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STYLE AS A REFLECTION OF IDEOLOGY OF THE AUTHORITIES

Abstract: One aspect of style is its conformity or opposition to the ideology of the dominant authorities. When new authorities want to emphasize their isolation from their predecessors, they use art and architecture as ideological propaganda, by creating a new style.

A striking example is ideology in the so-called “Stalinist Empire”, and the architecture of Ukraine, Poland and Romania during the socialist period. The architecture did not demonstrate any continuity with previous styles and just tried to emphasize its non-identity with the “old world”. At the same time in the Soviet Union, for example, socialist art was not homogeneous and radically changed in accordance with the Communist party line – from the stage of Bolshevik ideology formation in the 1920s to Stalinist authoritarianism in the 1940s and early 1950s.

Ingrowth of traditional culture into socialist ideology is exemplified by China with a national version of postmodernism, in contrast to European postmodernism, completely devoid of irony and aimed at revealing the dominant ideology with traditional Chinese architectural techniques. At the same time, the foreign policy task is to promote Chinese culture in a somewhat simplified, “export” version, and within the country – to emphasize the historical continuity and sacredness of authorities.

Keywords: style, reflection, ideology of the authorities, Soviet Union, Ukraine, Poland, Romania, China.

Introduction

There are several meanings of the term “style”. You can analyze style in terms of artistic features or manifestations of national identity, from a commercial perspective – the style of a company or brand, or as a means of instilling a dominant ideology. Regarding the latter role of style, it should be noted that the practice of transforming style into an instrument of influence of a certain ideology has existed since ancient times.

Thus, style cannot only have certain cultural, artistic and aesthetic significance, but also becomes an instrument of a government's struggle against “dissent” or opposition to authoritarian rule (e.g. the spread of “Zakopane style” in Poland, “northern national romanticism” in Finland and the Baltics, and “Ukrainian national romanticism” in Ukraine in the early 20th century became a sign of cultural and artistic circles' struggle for the assertion of their national identity in countries occupied by the Russian Empire).

Style is used by authoritarian regimes not only to consolidate and maintain power within their countries, but also to spread influence abroad. An interesting pattern should be noted – authoritarian regimes that have lost the

ability to develop and focus solely on maintaining power, tend to support the style trends in architecture that lag behind global trends and sometimes directly contradict them.

A striking example is the development of architecture in the USSR. In the 1920s, Soviet architecture developed according to the global trend of modernism, while in the early 1930s its stylistic orientation was changed by directive decrees to Soviet neoclassicism (the unofficial name of this style is “Stalin’s Empire style”) which, after the end of World War II, evolved into a neo-Empire style. Referring to the forms of Neoclassicism and the Empire style was quite natural after the return in the national and partly in the social policy of the USSR to the principles of the times of the Russian Empire. It was also observed in other totalitarian regimes of the time – Fascist in Italy and National Socialist in Germany.

The development of architecture in these countries has led to similarity of its stylistic features: excessive monumentalism, expressiveness, emphasized dynamism and pomposity of architectural forms, and use of propaganda symbols. The common denominator was neglect of architectural (and, more broadly, national and cultural) heritage, especially if it contradicted the dominant ideology.

After World War II, communist regimes were established in Eastern Europe, including Poland and Romania. From the beginning, they started to imitate their “older brother”, even in small things. Fascination with neoclassicism was characteristic of these regimes until it spread to the Soviet Union and died out just as quickly after condemnation of “architectural excess” and a “directive” return of the Soviet Union to modernism in late 1955.

In modern China, which positions itself as a socialist country, the current policy of the ruling Communist Party is aimed at introducing national traditions in modern culture, art and architecture, and educating the population to respect them. There is also a constant policy of promoting Chinese culture in the world, including by means of architecture in the construction of facilities abroad. Although no architectural style is legally required, in practice large buildings are often built in the style of postmodernism (or rather its specific Chinese version). Unlike European postmodernism, which is ironic about the styles of the past, the Chinese version of postmodernism is completely devoid of irony and aims to establish a hereditary link between millennial Chinese traditions and the present.

The aim of the study is to characterize the specifics of style in the different countries as an instrument of the dominant ideology and to show how style responds to political and ideological changes. This goal has led to the development of an appropriate source base. Sources in the following areas have been selected:

- style as an expression of national identity;¹
- problems of art criteria and selection of works of art;²
- national identity as a basis for restoration measures;³
- the phenomenon of postmodernism in Europe and modern stylizations of national motifs.⁴

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- ¹ Y. Ivashko, K. Rezga, *Specific features and issues of preserving the historic cities of Algeria - centres of islamic construction*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2019, no. 58, pp. 143-147; Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, P. Chang, *History of origin and development, compositional and morphological features of park pavilions in Ancient China*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 78-85; Y. Ivashko, T. Kuzmenko, S. Li, P. Chang, *The influence of the natural environment on the transformation of architectural style*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 101-108.
- ² M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, *The concept of art and works of art in the theory of art and in the restoration industry*, "Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts" 2019, vol. XXI, pp. 171-190; P. Gryglewski, Y. Ivashko, D. Chernyshev, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, *Art as a message realized through various means of artistic expression*, "Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts" 2020, vol. XXII, pp. 57-88.
- ³ M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, P. Chang, *Rational and aesthetic principles of form-making in traditional Chinese architecture as the basis of restoration activities*, "International Journal of Conservation science" 2020, vol. 11, issue 2, pp. 499-512; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, Y. Ding, M. Krupa, K. Kusnierz, I.G. Sandu, *The Specificity of the Restoration and Monument Protective Measures for the Preservation of Historical Chinese Gardens*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, issue 3, pp. 1003-1026; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, J. Kobylarczyk, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, *The influence of ideology on the preservation, restoration and reconstruction of temples in the urban structure of post-totalitarian states*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 61, pp. 67-79; Y. Ivashko, K. Rezga, *Specific features of the compositional construction of historical mosques of Algeria as the basis for their preservation and restoration in the original form*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 61, pp. 80-84; Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, *Historical Background and Peculiarities of Mosque Construction in Iran as a Basis for Their Restoration*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 63, pp. 46-53; M. Dyomin, Y. Ivashko, *Research, preservation and restoration of wooden churches in Ukraine*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 61, pp. 85-90; Y. Ivashko, V. Tovbych, A. Dmytrenko, O. Ushakova, O. Kondratska, P. Bigaj, *Stylistic Features of Secession Décor in Ukraine as the Basis for Its Restoration*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2021, no. 68, pp. 117-127.
- ⁴ M. Żychowska, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, N. Kulichenko, X. M. Zhang, *The influence of traditional Chinese landscape architecture on the image of small architectural forms in Europe*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 59-68; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, P. Zueva, Y. Ding, T. Kuzmenko, *Continuity of traditions and innovation in modern landscape design in China*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 94-103; D. Chernyshev, P. Chang, *Postmodern building as Theatrical Decoration: Architectural illusions of Manuel Nunez Yanovsky*, in: *Defining the architectural space - The truth and lie of architecture*, vol. 2, ed. T. Kozłowski, W. Celadyn, A. Mielnik, Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut - Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2020, pp. 21-32; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, *Modern "Chinese-Style" Arbours: Image Authenticity or Distortion?* in: *Defining the architectural space - The truth and lie of architecture*, vol. 3, ed. T. Kozłowski, W. Celadyn, A. Mielnik, Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut - Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2020, pp. 19-31.

Materials and methods

The objectives of the study have led to the choice of scientific methods, such as:

- historical analysis to study the specifics of the socio-political situation in different countries and different periods;
- culturological analysis of the cultural preferences of different periods;
- comparative analysis to compare historical processes and phenomena in style formation, argumentation of certain styles in terms of their dependence on the dominant ideology;
- photofixation and field surveys – to justify the conclusions of specific examples.

Results and discussion

Ideological origins of the socialist era style in the USSR

If we talk about the style of the socialist era in the Soviet Union, from the 1920s to the 1990s it was not homogeneous and reacted quickly to ideological changes taking place in the state. Periods of following world trends and isolationism replaced each other.

In the 1920s, Soviet architecture developed within the global trend of modernism, while in the early 1930s its stylistic orientation was changed by directive decrees. Initially, the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) “On the Restructuring of Literary and Artistic Organizations” eliminated the creative pluralism of the 1920s with its diversity of creative groups, and formed creative unions of writers, composers, artists and architects who were called the instruments of Bolsheviks propaganda. Later, in 1937, the All-Union Congress of Architects made a number of fundamental decisions, including the only creative method in architecture – *socialist realism*. In practice, it proved to be *Soviet neoclassicism* – an ideological modification of traditional Neo-Classicism with the replacement of individual elements by ideological symbols – five-point stars, coats of arms of the Soviet Union, images of workers and Red Army soldiers, etc. For its pomposity and monumentality, the style was unofficially called the “Stalin’s Empire style”. In the pre-war period, there was still some influence of constructivism due to inertia, and the implementation of Communist party decisions was often reduced to hanging classicist attributes on constructed constructivist buildings. After the war, however, neoclassicism really became the basis for creative thinking. As in the days of the Russian Empire, architecture focused on the formation of ceremonial avenues and squares, seeking to create beautiful scenery. After the end of World War II, damaged and partially destroyed buildings were rebuilt,

usually not in their original style, but in the style of Soviet neoclassicism which can sometimes be described as the Soviet neo-Empire style, with such features as the glorification of military power, and use of weapons and armor as decor. An example is the restoration of the destroyed building of the Pivdennyi Railway Station in a regional center – the city of Poltava (architect Ye. Lymar, 1947). The bas-reliefs on the main facade of the building illustrate the idea of succession of the victory of Russian troops in the Battle of Poltava in 1709 and liberation of Poltava by Soviet troops in 1943 (Fig. 1).



Fig.1. The building of the Pivdennyi Railway Station on the Slavy Square in Poltava. Architect Ye. Lymar, 1947 (photo by A. Dmytrenko, 2022)

A characteristic example of the “Stalin’s Empire style” are the pavilions of the Exhibitions of Economic Achievements in Kyiv (Figs. 2, 3). As of the 1950s, the complex consisted of 63 elements – pavilions for various purposes, small architectural forms, green areas and design elements. The Kyiv complex of the Exhibitions of Economic Achievements (1949-1958) was created on the model of the Exhibition of Economic Achievements in Moscow (1935-1954).

It is significant that the “Stalin’s Empire style” was forcibly planted even in those territories of modern Ukraine that were not part of the Soviet Union until 1939, in particular in Western Ukraine. Examples of such “ideological



Fig.2. Pavilion "Cereals and oilseeds" (photo by O. Ivashko, 2021)



Fig.3. Pavilion "Mechanical Engineering and Instrument Making" (photo by O. Ivashko, 2021)

architecture” in Lviv, researched by Oksana Morklyanyk, are apartment buildings at 1 Yaroslava Mudroho Street (1952-1954), 85 Horodotska Street (early 1950s), 50 Yevhena Konovaltsia Street (early 1950s), 76 and 78 Heroiv UPA Street (1952-1955), 3 Hnatiuka Street (1956). The defining features of this style in Lviv were: an active silhouette with the use of variable storeys, triangular pediments, kurdoners and risalits, expression of tectonics, repetitions and rhythmic series of elements, use of towers with semicircles and obelisks, accentuation of corner compositions by pilasters in the form of a balustrade, active use of socialist symbols as decor, modernization of residential sections in 1948. The decor of such houses was to symbolize a happy socialist life.

This confirms the thesis that the more authoritarian and individual the regime, the more it tends to use pomposity, monumentality, staticity and succession with classicism, which historically most fully expressed the features of power.

Summing up the specifics of the ideological nature of the “Stalin’s Empire style”, it should be noted that it did not have a pronounced national color which was expressed mainly in detail – especially in ornamentation.

The second feature of the “Stalin’s Empire style” was that it was planted in foreign lands – a striking example is the “gift” given to Poland by the Soviet Union – the Palace of Culture and Science (originally named after Stalin) in central Warsaw, built on the model of “Stalin’s skyscrapers” (the main building of the Moscow State University), but with elements of Polish historicism (architect L. Rudnev, 1952-1955) (Fig. 4).



Fig.4. Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw (photo by O. Ivashko, 2021)

Another example is the spread of Soviet influence to other countries through architecture - Casa Scântei (Spark House) in Bucharest, Romania - a monument of Romanian architecture in the socialist realism style. Originally called Casa Scântei (House of Spark) or the Palace of the Printing House, it was intended for state press from the beginning. This was the first work in which the constructors introduced the calculation of resistance to a possible earthquake, Bucharest being in the range of the Vrancea earthquake frequencies (some very strong, with over 7 degrees on the Richter scale).⁵

For many years, this monumental building (Fig. 5) remained the largest architectural structure in Bucharest. In fact, it is a four-sided ensemble that houses a large inner courtyard plus two more U-shaped ensembles which are connected to the front body and remained open for later construction of a theater and a union house which were not built due to high costs.⁶

After the construction of the House of Spark on the front esplanade, a statue of Lenin (21 April 1960 - 4 March 1990) was erected on an imposing red marble base.



Fig.5. The House of the Free Press, until 1989 called the House of Sparks, in front of the esplanade of the Square with the statue of Lenin (photo from the collection of prof. Ion Sandu)

⁵ *Administrația Monumentelor și Patrimoniului Turistic*, Ed. PrivEȘTI, Bucuresti 2017.

⁶ F. Tone, *Cum s-a construit Casa Scântei*, "Adevărul" (Arhivă), Bucuresti, 9 iunie 2009.

If we look at the House of Spark (Casa Scânteii) as a monument, we can see similarities with Lomonosov University in Moscow and other buildings in some capitals of former communist countries. Many claim that these ensembles were built according to a project identical to that of the University of Moscow which was built in the same years.⁷

It is said that a team of Romanian architects led by Horia Maicu left for Moscow with a Romanian construction project for Casa Scânteii, intended as a low-rise building, and that it returned with precise instructions to build a monumental building in the style of Stalinist architecture that impresses with its grandeur (like Lomonosov University, Leningradskaya and Ukraine Hotels, the building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and those known as Kotelnicheskaya and Kudrinskaya). We must remember that the Palace of Culture in Warsaw, a gift from Muscovites from the Polish capital,⁸ was built in the same style in the same period.

Prof. Panaite Mazilu, who built the resistance structure of the Spark House, later made important remarks: “The central body was, in fact, a kind of a copy of the eight buildings that had been built in Moscow. According to Sorin Toma, editor-in-chief of the Scânteia newspaper in those years, initially there were two variants. One was modelled on (then fresh) tall buildings in Moscow which mimicked great Gothic cathedrals in the West, while the other one was based on an American model with a flat façade, made of glass and concrete.”⁹

Both were too majestic and seemed meant to dominate by contrast, which is why neither seemed the best solution. In the end, the architects resorted to “a synthesis between the old and the new”, taking over elements from “traditional Romanian architecture” in the future construction and using the church model. Several decorative elements from Curtea de Argeş, Cozia and Horezu were selected, which were taken from the architecture of Casa Scânteii.¹⁰

⁷ P. Tache, *The infamous story of the Free Press House, the former House of Sparks*, (in Romanian) *Infama poveste a Casei Presei Libere, fosta Casa Scânteii*, *Istoricul Casei Presei...* 2018 <https://evz.ro/infama-poveste-a-casei-presei-libere-fosta-casa-scanteii.html?v=347635&page=1> (Access: 20.05.2022); M. Cosac, *Casa Scânteii, ridicată pe locul Hipodromului Băneasa*, “Bucuresti din povesti”, 20.09.2018.

⁸ http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casa_Scânteii (Access: 20.05.2022); I. Sandu, M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, O. Ivashko, Y. Ivashko, C.G. Lăzăreanu, K. Paprzyca, I.G. Sandu, P. Sztabińska-Kałowska, *Scientific Conservation of the Outstanding Theaters of the 19th Century and Their Influence on the Creation of Modern Art-Space*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2021, vol. 12, issue 2, pp. 361-390.

⁹ I. Sandu, M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, O. Ivashko, Y. Ivashko, C.G. Lăzăreanu, K. Paprzyca, I.G. Sandu, P. Sztabińska-Kałowska, *Scientific Conservation of the Outstanding Theaters of the 19th Century and Their Influence on the Creation of Modern Art-Space*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2021, vol. 12, issue 2, pp. 361-390.

¹⁰ F. Georgescu, P. Cernovodeanu, A. Cebuc, *Monumente din Bucureşti*, Ed. Meridiane, Bucureşti 1966; I. Sandu, M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, O. Ivashko, Y. Ivashko, C.G. Lăzăreanu, K. Paprzyca, I.G. Sandu, P. Sztabińska-Kałowska, *Scientific Conservation ...*, pp. 361-390.

Among them, there were rows of columns of the base of the lower bodies on the left and right of the central body, but also the so-called “ocnita” (a rectangular window deep in the wall) which allows access to all the central body floors. It is believed that the four towers that set the outer boundaries of the ensemble were taken from the architecture of churches from the monasteries of Sucevita and Dragomirna.¹¹

During the first stage, the chief architect of the works, Horia Maicu, wanted the columns of the main entrance to be twisted from the construction, but Prof. Panaite Mazilu, responsible for the resistance structure of the ensemble, objected, which is justified by his expertise.

There is an opinion that, despite the relative similarities of the House of Spark and Lomonosov University, they are expressions of two architectural orientations that differ in design, style and construction. Moreover, the architecture of Lomonosov University lacks a national character, while our architecture has many elements related to the past. A series of numerical comparisons was also used in order to reinforce the buildings differently. Thus, at Casa Scânteii the horizontal/vertical ratio is twice as high, in favor of the horizontal – a difference with a considerable visual but also psychological effect.¹²

Moreover, the building in Bucharest was designed to withstand the earthquakes of Vrancea. It was the first house in Romania for which Italian earthquake calculation norms were used, alongside concrete with rigid reinforcement.¹³ Thus, the central body went down in history for another reason: the already raised and lower parts of the ensemble were built of concrete, with metal pillars and beams manufactured in Resita.¹⁴

It is also worth mentioning that after the central body was built, small connecting bodies were made with joints on either side to prevent certain settlement of it. The central body was completed in 1954 when the “resistance team” fulfilled its mission on the construction site of the House of Spark, and by 1956 the finishes were completed.¹⁵

It is known that the crest was changed during the construction of the building due to financial problems. In 1952, the building even appeared on the reverse of the 100 lei banknote. However, after 1954 there were almost no large donations for the construction site. Moreover, after Stalin died, the idea to place the Russian star in the five corners of the arrow center in the central body was abandoned. Columns at the main entrance were not adorned with

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² F. Tone, *Cum s-a construit...*; F. Georgescu, P. Cernovodeanu, A. Cebuc, *Monumente din București...*; P. Tache, *The infamous story...*

¹³ P. Tache, *The infamous story...*

¹⁴ F. Tone, *Cum s-a construit...*

¹⁵ P. Tache, *The infamous story*, op.cit.

marble sculptures and the U-shaped side bodies were not completed. In honor of August 23, 1956, it was declared that the monument was finished. During the commissioning period, there were unsuccessful attempts to use metallurgical concrete, precast concrete and other modern materials without sufficient experience.¹⁶

As the construction costs were very high, the theater and the union house were not built. Part of the funds was collected through a “voluntary” public collection. Employees would receive vouchers of the value of 5, 10, 20, 30, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000 lei.¹⁷

In conclusion, Casa Scanteii was built with great efforts, without achieving the intended purpose.¹⁸ Thousands of people worked continuously from the end of 1949 until 1956 or 1957 (the date of the inauguration is not known for sure), and the work was not interrupted even during winter. At present, the imposing Stalinist building has fallen into disuse – it is gloomy and almost completely inactive. The huge spaces are no longer useful, being difficult to heat in winter. It has remained a kind of a vestige of the former communist dictatorship; there are inscriptions with the hammer and sickle, the symbol of the former communist party, at almost every entrance (Fig. 6).



Fig.6. A communist symbol left from the early years (detail from a photo from the collection of prof. Ion Sandu)

¹⁶ I. Sandu, M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, O. Ivashko, Y. Ivashko, C.G. Lăzăreanu, K. Paprzyca, I.G. Sandu, P. Sztabińska-Kałowska, (2021) *Scientific Conservation...*, op. cit. <https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-cultura-12642819-sculptura-hidra-costin-ionita-vernisata-cadrul-proiect-1990.htm> (Access: 20.05.2022).

¹⁷ I. Sandu, M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, O. Ivashko, Y. Ivashko, C.G. Lăzăreanu, K. Paprzyca, I.G. Sandu, P. Sztabińska-Kałowska, *Scientific Conservation*, op. cit.

¹⁸ https://romaniamama.ro/turism/monumentul-aripi-piata-presei-libere_3465.html (Access: 20.05.2022).

The phenomenon of Chinese postmodernism

In China, like in the Soviet Union, periods of openness to world trends in architecture are replaced by periods of relative secrecy and self-isolation. The period before the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, when many Western architects were involved in the design of significant objects (a CCTV building by Rem Koolhaas; the Olympic National Stadium (“Bird’s Nest”) in Beijing by Herzog & de Meuron (Switzerland), the National Water Sports Center (“Water Cube”), Beijing by PTW Architects (Australia), consultants: PTW Architects, CCDI, Arup and others), can be considered the last such period of openness.

Chinese President Xi Jinping first called for an end to “weird architecture” in 2014, when he criticized many of the country’s unusually shaped buildings. In 2016, the Chinese government issued a new directive banning “bizarre architecture” and criticising some of the “oversized, xenocentric, weird” buildings in the country. According to the South China Morning Post (SCMP), the directive states that urban architecture should henceforth be “suitable, economic, green and pleasing to the eye”.¹⁹

Such decisions have contributed to the flourishing of a style in China that can be described as “Chinese postmodernism.” Some critics also ironically call it the “big hat style”, alluding to the common method of finishing a modern building with a traditional Chinese roof with curved corners, or placing a replica of a famous historic building on the roof.²⁰

Unlike many other styles, postmodernism in architecture (and art in general) has always been positioned as a “non-political” phenomenon, fundamentally skeptical of any ideology. However, even this style can be used for propaganda, which is well illustrated by the example of the abovementioned architectural trend in China. It is advisable to compare this style with European / American postmodernism, highlighting the common and different elements.

In “Chinese postmodernism” there are such characteristic features of postmodernism as bold experiments on architecture, inconsistency of the appearance of a building with its function and layout, certain “theatricality” of architecture, use of historical allusions and direct architectural “quotes”. However, in contrast to Western, “Chinese postmodernism” is completely devoid of elements of irony, parody and grotesque. At a time when a European

¹⁹ *In pictures: China bans 'bizarre' architecture*, 22 February 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-35630043> (Access: 20.05.2022); L. Wang, *China officially bans 'weird' architecture*, <https://inhabitat.com/china-finally-bans-weird-architecture/> (Access: 20.05.2022).

²⁰ L. Teixeira, *Building China: How "Big Hats" Came to Dominate Chinese Architecture*, <https://radiichina.com/building-china-how-big-hats-came-to-dominate-chinese-architecture/> (Access: 20.05.2022); J. Lam, *The Future of China's "Weird" Architectural Scene*, <https://placesjournal.org/workshop-article/the-future-of-chinas-weird-architectural-scene/?cn-reloaded=1> (Access: 20.05.2022).

or American architect is seeking to transform an architectural object into a theatrical setting – “dematerialization” of the building (theatrical decorator and architect Manolo Nunez-Janowski, and architects Ricardo Bofill and Charles Moore do this especially well), a Chinese architect turns a citation of ancient architecture into a certain ideological symbol, thus emphasizing the continuity of the change of epochs – from ancient times to the present – and highlighting the significant role of Chinese civilization at all times.

As in Europe and the United States, Chinese postmodernism also features a combination of architectural image and function uncharacteristic of this image. For citation, either well-known objects or characteristic forms are chosen, but unlike in Europe and the United States, where these can be forms of different epochs and styles (especially ancient Greek, Roman, or Renaissance), in China they are always historical Chinese forms.

In Europe and the United States, historical forms are not reproduced literally according to the original, although the style as a whole remains recognizable. However, the proportions of classical orders change, columns even turn upside down, mascarons are replaced by images of the architect-author (as Charles Moore did in Piazza d’Italia in New Orleans), and classical Roman arches are transformed into theatrical scenery and create the impression of intangible elements. The residential complex Les Espaces d’Abraxas in Noisy-le-Grand near Paris (1978-1982) has been transformed into a theatrical setting with hypertrophied order, a triumphal arch and an amphitheater square that surrounds the triumphal arch in circles.

European and American architects of postmodernism play a certain intellectual game of guessing which historical object is quoted, where the modern allusion comes from, with the viewer. Thus, another characteristic that is true of European and American postmodernism, apart from architecture-theater, is the architecture-intellectual puzzle regarding knowledge of history. Thus, the architecture of postmodernism becomes a synthesis of architecture, art (sculpture, bas-relief, paintings) and performance, while losing the functionality of form.

European, American and Chinese postmodernism aims to avoid becoming a modern exact replica of an object built many centuries ago. And this is common to these varieties of postmodernism.

European and American postmodernism is well studied, but the phenomenon of Chinese postmodernism, its hidden ideological essence, remains unexplored. The authors have tried to analyze the characteristic features of Chinese postmodernism.

First of all, it should be noted that there are two versions of Chinese postmodernism today: domestic in China and “export” outside China. The inner version of Chinese postmodernism is closer to the historical original and

quotes objects that most fully express the greatness of Chinese civilization, especially the main pavilions of the Forbidden City in Beijing, dating back to the Ming and Qing empire (Fig. 7).

The authors have selected some striking examples of Chinese domestic postmodernism. Perhaps the most striking one is the Beijing City Hall, where the special political and ideological significance of the building is emphasized with an entrance accentuated by a curved tile roof placed directly on the roof of a pavilion of modern architecture that embodies basic national forms (Fig. 8). There you can feel allusions to the Tayhedian Pavilion of the Forbidden City in Beijing – the main pavilion of ancient China and the main symbol of government.

Not surprisingly for atheistic modern China, there is an allusion to ancient temples of Taoism and Confucianism, such as the Hu County Huayang Yuan Dynasty Temple, Arhat Temple, Dongyue Temple, Huxian Confucian Temple, Baxian Temple, Shuilu Temple, and Louguantai – “Shujingtai” of the Ming Dynasty.

Just as the main imperial and temple pavilions became a source of inspiration in modern administrative and party buildings, the imperial gate, which is also symbolic, became the source of quotations in the main transport buildings (Fig. 9).



Fig.7. Tayhedian Pavilion (太和殿, Supreme Harmony) Forbidden City in Beijing. Photo by M. Żychowska, 2005



Fig.8. Beijing City Hall. Stylization of Tayhedyan Pavilion on the roof of a modern building. Photo by M. Żychowska, 2005

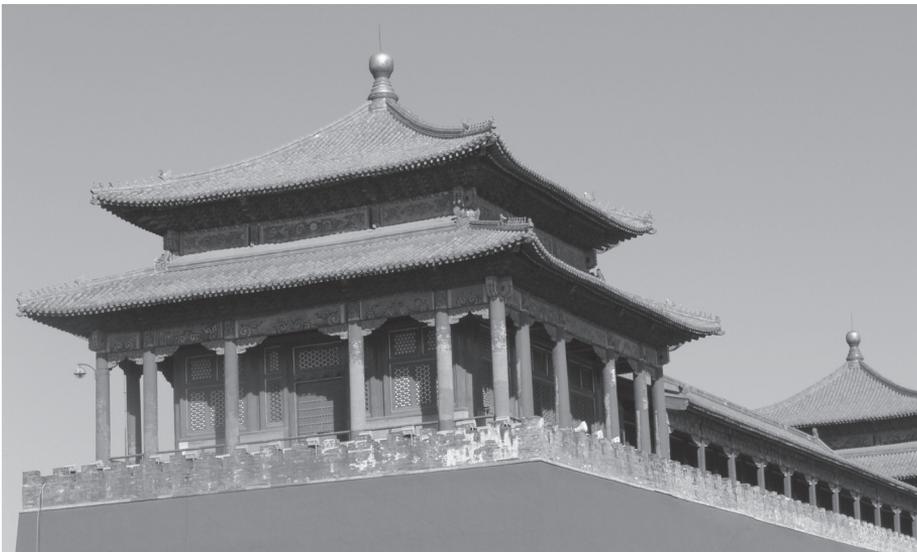


Fig. 9. Meridian (South) Gate – the central entrance to the Forbidden City. Side wing. Photo by M. Żychowska, 2005

There were several entrances on each side of the walls in the Forbidden City, but the main one was the South Gate in the south wall. Two protruding wings, departing from the South Gate, together with the gate itself, bounded the three sides of the Meridian Gate. The central passage of the Meridian Gate was sacred, constituting part of the Imperial Way – the central axis of the Forbidden City and the whole ancient Beijing; this passage could only be walked by the emperor and – during the wedding ceremony – the Empress.

The location of the three stylized towers of the South Gate pavilions on the roof of the modern building of the Beijing West Station is not accidental (Fig. 10). It should be noted that under the central pavilion, on the main axis, there is also a portal with a through arch, constituting a direct allusion to the South Gate: there is the main (imperial) arch accentuated by a larger pavilion, and two stylized side wings with smaller pavilions. In this case, the walls of the station symbolize the high defensive walls of the Forbidden City. In the central pavilion on the roof of the West Station there is even a gilded crowning element stylized for the pavilions of the South Gate and there are stylized figures on the edges of the roof, the number of which testified to the importance of the building for the empire.



Fig. 10. View of the main facade of the West Railway Station in Beijing. Source:[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beijing_West_Railway_Station_\(20180628184009\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beijing_West_Railway_Station_(20180628184009).jpg) [Date of access: 15/05/2022]

The choice of such a unique object for styling was not accidental. Just as the South Gate was the main entrance to the heart of the developed empire, its symbol flanking the square in front of the gate, the West Station is the main gateway to modern China, its symbol, China's largest station and one of the largest stations in Asia. It was built in 1996 and expanded in 2000, designed to accommodate 300,000 passengers at a time. The theme of the South Gate is played in the building of the Beijing Central Station, dating from the 1950s. The main part is accentuated by two paired towers (the side wings – smaller towers).

It can be felt in other modern buildings of different functional orientation in Beijing, where towers are crowned with traditional golden balls and roof edges are decorated with symbolic figures of animals which now do not carry the former content load. The export version of Chinese postmodernism envisages greater simplification of national elements and removal of hidden ideological-political content. First of all, features of Chinese architecture known to foreigners are reproduced – curved roofs, red lanterns, sculptures of lions and dragons, bright polychrome, etc. A striking example of this design solution is the high-rise building of the Beijing Palace Soluxe Hotel in the capital of Kazakhstan – Nur Sultan.²¹

The success of the export version of Chinese postmodernism is evidenced by the popularity of national-style Chinese restaurants outside China and introduction of Chinese landscape design, especially in the mass production of “Chinese style” gazebos with curved roofs.

The export version of Chinese postmodernism is less pompous, brighter and more decorated, as can be seen in the tourist areas of Suzhou – a famous tourist center of China (Fig. 11).

Conclusions

The formation of a style corresponding to the prevailing ideology is analyzed, using examples of styles of the socialist era in the Soviet Union, Poland and Romania, as well as modern Chinese postmodernism. Changes in ideology in socialist countries were invariably reflected in art and architecture.

An original phenomenon that still needs to be investigated is Chinese postmodernism which aims to use historical quotations in modern Chinese architecture, but without the irony of European and American postmodernism, and based solely on historical national soil.

²¹ M. Gawęcki, *New Urbanization of the Steppe. Astana: a Capital Called the Capital*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272575110_New_Urbanization_of_the_Steppe_Astana_A_Capital_Called_the_Capital (Access: 20.05.2022).

In the case of ideologically significant buildings of modern China, we can talk about scale, monumentality and selection of only the most iconic national objects, authentic forms and traditional polychromy. Tourist sites are small due to a large number of elements, decor in the form of ornaments, bas-reliefs, sculptures, traditional lanterns and furniture elements, emphasized by bright polychrome and borrowing authentic forms from many types of buildings – residential pavilions, temples, gazebos, city gate pavilions, etc. The variety of Chinese postmodernism in tourist facilities involves certain hyperbolization of China's image for foreigners. In this respect, it can be compared with European and American postmodernism in terms of the hyperbole of the quoted image, but the means of this hyperbole are different: with a touch of irony in Europe and the United States, and without irony in China. This indicates the need for further research on the phenomenon of Chinese postmodernism which coexists with dominant state-of-the-art architecture of China.



Fig.11. Suzhou Tourist District. Photo by M. Żychowska, 2005

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STYL JAKO ODZWIERCIEDLENIE IDEOLOGII WŁADZY

Abstrakt: Jednym z elementów stylu jest jego zgodność lub sprzeciw wobec ideologii dominującej władzy. Kiedy nowa władza chce podkreślić swoją odrębność od poprzedników, wykorzystuje sztukę i architekturę w celach propagandowych, tworząc nowy styl. Uderzającym przykładem odzwierciedlającym styl rozumiany ideologicznie, jest architektura w tak zwanym „imperium stalinowskim”, czyli na obszarze Ukrainy, Polski i Rumunii w okresie socjalizmu. Architektura okresu socjalistycznego nie zachowywała ciągłości z poprzednimi stylami i starała się podkreślić swoją odrębność wobec „starego świata”. W tym samym okresie, na przykład w Związku Radzieckim, sztuka socjalistyczna nie była jednorodna i radykalnie zmieniła się zgodnie z linią partii komunistycznej – od etapu kształtowania się ideologii bolszewizmu w latach 20. XX wieku do stalinowskiego autorytaryzmu w latach 40. i na początku lat 50.

Oryginalnym przykładem przenikania kultury tradycyjnej w ideologię socjalistyczną są Chiny z ich narodową wersją postmodernizmu. W odróżnieniu od postmodernizmu europejskiego, jest ona całkowicie pozbawiona ironii i ma na celu podkreślenie dominującej ideologii za pomocą tradycyjnych chińskich technik architektonicznych. Jednocześnie zadaniem polityki zagranicznej jest promowanie kultury chińskiej w nieco uproszczonej, „eksportowej” wersji. Podczas gdy w kraju istotne jest podkreślanie ciągłości historycznej i świętości autorytetów.

Słowa kluczowe: styl, refleksja, ideologia władzy, Związek Radziecki, Ukraina, Polska, Rumunia, Chiny.

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