



**THE 'CRISTAL' BAR IN GDAŃSK-
WRZESZCZ AFTER ITS FIRST
ALTERATION IN THE EARLY 2000S**


BAR „CRISTAL” V GDAŃSKU-
WRZESZCZI PO PRVEJ PRESTAVBE
ZAČIATKOM NULTÝCH ROKOV

Source Zdroj: Archive of the Gdańsk
City Hall, sign. 332/105, Construction
Project, 2009, Technical Expertise, p. 6

Conservation Issues of Post-War Modernist Architecture in Poland

Problematika ochrany povojnovej modernistickej architektúry v Poľsku

Tomasz Ziemkiewicz

 <https://doi.org/10.31577/archandurb.2021.55.3-4.3>

Ochrana povojnového modernizmu v Poľsku je zložitý problém, ktorý zahŕňa právne otázky, teóriu ochrany a jej uplatňovanie v praxi. Právny rámec ochrany pamiatok vychádza zo „Zákona o ochrane pamiatok a pamiatkovej starostlivosti“ z roku 2003, ktorý stanovuje organizačnú štruktúru orgánov pamiatkovej starostlivosti a oficiálne formy ochrany. Kľúčovú rolu hrajú vojvodské (krajské) úrady pre ochranu pamiatok a ich podriadení na miestnej úrovni, mestskí alebo okresní pamiatkári. Vojvodské pamiatkové úrady sú zodpovedné za realizáciu štátnej politiky ochrany pamiatok, za vedenie zoznamu najvýznamnejších objektov, ktoré získali štatút chránených objektov vo vojvodstve (tzv. register pamiatok), a tiež zoznamu ostatných objektov hodných ochrany. Objekty zapísané do registra sa dostávajú pod drobnohľad pamiatkových úradov a pravidiel, ako s nimi zaobchádzať, sú veľmi prísne – po zápise je prakticky nemožné vykonávať akékoľvek práce bez súhlasu vojvodského alebo miestneho pamiatkára. Zápis je jedným z piatich zákonom schválených spôsobov ochrany pamiatok, no odborníci a vedci poukazujú na to, že je to spôsob zdaleka najúčinnejší. Každá pamiatka si však pred zápisom vyžaduje dôkladné posúdenie, ktoré zhodnotí jej význam na základe širokých kritérií stanovených zákonom – jej historickú, umeleckú alebo vedeckú hodnotu. Hodnotenia sa vykonávajú podľa kritérií usporiadaných do ucelených systémov, ktoré navrhli akademici a odborníci v oblasti teórie ochrany pamiatok.

Tu vznikajú prvé problémy v súvislosti s modernistickým dedičstvom. Odborníci upozorňujú, že súčasné systémy hodnotenia nezodpovedajú špecifickej povahe modernistickej architektúry, ktorá sa často výrazne líši od tradičných stavieb. Objavilo sa niekoľko rôznych pokusov o nápravu tohto problému. Architektonické kruhy sa problém snažili vyriešiť pomocou iného právneho pojmu „bohatstva modernej kultúry“ ukotveného v „Zákone o plánovaní a územnom rozvoji“ z roku 2003. No aj keď vytvorili a pomerne úspešne zaviedli rozsiahly a komplexný súbor kritérií, praktické uplatnenie tejto myšlienky vyšlo nazmar – pre ochranu budov spĺňajúcich tieto kritériá neexistovala žiadna právna záruka. Hlavný problém spôsobovala skutočnosť, že objekty „bohatstva modernej kultúry“ sa zo zákona nepovažujú za pamiatky, a teda nespádajú do pôsobnosti pamiatkarov. Niektorí odborníci, poučení z týchto skúseností, sa zamerali na vytvorenie nových

kritérií, ktoré by zodpovedali „Zákonu o ochrane pamiatok [...]“. Ich úsilie prinieslo cenné výsledky, systémy kritérií teraz viac vychádzajú v ústrety modernistickej architektúre. Týchto návrhov je však veľa a je naďalej na pracovníkoch pamiatkových úradov, ktoré z nich si vyberú.

Samotná ochrana modernistických budov má za sebou rovnako neľahkú cestu. Teoretické predpoklady pre ochranu modernizmu nedokázali držať krok s rýchlo sa meniacim prostredím. Výsledkom politických a sociálno-ekonomických zmien, ktoré nastali po roku 1989, bolo rýchle prijatie nových architektonických foriem – ľudia a podniky chceli opustiť „hru-bú a fádnu“ estetiku minulosti. Kľúčovú úlohu v podnecovaní zmien zohrala aj privatizácia pozemkov a nehnuteľností, v rámci ktorej sa búraním „nechcených“ budov vytváral priestor pre výnosnejšie investície. Chronicky zlé hospodárenie so štátnymi budovami počas komunistickej éry malo, žiaľ, veľký vplyv aj na všeobecné vnímanie povojnového modernizmu medzi poľským obyvateľstvom. Vzhľadom na to všetko nie je prekvapením, že v priebehu troch desaťročí sa mnohé významné budovy prebudovali alebo jednoducho zbúrali vrátane niekoľkých jedinečných príkladov, ako sú samoobsluha „Supersam“ a pavilón „Chemia“ vo Varšave alebo budova hlavnej železničnej stanice v Katoviciach (zbúrané v roku 2006 a 2011). Verejné volanie po ochrane a pozornosť médií, ktorej sa niektorým z týchto budov dostalo, však mali pozitívny účinok. Verejná mienka začala tieto stavby viac oceňovať, najmä generácie, ktoré dospeli po roku 1989. Objavilo sa aj niekoľko autorov, ktorí sa snažia osvetliť dejiny architektúry v Poľsku po roku 1945 a poukázať na hodnoty, ktoré predtým stáli mimo ponímania mnohých. Pozornosť priťahujú aj na modernizmus zamerané stránky a skupiny na sociálnych sieťach, ktoré prinášajú čoraz viac hodnotného obsahu.

Dôležité je, že akademickým a odborným kruhom, ktoré sa snažili vypracovať kritériá hodnotenia modernistickej architektúry (už od začiatku 21. storočia), sa podarilo viac presadiť. Zdá sa, že ich výskum mal pozitívny vplyv na ochranu povojnového modernistického dedičstva – tento posun odráža aj rastúci počet zapísaných pamiatok. Napriek tomu je celkový počet povojnových modernistických stavieb, ktoré získali štatút chránených pamiatok, v porovnaní s ostatnými stavbami v registri stále marginálny. Stále existuje množstvo ohrozených budov, niektoré z nich oficiálne odsúdené na zbúranie, čo znamená, že zostáva ešte veľa práce.

Introduction

The following article addresses a broad spectrum of subjects relating to the protection and conservation of postwar modernist heritage in Poland. It is divided into three sections, each comprising several related aspects of the issue. The first section briefly explores the legal and organisational structure in place for monuments protection. The second section focuses on specific legal problems facing the protection of modernist monuments. The third provides an overview of changes to Poland's approach regarding the architectural heritage of the postwar era, delving into specific examples and outlining the key processes.

The Legal Framework for Monuments Protection in Poland

The Polish legal system for monuments protection is based on the 2003 'Act on the Protection and Guardianship of Monuments' (hereinafter: Monuments Protection Act).¹ First and foremost, it provides the legal definition for a monument [Pol. *zabytek*]. It is described as including an item of real estate (or property, like architecture, parks, etc.) or a movable object, including parts or groups/complexes of them, which are man-made or are linked to human activity. It is also stated that these objects have to serve as a testimony to a past epoch or event, the preservation of which is in the public interest due to its historical, artistic or scientific value. The Monuments Protection Act also establishes the organisational structure of monument preservation organs and the official forms of protection. These forms are:

- inscription to the monuments register,
- inscription to the *Heritage Treasures List*,
- recognition as the *Monument of History*,
- creation of the cultural park,
- establishment of forms of protection in accordance with the 'local plan for spatial management' or localisation of public investment, a decision on building conditions, decision on road investment permission, a decision on the establishment of railway line localisation or decision on public airport investment permission .

The organisational structure plays a key role with regard to formal protection. The General Conservator of Monuments plays the leading role, and his/her responsibility is to guide heritage preservation policy, in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The care and protection of monuments are coordinated and executed by Voivodeship Conservators (provincial level). Subordinate to them are the City or Poviats Conservators (local district level), who carry out tasks assigned to them by their superior. The role of the Voivodeship Conservators is to maintain the inscribed monuments register (registers are coordinated on the voivodeship level), and the voivodeship monuments list. They are also required as a consulting and coordinating body to the provincial and local administrators when creating a cultural park or adding heritage protection measures to the 'local plan for spatial management'. However, the local monuments list, maintained by the City/Poviat authorities, stands as the basis for any actions towards heritage protection. It allows the local authorities and Voivodeship Conservators to prepare guardianship programs.

Out of the five mentioned forms of protection, only three will be analysed in the present work – the monuments register, cultural park, and protective means included in the 'local plan for spatial management' (hereinafter: 'local plan').³

The inscription of the monument to the register is performed by the Voivodeship Conservator – the decision is taken in response to a request filed by the owner (of the specific building or land) – or it can be conducted *ex officio* in case there is a reasonable concern for the fate of the monument – destruction or damage for example. A cultural park can be established by a local council. The council must state the name, borders and means of protection of the park, and the legal restrictions that will apply within. Additionally, it is obligatory to formulate the protection plan and to create 'local plans' for the areas in which the park is situated. Finally, the Monuments Protection Act states that the creation of a 'local plan' (or other listed forms of spatial management) requires the local authorities to include protective regulations regarding any monuments located within its borders.

In all cases, the Voivodeship Conservators are legally obliged to participate actively in the process of monuments protection and to carry out inspections of lawful conduct towards monuments. In the case of the registered monuments, the Conservators assert the greatest influence over the protection process, since no refurbishment, rebuilding or conservation works can be done to the

inscribed monument without their permission. It is also their prerogative to halt any works done to the monuments, and to issue recommendations on the proper treatment of them. As for the 'local plans', they must include a specific strategy for monuments protection, which has to be agreed with a Voivodeship Conservator. The same thing applies to cultural parks since there is a legal obligation to consult the protection plan to the Conservator. Also, a 'local plan' must be created for the park's area after its establishment (which also requires a Conservator's input).

There is an additional piece of legislation, which is also crucial for the better understanding of problems addressed in this article. The 2003 *Act on Planning and Spatial Development*⁴ regulates, for example, the organisational aspects of creating 'local plans of special development'. It introduced the new term: 'assets of modern culture'. These 'assets' include places of memory, buildings (including interiors and decorative details), building complexes, urban and landscape areas, that are not considered monuments [zabytki], but have a great artistic and historical value, and are well-regarded by contemporary generations. The act also states that protective measures towards 'assets of modern culture' have to be included in 'local plans', along with monuments and cultural landscapes.

Problematic Aspects of Protecting Post-War Modernism in the Light of Polish Law

It has been stated numerous times by scholars that inscription to the monuments register is the best, and often the only, way to guarantee the protection of a historic building.⁵ However, because the values used to identify the building as an important monument – historical, artistic and scientific – are very broad, they require additional evaluations.⁶ These are conducted using a set of criteria, organised into a coherent system, that helps to identify the values of a potential monument. Over the decades scholars have made various proposals for such systems, for example, ones by Zdzisław Bieniecki,⁷ Michał Witwicki,⁸ or Janusz Krawczyk.⁹ These systems focus on criteria such as authenticity, integrity, historical value (for example: a site of historic events, an object for historical analysis, having an emotional value to the local community), artistic and aesthetic value, or utilitarian value (the building's adaptability to new functions). When properly applied, they allow for a more detailed and objective assessment of the analysed building. However, there is no universally adopted system, which greatly hinders the possibility for a unified approach towards different types of monuments.¹⁰

Nevertheless, voices were raised that stressed how the specific nature of modernist architecture makes it very problematic to assess through the established evaluation criteria, especially when it comes to late modernism, which is very often defined by simple designs, use of industrial materials, and standing in a different context to older architecture. For instance, many techniques used for the construction of modernist buildings are used to this day, which makes it harder to demonstrate their importance, in this aspect, from a historical or scientific perspective. Thus, it becomes difficult to evaluate a wide range of modernist buildings using the same criteria as for older, more traditional architecture. This problem prompted the members of Warsaw's *Association of Polish Architects* [pol. Stowarzyszenie Architektów Polskich, SARP] to create another set of criteria, suited for buildings erected after 1945. The work took place between 2000 and 2003, and the results were based on the newly created legal notion of the 'assets of modern culture'.¹¹ The final list included eight points:

1. innovation both in the context of architectonic, spatial and technical solutions;
2. context, coexistence both at the creation stage and the later spatial development of the location;
3. a tradition of a place, including negation as attempts at creating new values or creative accumulation of generations' heritage;
4. the criterion of symbol;
5. appreciation by contemporaries (awards, distinctions);
6. the criterion of the test of time, preserving spatial and aesthetic values despite degradation resulting from technical wear or/ and administrator's neglect, or spontaneous building development of the adjoining terrain;
7. the artistic criterion;
8. the criterion of uniqueness (for example the only object preserved in an unchanged form).¹²

These criteria were used to create a list of the 'assets of modern culture' for the city of Warsaw, which were supposed to receive a protected status subsequently. The idea was later adopted by other branches of SARP, for example in Kraków.¹³ Unfortunately, problems arose, casting doubt on the usefulness of this method, which became evident once many of the buildings from the Warsaw list were demolished within a decade. Protection of modernist buildings by listing them as 'assets of modern culture' is only as effective as are the legal means included in the 'local plan'. This aspect touches on another issue – the scarcity of 'local plans'. A 2012 study reveals that by 2010 about 26 % of Poland's land area was covered by local plans, with statistics on the voivodeship level ranging from 61 % coverage to as little as 3,8 %. What discourages the local authorities from enacting a 'local plan', are the potentially high costs (at the expense of local budgets) of such an undertaking.¹⁴ So, putting it simply, if there is no 'local plan', there is no legally guaranteed protection for any buildings listed as 'assets of modern culture'.¹⁵

Furthermore, even if there is a 'local plan' enacted, there are very limited means of preservation of such 'assets'. As mentioned earlier, the 'Monuments Protection Act' gives the voivodeship and local conservators tools and responsibility to protect monuments. However, their power reaches only as far, since the 'Planning and Spatial Development Act' states clearly that 'assets of modern culture' are not considered monuments. So, even though Article 15 of the latter act obliges the local authorities to ensure the protection of both, only listed monuments enjoy the additional protection guaranteed by the former act.¹⁶ It also means that local authorities enacting a plan are solely responsible for establishing the strategy for protection, which does not require consultation with a conservator. These limitations only strengthen the perception that inscription to the monuments register remains the only effective method.¹⁷

In 2009, a team in the *National Centre for Monument Research and Documentation* undertook another attempt to create a universal set of criteria for evaluating modernist architecture, one that would be based on the 'Monuments Protection Act'. The eventual outcome was a set of three basic criteria:

- artistic value – form of the object or complex (quality and impact),
- scientific value – the authenticity of the idea, material, function, construction, material, innovativeness,
- historical value – the identity of the place, people, events.

A very similar set was recently proposed by Jakub Lewicki, though it includes one additional factor, that of 'impact' – on local, extra-regional and European levels. As the author implies, the addition of an impact factor that goes beyond the local level can help distinguish the buildings of highest value, and to make the criteria more objective.¹⁸ However, each of these sets of criteria remains a proposal, and it is still to the decision of professionals at the Conservators' Offices which ones to choose.

Evolution of the Approach Towards Preservation of Post-War Modernism in Poland

Scholarly interest in Polish postwar modernism began to take shape in the early 2000s. The earliest monograph referring to the subject was published in 2001¹⁹ and explored the vast spectrum of problems surrounding communist-era architecture in Poland, touching on many issues, such as state interference, the role of the architect, economic constraints, or various aspects of urban planning, with a focus on their negative outcomes. Architectural circles began discussing the problems of recognising and preserving the important examples of postwar modernism as early as 2000. However, these ideas were taking shape at a time when very few people would consider post-1945 architecture in terms of historical or artistic value. The relatively young age and often questionable quality of the buildings contributed to such a negative perception. Another aspect was the professionals' attitude at the Conservators' Offices, who tended to apply the old definition of monuments: a definition, dating back to 1928, that required the building's age to exceed 50 years.²⁰ Though such a criterion does not exist in the 2003 Monuments Protection Act, it may still have some effect on the choice of protection-worthy buildings.²¹ Adding the legal gap with the notion of 'assets of modern culture' would cause many buildings to fall outside the scope of interest for years to come, and lead to many uncontrolled modifications or losses.

The crucial aspect in understanding their fate and the evolution of the approach towards them lies in the economic transformation of Poland after 1989. Since the majority of land and enterprises

**THE 'CRISTAL' BAR AFTER ITS
SECOND ALTERATION IN 2011**

BAR „CRISTAL” PO DRUHEJ
PRESTAVBE V ROKU 2011

Photo Foto: Tomasz Ziemkiewicz



**LARGE-FORMAT ADVERTISEMENT
MOUNTED ON THE 'FORUM' HOTEL
IN KRAKÓW, JUNE 2021**

VELKOFORMÁTOVÁ REKLAMA
UMIESTNENÁ NA HOTELI „FORUM”
V KRAKOVE, JÚN 2021

Photo Foto: Tomasz Ziemkiewicz

were under direct state control in the immediate post-communist period, so was the building ownership and use. The unavoidable problems with the centrally planned economy and state ownership in communist Poland included a lack of responsibility and long-term maintenance of the buildings, which often led to the structures' quick deterioration. After Poland's rapid adoption of capitalism, land and real-estate were quickly privatised, something which had various effects on the architectural landscape. Buildings were renovated or 'embellished', making them more up-to-date with the changing times. In other cases, the division of ownership led to individual modifications of certain sections of the buildings or their further degradation. The introduction of numerous, often large-format, advertisements also harmed individual buildings and the public environment. Additionally, large land areas on which certain buildings stood (especially within the city centres) became highly valuable, which often prompted investors to clear the land to make way for a new, more profitable investment.



**'SUPERSAM' SELF-SERVICE
SUPERMARKET, 1962**

SAMOOBSLUHA „SUPERSAM”, 1962

Photo Foto: Zbyszko Siemaszko
Source Zdroj: Narodowe Archiwum
Cyfrowe, [https://audiovis.nac.gov.pl/
obraz/142524/](https://audiovis.nac.gov.pl/obraz/142524/)



**'PLAC UNII' TRADE GALLERY,
ERECTED ON THE FORMER SITE
OF SUPERSAM, 2013**

OBCHODNÁ GALÉRIA „PLAC
UNII” POSTAVENÁ NA MIESTE
SUPERSAMU, 2013

Photo Foto: Filip Bramorski
Source Zdroj: Wikimedia Commons

Over the years, some important buildings were significantly altered or lost due to the practices described above. To name a few:

- 1998 – 2000, modernisation of Hotel Mercury in Poznań (designed by Jan Cieśliński, Jan Węclawski, Henryk Grochulski, 1961 – 1964). The renovation process introduced significant changes to the internal layout and design, and alteration of the building's façade;
- 2002, demolition of the 'Barbara' pavilion in Szczecin (des. Zbigniew Grudziński, Jan Około-Kuśak, 1961), which utilised an all-steel, lightweight construction with a curtain-wall façade, and a unique geometric chalice-like ceiling. The pavilion filled the gap between two tenement houses, and after its demolition, a new one stands on location (completed in 2012);
- 2006, demolition of the 'Supersam' self-service shop in Warsaw (des. Maciej Krasiński, Ewa Krasińska, Jerzy Hryniewiecki, 1960 – 1962), a uniquely constructed building, enclosed with a rope-supported roof made of concrete shells. It received honourable mention at the 1962 Biennale in Sao Paulo and was widely discussed and praised at home. In 2006, it was demolished, despite public outcry in its defence. People also called for its formal protection (which was not granted). Though included on the list of Warsaw's 'assets of modern culture', it was later replaced with an office and trade centre;
- 2011, demolition of the 'Chemia' Pavilion in Warsaw (des. Jan Bogusławski, Bohdan Gniewiewski, 1959 – 1961), a small trade pavilion built using lightweight steel-and-glass construction, enclosed with a concrete plate roof. It was included on the list of Warsaw's 'assets of modern culture'. A high-end trade gallery stands in its place;
- 2011, demolition of Katowice Railway Station (des. Waclaw Klyrzewski, Jerzy Mokszyński, Eugeniusz Wierzbicki, 1969 – 1972), a Brutalist building that utilised a thin-shell roof



THE ORIGINAL BUILDING OF THE KATOWICE RAILWAY STATION BEFORE ITS DEMOLITION, 2010

PŮVODNÁ BUDOVA ŽELEZNIČNEJ STANICE V KATOVICIACH PRED ZBÚRANÍM, 2010

Photo Foto: Arkadiusz K.
Source Zdroj: Fotopolska, <https://fotopolska.eu/142874,foto.html?o=b58978&p=3>



THE NEW KATOWICE RAILWAY STATION, JUNE 2021

NOVÁ ŽELEZNIČNÁ STANICA V KATOVICIACH, JÚN 2021

Photo Foto: Wikimedia Commons
Source Zdroj: [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plik:Exterior_of_Katowice_train_station_\(view_from_the_northern_site\),_June_2021.jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plik:Exterior_of_Katowice_train_station_(view_from_the_northern_site),_June_2021.jpg)

consisting of 16 concrete chalices. It was highly praised, with its construction being unique in the world. After a lengthy debate surrounding the demolition plans, it was finally torn down and replaced with a new building that combines a railway station with a shopping gallery. The new design mimics some aspects of the original, with a limited use of the earlier concrete chalice shape;

- 2016, demolition of the 'Emilia' furniture store in Warsaw (des. Czesław Wegner, Marian Kuźniar, Hanna Lewicka, 1964 – 1970), a large, glass-and-steel pavilion enclosed with a monolithic concrete roof. A heated debate surrounding its planned demolition resulted in the pavilion's inscription to the monuments list and later into the monuments register (in 2015). However, in 2016 it was removed and the demolition process could not be stopped. Unusually, the decision was made to relocate the building, which is currently deconstructed



DEPARTMENT STORE IN MŁAWA,
2014

OBCHODNÝ DOM V MŁAWE V ROKU
2014

Photo Foto: W. Zalewski

Source Zdroj: CC-BY-SA 3.0,

<https://fotopolska.eu/773034,foto.html?o=b121641>

and awaits reassembly on its new site. It was included on the list of Warsaw's 'assets of modern culture'. The original location is to be occupied by a skyscraper.

These examples are the most recognisable among those that helped to steer change in both the popular and professional perception of late-modernism. Since the earliest alterations to, and demolitions of, such structures, scholars started to address the problems of limited evaluation criteria, resolving which, could help protect modernist heritage. In 2007 and 2008, two conferences took place in Poznań, which led to the creation of a list of the city's most valuable 20th-century architecture. The list was publicised along with the description of the criteria used by the authors,²² in this case based on the model proposed by SARP's Warsaw branch. Notably, only a year earlier the city's well-known department store called 'Okraślak' (des. Marek Leykam, 1947 – 1952) had been inscribed to the monuments register. In the next few years, more themed conferences began to take place. For instance, since 2014, the cycle of modernism-oriented conferences in Gdynia broadened its scope by accepting presentations about post-1945 architecture.²³ The Polish branch of the *International Council on Monuments and Sites* (ICOMOS) also began to publish materials focused on similar subjects.²⁴ Monographs began to emerge, focusing on the 20th-century architectural landscape, for example in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship²⁵ or specific cities like Kraków.²⁶ It should be noted that scientific interest in communist-era architecture is a broader phenomenon, happening across the world. For instance, a significant emphasis is put on mass-housing projects, that remain important elements of post-communist countries' architectural landscape.²⁷ The increased international interest in such subjects likely affects the Polish debate as well.

Scholarly interest in the subject seems to have had a positive influence on the practical protection of postwar modernism. A 2014 study done by the *National Institute of Heritage* [pol. Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa] showed that only 81 buildings erected between 1939 and 1989 had received a place in the monuments register, out of more than 64 000 inscribed (as of 2015²⁸). However, a full online list of inscribed monuments was opened for public access this year,²⁹ which brings the numbers up-to-date. According to the data, over the past five years, the number of inscribed buildings rose beyond 78,000, a figure that includes an additional 160 entries constructed between

PAVILION OF THE WARSZAWA
POWIŚLE RAILWAY STATION, 2018

PAVILÓN ŽELEZNIČNEJ STANICE
WARSZAWA POWIŚLE, 2018

Photo Foto: Tomasz Ziemkiewicz



1939 and 1989 – both individual buildings and sites. Out of those, 43 buildings can be classified as examples of postwar modernism, ranging from housing blocks to churches and academic architecture. Among those are several buildings in Warsaw, like: the ‘Cepelia’ Pavilion (des. Jan Bogusławski, Bohdan Gniewiewski, 1962 – 1966), the rail stations ‘Warszawa Centralna’ (des. Arseniusz Romanowicz, Piotr Szymaniak, 1972 – 1975) and ‘Warszawa Ochota’ (1962 – 1968), or the ‘Relax Cinema’. Examples outside of Warsaw include a department store in Mława (des. Stanisław Koldo, 1958 – 1963), an exhibition hall in Chorzów (des. Jerzy Gottfried, 1968), the ‘Cracovia’ Hotel in Kraków (des. Witold Cęckiewicz, 1960 – 1966), or the ‘Mezonetowiec’ apartment block in Wrocław (des. Jadwiga Grabowska Hawrylak, 1958 – 1960). This increase in inscribed modern structures shows a notable shift that may indicate an increased appreciation of the newly recognised heritage. However, these numbers are still marginal compared to the entire register and do not represent the full spectrum of the problem. For instance, the inscription of the Nicolaus Copernicus University Campus comprises 14 individual entries, including the urban complex as a whole, along with specific buildings. Hence, by analysing the list it becomes evident, that over 30 % of late-modernist entries come from a single city.

Still, the important problem remaining is the social perception, or lack of understanding, of postwar modernist architecture’s values. It likely comes from its communist pedigree, an era that is held in contempt by Poles. Another aspect is the often poor condition of many buildings from that era, having been mismanaged across the decades. The negative perception makes it hard to consider such buildings ‘heritage’, which leads to a lack of interest in their fate. Stella Grotowska makes an interesting point in her sociological study from 2016, focusing on the perception of socialist-era architecture in Poland through analysis of the press debate surrounding the demolition of the Katowice main railway station.³⁰ It shows a clear difference between the views expressed by the specialists and the city dwellers. In the debate, specialists calling for the protection focused on the building’s unique form and construction, underlining its significance to art history. On the opposite side, the dwellers were more interested in its mismanagement, overall poor condition, and negative associations with issues such as the presence of homeless people.

These results can be understood twofold. The first viewpoint leads to the interpretation that postwar modernism is unlikely to be understood by most people who do not possess the specialised knowledge to grasp the architectural qualities of such buildings. However, some situations contradict this point and lead to a different interpretation. For instance, in 2009 the cash desk pavilion of the 'Warszawa Powiśle' railway station was adopted into a café. The adaptation process respected the original substance of the building, maintaining the original exterior with its window frames and neon lights. The new business venue was well received and became a popular spot in the capital. In 2018 the building was recognised as a monument and inscribed into the register. Similarly, the 2011 renovation of the 'Warszawa Centralna' station was well received by city dwellers, who had mostly negative opinions of the building before.³¹ These two examples suggest, that keeping the modernist buildings in a well-preserved state can have a good impact on their popular perception.

Additionally, the 'Warszawa Powiśle' pavilion's fate shows that people outside the professional, heritage-oriented circles can also notice and respect the values of late-modernist buildings. Over time new authors have begun to express interest and shed more light on the architectural history of postwar Poland. These include Anna Cymer,³² Filip Springer, Paweł Giergoń³³ and Grzegorz Piątek.³⁴ What may be important is that these authors represent a generation that has reached maturity after 1989, which can have substantial impact on their outlook towards Poland's communist-era architectural legacy.

To help inspire interest and appreciation for postwar architectural heritage, several public initiatives have been established. For example, Gdynia and Kraków have dedicated websites³⁵ that share information about important modernist buildings and organise detailed walking tours for individuals or groups. The internet and social media also have their role, with numerous fan pages sharing socialist-modernism-related content. It broadens the spectrum of known objects and contributes to the increase of awareness of valuable architectural pieces.

Conclusion

This article provides only a brief summary of the complex problems that relate to the protection and conservation of postwar modernism in Poland. Since the enactment of the 2003 Monuments Protection Act, scholars have made much effort to recognise the potential lying in the buildings that were largely ignored. Unfortunately, many valuable objects were lost along the way, even if their fate seems to have had the effect of sparking a larger discussion that has led to the recognition of a new kind of heritage. Attitudes towards communist-era architecture have also begun to change, which is especially evident in the tone of books on the topic published during the last two decades. The earliest example, written 12 years after the communist-to-capitalist transformation of Poland, takes a largely negative stance towards the postwar architectural legacy. Less than a decade later, however, a noticeable shift occurred, once a new generation of authors, observing a rapidly changing landscape, started to portray such architecture as historically important. Considerable activity concerning the subject is also taking place outside the scholarly debate, with various interest groups appearing on social media and the internet in general. Despite these indications of positive change, there are still dangers facing late-modernist heritage. Many buildings remain in poor condition, others are slated for restoration that would alter their original characteristics (e.g., the PKO Rotunda in Warsaw), or are even scheduled for demolition (e.g. the Olsztyn main railway station). Hopefully, such cases will soon be a thing of the past.

MA TOMASZ ZIEMKIEWICZ

ACADEMIA ARTIUM HUMANIORUM,
NICOLAUS COPERNICUS
UNIVERSITY

Władysława Bojarskiego 1
87-100 Toruń
Poland

tomekziem21@gmail.com

- 1** Ustawa o ochronie zabytków i opiece nad zabytkami (2003). *Journal of Laws of 2003*. **162**(1568).
- 2** The accurate translation is impossible, since the word 'monument' literally means 'pomnik' (deriving from 'pomnieć' – to remember). 'Zabytek' has a different etymology, originating from the word 'byt' (being/existence), and it refers to material objects that are the remains of past times – BRÜCKNER, Aleksander, 1927. *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*. Kraków, Krakowska Spółka Wydawnicza, p. 643.
- 3** More detailed information in English can be found in the following article: LANDMANN, Tomasz, 2018. *Legal regulations in the field of cultural heritage protection in Poland after 1989 – evaluation attempt*. Scientific Journal of the Military University of Land Forces, [online] **1**(187), pp. 75 – 91, [cit. 11.08.2021] Available at: <http://yadda.icm.edu.pl/yadda/element/bwmeta1.element.baztech-a667271e-a358-43fc-9004-a0a556e630c3b>
- 4** Ustawa planowaniu i zagospodarowaniu przestrzennym (2003). *Journal of Laws of 2003*. **80**(717).
- 5** GAWLICKI, Marcin, 2008. Rejestr zabytków w praktyce ochrony konserwatorskiej. *Ochrona Zabytków*, [online] (2) pp. 55 – 82 [cit. 09.07.2021] Available at: <https://www.infona.pl/resource/bwmeta1.element.9371c74d-f297-3b5d-a803-9221377df0cc>; p. 61; MARCINIAK, Piotr, 2017. *Ochrona dziedzictwa powojennego modernizmu na przykładzie Poznania. Sposoby ochrony i waloryzacja. Modernizm w Europie*. *Modernizm w Gdyni. Architektura XX wieku i jej waloryzacja w Gdyni i Europie*. Gdynia: Urząd Miasta Gdyni, pp. 215 – 220.
- 6** SZMYGIN, Bogusław, 2015. Teoria i kryteria wartościowania dziedzictwa jako podstawa jego ochrony. *Journal of Heritage Conservation*. [online] (43), pp. 44 – 52 [cit. 15.07.2021] Available at: <https://www.infona.pl/resource/bwmeta1.element.baztech-e25822f8-578f-43ca-a007-b385d3898fb5>
- 7** BIENIECKI, Zdzisław, 1969. Potrzeba i drogi ochrony obiektów architektury najnowszej. *Ochrona Zabytków*. [online] **22**(85), pp. 83 – 116 [cit. 29.07.2021] Available at: http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-a56f5eec-eed8-4453-b284-93788bfe0620/c/Ochrona_Zabytkow-r1969-t22-n2_85_-s83-116.pdf
- 8** WITWICKI, Michał Tadeusz, 2007. Kryteria oceny wartości zabytkowej obiektów architektury jako podstawa wpisu do rejestru zabytków. *Ochrona Zabytków*. **1**, pp. 77 – 98.
- 9** KARWCZYK, Janusz, 2013. Dialog z tradycją w konserwatorstwie – koncepcja zabytkoznawczej analizy wartościującej. *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici. Zabytkoznawstwo i Konserwatorstwo*. [online] **46**, [cit. 15.07.2021] Available at: https://repozytorium.umk.pl/bitstream/handle/item/2494/AUNC_ZiK.2013.021_Krawczyk.pdf?sequence=1, <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/AUNC>
- 10** ZIMNA-KAWECKA Karolina and PRARAT, Maciej, 2013. *Wartościowanie zabytków architektury w praktyce Wojewódzkiej Ewidencji Zabytków – kilka refleksji inwentaryzatorów. Wartościowanie Zabytków Architektury*. Warszawa: Polski Komitet Narodowy Międzynarodowej Rady Ochrony Zabytków, p. 197.
- 11** LEWICKI, Jakub, 2016. On the beginning of the classification of monuments. On the advantages and disadvantages of Polish heritage valuation systems. *Ochrona Dziedzictwa Kulturowego*. [online] **2**, pp. 91 – 108 [cit. 29.07.2021] Available at: <https://yadda.icm.edu.pl/baztech/element/bwmeta1.element.baztech-e89f982b-0215-489f-980c-2a5ef05144f4>
- 12** Lewicki, J., 2016, pp. 41 – 42.
- 13** ROZENU-RYBOWICZ, Agnieszka, SZLENK-DZIUBEK, Dorota and BIAŁOSKÓRSKI, Piotr, 2009. *Atlas dóbr kultury współczesnej województwa małopolskiego*. Kraków: Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego Departament Polityki Regionalnej.
- 14** PRUS, Barbara, 2012. Sytuacja planistyczna w Polsce – studium porównawcze. *Infrastruktura i Ekologia Terenów Wiejskich*. [online] **2**(2), pp. 123 – 135 [cit. 15.07.2021] Available at: <https://agro.icm.edu.pl/agro/element/bwmeta1.element.agro-9e8e7f34-e2e1-495e-93ce-4109f5d03fb8>
- 15** LEWICKI, Jakub, 2014. *Badania, definicje, wartościowanie a rzeczywistość, czyli dlaczego utracono czołowe dzieła polskiego modernizmu. Modernizm w Europie*. *Modernizm w Gdyni. Architektura do lat sześćdziesiątych i jej ochrona w Gdyni i Europie*. Gdynia: Urząd Miasta w Gdyni, pp. 149 – 156.
- 16** SIWEK, Andrzej, 2011. Między zabytkiem a dobrem kultury współczesnej. *Kurier Konserwatorski*. **10**(5 – 33) pp. 5 – 11; KOZIEN, Adam, 2019. Pogranicza ochrony zabytków nieruchomych oraz dóbr kultury współczesnej w planowaniu i zagospodarowaniu przestrzennym. *Internetowy Przegląd Prawniczy TBSP UJ*. [online] **1**(45), pp. 132 – 148 [cit. 06.07.2021]. Available at: <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/79848>; BIAŁKIEWICZ, Adam, STELMACH, Bolesław and ŻYCHOWSKA, Maria J., 2020. Dobra kultury współczesnej. Zarys problemu ochrony. *Journal of Heritage Conservation*. **6**(3), p. 59.
- 17** Siwek, A., 2011, p. 9.
- 18** LEWICKI, Jakub, 2017. Assessing the value of the modernist epoch monuments. Past, present and future. *Journal of Heritage Conservation*. [online] **4**(9), pp. 43 – 47, [cit. 29.07.2021] Available at: <http://yadda.icm.edu.pl/baztech/element/bwmeta1.element.baztech-b7d65266-65d5-410b-abdef14a85614f>
- 19** BASISTA, Andrzej, 2001. *Betonowe dziedzictwo. Architektura w Polsce czasów komunizmu*. Warszawa-Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- 20** It was respected for such a long time, most likely because the 1962 Act on Protection of the Assets of Culture (that regulated monuments protection policy until 2003) did not include a clear definition of a monument to go with.
- 21** ŚWIDRAK, Marek, 2017. How young can a monument be? The normative premises of stating the „validity” of immovable monuments. *Ochrona Dziedzictwa Kulturowego*. [online] **3**, pp. 87 – 94 [cit. 29.07.2021] Available at: <https://ph.pollub.pl/index.php/odk/article/view/833>
- 22** GRZESZCZUK-BRENDEL, Hanna, KLAUSE, Gabriela, KODYM-KOZACZKO, Grażyna and MARCINIAK, Piotr, 2008. *Prolegomena to the Protection of Architectural Structures and Town Planning Complexes from the 20th Century in Poznań*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej.
- 23** SOETYSIK, Maria J. and HIRSCH, Robert [ed.], 2014. *Modernizm w Europie*. *Modernizm w Gdyni. Architektura do lat sześćdziesiątych i jej ochrona w Gdyni i Europie*. Gdynia: Urząd Miasta w Gdyni.
- 24** SZMYGIN, Bogusław and BOURKE, Sheridan [ed.], 2017. *Modern Heritage – Identifying, assessing and managing its protection and conservation*. Florence-Warsaw: ICOMOS Poland.
- 25** BAL, Wojciech, DAWIDOWSKI, Robert and RACZYŃSKI, Miłosz, 2007. *Architektura polska lat 1961 – 1975 na obszarze Pomorza Zachodniego*. Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Walkowska.
- 26** WŁODARCZYK, Małgorzata, 2019. *Modernizm 1956 – 1970 w Krakowie. Uwarunkowania. Przykłady*. *Dziedzictwo*. Kraków: SARP Oddział Kraków.
- 27** MEEROVICH, Mark, ANTONENKO, Nadiia and SHCHAVINSKAYA, Luidmila, 2018. The Residential Area of Cheremushky as an Example of the Implementation of Khrushchev's Housing Reform in Ukraine. *Architektura & Urbanismus*. **51**(1 – 2), pp. 66 – 83.
- 28** ROZBICKA, Małgorzata [ed.], 2017. *Raport o stanie zachowania zabytków nieruchomych w Polsce*. Warszawa, p. 51.
- 29** *Rejestr zabytków nieruchomych*. [online] 2021 [Accessed 20.07.2021] Available at: <https://dane.gov.pl/en/dataset/1130,rejestr-zabytkow-nieruchomych>
- 30** GROTOWSKA Stella, 2016. Czy architektura czasów PRL ma znaczenie? Analiza wydarzenia medialnego. *Opus Sociologica*. [online] **3**(17), [cit. 29.07.2021] Available at: <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-91f3e24a-758d-4f34-a8b5-ce48487a8011>
- 31** SPRINGER, Filip, 2011. *Żle urodzone*. Reportaż o architekturze PRL. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Karakter.
- 32** CYMER, Anna, 2019. *Architektura polska 1945 – 1989*. Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Architektury i Urbanistyki.
- 33** GIERGOŃ, Paweł, 2014. *Mozaika warszawska. Przewodnik po plastyce w architekturze stolicy 1945 – 1989*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego.
- 34** PIĄTEK, Grzegorz, 2020. *Najlepsze miasto świata. Warszawa w odbudowie 1944 – 1949*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo WAB.
- 35** *Gdyński szlak modernizmu*. [online] [Accessed 12.08.2021] Available at: <https://modernizmgdyni.pl/>; Krakowski Szlak Modernizmu. [online] 2021 [Accessed 12. 08. 2021]. Available at: <https://szlakmodernizmu.pl/>