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ARCHITECTURE OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AS A CARRIER OF CONTENT AND SOCIAL AMBITIONS – CLASSIC CANONS IN THE LANDSCAPE OF A MODERN CITY

ARCHITEKTURA OBIEKTÓW RZĄDOWYCH JAKO NOŚNIK TREŚCI I AMBICJI SPOŁECZNYCH – KLASYCZNE KANONY W KRAJOBRAZIE WSPÓŁCZESNEGO MIASTA

Abstract

The form of architectural objects related to government administration is a carrier of content, reflects function, refers to tradition, history and social conditions and ambitions. The aim of the article is to discuss selected government buildings based on classical patterns in the landscape of the modern city. The author conducts a comparative analysis and attempts to distinguish for these buildings characteristic formal and aesthetic features, as well as examines whether historic buildings have the ability to fit into contemporary trends and technological needs.

Keywords: government building, historicism, parliament

Streszczenie

Forma obiektów architektonicznych związanych z administracją rządową jest nośnikiem treści, odzwierciedla funkcję, odnosi się do tradycji, historii oraz uwarunkowań i ambicji społecznych. Celem artykułu jest omówienie wybranych gmachów rządowych bazujących na wzorcach klasycznych w krajobrazie współczesnego miasta. Autorka dokonuje analizy porównawczej i podejmuje próbę wyróżnienia dla wspomnianych budynków charakterystycznych cech formalnych oraz estetycznych, a także bada czy historyzujące budowle mają możliwość wpisania się we współczesne trendy i potrzeby technologiczne.

Słowa kluczowe: gmach rządowy, historyzm, parlament

1. INTRODUCTION

An architectural costume typical of a given era carries many meanings hidden in detail, material, proportions and broadly understood symbolism. It is a reflection of culture, social mood, economic situation and ideology – it creates history in the city space. The way of thinking about a building as a carrier of information became particularly clear at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, when historicism became popular in Western culture. It was

then that scientific research into historical styles aroused the impulse to discover new creative possibilities in old architectural solutions. Initially, it was mainly based on ancient and Renaissance patterns, but over time, references were made to Gothic and Baroque. Buildings were designed in “historical costume” with ahistorical amenities such as electric lighting, central heating, running water, and modern ventilation systems. The choice of style could be purely aesthetic, it could be related to the context of the place or it could be related to ideas about the times in which a given style prevailed and the connection of these ideas with the ideological meaning and function of the newly designed building¹.

The reflection of old ideas as the basis for shaping the architectural form is particularly noticeable in the buildings of government administration. According to the idea of *architecture parlante*, these buildings become a carrier of information and serve as a testimony of the rank of a given country.

2. GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES – AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINITION

The term “administration” comes from the Latin language, in which *ministrare* means serving, executing, managing and submitting to orders². The term “government buildings” therefore refers to a wide range of buildings related to organizational and management activities, both at the central level (e.g. parliament building, presidential palace) and at the field level (e.g. offices, agencies, guards). Their scale and rank are varied, and the chosen architectural form can almost serve as a medium of mass communication, which influences society for ideological reasons.

In view of the large variation in the scale of these buildings, for the purposes of this article, the area of study has been narrowed down to selected parliament buildings built in the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe. The selected temporal and area caesura allows for comparative analysis and the separation of similar formal and aesthetic features.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED PARLIAMENTARY OBJECTS IN EUROPE – 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

3.1. PARLIAMENT IN OSLO, NORWAY

After years of meetings of the Norwegian Parliament in temporary buildings, in 1854 the government in Stockholm decided to build a new building, entirely dedicated to the needs of Norway’s unicameral parliament, the Storting. Six years later, the design of the Swedish architect Emil Victor Langlet was chosen. The Neo-Romanesque building combines Swedish, Italian and French traditions (Ill. 1). The chosen architectural costume refers to the period of the founding of Norway. The facades are finished in yellow brick, and details and massive plinth in light grey granite. The corners are decorated with boning, and just below the line of the eaves

¹ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary architektury*, Wydawnictwo Natalia Szcześniak Dobre Pomysły, Warszawa 2021, pp. 63–64.

² “Administracja” [in:] Encyklopedia Administracji Publicznej, <http://encyklopediaap.uw.edu.pl/index.php/Administracja> (access: 21.06.2023).

runs an arcade frieze. The official opening took place on 5 March 1866, but it soon became apparent that the building was too small and was reconstructed by combining the two divided parts of the Storting. Finally, the building was built on the plan of the letter H. On the central axis was placed a semicircular block with a main entrance and a meeting room on the first floor. The hall has the shape of an amphitheater with a gallery for spectators under the windows in the form of biforias. The central point is occupied by two stands and a platform with the seat of the President of the Parliament. The interior is finished in wood using fronts with decorative tiles. Neo-Romanesque detail and rich gilding give it seriousness and refer to history (Ill. 2)³.

The next expansion of the building took place in the 1950s. Architect Nils Holter proposed a modernist four-story extension facing Akersgaten Street. The rectangular form with a row of windows in aluminum frames cuts off from the historical facades, creating a great contrast with them.

3.2. PARLIAMENT IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

In 1874, the construction of the parliament building in Vienna, designed by the Danish architect Theophil Hansen, began. The structure consists of several intertwined solids, arranged axially and forming a symmetrical structure. The main element is an eight-column Corinthian portico topped with a triangular tympanum with full plastic sculptures. It was preceded by ramps of the driveway with a fountain and a statue of Pallas Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and the mythical guardian of parliamentarians⁴. On both sides of the portico there are lower wings of the building, decorated with Corinthian semi-columns and a rhythmic arrangement of windows with triangular pediments (Ill. 3). Behind them, there were higher pavilions housing meeting rooms, the corners of which were topped with bronze quadrigas. A statue of Nike, the messenger of divine power and victory, was placed on the roof of the parliament. The base area of this spacious building is 14,000 m²⁵.

The interiors were also designed in an antique style. On the axis of the building there is a columned hall which currently serves as a place for receptions and events. There are 24 marble columns, each carved from a single block of marble. The layout of the meeting room refers to an ancient theater (Ill. 4)⁶. The central part with a colonnade topped with a tympanum has rich sculptural decorations. The balcony is supported by caryatids, and above them, above the balustrade, there is a rhythmic arrangement of columns connected in pairs by triangular pediments. The entire structure is covered with a fan-shaped roof skylight. Rich gilding, polychrome and marmorization complement the impression of splendor and sophistication of the interior. The achievements of the industrial revolution were used in the facility, such as steel structures with wide spans, which enabled the introduction of large roof glazing and the installation of air conditioning.

The architectural costume chosen by Hansen, referring to the ancient ideal of democracy in Athens, clearly emphasizes the function of the object and confirms the belief that it is an appropriate style to emphasize the nineteenth-century democratic idea⁷.

³ I. Buch Østbo, *The Norwegian Parliament*, Strortinget, Oslo 2006.

⁴ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75–76

⁵ Parlament i pałac Epstein [in:] vienna.info, <https://www.wien.info/pl/zobacz-i-prze%C5%BCyj/za-bytki-a-z/parlament-i-pa%C5%82ac-epstein-355066> (access: 19.06.2023).

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary...*, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

In 2014, the architectural firm Jabornegg & Pálffy won the competition for the renovation and extension of the parliament. The intention was to create more extensive information spaces for the public and to expand the areas of work. The renovation was due to both the consumption of materials and the desire to adapt the space to modern standards. The designers relied on the logic of Hansen's architectural concept to create its continuation using modern construction means⁸.

3.3. PARLIAMENT IN BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

The building of the Hungarian Parliament is a symbol of the division of the Habsburg monarchy into Austria-Hungary. A sign of the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Hungary was to be the building where decisions on the fate of the great country would be made. The seat of Parliament was Budapest, which was created from the unification of the three cities of Buda, Óbuda and Pest between 1872 and 1873⁹.

In 1880, a decision was made to build a facility in the area of Pest. The selected area on the Danube was very wet with a large amount of wood logs for rafting. The architect chosen to design the parliament was Imre Steindl. He proposed to give the building a neo-Gothic style, to emphasize the medieval ancestry of Hungary¹⁰. The architect's goal was to achieve a uniform form, reminiscent of the London House of Parliament. He turned the 265-meter-long main façade towards the Danube, thus providing a beautiful view of Buda's apartments (Ill. 5). The entrance to the facility is located from Kossuth Lajos Square. The width of the building is 135 meters, and the height measured to the top of the dome located centrally on the building's axis is 96 meters. The neo-Renaissance style dome is the same size as the dome of St. Stephen's Cathedral, which was intended to symbolically indicate the unity of religious and political views of Hungarians¹¹.

Construction lasted from 1885 to 1904, but the first meeting took place in 1896 on the 1000th anniversary of the Hungarian state. Apart from six-meter-high granite columns from Sweden supporting the ceiling in the representative staircase, all other building and finishing materials came from Hungary. Forty million bricks, half a million precious stones and forty kilograms of gold were used for construction. A thousand people participated in the work, including the most outstanding artists such as Károly Lotz, responsible for the frescoes, and Miksa Róth, creator of stained glass windows and glass mosaics. The historic, baroque-style interiors are equipped with modern ventilation and air-conditioning systems. The hall of the former Lower House (today's National Assembly) is designed in an amphitheater style. Extremely sumptuous neo-Gothic wall decorations were covered with gold leaf. The interiors give the impression of splendor and almost royal dignity. The facility is serviced by 13 elevators, has 691 rooms, including 200 offices, 27 entrances and 10 courtyards¹². With a usable area of 17,745 square meters, it remains one of the largest buildings in Hungary.

⁸ Österreichisches Parlament [in:] Jabornegg & Pálffy Architekten, <https://jabornegg-palffy.at/projekte/parlament/> (access: 19.06.2023).

⁹ P. Boroń, *Parlament w Budapeszcie. Wspomnienie węgierskiej potęgi* [in:] Instytut Felczaka Intézet, <https://kurier.plus/node/3083> (access: 19.06.2023).

¹⁰ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–77.

¹¹ P. Boroń, *Parlament...*, *op. cit.*

¹² *Ibidem*.

3.4. REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

Originally, the Bundestag occupied the building of the Prussian House of Lords at Leipziger Strasse 3, and later the Schwerin Palace. As the German state expanded, housing needs increased. In 1871, a commission was established whose task was to prepare the construction of a new parliament building, find a suitable location and conduct an architectural design competition¹³.

The building was intended to be located on the eastern side of Königplatz, but in this place stood the palace of the Polish landowner and Prussian diplomat Atanazy Raczyński. The commission assumed that its plans would gain the emperor's approval and Raczyński's consent, and in 1872 it announced a competition for the Reichstag building, in which over a hundred architects took part. The first prize was won by Ludwig Bohnstedt from Gotha, but despite universal recognition, the project could not be implemented for legal reasons because Count Raczyński refused to sell the plot¹⁴.

Finally, after Raczyński's death in December 1881, the Reichstag decided to purchase the plot for a high amount from his son. It was decided to organize a new architectural competition, which this time was won by Paul Wallot from Frankfurt¹⁵. The cornerstone was laid on June 9, 1884. The building was given a historicizing Neo-Renaissance costume modelled on the Italian Renaissance with Neo-Baroque elements and then fashionable iron and glass structures used in the dome. The dome was originally supposed to be 85 meters high and was to be located above the plenary hall. This solution was criticized as being too reminiscent of religious and imperial buildings. Wallot agreed to move the dome above the western entrance hall, but as the work progressed, he became convinced that the original location was definitely more appropriate. He managed to negotiate a change and, finally, thanks to cooperation with engineer Hermann Zimmerman, a light structure made of glass and iron, 75 meters high, was created¹⁶.

The building was completed in 1894. The facades are designed in a symmetrical arrangement. On the central axis of the main entrance there is a portico with Corinthian columns carrying a tympanum with the coat of arms of the Reich and an inscription underneath it. The inscription "Dem deutschen Volke" was supposed to have appeared before the opening of the building, but it did not appear until 20 years later during World War I. The coat of arms of the Reich and the imperial crown at the top of the dome symbolized the unity of Germany. On the building there are signs indicating that the German state consists of many countries. Artists from these countries were employed for the sculptures in order to avoid regional disputes¹⁷. In the corners are placed towers topped with attics.

The interiors are finished with oak, pine or oriental wood, mainly for acoustic and stylistic reasons. Wallot gave them the Renaissance style of the 16th–17th centuries, which was to emphasize the representative character of the buildings and contrast with the more international Neo-Renaissance style of exterior architecture¹⁸.

¹³ W. Kaiser, *Das Reichstagsgebäude: Symbol deutscher Geschichte* [in:] Deutscher Bundestag, <https://www.bundestag.de/besuche/architektur/reichstag/geschichte/symbol-246952> (access: 20.06.2023).

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ C.-C. Kaiser, *Das Reichstagsgebäude* [in:] *Einblicke. Ein Rundgang durchs Parlamentsviertel, Berlin: Deutscher Bundestag, 2005*, p. 8.

¹⁶ W. Kaiser, *Das Reichstagsgebäude...*, op. Cit.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

As a result of the destruction of World War II, the Reichstag building fell into ruin. In 1955 it was decided to completely rebuild it. Paul Baumgarten won the competition in 1961. He used modernist forms from the 1960s, devoid of decoration and wanting to cut itself off from history. At that time, the building housed a museum. After the reunification of Germany in 1990 and the relocation of the capital to Berlin, it was decided to return the Bundestag to the Reichstag. Three years later, an international architectural competition was held for the reconstruction of the parliament building, which was finally won by Foster+Partners from the UK. The most characteristic element of the changes was the glass dome with a diameter of 40 meters and a height of 24 meters. Inside it there are two ramps leading to the viewing plane (Ill. 6, 7)¹⁹. The interior reconstruction was to be carried out respecting the historical values of the building. On the occasion of the construction work, care was taken to introduce ecological energy solutions, including solar panels, which cover 300 m² of the roof of the building²⁰. The glass dome, in turn, serves for lighting and ventilation of the plenary hall. With 360 funnel-mounted mirrors, sunlight is directed down the building. Air from inside the building passes through the center of the funnel and exits through the opening at the top of the dome²¹.

3.5. PARLIAMENT IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

The Palace of the Swedish National Parliament was built between 1897 and 1905 on the islet of Helgeandsholmen in the historic center of Stockholm, designed by Aron Johansson. The parliament building consisted of two buildings separated by Riksgatan Street. Gates were placed between them, which created the impression of cohesion of both parts. The foundation work required digging 37,000 cubic meters of earth and using 9,000 oak piles. Ultimately, the costs amounted to 12 million Swedish crowns, which was almost twice as much as expected at the beginning of construction. This was due to difficulties in finding building materials and labor costs, as the construction work coincided with the construction of the Royal Opera House and the prestigious Strandvägen Avenue²².

Johansson designed the facades of the parliament in the neo-baroque style. Originally, on the central axis there was supposed to be a dome, and on its sides symmetrically arranged tympanums with sculptural decoration referring to ancient culture. In the end, these elements were not made. The façade from the side of Riksplån Street is preceded by a columnar shadow in the Corinthian rear. The central axis was accentuated by an elevation topped with rich sculptural decoration with the coat of arms of Sweden above the architrave of the main entrance. Above are four figures reflecting the medieval social classes of Scandinavia: nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie and peasantry. Above the whole is the statue of Mother Svea, an allegorical figure of the Kingdom of Sweden (Ill. 8). The rhythmic arrangement of windows surrounding the whole rectangular body has decorative foreheads and is divided by pilasters with Corinthian heads. The high ground floor of the building is decorated with rustic boning emphasizing the massiveness of the solid. In this area, 57 masks are placed above the windows, representing stone-carved portraits of the figures involved in the construction of the parliament. Originally,

¹⁹ C.-C. Kaiser, *Das Reichstagsgebäude...*, op. cit., p. 45.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

²¹ W. Kaiser, *Das Reichstagsgebäude...*, op. cit.

²² K. Lundkvist, *Norrbro och Strömparterren*, Stockholms stadsmuseum, Stockholm 2006, https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/PostFiles/SMF/Rapport_Norrbro_och_Stromparterren.pdf (access: 19.06.2023).

each of the masks was supposed to be different, but after opposition from the project management, some of the people were not portrayed²³. The semi-circular facade of the second parliament building is almost entirely covered with rustic boning, also applied to the columns between the windows. The whole is crowned with a balustrade attic, giving lightness (Ill. 9).

Inside the building there is a parade staircase leading to the gallery along the front, where the entrances to two rooms are placed. Each of them has a large skylight on the octagonal plan. The historic main meeting room has Finnish birch wood paneling covering the entire walls, and just below the skylight, telescopes decorated with paintings and stucco decoration. The benches are made of Swedish birch. The interior exudes dignity and respect for history.

In the years 1980–1983 the seat of parliament was expanded. On the roof of the building on the west side, another story was added, completely glazed. A new meeting room was placed there, already maintained in modern style.

3.6. PARLIAMENT IN WARSAW, POLAND

After Poland regained its independence, the need to have a seat for the central authorities of the restored country became very urgent. There was no time to build a new facility, so it was decided to occupy an extensive educational building from 1853 designed by Bolesław Paweł Podczaszyński and Karol Martin. The adaptation was carried out by architect Kazimierz Tołoczek, and the former dining room on a rectangular plan with dimensions of fifteen by twenty-five meters was used for the meeting room. In the following years, further renovations were carried out to adapt the building to the needs of Parliament. In 1924, it was decided to add a new meeting room to the Sejm building, and the design work was entrusted to architect Kazimierz Skórewicz. The former dining room was slightly reduced and allocated to the Senate Chamber. An amphitheatrical meeting room was added to the former school building on the south side, which opened on 28 March 1928²⁴. In his project, Kazimierz Skórewicz used motifs taken from the stylistics of ancient Rome. From the outside, the semi-rotunda was decorated with semi-columns with shafts of a corrugated structure in the upper part, just below the Doric heads (Ill. 10). The interior is based on the scheme of a Roman theatre with three doors leading to the stage facing the semicircle of the audience. Originally, the hall was covered with a dome inspired by the Pantheon dome with cassettes and an oculus illuminating the interior²⁵. After the destruction caused by World War II, the buildings of the Polish Parliament were rebuilt, and the structure of the covering and upper lighting of the meeting room was made new, but based on the outline from 1928 (Ill. 11)²⁶.

3.7. PARLIAMENT PALACE, BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

The second largest administrative building in the world after the Pentagon is the seat of the Romanian Parliament in Bucharest, formerly called the People's House. The

²³ "Riksdagshuset i Stockholm" [in:] Wikipedia, <https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riksdagshuset?oldid=17417604> (access: 19.06.2023).

²⁴ L. Kłosiewicz, *Kompleks budynków sejmu RP [HISTORIA]* [in:] *Marchitektura-Murator*, 23.09.2015, <https://architektura.muratorplus.pl/krytyka/kompleks-budynkow-sejmu-rp-aa-pXBq-ABmJ-3gvL.html> (access: 18.06.2023).

²⁵ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–39.

²⁶ L. Kłosiewicz, *Kompleks budynków...*, *op. cit.*

building's development area is 830,000 m², it has 12 above-ground and 8 underground floors (four of which are still not operational). The construction of the palace was initiated by the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu. The building was to serve as an apartment for his family and the headquarters of the police²⁷. Starting construction required the demolition of approximately 7 km² of the old city center, including 19 Orthodox churches, 6 synagogues, 3 Protestant churches and 30,000 residential houses. As a result, approximately 40,000 people were displaced from the planned construction site. The idea was to create a monumental government district²⁸. The competition to design the palace was won by just 28-year-old architecture graduate Anca Petrescu. She headed a 10-person team of experienced architects who supervised the work of 700 construction engineers²⁹. The construction of the People's Palace began in 1983. The design combined motifs from many classical sources, ultimately creating a style that can be compared to eclecticism. The author herself cited Versailles and Buckingham Palace as sources of inspiration, although it is difficult to find analogies. The stepped structure of the massive body of the palace was divided by a system of rhythmic windows separated by massive Corinthian columns. The imperial scale overwhelms the viewer (Ill. 12). The building is 240 meters long, 270 meters wide, 86 meters high, has approximately 1,100 rooms, including 440 offices, 30 multi-purpose rooms, 4 restaurants, 3 libraries, a concert hall and two parking lots. Dictator Ceaușescu's ambition was for all building materials to come from Romania. Ultimately, 1,000,000 m³ of Transylvanian marble, 3,500 tons of crystals were used to make 480 chandeliers and 1,409 lamps, 700,000 tons of steel and bronze, 900,000 m³ of wood and 200,000 m² of carpets (Ill. 13)³⁰.

The investment costs were enormous. To cope with them, the dictator secretly took out many foreign loans from the nation, the later repayment of which further worsened the economic situation of Romania³¹. The country's standard of living fell to an all-time low, food rationing and power outages became a sad daily routine, while Ceaușescu exhibited scandalous extravagance³².

In 1989, after the political revolution in Romania, the construction was 80% completed. They were considering a new purpose for the palace and looking for an investor who would complete the construction. When the idea of one of the potential investors to transform the facility into a casino came up, the decision was made to leave the building in Romanian hands to serve the nation. Its construction was completed in 1997 and it was transformed into the Palace of Parliament. Three years earlier, it housed the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the Romanian Parliament, and since 2005, also the Senate, the upper house. In 2006, the value of all works was estimated at EUR 3 billion. Despite this huge amount of money, the building does not meet modern standards. The interiors are poorly

²⁷ D. Petrescu, *The People's House, or the voluptuous violence of an architectural paradox* [in:] N. Leach (ed.), *Architecture and Revolution. Contemporary perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe*, Routledge, London 1999, p. 181.

²⁸ G. van Reed, *The People's Palace: Ceausescu's Lasting, Loathed Legacy* [in:] *Local Life*, 6.10.2021, <https://www.local-life.com/bucharest/articles/palace-of-parliament> (access: 19.06.2023).

²⁹ P. Drózdź, *Pałac ludowy, czyli mania wielkości Ceaușescu* [in:] *TwojaHistoria.pl*, 7.11.2021, <https://twojahistoria.pl/2021/11/07/palac-ludowy-czyli-mania-wielkosci-ceausescu/> (access: 19.06.2023).

³⁰ G. van Reed, *The People's Palace...*, op. cit.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Ibidem*.

lit, inadequately ventilated and air-conditioned, and traveling long distances causes discomfort for users. The high cost of living is also criticized, which is compared to the monthly expenses of one medium-sized Romanian city³³.

4. SUMMARY

Giving historical costumes to objects from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries allowed the axiological connection between the functions of monumental buildings and their form, referring to historically anchored values and virtues³⁴. When designing parliamentary buildings, architects willingly used ancient trends, reflecting Roman ideas as the basis for forming world empires in the 19th and 20th centuries. The introduction of details from ancient Athens was a clear reference to the idea of the cradle of the democratic system. Therefore, the use of compositional symmetry, proportions and architectural details of ancient buildings was to symbolize the values: knowledge, order and democracy. In those countries where the period of splendor fell on the Middle Ages, parliamentary buildings were eagerly decorated with neo-Romanesque or neo-Gothic costumes.

The interiors were finished to a high standard, expressing the elegance and seriousness of the institution. Local materials were used to highlight the natural wealth and the creative skills of local craftsmen. Large roof skylights, sumptuous details and gilding were introduced in the plenary halls. References were made to broadly understood architectural classics, without forgetting to be equipped with modern air-conditioning and ventilation systems to create comfortable work.

Of the mentioned parliamentary buildings, the youngest of them, the Parliament of Bucharest, has a peculiar scale and form. The author of the design was inspired by classical objects, but the distorted proportions, overwhelming mass and astronomical costs made the building a symbol of the “sacrifice” of the nation rather than its pride.

The passage of time, war damage and changing housing needs influenced the reconstruction of most of the examined facilities. Some of the construction works dating back to the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century were carried out with respect for history and a clear distinction between the newly designed architectural fabric using the most modern, ecological technologies.

Can the architecture of parliamentary buildings be said to have been “built for itself”? In the author’s opinion, it could rather be considered a medium of communication which, through its scale, majesty and reference to historical styles, conveys the spectrum of experiences and ideological aspirations of the country it represents.

³³ J. Potocka, *Gigantyczny pałac Ceausescu symbolem komunizmu i potęgi narodu* [in:] *dzieje.pl*, 22.10.2012, <https://dzieje.pl/rozmaitosci/gigantyczny-palac-ceausescu-symbolem-komunizmu-i-potegi-narodu> (access: 19.06.2023).

³⁴ R. Gajda, *Cztery wymiary...*, *op. cit.*, p. 89.



III. 1. Parliament in Oslo, front elevation, source: [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budynek_parlamentu_w_Oslo#/media/Plik:Stortinget,_Oslo,_Norway_\(cropped\).jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budynek_parlamentu_w_Oslo#/media/Plik:Stortinget,_Oslo,_Norway_(cropped).jpg) (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 2. Parliament in Oslo, session hall, source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budynek_parlamentu_w_Oslo#/media/Plik:Sp%C3%B8rretimen_i_Stortinget_22._november_2007.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 3. Parliament in Vienna, front façade, source: <https://pl.advisor.travel/poi/Budynek-parlamentu-w-Wiedniu-3079> (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 4. Parliament in Vienna, historic session hall, source: <https://www.wien.info/pl/zobacz-i-prze%C5%BCyj/zabytki-a-z/parlament-i-pa%C5%82ac-epstein-355066/> (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 5. Parliament in Budapest, view from the Danube, source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/97/HUN-2015-Budapest-Hungarian_Parliament_%28Budapest%29_2015-01.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 6. Parliament in Berlin, front elevation, source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichstag_building#/media/File:Reichstagsgeb%C3%A4ude_2023.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 7. Parliament in Berlin, ramp in a glass dome, source: <https://www.walterknoll.de/en/magazine/reichstag-in-berlin> (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 8. Parliament in Stockholm, front façade, source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riksdagshuset#/media/Plik:00_5258_Stockholm,_Gamla_stan_-_Riksdagshuset.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 9. Parliament in Stockholm, north-west façade source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ce/Riksdagen_June_2011.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 10. Parliament in Warsaw, source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kompleks_budynk%C3%B3w_Sejmu_Rzeczypospolitej_Polskiej#/media/Plik:Sejm_RP.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 11. Parliament in Warsaw, plenary hall, source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kompleks_budynk%C3%B3w_Sejmu_Rzeczypospolitej_Polskiej#/media/Plik:20070124_sejm_sala_plenarna_loza_dla_gosci_i_prasy.jpg (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 12. Parlament in Bucharest, front façade, source: <https://pixabay.com/pl/photos/bukareszt-pa%C5%82ac-parlamentu-1280226/> (access: 21.06.2023).



III. 13. Parlament in Bucharest, ballroom, source: <https://sumfinit.com/pl/zdjecia/rumunia/bukareszt-palac-parlamentu/> (access: 21.06.23).

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