

ARCHITECTURE OF EVERYDAY LIFE AS A VISUAL NARRATIVE OF MODERNITY**Bespalaya H.**

Master of Art Management, Junior Researcher of the Research Department of the Educational Establishment «The Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts», Minsk, Belarus
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13136885>

Abstract

The article examines the phenomenon of architecture of everyday life as the immediate habitat of a modern person. In this context, the visual component of the appearance of modern cities is analyzed in the context of socio-cultural and technological changes of the XXI century, in particular residential buildings and places of the most frequent public use.

Keywords: architecture, everyday life, city, residential areas, habitat.

Architecture accompanies human beings from the earliest forms of their existence, initially realised in primitive dwelling structures, and later in complex multidimensional constructions with not only functional but also symbolic sense.

The most obvious symbolism in the spiritual content can be traced in the funerary edifices of different cultures. An example is the famous Egyptian pyramids – a unique example of the high level of skill of ancient Egyptian architects, visually reflecting the pharaoh's afterlife route to Heaven. Besides, the ancient Egyptian pyramid symbolised the inseparable connection of cosmic and earthly forces in the monumental nature of the funeral structure.

Thus, since antiquity, architecture has been understood not as an ordinary building, but as an outstanding achievement of architectural thought and technological capabilities of the era.

However, the art and technological level do not cover the variety of the intended purpose of architecture. Architecture is also seen as a means of expressing ideological attitudes of ruling circles, cultural changes or public moods. In this aspect, architecture reacts sensitively to historical changes and expresses them most clearly in a number of buildings, and sometimes in the entire urban ensemble.

At this point, the architectural appearance of cities is shifting towards greater functionality, the tasks of utilitarian convenience and accessibility to the average citizen are in the foreground. Cities acquire visual distinctive features of a modern metropolis, manifested in abundant glazing of facades, high-rise storeys and extreme geometric minimalism.

At the same time, postmodernity is characterised by multidirectional style variations, some of which – for example, deconstructivism – are characterised by non-linearity, abstraction and fragmented forms.

The architecture of the present period is extremely difficult to incorporate into a single direction of development, but when analysing the most frequent architectural solutions of modern cities, it becomes clear that the priority of urban planning policy lies in universal unification and typification, primarily of dwelling buildings.

This trend in the post-Soviet space originated in the first mass series of houses from the mid-1950s.

Typical housing construction implied the deprivation of individuality on the way to the birth of a collective 'we'. Thus, even in a purely private residential space, the task of forming a unified communist society without emphasis on the individual was fulfilled.

At the moment there is no such task, but the uniformity of residential neighborhoods still reflects the impersonality of architectural solutions. The architecture of residential complexes most often represents mediocre micro-districts, within which are located a series of high-rise buildings designed solely to meet physiological needs.

At the same time, it is the architecture of residential space that is of the greatest interest as an area of formation of a certain type of thinking and mindset of residents. The aggregate of visual constants of residential buildings and nearby objects of daily use forms the basis of the architecture of everyday life.

To understand the importance of considering the architecture of everyday life, it is worth clarifying that it was in residential architecture that the fundamental changes in the social plan were most clearly reflected. The man of the era of mass production was not supposed to be a separate individual with his own ideas about the best and proper. Man (as well as machine or mechanism) was only a part of the general system of production and was obliged to fulfil a clearly defined range of tasks. This utilitarian approach to the perception of the individual is characteristic of Le Corbusier's functionalism, where the individual is erased in a mass of identical living cells. As he himself asserted, 'The house is a machine for dwelling'. [1].

However, it is impossible to imagine the advanced architecture of the industrial age without it. The architect's task was to provide housing for the large mass of workers, which meant a shift in the usual understanding of the urban environment. Mass consumption and urbanisation became the postulates on the basis of which the very culture of society was changing, which found an outlet in bold architectural ideas. This was not only necessary, but highly appropriate for the time, as it reflected the general desire for modernisation.

The everyday life of the age of automation was expressed in urban volumes, where wide motorways began to appear instead of narrow alleys, and the low

height of buildings was seen as an inhibition of development rather than a priority for the human-sized scale of the city. Man was confronted with a new planning of cities as economic centers of international communications and trade. The personality of the individual lost its former importance, due to the increasing need for a functional mass of able-bodied population. This phenomenon was reflected in the architecture of the everyday, as repetitive and impersonal.

The architecture of everyday life as an immediate human environment, including home, work and recreational areas, is connected to the places of daily contact, simultaneously influencing and reflecting the essence of modern man. Through the prism of the visual component of residential development, we can examine the fundamental characteristics of the society that lives in it.

Taking as an example a typical city with historical and business centers and peripheral areas, we can see that the main life is concentrated outside the residential districts, whose purpose is to fill vital and psychological needs.

Inside the dormitories are most often grids of high-rise buildings with minimal infrastructure around them: kindergartens, playgrounds, schools and shops. Outside of them, the number of public places is extremely limited and is usually limited to a few points of household services such as shoe shops or hairdressers.

This situation characterises a state of society where the everyday architecture of the immediate, almost intimate, space is devoid of identity. The person of the standardised environment also becomes subject to excessive stereotyping and rigidity. This circumstance leads to attempts of self-expression through the modification of one's own flat as a locus of privacy untouched by generalisation.

For this reason, there has been a growing interest in antique objects, authentic items and vintage. Nostalgia for the forgotten or even the unknown becomes a

guide to a world of sensual images animated by a connection to the past, which appears more alive and present than reality.

Thus, the architecture of everyday life – the timeless space of life of multiple generations – is one of the main factors influencing people's worldview and self-understanding with its appearance. The picture of the environment, the abundance or lack of diversity of architectural solutions and designs, fundamentally affects everyday thinking, enriching or narrowing it to a direct functional role.

The very concept of 'everydayness' began to be considered by scholars relatively recently [2]. Before that, everyday life was considered unworthy of attention as the sphere of the lowly and primitive. However, there is no doubt that human existence is inextricably linked to everyday life, only occasionally entering the realm of 'high' culture and complex forms of cognition. Everyday life is the very trajectory of movement, the direction of which is set by the routine repetition of identical actions in terms of meaning, which are influenced, among other things, by the visual series of habitual images.

This implies the importance of studying the architecture of the everyday as an organic part of intersubjective everyday life.

References:

1. Le Corbusier. Architecture of the XX century / Le Corbusier; per. from Frants. T. P. Topuridze. – Moscow: Progress, 1977. – P. 72.
2. The culture of everyday life: [textbook] / M. V. Kapkan ; Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Urals Federal University. Federation, Urals Federal University. – Yekaterinburg : Izd-v Ural. un-ta, 2016. - P. 15.