

Spatialization as a Special Form of the Spatial Organization of the City, Objectifying Social Existence*

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Abstract—The article discusses the origin of the concept of spatialization (from Latin *spatium* — space) and the nature of its use in architectural science. The concept is presented as the name of the action aimed to create a model of an economically effective social space. The action initiated by the initiative group at the moments of etherialization is a strong-willed thought act which leads to a general spatial explosion of a place in the city, that is, to its explosive redrawing for the sake of increasing its economic efficiency, for the sake of strengthening its political value, for the sake of the adequacy of the semantic content and, if possible, the fullness of its existence. Architecture today (both theory and practice) grasps the meanings of this kind of change.

Keywords—*spatialization; architectural space; urban space; accelerated city; dynamic social space*

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this text is to outline ways to expand the understanding of the socio-economic and ontological nature of the city space. It is clear that the position of the architect regarding this issue is predetermined by professional affiliation to architectural science. The subject of architectural theory has always changed slowly, even in an existentially tense situation. The conceptual structures for describing the architectural space are diverse. However, the category of "space" is a very strict category in architectural science associated with the triad of morphological, symbolic and phenomenological concepts about space as the subject of artistic creativity.

The concept of "Urban Space", on the contrary, has been changing its content — from statics to dynamics, from the local scale (place) to the city, to the global city, region and further to the geographical scale of the territory of the state. Urban concepts of space are the subject of theoretical debate

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and discussions. Almost constant modification of urban concepts of space seems to be the natural state of this scientific sphere, as it takes into account the subtle and sudden changes in the socio-political climate and moreover the changes in the understanding of the phenomenon of the "city" itself.

Urban Studies as a discipline represents a branch of sociology and social psychology, deployed to the phenomenon of the city and the accelerating processes taking place in it, as the comprehension of the energy of changing space — in the optics of geography, culture, even politics. Therefore, the very essence of urban studies is constantly expanding as well as the methodology and the scale of representations.

The concept of spatialization came to the architectural science from sociology. It means the process of the creation of spatial forms in which social activity is embodied. According to Foucault, spatialization leads to the formation of cultural forms of different scale from gestures and physical manners to geopolitical relations of states. Spatialization changes continuously because it reflects and depends on the performative actualization of a given spatial order.

Next to the concept of spatialization there is the concept of spatiality — as the quality of existence, formed in a certain place and types of the reflection of this existence. As the political scientist Komleva N. A. notes the discourse of spatiality has become an integral part of the theoretical constructs of many contemporary researchers working in different disciplinary fields. Under the spatiality Komleva understands "the being itself...in the field of all social (socio-political) forms, and all kinds of reflections of this being – that is, not only anthropological, poetic and mythical being mentioned by Michel de Certeau, but also any socially oriented sense of space." [1]

So, spatialization is an action, a process of struggle for a new semantic content of a place in the city, and spatiality is the product of this reconfiguration. Fredric Jameson concretizes the mechanisms of the production of new forms of spatiality: "... all these three types of space, which I mean,

are the result of the continuous expansion or qualitative leaps in the expansion of capital, in its penetration and colonization of those areas that have not been previously subject to commodity logic.” [2]

II. THE PHENOMENON OF SPACE AND THE PHENOMENON OF THE CITY

The phenomenon of space will be considered simultaneously with and within the phenomenon of the city. Revealing the city as a process, modeling the city as a concealed working system, and analysis at the level of hidden energies seems to be the necessary methodological basis for a modern architectural analysis. The architect, not being an expert in the fields of sociology, economics and other disciplines dealing with the nature of the functioning of the city as a mechanism-machine-device, is forced to turn to the recognized authorities of other disciplines that studied the city and urban space.

One of the objectives of this analysis is, using the concepts of the masters of urban studies of the 20th century, approach the disclosure of the generative basis of the phenomenon of the city and the phenomenon of urban space as a specific form of human residence on earth, a form with a special magnetism and special intellectual, economic, political and artistic productivity in particular.

And to start let's turn to the classics of urbanism, primarily to the work of the representative of the Chicago School, the classic of urbanistic paradigm by Louis Wirth "Urbanism as a Way of Life." The work has been written in 1938, in the era of intensive industrialization, and the author focuses mainly on industrial cities. At the initial stage of industrialization the city is static and grows suburbs. According to Louis Wirth, urbanism is a special way of life, while urban settlement has the characteristics of high density and heterogeneity. Urbanization, according to Wirth, is rather a cumulative process free of the effects of external economic pressure. Wirth presents the formula for the success of the producing city and describes its energy matrix at its sustainable phase of development. "The city becomes not just a place where modern people live and work, but also a creative and regulatory center of economic, political and cultural life..." [3]

It has been 80 years since another great urban theorist, Lewis Mumford, has raised the question "What is a City?" in his 1937 essay, to which he himself replied: "The city is essentially a place for diversified and mixed activities; yet in the case of industries like cement and chemical works, steel plants and slaughter houses, spatial insulation is desirable and justifies relatively long journeys to work." [4].

Mumford asserts that most of the housing stock of cities and urban planning is deficient because the professionals who perform this work do not have a clear idea of the social functions of the city.

Mumford sees the city as the theatre of social action. He states: "The planning of cities cannot be confined to 'housing, work, recreation, and circulation,' the standard planner's definition: the whole city must rather be conceived mainly as

a theater for active citizenship, for education, and for a vivid and autonomous personal life." [5]

The physical organization of the city can either dampen this drama, disarrange it; or, on the contrary, can, through the deliberate efforts of art, politics, and education, make the drama more expressive. The city, according to Mumford, in its social aspect is a special structure that contributes to the creation of various opportunities for living together and exciting the collective drama.

It is also important to note that, according to Mumford, the city, unlike the community, is a caste society, organized to meet the needs of the dominant minorities, and not the former community of ordinary families living by mutual assistance.

In order to get closer to the understanding of the essence of our problem — to a try to develop a generalized idea of the work of the forces that transform the city, to clarify the position of the architect in a rapidly developing city — we turn to the monumental multi-volume work of the English historian Arnold Joseph Toynbee "A Study of History", to his reflection, matured over a number of years (the first volume was issued in 1934, the concluding – in 1961).

In the work of Toynbee, we are primarily interested in his method, or rather, the interpretation of methods of the comprehension of dynamically developing (or decaying) large-scale and at the same time human-scale phenomena. It seems acceptable to draw a parallel in the study of dynamically developing objects as a specific integrity (of the civilization and the city).

In order to capture such a phenomenon as the internal forces of the dynamics of complex socio-economic organisms Arnold Toynbee uses a specific conceptual "challenge-and-response" formula which he proposed as a method to overcome the crises of complex systems. He also builds his theoretical concept of etherification on its basis. Toynbee himself explains the etherification in following terms: "...the process of etherification, which we have analyzed, is not some simplification of the means used - it is the transfer of energy, a shift from the lower sphere of existence to the sphere of action of a higher level. Etherification (or Etherealization) is a volitional mental act. Here lies the intrigue of the transitional moments in the development of the energy sub-base of the city space." [6]

We believe that the Toynbee's theoretical model can be superimposed on the development stages of the society, as well as the associated stages and vectors of the development of the city and urban space.

III. SPATIALIZATION ACCORDING TO LEFEBVRE

In mid-20th century, according to the French theorist of the 1960s Henri Lefebvre, social space is a social product. Space as a creation and space as a product can be distinguished only through a retrospective analysis. He considers social and semantic space out of the connection with the physical one. And he also states that the space given

to the architect to work with is little known to him as the subject of the authorities' tactics.

Careful reading of Lefebvre, reveals his "social space" as the product and the instrument of economics and politics. "Between the growth of productive forces and the creation of a certain space there are mediations or mediators — actions of social groups, factors of knowledge, ideology, representation." [7]

"With the development of industry, the expansion of the market, the commodity world, with the increasing importance of the economy and capitalism, the historic city, besieged from all sides, becomes something else." [8]. Careful re-reading of Lefebvre's works, brings the idea that the creation of an effectively working social space is what the desire of initiative groups at the moments of the strong-willed thought act of etherealization is directed at, according to Toynbee. Where do the actions of the groups lead? "All of this leads to a general "explosion" of spaces, that is, to their explosive redrawing, as the result of which the relations between all geographical hierarchies are arranged anew and acquire a new geographical displacement." [9].

Let's note that according to Lefebvre and to his thesis, put forward in 1979, the process of redrawing in the cities ones started becomes permanent. He stated that there is a recent trend of space-time and that it arises, on the one hand, against the background of global integration, on the other — against the background of territorial re-differentiation, that is, re-differentiation of territories.

IV. POST-INDUSTRIAL TURNAROUND

The post-industrial turnaround became a reality in the late 20th century. It is known that neoliberalism in the troubled 1970s has begun to come to the fore, especially in the United States and Britain, nurtured in various "thinktanks" such as the Institute of economic relations in London and the University of Chicago. The Anglo-American philosopher and economist David Harvey demonstrates a clear relationship between the birth of new forms of the culture of the city and the rise of special increasingly flexible forms of capital accumulation. He is talking about a new round of space-time compression. Harvey argues that nowadays capitalism holds power not only through the production of space, as Lefebvre insisted, but also through supreme control over space, and this position is as characteristic of urban regions as it is of the global space of capitalist aspirations. Harvey notes that the power to shape space is proving to be one of the most crucial in controlling social reproduction. Therefore, the authorities turn to intellectuals who are related to the formation of space. "And it is exactly on this basis that those who have the professional and intellectual skills to shape space materially and effectively - engineers, architects, planners, and so on - can themselves acquire a certain power and convert their specialized knowledge into financial benefit." [10]

Cost-effective artifacts — business structures of various profiles — from financial corporations and commercial companies to tourist business and shopping malls, are being built into the space of the city. This is how an Accelerated

Service city of the 21st century is born. The spatial structure of the city turns inside out, moving from the centripetal (the system of the industrial city) to the centrifugal (the system of the post-industrial city). Edward Soja emphasized that as a result of the urbanization of suburbs a "complete eversion of the modern metropolis" took place, and "next to this phenomenon there was a reverse flow — to the centers of cities, as a result of the mass migration of people from the so-called "third world".

V. THE SOCIAL SPHERE AND ITS ABSORPTION BY THE TECHNOLOGICAL SPHERE

At the end of the 20th century, the concept of space as a dynamic machine, as a process has been put forward in the research of Bill Hillier from the London Bartlett school (1984, 2000). It was a special approach to the theoretical articulation of the invisible energies of the city. The concept was characterized by a deep understanding of the phenomenon of architecture, its functional, symbolic and phenomenological embeddedness in people's lives, understanding the connectedness of the complex profession of an architect, in which imagination occupies a central place, alongside with innovative capabilities. Hillier's concept of "spatial syntax" is a set of theories and methods for analyzing and evaluating the so-called "spatial configurations" of a city. The method based on a computer program is proposed as a tool to design programs in architecture, urban design, planning, and transport.

In the 21st century, in the context of the impending digital era, another view of the problem is gaining its momentum. A number of urban theorists set the task of space management. The purpose of the concept of a British geourbanist Michael Batty is the management of human behavior in the city. He bases his research on the idea that all the processes taking place in the cities will eventually become more detached from their physical form. His method of "spatial syntax" is a descriptive method of visualizing spatial relationships at the level of relationships between places. It is based on the method of "spatial interaction" — on a certain prognostic model that predicts, for example, how many "travels" will happen between urban "places".

We can name a number of researchers who have turned - after reading Lefebvre — not to the scale of the city, but to the scale of the territory, the state. These are the works of Neil Brenner, Stuart Elden. Today we can also mention the Russian initiative of the HABIDATUM Company and say that modern technology allows us to explore the city as a spatial process.

Let's note that the social sphere, despite the fact that it is faster than the architectural sphere, is still slower than the sphere of electronic technologies. Therefore, there is a danger for it to get absorbed by the fast technological sphere. Initiative of the contemporary urbanists, already armed with digital technology, has a strictly functional purpose to track the movements of citizens in order to adjust their behavior in a centralized way. Let's agree that behavior management — relieves the poetic veil of the sacrament of urban space. The city-scene of Mumford, inspiring citizens, gets crossed out of

the perception palette. But the technology allows us to consider and evaluate models of urban space of different scale and purpose.

The architect, as the screenwriter of the perception of space and the creator of a set of shades of mood, appears in a position of the unclaimed expert. However, against this background, the phenomenological concept of urban space becomes demanded — but rather as an antithesis of Lefebvre's urbanism and only partly in contact with it.

VI. CONCLUSION

It seems that sociology does not deal with space, but with some dynamic abstract structure. And spatialization is the method of working with it. It seems that the urbanist does not generate and does not produce space, but creates a kind of an energy model — a model of the machine that reconfigures the old structure of the inefficient operation of the settlement, in a new theoretical model of the connections between the working nodes of this invisible machine in order to effectively use the human and spatial resources of the settlement.

The redrawing of the classical logic of urbanism, recorded in the early 20th century by Louis Wirth, has been happening rapidly since the 1980s. Modern service and business post-industrial city loses the quality of the compactness of the center as a place of the concentration of cultural institutions (according to Mumford — the “compressed space that promotes enthusiastic communication”). The center is now compacted by business and commercial development, due to the “economic work” of such urban spaces as real estate, special places of mass trade, business attracting tourism. And as it has been said before, the spatial structure “turns inside out”, doing transforming from centripetal to centrifugal. The complexity of the city leads to the complexity of the theoretical concepts of urban space and methods of research. Space in the sphere of sociology and economics is thought of as a process!

“Cities are often compared to living organisms, which is quite justified. Cities arise to grow, to come into a state of stagnation, to restore their strength, to change their centers of attraction, to develop the hierarchy of their blood arteries and nodes and to work again in an active mode... but we must remember that the city does not regenerate itself; this mission is entrusted to the active agents inside the city that provoke changes.” [11] And here again we might recall the “call-and-response” tactic of the Arnold Toynbee's etherealization — provoking actions of the active agents during the decline of the city as a system. It is clear that active agents are not only sociologists, but also economists, politicians, developers, and even all those who create procedural theories of urban planning.

The main factor of the formulation and solution of the problem of space — is the bet on the intelligence and intuition of professionals, but low-scale urban space problem-solving is dominated by digital methods today. They perform a function incomprehensible to man, but still an auxiliary function. And let's not forget that the city is a caste society. It seems that sociology is dealing of course

with not the same kind of space that the architect is working with, but with some kind of a dynamic abstract structure. The spatialization as the method of working with it is a very abstract metaphysical in spirit binding to a certain “specific” space. An urban sociologist neither generates nor produces space, but creates a kind of an energy model — a model of the “machine”, reconfiguring the old structure of the inefficient economic work of the settlement to a new theoretical model of the connection of the working units of this invisible machine, and of course provoking the architecture to create a new aesthetics for the effective use of human and spatial resources of the settlement.

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