

## Decorative-formative and spatial organization of representative architecture 1930s – early 1950s as a reflection of the state-ideological goal

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**Summary.** During the first half of the social history XX century of European countries and the Soviet Union as a reaction to world events: the First World War, the revolutionary outbreaks in many European countries, the political, economic and cultural crisis, the disappointment of various segments of the population in the existing political regimes – in the European countries were born national-socialist parties that in some states formed totalitarian political regimes on the basis of a single party headed by a leader. From the side of state power, the replacement of the system of government led to the need for the formation of the urban environment as a carrier of a new state ideology, from the side of society there was a birth of a new social consciousness, which inevitably reflected in new directions of development of culture and architecture

During the 1930s, the Soviet Union, both theoretically and practically, consolidated itself in positions of totalitarianism of the authorities with corresponding changes in architecture. Due to the common features in the system of governance, European states and the USSR certainly had common directions in architecture – axial symmetry, which as an architectural means always proclaims the order in the state, the large scale of buildings – a sign of strength and invincibility, composition based on the subordination of parts as a whole, reflecting the need for praise of power. But the differences in social stratification, which is natural in European countries, created on the basis of taking into account the property status of the owner, and artificial, adopted in the USSR, on the basis of the rise of the social role of the worker as a social hegemonic, led to the embodiment to the architecture a different state-ideological goal: in European countries – the ideal of strength, power, order, national superiority over other peoples; in



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the Soviet Union – equality, reliability of the protection of the state, a bright future in the life of the people.

**Keywords:** European states, Soviet Union, architecture, political regime, totalitarianism, state symbols, form and style in architecture.

### THE INTRODUCTION

The first half of the twentieth century, beginning in the 1920s, marked the emergence of totalitarian regimes in European life as a reaction to the political upheavals that took place in a number of countries after the First World War.

The First World War caused a great political, economic and cultural crisis, rejecting the established norms, values, moral restrictions and especially the imagination of the value of human life [21]. After its completion, a revolutionary wave swept through Europe, which in 1917-1921 captured Russia, Spain, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy and other European countries [22]. As a result, representatives of the monopoly capital, the agrarian aristocracy, employees and part of the workers took the view that it was impossible to secure a solution to the crisis through bourgeois-parliamentary institutions [14] and nec-

essary to establish a rigid, authoritarian power. That is why, in a number of European countries, the formation of reactionary parties and the change of political regimes took place, and in Spain, Italy, Portugal and Germany a system of government was formed based on a one-party system headed by a leader. Representatives of these political forces called themselves National Socialists or fascists<sup>1</sup>.

For these countries, it was characterized by the presence of rigorous control on the part of the elite of power to all sides of life – an economy where private property and market relations were maintained, a policy of categorical non-perception of other political forces and movements, a culture in which various forms was reflected the idea of creating a public consciousness on the basis of the feeling of the exclusivity of the nation, and therefore its priority right to decide the fate of other peoples.

### THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

It is need to make comparison of the architectural heritage of European countries and the USSR that in the first half of the twentieth century belonged to states with totalitarian political regimes, to establish the main tendencies in their architecture – the common features and differences – and to find out the reasons for their appearance.

### THE METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

The methods of research of the problem under consideration are a comparative analysis of the historical architectural heritage that emerged during the 1920s and early 1950s in European countries and the USSR during the existence of totalitarian regimes, and the causal link between the political regime and architecture.

### THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What distinguished the Soviet political system from European political regimes? First, the idea of democracy in the form of local councils of people's deputies (the authorities from below, from the people – upwards) was absorbed by the party system, formed on the principle "on the contrary", as a command system (from the helmsman to the people). Therefore, in the process of perfection, it turned into a conglomerate in which the legislative branch of power became a puppet and completely dependent on the main party component of the system of government [2-4]. Second, there was no private property in the USSR. Land and other natural resources, all means of production belonged to the state, were at the disposal and under the strict control of the authorities. Thirdly, public consciousness was formed in the spirit of patriotism, love for national culture, faith in the bright future, which would determine the party leadership (which meant the transfer of responsibility for its own fate to the representatives of the authorities) and friendly relations with other peoples. The public consciousness forming the direction of the development of culture was a consequence of the embodiment of the state-ideological essence of social life to thinking of the society, which was programmed by the leadership of the state [6].

The means of architecture that are under the influence of state ideology, the specifics of the economic system, the formed psychology of society and social consciousness, forms an artificial environment of human being, which, on the one hand, reflects socio-political processes, on the other, creates an environment that educates a person in a certain the corresponding direction. Under totalitarian systems, both sides are pushing for a person stronger in the direction desired by the ruling power, limiting its freedom is felt stronger than in a democratic political system.

Thus, the first half of the twentieth century was marked both in Europe and in the Soviet Union by the creation of totalitarian regimes, which were clearly reflected in the formation of the architectural environment. So whether the common features in the political-economic system, political events and the development

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<sup>1</sup> The name "fascism" comes from the Latin. "Fasces" – "fascia", a handful of rods with an ax of a lictor (guardian of consuls in ancient Rome).

of the culture of European states and the USSR influenced onto architecture, its form and style? Have any cardinal differences been observed? When were they, what caused their appearance? Where did the causal link between the political-economic system and architecture look?

In Fig.1 there were given some examples of German architecture in the times of totalitarianism. The Berlin Reconstruction Program – transforming it into the capital of the world – was provided of the creation of two mutually perpendicular axes, along which the main buildings of the German Empire were to be located (see Fig.1, *a*). Thus, according to A. Speer's project, the North-South axis had to combine the railway station and the Hall of the People with 18,000 members present at a height of 320 meters with a vault of 315 meters in diameter (see Fig.1, *b-c*). In the interval between them it was necessary to place the largest triumphal arch in the world in height of 117 meters and a width of 170 meters [15]. But Hitler's main toy, according to the testimony of historian-analyst D. Khmelnskiy [24], was the railway, which he planned to build in the form of four-track tracks with a track width of 3 meters, first to Munich, and then to Spain, St. Petersburg and Donetsk, to India and Afghanistan. On these new tracks, 1,200-meter long trains had to be traversed with 41-meter long two-story wagons equipped with bathrooms, hairdressers, cinemas and an anti-aircraft platform.

Rationalistic German architecture with features of functionalist simplicity and neoclassical tendencies in the form of square pylons was supplemented by the Reichsandler - the state symbol in the form of an eagle holding a wreath with a swastika in the middle - an eastern symbol of death (see Fig.1, *h*), sculptures of the eagle (see Fig.1, *e*), his head (see Fig. 1, *k*), the eye (the lamps in the largest to date Tempelhof airport, see Fig.1, *m*), the bull (see Fig.1, *g*), the man (see Fig.1, *f*, *i*). For all the buildings was characterized by monumentality, axial symmetry of object-spatial structure, strict color and extraordinary ambitious architectural design – huge dimensions, the destination for the masses of people. German archi-

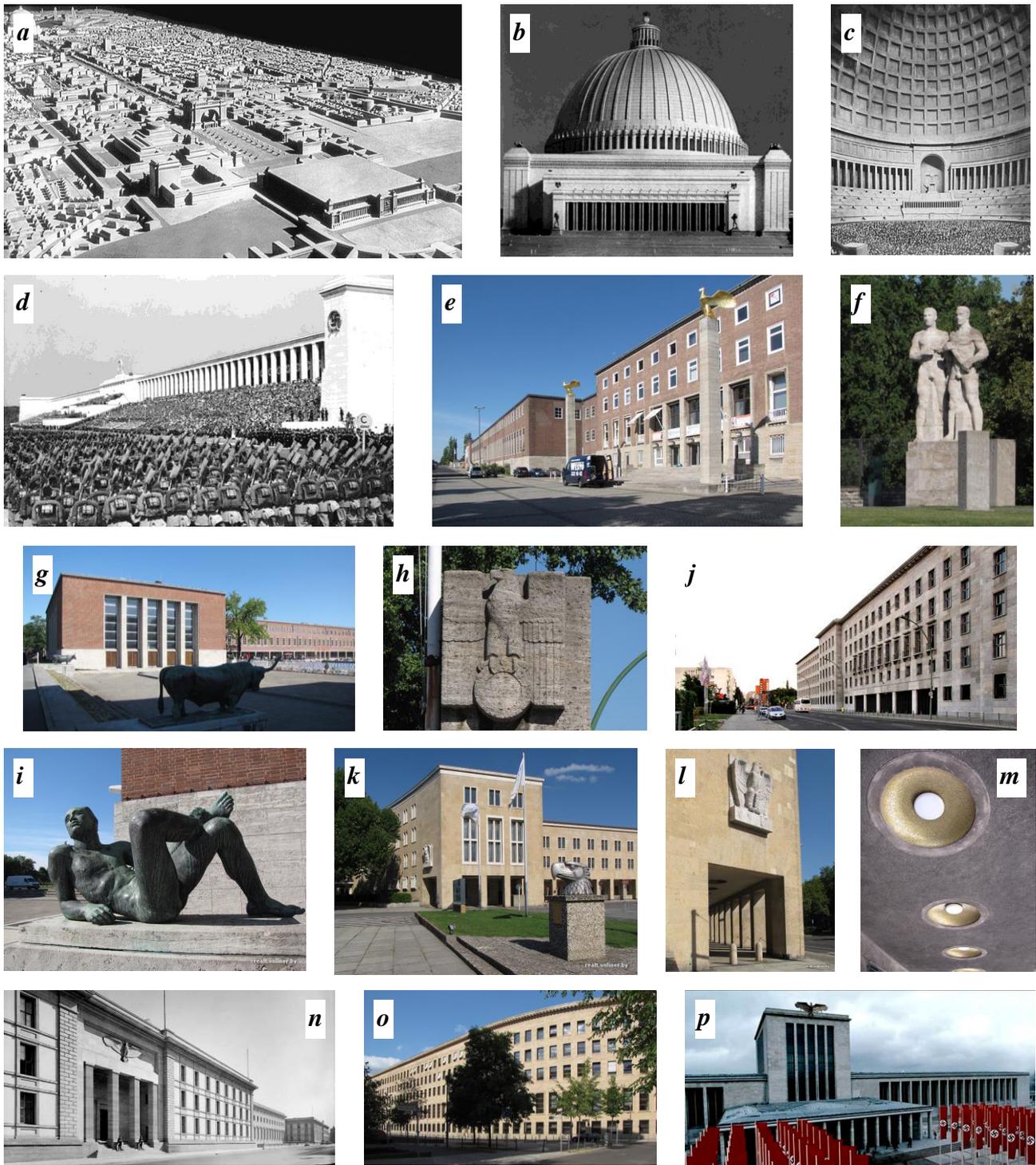
itects – supporters of the new government – have clearly created a new direction in architecture, using the new trends of the early twentieth century – functionalism - and investing in it a new great-power content through time-tested vertical divisions, present in classical architectural forms, almost Egyptian simplicity and conciseness of monumental forms.

The German ambitious plans to create the world capital were not fully implemented due to lack of funds in the country that occupied the territory of neighbouring countries.

The period of the establishment of the totalitarian regime in Italy was a turning point in which, as always, in art and architecture, two main tasks of creativity arose – the search for a new image and new means of expressiveness. It was on them that Italian artists and architects concentrated on finding solutions to the problem of creating an actual new form that would meet the requirements of the time and require the development of new professional techniques [16].

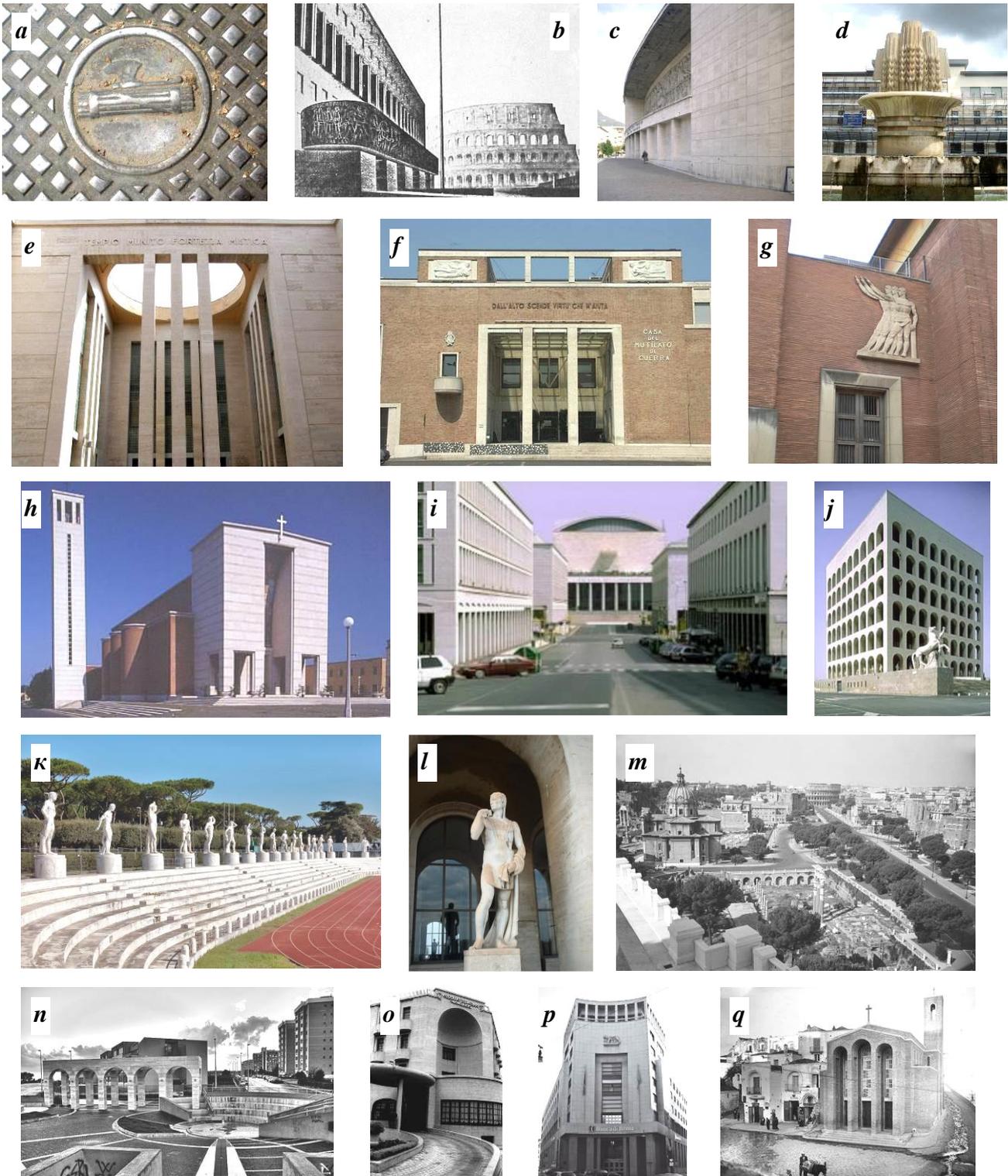
The Italian architecture of the totalitarian period of rule was based on the historical architectural heritage of ancient Rome (Fig.2). Even the name of the political regime was created with the use of ancient symbols (see Note 1). Ancient forms, built on the widespread use of arches, orders, sculptures, were transformed into lapidary forms: from the arcade only the contours of the caverns were left (see Fig.2, *j*, *n*, *o*, *q*), from the order – thin or massive pylons (see Fig.2, *e*, *f*), gracefully processed sculptures turned into clumsy figures with a primitive expression of the face as symbols of simple brute force (Fig.2, *j*, *k*, *l*), instead of perfect forms the friezes became unusually massive (Fig.2, *b*, *c*). In all the projects of the reconstruction of the city of Rome in the 1920-1940's there was a shameful attitude not only to the development of the historical Italian heritage [8, 19], but also to the preservation of urban ensembles of the historical centre (Fig.2, *m*), to the formed coastline, which led to the destruction of important architectural monuments and historically formed environments.

Architecture of Germany  
1930s - 1940s



**Fig.1.** Examples of German architecture 1930 – 40: *a* - Welthauptstadt Germania (Germany Capital of the World), Berlin, layout, arch. A. Speer; *b-c* - Hall of the people on 180 thousand, Berlin, layout, arch. A. Speer, outlook, interior; *d* - The main tribune of Zeppelinfeld for parades in the congresses of the NSDAP, Nuremberg; *e-h* - Reichssportfeld, Olympiastadion, Charlottenburg, Berlin, 1934-36; "House of German Sport", arch. V. Marh; sculpture "Runners Relay", courtyard with sculptures of bulls; Reichsadler; human sculpture; *i* - Imperial Ministry of Aviation, Berlin, 1936, architect. E. Zagabile; *j-m* - New Terminal Airport Tempelhof, Berlin, arch. E. Zagabile, 1934: fragments of the outlook, lamps; *n* - The Reich Chancery, Berlin, 1939, photo - Bundesarchiv, Germany; *o* - Ferbelliner Place, Berlin; *p* - Exhibition pavilion "Messe Berlin", arch. R. Hermish, 1937, during the filming of the film "Operation Valkyrie". All photos except "1, n" – [db@onliner.by](mailto:db@onliner.by) [15].

The architecture of Italy  
1920s - 1940s



**Fig.2.** Examples of Italian architecture 1920-40: *a* - sidewalk tile with licker ax and fascia; *b*-competition project at the Vittorio Palace, arch. Di Renzi, 1933; *c* - the building of the Financial Service in Bolzano; *d* - fountain with fascia and colic, Littoria-Latina; *i* - Municipality of Palermo; *f* - Invalid buildings, m. Ravenna; *g* - Saragos Gate, Bologna; *h* - the church, the city of Sabaudia, the province of Lazio; *i* - Congress Palace, 1954; *j* - Espo-sizione Universale Roma (EUR), Palace of Italian Civilization, arch. J. Gwernin, 1943; *k* - sculpture in EUR; *l* - the stadium in Rome; *m* - avenue in Rome, laid out through the ancient forums; *n* - Pomezia in the province of Lazio; *o* - building on o. Rhodes; *p* - Bank of Rome, Milan, 1941; *q* - a house in Basilicata. All photos - <https://lord-k.livejournal.com/199376.html> [1, 10]

But researcher S. Lipgart saw that there were the other side of the relationship between professionals and the customer to the heritage in the reconstruction of the city of Rome in the 1930s, it was the perception of historical buildings as spectacular theatrical scenery, where new buildings did not diminish the meaning of the olds and did not hide among them [20]. Yes, there was no gigantism in Italian fascist architecture, it was quite a measure of human scale [1, 10].

For the architecture of Portugal and Spain, the period of totalitarianism was also characterized by the simplicity of forming, the large scale of architectural objects – the symbols of the new government, the widespread construction of representative architectural buildings (Fig.3).

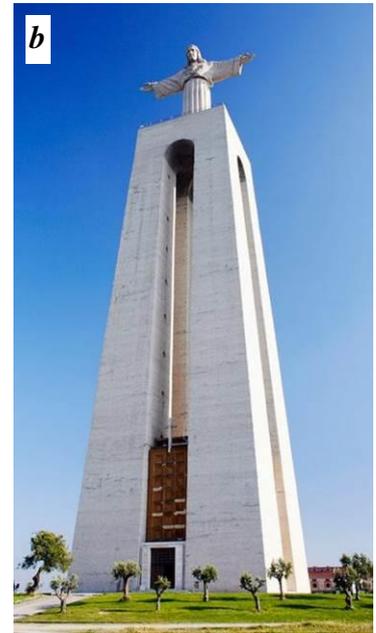
So, an overview of the architectural and urban heritage has shown that for all European countries, where reactionary regimes were established, the following was typical: gigantomania in the size of objects that were prestigious for the authorities and the state; style building based on national, ancient traditions; purism, asceticism, lapidary and, at the same time, simplicity and monumental forms; axial symmetry of city-building ensembles; moderate, but accurate, in the main places of use of state symbols; application of additional decorative symbols emphasizing the connection with the ancient past: figures of a physically strong man, a bull, horses, more often in the form of sculptures, less often - bas-relief; monotonous interpretation of the wall - without cavities or with identical cutouts, which served as a monumental background for a separate sculpture, emphasizing its symbolic meaning. The rationalism of architectural forms was manifested in the purity and concordance of the plan, the architectonics of the building, which brightly and precisely helped to focus the viewer's attention and emphasized the value of a single symbol. The simplicity of the formation of European functionalism, which was combined with the symmetry of the architectural-spatial composition and the neoclassical manifestations of the warrant, the great-power symbols and monumental forms, as well as expensive materials, created a special

direction of the open-mindedness of the state-ideological content of architecture. By such means, the architecture articulated outside clearly demonstrative and ideological reference to an absolutely indisputable order in the state, based on conquering the authorities, carrying the order to other peoples and deciding their fate at the discretion of this power.

D. Reynolds, who considered the specifics of the historical movement of the Soviet Union, argued that Stalin had formed the second revolution since October 1917, at that time "from above", which was supposed to transform both society and the economy. Its main objects were gigantic projects of industrial complexes, justified by ideological reasons. The victory of totalitarianism contributed to the emergence of an official company against "cosmopolitanism", whose purpose was to eliminate all kinds of internationalist tendencies [9]. Therefore, the Soviet Union entered the path of rebirth and creative rethinking of the classical heritage, as were defined by leading party documents. Before the war, the Soviet Union embarked on a path of rebirth and creative rethinking of the classical heritage. With drew from the tendencies of the spread of constructivist industrial forms in the urban environment, Soviet architecture moved through the formation of the Russian empire.

Thanks to the desire to glorify the existing system of government at that time, the USSR chose the classic principles in architecture: the classical perimeter building of quarters and the symmetrical structure of the facades were revived; the mandatory formation of the main city center on the basis of the axis of symmetry and the main buildings with towers and spikes in completion, with many state symbols, which looked like an explicit selection of decorative forms and details. Among the examples of the Soviet legacy of the so-called "Stalinist" period in Fig. 4, *b*, is a photo of a residential building located in Moscow on the street Chervonosil'skaya, whose facade architecture dated back to the then German architecture (see Fig.1, *e, j, o*).

Architecture of Portugal  
1930s - 1950s



Architecture of Spain  
1940s - 1950s



**Fig. 3.** Examples of Portuguese and Spanish architecture: *a* - pl. Areíro, m. Lisbon, arch. C. de Silva, 1930s; *b* - the statue of Christ in the city of Almada, 1949-1959; *c* - Palace of Justice, Porto, 1940s; *d* - the statue of Themis in front of the Palace of Justice; *e* - Memoir to killed in the Civil War, Valley of the dead, 1940s; *f* - Triumphal arch, arch. M.L. Otero, P.V. Santefliou, 1950-1956; *g* - Headquarters of the Air Forces, Madrid; *h* - Spain House, Madrid, arch. J. Otammendi, 1953. All photos - <https://birdinflight.com/ru/mir/20170522-architecture-european-dictators-2.html> [19]

Architecture of the Soviet Union  
1930s - the beginning of the 1950s



Architecture of Soviet Ukraine  
1930s - the beginning of the 1950s



**Fig. 4.** Examples of Soviet Architecture: RSFSR, Moscow: a - All-Union Agricultural Exhibition (AAE), sculpture "Worker and Collective Farmer", sculptor V. Mukhina; b - residential house, Chervonosil'skaya st., arch. I. Rozhin, A. Khryakov, 1937; c - residential building, Mokhovaya st., arch. I. Zholtovsky, 1934; d - AAE, pavilion of Georgia, arch. A. Kurdiani, G. Lezhava; i - Beijing Hotel, arch. D. Chechulin, 1949-1955, f - element of completion, g - frieze over the entrance; Ukrainian SSR, Kyiv, Khreshchatyk st.: h - residential complex number 23, 25, 27; i-j is the central part of the building No. 25 and its completion; k-l - the end of the dwelling house number 23 and decorative design of the bay window and balcony [17]

In the postwar period, Stalin's skyscrapers, "absolute absurdity, such figurines" were constructed in the words of D. Khmel'nitsky [24]. State symbols that had to remind of the role of the Soviet state in the life of the people and to demonstrate the differences between Soviet architecture and the architecture of the Russian Empire, began to appear anywhere. The unlimited number of that symbolism simply shouted about the ideological purpose, but at the same time it reduced its value. In addition to such obsessive use of symbolism, the psychological effect was enhanced by other decorative elements that performed an additional auxiliary function. It is a variety of symbols of fertility, labor, a bright future that awaits the people in the form of justice, equality, peaceful life, and well-being. The combination of a heavy order with a richly decorated facade created in the architecture of a fairy tale about a strong, reliable, mighty state, which promised protection and happiness to its people. An unlikely architectural form and style that did not correspond to real situations (repressions in the country and arms race among the states) formed a decorative screen that covered the real state-ideological content of the formed urban environment.

### THE CONCLUSIONS

1. Consequently, the architectural and urban heritage of European countries and the Soviet Union was formed at the time of the totalitarianization of political regimes. But European countries differed from the USSR by maintaining private property at the same time as the strict control of the state, the Soviet economic system provided for the full ownership of land and all means of production to the state. In European countries, social stratification was formed naturally on the basis of property status, in the USSR – on an artificially constructed system with workers – the class that has no property – above.

2. The political regimes of all the countries under review were organized on the basis of a system of government with a one-party system and a leader at the head.

3. The public consciousness of the peoples was formed in the spirit of faithfulness to the authorities; therefore, in culture and architecture, the manifestations of the state-ideological goal of countries with totalitarian political regimes were clearly reflected - the need to glorify forces, power and invincibility of power. The architectural heritage of European states significantly differed from that of the USSR by the fact that European states frankly proclaimed the ambition of their own political programs, and the Soviet state, having an artificially constructed social structure, with the help of architectural means created an idyll of peacefulness and a bright future for the people.

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**Декоративно-формообразующая и пространственная организация представительской архитектуры 1930-х – начала 1950-х годов как отображение государственно-идеологической цели**

*Людмила Бачинская*

**Аннотация.** В течение первой половины XX столетия социальной истории европейских стран и Советского Союза в ряде европейских стран зародились национал-социалистические партии, которые в нескольких государствах создали тоталитарные однопартийные политические режимы во главе с вождем. Эти события

произошли как реакция на мировые события – первую мировую войну, революционные всплески во многих европейских странах, политический, экономический и культурный кризисы, разочарование разных слоев населения в существовавших политических режимах. Со стороны государственной власти замена системы правления приводит к необходимости формирования архитектуры городской среды как носителя новой государственной идеологии, со стороны социума происходит рождение иного общественного сознания, что неминуемо отражается в новых направлениях развития культуры и архитектуры.

Советский Союз в течение 1930-х годов и теоретически, и практически укрепился на позициях тоталитаризации власти с соответствующими изменениями в архитектуре.

Имея общие черты в системе правления, европейские страны и СССР сформировали общие направления в архитектуре – осевую симметрию, что как архитектурный метод свидетельствует о порядке в государстве, большой масштаб сооружений – признак мощи и непобедимости, композицию на основе подчиненности частей целому, которая отображает необходимость прославления власти. Но отличия в социальной стратификации – естественной в европейских странах, созданной на основе учета имущественного положения владельца, и искусственной, принятой в СССР, на основе возвышения социальной роли рабочего как общественного гегемона – привели к внедрению в архитектуру разной государственно-идеологической цели: в европейских странах – идеала силы, мощи, порядка, национального превосходства над другими народами; в Советском Союзе – равенства, надежности защиты государством, светлого будущего в жизни народа.

**Ключевые слова:** европейские государства, Советский Союз, архитектура, политический режим, тоталитаризм, государственные символы, форма и стиль в архитектуре.