

Lodz University of Technology
Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Environmental Engineering
Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning

The Summary of Doctoral Thesis

mgr inż arch. Katarzyna Wyszynacka

"The Idea of the Labyrinth in Architecture of the 20th and 21st Century"

The author of the thesis attempts to investigate the phenomenon of the idea of the labyrinth in the contemporary, architectural dimension. The thesis statement determines the maze as a sign of architects who lost their sense of security and expressed a desire to protest against the existing socio-cultural space. The labyrinthine architectural objects presented in the dissertation allow to see creative gestures that are directed towards change that violates the current order of life. In moments of crisis of values the discussed idea was still reviving. The archetype of the labyrinth appears as an element of architects' inspirations in the 20th and 21st century, which has become a spatial expression of times of anxiety and doubt.

The labyrinth in the world of 20th century architecture is presented as a tool in the hands of artists who use it to show negative attitude to modernist architectural ideology. Through the labyrinthine architecture architects present a rebellion directed towards political systems restricting the freedom of individuals. The archetype also became an instrument for cultivating a universal architectural language of memorials commemorating the tragic events of the past. The idea of the labyrinth that appeared in the architecture of the last century supported the departure from functionalism in the field of urban planning. The labyrinthine architecture of the 21st century, which develops the universal character of the building, reduces the influence of the creators' narratives and supports a spreading lifestyle characterized by changeability and speed.

The labyrinthine spatial installations are also presented in the dissertation that fit into the modern rhythm of life and promote the limitation of consumerism. The examples given by the author of the thesis confirm the use of the discussed idea in all scales: from sculptural elements enriching architecture, through buildings, cities, to forms that can be classified between the mentioned groups. The architectural trends confirm that designers were inspired by the theme of the labyrinth in the area of residential, religious and public architecture.

Labyrinth indicates a constant return to questions related to our lives, fate, and condition of human existence. The uninterrupted period of the archetype's functioning in human consciousness emphasized its timelessness. The examples of labyrinthine architecture given in the dissertation show above all the modern and current dimension of the ancient symbol. In the 20th and 21st centuries architects have developed and renewed the popularity of the subject of research in architectural inspirations, creating new visions of architecture, going beyond the convention.