

Genesis of Architecture and Synthesis of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Genesis of architecture as a consistent activity focused on the formations of habitat possesses several starting points. These are temple complexes Göbeklitepe in modern Turkey, Mgarr and Tarsien in Malta. There is much in common in the architectural concept of these ancient complexes, i.e. planning, form making, constructive techniques, though there is a 50-century gap that separates them.

One of the main characteristic features is the use of synthesis of arts in these first architectural objects. In Göbeklitepe and Tarsien there is a combination of sculptural plastic art (from flat ornamental reliefs to three-dimensional images) and architecture. These complexes are pagan shrines, so it is possible to believe that synthesis of arts in them is used intentionally to create the architectural environment characterized by metaphysical, ideological and spiritual features.

Keywords: primitive art, synthesis of arts, monumental architecture, shrine, symbolization of space

I. INTRODUCTION

Architecture as a task-oriented system of the development of human habitat includes in its genesis two closely interconnected processes, i.e. material and metaphysical, spiritual. The former implies the formation of material objects and communicational ties between them. The latter includes psychological understanding of these factors, their reflective and sensuous interpretation and the formation of behavioral reactions. This, to a great extent, determines environmental human life activities.

The starting point and at the same time the factor of initial “environmental understanding of the world” was wild nature and human activity was aimed at adapting it to life. People had to develop land in search of food, to protect themselves from the external forces.

All these processes required reinforcement in human consciousness of material and space situations, creation of habitual visual images of a certain kind of environment. Environmentally life activity could be divided into “us and them”, “dangerous and safe”, “developed and undeveloped”. Thus, architectural and construction activity was of dual character, on the one hand as a material development of the environment, on the other as a necessity to “emphasize” space, to give it a name through a visual image, which is necessary for programming further human activity.

II. MARKING OF ENVIRONMENTAL SPACE AND SYMBOLIZING OF OBJECTS

The environment and its objects begin to be marked in different ways. This marking can be directed at working tools, household or dwelling items, structure of settlements and communicational routes. Thus, what we may call “primitive art” appeared [1]. It is art, unlike crafts this kind of activity contains what can be characterized as “visualization”, abstractness from practical life, i.e. figurine-amulets, decorations and ornaments on working or hunting tools could be the objects of primitive art (“Fig. 1”).



Fig. 1. Idol-amulet. Upper Mesopotamia. Archeological museum in Sanliurfa.



Fig. 2. Megalithic object. Karahunj. Armenia.

Genesis of this kind of human activity is closely connected with the development of religious attitude to the world, the formation of pagan (ensoulment of nature) beliefs and the embodiment of these symbolic images in visual forms and representations. That was the way cave art and megalithic “art of big stones” appeared (“Fig. 2”). Researchers connect the appearance of these kinds of art with “availability of leisure, settled life and understanding of personal safety” [2]. Chronologically this period refers to the Upper Paleolithic, i.e. 35000 years ago [3].

Material and visual marking of human habitat could include such activities as:

- making painted or plastic pictures on the existing objects;
- creation of special objects which possessed a symbolic meaning.

Birth of architecture as a form of art is connected with these two processes. Actually, there appeared symbolization of a constructed object which could include the two processes, sometimes connected, sometimes separated. That was the beginning of monumental architecture and synthesis of arts.

III. FIRST MONUMENTAL COMPLEXES

Monumental architecture comprised the creation of building constructions and forms not connected with practical utility but possessing a symbolic, “sign” meaning. These objects were united by the purpose to express a certain idea and create an abstract “art image”.

There is such a complex in Göbeklitepe (the Upper Euphrates, at present Turkish territory). Archeologists discovered there a ritual shrine which can be called “the first temple in the history of mankind” [4].

This complex has an elaborate structure, which consists of several (23) concentric in the plan interconnected structures (“Fig. 3”). Each of the elements or spaces of the complex has enclosure walls, which are made of big stones, and situated inside T-shaped pylons directed to the center. There are relief or three-dimensional plastic images on the geometrically well-formed and well-processed pylons (“Fig. 4”, “Fig. 5”). These are easily recognized or fictitious animals, birds, symbolic pictographs. It is interesting that on some pylons there are rows of recurring images of ornamental character (“Fig. 6”).



Fig. 3. Göbeklitepe shrine. Central part. Turkey.



Fig. 4. Plastic images on the pylons. Göbeklitepe.



Fig. 5. Plastic images on the pylons. Göbeklitepe.



Fig. 6. Ornamental images on the pylon. Göbeklitepe.

Archeologists refer the construction of this complex to the Upper Paleolithic, i.e. 10-12 000 years BC. Göbeklitepe is a unique architectural complex not only because of its age but also due to its non-primitive, even elaborated, planning and construction techniques, as well as the direct use of synthesis of arts. Images of animals as the objects of hunting and at the same time the objects of pagan worship, can be found in various artifacts of primitive art in different parts of the world. But in Göbeklitepe these images are compositionally grounded and fitted in architectural forms.

Undoubtedly, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and the Mediterranean region were the cradles of human civilization but the time-gap between Göbeklitepe hill and other architectural and construction objects is great. In the same area, the first anthropomorphic sculptural image 1.8.m high was found. It may be a pagan idol, which was part of a shrine ("Fig. 7"). This is also evidence of the use of the symbolic image in habitat of

Homo Sapience at the earliest stages of the development.



Fig. 7. Pagan anthropomorphical idol. Archeological museum in Sanliurfa.

Ornamental bands and three-dimensional sculptures can be seen in the architecture of another temple complex, i.e. Tarsien in Malta ("Fig. 8", "Fig. 9"). This object dates back to 31 century BC. It is interesting that a spiral-shaped ornament became one of the main themes of the synthesis of art and architecture in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece. It can be found on the mortuary stela from Mycenae, which dates back to 16-15 centuries BC ("Fig. 10").



Fig. 8. Ornamental image of the Tarsien temple. Malta.



Fig. 9. Sculptural images of the Tarsien temple. Malta.



Fig. 10. Mortuary stela. Archeological museum in Mycenae. Greece.

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IV. CONCLUSION

Monumental architecture as a specific genre was formed in high antiquity and it is closely connected with the appearance and development of religious beliefs, ritual and sacral activities of people.

Even at the earliest stages of appearance and development of monumental architecture one of its main characteristic features was the use of arts synthesis as one of the main means of creation of symbolism and art visualization of architectural objects.

The formation of monumental architecture and its genre characteristics have common features in different civilizations and peoples in the long historical period up to the present moment.