

THE ARCHITECTURAL VALUE OF 1950'S ARCHITECTURE AS HERITAGE AT RISK OF TRANSFORMATION

Adam NADOLNY^{1*}, Maciej KRUSZ²

¹ Faculty of Architecture, Poznan University of Technology, 60-965 Poznan, Poland

² Department of Administrative Law and Administration Science,
Faculty of Law, Adam Mickiewicz University

Abstract

The article explores the potential heritage value of the former dormitory complex located at Dożynkowa Street in Poznań, constructed in the 1950s. The study evaluates these buildings in terms of their architectural characteristics, historical context and legal considerations regarding heritage preservation. Despite their role as representatives of socialist-era architecture, the dormitories are characterized by architectural monotony, functionalist design and a lack of distinctive features, which significantly diminishes their artistic and cultural value. The research further examines legal guidelines and criteria for recognizing post-1945 architecture as heritage, including those outlined by the Association of Polish Architects (SARP). The findings indicate that the dormitories do not meet the majority of these criteria due to their uniformity, absence of innovation and loss of authenticity over decades of their use. The article concludes that the architectural and cultural significance of the dormitories is insufficient to justify their designation as heritage buildings. This analysis highlights the broader challenges of assessing the heritage potential of the socialist-era architecture within Poland's urban landscape, considering both architectural merit and legal frameworks.

Keywords: Ruins; Context; Post socialist architecture; Local law,

Introduction

The former dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań, built in the 1950s, can be defined as structures of minimal architectural value. Despite their modest design and utilitarian character, such buildings represent a significant period in architectural and urban development shaped by post-war reconstruction and socialist ideology. This era emphasized functionality and mass production, often at the expense of aesthetic quality. However, the changing attitudes toward mid-20th-century architecture raise questions about the historical and cultural significance of these structures.

This article analyzes the architectural and heritage value of these dormitories within the broader context of 1950s architecture. It explores how such buildings, despite their limited aesthetic appeal, can contribute to a better understanding of the socio-political and economic dynamics of the time. Furthermore, the paper discusses the challenges of preservation and adaptation of these structures in light of contemporary urban transformations, as well as the potential risks posed by their neglect or demolition.

The topic of scientific research concerning the infill development of the city of Poznań and its spatial growth is addressed in the publication by A. Nadolny, Y. Ivashko, K. Sluchocka, I.G. Sandu and P. Bigaj [1]. It delves into the historical context and planning policies that have

* Corresponding author: adam.nadolny@put.poznan.pl

shaped the urban form of Poznań, highlighting the role of infill development in revitalizing underutilized areas and enhancing urban density. It also analyzes how such strategies can preserve cultural and architectural heritage while adapting to contemporary needs. The publication by *G. Kodym-Kozaczko* [2], on the other hand, takes a more technical approach, analyzing the spatial and economic implications of infill projects. It investigates the regulatory frameworks, urban design principles and stakeholder involvement necessary for their successful implementation. Additionally, it discusses the environmental benefits of compact urban growth, such as reduced resource consumption and improved connectivity.

The issues of identity and the history of Polish architecture, including socialist architecture, are explored in the work of *B. Stelmach* and *K. Andrzejewska-Batko* [3], which examines the broader historical development of Polish architecture, emphasizing its roots in national traditions and its adaptations to changing geopolitical circumstances. It discusses how architecture has served as both a reflection of cultural identity and a tool for political expression, particularly during periods of significant upheaval, such as post-war reconstruction. *A. Cymer* [4] focuses specifically on socialist architecture, analyzing its ideological underpinnings, design principles and legacy. It highlights how this period of architecture was influenced by the broader goals of socialist realism, including the promotion of collective values and the prioritization of functionality over aesthetic individuality. The publication also critiques the lasting impact of these structures on the urban fabric and public perception. The publication by *P. Marciniak* [5] addresses the contemporary reinterpretation and preservation of socialist architecture within the context of Polish heritage. It explores debates surrounding the architectural value of these structures, examining how they are increasingly recognized as significant cultural artifacts despite their initial association with a politically charged era. The study further evaluates strategies for integrating these buildings into modern urban landscapes while respecting their historical and cultural significance. These works delve into the complex interplay between architectural forms, historical context and cultural identity, shedding light on how Polish architecture has evolved across different political and social landscapes.

The discussions and criteria for protection, or its lack, of post-war architectural structures, as well as issues related to their conservation, are addressed in the publication by *P. Marciniak* [6], who focuses on the challenges of defining heritage value in post-war architecture, highlighting the tension between historical significance and public perception. It explores the evolving criteria for classifying such structures as worthy of protection, particularly considering their architectural, cultural and social context. The publication also investigates how post-war architecture is often overlooked due to its association with utilitarian design and the ideological legacy of the time. The works by *H. Grzeszczuk-Brendel*, *G. Klause*, *G. Kodym-Kozaczko* & *P. Marciniak* [7] and *M. Orlenko*, *Y. Ivashko*, *D. Kuśnierz-Krupa*, *J. Kobylarczyk* & *O. Ivashko* [8] delve into the practical aspects of conserving post-war buildings, addressing technical challenges such as material degradation, lack of original documentation and the complexities of retrofitting these structures for contemporary use. They also emphasize the importance of balancing conservation efforts with urban development needs, proposing innovative approaches to integrating post-war architecture into the modern cityscape. These works examine the complex dynamics surrounding the evaluation, preservation and adaptation of post-war architecture within the broader context of heritage protection and urban development.

The final aspect of the discussion concerns the documentation of post-war architecture as visible in *V.A. Nikolaenko*, *V.V. Nikolaenko* & *O. Zubrichev* [9], its preservation or demolition as presented by *O. Kozakova*, *I.L. Kravchenko*, *M. Sulayman*, *D. Kuśnierz-Krupa*, *S. Wang*, *M. Abdulgani Mustafa*, *M. Lisińska-Kuśnierz*, *L. Bednarz* & *M. Budziakowski* [10] and *A. Markovskiy* & *O. Lagutenko* [11], as well as its technical quality shown in *O. Dedov*, *M. Vabishchevych*, *O. Skoruk* & *G. Twardowski* [12]. Together, these publications provide a holistic view of the challenges and opportunities related to documenting, preserving, or

replacing post-war architecture, offering valuable insight into its role within the evolving urban and cultural landscape.

Materials and Methods

The former dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań are located in the Winogrady district, in the northern part of the city, near the campus of the University of Life Sciences and in the near vicinity of the academic and cultural center of the city. Their location is attractive owing to their convenient position in relation to public transport, as numerous tram and bus lines provide fast connections to the city center and other districts.

On a map of Poznań from 1945, depicting war damage, the area around Dożynkowa Street was marked as 70% destroyed (blue) and 50% destroyed (red), as seen in figure 1.

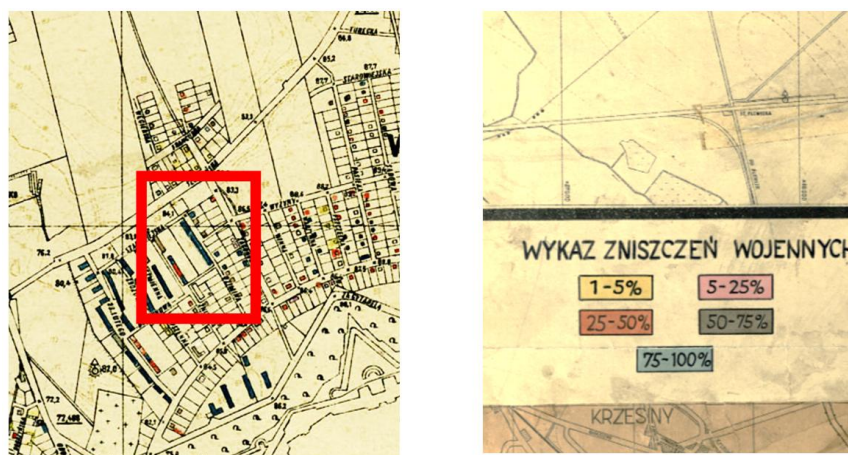


Fig. 1. Plan of the city of Poznań in 1945, showing levels of destruction of buildings as a result of hostilities. The location of the dormitories on Dożynkowa Street is marked in red. (<https://cyryl.poznan.pl/kolekcja/plany-poznania-1945-1993>)

The scale of this damage created the right conditions to allocate the area for new developments, including the construction of dormitories. Severe damage to this part of the city, caused by intensive hostilities in the vicinity of the Citadel in 1945, made the area suitable for social projects, including dormitories, which met the post-war needs of a rapidly growing academic community. The creation of the dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań was an important part of the urbanization process in this part of Poznań, as well as a response to the need to create new housing as part of the reconstruction of the city. This also went in line with the socialist assumptions of the time, which focused on the development of education and support for academic youth in post-war Poland.

An introduction to socialist realist architecture, using the example of the buildings at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań

The origins of Polish Socialist Realist architecture date back to the years after the end of the Second World War, when Poland, like many Eastern European countries, came under the influence of the Soviet Union. Socialist Realism became the official artistic style promoted by the state and its aim was to emphasize socialist values and to present communist ideology in an attractive and monumental form. Socialist Realist architecture in Poland between 1949 and 1956 was not only intended to serve a utilitarian purpose but also to have a propaganda impact, build a new social identity and promote the image of the working class as the key force of the nation.

One of the earliest and most recognizable examples of Polish Socialist Realist architecture is the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, erected between 1952 and 1955 (Fig. 2). This building, designed by the Soviet architect Lev Rudniew, was a gift from the Soviet Union and was meant to symbolize friendship between nations. Characteristic elements of Socialist Realism were the monumental, heavy forms, often modeled on Classical architecture, which were intended to inspire awe and a sense of power. A feature of this architecture was the numerous ornamental details, referring to both Polish traditions and Soviet patterns.

In the 1950s, Socialist Realism became the dominant style in the design not only of public buildings but also of housing estates. One of the first and very widely commented on was Warsaw's MDM (Fig. 3), i.e., Marszałkowska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa (Marszałkowska Housing Estate) housing estate, which was intended to meet the housing needs of Warsaw's growing population. This housing estate, executed on a grand scale, was meant to emphasize the new socialist identity of the city. The facades of the buildings were decorated with sculptures and reliefs depicting working people and national elements, which emphasized that socialist realist architecture belonged to the Polish tradition.



Fig. 2. View of the PAC building from Marszałkowska Street. The intersection with Jerozolimskie Avenue is visible in the foreground. Photographic Archive of Zbyszek Siemaszko, National Digital Archive, Warsaw, File: 51-799-2



Fig. 3. Marszałkowska Residential District, View from the MDM Hotel. The perspective of Marszałkowska Street is clearly visible. Zbyszek Siemaszko Photo Archive, National Digital Archive Warsaw, File reference: 51-829-2

The dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań, built between 1952 and 1956, are an example of Socialist Realist architecture in Poland, which shaped urban space in the post-war period. Characteristic of this style are the classicizing elements found in the buildings' austere architectural costume. Both the symmetrical composition of the façades and the simple but distinctive vertical and horizontal divisions emphasize the monumental character of the buildings.

A feature of the buildings that emphasizes the Socialist Realist style is also the modestly designed decorative details. The window frames add symmetry to the architecture, while the strongly accentuated cornice crowning each block creates a clear dividing line between the façade and the roof (Fig. 4.) The aforementioned elements refer to the classical tradition,

characteristic of socialist realist architecture. The aim of this style was to combine monumental elements with details representing national identity and tradition and in this case we are talking about a very modest form. Compared to the MDM buildings mentioned in the study, the former dormitories appear as buildings with a very simple, even ascetic, architectural costume.

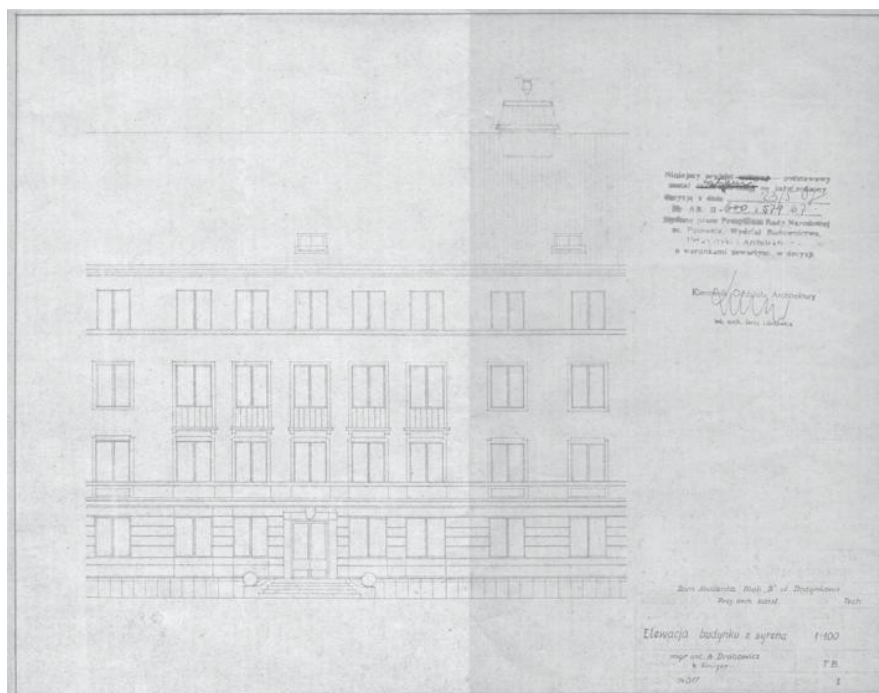


Fig. 4. Fragment of the design documentation of the dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań (Source: Archives of the Poznań City Hall)

The buildings on 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street not only fulfilled their primary function as dormitories but also served as propaganda elements that emphasized socialist ideology in urban planning. The architecture of the dormitories was to have an impact on social consciousness—the simplicity and regularity of the forms suggested order and stability, while the classicist, sparse ornamentation was to influence the sense of aesthetics, creating an image of community and order inscribed in the new social values.

Urban planning and architecture of the building complex at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań set against the background of the epoch.

Given that the dormitories under analysis are a part of a larger building complex, it is also important to discuss the urban character of this development. In the history of architecture, particular styles and trends are closely linked to the eras that preceded them and these influences are also clearly visible in the case of the buildings in question. Together they form a compact complex with the geometric form of (Fig. 5), characteristic of interwar modernism-functionalism, which developed between 1918 and 1939.

The arrangement of the buildings and their compact formation into an urban quarter are reminiscent of interwar housing design concepts. In this period, the aim was to provide better living conditions and access to fresh air and recreational spaces, which was executed by separating buildings and forming them into internal, closed courtyards or backyards. This type of development is referred to as quarter development, as the buildings within the plot space form a closed urban interior, based on rectangular blocks (Fig. 6).

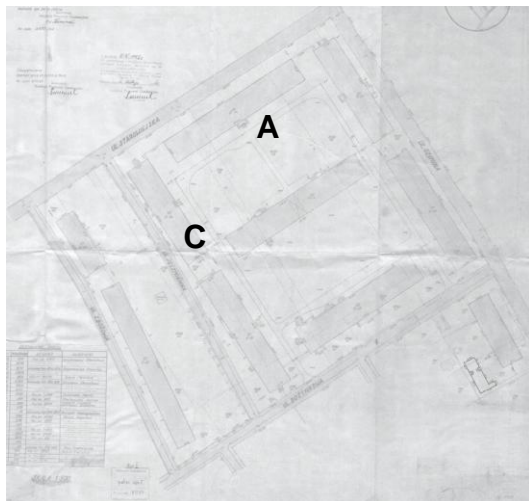


Fig. 5. Composition of the dormitories in Dożynkowa Street, map from 1952. The dormitories in question are marked with letters A and C. Source: Archives of the Poznań City Hall, prepared by the authors

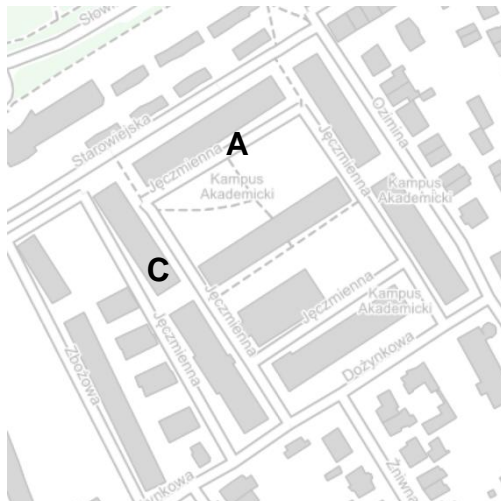


Fig. 6. Contemporary map of the establishment of the dormitories on Dożynkowa Street. The dormitories in question are marked with letters A and C.

In summary, the spatial arrangement of the complex in which the analyzed buildings 9A and 9C are located bears traces of modernist ideas of urban design, while the architectural form of the buildings themselves is typically socialist realist, reflecting the aesthetics and ideology of the post-war years in the period of 1949-1956.

The architecture of post-war Poland was integrally linked to the shaping of a new social and political reality based on Marxist doctrines and ideology. The period from 1949 to 1956 became crucial for the development of a new vision of architecture, which was shaped under the influence of socialist ideology. Under Socialist Realism, the style officially promoted by the authorities, architecture was not only to have a utilitarian function but also to play an important propaganda role. The analyzed buildings 9A and 9C fully reflect the stylistic conventions of their era, emphasizing the characteristic elements of the era both in the detailing and in the overall compositional idea. Among the most prominent features is the rusticated ground floor (Building A and Building C), which gives the elevations a monumental, massive appearance, typical of Socialist Realist architecture.

Regularly arranged windows in both buildings with plaster frames and geometrical drawings of the façade introduce rhythmical, harmonious arrangements according to the principles of classicist socialist realism (Fig. 7). Both buildings A and C are topped with massive cornices with a characteristic geometrical pattern in the form of repetitive squares (Fig. 8). Building C is a three-aisle, three-story building with a centrally located corridor; vertical communication in the building is designed in the form of a central staircase. Similarly, Building A is a 3-flight, 3-story building with vertical communication in the building being designed in the form of two staircases located at the ends of the building. Their location is visible on the façade of the building from Starowiejska Street in the form of flat risalits finished with narrow pilasters. The elevation of buildings C and A facing the courtyard was enriched in its central part with elongated windows, supplemented with balustrades with a simple geometrical drawing at the level of the 2nd floor.

The use of these elements was not accidental. It was intended to create a sense of stability, order and strength, which followed the ideological tenets of the era and was intended to influence society through the aesthetics of architecture.



Fig. 7. View of the geometric facade of the former dormitory building at 9A Dożynkowa Street.



Fig. 8. Concrete geometric in form, the cornice of the former dormitory building at 9A Dożynkowa Street.

However, it is difficult to speak of outstanding form or exceptional detail in the case of the analyzed buildings. These buildings merely reproduce the standard solutions used in the development of collective housing, which were widely disseminated as typical designs during the Socialist Realist period. Their composition is based on a characteristic body scheme: a clearly accentuated ground floor, flat, simple façade tectonics and a hipped roof. This layout is highly representative of the architecture of the era but, at the same time, lacks individuality in comparison to, for instance, the buildings on Plac Wielkopolski in Poznań.

Such typical solutions resulted from the need of the time for mass, rapid construction and centrally imposed design patterns to ensure uniformity and ease of adaptation. Hence, the analyzed buildings, despite their solid construction, do not stand out from other buildings erected at the time, as visible in figures 9 and 10. They are an example of a typical socialist realist approach to urban development rather than a unique architectural form.



Fig. 9. A fragment of the facade of the former dormitory building at 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań—a cross-section through the roof truss.

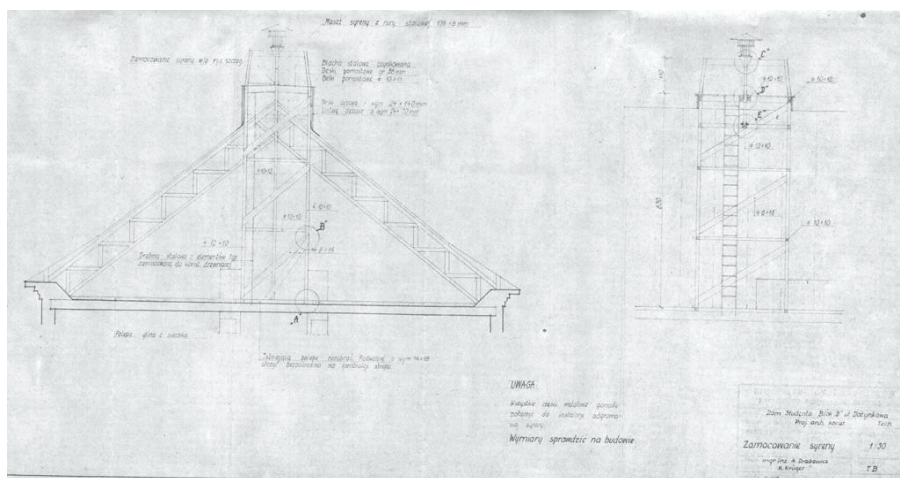


Fig. 10. Fragment of the design documentation of the dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań, a cross-section through the roof truss. (Source: Archives of the Poznań City Hall)

Results and Discussion

Historical values of post-1945 buildings today

This expert report uses the criteria developed by the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) in Warsaw in 2001 for assessing the historic value of buildings and architectural complexes built after 1945. The authors of the criteria were Warsaw architects cooperating within the SARP Warsaw Architecture Heritage Committee in 2001-2003, i.e., Jolanta Przygońska, Barbara Brukalska, Jan Kempa, Andrzej Kiciński, Henryk Kosieradzki, Jeremi Królikowski, Andrzej Nasfeter, Michał Piechotka, Maria Sołtys, Tomasz Sławiński, Marta Leśniakowska, Przemysław Woźniakowski, Barbara Zygadło, Maria Sarnik-Konieczna, Marek Barański and Lech Królikowski. These criteria take into account both the artistic and historical values of the buildings as well as their significance for cultural heritage and the development of post-war architecture. The adoption of these guidelines allowed a precise assessment of the potential historic values for the former dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań.

The criterion of innovativeness in terms of architectural, spatial and technical solutions in the case of the analyzed buildings

Concerning innovation in terms of architectural, spatial and technical solutions, the socialist realist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street in Poznań come off as not particularly innovative. The design of these buildings, executed in the spirit of socialist realism, is quite predictable and hardly innovative, which was mainly due to the ideological assumptions of that era. The Socialist Realist style emphasized monumentality, but often at the expense of functionality and aesthetic quality. There is a lack of creativity in the use of space and the structural and material solutions are typical of post-war mass construction, with little flexibility and limited potential for adaptation. The spatial layout of the buildings is rigid and little adapted to modern functional requirements. The interiors are relatively dark and hardly spacious, while the construction hinders modifications and adaptations that could make the buildings more user-friendly and accessible. In terms of technology, the buildings also do not add value. There are no advanced solutions that could be considered exceptional examples, standard roof trusses, or bricks partly from demolition.

The analyzed dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street are not distinguished by innovative solutions, neither architectural nor technical. They are an example of conventional

socialist realist construction of the mid-1950s, which does not meet contemporary criteria of novelty either in aesthetic or functional terms.

The criterion of context, coexistence both in the creation phase and in the subsequent spatial development of the site

To begin with, it would be appropriate to clarify the issue of spatial context in architecture. Spatial context in architecture is a key aspect of the design process that relates to the relationship between a building and its surroundings. Considering spatial context means analyzing and understanding the character of the place where a building is to be built or already exists and its impact on the surrounding space. This is a broad issue, encompassing both the natural and urban elements of the environment, as well as cultural and social aspects of the area.

When designing a building in harmony with its spatial context, the architect seeks to adapt the building to the scale, proportion, color scheme, style and character of the surrounding buildings and landscape. For instance, a building designed in a historic city center often requires a form and detailing that is consistent with the neighboring buildings to fit harmoniously into its surroundings, while a modern building may use contrasting forms in harmony with an open space such as a park or river.

Spatial context also includes understanding such issues as access to light, air circulation, sounds, views, or the way people and vehicles move through an area. A well-designed building, taking into account the spatial context, not only responds to the needs of its users but also enriches the urban space, positively influencing the comfort, aesthetics and functionality of its surroundings.

The location of the socialist realist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street raises a number of objections in terms of their coexistence with the surroundings, both at the stage of their original construction and subsequent spatial development. The dormitories were placed in the 1950s in a way that does not harmonize with the character of the area. The monumental, austere buildings with their homogeneous, massive bodies dominate the surroundings without considering the existing space and its potential for harmonious development.

At this stage of consideration, it should be stated that the location of the dormitories was not chosen at random. They are surrounded by single-family housing located on large plots of land. This way of developing these areas was introduced by the General Plan for the City of Poznań from 1934, authored by Władysław Czarnecki. The continuity of development of these areas for single-family housing was confirmed in the post-war period by the General Plan of Spatial Development of the Capital City of Poznań from 1945 to 1946. This plan was created by a team led by Tadeusz Płończak and Leonard Tomaszewski.

The buildings, instead of blending into the space, create an impression of isolation, visually cutting themselves off from the surroundings, which negatively affects the perception of the entire area. The lack of architectural relationship with the surrounding buildings and the failure to adapt the scale and form to the local conditions disturbs the spatial balance, making the dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street seem like an intruder in the urban space.

Rather than promoting urban coherence, their location creates dissonance and limits the potential for sustainable development of the area. In addition, the positioning of the buildings and their inappropriateness for flexible development of the surrounding space hinders further development of the site in a way that meets contemporary spatial and social standards. The buildings remain a symbol of an outdated approach to urban planning that has not only failed to consider the context of the site but has also limited its future development potential. In summary, the analyzed buildings at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the criterion discussed above.

The criterion of the tradition of a place, including denial, as an attempt to create new values or a creative layering of the heritage of generations

Tradition of place in architecture is a concept that refers to the unique characteristics and cultural heritage of a location that shape the character of a space and influence the way it is built

and used. Understanding the tradition of a place requires a careful analysis of its history, local customs, architectural styles, building materials and landscape elements that are characteristic of an area.

In architectural practice, taking account of the tradition of a place involves designing new buildings or spaces in a way that respects and develops the already existing local qualities. This may involve adapting architectural forms, maintaining the proportions and scale of the neighboring buildings, using traditional materials, or referring to local aesthetic patterns. In this way, new architecture coexists harmoniously with the older elements of the surroundings, enriching the space rather than dominating or degrading it.

Preserving the tradition of a place is key to maintaining cultural identity and strengthening the sense of belonging to the local community. Projects that respect this tradition not only respect the local heritage but also become part of it, linking the past and present into a coherent and meaningful space.

The socialist realist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the criterion of the tradition of the place, both in terms of the continuation of local heritage and the creative layering of architectural values of subsequent generations. Rather than relating to the character of the place and the history of the surrounding area, these buildings introduce a uniform, monumental aesthetic, typical of socialist realism, which neither integrates with local traditions nor develops the previous architectural values of the area. The socialist realist premise of these buildings, aimed at propagandistic monumentalism and domination over their surroundings, is at odds with the idea of creating values consistent with the local heritage. Lacking any attempt to align style, scale, or building materials with the traditions of the place, the dormitories do not enrich the space in a way that could be described as a creative layering of heritage. Instead, their presence contradicts the idea of cultivating a long-standing heritage and introduces dissonance, effectively preventing the harmonious spatial development of the place.

Symbol criterion in general, e.g., for visitors (economic migration and tourism)

A symbolic object in architecture is a building or urban structure that goes beyond its utilitarian function to become a carrier of deeper cultural, social, or historical meaning. Such an object represents the values, ideas, or identity of a place and community, often being a recognizable sign or icon in a region or even internationally. Symbolic buildings often reflect the spirit of their time. They can be monumental structures designed to highlight technological power and progress or intimate buildings expressing local traditions and history. On an architectural level, the symbolism of these buildings can manifest itself in their form, size, choice of materials, details, or location. Examples include the Eiffel Tower, which is a symbol of Paris and the technical progress of the 19th century, or St. Mary's Basilica in Krakow, representing the tradition and religious identity of the city.

A symbolic object in architecture also has the capacity to have an emotional impact on the community. Responding to the needs of identification and local pride, it becomes a point of reference, inspiration, or place of remembrance, building a bond with a place and its heritage.

The socialist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the definition of the symbol criterion in general, especially for visitors such as economic migrants or tourists. They lack the expressiveness and character to attract attention and generate interest as an important identification point of the place. Unlike architectural icons that become recognizable symbols of cities or regions, the dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not offer aesthetic or cultural values that could attract outsiders.

Their austere, monumental style, characteristic of socialist realism, does not evoke associations with local identity or inspiration, making them not a place that visitors would consider representative or worth remembering. Lacking unique architectural elements and links to local history, the dormitories remain anonymous buildings that act as a symbol neither for the city nor for its visitors.

Criterion for contemporary recognition—awards and prizes, popularity votes

The socialist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the criterion for contemporary recognition, as they have not won any significant awards or distinctions or been recognized in architectural or community popularity votes held over the past few decades. They lack the qualities that the architectural community and the local community would consider worthy of distinction. Unlike buildings that gain recognition through innovation, exceptional aesthetic qualities, or social values, these dormitories offer nothing to attract attention and gain recognition in the competition arena or in public popularity votes. The lack of recognition of dormitories in the form of awards or prizes reflects not only their limited architectural qualities but also their insufficient social or cultural significance to attract the attention of both professionals and the public.

The criterion of the test of time is the preservation of spatial and aesthetic qualities despite degradation due to technical wear and/or the negligence of the manager or spontaneous development of adjacent areas

The dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not stand the test of time, which is evident in their insufficient capacity to preserve their spatial and aesthetic qualities. Over the years, the buildings have deteriorated because of both technical wear and lack of care on the part of the manager. Neglected facades, outdated materials and lack of regular maintenance led to these buildings losing their original form and aesthetics, presenting themselves neither as valuable examples of socialist realism nor as contemporary icons of architecture.

In addition, the spontaneous development of the adjacent areas has negatively affected their perception. The ill-considered development of the surrounding area has disrupted the original spatial context of the dormitory complex, making them anonymous structures that do not add aesthetic value to the local landscape. As a result, the dormitories have not only failed to stand the test of time but also do not meet contemporary aesthetic or spatial standards, making them unable to fit positively into the changing urban fabric of the area.

The artistic criterion

The artistic criterion in architecture refers to the evaluation of a building in terms of its aesthetic qualities, design creativity and ability to evoke emotions. It includes aspects such as form, composition, proportions, detailing and innovative use of materials and technology. The artistic criterion, therefore, relates not only to the appearance itself but also to architectural harmony and expression, which give an object its character and identity, influencing the perception by both users and observers (Figs. 11 and 12). Good architecture that meets the artistic criterion can communicate ideas, reflect cultural values and enrich the space in which it is located. Buildings judged artistically positive are often distinguished by their unique style, innovative aesthetic solutions and coherent artistic vision, making them important reference points in architectural and cultural history.

The socialist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the criteria of artistic quality. They are characterized by architectural monotony, lack of attention to detail and domination of functionality over aesthetics. The designs of these buildings often omit elements that could enrich their visual character, leading to homogeneous and austere forms. As a result, the socialist dormitories on Dożynkowa not only fail to meet high aesthetic standards but also do not contribute to creating an inspiring environment for the residents.

Criterion of uniqueness, e.g., the only object preserved in an untransformed form

The socialist dormitories on Dożynkowa do not meet the criterion of uniqueness, which is justified by the lack of architectural diversity, uniform spatial forms, the absence of most original elements and their mass character. As a result, they cannot be regarded as unique buildings in the history of Polish socialist architecture.

The following factors should also be noted. The Socialist Realist dormitories, including those at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street, often replicated similar architectural and functional schemes, leading to a lack of diversity. They do not stand out from other buildings of the

period. The buildings are characterized by monotonous elevations and austere, functional forms. Their design is often limited to basic aesthetics, which makes it difficult to consider them as unique architectural structures. The dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not contain original architectural details or decoration that could give them a unique character—the existing details are very schematic and unsophisticated. Instead, their appearance is standard, which does not contribute to creating a unique identity for the buildings.



Fig. 11. The interior of the entrance hall of the former dormitory building at 9A Dożynkowa St. in Poznań. A standard space in a building intended for collective housing which bears no trace of outstanding architectural creation.



Fig. 12. The interior of the first floor corridor with entrances to the house of rooms, former dormitory building at 9A Dożynkowa Street in Poznań. A standard space bearing no trace of outstanding architectural creation

Criterion of representativeness - objects that are typical examples of historical formal ideological tendencies

The dormitory buildings at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street meet the criterion of representativeness, as they are typical examples of the historical formal and ideological tendencies that characterized socialist architecture. The dormitories represent typical features of the socialist style, such as functionalism, simplicity of form and raw building materials. Their appearance is in line with the building standards of the time, making them representative of the period. These buildings were designed with socialist ideas such as egalitarianism and collectivism in mind. Designed for students, they aimed to promote community and integration, reflecting the social values of the time. Dormitories 9A and 9C are similar to many other buildings constructed during this period, making them representative of a wider trend in socialist architecture. Their formal and ideological features can be found in many other projects of the time. In summary, the dormitory buildings at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street meet the criterion of representativeness as a typical example of socialist architecture, reflecting the formal and ideological tendencies of the time.

The criterion of conservationist authenticity of matter—objects rebuilt after World War II, which are often only a conservationist creation

The dormitory buildings at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street do not meet the criterion of conservationist authenticity of matter, as their current condition is the result of construction after the Second World War rather than the preservation of original architectural elements created before 1945.

Conclusions

The administrative procedure leading to an entry in the register of monuments ends with the issuance of a constitutive administrative decision, which is discretionary in nature and leads, based on this decision, to a material and technical action consisting of the actual entry of a given object in the register of monuments. In its course, the monument protection authorities are obliged to apply the Code of Administrative Procedure with all the guarantees arising from it.

The discretionary nature of the administrative decision is explained in the case law by pointing out that *The regulations governing the inclusion of an object in the register of monuments do not introduce detailed criteria that the authority should follow when assessing the advisability of subjecting a monument to conservation protection and therefore the decision of this authority is discretionary in nature* and based on the assessment of a given subject of protection through the prism of the statutory definition of a monument contained in art. 3(1) of the Act on protection and maintenance of historical monuments from 2003, the documentation gathered in the case as well as the knowledge and experience of the Province Monument Conservator and *the staff of the Provincial Heritage Conservation Office subordinate to him (Judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court, passed on 12.01.2023 r., II OSK 2887/21.)*. Discretion, therefore, does not mean arbitrariness. However, the expertise of the monument protection authorities is crucial. It should be evidenced by a thorough justification of the decision to place the property under monument protection. This justification of the decision should be a result of a thorough investigation. In the case of a discretionary decision, there are no prerequisites for the decision that facilitate the process of making it and verify its substantive legal correctness. When exercising discretion, the authority shall act in accordance with certain selection directives. Three ever-present ones may be identified: a) guided by social interest and the legitimate interest of the citizens, b) guided by constitutional axiology and c) guided by the principle of proportionality. It can be argued that the legislator gives the public administration body the discretionary power to decide on matters that by their nature do not lend themselves to the determination of grounds in a legislative act. Such types of cases are monument [13] protection decisions concerning the placing of property under protection. Each case is unique, requiring specialized analysis, expertise and often also the involvement of experts as court-appointed experts. In this context, it is worth noting that according to Art. 84 § 1 of the Code of Administrative Procedure *when special knowledge is required in a case, the public administration authority may request an opinion from an expert or experts*.

The subject of the administrative proceedings is the determination of whether a given object corresponds to the features indicated in the legal definition of a historical monument, which constitutes a material premise for the entry. However, *since the entry results in a significant limitation of control over the property, it should be made only when the collected evidence unequivocally confirms the historical value and also – if it is high enough to determine the existence of a social interest in preserving the given object, therefore, while the limitation of property rights due to the need for monument protection is legally permissible, it should always be duly justified, demonstrating the absence of other, less burdensome means for property owners to achieve this public interest (Judgement of Regional Administrative Court in Poznań, passed on 14.06.2018 r., file number: IV SA/Po 294/18.)*.

Because of the issues outlined above and in particular the fact that the decision to include an object in the register of monuments is taken within the framework of administrative discretion, it is so important that its content is devoid of arbitrary features and contains a thorough and detailed justification of the circumstances justifying the fact of subjection of a given object to preservation maintenance. This is uniformly confirmed in the case law, where it is pointed out that since the decision to include an object in the register of monuments is discretionary, the authority is particularly bound by the general principles regulated in Chapter 2 of the Code of Administrative Procedure (k.p.a.). This means that the authority is especially obliged to take all necessary steps to thoroughly clarify the facts and resolve the matter, considering the legitimate interest of the owner of the object proposed for inclusion in the register, as long as it does not conflict with the public interest in the form of monument protection (Article 7 k.p.a.). Additionally, the authority must ensure the active participation of the parties at every stage of the proceedings and provide them with the opportunity to express their views on the collected evidence before issuing a decision (Article 10 § 1 k.p.a.). Finally, the authority must explain to the parties the rationale behind the criteria used in resolving the matter (Article 11 k.p.a. - Judgement of Regional Administrative Court in Warsaw, passed on 21.06.2022 r., file number: VII SA/Wa 653/22).

Similarly, in another judgment, the court states that the decision to enter a particular object in the register of monuments should be preceded by a thorough analysis of the legitimacy of such an entry, taking into account the constitutional prohibition on violating the essence of property rights and stemming from the unquestionable value of the object as a monument. It should be apparent from the reasons for the decision that all the circumstances relevant to the case have been both considered and assessed and that the final decision is the logical consequence. It should be noted that *it is a mistake to justify a decision by merely describing the object, as this constitutes only a statement of fact and not an evaluation, especially from the perspective of the constitutional principle of not violating the essence of property rights (Judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court in Warsaw, passed on 21.10.1999 r., file number: I SA 233/99.)*. Literature indicates that the fundamental task of the authority during the proceedings is to determine whether the object possesses the aforementioned values and to evaluate them, as well as to dispel any doubts and controversies related to this, for which the authority may even use the evidence of an expert opinion if the knowledge and experience of the WKZ staff prove insufficient. Therefore, there should be no situation where the specialist authority, such as WKZ, leaves any circumstances of the case unexplained in detail, as otherwise, we would be dealing with at least an inadequately justified or even arbitrary decision.

Without a convincing justification additionally supported by an expert report, there can be substantial doubt as to whether it is justified to include the complex of buildings in question in the register of monuments [14]. The entry constitutes an excessive and disproportionate restriction of the property rights of the owners of those buildings and occurred in a situation in which the authority exceeded the limits of the public administration's discretion and gave primacy to the public interest over private interests without any justification whatsoever.

After analyzing the architecture and urban planning of the socialist dormitories located at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street, it can be concluded that these buildings do not meet the criteria for heritage value typically applied to post-1945 architecture. Firstly, it is clearly visible in the lack of architectural distinction. These dormitories do not stand out from other buildings of the same period. Their architectural monotony and uniformity make them unremarkable examples of socialist architecture. Moreover, the structures are characterized by a stark functionalist style that lacks aesthetic details. This minimalistic approach does not enhance the artistic value of the buildings, which is one of the key criteria for assessing heritage value. Secondly, they bear limited cultural significance.

While these dormitories are representative of socialist ideology, their lack of architectural diversity and innovation limits their cultural significance. In the context of post-1945 architectural heritage, these buildings do not hold sufficient importance to warrant preservation or recognition as valuable heritage. Non-Compliance with Heritage Guidelines Based on the arguments presented above and as elaborated on in this study, it is evident that the socialist dormitories at 9A and 9C Dożynkowa Street fail to meet most of the heritage value criteria outlined in the guidelines of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP). Their architectural characteristics, absence of unique features and loss of authenticity due to modifications and wear over time diminish their relevance for the preservation of cultural heritage in Poznań.

Acknowledgments

This article was written within the framework of the research project entitled “*Mapping of architectural space, the history, theory, practice, contemporaneity stage*” the authors participated in at the Faculty of Architecture, Poznan University of Technology.

References

- [1] A. Nadolny, Y. Ivashko, K. Słuchocka, I.G. Sandu, P. Bigaj, *In-fill Development Architecture, As Element of Post Second War Reconstruction of City of Poznan. Case Study of Joseph Stübben's Extension Plan of the City from Years 1902-1918*, **International Journal of Conservation Science**, 14(1), 2023, pp. 57-74.
- [2] G. Kodym-Kozaczko, *Rozwój Poznania w planowaniu urbanistycznym w latach 1900 – 1990*, **Architektura i urbanistyka Poznania w XX wieku**, ed. T. Jakimowicz, Wydawnictwo Miejskie, Poznań, 2005.
- [3] B. Stelmach, K., Andrzejewska-Batko, *Tożsamość 100 lat polskiej architektury* Narodowy Instytut architektury i Urbanistyki, Warszawa 2019.
- [4] A. Cymer, *Architektura w Polsce 1945-1989*, Centrum Architektury, Narodowy Instytut Architektury i Urbanistyki, Warszawa 2018.
- [5] P. Marciniak, *Konteksty i modernizacje: studia z dziejów architektury i urbanistyki w PRL*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej, 2018.
- [6] P. Marciniak, *Doświadczenia modernizmu: architektura i urbanistyka Poznania w czasach PRL*, Wydawnictwo Miejskie, Poznań 2010.
- [7] H. Grzeszczuk-Brendel, G. Klause, G. Kodym-Kozaczko, P. Marciniak, *Prolegomena do ochrony obiektów architektonicznych i zespołów urbanistycznych*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej, Poznań 2009.
- [8] M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, J. Kobylarczyk, O. Ivashko, *Conservation of the residential and public architecture of the 19th – early 20th centuries (on the examples of Kyiv and Cracow)*, **International Journal of Conservation Science**, 12(2), 2021, pp. 507-528.
- [9] V.A. Nikolaenko, V.V. Nikolaenko, O. Zubrichev, *Preservation of the historical architectural environment in a modern city*, **International Journal of Engineering and Technology (UAE)**, 7(3), 2018, pp. 649-652, <https://doi.org/10.14419/ijet.v7i3.2.14607>.
- [10] O. Kozakova, I.L. Kravchenko, M. Sulayman, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, S. Wang, M. Abdulgani Mustafa, M. Lisińska-Kuśnierz, L. Bednarz, M. Budziakowski, *The Role of Photographic Documentation in the Process of Conservation of Destroyed Architectural Monuments and Centres of Historic Cities*, **International Journal of Conservation Science**, 15(SI), 2024, pp. 3-16, DOI: 10.36868/IJCS.2024.si.01.

- [11] A. Markovskiy, O. Lagutenko, *Restoration, Revitalization or Liquidation: Strategies of Attitude to Cultural Heritage*, **International Journal of Conservation Science**, **15**(SI), 2024, pp. 185-194, DOI: 10.36868/IJCS.2024.SI.15.
 - [12] O. Dedov, M. Vabishchevych, O. Skoruk, G. Twardowski, *Study of the Effects of Natural And Man-Made Origin On the Technical Condition of Architectural Monuments*, **International Journal of Conservation Science**, **15**(SI), 2024, pp. 195-204, DOI: 10.36868/IJCS.2024.si.16.
 - [13] M. Jaśkowska, **System prawa administracyjnego** tom I Instytucje prawa administracyjnego, Warszawa 2015, p. 261.
 - [14] J. Kobyliński J., *Wpis zabytku nieruchomego do rejestru zabytków – istota, procedura i najczęstsze błędy organów*, **Nieruchomości**, **12**, 2021.
-

Received: November 10, 2024

Accepted: March 22, 2025