

SPACE – LANDSCAPE - FIRE

Theses of DLA dissertation

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Introduction

Sense of landscape - landscape of sense (Janousek, 1994. p.48.)

I live in the country as an artist where features of the place have a strong effect on the character of creative work and at the same time I also have effects on the land, the surroundings. I try to answer theoretical and practical questions arisen by these effects or when shaping the environment. „*Building means making a place in the space and a space on the place*” (Hamvas, 2002. p.52–59.) Landscape and creative work directly connected to the land are unseparable for me. *The chapters analysing the changes in the space and history of the place make a sequence similarly to the analogue of the creative work done in the landscape.* That is why I did my research on the cave dwellings of Noszvaj while shaping the landscape forming their surroundings and utilizing them. In my works I examine correlation, relationship of space, place and plasticity and present dissertation was created from reflections of this research.

When forming the structure of the dissertation I created three major units. First I write about space (I: Space), deal with historical review of the definition of space-sensations. I focus on the changes in the history of space perception and write about how mythic space turns into an aesthetic one. I review environment shaping process of land-art and eco-art. Connected to it I emphasize the relevant for me elements of the possibilities of community space creating, so I deal with the history of the 20th century art-communities, symposion movement.

In the second part (II. Landscape) I reearch the historic roots of the sites, write about garden design, garden culture in dwelling environs and the cave dwellings. Starting with the short review of organic architecture shaping our environment I write about work of Farkaskő Art-community¹.

¹ www.pocem.hu

In the third part (III. Fire) I introduce my sculptor activity through one location wishing to show the space shaping on the given location. In this chapter I also write about my statuette works. Part of the dissertation is to introduce the master-work which is an individual stove made in the cave-room created by myself. This space is the imprint of my studies, my thoughts. Since I live in a community, opinion of my friends, people, creators close to me is important to me. New dimensions are given to the being created story by every viewpoint.

Approaching method is applied in the construction. Layers of understanding, inbeddedness are shown in tapering circles. I searched for answer by analysing connection of art and life. Based on it I tried to see changes in the swing of material shaping spiritual waves. This approach helps to understand and place my artistic activity in a given cultural setting. Revealing, analysing and enlarging interpretation possibilities of a creative process help to understand an era and provides new possibilities to approach hermeneutically the imprints of its objects.

The main aim of the essay, so priority was given to research focusing on the spirit of the place. Beginning from the second half of the 19th century artists create special life-art affected by a land. (*Geller – Keserü*, 1986; *Réti*, 1996). In a section of my dissertation I write about oeuvre of creators twitted to certain lands. That is how analyses of works initiated by landart and ecoart are also involved into my essay besides mentioning traditional art-community works. Artists dealing with visuality, connected to land, visual orders (*Horváth*, 1999) are looking for possibilities of redefinition of space. Artists dealing with landscape design keep distance from more organised, more urban activities of artistic life. This physical distance also results in a kind of spiritual one. What is generally characteristic for the artists and works enumerated here is the attempt to revive harmony with nature. Direct application of materials, objects, energies and locations of nature can be seen in the creative process.

I. Space

Differences of mythic, aesthetic and theoretic space approach determine connection of place and space. Together with the metamorphosis of space approach relationship of man to their surroundings is also transformed. I dealt with questions of disjunction/union of nature/man, spiritual-sacral/profane putting special emphasis generated by the changes in the viewer's viewpoint, spread of perspective approach as for how it is imbedded in the environment. Disruption of the unity of nature and man resulted in turning spiritual-sacral thinking into profane. Objectivity and rationality of mathematics has changed

way of thinking of mankind determining our living conditions as a major factor to shape our senses and environment. Changes by the appearance of aesthetic space can be connected to the recent situation.

Apart from the direct presence of sensation it is well known that human way of seeing depends on culture. Space is not subjective cognition of physical reality, but part of human existence, says *Bolnow* (quoted by *Rényi*, 2005). Bits of existence appear in different forms in different cultures. Sensation of space is completed by space approach, way of seeing determined by a given land, a given community, a given culture. Characteristic features of space-creating relics of different periods cannot be explained by just one sensation attitude. Space organisation has its own history, yet we must see that history of space organisation is richer than space theory activity of different cultures. Space organisation activity was this way a characteristic feature of a cultural community. Comparison of space approach starts to develop with advancement of historical knowledge, system of comparisons (*Moravánszky, M. Gyöngy*.2007).

Sensation and cultural determination together shape space attitude of individuals but it also sets boundaries of space sensation. Boundaries of space are researched and developed by cosmological researches and mathematic space theories, but individual space sensation, as we can see it, is not without limits (*Moravánszky, M. Gyöngy*. 2007).

Representation of individual space sensation is *experienced space* – the expression introduced by *Lefebvre* (*Rezsonya*, 2007) – where man experiences their connection with space directly and unconsciously. According to him art creates codes which contain new forms of social thinking, inspire its renewal. Referring to the synthesis of Lefebvre and dissertation of *Rezsonya* is especially important for me because they give me support to understand my own space-building practice connected to landscape. Experienced space, environment created by *sensed space, spacial practice*, to find „spirit of the place” are the ones I was especially interested in as an artist.

Experienced space, forming common understanding, inner hierarchy of cultural effects concerning space, expression of completeness assumes a kind of totality, that is a kind of holism. (1) Based on space theories and space sensation I express possibility of cultural space sensation united in experienced space this way.

A current phenomenon is that artists do attempts to restore unity by re-evaluating art, task of artists (*Forián*, 2003). For me a personal artistic alternative – holistic art - can be a kind of space shaping which is an attempt to restore unity. More precisely: expressing

forgotten symbolism, restoration of sacral state of spaces can create such frames which can restore vertical sensation and also generate spiritual experiences.

It is especially important for me to find continuity in environment shaping initiatives, activity of community. Art communities, symposion movement can this way be connected to the landscape and space forming work. Artists finding natural values, where proximity of nature is important formed communities already at the end of the seventies which have survived in the country by continuing traditional shapes and techniques. (*Természetesen, 1994.p. 104. and p. 256–64.*). *A local artist is only valid if he takes time and place related characteristics, peculiarities of his presence into consideration. (Hamvas, 2002. p.54–59.)*

At the same time with West-European tendencies artistic actions communicating with nature also appear in East-European states within the frames of neoavantgarde renewal. They mainly focus on recreation of harmony with nature but not through representation. Attitude utilizing nature appeared in the use of materials, objects, energy, location, through direct contact with them. „*Nature, in all its form of representation is: annunciation*”(…) *nature is enough on its own and must be enough for people, too, because nature is: art*” – says *Herman de Vris* in 1993 (*Szikra, 2007*).

The real alternative is – which I emphasize several times – generalisation of ecological way of thinking though it is difficult to fulfil in practice.

II. Landscape

Statements on definitions of various fields of space in urbanic setting can be seen in alteration of space structure of rural environment, also in changes affected by our activity. Revitalization programme of the country can be understood in the importance, validity of landscape, in the system of various space approaches. As I have mentioned, unified space approach cannot be detected so far neither in art nor in science. The various space sensational shapes, effects of culturally determined space approaches and space theories result in a special, almost individual space attitude. This peculiarity, however, can be tuned, enlarged in various ways. Possibility of experience, identity with the landscape means a new type of space experience. This, not simply phisycal space sensation, not simply cosiness, but a deliberately undertaken enlargement of spacial, space-theoretical, cultural identity means novelty for me, which validates writing of this dissertation.

For me, an artist, sculptor it has become obvious that there is a type of artist and an artistic lifeart where landscape and landshaping activity cannot be separated. It is proved that

no landscaping form is possible without single treatment of land, spacebuilding and personal ambitions.

Introduction of garden history, relics of underground architectural history, local history research of Hungarian relics and cave dwellings of Noszvaj provides an insight on land- and spaceshaping activity of cultures. I start off with historic research of garden art, accepting traditions of garden art and changes of artistic gardens. I am interested in cultural prehistory of the formation of present landscape. I would like to fit our landscape-magic art colony programme into the sequence of European gardens. Based on researches on antecedents of underground architecture I get to the introduction of the spread of cave dwellings in Hungary describing in details the cave dwellings in Noszvaj. Connection to Indian, oriental antecedents cannot be detected with European sites, but using freedom of artistic intuitions I have no doubt in their connections. Similar expression of form creating mentality can be detected at the so distant in time and era locations. The shapes, so different in space and historic era, yet so similar in outlook give reinforcement to me. Cult of logos appears in these shapes.

The land, like everything, loses its (past) appearance and serves to be a tool for production, consumption (everywhere). Ideas of Ferenc Varga speaking about sculpture (*Varga, 2004*) can also be valid in broad sense for the use of environment. The „eyes” of our culture get open if we think about seeing, experiencing – we are at home somewhere - the cosmic order manifested in the landscape. A world can be created by our own wishes, expectations. The experience pries us out of the usual environment based on consumption, modern values. Visual orders (*Horváth, 1999*) make it possible to practice a certain cosy independence.

In the activity of Farkaskő NBME I am trying to find my place while creating my own cave dwelling, my own space of living paying attention to retinal (Merleau-Ponty, 2007, p.105..) conscious, and practical questions of the programme of fitting into the environment and possible ethical (Lányi and Jávora, 2005) and aesthetic results of experiencing this situation. I look into the future, taking directions of a possible development, advancement into consideration. I proceed step-by-step developing the adjoining circumstances. I look for analogies. The programme having existed for ten years cannot be completed, it is being formed with the landscape, its shaping, existence is parallel with the changes in my thinking.

III. Fire

Statues shaped in fire made me create an artistic place of fire, which is the topic of my doctor masterwork. While reviewing the process of development, revealing personal interpretation of space, shapes and tendencies of changes in approach when creating these shapes can be made more understandable. Those statues are included in the analysis which are important stations of the past decade.

Shapes of my works recalling natural pre-images created by the use of organic material/clay and also their structures all preserve traces of creative gestures. Building technology reaching limits of material use can be fulfilled by applying strict constructive control. When you build around something bordered by positive shapes, you create a space appearing as a concrete form, though it is only „emptiness”, which the forms give meaning to. So they need not have a closed formation, because we would not be able to sense this phenomenon (it would become a non-used space, e.g.: interior of a bronze statue). If by breaking through plasticism I make use of internal spaces – turn them into opened up spaces – I can multiply my possibilities. *I make external space to be element of the composition, so I connect passive internal space with its surroundings, this way creating an active, communicating unit. 1.*

That is how sculptural space got opened in my mind and started to be interested in understanding „internal” passage, negative shape. Appearance of negative shape caused by breaking closed surface, plasticity (pattern of structure) made me wish to make larger breakthroughs.

When shapes are born it is a permanent interest to examine presence of positive and negative spaces completing each other. When shape and space (positive and negative) are both in the phase of birth, it is the captured moment of the mysticism of creation. It is incredibly exciting when as an effect of two qualities a third one is created, which is neither negative, nor positive, it is something different. This border-area is an intangible place, moment of the manifestation of existence. Space-time pulsation can almost be captured making a unity in the sensation generated by it.

About my cave dwelling

Revitalisation of landscape was combined by creating the place of fire in my work. Research starting in the aesthetic space becomes a place of living in a cave. I introduce

process of the doctor work, show the results, pointing out the most important building materials of it.

Summary

Space of cave dwellings is shaped by sensing challenges of contemporary environs, by using form creating possibilities of art. Cultural matrix of the place is modified while completed by gestures of organic form creation. Transparency creates melting pot of values and places gain new life in the peculiar patterns of the special character of the new cultural texture. „...every social relationship becomes real and concrete, part of our experienced existence, but only on condition if it is „imprinted” in the space, that is concretely represented in social creation of space. Social reality does not merely exists random in the space, but predestinated and ontologically spacial (*Rezsonya*, 2007. p.13., quoted by: *Soja*, 1996. p.46.). Shaping, eco-conscious harmonisation of the pattern of the texture can be the task, responsibility of art.

During the crisis of each historic period appearance of the wish of rearrangement can be detected and it can result in returning to Nature. It is a possible way of life. Life formed with exodus in christian culture is in close connection with aesthetics. For me this approach has become a determining element of rethinking creating sustainable models. Exodus can help us to overcome output-work centered public life of our age. Festive, uplifted experience of existence can be regained this way.

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