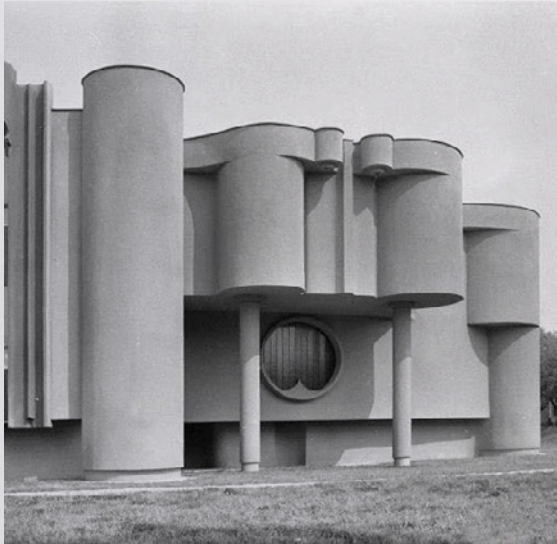


history thesis



Phenomenon of expression in resort modernism of Soviet Lithuania

Western dream then, undesirable shadow now?

Collective remembrance | national identity | "young" heritage

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During thirty years of independent Lithuania, numerous iconic modern and postmodern buildings from the Soviet period had been demolished. Only in recent years architects and preservationists have started to protest and communicate the message of opposition to such activities but in most cases, it is too late to save an artifact.

In the rich field of architectural edifices of social modernism, resort architecture is particularly interesting.

It can be stated that it was in the resorts that some of the most original and valuable structures of socialist modernism were erected in Lithuania. In theory it should be regarded as a niche where true Lithuanian architecture could have emerged through the limitations of Soviet apparatus, however it is surprising to see this sort of architecture neglected or demolished.

Knowing that architecture makes up a large part of the regional identity, demolition of unique recreational buildings can lead to irretrievable loss of existing **genius loci**. Therefore, my main research question is why and how large number of expressive examples of socialist resort modernist architecture in Lithuania are undesirable?

Is it a matter of **economics**, considering the prestigious location of most of the remaining resort buildings? Is it because of the inseparable link between **politics** and architecture? Is it the institution of heritage and conservation failing to protect them? Is **collective remembrance** being altered when difficult heritage buildings are being demolished?

In addition to the existing discussion within the Lithuanian community about Soviet time heritage preservation, I am considering the unique resort buildings being part of the **national identity** and as an element of a **cultural phenomenon**.

In the **first chapter** I explain historical context and the origin of socialist modernism, prevailing ideological apparatus at the time, significance of resorts and their architecture.

The **second chapter** consists of investigation what is hiding "behind the scenes" of the ignorance of socialist modernist architecture. In different sections I discuss such architecture in terms of memory, collective remembrance, explain the concept of genius loci, talk about psychological confrontations of the country, elaborate on how heritage preservation is not always applicable in Lithuania and look into economic aspect.

The **third chapter** addresses two case studies - demolition and renovation of resort buildings. Firstly, I discuss the demolition case of cafe "Banga" (1796; demolished in 2015) in Palanga. Secondly, renovation of cafe "Vasara"(reconstructed in 2005)