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Newer Serbian architecture and its audience

ABSTRACT: This review article retrospectively considers the main directions of development of Serbian architecture from the beginning of the 18th until the end of 20th century. How they were perceived socially is also taken into account. Initial, notional, technical, semiotic and stylistic properties of buildings on all territories where Serbs lived are questioned. New Serbian architecture is also presented, with the main authorial opuses and key works of individual periods pointed out. It is concluded that in the long term process of permanent Europeanization and modernisation of Serbian society, generations of active builders gave a big contribution to the civilization. Experiences show that significant objects of newer Serbian architecture are subjected to specific measures of evaluation by a number of judges composed by the representatives from different strata of the cultured public – from laymen to experts and scientists.

KEY WORDS: architecture, builders, Serbia, 18th–21st, century, Europeanization.

At the end of the last century three hundred years had passed from 1690, when, according to historiographers,¹ the age of development of Serbian late Medieval architecture ends and its inclusion in contemporary mid European stylistic contexts begins. With Serbian migration an unstoppable process of political and cultural emancipation of the Serbian nation began, which would gradually outgrow the provincial subservient position within the Ottoman Empire by creating a free Christian kingdom (since 1882) that was advanced and distinctive in many ways. In that long cultural-historical process, whose ideological performance, strategic objectives and empirical results can be subsumed in the phrase *permanent Europeanization* (especially from 1804 to 1914),² and from 1918 ever more prominent *modernisation*,³ generations of Serbian builders gave a big contribution to the civilization.⁴

Serbian architecture of the 18th century was marked by a crucial shift in the understanding of style, whose main goal was the preservation of creative continuity at the cost of giving up standing criteria of traditional Serbian-Byzantine architecture. In Serbian lands under the

¹ M. Jovanović, *Kraj srednjeg veka*, Glasnik Društva konzervatora Srbije 32, Beograd 2008, 49–50.

² Z. Manević, *Sto i prva evropeizacija*, Čovjek i prostor 10, Zagreb 1969, 14–15; A. Mitrović, *Evropeizacija i/ili modernizacija*. Deset teza, Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju 2, Beograd 1994, 143–145.

³ *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima XX veka* (proceedings), Beograd 1994; A. Kadijević, *Terminologija srpske arhitektonske istoriografije: Moderno, modernizam, modernizacija*, Arhitektura 88, Beograd 2005, 12–13.

⁴ *Leksikon neimara* (ed. Z. Manević), Beograd 2008.

Austrian and Venetian rule, sacred and profane construction was undergoing a process of gradual Europeanization, adapted to the legal norms and ideological control of foreign institutions. In the territories under the Ottoman rule, due to stricter legal constraints and greater scarcity,⁵ a significantly more modest shift in technical and aesthetic sphere of construction was made. However, a factor that symbolically connected building ambitions of Serbian patrons in different territories was an ideology of existential historicism,⁶ by which awareness was maintained of the need for bare survival of endangered artistic culture, which was highly developed in the Middle Ages. This ideology enabled the occurrence of qualitatively uneven continuity of construction in the areas on both sides of the Sava and Danube rivers, as well as a noticeable rise in the areas where, due to economic emancipation, Serbian population was allowed more ambitious endeavours. Systematic interference of Austrian government in the construction of Serbian churches on the territory of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, based on the deeper historical connection with the identical obstruction of construction in the areas under Turkish rule, did not stop the revival of monumental construction.

Productive and the most artistically successful activity was realized in Serbian sacral architecture during the second half of the 18th century in the area of Fruška Gora and Sremski Karlovci. It was encouraged by gradual withdrawal of Turks from the Danube region.⁷ Most of the older monastery churches were renewed and completed by baroque belfries, while some of the buildings got baroque facade and decoration. What remained was the single nave conception of sacral space divided into narthex, naos, and altar with rectangular or semicircular choirs, and a dome over pendentives which are placed at the intersection of crossed axes. Among the newer churches on the territory of the Diocese of Karlovci, aside from the majority in baroque style, a smaller number was built in the spirit of traditional conception (Kovilj) with noticeable memories of the foundations of Moravian Serbia.⁸ By the end of the century, as well as the beginning of the following one, late baroque style was ever more frequently mixed with elements of contemporary classicism in Vojvodina.⁹ With the introduction of polyphonic choral singing, choir spaces in city and village churches lost their importance in favour of spacious choir galleries above the narthex.

On territories under the Turkish rule log cabins and modest monastery lodgings were built and temples from late medieval period were restored. In Venetian Dalmatia and Boka Kotorska, along with the construction of small stone churches reminiscent of romantic and gothic styles, baroque tendencies grew stronger in the shaping of palaces and oratories.¹⁰ The

⁵ M. Šuput, *Srpska arhitektura u doba turske vlasti, 1459–1690*, Beograd 1984; Ibid, *Spomenici srpskog crkvenog graditeljstva XVI–XVII vek*, Beograd 1991; Lj. Stošić, *Srpska umetnost 1690–1740*, Beograd 2006, 51–88.

⁶ See: M. Jovanović, *Počeci srpskog stila*, Zbornik Narodnog muzeja XVII/2, Beograd 2004, 303–309. On the concept of historicism see: M. Jovanović, *Istorizam u umetnosti XIX veka*, Saopštenja XX–XXI, Beograd, 1988/1989, 275–284; A. Kadijević, *Istorizam*, Arhitektura 92, Beograd–Podgorica, 2005, 14.

⁷ V. Matić, *Arhitektura fruškogorskih manastira*, in: Fruškogorski manastiri (*exhibit catalogue*, SANU, Beograd 1990), 78–156.

⁸ M. Šuput, *Crkva manastira Manasije kao graditeljski uzor*, in: Manastir Resava, istorija i umetnost (proceedings, ed. V. J. Đurić), Despotovac 1995, 135–160.

⁹ M. Kolarić, *Klasicizam kod Srba*, vol. II, Beograd 1966; Z. Manević, *Klasicizam u srpskoj arhitekturi*, Zbornik Matice srpske za klasične studije 4–5, Novi Sad 2002–2003, 123–127; A. Kadijević, *Pogled na klasicizam u novijoj srpskoj arhitekturi*, Račanski zbornik 14, Bajina Bašta 2009, 115–122.

¹⁰ D. Medaković, *Srpska umetnost u XVIII veku*, Beograd 1980, 165–188.



Image 1. Hadži Nikola Živković, *Palace of Princess Ljubica* (Belgrade, 1829–1830)

church of the monastery Savina (1777–1799), by Korčulan builder Nikola Foretić, successfully merged the elements of ancient maritime tradition and contemporary stylistic aspirations.

During that period Belgrade, as the centre of Serbian culture, passed several times from Turkish into Austrian possession, making age long Ottoman style take on the elements of central European military and civil architecture.¹¹ However, due to a Turkish re-conquest, Belgrade would for a long time retain an essentially oriental look, until their final withdrawal in 1867 and reconstruction of the city in the trench.¹²

In the uprising and post uprising vassal principality of Serbia, for a long time Oriental-Balkan style was the dominant choice of the Serbian political elite, who were determined to support the Turks in almost every way.¹³ Profane architecture of oriental towns was dominated by half-timbered objects, with adobe filling and Roman tile roofs. Pivotal points of lively settlements became lodgings of the leaders of the uprising, among which the residences of Prince Miloš Obrenović are the most prominent. (Image 1) They were built by leading local

¹¹ D. Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd kao orijentalna varoš pod Turcima 1521–1867*, Beograd 1977; *Istorija Beograda* (ed. Z. Antić), Beograd 1995.

¹² M. Roter-Blagojević, *Stambena arhitektura Beograda u 19. i početkom 20. veka*, Beograd 2006; D. Đurić-Zamolo, *Graditelji Beograda 1815–1914*, Beograd 2009; Lj. Blagojević, *Urban Regularization of Belgrade, 1867: Trace vs. Erasure*, Serbian architectural Journal 1, Belgrade 2009, 27–44; N. Mišković, *Bazari i bulevari. Svet života u Beogradu 19. veka*, Beograd 2010.

¹³ See: B. Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije 1791–1848*, Beograd 1986.



Image 3. Adam Kverfeld *Cathedral church*
(Belgrade 1836–1839)

Image 2. *Church of Ascension*
(Pančevo 1810–1855)

builders – Hadži Nikola Živković, Nikola Đorđević and Janja Mihajlović. Karađorđe's city in Topola, the largest urban-architectural endeavour in Serbia during the First Uprising, gradually lost importance. The main centres of political power – Kragujevac, and then Belgrade, become the centres of building activity,¹⁴ so higher education in architecture was organised there since 1841.¹⁵ Aside from satisfying the requirements of public employers, personal needs of powerful individuals are expressed in current architecture.¹⁶ The transitional traditional-classicist style, by the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth decade grew into pure classicism of European provenance. Among the examples of the new style in the architecture of the capital, the following stand out: Đumurkana, houses of Cvetko Rajović, Stojan Simić and the castle of Prince Miloš in Sava Mala, built by central European engineers of Slavic and

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ M. Roter, *Nastava arhitekture na visokim i i visokoškolskim ustanovama u Beogradu tokom 19. i početkom 20. veka*, *Godišnjak grada Beograda XLIV*, Beograd 1997, 125–168.

¹⁶ A. Kadijević, *Arhitektura – okvir privatnog života u srpskim zemljama od početka devetnaestog veka do Prvog svetskog rata*, in: *Privatni život kod Srba u devetnaestom veku* (eds. A. Stolić and N. Makuljević), Beograd 2006, 245–258.

Germanic origin. In church architecture late baroque and classicist elements were still mixed (Church of Assumption in Pančevo, Congregational Church in Belgrade),¹⁷ (Images 2–3), occasionally completed by historicist reminiscences of medieval Moravian architecture (Topčiderska Church).¹⁸

During the middle of the 19th century romanticism was the most dominant style, more popular than classicism because it reminded people of Medieval Serbian architecture.¹⁹ Integrity of the façade and free, often bizarre ornaments, as well as the tendency towards pyramidal composition of the volume, were constant romantic opponents to the classicistically ordered system of composition. Facing the worlds of imagination and history, builders of the epoch of romanticist historicism developed two streams – international (Eye Clinic in Belgrade, “Staro Zdanje” Hotel in Aranđelovac, churches in Veliko Gradište, Grocka, Obrenovac and others), and mono-national, distinctly Serbian, with recognisable elements of medieval national architecture. Romanticist natural international eclecticism achieved its highest prominence in the representative Captain Miša’s Edifice in Belgrade (1863), (Image 4) inspired by Vienna Rundbogenstil.²⁰ With Jan Nevolá, the author of that monumental object, the main representatives of Serbian romanticism were Nastas Đorđević, Kosta Šreplović, Jovan Frencl and Andrija Vuković. Initiated in the works of the Damjanov team,²¹ the national variant of Serbian romanticism achieved its purified academic form in Neo-Byzantine buildings of students of the Vienna professor Theophil Hansen – Svetozar Ivačković, Dušan Živanović, Vladimir Nikolić and Jovan Ilkić.²²

During the last quarter of the century, a local variant of the Central European Academic Art architecture, established under the influences of authoritative university centres – Vienna, Budapest, Munich, Karlsruhe, Berlin and Zurich, began to develop in urbanistically trans-



Image 4. Jan Nevole, *Kapetan Miša's Edifice* (Belgrade 1863)

¹⁷ See: Z. Manević, *Sukob između tipičnog i atipičnog u srpskom crkvenom graditeljstvu novijeg doba*, in: Tradicija i savremeno srpsko crkveno graditeljstvo (proceedings, eds. B. Stojkov and Z. Manević), Beograd 1995, 135–140; B. Vujović, *Saborna crkva u Beogradu*, Beograd 1996; A. Kadjićević, *Arhitektura hrama*, in: Hram Uspenja Presvete Bogorodice u Pančevu (ed. M. Jovanović), Pančevo 2008, 11–26.

¹⁸ I. M. Zdravković, *Izgradnja Topčiderske crkve*, Godišnjak Muzeja grada Beograda I, Beograd 1954, 201–205; K. Mitrović, *Topčider. Dvor Kneza Miloša Obrenovića*, Beograd 2008.

¹⁹ Z. Manević, *Romantična arhitektura*, Beograd 1990; B. Nestorović, *Arhitektura Srbije u XIX veku*, Beograd 2006, 159–258; M. Roter-Blagojević, *Stambena arhitektura Beograda u 19. i početkom 20. veka*, Beograd 2006.

²⁰ T. Borić, *Kapetan Mišino zdanje*, in: Dobrotvori Beogradskom Univerzitetu (exhibit catalogue, eds. M. Šuput and T. Bošnjak), Beograd 2005, 42–47 (with older references).

²¹ N. Makuljević, *Andreja Damjanov: arhitekta poznoosmanskog Balkana*, Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske 38, Novi Sad 2010, 137–149 (with detailed older references).

²² M. Jovanović, *Teofil Hansen, „hanzenatika“ i Hanzenovi srpski učenici*, Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti 21, Novi Sad 1985, 235–260; A. Kadjićević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi (sredina XIX–XX veka)*, Beograd 2007, 69–114; N. Makuljević, *Crkvena umetnost u Kraljevini Srbiji (1882–1914)*, Beograd 2007, 219–252.



Image 5. Aleksandar Bugarski, *Old Court* (Belgrade 1881–1884)



Image 6. Andra Stevanović – Nikola Nestorović, *Funds Administration* (Belgrade 1903)

formed Serbian towns²³. The first phase of Serbian Academic Art was governed by strict concepts of normative eclecticism with prevailing Neo-Renaissance predilections (National Theatre and the Old Palace by Aleksandar Bugarski, Image 5, residential-commercial buildings by Konstantin Jovanović, Ministry of Justice by Svetozar Ivačković in Belgrade), and during the second phase from 1900 to 1914 more liberal composition and decoration methods with loose hierarchy gained prominence and they combined elements of baroque, rococo, classicism and secession²⁴. The building of the Funds Administration by Andra Stevanović and Nikola Nestorović (Image 6) and the National Assembly building by Konstantin Jovanović and Jovan Ilkić in Belgrade are the most prominent in that period due to their distinctive external and internal designs. The same is true of municipal administration and court buildings in Kruševac and Kragujevac, grammar schools in Niš and Valjevo, barracks in Užice and Čačak.²⁵ By consistent insistence on the academic concept, with a few exceptions (such as the Municipal Administration building in Vranje built in the Serbian-Byzantine style)²⁶ (Image 7), the Eurocentric cultural orientation of the official architectural establishment was confirmed. Ever more prominent specialisation in the teaching of architecture organised during the late 19th century at the Belgrade School of Technical Sciences following the models of Vienna and German polytechnic schools, contributed to domination of the Academic Art. Alongside the official state ones, private design studios blossomed gradually. In church and memorial architecture, as well as in the construction of private residences, the modern variant of the national style survived, increasingly being enriched with decorative and compositional motifs of secession (Ministry of Education and the Main Telephone Switchboard Office in Belgrade by Branko Tanazević, Image 8).²⁷

In the early 20th century, late romanticism and Academic Art were accompanied by the local variant of secession expressed in two forms – international and national.²⁸ Imported from Vienna as a ready-made doctrine of design, it never became the official style of the state or in schools, but rather a favourite theme for young, yet undiscovered architects who enjoyed the support of open-minded entrepreneurs. Along with Azriel's Department Store building²⁹ (Image 9), constructed under the influences of the Vienna style, the most significant example of the international form of the Serbian secession is the Moskva Hotel in Belgrade³⁰ (Image 10) marked

²³ A. Kadijević, *Arhitektura i urbanizam u Srbiji od 1854. do 1904. godine*, in: *Nauka i tehnika u Srbiji druge polovine XIX veka* (proceedings, ed. T. I. Podgorac), Kragujevac 1998, 263–284.

²⁴ A. Kadijević, *Estetika arhitekture akademizma (XIX–XX vek)*, Beograd 2005, 289–346.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ A. Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja...*, 152–153.

²⁷ M. Gordić, *Ministarstvo prosvete*, Beograd 1996; B. Nestorović, *Arhitektura Srbije u XIX veku*, Beograd 2006, 524, 526; A. Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja...*, 144–148.

²⁸ Ž. Škalamera, *Secesija u srpskoj arhitekturi*, Zbornik Narodnog muzeja XII-2, Beograd 1985, 7–12; A. Kadijević, *Two courses of the Serbian Art-Nouveau: International and National (Dva toka srpskog arhitektonskog Ar-Nuova: Internacionalni i nacionalni)*, Heritage (Nasleđe) V, Beograd 2004, 53–70; *Secesija na beogradskim fasadama* (photo exhibition by M. Jurišić, text by M. Jovanović, catalogue by S. Toševa), Beograd 2008; Lj. Lazić, *Secesija u Novom Sadu*, Novi Sad 2009.

²⁹ Ž. Škalamera, *Secesija u arhitekturi Beograda 1900–1914*, Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske 3, Novi Sad 1967, 323–325; S. G. Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda XIX i XX veka*, Beograd 2005, t. II, 681.

³⁰ Ž. Škalamera, *op. cit.*, 323; T. Borić, *Terazije, urbanistički i arhitektonski razvoj*, Beograd 2004, 159–163; S. G. Bogunović, *op. cit.*, 803; B. Nestorović, *op. cit.*, 465; D. Maskareli, *Hotel 'Moskva' u Beogradu*, DaNS 55, Novi Sad 2006, 70–71.



Image 7. Petar Popović, *County Headquarters* (Vranje 1908)



Image 8. Branko Tanazević, *Main Telephone Switchboard Office* (Belgrade 1908)

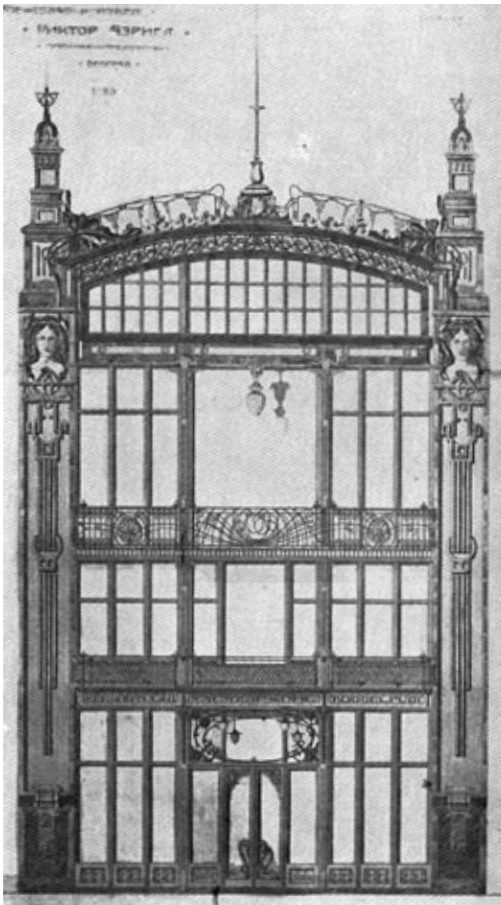


Image 9. Viktor Azriel, *Department Store* (Belgrade 1907)



Image 10. Jovan Ilkić and others, *Moskva Hotel* (Belgrade 1906)

by a significant influence of the Saint Petersburg version of this important world movement. In the church architecture the popular Neo-Moravian version of the national style can be seen in the construction of the mausoleum of the Karadorđević dynasty in Oplenac³¹, based on non-national stylistic models.

During the period between the two world wars, best known for its dynamic cultural milieu of the multinational Yugoslav community, Serbian architecture developed through several simultaneous styles – late secession, Serbian-Byzantine and the Yugoslav style, folklore style, Art Deco, Academic Art and modernism.³² (pics. 11, 12) During the 1930's, Academic Art was still the dominant official state style supported by expert engagement of Russian emigrant Academic architects Krasnov and Baumgarten.³³ (Image 13) During that period, church masonry was booming after centuries of an imposed state of falling behind. The construction of the two most monumental cathedrals – those of St. Sava and St. Marko began in Belgrade.³⁴ (Image 14) The national style in sacral and profane architecture was versatilely developed by Momir Korunović, Dragutin Maslać, Petar Popović and Aleksandar Deroko,³⁵ while young architects of modern orientation formed the Group of Architects of the Modern Movement (1928–1934).³⁶ The ambitious programme of constructing public buildings in different parts of the new country inevitably involved a crucial influence of Belgrade architects on shaping regional centres such as Skoplje, Cetinje, Banjaluka, Niš, Novi Sad and Kragujevac.

During the 1940's, the Modern Movement assumed dominance in residential and public architecture and at the time, the concepts of Milan Zloković (Image 15) Branislav Kojić, Dušan Babić, Jan Dubovi rose above the rest, as did urban planning ideas of Nikola Dobrović.³⁷ Modernism secured its qualitative sway on the open scene with the legendary trilogy of the most gifted Serbian architect of the period Dragiša Brašovan (Air Forces Headquarters in Zemun, the Provincial Administrative Centre building in Novi Sad and the State Printing Office in Belgrade). (Images 16–17) Frontrunners of the Academic Movement – Milutin Borisavljević,

³¹ M. Jovanović, *Oplenac*, Topola 1989.

³² Z. Manević, *Pojava moderne arhitekture u Srbiji* (manuscript of the doctoral thesis defended at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Belgrade), 1979; Z. Manević, *Jučerašnje graditeljstvo*, Urbanizam Beograda 53–54, Beograd 1979, Prilog 9, I–XXX; D. Milašinović-Marić, *Vodič kroz modernu arhitekturu Beograda*, Beograd 2002; A. Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi 1904–1941*, Beograd 2007.

³³ T. T. Milenković, *Ruski inženjeri u Jugoslaviji 1919–1941*, Beograd 1997; M. Djurdjević – A. Kadjević, *Russian Emigrant Architects in Yugoslavia (1918–1941)*, Centropa 2, New York 2001, 139–148; A. Kadjević, *Uloga ruskih emigranata u beogradskoj arhitekturi između dva svetska rata*, Godišnjak grada Beograda LIX–L, Beograd 2002–2003, 131–142; A. Kadjević, *Osnovnye istoričeskie, ideologičeskie i estetičeskie aspekty arhitektury ruskoj emigracii v Jugoslavii*, u: *Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, arhitektura i iskusstvovedenie russkogo zarubež'ja* (ed. O. L. Leikind), Sankt Peterburg 2008, 325–336; A. Kadjević, *Dejatel'nost' russkikh emigrantov-arhitektorov v Jugoslavii meždu dvuma mirovyimi vojnami*, u: *Arhitekturnoe nasledie Russkogo zarubež'ja* (ed. S. S. Levoško), Sankt Peterburg 2008, 248–256.

³⁴ B. Pešić, *Spomen hram Sv. Save na Vračaru u Beogradu 1895–1988*, Beograd, 1988; M. Đurđević, *Arhitekti Petar i Branko Krstić*, Beograd 1996; A. Kadjević, *Prilog proučavanju arhitekture crkve Sv. Marka na beogradskom Tašmajdanu*, Nasleđe 1, Beograd 1997, 75–80; M. Jovanović, *Hram Svetog Save u Beogradu*, Beograd 2007.

³⁵ A. Kadjević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila...*, 181–330; M. Janakova-Grujić, *Arhitekta Dragutin Maslać (1875–1937)*, Beograd 2007; A. Ignjatović, *op. cit.*

³⁶ M. Đurđević, *60 godina od osnivanja grupe arhitekata modernog pravca*, Moment 13, Beograd 1989, 86–87; V. Kamilić, *Osvrt na delatnost Grupe arhitekata modernog pravca*, Godišnjak grada Beograda LV–LVI, Beograd 2008–2009, 239–264.

³⁷ Z. Manević, *op. cit.*; D. Milašinović-Marić, *Arhitekta Jan Dubovi*, Beograd 2001; M. Vukotić-Lazar, *Beogradsko razdoblje arhitekta Nikole Dobrovića*, Beograd 2002.



Image 11. Viktor Lukomski, Nikolaj Krasnov, Sergej Smirnov and Živojin Nikolić, *Dedinje Court* (Belgrade 1924–1929)



Image 12. Momir Korunović, *Post Office 2* (Belgrade 1928–1929)



Image 13. Nikolaj Krasnov, *Ministries in Nemanjina Street* (Belgrade 1922–1930)

Image 14. Petar and Branko Krstić, *Church of St. Marko* (Belgrade 1930–1939)



Image 15. Milan Zloković, *Own House* (Belgrade 1927)



Image 16. Dragiša Brašovan, *State Printing House* (Belgrade 1933–1940)



Image 17. Dragiša Brašovan, *Danube County Administrative Building* (Novi Sad 1935–1940)

Svetozar Jovanović and Dimitrije M. Leko,³⁸ reluctantly accepted the methods of the Belgrade modernism in the years just before the war, and the majority of other Serbian architects unwillingly did so too in pursuit of jobs. Folklore style ideas found fertile ground between the two wars in the works of Branislav Kojić, Momir Korunović and Aleksandar Deroko.³⁹ On the other hand, ideas of the purist-functionalistic avant-garde during the end of the period were promoted by Serbian students of Corbusier Jovan Krunić, Branko Petričić and Milorad Pantović.

During the first years of the Second World War Serbian architects leaned towards declarative socialist realism as a form of command art founded upon the dictate of a single-party establishment. Architecture nationally recognisable in form and socialist in contents was sought after.⁴⁰ In practice, the modernistic stereotype of box-like buildings was infinitely reproduced with only traces of hierarchic Academic composition. This bureaucratic, collective form of architectural thought which reflected the poverty of the society after the war and its ideological uniformity, doctrinally taken over from the USSR, was timidly criticised at the Conference of Yugoslav Architects held in Dubrovnik in 1950, and rejected in practice afterwards.

During the next period, as economy improved conditions were set for activities of independent architectural studios and entrepreneurial design firms. A time of prosperity came for Belgrade authorial schools of modern architecture led by Aleksej Brkić, Milorad Macura, Ivo Kurtović, Ivan Antić, Uroš Martinović, Mihajlo Mitrović and Bogdan Bogdanović.⁴¹ Unsatisfied with the way the field was organised in his homeland, while in emigration Aljoša Josić achieved world reputation for his undertakings in urbanism achieved together with Shadrach Woods and George Candilis.⁴² With the building of the Federal Secretariat of National Defence (Image 18) the leading ideologist of Serbian modernism between the wars Nikola Dobrović successfully completed the full circle of his several decades long career.⁴³ He also initiated the construction of Novi Beograd on the basis of acknowledged solutions of modern urbanism.

Renowned for its absence of dogma and spiritual, unorthodox functionalism,⁴⁴ The Belgrade school successfully represented the era of high social standard and socialist pluralistic aesthetics. (Images 19–21) Based at first on methods of Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, the Belgrade school gradually developed its specific regional form of non-canonical modernism. In the early 1980's academic modernism was suppressed by critically oriented postmodern ideas generally embodied in theory and unimplemented projects of ambitious authorial teams.⁴⁵

³⁸ A. Kadijević, *Estetika arhitekture akademizma...*, 361–367.

³⁹ Z. M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, Beograd 1991; S. Toševa, *Branislav Kojić*, Beograd 1998; A. Kadijević, *Momir Korunović*, Beograd 1996.

⁴⁰ A. Kadijević, *On socialist realism in the architecture of Belgrade and its contradictory interpretations*, Heritage IX, Belgrade 2008, 69–80.

⁴¹ See: *Leksikon neimara* (ed. Z. Manević), Beograd 2008.

⁴² J. Joedicke, *Candilis, Josic, Woods, une décennie d'architecture et d'urbanisme*, Paris 1968; T. Avermaete, *Another Modern: The Post-war Architecture and Urbanism of Candilis-Josic-Woods*, Rotterdam 2005; B. Chaljub, *Conversation avec Alexis Josic*, *AMC*, n°186, mars 2009, 80–86.

⁴³ B. Kovačević, *Arhitektura zgrade Generalštaba*, Beograd 1999; M. Vukotić, *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ M. Mitrović, *Novija arhitektura Beograda*, Beograd 1975; A. Brkić, *Znakovi u kamenu. Srpska moderna arhitektura 1930–1980*, Beograd 1992.

⁴⁵ On influences of postmodernism on the Serbian architecture see: D. Milašinović-Marić, *The Context, Continuity, Identity in the Serbian Architecture of Post-Modern Period*, in: *Architecture and urbanism at the turn of the II millennium*, Belgrade, 1996 (vol. 1), 453–460; M. R. Perović, *Serbian Architecture During the Last Decade of the XX century* (proceedings), Arhitektonski fakultet, material, vol. 75, Beograd 1998, 145–165; D. Milašinović-Marić, *Beogradska*



Image 18. Nikola Dobrović, *DSNO Edifice – Headquarters* (Belgrade 1963)



Image 19. Aleksej Brkić, *Edifice of Social Security* (Belgrade 1962)



Image 20. Ivan Antić – Ivanka Raspopović, *Museum of Modern Art* (Belgrade 1965)



Image 21. Mihajlo Mitrović, *Apartment Block in Braće Jugovića Street 10–12* (Belgrade 1964–1977)



Image 22. Branislav Mitrović – Vasilije Milunović,
interior Dušan Tešić, *Zepter Palace* (Belgrade 1997)

Image 23. Miladin Lukić,
Church of St. Luke (Belgrade 1995–1999)



The last decade of the century was marked by erosion of criteria within the semi criminal, internationally isolated nondemocratic political system. This was the time when extreme forms of turbo-architecture and nationalistic conservatism appeared. In spite of the dominance of retrograde trends, scarce elite of Serbian postmodernism and neo modernism managed to maintain creative communication with the world.⁴⁶ (Images 22–23)

The development of Serbian architecture and urbanism during this period of three centuries started off modestly, but decade after decade it conceptually grew increasingly emancipated and original. A vivid testimony to that is today's architectural portrait of the constantly growing capital city and other cities, in spite of never-ending efforts of political elites to control this development and instrumentalise it in a desirable way.⁴⁷ Even though there were pressures coming from the official circles which did not always have the necessary cultural

arhitektura poslednjih decenija dvadesetog veka, Arhitektura i urbanizam 6, Beograd 1999, 51–65; Lj. Miletić-Abramović, *Paralele i kontrasti. Srpska arhitektura 1980–2005*, Beograd 2007.

⁴⁶ M. Janakova, *Autori, dela, metodi u srpskoj arhitekturi na prelomu vekova*, Beograd 2006 (multimedia electronic edition); M. Mladenović, *Umetnost „devedesetih“ i naša arhitektura / O aktuelnosti*, in: *Projekti vizuelnih umetnosti* (ed. D. Jelenković), Pančevo 2006, 108–121; Z. M. Jovanović, *Između krize kriterijuma i novih vizija u sakralnom graditeljstvu Srpske pravoslavne crkve na primeru kapele na Bubnju kod Niša*, Leskovački zbornik XLVII, Leskovac 2007, 187–208; A. Kadrijević, *Savremeno srpsko crkveno graditeljstvo – tokovi, istraživanje i vrednovanje*, Novopazarski zbornik 32, Novi Pazar 2009, 149–163.

⁴⁷ Z. Manević, *Arhitektura između biznisa i kulture*, Izgradnja 3, Beograd 1987, 35–36; A. Milenković, *Architecture – politica ultra*, Beograd 1996; M. Popović, *Heraldički simboli na beogradskim javnim zdanjima*, Beograd 1997; A. Stupar, *Volja za moć: Rekonstrukcijom do vladarske katarze*, DaNS 44, Novi Sad 2003, 47–48; A. Ignjatović, *Arhitektura kao diskurs*, DaNS 45, Novi Sad 2004, 34; A. Kadrijević, *Uloga ideologije u novijoj arhitekturi i njena shvatanja u istoriografiji*, Nasleđe VIII, Beograd 2007, 225–237.

refinement, architecture with artistic ambitions survived, developed both quantitatively and qualitatively, diversified methodologically and defined its course.⁴⁸ This architecture reached great heights with recognisable authors and internationally noticed opera. Authors became increasingly expressive, which led to great advancement in scientific and construction branch of the field, particularly in innovative design engineering, theory of urbanism and designing process.

The most of the facades of public edifices, as well as a number of facades of single-family houses and residential-commercial buildings, are a result of clients' taste and needs, which were wholeheartedly indulged by Serbian and foreign designers. On the other hand, research shows that in three quarters of the constructed buildings, the influence of non-expert factors was not crucial, i.e. it was not dominantly ideologically postulated, but had and preserved authorial architectural character. After all, if it had not been so, today we could not discuss the artistic expression in architecture in Serbia.

Former experiences show that important buildings of recent Serbian architecture are subjected to specific evaluation criteria by a range of evaluators who come from different cultural layers – from laymen to experts and scientists⁴⁹. It is striking that the majority of users of architecture did not publicly pass their opinions, nor did they become involved in interpretation, evaluation, discussions etc. Their evaluations are primarily carried out in private circles. The functionality of the buildings is probably best known and understood by its direct users – owners, residents and employees. Judgment about architecture of the buildings of various purposes is also expressed by passers-by⁵⁰, occasional visitors and travelwriters, or those who observe the city from the distance, from air, rivers, through popular publications, cinema and electronic presentations. It can be concluded that the general public is not indifferent towards attractive buildings, but it does not have a regular habit of exploring the building through specialized and scientific publications. The general public perceives these buildings primarily as communicational hubs, symbols of history, places of significant events where they can evoke collective and personal memories, conclude personal errands, fulfill cultural needs, and less as works of art with a unique esthetic structure and a specific authorial style.

In the reality of mass communicational, buildings exist within certain hierarchies of value resulting from superficial knowledge of detailed principles of city planning and architecture, but more from relating to peripheral historic aspects or local perception of those buildings (urban legends, popular places with supernatural features, myths about “haunted” building, etc.). Buildings are more remembered than their designers, and they are often connected with persons who used to live and work there, they are compared to various means of transport, everyday objects, and beings from animal and plant life. They often serve as a means of social and cultural criticism, “evidence of domestic gloom”, “traditional running behind more developed countries”, “provincial megalomania”, “kitsch” or imprudent glorifications of “domestic construction industry”, which erects buildings “the greatest and the most luxurious buildings in the Balkans”. In such exaggerations, for pragmatic reasons, buildings happen to be used as

⁴⁸ A. Kadijević, *Comprehension of the purity of style and the authorial expression in recent Serbian architecture*, in: *Pure expression*, Pančevo 2008 (ed. D. Jelenković), 195–201.

⁴⁹ A. Milenković, *Arhitektura – horizonti vrednovanja*, Beograd 1988.

⁵⁰ R. Radović, *Prolaznici o arhitekturi*, in: *O arhitekturi*, Beograd 1971, 82–84.

“indicators” of creative superiority over other peoples and religions. Equivalently, striking Masonic symbols⁵¹ and emblems of obscure societies and sects are sought for rather than style-semiotic layers.

Even when they are being evaluated according to fragile, relativistic aesthetic criteria, buildings are respected for their size, height and dominant position in space. Such buildings are observed with the feeling of awe, especially the ones that hold governmental institutions, unavailable to the general public. An assembly of individuals of high power and the privileged, gathered behind massive facades and numerous police and military security, is usually not the subject of their concerns. It is important that “the chosen ones” feel safe in those buildings, and that they successfully fulfill their duties. From the structural aspect, it is important that the state buildings open to public are not “complicated” and that people circulate as fast as possible. Private residences are observed dually: in small-minded circles they are glorified as symbols of social prestige and high “taste”, while intellectuals and lower classes look askance at them as status symbols of pseudo-elite, often acquired by questionable financial arrangements⁵².

In the next segment of the range, an important place is taken by professionals involved in the immediate construction practice. Those professionals are designers, individuals from authoring teams, contractors, town planners and space planning engineers. They have a more or less elaborate review of older and newer buildings, which they often share with their colleagues from similar institutions. Newer buildings are favoured as “signposts” or rejected as failures, while older are respected as indisputable historical works. They rarely express their judgments publicly, mainly as members of the competition jury and town planning teams, rather than as strict critics who give a comprehensive explanation. Considering that as creators and business competitors, they cannot evaluate their own and other people’s work objectively, their opinions are largely expressed in narrow business circles.

Unlike them, higher forms of reception of architecture are being developed by specialized architecture critics and chronics, who are very rare here, and who do more complete analyses in articles and reports. Their conclusions, given without sufficient historical distance, are very direct, instantaneous and sincere. Despite certain deficiencies, the effectiveness of their criticism is great.⁵³

Last in range to evaluate certain buildings are historiographers, by definition committed for normative principles of evaluation, amongst which the principles of historic, ideological, interest and emotional distancing are highly regarded.⁵⁴ They can be journalists or scientists, university professors, museum or institute experts, conservers or independent, individual researchers. Even in that part of interpretation, which is considered to be the least biased, it is possible to find certain deviations, dogmatism and favouritism of certain buildings and architectural opuses. For example, modernism has been non-critically regarded through decades

⁵¹ Z. Lj. Nikolić, *Masonske simbole u Beogradu*, Beograd 2010.

⁵² Lj. Miletić-Abramović, *Arhitektura rezidencija i vila Beograda 1830–2000*, Beograd 2002.

⁵³ A. Kadijević, *Terminologija srpske arhitektonske istoriografije: Arhitektonska hronika i kritika kao istorijski izvori*, *Arhitektura* 97, Beograd–Podgorica 2006, 11.

⁵⁴ F. Kritovac, *Povijesne distance i arhitektura*, *De re Aedificatoria* 1, Beograd 1990, 33–41; A. Kadijević, *Vidovi distanciranja od pojava tokom njihovog tumačenja u arhitektonskoj istoriografiji*, *Nasleđe* X, Beograd 2009, 235–253.

to be the most progressive style here, especially the persona of Nikola Dobrović as its most faithful protagonist. An obvious fact has been neglected that Dobrović himself was being severely reprimanded by Theo van Doesburg, the leader of avant-garde in Europe, for “academism” in implementing outdated compositional methods and construction systems.⁵⁵ Modernism phases in the works of Milan Zloković, Dragiša Brašovan and Branislav Kojić is mostly treated as the most fruitful and fundamental in their works, although those doyens of new Serbian architecture used completely different styles in some of their best works.

The Institute for the Protection of Monuments of the city of Belgrade should determine its priorities in accordance with remarks expressed in historiographic studies. Since there are few of those works, especially those that are thorough and layered, conservation projects are either late or left out in many buildings, especially those protected by institutes that are far away from important historiographical sources. The efficiency of the Institute for the Protection of Monuments would be greatly improved if conservers (architects and historians of art) would have an access to the latest historiographical results in good time, and cooperate more beneficially with specialized interpreters. A more active involvement of citizens in the process of protection is justified and necessary.⁵⁶

Considering the fact that people in charge of the greatest political decisions concerning the faith of a city most often have no adequate architectural or historical-artistic education, it is not rare that in their projection of cultural, technical and construction and public-utility development of the city they do not take into advisement professional criteria, thus performing arbitrary and groundless actions with devastating consequences in terms of town planning and architectural and visual presentation of the city. This adverse voluntarism, full of spontaneous tendencies which basically does not have to be ill-intended, unilaterally striving towards “great projects” and buildings that would best present the period of their reign, could partly be managed by active media criticism of expert opinion and a strong resistance of the city architect. A more effective public presentation of certain significant buildings is obstructed by the fact that many of them have still not been returned to their original owners, who would undoubtedly be more ambitious in popularizing their cultural and artistic significance. A respectable step forward in this regard was taken in the year 2005 by the University of Belgrade, when they organized exhibitions on endowments that they managed until the expropriation after the World War II.⁵⁷

Although the angles of observation, ways of experiencing and evaluating architectural heritage differ significantly in the laymen and professional and scientific sphere, the attitudes that prevail within the two seemingly distant corpora in the final stage of historiographic research should be taken into account equally. Regardless of the deep methodological differences between the two levels of perception – the academic, which complexly judges the heritage by well-chosen words and arguments, and colloquial, which predominates in the street communication, public transport and bar tables, a desirable constant for a culture is effectiveness at

⁵⁵ T. van Doesburg, *Yugoslavia: Rivalling Influences – Nikola Dobrović and the Serbian Tradition*, in: *On European Architecture: Complete Essays from Het Bouwbedrijf 1924–1931*, Boston 1990, 289–295

⁵⁶ S. Dimitrijević-Marković, *Učešće građana kao predušlov za uspešnu zaštitu nasleđa*, Nasleđe XI, Beograd 2010, 185–192.

⁵⁷ *Benefactors to the University of Belgrade* (eds. M. Šuput and T. Bošnjak), Belgrade 2005.

all levels of criticism. Attitudes of laymen could be useful to professionals to pay attention to the visual effects of buildings in the area, to the needs and tastes of the masses, who, after all, set the tone of life in architectural environments and contexts. In addition, more of scientific exposés in media will contribute in terms that laymen express their observations less vulgarly and more complexly, trying to keep spontaneity and provocativeness of their judgments. The end result of raising the level of scientific, professional and laymen criticism along with their closer interconnection will be a greater respect for their architectural heritage and its adequate preservation⁵⁸.

Александар Кадијевић

НОВИЈА СРПСКА АРХИТЕКТУРА И ЊЕНА ПУБЛИКА

Резиме

У овом прегледном чланку ретроспективно се разматрају главни правци развоја српске архитектуре од почетка XVIII до краја XX века, као и видови њихове друштвене рецепције. Проблематизују се полазишна идејна, техничка, семиотичка и стилистичка својства изграђеног фонда на свим територијама на којима су Срби живели. Излаже се и периодизација новије српске архитектуре, издавају главни ауторски опуси и кључна дела појединачних раздобља. Закључује се да су у дуго-трајном културно-историјском процесу перманентне европеизације и модернизације српског друштва, генерације активних градитеља дале крупан цивилизацијски допринос.

Развој српске архитектуре и урбанизма у обухватном тровековном раздобљу текао је у почетку скромније, али из деценије у деценију концепцијски све еманципованије и оригиналније. О томе сликовито сведочи данашњи архитектонски лик константно увећаване престонице и других градова, упркос сталним покушајима политичких елита да га контролишу и инструментализују у пожељном смеру. Иако под притиском официјелних кругова који нису увек располагали потребним културним рафинманом, грађење са уметничким амбицијама се одржало, квантитативно и квалитативно развијало, методолошки раслојавало и профилисало. Досегло је и високе, ауторски препознатљиве домете и међународно примећене опусе. Досадашња искуства показују да се значајни објекти новије српске архитектуре подвргавају специфичним мерилима вредновања унутар ланца просудитеља који чине представници различитих слојева културне јавности – од лаика, до стручњака и научника.

⁵⁸ This paper was written as part of the project “History of Serbian Architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries” (Matica Srpska) and project no. 177013 of the Ministry of Science and Technological Development of Republic Serbia.