

Cracovian modernists – the 60 ties, 90 ties of the XX century – the returns

Jan Wrana

*Politechnika Lubelska, Wydział Inżynierii Budowlanej i Sanitarnej,
Samodzielna Pracownia Architektoniczna*

The European reaction of the leading architects towards the period of international style, *“The idea of style has yet again become up-to-date. The modern style, covering the whole world, is uniform and coherent...”* [4], promoted at the exhibition “Modernist architecture” organized in Museum of Art in New York by architects Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philips Johnson, was immediate. The leading European architects: a) Walter Gropius wrote: *“The aim of Bauhaus was not to promote one particular style...”* [4], b) Le Corbusier formulated *“Fundamental principles of aesthetics”* [4], c) Bruno Taut wrote: *“Five assumptions of new architecture”* [4]. The message that “The form follows the function” became the very principle of modernism.

The year 1972, when the blocks of flats in St. Louis, US were blown up, and the year of the actual end of the ideology originating from CIAM, is the agreed time marked as the end of modernism. It was a few years after Le Corbusier’s death (1965) - the death of the unchallenged spiritual ideologist of modernism.

The term “Late modernism and postmodernism” appeared towards the end of the 70ties as the protest against the ideology of mature modernism (earlier in Europe Aldo Rossi created the basis for the theory of “neorational architecture”, and, in the US, Robert Venturi declared “more is more (better)” in contrast to Mies van der Rohe’s dictum “less is more (better)”, giving priority to complexity and contradiction in architecture). The new movement introduced the principle “The function follows the form”.

The period of post-war Poland, called “socialist realism” hindered creative individualism, drawing from the achievements of Western Europe and the US. It was only after the year 1956, the first historic breakthrough in post-war Poland, that an emotional period of coming back to the style of international functionalism could be observed in the designs. In Poland it was only after the year 1956, that the architecture could be called modern. The period of coming back to modernism, called “enchantment with the West”, was a period of active work of eminent Cracovian architects from the Faculty of Architecture of the Cracow University of Technology: Zdzisław Arct (The building of NOT), Wojciech Buliński (The office building of “Biprocemwap”), Władysław Bryzek (The Female Students Residence Hall of the Jagiellonian University), Witold Cęckiewicz (The complex of “Cracovia” hotel and “Kijów” cinema), Tadeusz Gawłowski (A house at Fałata Street), Zbigniew Gądek (The building at 10a Rajska Street), Maria and Janusz Ingarden (The housing estate on Wzgórza Krzesławickie), Stanisław Juszczyk (“University of Agriculture”),

Bohdan Lisowski (The House of “a hundred balconies”), Tomasz Mańkowski, Zofia Nowakowska, Przemysław Gawor (Campus- Miasteczko Studenckie), Stanisław Spyt (“Dom Turysty” hostel).



Photo 1, 2. Witold Cęckiewicz – “Cracovia” hotel and “Kijev” cinema in Cracow.



Photo 3, 4. The office building of „Biprocemwap” in Cracow.



Photo 5, 6. Władysław Bryzek – The Female Students Residence Hall „Pias” of the Jagiellonian University, Piastowska str. in Cracow.

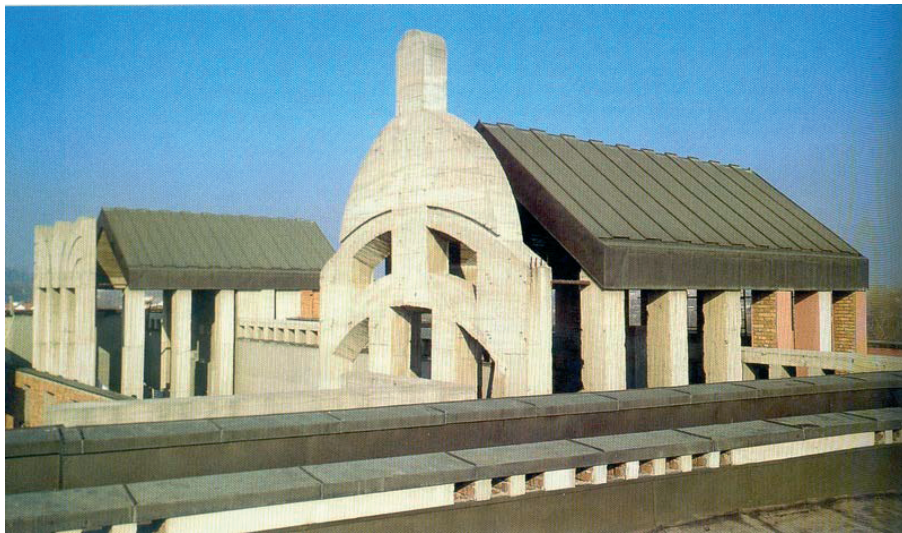


Photo 7, 8. Dariusz Kozłowski i Maria Misiągiewicz – „The route of gates” Major Seminary of the Resurrection Fathers in Cracow.



Photo 9, 10. Krzysztof Ingarden and Jacek Ewy – Manggha the centre of Japanese Art and Technology in Cracow.



Photo. 11, 12. Romuald Loegler – The Jagiellonian Library – the new wing

The year 1981 was yet another breakthrough in post-war Poland, the year of the spurt of civil freedoms. Together with the following years - coming back to the free profession of an architect - it led to the return to the very roots of modernism

by the Cracovian creators: Marek Dunikowski (Krakchemia), Piotr Gajewski (The complex of housing buildings in the II Pułku Lotniczego housing estate), Krzysztof Ingarden and Jacek Ewy (Manggha- the centre of Japanese Art and Technology), Dariusz Kozłowski, Maria Misiągiewicz (“The route of four gates”: Major Seminary of the Resurrection Fathers), Jacek Czekaj, Krzysztof Lenartowicz, Krzysztof Leśniadorski, Andrzej Walkowski (The hospital at Skawińska Street), Romuald Loegler (The Jagiellonian Library- the new wing), Waław Seruga (The complex of housing buildings “Wesele Północ” and St. Adalbert’s Church).

“In 1989, Kisho Kurosawa, on the occasion of his exhibition in Breslau, stated: Humanity as a whole will never accept a common language such as Esperanto. International architectural style will not be able to cover the whole world. The essential cultural dialogue may only be conducted by using different languages of particular cultures. Only by regaining the identity and integrity of each and every culture, it is possible to maintain and preserve true globalism. I believe in the possibility of international dialogue through local cultures.” [5]

The timeless aesthetic sensitivity can be contemporarily found by conducting a creative dialogue with respect to local culture. Thus, the border lines of modernism fade away allowing for identity search referring to national traditions.

References

- [1] *Sztuka Świata, Zwycięstwo i zmierzch awangardy, Architektura lat 1900-1960 (The Art of the World. The victory and dusk of avant-garde. The architecture of 1900-1960)*, Przemysław Trzeciak, Arkady, Warsaw, 1996.
- [2] *Sztuka Świata, Pochwała różnorodności. Architektura po roku 1960 (The Art of the World. The praise of diversity. The architecture after 1960)*, P. Trzeciak, Arkady, Warsaw, 1996.
- [3] *Architektura późnego modernizmu (The architecture of late modernism)*, Charles Jencks, (translated by Barbara Gadomska, afterword by Wojciech Kosiński), Arkady, 1989.
- [4] *Architektura XX wieku. (The architecture of the XX century)*, Peter Gössel, Gabriele Leuthäuser, Tachen/TMC Art., Köl, 2006.
- [5] *Nowa Architektura Polska (New Polish Architecture)*, T. Przemysław Szafer, Arkady, 1981.
- [6] *The architecture of the 60ties in Cracow*, Małgorzata Włodarczyk, WAM Publishing House, Cracow, 2006.
- [7] *The modernists II*, Wojciech Obtulowicz, Małgorzata Włodarczyk, Marta Gajczak, Union of Polish Architects, Cracow Branch, 2000.