

Ancient theater architecture as an element of the world cultural landscape

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the history of the development of ancient theatre architecture in the context of the environment, which forms a territory that acquires the status of a cultural landscape. The material of antiquity is interpreted in the aspect of the evolution of the formation of theatrical buildings, ranging from ancient Greek to ancient Roman, which, despite the ruins, amaze with their large-scale and untouched architecture. An attempt was made to systematize valuable evidence of the past in the environment: material (theatre architecture) and intangible (theatre art), since the theatre lives only when it is performed and theatrical architecture remains for posterity. Their relationship in space and time was considered. The research methods (descriptions of the studied phenomena, the method of field observation, the method of problem-historical analysis) made it possible to focus on the specifics of the arrangement of theatre buildings located in open spaces, representing cultural landscapes – vast territories of co-creation of human and nature. Throughout the eras, the architecture of a theatre, intended for spectacular performances, associated with the environmental factor and acting has undergone a transformation, just as the theatrical art itself has changed, sometimes within the same performance, on the same stage. Fragments of the lost cultural experience today are open systems in the associative, semantic, historical aspects, as well as in terms of the reconstruction of objects. They form an attractive and popular place that goes beyond city-planning conditions, being a significant public space. The composition of the construction of theatres and the principles of shaping that took shape in the antique period had a great influence on their subsequent development and remained in modern design solutions. In this context, this experience of interpreting architectural monuments related to theatrical art is of great cultural and educational significance, not only in the sense of reconstructing a lost layer of cultural heritage but, to a greater extent, in the form of modelling a new vision of the architectural culture of the new world that is being formed today.

Keywords: Art, Compositional structure, Architectural culture, Drama, Stage

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1. Introduction

The origins of theatrical architecture go parallel with the birth of a theatre itself. It is theatre, as an art that is synthetic in nature, that absorbs many elements, among which the structure itself, the frame and shell of a building with its own specially organized space is important. In addition, the environment is of no small importance as a cultural field that carries content. There is a subtle sense of natural factors, understanding of a landscape. The ability to organically integrate architectural forms into a natural location. Modern science strives for a holistic study of a person and his environment in the context of life relations with the world. The emphasis



in this approach is placed on the study of the deep, essential foundations of an architectural activity as a special type of creativity, which introduces into the field of vision such a phenomenon as the synthesis of architecture, theatre, landscape. It contains the experience of organizing a qualitatively new environment for the development of the cultural and aesthetic potential of various regions.

The purpose of the study is substantiated by the necessity to consider a structure, principles of the compositional synthesis of the architecture of a theatrical building of the ancient era in relation to the theatrical art itself in the context of the world cultural landscape. Research objectives: to analyze the features of ancient theatrical architecture as a source of formative principles; to reveal the volumetric-spatial and planning types of architecture of Greek and Roman theatres in connection with the development of the genre system of theatrical art in the context of the era under consideration; to formulate the essence of the theoretical concept concerning the architecture of ancient theatres within the framework of its popularization as a world cultural landscape.

There is certain historiography of the study of theatre as a type of architectural structure. Famous historians of architecture and art have contacted him: N. I. Brunov [1], M. Bieber [2], A. W. Lawrence [3], R. Hoegler [4], I. B. Mykhalovskiy [5], W. Dörpfeld [6] and others. In their works, the techniques of the classical methodology of the history of architecture were implemented based on historical-genetic, historical-typological, functional approaches, compositional and system analysis, graphic reconstruction and other research techniques. Among the publications there are also works belonging to the theatre researchers: V. I. Kozlynskyi and E. P. Freze [7], K. A. Smolyna [8] and others, in addition to the historical aspects of theatre buildings, they investigate special issues of the structure of the stage, the technology of stage arrangement and its decoration, without which theatrical structures lose their meaning.

Recently, articles have appeared in which certain aspects of the ancient theatre and theatrical construction have been considered, attempts have been made to find out the reasons for its phenomenal popularity in the Greek world. O. V. Barabanova [9], A. A. Hudkov and O. V. Morozova [10], E. N. Poliakov and T. O. Ynozemtseva [11] et al. For recent studies, reference can be made to L. Martha and A. Kotsaki [12], which examines the contemporary activities of ancient theatre as a means of tourism policy. N. Barkas [13] explores the acoustic functionality of ancient theatres, proving that they represent the application of a successful combination of the main parameters that govern the acoustic design of open-air venues. R. Frederiksen, E. Gebhard and A. Sokolicek [14] analyze in detail the architectural shaping of Greek theatres. In the works of researchers, the architecture of ancient theatres, as a rule, is considered within the general course of history, but in isolation from the modern conditions of an urban or natural untouched environment and the possibilities of using this environment in the addition of the cultural space of territories.

This research is devoted to the architecture of ancient theatres located in the modern territories not only in Greece and Rome but also outside these countries. It is impossible to study it without clarifying the peculiarities of the cultural context in which it appears and the connection with the theatrical process itself. Archaeology gives information about the finds of the architectural system of ancient theatres, traces of visible and invisible cultural wealth. There is no doubt that all this wealth of a territory on which ancient theatres are located cannot be reduced only to a single, albeit unique, constructive and planning aspect but also to consider them as an element of the cultural landscape, as monuments integrated into a specific environment. Find points and connections between them, with different historical themes and layers associated with the development of the theatrical art of that time. The structural component of the architectural forms of old theatres consists of currently existing and lost elements, therefore, the questions of partial renewal of functions, historical reconstruction, and the formation of a cultural landscape as a memory of a place are raised. The modern era can be seen not only as a time of oblivion, but also as an era of historical restoration.

2. Materials and methods

The research methodology was determined by a dialectical approach to the study of the historical aspects of the creation of ancient theatres. The study was based on both the general scientific method (theoretical modelling)

and special methods (in particular, the method of describing the phenomena under study, the method of natural observation, the method of problem-historical analysis, complex use and comparison of available sources). However, turning to the past turns out to be striving for the future. The architecture of old theatres is giving way to the design of the future. In this context, this experience of interpreting architectural monuments related to theatrical art is of great cultural and educational significance, not only in the sense of reconstructing a lost layer of cultural heritage but, to a greater extent, in the form of modelling a new vision of the architectural culture of the new world that is being formed today. “Every new discovery expands the possibilities of reading and enriching the known. The appeal to a different aesthetics is based not only on its own codes and ideology, but also on codes and views that are characteristic of present, which allow including the subject of antiques in a different context, not only capturing the spirit of the past in it, but also bringing a new connotation of today” [15].

Thus, the author’s argumentation of the necessity for a historical and cultural approach to the analyzed theatre structures is significant, which allows this architectural complex to become a complex humanitarian and geographical object that generates many different interpretations. That is why the author did not limit herself to the external compositional similarity of the complex of the designated monuments of ancient theatrical architecture that have an open landscape form, and how this form is reflected in modern spectacular architecture. It was important to discover and show the symbolic parallels of the art of theatre itself with the natural laws of the organization of the World and the Universe, which previously remained without the attention of researchers. There are interesting analogues in the organization of theatrical performance, existing inside the structure of a closed ancient theatre, but going into the open space of the world cultural landscape. “Humanitarian-geographical images, taken “abstractly”, without close and momentary reference to a specific territory, were coordinated ensembles of signs, symbols, archetypes and stereotypes that described, characterised and interpreted the geographical space from the point of view of its experience, comprehension and embedding into various existential strategy” [16].

3. Results and discussion

The structure of the Greek theatre in the natural environment of the cultural landscape. On the European continent, urban planning techniques for theatrical structures began to be developed in ancient Greece. The very etymology of the word “theatre” is of Greek origin and means “spectacle”. The era of the emergence of the ancient Greek theatre dates back to the classical period (5th-4th BC), a feature of which was a harmoniously arranged world, balance and proportionality of elements, both in the plasticity of theatrical art and in the harmony of the architectural image. During the classical period, Greek architecture and theatrical art experienced a period of greatest prosperity. Archaeology has not left reliable data on the exact structure of the ancient Greek theatre. However, despite the lack of iconographic materials (drawings, paintings) that survived to this day, the ruins of ancient theatres, despite the restructuring in later times, give reason to speak of theatre architecture as a separate page in the history of the ancient world. “Ancient Greek theatre and drama were born out of festivities in honour of the god Dionysus, which were based on symbolic play and cult rites associated with the winter dying and spring rebirth of nature” [17]. The city theatre adorned the hillside, picturesquely blending into the surrounding nature and was part of the design of the natural relief. Greek theatres were the place where theatrical performances took place.

From the end of the 7th century BC, in Athens, tragedies, comedies and satirical dramas were staged annually, and there was an annual national holiday “Great Dionysius”. Subsequently, they were distributed in other areas of Greece (Thessaly, Elis and other regions of the Peloponnese). These theatrical events have become a mandatory part of public holidays. They were played out in an open area – an orchestra, which was surrounded by seats for spectators – a theatron, which is the prototype of the auditorium. According to the information received, at first this site had a rectangular shape. Stone buildings with a round arena and large amphitheatres appeared in the classical era (4th century BC). The amphitheatrical structure of the audience was best suited to

the solution of the problem, providing the same audio-visual conditions for thousands of spectators. A large number of spectator seats were located in a relatively small space, while the angle of view of the stage from the first and last rows of the amphitheatre differed only by a few degrees. The structure of the Greek theatre also included a skene – an office space for actors changing clothes and storing props. The limited set of visual means (masks, costumes, lack of scenery) was associated with the orientation of the entire ancient culture, including the Greek theatre, towards acoustic perception.

Reflecting on the design features of the Greek theatre, V. V. Bazanov [17] notes: “The extreme conventionality of the pictorial side of the performance gave complete freedom to playwrights in choosing a scene, did not hinder their creativity with the narrow possibilities of the stage, so they easily transferred their heroes to a variety of situations that they needed to express the general idea of the work”. In the centric types of structures, various variants of theatricalization were developed, but the structure of Greek drama remains unchanged. From the point of view of the “microstructure” of the composition of the universal image of a theatre, the features of the classical ancient Greek genre system (tragedy and comedy) were determined by the following features: rise and fall, with a return to the opposite, circulation, vicissitudes. This type of construction is a kind of confirmation of the author’s logic of reasoning, since it expresses connection, synthesis and generalization. The theme of the Universe becomes relevant for the inner space of the centric building of the Greek theatre. The static (theatre building) and motional (theatrical performance) archetypes in the inner space merge in a single burst of real (material) and ideal (spiritual) movement.

The most ancient theatre in Athens is considered the “Theatre of Dionysus”. An open-air theatre was located at the foot of the Athens Acropolis on the south-eastern slope. The construction of this structure dates back to the 4th century BC. Speaking about the general methods of organizing theatres in the ancient classical era, the researcher of architecture A. Choisy [18] notes: “The theatre of Dionysus now is in a distorted form. Its most ancient parts seem to date to the restoration of the theatre by the orator Lysurgus in the 4th century; the remains of the scene date back to the time of the Antonine; the taste for archaeology that prevailed in this era determined the reproduction of primitive forms here, so if there was not the original, then, apparently, there would be a very faithful copy.” As can be seen, in later times the theatre was rebuilt several times, however, the basic spatial idea of the Greek theatre was preserved without fundamental distortions. The works of the great ancient Greek playwrights – Aristophanes, Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides were first presented here on the stage of the old theatre. The history of the world theatrical art is associated with this place. The tradition of theatrical makeup, costumes and masks was laid on the stage of this theatre. It was also Athens' main open-air theatre [8]. The last excavations in 1895 made it possible to establish some dimensions of the theatre. In the original version, spectators were freely seated around the orchestra, the diameter of which was 27 meters; later, special places for the public appeared, located on the slopes of the adjacent hills and mountains. Two-thirds of the orchestra, planned in a semicircle, represented the auditorium [19-26].

The rows for spectators were located one above the other, going up, and were divided by two passages into three tiers, and were also vertically divided by many passages into wedges. In the first row, there were marble armchairs, intended, according to the surviving inscriptions on them, for the noble people of the city. An armchair of the god Dionysus, richly decorated with decor, was highlighted in the center. The preference given to Dionysus is not accidental, since the theatre is located on the territory of his sacred place. The orchestra was closed by a skene, from which its right side was preserved. The Athens Theatre of Dionysus could accommodate 17 thousand spectators. The works of the great ancient Greek playwrights – Aristophanes, Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides – were first presented here [27-39]. The history of world theatrical art is primordially associated with this place. The auditorium occupied the entire space of the top of the Acropolis Hill. Subsequently, the “Theatre of Dionysus” changed, especially its stage area was modernized, it was redesigned in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. In the new theatre, the old orchestra was moved to the north, thus creating more space for the performance of the actors and for the placement of stage devices. Skene was located on the side opposite to the auditorium. The theatrical performance took place on the area, located at the ground level, later it rose higher and received the name “proscenium”. Proscenium and orchestra were connected by rows of steps. All the

functional specificity of the Greek theatre was focused on the cult of Dionysus in Attica, where it achieved the greatest popularity and was most noticeably transformed when it appeared in the Greek world. In the 16th-17th centuries, performances of Shakespearean dramas, as well as other performances of classicism, imitating the ancient masters, began to be staged on the stage of the Dionysus Theatre [40-58].

Ancient Greek small theatres. Another form, along with open theatres, designed for a large number of spectators in Greece, can be called small indoor theatres, called odeums. The most famous and most ancient odeum, about which information survived, is the Odeon in Athens (Herod Atticus), intended for vocal competitions and instrumental music performance. According to Pausanias [59] instructions, the Odeon was covered with a wooden tent and was located east of the Theatre of Dionysus. The plan of the building is reminiscent of Greek theatres, and the facade, decorated with arches and niches, is reminiscent of the Roman style. Spectator sittings rise steeply upward, leaning on a retaining powerful wall that forms a bypass around the upper row of benches. In 267, as a result of the invasion of the Roman Empire by the German tribe, the roof was destroyed, which was never restored. The theatre itself was also gradually destroyed, and its stone blocks were used for the construction of other objects. In 1857, archaeologists discovered the auditorium under a 12-meter layer of earth. In the 1950s, it was extensively reconstructed. In the course of the work, the marble cladding of the stage tablet and the audience seats were reconstructed. After its restoration, the theatre became the main venue for annual international festivals. To the west of the theatre is what remains of the ancient sacrificial altar of Asclepius (the god of medicine), founded in 420 BC. Among these ancient ruins, there are other monuments, unfortunately, practically not preserved to this day, such as the ancient fountain, the altar of the Land of Kuproforos, the remains of two temples of Dionysus of the 6th and 4th centuries BC, the stones of the Pericles Odeon, etc. displaying the history of the theatre itself, located next to other ruins that tell about the life of ancient society and the events of history, is an essential part of the process of its perception and the formation of a collective image associated with the memory of a particular place [60-78].

Outside the capital Athens, in other parts of Greece, theatres of similar architecture have been built. So, in one of the beautiful places with untouched rural pristine nature are the ruins of the "Delphic Theatre". Located in the northwest area of the sanctuary of Apollo, it blends harmoniously with the surrounding landscape. Its centric shape from the north and west is formed by a rocky relief, from the east and south by an artificial embankment. The theatre is horizontally divided into lower and upper zones with different numbers of seats. It is traditionally divided vertically by radially diverging passages. Skene had a scoria and the main part, outside it was decorated with a zoophorus for the plots of the exploits of Hercules (currently lost). In the 4th century BC, the first stone theatre was built, and then numerous reconstructions followed. The theatre acquired a monumental image under Eumenes II, sponsored by the oval is a reconstruction of it in the Roman era. In ancient times, it hosted competitions in vocal and instrumental music as part of the Pythian Games and other religious holidays and celebrations, the significance of which gives the monument spiritual and artistic value comparable to the value of the sports idea that the stadium in Olympia represents. The foundations of the Roman theatre are preserved today. At the beginning of the 20th century, on the stage of the theatre, performances were staged and shown at the initiative of the Greek poet A. Sikelianos in an effort to turn the sanctuary of Apollo into a centre for international cooperation [79-96].

Another, perfect in architecture, plasticity and proportions, theatrical structures of the Hellenistic era is the "Theatre at Epidaurus", built by Polykleitos the Younger, also in the 4th century BC. Already in antiquity, this theatre was considered the most famous among all Greek and Roman theatres and classical in terms of the aesthetics of architectural forms. Its good preservation has allowed archaeologists to restore its original appearance. According to the available data, the round platform of the orchestra did not have a hard covering of stone slabs; it was based on elastic natural soil. The total diameter of the theatre was 118 m. The theatre could accommodate up to 40 thousand spectators, and also had a special technical device – a movable skene. Skene had a two-story structure and two sliding wings [97-111]. The surviving parts of the skene make it possible to fairly accurately determine its parameters. Proscenium was 26.5 m long and 3.01 m wide. The penetration height above the level of the orchestra was 3.5 m. The entrance was made from the side of two side narrow passages

in the form of Ionic pylons. These dimensions indicate the colossal capacity of this theatre. In the Hellenistic theatre, professional actors began to perform for the first time, as the structure of theatres becomes more perfect. According to M. Vytruyvi [112], Greek theatres were also enclosed by porticos, which served for spectators to walk and shelter from bad weather. In the 5th-4th centuries BC, the classical varieties of theatrical performances – tragedy, comedy, pantomime, etc. reached perfection. In the same period, the functional diagram of the ancient Greek theatrical building was finally formed, including the function of figurative representation of the picture of the world. The perfect shaping of the theatre in Epidauros and the beauty of the area around it, combined with the acoustics formed from its orchestral form (not completely centric, but slightly oval with three developed planning centers) create consonant harmonious analogies. The theatre in Epidauros, with its architecture inscribed in an open landscape space, lies in the development of the concept of the historical and cultural development of the artistic image of the landscape. Landscape as a special form of landscape perception arised when a certain level of development of the antique picture of the world was reached, which made it possible to treat architecture and nature as an integral phenomenon, in a certain way correlated with human life.

Among the Greek theatres, it should be noted that after the Athenian and Epidauros theatre, which were considered the best among the Greeks; other theatres were built, lying in the system of the same planning systems: Chaeronea, in which seats for spectators were carved in the form of a sector in the rock; a theatre in Delphi with a movable stage stand; the theatre in Delos, where the tribune was supposedly installed; the Segesta Theatre in Sicily, with a panoramic view; the theatre at Toarmine, which had a landscape as a background; a theatre in Syracuse, animated by a waterfall over the upper row benches; the theatre in Aspenda, whose location in the mountains of Cilicia contributed to its almost complete preservation. Monumental stone theatres were erected in various cities in Greece. Including in the Italic colonies, where the Romans first met them. Other theatrical structures of antiquity were built according to a similar scheme, including during the time of Ancient Rome [113-120].

Ruins of Roman theatres as objects of architectural heritage. The architecture of the Roman theatre had a number of features that distinguished it from the Greek theatre. According to K. Smolyna [8]: “There were not permanent theatre buildings in Rome up to the middle of the 1st century BC. The dramas were performed on the stage of temporary theatrical structures. Comedies were played right on city streets. The first permanent theatre buildings were built in the Greek colonies – in the south of Italy and in Sicily”. Although Roman theatres reproduced the form of Greek theatrical structures, they had significant differences in the spatial field of the landscape. The Romans built theatres on a flat area, and therefore their structures acquired more monumental forms that fit into the overall structure of urban development. In this regard, the oldest Roman permanent theatre of Pompey on the Champ de Mars, built around 79 BC, is indicative; to the present day it has been preserved in underground ruins. Other theatrical buildings were also lost: the Balbo theatre and Domitian's odeum. The building on the outside had a quadrangular shape and a portico, which distinguishes it from the centric one; a ceiling was erected over the stage and places for spectators. In addition, according to the memoirs of the Christian writer K. S. Tertullyan [121], this theatre building simultaneously served as a temple dedicated to the goddess of Victory, so the seats of the auditorium served as its steps.

Another permanent stone theatre, located in the historical part of modern Rome, was built in 55-52s BC. In 11th BC, the construction of the Teatro di Marcello, begun under Caesar, was completed. At present, all left of this theatre is the outer wall, divided into three floors, which corresponds to three inner tiers. The theatre is considered the predecessor of the Colosseum. New technologies have made it possible to erect the building on a concrete foundation made of tuff and travertine. The disappearance of the choir had a great influence on the shape of the stage; the amphitheater impressed with its size, accommodating 12000 spectators. The orchestra platform of 90 m was preserved, but in a greatly reduced form and was used as a place to accommodate part of the audience. And since the main place for the game was the proscenium, it turned from a rather narrow platform in the Greek theatre into a vast area. Traditionally, the seats for spectators were located and rose in several tiers in the form of a semicircle. The surviving data allow speaking about the upper overlap of the amphitheater passage with special sun-protection awnings. This is evidenced by the rows of grooves made in the upper part

of the skene wall. The same construction is described by T. Lukretsii Kar [122] in the book “On the nature of things”.

The overlap of spectator and stage spaces allows speaking of the emergence of new technologies in the theatre building. However, the skene and amphitheater tents, according to the preserved documents, were not uniform, but hung in the form of two separate parts, therefore, in the full sense of the word, the Roman theatre was not yet a theatre under the roof. There are differences in the decoration of the Greek and Roman theatres, which also depended on the conceptual design of the organization of open and closed spaces. In Greek theatres, the decor was placed mainly on the front of the proscenium and the front of the skene. In the Roman theatre, which has an isolated interior space, it was both in the stage and in the audience parts. The unity of the two spaces was emphasized by an architectural ensemble in the form of a colonnade that closes the last row of the amphitheater. A number of evidences also suggest the presence of a curtain in the Roman theatre, however, unlike the modern one, the antique curtain rose from below, from under the orchestra, blocking the playground. In general, the projects of ancient Greek theatres mark successive stages in architectural creativity based on the experience of mastering their own classical antique style.

It is obvious that today, ancient Roman theatres can be viewed as a communicative space open to artistic practice. At the same time, a view of theatre and theatrical performance from the standpoint of theatre architecture related to the landscape becomes relevant. Since in the ruins of ancient theatres, performances are also staged today. This approach makes it possible to consider theatrical traditions as an object of architectural heritage. Thus, the reconstruction of historical theatrical spectacular forms on the sites of ancient theatres is becoming not only a theatre study but also a historical and artistic problem (Emmons et al., 2012)]. In the selected coordinate system, theatrical performance as a kind of performing art acts as one of the forms of intangible cultural heritage, the preservation and popularization of which also includes the tasks of theatrical architecture as a material heritage.

Spectacular buildings in the historical and cultural context of the ancient era. Another stage in the development of the Roman theatre and theatrical structure is associated with the imperial era. Emperor Augustus strove to turn the theatre into a distracting political means – the theatre should, first of all, entertain, amaze. Genre preferences changed, tragedy faded into the background. The most popular was mime, gradually replacing all other types of representations. Circus performances and gladiator fights staged in the Colosseum and other amphitheaters had much greater success. The Colosseum is the largest amphitheater in Rome and the entire ancient world. The amphitheater was built during the reign of Flavius, in 80 AD consecrated by the emperor Titus, located between the Palatine, Tselios and Esquiline hills. In terms of the Colosseum is an ellipse, its entire spatial structure contains 50,000 structures, accommodates the same number of spectators. For quick entry and exit, there was a sophisticated system used in modern sports arenas, allowing to quickly fill and empty the amphitheater. Outside, the Colosseum was divided into four encircling tiers, and the outer part into three arcades, each of which had many arched spans. In the upper tier, decorated with a colonnade, masts were installed to pull the awning. Under the arena were corridors lined with stone, rooms for storing props. A system of stairs connected the galleries with the entrances to the building, which were evenly spaced along the entire perimeter. One of the important tasks was to find a regular volumetric-spatial construction of the main premises, zones for various purposes, their relationship with the huge external dimensions of the structure [123].

Of all the types of antique spectacular structures considered, the Colosseum is the most developed, complex in planning and compositional solution and a large-scale example of a historical theatrical project. Today, the appearance of the Colosseum, as if not completed or destroyed, survived damage, it still leaves a powerful impression, it breathes a truly ancient spirit. Its architecture, built as a symmetrical, balanced, self-contained spatial-plastic and large-scale whole, consistent in all parts, animated by the rhythmic organization of forms, lives its own independent life. Currently, the Colosseum integrates a layer of cultural memory with a time span of several millennia. Unlike a number of the considered monuments of Greek theatrical architecture located in the territories of open landscape spaces, the Colosseum, included in the World Heritage, is located in the conditions of close development of the capital of Rome. Thus, contextually, it preserves the authenticity of

ancient historical layers in dialogue with modern architecture. In many ways, the lost parts of the Colosseum building today have become a platform for future artistic and historical reconstruction. The revealed general principles of its internal organization make this analysis viable, and the cultural landscape of the site of the monument – a historical, spiritual concept.

4. Conclusions

The results of the study show that the methodology developed by the author helps to more quickly and efficiently analyze a theatrical architectural object in order to focus on the formation of the environment, in addition to its very aesthetic side, and to trace the potential for the synthesis of all the tools and components used, aimed at creating a holistic architectural and artistic theatrical image. Based on the research, the author concluded that each structure under consideration is inscribed in the historical and cultural context, which creates a significant place in the history of culture. A historically formed environment is observed, which has the property of compositional completeness, an architectural ensemble. The theatre zones have formed an attractive and popular place that has the property of a public space. All considered Greek spectacular structures have a spatial typology based on low-lying location, in contrast to traditionally designed Roman theatres. However, the monumental scale determines the most important characteristics of the artistic idea of both.

The compositional structure of the old theatres organically entered the system of formation of the “Open Museum” method, which is conditioned by the place toponymy having a semicircular concave shape. Each theatre building is an example of natural stone, where in the rich variety of its types and forms it is the most traditional and expressive material for construction and decoration. In the process of modern use of the stage platforms of old theatres, the scenography of the space is revealed in an expressive scenario of the development of the compositional theme and image. So, the ancient theatre is an integral environmental object, which has unique structural properties and patterns of formation, occupies a special place in the history of urban planning, architecture, art. Ancient theatre, both Greek and Roman, is an open-air theatre based on the interpretation of the stage and spectator zones, which have formed integral historical and cultural spaces both inside and outside. It was a culturally diverse public theatre for stage performances. It is the theatrical performance, movement and related other temporal characteristics inherent in this type of creativity, which are so difficult to convey by means of static types of art – that is the necessary link that allows transferring the architectural image into the area of expressive, living, spiritualized.

The Roman theatre, adopting the traditions and skills of the Greeks, makes its own changes in the construction of the theatrical stage, and these changes reflect the new conditions for the existence of the theatre and the new character of drama. However, the open stage of that time met the needs of cultural development over several centuries. Ancient theatres differed from each other in size, capacity, compositional and constructive solutions, features of interaction with the surrounding landscape, but it was always not an inert, but an active environment in all the richness of its content. The architecture of the ancient theatre emerged from various but interrelated advances that changed the relationship between human and nature. Fragments of the lost cultural experience today are open systems in the associative, semantic, historical aspects, as well as in terms of the reconstruction of objects. They form an attractive and popular place that goes beyond the city planning conditions, having the property of significant public space.

Contemporary architecture and theatre direction in many countries have repeatedly turned to the ancient experience based on the classical concept of construction and organization of theatrical performance, starting from the planning-tectonic structure of the building and ending with its arrangement and decoration. Thanks to modern direction and scenography, the purposeful use of various methods of forming an architectural and artistic image, an old antique scene can become a unique aesthetically valuable space in every staging solution. Understanding the relationship between the morphology of the theatrical space, the components and means of its compositional organization, and the process of perception is fundamental for the creative method of forming the aesthetic image of the theatrical structure as a whole. The main provisions and conclusions of the study not

only deepen the existing understanding of the architecture of ancient theatres but also provide opportunities for enriching the philosophical, historical, and cultural understanding of the processes associated with the eras of national revival in the world. Indeed, architecture can reflect these new ideas about heritage, moreover, in a new information world, with new opportunities for the knowledge dissemination.

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