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**Proceedings of the International Colloquium
TOTALITARIANISMS AND TRADITIONS
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On the cover:

Jozef Jankovič: "Victims warn!", Sculptural group
for the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising at Banská Bystrica, 1964-1969. Foto J. Čeněk (to study by K. Bajurová)

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Introduction

The intention of our Colloquium has been limited to the ambition to arrange a meeting of scholars coming from both sides of the collapsed "iron curtain" offering them an opportunity to exchange their ideas and confront their experiences with the rôle art played in various totalitarian regimes. We believe that the problem of the relation between art and dictatorial political power has not lost anything of its topicality in our post-totalitarian or post-industrial and post-utopian period. On the contrary, the problem of the control over art is becoming the more urgent the more disguised the nature of it is.

At the same time we are fully aware that there is a risky premise implied in our project: To compare various totalitarian regimes and their artistic styles presupposes that there is a common denominator legitimizing such a comparison. Nevertheless, there exists also another justification of such a comparative procedure: To specify the uniqueness of different phenomena by contraposing them. It is well known that three different ideas were developed as far as this topic is concerned:

A. According to the first, there exists no general or universal "totalitarian art". As a consequence, affinities between artistic expressions of various totalitarian regimes, between Fascist or Nazi-art on the one hand and s.c. Socialist Realism on the other, should be regarded as superficial and limited to their style.

B. According to the opposite idea artistic structures of various totalitarian states are so close to each other that they justify speaking of a general phenomenon called "totalitarian art".

C. A mediating position between both opinions mentioned above is represented by the belief in a universal artistic evolution irrespective of the different political structures within which art functioned.

It is noteworthy that each of these three ideas is based on a different premise as far as the principal

determinant of art is concerned. The first one presupposes that art is influenced and shaped principally by the economic bases of particular totalitarianisms do not allow to speak about a "totalitarian art" in general, according to that conception. As a consequence, similarities between artistic styles of various totalitarian regimes have to be conceived of as accidental and superficial. The opposite view implies the belief in the primacy of the social function of art and the decisive role ideology or even politics play in the matters of art. According to that conception, similar artistic styles follow similar political structures despite the differences in their economics bases. As far as the third opinion is concerned, it implies the belief in an autonomous nature of artistic development and its capability to transcend all social bindings. As a consequence, not only Nazi or Fascist art and Socialist Realism represent parts of a common cultural phenomenon, but also Surrealism can be conceived of as a part of an all-embracing neo-Classical movement in the thirties.

There are some challenging question intentionally implied in the project of our colloquium too. The first of them can be put as follows: It is evident that all kinds of totalitarian art have an affirmative relation to the art of the past. Does that fact legitimizes us to regard them as intentional historical revivals? Moreover, does the neo-Classical nature of art in modern dictatorial regimes justify us to interpret them as vehicles of political restorations and regard them as significant tokens of post- or counter-revolutionary periods?

It is just the perspective opened by post-Modernism and post-Communism that revealed the utopian nature of avant-garde art in its full scope. As a consequence, there is a question whether the anti-avant-garde strategy of various kinds of totalitarian art legitimize our conceiving them as anti-utopias rather than as retrospective utopias.

It is quite natural that iconoclastic tendencies accompany utopian dreams. Paradoxically enough an alliance of iconoclastic device with the cult of art came into existence not only within the avant-garde

movements but also within totalitarian doctrines. The specific character and particular rôle that tandem played within different contexts is also worth analyzing.

One of the cardinal problems concerning the history of the twentieth century art is closely connected with problems enumerated above. It can be formulated into the question whether the avant-garde utopias on the one hand and the totalitarian conservative and retrospective utopias on the other represent complementary elements of a commonly shared cultural spectrum or even a system. Or, on the contrary, whether various kinds of totalitarian art can be regarded as efforts to stop and reverse the universal course of the history of art. In other words, we should test the hypothesis that totalitarian artistic idioms weren't but ideological tools of unsuccessful attempts to catch up with economically leading countries by means of the revival of pre-industrial artistic forms and political structures.

At present the history of Modernism seems to have come to its end. As a consequence of the collapse of all revolutionary and futurist utopias we are faced with an unexpected question: How can the eclecticism shared by totalitarian art as well as post-Modernism be explained? We are here confronted with an opportunist challenge cynically claiming that

the totalitarian conservative and retrospective utopias can be regarded as predecessors of post-Modernist anti-utopia. For better or for worse we cannot avoid testing a hypothesis however phantasmagoric it appears, that there could be disguised connection or, if you want a secret contract between totalitarian and post-Modern conservativisms. It is not my purpose here to look for answers to the presented questions. Nevertheless, I have to close this list of problems we have to cope with by a self devouring question: Does not my a little long winded enumerating implied the Hegelian prejudice that there must be (and probably is) an inner unity or homogeneity between artistic styles and political and social structures? If there does not exist such an inner connection at all, many of the puzzles presented in this introduction can be solved in a quite simple way: In accordance with E. Gombrich's doctrine we could regard artistic forms as arbitrary tools able to be used (or misused) for different (and some times even opposite) purposes receiving their particular meaning from the context they are functioning within. Despite attractiveness of such solution we have first to take it as a hypothesis and to try to falsify it to keep loyalty to Sir Ernst. To do so is, in my opinion, one of the tasks of this meeting.

Ján BAKOŠ

I. Utopias and Iconoclasms

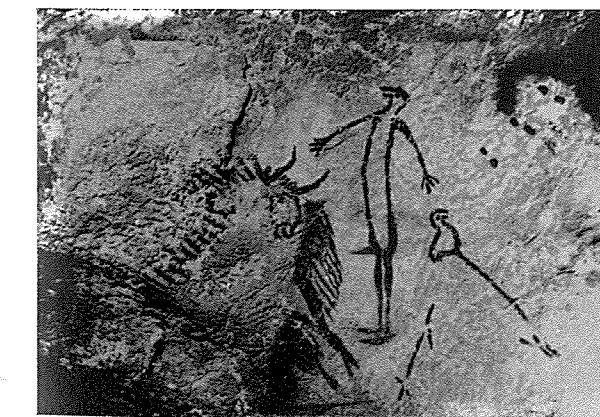
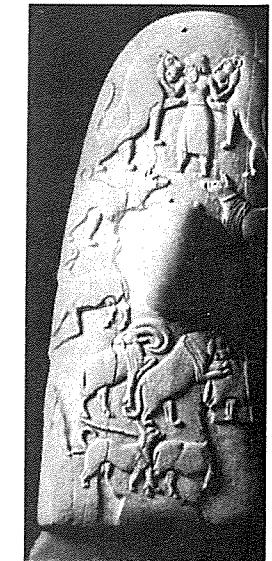
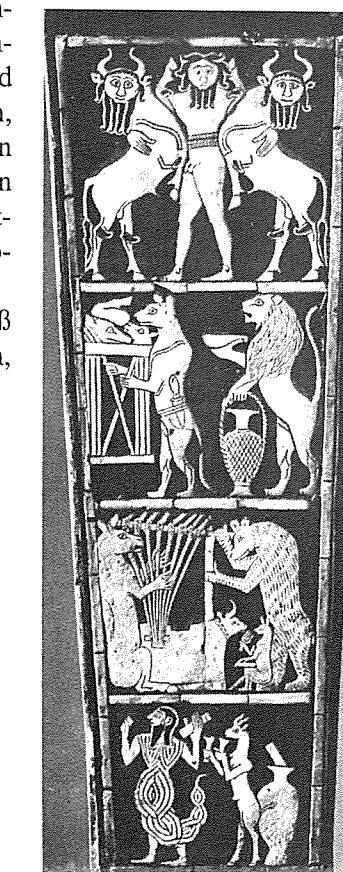
Bezähmende Symmetrie und triumphale Utopie

Rudolf CHADRABA

Verehrter Leser soll in zwei Beiträgen dieses Sammelbandes von utopischen Vorhaben der holländischen De Stijl-Gruppe unterrichtet werden, deren "neoplastizistische" Schöpfungen bekanntlich asymmetrisch waren, in Malerei und Architektur. Das Prinzip der Asymmetrie ließ sich noch im weiteren Umfange der modernen Kunstschauführung geltend machen. Nach der nur dekorativ vorgeblendeten, asymmetrischen Rocaille des 18. Jahrhunderts an sonst symmetrischen Fassaden usw. kam es nun, von ab 1910 ungefähr, zum Einverleiben der Asymmetrie in die innere Struktur von Artefakten, mit utopischen Konnotationen.

Es sollte darüber nicht vergessen werden, daß im Gegenteil auch asymmetrische Konfigurationen,

zwar von alters her, mit utopischen Projekten von Seiten einer sakralisierten, charismatischen Autorität verknüpft sein konnten.



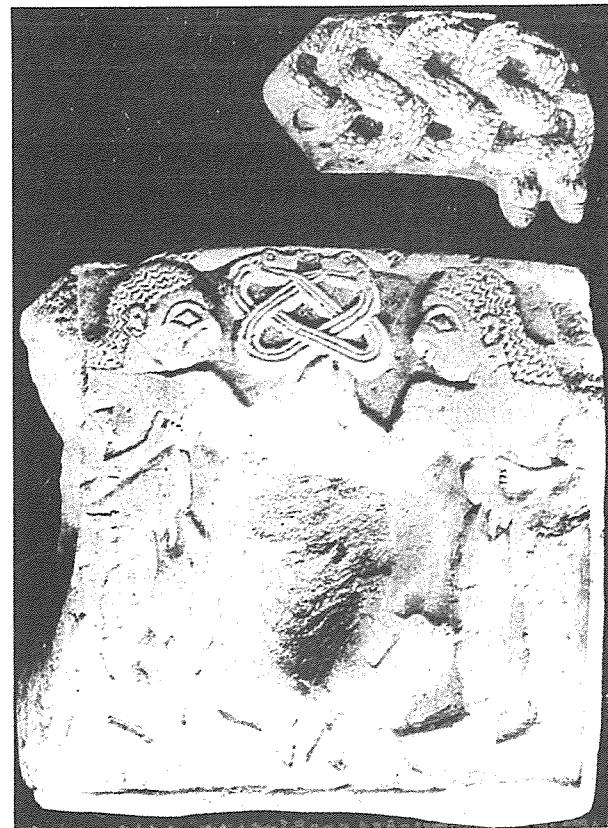
1. Auerochs und Jäger; Jungpaläolithikum. Lascaux, Höhle des Menschen

2. Tierzähmungsszenen vom Anfang des 3.Jt. v.Ch.: Harfe mit Gilgamesch vom königl. Grab von Ur; Messerhand griff, vordynast. Ägypten

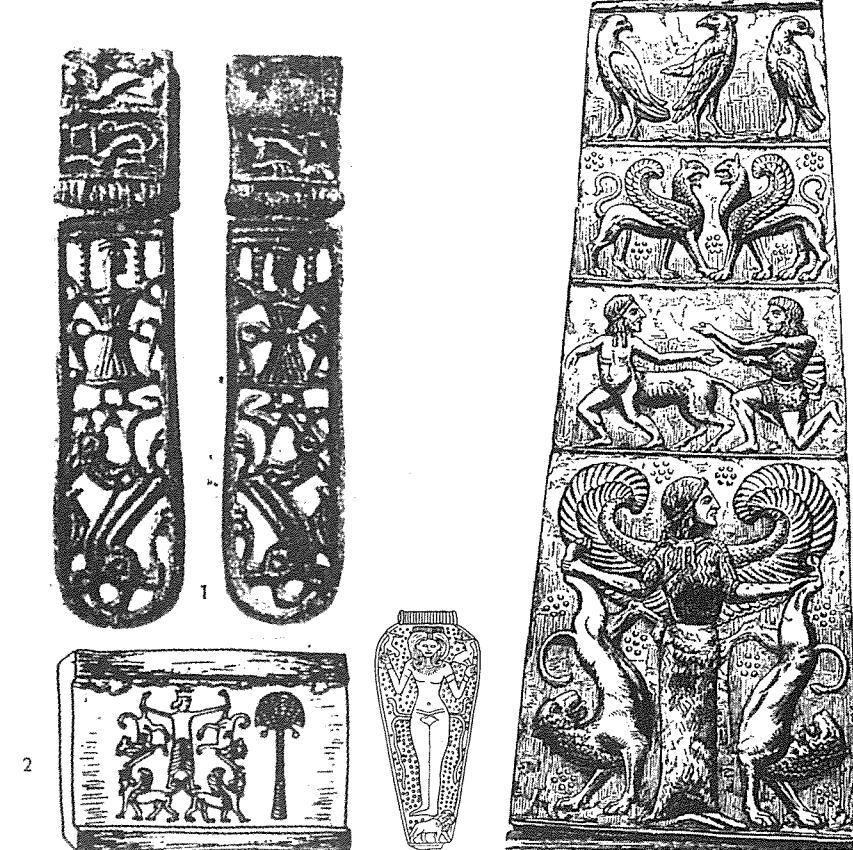


3. a) Altsyrische Plakette, nach H.Read - b) Altsyrische Schale - c) Hethitischer Priester; 2.Jt. v.Ch. - d.) Merowengische Riemenzunge, Bronze, Schweiz, 7.Jh.

Den Ursprung der Symmetrie in der bildenden Kunst suchte der Kritiker und Kunsthistoriker Herbert Read¹ im altägyptischen Ritual der Tierzähmung. Er sah einen wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen der vereinzelten, linearschematischen Darstellung eines



4. Persischer König als Löwenzähmer, sassanidischer Silberschüssel, 6.Jh., British Museum

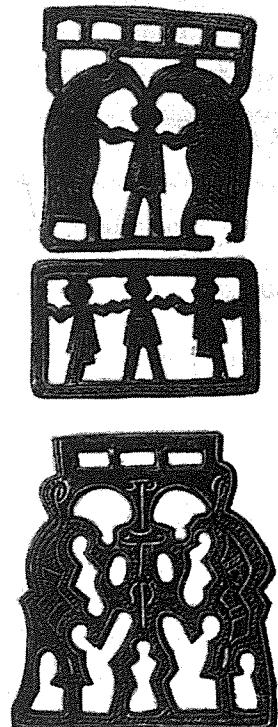


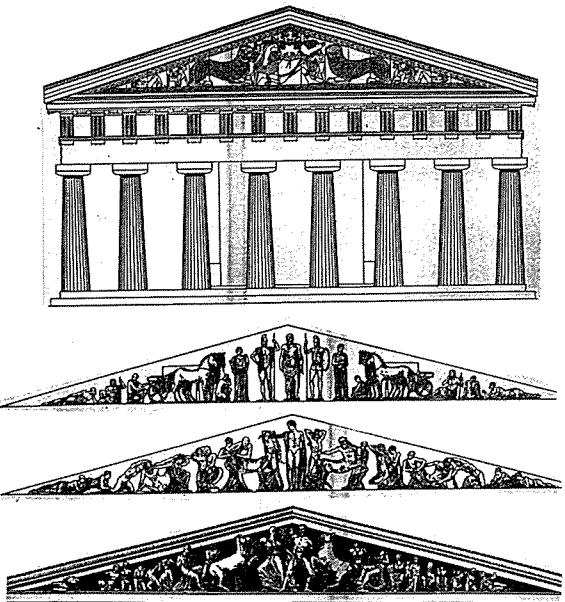
5. Awarostlawische Gussbronzen als Stilisierungen des iranischen Bezähmungsmotivs, nach J.Dekan - Syrische Vase aus Ugarit, 2.Jt. v.Ch. (Nachzeichnung) - Merowinger Bronzeschlag, 6.Jh.

dynastischen Ägyptens und der mesopotamischen Stadtstaaten vom Beginn des 3. Jahrtausends v.Ch.² (Abb. 1).

“Ein gutes Beispiel”, so Read, “ist die Muschleinlegearbeit aus einem Königsgrab in Ur, die vier Szenen agierender Tiere zeigt... Ein weiteres Beispiel ist ein jetzt im Louvre befindliches Messer aus Feuerstein. Es wurde in Dschebel el-Araq in Oberägypten gefunden, ist aber wahrscheinlich mesopotamischen Ursprungs”.³ Read weist ferner auf Beteiligung des von Mesopotamien sich ausbreitenden Flechtmotivs hin. Das Geflecht, herkommend vom urzeitlichen Handwerk des Zaun- oder Korbflechtens und Textils, tritt als rational-menschliche Potenz hinzu: eine giftige Schlange (Abb. 2-3) wird geometrisch eingeflochten und somit bewältigt, unschädlich gemacht.

Im berühmten Löwentor von Mykenä erblickte Read eine Substitution des Riesen oder Zauberers in der Symmetrie-Achse durch eine Säule. Die Herkunft





6. Entwicklungsphasen der griechischen Tempelgiebel

von Nahen Osten wäre da anzunehmen, wie auch die kyklopische Bauart der rechteckig angelegten Festung. Man findet auch Lebensbäume zwischen sich davon ernährenden Tieren. Statt eines Menschen kann eine Hybris die Dominanz übernehmen, es kommt auch zum manierlichen Rollenwechsel von Mensch und Tiere in der Symmetrie, im Sinne der "verkehrten Welt".

Read zufolge handelt es sich ursprünglich um Selbstbestätigung des von der Naturwüchsigkeit emanzipierten Menschen am Übergang vom Jäger- und Sammlertum zur seßhaften Lebensart der Viehzüchter und Landwirte.

Eine zählebige Tradition der Ikonographie wurde damit abgelehnt. Survivals und Revivals des Beißungsmotivs in symmetrischer Anordnung finden sich viel später z.B. im archaisch-griechischen Kunsthantwerk, auf einer Bronzepalette mit Nike-Victoria als Dompteuse von Löwen, wie an jenem Beispiel von Ur auch mit begleitenden zirkusähnlichen Tierszenen (Abb. 5). Die Siegesmythologie der Griechen war bekanntlich fortschreitend mit uto-pischen Herrschaftsträumen verbunden.

In der klassischen, ja schon unmittelbar vorklassischen Zeit setzt sich die Tradition auf den Tympa-

na griechischer Tempel fort, mit anwachsender, doch nicht vollständiger Vermenschlichung (statt Tiere halbtierische Kentauren - Abb. 6).

Als Anreicherung der Komposition erscheint sehr früh schon die Doppelzonigkeit: die gebärende Große Mutter in Çatal Hüyük (6. Jht. v.Chr.) sitzt auf einem Löwenthron im Typus "Herrin der Tiere", *Potnia therôn*. Dies pflanzt sich bis zur mitteleuropäischen Madonna als Thron Salomons und deren Reduktion in die Glatzer Madonna (Hofkunst Karls IV., nach 1350) und die "Löwenmadonnen" schlesischer Plastik seit um 1360 fort. Einen Sonderfall bildet ein hethitischer Priester, stehend auf einem Sockel mit symmetrischer Löwenzähmung en relief (Abb. 3). Im Britischen Museum habe ich neben altmesopotamischen Szenen kombinierter Löwen- und Schlangenzähmung mit dem Stehen auf Löwen auch eine radikale Probe äquilibristischer Löwenzähmung, mit Löwen auch als Fußschemel, der persisch-sassanidischen Kleinkunst gefunden (Abb. 4). Statt der Löwentötung, die er auch alljährlich rituell vollführen mußte, exerziert der persische König die Löwen mit einer unglaublichen zirkusartigen Gewandtheit. An utopischen Assoziationen ist da nicht zu zweifeln, seit der spektakulären Eroberung Babylons durch Kyros d.Gr. 539 v.Chr., mit nachfolgender Gründung des Weltreiches usw. Wiederholte strahlten apokalyptische Prophetien eines tausendjährigen Reiches (Chiliasmus, vom gr. *chilioi*-Tausend) von Iran aus. Sassanidische Herrscher werden auch auf dem Löwenthron sitzend dargestellt (Abb. 10).

Ján Dekan hat auf anknüpfende Muster der awarisch-slawischen Gußbronzen des 8. Jahrhunderts hingewiesen, mit vereinfachender Stilisierung, die zu Mißdeutungen verleiten kann.⁴ Merowingische Beispiele gehen auch so weit (Abb. 5).

Survival oder Revival gleichviel, von dieser Art ist immerhin die rustikale Ritzezeichnung eines Zaubers zwischen zwei gehörnten Tieren (Abb. 9) auf einer Innenwand der St. Georgskirche der Prager Burg vom 11. Jh. - so unchristlich sie auch anmutet und wohl auch ist: ein Revival oder vielmehr Survival der Urzeit.

Doch auch die christliche Kunst konnte von der symmetrischen Tierzähmung vielfachen Gebrauch machen. Ebenfalls vom 11. Jahrhundert haben wir ein keramischer Beispiel, Pflasterstück ehem. Ro-

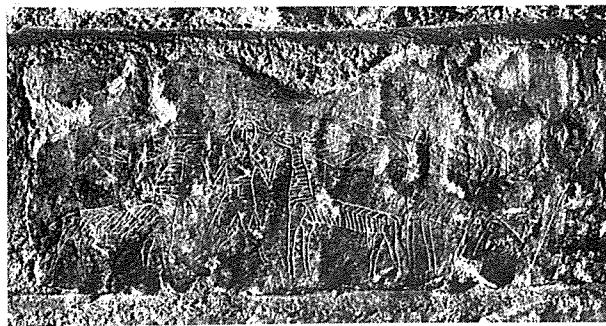


7. Tafel vom gallorömischen Konsulardyptichon und Elfenbeitafel vom Kloster Sankt Gallen aus dem 9.Jh.

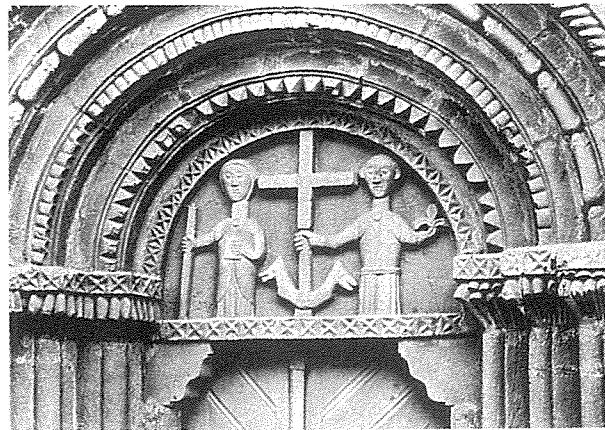
tunde in Dolní Chabry bei Prag. Ein nimbierter, also heiliger Priester im Ornat bezähmt zwei vierfüßige Säugtiere, indem er sie an den Schwänzen hochhebt. An der Christlichkeit dieser Darstellung ist kaum zu zweifeln, ich glaube eine altchristliche, wohl mißverstandene, Vorlage dazu gefunden zu haben. Eine Pilgerampulle aus der 2. Hälfte des 4. Jahrhunderts, die Mons. C.M. Kaufmann im Jahre 1909 in der Libyschen Wüste unter den Resten der sandverwehten ehem. Menasstadt, mit großer Basilika aufgefunden hat. Eine griechische Inschrift bezeugt die Darstellung vom hl. Menas, Bischof und Märtyrer der Libyschen Wüste, Patron Libyens. Schon viel früher



8. Pilgerampulle mit dem hl. Menas nach C.M. Kaufmann, 4.Jh. und Pflasterstück aus Dolni Chabry bei Prag, 11.Jh.



9. Wandritzzeichnung, St. Georgskirche der Prager Burg, 11.Jh.



11. Portaltympanon der St. Wenzelskirche, Hrusice bei Prag, Anf. 13.Jh.



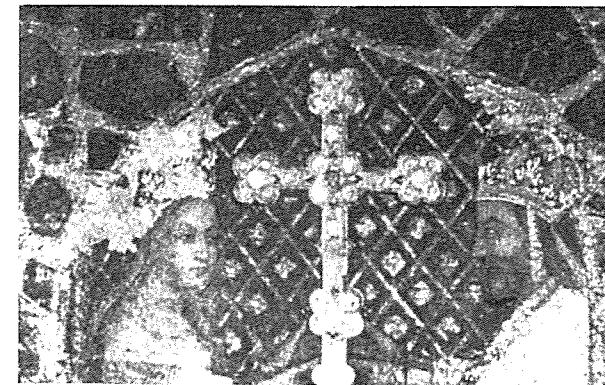
10. Christus Victor; Mosaik, Ravenna, Capella arcivescoville, Anf. 6.Jh.

hatte die Libya antiqua mit von der Oase Siwa-Ammonium ausstrahlenden Ammonkult die gesamte Mittelmeerwelt beherrscht⁶ (Abb. 8,9). Der Nachahmer von Dolní Chabry kann anderthalb Jahrhunder te später an Hund und Katze als Symbole der Zwist gedacht haben, eine Pilgerampulle der vorerwähnten Art kann er vor Augen gehabt haben.

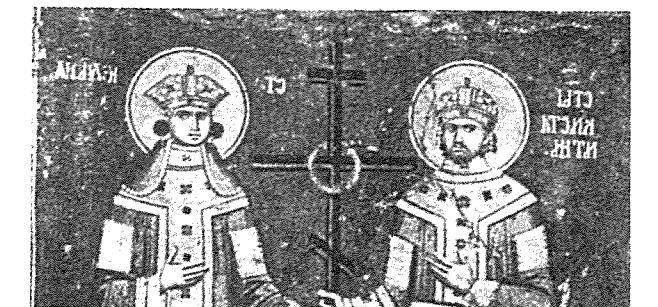
Im berühmten Mosaik der Capella arcivescoville von Ravenna, um 500, tritt Christus Victor in Legionär uniform auf einen Löwen und eine Schlange (*concubis leonem et basiliscum*): eine doppelzonige Tierzähmung (Abb. 10). Einen inhaltlich belasteten Sonderfall der kohärenten Doppelzonigkeit stellen die Reliefs konsularer Diptychen der heidnischen und anknüpfenden christlichen Spätantike: oben hieratisch-symmetrische Strenge des Herrn der Spiele, unten Tierkämpfe der Zirkusarena: *status aeternitatis* über dem *cursus temporis* (C.M. Kaufmann), Katastasis der Ewigkeit über Katastasis der Zeit (Kosmas Indikopleustes, 6. Jh.).

Man vergleiche (Abb. 7) eine Tafel vom gallo-römischen Konsulardiptychon mit der vom schweizer Kloster St. Gallen, 9. Jh., mit triumphaler Himmelfahrt Mariä oben, und der Szene SANCTUS GALLUS PANEM PORRIGIT VRSO unten.

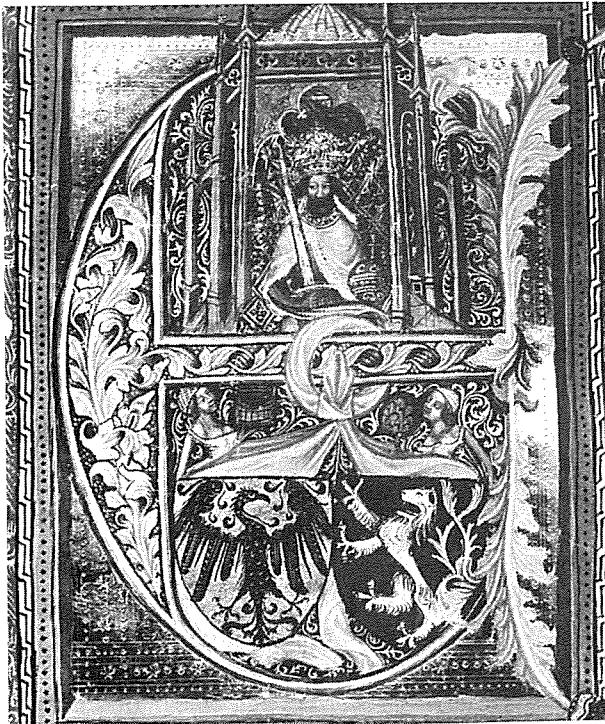
Das Kreuz ist durchgehend in der christlichen Ikonographie und Symbolik n.a. das *Tropaeum fidei*, Trophäe des Glaubens - in Byzanz wird es oft mit der Inschrift NIKA versehen, wie auch der "Siegel" eucharistischer Brote. Inmitten der "Zarenporte" orthodoxer Kirchen erhebt sich das Kreuz über zwei Drachen und als Reduktion auf einem Portaltympanon der St. Wenzelkirche in Hrusice bei Prag (Anf. 13. Jh. - Abb. 11). In der Symmetrieachse wird das Kreuz wahrscheinlich von St. Wenzel und seiner Großmutter der hl. Ludmila im Typus Konstantin und Helena mit dem Kreuz aufrecht gehalten.



12. sassanidisches Felsrelief, im Mittelalter für Darstellung von Chosroes und Schirin gehalten, 6.Jh., darunter Konstantin und Helena mit dem Kreuz, serb.Patriarchatskirche in Peć, rechts oben Initiale E(lena) im Vysehrader Antiphonar, Klosterbibliothek Vorau, rechts unten Karl IV. mit einer gekrönten Frau, werkstattnahe Wandmalerei um 1357, Burg Karlstein

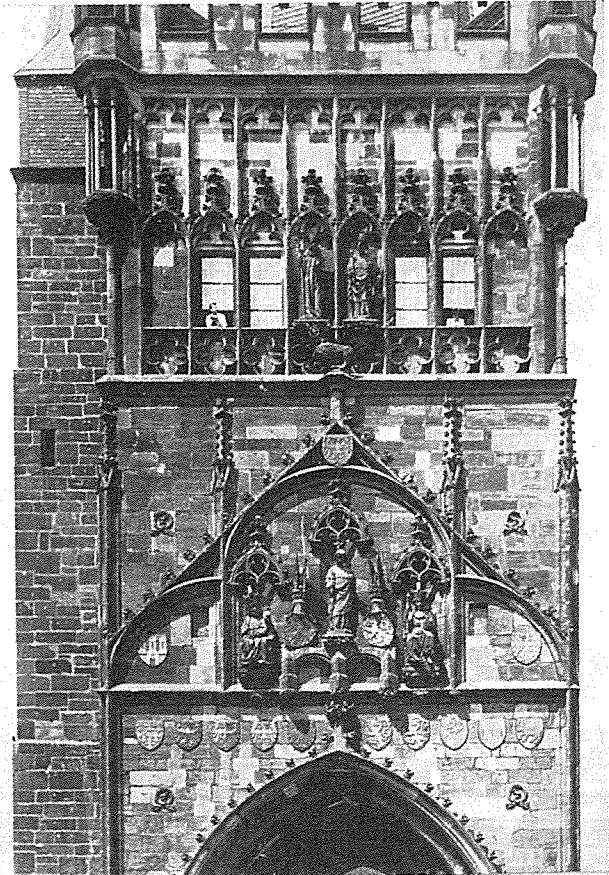


Dieses Stammbild aller orthodoxen Kirchen, welches sich durch Nachahmung byzantinischer Münzen (beginnend mit dem Lateinischen Kaiserthum 1204) nach dem Westen verbreitete (Hohlpfenning Barbarossas u.a.), erinnert an die legendäre Kreuzfindung auf der Golgatha durch Konstantin d.Gr. und seine Mutter Helena. In der Burg Karlstein wurde Karl IV. um 1357 in diesem Typus dargestellt, wie er mit einer gekrönten Frau (Diadem abgebrockelt) zusammen ein Kreuzreliquiar in der Mittelachse hochhält. Doch die Profilierung der beiden büstenartigen Porträts ist nicht frontal oder nur wenig gelockert wie bei allen anderen Belegen dieser Ikonographie, z.B. vom 1340 in der serbischen Patriarchatskirche von Peć, mit Hineinprojizierung des aktuellen Herrscherpaars (Abb. 12). Die Profilierung wurde, ohne die - bei Karl wohlbeweisbare Porträthybrigkeit zu beeinträchtigen, von einem sassanidischen Felsrelief übernommen, welches im Mittelalter für ein Doppelbildnis des letzten großen sassaniden Königs Chosroes II. und Schirin, der "schönen Helena des Ostens" gehalten wurde. Nachzeichnungen der auf Felsen dargestellten persischen Könige wurden, in sog. Königsbüchern, auf islamischen Höfen europäischen Gesandten gezeigt. Einer von ihnen war Karls Höfling und Chronist, der vielbereiste "Apostolus Orientis in Curia Caesaris" Johann von Marignola (Abb. 6). Man vgl. eine majestatisch-orientalisierende Darstellung Wenzels IV., Karls Nachfolger, in der "Wenzelbibel" (um 1400, Wien, ÖNB) mit der Abbildung eines sassanidischen Königs auf dem Löwenthron (Abb. 13). Das Kreuz ersetzte bei Karl IV. den Hvar, Drehknoten iranischer Welt-herrschaft, sein Sohn Wenzel behält ihn auch auf dem Altstädter Brückenturm in Prag, dessen Bildprogramm in symmetrischer Anordnung ganz im



13. Sassanidische Silberschüssel, 6.Jh., und Wenzel IV. in der Wenzelsbibel, Wien, ÖNB, I.Teil, um 1390

Sinne der vorgezeigten Überlieferung seine Nachfolgschaft der heilbringenden *Tranquillitas ordinis* seines Vaters verkündet (Abb. 14).



14. Altstädter Brückenturm, Prag, Ostfassade, um 1380

Krotiteľská symetria a triumfálna utópia

V zamyslení sa nad jedným odkazom, v mnohom podnečujúcej knihe Herberta Reada *Icon and Idea* môže výskum v oblasti porovnávajúcej ikonografie viesť k poznaniu, že symetrická figúra ornamentu byva odvodzovaná od figurálnej kompozicie pripomínajúcej cirkusové scény - stredná figúra hrdinu medzi dvoma skrotenými zvieratami - ako variant asi ešte starších a asymetrickú ornamentiku predznamenávajúcich typických zvieracích zápasov. Tieto by lepšie zodpovedali pravekým a popri ranných civilizáciách prežívajúcim loveckým kultúram, zatiaľ čo "krotiteľská symetria" poukazuje na podmienky všetkých pastierskych (nomádskych) a poľnohospodárskych kultúr: skrotenie, domestifikácia zvierata u usporiadaných, migrujúcich, ako i už u usadených ľudských pospolitostí.

Ked' sa teraz pýtame na pôvod utopickej triumfálnej symboliky v mediteránnej (stredomorskej) kultúre, táto môže pretr-

vávať ešte v najstarších ríšach napr. v Mezopotámii, v Egypťe ešte popri krotiteľskej symetrii dostatočne zastúpenej, pričom zobrazenia triumfu nie sú symetrické, nedochádza k syntéze oboch kategórií.

Celkom inak je tomu v tzv. klasických kultúrach Grécka a Ríma, s Perziou ako predstupňom, v tej miere, v ktorej sa tie-to premieňajú z kolonizujúcich mestských štátov na svetové ríše. Utopickej prísľuby triumfálneho náboženstva boli závislé od toho, aby cez kresťanské "prehodnotenie hodnôt" ("Umwertung der Werte" - Nietzsche) prešiel antický triumfalizmus a utopizmus do stredoveku a ešte ďalej. Zmena nastane až u podobne utopickými asociáciami sprevádzanej asymetrie rokokového ornamentu a u modernej skupiny De Stijl.

ANMERKUNGEN

¹READ, H.: *Bild und Idee* (Orig. *Icon and Idea*, London 1955), Köln 1969, S. 33f.

²Daselbst

³Daselbst

⁴DEKAN, J.: *Herkunft und Ethnizität der gegossenen Bronzeindustrie des VIII. Jahrhunderts*. In: Slovenská archeológia, XX, 1972, Nr.2, S. 426f., Abb. 134/1-2 auf S. 427

⁵Vgl. *Libya antiqua*. Colloque international. Paris 1985

⁶CHADRABA, R.: *Apostolus Orientis, Poselství Jana z Magnoły*. In: Z tradic slovanské kultury v Čechách (Kolokvium Praha 1972), Praha 1975

Utopien der “Konstruktivistischen Internationale” (1922)

Kai-Uwe HEMKEN

I.

Einige Bilderwerke in der Geschichte der Kunst zeichnen sich durch Beharrlichkeit aus, Beharrlichkeit in ihrer steten Präsenz. Dies gilt auch für die Geschichte der Konstruktivismus: Auf mehreren im Jahre 1922 entstandenen Fotos versammelt sich eine hochkarätige Gemeinschaft avantgardistischer Künstler, unter ihnen Theo und Nelly van Doesburg, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, El Lissitzky, Hans Arp, Tristan Tzara und Cornelius van Eesteren. Waren die aufgenommenen Personen zwar nicht unbekannt, so blieben der Anlaß und die Umstände dieser Zusammenkünfte bislang im Ungewissen. Auch Hinweise auf einen Kongreß der Konstruktivisten und Dadaisten in Düsseldorf und Weimar konnten nicht erhellend wirken. Man wog sich bislang in der Sicherheit, daß es sich hierbei um eine der zahlreichen spontanen Veranstaltungen fortschrittlicher Künstler han-



1. Kongreß der Konstruktivisten und Dadaisten in Weimar, September 1922

delte, die das “Sich-organisieren” als neue Qualität moderner Lebenformen erachteten.

Erst in jüngster Zeit gibt es nähere und verblüffende Erkenntnisse zu diesen speziellen Fotos und den Hintergründen ihrer Entstehung. Neben einem Aufsatz von Stephan von Wiese erbrachte die im Sommer 1992 veranstaltete Ausstellung in der Kunstsammlung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf neue Berichte zur Brisanz dieser fotografisch dokumentierten, historischen Ereignisse.¹ Ohne an dieser Stelle auf die komplizierten und detailreichen Zusammenhänge der zwei Kongresse im Jahre 1922 einzugehen, sollen hier zumindest die wichtigsten Informationen zum Verständnis stichwortig zusammengefaßt werden:

Aus lokalen Streitigkeiten heraus rief die Düsseldorfer Künstlerschaft 1922 zu einer internationalen Solidarität fortschrittlicher Künstler auf, die auf



2. Teilnehmer des Kongresses der “Union internationaler fortschrittlicher Künstler” in Düsseldorf, Mai 1922



3. Atelier Theo van Doesburg in Weimar, Zustand 1991



4. Nelly und Theo van Doesburg mit Harry Scheibe im Atelier van Doesburg in Weimar, Februar 1922

einem Kongreß besiegelt werden sollte. Tatsächlich fand dieser Kongreß vom 29.-31. Mai desselben Jahres statt. Auch eine Gruppe versprengter Künstler in Berlin fühlte sich angesprochen, jedoch mehr noch berufen, die Veranstaltung auf ihren Kurs zu bringen. Mit diesem Vorhaben reisten Raoul Hausmann, Werner Graeff, Theo van Doesburg, El Lissitzky und Hans Richter an den Rhein. Dort fanden sie zum Teil Gesinnungsgenossen.

Waren ihre Vorstellungen bis dahin nur vage formuliert, so brütete beispielweise Theo van Doesburg nun nächtens in seinem Hotelzimmer über einem Konzept, um dem heftigen Disput am Vortage nun ein konkretes Manifest folgen zu lassen. Die Forderungen kannten kein Pardon gegenüber dem unentschlossenen Kongreß: Verneinung der Kunstausstellungen als Orte des Kommerz, Verneinung des Subjektiven in der Kunst, statt dessen die Forderung nach einer “systematischen Organisation der künstlerischen Mittel zu einem allgemein-verständlichen Ausdruck”.²

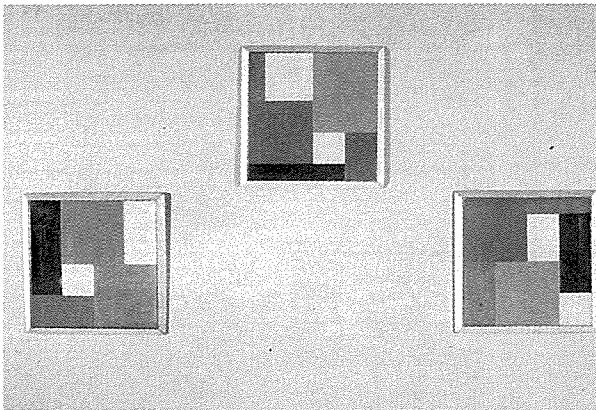
Die Kompromißlosen, die sogenannte Fraktion der Konstruktivisten, verließen den Düsseldorfer Kongreß und riefen zur Gründung einer eigenen Union auf, zur Konstruktivistischen Internationale schöpferischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft (K.I.), die sie offiziell auf einem eigenen Kongreß ins Leben rufen wollten. Der im September 1922 veranstaltete Kongreß wurde zur Farce. Van Doesburg ließ die Versammlung durch die Dadaisten sprengen, da er glaubte, Moholy-Nagy würde diesen für seine politischen Zwecke missbrauchen. Gruppendynamische Prozes-

se schienen also für den Bruch der einstigen Verbündeten ausschlaggebend gewesen zu sein. Ein Vergleich der weitaus wichtigeren Schriften zeigt aber, daß die Vorstellungen einer zukünftigen Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen einer K.I. unmöglich gewesen sind. Ein Blick auf die Manifeste und Aktivitäten mag dies verdeutlichen.

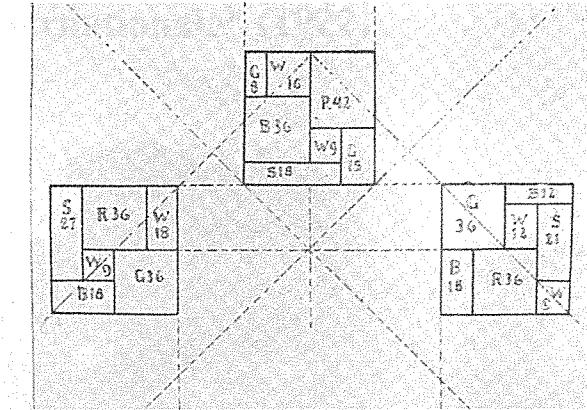
II.

Das K.I.-Manifest des zweiten, in Weimar veranstalteten Kongresses erweiterte die in Düsseldorf erhobenen Forderungen: Kollektive Arbeit des Künstler, ständiger Austausch und Verbreitung von Ideen durch eine eigene Zeitschrift, Kunst auf das Leben ausrichten, Verwendung und Entdeckung neuer Materialien, logisch erklärbare Anwendung der Arbeitsmittel.

Aus der Vielzahl von Einzelinteressen lassen sich grundsätzlich zwei Positionen erkennen, die diametral andere Vorstellungen vertraten. Diese Positionen nahmen Theo van Doesburg auf der einen und El Lissitzky auf der anderen Seite ein. Im Sommer 1922, also zwischen den Kongressen, richtete Van Doesburg in Weimar einen De Stijl- Kursus ein, der als Versuchsstation der neuen Künstlergeneration gelten kann.³ Eine kleine Gruppe von versprengten Jungkünstlern, Bauhausschülern und Ergebenden übten sich in der Lehre des niederländischen Meisters. Klarheit der Mittel und Anwendung, Anti-Subjektivismus, rationaler Universalismus der Sprache, Kollektivdasein als Arbeitsinhalt waren einige Punkte



5. Theo van Doesburg, *Komposition XVIII*, 1920 (dreiteilig, Öl auf Leinwand, je 35 x 35 cm)



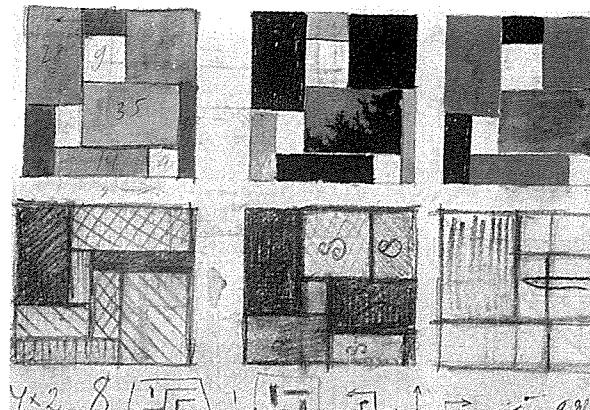
6. Theo van Doesburg, Hängungsschema der Komposition XVIII (aus: Evert van Straten, Theo van Doesburg 1883–1931, Den Haag 1983, S. 96)

im Regelwerk Van Doesburgs. Die Resultate öffnen den Zugang zu dieser beinahe sektenhaften Gemeinschaft: Petr Keller, Andor Weininger und Karl Peter Röhl eiferten Van Doesburg nach. Ein zentrales Vorbild war die „Komposition XVIII in drei Teilen“ aus dem Jahre 1920. Eine eingeschränkte Farbpalette, ein festes Repertoire an Flächenformen und Komposition sollte die Sicherheit vermitteln, eine Bildsprache jenseits der Willkür und Lyrik entwickelt zu haben. Auch wenn hier System mit Objektivität verwechselt wurde, so ist doch letztlich Van Doesburgs grundlegende Absicht entscheidend. Rationalität der Bildsprache war bei ihm nicht nur künstlerisches Programm, sondern Sinnbild der Lebenform von Gegenwart und Zukunft.

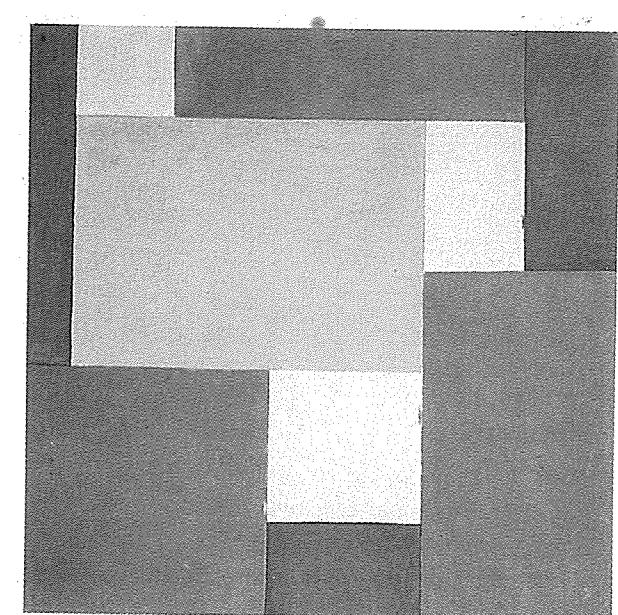
In seinem Vortrag „Der Wille zum Stil“, den Van Doesburg 1922 in verschiedenen Städten Deutschlands hielt, ließ er keinen Zweifel daran, daß Prophezeiung einer neuen Kultur in Erfüllung gehen werden.⁴ Er war der Ansicht, daß die neue Gesellschaft aus dem Geiste der Technik erwachse: Ökonomie, Rationalität, Universalität und Logik waren für ihn die neuen Koordinaten der zukünftigen Lebensform. Keine Nische, kein düsterer Winkel, in dem sich das Lyrische und Mystische hätte einnisten können, sollte dem „Lichte der Aufklärung“ namens De Stijl entgehen. Er war der Führer des neuen Kultes der Rationalisten, wie ihn der Kursteilnehmer, Karl Peter Röhl, noch vor dessen Ankunft in Weimar betitelte. Mögen System und Willkür in den Bildern Doesburgs und seiner Ergebenen sich noch erken-

nen lassen, so ist doch das Bildverständnis ausschlaggebend: Van Doesburg fordert eine Bildordnung, die zwar auf den ersten Blick das Prinzip „Variation“ kennt, doch wird sie fest umklammert von der Forderung nach einer Unterordnung aller Elemente unter ein Bildsystem, das Komposition, Hängung, Farb- und Formpalette festlegt. In diesen Bildern bleibt trotz ästhetischer Spannkraft keine Lücke, keine Unentschlossenheit, kein Zweifel, keine einander widerstrebenen Momente. Wer einen Vergleich der Werke Van Doesburgs mit denen seiner Vaterfigur, Piet Mondrian, unternimmt, wird unschwer die fundamentale Verschiedenheit beider Farbfeldmaler erkennen: Mondrian erarbeitete seine Farb- und Formkompositionen auf der Grundlage des Balance, der Ergänzung, der Unentschlossenheit usw. Van Doesburg hat Mondrian mißverstanden, als dieser glaubte, Mondrians „Utopie der Vollkommenheit“ mit konkretem Inhalt zu füllen. Es ist eine Utopie der Seelenlage, eine elegische Kunstbetrachtung, die Mondrian verfolgte. Van Doesburg aber hat Mondrians Utopie mit Technik konditioniert.

Das hermetische System, das Van Doesburg für seine Malerei in Anspruch nimmt, wird noch durch den Tatbestand erschwert, daß er seine Formgesetze allein in der Kunst anwendete. Zielte er mit dem Weimarer Kurs zwar auf die Architektur, so hatte sich die Wirklichkeit aber gefälligst nach seinen Vorstellungen zu richten. Der wortgewaltige und orthodoxe De Stijl-Künstler war hier um Argumentationen nicht verlegen.



7. Andor Weininger, *Ohne Titel*, 1922/23 (Bleistift, Aquarell und Tusche auf Papier, 12,9 x 19,1 cm). Sammlung Cornelia Weininger, New York



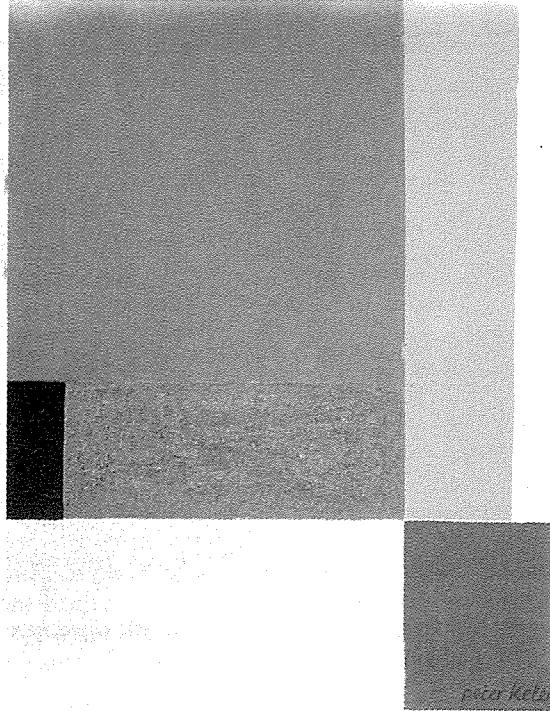
8. Andor Weininger, *Kuri I*, 1922 (Bleistift und Gouache auf Papier, 21,5 x 21,5 cm). Sammlung Cornelia Weininger, New York

Auch El Lissitzky unterschrieb das Manifest der K.I.-Protagonisten. Seine Vorstellungen aber waren anderen Inhalts. Seine künstlerische Arbeit konzentrierte sich im Jahre 1922 vornehmlich auf die Typographie. Zahlreiche Buchumschläge, Einladungskarten usw. begründen seinen Ruhm nicht nur in den Reihen der Buchgestalter.

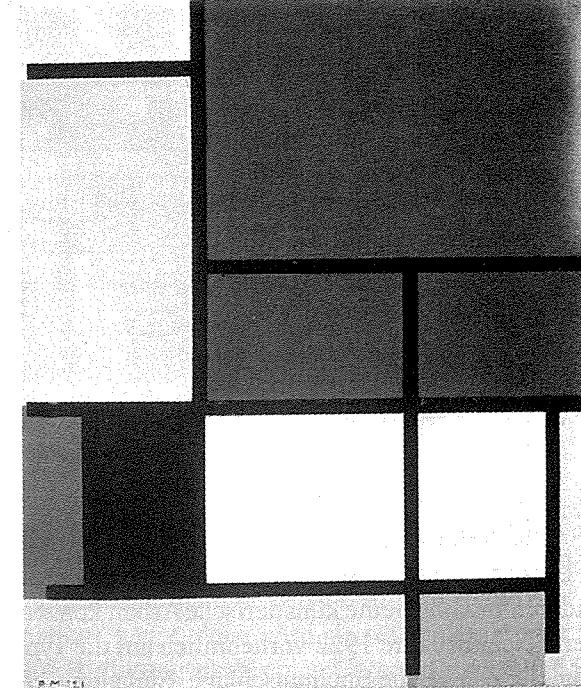
Am Beispiel des Umschlagentwurfs für die eigene Zeitschrift „Vesc-Objet-Gegenstand“, die im Frühjahr 1922 mit nur zwei Nummern erschien, läßt sich Lissitzkys Bildsprache erläutern. Frühe Zeichnungen bekunden einen beinahe konventionellen Aufbau, d.h. die Trennung von Schrift und Bild. Wie ein Briefkopfentwurf belegt, deutet der Kreis um die Schriftzüge ein Auge an; zumindest aber verweist es auf einen Projektionsvorgang. Das menschliche Sehen, die Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten sind für ihn Prämissen seiner Gestaltungen. Max Wertheimers Gestalttheorie, über die nachweislich zahlreiche ost-europäische Studenten und vermutlich auch Lissitzky durch Wertheimers Berliner Vorlesungen um 1922 informiert waren, läßt sich in Bild und Schrift bei Lissitzky nachvollziehen, sei aber an dieser Stelle nur erwähnt. Der Vorgang des Sehens, die physiognomische Bedingtheit des Sehens führt Lissitzky offenbar nicht zu einem simbolidichen Verweis auf das Sehen als Projektion, sondern er realisiert es. Ein

hakenförmiger Typobalken wird diagonal über die Bildfläche geführt, die weißen Flächen werden automatisch zu aktiven Werten. Lissitzky beschleunigt das Lesen, nicht das horizontale Ablesen der Fläche, sondern die diagonale Durchkreuzung der Bildfläche, hin zu den Einzelinformationen. Beschleunigung und Vitalisierung, beides durch das Abweichen vom Zeilensystem ermöglicht, gründen sich auf ein experimentelles Gestalten, das sich unter anderem auf Erkenntnisse fachfremder Disziplinen beruft.

Die moderne Gestaltung beispielsweise Lissitzkys sieht sich in der Tradition und Moderne, d.h. Seh- und auch Denkgewohnheiten, auf der einen und Wissenschaft und Propaganda auf der anderen Seite. In dieser Experimentsituation wird um ein Ausgleich gerungen, der aber in der Regel für die Moderne ausfällt. Als Experimente aber bergen diese Arbeiten einen Widerstreit, der durch die Reibungssituation von alt und neu, von Leben und Kunst beinahe automatisch entsteht. Wird der innerbildliche Streit zwischen Tradition und Moderne zwar zugunsten des



9. Peter Keller, *Flächenkomposition*, 1922 (Öl auf Leinwand, 54,4 x 43,4 cm). Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar



10. Piet Mondrian, *Composition with Great Blue Plane*, 1921 (60,3 x 49,8 cm). James Collection, Dallas

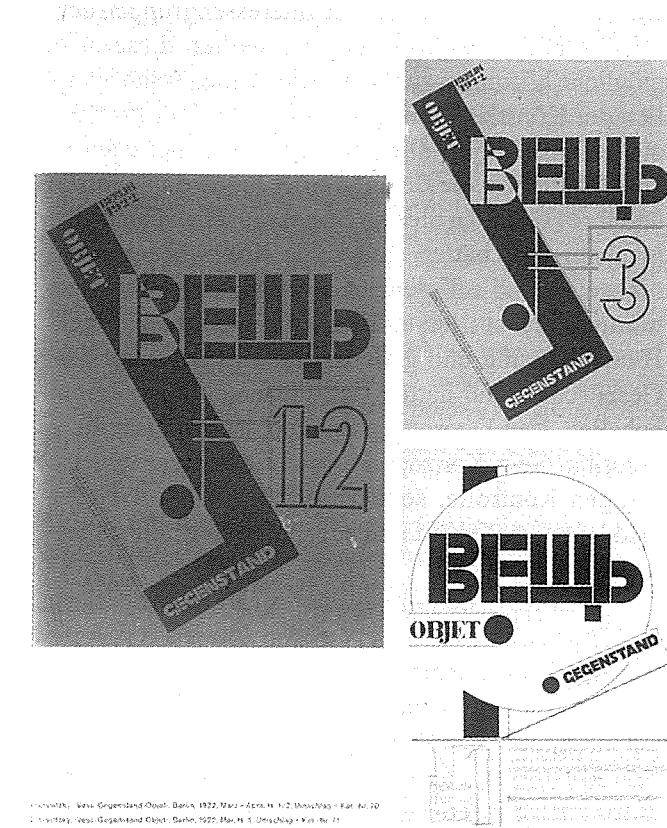
Neuen entschieden, so bleibt das Überlieferte als Widerpart Bestandteil der Gestaltung. Lissitzky kann es auch nicht leugnen, nähren sich doch seine Ideen gerade aus diesem gewissermaßen strukturimmanennten Widerspruch.

Van Doesburgs Vorstellung einer neuen Kunst, die wie auch bei Lissitzky von der Hoffnung auf eine Verbindung von Leben und Kunst getragen wird, beinhaltet einen anderen Begriff des Universalismus, d.h. eine Kunst, die universell für alle Lebensgebiete anwendbar ist. Van Doesburg entwickelt in der Bildwelten, sondern auch in den Gesellschaftsbildern beider Künstler. Im Zuge der K.I. erläuterten beide direkt und indirekt ihre Vorstellungen über die Bedeutung der Kunst innerhalb der Gesellschaft. Van Doesburg proklamierte die Technik als alleiniges Regelwerk der zukünftigen Lebensform. Seine Kunst sollte der Gesellschaft unter dieser Prämisse die Form

zieht, braucht nicht erläutert zu werden. Lissitzky hingegen setzt sich als Künstler der Wirklichkeit aus, seine typographischen Gestaltungen mögen dies zwar provozieren, doch Lissitzky scheint diese Zwangsläufigkeit als Qualität zu erachten und zum Programm zu machen.

III.

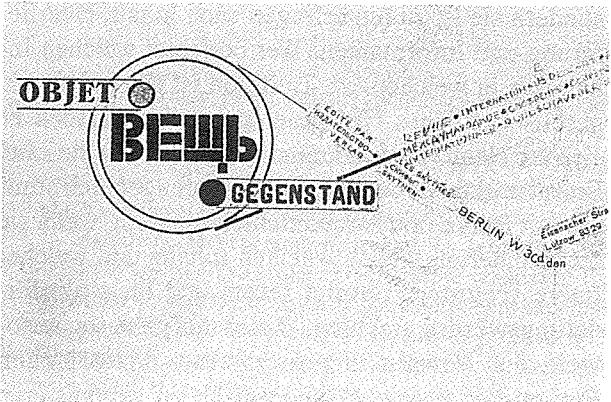
Der grundlegende Widerspruch zwischen Lissitzky und Van Doesburg offenbart sich nicht in den Bildwelten, sondern auch in den Gesellschaftsbildern beider Künstler. Im Zuge der K.I. erläuterten beide direkt und indirekt ihre Vorstellungen über die Bedeutung der Kunst innerhalb der Gesellschaft. Van Doesburg proklamierte die Technik als alleiniges Regelwerk der zukünftigen Lebensform. Seine Kunst sollte der Gesellschaft unter dieser Prämisse die Form



11. El Lissitzky, Umschlaggestaltungen der Zeitschrift "Vesc-Objet-Gegenstand", Heft 1/2 und 3, 1922 (Buchdruck, je 31 x 23,5 cm) sowie Umschlagentwurf, 1921/22 (Bleistift und Tinte auf Papier, 30,5 x 22,5 cm). Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Niederlande

geben, sie wollte zur Statthalterin der Technik - im Zuge der Modernisierung der Gesellschaft - erwachsen.

Lissitzky brachte ein weitaus differenzierteres Modell zur Sprache. Demnach haben sie alle kultur- und wirtschaftstragenden Kräfte wie Arbeiter, Ingenieure, Künstler usw. zu versammeln, um aktuelle Problemstellungen zu diskutieren. Die eingebrachten Lösungsvorschläge werden vom Künstler bewertet und schließlich auch entschieden. Maßt sich der Künstler zwar hier auch die Entscheidungsgewalt an, so wird doch die Art und die Lösung des Problems von allen eingebracht. Während also Van Doesburg ein autoritäres System entwirft, schlägt Lissitzky ein



12. El Lissitzky, Umschlagentwurf für die Zeitschrift "Vesc-Objet-Gegenstand", 1922 (Bleistift und Tinte mit Collage auf Papier, 14 x 22 cm). Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Niederlande

demokratischeres vor; beide Vorstellungen spiegeln sich in den Werken der Künstler. Lissitzky selbst hat Zeit seines Lebens dieses Prinzip verfolgt: Nicht nur die Anwendung seiner Kunst auf praktische Probleme sei erwähnt, auch das ständige Miteinbeziehen neuester wissenschaftlicher Forschungen, seien sie von Einstein, Lobatschewski, Wertheimer oder Raoul Heinrich Francé, sprechen hierfür.

IV.

Totalitarismus ist schlecht, Tradition aber auch nicht immer gut. So ließe sich mit einer Formel das sich stellende Problem diskutieren. In der heutigen Zeit einer Revision der Moderne ist es naheliegend, Tradition und Totalitarismus in absoluter Polarität zu sehen. Allein die Geschichte der Sowjetunion belegt aber das Gegenteil: Tradition wurde im Zuge einer Industrialisierung der Gesellschaft instrumentalisiert. Tradition ist also vor politischer Funktionalisierung nicht gefeit, verhält sich nicht im wertfreien Raum. Um einer bloßen Polarität von Tradition und Totalitarismus zu entgehen, möchte ich den Begriff der Tradition nach Petr Burke mit "Gedächtnis" übersetzen, und genauer: Tradition als "inoffizielles Gedächtnis".⁵ Demgegenüber wäre das "offizielle Gedächtnis" die herrschende Politik.

Ohne an dieser Stelle die Wissenschaft der Mnemosyne zu erörtern, so beziehe ich mich doch auf die Erkenntnisse von Jan Assmann, Peter Burke und Francis Yates.⁶ Die Tradition ist nicht autonom,

sondern sie ist zu hinterfragen nach Inhalt, Überlieferung und Informanten. Wer berichtet welchen Inhalt und in welcher Art. Tradition ist generell in ein gesellschaftliches Gefüge eingebunden, handelt es sich um Naturvölker oder Industrienationen. Sie kann Sozialstrukturen bestätigen oder sprengen. Ich stimme mit Burke und Assmann nicht überein, wenn sie die Erinnerung gleich welchen Inhalts und welcher Interessengruppe absolut setzen und für strikt förderungswürdig erachten.⁷ Assmann geht sogar so weit, die Vermittlungsform eines historischen Ereignisses geradezu scholastisch zu kanonisieren und in dieser Form in der Gegenwart aufrechtzuerhalten - auch auf die Gefahr einer sozialen Ausgrenzung des Überlieferers hin. Wer einerseits die vitale Geschichte gegenseitig befruchtenden Kulturaustausches zwischen Völkern kennt und wem andererseits die Gefahren heutiger strikter kultureller Abgrenzung und Orthodoxie nicht entgangen sind, wird dieser These eher skeptisch gegenüberstehen.

Wie aber ließe sich die Gefahr einer Vereinnahmung von Tradition begegnen? Ein Modell haben die Konstruktivisten der K.I. bereits thematisiert: Lissitzky entwarf das Modell einer Versammlung von

Kulturträgern. Hier trugen die Interessengruppen der Gesellschaft ihre Probleme vor, stellten diese und mögliche Lösungen zur Diskussion - auch wenn letztlich der Künstler zu entscheiden hatte. Das "inoffizielle Gedächtnis", die Tradition, stand hier ebenso zur Debatte wie die Belange einer Industrialisierung und ihre Folgen. In diesem demokratischen Kontrollmechanismus hätten sich beide Kontrahenten, inoffizielles und offizielles Gedächtnis, einer Reglementierung stellen müssen - im Dienste einer Humanisierung und gleichzeitigen Erneuerung der Gesellschaft und hätten sich gleichzeitig im Zaum gehalten. Van Doesburgs Entwurf ist grundsätzlich autoritär. Sein Konzept war nicht das einer gegenseitigen Kontrolle, sondern er hätte das offizielle Gedächtnis befördert und sogar eine Leitlinie geliefert, die Technik.

Lissitzkys demokratischeres Modell installiert eine Kontrollinstanz, die von den Interessensgruppen der Gesellschaft geleitet wird. Lissitzky, eine Kultfigur der Russischen Revolution, ist zu Beginn der 20er Jahre wesentlich demokratisch gesinnter als sein Mitstreiter Theo van Doesburg, der wohl eher einen bürgerlichen Moralkodex das Wort redet.

ANMERKUNGEN

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² DOESBURG, Theo van - LISSITZKY, El - RICHTER, Hans: *Erklärung der internationalen Fraktion der Konstruktivisten*. Zit. nach K.I., Ausst.-Kat. Düsseldorf 1992, a.a.O., S. 304

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⁴ DOESBURG, Theo van: *Der Wille zum Stil*. In: *De Stijl*, 5 (1922), H. 2 u. 3, S. 23-41

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⁶ Vgl. entsprechende Beiträge in: ASSMANN, A.: *Mnemosyne*, a.a.O.

⁷ Vgl. ASSMANN, Jan: *Die Katastrophe des Vergessens. Das Deuteronomium als Paradigma kultureller Mnemotechnik*. In: ASSMANN, *Mnemosyne*, a.a.O. (Zit. Anm. 5), S. 337-355

Photo: Nederlands Architectuur Instituut, Amsterdam (Abb. 1, 2) - Louis Held, Weimar (Abb. 3) - Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst, Den Haag (Abb. 4, 5) und Museen

Utópie "Konštruktivistickej internacionály" (1922)

"Konštruktivistická internacionála, tvorivé pracovné združenie" (K.I.), proklamovaná a prezentovaná Theom van Doesburgom, Wernerom Graeffom, El Lissitzkym, Hansom Richterom a i., predstavuje rozhodujúci obrat v procese vzniku moderny v 20. rokoch. V konkurencii s tradičnými umeleckými spolkami a s expresionizmom navrhovalo hnutie K.I. program pre umenie v technicko-vedeckom veku. Kolektivizmus, univerzálné vyjadrovacie prostriedky, zrozumiteľnosť a vysvetliteľnosť umenia, demonštračné priestory a i. boli jej požiadavky na adekvátne umenie v životných podmienkach modernej industriálnej spoločnosti. Hnutie K.I. malo rozhodujúci podiel na presadení konštruktivistických konceptov začiatkom 20. rokov, ktoré urýchlovalo pomocou intenzívnej propagandy. Expressionizmus, ktorý vládol v umeleckom pohybe okolo rokov 1922-1923, sa týmto mohutne potlačil.

Ked na jar roku 1922 düsseldorská skupina umelcov "Mladé Porýnie" (Das Junge Rheinland) volala po založení "Únie medzinárodných pokrokových umelcov" (Union internationaler fortschrittlicher Künstler) a pozývala za týmto účelom na kongres do Düsseldoru, nebolo to len opatrenie proti tradičným umeleckým spolkom, ktoré dominovali v düsseldorskom umeleckom hnutí. Bol to viacmenej pokus iniciovať medzi spoločnými menovateľmi pokroku medzinárodné umelecké "Zoskupenie proti tradicionalizmu" (Sammelgruppe gegen den Traditionalismus). Požadovalo sa "medzinárodné umenie" - k zhode však nedošlo, kongres stroskotal. Jeden z účastníkov, Theo van Doesburg, vinil z toho zotrvanie na umeleckej individualite, ktorou sa vyznačovali predovšetkým "impulzivisti" (t.j. expresionisti). Ked sa nato odštiepila v otvorenom škandálnom "Frakcia konštruktivistov" (Fraktion der Konstruktivisten) - pod vedením van Doesburga, Lissitzkeho a Richtera, stalo sa toto otvorenou výzvou do boja proti umeniu Weimarskej republiky, vládnucemu "expresionistickej duší" a početným formám jej prejavov.

Frakcia zo svojej strany volala po založení "Konštruktivistického medzinárodného tvorivého pracovného spoločenstva" (Konstruktivistische internationale schöpferische Arbeitsgemeinschaft), ktoré sa malo konštituovať na kongrese vo Weimare v septembri 1922. Jej predstava "o medzinárodnom umení" ďaleko prekročila požiadavky "Mladého Porýnia". Popri zosilnenej výmene názorov v časopisoch a inštalácii permanentnej výstavy volali o.i. po "logicky vysvetliteľnom používaní všeobecne zrozumiteľných vyjadrovacích prostriedkov" na príro-

dovednom základe, po kolektívnej spolupráci a orientácii umeleckej práce na praktické úlohy.

Navyše popierali aj komerciu, vychádzajúcu z umeleckých výstav a svoje idey plánovali spracovať didakticky a prezentovať ich verejnosti bez komerčných intencii.

Zviditeľnenie programu nenechalo na seba dlho čakať: Moholy-Nagy spojil vo svojej sérii diel, ktoré vznikli v r. 1922, reč foriem hnutia De Stijl s vlastnými umeleckými experimentami (opierajúc sa o svoje fotogramy); Richter podnikol s Graeffom pokusy, pomocou svojich abstraktných filmov vyvinúť univerzálnu, elementárnu reč obrazu; navyše vydal spolu s Lissitzkym časopis "G"; van Doesburg otvoril vo Weimare spolu s Petrom Röhlem ateliér De Stijlu; a mnôh iné aktivity.

Konštruktivistické hnutie, ktoré bezpochyby nachádza svoj pôvod v moskovskej "umeleckej scéne" a v postave jej sprostredkovateľa El Lissitzkeho, našlo svoje pokračovanie po fáze rozkvetu v rokoch 1921-1924 v praktických úlohách dizajnu, typografie a architektúry. Napriek tomu, že nemohlo dosiahnuť svoj cieľ - oficiálne založiť Konštruktivistickú internacionálu, mohlo predsa len splniť jednu zo svojich ústredných požiadaviek: svoje umenie zamarať na praktické úlohy.

Umelci hnutia K.I. boli súčasťou ajé, čo sa týka uvedených požiadaviek, ale definícia a realizácia týchto aspektov bola sporná. Modernizácia spoločnosti podľa zákonov rationality, ekonomie a osvietenstva bola základným konsenzom účastníkov, hoci argumentovali z rôznych hľadísk. Ich želania dali najavo kritiku na dvojakosť spoločenského morálneho konsenzu, ktorý pranieroval pomocou politických záujmových skupín inštrumentalizáciu hodnôt. Tradícia, ktorá sa prejavovala najrozmanitejšimi formami (akadémie, výstavná politika, vysoké školy, cenzúra, práca politických inštitúcií atď.), nebola nedotknutelná veličinou spoločenského poriadku, ale predmet zúžitkovania spoločenskými stratégiami. Bolo potrebné zastaviť tento vývoj v demokracii, ale bez toho, aby sa spustila zo zreteľa identita vytvárajúca význam tradičných predstáv hodnôt. Ústredným pojmom tu bola "totalita", ktorá sa odráža v estetických a spoločenskopolitickej predstavách umelcov K.I.

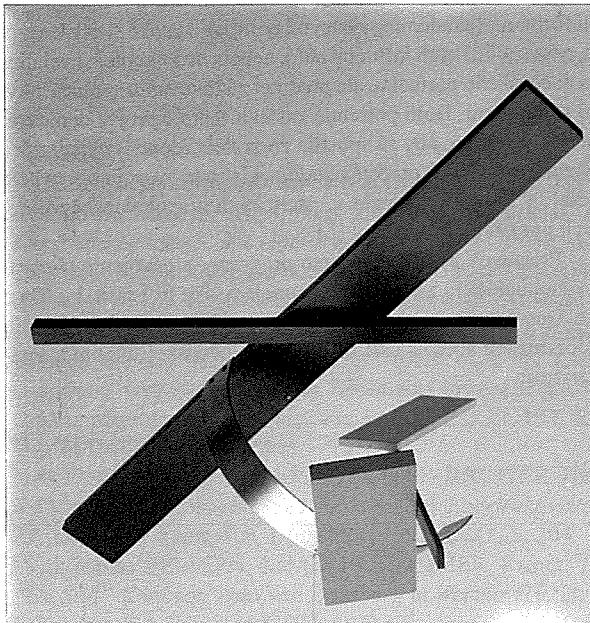
Príspevok predstavuje tieto programy a osvojenie si obrázového materiálu zúčastnených umelcov ako El Lissitzky, Theo van Doesburg a i., aby sa potom formulovali úvahy o utópii, modernizácii spoločnosti, tradícii, spoločenskej totalite a totalitarizme.

From Constructivism to Extensionism, a Reformulation of Utopian Ideas

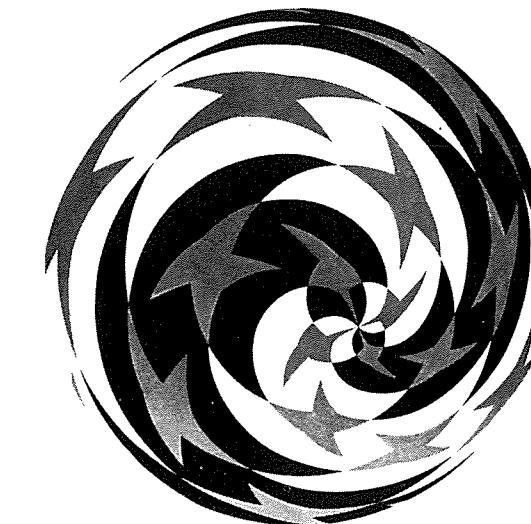
Fré ILGEN

Introduction

Constructivism evolved at the start of the 20th century out of 19th century scientific and artistic knowledge, post-impressionism, rayonism, cubism, futurism, cubo-futurism, suprematism, etc. and contributed at large to the development of abstract art, graphic design, typography, industrial design, architecture, stage design, cloth and fashion design, but also of linguistics, art and design education, ideologies concerning the value of the design of the society, theoretical knowledge concerning the artistic language, space, composition and form, new media (like photography, film) and showed serious interest in the

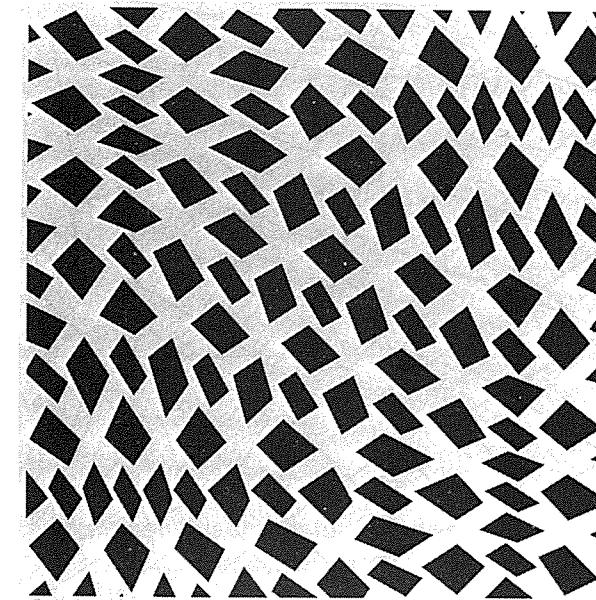


1. Fré Ilgen (Holland): "Orange De-Light", 1992

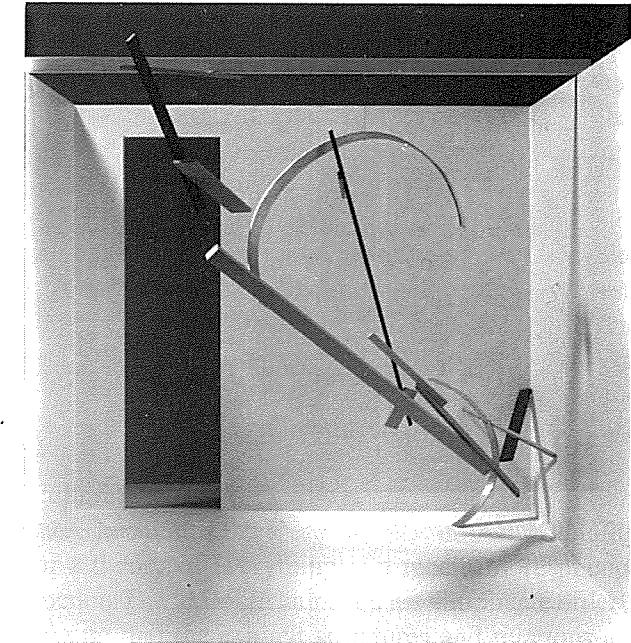


2. Hans Hinterreiter (Swiss), 1943-72

parallels of the new developments in philosophy, technology and science. Although I do not have time enough to explore this in depth, it should be sufficient to recall that Matjuschin, Malevitch, Tatlin, El Lissitzky, Gabo, Rodchenko and their colleagues were quite familiar with 19th century scientific knowledge on the conservation of energy (Joule), the looping lines of force of electromagnetics (Faraday, Maxwell), the colour theories on light perception (Chevreuil, Road, Helmholtz, Ostwald), the early 20th century ideas on time-space and fourth dimension (Hinton, Ouspensky, Einstein, Minkowski), the concepts of equivalence of Planck, Einstein, Bohr,



3. Jean-Pierre Maury (Belgium): *Composition intégraliste*, 1993

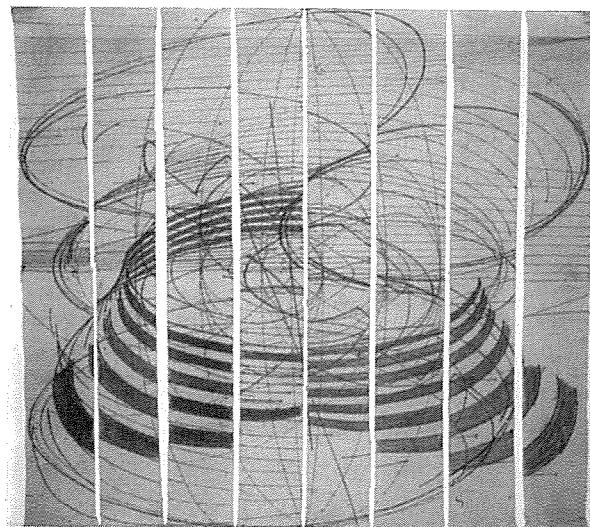


4. Fré Ilgen (Holland): "Twister Greens", 1993/94. Installation Galerie Lippe, Frankfurt

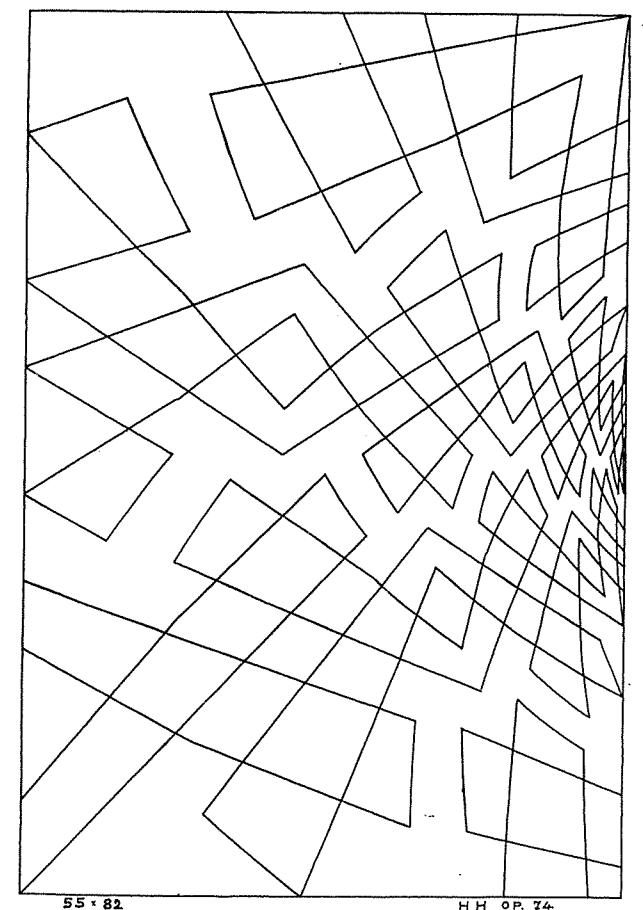
as well as Hindu- Buddhist-, Egyptian- and Hebrew philosophies, phenomenology (Husserl), anthroposophy (Steiner), semantics, Gestaltpsychology (Wertheimer). They were highly interested in the "sensation", crystallography and projective geometry, advertising psychology, linguistics. Matthew Luckiesh exemplified the impact of the visual on the human well being in 1918 in his *Languages of color*: "The effects of visual stimuli can be observed in the blood pressure, in muscle-, mental- and nerve-activity, in the mood and in several other ways." It is, therefore, hardly surprising that in those years designers hoped to improve the conditions of living by a different design, based on the available knowledge in the mentioned fields. El Lissitzky, Popova, the Productivists, the Bauhaus, VKHUTEMAS, developments in typography, industrial design, architecture (Rietveld, Weissenhofsiedlung) and urban design are good examples. The utopian ideal was related to the *Zeitgeist's* optimistic belief that a different design is able to influence man to be a better being. Alas, the sequence of wars since those early days have shown that this surely is a too high hope.

Constructivism today

Constructivism, has since the pioneer period continuously been furthered through the following decades and in the mean time it has had its impact clearly on all earlier mentioned disciplines all over the world. As a result of this development, constructivism as a term has been more or less relevant as a reference to a multidisciplinary approach of the actual evaluation of reality, to the creative production-process (the constructing) and the understanding of perception and creativity in that period. This term was also relevant for the reflection of the idea to aim at the improvement of the design of society by using universal values, the visualization of the so-called universal principles. In the past years it has become increasingly clear, that the term "constructivism" does not anymore coincide completely with the actual knowledge concerning understanding reality, as today we perceive, experience and evaluate reality, what the visual means and how we understand creativity today. The purely objective-rational, like reflected by the word "constructivism", is too limited to the technical part of the production-process to be able to serve



5. Michael Kidner (United Kingdom): *Elastic Transformation*,
untitled 1980

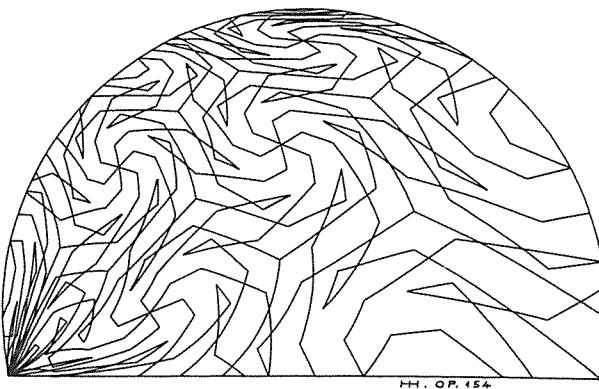


6. Hans Hinterreiter; drawing

as a synonym for the continual interrelation and interaction, the continual communication jumping back and forth between the individual subject and the individual object (feedback-loops) during and after the creative process. When one studies the recent developments in such a variety of fields as theoretical physics, particles-physics, philosophy, cognitive sciences, cosmology, industrial design, marketing or even computer technology, one will find that "interrelation" and "interaction" are the new paradigms. These are strictly connected with concepts as "feedback-loopings", "not in balance systems", "breaking of symmetry", "communication", "chirality", "human factors". Chirality refers to the fundamental structure, that every particle and every movement has his or her antipole, comparable to "plus" and "minus" and "Yin" and "Yang". Based on the knowledge of the 19th century, especially in relation to the conservation of energy and the in itself returning lines of force as defined by electromagnetics, one has discovered especially in physics, biology, cosmology and psychology how essential and universal the fluctuating movements is, to which we are subjected here on our earth, to which we thank our existence and on which our own body-construction is based.

Extension

Since man became conscious, developed his conscious being, space has fascinated him, the relation of himself and the space around him, defined by the objects in that space. A conscious being simply means attempting to understand that relation, striving to obtain knowledge on this. All through human history this problem has never been solved and has even become more complex. The infinite universe was discovered, later the infinity into "the other direction" in the search for the fundamental element in the own body-cells. Both reaching far beyond the capacity of the human eye. The intellect, the ratio, plays in this an important role. (One thing



7. Hans Hinterreiter; drawing

tist has seen the world without borders and separations. He sees the fluctuation of all forms and senses, that everything visible of simple bodies and forms are merely the trace of higher organisms, that are connected with all that is visual just as heaven is connected to earth."

Theories on the unseparable connectedness of all bodies in the infinite, continuous further developing space, obviously do not only exist in our western culture. Evidence of this concept one can find in all cultures and civilizations, like the Celts, in Asia (Kalachakra-mandala's), Africa (for example the exceptional cloths of the former Kongo, now Zaire), Islam and the every visually oriented Aborigines culture.

In science the search for the notion of totality or a theory of everything is a recent more phenomenon. David Bohm launched his "implicate order", stating that the explicit structures and relations are maybe no manifestations of nature in its real form. An example of the (occidental?) human ambition to find a hidden structure in and of nature. In contrast many artists, such as Hans Hinterreiter and Charles Biederman, still focussed on the importance of the human eye-perception.

Extensionalism

Because the term "constructivism" does not completely cover the actual level of knowledge of our reality evaluation anymore, and, because the flood of exhibitions and publications concerning the first pioneer period also create unnecessary confusion, this term must be extended. The term "EXTENSIONALISM" will better succeed in covering the necessary contents, aims and means. Extensionalism obviously relates to "extension", the extension of knowledge of our reality-evaluation or our consciousness, our conscious being, through a necessary extension of the multi-disciplinary approach of theory and practice. In this approach, the visual is considered essential. The "-ism" offers the necessary reference to such a multidisciplinary approach. Extensionalism aims at the extension of the research of the interrelation and interaction of man and his environment, man and reality, man and nature, emphasizing the importance of the visual language, the compatibility and semantic of visual and verbal in-

formation and communication, (especially visual) perception, the understanding of reality, and based on this knowledge the searching for the formulation of criteria for the visual and to test these in everyday practice. The visual is seen as a necessary medium for consciously being. The creation/the visualizing is understood as the process of "input" (visual, memory, reflection, acknowledgement, semantics and "commitment", meaning: the action following a final judgement), the first activities of the brain (the retina as part of the brain, the reflection), the desire to "argue" visually by the act of visualizing (translation), the evaluation jumping back and forwards between seeing and reflecting (like the "scanning" and rationalizing of the information, or also understood as inference) during and after the visualizing. This process can be interpreted as a continuous dialogue between the designer and the designed, as a verbal and visual argument which develops our conscious being (we think in images and spoken words). Metaphorically one could understand perception and translation into knowledge as a tree. A tree exists of a complex structure (but still a structure) of branches and a comparable complex structure of roots. Graphically seen there is only the trunk, of which at one end a structure unites and out of the other end on other structure grows (or the other way ground). The human eye, the retina, is the trunk, the perceived complex structure of reality thus unites on the retina and splits up to the different locations in the brain and is translated into a complex structure of communication of knowledge in visual and verbal language.

Extensionalism emphasizes the importance of the search for better knowledge of the visual and the

need for formulating criteria, but also denies the possibility to define absolute rules (every kind of dogma is to be avoided). Therefore, it can be understood as open formalism. Extensionalism is a new term for an already proceeding development and as a logic result of further evaluated constructivism, it reflects a better defined meaning of continuous furthered visual knowledge and gives a clear direction to the search for the "human form"!

No utopian ideal

As this approach quite clearly reflects the knowledge in quite different disciplines in this century it can hardly be being merely regarded as utopian. Although it has been proved that it is indeed utopian to expect to influence man to be a better being, it can hardly be denied that any design inflicts its influence on the comfort or discomfort of the observer, as the evolvement of acknowledgement of the ecological problems has proved. Man can never again be understood as an autonomous being but as an entity in continuous and close interrelation and interaction with all entities around him. The aim to improve the living conditions for the man by searching the ultimate improvement of the actual design of his environment and all objects of this environment is thus no utopian ideal, but a serious and highly realistic responsibility. Therefore today it can quite safely be stated that the utopian ideals of early constructivism have matured into a very realistic expertise and knowledge of extensionalism. Undoubtedly, like with all knowledge, further progress and extension of this knowledge will always be necessary as many fundamental factors of the human society change.

Od konštruktivizmu k extenzionalizmu, preformulovanie utopických ideálov

Konštruktivizmus sa rozvinul na začiatku 20. storočia, vychádzajúc z predchádzajúceho vedeckého a uměleckého poznania, z postimpresionizmu, rayonizmu, kubizmu, futurizmu, kubofuturizmu, suprematizmu, atď. Výrazne prispel k rozvoju abstraktného umenia, grafického dizajnu, typografie, priemyselného dizajnu, architektúry, scénografie, odevného a módneho návrhárstva, ale aj k rozvoju jazykovedy, uměleckej a dizajnérskej výchovy, ideológií zaobrajúcich sa hodnotou dizajnu danej spoločnosti, teoretických poznatkov o uměleckom jazy-

ku, priestore, kompozícii a forme, o nových médiach (napr. fotografia, film) a prejavoval väzny záujem o paralelné javy nových objavov v oblasti filozofie, technológie a vedy.

Neprekvapuje preto, že dizajnéri v tých rokoch chceli zlepšiť životné podmienky rôznymi projektami, ktoré boli založené na vtedajších poznatkoch v daných oblastiach. Ako príklad možno uviesť El Lissitzkeho, Popovovú, produktivistov, skupinu Bauhaus, VCHUTEMAS, pokrok v typografii, priemyselnom dizajne, architektúre (Rietveld, Weissenhofsiedlung)

a v projektovaní miest. Utopický ideál bol spojený s optimistickou vierou, že rozličné konštrukcie sú schopné urobiť človeka lepším. Avšak vojny, ktoré potom nasledovali, jasne ukázali, že išlo o zbytočné nádeje.

Odkedy si človek uvedomil sám seba a začal vedome rozvíjať svoje bytie, fascinoval ho vesmír, jeho vlastný vzťah k vesmíru ktorý ho obklopoval a ktorý bol určený objektami nachádzajúcimi sa v tomto vesmíre. Vedomé bytie znamená jednoducho pokúsiť sa pochopiť tento vzťah, snažiť sa získať vedomosti o ňom. V priebehu celej histórie ľudstva tento problém však neboli vyriešený, ale stal sa ešte zložitejší. Najprv bola objavená nekonečnosť vesmíru a neskôr i nekonečnosť "v opačnom smere", pri hľadaní základného prvku buniek ľudského tela. Obidve tieto nekonečné siahajú oveľa ďalej, než kam môže doviťať ľudské oko. Dôležitú úlohu tu hrá intelekt, racio (na ceste za poznáním sa človek nikdy nezmieri s tým, že jeho chápanie je obmedzené).

Už od čias formulovania Aristotelových teórií sa nekonečno dávalo do vztahu so základnou vlastnosťou každého telesa, s rozpínaním, extenziou: bez extenze neexistuje nekonečno. Práve kvôli extenze sa telesá vzájomne ovplyvňujú. Leibnitz hľásal, že extenzia existuje iba vo vztahu k pluralite telies alebo bytosťi, ktoré existujú v tom istom čase, čo Whitehead rozvieadol do pojmu extenzívneho kontinua (kontinuum extenzívnych vztahov). Umenie a veda, Gallilei, Keppler, Newton rozvíjali poznanie paralelne s týmito filozofickými teóriami. Po objavení elektromagnetických siločiar v priestore zaviedol Einstein pojem zakriveného časopriestoru, v ktorom sa predmety a bytosti vzájomne ovplyvňujú. Kubizmus, futurizmus, rovnako ako suprematismus a konštruktivizmus boli nielen ovplyvnené, ale

i čiastočne iniciované týmto novým poznáním (teórie o nerozdeliteľnej spojenosti všetkých tvorov v nekonečnom, neustále sa dalej vyvíjajúcim priestore prirodzene nájdeme nielen v našej západnej, ale vo všetkých kultúrach a civilizáciách).

Pretože termín "konštruktivizmus" už nepokrýva úplne súčasnú úroveň poznania reality, je nutné ho rozšíriť. Termín "EXTENZIONALIZMUS" bude lepšie zodpovedať obsahu, cielom aj prostriedkom - má zrejmú súvislosť so slovom rozširovanie, extenzia, s rozširovaním poznania o našej realite, našom vedomí, vedomom byť prostredníctvom nevyhnutného multidisciplinárneho prístupu v teórii a praxi. Za nevyhnutné médium pre uvedomelé bytie sa pritom považuje vizuálny vnem.

Extenzializmus má za cieľ rozšíriť výskum vzájomných vztahov a vzájomného pôsobenia medzi človekom a jeho prostredím, realitou, prírodou. Zdôrazňuje pritom vizuálny jazyk, kompatibilitu a sémantiku vizuálnej a verbálnej informácie a komunikácie vnímania, chápania reality. Na základe tohto poznania sa snaží formulovať kritériá vizuálneho vnemu a overiť ich v každodennej praxi, zároveň však popiera možnosť definovania absolútnych pravidiel.

Extenzializmus ako nový termín označuje už prebiehajúci vývin a ako logický dôsledok ďalšieho vývoja konštruktivizmu odráža presnejšie definovaný význam nepretížitého napredovania vizuálneho poznávania a dáva jasný smer snaženia o "humánnu formu". Utopické ideály raného konštruktivizmu tak dozreli na veľmi realistické a expertné vedomosti extenzionalizmu. Keďže sa však mnohé základné činitele ľudskej spoločnosti menia, bude nepochybne nevyhnutný ďalší pokrok a rozširovanie týchto vedomostí, ako je to nutné v prípade každého poznania.

Letters from the Red Star or A Brief Reflection on the Quickest Ways to Improve Human Nature through Properly Organized Structures

Andrej KOVALEV

In Soviet Russia the 1920s, even at first glance, the normal relationship between ideas and their implementation was disrupted: so many brilliant ideas were conceived and so many designs produced: very few of them were realized, however.

The modest look of projects in real life is immeasurably inferior to the sparkling and amazing efflorescence of ideas and bold concepts which survived only on paper and, quite often, in literary descriptions or even in vague and inconsistent reminiscences of the contemporaries. In a sense, every student of Soviet architecture of the 1920s was confined primarily to the study of architectural fantasies, utopias, projects that never saw the light of day, and so on.

Suddenly, as it often happens in the study of the 1920s, our thoughts are beginning to go in different directions, everything is falling into layers; every object is becoming a palimpsest, all layers of which have almost equal value. In trying to answer the simple question - why did it happen that 1920s culture had so many unworkable, utopian and fantastic projects, as well as projects simply not realized and never carried out? - we notice that our thoughts are beginning to race in different directions as if interlinked with the overwritten layers of that palimpsest; and we have little else to do but repeat expressions, such as "not only, but also..." .

On the one hand, the pragmatic aspect of the answer we are looking for is obvious: the post-revo-

lutionary devastation, the general decline in construction standards, and later, the way an impersonal state became the sole client: all this eventually led to the destruction of an exceptionally productive and innovative trend. However, if we accept this as the answer, we will automatically assume the standpoint from which "modernist" culture was bitterly criticized by official culture of the 1930-1950s. And still we should acknowledge that even in the 1920s, opportunities quite feasible from the viewpoint of civil engineering of that time were passed over; they were frowned upon as utopian simply because of the widespread devastation and the rapid technological decline of industry (for this reason, for example, the window bands so favored by the Constructivists became a luxury - industry refused to manufacture large-sized glass panes which had been a standard item available to Rationalist architects of the pre-revolutionary decade). Against such a background, the "immodest" desire of architects to build solid and innovative structures - say, skyscrapers - of the best of materials looked like a totally unwarranted fantasy. Let us note that even then industry was beginning to dictate its terms to architects.

Oddly enough, when projects for a "Palace of the Soviets" were discussed in the 1930s (they dwarfed El Lissitzky's "horizontal skyscrapers" as well as Krinsky's and Ladovsky's high-rise buildings by the sheer magnitude of the engineering solutions needed), no one dared to call their feasibility into question.

The enormous gap between the dreams of architects who wanted to "launch ferro-concrete into the sky" immediately and the meagre technological and construction possibilities (made even worse by the user's incompetence and, to an extent, indifference to the prestige of an architectural image) largely explain why only a small number of projects proposed by Soviet architects was realized at that time.

If we continue to analyze the grammatical formula "not only, but also...", we will, in my opinion, come across a popular myth about great self-educated inventors who were never recognized in their native land. Therefore, one of the sources of the conviction that design was superior to actual realization was a complex which we call, tentatively, the "Levsha complex" (*Levsha*, known in English translation as "Lefty", is the main character of Nikolai Leskov's 19th century short story based on the facetious Russian saying "The English made a flea of steel, but our smiths shod it and sent it back". Lefty was, supposedly, one of them.)

It is certainly noteworthy that as early as in the mid- 1920s, this type of sly and ingenious craftsman, inclined to produce all kinds of tricky articles with dual meaning, made his presence felt in the artistic career of the Russian avant-garde artist, Vladimir Tatlin. He was the first to escape from the attractive world of experimentation with form (his spatial counter-reliefs) - even before a vast body of theoretical works showed that it was the right thing to do - into the visionary quasi-utilitarian world of his famed monument for the Third International, the project that became a trademark of the "pioneers of Soviet architecture". Clearly going beyond his modest commission under the Plan for Monumental Propaganda, he created in his monument for the world's first Proletarian State a utopian image which materialized as it were, hopes for a future World Revolution. Although **plastic** analogies are usually mentioned as the source of Tatlin's Tower, in my view, Tatlin weds **ideas** of the cultural/historical myth of Moscow as the Third Rome with those of the heavenly Jerusalem, which was higher than the Tower of Babel. Tatlin's subsequent evolution in the 1920s was that of a decline of his former historiosophic fervor. His attempts to design stoves and garments, and even his famed *Letatlin* flying machine, attest rather to

a certain amount of confusion at the choice between art and the need to become an inventor, a designer.

As it happened, the favourite notion of the 1920s - "artist-designer" - came to denote much more than "simply an artist" or "simply a designer". The task was to create life itself, not "only art". The theomachist thirst for taking the place of the Creator was perhaps the root cause of the axiological rise of **idea** over **implementation**. An artist, who competed against the Creator, or even challenged his existence, definitely fancied that he was creating the World with his single Word, with his single momentary thought.

In this case, too, common sense is ready to prompt to us fairly positivist interpretations. The grandiose intellectual outburst of 1919-1922, a "brain storm" of sorts, occurred with lightning speed; entire stages of development were "covered" within that period, and the intensive search for the ultimate answer did not require the recording of intermediate hypotheses. This is possibly one of the explanations why VKHUTEMAS teachers who originated at INKHUK did everything to "undermine" the habitual stereotypes of artistic consciousness in their disciples, by making the accustomed to an ability - irrational and inexplicable to outsiders - to sense and construct the New Form and the New Style. Only after that were fresh "converts" entrusted with the task of **translating** the Great Utopia into material life. Not by chance did ardent apologists of technicism go to such lengths to ensure that VKHUTEMAS students thoroughly studied engineering and building disciplines.

Here, of course, we could have limited ourselves, as is usual, to ascertaining that the early Constructivists were "technological romanticists", if it had not been for the consistency, perhaps even passion, with which technology was mythologized and deified. Detailed analysis leads us to the conclusion that the unrestrained technological optimism was a means rather than a goal: the Transformation of Man was to take place via the Transformation of the World.

At this point, we should mention the importance of the philosophical and anthropological ideas of N.I. Feodorov, who was, quite possibly, the primary source of the great apologia for technology, or the deification of the machine, in the cosmic conception of the

universe. (Thanks to the preachings of his disciple and admirer, K.E. Tsiolkovsky, there even emerged a small and short lived group, called “Electroorganism”.) The suprematist coffin which, as according to one legend, Kazimir Malevich designed for himself can be regarded as a reflection, even if a rather doubtful and distant one, of Feodorov’s ideas of the Universal Resurrection. In my view, that architekton of Malevich’s unveils to a certain extent the mystery shrouding the secrets of Suprematism and its creator. Despite the artist’s assurances that he and his followers, the Suprematists, set themselves the task of fighting for a “utilitarian new outlook on the world”, one can discern, in Malevich’s work, chiliastic aspirations for designing a Great Mystical Body, or Corpus Mysticum, of Humankind’s Future. Hence, whereas suprematist composition can be perceived as certain meditative objects which, like Buddhist *mandalas*, lead to individual edification, one can clearly perceive that architektons and planits are underlain by the idea of a **virtuous arrangement of a Millennium**, in which the artist is to become a demiurge rather than a simple decorator or a builder faithfully devoted to his client’s interests.

And still the mystic rationalism so typical of Malevich along with many great Russian mystics enabled him to make his ideas utilitarian, that is, to downgrade suprematist revelations to the status of instructions for everyday life. Malevich is known to have encouraged his disciples to address social matters. Their task was to cover the world with supreme signs, denoting the correct, Suprematist, Transformed Objects and New, Transformed People, Suprematists managed to objectify chiliastic utopias with considerable ease because, paradoxical as it may seem, Malevich himself seemed not sufficiently radical for that; so transplants into the actual world were made from the standpoint of another, immeasurably more potent and grandiose, idea - the Idea of the New Man and Brighter Future.

Oddly enough, Malevich himself took virtually no part in the process which brought two utopias, the Futuristic and *Proletcult* ones, together and simultaneously pitted them against each other. He evidently regarded the cosmogony of Suprematism to be immeasurably more superior to a rather naive

sociology of *Proletcult* (at best, he accepted it as a component part).

By the time that Futurism, in the first post-Revolutionary years, began to lay claims to being the official state art, *Proletcult*, headed by A.A. Bogdanov, was its main rival. Despite this rivalry, it was precisely due to the impact of Bogdanov’s ideas that Futuristic urbanism and vacillations between **machinoclasm** and **machinolatria** began to lose their anarchist shade. The **Anarchist sobornost (orthodox style of mystical collectivism)** of the Futurists began to yield to Bogdanov’s **collectivist idea; cosmism and universalism**, based on Feodorov’s revelations, were gradually transformed into **scientific and technological optimism**. In the process, eschatologism of the Futurists was being filled with Bogdanov’s sociology, thus becoming a kind of “eschatological sociiology”, while, in exchange, *Proletcult* ‘s artistically void idea received an adequate content. This fusion was promoted by the **life-organizing**, chiliastic orientation of both utopias, the feeling of superiority over the Past (also characteristic of both) and, what is most important, the common perception of the Present as a moment of transition to a radiant Future.

There was, however, a radical difference between the followers of both utopian systems. When *Proletcult* accused the Futurists of being incomprehensible the latter could live with the charge. By far the gravest accusation they heard was that they had nothing to do with the future, because they bore the perpetual “birthmark” of the original bourgeois sin - something which only the Proletarians, as members of the New Race, could feel free of.

As a result, members of Futuristic trends constantly felt disapproval on the part of the New Masters of life and their leaders; they even developed an inferiority complex of sorts on that basis. It was this complex that pushed them toward exceptional collectivist deeds which could have been described as absolutely unprecedented, had it not been for the long-standing tradition which made it possible to legitimize manifestations of early Russian Modernism thanks to - not in spite of -

the great break with the arts proclaimed at INKHUK in 1921.

INKHUK’s theory of art as the **organization of materials** had yielded by that time to the collectivist shift to the **organization of everyday life**. This is why the end of the “Golden Age of Russian art” came in 1921 (not in 1932 or 1934); the erosion of the border between art and life - an *idée fixe* of 19th century Russian philosophers - resulted in a total lack of protection of the artist from Life, which naively hoped to Create.

It is noteworthy that when the Futuristic utopia entered its new, LEF (Left Front of the Arts), stage which came to be known as **productionism**, Boris Arvatov, a mathematician by profession and a former member of *Proletcult*, emerged as its main theoretician. It is equally noteworthy that the authors of major literary utopias, creating circa 1920, also engaged in natural scientific and empirical activity: Alexander Bogdanov, the author of the comprehensive *Tektologiya* (“Tectology”), and of two novels, *Krasnaya Zvezda* (The Red Star) and *Inzhener Menni* (Manny the Engineer), was a physician by profession. His disciple, Alexei Gastev, who gave up poetry to become head of the Central Institute for Labour, was a highly skilled iron and steel industry worker. Velemir Khlebnikov, the author of *Gorod budushchego* (City of the Future), the man who did so much to model Constructivist precepts, was educated as a mathematician. Eugene Zamyatin, the author of one of the greatest anti-utopias of the 20th century, was a professional engineer specializing in ship-building. In a word, one can make the conclusion that people even indirectly involved in empirical activities proved to be more innovative and far-sighted, especially in theory, than the Futurists proper.

Practicing architects, M. Ginzburg, the Vesnin brothers, and K. Melnikov, who had vast building experience before the Revolution, became, starting from the early 1920s, leading architects who made their apologia for technicism sound especially convincing. Having evolved sharply in the direction of Constructivism in the early 1920s, these architects forgot, as it were, all about the early, Futuristic, stage of Constructivism, and Ginzburg wrote his program book *Stil i Epokha* (Style and the Epoch) in such

a vein that his eulogies for high technology appealed to technology itself rather than to the declarations of the early Futurists.

Furthermore, bold dreams of the first five post-Revolutionary years about new types of structures based on a cubical interplay between abstract forms began to be not so romantic a flesh when it came to their actual building. They were assigned the role of **social condensers** which, on a more general plane, were to become a kind of incubator for hatching the New Man. This is why, taking over from the early Constructivists and Futurists, a Constructivist architect did not simply design structures” he designed the New Society and its components, thus indulging in the construction of new phalansteries. For this reason structures that were actually built - houses-communes, workers’ clubs, giant laundries, “integrated communal kitchens”, etc. - should be considered, without doubt, to be works of utopian architecture created for the man of the New Society, a man all of whose functions, the most intimate ones included, were socialized to a maximum. The majority of projects produced by Constructivist architects appears to be rather realistic, but only from the standpoint of assisting various functions of the New Man, although, as experience shows, ordinary people, not necessarily a new breed, could live in such buildings too. (Besides, one should not forget that architects of the 1920s designed a fairly large number of buildings which were not utopian at all.)

In those years architecture possessed one striking quality: dreaming of flying cities, buildings on springs, and similar miracles of technology, architects had difficulty imagining that actual housing with more than nine cubic meters of living space per person could be built at that hard time. “Urbanists” and “disurbanists” allotted similar or even smaller norms of housing space to the future inhabitants of “new settlements”.

Why then were the innovative ideas in architecture and design renounced so resolutely right before it was announced that “socialism was built finally and irreversibly”, before the “great industrialization” created, at long last, opportunities for implementing truly fantastic projects? Why then were those trends of Soviet architecture and the arts, which had so ar-

dently stated their intention to participate in building the New Society, suppressed and subjected to ideological flagellation?

As I see it, the answer is that architects - the Constructivists and Productionists - appropriated those functions of building and organizing society which belonged to entirely different spheres and institutions. Distracted from reality by their travels to the heaven of the universal utopia, they failed to notice how the chiliastic idea, preached by them, was being replaced by the rigid authoritarian system which had no room for them. Naive daydreamers, they believed that an egalitarian society was in the making - a society in which everyone would have

the right (and be obliged) to live in the same conditions. However, in the late 1920s, the system of privileges and castes was already assuming its final shape in the Soviet society. Sadly, it was Moisei Ginzburg, the ideologist of disurbanism and the planner of disperse patterns of settlement in which workers were supposed to live in small fairy-tale huts, who designed a very comfortable building on Moscow's Novinsky Boulevard for the *Nakomfin* (People's Commissariat of Finance) officials. He did so with due regard for the existing social stratification - all are known to be equal, but some are more equal than others.

Listy z červenej hviezdy alebo Krátka úvaha o najrýchlejších cestách k zdokonaleniu ľudskej povahy prostredníctvom vhodne organizovaných štruktúr a tiež o veľkom prínose architektonických fantázií

Autor sa zaobrá ruským umením 20. rokov, ktoré charakterizuje roztržka a prerušenie normálnych vzťahov medzi umeleckými ideami a ich realizáciou, materiálnym uskutočnením - dobu, ktorá sice zrodila brilantné myšlienky a projekty, ale ponechala ich vo sfére utópii a fantázii. Základnou a východiskovou problémovou premisou príspevku je otázka, prečo bol charakter ruskej porevolučnej kultúry utopický a "neuskutočnitelný" - projektívny. Autor definuje na jednej strane pragmatické podhubie tejto situácie (porevolučná devastácia krajiny, všeobecný úpadok hospodárstva a tým aj stavebníctva a konštrukčných štandardov), na druhej strane však viac smeruje k interpretácii "duchovných" príčin tohto fenoménu (parafrázujúc N. Leskova ho nazýva "komplexom ľaváctva").

Projektívny charakter ruského umenia dvadsiatych rokov má komplikovanejší pôvod; výrazným spôsobom ho ovplyvnili niektoré smery ruského filozofického myšlenia z prelomu 19. a 20. storočia (N.I. Fjodorov, K. Ciolkovskij), aspekty kozmizmu a univerzalizmu. Theomachická túžba umelcov prevziať na seba úlohu Tvorcu, umením nielen pretvárať, ale aj vytvárať život, organizovať životné funkcie, patrí k jednej z príčin axiologického "vítazstva" idey nad jej realizáciou. Zvláštnu symbiózu mysticizmu s utilitarizmom, utopizmu so sociálnym pragmatizmom, racionalizmu a iracionalizmu ruského umenia dvadsiatych rokov demonštruje na príkladoch jej najvýznamnejších tvorcov a hnutí (Tatlin, Malevič, suprematismus, futurizmus, Proletkult, LEF, produktivizmus a konštruktivizmus).

Die Umwelt des Steppenkommunismus. Andrej Platonows "Tschewengur"

Alexander JAKIMOWICZ

Das Absurde, als eine absichtlich verwendete Kunststrategie, sollte theoretisch keine Chancen in den Verhältnissen der "harten" sowjetischen Diktatur von 1927-1955 gehabt haben. Allerdings ist die Kunst und Literatur des offiziellen "Sozialistischen Realismus" an sich absurd genug gewesen, um sie heute konzeptualistisch zu genießen. Manche Stellen der Moskauer U-Bahn - dieses Systems unterirdischer Marmorpaläste der 30er Jahre mit charakteristischen Wandbildern und Plastiken - sehen wie ein Traum des ideologischen Idioten vom Goldenen Zeitalter aus. Ein Effekt sondergleichen, jedoch ist dieser Effekt unabsichtlich erreicht worden.

Um 1990 werden in Moskauer "postmodernen" Kreisen eifrig Texte aus den 30-er Jahren lanciert, die z.B. den sibirischen, kaukasischen oder anderen marginalen Einheimischen gehören. Manche sind tatsächlich außerordentlich in ihrer Verbindung der neuen Wirklichkeit des Totalstaates UdSSR mit der ausgesprochen schamanistischer Phantasie (die, beiläufig gesagt, vom abgeschossenen Luftwaffe Flieger Josef Beuys bei den ihn in Obhut genommen habenden Krimtartaren entdeckt wurde, was für die westeuropäische Kunstgeschichte nicht ohne Folgen blieb).

Jawohl, auch Steinzeitgeschichten haben wir, die der Magie der totalitären Allmacht und Allsicht gewidmet sind. Wir sind Besitzer epischer Lieder vorzeitlicher, aber zeitgenössischer Jäger und Hirten mit Lenin und Stalin als Haupthelden. Vorzeitlich und zeitgenössisch, denn bei uns ist es möglich. Man hat diese Früchte des volkstümlichen Geistes offiziell nur ausnahmsweise unterstützt - nämlich nur

in den recht seltenen Fällen, wenn die Schamanen einen mehr oder weniger zivilisierten Ton anschlagen konnten.

Diese anachronistische Folklore-Wortkunst ist jedoch ein Sonderfall. Gab es individuelle Hochleistungen absurdistischer Wortkunst (also, der irrationalistischen, dionysischen, vernunftsbrechenden) auf sowjetischen Boden?

Um 1990 sind endlich einige literarisch-philosophische Werke von etwa 1925-1940 veröffentlicht worden, die das Bestehen eines nicht-offiziellen "Keller-Surrealismus" im Stalinreich bescheinigen. Es handelt sich um die bekannte Gruppe OBERIU (Daniil Harms u.a.) sowie um außerordentliche Einzelgänger wie Konstantin Waginow (Wagenheim) und Andrej Platonow.

Der philosophische und phantastische Roman Platonows *Tschewengur* wurde in 1927 geschrieben und erzählt von einer "kommunistischen" Gemeinde, oder vielmehr Sekte, die in der von der Sonne und vom Bürgerkrieg verbrannten Steppenwelt Südrusslands ein Städtchen Tschewengur findet und bewaffneten Handes ergreift, um dort eine neue Welt, eine Art alternative Realität aufzubauen, die auf das Glanzwort Kommunismus getauft wird. Steppenkommunismus sollte das genauer geheißen.

Diese Leute, sie kommen alle aus der Vorzeit, aus schamanistischer Wunderwelt russischer, kasachischer, tartarischer Dörfer. Man will in dieser Wunderwelt nicht jene Sinnunterscheidungen machen, die dem rationellen Bewußtsein der Europäer selbstverständlich erscheinen - wenigstens in neuer Zeit.

Im "kommunistischen" Tschewengur wird eine Realität ohne Unterschiede herausgebildet. "Lebendig" und "tot", "Mann" und "Frau", "mein" und "dein" werden undifferenzierbar. Der Verzicht aufs Unterscheidungsvermögen wird zum Grund (oder vielmehr Abgrund, mystisch gesprochen - Ungrund) dieses Daseins. Man glaubt häufig, dieser Verzicht sei die Sache der Postmoderne. Keinesfalls. Der mystische Anarchismus in Rußland hat uns dazu seit langem vorbereitet.

"Ich sehe gern zu, wie Kinder sterben" - der berühmte Satz Majakowskis - will gar nicht sagen, daß der Autor dieser "poetischen" Aussage sich die Rolle des Monstrums aneignen möchte. Der Satz will sagen - die Zeit des Urzeitmenschen sei gekommen, also des Wesens, das ruhig, unperturbiert und gleichgültig bleibt im Angesicht des fremden sowie des eigenen Todes, weil es ja egal ist - zu leben, oder zu sterben.

Es gab einen guten Familienvater in Auschwitz, der seine Volkslieder gefühlvoll sang und seinen Kleinen nach Hause zärtliche Briefe schrieb, und Judenkinder in die Gaskammer brachte. Es gab eine Lehrerin in Moskau, die den Kindern vom Freiheitsgeist Puschkins und vom lyrischen Element bei Blok ergriffen erzählte, und abends ihre Mitlehrer anzeigte wegen politisch unrichtiger Ansichten, was für die Angezeigten Versperrung im KZ und, meistensfalls, Tod bedeutete.

Ich kenne in Moskau einen Offizier der heute schon wieder russischen (und nicht sowjetischen) Armee, der in 1985 als Oberleutnant der damals noch sowjetischen Armee in Afghanistan war. Einmal hat er mit seinen Soldaten einen dreizehnjährigen Jungen gefangengenommen, der eine portable Rakete auf gehasste Okkupanten abgeschossen hat. Der Offizier und seine Kerle haben den Jungen in Stücke zerrissen. Ich habe selbst das Photo gesehen. Ist er ein Unmensch, ein Ungeheuer? Er spricht so aufgeregt von Leiden, die die Russen erdulden mußten, von verhungernden alten Frauen, den Witwen unserer Kriegsveteranen. Er fragte mich, ob ich ihn wegen des afghanischen Jungen verurteile. Ich sagte "Nein" und erzähle ihm vom österreichischen Denker und Literaten Robert Musil, der das Menschenwesen wie folgt definiert hat: ein Wesen, das kannibalisch werden kann, aber auch eine "Kritik der reinen Vernunft"

zu schreiben imstande ist. Das ist metaphorisch zu verstehen. Der Mann von Auschwitz, die Lehrerin und der Offizier sind Leute der Musil-Epoche - die Gutbösen. Wie kommen sie zur Welt? Ein Weg führt durch Tschewengur.

Der verwaiste Dorfjunge namens Alexander Dwanow wächst in der Familie eines Eisenbahnarbeiters auf. Der neue Vater ist - wie auch der verstorbene - ein Mystiker und ein Philosoph der tiefen Vormoderne. Er vergöttert die Technik, also das Präzise, Ewige und Übermenschliche der industriell-technischen Wunderwelt. Der Mensch ist ihm zu unvollkommen, und stammt, wie der Meister flüchtig erfahren hat, von wurmartigen Lebewesen. So steht es in klugen Büchern.

Der Meister ist ein guter Mann. Hat aber Nietzsche nicht gesagt, daß die Guten der Anfang des Ende sind?

Platonow kennt gut diese wunderliche Erscheinung - die Geisteswelt des Proletariats in Rußland. Der vorhistorische Mensch verläßt seine agonisierende Dorfwelt und gelangt an neue Wunder und Götter - die Dampfmaschine, das Maschinengewehr, der Kinematograph. Wird er zum "zivilisierten" Menschen? Er erlernt neue Berufe der technischen Epoche, aber seine schamanistische Weltsicht wird dadurch nicht gestört - im Gegenteil. Er beobachtet zaubervolle Verwandlungen der Welsubstanz, des einheitlichen Universums. Aus Nichts wird etwas - so Elektrizität. Aus Etwas - ein absolut Anderes. So Photographie.

Er hat alle wissenschaftlich feststellbare Merkmale eines rationalen Menschen des positivistischen Zeitalters, aber darunter steckt eine irrationale Urzeitpsyche. Die Idee des souveränen Selbst - die Kernidee der westlichen Zivilisation - bleibt dem Wald- und Steppenträumer fern und nicht geläufig. Das Ich - der Baum - die Dampfmaschine... Wer hat gesagt, daß diese Dinge prinzipiell unterschiedlich sind? Ein Mechanismus ist vollkommener, als ein Mensch, der ja von einer Art Wurm stammt...

Europäische, zivilisatorische Haarsplittere (lebendig ist nicht tot, gut und böse sind nicht dasselbe) erscheint ihm als Lüge oder müßiges Geplapper. Das unbegrenzt Wandelbare an der unbegrenzt einheitlichen Wunderwelt des Schamanismus - das ist, was es sieht und was er sehen will.

So entsteht die russische Version der kommunistischen Utopie.

Der "Kommunismus" von Tschewengur hat nur eins gemein mit dem reellen Bolschewismus - und zwar, das Prinzip der totalen Gewalt, der schonungslosen physischen Vernichtung der "Klassenfeinde". Die Disziplin, die Hierarchie der neuen sowjetischen Herrscher finden keinen Platz in Tschewengur. Hier herrscht der anarchische Kommunismus eines Kropotkin, eine "romantische" Version - die allerdings im wirklichen Leben des sowjetischen "Sozialismus" viel einflußreicher war, als man denkt.

Hohe Werte und Stichworte europäischer Zivilisation kommen hier zum Schluß. Geschichte, Gesellschaft, Ordnung, Gesetz, Organisation, Hierarchie, Arbeit, Wissenschaft, Nutzen, Ratio - niedergestellt. Man zerstöre die Trugwelt der Bürgerlichen. Der Traum der Vorzeit von der Fülle des Seins - die auch die Fülle des Nichts ist - vom ursprünglichen Chaos, das das Leben gibt und nimmt, soll die Oberhand gewinnen.

Von Karl Marx weiß man in Tschewengur nur eins - daß er den Kommunismus als die "Finale der Geschichte" bezeichnete. Gut so. Steppenleute mit Eisenbahn und Maschinengewehr haben diese Idee gern, denn sie sind satt von der Geschichte, mit allen Scheußlichkeiten des Geschichtlichen. Also, die Finale. Die Revolutionäre haben von kirchenbesuchenden Großmüttern einstmals die Pfaffenmärchen vom "Weltende" und vom "Jüngsten Gericht" vernommen. Daraus erlernen sie die Revolutionsstrategie: die alte Welt der Bourgeoisie soll im eigenen Blut ertrinken. Man proklamiert in Tschewengur "Das Ende der Geschichte". Maschinengewehre sorgen dafür. Alle, die in ihren Häusern leben und etwas haben, und mit ihren Familien den Lügennetz der alten Welt bilden, sollen das Zeitliche segnen.

Die alte Welt und ihre Qual müssen überwunden werden. Die Zeit gibt es keine mehr. Keine Jahreszahlen, keine Daten. Das Eigentum wird abgeschafft. Und so weiter - die Arbeit, das Ratio, das Sozium... ALLES.

Die Lumpenproletarier Rußlands wissen auch aus dem "Kommunistischen Manifest" von Marx und Engels, daß sie, die "Arbeiterklasse", nichts zu verlieren haben, außer ihrer Ketten, aber die ganze Welt gewinnen sollen. Die Welt ist groß, aber das Städ-

chen Tschewengur gehört ihnen ganz - mit allen Straßen, Häusern und Gärten. Die Bürgerlichen, diese Teufel des Geldes, der Arbeit, der Zeit, der Vernunft und anderer Unterdrückungswerze, liegen in ihrem Massengrab. Endlich lebt man in Wahrheit und in Einheit. Man lebt im Anderen und für den Anderen, nicht im Selbst, nicht um des Selbst willen. Man wandert, wie einst urzeitliche Vorfahren, in verwilderten Gärten, in den früheren Ackern in den Umgebungen der Stadt, oder man fischt am kleinen Flüßchen, um etwas Eßbares zu haben - nicht für das Selbst natürlich, sondern für jeden Genossen, für den Klassenbruder. Der Andere ist immer teurer, als das Ich - so lautet das Gesetz. Keiner soll arbeiten, im alten Sinne des Wortes - um sich ernähren zu können. Die Qual der Arbeit ist den Naturkräften überlassen - der Sonne, der Erde, dem Regen. Deshalb soll in Tschewengur das Denkmal errichtet werden, das der Einheit von Natur und Mensch gewidmet ist.

Das soll man sich merken. Die Tschewengurier errichten Denkmäler, viel Denkmäler. Sie ereifern sich gegen die ermessene, die geordnete historische Zeit, aber sie sind in die Ewigkeit verliebt - in das Grundlose, Unermeßliche. Das ist eine durchaus bedeutende Tatsache für einen Kunsthistoriker, der sich für diese seltsame und nicht zufällig dem großen Schriftsteller eingefallene Zivilisation interessieren möge.

Das Denkmal der Einheit der Natur und des Menschen sollte, dem Entwurf nach, einen Baum darstellen, der mit seinen Ästen einen Menschen umarmte.

Ein Kunsthistoriker könnte kaum eine Assoziation mit dem Surrealismus der 20er und 30er Jahre in Westeuropa vermeiden. So ein Denkmal konnte einem Max Ernst, einem Salvador Dalí, einem Richard Oelze gehören. Merkwürdig.

Salvador Dalí hat bekanntlicherweise mehrmals in dem Sinne gesprochen, daß er sich von Sowjetrußland mystisch und surrealistisch angezogen fühlte - eine typische Geste surrealistischer Wahnliebe zum unerhört Unmenschlichen. So war seine Art. Dalís Liebeserklärungen dem "großen Masochisten" Adolf Hitler gegenüber legen auch Zeugnis davon ab.

Was geht die Tschewengurier der Surrealismus an? Im utopisch-anarchistischen Steppenkommunis-

mus des Ostens gibt es keine Unterscheidung des Lebens und des Todes - und das war ja einer der Kernpunkte der Theorie André Bretons. In Tschewengur könnte er seine Träume lebendig sehen. Der Tod wundert dort keinen, erschreckt keinen, er ist nichts besonderes. Man ist immer bereit zu sterben und zu töten. Eine "tierische Grausamkeit" gibt es jedoch nicht - weder bei den Tieren, noch bei Kommunisten. Man schneidet Kehlen und Bäuche der Bürgerlichen auf, aber ohne Wut. Man ist nicht böse und nicht gut. Man ist Steppenkommunist.

Die Heiden aus schamanistischer Vorzeit, seien sie mit Maschinengewehr und Automobil ausgerüstet, existieren außerhalb der Opposition von gut und böse. Dinge und Wesen sind eins in magischer Sicht. Die Weltsubstanz kreist zwischen der Entstehung und der Vernichtung. Eine Teekanne zu brechen, eine Blume niederzustampfen oder einen Menschenkopf abzusäbeln hat nichts zu tun weder mit "gut" noch mit "böse". Es ist die normale alltägliche notwendige Arbeit eines Revolutionärs, bürgerliche Teekannen, Blumen und Köpfe zunichte zu machen. Die verfluchte Bourgeoisie hat ja die Gesetze des Weltalls vergewaltigen wollen mit ihrem Geld, ihrer Vernunft und Logik, ihrer Geschichte, ihrem Nützlichkeitsprinzip. Die Feinde des ursprünglichen Chaos wollten die Ordnung einführen, wo das Weltreich der Magie sein soll. Das werden sie teuer bezahlen sollen. Ohne Wut und Haß verwandelt man sie und ihre Zivilisation wieder in die chaotische und einheitliche Urssubstanz, damit der Weltbaum den Menschen wieder mit seinen Ästen umarme - liebend, lebenspendend und tödend, was ja ein und das selbe ist.

Die Unwelt der kommunistischen Steppenstadt hat ihre Anführer und Schamanen. Einer der bedeutendsten heißt Kopenkin. Wie ein Ritter, kämpft er immer für die Wahrheit und die Dame, und diese letzte ist keine andere als Rosa Luxemburg - die von der verfluchten Bourgeoisie getötete Revolutionärin, die in ihrem Grab im fernen Deutschland liegt. Kopenkin träumt davon, wie er seine Geliebte aus ihrem Grab befreien wird, um sie nach Tschewengur zu bringen (eine merkwürdige irrationale Kontamination zweier Ritterideen - der "Befreiung des heiligen Grabes" und der "Befreiung der Dame"). Ist er ganz

bei Sinnen? Von Standpunkt der Bürgerlichen ausgesehen - natürlich nicht.

Der Krieger und Magier von Tschewengur ist ein Mann des Chaos. Rationelle Unterscheidungen will er nicht in Kauf nehmen. Die "lebendige Rosa" und "tote Rosa" bilden eine Opposition im Rahmen der rationalen Vernunft, die von Tschewengur ausgetrieben ist. Kopenkin weiß gut, daß die ersehnte Geliebte tot ist. Ihm ist es aber egal. Tot oder lebendig - lächerliche Spiele der alten Welt. Im Kommunismus ist es einerlei. Der Ritter träumt davon, wie er mit ihr, der Totlebenden, in seine Unwelt des kommunistischen Einerlei zurückkommt. Wiederum eine Idee für einen Surrealisten.

So sind die großen Schamanen des Steppenkommunismus. Einer von ihnen - ein Philosoph sui generis - sagt einmal: "Die Substanz ist eins - so ich, so ein Stern..." Wie kann dann jemand sterben, wenn die Substanz einst ist?

Der bürgerliche Feind des Universums wird wohl sagen, diese Lumpenträger seien verrückt, und die Toten leben nicht mehr. Und anderes vernünftiges Zeug. Dafür bekommt er seine "neun Gramm Blei", wie russische Soldaten sagen. Soll das Mord heißen? Das chaotische Weltall der Magie ist nicht böse - und nicht gut. Weltall ist Weltall.

In Tschewengur ist der Mensch über alles in der Welt. Aber nicht das Ich. Immer der Andere. Also, das Nicht-Ich ist über alles.

Der Mensch (der andere) ist die vollkommenste Verkörperung der Weltsubstanz, die "immer anders" ist. Der Allmensch ist das Beste, was das Weltall nach seinem Bilde geformt hatte. Der allmögliche Andere - der zärtliche Henker von Auschwitz, der menschenfreundliche Knabenmörder von Moskau. Der verbrecherische Held, der ehrliche Lügner, der Mensch der neuesten Zeiten. Wenn er eines neuen Gottes bedürfte, so kenne ich dessen Namen: Christus Belzebub...

Die magische Urssubstanz feiert ihren Sieg in Tschewengur. Darüber legen Dinge und Objekte, die in steppenkommunistischer Unwelt hergestellt werden, Zeugnis ab. Ja, es wird hergestellt. Aber nein, das ist keine Produktion zur Befriedigung des Ich im arbeitsteilenden Sozium. Die Zeit, die den Leuten hier bleibt (und sie haben nicht wenig freie Zeit)

gebrauchen sie zur Herstellung der Geschenke für Andere, für Klassenbrüder. Alles soll dem Anderen geschenkt werden, nichts für sich. Zerstören oder schenken - nur so geht man mit materiellen Werten um. Das Leben von Tschewengur ist eine Art ewiger Potlatch.

Dabei könnte man in eine Falle der bürgerlichen Welt geraten, wenn man nützliche Sachen, die sogenannten Gebrauchswert haben, einander schenken würde. Eine intakte Uhr, ein Paar gute Schuhe schenkt man nicht. Teufelssachen der bürgerlichen Welt sollen vernichtet werden - das heißt, dem Chaos der Weltsubstanz wiedergegeben.

Man schenkt symbolische Sachen. Eine aus Tannenholz geschnittene Pfanne, worauf nichts gebraten werden kann. Ein Rad von etwa vier Meter Durchmesser ist ein gutes Geschenk. Eine "dynamische Maschine", aus den Teilen vieler Wanduhren und Wecker hergestellt. Außer ihrer eigenen ziellosen Bewegung kann solche Maschine nichts produzieren. Etwas wie von Jean Tinguely...

Daß er ein geistiger Bruder der Dadaisten und Surrealisten sei, hätte ein Tschewengurier vielleicht in Abrede stellen wollen. Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, Jean Tinguely haben ja fürs Geld gearbeitet und an bürgerlichen Kulturtätigkeiten teilgenommen - was bestimmt mit "neun Gramm Blei" zu vergelten sei.

Was sie in Tschewengur tun, ist auch keine Kunst im bürgerlichen Sinne des Wortes, sondern eine Unkunst der endlich zur Unzeit durchgebrochener Unmenschen (der Nicht-Ich, der Immer Anderen). Formell gesehen, soll man das Dasein in Tschewengur dadaistisch nennen. Andrej Platonow, der seltsame Autor mit großer Erfahrung in marginalen, ungeregelten, "wahnsinnigen" Lebensschichten, sollte allem Anschein nach Kunstformen irgendwelcher Gruppen radikaler Künstler der 20er Jahre beobachtet haben, die uns heute nur aus Legenden bekannt sind (wie jene absurdistisch skizzierte Dichter- und Künstlerkreise, die man in den Romanen Konstantin Wagnows vorfindet).

In Platonows Tschewengur geschehen ununterbrochen jene spontane "shows", die dem Dadaismus nahe stehen. Man stelle sich nur eine Szene vor. Ein Abgesandter des kommunistischen Zentralkomitees von Moskau taucht in Tschewengur auf. Eine nor-

male Dienstreise eines Beamten im sich totalisierenden Staat der Bolschewiken. Der Angekommene sieht sich von seltsamen Leuten umgeben. Sie sind weder bekleidet noch nackt, weder feindlich noch freundlich, weder Verrückte noch Normale. Sie sind anders und benehmen sich nicht so, wie man sich anderswo benimmt. Einer von ihnen zieht die automatische Feder des angereisten Beamten an sich, zerbricht sie - und schenkt die Bruchteile seinem Genossen (wir wissen ja, daß eine normale Gebrauchssache, also die giftige Frucht der bürgerlichen Welt, keinen Eintritt in die kommunistische Unwelt bekommen kann). Dasselbe geschieht mit der Brille, mit dem Sakko und den anderen Sachen des Dienstreisenden. Ohne Wut oder Hohn, aber unwiderstehlich. Hier herrscht der Kommunismus, die endgültigte Freiheit. Im Westen sagt man Dada.

Tristan Tzara erklärte: "Die Vernichtung der Logik ist Dada, die Abschaffung der sozialen Hierarchie ist Dada, der Tod des Gedächtnisses ist Dada, die Verachtung der Zukunft ist Dada". Die Konservativen von damals assoziierten die radikale Avantgarde mit dem sogenannten Kulturbolschewismus. Sie sollten nach Tschewengur gehen.

André Breton erhob die Forderung, den besonderen Stand der Psyche zu berücksichtigen, wo es keine Opposition mehr gibt zwischen dem Leben und dem Tod, zwischen dem Wirklichen und dem Erdachten. War auch er etwa ein heimlicher Tschewengurier gewesen?

Die Konsonanz westlicher Avantgarde-Stimmen mit der Stimme des Chaos und Wahnsinns von Rußland ist an sich bezeichnend genug. Die Lebenswelt des Steppenkommunismus erzeugt auch andere exotische Früchte. Hier, in absoluter chaotischer Freiheit von der Vernunft, dem Gesetz, der Ordnung keimen Ansätze des "Sozialistischen Realismus" - der künftigen offiziellen Kunst der sowjetischen Diktatur. Der Kunst, die seit 1932 in ihre aktive Phase trat.

In Tschewengur errichtet man einander Denkmäler. Jeder jedem - nur nicht sich selbst. Immer dem teuren Klassenbruder, dem Gefährten und Mitkämpfer beim Wandern in der magischen Welt. Der Mensch verewigt den Anderen im rohen Ton, denn die Bronze und der Marmor sind nicht bei der Hand. Wie sollten diese Götzen des Nicht-Ichsein ausse-

hen? Einmal nur wird flüchtig bemerkt, daß ein Denkmal hier von Ähnlichkeit nicht viel hatte - was ja selbstverständlich ist angesichts des absoluten Unprofessionalismus der Unkünstler: sowie der amorphen Tonsubstanz in ihren Händen. Unzergliederte Götzenfiguren, menschenähnliche Amöben mit schwach angedeuteten Köpfen, Armen und Beinen - das war der Höhepunkt der magischen Nicht-Ich-Verehrung in Tschewengur. Die Ähnlichkeit, die rationelle Zergliederung der Gestalten brauchte man eigentlich nicht. Im reell existiert habenden Sozialistischen Realismus der Stalinzeit wurden die Ähnlichkeit und der richtige Bau der Menschenfigur theoretisch gefordert. Soll es heißen, daß heldenhafte und ideelle Gestalten der offiziellen Kunst realistisch gewesen sind?

Den mystischen Verzicht auf das ich, die Ordnung, die Vernunft erklärten bei Dostojewski der "Mann aus dem Keller" und der "lächerliche Mensch". Die Hauptschlagkraft der Revolte erschien mit dem übermenschlichen Hyperboreer und Antichrist von Nietzsche. Seine Leute folgten ihm: der kampfbereite philosophische Hidalgo, der aus den Schriften Ortega y Gassets spricht und die bürgerliche Liebe zur Ordnung und Moral verhöhnt; sein noch ungestümerer Landsmann Luis Buñuel; russische Künstler und Dichter des magischen Weltalls, von Filonow bis Khlebnikov. Und, selbstverständlich, die

Kämpfer von Paris - der "Papst des Surrealismus" André Breton und der irische Künstlerterrorist und Wortbomber James Joyce.

Totalitäre Diktaturen in Deutschland, Rußland und Italien bekämpften diese Pest aufs entschiedenste seit den ersten Schritten der neuen Machthaber (offiziell unterstützte Angriffe auf die "bürgerliche Entartung" in der Kunst und Literatur entfalteten sich in Rußland seit etwa 1925).

In die Zeit der Triumphe des sowjetischen Sozialismus hinein kommen junge Geister wie Platonow, Harms, Wagnow. Was tun sie da, welche ist ihre Rolle? Wollen sie sich selbst mit utopischen (und schrecklichen) Geschichten von der wahnsinnigen "letzten Freiheit im Chaos" trösten und ermuntern, schon wieder im Keller lebend? Meinen sie etwa, daß der Durchbruch zum universalen mystischen Einerlei, zum "höheren Wahnsinn" des Nicht-Ich und des Alles-Ist-Erlaubt doch nichts anderes als der entscheidende Schritt zu allerletzter Totalgewalt ist, die sich selbst von der Nicht-Gewalt nicht mehr unterscheidet?

Platonows *Tschewengur*, sowie absurdistisch-komische Gewaltgeschichten von Harms geben uns einen Kommentar zur wunderlichen Tatsache des stummen und gleichwie unbeteiligten Verschwindens vieler Millionen Leben im Laufe totaler Repressionen von 1927-1953.

Človek a umenie v románe Andreja Platonova "Čevengur" (1927)

V súvislosti s rozkladom a najmä po páde sovietskohho systému v Rusku sa stávajú známymi početné a významné nové údaje o "podsvetí" kultúrnych činnosti epochy totalitarizmu. Platonovov román *Čevengur* (dokončený 1927 a do r. 1990 nikdy nepublikovaný) má z tohto hľadiska význam ako svedecká výpoveď nezávislého, neoficiálneho filozofického myslenia. Človek, umenie v pomeroch jednej "uskutočnejnej utópie" sú hlavné predmety tohto myslenia.

Čevengur - tak sa volá jedno mestečko, stratené v stepi južného Ruska, kde fanatické spoločenstvo revolucionárov oživuje svoj sen o komunizme. Má tento snový a stepný komunizmus niečo spoločné s reálnym sovietskym totalitarizmom? Zdanlivo nie sú si vôbec podobné. Civilizačné a spoločenské hodnoty ako disciplína, právo, poriadok, kontrola a samotná práca a princíp užitočnosti sa v rámci komunistickej stepnej utópie radikálne odstraňujú ako "burzoázne výplody". Totálna diktatúra alebo totálna anarchia? Čevengur je oboje, a tento pohľad "uskutočnejnej utópie" je dostatočne hlboký. Platonov popisuje ojedinelú jednotu dvojakých vecí, a to absolútnej nezodpovednej anarchic-

kej slobody na jednej strane, a rovnako absolútnej závislosti osobnosti od spoločenstva, od iných. Tým sa vynoria na svetlo antropologické a psychologické javy, ktoré sú vlastné reálnemu sovietskemu socializmu. Myslím existenčnú situáciu "mystickej jednakosti" hodnôt a kritérií ľudského správania sa. Alebo, inými slovami, špecifický, neuspriadaný, iracionálny model svedca, ktorý ignoruje základné rozlišovanie jednej rozumnej civilizácie. Teda, "skutočný" a "fiktívny", "dobrý" a "zlý", "živý" a "mŕtvy" nie sú už viac opozitá.

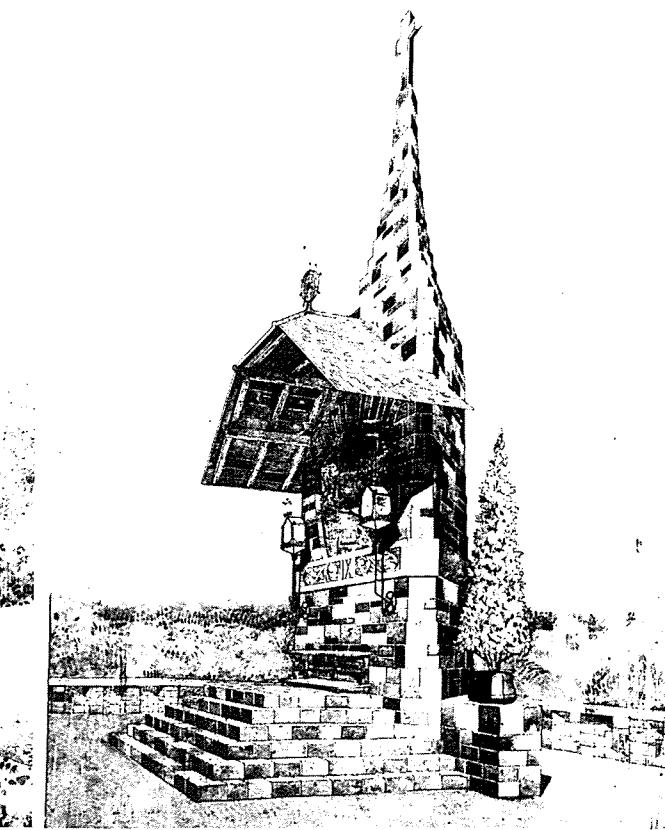
Následky v umení a kultúre nenechajú na seba dlho čakat. Umelecké formy utopického stepného komunizmu, ako ich línil Platonov, zaujímajú miesto medzi západným dadaizmom a surrealizmom (objekty a stroje umenia Dalího a Tinguelyho) na jednej strane a budúceho "socialistického realizmu" Stalinovej epochy (oslava "nového človeka" v bezpočetných pomníkoch) na strane druhej.

Líčenie utopického mysticizmu ako aj paralela totalitnej a netotalitnej kultúry je silnou stránkou Platonova.

War Visions of Dušan Jurkovič (Reflections of Totality in the Work of the Humanist)

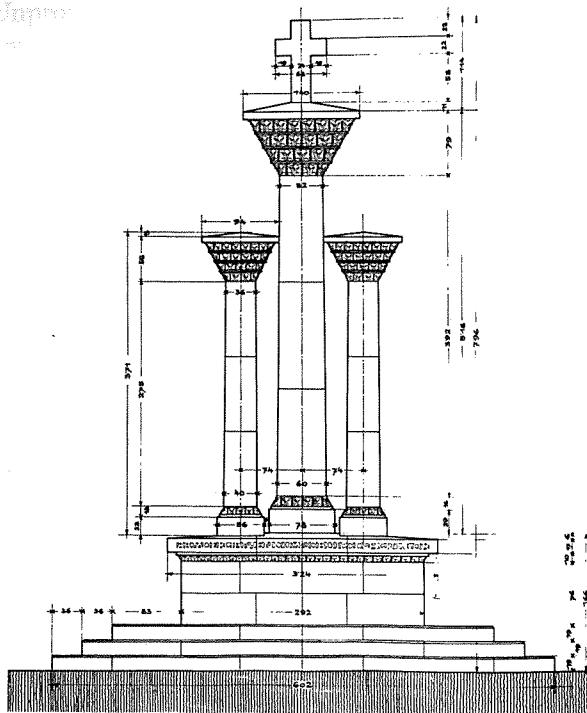
Dana BOŘUTOVÁ

I would like to tell you a story - the story of an architect whose works were picturesque, romantic, snug, and elegant, abounding in charm, joy, and, most of all, they were moderate - adequate to human measures. It is the story of a man, whose consequent rational thinking and strong social feeling motivated him to search for an ORDER (Fig. 1).



1. The chapel of the Way of the Cross at St. Hostýn, Moravia, design, 1903

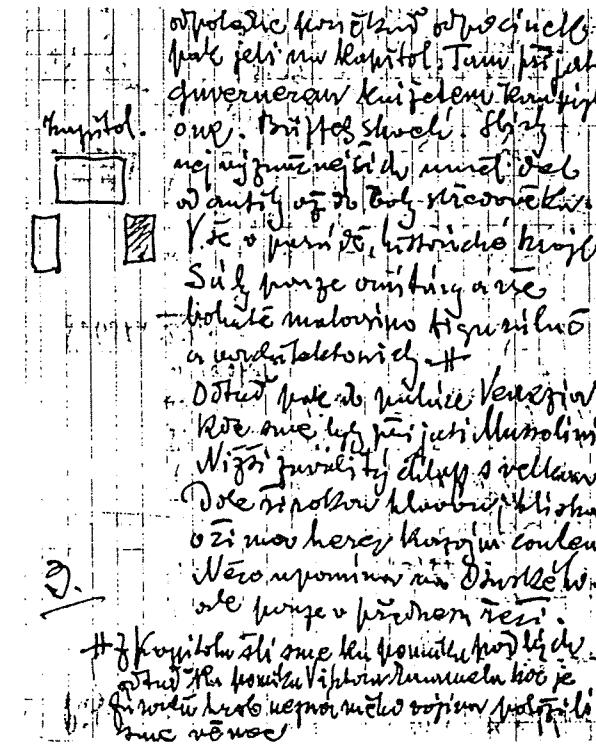
He comprehended the occupation of an architect as a mission to develop the culture of his own nation, as a mission to improve the life conditions of the people. His way of thinking could be defined as that of an enlightenment type, oriented, due to the specific influences of conditions at home as well as of his education, rather pragmatically.



2. Military cemetery at Zmigród, Western Galicia, design, 1916

Jurkovič was generally known as an architect who synthesized elements of the folk building tradition with principles of contemporary architecture, attaining thus the specific expression of his works. But, there were more impulses absorbed by him, and our story will touch exactly one of them - that of classicism, a tradition, in fact, alien to his own milieu.

When Jurkovič, in 1933, for the first time visited Italy, he had already been well prepared to accept (and absorb) classicism. For many years ago, he was already playing with it, so to say, in a Viennese manner. It is not known, whether just the different character of his own (ethnic) tradition, or, may be, a certain "complex of a periphery", challenged him to compound with the Classic. Or whether a practical circumstance played a role here, such as the arrival of Italian captives, stone masons (stone-dressers) in the time Jurkovič was engaged in building the military cemeteries in Galicia - the circumstance being

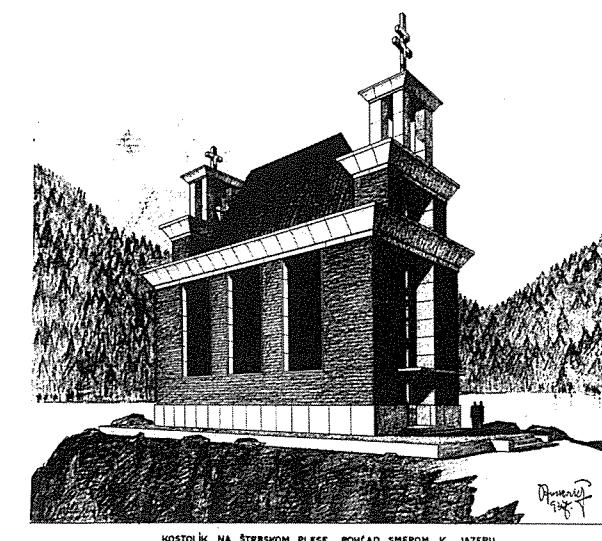


3. Manuscript notes of Dušan Jurkovič from his Italian trip, 1933

supported by a touch of classicism, present in pre-war works of the leading Viennese architects (Wagner's pupils),¹ then permanently followed by him? Anyway, since the time of World War I, there appeared a continual classicizing tendency in Jurkovič's multiform work (Fig. 2).

However, the direct experience with the architecture of Italy, had Jurkovič only in 1933, when he participated in an international conference of architects, which took place in Milan.² The large-scale program of the event, evidently comprehended by the organizers to be an opportunity for propagation of the "successful results" of the then 10-years old "building-up of Fascism" in their country (to apply the well-known slang of the not so far gone times), gave Jurkovič a possibility to visit numerous important historical cities.³

Manuscripts of his travel diary, completed with sketches⁴ can witness, that Jurkovič paid much attention not only to the study of the Roman and other historical monuments, but to contemporary architecture as well, which, finally, had been programmati-

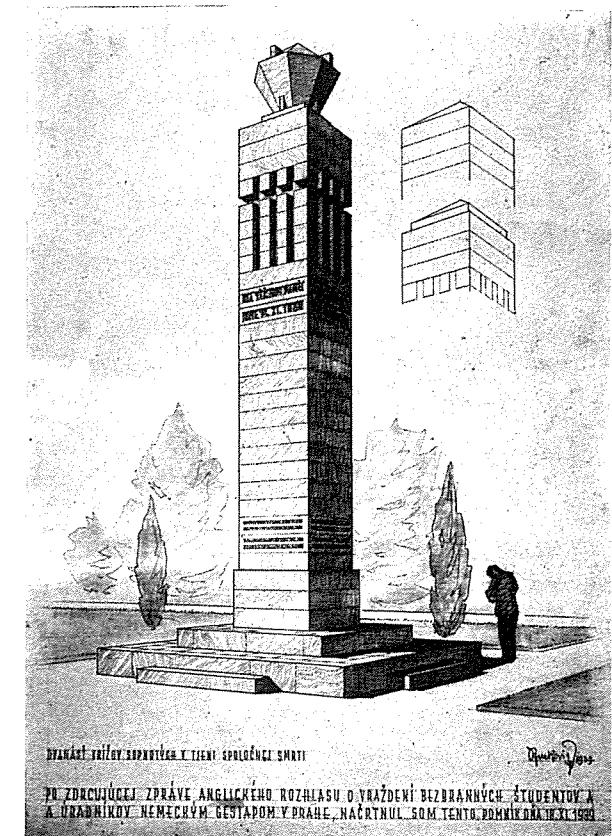


4. Church at Štrbské Pleso in the High Tatras, Slovakia, design, 1937 (not realized)

cally presented as one of the positive results of the Fascist regime.

Although he maintained a reserved attitude, it is impossible to deny, that modern Italian architecture impressed him quite a lot. He became stupefied not only by the large scale and grandeur of the massive volumes, but also the technical aspects (parameters) and functional capacity of those buildings. It can be documented with his notes relating to the visit of the new building of the Ministry of aircraft: "Architecture, to a certain degree heavy, strong (-man), but beautiful. (...) Everywhere... marble, metal, and paintings...", and following the description of the appearance and disposition, he concluded: "In the souterrain of the building, apart from other rooms of purpose, the pneumatic post and telephone exchange, there are to be found also the rooms, needed for providing 1300 officials with the morning coffee and lunch. Everything is self-sufficient."⁵ (Fig. 3)

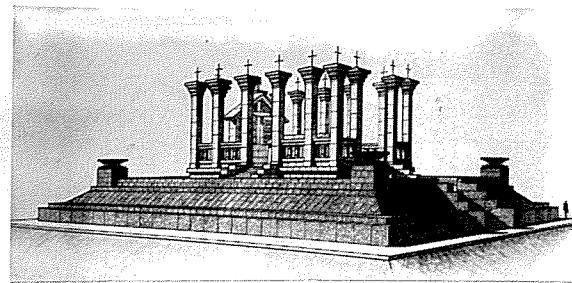
In order to propagate the regime, the trip to Littoria, one of the five newly founded cities, became a part of the program, as well as the visit of the 10-year jubilee exhibition (as regards these points no closer notices are to be found in Jurkovič's diary) and a number of social events culminating with an audience by Mussolini. Jurkovič put down his im-



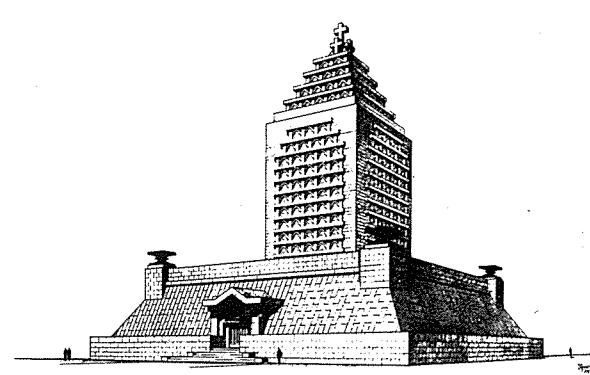
5. Monument to the Prague students, design, 1939

pressions from the audience: "A lower, stout man with a big head, wider in its lower part, flashing eyes, throughout an actor." And, with regard to his own conviction, Jurkovič might have liked some of the sentences of the dictator's speech, while he later noticed: "Mussolini: Demands the architects to work for the needs of the modern man, anyway, regarding not only his practical needs, but also his feelings."⁶

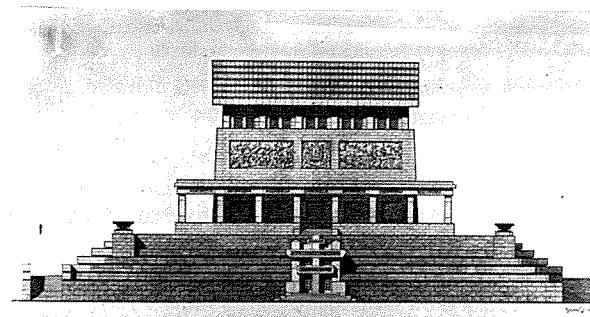
The impressions from the Italian trip persisted in Jurkovič at home too - it is to be witnessed by some new features which then appeared in his designs (Fig. 4), as well as by his reflections on the differences between what he had seen abroad and what he had encountered at home. Unpleasant experiences from his eternal fight against bureaucracy and manifestations of incompetence at important offices (which caused him to leave disgusted the office for monument preservation, and led him to write a number of critical articles, and also to make numerous, although vain, proposals with the aim to



6. Monument to the personalities of the Slovak culture, design intended for the Martin cemetery, 1944



7. Mausoleum of the Czech martyrs in World war II, design, 1942



8. Mausoleum commemorative of the Battle of Stalingrad, design, 1943

solve some of the actual problems)⁷, strengthened in him the feeling of chaos, and supported his motivation in searching for ORDER.

It seems, that the social order of a different type, viewed from the outside, had spelled him. Possibly just for that reason of viewing it through the prism of architecture, that, similarly to his own attempts, tried to solve the problems of tradition and innovation. Not solely he became attracted - even *Le Corbusier, while disliking the pomp and monumentality of a centralist state, still admired Fascism which 'could make the trains run on time'*.⁸

However, the idea of ORDER stuck in the very base of the modernist views - in its enlightenment rationalist roots and in the conviction about the possibility to improve man by means of order. It was connected also with the pragmatic tendency in modernism, which, as Charles Jencks has shown, created specific conditions for the misuse of modernism by the might.⁹ The whole of this background is to be felt in the lines which Jurkovič wrote in margin of his post- Italian reflections (thoughts): "*The difference between our democracy and Italian Fascism is a difference between a state governed by the capital as with us, and a state governing the capital. (...) The solving of the most difficult questions causes no troubles there. - In our country, the question of Petřín communication seems to be everlasting, there the question of the pass out of the heart of Rome across the ruins of Forum Romanum already built, and, evidently, ought to have been accomplished. Also there may occur some fault, but neither we are protected from faults. The capital can be governed in a good way and in a bad one, but our direction can lead us only to a catastrophe.*"¹⁰

After a short time, however, Jurkovič was to face a bitter lesson about the deceitful character of the image he had created relating to the new order, and a cruel awakening from the tolerance towards phenomena rendering the backgrounds of that image. The year of Jurkovič's Italian trip was, at the same time, the year when Hitler, representant of another movement based on principles of unified Order, ascended to the decisive position in the German government. And in September 1939, just five years after Jurkovič's Italian trip, this "Order" already fundamentally threatened his homeland. The consequences are well known: The break-up of the Czechoslovak republic - on the maimed territory of Bohemia the German protectorate had been established, and on the equally maimed territory of Slovakia originated the new, seemingly sovereign Slovak state, a vassal of Germany ruled by the similar type of "Order".

This time, the established order could not gain any sympathy of Jurkovič. The seventy-two year old artist had already made his experiences with ethnical suppression (in the years of his youth and maturity), other experiences with the awe of World War I (close touch in with it during his work in Galicia), and also experiences with an incomprehension and ingratitude relating his attempts at contributing and promoting the development of the new state of Czechs and Slovaks - the state that represented the fulfilment of an old and great dream of his. Therefore, he did not yield the enthusiasm of the supposed sovereignty and completion of the Slovak state. Possibly, for now he could see better the real face of the Order, presented as the pillar of the new state.

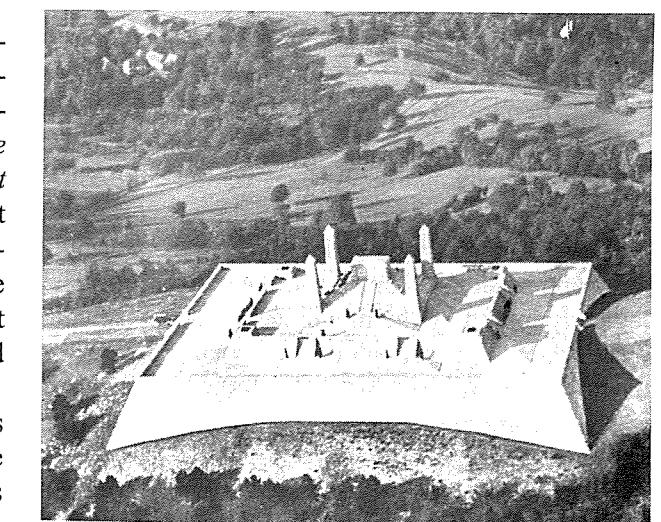
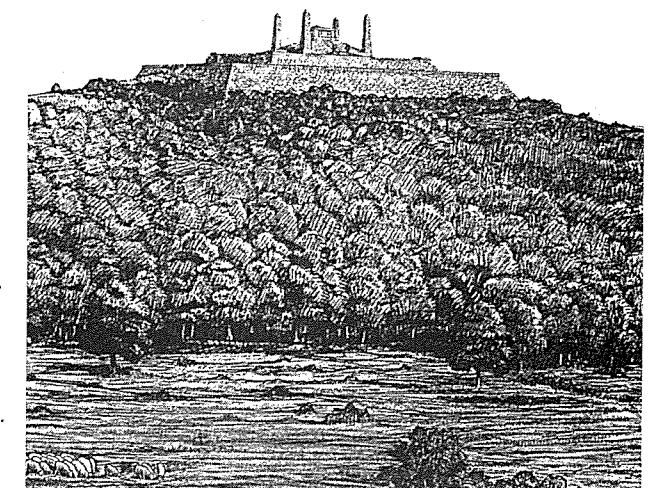
Jurkovič's reaction according to the depressing historic events had, similarly to the whole of his work, two poles.

On the one side, this active, engaged, and many-sided man, used to participate in the public life, decided to retreat from the public into privacy, preferring "internal emigration": "*In the years of the Slovak state I decided for a fast... I did not visit a theatre either...*".¹¹ But his retreat meant no defeat by the depression ("two world wars in our generation, it is more than too much..."),¹² or giving up the possibility of activity, but, on the contrary, it meant his refusal of an identification with the established regime.

Therefore, the second pole of his reaction was represented by an attempt to transform his resistance into real action: he helped to organize collections for imprisoned opponents of the regime, and flights of the Slovak military officers abroad,¹³ he supported the anti-fascist activities of his three sons, one of them taking part in the fights of the Uprising near Banská Bystrica.

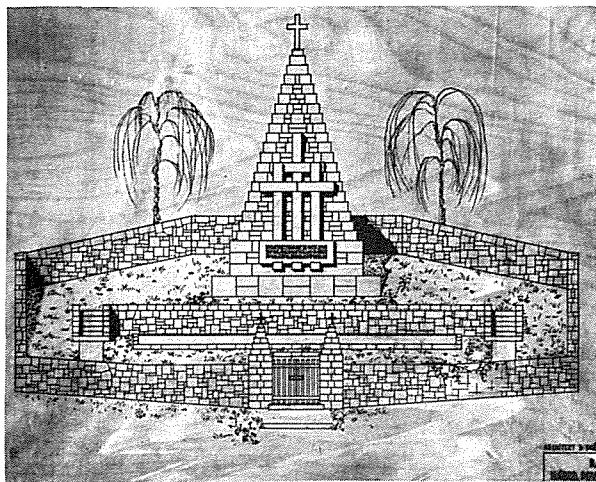
This double-sided reaction of Jurkovič projected also into his architectural work of the war period.

The first pole - retreat into the inner world of creative architectural imaginations is characterized with utopian proposals of monuments to victims, or memorials of important events of the war, originating in the course of the 1940s and representing a special, personal commentary.

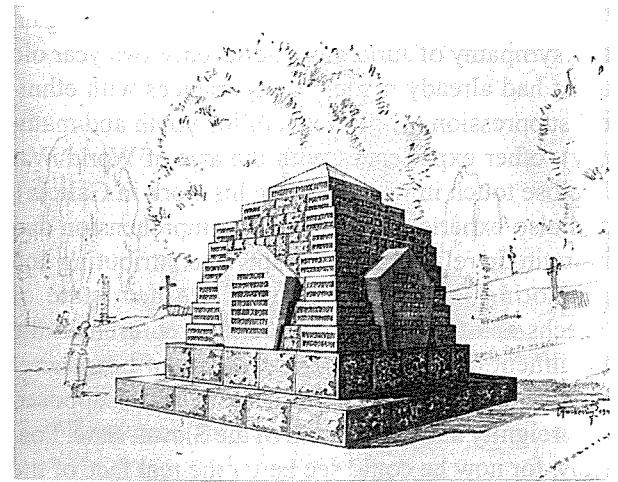


9. Monument to General M.R. Štefánik at Bradlo, 1928

The overture was represented by the design of the monument to Prague students, assassinated on November 17, 1939. On the margin of the drawing, Jurkovič dropped a line, describing the monument and circumstances of its origin: "*12 crosses connected in the shadow of the common death. - After the depressing news of the English radio about the*



10. The monument to the victims of the Slovak Uprising at Kremnička, design, 1947 (realized)



11. The monument at the Brezová cemetery, originally intended as a memorial of the revolutionary events of 1848 at Brezová, design, 1944. Not being carried out, in 1948 it became a tombstone of Dušan Jurkovič.

assassination of defenceless students and officials by the German Gestapo in Prague, I sketched this monument on November 18, 1939.”¹⁴ (Fig. 5)

The following works were proposals for monuments to the personalities of Czech culture, the composer Bedřich Smetana (1940) and the writer Božena Němcová (1941),¹⁵ witnessing already the growing scale and broader urbanistic stroke. These are typologically joined by the monument to the personalities of the Slovak nation (1944), which, similarly to the previous, and contrary to the following designs, was still comprehended in real space of the Martin cemetery - although not drawn in that way. (Fig. 6)

However, Jurkovič's creativity of the war period culminated in his architectural designs for the Mausoleum of Czech martyrs of World War II (1942), Mausoleum commemorative of the Battle of Stalingrad (1943), Memorial of the Second Anniversary of the Destruction of Lidice (1944), The Stone Apotheosis of the Slovak Uprising (dating from December 1944) and a Cenotaph for the fallen heroes of the Red Army in liberated Slovakia (1945). (Figs. 7, 8)

It was visionary architecture, quite different from other works by Jurkovič. Monumental symbolic buildings were intended - and this is something unique for Jurkovič - as ideal, abstract objects, without a connection with the real landscape environment. The drawings make an impression of the architectural massing accomplishing the ascending

lines of some undefined hill or naturally heightened terrace. The architecture uncompromisingly ambitious to dominate its surroundings. Massive volumes, strict, rough, even brutal expression was conditioned, on the one hand, by the use of hard classicizing forms, and, on the other, by the intention to promote the expressivity through the rough manner of the stonemasonry. Here Jurkovič evidently had been preoccupied with the study of the communicative values of architectural forms, with the question of expressing the ideas and emotions by the means of the architectural language. He searched for the way of articulating the feelings of consternation, exasperation, and sorrow about the human cruelty, the feelings of resistance towards violence, and the feelings of hope.

The overwhelming scale of these buildings, orientation to the form repertory of the classicism, and the symbolic language of architecture, as well as certain utopian character of the designs indicate some parallels with the works of architects of the French revolution (such as Étienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux) and also with those of contemporary Italian architecture.

In spite of the fact, that traces of the separate form elements could be found also in some of Jurkovič's earlier works, in spite of the fact, that the rough stone surfaces were quite frequently used by him as means of supporting the over-all effect of the



12. Jurkovič's work Assembled Family Houses Made of Brick Prefabricates published in 1946

the world war became preserved only on paper, representing the personal declaration of the artist and witness of those monstrous times.

The second pole of Jurkovič's reaction to the events of the period corresponds to the principle of activity, to the resistant and indefatigable spirit, and to the positive, constructive, practically oriented program. The architect compounded with the difficult times and depressions through diligent and concentrated work on the theme, which stepped over the shadows of contemporary reality, being oriented forwards: Jurkovič had been preoccupied with the problems of rapid building of low-priced houses for more than 20 years. After numerous experiments with various types of assembled houses made of wooden panels, now he concerned with the development of a system of assembled houses made of brick elements, which he proved on his own brickyard at Trnava.¹⁶

He elaborated the results of his experiments and project works into a kind of a catalogue, in which he described in detail and documented 15 different types of family houses, even a tenement house. Shortly after the end of the war convinced of its usefulness he published the work at his own costs.¹⁷ No success. No matter that, in 1946, in the course of the international conference on the post-war reconstruction in which Jurkovič participated, too, his designs attracted the attention of British experts,¹⁸ - at home he earned only criticism.

Was it a utopia? Or, was there really a concealed danger of the new form of totality, hidden behind the idea of standardization and typisation - as we feel it today, after having made our long-lasting experience with the so-called mass building of the flats? It is said the way to hell is paved with good intentions only... However, in the end Jurkovič's proposals were left on paper and his book became a kind of curiosity of Slovak architectural literature. (Fig. 12)

NOTES

¹ Jurkovič followed with attention the works of the Viennese architects such as Joseph Maria Olbrich, but mostly Josef Hoffmann, as regards furniture, or interior decorations, as well as the architecture - classicizing motifs in J. Hoffmann evident after

1910 (eg. at his villa Skywa-Primavesi in Vienna, 1913, or in his designs of the monuments and tombstones, enlisted into the publications serving as models in the course of World War I) found an echo in the works of D. Jurkovič.

²An international conference on architecture was taking place in Milan since September 16th, 1933.

³In the course of September 13th to 29th, 1933, he visited Venice, Milan, Como, Certosa, Pavia, Rome, Ostia, Tivoli, Littoria, Florence, Bologna and again Venice, from where he started his way home.

⁴The travel diary of Dušan Jurkovič is to be found in his personal fund in Slovak National Archives in Bratislava (sign. SNA, A1).

⁵Quoted after the notes of D. Jurkovič mentioned above. Jurkovič continued: "Building consisting of three tracts, built in ferro-concrete, having corridors in the centre, in the main tract larger, and in the back tract smaller rooms. Tracts for officials and offices are in fact large halls like in factories or department stores. Everything mutually connected through the air: The walls dividing separate rooms serving as offices, as well as the corridors, are made of glass up to the 2/3 of the height of the rooms. And all the doors entering the offices from the corridors, as also those connecting the offices from inside, were filled with glass. Each of the employees is to be seen from all sides. The costs of building and furnishing took 150 millions of liras."

⁶Quot. Op.cit.

⁷For detailed explanation see the chapter "Iniciatívy" (Initiatives) in: BOŘUTOVÁ, D.: *Dušan Samo Jurkovič - osobnosť a dielo*. (Dušan Samo Jurkovič - Personality and Work) Bratislava, Pallas 1993.

⁸JENCKS, Ch.: *Modern Movements in Architecture*, p.48.

⁹Ibid. - In this connection it seems interesting, that a similar view, but this time regarding classicism, had been presented by Leonardo Benevolo, who considered classicist forms as generally known, understandable but emptied of their sense. - See

BENEVOLO, L.: *Geschichte der Architektur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts I, II*. München, Callwey 1964.

¹⁰JURKOVIČ, D.: *Moje dojmy z Itálie* (My Impressions from Italy). Manuscript (SNA, A1).

¹¹See notes of D. Jurkovič (SNA, A1).

¹²Notes of Dušan Jurkovič relating to the prepared publication *Skizze a počiny* (Sketches and acts). Manuscript (SNA, A4).

¹³Recollections of Dušan Jurkovič titled *Účasť v odboji* (Taking part in the anti-fascist movement). Manuscript (SNA, A1).

¹⁴The monument to Prague students, perspective pencil / cart-board, 53 x 35 (SNA IV-39/1).

¹⁵The designs of the monuments to the personalities of Czech culture, witnessing that Jurkovič continued to follow the activities at the Czech architectural scene (planning of competitions for those monuments), can be also considered to be a manifestation of his resistance towards the regime of the Slovak state. This regime destroyed at that time the monument built in 1928 to the co-founder of the first Czechoslovak republic M.R. Štefánik in Bratislava. Quite significantly, Jurkovič, preoccupied himself also with an idea of restoration of the then pulled down Štefánik monument.

¹⁶In cooperation with his own brother Ladislav Jurkovič as well as with Ing. Rosík (statics), Arch. F. Faulhammer and A. Perla.

¹⁷JURKOVIČ, D.: *Skladacie domky rodinné z pálených tehliarskych výrobkov* (Assembled Family Houses Made of Burned Brick Products). Praha 1946.

¹⁸JURKOVIČ, D.: *Načo u nás pracovať?* (Why To Work?) Čas (Bratislava) 5.6.1946. - In the article wrote Jurkovič, that a representative journal of the Royal British Architects was preparing information (6 pages) concerning his designs of assembled houses.

Zanedlo však Jurkoviča čakalo trpké poučenie o klamnosti obrazu, ktorý si o novom poriadku vytvoril. V čase jeho návštavy Talianska sa v Nemecku dostal k moci Hitler, tiež propagátor jednotného poriadku. O päť rokov neskôr už tento "poriadok" bytosne ohrozoval Jurkovičovu vlasť. Dôsledky sú známe: rozbitie Československej republiky na protektorát a takzvané samostatný slovenský štát s režimom podobného typu "poriadku".

Tentokrát si však nastolený poriadok nevyslúžil u Jurkoviča už ani najmenšiu sympatiu. Sedemdesiatročný umelec so skúsenosťami z národnostného útlaku, skúsenosťami z hrôz prvej svetovej vojny, i so skúsenosťami nevdaku voči jeho dobre mienenému a často progresívemu úsiliu riešiť pálčivé spoločenské problémy prvej republiky, nepodľahol nadšeniu z domnej suverenity. Teraz sa už bližšie prizrel onomu poriadku, o ktorý sa nový štát opieral.

Jurkovičova reakcia na tlak deprimujúcich historických udalostí bola rovnako dvojpôlová ako celá jeho tvorba.

Na jednej strane to bola vnútorná emigrácia - ústup z verejného a spoločenského života, utiahnutie sa do vnútorného sveta výtvarných predstáv. Premietla sa do série utopických návrhov na pamníky obetí, resp. pamätníky udalostí vojny: pamätník pražským študentom (1939), pamätníky osobnostiam českej kultúry zo začiatku 1940-tych rokov, pamätník národným dejateľom (1944), predovšetkým však návrhy na mauzóleum českých mučeníkov v druhej svetovej vojne (1942), mauzóleum na pamäť bitky pri Stalingrade (1943), pamätník druhého výročia zániku Lidíc (1944), Kamenná apoteóza Slovenského národného povstania (1944), a Kenotafium k oslavě padlých hrdinov Červenej armády na oslobodenom Slovensku (1945).

Je to vizionárská architektúra predstavujúca zvláštny osobný komentár umelca k udalostiam druhej svetovej vojny. Monumentálne symbolické stavby sú uvažované ako ideálne, bez

väzby na konkrétné krajinné prostredie. Ohromujúca miera, orientácia na formový repertoár klasiky a symbolický jazyk architektúry, ako aj do istej miery utopický ráz týchto návrhov naznačujú určité paralely k dielam architektov Francúzskej revolúcie (É.-L. Boullée či C.-N. Ledouxa), i k súdobej talianskej architektúre. Hoci jednotlivé formové motívy nadvážujú na skoršie Jurkovičove diela, vojnové pamätníky jednoznačne prekračujú rámcu jeho dovedajúcej tvorby a v kontexte jeho diela predstavujú svojbytnú skupinu. Spomedzi početných memorálnych návrhov vojnového obdobia Jurkovič napokon realizoval iba monument v Kremničke, ktorým nadviazal na svoju tvorbu haličského obdobia, a pomerne komorný pamätník revolučných udalostí na cintoríne v Brezovej, ktorý sa v roku 1948 stal jeho vlastným náhrobkom. Taživé a obľudné vízie svetovej vojny ostali uchované iba na papieri ako osobná výpoved umelca, ako svedectvo obľudnosti doby.

Druhým pólom jeho reakcie na udalosti doby bola snaha aktívne zasiahnúť do diania (zúčastňoval sa protifašistického odboja, podporoval účasť svojich synov v Povstaní). Tomuto princípu aktivity zodpovedal pozitívny, konštruktívny, praktický zameraný program, ktorý prekračoval neradostnú súčasnosť a hľadal dopredú: systém rýchlej výstavby lacných obydlí, ktorý už vyše 20 rokov rozvíjal na princípe montáže drevených dielcov, teraz rozpracúval na princípe skladania tehlových prefabrikátov. Výsledky svojho úsilia spracoval formou katalógu návrhov s podrobnej dokumentáciou, ktorý krátko po vojne vydal ako samostatnú publikáciu. Nepochodil. Hoci jeho návrhy vzbudili pozornosť odborníkov v Anglicku, doma si touto prácou vyslúžil iba kritiku.

Bola to utopia? A či sa snáď v myšlienke štandardizácie a typizácie naozaj nevyhnutne ukrývala nová forma totality (ako to pocítujeme dnes, poučení skúsenosťou tzv. hromadnej bytovej výstavby z posledných 45 rokov)?

Vojnové vízie Dušana Jurkoviča. (Odraz totality v diele humanistu)

Jurkovič je známy ako tvorca pôvabných a radostných diel, osobnosť syntetizujúca senzitívlosť, fantáziu a racionalné praktické uvažovanie, architekt, ktorý spojením tradície ľudového stavitelstva s princípmi súdobej architektúry dosiahol svojský poetický výraz svojich diel. Jeho dielo však bolo mnichotvárné a zahrnovalo početné ďalšie impulzy, okrem iného i klasicizmus, ku ktorému sa viaže špecifická etapa jeho tvorby. Týka sa obdobia vojnových rokov, kedy bol Jurkovič na sklonku svojho života konfrontovaný s trpkými skúsenosťami (cit. "dve svetové vojny na našu generáciu je už privela...").

Už od prvej svetovej vojny možno v jeho tvorbe sledovať líniu klasicizujúcej tendencie, no priamu skúsenosť s talianskou architektúrou získal Jurkovič až v roku 1933, keď sa ako delegát zúčastnil medzinárodného stretnutia architektov v Miláne. Itinerár i Jurkovičove dojmy z cesty poznáme vďaka jeho rukopisným poznámkom, ktoré sú doplnené náčrtkami: dozvedáme sa že popri historických pamiatkach v ňom silný dojem zane-

chala i moderná talianska architektúra - ohúrila ho veľkolepostou, mierou, vznosnými objemami stavieb, i technickými parametrami a funkčnou kapacitou a predovšetkým ideou PORIADKU, ktorú stelesňovala. V poznámkach nachádzame i zmienku o prijatí zahraničných architektov Mussoliniom.

Dojem z cesty po Taliansku pretrvával v Jurkovičovi aj doma - svedčia o tom niektoré nové prvky, ktoré sa objavili v jeho architektonických návrhoch, i jeho úvahy o rozdieloch medzi tým, čo videl vonku a s čím sa stretával doma. Nevelmi potešujúce skúsenosti z večného boja s úradnými šimlami a s prejavmi nekompetentnosti na rozhodujúcich miestach v ňom posilňovali dojem chaosu, živelnosti a posilňovali jeho motiváciu hľadania PORIADKU.

Zdá sa, že pohľad zvonku na spoločenské zriadenie iného typu ho na čas očaroval. Možno práve kvôli skutočnosti, že ho videl cez prizmu architektúry, ktorá sa pokúšala riešiť jemu dôverne blízky problém, totiž spojenie tradície a moderny.

II. Utopias and Revivals

Italian Fascism and Culture

Jaroslav KUDRNA

Although the Italian fascist regime may be considered as one of the first forms of totalitarian rule it can not on the other hand be denied that it had many links with the preceding liberal regime; this fact can be derived either from the legality of the transition during the coup or from the fact that the leading ideologists of the regime such as Gentile and Volpe reected about the classical erudition and were not adherents of racist ideology, which was enforced on the Italian fascist regime only after 1938, under the direct intervention of the Nazis.

The fact that imprisonments in fascist Italy did not reach 6.000 until 1943 shows that we are dealing with a moderate form of totalitarian dictatorship. Also, the fact that the structure of cultural institutions was not disturbed shows a continuity with preceding pre-fascist era. The Italian fascist regime did not set in motion any massive purges in the universities and even up to 1938 it allowed Jewish professors to be active at the universities and other institutes. For instance the director of the famous Enciclopedia italiana was of Jewish origin.

Genuine Italian fascist ideology disagreed with the simplified ideas of the French revolution, and with the Marxist interpretation of history which was conceived as the history of class struggle. The fascist ideologists were against the idea of foresight in the historical process. They saw first of all in history the history of heroic deeds. They kept in mind and highly appreciated highly the traditions of Ancient Rome. Nietzsche was their philosophical paragon, but the work of Sorel was also acknowledged as was the leading light in the theory of the elite, Pareto.

After a certain period of reluctance, the regime allowed the work of a group of independent thinkers

working around the greatest Italian philosopher of the 20th century B. Croce. Croce was liberal and criticized the misuses of power from standpoint of liberalism.

A certain autonomy was also granted to the above mentioned Enciclopedia italiana, the famous publikation, which is stil of great importance to this day. It is not through a lack of endeavour that we have not been able to find in it, with exception of the articles about fascism written by Mussolini, Gentile and Volpe, any traces of fascist ideology. Even the articles about Marx and Lenin are written objectively. On the other hand a critical stand is taken towards German fascism and towards racist ideology. That could be explained by the fact that Gentile, who was the founder and organizer of the Encyclopedia, allowed many liberals and even socialists to contribute to it.

The situation in several cultural journals was more complicated. Apparently besides manifestations of servility, many of the authors seemed to suffer from what might by termed schizophrenia of certain authors. This may remind us of the situation in our country at the end of Novotný's and Husák's era.

All this does not prove that there were not attempts at moulding fascist culture. As far as institutions were concerned this was their first duty. The course on fascism were characterized by the indoctrination of some phrases taken from the work of Mussolini. Unfortunately the bombastic and empty phrases of these also appear in many works by Gentile.

The ideology and practice of the Italian fascist movement found critics among the émigrés. Here should mention G. Salvemini, the historian who cri-

ticized the fascist for abusing the progressive traditions of Italian history, above all the tradition of Mazzini and Garibaldi.

The general features of the fascist conception of culture may by seen in the work of a fascist historian G. Volpe. Originally a brilliant historian of the Italian Middle Ages Volpe tries above all in his book *L'Italia nel cammino* which was highly appreciated my Mussolini, to analyze the historical background of the Italian fascist regime. We can summarize his historical views in the following points:

a) Volpe credited the fascist regime for not only leaving a legacy of conservative values also progressive elements. He appreciated the role of the Revolution up to the point where it was compatible with the claims of the bourgeois national state. But he nevertheless gave precedence to the monarchic form of unification. From this view he criticized Mazzini for his republicanism. But nevertheless he supported the followers of Mazzini in so far as they coordinated their activities with the political pretensions of Piemont. He considered the Risorgimento to be the product of the minorities but he rejected the class interpretation of it although he admitted that it was dependent on the activities of the bourgeoisie who pursued the moral goals.

b) The attitudes of Volpe were symptomatic of his gallicanism which was reflected in the conception of the French revolution. He rejected the Jacobean plan for the unification of Italy and interpreted the unification of Italy as a work of the right wing political leading groups, as a conquest of the South by the North.

c) Volpe strove to minimize the role of the liberals in this process. He criticized the Left because it undervalued the possibilities of the imperialist expansions of Italy. Italy took note of the aggression of other countries, for instance of France, but refused to participate on those countries expansionist aims.

d) Volpe was a decisive opponent of the Italian socialism. He blamed it for undermining discipline and accused it of having succumbed to positivism. Volpe exploited many elements of reformism and revisionism. The revisionists weakened the revolutionary work of the working class but contributed on the other hand to the social welfare of the workers.

In addition to this Volpe also considered revisionism as a means against the gallicanism, mazzinism and republicanism. Volpe praised the representatives of the bourgeois policy (Giolitti, Crispi) who fought against socialism with help of reformism.

e) Volpe approved of the ideas behind Italian nationalism which rejected the class struggle, revolution and democracy. He was an admirer of R. Michels, the German sociologist who was originally a member of the German social democratic party but later he resigned this position. Volpe was convinced that capitalism did not achieve its goal and still had possibilities for further development.

f) Volpe was an admirer of Germany, of its respect for order and attributed the highest values to the German historism; the influence of this can observed in the work of Croce and Gentile.

g) Volpe highly appreciated the role of war in history. He saw in war a means of combating any parasitic tendencies in society and against the survival of antiquitated institutions. The war derailed the minor bourgeoisie and led to the regrouping of political and social forces and prouded the bourgeoisie with a new political ethos. He saw in fascism the first revolutionary movement after Risorgimento.

h) Fascism represents a synthesis of liberal economy and the worker's world. Volpe was convinced that their flexible cultural policy could attract many men who did not stand for directly fascist values to the fascism. In this way fascism could serve as a national movement, help to guarantee with the assistance of the state, continuity with the previous regime and help the state to control fascist extremists.

Volpe was director of the Italian historical institute and director of the School of Modern History but he had no direct followers. The majority of the Italian historians were under the influence of Croce.

Delio Cantimori was among the younger Italian historians, who were attracted to by fascism, and the disciples of Gentile. Italian historians attribute to him about 20 articles which contain the elements of fascist ideology. In the thirties he examined German romanticism, the theories of C. Schmidt and he also sought in fascism the legacy of Reform and Enlightenment. In the thirties he wrote much about

M. Weber whose main work was translated into Italian by E. Sestan. He was active in the Institute for German Studies in Rome and shared certain sympathies for German fascism seeing in it the product of German culture. But his profascist attitude lasted only until 1938. Then he occupied himself with Italian religious historiography and wrote a book about the Italian heretics of the 16th century paying attention to the ideas of socialism.

Other Italian historians were disciples of Croce and refused to let fascism sully the legacy of Risorgimento.

It is interesting that in the last years of fascism there developed a sociological view of history, as

with Carlo Antoni, whose work *From Historism to Sociology* contains positive remarks about Marxism. That was no exception.

In this context we should also bring to attention the work of Barbagallo in the twenties and del Pane in the thirties.

In conclusion, Italian fascism left room for culture and allowed liberal thinkers to pursue their work. It can not therefore be a surprise that after the war these thinkers would appear as the main spokesman personalities for Italian culture and democracy.

Taliansky fašizmus a kultúra

Hoci taliansky fašistický režim možno charakterizovať ako prvotnú formu totalitnej vlády, na druhej strane sa nedá popriť viacero spojovacích článkov s predchádzajúcim liberálnym režimom; fakt, ktorý by mohol mať pôvod v legitímnosti prechodu počas obdobia uchopenia moci, alebo v skutočnosti, že čelní ideológovia režimu, akými boli Gentile a Volpe boli nadaní klasickou erudíciou a neboli prívržencami rasistickej ideológie, uplatňovanej v talianskom fašistickom režime až po roku 1938 v dôsledku priamej intervencie nacizmu.

O tom, že máme vo fašistickom Taliansku dočinenia s umiernenou formou totalitnej diktatúry svedčí aj skutočnosť, že počet z politických dôvodov uväznených osôb do roku 1943 nedosiahol ani 6 tisíc.

Kontinuitu s pre-fašistickou érou dokazuje aj to, že nebola narušená štruktúra kultúrnych inštitúcií. Fašistický režim v Taliansku neuskutočnil masové čistky na univerzitách, ba dokonca aj pred rokom 1938 na univerzitách a iných inštitúciach pôsobili židovskí profesori. Židovského pôvodu bol napríklad aj riaditeľ Encyclopædia Italiana.

Vlastná talianska fašistická ideológia bola nasmerovaná proti zjednodušeným myšlieniam francúzskej revolúcie, proti marxistickej interpretácii dejín, pochopených ako dejiny triednych zápasov. Fašistickí ideológovia pripúšťali názor o nepredvídateľnosti historického procesu. V dejinách videli predovšetkým dejiny hrdinských skutkov. Udržiavali, ba nanajvýš doceňovali tradíciu starovekého Ríma. Modelovým mysliteľom bol pre nich Nietzsche, ale ďalší vzor videli v Sorelovi a v heroldovi teórie elít Paretovi.

Po istom čase zdráhania nechal taliansky fašizmus na poči nezávislé zmýšľanie skupiny okolo najväčšieho talianskeho

filozofa 20. storočia B. Croceho. Croce bol liberálom a aj kritiku zneužívania sily viedol zo stanoviska liberalizmu.

Určitá autonómia sa vytvorila aj okolo spomenutej Encyclopædia Italiana, známejho, dodnes veľmi dôležitého diela. Nie je bez zaujímavosti, že v nej nenájdeme - s výnimkou článkov o fašizme, ktoré písali Mussolini, Volpe a Gentile - žiadne stopy fašistickej ideológie. Dokonca časti o Marxovi a Leninovi sú napísané objektívne. Na druhej strane, kritické stanovisko je zaujaté voči nemeckému fašizmu a rasistickej ideológii. Bolo by to možné vysvetliť tým, že Gentile, iniciátor a organizátor Encyclopædie, dovolil na nej pracovať mnohým liberálom, ba dokonca socialistom. Nebolo teda náhodou, že práve táto skupina sa po roku 1943 vynorila ako skupina čelných intelektuálov v demokratickom talianskom štáte.

Omnoho komplikovanejšia bola situácia v niekoľkých kultúrnych časopisoch. Tu bolo okrem servilnosti zjavná i schizofrénia istých autorov (pripomína to situáciu v našej krajine na konci Novotného a Husákového éry).

Všetkým tým však nechce byť povedané, že by neboli existovali pokusy vytvoriť fašistickú kultúru. Čo sa týka inštitúcií, bol to predovšetkým Inštitút talianskej kultúry. Kurzy o fašizme boli charakteristické prežúvaním niektorých fráz Mussoliniho diel. Nanešťastie, onen zveličený a nezmyselný tón sa objavuje tiež v niektorých Gentileho dielach.

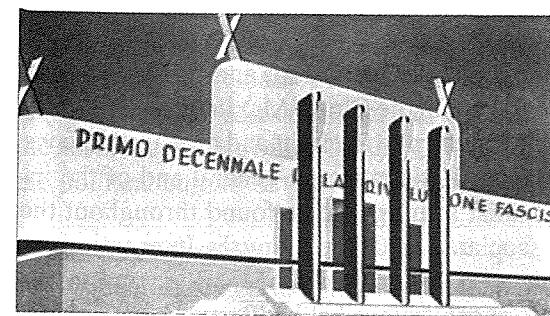
Ideológia a prax talianskeho fašistického hnutia našla kritikov medzi emigrantmi. Tu možno spomenúť G. Salveminiho, historika, ktorý kritizoval fašizmus kvôli zneužívaniu progresívnych tradícií talianskych dejín, hlavne tradície Mazziniho a Garibaldího.

Competing Interests: Cautionary Notes on the Notion of Totalitarian Art

Richard A. ETLIN

A recent book review by F. M. L. Thompson, editor of the three-volume Cambridge *Social History of Britain 1750-1950* begins: "There will always be "lumpers" and "splitters", those who sum up an age in a great event or development - civil war, a revolution, a great war, industrialization, modernization - to which all actions and thoughts are contributory streams; and those who see a multiplicity of separate and often conflicting movements, no single grand or dominant theme, and an outcome which is confused and accidental rather than preordained."¹ Even if we do not subscribe to the extremes of these intellectual orientations, all of us historians must perpetually oscillate between the patterns that we discern as "lumpers" and the discriminations that we articulate as "splitters". And as historians we must always be on guard against too indiscriminate a generalization just as we must not mistake our inability to find patterns as justification for the "splitter's" point of view. Nowhere does the tendency to generalize become more tempting than in discussions of so-called "totalitarian" art. And yet, Thompson's bipolar categories will not suffice to explain the com-

plex phenomena that take place when art is produced in a totalitarian state. The remedy against facile generalizations in this domain, against the "lumper's" willingness to refer readily to "the state", "the regime", or "Fascism's desire" is not to become a "splitter", but rather to recognize that society is composed of a cluster of different cultures whose different interests run parallel, intersect, and even avoid each other in complex ways. My purpose here is to offer a preliminary outline about the com-



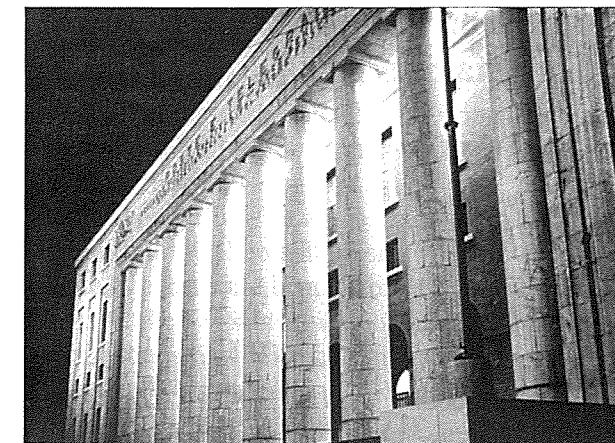
1. Adalberto Libera and Mario de Renzi, Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, Rome, 1932, first project



2. Adalberto Libera and Mario de Renzi, Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, Rome, 1932



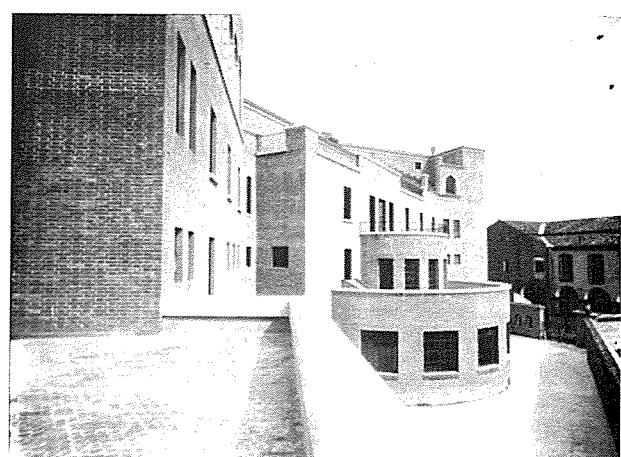
3. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Ferrara 1926-1930



4. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Palermo, 1929-1934



5. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Pistoia, c. 1934. (The facade incorporates a pre-existing Renaissance-revival loggia by Mazzoni's contemporary, ing. Brizzi)



6. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Ferrara, 1926-1930. Rear facade

ting interests that can come into play as art is produced within a totalitarian regime.

As the foundation for this talk I draw upon the papers written for the session that I chaired at the 1993 Annual Meeting of the College Art Association (CAA) held in February in Seattle, Washington, and entitled - "Art, Architecture, and Art History, and the Modern Totalitarian State." I give full credit in my text to the research and ideas of the participants in this session. In addition, I will add observation from my own research on architecture under Italian Fascism. At the end of the session in Seattle, I sketched out a six-point program for distinguishing between the competing interests that come into play in such situations. This list, of course, is not intended as a complete cultural model but rather as a beginning. I take the opportunity presented by this symposium to develop further my initial observations.

I. The Aesthetic Agenda

Artists called upon to create art for a state function do not necessarily have the same intellectual intentions as their patrons. They often have an independent aesthetic agenda related to their interests grounded within their own artistic culture. We see this clearly in the case of the Italian Rationalist architect Adalberto Libera and his collaborator Mario De Renzi who were asked to design the building for the 1932 Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution) to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Mussolini's March on Rome. Libera and De Renzi's first project (*Fig. 1*) was fully har-

monious with the graceful aesthetic that Libera and other Rationalists had developed over the previous years for architectural programs within the commercial and ecclesiastical realm - apartment buildings, hotels, fair buildings, schools, and churches.² Yet, Dino Alfieri, the Fascist director of this exhibition, was not satisfied with this preliminary design. Under Alfieri's guidance the Rationalist architects produced a new scheme whose forms and proportions perfectly expressed the intransigent, militaristic outlook of the Fascist credo (*Fig. 2*). In so doing, Libera and De Renzi departed from the Rationalist aesthetic of their previous work and effectively created an Italian Fascist style. I believe that this is one instance in which such a generalization is permissible because we see the transformation of an aesthetic under the directed guidance of a Fascist leader for a clear ideological purpose.

On the other hand, when Libera and De Renzi were put in charge of the architecture for the Mostra delle Colonie Estive e dell'Assistenza all'Infanzia (Exhibition on Summer Camps and on Assistance to Children), held in the Circus Maximus in 1937, they were able to return to the light and airy aesthetic value of Italian Rationalism in general and of the internationalist avant-garde as found throughout the West associated with the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). Referring to the four Fascist exhibitions held in Rome between 1937 and 1939 on the site of the Circus Maximus, Piero Ostilio Rossi has justly observed, "In the years in

which Italian architecture was constrained to respond to the new imperial ideology of the regime, the preparation of exhibitions presented perhaps the sole opportunity, at least with respect to public commissions, in which Rationalist architects were given a certain freedom of expression".³ In her CAA paper, "Dream Worlds of Fascist Supremacy: The Spectacle in Mussolini's Italy", Marla Stone, currently at the History Department at Occidental College, remarked upon the suitability of this style for the ideological purposes of the Fascist regime. Describing the architecture of the Circus Maximus exhibitions as primarily "functionalist, with emphasis on open spaces, glass, industrial design, and minimal ornamentation," Stone concluded that "modernist aesthetics gave shape to the simulations of Fascist progress and supremacy". In this sense perhaps it is possible to speak of a confluence of values between the aesthetic culture of the Rationalist architects and the political culture of the Fascist regime.

II. Political Agendas

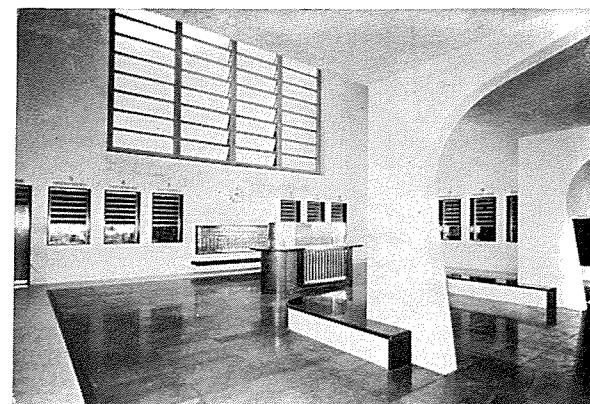
Sometimes an artist might engage in an action that furthers the political agenda of a totalitarian regime while he or she was also promoting a separate political and cultural agenda that coincided with the

state's official policy. For example, in his CAA paper, "Political Things: The Object-World of Italian Fascism", Dennis P. Doordan of the School of Architecture, University of Notre Dame, recounted how the decorative arts could be used to "domesticate" the revolution and introduce a Fascist presence into the routine rhythms of daily life. A majolica bread plate designed about 1927 by Duilio Cambelotti, for example, is decorated with a quotation by Mussolini extolling the simple pleasures of fresh bread.⁴

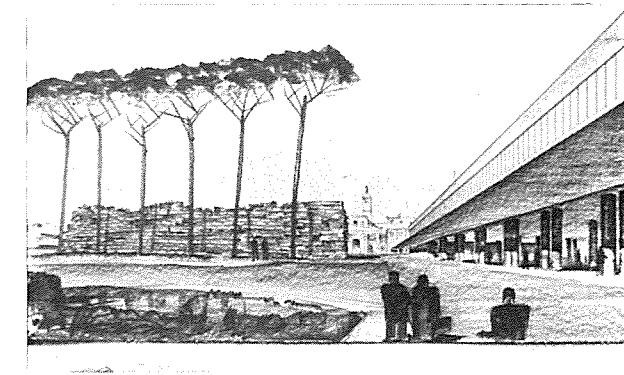
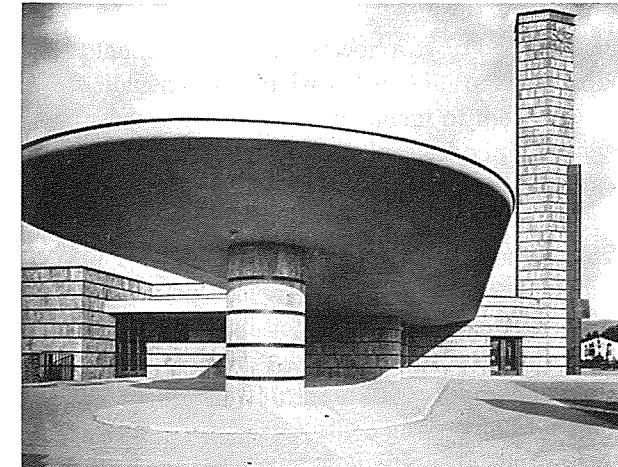
To whatever degree this bread plate might have served the purposes of domesticating the Fascist revolution, it also supported a long-term and ongoing theme in Cambelotti's public life. About fifty-one years old at this time, Cambelotti, as Irene de Gutiérrez has argued, devoted "more than twenty years" as a populist in Rome to "humanitarian work to improve the peasants' living conditions." In addition to his works of art, ranging from the fine arts to the decorative arts, whose subject matter and style ennobled the life of the peasant, Cambelotti "became a member of the committee for establishing schools for the peasants set up by Anna Celli... and the writer Sibilla Aleramo". Cambelotti also engaged in numerous reform activities such as designing "a great variety of teaching materials, from toys to children's books, and collaborating in the furnishing and decoration of schools" as well as in the design of prototypes for workers' houses.⁵ In other words, Cambe-



7. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Palermo, 1929-1934. Rear facade



8. Angiolo Mazzoni, post office, Pistoia, c. 1934. Interior



10. Angiolo Mazzoni, first approved project for Stazione Termini, Rome, published on the front page of *Il Messaggero*, February 17, 1937

lotti's Fascist bread plate furthered two causes at the same time, uniting a current political agenda of the regime with a longstanding reformist commitment to dignifying and elevating both spiritually and physically the life of the peasant.

III. Cultural Agendas

Another temptation that historians must be careful to resist in their desire to generalize about totalitarian art concerns situations when the selection of style is dominated by considerations of longstanding cultural values as opposed to current political ends on the part of a regime. For example, in Fascist Italy, local authorities were given an important voice in the selection of the style of the new post offices and train stations that the Ministry of Communications was constructing. The career of the chief designer, Angiolo Mazzoni, along with his supervisor, the engineer Ferruccio Businari, both of whom wanted to construct modern architecture whenever possible, is instructive on this account. These men repeatedly encountered conservative municipal authorities who, like their predecessors over the course of the preceding one hundred years in the age of historical revivals, wanted buildings in the predominant or most significant style of their locale. Thus, Mazzoni was obliged to design a Renaissance post office for Ferrara (Fig. 3) and a Doric post office for Palermo (Fig. 4), while using a Renaissance revival loggia with typical local medieval stone banding for the post office in Pistoia (Fig. 5). On the other hand, the lack of

attention by these same authorities to the rear facade of these buildings as well as to the interiors permitted an architect such as Mazzoni to build his vision of a modern architecture in spite of the constraints placed on the appearance of the front facade (Figs. 6-8). At times, Mazzoni and Businari cynically used the patriotic symbolism of the giant fasces to forestall or overcome opposition to a modern style on the part of the local authorities, as in the case of the train station of Montecatini Terme- Monsummano (Fig. 9).⁶

The history of the successive evolution of the design for the Roman train station by Mazzoni (Figs. 10-12), as it underwent successive approvals by Mussolini and successive revisions subsequently forced by conservative members of the railroad administration in spite of Mussolini's approval and in spite of publication on the front pages of the national press, also illustrates the importance of cultural agendas on the part of interested parties.

IV. The Fragmentation of Power

Furthermore, historians must be careful not to assume that power is always centralized and uniform in a totalitarian state. Nor should historians assume that a dictator will necessarily want to impose or attempt to impose a single, unitary artistic style. As I have written previously in *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1949* with respect to Fascist Italy, Mussolini appears to have purposefully welcomed the full range of artistic tendencies in Italy as evidence of the fecundity of the Italian genius.⁷ He may

9. Angiolo Mazzoni, train station, Montecatini Terme-Monsummano, 1937

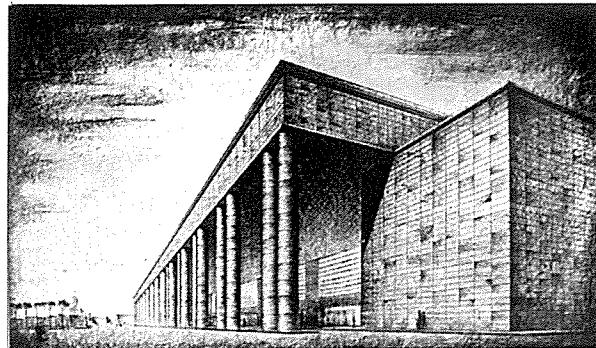
also have realized that it would have been politically counter-productive to alienate entire groups of artists by exclusionary policies. Certainly, as numerous historians have stressed, the more conservative styles spoke to Fascist visions about recreating ancient imperial Roman grandeur while the more avant-garde styles reinforced the Fascist theme of Italy as a leading modern industrial state. Maria Stone's CAA paper emphasized the conjunction of these two stylistic tendencies in the exhibitions buildings at the Circus Maximus; Dennis Doordan's CAA paper stressed the plurality of styles that appeared in the commercial sector of the decorative arts while also pointing out the individual sources of ministerial patronage.

V. Institutional Politics

In considering the interplay between art and totalitarian regimes and when differentiating between the different institutional and individual centers of power, it is important to distinguish between their separate agendas. Government agencies, for example, have been interested in enhancing their status, promulgating the social and political belief of their leaders, and generating financial profits. The ability to identify these and other motivations helps us to nuance generalizations about art and the totalitarian "regime". Dennis Doordan in his CAA paper correctly emphasized the need for historians to devote attention to the desire for self-promotion that prompted the leaders of various government agencies in Fascist Italy to avail themselves of the service of avant-garde artists:

Patterns of ministerial patronage remain one of the least explored aspects of political design during the Fascist era. Students of the period err when they limit the scope of their inquiry to the role of Mussolini and the Fascist Party alone. Italo Balbo at the Ministry of Aeronautics, And Constanzo Ciano, head of the Ministry of Communications, for example, were major clients for progressive Italian designers. Other important design clients included various Fascist Party organization such as the Opera Nazionale Balilla (ONB, the youth organization) and the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (OND, the after-work organization). The paraphernalia of membership in these organization included pins, badges, certificates, trophies, and souvenirs of all types replete with the full range of Fascist iconography.

Paul B. Jaskot, currently with the Department of Art History at Northwestern University, in his CAA paper, "The Architectural Policy of the SS", touched upon the profit motive that played an important role in the SS operation of forced-labor camps, which provided quarried stone, especially granite, for monumental Nazi buildings.⁸ Jaskot developed a complex picture of intersecting personal and institutional interests whereby Hitler's and Speer's program for the monumental rebuilding of Berlin with granite was made possible through economically advantageous

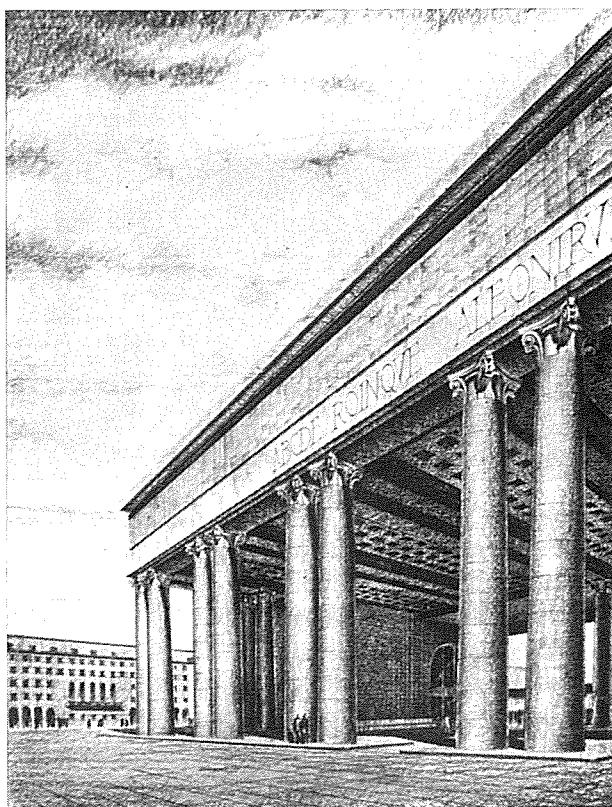


11. Angiolo Mazzoni, second approved project for Stazione Termini, Rome, published on the front page of *Il Messaggero*, February 27, 1938

contracts between Speer's office of the Generalbauinspektor für die Reichshauptstadt Berlin (GBI, or Inspector General of Building for the Capital) and the SS, which leased granite quarries for its forced-labor camp inmates to quarry as part of their punishment. Jaskot chronicled a brutal policy of exploitation and repression in maximizing stone production while simultaneously inflicting suffering and death on the prisoners.

Jaskot's study teaches us that in certain instances considerations of style alone are not sufficient to understand the full character of totalitarian art. Although Wilhelm Kreis was the architect of the important Soldiers' Hall in Berlin north of the Runder Platz on Speer's north-south axis, Kreis was not free to select the building material for his facades. As Jaskot explained, he was effectively told to use granite because it was Hitler's choice. Quarried by the inmates of the forced-labor camps, the granite for this and for other Nazi buildings was both symbolically and literally bathed in the blood of the victims of Nazi tyranny. In contrast to the stones of the Bastille, which were sold during the French revolution as symbols of the purging of tyranny from French soil and the purification of the nation's soul, the stones for Hitler's and Speer's buildings that glorified the Nazi regime seem to have been understood by Nazi leaders as having helped purify the nation of what they saw as the tainted blood of political prisoners and people less than human who had to be destroyed.

Institutional agendas could also be used to mask personal ambitions. My example here comes from



12. Angiolo Mazzoni, third and final project for Stazione Termini, Rome, 1938. (Although the sides of this building with the giant Roman arches were built, this facade was not erected because construction was halted during World War II. A different facade by other architects was erected after the war as a result of a competition.)

Marilyn S. Kushner's CAA paper, "The American National Exhibition, Moscow, 1959: A Tool of Cultural Diplomacy". Here we have the case of the United States Information Agency (USIA) interested in using American art as "a tool of cultural diplomacy against the Soviet totalitarian regime." Kushner quoted remarks to this effect by William Benton, a former Assistant Secretary of State:

The State Department... was in the propaganda business and not in the art business. (...) "Art" judged from the standpoint of the U.S. Government and its Congressional appropriations, applied to overseas activities, must always be judged from its impact as propaganda - and never from its impact as art.⁹

Kushner explained that while Congressman Francis E. Walter, chairman of the House Commit-

tee on Un-American Activities, attempted to purge this planned exhibition of works of art by Americans with alleged Communist sympathies or associations he was seconded by the president of the American Artists Professional League, Inc., who in the eyes of its critics, was not simply attempting to keep out of the show "decadent" works, but also was protecting a near monopoly on government patronage. Kushner pointed out that as early as 1956 Lloyd Goodrich had complained to the director of the USIA about those artists who had assiduously protected their hold on government commissions by lobbying against expanded patronage to other groups and by smearing their opponents as Communists. These stories also should warn us that we must look closely at the interplay of power, patronage, ideology, and ambition when considering government support of the arts whether in democratic or totalitarian regimes.

VI. Propaganda or Patriotic Appeal?

The idea of propaganda is a complex notion that often enters into discussions of politically inspired art, especially when associated with totalitarian states. Certainly the distinctions made by James A. Leith in his recent major work, *Space and Revolution: Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France 1789-1799*, bear consideration:

There are two assumptions about the term [i.e., propaganda] that have become widespread as the result of the propaganda disseminated in Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, and other twentieth-century regimes. The first assumption is that propaganda is usually organized by the state. While this is often true, it is by no means always the case. (...) The second widespread assumption is that propaganda involves the calculated dissemination of lies or distortions. This too has often been the case: Goebbels frequently spread falsehoods to promote the Nazi cause, as did his contemporary Stalin and other modern leaders. (...) [Yet] the Catholic church, which gave us the term "propaganda" when it established the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1622, did not think it was propagating untruths. (...) Also, on the eve of the Revolution the pamphleteers who attacked the power of the First and Second Estates, the clergy and the nobility, on behalf of the commoners

of the Third Estate thought that they were making fair and justifiable claims.

Consequently, Leith distinguishes between what he terms "agitational propaganda" and "integrational propaganda". The former is "negative" and is used to "discredit and dislodge" an opposing group; the latter attempts to promote support for a regime and to integrate citizens into a new social order.¹⁰

Leith's distinctions, as important as they are in recognizing the different operations of propaganda, must also expand to include the aesthetic, cultural, and political agendas outlined above that come to coincide with government activity without necessarily sharing its intentions and goals. They also have to accommodate distinctions between political and commercial motivation. For example, are we to classify as propaganda the various decorative art objects manufactured with Fascist themes in Italy between the two World Wars: In his CAA paper, Dennis Doordan related that the ceramic industry, to take one example, was "composed of multiple, independent manufacturers producing designs for a consumer market characterized by a broad spectrum of taste". Political themes as decoration on ceramics appear to have been commercially popular. The question arises for theorists of propaganda as to whether a visual theme when propagated by the government as propaganda - "integrational propaganda" to use Leith's term - still serves as propaganda when commercialized? Or rather, is the product successful commercially because it has been already assimilated into the domain of nationalistic patriotic themes?

These six categories - aesthetic agenda, political agenda, cultural agenda, fragmentation of power, institutional politics, and the interplay between propaganda and patriotic appeal - form a preliminary list of the types of distinctions that must be made when attempting to ascertain the role of the totalitarian state in the production of art. Rather than working as "lumpers" or "splitters", historians might consider their subject more fruitfully by recognizing the web of intersecting and often competing interests on the part of different individuals and institutions in the genesis and propagation of particular styles of art.

NOTES

¹ THOMPSON, F.M.L.: *Workers in Bowler Hats: Was There a Transformation in Late Victorian Britain?*. Times Literary Supplement (October 1, 1993), p. 25.

² See, for example, Libera's competition project of 1926 for a hotel on a mountain slope and his competition project with M. Fagiolo a M. Ridolfi for "la Palazzata di Messina" reproduced in *Adalberto Libera. Opera completa*. Milano, Electa, 1989, p. 124, 136; - Francesco GAROFALO and Luca VERESANI: *Adalberto Libera*. New York, Princeton Architectural Press 1992, p. 22, 46.

³ ROSSI, Piero Ostilio: *Roma. Guida all'a architettura moderna 1909-1984*. Roma & Bari, Laterza 1984, p. 119: "Negli anni in cui l'architettura italiana fu costretta a una generale involuzione dalla nuova ideologia imperiale del regime, l'allestimento delle mostre rappresentò forse l'unica occasione, almeno per quanto riguarda gli incarichi pubblici, nella quale agli architetti razionali fu consentita una certa libertà di espressione."

⁴ This paper will appear as "Political Things: Design in Fascist Italy", in Experiencing Modernity? The Arts of Reform and Persuasion, 1885-1945, exhibition catalog (Miami Beach, Fla.: Wolfsonian Foundation, 1995).

⁵ GUTTRY, Irene de: *The Design Reform Movement in Rome at the Beginning of the Century*, read at the symposium held on October 22-23, 1988, to accompany the exhibition "Stile Flore

ale: The Cult of Nature in Italian Design", sponsored by the Wolfsonian Foundation and Miami-Dade Community College and subsequently published with the symposium's acts in The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts 13 (Summer 1989), pp. 65-70, with illustrations.

⁶ MAZZONI, Angiolo: *Grandi Facci Architettonici*. Album D/1, p. 9. Archivio Angiolo Mazzoni - Galleria Museo Depero, Rovereto.

⁷ ETLIN, Richard A.: *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940*. Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press 1991, pp. 387-389.

⁸ This paper was adapted from JASKOT's Ph.D. Dissertation, "The Architectural Policy of the SS, 1936-1945" (Northwestern University, December 1993).

⁹ William Benton to Lloyd Goodrich, November 10, 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ LEITH, James A.: *Space and Revolution: Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France 1789-1799*. Montreal & Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press 1991, pp. 3-4.

Photo: Adalberto Libera Archives, Rome (Fig. 1) - *Architectural Forum* (Fig. 2) - Archivo Angiolo Mazzoni - Galleria Museo Depero, Rovereto (Figs. 3-12)

Súťažiace záujmy: Varovné poznámky k pojmu totalitné umenie

V príspevku autor skúma rôzne vzájomne súťažiace a často konfliktné faktory, ktoré sa podielali na tvorbe a propagácii umenia počas totalitného režimu. Používa špecifické príklady z rôznych krajín, počínajúc nacistickým Nemeckom cez Sovietsky zväz až po fašistické Taliansko. Skúma:

1.) nezávislý estetický program umelca, zodpovedajúci jeho umeleckej kultúre,

2.) sociálne a politické programy umelcov, ktoré niekedy nie sú v zhode so sociálnymi a politickými programami vládnuceho režimu,

3.) programy štátnych úradov v zmysle ich ideologických záujmov a inštitucionalizovanej politiky,

4.) politické a ideologické programy totalitných vodcov,
5.) finančné záujmy štátnych úradov a súkromných iniciatív,

6.) vzťah medzi politickou propagandou a dovolávaním sa vlastenectva,

7.) využívanie ochrany štátu umelcami na urýchlenie osobnej kariéry a na zvyšenie statusu svojej profesie.

Jeho zámerom je ukázať komplexnú povahu tvorby umenia za totalitného režimu a upozorniť na povrchné zovšeobecňovanie o "totalitnom umení", ktoré neberú do úvahy splet súťažiacich a divergentných záujmov, ktoré tu vstupujú do hry, tak ako vo všetkých iných ľudských prejavoch.

Totalitäre Architektur des NS-Staates im Vergleich

Hans-Ernst MITTIG

(Zusammenfassung)

Totalitarismus wird als das dominierende Prinzip einer politischen Herrschaft verstanden, die die uneingeschränkte Verfügung über die Beherrschten beansprucht und den Autoritarismus dabei übertrifft, indem sie über die öffentlichgesellschaftliche Sphäre hinaus auf den Bereich des Persönlichen ausgreift. Das Wort fand und findet besonderes Interesse als ein Kriterium des Vergleichs verschiedener politisch-gesellschaftlicher Systeme, darüberhinaus als ein Prädikat, das solche Systeme mit denen des NS-Staates parallelisieren soll. Daraus wird insbesondere eine Verwünschung gewonnen, die man dem angeblich realen Sozialismus nachruft.

Als Kriterien der Ähnlichkeit gelten auch Merkmale, die man an der NS-Kunst wahrzunehmen glaubt. Larsson 1978 egalisierte die NS-Architektur mit neoklassizistischen Bauweisen auf der ganzen Welt. Andere Wissenschaftler sind außerstande, die Siedlungsarchitektur des "Nationalsozialismus" von vorausgegangener "Heimatschutzarchitektur" zu unterscheiden. Eine Kritik solcher Gleichsetzungen muß sich auf die formgeschichtliche Betrachtungsebene einlassen.

Daß Merkmale einer NS-Monumentalarchitektur, wie sie seit Arndt 1968 und Kunst 1971 beschrieben wurden, nicht auch den Wohnungs- und den Industriebau durchdringen, spricht eher für als gegen eine "totalitäre Spezifik", denn die Hervorhebung der Staats- und Parteearchitektur macht eine Hierarchie von Lebensbereichen sichtbar, bei der die Privatsphäre in Frage gestellt ist. Dies läßt sich auch an

einzelnen Bauten wie dem Haus der Deutschen Kunst in München (1933-1937 von Troost) ablesen.

Solche Spezifik wird zu Unrecht mit dem Hinweis auf vorausgegangene neoklassizistische Architektur in Deutschland bestritten. Der nähere Vergleich erweist Besonderheiten der NS-Architektur, die auch ihre Botschaft mitbestimmen. Statt Angriffen auf die private Sphäre - im Sinne der oben zitierten Definition von "Totalitarismus" zeigen mehrere von 1933 entstandene neoklassizistische Bauten spezielle Beziehungen zur Bauaufgabe, zur Person des Auftraggebers und zur Umgebung. Solche über den Formvergleich hinausführende Kriterien erleichtern es auch, die übliche Parallelisierung gleichzeitigen Bauten in Italien und Sowjetunion zu prüfen. Auch dabei zeigen sich Varianten innerhalb des gemeinsamen Neoklassizismus, die gleichsetzende politische Folgerungen verbieten. Der Blick auf gleichzeitig entstandene französische und amerikanische Bauten, aber auch Vergleiche mit der deutschen Nachkriegsentwicklung in Ost und West fördern Beispiele dafür zutage, daß formal variierte Neoklassizismen geradezu entgegengesetzten politischen Zielen dienen konnten.

Ob eine totalitäre Gesellschaftsordnung anzu treffen ist, ob und wie sie sich auch in einer totalitären Kunst realisiert, muß also in jedem Land separat, ohne Analogieschlüsse aus Formen der Architektur, untersucht werden. "Totalitäre Kunst" als Sammelbegriff ist dabei nicht behilflich. Der Ausdruck eignet sich aber dazu, die Architektur im NS-Staat zu qualifizieren, denn dort wurde eine totalitäre Gesellschaftsordnung auch mit den Mitteln der Architektur durchgesetzt.

Pod totalitarizmom rozumieme princíp politickej vlády, ktorá si nárokuje neobmedzenú moc nad ovládanými a autoritarizmus predstihuje v tom, že cez verejno-spoločenskú sféru presahuje až do oblasti osobného. Toto slovo sa stretávalo a stále sa stretáva s osobitným záujmom ako kritérium porovnania rozličných spoločensko-politickej systémov, ktoré ich má ako označenie následne postaviť na rovnakú úroveň systému nacistického štátu. V konečnom dôsledku sa tým vyvoláva "odkaz" na domnely reálny socialismus.

Za kritérium podobnosti slúžia aj znaky, ktoré sa ponímajú ako znaky národnosocialistického umenia. Larsson vo svojej práci z roku 1978 priroval národnosocialistickú architektúru k neoklasicistickým stavebným postupom celého sveta. Iní vedci nie sú schopní rozlišovať siedelnú architektúru "národného socialismu" od predchádzajúcej "Heimatschutzarchitektur". Kritika týchto porovnaní musí byť postavená na rovine formálno-historického posúdenia.

Že znaky monumentálnej architektúry "národného socialismu", ako boli opísané počnúc Arndtom (1968) a Kunstrom (1971), nepresahujú do oblasti obytnej a priemyselnej architektúry hovorí skôr *pre než proti* "totalitnému špecifiku", pretože zdôraznenie štátnej a stranickej architektúry zviditeľňuje hierarchiu životných oblastí spôsobom, pri ktorom je súkromná sféra otázna. Toto sa dá pozorovať aj na jednotlivých stavbách, napríklad Dome nemeckého umenia v Mnichove (Troost, 1933-37).

Spomínané špecifikum sa neprávom popiera odkazom na predchádzajúcu neoklasicistickú architektúru v Nemecku. Bližšie porovnanie však dokazuje osobitosti nacistickej architektúry, ktoré určovali aj ich poslanie. Namiesto zasahovania do súkromnej sféry - v zmysle vyššie citovanej definície "totalitarizmu" - preukazujú viaceré neoklasicistické stavby, postavené pred rokom 1933 osobitné vzťahy k zákazke, k osobe objednávateľa a k prostrediu. Tieto kritériá, vychádzajúce z formálneho rozboru tiež uľahčujú obvyklé pokusy, posudzovať na rovnakej úrovni súdobé stavby v Taliansku a v Sovietskom zväze. Pohľad na súčasne postavené francúzske a americké stavby, ale aj porovnania s nemeckým povoju novým vývinom na východe i západe poskytuje príklady k tomu, že formálne variabilné neoklasicizmy mohli slúžiť dokonca protikladným politickým cieľom.

Skutočnosť, či sa niekde stretávame s totalitným spoločenským zriadením, či a ako sa toto zriadenie prejavuje v totalitnom umení je nutné preskúmať v každej krajine osobitne, bez toho, aby sa vytvárali analogické uzáverky z architektonických foriem. "Totalitné umenie" ako strešný pojem nám pri tom sotva pomôže. Výraz sa však hodí ku kvalifikácii architektúry v nacistickom štáte, pretože tam bolo totalitné spoločenské zriadenie presadzované aj s pomocou prostriedkov architektúry.

Remarks on Relationship between Art and Policy in Hungary

László BEKE

Recently I had to deliver a speech at a conference in the Netherlands, arranged by the Hungarian Kelemen Mikes circle with the title: "Shall we (can we) re-write (Hungarian) art history?" My answer was yes, of course we shall, and not only because of the political changes in the last years, but also because re-writing, re-interpretation is a *modus vivendi* of any kind of writing history - even if post-modern thinkers do sometimes take an antihistorical position, I am inclined to think that whether we admit it or whether we don't, historiography is always ideology-based in the sense that it has always some definite aim, and it is always animated by some belief. This belief of mine is in several respects identical with earlier, avant-garde beliefs: life (society, world) can be changed, freedom should be achieved, new ideas should be sought, etc. I think it was this very avant-garde mentality that prepared the way to political changes in East Europe in 1989-1990, and now, since we can already plainly speak about all that, while re-writing history those very values have become threatened.

Avant-garde values are threatened by the offensive of the Post-Modern ("Avant-Garde as the trailblazer of Totalitarianism") as well as by recently emerged right wing tendencies ("Avant-Garde is Radical, it is Liberal, it is Leftist, it is Bolshevik..."). What can be the ground for these exaggerations?

East European Totalitarian regimes gradually began to decrease their totalitarianism in the sixties and seventies. They applied relatively little violence against artistic events, and artists were seldom imprisoned. On the contrary, those regimes wanted to co-operate with artists. At the beginning of the seventies agents of the Ministry of the Interior contac-

ted several artists and intellectuals asking them to supply informations. Most likely the same happened also in other socialist countries. A number of these people were summoned - hardly anybody was able to refuse to appear at the police, the summons didn't say why he or she was requested to appear: as a "witness", an "expert", a "suspect" or anybody else -, and some of them were surprised, how polite the police was. Their "negotiating partners" requested nothing else than to give "mood reports": what the artists were interested in, which plans they had, with whom they had connections, etc. Some of the summoned people refused to answer, some others, suspecting a trap, gave elusive replies, and some answered frankly in the hope of "being able to help a bit". An art historian in Budapest was once asked by a high-rank functionary of the Federation of Young Communists to give from time to time "mood reports" on young artists. The art historian thought that the functionary might really want to help (why not?), but he answered with a noteworthy presence of mind that he did not want bureaucratic complications, for he had to report at his (state) working place every "seeing about" or "mood inquiry", which, indeed, was not desirable for the functionary either. (Incidentally, some months later the functionary went illegally abroad.)

At the beginning of the seventies, two artists and an art historian were summoned to a high-rank state office, where the clerk let them know that he would not report their matter to the police in case they signed a declaration that they would not issue illegal publications any more. The summoned men managed to detect with a lot of inventiveness, which foreign *samizdat* publication of one of their friend

the office wanted to palm off upon them. They protested saying that the text of the declaration involved the acknowledgment of an implicit charge they did not want to sign. Within following six hours a compromise was set up and signed, and the signatories were benevolently advised by the clerk to protest against the manipulations of foreign press in the newspaper of the Party. (The sketch of this declaration can surely be found in some archive.)

I do not want to describe the tyranny of totalitarian dictatorship and the heroism of resistant artists and intellectuals in these stories. On the contrary, we should understand the mechanism which led to a gradual "softening" of "hard" dictatorship, and which made it possible that certain - in some sense even positive - relations were formed between those in power and those under control. Indeed, hardly anybody was beaten, and only some were arrested for more than 1-2 days (at the maximum they were dismissed from their office or their passports were withdrawn). And it was even a good feeling to be treated with some friendly phrases or jokes. It was well known that the functionary who exercised the highest power above culture and art, sometimes organized friendly meetings, and one could ask for some lesser favours, even for others - and he frankly replied if he could not help. One could get a friendly phone call even from the centre of the Party, by which he or she was warned not to do this or that. (This happened in the case of the remarkable "dissident" Biennale of Venice, where Hungarian artists wanted to exhibit a large flat in an empty room with the inscription: "WE ARE NOT ALLOWED TO EXHIBIT". This was of course not allowed by the organizers either.) It is noteworthy that this time the Security Service had to tap also the Party's wire (!)

The almost cordial atmosphere of "soft" dictatorship was only sometimes impaired by lesser episodes, like "free party days" for "cultural creative workshops" with obligatory participation, which were arranged after the stopping of the "new economical mechanism", ordered in 1972-73 from Moscow. Here one got to know what the "avant-gardist terror of taste" (sic!) was (a dozen of artists wanted to drive out with their decadent works the "healthy" society of artists - some other 4-5 thousand people - from the publicity). Here it was made known, how an other-

wise "properly thinking" artist had committed a mistake by making illustrations in the Bible and by giving an interview for the Christmas issue of a Catholic journal. The writer of this paper grasped the truth on one of these occasions; if the regime hated abstract painting so much, colours and forms *really* must have had some power, even in themselves. If even non-figurative art was dangerous, then art was a *real* power (not to speak about really subversive genres, like happenings or conceptual art). Political power feared everything unusual, incomprehensible or new, for a promise of freedom was supposed behind them.

Horribile dictu, it also happened that a Communist art collector considered geometric abstract art and Neo-Constructivist tendencies as real trustees of Social art. His theory had no clamorous success, but on the other hand he was neither imprisoned. This example characterizes well the conditions under "Socialism with a human face". Everyone tried to feel out his or her own borders, but the parties shored up to each other from the two sides of the border. A border crossing and self-censorship are but two different aspects of the same action. State power and avant-garde differed only in the direction ("vectors") of their tendencies, but sometimes inexorably. A change of these positions was rarely proposed by avant-garde artists, like Miklós Erdély, who around 1971 elaborated a "Solidarity Action". According to his plans, the whole population of the world could be alarmed in 36 steps, if everyone gave notice only to two fellowmen, the *jailers* included (my italics, B.L.). In the eighties Erdély also planned to establish an international corporation with an illimitable legislative but no executive power.

Could we say, after all, that Miklós Erdély wanted to collaborate with the jailers? Of course not. Or did he? It seems so, or at least, it is possible. For, if an "interrogation record" or a report about a conversation comes to light, who is able to prove that it implied no collaboration with the secret police? Or who could prove the contrary, that the interrogated was an informant?

In the "bygone times" I met somebody who was proclaimed a spy (or, as it was said in Hungary, a "brick"), and he knew it himself. It was a terrible situation. He had no possibility of refusal or expla-

nation, for the accusation was not brought face-to-face or in public. And recently I met someone who confessed of having been an informant, and that he had repented it. And he asked me about my opinion. My opinion was that he has done well to confess it, and he has done even better to repent it. I also know a critic who repented his loyal attitude to the former regime.

Concerning the past, this is the only possible attitude: repentance accepted with forgiveness. The most positive of recent changes is that we can openly speak of many things we could not before. But there are also negative changes: the values of the avant-garde have disappeared. Anti-capitalism, unofficial (as contrasted to the official: alternative, underground, avant-garde) attitudes and internationalism have no sense any more. And the most negative heritage of the past continues to infect: accusations, mud-slinging, suspicion of getting to know something about our best friend, or that someone else will find out that we sympathize with former Communists (that is, collaborators). And we do all that in the name of party interests, for showing sympathy with a political party in Eastern Europe implicitly means refusing our friends, colleagues and acquaintances who sympathize with other parties.

The Post-Modern condemns the Avant-Garde as having been a trailblazer of *totalitarianism*. Never-

theless, claims to *totality* are not totally out of season either today. (Cf. László Moholy-Nagy and Joseph Beuys: "everyone is talented".) Why could not this idea be the ground principle of democracy also in the future? Why internationalism, that is, internationalism of art, is no value any more? The Post-Modern replies: because regionalism is all the rage; and post-Socialist cultural policies reply: because internationalism was a Bolshevik ideology, which suppressed national aspirations. Anybody who is not a nationalist, is a cosmopolitan they say (by the way, the same was said during Socialism which confronted proletarian internationalism with capitalist cosmopolitanism).

Looking for an appreciation of diversity was one of the most important avant-garde values. "Strange is beautiful!" - proposed the title of a recent Hungarian exhibition. "Strange" and "diverse" are always minorities in the context of a given group or society. To be a *minority* is something nice in itself: "Small is beautiful!" Nationalism is also beautiful until it is small. Becoming a majority, other minorities increasingly disturb it, and the disturbed nationalism refers to the majority as a ground principle of democracy. The confusion of values gradually becomes *total*, and there remains no other way out of it, only one of the oldest avant-garde values: repentance founded on mutual forgiveness.

Poznámky k výfahu umenia a politiky v Maďarsku

Prikláňam sa k tým, ktorí sú za napísanie nových (madarských) dejín umenia a to nielen kvôli posledným politickým zmenám, ale aj preto, že reinterpretácia je modus vivendi každého dejepisu. Historiografia je vždy ideológiou - je zaujatá, sleduje určitý cieľ a je živená určitým názorom. Moje názory sú v mnohom identické s vierou starších avantgárd: svet možno zmeniť, hľadať nové idey, dosiahnuť slobodu. Nazdávam sa, že tieto názory pripravili cestu k politickým zmenám vo východnej Európe v r. 1989-90. Pri znovu napísaní historie by však mohlo dôjsť k ohrozeniu skutočných hodnôt - jednak útokmi postmoderny ("avantgarda ako priekopník totalitarizmu") ako aj pravicovo orientovaných smerov ("avantgarda je radikálna, liberalná, lavicová, bolševická..."). Čo je základom týchto nadzádzok?

Východoeurópske totalitné režimy postupne zoslabovali svoj totalitarizmus v 60. a 70. rokoch. Uplatňovali pomerne malé

násilie voči umeleckému dianiu a samotní umelci boli len zriedkakedy väznení. V istom zmysle sa dokonca vytvárali pozitívne výfahy medzi tými, ktorí boli pri moci a tými, ktorí boli pod kontrolou. Politická moc sa však zároveň obávala všetkého neobvyklého, nepochopiteľného a nového.

K tejto minulosti možno zaujať jediný postoj: lútosť prijímať s odpúštaním. Je to aj jedna z najstarších zásad avantgárd. Mnohé avantgardné hodnoty sa vytratili. Anti-kapitalizmus, neoficiálne názory, internacionalizmus stratili zmysel. Dedičstvo minulosti - obviňovanie, karierizmus, podozrivanie sa šíria ďalej v mene stranických záujmov. Totalita nie je totálne zažehnaná ani dnes. Zmätok a nevyjasnenosť hodnôt sa postupne stanú totálnymi a neostane nám nič ako už spomenutá lútosť založená na vzájomnom odpúštaní.

“The Realm of Poetry” in the Era of Socialist Realism

Vincenc Kramář and Karel Teige on Cubism

Vojtěch LAHODA

In the autumn of 1949, more than a year after the communist coup in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, Dr. Vincenc Kramář wrote a letter to Karel Teige. Kramář was a famous collector of Picasso, an internationally less known art historian and still lesser known director of Prague’s Gallery of the Society of Patriotic Friends of Fine Arts, by that time retired.

Karel Teige was a leading figure of the interwar Czechoslovak avant-garde, member of the Surrealist Group in the Czechoslovak Republic, a friend of André Breton, and from the viewpoint of Czechoslovakia’s postwar communist leaders a persona non grata.

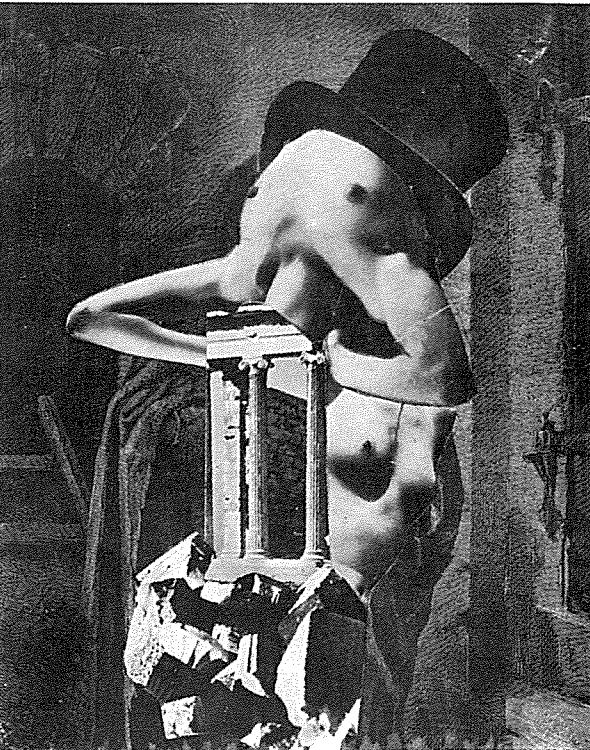
In his letter dated September 13th 1949, Kramář was responding to Teige’s 1949 study on Bohumil Kubišta, a distinguished Czech Cubist-expressionist painter whose picture “Pierot” (1911) Kramář owned in his private collection. In his study on Kubišta Teige spelled out the most general characteristic of Cubism: “This is a painting without a message”. In its time, this “strict formalism” of Cubism is said to have had its own liberating importance. “The process of cleansing was so radical that endeavours to restore a charge of human and poetic tension to the subject no longer lead the artist astray on to a path back to nature or towards an external subject, and in the future such efforts will be focused on what we call, to borrow Breton’s term, an innermost model. The presence and the impact of the innermost theme tends to abolish the bound-

dary between painting and poetry. Painting thus enters the promised land of poetry”.

In his letter of September 13th 1949 Kramář disagreed with the term “formalism”, as applied by Teige to Cubism. Kramář claimed that genuine formalism amounts to what he termed a ”real juggling with forms”, while Cubism tried in its time “to return meaning to things” and “to restore them in their dynamic form”. Cubism is said to have contributed to “the trappings of political and social caricature”, having affected even the political and social conditions (as Kramář exemplified by Picasso’s “Guernica” and Filla’s “Fights and Struggles”). The nature of Cubism is therefore “social revolutionary”. Kramář acknowledged the existence of an affinity between Cubism and surrealism.

But Kubišta, Kramář claimed, was not a representative of Cubism derived from Picasso, Cubism which “had laid the foundations of new realism” concentrating on the “poetic concept of things”. That kind of Cubism which Kramář viewed as the only authentic one. Kramář believed that Kubišta’s art was associated with what he termed “Cubicizing expressionism”. He saw the mission of Cubism as temporarily accomplished even though he did not rule out the possibility that at some time in the future Cubism might provide the groundwork for a ”new realism”.

Kramář was a well-known defender of Cubism already before the First World War. In 1921 he published a book called “*Kubismus*” (Cubism) in which



1. Karel Teige: Collage, 1936

he summarized his underlying conception shaped largely before World War I. While emphasizing the nature of Picasso’s and Braque’s paintings from the years 1910 and 1911, especially their still lifes with pipes, glasses or musical instruments, he stressed that “it is the selection of the object to be depicted - the object is not a theme but a lyricism of the whole... that seems to be absolutely unimportant”. The “lyricism of the whole”, therefore, constitutes the subject matter. Picasso’s paintings, Kramář wrote in his book of 1921, “display the brightness and purity of Mozart’s music and the sublimeness and cohesion of a lyrical verse.” The accentuation of the poetic qualities of Cubism gradually grew more prominent in Kramář’s studies. In his book “*Otzázy moderního umění*” (Issues of Modern Art), published in 1958 but written between 1952 and 1956, Kramář claimed that Cubism was an artistic style striving - “like realism - for a profoundly truthful and thus poetic depiction of objective reality”. Another passage says that “to experience the sensual reality in a poetic manner is the basic condition of creative art

whether realistic... or Cubistic endeavours... are involved”.

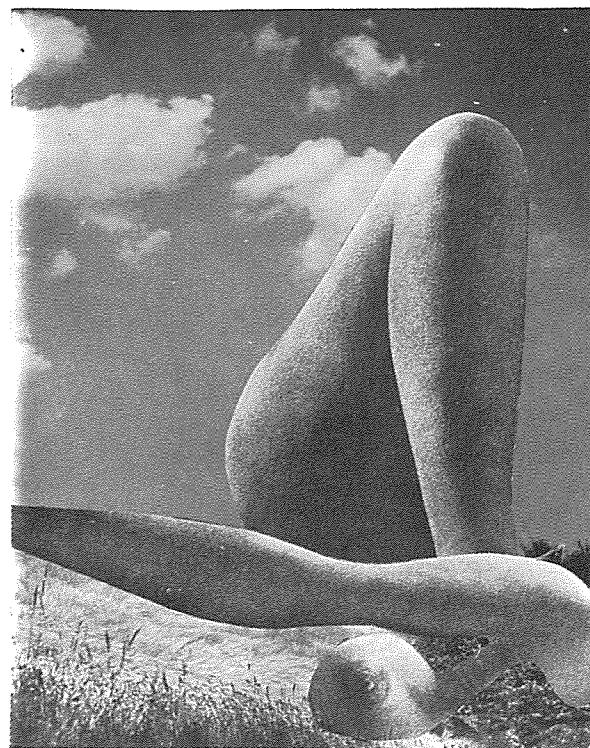
At that time, in the 1950s, Kramář was wondering whether the arts of the past could still “make a contribution” to the “continued development of socialist realism, eg. raising the impact of its ideological content by richly promoting its creative poeticism etc.” Under the arts of the past he meant primarily Cubism as representing such a poeticism. On the one hand, Kramář tried to pass Cubism off to the reader as a key trend of the modern fine arts whose foundation lay in “poetic creativity”. On the other hand, he could hardly afford to say quite unequivocally - possibly because his hands had already been tied by an awareness of the genuine incompatibility of Cubism with socialist realism - that Cubism could have ever been the latter’s foundation. But basically this was his ultimate goal. That is why Kramář wrote sentences like: “A new truthful realism is being born - socialist realism - and that is the lesson provided by Cubism - an art which is creatively poetic and what is particularly new - highly ideological.” Kramář believed that in the phase of socialist realism Cubism could assert its main strong point, namely that “creative poeticism”, ie. “enhanced creativity stimulated by and based on nature...”. According to him, ideology was the novel feature of socialist realism.

On the other hand, Kramář was well aware that Cubism was no longer topical because in “our time when world peace is being threatened as a result of the last-ditch desperate attempts by dying capitalism and imperialism ... there is no time to search for a systematic solution of graphic problems...”. When Kramář wrote these words Teige had already been dead.

Teige responded to Kramář’s 1949 criticism of Cubism as a trend of “social revolutionary” nature, which formed the basis of a modern realism, by writing a letter he had never dispatched. He viewed the whole concept of Cubism and de facto of realism or “irrealism” to be of such major significance that he decided to answer Kramář in a book which eventually ran to many chapters but whose publication Teige did not live to see. He died on October 10th 1951. The book, which appeared under the title “*Vývojové proměny v umění*” (Developmental Changes in Arts), was published mainly thanks to editor Vratislav Ef-

fenberger in 1966. Indeed, this was a unique case in the history of art: a whole book was written in response to back up an argument.

In his undispached letter of September 18th 1949 Teige explained his own interpretation of "formalism" as peinture pure, as a broader and definitely not a pejorative concept, as Kramář understood it in the spirit of what was a more or less socialist realistic criticism of the fine arts. Teige claimed that a hidden impact of Cubism was still feasible but he principally rejected the possibility of its relationship to socialist realism: "... the officially stipulated demand of socialist realism is alien to modern art. It runs counter to the nature and substance of modern arts ... the requirement of socialist realism is nothing but a thoroughly reactionary, anti-artistic diktat, which has already demonstrated in practice that it tends to deaden artistic creation and render it barren because it puts the clock of the development of arts a century back. A compromise solution could hardly be found between the demands of socialist realism and those of an art growing out of a foundation established by the revolutionary deeds of Cubism even if such a compromise formula were dressed up by being called a dialectic adjustment of contradictions. As Teige began contemplating the underlying concept of his book, aimed at describing the nature of modern arts and formulating primarily the conception of Cubism, a political campaign against him was gaining momentum. Teige then concentrated on his extensive theoretical works, in fact preparing an answer to Kramář in parallel with the creation of his collages which he had been creating since the mid-1930s. Teige realized only too well that due to political reasons the results of his lifelong work would never be published in his lifetime. And he was right. While examining the systems used by both art historians in greater detail; we will find out that although they had very little in common there was one particular issue on which they came very close to one another: namely the notion of Cubism as a kind of poetry. It was precisely in the realm of poetry that the substance of fine arts was said to have laid, in Kramář's concept grounded in a realistic foundation (since - following in Kahnweiler's footsteps - he viewed Cubism as a kind of realism and wrote about the "poetic depiction of the objective reality"), in

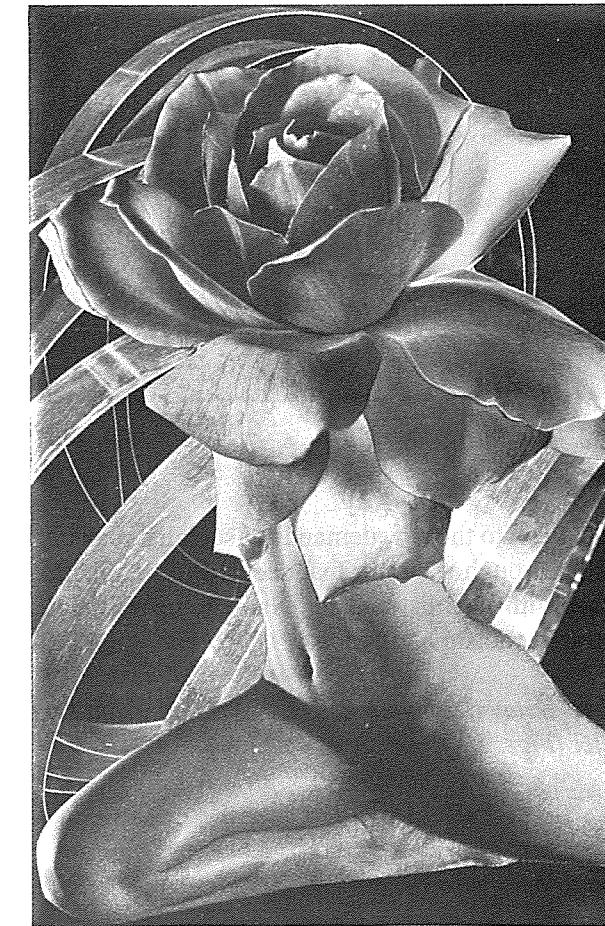


2. Karel Teige: Collage, 1948

Teige's case based on a much broader foundation integrating the arts with everyday life.

According to Teige, poetry should involve the "participation of the world", "the principle of poetry will be identified with the principle of reality". One of Teige's key ideas, highlighted in his study on Bohumil Kubišta and criticized by Kramář, was the claim that "painting has entered the promised land of Poetry". While for Kramář poetry was a kind of external attribute of arts (and of Cubism in particular), for Teige it was a substantial component of being.

This can be illustrated by Teige's surrealistic collages, most of them dating back to the years 1948 and 1949. The collages were neither solely a visual diary nor a "mere" evidence of a graphic solution. Sometimes they represented an exercise in imagination, possibly a reflection of dreams but also an echo of the periods rife with totalitarianism, first the era of Nazi occupation (between 1939 and 1945) and then the communist rule (1948-1951). These collages are replete with erotic imagery. They are primari-



3. Karel Teige: Collage, 1948

ly pictures of the "surreal", capturing that poetic moment of the real as an expression of the will to deepen the reality. They symbolize a link between Eros and Poetry.

Accentuation of the poetic which winds through Teige's theory like a red thread is a confirmation of the surrealistic "empire of freedom". Love, which is viewed according to Breton primarily as physical love, is Love-Poetry. Possibly the most pronounced confirmation of the interrelationship between love and poetry can be found in Teige's note in his excerpts from F.X. Šalda on the theme Eros and Poetry: "Through erotic imagery the aspiration of poetry has managed to incorporate and interweave into itself the entire world and life. A poet's thinking is driven and urged by EROS."

The interdependence of eroticism and poetry (especially in the 1940s) seems to have replaced, at

least in Teige's collages, the previous polarity of constructivism and poetry. While the collage became for Teige the most suitable instrument for putting across the poetic values he had found in the realm of Eros, this was also because he shared Soupault's opinion that a collage "corresponds to the new form of language and image, which could exercise great impact... and give strength to poetry". It was Ernst, the father of surrealistic collages, himself who wrote about the approximation of the previously alien elements in the collage in between which he aspires to generate - through his composition - "an electric or erotic tension", "expressional mating", which gives off the "spark of Poetry". Ernst found eroticism in the very principle of collage and Teige directly linked up to his concept.

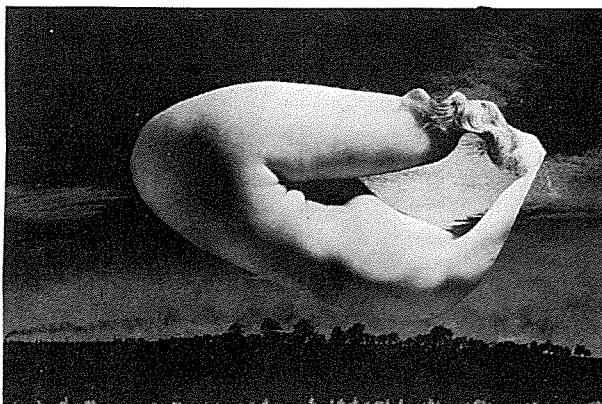
The core of Kramář's response to Teige was the conception of poetry. Kramář stressed the "poetic concept of things", Teige perceived Poetry as an issue of existence and thus freedom. Kramář's and Teige's opinions clashed at a time when the cultural scene in Bohemia was dominated by socialist realism. Kramář, a dedicated prewar defender of Cubism, did not reject it then. He tried to smuggle something of Cubism, precisely that "poetic creativity", into socialist realism. He defended Picasso's Cubism in the 1950s as strongly as he did before the war.

Paradoxically enough before 1935 Teige himself tried hard to understand socialist realism and came to the conclusion that "surrealism fitted into the broader range of socialist realism". From 1938 onwards he no longer subscribed to this view. Poetry became the backbone of his thinking and creative work around 1949. As confirmed by Teige's contemporaries, his most favourite collage was the one he typically called Baudelaire's Embankment. As a result, it was not only in the theory of art (in a letter to architect Hannes Meyer in Mexico in 1950 Teige mentioned his ambitious plan to write a theory of modern arts whose third part would be devoted to the interrelationship of painting and poetry) but also in his own art that Poetry constituted a utopian shield and safeguard against the reality of socialist realism.

On the other hand, Kramář went out of his way to incorporate elements of Cubism into the 1946 communist programme of fine arts. In his book "*Oázky moderního umění*", published in 1958, he

held up Cubism as the most influential of the modern styles. And yet nobody could keep him from groping in the dark of the theory of socialist realism.

The search for a utopian land of Poetry (Teige) or poetic elements in reality (Kramář) at the turn of the 1940s and 50s was indeed a desperate and occasionally tragic attempt to find alternatives to socialist realism. For Teige, such a realm of poetry lay primarily in surrealism, by that time a style incompatible with socialist realism. For Kramář, Cubism still reflected poetic elements of reality, constituting in his eyes a certain model of "creative non-representational art", which was dependent on the elements of reality". But Kramář also discovered what he called "creative poeticism", which for him eventually represented the main attribute of Cubism and the fine arts en gros, in socialist realism. The paradox of Kramář's acrobatic turnabout from Cubism to socialist realism was thus accomplished. It only served to show how flexible the theoretical programmes of modernism (and the avant-garde) really were. On some occasions it was not very difficult to



4. Karel Teige, Collage, 1951

adjust them to the new demands of socialist realism, mostly through a notion that seemed to be incompatible with socialist realism. Namely the notion of poetry, poeticism and lyricism.

Photo: Ústav dějin umění AV ČR, Praha - František Krejčí (Figs. 1-4)

"Země Poezie" v čase socialistického realismu. Vincenc Kramář a Karel Teige o kubismu

Na podzim roku 1949, více než rok po komunistickém únorovém puči, napsal dr. Vincenc Kramář dopis Karlu Teigemu. V dopise z 13.9.1949 reagoval Kramář na Teigovu staf o Bohumilu Kubíštovi z roku 1949. Kramář zde vyjadřoval své stanovisko o kubismu, což byla tendence, kterou obhajoval již od doby před první světovou válkou. Tvrdil, že kubismus bude základem jakéhosi "nového realismu", "odlišného, jak káže vývojový zákon, od předchozího realismu 19. století". Teige na kritiku reagoval dopisem, který ovšem neodeslal: otázka pojednání kubismu a de facto realismu či "irrealismu" mu připadala natolik zásadní, že se rozhodl odpovědět Kramáři knihou, rozvíjející se do nových kapitol. Jejího vydání se Teige nedožil. Zemřel 1.10.1951, kniha vyšla pod názvem *Vývojové proměny* v umění díky editoru Vratislavu Effenbergerovi roku 1966.

V dějinách umění šlo o ojedinělou causu: odpovědí na polemický argument byla celá kniha. Ponoříme-li se hlouběji do systému obou protagonistů diskuse, zjistíme, že mají něco společného: pojednání kubismu je vztahováno k poezii. Právě říše poezie měla být podstatou výtvarného umění, u Kramáře založeném na realistickém základě (neboť ve stopách Kahnweilera chápal kubismus jako svého druhu realismus, psal o "básnívém ztvárnění objektivní skutečnosti"), u Teigeho na mnohem širší základně sepětí umění a života. Dle Teigeho poezie musí být "participací světa", "princip poesie se ztotožní s principem reality". Zatímco u Kramáře byla poezie jakýmsi vnějším atributem umění (a kubismu především), u Teigeho byla v té době podstatou bytí.

Výměna názorů byla zahájena v době, kdy v Čechách vládl v kultuře socialistický realismus. A paradoxem doby zůstává, že sám Teige se ještě roku 1935 snažil socialistického realismu porozumět a shledával, že "surrealismus zapadá do širokého rámce socialistického realismu". Roku 1949 již takto neuvažoval. Nejen teorie, ale i surrealistické koláže, jejichž tvorba kulminovala především ve čtyřicátých letech, dokládají Teigův posun od avantgardistického sepětí konstrukce a poezie k dualitě Erota a Poezie 40. let. Poetické se stala pro Teigeho nejen v teorii umění (v dopisu architektu Hannesu Meyerovi do Mexika z roku 1950 píše o velkém plánu napsat teorii moderního umění, jehož třetí část by se zabývala vztahem malířství a poezie), ale i ve vlastní tvorbě utopickou záchrannou před realitou socialistického realismu.

Oproti tomu Kramář se snažil implantovat prvky kubismu do komunistického programu výtvarného umění z roku 1946

a ještě v knize z roku 1958 *Otzázy moderního umění*, napsané v letech 1952-1956, prosazoval kubismus jako nejvlivnější z moderních stylů. Přesto nebyl ušetřen bloudění v teorii socialistického realismu.

Hledání utopické země Poezie (Teige) či básnívých prvků v realitě (Kramář) na přelomu čtyřicátých a padesátých let byly snahou hledat jiné duchovní horizonty, než předkládalo pojednání socialistického realismu. Pro Teiga takovou zemí poezie byl především surrealismus, tehdy již neslučitelný se socialistickým

realismem, pro Kramáře básnické prvky reality reprezentoval stále kubismus. Byl pro něj jakýmsi modelem "tvůrčího nena-podobujícího umění", ale závislého na "skutečních prvcích". "Výtvarnou básnívost", která byla pro Kramáře nakonec hlavním atributem kubismu a výtvarného umění en gros, shledával ovšem také v socialistickém realismu (*Otzázy moderního umění*, Praha 1958, s.26). Paradox Kramářova akrobatického obratu od kubismu k socialistickému realismu byl tak dovršen.

Medievalism in Czech Progressivist Culture: Notes on the Perseverance of a Totalizing Gesture

Jindřich TOMAN

When asked in 1931 what he thought about contemporary Catholic literature and the impact of Catholicism on art, the Czech author Vladislav Vančura replied:

The Catholic imperative is, I believe, unity. Actions and the world of phenomena converge in a single point. This premise is certainly of great value from the point of view of form and forming. Catholicism has an old and beautiful tradition. The Weltanschauung of its poets is unified. There is order and explanation for all things. What pleasure for poets. (Vančura 1931)

The answer might surprise: Vančura was an active participant in the Czech interwar avantgarde and, above all, a prominent representative of a Czech leftist culture. But in view of the above quotation, one feels compelled to conclude that either all these labels - Catholicism, avant-garde, Leftism - got somewhat mixed here, or that there is a level at which all of them may apply correctly without leading to a contradiction. And, indeed, such a level seems to exist. It involves a consciously constructed ideological discourse revolving around the totality of order, and as such it easily accommodates additional perspectives, for instance, that of Medievalism, where the term is essentially understood in Vančura's

sphere of this period. A more exhaustive account will hopefully be possible in not too distant a future.

I

Vladislav Vančura (1890-1942), one of the most prominent Czech authors of the interwar era, has been a tough nut for literary theorists - his style appears inexplicably unique and hard to classify. Among other things, Vančura strikes the reader with his penchant for the Middle Ages, visible not only in some of his prose but also in his reviews and theoretical statements. Writing on Roman Jakobson's 1927 edition of Czech medieval poetry (Jakobson 1927), Vančura approvingly noted:

The editor of the book correctly maintains that the very content of the poem is its form. Guided by criteria of forming, Jakobson has searched in the depths of literary history and, lo and behold, unlike those confused professors who point to the period of Humanism, he uncovered the Gothic poem - an object full of discipline and formal harmony. His is a discovery of genuine verse and of numerous indications of the presence of style [...] (Vančura 1927)

(Throughout, the term Gothic is understood as a synonym for medieval.)

Significantly, Vančura did not praise Jakobson's collection for reasons of historicism or similar motives. What mattered was not that these were medieval poems, but that a contemporary reader would be able to read them: "It is not medieval sentiment that matters, but the old poem you have just finished reading - something that lasts" (*ibid.*). Vančura's approach is typical in that it is based on the idea that medieval art can have a contemporary quality and that much of this quality rests upon the presence of a unifying gesture - the presence of discipline and style. For Vančura, cultivation of the legacy of medieval language was a worthwhile and important enterprise.

Among other places he instantiated it in his *Markéta Lazarová* (1931), a prose work inspired by the life of medieval robber knights in Bohemia, and in his voluminous *Images from the History of the Czech Nation* (1939-1940), a project designed as an intellectual response to the German attack on Czechoslovakia. Both of these books exploit a highly stylized Czech, full of artificial archaisms.

The fact that Vančura regarded medieval poems as capable of addressing a reader in 1927 is crucial for our understanding of the sentiment of the interwar period. The constructive force that Vančura saw in the stylistic unity of medieval poetry was still felt as an exemplary source of inspiration despite the fact that the larger part of the "style" discussion was already far behind. Before 1914 the question of whether modern times had style, and if so, what were the adequate means of expressing it, was extensively abused in environments as different as turn-of-the-century Vienna and Italian Futurism, but the problem retained some of its attraction even after the war. As late as 1922, Karel Teige, the driving force behind the Czech avant-garde, did not hesitate to see in proletarian art a potential for a "new socialist Gothic" (Teige 1922, 18). He based this attribute on the idea that the proletarian idea would finally supply the epoch with a new style - for him, the "new socialist Gothic" implied not only a new social vision but also *slobohost*, the presence of style.

That Vančura should be sensitive to matters of form in medieval lyrics is not surprising. In a number of theoretical statements he defined his credo as the struggle for form (*zápas o tvar*). This struggle was part of a culture of craftsmanship, and it was essentially congruent with the construction of modern society in which artistic creation did not merely strive for the organizational unity of the work of art, but it also aimed at a subordination of all domains of work to the "needs of life" (see Holý 1990). The image of an overall subordination to overriding goals (just like

a Catholic "convergence in a single point" and medieval "discipline and harmony") provides a common perspective for all the labels that seemed initially confused. The image is also the base of a profoundly totalizing gesture.

II

Vančura was by no means isolated among the Czechs in his effort to project a culture in which everything was lawfully subordinated to a single homogenizing perspective. A prominent social philosopher and advocate of alternatives to democratic society, the Brno-based philosopher Josef Ludvík Fischer (1894-1972), was active essentially along the same lines.

In developing his conception of culture and society, Fischer concluded that European culture had been philosophically and culturally dominated by mechanistic-scientific concepts, and politico-economically by capitalism. While Vančura was projecting a culture in which "workship" (*dělnictví*) would give style to a styleless society, Fischer saw the alternative in what he called a "synthetic" society, a new cultural formation in which things and actions would have a genuine, unalianated sense. (In Czech, the term is *skladebná společnost*, "synthetic society.") The now uncommon adjective *skladebný* echoes such prewar usage as in *skladebné léky* "synthetic drugs," now also obsolete.)

Fischer's foremost concern was to liberate the West from the legacy of mechanicism and capitalism, two major sources of social and cultural disjunction. In his view, steps in the right direction had been taken in a variety of scientific disciplines. He thus highly valued certain traits in Driesch's Neovitalism and in Gestalt theory which prompted departure from the Weltanschauung of the previous epoch:

The concepts of the whole and Gestalt are now advancing in the place of the old mechanistic understanding of the atomistic and summative nature of organic and psychic objects and the mono-causal, meaning-free nature of their relationship. These concepts form organic and psychic realms in a non-mechanical and meaningful way. (Fischer 1929, 48)

Fischer is in general critical of science which is conceived of mechanically and in which reality ap-

pears as "devoid of sense," while "meaningful" phenomena are regarded as results of chance (as is the case in Darwinism, for instance).

The range of topoi that characterize Fischer's discourse also includes the concept of "order" (*řád*):

The epoch we are entering [...] is an epoch of order. In sharp contrast to the cultural and social disintegration, even anarchy, of the preceding period [...], there emerges a period of cultural and social order, a synthetic period, which, so to speak, sets out to materialize what the present times so desperately lack: unity of the cultural universe - in philosophy, science, society, in short, everywhere where the order-creating activity [*řádové úsilí*] of the human spirit can reach. (Fischer 1933, 41)

It is not surprising that, like Vančura, Fischer did not hesitate to support his arguments with certain medieval images that were congruent with the idea of order and unity of the cultural universe. In his *Unrest of the Present Times* (Fischer 1930), a brochure dedicated to the alternatives to democracy, he evokes a *topos* that is classical in this context, that of the cathedral:

Is it so hard to understand how fruitful and beautiful the wisdom is with which the most precious legacy of Europe, the stone image of its genius, the Gothic cathedral, speaks to us - to us who have since long unlearned such language? Is it so hard to see and understand how, aiming upwards, the cathedral abducts the desire for perfection into higher and higher realms; how it materializes the harmony in which part and whole breathe with the same will; how it subordinates the spirit of matter under the prayer of beauty and order? (Fischer 1930, 35)

In 1932, Fischer reasserted his Gothic nostalgia in a book of essays, entitled literally *The Mirror of the Period*. One of the essays, "Gotika" (Gothic), begins with the assertion that, despite its religiosity, the Gothic period seems to be close and familiar to the man of the twentieth century. The passage is remarkable in that Fischer confesses to seduction by the term gothic:

Its language sounds so familiar, so deeply akin to us, despite its piety and the distance of centuries. In fact, for quite a long time, I was considering the possibility of calling my prototype of cultural synthesis a gothic prototype. (Fischer 1932, 97)

He then raises the question of whether the Middle Ages, in which everything was subordinated to religious ideas, would lose their appeal if their religiosity were removed. In other words, he is asking what the core and what the overlay of the medieval period was, and he eventually decides that it indeed is possible to do without what was negated by later secularization, because the genuine core of the Middle Ages was not religion but the epoch's synthetic character.

Although no direct advocate of Medievalism, Fischer saw in the Gothic era a world which had an inspiring effect in a time of crisis. It was able to supply modern times with an element that was missing in the mechanistic world of the late 19th century the element of desire and perfection. Gothic splendor helps estheticize Fischer's synthetic society, which can longer seek eternity in God, yet also lives through desire for perfection:

The Gothic period has become the most expressive symbol of this desire. Tuning its prayer in stone into a chord, it speaks to us a language that sounds close even today a language of beauty and desire for the unity of order. (Fischer 1932, 100f.)

III

So far the selection of sources has revolved around authors who had some relation to Structuralism and the Prague Linguistic Circle (see Toman 1994). Vančura was a follower of the Circle and a close friend of Jakobson's. Fischer was admitted as a member in the 1930s. (In the 1960s he became a grandfather of a school of thought known as dialectical structurology, a continuation of Prague Structuralism with soft Marxist means.) Did the Circle also show any traces of Medievalism in its cultural program?

In 1935, the Prague Linguistic Circle began to publish a journal, *Slovo a slovesnost*, which opened with an introduction that not only proclaimed integration of linguistics into the contemporary system of social needs, but, remarkably, attempted to do so with recourse to the Gothic period and its constitutive elements:

The Gothic epoch thought in dimensions of centuries. Ignát Herrman was right when he contrasted the far-sighted imperial construction of Prague by

Charles the Fourth with Prague's narrow horizon fifty years ago. As he put it, whatever was recently being undertaken "was tailored merely according to the measure of the day." We cannot - and do not want to - return back to Gothic culture, but its grandiose, self-conscious and goal-oriented construction provides a more contemporary and inspiring example than the poverty of yesterday - heroic and sacrificial as it may have been. (Circle 1935, 7)

Again, this matches the sentiment of the 1930s in that there is an admiration for an epoch of order and discipline, monumentality and subjugation under higher-order goals. Either Mukařovský or Jakobson are the likely candidates for the authorship of this passage. In his *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Aesthetic Value* of 1936, Mukařovský assigned Gothic society aspecial status, and also for Jakobson the preoccupation with the Middle Ages had a certain mystique, as seen, among other places, in his "Considerations About the Poetry of the Hussite Period" (Jakobson 1936). The study strikes one by an emphasis on the integrated character of medieval society:

Gothic order did not know the strict division of spheres of interest - religion, art, science, socio-economical, national, erotic spheres - characteristic of modern times. Each phenomenon had several levels and each event belonged necessarily to several levels at the same time. This is the essence of gothic symbolism. The tendency toward autonomy of individual areas only began with the Renaissance. (Jakobson 1936, 2)

IV

Clearly, the Middle Ages provided a score of animating images some of which were readily picked up and modified by Czech progressivist intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s: the Gothic cathedral (Vančura, Fischer), a kind of chivalric code (Vančura), craftsmanship and goal-oriented work (Vančura, The Circle), monumentalism (The Circle) and order (Vančura, Fischer, the Circle). At the same time, most of these images appear in the interwar time in their late forms, having traveled a long path through Symbolism, Expressionism and the early avant-garde, both at home and abroad. Gothic allusions were frequent in Jaroslav Durych (1886-1962), a Czech catho-

lic author whose name belongs to an overall account of Czech Medievalism but can be ignored here. The image of the cathedral appears in the Czech Symbolist poet Otokar Březina, the Prague German poet R.M. Rilke, but also in the Bauhaus organizer Walter Gropius. (Incidentally, the name originally contemplated for *Bauhaus* was *Bauhütte*, a word with strong medieval connotations.) And, as we have seen above, one of the earliest programs of Czech avant-garde, Teige's "New Proletarian Art," exploited the image of a "new socialist Gothic."

But on the whole, Czech progressivist authors have rarely achieved the medievalistic quality that is known from the English 19th century medieval revival, from German conservatives such as Moeller van der Bruck or from such Russian thinkers as Berdyayev. It should be obvious from the Czech sources that in each case Medievalism represents a trace element, an ingredient of a discourse that by itself does not aim at a large-scale Gothic Revival. In other words, the Prague Linguistic Circle was not a medieval guild, and Fischer was not a Czech William Morris. Likewise, Vančura cannot be reduced to a simple imitator of medieval Czech or a straightforward intellectual medievalist - his prose and thoughts were simply much more complex. But there is a clear line of commitment and a recurring link that associates Gothic imagery with certain social and cultural projects. The Middle Ages served as a symbol of a world that had a special appeal - an epoch of genuine relations, genuine work, genuine faith. This is quite in line with the 19th century Medievalism that also focused on a highly idealized vision of medieval society as an example of undiluted piety and faith,

honest craftsmanship, mutual responsibility, and esthetic triumph. But this is also in line with a pronounced commitment to the political philosophy of antiliberalism that characterizes the Czech progressivists of the interwar period. Critique of liberalism, a fortuitous play of interests with no apparent meaning, was a constitutive element of Fischer's philosophical system. Likewise, the Circle, at least in Jakobson's and Mukařovský's understanding, was not enamored of social and cultural categories of the late nineteenth century. Finally, Vančura was also critical of liberalism. Turning to the *enquette* on Catholicism with which we began, we note the way Vančura

asserts a common denominator between the avant-garde and Catholic authors:

It seems to me that both Catholic and radical poets converge in their interest in matters of language; besides that, of course, they have a common adversary - liberalism. (Vančura 1931)

Medievalism thus consistently emerges in anti-liberal contexts, something that is not surprising in view of extensive discussions in the 1920s and 1930s about the self-destructive nature of parliamentary democracy, inadequacies of liberal market of goods and ideas, and "counterproductive" competition. Some of these discussions fueled the emerging Eu-

ropean totalitarian systems, but in our case one mostly sees essayism and art which, despite the presence of basic totalitarian images, lack political explicitness. On the whole the desire for some sort of meaningful order that would enhance social coherence and integration seems to dominate - there is very little in terms of an explicit focus on patterns of political mobilization. In this sense a weaker notion of totalizing, rather than totalitarian, thinking seems more appropriate. The totalizing quality of this discourse, however, is quite apparent and the medievalist imagery is undoubtedly one of its significant components.

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Medievalizmus v kultuře českého progresizmu

Příspěvek se zamýslí nad zájmem o středověk v české meziválečné kultuře. Autor diskutuje pojetí této epochy u Vladislava Vančury a J.L. Fischera, dále se zabývá některými soudy o středověku v Pražském lingvistickém kroužku. I když programatický medievalizmus v této části české meziválečné kultury v přísném slova smyslu neexistoval, odkazy na středověk zde vždy explicitně zahrnuje kritiku liberální společnosti druhé poloviny devatenáctého století.

ci. Zájem o středověk je jak literárně tak kulturněpoliticky živen obdivem k jasné, přímočaré ideologii a představami o rádu, stylové ucelenosti doby a smysluplném propojení společenských funkcí. V tomto smyslu je v našich pramenech zřejmě jejich antiliberalní zahrocení - medievalizující diskurs zde vždy explicitně zahrnuje kritiku liberální společnosti druhé poloviny devatenáctého století.

Rußland - vom vorrevolutionären Klassizismus zum sozialistischen Realismus

Otakar MÁČEL

Die Architekturgeschichte des Interbellums in der Sowjetunion wird im allgemeinen durch die Polarität des Konstruktivismus mit dem späteren Neoklassizismus gekennzeichnet. Die Gegenüberstellung der Avantgardekonzeptionen und des traditionsorientierten sozialistischen Realismus suggeriert eine absolute Diskontinuität der Entwicklung. Dieses Bild wird durch das kulturpolitische Eingreifen in die Autonomie der Künste am Beginn der dreißiger Jahre noch verstärkt, da es seitdem schwierig ist, die Kunstauffassung der Einzelnen von der gesteuerten Kulturpolitik zu trennen.

Dieses Bild beantwortet im allgemeinen die bisherigen Forschungsresultate; wobei man zu der Stellungnahme einer absoluten Diskontinuität einige Bemerkungen machen muss. Auf dem Gebiet der Architektur und auch bei anderen Kunstgattungen hat man wegen des Kontrastes von Neuerertum und Tradition, die schmale Spur der Kontinuität aus dem Auge verloren.¹ Diese Kontinuität ist zurückzufinden auf der abstrakten Ebene - so ist der Unterschied zwischen den Architekturkonzeptionen des Konstruktivismus und des späteren Neoklassizismus kleiner als der äußerliche Unterschied, den die Gestaltung der Gebäude suggeriert - aber auch auf einer "realen" Ebene. Die vorrevolutionäre traditionalistische Kunstauffassung wurde in verschiedenen Formen auch während der Avantgarde-Blütezeit weitergeführt. Darum kann die Untersuchung dieser Phänomene zu besserem Verständnis der Komplexität der Entwicklung und der Entstehung des sozialistischen Realismus beitragen.

Um solche Problematik auf dem Gebiet der Architektur zu erfassen, muß man sich in die Lage um 1910-1915 zurückversetzen. Das damals in

Rußland aufblühende Avantgardeleben in verschiedenen Kunstmitteln ist bekannt. Weniger bekannt ist, daß es in der Architektur keine solche Parallelen gab. Die meisten damals tonangebenden Architekten haben sich, in einer Reaktion gegenüber dem Modernismus um 1900 und dem historisch orientierten Eklektizismus - die beide als ein "cul de sac" der Architektur betrachtet wurden - der klassischen Tradition zugewandt.² Die Orientierung auf die klassische Tradition war damals in Europa nicht unbekannt (Behrens, Hoffmann, Skandinavien usw.). Beschränkter im Umfang war die Neuorientierung auf die einheimische vorklassizistische Tradition, den sog. Russischen Stil.

Nach dem Ausbruch der Revolution im Oktober 1917 kam es zu einer zeitlichen Allianz der Avantgarde mit dem neuen Regime. Die Avantgardekünstler sahen in der Oktoberrevolution ein gesellschaftlich-ökonomisches Pendant zur ihrer - schon vor dem Umsturz - angestrebten Kunstrevolution. Die meisten Künstler - nominal war die Avantgarde nur eine kleine Minderheit - hatten, sowie die meiste Intellektuellen, eine abwartende, sogar feindliche Haltung zu der politischen Änderung eingenommen. In der Architektur war die Lage am Anfang anders. Da es auf diesem Gebiet - wie schon erwähnt - keine Avantgarde gab, hatte das zweierlei Folgen. Die ersten Impulse zu einer Änderung der Architekturauffassung kamen von der bildenden Kunst; der Suprematismus (Malevič u.a.) und der Konstruktivismus (Tatlin, Rodčenko) haben die Geburt der neuen Architektur geprägt. Die andere Folge war, daß bei dem Mangel an ähnlich politischen Verbündeten auf dem Gebiet der Architektur, die neue Regierung nur auf die Mitarbeit mit den Repräsenten

tanten des "ancien régime" angewiesen war. Ein Teil der vorrevolutionären Prominenz war zur Zusammenarbeit bereit. Es waren Architekten wie Ščusev, Ščuko, Šechtel, Semenov, Fomin, Iljin, Tamařan und Žoltovskij, die vor 1917 hauptsächlich für den Adel und die reichen Kaufleute gearbeitet hatten.

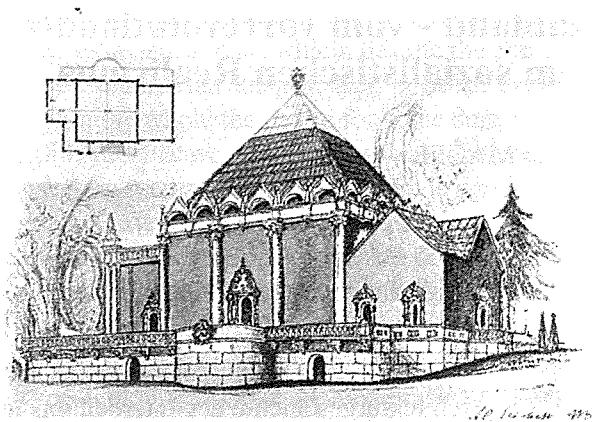
Die oben gestellte Frage der Kontinuität auf der "realen" Ebene betrifft gerade das Engagement dieser Architekten für das neue Regime und die Rezeption ihrer Arbeit unter den neuen Umständen. Mein Beitrag über das Werk der Architekten Žoltovskij und Ščusev geht auf die Frage der Kontinuität ein.³

Vorrevolutionäre Karriere

Als 1917 die Revolution ausbrach, war Žoltovskij fünfzig Jahre alt. Damals hatte er bereits eine Karriere als maßgebender Architekt und bekannter Architekturlehrer aufgebaut.

Nach seinem Studium an der Kunstakademie in St. Petersburg (1887-98), für das er mit einer Goldmedaille ausgezeichnet wurde, ging Žoltovskij 1900 nach Moskau. Dort lehrte er an der Stroganov-Schule, widmete sich dem Bauen und reiste nach Italien und England. Zwei seiner Moskauer Bauten kennzeichnen deutlich seine Architekturauffassung. Zwischen 1903 und 1905 wurde nach seinem Entwurf das Gebäude für den Reitverein errichtet. Žoltovskij hatte den Wettbewerb, der einen Entwurf im "Gotsischen Stil" forderte, gewonnen. In Eigen-Initiative arbeitete er jedoch eine klassizistische Variante aus und überzeugte die Jury von der besseren Qualität des zweiten Entwurfes. Das Gebäude wurde dann auch nach diesem Plan ausgeführt: in spielerischem Neoklassizismus mit palladianischen Motiven, möglicherweise inspiriert durch den Vater des englischen Neoklassizismus, Robert Adam.

Das zweite Bauwerk ist die Villa des Industriellen Tarasov in Moskau (Tolstojstraße). Sie erinnert an einen stattlichen renaissanceartigen Palast: klassische Ordnung und Detaillierung der Fassaden, Rustika und ein ausladendes Gesims. Dies ist nicht so erstaunlich, da das Haus Tarasov eine buchstäbliche Kopie des Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza von Andrea Palladio ist. Die Inspirationsquelle dieser Entwürfe sollte Žoltovskij fortan charakterisieren: die klassische Tradition, vor allem die Renaissance



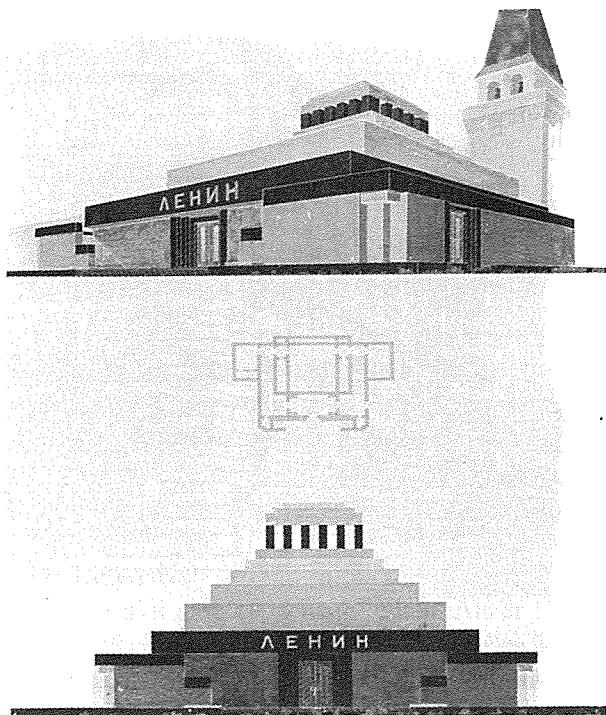
1. A.V. Ščusev: Ausstellungspavillon für Biennale in Venedig, 1913

und Palladio. Hierdurch wurde auch seine Position innerhalb der Moskauer Architektenwelt bestimmt.

Aleksei Viktorovič Ščusev war zum Zeitpunkt des Ausbruchs der Oktoberrevolution 44 Jahre alt. Auch er studierte in St. Petersburg, ebenso wie die anderen "alten Meister" Fomin und Ščuko. Während des Studiums kam Ščusev in Kontakt mit den Anhängern des Russischen Stils (u.a. I. Petrov), die ihn sehr beeinflußt haben. Obwohl auch er im klassizistischen Stil entwarf, sind seine wichtigsten vorrevolutionären Bauten inspiriert durch die altrussische Architektur. Zwei Kirchen, der russische Pavillon auf der Biennale in Venedig und der Kasaner Bahnhof in Moskau machten Ščusev zum wichtigsten Repräsentanten dieser kleinen Strömung.

Die Revolution und die Architektur

Die Revolution hatte die bestehende Ordnung in Rußland gründlich erschüttert. Trotzdem verließen die Karrieren von Žoltovskij und Ščusev in diesen unruhigen Jahren relativ gut. Auf Empfehlung von Lenins Bildungsminister Lunačarskij wurde Žoltovskij als Inspektor dem Team "Neues Moskau" angeschlossen, das die nachrevolutionäre Rekonstruktion Moskaus vorbereiten sollte. Der Leiter dieses Teams war sein Kollege Ščusev. In einem Brief an Lenin schrieb Lunačarskij, daß Žoltovskij der beste Vertreter der "künstlerischen" Architektur wäre.⁴ Als im selben Jahr (1918) der Kunstunterricht reorganisiert wurde, bekamen Žoltovskij und Šču-



2. A.V. Ščusev: Lenin Mausoleum, definitive Version, Moskau 1929-1930

sev an der Architekturfakultät jeweils ein Atelier. Eine dritte Aufgabe erhielt Žoltovskij an der Abteilung für Bildende Kunst (IZO) des Kulturministeriums. Er wurde Leiter der Moskauer Unterabteilung Architektur. Aber an diesem durch Lunačarskij geschaffenen Institut waren die meisten Stellen durch Avantgardisten besetzt, die wenig mit dem renomierten, akademischen Architekten gemein hatten. Die Reibungen blieben dann auch nicht aus, und der Minister griff ein: 1919 wurde eine selbständige Architekturabteilung eingerichtet mit Žoltovskij an der Spitze.⁵ Dort wurden unter anderem die Bauprogramme und Wettbewerbe, die von der zentralen Behörde entwickelt wurden, bearbeitet. Auf diese Weise wurde Žoltovskij für kurze Zeit (bis 1923) eine Art Kontrolleur der Architektur im neuen Sowjetstaat, ohne sich eigentlich besonders politisch zu engagieren. Er folgte vor allem seinen eigenen Architekturauffassungen, die einen vorrevolutionären Ursprung hatten.

Auch Ščusev hatte derzeit eine bedeutende Position erworben. Er wurde 1922 zum Vorsitzenden

des Moskauer Architektenvereines (MAO - Moskovskoje Architekturnoje Obščestvo) ernannt, der - sicher seit dem Regierungswechsel von Petersburg nach Moskau - der einflussreichste im Land war.⁶

Es stellt sich die Frage, wie dies möglich war. Revolutionäres Engagement ist von beiden Architekten nicht bekannt. Wenn dies der Fall gewesen wäre, darf man annehmen, daß Žoltovskij und Ščusev in ihren späteren Schriften darüber berichtet hätten, ebenso wie ihre Biographen aus der fünfziger Jahren. Der Grund für die Kontinuität ihrer Karriere (und zahlreicher anderer Kollegen) ist eher in der Haltung der Partei und der Behörden zu suchen. So sah der Bildungsminister Lunačarskij die linke Avantgarde in der bildenden Kunst derzeit als politisch-Verbündeten, aber keineswegs als Träger der neuen Kunst der zukünftigen klassenlosen Gesellschaft. Hinsichtlich der Architektur war seine Meinung ausgeprägter: der vorrevolutionäre Klassizismus war die richtige Architekturauffassung, die die besten künstlerischen Traditionen in sich trug und dadurch für die Repräsentation der neuen Gesellschaft durchaus geeignet war.

Die Kulturmaßnahmen der bolschewistischen Regierung waren nicht - wie es der Avantgarde vorschwebte - auf einen Bruch mit der Vergangenheit gerichtet, sondern betonten eher die Kontinuität "der besten künstlerischen Traditionen", die mit dem neuen Inhalt der klassenlosen Gesellschaft verschmelzen sollten. Als Vorbild könnte man das Denkmalpflege-Gesetz, oder das Eingreifen von Lenin gegen den Prolet-Kult nennen. Von dieser Seite hatten Žoltovskij, Ščusev und ihre Kollegen wenig zu befürchten: man liess ihnen ihre Handlungsfreiheit - so lange sie sich nicht in die Politik einmischten, was sie auch nicht taten.

Die praktische Auswirkung 1920-1924

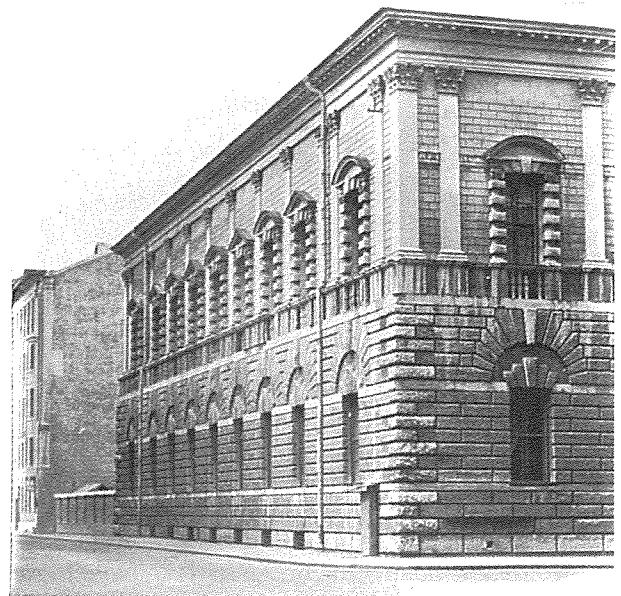
Nach der zweiten Reform der Kunstschulen 1920 entstanden die VChUTEMAS, und in einer der drei Ateliergruppen lebte die akademische Tradition unter Leitung von Žoltovskij fort. Seine Mitarbeiter waren u.a. Ščusev, Kokorin, Norvert, aber auch Leonid Vesnin.⁷ Obwohl der Einfluß dieses Ateliers auf die Studenten zunehmend kleiner wurde, verschwand die traditionalistische Architektur und das Bewußt-

sein der Kontinuität der vor kurzem abgeschworenen Vergangenheit nie vollständig aus dem Unterricht.

Eine ausgesprochen steuernde Maßnahme, um die Architekturentwicklung nicht aus der richtigen Bahn gleiten zu lassen, war Žoltovskij's Eingriff in den Wettbewerb für den Palast der Arbeit 1923. Es sah danach aus, als würde der erste Preis an die Brüder Vesnin - mit einem absolut konstruktivistischen Entwurf - gehen. Dank Žoltovskij wurde der erste Preis jedoch an N. Trotzki vergeben, der ein Projekt im Geiste der byzantinischen und altrussischen Baukunst vorgeschlagen hatte.

In den ersten Jahren nach der Revolution gab es nur wenige große Aufträge zu verteilen. Der bedeutendste war wahrscheinlich das Projekt für die Landwirtschaftsausstellung in Moskau 1923. Sie war ein Ereignis nicht ohne politische Bedeutung, die die neue Agrarpolitik unterstützen sollte. Für das städtebauliche Konzept wurde ein beschränkter Wettbewerb ausgeschrieben, den Žoltovskij gewann. Auf diese Weise erhielt er die Leitung des Teams für den Aufbau der Ausstellung. Das städtebauliche Konzept, das Torgebäude und einige Pavillons entstanden unter seiner Hand. Der Hauptarchitekt der Ausstellung war Ščusev; von den anderen "alten Meister" hatten sich Šehtel und Ščuko beteiligt. Žoltovskij's Entwurf für das Ausstellungsgelände ist eine Kombination aus klassizistischer, axialer Ordnung und einer malerischen Landschaftskomposition. Der mittlere Teil mit dem großen Innenhof und dem dahinterliegenden Grün wird durch die Hauptachse beherrscht. Die wichtigsten Pavillons sind daran mittels Nebenachsen angeordnet. Eine Reihe von Abweichungen von dieser streng-axialen Ordnung sorgt jedoch für eine gewisse Auflockerung und nimmt dem Konzept somit die akademische Starrheit.

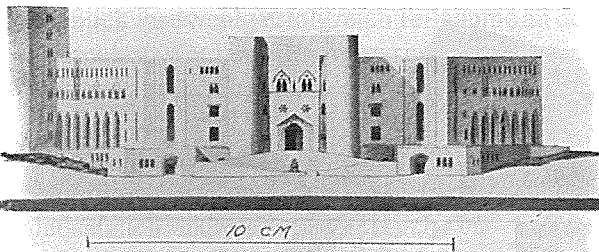
Die Architektur der Pavillons war durchgehend klassizistisch. Nur wenige (Melnikov, Gladkov) wichen deutlich davon ab. Aber die Gebäude, die als Folge des Materialmangels meist aus Holz, Leinen und Gips errichtet wurden, hinterlassen keinen allzu akademischen Eindruck. So ist z.B. das Torgebäude von Žoltovskij bei dem Haupteingang sichtbar von einem kaiserlich-römischen Triumphbogen abgeleitet. Durch die Ausführung in einer "nackten" Konstruktion - ein transparentes Gefüge aus hölzernen



3. I.V. Žoltovskij: Haus Tarasov, Moskau 1909-1910

Brettern - atmet es jedoch den Pioniergeist der ersten Jahre der Sowjetregierung. Möglicherweise kann man dies jedoch auch mit den hölzernen Lauben aus den Gärten des 18. Jahrhunderts in Verbindung bringen - bei Žoltovskij weiß man das nie! Nichtsdestoweniger ist es eine Tatsache, daß diese Ausstellung in ihrem städtebaulichen und architektonischen Aufbau durch die Auffassungen der vorrevolutionären Architekten bestimmt wurde.

Am 21. Januar 1924 stirbt Lenin. Einen Tag später beauftragte die inzwischen gebildete Trauerfeierkommission Ščusev mit dem Entwurf für ein provisorisches Grab. Ščusev entwarf eine vierstufige hölzerne Treppenpyramide, die in ihrer Einfachheit an die Kompositionen von Malevič erinnert, sich in ihrer Konzeption jedoch durchaus davon unterscheidet - Ščusev ging von einen alten Grabmaltypus aus. Dies wurde sichtbarer, als er im Mai des selben Jahres den Auftrag für ein semi-permanentes Lenin-Mausoleum erhielt. Sein Entwurf basierte auf der antiken Grabmaltypologie: ein rechteckiges stufenartiges Volumen, mit Tholos bekrönt. 1929, als die Entscheidung für ein definitives Mausoleum fiel, wurde wiederum Ščusev mit einem Entwurf beauftragt.⁸ Lenins Grabmal kann ohne Zweifel als die ideologisch-wichtigste architektonische Aufgabe in



4. I.V. Žoltovskij: Haus der Sowjets in Machač-Kala, 1926-1928

der ersten Hälfte der zwanziger Jahre genannt werden, und es ist kennzeichnend für die Position der vorrevolutionären Architekten, daß einer aus ihrer Mitte, und nicht jemand aus der aufkommenden Architektur-Avantgarde, den Auftrag erhielt.

In der Defensive

Žoltovskij ging 1923 nach Italien. Als er 1926 zurückkam, schien sich die Architektur in der Sowjetunion doch in eine "falsche" Richtung zu entwickeln. Die Traditionalisten wurden in die Defensive getrieben. In ihrer Verteidigungshaltung entwarfen sie mitunter auch - probeweise - im "modernen Stil", um nicht aus dem Architekturmarkt verdrängt zu werden. Das Projekt für das Telegrafenamt in Moskau von Ščusev, dessen Gebäude des Sanatoriums in Macest und des Koopinsojuzes (später Ministerium von Landwirtschaft) in Moskau gehören zu den bekanntesten Beispielen. In den ersten zwei Wettbewerben erhielt Ščusev selbst - vor den Gebrüdern Vesnin - den ersten Platz. Ščusev war in solchen Angelegenheiten pragmatisch, oder besser gesagt opportunistisch. Bei dem Wettbewerb für die Leninbibliothek in Moskau (1928) presentierte er zunächst einen historisierenden Entwurf; aber dann, von der Jury aufgefordert, reichte er ohne Änderung des Grundrisses eine moderne Variante ein. Das Gebäude wurde schließlich nach dem gemäßigt klassizistischen Entwurf von Ščuko und Gelfrejch gebaut. Auch sie hatten ihren Plan "modernisiert", jedoch weniger radikal als Ščusev.⁹

Auch Žoltovskij und seine Mitarbeiter (Golc, Kosin, Parusnikov, Sobolev) konnten diesem Dilemma nicht entgehen. Einerseits blieben sie ihren eigenen Auffassungen treu, andererseits hatten sie doch kleinere Versuche unternommen, sich in einer anderen Architektursprache auszudrücken. Das einzige

realisierte Beispiel für die obengenannte Einstellung ist das Gebäude des Kesselhauses und der Pumpstation Moges (1929) in Moskau. Wahrscheinlich war es der utilitäre Charakter des Objektes, der in Žoltovskij's Augen eine derartige Annäherung an den Konstruktivismus zuließ. Er verwandte moderne Materialien wie Glas, Beton und Stahl und versteckte diese nicht hinter einer klassizistischen Formgebung.

Das zweite Projekt im Stil der Neuen Sachlichkeit - ebenfalls funktions-orientiert - war die Einsendung für den Dneprograd-Wettbewerb, ein Staumauer mit hydro-elektrischer Zentrale. Aber so wie bei dem Wettbewerb für den Reitverein sandte Žoltovskij auch hier eine zweite Variante ein: historisierend, mit einer vom Dogenpalast in Venedig abgeleiteten Fassade. Diese zweite Variante wurde scharf kritisiert, selbst im Parteiblatt "Pravda". Der schließliche Gewinner des Wettbewerbes war Viktor Vesnin.

Die zwei funktionalistisch erscheinenden Entwürfe blieben ein Intermezzo im Oeuvre Žoltovskij's, denn zur gleichen Zeit seines "Kniefalls" vor der modernen Bewegung entstanden zwei Gebäude aus seiner Hand, die beide seine Liebe für ältere italienische Architektur bezeugen. Kurios ist das Haus der Sowjets in Machač-Kala (1926-28) in der Teilrepublik Aserbaidschan. Der Entwurf ist eine Kopie der Villa Farnese in Caprarola von Vignola aus der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts. Žoltovskij untersuchte scheinbar die Brauchbarkeit der Renaissancemodelle für die Sowjetarchitektur. Die Fassade ist an die einheimische Tradition angepaßt - keine klassische Detailierung, sondern eine glatte Wand mit Fensterformen aus der islamischen Architektur. Der Innenhof ist wiederum nach italienischem Vorbild ausgeführt. In Vignolas Entwurf war eine bestehende fünfeckige Bastion Anlaß für die besondere Form der Villa; Žoltovskij hatte keinen vergleichbaren Anlaß. Daß diese merkwürdige Mischung von italienischem Manierismus mit islamischen Motiven von den Parteivorsitzenden akzeptiert wurde, zeigt, daß es innerhalb des Obrigkeits- und Parteiapparates stets Menschen gab, die in der aufblühenden Avantgarde eine falsche Richtung sahen.

Dasselbe kann man über Žoltovskij's Sieg im Wettbewerb für die Gosbank in Moskau (1927) sa-

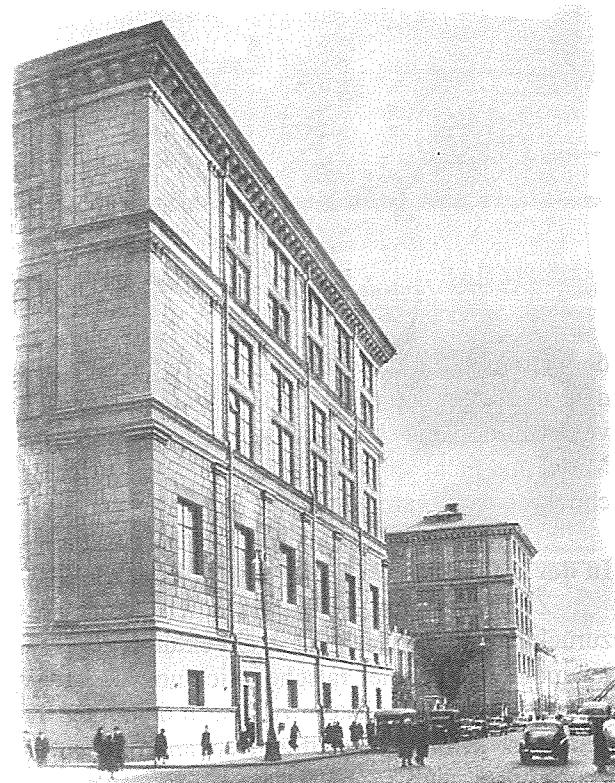
gen. In den Einsendungen für den Wettbewerb waren verschiedene Auffassungen vertreten. So gab es auch eine Einsendung von Ščusev in einem konstruktivistischen Mantel. Trotzdem wurde der renaissanceartige Entwurf Žoltovskij ausgewählt.

Die Gosbank ist weniger eigensinnig als das Gebäude in Machač-Kala. Im entgültigen Entwurf - in der ersten Version wurde noch ein italienischer, mittelalterlicher Wohnturm vorgeschlagen - blickte der Architekt auf die Palazzo-Architektur des Quattrocento zurück, namentlich auf den Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza und den Palazzo Ruccelai in Florenz. Die Ausführung ist jedoch zeitgemäßer. Die Fassade ist nicht aus Naturstein, sondern aus Putz, der durch seine ockerbraune Farbe wie Naturstein wirken mußte. Die Bogen im Inneren bestehen aus nichttragenden Putzkonstruktionen. Das Kraggesims ist wegen der Brandschutzworschriften aus bewehrtem Beton. Die Avantgarde-Architekten waren über dieses Gebäude entsetzt. Aber Chiger erwähnt auch einen unter Pseudonym geschriebenen Brief an die konstruktivistische Zeitschrift "Sovremennaja Architektura",¹⁰ in dem die Rede von dem "bezauberndem Eindruck" des Ganzen ist und in dem behauptet wird, daß ein Repräsentant der alten Richtung viel zum Konstruktivismus beitragen kann.¹¹

Das Endes des Streites, oder zurück zu der Tradition

Das Wetteifern zwischen den modernen und den traditionellen Auffassungen in der Architektur spitzte sich am Beginn der 30er Jahre mit dem Wettbewerb für den Sowjetpalast zu. Nach einem beschränktem Wettbewerb 1931 wurde im gleichen Jahr ein offener Wettbewerb ausgeschrieben. Im Januar 1932 hielt Lunačarskij eine Rede, die möglicherweise den Ausgang hervorsagte. Er pries darin die klassische Baukunst als Schönheitsideal. Über den zukünftigen Sowjetpalast sprechend legte er den Nachdruck auf dessen monumentale und repräsentative Funktion. Das Gebäude mußte von der Größe und Macht des Proletariats zeugen - die Menschheit sollte sehen, "wie wir einander verstehen".¹²

Am 28. Februar 1932 wurde das Ergebnis bekannt gemacht: Drei Einsendungen wurden prämiert - die von Žoltovskij, Hamilton und Iofan. Alle diese Projekte waren akademisch und mehr oder weniger



5. I.V. Žoltovskij: Gosbank, Moskau 1927-1929

traditionalistisch. Der Entwurf von Žoltovskij zeichnete sich noch am ehesten durch eine "naturalistische", historisierende Gestaltung aus. Sein Plan bestand aus einem kolosseumartigen Kongreßsaal, auf der rechten Seite flankiert von einem Innenhof mit Kolonnaden und einem Turm als Blickfang, und auf der linken Seite von zwei Verwaltungsgebäuden, von denen eines mit einem tempelartigen Aufsatz bekrönt war. Die Ordnung und Detailierung verrät wiederum Žoltovskij's Vorliebe für die Renaissance.

Ščusev hatte sich in der ersten, geschlossenen Runde mit einem modernen Projekt beteiligt. Für die zweite, offene Runde zeichnete er ein historisierendes Projekt, mit dem er jedoch keine offizielle Anerkennung erhielt. Die gemeinschaftliche Einsendung von Ščusev und Žoltovskij für die dritte Runde des Wettbewerbes war ebenfalls ohne Erfolg.¹³

Schlussbetrachtung

Für die Beurteilung von Ščusevs und Žoltovskij's Position in der Russischen Architekturwelt ist

schließlich ihre wenig erfolgreich Teilnahme an dem Sowjetpalast-Wettbewerb von geringer Bedeutung. Wichtiger war das Ergebnis der zweiten öffentlichen Runde in Februar 1932, wo Žoltovskij's Entwurf mitbekrönt wurde. Dieses Ergebnis machte den neuen kulturpolitischen Trend, der alle Gebiete der Kultur grundsätzlich änderte, offensichtlich. Die Jury beabsichtigte keineswegs die prämierten Entwürfe für den Bau vorzuschlagen, die Bekrönung hatte nur einen symbolischen Wert. Es ging vor allem um ein Signal, das die Richtung des Entwurfes für den zukünftigen Palast angeben sollte.

In diesem Kontext hatte Žoltovskij's Entwurf gute Dienste geleistet, da er die klassische Tradition

ANMERKUNGEN

¹ Selbst die neueste Publikation von russischen Autoren widmet dieser Frage wenig Aufmerksamkeit (TARKHANOV, A. - KAVTARADZE, S.: *Stalinist Architecture*. London/?/ 1992).

² Siehe z.B. BRUMFIELD, W.C.: *Anti-Modernism and the Neoclassical Revival in Russian Architecture, 1906-1916*. Journal of the Society of American Architectural Historians, XLVIII, 1989, p.371-386 und KIRIČENKO, E.I.: *Das Problem des Stils, des Genres und der Mittel in der russischen Architektur am Ende des 19. und Anfang des 20. Jhdts.* In: Avantgarde I, 1900-1923 Russisch-sowjetische Architektur. Ausstellungskatalog Kunsthalle Tübingen, Kunsthalle Rostock, Stuttgart 1991, S. 34-41.

³ Siehe auch MÁČEL, Otakar: *A.V. Sjtjoezhev, flexible patriarch van de Sowjetarchitectuur*. Wonen-TABK, 1981, Nr.16-17, S. 18-28 und *Nieuwe werelden in het voetspoor van Palladio*. Archis, 1986, Nr.5, S. 45-53 (über Žoltovskij).

⁴ Siehe CHIGER, R.: *Zodčij I.V. Žoltovskij*. Architektura SSSR, 1968, Nr.4, S. 44.

⁵ Die Meinungsunterschiede mit Žoltovskij führten in IZO zur Gründung der "Kommission für Integration der Malerei, Bildhauerei und Architektur" (Živskulptarch) wo u.a. Ladovskij, Krinskij, Fidman und später auch Rodčenko tätig war.

buchstäblich verkörperte, ohne daß man wirklich den Bau des Palastes in Žoltovskij's "naturalistischen" Historismus im Betracht zog.

Die Karriere beider Architekten zeigt, daß sie (und nicht nur sie) in den bewogenen zwanziger Jahren die Träger der Kontinuität der traditionellen Architekturauffassung waren; selbst haben die beiden die Entwicklung und die kulturpolitische Wende nicht beeinflußt. Aber sie waren für die Partei der Beweis, daß es neben der Avantgarde immer noch eine andere Richtung gab. Sie wurde die Präzedenz und die Alternative.

⁶ Die Wichtigkeit von Žoltovskij und besonders von Ščusev betont Ladovskij (ASNOVA) in einem Brief an El Lissitzky noch am Beginn von 1924 (LISSITZKY, El: *Proun und Wolkenbügel, Schriften, Briefe, Dokumente*. Dresden 1977, S. 177-178).

⁷ Die Vesnin-Brüder waren auch vor der Revolution geschult und bauten auch neoklassizistisch. Alexander Vesnin, der sich um 1915 suprematistischer Malerei widmete, dekorierte gleichzeitig das von seinen Brüdern entworfenes Haus Sirokin mit Veroneserartige Fresken.

⁸ Die Tribüne auf dem Mausoleum wurde später von V.A. Michajlov entworfen.

⁹ Siehe COOKE, C. - KAZUS, I.: *Soviet Architectural Competitions 1924-1936*. Laren 1992, S. 23-50.

¹⁰ Anonym: *Kakaja architektura nužna Dneprostroju*. Pravda, 15.XII.1929.

¹¹ CHIGER, R.: *op.cit.*, S. 45.

¹² LUNAČARSKIJ, A.V.: *Reč o proletarskoj architekture*. Architektura SSSR, 1934, Nr.8, S. 5.

¹³ Für die Abbildungen der Projekte siehe *Naum Gabo und der Wettbewerb zum Palast der Sowjets Moskau 1931-1933*. Ausstellungskatalog Berlinische Galerie, Berlin 1992.

Rusko - od předválečného klasicizmu k socialistickému realismu

Meziválečné dějiny sovětské architektury jsou vymezeny polaritou moderní architektury se socialistickým realismem. Tato polarita je tak výrazná, že ostatní vývojové nuanse jsou sotva viditelné. Z těchto důvodů nebylo věnováno příliš pozornosti skryté kontinuitě neoklasicistických tendencí dvacátých let.

Neoklasicismus hrál v předrevoluční architektuře Ruska význačnou roli. V letech 1910-1915, kdy v ruském výtvarném umění dochází k rychlému rozvoji avantgardních konceptů, byl

v architektuře aktuální neoklasicismus a v menší míře tzv. ruský styl. Explosivní avantgardní aktivity po říjnové revoluci měla svoje zázemí v předrevolučním údobí. V architektuře byla situace odlišná, vyjma malé kubo-expresionistické skupiny "Živskulptarch", nebyly nové koncepce architektury ještě využity. Iniciativa byla v rukou výtvarných umělců (Tatlin, Rodčenko, Lisickij). V praxi to znamenalo, že nový režim spolupracoval s renomovanými architekty carského režimu, jako např.

Ščusev, Fomin, Ščuko, Semenov nebo Žoltovskij. Porevoluční kariéry Ščuseva a Žoltovského mohou být příkladem významu tradičně orientované architektury dvacátých let.

I.V. Žoltovskij (1867-1959) a A.V. Ščusev (1873-1949) patřili před revolucí k prominentním představitelům moskevské architektury. Žoltovskij vycházel z neoklasické, palladian-ské orientace (osobník Tarasova, Moskva, 1910). Ščusev byl inspirován tzv. ruským stylem (ruský pavilon Biennale v Benátkách, 1914). Po revoluci byly oba ochotni spolupracovat s novým režimem a získali záhy významné funkce. Žoltovskij se stal šéfem oddělení architektury na tehdejším ministertvu kultury a přiděleným inspektorem týmu rekonstrukce Moskvy. Vedoucím tohoto týmu byl Ščusev, který se stal v 1922 předsedou moskevského spolku architektů (MAO). Oba architekti se podíleli na výuce na VChUTEMASu.

K získání těchto pozic nebylo třeba aby architekti představili avantgardně levicové názory. Naopak, ministr Lunačarský doporučoval Leninovi Žoltovského právě proto, že tento byl představitelem neoklasické architektury. V první polovině dvacátých let preferoval stát jako zákazník tyto architekty nejen pro jejich praktickou zkušenosť, ale i pro jejich pojetí architektury, které odpovídalo představám vedoucích funkcionářů. Hlavní podíl Žoltovského a Ščuseva na projektování první zemědělské výstavy (1923) nebo projekt Leninova mauzolea (Ščusev 1924-1928) o tom svědčí.

V druhé polovině dvacátých let, kdy avantgarda v architektuře dočasně převládla, projektoval Ščusev často v konstruktivistickém "stylu" (sanatorium v Macestu, budova Koopinsjuzu, Moskva) a při soutěžích střídal někdy pojetí architektury podle okolnosti. Žoltovskij to dělal zřídka. Jeho orientace na italské 16. století nebyla překážkou v realizaci moskevské Gosbanky (1927) v duchu italských renesančních paláců a místního sovětu v Machač-Kale (Azerbajdžan). Budovu místního sovětu projektoval Žoltovskij podle půdorysu Vignolovy vily Farnese v Caprarole.

Začátkem třicátých let, kdy se kulturně-politická orientace sovětského státu rychle měnila, mohli oba architekti pracovat bez velkých problémů podle svých tradičních principů. V druhém kole soutěže na Palác sovětů (1932) získal Žoltovskij, vedle Hamiltona a Iofana, jednu ze tří hlavních cen. Všechny tři projekty byly provedeny v akademickém duchu, Žoltovského projekt byl nejvíce vázán na historizující tvarosloví. Udělení ceny Žoltovskému mělo hlavně kulturně-politický význam. Zde šlo o zdůraznění tradice jako důležitého zdroje inspirace pro sovětskou architekturu. Architekti jako Žoltovskij a Ščusev tvořili svým pojetím architektury alternativu k avantgardě. Záleželo jenom na okolnostech, kdy stát měl zájem této možnosti využít.

Strategy of Socialist Realism (A comment)

Ján BAKOŠ

Stalin's coming to power has been often interpreted by general historians¹ as a second termidor or even as a kind of a hidden counter-revolution. Lenin's Bolshevik party was being liquidated systematically and superseded by a new bureaucracy and post-revolutionary pluralism, even if a limited one, was replaced by a strict authoritarian regime after Stalin's coming to power. It is interesting and in a sense significant that art historians interpret the development of art during the transitional NEP period in a quite different way. They do not emphasize a rupture but, on the contrary, the continuity between the post-revolutionary avant-garde movement and socialist realism. Stressing the anti-individualistic and utopian or even totalitarian nature of the Russian artistic avant-garde they often regard socialist realism as a logical consequence and further development of the avant-garde programme.

According to Boris Groys,² Russian avant-garde art came into being as a reaction to a traumatic experience of the death of God. Due to that, artistic avant-garde in Russia got the shape of a mystic, irrational and anti-progressive utopia. Its ultimate aim was to save the chaotic world by creating a new and highly organized one. Art was regarded as a main vehicle for that. As a consequence, not only the avant-garde artist was conceived of as a constructor or even creator, but also works of art were understood as vehicles for ideology and politics. In a sense paradoxically, that doctrine not only originated from constructivist idea but also resulted in a magic concept of art. The religious intolerance of representatives of avant-garde connected with that "religious" nature led later to the liquidation of the artistic avant-

garde regarded as a dangerous rival by the ruling Communist party, on the other.

In spite of deep and evident differences and explicit polemics against modernism or formalism, socialist realism can be regarded as a continuation or even radical materialization of the avant-garde doctrine, according to Groys. Socialist realism shared with the avant-garde the principal task: the re-fashioning the world through art and the creating a new man by means of it. Art kept within the doctrine of socialist realism its instrumental and projective nature and its primary political mission despite all stylistic differences. Socialist realism had only a quasimimetic character. Realism played a role of a strategic vehicle for hagiographic aims. Socialist realism was realistic rather in a medieval sense of the term, i.e. it was regarded as an instrument of realization of an idea, a dream or a desire on the one hand and as identical with it in the other. Due to that, a work of art was conceived of as a magic means and an object of a political or ideological ritual, as a new kind of icon. According to Groys, the cult of tradition was also only an instrument of transcending history or changing the present into eternity. In addition, not solely the concept of art but also the status of the socialist realistic artist was very close to the avant-garde conception. The artist was still regarded as an engineer designing a new world and forming a new man. Nevertheless, the artist was conceived as a psycho-engineer in the first line, due to the shift of emphasis on ideological indoctrination in the socialist realism doctrine. Socialist realism not only materialized the avant-garde programme, but developed it to its extreme. Owing to the new dicta-

torial doctrine Stalin himself was conceived of as the greatest constructor of the new world and a new man, and as a consequence also as the best of all artists. Their task was only to guess, to illustrate and to immortalize his ideas and desires.

As we see, Groys's view can be characterized in a sense as a Post-Modernist interpretation. In a contrast to other researchers³ who stress the continuity of artistic development from the post-revolutionary avant-garde movement to socialist realism, Groys based his interpretation on the idea of a structural or functional correspondence between two as far as style is concerned fully divergent artistic conceptions. In contrast to that, interpretation by Igor Golomstock⁴ cannot be regarded as an anti-Modernist in any case. He does not accept "the legend of a wall of antitheses" between the avant-garde movement and, as he calls it, "total realism" of the thirties and speaks about a "hereditary link" between both phenomena. He acknowledges also the fact that "the artistic avant-garde of the 1910s and the 1920s first elaborated a totalitarian ideology of culture".⁵ In spite of that he refuses to regard the avant-garde as the proper and main source "which opened the way for totalitarianism". He uses the term "totalitarian revolutions" that deeply changed the concept of art. They gave birth to a "megamachine"⁶ of the total political control over culture. Owing to that, art became a direct vehicle of political propaganda and its principal function was to transform ideology into convincing images. The fusion of politics and culture not only changed art into an obedient servant of propaganda but resulted also in a concept of art as an illustration of ideology. Furthermore, the concept of art as a weapon in the ideological struggle and a means of influencing masses inspiring them to build up a new society resulted into the resuscitation of tradition and established a monopoly of realism.

Nevertheless, sanctification of realism can be explained neither by the dictator's personal taste nor by "reduction of all art to the level of mass tastes" solely, according to Golomstock. Besides, socialist realism was in no way identical with a photorealism, despite a link connecting it with "the conception of art as the faithful depiction of reality inherited from the nineteenth century". Art had to fulfil two main

functions within the totalitarian cultural megamachine, i.e. to spread propaganda and to create a myth. As a consequence, the conception of total realism was of a contradictory nature. Its proper task was "to express myth of an earthly paradise in a realistic image" or, in other words, "to portray the joyful world of an achieved utopia". The contradictory conception of realism was closely associated with another paradox of totalitarian ideology, i.e. with its dialectical cult of historical tradition. Or, as Golomstock put it, "for all its aspirations toward the future it (= the totalitarian consciousness) always ... end up gazing into the past".⁷ The dualistic conception of history dividing it into two parts, a progressive and a reactionary one, enabled socialist realism to legitimize itself by means of tradition as well as to utilize history for the purpose of the present. Owing to that, the development of socialist realism can be reconstructed, according to Golomstock, as a transition from proletarian internationalism to undisguised Russian nationalism on the one hand, and as a regress from the Russian nineteenth century realism to the imperial classicism on the other.

In comparison with Groys and Golomstock the analysis of the logic of the totalitarian ideological machinery presented by Martin Damus⁸ is more condemning. According to the author, art in Nazism as well as in s.c. Real Socialism was based on a gap existing between social reality and political desires of the ruling party. The disharmony and dissatisfaction following that gap resulted in the need to mask them. Due to that a programme of a harmonious superstructure and a doctrine of an obligatory norm supervised and controlled by state came into being. As a consequence, the principal role art had to play was disguising the discrepancy between politics and social reality. To legitimate such a deceptive mission of art the conception of art as mirroring the s.c. substance of reality as opposed to naturalistic details, was established. The artist was required to be widely understandable, to adjust his works to the taste of the lower social strata and to satisfy their emotional desires. By means of such tricks the motion of art as a vehicle of political propaganda and instrument of ideological manipulation was mixed undistinguishably with the concept of art as an emotional and aesthetic satisfaction. In that sense we can speak

about an aestheticizing of politics by means of art regarded as the way to mask a total control over life and culture.

According to Damus, the totalitarian state abused art as a vehicle of power. That led to a number of paradoxes. On the one hand, totalitarian art was conceived of as an art for the masses, on the other, it was designed and fully controlled by state. On the one hand, it represented a direct instrument of power, on the other, it pretended to be a continuation of the traditional bourgeois realism, that can in no way be regarded as a direct expression of political domination. On the contrary, works of art were conceived of by the bourgeoisie as aesthetic objects on the one hand and particular market products on the other. As far as works of art under Nazism and real Socialism are concerned, they were presented as aesthetic phenomena exhibited primarily at artistic shows or displayed in museums and galleries, but commissioned and financially supported exclusively by state institutions at the same time. As a consequence, a quasi-realism came into existence. Political desires were passed off as truth and idyllic surrogates were presented as the real world. In other words, art became a vehicle of deception rather than a mirroring, a delusion rather than an illusion. Furthermore, various visual arts expressed, according to Damus, totalitarian domination in a different way. In his view architecture can be regarded as the most direct expression of totalitarian power.

Despite explicit disagreement about the existence of an universal totalitarian art⁹ Damus's interpretation correspond widely with an idea of Nazi-art published by Berthold Hinz in his studies.¹⁰ As far as the relation of totalitarian regimes to art is concerned, both German scholars agree that those regimes abuse and violate art. Hinz speaks even about abusing traditional art as an instrument of masking totalitarian terror by means of stressing details. Due to that, the resurrected bourgeois genre realism lost his original function, i.e. to compensate for cruel real life, and changed into an instrument of ideological brainwashing.

It is well known, that the principle of confusing the distinction between true and false, described very precisely by Hannah Arendt,¹¹ played a crucial role within the totalitarian ideology. According to Igor

Golomstock, totalitarian art can be regarded as a very effective materialization of that principle. Blurring the distinction between fact and fiction socialist realism fulfilled the function of manipulation and masking the true nature of the totalitarian system. Nevertheless, the strategy of socialist realism did not consist solely of the principle of indoctrination or stimulation of the masses (e.g. to higher production by the cult of labor) on the one hand, and the principle of confusion mentioned above on the other. The principle of simulation of the very contrary, the principle of lie belonged to the system of tricks too. The presented cult of art and artist, the sanctification of an individualistic and gnoseologic realism or the respect for humanist tradition put on display, disguised the contrary nature of the totalitarian state and masked the instrumental abusing of all values or symbols. Boris Groys showed very convincingly that the cult of history was but an instrument of pretending immortality of the totalitarian present. Moreover, the monopoly of the realistic style can be regarded not only as a result of the educational mission of art, or as a consequence of the taste of the new ruling oligarchy (or even of Stalin himself), but also as an expression of the s.c. principle of a mimetic antithesis defined by Rudolf Chadraba,¹² i.e. of an attempt to get posession of the property and power of the former ruling class by means of imitating its symbols. All principles of the strategy of socialist realism mentioned above shared, the aiming at total control over people's minds. The contradictions between the concept of the artist as a creator on the one hand, and as an obedient servant of the ideology on the other; or the discrepancy between dogmas and their vagueness that forced artists to look desperately for their right shape; and the overemphasizing the importance of art for life were extraordinary effective means of tyranny.

Another example of the deceptive nature of socialist realism was its pretended internationalism as expressed by the maxim "socialist in content, national in form". In fact, the communist ideology was disguised imperialist doctrine, that had its historical roots in the Russian Slavophil tradition.¹³ Socialist realism as the vehicle of the disguised hegemonism became more and more direct under the influence of Nazism and the victory over it. In short, the shift

from realism to classicism can be regarded also as a shift from instrumental to expressive utilization of history. As a consequence, socialist realism can be conceived of as a kind of historical revival.¹⁴ In other words, it can be regarded as an expression of a political restoration of pre-capitalist or pre-industrial political and social structures by means of traditional artistic forms. As a consequence the following question arises: What was the reason that socialist realism preferred bourgeois values like individualism and humanism or the educational and gnoseologic function of art? The answer could be as follows: Both Nazism and Communism can be conceived of as two attempts to catch up with western capitalism by means of pre-capitalist political or even social structures (e.g. dictatorship, tyranny, slavery etc.). Due to that, the artistic historical revival represented by socialist realism can be regarded not only as an instrument but also as a direct expression of totalitarianism.¹⁵

By way of conclusion, allow me to make the following remark: In spite of the fact that both Hinz and Damus rejected to identify art with aesthetic autonomy and originality of form or expression of

an individuum, there was a kind of axiology implied in their interpretations, that justified them to condemn Nazi as well as Real Socialist art as kinds of degenerated art. In contrast to that, Igor Golomstock refused to limit creative art to the avant-garde movement and to disdain totalitarian art as a non-art, despite his very critical analysis of the totalitarian ideological megamachine. And as for Boris Groys, he gone up any sanctification of Modernism and did not hide a certain appreciation of Stalin's art. That is why he re-constructed its genealogy till Byzantine magic icons. Irrespective of keeping aloof from the Slavophile interpretation of Russian Communism (by N. Berdjajev) I. Golomstock as well as B. Groys share certain sympathy with this empathic (and in a sense secretly excusing) way of criticism of Communist violence. Despite a shift of emphasis indicating different premises and intentions all above analyzed interpretations share the conviction that the phenomenon of totalitarian art is of great topicality. However, the question is: Does it justify us to regard Nazi-art or Socialist realism as "early forms of Post-Modernism - albeit authoritarian ones"?¹⁶

Stratégia socialistického realizmu

Dejiny umeleckej kultúry 20. storočia nemožno plne po rozumieť keď ich zúžime na avantgardné umelecké prúdy. Organicky do nich patria aj umelecké prejavy tzv. totalitných režimov. Fašistické umenie, umenia nacizmu alebo socialistický realizmus predstavujú takpovediac komplementárnu zložku kultúry nášho storočia. Antinómia 19. storočia akademizmus versus modernizmus vystriedala antinómia avantgardizmy - totalitárne umenie. Avantgardy a umenie totalitných režimov tvoria rub a líce jedného celku, odzrkadľujú základnú polaritu vysoko industriálnej society, spor dvoch alternatív: Otvorených a uzavretých, tržných a ideologických, individualistických a kolektivistických sociálnych usporiadanií. Vzťah k politickej moci je v totalitných kultúrnych doktrínach obnaženejší: Umenie sa chápe ako priamy inštrument nielen ideologickej propagandy, ale i ako bezprostredný prostriedok politickej manipulácie. Táto funkcia priznaná umeniu je mnohorako maskovaná, predovšetkým predstieraním kultu umenia a umelca a realistickým, gnozeologickým umeleckým štýlom. Umenie totalitných režimov predstavuje však i špecifickú polohu umeleckých revivalov. Používa jednak tie historické formy, ktoré sú blízke jej hegemonickému zameraniu (imperiálnej rímskej antiky), jednak však i formy, ktoré majú zastrieľ jej antiindividualistický charakter (renesančný individualizmus, buržoázny žánrový realizmus). Historizmy obsiahnuté v umení totalitných režimov však nehrájú iba čiste inštrumentálnu úlohu (maskovať právú tvár umenia hegemonie a manipulácie). Majú aj priamejší, "úprimnejší" vzťah

k svojej politickej intencii: Prezrádzajú reakčnú, reštauračnú povahu totalitných režimov. Sú jasným prejavom snahy korigovať anarchické dôsledky sociálnych revolúcií, ku ktorým došlo po 1. svetovej vojne. Kedže sa uvedený spor odohrával na pôde moderného individualizmu (na platforme Francúzskej revolúciou oficializovanej ideológie rovnosti) musel sa návrat k predindividualistickým štruktúram maskovať. Prostriedkom tohto maskovania bolo i vlichocovanie sa veku nižších sociálnych vrstiev. A nakoniec, ale nie naposledy, historické revivaly, charakteristické pre umenie totalitných režimov 20. storočia sú prostriedkami rehabilitácie a oslavys predkapitalistických či pre-industriálnych foriem, ktoré mali slúžiť ako pomôcky boja proti kapitalistickému individualizmu. Ale súčasne mali maskovať, že pred-industriálne formy, sentimentálny návrat do predkapitalistického idylizmu boli rafinovanými cestami odbúrania základných výdobytkov buržoáznej revolúcie.

Umeniu sa pritom pripisovala enormná dôležitosť, preto sa príse regrémentovalo. I v tom sa zračil návrat k predkapitalistickému štatútu umelca. Ale i tentoraz bol skutkový stav - chápamie umeleckého tvorca de facto ako púeho ilustrátora aprioristických politických sloganov - maskovaný predstieraným kultom umelca ako génia. Paradox jeho slobody spočíval v povinnosti uhádnuť neartikulované priania politickej moci. Kedže úspech či neúspech závisel od nevypočítatejnej lubovôle politickej moci, manipulácia bola dokonalá.

¹ See e.g. BRTOVŠEK, Marjan: *Stalin's Termidor* (Ljubljana 1984), or MEDVEDEV, Roy A.: *Stalin and Stalinism*. (Slovak translation Bratislava 1990)

² GROYS, Boris: *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin. Die Gespaltene Kultur in der Sowjetunion*. München - Wien 1988

³ E.g. GASSNE, H. and GILLEN, E.: *Zwischen Revolutionskunst und sozialistischem Realismus*. Köln 1979

⁴ GOLOMSTOCK, Igor: *Totalitarian Art in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy and People's Republic of China*. London 1990. - On Russian socialist realism see also BOWN, Matthew Cullerne: *Kunst unter Stalin: 1924-1956*. München 1991.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 2-28

⁶ Ibid., p. 91

⁷ Ibid., the chapter on *The Present, the Past and the Future (inheritance and traditions)*, pp. 139-168

⁸ DAMUS, Martin: *Sozialistischer Realismus und Kunst im Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt a.M. 1981

⁹ On the discussion about the concept of "totalitarianism" see SARTORI, Giovanni: *The Theory of Democracy Revised*. New Jersey 1984 (Slovak translation pp. 194-204)

¹⁰ HINZ, Berthold: *Die Malerei im deutschen Faschismus. Kunst und Konterrevolution* (München 1974), or *Art in the Third Reich* (Oxford 1980)

¹¹ ARENDT, Hannah: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. London 1958

¹² CHADRABA, R.: *Influence, ou antithese*. In: *Studia Minorata Facultatis Philosophicae*, F 14-15, Brno 1971, pp. 33-45

¹³ See BERDJAJEV, N.: *Pramene a zmysel ruského komunizmu*. (Russian original Paris 1955)

¹⁴ See BAKOŠ, J.: *Lsti "sorely"* (On the tricks of socialist realism), a paper at the symposium "Recidíva modernity", Bratislava, November 12, 1991

¹⁵ The art of Fascism, Nazism and Communism was compared lately by Jan Tabor. See the catalogue of the exhibition *Kunst und Diktatur. Architektur, Bildhauerei und Malerei in Österreich, Deutschland, Italien und der Sowjetunion 1922- 1956*, Baden 1994.

¹⁶ See TAYLOR, Brandon: *Post-Modernism in the Third Reich*. In: *The Nazification of Art*. Winchester 1993, pp. 129-143

Sztálinváros (Stalin Town). The Paradigm of Socialist Town planning in Hungary. (A study of case)

Endre PRAKFALVI

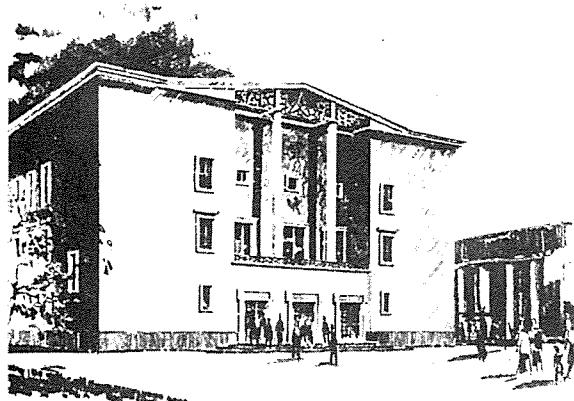
"... the new Socialist ideology is expressed in every urban-form (in Sztálinváros)." Tibor Weiner, 1951

Sztálinváros was described by its chief architect, Tibor Weiner, as "*... the greatest creation of our five-year plan... and at the same time the first attempt to build a new socialist town on virgin soil.*" Based on Soviet experience and in particular on Comrade Stalin's directives for urban-planning in Moscow, Weiner summarized the basic principles of town-planning in three points. They were:

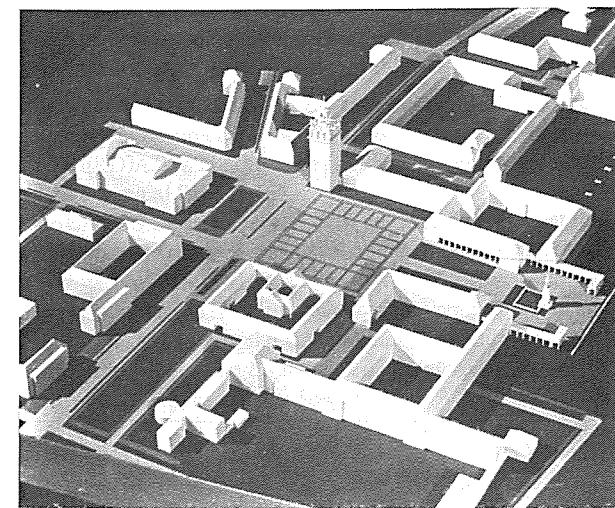
1. There are no "inner" and "outer" quarters... The democratic nature of the socialist system is manifested in the fact that all parts of the town are of equal quality.

2. The "Town" and the "Industrial estate" are two poles of an organic unity: the "*Town-centre and the main entrance to the Factory should stand in an immediate relationship to one another.*"

3. The structure and architectural resolution of the city should be suitable for all aspects of public life, ranging from the individual and family spheres through to the largest celebrations which draw together the entire community.



1. T. Weiner: Party Headquarters, not realized version, 1951



2. Sztálinváros, Main Square, on the right the Stalin Statue, model, 1952 (Plan: T. Weiner)



3. The Party Headquarters (on the left) and the Medical Center, about 1953 (Plans: 1951. Architects: T. Weiner, A. Ivánka)



4. Sztálin út (Stalin avenue), about 1953

Planning and construction documentation from Sztálinváros gives a graphic insight into characteristic contradictions between declared principles and practice, which often saw original ideals undergo significant modifications "while at the same time maintaining their integrity". During the planning and construction process there was an attempt to embrace and define developments ideologically as well as a parallel attempt to explain the improvisations and corrections which occurred during the construction and accommodate these discrepancies with the original ideals. Everything had to be **planned** but behind this stood the **lack of planning** and organization.

Connected to the construction of Sztálinváros the Dunai Vasmű (Danube Steel-works), was required to be in production by the end of 1953. Although initially consisting of only a housing estate, the "cification" of Sztálinváros, according to Weiner, began through satisfying "*the needs of the populace*". In deciding upon the siting of the steel-works, a process in which no architects were involved, relations with Yugoslavia were a crucial factor.

At the beginning of the construction in 1950, a primary objective was the reduction of the cost of production beyond the national average, since, for the first time, clusters of identical housing types were to be constructed in one location. Buildings completed in the first construction cycle exhibited reminiscences of "Modernism".

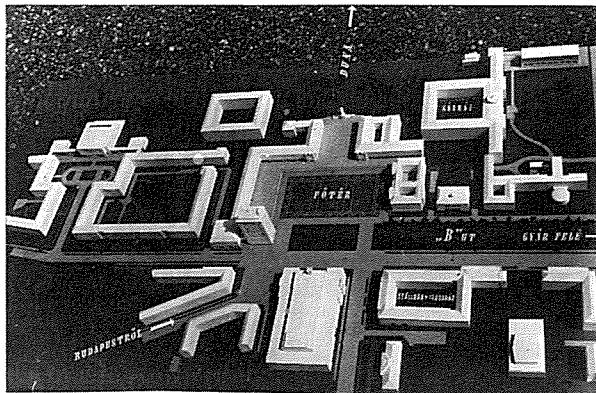
On the 7th of November 1951, a local initiative saw the town take on the name of Stalin. Beyond

the fact that a "Sztálinváros" already existed in most of the peoples' republics, the political leadership maintained that it was with the "*personal contribution and support of Comrade Stalin that the town has come into existence*". Naming the Steel-works after Stalin was motivated also by the totally irrational consideration that this would morally commit the Soviet economic authorities to maintaining planning (the steel-works plans) and delivery deadlines.

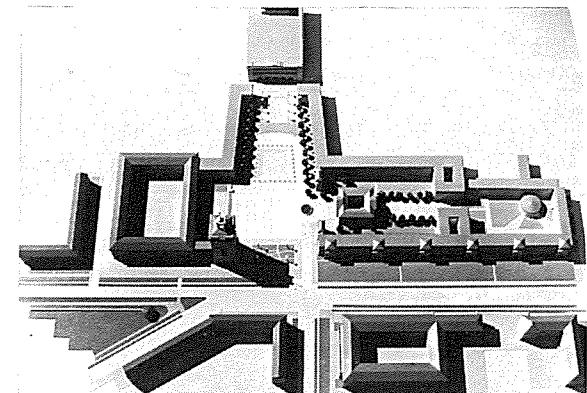
The **Párház** (Party Headquarters), which represented the first element of the Főter (Main Square), was already standing in 1951, although the **master town-plan** was only completed in the Autumn of 1952. This followed a resolution of the Council of Ministers in April 1951 concerning the development of Sztálinváros as a town. In relation to the expectations of Social Realism and the Propaganda, the Párház itself was rather insignificant and without bravado. Yet it also illustrated architecturally a clear shift in a direction, opposed to earlier modernist conventions. These expectations were realized at a conceptual level:

"... the Minor Programme did not allow for design of an enormous building which would express the power of the party in its physical dimensions. Thus, the designer had to heighten his inner socialist enthusiasm to resolve this modest building... The intimate, inner courtyard and the onlooking corridor provided brightly lit spaces for the workers and at the same time ensured the feeling of forged bonds, thus symbolizing the strength of the Party."

In December 1952, the Director of the Országos Tervhivatal (National Planning-Office) outlined



5. The Main Square, model, 1953 (Plan: T. Weiner)



6. The Main Square, model, 1954/55 (Plan: T. Weiner)

the **master town plan** to the Államgazdasági Bizottság (Committee of State Finance) and, in revised form, to the Politikai Bizottság (Politbureau). At this time the construction of **Sztálin út** (Stalin Avenue), the major avenue connecting the main square and the factory entrance, was at an advanced stage. This was despite the fact that the Építészeti Tanács (Architectural Council) only evaluated the plans in the middle of 1953.

Tervhivatal (Planning Office) reported summarily that the construction of the first socialist city in our country should reflect the “*superiority of the socialist economic system and the power and goals of the working class. For these reasons, the external appearance and internal structure of the city should express the happy life of the liberated working class and demonstrate how the Party and the State, through the city and its institutions, satisfies in every respect the physical and cultural needs of the workers.*”

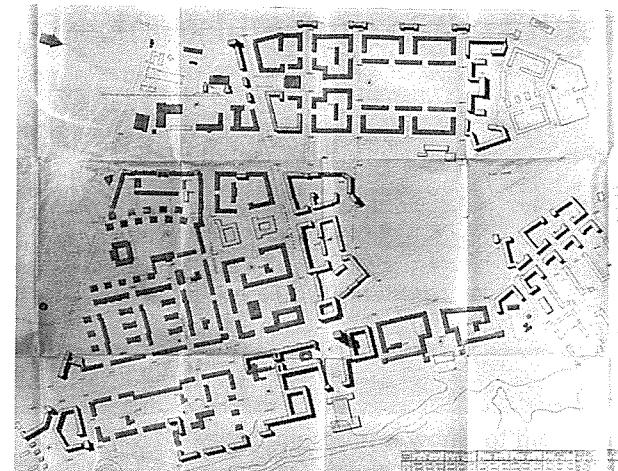
Gradually the town structure and centre evolved. The **structural basis** of Sztálinváros was the intersection of three axes which formed the “*natural location of the town centre*”. The three axes were:

1. The route from Budapest (the main transport axis of the town).
2. The avenue ending at the entrance to the steelworks (Sztálin út)
(The route for the May Day march.)
3. The route from the railway station.

This **intersection** should ‘form the most important quarter’ of the town and develop a “square-like”

character. It would contain the most important political, administrative and cultural institutions, and in addition “*the statue of Comrade Stalin, leader of the Béketábor (People fighting for Peace) must be erected*” here.

The Planning Office report dealt in detail with the most problematic aspect of the design, the development of a **vegetation-free** main square. It pointed out that the completed three-storey Party-Headquarters determined the architectural context of the square to such an extent that even a competition organized by the Építésügyi Minisztérium (Ministry of Construction) in May 1952 was unable to produce a successful resolution. According to the program of the competition, the six-storey apartment buildings under construction on Sztálin út had to be stepped down to a two-storey height approaching the square, so as not to harm the proportions of the Party Headquarters. Consequently, a decision was made not to respect the height of the existing Party Headquarters. Weiner had also taken this problem into consideration in an earlier emphasis of the importance of the 70 meters high spire of the **Tánács háza** (Town Hall) within the Sztálinváros “skyline”. He explained that although the Party Headquarters opposite was considerably smaller, the ideological content of the headquarters could not be expressed in form or physical size. In contrast with L-shaped forms of the **Town Hall** and the **Palace of Culture**, the **Party Headquarters** sought to express its status as a central free-standing mass, in the manner of



7. János Rákosi - Tibor Weiner: General Town-plan, 1955 (Party realized)

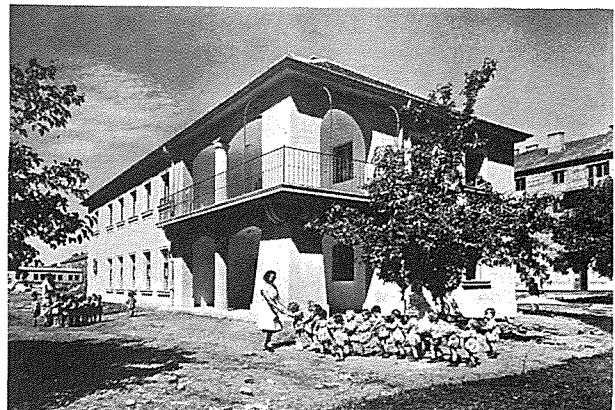
Greek Temples. Even so, Weiner produced an alternative design in 1952 which integrated the building within a larger unity.

The general plan and the critical reception of the time gave architectural emphasis to the importance of the closure of the western side of the town - a pseudo city wall - also: “*the bastion-like articulation of the perimeter residential-blocks gave a feeling of strength and security.*”

The design of the main square reached its peak in 1953/54. In May 1953 a “Moscow Style” became apparent. In connection with this, the Politbureau stated their “*agreement with a solution which emphasizes the tower, however it should be proved that this should be a truly artistic creation crowning the square, rather than something box-like.*”

From a functional and aesthetic point of view the massing of the elements for the public buildings in the main square (Party Headquarters, Town Hall, Palace of Culture, Museum etc.) was merely a “variation” game. Following Stalin’s death (5th March 1953), the conviction of Berija (July 1953) and the election of Khrushchev as first secretary (September), plans drawn up in late 1953/early 1954 indicated the place previously earmarked for Stalin’s statue as occupied by the Palace of Culture.

For an intellectual and stylistic lesson it is worthwhile referring to the explanation which accompanied the plans of May 1953:



8. Sztálinváros, Nursery (Architects: D. Cserba, L. Medvedt)

“The main square is the centre of community life in Sztálinváros... it should reflect the background of the town’s development and should be characteristic of the atmosphere of the town as well... The statue of Comrade Stalin, worthy of this immortal figure... should be the central element for the composition of the entire town... The strongest structural-axis is represented by the route connecting the town-centre and the factory... which appears as an 85 m wide avenue and 35 m wide landscaped pedestrian strip complete with a row of Stachanovists (Heroes of the Productivity Competitions) statues... The “high-rise” (i.e. approx. 10 storey) Town Hall... is at the same time a memorial... it carries the ideas of our Socialist architecture and in its symbolism expresses the state-order of our people’s democracy. In this sense the gigantic corner columns of the tower raise an emblem depicting allegorical figures of the worker and the peasant defending our national coat of arms above the dynamic main-cornice to a height of over fifty meters... The Main-square... the architectural composition of the enclosure, adopting and developing late Baroque prototypes and forms of Hungarian folk-art... the use of segmented arches - all form parts of an experiment. The traditional towers of church architecture or towers of historic cities were inappropriate as sources... because the size of the tower in Sztálinváros does not guarantee the qualitative development which the Soviet towers give witness to (referring to the Soviet “skyscrapers” or “Stalin Towers”). The giant order of corner columns



9. Sztálinváros, about 1955 (Looking north-east)



10. Sztálinváros, about 1955 (Looking north-west)

which binds together the entire tower is a purer intellectual expression of the tower.”

At this stage it is worth adding to this evaluation the opinion of a Hungarian theoretician of architecture, Máté Major: “Society invests in architecture/art (“superstructure” in Marxist ideology), the task of propagating the ideology and protecting its foundation and in accordance with the principles of monumental propaganda, the architecture of the present should transcend previous ages in the positive representation of society.”¹

The basic design and structure of Sztálinváros bears the stamp of both “ideal” and “authoritarian” urban-planning. The city should have been able to legitimize the political system that defined itself as a novelty in history through its institutions and through its architecture. Weiner expressed the basic expectations and criteria in respect of Sztálinváros as follows: “the socialist town, the socialist people and PEACE are being established with the wise leadership and direction of our party - and of course with the help of the Great Soviet Union.” From an iconological point of view the Socialist City manifested

or would manifest itself through the founding of a new city which expressed the socio-ideological goal of a “world representative of happy, liberated, human dignity”. The socialist urban vision in 1950’s Hungary would have had the “Socialist City” appear on the bank of the Danube as if it were the earthly equivalent of St. Augustine’s “Heavenly City”.¹

¹ Based upon an analysis of the sources, the case of Sztálinváros could be compared to that of the reconstruction, alteration and intended urban-plan of the capital, Budapest. Its design was a means for expressing the unique importance of the town, that is, to demonstrate the centre of Bolshevik power.

For a list of basic archival sources and secondary works see: PRAKFALVI, Endre: *Elmélét és gyakorlat építészetünkben, 1945-1956*. In: Építészet és tervezés Magyarországon - Architecture and Planning in Hungary 1945-1956 (ed. Endre Prakfalvi et al.), Exhibition Catalogue, Hungarian Museum of Architecture, 1992, pp. 6-22.

Sztálinváros ako paradigma stavby socialistického mesta v Maďarsku

Sztálinváros bol najväčšou koryejskou maďarskou experimentom na vybudovanie socialistického novomesta. Uskutočnil sa parallelne s výstavbou stalinských železiarní v období prvej päťročnice socialistického plánovaného hospodárstva, od r. 1949/50.

Základná architektonická štruktúra mesta bola vytyčená trásou sprievodov, ktorý viedla od Hlavného námestia (bez akejkoľvek zelené) - tam sa uvažovalo s umiestnením sochy súdruhu

Stalina - až ku hlavnému vchodu továrne. K tejto určujúcej líniu boli potom priradované ostatné, tzv. susedské stavebné jednotky.

Z architektonicko-ikonologického hľadiska sa v metóde projekcie novomesta manifestovala idea vybudovať socialistické mesto ako pozemskú obdobu Nebeského mesta, zasadeneho na breh Dunaja.

Czech Architecture of the Fifties - Unpleasant Memories

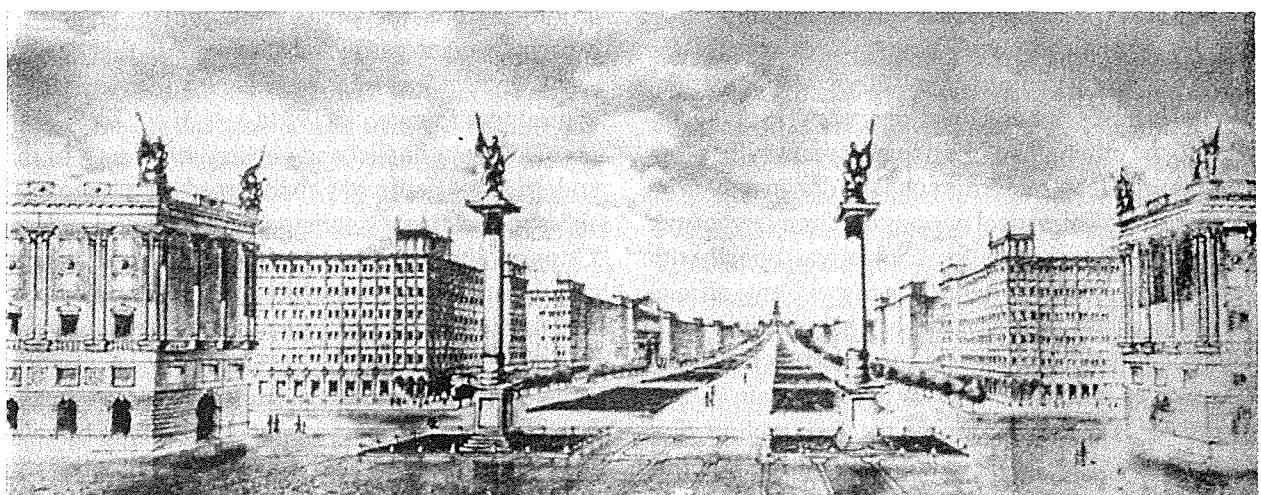
Pavel HALÍK

If we observe architectural works of the Fifties and the monumental “Cities of Socialism” from the perspective of our days, they seem interesting and having some qualities the successive periods have lost. There even exist parallels between the Fifties and particular trends in contemporary post-modern architecture. To the foreigners and the young generations these decorated and monumental forms may appear pleasant (e.g. A. Rossi, *A Scientific Autobiography*, 1988). But their attitudes betray an ignorance of the historical context, of the political and ideological background and the atmosphere of terror, fear and anxiety that accompanied these works.

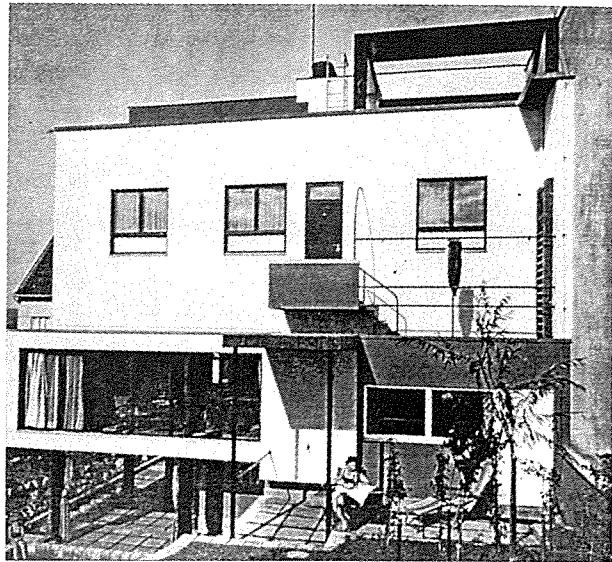
The ideology and methods of Socialist realism have been taken over after the Communist upheaval in February 1948 directly from the Soviet Union and from the beginning imposed upon all artistic activi-

ties. The art was then considered by the Communist regime an important tool of ideological propaganda and architecture had to play the most important role in it.

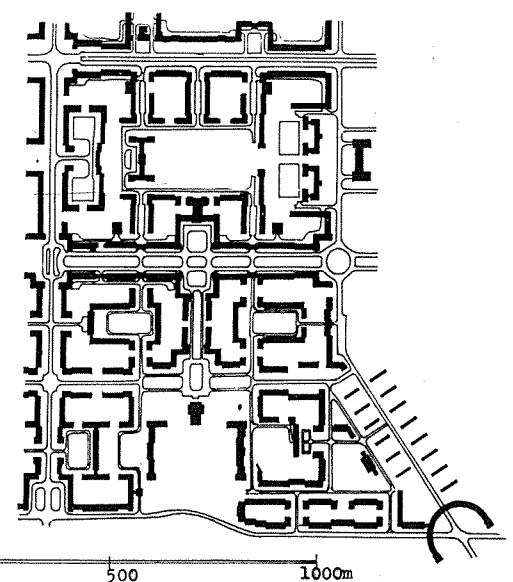
Between the wars there existed in the Czech country (especially in Prague) a very active modern movement connected with the main centers of the European avant-garde. Politically left-oriented and revolutionary, modern architects were expressing themselves by constructivist geometrical forms which represented for them the symbols of revolution. The leader and theorist of the Czech modern avant-garde, Karel Teige, tried to interpret the constructivist or functionalist architecture as a kind of sociological sciences having to act as a tool for the transformation of society. The modernism and modern forms were identified with the revolution.



1. “Socialist Town” Ostrava-Poruba, the general prospect (Meduna, Čtvrtiček a kol., 1951)



2. Ostrava-Poruba, the plan of the 1. and 2. district, 1952-1953



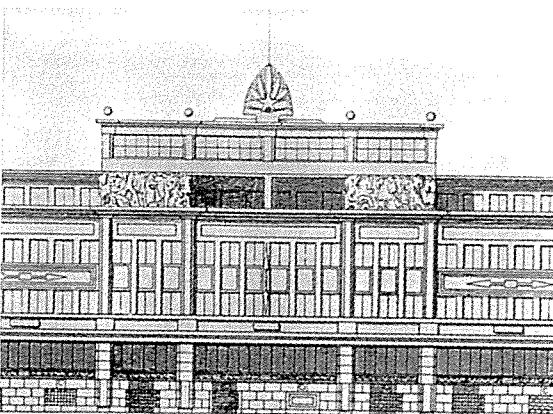
3. Jiří Kroha, the family house of the architect in Brno, 1930

But, since the arrival of the Communist party to power, the architects of the avant-garde were forced (mostly against their conscience) to apply historic forms as the only one true expression of the victorious working class aspirations. To many of them it meant the fall into the threatening and irrational situation associated with uncertainty. Moreover, each of them had to manifest before the public a creative enthusiasm. In their projects they have been obliged to use historical forms not only as decorative elements but as ideological signs and they had to defend them before ideological committees and critics. All history of the Czech country was reevaluated from the Marx-Leninist point of view and articulated in "progressive and reactionary" periods. According to the principles of the Socialist realism the progressive architectural forms could be drawn only from "progressive" historical periods but for many former avant-garde' architects the choice was bound with serious difficulties. There did not exist any official direction about the selection of "progressive architectural forms", the decision was left to architects themselves and they were always uncertain in this question. It was for example the folk architecture that offered the models but the tasks that the architects in the Fifties had to face, concerned mostly town planning activities of great dimensions. Huge

"cities of socialism" had been laid out in mining regions (Ostrava, Most, Příbram and others) according to the classicist principles and a monumental appearance had been asked for them. In the Czech country there did not exist almost any traditions for them or precedent, so it was necessary to seek for models in the Soviet Union. "The struggle for the Socialist realism finds its great model in the Soviet Union", wrote one of its protagonist Jiří Kroha (a former avant-garde' architect). For this reason a new review *Sovětská architektura* (Soviet Architecture) was founded in 1951.

The functionalist and constructivist past of the modern avant-garde was condemned as "cosmopolitan" and reactionary, strange to the working class. "Cosmopolitan architecture is an expression of the hatred of the working people" (J. Kroha, 1951) So each former modern architect had to feel guilty for his sinful past.

The texts of speeches, lectures, articles, treatises had then to manifest a high simplicity to be easy understandable, often almost infantile and completely ritualized. At the beginning of each text an apotheosis of the Soviet Union and its great leader Stalin,



4. Jiří Kroha, office building, 1951

(Stalin's care for mankind), then evaluation of the progress reached on the way towards socialism in our country and finally criticism. Sharp criticism was addressed before all to those "who did not want to renounce their cosmopolitan past". In reality all of the avant-garde' architects had to play (willing or not) a role of enthusiastic "constructors of happy tomorrows". The criticism was always too general, never addressed a concrete person so as everyone could feel involved and consequently threatened. The intentionally maintained situation was permanent uncertainty, anxiety and fear. It was not a question of conscience; belief in socialism, loyalty to the regime, enthusiasm, even the Communist party membership were not a sufficient guarantee against being menaced by ideological criticism. In this atmosphere public confessions and self-criticism played an important role in suppressing any self-esteem and replacing it by fear of the Power with its ideological terror. So on the visible side of the situation there was creative optimism and on the invisible side anxiety and fear. Today the living witnesses do not like to remember the Fifties, those who were protagonists of Socialist realism in architecture as well as those who acted under compulsion, both feel compromised.

In that situation there were two ways for the former modernists how to face the ideological pressure to which they found themselves suddenly exposed.

On the one hand the reaction of some of them was like something we could call the ideological

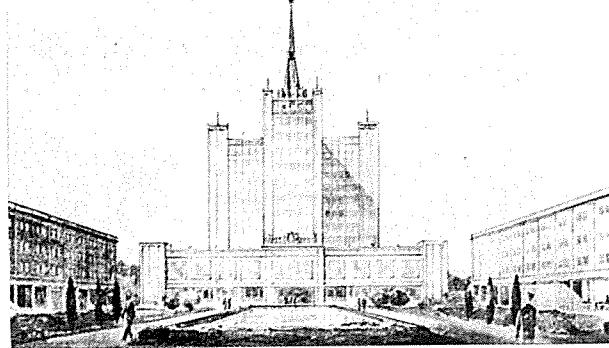


5. Josef Havlíček a Karel Honzík: the building of the General Insurance Institute, Prague 1929-1934

counter-attack, that is an aggressive manifestation of communist faith and elan silencing any ideological opposition.

On the other hand it was self-criticism and personal confession followed by repentance. Others stood between these two polar positions.

The best example of the first approach represents the "National artist" Jiří Kroha. Because of his journeys to the Soviet Union before the war, he imposed himself as expert in this field, from the very beginning acquainted with the ideological rhetoric. His speeches and texts are abundant in metaphors celebrating the Soviet Union, Stalin, Soviet people and the gigantesque process of construction and modernization of the Soviet country. This rhetoric consists of an enormous, almost wild accumulation of adjectives celebrating Soviet achievements, or condemning the capitalistic world, but we do not find in these, as well as in other contemporary texts, any valid information. It is a question of ritual. Their aim is to show the "progressiveness" of the authors. There are some examples: "gigantesque construction, radiant beacons, great magnificent ideas, the Soviet people as the highest type of contemporary mankind, the greatness of the constructors epoch, the dynamic and creative force of the new growth, the radiant and fascinating ideological content, the joyous and elevating experiences of humanity, the grandiose ideas

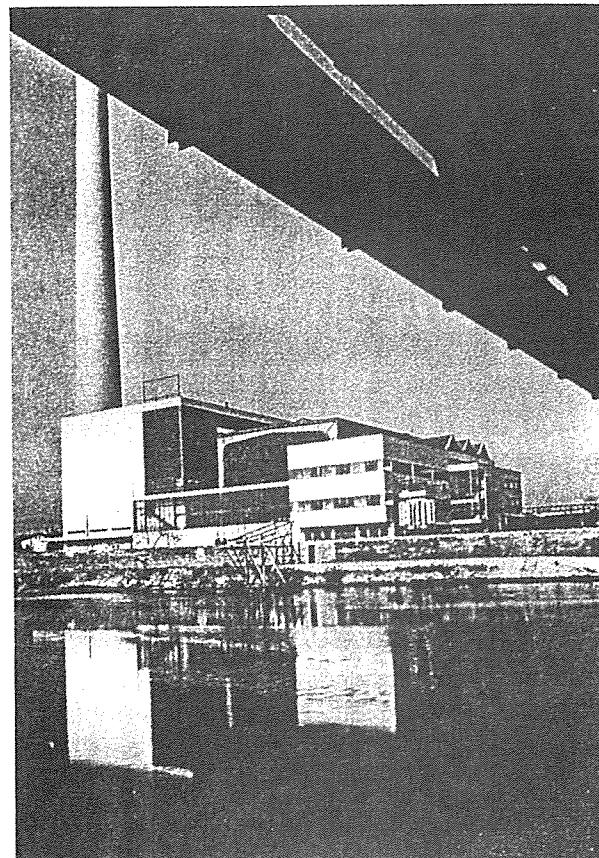


6. Josef Havliček, the project of the Communist Party University in Prague 1954

of greatness, beauty and happiness, the grandiose ideological contents embracing the whole world, Stalin's care for mankind" ... and so on ... (for ten, fifty or hundred pages, always this way). The last part contains the obligatory criticism: in principle, it is a condemnation of the cosmopolitan past and at the same time, a warning and a threat. "It will be necessary to denounce in the unwillingness (of the adherents of modernism) the elements of the political enemy... The adherents of cosmopolitan architecture cannot be only criticized but have to be denounced as political offenders..." (From: National artist Jiří Kroha, *Architecture, interest and propriety of the working people*, Architektura ČSR, 7-9, 1951 - *Architektura zájmem a majetkem pracujícího lidu*).

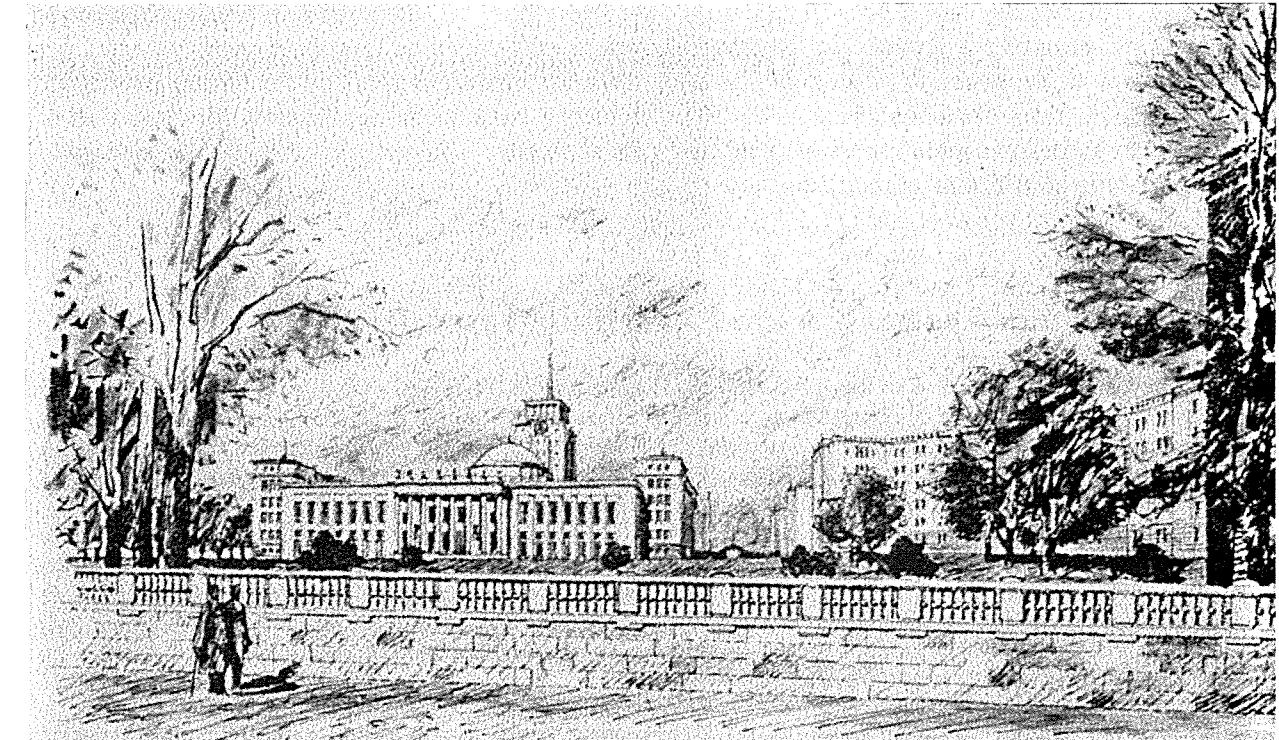
As an example of a self-critical confession may serve the book of Karel Honzík, *Architecture for all* (*Architektura všem*, Praha 1956). Here is a significant quotation condemning his and the avant-garde's cosmopolitan past: "It was even considered as modern to demonstrate an ostentatious contempt for tradition, history and monuments and we architects took part in an anarchist-leftist campaign, thinking that it was the way how to manifest our adherence to the social revolution. In contemporary Europe, upset by the echoes of the Great October Revolution, the very progressive ideas were indistinguishably fused with destructive provocations, which were in essence only the effects of the poison of putrefied capitalism..." and so on...

This is the confession of an old avant-garde' architect and theoretician who now could not find almost anything sane in constructivist and functiona-



7. Jaroslav Fragner, the power station in Kolín, 1929

list architecture (It may be of interest that his criticism of modern architecture from the position of the totalitarian Soviet ideology is in many aspects similar to post-modernist criticism.) The author considered it necessary to explain to the public, that is to the working class (in reality to the party ideologists) that he wants to have nothing in common with his sinful past and to prove absolute loyalty to the regime. The cosmopolitan avant-garde took the wrong way. Now it must reorient all its efforts, denounce completely its past experiences and condemn its modern works. A short time later, when the cult of personality has been disclosed by Khrushchev, Honzík rapidly changed his attitude and proudly claimed his belonging to the left-wing avant-garde as if he never had been compromised with socialist realism, forgetting suddenly all his personal theoretical initiative in the Fifties.



8. Jaroslav Fragner, the project of Party university in the periphery of Pankrác, Prague 1954

Where did the category of ideological critics, initiated into the secrets of the theory of the Socialist realism come from? They were people knowing about the recent situation in the USSR and the Russian language. The groups of sharp critics (if we could take them for critics, because it was the ideological content of architectural work rather than its substantial qualities) gathered mainly around the review *Soviet Architecture* (from 1951 to 1955). Most of them belonged to the younger generation and some studied in the Soviet Union. With regard to their fresh ideological knowledge, many older architects (former modernists) were completely uncertain (even if they were members of the Communist party).

"We must remove more rapidly all the obstacles... so as we could, in accordance with the model of Soviet architecture, give back to that art, which in our country has been plunged into the anti-ideological mud of the interwar period, its very social importance."

In 1953 the 1st Conference of the newly established Association of Czechoslovak Architects took

place in Prague. Here these critics have clearly shown to the older avant-garde' architects that the good will did not suffice, that their past, even leftist, is a guilt that had to be undone.

At the conference the offensive of ideological criticism attained its climax. Members of the Association were charged to work "in the spirit of Socialist Realism".

We have presented some quotations of previous avant-garde' architects to show their striving for being appreciated by the new political and ideological leaders. But the reply was not favorable: Critics have seen in their speeches only "an influx of words about ideological context, realism, formalism/.../ the danger of using certain notions without understanding their inner sense... The unity of our architects cannot be replaced by some reconciliation between the so called "rationalists" and "plastic functionalists"... Our architect is neither a rationalist nor a plastic functionalist but he is still burdened with the relics of the past and they have to be discovered here ... it is of urgent necessity to analyse the works of our architects

and to denounce the sane and insane tendencies ... the present situation of our architecture is unsatisfactory ... it will be necessary to attain high mastership ..." and so on (from: *Soviet Architecture* 4/1953).

Fortunately the atmosphere of ideological terror did not last long. It is almost incredible how ra-

pidly it faded away after 1956, its protagonists turned out to be at once quite normal men, but until our days, the Stalinist period still remains an unpleasant memory and a permanent trauma for almost all of its witnesses.

Česká architektura v padesátých letech - nepříjemné vzpomínání

V padesátých letech s příchodem komunistické vlády byl všem oblastem umění vnučen socialistický realismus, ne dosť jasně definovaný sloh, jež měl propagovat pokrokovost socialismu. Byl to ideologický sloh, užívající tradicionalistických, historizujících forem, které měly být srozumitelné lidu. Proto umělci usilovali o názornost a to nejenom ve své tvorbě, ale i v teorii. Ta byla silně ritualizována a podstatě postrádala informační hodnotu.

V architektuře byla situace složitější. Moderní avantgarda, která rozvinula před válkou repertoár konstruktivistických apuristických forem, jimž přisuzovala revoluční významy, levicově orientovaná, odvrácená od historie, musela nyní tuto svou minulost odsoudit jako těžký hřich mládí. Musela zavrhnut moderní "kosmopolitní" slovník a nahradit jej slovníkem historických forem. Ani to však nebylo jednoduché: sama historie byla souzena z hlediska pokrokovosti nebo reakčnosti jednotlivých epoch a nebylo snadné vybírat. Bývalí modernisté ztráceli jistotu a protože museli každý svůj architektonický počin zdůvod-

ňovat před ideologickými soudci (okolo revue *Sovětská architektura*, od 1951), cítili se ohroženi, zmocňoval se jich strach. Všechny projevy byly doprovázeny ostrými kritikami, které však nikdy nebyly adresné, proto, aby každý měl pocit, že se vztahuje k němu.

Tomuto náporu čelili bývalí modernisté několika způsoby: ideologicky agresivními projevy (Jiří Kroha), sebemskačskými autokritikami a zpověďmi (Karel Honzík), nebo únikem k rekonstrukcím historických památek (J. Frágner, B. Fuchs). Byla vybudována řada velkých "socialistických měst" (Ostrava-Poruba aj.), jejichž autoři se v celkových kompozicích řídili přímo sovětskými vzory, v domácích městech středověkého původu nebylo lze najít monumentální a imperiální vzory, jako např. v Petrohradě.

Že šlo o vnučenou situaci, v níž panovalo napětí a strach, ukázalo odsouzení "kultu osobnosti" Chruščovem v r. 1956, po němž v neuvěřitelně krátké době zmizel socialistický realismus ze scény.

Heroes and Victims. Some Remarks on the Typology of the Visual Image in Slovak Fine Art from the Period of Socialism

Katarína BAJCUROVÁ

Where there are heroes, there are also the victims. Where the victims are, there are executioners, too. After all, an executioner is nothing but a servant.

That is how we could explicitly paraphrase the quintessence of what was going on as for art at the time until lately labelled as "socialist". My study has a modest aim: on the example of three Slovak sculptors and their selected works, to express three typologico-situational comments on the history of Slovak visual art in the years spanning from the end of the 1940s until the 1980s. To outline how, in the given social situation with its transformations, the character of the visual image - shape was also changing. How the character of the social and artistic function of a work of sculpture became projected into its "corporeality". The basic sign and semantic code of the cultural-historical setting of the work in the time are also materialized in the visual shape of a statue as human body. "The way to the mysteries of human life leads through the body" - wrote Josef Kroutvor in his phenomenology of the body, the physical reveals the psychic, "it extends the body into interpersonal and social spheres".¹

Situation I (Heroes). Since the '40s, Jozef Kostka (born in 1912) was one of the most outstanding personalities of Slovak visual art. His extensive work grew hand in hand with its time, responding to its changing demands. Consequently, it is a rare key to the understanding of the paradoxes of its development. Without having relinquished anything from its artistic standards, its inward creative creed, it survived several totalities and took up its stand towards

them. Kostka was among the first artists to react after 1945 to the coming changes in the social and artistic statute of a work of art. Following an introvert and chamber prologue, he turned to extravert monumental sculpture, which in his apprehension is a "natural expression of the social yearning after freedom and independence".

The monument has since times immemorial been the genre in which an aesthetic-ethical ideal of social targeting has always found its most inherent expression. It raised ideas and acts of individuals, traits and events, important to the fate of mankind, worthy to be preserved in the historical memory of the descendants, on to pedestals. From 1946 to 1949 Kostka was at work on the Monument to the Slovak National Uprising at Partizánske. It is rather interesting to follow up the genesis of his idea, studied in an unusual amount of preparatory sketches and models. One of the principal traits of Kostka's work also found here its reflection: a romantic pantheism of the metamorphosis of the natural into the human, and vice versa. The monument in its essence is a figural and spatial profile of mountain peaks. (In the Slovak literature of romantic tradition this was one of the characteristic tropes to designate the proud, rebellious, unsubmitting nature of a popular hero). In the final finish, the sculptor tones down somewhat this primary morphological sign- and metaphor-bearing function, but leaves it to act in the arrangement of a triangular compositional key of three figures, locked closely together. In harmony with the "everlasting" conservatism of the monument image, it makes the scene "comprehensible". Kostka

searched for the form of his defenders with a down-right obsession. He abandoned the expressive dictation of his early work, reflecting the previous, fascist regime. For an anonymous man in an anonymous space, passively succumbing to the adversity of destiny, he substituted a definite human being for an individual character: a defender - a partisan. He rendered his physical and psychic appearance which he defined with pertinent attributes without descriptiveness and any passive statement of details. He set hero-worship of a common deed, the connotation of a struggle of the stronger with the weaker on whose side is truth, into the centre of his concept. By means of a dramatic motion and physical gestures of the figure, he mediated the philosophy of a small nation through the philosophy of a threatened, but defending individual within the group. He has introduced a precedence into Slovak sculpture: the image of a hero. Much used and abused subsequently.

At the time of its origin, the monument had not as yet achieved "a consistent fight for a realistic orientation", which was ushered in a few years later into Slovak art in the form a normative, imported method of socialist realism. This image of a hero brought Kostka the accusation of formalism (and indeed, the sculptor truly succeeded here inventively to work with means of artistic fiction, generalization and abbreviation which were - inadmissible)... And one of the agile flag-bearers of the new method - later himself its victim, and an adherent of all avant-garde - fervently reproached Kostka's defenders with the ideologically harmful glance to heaven... Nevertheless, time and regime had willy-nilly to look with favour at the monument and the type which Kostka had created in it. This gripped Kostka's heroes as symbols anticipating in a programmed way the spiral of social progress. It embodied something the author could not as yet foresee at the time he created it - the goal of socialism, a joyful and happy present redeemed with the blood of heroes...

The '50s also drew Kostka into the situation of "a social hypnosis without any alternative". Although Kostka did not lower himself, as many of his contemporaries, to the refined lies of dogmatism, yet traces of the times and their aesthetic canon, striving at peculiar effacement of the difference between art



1. Jozef Kostka: *The sketch for the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising at Partizánske, 1946*

(i.e. its form) and life (i.e. content) in terms of the "new unity", did also affect his work.

Kostka's awakening from the utopia of the initial stage of building up communism in the 2nd half of the '50s made a greater impact on the sculptor's conscience. In the '60s he was one of the first daring to see his "heroes" in an anti-heroic, anti-romantic and anti-pathetic way. He detailed out his beautiful and dignified, serious and courageous defenders in an expression of shape and sign. He transformed space into surface, a three-dimensional classical figure, into a nonclassically robust two-dimensional silhouette. He turned his heroes into statues - traces, signs of a tragic destiny.

Situation II (Victims). In the '60s, a young talent entered Slovak art - the sculptor Jozef Jankovič (born in 1937). He was one of the authors who opened to Slovak sculpture the road of "substantial reconstruction", opportunities for accepting the latest trends and movements. A bold innovator, he succeeded from the early '60s iconoclast-like to seek in "no man's land" and to free himself from an a priori



2. Jozef Kostka: *The Monument of the Slovak National Uprising at Partizánske, 1946-1949*

power of tradition, to reach out for stimuli that had until then been taboo, proscribed. After a nonfigural prologue, he became "an inherent figuralist". But did he come to be a figuralist whom socialist art needed? Indeed by following criticism of dogmatism, the interpretation of "socialist art" became extended, yet not limitlessly. Solely ideological and socio-pragmatic corrections of work and authors, directed "from above", temporarily receded into the background.

Jankovič dealt with the relationship of subject and object, the irreconcilable duality of man and world which gradually acquired in his work the form of a relation of man and society. At first, he examined estrangement, an emphasized the tragic accent on the individual human being in an inimical world on a general, existential plane, joined to it a historical, but universal direction in order ultimately to alter it into the topic of man's estrangement and total power.

In the '60s, Jankovič brought into Slovak art a new man - a sacrificed man. And even more - he brought the victim into the chosen land, to the territory of monumental sculpture, the most pragmatic and the most servile discipline. While the hero, as



3. Jozef Jankovič: "Victims warn!", *Sculptural group for the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising at Banská Bystrica, 1964-1969*

an integrated "holistic" man, steeled and forged in battle and suffering, over which he is destined to triumph, had to be defined by a figural physical shape understood haptically and visually in a holistic manner. The victim is an image of a different type. He is not even a man any more, or one in process of destruction, on the border of non-existence. But Jankovič dared to make the victim the central symbol of our modern history - in the concept of the sculptural-architectonic monument to the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica (he worked on it together with architect D. Kuzma from 1964 to 1969). He was the author not only of the central sculptural group "Victims warn!" which he set as a categorical imperative into a narrow gap between two concrete hemispheres of the monument, reminiscent of a rock cleft by lightning, but likewise of this uniquely original sculptural idea (in the following years he was denied its authorship). Jankovič disrupts the traditional "image of man" and in the concept of the

project varies the basic, semantic and expressive principles of his work. Indeed his central element is an analogical image of man, his expressively wounded physical core - that, however, becomes confronted with further elements. Man disintegrates into fragments, his most motile parts, the upper and lower extremities. "Human corporeality" - "is here introduced in an inferred, non-authentic, hence deformed shape".² But there are not simple casts of legs and arms, but of casts of their clothing protection against the outside whose symbolic function causes the "effect of estrangement". It acquires just the opposite meaning - turning into a powerless, non-living shape, an object deprived of its original function. The sculptural group is a drastically heaped up scrummage in which disrupted bodily fragments meet with those acquiring an extra-corporeal, object character.

The sculptor made use of a similar principle of expression in his concept of the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising at Kováčová (in cooperation with architect A. Cimmermann in the years 1968-1969). He created some sort of urbanized, architectural statues set on an alternation and unexpected emergence of sequences. Fragments of extremities pressed into brutally acting concrete become suggestively revealed to the moving onlooker.

Jankovič had recourse to a sacred heroic topic, he did not glorify the tragedy, deprived it of its moral aureole, rid the uprising of pathos, did away with the black-white antagonism existing until then between the acts of victors and victims of unnamed individuals. He understood the ideological topic universally, anthropologically and pacifistically. There in lay the essential politics of the statue and that is why the normalizing regime had it removed and replaced with a harmless and impersonal, world-encircling universalism of the hammer and sickle... And Jankovič's victims, after having lain for years on scrap heaps, found a quiet corner within the complex of the monument to the burnt-out village Kalíšte...

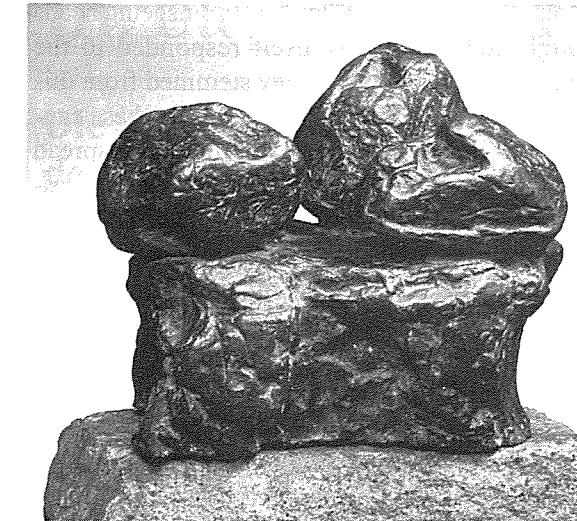
Jankovič's iconoclasm could not go unpunished. It is rather peculiar that the regime in its cowardice, this time could not turn against his works. It turned against the author himself who was threatened with life banishment for "his betrayal of socialist ideals", "his deviation from the method of socialist realism",



4. Ján Kulich: The Monument of the "February Victory in 1948" at Bratislava, 1973. Condition before removing in 1989

"destructive tendencies", which had again "brought our art on to the blind track of formalism".³ Fortunately the regime's schizophrenic temperament did not permit it to carry out Jankovič's exodus in fact. It permitted him to be further its living conscience...

Situation III (Executioners and servants). While Kostka discovered the image of heroes for Slovak sculpture, and Jankovič the idea of victims, sculptor Ján Kulich (born in 1930) appeared on the Slovak artistic scene as if for some other purpose. In order to appropriate the former and adapt it to his own image, and "to execute" the latter. Perhaps, Kulich's human and sculptural "teeming" would not be worth of mentioning. After all, he was not the only liquidator, inquisitor and guardian of the purity and truth of socialist art, were it not for the fact that in his sculptural "activity", there grew up a very characteristic, cultural-historical phenomenon of the times. The times of "normalized totality" which in the '70s and



5. Jozef Kostka: Table of Civilization, 1967-1968

'80s called itself "real" or "advanced" socialism. In Kulich's personality there appeared an unusually eager, enthusiastic, dedicated and obedient servant of the regime, who again succeeded in placing man (!) in the centre of his work and his image in art was to educate all-round, versatile harmoniously developed builders of communism. His creative destiny, however, rather supports the fact that "an artist may occupy a key position in some movement or circle, and yet may be a second- or third-rank artist".⁴

As an "inherent realist" (who was this time allowed to adopt "formal stylization"), he fulfilled in an entirely peculiar manner the basic, but revamped premise of cultural policy of the '70s, which craftily varied its models from the '50s: the premise about art, which ought to be "socialist in content" (party-guided, class-like and popular) and "national in form". He created a special hybrid in which man - the hero - is socialist in content (i.e. a worker, partisan, liberator or Jánošík, well-known popular hero) as well as national in form (i.e. he is often dressed in festive folk costume). He "organically" connected totality with traditions. The ruling power could find its idealized postulates in Kulich's works as in a mirror - however, a distorting one. Its resulting image sharply recalled the absurdity of the country "behind the mirror". And the powers that be could equally find in it their understanding of tradition: its practically exclusive symbol came to be the secular



6. Jozef Jankovič: The Monument of Slovak National Uprising at Kováčová, 1969

struggle of the Slovak working people with the lords, personified in the real image of the "present-day hero" - a costumed figure with a hat, bast sandals and holding a so-called wallachian axe-topped walking stick, or a shepherd's fife... The existence of this pseudo-romantic and anachronistic folkloric notion had more than a mere political background in "real socialism": that means the aim to mythicize the people into the position of ruler and creator of a new society and thereby to usurp his past, but also purely artistic and historical reasons. Slovak sculpture failed to meet this revivalist model in the 19th century and thus it necessarily was inherited by the 20th century in which Kulich took charge of it.

Kulich also reached out for the topic of the Slovak National Uprising. For his monument he obtained the most honourable site - the main square of the capital of Slovakia (the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising in Bratislava, 1974, collabor. arch. D. Kuzma). He combined practically all the characteristic procedures of his work in one single concept: "gigantic symbolism, genre, "folksy" realism and affected puppet-like sculpture".⁵ Iconographically, Kulich enlarged the understanding of the topic: to the monstrous warrior, a symbol of resistance and resolve, he added proportionally and spatially un-

der-dimensioned popular weepers. The sculptor vividly showed that a revolutionary act turned towards the future is more important than sorrow and tears over the past. However, neither the grandiose form, nor the so-called modern realism have succeeded in concealing the author's bewilderment as to form and composition, his theatricality of expression, the large-space emptiness of this "poem of heroism". However, monuments, as a rule, live their independent life in Slovakia and Kulich's statues - symbols of totality had silently and humbly to look on in autumn of 1989 how silently and humbly totality was falling under their feet and before their eyes...

In conclusion, allow me to mention three short sequences. Something about the head "the body's crown: "It holds a special position with regard to the world and the body. It is part of the world and, although outside the world, it possesses its pride, its consciousness... it is a sacred element of being, a taboo, a fetish... every culture honours the head as a leading principle, a symbol of unity. The cult of the head tells us either directly or indirectly that this or that head is the lord of creation..."⁶

Nameless heads, faceless heads, unseeing heads - through them Kostka himself responded to the "nameless years", the '50s. They stemmed from this sorrowful stage of human and social life - these cautioning, enigmatic signs of destiny, humbly spread on the table of the most advanced and most progressive civilization of the world (War heads, 1960, Table of civilization, 1967-68).

In the case of Jankovič, the entire powerlessness of the '70s and '80s was concentrated in the head. His Heads, too, lose their shape and face, they turn into a uniform silhouette, the trace of the same man from the crowd, into a mask - a profile, whose "period of motionlessness" denied the miracle of seeing, but not that of acting and thinking - everything is taking place in it, it is the stage of the world theatre.

But there also were other heads here, too. They grew out of the ground, they sprouted, budded and blossomed, turned into modern giants of idea and deed. In the '70s Kulich succeeded in erecting one of the most absurd statues of socialism on the main square in Žilina - the gigantic head of a gigantic leader. The head was - cut off...

NOTES

¹KROUTVOR, J.: *Hlava Meduzy*. Praha, Jazzová sekce 1983, p.105

²HRABUŠICKÝ, A.: *Situáčné porozumenie svetu*. Slovenské pohľady, 104, 1988, No.12, p.110

³Za socialistické umenie. Bratislava 1974, pp. 148-165

⁴HAUSER, A.: *Filosofie dejín umenia*. Praha 1975, p.12

⁵HRABUŠICKÝ, A.: *Ján Kulich - bilancia*. Výtvarný život, 36, 1991, No.1, p.44

⁶KROUTVOR, J.: op.cit., pp.170-171

Photo: M. Marenčin (Figs. 1, 2, 6) - J. Čeněk (Fig. 4) - Th. Leixnerová (Fig. 5)

Hrdinovia a obete. Niekolko poznámok k typológii vizuálneho obrazu v slovenskom výtvarnom umení obdobia socializmu

Kde sú hrdinovia, tam sú i obete. Kde sú obete, sú katí. Ostatne kat je vždy iba sluha. Takto, expressis verbis by sme mohli parafrázoval pointu toho, čo sa dialo s umením a v umení v období donedávna nazývanom "socialistickým". V príspevku - na príklade troch slovenských sochárov a ich vybraných diel (Jozef Kostka, pamätník SNP v Partizánskom, 1946-49, Ján Jankovič, pamätník SNP v Banskej Bystrici, 1964-1969, Ján Kulich, pamätník SNP v Bratislave, 1974) - sú formulované tri typologicko-situáčne poznámky k dejinám slovenského výtvarného umenia v priereze od konca 40. po 80. roky (Situácia I -

Hrdinovia, Situácia II - Obete, Situácia III - Sluhovia a katí). Načrtávajú, ako sa v danej spoločenskej situácii menil charakter vizuálneho obrazu - tvaru, ako sa charakter sociálneho a umeleckého fungovania sochárskeho diela premietal do jeho "telesnosti". Aj vo vizuálnej podobe sochy ako tela je názorne zhmotnený základný znakový a sémantický kód kultúrno-historickej situovanosti diela v čase, aj v "reči" tela je "jazyk" doby. "Cež tela vedie cesta do tajomstiev ľudského života", fyzické odhaluje psychické, "predĺžuje tela do sfér interpersonálnych a sociálnych" (J. Kroutvor).

III. Utopias and Anti-utopias

Die Schwierigkeiten mit der Demokratisierung des Denkmalbegriffes

Géza HAJÓS

In Österreich gibt es seit einigen Jahren heftige Angriffe gegen eine gesamtstaatlich organisierte, zentrale Institution der Denkmalpflege, nämlich gegen das Bundesdenkmalamt, das als eine Behörde mit beschränkten Machtbefugnissen in seiner Existenz durch die politischen Forderungen der Landesregierungen im Sinne der Föderalismusdebatte vor dem EG-Eintritt gewissermaßen in Frage gestellt wird und entmachtet werden sollte. Diese Debatte ist zwar eine innerösterreichische Angelegenheit - in den verschiedenen europäischen Staaten ist die Denkmalpflege verfassungstechnisch unterschiedlich organisiert. Sie widerspiegelt jedoch ein tiefer liegendes theoretisches Dilemma.

Seit dem 19. Jahrhundert ist der Denkmalbegriff auf viele Bereiche ausgedehnt worden, die - wie etwa Ortsbild, Kulturlandschaft oder auch Naturbelange - ursprünglich nicht das Ziel von Schutzbestimmungen waren und heute verschiedenen Kompetenzbereichen zugeordnet sind.

Dadurch entstehen eigenartige Konflikte - es sei in diesem Zusammenhang z.B. auf die historischen Gärten hingewiesen, die zwischen Denkmalschutz und Naturschutz in Österreich eigentlich ohne Schutz dahinvegetieren müssen, weil man politisch nicht einigen kann, ob ein Garten Menschen- oder Naturwerk ist, - und diese Konflikte werfen ein scharfes Licht auf die Denkweise der Öffentlichkeit, die vielfach durch Mißverständnisse geprägt ist. Die Landeshauptleute Österreichs, die den Dekmalschutz der zentralen Verwaltung entziehen und ihrem eigenen Machtbereich zuordnen möchten (ähnlich wie dies schon der Fall beim Schutz der Natur oder von Kulturlandschaften ist), berufen sich in erster Linie auf die "Demokratisierung des Denkmalbegriffs",

denn ihrer Meinung nach sollte diese Kultureinrichtung den örtlichen Belangen näher gebracht werden, da die Aufgaben des Denkmals vor allem eine Identifikationsstiftung ist. Eine demokratische Identifizierung entsteht an Ort und Stelle, nicht aber in Wien, wie dies die Föderalismusanhänger behaupten. Damit wird angedeutet, daß in dem Moment, wo Denkmale nicht mehr nur aus Domen und Schlössern bestehen, sondern auch Arbeiterwohnhäuser und Bauernhöfe bedeuten, wäre eine örtliche Öffentlichkeit für diese Belange stärker mobilisierbar als eine gesamtstaatliche Öffentlichkeit, die sich nicht - wie häufig behauptet - um abgelegene Ecken kümmern kann.

Die Vertreter der zentralen Bundesdenkmalpflege haben andere Argumente: Sie befürchten, daß mit einer "Veränderung" dieser Institution der wissenschaftliche (d.h. hohe moralische) Charakter des Denkmalbegriffs gefährdet ist bzw. verwässert wird und daß damit auch eine altehrwürdige Institution mit großer Tradition (seit der k. u. k. Zentralkommission) vernichtet werden könnte. Es wird von dieser Seite auch die Befürchtung geäußert, daß - wenn die Entscheidungsebenen zum wirtschaftlichen Geschehen näher gebracht werden - die Entscheidungsträger ihre Unabhängigkeit notgedrungen einzubüßen werden und daß das Denkmal so zu einem Spielball direkter örtlicher Konfrontationen wird. Der Landeshauptmann der jeweiligen österreichischen Provinzregierung würde in einem solchen Fall nicht nur über die Erhaltung des gefährdeten Kulturgutes, sondern auch über die wirtschaftlichen Zukunftsprojekte seines Landes in einer Person entscheiden müssen. Das kulturelle Erbe würde dann - so die Argumente der zentralen Denkmalverwaltung - die

wesentlich schwächeren Anwälte haben, als z.B. die der Autobahngesellschaften oder der Bauspekulanten, und von ähnlichen Interessengruppen. Das öffentliche Interesse in der Denkmalpflege lässt sich, nach Meinung der traditionellen Auffassung, mit der wissenschaftlichen Distanz einer unabhängigen Institution besser definieren, als durch eine enge Einschaltung der Denkmalentscheidungen in der wissenschaftlichen Belange. Die Absurdität einer direkten Demokratisierung des Denkmalbegriffs wird mit der Tatsache illustriert, daß heute niemandem einfallen würde, den Abbruch eines Schlosses oder einer Kirche durch eine Volksabstimmung entscheiden zu lassen.

Damit ist schon die grundsätzliche Problematik unserer Themenstellung kurz umrissen: Welche Möglichkeiten (oder Unmöglichkeiten) trägt der Begriff des Denkmals für die gesellschaftliche Zielsetzung einer Demokratisierung? Wie verhielt sich die Denkmalschutzbehörde im Verlauf ihrer Geschichte (beispielsweise in Österreich oder im deutschsprachigen Raum) zu diesem Anspruch? Daß in diesem Zusammenhang unterschiedliche Auffassungen über den Umgang mit Geschichte schlechthin behandelt werden müssen, liegt sozusagen auf der Hand. Es wird zu untersuchen sein, ob die institutionalisierte Denkmalpflege zum wissenschaftlichen oder zum politischen Umgang mit Geschichtlichkeit gehört bzw. wie sich diese beiden Umgangsformen zueinander verhalten. Eine Frage wird lauten, ob der Denkmalbegriff autonom - wissenschaftlich - definierbar ist, oder daß er sich notgedrungen und automatisch immer "fremden" Manipulationen aussetzen muß.

Als Einstieg in diese Problematik werden drei Standorte skizziert: einmal die Kritik der "68-er Generation" an den Denkmalbehörden in den siebziger Jahren, dann die theoretische Gegenposition der herausgeforderten Institutionen angesichts der "Erweiterung des Denkmalbegriffs" und schließlich die denkmalpflegerische Initiative der sog. "Postmoderne" in den achtziger Jahren.

Die Kritik der "68-er Generation" an den etablierten Denkmalbehörden

Eine Arbeitsgruppe am Kunsthistorischen Institut der Universität Kiel hat 1971 *"Materialien zur*

Denkmalpflege" zusammengetragen und dort konnte man u.a. folgendes lesen: "Daß die Denkmalpflege im Rahmen der Kulturpolitik einen niedrigen Stellenwert hat, kann man aus der personellen Unterbesetzung der Ämter ersehen, außerdem an den Etats, deren Höhe selbst im Vergleich mit den Theater- und Museenzuschüssen lächerlich niedrig ist. .../ Die Denkmalpflege dispensiert sich von der Verantwortung für diese Misere, indem sie allein die Legislative verantwortlich macht. Sie hat es bisher versäumt, auch nur in Ansätzen kulturpolitische Konzeptionen als Grundlage ihrer Arbeit zu entwickeln...". Diese Misere begründen die Mitglieder der Arbeitsgruppe mit der Unfähigkeit der Fachbehörden, Programme zu entwickeln, vorausschauende Konzepte z.B. in die Stadt- oder ländliche Raumplanung einzubringen, mit ihrer Weigerung, agieren statt reagieren zu wollen und schließlich auch mit der kunsthistorischen Ausbildung, Denkmale bloß als elitäre, von Gegenwartsbezügen abgehobene Kunstwerke behandeln zu können. Nach Meinung dieser Kritiken wurden im Denkmalbegriff der Nachkriegszeit alte hierarchische Vorstellungen gedankenlos weitertransportiert, bloß eine Detailakribie und Befundpedanterie verlangt und überhaupt die Chance versäumt, die Wiederaufbauphase der deutschen Städte perspektivisch als Diskussionsgrundlage zu nützen oder die "Unwirtlichkeit der modernen Städte" zur Festigung ihrer gesellschaftlichen Positionen zu verwenden. In diesem Papier von 1971 wurden daher folgende Änderungen in Theorie und Praxis der Denkmalpflege gefordert: Zuerst die Aufhebung der herkömmlichen Zeitgrenze um 1850 und die intensive Bearbeitung der Denkmalbestände aus der zweiten Hälfte des 19. und ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts als schutzwürdige Objekte. Zweitens eine Diskussion über das theoretische Verhältnis "Original und Kopie" bzw. Denkmal als "Dokument und Symbol", wobei im Sinne einer Umweltbezogenheit des Denkmalbegriffs der Abgang von der ausschließlichen Ausrichtung auf das "Original" verlangt wurde. Die Autoren der Kieler Materialien forderten die etablierten Denkmalpfleger auf, in die gesellschaftspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um den Eigentumsbegriff aktiv einzugreifen, um der weit verbreiteten Isolation entgegenzuwirken bzw. der "improvisierenden" Arbeitsweise ein Ende zu berei-

ten. Sie verlangten außerdem, daß die Denkmalbehörden in die Verkehrsplanungen institutionell eingeschaltet werden und daß der Denkmalbegriff endlich entsprechend der Ganzheitstheorien der Kunst (und Environment) und nicht mehr isoliert und "romantisch" gehandhabt wird. Im Sinne einer marxistischen Auffassung lehnte die Kieler Arbeitsgruppe "marktkonforme" Denkmalüberlegungen ab und verlieh der utopistischen Hoffnung Ausdruck, daß das Denkmal von breiten Bevölkerungsschichten getragen als Lernort und Identifikationssymbol gegen andere Interessen geschützt werden kann. Der Öffentlichkeit gegenüber sollten, dieser Meinung nach, die etablierten Denkmalpfleger ihre "spezifisch bürgerlich idealistische Scheu vor Kategorien politischer, ökonomischer und sozialer Analyse" ablegen und sich nicht mehr als eine elitäre Bildungskaste betrachten, die sich einbildet "immer noch umgebrochen im alleinigen Besitz des sensibilisierten (und nicht vermittelbaren) Verständnisses des überkommenen Kulturgutes" zu sein.

Abgesehen von der euphorischen Radikalität mancher antiautoritärer Formulierungen hatte auch dieses Papier einen guten Anteil an der Entfachung einer breiten Diskussion, die in theoretischer Hinsicht die Erweiterung des Denkmalbegriffs betraf. Mit der Forderung nach Einbeziehung der Gründerzeit, mit dem Wiederaufgreifen des Heimatbegriffs (benannt hauptsächlich als "Milieu" gegen die anonyme Unwirtlichkeit der Städte) und mit der Betonung der "ästhetischen" Erfahrung bezogen auf Geschichtlichkeit, tauchten jedoch Probleme auf, die eine linke Geschichtstheorie nur schwer bearbeiten konnte. Gerade die fortschrittlichen künstlerischen und sozialen Bewegungen der Jahrhundertwende bekämpften vielleicht am heftigsten die Verlogenheit, die Schwulstigkeit der gründerzeitlichen Kunst und den antisozialen Charakter des Städtebaus aus dem vorigen Jahrhundert. Mit den Zielsetzungen des Funktionalismus in den zwanziger Jahren wurde aus dem kunsthistorischen Denkmalbewußtsein das 19. Jahrhundert für eine längere Zeit sozusagen ausgelöscht. Auch mit dem Heimatbegriff ist es ähnlich engangen: Um die Jahrhundertwende, als die Heimatschutzbewegung mit der Denkmalpflege konform die Sünden der Gründerzeit bekämpfte wurde auch eine Entwicklung eingeleitet, die der fortschrittlichen funktionalistischen Denkweise überhaupt nicht entsprach und welche bald (im Dritten Reich) zur totalen Deformierung der wissenschaftlichen Denkmalschutzidee führte. Das Bedürfnis, nach der großen Zerstörungsphase der ersten Gründerzeit, geschichtliche (d.h. vorindustrielle) Harmonie zu retten oder wiederherzustellen, artete bald in "Blut-und-Boden-Ideologie" aus, die dann lange nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg die Fortführung der Heimatschutzidee grundsätzlich verhinderte. Umso schwieriger war also für die 68-er Generation, wieder nach Heimat und Verwurzelung ("Krätsel", "Milieu", usw.) zu verlangen. Die Historisierung und die Ästhetisierung der Gründerzeit und auch der Heimatstilepoche des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts mußte also in den Kritiken der siebziger Jahre gegen die etablierte Denkmalpflege, die diese historischen Epochen nur mühsam in die Schutzaktivitäten einbauen konnte, ideologisch begründet werden. Das Institut für Bau- und Kunsts geschichte der TU Hannover hat daher 1976 einen Band mit dem Titel *"Bewertungsfragen der Denkmalpflege im städtischen Raum"* herausgegeben, in dem u.a. ein führender linker Theoretiker dieser Zeit, Michael Müller das Wort ergriff und eine Ehrenrettung nicht nur des 19. Jahrhunderts, sondern auch der sinnlichen, ästhetischen Erfahrung gegenüber der geschichtlichen Formenvielfalt schlechthin versuchte. Die ausschließliche Beschäftigung mit der künstlerischen Form, die Beurteilung ihrer Qualität war bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt dem vielfach kritisierten "elitären" Kunsthistoriker vorbehalten, der seine Urteile nur fachimmanent begründen und nicht unbedingt öffentlichkeitswirksam vermitteln mußte. Das breite und neue Bedürfnis nach Formvielfalt, Fassade und Dekor ließ dann aber die bis um 1970 in der Denkmalpflege nur geringfügig beachteten (und meist auch abschätzig beurteilten) Epochen in einem neuen "ästhetischen" Licht erscheinen, und dieses Phänomen konnte Müller nur mit einer neu erlichen Kritik an der Architektur des 20. Jahrhunderts erklären: "Die Aufhebung einer vormals ästhetischen Architektur (durch die Moderne - G.H.) hat im gesellschaftlichen Alltag nicht die Ansprüche und Versprechungen verwirklicht, die man neuerlich in der 'Rettung' älterer, noch traditionell ästhetische beanspruchter Architektur (z.B. der Gründerzeit - G.H.) aufzugreifen versucht".

Nach Meinung der 68-er Generation sollte also Geschichte - wieder - gerettet werden, auch in der Denkmalpflege, als sinnlich erfahrbare Handlungsräume, aber auch als Heimat, in der "eine umgestaltete und an Solidarität angeeignete Natur" "nicht verfehlt ist". Dieser Versuch, neue gesellschaftskritische Utopien im Denkmalbegriff nach einer langen Periode des Funktionalismus (in der hauptsächlich auch eine Gesellschaftskritik gegen die Wohnbarbarei der Gründerzeit geäußert wurde), war freilich eine von der breiten Öffentlichkeit nur wenig verstandene intellektualistische Konzeption.

Bei der Erweiterung des Denkmalbegriffs, in der es in erster Linie um das 19. Jahrhundert und um die Aufnahme der künstlerisch nicht hochwertigen Massenarchitektur ging, mußte aber bald auch die etablierte Denkmalpflege und Kunstgeschichte ihren theoretischen Standpunkt klarlegen.

Die theoretischen Gegenpositionen der Denkmalpflegeinstitutionen

Das europäische Denkmalschutzjahr 1975 war eine gute Gelegenheit für Wortmeldungen der traditionellen Vertreter der Kunstgeschichte und Denkmalpflege angesichts der vorhin skizzierten Herausforderung der 68-er Generation und auch angesichts einer veränderten Umweltphilosophie, die immer mehr die breite Öffentlichkeit erfaßt hat. Der traditionelle Denkmalstandpunkt war vorerst einmal dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß eine Veränderung des Denkmalbegriffs grundsätzlich skeptisch beurteilt wurde.

Erwin Thalhammer hielt in einem kurzen Aufsatz mit dem Titel "*Brachte 'das Jahr des Denkmalschutzes 1975' einen neuen Denkmalbegriff?*" fest: "... der Denkmalbegriff bedarf offenbar keiner Revision, wohl aber die Einstellung zu ihm". Dabei zitierte er den "*Katechismus der Denkmalpflege*" von Max Dvořák, wo ein Sündenregister der Gesellschaft schon 1916 mit Feststellungen charakterisiert wurde, die 1975 nicht anders formuliert werden können. Somit auch die Schlußfolgerung: "Basis und Instrument des Denkmalschutzes und der Denkmalpflege bleibt somit der geltende Denkmalbegriff." Auch Norbert Wibiral vertrat eine ähnliche Ansicht: "Keineswegs hat sich - gleichgültig, ob rational oder emotional motiviert - mit dem Ensembleschutz der Begriff des Denkmals selbst ausgeweitet, weil sein

Wesen in der Bedeutungs- bzw. Wertauszeichnung liegt." Da sowohl der Denkmalbegriff als auch der des öffentlichen Interesses schwer bestimmbare Rechtsbegriffe sind, kommt der herrschenden Fachmeinung im Kontext mit der "Identifikation und der sozialen Adäquanz" die entscheidende Bedeutung zu und "im Zweifels- und Streitfall bleibt, gemäß demokratischem Verständnis, der Instanzenzug" (d.h. der Weg von der Fachbehörde bis zum Obersten Gerichtshof). Um zu zeigen, daß der Ensemblebegriff keineswegs eine Erfindung der 60-er oder 70-er Jahre war, zitierte Wibiral Goethe, der über Venedig nach einer Lagunenfahrt am 29. September 1786 in sein *Tagebuch* schrieb: "Alles was mich umgibt, ist würdig, ein großes respektables Werk versammelter Menschenkraft, ein herrliches Monument, nicht eines Gebieters, sondern eines Volks". Damit sollte gezeigt werden, daß allein vom Begriff her immer schon ein fast nicht begrenzbares Denkmalspektrum ausstrahlte, daß aber die Gesellschaft nicht immer in der Lage war, die im Begriff vorhandenen Möglichkeiten auch zu verwirklichen. Wibiral leugnete auch, daß im alt-tradierten Denkmalbegriff ein "elitärer Vorzug - etwa des Künstlerischen allein -" verankert gewesen wäre und wies auf die österreichische Denkmaldefinition hin, die gesetzlich seit 1923 außer der künstlerischen auch die geschichtliche und kulturelle Bedeutung enthält und somit einen immens großen Bogen gesellschaftlicher Werte umfaßt.

Auch Georg Mörsch vertrat die Meinung 1975 in einem Vortrag, daß die Denkmalbehörden immer schon "das Grundrecht auf Geschichte" verkündeten, jedoch von der Öffentlichkeit häufig nicht angehört wurden. "Aus der Überzeugung, daß der Auftrag an die Denkmalpflege hinter allen zeitgebundenen Formulierungen stets so grundsätzlich lautete, wider spreche ich der in den vergangenen Jahren zum Topos gewordenen Behauptung, in letzter Zeit erst habe Denkmalpflege sich aus Introvertiertheit und Engstirnigkeit befreit und vertrete endlich modern und aufgeschlossen ein öffentliches Belang." "Unterstellt man, daß ein Belang nicht erst dann als öffentliches anzusehen ist, wenn ihm die genügende Anzahl von Interessenten Nachdruck verleiht, dann darf behauptet werden, daß Denkmalpflege jahrzehntelang das Grundrecht auf Geschichte als öffentli-

ches Belang vertreten hat, jedoch ohne ausreichende Interessenten."

Mörsch versteht sich in erster Linie als Anwalt der Objekte aus der Vergangenheit und lehnt es ab, den Begriff des Denkmals durch außenstehende Faktoren, wie soziale Rolle in der Gegenwart, ästhetische Wirkung auf Geschmacksebene oder Nützlichkeit für eine humane Zukunft bestimmen zu lassen. Er möchte ein unbequemer Vertreter von unbequemen Objekten sein und nicht modischen Wellen erliegen. "Es hieße die Aufgabe der Denkmalpflege falsch sehen, von ihr, über die Bereitstellung historischen Materials hinaus, die entscheidenden Vorschläge für die konkrete Nutzung dieses Materials zu erwarten. ... Die Öffentlichkeit muß sich darauf verlassen können, daß er (der Schützer) grundsätzlich weiß: Denkmalpflege ist keine Schönheitskonkurrenz mit moderner Architektur". Schließlich lehnt er auch kategorisierte Selektionsmechanismen ab, denn "die erkenntnistheoretische Überlegung, daß jede heute als noch so extensiv verstandene komplett Benennung des heute Erhaltenswerten eine Auswahl aus dem potentiell Bedeutsamen ist, benennt den wichtigsten und generell unvermeidbaren Auswahlmechanismus. Immer im nachhinein gesehen, fallen diesem Mechanismus so viele Dinge ungewollt zum Opfer, daß alle anderen Auswahlmethoden aus dem schon als Bedeutsam bewußten in Frage gestellt werden müssen."

Nirgends wurde so klar wie hier eine Kontraktion zu den Thesen der 68-er Generation entwickelt und am herkömmlichen Denkmalverständnis festgehalten. Mörsch ging davon aus, daß der Geschichtsbegriff in der Denkmalpflege in erster Linie ein Objektbegriff ist, es geht ja in den Schutzbestimmungen ausschließlich um die Erhaltung der materiellen Substanz und nicht um ihren Einbau in die Zukunftsperspektiven. Das vorlaufende Interesse der Öffentlichkeit wird in diesen Betrachtungen als Hindernis und Bedrohung für die Existenz der Denkmale hingestellt und an einer hegelianischen Gesellschaftskonstruktion - These/Antithese - festgehalten. Es wird außerdem die Freiheit der geschichtlichen Betrachtung verteidigt, in deren Entfaltung kein (wie immer gearteter) Riegel vorgeschoben werden dürfte.

Im Gegensatz zu diesen Vertretern der institutionellen Denkmalpflege - die an einer Änderung des Denkmalbegriffs in den siebziger Jahren nicht glauben wollten - vertrat der Kunsthistoriker Willibald Sauerländer eine reformfreudigere Ansicht. Obwohl auch er den Bogen des Denkmalbegriffs zwischen der Antike und dem 20. Jahrhundert spannte und damit auf eine konstante Kontinuität hinwies, bekannte er sich doch zu neuen notwendigen Inhalten, die im Denkmalbegriff der letzten großen Erneuerung um die Jahrhundertwende (Rieg und Dehio) nicht enthalten waren. Im Gegensatz zu Mörsch's konservatorischen Thesen schreibt er: "Von uns fordert die gegenwärtige Situation jedenfalls Verantwortungsgefühl und Handlungsbereitschaft über jedes Spezialistentum hinaus. Das ist gefordert im Dienst eines nicht nur erweiterten, sondern eines sozialbewußten und urbanen, auf die Zukunft der Bürger und der Res publica gerichteten Denkmalbegriffes - auf eine Zukunft, die nicht brutal von jeder Erinnerung abgeschnitten ist."

Sauerländer glaubt, daß Denkmalpflege in die Agenda der bewahren Stadterneuerung integriert werden müßte, denn die "Die Achtung vor der historischen Existenz als solcher", um noch einmal Dehio zu zitieren, ist in den Konfliktszenen unserer Städte als Motivation für das Konservieren nicht mehr überzeugend. An ihre Stelle müßte eine denkmalpflegerische Praxis treten, die geschichtliche Gestalt auf eine Weise sozial vermittelt."

Sauerländer, als Mittelalterspezialist, hat zwar kein "wolkenloses" Verhältnis zur Architektur des 19. Jahrhunderts, verlangt jedoch auch die Verschiebung der Zeitgrenze im Denkmalbegriff: "Alte Werke von Oberbauräten des 19. Jahrhunderts als Dokumente der Kunst- und Architekturgeschichte zu archivieren wäre ein schwer vertretbares Anliegen und führte wirklich nur zur elephantiasartigen Aufblähung eines im Gestern verhafteten Denkmalbegriffes. Die tatsächliche Aufgabe liegt anders: Es gilt abermals das Angebot zu aktivieren, welches die Überreste gründerzeitlicher Architektur an die Stadt von Morgen machen... Und hier bündelt sich der konservative Wunsch nach Erhaltung mit dem sich progressiv gebenden und im Grunde doch so oft romantisch-rousseauistischen Protest".

Sauerländer glaubt schließlich auch, daß der bis um 1970 unantastbare Begriff des "Originals" zu revidieren wäre: "Jene Bestimmung des Originals, als dessen essentielle Eigenschaften Ursprünglichkeit, Einmaligkeit und ergo Unwiederholbarkeit galten, scheint im Bewußtsein der Gegenwart mehr und mehr an absoluter Gültigkeit zu verlieren. ...es gibt zu denken, daß die rekonstruierenden Lösungen - vom Goethehaus über die Münchner Residenz und den Münsteraner Prinzipalmarkt, um von polnischen Städten und russischen Schlössern einmal ganz zu schweigen - heute positiver beurteilt werden als wohl noch vor einem Jahrzehnt. Wo die pathetische Überhöhung des Originals fragwürdig wird, da entdeckt man, daß Zeichen, Erinnerungen aus der Vergangenheit auch im Bereich des Sichtbaren revoziert, wieder aufgerufen werden können." Es wird in diesen Überlegungen Mielkes Aufsatz aus 1961 zitiert, wo der Unterschied zwischen Dokument und Symbol im Denkmalbegriff frappant ausgearbeitet wurde, in einer Zeit allerdings, wo weder der Dokumentencharakter noch der Symbolcharakter (dieser letztere abgesehen von Ausnahmefällen) ein allzu großes Öffentlichkeitsinteresse hatte.

Denkmalpflegerische Ansätze in der sog. postmodernen Diskussion

Im Hintergrund der 68-er Kritik und auch der theoretischen Antworten der herausgeforderten Denkmalpflegeinstitutionen stand eine viel allgemeingültigere Debatte, in der es um die Anfechtung der Moderne auf verschiedenen Ebenen ging. Politische, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Aspekte wurden berücksichtigt, wenn die Fortschrittstheorien der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts grundsätzlich in Frage gestellt wurden. Diese Debatte bedeutete (oder bedeutet) auch für Denkmalpflege Chancen und Gefahren: Einerseits Positives im Bereich der Architekturentwicklung, die endlich von der gesichts- (und geschichts)losen Sachlichkeit der Wohnsilos Abschied nahmen und mit der "solitären Arroganz" moderner Büro-, Kaufhaus- und Bankgebäude brechen möchte; Positives auch in der Absicht, im Stadtgewebe endlich auf eine räumliche und zeitliche Kontextualität hinzuweisen und die sprachliche Dimension der Architektur fördern zu wollen. Gefahren andererseits in einer vermarkteten und simulierten

Geschichtlichkeit, wo es in erster Linie um Schein und nicht um Substanz geht, um eine Revision der Geschichte für unwissenschaftliche und unmoralische Manipulationen. In der Denkmalpflege spricht man häufig über eine "Fassadenkosmetik", die sprechender Ausdruck ist für Alibilösungen der Ratlosigkeit, für vorgetäuschte Kulissen, etc.

In diesem Zusammenhang erhält die Diskussion um den Begriff des Originals eine zusätzliche Schärfe und Aktualität.

Wenn Architektur in der postmodernen Theorie nicht mehr als funktionalistische Wohnmaschine, sondern als sprachlicher Kommunikationsraum definiert wird, so hatten diese Neuinterpretierung entscheidende Auswirkungen auf den Denkmalbegriff und auch auf seine öffentliche Akzeptanz. Die Öffentlichkeit war seit dem späten 18. Jahrhundert mit Geschichte als eine Form der Beherrschung konfrontiert: im 19. Jahrhundert als stilpluralistische Legitimation des technischen Fortschritts, im 20. Jahrhundert als unversöhnlicher Kampf zwischen vorlaufenden und rückschauenden Utopien. Entweder die erdrückende Kenntnis der Vergangenheit oder die erbarmungslose Prophezeiung der Zukunft bestimmten das Verhältnis der Öffentlichkeit zur Geschichte, die der Gegenwart immer weniger Raum und Gültigkeit ließ.

Die Postmoderne lobt aber nicht das total Beherrschende, sondern das Unfertige, wie der französische Philosoph Jacques Derrida in einem Gespräch unter dem Titel "*Archi/Textur als Labyrinth*" 1987 hervorhob. Damit möchte er einer pluralistischen Versöhnung den Weg ebnen: "Nur die Verunmöglichung des Turms von Babel ermöglicht es der Architektur wie auch der Vielfalt der Sprachen eine Geschichte zu haben. Und diese Geschichte ist immer in Beziehung zu einem Göttlichen zu verstehen, das endlich ist. Vielleicht ist es ein Charakteristikum der Postmoderne, daß sie dieser Niederlage Rechnung trägt. Wenn sich die Moderne durch das Streben nach der absoluten Herrschaft auszeichnet, so ist die Postmoderne vielleicht die Feststellung oder die Erfahrung ihres Endes, des Endes dieses Plans zur Beherrschung." Hinter diesen pathetischen Worten ist eine Perspektive auch für den Denkmalbegriff vorhanden, wie Derrida selbst ausführte: "Ein neues Verhältnis zwischen dem Einzelnen und den Vielen,

zwischen dem Original und den Reproduktionen zeichnet sich ab. Denken Sie z.B. an China und Japan, wo die Tempel aus Holz gebaut sind und regelmäßig vollkommen erneuert werden, ohne daß sich der Originalität verlieren würde, die also nicht in ihrem sichtbaren Körper haust, sondern in etwas anderem. Auch das ist Babel: die Vielfalt der Beziehungen zum architektonischen Ereignis von einer Kultur zur anderen. Zu wissen, daß ein Versprechen stattfindet, selbst wenn es nicht in seiner sichtbaren Form gehalten würde."

Wurde der Öffentlichkeit im Zeitalter des Historismus die **Geschichte** als nationaler (oder internationaler) Besitz demonstriert, im darauffolgenden Zeitalter der Moderne sie dann entweder verleugnet oder als gespenstische totale Macht dargestellt, so könnte in einer kommenden Epoche der "Postmoderne" - so der Wunsch ihrer Anhänger - **geschichtliche Vielfalt** ein herrschaftsloses, versöhnliches Verhältnis zur menschlichen Umwelt ermöglichen und die bekämpften Bruchlinien zwischen Vergangenheit und Zukunft gegenstandslos machen.

In diesem Sinn wäre aber eine Erweiterung des Denkmalbegriffs auch sinnlos, denn die Umwelt würde dann Denkmal und Nicht-Denkmal gleichzeitig darstellen. In diesem Fall wären dann Zeitgrenze, Selektionsmechanismen, die Frage ob Original oder Kopie keine Kampfthemen mehr. Die denkmalpflegerische Öffentlichkeit - d.h. von den Schutzmechanismen betroffene Öffentlichkeit - bestünde nicht mehr aus Leidtragenden, Demolierern und Schützern, sondern nur mehr aus Verwertern, Touristen und Konsumenten. Die Einwohner der Denkmale und Denkmalorte könnten sich als Akteure ihrer eigenen Geschichtlichkeit empfinden und verkaufen. Die Welt bestünde in diesem Fall nur mehr aus verschiedenen Geschichts- und Zukunftsreservaten, die Umwelt wäre dann ein total auf Kommunikationen eingestellter Raum ohne Zwischen- und Konfliktbereiche. Diese Gedanken erscheinen uns heute noch gewiß lächerlich, gewisse Tendenzen zeichnen sich jedoch in dieser Richtung ab.

Die Suche nach neuen Denkmalöffentlichkeit

Nach der kurz skizzierten drei verschiedenen Standorten zur Bestimmung des Denkmalbegriffs und seiner Öffentlichkeit in unserer Gegenwart - die,

wie wir gesehen haben, viele Querbezüge aufweisen - soll das Grundproblem dieses Referates zum Schluß nochmals deutlich formuliert werden: Ist und inwieweit ist der Denkmalbegriff im Spannungsfeld verschiedener Interessen demokratisierbar?

Wenn man davon ausgeht, daß der neuzeitliche Denkmalbegriff ein Kind von Aufklärung und Romantik ist, wird damit schon seine Widersprüchlichkeit und gewissermaßen Unbestimmbarkeit angedeutet: Einerseits transportiert er die Hoffnung, aus der Vergangenheit für die Zukunft positive Handlungsmöglichkeiten lernen zu können - andererseits ist er auch ein sentimentales Zeichen für die Lobpreisung der Vergänglichkeit und Melancholie. Aus dieser Doppelbödigkeit des Phänomens "Denkmal" ergibt sich seine Symbolfunktion und sein Dokumentencharakter. Denkmal ist für die Öffentlichkeit Mahnmal und Schatz (oder Lernort und "objet trouvé") gleichzeitig; die Erhaltungswünsche und auch -pflichten wurden auf diesen Ebenen schon im 19. Jahrhundert formuliert. Die nationale Komponente der bürgerlichen Entwicklung führte im Gegenstand Denkmal zur staatlichen Identifikation, als Hinweis auf die glorreiche Vergangenheit; das Denkmal war aber auch ein künstlerisches Vorbild für die Multiplizierung zivilisatorisch bedingter Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten.

Die Denkmalöffentlichkeit des 19. Jahrhunderts war eine nationalstaatliche, wenngleich die Denkmale durch ihren Stimmungscharakter manche unkontrollierte Freiräume für die Subjektivität dieser Öffentlichkeit sicherten. Der Begriff der "patriotischen Pflicht" zur Erhaltung der gefährdeten Monuments wurde erst in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts verstärkt, als die große Welle der Industrialisierung immer mehr vorindustrielle Lebenszusammenhänge vernichtete und der pathetische Schutz von isolierten Domen und Schlössern eine breitere Öffentlichkeit nicht mehr befriedigte. Diese Öffentlichkeit war mit den patriotischen Altertumsforschern nicht mehr identisch, die in Vereinen versammelt seit um 1800 die Geheimnisse der Vergangenheit auch topografisch zu entziffern versuchten; im Gegenteil es sollte im späten 19. Jahrhundert das ganze Volk mobilisiert werden, um dem Staat zu ermöglichen, effektive Schutzmaßnahmen gegen die gründerzeitlichen Veränderungen zu institutionalisieren.

Egoismus und Habgier wurden von der beginnenden Heimatschutzbewegung - deren Wurzeln tief in das 19. Jahrhundert zurückreichen - als Hauptstünden der Gesellschaft angeprangert und die Altväter der modernen Denkmaltheorie, Alois Riegl und Georg Dehio forderten einen "sozialistischen Charakter" in der Denkmalpflege, d.h. Altruismus und weitgehenden Verzicht auf private Eigentumsinteressen. Beide sprachen 1905 diesen Wunsch aus, als der Begriff "sozial" schon in den verschiedenen politischen Strömungen und Zielsetzungen fest verankert war. Sie hofften, daß der Staat im Interesse des Volkes den idealistischen Erhaltungsbestrebungen eine verordnende Hilfe leisten wird. Riegl sprach sogar von der "Demokratisierung des Denkmalbegriffs" und verstand diesen für die damalige Zeit ungewöhnlichen Ausdruck hauptsächlich als die nivellierende Kraft des "Alterswertes", für die es eigentlich egal sein sollte, ob es sich um einen Dom oder um ein Bauernhaus handelt, denn Demokratie im Denkmalbegriff hieß für Riegl: alles was alt ist, wäre gleichermaßen zu schützen.

Beide Theoretiker hofften, daß mit der Entfaltung der Moderne, die sich von der vermeintlichen Imitation der geschichtlichen Formen befreite, die Historizität der alten und vielfach gefährdeten Objekte genug Motivation für die Gesamtheit der Öffentlichkeit bieten wird, um für ihre Erhaltung vehement einzutreten. "Historizität" verstand Dehio noch mehr als nationales Gut, Riegl dagegen als eine Art pantheistische Stimmungswertigkeit, ein Fluidum der Alterungsprozesse. Beide waren leidenschaftliche Vertreter des Originals, als unverfälschlichen Dokuments der unwiederholbaren Vergangenheit. Die Bestrebung, das "Echte" d.h. Originelle zu erhalten war auch ein Wunsch der Moderne, denn sowohl Denkmalpflege als auch moderne Kunst bekämpften die "Lügen" des Historismus.

Das Volk war jedoch in diesen Überlegungen weit überschätzt und undifferenziert betrachtet. Der subjektive Bildungsbürger hatte um 1900 versucht, seine Wünsche und Sehnsüchte - nämlich Aufklärung und Romantik in einer Synthese des Denkmals präsentiert - als Volksbedürfnis zu deklarieren. Dabei war das Volk - verstanden darunter die breiten Bevölkerungsschichten - noch gar nicht so weit emanzipiert, um dieses gewünschte Geschichtsverhältnis

akzeptieren zu können. Wenn das Dorfrathaus im späten 19. Jahrhundert in barockisierenden Stilformen errichtet wurde, so verstand es wohl jeder Bauer, daß es in diesem Zusammenhang um etwas Herrschaftliches, Nobles ging, denn Geschichte war für die weniger gebildeten sozialen Bevölkerungsgruppen nicht die eigene Geschichte, sondern die Geschichte der Herrschaften. So hatten Spekulanten oder fortschrittsgläubige Bürgermeister weiterhin leicht, das Dorf- oder das Stadtgebäude radikal zu verändern. Im deutschsprachigen Raum wurde das "breite Volk" mit der eigenen Geschichte erstmals im Dritten Reich konfrontiert, als die Heimatschutzbewegung zur Blut-und-Boden-Ideologie deformiert zu einer totalitären Identifikation führte. Die Denkmalpflege spielte hier vielfach leider mit, weil ihre Zielsetzungen leichter erfüllbar zu sein schienen. Im diktatorischen Staat funktionierte z.B. die Unterschutzstellung gefährdeter Objekte wesentlich schneller und einfacher, als in den vorangehenden Epochen, als Interessenkonflikte vor allem von wirtschaftlichen Aspekten bestimmt wurden. Die deutsche Vergangenheit war freilich eine stark selektionierte Geschichte; Objekte, die bestimmte Geistesrichtungen zum Ausdruck brachten, die nicht in die NS-Ideologie paßten, konnten nicht, oder nicht zu leicht zu Denkmälern deklariert werden, als Objekte, in denen das diktatorische Regime die Vorläufer des "tausendjährigen Reiches" zu erkennen glaubte. Die gründerzeitliche Architektur ebenso wie die Anfänge des Funktionalismus wurden als falsche Geschichte verpönt. Hiermit wurden einige Träume der Denkmalpfleger erfüllt: die Einschränkung des Eigentumsrechts, die heftige Ablehnung des "verlorenen" Eklektizismus, die Heranziehung der mit Vergangenheit beschäftigten Fachleute in die großen Zukunftsplanungen waren um 1900 noch unerreichbare Ziele.

Die Katastrophe des zweiten Weltkrieges, das Eingeständnis von Irrtümern warf die Denkmalbehörden dorthin zurück, wo sie vor dem Dritten Reich standen: in idealistische, aber von einer zweiter Gründerzeit erfaßten Gesellschaft wenig beachtete und schwach dotierte Behörden, die in der Wiederaufbauphase sich total auf den wissenschaftlichen Denkmalbegriff zurückgezogen haben, für die strenge Erhaltung des Originals kämpften und vom der

beginnenden Prosperität ausgesetzten Volk wieder negiert wurden. Nach den Erfahrungen des Dritten Reiches hätete man sich davor, die Denkmalpflege konzeptuell und vorausschauend in die Belange der Gesellschaftspolitik einschalten zu wollen. In den 50-er und 60-er Jahren wurde eine streng entideologisierte Denkmalpflege praktiziert. Diese Bestrebung, nur wissenschaftlich zu agieren, wurde durch die Nachbarschaft der kommunistischen Länder noch verstärkt. Die kommunistischen Diktaturen beanspruchten die Denkmalpflege im Gegensatz zum NS-Regime nicht, da die marxistische Ideologie in erster Linie zukunftsorientiert war und radikale gesellschaftliche Veränderungen wünschte. Interessanterweise wurde die Denkmalpflege in der stalinistischen Periode nicht dazu motiviert, systematisch und massenweise die Denkmale der Arbeiterklasse und der Bauern unter Schutz zu stellen, da der herkömmliche Denkmalbegriff in diesen Ländern eigentlich beibehalten wurde. Abgesehen von manchen ideologischen Gedenkstätten, die kultisch gepflegt wurden und abgesehen von einer kurzen Phase, in der die Wertschätzung der herrschaftlichen Architektur und Kunst massiv zurückgedrängt wurde, kehrte man bald zum wissenschaftlichen Denkmalbegriff zurück und die denkmalpflegerische Methodik unterschied sich nicht im wesentlichen von der der westlichen Länder. Der vollständige Wiederaufbau von Warschau hatte keine sozialistische sondern, eine nationalistische Motivation und die erwähnte Rekonstruktion von russischen Schlössern entsprach mehr einer bürgerlichen als einer proletarischen Kultur. Die kommunistischen Länder pflegten ihre nationale Vergangenheit manchmal sogar intensiver als die westlichen Länder; die Denkmalpflege diente hier dazu, die Verbindung mit der übrigen Welt aufrechtzuhalten und später die Geschäfte mit dem devisenbringenden Tourismus nicht zu versäumen. Die Denkmalpflege war in diesen Ländern ein gutes Vehikel, Kirchen und Schlösser nicht ganz vernichten zu müssen und die rumänischen Absichten eines wahnsinnigen Ceausescu, die Vergangenheit auszuradiieren und die Denkmalämter zu sperren, blieben isoliert. Was in diesen Ländern die Denkmalpflege in große Schwierigkeiten brachte, war die wirtschaftliche Misere, d.h. der Verfall der Altstädte und die daraus folgende museale Methode, bloß herausge-

suchte Einzeldenkmale wiederherstellen zu können. Folgeschwerer war für Osteuropa die massive Errichtung neuer Wohnsiedlungen, die zum abstrakten Plansoll vor allem der 70-er Jahre gehörten und die historischen Altstädte "unwirtlich" zu ersticken drohen. Auffallend ist es auch, daß die vorhin skizzierten Diskussionen der westlichen Denkmalpflege keine allzu große Auswirkung auf die kommunistischen Länder hatten und daß nicht einmal die "linke" Kritik der 68-er Generation am herkömmlichen Denkmalbegriff dort aufgegriffen wurde.

So kehren wir zum Anfang zurück und können feststellen, daß die Problematik des öffentlichen Interesses in der Denkmalpflege noch ein wenig erforschtes und diskutiertes Gebiet dieses Faches ist. Die zwei grundsätzlichen Inhalte des Denkmalbegriffes, nämlich sein Dokumenten- und sein Symbolcharakter, verlangen nach verschiedenen Öffentlichkeiten, die zueinander ebenso wie die Inhalte im Begriff in einem Spannungsverhältnis stehen. Die Demokratisierung der Öffentlichkeit ist ein schwieriger und ein von Rückschlägen begleiteter Prozeß eigentlich seit dem späten 18. Jahrhundert, als der neuzeitliche Denkmalbegriff erstmals umrisse wurde. Das öffentliche Interesse am Denkmal bestimmen daher noch immer Aufklärung und Romantik, die in diesem Prozeß eine wichtige Rolle spielen: Identitätsstiftung (mit Vorbildcharakter) und Freiheit (als moralische Distanz) machen die Gegenstände des "Denkmals" zu Symbol und Dokument.

Mit dem Dokumentencharakter ist die historische Methodik verbunden, die zwar ständig in Entwicklung begriffen, als wissenschaftliche Zugangsweise nicht demokratisieren läßt. Die Symbolfunktion des Denkmals verlangt freilich nach einer gesellschaftlichen Adäquanz und Akzeptanz; d.h. in unserem westlichen System nach einer Demokratisierung. Bei der Überschneidung dieser beiden Aspekte war und ist ein Gefahr von Manipulationen vorhanden, sodaß institutionell gesichert werden sollte, daß der wissenschaftliche Aspekt der Denkmalpflege im Spannungsfeld verschiedener Interessenkonflikte nicht untergeht. Die Überbetonung der Symbolfunktion des Denkmals hat in der Vergangenheit häufig zu Deformierungen geführt, sie bietet jedoch genügend wissenschaftlicher Kontrolle die

gesellschaftliche Relevanz eines Phänomens - nämlich die institutionalisierte Denkmalpflege - die von unserer Kultur (noch) nicht wegzudenken ist.

So bleibt konkret ausgesprochen in Österreich die Existenz von zwei Denkmalinstitutionsebenen berechtigt und wünschenswert: Auf Bundesebene

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wird der Dokumentencharakter des Denkmals immer im Vordegrund stehen; auf Landesebene dagegen herrscht sicherlich die Symbolfunktion vor, die nach einer emanzipierten, demokratischen Öffentlichkeit verlangt.

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Ťažkosti s demokratizáciou pojmu pamiatka

1. Konkrétna východisková situácia: politická debata v Rakúsku o "Veränderung" (väčšej právomoci spolkových zemí, pozn. prekl.) - t.j. federalizácii ústrednej štátnej pamiatkovej starostlivosti v zmysle "demokratizácie pojmu pamiatka". Argumenty a protiargumenty. Je pamiatková starostlivosť politická alebo vedecká činnosť s pojmom pamiatka?

2. Kritika generácie '68 na etablovaných úradoch pamiatok v 70. rokoch: žiadne kultúrno-politicke koncepcie, reagovali na ni konat, žiadna teoretická diskusia o základných pojmoch, elitárny postoj.

3. Teoretické proti-pozície inštitúcií pamiatkovej starostlivosti: rozšírenie pojmu pamiatka neznamená žiadnu kvalitatívnu zmenu (vrátane predmetov 19. storočia, ochrany masovej architektúry), zachovanie a starostlivosť o "originál" zostáva ako hlavný cieľ. Pamiatková starostlivosť je povolená na to, aby pri-

pravila historický materiál a bola obhajcom ohrozených objektov.

4. Vklad pamiatkovej starostlivosti k tzv. postmodernej diskusii: Šance: Kritika nehostinnosti funkcionalistických miest, príanie časovej a priestorovej kontextuality, zdôraznenie rečovej dimenzie architektúry. Nebezpečenstvá: Simulovanie dejín, fasádová kozmetika, manipulácia originálnych objektov. Deridov názor na "originál" a "rekonštrukciu". Objasňovanie dejín pomocou pluralizmu?

5. Hľadanie nových verejných pamiatok (Denkmalöffentlicheiten): Poučenie a romantika v pojme pamiatka - funkcia symbolu a charakter dokumentu. Hnutie za ochranu domova (Heimatschutz) a moderné teorie pamiatkovej starostlivosti (Riegl a Dehio). Deformácie v Tretej ríši. Pamiatková starostlivosť a komunistické krajiny. Východisko z dilemy?

Perestroika and the Destabilization of the Soviet monuments

Albert BOIME

On late Thursday night, 22 August 1991 - following the dissolution of the Russian putsch - thousands of jubilant celebrators marched to Red Square; the Kremlin, and Dzerzhinsky Square, hundred of demonstrators chanted slogans against the Communist Party and the KGB, threatening to storm the Lubianka. To calm the angry crowd, Moscow mayor Gavril Popov agreed to remove the huge statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky (founder of the Cheka, forerunner of the KGB) from the square. In this case, the local leaders channeled anger into a constructive destructive act and thereby controlled the crowd's outrage. By midnight, heavy construction cranes were in place to lift the fourteen-ton statue from its massive pedestal as three thousand cheering spectators watched (Fig. 1). The first of many widely despised monuments of Communist heroes removed over the next few days had been overturned.

Immediately following the failed coup, the Western World's imagination was captivated by the dismantling of the Dzerzhinsky and a number of other public monuments and sculptures including those of Lenin, Kalinin, and Iakov Sverdlov - all heroes of the Bolshevik revolution (Figs. 2, 3). Indeed, throughout Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union republics, either spontaneously, or in response to orders, people began removing images of Lenin as well as local national heroes linked to Leninism and Soviet politics from public view. In downtown Moscow one could witness ecstatic iconoclasts chipping pieces off the pedestals of the deposed monuments to Dzerzhinsky and Sverdlov, with throngs of people posing at the feet of former heroes. These were the days of "the downfall of statues." The idols of stone and bronze were humiliated, knocked down off the verti-

cal and either carried off to the dump or piled up for horizontal display in a public site. The goal of the crowd that attacked the statues seemed clear: to reclaim the former totalitarian spaces of Moscow and invest them with a new signification, to transform them into public spaces of open negotiation and exposition.

The construction of official monuments inevitably involves assertions about the preservation of historical memory, the visualization of ideology in the public realm, the legitimization of existing authority, and the semiotics of social identity. Their destruction challenges these assertions by unmasking the embodied aims of permanence, memory, and authority and by implicating these emblems of stability momentarily in the transitoriness of everyday life. Statue-breaking attests to the impermanence of heretofore supposedly permanent regimes and hence its physical as well as metonymic relevance to historical change.

I argue in this paper that statue-breaking is both anti-tradition and, in the case of the ex-Soviet Union, anti-totalitarian. Although iconoclasm may be an expression of illegitimate or despotic authority (witness the Fascist destruction of artifacts for political ends) or even of individual acts of image-defacing, my study here assumes a group attack on the symbols of tyranny.¹ Since public monuments help forge a unifying experience in hierarchic societies (and there are no others in the modern world) and are essential to the self-esteem and social identity of regional and national communities, the demolition of monuments serves the same purpose as their erection. The act of destruction represents the shedding of the old social skin in relationship to a discredited

ancient regime and constitutes a regeneration of the social self in relationship to the collectivity.

This new self must then be realized in a different kind of representation, one that now seeks to establish links with some imagined past, freshly interpreted, that preserves personal and collective nostalgia. Although the sense of unlimited potentiality and momentary euphoria that accompanies release from authoritarian rule would seem to provoke visions of a resplendent future, the dream must be historically justified by a radical reinterpretation of the recent nightmare. The desire for self-immortality is so powerful that it is unlikely that monument-making for the sake of historical amnesia as well as of memory will ever disappear as a form of human accomplishment.²

Public monuments are the visible coordinates of a regime's power, and each change in regime requires a new set of symbols. Some monumental icons seem to defy this principle and outlast old regimes, but this speaks to their signifying role in popular culture or to their capacity to undergo successive reinterpretations or recodings in new systems over time. In the purpose of the public monument is to commemorate and of the official state-sponsored monument to inscribe official monumental disrupts that history and opens it up to a more inclusive interpretation for the wider community.

Ideally, the opportunity would present itself to create out of the old public space an authentic public life where the competing rights and interests of different groups were at least recognized. Although for future leaders the destruction is tied to their desire to efface history and start with a clean slate, the transition phase involves the clash of competing ideas within the public realm. The fractured or newly-absent public monument is a sign of this evolving social as well as political identity.

The symbolic erasure of the oppressive past is not only a therapeutic action but a manifest sign of readiness to grasp new human possibilities. The public collaboration in statue-breaking or removal is a concrete expression of participation in historical change, more direct than passively experiencing the alteration of site names. How else explain the willingness of the impoverished citizens of the ex-Soviet Union and its client states to sustain the expenses



1. The 14-ton statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky pulled off its pedestal outside KGB headquarters late Thursday night, August 22 1991

involved in the wrecking and hauling away of the statues? Although the sense of change achieved through the dismantling of statuary may in the long run prove illusory, there is a momentary feeling of self-realization in the collective act - a projection of a larger vision and hope through consensus.

A broken statue may well be a more authentic index of popular political sensibility than a new monument erected by the succeeding government. May we now expect a monument ordered under Yeltsin to commemorate his putsch against the Russian Parliament and its unconstitutional dissolution as the first step on the long road to building "democracy"? More likely, Yeltsin will want to record his role in the August 1991 coup, perhaps representing himself atop a tank - an ironic reprise of the image of Lenin standing on an armored car. Yeltsin however, may have difficulty explaining away the fact that



2. The toppled statues of Lenin and Petru Groza, Bucharest, 1990



3. Anatoli Beliasov, Removal of a Lenin Statue, 1991. Gelatin Silver Print.

he then enjoyed the support of the same parliamentary "hardliners" who were so recently ousted. Or perhaps there are plans for replicas of the two White Houses in Washington and Moscow surmounted by a statue of a cherubic Yeltsin atop a tall column; after all, he has the blessing of the entire Western establishment headed by Bill Clinton himself. Evidently, Clinton is ready to let democracy and legality fade in importance on the assumption that Yeltsin's authoritarian role is the best bet for keeping Russia safe for capitalism and international finance.³

All of this may have been anticipated in the West's reception of the iconoclasm that attended the failure of the August coup. The complexities of the statue-mania were glossed over in favor of a broad symbolic association of the collapse of Soviet Communism and the toppling of the statues. It is thus altogether unsurprising that the U. S. mainstream media remains complicit with the official government line that supports Yeltsin's recent attack on the unfolding democratic process in Russia. They continue to frame the conflict as a dramatic clash of the contending forces of democracy and despotism, with the former deputies in parliament cast as the villains, otherwise known as "die-hard Communists and nationalists". This time the majority of Russians stood on the sidelines, perhaps stultified by Yeltsin's authoritarian repression and the sense of an impending crackdown on independents and trade unionists. So much for energy expended on tearing down statues of ex-Soviet tyrants.

Of course, I do not wish to appear naive in pointing out the hypocrisy of our establishment and the subservience of our press. Yet Eastern Europe was the one area where the illusion may have still worked. The West paraded there as the ally of the downtrodden, the protector of Polish workers and the Russian victims of the gulag. It is this myth that vanished into thin air when the tanks began shelling Moscow's White House. It may just be that in the long run popular democracy is even more threatening to so-called democratic states whose governing elites fear mass participation as despotism from below. But if we are determined to impose capitalism by any means, we will never be able to achieve our objective with a genuine consensus of the various competing interests. So we opt for some kind of iron fist, for a czar of sorts, and in that case the toppling of statues may be a portent for the fall of the hollow icons on our side as well.

To clarify my discussion of the process of monument iconoclasm I will use the following terms: *monument inversion*, *monument subversion*, and *monument conversion*. The first category refers to collective crowd action in overturning monuments during times of drastic political change, when there is a sense of self-renewal and an acceptance of

present uncertainty in the faith that the future can be controlled.⁴ The second is related to official overthrow of the history of the recent past, what the new ruling elite wants everyone to forget (including its previous complicity with the old regime). This also includes the iconoclasm of anti-democratic forces whose elimination of democratic symbols is predicated on a New Order given to revisionist history. Unlike the idolatry of authoritarian symbols, however, the democratic or republican effigies - say a Washington or a Lincoln, for example - merely engender respect at best. Hence their destruction lacks the liberating energies of symbols that aroused extremes of hatred or blind obedience. The third and final category implies the salvaging of the monument or its fragments by recoding and recycling them in a different historical interplay between the past, present and future. Here the political message may be obsolete, but the historical message is still unfolding in a special space organized for study and contemplation. One earlier example is that of the Abbé Henri Grégoire's defense of the conservation of the statues of the kings during French Revolution on the grounds that these "symbols of oppression" could be transformed "into permanent reminders of tyranny, forcing them to become a kind of permanent pillory".⁵ A more recent instance of this recontextualization are the proposed theme parks for the exhibition of the collapsed statutory, as in the case of Budapest. Although all my categories overlap to some extent and are purer than anything found in actuality, I believe that they furnish us a useful tool or characterizing modern iconoclasm.

In the latest case of statuemania, the historical context and regional divisions gave a coherence to the vandalism as a sustained political act. The act repeats an ancient tradition addressing the changed status and meanings of public works of art. Ironically, the opening shot did not occur in the Soviet Union but in Ethiopia, on the occasion of the overthrow of President Mengistu Haile Mariam. Mengistu, who had held power for seventeen years, fled once his Communist regime began to collapse in the face of the insurgency. One of the key events in the recognition of the demise was the pulling down of the fifty-foot high statue of Lenin by government construction crews (Fig. 4). The colossal statue, marking out



4. Residents of Addis Ababa on top of fallen statue of Lenin, May 1991

the space known as Lenin Square in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, was given by the Russians in the 1980s to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Ethiopian revolution. (The workers dislodged a plaque declaring the statue as a gift from the Soviet people - just like the Statue of Liberty, a political token from one elite group to another, was falsely supposed to have been a gift from the people of France.)

Although students began to scrawl political graffiti on the legs of the statue prior to its tearing down, the act itself was not initiated "spontaneously" by the people but by the government. Thousands of Ethiopians poured into the streets to celebrate the event, however, and watched with rapt fascination as it came down by ropes attached to the statue's shoulders and waist and drilling by jackhammers into the reinforced concrete base. Yet the government clearly meant this to be a major political event, coinciding with its release of political prisoners. In orchestrating the bringing down of the statue and declaring amnesty for the group of prisoners, the new government attempted to distance itself from the old to pick up popular support and strengthen its hand in peace talks scheduled the following week in London. That this had its intended impact is seen in the statement of one western diplomat who welcomed both acts as a demonstration of "the sincerity of their commitment to reform".

The event certainly contained ingredients of catharsis of the crowds who witnessed the toppling



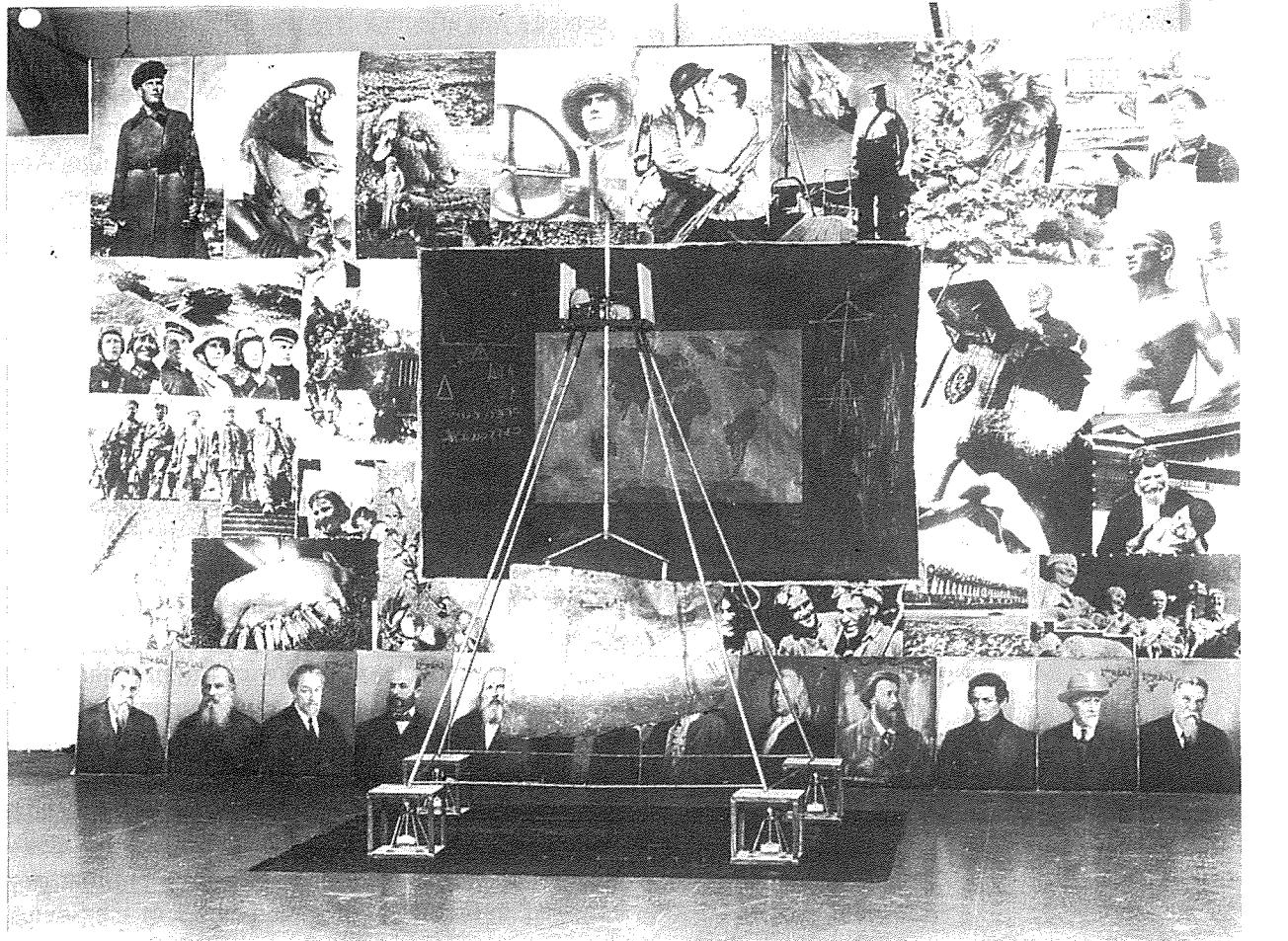
5. Vera Mukhina, *The Worker and the Collective Farm Woman*, steel plated, 1937

of the statue. One bystander, a thirty-two year old municipal planner, declared: "That statue is not symbol of Socialism. It's a symbol of exploitation and bad leaders. Maybe now people will begin to forget the anger we all have inside when we don't have to see Lenin every day." What I believe he implies here is that the public space has now been redefined to match the psychology of the crowd. The statue of Lenin defined the public space in alienating and repressive terms and with its removal the space - not the individual represented nor the ideology he repre-

sented - was affected. It is less a question of sympathetic magic than of opening the public sphere through monument inversion. Her the government read the citizens correctly in allowing them to participate in an event that coincided with change. Accordingly, Christian churches and Muslim mosques were overflowing with worshippers who now saw the possibilities of a return to total freedom of religion.⁶

One case study that almost defies categorization is the recent disruption of the monumental image by Vera Mukhina, *The Worker and the Collective Farm Woman* - the symbolic centerpiece of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics's Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition of 1937 (Fig. 5). The colossal partnership of the two figures, each carrying one component of the national emblem of hammer and sickle, harmonizes to create the cosmic national blending of male and female, rural and urban, peasant and worker, embodying the highest political and aesthetic ideals of the Soviet Union at that moment. Here the structure of the monument is an allegorical presentation of the concept of "from each according to his/her ability, to each according to his/her need". Yet Mukhina's group, representing the enthusiasm and optimism of youth and youth's idealism, was put to the service of a program that expressed, in the words of the organizer of the Soviet pavilion, Boris Ternovets, "the idea of efficiency and powerful growth, of the invincible movement of the Soviet Union along the path of conquests and victories." It was a synthetic construction supported by an ideology that inevitably could not sustain itself.

The mischievous contemporary dissident Soviet artist Afrika, who thumbed his nose at censorship authorities and the official Soviet art world, created a project that directly attacked this work, *Donaldestruction* - made explicitly for consumption in the West (Fig. 6). It began as an act of wanton vandalism. Africa and a friend travelled to Moscow, where they removed a door panel from the inner thigh of the female half of Mukhina's monument that now stands in front of the pavilion of the building of Achievements of the National Economy of the ex-USSR. Whisked back to Leningrad, the steel door became fetishized into an entity called "Agent", which was incorporated into an installation of sculptures, collages, drawings and paintings that link Le-



6. Afrika (Sergei Bugaev), Donalddestruction, mixed media installation with fragment of The Worker and the Collective Farm Woman, 1991

nin, Lenin's Tomb, the Taj Mahal, McDonald's, Donald Duck and Trump Tower in a vast conspiracy narrative. My capsule reading of this complicated allegory is that Communism and Capitalism needed each other to maintain control over their respective domestic realms.

Sooner or later, the ramifications of this global symbiosis were destined to doom both world powers to obsolescence, but, as it turned out, capitalism was more efficient at building a war machine and satisfying the domestic front, and the Soviet Union bit the dust first. The Western industrial nations needed symbolic imagery to persuade their peoples of the triumph of their ideology, and the new Russian *privilegentsia* that had deserted Gorbachev for moving too slowly towards capitalism happily provided them.

As dismantled statues, Soviet icons can now clamor for the status of consumer items. One resident of Kiev went around buying up all the Lenin statuettes, pins, and paintings for the Western art market at the time of the dismantling of the Lenin statue there, concluding that there would be a vast international demand for Bolshevik souvenirs now that the Party was dissolved.⁷ On 24 October 1992, a crowd of three thousand Russian citizens gathered in the October Place near one of the surviving Lenin statues to protest Yeltsin's drive to capitalism; one complaint was that the holy icons of the churches were being sold to foreigners to pay for privatization.⁸ There are ironic parallels between the selling of the state's patrimony, the loss of the religious aura of the icons and the loss of the political aura of the monuments.



7. Art Spiegelman, Recuperated Worker and the Collective Farm Woman, manipulated photograph, 1993

Another manipulation of the Mukhina monument is Art Spiegelman's entry for Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid's 1993 exhibition, *Monumental Propaganda*, run concurrently in Moscow and New York City (Fig. 7). The cartoonist and author of *Maus* made the most minimal interference by simply shrinking its pedestal. Now rather than striding purposefully into the future, the enthusiastic pair are about to topple into the abyss and into everlasting humiliation with their next step. Spiegelman claimed that his project was his way of "bringing them up to date".⁹

When Komar and Melamid first announced their plans for an exhibition for projects to preserve the ex-Soviet monuments through transformation (or conversion in the sense that I want to use it) they declared that they desired "neither worship nor

annihilation".¹⁰ What they were proposing was a "creative collaboration" with the monuments to convert them into post-totalitarian "history lessons". They were concerned that with each wave of iconoclasm in the evolution of Russian society, "it is history, the country's true past, which is conveniently being obliterated." Of course, Komar and Melamid knew full well the appeal of such a show to the West and it is not surprising that it was exhibited in the Courtyard Gallery of Manhattan's World Financial Center - the seat of global capitalism.

Indeed, most of the entries were satirical including their own: they would convert the famous image of the gesturing Lenin into a hapless New Yorker trying to hail a cab, a joke that recently graced the cover of *The New Yorker*.¹¹ More dramatically they would salvage Lenin's tomb with an electronic signboard that would flash messages including one that added the suffix "ISM" to Lenin's name and convert it into a monument to a particular epoch rather than to an immortal idea. Constantin Boym, a Russian émigré living in New York, would alter existing monuments into monumental advertising schemes, and suggested that the Russian government lease the various Lenin statues to Western corporations for "a hefty hard-currency fee". Mac Adams, an American, would tear down the famous statue of Marx and Engels conversing, leaving in its place only the insubstantial "dialectical space" between them.

Komar and Melamid deliberately borrowed their theme from Lenin's project entitled *Monumental Propaganda*. Originally addressed to Lunacharskii, commissar for education, Lenin's plan was to create a "people's" art, one that could integrate itself with everyday life, assisting in the ideological shaping of a new revolutionary mass consciousness. He argued that Monumental Propaganda should consist of provisionally-made statues, busts, or reliefs celebrating revolutionary individuals or events produced with cheap materials such as wood and plaster. They were to be temporary objects corresponding to the moment like journalistic reportage, and the embody didactic values for revolutionary celebrations such as May Day. Lenin's strategy - just the opposite of the later cult statues made in his image - was to liberate monuments from their supernatural look of frozen solemnity and activate them as humanly accessible

agencies advancing the progress of the revolution. Not designed for eternity but for eventual self-destruction, they partake of all three categories listed above. In a sense, Komar and Melamid pay homage to Lenin's idea for temporary monuments that never exist long enough to outlast their topical significance. In the end, Lenin's scheme was anti-traditional and, at the same time, diametrically opposed to the cultist ideals of Stalin's totalitarian state.

Indeed, underlying Lenin's project was his concept of a dynamic yet incomplete society always in the process of unfolding, continually striving for self-renewal until the emancipation of the least of its members. This notion runs contrary to the Totalitarian Utopia, where perfection lies within the will of the Leader and is therefore imminently realizable. The visual for this ideal are permanence and impersonality - the characteristics of the Stalinist idols of stone and bronze. Thus the toppling of the statues remained squarely within the anti-traditional plan of Lenin.

Just as the fallen image of authority symbolically tells us about the loss of authority, so images representing authority yield valuable insights into the nature of the actual authority producing it. Political representation has a double signification, in first projecting the physical persona of the revered leader, and secondly in constructing an ideological community of shared interests. This entails finding a form that mediates between the corporeal person and transcendental icon. Movement and energy is therefore generally inappropriate for official political representation, as is clear from the monuments to Lenin, Stalin, and Dzerzhinsky (Fig. 8). Most are concealed beneath long heavy coats that transform them into monumental columnar objects. Here the leader is divested of individual or personal characteristics and transformed into allegory and deified.¹² Such rhetoric of political representation is of necessity conservative, yet eminently suited for authoritarian regimes constituted by the all-powerful leader. One effect of the omnipotent head of the police state is the internalizing of controls, symbolized by the ubiquitous images of illegitimate political authority. They stand as constant reminders of the guilt of accommodation, of having to denounce to prevent being denounced in turn. The intimidated and guilty citizen



8. Evgenii Vuchetich, Monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky, Moscow
is excluded from this metaphorical formulation through the absence of suggestion of the leader's dependence or sense of responsibility for their interests, exactly as in the case of a religious icon. In this sense, the so-called public space defined by the statue was a fiction and more akin to the sacred than to the public. Only during the August putsch, when the terrains marked out by the statues had to be contested by live bodies did the notion of public space assume some validity. Thus step towards symbolic dismemberment and breaking of the leader, who is the macrocosm of one's microcosm, is fraught with the powerful floodtide of emotions when monument inversion occurs and the world turns upside down. The moment of destruction of the symbols of illegitimate authority is tantamount to laying the groundwork for a vibrant future.

The Austrian art historian, Alois Riegl, defended the bourgeois tradition at the end of the last cen-



9. Cranes hoisting figures of the Marine Corps Memorial into position, 1954

tury in declaring that a monument's historical purpose is to keep alive the deeds or events of a single individual or a nation in the minds of future generations. As such, it is intimately connected with collective memory within a given culture. Public commemoration is a form of history-making, but shifting political discourses are at work to revise, supplement, and efface history. The repression of the KGB was only too real, but the memory is too painful to bear if your friends or relatives disappeared in Lubyanka prison. The memory constructed by the original monument had to be destroyed or otherwise displayed as a relic of some bygone age. Both the erection and toppling of sculptures produce meaning related to the nation's historical memory.

Destruction of effigies, as we know, confirms a previous state of their worship; it is not just an expression of moral illiteracy but of an unresolved feeling of guilt spilling out and clamoring for immediate victims. The participation of citizens and local leaders in the ritual destruction of the symbols of an outworn regime has a long history, perhaps most vividly embodied in the destruction of the Vendôme Column in April 1871 by the French Commune. Ironically, the Bolsheviks - and most notably, Lenin - profoundly admired the Commune from whence they derived their red banner and model for a proletarian revolution. The impermanence of national monuments designed to perpetuate the deeds of heroic actions to inspire loyalty and coherence is one of the

vagaries of art history. Even when the monument is seen in the process of installation it seems as provisional as those that are demolished, as is seen in the case of the erection of the Iwo Jima memorial in Washington, D.C. (Fig. 9). One of Komar and Melamid's proposals was for a statue to be left dangling from cranes in the air arresting the moment of dismantlement and "extending it into eternal retribution". Although in its definitive place the monument assumes the aura of its environment and becomes fixed in the national memory, the erection of a statue and its demolition signal the power of the state to reify visual experience. Like a flag, a national monument is simply a mass of fragile material endowed with meaning by force of arms or the power of propaganda.

On Dzerzhinsky Square without Dzerzhinsky and Sverdlov Square without Sverdlov, it suddenly dawned on Soviet citizens that the statues they had revered, even feared, had suddenly become demystified. This is not a novel experience in revolutionary iconoclasm, as seen in a recent paper by my colleague László Beke on "The Demolition of Stalin's Statue in Budapest."¹³ The bronze colossus was the site of major political spectacles and pledges were made in front of it, but when toppled someone scrawled the letters "W.C." on the statue's head. An essay in a recent issue of *kritische berichte* recounts how the author passed the colossal red granite statue of Lenin in East Berlin every day for twenty years, straining not to look at it and yet almost always feeling emotionally provoked by it. But with the destruction of the wall it became merely a "stony" monument which had lost its hold over her.¹⁴ In the case of toppling and decapitation of the East Berlin monument, there was a curious switch: defenders of the statue attached a banner across Lenin's chest with the inscription, "Keine Gewalt" - No Power. In this instance it was the municipal authorities - forging ties with the West - who ordered the monument's subversion and wished to replace its symbolic history with "deutsch-deutsche Geschichte". Those who protested its removal with the banner wished to safeguard and convert the monument by declaring its neutrality.¹⁵

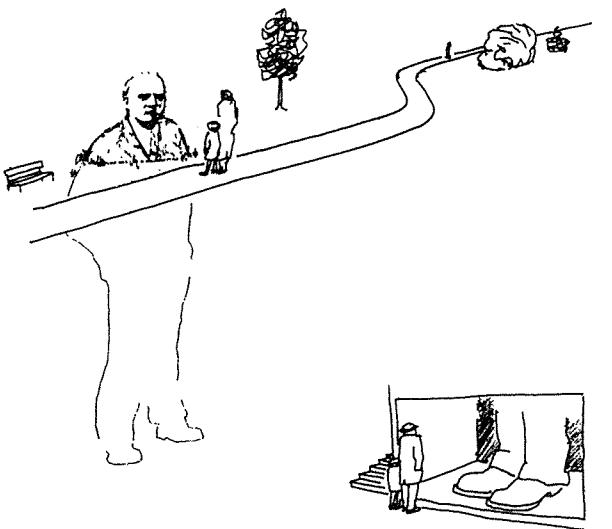
One of the ingenious schemes for conversion in the Komar and Melamid exhibition was John Murray's idea to bury the statues of former leaders

(Fig. 10). Only their head and shoulders would be exposed above ground, thereby demystifying their former exalted status by putting spectators on the same level. For those nostalgic for the old relation, a subterranean viewing chamber could be carved out, attainable by stairs, where spectators could once again confront mainly feet. Heretofore the power of the monuments was reinforced by secret police and the internalization of guilt. Formerly the crowd itself had assumed repressive functions under the aegis of the statues treated as sacred: the KGB (Dzerzhinsky), the Party (Lenin), the Soviets (Sverdlov), and Industry (Dzerzhinsky, Lenin).

The Cult of Lenin

Actually, since 1989 Lenin statues were being sporadically knocked down in several republics as millions of people quit the increasingly discredited Communist Party. This constituted a dramatic overthrow of the Lenin mystique and paved the way for the iconoclastic acts of August 1991. The Russian revolution undermined the existing social order and the unstable transition period of reconstruction in all the realms of existence required new symbols to confer meaning on the chaos - inevitable following a period of drastic political change. As the Communist party moved to dominate the political process, it increasingly centered its claims to legitimate rule on the idealization of Lenin as the revolution's author and guiding force. The cult of Lenin crystallized around 1923, when illness had removed the leader from power and then assumed the status of a national religion immediately following his death the following year. As Tumarkin has written:

The full-blown cult of Lenin was an organized system of rites and symbols whose collective function was to arouse in the cult's participants and spectators the reverential mood necessary to create an emotional bond between them and the party personified by Lenin. Stylized portraits and busts of Lenin were its icons, his idealized biography its gospel, and Leninism its sacred writings. Lenin corners were local shrines for the veneration of the leader, and its central shrine was the mausoleum in Red Square displaying Lenin's preserved remains. This formalized veneration of Lenin persisted until the end of the



10. John Murray, *Buried Statues of Former Soviet Leaders*, ink drawing, 1993

1920s, when the emerging cult of Stalin began slowly to eclipse it.¹⁶

Although as a complex of standardized texts and symbols the cult targeted the mass of the Russian people and served the needs of the Soviet state, it revealed parallels to that of other political cultural experiments bent on replacing the sign system of the previous regime with its own representative emblems of identification and unification. Further, it bears a specific relationship to the traditional concept of the king's two bodies, the mortal body subject to the frailties of nature and the political body that could not be seen but could be experienced in perpetuity through representation. Finally, the Russian tradition of venerating icons and the remains of their canonized religious martyrs and saints may have predisposed the Russian people to a cult of representation such as that organized around the idealized image of Lenin.

The object of the cult is an immortal Lenin who personifies the Communist Party and is the author of the guiding line to socialism. Thus the symbol was made to order for destruction during the breakup of the Soviet Union and glasnost. Not only was there the cathartic act of simply destroying something hated, but in the case of Lenin's cult image there were

specific political implications insofar as it allegorized the ascendancy of Communism and had become a signifier of oppression. Lenin had been a metonymic sign for the inevitable victory of the Communist Party; his cult signified invincibility and immortality - at least the system of ideas his effigy perpetuated and embodied. Hence the need to topple Lenin once support was withdrawn - to dispense with the idea of his invincibility and to literally bring him down to earth. The positive ideas that Lenin also embodied - his call for the rising and raising up of the oppressed, for perpetual striving towards emancipation, for the final victory of the proletariat - perhaps they also had to be suppressed in the New World Order. The need to destroy images is never merely wanton or wasteful. The toppling of hated symbol is part of self-hatred as well - the idea that one could be coerced or intimidated by representations of a political system. The previous passive acceptance of the condition of things is now a subject of self-detestation projected outwardly on to the hollow icon. Not surprisingly, this insecure state intensifies close to the end: those with some privilege see their power and advantages threatened, some fear the loss of a comfortable paternalistic support system, and others fear chaos most of all. At the same time, Lenin's comeuppance as the terror of the tsars and of the capitalists made good copy in the Western press and may have been encouraged from above as a sop to the Western nations.

Following Lenin's death in 1924 and the political exploitation of national mourning (which brought about a power struggle within the ruling troika of Stalin, Trotsky and Zinoviev), the construction of statues of Lenin was ordered for Moscow, Kharkov, Tiflis, Minsk, Tashkent, and Leningrad (formerly Petrograd). As was stated at the Second All-Union Congress that adopted this resolution, "The image of our great leader must be immortalized for all future generations and should serve as a permanent reminder and call to the struggle for the ultimate victory of communism".¹⁷ The object was to substitute for a ruler a cult predicated on the preservation of the memory of the ruler and hence his or her continuing vital energy in the lives of citizens. Le roi est mort. Vive le roi! This was also achieved through the mourning rite, carried out as spectacle and the pre-

servation of Lenin's embalmed body. A competition for a mausoleum design inspired numerous ideas, including a 15 to 20 story-high statue of Lenin that would house meeting halls for higher government institutions. The inauguration of the chosen project in 1930 was associated with Soviet engineering and the accomplishments of Stalin's Five-Year Plan. The propaganda began in the schools and pursued the citizen throughout her or his lifetime. Every classroom displayed Lenin's portrait, texts carried illustrations of Lenin surrounded by adoring children, and the mythology surrounding him was perpetuated by such projects as essay papers on ways to honor his memory.

But as Stalin consolidated his power, the cult of Lenin subsided and that of his successor arose. The index to this development could be statistically demonstrated through representations: by 1933, it was reported that the number of portraits of Stalin outnumbered those of Lenin in Moscow by almost two-to-one. The cult of Stalin culminated in apotheosis in 1953 when in March he joined Lenin in the Lenin-Stalin Mausoleum. Just a few years later, however, with his famous "secret speech" delivered at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist party, Nikita Khrushchev effectively destroyed the Stalin cult and launched a new Lenin cult to replace it. De-Stalinization proceeded apace with neo-Leninism, reaching a climax in 1961 when Stalin disappeared from public display and Lenin's statue was being produced in mass quantities for distribution throughout the Eastern bloc and its allies.

Social Realists had canonized and dogmatized Stalin's claim: "Life has become easier, life has become happier." The Romanian sculptor Dimitrios Demou tells the story of his famous statue of Stalin that had to wear a benign smile to express an optimism that in fact did not exist. It is precisely the false or rather mystifying features of social realism that made these statues hollow icons whose validity could obtain only as long as they could be maintained by threat of force. Once the force was removed, the hollowness of their pretense was immediately apparent and hence had no legitimate claim to existence. The skin of a happy man, of happy tractors and airplanes, is stretched over the skeleton of propaganda. Social Realists practiced a literary style with

a conventionally coded iconography. This made it easy then to attack its iconography with the blunt edge of a sledgehammer or have it pulled down by a mechanical crane.

The Lenin Cult that resurfaced in post-Stalinist Russia to become the symbolic focus of international Communism served as the historical touchstone for the unstable regimes that followed in the wake of Stalin's death. The regenerated Lenin cult, however, differed from the old one with its genre-like adaptations. Now he came to figure as a colossal columnar statue, towering over a public square and used for ceremonial and festive occasions. When Leonid Brezhnev took over Khrushchev's job in 1964, he took advantage of the jubilee celebration of Lenin's birth to shore up his strength in the party. On 16 April 1970, Brezhnev traveled to the city of Ulianovsk (formerly Simbersk) to preside over the formal opening of the grand Lenin Memorial built for the occasion. He also delivered a major speech commemorating the event on 21 April to the Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic, standing against the backdrop of an enormous profile of Lenin's head. The standing ovation Brezhnev received concluded with a formula derived from Maiakovsky's 1924 poem: "Lenin lived, Lenin lives, Lenin will live!"¹⁸

Yet one must be careful in assigning too much power to inanimate objects, even if symbolically they point indexically to the authority behind them. The centennial hardly achieved its hoped-for results, and even created backlash of sentiment against the excessive attention to the leader. The many jokes and quips making the rounds in the popular domain indicated that the Lenin cult was already becoming the object of ridicule. A department store selling beds for newlyweds advertised a bed for three, since "Lenin is always with us". A widely circulated anecdote - rumored to be a favorite among Moscow and Leningrad intelligentsia - described the results of an official contest for the best statue of Alexander Pushkin: third prize went to a statue of Pushkin reading Lenin; second prize, to a statue of Pushkin reading Lenin; and the first prize was awarded to a statue of Lenin! But perhaps the best story illustrating Soviet self-awareness tells of an elder citizen unsuccessful-

ly seeking an apartment - all of his letters to the bureaucracy remaining unanswered. Finally, in desperation he goes directly to the Central Committee and demands to see Lenin in person. "Lenin?" exclaims the astonished receptionist, "but Lenin died in 1924!" "How come," the old man replies, "when *you* need him he's alive, but when I need him, he's dead?"¹⁹

It would seem that the monuments had already lost the magical aura and sanctity of legitimization. Nevertheless, the mausoleum continued to be a place of pilgrimage for large number visitors. It became the focal point of state ritual, especially during the celebration of revolutionary holidays. It also served as an official spiritual center. Soviet cosmonauts gathered there before and after space flights, and it was customary for newlyweds to lay flowers outside the mausoleum immediately after their weddings. The demeanor of visitors was serious and respectful, like visitors to the Vietnam Memorial. All the investment of their childhood energy in revering Lenin and the idealizing rhetoric surrounding the cult was somehow dashed in the glasnost period, much like Americans coming of age in the 1960s with the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam war and their attendant reaction. If so, the attack on the statues became a form of self-flagellation for having been so gullible, end even fearfully so.

In Bucharest, a cleric held up a cross against the offensive bronze statue of Lenin just removed by a crane from Piata Scinteli in the center of the city. The cleric himself occupied the granite pedestal where previously the statue had stood, proposing himself as a pious surrogate for an atheistic symbol. The cleric symbolically alluded to emancipation from the former tyranny that the statue represented. It has been argued that public monuments are normally invisible objects that become visible suddenly during moment of drastic political upheaval. Recoded in changed political conditions, they become silent scapegoats permitting a collective catharsis. Yet this so-called sudden "visibility" is a misnomer; it is there hovering in the background of a landscape (like an electrically charged field) exactly as it hovers in the background of our imagination - acting as a brake on it or a liberating mechanism, depending on our ideological orientation. It frames the consciousness, setting the perimeters to our thinking, policing us

with its representation of the social order. Even as in the case of an allegory such as the Statue of Liberty or the Marine Corps Memorial, our sense of history is being selectively arranged for us. In this sense, the contestation for a public space begins by tearing down the statues that delineate it.²⁰ It is not only an attack on the ancient regime but an attack on those signposts of the state that oppress us even in the most benign of circumstances. Certainly, it is cathartic to spit in the stony or bronze face of a hated individual - or vandalize an image with grafitti - but the bringing down of a three-dimensional marker that mapped out a public space means also that the act represents an attempt to free oneself from self-imposed limitation, to break through a shell of indoctrination that defines and control one's freedom to move through the public space.

As previously suggested, destroying the cult image paradoxically points to the power of that image ultimately attests to "an immense respect" for the image. Actually, any act of vandalism always confirms the recognition of the ideological centrality of the icon but without necessarily suggesting respect. It is an acknowledgement that the work radiates a charismatic aura, but that it has failed to live up to the promises of its rhetorical script. For not only does it radiate authority, it radiates the aura of the Good Father who embodies protection and benevolence for his extended family. No statue proclaims its tyrannical or despotic hold on its public, rather it speaks out to future generations to act with the same boldness, intelligence, and national concern of the subject of the statue. The force of the state can make its fiction history, but when the regime falters and the statue is standing contradiction of the rhetoric surrounding it then it constitutes a negation of its state meaning. Thus the statue of Rodin's *Thinker* in front of the Cleveland Museum of Art was bombed when a member of a surrounding ghetto decided that the culture it represented was more concerned with preserving objects than lives. Inevitably, builders of public monuments cover up crimes against the public by selecting their narratives that leave out the violence that inspired them or substitute for the real heroes one necessitated by the state's ideology. What keeps the monument in place, is the power of the

privileged minority that profits from narrative. But a monument in a public space cannot be limited to a single meaning and its attempt to suppress certain forms of historical occurrences and ideas ultimately means betraying its narrow concerns. The reality and is allowed the opportunity to publicly proclaim it is it possible to agitate against the significations of the monument.

The Soviet Union having failed dismally in its search for a shortcut to socialism, Russia is now seeking an equally spectacular shortcut to capitalism. We might understand the government's program as a Five-Year Plan for the Rebuilding of the Bourgeoisie, and in the propaganda only the terms will have changed. As one Soviet primer of 1930 put it:

After socialism is built there will no longer be dwarfs - people with exhausted, pale faces, people reared in basements without sunshine or air. Healthy, strong giants, red-cheeked and happy - such will be the new people.

For this new people new cities would have to be built, entirely different from the gloomy and crowded cities whose center is a fortress or Kremlin:

From the central square, like the rays of the sun, avenues and boulevards will radiate in all directions. Buildings will not stand in a row like soldiers, all facing one way. Each dwelling will turn toward the sun in order to get as much light as possible. White house-communes, schools, libraries, hospitals will be surrounded with flower beds. At every entrance you will be greeted by green giants - oaks, pines, linden trees.²¹

Presumably, the central square would have had as its dominant focus the paternalistic effigy of Lenin.

The old Five-Year Plan was a vision of infinite possibilities just as now the *nomenklatura* of privileged elite makes claims for an utopian world growing out of privatization. But the question for the new regime is the role the state is to play in the construction of classic capitalism. Yeltsin now knows that his economic policies have caused widespread discontent, that the money for restructuring must come from domestic swindlers and foreign speculators whose interests do no coincide with those of the Russian people. The marketeers know that reforms cannot be

conducted too rigorously for fear of evoking resistance from society of undermining confidence in the path that has been chosen.

Is it the drastic and abrupt overthrow of the revolutionary birthright of the people that is expressed in the throwing down of the statues. Just as the original Five-Year Plan wanted to overhaul in an abbreviated period the old social order and required its symbols of optimism, so now the urge to private ownership of property requires some concrete manifestation of change to mark the transition. But lacking a positive program and a mass base, this need has been expressed negatively in the overturning of the old cheery symbols and authority heroes of the past. It was the sudden break in political and cultural continuity that both gave rise to the Lenin cult and to its demise in the perestroika and glasnost years.

The present Russian government is still unable to invent a set of visual symbols to complement its effacement of the old, as in the case of the removal of the statues, the revival of the pre-revolutionary flag, the excision of the once pervasive hammer and sickle from its official signage, and the change of names of municipal and state sites. But even these token gestures carry a certain amount of certitude and conviction that substitutes for the agonizing period of transition and confusion. The toppling of the statues is an act involving the collaboration of the government and its people, thus creating the momentary illusion that there is harmony between them.

This also plays well for the international press that sustains the illusion of a common set of interests of both government and the masses of Russian people. Shortly after the August coup, Gorbachev and Yeltsin united to urge the adoption of a new governing structure for the Soviet Union, based on the resurgent power of the its constituent republics. Gorbachev stated to the Congress of People's Deputies: "Let me tell you, the West is watching. If we are to coordinate, unite within the new forms, find new structures, new people, the West will support us".²² The most conspicuous expression of this restructuring was the knocking down of the Lenin monuments. Indeed, the toppling of the statues quickly became the central visual metaphor for the very process of perestroika, dismantling and restructuring, especially after the coup. The seizing upon the toppling of the



11. Irina Nakhova, Recycled Lenins, manipulated photographs, 1992

statues as a front-page item in the major U.S. papers attests to the clear legibility of the act as a sign of the destruction of the Communist regime and the beginning of a new government based on privatization. Thus the U.S. press exploited these events to symbolize the victory of the Western industrial nations, even though the absence of a new sign system left the actual outcome in doubt. Only in the case of the Chinese student rebellion in Tiananmen Square was there anything approximating a new emblem produced, and this was modeled after a well known American icon (The Statue of Liberty). Thus Americans could be convinced that lying behind the rubble of the Berlin Wall and the razed sites in Eastern Europe were the haunting specters of capitalism.

Yet even here there was fear of the crowd and its unpredictability. A *New York Times* journalist reporting on the projected dismantling of the Lenin statue in Kiev observed condescendingly that at "Lenin's feet [there] was a happy crowd that only Bruegel could have painted: ordinary people leering up at the great figure and gesturing mockingly".²³ A reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* repeatedly referred to the "intoxicated" crowds tearing down statues in derogatory terms even while praising the act itself. To him it was an Albanian "mob" that "clawed down a statue of Enver Hoxha with their bare hands," while in the Polish town of Nowa Huta "delirious protesters" attacked a Lenin monument.²⁴

These contradictory sentiments suggest a fear about the dissenting crowds within American society itself, conjuring up the nightmarish vision of

hordes of students and workers pouring into the streets such as happened in South Central Los Angeles in the summer of 1992. Although no special monument or category of monument was singled out, the nature of the buildings targeted for attack was primarily entrepreneurial and dependent on the local clientele for business. This suggests a political act and plan, analogous to that which existed in the squares of the East European urban sites. While in this case there was a distinctly cathartic element to this destruction, as in the case of the toppling of the statues a suffering people signaled an alarm to their leadership. As long as a privileged elite chooses to ignore the alarm, there will be a fresh round of statue-toppling and/or destruction of the symbols of oppression.

Yeltsin himself may soon provide an excellent case study: in Klin, a small town 50 miles outside Moscow, a group of elderly women were overheard discussing the confusion following the August coup. One 70-year old pensioner recalled that everything seemed up in the air until she saw Yeltsin appearing on television, standing on a balcony with his jacket unbuttoned and his fist raised in the air, "oy just like Lenin". Her neighbor abruptly interjected: "Right, dear. Only let's not speak of Lenin".²⁵ Popular heroes, like statues, are always ripe for a downfall, especially when exposed as hollow and naked. But the alternatives are never too clear: as long as societies need a patriarchal head yesterday's villain may be recycled as tomorrow's hero (Fig. 11).

NOTES

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¹For important recent works on iconoclasm, see especially *Bilderschreck: Die Zerstörung des Kunstwerks* (M. WARNKE, ed.), Munich 1973; - FREEDBERG, D.: *The Power of Images*. Chicago and London, 1989, Chapter 14.

²See in this connection BAKOŠ, J.: *Monuments and Ideologies*. Human Affairs, vol. 1, 1991, pp. 106-119.

³This was written before the December 1993 parliamentary elections which installed more extremist opposition forces in the new Parliament than there were in the one that Yeltsin disbanded. The elections showed that Russia is now utterly polarized, leading to the surprising emergence of an ultra nationalist-Communist movement led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky. His calls for law and order and a crackdown on corruption appeal to millions of angry Russians fed up with Yeltsin's extremist economic and political policies. The elections also represented a backlash against the intrusive U.S. role in Russia's internal affairs: one of Zhirinovsky's popular campaign planks was ridding Russia of American influences.

⁴At this moment, an example of what Pierre Nora calls a "memory site" - a place where there is a struggle over a community's tensions between its experience of the past (memory) and its organization of the past (history) - is perhaps seen in its most active and collective manifestation. - See NORA, P.: *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Representations, No. 26, Spring 1989, pp. 7-25.

⁵VIDLER, A.: *Grégoire, Lenoir et les "monuments parlants"*. In: La Carmagnole des muses, ed. J.-C. Bonnet. Paris 1988, pp.

134-137. Vidler's entire study, dealing with the dialectics of monument-destruction and monument-conservation, is germane to my investigation here.

⁶KRAUSS, C.: *Ethiopians Rejoice as Rebels Close In*. The New York Times, May 24, 1991

⁷CLINES, F.X.: *Taunting an Icon in a Cage. Kiev Feels More Unfettered*. The New York Times, August 31, 1991

⁸"Rettungsfront" gegen Jelzin. Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung, October 25, 1992

⁹ERLANGER, S.: *Mocking Socialist Realism to Save It*. The New York Times, August 3, 1993

¹⁰KOMAR and MELAMID: *What is to be Done with Monumental Propaganda?* Artforum, vol. 30, May 1992, p. 102

¹¹The New Yorker, July 12, 1993

¹²YAMPOLSKY, M.: *The Rhetoric of Representation of Political Leaders in Soviet Culture*. Elementa, vol. 1, 1992, pp. 1-2

¹³BEKE, L.: *The Demolition of Stalin's Statue in Budapest*. In: Les iconoclasmes, vol. 4, XXVIIe Congrès international d'histoire de l'art, Strasbourg 1989, pp. 275-284

¹⁴RÜGER, M.: *Das Berliner Lenin-Denkmal*. kritische berichte, vol. 20, 3/1992, p. 36

¹⁵ROETIG, P.: *Sprechende Denkmäler: Von der Inschrift zum Graffiti - Formen des Denkmalkommentars*. kritische berichte, vol. 20, 3/1992, pp. 75-76

¹⁶TUMARKIN, N.: *Lenin lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1983, pp. 2-3

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 156-157

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 261-262

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 263-264

²⁰For an excellent discussion of the invisible-visible public monument, see LEWIS, M.: *What is to be Done*. In: Ideology and Power in the Age of Lenin in Ruins (eds. A. and M. Kroker). New York 1991, pp. 2-5.

- ²¹ ILIN, M.: *New Russia's Primer: The Story of the Five-Year Plan.* (tr. G.S. Counts and N.P. Lodge). Boston and New York 1931, pp. 150, 154-155
- ²² BOHLEN, C.: *Gorbachev and Yeltsin, Tense Allies, Push Union Plan.* The New York Times, September 4, 1991
- ²³ CLINES, F.X.: *Taunting an Icon in a Cage, Kiev Feels More Unfettered.* The New York Times, August 31, 1991
- ²⁴ WILSON, W.: *The Russian Devolution.* Los Angeles Times, September 21, 1991
- ²⁵ KELLER, B.: *View from a City of Skeptics: A Coup? It Hardly Matters.* The New York Times, August 29, 1991

Photo courtesy of the Russian Union of Art Photographers (Fig. 3)

Perestrojka a demontáž sovietskych pamätníkov

Ked perestrojka nabraла krkolumnú rýchlosť, západné štáty sa vyžívali v hmatateľných dôkazoch rozpadu Sovietskeho zväzu a východného bloku. Vizuálnym znakom kolapsu systému bol pád kultových sôch Lenina a Stalina. Predstavy o týchto činoch vandalizmu a ikonoklazmu sa rýchlo stali pre Západ dominantnou vizuálnou metaforou perestrojky - rozoberania a reštrukturovania najmä po augustovom puči. Napriek explózii nových historiek na titulných stránkach svetovej tlače, bolo do teraz tomuto fenoménu venované iba málo odbornej pozornosti. Príspevok sa pokúша vyplniť túto medzeru a zároveň sa pokúsi ukázať, že deštrukcia sôch v tomto momente má mnoho spoločných čŕt s historickým osudem - aj keď nie vždy tak katastrofickým - iných verejných pamätníkov.

Autorove predchádzajúce vedecké skúmanie politiky monumentálneho verejného sochárstva v USA a vo Francúzsku mali širokú metodologickú perspektívnu, z ktorej hodnotí deštrukciu kultových ikon. Pretože sa to týka verejnej sféry, monumentálne sochárstvo nesie silný ideologickej význam a symbolizmus dovtedy, kým režim, ktorý ho vybudoval alebo zachoval zotraváva pri moci. Zároveň je to dynamické potiaľ, pokiaľ politická zmena dovolí možnosť reinterpretácie tých istých pamätníkov a ich dopad na verejnú sféru. Táto zmena môže byť drastická tak v revolučných okamihoch, kedy nová politická sila ničí uctievane pamätníky svojich predchodcov, ako v prípade zničenia Venďomského stĺpa Komúnou v r. 1871, alebo lepšie môže vyhovovať spolunadväznosť reinterpretácie stojaceho pamätníka ako v prípade Lincolnovho pomnika, ktorého originál a prvotná podoba Lincolna ako spasiteľa únie sa zmenila počas hnutia za občianskeho práva na Lincolna osloboditeľa. Za Kennedyho, pravé tá časť verejnosti, ktorá bola dovtedy k tomu odmietavá, pri-pustila, že monument opäť nadobudol svoj význam. Ešte inú formu reinterpretácie monumentálneho sochárstva je možné vidieť v prípade ex-sovietskych príkladov, z ktorých mnohé boli premiestnené do "tematických parkov" v mestách ako Moskva a Budapešť. Symboly kedysi obávaných totalitných vládcov, ktoré

kedysi stáli na významných verejných miestach, dnes vzbudzujú predovšetkým historický záujem ako turistické atrakcie.

Ak sa sochy predstavujúce mocných môžu vziať do povahy týchto osobností, potom aj ich želaná deštrukcia sa môže vziať do povahy straty tejto moci. V tomto zmysle, autorove analýzy o likvidácii sôch majú ukázať ako sochy slúžia na oboje - legitimizovať a delegitimizovať autoritu, do tej miery, v akej sa socha pokúša reprezentovať ľud, sociálnu triedu, politickú stranu, alebo veľkého národného hrdinu, ktorého telo je naplnené symbolickým významom pre ľudí, sociálnu triedu alebo politickú stranu.

Hlavným cieľom deštrukcie v kampani za zničenie sôch Lenina bola podoba Lenina, zdánlive "nesmrteľnej" personifikácie komunistickej strany. Jeho spodobenia boli ničené počas konca sovietskeho štátu a jeho satelitov. Ako metonymický znak nevyhnutný pre výrazstvo komunistickej strany bol jeho status otázny od chvíle, keď systém začal zanikať. Pád jeho sochy bol doslova spôsob, ako ho dostal "k zemi". Ironicky, sám Lenin sa výrazne usiloval o zničenie cárskych pamätníkov - myšlienka inšpirovaná jeho štúdiom Komúny.

Hoci väčšina pamätníkov, ktorími sa tu autor zaobrá, je konzervatívna esteticky a politicky, nesúhlasiť by s tým, že monumentálne metafore môžu byť všeobecne chápané ako "posvätné ikony" vždy pripravené na vyprázdnenie a znovunaplnenie významom v závislosti na zmene sociálnych a politických pomero. Presvedčili sa o tom aj diváci filmu "Planéta opíc", ktorí sa identifikovali so šokom hlavného predstaviteľa v momente, keď náhle objavil novovykopanú Sochu Slobody. V skutočnosti, je to naša normálna vnútorná potreba zachovať pamätníky, ktoré nám dovoľujú odsúdiť vandalizmus skupín, ktorých ideológia odmietame. Schopnosť povzniest sa potom nad túžbu uchovávať a zúčastňovať sa na kolektívnom vandalizme predpokladá, že sila predstav je nielen v ich formálnych vlastnostiach alebo jednoduchej reprezentácii, ale v ich udržiavaní našej krehkej sociálnej identity.

Totalitäres Regime und afrikanische Tradition, am Beispiel des Zaire

Eva MEINERTS

Als in den Jahren um 1960 fast alle afrikanischen Staaten die Unabhängigkeit erreichten, organisierten sie ihre politischen Strukturen nach dem Vorbild der jeweiligen Kolonialmacht in parlamentarisch-demokratischer Weise. Diese Demokratien waren zehn Jahren später fast überall verschwunden (mit Ausnahme von Botswana und einigen kleineren Ländern) und hatten mehr oder weniger autoritären Regimen Platz gemacht, häufig Militärdiktaturen, die oft von kurzer Dauer waren und von anderen Diktaturen abgelöst wurden.

Auch der Zaire, das damalige Belgisch-Kongo, gewann 1960 die Unabhängigkeit. Es folgten Jahre des Bürgerkrieges, bis 1965 der Oberkommandierende der Armee, Mobutu, die Macht übernahm, die er bis heute in Händen hält. Sein Regime nahm im Laufe der Jahre totalitäre Züge an, mit unkontrollierter Staatsgewalt, Einheitspartei, Staatsideologie, Unterdrückung der Opposition, willkürlichen Verhaftungen. 1990 lockerte Mobutu diesen eisernen Griff, verkündete die Einführung der Mehrparteien-Demokratie und setzte sich damit in seinem Land an die Spitze einer Bewegung, die ganz Afrika erfasst hatte.

Das Ende des Kalten Krieges und der Zusammenbruch der autoritären Regime in Osteuropa hatten überall in Afrika den oppositionellen Kräften Auftrieb verliehen, das Wort "Winds of Change", das um 1960 herum gebraucht wurde, diente nun wieder zur Beschreibung der politischen Veränderungen. Der Kampf gegen die Diktaturen und für demokratische Freiheiten begann überall, z.B. in Togo, Kenia oder Kamerun, er hatte in einigen Ländern Erfolg (so in Zambia) und hält anderswo noch an.

Von diesem Hintergrund sollen in diesem Vortrag erörtert werden:

1. Demokratische Tradition in Afrika;
2. Autokratische Traditionen und ihre Instrumentalisierung durch Mobutu;
3. Afrikanische Traditionen als politische Faktoren im Übergang zur parlamentarischen Demokratie.

Mit "Afrika" ist im folgenden "Schwarzafrika" gemeint, nämlich die Länder südlich der Sahara mit Ausnahme Südafrikas, das aufgrund seiner zahlreichen weißen Bevölkerung und des Apartheitsregimes eine Sonderstellung einnimmt.

Der Zaire soll verschiedentlich als Beispiel herangezogen werden, aus folgenden Gründe:

- es handelt sich um ein sehr großes, im Herzen des Kontinents gelegenes Land,
- die politischen Verhältnisse dort sind in vielem exemplarisch,
- ich habe dort zehn Jahre lang gearbeitet.

1. Demokratische Traditionen in Afrika

Im vorkolonialen Afrika gab es, vereinfacht gesagt, zwei Kategorien von Gesellschaften, solche mit zentralisierter Amtsgewalt und scharfen Unterschieden bezüglich Privilegien, Besitz und Status, und andere ohne diese zentralisierte Gewalt und ohne scharf definierte soziale Hierarchie (s. Fortes und Evans-Pritchard, S. 5). Der erste Typus fand sich eher in den Savannen-, der zweite in den Dschungelgebieten. In beiden Gesellschaften gab es Formen der Mitwirkung und Mitbestimmung.

Das Grundmodell dafür ist die Volksversammlung als Ort des Palavers, des ausgedehnten de-

mokratischen Diskurses. Jedes männliche Mitglied der Ethnie hatte Zugang (in manchen Ethnien auch die Frauen), jeder konnte seine Meinung einbringen, und wer sie mit Sprichwörtern in der Weisheit der Alten verankerte, fand besonderes Gehör. Dem Chef oblag es, die sich herausbildende Meinung abschließend zu formulieren, und es wurde erwartet, daß er sie sich zu eigen mache. Abstimmungen und Entscheidungen nach der Mehrheitsmeinung waren im alten Afrika undenkbar (s. *Ki-Zerbo*, S. 56), da die überstimmte Minderheit wahrscheinlich Groll gehegt hätte. So wäre die Harmonie, Hauptziel der gemeinschaftlichen Beratungen, gestört, bzw. nicht wieder hergestellt worden (s. *Nzongola-Ntalaja*, S. 117). In diesen Versammlungen wurde über alle Probleme des täglichen Lebens und des Zusammenlebens beraten, es wurde Vorschläge für die Bestrafung von Übeltätern gemacht, Jagd- und Kriegszüge vorbereitet (s. *Nkangonda Ikome*, S. 137).

Dieses zeitaufwendige Verfahren ist natürlich nur in kleinen, überschaubaren Gruppen möglich. In den Savannengebieten hatten sich in der Vergangenheit größere politische Einheiten herausgebildet, Königreiche, die nicht mehr auf dem Wege der "direkten Beziehung" regiert werden konnten. Sie wurden von Chefs geführt, die in der Regel aus der königlichen Familie kamen, doch wurden auch sie von Versammlungen gewählt, von Volksversammlungen oder dem Rat der Ältesten und "Barone". Diese Räte gaben, wie die Palaver-Versammlungen, dem Chef Leitlinien vor, und er tat gut daran, sie zu respektieren. (*Akinyemi* spricht in diesem Zusammenhang von "konstitutionellen Monarchien", S. 117.) Einen diktatorischen Chef ertrug man mit Langmut und Geduld oder entledigte sich seiner schließlich mit Gewalt.

2. Autokratische Traditionen und ihre Instrumentalisierung durch Mobutu

Präsident Mobutu im Zaire stützt sich nachdrücklich auf afrikanische Häuptlingstraditionen. Er verbindet sie mit seiner Rolle als Chef des Staates und reklamiert die Entscheidungsgewalt für sich, indem er sagt: "Le Chef c'est le Chef. Il a le dernier mot" (s. *Körner*, S. 34). Daß er sich in der Tradition des Häuptlings sieht, zeigt er schon äußerlich mit seinem Képi aus Leopardenfell und mit dem Zaubersym-

bolen geschnitzten Stab, den er bei jeder zeremoniellen Gelegenheit trägt.

Mit dem Titel "Président Fondateur", den er sich 1975 zulegte, greift er auf eine andere Tradition zurück. Jede Familie, jeder Clan kennt seinen legendären Ahnherrn, den "Fondateur" eben, der über das Wohlergehen aus dem Jenseits wacht und der strafend eingreift, wenn die Nachfahren gegen die sittlichen Regeln der Ethnie verstößen (s. *Kossodo*, S. 46f). Der "Fondateur" hat also magische und göttähnliche Funktionen, und tatsächlich wollte Mobutu (übrigens auch Houphouet-Boigny in der Elfenbeinküste, von Bokassa zu schweigen) in der Glanzzeit seiner Macht, den siebziger Jahren, als ein "Heiland" (sauveur) verehrt werden. Er sieht sich als der Fondateur, den Gründer der zairischen Nation (was man ihm nicht absprechen kann), und leitet daraus das Recht über Leben und Tod seiner Untertanen ab. Darüber hinaus hält er es für sein Häuptlingsrecht, über alle Reichtümer des Landes nach seinem Gutdünken zu verfügen.

Untermauert wurden diese mystischen Tendenzen durch die Berufung auf die "Authentizität", die die Grundlage der Ideologie des "Mobutismus" ist, also eine Berufung auf die Werte des alten Afrika. (Natürlich wurden sie willkürlich definiert, denn man kann die vergangene "authentische afrikanische Kultur" nicht in den Details rekonstruieren, s. *Euban*, S. 148.) So wurde es in den 70er Jahren Pflicht, die christlichen Vornamen abzulegen und afrikanische anzunehmen; es wurden Kleiderordnungen erlassen, die das Tragen von Schlippen, Perücken etc. verboten und den Männern das Tragen einer bestimmten Jacke vorschrieben, die viele für eine "Mao"-Jacke hielten. Jedenfalls wurde der Mobutismus die ideologische Grundlage der Einheitspartei MPR, ihrer Propaganda und ihrer Zwangsmaßnahmen.

In dieser vermuteten afrikanischen Tradition stand schließlich auch die Einführung der Mehrparteidemokratie durch Beschuß des "Chefs", wie sie Mobutu im April 1990 in einer Fernsehansprache verkündete. Er berief sich auf eine Art Volksbefragung, denn er hatte über Monate die Provinzen bereist und in den Zentralorten an Versammlungen der örtlichen Würdenträger teilgenommen, die ihm ihre Klagen und Wünsche hatten vortragen dürfen.

Es ist schwer zu sagen, wie weit Mobutu an diese folkloristischen Elemente seiner Herrschaft wirklich glaubt. Für den Außenstehenden sind sie nichts als die Verschleierung eines diktatorischen Regimes, das sich am besten mit der von Max Weber eingeführten Kategorie der "patrimonialen Herrschaft" beschreiben läßt. So heißt es bei Weber, daß der Potentat "mit den Beherrschten durch eine Einverständnisgemeinschaft verbunden ist, /.../ welche auf der Überzeugung beruht, daß die traditionell geübte Herren gewalt das legitime Recht der Herr ist" (Weber in *Körner*, S. 35). Diese patrimoniale Herrschaft hat nun aber nicht im Sinne Webers zur Modernisierung und zur Durchsetzung kapitalistischer Strukturen geführt, sie hat nicht die kleinbäuerliche Produktionsweise erfaßt, in der 70 % der Bevölkerung beschäftigt sind, sondern sie hat das Land in eine ungeheure Schuldenkrise geführt, die aus dem reichsten Land Afrikas eins der fünf ärmsten gemacht hat. In dieser Situation erweist sich die "Einführung der Demokratie" als ein Schauspiel, das die eigene, unruhig werdende Bevölkerung und die Kreditgeber im Ausland ablenken und trösten soll, ohne daß sich an den Machtstrukturen bisher etwas geändert hätte.

3. Afrikanische Traditionen als politische Faktoren im Übergang zur parlamentarischen Demokratie

Es wird in der Literatur gelegentlich beklagt, daß die Kolonialzeit die im alten Afrika vorhandenen demokratischen Strukturen zerstört habe und die Völker darum am Tage der Unabhängigkeit nicht mehr darauf zurückgreifen könnten (so *Akinyemi*, S. 40). Doch lebt die Tradition der "Palaver-Demokratie" durchaus weiter und hat sich in den letzten Jahren, als es um die auch moralische Überwindung der alten Diktaturen ging, neu bewährt. Die Menschen verlangten, oft in großen, blutig endenden Demonstrationen, die Einsetzung von Nationalkonferenzen. Dort hatte das bedächtige Benennen und Bereden der vergangenen Schrecken und Übel eine kathartische Funktion.

Anderseits stehen die traditionellen Verhaltensweisen der Herausbildung moderner politischer Strukturen auch im Wege. Sie beruhen auf persönli-

chen Beziehungen und sind ungeeignet, wenn es gilt, in einer anonymen Massengesellschaft die politische Willensbildung zu organisieren. Das zeigt sich bei der Bildung von Parteien. Man setzt dort die Gewohnheit der persönlichen Relationen ganz selbstverständlich fort. So sind die jetzt überall entstandenen Parteien in der Regel nicht Weltanschauungs- oder Interessenbünde, sondern Organisationsformen der Clan-, Stammes- oder Volkszugehörigkeit. In sie ist man nicht freiwillig eingetreten, und man wählt sie nicht aus Überzeugung, sondern weil man eben Haussa oder Kikuyu ist, und es ist undenkbar, daß man die Partei wechselt, weil man sich von einer anderen besser vertreten fühlt (*Akinyemi*, S. 43). Das Wechselwählerverhalten ist aber einer der Mechanismen, auf denen das parlamentarische System beruht.

Trotz dieser Schwierigkeiten denke ich, daß die Demokratisierungsbestrebungen heute besser Chancen haben als vor 30 Jahren. In den Städten haben sich Ansätze eines modernen Bürgertums und einer intellektuellen Elite herausgebildet, und man versucht, sich aus der Klammer ererbter Loyalitäten und Gruppenzugehörigkeiten zu befreien. Anderseits sind es diese alten Beziehungen, die in den Städten Gruppierungen entstehen lassen, die denen des Dorfes ähneln und in denen man sich - weil von gleicher Herkunft - zu gegenseitigem Beistand im Überlebenskampf verpflichtet fühlt (s. *Cornevin*, S. 431). In einer Zeit der fortschreitenden Verarmung, einer horrenden Inflation, zusammenbrechender Infrastrukturen und der Auflösung des staatlichen Ordnungsgefüges gewinnen die alten Strategien des Überlebens "im Dschungel" neue Bedeutung.

Wir sehen: die traditionelle Kultur Afrikas ist lebendig und vollbringt in einem unaufhörlichen Prozeß der Resorption der Moderne enorme Anpassungsleistungen. Dennoch unterscheidet sich Afrika von den sich rasch modernisierenden sogenannten Entwicklungsländern anderer Kontinente, es hält zäher fest an seinen Traditionen, und manche sagen sogar, Afrika verweigere die Entwicklung. (Von *Axelle Kabou* erschien 1991 in Paris ein Buch mit dem Titel "Et si l'Afrique refusait le développement?"). Es scheint, als bleibe Afrika sich treu und erweise sich damit als das "ganz Andere".

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Totalitný režim a africká tradícia, na príklade Zaire

Po krátkom prehľade politického vývoja v afrických štátoch od získania nezávislosti pred tridsiatimi rokmi, sa hovorí o téme z troch hľadisk:

1. Demokratické tradície v Afrike;
2. Autokratická tradícia a ich inštrumentalizácia Mobutuom;
3. Africké tradície ako politické faktory v prechode k parlamentnej demokracii.

Autorka opierajúc sa o svoje dlhoročné skúsenosti v Afrike, ukazuje, ako mnohé tradície z predkoloniálneho obdobia prežívajú a určujú ešte aj dnes politický život - ako prezident

Mobutu v Zaire zavádzajú náčelnické tradície, aby zriadoval totalitný režim a ideologickej ho odôvodňoval a ako na druhej strane aj demokratické hnutia, ktoré vznikali v posledných rokoch všade, môžu opäťovne siaháť k africkým tradíciam. Tak slúži aj svojou funkciou katarzie napr. v národných zhromaždeniach, v ktorých má byť prekonaná totalitná minulosť, palavru, typickej africkej veľkej demokratickej debaty.

Živé tradície Afriky stojí v stáлом procese prispôsobovania sa požiadavkam modernej doby, ale vytvárajú tiež potenciál odporu proti rýchlemu vývoju.

Post-modernism and Post-totalitarianism. The Poland Case of the 1970s

Piotr PIOTROWSKI

Although the term "post-modernism" is not clear, on the contrary - it still arises controversies, in this essay I will not make any attempt at systematizing it. The concept of post-modernism will be used here in its most general sense; as applied by Anglo-Saxon art criticism to visual arts, as a reaction to abstract expressionism or informel, and other accompanying artistic discourses. The eruption of gesture painting on both sides of the Atlantic in the forties and fifties is understood in this context to be the essence of modernism. On the other hand, the art which aims at its revision and which is critical of the absolute conception of painting (both in a universalist and existentialist perspective), such as American neo-dadaism, happening, British pop art, French Le Nouveau Réalisme, Italian Arte Povera, Fluxus, and later Anglo-Saxon conceptualism, is interpreted as setting "the border of the present," the boundary between modernism and post-modernism.

The history of contemporary Polish art has, however, slightly different dynamics than the experience of Western artistic culture. In Poland, the artistic present came into being under much more complex circumstances than in the West of Europe or, for that matter, in the United States. If in America action painting or abstract expressionism have been related to the processes of "cold war",¹ in Poland it was just the opposite - that kind of art (in fact, adopted from France rather than from the USA) appears at the moment when the "cold war" tension decreases, in the context of the so-called "thaw" started by the seizure of power by Nikita Khrushchev in the USSR. The syndrome of "thaw" in the Polish artistic culture can then be seen in the revision of socialist rea-

lism, the revision undertaken by "free" abstract art; the art which, by contrast to Stalinist soc-realism explicitly referred to Western models, in particular to that of the French informel.

The problem is, that Polish informel itself became soon involved in political ambiguities. First of all, the "thaw" came to an end in the early sixties, and both political and cultural life were submitted to stricter principles. Even though the return to the tough Stalinist regime was no more possible, still the Communist party and the state administration tightened their control of public life. On the other hand, contemporary art, the art of late modernism manifesting itself in the "thaw" informel, both loses its internal momentum and penetrates into the establishment. That can be seen particularly in modifications of the tradition of the so-called Polish colorism, in the painting of academies, museums and official exhibition salons which at that time freely draws from the freedom of gesture of informel as well as from the pictorial materialism of the "thaw" art. Simultaneously "abstraction" becomes a style, more and more popular in design, fashion, and decorative painting.

The tradition of "thaw," reformulated in such a way and functioning in altered political reality, later becomes a direct point of reference for the critical art of the mid-sixties, the art inspired by Western tendencies called above "post-modern".

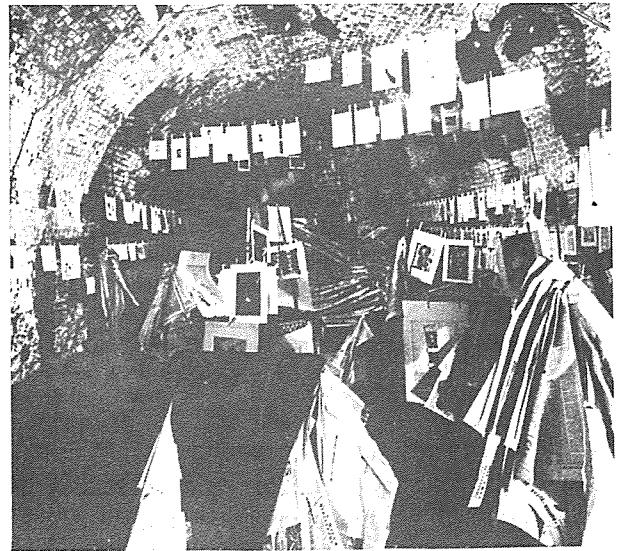
The critical character of that new art which came into being in Poland in the mid-sixties manifested itself on a few levels which, however, can all be reduced to one common point - the rejection of the picture not so much as the illusion of reality (that had already been the achievement of modernism),

but as an object, as a created object, made of pigment and identified with a gallery-museum context.

On the social level that was connected with establishing new exhibiting institutions in the non-artistic area: a factory, student club, public reading room, etc. Besides, new galleries appeared which were connected to neither museums nor official salons: El Gallery in Elbląg (1961), odNOWA Gallery in Poznań (1964), Współczesna (1965) and Foksal (1966) Galleries in Warsaw, Pod Moną Lisą Gallery in Wrocław (1967). Formulating an artistic context which was alternative to the official one, those galleries undermined the structure of artistic life canonized and controlled by the establishment. The intention of their founders was to make them free of any conventions of creation and reception of art, situated - to use the idiom of Michel Foucault - beside the artistic "microphysics of power." Naturally that does not mean that those groups and institutions were not controlled by the authorities. In the communist reality each fragment of the public space was, as we know, subject to censorship. It means only that those galleries broke out of the system established by the authorities which in Poland was composed (apart from museums) by the network of the so-called bureaus of artistic exhibitions (BWA). Consequently, such a move forced the authorities either to tolerate an assault upon the institutionally professional structure of the functioning of society (which refers also to art produced in that context), or to resort to repressions. In the sixties, both strategies were actually chosen.

On the par excellence artistic level, the rejection of the picture (conceived as an object of culture) was related to the tendencies making the art work as a real object, the act of creation the Western equivalents of which were happening, the French Le Nouveau Réalisme, or - in other cases - art referring to concepts, i.e. conceptual art.

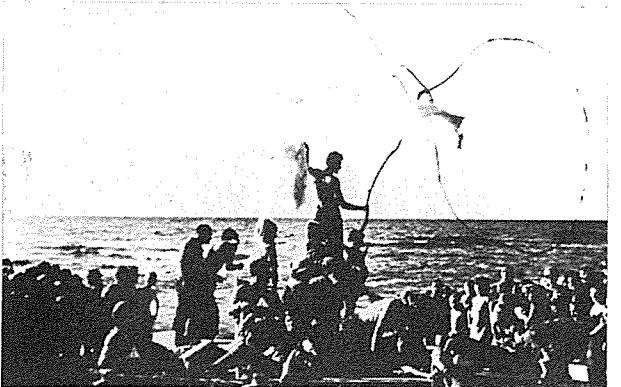
Perhaps one of the first manifestations of such critical art in Poland was "Wystawa popularna" (The Popular Exhibition) by Tadeusz Kantor, shown in the Krzysztofory Gallery in Cracow at the end of 1963. The presentation was composed of 937 exhibits, including both "artistic" objects (sketches and drawings) and "ready-mades": newspapers, chairs, letters, wrapping paper, etc. Incidentally, Kantor's art makes



1. Tadeusz Kantor: Popular Exhibition, Kraków 1963

a good example of artistic processes under discussion in this essay. Almost from the very beginning of his artistic career, that is from the wartime, underground theater spectacles ("*Powrót Odysza*" - or The Return of Odysseus, "*Balladyna*"), Kantor would tend to activate in his work "reality" against illusion. At the turn of the fifties and sixties, painting informel, he was in fact closer to the art of the matter, than to the existentialist gestures of the Paris school. His pictures worked through the physicality of the paint, through the materiality of the pigment; in such a way they themselves became "real" objects, material beings. That materialization of the picture gave Kantor a chance to get rid of it and to turn towards "poor" reality, the reality - as he would say - of the "lower level." Primarily, that move may be observed in many series of his so-called "emballages", all kinds of wrapping stuff: umbrellas, sacks, envelopes, clothes, bandage, etc; later, in the sixties, in his happenings, "real" events identified with their specific time and place - especially those in which art, masterpieces of European culture such as paintings by Rembrandt or Géricault, were used as "ready mades."

The author of works even more radically turning art into object is Włodzimierz Borowski. He not only introduces ready-made objects, things of everyday life, as in "*Zbiory trzepakowe*" (The Cloth-Horse Classes, 1968); not only "objectifies" the his-



2. Tadeusz Kantor: Panoramic Happening - The Raft of Medusa, Lazy 1967

tory of modernism, as in "*Niciowce*" (or The Thread-Like Objects - which are humorous Polish equivalents of Duchamp's stoppages-etelon) or the window supposedly fished out from the Baltic Sea (an ironic reference both to the motif of Venus and to Duchamp's "Fresh Widow"), but in the first place - also in an ironic dialogue with the tradition of modernism - objectifies himself, the maker who appears not quite as a demiurge, the creator of things, but rather as a figure - to use the latest idiom - deconstructing its own myth, the myth of the artist. It can be definitely seen in "*VIII Pokaz synkretyczny*" (The 8th Syncretic Show, Poznań, 1968), where the artist, accompanied first by shouting and then by military marches, drilled with an electric borer holes in the eyes of his photographic self-portraits on cardboard. In this context, however, the strongest point is "*IV Pokaz synkretyczny*" (The 4th Syncretic Show), realized during the Symposium of Artists and Scientists in a chemical factory at Puławy (1966), already bordering on a conceptual employ. During that action, the artist, wearing a tuxedo, "gave" the factory its own carbamide furnace as his work of art. On that occasion, what was submitted to critical observation was not only the role of artist-creator, not just the role of the factory-as-sponsor, but also a custom - common in the communist Poland - of presenting factories with works of art produced on the spot (during the so-called plein air sessions).

Another individual whose name should be mentioned in the context of the Polish critical art of the sixties is Andrzej Matuszewski. In that case the ar-

tist also used real objects, creating by means of them whole - as they were then called - environnements (the exhibition of "21 Objects", Poznań, 1968). On another occasion, Matuszewski performed - as it were - an act of objectification of a viewer-participant in a happening who was carefully provoked by the reality manipulated by the artist - a ready-made thing ("*Postępowanie*" - or The Procedure, Poznań 1969).

The critical art of the sixties, the characteristics of which have been briefly presented above, is the point of departure for the art of the seventies. Yet the key to the understanding of that, let's say, second wave of post-modernism, i.e. the art of the seventies, is to be found in the changes in the mechanism of executing power in Poland at the turn of the sixties.

The moment of a breakthrough, although not so spectacular as in Czechoslovakia, was the year 1968, and not just because of anti-intelligentsia and anti-semitic excesses committed by the party hooligans in the state administration and in the press, but because at that moment the ruling political class lost its ideological background. Until 1968, communism was an effective instrument of ideological legitimization of power in Poland. It lost its force with a nationalistic revolt raised by a group of party apparatchiks. Those Polish intellectuals who - like the Western left - believed that a Marxist-Leninist tradition might be a good fundament to build "socialism with a human face" (among others, Leszek Kołakowski, Stefan Morawski, Stefan Żółkiewski) were expelled from the establishment. Thus the communist party was deprived of its intellectual supporters who reacted to changing reality and produced its ideological interpretation.

Still, it was not just a question of personal rivalry. That process was taking place on a much deeper level; in the first place on the level of economy. The economic bankruptcy of the system became more and more painful. The atmosphere of optimism created by the party propaganda which appealed to most Poles after the war in the late sixties lost its persuasive power because of obvious and widespread poverty.

Although nationalism and anti-semitism propagated by the party-police power system around 1968 was much more effective than the petrified rhetoric

of Marxism-Leninism, it could not legitimize the system in the long run. Something more "concrete" was needed both on the level of production and ideology, and society forced the authorities to do that "something" in the early seventies. As a result of the shipyard workers' revolt, in December 1970 the ruling group changed. Edward Gierek became the leader of the party and the state, promising quick economic recovery. What aroused genuine enthusiasm was a **consumerist rhetoric** of the new authorities, the opening of the Polish frontier to Western goods, and liberalization of the state administration system (in particular as for passport regulations) which allowed Poles to travel abroad and to develop cultural contacts with foreign countries. The party propaganda formulated the vision of the so-called Second Poland, a country close to Western economic, cultural, and social standards, and at first an economic boost seemed to make that vision quite real. In that situation, the language of Marxism-Leninism which started going bankrupt in 1968 but which could not be eliminated in a part of the Soviet bloc, began to change more and more into an ideological make-believe, a purely rhetorical ornament. The authorities kept using that language, but no one believed into its ideas any more; on the contrary, everyone succumbed to the charm of the Western lifestyle, of the consumerist culture.

What seems particularly useful for the purpose of description of the syndrome of the seventies in Poland is the concept of post-totalitarianism formulated by Václav Havel.² One can say that it is even better adjusted to the case of Poland than to that of Czechoslovakia; that it refers to the rule of Edward Gierek in Warsaw rather than to the rule of Gustáv Husák in Prague.

The essence of post-totalitarianism is above all contained in its comparison with classic totalitarianism. Besides, the prefix "post" does not mean that what we deal with is non-totalitarianism; just the opposite - it is still a totalitarian system, although functioning in a different way.

Havel writes: "A profound difference of our system as regards the character of power from what we have traditionally imagined as 'dictatorship,' a difference which is visible, I believe, even after a cursory comparison, makes me to adopt for it... some special term. If from now on I will be calling

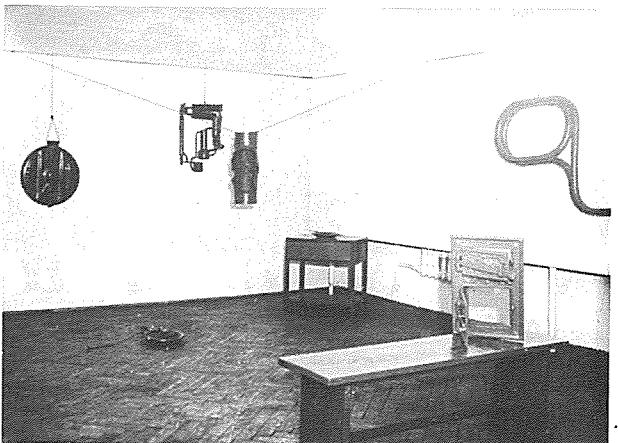


3. Włodzimierz Borowski: The 8th Syncretic Show, Poznań 1968

it a **post-totalitarian** system, I am certainly quite aware that it is not the most precise term; still, no better one comes to my mind. Anyway, by that "post" I do not mean that the system is no more totalitarian; on the contrary, I wish to imply that it is totalitarian **in a way much different** from "classic" dictatorships which we have usually associated with the concept of totalitarianism."³

Let us discuss, after Havel, the crucial differences between classic dictatorship and post-totalitarianism. First of all, it is the functioning of the system under the conditions of certain social stability, in the context of its own tradition which makes the submitted societies accept its functional assumptions. The system is no more a novelty, like a dictatorship introduced by means of revolutionary methods; just the opposite - it is based on some continuity and it functions in a pre-defined political space. Another difference lies in a conviction that the functioning system is not an isolated island, that it is not an enclave breaking the rules of the global order; on the contrary - it seems to be embedded in the world order, it is an integral part of the global structure. Then the disappearance of differences constituting the system's identity makes the ideology motivating in the heroic period disappear as well; in the post-totalitarian phase it turns into just an alibi, into a convention of communication between the rulers and the ruled, a communicative ritual.

That rhetorical ritualization conceals a certain pragmatism of the execution of power, a tacit agree-



4. Andrzej Matuszewski: 21 Objects, Poznań 1968

ment between the political class and society with guarantees of political stabilization. A post-totalitarian society renounces its right to democracy, that is, the claim for power; in return, the authorities guarantee its material security. Hence, the ritualization of ideology supersedes the metaphysics of revolution so typical of the times of heroic dictatorship and disguises the true values of the new order which in fact reflect the Western culture of consumerism.

"While classic dictatorship," writes Havel, "may be characterized by the atmosphere of revolutionary excitement, heroism, and self-sacrifice... in the Soviet bloc even the remnants of that atmosphere are already gone. For a long time that bloc has ceased to be an enclave isolated from the rest of the developed world and immune to the process which takes place in it; on the contrary, it is its integral component... In practice it means that our society has adopted... the same hierarchy of values as the developed Western countries, so de facto we simply deal with another form of an industrial and consumer society, with all its social and spiritual consequences... Oversimplifying, one can then say that the post-totalitarian system has grown out of a historical encounter of dictatorship with consumer society."⁴

What follows the modification of the system of power is the modification of the ways of controlling society. Referring at this point to Michel Foucault, one can say that the system of "order and punishment," typical of classic dictatorship, in the post-totalitarian phase is replaced with the system of "dis-

cipline".⁵ Consequently, the mechanism of the execution of power in a post-totalitarian society becomes similar to modern panopticism, all the practical differences between East and West notwithstanding. The former is certainly much less refined and more brutal, nevertheless it differs from the grand scale terror of the classic Stalinist dictatorship.

People's Poland of the seventies is a full-fledged example of the post-totalitarian system with its ideological ritualization, consumerist values, and panoptic discipline. The authorities of the Polish People's Republic (PRL) even tolerated political opposition, which was out of question in the context of classic dictatorship. The opposition groups of the second half of the decade were rather infiltrated than eliminated, and the repressions they faced were harassment rather than terror.

Naturally, the freedom of the disciplined society was restricted and strictly determined. Particularly on the level of culture the rules were obvious enough. The authorities tolerated the complete freedom of artistic expression, but only as regards formal experiments; the price was political neutrality, since politics in the post-totalitarian society was restricted for the authorities only. In other words, the artist was free with respect to his/her decisions concerning the means of expression and he/she could cherish that freedom as long as he/she did not enter the field of politics. Involvement in any kind of critical political discourse aimed against the authorities meant the end of that freedom.

In general, let us add on the margin, communism "**appreciated**" artists. To use the words of Miklós Haraszti, the artist lived as though in a "velvet prison."⁶ No doubt it was a prison, still for those who accepted its rules and regulations the cells were very comfortable. Generally speaking, the artist was free of the pressure of the market. Fulfilling a number of conditions, he/she could live safely and comfortably, enjoy high prestige, respect, and appanage. The authorities needed artists for various purposes. It was already Lunacharsky who wrote that art - as one of the dimensions of ideology - was too strong an instrument of propaganda for the authorities to neglect its potential.⁷ An artist who wanted to take on a determined role could count on gratitude of the ruler and hope for a velvet cell. The prison was guar-

ded not only by censorship which performed its task in a flexible way, depending on the political needs of the authorities, but also by its twin - and possibly more powerful - instance: self-censorship. The artist knew the price of the prison velvet. Whenever the authorities were making his/her cell more spacious and gave him/her more liberty of expression inside it, the temptation to break free would decrease.

At various stages of the development of communist totalitarianism, artists were given different roles. In the times of Lunacharsky, their task was no doubt defined very precisely - active propaganda; however, in a panoptic, post-totalitarian society he/she was supposed to perform more subtle functions. What guaranteed him/her the "velvet" of the prison cell was civil and political indifference. On the one hand, authorities demanded from him/her neutrality, non-criticism, and respect for the ritual linguistic conventions, yet on the other - I believe - also activity, formal experiments, and modern or, shall we say, post-modern stylistics which would confirm the "modernity" and "occidentalism" of the post-totalitarian society. The authorities which in the seventies were busy building the Second Poland did not need soc-realist propaganda any more, but art that would be both modern and non-critical, not violating the status quo, and respecting the post-totalitarian mechanisms of the functioning of society that was - at the same time - totalitarian and consumerist.

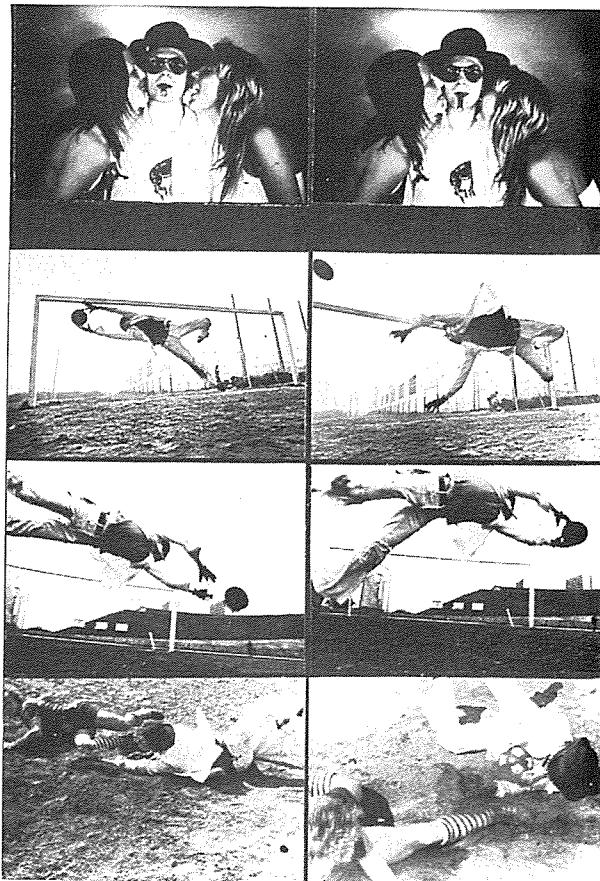
The occidentalization of the Polish People's Republic (or PRL) in the seventies fostered a good climate for the development of post-modern tendencies in art; the climate which was much more favorable than the "post-thaw" atmosphere of the previous decade. That paralleled the processes of the conventionalization and commercialization of post-modern art in the West. The art of the former counter-culture penetrated into the establishment. A symbolic moment in that process was the Kassel exhibition Documenta 5 in 1972, where Herald Szeemann (the organizer of the exhibition) invited the artists who five years earlier contested Documenta, introducing them into that same largest art market in the world. In Poland, together with the liberalization of both personal and institutional contacts with the West, the models which came from that direction



5. Natalia Lach-Lachowicz: Consumer Art, 1974; Muzeum Sztuki Łódź

were welcome. I am not saying that the authorities stimulated the reception of post-modernism in Poland; what I am saying though is that they tolerated or even recuperated that reception, since such a strategy confirmed the image of the country belonging to the orbit of Western culture.

In Poland in the seventies, the increase of the number of artists referring to post-modern artistic models, galleries interested in that kind of art, conferences, meetings, etc., was really imposing. Up to now there is no documentation of what was going on in that period. What has been published are only fragmentary materials concerning particular groups. It is obvious that among a large number of artists, events, and manifestations one may find interesting and significant examples. Such artists of the seventies as Andrzej Dłużniewski, Jarosław Kozłowski, or Krzysztof Wodiczko, entering the tradition of critical art, reformulated in the direction which may be called meta-critical, since it aimed at an analysis of its own tradition. Yet those artists cannot be called *signum temporis* of that decade, although - as they have often stressed it - they were part of it.⁸ Thus their work will not be the object of our attention; in other words, it is not critical art that will be discussed, but the kind of art which was much more character-



6. Zdzisław Sosnowski: Goalkeeper, 1975-1976

istic of the post-totalitarian syndrome of the seventies - the art to be called, let's say, non-critical or pseudo-critical.

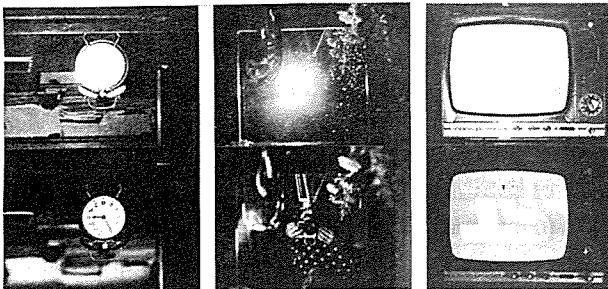
However, it is not my task to pass judgment, but only to find out its hidden connections with the time and place where it came into being; an analysis that would allow for its historicization and contextualization, for recognizing in it the processes which were characteristic of the history of art of those times.

The very factor of quantity is historically significant. Numerous symposia and conferences as well as many galleries (often established under the auspices of the official Polish Students' Union) were all financed from the state budget, often enough - as in the case of the Remont Gallery in Warsaw - most generously. For instance, the Remont Gallery could organize large scale international meetings, covering all the expenses of many of their foreign par-

ticipants. The state financed that kind of culture open-handedly. What was more, censorship that strictly controlled literary life did not intervene in the artistic life at all. The documents taken away to the West (and then published there) by a Cracow censor clearly prove that in the seventies in Poland all the literary publications were controlled extremely rigidly, while visual arts enjoyed unlimited toleration.⁹ Even those artists who after some time earned the (not always deserved) reputation of the critics of the authorities did not recall any censorship harassment.¹⁰ One could, however, come across reverse cases: some artists who were politically indifferent, such as Jan Świdziński, during the "Solidarność" revolt of the early eighties turned out eager to invent for themselves some opposition mythology, claiming that they had actually been oppressed by the PRL censors.¹¹

The established order was respected also by art criticism. It never criticized art that was non-critical, never tried to lay bare the real mechanisms of the functioning of Polish culture in the seventies. The aforementioned censorship documents include no traces of intervention in critical texts about art, which means that there were even no attempts to get such analyses published. Moreover, it was significant that although the second half of the decade brought about the development of the underground publishing movement - open yet illegal, which meant "free of the state censorship", no texts on art criticism were published in the underground press. They appeared only under the martial law in the eighties, and the first - as well as the only - underground periodical devoted entirely to art ("Szkice" - The Sketches) was established as late as in 1984. It was then not only post-modern art which took (mostly) an non-critical attitude; the same referred to art criticism.

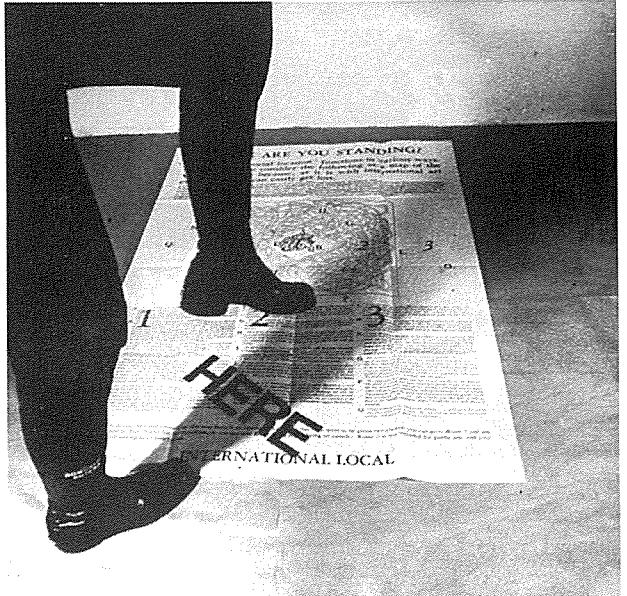
Let us now have a look at some concrete realizations. I will start with the work by Natalia Lach-Lachowicz, a very influential Polish artist highly appreciated both in Poland and abroad, called - which was very significant in that context - "Sztuka konsumpcyjna" (The Consumer Art). The work is a "permanent photograph" of an attractive girl eating bananas (in other versions she is eating hot dogs or ice cream). The erotic sense of those photos is self-evident. What's more, the link of eroticism and consumption is, in fact, clear - it is a kind of con-



7. Józef Robakowski: Pits, 1977

sumerist erotic, so characteristic of the streets of Western cities, TV commercials, or illustrated magazines. Hence, the works of Natalia Lach Lachowicz are actually a sort of critique of such a situation - of the objectification of sex, of the reduction of erotics to consumption and to the model of mass culture. They are an interesting example of revealing the mechanisms of a consumer society and its presence in visual culture.

However, the problem is that those works - produced in the seventies in Poland by a Polish artist and addressing (also) the Polish audience - were made in the country which even in the seventies did not suffer from the excess of consumer goods. Rather, it was just the opposite - consumption was the desire both of the authorities and of society, it was a fruit both hardly available and much demanded, and bananas - trivial in Western supermarkets - in Poland were a symbol of luxury. Besides, bananas were horribly expensive, and in the post-totalitarian Poland a worker or, even worse, a teacher surely could not afford to buy them every day. Anyway, they were not regularly available in stores, and whenever they were supplied, long lines of potential customers testified to their availability. There was a Polish saying "banana youth," referring to the children of rich parents, often connected with nomenklatura or private business. Consequently, bananas were more a dream about consumer excess than the actual "lived experience" of the post-totalitarian society. They were also a dream of the authorities which, using a consumerist rhetoric, in fact could not satisfy the desire it aroused - and as we know, the final result of that was a disaster. Moreover, such a dream were also the much more trivial frankfurters which in the next deca-



8. Romuald Kutter: Interpretation, 1977

de were rationed and could be bought only for meat vouchers.

It was almost the same with erotics. In the sixties, Poland did not have its sexual revolution. In the West, for the generation of "flower-children" sex was a form of the critique of capitalism and its culture. However, it was soon recuperated and - above all - commercialized by the target of the attack. In Poland nothing of that sort took place. On the contrary, in the post-totalitarian society the contestation of Western consumerism and commercialization brought that consumerism right under the eyes of the people as riches and welfare. Paradoxically, the critique of a consumerist society was interpreted as an attractive attribute of that society. Thus, like bananas, sex in the seventies in Poland was attractive, yet mostly absent from the visual culture. Again, like bananas, it was the object of desire both of the authorities and society, since it was associated with the welfare state - the objective of the Second Poland.

So, if "*Sztuka konsumpcyjna*" (The Consumer Art) appeared in New York, Cologne, Paris, or Milan, it might have been interpreted in the context of the post-modern critique of a consumerist society. Yet it appeared in Poland and from that point of view, in the context of historical processes functioning in



9. Romuald Kutter: Reinterpretation, 1977

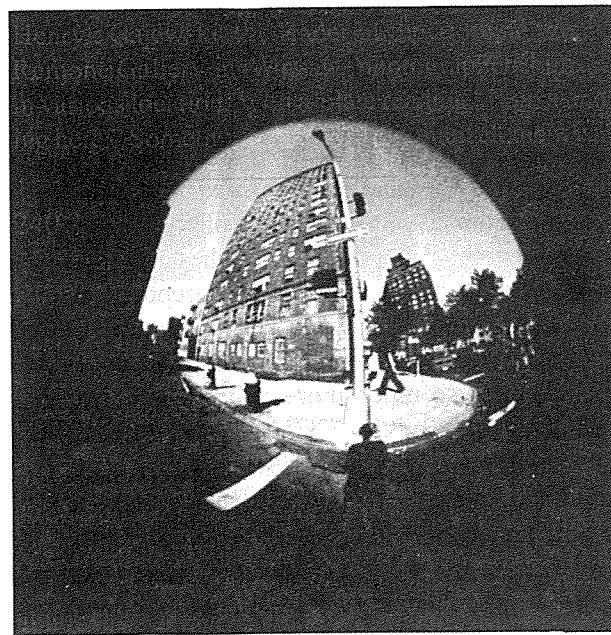
that country, the work by Natalia Lach Lachowicz acquired a completely new meaning - it became non-critical, it aroused rather than analyzed consumerism, it was an act of surrender and not description.

"*Sztuka konsumpcyjna*" (The Consumer Art), interpreted as a non-critical approach to the consumerist desire of the post-totalitarian society, was not just an isolated case in Poland. Let us take one more example - "Goalkeeper" by Zdzisław Sosnowski which is even more significant, since it made the "Polish team" at the 10th Biennale de Paris. Soccer, a mass entertainment of European societies, including the Polish society as well, is here represented in a luxurious context, in the convention of a pop star. In this case too, the elements of the consumerist erotics are visible. "Goalkeeper" could be interpreted as a symptom of a post-modern critique of the image of a star, so popular in the media, with all his sexual and economic attributes provided by mass culture. It could be so, if not for the fact that the picture referred more to Western culture as an object of esteem and desire, rather than to actual Polish reality.

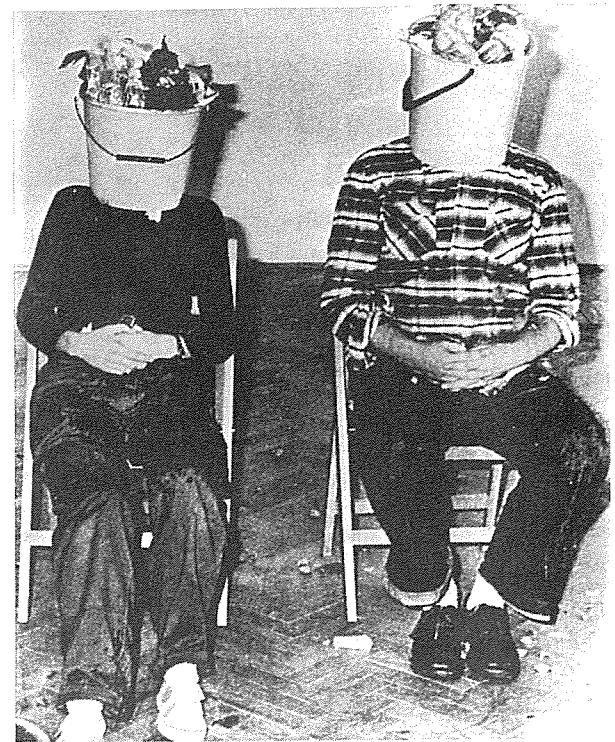
The post-modern critique of society in the works of Western artists is not only a critique of consumerism, but also - and perhaps in the first place - the revealing of the structural foundations of capitalism.

According to Benjamin Buchloh, such was also the function of conceptual art which, referring to a positivist definition of reality and reducing the artist to an "administrator" of the artistic space - a role analogous to the one performed in the society of late capitalism by officials - in fact was a critique, the critique of the institutionalization of social structures and processes.¹² Supposedly, such a model could prove very inspiring for Polish conceptualists - artists working in a country where institutionalization was much more annoying than in the West, and where officials had so much more unlimited power. And yet - it was not so.

In as much as a classic strategy of conceptual art was tautology, Polish art, especially that analyzing the language of photography, resorted to it very often. The point was, though, that that type of artistic activity, in Poland called "foto-medium-art," was usually quite banal, since it was based on problems known from amateur photography manuals, such as depth of focus, lighting, time of negative exposure, etc. Those artists believed that they were discovering the language of photography, simultaneously levelling criticism against the mythology of photography as an "objective" and natural instrument of recording reality. As a matter of fact, though, they were operating on the level of obviousness, and their supposed criticism did not reach beyond the level of banality; in the first place - at least till the end of the seventies - it did not start penetrating and analyzing the political status of the photographic image. A classic example in this respect are the works of Józef Robakowski, otherwise a well-known filmmaker and video-artist, from the series "*Czeluscie*" (Pits, 1978). They prove that a camera does not "see" everything, and some of the peripheral equipment (e.g. a flash) even make the recording of reality impossible. However, at the beginning of the eighties Robakowski gave up those pseudo-critical experiments and turned toward the analysis of the presence of image in current politics (mainly on video tape), making two extraordinary films. One of them, composed of best remembered TV pictures informing about the key events from the 1980-1981 history of "Solidarność", showed how certain images irresistibly associate with a given historical situation, functioning as its visual clichés. The other film is



10. Andrzej Lachowicz: Concrete Photography, 1978



11. Zofia Kulik & Przemysław Kwiek: Humans-Garbage Containers, 1978

about the funeral of Leonid Brezhnev, and it was made also on the basis of the TV footage. Anyway, both films belong to quite another epoch, transcending the historical and political frames of the seventies.

Let us give some other examples of pseudo-critical analyses. First, Romuald Kutera who photographs stepping on a sheet of paper ("*Interpretacja*" - Interpretation, 1977) and then photographs the same already photographed activity again, simultaneously repeating it once more ("*Reinterpretacja*" - Re-interpretation, 1977). The identity of place is stressed by the use of an English word "here"; the English language is necessary to let the work function on the international art market. Besides, to dispel any doubts that the author of the works is Romuald Kutera, the right shoe of the person stepping on a sheet of paper bears the signature of the artist.

The English language as a guarantee of the international reception of Polish art was quite commonly used in the activities of that kind. For instance, Henryk Gajewski, the leader of the aforementioned Remont Gallery in Warsaw, photographed himself in various locations with a plate reading "I am standing here." Sometimes, that cosmopolitan element was

a bit more subtle: Andrzej Lachowicz exhibited a series of works called "*Fotografia konkretna*" (Concrete Photography, 1978), showing himself during the activity of photographing by the photographs of his shadow. Still, the places which the artist "marks" with his presence do not resemble the landscapes of the PRL - all the photos were taken in the U.S. where Lachowicz spent some time as a grantee. The same motif of a "tautological analysis" appears in many works of the artist, sometimes very similar to one another ("*Sam*" - Alone, 1976).

However, pseudo-criticism is to be observed particularly in those (very rare) activities which aspired to political critique. I will give just one quite characteristic example. A couple of Warsaw artists, Zofia Kulik and Przemysław Kwiek, presenting a whole series of performances called "*Działania na głowie*" (The Actions on the Head), showed also works that had political reference. For instance, in "*Ludzie-kubły*" (Humans-Garbage Containers, 1978), they illustrated the "littering" of our minds. Still, that very general and rather banal metaphor could not appeal

to the imagination of the viewer (or censor) and connect the images to concrete, post-totalitarian Polish reality.

Yet, in 1976, the year which was quite important in the history of post-war Poland because of the institutionalization of political opposition in KOR - Committee for the Defense of Workers, Jan Świdziński proposed an artistic program that seemed to aim at the critique of reality - "*Sztuka kontekstualna*" (Contextual Art). The manifesto was published both in Poland and abroad (Lund, Sweden and Toronto, Canada), and it contained a radical critique of conceptual art (it was a year after the self-critique of conceptualism formulated by Joseph Kosuth and a British group "Art & Language"), particularly of its hermetism and supposed isolation from social and political problems of the present. Świdziński postulated the art that would "fill" itself with the context - the context determining its meaning. Contrary to the criticized conceptualists though, the artist preferred to limit himself to theoretical claims without any corresponding practice. In a post-totalitarian state theorizing was much safer than critical activity.

To conclude, one may claim that the presence of post-modern art (as a whole) in the seventies in Poland was very unique. What was adopted, had to be safe from the political point of view, therefore politically critical art did not appear at all. Polish artists chose a pseudo-critical rather than genuinely critical perspective.

The reasons for that were provided by the establishment of the post-totalitarian state which was interested in the reception of contemporary culture confirming the civilizational progress of the country. The consent of censorship to the presentation of post-modern art, financing of the galleries, conferences, and exhibitions, not so obvious in other countries of the "Eastern bloc," in Poland seemed a common practice with the authorities. The authorities needed artists, and the artists needed them too. After all, the

opportunities to work at the public cost (i.e. the cost of the state) were too valuable to lose, even if the price was the acceptance of the political status quo and the renouncement of the right to criticize. The result was widespread conformity, noticed by Havel in all levels of life of the post-totalitarian society, from the manager of a grocery store to the party official. The game played in the post-totalitarian society by the artist was no exception - it was a rule determining the system of power. Conformity, exemplified by the non-critical or pseudo-critical character of post-modern art, was then, in the words of Michel Foucault, the basis of the "microphysics of power" in artistic culture; it was the fundamennt of its mechanisms.

Pseudo-critical art was a symptom of considerable conformity of the Polish artists. It was particularly obvious in the context of absence of any forms of political art. The fear to lose opportunities, work conditions, access to grants, donations, etc. - paralyzed most groups and individuals. What's more, it favored - sometimes even in the form of manifestoes - conformist attitudes, turning them into a value, a model of activity. In 1978 Jan Stanisław Wojciechowski wrote: "...conformity is a proper antidote to derisory plans of destroying reality... we should think, and not fall prey to emotions, find self-realization here and now, in this country, under such circumstances as there are. we should respect certain definite rules against utopian thinking..."¹³ Those "derisory plans," that "utopian thinking" mentioned by Wojciechowski was most probably political opposition represented, together with other groups, by KOR which, established just two years earlier, in 1976, paved the way to founding the largest European trade union "Solidarność," and then to the fall of communism. Unfortunately, the art of the seventies did not contribute to that process in any significant way.

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Art "For" and "Against". Activist Art in Yugoslavia of the Eighties - Democratic and Totalitarian Options

Berislav VALUŠEK

Postmodernizmus a posttotalizmus. Prípad Polska v 70. rokoch

V príspevku autor opisuje vzťah medzi "osveteným autoritárimom" politického systému vlády Edwarda Gierka, 1971-1980, na jednej strane a umenia postmoderny tých dní v Poľsku, na strane druhej.

Koncept postmodernizmu je tu definovaný ako široký a všeobecný termín, ako umelecká kultúra po modernizme, to znamená procesy, ktoré sa v umení objavili nato, aby revidovali neskoromoderné maliarstvo abstraktného expresionizmu alebo l'art informel. Avšak v Poľsku to znamená reakciu na "maliarstvo obdobia odmäku", tu veľmi rozšírené umenie druhej polovice 50. rokov, po tom, čo zlyhalo stalinistická doktrína socialistickej realizmu; inými slovami - reakcia na umenie obdobia "odmäku" vytvorila v Poľsku začiatok postmodernej umeleckej kultúry 60. rokov. Posledná potom, je priama tradícia extenzívnej erupcie meta-kritického alebo najmä pseudo-kritického umenia 70. rokov, ktoré je ústredným predmetom štúdie.

"Posttotalitarizmus", pojed popísaný v dielach Václava Havla, je chápáný ako posledná "mäkká verzia" reálneho socialismu, viac sa hodiaca na systém moci Edwarda Gierka v Poľsku 70. rokov ako Gustáva Husáka v Československu. Poľsko v tých rokoch začalo byť "otvorenou" krajinou, zavádzajúcou konzumnú kultúru iba vďaka západným financiam (jeho vlastná ekonomika bola totálne neefektívna), a ako také bolo nútene tolerovať, okrem iného, politickú opozíciu v druhej polovici dekády.

Použijúc terminológiu Michela Foucalta, povedali by sme, že "posttotalitarizmus" bol systém moci založený na panoptickom dohľade spoločnosti, ktorý nahradil stalinistický systém zákazov a trestov.

Ak porovnávame s inými komunistickými krajinami východnej Európy, postmoderné umenie v Poľsku v 70. rokoch

neočakávane vzrástlo. Jestvoval ohromný počet umeleckých festivalov, konferencií, výstav, katalógov, manifestov, sympózií atď. Pozerajúc na tento fenomén v jeho historickom kontexte, môžeme predpokladať, že taká enormná produkcia postmoderných foriem umeleckých výrazov bola neskoro komunistickým režimom nielen tolerovaná, ale dokonca schvalovaná úradmi, ktoré chceli byť uznávané počas Gierkovej doby ako "osvetená" vláda "modernej" a západnej krajiny - krajiny, ktorá nakupovala v tom čase západný konzumný tovar, technológiu a módu.

Mohli by sme povedať, že poľskí umelci 70. rokov mali širokú umeleckú slobodu na formálne experimenty, hoci politicky obsah ich vyjadrenia bol v tom čase striktne limitovaný. Preto oslobodenie v otázkach formálnych inšpirácií a súčasne obmedzenie možnej politickej kritiky, spôsobili situáciu, ako to bolo vyššie spomenuté, kedy poľské postmoderné umenie 70. rokov, všeobecne povedané, nadobudlo často pseudo-kritické kvality.

Preto umelci ovplyvnení "západnými" štýlistickými a poetickými štandardmi, a rešpektujúci - samozrejme politické limity slobody prejavu, skrátka - pseudo-kritickí umelci sa neočakávane (veľmi často sami pre seba) vynorili ako nositelia oficiálnej rétoriky, rétoriky postavenej na imidži nového, "západného", "európskeho" a "civilizovaného" štátu, nazývaného vtedy propagandou "Druhé Poľsko".

Poľské úrady potom, zrušiac cenzúru postmoderného umenia (na rozdiel od iných kultúrnych oblastí), chceli presvedčiť svet (Západ), rovnako ako aj samých seba, že Poľsko začína byť modernou krajinou, kde je možné nájsť nielen západnú konzumnú kultúru a technológie, rozsiahlo nakupované za pôžičky západných bank, ale súčasne tiež moderné či postmoderné umenie.

This essay is based on art material of the Exhibition under the title "*Art FOR and AGAINST, Art - Politics - Ideology*". The Exhibition took place in Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina), from November 1989 to January 1990. I had been preparing the Exhibition for almost a year. During that period I visited studios of all the artists that took part in the Exhibition (50 of them), and I visited a lot of other artists all over the former Yugoslavia. Already at that time, at the beginning of the year 1989, it was obvious that "something was going on". Nobody supposed that that "something" would be so bloody and humiliating. It was also clear who, in former Yugoslavia, has chosen a totalitarian option and who has chosen a democratic one (whatever it meant). The art of that period was a battlefield of the options we live today. Considering the time-distance, sign and significances are even easier to be understood today.

To see more clearly what is happening nowadays, we need a short introduction. In former Yugoslavia the beginning of the eighties confirmed postmodernism in the art. At the same time, it was the period of democratization of the political and public life. The control of the Communist Party and government became less rigorous. The reasons for that change were Tito's death on one side, and changed circumstances in the world, on the other.

The process in former Yugoslavia coincided with the same process in the world (Gorbachev and "glasnost", the fall of Berlin wall, etc.). The economic, social and political crisis of the eighties caused a new stratification of political interests. The out-

come was that national option became stronger than before.

The Serb president Milošević began this process in 1987. Kosovo crisis was a good alibi for limiting the independence of the autonomous provinces Kosovo and Vojvodina, and changing the political management in Montenegro (Crna Gora). The national and nationalistic program that Milošević used was realised by the most important scientific institution in Serbia: **The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts**. This program aroused reactions in all the other Yugoslav republics. Economical, political and social problems that have been waiting for years to be resolved, and the dangerous question of national rights, helped Milošević to push Yugoslavia into a deep crisis. This process was irreversible.

The first free elections in Slovenia and Croatia were organized in 1990. Unable to beat the opponents and control them by political means, Serbia began the war in Slovenia in June 1991, using the Yugoslav Army as the instrument to accomplish its goals. This war ended in seven days. In August the same year, Serbia began the war in Croatia, and in February next year the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While writing the text for the catalogue for the Banja Luka Exhibition, I tried to give the precise meaning of the term ACTIVIST ART. This is the engaged art where engagement happens inside the problem of the work of art itself (disregarding motivation which can, more or less clearly point out social, political, ideological or other contents). This

direction in art puts a question mark upon society, system or government. It provokes and denies, it is subversive and dangerous, it presents demystification and negation. Such kind of art creates its own new reality, its own language, negating the reasons that are beyond. Adorno says: "There is no socially truthful art if it is not truthful itself."

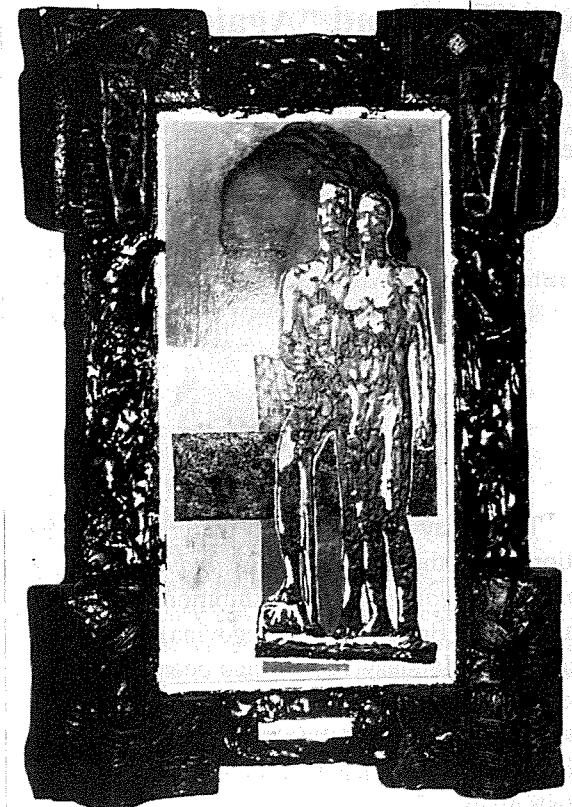
There is another kind of art which is hard to recognize from the activist art - POLITICALLY TENDENTIOUS ART, through which society gravitates towards accomplishing collective aims inside the domination of a simple idea. This is the direction in art where engagement means domination of society as an accomplished object or closed, perfect system. Glorification of reality is present, or, in better case, reality is declaratively illustrated. Art is turned into propaganda, advertisement, and, as the outcome, in the opposition and negation of itself: non-art.

Ideology and Politics

The exhibition "Surrealism and social art 1929-1950" (Museum of Modern Art, Belgrade) and Exhibition "Activist Art in Yugoslavia 1919-1969" (Slovenj Gradec, 1969), represent the history of Activist art in former Yugoslavia. In the turbulent fifties the art gained its autonomy (EXAT 51 group, exhibitions at Riječki salon etc.). The sixties brought universal humanitarian engagement of a broad spectrum with, at first sight the disengaged GORGONA group. The seventies were sceptic about the media and wanted answers about the role and function of art in the society.

What about the eighties? Eighty years after the appearance of "The First Futurist Manifesto" (1909) do "the elements of poetry ... courage, spirit and revolt" still count? Is there anybody who wants to "free Italy from numerous museums in which we cross the land like graveyards"? Is it "a must for art to resign from the past", is "a racing car" (still) "more beautiful than Nike from Samos"? In other words, does still exist, or is some new big idea born which could wake up the artists' creative potential and concentrate their energy to reach their goal?

Almost certainly, the answer to these questions is no.



1. Group IRWIN (Slovenia): WAS IST KUNST?, 1989

At the beginning of the eighties the art of that period was retrograde. It represented a need for highly aesthetic emotionality, the art that shut its eyes to reality that became more and more painful, the art like ideological fata morgana and a means of manipulation. Today we must admit that to resign from the ideas of the historical avant-garde means pluralism and that progressivism is the road that never really existed. We are about to admit that we went the wrong direction and are ready to go back. Agitation propaganda immanent to opposition changed to an integrational one which aimed at social stability, created coexistence of different ideological, political and artistic models and systems.

What can, in the period when all the great ideas are dead, creative, critical - activist art do? Where are the possibilities of art engagement? Here is one of possible answers. It can use the very methods, language and media that are ideological and political



2. Miodrag Popović (Serbia): 1st of May 1985, 1985

means of the system this art opposes to (at least in appearance if not by quality and quantity of communication). Exactly like LAIBACH (rock-group from Slovenia) says in 1983: "Every art is subjected to political manipulation (indirectly - consciousness; directly) except the one that uses the very language of manipulation itself." Similarly Hans Haacke creates his economic-political messages in the form of advertisements in luxurious magazines; Beuys had a bureau called "Organization for direct democracy by peoples' voting"; Jenny Holzer uses in her works fluorescent ribbons for advertising, and quite a lot of artists use video as a means of expression. The question is what is of communication the range of these means of expression. Minor, almost of no importance. Photography (newspaper), TV and film, transmitters that also use art language are today's strongest visual mediators that are completely ideo-

logized, entirely (and all over the world) controlled by the establishment. On the other side, there are pictures and statues who the public of which is limited by the number of people visiting museums and galleries. (Has it ever happened that soldiers have occupied a museum or gallery instead of a TV-station?)

Art, likewise culture, uses only its own language, even when it puts on a political outfit. In the situation when culture is repressed, answers by using the institutional language of culture, art uses an autonomous language. The problem is that art fighting against the ruling ideology uses the space of the ideology; it finds the reason in opposing the ideology and therefore is inevitably defined by the ideology. The system permits a certain amount of provocation and gets legitimacy out of it. "Freedom of creativity" is just a small bordered field surrounded with a bigger field called establishment - power - ideology - politics.

A system of ideas which reflects the reality, ideology is out of categories "truth" and "false"; it is entitled to represent "absolute truth". Ideology is realized through institutions and especially is interested in the influence on politics and art. It plays with signs (without contents) made into symbols. In that way society is structured as a system of signs; having, for example, a car doesn't mean to satisfy the need, but to satisfy an artificially created need. That is why today design, as one kind of art, is completely (indirectly but completely) in service of the ruling ideology. In what way then can art avoid the everpresent terrorism of ideology. Before we try to answer this question, let us see the way engaged art (activist art) developed in Yugoslavia in the eighties.

Models

I wanted to find answers to the questions: Which is the methodological means of realization of art engagement? Who are the authors engaged in the first described manner, and who are those whose engagement can be described as the second one? Wishing to make this distinction, I recognized five basic models of politicizing and political ideologization of art.

The first model is based on the relatively naive playing with signs and symbols which are used as the material for new artistic or simply decorative art

constructions. That is the model in which self-censorship is ever present, but it is the first step towards asking (unpleasant) questions.

The second model is the ironization of symbols. It separates them from the general context of usual appearances, redesigning and fitting them into new systems which give new meanings. As in most cases the point is in the signs and symbols of socialist revolutions. This model can already be recognized as the potential danger for the practice which confirms them.

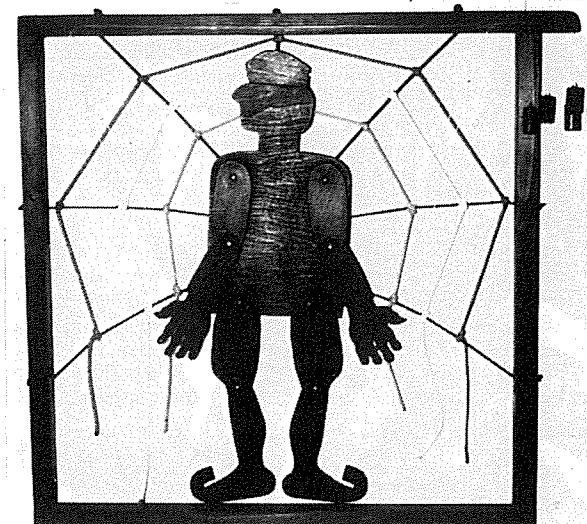
The third model is moralizing. It tries to point out the wrong places of political practice or such practice itself is condemned. In these cases, the unconcealed conflict between the artist and art already begins as the autonomous units on one side, and the social reality as closed in itself and defined totality, on the other side.

This three part grading can be understood as one totality which has an essential characteristic to inquire about social circumstances or to define the artist as an independent thinking subject and art as intellectual practice.

None of these models gives answers, they only put questions casting doubt on existing social values.

The fourth model of politicizing - ideologization of art offers answers. It is non-artistic; one's own (artistic) definition by a political or ideological structure is accepted without any reserves (directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously). In Yugoslavia of the eighties there are two directions: the first one is already the completely weak and anachronic direction of glorification and further mythologization of the revolution and revolutionary premises of society, while the other direction relies on national programs which coincide with the politics of carrying out these programs.

And, finally, the fifth model, that can never be found in its own form, but always entangled in previously analyzed models. It is the model in which the wholesome, global world situation (which means even those local situations) is resolved by Thanatos - death - by the way of art. At the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties we witnessed the fact that the main theme of many exhibitions in the world was death (The New Museum of



3. Milija Nešić (Serbia): Serb, 1986

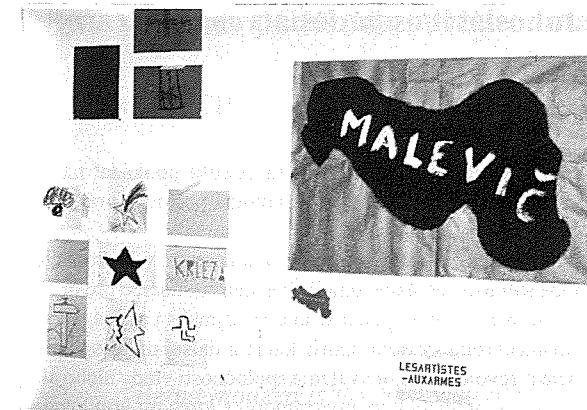
Contemporary Art, "Interrupted life", New York, for instance). Namely, death in its metaphorical, artistic way seems to be the only means to get away from the everpresent and overwhelming terrorism of ideology.

The history of modern art and historical avant-garde groups considered utopia as the ideal shelter from ideology. The rigid present tense in that "no-place" changed and became an optimistic vision of the future. Today there is no more a "great idea" or a utopistic project for the future, and activist art has, in one part, turned to the opposite direction: distopia or negative utopia. While utopia incorporates hope, distopia means fear for the destiny of humankind and incorporates doubt. But where is doubt, there is hope, so the contradiction of the world is resolved by one final decision - death.

Let us see which models of politicizing - ideologization of art have been used in particular parts of former Yugoslavia in the eighties.

First three models, which are subversive by definition, can be found all over former Yugoslavia. The fifth model which points out death as the resolution, is connected to urban surroundings with a strong artistic tradition such as Ljubljana (Slovenia), Zagreb (Croatia), Belgrade, Novi Sad (Serbia).

The first type of the fourth model, non-artistic glorification of the system, can be detected all over the former Yugoslavia. But the second one, that is



4. Vlado Martek (Croatia): From cycle "Overcommunism", 1983/84

the direction with a national program, was present only in Slovenia, Serbia and Macedonia. In Slovenia there is the art group IRWIN from Ljubljana which, in an nontypical manner uses Slovenian national symbols and myths, but the artists used them to denounce the reality itself. Group IRWIN, part of a larger art movement called "Neue Slowenische Kunst" (NSK) used the language of totalitarian systems (especially German Nazism) very intelligently, to point out the totalitarian nature of the society and system.

In Macedonia the national thematic was scarce but present. The most rigid national and nationalistic program in art was present only in Serbia. What was the way it has been realized and how could it be recognized? What was its principle of action? It used the same means and ways as it had done always in the past.

If society is a national category, and culture is national and international, it is enough just to agree with a one dimensional definition of culture and apply such definition to art. Instead of destroying the myths (demystification as condition for desideologization), in Serbia began the process of renovat-

ing old national myths and fabricating new ones. The most exposed and used was the myth about Kosovo, a memento of the Serbian defeat in the battle against the Turks on the field named Kosovo in 1389. After that lost battle, Serbia was under Turkish government for the next 500 years. The myth about Kosovo incorporates the idea of the permanent loser's pattern in Serbian history which is to be changed, and the idea about a strong and big Serbia to avoid new defeats. Using this myth during two Balkan and two World Wars, Serbia has become ten times bigger than it was before the First Balkan War.

To satisfy the need of daily politics, the Kosovo-myth was modernized with the story about big Albanian threat (the Albanians being today 90% of the Kosovo population). A great part of the Serbian art production of the eighties leaned on it's own national background. Collectivity became stronger than individuality, one idea became stronger than all the others, a very well known pattern was born in history: one nation (state), one leader, one idea (party). So the ideologization that was expressed by the way of myths became complete. Such kind of art is politically tendentious, instrumentalized, engaged in a banal and vulgar way, it is regressive. Its ideological position coincide in all details with political theory and practice - that is with the ruling ideology of the moment.

Instead of a critical distance from the society, this kind of art incorporates a sort of fighting dictated from the outside. Doing that, it loses freedom and becomes its own negation - false art or non-art.

Last but not least, I have to say that in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina I did not find a simple example of politically tendentious art with a national prefix in 1989. This is, maybe, why war is still going on in these republics of former Yugoslavia.

Umenie "za" a "proti". Angažované umenie v Juhoslávii osemdesiatych rokov - demokratické a totalitné požiadavky

Ekonomické, sociálne a politické rozvrstvovanie juhoslovenskej spoločnosti začalo po Titovej smrti v r. 1980. Je to tiež čas novej, postmodernej situácie vo vizuálnych umeniach. Niektoré alternatívy by sme spoznali v juhoslovanskom umení už na úplnom začiatku 80. rokov a počas celého desaťročia, požiadavky, ktorých politické ekvivalenty sú formulované práve teraz. Na jednej strane sú autori, ktorých umenie bolo *engagée* (vnútri výpovede diela samotného umenia, bez ohľadu na motívy, ktoré boli viac menej jasné), kým na strane druhej, autori, ktorých umenie bolo politicky podložené (umenie, pomocou ktorého chce spoločnosť dosiahnuť kolektívne ciele s dominujúcou iba jednou ideou). V tých rokoch sme rozpoznávali päť základných modelov spolitizovania, t.j. umenia *engagée*.

1/ Model založený na relatívne nevinnej hre so znakmi a symbolmi, ktoré sa používajú ako materiál pre nové umelecké alebo čisto dekoratívne vizuálne konštrukcie.

2/ Model ironizácie symbolov (socialistickej revolúcie), ktoré sú vyňaté z obecného kontextu obvyklého javu, sú pretvorené a vsadzované znova do nových systémov nových významov.

3/ Moralizujúci model, ktorý sa pokúša poukázať na zlé stránky politickej praxe alebo je to samotná politická prax, ktorá je odsudzovaná.

4/ Neumelecký model spolitizovania umenia, v ktorom človek úplne súhlasí s osobou umeleckou determináciou prostredkami politickej a ideologickej štruktúry. Zjavil sa počas 80. rokov ako anachronický trend glorifikácie a ďalšej mytológizácie revolúcie a revolučného uchvatenia spoločnosti vtedy alebo ako paralela k nacionalistickým programom, s ktorými kolidoval.

5/ Model *Thanatos* - úplne globálna (do určitej miery aj lokálna) situácia je riešená vymieraním nepriamo, prostredníctvom umenia.

Prvé tri modely sú demystifikácie ako umelecká prax, ktorá odhaluje jeden či viac spôsobov použitia partikulárneho jazyka politiky a ideológie. Jazyk politiky sa stal prostredkom používaným proti tej istej politike alebo ideológii. Štvrtý model je model propagandy alebo propagandistické umenie, ktoré znovuožívuje staré myty a vytvára nové, kým piaty model sa zmenil na negatívnu utópiu ako miesto, v ktorom je celý svet odmetaný a jeho protirečenia sú riešené konečným činom - smrťou.

New Visions of Modernity

Rostislav ŠVÁCHA

"Being modern is the best way of using our memories".

(Jean Nouvel, 1992)

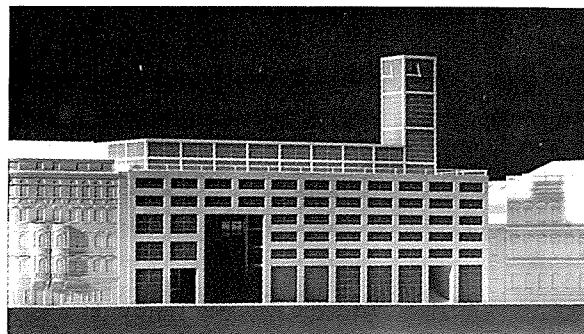
Today you could hardly find a more difficult and dangerous discussion to initiate than a serious debate on the need of being modern. On one hand, there is an alarming experience of a fateful alliance between modernism in art and politics because of the contribution modern art and architecture brought to all better or worse thinking philosophers trying to make true their unreal social utopias. And sad must feel today even those who understand why these social utopias came to life and why they found such a response with artists. The debate on the need of being modern seems to be a hazardous one not only because it is happening in a very sensitive political environment. On the other hand, there is the constant danger of the concept that permanently inclines towards taking modern for fashionable, superficial, snobbish, bored, as well as the wild lust for the new and new artistic experiments we every two to three years welcome with the same impatience we at the same time kick out the back-yard door their now-oldfashioned forerunners.

For many years now one thought contemporary art and architecture would feel some kind of need for repentance for these sins. The hangover from eccentric and dogmatic modern art seemed to become an ethical base for postmodern art and architecture. When, in 1966, one of the pioneers of this movement Robert Venturi published his *Complexity and Contradictions in Architecture*, he referred to an expression of the Dutch architect-philosopher Aldo van Eyck, who said the biggest mistake of modernism was its unlimited concentration on exploring the new,

which brought along its impotency to perceive the relatively perpetual elements in architecture. Already in 1962 van Eyck declared: (modern architects) "have been harping continually on what is different in our time to such an extent that they have lost touch with what is not different, with what is essentially the same".¹

Eyck and Venturi possibly found such arguments in Panofsky's iconology and its understanding of art history as a chronology of differently motivated renaissances and renascences. Even more they could have been inspired by Ernst Gombrich, who says in art there is nothing created as completely new, just by erasing the tradition. According to Gombrich every cultural or artistic product has its historical precedent.² The structuralistic theory of art brought along the understanding of an artistic creation as a language system of its own kind. Started by Venturi, postmodern architecture began to communicate with the public through the known method of quotations and references to different styles, to different architectural vernaculars, or simply to some other piece of architecture chosen for its purpose from the inexhaustible reservoir of tradition.

Postmodern architecture succeeded better in addressing the public than the modern one, which is why it played such a positive role in its time. If I dared to declare that today's ethos of architectural or any other postmodernism seems to be exhausted, I would risk to be taken for one of those snobbishly lusting for changes and renewal I mentioned in the first article. But, based on my experience, I collected through interpreting pieces of art of classical modernism and even contemporary architecture over the past years, I have to insist on such a declaration.

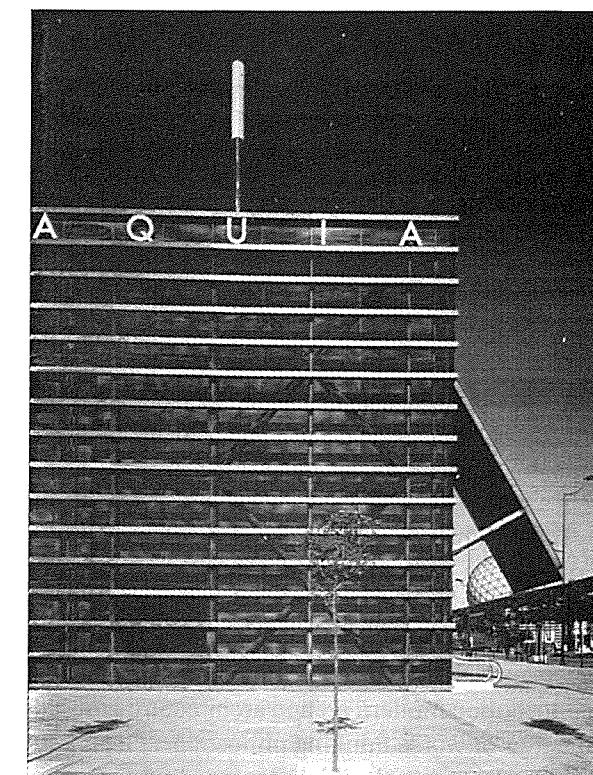


1. Alena Šrámková - Tomáš Novotný, project for Tuzex department store, Prague, 1988

In addition I must say my scepticism about the possibilities of postmodernism's progress, followed by the belief in the necessity of searching and defining new modes of modernity, is only superficially inspired by the critique of postmodernism which had been receiving from a growing number of European and American critics over the past ten years or so.

According to the deconstructivists from the circle around Jacques Derrida postmodernism is not capable of anything but repetition, which Derrida himself describes as a nihilistic point of view.³ Kenneth Frampton and some English left-wing critics concern postmodernistic architecture - and especially the one in the stage of Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972) - for a typically American expression of cynical manipulation with consumly oriented public, for a sort of architectural analogy of more and more aggressive commercial signs along the shopping streets of big cities and more and more stupid TV-programs, that do not offer anything of worth and routinely adjust to the public's less and less exacting intellectual level.⁴

Miroslav Šik, a Swiss architect of Czech origin, stated that the postmodernistic system of references and quotations is not able to create anything but ironical, cheap and fake imitations of the past.⁵ (Already at the end of the XIXth century Adolf Loos repreahended a similar confusion of original and imitation to the "historicizing" architecture of Vienna, the Potemkin's City.) Friedrich Achleitner, a Viennese historian of modern architecture, says the postmodernistic illustrations of the past are not able to define our own times.⁶ The picture of tradition and the past, which postmodernism uses as a language to communicate with, is, according to the Swiss ar-



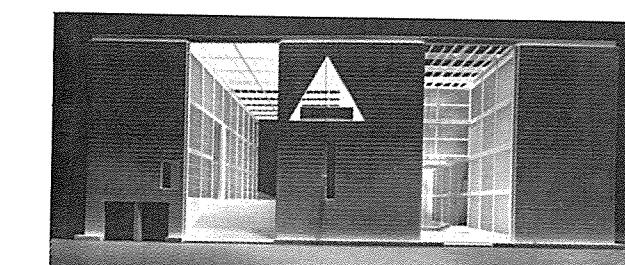
2. Martin Němec - Ján Stempel, Czechoslovak pavillion, EXPO '92, Sevilla, 1991-1992

chitect Jacques Herzog, seemingly the same kind of utopia as the utopia of the future celebrated by modern art.⁷

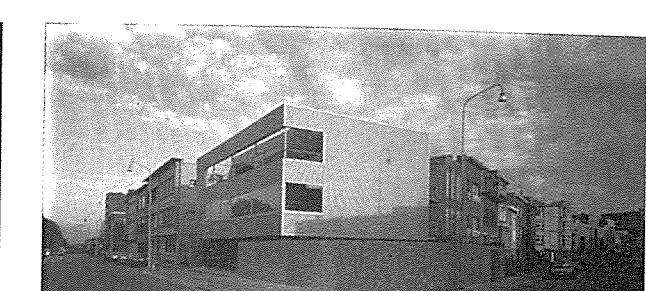
All these denouncements of postmodernism are important and mostly also true. Though some other things make me, as a historian of modern art, feel uneasy as well.

As I already said in connection with Panofsky and Gombrich, we could find the counterpart to the postmodernistic way of communication with the public (as it is based on references to fragments of historical tradition and quotations of some historical precedents in methods of interpretation of the most influential art-historical streams of the second half of XXth century).

At the same time these methods were used not only for studying art of the past, but even for interpreting the era of modernism, which, under the pressure of these methods, changed into a historicism of its own. Benefit of this new, already very much postmodernistically oriented interpretation of moder-



3. Emil Přikryl, project for Czechoslovak consulate, Shanghai, 3rd version, 1989



4. Willem Jan Neutelings, family house, Berchem, 1988-1990

nism, was without any doubt very great. In spite of this, my opinion is that the method of analyzing and summarizing all possible references and quotations in a piece of art will not give us all essential information about it.

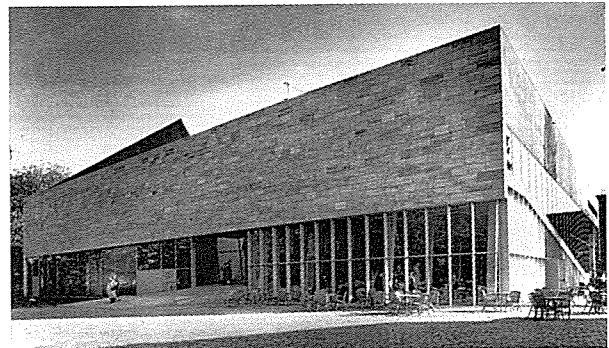
When I was about to write a book on Le Corbusier, my great inspiration was *Le Corbusier, Elements of a Synthesis*, by a Swiss historian of modern architecture Stanislaus von Moos (1968, 1982).⁸ In his book, all individual elements of Le Corbusier's work and their often surprisingly high level of traditional inspiration, are pointed out, listed, analyzed and interpreted very skillfully. Von Moos didn't miss to mention the characteristics of all Le Corbusier's part-innovations either, but the fact, that despite of his relation tradition, Le Corbusier was the greatest inventor in XXth architecture century, was left aside a little.

I experienced even bigger disillusion while working in a team compiling a catalogue *Kubismus in Prag 1909-1925*,⁹ in which the authors, including myself, searched for and explained in detail all possible connections there were between cubism and gothical, manneristic, baroque, symbolistic, art nouveau and other traditions. At the same time, the feeling for cubism as the greatest among revolutions in art throughout the history, had not been stressed enough.

Of course you can object that the new in a piece of art is clearly to be seen only after one determines what is old in it. To oppose such a statement we must ask ourselves if there is a good method of interpretation available, a method we can use to specify the modern in a piece of art. Maybe our methods, concentrated on looking up references and quotations, force us to prefer in the history of art traditionalism

flooded with all possible kinds of quotations and references and nothing else. I almost feel Aldo van Eyck's declaration I mentioned earlier to become true today in its opposite meaning, eg. in today's interpretations of modern art "*we stress continually what we have in common with the past to such an extent, that we have lost touch with what is different in our time, with what is essentially the new.*"

The same puzzlement I sometimes experienced when interpreting pieces of classical modernism I felt in my judgements to understand the artistic contents of some architectural projects and constructions of our time. By that I don't mean object in the style of neofunctionalism which - as its name says - counts without hesitation on references and quotations and so seems to be only a postmodernism in the mask of modernism. I don't address the high-tech architecture either, the one that maybe expresses greater interest in the true modernity, but is most of the time too naive and one-sided and in which we could find many nostalgic references and quotations after all, whether those would come from the illustrations of the Jules Verne novels, the splendid era of victorian engineering or the formal language of oil plants and cosmic technology.¹⁰ Fundamental doubts about the method were not awaken in myself either by the typical architectonic deconstructivism - projects by Daniel Libeskind, Zaha Hadid or the Coop Himmelblau group - in which we have to acknowledge far greater interest in communicating with the public through other means than simple quotations, but even these projects refer to historical precedents to some degree - for instance to the Russian constructivism and especially to the nervous trapezoid and streamline forms of modernism of the fifties.

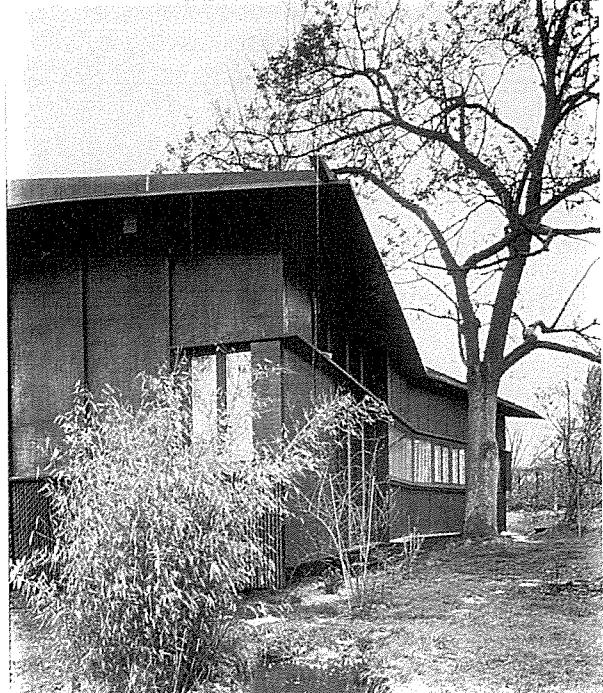


5. Rem Koolhaas (OMA), Kunsthall building, Rotterdam, 1990-1992

My puzzlement I mentioned was awoken more by projects whose roots in tradition of modern architecture often are almost more visible at the first sight, just as it is in the case of neofunctionalism, high-tech and deconstructivism, but after further studies of their artistic message a question arises whether it is possible to explain them completely with the help of their links with that tradition.

The never realized project of the Tuzex department store, authors Alena Šrámková and Tomáš Novotný from 1988¹¹ is, by its strictly geometrical volumes, a marked skeletal construction and windows put in coherent lines, unquestionably declaring its connection with the tradition of constructivism of the twenties, a sort of archetype of all the modernity in architecture to come. In the Tuzex project we can find even some deviations from the "right" constructivism and functionalism, but those don't mean very much in the context. If we still tried to interpret this project as a sort of a conglomerate of quotations and references to historical constructivist standards, we would probably find very few real quotations and these would not help in interpreting the basic characteristics of this project. The creation of Alena Šrámková and Tomáš Novotný contains something else, something you cannot explain nor name by decoding its quotations.

Successive transfer from either postmodern or neofunctionalist forms towards the not very easily categorized modern architecture is possible to detect in the development of Václav Králíček's project of the theatre Husa na provázku¹² and Emil Přikryl's project of the Czechoslovak consulate in Shanghai,¹³ both designed in 1988-89.

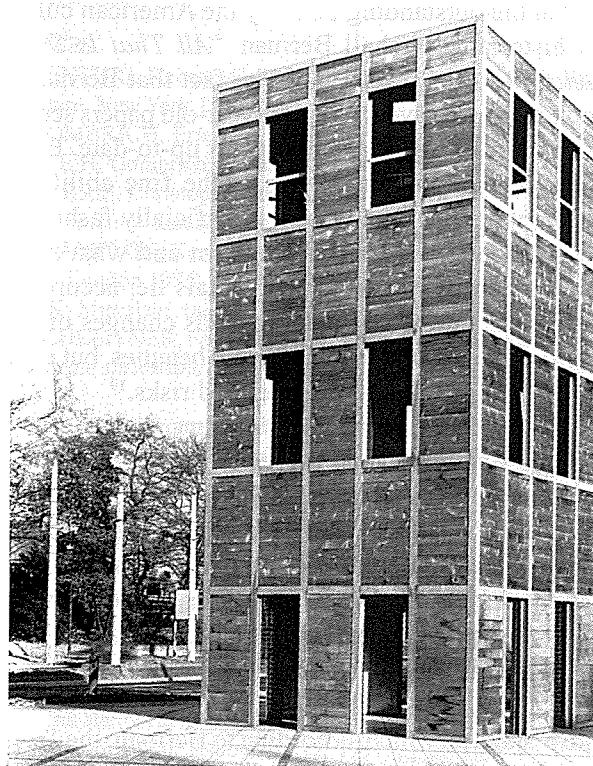


6. Jacques Herzog - Pierre de Meuron, Plywood house, Basel, 1985

The contest for the Czechoslovak pavilion at EXPO 1992 in Sevilla was won in 1990 by Martin Němec and Ján Stempel, and their project seemed to be a big quotation of another object of this kind: Jaromír Krejcar's pavilion for the International Exhibition of Art and Technology in Paris in 1937.¹⁴ While working on the final version of sketches for Sevilla, Němec and Stempel's project went through substantial metamorphosis. The concept of the pavilion still was, according to the authors, inspired by the traditional poetic functionalism from between the world wars, but the result is once again ungraspable and impossible to define by the method of decoding references and quotations.

In Czech architecture you can find objects of similar nature in the works of Josef Pleskot, Jaroslav Šafer, Lukáš Velíšek, in the projects of some members of the Brno Obecní dům and some other architects.

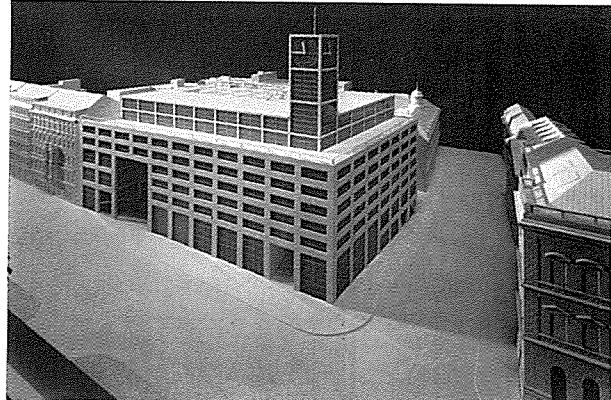
In other countries, similar and until now not very well defined architecture was designed by a great number of architects of different generations as well as different cultural and stylish circles - among others



7. Haus Rucker group, the tower, Neuss, 1985

the Dutchmen Herman Hertzberger, Rem Koolhaas and Willem-Jan Neutelings, the Portugese Alvaro Siza, American Cesar Pelli, the Frenchmen Jean Nouvel and Dominique Perrault, the German-Austrian group Haus Rucker, the Swiss team Jacques Herzog - Pierre Meuron. It seems to speak for itself that Jacques Herzog sees as one of the most important experiences of his carrier his sort of an unsuccessful quotation he made while trying to imitate the characteristic wooden nursery from the forties at the construction of the so called Plywood house in Basel 1985. Although he tried hard to work in the chosen vernacular, the result came out completely different.¹⁵

The goal of this discussion should hypothetically become the fact that in the very elements and aspects of contemporary architectural achievements that are not created only by repeating the past or referring to it, but which unfortunately still seem to us as difficult to define, lies probably the true definition of our time, the real expression of its modernity.

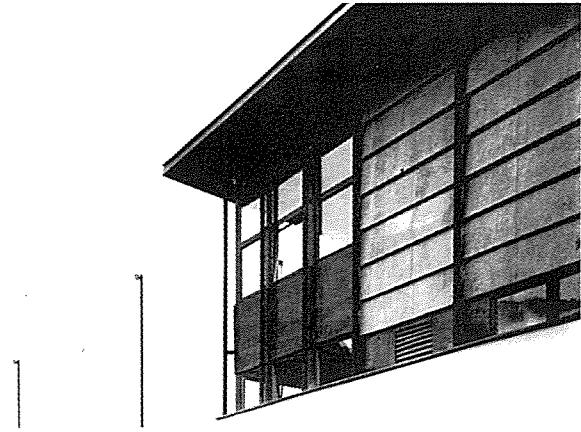


8. Alena Šrámková - Tomáš Novotný, project for Tuzex department store, Prague, 1988

There is, of course, the question whether the undefinability of such a modernity is a sufficient result for us - or whether it is necessary to define that modernity in some more concrete way.

Traditional experts of modernity, as were in Bohemia F.X. Šalda, Vincenc Kramář or Karel Teige, would not help us very much in answering our question. In today's light their visions of the new art seem already too simple, too dogmatic and too linked together with the ideas of common progress of their era. However, Šalda's lecture "The new beauty, its genesis and character" from 1904, identifying modernity with the ability to open up to all new realities of the modern world will always remain a generally valid appeal.

Newer theories and measures of interpreting art, oriented on solving and disclosing references and quotations, seems to be of as little use today as well. Reference and quotation are not the modes of definition of modernity we are searching for and are not the means a project can be realized through either. That is why I think Stanislaus von Moos' observation that in today's architecture (and especially in Koolhaas' work) you can see a clear transfer from straight-line quotations allowing "to pin-point post festum the sources of one or another among the project's formal characteristics", towards far more delicate evocations, indications and inspirations,¹⁶ becomes significant. The fundamental in architecture is not any more the language developed to communicate with the public, but more likely a sort of



9. Josef Pleskot - Radek Lampa, Megafyt R factory, Vrané nad Vltavou, 1992-1993

an introvert concept - a key - which helps the architect to define his own actual situation, but which he does not necessarily have to offer to the public as a help in "reading" his work. So even in cases of constructions not denying their links with historical models, the differences become more outstanding rather than the similarities.

Moos and his younger colleague Wilfried Wang¹⁷ are trying to strengthen the evidence of the conceptual character of contemporary architecture by tentative interpretations of projects by Koolhaas and Herzog taken over from conceptual painting analysis. But, in the end, we still cannot be sure how far these interpretations are to be taken for a hypothesis of the interpreters and how far they are a true record of the creative minds of Koolhaas and Herzog. The increasing number of signals from several directions tells us though the search for a new successor to the eroded postmodernist method of references and quotations has begun.¹⁸

By describing the state of today's architecture we somewhat divert from our mission to, at least to some degree, define its modernity. In my opinion we could find one of the deepest going analysis of the problem of different forms and modes of modern-

nity in the outstanding book by the American cultural historian Marshall Berman "All That Is Solid Melts Into Air" from 1982. The fact that Berman's book contains eleven to fifteen-year-old papers seems to be more of a guarantee that it is up-to-date. Even today it still inspires, thanks to the fine ability to differentiate between what's superficially fashionable, straight "pastoral" modernism and what's the true modernity, whose fundamentals lie, according to Berman, in the openness towards changes of the world with all its achievements and beauties, but even with all its paradoxes, disputes and risks.¹⁹

Already from the XIXth century, on the era of Charles Baudelaire and prefectus Haussmann, who act as pioneers of our own modernity in the key parts of Berman's book, all achievements, beauties, paradoxes and contradictions of modern times are most distinctively concentrated in big cities. Big cities with their boulevards and avenues are certain to the biggest chance to see a thorough production of modern civilization. And only big cities can be transformed into a stage on which, according to Berman, the "primal situations" are born and lived, the archetypical experiences of modern man living in the whirl of social and civilizational changes. So maybe it is not strange that almost all of discharges of architectural modernity, from the Haussmann and Chicago School, the avant-garde of the twenties and Venturi's "Honky tonk elements" to the work of Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture and a little naive display facades by Jean Nouvel,²⁰ always contained an element of celebration of a big city street.

The referred-to project of the Tuzex department store, authors Alena Šramková and Tomáš Novotný, thanks to which - in my opinion - Czech architecture for the first time clearly surpassed the horizon of postmodernism, is in no way diverting from this tradition. The very tradition modern architects of today don't use as an object of quotation, but rather a challenge to make their own definition of today to stand on its own feet.

NOTES

- ¹ VENTURI, Robert: *Complexity and Contradictions in Architecture*, New York 1966, p.19
² GOMBRICH, Ernst H.: *Art History and the Social Sciences*. (In: E.H. Gombrich: *Ideals and Idols*. Oxford 1979, p.135)
³ NORRIS, Christopher and BENJAMIN, Andrew: *What is Deconstruction?* London 1988, p.42, see even pp. 25-31.
⁴ FRAMPTON, Kenneth: *Modern Architecture. A Critical History*, London 1985, pp. 290-292
⁵ ŠIK, Miroslav: *Analoge Architektur*. Praha 1990
⁶ ACHLEITNER, Friedrich: *Nebezpečím pro dějiny není přítomnost, ale zfalšovaná historie*. Architekt, 39, 1993, 5th issue, pp.1, 11
⁷ HERZOG, Jacques: *Hidden Geometry of Nature*. (In: Wilfried Wang: Herzog & Meuron. Zürich - München - London 1992, pp.142-146)
⁸ MOOS, Stanislaus von: *Le Corbusier. Elements of a Synthesis*. Cambridge, Mass. 1982
⁹ ŠVESTKA, Jiří - VLČEK, Tomáš (eds.): *Kubismus in Prag 1909-1925*. Stuttgart 1991
¹⁰ DAVIES, Colin: *High Tech Architecture*. London 1988, pp. 6-21
¹¹ Architektura, 49, 1990, 1st issue, p.57. - Compare to my unsuccessful attempt at interpretation of this project (R.Š.: *Alena Šramková*. Tvorba, 24th issue, June 12, 1991, pp.16-17).
¹² The last version of the Theatre Husa Na Provázku project from 1988 wasn't accepted by the constructors. Sketches were published in: Architekt, 39, 1993, No.22, pp. 1, 3.

¹³ STL. *Středotlací* (editors Jiří ŠEVČÍK, Benjamin FRAGNER), Praha 1989; - my abortive attempt to understand the final version of the work see R.Š.: *Emil Přikryl*. Výtvarné umění, 1990, 5th issue, pp. 61-64.

¹⁴ ŠVÁCHA, Rostislav: *Pabellon de Checoslovaquia: Návrat od Krejcara?* Architekt, 37, 1991, 12th issue, p.3

¹⁵ See note 7.

¹⁶ MOOS, Stanislaus von: *Dutch Group Portrait. Architecture and Urbanism*, No. 217, October 1988, pp.86-94. - See in M. ŠIK (quotation in note 5)

¹⁷ See note 7.

¹⁸ Worth attention there is for instance Derrida's "deconstruction" of the pair "signifying-signified", which was formulated by the father of structuralistic linguistics and esthetics Ferdinand de Saussure. - A different, not typically postmodernistic, relation to quotations is to be seen in architecture by Frank Gehry. His famous fishes, airplane fragments and his newest glass dancing robe, part of the Nationale Nederlanden House project (1992 version) in Prague by the Frank Gehry - Vlado Milunić team, are not "quotations" of objects, but objects themselves.

¹⁹ BERMAN, Marshall: *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York 1982. - Thanks David Vaughan for lending me this book.

²⁰ ŠIK, Miroslav: *Každý den neděle*. Zlatý řez, No.3, January 1993, pp. 22-25

Nové vize modernosti

Stav se snaží najít nový, netotalitní a neutopický modus modernosti. Podnáje ji k tomu přesvědčení o vyčerpanosti postmodernismu, hnutí, které sa naučilo komunikovat s publikem prostřednictvím citací nějakých starých vzorů. Interpretaci metoda založená na odhalování a luštění těchto citací se i na ryzé moderní umělecké směry 20. století neumí dívat jinak než na historismy svého druhu. Nevadilo by to, pokud bychom tak zároveň neztráceli smysl pro invenční a inovativní stránky uměleckého díla. Zdá se jistě být zajímavé studovat Le Corbusiery nebo Picassovy citace tradice, ale neměli bychom přitom pomíjet fakt, že dílo obou umělců představuje jednu z největších revolucí v dějinách umění. Interpretaci založenou na čtení citací se podivně vzpírá i jeden ze směrů současné architektury, spjatý v Čechách např. s projektem domu Tuzex od A. Šramkové a T. Novotného (1988) nebo s realizovanou verzí pavilonu ČSFR v Seville od T. Němce a J. Stempela (1992). Zakořenění těchto děl v tradici moderní architektury je nesporné. Přímých kopírujících citací této tradice však je v nich velmi málo. Právě tato díla možná obsahují onen nový, ještě dobré nepojmenovatelný modus modernnosti, k jehož definování se více než četba nějakých citací hodí von Moosovy úvahy o aluzivní podstatě dnešní architektury. Ani von Moosův návrh záměny "jazykové", citační architektury postmodernismu za "konceptuální" architekturu nové modernosti však není bez problémů.

International Colloquium TOTALITARIANISMS AND TRADITIONS

(Bratislava and Smolenice Castle)
October 25-27, 1993

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