

PRAQUE ECONOMIC WARSAW RUINS? BRATISLAVA BUDAPEST

Iconic Ruins?
Post-war Socialist Architecture
in the Visegrad Countries

Iconic Ruins?



Post-war architecture in the former state-socialist countries has recently become a prominent topic. For a long time it was viewed by the public in a dubious light and against the backdrop of the often bleak personal memories of and lives impacted by the communist regime. Recent expert studies and activities aimed at public education have, however, revealed that the architecture at that time assumed a surprisingly diverse array of forms and that there existed in the region a parallel course of development that anchors the former Eastern bloc within the wider frame of the history of world architecture.

The *ICONIC RUINS?* exhibition thus focuses primarily on politically prominent public investment projects and looks at where the ambitions of power and the creative ideas of architects connected and where they clashed.

The rapid demise of this architecture in recent years as a result of dramatic redevelopment and radical demolitions has prompted unprecedented action on the part of the professional community and academic sphere. The exhibition therefore also tracks the current condition of post-war architecture and combines historical comparisons based on Docomomo International's methodology with student visions for the future use and transformation of such structures, which were developed as part of a project of the same name run by the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava (Studio of Architecture II, III A3, and the Virtual Studio).

The *ICONIC RUINS?* exhibition seeks to reveal the parallels to be found in the architecture of the four Visegrad countries' shared state-socialist past and to initiate a broader discussion of

the immediate future of the critically at risk cultural heritage of late modernism. The exhibition is part of a large European project titled Shared Cities: Creative Momentum aimed at mapping the shared history of socialist architecture in Central Europe.

The *ICONIC RUINS?* exhibition was created as part of Shared Cities: Creative Momentum – an international network for creative discourse at the intersection of architecture, art, urbanism and the sharing economy. From 2016 to 2020, Shared Cities is bringing together eleven partners from seven major European cities (Belgrade, Berlin, Bratislava, Budapest, Katowice, Prague and Warsaw) with the ambition of showing urban citizens that their participation and cooperation is essential for creating a pleasant and valuable urban environment. The project Shared Cities: Creative Momentum is co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

Czech Post-War Architecture

Post-war architecture in state-socialist Czechoslovakia underwent dramatic changes which faithfully reflected the internal political developments and processes going on in the Eastern bloc but also responded to ideas and inspirations that filtered in from the other side of the Iron Curtain.

Architecture was fundamentally impacted by the system of the centrally planned economy which was controlled by politically motivated interests and rigid five-year economic plans and as the country fell increasingly behind the advanced Western economies quantity became the primary focus. The profession of architect, which originally had for the most part been an independent creative and entrepreneurial occupation, was also subjected to collectivisation after 1948. In the state-run planning institutes architects became ordinary employees, whose work was heavily determined by political priorities and the limitations to what the construction industry could produce. Architecture was increasingly impacted by the strict demands for standardisation and prefabrication that were asserted to ensure lower prices but also greater control over state-funded building development. In 1948 this led to the creation of the Standardisation and Normalisation Institute, which was soon after renamed the Research and Standardisation Institute. Then in 1952 another influential state organisation was founded – the theory-oriented Research Institute for Construction and Architecture.

Important public contracts were in most cases assigned on the basis of the planning institutes' regional or institutional

affiliation. In the 1960s, as the conditions in society began to open up, architectural competitions also became a valuable and popular medium for selecting architects; the competitions often had excellent competitors, were widely discussed, and not uncommonly resulted in the construction of genuinely the best design. The 1970s and the normalisation period led conversely to a decrease in competitions, which were organised more just for public contracts of exceptional importance and usually only for invited participants. In 1971 the Union of Architects also underwent a transformation, and thereafter only politically acceptable individuals could remain a member. Important architects from the 1960s who were then banned were allowed to continue work to complete any prestigious contracts they were engaged in, but without the opportunity of their work being published or of them being publicly acknowledged for it. The main route to obtaining interesting assignments was to be a member of one of the more renowned planning institutes, which in the 1960s had already begun to specialise and profile themselves around a particular type of building structure or a charismatic boss.

The nature of the state's showcase projects also changed over time. Residential complexes were of course a recurring assignment, along with projects aimed at improving the wellbeing of the people and the accessibility and standards of amenities. There was a distinctive progression from the expressively and technologically very simple ensembles of the 1950s, put together with city-shaping objectives, to the typologically and visually experimental housing estates of the 1960s with their elaborate parterres, followed by the building development in

the early normalisation-era 1970s with its quantitative focus, and eventually by the first attempts to humanise housing estates shortly before the Velvet Revolution. Another major phenomenon, however, was public buildings, which were a faithful reflection of the transformation of shared values. The 1950s were characterised by strictly controlled propaganda and the construction of culture houses, and the 1960s by growing consumerism and the increased importance of the country's international image – represented, for example, through department stores, embassies, hotels, and especially the buildings of the Foreign Trade Enterprise. The entire post-war era was marked by the large-scale construction of hospitals, schools, and sports facilities, and for these structures the regime constantly tried to assert standardisation and prefabrication, succeeding, fortunately, for the most part only in the case of smaller assignments.

In terms of their visual expression, public investment projects went through some generally well-known twists and turns. The 1950s were dominated by forced inspiration from Soviet Socialist Realism, which Czech architects resisted with ethnic-folk and small-town motifs and an emphasis on monumentality, ornamentation, craft, and visual art, or by escaping into typologically or technologically sophisticated, i.e. un-standardisable types of structures or into heritage conservation. With the 1960s came a shift towards the Western take on the International Style, wittily blended with the still vibrant tradition of poetic interwar functionalism and with the interdisciplinary and artistic aspirations and optimism that followed in the wake of the Czechoslovak Pavilion's success at Expo 58 in Brussels. As the 1960s came

to a close the influence of brutalism and a technicist approach also surfaced, and even within the resigned atmosphere of normalisation these tendencies surprisingly managed to survive in the more important state projects. Pre-revolution architecture was gripped by the cautious incursion of postmodernist and high-tech ideas, usually in the work of the younger generation, and there even appeared the first attempts at environmentally or contextually responsible architecture.






Today in the Czech Republic post-war architecture elicits heated debate. It makes up approximately one-half of the domestic building stock, but only a handful of structures from that era enjoy heritage protection, and most of them are from the Stalinist 1950s. Tainted by social preconceptions and stereotypes about the impossibility of making sensitive repairs to them, this layer of cultural heritage has in recent years been rapidly disappearing and is being irretrievably lost. Amidst not insignificant attention from the media, the general public, and the professional community, it usually succumbs to devastating renovations or demolition. It is, however, at the same time the subject of heightened interest from many researchers and is increasingly the focus of publications. Post-war architecture has become an attractive subject for the young generation in particular, who are unencumbered by any harsh personal memories of the normalisation era and who appreciate its exotic appearance, born out of 'a strange and different era', and its distinctive, authentic, and raw qualities, so unlike the hyper-precise architectural production of the present day.

Petr Vorlík
Architectural historian (CZ)



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CZ		Building of the Central National Committee / Communist Party
1945—1958		
	Řásnovka 770/8, Prague-Old Town; 50°5′32N, 14°25′32E	
	František Marek	
	1941—1950	
	new use	
	authentic	








CZ		Building of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party
1972—1989		
	Náměstí T.G. Masaryka 145, Příbram, 49°41'14N, 14°00'34E	
	Jiří Merger, Jan Nováček, Stanislav Franc	
	1980–1984	
	new use	
	authentic	









CZ		Czechoslovak Federal Assembly Building
1959–1971		
	Vinohradská 25/1, Prague-Vinohrady; 50°4'48N, 14°25'56E	
	Karel Prager, Jiří Albrecht, Jiří Kadeřábek	
	1967–1974	
	new use	
	authentic	
	listed as cultural heritage	



CZ	BVV administrative building
1945—1958	
	Veletržní, Brno; 49°11'15N, 16°35'12E
	Miroslav Spurný
	1957–1960
	original use
	partly restored



CZ	ČKD administrative building
1972—1989	
	Na Můstku, Prague-New Town; 50°5'4N, 14°25'25E
	Alena Šrámková, Jan Šrámek
	1974–1983
	new use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



CZ	Strojimport Foreign Trade Enterprise
1959—1971	
	Vinohradská 2396/184, Prague-Vinohrady; 50°4'41N, 14°28'20E
	Zdeněk Kuna, Zdeněk Stupka, Olivier Honke-Houfek
	1962–1971
	original use
	authentic



CZ	Hotel International
1945–1958	
	Koulova 1501/15, Prague-Dejvice; 50°6'34N, 14°23'36E
	František Jeřábek et al.
	1952–1956
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage









CZ	Hotel Praha
1972–1989	
	Sušická, Prague-Dejvice; 50°6'10N, 14°22'39E
	Jaroslav Paroubek, Arnošt Navrátil, Radek Černý, Jan Sedláček et al.
	1971–1981
	demolished 2014








CZ	Thermal Hotel and Festival Complex
1959–1971	
	I. P. Pavlova 2001/11, Karlovy Vary; 50°13'44N, 12°52'34E
	Věra and Vladimír Machonin
	1963–1978
	original use
	partly restored








CZ	Pardubice Train Station
1945–1958	
	Náměstí Jana Pernera 217, Pardubice; 50°1'57N, 15°45'27E
	Karel Řepa, Karel Kalvoda, Josef Danda
	1947–1958
	original use
	partly restored
	listed as cultural heritage



CZ	Vítkovice Train Station
1959–1971	
	U Nádražní 27/1, Ostrava-Vítkovice; 49°48'04N, 18°15'45E
	Josef Danda
	1964–1967
	original use
	dilapidated



CZ	New check-in hall of the Prague Main Train Station
1972–1989	
	Wilsonova 300/8, Prague-Vinohrady; 50°5'0N, 14°26'3E
	Josef Danda, Alena and Jan Šrámek, Jan Bočan, Zdeněk Rothbauer
	1972–1977
	original use
	partly restored



CZ	Radio building
1945–1958	
	Náměstí Míru 2363/10, Pilsen; 49°43'50N, 13°22'21E
	Karel Tausenau, Václav Pavelka, František Hurta
	1946–1956
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage



CZ	Rudé Právo printing and administrative building
1972–1989	
	Na Florenci 2116/15, Prague-New Town; 50°5'19N, 14°26'7E
	Miroslav Koukolík, Jaroslav Hošek
	1977–1989
	demolished 2012

CZ	Czech Television
1959–1971	
	Na Hřebenech II 1132/4, Prague-Kavčí Hory; 50°3'0N, 14°25'33E
	Jiří Holý et al.
	1958–1972, 1975
	original use
	authentic



CZ		Černé Pole Children's Hospital
1945–1958		
	Černopolní 9, Brno; 49°12'13N, 16°37'3E	
	Bedřich Rozehnal	
	1947–1953	
	original use	
	partly restored	



CZ		Children's Hospital of Palacký University
1959–1971		
	I.P. Pavlova 6, Olomouc; 49°34'51N, 17°14'16E	
	Dobroslav Kolář, Zdeněk Srovnal, Leopold Hoferek	
	1967–1978	
	original use	
	partly restored	



CZ		Orthopaedic Clinic at Bulovka Hospital
1972–1989		
	Budínova 2, Prague-Libeň; 50°6'57N, 14°27'50E	
	Vladimír Černický	
	1975–1978	
	original use	
	partly restored	



CZ		Secondary vocational school and college
1945–1958		
	Vejprnická 663/56, Pilsen; 49°44'37N, 13°20'02E	
	Jan Gillar, Maxmilián Smolák, Antonín Kurel	
	1951	
	original use	
	authentic	



CZ		Secondary-school dressing rooms
1972–1989		
	Žižkova třída 2-4, České Budějovice; 48°58'21N, 14°28'47E	
	Michael Fidra	
	1986	
	new use	
	restored	



CZ		
1959–1971		
CTU's Mechanical Engineering Faculty and Electrotechnical Faculty		
	Technická 2-4, Prague-Dejvice; 50°6'12N, 14°23'31E	
	František Čermák, Gustav Paul	
	1957–1967	
	original use	
	partly restored	



CZ		House of Culture
1945–1958		
		Mírové náměstí 733, Ostrov; 50°18'29N, 12°56'56E
		Jaroslav Krauz, Josef Sedláček
		1954–1955
		original use
		partly restored
		listed as cultural heritage



CZ		AZNP House of Culture
1959–1971		
		Dukelská 1093, Mladá Boleslav; 50°24'5"N, 14°54'45"E
		František Řezáč
		1966–1972
		original use
		authentic



CZ		Crystal House of Culture
1972–1989		
		Boženy Němcové 2942, Česká Lípa; 50°41'5N, 14°32'3E
		Jiří Suchomel
		1974–1990
		original use
		authentic








CZ		Ice rink
1959–1971		
	Štefánikovo náměstí 1, Pilsen; 49°44'14N, 13°22'41E	
	Vladimír Urbanec, Pavel Janeček, Ladislav Švábek	
	1965–1969	
	original use	
	restored	



CZ		Town spa
1945–1958		
	Hradská 888, Zlín; 49°13'17N, 17°40'11E	
	Vladimír Karfík	
	1946–1952	
	original use	
	restored	



CZ		Man-made rowing canal and floating equipment
1972—1989		
	Račice; 50°27'35N, 14°20'39E	
	Tomáš Kulík, Jan Louda, Zbyšek Stýblo, Lo-tech	
	1986	
	original use	
	authentic	



CZ	
1945–1958	
House of Fashion	
	Václavské náměstí 804/58, Prague-New Town; 50°04'47N, 14°25'44E
	Josef Hrubý
	1954–1956
	original use
	partly restored



CZ		Kotva Department Store	
1959–1971			
	Nám. Republiky 656/8, Prague-Old Town; 50°05'20N, 14°25'37E		
	Věra and Vladimír Machonin		
	1969–1975		
	original use		
	authentic		
	listed as cultural heritage		



CZ		Máj Department Store	
1972–1989			
	Národní 63/26, Prague-New Town; 50°04'56N, 14°25'10E		
	Miroslav Masák, Martin Rajniš, John Eisler		
	1971–1975		
	original use		
	restored		
	listed as cultural heritage		



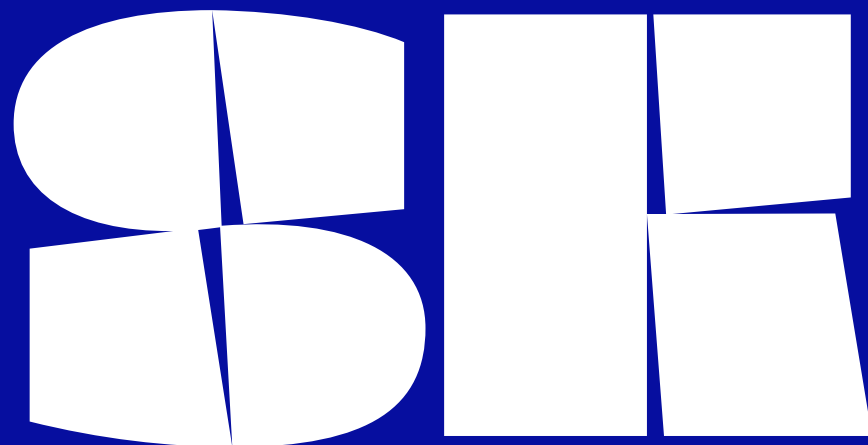
CZ		Vltava Dam System
1945–1958		
	Lipno I, 48°42'22N, 14°5'6E, Lipno II, 48°37'49N, 14°17'46E Orlík, 49°30'38N, 14°9'53E, Kamýk, 49°37'1"N, 14°13'24E Slapy, 49°44'30N, 14°21'24E	
	1949–1962	
	original use	
	partly restored	



CZ		Ještěd TV Tower and Mountain Hotel
1959–1971		
	Horní Hanychov 153, Liberec; 50°43'56N, 14°59'7E	
	Karel Hubáček, Otakar Binar et al.	
	1963–1973	
	original use	
	authentic	
	listed as cultural heritage	



CZ		Transgas dispatch building and the building of the Ministry of Fuel and Energy
1972–1989		
	Vinohradská 325/8, Prague-Vinohrady; 50°4'43N, 14°26'0E	
	Jindřich Malátek, Jiří Eisenreich, Ivo Loos, Václav Aulický	
	1966–1978	
	demolished 2019	



From Functionalist Palaces to Complex Monuments: The Architecture of Public Buildings in Socialist Slovakia

Throughout the 20th century the construction sector in Slovakia witnessed remarkable growth. This was the first time in history that as well as housing development a number of large public investments were carried out. This trend culminated in the latter half of the century with the construction of hundreds of public administration buildings, cultural institutions, and educational, medical or recreational facilities. Centralised management, the planned economy, state ownership of land and the means of production, and a state-run system of architecture and engineering offices made it possible for the socialist regime to plan and build on a grand scale, with almost no public debate. The fact is that similar conditions prevailed in the entire Eastern bloc. However, the architecture in Slovakia in the latter half of the 20th century was also influenced by several locally-specific factors. The first factor was the development of a local architectural scene made up of graduates of the first school of architecture in the territory of Slovakia – namely, the Faculty of Architecture and Building Construction of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. The second factor was an increased inflow of investment into Slovakia in the 1960s and 1970s that coincided with the federalisation of Czechoslovakia, which made possible the construction of many significant buildings. Another important phenomenon was investment opportunities relating to Slovakia's natural resources, especially the development of spa and alpine recreation. The structure of the architectural scene in Slovakia was also affected by the limited possibilities to represent the

country in an international context. Slovak architects got only a few chances to design Czechoslovak embassies or structures representing Czechoslovakia in international expositions. Paradoxically, there was also a good side to the marginalisation of the Slovak architectural scene: hidden in the shadows, away from the attention of the central ideologists, it provided a space for the activities of politically undesirable architects and the development of trends that did not entirely follow the line set by the Union of Architects of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. These factors combined determined the structure of tasks, the prevailing typologies, and also the form of Slovak architecture.

Formal manifestations of architecture in Slovakia in the latter half of the 20th century can be divided into three groups. The first group consists of structures built in the first decade after the war, during which time the principles of functionalism gradually petered out and there was a brief, unheroic response to the Soviet model of Socialist Realism. This group is typically made up of large utilitarian buildings, the form of which was determined by the building's internal operations and by classicist principles of composition. The second group encompasses structures that were created between the latter half of the 1950s and the mid-1960s and embraced the International Style of post-war Europe. These structures were characterised by their subtle construction, small scale, and sensitive reflection of their context. From the late 1960s Slovak architecture responded to a growing interest in communicability, spatial complexity, monumentalism, and artistic abstraction. An important role was played by the technological side of construction,

which was made evident in ambitious steel or reinforced-concrete structures defining the architectural form. Towards the end of the 1950s key figures of Slovak architecture, such as Ferdinand Milučký, Ivan Matušík or Vladimír Dedeček, entered the scene. Their individual conceptions determined the nature of Slovak architecture basically until the end of the 1980s.

And it is the architecture of late modernism that represents a controversial heritage in today's Slovakia. It is still perceived as the product of an authoritarian regime and modernist planning to which original historical structures were sacrificed in the past. The public also finds novel architectural solutions based on new aesthetic and spatial rules hard to understand. Yet, there is a growing interest in this architectural heritage among the youngest generation, who are unencumbered by its ideological connotations.

Henrieta Moravčíková
Architectural historian (SK)

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SK	
1945—1958	
Fund for National Renewal	
	Dobrovičova 12, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°8'33N, 17°7'5E
	Eugen Kramár, Štefan Lukačovič
	1947—1952
	new use
	authentic



SK		Building of the Regional Board of the Slovak Communist Party
1972—1989		
	Námestie obetí komunizmu 1, Žilina; 49°13'17N, 18°44'33E	
	Viera Mecková	
	1981—1988	
	new use	
	authentic	



SK		Complex of ministry buildings
1959—1971		
	Špitálska 4, 6, 8, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°8'48N, 17°6'56E	
	Ivan Matušík	
	1961—1973	
	original use	
	authentic	



SK	Town hall
1945–1958	
Starý Smokovec I; 49°8'26N, 20°13'25E	
Viktor Malinovský	
1953–1957	
original use	
restored	



SK	Research Institute of Construction Economics and Organisation
1959–1971	
Ružová dolina 27, Bratislava-Ružinov; 48°9'4N, 17°8'34"E	
Karol Paluš, Jozef Chovanec	
1965–1967	
new use	
restored	



SK	Office building
1972–1989	
Centrum 1/1, Považská Bystrica; 49°7'0N, 18°26'48E	
Ivan Meliš, Severín Ďuriš	
1966–1978	
original use	
authentic	



SK	Park of Culture and Leisure
1945–1958	
📍	Dvořákovo nábrežie, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°8'33N, 17°5'5"E
👤	Ján Štefanec, Pavol Andrič, Kamil Gross, Viktor Uhliarik
🕒	1940–1956
🏠	demolished 2011



SK	Embassy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
1972–1989	
📍	August-Bier St. 31, Bonn, DE; 50°43'9N, 7°6'39E
👤	Ludovít Jendreják, Ladislav Kušník, Peter Puškár, Ján Šilinger
🕒	1980–1985
🏠	demolished 2012



SK	Embassy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
1959–1971	
📍	Via dei Colli della Farnesina 144, Rome, IT; 41°56'34N, 12°27'33E
👤	Ferdinand Milučký, Jozef Chovanec
🕒	1969–1971
✓	original use
🏠	restored



SK	Zvolen Train Station
1945–1958	
	T. G. Masaryka 3, Zvolen; 48°34'10N, 19°7'14E
	Jozef Lacko
	1956–1959
	original use
	authentic



SK	Post-Office
1959–1971	
	Poštová 7, Štrbské Pleso; 49°7'6N, 20°3'47E
	Oľga Ondreičková
	1967–1970
	new use
	restored



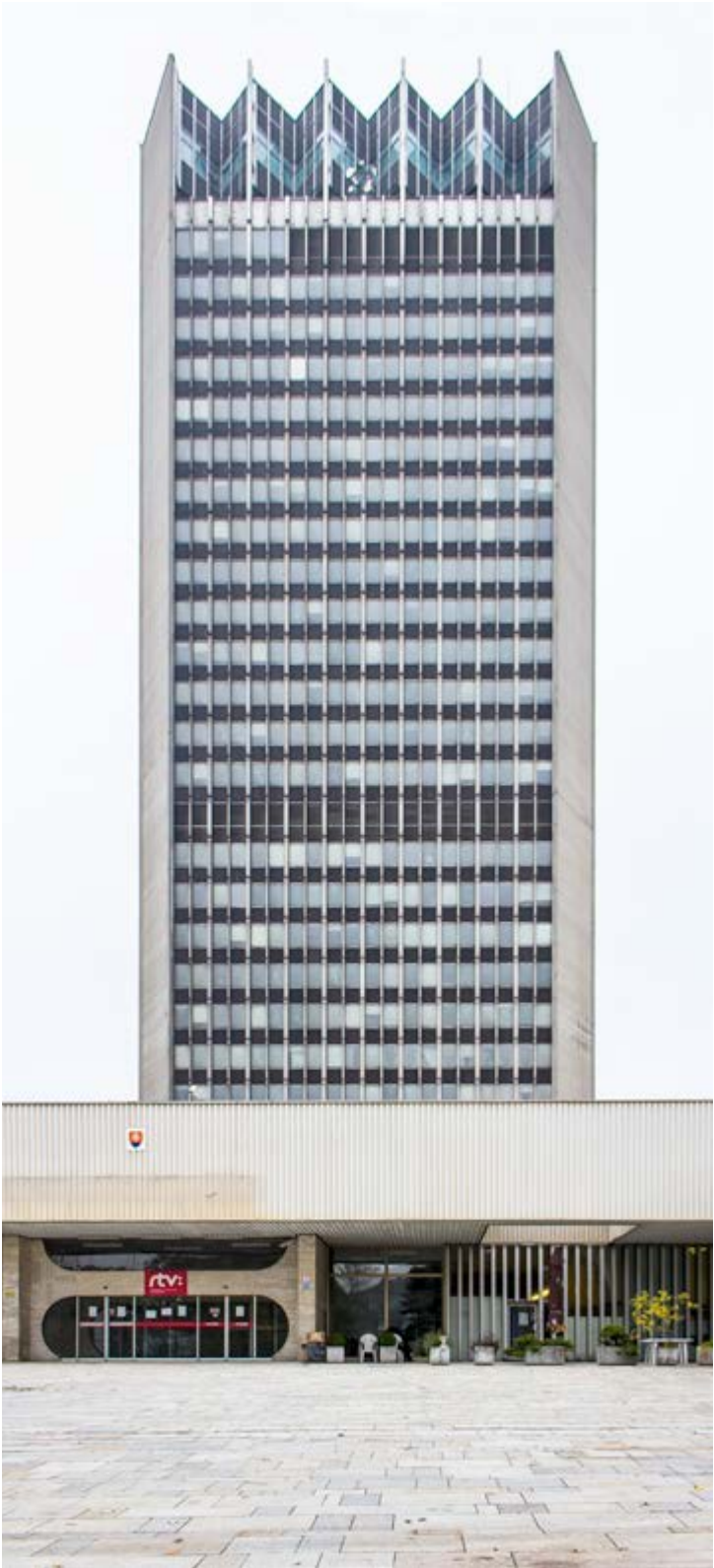
SK	Government lounge
1972–1989	
	M. R. Štefánik - Airport, Ivanská cesta, Bratislava; 48°10'11N, 17°12'5E
	Vojtech Vilhan, Ján Bahna
	1972–1973
	demolished in 2015 (moved to the Slovak Design Center)



SK	Slovak Radio
1972–1989	
	Mýtna 1, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°9'13N, 17°6'52E
	Štefan Ďurkovič, Barnabáš Kissling, Štefan Svetko, Marta Skočková
	1964–1984
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage








SK	Pravda office building and printing works
1945–1958	
	Štúrova 4, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°8'35N, 17°6'47E
	Martin Kusý
	1951–1960
	new use
	restored



SK	Slovak Television
1959–1971	
	Mlynská dolina 1, Bratislava; 50°3'0N, 14°25'33E
	Jozef Struhař, Václav Čurilla
	1965–1975
	original use
	partly dilapidated



SK	Hospital
1945–1958	
 Nemocničná 2, Bojnice; 48°47'7N, 18°35'21E	
 Jaroslav Rajchl	
 1954–1961	
 original use	
 partly restored	



SK	
1959–1971	
University Hospital and Polyclinic	
 Limbová 5, Bratislava-New Town; 48°10'3N, 17°5'16E	
 Oldřich Černý, Štefan Imrich, Richard Pastor, Jaroslav Rajchl, Milan Šavlík	
 1958–1967	
 original use	
 authentic	



SK	Helios Sanatorium
1972–1989	
 K Vodopádom 27, Štrbské Pleso, High Tatras; 49°7'43N, 20°3'39E	
 Richard Pastor	
 1964–1977	
 dilapidated	
 partly demolished	



SK	Faculty of Architecture STU
1945–1958	
	Námestie slobody 19, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°9'4N, 17°6'38E
	Emil Belluš
	1946–1953
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage






SK	
1959–1971	
	Slovak University of Agriculture
	Trieda Andreja Hlinku 2, Nitra; 48°18'25N, 18°5'35E
	Vladimír Dedeček, Rudolf Miňovský
	1956– 1966
	original use
	partly restored
	listed as cultural heritage




SK	Faculty of Chemical and Food-Processing Technology
1972–1989	
	Radlinského 9, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°9'0N, 17°6'51E
	Igor Diklič, Jozef Liščák, Juraj Lupták
	1977–1983
	original use
	partly restored

SK	
1945–1958	
Youth Education and Culture Centre	
	Búdková 2, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°9'10N, 17°5'31E
	Miloš Chorvát
	1950–1955
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage








SK		Concert hall of the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra
1972—1989		
	Nábřežie Ivana Krasku 1, Piešťany; 48°35′31N, 17°50′24E	
	Ferdinand Milučký	
	1969–1979	
	original use	
	authentic	



SK		Monument to the Slovak National Uprising
1959—1971		
	Kapitulská 22, Banská Bystrica; 48°44'6N, 19°8'59E	
	Dušan Kuzma	
	1963–1969	
	original use	
	authentic	
	listed as cultural heritage	



SK	Ice hockey stadium
1945—1958	
	Odbojárov 9, Bratislava-New Town; 48°9'35N, 17°8'7E
	Kamil Gross, Arnošt Adámek, Juraj Uhlíř, Eduard Horváth
	1946–1958
	original use
	destroyed by renovation in 2009

SK	Hotel FIS and the Area of Dreams Skiing Complex
1959—1971	
	K Vodopádom 6, Štrbské Pleso, High Tatras; 49°7'43N, 20°3'40E
	Eugen Kramár, Ján Šprlák-Uličný
	1965–1970
	original use
	partly dilapidated



SK	Town sports hall
1972—1989	
	Okružná 18, Prešov; 48°59'43N, 21°14'16E
	Igor Diklič, Dušan Mázik, Ferdinand Zbuško
	1972–1987
	original use
	authentic





SK

1945–1958

Shopping colonnade

📍 Predmostie housing estate
Mostná, Nitra, 48°18'59N,
18°5'31E

👤 Michal Maximilián Scheer

🕒 1955–1961

✓ original use

🏠 authentic

SK	Prior Department Store
1959–1971	
📍	Kamenné námestie 1 A, Bratislava-Old Town; 48°8'43N, 17°6'50E
👤	Ivan Matušík
🕒	1961–1968
✓	original use
🏠	partly restored



SK	Market hall
1972–1989	
📍	Trnavské mýto 112, Bratislava-New Town; 48°9'25N, 17°7'32E
👤	Ivan Matušík
🕒	1975–1983
✓	original use
🏠	authentic



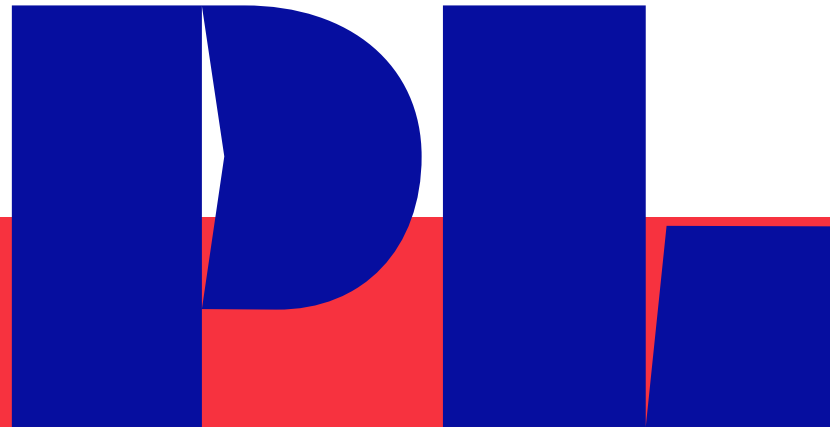
SK	Machine room of a hydroelectric power station
1945–1958	
	Trenčianska 1, Nové Mesto nad Váhom; 48°46'21N, 17°51'3E
	Martin Kusý
	1948–1950
	original use
	authentic



SK	TV transmitting tower
1959–1971	
	Cesta na Kamzík 14, Bratislava-Koliba; 48°10'57N, 17°5'41E
	Stanislav Májek, Jakub Tomašák, Milan Jurica, Juraj Kozák, Ján Privitzer
	1965–1974
	original use
	authentic



SK	New Bridge
1972–1989	
	Most SNP, Bratislava-Petržalka; 48°8'18N, 17°6'16E
	Jozef Lacko, Ladislav Kušnír, Ivan Slameň, Arpád Tesár
	1968–1973
	original use
	partly restored
	listed as cultural heritage



A Problematic Heritage

In the second half of the 20th century both the organisation and the technical status of Polish architecture were determined by the political situation. The nationalisation of the construction industry had already begun by 1948. A year later all the architectural studios underwent this process. This had a strong impact on the architectural market in Poland. In a system where the state had a monopoly on construction investments, architects had to endlessly negotiate with the authorities and the producers of building materials. To execute an original concept they had to constantly look for different possibilities. Although the years between 1945 and 1989 in Poland are treated as a single epoch, the situation architects faced shifted over these decades.

The first three post-war years in Poland saw the continuation of the modernism that had developed in the 1920s and 1930s. However, the introduction of Socialist Realism in 1949, which dominated all the arts, hindered the development of architecture for seven years and was clearly a step backwards. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing that even within the framework of this imposed doctrine many valuable projects were executed that hovered on the edge between the historicism favoured by the authorities and modernism. The fall of the USSR-imposed ideology in 1956 was followed by a heyday of innovative projects in terms of their form, technology, and construction. Nonetheless, soon after that the state authorities decided to make architecture increasingly subordinate to the construction industry. The processes that occurred as a consequence – prefabrication,

standardisation, the prioritisation of mass residential construction – greatly limited the creative possibilities. It was difficult to construct original buildings using identical elements. It was only the huge economic crisis of the 1980s that changed the situation. The inefficiency of the state made it possible for architects to work freely and the domination of the construction industry collapsed.

Interestingly, in the second half of the 20th century sacred architecture was a space of freedom for Polish architects; during this time over 3,000 churches were built (the authorities allowed their construction as a way to calm any social unrest). It was the only field that was not regulated by the state; however, it was not financed or supported either, so churches were built from the donations of the parishioners, and often even by the parishioners' own hands. This was a complicated network of dependency – architects could design without having to worry about state regulations, but many times they lacked the means to execute their visions. This resulted in the construction of unusual buildings, many of which are still not socially accepted today.

Just ten years ago the only opposition to the demolition of masterpieces built during that period (such as the Supersam Pavilion in Warsaw or the train station in Katowice) came from experts and architecture enthusiasts. Conservationists could lose their jobs for inscribing a Socialist Realist building on the list of historical monuments. Today, many inhabitants of cities cherish the heritage of that time, but the architecture of the socialist era still sparks controversy. Even now, many valuable structures are at risk of being demolished. A good number

of them have not aged well because they have not been renovated, which makes it hard to fully appreciate their value today. We are still looking for criteria with which to be able to assess the architecture of that era and are discussing which buildings should be kept in their original state and which require rebuilding. And it is still difficult to separate this architecture from its political context, a context that still generates somewhat negative emotions.

Anna Cymer
Architectural historian (PL)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>60 Government Administration
Dom Parii – Head Office of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, <i>photo CC BY-SA 3.0 pl/ Adrian Grycuk</i>
Presidium of the Provincial National Council, <i>photo Jarosław Matla</i>
Police Headquarters, <i>photo Anna Cymer</i></p> <p>62 Administration
Central Statistical Office, <i>photo CC BY-SA 3.0 pl/ Adrian Grycuk</i>
Zieleniak Central Research and Design Centre for the Shipbuilding Industry, <i>photo Anna Cymer</i>
Stalexport office buildings, <i>photo Anna Cymer</i></p> <p>64 International representation, hotels
Embassy of the People's Republic of China, <i>photo Anna Cymer</i>
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Observatory of the Hydrological and Meteorological Institute, <i>photo Marek Kosiński</i>
Łazienkowska Thoroughfare, <i>photo CC BY-SA 3.0 pl/ Adrian Grycuk</i></p> |
|--|--|



PL	Presidium of the Provincial National Council
1959–1971	
	aleja IX Wieków Kielc 3, Kielce; 50°52'32N 20°37'46E
	Stanisław Kawiorski
	1967–1971
	original use
	restored



PL	Police Headquarters
1959–1971	
	ul. księdza Jerzego Popiełuszki 5, Częstochowa; 50°48'58N 19°6'12E
	Marian Kruszyński
	1979
	original use
	destroyed by renovation



PL	Dom Paryi – Head Office of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party
1945–1958	
	ul. Nowy Świat 6/12, Warsaw, 52°13'53N 21°1'20E
	Wacław Kłyszewski, Jerzy Mokrzyński i Eugeniusz Wierzbicki
	1947–1952
	new use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



PL	Central Statistical Office
1945–1958	
	aleja Niepodległości 208, Warsaw; 52°13'0N 21°0'21E
	Romuald Gutt, Zbigniew Wasiutyński
	1947–1954
	original use
	authentic



PL	Zieleniak Central Research and Design Centre for the Shipbuilding Industry
1959–1971	
	ul. Wały Piastowskie 1, Gdańsk; 54°21'30N 18°38'47E
	Stanisław Tobolczyk, Jasna Strzałkowska
	1966–1971
	original use
	authentic



PL	Stalexport office buildings
1972–1989	
	ul. Mickiewicza 29, Katowice; 50°15'48N 19°0'51E
	Georgo Gruicić
	1977–1981
	original use
	authentic



PL	Cracovia Hotel
1959–1971	
	al. marsz. Ferdynanda Focha 1, Krakow; 50°3'30N 19°55'24E
	Witold Cęckiewicz
	1960–1965
	new use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage



PL	Forum Hotel
1972–1989	
	ul. Marii Konopnickiej 28, Krakow; 50°2'43N 19°56'8E
	Janusz Ingarden
	1977–1989
	dilapidated



PL	Embassy of the People's Republic of China
1945–1958	
	ul. Bonifraterska 1, Warsaw; 52°15'2N 21°0'9E
	Romuald Gutt, Tadeusz Zieliński, Michał Gutt, Michał Glinka, Aleksander Kobzdej, Alina Scholtz, Lin Luo
	1956–1959
	original use
	authentic



PL	Gdynia Główna Train Station
1945–1958	
	Plac Konstytucji 1, Gdynia; 54°31'17N 18°31'48E
	Wacław Tomaszewski
	1950–1954
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



PL	Warsaw Commuter Railway, Warsaw Stadion Station
1959–1971	
	ul. Zamoyskiego 16, Warsaw; 52°14'52N 21°2'40E
	Arseniusz Romanowicz, Piotr Szymaniak
	1956–1958
	original use
	restored



PL	Kielce Bus Station
1972–1989	
	ul. Czarnowska 12, Kielce; 50°52'32N 20°37'17E
	Edward Modrzejewski, Andrzej Grabiwoda, Jerzy Radkiewicz, Mieczysław Kubala
	1975–1984
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



PL	Polish Radio
1945–1958	
	al. Niepodległości 77/85, Warsaw; 52°11'32N 21°0'53E
	Bohdan Pniewski
	1952–1957
	original use
	authentic



PL	Silesian Press House
1959–1971	
	Rynek 1, Katowice; 50°15'33N 19°1'16E
	Marian Śramkiewicz
	1963
	new use
	destroyed by renovation



PL	National Library
1972–1989	
	aleja Niepodległości 213, Warsaw; 52°12'48N 21°0'15E
	Stanisław Fijałkowski
	1989
	original use
	authentic



PL	Stefan Żeromski General Hospital
1945–1958	
	Osiedle Na Skarpie 66, Krakow; 50°3'56N 20°2'43E
	Stefan Porębowicz, Henryk Skrzyński
	1951–1954
	original use
	authentic



PL	DOLMED Lower Silesia Centre for Medical Diagnostics
1972–1989	
	Legnicka 40, Wrocław; 51°6'49N 17°0'11E
	Anna Tarnawska, Jerzy Tarnawki
	1974–1977
	original use
	authentic



PL	Ustroń-Zawodzie medical and rehabilitation district
1959–1971	
	ul. Sanatoryjna, Ustroń; 49°42'25N 18°49'58E
	Henryk Buszko, Aleksander Franta, Tadeusz Szewczyk
	1966–1975
	original use
	authentic



PL	Elementary school
1945–1958	
	ul. Łukaszczyca 9/13, Poznań; 52°23'40N 16°54'12E
	Stefan Zieleśkiewicz
	1955–1958
	original use
	authentic



PL	
1959–1971	
	Mikołaj Kopernik University Campus
	ul. Jurija Gagarina 11, Toruń; 53°1'2N 18°34'22E
	Ryszard Karłowicz, Konrad Kucza-Kuczyński, Marek Różański, Witold Benedek, Józef Łucki, Andrzej Jaworski, Bogdan Popławski, Wincenty Szober, Zenon Buczkowski
	1964–1973
	original use
	authentic

PL	Monument to One Thousand Years of The Polish State – Museum of the Origins of the Polish State and secondary school
1972–1989	
	ul. Kostrzewskiego 1, Gniezno; 52°32'1N 17°34'59E
	Bogdan Celichowski
	1973–1978
	original use
	authentic




PL	
1945–1958	
Ludowy Theatre	
	Osiedle Teatralne 34, Krakow; 50°4'41N 20°1'53E
	Janusz Ingarden
	1955
	original use
	authentic

PL	
Museum of the ‘Panorama Racławicka’ Painting	
1959–1971	
	Jana Ewangelisty Purkyniego 11, Wrocław; 51°6'36N 17°2'42E
	Marek Dziekoński, Ewa Dziekońska
	1956–1985
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage








PL	
Opera Nova	
1972–1989	
	Marszałka Ferdynanda Focha 5, Bydgoszcz; 53°7'27N 17°59'51E
	Józef Chmiel
	1962–2006
	original use
	authentic



PL	'Palace of Sports' Sports Hall
1945—1958	
	ul. ks. Skorupki 21, Łódź; 51°44'57N 19°27'6E
	Włodzimierz Prochaska
	1946–1957
	original use
	authentic




PL	Regatta track Malta
1972—1989	
	ul. Wiankowa 3, Poznań; 52°23'59N 16°58'31E
	Klemens Mikuła
	1980–1990
	original use
	authentic








PL	Olivia Sports Hall
1959—1971	
	al. Grunwaldzka 470, Gdańsk; 54°24'4N 18°34'18E
	Maciej Gintowt, Maciej Krasiński; Stanisław Kuś
	1963–1972
	original use
	authentic








PL	Okrągłak Department Store
1945—1958	
	ul. Mielżyńskiego 14, Poznań; 52°24'29N 16°55'20E
	Marek Leykam
	1948–1954
	new use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



PL	Sezam Department Store
1959—1971	
	ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 40, Lublin; 51°14'50N 22°33'41E
	Tadeusz Witkowski; Marian Jankowski
	1959–1964
	original use
	authentic



PL	Universus Central Bookstore
1972—1989	
	ul. Belwederska 20/22, Warsaw; 52°12'23N 21°1'55E
	Leszek Sołomowicz
	1975–1981
	new use
	authentic



PL	
1945–1958	
East-West Route	
	Warsaw; 52°14'1N, 21°1'41E – 52°12'20N, 20°56'29E
	Stanisław Jankowski, Józef Sigalin, Zygmunt Stępiński, Stanisław Hempel
	1947–1949
	original use
	authentic



PL	
Łazienkowska Thoroughfare (14 km freeway and bridge)	
1972–1989	
	Warsaw; 52°13'17N, 21°2'28E
	Józef Sigalin
	1971–1974
	original use
	authentic



PL	
Observatory of the Hydrological and Meteorological Institute	
1959–1971	
	Góra Śnieżka / Śnieżka Mountain; 50°44'10N 15°44'23E
	Witold Lipiński, Waldemar Wawrzyniak
	1966–1974
	original use
	authentic



Hungarian Post-War Architecture

Like in many countries in the socialist bloc, architecture in Hungary between 1945 and 1990 was determined by the fluctuating balance between political influence and international architectural trends. The difference in the basic situation was caused by the interwar period: while many Hungarian architects and artists (e.g. Marcel BREUER, László MOHOLY-NAGY) were at the birth of Bauhaus and CIAM and contributed to the spread of New Architecture among a wider professional circle in Hungary, official state policy favoured neo-baroque architecture as a way of restoring national pride, which had been lost in the wake of the First World War, and it tried to fight off modernism, as it was associated with left-wing ideas.

During the three to four years that followed the Second World War, architects became very enthusiastically involved in the process of creating a new Hungarian modernism. Although the limited resources and the need to rebuild after the defeat and destruction of the war offered only limited opportunities to construct new, high-quality public buildings, those few significant buildings were the result of the joint efforts of pre-war, suppressed modern architects and the new, emerging generation. In Hungary as well, the turn towards Socialist Realism was forced by the Workers' Party and its leading ideologists around 1948–49, right after the socialisation of the building industry and planning institutes. The architecture of historicism and especially classicism was found to be the national form that best fit the socialist context, so it became Hungary's declared architectural direction. A unique colour was introduced

into architecture by Hungarian 'Danish' architects, a group of young designers who were deported to Denmark at the end of the Second World War and returned to Hungary in 1947. Struggling to work within the constraints of archaism, they borrowed elements from neo-classical Scandinavian modernism. Meanwhile, IPARTERV (Planning Institute for Industrial Buildings) had become the most important architectural workshop of the era: the strict principles of up-to-date industrial architecture left little room for archaism; the institute therefore served as a meeting place for prominent, confirmed modernist masters and their followers.

The leading Hungarian newspaper of the time published a full-page report on the 'industrialised building speech' that Khrushchev gave in Moscow. Architects gradually became bold enough to reintroduce modernism into their work in 1955, during the respite that came with the first government of Imre Nagy. Although Nagy's second government ended with the revolution of 1956 and its suppression by the Soviet Union, which led to the restoration of socialism, architects were no longer forced to adhere to Socialist Realism in their work. As a result, modernism started to make a return by the late fifties. The next decade – often called 'the long sixties' – became almost the only epoch in Hungarian post-war architecture when local architects could do their job in line with international trends. In spite of the circumstances determined by the realities of the socialist building industry, the most important pieces of late-modern architecture in Hungary were born during that era.

In 1968 economic reforms were introduced by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. One of the main priorities of the so-called 'New Economic Mechanism' was to intensify industrialised building construction and increase standardisation. The great number and large scale of buildings of this type left little room for individual architectural endeavours, which led to the moral inflation and exhaustion of modernism in Hungary.

By the eighties, with a decade-long delay, the voices that had been criticising modernism had grown louder even in Hungary. While some architects tried to reform modernism 'from the inside', drawing on international trends such as high-tech, structuralism or metabolism, a unique architectural approach called 'organic architecture' – ushered in by Imre Makovecz and György Csete – was gaining ground. While this style was rejected by the official leadership, post-modernism, which was being studied and adopted by a widening circle of architects, gradually became more accepted. By the end of the decade, most public and residential buildings reflected the influence of Dutch, British, and Italian post-modernism.

Ábel Mészáros
Architectural historian (HU)

- 86 Government Administration**
Headquarters of Nógrád Country Council,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Headquarters of the National Council of Trade Unions,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
13th District Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
- 88 Administration**
Headquarters of the Planning Institute for Metallurgy and the Machine Industry,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Chemolimpex Headquarters,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
International Trade Centre,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
- 90 International representation, hotels**
Golden Star Hotel,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Budapest Hotel,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Hilton Hotel, *photo Tamás Bujnovszky*
- 92 Transport**
Győr Railway Station,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Ferry port, *photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel*
Ferihegy Airport Terminal 2a,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
- 94 Media**
Sound and revoicing studio,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Observation and TV transmission tower,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Headquarters of MTI Hungarian News Agency, *photo Tamás Bujnovszky*
- 96 Health care**
Outpatient clinic,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Public bath, *photo Tamás Bujnovszky*
Laboratory of the National Blood Service,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel

- 98 Education**
Technical University of Budapest, buildings R, T, and H,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Elementary school,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Városmajori Secondary School,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
- 100 Culture**
Cultural centre,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Cultural centre, *photo Tamás Bujnovszky*
Cultural centre, *photo Tamás Bujnovszky*
- 102 Sport**
The People's Stadium,
photo Jászai Csaba
VASAS Tennis Hall,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Secondary-school gymnasium,
photo MTVA Sajtó-és Fotóarchívum / Járαι Rudolf
- 104 Consumerism**
State Department Store,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Pécskő Shopping Centre,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Domus Furniture Store,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
- 106 Civil engineering**
Fertiliser storage facility,
photo Tamás Bujnovszky
Boiler house of a brick factory,
photo Tamás Réthey-Prikkel
Public fountain pavilion,
photo Dr. Kistelegdi István



HU	
1945–1958	
Headquarters of Nógrád Country Council	
	Rákóczi út 36, Salgótarján; 48°06'00N, 19°48'22E
	Pál Németh
	1952
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage








HU	
1959–1971	
Headquarters of the National Council of Trade Unions	
	Váci út 75, Budapest-13th district; 47°32'02N 19°04'05E
	Dezső Dúl
	1941–1950
	original use
	restored








HU	
1972–1989	
13th District Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party	
	Váci út 71, Budapest-13th district; 47°31'59N, 19°04'06E
	Margit Pázmándi
	1979
	new use
	restored








HU		Headquarters of the Planning Institute for Metallurgy and the Machine Industry
1945—1958		
	Krisztina krt. 55, Budapest-1st district; 47°29'51N, 19°01'43E	
	Pál Németh	
	1954	
	new use	
	restored	



HU		International Trade Centre
1972—1989		
	Váci u. 19–21, Budapest-5th district; 47°29'38N, 19°03'08E	
	József Finta	
	1985	
	original use	
	restored	

HU		Chemolimpex Headquarters
1959—1971		
	Bécsi u. 4, Budapest-5th district; 47°29'46N, 19°03'06E	
	Zoltán Gulyás	
	1966—1971	
	new use	
	restored	



HU	Golden Star Hotel
1945–1958	
	Vasmű út 39, Dunaújváros; 46°57'49N, 18°56'26E
	István Zilahy
	1954
	new use
	restored



HU	
1959–1971	
Budapest Hotel	
	Szilágyi Erzsébet fasor 47 Budapest-2nd district, 47°30'36N, 19°00'47E
	György Szrogh
	1967
	original use
	restored



HU	Hilton Hotel
1972–1989	
	Hess András tér 1-3, Budapest-1st district; 47°30'09N, 19°02'01E
	Béla Pintér
	1975
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



HU	
1945–1958	
Győr Railway Station	
	Vasútállomás, Révai Miklós u., Győr; 47°40'55N, 17°38'02E
	János Dianóczky, József Éhn
	1958
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



HU	
Ferry port	
1959–1971	
	Tihany u. 9, Szándód, Lake Balaton; 46°52'47N, 17°54'02E
	János Dianóczky
	1967
	original use
	authentic



HU	
Ferihegy Airport Terminal 2a	
1972–1989	
	Ferihegy Airport, Budapest-18th district; 47°26'00N, 19°15'44E
	Ervin Jaklics, Károly Herczegh
	1985
	original use
	restored



HU	
1945–1958	
Sound and revoicing studio	
	Hűvösvölgyi út 64, Budapest-2nd district; 47°31'31N, 18°59'4E
	Lajos Gáboros, István Mühlbacher
	1954
	original use
	restored









HU	
1959–1971	
Observation and TV transmission tower	
	Avasi TV torony, Miskolc; 48°05'57N, 20°46'31E
	Miklós Hofer
	1960
	original use
	authentic













HU		Headquarters of MTI Hungarian News Agency
1972–1989		
	Lisznai u. 17, Budapest-1st district; 47°29'37N, 19°02'02E	
	Csaba Virág	
	1991	
	original use	
	partly restored	








HU	Outpatient clinic
1945–1958	
	Vasmű út 10, Dunaújváros; 46°57'48N, 18°56'32E
	András Ivánka
	1952
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage








HU	Laboratory of the National Blood Service
1972–1989	
	Karolina út 27, Budapest-11th district; 47°28'45N, 19°01'51E
	György Kévés, Péter Wágner
	1986
	original use
	restored

HU	Public bath
1959–1971	
	Hatvani út 5, Jászberény; 47°30'09N, 19°54'32E
	Lajos Zalaváry
	1964
	original use
	authentic



HU		Technical University of Budapest, buildings R, T, and H
1945–1958		
	Műegyetem rkp. 7-9, Budapest-11th district; 47°28'43N, 19°03'33E	
	Gyula Rimanóczy	
	1955	
	original use	
	authentic	



HU		Elementary school
1959—1971		
	Szárcsa u. 9-11, Budapest-21st district; 47°23'29N, 19°06'12E	
	Kamill Kismarty-Lechner	
	1962	
	original use	
	authentic	

<div><div></div><div><div>HU</div></div></div>	
1972—1989	
Városmajori Secondary school	
<div><div><div></div><div><div></div></div></div><div>Városmajor u. 71, Budapest-12th district; 47°30′31N 19°00′40E</div></div>	
<div><div><div></div><div><div></div></div></div><div>Endre Pethes, Judit Görgényi</div></div>	
<div><div><div></div><div><div></div></div></div><div>1989</div></div>	
<div><div><div></div><div><div></div></div></div><div>original use</div></div>	
<div><div><div></div><div><div></div></div></div><div>authentic</div></div>	





HU	Cultural centre
1945–1958	
Bajcsy-Zsilinszky u., Tolna; 46°26'15N, 18°46'49E	
Béla Pintér	
1952	
dilapidated	



HU	
1959–1971	
Cultural centre	
Fötér 5, Salgótarján; 48°06'16N, 19°48'32E	
György Szrogh	
1966	
original use	
restored	
listed as cultural heritage	

HU	
1972–1989	
Cultural centre	
Szabadság tér 9, Nyíregyháza; 47°57'28N, 21°43'09E	
Ferenc Bán	
1982	
original use	
restored	
listed as cultural heritage	









HU		The People's Stadium
1945—1958		
	Istvánmezei út 3-5, Budapest; 47°30'11N, 19°05'52E	
	Károly Dávid, Jenő Juhász, Ferenc Kiss	
	1953	
	demolished 2016	



HU	
1959—1971	
VASAS Tennis Hall	
	Pasaréti út 11-13., Budapest-2nd district; 47°30'47N, 19°00'31E
	Jenő Szendrői, István Menyhárd
	1962
	original use
	restored
	listed as cultural heritage



HU		Secondary-school gymnasium
1972—1989		
	Rév u. 6, Visegrád; 47°47′11N, 18°58′09E	
	Imre Makovecz	
	1985	
	original use	
	restored	
	listed as cultural heritage	



HU	State Department Store
1945–1958	
	Árpád út 70, Budapest-4th district; 47°33'38N, 19°05'21E
	Pál Rákos
	1954
	original use
	authentic
	listed as cultural heritage



HU	Domus Furniture Store
1972–1989	
	Róbert Károly krt. 67, Budapest-13th district; 47°31'32N, 19°04'37E
	Antal Lázár, Péter Reimholz
	1974
	dilapidated
	listed as cultural heritage



HU	Fertiliser storage facility
1945–1958	
	Kazincbarcika-Berente; 48°14'54N, 20°38'59E
	Miklós Gnädig
	1950
	original use
	authentic



HU	Public fountain pavilion
1972–1989	
	Orfű; 46°08'21N, 18°09'44E
	György Csete, Jenő Dulánszky
	1970
	dilapidated
	listed as cultural heritage



HU	Boiler house of a brick factory
1959–1971	
	Fehérgyarmat; 47°58'31N, 22°31'49E
	Fivo Sans Modern
	1947–1949
	dilapidated



Iconic Ruins

It was about six years ago that we started to seriously consider the idea of exploring the topic of Soviet-era modernist buildings from the late 1960s to the 1980s. The idea emerged out of the sense that there are no topics concerning big architecture left and that we rather owe it to the architecture, which could serve our students as a good example and a good source of study material. 'Iconic Ruins' was the provocative title invented to encompass the shared interest of architects/teachers in the Department of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava in the current potential of these buildings. Within the frame of a project titled 'Shared Cities: Creative Momentum' the term was expanded to include the entire region of Central Europe. Iconic Ruins encompasses a variety of teaching and writing activities: projects for the conversion of department store buildings in Prague to new use prepared by students as their dissertation work in the studio of Petr Hájek, Faculty of Architecture, Czech Technical University in Prague (2015, 2016); the transformation of residual spaces by the studios of Zolo Holocsy and Ján Studený (1); a joint project titled 'Starosť o architektúru/ Care for Architecture', conducted by B. Brádňanský, P. Hájek, V. Halada, J. Studený, and M. Zervan curated by Monika Mitášová, and exhibited in the Czech-Slovak pavilion at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition as part of the Venice Biennale (2016); and student workshops (Trnava, Lozorno, Belgrade etc.); and a series of lectures given by guests and colleagues (Beran, Billet, Burlon, Krivý, Kovács, Nakonieczny, Sumorok, Szalay, Zervan, etc.).

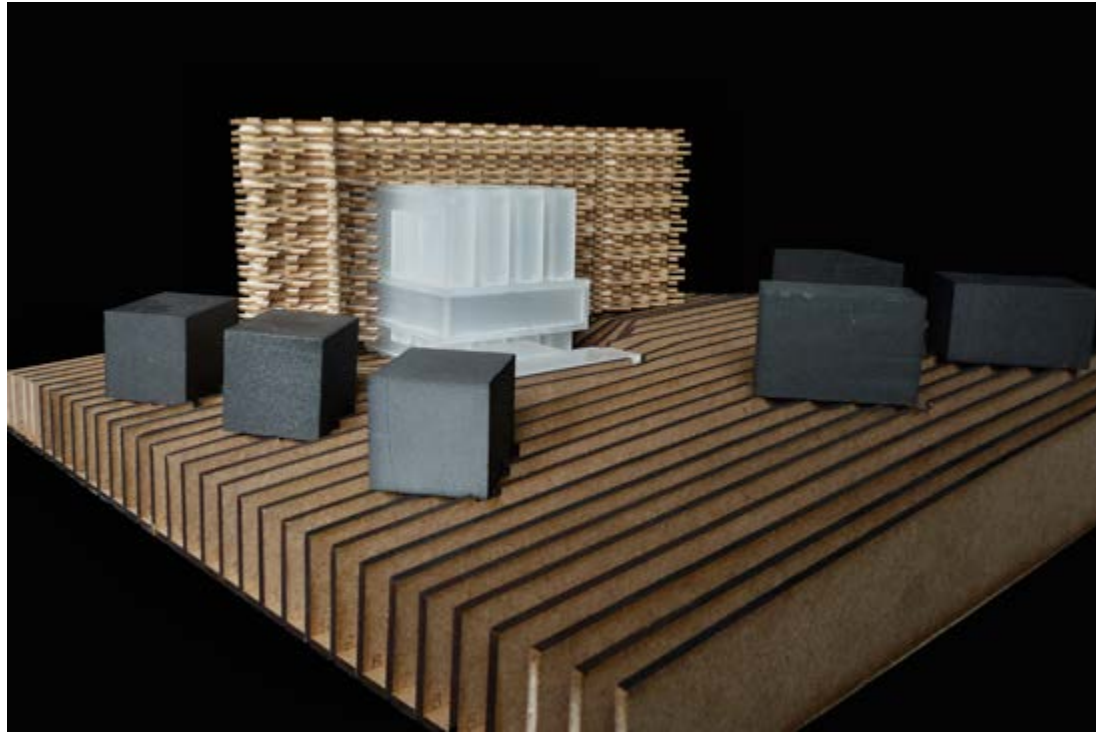
'... What do we want to do with the

Soviet-era palaces of late modernism? Do we want to pull them down or restore them? We would say neither nor, as we are looking for ways in which to transform them.' This was the motto assigned to the work created by the studio of Ján Studený (department assistants B. Brádňanský, D. Pišteková) between 2015 and 2018 and the studio of Vít Halada (department assistant B. Brádňanský) in 2017 (2).

The term 'iconic ruins', as we use it, refers to the Soviet-era cultural, commercial, sports, educational, congress and other 'palaces' that were built with an original design and set in a unique location, with a generous amount of public space, and that are currently in poor condition that could be described as somewhere between physical and ideological decay. These iconic ruins are too young to be listed buildings. They are too conflictual to be successful developer projects. They are too large and their condition too poor for them to be easily occupied by activists. They are too red, sharp, collapsing, and pyramidal to be liked, too rude, monstrous, machine-like, and inverted, denying their context they stick out like a sore thumb. We believe iconic ruins represent an opportunity for architecture. They make us think about care and conservation, look at architecture as a social and cultural project, and consider architecture in the context of tabula plena (as opposed to tabula rasa). Rather than evoking nostalgia and emotions in people, iconic ruins make them think.

Vít Halada, Ján Studený
(1) Zvyškové priestory / Residual Spaces, 2018.

(2) 'Transformácie (Ikonické ruiny).'
In Projekt 3, 4/2017.



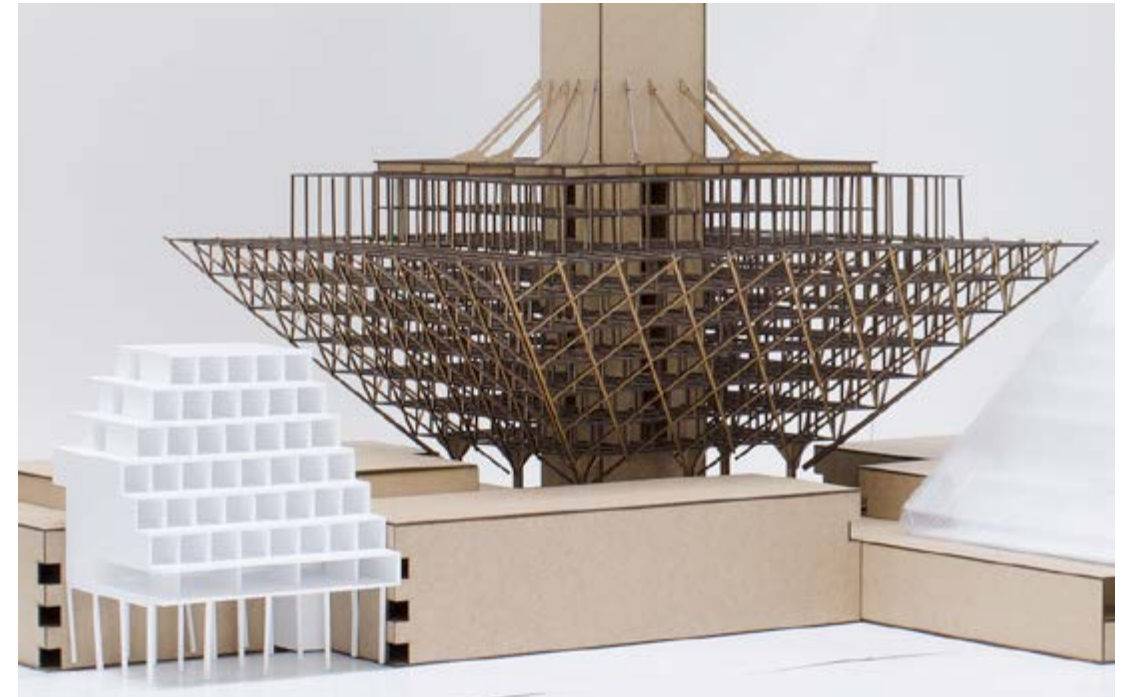
Slovak National Archives, Bratislava, Slovakia
D. Nosko, Studio of V. Halada and B. Brádňanský



Strategy Overlaying
 Istropolis Trnavské mýto, Bratislava, Slovakia
E. Kvassayová, Studio of J. Studený and D. Pišteková



Strategy Renewal
Slovak Television, Bratislava, Slovakia
E. Bevilacqua, Studio of J. Studený and B. Brádňanský



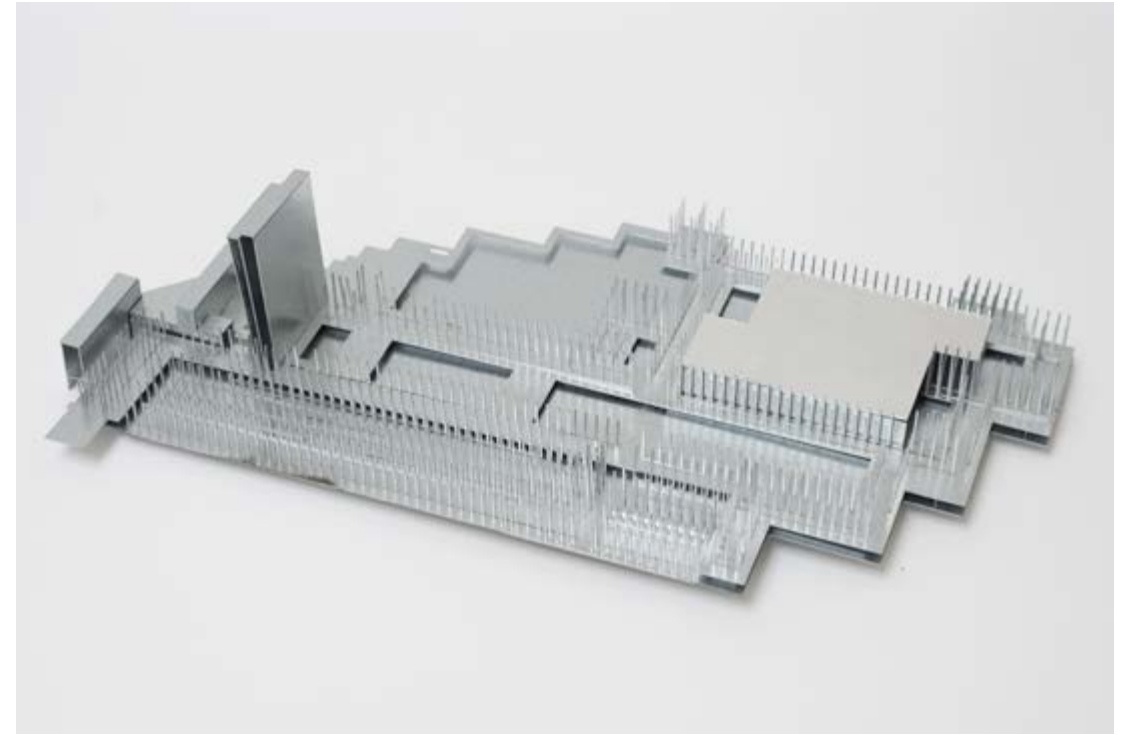
Strategy Supplementation
Slovak Radio, Bratislava, Slovakia
M. Búran, M. Mikovčák, Studio of J. Studený and B. Brádňanský



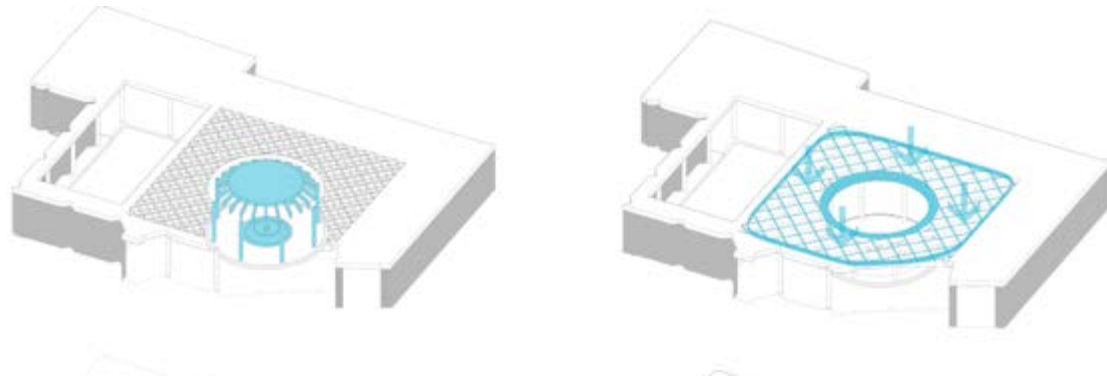
Strategy Expansion
Square „Kamenné námestie“, Bratislava, Slovakia
M. Búran, F. Kusák, E. Beňuška, Studio of J. Studený and B. Brádňanský



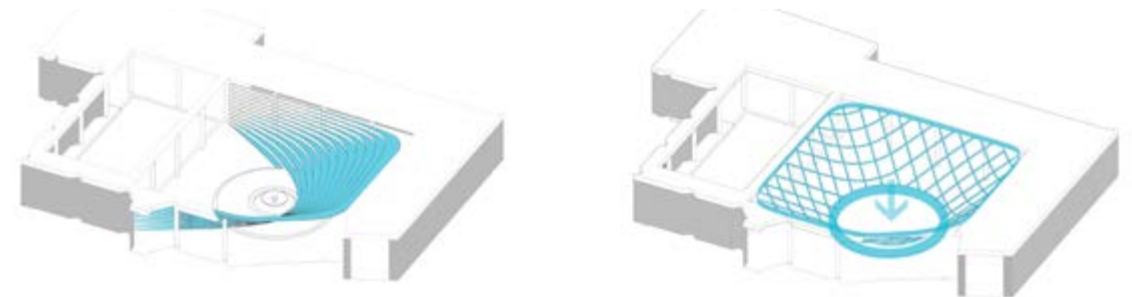
Strategy Replacement
Embassy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Berlin, Germany
J. Horňák, Studio of J. Studený and B. Brádňanský

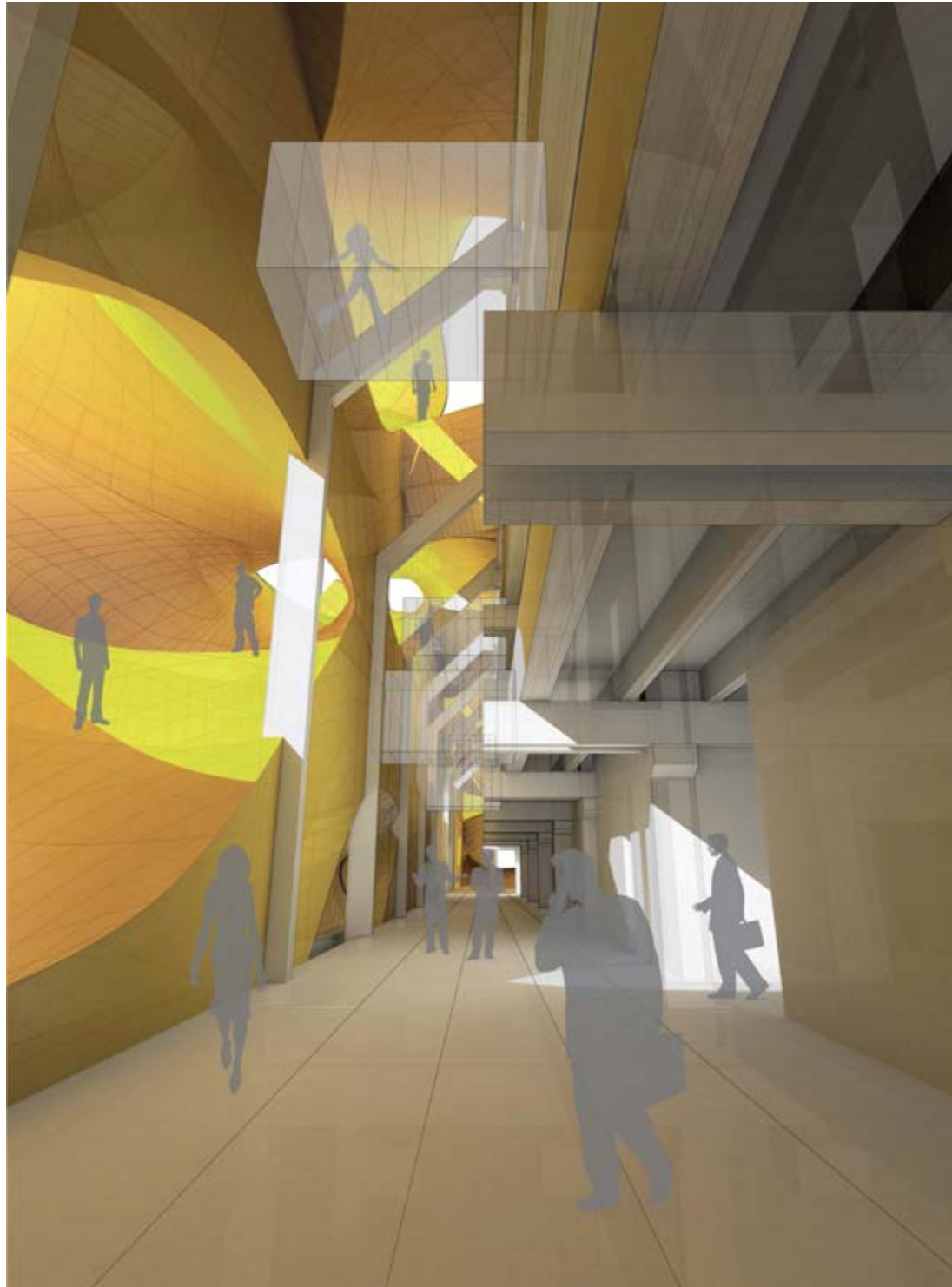


Strategy Concentrating
Incheba, Bratislava, Slovakia
M. Studničná, Studio of J. Studený and D. Pišteková

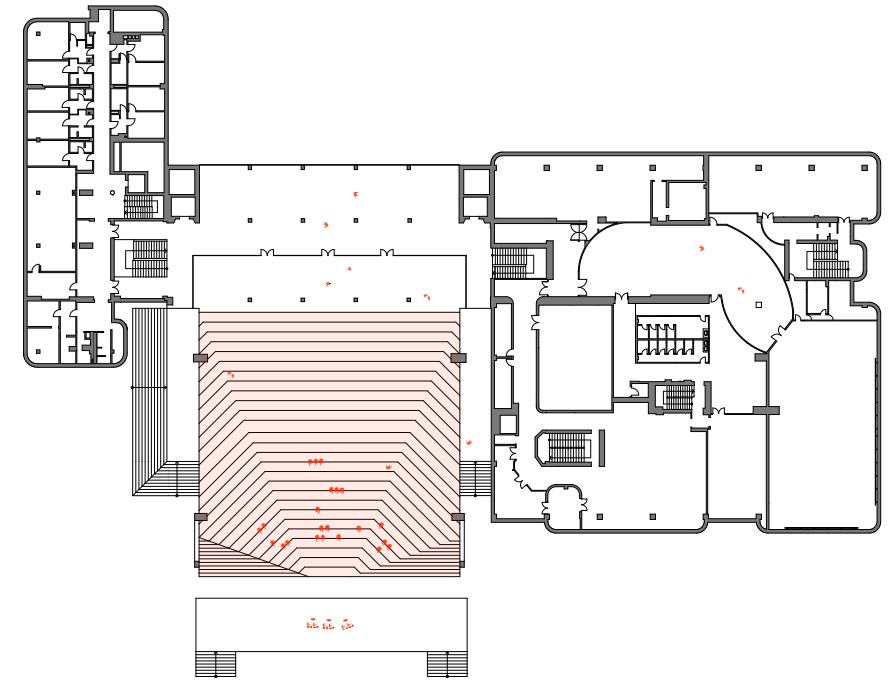


Auditorium Bezistan, Beograd, Serbia
E. Kvassayová, P. Olejňák, M. Krpálová, workshop

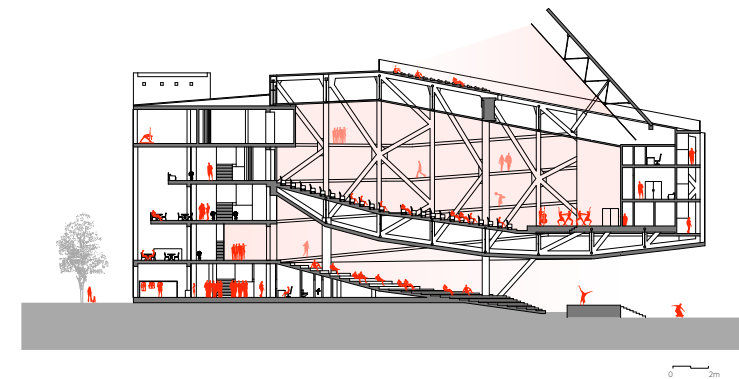




Market Hall „Nová tržnica“, Bratislava, Slovakia
P. Olejňák, Studio of V. Halada and B. Brádňanský



1st floor



section

Dezember Palast, Katowice, Poland
S. Gálová, Studio of P. Hájek and V. Halada



Thirty years after the change of political system in Central-Eastern Europe, this exhibition investigates the shared architectural heritage of the state-socialist period, or more precisely, what part of that heritage that has survived. Reading the reports on the architectural histories of the four V4 countries, it becomes clear they had one special period in common, which is the historicism of Socialist Realism. Despite slight differences between countries the approaches described here occurred more or less parallel to Western architectural trends. However, some characteristics of the state-socialist period were determinative for the future of this architectural heritage: the raw quality of materials, the low level of building industry, and, especially, the relationship between the political authorities and architecture. Like any other economic development, the party and the government communicated architectural projects as outcome that demonstrated the success of the political system. This explains why after the change in regime people barely protested the demolition of some buildings from the previous era. As the euphoria generated by the 'return to Europe' waned, there emerged an ambivalent nostalgia for the former social system, but not for its architecture. Consequently, evaluating this architectural period was left to historians of art and architecture, professionals who performed and continue to perform this work amidst the dual difficulties caused by ownership interest and public disinterest. The rapid neo-liberalisation process – though still marked by path dependence – altered the property structure in these countries. Many former state-owned buildings were put on the market, while others were demolished and left empty and dilapidated. Others

were renovated and restored, and a lucky few had managed to retain most of their original qualities by the end of this process.

The public buildings selected by architectural historians for this exhibition represent the best examples of their kind from the state-socialist period – even though some of them have now been demolished or are in a state of decay and falling to ruin. We can celebrate the fact that about 20 per cent of the buildings presented here are now registered cultural heritage. But this label – like the images show – is not always enough to ensure authentic reconstruction. The building's fate, if it can retain its authenticity, depends on both its ability to adapt and its location within the city. The post-socialist city was long interpreted as reflecting a period of transition that should come to an end. After 30 years it seems that cities (post-socialist and others) are in a process of transformation that could continue to go on forever, and our built heritage – under the protective eyes of its defenders – should be a part of this.

Mariann Simon (HU)
architectural historian

ICONIC RUINS?

Post-war Socialist Architecture
in the Visegrad Countries

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Czech Centres

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