

## ***Reality, Singularity, Mortality***

***Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque.*** The most significant eras of Central European architecture. However, these words do not mark *styles* only. These can be treated as *paradigms*, in other words, common terms for all human endeavour in a particular time and place. Displays of such paradigm can be found in literature, visual arts, music, and naturally - in architecture. However, it can be found as well in philosophy, science and people's thinking generally. The spread of such a paradigm can be compared to a really dynamic system of flows, whose direction and intensity is nearly unpredictable. Human existence is not conditioned by the time and place, but by the flows it came across with. That's why we find the specification *time and place* a bit confusing.

As long as these paradigms include architecture, we should be able to deduce from it the nature of the corresponding human endeavour. We are inspired by the idea that there are classical styles or rather paradigms and anti-classical ones. (e.g. Nietzsche)

Renaissance would definitely be an example of a classical style. A typical feature of classical styles is reflecting reality. People are focused on themselves and the real world surrounding them. Hence the extent to which the world is captured realistically becomes the main criterion of beauty, which implies for example the use of perspective in the visual arts and partial secularity in literature (e.g. Decameron by Boccaccio). Concerning architecture, technological development is held in high regard and therefore Renaissance explores a diverse scale of means to build astonishing buildings. Ancient elements are often used, as admiration for Classical antiquity is rather influential in Renaissance. Classical antiquity has been treated as the heyday of the art, exactly because of its focus on realisticity and technical skill. All the typical features of the Renaissance architecture, such as symmetry, geometric pattern, emphasis put on proportions and an increasing number of secular buildings (e.g. palaces, villas), perfectly fit into this concept.

Anti-classical paradigms are those with a more complicated relation to the real world. There are disputes over the definition of Mannerism, however we believe that this concept is quite suitable to distinguish it from Renaissance. For a Renaissance artist, the model is reality. The main motive for a Mannerist artist is precedent art, which leads to their art becoming a *manner*; they revise a form, they select and combine. They experience a feeling of alienation, losing touch with reality, as seen in many diverse displays (e.g. dadaism) during the 20th century in avant-garde. The beauty of the Laurentian Library vestibule is not the sober beauty of Renaissance architecture, it's the beauty of the gone-wild-form, that became way more important than the function, this is obviously connected to the increasing importance of individualism.

When first encountering Baroque architecture, it is easy to be misled - due to all the folds, twists and undulations, form seems to be the most important and beautiful thing about art and consequently life. Going deeper, we find the Baroque era religious in nature; thus we can conclude that the purpose of the form is to show God's magnitude. From a Baroque point of view, the carnal world is something fruitless, abortive, disgusting (frequent motifs of Baroque literature are rot, worms, corruption etc.), and passing. The ostentatious beauty of the Baroque architecture seems to be in conflict with its attitude to life. Nevertheless, conflict and duality shape Baroque's stance to the world. The conflict of the eternal and passing, divine and carnal. The emphasis put on the body does not serve to elevate it, but to demonstrate the difference.

Due to this dispute, we are of the opinion that *Baroque* would be treated as *mad* nowadays. Given the fact that we are living in a different flow, our values have changed, baroque has become a meaning-lacking relic. Because of its exaggerated appearance, it may be considered kitsch. Since we use our new values to look upon Baroque, we tend to overlook its original meaning. The word Baroque gains a whole new dimension. The same applies for other words as well. Architecture can serve as a key to gain comprehension of the paradigm, but it would be misleading to treat it as an independent phenomenon. It makes proper sense only with other evidence such as literature, visual arts, music, philosophy etc.