

Phenomenological dimensions of architectural creativity

Lyudmila Molodkina *

Abstract: The specific character of a creative activity in the sphere of architecture, in both historical and contemporary perspectives, has been analyzed in this paper on the basis of Roman Ingarden's phenomenological and aesthetic interpretation of the artwork in general, and of the architecture in particular. Heuristic power of phenomenological approaches to the study of architectural creativity has been shown, underlying the dimensions of intersubjectivity within the dialogic process of 'reading' the architecture's 'event'.

Keywords: architecture, cultural meanings, intersubjectivity, creativity, intentionality

Architecture is the art of the creative, because it is based on the discovery (as a result of creative research) and realization (materialization) of new 'forms' - the so-called types of external - and new high-quality combination ...; it is an expression of the degree of mastery of matter ...; its submission ... requires and at the same time gives life, ... the spiritual life of man, satisfying his needs in a beautiful and aesthetic charm.

Roman Ingarden

INTRODUCTION

The innovative spirit and the multidimensional nature of social-informative and cognitive antinomies of modernity reflect a more profound and sophisticated philosophical and methodological model of thinking the creative dynamics in many spheres of human activity. Architecture, in its pragmatic functionality and external visibility, is represented as utilitarian and aesthetic object, requiring close attention, in-depth study and understanding of a rapidly changing point of view of the architect-creator and owner-user. In the mid-80s of the last century, the famous researcher in the architectural theory V. Glazichev noted that "to explain the architecture work only by the architectural

* Lyudmila Molodkina ()

The State University of Land Use Planning and Management, Moscow, Russia
e-mail: lmolodkina@hotmail.com

material is not the same thing, as in the case of trying to explain the creativity of science and/or poetry on the basis of them. Following to sort out the problem of creativity in architecture, we have to consider the wider cultural context of innovation” (Glazichev 1986, 7), in which architecture acquires a special semiotic status, thanks to a unique system of language - the language of forms and designs -, seeing that the semantic richness of such a peculiar symbolic ‘text’ requires adequate reading. It means that the architecture intersubjectivity is always, to some extent, an experience, an event or chain of events embodied in a silent appearance of buildings. In fact, any genre or stylistic interpretation of the architectural object delineates a plot full of cultural meanings. The integration of semantic flows is generated in one’s mind under the influence of architectural forms and volumes with significant impact on the corporeal essence of man, on his life, activity and creativity; and they represent a complex philosophical problem that needs a serious methodological analysis.

Intensive search for the proper philosophical tools, allowing us to theoretically reconstruct the intersubjective procedural generation of innovation in architecture, leads to the phenomenological methodology for conceptual refinement of the most appropriate analysis of the creative process in architecture.

However, it should be noted that the architectural design of the environment and its creative renewal historically engage changeable architecture means. It is no secret that the embodiment process of architectural creativity fruits due to high material and financial costs, and therefore extremely ‘stretched’ in time. This, of course, differs from the architecture of a ‘mobile’ type of art, which is not so dependent on investment and human labor possibilities and rights. However, the unity of culture implies existential community of architecture and literature, painting, music, etc., wherein creative innovation is faster and therefore more noticeable.

It is to be emphasized that the nature of creative activities in this important field of culture is determined by a symbiosis of the various components of architectural activity: professional knowledge, skills, judgment, creativity, etc. (Glazichev 1986, 5-11). Creativity in architecture as “extreme rarity” is born when “certainly explodes the current rate of professionalism, and because it can’t be let in very limited doses” (Ibid, 7). Undoubtedly, not every novelty in the architecture can be recognized as a sign of creativity; but only that is a real new creation, which reaches the “value innovation” rank enshrined

in the culture and “includes in its own ‘genetic pool’” (Ibid, 6). This is obvious by unforgettable and delightful images of historic architecture, continuously amazing through its construction-engineering ductility and inimitable sculptural model of modern architecture. As a result, historic and modern on equal creative rights fit into a single architectural space surrounding the environment’s tissue, interacting and complementing each other. Great architectural samples of past eras, carefully protected, if the pattern details were skillfully chosen, are interwoven into a modern ‘stone lace’, forming multidimensional socio-cultural and environmental meanings - from utilitarian, artistic and aesthetic, to memorial, spiritual and sacred, collective and personal.

The creative design of cultural meanings in architectural composition depends on the ability of ideas’ objectification and insights, projecting translation into tangible material fabric. The ‘enlightenment’ for understanding the creative process in architecture points to the idealized and somehow mystified nature of this phenomenon’s uniqueness; one of generating intense spiritual energy and producing authentic creation. The architectural space becomes part of nature, the so-called second nature, thanks to features such as proportionality, rhythm, static but also dynamics, texture, composites, etc., sustaining the person to know and comprehend much better the architectural creativity.

Multi-stage architectural creation, as one of the most important kinds of social and cultural achievements, generates a semantic layering requiring reasonable explication to be articulated by phenomenological categories as intentionality, intersubjectivity, “life-world” and others. N. Smirnova (2014, 65) believes that phenomenology gives even the “methodological principle to solving the ultimate philosophical dignity of the epistemological problems”. There is no doubt that, in this view, architecture seems be worthy as one of the fundamental social areas, claiming high scientific and philosophical interpretation.

ON THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL SEARCH FOR CULTURAL MEANINGS IN ARCHITECTURE

Sophisticated semantic structure of architectural creation is presented as a synthesis of various architectural and natural ingredients, with rich spiritual meanings and utilitarian functions, forming the basis of the creative project of the architect-author (constructing the subject) and

revealing through the architectural design. To generate new creative ideas (that require objectification) and forms that result from this process is the main task of the architect. An author creates and often changes the already made architectural space, filling it with creative energy and aesthetic value. In order to understand in detail the conversion of the architectural and building project into artistic work of architecture, it is necessary to understand that an object (temple, theater, palace, monastery, obelisk, monument, etc.), in addition to its utilitarian purpose, endows the observer semantic capacity, too. It is important to understand how the very act of creation occurs as the formation and development of new architectural forms and spaces in its value dimension with countless shades of meaning. The answer can be found, among other things, on the basis of Roman Ingarden's phenomenological and aesthetic approach of artwork, and, in particular, of architecture.

The outstanding philosopher was at the origins of the creation and development of phenomenological aesthetics, which fully reflects the foundations of his ontology and epistemology in relation to sociocultural objectivity. Ingarden experienced creative excitement and scientific research interest in revealing the main problem of phenomenology, identifying the essential dynamics of consciousness in relation to being. He focused to interpreting the correlation of consciousness and the object by "researching the problem of idealism/realism" (Dolgov 1996, 192). Through his main ontological study, *Controversy over the Existence of the World*, Ingarden testified to the existence of discrepancies on ontological issues in the field of phenomenology, about the identification of "bottlenecks" in it (Ingarden 2013). The philosopher gives ontology a strictly differentiated character, dividing it into material, formal and existential. He distinguishes multiple socio-cultural objectivities with a special content and formal status, namely: works of art - literary, architectural, pictorial, musical; religious monuments; State symbols. Thus, he maintains the phenomenologist's unshakable interest in the ontological foundation of both, first of all, artistic and aesthetic culture, and other objects of a broad socio-cultural orientation. Within the framework of the aesthetic-phenomenological analysis of works of literature, architecture, music and painting, an original - in comparison with transcendental idealism - tendency can be traced.

Roman Ingarden purposefully attracts art to resolve ontological issues, and this undoubtedly testifies to the scientific and philosophical

significance of his phenomenological research, to his independent contribution to aesthetic theory. The categories of multidimensionality, uncertainty, multi-layeredness, beingness, and concretization conceptually expanded the research framework of aesthetic theory and are conceptually keys in the analysis of objects of artistic reality. The Polish thinker seems to “plunge” into the ontological space of a work of art, revealing its semantic background and observing the movement of meanings, their relationship with the streams of consciousness and the physical world.

In this context, Roman Ingarden undertook a phenomenological study of fiction as one of the main components of cultural and aesthetic objectivity, most suitable for all objective and subjective reasons for a thorough analysis of the phenomena of the “ideal world”. In the creative literary process, phenomenal streams of consciousness are revealed as much as possible, being objectified in it in the form of reflected social and cultural experience. A fictional literary text, Ingarden emphasizes, contains several narrative plans intentionally produced by the author. This can be either a large-scale coverage of the historical era in cultural-figurative expression, or artistic concentration on the intentions and experiences of an individual character.

After that, Ingarden’s philosophical interests shifted to an in-depth phenomenological interpretation of the ontology of musical art, painting and architecture. His attention is focused on the issues of “cognition” and the aesthetic experience of a work of art as an object and an intentional object, in which diverse meanings are generated, demonstrating the connections between an artistic object and consciousness. He was interested in the questions of objective layering in one or another form of art and the relationship of an artistic object with its ontological correlate. How and to what extent does a piece of music depend on the sound of an instrument or voice, architecture - on structure, painting - on canvas, etc.? For example, a piece of music is presented not only as an ideal object created by the feelings of performers and listeners; it was created by the composer at a certain point in time and requires a certain instrumental accompaniment. Therefore, a piece of music is constituted between real and ideal being - the being of pure intention. The basis of the intentional being of musical, literary, architectural, pictorial works is the artist’s creative act. The musical number, according to Ingarden, is the ontic foundation of music and has a less definite character in comparison with the existential basis of a literary text - words or sentences. A piece

of music contains many vague points: such as the loudness of the performance, the accentuation of notes, etc. These physical attributes can sometimes create very unexpected and unforeseen nuances. Therefore, the existential basis of a literary work is more schematized in comparison with a musical one.

The artistic image in the field of painting is described by Ingarden as an intentional object with many ontological layers, namely: starting from the denotation, represented in an artistic-figurative form, and ending with a diverse layer of individual grasping of the denotation in various modes of reflection (visual, auditory, etc.) and consciousness generally. This phenomenologically developed ontology of artistic genres is a unique contribution to the treasury of world aesthetic thought.

Regarding architecture, Roman Ingarden notes that, certainly, the functionality of an architectural work should negate the ontological plurality and at the same time maximally combine the intentions of the architect and the recipient. However, he emphasizes that although functionality is the dominant property of architecture, the architectural reality of this socio-cultural object is subsequently emphasized not only for utilitarian-consumer use, but also for aesthetic perception. The observer (recipient) independently carries out the reconstruction of the aesthetic layers of architectural objectivity at the intentional level.

Ingarden undertook the aesthetic-phenomenological study of the constitution of cultural meanings in architectural works by analyzing in detail the phenomenon of architecture in his aesthetic investigation of art, getting “music, picture, architecture, film” (Ingarden 1962). He provides the essence of a work of art in the presence of intentionality, emphasizing their specifics: “Architecture expresses human not by reproducing its individual destiny and experience’s content, as literature, sculpture and painting do to a certain extent; as well as music, it expresses human in the basic psychic structure and the way of life of the body, the constructive – intelligent and aesthetically-perceiving spiritual abilities” (Ibid, 247). Properly, Ingarden found a subtle approach to explain the peculiar nature of intentionality in architecture, making a philosophical and phenomenological concept of architecture.

So, intentionality of architectural work involves the gradual build-up of cultural meanings and memorial values attributed to the ordinary consciousness of the original building. Ingarden dynamically monitors the creative genesis of origin in the mind of the architectural work as

intentional object on the basis of the original structure. Gothic cathedrals, Romanesque cathedrals, churches, theaters, ancient Greek temples, etc., above all, are real objects; likely, there is the surrounding area on which they are built. Phenomenological “portrait” of the structure as a true work of architectural art emerges in the mind at once. There, prolonged character formation in the perception of aesthetic and artistic value of buildings and its gradation consistently grow the “tempo” sense. The aesthetic value of the building is based on its real foundation for “a pile of stones”, in a certain way stacked in some stable three-dimensional shapes, thereby giving a character that has “exclusively physical properties” to the construction site. However, “when we open toward the construction of a work of art and admire its beauty, or, conversely, we are disgusted by its ugly appearance, we take it into account not only as the real thing, in fact, its reality starts to lose meaning for us” (Ingarden 1962, 204). Using a phenomenological language, we can say that the reality of construction as empirical evidence, “taken out of the brackets”, “is derived from the game”, and “excluded from the scope of attention”. According to Smirnova (2014, 52), “The meaning of these operations is to free minds from all anticipating interpretations inherent in the pre-reflective consciousness state, the natural setting”, and reach the level of pure “phenomena of consciousness experienced with immediate evidence”. Here, it becomes appropriate to the appearance of different points of view the so-called “labels” attributed to the structure of consciousness. There is a kind of “Brownian motion” being born of meanings, like incremental to the same building (the church or the Renaissance palace) as whole. This can be an engineer view, exploring the static properties of engineering structures, the opinion researcher historian who is interested in the history of the construction of buildings or aesthetic pleasure, a tourist audience, “when we admire the harmony of mass accommodation, when immersed in the charm of silence Romanesque cathedral and admire the ease and grace of the Ionic columns, etc.” (Ingarden 1962, 204) In the light of philosophical reasoning Ingarden personal impressions from visiting Scotland castles and Welsh, Italian palaces and villas of Palladio, Byzantine churches and Istanbul mosques, unsurpassed gardens and buildings of the Spanish Alhambra, as well as Russian classical mansions and secluded monasteries domestic hinterland seem not only more aesthetically expressive but also richer semantically. Each point of view and every impression designed to empower the various features of the building,

which in the subject have not changed anything physically, but semantically. At the same time the true nature of the structure as a real physical body does not disappear, but simply “pushed back into the shadows”/ brackets. “The result of transcendental-phenomenological reduction becomes an inextricable connection between consciousness and its intentional object. The units of the transcendental analysis of the reduced scope are not objects of the external world, but meanings” (Smirnova 2014, 53). The architectural object acquired new semantic features creatively converted. It becomes the intentional object to the author, the creator and the viewer of the recipient, occurring in the minds of them and holding different semantic structures.

Creative multi-stage architecture shows a consistent, quantitative and storage cycle constituting meaningful retentions: building as a whole, as a real physical object; as the basis for the construction of existential work of architecture; piece of architecture in its specificity as an aesthetic object. The uniqueness of this phenomenological typology of creative stages in the architectural development of the subject to the level of a work of art consists in the isolation of their particular temporal succession and interdependence. Initially characterized from the perspective of “natural settings” as a real physical object structure, it gradually modified from the “pile of stones” in the face of the whole organism, which is based on the harmonious unity of all its parts and forms, technically giving birth to a kind of “silent dialogue” of architectural and engineering designs, heavy masses of building materials, and so on. Ingarden stresses that the most important structural element of the architectural works is made by the system of geometric shapes, based on the laws of statics of heavy masses and related utilitarian sense of construction – the ground of architectural art’s existence.

Combining architecture with other arts and wanting to re-emphasize its characteristics and identity, Ingarden deprives architectural creation of absolute “purity” of quality, assuming that any building can’t be related significantly to its utilitarian purpose, which “modifies the geometric-static design. ...It follows to view an artwork’s composition, provided by the freedom of the artist striving to embody certain aesthetically valuable quality in the work” (Dolgov 1996, 243). Any other elements of the product are structurally derivatives, although in the aesthetic perception of the work they can play a major role. Derivative elements include the surrounding natural landscape, artistic or decorative, etc. - all that is material content

shaped pattern of architectural works and increases its aesthetic value as the existential foundations of the birth of the intentional subject with the cultural semantic content. At the heart of the gradation of meanings is the transition from the trivial utilitarian pragmatism built with the original plainness and simplicity of its geometric forms, “prosaic” heavy mass of building material to the artistic and aesthetic richness of the architectural work in the intentional semantic terms.

Built phenomenon as a real holistic body has physical properties, laws, an independent entity in relation to all kinds of acts of consciousness; the whole structure is autonomous and independent in its existence from consciousness. But Ingarden emphasizes that the whole is a real equivalent of a “subjective point of view and conscious behavior of the subject, in which there is ... an avoidance of the implementation of any intentional acts” (Ingarden 1962, 207). Cultural meaning “labels” can be “glued” structure only when it becomes a correlate of consciousness, when it was sent to an intentional act and it is positioning itself as an intentional object. “The sense in architecture is composed, first of all, of harmony and proportion - both in the architectural structure itself and with the surrounding landscape. Experiencing the semantic content of the environment allows a person to feel ‘at home’ and fully feel the meaning of the being” (Molodkina 2019, 74). In phenomenological terms, it is about the actual structure of the whole, its “life-world”, background and horizon, tending to its semantic expansion. Ingarden notes greater mobility and variability in these intentional acts of consciousness. This is largely determined by the socio-cultural environment, the type of social and individual consciousness, the religious beliefs, the whole mentality level, etc. However, the intentional act of consciousness, aimed at the real thing as a correlate (construction, landscape fragment, household items, etc.) does not change anything in the real physical world of these things. It is important that such a thing takes on a new intentional property, it becomes the existential basis of intentional objectivity to constitute meaning: a temple, a palace, monastery, monument, etc. “Only when the subject intervenes in interpretation, ... the expression in concrete material becomes the idea that illuminates the artist’s work embodying the creative ideal work of art, and in particular the work of architecture; until then, it was just conceptually presented but not creatively ‘done’” (Ingarden 1962, 214).

CONCLUSION

The notion of intentionality is the key to the phenomenological and aesthetic interpretation of the creative process in architecture. The structural and compositional being of architectural work, the aesthetic combination of its volumes and shapes, “missing” in the light of the intentional consciousness as its correlate, receives different semantic transformation that requires new reading and a corresponding vision and understanding. Architecture is a peculiar language, the main characters of which are the “silence” of heavy weights and technically rigorous construction, materializing the utilitarian and aesthetic idea of the author, and appearing as an existential base intentionally eventful formed. Architectural “events” as phenomena “are being” to our consciousness, imprinted in intentionally “written by” the text, in a specific sequence constituted consciousness as intentionally structured architectural story that fixes cultural meanings. The production of meanings is a process. Meanings are co-partners in the process of interaction, opening more and more as deployment of such a cooperation and deepening it. Production of meanings in social interaction is an open-ended process; it is a real adventure that is fueled by the synergy of interacting individuals. The diversity of cultural values filling the intentional consciousness of the subject, the evidence of dialogic different semantic approaches requires a particular interpretation of the architectural “event” as the constituted one by own intentional consciousness and the ‘others’ consciousness, too.

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