

PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN THE ARCHITECTURE OF UKRAINIAN MODERNISM

Workers' Clubs

Olha Deriabina, Marina Pominchuk, Olena Konoplova

ABSTRACT: Among the avant-garde monuments preserved in Kharkiv and creating its unique architectural character, the buildings of workers' clubs occupy a special place. The construction of buildings with such a function began in Kharkiv at the beginning of the 20th century, but after the October Revolution, workers' clubs became almost the main symbol of the era, because they symbolized the desire for a new life and the creation of a new person. In the works of avant-garde architects, the club became a favorite design theme. During the architectural competitions of the early and mid-1920s, a typology of club buildings was compiled and original compositional and artistic solutions formed, which reflected a creative discussion about the development of Ukrainian architecture: the struggle against the revival of baroque trends ended with the victory of a new direction — Modernism. The architecture of Kharkiv workers' clubs in the 1920s and 1930s reflects the development trends of Ukrainian modernism, but it has its own characteristics related to both regional features and the individuality of the masters who took part in their design. Kharkiv's clubs reflect the diversity of views of, and approaches to, form-giving by architects with different views and experience, whose buildings constitute a unique architectural heritage. The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristic features of Kharkiv workers' clubs and determine their place in the general picture of Ukrainian modern architecture for the further development of a program for their preservation. The research uses the methods of historical-architectural, functional-structural and stylistic analysis, which includes traditional general scientific approaches. The material collected, analyzed and systematized in this article can be used for further scientific research in the field of the development of historic architecture, for the implementation of project proposals for the restoration and conservation of individual monuments, and in education.

KEY WORDS: Ukrainian modernism, public buildings, avant-garde architecture, Kharkiv workers' clubs.

INTRODUCTION: The architecture of Ukrainian modernism developed in line with global changes in architectural design. The rejection of the aesthetic norms of the past, the desire to change the attitude towards space, form and construction clearly reflected in the architecture of public buildings, in particular, workers' clubs. A significant part of the heritage formed by buildings of this type is located in Kharkiv, which was the capital of Ukraine at that time (1919–1934s).

The architectural features of these monuments (the vast majority of which were granted monument status only in the mid-1990s.) and their contribution to the development of avant-garde architecture are still not sufficiently

researched. This article is devoted to the addition of existing data and their further systematization at a new level.

Questions related to the new attitude to architectural shape became the subject of study as early as the 1920s. Gan (1922), Ginzburg (1924), Golosov (1933), and Leonidov (1930) worked on the development of the theoretical principles of Constructivism. The main theorists of the Rationalists were Ladovskyi (1926), Dokuchaev, Krynskyi, Melnikov, Gegello, Turkus, and Lamtsov (middle of 1920–1930s).

The research of Aleksandrov (1971), Astafieva-Dlugach & Volchok (1989), Lavrentiev (2010), Khazanova (2000), Khan-Magomedov (1966, 1967, 2001), and the stages

of formation of avant-garde architecture, its artistic features, development and influence on further architectural practice are considered.

The works of Bouryak & Kreizer (2000), Bouryak et al., (2009), Cherkasova (2005), Lagutin (1953), Milashevska (1970), Ryabushyn & Shishkina (1984) and Rychkov (2008) are dedicated to the three-dimensional form, structure and artistic solutions of buildings and structures of this period.

Among the foreign researchers of avant-garde Cohen et al., (2011), whose research is mainly devoted to the problems of preserving the architectural and theoretical heritage of modern architecture.

The purpose of this article is to present the contribution of the architecture of public buildings, in particular workers' clubs, to Ukrainian modernism. The peculiarities of this process and the significance of the creative work of Kharkiv architects in the general context of avant-garde architecture will be explained.

The research uses the methods of historical-architectural, functional-structural and stylistic analysis, which includes traditional general scientific approaches. A comparative analysis of materials obtained from archival and literature sources will be held, together with a morphological analysis of objects using the grapho-analytical method. A historical approach is used in the study of the formation of avant-garde architecture and its role in the development of twentieth-century architecture. A study of the heritage of the period under consideration will be carried out, as well as the systematization of data on various concepts of avant-garde architecture. On-site surveys and photo-fixation of preserved objects of avant-garde architecture in Kharkiv were done.

Revolutionary transformations and the policy of the national revival in Ukraine created the conditions for a turbulent artistic and architectural life in the 1920s. A whole constellation of young and talented Ukrainian artists and architects affirmed new social ideals with their creativity (Khan-Magomedov, 2001; Konoplyova & Deriabina, 2019).

All types of fine arts developed, represented by such personalities as V. Yermilov, M. Boychuk, A. Petrytskyi, V. Palmov, D. Burluk, O. Bogomazov, B. Kosarev, and others (Ginzburg, 1924). The works of those years showed a synthesis of the national and a revolutionary approach. Artists participated in the development and design of tribunes, kiosks, billboards, posters, books and packaging (Sbitneva, 2003).

The creative discussion about the ways of development of the architecture of Ukraine, which unfolded in the early 1920s, and during which there was a struggle against the revival of baroque tendencies, ended with the victory

of a new direction, to which a number of experienced architects, who previously focused on the development of traditions or search for a "national style," ascribed (Yasievich, 1988). However, the nature of this struggle also depended on the specific conditions or the various cultural centers of the republic. The traditionalists had the strongest positions in Kyiv. Odesa experienced a violent fascination with left-wing art already in the first half of the 1920s. In Kharkiv, where large-scale construction took place in the 1920s, the influence of the architectural avant-garde was already evident in the mid-1920s.

Until the end of the 1920s, there were two competing organizations in Ukraine that united avant-garde architects. The Society of Modern Architects of Ukraine (SMAU 1928–1932s) and the All-Ukrainian Society of Proletarian Architects (AUSPA the mid 1920–1930s). SMAU fought for the revival of national features in architecture, and AUSPA — for modern architecture, the International Style.

Three main stylistic directions can be distinguished in the architecture of Kharkiv of this period. The first one is characterized by the use of the forms and techniques of folk timber architecture and Ukrainian Baroque, with typical forms of roofs, windows and timber carvings for folk dwellings. The second direction is characterized by the use of forms of Classicism. The third is the architectural avant-garde, the ideas of which were promoted mainly by creative youth (Konoplyova & Deriabina, 2020). This direction is characterized by rational construction and planning solutions with the use of the newest construction materials. Another group of architects formed the "Business Club", whose head was O. Linetskyi. Considering their main concern — holding exhibitions, organizing contests, etc. — this group did not participate in ideological disputes and discussions. Thus, despite differences in theoretical views, all Kharkiv architects to one degree or another were involved in the new architecture. This also applies to representatives of the "old school" (O. Linetskiy, O. Molokin) and academics (O. Beketov).

In practice, the manifestos and principles of the avant-garde were mainly implemented in industrial architecture, residential constructions, and in the architecture of workers' clubs (Lahutin, 1953).

The brief period of avant-garde architecture in Kharkiv is represented more than in other large cities of Ukraine, which was facilitated by the status of the capital city. In the late 1920s – early 1930s, the construction of public buildings based on the projects of supporters of innovative currents gained a large. Workers' clubs represent a significant part of this heritage (Rychkov, 2008).

An event in the architectural life of the city is the construction of workers' clubs and palaces of culture. The appearance in Kharkiv of buildings specially designed

for meeting and club events dates back to the first third of the 19th century. Until the moment when Kharkiv was declared the capital of Ukraine, the House of the Nobles' Assembly, the Commercial Club, the Officers' Assembly, the Assembly of Ensigns, etc. functioned in it. By the beginning of the 20th century, they were gradually replaced by clubs based on interests.

The People's House and the Workers' House are the prototypes of numerous workers' clubs. The People's House building was built in 1900–1902 in the neo-Renaissance style according to the project of O. Vincent under the direction of I. Zagoskin. The People's House was meant to house cultural and educational activities, whereas the Worker's House, built in 1903–1909 according to the project of the architect I. Zahoskin, was one of the centers of the revolutionary struggle of the Kharkiv proletariat.

After the October Revolution, about 15 new clubs were opened in Kharkiv, which carried out active cultural, educational and propaganda work. The clubs used different buildings, cooperating, mostly on a trade union basis, gathering workers from several enterprises of similar specialties (Cohen et al., 2011).

At the end of the 1920s, the construction of special buildings intended for club work also began in Kharkiv. At that time, the most common type of club was a "two-part club" with a separation of the show-part and club parts, which could have different architectural solutions.

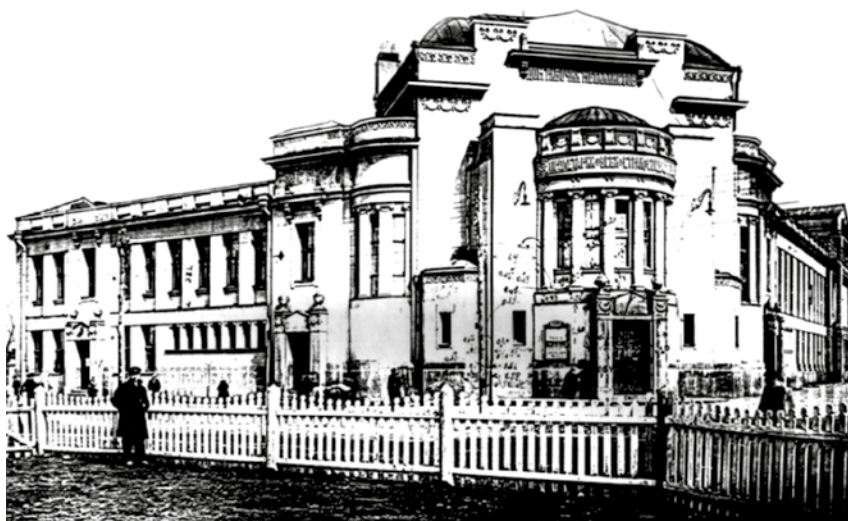
Modernist ideas in Kharkiv architecture had their own characteristics. The search for new approaches to form fascinated Kharkiv architects, but it was not as radical as in Moscow and Leningrad. The interpretation of the general programmatic attitudes of Kharkiv avant-garde architectural theorists formed the basis of original artistic and compositional decisions of the city's workers' clubs (Bouryak et al., 2009).

A number of reasons influenced the degree of "avant-garde" architectural solutions to Kharkiv clubs. Architects like O. Beketov, O. Linetskiy, O. Dmitriev, P. Alyoshin, and O. Molokin, before starting work on the projects of the Kharkiv clubs, were already established masters, whereas Ya. Steinberg, I. Malozyomov, I. Milinis, M. Lutskiy, V. Pushkarev, and V. Trotsenko were just starting their architectural activity. Young masters more easily accepted innovations in architecture, since they had no experience of working in other styles, and the older generation more often used their own vocabulary of forms and techniques.

Another important factor that influenced the nature of artistic decisions was that many architects who worked in Kharkiv were educated in other cities: O. Beketov, O. Dmitriev, P. Alyoshin, and O. Molokin, studied in St. Petersburg; I. Milinis, I. Malozyomov, and Ya. Shteinberg — in Kyiv; M. Lutskiy, V. Pushkarev and V. Trotsenko — in Kharkiv. The environment in which they were formed as architects was reflected in the stylistic characteristics of their work (Deryabina, 2013).

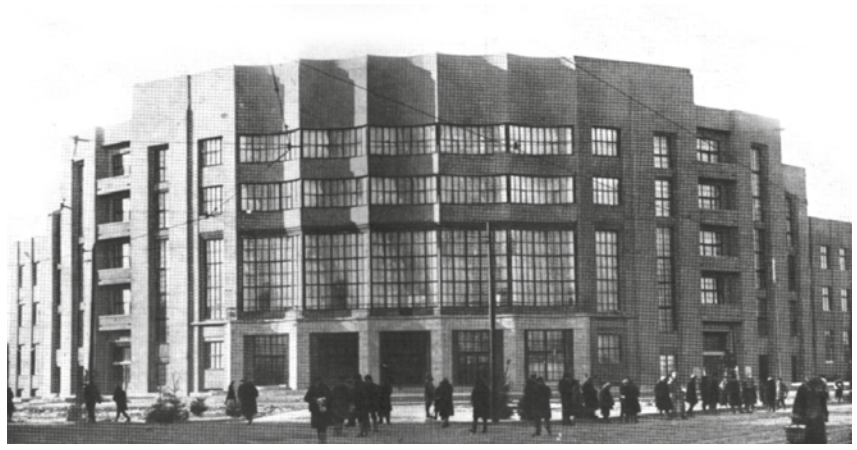
O. Beketov was an eclectic and used artistic techniques of various styles in his works. He was skeptical about Constructivist architecture. However, the building of the Electromechanical Faculty of KhPI characterizes his efforts in the field of avant-garde architecture. The competitive design of the State Industry Building (1925) was an attempt to create a building in a new aesthetic, made of new materials, based on academic composition techniques.

Analysis of the creative heritage of O. Beketov, in his numerous Kharkiv buildings, allows us to trace the origins of the author's attachment to certain compositional schemes and details. The connection with Classical and Baroque ensembles of St. Petersburg is undeniable. For all of his life, Beketov studied and admired the St Petersburg



01 The Central Club "Metalist", 1923, architect O. Beketov. © Kharkiv City Archive.

02 The Communication workers' club, 1927, architect O. Molokin.
© Kharkiv City Archive.



03 Railway Workers Palace of Culture in Kharkiv, 1928–1932,
architect O. Dmitriev.
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architecture. Many compositional techniques and details of this architecture were transferred to the architecture of Kharkiv and creatively reinterpreted by the master.

All these features were reflected in the architecture of the Central Club "Metalist" (the former Workhouse), the reconstruction of which Beketov began in 1923 with the participation of architect M. Zelenin. At that moment, Beketov could not rely on any examples of avant-garde solutions for club buildings, but he was certainly familiar with the program statements of both Constructivists and Rationalists. Therefore, he set the main task of creating the image of a "palace for workers". Keeping Zagoskin's idea as much as possible, the architect gave the club monumentality, using the artistic techniques of the previously erected building of the Kharkiv Medical Society in the design of its facades [FIGURE 01].

In 1927, the construction of the Communications Workers' Club began. The building was allocated a site in the center of the city, which determined its solution in the spirit of new architecture. Architect O. Molokin created an asymmetrical building composition that corresponded to the size and configuration of the site. The size and massing of the auditorium section of the building was emphasized by the vertical glazing between simplified and stylized

columns contrasted with the other section of the façade which grouped vertically proportioned windows in horizontal bands tied together with a projecting balcony which had a metal balustrade. The simplified Classical Order elements on the facade acted as a connecting link with the historical environment and also testified to the master's classical education. The vertical stairs, the nature of the balustrades on the balconies indicate that the author was well acquainted with the works of the leaders of avant-garde architecture [FIGURE 02].

O. Dmitriev in his work on the project of the Palace of Culture of Railway workers also used the motifs of his earlier work — the Palace of Culture of Metallurgists in Donetsk. In the planning decision of the building, a connection with the clubs of K. Melnikov (Rusakov Club, Porcelain Factory Club and Kauchuk Club). In addition, there is information that Dmitriev participated in the development of the project of the House of Culture of the Moscow-Narva District of Leningrad (co-authors O. Gegello, D. Krychevskiy, 1927), which used similar methods of composition formation. In general, the building of the railway workers' club gravitates towards the concept of Rationalists — a "sculptural" volume that ensures the development of the space inside [FIGURE 03].



04 The "Kharchosmak" club, 1927, architect O. Linetskiy. © Kharkiv City Archive.



05 The buildings of dining clubs in the "New Kharkiv" social city, 1929–1933, architect P. Alyoshin and others. © Kharkiv City Archive.

The author of the reconstruction of the Noble Assembly O. Linetskiy, before the revolution worked in the neoclassical style. His first post-revolutionary works also gravitate towards this style: the building of the Commodity Exchange (1925) and the third model polyclinic for workers (1927). However, the project of the "Kharchosmak" club already utilizes other forms. Obviously, the composition of the building was influenced by the new function of this object. However, the desire to create monumental forms characteristic of Linetskiy was also reflected in this project. The building contains both elements typical of Constructivists (contrast of the verticals of the cylindrical volumes of the stairs to the elongated parallelepiped of the building itself) and Rationalists (integrity of the composition) [FIGURE 04].

In the buildings of dining clubs designed by P. Alyoshin (with the participation of architects O. Aly, O. Tarusov) in the social city "New Kharkiv", one can find the most features that correspond to the concept of form formation

of Constructivists: "striped" glazing, a house on supports, the juxtaposition of a cylinder and a parallelepiped. The architect used his favorite method of combining red brick and white reinforced concrete elements, which emphasizes national features in the new architecture (an analogy with a towel) [FIGURE 05].

The most striking work of avant-garde architecture among club buildings in Kharkiv is the builders' club of architects Ya. Shteinberg, I. Milinis and I. Malozyomov, 1927–1929. The pavilion scheme promoted by the Constructivists was rethought with originality in the building: the main rooms of the club are grouped around an inner courtyard, on each side of which there are different functions. The entrance leads to the courtyard, which serves as a distribution lobby. The composition includes favorite techniques of Constructivists: the stair cylinder is contrasted with the horizontality of the main facade, which resembles a transition between buildings. Characteristic

for Constructivists, there are also details of this building: round windows, “tiled” glazing, tubular railings on corner balconies [FIGURE 06].

Of great interest for study and restoration is the Rope Club in New Bavaria, built according to the design by M. Lutskiy in 1932. The club building underwent post-war reconstruction, but it still features elements characteristic of Constructivist architecture: the powerful cylinder of the entrance group, raised on pillars, the cylinders of the stairs on the side and courtyard facades, round windows, “tiled” glazing and a characteristic juxtaposition brick wall elements from reinforced concrete [FIGURE 07].

In 1931, on the site of the People’s House by architect V.I. Pushkariv, the construction of the Chervonozavodsky Theater began (later — the KHEMZ plant Palace of Culture). During construction, the project was significantly changed (arch. V.K. Trotsenko). The need to place a fully-fledged theater hall with the stage fly tower determined the grandiose scale of this building. The composition is built on a contrasting juxtaposition of volumes of different scales, vertical and horizontal glazing, and a trumpet shape of the plan. The building Constructivist and Rationalist architectural features [FIGURE 08], (Deryabina, 2013).

CONCLUSION

Due to the fact that the design (or reconstruction) of club buildings took place under different initial conditions (task, design year, urban planning situation), their architectural design was influenced by the presence of prototypes, as well as the individual handwriting of the master, which was formed on the basis of the leading concepts of avant-garde masters (Deryabina & Pominchuk, 2020). The design method also influenced the final result of form creation: stylization or construction — two diametrically opposed approaches were often intertwined in the process of finding a form, which reflected both general trends in avant-garde architecture, and the master’s use of his own palette of artistic and compositional tools.



06 The Builders’ club, 1927–1929, architects Ya. Steinberg, I. Milinis, I. Malozyomov. © Khan-Magomedov S.O. Architecture of the Soviet avant-garde: In 2 books. — M.: Stroyizdat, 1996. — Book. 1: Formation problems. Masters and movements, P. 593.



07 The Rope Club in New Bavaria, 1932, architect M. Lutskiy. © Kharkiv City Archive.

As a result of the study, it was established that, in the architecture of the Kharkiv clubs, the principles of form formation of the Constructivists were intertwined with those of the Rationalists. One of the important factors that influenced the originality of the artistic and compositional solutions of the Kharkiv clubs was the individual interpretation of the general program settings in the work of individual architects. The creative path and design signature of every avant-garde architect as well as their previously developed methods of organizing the artistic form, turned out to be organically included in the new solutions.



08 The Chervonozavodsky Theater (later — the KHEMZ plant Palace of Culture). 1931–1938, architects V. Trotsenko, V. Pushkarev. © Kharkiv City Archive.

The material collected, analyzed and systematized in this study can be used for further scientific research in the field of the development of the historical architectural process, for the implementation of project proposals for the restoration and conservation of individual monuments, as well as used in the educational process of for architectural students.

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