



THE INFLUENCE OF MAJOR CITIES ARCHITECTURE ON FORM OF KRAKOW TOWN HOUSES FROM THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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Krakow town houses dating from the turn of the 20th century combine a local tradition with tendencies popularized in major European cities (i.a. Vienna, Paris, Berlin). They present stylistic diversity and individualization of the arrangement of their facades. Many of town houses were apparently influenced, among others, by the then important Vienna school. The decorations combine both the typical geometrical motifs of the *Wiener Secession* and plant motifs that were usually limited to clearly separated spaces. The influence of the *Wiener Secession* can be seen in geometrised forms, especially in the motif of a circle with three vertical strips, where the middle strip was often the longest one. *In many Krakow structures the impact of Wagner's works is visible – this refers, among others, to the method of arrangement of decorations on the façade* (the “floating” façade), in the selection of forms, such as aluminium pins (dots), geometrical divisions (checks), the attic consisting of the simple sectional form supplemented by an iron guard-rail fixed on bricked brackets over the eaves, the window joinery with square divisions (the *Quadrastil* promoted by the *Wiener Werkstätte*), borders of main façade fields, the graphic treatment of bars between windows, or the introduction of inscriptions on façades that are used not only because of their symbolic meaning, but also due to the value of their composition and decorations. However, when transplanting the Vienna style patterns, Krakow architects usually „domesticated” them by means of plant motifs. They often made use of plant motifs occurring in that region (chestnut, sunflower, roses etc.). Apart from plant decorations, there are also animal decorations presenting a lion, an eagle, an owl, a spider, a peacock, a donkey etc. Another favourite motif of the secession style was a woman's head with long hair. Apart from their symbolic meaning, these motifs helped to distinguish town houses from one another and to provide them with unique features. Architects drew inspirations from folk art and made direct use of patriotic symbols, such as emblems or insignia, thereby continuing characteristic cultural traditions of that region in a new form. Krakow town houses were also influenced by Parisian architecture. Some of them have a small gardens inspired by boulevards à redans designed by Eugène Hénarda in 1903. Mansard roofs were used in Krakow too, but not so frequently like in Paris. Brick was combined with ceramics and iron elements (balustrades, anchors and ferrules) on elevations of the houses. The same materials appeared in Krakow as well as inscriptions with the name of designer. Krakow buildings were also influenced by Berliner architecture. The characteristic type so-called the Berliner town house was created in seventies of the 19th century which affected analogous forms in other European cities. Certain universal characteristics, typical for the structures which were repeated in other major cities (i.a. Vienna, Paris, Berlin), can be noted in Krakow town houses; however, at the same time, local and historical tradition popularized some atypical and innovative solutions.

Keywords: Architecture, Town house, Decoration.

Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century Cracovian architects were drawn inspiration from major European cities. New buildings designed in Vienna, Paris and Berlin were popularized in specialist journals and magazines. Many of town houses in Krakow were apparently influenced by the Vienna school. Polish architects, particularly at the end the 19th century, undertook studies in Bauschule where lecturers were i.e. Heinrich von Ferstel and Karl König [Purchla J., 1991] and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna where lecturers were i.e. Friedrich von Schmidt, Theophil von Hansen, Karl von Hasenauer and Otto Wagner.

French artists had also a visible influence on architects in Krakow at the end of the 19th century (among others the influence of Impressionist painting). Some of them undertook studies in Paris (i.e. Zygmunt Hendel, Franciszek Mączyński, Józef Pokutyński and Tadeusz Stryjeński). Cracovian architects were also studied in Berlin (i.e. Władysław Kaczmarski, Maksymilian Nitsch, Sławomir Odrzywolski, Filip Pokutyński and Karol Zaremba). Many plans of houses in Krakow were influenced by so-called the Berliner town house in a modify version.

The Viennese influence on Krakow Town Houses

At the turn of the 20th century the architecture in Krakow had many references to Vienna. However, it wasn't entire copying of Viennese examples [Haiko P., 2000]. When transplanting the Vienna style patterns, Krakow architects usually „domesticated” them by means of plant motifs. They often made use of plant motifs occurring in local region (chestnut, sunflower, roses etc.). Resemblance of town houses was visible in sculptural surface treatment of elevations [Wagner-Rieger R., 1970], plastic cornices and bay windows, as well as variety of details and decorations [Zednicek W., 2006]. There were more decorations on elevations of the town houses in Vienna than on Cracovian buildings. More diverse materials and wider color range were used in Vienna as well. The examples were the town houses at 59-61, Ungargasse St. (design by Max Fabiani, 1899-1900) and 31-33, Kloostergasse St. (design by Karl Holzer, 1905-1906). Different green and blue tiling were applied there. A golden color was often combined with the white one on elevations [Haiko P., 2000]. The examples in Krakow were mosaics above the entry to town houses at 36, Piłsudskiego St. (design by Sławomir Odrzywolski, 1907-08) and 1, Wenecja St. (design by Kazimierz Hroboni, 1911-12).

Decorations combined geometrical motifs of the *Wiener Secession* with plant motifs that were usually limited to clearly separated spaces. Transformed abstract elements emphasized the building structure. The influence of the *Wiener Secession* can be especially seen in the motif of a circle with three vertical strips, where the middle strip was often the longest one. This characteristic motif was designed on elevations of the town houses located at 30, Krupnicza St.; 30, Długa St. (design by Kazimierz Zieliński, 1904) and 19, Miodowa St. (design by Aleksander Biborski, 1905). Motifs of circle connected by horizontal slats were designed on elevations of the town houses located at 46, Karmelicka St. (design by Aleksander Biborski, 1910-12) and 28, Wielopole St. (design by Aleksander Biborski, 1910-11). Contrast of the surface of walls and alcoves (holes), asymmetrical composition of elevations, the highlighted outline (inspired by projects of Josef Hoffmann), the decoration underlining the structure of the building and divisions of the elevations were the examples of Viennese influences.

The standard of flats in Krakow was diverse and lower by comparison with the big apartments in Vienna. They had the huge stairwells designed in the center of the buildings (often stairs designed in a fan shape). Houses had also modern elements such as small roofs with metal construction fitted with glass. Modern details were applied in many town houses in Vienna e.g. at 11, Dannebergplatz St. (design by Georg Berger, 1906); 47 Löwengasse St. (design by Anton and Josef Drexler, 1908-1909) and

Schikanedergasse/Margaretenstrasse (design by Artur Baron, 1903). There were no such modern elements in town houses in Krakow.

The impact of Otto Wagner's works was visible in many Krakow buildings – this refers, among others, to the method of arrangement of decorations on the façade (the “floating” façade). The resemblance was also in the selection of forms (aluminium pins, geometrical divisions), the iron attic, the window joinery with square divisions (the Quadrastil promoted by the Wiener Werkstätte), borders of main façade fields, the graphic treatment of bars between windows and inscriptions on façades. The inscriptions were used not only because of their symbolic meaning, but also due to their compositional and decorative values. It was possible to see the influence of Wagner's works in resemblance of solving the part of town house (among others big oval stairwell) located at 38, Linke Wienzeile St. (design by Otto Wagner, 1898-1899) in Vienna [Il. 1-2]; at 15, Krasieńskiego Av. (design by Apolinary Pezdański, 1907-08) and 31, Dietla St. (design by Benjamin Torbe, 1908) in Krakow [Wallis M., 1984]. We can also see a resemblance in decorations on the elevations of Postsparkassenamt in Vienna (design by Otto Wagner, 1903-12); town house located at 40, Neustiftgasse St. (design by Otto Wagner, 1909-1912) and town house at 4, Rakowicka St. (design by Antoni Dostal, Aleksander Biborski, 1910-11) in Krakow. Architects used there the similar multiplication of decorations in fields between the windows of the highest storey, which imitated capitals and cornices. They also designed the round-shape motifs and square bumps.



Ill. 1. Town house located at 38, Linke Wienzeile St.
(design by Otto Wagner, 1898-1899), Vienna
(photo by B. Makowska, 2013)



Ill. 2. Town house located at 38, Linke Wienzeile St.
(design by Otto Wagner, 1898-1899), Vienna
(photo by B. Makowska, 2013)

Similar decorative motifs were also designed on elevations of the town houses located at 3, Köstlergasse St. (design by Otto Wagner, 1898-1899) in Vienna; 30, Długa St. and 30, Krupnicza St. in Krakow. An analogous manner of composition of the façade (so-called the “floating” façade) was visible at town house so-called Majolikahaus at 40, Linke Wienzeile St. (design by Otto Wagner, 1898) in Vienna and 15, Krasińskiego St. in Krakow [Johnston R., 2007]. Similar decorations in form of circles with vertical slats were designed for crowning pilasters at the town houses located at 40, Linke Wienzeile St. in Vienna and 30, Długa St. in Krakow. Women's heads (often with wheels, squares and slats) – a typical motif of Art Nouveau – appeared on the elevations of the town houses in Vienna at: 3, Mohsgasse (design by Moritz O. Kuntschink, 1903/1904) [Il. 3-4]; 38, Linke Wienzeile St. (design by Otto Wagner, 1898-1899); 10, Königseggasse St. (design by Wilhelm Stiassny, 1903-1905); 125, Währinger Strasse St. (design by Hans Dworak, 1902) and 3, Mohsgasse St. (design by Moritz O. Kuntschink, 1903-1904). Similar motifs were designed on elevations of Krakow town house at 3, Grabowskiego St. (design by Benjamin Torbe, 1905-06); 57 Długa St. (design by Aleksander Biborski, 1906-1907); 30, Wielopole St. (design by Aleksander Biborski, 1910); 3, Krupnicza St. (design by Benjamin Torbe, 1906-07); 26, Lubicz St. (design by Benjamin Torbe, 1909) and 30, Piłsudskiego St. (design by Benjamin Torbe, 1905). Architects from this period have often used plant and zoomorphic decorative motifs. The example was a frog on the elevation of the house at 33, Lendkai St. in Graz and 1, Retoryka St. (design by Teodor Talowski, 1889-90) in Krakow. Another example was an owl on elevations of houses located at 21, Krasińskiego St. (design by Roman Bandurski, 1907) in Krakow; 31, Lendkai St. in Graz and on the Pavilion of Secession in Vienna. There were also many resemblances in details of the buildings (windows, portals etc.).



Ill. 3. Town house located at 3, Mohsgasse (design by Moritz O. Kuntschink, 1903/1904), Vienna

(photo by B. Makowska, 2013)



Ill. 4. Town house located at 3, Mohsgasse (design by Moritz O. Kuntschink, 1903/1904), Vienna

(photo by B. Makowska, 2013)

Many interesting town houses from the turn of the 20th century were located in other Austrian cities e.g. in Graz at: 64, Pestalozzistraße St. with the eclectic and Art Nouveau decorations (a woman's head); 12, Liebiggasse St. (a woman's head and a motif of circle with three vertical slats); 17, Leitnergasse St. (geometrical divisions of the elevation, simplified plant motifs, wheels and slats, wavy line allocating under the ground floor); 152, Steyregasse St. (plant decoration, oval frames of windows, pseudo-pilasters with heads used as capitals, textured plaster); 12, Seebachergasse St. (extended portal crowned with the head) and 11, Giesplatz/ Zweiglasse St. (a woman's head, crowning frieze with chestnut motifs). Architects designed also animal decorations (a lion, an eagle, an owl, a spider, a peacock, a donkey etc.) on elevations of town houses in Krakow. Apart from their symbolic meaning, these motifs helped to distinguish houses from one another and to provide them with unique features. Architects drew inspirations from folk art and made direct use of patriotic symbols, such as emblems or insignia, thereby continuing characteristic cultural traditions of that region in a new form.

The Parisian influence on Krakow Town Houses

Parisian town houses from the turn of the 20th century had a similar size and height; they often had axially composed windows on every storey [Boudon F., Chastel A., Couzy H., Hamon F., 1977]. Houses were more homogeneous than Krakow buildings. Their characteristic features were usually uniform elevations made of similar materials and bright colors, withdrawing the last storey (mansard roof with big dormer windows), big French windows (often on the first floor), balconies with metal or cast-iron balustrades conducted by entire width of the elevations (most often on the first and the last storey) and ornate portals. There were many town houses with richly decorated portals. The examples were houses located at 134, rue de Grenelle (design by Jules Lavirotte, 1903) and Castel Béranger (design by Hector Guimard, 1897-1898) located at 14, rue de la Fontaine. The portal and decorative motifs used there had analogies in house at 23, Krasieńskiego St. in Krakow.

Urban situation in Paris created more favorable conditions for town houses after Georges Haussmann's reconstruction (1852-1870). Flats located near wide boulevards were predominantly aired and sunny. However, there were some height town houses with somber, wheel shape backyard [Chemetov P., Marrey B., 1980]. At the turn of the 20th century they had often six- to seven-storey. Elevations of houses had mainly the width up to 20 meters and the height up to 20 meters (after the regulation in 1902 the height took to 22 meters) and withdrawn of the residential part on the last storey had 5 meters (after the regulation in 1902 withdrawn took to 6 meters). The frontage of Parisian town houses was mainly more uniform than in Krakow. Here the houses were much lower, they had a various height (often between three-storey to five-storey, rarely two-storeys). They were depending on building regulations adapting them to the width of streets. French architecture from this period referred to native Rococo and the Baroque, Krakow architecture among others referred to Renaissance and the Baroque.

Houses were often located on corner building plots with the sharp angle, arising from the radial arrangement of Parisian squares. Cut corner of town houses were characteristic for Haussmann's reconstruction. There were also many corner building plots in Krakow, but they didn't have so sharp angles. Flats in Paris have usually representative character with the huge stairwells, which have often had an oval or a fan shape [Krassowski W., 2007]. The fan shape stairs were rarer in Krakow town houses, they were designed among others in the town houses located at 11, Zyblikiewicza St. (design by Eugeniusz Ronka, 1908-09) and 8, Kremerowska St. (design by Ludwik Gutman, 1912). Usually shops were located on the ground floor (or on two of the lowest floors) in Parisian town houses located on commercial streets. In Krakow shops were designed only on the ground floor. A room for a doorkeeper was also located on the ground floor. Mansard roofs characteristic for French architecture were designed in Krakow, but more rarely than in Paris e.g. the town house at 1, Basztowa 1 St. (design by Józef Pakies,

Wacław Krzyżanowski, 1908-10); 12, Kremerowska St. (design by Władysław Grabowski, 1911); 1, Studencka St. (design by Teodor Hoffmann, 1910-12) and 39, Karmelicka St. (design by Jan Zawiejski, 1914-15). Information about the date of building of the house and its designer was very often put on the elevations. Similar examples, inspired by French architecture, were designed in Krakow e.g. house located at 15, Zwierzyniecka St. (design by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, 1912) and 16, Garncarska St. (design by Karol Zaremba, 1895-98).

A light color plaster and sandstone were mainly used on elevation of Parisian town houses which were combined with colorful brick, ceramics, mosaics and iron elements (balustrades, anchors, gratings, fitting of door and gates). The elevations of Krakow town houses, more diversified, were also decorated with metal anchors, sculptures and decorations inspired by plant and zoomorphic motifs (a dragon, an owl, a spider etc.). Modern structures and materials were frequently applied in Paris (among others cast-iron abutments, reinforced concrete skeleton, as well as glass small roofs above an entry or a balcony). The examples were town houses with the reinforced concrete at 25 bis, rue Franklin (design by Auguste Perret, 1902-1903) and 26, rue Vavin (design by Henri Sauvage, 1912-13). Krakow was less open to technical novelties.

Characteristic withdrawing of building line of Krakow town houses with little front gardens was inspired by Eugène Hénard's boulevards *à redans* (1903) [Hénard E., 1903]. Withdrawing of the walls of the buildings was usually about 3-5 meters with regard to the building line. It was most often used on the north side, what improved conditions of the solar exposure and airing in the interiors of the houses e.g. at 3, Bonerowska St. (design by Zygmunt Prokiesz, 1923); 5, Bonerowska St. (design by Henryk Lamensdorf, 1910); 7-9, Bonerowska St. (design by Henryk Lamensdorf, 1909); 8 Kremerowska St. (design by Ludwik Gutman, 1912); 14, Kremerowska St. (design by Henryk Lamensdorf, 1911); 9, Szlak St. (design by Henryk Lamensdorf, 1909) and 27, Lubomirski St. (design by Kazimierz Hroboni, 1912).

Some outstanding Parisian examples constituted the source of inspiration for Krakow houses from that period. One of them was six-storey town house at 67, Boulevard Raspail (*Bon Courage*) (design by Léon Tossier, 1913). It had a dynamically designed elevation with the oval bay windows [II. 5-6]. Similar bay windows above the entering were also designed in Krakow e.g. at 1, Basztowa St. (design by Józef Pakies, Wacław Krzyżanowski, 1908-10). Louis Henri Bouchard was an author of sculptures on the portal and the copestone of the *Bon Courage* house. Two last floors were partly made from colorful brick and mosaic.



Ill. 5. The *Bon Courage* house located at 67, Boulevard Raspail (design by Léon Tissier, 1913), Paris (photo by B. Makowska, 2014)



Ill. 6 The *Bon Courage* house located at 67, Boulevard Raspail (design by Léon Tissier, 1913), Paris (photo by B. Makowska, 2014)

Very interesting plant motifs were used (passion flower, pine and ginkgo) in the decorations of the walls and the balconies of the town house located at 48, Boulevard Raspail (design by Louis Sorel, 1912). Zoomorphic motifs also appeared on elevations of Parisian town houses from the turn of the 20th century. The example was the door handle in a lizards' form on the front door at 9, rue Le Tasse (design by Charles Plumet, 1904); decoration of the door at 151, rue de Grenelle (design by Jules Lavirotte, 1898) and at 29, Avenue Rapp (design by Jules Lavirotte, 1901). The ceramic forms () and richly decorated portal with peacock's motifs were also decorated this house. The author of the sculptures was Jean-Baptiste Larrive and the author of ceramics was Alexandre Bigot. The peacock's motif appeared in Krakow at house located at 36, Piłsudskiego St. (design by Stanisław Odrzywolski, 1907-08).

The outstanding example was also Castel Béranger located at 14, rue de la Fontaine in Paris (design by Hector Guimard, 1894-1898). It received the first award for the most beautiful facade in 1898 in the competition organized by magazine *Le Figaro*. Guimard designed all elements in this cohesive composition of the building (among others the balconies, the bay windows, the fountain in the courtyard, the fence and insides – furniture, carpets, stained glass, door handles). Idea of unity of arts, erasing the border between them and creating the homogeneous integrity was visible in this house [II. 7-8]. The similar examples of the town houses with homogenous details and decorations were located at 3, Na Groblach Sq. (design by Karol Tichy, 1910-12) and 30, Krupnicza St. (design by Kazimierz Zieliński, 1906) in Krakow. The various materials were used in the Castel Béranger house – brick, stone (limestone and flintstone), steel structure and iron green painted decorations (among others the frames of windows

and the balconies). Characteristic decoration was a sea horse. The similar decorative motif appeared on elevation of town house located at 23, Krasieńskiego Av. (design by Ludwik Wojtyczko, 1908) in Krakow.



Ill. 7. The Castel Béranger house located at 14, rue de la Fontaine (design by Hector Guimard, 1894-1898), Paris (photo by B. Makowska, 2014)



Ill. 8. The Castel Béranger house located at 14, rue de la Fontaine (design by Hector Guimard, 1894-1898), Paris (photo by B. Makowska, 2014)

The Berliner influence on Krakow Town Houses

Krakow buildings were also influenced by Berlin architecture (above all Karl Friedrich Schinkel' works of and his successors), especially after the middle of the 19th century. A strict discipline in forming the blocks combined with delicate and refined details were a characteristic feature of architecture designed by Schinkel [Klimala K., 2002]. Typical for it were also: legible cubical main part, horizontal and vertical contrasts underlined on flat formed facade, richness of details (niches, aedicule, colonnades, arcade porticos) and tectonics, good and proven proportion, using basic geometrical blocks creating the space and delicate relief of decoration [Börsch-Supan E., 1977]. The main part of the building depending on it character was shaped as uniform, cubical and compact, or as free and additive. It combined the simplicity and usefulness. Thinner walls of Berliner town houses supported three-dimensionality of the buildings [Roguska J., 1979]. It was the result of morphologies of the plans, rather than effect of outward variety and decorations. The Berliner school adopted the transitive way "between curt concision of Parisian houses and the exaggerated richness of Viennese ones" [Berlin und seine Bauten, 1877]. The large blocs of the buildings were formed in a solid line in Berlin, with the possibility of parallel withdrawing.

The characteristic type so-called the Berliner town house was created in seventies of the 19th century (period of *Gründerjahre*) which affected analogous forms in other European cities [Krassowski W., 2007; Geist J.F. Kürvers K., 1984; Posener, J., 1979]. It was a four- or five-floors building with high wings of annexes (mainly two). It had a two tracts form with a half-tract corridor which separates the rooms. The annexes were one tract and had their own stairwells. Usually two big flats at the front and two small ones in the back side of annexes were located on each floor. The kitchens and the bathrooms belonging to the front flats were also designed in the annexes. A connecting so-called Berliner room (*Berliner Zimmer*) was designed between the front house and the annexes, which mainly served as a dining room.

There are many examples of Krakow town houses inspired by Berlin plans in the modified form only with one annex, as well as less numerous with two annexes (typical plan in Berlin). (among others: town houses located at 9, Piłsudskiego St.; 3, Na Groblach Sq.; 36, Piłsudskiego St. and 14, Garncarska St.). Krakow houses were characterized by freedom of composition, dynamics (impression of the movement upwards), plasticity and richness of the forms. German houses were usually much more monotonous, located on regularly designed streets. According to Moritz Jaffé Poles had a greater sensitivity of "the form and its expression" than Germans [Jaffé M., 1909]. Reforming assumptions propagated by German magazines and books also affected Krakow residential buildings [Gessner A., 1909].

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be formulated after conducted research:

- Krakow town houses dating from the turn of the 20th century combine a local tradition with international tendencies popularized in major cities then (i.a. Vienna, Paris, Berlin). In spite of many similarities and analogies to European cities (among others applying similar materials and decorative motifs – plant, zoomorphic, women's heads), they had largely different character [Makowska B., 2011]. Their elevations had intermediate forms between curt concision of Parisian houses and predominantly the exaggerated richness of Viennese ones (and some of Parisian houses). Rationality and adaptation to local conditioning characterized them, but all the same they had certain analogies for examples in Vienna, Paris and Berlin.
- There were rare examples of applying modern structures and materials in Krakow such as cast-iron abutments, reinforced concrete skeleton and glass small roofs.
- Certain universal characteristics, typical for the structures which were repeated in other major cities (i.a. Vienna, Paris, Berlin), can be noted in Krakow town houses; however, at the same time, local and historical tradition popularized some atypical and innovative solutions.
- The residential buildings in Krakow were more varied than in Vienna, Paris and Berlin. They were located on unique quarters and irregular plots what affected diversity of their elevations and plans. Town houses in Krakow weren't high and didn't have homogeneously arrangement of the facades. In Paris and Vienna the buildings arrangement was normally more regular. A type of the high-rise building with monumental and united character was popular here. There were applied a system of join a few separate buildings into a group constituting the whole.
- Architectural elements were different in France regions than in Krakow – for example town houses had other forms of the roofs (high, mansard roofs and turrets) and they were made of different materials (mainly in local stone). Plaster and brick were common used in Krakow (stone

mainly stressed more important details) from economic and practical reasons. Architects were referring here to local traditions. They were seeking and creating a national character of architecture, emphasizing regional tendencies.

- Town houses were connected with the history of cities, rooted in the tradition of local images and techniques. Architects referred to local motifs and materials, they tried to keep regional character (shapes of roofs, rhythms, character of details) and scale of the buildings. They were seeking for new materials and forms and they were transformed earlier motifs to new ones. A care of preserving the continuity of tradition was visible in described cities.

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