

ON THE CREATIVE PATH TOWARDS ARCHITECTURAL ORIGINALITY – RATIONALIST MOTIVATIONS OR INTUITIVE SEARCH FOR ATTRACTIVENESS IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE?

O TWÓRCZEJ DRODZE KU ARCHITEKTONICZNEJ ORYGINALNOŚCI – MOTYWACJE RACJONALISTYCZNE CZY INTUICYJNE POSZUKIWANIE ATRAKCYJNOŚCI W ARCHITEKTURZE WSPÓŁCZESNEJ?

Abstract

Among the creative paths leading to the creation of an architectural work, one can find attitudes that are both the result of rational spatial calculations, embedded in a specific context of the place, and those arising from a certain impulse – the effect of intuitive (subconscious) thinking and acting, not supported by any clearly defined premises or commonly developed design methods. This intuition seems to be not only an aftermath of knowledge, experience and skills acquired in the process of education and professional practice, but above all concerns unique abilities and creative predispositions to shape the architectural form and space that are commonly hidden behind the concept of “talent”. It constitutes the foundation of this prime mover, necessary to create both individual original works and to develop a specific, distinctive design method, recognized as unique, or having the features of uniqueness in the scale of a certain cultural and architectural whole of the given epoch. Devoid of legibly crystallized styles or trends in architecture, contemporary times have been condemned to the originality and talent of great artists, whose achievements (both realization and theoretical) are sometimes the inspiration for continuators, followers or successive generations of adepts of the architectural art. The text attempts to explore the issues related to the creative quest for architectural originality, motivated by both rationalist premises and the one whose attractiveness is derived directly from intuitive thinking.

Keywords: originality, creative way towards architecture, intuitiveness in architecture, architectural rationalism

Streszczenie

Wśród twórczych dróg wiodących do powstania dzieła architektonicznego odnajdujemy postawy będące zarówno wynikiem racjonalnych kalkulacji przestrzennych, osadzonych w konkretnym kontekście miejsca, jak i te rodzące się z pewnego impulsu – skutku intuicyjnego (podświadomego) myślenia i działania, nieopartego żadnymi jasno określonymi przesłankami czy powszechnie wypracowanymi metodami projektowymi. Intuicyjność ta wydaje się być nie tylko pokłosiem wiedzy, doświadczeń oraz umiejętności zdobywanych zarówno w procesie edukacji czy praktyki zawodowej, jak i przede wszystkim dotyczy unikalnych zdolności i twórczych predyspozycji do kształtowania formy i przestrzeni architektonicznej, które powszechnie skrywają się za pojęciem „talentu”. Stanowi on fundament owej siły sprawczej, niezbędnej przy tworzeniu zarówno pojedynczych oryginalnych dzieł, jak i przy wypracowaniu określonej, wyróżniającej się metody projektowej, uznanej za wyjątkową bądź mającą cechy unikalności w skali pewnego całokształtu kulturowego i architektonicznego danej epoki. Współczesność, pozbawiona czytelnie wykrystalizowanych stylów czy kierunków

* Ph.D. Arch. Przemysław Bigaj, Chair of Housing and Architectural Composition, Institute of Architectural Design, Faculty of Architecture, Cracow University of Technology, pbigaj@pk.edu.pl.

w architekturze, została skazana na oryginalność wielkich twórców i ich talent, których dorobek (zarówno ten realizacyjny jak i teoretyczny), bywa inspiracją dla kontynuatorów, naśladowców czy kolejnych pokoleń adeptów sztuki architektonicznej. W tekście starano się przybliżyć kwestie związane z twórczymi poszukiwaniami architektonicznej oryginalności, motywowanej zarówno przesłankami racjonalistycznymi, jak i tej, której atrakcyjność wywodzi się wprost z myślenia intuicyjnego.

Słowa kluczowe: oryginalność, twórcza droga do architektury, intuicyjność w architekturze, architektoniczny racjonalizm

1. Introduction

It seems that nowadays only originality can become a feature of contemporary architecture that is able to reconcile and at the same time meet the aesthetic social expectations posed to architects' creative activity along with their personal artistic ambitions. Originality of form of an architectural work and its uniqueness is a guarantee of success and recognition not so much in the urban space as in the media space. This originality may either adopt an ephemeral form – treated as an architectural, momentary event, satisfying immediate social needs for some kind of spatial phenomenon, or have a permanent character – based on the values that build a visually recognizable identity in the long term. This becomes possible owing to the attractive shape given to places through unique and often sophisticated forms. Nowadays, the pursuit of originality has become, as many creators believe, the only rightly chosen path to search for the essence of architecture. This is due to the lack of a single leading theory, style or even trend in art that would outline the aesthetic framework of present-day artistic activity. The words of Dariusz Kozłowski confirm this fact: *It seems that there are no more architectural movements – there is only the originality of great artists. Each of them creates architecture in their own way, and one cannot see a single theory of architecture or even attempts at communication in this area. There is no understanding between speakers of different languages – followers also remain confused. The main value has become not so much the art called architecture itself, but the 'convention' that allows favourable acceptance of new shapes and their friendly reception*¹.

2. The trap of originality

The works of architecture that are most often predestined for originality are those whose evocative and expressive form was created in the spirit of broadly understood expressionist tendencies. Among the works that have a pronounced expression there are the deconstructivist works of Frank Gehry with the *Guggenheim Museum* in Bilbao (1997) at the top of the list. The *Kunsthause* building in Graz (2003), designed by Peter Cook and Collin Fournier, in which the shapes of the forms, the technologies and materials used, and the multimedia elevation strongly contrast with the urban tissue based on traditional forms and building patterns, may be regarded as equally original. The attractiveness of Zaha Hadid's works

¹ D. Kozłowski, *O naturze betonu – czyli idee, metafory i abstrakcje*, [in:] *Architektura betonowa*, D. Kozłowski (ed.), Polski Cement, Kraków 2001, p. 10.

brings to mind the clarity and dynamics of shapes solidified in concrete matter, like the athlete's movement captured in photography. One can also see a slightly different dynamism in the taut, anthropomorphic constructions and skeletons known from the works of Santiago Calatrava (ill. 1). These selected examples illustrate the realizations of the frequently intuitive aspirations of artists for shaping unique forms born of the need to explore imagination in search of attractive things, unknown to the world of present-day architecture thus far. The need to design architecture that is original in its shape or idea has become such a strong temptation among creators that increasingly often they have departed from proven and reasonably justified patterns known from the past in favour of forms shaped somewhat by force. In the absence of adequate resources, technical and engineering facilities and appropriate technologies, design intents have often proved to be a kind of implementation trap. Wishing to fit in with the generally understood phenomenon of creating structures characterized by the uniqueness of shapes and directed at the momentary occurrence in the media coverage, architects have sought to implement the issue of the originality of forms with various results. These phenomena have found fertile ground, fitting in with the consumer and social character of the modern model of life for the masses that also extends beyond the countries of the West in its broad sense. This has ultimately led to uncontrolled development of buildings with forms incongruent with local urban conditions and in many cases to the fall of urban thought for a more undefined planning, lacking a specific spatial expression (e.g. the phenomenon of *urban sprawl*). These processes have provoked many creators to speak with critical voices. In *Junkspace* from 2001, Rem Koolhaas lists a series of ills and "sins" of modernity in this area. "Junkspace is the sum total of our current achievement" – Koolhaas writes – *we have built more than did all previous generations put together; but somehow we do not register on the same scales. We do not leave pyramids. According to a new gospel of ugliness, there is already more Junkspace under construction in the twenty-first century than has survived from the twentieth (...)* It was a mistake to invent modern architecture for the twentieth century. *Architecture disappeared in the twentieth century; we have been reading a footnote under a microscope hoping it would turn into a novel; our concern for the masses has blinded us to People's Architecture*². Some, like Leon Krier with his critical works on contemporary architecture and urban planning, go even further. He calls for the restoration of architecture based on traditional models and new building craftsmanship. According to Krier: *In fact, there exist today two kinds of modern architecture. An official, standardized, international-style architect's architecture that may be perceived as arrogant or even provocative, and a private architecture, often based on regional models, that attempts to blend naturally and harmoniously with the architecture of existing landscapes and cities*³. These critical voices should be treated as an expression of concern for the state of contemporary material culture that creates the space and environment of human life. Therefore, the creative path towards architectural originality can be motivated and understood differently today. The rationalist approach, always perceived as compatible with reason, is often contrasted with the intuitive search for attractiveness in architecture, which, in turn, is often the result of an emotional approach to the products of human thought. Architecture, belonging to a set of decorative arts, in its ideal image, looks blindly towards another of the arts – sculpture. It seems that only the

² R. Koolhaas, *Śmieciowa przestrzeń. Teksty*, Fundamenty / Centrum Architektury, Warszawa 2017, p. 101.

³ L. Krier, *Architektura wspólnoty*, Słowo/Obraz/Terytoria, Gdańsk 2011, p. 7.



III. 1. Santiago Calatrava, *Auditorio de Tenerife*, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, 1997–2003 (photo: P. Mika). An example of an expressionist form thanks to which the building has gained the status of an icon of contemporary architecture

architectural achievements of the 21st century will be able to fully implement the observation of Sigfried Giedion that: *architecture is approaching sculpture, and sculpture is approaching architecture*⁴. Perhaps this fact will turn out to be the biggest trap for creators in their search of the originality of present-day architecture.

3. The Vitruvian path to architecture

In his treatise *De architectura libri decem*, Vitruvius wrote that architectural knowledge “is born of practice and theory”, emphasising the necessity for the creators of architecture to gain proficiency in both of these issues. He clearly indicates that “architects who have aimed at acquiring manual skill without scholarship have never been able to reach a position of authority to correspond to their pains, while those who relied only upon theories and scholarship were obviously hunting the shadow, not the substance. But those who have a thorough knowledge of both, like men armed at all points, have the sooner attained their object and carried authority with them”⁵. Following the trail of Vitruvian thinking, it seems that practice allows architectural solutions to be rationalised more, while theory raises intuitive habits in architectural thought. These habits allow the creative talent to manifest in this art of shaping form and space. Proficiency in practice and knowledge of theory, the ability to harmoniously combine them into a completely composed work has, since ancient times, become the basis for practising the profession of architect-builder. Therefore, according to Vitruvius, an architect: *ought, therefore, to be both naturally gifted and amenable to instruction. Neither natural ability without instruction nor instruction without natural ability can make the perfect artist*⁶. Intuitiveness – this kind of creative instinct existing in the subconscious is also responsible for searching for the right geometrical principle for the building – both the one written in the plan and in the cross-section. This principle was nothing more than the calculation of spatial effects – and so the later rationality and transparency of the adopted geometry of the form also derived from intuitiveness. The creative impulse included in the thought that outlines the architectural idea of the structure in a given context, which is usually conveyed in the first impulses and written in an expressive sketch, is the first step on the way to architecture. This is certainly an intuitive operation. The further stages of this path are attempts at spatial solution to this idea with the use of technical means and matter. The aspect of rationality in architecture comes to the fore here.

Vitruvius also indicated three features that should be considered when constructing buildings. These are: “durability, utility, and beauty”⁷. This triad defined and determined the essence of the architecture of a building for centuries. It did not only consist in fulfilling these features in the design process and building construction, but in maintaining an appropriate balance between the elements of this triad, or rather creating a kind of symbiosis resulting from the coexistence of these features. This is a kind of historically understood rationality in architecture consisting in creating a coherent image of a work based on a balance

⁴ S. Giedion, *Przestrzeń, czas i architektura*, PWN, Warszawa 1968, p. 17.

⁵ Witruwiusz, *O architekturze ksiąg dziesięć* (transl. K. Kumaniecki), Pruszyński i S-ka, Warszawa 2004, p. 24.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 32.



III. 2. Mario Botta, *corner building at Lützowplatz (Block 234)*, Berlin-Tiergarten, 1988–1990 (photo: P. Bigaj). The structure can be seen as the essence of architecture proper to neo-rationalist tendencies – compact form with a clear and consistent articulation of window openings, of a slightly monumental expression, strongly embedded in the urban context and seeking a dialogue with the past in a new detail and material used

of implementation of these features to the whole structure. None of them could dominate because it would distort this harmony. Nowadays – that is since the turn of the 20th century, called the “revolution in architecture”, the universal principles of the architectural treatise written by Vitruvius, rooted in the sources of antiquity themselves, have changed their sense. Modernism attacked this interdependence of the elements in the triad, undermining the current order in shaping architectural thought. As pointed out by Leon Krier: *Disagreements about the fundamental issues expressed in the Vitruvian triad are the basis of a schism that has divided architectural understanding for a century. According to modernists, the breakup of this triad is an irreversible and indisputable historical fact. For traditional theory, the passing of time cannot open fatal breaches in a body of timeless principles. The vast typological, technical, and formal repertoires of traditional architecture simply cannot be reduced to those of historiographical classifications. Rather, they represent an inventory of genetic capacity. The typologies of traditional architecture form the structuring schemata for innumerable new, original works*⁸.

One of the universal paths to architecture should be considered the Vitruvian one. Some creators perceive it as archaic, others treat it as the only right way to proceed. It is a path delineated around the triad – durability, utility and beauty – defining the features of architectural correctness. Although each of these features has lost its original and historically fixed meaning in the globalized world, including the architectural one, they are increasingly desirable values in the era of “junkspace”. Redefining the concepts that accompany modern thinking about architecture makes the Vitruvian path to architecture seem to be more responsible for the rationalist approach to organizing the functional and spatial structure of a building. Nevertheless, this path did not renounce intuitiveness in the design process. Beauty, which is no longer the result of classical orders and proportions, has been replaced by concepts that arouse admiration among viewers – recipients of architecture. One of such concepts has become originality, the other may be attractiveness – not necessarily that which is associated with or results from the essence of good in Latin culture. In order for a work of architectural art to be created, regardless of whether it is attractive to the eye in its originality, or fascinating to the human spirit, regardless of the type of aesthetic convention adopted, the talent of an architect – artist for rent – is needed. In this context, the words of Leon Battista Alberti from his treatise, *On architecture*, are noteworthy: *A built structure, which is also commonly called Fabbrica [building]. It is a certain body made of drawing and matter; the former is a product of talent, the latter – of nature. The former is created by the use of thought and mind, the latter – by the use of devices and choice. And it is not enough to have one with the other without the hand of an experienced artist who can combine matter with the right drawing*⁹.

4. (Neo)rationalist trends and the originality of present-day architecture

It seems that the rationalist tendencies in present-day architecture should be sought everywhere where, over the centuries, a clear typology of building forms and functional systems

⁸ L. Krier, *Architektura ...*, *op.cit.*, p. 259.

⁹ J. Białostocki, *Teoretycy, historiografowie i artyści o sztuce. 1600–1700*, Słowo/Obraz/Terytoria, Gdańsk 2009, p. 200.



III. 3. Frank Gehry, Vlado Milunić, *Ginger and Fred (Dancing House)*, Prague, Czech Republic, 1994–1996 (photo: P. Bigaj). An example of the original form of a corner building in the historic city block. The expressiveness of the deconstructed shapes has given this building the status of an icon (sign) of the place and become a recognizable element of the urban identity

has crystallized – that is, in architecture based on repeatability and solutions based on standardization. We can certainly include part of the architecture of modern multi-family housing in this group. Considering the issue of the proper height of residential buildings, Walter Gropius pointed out that the concept of “rationality” literally means nothing more than “according to reason”. As he further explains, the term: *in the present case it implies not only economic considerations, but primarily also those of psychological and sociological nature. The sociological aspects of a wholesome housing policy are unquestionably of more vital importance than the purely economic aspects, because economics for all its importance is not an end in itself but only a means to an end. Rationalization therefore makes sense only if it tends to enrich life or, in the language of economics, if it spares the most precious of commodities, the vitality of the people*¹⁰. The issue of rationality in architecture is closely related to its basic purpose, distinguishing it from, for instance, sculpture – that is, its utility. The path to utility in architecture should not, however, lead to the omission of attractiveness (beauty) of the form with its constructional reasons resulting from the safety and durability of the technical structure of the building. The ability to create architecture combines various fields: technology, economics, sociology and finally fine arts into a compositionally cohesive and functionally working whole. Rational design, meaning “according to reason”, does not exclude or reject the sensory feelings that accompany creative processes in architecture, but taking into account these intuitive impulses, it tries to give them solutions build physical structures of invented things. Drawing upon the rules of reasoning, spatial logic, acquired knowledge and experience, it becomes possible to create an original thing, as this originality does not exclude design according to reason. Rationalist architecture is that which can crystallize laws, principles and design methods, as well as a typology of forms, and then the design method itself can bear the marks of originality. Rational activities also contribute to building an individual style or architectural expression attributed to individual leading contemporary artists. Here the rationalization of solutions boils down to the ability to create individual features of their own style, based on similar aesthetic principles in a way that ensures easy transfer of methods of creating one solution to another. The architectural detail is also subject to these rules. These processes can be observed in the architectural movement referred to as Neo-rationalism.

In the second half of the twentieth century in Italy there appears an architectural movement called *La Tendenza*, which was referred to as Neo-rationalism. Philip Wilkinson mentions this issue in his publication *50 Architecture Ideas You Really Need to Know*. This movement was a response to the dominance of modernist trends, as well as to the departure from the postmodern ironies and consumerism of this type of architecture straight from Las Vegas. Here, rationalism was based on respecting the attainment of historical achievements in architecture, but by finding a new way of building while expressing sensitivity to the achievements of the past rather than by copying old solutions. Neo-rationalism did not refer only to purely architectural issues, but above all to urban planning and understanding of the processes of shaping city morphology with the help of architecture. The basis of the classic geometry of neo-rationalist buildings was the restoration of pure forms as well as their monumentality, which could be worthy of well-conceived urbanity in its traditional form. The neo-rationalist path to architecture led through the articulation of rhythms, the ordering

¹⁰ W. Gropius, *Pelnia Architektury*, Karakter, Kraków 2014, p. 157.



III. 4. Daniel Libeskind, *The Bundeswehr Military History Museum*, Dresden, Germany, 2011 (photo: P. Bigaj). An example of creating the effect of originality on the basis of contrast – combining a new (interfering) form with the old structure of the building of the nineteenth century armoury (arsenal)

of the frontage, the reflection of the harmony of the compositional form in a permanent, often traditional material, such as brick or stone. It is also the resurrection of urban space with its hierarchical gradation into public, semi-private and private spaces. Aldo Rossi is considered the most recognizable creator of Italian Neo-rationalism. This recognition is supported not only by the achievements in the field of design and execution (e.g. *Gallaratese Quarter* in Milan, *San Cataldo Cemetery* in Modena), but also in theoretical work and publications (e.g. *The Architecture of the City*). A number of authors from outside Italy remained under the influence of Neo-rationalism. One can find this thinking, for example, in the works of Mario Botta (ill. 2), who executed his works in a similar but slightly more individualized style, also designing outside Switzerland. In Germany, neo-rationalist principles are presented in the designs and executions of Simon Ungers and Josef P. Kleihues. The French approach in this matter can be found, for instance, in a residential complex by Henri E. Ciriani, erected in Marne-laVallée in Paris. We also notice this influence to a certain extent in the works of the Portuguese architect Álvaro Siza (e.g. *Galician Center of Contemporary Art* in Santiago de Compostela, or the Berlin execution of the corner residential building *Bonjour Tristesse*). Their creative activity and works executed in the spirit of Neo-rationalism allow one to see the aspect of originality not only in the buildings themselves, but also in their individual style. Despite their modern character, the forms designed by them give the impression that they were created from something that had already been there, but in a completely new – processed for the present time – way. Perhaps this feature, which does not resign from creating the originality embedded in the existing context, and not achieved in opposition to it, allows for the acceptance of this architecture by a wider group of recipients. Like in philosophy, one gains knowledge in architecture through two paths: reason and experience. And although they are perceived as two separate things, they lead to the same goal – the essence of an (architectural) thing.

5. An intuitive path to architecture or subconscious search for the originality of forms

Dariusz Kozłowski claims that *since beauty went away along with classical art, architects have been left with the mere search for originality*¹¹. After the emerging modernist movements, aspiring to the avant-garde of the era, had resigned from the historical attainment of architecture, there appeared more and more often the need for an intuitive search for a path to architecture based on the originality of forms. The new technological possibilities as well as material and technical means that emerged at the turn of the 20th century provided the opportunity to create dynamic, expressionist shapes unachievable so far. Architects gained new materials, knowledge and skills to realize visions that until then had been born only as theoretical digressions and utopian reflections. The intuition of outstanding individuals set new challenges, breaking successive engineering records. As a result of all these activities, at the end of the twentieth century, a pluralistic attitude, based on the ethos of great artists, began to crystallize in architecture. Intuitively, one tried to search for the essence of architecture in the breakup of form as the basis for originality conveyed in the expression of abstract shapes that

¹¹ http://architektura.muratorplus.pl/architekci/zawod-architekt-dariusz-kozlowski_3886.html (retrieved on: 8.08.2018).

had never been seen before. Thus, the limits of unambiguity between architecture and other fields of arts, starting with sculpture, began to blur. Buildings, whose forms were composed like sculptures, began to compete with each other in space. Wishing to design further distinctive works for the present day, creators fell into the trap of originality, consisting in the subconscious need to create iconic forms that often broke with the context of the existing place. The famous statement by Rem Koolhaas can be recalled here: *Fuck the context*, illustrating the limits of creative arrogance in present-day architecture. The search for original forms arousing admiration, frequently surprise, is the domain of architectural authorities who are familiar with expressionistic tendencies that emanate the dynamics of shapes, deformations, decomposition or, finally, are based on the contrast with the environment. The subconscious search for the originality of forms began to deny the need to continue the shapes and nature of the development in the immediate surroundings. There are, however, situations known from historic urban tissues, for instance, where the context of a place becomes an excuse to create an original form. An example of this is the corner situation in the city block, where the shape of the plot imposes an intuitive search for expressiveness of the form on the author. A good example of such a situation may be the *Chilehaus* building by Fritz Höger from Hamburg (1922), or the “dancing” building from Prague, *Ginger and Fred*, original in its form (1996, ill. 3), by Frank Gehry. The idea of originality did not spare the historically existing and compositionally closed forms known from the past. As a result of the transformations by means of introducing new structures, one attempts to give a new quality to the places and buildings in a visually appealing manner, attracting the viewer with the expression of their shape. Creating and contrasting an old form with a new one is also one of the characteristics of the intuitive search for originality on the present-day path to architecture. An example illustrating this situation may be the execution of the *Bundeswehr Museum of Military History* in Dresden (2011, ill. 4) by Daniel Libeskind; or the modified form of the *Roof at Falkestrasse* (1983–1988) on one of the Viennese tenement houses, designed by the Coop Himmelb(l)au. The intuitive path to architecture in these cases consists in reaching to the deep layers of imagination, often resulting from architectural associations, knowledge of shapes, acquired experiences or images rooted in the author’s subconscious. Since architecture became a media event rather than the spatial one, it is the originality, and not the durability, utility, or beauty of a built thing that determines its success and its existence in the world of art. It is the attractiveness derived from the originality of a work that guarantees durability recorded in books, drawings and photographs, rather than the material one – durability synonymous with the memory of a work and its uniqueness in times of progressing globalization. The intuitive search for originality seems to be a natural way and a fundamental pursuit in a globalized world. Architecture in the global market must stand out to be noticed and establish its presence like an advertised product. As a result, it becomes more and more virtual and unbearably sterile, and thus pretending to be eternally “young”, as if it had just been put into service. Contemporary architecture is aging in an unnatural way, stripped of the patina of time, constantly restored, renewed and modernized. After decades since its construction, it often looks unnatural – resembling an old man with dyed hair. In one of his texts, Rem Koolhaas writes: *Globalization destabilizes and redefines both the way architecture is produced and that which architecture produces. Architecture is no longer a patient transaction between known quantities that share cultures, no longer the manipulation of established possibilities, no longer a possible judgment in rational terms of investment and return, no longer something experienced in person – by the public of critics. Globalization lends virtuality to real*

*buildings, keeps them indigestible, forever fresh*¹². A quarter of a century later, these prophetic words about the repetition of the Tower of Babel, *bearing the promise of a new architectural system*, seem even more valid.

The subconscious search for the originality of forms in architecture is a constant experimentation with perception of things that are ideal in their design. The ally of originality is certainly intuition – this kind of sudden flash in which we see the right solution or image defining the answer to the spatially posed question (problem). Since it is a process that occurs in the subconscious, it is often necessary to wait for an intuitive solution, return to inspiration, memories and experiences. Therefore, in the intuitive way to architecture, the associations that accompany the search for the single – ideal solution – in the imagination play a key role. In order to erect an original work, the investor (patron) must find the right creator (artist), gifted with talent – that is, the intuition to create outstanding things. How to find him? Maybe by way of an architectural competition or after getting acquainted with the current creative achievements or professional accomplishments of such an artist.

6. Conclusion

The pursuit of originality in present-day architecture replaced the old (classically understood) concept of beauty. Architects outdo each other in searching for the right path to the originality of a work, often losing the essence of the problem determined by the context of the place. Today, we do not create architecture. Today, we produce it on an unimaginable scale. We build upwards, sideways, diagonally, to the depths. We do not create it in the classical way – as it was created by a former artist-craftsman according to the triad of durability, usability and beauty. We provide a product to be used for a certain period of time, arousing admiration through the attractiveness that results from the originality of the form of the work and not through the classically understood beauty. However, designing and building on the basis of temporary premises equates originality with the economic factor, resulting from the unwritten rule: have a recognizable form to attract (and to earn). This aspect of originality seems to be one of the most rational premises to create peculiar things today. There is also the need to invent original things resulting from purely egoistic motives – giving joy of selfless creation. It is certainly the attitude closest to artists-architects, whose fruit is secretly hidden in more than one drawer. Undoubtedly, expressionist tendencies in architecture are predestined to be recognized as original because of the attractiveness and ecstatic nature of forms that one cannot pass by indifferently. Perhaps it was the need for originality that formed the shapes of expressive means in the minds of the creators and became the basis for building an individual style around this expression that fell into the reign of great artists in the architecture of the late twentieth century.

Among the many paths leading to architectural originality, we can find the most universal ones, such as the Vitruvian one, valid for centuries, and whose essence was defined in the triad: *firmitas, utilitas, venustas*. The history of architecture provides many works original for their times created within a specifically applicable style. The dome of the Pantheon, the soaring and enormous Gothic cathedrals, the classical style of Andrea Palladio, the baroque and rococo splendour in ornamenting forms are selected examples of this originality built according to

¹² R. Koolhaas, *Śmieciowa...*, *op.cit.*, p. 44.

strictly defined principles of composition and proportion that can still delight the viewer – passer-by. The example of a queue of tourists heading for the still-unfinished Antonio Gaudi's *Sagrada Familia* cathedral, whose construction began in 1882, testifies that the originality and richness of forms, even in the incomplete form, is much more attractive than such icons of avant-garde modernist architecture, like the *Barcelona Pavilion* by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1929). It sometimes happens that time and accompanying events become an element which influences the originality of architectural forms. Getting to know and discovering history, secrets behind often inconspicuous shapes, can be fascinating and therefore attractive. It is also a component affecting the intangible dimension of the originality of architecture.

Rationalism has always accompanied the design art. And although it seems that the rationalist attitude is closer to the engineering arts than fine arts, the calculations behind the decisions made do not omit even the most attractive and original works of architecture if only they are to be constructed. *La Tendenza* was distinguished by – as Philip Wilkinson writes – “the voice of reason among the loud slogans of Modernism and Postmodernism and outside of Italy was known as Neo-rationalism”¹³. In turn, Kenneth Frampton in *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* points out that “La Tendenza was clearly an attempt to save both architecture and the city from being overrun by the all-pervasive forces of megalopolitan consumerism”¹⁴. Rationalist motivations in architecture are not only a matter of purely engineering reasoning, but above all a search for the way to attractiveness and originality of architecture through pure forms and frequent monumentalism resulting from spatial logic, guided by classical premises. A characteristic feature of neo-rationalist tendencies is the skilful incorporation of new forms into the traditional tissue of the city, or erecting them from scratch, and thus building attractiveness through a good continuation of urban structures. It seems that these tendencies will always be present in architecture and will find their continuators since shaping the best spaces for everyday life requires design activities according to reason and logic needed for comfortable use of this space.

It seems that the intuitive search for attractiveness in architecture leads to the creation of original, ecstatic works, filled with dynamism and expression of forms. For this, one needs talent, understood as individual predispositions, allowing this art of shaping forms and space to be mastered in a superior manner. Intuitive tendencies in the search for the essence of architecture are the domain of, above all, the theory that with time can materialize into a concrete, physical work. Intuitive thinking leads to experimentation with forms known from the history of art, or strives to invent ground-breaking things. The intuitive path to architecture is not guided by logical reasoning, it consists in the subconscious search in the minds for some kind of a creative impulse based on subjective beliefs about the rightness of a given solution for a specific location. It is a process that does not find a rational explanation, often perceived as the ability to extract from the subconscious certain associations and skills of combining various forms, images, and spatial solutions into a coherent whole, including the technical ones if only they support the final desired aesthetic effect. Without getting the right knowledge, without trying to find an answer to the question about the essence of things, personal experiences and practice, seems to be defective and therefore unable to fulfil its destiny, which one can recognize as the quest for the poetics of the work – the guiding principle of each of the arts.

¹³ P. Wilkinson, *50 teorii architektury, które powinieneś znać*, PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 164.

¹⁴ [Quoted after:] *Ibidem*, p. 165.

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