

Modernists Town Houses Designed by Fryderyk Tadanier in Kraków

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1. Introduction

Entries for avant-garde coming into existence in the modernism period were not appropriate to Kraków cultural environment¹. Problem of residential development had here the other dimension than in industrial cities, where excessively extended tenement house with small yards (yards which resemble wells) was subjected to the harsh criticism. The lack of developed industry in Kraków at the end of the 19th century caused, that in spite of densely populated city, districts below tolerable standard did not come into existence here. Buildings were undergoing a natural evolution and local tradition had an influence on "softening" their sterile modernity so they have been harmoniously adjusted for neighborhood. The historical built-up areas has often been a source of inspiration for forming the composition of elevations, compiling details and decorations. Architects carried on tradition of so-called „Kraków School”², which was well-known for its attempts to create its own interpretation of foreign ideas based on traditionalism, non-standard decorativeness quality and using often native motives³. A vivid local tradition of decorating houses with emblems also influenced on architecture in this period⁴.

Among other outstanding architects⁵, Fryderyk Tadanier was a representative of Kraków modernism in its moderate form. He was born on 1 January 1892 in Kamionka Strumiłowa, he died on 1 October 1960 in Kraków. He graduated Lviv Polytechnic National University, then he worked in Kraków at the beginning of the 1930s. He was the member of SARP Board, the lecturer at Academy of Fine Art in Kraków (in the years 1936-39 and from 1952) and he

was a leading engineer as well as an assistant manager⁶ of "Miastoprojekt". He was also one of the editors and publishers of the "Architect" magazine. Tadanier designed a few public buildings in Kraków among others the District Department at 18/20 Słowackiego Av. (with Stefan Strojek, 1935-36), the "Bagatela" Theater at 4 Karmelicka St. (adaptation for the "Scala" Theater, 1938), the Council Savings Bank of Kraków District at 5 Szczepański Sq. (with Stefan Strojek, 1933-36) and the Main Post Office at 2 Wielopole St. (reconstructed in 1931). He is also an author of the post office building close to the central station (1947).

Tadanier's style, especially visible in public buildings, is also expressive in town houses designs. Architect referred to tradition by using three parts of division of elevation (e.g. rustication of a base, vertically articulated main part, large horizontal eave, attic), strongly emphasize portals and decorations stressing important components of the elevation (e.g. emblems above the entry doors, cornices above the ground floor and others). Typical for modernism period in his town houses were sequence of windows additionally underlined with cornices, a geometrical body divided into parts, rounded expressive corners and simplified details which were structural elements, rather than elements independently put on the surface of architectural form. Corner windows and big rectangular windows typical for modernism appeared in Tadanier's projects. Their horizontal arrangement, additionally underlined with window sills, has often been emphasized. Window opening grouped vertically also appeared, as well as individually design details of entrance portals, window and door frames made by hand in fine plaster.

2. Kraków Town Houses designed by Tadanier

Fryderyk Tadanier designed eleven town houses in Kraków⁷. He is also an author of housing estate of the "Praca" workers' housing cooperative in Dębniki (1935-39) and social house at 52 Czarnowiejska St. (earlier called Praska St.)⁸ designed together with working-class houses in housing estate (1935-36)⁹. Town houses have shown how the individualization of projects was important to architect, in spite of certain common features which they have. Their diversification depends on the localization and

1. Aleksander Böhm, *Architektura krakowska w latach 1918-1939 w świetle współczesnych konkursów* (Krakow Architecture in the years 1918-1939 on the background of contemporary competitions), [in:] *Architektura i urbanistyka w Polsce w latach 1918-1978* (Polish Architecture and Urbanism in the years 1918-1978), Studia i Materiały do Teorii i Historii Architektury i Urbanistyki, PWN, Warsaw 1989, p. 27.

2. Andrzej K. Olszewski, *Nowa forma w architekturze polskiej 1900-1925. Teoria i praktyka* (New Form in Polish Architecture 1900-1925, Theory and Practice), Zakłady Narodowe im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1967, p. 167; Jacek Purchla, *Urbanistyka, architektura i budownictwo* (Urban Planning, Architecture and Construction), [in:] *Dzieje Krakowa* (The History of Krakow), Vol. 4, by J. Bieniarzówna, J. Małecki, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1997, pp. 174-175.

3. Maria J. Żychowska, *Między tradycją a awangardą. Problem stylu w architekturze Krakowa lat międzywojennych* (Between Tradition and Avant-garde. The Problem of The Style in Cracovian Architecture in the Interwar Period), Monograph No. 113, Edit. Kraków University of Technology, Kraków 1991, pp. 139-145.

4. Adam Samek, *Godła kamienic krakowskich w dwudziestolecu 1919-1939* (The Emblems of Kraków Town Houses from 1919 and 1939), *Commission of Architecture, Urban Planning Polish Academy of Sciences*, Kraków, Vol. 18, pp. 185-191.

5. Beata Makowska, *Façades of Modernist Krakow Townhouses Designed by Selected Architects*, Architecture Civil Engineering Environment, Gliwice, Vol. II, 2/2009, pp. 7-18.

6. Tadeusz Ptaszynka was a manager of "Miastoprojekt", [in:] *Encyklopedia Krakowa* (Encyclopedia of Kraków), PWN, Warsaw 2000, p. 978.

7. *Zabytki architektury i budownictwa w Polsce. Kraków* (Monuments of Architecture and Building in Poland. Kraków), Krajowy Ośrodek Badań i Dokumentacji Zabytków, Warsaw 2007, pp. 500-501.

8. AP Kraków (State Archive in Krakow), ABM (Archive of Urban Construction) Czarnowiejska 52, fsc. 125.

9. M. Fabiański, J. Purchla, *Historia architektury Krakowa w zarysie* (An Outline of the History of Architecture in Kraków), Edit. Literackie, Kraków 2001, p. 84.



1. Town house in Plac Inwalidów 7-8, corner of Słowackiego 2 in Kraków, Fryderyk Tadanier, 1931. Photo by B. Makowska

neighbourhoods (e.g. surroundings of the Trzech Wieszców Avenues – house at 8 Plac Inwalidów, surroundings of the Main Market – house at 8 St. Marek St., town house at 2 Plac Matejki located close to Polish Bank - project design by Wyczyński and Hoffman, 1925). Buildings designed in elegant districts of Kraków are representing the high standard. Town houses in districts located in bigger distance from the centre have more modest elevations and the smaller scale.

A corner town house at 7-8 Plac Inwalidów and 2 Słowacki Av. was designed by Tadanier in 1931¹⁰. This building localization caused, that it had the monumental form referring to other important buildings on the Trzech Wieszców Avenue. Two oval corners constitute the predominant feature of this town house, which is more expressive from the Słowacki Avenue side, underline by balconies (Fig. 1). The vertical articulation on elevations creates windows bordered by lesenes and grouped balconies. The huge cornice above the fifth level constitutes the distinct horizontal accent. A front door and balustrades in the interior have decorations in the form of wheels.

A four-storey town house at 9 Biskupia St. and 2 Sereno Fenn'a St., with the fifth floor and the attic in the corner part, came into existence in years 1937-38 according to Fryderyk Tadanier's project¹¹. An emblem presenting the worker (or miner) with the pickaxe and the lamp¹² was put above the entrance located at Sereno Fenn'a street side. A stained glass presenting Mother of God with Baby is placed in the transom window of the portal. An inscription "Design by architect eng. Fryderyk Tadanier 1938" was put on the façade of this town house. Situating this house on the irregular corner parcel influenced the arrangement of the section. The two-roomed flat was designed on the ground floor, as well as: two of one-room and flatlet, passage to the backyard (located in the last right axis) and the stairwell with the lift, which was set up under the right angle to the axis of the entrance.

A town house at 11 Biskupia St. originally was built as the multi-storey building in years 1881-1887 and designed by the architect Aleksander Biborski. Fryderyk Chrzęszcz was the owner of this house, later it belonged to Karol Panek. In 1937 Fryderyk Tadanier designed a four-storey building for Stanisław Syska. An emblem presenting the



2. Town house in ul. Biskupia 9, corner of Fenn'a Sereno 2, in Kraków, Fryderyk Tadanier, 1937-38. Photo by B. Makowska

sign of the "Ćmielów" factory put on three vases surrounded with plant is placed above the entry¹³. The three-roomed flat, bachelor apartment and caretaker's flat, passage to the backyard and a stairwell with the lift was designed in the ground floor of this house. Tadanier is also the author of a corner town house (designed for Stanisław Syska and the "Ćmielów" factory) which is linking two premises No. 9 and 11 in geometric body and articulation of the elevations (Fig. 2). The divided elevation with the corner window has eight axes from Biskupia street side (four axes belong to the house at No. 11) and five axes from Sereno Fenn'a street side. Wide windows were framed by benching lesenes and put in shallow recesses. Corner windows received the additional shared frame. The horizontal articulation on the elevation is created by cornice above the ground floor with "rustication", cornice above the fourth level (which is broken on the corner), cornices of the fifth level and copestone. Town houses at No. 9 and 11 are divided in the section, what underlines the higher fifth storey with the functional attic. They are the outstanding examples of moderate modernism¹⁴.

A four-storey town house at 8 St. Marek St., with the attic and four-storey side backhouses, was rebuilt in years 1937-38 according to Tadanier's project. A Council Savings Bank of Kraków District was the owner of this house then¹⁵. Backhouses built in 1872, were rebuilt in later period (1887, 1901). Stanisław Filipkiewicz and Juliusz Kolarzowski were the authors of back and flank annexes designed in 1930. The owner of the house was a co-operative bank. A stairwell in the front building was rebuilt in 1933 and other interior changes was made then. The elevation dating from 1937-38 has avant-corps in outside axes. A higher simplified attic is linking three centre axes with three oval windows, framed by

10. AP Kraków, ABM Słowackiego 2, fsc. 828.

11. Stanisław Syska was the owner of this town house (and Ćmielów Porcelain Factory). In 1938 an additional project was presented, [in:] AP Kraków, ABM Biskupia 9, fsc. 38b.

12. AP Kraków, ABM Biskupia 9, fsc. 38b.

13. AP Kraków, ABM Biskupia 11, fsc. 38b.

14. M. Fabiański, J. Purchla, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 316.

15. AP Kraków, ABM Marka 8, fsc. 571.

pilasters conducted by the entire height of the house (Fig. 3). A decoration of three bees were put between pilasters above windows of the first floor. On the ground floor three axes created the stone frame of the entrance portal with the oval window of the transom window. A balcony with decorative balustrades, connected with shared cornices with stone balusters, was put above them. Lines made in plaster surface were conducted on the elevation. They extended the contour of windows. The entry is leading to stairwell with the lift. A transit entrance hall was designed on the right-hand side of the building. Section of the building has a diagonal wall linking it with the neighbouring house on the right side. It is also connected with the backhouse on the left side.

A five-storey town house with the right backhouse at 8 Sereno Fenn'a St. was designed in 1935 using the section close in shape to trapezium. Two centre axes on the elevation were highlighted with little alcove (plastered in the dark colour), with rounded balconies and cornices (above third and fourth level) and with small roof put above windows of the last storey. The ground floor of the house has molding and rustication in the surface among the windows and around the entrance portal. A stained glass presenting the Mother of God was put in the transom window of the entrance door. Windows have frames made in a red artificial stone (apart from the ground floor), contrasted with sandy colour of the elevation made of plaster (Fig. 4).

A six-storey town house at 2 Plac Matejki, with the section close in shape to trapezium and with avant-corps at courtyard side, was designed by Fryderyk Tadanier in years 1938-40 (construction was conducted by the architect Medard Stadnicki) for the "Ćmielów" factory. An earlier house was built for Maryja Wertzstein in 1902, and in 1905 a stable was edified (designed by the architect Aleksander Biborski), which was later intended to demolish (premises then reached to 4 Zacisze St.). The Department of Constructions recommended to: "to adapt the height of the main cornice to the neighbouring building of the Polish Bank, to make smooth stone pillars in the ground floor, without passed rustication, to make richer frames of windows of the 1st floor in the centre avant-corp, before making the front façade to present its details for approval"¹⁶. Additional plans were submitted in 1940 for changes in arrangement of the basements and the ground floor interior (the pharmacy, the gatehouse and the laboratory on the ground floor). Two three-rooms flats on each floors were designed almost identically. The front elevation has seven axes on the ground floor and six axes on other levels. Four centre axes of the elevation create the pseudo portico with lesenes between windows. Frames of windows on the first floor are decorated with plant ornament, and surfaces between windows in last axes are decorated with vases and garlands. They were carved by professor Franciszek Kalfas. In the ground floor separated by sill cornices were placed display windows, an entrance to the house and an inscription: "Designed by arch. eng. Fryderyk Tadanier 1940" (Fig. 5).

A four-storey town house at 5 Chopina St. was designed in 1933. A chessboard pattern on four-axes elevation forms bicolour surfaces located among windows (which were partially moved ahead and partially moved back). Balconies with balustrades decorated with geometrical ornament were situated in two centre axes. The shop window was located on the right side in the ground floor.

A four-storey town house at 40 Kazimierza Wielkiego St. was designed by Tadanier in 1937. It has an asymmetrical elevation and arrangement of section¹⁷. Two axis on the left side were framed by lesenes made in the red and sandy colour plaster. The ground floor of the house was distinguished with double cornice which framed windows of the first floor. High windows of last level are square. The shop windows and the entrance portal, with door decorated with geometrical check, were designed in the ground floor.



3. Town house in ul. Św. Marka 8 in Kraków, Fryderyk Tadanier, 1937-38. Photo by B. Makowska

A three-storey corner town house at 2 Filarecka St. and 7 Senatorska St. was built in years 1932-33 (designed similarly like neighbouring house at No. 2A Filarecka St.)¹⁸. The elevation is decorated with geometrical motives which link windows on each floor. The ground floor of the building was underlined by the cornice and modeling in plaster. A three-storey town house at 2A Filarecka St. was designed in 1931-32¹⁹. It has symmetrically designed entrance. The elevation decorated with geometrical motives have five axis. The ground floor was underlined with the cornice and modeling.

A four-storey town house at 22 Lea St. was designed by Tadanier about 1920²⁰. It was entirely rebuilt in 2008. The original elevation and the arrangement of the interior were totally changed.

3. Summary

Tadanier's projects are an example of moderate functionalism of the "Kraków School". From the one side, they are referring to international tendencies, from the other one to classical composition and typical Kraków details and decorations (emblems, attic). They are characterized by composition and aesthetic connection between inside and outside of buildings, spacious stairwells and halls and the high standard of interiors. Characteristic for modernism are: fragmentation of geometrical body, oval corners, horizontal dynamic cuts of surfaces. A prominent cornice put below last storey, reducing optically the height of

16. AP Kraków, ABM Matejki 2, fsc. 577.

17. AP Kraków, ABM Kazimierza Wielkiego 40, fsc. 375.

18. AP Kraków, ABM Filarecka 2, fsc. 220.

19. AP Kraków, ABM Filarecka 2a, fsc. 220.

20. AP Kraków, ABM Lea 22, fsc. 198.



4. Town house in ul. Fenn`a Sereno 8 in Kraków, Fryderyk Tadanier, 1935. Photo by B. Makowska

building is typical for this architect. Smooth and flat surface of elevations was often enriched by horizontal or vertical rhythms (lisenés, balconies located in niches and on corners, window cornices, frames of doors and windows and others). Tadanier didn't belong to architects which built many town houses in Krakow in modernism period²¹, but his projects are worth to be mentioned and well documented thanks to high standard and individual stylistics of their elevations. He linked local tradition with international tendencies in his projects in creative way²².

21. Among architects which have built many of modernists town houses in Kraków were: Leopold Bachner (18), Roman Bandurski (25), Ignacy Bierer (25), Józef Chmielewski (24), Antoni Dostal (53), Alfred Düntuch (25), Juliusz Eintracht (27), Izydor Goldberger (38), Zygmunt Grünberg (39), Henryk Jakubowicz (27), Salomon Jonkler (20), Leon Lieberman (17), Stefan Manber (14), Stanisław Mehl (22), Zygmunt Prokiesz (72), Jan Rzymowski (18), Edward Skawiński (44), Maurycy Stiel (14), Zygmunt Szufa (27), Roman Weindling (15), Stanisław Wexner (22), Tadeusz Żróbek (19), [in:] *Zabytki architektury i budownictwa w Polsce. Kraków. op. cit.*, pp. 397-523.

22. This paper is a fragment of vast documentation of above 200 town houses from the turn of the 20th century and modernism period – the research was partially financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in years 2007-2010.



5. Town house in Plac Matejki 2 in Kraków, Fryderyk Tadanier, 1938-40. Photo by B. Makowska