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To the borders of Art Nouveau

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BARCELONA 25-28 JUN.2015

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Amb la col·laboració de l'Art Nouveau European Route – Ruta Europea del Modernisme i de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona.

II coupDefouet International Congress

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El Congrés Internacional *coupDefouet* Barcelona 2015 ha estat una iniciativa de l'Art Nouveau European Route – Ruta Europea del Modernisme, organitzada per l'Institut del Paisatge Urbà de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, el grup de recerca GRACMON de la Universitat de Barcelona i la Fundació Catalunya – La Pedrera.

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II coupDefouet INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Presentem el volum corresponent a les actes del II Congrés Internacional coupDefouet. Ho fem amb molta il·lusió, perquè el sol fet de tractar d'un número ordinal com el que indica «segon» implica ja una continuïtat. I així és: l'ampli ressò que va tenir el congrés de l'any 2013 entre els estudiosos, col·leccionistes –i també aficionats– a l'Art Nouveau, ens va fer pensar que seria molt positiu convertir-lo en un espai de debat.

En aquest sentit, Barcelona, una de les grans capitals del moviment, té la voluntat de liderar el projecte amb joia i responsabilitat, i amb el benentès que la seu física d'alguna de les properes edicions del Congrés cDf pot ser alguna altra ciutat d'Europa. El primer congrés es va organitzar per commemorar els deu anys de publicació de la revista *coupDefouet*; aquesta publicació internacional especialitzada en Modernisme és ja un projecte consolidat, com ho és també l'ANER (Art Nouveau European Route / Ruta Europea del Modernisme), l'associació que agrupa més de 75 ciutats i 65 entitats amb l'objectiu de promoure i difondre el patrimoni modernista com un bé comú europeu. Tot plegat –Ruta, revista i Congrés, amb la seva publicació corresponent– es proposa acostar àmbits que massa vegades segueixen camins divergents: protecció del patrimoni, turisme, divulgació i transferència de coneixement i recerca. Com en el primer Congrés, tot això ha estat possible a partir d'una tasca duta a terme conjuntament per l'Institut del Paisatge Urbà de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, promotor de la revista i coordinador de l'ANER, i el grup de recerca GRACMON (Grup de Recerca en Història de l'Art i del Disseny Contemporanis) de la Universitat de Barcelona, que s'ha especialitzat en l'estudi del Modernisme.

Seguint el model iniciat fa dos anys, el congrés es va celebrar, tot just passada la festa de Sant Joan, entre els dies 25 i 28 de juny de 2015. La conferència inaugural es va fer a l'Aula Magna de la Facultat de Geografia i Història de la Universitat de Barcelona, i la resta de les sessions es van desenvolupar a les sales de La Pedrera, cedides per la Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera que va aportar-hi tota l'experiència i la capacitat organitzativa del seu equip professional.

TO THE BORDERS OF ART NOUVEAU: CZERNOWITZ AND HARBIN

Paolo Cornaglia and Rosa Tamborrino, Politecnico di Torino – Department of Architecture and Design

Harbin (Northern China) and Czernowitz (Bukowina, Habsburg Empire until 1918, then Romania until 1945, now Ukraine) are two examples of cities at the edges of empires, close to the borders of countries, with a consequent melting pot of people and nationalities. In this framework of a need for representation of diverse national and/or religious characters, at the beginning of twentieth century Art Nouveau architecture played a key role on a background of never-ending Eclecticism. Less as a fight against Eclecticism and more as a symbol of modernity and supernationality, Art Nouveau reached these outposts of Western culture directly from Vienna or through its Russian version. The Postsparkasse in Czernowitz (1900) and the Chinese Eastern Railway buildings (1902) in Harbin are the best examples of this search for modernity. The Art Nouveau era in Czernowitz, strongly related to the imperial core, vanished in 1918, but in Harbin it lasted until the 1920, thanks to its iconic value.
Keywords: Czernowitz, Chernivtsi, Harbin, Jewish community, Chinese Eastern Railway, Gessner, Hubert, Marmorek, Oskar, Wagnerschule, Eclecticism, Russian Art Nouveau.

Some cities grow slowly, century by century, “in the same place”, with the same families, generation by generation, joining monument to monument, district to district. Others, on the contrary, are caught by historical and political earthquakes, and they change name, people, and “place” because of shifting borders and changes in the nation they belong to. We’ll discuss two case studies: Czernowitz (Chernivtsi) in Ukraine and Harbin in China, both along the borders of their countries and representing urban stories where their location played a key role in their development. These sites turned a borderline position in their states into an opportunity for richness and cultural identity, as they were inhabited by a multi-ethnic population which boosted economic and cultural exchanges. Within their own chronology, these cities share their “golden age” period, around the turn of

the twentieth century, adopting the Art Nouveau language as a symbol of modernity. This paper focuses on the significant role that their position played in their urban development, and analyses from a comparative perspective how architectural language contributed to building up their urban identities.

1. Borders, names & people

1.1. In Czernowitz (Chernivtsi)

Today Chernivtsi is a Ukrainian town, but this status belongs to the town only since WWII: prior to that it was called Cernauţi, as a part of Greater Romania (1918–1940, 1941-44), and before that it was Czernowitz under the Austrian empire (1775–1918). Until 1918, Czernowitz was the capital of Bukovina,[1] the eastern area of the empire, surrounded by other parts of the same empire (Galicia and Lodomeria, inhabited by Ukrainians and Poles and ruled by Vienna; Transylvania, inhabited by Romanians and Hungarians and ruled by Budapest) and Romania.

The capital was close to the Romanian border and very close to the Russian Empire. The region, because of its position but also because of the immigration promoted by Austria for peopling the area, was a melting pot of Ukrainians, Romanians, Poles, Armenians, Hungarians and Jews. In 1918, with the collapse of the Central Empires, new-old nations appeared on the European scene, and new borders were traced: Bukowina became a part of Greater Romania (the Moldavian and Valacchian principalities, plus Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania), and the closest borders were with Poland and the Soviet Union (Ukraine). The last twist of fate happened in 1940, and was consolidated in 1944: the upper part of Bukowina (with a majority of Ukrainians) was joined to the Soviet Union (Ukraine), and Romanians (and Jews of Romanian nationality) were 'recommended' and allowed to move back to their 'homeland', the capital, now called Chernivtsi, which became a town of mostly Slavic language and culture. The only borders today still extant are the ones with Romania and Moldova.

For Czernowitz the golden age – the period when the reality and the idea of a tolerant multicultural town came to pass – ran from 1775 (the annexing of Bukovina to the Austrian empire) to 1918, when the duchy

became a part of Greater Romania. It was the 'Far East' of the empire, the bastion of Western civilization and culture. For German-speaking Jewish writers, such as Karl Emil Franzos, it was a sort of oasis in the barbaric East; for travellers a European place, well linked to Vienna. As in all the regions of this part of the empire there was a strong contradiction between the élites ruling the urban areas and the countryside: in a mostly Ukrainian and Romanian duchy, the capital was a mirror of German culture and language, because of the Austrian state officers related to the imperial administration, the German community, and the increased assimilation of the Jewish community as a German-speaking group. The Jewish people leaving the villages (the *shtetl*) to settle in Czernowitz, left the old language too (Yiddish), entering the "German world", in a sort of upgrading. In 1900, 30% of Czernowitzer were Jewish (30,000 people within 88,000); in 1914 the Jews numbered 40,000 and in 1941 about 50,000. All these German-speaking people made Czernowitz like a German town in the middle of a territory full of Romanians and Ukrainians: this contradiction would bring Romania, and later Ukraine, to claim the region and its capital. The high percentage of Jewish people in Czernowitz was balanced, anyway, by other national groups. In 1910, beyond Germans and Jews (1/6 of population), there were Romanians (1/6), Ukrainians (1/6), Polish (1/6), plus Armenians and Hungarians. According to official reports of the end of eighteenth century, 75% of people in the Bukovina region were Romanian, and the most used language was Romanian. Austrian powers always tried to reduce this predominance, allowing Ukrainian immigration, to limit Romanian claims on the region. In Czernowitz, the different ethnic groups acted as different social bodies: you would find Jews and Germans in the urban élite; the guardians, housemaids and nannies were Ukrainians; craftsmen, market sellers and retailers were Polish and Romanian. The multicultural character of Czernowitz was continually evident from the names of the streets (written in the three main languages), and from the multi-language newspapers and magazines (such as *The Bucovina*, a cultural magazine published in German and Romanian), and was a result of the need to know most of the languages spoken in town to communicate: at the market or with the nanny…

1.2. In Harbin

Harbin is a Chinese city in the Manchuria region (Northeast China). Though a fishing village existed in the area, in the past named Alejin (Harbin name is derived from it by different sources meaning "honour" or "a place for drying fishing nets"), the city was founded when Russia obtained the right to build the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) at the end of nineteenth century. Things went very fast: the concession was signed in 1896, works began in 1897, and traffic on the line started in November 1901. The CER linked the Siberian region to the harbour of Vladivostok (on the Sea of Japan) cutting a path through Chinese territory. At that time, the Trans-Siberian Railway became the world's longest railroad, with Harbin the hub of the railway company. The city was founded on the south bank of the Sungari River, or Songhua, where the railroad intersected with extensive river traffic. Its construction started in 1898 and was conceived as a sort of Russian outpost alongside the goods' traffic. From the description in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* the cool climate with cold winters lasted four or five months; sub-zero overnight low temperatures were common and could reach −40°F (−40°C).[2] Nevertheless, because of its position Harbin became quickly very attractive for traders as well as for populations discriminated on the other side of the border. At different moments in the twentieth century, wars and political changes created various conditions that encouraged a multi-ethnic people to join Harbin, and its special status of a city not completely belonging to anyone. On one hand the city had a Russian organization, with a European style of life, Western stores and amenities; on the other hand it could offer different rules and rights. In Harbin, not so far away from the border, many people found a place to live without fear of persecution. Jews from Russia, Ukraine and Siberia were among the first arriving there. With the aim of improving economic development, in fact, the Czar had offered them a chance to live in this Russian 'enclave' without restrictions. As local Chinese people had no tradition of anti-Semitism, Jews took the opportunity to enjoy residential permission plus economic and political rights unavailable in Czarist Russia. The rights remained even with the political changes in the Russian Empire, when the Soviet Union acquired the railroad zone, and later when the Soviet's sold it to Japan in 1936. The first Jew, S. I. Bertsel, arrived in 1899. Many cultural institutions were established soon, including a Talmud Torah, which played an important part in the daily lives of the residents.[3] Among

the multi-ethnic communities living in Harbin, the Jews played a leading role. They developed the major trade with the export of furs and selling maritime insurance, and played a key role exchanging goods and services for everyday life of the city too. Their fruitful presence is testified to by some of the oldest buildings in Harbin still existing, which were owned by Jewish citizens. These include expensive private mansions as well as buildings for strategic services in the city, such as the Hotel Moderne (a multiservice structure with a restaurant, cinema, ballroom, billiard room, bar, barbershop, and shops run by the same owner, who also owned a jewellers and developed a chain of theatres),[4] and the Hospital directed by Dr Abram Yosifovich Kaufman who was in the Siberian Army, graduated in Medicine in Switzerland and, with his wife, moved to Harbin and led the Jewish community before and during the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. The role played by Madame Kaufman is also a sign of the modern and open-minded vision introduced by the Jewish community. The 1913 census of the CER mentions about 70,000 citizens of 53 nationalities, speaking 45 languages (34,313 Russians, 23,537 Chinese, 5,032 Jews, 2,556 Poles, 696 Japanese, 564 Germans, 234 Tatars, 218 Latvians, 183 Georgians, 172 Estonians, 142 Lithuanians, 124 Armenians, and some Crimeans, Ukrainians, and so on). A second wave of immigration began in 1918 when the city welcomed the white émigrés from Russia after the Russian Socialist Revolution of 1917. In the 1920s the collectivization of Stalin also encouraged many German-Russian families, especially Mennonites of South Russia and Lutherans, to cross the Sino-Soviet border. In the early 1920s the consulates of principal countries were built or renewed: the Japanese General Consulate, the Danish, Italian and German consulates were all built in 1920, the French one in 1923 and the General Consulate of the Soviet Union in 1924. As the city grew to 100,000 inhabitants in 1917, and to 120,000 in the 1920s, new stores and markets were also established, as well as schools, hotels, restaurants, and cinemas. Some of these buildings were very impressive, such as the imposing facade of the Shuidu Cinema (1929). The demographic growth boosted the economy and several banks were built in a few years: Wanguo Bank (1922); The National Bank of Jews, Agevlov Foreign Bank and the Brithis Huifeng Bank (all built in 1923), and the Bank of Communication (1928). Each had its own architectural style. The cosmopolitan components also increased. New

religious buildings were built: the Russian Orthodox Saint Sophia Cathedral with a Russian aspect (1923), the 'Oriental' style New Assembly Hall of Jews (1921), Chinese style temples and a Buddhist temple (1922), the Temple of Ultimate Bliss (1923), Confucius Temple (1926), and more Orthodox churches, such as the Eastern Orthodox Saint Alexeevsky, then Catholic (1931). The city looked like a rich cosmopolitan metropolis, and became known as the "Oriental St Petersburg", and the "Paris of the Orient". The number of journals and periodicals published there also is a sign of this urban development. Most of them were Jewish: in the early 1900s Moshe Levitin had established a Hebrew, Yiddish and Russian publishing company and about twelve Russian-language Jewish periodicals were published between 1918 and 1930.[5] If this melting-pot population was largely Russian speaking, did the architecture have a common language? Harbin was born around the period when Art Nouveau was developing in Europe. Did this style play any role in building up the image of this city?

2. From Eclecticism to Art Nouveau on a multicultural stage

Czernowitz and Harbin in different ways arrived to host people coming with their own traditions and cultural identities. Mixing the different periods of history with the wide range of national references, the Eclectic language seems to be the most represented in these cities. In fact, their buildings' facades needed to reflect the provenance of their owners in some features. Architects and builders mostly conceived a style as a common language easy to shape, given the richness of diverse artistic influences. Neither the Neoclassical, Neo-Medieval or Neo-Renaissance styles, in fact, seem related to any cultural choice concerning a particular theory or moral values. Their features were merely used as available elements 'to speak' about cities as they created a generic 'European style'. Harbin was an outpost of Eastern Europe in China, and Czernowitz was the Eastern limit of Central European civilization (that is, another outpost of Europe in the Far East). The architectural language employed was a tool to emphasize European culture as a common ground.

2.1 Eclecticism in Harbin

In Harbin, Eclecticism was differently used as a “lingua franca” or as an ethnic style. Looking at the documentation of early buildings constructed we can see how the residence of a foreign emigrant was conceived as Neo-Medieval while the house of the Polish merchant Kovalisky (1909) was Neoclassical; on the other hand, the Central Assembly Hall of Jews (1906) looks ‘Oriental’, and the red-brick Central Telephone Office of CER (1907) denoted an eclecticism inspired by the Neo-Gothic, as did the 1910 Staffs’ Sport Club.[6] The general image of Harbin at that time had to be not so far removed from that of the nineteenth century Historicist facades of cities across Europe. The city also doesn’t seem inspired by any special urban model. It was developed by the patterns of general Western urban culture, also using town planning to create a mobility of structure, blocks and plots according to a Western organization of urban space, with hierarchy of the spatial elements. As a result, the core of Harbin mostly looked like a European city. Thus, urban design and decoration (see the balustrades of the Courtyard where the Heilonggjiang Electric Power Bureau is today) was also a part of the *mise en scène*, with a main road linking the railway station to the square and the church of Saint Nicholas as well as buildings for social life, cinemas, and stores. The Japanese Merchant Firm building (1916), for instance, with the imposing corner surmounted by a dome and pillar-statues sustaining the balustrade, reproduced a shopping building type that we could find in France or in Northern Europe. The architectural language was also used as a tool to connect people living in these cities to their own original countries and/or cultures. In the case of Harbin, the buildings related to the religions (churches, synagogues, mosques, schools) became the special places made to evocate the memory of the different origins of people living there. Thus, the various religions represented underlined their specific provenances by using different architectural styles for their buildings: the Turkish Mosque (1906) had a different ethnic style compared to the Arab Mosque (1908), both referring to Islamic culture in a different way; the Eastern Orthodox church of the Russian emigrants and the Orthodox Virgin Mary church (1922) evoked the origin of their members, as opposed to the German style roof of the German Lutheran church (1914). The same cultural multiplicity was seen within the Jewish community, where ideological diversities were reflected in their Zionist and Revisionist organizations (there were even some Jewish Communists and

Karaites).[7] All the ethnic affiliations of the people were made visible through the architecture of their temples, as well as for the Chinese people who distinguished their temples by adopting the 'Chinese' style which related to a range of cultural references. These buildings, through their architectural language, displayed multiculturalism as a component of the city's DNA, while also underlining the diversity and the heterogeneity of the urban image.

2.2. Churches, 'national houses' and 'ethnic' architectural languages in Czernowitz: building types

The urban elements that, at first, recall the many different identities of the society are, of course, the churches of the many religions of Czernowitz. Beyond the ancient wooden churches, the oldest temple in the town is the Roman-Catholic Holy Cross church (1787-1814), built in a Neoclassical style but with clear references to the late-Baroque style still very appreciated in the empire of the late eighteenth century. The late-Neoclassical Greek-Orthodox cathedral of the Holy Spirit was built in 1844–1866 by Ferdinad Roell, while the Greek-Catholic Virgin Mary church was built in 1825–1830, combining a Neoclassical design with the typical Slavic five domes in a bulb shape. Other churches belong to Eclecticism: the Neo-Gothic Jesuitical Church of the Sacred Heart (1891–1894), and the Armenian St Peter and Paul church, built by the Czech architect Jozef Hlavka in 1869–1875. He designed the most important and monumental building in town too, the Residence of Bukovinian and Dalmatian Metropolitans (1864–1875). Conceived as a "crown of the town", built on the upper part of the city centre, the building speaks clearly about the Austrian project to make Czernowitz the Vatican of the Orthodox church in the empire. The building, a red brick monument, shows a mixed world of references: German pediments and gables, Byzantine-Romanesque elements, regional Romanian details, and the classical five domes of the church. In the same period and in the same eclectic world the main Jewish Synagogue was built. It was centrally located, more so than the previous one, and it became, with the Residence of the Metropolitans, one of the landmarks shown on postcards of the period. The synagogue,[8] built between 1873 and 1878, was designed by the Lemberg (Lviv/Lwow) based Polish architect Julian Zachariewicz. He used a Moorish-Byzantine language, already

experimented with by Ludvig Förster in the synagogues built in Vienna (1854) and Budapest (1859), but joining a dome to the temple, as Eduard Knoblauch and Friedrich August Stüler did in Berlin (1859–1866). After these works the Jewish community placed another 'mark' in the town, with the Jewish House (Jüdisches Haus) built in 1905–1908, a Neo-Baroque monumental palace – with some Secession elements in the internal and external railings and in the large bay on the left side – designed by Tadeusz Levandovsky,[9] with four very 'Viennese' Atlases in the front. In those years, as we can see in the postcards, the Jewish House in the foreground and the dome of the Synagogue in the background were two related elements of the urban landscape, showing the prominent role of the Jewish community in Czernowitz. Stars of David decorated the doors and the staircase railing. Not only the Jewish community had a 'national house': all the nationalities had specific buildings for meetings and for promoting their respective culture.[10] The Romanian House (Palatul National) was in the main square, the Ringplatz, but it was a former hotel built in the nineteenth century with an Eclectic facade, decorated with Romanian details only during the Romanian interwar period. The Ukrainian (Ruthenian) House, a monumental building with no 'Ruthenian' decorative elements, was just in front of the Armenian church, close to Herrengasse, the main street where the Polish National House played a visible role, decorated by Polish architectural features in 1902–1905. In 1910, just in front of the Polish House, the Christian German community of Czernowitz built the biggest national house in town along with the Jewish one: the *Deutsches Haus*, a masterpiece of Jugendstil with vernacular and 'gothic' details, by Gustav Fritsch, a German architect from Sudetenland.[11] As Florence Heymann reminds us, the growing importance of these national houses wasn't a mark of the multicultural society but, on the contrary, a signal of the decay of fluent relationships between communities. If all groups had strong connections for trading and working and in daily life, real interethnic relationships and friendships depended on specific situations, case by case.

2.3. Architectural identity and the Art Nouveau language in Harbin and Czernowitz

Although Historicism was very popular, in Harbin the major buildings that were related to the CER mostly adopted the Art Nouveau style. The office

of the CER Management Bureau (1902) (fig. 1), the hotel of the CER Management Bureau (1902), and the residence of the deputy director all had similar signs, elements, decorations that were Art Nouveau inspired.[12] As they were almost the first buildings in Harbin, their style was very up-to-date in the context of the European development of the Art Nouveau movement. The decorations, materials, and architectural composition indicate some very interesting references, variously inspired by various aspects of the new artistic vogue. The irregular prospects of the residences, the shapes of the windows and the wooden insertions giving the idea of an urban cottage, are Arts and Crafts and Mackintosh inspired; while the Art Nouveau style official building of the administration, with a geometrically designed facade to give an impression of strength, is in a more 'continental' style. Though the stone appearance of this building hides a brick structure, it was a considerable investment, evidenced by the wooden details of doors and the interior decorations. It had to look really 'new vogue' to citizens and visitors arriving in the far east land of China at that time. The program, strongly underlined by the Russian Company, became a sort of brand for the company within the city. The image of the modernity of the company identified by the 'new art' of the buildings was linked to different buildings and functions over a long period. Indeed, it was continued when new buildings were constructed in the 1920s. By then the Art Nouveau had expired in Europe, but in Harbin it had been interpreted in a different way. The 'new art' didn't have the same meaning it did in Europe as a rupture with the past and a search for new references and new materials for designing and composing. Rather than being used against Eclecticism, it was used next to it, as a new style adding new stylish elements to others. The buildings in the Art Nouveau style didn't have a pure and plain Art Nouveau composition. Most of them mixed some Eclectic elements too. Nevertheless, in the first decades of the twentieth century the Art Nouveau language had been recognized as contributing to Harbin's identity. Harbin was a company city where the more relevant buildings of the company, the CER, had been realized in Art Nouveau style. Thus, Art Nouveau style became a symbol of the city. More buildings commissioned by private owners had in fact adopted the same Art Nouveau style, or simply added some Art Nouveau decorations to their Eclectic buildings (see the 1915 Tianfeng Grocery, Eclectic with some Art

Nouveau style decor). The essential role of the Jewish community in the foundation of Harbin is also especially demonstrated by their Art Nouveau buildings, as they also exhibited their status through 'en vogue' buildings, from the point of view of the architectural language. As the economical skeleton of the city initially, the Jews shared the same new language that related to the modernity of this new world. This attitude is especially evident in the Judaic Emigrants' Association of 1902, the magnificent Hotel Moderne built in 1906 and run by the Russian Jewish Merchant Jose Kaspe (whose son became a well-known pianist, who naturalized French in the 1930s), and the Brother Chamber of Commerce of 1910 by the French Jew Samsonovsky.[13]

Fig. 1. Harbin (China). CER Management Bureau (1902), main entrance. Photo R. Tomborrino.

After the beginning of the century, the Art Nouveau style was reiterated at the second stage of development in the 1920s when the city numbered about 120,000 inhabitants. At that time, the Russian Revolution made life difficult in the territories of Eastern Europe. Many families, especially people with religious traditions, moved to Harbin, boosting new

development. Recent research into Lutheran archives enlightens this period because many Mennonite and Lutheran families arrived in China. Their organizations around the world (such as the Mennonite Central Committee) helped them.[14] The Lutheran World Convention of 1931–1932 provides details of the effort to rescue German-Russian Lutheran refugees that had escaped Russia and were living in Harbin. In these years, the company buildings repeated their 'own' style to build more offices and high rank residences. The Art Nouveau was adopted as 'the' language: see the Railway Technical School of 1920, and the Engineering Department of Railway Bureau of 1921 **[Fig. 2]**. Nevertheless, looking at the Art Nouveau former residences of the CER of the same years, at the large wooden terraces or the shapes of the roofs, we can see how this architectural language had moved to a more eclectic style. Many buildings of this period are still preserved showing how extensively Art Nouveau was adopted then. At the same time this style was expiring in Europe, and new ideas were linked to the idea of modernity. In Harbin, buildings were mixing architectural Historicism with exotic locally-inspired decorations, originating a sort of local Baroque. In this melting pot of architecture the Art Nouveau still remained as a main reference. In a way, the impact of Art Nouveau was probably even greater in this late period, when the private multi-ethnic patronage also mainly adopted this style: see the 1926 Fulun yucai Lecture and Study Institute, the Miniature Restaurant run by the Jewish A. Karci, and so on. Strictly evaluated from the point of view of architectural research these buildings are not masterpieces. However, they are very important to the cultural identity of the city. It is precisely the spurious interpretation of the language, its uniqueness in mixing features prevalent in previous Harbin buildings, that this style developed into a unique local language giving the city its own identity for ever.

Fig. 2 Harbin (China). Architectural and Civil-Engineering Institute (1920). Facade. Photo R. Tamborrino.

In Czernovitz the major role played by the German-speaking community, within the multiplicity of social components, created a homogeneous architectural landscape, with 'some' national spots, visible but not prominent. The model was Vienna: the Herrengasse, the street with the most elegant cafés and the most important shops, looked to the Viennese Graben. Building in Secession and Eclectic styles made the urban fabric totally Western, European and Viennese. The town had particular look also because it was very new – there wasn't a Gothic, Renaissance or Baroque historical core. Despite the first appearance of the name of the place in a record dated 1408, the place officially became a city in 1786, and grew especially in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century. Everything in Czernowitz played a role in this Viennese festival: street names, the building typology, the retail system, the new railway station (built in 1905 in Secession style by Moritz Elling), the *Volksgarten* (close to the area where the officer of the Austrian administration and the wealthy German families lived in villas). The most Austrian elements were absolutely the Theatre and the Postal Saving Bank. The former was built in 1905 in a Neo-Baroque/Secession style by Fellner & Hellmer, well-known theatre designers operating in the whole empire between 1871 and 1913; it was a copy of the theatre already built in Fürt (1902), and then was a reference for the following one in

Klausenberg/Kolozsvar (today Cluj, Romania – 1906). Decorated by busts of German composers, and by the stuccoes depicting Wagner and Shakespeare (to mean the double function of the hall, for operas and plays), was faced by the Schiller's statue. The Postsparkasse, built in 1900–1901 by Hubert Gessner (1871–1943, a student at the Wagnerschule from 1894 to 1898), was a clear example of Secession (fig. 3, 4). Gessener won first prize in the competition against other colleagues from Czernowitz (Max Morgenstern, second prize, designer of the Neo-Baroque Café Habsburg[15]) and Vienna (Viktor Fiala, living in Vienna but born in Czernowitz, with Oskar Laske, third prize). The project was published in *Der Architekt* by Joseph August Lux, speaking of a "creative architect".[16] Gessner – despite the conservative design for the roofs, with a central part 'à la Mansart' like in a Baroque palace – tried to achieve a modern goal, at the same time practical and artistic. According to Lux, the building shows simplicity related to its character of a working place but at the same time clear attention to art, effectively linking architecture and applied art. Gessner gave particular attention to materials: iron for the entrance gate, marble and marble columns for the atrium, white stucco for the walls, mahogany for doors and panels on the first floor, coloured stained glass for the windows with the Secessionist representation of flowers and clouds. The main hall – on the first floor – receives light from the windows but also from a glass ceiling. In the upper part of the front a mosaic by Adolf Joseph Lange depicts the twelve provinces of the empire, with Austria and Bucovina in the middle. Another important Secession building in Czernowitz should have been the Stock Exchange, designed by Oskar Marmorek (1863–1909). The building, conceived in 1904 for a competition, and published in *Der Architekt* in the same year and in *Die Architektur des XX Jahrunderts*[17] in 1907, was not built, but it shows the not-secondary role of the Czernowitz architectural scene in the empire. Marmorek was a prominent Jewish architect, late-Historicist in his first works in Budapest but who later adopted a clear Secessionist *Wagnerschule* language, such as in the Rüdigerhof in Vienna (1902) and in these drawings for Czernowitz. The Stock Exchange Hall was conceived as part of a shopping mall, at the end of an internal courtyard. If these are the most important examples, the landmarks, there are many examples of Art Nouveau buildings within the Historicist urban fabric of Czernowitz, often symbols of the – frequently

Jewish – modernised bourgeoisie of the city, such as the shopping arcade Matildenhof (1904) and the Goldene Dirne (1905).[18]

Fig. 3. Cernowitz (Ukraine). Postparkasse, today Art Museum (Hubert Gessner, 1900). Facade. Photo P. Cornaglia.

Fig. 4. Cernowitz (Ukraine). Postparkasse, today Art Museum (Hubert Gessner, 1900). Main entrance. Photo P. Cornaglia.

Ultimately, we can state that the Art Nouveau language in Czernowitz (absolutely Viennese and not related to other 'versions' of Secession, like

the Hungarian one, so eager to 'shout' Hungarian very loud) was a choice of a neutral, modern and supernational language. It is not by chance that the Theatre comprises a large Secessionist style three-partitioned bay in the main front, as does the new railway station, built after demolishing the previous and not-so-old Neo-Medieval Eclectic building (as also happened in Lemberg). This attitude is a feature of the beautiful, modern and light Secessionist Postal Saving Bank too. How could a bank speak, in that area, only a specific language (against others), and how could a bank look not modern, safe and projected towards the future? The Jewish House too was involved in this movement: completely not Moorish or Oriental (as, to the contrary, the Synagogue was), it speaks[19] of the will of the Jewish community to be assimilated, to be 'Austrian', through the Viennese Atlases of the main front, but at the same time – within in a general eclectic framework – about the will to be modern, thanks to the great Secessionist three-partitioned bay of the side front.

3. Conclusion

In spite of the acceptance of diversities as a multiplicity and a richness, the governance of these cities needed to unify their melting-pot blends of citizens. With this aim, specific architectural programs were adopted to reinforce the image of the city. The administration sought to inspire the efficiency of the new way through a new language as a symbol of modernity.

The Art Nouveau was at that time the new language of the architecture around Europe, breaking with Historicism and the past. As a new form of art it seemed to be more flexible and more capable than others of 'speaking' to everybody. Art Nouveau wasn't codified, as a new architectural style, so it was a sort of 'neutral' tool helpful for embodying a wide range of identities without focusing on the national style of the leading élites. In a way, this was a political use of architecture. In their golden ages, Harbin and Czernowitz adopted Art Nouveau to build their cultural identity as unified cities. They used this language in unique ways to represent public and common places.

11. Carla GIOVANNINI, *La città dei professionisti*, in Maria MALATESTA (Ed.), *Storia d'Italia. I Professionisti*, Torino, Einaudi, 1996 (Milano, Il Sole 24 Ore, 2006).

12. Cette élite, en effet, même si elle fait partie de la bourgeoisie des professions, n'a pas complètement coupé ses liens avec l'aristocratie. Maria MALATESTA, *La borghesia professionale,* in Aldo Berselli, Angelo Varni (Ed.): *Storia di Bologna. Bologna in età contemporanea 1796-1914*, Bologna, Bolonia University Press, 2010, p. 249-332.

13. Le document peut être consulté dans la section Architecture des archivea historiques de l'Université de Bologne. Directeur ; prof. Gian Paolo Brizzi ; conseillère scientifique de la section : M. Beatrice Bettazzi.

14. Elena GOTTARELLI, *Come Abramo Ariodante Sironi*…, p. 39.

3.3. To the borders of Art Nouveau: Czernowitz and Harbin. Paolo Cornaglia - Rosa Tamborrino

1. About Czernowitz/Chernivtsi see: Florence HEYMANN, *Le crépuscule des lieux*, Paris: Stock, 2003; Dmitro TANASHIK, *Chernivtsi*, Chernivtsi: Zoloti Litavry, 2005; *Mithos Czernowitz. Eine Stadt in Spiegel ihrer Nationalität*, Potsdam: Deutsches Kukturforum östliches Europa, 2008; Marianne HIRSCH, Leo SPITZER, *Ghosts of home. The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2009; Svetlana FRUNCHAK, *Studying the Land, Contesting the Land. A Select Historiographic Guide to Modern Bukovina*, The Carl Beck Papers in Russian & European Studies, Pittsburgh, 2011, no. 2108; Davide RECHTER, *Becoming Habsburg. The Jews of Austrian Bukovina 1774-1918*, Oxford/Portland, Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2013; Paolo CORNAGLIA, "Czernowitz. 'Un ermellino a Cernopol' tra Impero, Romania e Ucraina", in Salvatore Adorno, Giovanni Cristina, Arianna Rotondo (eds), *VisibileInvisibile. Percepire la città tra descrizioni e omissioni*, Catania: Scrimm, 2014, p. 1715-1725.

2. "Harbin", entry in *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/254877/Harbin> [consulted 30/06/2014. See also family stories on the website of the Jewish Communities of China at <http://www.jewsofchina.org/>. Cf. Nikolaj Petroviĉ Kradin, Kharbin – russkaia Atlantida [Harbin: The Russian Atlantis], Khabarovsk: Khabarovskaja Kraevaja tip., 2001, p. 183-84.

3. Jonathan GOLDSTEIN, Irene CLURMAN, Dan Ben CANAAN, *Detailed History of Harbin*, The Sino-Judaic Institute, 2009, <http://www.sino-judaic.org/index.php?page=harbin_history> [consulted 05/05/2015]. Cf. Yaacov LIBERMAN, *My China: Jewish Life in the Orient: 1900-1950,* Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 1998, and Berkeley, CA: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2007. See also Eleanor PARKER, *Book Review: My China: Jewish Life in the Orient: 1900-1950*, by Yaacov (Yana) Liberman, in "China Judaic Connection", July, 1998.

4. The same owner Joseph Kaspe also had a jewellery store and developed a chain of theatres.

5. J. GOLDSTEIN, I. CLURMAN, D. B. CANAAN, *Detailed History of Harbin* (http://www.sino-judaic.org/index.php?page=harbin_history).

6. Nye YUNLING (ed.), *Harbin Historic Architectures*, Harbin, 2005; S. S. Levoshko, Russkaia arkhitektura v Man'chzhurii. Konets XIX — pervaia polovina XX veka [Russian Architecture in

Manchuria: Late 19th – Early 20th Century], Khabarovsk: Chastnaia Kollektsiia, 2003, pp. 88-90; Chang Huai SHENG, *Harbin Architecture*, Harbin, 1990.

7. This part of Harbin's history benefits from more documents collected by Jewish organizations. Cf. photographs from the Sitsky Toper Collection and more pictures by the Sino-Israel Research and Study Center <http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org>.

8. On the Synagogue in Czernowitz see Sergey R. KRAVTSOV, "Jewish Identities in Synagogue Architecture of Galicia and Bukovina", *Ars Judaica*, 6, 2010, p. 81-100.

9. According to information by Irina Korotun (Czernowitz, National University Yuryi Fedkovych). Thanks to her, who kindly guided me around the town in summer 2013 and gave me much historical information and advice, also to Svetlana Frunchak for her book, and to Mykola Kushnir (curator) and Alex Kohen of the Jewish Museum in Czernowitz, for their help in understsanding the Jewish history of the town.

10. Volodimir STARIK, *Chernivtsi Multikulturni*, Chernivtsi: Ukrainskij Narodnij Dim, 2012.

11. Whose Imperial and Royal Government Administration Building in Czernowitz (1871) shows typical Historicist influence.

12. On Art Nouveau in Harbin cf. Anastasia, A., "Artem'eva, Modern v arkhitekture dal'nevostochnykh gorodov" ["Art Nouveau in the Architecture of Russian Far Eastern Cities"], PhD dissertation at the Research Institute of the Theory and History of Architecture and Town Planning of the Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Sciences (Khabarovsk branch), 2007.

13. Cf. Mark GAMSA, "The many faces of the Hotel Moderne in Harbin", *East Asian History*, 37, December 2011, p. 27-38.

14. The history of the Germans from Russia was found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America Archives (Rosemont, Illinois). Cfr. V. A. LESS, The Federation of East European Family History Societies website, *Harbin Lutheran Refugees*, FEEFHS, 1995-2003, http://feefhs.org [consulted 30/06/2014]. Cf. Katie Michelson MELVIN, "Escape From Russia", *AHSGR Journal*, 10, 2, summer 1987; John B. TOEWS, "Flight Across the Amur Into China", *AHSGR Journal*, 2, 1, spring 1979.

15. Quoted as "Max Monter in Czernowitz" or "in Brünn on *Wiener Bauindustrie Zeitung* (1904, 21, I, p. 29-32; 22, II, p. 242-244).

16. Joseph August LUX, "Das Sparkassengebäude in Czernowitz", *Der Architekt*, 9, 1903, p. 71-75; Id., "H. Gessner und die Wagnerschule", Innen-Dekoration, 13, December 1902, p. 296-298, 304-308. About the architect and the building see Markus KRISTAN, *Hubert Gessner. Architekt zwischen Kaiserreich und Sozialdemokratie 1871-1943*, Wien, Passagen Verlag, 2011, p. 46-50, and Anna BELKINA, Irina KOROTUN, *Architectural features of the Museum of Art in Czernowitz*, in press.

17. *Der Architekt*, 1904, 10, pl. 79, *Die Architektur des XX Jahrunderts*, 1907, 62. See Markus KRISTAN, *Oskar Marmorek 1863-1909. Architekt un Zionist*, Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau, 1996.

18. *Wiener Bauindustrie Zeitung* (21, nr. 22, p. 176-180; 22, nr. 34, p. 242-244).

19. On the architectural languages in the empire see: Anthony ALOFSIN, *When buildings speak. Architecture as a Language in the Habsburg Empire and its Aftermath, 1867-1933*, Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

II *coupDefouet* Art Nouveau International Congress

The I*coupDefouet* International Congress was held in June 2013 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of *coupDefouet*, the magazine of the Art Nouveau European Route, an association of municipalities and other entities to promote and disseminate Modernista or Art Nouveau heritage. Its success and excellent scientific results led to its continuity with a second congress, held in 2015, whose acts are presented in this volume of Singularities. The congresses are organised by the Urban Landscape Institute (IMPUiQV) of the Barcelona City Council in partnership with GRACMON, a consolidated research group of the University of Barcelona.

El primer Congrés Internacional *coupDefouet* se celebrà el juny de l'any 2013 per commemorar els deu anys de l'aparició de *coupDefouet*, la revista de la Ruta Europea del Modernisme, una associació de municipis i altres entitats per a la promoció i la difusió del patrimoni modernista o Art Nouveau. Gràcies a l'èxit i als bons resultats científics es va apostar per la seva continuïtat amb un segon congrés que tingué lloc el 2015, les actes del qual presentem en aquest volum de Singularitats. Aquestes jornades estan organitzades per l'Institut Municipal del Paisatge Urbà i la Qualitat de Vida de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, amb la col·laboració de GRACMON, grup de recerca consolidat de la Universitat de Barcelona.

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