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ART AND POLITICS: CASE-STUDIES FROM EASTERN EUROPE

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Turinys / Contents

Pratarmė

Trečiąjį žurnalo *Meno istorija ir kritika* tomą sudaro straipsniai, parengti remiantis tarptautinės mokslinės konferencijos *Menas ir politika: Rytų Europos atvejai* medžiaga. 2006 m. spalio 26-27 d. Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto Menų instituto surengtoje konferencijoje dalyvavo 30 mokslininkų iš Lietuvos, Latvijos, Estijos, Lenkijos, Čekijos, Kroatijos, Rumunijos, Prancūzijos, Vokietijos, Jungtinės Karalystės ir JAV. Visi jie tyrinėja ypatingą Europos istorijos ir kultūros dalį – vadinamojo Rytų bloko sovietinę praeitį ir posovietinę dabartį. Kaune konferencijos dalyviai diskutavo apie meną ir politiką – vieną aktualiausių šios tyrimų srities problemų.

Meno politiškumas, politinis menas, menas kaip galios įrankis ir valdžios įkaitas – su tokiais klausimais neišvengiamai susiduria daugelis Rytų Europos kultūros ir meno tyrinėtojų. XX amžius Rytų Europos regioną buvo pavertęs socialinės inžinerijos ir politinio eksperimento laboratorija, kurioje buvo išbandytos ir meninės veiklos galimybės. Čia nesunku rasti radikaliausius meno ir politikos flirto atvejus, avangardo utopijos žavesį ir žlugimą, aštriausius etikos ir estetikos konfliktus. Tad simptomiška, kad naujausi Rytų Europos meno istorijos tyrimai tampa vis atidesni ne tik pačiam meno kūriniui, bet ir jį supančiam kontekstui, ne tik meninei formai, bet ir politiniam meninių strategijų turiniui.

Konferencijos dalyviai buvo pakviesti aptarti įvairias meno ir politikos sąveikas sovietinėje ir posovietinėje erdvėje, ypač atkreipiant dėmesį į tokias temas kaip politinio meno subversijos nedemokratinėje valstybėje; kultūros politika ir pasipriešinimo kultūra; panacėjos beieškant: rezistencija, transgresija ir apropriacija; reprezentacijos kritika ir naujų mitų kūrimas; norminė estetika ir nacionalinis stilius; *aš* tapatumo diskursai (autobiografija, kūnas, individuali mitologija) režimo skliaustuose; ideologinis menas ir meninės ideologijos. Pasiūlytos temos konferencijos metu susikristalizavo į kelias potemes, kurios gvildenamos šios straipsnių rinktinės skyriuose: menas ir diktatūra; ideologija ir meninės strategijos; cenzūra, galia ir erdvė; kultūra kaip pasipriešinimas: dvigubi žaidimai; menas ir demokratija; pokomunistinė kultūra ir nauji mitai.

Leidinio straipsnius jungia ne tik bendra meno ir politikos tema, bet ir panašus mokslinio tyrimo žanras. Įvairūs Rytų Europos meno ir kultūros procesai analizuojami pasitelkus *atvejo studijas* – vieno kūrinio, autoriaus, įvykio ar reiškinio tyrimus, kuriais atskleidžiamos bendresnės laikotarpio tendencijos ir problemos. Atidi konkrečių atvejų analizė, dėmesys lokalumui ir detalei ypač reikalingas norint suprasti sudėtingą Rytų Europos praeitį ir dabartį, užuot ją smerkus ar aukštinus. Toks požiūris taip pat padeda atskleisti buvusį Rytų bloką kaip heterogenišką politinės ir meninės geografijos regioną bei dar kartą kritiškai apmąstyti pačią Rytų Europos idėją.

Linara Dovydaitytė

Preface

The third volume of the *Art History & Criticism* journal includes articles based on the proceedings of the international conference *Art and Politics: Case-Studies from Eastern Europe* organised by the Art Institute, Vytautas Magnus University in 26-27 October 2006. Thirty scholars – from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, France, Germany, the UK, and the USA – presented papers focused upon one aspect of the European history and culture, namely the former Eastern bloc and its Soviet past as well as quotidian post-Soviet reality. Participants of the Kaunas conference discussed one of the most challenging issues of the field – art and politics.

Political art, art as a tool of power and a hostage of authority – these topics are hard to escape when researching Eastern European culture. The 20th century turned this region into a laboratory of social engineering and political experiments where boundaries of artistic practices were also tested. In studies of the region one can easily find the most radical examples of cultural production that flirts between art and politics, the magic and failure of avant-garde utopia, and the sharpest conflicts between ethics and aesthetics. Thus contexts of art practices as well as political contents of artistic strategies (rather than pure stylistic qualities and authorial values) are under consideration in recent studies of Eastern Europe art history.

Speakers of the conference were expected to discuss diverse interactions of art and politics in (post)-Soviet space with a special emphasis on: Subversions of political art in a non-democratic state; Cultural policy and culture as resistance; In search of panacea – resistance, transgression, appropriation; Critique of representation and creating of new myths; Aesthetical norms and/or national style; Self identification (autobiography, the body, and individual mythologies) at the sidelines of regime; Ideological art and artistic ideologies. In the course of the conference the different topics were gathered into thematic divisions which then turned into the sections of this collection of articles: Art and dictatorship; Ideology and artistic strategies; Censorship, power, and space; Culture as resistance – double games; Art and democracy; Post-communist culture and new myths.

The articles of the volume are related both by topic *art and politics*, and also by the related genre of research. The processes of Eastern European art and culture are analysed here using "case-studies" – i.e. researches into particular works, authors, events or phenomena, through which broader developments and processes of the period are revealed to be indexical. Close analysis of particular cases, proper regard for the locality and detail are especially valuable in the attempts to understand the complex reality of an East European past, and present, rather than judging or worshipping it. Such attitudes also help to map the Eastern bloc as an inherently heterogeneous geo-political and artistic region and once again to critically reflect the very idea of "Eastern Europe".

Linara Dovydaitytė

ART AND POLITICS IN EASTERN EUROPE

MENAS IR POLITIKA RYTŲ EUROPOJE

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The Artist and Politics: Pablo Picasso and the Communist Bloc during the Cold War

Key words: painting, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, communism, Stalin, Pablo Picasso, Béla Czóbel.

THE ARTIST AND POLITICS: A MODEL CASE

Let us try to imagine a hypothetical avant-garde artist living in Central Europe, specifically in Czechoslovakia, from the First Republic in the 1920s to the 1960s. Such an artist would embody all the obstacles and hardships of artwork connected with the place, the era, and the political regimes that he had lived through. The artist thus selected would be a kind of statistical average of the fate of the modernist and avant-garde artist who had experienced the cultural boom during the First Czechoslovak Republic, in 1918-1938, and during the Nazi occupation and Stalinist regime that followed.

Let us begin in the mid-1930s. Our artist, living in democratic Czechoslovakia, anxiously observes the growing influence of Nazi Germany. He reads in the newspapers about the *Entartete Kunst* campaign, which anathematises the avant-garde. He attends anti-fascist meetings. He shakes his head in disbelief at the stupidities of the Nazi *Kulturträger*. Whether his work is cubist or surrealist – both trends having set deep roots in Czech art – he can, now and then, exhibit and sell something. He tries to express his opposition to black-and-brown totalitarianism. At this point he learns about the Moscow trials. A frost emanates from the Kremlin. He is shocked by the Italian occupation of Abyssinia, and the civil war in Spain. He knows that he should act: if he's brave, he'll join the republicans. If that is too risky, he will at least support the Spanish Republic via collections, and participate in demonstrations. After Nazi Germany's *Anschluss* of Austria, he realises that Czechoslovakia is next in line. If he is not Jewish, he survives the Protectorate in seclusion. He cannot exhibit or sell his cubist or surrealist works. He prays that he will not be called to do forced labour in the Great German Reich. He listens to a speech in 1944 by the Minister of Culture in the Protectorate government, Alois Moravec, who attacks Czech decadent art. "The insolent eccentricity" of "degenerate"

Fig. 1. Pablo Picasso in Wroclaw, 1948. Source: unidentified newspaper reproduction

artists allegedly terrorises the soul of the average person. "Modern painters do not know how to paint a decent, natural, and spiritually beautiful female nude. They are aesthetically "degenerate"". Moravec states that up to now he has protected Czech artists, but in this time of general mobilisation of civilians for the war effort and strict punishment of saboteurs in factories, he must apply the same standards to a person who "works in the field of the spirit … if he cultivates something that undermines the health and strength of the nation. Therefore the Czech mud of today, which is called artistic, has to be burned; once it becomes a hard brick, it will last through the ages. We will take care of the temperature".[1] As a direct result of this raising of the temperature, "degenerate" Czech modern artists are called to do forced labour. Our artist is lucky; he is not called. He survives the Protectorate. May 1945 brings liberation and the end of the war. New hopes and horizons. The artist exhibits again. He travels to Paris and sates himself on the diversity of modern art. He is fascinated by Picasso in particular. He returns to his country. The communist coup is carried out in February 1948. The artist once again withdraws into semi-illegal seclusion. He paints, but doesn't sell anything. He survives on other work (in a warehouse for example). Cubism, or post-cubism (whatever one chooses to call it), is banned again. It is the period of hardcore Stalinism. Not until sometime in 1956 does our artist try to organise his own solo exhibition – which the Union of Artists approves the following year, during the period of the Thaw. Let us say that it is his first solo exhibition in the past twenty years.

WHY PICASSO?

In 1946, Jarmila Kubíčková published a book entitled *Proč právě Picasso* (*Why Picasso*).[2] Why did Picasso become an icon for so many artists from the end of the 1940s through the 1950s?

Why is our virtual Czechoslovak artist drawn to Picasso? As Piotr Bernatowicz has shown in the study *Picasso w Polsce zaraz po wojnie* (*Picasso in Poland right after World War II*)[3], we could add examples from Poland as well. Along with his own faith in art, the artist in the post-war period is sustained

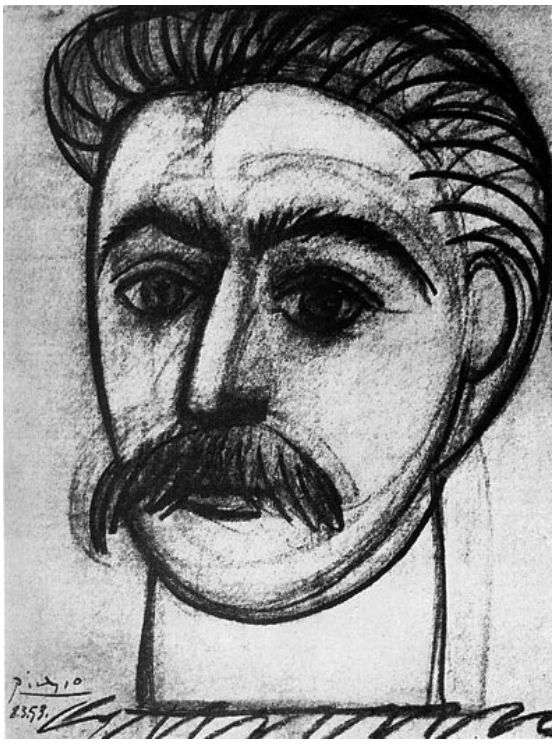

Fig. 2. Pablo Picasso, Stalin, 1953, chalk drawing. Source: Les Lettres Françaises, 12 March 1953

by the vitality of an artist like Pablo Picasso – an artist whose artistic language after 1945 is supremely modern, who never rests on his laurels, who appears mysterious and dramatic, and what's more, is able as a famous artist to raise his voice against injustice and evil. And by Picasso's faith in art. Indeed, early in 1939, Picasso had already reacted to Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939: on April 22, he produced drawings, and the painting *Cat Catching a Bird*, as an allegory of the liquidation of a small state by the Nazi "beast of prey". Our artist is not only familiar with Picasso's *Guernica*, he is also fascinated with Picasso's "new" post-war style, as represented by *Fishing at Antibes* (1946). In the period of the Thaw following the end of the Stalinist personality cult, he seeks a role model in the artistic world to inspire him with his contemporary artistic language and his trustworthy outlook. That is how Picasso is seen by the Czechoslovak artist who has survived the Protectorate and the 1950s, and who is enjoying a short period of relative freedom for a few years during the 1960s. Picasso is more than a role model. He is a guru, a leader who indicates the right path. He is a moral example.

TO WHAT EXTENT WERE THE HOPES PLACED IN PICASSO FULFILLED?

To a considerable degree it was Picasso himself who had established his position. It was not enough that his work had an enormous influence. Picasso considered it necessary in 1944 to announce to the world his reasons for joining the Communist Party of France (in *New Masses*, a syndicated newspaper in the USA, 24 October 1944, were published news for the capitalist world, in *L´Humanité*, a communist newspaper in France, 29–30 October 1944, was published an information for comrades). A myth, supported by Alfred J. Barr's assertion that Picasso had played an unusually important role[4], was spread about Picasso's participation in the French Resistance movement. It turned out that Picasso had not participated directly in the resistance, he had survived the Vichy regime thanks to the protective hand of the Nazi sculptor Arno Breker, who had a paradoxical weakness for everything French, and, most likely, for Picasso's work as well. One cannot, however, say that Picasso was particularly loyal to the occupation authorities – he was not a member of the resistance, but neither was he a collaborator.

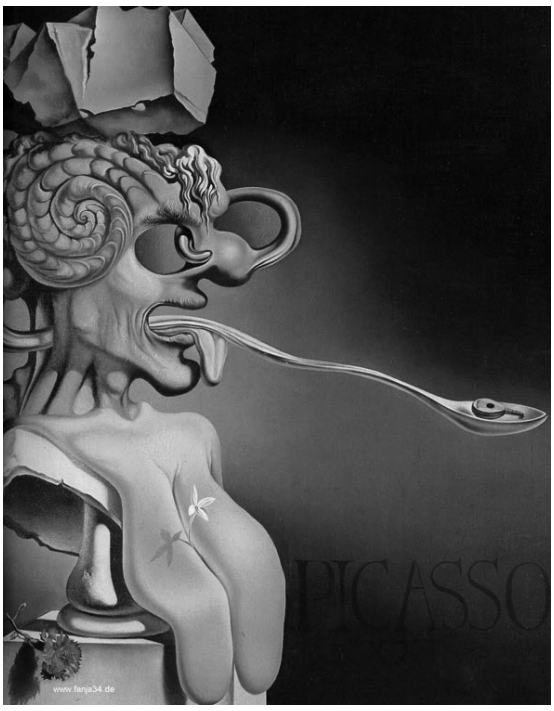

Fig. 3. Salvador Dalí, Portrait of Picasso, 1947, oil on canvas, 54 x 64 cm. Fundacion Gala-Salvador Dali, Figueras

In short, he had lived through the Nazi occupation without too much difficulty.

For many artists in countries newly liberated by the Soviet Union, Picasso naturally exemplified unscathed survival in a totalitarian regime. If they believed the myth about his alleged role in the resistance, he even exemplified open resistance to such a regime.

THE REACTIONARY AND THE PROGRESSIVE PICASSO

What stance did the official critics take regarding Picasso in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s – when many artists looked up to him? Paradoxically, the official press was not overly critical of his cubist style. There was nothing said about cubism, and perhaps it was considered an aspect of Picasso's work that was over and done with. After the communist coup, the Prague publishing house *Athos* published a translation of memoirs by Picasso's friend and model Fernanda Olivier (*Picasso and his Friends*, Prague 1949). In his introduction, Jaromír Procházka praised Picasso's participation in the international peace congress of intellectuals in Wrocław, Poland, in 1948. Cubism had not yet been condemned. This changed in Jaroslav Bouček´s article entitled *Formalistické 'umění' ve službách válečných paličů* (*Formalist 'Art' in the Service of Warmongers*) in volume two of the *Výtvarné umění* journal in 1951-1952. In it, he sharply criticised the "art of the epoch of rotting capitalism".[5] The cubists and surrealists, in particular Salvador Dalí, who "managed to depict [Picasso] as a terrible monster with an elephant's trunk that goes through empty eye sockets and a spike that goes through the head and pokes out of the mouth in the form of a spoon", were sharply criticised.[6] Picasso, of course, was spared any criticism. As one would expect, the author wrote about Picasso's dove:

> "People all over the world love to cry with this painting, not because the artist was for many years connected with, and made a name for himself as a representative of cubism, but rather because there is nothing in the painting of the dove that would deform its beauty

> or gentleness. In other words, because the painting is free of cubism. This Picasso is no longer celebrated by the Trotskyites and formalists who bragged about his *Guernica* and exploited it as a support against realistic art. … One has to consider the fact that Picasso's cubist paintings hang in American galleries and are analysed and celebrated in reactionary American journals and monographs. Yet as soon as Picasso painted the dove, the portrait of Maurice Thorez, and portraits of Henry Martin and Nicos Belojannis, which show a marked turn towards realism, he became persona non grata for the USA and was even refused an American visa".[7]

Stalinist rhetoric thus recognised two Picassos: the "old" one connected with cubism and embraced by American collectors, and the "new" realistic one connected with a communist world outlook. The latter, of course, acquired fanatical proportions at the end of the 1940s. In February 1949, Picasso's friend Louis Aragon chose the painter's drawing of the dove as the motif on the poster for a peace congress which opened in Paris on April 20. The previous day, the sixty-eight-year-old Picasso celebrated the birth of his daughter, whom he named Paloma (Spanish for "dove").

Not much was written in the Czechoslovak press about Picasso during the Stalinist period. What little there was, was mostly positive. And naturally only one aspect of his activities – what we might call *homo politicus* – was mentioned. In its first issue in 1950-1951, the official journal, *Výtvarné umění*, announced that Picasso had won the Lenin Prize.

The Czechoslovak regime corresponded frequently with Picasso during the most doctrinal Stalinist period. In February 1951, on the third anniversary of the 1948 communist coup, ambassador Adolf Hoffmeister invited Picasso, along with the poets Pablo Neruda and Paul Eluard, to the Czechoslovak embassy in Paris.[8] This visit served as the basis for subsequent contacts. In March 1951, the Czechoslovak *chargé-d'affaires* in Paris gave Picasso a book entitled *Píseň míru* (*Song of Peace*)[9] by the "national artist" Václav Rabas, and asked him to

Fig. 4. Václav Rabas, Píseň Míru (The Song of Peace), Prague, 1950

autograph sets of stamps with his peace dove that had been issued by the Czechoslovak post office.[10] In November 1954, Picasso received an official invitation from the government to visit Czechoslovakia for fifteen days, but did not avail himself of the opportunity. He was again invited in March 1960, this time by the Union of Czechoslovak Artists, to attend the second *Spartakiad*.[11]

The double face of Picasso – Picasso the cubist versus Picasso the realist-politician – was basically accepted by the Czechoslovak regime of the 1950s. (Naturally, only the second, "new", politically involved face was evaluated positively; not much was written about the first face.) Paradoxically, this double face had its parallel in a contemporary evaluation by the official press in the USA. In 1951, Joseph Barry published an article in *Time Magazine* dealing with the painter's involvement with communism, entitled *The Two Picassos: Politician and Painter*.[12] To justify the interest by American circles in Picasso's work, which was often very political, Barry tried to separate the former from politics

– and thereby make it more digestible and hence acceptable for American collectors and galleries. It was thanks to this vivisection, or double face, that Picasso managed to interest both the communist regime, and, as the Stalinist vocabulary called it, "rotting capitalism". Serge Guilbaut refers to Picasso as a "double agent" in his conquest of the American post-war art industry, skilfully and even "cynically" managing to communicate with both orthodox communists, and with their sworn enemies (including, for example, Nelson Rockefeller). In 1954, Picasso assured Rockefeller of the "apolitical quality" of his work, through the director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, René d'Harnoncourt. If d'Harnoncourt and Rockefeller had had access to *Les Lettres Françaises* of March 12–19, 1953, they would have discovered that the title page displayed Picasso's expressed admiration for Stalin in the form of a drawing based on a photograph taken on the day following Stalin's death. According to Guilbaut, Picasso was both an artist/multimillionaire, and a communist who praised Stalin; he was surrounded, like a Hollywood star, by beautiful women, and by politicians from the irreconcilable camps of the left and the right.[13] He never gave up the money that American millionaires paid for his paintings, and he drove American limousines, but at the same time, both directly and indirectly, was a sharp critic of American imperialism.

THE HUNGARIAN GUERNICA 1956

On October 23, 1956, the Hungarian revolution broke out in Budapest. It was vigorously suppressed by Soviet detachments (with the participation, to a lesser degree, of Hungarian state troops) on November 4. As many as 2,500 Hungarian rebels and 720 Soviet soldiers were killed, and many others wounded. The revolution caused divisions within West European communist parties.

A reproduction of Picasso's painting entitled *Massacre in Korea* (1951) appeared on the streets of Warsaw, in a black frame wrapped in a black ribbon, in protest against the Soviet invasion of Hungary. Helene Parmelin, a French communist and a major contributor to *L'Humanité*, wrote Picasso an outraged letter on November 20, 1956, complaining

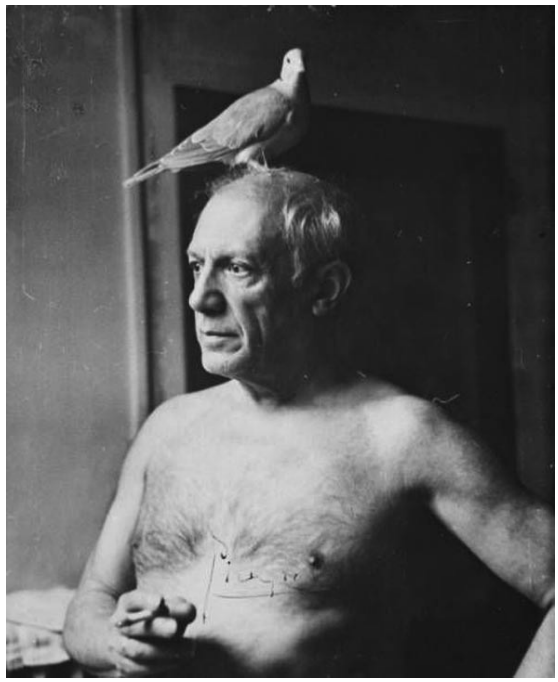

Fig. 5. James Lord, Pablo Picasso with Dove, 1945. Source: unidentified net address

that the press had published a photo of a Warsaw street with the reproduction, in connection with the events in Hungary.

Many intellectuals expected Picasso to react to the events in Hungary. In a book called *Picasso. The Communist Years* Gertje R. Utley writes that, "Picasso was seen as the champion of civilian victims of military force. He was flooded with letters such as this one from a group of exiled Hungarians imploring him: 'Do for Budapest what you have done for Guernica and Korea … support us … relinquish your restraint'".[14] The letter can be found in the archives at the Picasso museum in Paris. Dated November 14, 1956, it was sent by a group of former students from Budapest, who had at one time studied at universities in France. They asked Picasso to create for Budapest something similar to what he had done for Guernica and for Korea, because what was happening in Budapest was a Hungarian Guernica.

According to Utley, Picasso's signature appeared on "a rather tame denunciation" in *Le Monde*: he and nine other members of the French Communist Party denounced "the attacks against revolutionary probity", and protested "any tendentious interpretation

of this collective letter, and any mistrust of [their] fidelity to the Party and to its unity" (November 22, 1956). The letter was hardly a condemnation of Soviet aggression.

Picasso received a similarly urgent letter from his friend, the Hungarian painter Béla Czóbel, whose work he knew from the period before the First World War. Early in 1956, Czóbel had asked Picasso to write "quelques mots en grise de preface" for an exhibition of his work to be held at Gallery Zak.[15] Czóbel's letter to Picasso on December 15, 1956 is crucial. In it, the Hungarian painter wrote:

> "I have returned from the hell installed by the Soviets in Hungary. My first thought was to write to tell you, that without knowing it, you are keeping company with bandits who have been plundering, burning, and crushing my country for eleven years now. … Come to Budapest to have a look yourself, and you will see 50,000 buildings destroyed by Soviet tanks for no good reason, and I'm not even counting the 70,000 dead and the 125,000 refugees to date. … I beg you to use your authority and endorse my testimony as publicly as possible, and paint a new *Guernica*, much more horrifying than the first. … I would be happy if, without mentioning my name, you could circulate this letter, the testimony of contemporary events by an unbiased person. It would be good if we could meet so that I might talk with you directly. You know how much I've liked and respected you for fifty years now. I clasp your hands, Béla Czóbel".[16]

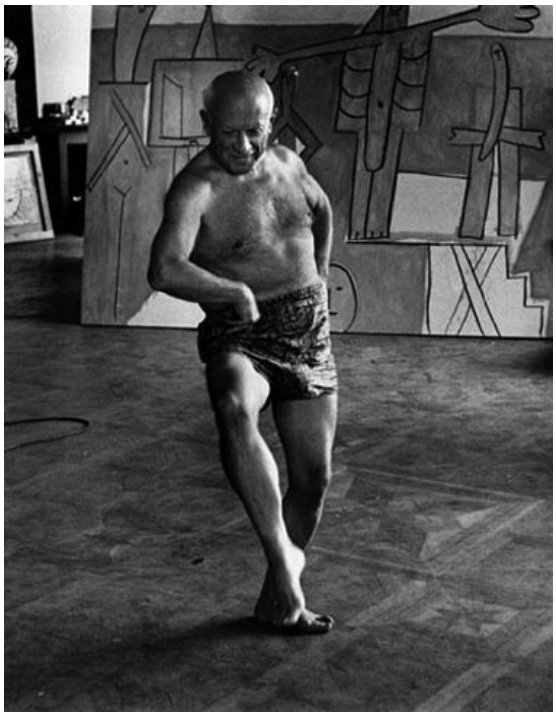

Fig. 6. David Douglas Duncan, Pablo Picasso dancing minuet, c. 1957. Source: David Douglas Duncan Online Exhibition, The University of Texas, Austin, USA. www.hrc.utexas.edu/gallery/picasso

The painter's request had an almost comic sequel, which showed that, even for the Hungarian Czóbel, who certainly condemned with all his heart the Soviet liquidation of the Hungarian uprising, it was not desirable to talk about these matters too openly (as already indicated in his request to remain anonymous). Another letter from Czóbel to Picasso, dated April 24, 1957, appears in the Picasso museum archives; included with it is a letter from the editors of *Le Figaro Littéraire*, addressed to Czóbel on January 3, 1957, explaining that they had received Czóbel's complaint asserting that his letter to Picasso (probably the one dated December 15, 1956) had been published without his knowledge. The editors ask Czóbel to approve the publication after the fact. Apparently they had received Czóbel's letter to Picasso from the French writer André Billy, with a request that it be published. In his second letter to Picasso, Czóbel complains that his previous communication to his old friend had been published without his knowledge. "As far as the contents of my letter," Czóbel wrote, "I wouldn't change anything. … I only add that I felt and still feel wretched that it was published".[17]

WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY FOREVER

Czóbel thereby expressed a paradox: on the one hand, he wanted people to talk about the atrocities committed in Hungary, and he wanted Picasso to make a statement or create a painting about the events; on the other hand, he did not want his own request made public.

We do not know how Picasso reacted to the letters from the Hungarian intellectuals, or to Czóbel's re-

quest. We do know that he made no statement about the events in Hungary, except for the one already mentioned in *Le Monde*, which was organised via a Machiavellian manipulation of information by Helene Parmeline. Picasso remained quiet even after an urgent challenge from his friend, the young American, James Lord, who was a frequent visitor to Picasso's studio at that time. Lord wrote a long emotional letter asking Picasso to condemn the Soviet intervention in Hungary by the end of the week – otherwise he would publish his challenge in the press. In the end that is what happened – but Picasso still remained silent. In December 1956, Picasso appeared with the head of the French Communist Party, Maurice Thorez, his wife, and another important communist, Laurent Casanova, in a photograph published in *L'Humanité* on the occasion of the opening of an exhibition of books illustrated by Picasso, at the Gallery Matarasso in Nice, in the south of France. In February of the following year, Picasso was named honorary citizen of the town of Antibes. Thorez and another elite communist, Marcel Cachin, attended the ceremony. The editor of *Paris-Presse l'Intreansigeant* wrote the following in an article called *Picasso Forgot About Budapest*: "Thorez and Cachin were not there to ask the painter of *Guernica* to paint a canvas entitled *Budapest*. The events in Hungary, and his stance, have in no way troubled his love affair with the Communist Party".[18] In 1957, Carlton Lake conducted an interview with Picasso for *The Christian Science Monitor*, with no mention of the artist's reaction to the events in Hungary. The painter only confirmed his faith in communism, and his intention to stand by the Party forever.

THE YEAR 1968: THE PAINTER, NOT POLITICIAN

A decade later we arrive at the critical year 1968. An assassination attempt in Germany has seriously wounded the chairman of the German Socialist Student Union, Rudolf Dutschke. This event provoked mass student protests in all of West Germany in May. At virtually the same time, the Humanities Faculty in Nanterre (Paris) was closed. Student protests quickly spread throughout France, and inspired workers as well. Despite police repressions, universities and factories were occupied, demonstrations and strikes were held. In Germany, France, and USA, protestors objected to the established order, and the wielding of power by the governments. The "process of renewal", Prague Spring, was underway in Czechoslovakia, but was brought to an end by August 21. The dream of a change in conditions initiated from within the Communist Party, of "socialism with a human face", collapsed. Hundreds of thousands of heavily armed Warsaw Pact soldiers, headed by the USSR, invaded the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on the night of August 20–21, 1968. The Soviet armed forces began their "temporary" occupation of Czechoslovak territory.

What stance did Picasso take in 1968? He expressed solidarity with the students demonstrating in Paris in May. Three months later he condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in conversation with friends – but not publicly.[19]

An article in December 1968 in a magazine called *Look* marked the end of Picasso's political face. Simone Gauthier's piece is entitled *Picasso: A Rare Interview with the Vintage Genius of Modern Art*.[20] In it Picasso refuses to speak about his political views. Among his papers, the manuscript of the article for *Look* reveals a passage that Picasso had crossed out: "I do not understand the politics of the left any more, and I have no desire to speak about it. I have long ago arrived at a conclusion that if I wanted to respond to such questions, I should change my profession and become a politician. But this is, of course, impossible".[21] In 1944 Picasso had felt the need to announce to the USA and to Europe his reasons for becoming a communist; in 1968 he gave up his other, "political" face. He wanted "just" to be a painter.

CONCLUSION

The artist in socialist Czechoslovakia in the 1950s and early 1960s still sees Picasso through the prism of leftwing revolution, which, as the year 1968 demonstrates (one thinks of the cult of Che Guevara), is so enticing and contagious. He also admires Picasso for his brilliant and creative hyperactivity, which is undiminished even in old age. Picasso is like a liv-

ing, walking warehouse of creative ideas manifested in painting and sculpture. He is synonymous with the freedom of the modern artist as applied to both painting and sculpture.

It appears that our artist is not disturbed by Picasso's involvement with the Communist Party. He overlooks Picasso's portrait of Stalin, and, thanks to the information embargo, probably does not even know of Picasso's double game – the "minuet", as Gilbaut calls it, which he performs in the 1950s so that doors will open in the USA, whilst at the same time being perceived as a correct and trustworthy communist. If our artist has good friends in the West who occasionally send him books about modern art, he will be happy to receive the latest catalogue for Picasso's exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1962 – on the occasion of his 80th birthday, which he celebrated in 1961.[22] What greater consecration of Picasso as the "father" of modernism, than an exhibition of his works at the renowned MoMA – an event that overshadows the fact that in that same year Picasso received his second Lenin Prize.

Thus, for the artist of the communist bloc, Picasso unwittingly serves to exemplify how an individual can manoeuvre on the border between modern art and politics, between the irreconcilable worlds of the West and the East, between "foul" capitalism and communism. How an individual can live in communist "real socialism", and at the same time adopt the Western model of modern art, as represented by Picasso.

Notes

[1] Emanuel Moravec, 'Sabotážníci hlav' ('Saboteurs of Heads'), in: *Lidové noviny*, 2 July 1944.

[2] Jarmila Kubíčková, *Proč právě Picasso* (*Why Picasso*), Prague: Athos, 1946.

[3] Piotr Bernatowicz, 'Picasso w Polsce zaraz po wojnie' ('Picasso in Poland right after World War II'), in: *Artium Quaestiones*, vol. XI, 2000, pp. 154-220.

[4] Alfred Barr in the MoMA Bulletin, January 1945, quoted in: Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, 'La Résistance?', in: Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, Androula Michael (eds.), *Picasso. L'objet du mythe*, Paris: ENSBA, 2005, p. 7.

[5] Jaroslav Bouček, 'Formalistické 'umění' ve službách válečných paličů' ('Formalist 'Art' in the Service of Warmongers'), in: *Výtvarné umění*, vol. II, 1951-1952, pp. 343-345.

[6] Ibid., p. 345.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Letter dated 2 March 1951, C4, Archives Musée Picasso, Paris (hereafter AMPP).

[9] František Rachlík, *Václav Rabas – Píseň míru. Cyklus nástěnných maleb a obrazů české krajiny z let 1945-1950* (*Václav Rabas – Song of Peace. A Cycle of Wall Paintings and Paintings of the Czech Landscape from 1945-1950*), Prague: Prague House of Art, Ministry of Information and Culture, 1950.

[10] Letters from the Czechoslovakian embassy in Paris to Picasso, dated 3 March 1951; 12 March 1951, C4, AMPP.

[11] Letter with the letterhead of the Czechoslovak embassy in Paris, dated 14 March 1960, C4, AMPP.

[12] Joseph Barry, 'The Two Picassos: Politician and Painter', in: *Time Magazine*, 6 May 1951, IV, pp. 17-38.

[13] Serge Guilbaut, 'Picasso – Picassiette: les turbulations d'un agent double au temps de la guerre froide', in: Laurence Bartrand Dorléac, Androula Michael (eds.), *Picasso. L'objet du mythe*, Paris: ENSBA, 2005, pp. 35-50.

[14] Gertje R. Utley, *Picasso. The Communist Years*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 197.

[15] Picasso collection C-14, letter dated 7 January 1956, AMPP.

[16] Picasso collection C-14, letter dated 15 December 1956, AMPP.

[17] Picasso collection C-14, letter dated 24 April 1957, AMPP.

[18] *Paris-Presse l'Intransigeant*, 26 February 1957, quoted in: Utley, 2000, p. 245, fn. 83.

[19] Testimony of Pierre Daix, cf. Utley, 2000, p. 201.

[20] *Look* 32, no. 25, 10 December 1968, p. 42.

[21] Picasso collection, Archives of the Picasso museum, in: Utley, 2000, pp. 202, 245, fn. 86.

[22] John Richardson (ed.), *PICASSO, An American Tribute*, New York: Public Education Association, 1962.

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Menininkas ir politika: Pablo Picasso ir komunistinis blokas Šaltojo karo metais

Reikšminiai žodžiai: tapyba, Čekoslovakija, Vengrija, komunizmas, Stalinas, Picasso, Czóbelis.

Santrauka

Pasibaigus Antrajam pasauliniam karui, Čekoslovakijoje gimė viltis tęsti tarpukario modernizmą, kurį protektorato laikotarpiu buvo užgniaužę vokiečių naciai. Palengvėjimo ir vilties laikotarpis netruko ilgiau nei trejus metus. Prahos komunistų perversmas 1948 m. vasarį visiškai pakeitė kultūros situaciją: socialistinio realizmo doktrina tapo oficialia ideologija, ir viltis atgaivinti modernizmą žlugo.

Daugeliui Čekoslovakijos, Lenkijos ir Vengrijos menininkų bei intelektualų Picasso buvo pavyzdys. Jo radikalus modernistinis, o kartu ir politiškai angažuotas menas XX a. 5-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigoje ir 6-ajame dešimtmetyje veikė daugelį komunistinio bloko menininkų. Picasso įsijungė į didžiulę tarptautinę komunistinę „šeimą“, 1944 m. išleidęs pamfletą *Kodėl tapau komunistu*. Žengęs šį žingsnį, jis galėjo, viena vertus, laisvai elgtis su daugeliu stalinistinių struktūrų Prancūzijos komunistų partijoje, bet, kita vertus, išlikti bekompromisiu avangardiniu menininku. Dėl *Guernicos* (1937) šlovės Picasso buvo laikomas žmogumi, galinčiu skirti gėrį nuo blogio. Ši nuomonė pradėjo keistis XX a. 6-ajame dešimtmetyje. 1952 m. Picasso nutapė *Korėjos žudynes* kaip atsaką į JAV imperialistinę Korėjos okupaciją, bet 1956 m. įvykus Vengrijos revoliucijai jis tylėjo. Straipsnyje aptariama keletas vengrų intelektualų laiškų, siųstų į Paryžių Picasso, kuriuose prašoma sukurti naują *Guernicą* ir *Žudynes*, šįkart smerkiant žiaurumus Budapešte. Šis prašymas liko neįgyvendintas dėl Picasso lojalumo Komunistų partijai. Politinio pobūdžio tyla tęsėsi iki 1968 m., kai Picasso ir vėl nepakomentavo sovietų invazijos į Čekoslovakiją. 1968 m. interviu, paklaustas apie savo poziciją politikos atžvilgiu, Picasso irzliai atsakė, kad jis yra tapytojas, o ne politinė figūra. Paradoksalu, kad tai buvo tas pats Picasso, 1944 m. prisistatydavęs ir kaip avangardo menininkas, ir kaip politinė figūra.

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From the Politics of Autonomy to the Autonomy of Politics

Key words: the autonomy of art, art and post-war communism in Central Europe, art and post-communism.

The autonomy of art seems to have been a crucial problem under communist dictatorship. Particularly in the period of official socialist realism, which began and ended at different times in the different Eastern bloc countries, independent-thinking artists made the autonomy of art their key postulate. Such demands emerged all over Eastern Europe – from the GDR to the USSR, from Romania to Poland. At times, as in Poland after 1956, the regime not only tolerated it, but proved able to use it for its own benefit, while in other countries, like the GDR, the authorities became repressive, and permitted cultural autonomy only within strictly controlled social niches, or, as in the Soviet Union, suppressed such postulates brutally in an attempt – with varying results – to prevent its fulfilment altogether. The postulate of autonomy was of course political, even though by definition it meant the liberation of art from politics. It was a reaction to the official politicisation of culture, or more precisely, to the use of art in communist propaganda. Autonomy was therefore understood as a condition of the liberty of art, of its right to concentrate on itself and on the intimate, existential problems of the artist – in contrast to his or her public role. Still, again from a historical point of view, the call for artistic autonomy must be approached as a political campaign, since the art that referred to such an autonomy was endowed by its context with political meaning.

Before I move on to an analysis of several case studies specific to the theme of art and politics, let me make a few remarks on the differentiations, conditioned by key moments in the historical evolution of the region, within the art map of Eastern Europe. The end of the Second World War in 1945 seems to be an obvious watershed in the history of this part of the continent: it was the beginning of Soviet domination, even though some countries, particularly Czechoslovakia, still maintained a more or less illusory form of parliamentary democracy. Differences could also be seen in the artistic culture: while 1945 marked the beginning of a hard-line policy against the independence of art and artists in the formerly independent Baltic states, the GDR, Romania, and Yugoslavia, in the late 1940s practically no such measures were attempted in Czechoslovakia and Poland. The communists were not yet fully in control in Czechoslovakia, and could not therefore proclaim a Stalinist cultural policy. And although the communists did, despite some appearance of pluralism, have total power in Poland, they did not want to press too hard, with the result that art, and ideological debate remained comparatively open. Three years later, however, the situation changed rather dramatically.

1948 marked the beginning of a hard-line Stalinist policy almost everywhere in Eastern and Central Europe. In Czechoslovakia, where the communists seized full official power via a *coup d'état*, the range of alternative options in artistic culture was radically reduced, but not completely eradicated. In Poland, which was already politically controlled by

the communists, 1948 marked the year of full control over the arts as well: an exhibition of modern art, called *The First*, which summed up the diverse developments during the post-war years, opened in December 1948 and was closed in mid-January 1949, for socialist realism had been introduced as the only allowed formal convention. Severe limitations, aimed mainly against the so-called European School, were also imposed on art in Hungary. The only exception was Yugoslavia, which left the Soviet bloc and laid the political foundation for the liberalisation of culture, whose first symptoms appeared only in 1951, with the rise of the *EXAT 51* group. The consequences of that process were quite peculiar within the context of the history of Central and Eastern European art – 1951 was the beginning of post-war Yugoslav modernism, which was soon acknowledged as the official style, and as such, was already being criticised by the local neo-avant-garde in 1959, when the *Gorgona* group was founded in Zagreb.

The next significant date, 1956, brought a "thaw", i.e. the beginning of the liberalisation of culture in some countries of the region, particularly Poland and the Soviet Union, while in other countries (Bulgaria and Romania, for example) it did not change anything. The Polish Thaw was different from the Soviet one, in particular regarding cultural policies. In Poland there was virtually an explosion of modern art, which, paradoxically, emerged in the same institutions that had formerly espoused socialist realism. The opening of another exhibition of modern art (called *The Second*) at the Warsaw Zachęta Gallery was attended by key political figures – party secretaries and government ministers – who saw almost nothing but abstract works of art. Similar attempts to revitalise modern art in Czechoslovakia began some time later (*Confrontations*, 1960 in Prague; 1961 in Bratislava), but were initially, both in Prague and in Bratislava, limited to private studios, and denied entry to the official exhibition halls. Moreover, every country participating in the Moscow Exhibition of the Art of Socialist Countries (1958-1959) displayed socialist realism – with the shocking exception of Poland, which showed modernist art, and evoked protests by Soviet comrades, and a great interest on the part of the public. In the USSR, unlike in Poland, the Thaw in art was a marginal phenomenon lasting only until 1962 and the famous exhibition at the Moscow *Manege*.

Another turning point, to be discussed later in this paper, came in 1968-1970. In some countries it was the beginning of the so-called normalisation – the end of the liberal cultural policy, and the beginning of oppression: this happened in Romania, but primarily in Czechoslovakia, where artists had to go underground after Soviet military intervention as a result of the Prague Spring. The same happened in Romania after Nicolae Ceaușescu's *July theses* (1971), which espoused a return to the values of socialist culture. In other countries, however, including in Poland, the years after 1970 brought the beginning of limited liberty in art: Poles were allowed to produce any kind of art, as long as it had nothing to do with politics – which had previously only been the case in Yugoslavia.

The early 1980s were another era of diversified artistic culture. While Poland experienced martial law, Hungary went through a period of the rapid development of a so-called "goulash socialism" – a consumer version of the communist state, with economic openness to the West, and a significant liberalisation of cultural policy. The year 1989 closed the history of the Eastern bloc, and opened a new era as diversified as the previous one. The post-communist condition took on a different form in each of the specific countries, which have not been developing in one and the same manner since 1989. On the contrary, the evolution, including vis-a-vis the culture of the post-communist countries, has been determined by their different national and ethnic traditions, social structure, and economy. For instance, as we will see at the end of this paper, post-communist Poland, with a conservatism and strong Roman Catholicism that is supported by all social groups and political parties (including post-communists), hardly resembles the liberal Czech Republic. Russia is very different from the former GDR, just as Slovenia is very much unlike Serbia (even though both countries once belonged to Yugoslavia), while Lithuania differs from Belarus, though both were once Soviet republics.

Returning to the question of the autonomy of culture in the context of the considerable differentiation of the history of art in Eastern Europe, I would now like to compare specific cases, i.e. Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. In order to maintain some historical coherence, I will present my analysis in a uniform chronological framework situated in the 1970s, or more exactly, in the years following the Prague Spring and the invasion by the Warsaw Pact troops in 1968.

1968 was a very important moment in the history of both Eastern and Western Europe: it brought the "Polish March", "Paris May", and – of particular significance in the context of the present paper – "Czechoslovak August", and an end to the local hope for political reforms. The latter was also the end of one of the most fascinating episodes in the culture of Bohemia and Slovakia – which, contrary to common opinion, was quite different in each of the two sections of that federal republic. The consequences of the invasion by Warsaw Pact troops could be felt in the country's art two or three years later, when, after taking control of the political situation par excellence, the new regime began the "normalisation" of culture. The Communist Party undertook strict control of the public sphere, which became inaccessible to artists labelled as being experimental, and hence potentially dangerous which did not necessarily mean that they were open dissidents. Interestingly, even though similar developments were taking place in the Soviet Union (e.g., to the *Collective Actions Group* comprised of Nikita Alekseev, Nikolai Panitkov, Georgii Kizevalter, Andrei Monastyrsky, Elena Elagina, Igor Makarevich, Sergei Romashko), the pressured artists began to withdraw into the realm of safe nature to a degree unprecedented in Central Europe. Nature activities included trips to the countryside organised by a group called *Križovnicka Škola* – to the woods and fields, or simply to the bars (*Pivo v umeni*). There were a number of conceptual projects carried out in the natural environment: J. H. Kocman nailed small plaques to trees, claiming that the object was "reserved" for the purpose of aesthetic contemplation (*Aesthetic Natural Reservation*, 1971); Jiři Valoch wrote the word "love" on rocks (*Stone*, 1972); Karel Adamus photographed his own footprints in dried mud; Ladislav Novák painted various zoomorphic patterns on rocks and stones.

The expulsion of the alternative and independent artistic culture in Czechoslovakia from the public sphere did not result in a confrontation and critique of the power system, but rather in the search for autonomy beyond that sphere. It is hard to interpret nailing plaques to trees in political terms, even though, paradoxically, that autonomous and "innocent" activity – pushed out of the public sphere into neutral nature – inevitably acquired a political, or at least resisting, character.

Of all the Eastern bloc countries, in the 1970s Czechoslovakia experienced the sharpest division of official and unofficial culture. Czech and Slovak artists also manifested the greatest efforts to defend the autonomy of culture by apparently insignificant gestures "outside the agora": roaming in the woods, painting rocks in the middle of nowhere, etc. Again, even though these activities were seemingly distant from the public sphere, they inevitably acquired some political significance – but not in the sense of a direct criticism of the regime. Jindřich Chalupecký, undoubtedly one of the most prominent art critics in Central Europe, closely watched the Czech art circles, and compared the predicament of the local artists to limitations exerted by business on the liberty of artists in the West. Chalupecký compared the Eastern (mainly Czech) bureaucratisation of art to its commercialisation in the West.[1] In his opinion, both were effective modes of manipulation – but alongside the negative aspects of the existing situation, the critic also noted a "silver lining" vis-a-vis the culture of bureaucracy. Its clear-cut divisions freed those artists who rejected the official sphere from any pressure. Immune to temptation, they could feel liberated, and could therefore work without compromise. Chalupecký believed that such an attitude stemmed from the traditionally "spiritual" character of art in Czechoslovakia: the artist follows his or her inner voice, and as there is no chance to show the results in official exhibition halls, is not constrained in terms of free imagination. Such art is neither hermetic, nor asocial. In a sense, it is the reverse: it favours communication and is "political",

but in a different way. The critic derives this concept from the Greek word *politikon* – to do with the *politeia*, community – which is closer to the civic than to the political par excellence.[2]

Chalupecký's account is perhaps a bit idealistic – but can be understood as a remedy of sorts for the blues caused by "normalisation". Still, it is undoubtedly thanks to the art of the underground, or the "grey zone", that the culture of Czechoslovakia was able to resist the bureaucratic oppression, and to defend sensibility and imagination not only against the "normalisers", but also against the imposed conformity typical of societies under total control. To summon the testimony of Vaclav Havel, one might say that "the power of the powerless" was quite prominent particularly in art.[3] Artists, along with other dissidents who since 1977 comprised *Charter '77*, showed where and how the power of the police and bureaucrats had its limits, and how effective the politics of the autonomy of art could actually be in the extended public sphere.

The invasion by the Warsaw Pact troops into Czechoslovakia aroused the protest of intellectuals all over the world. Protesters in Poland included a number of writers and scholars, but I have not heard of protests by Polish artists or anyone else in the art world. In fact, the art circles in Poland were effectively paralysed by the self-evident threat of losing their officially-granted right to autonomy. The privilege of autonomy for art in Poland was, as it were, granted by the authorities, who had abandoned the idea of controlling the works of art themselves. This did not, of course, come out of the blue, but became real as a consequence of decisions taken in the mid-1950s to eliminate socialist realism from culture, and to give artists the right to work as they pleased. Polish artists in the 1970s enjoyed almost unlimited liberty – I say "almost", because political criticism of any sort was completely out of the question. This was the key term of a tacit agreement between the artists and the Communist Party. The party officials seemed to be saying "you can do whatever you want, as long as you don't get involved in politics", and the artists respected that condition. They did not ask themselves questions about the degree of control and limitations, but felt quite comfortable in their cage of gold, and supported their activity with the modernist theory of uncommitted, autonomous works of art, which should, by their very nature, remain as such. Thus, in Poland, the modernist theory of art was very often a pillar of conformism. Even though in the West the popular art of the period (conceptual, happening, body art, media critique, etc.) stemmed from the rejection of modernism, and often entered the world of political and social criticism, in Poland it belonged, quite paradoxically – at least from the point of view of the history of Western art – to the modernist paradigm of the work and artistic process. Of course there were temptations to become politically committed, and there were exceptions as a result of political tensions that happened after 1976, when an overt (and to an extent tolerated, though still illegal) opposition came into being. Its symbols were the Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR), the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights (ROPCIO), the Confederacy for an Independent Poland (KPN), and finally, the free trade unions (*Solidarność*). Some Polish artists took up the challenge, in more or less convincing ways. There were, for instance, Elżbieta and Emil Cieślar, and Zofia Kulik and Przemysław Kwiek, who were connected to the Repassage Gallery in Warsaw – but they were the exception.

Speaking more generally, the concept of autonomy of art in Poland fostered conformity as an element of the pseudo-liberal cultural policy of the communist regime. Let me quote one very significant remark made by Stefan Morawski. In his analysis of cultural processes in Poland in the 1970s, he said:

> "In a collection of documents of this decade, such as *Art-Texts*, Jan Wojciechowski [an artist and art critic in Poland at that time – P.P.] stressed at the beginning of the 1970s that his generation feels a deep anxiety and a vivid temptation to protest against the status quo. It was, however, quite a strange rebellion, since it was recommended that cybernetics, and the theory of Wittgenstein be studied; also, the artist saw a concept of salvation in the theory of semiotics. It is no surprise – Morawski continues – that in texts by the same author one can gradually see some

> suggestions to accept reality. Finally, in 1978, in an article called *The Repressive Stereotype of Novelty*, Wojciechowski proposed in the most direct way a concept of prudent conformism, understood to be the most proper attitude towards the political reality. He said [Morawski quotes Wojciechowski – P.P.] that conformism is the appropriate reaction for naive concepts to destroy reality; one should self-realise here and now, in this country, in this context; one should respect the given rules, and at the same time refuse any Utopian wishful thinking".[4]

As a reminder: two years later, in 1978, KOR was founded in Poland; one year later *Charter '77* was signed in Czechoslovakia.

In Hungary, though, the situation was quite different, since nothing was guaranteed there. The famous *3 x T* (*Turni, Tiltani, Tamogatni* – Tolerate, Forbid, Support), chosen as a metaphor for Hungarian cultural policy, resulted in a deep sense of uncertainty – as a result, artists were not tempted to play games with the communist establishment. They simply had nothing to lose, and therefore their reaction to the oppression in Czechoslovakia after 1968 was the most immediate. Moreover, since the late 1960s, the Hungarian neo-avant-garde appeared to be the most radically politicised of all such circles in Eastern Europe, with at least several Hungarian artists openly criticising the communist system.

The most significant Hungarian reactions to the suppression of the Prague Spring include Tamás Szentjóby's *Portable Trench for Three Persons*, and *Czechoslovak Radio* (a simple brick), and László Lakner's *Wounded Knife* (1968) – a sheet of paper with two handwritten inscriptions: "Sept. 1968" at the bottom and "wounded knife" in the middle. This was only the tip of the iceberg, since there were many other Hungarian artists who also protested in one way or another. Political overtones could be found in the art of Gyula Konkoly, Gyula Pauer, Gábor Attalei, Sándor Pinczehelyi, and Endre Tót. The latter combined a photo of himself with a portrait of Lenin, and the comment, "you are the one who made me glad"; he also photographed himself reading the Moscow newspaper, *Pravda*, the symbol of communist propaganda, with a hole through which one could see his smiling face, and the sentence, "I am glad if I can read the newspaper".

One might say that, in contrast to the politics of autonomy which in the Eastern bloc countries afforded some relief to the pressure of propaganda (the case in Czechoslovakia, but also in the GDR, which is not mentioned here), and even the illusion of liberty (particularly in Poland), the Hungarians applied a strategy moving towards the autonomy of politics – a concept more characteristic of contemporary art than of the communist era. Of course it would be risky to call it a real autonomy of politics – it was, instead, a step in that direction. Szentjóby once told me that he wanted to write poetry, but that the police and other communist authorities not only controlled but also censored even neutral art and poetry, and that he did not want to sit quietly in such a situation – he felt that he should do something about it. I gather that this was the more common experience in Hungary. Artists wanted to produce autonomous art as well, but they reacted critically to the state control over culture, which was unusual within a Central and Eastern European historical context. Perhaps this was more of a moral than a political reaction, even if it did have quite political meanings.

The process of going from the politics of autonomy to the autonomy of politics seemed to be completed after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The contemporary artist had a clearer choice: he or she can, but does not have to be, politically committed; can concentrate on the autonomous message of his or her art, but does not have to consider that decision in political terms. After the fall of communism, the pressure on artists to support the power system undoubtedly disappeared – but this does not mean that the constraints limiting their artistic freedom did as well. The pressure to become engaged in the propaganda effort was sometimes replaced by a ban on becoming engaged against the present-day regime. This applies to religion in Poland and Russia, where the authorities have been reacting strongly to the use of religious symbols in art in a critical, or even ironic way. A telling Polish

example is the case of Dorota Nieznalska, who was sentenced by the court in Gdańsk to six months restricted liberty (i.e. obligatory public work), for exhibiting a photograph of male genitals on the cross (*The Passion* exhibition, 2001) – a work that was interpreted by the extreme right as "an abuse of religious sentiments". In Russia, Yuri Samodurov and Lyudmila Vasilovskaya, who organised an exhibition called *Caution! Religion*, shown briefly at the Andrei Sakharov Centre for Human Rights in Moscow in January 2003, were fined 100,000 rubles each by the Russian court for blasphemy (mainly as a result of Alexander Kosolapov's work, *Coca-Cola. This is my blood*); Anna Mikhailchuk, a Russian artist, was also charged, but finally acquitted. Such tactics do not, in practice (at least in Poland), intimidate artists – on the contrary, they encourage political commitment, and criticism of the authorities regarding the autonomisation of politics in art. Although the Polish tradition was, paradoxically, rather weak in this respect (with the make-believe liberalisation of the 1970s favouring conformity rather than rebellion), in the present situation – perhaps because of the official oppressive strategy (openly endorsed by the right-wing establishment) to introduce some level of censorship – artists have been reacting in an equally open critical manner.

Let me stress this paradox. While in Poland there is a distinct shift towards the autonomy of politics in art (accompanied of course by shifts in another direction as well), the reverse is happening in Hungary, which has a strong and quite unique tradition in this respect. I am not saying that Hungary is an exception. Quite the contrary – the map of post-communist Europe shows Poland to be exceptional. In most post-communist countries one can notice a distinct tendency to react against the long-lasting pressure of engagement, but other than in Belarus, and to some degree in Russia, artists are not confronted by the threat of an official introduction of censorship – which unfortunately is the case in Poland. Perhaps it is a kind of rule, that countries that suffered strong cultural censorship under a previous regime, including the Baltic countries within the former Soviet Union, still maintain a level of hesitation against becoming involved in politics. There is, however, definitely also another rule: that the temptation to be involved in politics is weaker in those freer countries where the authorities do not have direct control over art, than it is in those countries that are relatively less free – as in present-day Poland, where the politicians are strongly involved in many forms of censorship (including particularly, but not only, religious). It does not of course mean that in those post-communist countries like the Czech Republic, Hungary, or even Lithuania there is no art involved in politics. Not at all. One can find political art everywhere. What it does mean is that in many post-communist countries, including the above mentioned ones, the political mood for such art either does not exist, or is relatively weak. In Poland, however, it is just the opposite. The extremely tense political situation, where democracy and free speech are in danger, and where one can see the rebirth of a sort of authoritarian system – not communist, but anti-communist, right-wing fundamentalist, nationalist and xenophobic – creates a particular challenge for the nation's artists.

One can see a politicisation of culture in Poland in three areas. One is the emergence of activist art, direct involvement in politics, political satire and street art, which became particularly popular when the twin brothers seized power. Examples include posters, graffiti, internet graphics, etc., produced by, among others, the *Radical Creative Action Group* (*Radykalna Akcja Twórcza*). The second is a sort of appropriation of religious iconography into the political sphere. There are many examples of this (including the case of Dorota Nieznalska), and I have written about them extensively elsewhere.[5] The third is critical art, which analyses the commonly-understood power system and its oppressive social and political praxis concerning body and sexuality (particular the gay and lesbian issue), consumer culture, and last but not least the general and universal power structure – as, for example, in the works of Zofia Kulik. This, however, is material for another paper.

Notes

[1] Jindřich Chalupecký, *Nove uměni v Čechach* (*New Art in Czechia*), Praha: H&H, 1994, pp. 156-157. A fragment of this book was previously published in English as 'Art in Bohemia: Its Merchants, Bureaucrats, and Creators', in: *CrossCurrents*, no. 9., Ann Arbor: UMI, 1990.
[2] Ibid., p. 163.
[3] Vaclav Havel, *Eseje polityczne* (*Political Essays*), Warsaw: Krąg, 1984.
[4] Stefan Morawski, 'Neo czy pseudo. Czy mamy awangardę', in: *Sztuka*, no. 3, 1981, p. 4.
[5] Among others, see Piotr Piotrowski, 'Agoraphobia after Communism', in: *Uměni/Art. Časopis Ústavu dějin uměni Akademie věd České republiky/Journal of the Institute of Art History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*, no. 1, 2004, pp. 52-60; Piotr Piotrowski, 'Visual Art Policy in Poland: Democracy, Populism and Censorship', in: *Populism. The Reader*, New York, Frankurt am Main: Lukac & Sternberg, Frankfurter Kunstverein, 2005, pp. 187-193.

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Adomo Mickevičiaus universitetas, Poznanė

Nuo autonomijos politikos prie politikos autonomijos

Reikšminiai žodžiai: meno autonomija, menas ir pokario komunizmas Centrinėje Europoje, menas ir pokomunizmas.

Santrauka

Komunistinės diktatūros metais meno autonomijos problema tapo itin aktuali. Oficialaus socialistinio realizmo laikais, skirtingai prasidėjusiais ir pasibaigusiais kiekvienoje Rytų bloko šalyje, nepriklausomai mąstantys menininkai savo svarbiausia nuostata paskelbė meno autonomiją. Tokie reikalavimai buvo girdimi visoje Rytų Europoje – nuo VDR iki SSSR, nuo Rumunijos iki Lenkijos. Žinoma, autonomijos postulatas buvo politiškas, nors jis reiškė meno išlaisvinimą nuo politikos. Tai buvo reakcija į oficialų kultūros politizavimą, o tiksliau – prieš meno naudojimą komunistinės propagandos tikslais. Taigi autonomija buvo suvokiama kaip meno laisvės sąlyga, teisė susitelkti į patį save ir į menininko intymias, egzistencines problemas, kaip priešingybė visuomeniniam meno vaidmeniui.

Straipsnyje pateikiama kampanijos už meno autonomiją, vykusios valdant komunistams, ir jos skirtingų reikšmių įvairiose šalyse nuo XX a. 6-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigos iki 8-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigos, geografinė apžvalga. Pradžioje šią menininkų strategiją galima vadinti „autonomijos politika", t.y. suvokti nepolitinį meną politiniame kontekste. Vėliau kai kuriose šalyse galima pastebėti, kad menininkai ėmėsi tiesioginės politikos, pripažindami jos savarankiškumą.

Gauta: 2007 03 01
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

ART AND DICTATORSHIP

MENAS IR DIKTATŪRA

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Facing the New Myths: on Lithuanian Art in 1940-1941

Key words: Lithuanian art history, art under the occupation, art and politics, collaboration, communist propaganda art, socialist realism.

I would like to begin by addressing the terminology, and admit that initially I did not want to accept the conference organisers' concept of "Eastern Europe". I have always tried to use the terms "Central Europe" or "Central and Eastern Europe", which both mitigate the opposition of East and West, and serve to indicate that the Czech Republic, Poland, and Lithuania are closer to France and Germany, than, say, to Byelorussia. However, once I began to write about the art world in Lithuania in 1940-1941, I understood that, in this case, the most appropriate term is in fact "Eastern Europe", which has both a clear political significance, and distinctly reminds us of the contours of 20th century European history – and their constant effect on the opposition between East and West.

1940-1941 was a particularly politicised period in Lithuania. On June 15, 1940 Soviet armed forces invaded the territory of the independent Republic of Lithuania. A puppet government was immediately formed in the country, and elections to the so-called People's Parliament (*Liaudies seimas* in Lithuanian) were announced. On July 21, 1940 the People's Parliament proclaimed Lithuania a Soviet republic, and sent an official delegation to Moscow requesting that it be accepted into the Soviet Union. On August 3, 1940 Lithuania was officially incorporated into the Soviet Union, and on August 25, 1940 Soviet law came into force – Stalin's constitution was adopted. The new political system was intensely enforced in all fields of life. Less than a year later, on June 22, 1941 the German army marched into Lithuania. With the approach of the Germans, the Lithuanians rebelled against the Soviets. The restored independent state of Lithuania was announced on June 23, 1941, but by August 5, 1941 the provisional government was disbanded and a new occupational regime was established. Despite the cognate nature of the Soviet and Nazi regimes, they were accepted and judged differently by the people, and understandably made a different impact on the country's art scene. I will not at this time delve into these differences and the reasons behind them, but will offer an overview on the change in Lithuanian art during the relatively brief Soviet occupation of June 15, 1940 – June 22, 1941.

Why an overview of this particular period? Research into the artistic culture of Lithuania during the time of the first Soviet occupation is interesting in itself. At the same time, it helps one to grasp the particularities that art and politics had in common throughout Western culture in the 20th century. The topic is also relevant in terms of other research regarding Lithuanian history. Without the period 1940-1941, the mosaic of the mid-20th century remains incomplete. The first Soviet occupation of Lithuania left a distinctive mark on the life of the country, and it is impossible to comprehensively analyse the much longer period of the second Soviet occupation without evaluating the cultural consequences of the former.


8 TIESA

Tarybų Lietuvos visų šakų meno jėgos entuziastingai įsijungė į socialistinę kūrybą. Tarybų Lietuvos meninikus įkvepia tas, kurio vardas brangus viso pasaulio darbo žmonėms—Stalinas. Atvaizde matome dail. Kosciušką ir skulptorių Pundžių kuriant Stalino portretą ir skulptūrą. Foto A. Naruševičiaus.

Fig. 1. Lithuanian painter Vaclovas Kosciuška (on the right) and sculptor Bronius Pundzius (on the left) creating the portraits of Stalin. Photo illustrations from the daily Tiesa, 28 August 1940

This specific period is, however, practically non-existent in the historiography of Lithuanian art. Or, to be more exact, many nuances are concealed or qualified in its presentation. This is not difficult to understand or explain. For instance, the authors of the three volume history of 20th century Lithuanian art published in the 1980s easily overlooked this period, for they based their study on the formal method – and no serious work of this kind had been done during the Soviet period. More profound research into the first Soviet period was impossible until the political environment changed so as to permit acknowledgment of the occupation of Lithuania as fact. Along with the emergence of the fact that a number of artists collaborated with the authorities, came a tenuous but convenient version regarding the fatal influence of outside circumstances justifying their conformist position. I have endeavoured to reflect this historiographic approach in creating the title for this overview. The text is therefore written with two goals in mind. The first is to present material challenging the version existing throughout historiography that Lithuanian artists collaborated with the occupational forces, though later many of them ostensibly suffered remorse for the rest of their lives. The second is to ascertain the turning-point in the work of the so-called modernists as they attempted to adapt to the requirements of their new clients. This presentation thus aims to delve deeper into the painful and tragic period of the first Soviet occupation, and to discuss certain features of the art from that period – thereby providing some basis for the reasoning behind them.

Two aspects of significance to the topic at hand include the existing conditions of the art world, and the artists' awareness of themselves – factors which would have determined a variety of behaviours.[1] I will not talk about the conditions of the art world in Lithuania at that time, for they were basically the same as in other totalitarian countries during the 20th century. When referring to a position taken by the artists, one is often reminded to take into account each individual case. But in fact, all of Lithuania's individual cases fit into three basic models of behaviour: a neutral position; an attempt to adapt to a new client; active participation in the consolidation of a new ideology, i.e. a new social order.[2] Which, in the case of the third, means a conscious collaboration with the occupational authorities. Unfortunately, it must be admitted that it was the latter that predominated in Lithuania.

I cannot present a comprehensive and well-grounded analysis of this situation, because, thus far, research into the art of the first Soviet period has been very fragmented – even the surviving artworks have not yet been registered. A more systematic collection of isolated factual data exists only in a rotary print publication of the third volume of *20th Century Lithuanian Art History*, dedicated to a discussion on art from 1940 to 1960.[3] Prepared for printing in the Soviet period and therefore subject to self-censorship, it was published, after stormy debates, in 1990, at a time when the system of censorship was already collapsing, i.e. during the years of the restoration of Lithuania's independence. Time proved that the decision to publish this material was an appropriate one, for after 1990 research into the art scene of the Stalinist period in Lithuania came to a standstill for at least 15 years. Anyway, there is enough material even in this *History* to raise the question of why so few Lithuanian artists distanced themselves from the Soviet regime, and why so few did not try to adapt to the requirements of the new client. This question is far from simple, and it has no single answer. But the search for an answer reveals some characteristic features of the culture, mental-

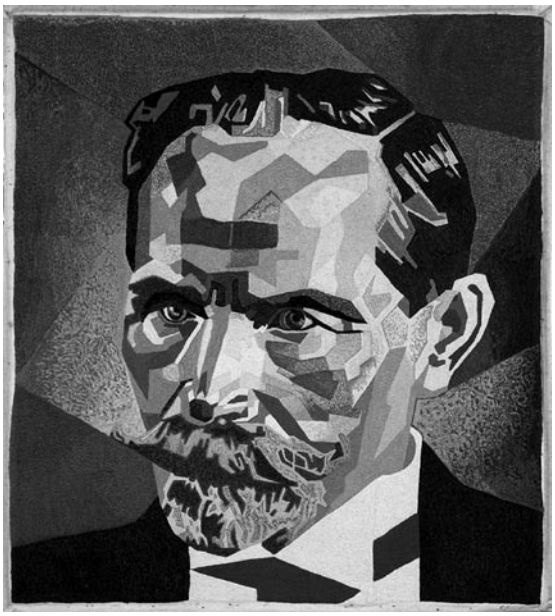


Fig. 2. Balys Macutkevičius, Portrait of President Antanas Smetona, c. 1938, silk embroidery, 52 x 47 cm. Courtesy: National M. K. Čiurlionis Museum of Art, Kaunas

ity, values, and understanding of art in Lithuania, and in the other European countries in the 1930s and 1940s, and, as mentioned above, gives a better understanding of the situation vis-a-vis Lithuanian culture after the Second World War.

It goes without saying that in this case we will not be focusing on the work of those artists who consistently developed the themes of social injustice, exploitation of workers, class struggle, and similar issues, who openly expressed their leftist views or even belonged to the Communist Party – and correspondingly, had worked illegally in Lithuania in the 1930s, when the Communist Party was prohibited and persecuted. It was natural that these artists would have welcomed the arrival of the Soviets.

There were also artists like Černė Percikovičiūtė, a talented painter of Jewish origins, who felt marginalised because of her ethnic roots and social position in independent Lithuania, and who sincerely hoped that the new social structure would liberate the "little people", and grant them more rights and the possibility to express themselves. Incidentally, Percikovičiūtė's work did not undergo any fundamental changes in 1940. Only in addition to her usual themes, she also painted several images conveying the urgent issues of the new life, including an expressionist double portrait entitled *Girls Publishing a Wall Newspaper* (also called *Two members of Komsomol* [i. e. All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth] *Publishing a Wall Newspaper*). This canvas expressed the artist's support for the new social situation, but, like her former paintings, it remained on the fringes of the public art scene. Works of this nature were not of any interest to the creators of the latest political order because they belonged to the sphere of personal experience. Percikovičiūtė applied an unfamiliar expressionist interpretation to socialist realism, and scrupulously sought for aesthetic appeal rather than ideological suggestiveness.

Several well-recognised artists of the older generation, including a well-known painter with an avant-garde background named Vytautas Kairiūkštis, withdrew from social issues, and dedicated themselves to landscapes and still life motifs, thereby consciously choosing the marginal zones of culture. Most of them, like Kairiūkštis (who was paid a teacher's, and later a museum curator's salary), had a permanent salaried position, and could thus afford the luxury of choosing to withdraw from active involvement in the art world, and maintain a position of waiting.

All the same, others of their colleagues who also had a position and a steady income, tried to win the favour of the Soviet authorities. Perhaps they were misled by the propaganda regarding Soviet support for the arts and artists. Those who felt undervalued by the government and society in an independent Lithuania trusted that the new provider would be more generous, and would create the means for artists to survive on the fruits of their creativity alone – without ever considering that this kind of activity would have nothing in common with free creativity.

For example, in 1940, just prior to the occupation, Paulius Augustinavičius, a young graphic artist, said the following in an interview for a cultural magazine called *Naujoji romuva* (*The New Sanctuary*): "In our Lithuania, art is akin to a luxury. Only those who are highly idealistic or materially well-off can dedicate themselves to art. But even idealism takes on a very bitter flavour when there isn't enough to

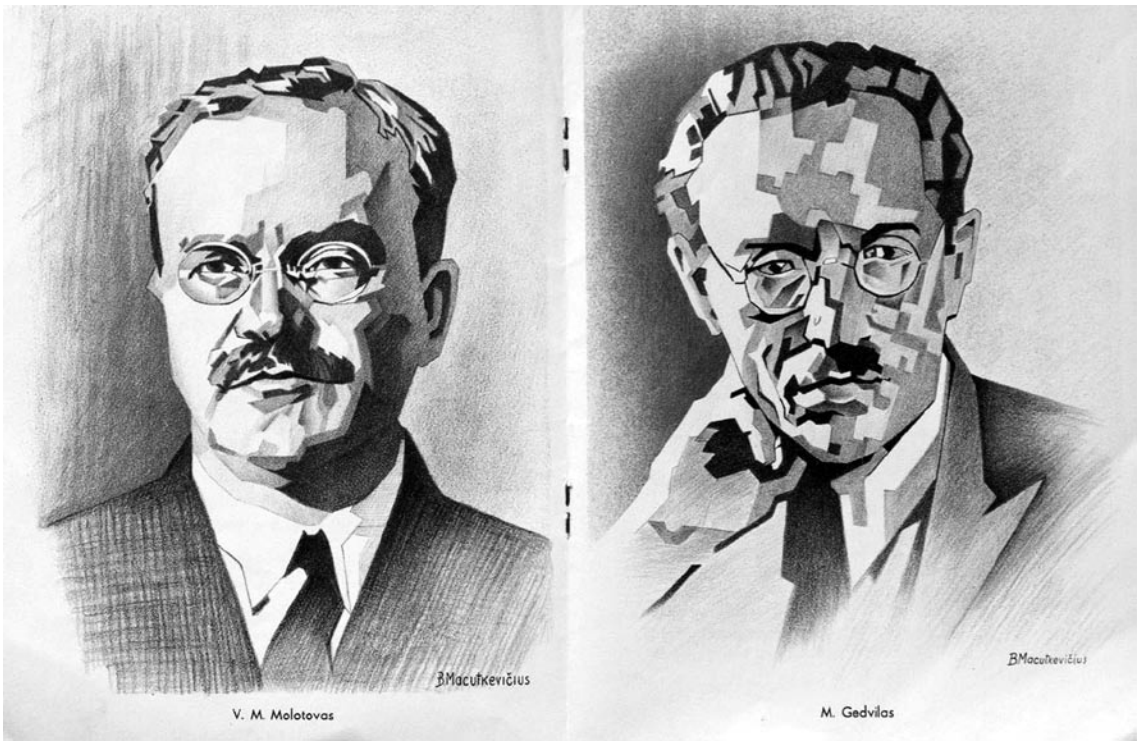


Fig. 3. Balys Macutkevičius, Portraits of Soviet Union Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov and Soviet Lithuania Puppet Government Interior Minister Mečislovas Gedvilas. Reproduction from the children monthly Genys*, no. 5, 1940*

eat...".[4] Augustinavičius undoubtedly dramatised the situation, and yet it must be acknowledged that his judgement did essentially reflect the reality of the art market in an independent Lithuania, and the weaknesses in its system of sponsorship. Private sponsors weren't able to guarantee artists independent creativity, for they bought relatively few works of art, and government commissions liberated only the occasional artist with long-term lucrative assignments to create works of monumental art, from the need to earn a daily living. There was talk about introducing art stipends that would allow artists a few months to half a year of creative work without worrying about earning enough to survive on, but nothing remotely similar to the US Federal Art Project ever materialised in independent Lithuania. On more than one occasion, the press brought up the example of the Soviet Union in reference to the dream of state support for artists. It is possible that, when it came to sponsorship of the arts, a number of artists believed in the merits of the Soviet system, and eagerly adapted to the new requirements in order to safeguard their own future under the conditions of the new order. Nevertheless, the speed with which the changes happened, remains shocking.

Let us now discuss several cases that testify to the changes in artists' values, world outlook, and correspondingly, individual style – therein reflecting the spread of the new ideology and the appearance of new stylistic norms.

By the end of the 1930s, the concept of socialist realism was quite well developed in the Soviet Union. There were still a number of theoretical gaps, but it was fairly easy for the censors to distinguish between its acceptable and unacceptable examples. Certain deviations aside, one of its basic principles was an ennobled naturalism, based on the tenets of academic representation. Which is why it is so surprising that artists with distinctly modernist views could accept the prospect of the introduction of socialist realism. One such example is the modernist *Ars* group and its members (among them Antanas Gudaitis, Vytautas Kazimieras Jonynas, and Juozas Mikėnas) – who, in a manifesto published in 1932, proclaimed the classic modernist goals of reforming art in Lithuania. It must, however, be noted that

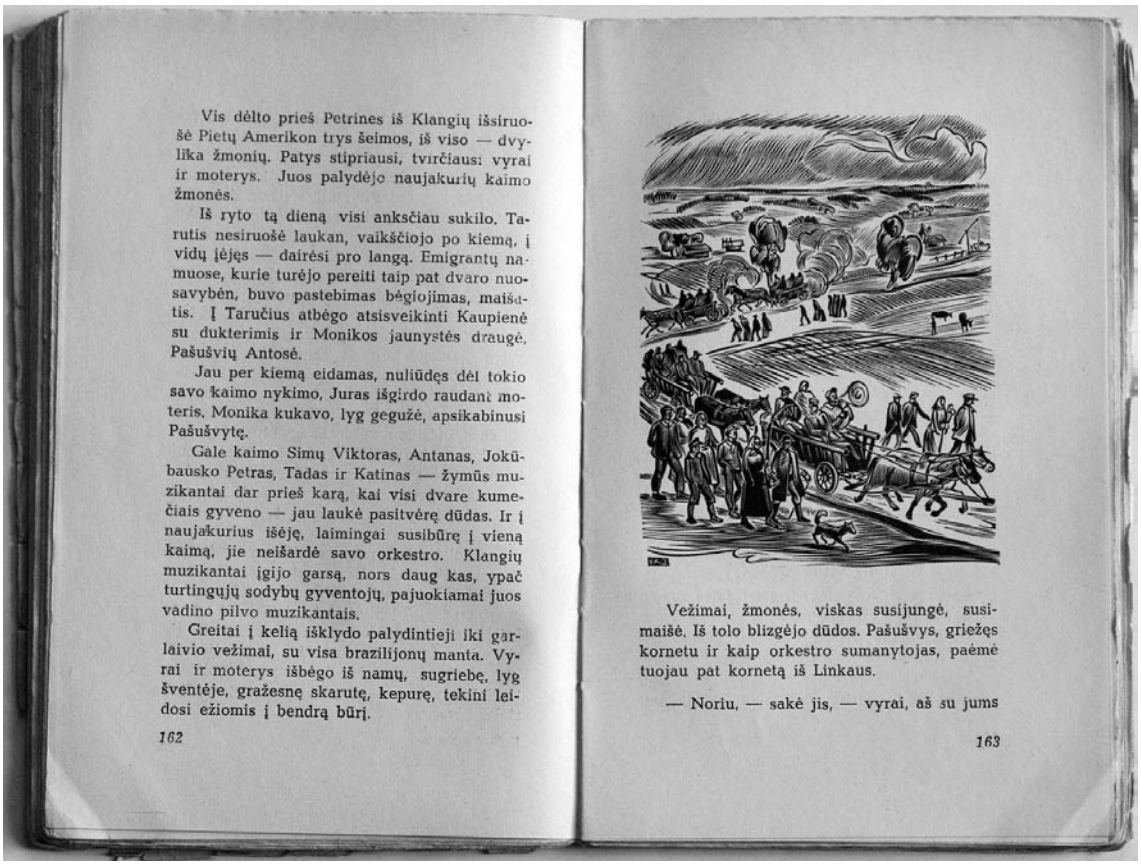
Fig. 4. Vytautas Kazimieras Jonynas, St George, 1934, colour linocut, 24 x 18 cm. Courtesy: National M. K. Čiurlionis Museum of Art

after a brief period of modernist work in the mid-1930s, all of the *Ars* group members began to change their style. They abandoned cubism, fauvism, even art deco iconography and expression, and began to adopt a neo-traditionalist style and vocabulary, which, incidentally, helped them to get well-paid state commissions.

In Juozas Mikėnas' case, transferring to a style that was acceptable to the new Soviet order was not overly painful – he created only a few neo-classicist sculptures on the theme of work, which he had started to develop in the mid-1930s, and produced a sculpture of Vladimir Mayakovski.

One of the leaders of the *Ars* group, the painter Antantas Gudaitis, had leftist views, and made friends with left-oriented literary people who aroused his dissatisfaction with the cultural policy of the ruling Tautininkai (Nationalist) Party, or, to be more exact, with its lack of interest in the development of art. From the very beginning of the Soviet occupation he became actively involved with *Agitrop* (a Soviet art propaganda organisation which began to operate in Lithuania in 1940), and started to paint a large-format canvas portraying the execution of four communists sentenced to death in Kaunas in 1926. Much later, when recalling that time, he claimed that he was initially blind to the horror and absurdity of Soviet reality – despite the fact that he visited Moscow and Leningrad, together with other Lithuanian cultural personalities, in 1936. Apparently his naive and youthful revolutionary enthusiasm, or more precisely his extremely critical outlook on the political and cultural reality of independent Lithuania, prevented him from seeing the truth. And yet, in the first half of 1940, he passionately argued that "art, the greatest expression of human spirituality, seeks the full and highest creative manifestation culminating in ecstasy and the absolute"; that "art is created not under coercion by need, or by social, aesthetic, or any other considerations, but by compulsion – for the same reasons that people, trees, water exist"; and that "only people confer aesthetic, social, religious, and moral goals to art".[5] In the latter half of that same year he suddenly suffered an attack of "amnesia": it was as if he had completely forgotten his theories of artistic autonomy, and found himself obediently following the new client's dictates. He created a publicity poster for elections to the People's Parliament, and organised to present his large-format work, *The Shooting of Four Communists*, at a retrospective exhibition of Lithuanian art in Moscow.

Gudaitis' conformist efforts are not ultimately so surprising when one considers the fact that, in the late 1930s, he was already trying to adapt to the requirements of the establishment, and utilising a popular neo-classicist form of expression. He painted so-called national models – Lithuanian farm people in ethnic costume going about their traditional work. It was probably then that he felt obliged to betray his creative ideals, in return for his daily bread and a better social position. Ambitious and talented, Gudaitis was truly crushed when, after his studies in Paris, back in Lithuania he did not get a job as a teacher at the Kaunas art college, and was forced instead to work as a lecturer at an evening course for interior decorators and wall painters. His disappointment was obviously reinforced by the Lithuanian authorities when they decided to ex-



Vis dėlto prieš Petrines iš Klangių išsiruošė Pietų Amerikon trys šeimos, iš viso — dvylika žmonių. Patys stipriausi, tvirčiausi vyrai ir moterys. Juos palydėjo naujakurių kaimo žmonės.

Iš ryto tą dieną visi anksčiau sukilo. Tarutis nesiruošė laukan, vaikščiojo po kiemą, į vidų įėjęs — dairėsi pro langą. Emigrantų namuose, kurie turėjo pereiti taip pat dvaro nuosavybėn, buvo pastebimas bėgiojimas, maišatis. Į Taručius atbėgo atsisveikinti Kaupienė su dukterimis ir Monikos jaunystės draugė, Pašušvių Antosė.

Jau per kiemą eidamas, nuliūdęs dėl tokio savo kaimo nykimo, Juras išgirdo raudantį moteris. Monika kukavo, lyg gegužė, apsikabinusi Pašušvytę.

Gale kaimo Simų Viktoras, Antanas, Jokūbausko Petras, Tadas ir Katinas — žymūs muzikantai dar prieš karą, kai visi dvare kumečiais gyveno — jau laukė pasitvėrę dūdas. Ir į naujakurius išėjęs, laimingai susibūrę į vieną kaimą, jie neišardė savo orkestro. Klangių muzikantai įgijo garsą, nors daug kas, ypač turtingųjų sodybų gyventojų, pajuokiamai juos vadino pilvo muzikantais.

Greitai į kelią išklydo palydintieji iki garlaivio vežimai, su visa brazilijonų manta. Vyrai ir moterys išbėgo iš namų, sugriebę, lyg šventėje, gražesnę skarutę, kepurę, tekini leidosi ežiomis į bendrą būrį.

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Vežimai, žmonės, viskas susijungė, susimaišė. Iš tolo blizgėjo dūdos. Pašušvys, griežęs kornetu ir kaip orkestro sumanytojas, paėmė tuojau pat kornetą iš Linkaus.

— Noriu, — sakė jis, — vyrai, aš su jums

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Fig. 5. Double-page spread from the novel Žemė maitintoja *by Petras Cvirka (*Breadwinning Earth, *Kaunas: LSSR State Publishing House, 1940) with the illustration by Vytautas Kazimieras Jonynas*

hibit a work by Gudaitis' teacher Adomas Galdikas, an artist of the older generation, instead of his own competition-winning triptych, in the Lithuanian section of a 1937 international exhibition in Paris. Apparently these personal grievances, together with the disappointment of the young intellectuals around him in the country's cultural stagnation and the government's sluggishness, pushed Gudaitis to oppose the system in the independent Republic of Lithuania. In 1941 he passionately asserted that it was necessary to engage in a struggle against bourgeois pseudo-classicism, and to represent the workers and peasants – since "the gentlemen's school has made even the models noble and urbane".[6] All the same, it is difficult to believe that he was still behaving sincerely during this period.

At the very end of the 1930s, the third member of the above mentioned group of protagonists of modernism, the graphic artist Vytautas Kazimieras Jonynas, very deliberately changed his individual style in the direction of realism, and called on the best examples of Soviet Russian graphic art. His neo-primitive works, based on studies of folk art and geometrical forms typical of art deco, approached a refined realism that bore certain features of naturalism, and allowed him to convey complex narratives fairly precisely. During the time of the Soviet occupation, cultural ideologists were particularly impressed with the illustrations that Jonynas had started back in 1938 for the epic poem *Seasons* by the 18th century Protestant pastor Kristijonas Donelaitis, which recounted the daily life of the peasants of Lithuania Minor. They also highly valued his wood carvings for a novel called *Breadwinning Earth* by the leftist writer Petras Cvirka [fig. 5]. Jonynas adapted to socialist realism naturally as he followed the work of his outstanding contemporaries – from the German graphic artists, to Vladimir Favorski, the classic of Russian graphic art, and Aleksey Kravtchenka, the pride of Ukraine, whose exhibition, organised in 1939 by the Association of Lithuanian and Soviet Union Cultural Relations, had aroused great interest in Lithuania. Jonynas was a typical case of seeking to

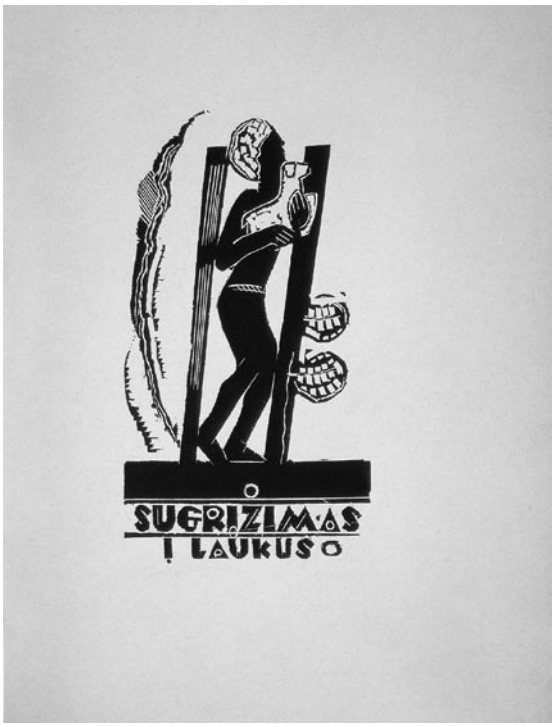

Fig. 6. Telesforas Valius, the chapter title illustration from the poetry book Mergaitė su žibuoklėm *by Kazys Zupka (*A Girl with Violets*, Kaunas: Sakalas, 1938)*

entice a client by adopting the style and fashion of the day, and his attitude regarding the Soviets is revealed in his later choices. Incidentally, Jonynas was the only one of these three *Ars* members to leave Lithuania when the Soviet army was approaching in 1944. He lived in the French occupied zone in Germany, and after attempting to settle in Paris, moved to the USA.

Young, ambitious, talented artists justified their attempts to adapt by claiming that they believed they could preserve their status as artists within the Soviet cultural system. The efforts of the proponents of modernism were particularly naive. For example, the passionate supporters of expressionism and neo-primitivism who had asserted that creative work was important primarily as an expression of deep and dramatic experiences, and achieved only by utilising deformation, contrast, and the courage to plunge into ugliness, were also quick to change their creative style. It is difficult to find any similarity between the early works of Viktoras Petravičius or Telesforas Valius, and the graphics they produced in 1940 and 1941 [fig. 8 and 9]. Naturally, it was important to demonstrate their loyalty to the new client, and in this case it was enough to express a minimal similarity to examples of authentic socialist realism. On the other hand, it is unlikely that artists of this tendency would have even succeeded in coming closer to manifesting socialist realism. After returning from his studies at the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1938, Petravičius worked very hard to present his personal experiences and to emphasise his emotional nature in as suggestive and strong manner as possible. His expressionist declarations became more effective. His compositions revealed a fluidity that was characteristic of symbolism, and was represented by lines connecting all the actors on the depicted stage – sky, earth, water, plant life, and humans – into a totality breathing a unifying rhythm. It is true that, at the very end of the 1930s, even this impetuous and original artist succumbed briefly to the common trend, and attempted to sustain a more attentive hold on reality. According to Jolita Mulevičiūtė, who has studied Lithuanian neo-traditionalism in depth, his one-man exhibition in 1939 forced the astute art critic Nikolaj Vorobjov to voice his dismay at the increasing realism – and consequent decreasing "formal intensity" – of Petravičius' engravings.[7] "Not only has the monumental tectonics of his earlier prints disappeared, so also has the accompanying visionary strength – a fantastic gift, the naive primitive power of images. His style is becoming more detailed, and somehow too 'human'," regretted the critic.[8] If this was an attempt to take into consideration the wishes of the client, and to consolidate his position within the ranks of the country's artistic elite, then Petravičius should have soon understood that he had taken the wrong path, for it was precisely his illustrations for the Lithuanian folk tale *Daughter-in-law from the Barn*, considered the apex of expressionism, that were highly valued by both his colleagues, and by art lovers. An edition with a French translation, aimed at foreign book lovers, appeared in 1940. True, it was published by a group of left-leaning artists called *Daira*, which had broken away from the Lithuanian Artists' Union, and which intended to fight for artistic freedom and social guarantees for its members. The group must have accepted the Soviet occupation in a positive light. Apparently the opinions of his col-

Fig. 7. The issue of the daily Tarybų Lietuva *with the illustration by Telesforas Valius, 12 January 1941*

leagues prompted Petravičius to join them in building a socialist culture for Lithuania. All the same, it's unlikely that his cover for Michail Sholochov's novel, *Virgin Soil Upturned*, helped him to get any further commissions [fig. 9]. In the end, Petravičius' spontaneous talent was stronger than his desire to seek out compromises. Although his efforts to adapt to the new regime helped him to get a position as an instructor at the Institute of Applied Arts in Kaunas, he left Lithuania for the West towards the end of the war, just before the second Soviet occupation.

The illustrative graphics adapted for a newspaper called *Tarybų Lietuva* (*Soviet Lithuania*) by another talented graphic artist, Telesforas Valius, are, on the other hand, very distant from the etchings and book illustrations that he had created in the late 1930s; moreover, professionally speaking, they are amateurish works [fig. 6 and 7]. The naturalism of socialist realism was fundamentally foreign to the artistic strivings of both Valius and Petravičius. The mythologists of historiography interpret such examples of declining artistry as a symptom of the artists' suffering and inner resistance. Nevertheless, it should be noted that they would not have managed, even were they so inclined, to adopt the requirements of socialist realism, because, on the one hand they were not skilled in naturalistic imagery, and on the other, they basically did not comprehend the nature and goals of socialist realism.

In a far better position were those artists of a neoclassical trend, who had only to adapt the iconographic motifs of socialist realism. One such artist was the state-awarded sculptor Bronius Pundzius. Well-recognised in independent Lithuania, he decided to welcome the new rulers, and began to model a portrait of Stalin. This is a rather memorable fact, since his portrait of Antanas Smetona, the last president of Lithuania, was removed with a great uproar from a retrospective exhibition of Lithuanian art in Vilnius during the first days of the Soviet occupation. Pundzius had cultivated a neo-classicist style, and thus did not have to exert himself to adapt to socialist realism. Content to live on his honorariums, he was not particularly concerned whether he was portraying the leader of an independent Lithuania, or the head of the occupiers who had conquered his native country. However, according to historiographic tradition, it was precisely the compromise with his conscience that so broke Pundzius that he became an alcoholic, and suffered an early death. A similar fate awaited the painter and graphic artist Balys Macutkevičius. He had perfected the decoratively geometric portraiture of a genuine art deco spirit, and tried to convey the features of some of the functionaries of the Soviet Union and the new Lithuania, even Stalin himself, by using this favoured style [fig. 3]. He had done exactly the same thing in his representations of the outstanding figures of independent Lithuania in the 1930s [fig. 2]. The strange apolitical stance and reluctance of these artists to acknowledge that artistic creativity is unavoidably linked to moral responsibility, that it expresses a certain point of view, is borne out by their naive attempts to adapt the means of modernistic expression to the plastic manifestation of Soviet ideology.

Here I would like to recall the above mentioned reference to a characteristic of the mentality of

the majority of Lithuanian artists, which can be described as the craftsman's resolve to produce an object that satisfies the buyer's needs. Where does this come from? In the beginning of the 20th century, Lithuanian society strongly empathised with the ideal of the artist as a herald of the nation rising above the masses – an ideal formed by romanticism, that acknowledged the artists' exceptional right to assert values integral to the whole national community. And thereby placed on them the burden of ethical responsibility. However, society in an independent Lithuania regarded art very pragmatically, for it was commissioned primarily by the state, which needed art for propaganda and representational purposes. Under these conditions, artistic ingenuity and freedom was restricted by the most banal economic levers, a situation which subsequently prompted artists to acknowledge the Soviet invaders and their local henchmen as the new client with accompanying rights. It was this fact that led Pundzius and Macutkevičius, who were fairly well known in the field of patriotic propaganda, and other young and talented artists, to eagerly take on the new iconography required by the Soviets. One should not, therefore, be surprised or shocked by the didactic illustrations in Soviet propaganda children's books designed by, for example, graphic artists Domicelė and Petras Tarabilda: they produced books addressed to the future citizens of a free Lithuania in the same optimistic style, and using the same type of figure, and manner of drawing as during the time of independence. It would seem that they felt absolutely no moral discomfort in this regard, and that this kind of accommodating conformed to the ideals of creative freedom that were defended with such passion and sacrifice by all of the 20th century art luminaries, as well as by the founders of the Lithuanian national school of art.

The metamorphosis of the young artist Rimtas Kalpokas, who had studied at the Monza Institute of Applied Art in Italy, took place along a similar vein. In the 1930s, the son of painter Petras Kalpokas (one of the founders of the national school of art, a Lithuanian intellectual of the older generation, and a figure of the national revival movement) mainly worked in applied graphic art, graphic design and

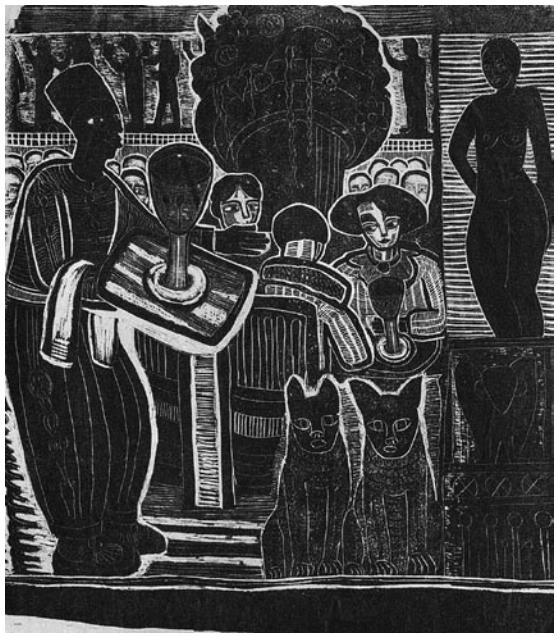

Fig. 8. Viktoras Petravičius, In the Oriental Café, before 1936, woodcut, 27.5 x 24.5 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

mural painting, and as a highly acclaimed illustrator of children's books. What do we see when we compare his illustrations for the rhymed fairy tale *Chimney Sweep* (1939) by the young poet Vytautas Sirijos Gira, and an ode entitled *Stalin's Constitution for the LSSR* (1940) by his father Liudas Gira (which the latter read out during the festivities on August 25, 1940, when Lithuania was officially subjugated to the laws of the Soviet Union)? The latter continues to be the work of a diligent craftsman, produced according to rules that have not changed, but that have adapted to different material. Ethical criteria should, presumably, not be applied when assessing this kind of work. There is another aspect, however, that comes to the fore when assessing the position of highly admired artists like the sculptor Vytautas Kašuba, who once believed in cultivating the honour and patriotic pride of his country's citizens. Kašuba represented those fighters who had paid for Lithuania's freedom with their life, those glorious ancient Lithuanians who had defended their country from the enemy. After the shift of the political regime, however, Kašuba followed on the heels of the others, and tried to ingratiate himself with the new client by peddling his talent and his abilities. His star also rose again during the time of the

German occupation, with the exhibition of a high relief work entitled *Liberation from Prison* (which was accompanied by angry voices claiming that this topical work had been created in 1940 or 1941, and successfully re-adapted in 1942).

An overview of Lithuanian art in 1940-1941 could allow one to say that both the modernists, and the bards of patriotism collaborated with the occupying Soviet authorities. Both chose a path of compromise. The first gave up their artistic ideals and professional ambitions, and the second resolved to reform their historical memory and civic consciousness for the sake of a career. All the same, it must be acknowledged that with the arrival of the second Soviet occupation, the majority of the most talented and ambitious Lithuanian artists chose the fate of an emigrant. In Soviet Lithuania, the work of Jonynas, Kašuba and Petravičius was seen as an example of free art, as a source of the vitality of the nation's culture feeding those who were suffering oppression.

How should one evaluate the creative biography of those artists, and the impression they made on the national culture? How can one avoid creating new myths, and finally understand how the people of Lithuania lived in the mid-20th century – including in terms of art, and the feelings of those who created it? The answer might only be found in an in-depth study of European culture under occupation during the middle and latter half of the 20th century, which is undoubtedly impossible without case studies.

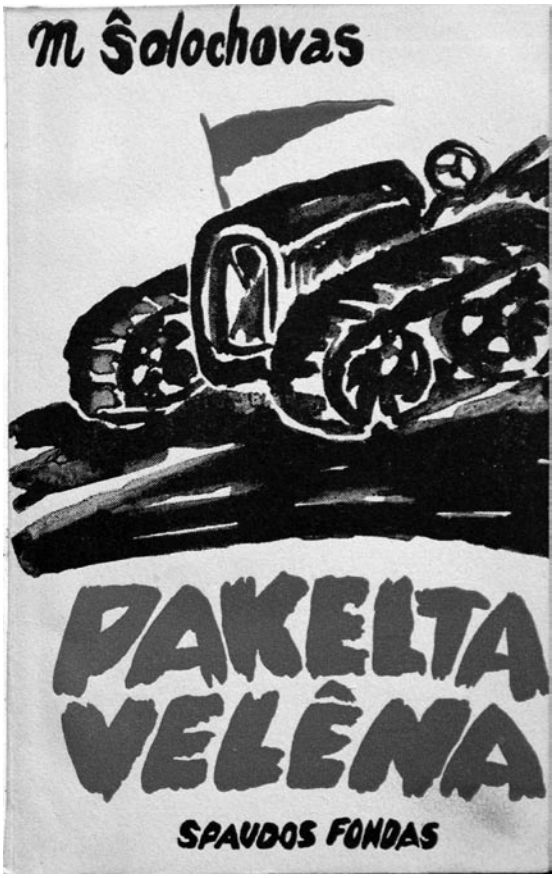

Fig. 9. Viktoras Petravičius, the cover of the novel Pakelta velėna *by Mikhail Sholochov (*Virgin Soil Upturned, *Kaunas: Press Foundation, 1940)*

Notes

[1] See analyses of the effect on the thinking of the artist of a utilitarian outlook on art, consistently fostered in the first half of the 20th century, in Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, 'Visuomenės vedlys ar amato meistras?' ('Spiritual Leader or Craftsman?'), in: *Naujasis židinys – Aidai*, no. 7/8, 1999, pp. 393-397. Also in the intro. articles and interview with sculptor Mindaugas Navakas in the catalogue for the jubilee exhibition of works by Juozas Mikėnas, which raises the issue of similarities in the thinking of regime-serving artists, and a comparison of Mikėnas with Arnold Breker: *Klasikos ilgesys: Juozo Mikėno kūryba tarp Paryžiaus ir Lietuvos* (*Longing for the Classics: Juozas Mikėnas between Paris and Lithuania*), ex. cat., compiled by Giedrė Jankevičiūtė and Elona Lubytė, articles by Giedrė Jankevičiūtė and Jolita Mulevičiūtė, Vilnius, 2001.

[2] Unlike among writers, there were no artists who attempted to flee the regime, or to secretly oppose it in their work. The exception was Juozapas Perkovskis (Józef Perkowski), a graphic artist of landowner origins, who committed suicide on July 24 1940, when the Soviets occupied Lithuania, because he was convinced that he would be arrested and tortured to death in prison or in the camps.

[3] Ingrida Korsakaitė (ed.), *XX a. lietuvių dailės istorija. 1940-1960* (*20th Century Lithuanian Art History. 1940-1960*), vol. 3, Vilnius, 1990.

[4] 'Meno idėjos ir gyvenimas' ('Artistic Ideas and Life'), in: *Naujoji romuva*, no. 22/23, 1940, p. 419.

[5] Ibid., p. 418.

[6] J. Cicėnas, 'Pas draugus dekadai kuriančius' ('With Comrades Creating for the Decade'), in: *Vilniaus balsas*, 12 February 1941.

[7] Jolita Mulevičiūtė, *Modernizmo link: dailės gyvenimas Lietuvos Respublikoje 1918-1940* (*Towards Modernism: Artistic Life in the Republic of Lithuania 1918-1940*), Kaunas: Nacionalinis M. K. Čiurlionio dailės muziejus, 2001, p. 143.

[8] Mikalojus Vorobjovas, 'Viktoras Petravičius kryžkelyje' ('Viktoras Petravičius at the Crossroads'), in: *Naujoji romuva*, no. 45, 1939, p. 817.

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Naujų mitų akivaizdoje: apie 1940–1941 m. Lietuvos dailę

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Lietuvos dailės istorija, menas okupacijos sąlygomis, menas ir politika, kolaboravimas, komunistinės propagandos menas, socialistinis realizmas.

Santrauka

Straipsnyje apžvelgiama Lietuvos dailininkų kūryba pirmosios sovietų okupacijos metais (1940–1941). Konstatavus, kad daugelis žinomų šalies dailininkų mėgino prisitaikyti prie naujojo užsakovo (kolaboravo su okupaciniu režimu), siekiama įvardyti šio santykio priežastis. Įvykusio lūžio pobūdis ir stiliaus paradoksai atskleidžiami, lyginant nepriklausomybės laikotarpio ir pirmojo sovietmečio žinomų dailininkų kūrinius. Konstatuojama, kad pirmojo sovietmečio patirtis paskatino dailininkų emigraciją. Daroma išvada, kad aptariamas laikotarpis yra ypač svarbus, norint adekvačiai suprasti bei įvertinti XX a. viduryje įvykusį Lietuvos kultūros lūžį ir patirtos traumos pobūdį.

Gauta: 2007 03 15
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

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The Architecture of Discipline and Mobilisation: A Contribution to an Interpretation of the Neo-Classicism of the Stalinist Era

Key words: architecture, Stalinist, martial, uniforms.

During the interwar period, Czechoslovakia was virtually the promised land of modern architecture. Its promising development was interrupted by the Second World War and the subsequent communist coup of 1948. In the straitened circumstances of a Soviet satellite state, where there were no private architectural studios or private clientele, every aspect of society was subject to strict ideological supervision. Avant-garde architects who had been close to the political left before the war assumed leading positions in the nationalised building industry and art institutions. Their attempts to harmonise communist ideas with a modernist programme ran up against the resistance of the authorities, who uncompromisingly promoted the doctrine of socialist realism, imported from the Soviet Union, across the spectrum of art and culture. In architecture this meant the cultivation of the Stalinist model of monumental neo-classicism.

The art of the ensuing era was intended to be socialist in its content, and national in its form. The designs published in architectural journals, however, reveal how difficult it was for even the most assiduous lackeys of the regime to put this rhetoric into practice. The only thing that was clear was the negative definition of the new architecture – it needed to be as different as possible from "cosmopolitan functionalism". Although the former avant-garde architects, headed by Jiří Kroha (1893-1974) and Oldřich Starý (1884-1971), still held important positions, they were compelled to express vociferous self-criticism, and to revise their original standpoints. But the strict overseers were not satisfied even by the blatant copying of Soviet models, and the application of new motifs in sculptural and painting decor. What they required were classicist architectural and town-planning compositions, a formal repertoire borrowed from the local renaissance, as well as the standardisation of building works.

Socialist architecture built on the heritage of the interwar avant-garde was first presented in Prague in 1947, in the pavilions of the Slavonic Exhibition designed by the architect Jiří Kroha. His studio also produced the first attempts at a Czech version of Stalinist historicism, in the form of designs for the new universities. However, younger and more radical revolutionaries criticised the alleged formalism

Fig. 1. František Jeřábek and collective, Hotel International in Prague, design 1950-1954, construction 1954-1956. Photo courtesy: Ústav dějin umění AV ČR Praha

Fig. 2. František Jeřábek and collective, Hotel International in Prague, detail of the spire. Photo courtesy: Ústav dějin umění AV ČR Praha

of Kroha's skilful transformation of the Soviet models. The great competitions for the Army Headquarters, Political University, and Stalin Monument were held in an atmosphere of fear. Few of the monuments, however, were ever built. The most important of the ones that were was the military Hotel International in the Prague Dejvice District (František Jeřábek and collective, design 1950-1954, construction 1954-1956).

The principal monuments of this era were the new towns, such as Ostrava-Poruba, Havířov, Dubnica nad Váhom, and Šaca. Khrushchev's criticism of "extravagances in architecture" in his famous speech in December 1954 brought an end to a bizarre episode in Czech and Slovak architecture. After a brief hesitation, the Prague communist elite also accepted the new course, and the technocrats subsequently assumed power in the Czechoslovak building industry. The blasting of the colossal Stalin monument sitting above Prague in 1961 brought a symbolic end to this period.[1]

Stalinist neo-classicism is political architecture par excellence. It originated from a political commission, and was repudiated on the basis of the same mechanism. In studying the subject, the historian can hardly avoid questioning the social function of this phenomenon. However, it is extremely difficult to formulate a historical interpretation of architectural works from that period of tyranny, because the interpreter can find little support in the statements of the architects. A reading of testimonies from the period cannot even answer such an important question as the extent to which socialist architecture can be seen as the fruit of the architects' left-leaning conviction and their enthusiasm for the construction of a new society, or as the product of enforced sovietisation. Public speeches by Czech and Slovak architects in the 1950s contain only fiery professions of faith in the star of Communism. And later declarations, when even those architects who supported the regime deny any kind of internal identification with the principles of official Stalinist art, are not much more convincing. How can one assess the relationship between buildings and the invisible aspects of the culture of the period, if one cannot trust the testimony of the architects who built them? One can only look at the metaphors, associations, and more or less overt analogies that reveal the hidden ties and correspondences between the diverse phenomena – which nevertheless belong to the same communicative space. This approach, common in art history, can help one to formulate hypotheses that clarify the relationship between the form, function and content of the works under consideration.

The starting point for this interpretation will be a comparison of the external appearance of Stalinist neo-classicist buildings, with the standard architecture of late functionalism, in contrast to which the style of the former was defined. On the one hand, there is an abstract sculptural form with no vertical or horizontal articulation – an almost incorporeal "skin" enveloping the internal structure. On the other hand, there is a heavy "cloak" with moulding, lisenas or pilasters, all manner of relief applications, and a silhouette picturesquely topped with gables or parapets. I use the designations "skin" and "cloak" deliberately. A simple comparison of two different ways in which the façade "hides" the building evokes an interesting association that resonates with the architectural thought of the 20th century.

Adolf Loos, for one, liked to compare the modern residential building to a well-fitting suit. In an article written in 1909, he asked: "Aren't you struck by the remarkable correspondence between the human exterior and the exterior of buildings?"[2] In his opinion, a building should be as dignified, discreet, and timeless as a black suit.[3] If the functionalist building recalls the dress suit of western civilisation, the ostentatious façade of Stalinist neo-classicism resembles the ceremonial military uniform. The simple and restrained suit, which differs from thousands of others only in nuances of cut, colour and material, is a striking contrast to the richly decorated and colourful uniform. The difference does not lie only in the suppression of any external representation in the suit, and, by contrast, the demonstration of outlandishness in the uniform. The difference between the two forms of dress is also structural, and can be described using the terminology of architectural theory. The military uniform is made in a "tectonic" manner: the marks of rank, the epaulettes, piping, trouser stripes, belts, even the pockets are sewn or otherwise affixed to a base, and thus form a kind of frame that expresses the "statics" of the garment. In terms of most of the decoration, one can distinguish "structural" features (trouser stripes and piping) from "filling" (epaulettes and badges). Civilian dress, by contrast, is "stereotomic" – made from a single material, and with its openings subsequently "hollowed out".[4]

Not too long ago, Mark Wigley used the comparison of architectural works and clothing as the starting point for his perceptive reflections on modern architecture. He analysed the white walls of functionalist buildings within the context of the psychosexual economy of fashion and clothing design.[5] This sort of connection has a long tradition in modern art theory. Leon Battista Alberti made use of it in his theories, as did Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.[6] The similarity between buildings and attire became a theme of architectural theory thanks in particular to Gottfried Semper and his "theory of clothing".[7] The Semper paradigm was applied to modern architecture by Loos, whose reflections set this interpretation off

Fig. 3. Anonymous, political poster I will be an exemplary soldier!*, c. 1951. Source: Power of Images, Images of Power. The Political Poster and Propaganda, Praha, 2005*

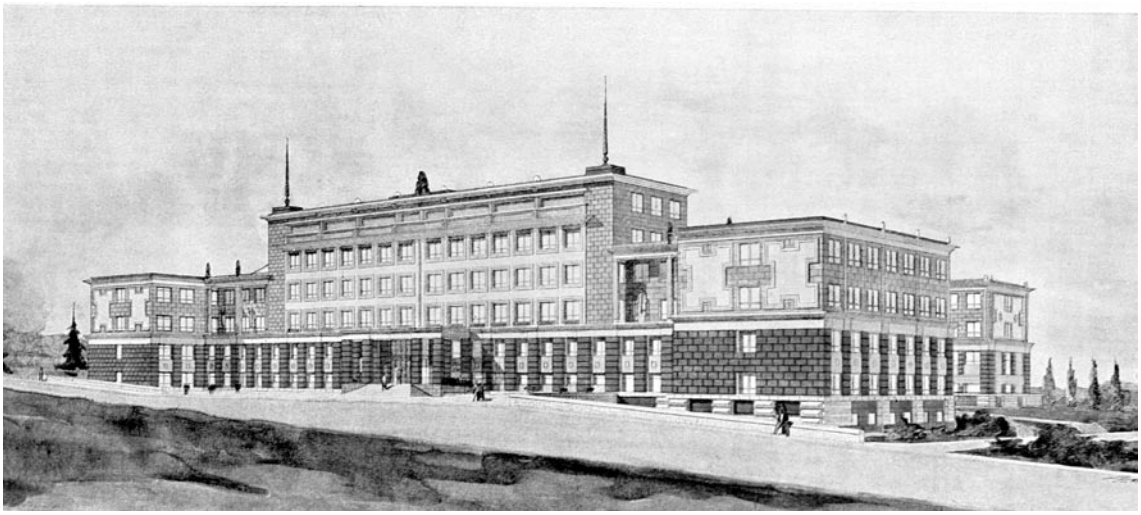

Fig. 4. Jiří Kroha and collective, Design for the Medical Faculty in Olomouc, 1951. Courtesy: Ústav dějin umění AV ČR Praha

along a certain train of thought. Goods made by skilled tailors showed the style of the 20th century in its pure form, and thus became a model for architects. These sorts of buildings and clothes were the prerogative of democracy. By contrast, the uniform was an expression of social and professional differences, and was therefore to be used only while on duty. According to Loos, "the feeling of subjection and devotion to something external to themselves is heightened among soldiers in colourful uniforms glittering with gold".[8] Loos mentioned Afghanistan as a regime that valued the pomp of uniforms more than the republican seriousness of black suits. Had he shared such reflections three decades on, he could have noted Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Soviet Union, instead of this backward Asian country.

A working hypothesis in the spirit of Loos' maxims could be described as follows: the sovereign position of tectonics in the architecture of socialist realism is, like the fondness for uniforms, a symptom of the suppression of democratic freedoms under the conditions of Stalinist rule. And, like the parading military units in their uniforms, these architectural works were put to the service of political propaganda.

The uniform is one of the symbols of totalitarianism. Political systems founded on one-party rule adopted it as an external sign, from military dictatorships – in the same way that they adopted the leadership principle as an instrument of organisation. Images in the collective memory of these regimes during the last century include military parades in Red Square, Nazi Party rallies in Nuremberg and Munich, portraits of Hitler and Stalin in military uniform. As a symbol, the ceremonial uniform is not necessarily connected with wartime events – it rather reveals the character of a regime that relies on the machinery of terror and propaganda. Hannah Arendt observed that the designation of uniforms for the paramilitary units of the Nazi Party was a "clear indication of the abolition of civilian standards and morals".[9] The uniforms and military attributes were intended to emphasise the martial character of the movement – the ideal fulfilment of which was the mentality of the "political soldier". The external forms which were borrowed from the Prussian military tradition thereby served to discipline and mobilise the masses. Dressed in his uniform, the individual gave up independent decision-making, and all sense of individuality. "Man lost his face. He became part of the mass, a quantitative factor of the collective psyche".[10]

Likewise in the Soviet Union and its satellites where the military uniform was an instrument of indoctrination whose goal was the unreserved acceptance of the ruling "political religion". In the people's democracy of Czechoslovakia, the uniform became an instrument of political propaganda shortly after Alexej Čepička was appointed Minister of Defence.

Čepička was the son-in-law of party boss and first "worker president" Klement Gottwald. His task was to transform the Czechoslovak army along the lines of the Soviet model. According to the new uniform code issued on December 6, 1950, the cut of the uniform, ensign of rank, and troop designating badge conformed to those used by the allied forces.[11] The officers' gold and silver epaulettes symbolised the army's new position in society, which assigned itself the task of strengthening its military forces. Service in the armed forces acquired a new meaning: "The army should perfect the political and moral education of the young people entrusted to it by the republic".[12] Within this system, the uniform necessarily reinforced discipline – and communist propaganda did nothing to hide this fact. The blending of military and civilian forms of expression was intended to prove the close connection between the working people and their army. The growing prestige of the army was also indicated by the penchant of top political leaders for military uniforms. The unique role of the uniform in the aestheticisation of power and mobilisation of the masses was regularly manifested in rituals such as the military parades that were held on the anniversaries of the Liberation.

Descriptions of military parades in Czechoslovakia include a figurative expression that would appear to refer to monumental architectural forms: "Army units like motionless ramparts … a majestic picture of steely beauty, granite decisiveness, virile strength".[13] Similarly, the definition of a German "political soldier" assumed that the propagators of National Socialism would have qualities equally suited to describe classical monuments: their "internal form" was to be "uniform, ordered, eternal, calm, serious, simple, firm, authentic". The list of desired qualities even included the strictly tectonic "rectangularity of body and soul".[14] By contrast, socialist architecture was supposed to be "exhilarating, militant, monumental"[15] and furnished with "signs of heroism".[16] Its anticipated effect was exactly the same as the anticipated effect of the parades. While in the working people it would allegedly evoke "powerful feelings of pride, resilience, determination and combative optimism, the enemy, by contrast, is dismayed by the sight of this architecture, crushed and convinced of his own existential, desperately concealed inferiority".[17]

Socialist architecture was intended to decorate power, just as the military parades were supposed to stir up the masses, enhance their self-confidence, and fuel their militancy. Official propaganda therefore attributed to it military virtues such as virility, strength and discipline, while it described the allegedly decadent building culture of the west as formless, desolate, even dead. Architect Oldřich Starý, whose views were informed by a study of Stalin's writings on linguistics, stated that "architecture must encourage the typical virtues of the new socialist man: virility, gravity, courage, confidence, simplicity, humility, truthfulness and honour".[18] To fulfil these tasks one could not merely exploit the expressive potential of works of sculpture and painting integrated in an architectural framework, or inherent in the usual symbolic emblems and allegories. The Stalinist ideologues aimed to activate the communicative power of architecture itself. According to them, the social zeal of the era of socialist building would be conveyed primarily by the clear architectural order of those structures that reflected the essential qualities of the new social system, in contrast to the chaos of capitalist society. Order of

Fig. 5. Jiří Kroha and collective, Design for the Institute of Chemical Technology in Pardubice, model, 1952. Photo courtesy: Ústav dějin umění AV ČR Praha

course meant the integrated system of the composition of classicist architecture. According to architect Jiří Kroha, the task of socialist architects was to overcome mass, and its "dead, naturalistic qualities". In doing so, they would achieve the architectural forms that embodied the desired intellectual message "through an artistic conception of tectonic-structural features".[19] The emphasis was not on rendering building structures visible in a poetic manner, but rather on the much more conventional and essentially scenographical "enlivening" of façades by means of vertical articulation. The façades were supposed to sweep upward in an imposing manner. Stalinist architects thus made use of a "spontaneous" (Rudolf Arnheim) or "natural" (Karsten Harries) symbolism, which was buried deep in the human psyche and did not require the authority of convention or of explanatory texts.[20] Architecture animated pre-conscious ideas, in particular the emotional potential of the vertical, which since time immemorial "underscores hierarchy, isolation, ambition and competition".[21] Only the better-educated servants of the regime, including Kroha and Starý, consciously drew on Semper's theory of "direction" as a quality of beauty.[22]

It is clear that totalitarian regimes regarded tectonic, geometrically arranged building forms as embodiments of discipline and mobilisation, like military parades and ceremonial uniforms. For them, classicism was not only an aesthetic, but also, in the words of Georg Simmel, an "absolute human and instructional ideal".[23] In the new architecture, as in the "scientifically" directed society, there was no place for subjectivism, or boisterousness of any sort. The task, therefore, of every Czech and Slovak architect was "to fight for the widespread knowledge of classicist principles".[24] But it is possible that the similarity between the "heroic" and the "martial" forms runs even deeper. The order, hierarchy, and formal organisation of classicist architecture originate in the proportions of the human body. Since the time of Alberti and Filarete, however, this structural style has referred not to a neutral gender, but rather to the male figure. The male body, situated at the "center of the unconscious of architectural rules and configurations"[25], and the military symbolism

Fig. 6. Boris Jelčaninov, Tenement house in Ostrava-Poruba, 1952-1955. Photo courtesy: Archiv města Ostravy

depicted on the façades, enhanced the impact of totalitarian architecture via a whole range of connotations from the sphere of sexual fantasy. Symbolic forms intended to mobilise the masses could awaken those libidinous powers, which, according to Sigmund Freud, unified artificial mass formations such as the army.[26] With the aid of uniforms, totalitarian political sorcery was able to improve the asexual figures of its leaders, to lend them an aura of virility and chivalry. Erotic kitsch, embodied by naked warriors and their equally resolute female counterparts, was an integral component of fascist and communist state art.[27]

I have attempted hereby to prove that the ostentation of military uniforms and totalitarian architecture may have something more in common than a historical context. Undoubtedly, the common denominator of both phenomena is their political function – the expressly formulated task of educating the broad masses. In an intellectual system wherein "struggle" was synonymous with "progress", the entire culture was based on militancy.

Notes

[1] Works dealing with socialist realist architecture in Czechoslovakia include the following: Radomíra Sedláková (ed.), *Sorela: Česká architektura padesátých let* (*Sorela: Czech Architecture of the Fifties)*, Prague: Národní galerie, 1994; Vladimír Šlapeta, 'Ingenieure der Menschenseelen: Der Niedergang der tschechischen Architektur 1945-1960', in: *Bauwelt*, no. 40, 1995, pp. 2311-2315; Pavel Halík, 'Ideologická architektura' ('Ideological Architecture'), in: *Umění*, no. 44, 1996, pp. 438-460; Jindřich Vybíral, 'The Beacons of Revolutionary Ideas: Sorela as Historicism and Rhetoric', in: *Centropa*, no. 1, 2001, pp. 95-100.

[2] Adolf Loos, *Trotzdem*, Innsbruck: Brenner-Verlag, 1931, p. 106.

[3] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

[4] Gottfried Semper introduced the distinction between "tectonics" and "stereotomy". Cf. Kenneth Frampton, 'Rappel à l'ordre, the Case for the Tectonic', in: Kate Nesbitt (ed.), *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996, pp. 516-528. Kenneth Frampton, *Grundlagen der Architektur: Studien zur Kultur des Tektonischen*, Munich and Stuttgart: Oktagon, 1993.

[5] Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 2001.

[6] Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Ästhetik*, vol. 2, Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1965, p. 129. Günter Bandmann, 'Ikonologie der Architektur', in: Martin Warnke (ed.), *Politische Architektur in Europa vom Mittelalter bis heute: Repräsentation und Gemeinschaft*, Cologne: DuMont, 1984, pp. 19-71, see p. 31.

[7] Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder Praktische Aesthetik. I. Die textile Kunst*, Frankfurt a. M., 1860. Cf. Harry F. Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996, pp. 290-302.

[8] Adolf Loos, 'Damenmode', in: Franz Glück (ed.), *Sämtliche Schriften*, Vienna and Munich: Herold, 1962, pp. 157-164, here p. 162.

[9] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1958, p. 370.

[10] Friedrich W. Doucet, *Im Banne des Mythos*, Esslingen: Bechtle Verlag, 1979, p. 259.

[11] Jan Vogeltanz, 'Die Uniformierung der tschechoslowakischen Armee 1951-1959', in: *Zeitschrift für Heereskunde*, 1994, pp. 152-155. Miroslav Hus, *Uniformy naší armády od roku 1918* (*The Uniforms of the Czech Army from 1918*), Plzeň: Západočeské muzeum, 1996, pp. 16-17.

[12] *Obrana lidu* (*Defence of the people* – hereafter OL), 1 January 1950.

[13] OL, 10 May 1952.

[14] Dietz Jaeger, *Leitgedanken zur Charakterbeschreibung des politisch-soldatischen Menschen*, Hamburg, 1941, p. 16.

[15] Vladimír Machonin and Josef Ulman, 'Několik poznámek k projektu národního umělce Jiřího Krohy' ('A Few Comments on Design by the National Artist Jiří Kroha'), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 9, 1950, pp. 102-103.

[16] 'Ideový referát 1. konference delegátů českých a slovenských architektů' ('Ideological Paper for the 1st Conference of Delegates of Czech and Slovak Architects'), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 12, 1954, p. 126.

[17] Jiří Kroha, 'Architektura zàjmem a majetkem pracujícího lidu' ('Architecture – the Concern and Property of the Working People'), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 10, 1951, pp. 215-250, see p. 216.

[18] Oldřich Starý, 'Poučení architektů ze článků J. V. Stalina Marxismus v jazykovědě' ('Lessons for Architects from J. V. Stalin's Articles 'Marxism in Linguistics"), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 9, 1950, pp. 299-309, see p. 301.

[19] Jiří Kroha, 'Odraz kosmopolitismu ve stavebnictví a v architektuře' ('The Reflection of Cosmopolitanism in the Building Industry and in Architecture'), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 11, 1952, pp. 4-14 and 104-124, see pp. 104 and 122.

[20] Rudolf Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1977, p. 210. Karsten Harries, *Ethical Function of Architecture*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997, p. 130.

[21] Arnheim, 1977, pp. 38-39.

[22] Semper, 1860, p. xxxviii. Cf. Mallgrave, 1996, p. 276.

[23] Georg Simmel, *Der Konflikt der modernen Kultur: Ein Vortrag*, Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1918.

[24] Karel Stráník, Zdeněk Lakomý and Milan Podzemný, 'Na cestu k socialistické architektuře' ('On the Way to Socialist Architecture'), in: *Architektura ČSR*, no. 10, 1951, pp. 202-206, see p. 206.

[25] Diana I. Agrest, 'Architecture from Without: Body, Logic, and Sex', in: Kate Nesbitt, 1996, pp. 542-553, see p. 543.

[26] Sigmund Freud, 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 6, Leipzig, Vienna and Zurich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1925, pp. 261-349, here pp. 291-293.
[27] Hans Bisanz, 'Kitsch besonderer Art: Missglückte Idealisierungen in der NS-Kunst und im Sozialistischen Realismus', in: Jan Tabor (ed.), *Kunst und Diktatur: Architektur, Bildhauerei und Malerei in Österreich, Deutschland, Italien und der Sowjetunion 1922-1956*, Baden: Verlag Grasl, 1994, pp. 84-89.

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Disciplinos ir mobilizacijos architektūra: indėlis į stalininės epochos neoklasicizmo interpretaciją

Reikšminiai žodžiai: architektūra, stalininis, karinis, uniformos.

Santrauka

Šios interpretacijos išeities taškas yra metaforos, asociacijos ir daugiau ar mažiau atviros analogijos, atskleidžiančios pastatus siejančias slaptas sąsajas, o taip pat nematomus laikotarpio kultūros aspektus. Straipsnyje lyginama stalininių neoklasicistinių pastatų išvaizda su funkcionalistine architektūra. Jei stereotipinis modernus pastatas primena Vakarų civilizacijos kostiumą, tai tektoniškas stalininio klasicizmo fasadas – karinio parado uniformą. Abi galios puošmenos padėjo žadinti mases, didinti jų pasitikėjimą savimi ir provokuoti norą kovoti. Abu reiškiniai rėmėsi natūraliu simbolizmu, slypinčiu žmogaus psichikos gelmėse; psichikai nereikia konvencionalaus autoriteto ar raštiško paaiškinimo. Antikinių architektūros orderių taisyklingumas ir dalių pajungimas visumai reiškė dominuojančios valstybės galios tvarką. Neoklasicistinė architektūra įkūnijo komunistinio režimo vertybes: heroizmą, drąsą, tvirtybę, asketizmą, discipliną ir paklusnumą.

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Assailing the Monolith: Popular Responses to the 1952 All-Union Art Exhibition

Key words: Aleksandr Gerasimov, Aleksandr Laktionov, Fedor Reshetnikov, socialist realism, Iosif Stalin, visitors' book.

There has been a shift in recent scholarship away from the notion of Soviet art and culture as a monolithic entity that was imposed on the unsuspecting masses by a firm and unyielding regime.[1] It would be more accurate to describe socialist realism as an ill-defined concept that evolved through a protracted process of debate, interpretation and manipulation, over the decades following Stalin's first use of the term in 1933. Official dictates on art and culture were often inhibited by a prevalence of empty rhetoric and sloganeering that offered its producers, critics and audience little concrete guidance. Thus this "method not a style" was to be "national in form, socialist in content", and aimed to show "reality in its revolutionary development" for the purpose of "the ideological refashioning and education of the working people in the spirit of socialism". Definitions were marked by a wealth of signifiers with a spectacular absence of signification, as, for example, in a statement from the president of the Academy of the Arts, Aleksandr Gerasimov:

> "Our great epoch has placed an honourable and difficult task on our artists: to imprint the events of our day in simple, majestic, stirring forms, to create tremendous examples of the valour of Soviet people, their great patriotism and steadfast love for the motherland".[2]

As in the overblown prose of socialist realist literature, every noun is adorned with an extravagant adjective and every verb is emphasised aggressively with a complementary adverb.[3] In its peculiar ability to formulate elaborately descriptive language into labyrinthine but ultimately meaningless sentences, Soviet rhetoric could often leave its bewildered recipient little the wiser.

Nonetheless, I have chosen to use the term "monolith" here in reference to the perceived monolithic nature of Soviet art amongst those who participated in its production and reception. I will argue here that the Soviet masses were empowered to express a kind of ownership of the socialist realist project, which they interpreted as a vehicle for their enlightenment and enjoyment, something akin to the American entertainment industry of the 1940s and 1950s. One might expect a Soviet art exhibition to have functioned as an exercise in educating and moulding a homogenous public's tastes, but in fact the reverse seems to be true. At least for those visitors who chose to contribute to the visitors' books, a Soviet art exhibition was a chance to assert their personal opinion as a discerning consumer of socialist realist art. If, as Clement Greenberg has argued, one of the goals of socialist realism was to flatter and placate the masses[4], it enjoyed limited success – the reality was often divisive and provocative.

I am focusing on the 1952 All-Union Exhibition as a case study for two reasons. Firstly, this exhibition provides a fascinating example simply because the visitors' comments have been preserved in a coherent and intact form. Nine bound volumes, their cov-

ers emblazoned with a golden image of Lenin and Stalin, reveal a passionate dialogue on art and taste, as irate exhibition-goers were stirred to assert their own opinions, dispute the opinions of others, cross out entries, underline words and phrases, scribble abuse in the margins, even to write poetry or rip out pages.[5] In her pioneering work on Soviet era visitors' books, Susan Reid has described them as "a kind of virtual public sphere, something like an internet message board"[6], a place where people can express honest opinions from a perceived position of safe anonymity. The candid nature of many comments at the 1952 All-Union Exhibition suggests (perhaps surprisingly) that the visitors' books were largely left unattended and unmonitored, which makes them a valuable and unusual resource in the context of Soviet research. As one unhappy punter wrote:

> "It's a great shame! The most interesting thing at the exhibition is the visitors' book; here is all life, arguments and battles of opinion. And what about the paintings? Flatness, varnishing, serenity or ill-proportioned posters. Shame on you, comrade-artists!"[7]

Secondly, the exhibition was significant because 1952 was a watershed year in the course of Soviet art. The so-called "mini-Thaw" of the post-war years had ended, to be replaced by an iron-fisted cultural policy that limited creative freedom as never before. The late Andrei Zhdanov had, through a series of draconian dictates on literature, music and theatre, re-instigated a 1930s-styled culture of paranoia in the art establishment. A pervasive fear of persecution obliged artists and critics to steer a safe and conservative path that eschewed European influences such as impressionism and Cezanne-ism, which were denounced as cosmopolitanism or formalism by the small group of artist and critic-oligarchs who held sway at the Academy of the Arts.[8] Likewise, theme and subject matter were constrained by the still prevalent "theory of conflictlessness" (*bezkonfliktnost'*), which stipulated that the art of a healthy socialist society could depict only the positive aspects of life.[9] The majority of artists working in official channels sought refuge in "safe" works depicting labour themes, genre scenes, or works of the leader cult, which had reached a fervent peak of idolisation in the post-war era. It was in the early 1950s that the Soviet art establishment came closest to resembling the monolithic stereotype promoted by some Western commentators.[10]

And yet, simultaneously, the first signs of change were already making themselves apparent, as a new generation of creative intelligentsia started to make its voice heard. Whether it was a backlash against the stifled creativity of the period, or a perception that the right to question had been "earned" through the ordeal of War, dissent was entering the public sphere, albeit in a cautious and limited way. For some writers and art critics, including Ilya Ehrenburg, Vladimir Kostin, and Nina Dmitrieva – all of whom had been subjected to repression for their outspoken views in the late 1940s – it was time to start reassessing socialist realism, and to move away from the stale conflictlessness and "varnishing of reality" (*lakirovanie destvitel'nosti*) that had come to represent the norm. A belief was emerging that Soviet art could credit its viewers with more substantial themes, and that the contemporary audience had grown weary of glossy sentimentality and official bombast. Their reviews and responses to the 1952 All-Union Exhibition were daring and antagonistic, and their words no doubt emboldened the public to express their own opinions with more candour.[11]

Fig. 1. Fedor Reshetnikov, Low Marks Again! (Opiat dvoika!), 1952, oil on canvas, 101 x 93 cm. Courtesy: State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

The first few pages of the first visitors' book were graced by a series of neatly written and polite comments which praised the general level of the exhibit, and paid tribute to the continuing high standard of Soviet art and sculpture. But critical and abusive comments began to appear by page seven, less than one week into the exhibition. The heated and often humorous comments were interrupted only by several pages of respectful and sombre entries at the start of volume seven. On March 5, 1953, midway through the exhibition, Soviet society was shaken to its very foundations by the unanticipated death of Stalin, an event that stimulated an unprecedented outpouring of grief. For several days the question of art was eclipsed by widespread bereavement as exhibition-goers were moved to express their heartfelt sorrow at the passing of their leader. The popular mantra, "Stalin is life, and life has no end!" was repeated solemnly in numerous entries.[12] But the period of mourning did not last long, and by March 12 the arguments had reignited, and continued to rage until the closure of the exhibition in May.

Many of the critical comments were directed at the large-scale, heavily varnished parade paintings and works of the leader cult that had come to dominate Soviet art exhibitions over the previous two decades. In particular the grandiose paintings by established academic socialist realists like Aleksandr Gerasimov and Boris Ioganson were attacked by some visitors. One wrote:

> "How nice – the students are overtaking their teachers. It's no bad thing that the worst paintings at this exhibition are those of Gerasimov and Sokolov-Skalia … These kinds of paintings only make it into the exhibition because of a complete absence of criticism and self-criticism".[13]

Elsewhere, a group of schoolchildren wrote a rehearsed phrase praising a poorly executed painting of Stalin with his mother:

> "*I. V. Stalin Visiting His Mother* is an amazing painting. The feeling of it is so well depicted! There is so much happiness and light".[14]

An unsympathetic response was scrawled underneath by a more cynical visitor: "Poor kids! You have been deceived." One mysterious visitor, who signed himself only as "V. S.", wrote over 100 disparaging and often comical short verses throughout the course of book eight. The following is a comment on Boris Ioganson's *Our Wise Leader, Teacher of the Path*:

> "You've put a huge effort into your canvas
> The subject is significant and momentous,
> But considering your great talent,
> We are waiting for a successful variant!"[15]

But it was a pair of comparable genre paintings of intimate domestic scenes – *Low Marks Again!* by Fedor Reshetnikov [fig. 1], and *Into a New Flat* by Aleksandr Laktionov [fig. 2] – that attracted the vast majority of comment and debate throughout the volumes of visitors' books. Reshetnikov's small, brushy canvas was hailed almost uniformly as the "masterpiece" (*iziuminka*) of the exhibition, and was praised for its welcome dose of comic relief. The work depicts a rosy-cheeked, tousle-haired schoolboy who has received another *dvoika* at school. His mother looks on in loving disappointment, while his high-achieving sister smugly reads a book, and his little brother, too young to understand, grins at his sibling's discomfort. An iceskate pokes guiltily out of the boy's satchel, while the family dog, unaware of his master's discomfort, jumps up, eager to play. Laktionov's painting, on the other hand, was the subject of intense dispute: a large, detailed, heavily varnished work depicting a "typical" Soviet family of the post-war generation in the process of moving into a beautiful, spacious new Moscow flat, it was admired by a minority of visitors for its striking verisimilitude and technical mastery, and considered by others to be a work of "vulgar, tasteless naturalism".[16]

"Laktionov's work is philistinism, really nasty philistinism"[17], is how P. Vakhitova described *Into a New Flat*, in January 1953 – her comment was underlined for extra emphasis. Yet others disagreed, and instead expressed their appreciation of the artist and his latest work. Some pages degenerated into heated disputes as visitors were compelled to reply to previous comments, and to assert their own opinions about the painting. A handful of contributors

were moved to fill several pages with dense handwriting in a tribute to their favourite artist, perhaps feeling the need to fight his corner in the face of the harsh and open criticism that was in evidence elsewhere. One of these devoted fans begins a three page monologue on the work with the following words:

> "I really can't understand why many of the visitors have cursed the artist Laktionov in the previous visitors' books. It seems that the harder he tries, the more they curse him. In his new painting, *Into a New Flat*, Laktionov has surpassed himself. Laktionov remains sure of himself, and Laktionov remains Laktionov. His painting *Into a New Flat* seems to me a miracle – a genuine miracle".[18]

But for many other visitors, Laktionov's painting was anything but miraculous. Some complained that the colour, finish, and intense detail of the canvas brought to mind retouched photographs from the pages of glossy magazines such as *Ogonek*, and accused the artist of photographism and naturalism. One flippant comment read as follows:

> "The colour photography co-operative needs a new photographer – would the retoucher Comrade Laktionov urgently apply. You can find the address at the information bureau. Appallingly executed work".[19]

Others felt that the uniform level of detail with which Laktionov had rendered not only his protagonists but also his still life, as well as the background and corners of his canvas, was detrimental to the laudable theme of the work. A pair of artists wrote:

> "Outrageous! When did we start showing such anti-artistic things at our exhibitions? It is breeding bad taste among young people. I'm writing about Laktionov's painting *Into a New Flat*, where everything from the new parquet flooring to the suitcase, the radio, the flowers, and the figures of the people are drawn in the same way!"[20]

"Taste" (*vkus*) was a word that recurred time and time again throughout the visitors' books, especially in reference to Laktionov's naturalistic style of painting. A number of exhibition-goers felt that the painting did not conform to their concept of tasteful socialist realist art, and that it might exert a harmful influence on other visitors:

> "A lot is being said about Laktionov's painting, but really it would be better not to have exhibited it – the benefits would be greater: there would be less discussion and there would be no items of bad taste at the exhibition. It's not art, it's hackwork; hackwork and a copy of painting. And it has been drawn, in all probability, with a brush with only one hair (which probably came from the head of the "artist")".[21]

A group of students argued:

> "Laktionov!??? Just because you have bad taste doesn't mean you should inflict it on those around you!"[22]

The repeated use of this word is perhaps surprising in the context of Soviet art, in which ideology was supposed to outweigh such subjective considerations. It implies an audience that was responding not only to the political dimension of the works on display but also to their aesthetic merits, and that was defining and differentiating itself based on these factors.

If Laktionov's painting represented the controversy of the 1952 All-Union Exhibition, then Reshetnikov's canvas was, without doubt, a runaway success. Throughout the exhibition visitors' books, comment after comment pays tribute to this painting, and to its touching and humorous subject matter:

> "Every exhibition has its masterpiece. This time the masterpiece is Reshetnikov's *Low Marks Again!* Out of all the genre paintings this is the brightest. The faces are lifelike. It's possible to stand at the painting for hours, and laugh from your soul".[23]

And of course one remark repeats itself with predictable regularity: "I would give *Low Marks Again!* full marks".[24] Reshetnikov's small and unassuming genre painting was in many ways the antithesis of the pompous brigade work that had so dominated the proceedings in previous years.

Fig. 2. Aleksandr Laktionov, Into a New Flat (V novuiu kvartiru), 1952, oil on canvas, 130 x 113 cm. Courtesy: Donetsk Regional Art Gallery, Donetsk

There are a number of superficial similarities between *Low Marks Again!* and *Into a New Flat*. Both artists have attempted to depict a typical Soviet family of the post-war generation: a working-class single mother with several children. Both mothers are dressed in headscarves and patterned clothing reminiscent of traditional peasant attire, and both sets of children are dressed smartly in modern shirts and blouses. Yet in Laktionov's painting the family members are statuesque in pose and expression. Like the varnished finish of the painting, their faces are glazed and inexpressive, and their stances are artificial and affected. Their faces carry little active characterisation or narrative substance – Who are they? Why have they been awarded a new flat? In contrast to Laktionov's near-photographic representation, Reshetnikov's family is marked by minor imperfections and idiosyncrasies: the naughty schoolboy's hair is ruffled and his nose is red and shiny from the cold, the mother's brow is wrinkled and she is wringing her hands in concern. These small concessions to the real world distinguish Reshetnikov's painting from the somewhat disturbing perfection of Laktionov's work. As a satisfied visitor noted:

> "The main thing that struck us about [*Low Marks Again!*] was the expressive faces of the characters in the painting. The painting is startling in its truthful portrayal of this small everyday scene".[25]

A recurring motif in Soviet art criticism of the early 1950s was a demand for representations of "living people" (*zhivye liudi*), perhaps in response to Stalin's own words at a 1933 art exhibition, which was the only time he was ever known to comment directly on a work of fine art.[26] Indeed, these very words recur three times in *Iskusstvo's* review of *Low Marks Again!*[27] Unlike Laktionov's stiffly realistic family, Reshetnikov's was lifelike, appealing, and familiar.

Above all else, the painting represented a welcome break from the one-dimensional harmony that had defined Soviet art during the previous decades. Reshetnikov's canvas was one of the first paintings of Soviet socialist realism to depict a scene of failure, no matter how trivial or temporary, and in this sense was something of a groundbreaking work. *Iskusstvo* declared him to be "a master of psychological characterisation, and a great director"[28], and a number of exhibition visitors were quick to agree:

> "*Low Marks Again!* Goodness, what a surprising, new thing it is. Two of the faces – the young boy and the dog – how sweet they are. The greatest numbers of people gather around this painting. There are no dry pedagogues here. Here there is life, here even a sad event contains humour – and that gives us great strength".[29]

It is difficult now to imagine the sense of release that this painting might have engendered upon its exhibition in 1952. To a Western observer the dramatic impact of the scene appears somewhat crude and couched in sentimental Soviet imagery, but to the contemporary Soviet viewer this was a genuine innovation, and a rare opportunity to laugh out loud amongst the more solemn displayed works of art. In spite of its relatively small scale, subdued palette, and brushy execution, the painting was hailed as a great success, with many visitors calling for the artist to be awarded the prestigious Stalin Prize – little understanding that there was hardly any likelihood

that their views would be taken into consideration in the distinctly undemocratic process of awarding these prestigious prizes.[30]

Throughout the volumes of visitors' books one gets the sense that the Soviet public hoped and believed that its opinions would be acknowledged and acted upon, with some people even leaving an address in anticipation of a reply. One helpful visitor contributed the following:

> "Once the exhibition has ended it would be sensible to bring the critical comments of the visitors (except, of course, the stupid and loutish ones) to the attention of the artists to which they relate. This would have a definite benefit".[31]

It is not easy to evaluate how seriously the comments from these books were taken by the exhibition organisers. In the case of the 1952 exhibition, most of the comments were compiled in typewritten notes for further analysis, but there is little evidence to suggest that they had any direct impact on future exhibition policy. It is clear that some art organisations were at least aware of comments and general opinions expressed in these books. Artists and critics from the Moscow Artists' Union made frequent references to the visitors' books in their evaluation of the exhibition, at times even quoting directly from the comments. Likewise, certain artists, including Laktionov, claim to have read the visitors' books in order to gauge the popular reception of their work.

Whatever their concrete influence may have been, these books provided a welcome opportunity for Soviet citizens to express an opinion in a public forum, and to read and respond to the opinions of others. The institution of the visitors' book was treated as a valuable part of the exhibition, and was itself the subject of heated debate. One visitor wrote:

> "Not one minute goes by when the visitors' book is lying idle on the table, it is being continually passed from hand to hand. Because of this, it is impossible for people to write in it, since it is always occupied by those who want to simply read it. Moreover, not only is it impossible for everyone to write in the book, but if someone succeeds in glancing at it out of curiosity about what others have written, they can consider themselves lucky".[32]

Contributors expressed a sense of ownership of the books, and were angered when filled volumes were removed and replaced with a new one:

> "Who is hiding the completed visitors' books? It is madness! What is the point? It certainly doesn't help our fine art … The critics don't like it, the artists don't like it, and the administration doesn't like it! I demand that the comments of the visitors not be hidden!!"[33]

It is likely that the exhibition organisers did indeed wish to conceal the negative comments of some visitors, and to encourage a more measured response in each fresh volume. By 1957 the convention of the visitors' book had been replaced by ballot-style slips of paper, which were deposited into a sealed box, thereby precluding the possibility to read and comment on the opinions of others, presumably in an effort to prevent the same passionate arguments and dialogues that arose in 1952.

The differences of opinion and dissent that were in evidence at the 1952 All-Union Exhibition paint a picture of a public that did not, in the field of fine art, simply submit to the Party line. The Soviet citizen was by no means cowed by the monumental canvases that constitute a stereotype of socialist realist art, and in many cases scorned such works in favour of more intimate treatments of everyday life. Whether by crossing out comments, scribbling abuse, or neatly writing pages of reflections, the Soviet exhibition-goer was expressing a desire to be listened to, and asserting his or her status as a cultured individual with personal taste. Most importantly, many of those who wrote in these books *expected* their comments to be read, taken seriously, and acted upon by the exhibition organisers, artists, and even policy makers. Many of the contributors to the 1952 exhibition visitors' books felt that it was their duty as Soviet citizens to contribute to the debate on art and taste, and to mould the monolith of socialist realism to their own demands as its target audience. Far from existing as a suppressive and

unyielding art form that was simply accepted by a compliant audience, it in fact stimulated passionate and diverse responses. In creating an art form for the masses, the policy-makers of the Soviet art establishment made every citizen an art critic.

Notes

[1] A number of works have emerged in recent years in which socialist realism is treated as an aesthetic category in its own right, with an acknowledgement that its artists produced diverse and significant works of art that demand serious analysis above and beyond their political dimension. See for example Irina Gutkin, *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic 1890–1934*, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1999; and Evgenii Dobrenko, *Sotsrealisticheskii kanon*, Sankt Peterburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2000. See also two collections of essays from recent exhibitions of Soviet art: Miranda Banks (ed.), *The Aesthetic Arsenal: Socialist Realism under Stalin*, New York: Institute for Contemporary Art, 1993; and Boris Grois and Max Hollein (eds.), *Dream Factory Communism: The Visual Culture of the Stalin Era*, Frankfurt: Schirn Kunsthalle, 2003.

[2] Aleksandr Gerasimov, 'Put' sovetskogo khudozhnika' ('Path of the Soviet Artist'), in: Aleksandr Gerasimov, *Za sotsialisticheskii realism: sbornik statei i dokladov* (*For Socialist Realism: Collection of Articles and Statements*), Moscow: AKhSSSR, 1952, p. 75.

[3] Gutkin, 1999, pp. 64-80.

[4] Clement Greenberg, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', in: *Partisan Review*, VI no. 6, 1939, reprinted in Charles Harrison and Paul Woods (eds.), *Art in Theory 1900–1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993, p. 539.

[5] *Knigi otzyvov Vsesoiuznoi vystavki 1952 goda* (*Visitors' Books from the 1952 All-Union Exhibition*), Gosudarstvennaia Tret'iakovskaia Galereia (State Tretyakov Gallery, hereafter GTG), F-8.II., O-2, D-6-17.

[6] Susan Reid, 'In the Name of the People: The Manege Affair Revisited', in: *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 6, no. 4, 2005, p. 680. See also Susan Reid, 'Socialist Realism in the Stalinist Terror: The *Industry of Socialism* Art Exhibition, 1935–41', in: *Russian Review*, vol. 60, no. 2, 2001. Jan Plamper has considered the history of the institution of visitors' books in the Soviet Union and studied visitors' comments at exhibitions of the Stalin Cult. Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult in the Visual Arts, 1929–1953*, PhD dissertation, Berkeley: University of California, 2001, pp. 170-226.

[7] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-10, p. 18, dated 29/1/1953.

[8] For an account of the Zhdanov-era reconstruction of the art apparatus, and shift in rhetoric towards an emphasis on the Russian Realist School as the foundation for socialist realism, see Elizabeth Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art: The State and Society: The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, pp. 180-186.

[9] Matthew Cullerne Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting*, London: Yale University Press, 1998, p. 228.

[10] "Russia, as she eventually shakes off Khrushchevism no less than Stalinism and Leninism, will not remain troglodyte. She will yet re-enter the mainstream of man's creation and appreciation of the finer nuances of life and civilisation." Albert Parry, 'Are They Kul'turny?', in: *The Slavic and East European Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1957, p. 135. The article deals with the assimilation of classical art and literature into Soviet culture, and attributes this development to an envy of the West amongst the Soviet intelligentsia. Fifty years on, the article is more interesting as an example of Cold War mentality and its culture of mutual resentment and suspicion.

[11] See for example, Nina Dmitrieva, 'Vsesoyuznaya khudozhestvennaya vystavka 1952 goda: bytovaya zhivopis' ('The All-Union Exhibition 1952: Genre Painting'), in: *Iskusstvo*, no. 2, 1953, pp. 13-22; and Vladimir Kostin, 'O nekotorykh voprosov masterstva v zhivopisi' ('On Several Questions of Mastery in Painting'), in: *Iskusstvo*, no. 4, 1953, pp. 53-54.

[12] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-14, pp. 1-18. By way of example, a comment from p. 1 reads: "March 5 will be remembered by all working people as the most tragic day – a day marked by a heavy loss. Our people, who passionately love their dear leader, are feeling a great sorrow on his demise. There are no words that can express our compassionate grief." Dated 8/3/1953.

[13] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-7, p. 3.

[14] The comment is signed: "10th year schoolchildren from 146 School", GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, p. 14.

[15] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-16, p. 8.

[16] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-8, p. 11.

[17] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, p. 10.

[18] The comment is signed: "Alekseev", 26/1/53, GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, pp. 8-10.

[19] The comment has been crossed out in red pencil, and was not included in the typed notes from the visitors' book. GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-7, p. 6.

[20] The comment is signed: "artists x 2", GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, pp. 33-34.

[21] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, p. 17.

[22] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-11, p. 9.

[23] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-8, p. 19, signed: "students MGBI", 28/1/53.

[24] For one of many examples, see GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, p. 4.

[25] The comment has several signatures. GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-8, p. 10.

[26] Cullern Bown, 1998, p. 184.

[27] *Iskusstvo,* no. 1, 1953, p. 6.

[28] Ibid. The reviewer goes on to suggest: "The painting can be interpreted as a small novella about Soviet life, children and school", and declares it to be a major step forward for the artist.

[29] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-9, p. 20.

[30] Reshetnikov never did win the award for this painting, although he had won it previously, for a 1949 portrait of Stalin.

[31] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-16, p. 39.

[32] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-12, p. 3.

[33] GTG, F-8.II, O-2, D-12, p. 1.

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Šefildo universitetas

Ardant monolitą: liaudies reakcijos į 1952 m. Visasąjunginę dailės parodą

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Aleksandras Gerasimovas**,** Aleksandras Laktionovas**,** Fiodoras Rešetnikovas**,** socialistinis realizmas**,** Josifas Stalinas**,** lankytojų knyga.

Santrauka

„Kas atrenka darbus parodai? Jų pavardes reikia publikuoti, kad liaudis galėtų iš jų pareikalauti atsakomybės.“ (A. S. Lebedevas, Visasąjunginės dailės parodos lankytojas, 1953 m. sausio 5 d.).

1952 m. vykusi Visasąjunginė dailės paroda žymėjo sovietinio meno posūkį. Socialistinio realizmo doktrina beveik du dešimtmečius dominavo oficialiajame mene, o vado kultas buvo pasiekęs viršūnę. Neseniai įkurta SSSR Menų akademija su Partijos paskirta taryba diktatoriškai kontroliavo sovietinį meną, pradedant užsakymais ir parodomis, baigiant meno žurnalų redakcijų kontrole. Praktiškai tai reiškė, kad parodoje dominavo impozantiškos monumentalios drobės, brigadinė tapyba ir portretai, sukurti gerai žinomų privilegijuotų menininkų. Tačiau pagrindinis socialistinio realizmo architektas J. V. Stalinas neišgyveno iki tos kontraversiškos parodos pabaigos.

Parodos lankytojų knygos pateikia vertingų duomenų, atskleidžiančių nepasitenkinimą, kurį juto daugelis sovietinių piliečių žiūrėdami į eksponuojamus kūrinius. Devyniuose įrištuose tomuose, su Lenino ir Stalino atvaizdu ant viršelio, užfiksuotas tarp visokio plauko lankytojų vykęs turiningas ir aistringas dialogas: nuo šaltai išdėstytos atmintinai išmoktos retorikos iki atviro įžeidinėjimo ar nuoširdžių pagyrimų. Iš komentarų galima susidaryti apibendrintą sovietinio parodų lankytojo, kaip tvirtą nuomonę turinčio individo, vaizdą – tai priešingybė homogeniškai masei, kuria dažnai remiasi šiuolaikinė literatūra.

Straipsnio objektas – dvi drobės, sukėlusios karštas diskusijas parodos lankytojų knygose: Fiodoro Rešetnikovo *Vėl dvejetas!* ir Aleksandro Laktionovo *Į naują butą*. Rešetnikovo humoristinė buitinė scena buvo plačiai pagerbta kaip parodos šedevras, o Laktionovo ideologiškai korektiškas žanrinis paveikslas daugelio buvo pasmerktas kaip „vulgarus“ ir „beskonis“ iš mados išėjęs stalinizmo reliktas. Kilusi diskusija iškėlė svarbius klausimus apie visuomenės skonį ir valdžios kontroliuojamos meno sistemos vaidmenį. Ji žymėjo sovietinio meno vieno laikotarpio, kartu ir monolitinių galios struktūrų, kurios palaipsniui artimiausiu metu irs, pabaigą.

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A Communist Image of the Hussites: Representations and Analogies

Key words: Bohemia, church, religion, communist ideology, Communist Party, Czechoslovakia, Jan Hus, Hussites, idealism, monument, painting, romanticism, sculpture, socialist realism.

In 2005, Czech national television held a popular survey to select the greatest Czech historical or contemporary person. Among the top ten were three men from the Middle Ages: King Charles IV (in 1st place), the Hussite commander Jan Žižka (5th place), and the spiritual founder of the Hussite movement Jan Hus (7th place). From time immemorial, the Czechs have commonly recognised those figures who were connected with the Hussite movement, even though the entire movement and its representatives were subject to various historical interpretations, stressing different aspects of the uprising. This materialised not only in the ideological explanations of historians but also in the visual and other arts. The most marked interpretation of the Hussite movement was provided by Czech communist ideologists after the Second World War. I will focus, via a selection of artworks, on the specific issues they stressed in connection with the Hussite movement.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HUSSITES

The Hussite movement emerged in Bohemia in the first half of the 15th century in the form of an uprising directed against the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, and against social injustice. Its name is derived from Jan Hus (ca 1369-1415) – who sometimes appears as John Huss in English. He was a university scholar and a preacher who became an ardent critic of the Church, which at that time was still divided by the papal schism. Hus was inspired by the doctrine of John Wycliffe, and called for reformation of the venal Church in his sermons and lec-

Fig. 1. Jan Zázvorka, Jan Gillar, Monument to National Liberation, 1929-1932

Bohuslav Kafka, Jan Žižka at the Vítkov Hill, 1941, bronze, H - 900 cm. Photos by the author

Fig. 2. Josef Malejovský and Antonín Strnadel, Entrance door to the Vítkov monument, 1953-1958, bronze. Photo by the author

tures. He was excommunicated by Pope Alexander V in 1410, but did not stop preaching until summoned to defend and explain his teachings at a trial in Konstanz in 1414. Challenged by both Church and secular authorities, he was ultimately accused of heresy, and burned at the stake in 1415.

Riots and disturbances broke out in Bohemia following the death of Hus. The Hussites, who came from all strata of society, created military-political formations with bases in different Bohemian towns. Although their demands were not always unanimous, their common religious goals could be summarised as the freedom to preach, the return of the Church to a state of humility and poverty, equal laws for laity and clergy, and communion for all. The latter demand provided the Hussites with their primary symbol, the chalice.

1419 saw the ejection of several councillors through the windows of Prague Town Hall, with mobs in Prague attacking and robbing monasteries, churches, and the houses of German citizens.[1] The most prominent Hussite military leader, Jan Žižka (ca 1360-1424), successfully repulsed five foreign crusades against the Hussites. Originally a highway robber, at the age of approximately 60, Žižka became associated with the rebels. Half-blind most of his life, he lost his remaining eye four years before his death, but was nevertheless a highly capable warrior at the head of a Hussite peasant army.

The Hussites consisted of a number of diverse communities living mainly in southern Bohemia. A radical Hussite flank settled in the town of Tábor, where it formed a special commune based on joint ownership and human equality. As Thomas Fudge has pointed out, this group in fact lived according to the ideals of communism, and shared everything – including wives. Their utopian dream quickly dissolved, however, due to differences in the background of the community members, divergent interests that led to corruption, a loss of vision, and no communal production despite communal consumption.[2]

Internal tensions between the individual Hussite groups brought about the final disintegration of the Hussite cause, and to a fratricidal battle in Lipany

in 1434. Something of a compromise followed, whereby the Hussite Church and certain original demands of the Hussites were recognised. But King Sigismund, who had been exiled during the Hussite wars, returned to rule Bohemia.

INTERPRETATION AND RE-INTERPRETATION OF THE MOVEMENT

The Hussite movement has been so favoured throughout Czech history because of its interpretive adaptability. Nineteenth century national revivers mainly emphasised the Hussites' nationalist consciousness and struggle against their oppressive German rulers; scholars during the time of the first Czechoslovak Republic stressed their cosmopolitan nature and philosophical base; communists showed "the importance of the Hussite tradition in the class struggle of the people, and especially its function in the struggle of the working class, which the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia brought to victory".[3]

This Marxist vision by the communist interpreters of history promoted the Hussites as proto-communists; by the same token, post-Second World War Czech (and Slovak) society was depicted as having inherited Hussite traditions. The post-1948 communist rule was justified by the claim of an inevitable historical process which had started in the Middle Ages. Klement Gottwald, the first "working-class president" of Czechoslovakia, stated clearly in 1948: "We are building our people's state in the traditions of Tábor and of the national awakening"; and: "If our nation was again ever brought close to its most famous Hussite period – today is the day".[4]

THE HUSSITES IN THE ARTS

The 19th century national awakening produced a number of artworks commemorating the Hussites. Leaders and principal events in Hussite history became motifs for paintings and sculptures reminding the people of their great national history, and the independent mediaeval state. Admiration of the Hussites was carried into the 20th century, to the time of the first Czechoslovak Republic, when, for example, Jan Hus' propagated motto "Truth wins" was embroidered onto the presidential flag, where it has remained to this day. I should also note that several 19th and 20th century musical works, by, amongst others, Antonín Dvořák and Bedřich Smetana, were composed on Hussite themes.

In the 1950s, communist ideology did not rely solely on re-interpreting the Hussites in speeches or pamphlets, it also promoted the creation of literary works, movies, and artworks with a dogmatic message. Novels on Hussite themes by Alois Jirásek, one of the most prominent Czech writers of the late 19th and early 20th century, were adapted for films, and distributed internationally.

As I have already suggested, the 1950s' visual depiction of the Hussite movement was based on a long tradition of artworks portraying individual leaders and battles. A major project of the 1950s, connected with the Hussite tradition, was the completion of a monument on Vítkov Hill in Prague – the site of the first Hussite battle. The construction of a liberation monument, military museum, and archives had already started back in the 1920s, but was completed in the 1950s with a different concept, and the omission of certain unwanted aspects (e.g., the Czechoslovak legions) of the state's military history. It was also temporarily a mausoleum for the body of Klement Gottwald, the great defender of the Hussite tradition.

THE VÍTKOV MONUMENT

An 18-metre high monumental statue of Žižka on horseback stands in front of the main museum building [fig. 1]. The sculpture was designed by Bohuslav Kafka back in the 1930s, executed in 1941, and erected in its present location in 1950. I shall now focus on the door leading into the museum, which is decorated by a relief depicting the apotheosis of the Hussites, created by Josef Malejovský and Antonín Strnadel. Strongly influenced by historicism, Malejovský portrayed events from Hussite history and mythology alongside revolutionary achievements of the working people. Six episodes from the Hussite period occupy the left side of the door, and modern parallels adorn the right side [fig. 2]. The relief thereby functions as an epitome of the

Fig. 3. Karel Lidický, Jan Hus, 1954, bronze, H - 250 cm. Source: Jaroslav Rataj, Karel Lidický, Prague: Odeon, 1977, fig. 60

communist vision of the Hussites – it manifests the idea of the predestined implementation of Hussite revolutionary ideas in the events following the Second World War.

Seen in relief, the main feature generally emphasised in visual representations of the Hussites is the class struggle of the peasants against an unjust social division; their religious goals are, however, suppressed. Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878-1962), minister of education and arts after the Second World War, was an all-round scholar and one of the main proponents of the communist-Hussite tradition, who maintained that the religious role of the mediaeval Church should not be overestimated.[5] Instead, he emphasised the secular and economic role of the Church in society – an aspect that was detested by the common people. At the same time, the selfsame Zdeněk Nejedlý initiated the rebuilding of the Bethlehem Chapel – where Hus had first delivered his sermons. Motivated more by the reconstruction of nationhood and the "cradle of the Czech people's movement", the replica represented the contradictory and selective attitude of the communists regarding their national history.[6]

Returning to the door at Vítkov: the first relief, in adherence to the suppression of the religious motives behind the movement, shows Hus preaching out in the open rather than in a church. Hus' follower Jan Želivský, portrayed holding a chalice and thus promoting communion for all, is also situated in a Hussite camp. During this period – contrary to the 19th century paintings which might be exemplified by *Preaching at the Bethlehem Chapel* by Alfons Mucha – disconnection from the church and an emphasis on a secular setting appear in a number of other depictions of Hus. The socialist artist Karel Štěch (1908-1982) placed Hus under the open sky in southern Bohemia in a woodcut that was part of his *Hussite Cycle*, carved between 1950 and 1957 to represent the idealised events of the Middle Ages.

MONUMENTS IN THE 1950s

Jan Hus was represented as the spiritual founder of the subsequent revolution, a martyr, and a national hero in a number of sculptures executed in the 1950s. Karel Lidický carved Hus in 1954, both for Prague and for Hus' birthplace, and very similar statues erected in villages and towns (e.g., Chrudim, Katovice u Strakonic, Soběslav) to commemorate Hus the preacher, are basically a repetition of the one analogous composition [fig. 3].

Although Jan Žižka first appeared as a popular hero, he quickly became a political symbol as well. The only successful commander in Czech military history, he stood for courage and determination, as well as the class revolt and struggle against a foreign enemy. Alongside the Kafka monument at Vítkov, his statue appeared mainly at sites connected with his deeds. A neo-classical sculpture by Josef Malejovský, author of the Vítkov door, was erected in Žižka's alleged birthplace, Trocnov; another, by Jiří Dušek, was installed in Hradec Králové, site of a Hussite battle. More notably in Žižka's case, historical precedents from the 19th century – including Josef Strachovský's 1884 monument in Tábor – were used as the inspiration for new works of art.

NATIONALISM IN THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT

Both Hus and Žižka have been represented as national symbols. The nationalism of the early 1950s saw the current revolutionary period as the ultimate patriotic outcome of the past, and the greatest triumph in the nation's history.[7] Although the movement was not successful, its defeat was temporary – and its tradition survived until victory by the Communist Party.

This nationalistic aspect of the Hussite movement was again taken over from the 19th century national revivers. In their interpretation, the Hussites, recruited from native Czechs, fought against the German tyrants who ruled, and who controlled trade in Bohemia. An example of a visual form of this point of view is Jan Šebek's *Revolt in Kutná Hora* (1950s), which depicts miners rebelling against the majority-representing German upper class in that Bohemian town. Moreover, Hus died at the stake in Konstanz, Germany, and King and Emperor Sigismund was seen as a violator of the Czech language, kingdom, and crown.[8] These nationalistic attitudes regarding the Hussites have survived to this day, and can be exemplified by the use of Hussite themes and visual symbols by a Czech neo-nazi singer Daniel Landa.

IDEALISATION OF THE HUSSITES

Hus and Žižka were the only figures stressed by communist historiography and visual representations as Hussite heroes. This could be explained in terms of the cult of personality politics and a deliberate simplification of the Hussite myth. There was, of course, a different official explanation: according to communist scholars, the Hussite tradition survived mainly among the common people. The common man remembered Hus and Žižka as leaders/initiators of the struggle, and was not confused by any number of other Hussite figures. According to Nejedlý: "The common man thinks in a simpler way, and thus often more correctly than many intellectuals … he sees Hus, the brave propagator and defender of the people against the oppressors. And he sees Žižka, fearlessly slaying the enemy of the people".[9]

Representation of an idealised present, future, and past was a requirement of the official ideology. Events from the past were chosen to depict problems that could be connected with the contemporary revolutionary struggle of the working people.[10] The heroes of the past needed to be positive and good in order to educate the new generations. Hus' ethical and moral integrity, and his struggle against the powerful Church were stressed, and the fact that Žižka and his troops were responsible for the destruction of a great number of churches, monasteries and urban dwellings was, in the light of their struggle against social-economic tyranny, suppressed.

To return again to the Vítkov monument: the entire concept and the individual scenes were executed according to the principles of socialist realism set out by Andrei A. Zhdanov in 1934. These include the premise that true and historical reality should be depicted in a manner that educates, and that works of art should be executed in the style of revolutionary romanticism.

The Hussites were an ideal topic for this romanticised revolutionary style. The struggle for a better

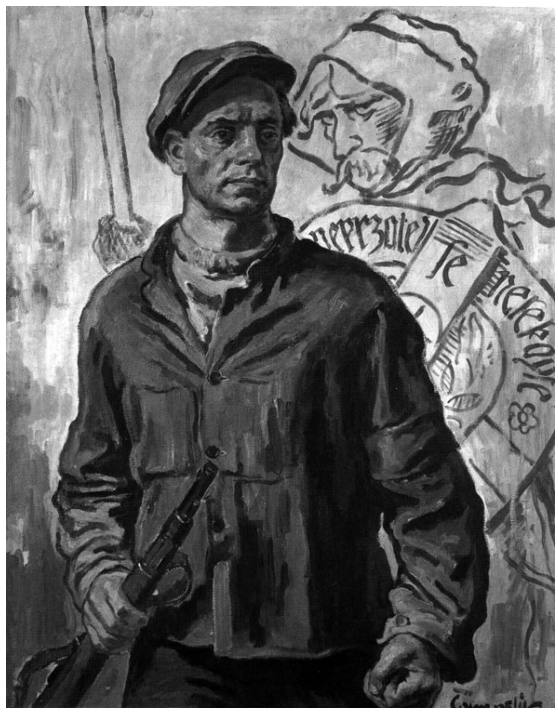

Fig. 4. Jan Čumpelík, Detail of the poster for the Exhibition of History of Revolutionary Struggle, 1949, oil on paper, 143 x 103 cm. Source: Tereza Petišková, Československý socialistický realismus 1948-1958, Prague: Gallery, 2002, p. 75

future in an ideal society, and the fight of the new against the old were paralleled with the present. The door of the Vítkov monument shows the victorious working class at different stages during the 20th century. The Soviet army is heartily welcomed in Prague in 1945, the questionable communist coup of 1948 is depicted as a triumph of the people's militia, and the better future to be achieved by building communism materialises in the last scene.

TODAY'S ARMY – MODERN HUSSITES

Along with Hus and Žižka, the army also appears as an important subject in a number of the door reliefs. According to František Kavka: "The victorious February of 1948 was a prerequisite for the Hussite revolutionary tradition to become the backbone of the Czechoslovak army".[11] It was not only the Czechoslovak army that was perceived as following the Hussite tradition – so was the people's militia which was created after 1945. When the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia took over the government in February 1948, the militia was recruited from the ranks of ordinary workers. So-called "Operational Committees" were mobilised to prevent trouble in factories, and to frighten non-communists – although officially it was claimed that, "[the people] were able to fight off the attempts of the capitalists and other traitors to bring our people, in February 1948, to a new and even worse Lipany…"[12] [fig. 4].

The Czechoslovak army was called the People's Army. According to communist interpretation, the Hussite troops were mostly composed of common people, whose aim, along with the establishment of a socially just system, was "the provision of the happy development of our country".[13] The Czechoslovak army sought, among other things, to fight the modern capitalist crusaders by consciously selecting the Hussites (and the Soviet army) as their role model. The capitalist crusaders were the Allies – imperialists of the West – who liberated western Bohemia in 1945, and the domestic enemy, who were compared to the mediaeval crusaders and corrupt feudalists.

The Vítkov monument door relief stands for the historical military struggle against the traitors, and culminates in the depiction of a happy communist society. A number of other scenes portraying Hussite troops in battle are mostly executed in a rigid historicist style. The scenes chosen basically conformed to requirements that included the credibility and dramatic character of the painting, an emphasis on individuals, a positive/optimistic attitude, and a focus on the entire message of the subject. Again, the execution of these battle paintings is highly indebted to paradigms from both 19th century Bohemian,

Fig. 5. Access to the Vítkov monument. Photo by the author

and contemporary Soviet painting. Examples of the former include works by Jaroslav Čermák, Václav Brožík, Mikuláš Aleš, while the latter could be exemplified by Alexander Bubnov's *Morning on the Kulikovo Field* (1942-1947).

CONCLUSION

From an art historical point of view, a dependence on 19th century paradigms is visible in most of the 1950s artworks depicting the Hussites. The resulting revolutionary romanticism of the paintings, and the conservative academism of the sculptures complied with the period demands of socialist realism.

The subject matter was, however, more important than the actual representation. The primary message of the works of art promoted the inevitable connection between the Hussites, and the communists who brought the mediaeval social revolution to a victory. The two positive heroes, Jan Hus and Jan Žižka, played a crucial role in this interpretation, and together with the Hussite army and rebelling common people, became the main themes of the artworks.

Certain aspects of the movement were stressed, and others suppressed, in both the visual and theoretical interpretations. The militaristic aspect of the Hussites became a suitable strategy in post-Second World War Europe, and provided a parallel in the form of the mediaeval troops and the socialist people's army. The importance of the religious cause which had initiated the movement, was, however, overshadowed by an emphasis on the social revolt of the working class against a corrupt and wealthy enemy.

I have also shown that one can detect discrepancies, including the ambiguous view of religion and the spiritual message behind the movement, and the communist attitude regarding the Hussite rebellion. Considering the Vítkov monument one last time, one can see that it also has features in common with religious symbolism – among them the door reliefs, which copy the decor of doors leading into Catholic churches. Likewise, the entire access to the museum on the top of the hill is designed as a pilgrimage, with the main walkway leading the procession up a monumental staircase [fig. 5]. And finally, the statue that dominates the hill was actually commissioned in the 1930s by a democratic Czechoslovak government – but has always been associated with the communist development on the hill.

The vote for the greatest Czech hero, as mentioned at the beginning of this presentation, was accompanied by a vote for the greatest Czech villain. The winner, ironically, was the very same president whose body lay in the mausoleum for nine years. As history's greatest villain, this propagator of the Hussite-communist succession ended up at the opposite end of the scale from the main heroes of the Hussite uprising.

Notes

[1] Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia. A Czech History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, p. 37.
[2] Thomas Fudge, 'Neither Mine nor Thine', in: *Canadian Journal of History / Annales canadiennes d'histoire*, XXXIII, April 1998, pp. 26-47: p. 40.
[3] František Kavka, *Husitská revoluční tradice* (*The Hussite Revolutionary Tradition*), Prague: SNPL, 1953, p. 14.
[4] Klement Gottwald, quoted in Kavka, 1953, p. 24 and p. 264.
[5] Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Hus a naše doba (Hus and our Times)*, 3rd ed., Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1952, p. 9.
[6] Ibid., p. 54.
[7] Kavka, 1953, p. 260.
[8] Sayer, 1998, p. 38.
[9] Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Komunisté – dědici velikých tradic českého národa (Communists, the Inheritors of Great Traditions of the Czech Nation)*, Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1950, p. 18.
[10] Mikuláš Bakoš, *O socialistickom realizme (On Socialist Realism)*, Bratislava: Štátne nakladatelstvo, 1952, p. 36.
[11] Kavka, 1953, p. 268.
[12] Vladimír Rošt, 'Poučení z husitské minulosti' ('A Lesson from the Hussite Past'), in: *Tvorba*, XX, no. 33, 1951, p. 785.
[13] Josef Macek, *Husitské revoluční hnutí (Hussite Revolutionary Movement)*, Prague: Nakladatelství Rovnost, 1952, p. 12.

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Komunistinis husitų vaizdinys: reprezentacijos ir analogijos

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Bohemija, bažnyčia, religija, komunistinė ideologija, komunistų partija, Čekoslovakija, Janas Husas, husitai, idealizmas, paminklas, tapyba, romantizmas, skulptūra, socialistinis realizmas.

Santrauka

Čekų istoriografijoje husitų judėjimas naudojamas įvairiais politiniais tikslais. Čekų nacionalinio atgimimo požiūriu, XV a. pradžios husitai buvo kovotojai prieš vokiečių priespaudą, o komunistų sukurtas oficialus įvaizdis pavertė husitų judėjimą revoliucine kova, XX a. darbininkų klasės pranašu. Husitų veiksmai, vienas didžiausių Viduramžių sukilimų prieš feodalinę santvarką, buvo suvokiami kaip kelio į socializmą pradžia. Komunistai laikyti posthusitais, o husitai – prokomunistais. Tai buvo sąmoningai propaguojama užsakytuose meno kūriniuose, kurie turėjo lavinti mases ir sukurti komunizmo istorinio neišvengiamumo įspūdį.

Daugelis XV a. husitų judėjimo įvykių aspektų buvo sąmoningai praleidžiama, tad straipsnyje svarstoma, ką komunistinė valdžia, kurdama husitų įvaizdžius, buvo pasirengusi pamiršti, o ką – prisiminti, kad galėtų propaguoti savo ideologijas. Pavyzdžiui, religinis husitų judėjimo aspektas buvo arba nutylimas, arba naudojamas kaip ginklas prieš to laiko bažnyčią. Kita vertus, valstietiška sukilimo kilmė buvo pabrėžiama ir tapo efektyviu propagandos įrankiu.

Remiantis XX a. antrosios pusės paveikslais ir skulptūromis, vaizduojančiomis husitus, tyrinėjama oficialioji judėjimo siejimo su komunistine darbininkų klase politika. Analizuojami paveikslai, kuriuose pavaizduotas bažnyčios reformatorius Janas Husas (pvz., Karel Lidický) ir karvedys Janas Žižka (pvz., Josef Malejovský), „eilinio kareivio“, kovojančio už laisvę, atvaizdai (pvz., Jan Šebek). Daug dėmesio skiriama reljefui, kabančiam ant Prahos karo muziejaus durų – jame vaizduojama husitų ir komunistų apoteozė.

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IDEOLOGY AND ARTISTIC STRATEGIES

IDEOLOGIJA IR MENINĖS STRATEGIJOS

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The Agitator and the Legacy of the Avant-garde in the German Democratic Republic: Willi Sitte's *Rufer II* (Caller II) of 1964

Key words: German Democratic Republic, *Verein Bildender Künstler* (Union of Visual Artists), SED (German Socialist Unity Party), socialist realism, cubism, Dada, avant-garde, Spartakus League, KPD (German Communist Party), agitator, expressionism, Cold War, Federal Republic of Germany, proletariat, *Neue Sachlichkeit* (new objectivity), fascism, formalism, *Neues Deutschland* (New Germany), collage, dialectical art practice.

This essay explores aspects of the tension between art and politics in the German Democratic Republic in the 1960s by means of a case study of Willi Sitte's *Rufer II* (Caller II) of 1964 [fig.1]. By the time he produced this work, Sitte was already a controversial figure in the GDR and on his way to prominence as a painter of complex, monumental, often multi-panelled works allegorising themes of war, class struggle, and life under socialism. 1964, the year in which he painted *Rufer II*, was a crucial turning point for Sitte, marked by both public statements from the artist pledging his allegiance to the socialist way of the GDR, and by public recognition: he received the *Kunstpreis der DDR* (GDR Art Prize), and was elected to the central committee of the Republic's *Verein Bildender Künstler* (Union of Visual Artists). He became the Union's president in 1974 and held the post until 1988, during which time he was justifiably described as the most powerful artist of the GDR.

Since the GDR's collapse and German re-unification, Sitte's work has become a problematic legacy for the public sphere in general, and an acutely sensitive issue for German museum culture in particular. This became painfully evident when preparation for a major exhibition of his work, planned for 2001 at the Germanische Nationalmuseum in Nürnberg, publicly and acrimoniously collapsed.[1] With accusations of political censorship still in full voice, a symposium was organised. Fiercely-held views and widely differing perspectives on Sitte – and especially on the heavily-loaded term *Staatskünstler* or "state artist" – were expressed.[2] Not surprisingly, given his status in the GDR, much of the discussion revolved around Sitte's personal and professional biography. Significant though the details of Sitte's life and career undoubtedly are, an overly biographical focus can be counterproductive when it comes to assessing Sitte's production as part of the wider complex of material and political culture in the GDR. For the purposes of this essay, the painting's iconography and formal properties, as well as its exhibition, reproduction and reception in the GDR are significant. Within the context of the theoretical formulation, in the crucial period of the 1960s, of the function and importance of art for and in socialist society, it can be argued that elements of Sitte's *Caller* are paradigmatic of the ambivalent relationship between the ideological prescription for didactic socialist art in the GDR on the one hand,

and the legacy of the German and European avant-garde on the other.

The painting *Caller II* is in oil on board, with newspaper collage elements. It measures 150 x 120 cm, making the figure of the caller himself slightly larger than life-size. It was at one time in the possession of Horst Sindermann, a friend of Sitte's and a senior SED (German Socialist Unity Party) politician, in the artist's home town of Halle, but its current location is unknown.[3] The title *Caller II* already implies that we are dealing here with a second version of an existing image. There are other, similar works by Sitte from the same period in various media, but this painting was in fact painted *over* an earlier version.

The interest of this work in terms of a wider understanding of art in the GDR lies in the way that Sitte's *Caller II* visualises practical problems and critical dilemmas in the search for a politically and aesthetically cogent visual language of socialist realism. Not least is the fact that it draws on certain key modernist practices – simultaneity and collage, for example – thereby posing aesthetic challenges to the orthodoxy of a more-or-less provisional socialist realism in the GDR of the early 1960s, while remaining committed to a socialist thematic and content.

Fig. 1. Willi Sitte, Rufer II (Caller II), 1964, oil on board, 150 x 120 cm. Present location unknown

Caller II was first shown in the exhibition *Unser Zeitgenosse* (Comrades of our Time) in Berlin in 1964, held to mark the 15th anniversary of the founding of the GDR.[4] Its image was reproduced on the cover of the catalogue and on magazine covers.[5] The work was clearly regarded by the curators of the exhibition as an important one. Some were, however, uncomfortable with it. Sitte's *Rufer II* included collage elements (in the form of newspaper fragments), underlining its relationship with cubism, Dada, and the Weimar avant-garde, and reviving a specific practice that was particularly divisive in terms of the formalism debate of the 1950s and 1960s. Sitte himself was already known for work strongly influenced by Picasso.[6] It is reported that the decision to use *Caller II* on the exhibition poster led to an internal argument with the SED's faction of the exhibition jury. Wolfgang Hütt claims that the collage elements in the work were seen as "formalist" by influential "party dogmatists", with tensions escalating to the extent that there were calls to censor the poster. The quarrel was resolved only after the sculptor Fritz Cremer defended the painting vociferously, and threatened to leave the exhibition jury in protest against the opposition to Sitte's work.[7]

Eduard Beaucamp argued in a recent newspaper article that "Sitte constantly preached socialist realism, without practising it himself".[8] The claim is a persuasive one. Though his political alignment with communism was never in doubt, Sitte's aesthetics were another matter. However, *Caller II* cannot be read in such unequivocal terms. Given that decades of exhaustive discussion in the GDR could not produce a convincing consensus on what constituted a nationally apposite "socialist realism", and that the motto "breadth and diversity" (*Weite und Vielfalt*) was devised to compensate for just such a lack of consensus, it is clear that we are dealing here with something more complex.

The image involves a tension between tradition, modernity, and contemporary socialist reality. For Sitte's supporters in the GDR, and indeed his admirers in the Federal Republic, this was one of its strengths. Writing in the left-wing West German journal, *tendenzen*, in 1975, East German art critic and curator Hermann Raum argued: "Already early

on, Sitte refuted the most cherished fairy-tale of the bourgeois critic: that of the death of art by political engagement".[9]

It is noteworthy that attempts were made to canonise the painting as a key work in a specific "agitational" genre. This occurred back in 1964, in the wake of its public debut[10], but the manner in which it was done again, in more detail in 1986, is particularly revealing of art-historical and curatorial methods in the GDR. *Caller II* was already twenty-two years old when it was presented to the public once again, in a particularly programmatic exhibition staged in Leipzig to coincide with the SED's 11th conference. The title, "Wherein our strength lies" (*Worin unsere Stärke besteht*), came from an agitational workers' song. The subtitle described the exhibition's central theme: "Working-Class Struggle Reflected in the Visual Arts".[11] The catalogue cover featured a 1931 lithograph by Käthe Kollwitz entitled *Demonstration II*. Should it not be clear for the exhibition visitors, this "strength", in what would turn out to be the last few years of the GDR, lay, according to local party leadership: "In the invincible readiness for action and creative force of the people, led by the united Party of the working class".[12]

In a catalogue essay devoted to the painting, Wolfgang Hütt, a life-long supporter of and expert on Sitte's work, positioned *Caller II* within a powerful iconographical tradition. In so doing, he constructed a genealogy for the motif of the "caller" that cast it as the socialist apotheosis of an international humanist *and* German tradition. Among several examples constitutive of this formative tradition, he cited works by Raphael (his *Transfiguration* of 1518-1520), Lucas Cranach the Elder (the woodcut *John the Baptist Preaching* of 1516), and Carl Friedrich Lessing (the *Hussite Sermon* of 1836).[13] Thus, the motif or "type" of the "caller", according to the historicisation offered by Hütt, had its roots in an iconography of transformation. The consummate transformation is that of the resurrected and transfigured Christ. On earth, the preacher – whether John the Baptist, or later Jan Huß, or the prototypical 16th- century revolutionary Thomas Müntzer (widely celebrated in the GDR) – is the agent of human conversion, and the promise of transformation. Hütt also identified forerunners for the origins of the agitator and caller motifs of the 20th century in the 19th-century conflict between Catholic and Protestant factions in Germany. Completing the narrative and the theme of struggle under the historical and material conditions of late capitalism, the socialist caller's closest ancestry was finally to be found in the revolutionary agitator of the Weimar period. Here and elsewhere, parallels were drawn between Sitte's painting and Karl Hofer's caller in a nocturnal wilderness, *Der Rufer* (The Caller) of 1924.[14] Indeed, Sitte's agitator adopts a similar physical posture to amplify his call. But for Hütt and other GDR historians of German art, two other important prototypes were provided by Conrad Felixmüller and Curt Querner.[15]

Felixmüller's portrait of Otto Rühle, co-founder of the Spartakus League, KPD (German Communist Party) and later KAPD (German Communist Workers' Party), underscores *both* the theatrical qualities of agitation, and the unruly corporality of the agitator [fig. 2]. In the GDR, it was sometimes regarded with suspicion as the work of an "ecstatic" expressionist trading in "overheated emotions".[16]

Fig. 2. Conrad Felixmüller, Der Agitator Otto Rühle spricht (The Agitator Otto Rühle Speaks), 1920, oil on canvas. Courtesy: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photo courtesy: bpk / Nationalgalerie SMB / Klaus Göken

It was precisely the subjectivity of the representation and the excessive passion of the agitator figure here that compromised the work in the context of post-war socialist realism. Felixmüller reminisced that, "Otto Rühle was the most energetic speaker, he was *the* man, the leader of the masses".[17] Rühle's passion is so violent, so corporeal, that it verges on apoplexy: his bloodshot eyes and the veins in his neck bulge, his features are distorted, and his unruly body appears to threaten to burst from his politician's suit. By contrast, Querner's agitator stands his ground firmly and issues his call with forceful composure [fig. 3]. Querner's painting was singled out as a "peak" of the tradition in the "late bourgeois" period. The artist's own proletarian background was inevitably highlighted – Querner was the son of a cobbler turned factory worker – but more importantly, given the date of 1931, the bodily stance of Querner's agitator was readily interpreted as the portentous expression of an "either-or" decision facing the German population: fascism or socialism. By extension, within the dynamics of the Cold War, the image also lent itself to insinuations about the paths taken by the "two" Germanies of the post-war period – the Federal Republic in the West, and the German Democratic Republic in the East.

Hütt argued that what he called the "main iconographic direction of this subject", which is "derived from Christ's gesture of resurrection", resumed after 1918 and the collapse of German imperialism. Furthermore, he identified in the sacred confessional gesture a counterpart to the speaker's gesture as one of a secular, revolutionary "justice of reality".[18] The promise of salvation from mortal life and earthly sin symbolised by the resurrection is itself transfigured, in the scheme of Marxist-Leninist (art) history and agitation, into the promise on earth of the active liberation of the proletariat.

Sitte's painting revived and monumentalised the motif of the agitator, which had been the potent symbol for a wide range of "revolutionary" aspirations in Berlin Dada, expressionism, and aspects of the so-called *neue Sachlichkeit* (new objectivity) in the inter-war period. Susceptible to charges of "bourgeois formalism", these avant-garde movements were now problematic in the GDR, and those aspects of the Weimar avant-garde that were positively received tended to be delineated in terms of "realism".[19] Artists of the German avant-garde whose communist credentials were in order were celebrated and honoured, or at least grudgingly rehabilitated. They included George Grosz, John Heartfield, Otto Dix, Felixmüller, Franz Seiwert and others. However, too direct an association with art that was sometimes negatively characterised as "passionate", "anarchist", and irrational, contradicted the repeatedly intoned demands for a socialist realism characterised by clarity and a political-scientific rigour. Typically, for example, *Junge Kunst*, the art monthly published by the FDJ or "Free German Youth" warned its young readers:

> "The mistaken path of modernism, the cowardice of the non-committal, must be replaced by strict partiality, ideological clarity, a creative capacity for experience and power of design. This is how the artist becomes a co-creator of the socialist future".[20]

Nonetheless, by revisiting the proletarian-revolutionary imagery of agitation, Sitte was able demonstratively to align himself with the "other", "good" path of German art – that which was committed to class struggle and the defeat of fascism – in contrast to the bourgeois "decadent" one that had led to the triumph of fascism.

Recent debate around Sitte's work has raised the call for a differentiated understanding of the concept of "state art" in the GDR.[21] Univalent and overarching concepts of culture in socialism are certainly not helpful. It is possible to argue that paintings such as Sitte's *Rufer II* are little more than artefacts of a totalitarian propaganda industry. However, paradoxically, this often serves to *de-politicise* the complex of meanings drawn on and produced by such imagery.

The other apparent paradox – that Sitte may have preached socialist realism, but did not practise it – raises more fundamental issues around the relationship between form and content. These were also at the heart of the often fraught discussions on the particular character of socialist realism in the GDR. It was quickly recognised that the issue could not

be reduced to formal criteria, and negatively defined as the mere *avoidance* of the trappings of so-called "formalism" – abstraction, subjective use of colour, *tachiste* gestures and so on. A key slogan became the *Übereinstimmung von Form und Inhalt* ("agreement between form and content"). It is useful now to consider the painting from this perspective.

First, the agitator-caller in the painting is located firmly in the context of work, specifically construction. The image of the construction worker played a central role as part of the symbolic rhetoric of the idea of "building" a new socialist state, which was to rise literally and metaphorically from the ruins of fascism. The geometric forms on the left of *Caller II* are Sitte's shorthand for the scaffolding of the building site. It can be traced back to other callers and construction workers in his oeuvre.[22]

Second, Sitte's caller of 1964, and indeed another of 1962 [fig. 4] is also a *reader*. The motif of the reading worker was another stock symbol of the new socialism, simultaneously suggesting the literacy and engagement of the working class, and the existence in socialism of a dominant proletarian literature.[23] Sitte's Léger-inspired reading worker in *Work Break* of 1959 is an example that provided another precedent for *Caller II*. Ernst Ullmann expressed the totalising fantasy of wholeness that often attended such images, when he wrote in 1968: "The difference between mental and physical work has become reduced, and it will completely disappear. Images of the people of our time declare this".[24]

Third, as we have seen, Sitte's reading worker here is a caller, an agitator, a communicator, the embodiment of a voice. The "voice" here, however, is ambiguous. It was likened to the sound from a horn or loudspeaker. But there is also a ventriloquist quality: the worker calls out *from* the newspapers. *Neues Deutschland* was the organ of the SED, and the main daily paper in the GDR. The "agreement between form and content" is perfectly orchestrated in the presence of *Neues Deutschland* – the material, paper object – and the words "Neues Deutschland" as signifiers. As such, the "call" is visualised *and* verbalised: "new Germany". The caller's message not only transmits content from, or in response to, the content of *Neues Deutschland*, it also emits physically from a body that is surrounded by newspapers. It is significant that the previous year Sitte had written the first of a series of polemic essays published in *Neues Deutschland*, thereby using the paper as a medium for his "voice". The paper in the foreground is held in the worker's hand, at the level of his lungs and guts, while his head, the site of his intellect, is juxtaposed with more sheets, this time suggesting the so-called *Wandzeitung* or wall-newspapers that were common in the workplace, schools, and other communal venues in the GDR, montaged by agitators like Sitte's "caller". In this way, a tension emerges between the individual, active agency of the monumentalised worker on the one hand, and his significant modification by the medium of the newspaper and the newspaper *as* medium, which is at different levels suggestive of the collective, of the state, and of the "consensus", on the other.

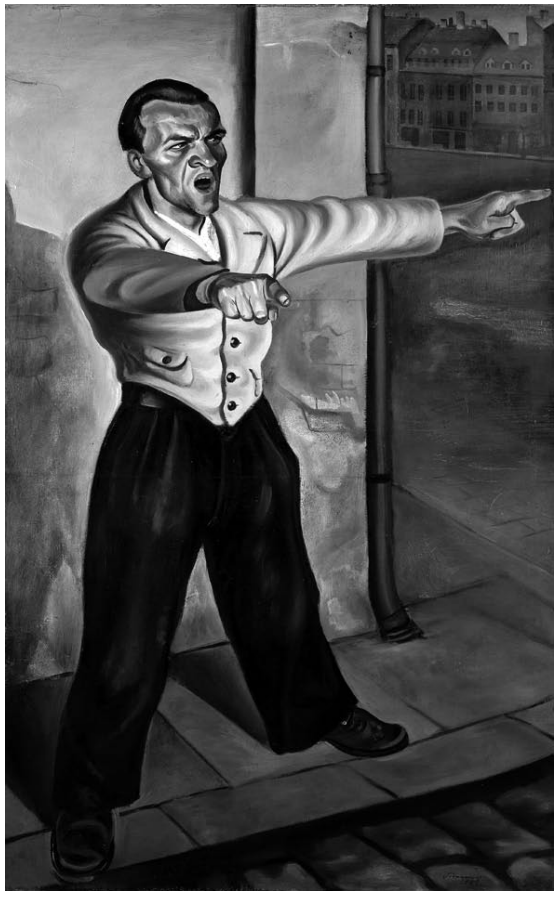

Fig. 3. Curt Querner, Der Agitator (The Agitator), 1931, oil on canvas. Courtesy: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photo courtesy: bpk / Nationalgalerie SMB / Bernd Kuhnert

Here we have a key respect in which Sitte's *Caller II* conforms to dominant, Marxist-Leninist prescription. Its iconography is in accord with one of the recognised ideological demands of the regime for the artistic representation of socialism in the GDR, namely to make the worker a "subject of history" – as opposed to its object. For Hütt, for example, what was "decisive" about Sitte's *Caller II* was "how artistic engagement was combined in it with a form expressive of activation".[25] He wrote revealingly of the figure in the painting:

> "He embodies the rousing voice of the working class in the German Democratic Republic, directed as much at the citizens of this state as at humanity itself, calling upon them to accept responsibility for their own people and the peace of the world".[26]

Ulrich Kuhirt, one of the most influential art theoreticians of the GDR, reflected in an essay of 1979 on the 1960s, with a highly ideological description of the artist's task, which could be imagined in terms of a commission for Sitte's *Caller II*:

> "Especially for the painter and the graphic artist, difficult problems of content and of form arose from [the fact] that the working class was becoming a consciously active subject of history [who] intentionally applied the objective rules of development. Its active occupation in the practice of mastering social processes – shared thinking [*Mitdenken*], shared planning [*Mitplanen*], shared taking of responsibility [*Mitverantworten*] – the moment of mental work in the overseeing and planning of social and production processes, became a characteristic of its concrete existence".[27]

In the light of the emphasis on mutual processes of thought and of shared production, the "active" and "activating" qualities of Sitte's *Caller* also corresponded with the operative demands of socialist realist art. Even the formally "challenging", fragmented and montaged elements of the work, those that appear superficially as subversive of the orthodoxy, in fact can also be read as efficient for the consolidation of socialist ideology.[28] For example, writing

Fig. 4. Willi Sitte, Unsere Jugend (Our Youth), 1962, polyptych. Detail: Der Rufer (The Caller). Courtesy: Halle Staatliche Galerie Moritzburg. © DACS 2007

in the catalogue for an exhibition of Sitte's work in the West, in Hamburg, Hermann Raum saw the artist's work, from 1964 on, as "markedly dialogic". For him, this quality both required and created a particular kind of viewer, who would "actively take up the optical and intellectual challenges, a viewer who [actively] completes the picture, indeed an onward-leading, transforming partner".[29]

Furthermore, by reasserting the reality of the newspaper not just as part of the material of urban modernity, but as a *medium* in the strict, communicative sense, its message amplified by the cry of the caller, he was able ideologically to mobilise, and therefore make acceptable, the use of collage itself. Hütt wrote that in *Caller II*, the use of collage was "aesthetically justified", and that it "therefore paved the way for its general application in the art of the GDR".[30] This last claim is something of an overstatement: it was only

with difficulty that the first dedicated exhibition of collage, organised by Roland März, could be shown in the GDR in 1975 – where works by Dadaists such as Raoul Hausmann and Kurt Schwitters appeared alongside others by GDR artists Hermann Glöckner and Willi Sitte.[31] However, even the briefest comparison of Sitte's work with others in the exhibition, such as Glöckner's, emphasises the almost wholly mimetic function of collage elements in Sitte's. Ultimately, like many works of art from this period in the GDR, Sitte's *Caller II* falls somewhere between monument, history painting, genre scene, and reportage.

The failure of the political and artistic regimes of the GDR ideologically and methodologically to resolve their relationship with the avant-garde of the Weimar period highlighted some of the most tenacious problems in the search for a "socialist national culture". While the negotiation of apparent contradictions that Sitte's *Caller II* enacts offended those who wanted a pliant and uniform "socialist realism", the work also offered an iconography consistent with an established Marxist-Leninist repertoire of form and content.[32] Finally, it should not be overlooked that the very tensions themselves can also be understood in relation to Sitte's pursuit of a "dialectical" art practice – something he himself aspired to. Sitte's *Caller II* and its critical reception in the GDR – including its historical rehabilitation and canonisation – ultimately reveal the instability of normative historiographical concepts of both "national culture" and "proletarian-revolutionary" art.

Notes

[1] See Horst Kolodziej and Wolfgang Richter (eds.), *Das Sitte-Verbot. Katalog (k)einer Ausstellung. Texte, Bilder, Dokumente*, *Icarus. Zeitschrift für soziale Theorie und Menschenrechte* (Sonderheft), vol. 7, 21, 2001/1.

[2] The symposium took place in the summer of 2001. The edited proceedings, including a record of the often heated discussions that took place, are collected in G. Ulrich Großmann (ed.), *Politik und Kunst in der DDR. Der Fonds Willi Sitte m Germanischen Nationalmuseum*, Nürnberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 2003. Several essays include critical responses to the account of the exhibition's cancellation, given by authors in an *Icarus* special edition (note 1).

[3] I contacted several relevant individuals and institutions in the former GDR directly about the present whereabouts of *Caller II* (in 2006 and 2007) but none knew where the painting went after Sindermann's death and the Wende in 1990.

[4] *Unser Zeitgenosse*, ex. cat., Berlin (East): Nationalgalerie, 1964. See also Gisela Schirmer, *Willi Sitte. Farben und Folgen. Eine Autobiographie*, Leipzig: Faber & Faber, 2003, p. 109.

[5] *Caller II* was reproduced, for example, on the cover of *Bildende Kunst* no. 3, 1965.

[6] E.g., *Massaker II* (Massacre II) of 1959, Willi-Sitte-Galerie, Merseburg.

[7] Wolfgang Hütt, *Willi Sitte. Gemälde 1950-1994*, Bönen: DruckVerlag Kettler [n.d.], pp. 276f, n. 36.

[8] Eduard Beaucamp, 'Das Sitte Verbot', in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 Dezember 2000: "Sitte predigte stets den sozialistischen Realismus, ohne ihn selber zu praktizieren." The article is reproduced in facsimile in Kolodziej and Richter, 2001, p. 2.

[9] Hermann Raum, 'Überlebende, Rufende, Lachende und Sieger. Zur Willi-Sitte-Ausstellung im Kunstverein Hamburg', in: *tendenzen* (Munich), vol. 16, no. 101, May-June 1975, pp. 41-46, p. 44: "Sitte widerlegte schon früh das liebste Ammenmärchen bürgerlicher Kritiker vom Tod der Kunst durch politisches Engagement".

[10] Diether Schmidt, 'Die Gestalt des Agitators in der proletarisch-revolutionären Kunst', in: *Bildende Kunst*, no. 11, 1964, pp. 576-583.

[11] *Worin unsere Stärke besteht. Kampfaktionen der Arbeiterklasse im Spiegel der bildenden Kunst*, ex. cat., Leipzig: Museum der bildenden Künste, 1986.

[12] Horst Schumann, 'Zum Geleit' in: *Worin unsere Stärke besteht*, 1986, p. 4: "In der unbezwingbaren Tatbereitschaft und Schöpferkraft der von der geeinten Partei der Arbeiterklasse geführten Volksmasse".

[13] Wolfgang Hütt, 'Zeichen einer künstlerischen Zäsur: Willi Sitte's Gemälde "Rufer II"', in: *Worin unsere Stärke besteht*, 1986, pp. 27-31, p. 28.

[14] For a more recent comparison of the two paintings, see Eckhart Gillen, *Das Kunstkombinat DDR. Zäsuren einer gescheiterten Kunstpolitik*, Köln: DuMont, 2005, p. 109.

[15] See also Schmidt, 1964.

[16] See, e.g., Dieter Gleisberg, 'Conrad Felixmüller, "Otto Rühle spricht"', in: *Worin unsere Stärke besteht*, 1986, pp. 32-34. Felixmüller was appointed to teach at the Martin-Luther-Universität in Halle (GDR) in 1949. In 1967 he left the GDR, and moved to West Berlin.

[17] Quoted in Friedrich W. Heckmanns (ed.), *Conrad Felixmüller. Das druckgrafische Werk 1912 bis 1976*, Düsseldorf: Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, 1986, p. 40.

[18] Hütt, 1986, p. 29: "Deshalb setzte sich nach 1918 die ikonographische Hauptlinie des Themas wieder in seiner Ableitung aus dem Auferstehungsgestus Christi fort, dessen Zug zum Bekenntnishaften sich mit der Realitätsgerechtigkeit des Rednergestus verband".

[19] See, e.g., *Realismus und Sachlichkeit. Aspekte deutscher Kunst 1919-1933,* ex. cat., Berlin (East): Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1974, and the more ambitious *Revolution und Realismus. Revolutionäre Kunst in Deutschland 1917 bis 1933*, ex. cat., Berlin (East): Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1978.

[20] W.S., 'Junge Künstler und der Mensch unserer Tage. Eine Betrachtung zur Ausstellung junger Künstler in Dresden',

in: *Junge Kunst*, no. 11, 1960, pp. 63-72, p. 72: "Der Irrweg des Modernismus, die Mutlosigkeit der Unverbindlichen müssen durch strenge Parteilichkeit, ideologische Klarheit und schöpferische Erlebnisfähigkeit und Gestaltungskraft ersetzt werden. So wird der Künstler zum Mitgestalter der sozialistischen Zukunft".

[21] Großmann, 2003, and especially Karl-Siegbert Rehberg, "'Formalist", Verbandspräsident, "Sündenbock": Willi Sitte als "Staatskünstler" in der "Konsensdiktatur"', pp. 76-93.

[22] Sitte's *Rufer I* (Caller I), a work in ink and newspaper fragments on paper of 1961 and *Rufende* (Caller) of 1959, both in the Willi-Sitte-Galerie Merseburg, are other closely related examples.

[23] In his monograph on Sitte, Hütt discussed the motif and described the calling worker in *Unsere Jugend* "a significant contribution to the image of workers in socialist art". Wolfgang Hütt, *Willi Sitte*, Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1972, p. 55.

[24] Ernst Ullmann, 'Es geht um das sozialistische Menschenbild', in: *Bildende Kunst* 2, 1968, pp. 105f, p. 106: "Der Unterschied zwischen geistiger und körperlicher Arbeit ist geringer geworden, und er wird ganz verschwinden. Bilder der Menschen unserer Tage kündigen es an".

[25] Hütt, 1986, p. 27.

[26] Ibid.: "Er verkörpert die aufrüttelnde Stimme der Arbeiterklasse in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, gerichtet sowohl an die Bürger dieses Staates als auch an die Menschheit überhaupt, aufrufend, die Verantwortung gegenüber dem eigenen Volk und dem Frieden der Welt zu erkennen".

[27] Ullrich Kuhirt, 'Gemeinsamkeit von Kunst und Gesellschaft. Zur Kunst der DDR in den sechziger Jahren', in: *Weggefährten Zeitgenossen. Bildende Kunst aus drei Jahrzehnten*, ex. cat., Berlin (East): Altes Museum, 1979, pp. 51-64, p. 53: "Schwerwiegende inhaltliche und gestalterische Probleme vor allem der Maler und Grafiker erwuchsen daraus, daß die Arbeiterklasse zum bewußt handelnden, die objektiven Entwicklungsgesetze planvoll nutzenden Subjekt der Geschichte wurde. Ihre aktive Tätigkeit in der Ausübung der Herrschaft über die sozialen Prozesse – das Mitdenken, Mitplanen, Mitverantworten – das Moment der geistigen Arbeit im Überschauen und Planen von gesellschaftlichen und Produktionsprozessen wurde zu einem Wesenszug ihres konkreten Seins".

[28] In the West, suspicion of "propaganda" was fuelled by the inclusion of such fragments of reality, and for some, this threatened to compromise a work's status as art. Discussing the flysheets in the hands of the exhausted soldier in Sitte's *Die Überlebenden* (The Survivors) of 1963, in the course of an otherwise positive review, one writer in a Düsseldorf newspaper put it as follows: "Das Problematische ist, daß diese Flugblätter mit lesbaren Texten gemalt sind. Wir erkennen Zeilen wie 'Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland' – 'Die Heimat ruft' – '...gegen Hitler' – 'Deshalb muß dieser Krieg sofort beendet werden'. Mancher Beschauer mag sich die Frage gestellt haben: Ist das noch Kunst? Oder liegt rein politische Propaganda vor?" ("Is this still art? Or is it a case of pure propaganda?"); Georg Hermann, 'Soll Kunst engagiert sein? Antikriegs-Gedanken über zwei Bilder von Willi Sitte', in: *Deutsche Volkszeitung* (Düsseldorf), no. 35, 1964, reproduced in *Bildende Kunst* 3, 1965, pp. 160f, p. 160.

[29] Hermann Raum (ed.), *Willi Sitte. Gemälde und Zeichnungen 1950-1974*, ex cat., Hamburg: Kunstverein Hamburg, 12 April – 18 May 1975, p. 39: "... ein betont dialogisches, daß einen mitdenkenden, aktiv die optischen und gedanklichen Herausforderungen annehmenden, die Bilder vollendenden Betrachter, ja einen weiterführenden, verwandelnden Partner brauchte und schuf".

[30] Hütt, 1986, p. 27.

[31] März argued here that collage "builds, with its fragments of the profane, bridges to the understanding of art and, as such, of reality". Roland März, *Die Collage in der Kunst der DDR,* ex. cat., Berlin (East): Das Studio im Alten Museum, 1975 [unpag.]. See also Bettina Schaschke, 'Von der Collage zur Mail Art', in: Eugen Blume and Roland März (eds.), *Kunst in der DDR,* ex. cat., Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2003, pp. 170f.

[32] For further points and a biting critique of Sitte's culpability in the power machinations of the state, see Andreas Hünecke, 'Am Schaltpult: Versuch über Willi Sitte', in: Günter Feist et al. (eds.), *SBZ/DDR 1945-1990. Kunstdokumentation. Aufsätze. Berichte. Materialen*, Köln: DuMont, 1996, pp. 558-563.

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Agitatorius ir avangardo palikimas Vokietijos Demokratinėje Respublikoje: Willio Sitte'o *Rufer II* (Šauklys II, 1964)

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Vokietijos Demokratinė Respublika, *Verein Bildender Künstler* (Dailininkų sąjunga), SED (Vokietijos socialistinė vienybės partija), socialistinis realizmas, kubizmas, dada, avangardas, Spartako lyga, KPD (Vokietijos komunistų partija), agitatorius, ekspresionizmas, Šaltasis karas, Vokietijos Federacinė Respublika, proletariatas, *Neue Sachlichkeit* (naujasis daiktiškumas), fašizmas, formalizmas, *Neues Deutschland* (Naujoji Vokietija), koliažas, dialektinė meno praktika.

Santrauka

Pasitelkus Willio Sitte'o paveikslą *Rufer II* (Šauklys II) kaip pavyzdį, straipsnyje tiriama Vokietijos Demokratinėje Respublikoje tarp meno ir politikos tvyrojusi įtampa. Kūrinys vizualizuoja kritines dilemas, kylančias ieškant įtikinamos socialistinio realizmo vizualinės kalbos. Šiame paveiksle remiamasi modernistinėmis strategijomis – vienalaikiškumu ir koliažu, kartu išsaugant ištikimybę socialistinei tematikai ir turiniui. Willis Sitte'as įamžino agitatoriaus motyvą, įtaigiai simbolizavusį platų „revoliucinių" aspiracijų spektrą tarpukario laikotarpiu (ekspresionizmas, dada ir naujasis daiktiškumas). Veimaro avangardo palikimą buvo galima apkaltinti „buržuaziniu formalizmu", todėl jis VDR buvo problemiškas. Tačiau net tuos Sitte'o kūrinių elementus, kurie, regis, prieštarauja ortodoksiškam požiūriui, galima suprasti kaip efektyvų socialistinės ideologijos palaikymą. Agitatorius-šauklys paveiksle vaizduojamas rankų darbo, statybų kontekste. Svarbiausias buvo statybininko įvaizdis, simbolizavęs naujos socialistinės valstybės, pakilsiančios iš fašizmo griuvėsių, „statybą". Sitte'o darbininkas yra ir *skaitytojas* – taip įkūnijamas darbininkų klasės raštingumas ir angažuotumas. Galiausiai jis – ir bendraujantysis, ir balso įsikūnijimas. Tačiau „balsas" yra dviprasmiškas: darbininkas kreipiasi iš laikraščio *Neues Deutschland*. „Turinio ir formos dermė" čia kuriama pasitelkiant *Neues Deutschland* kaip materialų objektą ir žodžius „Neues Deutschland" – kaip signifikantą. Taigi „kreipimasis" yra ir vizualizuojamas, ir verbalizuojamas: „naujoji Vokietija". Čia kyla įtampa tarp individo – darbininko – aktyvaus veiksmo ir jo reikšmingos modifikacijos per laikraštį kaip mediją, reprezentuojančią bendrumą, valstybę ir „konsensusą".

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Art and Politics in Lithuania from the Late 1950s to the Early 1970s

Key words: art of power, ideological propaganda, art propaganda, themes of the works of art, legitimation of authority, total authority, Artists' Union, artists' interests, non-conformism.

In a democratic system of government the politicisation of art can be defined as a process when art enters the field of politics and becomes an instrument capable of influencing or even changing the social political reality. In the modern day, both art and politics acquired an autonomy which was determined by their close interaction. According to the philosopher Boris Groys, the radical autonomy of art is shown precisely through radical political engagement. But only that which is absolutely free and autonomous can engage in something. It is not by accident that the concept of political engagement came into being in the context of French existentialism, which declared the individual's freedom from social and political violence. But art cannot be politically engaged if it is already political.[1]

So what would the *politicisation of art* mean in a non-democratic system of government? I think that the art of a particular period is not only the sum of the works of art, it is also a system comprising the conditions of their production, distribution and reception. In this paper I am therefore going to analyse the coherent politicisation of the whole system. I will pay most attention to: 1) the peculiarities of the *art of power* (Klaus von Beyme),[2] 2) the interaction of official art policy and artists' interests, and 3) the question of the contra-power of art.

1. By analysing the elements of the functioning and production of the *art of power* in post-Stalinist Lithuania, I will try to answer two questions: 1) Did Lithuanian art suit the purposes of legitimating Soviet rule and the ideological propaganda? 2) Did the official art support the Soviet system?

There were three tendencies characterising the post-Stalinist period:

1.1. Ideological propaganda through art was gradually replaced by politicised art propaganda. In his book entitled *Art and Propaganda*, Toby Clark writes that although the concept of "propaganda" ought to be associated with the ideas of manipulation, intimidation, and deceit, both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany used this means in public shamelessly.[3]

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Communist Party in the Soviet Union commanded that the role of visual agitation in the education of the people be strengthened: "While attempting to propagate art, one must remember the most important aim, which is the propaganda of communist ideology by the means of art, and the indoctrination of this ideology into the consciousness of the masses … Art propaganda and propaganda by the means of art are inseparable".[4] Visual agitation at that time was comprised not only of party slogans hanging in the streets. Works of art in public spaces, art exhibitions, even art criticism became a means for "mass political work". The press also had to "systematically elucidate the problems of agitation and propaganda by means of art".[5]

An example of the synthesis of ideological and artistic propaganda can be seen in commemorations

of the October Revolution, the Victory of World War II, and other similar events, which, alongside the instruments of political education or meetings with war veterans, included concerts and exhibitions. Following the spring of 1972 in Kaunas, the Ministry of Culture of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR) was charged with the task of strengthening the "political and aesthetic education" of the Kaunas inhabitants. Plans were developed for the construction of a monument to the Four Communists, a public library, a dance hall, the renovation of the music theatre, literature museum, Town Hall Square. Museums were instructed to intensify the political education of young people and schoolchildren. Decisions were made to organise biennials of young artists, drama festivals, etc. in Kaunas.[6]

Art propaganda proceeded with no shame. During the VI Congress of the LSSR Artists' Union in 1966, the minister of culture encouraged artists to "thrust … where the need for art is not understood". It was proposed that factories and kolkhozes be ranked not only according to their rate of production, but also on the basis of "which of them acquired more and better works of art". A 1973 Artists' Union report on cultural education in the provinces states that "graphics artists have found a new, interesting, and very immediate form for the propaganda of works of art – to exhibit works temporarily in kolkhoznics' homes".[7]

In 1972, the LSSR Artists' Union decided to found a bureau of artistic propaganda in order to coordinate the activities of all periodicals, and to propagate art in the press. A list was made of buildings where works of decorative and applied art could be exhibited.[8] However, only six books, five albums, and seven collections of postcards were included in the plan for artistic publications from 1973 to 1976.[9]

The VIII Congress of the LSSR Artists' Union in 1973 emphasised that art propaganda attracted considerable attention: "approximately 46,000 works of art were used for the ideological and aesthetic education of the people. Over the 20 years of rule by the bourgeoisie in Lithuania, there were about 80 exhibitions where approximately 10,000 works were shown … Therefore, … these achievements express Soviet art policy superiority over the art policy of the capitalist world".[10]

During the Congress of 1966, it was also stated that art was a weapon, and that "the capitalist world lays great hopes on ideological diversion, and consequently, on diversion through the help of art".[11] In 1974, in a decree directed towards the implementation of a peace programme, the LSSR Ministry of Culture demanded an increase in the ideological efficiency of cultural links, and the use of said links for the purposes of "propaganda of the Soviet way of life, domestic and foreign policies, achievements of multinational socialist culture". Artists touring abroad had to be provided with propaganda material about their own work, and about the "development of the culture and art of the nation".[12]

1.2. The ambivalence of the canons of the *art of power*, and the difference between requirements and criteria of evaluation gradually increased.

The concept of socialist realism is essentially contradictory, because the main thesis of dialectic materialism is "the unity and struggle of contradictions". According to Groys, to think in a dialectic-materialistic way means to think in a coherently contradictory and paradoxical way – to refer to total logics. "The main requirement for the Soviet people was not to think in a Soviet way, but to think both sovietically and antisovietically at the same time – that is, to think in a total fashion".[13]

In the late 1950s, the canons of realism which originated in the 19th century were denounced, and replaced by a campaign for the renewal of socialist realism. Part of the campaign included a limited return to the national traditions of the past and the legacy of modernism. Thus the norms of socialist realism became even more contradictory, and were apparently overtaken by the artistic practice. Nevertheless, the Lithuanian artists who actively took part in the renewal of socialist realism were quite clearly told that a good socialist realist painting had to examine a significant theme (revolution, industrialisation, kolkhozes, etc.), and be distinguished by a "laconic style, expressivity, artistic generalisation, monumentality, and emotionalism".[14] It

was specifically these types of paintings that had the greatest value in terms of commissions. In the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, the programmes of so-called thematic exhibitions were very laconic and limited to general phrases.

Starting in 1970, the Communist Party declared that it would intensify its direction vis-a-vis the creative intelligentsia, and increase requirements regarding the "ideological-artistic level" of works of art. The propaganda bureau of the USSR Artists' Union began to write extensive thematic plans for exhibitions. A 1971 plan for commissions recommended the following themes: "triumph of national Leninist politics", "high morality of Soviet soldiers", "military cooperation of Warsaw pact countries", "USSR aid to the people of Vietnam", "art in the life of the people". The artists also had to "show the Communist Party's leading role in all spheres of Soviet life", and to "highlight the new features of the Soviet man – creator of material and spiritual goods – to show the creative aspect of his work".[15] Exhibition projects introduced artists to the problems being solved by the Party: "raising the material and cultural living standards of the people", "development of propaganda forms", "support for law and order, Soviet democracy, and the social-political and ideological unity of society".[16] The plans for Lithuanian art exhibitions included themes like the struggle of supporters of the Soviet regime against "bourgeois nationalists", the October Revolution and Lithuania, the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR.

It was not only the Party that increased its claim on artists. In 1974, state institutions received a letter from Klaipėda region war veterans complaining that artists at the Palanga (sea resort) artist residence were painting landscapes instead of commemorating the heroic deeds of soldiers during battles in the Klaipėda region. The latter kind of artwork would emotionally affect viewers, and most importantly, "the artists themselves would experience an ideological patriotic impact while creating works on military themes".[17]

However, these barely comprehensible requirements of artists had little in common with the criteria of evaluation and selection of state purchased artworks. The authorities were mostly concerned about formal quality, and the growing quantity of artworks. It was no accident that the Art Council of the Republic was composed mainly of painters. The protocols of Council meetings, as well as press reviews of exhibitions were limited to the purely formal analysis of works of art.

These thematic plans did not have any significant impact on art, for the canons of political iconography were created by acclaimed masters. In Lithuanian art these canons were quite liberal and abstract. The political and ideological meaning of the message of a work of art was usually very vague, concretised only by the title (quite often devised by the exhibition commitee on the eve of an opening). Although the search for diverse means of expression was encouraged, it was in fact mostly works by "mature artistic individuals", i.e. ones that repeated well-tried schemes, that were purchased and exhibited.

It seems that increased control by the authorities in the 1970s was in fact simulated. For example, it became inadvisable to refer to concepts like "deformation" or "colourism"[18], but not to use the artistic means themselves. The ambivalent norms of the *art of power*, double standards, discrepancy between requirements and evaluation criteria had to create an illusion of disobedience by the artists and Party tolerance towards them, as well as an illusion of the emancipation of art, the illegal liberation from the function of ideological propaganda, an illusion of non-conformism. The myth of the *partijnost* as political engagement was replaced by the myth of autonomous art.

1.3. The shift of the political role of art was determined by the changing principles of legitimation of authority.

During the post-Stalinist period, not only the idea of a class struggle, but also slogans about a decisive historic turning point, the making of a new society and a new man, were renounced. They were replaced by what was actually not a new idea: one according to which the Soviet system incarnates "humanity's eternal ideals of a better life", and "the fixed moral values" that in the West were destroyed by thoughtless progress and a tolerance of morally reprehensi-

ble actions.[19] The task of art in the Stalinist period had also been not only to re-educate the citizens of the LSSR (including artists) "in the spirit of communism" – "the new authorities sought to show all the world that the Lithuanian nation had taken a new turn, and that this new direction is supported by the creative intelligentsia".[20]

The goal of the art policy in the Brezhnev era was to demonstrate and prove to the citizens of the LSSR, and to the world, that the Communist Party cherished culture and art, and that, along with fostering closer relations with the nations of the USSR, it encouraged the prosperity of national cultures. It was emphasised that, compared to "standardised capitalism", Soviet life was characterised by a "richness of spiritual life", and that its art showed "the variety of individualities and the inexhaustible spiritual richness of man".[21] The "new man" was replaced by the "harmonious, well-rounded personality".

As guardian of spiritual values, the Party declared war "on the cult of material goods" (consumerism) – but in reality tolerated and even encouraged it. Consumption of cultural production and art was especially promoted. Art truly was the most beautiful commodity in the purposefully organised Soviet "aesthetic" environment. It seems that the authorities were more interested in a high consumption of artworks than in the spread of communist ideas through art, for there was practically no control vis-a-vis the reception of their political content. The Soviet authorities cultivated in their citizens a sense of an aesthetic distance, in order that they apply the principle of distance not only to their perception of art, but also to their perception of the authorities and their policies.

Post-Stalinist Lithuanian art was poorly suited for the communist education of the people, but it served perfectly to legitimate authority. The more it looked like Western modernism and autonomous art, the more it supported the system and maintained the myth of "a little bit of the West in the Baltic countries", so treasured by the Soviet authorities. The most prominent "non-conformists" ended up exhibiting abroad. The only way that artists could oppose the system was by not creating. And something like that indeed did happen: in 1972, the minister of culture regretfully announced in the press that the number of purchased paintings, and paintings in artists' studios had decreased.[22]

2. In analysing the interaction between official art policy and artists' interests, the following questions must be asked: 1) was the politicisation of art merely its forcible employment for the political purposes of the Soviet state? 2) was the subordination of art to politics (i.e. the Artists' Union to the Communist Party) clear and unequivocal?

In the 1930s, Stalin stated: "Staff determine all". Groys defines communist society as "a total producers' dictatorship over consumers".[23] Totalitarian authority reared a totalitarian power of the one towards others. The Party oppressed Soviet citizens, though many of them were its members. Anyone who had an opportunity to occupy a position of relative power towards some group or individual, certainly did occupy it. The post-Stalinist Soviet society ideally matches Michel Foucault's definition of power as a performative strategic situation, and not a slightly asymmetrical interaction: "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere".[24]

The Soviet creative intelligentsia were closest to the Party's power mechanism; the latter was the only thing "higher" than them. The best known artists were Party members; some were elected to the Supreme Council. "Communist *partijnost*" – the supposed "strong internal connection of art … to the goals of the Party"[25] – in reality meant that only those artists who were intimately connected to, or who identified themselves with, the Party, could adapt to the volatile requirements of the Party. Bureaucrats responsible for the implementation of official art policy were also artists or art critics.

The artists' cooperation with the Soviet authorities was determined not only by their need to protect personal interests, but also by the reverberation of avant-garde attitudes such as a predisposition towards artocracy and a desire for power, and the wish to replace the representation of the world by its recreation, and to enter politics and government.[26] Organisational aspects of the Artists' Union (sec-

tion bureaus, the presidium) were analogous to Party structures. Artists seemed to like the fact that the issues of creative work were being discussed as political issues, and that aesthetic solutions acquired the status of political decisions.

The attitude of the artists and the Party regarding the sponsorship of art coincided very well. The Soviet authorities had no knowledge of a problem which was common to democratic states: how to sponsor art in such a way that taxpayers or specific sponsors could not insert their own demands. Productive artists – conformists – were among the best endowed members of Soviet society.

In the early 1970s, long-term contracts with artists began to appear. The purpose of these contracts was "not to accumulate created valuables, but to encourage their beginning, to support those artists who are not successful today, but who definitely will be tomorrow".[27] Artistic production exceeded plans by 20% annually, with unplanned artistic production existing to the tune of 1.5 million rubles. At the VI Congress of the Artists' Union in 1966, it was decided not to found a proper publishing house (such as Estonia had), because "many art grants would have to be denied".[28] In 1972, approximately 126 grants (of 30-300 rubles) were allocated to artists.[29] In 1970, art school graduates began to receive guaranteed payments, and compulsorily registered young artists were given commissions. As the number of artists increased (there were 500 in 1973), so did the demand for more funds in order to purchase their work.

In the late 1950s and during the 1960s, artists struggled for the renewal of socialist realism, a broad concept of thematic painting, "colourism", and a status of thematic painting for landscape paintings. In the 1970s they struggled for apartments, studios, cars, trips abroad, and a technical base for "experimentation". It was proposed that a special, exclusive to artists section be created in the artistic production workshops (subordinate to the Artists' Union), in order to provide them with materials and instruments for their work.[30]

The Artists' Union sought to control all spheres connected to art: the art industry, museums, art education, the activities of folk artists, art criticism and history, the press, publishing, the art trade, etc. In 1965, the USSR Artists' Union issued a strict decree stating that all institutions and organisations could commission works of art, or the service of designers, only via the Artists' Union.[31] In 1970, the LSSR Ministry of Culture allowed the purchase of artworks only on the recommendation of the Art Council and the Artists' Union.[32] Requests to read Artists' Union documents for study purposes in the Archives of Literature and Art had to be approved by the Board.[33]

The hypertrophied attention to art by the totalitarian powers in the post-Stalinist period probably resulted in a strong and flexible union of art and authority, rather than in a conflict of interests. During the post-Stalinist period the Party had to supervise experiments in renewed socialist realism, and here it could not manage without the artists themselves. Experienced artists supervised new ones, section leaders – rank and file members, heads – groups of artists in artist residences. The exhibition committee, and the Art Council, both composed of artists, controlled the processes of artistic development. Artists were suppressed not only by the Soviet authorities, they themselves wielded a power which even crept into their work through the form of "rigorous style".

3. Artistic non-conformism: can one speak of the contra-power of art?

Robert Merton, an American sociologist, distinguished the following ways in which an individual adapts to a political system and seeks to overcome alienation: a) "an innovation" inside the system, b) revolt against the system, c) escapism, real or "internal" emigration, d) "rituality" of adaptation.[34]

From the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, enthusiasm regarding the renewal of socialist realism was typical of the young generation of Lithuanian artists; it was later replaced by the auto-reproduction of "artistic individualities". In the 1970s, escapist sentiments intensified: artists would rather live by teaching in art schools than by elaborating on "thematic painting".

I would distinguish two cases of non-conformism in post-Stalinist Lithuanian art. The first, often referred

to in art criticism as semi-non-conformism, is an illusory non-conformism supported by the authorities, a constitutive part of conformism, an effect of the difference between requirements and evaluation criteria. In the 1960s, the sphere of this assumed non-conformism encompassed so-called experimental, semi-public, opened and quickly closed exhibitions in cinemas, publishing houses, the Writers' Union, Conservatory, etc. Artists followed a strategy common to modernism – they tried to create an alternative to dreary Soviet reality, in art.

The second non-conformism is the real, unofficial creative work shown by artists to their close friends in studios or private apartments. It already existed at the end of the 1950s, but became more prolific by the end of the 1960s. The young generation of Lithuanian artists was by then partially acquainted with the works of the Moscow conceptualists[35], who deconstructed the specific contact of Soviet ideology and lifestyle. The phenomenon of "realist socialism" inspired Lithuanian painters as well. On the other hand, works that criticised Soviet reality were also partly absorbed by the system, and were shown at official exhibitions.

There was little difference between real non-conformist iconography and the European art of the 20th century. Motifs of violence or confinement were frequently represented, as were monsters or colossi; fantastic beasts, which in European art often represented the horrors of war, became allegories of the Soviet regime in non-conformist art. Motifs of Christian iconography, which expressed "internal emigration" in European art during periods of dictatorship, were also common.[36] According to von Beyme, the struggle for abstraction, together with archaism, exotism, or infantilism in certain circumstances can also be understood as a protest against the regime.[37] It was exactly these forms of protest that characterised the non-official Lithuanian art of the 1960s.

Today these works of art look impressive, but one can hardly refer to their contra-power: they could not have been a serious challenge to the system because of the lack of theoretical interpretation, and the very limited possibilities of their reception. More examples of politically engaged art emerged only during the collapse of the Soviet system and the struggle for independence. The autonomy of art was more important to artists than was the subordination of art to political opposition. However, this striving for autonomous art, though sometimes absorbed or even produced by the system and transformed into an instrument of ideological propaganda, in a certain sense was also a manifestation of political disobedience, rebellion, and struggle for freedom.

Notes

[1] Boris Groys, *Logik der Sammlung. Am Ende des musealen Zeitalters*, München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1997, pp. 109-110; Boris Groys, *Kunst-Kommentare*, Wien: Passagen, 1997, p. 89.
[2] Klaus von Beyme, *Kunst der Macht und die Gegenmacht der Kunst. Studien zum Spannungsverhältnis von Kunst und Politik*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1998.
[3] Toby Clark, *Art and Propaganda in the 20th Century*, London: Calmann & King Ltd., 1995 (Toby Clark, *Kunst und Propaganda. Das politische Bild im 20. Jahrhundert*, Köln: DuMont, 1997, pp. 7-8).
[4] A pronouncement of the third plenum of the USSR Artists' Union, 26 June 1974, Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas (Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, hereafter LLMA), F-146, O-1, E-565, L-21-28.
[5] Ibid.
[6] LSSR Ministry of Culture decree Nr. 48, 19 September 1972, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-481, L-10-13.
[7] LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-564, L-15-16.
[8] LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-491, L-143-148.
[9] LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-516, L- 45.
[10] Stenograph of the LSSR Artists' Union VIII Congress, 18-19 January 1973, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-517, L- 50-52.
[11] Stenograph of the LSSR Artists' Union VI Congress, 19-20 December 1966, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-344, L-67.
[12] LLMA, F-342, O-1, E-2577, L-161-164.
[13] Boris Groys, *Das kommunistische Postskriptum*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2006, p. 59.
[14] G. Kęstutytė, 'Kai kurie tematinio paveikslo vystymosi bruožai' ('Some Features of the Development of Thematic Painting'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 22 November 1958.
[15] LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-328, L-236-240.
[16] Thematic plan of the USSR *Glory to Work* art exhibition, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-394, L-239.
[17] LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-565, L-64-66.
[18] The concept of "colourism" in Soviet art criticism from the late 1950s to the early 1970s meant the domination of colour, and less attention to drawing and composition in a painting.
[19] Boris Groys, *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin. Die gespaltene Kultur in der Sowjetunion*, München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1988, p. 85.
[20] Konstantinas Bogdanas, 'Dailininkų sąjungos veiklos ba-

ruose' ('At the Domains of the Artists' Union Activities'), in: *Dailė*, no. 2, 2005, p. 10.
[21] Stenograph of the LSSR Artists' Union board meeting, 13 May 1974, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-546, L-52.
[22] Lionginas Šepetys, 'Estetinė gerovė' ('An Aesthetical Prosperity'), in: *Pergalė*, no. 7, 1972, p. 115.
[23] Groys, 1997, p. 170.
[24] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*, London: Penguin Books, 1990, p. 93.
[25] Nikolajus Tomskis, 'Iš socialistinio realizmo pozicijų' ('From the Positions of Socialist Realism'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 3 October 1970.
[26] About the political ambitions of the modernist avant-garde see: Eduard Beaucamp, *Der verstrickte Künstler. Wider die Legende von der unbefleckten Avantgarde*, Köln: DuMont, 1998; Klaus von Beyme, *Das Zeitalter der Avantgarden. Kunst und Gesellschaft 1905-1955*, München: C. H. Beck oHG, 2005; Jean Clair, *La responsabilité de l'artiste*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997; Beat Wyss, *Der Wille zur Kunst. Zur ästhetischen Mentalität der Moderne*, Köln: DuMont, 1996.
[27] Šepetys, 1972.
[28] Stenograph of the LSSR Artists' Union VI Congress, 19-20 December 1966, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-344, L-136.
[29] Protocols of the LSSR Artists' Union board meetings, 1972, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-481a.
[30] Stenograph of the LSSR Artists' Union VIII Congress, 18-19 January 1973, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-517, L-78.
[31] Decree by the USSR Council of Ministers, 22 June 1960, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-323, L-38.
[32] Decree by the LSSR Ministry of Culture, 10 February 1970, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-442, L-10.
[33] Protocol of the LSSR Artists' Union board meeting, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-516, L-57.
[34] Von Beyme, 2005, p. 517.
[35] Ilja Kabakov, Vitalij Komar, Aleksandr Melamid, Erik Bulatov, Dmitrij Prigov et al.
[36] Von Beyme, 2005, p. 848.
[37] Ibid., p. 851.

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Reikšminiai žodžiai: *galios menas*, ideologinė propaganda, dailės propaganda, dailės kūrinių temos, valdžios legitimacija, totalinė valdžia, Dailininkų sąjunga, dailininkų interesai, nonkonformizmas.

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjami dailės politizavimo aspektai postalininio laikotarpio Lietuvoje: *galios meno* (Klaus von Beyme) ypatumai, oficialiosios kultūros politikos ir dailininkų interesų sąveika, meninio protesto klausimas.

Galios menui kaip produkavimo, sklaidos ir recepcijos sistemai šiuo laikotarpiu būdingos trys tendencijos. Pirma, ideologinę propagandą dailės priemonėmis palaipsniui pakeitė politizuota dailės propaganda. Kai XX a. 8-ojo dešimtmečio pradžioje SSKP liepė sustiprinti vaizdinės agitacijos vaidmenį darbo žmonių auklėjime, šioji nebuvo tik gatvėse iškabinti partijos šūkiai. „Masinio politinio darbo" priemonėmis tapo dailės kūriniai viešosiose erdvėse, parodos ir net dailės kritika, todėl dailės propagavimas buvo ypač svarbus Dailininkų sąjungos uždavinys. Antra, stiprėjo *galios meno* kanono dvilypumas. XX a. 6-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigoje, prasidėjus socialistinio realizmo atnaujinimo kampanijai, jo normas lėmė dailės praktika, o teminių parodų planuose apsiribota bendromis frazėmis. Kai 1970 m. SSKP sugriežtino reikalavimus kūrinių „idėjiniam-meniniam lygiui", SSSR Dailininkų sąjungos Propagandos skyrius ėmė kurti išsamias dailės temų programas; dailininkams liepta vaizduoti „lenininės nacionalinės politikos triumfą", „vadovaujantį komunistų partijos vaidmenį" ir pan. Tačiau šie reikalavimai buvo menkai susiję su valstybės įsigyjamų kūrinių vertinimo ir atrankos kriterijais, nes iš tiesų valdžiai labiau rūpėjo kūrinių kiekybė ir jų formali kokybė. Reikalavimų ir vertinimo kriterijų neatitikimas turėjo sukurti dailininkų nepaklusnumo, dailės emancipacijos ir partijos tolerancijos iliuziją. Trečia, politinį dailės vaidmenį lėmė valdžios

legitimacijos strategijų kaita. Brežnevo laikais SSKP siekė pademonstruoti pasauliui, kad ji puoselėja kultūrą, meną ir skatina nacionalinių kultūrų suklestėjimą. Todėl, kuo labiau Lietuvos dailė buvo panaši į vakarietišką modernizmą, tuo geriau ji tiko valdžios legitimacijos tikslams.

Hipertrofuotas valdžios dėmesys dailei postalininiu laikotarpiu nulėmė veikiau tvirtą ir lanksčią dailės ir valdžios sankabą, o ne interesų konfliktą. Dailininkų sąjunga siekė kontroliuoti visas su daile susijusias sritis – muziejus, dailės studijas ir švietimą, tautodailininkų veiklą, dailės kritiką ir istoriją, spaudą, leidybą, prekybą kūriniais. Be pačių dailininkų pagalbos partija nebūtų galėjusi prižiūrėti atnaujinto socialistinio realizmo ieškojimų.

Šio laikotarpio Lietuvos dailei būdingos dvi nonkonformizmo pakraipos. Pirmosios pakraipos nonkonformizmas – iliuzinis, valdžios skatintas, nulemtas skirtumo tarp reikalavimų ir vertinimo kriterijų. Antroji – tikroji, neoficiali, tik menininkų dirbtuvėse ar butuose siauram ratui rodyta kūryba – negalėjo tapti rimtu iššūkiu santvarkai dėl ribotos recepcijos.

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Late Soviet Political Art – Between the Meta-Narrative and Intervisuality

Key words: propaganda, engagement, intervisuality, Soviet art, Latvian painting.

Researchers of political visual art who deal with various aspects of interactions between art and politics are not able to avoid the question of the engagement of art. The notion of engagement is usually taken for granted. While it is used to describe not only the political, but also a wide scale of various forms of engagement, there is a lack of an attempt to reveal its mechanisms.

The most popular opinion describes engagement as part of content. For example, in the foreword to Peter Selz's book *Art of Engagement: Visual Politics in California and Beyond*, Daniel T. Keegan writes: "Art is as diverse in style as the causes it represents. Though the styles do mirror those of the times, ranging from abstract to conceptual art, the art of engagement is about content".[1]

Studies of political art usually deal with interaction between art and politics on three levels – social, content, artistic. While studies on the social level help to uncover the social, economic and punitive mechanisms used by political powers to engage artists, enquiries into content and artistic forms are what disclose the trails of engagement. There is no clear definition of engagement of art, and there is no method for separating it from other forms of content. However, one could assume that engagement happens whenever a pictorial utterance is altered by some political, social or civic context within which the artwork is produced or consumed. Political engagement is one of the more widely known types of engagement because of the easily recognisable features that transmit its particular nature.

Political discourse is always textual, i.e. text based, political communications always convey textual meanings, and the political meaning of visual art always assumes textual dominance. The political engagement of visual art always means an escalation of conflicting interactions between image and text – in other words, between visual and textual experiences conveying related discourses. Thus if we reconsider the relationship between visual art and politics we must admit that there are not only questions about the moral or political liability of artists on the one hand and the moral duty of modern society to preserve artistic freedoms on the other hand. The main contradiction between art and politics does not lie in the field of politics, morality or art, but in the different modes of communication.

W. J. Thomas Mitchell argued in his excellent book *Picture Theory* that "the tensions between visual and verbal representations are inseparable from struggles in cultural politics and political culture".[2] From Mitchell's point of view, there is no way to separate power, politics, and the textual and visual qualities of pictures. Political art therefore is just one aspect of relations between image and text in the emerging imagetext, image-text, and image/text categories.[3]

However, there is a specific problem regarding political art. One could assume that it originates from competing textual and pictorial structures, in the

Fig. 1. Indulis Zariņš, Iskra, 1965, oil on canvas, 140 x 140 cm. Courtesy: Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga

sense of a struggle for power. Politicians feel more comfortable dealing with text than with images. They produce textual messages, and they use text to create their vision of the future. But pictures have their own visual power, or, as defined by Mitchell, two kinds of visual power: power of illusionism and power of realism – in other words: power of spectacle and power of surveillance.[4]

Both of these visual powers of the image are what the politicians would like to exploit to make their political statements more powerful. This means that political art is not simply an illustration of political text. Power of illusionism and power of realism supply political statements with ocular proof and credibility. The depicting of reality now depends more on political text than on reality itself. The main feature of political art is the subjection carried out by textual political discourse.

Researchers who deal with Soviet political art focus mainly on the 1930s–1950s. This of course was the time when, in our history, the relationship between art and politics was being shaped most dramatically. Stalinist political power produced its own political discourse, one that exerted its influence over all the media under its domain to an extraordinary degree. This was a time when art was superimposed by political statements, and visual discourses were dominated by textual ones. However, the relationship between art and politics in the period following the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, known as the "Thaw", and the later years of political stagnation, become less clear and more complicated.

Despite embarking upon a new, post-totalitarian phase after the abandonment of mass terror, the Soviet Union preserved all of its repressive structures, and kept all of its ideological oppressive measures intact for almost thirty years. In the eyes of the Soviet state, art was an essential part of its resources vis-a-vis propaganda and ideological control. Of course, the fall of the Stalinist political order resulted in the rejection by artists, and even art theoreticians, of most of the dogmatic forms of socialist realism. But the principal dogmas of socialist realism, including that Soviet art had to be truthful, historically concrete, and biased – in other words, engaged with the ideological stance of the Communist Party – remained intact. The reason for such a discrepancy lay in the nature of socialist realism. It wasn't a method of art, as proclaimed by exponents of official Soviet art theory, or, as one may now think, some variation of realism. It was a policy of the ideological and political marketing of art. All the controversy regarding socialist realism arose from its ambition to translate the language of art into the language of politics.

The political engagement of Soviet art remained intact not only during the 1930s–1950s, it was upheld until the fall of the Soviet Union. There was, however, a breakthrough in the language of Soviet political art after the years of domination by the canonical artistic forms of the Stalinist regime at the end of the 1950s, which was known as the "rigid style" (*surovij stilj*). This "rigid style" had a notable impact on later Soviet art, and regardless of the crackdown on Moscow nonconformists in late 1962, and the subsequent years of repression against the abstractionists, Soviet art did lose its homogeneous language. What flourished were many separate artistic trends, which all came under the umbrella of Soviet realism.

What happened to Soviet political art in the 1960s and 1970s? How did artists deal with these more pluralistic languages of art, whilst at the same time

preserving the political aspects of their artwork? Was the textual dominance of political art subject to change during the period of late Soviet art? Did their goals – artistic and political – match? Was there any evidence of the existence of such goals? To answer these questions, we will consider the following example.

This painting, *Iskra*, was made by the Latvian painter Indulis Zariņš in 1965 [fig. 1]. Zariņš (18 June 1929 Riga – 13 April 1997 Riga) was an excellent exponent of this controversial time. He and his family were deported to Komi ASSR during the first Soviet occupation in 1941, and returned to Riga in 1947, at which time he began his studies at J. Rozental's art school. He studied painting at the Latvian SSR State Academy of the Arts from 1952 until 1958, graduated with honours, and was soon a highly successful painter.

Zariņš started out as an exponent of the "rigid style". His first famous work, *Latvian Riflemen*, was created in collaboration with Heinrihs Klēbahs. It was one of the last examples of collective (*brigadnaja rabota*) easel painting, and one of the first examples of the "rigid style" of Soviet art. He painted 'Red' Latvian riflemen, created episodes from the Great Patriotic, and Spanish Civil War, and depicted his contemporaries as builders of a brighter future.

The son of a bourgeois family oppressed by Soviet power, who became Soviet Latvia's most prominent artist, Zariņš was well-known because of his politically didactic works. He received the Latvian SSR State Prize (1967), and the Lenin Prize (1980), became a member of the USSR Art Academy (1978), and was honoured as People's Artist of the Latvian SSR (1979).

Nevertheless, Zariņš also aspired to preserve a dynamic equilibrium between political content and artistic value in his paintings. He was capable of handling all aspects of painting, and later developed his own artistic language, one that was partially influenced by 20th century Latvian modernists, classical art, the poetic realism of the 1930s, and even a revised fauvism. Naturally this eclectic mix of trends and influences could lead one to a revaluation of Zariņš's artistic heritage, including to define him as one of the first Soviet postmodern artists – at least in the sense of postmodernism being associated with a certain amount of reassembling and remixing.

But how does this postmodern surfing of visual language move on to political discourse? Zariņš often told his students that content was not the problem of the artist, but of the commissioner of works of art. It was his belief that the main concern of the artist lies in artistic forms – in other words, the main preoccupation of the artist is a visual, not a textual, discourse of artwork.

Initially, *Iskra* appears to be obvious proof of the previously mentioned textual domination. A story about the first underground Marxist paper – *Iskra* (Spark) – to be distributed in Russia became an essential part of the official revolutionary myth. It was published by Russian socialists from 1900 until 1905, and bore the symbolic slogan: "From a spark a fire will flare up" (from a poem by Vladimir Odoevsky (1803-1869), written as a rejoinder to one by Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) dedicated to 'Dekabrists' imprisoned in Siberia). Naturally, the

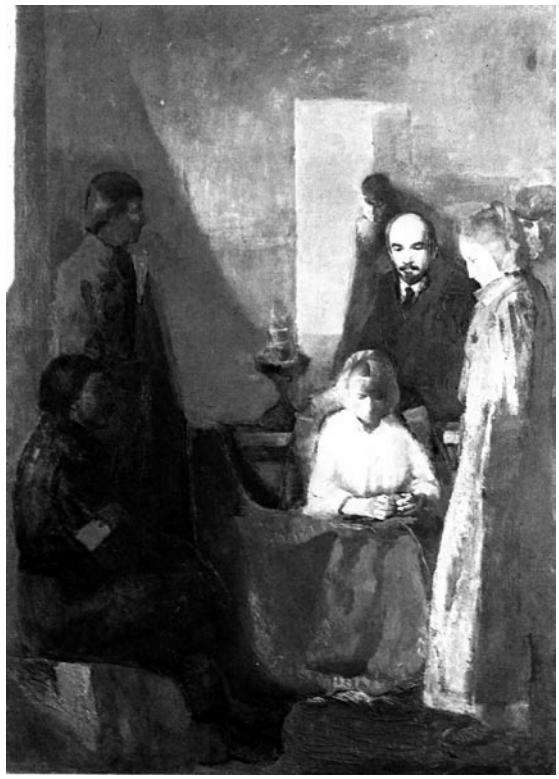

Fig. 2. Indulis Zariņš, Riflemen's Flag, 1980, oil on cardboard, 150 x 107 cm. Courtesy: Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga

symbolism of the spark as an act of individual courage, used by the Russian intelligentsia during the 19th century, had changed its metaphoric meaning: *iskra* became the symbol of a revolutionary struggle carried out by means of information and propaganda. In the 1960s there was no need to feel anxious that the paper could be seized by the 'Mensheviks', and *Iskra* became the archetypal model for all succeeding Bolshevik and Soviet newspapers, thereby melding into a visible symbol of a Russian Marxist political narrative, succeeded by later ideological meta-narratives produced by the Communist state. The story of *Iskra* served not only as a historically proven argument of the overwhelming role of printed political texts, it was also used as a didactic symbol for a romantic revolutionary underground struggle.

The Communist bureaucracy that seized power after the Thaw receded did little to retain the initial revolutionary spirit. And for that reason urgently needed such stories – not only to legalise their power, but also to decorate it with some romantic aspects of the former revolutionary struggle.

Seen from that angle, Zariņš's painting could serve as an illustration of the envisioned political myth. However, the pictorial utterance of his *Iskra* is more complicated than that: its visual discourses contain not only references to the symbolic role of the first underground Marxist newspaper, but also present an array of independent visual references that have no connection to actual political myth. So little appears to be happening in this picture: two men and a woman sitting at a simple wooden table in a room that looks like a cellar, with few props, no motion – and no clear clues as to the matter of this *mise en scène*.

Both men are reading a paper that resembles *Iskra*, but the woman, dressed in red, is looking elsewhere. While the labourer and the man in uniform represent working-class confidence and the need to study Marxist ideology, the woman brings a sense of revolutionary romance to the painting. But the visual discourse of this picture not only presents information about three likely revolutionaries, two of whom are reading a newspaper in a basement room. On closer observation, one can easily recognise some astounding visual references to the works of Jan Vermeer (1632-1675).

First of all, there is a background wall in Zariņš's painting that resembles the simple whitewashed walls which appear in so many of Vermeer's paintings[5] that they are taken for granted as a token of his visual language. Of course the rooms depicted in their paintings are quite different: Zariņš's cellar has little in common with 17th century Dutch living quarters. Nevertheless, the play of light as it slides across the rough plastered surface of the wall in Zariņš's painting so resembles Vermeer's style, that it reveals a hidden presence in the painter's artistic language.

And it is not only the play of light on the wall that creates these visual references. The red dress worn by the woman in Zariņš's painting not only resembles the red-coloured costumes of Vermeer's subjects, it also occupies the same topological space on a pictorial plane.[6] Furthermore, the appropriation of elements of Vermeer's language is not a matter of coincidence. Fifteen years later, Zariņš uses them once again – in *Riflemen's Flag* (1980) [fig. 2]. A depiction of a scene with a revolutionary flag, the painting initially appears obvious and didactic: a young girl sewing a red flag under the gaze of Vladimir Iljich Lenin, a woman standing nearby, several riflemen evidently awaiting their flag. Yet here again there are some elements characteristic of Vermeer.

The hair and posture of the girl, and the light that gently illuminates the surface of her head and body are rendered in a manner similar to that in Vermeer's famous painting depicting a girl reading a letter. The play of light on the red flag is reminiscent of the still-life in the foreground of that same painting, and the sliding light on a background wall once again is suggestive of the whitewashed walls as rendered by Vermeer.

These traces of another artist inside Zariņš's paintings permit one to reconsider the visual language of pictures. Visual language is not just a casually created and improvised set of elements. It has its own structure, code and history. Sometimes it contains references that are more ancient than any artist could suppose. Potential connotations hidden in these references give artists, viewers and theoreticians the

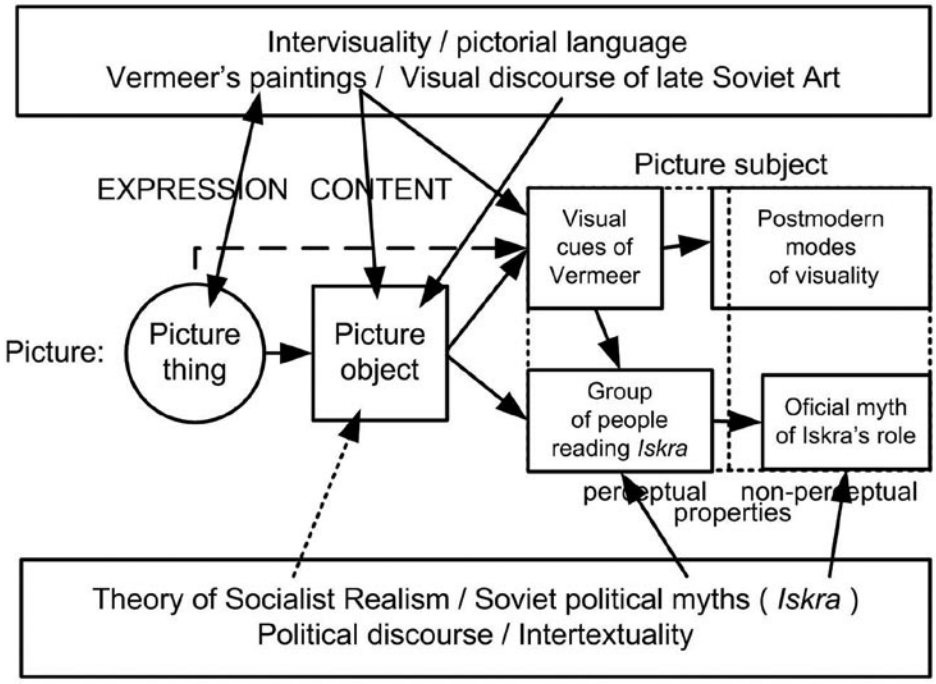

Fig. 3. The scheme of interaction between intertextuality and intervisuality and the picture and its pictorial utterance that produces a meaning that is different from the proclaimed meaning of political art (based on modified Göran Sonesson's model)

possibility to produce an almost unlimited number of interpretations. For example, one may assume the scene of the men sitting at the table depicted in *Iskra* as belonging to the iconographic typification of the *Supper at Emmaus*, or to any other iconographic typification of men sitting at a table. Naturally, speculation that any kind of depiction of a scene of men sitting at a table would be based on the iconographic typification of the *Supper at Emmaus* sounds odd. However, one must admit that an analogy between Zariņš's *Iskra* and the *Supper at Emmaus* is possible because the underlying visual structures that are used in these paintings so resemble many other paintings with a similar *mise en scène*. Certain visual structures may remain intact irrespective of the differences in narrative that they convey. Nevertheless, they may also contain a certain independent semantic, which leads one to admit that there is some phenomenon of interdependency, or visual intertextuality, within a visual pictorial language.

As stated in the famous essay *Semiotics and Art History* by Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson (1991)[7], art history studies based on the semiotic approach have to focus on three key aspects – intertextuality of visual language, polysemous nature of pictorial signs, and codes constructed within frameworks of social and historical contexts.

The intertextuality, or more accurately, intervisuality of pictorial language is based on the presence of interdependent visual cues and references found in pictures that could also retain a part of their own semantic. Such a net of intervisuality, present in any picture, makes possible a broader semantic interpretation of any picture than would be intended by its creator. Contextual frameworks subject to dynamic social and political changes at the same time define how we catch the meaning produced by pictures. Intervisuality from this point of view is not just the property of pictorial language, it is rather a form of active visual participation, or, as stated by Nicholas Mirzoeff, is "the formal condition of contemporary visual culture"[8] or "the simultaneous display and interaction of a variety of modes of visuality".[9]

Such an outlook allows for an insightful reading of the visual narrative on a level apart from an analysis

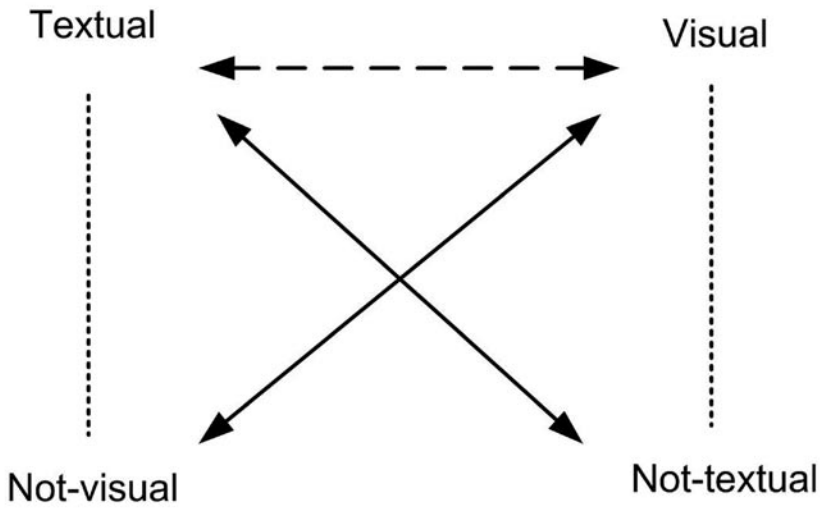

Fig. 4. The scheme of interaction between textual, visual, not-visual and not-textual dominances that determines different models of political engagement

of visual allusions to the verbal or textual. In this way, one has to accept the presence of certain interdependent visual structures and elements in any visual discourse on any picture. And even more, with reference to political art, one has to acknowledge that it is precisely intervisuality that creates the greatest tension between visual and textual discourse. It is precisely intervisuality that produces a meaning that is different from the proclaimed meaning of political art [fig. 3].[10]

But what meaning is produced, and what utterance is expressed by the intervisuality of the visual discourse of *Iskra*? To answer this question one must consider what the New York art critic John Haber said about Vermeer's painting entitled *Woman Reading a Letter*: "The beauty of a Vermeer hinges on an outspoken refusal to speak its own language. Roland Barthes described tragedy as the myth of the failure of myth. Vermeer's meaning is the myth of the failure of meaning".[11] And so one could continue: the meaning of Zariņš's *Iskra* is the myth of the failure of political meaning, and the rise of the power of pictorial meaning.

Zariņš's appropriation of Vermeer is not unintentional or innocent. By quoting the painter's artistic language in a politically engaged picture, he not only emancipates intervisuality, but raises ironic or even self-ironic questions about the visual discourses of painting and their role in contemporary visual culture. There is no ambiguity – any kind of irony deconstructs a political message, and Zariņš's *Iskra* is no exception. While the ordinary viewer (and one may suppose the ordinary *apparatchik*) may perceive this painting as depicting an episode of underground revolutionary struggle, anyone with some knowledge of art history cannot avoid seeing the ironic message produced by the intervisual connotations within it.

And thus, one must presume that the recognition of a deconstruction of political text as a result of the intervisuality of visual discourse confirms the need to revise our accustomed interpretation of the history of Soviet art. The story of Soviet art is not about the struggle between artists and politicians, it is the story of the contradictory engagement of visual discourse in political text. It is the story of the struggle and interaction between textual and visual modes of communication that resulted in different models of political art dominated by textual and visual engagement – rather than by textual or visual engagement alone [fig. 4].[12]

Notes

[1] Daniel T. Keegan, 'Foreword', in: Peter Selz, *Art of Engagement. Visual Politics in California and Beyond,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006, p. xii.
[2] W. J. Thomas Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 3.
[3] More about these categories defined by Mitchell see ibid., pp. 89-90.
[4] Ibid., pp. 325-326.
[5] See for example *Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window* (1657) by Vermeer van Delft (oil on canvas, 83 x 64.5 cm, Gemäldegalerie, Dresden). Excellent whitewashed wall also in *Woman with a Lute near a Window* (1663, oil on canvas, 51.4 x 45.7 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).
[6] Examples in Vermeer's works include *A Lady Drinking and a Gentleman* (c. 1658, oil on canvas, 66.3 x 76.5 cm, Staatliche Museem, Berlin); *A Lady and Two Gentlemen* (c. 1659, oil on canvas, 78 x 68 cm, Herzog Anton-Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig); *Girl Interrupted at Her Music* (1660-1661, oil on canvas, 39.4 x 44.5 cm, Frick Collection, New York).
[7] Mieke Bal, Norman Bryson, 'Semiotics and Art History', in: *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 73, no. 2, 1991, pp. 174-208.
[8] Nicholas Mirzoeff, 'The Subject of Visual Culture', in: Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.), *The Visual Culture Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 3.
[9] Ibid., p. 3.
[10] We could use modified Göran Sonesson's model (more about this model see Göran Sonesson, *Pictorial Concepts. Inquiries into the Semiotic Heritage and its Relevance to the Analysis of the Visual World*, Lund: Aris/Lund University Press, 1989, p. 340; and about its modification see Andris Teikmanis, 'Pictures, Politics and Power', in: *VIIIth Congress of the AISV-IAVS – International Association for Visual Semiotics*, *2007*, *SEMIO ISTANBUL 2007*, Stambul: Stambul Kültür Üniversitesi, vol. 2, 2007, pp. 671-675.) to illustrate the interaction between intertextuality and intervisuality and picture (i.e. picture thing and picture object) and its utterance (picture subject).
[11] John Haber, 'The Death of the Symbol', in: Haber's Art Reviews, 2004. http://www.haberarts.com/vermeer1.htm
[12] More about these models of political engagement see Teikmanis, 2007, pp. 669-679.

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Vėlyvojo sovietmečio politinis menas – tarp metanaratyvo ir intervizualumo

Reikšminiai žodžiai: propaganda, angažuotumas, intervizualumas, sovietinis menas, Latvijos tapyba.

Santrauka

Meno ir politikos santykiai visada buvo prieštaringi, bet XX amžius dar labiau pablogino šią istoriją. Tuo tarpu pagrindinis meno ir politikos prieštaravimo šaltinis – ne moralinės atsakomybės ar meninės laisvės sritis, bet įvairūs komunikavimo būdai.

Politinis diskursas visuomet tekstualus, t. y. pagrįstas tekstu, ir todėl politinė komunikacija visada perteikia tekstines reikšmes. Šiuo požiūriu politinis menas turėtų būti apibūdinamas kaip perdengtas tekstu. Tokie teiginiai galėtų būti teisingi stebint stalinistinio režimo užsakyto meno pavyzdžius. Tačiau teksto dominavimas politiniame mene ne visais atvejais buvo pastovus. Dogmatinio socialistinio realizmo atsisakymas XX a. 6-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigoje prisidėjo prie meninių priemonių peržiūrėjimo ir politinio meno lauke.

Indulio Zariņšo (1929-1997) nutapyta *Iskra* (1965) iš pradžių atrodo lyg akivaizdus anksčiau minėto teksto dominavimo įrodymas. Pasakojimas apie pirmąjį pogrindinį marksistų laikraštį, kuris buvo platinamas Rusijoje, priklausė sovietiniam oficialiam politiniam metanaratyvui, o šis paveikslas galėtų būti tame metanaratyve įkūnyto politinio mito iliustracija. Tačiau *Iskros* vizualinė matrica turi ne tik šias tekstines, bet ir keletą vizualinių nuorodų.

Šių nuorodų šaltinis – ne tik mūsų realaus gyvenimo vizualinė patirtis, kiti Indulio Zariņšo ar jo bendraamžių kūriniai, bet ir Jano Vermeerio (1632-1675) kūriniai.

Tokios tarpusavyje susijusios ir trikdančios nuorodos reikalauja apmąstyti vizualių diskursų vaidmenį politiniame mene. Kartu egzistuoja platus politinių naratyvų ir vizualinių diskursų spektras, leidžiantis nustatyti skirtingus politinio meno modelius priklausomai nuo to, kas dominuoja – tekstas, vizualumas, netekstas ar nevizualumas.

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Language and Politics: Expressionism in Lithuanian Propaganda Painting during the Thaw

Key words: Thaw, society, individualism, painting, visual language, expressionism, propaganda.

This essay focuses on the period of the Khrushchev Thaw which signifies the process of liberalisation and modernisation of Soviet life and culture as well as significant changes in the aesthetic values of the visual arts. The main reforms in painting of that period were influenced by a critical approach towards the doctrine of socialist realism which had prevailed in Soviet art since 1934 and a rehabilitation of early modernist visual language which was unacceptable during the years of the Stalinist regime. As defined by Zhdanovist culture policy, a form in socialist realist art was supposed to be "objective", figurative and mimetic though the contents of this art was actually based on a "performative mimesis" (not a referential one).[1] The modernist mode of representation, by contrast, allowed the celebration of the "subjective" individuality of an artist and was ruled by the (utopian) imperative of (self)-expression. An encounter of these two different artistic ideologies – socialist realism and modernism – in official Soviet painting of the Thaw was significant politically and aesthetically. Like many, at first sight neutral, purely aesthetical practices, the shift of artistic language was involved in the game of power and control and resonated within the socio-cultural context of the period. The essay is aimed at an analysis of how modernist visual language replaced socialist realism in Lithuanian propaganda painting in the 1960s and a discussion of its political meanings.

Fig. 1. Leopoldas Surgailis, After the Rain, 1962, oil on cardboard, 115 x 132 cm. Courtesy: National M. K. Čiurlionis Museum of Art, Kaunas. Photo by the author

IDEOLOGY OF INDIVIDUALISM

The late 1950s and the early 1960s was a short yet very dynamic period of change of the Soviet system, known as the "Khrushchev Thaw". Political reforms and the modernisation of life of Soviet society dating from 1956 was a significant ideological twist in both social life and culture. As the period of Stalin's rule ended the ideology of *collectivism* (or *holism*, to use Louis Dumont's term) started gradually being pervaded by varying forms of *individualism.* In the USSR's inside politics and administration this meant an increased interest in cultural differences among the fifteen Soviet republics, recognition of relative autonomy in the structure of administrative subordination, the decentralisation of state control system etc. However the reformist campaigns which

Fig. 2. Leopoldas Surgailis, Country Music Band, 1964-1965, tempera on cardboard, 116 x 134 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius. Photo by the author

took place in the Soviet Union were short-lived and inconsistent. Even the most significant projects of reorganisation ended in political and economical failure at the beginning of the 1960s. For example, national diversity within the USSR was officially accepted as early as 1953 when the Soviet republics were granted individual regalia (including national anthems and flags) symbolising their provisory sovereignty, however this pluralistic and nationalistic vision of socialism was replaced with the new universalistic myth about future communist society shortly after the 21st Congress of the Communist Party at the end of the 1950s.[2]

Individualism also grew in importance within the culture of daily life during the Thaw. Khrushchev's government attended to the daily needs of the people, their living standards and surrounding environment (for example the new housing program was developed alongside huge industrial projects and the so-called *komunalka* apartments were gradually replaced by individual flats). And yet these years would later be symbolised by the Soviet urban planning phenomenon of a standard flat in a standard house built in a standard block.[3] In other words advances in *individualism* and the notion of privacy was immediately followed by overall *typifying* which soon became a tool for standardising and controlling the diversity of individual choices.

The emergence of fashion and the new habits of consumption that entered the daily life of the Soviet citizenry as the economic conditions improved are another significant evidence of the modernisation of life. The society which was accustomed to the experience of the harsh restrictions of Stalin's regime was now facing an increase in the supply of goods and consequently the possibility to choose and euphoria of individual style. The years of the Thaw witnessed the birth and boom of fashion, life style and interior design magazines, while the ideals of asceticism of the post-war years were gradually replaced by the promises of consumerism. Unlike other countries of the Communist bloc, however, the Soviet Union kept following the principle of "ascetic consumerism" by controlling consumption through various public campaigns of "aesthetic education" and criticising consumers' fantasies as antisocial, individualistic, and akin to foreign values of the bourgeoisie.[4]

In summary, on the one hand the modernisation of life in the Soviet society sustained quotidian forms of *individualism* such as privacy, originality and freedom to choose. On the other hand, any manifestation of individual taste in designing one's personal environment or creating an individuated life style were simultaneously controlled through indirect means of aesthetic propaganda, meant to assure new norms and new socio-aesthetical ideals proper to the Soviet citizens.

LANGUAGE OF EXPRESSIONISM

The ideology of individualism, which was loudly but also paradoxically rehabilitated in the social life in the Thaw period was also important to the visual arts and painting. Here it was reflected by *the striving for self-expression* as a form of maintaining a coherent narrative of identity – of the modern individual.[5] In Lithuanian painting of that period the conventions of post-war socialist realism with its stress on "objective," narrative and mimetic image were replaced with the language of one of the historical modernist styles – expressionism. Thus socialist realist pictures started to be created according to the new model of visual communication based upon the principle of *expression*.

According to theorist and art historian Hal Foster, expressionism as a language is a paradox in itself. In expressionist art the problem of language lies within its very definition and it is related to one of its most important philosophical assumptions, that of striving for *immediate* expression. In expressionist painting a painterly sign is considered to be "an authentic" trace of a display of the subject's will, a sensor directly signalling inner emotions instead of a linguistic code with a conventional signification. Any symbolical representation, however, works under a principle of language – a system of arbitrary signs – whereas "unmediated expression is a philosophical impossibility".[6] Expressionist strategies of creating images, therefore, have to be analysed as a specific language. Even though it denies its own linguistic status it is of a linguistic nature and consequently is characterised by meanings reliant on cultural context rather than some independently substantiated signification.

Referring to expressionism as a historical formation Foster points out that expressionism emerged as a result of conflict with the dominant conventions of traditional visual representation. Expressionism

Fig. 3. Silvestras Džiaukštas, Health-Officers, 1964, oil on canvas, 144 x 109 cm. Source: Dailė, vol. 7, 1966, p. 5

therefore means a change of the language codes: if the codes of classical representation in art were based on concealment of material elements of a painting, simulating verisimilitude of the image, expressionist art liberates material elements of a painting from the representational function – simulating immediacy of expression. Both cases involve the principle of substitution: "the classical painter substitutes for things his representations of them", while "the expressionist substitutes for these representations the freed marks and colours that signal self-expression".[7] In his attempts to overcome the effect of *mediation* the expressionist artist highlights materiality of the painterly sign, and the subjective psycho-physical imprint on the surface of the canvas and thereby intensifies the affective suggestion of the image. Consequently expressionism can be qualified as a unique type of visual language which requires two main elements to communicate – *the expressive self* and *the emphatic viewer*. Besides which, as with any form of language, meanings of the codes of expressionist language are determined by their cultural and political context and necessarily represent a specific relation to ideology.

The expressionist model of communication in the Lithuanian painting of the Thaw period was embodied in the principles of the so-called "emotional colourism", based on "spontaneous" gesture, psychological use of colour and an "emotional" relation with depicted object. The official painting of the 1960s is teeming with expressionist visual rhetoric as it was well suited to both "politically neutral" art including landscapes and pictures with folk motifs and scenes of daily life (Leopoldas Surgailis' *After the Rain*, 1962 [fig. 1] and his other work containing motifs of harmonised folklore, called *Country Music Band*, 1964-1965 [fig. 2]; and every day events depicted in the paintings by Silvestras Džiaukštas' *Health-Officers*, 1964 [fig. 3] and Vincentas Gečas' *Car Crash*, 1964 [fig. 4.]) and propaganda art, which I will analyse later in the essay. The idea of the expressive self was realised here by the individual plastic solutions, the "authentic" touch of the painter, and the upholding of personal style. Expressionistic language in painting was therefore important not only aesthetically, but also with regards to politics,

so far as it supported the narrative of artistic individuality and the value of the personal resisting to the collectivist ideology of the Soviet regime.

TOOL OF PROPAGANDA

As a visual language expressionism was used not only in the "politically neutral" genres but also in propaganda painting of the Thaw period, i.e. it became established as a means of visual rhetoric commensurate with the ideological contents of the picture. Expressionist representation was often applied by artists in order to transmit the ideology of the Soviet system – to express dramatic images of earlier revolutionary struggles, heroic images of the socialist present, a new man and a new life within the communist future. But the new visual language changed a mode of propaganda in socialist realism. The expressionist rhetoric "peeled away" the shell of open propaganda from socialist realist images and suggested more intimate, more individual and psychologically more affective versions of these images stimulating the viewer's empathy and emotional response, i.e. proposing certain ways of reading the work of art to the audience and prompting particular ideological responses to it.

An apposite case-study of the Thaw period presents itself in relation to two well-known paintings and their public reception which reveals how the content of the works had to be perceived by contemporaries. The works by famous Lithuanian painters Leopoldas Surgailis (b. 1928) and Silvestras Džiaukštas (b. 1928) belong to the historical genre, that is, the most rigorously regulated propaganda genre to reflect the official socialist version of history. Thus, the analysis of works of this genre reveals how expressionist language was used instrumentally and concealed the political content of paintings under a rhetorical veil of "authenticity". Both of the works analysed here were produced in the late 1960s, they were shown in the most important exhibitions of the time and both attracted the attention of art critics. Both paintings were considered to be representative of their times and of the historical genre absorbing the most important ideas of the 1960s.

Fig. 4. Vincentas Gečas, Car Crash, 1964, oil on canvas, 94 x 95 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius. Photo by the author

The Republican exhibition of 1967 was sacred to the 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and therefore the works dealing with historical subjects were regarded primarily important. Naturally, these works attracted the special attention of art reviewers, especially the work of impressive size laconically titled *The Year 1917* (1967, 146 x 270 cm) by Leopoldas Surgailis [fig. 5]. The work of extended horizontal size depicts three men fighting a fantastical creature. The figures and the background are painted in an abstract manner, using large colour spots and long brush strokes. Although the image is not based on a narrative story and the shapes of the human figures are not detailed, the viewer is proposed an easily readable symbolism – one clearly recognises the heraldic double-eagle, holding the symbols of monarchy, in the figure of the fantastical beast, the details of the uniform and ammunition of the Red Army soldiers in the figure of man, and the symbol of Bolshevik revolution in the red sun over the heads of the fighters. The Soviet viewer could easily identify the abstracted fight scene with the "real" historical events: according to the press, the painting depicts how a worker, a peasant and a sailor are overthrowing "rotten Czarism and capitalism".

What was perceived to be the most important and valuable in this painting by Soviet art critics, however, was not the interpretation of history but on the contrary – the a-historical character of this picture:

Fig. 5. Leopoldas Surgailis, The Year 1917, 1967, synthetic tempera on canvas, 146 x 270 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius. Photo courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

"Surgailis was the only one who has not fallen into historicism in his interpretation of the issue of the October revolution; he has succeeded in finding such a pure symbolism, a generalisation almost developed into abstraction and a thrusting energy that his work may be considered to be the keystone in the development of figurative art".[8] The work contained two interrelated planes: history and myth. The former plane was supported by clear historical references, while the latter was manifested through the ritualistic nature and heraldic symbolism of the image. The depiction of the historical event was turned into myth through the expressionist image which was to celebrate "revolutionary romanticism". According to Roland Barthes, myth as a "secondary semiological system" comes into being by erasing the meaning of an image – taking away all the history, cultural determination and specificity of an image and turning it into an abstract illustration of an idea. However the meaning of an image is not actually eliminated but rather suspended, as the viewer, to whom this particular mythical message is addressed, "experiences myth as a true and simultaneously unreal story".[9]

In *The Year 1917* the codes of expressionist language, like bright contrasting colours, dynamic and simple composition, rudely schematised figures and unconcealed painterly gesture, "saved" the symbolic scene of the October revolution from being openly propagandist and provided it with the dimension of "universality" of the struggle between good and evil. Thus emotional suggestion rather than stimulation of historical memory or reflection determined the appeal of the image to contemporary viewers, accustomed to a discredited Soviet version of history.

Surgailis' work *The Year 1917* as an expressionist version of propaganda painting is representative of the strategies of turning history into myth, meanwhile my other example of the painting of the period displays the ways of using expressionist rhetoric for the personification of history. The painting *Death of an Activist* by Silvestras Džiaukštas (1969, 165 x 150 cm) was first exhibited in the Republican art exhibition *Following Lenin's Way* in 1970 [fig. 6]. Together with some other paintings the work was later moved to the Lenin's Centennial exhibition in Moscow: which is a significant because selection of works – for all-Soviet exhibition, in the capital – was rigorous and conservative. Nevertheless, the painting by Džiaukštas was noticed not only by local critics but also by Soviet art critics first and foremost for unconventional interpretation of its historical subject.

The work depicting a male body lying in the closed space of the room used the principles of the expressionist scenography based on the principles of en-

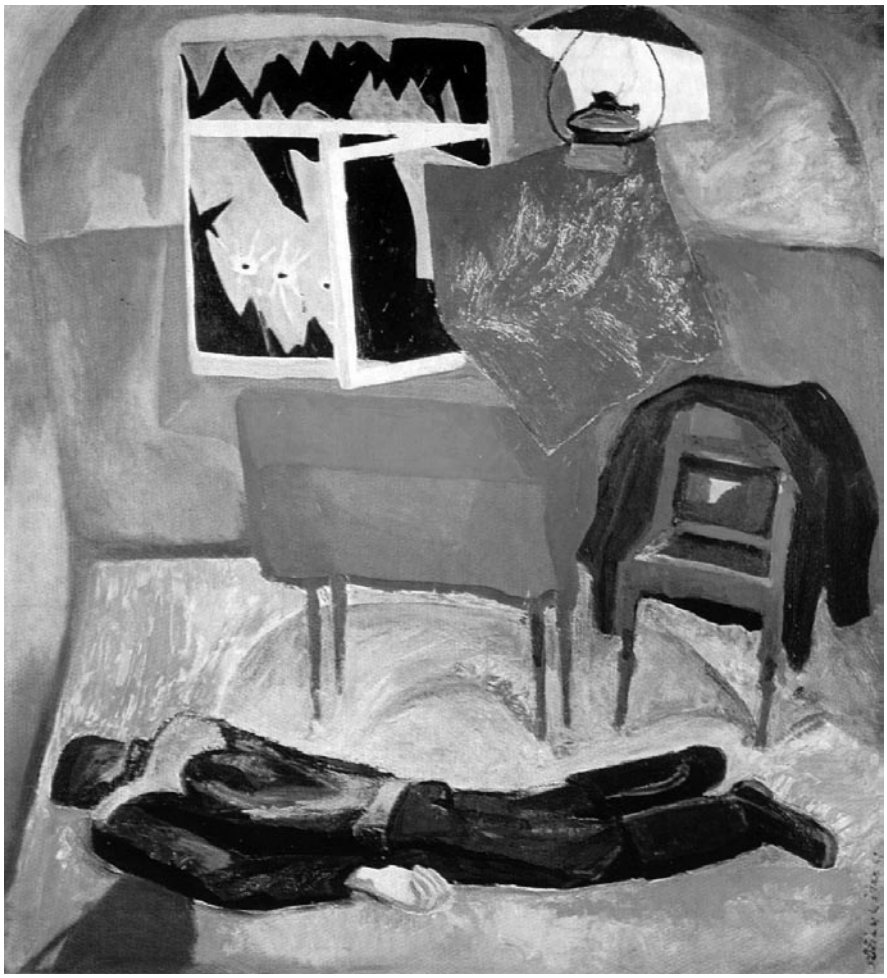

Fig. 6. Silvestras Džiaukštas, Death of an Activist, 1969, oil on canvas, 165 x 150 cm. Courtesy: the artist. Source: Silvestras Džiaukštas, Vilnius: Vaga, 1975 (non-paginated)

ergising contrast. Soviet art critics didn't hide the strong impression the visual language of the picture had made on them:

> "The colouristic composition of the canvas has something drastic and challenging about it, particularly the torn down blue curtain in the yellow room behind the red table … The atmosphere of the painting is trivial and yet unreal … Quite a few things ... and nothing stand still – everything seems stirred. Even the things that are expected to be still have asymmetric shapes and lack balance: the wall is as though waving, the table painted in "reversed" perspective with very thin fragile legs looks incredible, excitingly inapprehensible … the existence of that kind of wall is impossible, the explosive movement would soon crack it down and the table is not supposed to stand, the lamp can not possibly shine with this lunatic white light. Altogether it can't be true: after all nobody wished to die, nobody had to either…".[10]

Looking at the picture it is evident why the interior captured the attention of the critics: the figure of man, painted with focus on the volume of the body, demonstrating realistic details and diminishing the intensity of colours contradicted the expressive character of the setting. Yet the bodily verisimilitude of the depicted hero standing in sharp contrast against the phantom room surroundings could stimulate empathy and emotional identification of the viewer.

The emotional impact of Džiaukštas' *The Death of an Activist* on the viewer had been an important element

of the Soviet propaganda as in contrast to the work by Surgailis, called *The Year 1917*, it was focused not on the "international" revolution, but rather the national history of Lithuania. The picture refers to the legendary armed resistance of Lithuanian partisans to the Soviet occupation that extended from the post-war years until 1954. Naturally, the scene depicted by Džiaukštas corresponds to the official Soviet version of the events – an activist of Communist party or *komsomol* killed by the "bandits" (as partisans were then referred to). The message of the picture however was much more ambiguous. It reminded another famous work of the same period, namely, the film about the post-war resistance struggles in Lithuania – *Nobody Wished to Die* (directed by Vytautas Žalakevičius, 1967), mentioned by the way in critical articles about Džiaukštas' canvas. The film and the picture were related not only by the similar national topos – the image that stimulated and actualised the historical memory of the nation but also the film was shot with similar aesthetics to those employed in the painting. Both the painting and the movie were different from the earlier propaganda art of socialist realism in that they leaned upon specificity of artistic language and its psychological effects rather than literary narrative and straightforward ideological identification of their characters. These works, in other words, were produced according to hidden rather than open principles of propaganda. This way the empathy of the viewer was stimulated more intensely as s/he could experience historical trauma not so much as some particular political event but as "a very personal reminiscence"[11] of the difficult past.

Both examples of Lithuanian propaganda painting of the Thaw period discussed here reveal how expressionist language was used instrumentally to transmit values and ideas of the Soviet system. The striving towards self-expression – the main idea of expressionism as an artistic ideology – was not realised in painting of the 1960s: there were no psychoanalytically complex images testing the limits of subjectivity that would dangerously question the social integrity of the Soviet individual. On the contrary, the expressionist language was successfully adapted to convey official Soviet ideology, for instance, the socialist version of history in propaganda painting.

In expressionist propaganda painting a romantic version of history was generated by the use of psychologically suggestive and symbolically abstract / a-historical images wrapped in rhetoric of "authenticity". These historical paintings primarily encouraged emotional simulations of political attitudes, and not a political reflection of the past. Abstracted, symbolical, "naturalised" images of struggle, violence and mourning conveyed through expressionist language universalised threat, which was perfectly consistent with the Cold War rhetoric. Moreover, expressionism in propaganda painting could guarantee the striking power of its message – it was psychologically strong and clear enough to leave no space for multiple interpretations or "misguided" reading of the pictures.

In the context of the USSR emerging as a post-totalitarian system – from the regime of Stalinist totalitarianism – the turn of expressionist language into the dominant mode of visual representation in Soviet Lithuanian painting also responded to general processes of social life: for example, the ambiguous fate of individualist ideas at the end of the political Thaw and the gradual internalisation of the system by its citizens.

Notes

[1] "A clear class position of an artist, devotion to the Party line and ideological engagement had to first and foremost be proven by his attempts to detect in reality something that was not actually there – the "revolutionary development", embodiment of a particular social power, abundance of social optimism – and to depict it". Erika Grigoravičienė, 'Tema, gyvenimas, žmogus – kūrybiškosios socrealizmo plėtros gairės' ('Theme, Life, Man: Guidelines for the Creative Development of Socialist Realism'), in: *Menotyra*, no. 3, 2005, p. 32.

[2] "The 21st Party Congress witnessed the birth of new myths about the USSR entering communism. The project of socialism was declared complete and since then it was all about "building communist society". Nikolia Vert, *Istorija sovietskovo gosudarstva. 1900-1991* (*History of Soviet Union. 1900-1991*), Moskva: Vies mir, 2003, p. 414.

[3] The standardisation of the living environment was designed to decrease the privacy of individual space and to reduce the reticence of personal life. See Iurii Gerchuk, 'The Aesthetics of Everyday Life in the Khrushchev Thaw in the USSR (1954-64)', in: Susan E. Reid, David Crowley (eds.), *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material*

Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe, Oxford, New York: Berg, 2000, pp. 87-88.

[4] For example in 1960-1961 Lithuanian cultural weekly *Literatūra ir menas* (*Literature and Art*) published a series of articles under the heading *Conversations on taste* intended to inculcate "correct" understanding of what is beauty in the daily environment of socialist man into the general public.

[5] Sociologist Anthony Giddens defines personal identity as an ability to "continue with particular narrative" and sees the narratives of modern ego as related to the social phenomena of late modernity such as new forms of intimacy (defined by "pure" relationship instead of traditional relations among individuals determined by family or social interdependences), development of personal "life style" (increase in significance of individual decisions and acts in post-traditional social order and the variety of choice it brought about) and striving for self-expression, maintaining ego reflexivity as one of the most important elements of modern identity. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997. Here I refer to Lithuanian translation: Anthony Giddens, *Modernybė ir asmens tapatumas: asmuo ir visuomenė vėlyvosios modernybės amžiuje*, trans. by Vytautas Radžvilas, Vilnius: Pradai, 2000, pp. 75, 102-128.

[6] Paul de Man, quoted from Hal Foster, 'The Expressive Fallacy', in: Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, Seattle, Washington: Bay Press, 1992, p. 59.

[7] Foster, 1992, pp. 60-61.

[8] Algimantas Patašius, 'Mintys po parodos. Tapyba' ('Thoughts after the Exhibition. Painting'), in: *Kultūros barai*, no. 12, 1967, p. 20.

[9] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, 1957, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957. Here I refer to Lithuanian translation: Roland Barthes, 'Mitas šiandien. Iš knygos *Mitologijos*' ('Myth Today. From *Mythologies*'), in: Roland Barthes, *Teksto malonumas* (*The Pleasure of the Text*), trans. by Galina Baužytė-Čepinskienė, Vilnius: Vaga, 1991, p. 102.

[10] Svetlana Červonaja, 'Įtvirtinant kūrybinius atradimus' ('Fixing the Creative Discoveries'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 4 July 1970.

[11] Gražina Kliaugienė, 'Su sava tiesa' ('With Own Truth'), in: *Kultūros barai*, no. 2, 1973, p. 17.

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Kalba ir politika: ekspresionizmas Lietuvos propagandinėje tapyboje *atšilimo* metais

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *atšilimas*, visuomenė, individualizmas, tapyba, vaizdinė kalba, ekspresionizmas, propaganda.

Santrauka

XX a. šeštojo dešimtmečio pabaigos – septintojo dešimtmečio sovietinės tapybos reformos buvo susijusios su kritiška socialistinio realizmo doktrinos peržiūra ir grįžimu prie ankstyvojo modernizmo vaizdinės kalbos. Kaip ir daugelis iš pirmo žvilgsnio neutralių, grynai estetinių, praktikų tuometinės tapybos kalbiniai ieškojimai priklausė galios ir kontrolės žaidimui, grindė normas ir kūrė alternatyvas, ženklino ideologijų kaitą ir atitiko bendrąsias laikotarpio idėjas. Šiame straipsnyje analizuojama politinė ekspresionizmo, kaip vaizdinės kalbos, reikšmė *atšilimo* metų Lietuvos propagandinėje tapyboje.

Ekspresionizmo įsitvirtinimas šio laikotarpio tapyboje siejamas su individualizmo ideologijos reabilitacija sovietinėje sistemoje, po 1956 metų prasidėjus politinėms reformoms ir socialinio gyvenimo liberalizavimui. Tuometinei tapybai būdingas ekspresionistinis vaizdinės komunikacijos modelis atgaivino saviraiškos ir „autentiško" pranešimo siekį ir palaikė meninės individualybės naratyvą. Tačiau straipsnyje atlikta garsių septintojo dešimtmečio tapytojų Leopoldo Surgailio ir Silvestro Džiaukšto istorinių paveikslų analizė atskleidžia, kad ekspresionistinė kalba iš esmės nepaneigė socialistinio paveikslo politinio angažuotumo ir priklausomybės kolektyvistinei ideologijai, kurią išreiškė herojiški revoliucinių kovų vaizdiniai. Priešingai, ekspresyvios meninio vaizdo kūrimo priemonės tarsi nulupo

nuo šių vaizdinių ligtolinei dailei būdingą akivaizdų propagandos luobą ir pasiūlė intymesnes, individualesnes, psichologiškai paveikesnes jų versijas, stimuliuojančias žiūrovo įsijautimą ir emocinį išgyvenimą. Ekspresionistinė kalba įtaigiai jungėsi tiek su mitologine istorijos interpretacija Surgailio kūryboje, tiek su istorijos personifikacija Džiaukšto darbuose, taip skatindama ne politinę praeities refleksiją, o jausmines politinio požiūrio simuliacijas. Abstrahuoti, simboliški, natūralizuoti kovos, prievartos, gedulo vaizdiniai, perteikti pasitelkus ekspresyvios kalbos figūras, žiūrovui siūlė asmeniškai pajusti „universalią“ visuotinę grėsmę, kuri puikiai atitiko *šaltojo karo* retoriką. Ekspresyvus paveikslas galėjo užtikrinti smūginę pranešimo jėgą, pakankamai aiškią ir stiprią, kad nepaliktų vietos interpretacijų įvairovei, kartu ir „klaidingam“ perskaitymui.

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Self-Historicisation as an Artistic Strategy: Neue Slowenische Kunst, Dragan Živadinov, and *East Art Map* by Irwin

Key words: self-historicisation, historiography, institutional critique in the Eastern Europe, Slovenian contemporary art and politics.

The development of art in the former Eastern Europe was based upon different models of history and conceptions of the public sphere than those that existed in the West. The fact that the art system (art market and galleries, associations, private collectors) and art context (art critics, museum curators, art historians dealing with contemporary conceptual and political artistic practices) as developed in the West did not exist in the East created different conditions for the functioning of art.

Historiography, as Igor Zabel writes, never was, and never is a neutral and objective activity:

> "It is always a construction of an image of an historical period or development … This construction plays a specific role in the symbolic and ideological systems throughout which various systems of power manifest themselves on the level of pubic consciousness. The fields of culture and art, thus art and cultural history, are those spheres where it becomes evident how the systems of power function symbolically. They namely construct stories and development systems, and simultaneously present them as "objective" facts. Those viewpoints that are incompatible with such constructions, are, on the other hand, marginalised, hidden, or excluded".[1]

Knowing about the conditions and manipulation of the emergence of documents which are officially presented as "objective facts", neutralises the ideas and knowledge that we inherit through education and society, and prevents us from taking them for granted.

In the foreword to an exhibition entitled *Interrupted Histories* (Moderna Galerija, 2006), Zdenka Badovinac writes: "...because the local institutions that should have been systematising neo-avant-garde art and its tradition either did not exist, or were disdainful of such art, the artists themselves were forced to be their own art historians and archivists, a situation that still exists in some places today".[2] It might seem that artists and curators have exchanged roles. Such self-historicisation occurred due to "the absence of systematised historisation in spaces outside, or on the margins, of the Western world", which, in Badovinac's words, can be called "spaces of interrupted histories". The artists thus act as archivists of those of their own and other artists' projects that were usually marginalised by local politics, and made invisible in the international art context; or as curators who research their own historical context; or as historians, anthropologists, ethnologists who record parallel and subordinate histories.

These achievements in the field of self-definition on the part of the artists are recognised also by Boris Groys, who writes that

> "It would be neither wise nor fair to demand of Western art institutions that they perform a task which instead is actually the duty of East European artists, curators, and art crit-

ics: to reflect upon the specific context of contemporary art in Eastern Europe through its own art. Those who refuse to contextualise themselves will be implanted into a context by someone else, and then run the risk of no longer recognizing themselves".[3]

Ilya Kabakov explains this very artistic strategy that was part of East European artistic practices since the early 1960s (and that I will discuss briefly in terms of artistic positions in Slovenia), via a definition of the term "self-description":

> "…the author would imitate, re-create that very same "outside" perspective of which he was deprived in actual reality. He became simultaneously an author and an observer. Deprived of a genuine viewer, critic, or historian, the author unwittingly became them himself, trying to guess what his works meant "objectively". He attempted to "imagine" that very "History" in which he was functioning, and which was "looking" at him. Obviously, this "History" existed only in his imagination, and had its own image for each artist… What was important was that these images, which had nothing to do with reality, burned rather brightly and constantly".[4]

The artists of these unofficial scenes became responsible for much of the best writing on the visual arts that has emerged from Central and Eastern Europe. Their proclamations are frequently more open and uncompromising than those of the critics and theoreticians, who consciously or unconsciously self-censored their writings in order to be published in the official journals. Many of these writings are articulated in the form of manifestos, thus clearly demonstrating an affinity towards the legacy of the avant-garde. They differ in the fact that the later manifestos were usually created as the only existing document on a certain artistic activity. They are self-explanatory, programmatic and self-contextualising, and function as the basic material for thinking about the strategy of self-historicisation.

These artists were thus constructing their own context – as declared in the principal 1990s slogan of the group Irwin – where they functioned simultaneously as both observer and object of observation. Irwin formed in 1983. In 1984, together with theatre director Dragan Živadinov and the multimedia/music group Laibach, the Irwin group founded the Neue Slowenische Kunst collective, a well-known phenomenon featuring radical and controversial artistic practices. Irwin's above-mentioned essential axiom arose from the fact that an individual (artist,

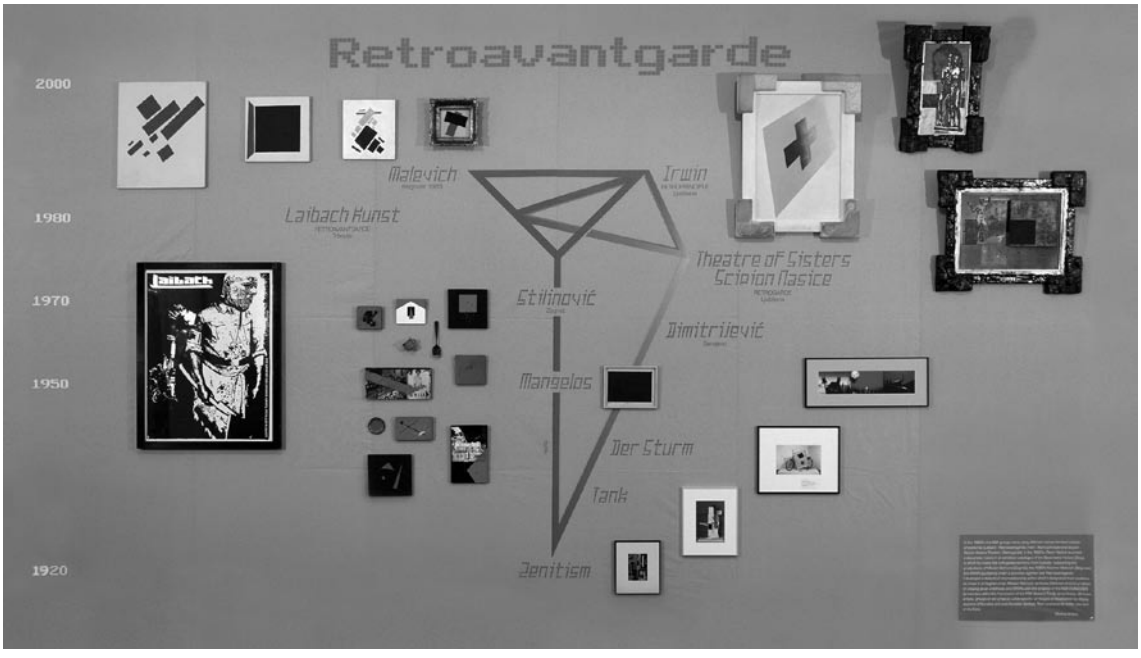

Fig. 1. Irwin, Retroavantgarde, 1994, mixed media

intellectual) in the East could actively intervene in the field of articulation on levels which otherwise are ascribed to the activities of institutions. Already in the 1980s Irwin became aware that an artist has to organise the context within which his or her work is read, because, if an "artistic work, artefact is not part of one story, narration, one system, then it does not exist, it cannot even happen".[5]

Before coming back to Irwin, I will describe the theatre and artistic practices most closely related to the notion of self-historicisation and creation of an immediate personality myth, of one of the founding members of the NSK collective – theatre director Dragan Živadinov.

In 1983, Živadinov formed a theatre group called *Sisters Scipion Nasice Theatre*. After its self-abolition in 1987, he formed the *Cosmokinetic Theatre Red Pilot* (1987-1990). Živadinov used these first two theatre groups of the 1980s to perform a precise ontological time-frame, predicting and fulfilling their creation, along with events and the act of self-abolition.

Another theatre group, headed by Živadinov since 1995, took on the name of the Slovene space travel pioneer Herman Potočnik Noordung (1892-1929), and is now called *Cosmokinetic Cabinet Noordung*. In 1929 Potočnik published the ground-breaking book *Das Problem der Befahrung des Weltraums* (*The Problem of Space Travel*), in which he presented, for the first time, the technical details of a geostationary satellite, and inspired the next generation of space scientists. In 1995, Živadinov's *Cosmokinetic Cabinet Noordung* premiered a 50-year-long project based on a drama inspired by Potočnik entitled *Noordung 1995-2045*, which is called *One Versus One* (and is to last from 1995 until 2045). The theatre director has often repeated his own manifesto:

> "It is an indisputable fact that 95 witnesses were present at the *Cosmistic Action of Noordung* on April 20, 1995 at 10 pm. Eight actors and eight actresses acted out, with their skeletons, a verbal conflict construction which lasted one hour and 39 minutes in an inhabited sculpture for witnesses with a direct view from above. The actors and actresses will repeat this show, for the first time, ten years hence, on April 20, 2005. If any of the actors or actresses dies during this time, robotic costume-symbols will travel through their *mis-en-scène*. Where the dead actor pronounces words, rhythm will be inserted in the same time interval, or a melody in the case of a dead actress. The show will be repeated for the second time on April 20, 2015. The method will repeat itself. The third repetition will be in 2025. The fourth repetition will be in 2035, and the fifth and last will take place on April 20, 2045. By then, all the actors and actresses will be dead. Sixteen robotic costume-symbols and music will be installed in the inhabited sculpture. I, Dragan Živadinov, will send my body to the depth of the cosmos. I will die on May 1, 2045. I, Dragan Živadinov, yearn to become empty-bodied in the absolute nothing with my instinctive physicality".[6]

The end of the performance is thus previewed in the form of robotic satellites as substitute actors performing somewhere in the space above Earth.

This utopian project of total theatre, which has by now been realised precisely as it was announced, has at least two arguments for those who doubt the seriousness of such a mega-project. The first is that in 1999, the *Cabinet* performed a series of events called *Biomechanics Noordung* in a plane for parabolic flights, under conditions of approximately 40 seconds of microgravity, at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Star City, Russia. The second is that Živadinov undertook all the necessary medical check-ups that any cosmonaut has to pass. The second repetition of the *One Versus One* project happened in 2005 in Star City as well, namely in the swimming pool where cosmonauts train for space travel. The end of this particular self-written history will be observed by those of us who live until 2045.

Another type of self-historicisation is at stake in Irwin's case (and since their 23-year-long practice has been extremely varied, I will focus on only one

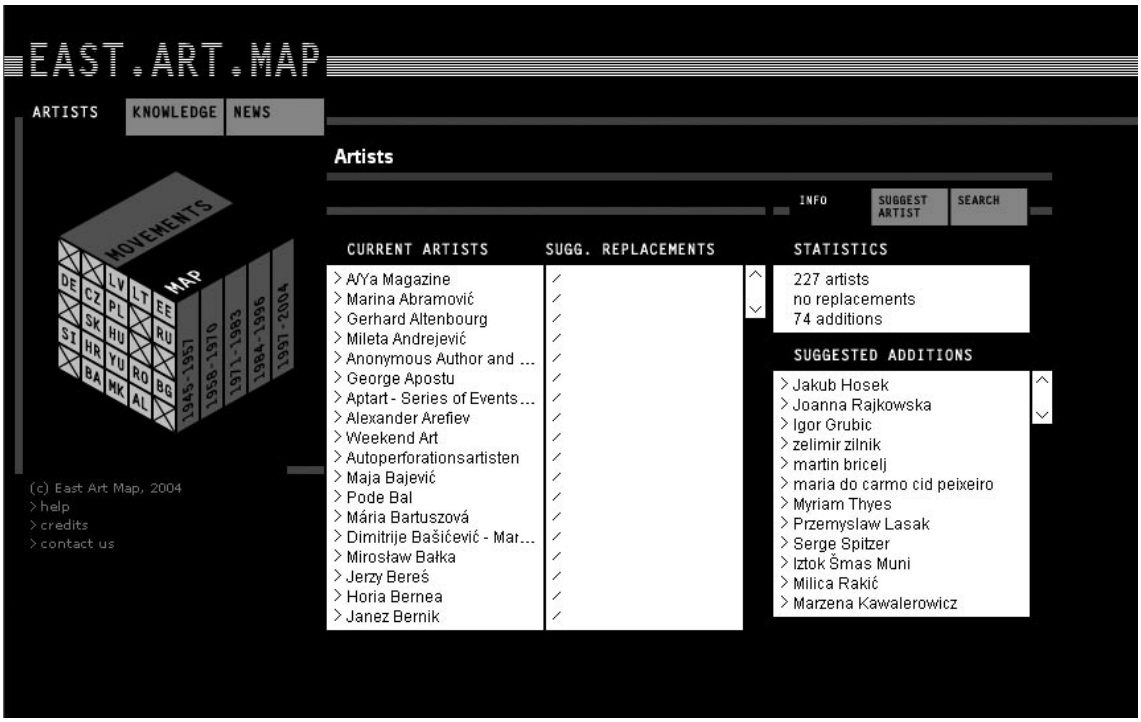

Fig. 2. Irwin, East Art Map Online, website of the East Art Map project, 2002-ongoing

of its aspects). In 1984, the newly established Irwin group defined its programme and its fundamental goal: to assert Slovene fine arts by means of representation based on the spectacular. The governing principles of their artistic activity were retro-principle, emphatic eclecticism, and assertion of nationality and national culture. *Retro-principle*, known also as *The Principle of Manipulation with the Memory of Visible Emphasised Eclecticism – A Platform for National Authenticity*, is defined not as a style or trend, but rather as a conceptual principle, a particular way to behave and act. In a diagram created in 2003, Irwin claimed the retro-principle to be the ultimate method according to which it works on its construction of context. There are three fields of interest wherein Irwin performs its artistic activities: "geopolitics" (projects like *NSK Embassy Moscow*, *Transnacionala*, *East Art Map*); "politics of the artificial person" (transformation of *NSK* to *State-in-time*, *Retroavantgarde – Ready-made avant-garde*, and other projects); and "instrumental politics" (collections, *East Art Map*).

With the beginning of the transitional period in the 1990s, when the doors to the Western art establishment (meaning international acclaim) were wide open and accessible, Irwin, as opposed to most groups, did not try to meld with the Western art system, but decided to articulate its own context. The basic premise was that, after the changes of the early 1990s, the conditions under which artists in the East worked were the only real capital available to them. Irwin therefore turned to the East in order to compare their experiences with those of other artists. The difference, which Irwin postulated from the 1990s as being inscribed in artistic production, of the East compared to the West, it labelled Eastern Modernism. The term was paradoxical regarding the internationalising and globalising institution of (Western) Modernism, and represents Irwin's attempt to actively intervene in the "grand narratives" of a Western-dominated art history, by construing a fictive art movement called "retroavantgarde" or "retrogarde" for the geographic space of Yugoslavia.

The installation called *Retroavantgarde* (first created in 1994) is a cartographic instrument to visualise the fictive art movement, a repetition of a discursive matrix. Connected under the common signifier of retroavantgarde were the most important projects of former Yugoslavia: Irwin, the crucial Croatian

conceptual artist Mladen Stilinović, and an artist from Belgrade known as Malevich. The scheme of the Yugoslavian fictive movement, extending from the present back to the neo-avant-garde and historical avant-garde, was presented in the installation with direct reference to Alfred H. Barr's *Diagram of Stylistic Evolution 1890-1935*, which was developed in 1936 by the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and has, since then, been the principal definition of the abstract art of modernism and its precursors, the European avant-garde movements. According to Irwin, which consolidates the already mentioned notion of "institutionalisation of friendship" as its central preoccupation – "History of art is a history of friendship".[7]

In the 1980s, Irwin began to actively reshape the consciousness and knowledge about the possible functioning of an art system. Given its belief that collections are extremely important tools, towards the end of the Yugoslavian period, together with the artist Jadran Adamović, Irwin initiated a collection called *Fra Yu Kult*. Financed by the Franciscan Široki Brijeg monastery in Lištica (now in Bosnia), it is the only collection of the art of Yugoslavia from the 1970s and 1980s which was compiled entirely by artists – without the involvement of any institution, curator, or critic. In 1994, Irwin and Adamović proposed to Zdenka Badovinac that they put together an art collection for Sarajevo. In this way, *Sarajevo 2000*, a collection for the future Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, came about. In 2000, Irwin was also involved in the creation of the new international collection for the Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana – *Arteast 2000+* – which emphasises a dialogue between historical and contemporary conceptual art positions in Eastern and Western Europe.

In reading the diagram of the construction of its context, Irwin's ambitious ongoing project-in-phases called *East Art Map*, is a continuation of the "instrumental politics" of collections. Irwin presented the first part of the project based on the axiom "history is not given", and on the belief that one has to actively intervene in its construction. The group invited 23 curators, critics and art historians from Central and Eastern Europe (including Iara Boubnova, Ekaterina Degot, Marina Gržinić, Elona Lubytė, Suzana Milevska, Viktor Misiano, Edi Muka, Piotr Piotrowski, and Igor Zabel) to select 10 local artists whom they considered the most crucial in terms of the development of contemporary art in Eastern Europe. The aim of the project is to show the art of the entire space of Eastern Europe in a unified scheme, outside of its national framework. Irwin wrote that

> "In Eastern Europe there are, as a rule, no transparent structures in which those events, artefacts and artists that are significant to the history of art have been organised into a referential system, accepted and respected outside the borders of a particular country. Instead, we encounter systems that are closed within national borders, whole series of stories and legends about art and artists who were opposed to this official art world. But written records about the latter are few and fragmented. Comparisons with contemporary Western art and artists are extremely rare. A system fragmented to such an extent … prevents any serious possibility of comprehending the art created during socialist times as a whole. Secondly, it represents a huge problem for artists who, apart from lacking any solid support … are compelled for the same reason to steer between the local and international art systems. And thirdly, this blocks communication among artists, critics, and theoreticians from these countries".[8]

Understanding history as the ultimate context, Irwin decided to "democratise" its construction. In the second phase of the project they established an online portal <http://www.eastartmap.org>, for anyone who is interested, to add proposals, or to suggest substitutes within the established *East Art Map*, on the basis of the invitation: "History is not given, please help construct it!"

Thus, by interweaving two discourses of thought, that of science and that of art, the artists managed to colonise the various professions – including most notably that of art critic and art historian. Colonisation of the position of art critic was first

noted in the field of the institutional critique in the West. As Julia Bryan-Wilson argues, "institutional critique's numerous evasions of conventional art history lead to the inevitable question: who is best equipped to formulate this history?".[9] It can thus be assumed that the strategy of self-historicisation in the East can be compared to the Western institutional critique. We could define it as a specific East European institutional critique, based on an affirmative and corrective character that is idiosyncratic, particularly in terms of the *East Art Map*.

Notes

[1] Igor Zabel, 'Strategija zgodovinopisja', in: Boris Groys (ed.), *Celostna umetnina Stalin*, Ljubljana: Založba, 1999, p. 147.
[2] Zdenka Badovinac, 'Interrupted Histories', in: Zdenka Badovinac et al (ed.), *Prekinjene zgodovine* (*Interrupted Histories*), Ljubljana: Museum of Modern Art, 2006, non paginated.
[3] Boris Groys, 'Back from the Future', in: Zdenka Badovinac, Peter Weibel and Mika Briški (eds.), *Arteast 2000+. The Art of Eastern Europe. A Selection of Works for the International and National Collections of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana*, Bolzano, Vienna: Folio Verlag, 2001, p. 14.
[4] Ilya Kabakov, 'Foreword', in: Laura Hoptman and Tomáš Pospiszyl (eds.), *Primary Documents. A Sourcebook for Eastern and Central European Art since the 1950s*, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2002, p. 8.
[5] 'A Vehicle, A Tool', in: Birgit Eusterschulte and WHW/What, How & For Whom, *Kollektive Kreativität* (*Collective Creativity*), Kassel: Kunsthalle Fridericianum; München: Siemens Arts Program, 2005, p. 240.
[6] 'Dragan Živadinov', in: Peter Tomaž Dobrila, Aleksandra Kostić and Jože Slaček (eds.), *3 Mednarodni festival računalniških umetnosti: Interaktivna umetnost* (*3rd International Festival of Computer Arts: The Interactive Art*), Maribor: Mladinski kulturni center, Multimedia center Kibla, Umetnostna galerija Maribor, 1997, p. 91.
[7] Jadranka Dozdar, *Interview with Irwin*, 2006, not yet published.
[8] Irwin, 'East Art Map', in: Badovinac et al, 2006, cf. fn. 1, non paginated.
[9] Julia Bryan-Wilson, 'A Curriculum for Institutional Critique, or the Professionalization of Conceptual Art', in: Jonas Ekeberg (ed.), *New Institutionalism*, Oslo: OCA/verksted, 2003, p. 100.

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Saviistorizacija kaip meninė strategija: Neue Slowenische Kunst, Draganas Živadinovas ir Irwino *Rytų meno žemėlapis*

Reikšminiai žodžiai: saviistorizacija, istoriografija, institucinė kritika Rytų Europoje, Slovėnijos šiuolaikinis menas ir politika.

Santrauka

Meno raida buvusioje Rytų Europoje remiasi kitokiais istorijos modeliais ir viešosios erdvės idėjomis nei Vakaruose. Tai, kad meno sistema (meno rinka ir galerijos, asociacijos, privatūs kolekcininkai) ir meno kontekstas (meno kritika, muziejų kuratoriai ir menotyrininkai, tyrinėjantys šiuolaikines konceptualias ir politines meno praktikas), tokie kokie buvo susiformavę Vakaruose, Rytuose neegzistavo, sukūrė visiškai kitokias meno funkcionavimo sąlygas.

Slovėnija išgyvena socialinį ir politinį pereinamąjį laikotarpį iš ankstyvojo liberalaus socialistinio režimo į nepriklausomą valstybę, neseniai tapusią ES nare. Atsivėrus platesniam tarptautiniam kontekstui, išaugo tarptautinis susidomėjimas nesena ir dabartine Slovėnijos meno rinka, o vietiniai kritikos kivirčai su hegemoninėmis (infra)struktūromis tapo akivaizdūs. Ribų nestabilumo žymėjimas, kuris tuo pat metu reiškia globalaus kapitalo

tendencijas ir besiformuojančias geopolitines sąlygas, yra viena dažniausių meno praktikos motyvacijų teritorijose, problemiškai vadinamose „periferija“. Šiame kontekste vyraujančios istoriografijos, politikos ir menotyros revizijos bei rekonstrukcijos įgyvendintos siekiant nustatyti tai, ką Borisas Groysas vadina savęs apibrėžimu (pavyzdžiui, Rytų Europos) ir ką Ilja Kabakovas pavadino savęs apibūdinimu. Suvokdami instrumentalistines technikas, kurios gali pakenkti naujosioms istoriografijoms, menininkai imasi šios temos su aštriu atsakomybės jausmu – už (naują) savo pačių kuriamą informaciją.

Šiame straipsnyje, remiantis tokių strategijų kaip žemėlapių braižymas, save paaiškinančių istorijų rašymas ir kompleksiškų ilgalaikių projektų kūrimas pavyzdžiais (grupės Neue Slowenische Kunst XX a. 9-ajame dešimtmetyje kurti projektai *Retroprinciple ir Retroavantgarde*, o ypač naujausias tęstinis Irwino projektas *Rytų meno žemėlapis* ir Dragano Živadinovo 45-erius metus trunkantis projektas *Vienas prieš vieną (Noordung 1995–2005–2045)*), siekiama atskleisti, kaip kai kurie menininkai suformavo meninę saviistorizacijos strategiją, tapusią reakcija į meno konteksto ir meno sistemos trūkumą. Šie menininkai, panašiai kaip XX a. 7-ojo ir 8-ojo dešimtmečio konceptualistai, sėkmingai pasisavino vaidmenis, kurie buvo labai ryškūs Vakarų meno sistemoje – menotyrininkų, kritikų ir kuratorių.

Gauta: 2007 03 20
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

CENSORSHIP, POWER, AND SPACE

CENZŪRA, GALIA IR ERDVĖ

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Between Myth and Reality: Censorship of Fine Art in Soviet Lithuania

Key words: Soviet, Lithuania, LSSR, censorship, control, fine arts, Artists' Union, Glavlit.

"We feel like the younger brothers and are overjoyed that the older brothers from Moscow are beginning to talk with us as equals about the fine arts. This helps us to overcome major deficiencies still existing in Lithuanian art". These were the words of comrade Černiauskas, one of the heads of the Ministry of Culture of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR), during a discussion about a Lithuanian decadal fine art exhibition at a meeting on April 13, 1954 at the USSR Art Academy in Moscow.[1] Artists in Lithuania had to take their lessons from their "Moscow brothers" – as did everyone within the Soviet Union. What were these lessons? What form did they take? Did they take place at all? These questions remain open, although there have been a number of attempts to answer them.

In 1990, following the restoration of independence in Lithuania, one of the most significant topics of fine art research was the refusal by Lithuanian artists to obey Soviet rule. In an article that he wrote in 1992, Alfonsas Andriuškevičius mentioned the phenomenon of semi-non-conformism. By his definition, semi-non-conformists were artists "who participated in the cultural game controlled by the government, and played by the rules …, and at the same time attacked the dogmas of so-called socialist realism".[2] In 1997, Elona Lubytė held an exhibition entitled *Quiet Modernism in Lithuania 1962–1982*, and published a book by the same title[3] in which she described "the side of fine art of the Soviet period that contradicted the official standards". But the question of what constituted the rules of "the cultural game controlled by the government" – the official standards – still remains open. The answers that are available are based mostly on memories. This situation prompted an analysis of what documented sources still exist, which is a risky undertaking – since official Soviet institution documents do not necessarily reflect real life at all. Double standards, an official position differing from real actions, are a distinctive feature of Soviet society. Nevertheless, the information contained in the documents allows a reconstruction of the institutional management model of the fine arts, with control being an important component. Speeches recorded in transcripts, and minutes of various discussions and reviews allow for an assessment of the operation of that model. The purpose of this study is to look into the modus operandi of Soviet control – the censorship of the fine arts – using documents from several Soviet institutions, including the LSSR Artists' Union, LSSR Ministry of Culture, and LSSR Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in the Press (Glavlit). It must be noted that the term "censorship" is not used in their papers by the Artists' Union or by the Ministry of Culture. It is only used in Glavlit documents. The Soviet multi-level system regulating fine art processes on a political and ideological basis did, however, have some of the attributes of censorship, for one of its purposes was to control the content and form of artworks. In this article, the term "censorship" means exactly that.

It is important first of all to determine the extent and the aspects of fine art falling within the range of control by Glavlit, the Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in the Press, a subordinate of the Council of Ministers. The direct function of this body was to censor the press and to ensure the exclusion of all undesirable verbal and visual information. A Lithuanian unit of Glavlit was set up in 1940. It was closed on February 29, 1990 by resolution of the then Lithuanian Council of Ministers.

Glavlit censors reviewed reproductions, illustrations, and photographs of fine art works that were published in the press. However, only isolated cases of censorship in the fine arts were documented – these included warnings about the "indecent" portrayal of a naked body, or the publication of inappropriate representations diminishing the image of the good Soviet man.[4]

Glavlit had its own Preventative Control Department. One of its functions was to inspect the thematic and exposition plans of museum exhibitions. The PCD also reviewed Lithuanian expositions in the Soviet section at international exhibitions, as well as national exhibitions hosted abroad.[5] Before proceeding to open an exhibition, museums had to submit a series of documents to Glavlit. Glavlit censors also conducted fairly specific museum inspections several times a year. A censor's job description required that particular attention be paid to visitors' books, i.e. inspectors were to ensure that entries made by visitors contained no classified information – the names of military units, secret factories, transport services, etc.

The Glavlit PCD also censored manuscripts and illustrations coming from, and going out to foreign countries. A special censorship unit operated within the International Division of the Vilnius Mail Sorting Service.[6] It inspected all parcels containing printed materials and manuscripts which were collected in Lithuania and the Kaliningrad region. Photographs, records and discs were also controlled.[7] Withheld literature was divided into progressive emigrant literature, anti-Soviet publications, and especially dangerous anti-Soviet publications. Anti-Soviet publications also included books on the fine arts. The catalogue of a Chicago exhibition entitled *Lithuanian Ex-libris* (Chicago, 1975), sent from the USA to 24 addressees in 1976, was deemed to be an anti-Soviet publication, and was therefore destroyed [fig. 1].[8]

Materials stored in the archives give the impression that Glavlit, the ultimate censorship body, treated the fine arts specifically – i.e. that it exercised virtually no control over the professional fine arts. It was more concerned with protecting the "decency" and positive image of the Soviet man, and limiting his ties with the outside world, than with what was specifically expressed in the fine arts.

Censorship traits are, however, more evident in the management mechanism of the fine arts, and here we gradually discover "the rules of the cultural game controlled by the government".

Under Soviet rule, the role of fine arts management was divided among several different bodies. In Lithuania, a three-step regulatory system for the

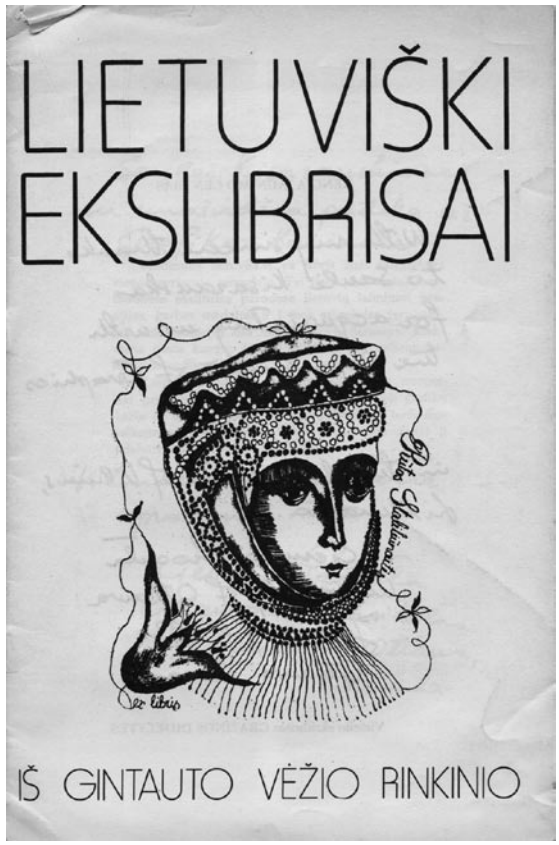

Fig. 1. Gražina Didelytė, Exlibris of Rūta Staliliūnaitė, 1972, etching, 6.1 x 5.2 cm. Source: Lithuanian Ex-libris, ex. cat., Chicago, 1975

management of the fine arts included the Artists' Union, the Council for Art Affairs of the Ministry of Culture, and the Central Committee of the LSSR Communist Party. The latter had the most power in terms of "dictating the rules of the game". It viewed the fine arts, like all other spheres of life, through an ideological prism. For instance, at an Intra-republic Conference of Artists from the Baltic States, held in Riga in 1953, art critic Jonas Umbrasas stated that "the 7th Congress of the Lithuanian Communist Party criticised the work of Lithuanian artists for insufficient reflection on the socialist construction theme, for its lack of colour, and for its tenuity. The 7th Congress instructed the artists of Soviet Lithuania to raise the ideological and artistic level in their creative work, to respond more actively to the realities of Soviet life, and to be more proactive with regard to socialist construction".[9] Raising the ideological level was one of the primary goals of the Communist Party. Another important issue was artistry, which in this case meant upholding the criteria of socialist realism.

One of the key measures for pushing artists closer towards a "correct" stylistic and ideological course was the system of state commissions. Artists were contracted to create specific works for major republic-wide or union-wide exhibitions. The state, represented by the Ministry of Culture, would undertake to buy the work – which the artist had to produce to suit the requirements of the customer. Works would be ordered on the basis of prepared sketches by the commissions responsible for organising these exhibitions. Commissions usually consisted of members of the Ministry of Culture and the Artists' Union. The commissions were authorised to check the work in progress, and to decide if completed works were suitable for exhibiting. Commission members would visit the artists' studios or arrange for joint screening of works.[10] The following are several examples of this procedure.

In 1953, Lithuanian artists were in the process of preparing special works for the LSSR Decade of Literature and Art, an exhibition to be held in Moscow. The minutes of a screening conducted January 24–25 include a number of remarks. For instance, the commission decided that a landscape called *Paper Mill in Petrašiūnai* by Jonas Buračas would be suitable for the exhibition, "if figures were introduced in the foreground". Several of his other landscapes were rejected for being "lifeless, lacking human beings, with "weak sounding" factories, and painted in a seemingly decorative style".[11] Marija Dūdienė's sketch of a knotted carpet depicting Stalin with a child was criticised as being too formal. Experts suggested that she "look for a solution to reflect May Day, give light to the oval, use a sunny background". The commission also decided that Leokadija Belvertaitė's sculpture, *Lenin Sits at a Stump and Writes*, was inappropriate for the exhibition: "the sculpture of Lenin is cheapened by the stump, there are too many proportions and details. Unacceptable". A remark referring to Janina Stankūnavičiūtė's illustrations for Petras Cvirka's book called *The Lord's Promises* is an excellent example of the necessary requirements regarding "the motif of the struggle of the classes": "the labourer must be strong, large and combative; he should not be on his knees". Jonas Vaičius, who was working on a painting called *The Michurinist*, was informed that "the idea is excellent. The rendering must be improved: the faces of the boy in the middle and of the girl must be improved due to their dark colouring … the rye must be softer and golden ... the overall impression is excellent; the sky in the foreground must be warmer; more work on the grove; the flowers in the foreground need stronger emphasis. To be developed further".[12]

The works were reviewed again on February 6. This time, Augustinas Savickas was criticised for his painting entitled *Lenin in Vilnius*. The review commission wrote:

> "The worker in the drawing is unnatural. Lenin's walk is unconvincing. Check the shapes in nature. There is more emphasis on the worker's face than on Lenin's, and therefore it catches the attention first. No feeling of the revolutionary moment; dominated by architecture, no tension. The architecture is depressing because the worker and Lenin are drawn in insufficient detail. The landscape must be richer to make it warmer. Shapes yet to be discovered. It needs better lighting,

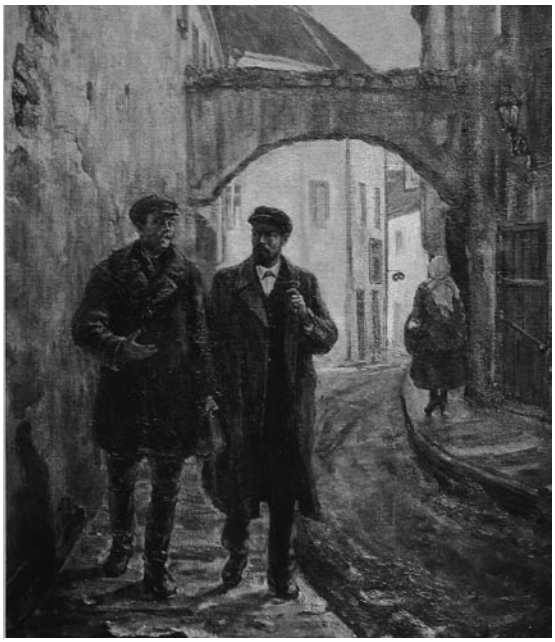

Fig. 2. Augustinas Savickas, Lenin in Vilnius in 1895, 1953, oil on canvas, 60 x 40 cm. Source: Leninas. Lietuvių dailininkų darbai (Lenin. Works by Lithuanian Artists), Vilnius: Vaga, 1970

> Lenin's face must be brought to the forefront. At the moment, the mood of the landscape is off-putting, which should be avoided even though it represents the old era".[13]

It is quite difficult to judge at what point the criticisms that were voiced during the reviews acquired the traits of preventative censorship. The question is whether the commissions which organised the exhibitions, requested artists to modify state-ordered works, and approved payment of the agreed-upon price[14] if their remarks were heeded, were simply protecting the customer's interests, or acting as censors as well. It must be noted that the creative process was not controlled by coercion. The studios of those artists who were not state-commissioned were not visited.[15] Those who disobeyed were simply ignored or subjected to subtle pressure – they were not repressed.

The procedure of organising exhibitions is another important area manifesting some signs of censorship. The Ministry of Culture had the authority to allow or mandate museums to host certain exhibitions[16], and to inspect the exhibits beforehand.[17] These matters were under the competence of the Council for Art Affairs, subordinate to the Ministry. "Each year, the Council for Art Affairs of the Ministry of Culture shall approve the annual exhibition plans. … Exhibits for each exhibition, if not coming from the museum stock, shall be inspected by a representative of the Fine Arts Division[18]. Authorisation for the exhibition shall be executed according to the established procedure, after the submission of a list of works".[19] The documentation of the Council for Art Affairs contains numerous requests to organise various exhibitions[20], and authorisations by the Council addressed to the organisers.[21] The documents also record instances when the Council for Art Affairs did not allow certain paintings to be exhibited. For example, there was a discussion on January 10, 1953 about works withheld from a 1952 exhibition, with interesting arguments regarding *Portrait of Prof. Ruokis* by Petras Tarabilda, and *Portrait of a Composer* by Aleksandras Silinas. In response to expressed doubts regarding the exclusion of these portraits, the painter Jonas Mackonis said that the commission had allowed them to be exhibited, but that they were subsequently "removed" by Ministry of Culture representatives Tadas Černiauskas and Juozas Banaitis, either because of a low artistic standard, or because of the actual topic ("perhaps these persons should not have been painted"). It is not known which composer Silinas had painted, but attempts to fathom why the exhibition inspectors rejected Tarabilda's painting bring us to examine the biography of professor Viktoras Ruokis (1885-1971). Ruokis was a well-known agronomist educated in Russia, a lecturer at the Academy of Agriculture during the independence period in Lithuania, and the author of a number of textbooks. He also worked at the Academy of Agriculture during the Soviet era, and was a corresponding member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. He joined the Communist Party in 1952, the year of the exhibition. Nevertheless, his activities during the independence period may have been the obstacle against a public exhibition of his portrait.

Supervision of art education was another important control tool. This function was entrusted to the Council for Art Affairs.[22] Teachers working at fine art schools were forced to follow the "politically ide-

ological" resolutions of the Communist Party, and to implement the "principles of the socialist realism approach".[23] The following is a random, and very eloquent example.

After a review of student works for the first semester of 1952-1953, several teachers at the Kaunas School of Applied Arts were scrutinised by the Council for Art Affairs. Teachers Filomena Ušinskaitė and Eugenijus Survila came under heavy criticism. It was determined that "the work of [Ušinskaitė's] students shows an unacceptable formalist approach to composition. Forgetting that the formal side of composition relies on its ideological content, the teacher moved in the direction of a cheap and shallow … layout of elements. These "compositions for the sake of composition" have no deeper idea, no meaning, no reality". In the case of Survila – "paintings by his students are dominated by dirty and dark colours which have nothing in common with reality". On the basis of this evaluation, the teachers were instructed "to completely change their teaching approach" – otherwise they "will not be able to continue to teach at this school".[24]

The control of fine art education had a two-fold effect: it limited the teachers' ability to transmit their creative principles to their students, and forced them in fact to abandon them; and it created a climate conducive to the development of a new generation of artists loyal to, and upholding the principles of, a state-controlled perception of fine art.

This brief, document-based outline touched upon just a few of the most obvious aspects of the regulation of the fine arts. A summary of the materials presented here leads to the conclusion that Soviet censorship of the fine arts did exist, and that it was preventative in nature. The documentation shows that many works had to be modified before they were exhibited in public spaces.

The undesirable artists were put under immense psychological pressure to ensure that they shy away from freely chosen creative principles and move closer to mainstream socialist realism. Methods used included criticism at the meetings of the Artists' Union and during exhibition discussions, financial restrictions which prevented them from obtaining art supplies and tools, and the compulsory obligation to "improve one's ideological level" at evening Marxist "universities". These tactics could be described as the promotion of self-censorship. It seems that in their efforts to obstruct the realisation of creative ambitions in unacceptable ways, and clearly indicating the acceptable path to recognition, the censors wanted the artists to come closer to the artistic concepts which were being promoted by the state.

It is not clear if requests to modify state commissioned works should be deemed censorship, or considered merely the representation of the customer's interests. In answering this question one must keep in mind that the Soviet regime occupied all spheres of public life. Under these circumstances it was virtually impossible to find legal ways to develop and publicly promote alternative activities. Thus, in the case of the fine arts, the restriction of ideas and their visual representation under the guise of protecting the customer's interests could be called censorship. Documented sources contain virtually no signs of repressive censorship. It seems that many issues were decided by mutual conformism between the controlling and controlled bodies or individuals.

Notes

[1] Transcript of a discussion regarding a Lithuanian artists' exhibition at the Academy of Arts of the USSR, Moscow, April 12, 1954, Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas (Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, hereafter LLMA), F-342, O-4, E-10, L-135.

[2] Alfonsas Andriuškevičius, 'Seminonkonformistinė lietuvių tapyba: 1956-1986' ('Semi-non-conformist Lithuanian Painting: 1956-1986'), in: Alfonsas Andriuškevičius, *Lietuvių dailė: 1975-1995* (*Lithuanian Fine Art: 1975-1995*), Vilnius: Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, 1997, p. 12.

[3] Elona Lubytė, *Tylusis modernizmas Lietuvoje. 1962–1982 (Quiet Modernism in Lithuania 1962-1982)*, Vilnius: Tyto Alba, 1997, p. 8.

[4] At the end of 1966, Glavlit censors came across a New Year greeting featuring a naked woman, in the humour magazine *Šluota*. The editorial office was reprimanded for this "escapade". Minutes of a December 1, 1966 meeting with the head of the Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in the Press, Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas (Central State Archives of Lithuania, hereafter LCVA), F-R-522, O-2, E-70, L-88.

[5] Regulations of the Preventative Control (First) Division of the Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in the Press, subordinate to the LSSR Council of Ministers, LCVA, F-R-522, O-2, E-147, L-6-7.
[6] Glavlit annual report on control of foreign literature 1959, LCVA, F-R-522, O-2, E-38, L-5.
[7] LSSR Glavlit annual report 1972, LCVA, F-R-522, O-2, E-117, L-7-8.
[8] Report of the Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in the Press, subordinate to the LSSR Council of Ministers, on control of emigrant posted foreign literature, LCVA, F-R-522, O-2, E-153, L-5.
[9] Speech by Jonas Umbrasas at the Intra-republican Conference of Artists from the Baltic States, held in Riga on October 15, 1953 (in Russian), LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-127, L-54.
[10] Minutes, nr. 8, from a review of works for a decadal exhibition, January 24-25, 1953, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-130, L-4.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., L-5-7.
[13] Minutes of review and discussion of works in progress for the decadal exhibition, February 6, 1953, Ibid., L-11.
[14] Minutes, nr. 9, from a November 15, 1956 republic committee meeting for the Anniversary Fine Arts Exhibition, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-36, L-41-44.
[15] Minutes of the February 12, 1953 meeting of the board of the LSSR Artists' Union, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-129, L-25; Minutes/plan of the May 23, 1953 meeting of the Sculpture Section of the Kaunas Branch of the LSSR Artists' Union, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-33, L-25; Minutes, nr. 1, from the May 23, 1953 meeting of the Painting Section of the Kaunas Branch of the LSSR Artists' Union, LLMA, F-146, O-1, E-33, L-26.
[16] Order nr. 50 issued January 26, 1953 by the head of the Council for Art Affairs under the LSSR Council of Ministers; Order nr. 335 issued August 19, 1953 by the head of the Supreme Council for Art Affairs, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-54, 403.
[17] Order nr. 183 issued April 7, 1953 by the head of the Council for Art Affairs under the LSSR Council of Ministers, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-213.
[18] Unit of the Ministry of Culture.
[19] Letter nr. 5-3659, December 5, 1977 by the head of the Fine Art Division of the LSSR Ministry of Culture, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-293.
[20] Letters from the board of the LSSR Artists' Union to the LSSR Minister of Culture: nr. 38 and 40, January 10, 1977; nr. 240 and 241, February 23, 1977; nr. 693, June 13, 1977; LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-1, 7; 41, 45, 108; letter nr. 777, October 11, 1977 from the director of the Kaunas M. K. Čiurlionis Museum of Fine Art to the Council for Art Affairs of the LSSR Ministry of Culture, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-239; letter nr. 144, October 21, 1977 from the chairperson of the Klaipėda branch of the LSSR Artists' Union to the LSSR Minister of Culture, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-242.
[21] Letter nr. 5-12b, January 13, 1977 from the head of the Fine Art Division of the LSSR Ministry of Culture to the LSSR Artists' Union and the LSSR Fine Arts Fund, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-23; letters nr. 710 and 5-709, March 2, 1977 from the head of the Fine Art Division of the LSSR Ministry of Culture, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-48, 49; letter nr. 5-3358, October 26, 1977 from the head of the Fine Art Division of the LSSR Ministry of Culture to the chairperson of the Klaipėda branch of the LSSR Artists' Union, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-493, L-247.
[22] Order nr. 77 issued February 11, 1953 by the head of the Council for Art Affairs under the LSSR Council of Ministers, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-105; statement by V. Uloza to the deputy head of the Council for Art Affairs under the LSSR Council of Ministers, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-344; order nr. 404 issued November 11, 1953 by the head of the Supreme Council for Art Affairs of the LSSR Ministry of Culture, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-473; order nr. 40 issued June 12, 1954 by the head of the Council for Art Affairs, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-7, L-276.
[23] Order nr. 91 issued February 17, 1953 by the head of the Council for Art Affairs under the LSSR Council of Ministers, LLMA, F-342, O-4, E-1, L-102.
[24] Ibid., L-101.

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Tarp mito ir tikrovės: dailės cenzūra sovietinėje Lietuvoje

Reikšminiai žodžiai: sovietinis, Lietuva, cenzūra, kontrolė, dailė, LSSR dailininkų sąjunga, Glavlitas.

Santrauka

Tyrinėjant XX a. antrosios pusės Lietuvos dailę neišvengiamai susiduriame su įvairaus pobūdžio liudijimais apie sovietinės sistemos taikytus draudimus, kūrybinio akiračio apribojimus, stilistinius, žanrinius suvaržymus. Jų gausu publikuojamuose ir išsakomuose amžininkų prisiminimuose. Prisitaikymo prie sovietinės sistemos, kola-

boravimo su ja, oponavimo jai temos gvildentos daugelyje po Nepriklausomybės atkūrimo publikuotų dailėtyros tekstų. Kaip sambūvio su sovietų valdžia pasekmę, dailėtyrininkai įvardijo „tyliojo modernizmo“, pusinio individualizmo reiškinius. Tačiau peržvelgus iki šiol publikuotą medžiagą, klausimai, ar tikrai egzistavo sovietinė dailės cenzūra, jeigu taip, tai kokia ji iš tiesų buvo ir kaip veikė, tebelieka atviri.

Straipsnis skirtas atsakymų į klausimus – kokia buvo ir kaip veikė sovietinė dailės cenzūra – paieškoms. Remiantis archyviniais šaltiniais – LSSR Dailininkų sąjungos, LSSR Kultūros ministerijos, LSSR Glavlito dokumentais ir kitais duomenimis – bandoma išsiaiškinti sovietinės dailės cenzūros veikimo principus, jos kontroliuotas sritis, hierarchinę struktūrą, sprendimų priėmimo ir vykdymo procedūras.

Dokumentinis dailės cenzūros tyrimas – vienas iš žingsnių, mitologizuotą įsivaizdavimą apie šį reiškinį priartinančių prie tikrovės.

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The Intended Breakaway: The Case of Recreational Architecture in Soviet Lithuania

Key words: Soviet, recreational architecture, ideological changes, changes in architectural expression.

The Soviet period is one of the most problematic in the history of Lithuanian architecture. Almost fifty years of Soviet rule imposed great changes on its natural development. The brutally changed structures of traditional towns and cities, the large-scale, standard buildings – all are part of an uneasy heritage that today challenges both architectural life and the nation's life in general. After the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence in 1990, a new social, economic, cultural, and architectural reality came into being, raising questions and demanding answers about this recent and troubled past. These questions are by no means easy to answer, meaning that they reveal a multifaceted reality despite the uniformity of the Soviet regime and ideology. The article focuses on the specific case of recreational architecture in Lithuania during the Soviet period: it seeks to disclose its peculiarities and causality in the context of the general architectural climate of that time, and centres attention on the artistic expression of particular examples and their meaning.

It is not possible to analyse architecture apart from its interaction with politics, ideology, and power,[1] at least not in the case of an authoritarian system such as the former Soviet Union. Architecture, like many creative activities in Soviet Lithuania, could not escape from the imposed dogmas of the totalitarian regime. The Soviet authorities subordinated architecture, a vehicle for the expression of the most important national, ideological, material, social, cultural, and aesthetical values, to the strategic designs of the Soviet empire. This not only interrupted the natural development of Lithuanian architecture as it had emerged in the interwar period but also caused it to lose much of its creative freedom, individuality, and autonomy. Architecture had to become a part of the planned and projected state system, and architects were turned into drawers and builders. They were expected to help materialise the Soviet way of life while dissolving national individuality and identity. However, from the very beginning of the Soviet occupation its repressive policy and ideology provoked an intellectual and spiritual reaction, a patriotic, cultural, and architectural resistance. Therefore, stereotyped methodical schemes are not enough to conceptualise and evaluate the ambiguous and multi-layered situation of architectural creativity at that time and in that context.

Recreational architecture in Soviet Lithuania is notably different from other types of public building from that period, be they administrative, educational, or cultural. It exhibits a kind of breaking away, an otherness from the general planning and building circumstances or the architectural and expressive style peculiar to that period. Despite the fact that the recreation and tourist areas in Soviet Lithuania were built according to certain normative documents and typical projects, many of the structures in the rest zones and resort areas were fashioned according to individual (not typical) projects. This should be viewed as something exclusive, varying from the norm in the context of the times. "Individual projects

Fig. 1. V. Ulitka, Balneological health resort in Druskininkai, 1960. A decorative stone mosaic called Nemunas *(Lithuanian boy in national costume, left) and Ratnyčėlė (Lithuanian girl in national costume, right) are placed in the plane of the main entrance risalitas. Photo by the author*

were rare exceptions to the rule that dissolved in the sea of mass standardised buildings".[2] The general architectural climate was constrained by the compulsory standardisation of buildings of various types (residential, cultural, industrial, etc.) on the public scale. On the one hand, unification of buildings was grounded on economies of scale; on the other, it indicated an obvious intolerance of any individuality by the totalitarian regime. "The inescapable result followed in successive order: urbanisation- standardisation-invariability, all in all eliminating any signs of genius".[3] Nevertheless, the same political situation prevailed in the whole country: almost each major city or town in Lithuania showed off its own architectural features. Each particular place revealed the picture of its specific link with the state in its material form as in the case of resort areas. It is impossible to deny the creative potential, individuality, and expressiveness of recreational buildings or buildings built in recreational zones that existed in those days. The architectural qualities, expressivity, and stylistic diversity of those buildings were evidently superior to those of residential as well as other public buildings. Several reasons for this are closely intertwined here.

What made recreational architecture rather exceptional those days was first of all its special mission. Functional typology of buildings is an important circumstance characterising most of the 20th century architecture. It is particularly important in the case of Soviet architecture, as it discloses the close interaction of the functional typology of buildings with the particular social function, which in a way is the essence of the Soviet attitude towards spatial development.[4] The building type is an important reflection of the societal being or a way to organise the way of social being. Recreation or rest culture in the former USSR stood in the main line of the political strategy. As a counterpoise to the absolute idea of *work*, a rather unique phenomenon of *recreation – a pure form of mass rest and relaxation* – was created in the "ideal" Soviet world. The special attention devoted to the creation of a rest and recreation system in the former Soviet Union was formally based on public concern about labour health actively propagated during the 1960s and 1970s. It was the for-

mal constitutional right of every citizen to have an annual vacation almost for free: 70% of the cost of going to any of resort in the territory of the former USSR was covered by the trade-unions. Similarly, health resort and wellness facilities were funded by the state, and also by various enterprises, higher educational institutions, and Soviet and collective farms. This worked indeed as a closed "happy" system (as we might rather literally if not ironically call it). Based on the trade-unions' control and financing, it stimulated the rise of health resorts in the whole territory of the former Soviet Union, including Lithuania. In the 1970s, health resorts such as Palanga, Druskininkai, and Birštonas were assigned the status of republic-level importance: that means they were developed to welcome vacationers from the whole USSR (there were resorts of three categories: those of *all-union*, those of *republic-level,* and those of *local* importance). Such a degree of subordination provided a certain order and measure of the development of health resorts.[5]

They were well funded and therefore could afford to give special commissions to artists and architects. However, each case depended on very specific and even quite unique conditions. As the case of the Palanga resort architectural development reveals, its process was very much determined by certain personalities that administered the place, the officials or the so-called head architects. Palanga, a former countryside locality (with between 5000 and 6000 residents in 1952), turned into a famous resort area of local importance primarily in the early 1960s (with more than a hundred thousand guests each year) and grew into one of the most popular health resorts in the USSR in the late 1960s and 1970s (hosting more than a quarter million guests). Accordingly, the whole architectural and spatial structure of the territory changed dramatically. All this was done at a higher speed than in many other cases. Just in six seven years of the first post-war decade Palanga grew significantly, gaining its present spatial character (more accurately that of the late 1980s). Mostly thanks to the head architect of those days, Alfredas Paulauskas, the main official figure of the architectural bar in Palanga from 1952 till 1964, Palanga's architecture experienced great changes. On the basis of the so-called general plan of Palanga made by architect Benicijanas Revzinas just after the end of World War II, Paulauskas implemented functional zoning of the place and created the main city facilities for public use: a certain street network, green public spaces, zones, and avenues. What was so specific about the work method was that most of the works were implemented without any prepared or certified projects. Proceedings took place straight in the course of building based on drafts prepared by Paulauskas himself. This was a real exception to the rule then in effect of strict architectural bureaucracy and documentation and was possible only because of the special relationship between the head architect and the upper officials in the Ministerial Council in Vilnius.[6] The special mutual understanding or trust between them made it possible for architects and artists to enjoy a privileged status in Palanga. The regional authority would close its eyes to the bypassing of routine procedures and provide extra financing for special projects that Palanga needed. Sculptures such as *Eglė Žalčių karalienė* by Robertas Antinis and *Jūratė ir Kastytis* by Nijolė Gaigalaitė are good examples of an unprecedented situation where financing for them came not from the Ministry of Culture of the Lithuanian SSR, as would have been routine, but from the Ministerial Council of the Lithuanian SSR, as an exception to the rule. The Palanga health resort gained its quite unique aesthetic appearance under the management of Paulauskas. Due to his strong leadership, Palanga achieved its contemporary image with an optimal balance of buildings and green spaces, new colours, sculptures, and other forms of small architecture that were executed after his personal sketches. Looked at from one side, this is evidence for quite an autocratic way of management within a privileged layer of the Soviet bureaucracy; on the other hand, it shows how it was possible to override certain norms and restrictions in order to overcome the threatening monotony while trying to preserve and enhance the genuine attractiveness of the locality.

Over time, projecting and building in Lithuanian resort areas, especially in Palanga, became a matter of the architect's image and prestige in pursuit of an over-all intention to create an environment different from that of everyday life. In a way, resort areas

Fig. 2. Aleksandras Eigirdas, Restaurant Vasara *in Palanga, 1967. Photo by the author*

as places of privileged status became platforms for the explosion of artistic expression within the constraints of Soviet-period architecture. The greatest and most valuable part of Soviet recreational architecture consists of examples of original and peculiar structures. They send us a message of the course of architectural ideas and aspirations of Lithuanian architects living uneasily within the Soviet system generally marked by mass construction, standardisation, a limited stock of constructional and building materials, etc. Individual examples of recreational buildings presented in chronological order help to reveal the course of ideas at the time and in that context.

Whereas we can talk about important changes in international modernistic architecture in the period from 1950 to 1960 that provoked the shift to new movements, the corresponding decades in most of the countries of the Soviet Union meant passing from post-war rebuilding to the domination of the so-called retrospective[7] architectural trend, showing continuity of historical styles. The tendency was imposed on Lithuania as part of Soviet ideology, a symbol of a new social culture. Not organically fitting into their architectural context, retrospective buildings were mainly designed and built in Lithuania by architects from other Soviet Republics (e.g., the Russian architects Viktor Anikin, Piotr Ashastin, and Vera Furman). Fortunately, the post-war period retrospective tendency was not pervasive in Lithuanian architecture. Only a few buildings of this type were built in Lithuanian resort areas during the post-war period. The *Žuvėdra* Sanatorium in Palanga (Aleksandras Eigirdas, 1954) exemplifies the spirit of the romantic neoclassical tradition. It is characterised by symmetrical composition, dominated by the elevated belvedere and the rotunda entryway surrounded by a balustrade. All this recalls the spirit of Italian representative villas and residencies.[8] The *Draugystė* Sanatorium in Druskininkai (Vera Furman and Jonas Gerulaitis, 1956) is one the sharpest examples of the full-dress neo-classical style: it is characterised by pompous symmetry, clear rhythm, and the use of classical order. It falls into the general trend of architectural policy of the first post-war decades when a symbolic image of classical palaces was adapted to represent the power of a new social culture. The return to the architecture of antiquity is felt in the Druskininkai Balneological health resort (V. Ulitka, 1960) [fig. 1]. The building composition is less pompastic than the previous example and therefore is in less opposition to the town's environment and landscape. A decorative stone mosaic called *Nemunas* (the name of the largest river passing Druskininkai) and *Ratnyčėlė* (the name of a stream flowing there) (Boleslovas Klova, 1960) are placed in the plane of the main entrance. These are the silhouettes of a Lithuanian girl and boy dressed in national costumes as a literal example representing the main idea of Soviet cultural policy: "socialist in content, nationalist in form," which meant using what was valuable in classical cultural heritage to develop and disclose the spring of national folk art. As noted by Alexei Tarchanov, elements of national folk art remained politically correct, reflecting the expectations of the proletariat.[9]

Soon after new Soviet resolutions called "reforms of Khrushchev" that conditioned ideological and aesthetical changes in the architectural program were passed – architecture from now on had to be effective, rational, and standardised for the good of society – a kind of *modernistic/functionalist* architecture made its way into the country. This resulted in a boom of building standardisation and typical projects seeking high aims of the social program during 1960s and 1970s. At that time many standard recreational buildings were built in Lithuania's health resorts. In many cases, mass structures violated the existing scale and building traditions of the territories, ig-

nored landscape features, made the general view of health-care localities uniform and made them look similar to residential settings. Especially noticeable in this regard were the high-rise rest houses, the so-called dormitory buildings (high-rise spa hotels). At the same time, in 1966 such high-rise spa dormitories were built in the Palanga and Druskininkai resorts: *Neringos kopos* in Palanga and *Nemunas* in Druskininkai (Enrikas Tamoševičius).

Along with typical, standardised buildings, a number of individually designed objects were built in resort areas in the 1960s and 1970s: rest houses as well as other public buildings in recreational zones. The buildings of Aleksandras Eigirdas reveal the shift from one ideological program to another. After almost ten years (after building the retrospective *Žuvėdra* sanatorium) he changed his style dramatically, thereby illustrating the reality of the ideological and aesthetical modifications in the architectural program in the 1960s when the governmental resolution declared that from now on architecture had to be effective, rational, and standardised for the good of society. One of his later buildings, the *Vasara* restaurant in Palanga, built in 1967, was no doubt one the most modern buildings in Lithuania at that time; it embodied principles of module architecture of bionic form, matching the basic shapes of circle, rectangle, and square and creating an illusion of dynamic transparency and original art synthesis inside – works of stained glass, metal, and ceramics (*Poilsis*, a sculpture by Konstantinas Bogdanas, and *Žuvytės* by Laimutė Cieškaitė-Brėdikienė) [fig. 2]. *Vasara* was a real event in Lithuania – irradiating transparent structure with original interior lighting and a brave constructive solution: the arch of the restaurant is supported by only one column. Eigirdas was the architect distinguished among others by his creativity and abilities either to ignore entirely or to handle more freely the normative architectural rules that constrained an architect's creativity. It was also true that building such as *Vasara* was enjoyed by the public very much and is still remembered by almost everyone who visits Palanga these days. It could be built because in Palanga the financing of buildings was more generous.[10] Another outstanding work of Eigirdas is the *Kastytis* rest house in Palanga (1967) [fig. 3]. The building is distinguished by its pure and equable modernism, the neat composition, harmony, and simplicity, and the relation between inside and outside, comparable to the cubistic manner of the Holland group *De Stijl* or Le Corbusier. The interior was created following the national theme script: original design, composition of various pieces of wood, textile, brass, metal, and plaster – all appealing in the stylish modernistic manner with a sense of national culture.

Fig. 3. Aleksandras Eigirdas, Guesthouse Kastytis *in Palanga, 1967. Photo by the author*

What was so special about these Eigirdas buildings is the artistic synthesis – the union of fine arts, sculpture, and architecture – in creating scenarios based on themes of national literature, including folk legends about fairy-tale heroes (thus name "Kastytis" was taken from a tale about the water-nymph Jūratė and the fisherman Kastytis). Old national story lines here went side by side with the ambitions of extreme modernity (extreme modernity, naturally, in terms of the closed structure of the Soviet world).

One more example of fine modernistic architecture is the *Žilvinas* rest-house by architect Algimantas Lėckas (1969) [fig. 4]. It is characterised by its innovative constructive solution – three interlocked bodies are uplifted on three poles or landings, i.e. it was a "house on the poles" after one of the five principles of Le Corbusier. The result achieved is a rectangular building face hanging down from the tree leaves. For the first time in the history of Lithuanian architecture denuded monolithic concrete was used not only for constructive but also for decorative purposes. In 1980 a sociological survey was done questioning architects and trying to determine the best examples of Soviet Lithuanian architecture.[11] *Žilvinas* was selected as one that Lithuanian architecture should follow. The question of national identity of Lithuania's architecture

Fig. 4. Algimantas Lėckas, Rest-house Žilvinas *in Palanga, 1969. Photo by the author*

was very much emphasised at this reunion of architects. What was so national in this advanced building, we may ask? Its modernistic approach and pure geometric form have literally nothing to do either with regional folk architecture or the historical tradition of villa building in resort areas of the 19th century (what is characteristic of those historical villas is the romantic approach, decorativeness, affluence in details, and complicated form). Looking at *Žilvinas* we find little in common with this type of architectural expression. However, the tradition is continued here indirectly. The building is distinguished not only by its progressive architectural and constructive solution but also by its respect for the regional context and natural environment: it seems as though the structures of the vacation house were hanging in the air and drowning and almost dissolving in the leaves of the trees. This rather directly continues the pre-war tradition of villas merging into the surrounding greenery. (In Palanga most of these villas used to be quite spread out and virtually disappeared among the green trees.) All this may also be seen as an attempt to create an identity with nature, to grasp the genius loci, the "spirit of the place," based on the idea of Christian Norberg-Shulz.[12]

These examples reveal that in the 1970s and 1980s quite an open and loud concern was voiced among architects about the national identity of Lithuanian architecture[13] and the shift from the literal reflection of nationality to a more sophisticated and professional understanding of identity and true traditional values in architecture through a respect for the landscape and the architectural context. In this search it is possible to trace the influence of Northern Europe architecture. The 1970s and 1980s are outcomes of what was set already in the 1950s and 1960s. Architects then working testify to the fact that they were especially fascinated by Finnish and Swedish architecture. Eager for any source of information about life outside the "iron curtain," they unearthed it from various hidden resources and spread it among colleagues.[14] What fascinated Lithuanian architects most was the simplicity of Finland's architecture with its balanced relation of nature and building, the social and the functional aspect, and the search for aesthetics in industrial construction. Many of the things they saw could at that time be realised in Lithuania, meaning that no special technology and materials were required. Lithuanian architecture at that time was very much limited by a shortage of building materials and poor engineering possibilities. It is important to emphasise that in 1980, based on such ideals, the notion of the national identity of Lithuanian architecture was clearly named and stated: new technologies, use of

traditional materials, a balanced relation to nature and urbanism, and overall moderation and quality.

It might seem to be a simple idea to somehow trace the parallel between the new brutalism and what was happening during the next period of the 1970s and 1980s in Lithuanian resorts. It had surely something in it rather brutal. After the 1970s the special structure of health resorts changed dramatically: buildings were built higher that in the 1960s and there was a movement from separate buildings to huge spa complexes. This changed the visage of towns greatly. What is also evident in certain cases is that architectural expression turned to a quite different paradigm. Rational forms were changed by expressive dynamic compositions, sometimes too complicated, plastic, and intimidating (e.g., the *Banga* coffee-house in Palanga by Gintautas Juozas Telksnys, 1982). The culmination of this trend was reached in the complex of physiotherapy convalescent homes in Druskininkai (architects Romualdas and Aušra Šilinskai, 1981) [fig. 5]. It was exceptionally original, expressive, ornamented, organic, sculptured, but extremely non-functional and all in concrete. Is this *beton bruit*? Or *beton charmant*? Undoubtedly it has something to do with Soviet-like irrationality, monumentality, pomposity, but at the same time it hides in itself something of an uncontrolleable desire to *break away* from the dangerous monotony of the surroundings; in that way it can be perceived as something open and honest (in the very specific meaning of being behind the "iron curtain").

Recreational architecture in Lithuanian health resorts during the Soviet period takes a specific place in the context of Lithuanian architecture as a multi-layer structure of different sources; it is distinguished by a clear creative potential.[15] It reflects the main architectural trends, conditions, and problems of the whole Soviet block; reverberations of innovative global architectural ideas; and the search for an original national architectural character. This search for individual forms and a relation to the local spirit essentially reflects a new stage of modern architecture that solves the problem of space identity and that may be treated as a consequence of the peculiar Lithuanian architecture and its resistance to the levelling monotony of socialist realism in specific Lithuanian spaces of that period. In some cases, the flight of the architectural fancy overtook contemporary technical possibilities.

It is also obvious that the special mission of recreational architecture, the forced myth of mass rest and relaxation, the encoded intention to create something different from the ordinary living environment actually opened the door for artistic creativity to break outside certain limits, to go into more spirited experiments, to free itself from the tight restrictions by profiting from the situation of being under the wing of a special commission, thereby revealing the ground of true artistic aspirations. The pulse of world-wide architectural movements was echoed here quite often in vitro and with its own specific inherence. Copying even directly was not a shame but meant advanced progress in the closed world behind the iron curtain.

Fig. 5. Romualdas and Aušra Šilinskai, Physiotherapy Convalescent Home in Druskininkai, 1981. Photo by the author

Notes

[1] Fredric Jameson, 'Is Space Political?', in: *Rethinking Architecture*, London: Routledge, 1997, pp. 258-268.

[2] Jonas Minkevičius, 'Šiaurės Lietuvos sovietmečio architektūros prieštaringumai' ('Contrasts of Soviet Architecture in Northern Lithuania'), in: *Žiemgala*, no. 2, 1992. http://www.ziemgala.lt/z/1999_02_02.html

[3] Ibid.

[4] Vaidas Petrulis, *Sovietmečio visuomeninių pastatų architektūra Lietuvoje: stilistinė raida ir sociokultūriniai kontekstai* (*Architecture of Public Buildings in Lithuania of the Soviet Period: Stylistic Development ad Socio-cultural Contexts*), doctoral dissertation, Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2005, p. 26.

[5] Jūratė Tutlytė, *Rekreacinė architektūra Lietuvos kurortuose (1940-1990): kompleksinis kokybės vertinimas* (*Recreational Architecture in Lithuanian Health-resorts (1940-1990): The Integrated Quality Evaluation*), doctoral dissertation,

Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2002, pp. 43-46.
[6] Jūratė Tutlytė, *Pokarinės Palangos rekreacinė architektūra* (*Recreational Architecture in Palanga during Post-war Period*), master thesis, Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 1997, pp. 16-17.
[7] The Soviet architecture of the post-war period is characterised by various terms: "retrospectivism", "Stalinist architecture", "socialist realism", "superfluities in architecture". The term of "retrospectivism" in this context is chosen as the one best referring to transformations in architectural expression.
[8] According to the telling of the personnel of the sanatorium, the project was indeed a copy of the example built in Georgia and until the reconstruction (in 1989) the building had all the attributes typical to Stalinist buildings – long hallways, high interior ceilings decorated with gesso and clay plastic.
[9] Alexei Tarkhanov, *Architecture of the Stalin Era*, New York: Rizzoli, 1992, pp. 49-50.
[10] After the regaining of Lithuania's independence, during the difficult transition period, the building was left empty, the shining circle smashed into smithereens. It was reconstructed in 2003 but sadly lost its unique original appearance – now there is a restaurant together with a residential complex around it.
[11] Algimantas Mačiulis, 'Architektūra kryžkelėje' ('Architecture at the Crossroads'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 17 March 1984.
[12] Christian Norberg-Shulz, *Roots of Modern Architecture*, Tokyo: A. D. A. Edita, 1988, p. 139.
[13] 'Nacionalinė architektūra. Kas ji?' ('National Architecture. What is It?'), in: *Statyba ir architektūra*, no. 2, 1979, pp. 12-13.
[14] According to the stories of celebrated architect brothers Algimantas and Vytautas Nasvytis, they looked for information in Moscow science libraries while taking part in preparing works for a Moscow exhibition. It was possible to find in special stocks publications on Northern Europe architecture, especially Finland with Alvar Aalto first of all. They copied what was valuable, made microfilms, and sent them to colleagues in Lithuania. Later, in 1959, a group of architects had the opportunity to go on a working trip to Finland and experience many things live. Teodoras Biliūnas, *Moderniosios architektūros savitumai Šiaurės Europos šalyse* (*Peculiarities of Modern Architecture in the Countries of Northern Europe*), bachelor theses, Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2000, pp. 24-26.
[15] Despite the fact the some of most valuable ones have already been destroyed or changed dramatically.

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Užprogramuotas kitoniškumas: rekreacinės architektūros atvejis sovietmečio Lietuvoje

Reikšminiai žodžiai: sovietmetis, rekreacinė architektūra, ideologiniai, estetiniai architektūros pokyčiai.

Santrauka

Lietuvos sovietmečio rekreacinėje architektūroje juntamos to laikotarpio politinės, ideologinės ir estetinės nuostatos. Kuriant įsivaizduojamą „tobulą" socialistinę Sovietų Sąjungos visuomenę, poilsio sistemos formavimui buvo skiriamas išskirtinis dėmesys. Sukurtas savotiškas rekreacinės veiklos „fenomenas" – išgryninta veiklos ir gyvenimo sfera. Rekreacinė architektūra, kurortų statybos tapo socialistinės valstybės priemone visuotinai poilsio strategijai skleisti. Valingas, neretai ir agresyvaus pobūdžio planingumas, itin smarkiai paveikė Lietuvos kurortų architektūrinį vaizdą ir sąlygojo staigią kurortų plėtrą. Lietuvos kurortų architektūra užima specifinę vietą to laikotarpio architektūros kontekste, kaip viena kūrybiškiausių „erdvių". Skirtingai, nei daugelyje kitų Lietuvos miestų, kurortuose tuo metu daug statyta pagal individualius (ne tipinius) projektus. Originalių formų paieška iš dalies sąlygojo funkcinė paskirtis ir užduotis – rekreacinę architektūrą siekta formuoti kitokią, nei gyvenamąją aplinką. Tuometinei Lietuvos kurortų architektūrai būdinga stilių, krypčių, architektūrinių idėjų ir sprendimų įvairovė – nuo istorinio retrospektyvizmo, funkcionalizmo iki savitų, susijusių su nacionalinio stiliaus paieškomis, modernizmo variacijų. Kurortų architektūros raidoje, rekreacinės architektūros raiškoje atsispindi tiek pagrindinės ideologinės nuostatos ir programos pokyčiai, tiek individualios pastangos nuo jų nukrypti.

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National(ist) Ideology and Urban Planning: Building the *Victory of Socialism* in Bucharest, Romania

Key words: socialist urban policies, demolitions, national-communist propaganda, Romania.

> "Nothing [is said] about the monuments destroyed, ruined or desecrated, nothing about those who tried to protect them, … nothing about the demolition contractors and about the victims, about orders and those who obeyed these orders, about the annihilation of the Church and about the obliteration of history".

This protest was heard on Radio Free Europe in the summer of 1981. Three (art) historians (Daniel Barbu, Radu Ciuceanu, Octavian Roske) elaborated a document concerning the different waves of demolition that had affected religious and non-religious buildings. Sent abroad clandestinely, the document (entitled *The condition of monuments under communist rule*) was attributed to a fictitious organisation called *The Group for the Monitoring of Historical Monuments* and, according to its authors, it was conceived "as an alarm signal for international public opinion".[1] It seemed to be the only potentially effective form of protest against Ceaușescu's megalomaniac projects for urban and rural restructuring, given that several petitions addressed to different Romanian institutions, and even to the "supreme architect" himself, remained unanswered.

The present article therefore examines both architecture as a reification of national-communist propaganda, as well as the reaction of different (art) historians and architects who tried to prevent the massive destruction of the country's architectural heritage. I will first present a concise overview of the different architectural policies in communist Romania (during the regime of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej, 1945-1965, and of his successor, Nicolae Ceaușescu, 1965-1989), and will then focus on the 1980s, the period when a "grandiose" project of urban restructuring was implemented in the Romanian capital, Bucharest.

Finally, I will try to ascertain whether this reconstruction of cities in communist Romania elicited any reaction on the part of either individuals or institutions (NGOs, professional associations, etc.). In doing so, I will focus my analysis on different *milieux de resistance*, showing that absolute control over urban and rural planning by an authoritarian leader, and total ideologisation of architecture were sometimes questioned, despite the quasi-total obedience which characterised most of the architects and public institutions. As one of my interviewees stated, "we sometimes had the illusion that our *don-quixotesque* attempts would change something… Of course, it was only an illusion…".[2]

THE SOCIALIST "ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVE": A DISCOURSE ON THE NEW, SOCIALIST CITY…

The Communist Party, a marginal political group prior to the occupation of Romania by the Red Army in 1944, came to power under Soviet guidance in 1945.[3] Before the communists turned themselves into "champions of autonomy from that imperial centre"[4], Romanian politics and policies (including architectural) were marked by an unconditional

Fig. 1. Bucharest, The Great Synagogue, screened by apartment blocks built in the 1980s. Photo by the author, 2006

loyalty to Moscow. For instance, a decision adopted in 1949 to radically change the urban structure of Moscow had an (in)direct impact on other countries in the "socialist camp" – including Romania. The new architecture was meant to ascertain "the superiority of the communist doctrine". Large building programs were conceived on the advice of Soviet architects, and in close compliance with the new "political line". Architecture became a part of "central planning" (a State Committee for architecture, construction and urbanism was founded in 1952), and architects, no longer allowed to work independently, were coerced, starting in 1949, to become members of state-run specialised institutions.

A speech by Khrushchev in 1956 that was slated as a manifesto against socialist realism, which had been considered the most representative expression of Stalinism, had an enormous influence in reshaping architectural discourses and related policies both in the Soviet Union and in the satellite countries.[5] The emphasis made by Khrushchev on standardisation and prefabrication became the "official" dogma of the new State Committee for Architecture and Construction of the Council of Ministers.[6] Four years after Khrushchev's famous speech, in which he referred to the "dear, but too expensive architects", the "aesthetic exaggerations" of urban planners and architects were heavily criticised at a plenary of the Romanian Working Party as ignoring the economic factors, i.e. the necessity of providing low-cost housing for the working class. As noted by Barbara Miller Lane[7], this impetus for cost-efficient planning was certainly based both on "ideological" rationality (prefabricated mass housing being seen as an embodiment of "the new era"), and very pragmatic economic reasons (a shortage of housing due mainly to late industrialisation).[8]

Obsessed as they were by political and social "transformism"[9], the communist leaders tried to create not only a new socialist city, but also a new socialist man. "The party-state believed architecture to have a transformative effect, and promoted communal dwellings in order to mould a new socialist way of life".[10] Thus the task of the new constructions was "to build material foundations that would mould nothing less than a new society"[11], both "modern" and "equalitarian". The necessary "living space" for the socialist man was prescribed by law to be a maximum of 8 m². Not surprisingly, some socialist men were "more equal" than others: exceptions could be made for socialist working heroes, members of communist organisations, high ranking army officers, and artists (their "living space" could be extended to 10-20 m²).[12]

The strict limitation of the necessary "living space" was applied not only to newly constructed buildings, but to existing ones as well. As a consequence, "the inequitable distribution of living space" was subject to various normative acts.[13] "While the exploiting class occupies luxurious buildings with dozens of rooms, the working people who have been bloodily exploited to construct these buildings, are living in the deepest poverty" stated the legislators, explaining the need to find solutions for the inequitable distribution of housing.[14] The "socialist solutions" culminated in a nationalisation decree passed in 1950, whereby more than 400,000 buildings were labelled as belonging to "class enemies" and "exploiters", and were subsequently nationalised.

Two decades after Khrushchev's speech, when the "equal distribution of housing" was already completed (either by nationalisation or by limitation of "living space"), Ceaușescu was still convinced that the constructed environment had to be modernised in order to express not only the economic and political, but also the social changes brought about

by his regime.[15] Ceaușescu's speech[16] at the twelfth congress of the Communist Party was illustrative in this sense: "We must complete the general reconstruction of the capital city, the town planning, the street system, so that in 1985 the capital will have become a modern, socialist city, worthy of the epoch of a multilaterally developed socialist society, that will be the pride of all of our people." According to Dinu Giurescu[17], by the end of 1989, when the Ceaușescu regime fell, at least 29 towns had been almost completely restructured (i.e. demolished and rebuilt), and another 37 were in the process of being restructured. There was also an overall plan of "rural systematisation" that intended to demolish and rebuild between 7,000 and 8,000 villages (out of a total of 13,000) by the year 2000, with new apartment buildings replacing single-family houses.[18]

… AND ON NATIONHOOD – ON "ROMANIANNESS"

"Socialist architecture" was meant not only to symbolise the "victory of socialism", of what Ceaușescu called "a modern, socialist city, worthy of the epoch of a multilaterally developed socialist society...", but also to engender a political narrative of "Romanianness". Since – under Gheorghiu-Dej's regime, and even more (after 1965) under Ceaușescu's – nationalism was used as the principal legitimising political ideology, architecture as well was forced to embody this "patriotic travesty".[19] In contrast to the first years after the communist take over, which were characterised by unconditional loyalty to Moscow, in the 1970s and 1980s both architectural structures and political rhetoric were dominated by the idea of a "national communist rule" independent of the Soviet bloc.

Fig. 2. Bucharest, The House of the People, today the Parliament's Palace. Photo by the author, 2005

The most notorious architectural reification of Ceaușescu's nationalist propaganda was the new civic centre in the capital city. Starting at the end of the 1960s, historical centres and old neighbourhoods in some Romanian cities were being demolished and replaced by standardised blocks of flats and "politico-administrative" complexes conceived according to one unique pattern: official institutions surrounding a large square.[20] A project for the new civic centre in Bucharest was elaborated in 1977, the year when large areas of the capital city were destroyed or badly damaged by an earthquake. Three weeks after this earthquake, at a meeting of the Executive political committee, Ceaușescu stated: "If we demolish everything, Bucharest will be [a] beautiful [city]".[21]

In fact, this period (the 1970s) can be seen as a turning point in Romanian urban planning.[22] The regime tended to abandon the idea of reappropriating and reinterpreting the past – including, for example, by taking over symbolic architectural landmarks, as had recurrently happened in the previous decades (e.g., Cotroceni Palace, the royal residence in Bucharest, had been given to the National Council for Pioneers, a communist youth organisation until the end of the 1970s). The "supreme architect" henceforth favoured an autonomous discourse: the "systematisation" (i.e. urbanisation) of villages[23], the demolition of large areas of the historical centres of cities, the construction of a new civic centre in Bucharest (including centralisation of the main state institutions). It appears that a visit to Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, was an important "source of inspiration" for Ceaușescu, who "re-Stalinised" his politico-architectural "agenda". His grandiose plans for the new civic centre in Bucharest represented a return to the Stalinist thesis of an imperative "socialist content and national form".

A glorification of its dictatorship, the civic centre included the following:

- the enormous *House of the Republic* (or *House of the People*), the second largest building in the world, after the Pentagon [fig. 2];

- a 3.5 km long avenue called *Victory of Socialism over the Entire Nation*, which was designed to be slightly larger than the *Champs-Elysées* in Paris [fig. 3];
- apartment buildings for prominent Party members lining the avenue;
- monumental buildings housing ministries, a national library, and a concert hall for the *Song to Romania* (a festival celebrating Romanian communist achievements), also lining the *Victory of Socialism*.

Beyond this "exceptionalism" (and in fact interconnected with it), the architecture of the civic centre was projected to engender a narrative of "national identity", of "Romanian-ness".[24] For instance, the extremely eclectic style of the *House of the People* was intended to represent a "neo-Romanian style". Its interior design incorporates deliberate visual references to different Romanian architectural styles and landmarks, and thus the building becomes a sort of statement or index of Romanian architectural styles.[25] The main architect, Anca Petrescu, proudly recalls (in interviews given after 1989) that she adorned the *House of the People* with decorations "saved" from demolished monasteries (including the Văcărești Monastery – the largest Orthodox church in the Balkans after the Athos Monastery, built in 1716-1722 by ruler Nicolae Mavrocordat; destroyed in 1986). Moreover, the *House of the People* was built as an "exclusively Romanian" concept (designed by ca. 400 architects) and construction (built by ca. 20,000 workers), and using (almost) only Romanian-made materials.

More than 40,000 people were dislocated for the construction of the civic centre. To prevent resistance, notice of relocation generally arrived only a few days before the bulldozers did.[26] "We knew that one day the bulldozers would invade our courtyard too," explained A., whose house was demolished in 1986. "There were rumours about visits by Ceaușescu and Elena [his wife], about him pointing at the next victims, the next streets to be demolished. But it was only extremely late, a few days before the demolition of our house, that we received an official announcement from the authorities".[27]

All in all, fourteen churches and two historic monasteries, along with perhaps approximately 9,300 public buildings from the 19th century, were destroyed, or in some cases, modified beyond recognition in order to build the *Civic Centre*.[28] After 1985, the Dudesti-Vacaresti sector (an area in the historical centre of Bucharest) was almost completely demolished [fig. 4 and 5].

REACTIONS AGAINST THE "BUILDING MANIA"...

"The Romanian building program is a notable achievement. Comparatively, we can only regret the results of non-planning in the United States: the confusion of free enterprises with anarchy. … Its most progressive aspect is its technology, … industrialised prefabricated panel structures, far ahead of American housing methods"[29], stated the *New York Times* correspondent in Romania in 1964. This wasn't a singular voice at the beginning of the 1960s. Several other foreign journalists remarked that, "improvements brighten Romania. … The housing development is the major element in the generally improved appearance of this city [Bucharest]".[30] And that, "as one gets into the city [Bucharest], row upon row of handsome buildings are seen. All have gone up within the last three years, and rank with the buildings of any European city in modernity and beauty".[31] The enthusiasm for the vast public housing program of the 1960s was to be replaced two decades later by an abhorrence, and vehement protests against the megalomaniac destruction of the capital city. A correspondent for the *Financial Times* wrote:

Fig. 3. Bucharest, The Victory of Socialism Boulevard, today the Union's Boulevard. Photo by the author, 2005

"Building mania is one of the worst forms of madness when it is uncontrolled". Bucharest became "a city of darkness – a horrific vision of the future that no sane person could possibly want to endure".[32]

Both from inside and outside Romania several attempts were made to stop or to delay this demolition and "building mania".[33] Individuals (historians, art historians, architects, clerics, journalists, etc.) and institutions (US Department of State, a Belgium-based NGO called *Opération Villages Roumains* created in 1988, etc.) tried to protest or to "negotiate" with the communist leaders regarding urban and rural restructuring projects implemented in the 1980s. For instance, different art historians and architects tried (and in a few cases even succeeded) to save several religious sites, churches that "happened to be" in the way of some "grandiose" urban project. The churches were either transmuted, or simply screened by new apartment blocks [fig. 1].

This article is intended neither as a complete history of all the protests against the "systematisation" of Romanian cities and villages, nor as an attempt to evaluate if and how these protests could have influenced the projects that Ceauşescu had embarked upon. Tracing the complete picture of all of these initiatives is an unachievable task, partly because of the difficulty of accessing the recent archives of the former regime (Romanian law permits access only to documents older than thirty years), and partly because of what Vladimir Tismăneanu calls "the distorting effect of self-serving memories of witnesses to, or of participants in, the events examined".[34] Nevertheless, I have tried to recover some "pieces of the puzzle" by using documents that were unavailable to researchers until just recently, as well as other primary sources. These include documents concerning socialist urban planning and systematisation that are available at the National Romanian Archives in Bucharest[35] or at the Open Society Archives in Budapest[36]; texts of research reports elaborated during the communist era and published after 1989; autobiographical sources, including memoirs published by architects and priests; interviews with architects and (art) historians who protested against the "systematisation" of cities and villages, as well as with owners of houses that were demolished in the 1980s.

Fig. 4. Bucharest, Former Jewish area, close to the Union's Boulevard, some of the few buildings which "escaped" the demolition wave of the 1980s. Photo by the author, 2006

For instance, the memoirs of an Orthodox priest who was sentenced to ten years in prison after protesting against the politicisation of sermons and the demolitions of churches, show that his was a fairly singular voice among the members of the Romanian Orthodox clergy.[37] Patriarch Iustin Moisescu, a former collaborator with the *Securitate* (Romanian secret police), did not even attempt to prevent Calciu's punishment, or to save the churches from being torn down.[38] And when historian Dinu Giurescu sought the support of the Orthodox Church to save sites of worship, he was told that he resembled "the fugitives from Radio Free Europe".[39] When Teoctist took over the patriarchal helm in 1986, he, like his predecessor, gave his consent to the demolitions and to the repression of protesting priests[40], despite the escalation in the number of destroyed sites of worship. Once again, it was an ordinary priest, Ioan Dură, who reacted to the silence of the Orthodox leaders by sending a protest against the demolitions, in October 1987, to the Romanian Ecumenical Council of Churches.[41]

Just as not all of the priests kept silent, not all of the architects competed for the right to construct "grandiose" socialist buildings. Some reacted to these totalitarian politico-architectural plans by means of various artistic experiments, exhibitions, articles, and symposia on architectural heritage, or by introducing concepts and teaching methods opposed to the "official" discourse. For instance, an exhibition organised by the Bucharest School of Architecture,

entitled *Traditions of Building*, showed fragments and photographs of the demolished buildings.[42]

Ceaușescu's politics and architectural policies were also the subject of more explicit critiques and protests, including ones elaborated by a small number of (art) historians. Various memorandums and letters were sent to Romanian political and administrative authorities, and to the "supreme architect" himself, by (art) historians and architects like Dinu Giurescu, Grigore Ionescu, Vasile Drăguț, Răzvan Theodorescu, Virgil Cândea, all members of the Central State Commission for National Cultural Patrimony.[43] Most were simply left unanswered. According to Theodorescu, one of the signatories of these documents, "the real difficulty was to get the documents to Ceaușescu personally. We used his brother, an army general who frequented the Arts Academy. But it was useless…".[44]

Articles and letters of protest were sent to international organisations like UNESCO, and to radio stations as well. They were comprised of well-documented works on Romanian architectural history, including precise data on the "systematisation" plans, and on their destructive consequences. Two of the most important appeals, entitled *The condition of monuments under communist rule* and *Will Bucharest survive until 1984?*, were elaborated in 1980 by three (art) historians (Barbu, Ciuceanu, Roske), and sent abroad clandestinely for broadcasting over Radio Free Europe. The authors stated that, if "whims will continue to govern the reactions of Bucharest leaders, historical monuments will continue to be demolished, ruined, or abandoned", and added that they were highly pessimistic regarding the potential outcome of their initiative: "the abuses, the arbitrary methods, the gratuitous decisions, the errors, [characterise] a behaviour which – we have no illusions – this work will be unable to influence".[45]

CONCLUSION: AN ARCHITECTURAL PALIMPSEST?

The "key arena for ideology"[46] – the architecture during Ceaușescu's sultanistic regime[47], including his "systematisation" plans, particularly as represented by the civic centre of Bucharest – embodies two different, but interconnected, "architectural narratives". The first discourse concerns "social engineering" – the simultaneous creation of a new man and a new society, and "the homogenisation of Romanian socialist society, a reduction of the main differences between villages and towns, and the accomplishment of a single society of the working people".[48] Most of the literature on the systematisation of cities and villages rightfully explains the drama for the families affected by the demolitions. One should, however, add some "grey" to this "black and white" picture: the apartment blocks were also seen as a form representing modern urban life.[49] Augustin Ioan remembers: "Enthusiastic about the idea of "progress" in the 1960s and 1970s, they [my parents] abandoned their house in order to move and live in a block of flats. … They would finally live a "civilized" life. … Also, they were heavily influenced by state propaganda, which, in a "modernising" drive, qualified the block as good/ progressive, and the house as bad/ retrograde".[50]

Alongside this first theme of "social engineering" is the second "architectural narrative" – a discourse on "Romanian-ness". The architecture is essential to what Homi Bhabha calls "the production of the nation as a narration".[51] Thus, in Ceaușescu's dictum, it had to represent "the pride of all of our people", and the image of "national communist rule" independent of Soviet dictates.

Screened by high-rise apartment blocks, or moved to a new place, some of the churches escaped the "grandiose" reconstruction plans. Whether these buildings demonstrated a quasi-successful attempt "to negotiate" with the Great Architect of the Socialist City, or whether they survived simply by a stroke of luck, is an intractable question. In this article I have tried to show some "enclaves of resistance", some "*don quixotesque* attempts" (to use my informant's expression) to stop the demolitions which started in the late 1970s, when the construction of the *Victory of Socialism* began. Nevertheless, the only moment that was indubitably decisive in stopping the "systematisation" plans was the fall of the communist regime in December 1989. Ceaușescu's systematisation plans were meant to lead, by the year 2000,

Fig. 5. Bucharest, Former Jewish area, close to the Union's Boulevard. Photo by the author, 2006

to a reduction by more than 50% of the number of villages, and to extensive urban reconstruction (by 1990, 90-95% of Bucharest inhabitants would have lived in new apartment blocks).[52]

The symbol of Ceauşescu's politico-architectural plans, the *House of the People*, became the focus of ongoing controversy[53] after 1989. Opinions as to the future of the totalitarian architectural symbol oscillated between a discourse on the necessity of breaking with the past (demolition of the building); derision of the "magnificent past" (its transformation into a casino or a communist Disneyland, as proposed by Ioan in 1991); or continuity for pragmatic reasons. It is the latter solution that took precedence over the former two. Thus the *House of the People* is a paradoxical "palimpsest": a symbol of a sultanistic regime, highly centralised power, and Ceauşescu's personality cult, it was transformed after 1989 into a "symbol of democracy", and today hosts some of the most important political and administrative institutions (Romanian Parliament[54], Legislative Council, Constitutional Court). The "official story" of the building, posted on the website of the Romanian Parliament[55], states that, "realising its enormous value …, people began to see the building with less hostility, and named it the *House of the People*. … It was decided that the building should serve to lodge the Chamber of Deputies, and the Senate of Romania, and that its name should be changed to *Palace of the Parliament* – a symbol of democracy." The surrounding architectural complex is used mainly for its original intended purposes (to house ministries, the National Institute of Statistics, etc.).

As Ioan notes, the Republic House/House of the People/Parliament Palace "became the pet location of the new/old political elite. … It was destined to be, and finally became, the ultimate political edifice in Romania".[56] In his analysis of post-Second World War Germany, Theodor Adorno explains the paradox of trying "to come to terms with the past" (his analysis seems pertinent to Romania as well): "One wants to get free of the past: rightly so, since one cannot live in its shadow. … But wrongly so, since the past one wishes to evade is still so intensely alive".[57]

Notes

[1] Daniel Barbu, Radu Ciuceanu, Octavian Roske, 'Condiția monumentului sub regimul comunist' ('The Condition of Monuments under the Communist Regime'), in: *Arhivele Totalitarismului,* no. 1-2, 2000, p. 219.

[2] Interview with T. (art historian, co-author of a letter of protest against the demolition of churches), Bucharest, June 2003.

[3] See Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism,* Berkeley & LA, California: University of California Press, 2003, pp. 37-106.

[4] Ibid., p. 5.

[5] For an analysis of Nikita Khrushchev's December 1956 speech and its impact on Romanian architects, see Augustin Ioan and Marius Marcu-Lepadat, *Man-Made Environment in Post-Stalinist Europe,* Research Support Scheme, OSI, March 1999, pp. 9-15; and Augustin Ioan, *Power, Play and National Identity: Politics of Modernisation in Central and East European Architecture. The Romanian File,* Bucharest: The Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1999, pp. 63-78.

[6] Ioan and Marcu-Lepadat, 1999, pp. 9, 13.

[7] Barbara Miller Lane, 'Architects in Power: Politics and Ideology in the Work of Ernst May and Albert Speer', in: *Journal of Interdisciplinary History,* no. 17 (1), 1986, pp. 283-310.

[8] This idea of cost-effective construction, of mass-produced buildings, was central to the state housing policy in several Western countries during the post-war era (e.g., Great Britain, Scandinavia). But in Romania, as in other Soviet-satellite countries, this type of building was seen not only as a solution to the post-war housing problem, but also as a "political doctrine".

[9] Robert Tucker, *The Soviet Political Mind: Studies in Stalinism and Post-Stalin Change,* New York: Praeger, 1963, p. 143.

[10] Caroline Humphrey, 'Ideology in Infrastructure. Architecture and Soviet Imagination', in: *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, no. 11, 2005, p. 39.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Open Society Archives (hereafter HU-OSA), Fonds 300: Records of Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty Research Institute (RFE/RL RI), Subfonds 7: US Office, Series 3: Romanian Subject Files, 1950-1973, Box 1: Romania – Housing (1951-1973): 'Living space', Bulletin 130, Information and reference department, RFE, 6 May 1952.

[13] E.g., Law no. 359/1948, Decision no. 29/1949 of the Council of Ministers, Decree no. 92/1950. Accordingly, the legislation elaborated in the first decade after the installation of the communist regime allowed state institutions to evaluate the necessary "living space" for each family that wanted to rent or to buy a house. At the same time, this served as the means by which representatives of state institutions could decide whether a family was "wasting" housing space. A "wasteful family" could expect to see its house nationalised, or be forced to move to a smaller apartment, or to give up "excessive" space (rooms, and sometimes part of the kitchen and bathroom) to another family.

[14] Excerpt from a circular of the Ministry of Internal Affairs dated March 1, 1949, quoted by Vladimir Tismăneanu (ed.), *Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, Final Report*, 2006, p. 616.

[15] Marie de Betânia Uchôa Cavalcanti, 'Urban Reconstruction and Autocratic Regimes: Ceausescu's Bucharest in its Historic Context', in: *Planning Perspectives,* no. 12, 1997, p. 84.

[16] Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Rapoarte, cuvântări, interviuri, articole* (*Reports, Speeches, Interviews, Articles*), vol. 14, Bucharest: Meridiane, 1977.

[17] Dinu Giurescu, *The Razing of Romania's Past,* New York: World Monuments Fund; London: Architecture Design and Technology Press, 1990, pp. vi-vii.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Tismăneanu, 2003, p. 28.

[20] Tismăneanu, 2006, p. 611.

[21] Minutes of a meeting of the Executive political committee, 30 March 1977, National Historical Central Archives, Fonds Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, Chancellery, file no. 42/1977, f. 1.

[22] For a diachronic overview of architectural policies in Romania after the communist takeover, see Giurescu, *The Razing of Romania's Past*. He refers to 3 main phases of these policies: 1955-1970, characterised by an extensive public housing programme; 1970-1977, an epoch of debate over the necessity of "systematising" villages and cities; and the period after the 1977 earthquake, marked by major demolitions. See also Adam Drazin, 'Architecture without Architects: Building Home and State in Romania', in: *Home Cultures,* no. 2 (2), 2005, pp. 198-203.

[23] The law for the systematisation of territory and localities was adopted by the Great National Assembly in October 1974.

[24] For the national(ist) politico-architectural rhetoric before WWII, see Augustin Ioan, 'Arhitectura interbelică și chestiunea identității colective' ('Architecture between the 2 WW and the Issue of Collective Identity'), in: *Caietele Echinox,* vol. 3, 2002, pp. 80-91.

[25] Roann Barris, 'Contested Mythologies: The Architectural Deconstruction of a Totalitarian Culture', in: *Journal of Archtectural Education,* no. 54 (4), 2001, p. 231.

[26] Ibid., p. 229.

[27] Interview with A. (engineer, former inhabitant of Dudești – Văcărești), Bucharest, October 2006.

[28] Barris, 2001, p. 229.

[29] Ada Louise Houxtable, 'Architecture: Romania's Ambitious Building Plan', in: *NY Times*, 21 July 1964, in HU-OSA, 300-7-3: Romania Subject Files; Western Press Archives: Romania; Romania: Buildings and Monuments (1952-1968).

[30] Eric Bourne, 'Making the Best out of Things: Improvements Brighten Romania', in: *Christian Science Monitor,* 17 July 1962, in HU-OSA, 300-7-3: Western Press Archives: Romania; Romania: General (1955-1973).

[31] Harold Schonberg, 'Modernity in Bucharest: City Shuns Soviet Architectural Style To Put Up Attractive, Colourful Buildings', in: *NY Times*, 23 September 1961, in HU-OSA, 300-7-3: Western Press Archives: Romania; Romania: General (1955-1973).

[32] Colin Amery, 'Megalomania in the Spoilt City', in: *Financial Times,* 11 June 1988, quoted by Raoul Granqvist, *Revolution's Urban Landscape: Bucharest Culture and Postcommunist Change*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999, p. 86.

[33] For a review of protests against the "systematisation" of

Romanian cities and villages, see Giurescu, 1990, pp. 42-66.

[34] Tismăneanu, 2003, p. 7.

[35] Romanian National Historical Central Archives, Bucharest, especially the Fonds Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, Chancellery.

[36] The Open Society Archives in Budapest provide the researcher with an overall picture of the politico-architectural programmes implemented in socialist Romania, and with important insights on remonstrations voiced against these programmes. The most important in this respect is HU-OSA, Fonds 300: Records of RFE/RL RI, Subfonds 60: Romanian Unit, Series 1, especially files: 3.101 Administration: National committees: Village destruction, 1990; 5.101 Administration: People's Councils: Systematisation, 1987; 5.101 Administration: People's Councils: Towns, 1989; 5.101 Administration: People's Councils: Villages, 1988; 5.101 Administration: People's Councils: Village destruction, 1988; 546. 3202 Standard of living: Housing, 1966/ 1968/1972/1988.

[37] Gheorghe Calciu – Dumitreasa, *Războiul întru Cuvânt. Cuvintele către tineri și alte mărturi* (*War and Words. Words Addressed to Young People and Other Testimonies*), Bucharest: Nemira, 2001.

[38] Tismăneanu, 1996, p. 466.

[39] Ibid. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is funded by the United States Congress, and was founded in 1950 by the National Committee for a Free Europe, to combat Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. RFE/RL was a radio station where well-known émigrés (e.g., Ioan Ioanid, Virgil Ierunca, Monica Lovinescu) contributed to Romanian language broadcasts on the political, social, and cultural situation in Romania.

[40] Ibid. See also Lavinia Stan, Lucian Turcescu, 'Politics, National Symbols and the Romanian Orthodox Cathedral', in: *Europe – Asia Studies,* no. 58(7), 2006, p. 1126.

[41] Tismăneanu, 1996, p. 466.

[42] Helen Stratford, 'Enclaves of Expression: Resistance by Young Architects to the Physical and Psychological Control of Expression in Romania during the 1980s', in: *Journal of Architectural Education*, no. 54 (4), 2001, pp. 221. See also Giurescu, 1990, pp. 42-46.

[43] Ibid., pp. 51-66.

[44] Interview with Răzvan Theodorescu ('Bucarest, quando l'UNESCO fece finta di nulla", 3 December 2006), www.lettera22.it/showart.php?id=6204&rubrica=130

[45] Barbu, Ciuceanu, Roske, 2000, pp. 222-223.

[46] Humphrey, 2005, p. 39.

[47] I use the term "sultanistic" as defined by Juan Linz, referring to political regimes where the leadership is one of great unpredictability and has undefined limits; Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation,* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996.

[48] Giurescu, 1990, p. 42.

[49] Vinitilă Mihăilescu et al, 'Le bloc 311: Résidence et sociabilité dans un immeuble d'appartements sociaux à Bucarest', in: *Ethnologie française,* vol. XXV (3), 1995, p. 485.

[50] Augustin Ioan, 'Monumental Slums', in: *Martor,* 2002, http://memoria.ro

[51] Homi Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration,* New York, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 297.

[52] Giurescu, 1990, p. 2.

[53] For an analysis of the *Bucharest 2000* international urban competition in 1995-1996, and the projects within it that tried to "reframe" the totalitarian architectural discourse of the Civic Centre, see Barris, 2001, pp. 229-237.

[54] In 1995, the Chamber of Deputies moved from the former Palace of the Parliament into Ceaușescu's Palace, as did the Senate, in 2005. The same chief architect (Anca Petrescu) was put in charge in the 1980s to construct the *House of the People*, and at the end of the 2000s to adapt part of the building for the present Senate.

[55] http://www.cdep.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=servicii1-palat

[56] Augustin Ioan, 'The History of Nothing: Contemporary Architecture and Public Space in Romania', in: *Art Margins, Contemporary Central and East European Visual Culture*, 2006. www.artmargins.com/content/feature/ioan5.html

[57] Theodor Adorno, 'What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?', in: Geoffrey Hartman (ed.), *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986, p. 115.

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Nacional(ist)inė ideologija ir miesto planavimas: *Socializmo pergalės* statyba Bukarešte (Rumunija)

Reikšminiai žodžiai: socialistinė miesto politika, griovimai, nacionalinė-komunistinė propaganda, Rumunija.

Santrauka

Socialistinės architektūros strategija įkūnija du skirtingus, bet tarpusavyje susijusius „architektūrinius naratyvus“. Pirmasis diskursas susijęs su „socialine inžinerija“ – naujo žmogaus ir naujos visuomenės kūrimu vienu metu. Šį požiūrį atskleidė „svarbiausiojo architekto“ – Ceauşescu – kalba dvyliktajame Komunistų Partijos kongrese. Kalboje sakoma, kad esą privaloma pabaigti generalinę sostinės rekonstrukciją, idant 1985 m. sostinė taptų moderniu socialistiniu miestu. Sostinė būsianti visos tautos pasididžiavimas, vertas būsimos daugiašalės socialistinės visuomenės epochos.

„Socialistinė architektūra“ turėjo būti ne tik „socializmo pergalės“ simbolis, bet ir įkūnyti „rumuniškumo“ politinį naratyvą. Kadangi nacionalizmu, kaip pagrindine įteisinamąja politine ideologija, pasinaudojo Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dejaus (1945-1965) ir Nicolae Ceauşescu (1965-1989) režimai, architektūra buvo priversta įkūnyti šį „patriotinį farsą“.

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama architektūra kaip nacionalinės-komunistinės propagandos sudaiktinimas, įvairių (meno) istorikų ir architektų, mėginusių sustabdyti masinį architektūrinio paveldo griovimą, reakcijos. Iš pradžių trumpai apžvelgiamos įvairios architektūrinės strategijos komunistinėje Rumunijoje (abiejų režimų – Gheorghiu Dejaus ir jo pasekėjo Nicolae Ceauşescu – metu). Analizuojamas XX a. 9-ajame dešimtmetyje Bukarešte, Rumunijos sostinėje, įgyvendintas „didingas“ urbanistinio perstruktūravimo projektas.

Galiausiai mėginama sužinoti, ar ši miestų rekonstrukcija komunistinėje Rumunijoje sukėlė pavienių asmenų ir institucijų veikėjų (nevalstybinių organizacijų, profesinių sąjungų, etc.) reakciją. Analizuojant skirtingą „rezistencijos aplinką“ įrodoma, kad autoritarinio lyderio nuolat kontroliuojamas miesto ir kaimo planavimas, visapusiškas architektūros ideologizavimas kai kada buvo kvestionuojamas, nepaisant tariamai visuotinio architektų ir visuomeninių institucijų paklusnumo.

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The Particularity of Lithuanian Structuralist Architecture: Case of the Dainava Settlement in Ukmergė District

Key words: collectivisation of agriculture, disurbanisation, functionalism, industrialisation, kolkhoz, modernism, new towns and settlements, reform of modernism, Soviet farm, structuralism, urbanisation.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most controversial periods in the history of Lithuanian architecture, associated with the avant-garde in philosophy, art, music and science, is laconically described as Soviet modernism. One of the phenomenons of contemporary architecture, characterised as a feature of Soviet modernism, is referred to as structuralism. The latter developed in Lithuania (as it did in Great Britain, Holland, Japan) as a reaction to the creative results of the modernist style. This presentation attempts to review the manifestation of these concepts in Lithuania, and their particularities within the context of other European countries and the USSR – with a focus on those ideas which affected changes in townscapes. The present text is part of more extensive research on the concept of structuralism in contemporary Lithuanian architecture. According to its author, such a review may help to define the particularities in the genesis and development of structuralist tendencies in Lithuania, and to understand their possible influence regarding the further architectural process in this country.

2. PRESUMPTIONS OF REGULAR TOWN DEVELOPMENT

There were various reasons for establishing new towns and settlements. The majority of them, however, are components of one policy of urbanisation within a specific country. Planned towns, small towns, and settlements differed not only in their function, but also in their method of development. It should be noted that the political-economic context differed as well.

According to researchers, the construction of new towns after the Second World War can be divided into East and West blocks. New Lithuanian towns (part of the contemporary process of regional planning in the USSR) can be divided into two main groups: 1) towns (Elektrėnai, Naujoji Akmenė, later Visaginas) with districts (Žirmūnai and Lazdynai in Vilnius, Kalniečiai in Kaunas), and 2) small towns and settlements. Regional planning in Lithuania began in 1956. The urban process was especially motivated by the growth of industry and the collectivisation of agriculture. By 1967 there was no administrative planning scheme, and small agricultural towns developed spontaneously. Later, economic socialist regulations determined the development of the urban agricultural sector.

In both the USSR, and Eastern and Western Europe, the practice of starting new towns showed that the theoretically measured human needs and models of society could not cover all of the subjective internal relationships and consequences occurring within a community. Such projects, which were quite expensive on an economic level, and too complex in a social sense, rarely succeeded. Thus after designing

new towns in the 1930s and 1940s, urban planners in Hungary in the 1950s and 1960s resumed the reconstruction and development of already existing cities[1], and Scandinavians reviewed their earlier strategy of new town planning.[2] Planners in Great Britain and France also turned to the reconstruction of separate areas of their cities. In the USSR such projects were politically motivated, and even if they did not succeed on the social and/or economic level, a precedent for their implementation had been laid. This was why, according to Lithuanian urbanist Romas Devinduonis[3], the concept of polarised urban development that was so popular in Europe in the 1960s did not become widespread in Lithuania until the latter half of the 1970s. Polish urbanist Jakub Wujek also noticed the aspect of delayed technology, which meant that project ideas were rarely tested in practice, with the result that their shortcomings only surfaced much later.[4]

3. PARALLEL EUROPEAN STRUCTURALIST IDEAS IN LITHUANIAN SETTLEMENTS

Structuralist ideas seem to have evolved from discussions by *Team 10* and CIAM, and were later popularised by the Dutch architectural magazine *Forum*.[5]

3.1. Another Idea. This idea was represented by urban design projects in the Pendrecht and Alexanderpolder districts in Rotterdam, where sectioned residential multiple low-rises appeared alongside single-flat, two-flat, block, and high-rise buildings.[6]

The Dainava Settlement [fig. 1] consisted of mostly sectional multi-family dwellings. A few four-flat two-storey residential houses were erected and granted garden allotments in separate locations.[7] Initially, on the basis of other USSR settlements, only multi-family houses were planned, but given

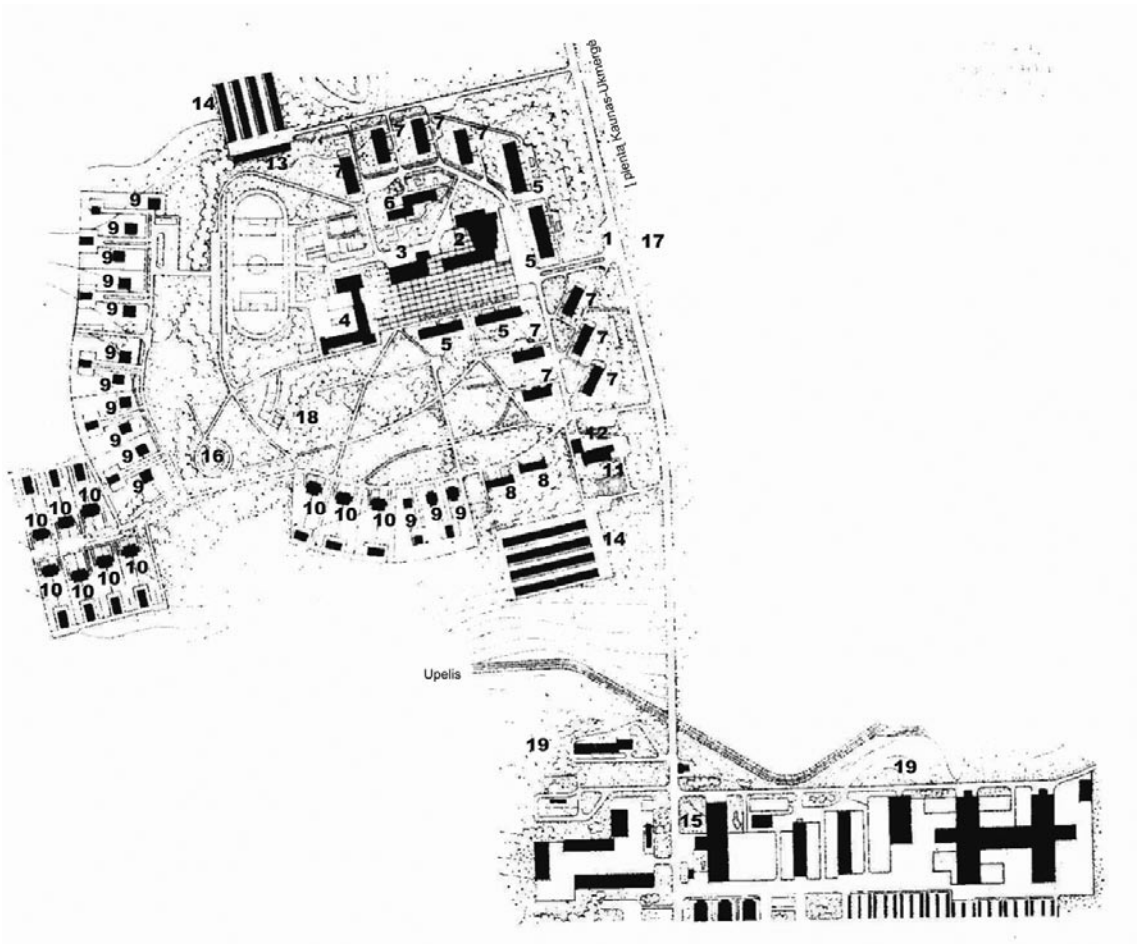

Fig. 1. Ramūnas Kamaitis with co-authors, The Dainava Settlement in Ukmergė district, 1966-71, site plan. Source: Jonas K. Minkevichius, Architektura Sovietskoj Litvy (Architecture of Soviet Lithuania), Moscow: Strojizdat, 1987

Fig. 2. Natural elements in the urban tissue of Klausučiai (Jurbarkas D.). Photo by the author, 2005

that the idea was not acceptable to all rural residents, it was decided some time later to construct single-flat houses as well.[8]

Western structuralists supported Patrick Geddes' concept regarding the integration of natural elements into the urban tissue – an idea which was also considered topical by the inter-war modernists. Its implementation, however, was successful only in the *Over-all Development Plan for the City of Amsterdam* (1928-1934), where peripheries were composed of basic functional elements, and natural elements were used for their interconnection with the baroque Old Town.[9] According to the architects, such solutions had to improve not only the quality of the residential environment, but also the bionic development of the city.

Natural components were also widely used in Lithuanian urban design projects [fig. 2]. For example, in seeking to arrange the landscape surrounding residential housing in Dainava [fig. 1], the traditional construction of agricultural-purpose buildings close to each residential house [fig. 1: 5, 7, 8] was abandoned in favour of the construction of such buildings in separate groups [fig. 1: 14, 15]. Such planning included playgrounds for children near residential quarters, and ensured the formation of a better landscape and the development of recreation spaces.[10] This innovative solution had

Fig. 3. Ramūnas Kamaitis with co-authors, The public center in Dainava (Ukmergė D.), 1966-71. Photo by the author, 2005

Fig. 4. Zenonas Dargis, Multi-family houses in Skaistgirys (Joniškis D.). Photo by the author, 2005

Fig. 5. Typical present-day situation. Ėriškiai (Panevėžys D.). Photo by the author, 2005

some weak points which surfaced quite early on: houses were too far away from agricultural-purpose buildings, and the concept of common exploitation of the buildings meant that they had no owner. Development of an 8-hectare park began around the settlement [fig. 1: 18]. The "collective gardens" [fig. 1: 17] in Dainava were the first of their kind in a rural environment.[11] A watercourse and "green line" separated the agricultural-industrial area [fig. 1: 19] from the residential sector.

3.2. Interior-Exterior Dialogue. Attempts were made to erase the boundaries not only between interior and exterior, but also between city and house, indoors and outdoors, big and small, detail and totality, private and public. In this way the concept evolved into the idea of the integrity of opposites, and finally started to modify the very concept of "designing": it was declared that projects for a kitchen and for the country were designed along analogous principles.[12] According to Wim J. van Heuvel[13], an archetypal example could be architect Aldo van Eyck's project for an orphanage in Amsterdam (1955-1960). This complex looks like a small city and a solid building at the same time, and is composed of rectangular repeating elements shaping private as well as common spaces. This permitted not only the modelling of special combinations out of typical elements, but also the enrichment of the human residential environment with the help of visual connections.

Public centres in new Lithuanian settlements were designed as integral architectural ensembles. The public centre in Dainava [fig. 3] was comprised of a kindergarten [fig. 1: 6], medical centre, bathhouse with laundry [fig. 1: 12], the first shopping centre – with eatery, club, and public services – in Lithuania [fig. 1: 2], a Soviet farm administration and postal building [fig. 1: 3], and a bus stop [fig. 1: 1]. Although they were composed out of typical elements, most design projects were individual in nature. Many of the projects for these settlements were unique, but were usually repeated once they were well accepted – with the result that in the later stages, many of the settlements began to show certain resemblances.

3.3. Other Housing. Structuralists suggested to dissociate primary functional elements from the functional structure of parallel-piped building, and to compose creative forms out of these elements. Such expanded compositional measures meant that the townscape had to become more colourful, thereby visually reducing volumes and space, animating street perspectives, and decreasing a sense of monotony.

The pre-cast block houses built in the Dainava settlement were the first such constructions in a rural environment [fig. 3]. Although they were awarded the USSR national prize, the architects of the settlement were accused of a straight-forward use of prefabricated products manufactured by home building integrated plants.[14] More original results were achieved in settlements erected some time later in Klausučiai [Jurbarkas D.; fig. 2], Juknaičiai [Šilutė D.], and elsewhere.

In comparing design projects from the post-war period with those of the 1960s and 1970s, one can find a feature characteristic of the development of the scientific modelling applied in countries in the West, i.e. the beginnings of the replacement of the functional character of urban territory modelling with an organic one.

Although the builders of most of the newly constructed Lithuanian towns, separate districts, and settlements failed to implement some design project solutions, one could clearly see certain parallels with the ideas of de-urbanisation, and the humanisation of the environment, that were being developed in Western societies. One should note, however, that such simultaneously developed ideas usually meant different things to residents of the Soviet bloc countries, and those in Western countries.

3.4. The present-day situation of towns developed in the latter half of the 20th century is quite varied [fig. 5]. Old industries have been successfully revived in some settlements, former Soviet farm centres, and kolkhozes (e.g., poultry farming in Dainava, and dolomite excavation in Skaistgirys). In certain former collective farms, agricultural partnerships have been established and function successfully (e.g., in Ėriškiai), or new agricultural branches have been started and developed (e.g., greenhouse farming in Aristava). Some ot these types of settlements have been amalgamated into the larger cities (e.g., Didžiosios Kabiškės near Nemenčinė and Vilnius, Dainava near Ukmergė, Juknaičiai near Šilutė). In order to attract and keep young professionals on the Soviet farms, these settlements usually had a higher quality of housing than previously existed in the larger cities. Today, these towns, now part of a larger metropolis, are becoming more and more popular as suburban residences.

Fig. 6. Combine harvester, a symbol of collectivisation, alongside the monument to the victims of Soviet occupation. Skaistgirys (Joniškis D.). Photo by the author, 2005

4. IN SUMMARY

Although Lithuanian agricultural settlements were built on the basis of socialist directives, they had some characteristic features. Socialist, political, economic directives and impersonalised creations were represented in the same way as was the striving for Western ideas during the information blockade, and the contraposition vis-a-vis the threat of assimilation [fig. 6]. Another important feature of Lithuanian agricultural settlements was determined by the absence of deportees from other Soviet republics. Volunteer colonists preferred bigger towns to agricultural settlements (unlike the expatriates in Siberia, Kazakhstan, or elsewhere). In the 1960s and 1970s, Dainava (Ukmergė D.), Klausučiai (Jurbarkas D.), Skaistgirys (Joniškis D.), and Kabiškės (Vilnius D.) were illustrative examples of Lithuanian agricultural settlements.

Undoubtedly, such newly developed functions had a certain influence on the further evolution of these towns, and the situation in some of them has undergone marked changes.

Notes

[1] Pjer Merlin, *Novyje goroda* (*The New Towns*), Moscow: Progress, 1975, pp. 193, 212.
[2] Ibid., p. 141.
[3] Romas Devinduonis, 'Lietuvos ir Vakarų Europos regioninio ir miestų planavimo praktikos paralelės' ('Regional and Urban Development Parallels in Lithuania and Western Europe'), in: *Archiforma*, no. 1, 1998, pp. 41-45.
[4] Jakub Vujek, *Mify i utopii architektury XX vieka* (*Myths and Utopias in Architecture of the 20th century*), Moscow: Strojizdat, 1990, p. 12.
[5] Wim J. van Heuvel, *Structuralism in Dutch Architecture*, Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010 Publishers, 1992, pp. 6-10; *Team 10 Online*, http://www.team10online.org/; Max Risselada,

Dirk van den Heuvel (eds.), *Team 10 1953-81. In Search of a Utopia of the Present*, Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2006.
[6] Van Heuvel, 1992, p. 12.
[7] V. Rupas, *Sovershenstvovanije zastroiki sielskich posiolkov Litovskoj SSR* (*Improvement of the Settlement Development in Lithuanian SSR*), Vilnius: LitNIINTI, 1981, pp. 32-33.
[8] Jonas K. Minkevichius, *Architektura Sovietskoj Litvy* (*Architecture of Soviet Lithuania*), Moscow: Strojizdat, 1987, p. 241.
[9] Leonardo Benevolo, *Europos miesto istorija (La citta nella storia d'Europa)*, trans. Aušra Čižikienė, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1998, p. 218.
[10] Rupas, 1981.
[11] Minkevichius, 1987, p. 243.
[12] *Team 10 Online*.
[13] Van Heuvel, 1992, p. 16.
[14] Minkevichius, 1987, p. 243.

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Lietuvos struktūralistinės architektūros raiškos savitumai Ukmergės rajono Dainavos gyvenvietės pavyzdžiu

Reikšminiai žodžiai: žemės ūkio kolektyvizacija, dezurbanizacija, funkcionalizmas, industrializacija, kolūkis, modernizmas, nauji miestai ir miesteliai, modernizmo reformos, struktūralizmas, urbanizacija.

Santrauka

XX a. vidurys ir antroji pusė paženklinta dideliais urbanistiniais pokyčiais. Lietuvoje imta projektuoti ir statyti naujus miestus (Elektrėnai, Naujoji Akmenė, vėliau – Visaginas), miestelius ir miesto tipo gyvenvietes. 1971 m. Ukmergės rajone pastatyta Leonpolio tarybinio ūkio Dainavos eksperimentinė-pavyzdinė gyvenvietė. Šios ir vėlesnių eksperimentinių-pavyzdinių gyvenviečių patirtis buvo pritaikyta kitų miestelių projektavimui ir statybai.

Lietuvos naujieji miesteliai, nors projektuoti pagal to meto direktyvas, turėjo savitų, kitoms sovietinio bloko miesto tipo gyvenvietėms nebūdingų bruožų. Kai kurių tyrinėtojų manymu, architektūra buvo to meto pagalbinė priemonė, identifikuojanti respubliką ir politinę santvarką. To meto architektūros teoretikai, atvirkščiai, teigė, kad tik Lietuvos architektų iniciatyva buvo atsižvelgta į vietos etnografinius savitumus. Esama teiginių apie prieškario mokyklos tęstinumą ir Vakarų bei Centrinės Europos patirties įtaką pokario Lietuvos planavimo darbams. Manytina, kad to laikotarpio Lietuvos architektūros ypatumus lėmė projektavimą reglamentuojančios direktyvos, politinė ekonominė situacija, jaunosios architektų kartos ideologinis ugdymas, kūrėjo nuasmeninimas ir priešprieša asimiliacijos pavojams, Vakarų architektūros idėjų siekiamybė informacinės blokados sąlygomis.

Kitas svarbus Lietuvos naujųjų miestelių bruožas – juose neatsirado tremtinių socialinės grupės. Atvykę savanoriai kolonistai kūrėsi saugesniuose didmiesčiuose, atvykėlių valdininkija nebuvo gausi, jos palaipsniui mažėjo. Todėl etninė periferijos sudėtis didžiąja dalimi išliko nepakitusi.

Šiandieninė XX a. antroje pusėje kurtų miestelių padėtis gana skirtinga. Kai kuriose buvusių tarybinių ūkių centrų gyvenvietėse pavyko atgaivinti senąją pramonę (pvz., Dainavoje – paukštininkystę, Skaistgiryje – dolomito kasybą). Kai kuriuose buvusiuose kolūkiuose įsitvirtino sėkmingai veikiančios žemės ūkio bendrovės (pvz., Ėriškiuose) ar buvo imtasi naujų žemės ūkio šakų (pvz., šiltnamių žemės ūkio – Aristavoje). Kai kurios iš šio tipo gyvenviečių pateko į didesniųjų miestų įtakos zonas (šalia Nemenčinės esančios Didžiosios Kabiškės, prie Ukmergės esanti Dainava, netoli Šilutės – Juknaičiai). Siekiant pritraukti ir išlaikyti jaunus specialistus valstybi-

niuose ūkiuose, buvo statomi kokybiškesni būstai nei didžiuosiuose miestuose. Todėl didmiesčių įtakon patekę naujieji miesteliai šiandien tampa vis populiaresne priemiestinio gyvenimo vieta. Naujosios funkcijos neabejotinai turi įtakos šių miestelių tolesnei raidai. Kai kurių iš jų vaizdas jau dabar ryškiai pakitęs.

Gauta: 2007 03 12
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

CULTURE AS RESISTANCE: DOUBLE GAMES

KULTŪRA KAIP PASIPRIEŠINIMAS: DVIGUBI ŽAIDIMAI

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Affirmation and Irony in Endre Tót's Joy Works of the 1970s

Key words: affirmation, negation, joy, zero, censorship, truth, action, body, photography, conceptualism, bureaucracy, Lenin, irony, double, documents, optimism, authenticity, clerk.

Two very different ideas weave in and out of the heterogeneous practice Endre Tót embarked on after declaring himself a conceptualist in 1971: joy, and zero. In what may seem like a swift march through post-war visual strategies, Tót had moved from *informel* painting, through collage, to pop, before turning to conceptualism. This conceptualism must be understood in the broadest sense, however, for Tót embraced a whole spectrum of activities: from light-hearted mail art, to street demonstrations, to "nullified dialogues" and "absent paintings". Tót's work is, I would like to suggest, largely structured around the exploration of affirmation and negation, whilst making agile acrobatic turns around a range of registers of critique: formal, linguistic, philosophic, and political. It is the political dimension, and how it intersects with the other registers, that I wish to foreground here. László Beke recalls how "the public soon noticed the attitude of criticism inherent in Tót's gesture: a talented painter suddenly gives up painting, and he is only glad if he can draw 000".[1] In parallel with the element of linguistic protest suggested by Tót's preference for English over Hungarian (and his preference for zeros over English), his move away from painting was more than the formal gesture of negation of the visual that provided the motivation for the earliest conceptualist generation in the West. It was a deliberately political manoeuvre. This paper looks at how Tót's works staked out a territory between the affirmative legacy of socialist realist ideology on the one hand, and conceptualism and performance, which were, by the 1970s, the major forms of art practiced in underground circles in Budapest, on the other.

"My *Joys* were the reflections of the totalitarian state of the seventies. I responded with the absurd euphoria of *Joys* to the censorship, isolation and suppression sensed in every field of life, though this suppression worked with the subtlest means, hardly visible", Tót later wrote.[2] His strategic response to

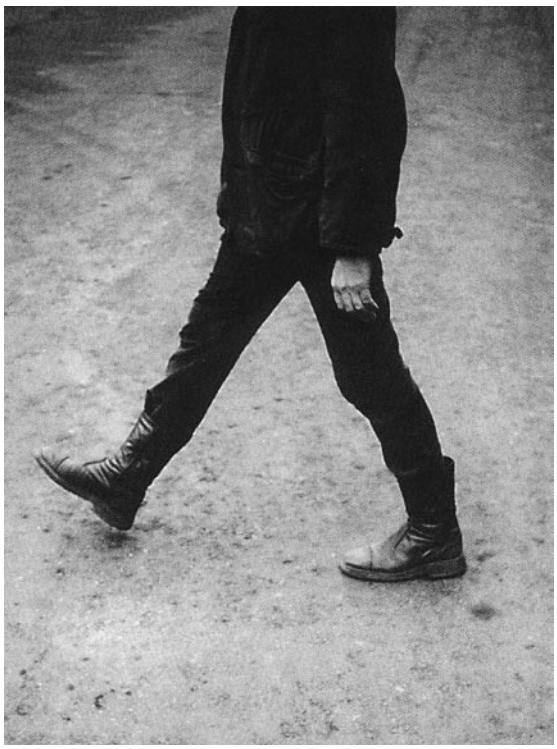

Fig. 1. Endre Tót, I am glad if I can take one step, 1973-5, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

the situation mimicked its malicious subtlety. In the series of works relating to gladness or joy that Tót carried out between 1971 and 1979, he had himself photographed performing a range of simple actions.[3] Black and white snapshots were, in each case, accompanied by the affirmative statement: "I am glad if…", or somehow incorporated this statement as part of the action. The actions themselves appear insignificant. Events as unremarkable as wiggling his toes, scratching his denim-clad derrière, or turning his head this way and that, all became pretexts for a uniformly deadpan profession of joy. The result is a seemingly arbitrary catalogue of largely mundane everyday activities and scenarios that seem utterly irreconcilable with any usual understanding of joy.

A piece entitled *I am glad if I can take one step* (1973-5) showed Tót with his leg raised, midway through a determined, almost military stride [fig. 1]. The routines of military training – of the body subjected daily to the discipline of a strict, wholesome regime – are interpolated, and, in turn, deflated. The artist's head and shoulders have been cropped, making the action anonymous. Tót's piece illustrated that taking "just one step" independently was one step too far for the Hungarian authorities. In view of the fact that Tót's short film of the same title was confiscated by the censors after an informal showing to a group of students, the signalling of the need for protection of the identity of the author gains retrospective resonance. This piece, and similar activities carried out by the artist on his own account, posed serious questions: What is it to act? When and how does an action become significant? He showed how any independent cultural action at this time risked being viewed as an "act" in the political sense. It is a simple point, but important precisely because it tested limits which did not "officially" exist, at a time when there was no censorship as a "legally operating institution" in Hungary.[4]

Fig. 2. Endre Tót, I am glad if I can stand next to you, 1973-5, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

Miklós Haraszti's wry "minimanual" of censorship in this period, *The Velvet Prison: Artists Under State Socialism*, is an ironic exposé of its anachronisms. The narrator claims that "progressive censorship does not demand from us the vision of the perfect society, or even evidence of ideological fealty, but rather the proof of sincere participation …".[5] The relationship between censor and artist, he boasts, has become dynamic and reciprocal: "The two faces of official culture – diligently and cheerfully cultivate the gardens of art together".[6] In his *Joys*, Tót played out the optimistic attitude required by the regime, and thereby appeared to comply with the demand to "participate". His internalisation of the fact that cheerfulness amounted to a condition of existence was wryly performed in a piece subtitled *Gaudeo ergo Sum* (1973-5). The artist was photographed in the act of grinning, his fringe so long that it casts a shadow over his eyes and all but obscures the remainder of his face, wearing a t-shirt with the letters TÓT over-scored by the figures 000. In the figural voiding of his name, Tót suggested that rejoicing amounted to an annihilation of his identity. His participation was a tongue-in-cheek "act": a meditation on action as act, in the dramatic as well as the political sense.

Tót is the first to admit that his actions were "very, very ironic".[7] Irony might be described as a linguistic act that is at once negative and generative: the receiver recognises that what at first appeared to be

true is inconsistent with the situation, and comes to apprehend a further meaning, the "real" meaning. In his discussion of the problem of irony, Paul de Man cites Friedrich Schlegel's idea of *reelle Sprache* – this being what "shines" through – what "glows" – in both wit and mythology.[8] The attributes Schlegel gave to this authentic language fluctuated. Initially, what "glowed" was the "seductive symmetry of contradictions" and a "strange, even absurd, as well as childlike sophisticated naïveté".[9] Elsewhere, though, he wrote that *reelle Sprache* was born of "error, madness and simpleminded stupidity".[10] The ambivalence manifested in these contradictory definitions is a play on the ambivalence of language, crucial to the powerfully performative function of irony. As something dangerously akin to this "authentic language", irony undoes the tropes of reflexivity and dialectic which so commonly structure narratives. Tót mirrored and destroyed the affirmative and negative tropes underpinning modernist and postmodern practices alike. His litany of *Joys* inflates and deflates on reception: they expand and contract.

The TÓTal JOY with the caption *I am glad if I can stand next to you* (1973-5) [fig. 2] shows the artist standing beside an immense statue of Lenin.[11] The first thing to point out is that despite the artlessness of the statement, the artist is not standing next to Lenin at all. His shoulder reaches no higher than the foot of the monument. If anything, he is standing next to the plinth. The simple caption ironically unmasks power relations and deconstructs ideology; its obvious untruth serves the opposite effect of the comradeship it implies, highlighting the totalitarian nature of the massive sculpture, and its incongruity with an ideology which purported to usher in a classless society of equals. The artist undermined the symbolic meaning of the heroic statue, whilst at the same time seeming to pay tribute to Lenin. This piece mocked the snapshot of the "good party member", the kitsch memorabilia of a culture enslaved by the cult of revolutionary figures. The diminutive figure inserted into the public space produced an intimacy that was immediately swamped by the vast scale of the sculpture.

Tót used Lenin again in a double portrait from 1975: Lenin on the left, Tót on the right. The caption read *You are the one who made me glad* [fig. 3]. Lenin appears serious and manly in his suit, shirt, and tie; he is bald and bearded. By contrast, Tót seems boyish in his unbuttoned and unironed shirt, and no tie; his rather too long hair billows freely. The juxtaposition mocks Lenin's severity. The smiling image that Tót used in this piece became a sort of trademark that proliferated in countless formats with the same ubiquity as the statements of gladness. Thomas Strauss has called it "a laughing mask".[12] The word "mask" usually implies doubling, suggesting a division between surface and depth (one face in public, another in private). Arguably, however, under socialism the

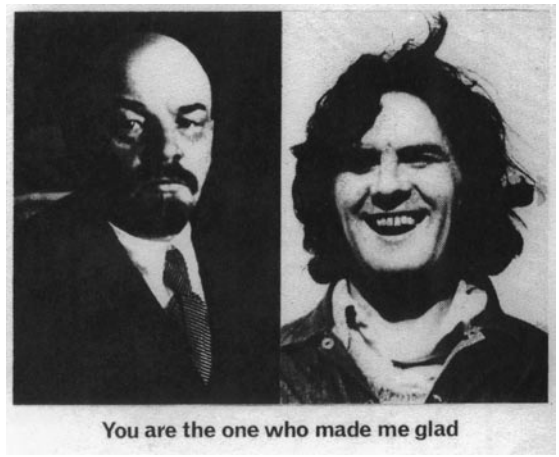

Fig. 3. Endre Tót, You are the one who made me glad, 1975, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

incursion of the public into all realms of the private was sufficient to make this dichotomy meaningless. This condition was illustrated in an earlier politically inflected double portrait by Miklós Erdély, the "father figure" of conceptualism in Hungary.[13] Erdély's piece consisted of two adjacent photographs: János Kádár on the left, the artist's wife on the right. The caption read *Two persons who have had a decisive influence on my life* (1972). Beke has written that "the foreign reader capable of seeing the logic of this was able to understand the essence of the entire Kádár era. (Although there could be no doubt as to the truth-content of the work, for after its appearance Erdély's wife was unable to find employment.)".[14] The piece spoke of life from within the absurdity of a system under which the state assumed a role as pivotal in one's daily life as one's closest family.

Maintaining such boundaries as public / private was impossible in this context.

Whilst conceptual boundaries were abolished in Tót's *Joys*, physical boundaries proliferated. Walls feature in many of the gladness pieces; they represent the brutality of isolation. The wall as a limit, restricting freedom of movement and sight, is explored physically in photographs captioned *I am glad if I can look at the wall* [e.g., fig. 4]. The artist is shown from behind, standing and looking at different walls, crumbling drab concrete, solid new brick. Looking at a wall is a negation of looking: Tót acted out physically the psychological restrictions on seeing. These pieces were simple, but powerful. The artist assumed the pose of a prisoner preparing for execution by a firing squad, contemplating eternity in the concrete before him. And yet he claimed to be "glad" to be looking at the wall, because, in the *Joys*, looking was presented as a form of action. The twin photos *I am glad if I can look to the right* and *I am glad if I can look to the left* (1973-5) show the artist in winter, chest out, looking in either direction, standing beside an electricity pylon in what appears to be a dreary-looking parking lot. He is smiling in an opaque sort of way, but the image is not without lyricism. Aesthetically, the photos have something of the quality of mug-shots from a prison line up. Looking left and right means that one is not looking straight ahead. Looking straight ahead was, historically speaking, the only appropriate progressive socialist attitude. Tót's brazen documentation of looking left and right amounted to looking askance. Was he looking for a way out?

Fig. 4. Endre Tót, I am glad if I can look at the wall, 1973-5, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

The gladness works operate through the doubling of meaning, which is played up visually in a number of pieces where Tót unexpectedly introduced his own double. *We are glad if we are happy* shows two Tóts, sharing a joke, in the same photograph [fig. 5]. One turns to grin at the other standing beside him, with Budapest's 36 m high millenary monument looming improbably in the middle. What is one to make of the casual signalling of the multiplication of the self in this monumental context? One might read Tót's uncanny doubling as referring to the levelling of personality and expression produced by the repressive state control of all aspects of life. In terms of the sort of subjectivity being enacted, it is a matter of self having become subordinate to surface. Both selves are surface. Tót used the double to explore what becomes of agency in totalitarian conditions. The language used by Tót in the matter-of-fact statements that accompanied these actions was as opaque as his own countenance. The statements seem to ask what more one could possibly say in such a situation.

Communication was in some way always thwarted or atrophied in the *Joys*. The artist's attempts at communication tended to amount to zero, or a series of zeros. In what he called his "zero-typing" actions, Tót sat at a typewriter and typed zeros for a specified number of hours at a time, among others, as part of the *FLUXshoe* that toured Britain in 1972-1973.[15] Working in this way, Tot generated piles of papers covered from top to bottom in zeros, with the sentence *I am glad if I can type zer0000s* on each page. In such actions, Tót invoked the mechanical activity of the bureaucrat, or the worker fulfilling impossible norms – the empty proliferation, page after page, of meaningless signs. Overproduction spiralled into the absurdity of excess. Another action involved stamping. This time, Tót sat at a desk and stamped

page after page, using a rubber stamp with an assortment of statements (*I am glad if I can stamp* and *Stamped by Endre Tót*) – again, for hours at a time.

Tót is reputed to be the first mail artist to develop his own rubber stamps (after a press in Budapest refused to make one of his designs, he had it produced in Zurich).[16] One of his stamps read *DOCUMENTS MAKE ME CALM*, in block capitals, suggesting the paranoid desire for the extension of bureaucracy that was so chillingly explored in Franz Kafka's *The Castle*, in which the hero devoted himself with the same obstinate passion to the pursuit of the ultimately elusive bureaucrat Klamm, as a lover might show in striving for reassurance and recognition from his chosen one. In their short book on Kafka, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari went so far as to state: "bureaucracy is desire".[17] A bureaucratic impulse has also been identified as a key to conceptualism.

Sol LeWitt, author of *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art*, once wrote that the "serial" artist's aim is "to give viewers information … He … follows his predetermined premise to its conclusion, avoiding subjectivity. The serial artist does not attempt to produce a beautiful or mysterious object, but functions merely as a clerk cataloguing the results of his premise".[18] Seated at his desk diligently stamping countless sheets of paper, Tót might be seen to represent this model of the artist-bureaucrat to perfection. Taking up LeWitt's remarks in his landmark essay entitled *Conceptual Art 1962-1969: from the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions*, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh claimed that the radical potential of conceptualism sprang from this definition of the artist as a "cataloguing clerk".[19] He cited "bureaucratic rigor", "deadpan devotion", and "statistical collection of factual information" as triumphant evidence of a refusal of "any transcendental dimension whatsoever".[20] But is it not also the case that this rhetoric of objectivity is dangerously familiar? Buchloh's reference to merely conveying "factual information", is, after all, another claim to information without ideological content.

It was primarily through photography that conceptualism revived this paradoxical rhetoric of authenticity – through an embrace of a consciously amateurish, de-skilled post-aestheticism. Jeff Wall has claimed that "these new methodologies of photographic practice are the strongest factor linking together the experimental forms of the period [the 1960s and 1970s]".[21] Wall argues compellingly that this new methodology emerged largely in dialogue with performance art, for which the picture became "the subsidiary form of an act, as 'photo-documentation'".[22] Using Bruce Nauman's practice as an example, Wall argues that a synthesis emerged, in which "the two reigning myths of photography – the one that claims that photographs are "true" and the one that claims they are not – are shown to be grounded in the same praxis, available at the same place, the studio, at that place's moment of historical transformation".[23] With no studio to work in, Tót played his own games with what Wall has called "the inherited proclivities of art-photography-as-reportage".[24] His solitary actions were, from the outset, only ever going to exist in the form of documentation: there were no spectators for most of the *Joys* described above – except for the photographer ("whoever was to hand"), whose identity, according to the artist, is "unimportant" for the work.[25] In the conspicuous absence of witnesses, the "document" became all the more precious.

Fig. 5. Endre Tót, We are glad if we are happy, 1973-5, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

Although Tót worked almost entirely in series, his work clearly subverted LeWitt's version of "the se-

Fig. 6. Endre Tót, I am glad if I can read the newspaper, 1973-5, photograph. Courtesy: the artist

rial attitude".[26] Tót deliberately destroyed the authenticity of the document when he casually introduced the figure of his double. Tót's documents were "falsified": the insertion of a second Tót highlighted their manipulation. The artist empowered the viewer to see the artificiality of the image, not to be fooled by the smooth, unperplexed surface, not to be fooled by the artist's laughing face. Tót used montage, a key tool of the constructivist avant-garde and used it to undo itself, drawing attention to the complicit legacy of photography and film as choice mediums for the production of propaganda, and highlighting the ideological nature of affirmation. The gladness piece *I am glad if I can read the newspaper* (1973-5) shows Tót sitting on a chair reading the Moscow broadsheet *Pravda* [fig. 6]. A large hole is torn out of the centre of the paper. This hole, I would like to suggest, is none other than the materialisation of the void of ideology: emptiness at the centre of "truth". And through the hole, smiling serenely, emerges the face of the artist. Where truth ought to be, there we see nothing except the artist's laughing face inserted opportunistically into the gap. In another newspaper piece, *I am reading a burning newspaper* (1972-4), Tót reads on, unperturbed, as flames devour his paper from the top left corner, so absorbed in his reading that he is oblivious to the danger. What happened when Tót read a Western newspaper? A photograph of the artist taken on a trip to England shows him sitting in a dark corner, reading. The headline of a paper calling itself *The London Gleaner* announces: "Mr. Endre Tót Voted Prime Minister of England!". After all, Tót seemed to suggest, *anything* was possible, in the West.

Just as it undid some key definitions of conceptualism, Tót's double put a spanner in the works for an interpretation of Tót's actions as actions in the sense of live art or "performance". By refusing to convince us of their spontaneity, these works seem to undermine their status as underground works: Tót's tongue-in-cheek take on what communist "performance art" might look like became a meditation on, and a criticism of, the very idea of "action". Tót the zero-typing clerk turned photography in on itself, in order to mock its solemnly impersonal tone. His laughing face mockingly threw the victory of the artist in the viewer's face. In a complex double-bluff, he used action to restage the pitfalls of conceptualism and make a critique of its premises. And finally, by inserting and insinuating his person into the ephemeral conceptualist networks at every opportunity, Tót showed what we knew already – that ultimately the clerk may be working for himself. The clerk wields a certain authority. As Kafka showed in *The Castle*, if it is power one is after, one can do far worse than be a bureaucrat. Although Tót used irony to reconfigure the dynamic of meaningful production by inviting the spectator to share his joke, ultimately the power relations remained intact: the artist continued to legitimise his own position. By posing as a humble clerk, the serial artist strove to secure his future. The two Tóts levelled a two-tiered critique: a critique of communist bureaucracy, and a critique of bureaucracy employed as a neo-avant-garde strategy in the capitalist context. In Tót's back-handed assertion that there is always work for the artist-clerk, achieved through his ironisation of both the affirmativity of socialist realism and the supposedly "neutral" self-reflexivity of conceptualism, we catch a glimpse of why, for Søren Kierkegaard, irony was "absolute infinite negativity".[27]

Notes

[1] László Beke, 'The Hungarian Performance – Before and After Tibor Hajas', in: Zdenka Badovinac (ed.), *Body and the East: From the 1960s to the Present*, ex. cat., Ljubljana: Moderna Galerija, 1998, p. 104.
[2] Tót's working notes for the exhibition *Nothing Ain't Nothing* cited in Endre Tót (ed.), *Tót Endre: semmi sem semmi: retrospektív 1965-1995 / Endre Tót: Nothing Ain't Nothing: Retrospective 1965-1995*, ex. cat., Budapest: Műcsarnok, 1995, p. 32.
[3] Many of these are published in Endre Tót, *Book of an Extremely Glad Artist: Arbeiten 1971-79 mit einem Bildnis des Autors*, Berlin: Rainer Verlag, 1981.
[4] Instead, there was a clever policy aimed at encouraging para-opposition that allowed some branches of the Hungarian intelligentsia more latitude than Polish and Czechoslovak censorship. See George Schöpflin (ed.), *Censorship and Political Communication in Eastern Europe: A Collection of Documents*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982, pp. 142-156.
[5] Miklós Haraszti, *The Velvet Prison: Artists Under State Socialism*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1988, p. 79.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Author's unpublished interview with Endre Tót in Köln, 6 January 2006.
[8] Paul de Man, 'The Concept of Irony', in: Paul de Man, *Aesthetic Ideology*, ed. Andrzej Warminsky, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996 (2002), pp. 179-181.
[9] Ibid., p. 180.
[10] Ibid., p. 181.
[11] The statue used to stand on Felvonulàsi Square in Budapest.
[12] Unpublished translation from German by Helen Ferguson of Thomas Strauss, 'Endre Tót als Aktionkünstler', in: Endre Tót (ed.), *Tót Endre: semmi sem semmi: retrospektív 1965-1995 / Endre Tót: Nothing Ain't Nothing: Retrospective 1965-1995*, ex. cat., Budapest: Műcsarnok, 1995, pp. 19-20.
[13] Published by the Swiss journal *Werk* as part of a survey of contemporary Hungarian underground art: *Werk*, no. 10, 1972.
[14] László Beke, 'The Strange Afterlife of Socialist Realism', in: Péter György and Hedvig Turai (eds.), *Art and Society in the Age of Stalin*, Budapest: Corvina Books, 1992, p. 122.
[15] The traveling *FLUXshoe*, masterminded by David F. Mayor, involved ten showings across Britain for a year, beginning October 1972. Tót was in England when the *Shoe* was at the Blackburn Museum, July 6-21, 1973.
[16] The anecdote is cited in Géza Perneczky, 'Endre Tót and the Mental Monochromy', in: Endre Tót (ed.), *Tót Endre: semmi sem semmi: retrospektív 1965-1995 / Endre Tót: Nothing Ain't Nothing: Retrospective 1965-1995*, ex. cat., Budapest: Műcsarnok, 1995, p. 32.
[17] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, p. 57. (First published as *Kafka: Pour une littérature mineure*, Paris: Les éditions de Minuit, 1975.)
[18] Sol LeWitt, 'Serial project #1, 1966', in: *Aspen magazine*, no. 5-6, ed. Brian O'Doherty, 1967, n.p.
[19] (My italics), Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', in: Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, p. 531. (First published in Claude Gintz, *L'art conceptuel: Une perspective*, ex. cat., Paris: Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1989.)
[20] Ibid., p. 532.
[21] Jeff Wall, "Marks of Indifference': Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art', in: Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer (eds.), *Reconsidering the Object of Art: 1965-1975*, ex. cat., Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1995, p. 254.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Author's unpublished interview with Endre Tót in Köln, 6 January 2006.
[26] Mel Bochner coined this phrase: Mel Bochner, 'The Serial Attitude', in: *Artforum*, no. 6:4, December 1967, pp. 28-33.
[27] This definition was the subject of the thesis in Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony: with Constant Reference to Socrates* (1841), trans. Lee M. Capel, London: Collins, 1966.

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Afirmacija ir ironija Endre Tóto XX a. 8-ojo dešimtmečio *Džiaugsmo kūriniuose*

Reikšminiai žodžiai: afirmacija, neigimas, džiaugsmas, nulis, cenzūra, tiesa, veiksmas, kūnas, fotografija, konceptualizmas, biurokratija, Leninas, ironija, antrininkas, dokumentai, optimizmas, autentiškumas, klerkas.

Santrauka

Dvi labai skirtingos – džiaugsmo ir nulio – idėjos susipina heterogeniškoje Endre Tóto kūryboje, kurios pradžia – 1971 m., kai jis pasiskelbė konceptualistu. Šiame straipsnyje aiškinamasi, kaip vengrų menininko kūryboje įprasminama, viena vertus, afirmacija pagrįstos socialistinio realizmo ideologijos palikimas ir, kita vertus, konceptualizmas bei performansas. Pasitelkdamas, regis, atsitiktinius, iš esmės banalius kasdieniškus veiksmus ir scenarijus, Tótas sukūrė režimui priimtiną optimistinę poziciją, tariamai paklusdamas reikalavimui „dalyvauti“. Tačiau jo dalyvavimas pasirodė kaip ironiškas veiksmas, kuris apmąstomas kaip aktas dramine ir politine prasme. Tótas, įvairiuose kūriniuose naudodamas ironiškai absurdišką, monotoniškai besišypsančią tapatybę, dvigubindamas prasmę, netikėtai įveda savo paties antrininką. Keistas Tóto dubliavimas suvoktinas kaip tyrimas, kuriame klausiama, kas atsitinka institucijai totalitarinėje sistemoje. Į šį klausimą Totas atsako „nulinio spausdinimo“ akcijose – sėdėdamas prie rašomosios mašinėlės ir spausdindamas nulius tam tikrą valandų skaičių, taip mėgdžiodamas mechaniškus biurokrato veiksmus.

Straipsnis baigiamas biurokratinio impulso, kurį Benjaminas H. D. Buchloh įvardijo kaip labai svarbų konceptualizmo sandą, tyrimu. Remiantis Jeffo Wallo konceptualioje kūryboje atliekama fotografijos analize, galima kvestionuoti Buchloh konceptualizmo versiją. Tóto antrininkas gali būti interpretuojamas kaip jo paties pasipriešinimas tam, ką Wallas vadina „paveldėtais meninės fotografijos kaip reportažo polinkiais“. Du Tótai nusitaiko su dviguba kritika: ir komunistinės biurokratijos, ir biurokratijos, kuri kapitalistiniame kontekste tampa neoavangardine strategija, atžvilgiu.

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Public / Private: The Abstract Art of Juzefa Čeičytė in the Lithuanian Soviet System

Key words: abstract painting, scenography, Soviet art criticism, Soviet ideology, Juzefa Čeičytė.

An analysis of the art, or rather of the abstractions, of Juzefa Čeičytė (b. 1922), which she produced in her spare time in the Soviet period, may serve to reflect the *threat* and the *gaps* in the complex ideological apparatus of the Soviet system. This paper will try to penetrate the recurrent and ostensibly undisputed claims that the paintings of Čeičytė, kept from outsiders for a long time, are "identity documents" produced as "evidence of an unruly soul".

The regulation of attitude of the conventional Soviet artist in the 1950s–1990s in fact corresponded with the personality of Čeičytė, who was being persecuted. The *threat* she was exposed to manifested itself through official political and cultural facets: as a daughter of deportees she could not complete her studies at the State Institute of Art, and until 1949 found herself unable to comprehend her own fate. Once the Thaw began and direct persecution stopped, she still faced obstructions regarding her creative potentials: she could not finish her professional studies because the commonly applied law of the 1950s decreed that women cannot be painters. In order to get her diploma she transferred to scenography, a move which predetermined her creative career – the applied arts became her enforced craft for the rest of her life.

In analysing reviews of the work of Čeičytė in Soviet periodicals, one can find an epithet stating that she was "a painter by the mercy of God" (the word "God" of course being written in miniscule letters[1]). A good look at this "missing detail" reveals certain aspects that influenced Čeičytė's creativity. What had occurred to elicit the use of such a daring phrase to describe a person from the "awkward" past, who was, in the present time, silently and consistently working in theatre and cinema? How can moods in cultural policy change so radically? Furthermore, after delving deeply in theatre scenography and cinema decoration, the artist was not censured during

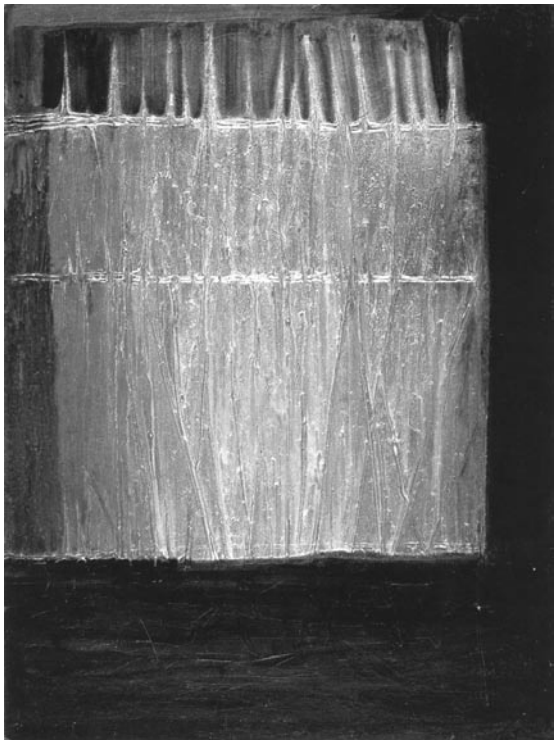

Fig. 1. Juzefa Čeičytė, Rye (Richard III), 1961, synthetic tempera on cardboard, collage, 78 x 53 cm. Courtesy: Audronė Girdzijauskaitė

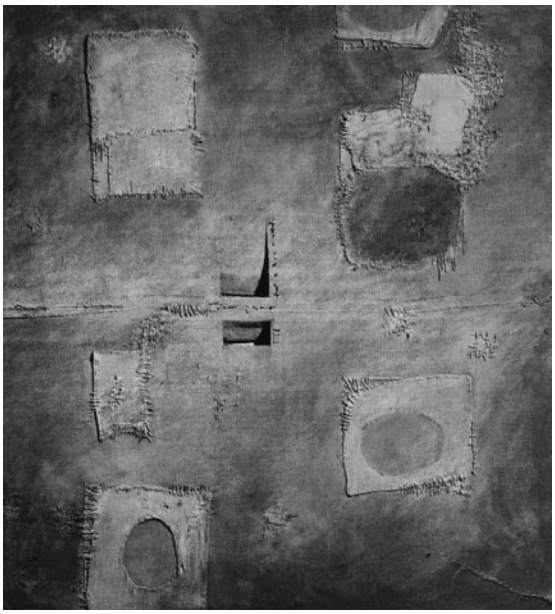

Fig. 2. Juzefa Čeičytė, Mother Courage, 1966, synthetic tempera on canvas, 130 x 120 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Theatre, Music, and Cinema Museum, Vilnius

all of her years of creativity in the Soviet period! It appears that it was possible to write about artists in a "freer" style. The articles are of a laudatory nature, and even if a play was belittled or deemed only average, Čeičytė's scenography was lavishly praised. Why would it be forbidden to talk about or to praise someone from the "awkward" past, or to allow a more open review to appear?

The situation that existed during the period of Stalinist condemnation can be described in a definition of Soviet bureaucracy given by Guy Debord:

> "This ideology has lost the passion of its original expression, but its passionless routinisation still has the repressive function of controlling all thought and prohibiting any competition whatsoever. The bureaucracy is thus helplessly tied to an ideology that is no longer believed by anyone. The power that used to inspire terror now inspires ridicule, but this ridiculed power still defends itself with the threat of resorting to the terrorising force it would like to be rid of (thesis 110)".[2]

As an official reminder of her family status, the painter was denied the highest positions in her professional field, and was thus cast down from the Olympus of painting and downgraded to creating stage designs. The authorities did not, however, succeed in ensuring that the artist was forgotten or diminished. Thanks to her talent, and the help of friends – including the support of Aldona Liobytė[3] – Čeičytė received commissions, with the result that, eventually, one could see glimpses of her new artistic style in her scenographic work – which in this case was only a draft visible to no-one but her colleagues. In this field one need not create a masterpiece, but rather, as expressively as possible, depict someone's vision in a way that can be understood by a small group of people: from the artistic director to the costume maker. Under such conditions, an artist with greater ambitions could be praised in the press – but only in terms of "effective work" and "productivity" (characteristic watchwords of socialism) – and in terms of the applied art itself, the likes of which, in Čeičytė's case, had not been seen before. Following on the aforementioned labels, the daring symbols that appear in her creations, e.g., the cross and divinity, could be incorporated and described, and not be traced by the censors.

The concept of stage art being an auxiliary part of the theatre was accepted by the press for a number

Fig. 3. Juzefa Čeičytė, Castle, 1960, synthetic tempera on cardboard, collage, 86 x 60 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

of years, including, for example, in production descriptions or in more general articles on theatre art.[4] In such publications, along with references to the harmonious moderation and symbolism in her scenography, the artist is praised for her relevant generalisation, and for the laconism that is already an indicator of her abstract style. The *gaps* in the ideological apparatus are evident in articles by the official press as well. Theatre critics, journalists, and certain art critics who knew Čeičytė personally, and who admired her abstract art, would skillfully include examples of the forbidden abstractions into their articles, presenting them as part of the extensive context of the artistic production which encompasses theatre, film, and art. An incredible example occurs when Benediktas Januševičius, in his article *Painter and Theatre Performance*, praises Čeičytė for her *abstracted stage images*, during a time when newspaper publications usually responded only negatively to formalist and abstract creations.[5] In 1957, at a congress of Soviet Union artists, Dmitri Shepilov, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, spoke of his trip to Paris, and while confessing that he understood nothing about the neo-realist exhibition he had seen, proudly summarised it with the following words:

> "True artists will never reconcile themselves to formalist waste. We think that the abstract and formalist road is disastrous, evenly deadly, to the creation of art. *(applause...)* The main statements of that art are apparently related to a subjective, idealistic bourgeois world-view – when the old regime declines, when the future is not clear to the ideologists of that regime, when the real things of the real world begin to perish".[6]

Thus, although the declarations of the Soviet apparatus – recycled in various newspaper and journal editorials – were the "guidepost" and only example of how one must create, write and paint, they sometimes became just a meaningless stamp when writers embarked on *free-thinking* descriptions of examples of stage design. Nevertheless, as can be seen in the material of the congresses of the Lithuanian Artists' Union, partially in the frequent *omissions* of forbidden sentences, and partially via some of the negligent insipid writings, it seems that the scenography section of the Lithuanian Artists' Union was frequently reprimanded and subsequently restricted, with the result that even its publications were constantly being supervised.

And so Čeičytė pays the price of having a choice: publicly she works as a scenographer, and privately she creates abstract paintings that *nobody knows anything about*. The connection happens when her abstract work is judged favourably – not in her (forbidden) paintings, but in her scenography work (overlooked by the censors since it is only a method for the other, i.e. theatre art). This ambiguity accompanied her work throughout the Soviet period. According to art critic Nijolė Adomonytė (who has written the most extensively about Čeičytė), after the period of a national rebirth in Lithuania, "scenography was officially recognised and evaluated as part of Juzefa Čeičytė's creation. It had not, however, satisfied the artist".[7] There have been exaggerations in the form of, for example, a 1982 art catalogue on the work of Čeičytė[8], where the title announces that her scenography prevailed over her painting. The same occurs in the titles of her works – although the painter may have wondered whether to choose

Fig. 4. Juzefa Čeičytė, Wind I, 1965, synthetic tempera on canvas, collage, 120 x 100 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

abstract titles or give the names of the theatre performances, it is the names of the performances that are used: *Richard III* (1961) instead of *Rye* [fig. 1]; *King Lear* (1970); *Mother Courage* (1966) [fig. 2]; *Castle* (1960 – based on the play *In the Shade of the Giant* by Balys Sruoga) [fig. 3] and that give her the possibility to appear on stage with her paintings. This is an insignificant but painful deception by the artist, which restricted her creative freedom, and at the same time spoke of the contemporary deterioration of the ideological system.

Fig. 5. Juzefa Čeičytė, Venice, 1965, synthetic tempera on cardboard, collage, 120 x 100 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

It seems that this unbalanced, but at the same time interdisciplinary method (the abstract art introduced as a secondary branch, a hobby), was the only possible way at that time to present and introduce a forbidden object into the general, though perverted, contemporary cultural policy. It appears that the author of the introduction to the aforementioned catalogue, Gražina Kliaugienė, did the same, by choosing specific words which reveal everything to those who choose to read between the lines:

> "For a number of decades, Čeičytė, a scenographer and a respected artist in the Lithuanian SSR, ate the *rough* [author's note] bread of the theatre and cinema. This reference is, however, deceptive, or not entirely illuminating, when one is faced with the whole body of this artist's work – not only the drafts for certain theatre performances, but also her improvisations on theatre themes, and her paintings. It is namely in the latter that one can find the artist, who, due to a strange destiny, was not known to many people – and the meaning of her efforts, the truth and the hope of her life".

After decoding this thought, it is clear that the work for which she is praised was not so pleasant, whereas her true destiny – painting – was known only by a minority, and was undervalued. At the same time, Kliaugienė immediately secures her position by saying that "no doubt Čeičytė is a theatre person. Meaning that she is able to conform with the general thinking" at the same time as being able "to give to it the reflection of her world, to think in metaphors". Responses to a public exhibition of the artist's works at the Exhibition Palace in Vilnius in 1982 defined her as a theatre painter, whose huge productivity also resulted in easel paintings:

> "Alongside her official work, the painter never parted with her paintings, collected and still collects interesting textiles distinguished by their textured, colourful thematic quests, which are on display in this exhibition. Improvisations on theatre themes, scenographic sketches, easel painting – sometimes it is difficult to distinguish which is which".[9]

Is it, however, possible to distinguish (and to deride) the public, quasi-unpleasant, forced work, i.e. stage design, from the lovely paintings designed for a small group of people, and created during the artist's leisure time? One can understand, by looking at her works, that the answer is "no".

On the contrary – for it seems that although the scenographic work was criticised, it was also the foundation upon which, even while rejecting it, she created her independent and most interesting works. In one of the first Soviet book-albums on Lithuanian scenography[10], published in 1968, Jonas Mackonis

writes that, as a painter, Čeičytė has a *masculine* touch, and explains this duality in terms of economy, a tune of moderation and taste, the absence of sentimentality and trivia. Without analysing this rather tough description of her personality, one could say that Mackonis used this *compliment* in an attempt to distinguish the artist scenographer from her other colleagues, as one who is able, via her creativity, to maintain an equilibrium of logic and emotion. It is her paintings that reveal this tendency towards equilibrium in the periods when Čeičytė worked in theatre (1948-1971) and in cinema (1962-1978).

During Čeičytė's fifty three creative years, the sole negative review (out of more than 40 published and unpublished reviews – mostly of a psychological nature – admiring the artist and her works), written during the time of the country's revival, states that the theatrical experience damages the inborn gift/instinct of the painter.[11] I, however, think that there are traces of this only in her weaker works (while praising the artist's productivity, the critics seemed to forget that a number of her works differed in their quality), and in those works with vivid nature motifs, where one can find a falsified or unsure sense of colour.

In analysing the aforementioned *Richard III* (1961), *King Lear* (1970), *Mother Courage* (1966), and *Castle* (1960), one could say that without the skills and comprehension that she acquired in her scenographic work, these paintings would not exist as part of Čeičytė's creative process. Ultimately, her totally abstract works originated in her scenographic background, and in the tones/undertones of her final plan – a fact that can be corroborated by looking at her unexhibited scenographic sheets. It does not matter whether the latter were the directions for a classical play, or experiments with plays written during the Soviet period. For example, her initial sketch for *Tartuffe* was painted realistically, including rococo details; the second attempt, including a background with drapery, and motifs of a castle, trees, and details of a French landscape, is painted in a whitish colour with warm slightly pastel shadings. The background becomes texturally heterogeneous and rough, and is reminiscent of fragments from her individual paintings. Another clear example is the background for sketches of costumes for three characters from the play *A Profitable Place*. If one removes the figures of Zhdanov and Julenka, what remains is a very interesting background with sparkling jagged cuts which in no way match the realistically depicted costumes.[12] A succession of such "well managed backgrounds" in a series of "average scenographic sketches" repeats in different forms in her paintings.

The painting of stiffened material originates from a scenographic principle, and is thus rare in works from that period. Collage works entitled *Castle* (1960), *Wind I* (1965) [fig. 4], *Wind II* (1965), and compositions made of sewn painted materials and leather patches – *Mother Courage* (1966), *Venice* (1965) [fig. 5], and *Composition* (1969) [fig. 6] – are more reminiscent of Western *art informe*l manifestations from the latter part of the 20th century, when a feeling of motion and space attempts to validate itself in two-dimensional stasis – hopelessly, existentially, sometimes under the principle of automation, and at the same time very tastefully. Thus in speaking of Čeičytė's works one feels a desire to highlight *matérialogies*, or the expression of structural painting, which

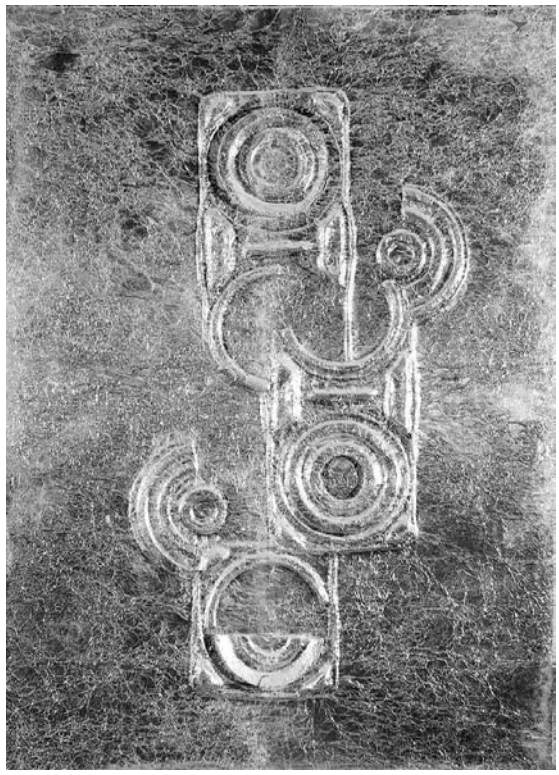

Fig. 6. Juzefa Čeičytė, Composition, 1969, cardboard, collage, synthetic glue, 115 x 85 cm. Courtesy: Lithuanian Art Museum, Vilnius

developed within the experience of Western thought. Čeičytė's work, however, grew on a level other than the classic examples of the elemental material cult of Antoni Tàpies, where the surface of a mixture of gypsum, glue, and sand was scratched until a certain expressive force was formed out of the cryptographic *dead*, *inert* and *gloomy* material. It was also unlike the abstract post-war compositions formed from strips of bandages drenched with colours and glued onto cloth, where dark spots revealed themselves deeply in the material itself or in different places of the surface – as wounds, or the scabby areas of a diseased body. Although Čeičytė's work is not so drastic, it nevertheless achieves the same result as the transformations of a structural painting.

The artist's existential positions and intentions, which profess the old modern model that deems that creation is a mysterious uncalculated work leading to who knows where, are closer to the Western ideas of that period. It is very clear, however, where the structures in Čeičytė's works lead to. How she manages not to overstep her limited square – the black theatre box – and how she manages to arrange herself within it, result in works that all merit a great deal of attention.

Paradoxically, abstract art is one of the negative Soviet statements that acquired a political aspect and became the great enemy of socialist realism – but in this case it was even praised in the official press, and occupied a particular position within the ideological system. The Soviet press could only state and follow its own fiction: praise socialist realist works of art, conceal strange new works of art, artificially organise educational discussions, or conceal unsolved problems. Therefore, once Čeičytė's abstract works entered the arena of scenographic art, they had to take on a shape of decontamination and "non-independence" (including as "improvisations along a theatre theme"), and consequently had the possibility to exist publicly.

Notes

[1] Audronė Girdzijauskaitė, 'Kasdieninė duona ir svajos. Kūrybinis portretas' ('Daily Bread and Dreams. A Creative Portrait'), in: *Kinas*, no. 1 (31), 1975, p. 10.

[2] Guy Debord, *Spektaklio visuomenė* (*The Society of the Spectacle*), trans. Dainius Gintalas, Kaunas: other books, 2006, p. 112.

[3] Aldona Liobytė insisted on Čeičytė as stage designer for Leonid Leonov's play *Auksinė karieta* (*Golden Coach*), produced at the Klaipėda drama theatre. From a letter by Liobytė: "My dearest friend, once you have mounted the "golden coach" there is no wish to dismount. I waited for you at the opening. You were anxious in vain. I did not tremble." Aldona Liobytė's 13th letter to Juzefa Čeičytė, in: *Šmaikščioji rezistentė Aldona Lubytė. Publicistika, laiškai, atsiminimai* (*The Clever Resistant, Aldona Liobytė. Writings, Letters, Memoirs)*, Vilnius: Lithuanian Writers' Union, 1995, p. 132.

[4] See Benediktas Januševičius, 'Dailininkas ir spektaklis' ('Painter and Theatre Performance'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 17 June 1961; Irena Aleksaitė, 'Kai kalba dekoracijos' ('When Decorations Talk'), in: *Pergalė*, no. 2, 1963, pp. 132-138; Vera Kulešova-Budrienė, 'Dailininkas klaipėdiečių scenoje' ('The Artist on the Klaipėda Stage'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 31 October 1964; Irena Aleksaitė, 'Šimtai veidų per vieną vakarą' ('Hundreds of Faces in One Night'), in: *Kultūros barai*, no. 11, 1980, pp. 12-15, etc.

[5] Januševičius, 1961. See articles from that year and later years, including: Lionginas Šepetys, 'Abstrakcionizmas – ne mada' ('Abstractionism is not Fashionable'), in: *Tiesa*, 8 October 1961; Juozas Mikėnas, 'Meno išpardavimas' ('Art at Bargain Prices'), in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 9 December 1961; J. Strelnikovas, 'Abstrakcionizmas… įsipyko žmonėms' ('Abstractionism… Exasperates People'), in: *Literatūra ir menas,* 9 December 1962.

[6] Dmitrijus Šepilovas, 'Už tolesnį tarybinės meninės kūrybos klestėjimą' ('For the Further Prosperity of Soviet Artistic Creativity'), in: *Tiesa*, 9 March 1957.

[7] Nijolė Adomonytė (ed.), *Juzefa Čeičytė. Tapyba* (*Juzefa Čeičytė. Painting*), Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1999, p. 6.

[8] *Juzefa Čeičytė. Scenografija, tapyba* (*Juzefa Čeičytė. Scenography, Painting*), cover article by Gražina Kliaugienė, Vilnius, 1982, p. 3.

[9] 'Vilniuje Dailės parodų rūmuose' ('In Vilnius at the Art Exhibition Palace'), in: *Vakarinės naujienos*, 12 November 1982.

[10] *Lietuvos scenografija* (*Lithuanian Scenography*), cover article by Jonas Mackonis, Vilnius: Vaga, 1968, p. 151.

[11] Sandra Skurvydaitė, 'Paveikslo paieškos – Juzefos Čeičytės paroda Vartuose' ('In Search of the Painting – Juzefa Čeičytė's exhibition at Vartai'), in: *Lietuvos rytas*, 12 December 1994.

[12] Lietuvos teatro, muzikos ir kino muziejaus archyvas (Lithuanian Theatre, Music and Cinema Museum Archives): Juzefa Čeičytė, stage design and costume sketches for Moliere's *Tartuffe*, 1955 (sometimes dated 1954, e.g., in the Dossier of the Lithuanian Artists' Union, Vilnius department), director Aleksandras Kupstas, Klaipėda Drama Theatre. Stage design sketch (pasteboard, gouache, 26 x 46 cm) for Aleksandr Ostrovsky's play *A Profitable Place*, 1971, directors Lidija Kutuzuva, Jonas Jurašas, Kaunas Drama Theatre. 1) Sketch for Julenka's costume, pasteboard, collage, synthetic tempera, 57 x 37 cm; 2) Sketch for Zhadov's costume, pasteboard, collage, synthetic tempera, 57 x 37 cm; 3) Sketch for Jusov's costume, pasteboard, collage, synthetic tempera, 57 x 37 cm.

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Viešumas ir privatumas: Juzefos Čeičytės abstrakcijos sovietmečio Lietuvoje

Reikšminiai žodžiai: abstrakčioji tapyba, scenografijos dailė, sovietmečio dailės kritika, sovietmečio ideologija, Juzefa Čeičytė.

Santrauka

Lietuvių dailininkės Juzefos Čeičytės (g. 1922) laisvalaikiu sukurtų abstrakcijų nagrinėjimas atskleidžia to laikotarpio daugialypio sovietinio ideologinio aparato *grėsmę* bei *spragas*. Straipsnyje bandoma perprasti ir rekonstruoti įprastus, dažnai kartojamus ir tarsi neginčijamus teiginius apie Čeičytės abstrakciją: esą tai – „tapatybės dokumentai“, sukurti kaip „maištingo būdo įrodymai“ ir ilgai slėpti nuo „pašalinių“ akių. Iš tikrųjų, XX a. 6-ojo – 9-ojo dešimtmečių Sovietų Sąjungoje keliami norminiai nurodymai, kaip elgtis sovietiniam dailininkui (dailininkei), palietė Čeičytės asmenybę.

Grėsmė buvo juntama politine ir kultūrine prasme. Būdama deportuotų tėvų vaikas, ji negalėjo baigti instituto (buvo išmesta), iki 1949 metų slėgė ateities nežinia ir deportavimo galimybė. Vėliau, sušvelnėjus aplinkybėms, tiesioginis politinis persekiojimas baigėsi, bet prasidėjo asmens kūrybinių galimybių blokavimas: ji negalėjo baigti savo pasirinktos specialybės – tapybos (tuo metu, 6-ajame dešimtmetyje, galiojo nerašyta taisyklė – dailininkė moteris negali būti tapytoja). Teko apginti diplomą iš scenografijos. Ši aplinkybė nulėmė dailininkės kūrybinį gyvenimą, kuriame svarbiausiu tapo taikomasis menas, kaip amatininkiškas darbas. Keletą dešimtmečių teatralai ir ideologizuotos kultūros žurnalistai menininkę gyrė būtent už harmoniją, saikingumą ir simboliškumą scenografijoje, dekoracijų mene; oficialiai tarp tapytojų jos nėra, nors kaip tik tapyboje pasireiškė jos meilė kūrybai.

Iš oficialiosios spaudos straipsnių matyti ir ideologinio aparato *spragos*. Tie patys teatralai, žurnalistai ir kai kurie dailėtyrininkai, privačiai pažinoję dailininkę Čeičytę ir žavėjęsi jos abstrakčia daile, savo tekstuose sumaniai užsimindavo apie tuo metu draustą abstrakciją, vadindami ją dalele platesnio kūrybos konteksto, kuriame susipina teatras, kinas ir dailė. Abstrakčioji dailė, pristatoma kaip antraeilė meno šaka, laisvalaikio pomėgis, bet kartu ir kaip to meto tarpdisciplininis kūrybos būdas. Tai buvo vienintelė galimybė šį draudžiamą objektą įrašyti į bendrą, kad ir labai iškraipytą, bet meninių šifravimų nestokojusią tuometinę kultūros politiką.

Paradoksalu, bet Čeičytės atveju abstrakti dailė užėmė savotišką poziciją to meto ideologinėje sistemoje – su ja nebuvo per daug kovojama, atvirkščiai, ji net buvo giriama oficialioje spaudoje. Sovietinė spauda galėjo tik konstatuoti savas fikcijas ir jų laikytis: girti socialistinio realizmo kūrinius, peikti išsišokėlius, nutylėti keistesnius naujus meno kūrinius, dirbtinai rengti auklėjamąsias diskusijas arba nutylėti neišsprendžiamas problemas. Todėl, pirmiausia pasirodžiusi kaip scenografijos dailė, Čeičytės abstrakcija galėjo būti pristatyta viešai, nors „nukenksminta“ ir nesavarankiška.

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Roman Cieslewicz: Double Player. The Case of the *Ty i Ja* Magazine

Key words: consumerism, magazine, modernity, Poland, poster.

Somewhat older Polish readers – those that can remember the 1960s – feel a surge of spontaneous sentiment when thinking about the *Ty i Ja* (*You and Me*) monthly journal, which was published from 1960 to 1973. Younger readers consider it a valuable collectible. The magazine was never associated with official propaganda, and is remembered as an elegant and graphically sophisticated journal, perhaps the most neatly and nicely edited of the decade. It was the first genuine Polish lifestyle periodical devoted to fashion, interior design, cooking, psychology, literature and art. It can also be read as the first post-war manifesto of Polish consumerism. Its political dimension is truly discreet, but noticeable: the history of *Ty i Ja* presents interesting evidence that private can also be political.

The story that I would like to recount was just an episode in both the artistic career of Roman Cieslewicz, and in the history of the Polish illustrated press and popular culture. Symptomatically enough, the first art director of the *Ty i Ja* monthly was one of Poland's most prominent artists, a star of the *Polish poster school*. He was a member of the editorial board for three years only, from May 1960 until June 1963, but his graphic vision shaped the character and style of the magazine right up to its very last issues. After leaving for France, Cieslewicz collaborated with the monthly for an entire decade, until its suppression in 1973. This past spring, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death, the National Museum in Poznań organised a large retrospective exhibition and catalogue of Cieslewicz's works.[1] Only a few pages of the catalogue were, however, devoted to the *Ty i Ja* magazine. Active as an artist for nearly half a century, Cieslewicz is presently primarily associated with film, exhibition and theatre posters, and experimental engravings and photos. All the same, the old issues of the magazine clearly indicate that something important was happening at the time.

Fig. 1. Roman Cieslewicz, Cover of the magazine Ty i Ja, *no. 4, 1960*

Cieslewicz designed 46 of the *Ty i Ja* covers. Relative to his previous and subsequent work, this was a time of withdrawal from more serious topics – a time for fun, and away from propaganda. In the end he did not create a great many propaganda designs. He had the good fortune to graduate from the graphic department in Kraków in 1955, during a turning point in Poland's history – i.e. after the settling of accounts with the Stalin period. Only one of Cieslewicz's three diploma works was produced in a socialist realist style. A new epoch, which started in October 1956, brought revolutionary and seemingly sustained political changes to Poland – the hope of freedom, including in the realm of art. The term *Polish poster school* was coined during this time of a political Thaw. Together with the older Henryk Tomaszewski, and his peers Jan Lenica, Waldemar Świeży, and Jan Młodożeniec, the young Cieslewicz developed a new artistic language. The *Polish poster school* was known for its use of compact graphic form and sharp intelligent metaphor, its colour and contour expressions, and lack of constraints, its lyricism, humour, and modernity. Five years later, Cieslewicz transferred all these features to the magazine covers.

It was obviously a controlled kind of revolution. In the case of this group of artists, one can hardly talk about a political rebellion – it was rather an artistic breakthrough. Paradoxically, the *Polish poster school* – though innovative and highly appreciated in Western Europe – did not actually fight the system. On the contrary, it was enthusiastically accepted, and even appropriated as a kind of artistic showcase in the People's Republic of Poland. A biographical element should be added here: Cieslewicz belonged to the Party and had leftist views – but according to him his leftist tendencies were not very deep: "Political considerations were of no interest to us".[2] Cieslewicz was fascinated with the Soviet constructivism inspired by Alexander Rodchenko, and greatly admired the master of photomontage, Mieczysław Berman – a graphic artist with the socialist press in the period between the two World Wars. As an emigrant, in 1967 Cieslewicz became known for his poster of Che Guevara [fig. 4]. Earlier, in Poland, he had been awarded for his poster com-

Fig. 2. Roman Cieslewicz, Cover of the magazine Ty i Ja, *no. 8, 1962*

petition entries entitled *Fight for Freedom* (1958) and *Third Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party* (1959). His safe political position facilitated his double game: on the one hand, he appeared to be above political suspicion, did not have to struggle with the censors, and probably acquired his post on the editorial board of the newly founded magazine because of his political affiliation. On the other hand, his fame as an esteemed graphic artist in the People's Republic of Poland gave him a free hand, and relative artistic liberty. By patterning the *Ty i Ja* magazine along the style of the western European press, Cieslewicz managed to smuggle a new and fresh style into Poland. And above all, he did it in the language of private life.

The fairly monothematic *Ty i Ja* covers present variations on the male and female figures. Cieslewicz used collage and photomontage liberally. He initially composed his characters out of torn paper pieces, then used motifs from old illustrations, and in the end turned to works of art. Cieslewicz combined his fascination with surrealism and dadaism with a form clearly taken from the constructivists. The

first magazine cover (May 1960) shows a figure of a man and a woman sitting in modern armchairs, facing each other. In the air above them, a dadaistic hand holds a sphere with a heart mounted in the centre. A rose replaces one of the woman's eyes. The symbols are sentimental and the message is ironic: a solid couple in a relaxed atmosphere. The June cover shows an airborne couple in a balloon – in a basket made of flowers, and once again the dadaistic hand, with a finger pointing at the balloon. The July issue pictures an angler being hugged by a mermaid. The August cover uses a self-quotation: a woman on the beach, wearing an elegant hat and reading the May issue (with its cover visible in miniature); one eventually notices a man swimming in the sea – his torn-paper head drifting on the waves like a reflection of the setting sun.

The next year, the message on the cover changes slightly: the female figure begins to dominate the male figure. An elegant woman wearing a turban gracefully blows a man off her gloved hand. A cat-woman in the foreground catches a man wearing a bowler-hat (male figures often resemble René Magritte's gentlemen, or Charlie Chaplin – the Everyman) with her lasso-like tail. The large face of a woman in a framed mirror, with a man climbing up to her like an insect on a flower stem. A man in bathing trunks, with an umbrella, jumping onto the wave of a woman's hair. Finally, in 1962, a series of covers in which the man is barely visible. On one his small face is a clasp-like decoration in the hair of a beautiful but cold-looking woman with a Nefertiti-like profile. On another a minute man appears in the pupil of a woman's eye. Sometimes the figure is just a symbol, as in the photomontage of a woman's legs carelessly playing with a black bowler-hat on a beach. The next month the symbolic relation is somewhat reversed – a man wearing a bowler-hat jumps onto the pillow of a pair of sensual female lips.

Sometimes the relationship becomes alarmingly concretised: the October cover shows a big stone tied with a pink ribbon to a woman's foot; underneath the stone, in a frog position, a miserable crawling little man. The last cover before the artist leaves for Paris in May 1963 is a deciduous reinterpretation of a previously used concept: this time it is a large profile of a man's face, with a woman's face mounted in his eye.

At the time, Cieslewicz was married to the well-known Polish sculptor Alina Szapocznikow. Perhaps her strong artistic personality gave rise to the ironic metaphors of feminine domination on the magazine covers. In 1963 they both left for France, where she continued to sculpt, and he became a graphic designer for *Elle* magazine (later also for *Vogue*). The covers that he sent to *Ty i Ja* at a later time reveal his further interests and experiments, including citations and an increasing fascination with pop-art. A good example is two lovers taken directly from a painting by Roy Lichtenstein, with a cartoon-like bubble issuing from the lips of the crying woman, inscribed with the title of the magazine in reverse: "No! Me and You" (1967). Another, with a stretched-out hand from the Sistine Chapel painted in a flat electric yellow colour and reflected along the axis of symmetry, comes from the early 1970s, when Cieslewicz was working on a series of symmetrical figures. In the latter case the relation-

Fig. 3. Roman Cieslewicz, Cover of the magazine Ty i Ja, *no. 2, 1968*

ship between the man and the woman is no longer obvious. Similarly, the words "you and me" can be interpreted metaphysically, i.e. in the context of the biblical meaning of Michelangelo's mural.

Not every cover from that period can be interpreted equally: some were clearly metaphoric, others revolved around quotations, still others were simply ornamental. All of them share an elegant, even sophisticated atmosphere, and a tone that is never serious. A characteristic feature of the covers, probably indicative of the magazine's programme, is that they invariably depict private life, romantic affairs, flirtation and seduction. It should be remembered that such themes were practically non-existent in Poland during Stalin's era. Artists began to tackle them only in the latter half of the 1950s. Lyrical pictures, e.g., a portrait of a couple looking into each other's eyes, first appeared at the famous *Arsenał* exhibition held in Warsaw in 1955. The explosion of lyricism – and individualism – was a clear cultural symptom of a political Thaw. Relieved of their role as tributes to propaganda, works of poetry, theatre, cinema, and painting could examine private life issues. Romantic advice columns started to appear in periodicals. The launch of the *Ty i Ja* magazine, which published love stories by famous foreign writers, offered psychological and even (a truly pioneer endeavour) sexual advice, and showed cosy home interiors, opened the decade of the 1960s in a totally new spirit.

The triumph of privacy was associated with an ideology of modernity and comfort. And would have been impossible in a communist country, were it not for a crucial political event. In July 1959, Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev had their famous conversation, later referred to as "the kitchen debate", at a Moscow exhibition of American technological achievements. Khrushchev was very impressed by the household appliances, and declared that the Soviet bloc countries must catch up with, and even outdistance the West, in that sphere as well. Thus began the new "domiciliary" stage of the Cold War. In the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia embarked on the production of washing machines and refrigerators, opened their first *supersam* (a type of supermarket) stores, and trumpeted the slogan "modernity on a daily basis". The economic revolution was accompanied by propaganda encouraging citizens to improve their standard of living, and to save their money to buy things on hire purchase. Pokey, poor quality – but cheap – flats were built for young married couples. Consumerism, which had until recently been stigmatised by socialist ideology as being bourgeois, was now considered proof of the success of a socialist economy.

Fig. 4. Roman Cieslewicz, Portrait of Che Guevara, 1967

As one can imagine, the new *Ty i Ja* magazine was expected to provide lifestyle models for the contemporary consumer. The periodical advertised detergents, washing machines, cosmetics – all obviously "Made in Poland". The simple and straightforward slogans ("Sew it yourself! It's cheap" for a sewing machine) were a kind of reference to the naïve language of political persuasion that the readers were so accustomed to. However, one cannot really say that the large scale mission of *Ty i Ja* was to democratise the tastes of Polish society. Its circulation was limited to ten thousand copies, and it was expensive to buy. The magazine was available only in the big towns, and one often had to be "on friendly terms" with the

shop attendant in order to purchase one. It was an elite publication targeted at intellectuals, and in fact promoted consumerism rather than consumption.

As an editor for such a specialty magazine, Cieslewicz could afford to display lightness and irony in his work. In what sense did he play a double game? – on several levels. As already mentioned, he did not oppose optimistic socialist propaganda. And he made designs (often on the back cover) incorporating Polish goods. At the same time, he tried to communicate something between the lines. His collages often included parts of illustrations, or artistic paintings. His advertisements simply used photos from Western magazines. The collages rendered a double message: they suggested an atmosphere of luxury – but were stripped of credibility and seriousness. The difference between Paris dreams and grey Polish reality created a tension which was utilised in the artwork. The magazine's model addressee could discover an encrypted message to the effect that the "small Polish stabilisation" was just a poor substitute for life in the West. By way of explanation: the term, which was adopted for the 1960s, came from a drama with an ironic message, *Świadkowie, albo nasza mała stabilizacja (Witnesses, or Our Small Stabilisation)*, which was written by Tadeusz Różewicz, and staged in 1964[3] (the story takes place in a bourgeois parlour and shows a family that suppresses boredom and the destruction of family ties by drawing satisfaction from its moderate prosperity).

The strategy of "resistance, transgression, appropriation" had not only an aesthetic, but also a political dimension. Cieslewicz resisted the explicit and "heavy" aesthetics of socialist propaganda, sought for transgression towards the avant-garde, and with that in mind appropriated the techniques of advertising used in the West – thereby utilising the aesthetics of consumerism. Now let's try putting it in reverse: perhaps Cieslewicz resisted the empty aesthetics of consumerism, sought for transgression towards the avant-garde, and with that in mind appropriated such artistic techniques as collage and photomontage, including with their leftist and critical traditions. It is not unlikely that there would have been some double-dealing at work in the process.

It is also not unlikely that the themes appearing on the covers themselves included hidden allusions. Seemingly playful images of married couples or lovers often depicted alarming relationships by ruling powers. The idyllic picture of the couple exudes a deceitful tone. Cieslewicz was playing with male and female stereotypes long before gender studies made their way to Poland – or was he using these figures in an attempt to say something about political oppression?

Above all else, Cieslewicz had a sense of humour and a sense of form. His task (according to a description by Zbigniew Florczak in *Ty i Ja*) consisted of "unflagging efforts to renew the sign and the picture".[4] At the same time, he performed yet another transgression: he introduced art onto the cover of an illustrated magazine. This ironic gesture, somewhere in the middle between high and popular culture, was the gesture of a professional and a visionary who was trying to transform a socialist imagination. Unfortunately, *Ty i Ja* was suppressed in December 1973 – as a result of the increasing interventions of censorship.

Notes

[1] Anna Grabowska-Konwent (ed.), *Roman Cieslewicz 1930-1996*, ex. cat., Poznań: National Museum, 2006.
[2] Ibid., p. 18.
[3] First published Tadeusz Różewicz, 'Świadkowie, albo nasza mała stabilizacja', in: *Dialog*, no. 5, 1962, pp. 5-26.
[4] Zbigniew Florczak, 'Czlowiek w jednym okularze' ('A Man with Half-glasses'), in: *Ty i Ja*, no. 1, 1972, pp. 13-19.

Justyna Jaworska
Varšuvos universitetas

Romanas Cieslewiczius: dvigubas žaidėjas. Žurnalo *Ty i Ja* atvejis

Reikšminiai žodžiai: konsumerizmas, žurnalas, modernybė, Lenkija, plakatas.

Santrauka

Romano Cieslewicziaus, žymaus lenkų grafiko ir tapytojo, kūrybą galima pateikti kaip įdomų dvigubo žaidimo su oficialia sistema ir visuomene XX a. 7-ojo dešimtmečio Lenkijoje pavyzdį. Geriausiai žinomas kaip vienas iš Lenkijos plakato mokyklos įkūrėjų, Cieslewiczius trejus metus (1960-1963) dirbo iliustruoto žurnalo *Ty i Ja* (*Tu ir aš*) grafinio dizaino redaktoriumi, o paskui, persikėlęs į Prancūziją, bendradarbiavo su žurnalu iš užsienio. Šis menininko karjeros tarpsnis gali būti laikomas geru „rezistencijos, transgresijos ir apropriacijos" strategijos pavyzdžiu: pritardamas 7-ojo dešimtmečio demokratinio konsumerizmo estetikai ar vadinamajai „mažąjai stabilizacijai", Cieslewiczius mėgino į grafinį dizainą slapta įterpti avangardines tendencijas ir vakarietiškus standartus. Šis eksperimentas, nors ir pasmerktas nesėkmei (*Ty i Ja* buvo uždarytas 1973 m.), paliko mums vieną įdomiausių visų laikų iliustruotų žurnalų. Skirtas madai, menui, literatūrai, gyvenimo būdui ir dizainui, *Ty i Ja* mėgino pakeisti liaudies skonį, kartais priešindamasis oficialiai socialistinės kultūros politikai.

Svarbiausia Cieslewicziaus taikyta technika buvo koliažas. Ši iš esmės avangardinė technika, susipynusi su komercijos ir reklamos bruožais, menininko kūryboje reiškė tam tikrą dvigubą pranešimą. Straipsnyje mėginama koliažą interpretuoti kaip ironijos ir net provokacijos kalbą. Vyriški ir moteriški personažai (mėgstama *Ty i Ja* viršelių tema) įdomūs ir lyčių santykių požiūriu, nes per juos žaidžiama su tradiciniais vaizdavimo kodais, ir tai (galbūt) suvoktina kaip politinės metaforos. Nors žurnalas *Ty i Ja* neužsiėmė politika tiesiogine to žodžio prasme, jis paveikė socialinę vaizduotę, suformuodamas naujus troškimus ir kurdamas naują išskirtinę įtampos erdvę tarp meno, propagandos ir vartotojų interesų.

Gauta: 2007 04 01
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

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Death in the New Town. Leonhard Lapin's *City of the Living – City of the Dead*

Key words: Estonian art, Soviet architecture, industrial housing, critique of architectural institution.

In an episode in Mati Unt's novel *The Autumn Ball* (1979) which describes everyday life in a prefabricated modern suburb of Tallinn, the rationalist architect of the district meets his colleague Leo Lapin, who insists that the principles of planning for these living quarters could be perfected by laying out cemeteries in the verdure between the houses. This would make the area self-sufficient, and the "inhabitants [would] be able to remain in their neighbourhoods forever without ever needing to cross a single thoroughfare".[1] Although the context is fictional, Leonhard Lapin was a real-life character whose "design" for cemeteries in the empty courtyards of micro-districts had been included in a group exhibition of 14 architects in the hallway of the Academy of Sciences Library in Tallinn, in June 1978.

Fig. 1. Leonhard Lapin, City of the Living – City of the Dead, 1978, gouache on cardboard, 100 x 100 cm. Courtesy: Museum of Estonian Architecture, Tallinn

The show, rather tersely called *Architectural exhibition 78*, was organised under the auspices of the Architects' Union Division of Young Architects, but in its critical content was targeted at the architectural institution, and the dominant urbanism of the decade. Several of the participants had been active artists throughout the 1970s, busily countering the rhetoric of the autonomous self-enclosed art of the 1950s and 1960s generation via an expressed interest in the everyday life surrounding them, in the transforming cityscape and industrial culture. These subjects, fostered in a different form in socialist realism, were associated with the dominant art discourse. Although the new generation was critical of these subjects, it did not place itself somehow above or outside the dominant discourse, but worked to contest it from within. While concentrating on Leonhard Lapin's work, I want to consider the issues that the exhibition brought up – a critique of mass housing and the architectural institution, and the position of the architect – against a background of an exchange with art practices.

I

Lapin's project, *City of the Living – City of the Dead* [fig. 1], inserted a cemetery into the public areas of the residential district which usually functioned as

car parks or dog walking zones. The cemetery included garages as tombs, with bodies buried in cars, and could function simultaneously as a children's playground. The image in the centre of the design depicted a Lada automobile being lowered into a grave, with the initials VK on its hood, indicating the name of the architect Vilen Künnapu[2], another participant in the exhibition, and one of the first in the group to own a car. To the left is a playground with climbing posts and see-saws that simultaneously function as memorials and cenotaphs ("W Vise" (throw), "B Kiik" (swing), "Z Roni" (climb)). Garages in a row function as chapels in different architectural styles (including one that represents the so-called Finnish cornice-architecture of the 1960s, which became the architectural mainstream for public buildings in Estonia in the 1970s). The upper part of the project drawing includes several direct and indirect allusions to various representatives of architectural institutions, who lie buried among the houses: "M. Sadamm, leader, 1922-1979"[3] on the central obelisk commemorates Mart Port, the somewhat authoritarian long-time head of the Architects' Union and chief architect at the leading state design office *Eesti Projekt* in charge of all three of the mass housing projects in Tallinn; under a semicircular tombstone in front of him lies M. Blonde – Malle Meelak[4], Port's principal co-worker. There is also a common grave dedicated to the Union of Architects. Lapin buried several of his own friends (P. Georg, with the dates 1953-2053, indicating that this scene is set in the future) and literary heroes (Jung, Kafka, J.K – Josef K) in this courtyard as well. Depicted in the upper right corner is a suprematist "small explosion" [fig. 2] that in the author's own words symbolises the demolition of prefabricated housing in the USA during the same period.[5] The word "explosion" has been misspelled, however, and could be read as "small yearning". This gives the scene double meaning, with the suprematist explosion becoming a yearning for Kazimir Malevich and suprematism. Lapin had been fascinated with Malevich since

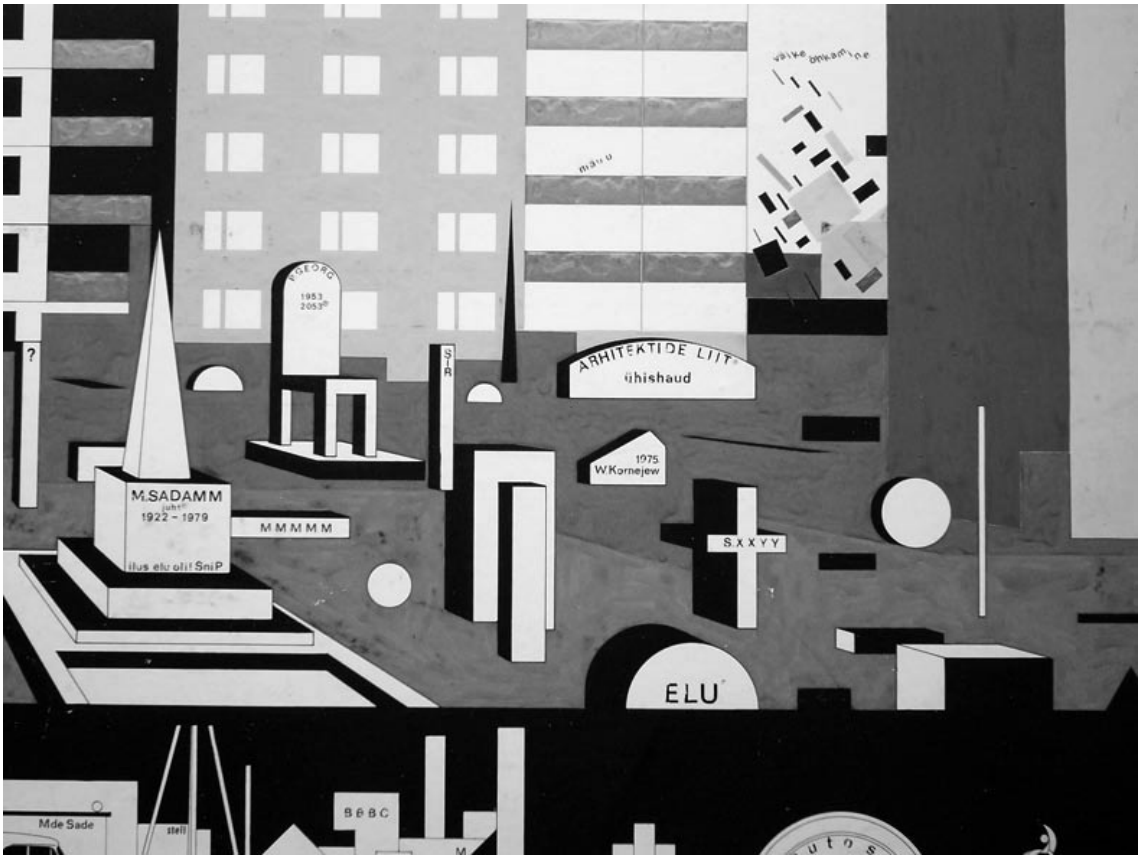

Fig. 2. Leonhard Lapin, City of the Living – City of the Dead, detail, 1978, gouache on cardboard, 100 x 100 cm. Courtesy: Museum of Estonian Architecture, Tallinn

the early 1970s, and the latter could be considered one of the main influences in his art practice. The scene thereby functions as a kind of auto-referential gesture signifying Lapin's own production. This self-reference becomes clearer when we realise that Lapin has also buried himself (in a chapel resembling a 1920s constructivist sculpture by Hendrik Olvi), as well as his wife at the time, the artist Sirje Runge, in this cemetery.

Lapin graduated as an architect from the Estonian State Art Institute in 1971, and throughout the 1970s was an active artist, art critic and writer, exhibition designer and organiser. His contacts with non-conformist artists in Moscow and Leningrad led to his interest in the legacy of suprematism. At the same time, in the period until 1974 during which he worked at the State Administration for Restoration, he was discovering the heritage of modernist art and architecture in Estonia from the 1920s and 1930s. Lapin's position, however, never became entirely nostalgic, as occurs in the historicist postmodernism that dominated the 1980s – quite the opposite – for in many cases he criticised the dominant lyrical-romantic notion of art that offered an escape from the surrounding reality, and countered it with art that corresponded to the industrial culture and took into account new technical means.[6] In his writings from that period he often envisions a complete artwork based on a machine aesthetic and the new design culture, which was intended to overcome the late modernist specialist culture whilst at the same time aspiring to transcendent meanings.[7] His conception of architecture is directed both against banal production, and against submission to a certain style, taste or tradition (thus the irony in his work against the "national" cornice modernism of the 1960s). Architecture, in his opinion, should move away from being only a rationalist field, and should restore its connections with a spiritual and universal totality.[8]

The idea for *City of the Living – City of the Dead* first appeared in written form a year earlier, in a manuscript where his artistic alter ego, Albert Trapeež, apparently submitted a similar work, with green areas as graveyards in mass housing districts, to a competition for children's playgrounds.[9] Lapin writes that, "thus the green areas in the new towns would be in good order, and children and their parents would take care of the graves". Later he also suggests burials in cars: "The newer the car and the more stylish the model, the more beautiful the burial".[10] Lapin's emphasis on cars refers to the growing importance of Soviet consumerism, and the changes in everyday life that became visible during the latter half of the 1960s. The next decade was characterised by a withdrawal into a well-organised everyday life, an endeavour to imitate a Western (Scandinavian) middle class lifestyle, when owning a car, house, summer cottage (or allocated studio space) counterbalanced collaboration with the bureaucratic state system.[11] Lapin himself was not entirely oblivious to the effects of changes in everyday life, for *City of the Living – City of the Dead* is set in a courtyard visible from the window of his newly obtained flat in the area of Õismäe in Tallinn.

In a review of the architects' exhibition, Mati Unt relates Lapin's work to the concept of *memento mori* that would restore a missing human dimension in the new towns (for which he uses the English word "suburbs"): "One hardly ever sees the dead in new towns, and we do not know where people disappear after their death – to the air, to earth, or to hell".[12] A recent similar interpretation by Mari Laanemets connects Lapin's work to a project by another member of the architects' group, Tiit Kaljundi, who proposed agrarian parks in cities as a means of transforming the new town into a cycle of seasonal change. For Laanemets, both works signify an attempt "to integrate the new town into the flow of time, to the cycle of life and death".[13] I would like to suggest, however, that Lapin's work differs from the agrarian park, and to give his project a slightly different reading.

The principal object of Lapin's critique was the modernist mass housing of the Soviet period, and the changed urban environment in the city. The first housing area in Tallinn to adopt the principles of free planning and organisation into micro-districts, where everything needed for daily life would be within walking distance, was built in the early 1960s in Mustamäe. By the 1970s, this concept began to symbolise the alienation of the urban dweller, his/her withdrawal to enjoy private pleasures in small

Fig. 3. View of the exhibition, Library of the Academy of Sciences, Tallinn, 1978. Photo courtesy: Leonhard Lapin

apartments – as described in Unt's *The Autumn Ball*. The first apartment blocks built in Mustamäe in the early 1960s adopted a winning design from a 1956 all-Soviet housing competition for small, economical apartments.[14] However, the project underwent several changes at the local *Eesti Projekt* office (under chief architect Mart Port), and the final design, nr. 1-317, had several striking cutbacks in details, and looked rather Spartan compared to that which was utilised in the other Soviet republics. The protocols written during the working process demanded simplification of finishing work in the interiors, diminishing of the height of spaces to 2.5 m (as opposed to the 2.7 m adopted in the USSR in 1959), replacing of the balcony in the living room with a French window (which finally became an ordinary window), installing a 1.2 m^2 bath in the bathroom and excluding a sink, [and] ventilation cupboards under windows… Next to a demand for the minimum width of the staircases (2.2 m) [there is the remark] that "one should check the possibility of removing a coffin"![15]

The goal of hygienic modernism and a functionally organised city was to eliminate physical, as well as moral, dirt. Everything left over from the rationally organised and differentiated city – abnormality, deviation, sickness, death – was cast aside.[16] But, as design nr. 1-317 demonstrates, this repression was delusional, for dirt and deviation existed next to order and cleanliness in a hidden form, as a latent double to a rationalised space. A cemetery in the middle of a new town was thus the return of modernism repressed, in a form that Freud called the uncanny – *das Unheimliche* – something strange in a familiar and everyday environment, "everything that ought to have remained ... secret and hidden, but has come to light".[17] In that sense, Lapin was not offering a harmonious illusion of the future (as occurs in architectural design in general), or reconstructing a nostalgic past (as is presented in conservative postmodernism) – he was destabilising the present (and thus possibly the "destructive architecture" that he mentions in a *samizdat* accompanying the show[18]). And hence the difference, both from the antimodernist agrarian park that brings a change of seasons to the city and reterritorialises alienated city space back to the natural cycle, and from the especially popular postmodern discourse of the 1980s,

that spoke of the new cities in terms of restoring a sense of home via architecture – the so-called human city.[19]

II

The hallway of the Academy of Sciences [fig. 3], where the show was held, usually offered exhibitions on the lives and works of prominent scientists, and displayed books and periodicals on low horizontal stands. An exhibition on contemporary architecture was clearly an exception in these premises. It was well known, however, that scientific institutions in Moscow had "sheltered" contemporary art exhibitions outside the institutional system since the mid-1960s. In Estonia, two significant non-institutional exhibitions had taken place in 1973 and 1975 at an agricultural research institute.[20] But, unlike in the latter case, where the exhibition sites were located outside of the city and required special buses for the public, the Academy of Sciences Library, one of the most popular in the city, was in the very centre of Tallinn, near Lenin Avenue, and literally across from the local Communist Party Central Committee building.

The exhibition was organised in two parts, with black-and-white photos of the architects' constructed works near the entrance, and their projects/artworks lined up along the large glazed foyer wall. The pieces were drawn on 1 x 1 m cardboard panels, a standard format used for exhibiting architectural designs in the state architecture offices. The majority of the participants, who were employed in the more liberal *EKE projekt* design office that did work for co-operatively owned collective farms, also had access to this material at their workplace. This accustomed format vis-a-vis architectural exhibitions gave the viewer the idea that the projects were being presented as bona fide architectural designs. This generic format (and title) could partly explain the agitated responses to the exhibition, whose critical content did not correspond to the expectations of a customary architectural display.

A 1972 manifesto called "A program for an exhibition of new architecture", which had been signed by five of the participants in the show, declared that "Everything is allowed in architecture".[21] The text following this fairly anarchic slogan aimed to "liberate architecture from local dogmas", and stated that "contemporary architecture should express new democracy". The "local dogmas" could be understood first and foremost to be those of the industrialised and highly regulated building process that reduced the architect's role to that of following pre-established norms (SNiP – *stroitelnye normy i pravila*, the centrally defined building regulations in the USSR, also mentioned in Lapin's work), but in a more general sense, as referring to the modernist architect-as-engineer. The exhibition which took place six years later, and which employed irony and parody as its principal measure, was directed against the dominant architectural discourse, but was also significant in that it referred not only to architecture in a narrow conventional sense.

Responses to the exhibition were divided into those which assessed the show according to the standards of a traditional architectural exhibition presenting the best that had been done, and those which saw

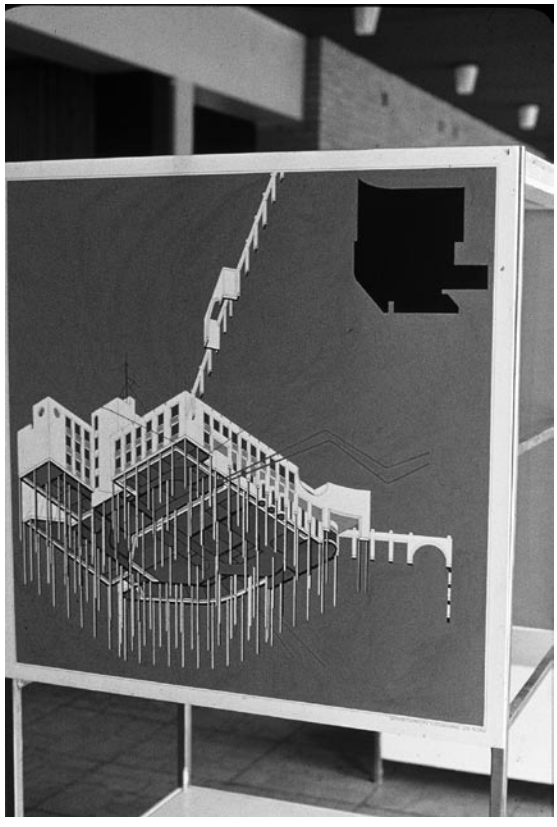

Fig. 4. Ain Padrik, Exhibitionist House, 1978, gouache on cardboard, 100 x 100 cm. Photo courtesy: Leonhard Lapin

it as part of a critical discussion revolving around the issues of architecture and urbanisation stated from the architects' position. The first group saw the exhibition as a kind of preparatory exercise prior to building "real" houses. Comments in the guestbook included: "Great talkers are s....y doers. People's architect" and "It is interesting that architects are still making jokes".[22] An article by architect Paul Härmson in the *Sirp ja Vasar* cultural weekly referred to the participants as "personalities still in search of their own way".[23] Comments by those who considered the exhibition to be of significance included the following: "Extremely problematic exhibition. Only don't get tired. – I. Normet". In his review, the writer Mihkel Mutt spoke of the importance of the experience of perceiving the works in the exhibition: "... in addition to an ordinary contact between the work and the viewer ... in seeing art inside a group ... there exist a series of contacts between the viewers themselves".[24] The collective experience also gave him understanding that "there is something different in the air".

City of the Living – City of the Dead as if literalised the idea of the micro-district as a self-sufficient area with everything within walking distance. Lapin's other project, *Architectural styles in the 20th century*, which he presented under the name of Albert Trapeež, classified a number of the participants' wedding photos according to their clothing styles. Ain Padrik's *Exhibitionist House* [fig. 4] proposed a building that reveals rather than shelters; Vilen Künnapu's montage drawing [fig. 5] showed a house flying above Manhattan Island; Jüri Okas' *Monument to Lapin in Räpina* included a found steel plate with an earthwork and instructions on how to inscribe the title. Significantly, it was this ironic notion of architecture that fascinated several reviewers of the show, and that opposed what one of them saw as the "overall seriousness"[25] that had thus far surrounded the discipline. Countering the "seriousness", both of the bureaucratic Soviet ideology but also of modernist professionalism (that in art terms we could call medium-specific), with laughter, games and parody, had been a recurrent strategy for this group of artists and architects since the early 1970s. At happenings, and often in spontaneous actions in public places, their absurd and seemingly pointless conduct stood out against daily rationality and normativity.[26] The 1978 exhibition could therefore be considered an attempt to bring the discourse to the architectural realm.

Fig. 5. Vilen Künnapu, House on Manhattan, 1978, collage, 100 x 100 cm. Photo courtesy: Museum of Estonian Architecture, Tallinn

III

In his comments on the minimalist break with normative modernist aesthetics in post-war Western art practices, Hal Foster has outlined a distinction between the modernist category of quality, and an avant-garde strategy of interest (quoting Donald Judd: "a work of art need only to be interesting"[27]). He describes the replacement of "quality" with "interest" in the 1960s as a transgression of the measurable (good or bad) aesthetic tradition with the ill-fitting and experimental: "quality is a criterion of normative criticism, an encomium bestowed upon aesthetic refinement; interest is an avant-gardist term, often measured in terms of epistemological disruption".[28] The revolt of Lapin and his colleagues against the "overall seriousness" of the normative architectural institution could then be viewed in a similar context, that rather redefines the context than refines the form, and attempts to step out from the set frames. The exhibitionist house (Padrik), or the house on the metaphysical field (Künnapu), and

even more the *City of the Living – City of the Dead*, could not be explained by means of the vocabulary following the "preceding evolution" in architecture: the key is in the commentary of architectural means, conventions and production. Thus architecture is not viewed as an autonomous system, it needs to be assessed via its social effect and intervention into the political sphere in a general sense. Here also is one of the possible explanations as to why the strongest reactions and most interesting comments regarding the exhibition came from people who were outside the professional architecture circles.

But there is at least one major divergence from Foster's schema. If the aim of the avant-garde artist in the dissolution of institutionalism (erasing the border between art and life) is also a dissolution of the institution of "the author" as a professional who guarantees the sole meaning of the piece, then the participants in the exhibition in 1978, and later, in the so-called Tallinn school, although remaining anti-institutional, upheld their role as professionals, and went on to develop their own "handwriting" in later exhibitions (this is also indicated in the 1978 show in their exhibiting the photos of their constructed projects).[29] Their critique was aimed at architecture as anonymous production, represented by the industrialised form of building in effect since the late 1950s. The architects who were dominated by this system countered the loss of authorship by underscoring individuality, intuition, spontaneity. Thus the conventional hierarchy of the profession was sustained in their projects, and the architect as engineer was replaced by the architect as artist (or Romantic artist). Lapin emphasises this when, in his interpretation of Malevich, he prefers the spiritual side of his work and writings: "Architecture is everything that is related to the problem of space, the problem of the void … People do not need mediocre houses or depressing cities, but a message, an idea that would be an antenna to cosmic energy".[30] This authorial position becomes more explicit in the following decade, in an architectural magazine called *Ehituskunst* – building art. Here, in countering the official notion of "architecture", the stress was not on "building", as in the production-oriented avant-garde in Germany (where a similar symbolic change had taken place in the 1920s), but on "art" as free creativity and self-expression. In erasing the border between art and life, it was art that stood in the leading position, and became the model for life and lifestyle.[31]

Notes

[1] Mati Unt, *The Autumn Ball*, Tallinn: Perioodika, 1985, p. 122.
[2] Information on the persons presented in this work comes from my interview with Leonhard Lapin, 8 September 2006.
[3] M refers to his first name, Mart; "Sadamm" is the Estonian translation of the English version ("Port") of his family name. The years 1922-1979 refer to the year of his birth and indicate that he is to die during the latter (next) year. In reality, he had to resign as head of the Union in 1979.
[4] "Blonde" refers to her hair colour.
[5] Interview with Leonhard Lapin, 8 September 2006.
[6] Leonhard Lapin, 'Objektiivne kunst' ('Objective Art'), in: *Kaks kunsti. Valimik ettekandeid ja artikleid kunstist ning ehituskunstist 1971-1995*, Tallinn: Kunst, 1997, p. 58.
[7] Leonhard Lapin, 'Funktsionalismi kriis' ('The Crisis of Functionalism'), in: *Kaks kunsti. Kaks kunsti. Valimik ettekandeid ja artikleid kunstist ning ehituskunstist 1971-1995*, Tallinn: Kunst, 1997, p. 139.
[8] Leonhard Lapin, 'Arhitektuur kui kunst. Ettekanne noorte arhitektide seminaril, 13 aprillil 1978' ('Architecture as Art. Paper given on the seminar of young architects 13 April 1978'), in: *Arhitektuur. Kogumik ettekandeid, artikleid, vastukajasid, dokumente ja tõlkeid uuemast arhitektuurist*. Tallinn, 1979, p. 6 (*samizdat* manuscript).
[9] Leonhard Lapin, 'Albert Trapeež kunstnikuna' ('Albert Trapeež as an Artist'), in: *Kaks kunsti. Valimik ettekandeid ja artikleid kunstist ning ehituskunstist 1971-1995*, Tallinn: Kunst, 1997, p. 66.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Rein Raud, 'Alternatiivne tegelikkus' ('Alternative Reality'), in: *Eesti Ekspress*, 21 June 2001. The number of personal cars in Estonia during the decade increased more than four times, from 27,000 in 1970 to 116,000 in 1980.
[12] Mati Unt, 'Arhitektuurinäitus' ('Architectural Exhibition'), in: *Sirp ja Vasar*, 9 June 1978.
[13] Mari Laanemets, 'Pilk sotsialistliku linna tühermaadele ja tagahoovidesse: häppeningid, mängud ja jalutuskäigud Tallinnas 70. aastatel' ('A Glance at the Wastelands and Back Yards of a Socialist City: Happenings, Games and Walks in Tallinn in the 1970s'), in: *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi – Studies on Art and Architecture*, no. 2, 2005, p. 171.
[14] Triin Ojari, 'Modernismi parameetrid: Mustamäe kujunemisest' ('The Parameters of Modernism: On the Development of Mustamäe'), in: Karin Hallas, Triin Ojari (eds.), *Kümme. Eesti Arhitektuurimuuseumi aastaraamat*, Tallinn: Eesti Arhitektuurimuuseum, 2000, p. 61.
[15] Ibid.

[16] This is what Michel de Certeau writes regarding the functionalist city: "On the one hand, there is a differentiation and redistribution of the parts and functions of the city, as a result of inversions, displacements, accumulations, etc.; on the other there is a rejection of everything that is not capable of being dealt with in this way and so constitutes the "waste products" of a functionalist administration (abnormality, deviance, illness, death, etc.)". Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 94.
[17] Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny', in: *Art and Literature. The Pelican Freud Library Volume 14*, Penguin Books, 1985, p. 345; the quotation is originally from Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, *Philosophie der Mythologie*, 1856.
[18] 'Uue arhitektuuri näituse programm' ('Programme for the Exhibition of New Architecture'), in: *Arhitektuur. Kogumik ettekandeid, artikleid, vastukajasid, dokumente ja tõlkeid uuemast arhitektuurist*, Tallinn, 1979, p. 50 (*samizdat* manuscript).
[19] See e.g. Ignar Fjuk, 'Inimeselinn ehk edasiviivast alalhoidlikkusest' ('The Human City or On Progressive Conservatism'), in: *Ehituskunst*, no. 1, 1981, pp. 22-27.
[20] See e.g. Eda Sepp, 'Estonian Nonconformist Art from the Soviet Occupation in 1944 to Perestroika', in: Alla Rosenfeld, Norton T. Dodge (eds.), *Art of the Baltic. The Struggle for Freedom of Artistic Expression under the Soviets, 1945-1991*, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, The Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, 2002.
[21] 'Uue arhitektuuri näituse programm' ('Programme for the Exhibition of New Architecture'), 1979, p. 50.
[22] 'Väljavõtteid arhitektuurinäituse (22 05-06 06 1978) külalisteraamatust' ('Excerpts from the Guestbook of the Architectural Exhibition'), in: *Arhitektuur. Kogumik ettekandeid, artikleid, vastukajasid, dokumente ja tõlkeid uuemast arhitektuurist*, Tallinn, 1979, p. 37 (*samizdat* manuscript).
[23] Paul Härmson, 'Kas tõesti tühjusest?' ('Really about Emptiness?'), in: *Sirp ja Vasar*, 23 June 1978.
[24] Mihkel Mutt, 'Arhitektuurinäitus' ('Architectural Exhibition'), in: *Sirp ja Vasar*, 9 June 1978.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Laanemets, 2005, p. 171.
[27] Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT press, 1996, p. 40.
[28] Ibid., p. 46.
[29] Mari Laanemets has indicated this in an art context. See Laanemets, 2005.
[30] Lapin, 1979, p. 7.
[31] See: Andres Kurg, 'Kunst ja kodu 1973-1980' ('Art and Home 1973-1980'), in: *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi – Studies on Art and Architecture*, no. 2(13), 2004, p. 122; Sirje Helme, Jaak Kangilaski, *Lühike Eesti Kunsti Ajalugu* (*Concise History of Estonian Art*), Tallinn: Kunst, 1999, p. 184. For a Russian perspective see also: Boris Groys, 'The Other Gaze. Russian Unofficial Art's View of the Soviet World', in: Aleš Erjavec (ed.), *Postmodernism and the Postsocialist Condition. Politicized Art under Late Socialism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

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Mirtis naujajame mieste. Leonhardo Lapino *Gyvųjų miestas – mirusiųjų miestas*

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Estijos menas, sovietinė architektūra, pramoninė gyvenamųjų namų statyba, architektūros institucijos kritika.

Santrauka

Leonhardo Lapino darbai, 1978 m. eksponuoti neinstitucinėje parodoje Talino Mokslų akademijos vestibiulyje, siūlė žaliuosiuose naujųjų miestų kvartaluose tarp blokinių namų įkurti kapines. Viešosiose erdvėse, kurios paprastai naudojamos kaip automobilių stovėjimo aikštelės ar šunų vedžiojimo plotai, turėjo stovėti garažai kaip kapų rūsiai, o juose – automobiliai su palaidotais kūnais; tuo pat metu tos erdvės turėjo funkcionuoti kaip vaikų žaidimo aikštelės. Siūlymas „patobulinti" nykius gyvenamuosius rajonus reiškė įgyvendinti naujųjų miestų idėją iki absurdo: kad gyventojams niekada nereikėtų išeiti iš rajono ar net pereiti gatvės.

Šis architektūrinis įvaizdis parodijavo beveik du dešimtmečius vykusias pramonines gyvenamųjų namų, kurie laikyti svetimkūniais mieste, statybas, bet kartu tai buvo „rimtumo", supusio architektūros discipliną (modernus architektas kaip inžinierius), kritika. Priešinimasis juoku ir žaidimais biurokratiškos sovietinės ideologijos rimtu-

mui, o kartu ir modernistiniam profesionalumui, buvo įprasta menininkų ir architektų grupės, su kuria nuo XX a. 8-ojo dešimtmečio pradžios bendravo Lapinas, strategija. Straipsnyje įvairių meninių praktikų kontekste analizuojami Lapino kūriniai ir aptariamos problemos, iškeltos jaunųjų architektų parodoje: masinės namų statybos, architektūros institucijos ir architekto visuomeninės pozicijos kritika.

Gauta: 2007 03 03
Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

ART AND DEMOCRACY

MENAS IR DEMOKRATIJA

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Appropriating the ex-Cold War

Key words: post-socialism, public monument, cultural transition.

INTRODUCTION

My purpose in this paper is to examine readings of the signs of an ideological context now encapsulated in history while the signs themselves, now decontextualised, remain as elements in contemporary visual culture. Examples include statues of Lenin removed to a forest park, sections of the Berlin Wall re-sited in North America, a schematic emblem of the hammer-and-sickle used as a restaurant sign, and the word "revolution" as the name of a chain of bars. I begin by outlining a context in which to reconsider visual traces of the Cold War, and note the contrast between the acceptable re-placement of a section of the Berlin Wall in New York (with graffiti on the West side) and the fear of an underclass evoked by similar, but locally produced, graffiti elsewhere in the city. I then deal with Jean Baudrillard's idea that an economy of signs has replaced an economy of things, using the hammer-and-sickle emblem, and bars called *Revolution* as an illustration – but note also that Baudrillard's position is contested in the social sciences. I then look in more detail at the case of the Grūtas sculpture Park (known as Stalin World) in Lithuania, where a number of collected Soviet-period statues are now on public display. I, as a foreigner, am not sure what I think of them: the park may aesthetically be the equivalent of a museum of modern art, or the statues may evoke a nostalgia for an ideology that I think has not yet realised its potential. I am, however, aware that I can think this way only because I did not live under the regime responsible for these signs of control.

CONTEXT

After 1989 and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, and after 1991 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the boundary between an East bloc and a West bloc, each defining itself as not-the-other, has dissolved. These events were sudden, and had not generally been predicted, although the growth of consumerism through the 1970s, followed by an economic downturn and continuing problems of distribution in the 1980s, can in retrospect be seen as contributing factors. Still, the border between the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic no longer exists, and the remaining elements of its security systems are simply reminders of a particular past to those who experienced it, or just a kind of historical curiosity or detritus to those who did not. In either case, they are encapsulated in history. In the meantime, since 1989, many of the states of the former East bloc have become members of the European Community. As Europe becomes an increasingly coherent economic, social, cultural and political force, and as China emerges as the potential rival to the remaining super-power, the category East and the category West no longer have the same ideological load or meaning as they did during the Cold War.

Other categories have dissolved or reformed as well, including in culture. The boundaries between art, media, fashion, architecture, and lifestyle consumption are no longer policed. Since pop art appeared in the 1960s, signs of everyday life and consumption have been merged into the realm of art – hitherto

the preserve of aesthetics and the association of high culture with universal values: the good, the true, and the beautiful. On the one hand, as Sharon Zukin has argued[1], the immaterial production of intellectual and creative work becomes increasingly central to the symbolic economies of cities, and to prescriptions for economic revival. This puts aesthetic production within a mainstream economic context of global competition for inward investment. On the other hand, the activities of artists and other cultural producers appear more and more subsumed in entertainment and spectacle. In both cases, what is produced is a set of signs.

The signs are abstractions. The artwork or media product becomes, at one level, a representation of a current lifestyle imperative (as it always has been for those who possess sufficient wealth to be connoisseurs and collectors), and at another, the democratisation of the sign Art and associated denotations of non-productive production, which mass media distribution introduces to the field of celebrity: the artist as B-list star.

Do the visual signs and visible traces of cultural production that surround us still carry values and ideals – the aesthetic as promise of another world, a non-material realm which nonetheless informs the imagination of a world indisputably better than present social organisation allows? Or does the evacuation of meaning from visual signs indicate the triumph of commodity ushered in by the trope of consumer choice? I simply pose the question at this stage while maintaining that the realm of cultural signs continues to be a factor in how we live the lives we have. Catherine Belsey writes of culture as "the vocabulary within which we do what we do … [which] specifies the meanings we set out to inhabit".[2] And Leonie Sandercock writes that we live "in a culturally structured world, are deeply shaped by it, and necessarily view the world from within a specific culture".[3] Belsey continues that culture is the vocabulary of "the values we make efforts to live by or protest against",[4] and claims that the protest, too, is cultural. Hence our encounters with signs may inform our social world and (re)formation, and our interpretation of them might be a site for intervention; i.e. by intervening in the codes and categories

Fig. 1. Sculpture of Lenin, Grūto parkas, Lithuania. Photo by the author, 2006

of visual culture, we might re-inflect the conditions by which we ourselves (and others likewise) are conditioned.

THE WALL, AND THE HAMMER-AND-SICKLE

The Berlin Wall, officially termed Border Security System West by its makers, was one of the key visual icons of the Cold War, as were the watchtowers and the May Day parades in Moscow. By the time of its dismantling, its West-facing side was covered with graffiti. It was, in fact, the fourth construction constituting the Wall. The first was simply a set of concrete blocks and wire. Successive improvements to the structure led to the use of pre-fabricated concrete sections of the kind utilised in systems that built mass housing, and resulted in a clear flat surface with a rounded protrusion on the top – an excellent "canvas" for graffiti. The latter was, of course, not possible in the East, because the Wall was patrolled there. In the West, Berliners and foreigners contributed their amateur or semi-professional images and slogans. New York graffiti artist Keith Haring

was commissioned to decorate a 400-metre section of the Wall in his own characteristic style. After the Wall was dismantled, people broke off and took away small pieces of the concrete as proof that they had been there, that they were participants in history. For some, it was perhaps also proof, in a kind of re-enactment, that the regime had fallen. Larger pieces, complete sections, were also removed more carefully, and transported to the West. One is now at the University of Texas in Austin, near a pet cemetery. Another is in New York, where it decorates a small urban plaza near the Museum of Modern Art. Here, the East-facing side is close to a wall that borders the plaza, and cannot be seen. The West-facing side, with its graffiti and tags in primary colours, looks out at the spectator from behind neatly placed white garden furniture, where passers-by can enjoy coffee and bagels. This might all be straightforward – it might be the extraction of spoils by the victor, paraded as a sign of victory over a defeated ideology. It makes sense: the graffiti was a sign of freedom – the ideological commodity marketed energetically by the West. I only ask how the graffiti on this Wall compares in style and meaning with that which appeared on New York subway trains at the same time, and was construed as a sign that an underclass living underground in subway tunnels and sewers was about to rise up and destroy the city (or at least threatened its stability, and produced street crime). Graffiti was anti-social behaviour, vandalism of public property – or it was a message of freedom. In some New York galleries, it was also traded as art in the works of Jean-Michel Basquiat and Haring.

More recently, I was walking to a metro station in Yerevan, Armenia (until 1991 a constituent republic of the Soviet Union). Standing at a street corner was a rusting steel hammer-and-sickle. At first I read it as part of the detritus of the Soviet period, not cleared away when a colossal statue of Stalin was replaced by one of Mother Armenia, and a more life-size Lenin by a large public video screen. This could have been the case, for Armenia has low resources, and many parts of the city are in transition. My second thought was that it might be postmodern ironic art. It was, in fact, the sign for a restaurant called *CCCP* – the metre-high rusty steel letters were set into the wall of the restaurant building. Next door to it was the head office for Porsche in Armenia. Much of the city centre is a construction site for new steel-and-glass towers financed by members of the Armenian diaspora in the US and Russia. There is money, and hence lifestyle consumption (but only for some). The restaurant caters to this globalised market – and the derivations of the hammer-and-sickle, CCCP, and Porsche signs are less important than is their function as denoting brands.

I suppose that the meaning I construct for these signs is a personal one, and that it has a veil of nostalgia. But it is also informed by the social and cultural discourses which structure my academic work. As a tourist I buy souvenirs – including a set of vodka glasses with pictures of Lenin and Stalin from Stalin World (Grūtas Park, Lithuania) – which I keep on a shelf in my office at the University as signs of travel, and retain mental images as another kind of souvenir. Some are only imagined, like the statue of Lenin from Yerevan, which I was told is in storage in the basement of the National Museum. I can almost imagine it, assume it to be like so many others – cap in hand or on head, arm outstretched or at the side… Many buildings are also in storage after making way for redevelopment, their grey volcanic stones numbered in white. The official line is that they will be reconstructed elsewhere; no-one believes this. Lenin as well will remain in storage. But the city has other monuments which increase in meaning, as does the extent to which the values they denote acquire mass consent. On April 25, 2006, I joined 750,000 people of all ages and many nationalities walking to the Genocide Memorial on the high ground overlooking Yerevan.

INTERMEDIATE REFLECTIONS

I never lived under a system of state socialism. As a Left academic from the West, I regard the philosophy on which it was partly based (and which did not for the most part inform its oppressive measures) as being open to further evolution, with Karl Marx (the potential of whose work is yet to be fully understood), along with Sigmund Freud and Charles Darwin, being one of the key thinkers of the 19th

century. That understanding involves critical reflection, and no doubt revision in our postmodern world. Nonetheless, I believe in social justice, and dispute the claims of consumerism. As Theodor Adorno said of mass culture: "The dream industry does not so much fabricate the dreams of the customers as introduce the dreams of the suppliers among the people".[5] He also argued that, "advertising becomes information when… the recognition of brand names has taken the place of choice".[6] Within the context of brand-culture, the word *Revolution* is the name of a chain of bars. One is located in the Castlefield district of Manchester, next door to another bar called *Fat Cat*. There have been many revolutions, but the bar is specific in its reference. It sells vodka cocktails, and the letter "e" in its name is reversed to suggest another alphabet. It would have been more predictable had the letter "R" been reversed to resemble (though not in sound) a letter in Cyrillic. But the "e" serves to give an exotic feeling, and draws on modern history for its marketing edge. How do I read this?

Baudrillard proposes a concept of sign-exchange as replacing the value previously invested in exchanges of goods, in an environment now composed of Simulacra. Mike Gane summarises that the simulacra introduced in the industrial revolution have given way to "the implosive advent of the consumer society to sign-exchange and the emergence of a 'system of objects'".[7] Gary Bridge cites Baudrillard's *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (1981), and observes that sign-value heralds "a proliferation of signs and simulacra that collapse the distinction between the original and its copies", in the consumption of images.[8] Drawing on Maussian anthropology, Baudrillard himself is sceptical regarding the prospect for empowerment through commodity consumption, and sees the triumph of consumption as sweeping away alternatives to its power – a view not entirely unlike Adorno's. Thus, through the triumph of the sign, the desire and intention of the consuming subject are subsumed in a more or less total system, and the system is denoted by an array of signs for brands, furthermore denoting as a whole the supremacy of the branded experience. I can accept this idea, and am reminded that intentionality is in any case a problematic idea when the subject is seen not as the unified self of liberal humanism, but as contingent on complex conditions and interactions within those conditions.

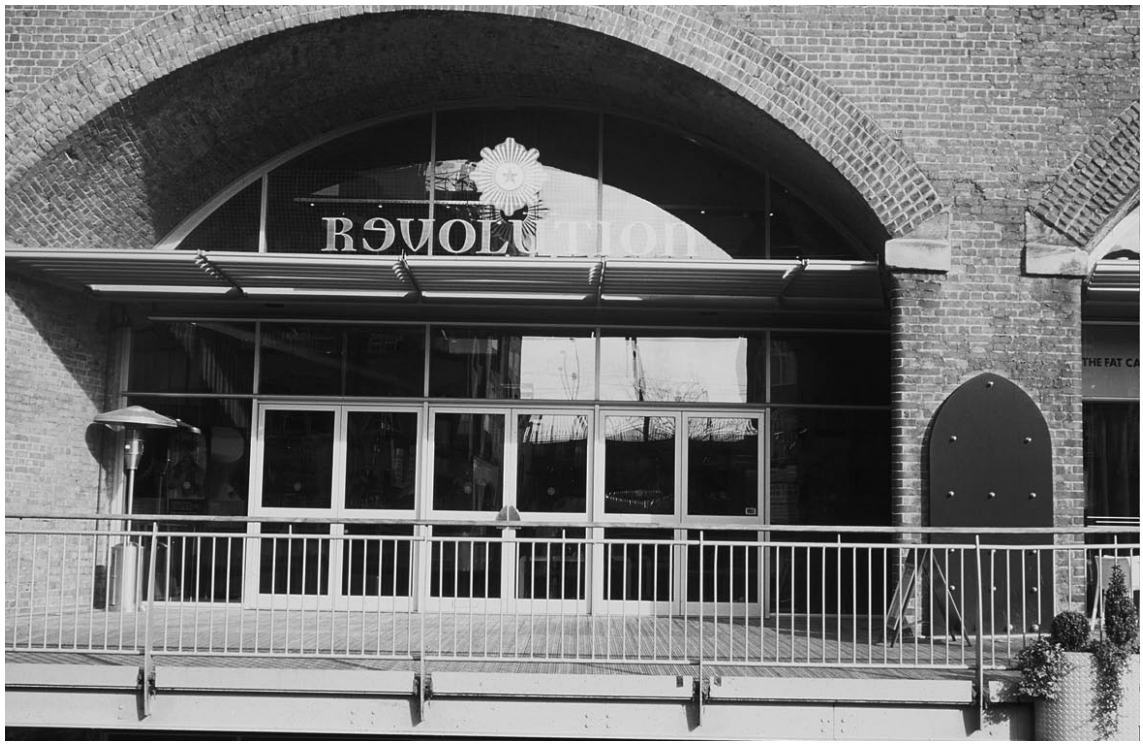

Fig. 2. Restaurant Revolution *in Manchester, UK. Photo by the author, 2006*

Signs, like words in a verbal language, are, however, mutable. According to Ferdinand de Saussure's observation of an arbitrary relation between a verbal sign and that which it signifies, there is no authentic meaning, received as it were from ancestral beginnings to be reiterated timelessly. But there may be a possibility, if signs are completed in reception (like text) so that completion itself is always in the future – inevitably unfinished and only ever provisional – of finding an exit from the situation. The bar appropriates a history of revolution and an ideology now encapsulated in history (the more so by its use as the name of a bar – which possibly is partly the point), but the term "appropriation" has another meaning in religious hermeneutics – as an act of interpretation through which to achieve "an intimate communion of sense" in reading.[9] The reference is perhaps anachronistic, but it points to an intervention in the re-reading of text – and thereby the possibility for a re-reading also of signs – and a re-contextualisation of the de-contextualised. Everything in language is mediated, and the authentic as unmediated representation of experience is an idea viable only in terms of the pre-verbal. But this does not mean that everything is fake. Following on this idea, Vincent Mosco outlines two ways in which political economists take issue with Baudrillard:

> "First… the argument for the emergence of commodification suggests one-dimensionalism, essentialism, and… fatalism… . Second, it is not clear what the victory of commodity actually means because the sense of the term changes… in Baudrillard's analysis. … But to the extent that it holds a specific meaning, sign value is limited to the needs of capital to produce a dense, hierarchical system of meanings, of status identifications, in order to cement its power".[10]

In any event, Baudrillard does not see consumers as hapless dupes of a system, but as subjects who are able to engage with it. I question a tendency in the 1990s of the social sciences to see consumers as knowing manipulators of the system, and incline more to the idea that such subversion as might be achieved within consumption – as distinct from anti-consumption movements – is likely to be quickly subsumed by the market. But there does appear to be a possibility to withdraw from the power exerted by lifestyle consumption, as evidenced by the formation of new social movements. For Ian Angus, members of such movements engage in identity formation "in a manner that transforms a drop-out rejection into a political project demanding social change".[11] Such a project requires a vocabulary reinvested with meanings. This is not a simple reclamation of previously valid meanings – the validity being common circulation – for signs appropriated by the market. The idea denoted by *Revolution* is now historical, since the model of a proletarian uprising is no longer credible. In a similar fashion, the hammer-and-sickle is a historical emblem open to appropriation by the tourist trade in former East bloc countries.

STALIN WORLD

Stalin World is a case of such appropriation – the badges, T-shirts, and other (newly produced) detritus of the Soviet period are consumed as souvenirs of a past world equivalent in its distance to the exotic. The acquired sign shows the tourist to have been there, as the branded goods denote that one has visited the mall. But I would argue that these signs are never entirely evacuated of meaning in the way the market might require, and that in the resulting ambivalences and complexities of response to what is still recent history, there is a space between the branded meaning and the personal interpretation that arises from past associations. In that space is the potential to re-produce (rather than reproduce) meaning.

As commentators on the cultural legacies of the former East bloc, Laura Mulvey argues that the monuments of the former Soviet Union should be preserved, and Renata Salecl that they should not. In 1991 Mulvey went to Russia with Mark Lewis to make the film *Disgraced Monuments* (1992). She cites Walter Benjamin's observation from the 1920s regarding a shop selling figures of Lenin in all sizes, and adds her own experience:

> "The poses had become fixed and stereotyped: Lenin with one arm outstretched,

> with both arms outstretched, standing still, walking forward, sometimes holding a cap … One favourite anecdote was of a statue which had got muddled, and appeared with Lenin both holding and wearing a cap".[12]

Mulvey adds that the problem of what to do with such statues is a problem of historical memory, and says that the people she interviewed in Russia felt that an ability to live with them may herald an ability to live with the past. Susan Buck-Morss, however, argues that if revolutions are legitimated by the histories they appropriate, then "the suturing of history's narrative discourse transforms the violent rupture of the present into a continuity of meaning".[13] A similar debate took place in Bucharest in 2005 over the future of the People's Palace, built by Nicolae Ceauşescu after a visit to Phenian in North Korea, as the centrepiece of a New Bucharest (for which old buildings, including churches, were demolished). Salecl recalls that "some people insisted that the palace had to be demolished, others proposed that it become a museum of the communist terror, still others suggested that it be transformed into a casino".[14] For Salecl herself, the building spoke of psychotic delirium under the previous regime. She argues that to keep statues in place after a shift of power assumes that "the current and former rulers do not differ in how they deal with historical memory".[15] With some incisiveness she notes that one would not have expected to find images of the Fuhrer in public places in Germany after 1945. I take her point. The removal of monuments dedicated to a past regime is probably necessary at least as a re-enactment of the shift of power, and as evidence that it has been effected.

But I would also argue that complete erasure does, as Mulvey indicates, lead to forgetting. However, in the case of Stalin World at Grūtas Park in Lithuania, removal leads to both retention and forgetting. To me, the dark green of the forest seems, in a way, to be the de-contextualising equivalent of the white walls of a typical museum of modern art. The extent to which the park, with its restaurant and play area, and even a small zoo in plain sight of the signs of power (including a deportation train parked at the site entrance), offers a full day of family entertainment, denotes appropriation to the tourist industry. And yet most of the visitors are Lithuanians, who, if they are an adult, lived through a period which they regard not only as one of communist oppression, but also as a period of foreign occupation and imposition of a foreign language. I see the park as the suture suggested by Buck-Morss (above) – it closes the argument between rival ideologies – but I maintain that the specific forms of each remain mutable. Reading signs such as the statues of Lenin at Grūtas Park from a viewpoint aligned with the successive efforts, since the 1960s, at forming a New Left, I have to say that the project is not yet finished.

Notes

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[2] Catherine Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001, p. 7.
[3] Leonie Sandercock, 'Cosmopolitan Urbanism: A Love Song for Our Mongrel Cities', in: Jon Binnie, Julian Holloway, Steve Millington, Craig Young (eds.), *Cosmopolitan Urbanism*, London: Routledge, 2006, p. 47.
[4] Belsey, 2001, p. 7.
[5] Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 80.
[6] Ibid., p. 73.
[7] Mike Gane, *French Social Theory*, London: Sage, 2003, p. 159.
[8] Gary Bridge, *Reason in the City of Difference: Pragmatism, Communicative Action and Contemporary Urbanism*, London: Routledge, 2005, p. 122.
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[13] Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West,* Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 2002, p. 43.
[14] Renata Salecl, 'The State as a Work of Art: The Trauma of Ceaușescu's Disneyland', in: Neil Leach (ed.), *Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary Perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe*, London: Routledge, 1999, p. 100.
[15] Ibid., p. 99.

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Savinantis buvusį Šaltąjį karą

Reikšminiai žodžiai: postsocializmas, visuomeninis paminklas, pereinamasis kultūros laikotarpis.

Santrauka

Griuvus Berlyno sienai ir iširus Sovietų Sąjungai, keletą Šaltojo karo laikotarpį primenančių kultūros ženklų vėl atgaivina naujoji mada. Pavyzdžiai: plieninis pjautuvas ir kūjis šalia restorano (kuris vadinasi *SSSR*) Jerevane (Armėnija); Berlyno sienos fragmentas, perkeltas į nedidelę aikštę prie Niujorko Modernaus meno muziejaus; barų tinklas *Revoliucija* („R“ rašoma atvirkščiai, kad būtų panaši į kirilicos raidę, kuri, tiesą sakant, tariama kitaip) Jungtinėje Karalystėje; sovietinės skulptūros parkai Budapešte ir Grūte. Ši, dažnai su vartojimu ir laisvalaikiu susijusi pozicija – iš naujo panaudoti ženklus kitu tikslu – yra priešingybė tam, ką 1871 m. padarė Paryžiaus komunarai, pašalindami iš viešosios erdvės Napoleono erelius ir Vendomo koloną ar airių respublikonai, XX a. nugriovę Anglijos karaliaus Jurgio statulas Dubline ir Korke. Kontrastą šiems pavyzdžiams sudaro ir ant Žaliojo tilto Vilniuje tebelaikomos socialistinio realizmo skulptūros.

Remiantis aukščiau įvardytais savinimosi atvejais, straipsnyje klausiama, kaip iš naujo interpretuojami ir ar gali būti interpretuojami pasisavinti senieji ženklai. Ar jie, pavyzdžiui, dekontekstualizuojami taip, kaip paveikslai modernaus meno muziejuje? Ar kavinių dizainas arba Grūto miško laukymė yra estetinis baltų modernistinio meno erdvės sienų atitikmuo? O gal tie ženklai kelia nostalgiją? Bet ženklai nesklando laisvai kaip signifikantai, be sąsajų su akivaizdžiais signifikatais, tad jų tuštuma, kaip bendra ženklų klasė, žymi kapitalo triumfą. Tačiau šis, taip pat neadekvatus, paaiškinimas kelia kitus klausimus apie tai, kaip galima žvelgti į senojo režimo ženklus: jie išsaugomi kaip kultūra, paliekami lyg seni baldai gatvėje ar veikia kaip ištrinta arba iš naujo kontekstualizuota istorija?

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Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

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Struggle for Freedom. Art for Tolerance in Poland

Key words: contemporary art in Poland, democracy, tolerance, censorship, art for tolerance.

I wish to examine the connection between art and democracy by focusing on the contemporary situation in Poland, and to write about the need for Art for Tolerance. Poland opened itself up to the West and turned to the capitalist system in 1989. The year is hailed as the regaining of freedom after the communist period. New threats to freedom have, however, appeared after 1989. One such threat is connected to the power of the conservatives and the Catholic Church. Poland is predominantly a Roman Catholic country: according to statistics, approximately 90% of the Polish population has been baptised. The Church plays a great role in public and political life. Polish rightwing politicians are responsible for, among other things, the ban on abortion introduced by law in 1993, inadequate public education on sexuality, and discrimination (including in the form of large-scale homophobia) in different fields of social life. There is also pressure by people and groups related to rightwing parties and to the radical wing of the Catholic Church (e.g., *Radio Maryja*) not to display controversial art. As a result, many exhibitions have been closed or repealed.

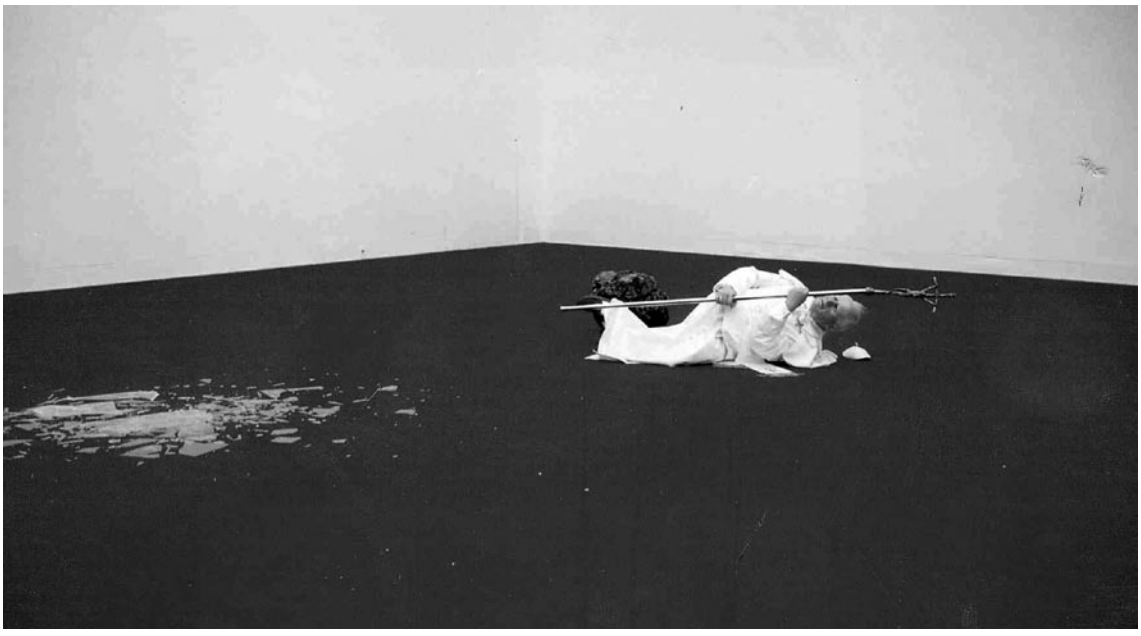

Fig. 1. Maurizio Cattelan, La Nona Ora, 1999. After demolishing by the deputy of the Polish Parliament Witold Tomczak, Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw, 2000. Courtesy: Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw. Photo by Anna Pietrzak-Bartos

In Poland, contemporary art is commonly perceived as something scandalous, excessive, or at best, the individual statement of a blasé artist. Viewers have in no way been taught or prepared to perceive modern works, and consequently approach art in a non-reflective way. The only information in this field comes from the media, and it presents art almost exclusively in the context of a scandal. As a society we are therefore vulnerable to the manipulations of rightwing politicians who "track down" all such scandals – essentially in order to be acknowledged as defenders of "national and Christian values".

The lack of proper art education and the marginalisation of art make it an easy target for pseudo and auto-censorship. This has led to the discontinuation of certain exhibitions, e.g., *Ja i AIDS* (*Me and AIDS*) at the Stolica Cinema in Warsaw in 1996, and *Dogs in Polish Art* at the Arsenał Gallery in Białystok. And it has brought about the exclusion of individual works, e.g., Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ* from his monographic exhibition at the Centre for Contemporary Art in 1994; Zbigniew Libera's *LEGO- Concentration Camp*, intended for the Venice Biennale 1997, and withdrawn by the curator of the Polish Pavilion; Rafal Jakubowicz's *Arbeitsdisciplin* (2002), not exhibited at the last minute at the Arsenał Gallery in Poznań; David Černy's *Shark*, removed from the *Shadows of Humour* exhibition at Gallery BWA in Bielsko-Biała in 2006. Further examples of art censorship include Katarzyna Kozyra's *Bonds of Blood*, which was chosen by Gallery AMS in 1999 for presentation on billboards that were then covered for fear of negative reactions. Destroyed artworks include Robert Rumas' *Hot Water Bottles* in Gdańsk in 1994; Maurizio Cattelan's *La Nona Ora* (1999) – by rightwing Parliament member Witold Tomczak at the Zachęta Gallery in Warsaw in 2000 [fig.1]; and Piotr Ukański's *Nazis* – by the actor Daniel Olbrychski, also at the Zachęta Gallery in 2000.

The most absurd example is that of a court case against Dorota Nieznalska, who was accused of offending religious feelings in her work *Passion*, and brought to trial in 2002. In her work the artist analyses the construction of masculinity and its meanings in contemporary Poland, which is a Catholic country with a consumer culture. *Passion* (2001) incorporated a movie showing a man exercising at a gym, and a cross-shaped object with a photo of male genitalia as a kind of symbol, pars pro toto, of masculinity. This work depicted a contradictory idea of masculinity: by training one's body one produces a new kind of masculinity – with "passion". The reference to Christ's passion offended some of the Catholics who, instead of asking her about the meaning of her work, accused Nieznalska of offending their religious feelings. Following a year of legal battles, in 2003 the court in Gdańsk sentenced the artist to six months of community services for offending said feelings. The Court of Appeal overruled this sentence – and a new trail, which continues to this day, commenced in 2005.

Several art institutions have also been closed down. Galeria Wyspa in Gdańsk was shut after presenting Nieznalska's *Passion* in 2002. A generally unfavourable attitude regarding art has led to a number of instances when private galleries have lost their leased premises. This happened in Kraków after an exhibition of posters by KPH (the Campaign against Homophobia), and in Ostrów Wielkopolski, before the opening of Nieznalska's exhibition in 2003. These are not individual cases, but rather a part of

Fig. 2. Ania & Ilona from Niech Nas Zobaczą (Let Us See)*, 2003. Courtesy: KPH. Photo by Karolina Breguła*

Fig. 3. Tomek & Sylwek from Niech Nas Zobaczą (Let Us See)*, 2003. Courtesy: KPH. Photo by Karolina Breguła*

the general "witch-hunt" against contemporary art – particularly art which relates to social critique, feminism, and gay and lesbian activism. It is becoming more and more difficult to display works that oppose mainstream thinking, and that are related to complex social issues. Nevertheless, it must be clearly stated that those artists who do not deal with these issues today cannot be certain that their work will not also be subject to attack at some point in the future.

As a result of such restrictive measures, the managers of formal galleries often prefer to present works that are neutral or formalistic in their outlook, sometimes even of low artistic value, simply to avoid the unpleasant consequences of displaying works by "unpopular" artists. Pressured by the so-called "defenders of morality", who create an illusion of speaking on behalf of all of society, the art curators and organisers of artistic life end up subjecting their work to auto-censorship. By demanding that exhibitions be closed down, and by stopping funding for specific galleries, the adversaries of contemporary art seek to limit broad public access to works of art, and to deny people the right of individual judgment; their own implied judgments usually suggest that contemporary art is immoral and pathological. In this context, it is interesting to note that the opponents of art have succeeded in "conditioning" the world of art – that their requirements and bans have been absorbed by gallery managers and directors, who, more than anything else, fear accusations of having insulted somebody's religious feelings. Those who subject themselves to auto-censorship do so in order to defend the institutions they represent from possible attacks and accusations that the art they exhibit does not conform to the tastes of the public at large.

The art adversaries' most commonly exploited argument is that art offends religious feelings. Any art that initiates a discussion on Polish Catholicism, and the impact of the Church on people's consciousness, is considered dangerous – as is art that relates to sensitive issues like intolerance and social exclusion. The opponents assume that art should comply with the views of the majority, and that artists have no right to areas they consider inviolable. Krzysztof Pomian says the following about art and democracy in Poland:

> "The accusations of blasphemy which are so often heard in our country today are an obvious abuse. Nobody is forced to visit galleries which display works that apparently offend their religious feelings. Everybody has the right to call for a boycott of these works, or even to organise protests. But hiding behind the defence of religious feelings, and involving state institutions in the process, is not the same as defending one's own feelings. It is an attempt to use police methods in order to prohibit others from expressing their own feelings. And even if these feelings oppose religion, or are ironic towards it, they have as much right to exist in a democratic country as do religious feelings".[1]

It is worth remembering that both artistic freedom and freedom of speech are guaranteed by the Polish Constitution. However, there is a problem in Polish society regarding its democracy, and the understanding of what democracy is.

The approach to art that I have described is a symptom of limiting democratic civil rights, of a process that does not permit the full development of a civic society with a mature political awareness – one that can make its own choices and judgments, and that does not avoid sensitive and controversial issues. This restrictive approach to art is inscribed in the broader political context. The "witch-hunt" that is happening in Poland does not apply only to art. It is also keen to ridicule sexual minorities, and feminists who demand changes in the anti-abortion law. Rightwing and Catholic circles do not limit themselves to an attack on art. In their opinion, religious feelings can be insulted in various ways: in films (Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*, 1998; Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education*, 2004); on billboards and magazines covers; in demonstrations for tolerance and equality. The threat against democracy was demonstrated during the so-called "Poznań events" of November 19, 2005 – when authorities prohibited an Equality March, and when the police brutally "pacified" a peaceful rally in its support. The event demonstrated that Poland is a place where constitutional law is not always fully respected. Public insults against sexual minorities go unchecked, and all discussions concerning equal rights and tolerance are silenced and blocked.

Fig. 4. Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka, former vice prime minister in a t-shirt I am Arab *from the* Tiszert for Freedom (T-shirt for Freedom)*, 2004. Courtesy: Fundacja dla Wolności. Photo by Konrad Pustoła*

This situation forces one to reflect on the role of art within the context of democracy. According to Pomian: "Contemporary art, but not only art, stimulates our awareness of the fact that democracy requires diversity in relation to groups, politics, ideas, religions, and so on, and that democracy requires disputes".[2]

Given this situation, there is an urgent need for Art for Tolerance as a means of evoking public discussion. Art for Tolerance aims to draw public attention to the marginalisation of different minorities, and to the need to counteract such discrimination. Various social and art actions have already taken place in Poland, and there does exist a form of critical art that takes into account the issues of Otherness, tolerance, and so on. Strategies used during various actions include the following:

1. EXPLORING THE ISSUE OF OTHERNESS

Me and AIDS (1996) – an exhibition aimed at confronting artists' attitudes regarding AIDS and people with this illness. The mid-1990s was still a time of panic regarding AIDS. Artists were asked to relate their fears and prejudices, their understanding of changes in social relations within the context of this illness. The exhibited works did not give a voice to people with AIDS, or try to show their perception of reality. It was the artists who wanted to show their own attitudes and social fears. One of the most interesting exhibits was by Katarzyna Kozyra. In her work entitled *Krzysztof Czerwniński* (1996), she showed a beaten homeless man with AIDS in a pose reminiscent of Christ on the crucifix, against a background of the Polish national flag. In this way, the artist showed the clash between Christian values and the attitudes of a society that fears people with AIDS, doesn't allow the construction of treatment centres for them, and even chases them away with stones. The Other was shown as a Stranger, a victim of society. The exhibition was closed down after three days, for moral reasons.

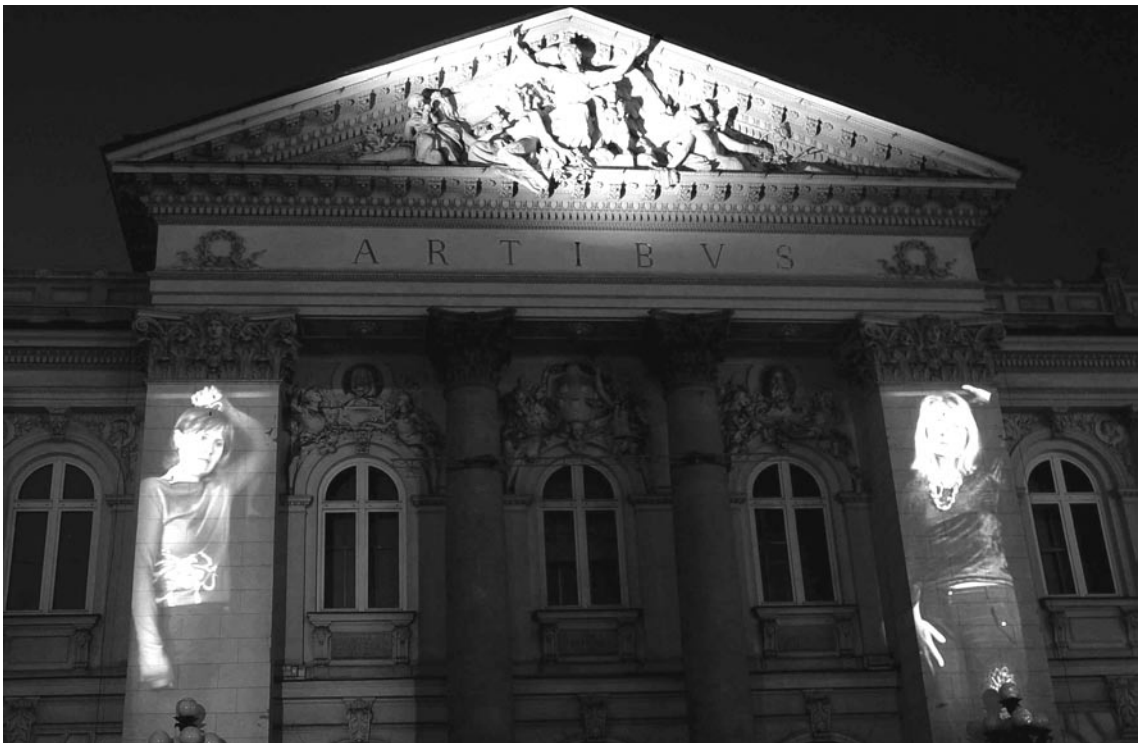

Fig. 5. Krzysztof Wodiczko, Monument Therapy, 2005, projection on the facade of the Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw. Courtesy: Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw. Photo by Sebastian Madejski

2. BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH OTHERNESS

Let us see – an event to promote acceptance of gays and lesbians, organised in 2003 by the Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH). It featured posters and billboards in Polish cities, and was inspired by the photographer Karolina Breguła [fig. 2, 3]. Posters of couples – ordinary young people – holding hands were meant to be displayed on billboards in Poland's largest cities. The idea became impossible because of the controversial topic, and the posters were shown only in a few galleries. Gay rights activists did claim, however, that the campaign was a success because it sparked a debate about gay rights. As Robert Biedroń, leader of the Campaign Against Homophobia, said: "For the first time, homosexuals were shown as ordinary people, not as paedophiles at a railway station, or as freaks in a gay parade".[3] The positive side of the action was that it showed people who are excluded from the field of visibility, and at the same time are excluded from the public sphere.

However, another effect of this action was a confirmation of the discourse of "normality". The photographs showed that gays are as normal as other people. But "normality" is a kind of "trap", for it is always connected with some form of exclusion (for example, elderly people in this case). A discourse of normality always produces its Otherness.

3. EMPATHY WITH THE OTHER

Here I am referring to the Polish projections by Krzysztof Wodiczko, an artist who is "most known for staging projections onto the facades of public monuments and buildings, using structures at the heart of the city's identity to tell the stories of citizens often overlooked by society".[4] He has made two projections in Poland. One was a public projection on the Old Town Hall tower in Kraków, in 1996, in which he gave voice to various excluded people: a man with AIDS, a homosexual, a homeless person, and a woman beaten by her husband. Viewers could only see the people's hands, and hear their voices. The other projection, during his exhibition entitled *Monument Therapy*, at the Zachęta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw in 2005-2006, concerned the problems of female victims of violence in contemporary Poland [fig. 5]. In it he projected pictures of women

posed as caryatids. The women spoke about being beaten by their husbands, about rape and other kinds of violence, including violence by law, i.e. the restrictive anti-abortion law.

The most important aspect of these actions is that they give a voice to people who are marginalised in the public sphere, who normally have no possibility to speak out. The confessions of the so-called Others are also very touching, and evoke a feeling of empathy in the viewer. It is a strategy whereby we can feel the emotions of the Others, and thus identify with them. The Other stops being an anonymous person and a stranger, and starts to be someone we do not regard with indifference.

4. DESTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

In 2004, the Foundation for Freedom prepared a campaign called *Tiszert for Freedom* (*T-shirt for Freedom*).[5] It consisted of covering t-shirts – so called "individual billboards" – with slogans signalling the existence of certain taboo topics and discriminated social groups in Poland. The action was invented by a young sociologist, Antek Adamowicz. The campaign gained the support of many Polish celebrities, who agreed to be photographed wearing the t-shirts [fig. 4]. In the first edition, slogans included: I'm a Jew, I'm an Arab, I'm black, I don't listen to the Pope, I don't go to church, I'm a gay, I'm a lesbian, I have my period, I use a spiral, I'm from the countryside, I have AIDS, I'm unemployed, I had an abortion, and so on.

In 2005, an exhibition of all the photos of celebrities supporting the campaign began to travel around Poland. It was presented in Warsaw and in Kraków (at the central railway stations), and in Poznań (at the School of Humanities and Journalism). The exhibition was accompanied by discussions and conferences at which social activists and politicians discussed the issue of tolerance. A presentation of

Fig. 6. Aleksandra Polisiewicz, Reanimacja demokracji – Marsz Równości idzie dalej (The Re-animation of Democracy – The March of Equality Moves On), 2005, video. Courtesy: the artist

the exhibition which was intended for a festival on human rights, *Human Rights in Films*, organised by Amnesty International and the Helsinki Fund at *Chatka Żaka*, part of the Marie Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, was prohibited by the dean of the University under pressure by the local bishop. Given these circumstances, the organisers cancelled the entire festival, and in doing so evoked a debate on freedom of speech, and relations between the Catholic Church and public institutions.[6]

I have called this strategy "destruction of identity" because each person wearing the "T-shirt for Freedom" can demonstrate his/her own individual problem and exclusion, or s/he can identify with the Other – can be the Other for a moment, metaphorically wear the skin of the Other. In this way, the campaign shows that we are Others among Others. It also reveals that our identity is not something that is of the essence, but is socially constructed.

5. BUILDING A NEW ORDER

An exhibition entitled *Love and Democracy* was organised by Paweł Leszkowicz for the private Grażyna Kulczyk Gallery in Poznań in 2005. A larger version of it was shown at the Centre for Contemporary Art in Gdańsk in 2006. The curator gathered together various works related to the title. These included individual voices on different kinds of sexuality, love, and desire (e.g., Katarzyna Korzeniecka). Some of the artworks presented a play and change of identity (Maciej Osika). Others, more related to social and political problems, included the aforementioned photos in the *Let us see* exhibition, and Aleksandra Polisiewicz's film *The Re-animation of Democracy – The March of Equality Moves On*, 2005 [fig. 6], which documents a rally in Warsaw supporting the banned Equality March that was brutally suppressed on November 19, 2005 in Poznań. Thus the exhibition also collected some of the earlier strategies, i.e. exploring the issue of Otherness, becoming familiar with Otherness, and destruction of identity. Within the context of this exhibition, the Other stops being an Other, and starts to be one of many of us.

The exhibition showed a pluralistic vision of different existing sexualities and identities. Paweł Leszkowicz described it as "plural love stories, multiple sexual narratives, various images of femininity and masculinity".[7] In this way, the exhibition presented a new kind of social order, with a place for Others and for different kinds of desire. According to this point of view, democracy is applied as it should be: "to guarantee the peace and security of all citizens in a multi-sexual society, and to control aggression and violence".[8] This project wasn't, however, shown in a public space. It appeared in the fairly safe space of the Gallery, and proposed a kind of "impossible Paradise" – a Utopian vision within the context of Polish reality. Again, the earlier strategies – to examine democracy, to move the borders of identities which strictly define our social order, to change the field of visibility from a monolithic to a diverse one – are important.

Art for Tolerance is important in the context of a weak Polish democracy. According to Pomian, in a social order, the elimination of differences leads to an atrophy of public life, and is one of the most serious threats facing democracy.[9] It is also a great threat for the arts.

In his *Dekada* (*The Decade*), Piotr Piotrowski recalled a statement by Josif Brodsky: "The non-reading of poetry leads a society to an appalling level of speech skills that makes it easy prey for demagogues and tyrants".[9] If applied to contemporary art in Poland – to the existing attempts to block it, to the covert censorship of Art for Tolerance – these words take on a disturbing new meaning.

Notes

[1] Krzysztof Pomian, 'Sztuka nowoczesna i demokracja' ('Contemporary Art and Democracy'), in: *Kultura współczesna,* no. 2 (40), 2004, pp. 35-43.
[2] Ibid.
[3] See: 'Demolishes Gay Awareness Campaign', 27 May 2003. http://niechnaszobacza.queers.pl/strony/prasa/27.05.03_en.htm
[4] "'If you see something..." – Krzysztof Wodiczko', 2005 http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/wy_in_wy_wodiczko_lelong_nowy_jork
[5] *Tiszert for Freedom*, http://www.tiszert.com/tiszertdla-wolnosci/english.pdf
[6] Ibid.
[7] Paweł Leszkowicz, 'Love and Democracy. Art – New Images of Love and Eroticism', in: Paweł Leszkowicz (ed.), *Miłość i demokracja (Love and Democracy)*, ex. cat.,

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[8] Ibid., p. 142.
[9] Pomian, 2004.
[10] Piotr Piotrowski, *Dekada. O syndromie lat siedemdziesiątych, kulturze artystycznej, krytyce, sztuce – wybiórczo i subiektywnie* (*The Decade. Selective and Subjective Remarks about the 1970's Syndrome, Artistic Culture and Critique*), Poznań: Wydawnictwo Obserwator, 1991, p. 80.

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Kova už laisvę. Menas už toleranciją Lenkijoje

Reikšminiai žodžiai: tolerancija, marginalizacija, šiuolaikinis menas, homofobija, demokratija.

Santrauka

Menas už toleranciją siekia atkreipti visuomenės dėmesį į įvairių mažumų marginalizaciją ir į poreikį priešintis šiai diskriminacijai. Lenkijoje yra vykę įvairių socialinių ir meninių akcijų, tokių kaip *Kampanijos prieš homofobiją* organizuota akcija *Let us see* (*Leiskite pamatyti*) ir *Laisvės fondo* projektas *Tiszert for Freedom* (*Marškinėliai už laisvę*); esama kritinio meno, kuris atkreipia dėmesį į Kito tolerancijos ir panašias problemas. Tokių akcijų ir tokio meno suvokimas ir eksponavimas yra problemiškas – jis net susiduria su tam tikra neinstitucine cenzūra. Žmonės ir grupės, susijusios su dešiniosiomis partijomis ir radikaliuoju katalikų bažnyčios sparnu (pavyzdžiui, *Radio Maryja*), siekia uždrausti rodyti tokį meną, todėl daug parodų buvo uždaryta ar atšaukta.

Šiuolaikinis menas dažnai suvokiamas kaip skandalingas ir „laužantis" nacionalines ir krikščioniškas vertybes. Vis dar tebevyksta Dorotos Nieznalskos procesas – ji apkaltinta tuo, kad savo kūriniu *Aistra* (2001) įžeidė religinius jausmus. Tokia situacija grėsminga ir menininkams, ir žiūrovams. Ji skatina apmąstyti Lenkijos demokratijos situaciją. Anot Krzysztofo Pomiano, šiuolaikinis menas ir, beje, ne tik menas, ragina mus suvokti faktą, kad demokratija reikalauja grupių, politikos, idėjų, religijų ir kt. įvairovės, ir kad demokratijai reikia diskusijų.

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Parengta spaudai: 2007 10 08

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Eliminated Man: Shifts of Traumatic Identity in Post-Soviet Lithuanian Art

Key words: politically oriented art, national, identity, abjection, introspection, (self)irony, eloquence of materiality.

As in many countries which experienced undemocratic regimes and a policy of denationalisation, politicisation in 20th century Lithuanian art was not a random phenomenon. At the beginning of the 20th century, the country was being developed within a framework which prohibited its national written and spoken language.[1] It is no wonder that after Lithuania became independent, art and culture were considered its most important national milestones. A model of Lithuanian national identity was created on the basis of the writings, speeches and points of view of famous interwar (1918-1940) Lithuanian thinkers such as Jonas Basanavičius, Antanas Maceina, Stasys Šalkauskas, etc. Its focal points, which embraced a rural/agricultural/nature-romanticising culture (a strong relationship with one's land, traditions, crafts, folklore and religion), and lyricism, were consolidated as the psychological imperative of a Lithuanian:

> "Lyrical are our songs, our fairy tales, our Worrier (perceived in the countryside tradition as a figure of the pensive Christ, saviour and comforter of all the suffering, who grieves for the sins and misery of the world), lyrical is our painting, where Lithuanian landscape prevails, lyrical finally are our novels and dramas. Without seeing the drama in nature we can hardly trace it in a person".[2]

Such attitudes defined the requirements for "Lithuanian" art, which had to be based on a rural culture as its identifying core, and grounded in lyricism – the self-contained parameter of the spiritual expression of a Lithuanian. This cultural trend was demonstrated in the 1930s at international expositions in Paris (1937), Berlin (1939), and New York (1939), where other participating countries presented achievements in industry and technology, while Lithuania, for economic reasons, but primarily as a result of the previously mentioned factors, exhibited

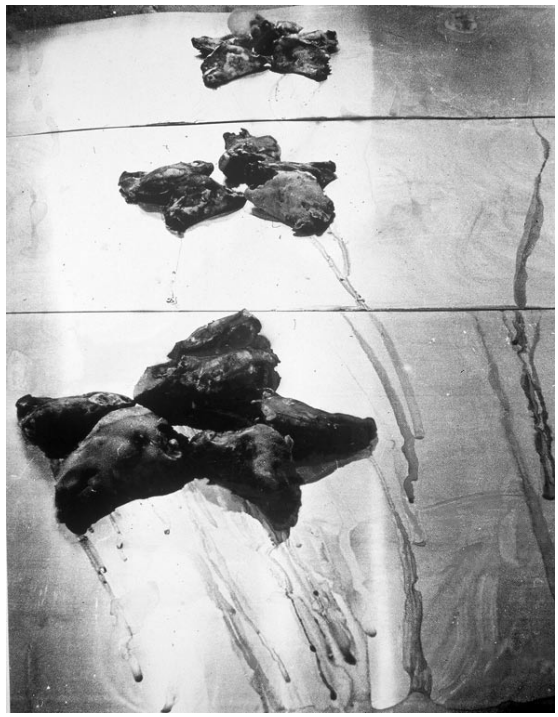

Fig. 1. Česlovas Lukenskas, Overstarring, 1990, detail of the installation. Photo courtesy: the artist

textiles, carpets, ethnic costumes, and other traditionally ornamented wares[3] in its pavilion.

Political discourse in Lithuanian art during the Soviet period (1940-1990) can be divided into three main directions: socialist realism (official art pandering to the regime and its objectives), underground – non-conformist – openly anti-Soviet art (within this framework are included works of art based on the principles of modernism: abstractions, assemblages, etc.), and apolitical art. The latter appeared to be based upon the criteria for art developed during the interwar period – on the lyrical and agricultural implications of Lithuanian nature – but in fact affirmed a passive distance from the political situation, and denied being part of the regime. In this instance, the use of national symbols in paintings and sculptures was not considered dangerous by the Soviet regime because it was based on lyrical, non-political aspects, and strongly reflected the aesthetics of the theory of abstract humanism.

NECESSITY TO DISSOCIATE FROM MORAL AMBIGUITY

In the 1980s, on the eve of recovering its independence, Lithuania gave birth to aggressive, anti-aesthetic, "bloody" art forms. It is no surprise that these kinds of expressions of an identity became a hard-to-swallow particle in the consciousness of spectators educated in the lyricism of apolitical aesthetics. From a number of possible examples, I would like to present a discussion of works by Česlovas Lukenskas – a member of the *Post Ars* group, which became especially active in 1988-1989, in the context of liberation from the Soviet system. The main theme in Lukenskas' installations and performances was a politically oriented quest for identity, and an open and critical discourse on the injured, enframed and unified existence of the individual. One can imagine that in his installation entitled *Moonlight* (1987), in which he employs objects with semantic meanings – an iron frame bed, or a coat, which for several decades was sewn in one fashion only throughout the entire multinational Soviet Union – Lukenskas is speaking about man's dignity being eaten away by moths, the anonymity of the Soviet citizen, even an ephemeral and broken existence. At the end of the 1980s, Lukenskas challenged the lyrical national tradition, hoping by the use of *abjection* (horror, ugliness, reactions of rejection) to achieve a catharthic

Fig. 2. Česlovas Lukenskas, The Eliminated Man, 1989, action. Photo courtesy: the artist

illustration of raped self-value. For example, in his installation *In Memory of the Georgia Tragedy* (1989), devoted to the tragic events in Tbilisi where several dozen people (mostly women and children) were massacred during a peaceful demonstration, the artist constructed an object whose composition is similar to that of a traditional monument: the vertical part, made of stiff solid linen cloth, resembled a grieving shrouded woman, while the horizontal part, made of solidified dirty clothes reminiscent of pig's guts, suggestively presented the absurdity of destruction, death and violence, disgust and untidiness.

At the end of February 1990, the Kaunas public received a shocking slap in the face from the newly established *Post Ars* group. In an exhibition of works by group members (including Aleksas Andriuškevičius, who nailed approximately 100 bread loaves to a wall in his composition entitled *Heater*, and Robertas Antinis, who, in memory of his deceased father, used glass and cotton-wool to create *Epitaph*), Lukenskas demonstrated an installation composed of five stars, called *Overstarring* (following on the star motif prevalent in his works at that time) [fig. 1]. Two of the stars were fixed onto the wall – they were made out of blood coloured cloth strips, organically alive and reminiscent of a torn, but still pulsating heart which has undergone the suppression of the grip of perishing time. The other three were placed on aluminum plates at the spectators' feet – these were made out of fifteen clumsily butchered halves of pigs' heads (a reference to the "network" of the Soviet republics). The composition was intensified not only by the clotting blood, but also by the horrible smell it emitted after a few days.[4] Not surprisingly, the exhibition was seen in an ambiguous light: at first glance, its exhibits appeared to be mocking supposedly sacred things related to "national/true" art: death (a respectful and romanticised relationship with the past), bread (a sacramental relic in an ethnic tradition), and the lyrical/reserved/"decent" fostering of "Lithuanisation".

Starting with his first installations, Lukenskas intuitively used objects of abjection (blood, meat, guts – all that is nauseous and repelling, that evokes disgust of oneself and the environment) to express the idea of rejection, the feeling of not belonging to oneself, as epitomised in images of death. According to the author of abject theory, the French theorist, philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva, the greatest abjection is a corpse:

> "The corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject. It is something rejected, from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object ... It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection, but what disturbs identity, system, order".[5]

Here, in the context of death, rejection, and expulsion, the cycle of performances entitled *The Eliminated Man* almost psychoanalytically investigates the parallels of man/thing, man/rubbish – loss of one's identity. The first performance was held at the end of November 1989. The site – the filthy, littered, stinking shores of the river Nemunas in Kaunas. A naked human body with a white drapery over its loins stretched out among the rubbish, snow, and stones. The hands and legs distorted, as if scattered in a disorderly fashion [fig. 2]. Man as rubbish,

Fig. 3. Česlovas Lukenskas, The Eliminated Man, 2000, live sculpture. Photo courtesy: the artist

Fig. 4. Occupation, 2006, interdisciplinary art project, Kaunas. Photo by Gintaras Česonis

offal, a superfluous thing thrown into a drain pipe. Via this efficiently economic act, the artist was questioning the moral, ecological, social, even religious aspects of life. The naked, lifeless body of a man, his loins wrapped in a white drapery, serves as a reference to the iconographic image of Christ Crucified – his dead body taken off the cross (the work of art exists only as a photo). Through body gestures, the use of nakedness in the severe autumn, the association of a used and useless dead thing, Lukenskas epitomised and revealed publicly the condition of the "statistical unit" mauled by the Soviet system, and at the same time left an iconographic reference to a possible resurrection.

In 2000, Lukenskas, together with a group of students from the Academy of Art, once again made reference to the issue of castaway man/offal. Lukenskas arranged the bodies of young men, whose senseless condition was intensified by their shabby clothes and mauled body postures, as if in a living picture, in a secluded, rigorous, forgotten and dehumanised environment. In these compositions, man is compared to a thing cast away by the society in which he once had a role to play.

The next performance of *The Eliminated Man* took place not in a secluded place, but in the centre of town – in the Unity Square in Kaunas. An environment art symposium called *Subscription for a Sculpture*, held in the autumn of 2000, was charged with finding alternative works for the former sites of sculptures of Soviet leaders (Lenin, and four communists). Lukenskas chose the most original variant of a sculpture. Instead of the temporary, cheap material objects which other artists rather suggestively installed in the place of the former monuments, Lukenskas constructed platforms on which several young men stood patiently as representatives of the former busts of the nation's enlightened persons [fig. 3]. In place of official plaques there were sentimental sentences of a diary type from the life of those standing: "Grandmother warmed up the milk every night", etc. Oddly enough, this project, which had an existential and humanistic idea, was criticised by the same colleagues who had boycotted the first *Post Ars* exhibition a decade previously; they now claimed that "such an artistic expression is inappropriately aiming to preserve the culture and values of our nation".[6]

As one of the sharpest critics of our society, Lukenskas began his cycle *The Eliminated Man* with more subtle hints of sacramental equalisation mixed with ecological implication, and continued his mission by questioning the relationship between the dehumaniser of the environment and the dehumanised environment, until he finally presented parallels of values – self-value of MAN, man and idol (monument) – in an effort to evoke confusion and to enliven thinking about true values.

In his creative practice, Lukenskas criticises the idea of identity which became an idol transfused with the illusion of sublimity. In the final performance (September 2006), held at the Contemporary Art Centre in Vilnius, Lukenskas returned to the beginning of a retrogressive creativity by changing the object of his criticism. The artist chose the cut heads of pigs as a means of revealing the indifference and self-satisfaction of today's bureaucracy (as well as of society in general) – beneath which lies a vital cruelty. Only this time, he put on the head of a carcass, and splashed supposed blood through glass at the spectators.

FROM PAINFUL INTROSPECTION TO A TOUCH OF IRONY

The aim of purification in a society which has unified the true values of the Lithuanian art of the previous decade is reflected not only in an austere but also in a sarcastic way, and is sometimes presented as a caricature or even a cynical jest. An interactive project called *Occupation*, which took place on June 15 (the Day of Occupation), 2006, on the deserted site of a former meat-packing plant in Kaunas, could be considered an example of the latter – a "politically oriented" action. The organisers and participants of the action – representatives from different fields of art and culture: actors, architects, painters, photographers, art critics, students, etc. – saw the action as a contemporary form of entertainment. The unauthorised occupation of the abandoned industrial territory attracted a huge crowd of spectators, even though information about the action went out "secretly" (via e-mail) only on the eve of the event [fig. 4]. The primary visual effects were based on the principles of "socialist realism and vivid image": pools of red-painted mud, and a collective of Kaunas artists seated along the shore, posing as the Kremlin elite waving to a passing "parade". Blindfolded young men, wearing Soviet schoolchildren and pioneer uniforms, and other similar clothing clichés, became "the blind guides" of the parade, and later, on a stage composed of concrete blocks, the sample heroes of socialist realist sculpture and painting. Helicopters flying over the packing plant area showered the gathered crowd with leaflets about the action. Besides the spectacular show-elements, *Occupation* also included many objects of an installation nature: a "Soviet meat" packing-plant sign made out of red carnation petals – a reminder of the long queues for boiled sausages; twenty pairs of black rubber shoes designed for wading through mud, arranged on a "carpet" of white powder; "castles" of sand buckets in memory of Soviet childhood, etc. For the artists mocking Soviet reality, the ruined, deserted, devastated environment of the packing plant became a real site-specific possibility, the suggestive complement of an idea, even its engine.

Fig. 5. Agnė Jonkutė, There is a Reason, 2006, performance. Photo by Gintaras Česonis

The environment especially enhanced the suggestiveness of Agnė Jonkutė's performance *There is a Reason* [fig. 5], which had much more in common with the spirit of Lukenskas' previously presented existential actions, than with the whirlwind *Occupation* show. The construction waste, and the ruined building (reminiscent of Marina Abramović's hill of bones) became the stage for Jonkutė's contemplative tearing of white cloth until blood-red sores formed on her hands. The dehisced hole in the ceiling above her head became a symbolic aureole enhancing the rituality of the meditative action.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the ideological shifts vis-a-vis identity expression in post-Soviet Lithuanian art, and the means chosen to render the desired message. The expression of self-comprehension and identity has changed strategy a number of times during the rather short interval (ca. 1987 to now) of the post-Soviet period. The first shift – *from mournful lyricism towards acute introspection* – is related to the early period. Art manifestos, transfused with public criticism born in the face of a changing political and moral situation, outraged, and were misunderstood by many spectators, who believed that national values as well as nationhood should be strengthened by means of the "right" art categories that had been crystallised during the interwar period.

Artistic actions consciously publicising internal human drama became a discursive support for romantically and modernistically oriented simultaneous art strategies. "Brutish", "impudent" art emphasising the necessity to purify the personality was marked with ambiguity, and in its use of the iconography of death, violence, and the unified experience, drew attention to ecological, political, moral, and value-system issues in society. In speaking about the rebellious Lithuanian art of the 20th century, Gediminas Gasparavičius defines very precisely the mission of the *Post Ars* group of artists, among them Lukenskas:

> "What *Post Ars* usually calls up is the notion of easy provocation, a suggestion, a slap in the face, surprise, sand, grit, other amorphous materials, as if depicting an attitude towards culture, survival, or even art. However, what they are really doing is (1) an education of cultural comprehension, and (2) a self-reflection and deepening of traditional art forms".[7]

The second shift – *from painful introspection to a touch of* (*self*)*irony* – is related to a natural oblivion of painful experiences, and to a pursuance via attractive forms, which is aimed at highlighting historical truths to young people who have not experienced them. Initiators of actions such as *Occupation* utilise the modern principles of capitalism, economics, and management to create a caricature of the post-Soviet system, and thereby not only refer to the paradigms of postmodern logic, but celebrate their insipidness as well. Existential attitudes are changed to reveal the elements that attract larger masses, and – who knows? – perhaps make a bigger influence on society. Politically oriented art becomes a politicking parody: it is not the image of the dead Christ, but a snack of pickled cucumbers that becomes the emphasis of an artistic action.

The aforementioned examples of works by Lukenskas, as well as the notional accents of the *Occupation* action are based on the eloquence of materiality, i.e. they speak to a spectator, or a participant in an action, via the connotative references of used materials or ready-made objects (carcass, bread, carnation, moth-eaten coat, uniform, body, etc.). Paradoxically, works of art based on the eloquence of materiality do not usually remain in a material, they are temporary. They are, however, transformed into "a mental footprint" that penetrates the thinking of spectators and of participants. And not only of participants. As in works of pure conceptualism, the above-discussed installations, performances and actions make a dent in the memory of those who have read about, or seen pictures of them. Works/propositions arise in the memory of the intellectual and artistic society as a kind of relic, whose influence is not based on an enduring material form. In terms of political relevance, today's creative artists eliminate the lyrical, romanticised model of a nation's revival, and use the above-mentioned "attacks" in order to confront the spectator not with a picture or a sculpture, but with a mirror

of a mental identity, within which, depending on the experience of the recipient, different – undoubtedly relevant and vivid – means unfold.

Notes

[1] Russian tsarist officials prohibited Lithuanian writing and printing for 40 years, and introduced Cyrillic – the regulation of Russian writing.
[2] Antanas Maceina, *Raštai*, t. 1 (*Writings*, Vol. 1), Vilnius: Mintis, 1991, p. 477.
[3] This revival of archaic technologies in the mid-20th century was acknowledged and awarded by international experts.
[4] The exhibition was closed after a few days due to public protest, ultimatums and condemnations, and demands by a number of fellow-artists.
[5] Julia Kristeva, 'Approaching Abjection', in: *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 4.
[6] 'Akrobatika ant vulgarybės ašmenų: pokalbis 'Kauno dienos' redakcijoje' ('Acrobatics on the Edge of Vulgarism: Discussion at 'Kauno diena' Editorial Office'), in: *Kauno diena*, 4 November 2000, pp. 11-12.
[7] Gediminas Gasparavičius, *Review: 'Post Ars' Presentation for Lithuanian National Award*, Kaunas Art Institute of Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, 2001. Česlovas Lukenskas' personal archives.

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Išmestas žmogus: trauminės tapatybės slinktys posovietinės Lietuvos mene

Reikšminiai žodžiai: politinės pakraipos menas, tautinis tapatumas, asmens tapatumas, abjekcija, introspekcija, ironija, saviironija, medžiagiškumo estetika.

Santrauka

Straipsnyje, remiantis kauniečio menininko Česlovo Lukensko akcijų ciklu *Išmestas žmogus*, įvykusiu 1991–2000 metais, ir Kauno menininkų bendruomenės akcija *Okupacija* (2006), siekiama atskleisti lietuviškos posovietinės trauminės tapatybės slinkties ypatumus, menininko ir suvokėjo (ne)susikalbėjimo priežastis, būdingiausias priemones, padedančias prabilti apie tapatumą.

Iš pateiktų pavyzdžių paaiškėjo, jog politinis aspektas pastarojo meto mene pasireiškia ne kaip politikavimas, o kaip politikos sąlygotos visuomenės sanklodos ir poveikio asmeniui refleksija. Savimonės ir tapatumo raiška Lietuvos mene posovietiniu periodu keletą kartų keitė strategijas.

Pirmoji slinktis – *nuo melancholiško lyrizmo link aštrios introspekcijos* – sietina su ankstyvuoju posovietiniu periodu. Sąmoningai vidinę žmogaus dramą viešinančios meninės akcijos tapo diskursyvia atsvara to meto romantiškos ir modernistiškos pakraipos meno strategijoms. „Grubusis", „akiplėšiškas" menas, panaudodamas mirties, smurto, unifikuojančios patirties ikonografiją, akcentavo dviprasmybe paženklintos asmenybės apsivalymo būtinybę, kreipė dėmesį į ekologines, politines, moralines, vertybines visuomenės problemas.

Antroji slinktis – *nuo užaštrintos savianalizės link lengvos ironijos ir saviironijos* – sietina su natūralia skausmingų patirčių užmarštimi ir siekiu patraukliomis formomis aktualizuoti istorines tiesas. Tokių akcijų kaip *Okupacija* sumanytojai šaržuoja sovietinę sistemą panaudodami naujuosius kapitalizmo ekonomikos ir vadybos principus, taip ne tik remdamiesi postmodernistinės logikos paradigmomis, bet ir sukurdami jų lėkštumo puotą.

Egzistencialistinės nuostatos pakeičiamos šou elementais, patraukliais daug didesnei masei ir, kas žino, galbūt darančiais didesnę įtaką visuomenei.

Straipsnyje pastebima, jog aptartųjų kūrinių prasminiai akcentai, nepriklausomai nuo išskirtų kategorijų, dažniausiai paremti medžiagiškumo kalba, prabyla į žiūrovą naudojamų medžiagų ar daiktų reikšminėmis nuorodomis. Paradoksalu, bet medžiagiškumo estetika paremti kūriniai dažniausiai neišlieka, tačiau jie, įsiskverbę į žiūrovų ir dalyvių mąstymą, transformuojasi į „mentalinį pėdsaką", liekantį jų atmintyje.

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POST-COMMUNIST CULTURE AND NEW MYTHS

POKOMUNISTINĖ KULTŪRA IR NAUJI MITAI

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Farewell Lenin – Good-Bye Nikolai: Two Attitudes towards Soviet Heritage in Former East Berlin

Key words: Berlin, Soviet monuments, Fall of the Wall, Lenin monument, Nikolai Tomsky, dismantlement, reunification, normalisation, protests, reflective nostalgia, memorial in Treptower Park, Yevgeny Vuchetich, restoration, Ostalgie, Great Fatherland War, Putin-Schroeder Friendship, rubble, ruin.

In Berlin, capital city of the German Democratic Republic, the most striking public monuments were commissioned, executed, and funded by the allied Soviet Union. Most of these monuments survived the spontaneous iconoclastic attacks which accompanied and followed the collapse of the socialist regime, since the target of these assaults was more often the most "hated" of Berlin monuments – the Wall.

In the euphoria during the first period after the fall of the Wall, several small-scale political monuments, including busts and memorial plaques, were arbitrarily removed from barracks, embassies, schools, and public offices. At the same time, certain municipal deputies took on the entire artistic heritage on the east side of the city, and declared their firm intention to wipe all Stalinist monuments off their pedestals.[1] The removal of a Lenin monument, erected on an anonymous square [fig. 1] in 1970 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birthday, was approved in 1991. No-one seemed to care that the 19-metre high granite statue belonged to the protected artistic heritage of Soviet sculptor Nikolai Tomsky, and was included on a list of protected Berlin monuments – and that the entire square had been designed for the monument. Evidently the ideological function of the Lenin monument, conceived as a demonstration of German-Soviet friendship, persisted in its iconoclastic version in the post-socialist era. This was symbolically emphasised by the decision to start the dismantling on November 8, 1991 – on the eve of the second anniversary of the fall of the Wall. In this way, the removal was declared and justified as a continuation of the democratic revolution that had started two years earlier, and as a step toward reunification – or, as it was often declared, toward "normalisation" of the city. In her studies on the concept of nostalgia, Svetlana Boym describes Berlin in the 1990s as "the virtual capital": "The New Berlin is an anti-nostalgic city that displays its pride through the panoramic vistas from the glass cupola of the renovated Reichstag. The key word of New Berlin is *normalisation*, not memoralisation".[2]

The removal of the Lenin monument was approved when the revolutionary impulse of the first days had vanished, and soon became a purely administrative act. It had nothing to do with what Katalin Sinkó defines as "the people's magic and ritual iconoclastic act, perceived and executed as a symbolic destruction of certain taboos".[3] On the contrary, the announced removal of the statue was seen as an extreme example of the vacuity and stubbornness of the city's authorities, and aroused strong protests. A *Political Monuments* initiative, founded in 1990

by art history students in order to preserve GDR monuments from arbitrary political decisions, was now joined by a citizens' *Lenin Monument* initiative, which began to collect signatures against the dismantling. The people who signed were not only historians, architects, journalists, and deputies with the political minority, but also residents from the area, for whom the Lenin monument had become a kind of familiar landmark. Paradoxically, they had realised this only at that fateful moment. Mikhail Yampolsky writes: "By its very nature, a monument is intended to be admired, contemplated and worshipped. In reality, however, monuments rarely become objects of a genuine cult or even of admiration. In urban landscapes, as a rule, their perception is automatised, and they virtually disappear from the field of vision".[4] The German word for monument is composed of two terms: *Denken* (thought) and *Mal* (spot). The *Denkmal* (monument) is "an encounter place in the present, suspended between past and future. It's an encounter place for an individual, but also, and especially, for a community. The monument is a sign physiognomically traced on the city's face, on the landscape's surface, on the common feeling, as an anonymous connective tissue of our experiences".[5] This collective feeling is mostly perceived in times of change – in this case, when the existence of the monument itself was threatened.

Fig. 1. Lenin Monument in the anonymous square in East-Berlin, with some members of the FDJ (Freie Deutsche Jugend – Free German Youth), c. 1970s. Photo courtesy: Rainer Görß, Archive Mnemotop, Berlin

Slavoj Žižek regards the monumental sculptures of socialist realism, oppressive in their inferior view, as a manifest representation of the threatening communist society.[6] With the fall of the regime, these monuments lost their reason for being, and became harmless remnants from a past which was still alive in many people's memories. After interviewing people in post-socialist countries, Laura Mulvey, co-director of the documentary film *Disgraced Monuments* (1992) stated: "An ability to live with monuments to the heroes of communism would now mark an ability to live with the past, however hostile to that past they might be personally".[7] The disappearance of remnants of the socialist past would eliminate the possibility for people, in this case coming from East Germany, to face their past, and to elaborate it. And that would bring about what the Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešič defined as "confiscation of memory".[8]

The Lenin monument was split into 125 parts which were buried in a secret place in order to protect them from souvenir-hungry tourists. In keeping with the new politics of normalisation, Lenin Square was renamed United Nations Square (and unavoidably nicknamed United States Square) [fig. 2]. The gap left by the monument was filled with a fountain – as had happened thirty years earlier at another site which fell into oblivion, when, as a result of Khrushchev's policy of de-Stalinisation, a Stalin monument was removed from the homonymous Allee. The fountain, located on what is now called Karl-Marx-Allee, has in the meantime dried up, its copper plates fallen down – but in contrast to the former Lenin Square, here at least there is a plaque outlining the history of the monument.

The *Lenin Monument* initiative carried out a last solemn ceremony: after its removal, discarded bits of the monument were loaded onto a supermarket cart, carried in procession to the Memorial to Socialists in the Central Cemetery in Berlin Friedrichsfelde, and placed on the graves of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. By nighttime a biblical quotation appeared as graffiti on the former Lenin Square, and Lenin's shadow was outlined on the ground in memory of his murder.[9] All these actions could be regarded as a manifestation of what Boym calls "re-

flective nostalgia": a nostalgia which doesn't evoke a national past and future, but concentrates on individual and cultural memory, and therefore can be ironic, critical, inconclusive, and fragmentary.[10] The "affaire Lenin" prompted the city authorities to set up a Commission for the Treatment of Post-War Political Monuments in East Berlin[11], right after the monument's removal was completed in February 1992. The decision to focus on monuments exclusively from East Berlin implied an a priori acceptance of the entire architectural and artistic heritage of the western part of the city – an implication which had a strong ideological significance. The possibility of removing monuments to a special park, as happened in Moscow, Budapest, and Grūtas Park in Lithuania, had originally been rejected as being a strong contradiction to the necessity of preserving the monuments in their original historic sites. Among the 23 monuments examined by the commission, only four were condemned to removal. A re-transcription of descriptive texts on plaques was approved for the others.[12] But given both the unexpectedly high cost of dismantling the Lenin monument, and fading public interest, most of the monuments remained untouched, and both condemned and approved ones continue standing in a miserable state on their original site to this very day.[13]

The "much ado" about Lenin opened up new perspectives towards a critical and constructive use of political monuments, and in many cases changed the way they were perceived – from monuments to an ideology to monuments to history, from instruments of power to instruments of education.[14]

Construction in Treptower Park of the Memorial to the Fallen Red Army Soldiers began in the summer of 1947, according to a design by a group of Soviet architects and artists who had conceived the ensemble as a "Gesamtkunstwerk". The choice of site was clearly politically motivated. At the beginning of the 20th century the park was a venue for political demonstrations by Berlin workers' movements, and this fact was often used by GDR propaganda to prove the historical continuity between the struggle of the German workers, and the heroic gestures and victory of the Red Army over conservative and fascist forces. Conceived as a funeral ensemble, the memorial in Treptower Park became a Victory Monument not only for the Soviets, but also for part of defeated Germany – the anti-fascist German

Fig. 2. United Nations Square in reunified Berlin, 2006. Photo by the author

Democratic Republic.[15] Yevgeny Vuchetich sculpted a statue of the soldier Nikolai Masalov, who, according to official legend, had saved a three-year old German girl from certain death during the assault on Berlin. For his heroic gesture, Masalov was declared an honorary citizen of East Berlin. The statue was inaugurated as part of Vuchetich's *Sword Trilogy*, which, in concordance with politically correct Cold War geopolitics, included the monumental statues for the Mamaiev Kurgan in Volgograd (former Stalingrad) and for the UN building in New York.

The Soviet memorial in Treptower Park was inaugurated on May 8, 1949, on the fourth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and just few months before the birth of the GDR. It soon became a model for the Soviet war memorials that were built after the mid-1960s, when Leonid Brezhnev declared May 9 the Day of Victory, and inaugurated the cult of the Great Fatherland War.[16]

The main issues regarding the status and preservation of the memorial in Treptower Park were sanctioned in 1965 by the GDR and the Soviet Union in bilateral laws on the conservation of monuments to war victims, and were ratified in 1990 in agreements between a re-unified Germany and the Soviet Union. Since then, Berlin municipality and the Home Office have been designated responsible for the conservation of the whole ensemble, which has undergone complete renovation.[17] The removal of the statue of Nikolai for proper restoration in 2003 [fig. 3 and 4] aroused media interest in the memory of the dismantling of the Lenin monument 12 years earlier.[18] Actually, Lenin was back in Berlin – this time as a film star: *Good-bye Lenin*, a film whose title and focal scene are dedicated to the Lenin monument that was removed in 1991, became the biggest German success of the year, and one of the most successful German movies ever made. It didn't matter that the papier-mâché copy portrayed the communist leader in a completely different position: historical accuracy was certainly not the principal aim of either the film director or producers, all of whom came from West Germany. The film marked and exploited the popularity and commercialisation of the German version of "Nostalgia" for the socialist past – the so-called *Ostalgie* (from the word *Ost* – East). The phenomenon of *Ostalgie* is regarded as being the third period in the process towards German integration after the euphoria of the first years following reunification and the difficulties and disillusionment that arose in the latter half of the 1990s.[19] Some cultural studies experts argue that German integration only effectively started when *Ostalgie* became a product and object of popular culture, and was thereby absorbed by the free market system.[20]

The restored Nikolai statue was re-erected just in time for the 59th anniversary of the end of the War, and for the *Year of Russian Culture in Germany* in 2003/04, followed by the *Year of German Culture in Russia* in 2004/05. After the election of Gerhard Schroeder and Vladimir Putin, as chancellor of Germany, and president of the Russian Federation respectively, relations between the two nations improved not only in economic and political affairs but also in cultural matters, and have been regularly publicised every year since 2001 during a meeting known as the *Petersburg Dialogue*. One of the main issues in the cultural approach refers to what Putin defines as "the historical reconciliation" between Germany and Russia, which was officially sanctioned (not without

Fig. 3. Removal of the Nikolai statue from the Memorial in Treptower Park, 2003. Photo courtesy: Rico Kassmann

internal criticism) by Schroeder's attendance – the first by a German Chancellor – at a Victory Parade in Red Square on the 60th anniversary of the end of the War. According to historians, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Great Fatherland War became even more meaningful in the cultural memory of Russian society: if the Soviet system was doomed to fail, then the victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War was one of the few historical events which people in contemporary Russia and in many post-Soviet states were able to feel confident and proud of.[21] Even now, the memory of the Great Fatherland War remains actual, "as a reference point and 'litmus paper', as the last bastion of a national self-consciousness".[22] Thus in the *Petersburg Dialogue* cultural agreements, both Russian and German authorities have pledged to invest more resources into the preservation of memorials and museums dedicated to the victims of the Second World War, and to promote excursions to these sights.[23]

With a growing economic crisis, Berlin is trying to merchandise (with some good results) its image not only as a multicultural and tolerant city, but also as a key site for commemorating the history of the 20th century, and the battleground of the Cold War.[24] In many tourist guidebooks and excursions, the classic Russian Berlin of the aristocratic intelligentsia who escaped the bolshevik revolution in the 1920s has been replaced by the more modern and exciting Soviet Berlin[25] – and the War Memorial in Treptower Park has become a "must" for tourists, especially Russians.[26]

The attitude regarding the two monuments is symptomatic of the two periods under consideration, and illustrates two different political uses of art in a re-unified Germany. Intended to be another step toward the integration of the two Germanys, the removal of the Lenin monument demonstrated the deep existing internal divisions and the necessity to develop an open dialogue on how to face the cultural heritage of the GDR. During that period, the collapsing Soviet Union was occupied with its own internal crisis, and in keeping with Gorbachev's foreign policy of self-determination, did not interfere. The restoration of Nikolai in Treptower Park was not only the result of a new historical and commercial confidence vis-a-vis Berlin's political monuments, it was a further step in the intensification of Russian-German relations. Under Putin, Russia once again started to play a primary role in foreign policy, and succeeded in finding legitimation, in this case in the Soviet past, and on German territory.

Using Marc Augé's distinction between ruin and rubble, one could define the Nikolai statue a ruin,

Fig. 4. Removal of the Nikolai statue from the Memorial in Treptower Park, 2003. Photo courtesy: Rico Kassmann

and the Lenin monument rubble. In ruins, which are subject to nature and time, we can see and perceive the past, and acknowledge history. Augé calls this their main "educational vocation".[27] Augé also emphasises the function of ruins, restored or not, as tourist attractions – as a "synthesis or compromise" between documenting information and being part of an integral décor. And, as is particularly appropriate in the case of Treptower Park, Augé defines tourism as one of the most spectacular forms of present-day ideology.[28]

The Lenin monument, however, is mere rubble, for its fate was deliberately decided by a destructive human action. There is no function ascribed to rubble, and as Augé points out, the fundamental issue is "how to get rid of it? What to build in its place?".[29] Although the last question appears to remain partially unanswered, what is clear is that the Lenin monument has not had time to age, to become history – to become a ruin.

Notes

[1] See Paul Kaiser, 'Gestürzte Helden, gestützte Welten' ('Fallen Heroes, Supported Worlds'), in: Paul Kaiser, Karl-Siegbert Rehberg (eds.), *Enge und Vielfalt (Narrowness and Diversity)*, Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999, pp. 375-376.

[2] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: Basic Books, 2001, p. 176. On the problematic of "normalisation" in post-socialist Europe, see Bojana Pejić, 'The Dialectics of Normality', in: Bojana Pejić, David Elliott (eds.), *After the Wall – Art and Culture in post-Communist Europe*, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1999, pp. 16-27. In the catalogue of the exhibition, which appeared in Stockholm (1999), Budapest (2000), and Berlin (2000/2001), the head curator points out the necessity to present a "normal-looking exhibition that would by-pass any need for the exotic" (ibid., p. 18) and any (post)ideological mystification. In doing that, she quotes Deimantas Narkevičius: "I am a little bit tired of being a 'Lithuanian artist'. I would like to be just an artist." (Ibid., p. 19.) As one step towards the so-called process of normalisation, Pejić includes the removal of Lenin statues from most of the public spaces in eastern Europe. Interestingly, some years later, in a video called *Once in the 20th Century* (2004), Narkevičius showed the dismantling of the main Lenin monument in Vilnius (like Berlin's Lenin, executed by Tomsky, and also removed in 1991!). Narkevičius edited the video in reverse, however, so that the Lenin monument seems to be erected and acclaimed by the joyous people gathered around it. This work perfectly illustrates the concept of normality as purely a question of relativity, dependant not only on points of view and on intentions, but also on the way (and on the direction) this process is shown to us.

[3] Katalin Sinkó, 'Die Riten der Politik: Denkmalserrichtung, Standbildersturz' ('The Rites of Politics: Monument Erection, Statue Destruction'), in: Péter György (ed.), *Staatskunstwerk: Kultur im Stalinismus* (*State Artwork: Culture under Stalin*), Budapest: Corvina, 1992, p. 71.

[4] Mikhail Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments', in: Nancy Condee (ed.), *Soviet Hieroglyphics: Visual Culture in late 20th Century Russia*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, p. 93.

[5] Andrea Pinotti, 'Dal monumento al non-umento. E ritorno' ('From the Monument to the Non-ument. And Return'), in: Chiara Cappelletto, Simona Chiodo (eds.), *La traccia della memoria, Monumento-rovina-museo* (*Memory Traces, Monument-Ruin-Museum*), Milano: Cuem, 2004, pp. 27-28.

[6] Slavoj Žižek, *Il godimento come fattore politico* (*For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*), Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2001, p. 14.

[7] Laura Mulvey, 'Reflections on Disgraced Monuments', in: Neil Leach (ed.), *Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary Perspective on Central and Eastern Europe*, London: Routledge, 1999, p. 222.

[8] See Dubravka Ugrešič, 'Confiscation of Memory', in: *The Culture of Lies: Anti-Political Essays*, London: Phoenix House, 1998, pp. 217-235.

[9] See Sergiusz Michalski, *Public Monuments, Art in Political Bondage 1870-1997*, London: Reaktion, 1998, p. 150.

[10] See Boym, 2001, pp. 50-51.

[11] See Hubert Staroste, 'Politische Denkmäler in Ost-Berlin im Spannungsfeld von Kulturpolitik und Denkmalpflege' ('Political Monuments in East Berlin between Cultural Policy and Preservation'), in: *Bildersturm in Osteuropa* (*Iconoclasm in Eastern Europe*), *ICOMOS – Hefte des Deutschen Nationalkomitees*, no. 13, 1996, pp. 84-86.

[12] See Kaiser, 1999, p. 377.

[13] On the removal of the Lenin monument and the fate of other Soviet monuments in Berlin see also Matteo Bertelè, 'Die Russen kommen! Fortuna e ricezione del patrimonio iconografico sovietico a Berlino dopo la caduta del Muro' ('Die Russen kommen! Success and Reception of Soviet Iconographic Heritage in Berlin after the Fall of the Wall'), in: Eva Banchelli (ed.), *Taste the East*, Bergamo: Bergamo University Press and Sestante Edizioni, 2006, pp. 165-198.

[14] See Nike Bätzner, 'Helden der Vergangenheit' ('Heroes from the Past'), in: Pawel Choroschilow, Jürgen Harten, Joachim Sartorius, Peter-Klaus Schuster (eds.), *Berlin-Moskau/Moskau-Berlin 1950-2000*, *Chronik* (*Berlin-Moscow/Moscow-Berlin 1950-2000, Chronicle*), Berlin: Nicolai, 2003, p. 192.

[15] On the mystification of the Second World War in the collective and national memory, and the new myth-making in both German states see the catalogue Monica Flacke (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen, Arena der Erinnerungen* (*Myths of Nations, Arena of Memories*), Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum, 2004.

[16] See Peter Fibich, 'Der Triumph des Sieges über den Tod' ('The Triumph of Victory over Death'), in: *Gartenkunst*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 137-152; and Antonina Manina, 'Sowjetische Denkmäler für Moskau und Berlin' ('Soviet Monuments for Moscow and Berlin'), in: Irina Antonowa, Jörn Merkert (eds.), *Berlin-Moskau/Moskau-Berlin 1900-1950*

(*Berlin-Moscow/Moscow-Berlin 1900-1950*), München, Berlin: Prestel, 1995, pp. 475-478.

[17] See Klaus V. Krosigk, 'Die sowjetischen Ehrenmale in Berlin, eine denkmalpflegerische Herausforderung' ('Soviet Memorials in Berlin, a Challenge for Monument Preservation'), in: *Stalinistische Architektur* (*Stalinist Architecture), ICOMOS – Hefte des deutschen Nationalkomitees*, no. 20, 1996, p. 35.

[18] See Stefan Jacobs, 'Good-Bye, Nicolai!', in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 2 February 2003.

[19] See Britta Freis, Marlon Jopp (eds.), *Spuren der deutschen Einheit: Wanderungen zwischen Theorien und Schauplätzen der Transformation* (*Remnants of German Unity: between Theories and Places of Transformation*), Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001, pp. 211-325.

[20] See Paolo Capuzzo, 'Good-Bye Lenin, la nostalgia del comunismo nella Germania riunificata' ('Good-Bye Lenin, Nostalgia for Communism in Reunified Germany'), in: *Studi culturali*, no. 1, 2004, p. 161.

[21] See Peter Jahn, 'Sowjetische Erinnerung an den Krieg' ('Soviet Memory of the War'), in: Burkhard Asmuss, Kay Kufeke, Philipp Springer (eds.), *1945 – Der Krieg und seine Folgen (1945 – The War and its Consequences)*, Bönen: DruckVerlag Kettler, 2005, p. 84. Until 2006, Peter Jahn was director of the Deutsch-Russisches Museum Berlin Karlshorst (German-Russian Museum in Berlin Karlshorst), which has a permanent collection on Russian-German relations in the 20th century; and often special exhibitions, including two on the perception and the reception of the Second World War in Soviet, post-Soviet, and both divided and reunified German memory: *Stalingrad erinnern – Stalingrad im deutschen und im russischen Gedächtnis* (*Remembering Stalingrad – Stalingrad in German and Russian Memory)*, Berlin: Links, 2003; and *Triumph und Trauma: Sowjetische und postsowjetische Erinnerung an den Krieg 1941-1945* (*Triumph and Trauma: Soviet and post-Soviet Memories of the War 1941-1945*), Berlin: Links, 2005.

[22] Natalja Konradova, Anna Ryleva, 'Geroi i zhertvy, Memorialy Velikoj Otechestvennoi' ('Heroes and Victims, Memorials to the Great Fatherland'), in: *Neprikosnovennyj Zapas*, no. 2/3 (40/41), 2005, p. 135.

[23] See: www.petersburgerdialog.de/de

[24] See Hanns Peter Nerger, 'Die Spuren der Teilung fehlen uns heute' ('The Traces of Division are Missing Now'), in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 6 November 2004, p. 10.

[25] On the 'Soviet style' as a new brand of Berlin tourism, design and club aesthetics see Giovanni Moretto, 'Nostalgie e retaggi iconografici sovietici a Berlino dopo la caduta del Muro' ('Nostalgia and Soviet Iconographic Legacy in Berlin since the Fall of the Wall"), in: Banchelli, 2006, pp. 199-223.

[26] See Victoria Syromolotova, 'Vozvrashcheniye v Berlin 60 let spustya' ('Return to Berlin 60 Years Later'), in: *Gorod aeroport*, no. 2, 2005, pp. 16-21.

[27] Marc Augé, *Le temps en ruines* (*Time in Ruins*), Paris: Galilée, 2003, p. 45.

[28] Ibid., p. 69.

[29] Ibid., p. 94.

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Sudie, Lenine – viso gero, Nikolajau: du požiūriai į sovietinį palikimą buvusiame Rytų Berlyne

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Berlynas, sovietiniai paminklai, Berlyno sienos griūtis, Lenino paminklas, Nikolajus Tomskis, išmontavimas, susijungimas, normalizacija, protestai, refleksyvi nostalgija, Treptowerio parko memorialas, Jevgenijus Vučetičius, restauracija, ostalgija, Didysis tėvynės karas, Putino-Schröderio draugystė, nuolaužos, griuvėsiai.

Santrauka

Straipsnyje aptariami ir lyginami du susijungusio Berlyno valdžios požiūriai į du sąjungininkės Sovietų Sąjungos paliktus įspūdingus paminklus Rytų Berlyne: skulptoriaus Nikolajaus Tomskio sukurtą Lenino paminklą ir Jevgenijaus Vučetičiaus sukurtą Nikolajaus Masalovo statulą Treptowerio parko Karo memoriale, skirtame kritusiems Raudonosios Armijos kariams. Žlugus Vokietijos Demokratinės Respublikos režimui, abu paminklai atlaikė spontaniškus ikonoklastų puolimus, nes tų puolimų objektas dažniau buvo Siena – labiausiai „nekenčiamas" Berlyno paminklas.

Miesto valdžia priėmė sprendimą nugriauti Lenino paminklą ir pateikė tai kaip natūralią Berlyno susijungimo ir prieš lygiai dvejus metus, griuvus Berlyno sienai, prasidėjusios revoliucijos pasekmę. Paminklo išmontavimas sukėlė seną neapykantą ir stiprius protestus, kurių metu pasirodė seni šūkiai iš demonstracijų, surengtų kaip tik prieš VDR žlugimą. Bet vaidmenys dabar buvo pakitę.

Nikolajaus statula taip pat buvo nukelta, bet tai įvyko daugiau nei po dešimties metų ir dėl visai kitokių priežasčių: ją reikėjo tinkamai restauruoti. Statulos, o kartu ir viso Treptowerio parko ansamblio restauravimas, buvo ne tik naujo geopolitinio etapo Vokietijoje (Schröderio-Putino draugystė), bet ir naujų istorinių, komercinių ir ekonominių sąlygų rezultatas. Vokiečių nostalgija socialistinei praeičiai, vadinamoji „ostalgija“, pastaraisiais metais tapo dideliu verslu. Miesto valdžia mėgina išsaugoti netolimos miesto praeities įrodymus ne tik kaip istorines vietas, bet ir kaip turistinius objektus.

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Transnational Mythmaking in Post-Soviet Europe: Cold War and EU Monuments in a Polish–German "Divided City"

Key words: monuments, borders, idea flow, public spaces.

INTRODUCTION

Because of their unique location spanning the Polish-German border, the divided cities[1] of Frankfurt(Oder), Germany and Słubice, Poland are a site of particular symbolic importance for the legitimisation of governing projects aimed at the creation of new national and international spaces. Following Fredrik Barth's[2] argument that identifying difference is most important at the boundaries of groups, this border location imparts Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice with greater symbolic value in relation to national and international governing bodies than the cities would otherwise be expected to have. In order to claim the local space as "Polish", "German", or "European", outside actors, such as national governments or the European Union (EU), have utilised public monuments as a way of "inventing tradition".[3] However, because border regions are also typically subject to both centripetal and centrifugal forces – simultaneously pulling individuals toward the national centre and toward the local trans-border region – these efforts ultimately had little effect on the attitudes of the local population, and instead reflected the centre's goals for the symbolic utilisation of the periphery.

The contested nature of the post-World War II Polish-German border directly contributed to border regimes that reified national difference as a way to consolidate and legitimise power over the new territorial arrangements.[4] At the same time, as the communist governments in Poland and East Germany worked to systematise new forms of governance, both Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice witnessed extensive socialisation campaigns. Słubice also experienced a Polonisation campaign, and after the collapse of the communist regime in 1989, an additional decommunisation campaign. Finally, as Poland prepared to join the EU in the 1990s, Słubice and Frankfurt(Oder) became the subject of EU efforts to de-emphasise and integrate its future internal borders. Even as geopolitical relationships in Central Europe changed, Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice were continuously considered to have high symbolic value due to their trans-border location, as is evidenced by their frequent use as venues for official summits during both the socialist and post-socialist periods.[5]

Public space monuments in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice are a reflection of these social contexts. Each of the monuments examined in this essay is not only a visual record of how changes in high politics and public policy were symbolised in the periphery by the centre, but also documents how traditions "invented" by the centre were adapted and modified by the periphery to fit the requirements of local politics and situations. We have therefore chosen to analyse the six monuments we present not from an aesthetic or compositional standpoint, but rather as markers in a larger socio-political symbolic system. We arrange the monuments in three cross-border pairs, with each pair representing a different type and

phase of memorialisation. The first pair are war memorials built immediately following World War II, the second pair are monuments to great figures of socialism built as part of the socialist reconstruction of the two cities, and the third pair are "European" monuments built in the 1990s as part of the EU's integration and expansion initiatives.

FRATERNAL STRUGGLE, SŁUBICE

Designed by Mieczysław Krajnik in 1949, the *Braterska Walka* (Fraternal Struggle) monument presents a column topped by two soldiers – one Soviet and one Polish – storming the west.[6] It is similar to other *Braterstwo Broni* (Fraternity in Arms) monuments throughout western Poland[7], and was meant to memorialise the comradeship and fraternity of the Polish and Soviet armies. The monument is located in *Plac Bohaterów* (Heroes' Square) in Słubice, and replaced the graves of 32 Soviet soldiers, which were moved to other cemeteries. Its original Polish inscription read *Nasze życie ofiarowaliśmy wspólnie. Niech nasza więź pozostanie na zawsze* (We offered our lives together. Let our tie stay forever), but this was later replaced with one dedicated to all World War II victims: *Pamięci poległym w czasie II wojny światowej* (To the Memory of the Dead of World War II).[8] The new monument received a more or less neutral response from the local population, perhaps because Słubice's post-war population was comprised of many individuals, such as former soldiers and persons resettled from Poland's eastern territories, for whom contact with the Soviet military was a normal and accepted occurrence. The monument remained under the care of the Polish military garrison stationed in Słubice, and in the 1980s was restored at the initiative of local party activists.

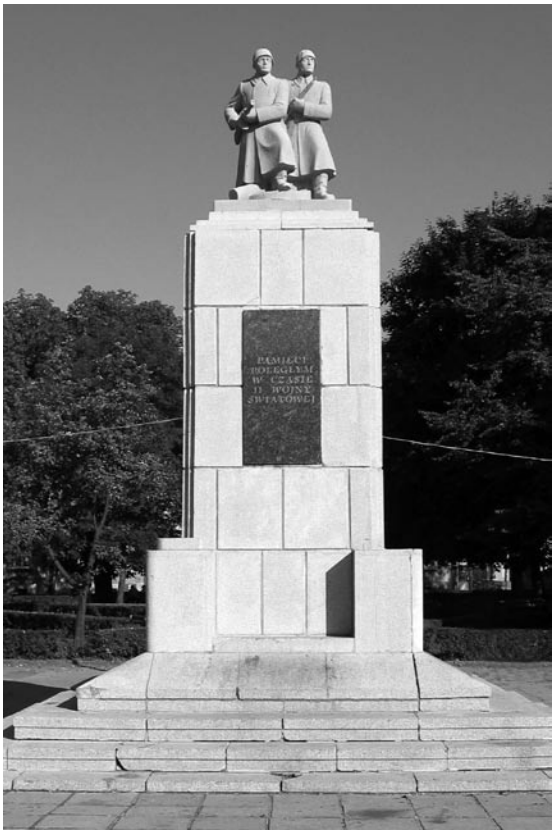

Fig. 1. Mieczysław Krajnik, Braterska Walka (Fraternal Struggle), 1949, sandstone, concrete, H - 900 cm. Photo by the authors

THE SOVIET CENOTAPH, FRANKFURT(ODER)

Constructed in 1947 and designed by Nikolai Tomski, the *Soviet Cenotaph* is located on the former military parade ground in Frankfurt(Oder), and replaced a 1925 monument dedicated to the soldiers of Frederick Wilhelm II's *Leibgrenadierregiments* who died during World War I. The original monument featured a soldier on the pedestal looking eastwards, ready to stand and fight[9], while the Soviet monument presents a soldier in a sentry-like stance facing the west.

Placed under the care of the Soviet garrison in Frankfurt(Oder), the *Soviet Cenotaph* combines a monument with a cemetery, wherein approximately 1,450 soldiers are buried. The dedication reads: *To the eternal remembrance of the Soviet Army Combatants who gave their lives for the Freedom and Independence of the USSR*, and is written only in Russian. An inscription on the reverse side – also in Russian – celebrates the Soviet victory: *Our cause remains just – We have triumphed*. Cemetery markers and an eternal flame (now extinguished) were added in 1975, and the Russian inscription was supplemented with the German *Ihr Vermächtnis, Unsere Verpflichtung* (Your Legacy, Our Obligation).[10] Concurrent with the Soviet army's withdrawal from Germany in 1994, the monument was transferred to the town of Frankfurt(Oder) in a ceremony witnessed by approximately 500 guests.[11] Since then,

the *Soviet Cenotaph* was climbed by members of the Frankfurt(Oder) Alpine club in 1997[12], defaced with a swastika in 2000[13], and restored in 2001-2003.[14]

LENIN MONUMENT / SIBERIAN DEPORTATIONS MONUMENT, SŁUBICE

Constructed in the 1970s as a new venue for celebrating communist holidays in Słubice, Lenin Square was located in a green area surrounded by post-war blocks of socialist-style flats. The monument was an initiative of the local party committee to underscore the special role played by Słubice in Polish communist propaganda, and to commemorate one of Lenin's anniversaries. It initially consisted of a concrete pedestal and bust, but was soon replaced in bronze. The unveiling of the monument was a regional and international celebration, and included guests from East Germany and the Soviet Union. The bust was subsequently vandalised several times, and painted red in a politically motivated act in the 1980s. It was then removed and buried in the yard of the town hall, where it was eventually unearthed by renovation workers. In the end, the entire *Lenin Monument* was replaced in 1990 by a monument commemorating Poles deported to Siberia in 1940.

Fig. 2. Nikolai Tomski, Soviet Cenotaph, 1947, sandstone, H - 800 cm. Photo by the authors

The *Siberian Deportations Monument* was an initiative of the local Siberian Deportees Association in Słubice, and consists of two steles salvaged from the *Lenin Monument*. The first bears a plaque with an inscription reading: *50th Anniversary of the Deportation of Poles to Siberia*, and the second holds a small bust of Christ, which was taken to Siberia in 1940 by one of the association members. In 2000, the square was officially renamed *Plac Sybiraków* (Siberian Deportees Square), in an initiative originating primarily with the association leaders. The *Siberian Deportations Monument* is therefore the only truly local monument in our sample.

MARX MONUMENT

Created in 1968 by Arndt Wittig and Manfred Vogler to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx, the *Marx Monument* is located in the north part of the central district of Frankfurt(Oder), in a green area that was intended to be surrounded by new blocks of flats. The monument consists of a concrete pedestal and a bronze bust – a copy of a work by Fritz Cremer – with an inscription that reads: *Die Theorie wurde zur materiallen Gewalt* (Theory Became Real Power).[15] The *Marx Monument* was a contribution to East Germany's 20th anniversary celebration and was meant to both commemorate Marx and to demonstrate the new spirit of Marxism.[16] While both monuments were designed to add an ideological component to new housing developments, unlike its Lenin counterpart in Słubice, the *Marx Monument* did not produce a political reaction from Frankfurt(Oder)'s populace – perhaps because of Marx's status as a German political thinker.

INTEGRACJA, SŁUBICE

Located in the plaza of the Collegium Polonicum[17] library, the *Integracja* (Integration) monument was the winner of a design competition commissioned by the Słubice city government for a monument to symbolise the border. It was installed in 2002 by Katarzyna Solima as part of a series of integration efforts and Polish-German cross-border projects that marked a high point in cooperation between the two

cities. The monument consists of two granite blocks stacked in a column and "sewn" together with rope. A stainless steel needle is stuck through one corner of the top block, while another corner of the block is "patched" with stitches. According to its author – who was unfamiliar with the local situation – the monument was designed to symbolise cooperation between Poland and Germany within an integrating Europe. Local inhabitants, however, tend to see it as symbolising cooperation between divided cities, and call to mind two Polish sayings: *Coś jest szyte grubymi nićmi* (literally: something sewn with thick thread = something that is untrue), and *Coś się nie trzyma kupy* (literally: something that doesn't stay together = something that is senseless or untrue). Given that one of the most common complaints regarding "integration" projects in Słubice is that they are manufactured by local administrations to gain access to EU funds and do not reflect a social reality of increased cooperation, these interpretations – quite opposite to the author's intentions – perhaps more accurately reflect the local perception of integration. In this respect, the monument might be a more apt representation of the failed hope of integration in Słubice and Frankfurt(Oder), rather than one of a successfully integrating Europe.

EUROPASKULPTUR SYMBIOZA, FRANKFURT(ODER)

Created in 2004 by the West Berlin artist Udo Cordes as part of a European project funded by the German federal budget, *EuropaSkulptur* consists of two geometric elements rising separately – but still connected and close together – from the same origin, and is intended to symbolise the integrating states of the EU.[18] These elements are set on a pedestal with four plaques, three of which are inscribed with text by Romano Prodi, Guenter Verheugen, and Gesine Schwan on the future of European integration, and a fourth which contains information on the project. The geometric portion of the sculpture was installed in 1996 in front of a factory in Frankfurt(Oder), and was only later moved to its current location in European Square in front of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt(Oder), as part of "Europe Day" celebrations on May 8, 2004. This fact

Fig. 3. Pomnik Sybiraków (Siberian Deportations Monument), 1990, steles salvaged from the Lenin Monument, concrete pedestal, metal plaques, H - 200 cm. Photo by the authors

was left unremarked during the celebrations[19], and the university and the city viewed the installation of the monument primarily in pragmatic terms, hoping that it would not only add "European symbolism" to the European University, but also produce a media-relevant event.

ANALYSIS: INVENTING TRADITIONS THROUGH PUBLIC SYMBOLS

The monuments in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice can be understood as a material representation of an ongoing process of inventing and reinventing traditions. "Invented traditions" have three tasks: to create a feeling of belonging, to legitimise the status of institutions or relations of authority, and to socialise behaviour and the transfer of values.[20] Furthermore, we should expect the frequency of the invented tradition to increase when "a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which the "old" traditions had been designed".[21] Thus, in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice, we observe that there have been two main periods of monument building: the first immediately following World War II, and the second immediately following the collapse of communist governments in 1989. In several cases, the new monuments quite literally destroyed and replaced the monuments of the old order.

The monuments in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice also facilitate the flow of ideas between the centre

Fig. 4. Arndt Wittig, Manfred Vogler, Marx Monument, 1968, concrete pedestal and a bronze bust, H - 500 cm, H - 200 cm. Photo by the authors

and the periphery by functioning as public symbols. Symbols have ". . . a specific function. A symbol hints at something which does not exist as a thing or matter immediately perceptible to the senses… In other words, a symbol tells about "some other reality" and is "the crystallisation of a linguistic description"."[22] In this way, materially existing objects are useful to embody and present abstract ideas, such as international socialism or EU integration, as well as to strengthen a populace in its convictions regarding these ideas. At the same time, "... the power of symbols and symbolic power do not lie in symbols and symbolic systems as such; power is in the hands of those social forces and groups who authorise these symbols, whose symbols they are, whose self-identity is expressed in these symbols".[23] Because they must be specifically authorised by those who hold power, public space monuments operate especially in this manner, and as embodied symbols, physically represent a system of power relations. In the case of Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice, the power relations represented are principally those between the centre and the periphery: many of the monuments in this analysis would not even exist if a centre were not involved in an active project of attempting to assert and legitimise its power over the periphery.

Nevertheless, there are significant differences in the absorption of external patterns in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice during different periods of their post-World War II history, which in turn correspond to different centre-periphery relations. Ideas originating from the centre are often transformed in the periphery, and gain new meanings and interpretations resulting from specific local conditions. These conditions influence not only the local perception of a doctrine, but also the doctrine itself. Three types of modifications are commonly observed: (1) *shortening* – the selective choice of ideas that modify the original content, (2) *completion* – the supplementation of original content with elements adjusted to meet the needs of local conditions, and (3) *imitation* – the repetition of a centre doctrine without real understanding in the periphery.[24] In fulfilling the three tasks of invented traditions, the monuments in Frankfurt(Oder) and Słubice exhibit each of these modifications, as shown in Table 1.

Fig. 5. Katarzyna Solima, Integracja (Integration), 2002, granite, H - 300 cm. Photo by the authors

Table 1. Doctrine modification vs. invented tradition tasks

	Imitation (Communist Monuments)	Completion (Modified Communist Monuments)	Shortening (EU Monuments)
Belonging	Soviet sphere of influence	Reassertion of national identity	United Europe -> trans-border European region
Legitimisation	Soviet presence, closed or highly regulated borders	Autonomy, relaxation of borders	Independence, open borders -> functional interdependence
Values	Peace, egalitarianism, international socialism.	Self-determination, independence	Peace, equality, international markets, integration -> financial pragmatism

Source: Authors' concept

Above all, communist monuments in Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice demonstrate the process of imitation. They were created by local units of the communist party, and directly inspired by the centres. These monuments follow an aesthetic typical of socialist realism, and they are virtually indistinguishable from monuments in other locations. The symbolic meaning of these monuments remains constant between the centre and the periphery – specifically, socialist unity based on wartime sacrifice resulting in peace, and a legitimate continued Soviet military presence and political influence.

It is also interesting to observe the difference between the *Fraternal Struggle* monument in Słubice and the *Soviet Cenotaph* in Frankfurt(Oder). The Słubice monument is inclusive of both Polish and Soviet soldiers and was inscribed in the national language, while its analogue in Frankfurt celebrates only the victors and was inscribed in Russian, a dissimilarity that demonstrates the different positions of post-war Poland and East Germany vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. As an "ally," it was important for public symbols in Poland to justify and legitimise Soviet influence by emphasising Poland's inclusion in the socialist project. As a defeated nation, there was no such imperative in Germany, where monuments could be raw symbols of Soviet power, as is evidenced by the original inscription: *Our cause remains just – We have triumphed.*

Perhaps predictably, once the geopolitical situation changed, these monuments were soon modified to suggest new meanings. In both cases, these changes represent a reassertion of national self-determination. On the *Fraternal Struggle* monument, the new inscription dissociated Poland from the Soviet Union, symbolically breaking the original inscription's "tie". The change of the dedication also shifted the focus of the monument from the victors to the victims, an emphasis that perhaps has more resonance in the national imagery of post-war Poland. Likewise, the addition of a German inscription on the *Soviet Cenotaph* not only allowed the German populace of Frankfurt(Oder) to participate in the monument's symbolism, it also softened the victorious tone of the original by transforming a past-oriented "triumph" into a future-oriented legacy.

In contrast to the Soviet-era monuments, the European monuments demonstrate the process of adaptation. Given a loose framework of "European values" to work with, both shortening and completion were utilised in the 1990s to create a trans-border regional context of "Europeaness". Robert Parkin[25] sees regionalisation as a bureaucratic instrument, in which trans-border regions might be useful for financial purposes such as acquiring EU subsidies. This leads to the need for legitimisation, which requires a local identity to be established, even if this identity is more a matter of pragmatism than of actual local feeling[26], and follows a functional understanding of the development of Euroregions[27] in which the Europeanisation process leads to trans-border cooperation as an alternative to nation states.[28] At the same time, unlike within the Soviet context, national and European identities in divided cities on the Polish-German border do not necessarily collide, they can also complement one another.[29]

As a result, the post-communist monuments were designed to confirm Słubice's belonging to a "European" space, and Frankfurt(Oder)'s openness to "European" projects. In both cases, the monuments assert that the two cities are part of a common transnational space (and they are both related to the cities' universities, two flagship programs of EU integration). However, though both *Integracja* and *EuropaSkulptur* are designed to emphasise cross-border connectedness, and are part of broader EU initiatives, they are also idiomatic expressions of this idea, adapted to local needs, reflecting local decisions of content and aesthetics, and sometimes exhibiting pure pragmatism and opportunism on the part of their sponsors and authors.

Finally, with the exception of the *Siberian Deportations Monument*, the monuments we have examined are also representative of imperial rather than national projects, that is, they are aimed at representing and legitimising international governing projects (the Soviet Union and the EU). The location of the two cities in a contested border space made them especially important places for expressing a symbolism that privileges the needs of these international projects more than local needs and values. The choice of sites for the monuments is critical in this regard, and reveals tensions between local spaces and international and national agendas. The Soviet period monuments are located in prominent positions at the centres of newly constructed public spaces, with the aim of mobilising local inhabitants around rebuilt city centres and legitimising a new geopolitical situation, as well as strengthening the ideological foundations of the state. In contrast, the European monuments are located at the edges and gates of territories, and near the universities, and are addressed to local inhabitants and visitors as a way to demonstrate openness and cooperation. Modifications to the monuments also demonstrate this tension, as they work to reclaim international monuments as local or national symbols. For example, the *Soviet Soldiers* monument replaced a memorial to soldiers of the *Kaisergrenadiers* (a replacement of national with international), while the *Siberian Deportations Monument* replaced the *Lenin Monument* (a replacement of international with local).

It is additionally instructive that most of the monuments failed to create any strong emotions among the citizens. They were usually treated as an element of the surrounding environment or cityscape rather than objects of particular focus. This follows a certain logic given their broader geopolitical context. Like the Soviet Union before it, the EU has set about creating an international space subject to specific governing principles. Although ideologically dissimilar, both the EU and the Soviet Union developed a vocabulary of symbols with which to define and structure these international spaces. Thus in the case of an individual monument in the periphery, it is perhaps less important for that monument to make a great political impact than it is for it to help structure and reinforce a larger international "socialist" or international "European" space. It is therefore not a testament to the failure of these monuments, but rather to their success, that, as political objects, only one of them (the *Lenin Monument*) elicited a

Fig. 6. Udo Cordes, EuropaSkulptur Symbioza (European Sculpture Symbiosis), 2004, metal, H - 800 cm. Photo by the authors

resistive response. The others were so much part of a normalised political-spatial landscape that they were perceived as benign. This demonstrates the key theme common to all of the monuments in all of the time periods we have examined here: as geopolitical needs change, so do the symbolic vocabularies that are deployed to structure spaces. The "traditions" that earlier governing bodies sought to invent must be modified or created anew in order to fit these changing needs. The monuments in Słubice and Frankfurt(Oder) are thus a physical example and record of how these evolving needs have been deployed at the level of local symbolism and utilisation of public space, and of how an environment can be shaped to demonstrate a broader ideological position.

Notes

[1] Divided Cities on the Polish-German border were created in 1945, when the shift of the border to the Oder and Neisse rivers separated several German cities into Polish and German "twins".

[2] Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1969.

[3] Eric Hobsbawn and Terrance Ranger (eds.), *The Inventions of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

[4] Sheldon Anderson, *A Cold War in the Soviet Bloc: Polish-East German Relations 1945-1962*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001; Helga Schulz, 'Schwierige Nachbarschaft on Oder und Neiße – Trudne sàsiedztwo nad Odrà i Nysà' ('Difficult Neighbourhood on the Oder and Neisse Rivers'), in: Barbara Breysach, Arkadiusz Paszek, and Alexander Tölle (eds.), *Grenze-Granica (Border)*, Berlin: Logos Verlag, 2003.

[5] For example, in 1972 prime ministers Piotr Jaroszewicz and Willy Stoph, and first secretaries Edward Gierek and Erich Honecker met in the two cities for a Polish/German summit (Jerzy Oleksiński, 'Wielki dzień Słubic' ('The Great Day of Słubice', in: *Echo Słubickie*, July 1972), and in 2004 EU enlargement celebrations held on the border bridge featured ministers for foreign affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Joschka Fischer.

[6] Sebastian Preiss, Uta Hengelhaupt, Sylwia Groblica et al*, Słubice: Historia-Topografia-Rozwój (Słubice: History-Topography-Development)*, Słubice: Collegium Polonicum, 2003, p. 121.

[7] Edward Mrozowski, 'W pamiętną rocznicę' ('In Memorable Anniversary'), in: *Echo Słubickie*, May 1975; Jan Dzikowski, 'Szli na Zachód osadnicy' ('The Settlers Went West'), in: *Echo Słubickie*, May 1975; Eugeniusz Jakubaszek, *Miejsca Pamięci Narodowej w Województwie Zielonogórskim (National Memory Places in Zielona Góra Voivodship),* Zielona Góra: Lubuskie Towarzystwo Kultury, 1972.

[8] Preiss, Hengelhaupt, Groblica et al, 2003, p. 121.

[9] Monika Kilian and Ulrich Knefelkampf (eds.), *Sieben Spaziergänge durch die Stadtgeschichte (Seven Walks through the Town's History),* Berlin: Scrīpvaz, 2003, p. 44.

[10] Sybille Gramlich, *Stadt Frankfurt(Oder) (The City of Frankfurt(Oder)),* Worms am Rhein: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2002, pp. 115-116.

[11] 'Ehrenmal an die Stadt übergeben' ('Memorial Transferred to the Town'), in: *Märkische Oderzeitung*, 9 May 1994.

[12] 'Bergsteiger am Ehrenmal' ('Rock-Climbers on the Memorial'), in: *Märkische Oderzeitung*, 28 November 1997.

[13] 'Sowietische Ehrenmale geschadet' ('Soviet Memorial Damaged'), in: *Berliner Morgenpost*, 10 May 2000.

[14] Anja Sokolow, 'Bis 2003 Sanierung des Sowjetischen Ehrenmals auf dem Anger' ('By 2003, Renovation of the Soviet Memorial in Anger Square'), in: *Märkische Oderzeitung*, 30 May 2001.

[15] Kilian and Knefelkampf, 2003, p. 62.

[16] Manfred Folger, 'Monumenten der Klarheit und Zuversicht' ('Monuments of Transparency and Trust'), in: *Neuer Tag,* 3 May 1968.

[17] Collegium Pollonicum is a division of Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, and is part of a major cooperative effort between Adam Mickiewicz University and European University Viadrina, Frankfurt(Oder).

[18] Udo G. Cordes, *Goetzen. Ich und die Anderen (Goetzen. Me and the Others)*, Frankfurt(Oder)/Słubice: FFO Agentur, 2004.

[19] Jana Schwedler, 'Kulturstandort Frankfurt(Oder)' ('Culture Place Frankfurt(Oder)'), in: *Union*, 8 May 2004.

[20] Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983, p. 9.

[21] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[22] Kyösti Pekonen, 'Centre-Periphery Relations in the Cycles of Political Symbols: the Problem of Modernity', in: Jukka Kanerva and Kari Palonen (eds.), *Transformation of Ideas on a Periphery*, Helsinki: The Finnish Political Science Association, 1987, p. 41.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Jukka Kanerva and Kari Palonen (eds.), *Transformation of Ideas on a Periphery*, Helsinki: The Finnish Political Science Association, 1987, p. 9.

[25] Robert Parkin, *Regional Identities and Alliances in an Integrating Europe: A Challenge to the Nation State?,* Oxford: University of Oxford, 1999, p. 5.

[26] Ibid., p.13.

[27] Olivier Thomas Kramsch, *The Para-Site of Governance: Trans-border Regionalism in the Euroregions*, University Nijmegen Working Papers, no. 1, 2003, p. 4.

[28] Parkin, 1999, p. 1.

[29] Cf. Ulrike H. Meinhof and Dariusz Galasinski, *Border Discourse: Changing Identities. Changing Nations, Changing Stories in European Border Communities,* A 'state-of-the-art' report in collaboration with the European Border Identities consortium, 2000, p. 1.

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Transnacionalinė mitų kūryba posovietinėje Europoje: Šaltasis karas ir ES paminklai lenkų ir vokiečių „padalintame mieste“

Reikšminiai žodžiai: paminklai, sienos, idėjų srautas, viešosios erdvės.

Santrauka

Remiantis paminklų „padalintuose miestuose“ – Slubicėje (Lenkija) ir Frankfurte (Oderis, Vokietija) – tyrimu, straipsnyje nagrinėjamos kintančios reikšmės ir viešųjų erdvių simbolikos panaudojimo būdai Vokietijos-Lenkijos pasienyje. Realizuojant nacionalinius ir transnacionalinius mitų kūrimo projektus, ginčijamoje erdvėje esantys miestai Slubicė ir Frankfurtas (Oderis) turėjo ypatingą simbolinę galią ne tik sovietų kontroliuojamoje Rytų Europoje, bet ir į rytus besiplečiančioje Europos Sąjungoje. Taigi šiame straipsnyje tiriamas politinis viešosios erdvės paminklų panaudojimas dviejuose miestuose dviem prieštaringais laikotarpiais: sovietiniais Šaltojo karo metais ir po 1989-ųjų, integruojantis į besiplečiančią ES. Abiejuose miestuose paminklais siekta reprezentuoti politinius projektus, nors tų projektų tikslai ir simbolika labai skiriasi. Tačiau tie paminklai privalėjo tenkinti „centro“, o ne vietos gyventojų poreikius ir reprezentuoti tarptautinio solidarumo ir draugystės idėją. Pastebėjus, kad nors ir Slubicėje, ir Frankfurte (Oderis) trūksta vietinių paminklų statymo iniciatyvų, o toliau dygsta nauji paminklai, skirti integracijai į Europą, šiame straipsnyje keliama hipotezė, kad ES integracijos laikotarpiu mitų kūrimo metodas išlieka toks pat kaip ir Šaltojo karo metais. Jam būdinga tai, kad transnacionalinės institucijos mėgina panaudoti simbolinę Slubicės ir Frankfurto (Oderio) vietą pasienio zonoje kaip platformą plačiai politinei argumentacijai.

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Manifestations of Politics in Lithuanian Architecture: Examples of Architectural Dehumanisation during the Transition from a Soviet to a Post-Soviet Society

Key words: Soviet architectural heritage, ideology, abandoned places, functional typology.

During practically the entire development of Lithuanian architecture in the 20th century, one can observe open architectural politicisation as being one of the most important ideological ways of giving meaning to space. Themes of national romanticism that were exploited during the interwar period were followed by a feverish attempt during the Soviet period to create a "socialist city", and replaced by subsequent variants enabling the search for a national identity within the "union of nations". These tendencies may be associated both with the peripeteia of politics, and the principled disposition – especially with reference to the modern movement – of architecture in the 20th century, or to open politicisation. At the turn of the 21st century, however, one finds an inclination to erase the more distinguishing ideological boundaries. In architecture, the direct and unambiguous examples that give a political sense to space, and that are demonstrated in an explicit manner, are replaced by multifaceted phenomena manifesting themselves via secondary (latent) subsequences. The urbanistic texture of a city/town is transformed by encompassing ideas and interests that are obviously even contradictory in the sense of their ideological meaning.

One of the controversial links between ideology and a spatial environment is manifest in an assessment of the architecture developed in the Soviet period, and its destiny in the post-Soviet world. Although the theme of this article is related to this issue, I will focus on the anti-ideological nature of the architecture that influenced the corrosion of ideology-based spaces created during the Soviet period in a post-Soviet city/town, rather than on the architectural ideology of the Soviet period.

This topic also features an important practical aspect. The major part of the heritage of the latter half of the 20th century is in danger of disappearing entirely, thus leaving an empty space between historical and modern architecture. In most cases, post-Soviet society has failed to harmoniously adapt the heritage of the past era. A typical phenomenon happens when an urban structure developed several decades ago exists in parallel with a new one, for the spaces they occupy hardly have the appearance of interconnecting vessels. Places that had great social and symbolic impact in the past gradually lose their meaning, and instead of being adapted to a new city/

Fig. 1. A detail of semi-desolated housing in Didžiasalis borough. Photo by the author, 2006

Fig. 2. Uncompleted hotel in Kaunas. Photo by the author, 2004

town, also lose their physical appearance. According to Arnold Toynbee, what we are witnessing is the *defacement* process of a modern city/town.[1] Part of the problem in this case undoubtedly lies in the quality of construction and changes in ownership, but it is also related to the deep discrepancy between the two eras. In this case, disharmony regarding urban development is the direct outcome of political transformations.

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND PUBLIC SPACES

By forming a specific, functional-spatial structure out of a built environment, any political system seeks to give itself meaning, to encourage its own prosperity via architectural and urbanistic tools. In order to reveal the particular form of political impact on a given space, we shall first define the manner of investigating the spread of this aspect. According to Margaret Kohn, local social meaning and sense should be perceived not only via text – because, as Henri Lefebvre emphasises, "the semiological categories of message, code, reading and writing can only capture part of the meaning of space" – but also via three interconnected levels of analysis. Space may be analysed "as a dimension of experience and perception (phenomenal); as a mechanism for facilitating interaction and forging collective identities (social); and as repositories of condensed meanings (symbolic)".[2] An analysis of public spaces during the Soviet period permits one to generalise that the (political) meaning is, in this case, doubly accentuated: directly – as a symbolic and multilayered structure of content (especially visible in memorial monuments and squares, representational objects, etc.[3]), and indirectly – as spaces whose main goal is the construction of *social welfare* places. If in the first case objects in the urban structure are symbolic and openly textual, then the supposed social welfare space is related, both in its formal shape and spatially modelled form, to everyday life and behaviour.

In the post-Soviet period, a large portion of the easily replaceable symbols of the previous regime were removed, and representational edifices were tailored – after the adaptation of one or another direct political message – to represent another political system. Socially isolated, these are the forms of daily "constructed happiness"[4] that became the most damaged urban spaces. There is a kind of paradox here. The prevailing opinion regarding architecture from the Soviet period is that only socialist realism architecture can be treated as Soviet architecture – thereby giving it a certain political shading. The most telling examples of this are the high-rise buildings from the Stalin period. Everything that was created later was a "natural prolongation of Lithuanian architecture".[5] However, once the political situation changed, there was a notable erosion primarily in the modernistic city/town. Hence, those spaces that initially seemed politically uncharged must be reconsidered via the prism of a change in the political situation. One can consider these buildings as being one of the most important manifestations of latent politicisation. Thus, the individual functional type of architecture that has a tendency to become a "cultural/political ruin" reveals the ideology of the past epoch no less effectively than the representational sculptures on the Žaliasis Bridge (Green Bridge) in Vilnius, or the uncompleted project of a socialist realism skyscraper.

In attempting to take a closer look at this peculiar strand representing the link between architecture and politics which unfolded during the post-Soviet period, one may begin to assume that *a connection between functional typology and social behaviour* is one of the most significant aspects in endeavouring to understand the links between architecture and society. This social behaviour is the indicator that enables one to name the influence of the general sociocultural phenomena on the peculiarities of architectural edifices. As "each individual has a variety of competencies in dealing with different aspects of the building environment (some of which are physiological and some social cultural)"[6], it may be said that the specificity of the relationship between architecture and social behaviour manifests itself particularly in how a person living here adapts to the behaviour models dictated by the existing architectural environment. On the other hand, models of typology and social behaviour are also defined by an inverse link, i.e. not by the manner in which an architectural environment impacts on a person, but by the manner in which a person (society) impacts on the development of an existing architectural environment. This is the change in public behaviour models that may largely account for the erosion of architectural spaces from the Soviet period in a post-Soviet city/town. This would mean that, in one way or another, architecture in the Soviet Union was developed as an assumption for ideologically programmed social activity. Naturally, this situation also formed certain typical forms of behaviour in space, and of behaviour with space. However, it is also natural that, after radical cultural and political changes, these buildings were left to exist without their usual social meaning. Losing touch with a social environment results in the dehumanisation of spaces accompanying political collapse. Here, architecture becomes a cultural-political representation instrument and is relevant insomuch as the ideas represented are relevant.

In this problematic medium it is important to distinguish two groups that differ both in their scale, and in the intensity of their political symbolism: representational architecture, and public spaces

Fig. 3. Eduardas Chlomauskas, Jonas Kriukelis, The Sports Palace in Vilnius, 1971. Photo by the author, 2004

providing everyday life in an architectural background. The following examples reflect only part of the everyday use of the public edifices that dominated the Soviet cityscape. This part of the architectural environment was aesthetically fairly modest, and thus the social-cultural effect of these buildings is not initially as strong visually, as is, for example, the decorative, neo-classicist architectural language of socialist realism. The overall effect of these public spaces is, however, no less important, in terms of the spatial vitality and harmony of the city, than its individual unique structures. Its social impact is also equally significant.

Nevertheless, we shall consider the fact that almost every one of these building types contains examples of portions of the edifice losing significance, and being abandoned or incompleted after the political system changed. In a post-Soviet environment, one can find buildings of various scale and function having the same symptomatology of spatial regression. The borough of Didžiasalis is a telling example of urbanistic affliction. Following the collapse of the political system and the breakdown of economic relations, Didžiasalis, like other spaces of an industrial nature, became a phantom town [fig. 1]. A great range of unfinished hotels, whose construction was initiated with tourists (for whom the Baltic States were one of the most attractive spaces in the Soviet camp) to the Soviet Union in mind, can also be considered a consequence of the collapse of the political system [fig. 2]. Certain representational edifices – the Sports Palace in Vilnius for one – also became architectural ruins [fig. 3]. Thus the two characteristic types of public space that are given as an illustration of political change are just a component of a broader phenomenon.

Fig. 4. Foodstuff shop in Molėtai. Photo by the author, 2006

SHOPPING SPACES

One of the most important types of public space characteristic of the Soviet period which was also the most open to society was the so-called *shopping centre and household service facility*. This edifice was both widely accessible, and made up a considerable part of the background of daily public life. At the same time, it is one of the public spaces that experienced the most radical changes. For example, while schools and kindergartens, which were also an integral part of the Soviet cityscape, were more or less adapted for continued existence, shopping spaces perhaps best depict the formation of two parallel types of public space in the post-Soviet urban transformation.

The most obvious assumption in terms of latent politicisation is the fact that numerous shop buildings were arranged methodically according to a so-called *stepped service system*, the implementation of which began in the early 1960s. A certain sequence based on sociological research and the geometric radius principle was introduced to the construction process of shopping centres and other household service facilities. Although the development of public centres in the 1970s turned from the strict planning typical of the spirit of the Athens Charter to a more flexible creation of polyfunctional edifices, the chain of shops divided into purveyors of specific goods (household goods, foodstuffs, etc.) remained one of the most characteristic attributes of the system. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this strictly organised system also broke down. Some buildings

were abandoned, while others lost their seamless appearance and architectural features due to a chaotic turnover of owners, advertising panels, and interior renovations. The massive conversion of shops at the turning-point of the epochs became an illustration par excellence of former and new urban structures existing as if in parallel within one of the spheres of public life.

The most typical illustrations of this phenomenon are the abandoned shop buildings in the smaller towns and villages in Lithuania: Molėtai, Ukmergė, Dūkštas, Telšiai, etc. After the passing of the centralised trade system, when only one or two shops sold foodstuffs [fig. 4] or hardware, these spaces lost their social logistics. As if illustrating the collapsed epoch, even those public buildings that were located in the main streets or town squares were not used for many years during the transitional period.

Representational urban shops can, however, be considered from a different angle. Starting with the construction industrialisation period of the 1970s, nearly all shop buildings were dominated by the aesthetic of functionalism. Apartment and public buildings, mostly grey in colour, formed a rather monotonous cityscape. Once these problems became apparent[7], efforts were made to develop shop buildings according to individual projects. Thus, in spite of the existing stepped service system, the 1980s witnessed the introduction of shopping and daily service centres featuring an absolutely new quality (both in terms of functional and architectural solutions), and integrating a new range of functions. The discovered solutions offered a peculiar alternative both for split-level modern functionalist buildings, and for the large covered shopping centre "boxes" that blossomed in the West. Daring steps were taken beyond the limits of utilitarian purposefulness, and some of these edifices even acquired touches of a luxurious, slightly manneristic style of architecture.

Despite the aforementioned positive moments, the change in conditions led to the fact that structures of seamless and frequently even original architecture were damaged by the promotional and visual chaos that resulted from fragmented ownership. An

Fig. 5. Kęstutis Pempė, Gytis Ramunis, shopping centre Šeškinė *in Vilnius, 1985. Photo by the author, 2005*

exemplary situation arose at the *Šeškinė* shopping centre in Vilnius, which was constructed in 1985 according to a project by famous Lithuanian architects Kęstutis Pempė, Gytis Ramunis, and others. The complex was developed in keeping with the style of the historic commercial square. However, barely a decade later, this space was also left unmanaged and semi-abandoned [fig. 5]. Having lost its original social conditions, the unique architectural structure was enveloped by a space that was forming along the principle of freely stretching wood paths – by a site which had lost its planned spatial concept. This is a typical example, and is repeated in many different versions of the shopping edifices of the period.

CULTURE AND LEISURE BUILDINGS

Another important functional type related to the ideological aspects of the Soviet period is architecture intended for cultural and leisure needs. An inherently representational function of these buildings per se offered an impulse to assign them a political meaning: "favourable attitude of society towards architectural projects with such a purpose; their openness, an attractive functioning nature and noncommittal meaningfulness ... are considered an effective instrument to represent politics, in this case cultural politics".[8] This aspect is primarily assigned to representational structures like theatres, museums, libraries, etc., which, with certain exclusions[9], remained functional despite the political situation. These are not discussed in this article, since their representativeness and politicisation is perhaps more of a textual, symbolic, surface nature.

Leisure models are, however, closely connected with daily social activities. In the process of an analysis dealing with reasons for certain architectural developments during the transformation period, it is very important to consider the evident principled difference between societies in the West and in the Soviet Union. In the former Soviet Union, the driving force stimulating the creation of public spaces derived not from a consumer society but from the official organisation of mass leisure as developed according to the goals of the Soviet system. Instead of being a natural social process it became a more

Fig. 6. Povilas Adomaitis, cultural centre in Mindūnai, 1979. Photo by the author, 2006

political one. Meanwhile, according to Peter Davey and many other theoreticians, in Western societies in the latter half of the 20th century, "leisure has been reduced to consumption"[10] – a phenomenon that is very apparent in architectural spaces.[11] In the Soviet Union, the establishment of one or another institution, and the formation of the characteristic structure of the public cultural space were actually based not on the real needs of society (though this may be simplified in terms of the stereotyped spaces of popular culture), but on certain visions of a socialist lifestyle.

The most telling spatial expression of socialist leisure planning was *the cultural centre*. In the provinces, buildings of this functional typology acquired particular meaning: these buildings represented an effort to replace the church – a public space that had prevailed in the smaller towns since olden times. They also had to become the focal point of a social life, no matter how meager that might be. If we follow the generalised assumption that a Western city developed as a field of continuous stress between two poles, i.e. sacrality and secularity, we will see that by the mid-20th century, there also was a balance between a sacral space (church) and a secular public space (pub, shop, etc.) in the smaller towns. Therefore, the striving to push away the *sacrum* space to the margins, and to replace it by a secular cultural centre, may be considered a particularly strong manifestation of the political ideology of the Soviet period. The fact that this aspect was played out directly in a daily space is also important.

However, even in the Soviet period, the acceptance of cultural centres as significant public places intended for community meetings was very difficult – despite the fact that in individual cases original architectural and urbanistic solutions were applied in order to create these new centres of attraction. Soviet ideologists soon recognised that "people usually go to, and communicate in, shops and household service facilities – not cultural centres".[12] This remark points to the obvious lack of conformity between ideological goals, and society's real expectations. It is natural that the change of epochs, accompanied by the loss of ideological meaning, also determined the decay of the physical appearance of the cultural centres. The Mindūnai cultural centre offers a most illustrative example: in Soviet architectural propaganda, this centre was often referred to as "a prosperous example of a Soviet collective farm (kolkhoz)" – it was completely abandoned [fig. 6] barely a decade later. The political-ideological basis of the problem is emphasised by the contrast between the decaying cultural centre, and a nicely maintained sacral space in the borough of Želva. These are just a few examples of many, where the latent impact of the Soviet epoch is felt symptomatically. It should also be remembered that in the majority of cases, there were more cultural centres than any other building designed for cultural needs, that the former lacked symbolic content and had no architectural value, and that once the social tasks designated to them lost their ideological lining, they obviously lost all meaning.[13]

CONCLUSION

In assessing a major portion of the architecture of the Soviet period, we acknowledge that only the most general and most telling examples of an ideology, articulated in the simplest way (high-rise buildings from the Stalinist period, monumental art, etc.), might be related to a geometry of forms and aesthetic expression. However, after delving into the typological peculiarities and transformations of public architecture, we soon recognise that some functional types also illustrate the prevailing ideology of the political system. Therefore, whilst analysing manifestations of politicisation in architecture, there should be a greater focus not only on easily replaceable symbolic décor, but also on the strength of the link between semantic meaning and physical appearance. Examples in the presentation of dissonant spaces illustrate the tight link between political and spatial structures.

Notes

[1] Arnold Toynbee, *Cities of Destiny,* London: Thames and Hudson, 1976, p. 22.

[2] Margaret Kohn, 'The Power of Place: the House of the People as Counterpublic', in: *Polity*, vol. 33, issue 4, 2001, p. 503

[3] When talking about regime symbols in a city/town, Sigurd Grava discerns the following: "Ubiquitous slogans which occupied pride of place in Soviet cities, much as commercial advertising does in Western cities; urban geography (naming and unnaming of cities, districts, institutions, facilities, and streets after major political personages or events); large ceremonial spaces with heroic statuary that the Soviet regime created (Red Square in Moscow as the prototype); tall wedding-cake style buildings erected during Stalin's period as instant landmarks symbolising the power of the regime". See Sigurd Grava, 'The Urban Heritage of the Soviet Regime: the Case of Riga, Latvia', in: *Journal of the American Planning Association*, vol. 59, issue 1, 1993, p. 9.

[4] Mart Kalm, Ingrid Ruudi (eds.), *Constructed Happiness: Domestic Environment in the Cold War Era, Estonian Academy of Arts Proceedings, 16*, Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Arts, 2005.

[5] Interview with Lithuanian architect Algimantas Nasvytis, February 24, 2007.

[6] Jon Lang, *Creating Architectural Theory: The Role of Behavioural Sciences in Environmental Design*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987, p. 103.

[7] The problems are discussed in the press of that time: Vytautas Balčiūnas, 'Apie gyventojų aptarnavimo sistemas ir kompleksus' ('On Resident Service Systems and Complexes') in: *Statyba ir architektūra*, no. 2, 1974, p. 2, etc.

[8] Rimantas Buivydas, 'XX a. reprezentacinė architektūra: *pro* ir *contra*' ('Representational Architecture of the 20th C.: *pro* and *contra*'), in: *Urbanistika ir architektūra,* no. 3, 2001, p. 122.

[9] For example, after the Soviet period, the public lost interest in the Revolution Museum in Vilnius, and it was abandoned for some time.

[10] Peter Davey, 'Environment and the Potential of the Individual', in: *Modernity and Popular Culture: the 3rd International A. Aalto Symposium*, Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1988, p. 103.

[11] The most telling example of this phenomenon is the architecture of Las Vegas, theoretically generalised in Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT press, 1972.

[12] Algimantas Liekis, 'Prekybos ir buities centrai kaime' ('Shopping and Household Service Centres in the Countryside'), in: *Statyba ir architektūra*, no. 11, 1979, p. 3.
[13] Here it should be taken into account that social-functional futility was also emphasised by recent demographical changes. These changes serve as an important assumption that beyond the safe and well-groomed world of the capital city and other major centres, are the indigent spaces of the provincial towns and boroughs.

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Politikos apraiškos Lietuvos architektūroje: architektūros dehumanizavimo atvejai pereinant iš sovietinės į posovietinę visuomenę

Reikšminiai žodžiai: sovietinės architektūros paveldas, ideologija, apleistos erdvės, funkcinė tipologija.

Santrauka

XX amžiui būdingą tiesioginę ir eksplicitiškai demonstruojamą erdvės politinio įprasminimo sampratą pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais keičia daugiabriauniai, antrinėmis (latentinėmis) prasmėmis atsiskleidžiantys architektūros ir ideologijų ryšiai. Viena iš kontraversiškiausių ideologijos ir erdvinės aplinkos interpretacijų posovietinėje Lietuvoje yra susijusi su sovietmečiu sukurtos architektūros vertinimu ir likimu. Akivaizdu, kad dažnai nerandama būdų, kaip harmoningai adaptuoti praėjusios epochos palikimą. Straipsnyje daroma prielaida, kad spartus XX a. antrosios pusės architektūros nykimas iš dalies yra sąlygotas staiga prarastos socialinės reikšmės, kuri buvo konstruota ideologiniu pagrindu. Tekste plačiau aptarti du būdingi šias tendencijas iliustruojantys viešosios erdvės tipai: prekybos pastatai ir mažesniųjų miestelių kultūros namai.

Straipsnyje akcentuojama, kad su formų geometrija ir menine raiška siejamas architektūros ideologiškumas yra paviršutiniškas, labiau tekstinio, simbolinio pobūdžio. Tad analizuojant politiškumo apraiškas architektūroje dėmesys kreiptinas ne tik į lengvai pakeičiamą simbolinį dekorą, bet ir į semantinės reikšmės bei fizinio pavidalo sąsajos glaudumą. Šias politinės santvarkos ideologijos ir erdvinės sąrangos sandūras iliustruoja pateikiami nedarnių erdvių atvejai.

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The Transition of a Cultural Institution from Socialist Communism to Democratic Capitalism: Case-Study – Dubrovnik Summer Festival

Key words: cultural policy, cultural institutions, cultural transition and change.

CONCEPTUAL – THE IDEOLOGICAL PROVISION

Apart from being thoroughly ideologically opposed, the main disparity between socialism and capitalism is predominantly recognisable in the obvious differences among their political systems, and apparent sets of social values. Although based on free thought and critical questioning, the Western capitalist order that has dominated the world economy for more than three centuries has been continually inclined to swiftly dismiss any benefits found in socialist or communist public policies and social experiences. This attitude was also proclaimed and prescribed by remaining European monarchies, and by emerging capitalist countries. Although the collapse of the communist regime throughout most of the world has proven that as a social and political imperative it is unsustainable, and therefore ineffective in the realm of modern rules, the Western world of capitalism has continued to label socialist communism as one of the worst threats to humanity. In Croatia this attitude is adopted by the neo-conservatives, who have unofficially proclaimed the "return of communism" as the greatest potential danger.

A more detailed examination of the socialist treatment of public norms and creation of a value system has been abandoned in the wider context of a generally negative judgement, with the result that there is insufficient literature on a more elaborate and complex comparative study of the recent changes in Eastern European – particularly ex-Yugoslav – cultural contexts.

CULTURAL TRANSITION DEFINED

Transition, the undergoing of a change of status or condition, which is defined as "a slow and painful process with uncertain prospects for successful resolution",[1] deeply affects all the components of a social structure. As well as transforming currencies and political agendas, and updating legislative structures, transition brings an extremely turbulent shift in the set order of cultural patterns. Any form of social transformation is predominantly reflected within the cultural framework: "Culture is a mirror of social reality".[2]

The features and norms of the economic and political side of transition are given the greatest consideration, and have consecutive effects – from state-owned to free-market economy and privatisation, from single party domination to multi-party democracy.[3] The cultural effects of transitional processes are, however, greatly disregarded and marginalised. As Vjeran Katunarić indicates, "among the many processes constituting transition in post-communist countries, cultural transition is the least clearly defined".[4] Indeed, the unclear normative concepts of cultural transition leave numerous issues unaddressed. There are, nevertheless, certain identified levels of cultural change that assist in the knowledge and understanding of cultural transition.

LEVELS OF CULTURAL CHANGE

Katunarić distinguishes three levels when describing cultural change:
- the level of transformation of values, e.g., from collectivism to individualism;
- the symbolic level, where the past, and cultural heritage are used as adornment for the enrichment of national glorification;
- the level of institutional change, e.g., abandonment of old institutions and methods of organisation in favour of innovations entailing free initiative and a linkage to the market demand for cultural services.[5]

1) The transformation of values
Transformation of values is a highly paradoxical process: at the same time as individualism, as opposed to communist collectivism, was pronounced to be the growing social value, the new nationalist ideology was creating a new, ethnocentric, bigoted form of collectivism. Professional standards lowered and cultural latitude became closed and self-referential, with obvious features of xenophobia. Croatian culture was no longer defined in terms of its own quality of cultural capital, but via a repetitive insistence on merely national classification.

This claim is substantiated by a statement in the Council of Europe national report on *Cultural Policy in Croatia*, which says that, under "the pretext of functional rationalisation, commercialisation, or of national priorities in culture, the cultural capital of the nation is being increasingly depleted, whether intentionally or unintentionally, and the development gap between Croatia and the developed countries is being widened".[6]

In the domain of values, Croatia has failed to resist what Katunarić refers to as a classical problem of democracy: the outbreak of wild passions and a lowering of mass taste.[7] According to Katunarić, people's attitudes towards a natural and cultural heritage have to be cultivated along with democracy, as does the stimulation of creativity, and the fostering of tolerance and communication with others.

2) Symbolic level
On this level, history and cultural heritage are used as symbolic ornaments to foster a sense of collective unity. The achievements of the new social elite came mostly in the form of nationalism, which is a contradiction in terms of their espoused pluralist and de-ideologising tendencies.

3) Institutional change
Institutional change is regarded as being functional: aiming for free initiative and a linkage to the market demand for cultural services, institutions abandoned old methods of organisation in favour of new ones which involved greater individual autonomy. And yet, as this case-study demonstrates, transition-induced institutional autonomy remains markedly inconspicuous, with institutions continuing to be dependent on the government for their funding and managing mandates.

THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL POLICY

On the conceptual level, in this thesis cultural policy as "an instrument of overall state policy in culture"[8] is associated and investigated in the context of two areas related to culture: the anthropological and the aesthetic.[9]

The anthropological examines "culture as a marker of how we live our lives, the senses of place and person that make us human – neither individual nor entirely universal, but grounded by language, religion, custom, time and space"[10], while the aesthetic indicates the qualitative level of specific artistic output as evaluated by production and consumption.

CULTURAL POLICY IN THE CROATIAN CONTEXT

For the purposes of analysing cultural policy within an institutional definition in the Croatian context, the term "cultural policy" is used to describe those activities and products that directly or indirectly come within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. As an executive and integral part of the governmental apparatus, the national Ministry of Culture is responsible for the creation, production, distribution, consumption and protection of intellectual goods, and the monumental, documentary and information heritage of both the majority and the minority peoples in the Republic of Croatia.[11]

Although cultural policy is not created solely by the bureaucratic administration, but is shaped indirectly by the subversive efforts of non-governmental, independent cultural organisations, the state has the ultimate decision-making authority vis-a-vis the regulation of cultural policy.[12] When this statement is inserted into an ideological framework, it is valid to state that cultural policy proclaims and conducts ruling political interests.

CULTURAL POLICY UNDER SOCIALISM

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a multi-ethnic state categorised by the powerful homogeneous ideological, political and cultural canons of a socialist hegemony. Cultural policy in former socialist Yugoslavia was segregated into three focal stages:
- State controlled and centralised;
- Transitory / decentralised;
- Self-managed.[13]

1) The first stage
Categorised as high culture, this first idealistic stage was mainly focused on education and thereby the achievement of general literacy.[14] Zoran Gjanković records that, "cultural creativity was to a certain degree privileged. Especially the cultural institutions in the large urban centres, and the cultural workers and artists gathered around them were at a very high creative level. The cultural needs of the population at large were, however, on a much lower level".[15] Since the rural areas were neglected in the distribution of cultural production, trade unions were left with the responsibility of fostering cultural action. The overall functioning of the state was highly centralised, and included a single taxation and budgetary system.[16]

2) The second stage
The transfer of financing and legislative governing aspects to national republican and local levels initiated decentralisation in Yugoslavia in the mid-1950s. These newly founded circumstances designed the appropriate pre-conditions for a cultural democracy: the deterioration of ideological influences on culture provided room for Western influences, namely in alternative art forms. Gjanković indicates that a new constitutional principle assured the self-management of workers in the spheres of education, culture and social services.[17] Minority cultural communities were given cultural consideration and relativism.[18] Even though general cultural policy retained the character of government-controlled decision-making and financing, most of the former collective norms and social patterns, along with associated cultural activities, were discarded. The cultural motto of the time was: "Culture to cultural workers".[19]

3) The third stage
The self-management stage (mid-1970s to late-1980s) is defined as the most complicated. All cultural activities were financed and organised through so-called self-management communities of interests in culture. These self-management organisations interrelated public needs for culture with cultural production, i.e. they merged providers and consumers. Their funding was regulated by specific legislation that appropriately distributed the following sources of funding:
- Self-financing / market value and participation of the public;
- Budgetary financing / governmental financial assistance.

Given the fact that there was no official free market exchange in the socialist system, the financing of the self-management communities remains ambiguous.

CULTURAL POLICY IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

The 1990 Croatian National Constitution defined culture as a national priority.[20] In addition, it was claimed that the main objective of Croatia's development was not economic but cultural growth, which included not only the arts and cultural heritage, but scholarship and education as well. This ideological position can be compared to the stand taken in the first stage of socialist cultural policy development.

Prior to 1993, much of the legislation, and funding statutes regarding culture were inherited from the former socialist order. A new model of "public needs in culture" was introduced in 1993. This model entailed annual, short-term competitions

announced by the Ministry of Culture requesting submissions of proposals by individuals, and by independent and governmental art organisations and institutions. With it came the abandonment of the de-ideologisation of cultural principles, and the introduction of neo-conservative concepts of fostering a sense of national unity – predominantly through spectacularisation. Cultural policy had become incorporated into the broader state agenda.[21] Manifestations of this stage included numerous grandiose state-funded exhibitions and festivals celebrating national harmony. Cogently, this led to a deep divergence between the state-owned and financed traditionalist, neo-conservative culture, and a progressive alternative culture that was Western-oriented. The latter independent artists, organisations and cultural projects ("that did not bear the ideological stamp of the national culture") were highly disregarded and obstructed by the state. During the 1990s, their existence was ensured by international foundations (e.g., Soros Open Society Institute Croatia) – often called "the parallel Ministry of Culture".[22] Croatian culture in the 1990s was divided into two separate entities: a neo-conservative, authoritarian nationalist group defined by xenophobia, and a modern, contemporary group amicable to international trends.

The cultural policy "model of public needs" was based on an annual mechanism, which meant that policy objectives were short-term, and included no long-term development strategies. However, 2001 commenced with some positive developments in the cultural policy domain. These included the drafting of a single official strategic document on culture in Croatia, which was published by the Ministry of Culture in 2003 under the title *Croatia in the 21st Century – Strategy for Cultural Development*. Although the proposed plan never actually produced any policy documents, it initiated a considerable amount of discourse on making cultural policy more democratic and on procedures on existing legislation being more transparent and accessible to the wider public. There have been no major alterations in Croatian cultural policy development which are of relevance to this paper, since 2004.

CASE-STUDY POSITIONING AND ANALYSIS

The Dubrovnik Summer Festival (DSF) was selected as a case-study because of its unique aptness as a cultural institution that has existed in both the socialist and the capitalist systems. Much of the data presented in this paper derives from extensive research conducted on the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, including interviews with staff and directors from the previous socialist and current capitalist period, as well as investigation of the institution's internal documentation.

The Dubrovnik Summer Festival is a 40-day long celebration of drama, ambience theatre, dance, ballet, poetry and music. In its fifty-eight years of existence, this festival, a member of the European Festival Association since 1956, has featured the most prominent performers from the European and world art scene. Up to 1990, it was one of the most prestigious art events in Europe, and made Dubrovnik a city of remarkable cultural distinction. The DSF attracted cultural audiences from around the world, and created an unprecedented artistic trademark with a reputation that is, even today, a subject of discussion.

One of the principal cultural institutions and manifestations of the former Yugoslavia, the DSF was founded during the first stage of the socialist cultural policy. Throughout the years its operation has reflected the changing trends in the subsequent stages of that policy. The DSF went from rigid centralised control to decentralisation by the governing powers, and the introduction of the very first features of cultural democracy. It was founded by President Tito of Yugoslavia, and was generously supported by the federal and later republican socialist government. This fact obviously involved the festival's adhering to socialist directives regarding what it proclaimed, and the image of cultural excellence that it portrayed within the international cultural arena. With the decline of socialist rule and the inauguration of the capitalist system, the DSF continued to follow the ideological trends which expressed the cultural objectives of the ruling political aims. This particularly refers to the first period of cultural policy in an independent Croatia during the 1990s,

when the pluralist approach to artistic diversity and cultural democracy was reduced to extreme nationalist directives. While apparently dismissing the socialist cultural policy model, the new Croatian policy strived to achieve the same goals, especially on the level of spiritual improvement and the "fostering of a sense of national unity", via events and manifestations produced by cultural institutions. The DSF thereby served a political purpose, and exercised policy objectives regarding the promotion of a national heritage. In essence, DSF operational objectives – presenting and representing national culture – remained unchanged throughout both political systems. The definition of a national culture corresponded with the proclaimed political aims: in socialism, national meant both Yugoslav and Croatian, with an emphasis on the self-management of a socialist definition of society; in an independent Croatia, the meaning of national is homogeneous with a strong emphasis on heritage as defining national identity. In either case, a great deal of institutional autonomy vis-a-vis the choice of artistic content was permitted.

The present functioning of the DSF has been prescribed by national and local cultural legislation, which in Croatia is described as being inefficient, outdated, and inept. The DSF's institutional form, operation, funding scheme, management structure and programming directives are currently prescribed by the ruling acts on the governing of cultural institutions. These acts build upon texts that have been largely passed on from the former socialist legislation on culture.

Basically, today the DSF maintains an almost identical organisational set-up and management formation to the one that it had in the previous system: it is still under the high patronage of the President of the State, and is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the national Minister of Culture. The Dubrovnik Summer Festival employs 27 permanent full-time staff members, and has an annual budget of circa 3 million euros. The Edinburgh International Festival, on the other hand, has 21 full-time staff members and an annual budget of 12 million euros. The DSF human resources policy clearly indicates that social security still surpasses the rules of efficiency and rational employment costs – more than 80% of the Festival's total budget is allocated to staff salaries. As Slovenian expert Vesna Čopić states:

> "Stagnation in social activities is today indicated by the fact that an increasing proportion of the available public funds in public institutions is allocated for staff salaries, and there is less and less money left for material expenses, which leads to the impoverishment of public sector programmes and activities, and represents a threat to their development. The fact that salaries have become the priority implies that, in social activities, social peace and not the performance of the activity justifying their existence, i.e. public provision, has become the principal social aim. Thus in the field of culture we have to speak too often of social policy instead of cultural policy".[23]

The appointment of the key management staff – director and artistic directors – is recommended by the board for the Minister's approval. This implies that the key management structure of the DSF is dependent on a political system that has the authority to appoint and to dismiss.

Regarding funding policies, in the latter stages of the socialist cultural period, DSF funding was an example of a de-centralisation process that proved to be highly efficient, as recorded in the Council of Europe national report:

> "Before 1960, the federal Yugoslav government granted most of the funds for the Festival. The Croatian government also assigned funds, but they were smaller than the federal funds. After 1963, the size of Croatian funds grew and considerably exceeded the federal portion, and after 1966, federal financing of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival stopped completely. After that the Festival was financed approximately 50% from republican (Croatian) sources and approximately 40% from its own profits".[24]

According to the former director of the DSF, in the later 1970s and in the 1980s, a major part of the funding responsibility (over 50%) was shifted to the City of Dubrovnik. This was an additional de-centralisa-

tion measure. At the time, the City of Dubrovnik regarded the DSF a cultural priority, and provided full support for all DSF endeavours. It presented a new local taxation system that included a Festival Tax, equal to one third of the regular local tax (paid by each tourist and guest visiting Dubrovnik during the period of the Festival – July 10 to August 25). All Festival Tax funds were paid into the DSF accounts, and logged as the Festival's own profit.

As of 1990 and the founding of the capitalist structure, the funding scheme returned to that of the 1950s and early 1960s, when it was dependent on centralised government and local authority funds.

The Festival's main financial sources became the state, county and municipal budgets. This position began to change for the better by the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium. In an interview, the present Festival director stated that the DSF currently earns up to 50% of its own budget, with most of the profit coming from sponsors and donations (38%), and the remainder in ticket sales. Nevertheless, though the shift has been made towards generating revenues from the market place, the Festival's financial maintenance, and the social security and welfare of all its employees are subject to the availability of state and local government funding. At the same time, the equation of 50% government sources and the remainder its own profits, achieved by the Festival in the recent free market years, is not far from the equation it held during nearly three decades of a socialist state-owned system.

Correspondingly, the underlying mechanism of DSF programme planning, procedure, and production has remained deceptively unchanged since the time of its inauguration. Congruent with the high-quality international image that the DSF set out to achieve from the very beginning, its programme orientations were always exceptionally ambitious, and featured the most important and distinguished names on the global art scene.

Current programming objectives and schemes are subject to the availability of funds. As is evident from its subsequent annual programmes, DSF theatre programming has somewhat disregarded international artistic input over the last decade, and has included predominantly national theatrical productions, thereby not facilitating a space for the communication and comparison of national and international theatrical art forms. This is the after-effect of the somewhat insular cultural policy of Croatia in the 1990s, as well as an obvious lack of funds. The DSF does strive to preserve its reputation for high artistic quality performances in its music division, and tends to involve renowned international artists – once again, based on its financial capabilities.

Throughout the years of its existence, the DSF generated a reputation for having artistically cultured and experienced audiences undisputedly able to critically assess its programming, and hence indirectly enhancing its quality and standards.

The audience at the DSF has always been perceived as a particular phenomenon. Audience participation in the Festival was never considered exclusive or privileged, and it was therefore possible to speak of a populist approach to artistic performances, as well as democratisation of the Festival itself. This remark is fundamental to an analysis of DSF audience development, and shows a distinctive precedent of likewise comportment throughout the socialist countries.

Statistics and reports from the socialist period show an astonishing figure of 3,162,348 (3.2 million) visitors attending more than 3,000 performances during the first 35 years of the Festival; in the last 15 years, the figures have decreased significantly. This can be explained by the general cut-backs in income amongst the Croatian population, with the result that some of the previous audience groups can no longer afford to attend such cultural events.

The present DSF's audience development aims include this season's introduction of the first-ever performance for children, indicating the Festival's attempt to widen audience spectrum and volume, but leaving the systematic improvement of audience quality and capital unaddressed. Moreover, there are no actual audience development or outreach programme strategies. These should be of great concern to the Festival, as recent statistics show that attendance by local audiences is declining due to high ticket costs. Festival performances are becoming accessible only to tourists and the upper classes. In a sense, the

Festival has positioned itself in the market on the basis of audience buying power, rather than with the intent of fostering the development of audience base and quality. This also raises a general question regarding a transitional cultural policy, where the differences and links between state and market place are largely misread: government funds and subsidies are treated as rightfully deserved, whereas market income is considered to be the result of vast efforts invested in gaining and preserving sponsor bonds and donations. The fact that state subsidies are actually sourced from the market place – large groups, whole communities of taxpayers creating the largest market share of investors in the cultural sector – is yet to be recognised. Indeed, much of the cultural sector in Croatia is still made up of a sector of public services for citizens, and thereby holds a rather significant position of social importance and responsibility. For this reason, communities and populations, local or national, should represent the principal market niche to which the cultural sector, including funding bodies, target their activities. Greater access to the arts and culture, regardless of audience group buying power, should be the aim.

This is the complex position of the DSF today. It is supported both by free market profits and government funding. An assessment of the value of culture as cultivated in the socialist period is now subject to financial evaluation, i.e. cash profit. This fact is highlighted in an interview with the former DSF director, who states that, "the level of cultural values was higher in the previous period because the audiences were more culturally aware". He also observed that people today are more concerned about "the price of the ticket rather than the quality of the performance".

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis herein has resulted in numerous conclusions, of which the following are suggested to be the most pertinent.

The chronicle of the DSF within the context of periodical cultural policies shows that, as a cultural institution, it was always dependent on the government, and thus prone to possible political influences. The ideological outlines of the specific periods, as proposed by the applicable legislation, have always been detectable in DSF objectives. This indicates that ideologies and ruling political systems – regardless of their title, totalitarian or democratic – do influence the outcome of cultural policies.

An analysis of the legislation, operation, and objectives of the DSF indicates that a proper institutional transition in culture has yet to happen. This conclusion is the result of a comparison of the evident traits of appropriate legislation and cultural policy objectives under socialism and capitalism vis-a-vis the DSF exemplar. It underlines the observation that the major characteristics and methods of Croatian cultural policy application in the case of the DSF correspond in the most part to those from the socialist period. However, as demonstrated in the case-study research, the analysis shows that the socialist period brought with it a significant number of benefits.

Finally, a single recommendation imposes itself as the logical outcome of this paper. As John Pick has said, "The future cannot be planned upon misreading the past".[25] In order to create coherent, sustainable and productive directions for DSF development (or, for that matter, the development of any cultural institution), it is imperative to consider the experiences of the past, and to recognise and learn from beneficial methods of practice, instead of swiftly dismissing them because of the ideological origins of the supporting cultural policy. If the past is faced and analysed in a correct and objective manner, defining both its inherited advantages and disadvantages, a better positioning within new, integrated cultural spheres might be more easily achieved.

Notes

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Reikšminiai žodžiai: kultūros politika, kultūros institucijos, kultūros pereinamasis laikotarpis ir kaita.

Santrauka

Plečiantis Europos Sąjungai ir skelbiant pasaulio demokratizaciją, tyrinėjama ir lyginama tokių pačių ar bent panašių politinių sistemų, stovinčių ant tvirtų kapitalizmo pamatų, tarptautinė kultūros politikos įvairovė. Tuo tarpu prie ES prisijungusios ar besijungiančios naujos šalys vis dar išgyvena pereinamąjį laikotarpį – iš socialistinių, pokomunistinių politinių sistemų jos transformuojasi į kapitalistines demokratines sistemas. Nors perėjimo procesų pagrindą sudaro teisėtvarkos ir socialinės politikos pokyčiai, tai smarkiai veikia kultūros institucijas. Tos institucijos buvo pagrindinės socialistinės kultūros politikos platformos, nes jos reprezentavo svarbiausią socialinio kapitalo gamybos ir kūrimo šaltinį nekapitalistinėse politinėse struktūrose. Susikūrus naujoms kapitalistinėms sistemoms, jų socialinė reikšmė ir vaidmuo smarkiai pasikeitė, kultūros institucijos, o kartu ir nacionalinio bei vietos biudžeto įsipareigojimai liko be aiškaus tikslo.

Šio straipsnio tikslas – aiškiai apibrėžti pereinamąjį laikotarpį kultūros srityse, kapitalistinės kultūros politikos faktus, šaltinį ir tikslus bei palyginti jų poveikį pačiai institucijai ir visuomenei. Siekiant nuoseklumo, pasirinktas Dubrovniko vasaros festivalis ir išnagrinėtas kaip viena svarbiausių kultūros institucijų buvusioje Jugoslavijoje, tebefunkcionuojanti naujoje kapitalistinėje demokratinėje Kroatijoje. Atsižvelgiant į tyrimo vietą ir svarbiausia – į jo objektą, šiame straipsnyje apsiribojama naratyvo, kurį galima pritaikyti kultūros politikai ir pereinamojo laikotarpio bruožams tik Kroatijoje, analize.

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