

Conservation of Modernist Architecture in Poland. Practice in Recent Years

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Many outstanding pieces of Polish modernist architecture, created during the first half of the 20th century, are threatened by irreversible changes or destruction. Numerous buildings from that period – both residential and public utility – require urgent renovation work. They have fallen into disrepair as a result of lack of guidelines determining elements that should unquestionably be preserved, and because of insufficient technological knowledge and standards of conservation procedures.

The issue of protection and conservation of modernist architecture has been more and more often addressed in various studies and publications¹. It is also a topic of more and more frequent meetings and seminars.² Nevertheless, there are still no effective standards for protecting architecture from that period, and neither has there significantly increased the number of properly renovated modernist buildings which, after conducted transformations or adaptations, would maintain their architectonic, artistic and functional values.

The situation of Polish functionalist architecture does not look good³. Despite undertaken research⁴ and proposed conservation demands, subsequent masterpieces of modernism have been transformed while conservation protection applies merely to their selected examples. The carried out transformations result in the increasing loss of value in historic residential buildings and monumental edifices. The protection and conservation of interwar complexes of

modernist architecture is made difficult by a large number of preserved high-standard edifices⁵, as well as their enormous volume and extremely refined architectonic form.

Basic threats

Complexes of modernist buildings erected during the interwar period usually served their original functions for very long. It concerned both the intensive use of their interiors and the use of the surrounding area. Threats came with the changes in functional requirements for housing. Some rooms became unnecessary, and some devices went out of use. Principles concerning the use of buildings changed radically, as well as requirements of the building law. Its consequence was the need to transform and alter the original shape of buildings. Terraces intended for recreation and sunbathing, so characteristic for modernist architecture went out of use. There emerged a necessity to add new appliances for ventilation and to introduce various specialist installations. It necessitated expansion and extension of interiors in public utility buildings. Introduction of new elements also became indispensable: starting from specialist installations, through all kinds of ventilation and air conditioning, to new electric, fibre-optic and Internet installations, and cables for specialist appliances. Partial adaptation of historic buildings, as well as extending and converting the rooms adapted to new forms of use and modern building and fire regulations, and safety rules became a fundamental condition for further functioning of the former modernist buildings. The issue particularly concerns public utility buildings, schools, hospitals and sanatoriums⁶.

The second group of threats refers to the change in the volume of modernist buildings, caused by unprofitability of their functioning because of too little space. It was necessary to extend the buildings in order to introduce new functions or adopt them to the binding principles. It is connected with considerable transformations to the external form of buildings, their bulk and elevation radically altered by carried out extensions.

Another group of threats associated with indispensable changes in function and interior décor resulted from the need to raise the standard of modernist buildings. It referred to residential spaces, where living conditions were improved

1. See: *DOCOMOMO Journal* (No. 1-41); Theodore H. M. Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, Faia (USA) 2008; Jadwiga Urbanik, *Total work of art (Gesamtkunstwerk) in revalorisation of modernist architecture* [in:] *Modernism in Europe, Modernism in Gdynia. Architecture of the inter-war period and its protection*, ed. Maria Jolanta Sołtysik, Robert Hirsch, Gdynia: Gdynia City Council 2009, pp. 207-215; Jakub Lewicki, *Problems of adapting modernist architecture to meet contemporary utility requirements* [in:] *Adapting historic objects for modern utility functions*, ed. Bogusław Szmygin, Warsaw 2009.

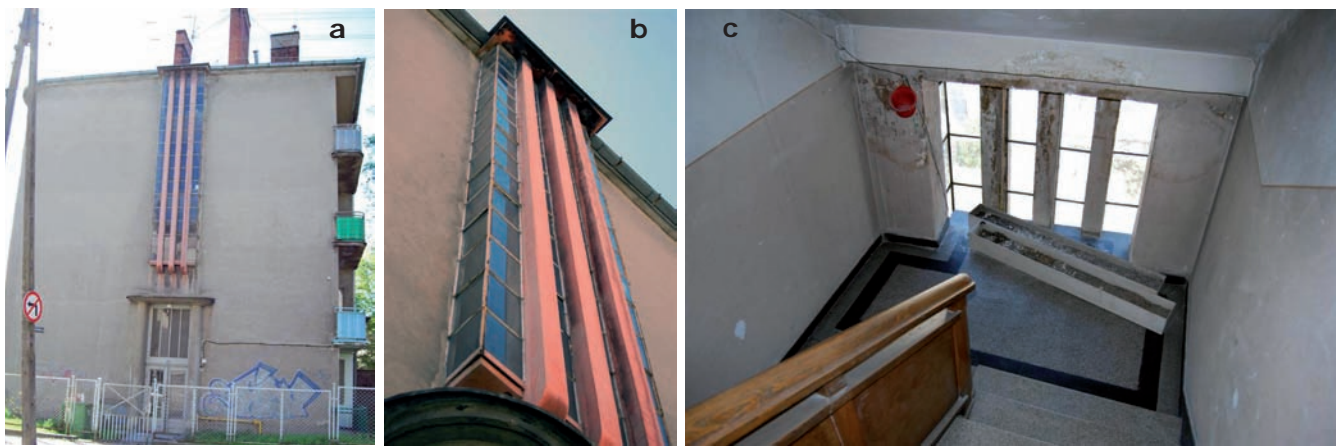
2. For instance: *Modernism in Europe, Modernism in Gdynia. Architecture of the inter-war period and its protection*, ed. Maria Jolanta Sołtysik, Robert Hirsch, Gdynia: Gdynia City Council 2009, and the subject of the Second International Conference: *Modernism in Europe. Modernism in Gdynia. Architecture of the 1st half of the 20th c. and its protection*, Gdynia 24-26 September 2009.

3. The issue was addressed by Jakub Lewicki in his paper, entitled *Protection of modernist architecture. Polish practice in recent years* presented during a seminar "Protection and conservation of modernist architecture in Poland – theory and practice in the last ten years" presented on 1.06.2007 during the 4th International Scientific Seminar of the Architecture Section of the Committee of Architecture and Urban Planning PAN "Modernism in architecture. An attempt at defining the phenomenon", Poznań 1-2.06.2007, published in: Jakub Lewicki, *Protection and conservation of modernist architecture. Polish practice in recent years* [in:] *Prolegomena to protection of architectonic objects and urban complexes of the 20th century Poznań*, ed. Hanna Grzeszczuk-Brendel, Gabriela Klause, Grażyna Kodym-Kozaczko, Piotr Marciniak, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej 2009, pp. 79-86.

4. A doyen of the research was Andrzej K. Olszewski, *New form in Polish architecture 1900-1925. Theory and practice*, Wrocław 1967.

5. Complete data on the number of objects entered into the heritage register and protected in other ways in the collection of the State Centre for Monument Research and Documentation in Warsaw.

6. Compare Jakub Lewicki, *Dilemmas in modernist architecture protection and conservation – case study of health resort architecture - former Military Hospital in Otwock* [in:] *Architecture of modernism. Kraków, Lublin, Otwock*, ed. Elżbieta Przesmycka, Lublin 2008, pp. 125-152; *ibidem*, *Issues of protection and preservation of the inter-war health-resort architecture* [in:] *Health-resort architecture*, national conference, 24-25 April 2009, Połczyn Zdrój, Szczecin 2009, pp. 187-205.



1. One of the most vital conservation problems connected with elevation conservation – meeting present-day standards of thermal protection by single-layer glass screens. Typical lighting of the stairwell by means of single-layer openings glazed with steel-framed panes. Visible leaks round the opening, frost and damp patches on the wall. Toruń, on the corner of Moniuszki and 17 Krasieńskiego street, the 1930s. 1a. General view; 1b. Central fragment of elevation with window; 1c. View from the inside. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2008

by enlarging flats and introduction of bathrooms and other facilities. Changes also involved the communal parts – canteens and rooms intended for more varied recreational and entertainment functions in public utility buildings. It ought to be emphasised, that frequently using the preserved buildings became impossible without raising the standard of their interiors, as not all the needs of their users were fulfilled which resulted in rapid deterioration in their quality of use. Another stage of destruction was the growing neglect of the building and gradual shut down of its parts. Eventually, it leads to decreasing the number of users and ceasing to use the building, and consequently its immediate destruction.

The third significant threat is ageing and deterioration of building materials. It particularly concerns ferroconcrete, various plasters and exterior ceramic lining applied on elevations and in the interiors (terrasite and terrabona plasters, various kinds of hydraulic mortar, clay ceramics)⁷. While analysing conservation problems with destroyed plaster and elevation facing, one has to notice the difficult issue of insulation usually performed as exterior insulation,

7. Jakub Lewicki, *Colour schemes in modernist architecture in Poland. Solutions, technology, conservation* [in:] *Colour scheme on historic elevations from the medieval period to modernity. History and conservation, Materials from an international conference celebrating the 30th anniversary of entering the Old Town in Warsaw in the UNESCO World Heritage List, Warsaw, 22-24 September 2010, Warsaw 2010, pp. 213-225.*

2. Typical process of insulating the elevation using the dry method. Building was originally covered with coarse double-layer plaster with regular geometric divisions made in the top layer - Warsaw, 218 Al. Niepodległości, completed in 1939. 2a. General view of the building; 2b. Fragment of the insulated elevation; 2c. Fragment of the insulation course; visible considerable thickness of the insulating layer and blurring of the wall texture. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2008



as their application is connected with changing the plaster coating. It poses yet another threat, as long as the plaster finish has a characteristic texture and colour scheme, or clearly visible admixtures – such as e.g. dark aggregate added to mass, mica elements giving the plaster finish a characteristic shine. Original plaster coating, besides external decorative elements such as ceramic and stone facing, woodwork and ornamental details, decide about the preserved authenticity of the interior décor in a modernist building. Varieties of colourful terrazzo, difficult to recreate because of the colour and texture differences of new fill-ins, are a serious problem. It also refers to original materials used for interior decoration: marble and ceramic facing with specially selected matching patterns, colours and texture. The final element are damaged fragments of original door and window frames with original glazing, and specialist fragments of interior furnishings: wooden fitted cupboards, partitions, linoleum used as interior floor lining or specialist historic medical or signalling installations, impossible to recreate in modern conditions. Some of those details are no longer used like, for example, wooden cupboards usually fitted below the window sill, which served as fridges or cold stores in kitchens adjoining living rooms. The impossibility to use some old fragments of interior decoration is a basic problem in preserving the original décor and function of functionalist interiors.

Another danger to the preservation of modernist architecture is caused by changes of ownership resulting from lower profitability of such buildings. Each change of the owner is usually connected with a radical transformation or at least a correction of the building function, and causes thorough transformations of the original architecture. In this case, it is necessary for the conservation office to intervene and precisely define elements which are to be absolutely preserved, as well as limits of possible interference into the preserved structure of the building.

The final factor making it impossible to preserve numerous buildings from the modernist period in their original form is the ambiguity and varied reception of the criteria for architecture evaluation. Architecture of modernist buildings is still perceived as not very attractive and not deserving of protection because of the time of its creation and modern forms which are commonly regarded as devoid of historic value. Therefore, the majority of buildings from that period have not been entered into the heritage register and protective measures are undertaken only when faced with the prospect of a considerable transformation of a building. It refers both to the legal protection and the analysis of a building value, its décor, indispensable for formulating the conservation guidelines. That is why the opportunity should be used to determine elements valuable for conservation reasons and subject to protection.

Elements to be protected

A crucial issue connected with the architecture of the modernist period is determining elements that ought to be



3. Typical elevation of a residential building after insulating it using the dry method. Visible change in the texture, colouring and finishing of the façade. **3a.** General view of the building; **3b.** Central fragment of the insulated elevation; **3c.** Fragment of the entrance – visible “disappearance” of once protruding architectonic frame of the entrance and deformation of the sentence around the entrance. Warsaw, 19 Wawelska St., designed at the beginning of the 1930s. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2010

protected and are absolutely necessary to preserve during the process of adaptation to modern functions.

The most important element containing historic values is the external form of buildings, their bulk and elevations, which is threatened by later extensions. It ought to be preserved in its original form. All the extensions and added volume should be separated from the historic bulk in order not to distort its proportions or form. Moving the new volume and extensions away from the historic part is the easiest, cheapest and the most appropriate in conservation respect way of preserving a historic modernist building. Added elements ought not to change the proportions of the preserved building or the composition of historic elements, thus lowering its architectonic value. The form of the roof should also be protected and its covering ought to match the original, while ensuring the modern coefficients for damp-proof and thermal protection. Newly added fragments ought to repeat the form of the bulk and elevation. It is very significant for the preservation of composition values of the original modernist architecture.⁸

Another valuable element is the functional layout

8. Jakub Lewicki, *Between aesthetics and practice. Conservation of modernist architecture in Poland* [in:] *Around the aesthetic issues of monuments after conservation and restoration*, Toruń 2010 [in print].

threatened by transformations. The entire spatial layout as well as its characteristic features ought to be protected. In public utility building it refers both to sections meant for individual users (room arrangement) and the communal sections – canteens and other rooms. Their function should not be altered, since it was not only carefully thought-out, but was also the reason for using characteristic elements of the décor. That is why the décor in interiors whose function was altered ought to copy the forms of original elements of the décor, such as lamps, door handles, woodwork forms. The function of utility rooms or rooms devoid of any valuable elements of décor can be changed. It should be emphasised, that function is of paramount importance in modernist architecture while elements of decoration are subordinate to it, and so it should remain.

Preservation of those parts of buildings and rooms which are no longer used and can be adapted to new functions is a very difficult issue. It refers to e.g. vast terraces, loggias and balconies intended for recreation and sunbathing, which are not used nowadays. Removing them results in an irreversible alteration of the characteristic features of modernist buildings. That is why it should not be allowed, or it should be carried out only in a restricted form. Terraces cannot be permanently built-over and conducted

4. Elevation lined with sandstone. Visible discolouration of stone resulting from improper cleaning of the elevation. Warsaw, Oskar Robinson’s tenement house, then of the Związek Emerytów BGK, 18 Marszałkowska St., designed by Lucjan Korngold 1935-36. **4a.** General view; **4b.** Fragment of elevation. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2009





5. Elevation from grey cement brick laid in patterns. State before and after conservation renovation - Warsaw, tenement house belonging to the Spółdzielnia Budowlano-Mieszkaniowa "Grójecka 40A", 40a Grójecka St., designed by Władysław Nałęcz Raczzyński, 1930-31. Visible deformations in texture and colouring resulting from preserving secondary accumulations on the bricks during conservation work, and leaving them as chronologically valuable layers. 5a. General view; 5b-5c. Central fragment of the elevation. State before and after the work; 5d-5e. Detail, view. State before and after the work. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2010

transformations should not deform the shape of historic modernist buildings.

Elements subject to protection are also original elements of the elevation and interior finish. It refers to plasters and ceramic facing applied to elevations and in the interiors, such as e.g. terrazite or terrabona plasters, various kinds of hydraulic mortar, clay ceramics. Applied exterior insulation cannot result in damaging the plaster finish when it has a characteristic texture and colour, or frequently used material admixtures (the already mentioned dark aggregate added to mass, mica elements giving the plaster finish a characteristic shine). Ceramic and stone facing, woodwork and other fine decorative elements, characteristic for the modernist epoch, ought to be preserved. Their preservation decides about the authenticity of exterior decoration of a modernist building. Characteristic elements of interior decoration, such as e.g. frequently used colourful terrazzo flooring, marble and ceramic lining with specially matching patterns, colours and texture are unquestionably to be preserved. Fill-ins should be of identical colouring and texture, or new but neutral materials ought to be applied. Original door and window frames (with original glazing) also ought to be preserved; it should either be repaired or – which seems more justified for practical reasons – new solutions should be applied, which would imitate the divisions and form of the destroyed woodwork. Original fragments of specialist interior furnishing: wooden cupboards and partitions are also crucial elements, and they ought to be preserved at least in selected rooms as witnesses to history. Original materials in the interiors – like e.g. linoleum used for lining floors inside, also constitute very important elements. Unfortunately, a complex conservation of such elements, which would not only allow for preserving them but would also introduce new replacements with identical colour schemes and similar texture, high resistance to abrasion and currently required safety parameters (e.g. fire regulations, work safety regulations) has not been carried out in Poland yet. Historic specialist cleaning and signalling installations, impossible to

recreate in present-day conditions, are also worth preserving. Although they are no longer used as a rule, they ought to be absolutely preserved in the form of witnesses to history, as well as striking and decorative artefacts showing the old furnishings of the building.

A desirable demand should also be protection of the original ownership of the property, since it most frequently facilitates preserving the former function of the building and protects it from radical transformations. However, it is not always possible, and here the only realistic course of action is maintaining a similar function which would allow for preserving the original architecture. In the case when a building's function is changed, it is indispensable to ensure the intervention of a conservation office and a precise definition of the range of protection and the limits to possible transformations of the original architecture of the modernist building.

Summing up the above considerations, it ought to be emphasised that without preserving the valuable elements of the original architecture and its décor, it is difficult to talk about effective protection and conservation of historic buildings from the modernist period.

Conservation procedures

In order to preserve elements of modernist architecture it is necessary to strictly maintain the previously established conservation procedures. As a rule, it is commenced by the intention to introduce significant changes in the architecture of an older building, which is related to the need for an intervention of a conservation office. In that case, the first stage is an initial recognition of the object needs and determining the basis for its protection. If the values represented by the buildings are not high, it is sufficient to protect it by a suitable entry in the local plan of spatial development, where the range of protection is specified. After a conducted analysis, it often turns out that a building represents high values and then a decision is taken concerning its entry into the heritage register⁹. Then the conservation office is given a concrete basis for interfering into the range of conducted work, both in reference to the bulk, the interiors and all the details of a building. The process is commenced by an initial

9. Jakub Lewicki, *Heritage protection of most recent architecture - Polish conservation theory and practice* [in:] *Legal heritage protection*, ed. Teresa Gardocka and Jacek Sobczak, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2010, pp. 192-207.



6. Warsaw, Wedel House, 28 Puławska St., designed by Juliusz Żórawski, 1935-38. A model building from the current of luxurious functionalism. Example of elevation destruction as a result of not recognising its high architectonic value. **6a.** Façade before the plaster replacement; **6b.** View after the plaster replacement. Photo: J. Lewicki 2008-2010. Visible differences in colouring and texture of the new finish. Architect J. Żórawski believed the plaster finish with a uniform finishing coat and variety of colour to be the most important element of the façade finish, which is confirmed by his recorded comments and accounts of workers erecting the building. The ideal finishing coat of the newly applied plaster was controlled by Żurawski at night by means of special lanterns illuminating it from the bottom upwards, which revealed all the irregularities and colour differences

identification, namely completing the so-called "white card" accompanying an entry into the register. Next, as a rule, is preparing the building inventory taking into account its current state with a detailed list of original and secondary elements. The inventory is a basis for designing and for evaluation of the preserved architecture of the building. The next stage is detailed research into the history of the building in the form of a broader historical study analysing its construction history, available project and iconographic materials, together with a description of artistic, historic and scientific values, as well as preparing initial conservation guidelines. Another stage is the evaluation (assessing) the architecture of a building with identifying elements to be preserved, redesigned or removed. Evaluation is the basis for preparing the so-called conservation guidelines which are an official document constituting a basis for drawing up an architectonic project presented for approval at the conservation office. The project is usually corrected several times, and the achieved compromise constitutes a basis for

realisation. Frequently, after agreeing on the conditions of building development, in the course of the construction work further arrangements are made connected with corrections and specifying the approved programme of renovation and conservation.

The procedure presented above is very typical for all historic monuments. The specificity of a modernist building involves its huge volume, due to which identification and evaluation of architecture is made more difficult, while preparing the guidelines and having the project approved requires a far-reaching compromise between the conservator and the architect. An impediment for the project executors is also ignorance of forms of modernist architecture and no ability to appreciate its value, which causes too much interference into the preserved structure, which can be avoided. Preservation and conservation of new building materials also poses a problem, which is a consequence of insufficient research into the issue in Poland. There are only a few specialists able not merely to repair modernist elements of décor, but to replace them with details of analogical aesthetic properties if the originals were destroyed. However, it frequently turns out that applying the still used traditional building methods and technologies (lying plaster, terrazzo, making building joinery) is sufficient for precise imitation of building and decorative method used in the modernist architecture.

The presented procedure is not complicated, though only when it is consistently observed it is possible to preserve modernist architecture and to protect it effectively from further transformations.



7. Elevation lined with sandstone. Visible slight discoloration, resulting from proper cleaning of the elevation and maintaining it in good condition. Warsaw, O. Robinson's tenement house, corner of 10 Koszykowa St. and Al. Przyjaciół, designed by Lucjan Korngold 1937. **7a.** General view; **7b.** Fragment of elevation; **7c.** Plaque with the architect's name and the original colour scheme re-patinated. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2009





8. Elevation covered with fine plaster, top coat coloured in mass, in the bottom part an addition imitating stone clinker, visible different intensity of colour in the central and side sections of the façade. Łódź, tenement house in Skwerowa St. (now: Polskiej Organizacji Wojskowej 7), designed by the office of "I. Gutman and L. Oli", second half of the 1930s. 8a. General view; 8b. Fragment of elevation. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2010



Attempts at preservation

Currently, when faced with changes in the function of many modernist buildings, attempts are made to protect them. Changes of building owners are also frequently connected with the necessity of a conservation intervention. An analogical situation occurs when a modernisation of preserved buildings is undertaken. Interventions of conservator's offices were needed in cases of modernisation of numerous residential or public buildings. A complex renovation and conservation was finally carried out in the outstanding pieces of modernist architecture (the palace in Wisła, the hotel building of WUWA by Hans Scharoun in Wrocław, tenement houses in Katowice and Gdynia), which also required detailed arrangements. Unfortunately, those examples of individual realisations have been but few supervised conservation renovations of modernist buildings from the 20-year interwar period, which were completed successfully for both the conservator and investor.

One needs to ponder over how to conserve the preserved interwar architecture. When analysing numerous examples of renovation of modernist buildings, regrettably it has to be stated that lack of understanding for modernist architecture as well as ambiguity and varied reception of the criteria for its assessment, effectively prevents preserving many buildings from that period. Changed method, regulations or functional solutions applied today are not a problem. Even the costs of renovation and conservation could be paid for by investors and users, as long as they would appreciate the value of such architecture. In many cases a compromise had to be reached, but whether it can be achieved in the case of renovation and modernisation of numerous other residential buildings – remains to be seen.

Methods of conservation of functionalist buildings in Poland

Having discussed elements that ought to be protected and the conservation procedure, one should analyse the activities concerning the conservation of modernist architecture in Poland so far. Most frequently, a few ways of renovating modernist buildings are used:

- renovation using building methods. The work is conducted regardless of the architectonic values of a modernist building which, most often, has not been analysed or examined. As a rule, window and door frames are replaced, new roofing is made, and the elevation is covered with new plaster the texture of which does not imitate the state of the former. Frequently the elevation is additionally insulated using the dry method, which is connected with lining the elevation with Styrofoam and applying new plaster that usually allude to the form from before insulation, i.e. the last stage of the elevation alteration. After completing

the work, the building considerably differs from its former state. The greatest differences are visible in the elevations, and proportions of window and door openings which are deeper;

- modern adaptations of buildings and modernisations – the work involves even more interference into the preserved structure¹⁰. Not only is the woodwork and metalwork replaced, or the wall-insulation added, but the plaster is also replaced and a different finish of the façade is made. Screening walls and new external lift shafts are frequently added. Elevations and building interiors after the renovation differ considerably from those before the work was completed;

- décor designed by an artist – here the renovation resembles the previously described, though the range of interference is slightly smaller, and designers try to add aesthetic value to the newly designed form. New colour scheme alludes to the forms regarded as "historic" and aesthetic, which is decided by an artist while preparing a new project of colour arrangement based on his own aesthetic taste. The realised solution generally bears no resemblance whatsoever to the original appearance of the renovated elevation;

- conservation of the building – it is the rarest manner of working in Polish modernist buildings. It involves examining modernist architecture using conservation methods – namely, carrying out stratigraphic, material and architectonic research, and its completion a program of conservation work is formulated which is subsequently realised. The work is carried out by a team of conservators, and after it is completed the building most resembles its original state¹¹.

Conservation of functionalist architecture in Poland

Although numerous modernist residential and public buildings are being renovated, only a few have been subjected to professional conservation work. The décor in majority of those buildings is made by artists or are renovated using building methods. Attempts at conservation of modernist

10. Jakub Lewicki, *Issues of adapting architecture...*, op. cit.

11. Jakub Lewicki, *Colour schemes in modernist architecture ...*, op. cit.



9. Example of destroying architectonic and aesthetic values in an interwar tenement house which was a part of a larger uniform urban complex. Transformation of the building led to destruction and loss of aesthetic value in one building and the whole building complex - Toruń, 39a Moniuszki St., designed in the 1930s. 9a. General view; 9b. Façade; 9c. Stairwell. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2009

research, but also recreating historic plaster (fine plaster) and copying the forms of window frames, and details including terrazzo decorations. Recreating plaster involved repeating the technology, which turned out to be relatively easy and inexpensive.

The work carried out in Katowice concerned a few tenement houses, too¹³. The work was mainly limited to the elevations. It was attempted to copy their décor by re-using the technologies and material solutions. The work was of pioneer character in this area and was treated as an initial stage of the activity in this field.

In Kraków attempts were made at recreating concrete technological solutions – such as plaster and terrazzo decorations¹⁴. Conservation of the décor of some tenement houses was also carried out – e.g. the House of the Jagiellonian University Professors, on the corner of 15 Słowackiego St. and 61 Łobzowska St. (designed by Ludwik Wojtyczko 1929, completed in 1932). The work involved conservation of multi-layer plaster together with its diverse

buildings have been taken only in a few cities. The work has been carried out merely in several buildings (most frequently tenement houses) in Gdynia, Katowice, Kraków, and single realisations in Warsaw.

The work conducted in Gdynia concerned merely few tenement houses¹². It involved not only stratigraphic

12. I would like to thank Mr Robert Hirsch, City Monument Conservator in Gdynia, for information concerning conservation of tenement houses in Gdynia. See R. Hirsch, *Protection and conservation of modernist monuments in Gdynia – selected examples from the local government activity* [in:] *Modernism in Europe, Modernism in Gdynia...*, op. cit., pp.

217-230; ibidem, *Modernist Downtown in Gdynia as a monument*, paper presented during the Second International Conference "Modernism in Europe. Modernism in Gdynia. Architecture of the 1st half of the 20th c. and Its protection", Gdynia 24-26 September 2009.

13. Barbara Klajmon, *Protection and conservation of architecture from the 20-year interwar period from the perspective of conservation office*, paper presented during the Second International Conference "Modernism in Europe. Modernism in Gdynia. Architecture of the 1st half of the 20th c. and Its protection", Gdynia 24-26 September 2009.

14. I would like to thank dr Paweł Karaszewicz from the Conservation Department of ASP in Kraków for information on the subject.

10. Conservation of elevation covered with multi-layer plaster and ceramic clinker facing. Kraków, House of the UJ Professors, the corner of 15 Słowackiego and 61 Łobzowska streets, designed by Ludwik Wojtyczko 1929, realisation until 1932. 10a.-10b. General view. State before and after the work. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2007 and 2010





10. Conservation of elevation covered with multi-layer plaster and ceramic clinker facing. Kraków, House of the UJ Professors, the corner of 15 Słowackiego and 61 Łobzowska streets, designed by Ludwik Wojtyczko 1929, realisation until 1932. 10c.-10d. View of side elevation. State before and after the work; 10e.-10g. Fragments of elevation, state after the work. Photo by J. Lewicki, 2007 and 2010

finishing. Later accumulations were removed, the original light-ochre colour scheme was restored, and the original finishing of joints in the clinker facing was recreated.¹⁵ It was also very important to conserve the ceramic decoration which, originally black, contrasted with the light colouring of the walls. It has marked the beginning of a wider-scale conservation activities concerning conservation of modernist buildings in Kraków.

The last city where conservation of modernist elevations was undertaken was Warsaw¹⁶. The work was carried out

15. Halina Rojkowska-Tasak, with Joanna Hiżycka, *Restoring historic elevations in conservation protection zones in Kraków* [in:] *Colour in historic elevations from the medieval period to modernity. History and conservation*, Materials from international conference celebrating the 30th anniversary of entering the Old Town in Warsaw in the UNESCO World Heritage List, Warsaw 22-24 September 2010, Warsaw 2010, pp. 377-378.

16. The topic has not been a subject of a further analysis yet, even though some articles describing concrete realisations with critical comments of specialists have been published in the Warsaw supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

under conservator's supervision or with conservator's subsidising. The best known realisation was the conservation of the elevation in the Wedel House in Puławska Street (Wedel House, 28 Puławska St., designed by Jerzy Żurawski, 1935-38), which ended in replacement of historic plaster. Despite employing specialists, effects were highly controversial and unsatisfactory because of the poor quality of workmanship or significant differences between the completed work and the state from before the renovation¹⁷.

To conclude, the number of conservation realisations in the field of functionalist architecture has not been too big. At the same time, it could be clearly seen that preserving the solutions from the modernist period, which now ought to be regarded as historic, was very difficult.

17. Documentation in the Archive of the Capital Monument Conservator in Warsaw.