



(source: the author).

THE ROLE OF SPACE IN MEMORIAL ARCHITECTURE

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Memorial architecture, as a specific building typology, has been established to preserve memories of people and events, stories about them, as well as the spaces and experiences of these stories. The influence of memorial architecture is very distinct. It generates experiences that reach the level of catharsis, both by its strength and character. In this case, the term “catharsis” refers to a state in which individuals evoke experiences that have a dramatic potential. This type of performativity can therefore be viewed in the context of the performing arts, and above all theater, for which the notion of catharsis is initially bound for. Memorial spaces are based on the consciousness for man’s need to communicate with someone or something that no longer belongs to reality, as well as the need that this communication be caused or awakened for various reasons. Thereby, one of the key questions is the candor of the story, i.e. the question of whether memorial space creates an experience in comparison to the realistic or the constructed past. Simultaneously, the notion of reality here should be understood quite conditionally, bearing in mind the reliable reality is questionable, while a dependable memory is definitely nonexistent.¹

Space in memorial architecture has a multimodal character and is designed to relocate an individual or a collective to a metaspace, an altered reality in which it is possible to establish an essential inner dialogue with the deepest layers of one’s own being. Metaspace, in this case, is provided in the form of in-between spaces, which can simultaneously be described as real and imaginary. The term refers to the actual physical presence of an individual in real space and time, while the imaginary is a form of *heterotopia*², an unreal space in which the communicational

process is established. In other words, memorial space is a context in which an individual, with their own memory and imagination, realizes their own being. This realization is caused by the influence of space, and above all - dimensions, ambience, and a consciousness that exists or is established based on the use of the space. In this way, the impact of the narrative’s meaning leads the individual or collective to a state of change that results in construction of memory and psychological experience of that space. The essential value of memorial space is therefore in the atmosphere and narrative that creates situations in which individuals, groups, and collectives generate experiences - different and particular in relation to their own beings.

The phenomenology establishment of the psychological experience of memorial spaces shows that the communicative process, through the influence of space, is gradually diverted towards coping with the reality of the individual, which implies the ability to accept reality and become aware of the individual and collective loss.

¹ Schechter, D. (2003). Intergenerational communication of maternal violent trauma: Understanding the interplay of reflective functioning and posttraumatic psychopathology. In S.W. Coates, J.L. Rosenthal and D.S. Schechter (eds.) September 11: Trauma and Human Bonds. New York: Taylor & Francis, Inc., pp. 115-142.

² Foucault, M. (2010). On other spaces: utopias and heterotopias. In Rethinking Architecture – a [1] reader in cultural theory, ed. by Neil Leach, 330-336. London: Routledge, pp. 332.