Orginal Article

Architecture as the art of creating human-friendly places, Lublin public space

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Abstract: The public space of a city plays a special role in the life of every human being, as it meets basic and at the same time most important needs related to safety and comfort of life. It is a combination of an idea and a technique, which for centuries has reflected the changes taking place in people's social and cultural life. While the city is a multi-layered structure with a clearly separated private and public zone, creating mutual relations between the buildings. Camillo Sitte saw the city urban spaces as a work of art, które should be designed in such a way that the inhabitants feel safe and happy, as it is not just a show-off of technical skill, but an artistic undertaking [1]. The art of designing architecture does not exist for itself, but is created for the target audience. It provides a harmony that satisfies human needs and guarantees survival. It is an important factor influencing the development of an individual through the organization of a social living space. Urban spaces are primarily people and their needs that change over time. The first part of the article is devoted to the role of public spaces and the idea of the city as a work of art. The second part, in turn, is an attempt to define architecture as a kind of fine arts, taking into account the role it plays in the social life of Lublin's residents. The article is an attempts to emphasize the importance of architecture in designing a human-friendly environment as an art design that meets social expectations with the use of selected examples urban space of the city of Lublin.

Keywords: architecture, art, work of art, public space, urban space

1. Introduction

One of the definitions describing *architecture* is the *art of shaping space* [2]. Creative design means creating space and creating an original and unique work of art. The architect, by observing nature, develops his sensitivity to the surrounding space, becoming a creative designer. The space created by him becomes an area of new quality, a meeting place, which often combines painting, sculpture and architecture. He/she creates a new area that is accessible and friendly to people.

Architecture is a combination of ideas and technical possibilities, as well as satisfaction of basic human needs, which result from the changes taking place in social and cultural life. It

has a very important social function, as it satisfies humans physically, mentally and spiritually, guaranteeing their harmonious functioning in the environment [3]. Contemporary and past products of architecture have a direct influence on man. The space organized by the architect provides people not only with shelter, but also satisfies them emotionally and mentally.

Architecture has a communicational function that the designer (artist) uses to realize her vision as well as satisfies his dreams and desires, where the image serves as a link between the architect and the recipient, between the architectural object and culture. It is shaped under the influence of two components: cultural and physical. They allow for the distinction between the figurative-architectural form and the user-construction form. The image of an architectural object through signs, codes and culture is transferred from the realm of everyday reality to cultural space, where the architectural form is incorporated into the sphere of culture. It is the physical form of one's fantasy and a mirror which reflects people's minds. It gives form and shape to what does not exist yet, and it lasts even after people's death [4].

Today's architecture uses the latest technologies and solutions, created with respect for people and the surrounding nature. It is the most complete and the richest domain, constituting one coherent organism, which stimulates one to think, just like art does. Nowadays, many people are looking for architecture that can cope with the biological, sensual and motoric life of a human being. More and more often architectural projects create a close relationship with the environment, nature or climate as it has been the case with Japanese architects for centuries.

Architecture defines a certain area, gives them functions, defines meaning, creates cities and villages. It changes the environment, people and their moods. It sanctifies places, constitutes the structural framework of reality, arranges space, closes or opens buildings. Architecture makes the world visible, can have a therapeutic, but also destructive power. It creates borders between public and private space. It is the peak of human creativity, as evidenced by many contemporary buildings. Architecture has gone beyond its existing, easily definable boundaries. Architects are no longer just designers, but cultural agents, pioneers of new ideas, making it possible for people to change from one way of life to another. Architecture can write its own stories [5].

The article discusses the importance of selected public spaces and stresses their role in the social life of Lublin residents. It presents examples of friendly urban spaces that enable people to satisfy not only their basic needs, but also those of a higher order, such as the need for self-realization, acceptance, and inspiration. They are spaces that inspire action and stimulate creativity. The article also analyses literature related to the city and its multidimensional character. On the basis of the proposed examples and own observations from Lublin, the role of architecture as an art fulfilling social expectations and increasing the comfort of social life is shown.

2. Architecture – space – happiness – significance

In the history of architecture there was no shortage of such periods in which rationalistic elements prevailed over arithmetic elements and vice versa. It often happened that the high level of technical skills of an architect was far from what was necessary to satisfy basic psychological needs of a human being.

Since the beginning of history, man has been involved in the construction of buildings and the organization of the surrounding space. With time, humans began to give their works more and more interesting spatial shapes, which satisfied the need for beauty, harmony and aesthetics.

For years, scholars have been wondering what architecture really is and what kind of creative activity it manifests itself in. History shows that due to the specific nature of the subject matter and the impact on man, there were difficulties in qualifying it into any field of art. In ancient times architecture included such skills as astronomy, astrology, construction of sundials or machine construction, but with time its activity and function was limited only to the design of goods for human use [6].

Over the centuries, the definition of architecture (gr.arcitèkton – builder) has undergone many changes, which were related to what and to whom the architectural art was to serve. The most characteristic for those times was the definition contained in the Great French Encyclopaedia, which reads as follows: *the architecture is rich in its own soil, provides so much material, that it is clearly distinguishable from other arts, it covers issues so unique and specific only to itself, that it should be presented separately and remain within the limits of its own domain* [7, p. 27].

The majority of the theorists of those times unanimously expressed the view that architecture was supposed to serve man above all and cannot be useless. It should meet the social needs of citizens, remaining in close connection with tradition and contemporary conditions in which it is created.

The 19th century marked out a new field of activity in art, thus separating it from reality and transferring it into the sphere of romantic tendencies. It contributed to turning to the rapidly developing technology in the field of construction, which was the main means of implementing the architect's idea. The division that emerged between architecture and new technology contributed to the search for a new concept for it. John Ruskin (1819-1900), wrote that *architecture is nothing more, than an ornament added to a building*, George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878): *architecture unlike an ordinary building is the decoration of the structure* a Edwin Lutyens, (1869-1944) *architecture begins where, its function ende* [6, p. 23].

The beginning of the 20th century saw a more formalistic definition of architecture as the art of constructing and organizing space expressed through construction [8]. The best-known definition proposed by Le Corbusier is: *architecture is a wise, coordinated play of solids in light* [9, p. 27]. After World War II, a more profound understanding of architecture as an art resulting from form and shape, called the art of shaping space, began to emerge.

The changes that took place in the 19th and 20th centuries in the field of technology in construction were so fascinating that they contributed to the lack of attention to the functional and aesthetic values of buildings. The beauty of the buildings was neglected. Therefore, people began to seek contact with ancient art and monuments of architecture, in which he found undeniably the beauty of the talent of artists and their works. With time, new architectural forms began to unify, often becoming monotonous and boring. Newly built houses and cities became identical and template, devoid of charm and individual beauty, to which man did not like to return. The quality of mental health of the human being was no longer cared for in favour of modern technology and unlimited possibility of comfortable life. The pursuit of technological perfection has pushed the natural needs of man to the margin, thus destroying the sense of order, peace and harmony. Despite the shaping of the reality of the early years, there was a group of architects who were able to use both new technological achievements and the needs of the community.

Today, it is no longer necessary to prove that man demands from architectural design, in addition to the rational benefits of safety, to ensure him/her positive emotional and spiritual experiences. The materials used for architectural projects have a direct impact on human health,

affect all people's senses and enable their healthy development. It is the art of architecture design that is able to meet social expectations, because it has the ability to shape the environment, which is guided by the laws of aesthetics and the rules governing beauty.

Architecture can be considered as a kind of utility art, which creates and divides space, at the same time meeting social expectations, ensuring comfort and safety of life. Marco Frascari has classified it in the category of non-utilitarian art, which satisfies the primordial human need for shelter, by combining materials in such a way as to give them an individual meaning [5].

The concept of architecture consists of two inseparable and mutually complementary elements, such as art and talettes, expressed in the form of architectural realization. An architectural work is defined as any three-dimensional element within a space that is created with the use of the necessary knowledge and talent. It deals with the organization of spatial elements and allows to consolidate the architect's idea, constituting a more perfect form of art meeting social expectations.

Art, which is a cultural expression, plays a key role here, as the architect's main task is to create and search for beauty on the basis of familiar rules, principles and available materials. The essence of architecture is not only what the creator herself considers beautiful, but above all the creation of what is expected of her by the community to which belongs [6].

Over the last few decades, the essence of the architect's activities in shaping space and organizing an environment favourable to man has increased significantly and consciously. Through proper selection of proportions and shapes, logical arrangement, and applicable rules, it has become an art, which has been called architecture for many years. This kind of creative activity often uses knowledge from various scientific disciplines depending on the type and scope of undertaken activities. Architecture is therefore an artistic discipline that organizes and shapes space for human needs, an *art* whose primary goal is to arouse admiration in the way no other discipline can. It can create timeless works of art that provide shelter and improve the quality of life.

Architecture is the art of building a community that engages both the creator and the recipient. It stands out from all other fields of art in that it presents what is useful to man and constitutes the basis for his existence in the world. It is characterized by a richness of form, which includes a combination of practical and spiritual satisfaction, making it a unique kind of art that *fulfills human dreams*. Contemporary architecture gives the environment and its inhabitants an identity. It exerts a positive influence on the observer during direct confrontation with the object, surprising him positively. The environment designed in this way is favourable to social life and is a subject of care and understanding for the human being [10].

With regard to the space created by architecture, the most important thing is to focus the senses on positive stimuli and sensory experiences. Architecture is considered to be the art of creating space through specific applications visible to the eyes, which are the basic tool for perceiving buildings with the senses. Touch allows a human to understand the world around him and has great therapeutic potential. Through touch, man experiences the world around him/her and the space in which he moves. Happiness for man is a space that has a natural and unforced positive effect on human senses and body [11].

3. Architecture and art

Over the centuries, many masters of architecture have created their own definitions, which talked about the values of architecture and art, attributed to them at the time of their formulation. Many attempts have been made to determine which manifestations of human

activity should be classified as art, which as architecture, and which criteria should be used to define them.

Władysław Tatarkiewicz, when formulating the definition of art, claimed that it is a conscious and not instinctive skill, which is used to produce things according to the rules prevailing in a given epoch. It involves reconstructing things, constructing forms, and expressing experiences in a way to delight, move, or shake the viewer [12]. Roland Frèart de Chambray wrote that: *Art is an infinite thing, which develops and evolves continuously. It adapts to the disposition of centuries and nations, which have different judgements and define beauty, each in their own way* [13, p. 13].

Czesław Przybylski defined architecture as *art that seeks to create works of art that evoke a familiar shudder in the recipients, by which we recognize that we are faced with a real work of art* [14, p. 28]. Similarly, Le Corbusier talked about the state of mind that allows the observer to admire architecture, creating the world of art [9]. Architecture is therefore an art of building, a science enriched with knowledge from various fields, which is used to create unique works of art.

Throughout the various epochs, the division of the definition of art has changed many times, and it was only in the middle of the 18th century that Charles Betteux used the term *fine art* for the first time. The above mentioned formulations are an extremely important element in the deliberations on the concept of architecture, as the art of shaping space in the aspect of the existence of the concept of the theory of architectural art. This theory contributed to the fact that architecture was recognized as a field of art which created a new, urban landscape. It began to be perceived not only as a building material, but also as one of the forms of art responsible for creating space for people.

Architecture is an art in the full sense of the word, it is a mathematical order, fulfilled harmony, which is based on the proportions of all its components [15]. Two prominent philosophers, G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) and G.Lukács (1885-1971), believed that architecture expands the basic type of house according to the basic criterion of beauty. A house is a man-made and man-serving man building [16]. Architecture is a real space in which human life takes place, so it is different from a typical drawing or painting space [17]. It is closely connected with art, since it shapes social space by means of artistic forms of expression, where its main aim is to design for people.

The art of architectural design is a reflection of the individual moods and tensions of the creator, expressed in the original shape and form. It often results from the natural predispositions of the designer, which allow to realize the imaginary spatial form in the real world [6]. Every creator lives in the world of imagination, which is the spatial imagination of an architect. An architectural work can be considered good if it simultaneously responds to social needs in economic, functional and structural terms.

Architecture is a form of visual art that differs from sculpture, graphics, painting and photography in that it is not able to reproduce with such detail and truthfulness the visual images created by the real world. It also cannot give such a clear and comprehensive idea of forms or colours that exist in nature. Architecture is also very different from construction, because only a building that delights with its beauty, form, rhythm and proportions can be considered a true work of art of architecture [18].[1]

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[1]   States that as a result of the extensive influence of French culture in the 17th and 18th centuries, the concept of fine arts was accepted by Anglo Saxon theorists as meaning a philosophical entity, to such an extent that it has been widely forgotten that, in France itself, the profession of architect had been completely separate from Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture until they were forced to merge after the French Revolution.

The art of architectural design is generally considered to be everything that came into being in its real spatial shape and serves a specific purpose. The process of creating this work of art begins with an idea that requires, above all, an extraordinary creative effort and commitment of the designer-artist. What counts here is the whole creative process, and not just the final result itself, considered an *architectural work* [6]. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that a project (drawing) being an element of art could be created without a concept and without imagining it, at least in the most general outline, in the creative process.

The art of architectural design consists of three basic stages, such as: an idea created in the imagination of the creator, a drawing design and its realization (i.e. execution in accordance with the design in nature). This process is very similar to the creation of a painting work of art. The painter, before starting to make a painting, imagines creating a project, creates a sketch and finally realises and presents the work. The creative act allows the artist to express his/her own idea through drawing to the very existence of the work itself. Edward Warder Rannels argues that architecture should be studied as a form of art, a material realization of concepts and artistic goals, as in the case of other forms of art such as sculpture and painting, and even poetry and music [19].

Creating a painting by an artist is similar to architectural design, as when painting an image, the artist starts with composition and adds further elements, such as colour or light, which determine its territory. From the circle, the architect, while designing, starts from the functional arrangement, light or the form of a solid presented by means of a drawing, ending with the realization in space. Architects, like artists, with their work present a separate creative attitude, through which they mark their presence in the designed work. The painted image becomes meaningful when it comes into contact with the viewer, and similarly, architecture begins to exist when the user starts to benefit from it, and only then the designer's vision is fulfilled.

Architecture is one of those fields of creativity that have always served man and the whole community. The form in which this process takes place is often influenced by the inner inspiration of the author, who is aware of all economic and social conditions. The creator of an architectural work has always been and will always be a person who is a part of society closely related to his environment. He is able to feel intentions and needs, takes into account his habits and contributes to the individual intellectual development of a person. He has the ability (gift) of spatial imagination, thanks to which he creates works that meet the expectations of the community in which he functions. During the creative design process, the architect takes into account not only the immediate environment in which the work is to be executed, but also all topographical, climatic, functional, structural, economic and social conditions. Like a painter painting a picture who gradually covers his canvas with paint, the architect fills the empty space with architectural content. He uses the means of expression characteristic of the artist, such as composition, light, texture, dynamism and the functional arrangement that forms the basis of the composition, triggering the same creative processes. Skillful use of current technological and constructional solutions by the architect allows him/her to realize an idea that integrates art with technology.

Architecture is an art that has a permanent and direct impact on the human environment. It enters all forms of social life, influencing culture, psyche and customs, where every decision made by an architect can have an impact on decades of social life. An architectural work is an inseparable element of social life, which influences its further development. People are the main users of architectural objects, which reflect their economic, political or social needs. It is visible in various forms, such as the organization of space, urban areas, places of work or

leisure. Therefore, regardless of whether it is a sports, work or leisure centre, these facilities are designed to meet human needs in such a way that the user likes them visually and enjoys spending time in them [20].

Contemporary creative architectural design includes not only objects, but also the whole environment, as well as the very relationship of the work with the recipient, which is man [21]. It includes interactions with the user where the architectural work is closely related to art, and has integrative and mutually stimulating properties.

Almost from the very beginning of the art of design, architects have worked with artists both on building projects and on the interior design itself. Today, the artist increasingly plays an important role in the design process, where together with the architect, he/she creates unique works such as Serpentine Pavillon (2007) in London or FAT Architecture for Alain de Botton's Living Architecture [22].

Observing the current work of architects, it can be said that for some time now, it has focused mainly on the humanization of architecture. This has resulted in a greater understanding of architecture and its subservient role in social life. Architectural art took on the right meaning in the search for beauty, the pursuit of harmony, proper proportions, justified plastic shape, in other words, everything that can and should bring aesthetic satisfaction. One of the manifestations of these tendencies among contemporary architects is the presentation of their visions in the form of a plastic model, which is an inseparable element of a project drawn up on paper.

In the art of design (...) ideas do not have to be complicated and most of them are successful because they are simple and functional [20].

4. Architecture for people and urban/public space

Architecture itself does not really exist as a stand alone concept, because it is always in some kind of environment called architectural space. Therefore, the very environment in which the object will be created is important. When creating new spaces, the architect must first of all take care of the sustainable development of the space, because he/she is responsible for the possibility of its being used by future generations.

Camillo Sitne wrote about the importance of urban spaces for man, who believed that beautiful architectural spaces have a positive impact on man [1,p.8]. Jan Gehl, on the other hand, stressed that architecture should respond to social needs and provide a sense of happiness [23]. The influence and significance of architectural spaces on people was the focus of great modernists, such as Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Right, who aimed for maximum functionality and comfort, meeting social expectations – providing happiness [24]. Le Corbusier raised the issue of anticipating and responding to the needs of individuals [25]. Jane Jacobs presented the city streets as the quintessence of social life, which provided security and successful social life [26]. The city is not only supposed to be beautiful but also friendly to people, it should satisfy aspirations and the need to establish social contacts [27]. Raymon Unwin believed that architectural projects should provide the greatest possible comfort for residents and improve their lives [28]. Kevin A. Lynch made a breakthrough in the heritage of urban planning by exploring how individuals move around the urban landscape, how they perceive it, and what impact the urban environment will have on them [29]. Christian de Portzamparc saw architecture not only as a professional discipline, but as a social responsibility [30].

The public space of the city, as Camillo Sitte wrote, is: *a living element of cultural development*, [1, p. 17] where the elements that make up it should be human-friendly in order

to satisfy the people's needs for mental and physical comfort of life, by establishing social contacts [1, p. 23].

In a public space, a person should find what is conducive to his/her well-being, inner balance and leads to closer social ties. These are factors that strengthen the sense of social dignity, where a friendly environment fosters an attitude of respect towards the users of a given space. This is closely related to accessibility, lack of physical barriers, sense of identity and security. Public space has an impact not only on the quality of life but also on social relations, which can be described as social dignity of life [31].

In her article on dignity in public spaces, Nora Jacobson highlights a number of important issues. Attractive urban spaces are those that meet the need for self-confidence, peace, trust and solidarity that allow users to count on each other's support. The author also emphasizes the important role of beauty and peace of the environment, as a feature that strengthens the sense of human dignity [20]. In this context, the art of designing local spaces takes on two important meanings. On the one hand, its value is influenced by the material form, i.e. the existing architecture, its shape in the form of furniture, equipment, sculptures, monuments and other symbolic elements. On the other hand, the well-being of the users depends on the motivations in which a person, in a formal or informal way, is guided in the creation of relations between the users.

The city is a spatial and social structure in which people live, work, play, use different services, gain education, enjoy entertainment, and experience culture. Nowadays, already at the design stage, more and more attention is paid to ensure that each component functions properly and is used in the most effective way. The concept of a friendly city, which is sustainable, healthy, safe and more accessible, is becoming increasingly common. Cities that not only satisfy basic human needs but also inspire and stimulate human creativity.

Architectural forms used in space, serve as elements of terrain, where greenery and water are components of urban and architectural space. They positively influence the perception of the city landscape. Thanks to their characteristic features, they become important landmarks on the mental map of the city. They can be orientation points, contact points, or places that stand out for their unique identity and original, non-standard appearance [32]. It is not art to erect monuments, but the real art is to shape a large space in a sustainable, functional and environmentally friendly way. The beauty of architecture is the whole of spatial activities, not a single object detached from the rest.

Architectural work, is a permanent element of the human environment, which regulates the way of life and existence. Architecture has an indirect impact on human life because of the place of residence in the city or housing estate, as well as the building or apartment. Currently, the most important issue for the architect is to design spaces that ensure above all mental health and comfort of social life. Architecture is responsible for the art of shaping space for the benefit of all mankind.

The basic task of architecture is to design the building and its proper adaptation for the potential user and to provide him/her with a visual aesthetic appearance. Vitruvius, thousands of years ago, said that, durability, usability and beauty must be taken into account during construction process [33]. Contemporary architect has a difficult task, because he has to decide himself what and how to design a building in order to encourage the recipient and meet his/her expectations. Architecture has one more very important task, namely to organize the human space in the perspective of the building and the whole city.

Architecture itself does not exist, but it is always in some kind of environment, that is, it creates an architectural space which is not only a spatial structure, but above all, it is created by people and their changing needs.

5. The value of city space and human beings

Nowadays, many towns and cities are dominated by the expansion of modern urban and architectural solutions, creating a uniform structure. To meet the expectations and needs of residents, architects more and more often create places where urban space regains its human dimension, co-creates and enriches the cultural heritage of a given area. The realization of the architects' vision serves to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants by creating new spaces for recreation, meetings, having fun, and resting. Increasingly, unused urban areas are being transformed, making them more accessible and attractive for the users themselves.

Contemporary cities are often difficult to move around due to the lack of important landmarks, which adversely affects the sense of security and psychological comfort of a person. A large part of people spend their free time more and more often in impersonal shopping malls, which replace traditional shopping habits existing for centuries in city spaces. The interiors of shopping malls, in fact, are a substitute for a human-friendly space, as they do not have the appropriate, powerful enough to make life buzz in them [27]. Manuel Castells believes that time and space are being transformed by modern information technology. Modern society is organized around a space that is based on flows of capital, information, technology, images, sounds and symbols. In this space, time is deformed and physical space disappears [34].

For Manuel Castells, it was clear that everything that generates power, money or information is linked to the exchange of network impulses. For him, one type of power is to create and control cultural codes, that is, ways of thinking about ourselves and the world around us. At the same time, he claimed that the abundance of information makes us stop in the consumption phase [35]. In his paradigm on information technology, Manuel Castells pointed out the ubiquitous influence of new technologies on all human activities, which would serve to revitalise local communities (rebuilding civil society) and encourage greater political participation [34], p.10-15].

According to Castells, alongside the use of digital social networks, it is important for social movements to create new public space. To this end, social movements can occupy urban space and buildings of symbolic significance, as such spaces create a community that opens up public space for a debate [36].

Nowadays, society is dominated by haste, which affects the whole of human life and the finalization of man. Sociologists are recording more and more dissatisfaction with life, and the constant chase does not allow us to enjoy everyday life. Paul Virilio believed that the increasing speed of life raises a factor that broadens the scope of human power on the one hand and violates human rights by concealing violence on the other. He believed that every new device brings about a form of disaster. As a representative of a post-modern paradigm of thinking, he was convinced that reality had become out of control, no longer being possible to be understood in any way [37].

Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly easy for modern people to gain various pleasures, and this is largely due to the technical devices that shorten our work. And although it would seem that we should have more time for ourselves, there is still not enough of it. That is why it is so important to create spaces where people can stop, at least for a moment in the city centre, to enjoy nature, the surrounding environment and relax.

In his book *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, published in 1980, W.H. White described the close relationship between the quality of urban space and social activity, proving that even small changes and improvements can significantly enhance the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Mishmen [38].

We live in a consumer society today, which significantly affects all aspects of our lives. Due to increasing consumption, people are becoming a commodity in the consumer and labour markets [39]. The constant rush that accompanies man does not give him the opportunity to think about using his free time, which in turn leads to internal emptiness.

The dynamic development of new technologies has led not only to changes in the way of thinking but also in behaviour in physical space. Nowadays we live in a population of people who think and react differently, as well as have a different way of understanding the world and the space around them [40]. Contemporary urban space increasingly encourages the user to both rest and play. It is a form of human activity that makes the user happier and is so important in times of consumerism.

In the centres of large European cities, people often feel good, as the streets and squares are picturesquely woven into the urban landscape. It is believed that well-designed spaces are the ones that we see and remember, the ones we are happy to return to and have a nice memory of. All this is due to the visual value of a given place, which is not only a source of comfort, but at the same time constitutes a psychological abatement for the inhabitants.

People are also observers of the public spaces around them. They accept the material reality in which they live with its values, building an emotional connection with the surrounding space. As user-inhabitants, they adapt their reactions to their surroundings, while tourists (visitors) contemplate a given space by means of subjective experiences, creating an image of a given place, which they use to recreate images and emotions connected with it from memory.

In the rush of everyday life, very often the inhabitants do not have time to use the available spaces or even admire them. Increasingly, urban life (congestion, noise, etc.) is associated with a number of stressful factors that lead to exhaustion and fatigue. However, it turns out that such spaces are very much needed because they have a positive impact on the user and determine their behavior. Making these spaces accessible to the public provides the residents with the opportunity to recover from everyday stress, stimulates positive reactions and above all allows them to relax. Often such zones bind different areas of the city together, providing a background for development or stimulating social activity. Thus, the spaces proposed below positively determine the behaviour of the residents and their reactions, and contribute to rebuilding an emotional connection with their immediate surroundings.

After all, the space surrounding a human being should be a kind of work of art, because it can influence his or her mental state, giving him or her peace and joy, stimulating his or her comprehensive development [41, p. 21]. This type of space is, therefore, not only a source of emotional experience, but also a stimulus for positive impressions, which increase the feeling of security in inner-city areas. The most important value of these spaces, which are part of the city landscape, is their legibility and ease of movement.

On the basis of own observations and analysis, a characterisation of selected examples of urban spaces under the account of openness, interest, accessibility, comfort and influence on the development of civil society was conducted (Tab.1). The analysis was conducted on selected spaces of the city of Lublin as such, such as: Saski Garden (Fig. 1), Plac Litewski Square (Fig. 2) and the Krakowskie Przedmieście Street promenade (Fig. 3). These spaces have been designed to serve their residents in visual, aesthetic and social terms. Each of these

spaces is subject to personal evaluation by its users, who appreciate its advantages resulting from direct contact with the environment. The most important function they perform for both residents and visitors (tourists) is to provide opportunities to establish social contacts.

Tab.1.   Table illustrating the evaluation criteria for the selected public spaces

Public space	Is it open to everybody?	Does it have something intetresting for everybody?	Can it attract people from all the town?	Does it have framework for city development?	Is it life-friendly area?	Can it help to develop a citizen life?
Saski Garden	+	+	+	+	+	+/-
Litewski Square	+	+	+	+	+	+
Krakowskie Przedmieście Street	+	+/-	+	+	+/-	+

Fig. 1.   The Saski Garden in Lublin, author's photograph, 2019

Fig 2.   Litewski Square in Lublin, author's photograph, 2019

The Saski Garden (Fig. 1) was established in 1837 on the initiative of Ignacy Lubowiecki, President of the Lubelskie Voivodeship Commission, according to the design of engineer Feliks Bieczyński. The idea of its creation was to build a public park for a wealthy social group of Lublin. When designing the space, the architect wanted to refer to the existing Czartoryski Park in Puławy, which became his inspiration. The original garden was located on Lubartowska Street, on the Czechówka River, but because of the distance from the Old Town, a new location was chosen, which once belonged to the Dominican Order in Wieniawa. The name *Saski Garden* itself was taken from the Warsaw garden thanks to the residents of Lublin, who believed that the park at that time was as beautiful as the one in the capital city [42].

The first step towards the renovation of the garden was taken in the mid-nineties on behalf of the Municipal Economy Department of the Office. After the renovation, the garden became more accessible for the community of Lublin and visitors. In 2012, the area was again thoroughly rebuilt to please its residents. Currently, the garden is divided into sectors, where you can walk through beautiful alleys filled with colorful vegetation. You can relax here on a bench near a pond or visit a playground equipped with modern and colorful equipment that attracts parents with children for long hours. We can find here a bird cage, a sundial, a gazebo and a concert shell where cultural events take place. There are also a few preserving elements of art in the form of sculptures, monuments or artefacts of small architecture, which create a unique and legible structure of the park he objects placed in different locations, are charac-

teristic landmarks, at which you can stop at least for a moment. They give a unique identity to a given place and create characteristic points of tension, impressions, sensations and emotions.

The Saski Garden is an ideal place to take a break from the daily hustle and bustle of the city, which makes it very popular not only among Lublin residents but also visitors. This area is a special place, which is the space of generally accessible recreational interior. Additionally, it has many surprising and architecturally interesting solutions created for the needs and with the thought of its inhabitants in mind. The friendly space created by the garden allows to slow down the pace, creates an enclave of peace and continuity, allows to maintain social contacts, anchors the man in history and culture, providing a sense of bliss. Here we can find spaces for different age groups of people, activating also young people and children. It is a peculiar social space. The park is an attraction through specially designed greenery, which only provides isolation from the street noise, but will provide shelter on hot days. It consists of multi-threaded forms of colorful vegetation, which provide a play of light and shadow introducing a mysterious atmosphere. The area of the garden is a place where the inhabitants of the city enter into relations with other people, at the same time reading the meaning coded in space. The area of the park is accessible to all people, enabling confrontation with the users of the city, where people want to meet, act and feel the joy of being there.

Litewski Square was established in the 1820s and was originally called Drilling Square, being intended for military parades (Fig. 2). Nowadays, it is located in the former suburb of Krakow. The area used to be located between the main trade route of the city and the road running along the Świętokrzyskie estate in the direction of the Wieniawa district [43]. Currently, the square is located outside the compact buildings of Krakowskie Przedmieście and has the shape of a triangle. Since 1839 it has been called Litewski Square. It includes a monument to the 3rd of May Constitution, a monument to Marshal Józef Piłsudski, and a tomb of an unknown soldier.

Litewski Square is one of the most important places on the map of Lublin. It often plays a representative role because of the most important celebrations and national holidays that take place there. In 2017, its thorough revitalization was completed, which contributed to even greater interest in it. It is regularly used as a place of meetings and interesting cultural events, becoming a perfect meeting place for families with children, looking for a moment of rest. Since its revitalisation, Litewski Square has become even more important for the residents of Lublin. There is a music-playing, illuminated fountain in the central part of the square, a string of fountains along the new part of the promenade next to the building of the Polish Post Office, and modern and colourful child's facilities, such as swings and slides, that attract whole families. The modernised so-called *Lublin's living room* has been rebuilt both for its inhabitants and tourists to allow spending a pleasant time here. The new space has gained an interesting layout of paths, green squares and modern elements of art, becoming beautiful and above all, useful place for residents. This area brings together many generations into one place. It is one of the important points characteristic for the city of Lublin, which allows people to calm down, relax, and sometimes make new friends.

Fig. 3.   Lublin's Promenade, author's photograph, 2019

Another of the main places of this type in Lublin is Krakowskie Przedmieście Street (Fig. 3), which in a natural way is an important space for city dwellers, both in terms of usefulness and visual aspects. The name Krakowskie Przedmieście used to mean not only a street, but in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance the whole district, opposite the Krakow Gate, around the route leading to Krakow, was defined in this way. In 1575 there was a fire in which most of the medieval buildings, both the suburbs, burned down. The reconstructed house on Krakowskie Przedmieście Street was already bricked up, which made the city an important centre for the nobility of the time. In 1657, affected by war damage with the Swedes, Lublin fell into decline. Krakowskie Przedmieście ceased to be a representative street and turned into an ordinary utility district. The fall of the street lasted until the partitions, although during the reign of Stanislaw August Poniatowski (the Krakowska Gate was then renovated). In the years 1815-1918 Lublin was ruined by wars, where only the Municipal Office introduced the city from a deep crisis within a dozen or so years, and expanded and modernized it. In the interwar period, Krakowskie Przedmieście was the city's main and most representative street and has become, after Ogród Saski [the Saxon Garden], the favourite walking place for Lublin residents to this day [44]. Of particular attraction for the residents are downtown streets with traffic off, like part of Krakowskigo Przedmieście Street, where all its width is available for pedestrians. In favourable climatic conditions, restaurateurs put tables and chairs outside, decorate them with flowers or colourful cushions, giving them a warm and cosy character. They are a perfect space for various cultural events, meetings, shows, and performances of different nature and content. The more functions they perform, the more important these spaces are. The square

is a place to meet with friends, go for shopping, walks and participate in cultural events. The multifunctionality of these spaces should be seen as an important feature that proves the quality of public spaces created for people.

Two types of urban public spaces, such as parks and city squares, play a very important role/function in fulfilling citizens' needs. These spaces are accessible, inclusive, and enable social relations to be carried out, offering a variety of activities such as walking or cycling. When analysing the multifunctionality of public spaces, attention should be paid to the location of commercial spaces within them, which undoubtedly increases the importance of the spaces used [45].

The art of building space should be beauty in its broadest sense. When we talk about the beauty of contemporary architecture, we mean the whole environment that surrounds it. It is these spaces that are closest to man, because it is in them that people are brought up and learn of aesthetics and beauty of architecture. The environment creates awareness and, depending on what it looks like, it shapes the aesthetic sensitivity of people in it. Inhabiting a given environment, a person often gets used to particular places, which often means accepting both their advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the space in which we are brought up is of great importance because it is this space that shapes our sense of beauty and aesthetics of the surrounding space.

The examples of public spaces presented above are not only of utilitarian but also of emotional importance for the residents of Lublin. It is in their area that various activities of both individual and social character are carried out. In this context, their quality, accessibility, and functionality are important. Friendly spaces are areas in which individuals carry out various activities giving the rhythm of life to its inhabitants are those that are often used to implement activities of a civic or political nature. The modern city provides a stable basis for people to take up new challenges, i.e. to actively spend their free time in friendly spaces. Cyclical old age fairs, food fairs taking place in the very centre of the Old Town, are conducive to building social bonds with simultaneous trade exchange. All these elements testify to the character of a given city and are important identification points not only for its inhabitants but also for tourists.

The image of contemporary architecture of many cities is an event between architecture and its user, which reveals the essence of the place. In its opinion, the basic one is to adapt to the requirements of contemporary man. The way of experiencing this event is fully dependent on its expectations of the space in which it is located, used, where it becomes its most important part. Public space arranges public, collective life and enables closer interpersonal contacts, which releases positive emotions, which are often missing in everyday life.

Friendly and accessible architecture is both for architects and people. The first one is characterized by the desire to surprise the viewer with a novelty by using new technology, scale, form or texture. The second focuses on creating friendly spaces in which people can feel safe and good. The search for novelty and innovation will always be more attractive than tedious "creation", but the demand for human and environmentally friendly architecture is greater and more desirable than for *shocking constructions*.

The public spaces presented above are meeting places that have grown almost to become social 'institutions', so important that life cannot be imagined without them. They are a guarantee of urbanity and social coexistence. They emphasise the relationship between man and space, which leads to emotional bonds and gives them a sense of security. Parks, green areas or streets with traffic off, are often a source of physical activity that is so necessary for the

emotional and mental health of society, and also a lifesaver for the city. An important feature of all these newly created and reconstructed urban spaces is to adapt to changes in society and nature in such a way as to meet social needs and expectations. Nowadays, for architects, it is no longer the primary objective to shock people with more and more complex projects, but to serve people and their needs. The currently emerging projects-solutions are adapted to constantly changing social, economic and environmental conditions. These urban spaces that are being rebuilt are adopted in such a way as to keep up with the constant changes and thus meet social expectations.

5. Conclusions

Nowadays, every city creates a complex organism which is supposed to satisfy all human needs and conditions. Shaping the structure of the city space requires cooperation between specialists and experts in various fields, so that a well-functioning, vibrant, healthy and friendly organism can be created. Individual city spaces should create a synergic system which, above all, will be conducive to living in ever-changing conditions. It is often said that the work of a designer-architect ends when a given building is put into use, but only then does the architecture begin to fulfil its social function, that is its most important function for which it was created. It directly influences the shaping of human behaviour and provides support in everyday life and the urban environment. One of the key factors that enables urban spaces to meet expectations is the willingness and frequency of visiting and spending time with loved ones and family in these spaces.

Over the years, the awareness of design and the perception of the social role of the architect have changed. Currently-designed buildings do not lose their message and do not constitute only an impersonal spatial form. They have gained a new dimension of art based on designing in accordance with the environment. Designers follow current trends in art and architecture and choose what is modern, practical and friendly to people and their surroundings. They are often beautiful, designed with a sense of taste and care for the natural environment. For an architect, people's needs and their mental, social and aesthetic condition, have become the primary goal.

Contemporary architecture is free of any limitations, it represents what is here and now by means of an astonishing variety of forms and shapes. The inseparable relationship between art and architecture allows us to create extraordinary objects, almost without limitations, whose functionality and care for people are in harmony with nature.

Aesthetic, functional and attractive creative design has become the architect's overriding goal. Buildings are created in such a way that the user enjoys his place of work or residence so that he can come back to it willingly and find it enjoyable to stay inside.

On the basis of the presented examples, it can be concluded that most of the works of contemporary architecture and urban planning are favorable to man and the surrounding environment. Architects create projects for and with people in mind, while meeting their needs, expectations and dreams. Useful design for the community is a difficult task that requires emotional intelligence, maturity and commitment from an architect. Every designed object is a *brick* in this complex machine, which is a *city*. It is buildings such as flats, shops, workplaces, meetings and recreation places that satisfy people spiritually, mentally and visually, changing the whole of social life.

Contemporary architecture, instead of dwellings or workplaces, creates *living spaces* that offer diverse lifestyles, where in different parts of the city, work, study, and recreation

take place as close as possible to each other. This is a very important part of social, cultural and economic life, which focuses on the needs of people creating places to live. Recipients of architectural spaces are very diverse, therefore they are treated as an important element of integration in the city where the identity of the place results from the community and the people who create it.

Architecture creates a given space, places where people have grown up and are usually the most lasting memory for them. More and more often people need this kind of rest, during which they would shade themselves physically and mentally from everything. Then they look for places from where they can rest comfortably and remain the owners of the area for a while, which gives them a sense of security. Public space is treated as a place for meetings, communication and dialogue between people. Parks, streets or squares are places that are known to establish and maintain contact with other people. Nowadays, architects not only design the city, but also give it a function by introducing various types of chase (e.g. benches, tables, hammocks, swings), which encourages inhabitants to spend their free time there.

It seems that today, more than ever, public space has to compete with the virtual world, with spending time on the Internet or with social life in social media. That is why it is so important to create spaces that provide people with a sense of happiness, becoming an oasis of peace, tranquillity and the joy of everyday life.

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