

**Beata Elżbieta Makowska\*, Anna Kulig\*\***

***Krakow-based outstanding architects' houses  
from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century:  
Analysis of original corner townhouses  
from a historical and contemporary perspective***

***Abstract***

This paper discusses Krakow townhouses from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, designed by Teodor Talowski, Władysław Ekielski and Jan Zawiejski. These projects, which were their own homes, gave them an opportunity for creative freedom, which resulted in original and outstanding forms. The innovative and non-schematic solutions of the townhouses were also conveyed by their corner location on irregular plots of land with a particular spatial configuration (the concentric-radial arrangement of Krakow) and their location on major streets. In developing the designs, it was important for the architects to take into account the existing context, as well as to ensure contact with nature improving the quality of life for the residents ("green façades", loggias, front gardens).

We analysed the townhouses in detail – their façades, plan layout, construction, and use – aiming to answer questions about how they are used, evaluated, and adapted today. This study was based on historical and photographic documentation of the townhouses, in situ research, analysis of available academic and other studies, including space valorisation studies and facility cards.

The study concluded that the architects' own corner houses represent distinctive formal solutions that have not lost their artistic and utilitarian value. The analysis of forms with recognisable details in the urban layout of the city from a contemporary perspective can be seen as important, as they are a valuable architectural heritage that should be protected and popularised.

**Key words:** architecture of Krakow, corner house, architectural detail

***Introduction***

Krakow's architectural heritage and wealth of forms from different eras make it a city with a distinct identity, one that is recognisable both nationally and globally. The historic townhouses and tenements located in the area between the first and second ring roads are an important part of its structure. The first ring road is formed by a series of streets that encircle the Old Town along Planty Park, which was built on the site of the city's former defensive walls. The second ring road consists of, among

other things, Krasińskiego, Słowackiego and Mickiewicza avenues. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a number of interesting houses were built in the area along the street frontages. Particularly noteworthy, however, are the corner forms with unusual solutions, among them houses designed by architects for themselves. The local irregular and non-modular plots favoured bespoke, original solutions and motivated the architects to creative exploration that dealt away with pre-established patterns.

The subject of this paper covers the most interesting Krakow houses of architects Teodor Talowski, Władysław Ekielski and Jan Zawiejski. It presents their characteristics and also shows them in the wider context of six other corner townhouses from the period in question. The forms selected were analysed from a contemporary perspective – as still functioning townhouses located in a city with a rich

\* ORCID: 0000-0002-1221-9216. Faculty of Architecture, Cracow University of Technology, Poland, e-mail: beata.makowska@pk.edu.pl

\*\* ORCID: 0000-0003-2845-0145. Faculty of Architecture, Cracow University of Technology, Poland.

cultural heritage. This study set out to answer questions such as: what condition the houses are in today, whether the original residential use had changed (adaptive reuse as services, offices, etc.), and whether the townhouses were renovated. The paper also analyses the formal relationships of the townhouses in question to the existing historical context. An analysis of the tenements according to patterns proposed by Christopher Alexander (1977) was carried out<sup>1</sup>.

The period in which the townhouses in question were built was a time of significant change in Krakow's urban planning. A change in the character of the city's development<sup>2</sup> occurred around 1870 (Purchla 1990, 7, 16, 45). In 1866, when the city gained autonomy, the delineation of new streets and the development of those that emerged radially from the Market Square began. The year 1872 saw the start of the implementation of Józef Dietl's plan for the city's urban layout. It revitalised housing development in the area outside Planty Park. In the years 1891–1900, during a period of intense building activity when the Krakow Fortress was being expanded, the area between the first and second ring roads was filled with townhouses and tenements. This also contributed to the significant development of crafts, trade, industry and transport. In the years 1860–1910, the city's population grew enormously from 50,000 to 152,000<sup>3</sup> (Tablice historyczne 1996, 359). This prosperity was interrupted by the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

As mentioned, the townhouses under study were built in the area of Krakow between the first and second ring roads. This area, with its distinctive and complex layout, had a significant influence on their form. The irregular plots specifically determined the forms of the corner townhouses, located on the more important streets, which were former routes leading to the city gates. The concentric-radial layout of the streets resulted in city blocks of varying size and shape (triangular, polygonal, rectangular). The diagonally diverging streets, perpendicularly intersected, contributed to the creation of numerous corners with different opening angles<sup>4</sup> (Purchla 1990, 34). The layout of transport routes, developed in a long historical process, determined the frontage development of 2-, 3-, 4- and 5-storey townhouses<sup>5</sup>.

The block, which was created by intersecting the space with streets was a secondary element to the originally created street. Development in the area adopted the model of an irregular, fine-grained positive residential fabric, which creates hollow spaces (streets and squares bounded

by frontages), as opposed to a negative fabric built of detached structures (Fryszak 1997, 59). This development was interspersed with monastery gardens and small gardens next to townhouses<sup>6</sup> (Miasta-ogrody 1912, 82, 83). Contact with nature that improved the quality of life for residents was important in the completed projects. This quality was provided by loggias, viewing terraces, front gardens or "green façades" with climbing plants. Narrow streets influenced the development of relatively low-rise buildings regulated by building regulations. Tenements and townhouses were built between the first and second ring roads and had a dominant role in the development of this area of the city.

### State of research

In the available literature, the authors found many studies on the architectural heritage of Krakow (Łoza 1954; Demel 1957; Krakowski 1971; Purchla 1990; Bałus 1991; Bialkiewicz 1994; Makowska 2014), including tenements and townhouses. The work of the architects discussed in this paper was documented as follows:

- Teodor Talowski's designs by, e.g., Beiersdorf (1973), Samek (1985) and Bałus (1994),
- Władysław Ekielski's designs by, e.g., Grajewski (1991, 109–124),
- designs by Jan Zawiejski, documented by, e.g., Purchla (1986).

Archival photographs of Krakow townhouses and tenements are presented in several publications (Broniowska, Tabkowski 2019; Gaczol, Kwiatkowska 2019; Grzechnik-Correale 2017), and their original design documents are stored at the National Archives in Krakow.

### Methods

The paper is a continuation of research conducted in the years 2004–2006<sup>7</sup>. The corner townhouses of architects were subjected to another analysis in 2024, from a contemporary perspective. The photos from 2004 and 2024 (after the renovations) were juxtaposed with surviving archive photos (from the photographic studio of Ignacy Krieger and Antoni Pawlikowski) from the period when the townhouses were built, in the years 1887–1910.

In the first stage of the study, a query of the National Archives in Krakow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie – ANK) was made and data taken from academic publications including past<sup>8</sup> and contemporary studies were analysed. A query was then carried out in the Archives of the Municipal Conservator of Monuments, where all available

<sup>1</sup> Alexander and colleagues described the positive patterns that make buildings places full of life.

<sup>2</sup> At the end of the 1860s, Krakow gradually transformed from a still-medieval city into a modern urban organism with new buildings with metropolitan features.

<sup>3</sup> In comparison, the population of Warsaw increased during this period from 158,000 to 781,000, of Wrocław from 146,000 to 512,000, of Łódź from 40,000 to 408,000, of Poznań from 51,000 to 157,000, and of Szczecin from 64,000 to 232,000.

<sup>4</sup> Corner townhouses accounted for 18.3% of the development.

<sup>5</sup> In the past, they linked the charter-period city with the wider region and were restructured in the plans for the beautification of the Republic of Krakow (1815–1846), later in the plan for the regulation of Greater Krakow 1910.

<sup>6</sup> The alternation of built-up and green areas was pointed out by Ebenezer Howard in 1912, who called Krakow "a garden-city of natural development" (Miasta-ogrody 1912).

<sup>7</sup> Research project entitled *Decoration of Krakow tenements from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries – the need to protect cultural values of architecture*, project no: 1547/T07/2004/27, funded by the Ministry of Science and Information Technology, Department of Research, sole contractor: Beata Makowska.

<sup>8</sup> Period trade journals proved an important source of information, including *Architekt*.

unpublished works on the townhouses in question were analysed, allowing, among other things, for the determination of the date of the renovations and the listing of the buildings on the Register of Monuments. The archive materials allowed copies of the original plans (floor plans, elevation drawings) to be made, the procurement and verification of data on the years of construction of the buildings, their authors, the history of the buildings and their remodels. This made it possible to verify whether the design data had been realised and to what extent it had been preserved<sup>9</sup>, and to identify the extent the City Building Authority in Krakow interfered with the form of the townhouses and the visual elements of their façades. Copies of the floor plans also made it possible to analyse the evolution of the interiors<sup>10</sup>. Illustrations by Ignacy Krieger and his descendants, as well as those by Antoni Pawlikowski, held in the collections of the Iconography Studio of the Historical Museum of the City of Krakow (Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa – MHK) and the National Archives, and published in specialist journals, were also an important source of information. These, combined with in situ research, made it possible to observe the changes that had taken place in the façades of the townhouses and in their vicinity, and to reconstruct decorations that no longer exist<sup>11</sup>.

### *Characteristics of the architects' corner townhouses under study*

Teodor Talowski (1857–1910) was a prominent architect of the period and created his own original language of forms that bordered on historical revival, Art Nouveau and early Modernism. He displayed great imagination and freedom in shaping the spatial layouts of townhouses, and those he had designed often had asymmetrical façade layouts with distinctive original detail. The diverse materials used on the façades – bricks with varied patterns, roughly cut stone, plaster and decorative mosaics, sentences, emblems – created their extraordinary picturesqueness. As Zbigniew Beiersdorf wrote, Talowski's façades are characterised by [...] *symbolism of mood: the poetics of the buildings' picturesque, patinated and mysterious façades evoke reflections on the passing of time* (1973, 199). The façades of the townhouses at 35 Karmelicka Street and 1 Retoryka Street were covered with vegetation, which climbed up them via carefully delineated channels. Talowski can be seen as a forerunner of "green" façades that are designed today and have a positive contribution to urban ecology. Talowski's designs displayed distinct free forms and asymmetric layouts. Irregularity is also evident on the façades with windows of different shapes and sizes. The interiors were also unusual for the time – there were sometimes two-storey rooms. In the building at 9 Retoryka Street, the architect designed only one staircase with a separate entrance to the kitchen, and a gazebo on the garden side that allowed con-

tact with nature. This was a precursor to common patterns. According to the journal *Architekt*, within Talowski there awakened [...] *an opposition against the schematic form of the contemporary house, which is expressed in the houses at 1 Retoryka Street (as a two-storey building), 2 and 5 Karmelicka Street ("under the spider")*. In the forms used here, the artist sometimes goes beyond the template, and draws so firmly and confidently that he makes you recognise his talent, expressing himself boldly and with a great sense of the line (W.E. 1910, 83). Talowski can also be regarded as a precursor to a more loose variation in the height of townhouses and their more three-dimensional design. In his designs of townhouses, the relationship between elevations and plans is clear, achieved through structural and decorative means. The articulation of the masses took into account the differences in the use of each room (1 Retoryka Street). Similarly, the placement and design of window and door apertures was driven by the use of the rooms in the interior (9 Retoryka Street). The details and decorations, as well as the materials used, accentuated the articulated forms. The composition of the façade of the building at 35 Karmelicka Street, with the continuation of the gable line carried out in the plane of its wall, can be considered innovative. Talowski's individuality contributed to the popularisation of a more loose way of building and had an impact on more than just the Polish circles. Alongside the originality in the approach to house designs, it was important for Talowski that they harmonised with the urban context. The shape of the gables on the façade of the building at 1 Retoryka Street engaged in a dialogue with the gable of the building at No. 3 and the convent of the Order of the Sisters of the Servants of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, while the gable of the building at 35 Karmelicka Street interacted with the gable of the neighbouring building on the side of Batorego Street, similarly, the brick gables "conversed" with the rustications and spheres placed on the façade next door.

Władysław Ekielski (1855–1927), whose designs were characterised by a high level of workmanship using the best materials, was also an outstanding architect during this period. He is the designer of the building at 14 Studencka Street (ANK, ABM, Studencka 14, fsc. 921), which references the style of the Viennese school of Heinrich von Ferstl, from his late period. The layout of the floor plan is characterised by spatial economy and functionality of the circulation links, with corridor connections designed in parallel rooms in an enfilade. The example discussed in this paper is Ekielski's own house on the corner of 40 Piłsudskiego Street / 25 Krasieńskiego Avenue, which heralded the new 20<sup>th</sup> century and when it was built aroused much controversy<sup>12</sup>. This design is characterised by an innovative floor plan (Purchla 1986, 289), a modern layout of forms (a cut-out form with a cylindrical tower in the corner) that

<sup>9</sup> The Ekielski house, for example, originally had a different façade.

<sup>10</sup> Some plans that had not been preserved in the National Archives were found in trade journals.

<sup>11</sup> For example, the decorations of the building at 40 Piłsudskiego / 25 Krasieńskiego Avenue that is documented in this article.

<sup>12</sup> Feliks Chwalibóg wrote about the house as follows: *Meanwhile, Wolska Street is a sewer of aborted fetuses of architecture, and the monstrosity hatched at its mouth has few equals in Krakow. This tower-like cylinder; it is not known whether it serves as a reservoir for the water of the peripheral railway with which it is in contact, or whether it is the boiler of a "grand laundry" or a private crematorium* (Chwalibóg 1908, 14).

anticipates later trends. At the same time, it has façades with historical revival and modernised forms. The motifs of the Wawel Renaissance are evident in it: windows, deep eaves, a jug, folk-art-inspired motifs. The comfort of the flats was enhanced by the front garden and loggias (formerly decorated with painterly decoration) providing contact with the green areas in the neighbourhood, as did the small tower terrace accessible from the top floor flat<sup>13</sup>. The satisfaction of the users' needs – recreation and contact with nature – used in this project was later developed by Functionalists in the form of a flat roof that acts as a terrace. In accordance with then-modern hygienic requirements, the bathrooms accessible from the flats' entry halls were illuminated and ventilated via windows located in the auxiliary staircase.

The third artist discussed is Jan Zawiejski (1854–1922), who evolved from historical revival to Modernism (1920s Modernism). Initially, he was a promoter of the *Alt-deutscher Stil* popular in 1880s Berlin. On the other hand, his Turnau House (1899–1890) located at the corner of 2 Siemiradzkiego Street / 28 Łobzowska Street is a case of Northern Mannerism. The building discussed in this paper and located at the corner of 11 Łobzowska Street / 2 Biskupia Street is a forerunner of later Modernist tendencies. On its façades, a corner bay and windows with large expanses of glazing were designed to allow users to connect with nature. On the courtyard side, the green area was connected to the extensive garden next to the Church of St. Francis de Sales. On the street side, trees were growing on a small green belt, and the garden square at Biskupi Square was also visible. In another house designed by this architect at 45 Karmelicka Street, the layout of the structure and the division of the walls in the interior largely correspond to the structural weave of the façade composition, in line with the latest trends. Zawiejski's townhouses established a dialogue with neighbouring buildings, maintaining a similar scale, repeating the rhythms, directions and characteristic lines of the façade<sup>14</sup>.

*Teodor Talowski's own house on the corner  
of 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street*

The “Under the Spider” tenement house is located on an irregular plot at the intersection of Karmelicka and Batorego Streets. It was designed and built between 1887 and 1890 by Teodor Talowski (Figs. 1, 2). The design is slightly different from the completed version – the bay window had a different form<sup>15</sup>. The wing on the side of Karmelicka Street is double-arched and has an asymmetrically designed vestibule in the front bay, the other wing on the side of Batorego Street is single- and double-arched with a staircase. The building is four-storey and has five-axis front façades on both sides (Danilczyk, Kasprzyk 2005,

44, 45; Danilczyk et al. 2004, 177, 178). The façades have a decorative surface made of brick and stone, with ceramic and plaster details. The single-axis corner of the building is emphasised by a small turret. Both façades are crowned with gables, the one on the side of Karmelicka Street is more elaborate and asymmetrical. It is decorated with a pinnacle with an owl's head, a bird perched on a ball and supported on a plinth (alluding to the mascarons designed for the Cloth Hall by Matejko), the date “1889”, a sundial and a decorative motif of a spider weaving a web, an analogy to the architect and his work. According to Bałus, the symbolism of the spider and the sundial on the façade is linked to time and transience (1994, 215–238). The sculpture was made by Władysław Chrośnikiewicz. The gable line is continued on the right by two stone buttresses and accentuated on the left by a dragon sculpture. Next to it is an inscription: “Fecit. Theodorus Talowski”. Above the entrance portal is a small bay window with a decorative semi-circular pediment and pilasters at the corners, featuring floral motifs on the capitals. The bottom of the bay window features a winged disc motif inspired by Egyptian art. An inscription was placed above the bay window: “Si Deus nobiscum, quis contra nos”<sup>16</sup>. The display window and shop portal are crowned by double segmental arches, one of one colour and the other made of alternating white and red bricks. The capitals of the shop portal are decorated with floral motifs. The crowning cornice and the cornice on the bay window were decorated with oculi. On the side of Batorego Street, the architect designed architectural forms relating to the Krakow Renaissance (motifs modelled on the attic of the Cloth Hall) and Gothic (defensive architecture). Bricks were carefully selected for the façade, imitating the archaic nature of the masonry and its layering. It is also decorated with metal anchors of varying forms and fragments of cannonballs. Special channels were delineated in the façade of the house through which wild vine can grow. This building was entered into the Register of Monuments on 17 May 1968 (A-157).

*Władysław Ekielski's house on the corner  
of 40 Piłsudskiego Street / 25 Krasińskiego Street*

This four-storey building was designed in the years 1898–1899 by Władysław Ekielski (Fig. 3). It has a two-bay layout with an inter-bay corridor (Danilczyk, Kasprzyk 2005, 318, 319; Sudacka 1979). Its floor plan is 16 m deep (from Piłsudskiego Street) and 15.2 m (from Krasińskiego Avenue), and is symmetrical in relation to the corner axis with a circular room, semi-circular staircase and spacious halls<sup>17</sup>. The Ekielski house stands out with its original details and decorations. The façade bears the inscription: “I did not build this for You, so You build for Yourself as well”. The frontage is set back at the corner, with a small

<sup>13</sup> The archive photo shows plants here (another storey was added later).

<sup>14</sup> Not all townhouses were appropriate in scale, e.g., the Ohrenstein House at the corner of 27 Stradom Street / 42 Dietla Street (designed by Jan Zawiejski, 1911–1913) was considerably larger than its neighbours.

<sup>15</sup> ANK, sign. ABM, 35 Karmelicka Street, photo 361.

<sup>16</sup> The same quotation can be found on the portal of the gate leading to the courtyard of Wawel Castle.

<sup>17</sup> It was built in stages – first as a two-storey building with cellars in 1899, then the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor was added, in 1903 the previously uninhabited part was included, and the caretaker's flat was also enlarged (ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 40, fsc. 447).



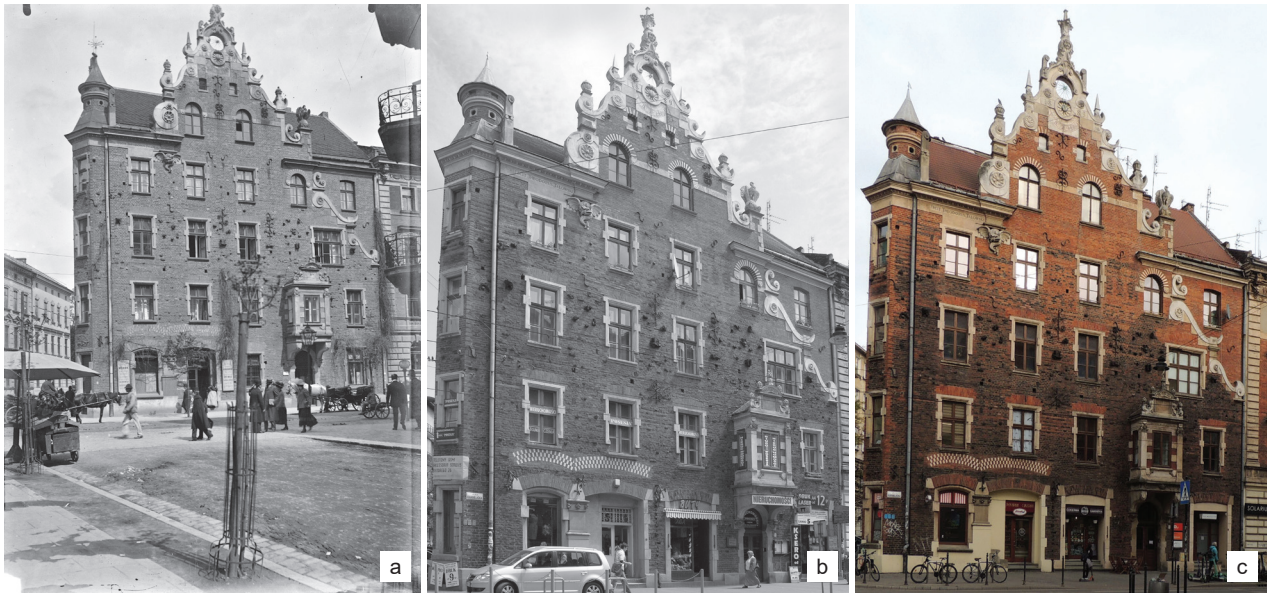


Fig. 1. Krakow, townhouse at 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street (design by T. Talowski, 1887–1890): a) archive photograph, 1920s (source: MHK collections invent. no. MHK-8444/N/2, photo by unknown author), b) 2004, c) 2024 (photo by B. Makowska)

II. 1. Kraków, kamienica przy ul. Karmelickiej 35 / Batorego 28 (proj. T. Talowski, 1887–1890): a) zdjęcie archiwalne, lata 20. XX w. (źródło: zbiory MHK nr invent. MHK-8444/N/2, autor niezany), b) 2004, c) 2024 (fot. B. Makowska)

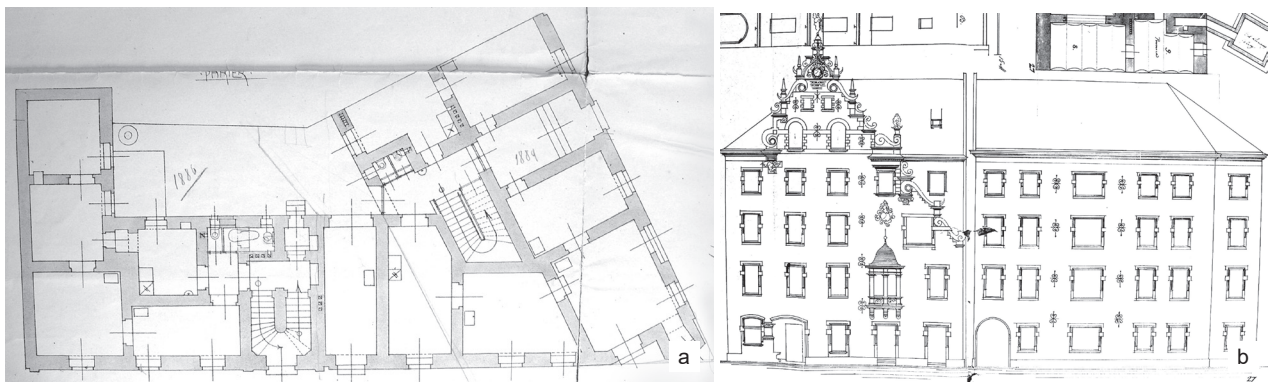


Fig. 2. Krakow, townhouse at 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street (design by T. Talowski, 1887–1890): a) floor plan, b) façade (source: ANK, ABM Karmelicka 35, fsc. 361)

II. 2. Kraków, kamienica przy ul. Karmelickiej 35 / Batorego 28 (proj. T. Talowski, 1887–1890): a) rzut parteru, b) elewacja (źródło: ANK, ABM Karmelicka 35, fsc. 361)

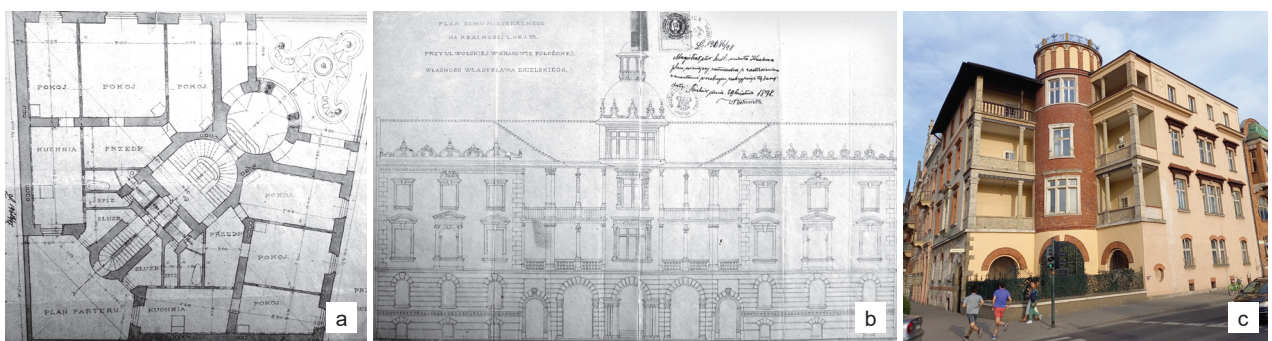


Fig. 3. Kraków, townhouse at 40 Piłsudskiego Street / 25 Krasieńskiego Street (designed by W. Ekielski, 1898–1899): a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 40, fsc. 447), b) façade (source: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 40, fsc. 447), c) photograph from 2024 (photo by B. Makowska)

II. 3. Kraków, kamienica przy ul. Piłsudskiego 40 / Krasieńskiego 25 (proj. W. Ekielski, 1898–1899): a) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 40, fsc. 447), b) elewacja (źródło: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 40, fsc. 447), c) zdjęcie z 2024 (fot. B. Makowska)





Fig. 4. Kraków, townhouse at 11 Łobzowska Street / 2 Biskupia Street (designed by J. Zawiejski, 1909–1910):  
a) 1920s (photo by A. Pawlikowski, before 1925, source: Jagiellonian University Museum, MUJ-1784-F), b) 2004 (photo by B. Makowska),  
c) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Łobzowska 11, fsc. 535)

Il. 4. Kraków, kamienica przy ul. Łobzowskiej 11 / Biskupiej 2 (proj. J. Zawiejski, 1909–1910):

a) lata 20. XX w. (fot. A. Pawlikowski, przed 1925 r., źródło: Muzeum UJ, MUJ-1784-F), b) 2004 (fot. B. Makowska),  
c) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Łobzowska 11, fsc. 535)

garden planned here. The front façade from Piłsudskiego Street is tri-axial, with the corner axis formed by architrave loggias on pillars and columns. The entrance, in the form of a semicircular closed band with a key, is located in the extreme right axis from Piłsudskiego Street and leads through an arcade. The ground floor is paved with irregular stone slabs and the floors with light glazed brick. The house is [...] *composed almost exclusively of Wawel Renaissance motifs, and forms a picturesque yet deeply rooted example of the historicist tradition* (Fabiański, Purchla 2001, 65). A variety of textures were used on the façade: red brick facing the tower, white glazed cement brick on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors, two-tone stone on the foundation, and a variety of plasters. The façade is also decorated with a mosaic depicting Christ located to the left of the entrance portal. The architect used an extraordinary wealth of forms on the façade (Dom własny 1902, 62, 63; Sprawa budowy 1902, 160). The brick tower is topped with an attic<sup>18</sup>, on each storey the windows are variously shaped (tripartite, bipartite, doubled). Particularly noteworthy is the window on the elevation from Piłsudskiego Street, topped with a full arch with a tympanum with a ram's head<sup>19</sup> (Grajewski 1991, 115). It is flanked by rustic pilasters with capitals decorated with double heads. An inscription was placed above the bay window: "This is where the light from heaven enters, it is to heaven You should look". The window sill is decorated with a medallion with geometric borders and two volutes with heads. The rectangular window located in the second axis on the side of the corner tower is decorated with a bordure with oak and palmette motifs, while the loggias of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors are decorated with pilasters with animal motifs. The arcade is decorated

with a bas-relief depicting an eagle holding a snake in its talons<sup>20</sup>. The stone entrance portal located in the first axis facing the avenue is enclosed by a wrought-iron gate with an inscription: "One year before the 20<sup>th</sup> century of Christ's reign over the world". The windows on the alley side have arched canopies supported by balusters, with studs characteristic of folk carpentry. Their lintels are decorated with white and blue ceramics. There is a circular room in the tower. This building was entered into the Register of Monuments on 11 May 1973 (A-479).

#### *Jan Zawiejski's house on the corner of 11 Łobzowska Street / 2 Biskupia Street*

The four-storey townhouse with basements known as the "Bright House" (Fig. 4), located on a quadrilateral L-shaped plot, was designed and built by Jan Zawiejski between 1909 and 1910<sup>21</sup>. The two-bay townhouse with a corridor-like intermediate bay has a hallway with a short flight of stairs in the third axis from the left. In the rear bay of the same axis and adjacent is a staircase (Danilczyk, Kasprzyk 2005, 47, 48). The composition of the façade, based on a regular rhythm of large windows and ascetically designed risalits, is close to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Modernist tendencies (Fabiański, Purchla 2001, 283, 284). The architectural forms of the façade are [...] *a contemporary travesty of 16<sup>th</sup> century Krakow Renaissance motifs in a Modernist interpretation*<sup>22</sup> (Purchla 1986, 194). On the side of Łobzowska Street, the façade is tri-axial, while on the other side – six-axial. Its chamfered corner is accentuated by a small attic and an oriel window that extends through the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. It is supported by imposts decorated with lion heads and floral motifs.

<sup>18</sup> The decorations of the arcade niches of the tower, depicting scenes of the adoration of Mary and the Child by angels, visible on an archive photograph from around 1900, have not survived.

<sup>19</sup> According to Grzegorz Grajewski, the frieze of the tympanum is modelled on the window of the castle in Baranów.

<sup>20</sup> It is a replica of the decoration of the "Under the White Eagle" townhouse at 45 Main Market Square.

<sup>21</sup> ANK, ABM Łobzowska 11, fsc. 535.

<sup>22</sup> Among others, two-storey rectangular oriel windows, Wawel motifs – prominent eaves with wooden coffers.

Table 1. Analysis of the architects' houses: changes in their form, use, state of preservation and formal relationships with the historical context (elaborated by B. Makowska)

Tabela 1. Analiza domów własnych architektów: zmiany ich formy, funkcji, stan zachowania i związki formalne z kontekstem historycznym (oprac. B. Makowska)

Research question	Talowski's Townhouse house at 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street	Ekielski's Townhouse at 40 Piłsudskiego Street / 25 Krasieńskiego Avenue	Zawiejski's Townhouse at 11 Łobzowska Street / 2 Biskupia Street
Has the façade of the building changed, were there any vertical extensions relative to the original design?	no	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor extension in the 20 <sup>th</sup> century	no
Did the original residential use change? (services, offices, etc.)	other residential, office and retail uses (shops on the ground floor: bakery, patisserie, kiosk)	formerly residential only, now mixed residential and office (law office)	formerly residential (Gestapo headquarters during the war, militia after the war); porcelain shop in 1933; now residential and commercial (Lunch Bar)
Was the townhouse renovated / what is its current condition?	renovation 1927, 1935, after 1990; good	renovation 2002–2024; good	renovation 2005–2013; good
Did the townhouse retain formal relations with the historical context?	yes	yes	yes

The horizontal plane of the bracket is filled with a bas-relief depicting a Jagiellonian eagle with a crown and the letter S on its breast. The vertical articulation of the façade is created by pilasters that flank tall tripartite windows whose heads are decorated with floral motifs. The beams above the windows are decorated with cartouche-framed medallions with the initials “J”, “W”, “M” (initials of the owners' names: Jan, Wanda and Małgorzata) and a house mark formed from the letters “J”, “Z” (Jan Zawiejski). An entrance portal flanked by pilasters with lion heads was designed on the side of Biskupia Street. Its fanlight is enclosed by a segmental arch with a prominent cuspid, most prominent in the top part of the arch. The horizontal divisions on the façade are formed by substantial parapet cornices, a corbelled cornice over the ground floor and a crowning cornice placed under a prominent decorative eave with wooden corbels. Above the eaves, an iron railing mounted on masonry brackets was placed in the likeness of an attic. The extreme axis on the right side of the longer façade is formed by slightly protruding loggias flanked by pilasters with impost decorated with, among other things, oculi. The central loggia ends in a full arch and is filled with a decorative lattice. On the ground floor, the head placed between the arched brackets supporting the loggia has been preserved. This building was entered into the Register of Monuments on 10 March 1975 (A-362).

## Results

### *Analysis of architects' houses from a contemporary perspective – an answer to this study's research questions*

Table 1 presents the answers to the research questions regarding the change in form and use of the townhouses in question, their state of preservation, and their formal

relationship to their historical context. Overall, it should be noted that the form of two townhouses did not change, and only in one of them a third storey was added. Minor changes were made to the form of use of the buildings and their technical condition is good. The houses are well maintained and still in use. As a result, all the townhouses retained formal links with the existing historical context.

### *Analysis of architects' houses according to Christopher Alexander's patterns*

The titular “pattern language” is both a theoretical and practical method of architectural design developed by Alexander and colleagues (Alexander 1977, 18). Its elements are units called patterns. Each pattern describes a problem that arises in the design and use of architectural forms. It also points to the essence of its solution (recommendation) in such a way as to use this solution repeatedly, never repeating the action. Alexander's extensive 1,200-page work contains 253 patterns with short titles. Alexander points to a network of their interrelationships, e.g., pattern no. 110: *Main entrance. Place the main entrance of the building at a point where it can be seen immediately from the main avenues of approach and give it a bold, visible shape which stands out in front of the building* (Alexander 1977, 544). Another example is pattern no. 207, which helps in the selection of materials. He recommends using traditional materials and techniques that have been used for centuries because they are relatively easy to build, accessible, durable, small-scale, adaptable and modifiable: [...] *Use only biodegradable, low energy consuming materials, which are easy to cut and modify on site. For bulk materials we suggest ultra-light-weight 40-60 lbs. concrete and earth-based materials like tamped earth, brick, and tile* (Alexander 1977, 960).

Table 2 shows the titles and numbering of several selected patterns.

Table 2. Analysis of architects' houses according to Christopher Alexander's patterns (elaborated by A. Kulig)  
 Tabela 2. Analiza wybranych cech domów własnych architektów według wzorców Alexandra (oprac. A. Kulig)

	Feature selected for analysis according to Alexander's patterns	Talowski's townhouse	Ekielski's townhouse	Zawiejski's townhouse
1	21. Four-storey limit	3 floors	3 floors	3 floors
2	207. Good materials	mainly brick and stone	various bricks, plaster, stone	brick, plaster, stone cladding
3	232. Roof caps	gables with stone decoration, attics, turrets	tower surrounded by lower roofs on two sides	heavily protruding eave with ornaments, posts and metal balustrade, corner slightly highlighted
4	122. Building fronts	building façades at street edges	Some of the fronts at the street, some are set back, at a front garden	building façades at street edges
5	110. Main entrance	visible with a stone portal, accented with a bay window	visible with wrought-iron gate, with stone portal	visible with a stone portal, accented with a bay window
6	112. Entrance transition	no, straight from the street into the hallway	yes, preceded by a gate, garden path, arcade	no, straight from the street into the hallway
7	160. Building edge	edges varied with recesses, steps, stone seating	edges differentiated by, e.g., arcades under the tower	uniform edge, no corners, only a few steps in the corner
8	167. Six-foot balcony	no, only narrow circulatory porches from the courtyard	yes, there are deep loggias at the front and narrow, farm porches at the back	no, small loggias, and porches from the courtyard, narrow, used for storage
9	119. Arcades	no	yes, arcade	no
10	131. The flow through rooms	enfilade	circulation by corridor and enfilade (in a loop)	circulation by corridor and enfilade (in a loop)
11	131. Short passages	yes, short corridors	yes, a spacious hallway in each flat	in a four-room flat yes, but in a smaller one a long corridor
12	221. Natural doors and windows	yes, various sizes and locations of windows, up to 8 types	yes, different types of windows, formal on the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor and smaller and modest above	no, identical windows on all floors, basements have small windows
13	133. Staircase as a stage	no, wooden staircase, modest staircase, poorly lit	yes, formal open stone staircase, fan-like, illuminated by windows in the roof	no, double staircase in the stairwell, but with large windows in the side walls
14	127. Intimacy gradient	there is a sequence of rooms	there is a sequence of rooms – formal, private, storage	there is a sequence of rooms
15	128. Indoor sunlight	yes, rooms are well lit	yes, well-lit, south-facing windows	yes, large windows, flat framing
16	246. Climbing plants	yes, designed vines in special channels	partly, at the loggias	no
17	239. Small panes 237. Massive glass doors	yes, small panes and glazed doors of vestibules, porches	glazed room interior doors	no
18	249. Ornament	yes, rich ornament, fancy	yes, but limited, mainly around windows and doors	yes, but repetitive
19	180. Window place	bay windows on each storey in the so-called tower	lack of dedicated areas	bay windows on two storeys



### *Analysis of other corner townhouses of the period in question*

In order to bring out the original features of Talowski's, Ekielski's and Zawiejski's townhouses, a synthetic analysis of other corner tenements built at the same time was prepared (Table 3). The comparison of the three townhouses that are the subject of this paper with six other corner houses from the same period shows that the architects' houses present original solutions in every respect and that they are distinctive (the townhouse designed by Talowski at 1 Retoryka Street / 26 Piłsudskiego Street is also one such solution), providing residents with comfortable living and contact with nature.

### *The urban context of the presented architects' houses*

This study used contemporary photographs of corner houses, taken from several directions and different distances. Observation sites have been chosen that best display them

(Figs. 11–13), highlighting their grandeur and originality. The comparison of the townhouses in question with more traditional solutions and repetitive façade types shows their high aesthetic class. Particularly interesting visual effects are in views directly to the corner, which is accentuated by a distinctive detail, roof form, gable, attic, bay window, balcony or turret. This allows the corner of the building to act as a visual dominant within the wider urban context.

### *Conclusions*

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

1. The architects' corner houses represent original and distinctive formal solutions that have not lost their artistic and utilitarian value. Their originality stemmed from a new juxtaposition of the previously used forms, as well as a search for new sources of inspiration rooted in national traditions and local materials. For the architects, it was important to capture what is original in the etymological sense of the word – the roots of both people and things.

Table 3. Analysis of other corner townhouses of the period in question (elaborated by B. Makowska)  
Tabela 3. Analiza innych kamienic narożnych z tego samego okresu (oprac. B. Makowska)

	Corner houses: location, designer, date of construction	Interior layout	Façade composition, details and decoration	Attention to contact with nature	Original and distinctive forms
1	1 Retoryka / 16 Piłsudskiego (Talowski, 1889–1890) (Fig. 5)	two-bay layout with inter-bay corridor; 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor added in 1909; original plan	asymmetrical façades; original details and decoration including a frog*	location adjacent to the square; plant channels on the façade; balconies facing the courtyard	the plan and façade are original and stand out
2	15 Krasieńskiego / Smoleńsk 26 (Pezdański, 1907–1908) (Fig. 6)	it has a two-bay layout with an inter-bay corridor and an oval staircase	symmetrical façades; reinterpretation of Gothic motifs – flowers shaped like crockets	balconies; internal garden	traditional floor plan and original Art Nouveau decorations
3	15 Krasieńskiego / Smoleńsk 37 (Pokutyński, 1907–1908) (Fig. 7)	two-bay, L-shaped layout with a small risalit in the courtyard	symmetrical façade with a concave-convex gable	corner loggia; small garden/internal courtyard	a solution in a historical revivalist tradition
4	30 Krupnicza / 2 Garncarska (Zieliński, 1906–1908) (Fig. 8)	two-bay layout	original forms of capitals as an echo of orders in Art Nouveau; unity of art – chestnut motifs	two corner balconies; very small internal courtyard	traditional floor plan and original Art Nouveau decorations
5	1 Studencka / 4 Podwale (Hoffmann, 1910–1912) (Fig. 9)	two-bay L-shaped layout with two side outbuildings	symmetrical façade, creative interpretation of tradition – the attics of the Cloth Hall	balconies (near Planty Park); very small internal courtyard	a solution in a historical revivalist tradition
6	14 Studencka / 12 Garncarska (Ekielski, 1892–1893) (Fig. 10)	two-bay layout	original and symbolic content of decorative motifs**	small garden/indoor	solution in the historicist tradition*** (Purchla 1990, 72, 73)

\* As a reference to the River Rudawa, which used to flow in the neighbourhood and next to which one could hear the croaking of frogs, it also alludes to the building's use as the seat of a music school.

\*\* Among others, a lyre in the musician's house (capitol and frieze), a sgraffito (depiction of Aurora) and a maxim from Adam Mickiewicz's *Ode to Youth*: "Hail, Dawn of Liberty! Oh, Long live Thou! Thou carriest the Redeeming Sun so bright".

\*\*\* Inspired by the Viennese school of Heinrich von Ferstl from his late period.



Fig. 5. Townhouse at 1 Retoryka Street / 26 Piłsudskiego (designed by T. Talowski, 1889–1890):  
a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 26, fsc. 560), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

II. 5. Kamienica przy ul. Retoryka 1 / Piłsudskiego 26 (proj. T. Talowski, 1889–1890):  
a) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Piłsudskiego 26, fsc. 560), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)

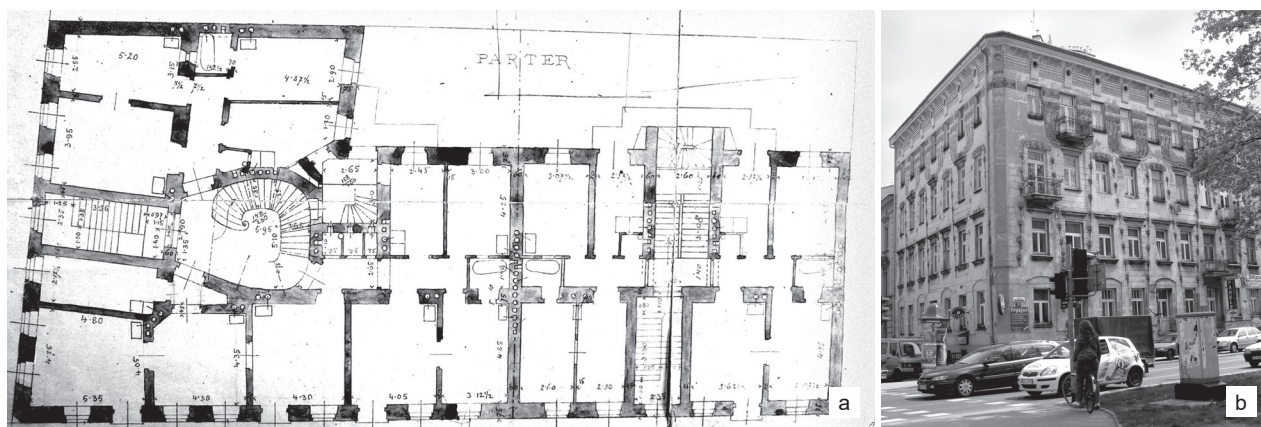


Fig. 6. Townhouse at 15 Krasińskiego Avenue / 26 Smoleńsk Street (designed by A. Pezdański, 1907–1908):  
a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Krasińskiego 15, fsc. 446), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

II. 6. Kamienica przy al. Krasińskiego 15 / ul. Smoleńsk 26 (proj. A. Pezdański, 1907–1908):  
a) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Krasińskiego 15, fsc. 446), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)



Fig. 7. Townhouse at 17 Krasińskiego Avenue / 37 Smoleńsk Street (designed by J. Pokutyński, 1907–1908):  
a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Krasińskiego 17, fsc. 446), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

II. 7. Kamienica przy al. Krasińskiego 17 / ul. Smoleńsk 37 (proj. J. Pokutyński, 1907–1908):  
a) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Krasińskiego 17, fsc. 446), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)



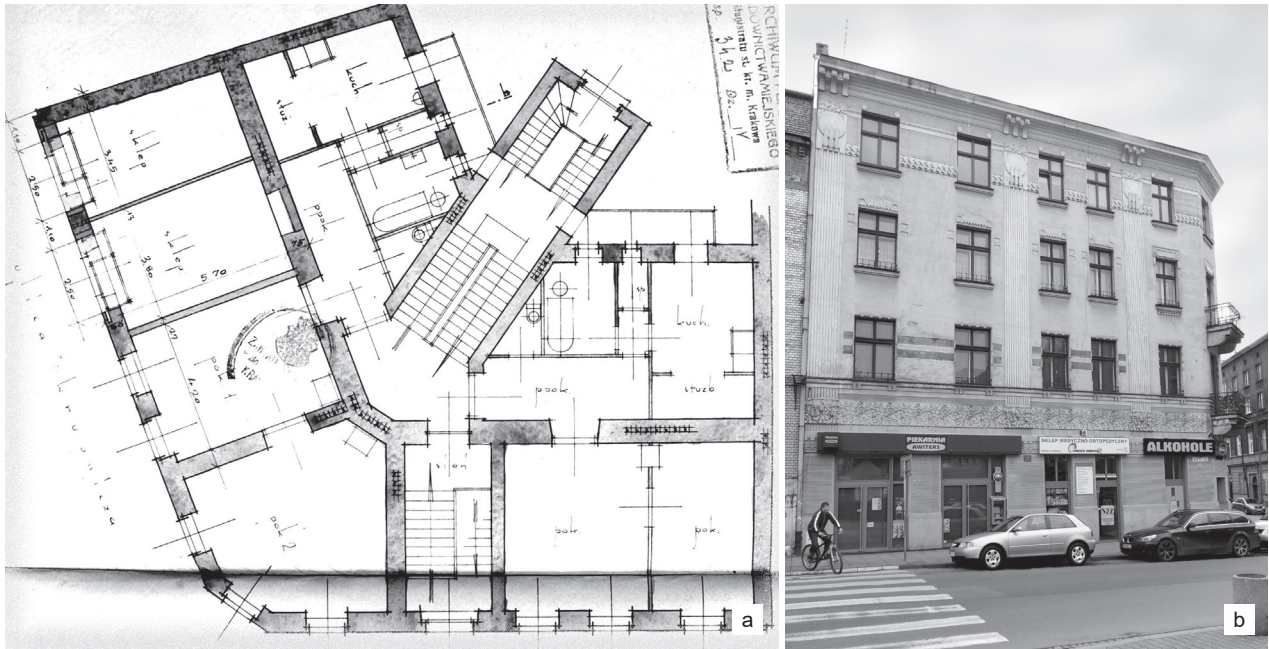


Fig. 8. Townhouse at 30 Krupnicza Street / 2 Garncarska Street (designed by K. Zieliński, 1906–1908):  
a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Krupnicza 30, fsc. 253), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

Il. 8. Kamienica przy ul. Krupniczej 30 / Garncarskiej 2 (proj. K. Zieliński, 1906–1908):  
a) rzut parteru (źródło: ANK, ABM Krupnicza 30, fsc. 253), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)



Fig. 9. Townhouse at 1 Studencka Street / 4 Podwale Street (designed by T. Hoffmann, 1910–1912):  
a) ground floor plan (source: ANK, ABM Studencka 1, fsc. 689), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

Il. 9. Kamienica przy ul. Studenckiej 1 / Podwale 4 (proj. T. Hoffmann, 1910–1912):  
a) rzut (źródło: ANK, ABM Studencka 1, fsc. 689), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)

2. The architects' houses from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were a pretext for showcasing the artistic craftsmanship of their creators, leading to original and modern solutions.

3. Talowski's house is characterised by a free-form floor plan, which was innovative at the time. The composition of the house's façade with the extension of the gable line into the wall plane can also be considered innovative, charac-

terised by a great contrast of textures and shapes, as well as original details and decoration.

4. Ekielski's house is characterised by functional communication links, a bold innovative plan, and a modern articulation of forms anticipating later trends.

5. Zawiejski's house, with a façade composition based on a regular rhythm of large windows and ascetically



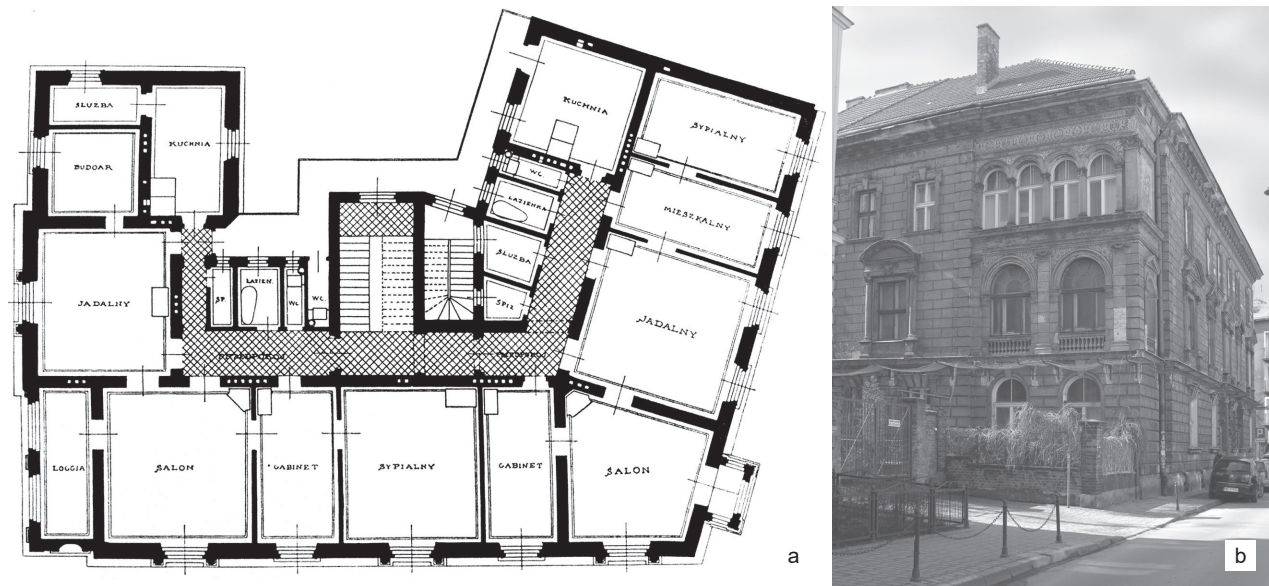


Fig. 10. Townhouse at 14 Studencka Street/ 12 Garncarska Street (designed by W. Ekielski, 1892–1893):

a) first floor plan (source: Ekielski 1904, 155, 156), b) façade (photo by B. Makowska)

Il. 10. Kamienica przy ul. Studenckiej 14/ Garncarskiej 12 (proj. W. Ekielski, 1892–1893):

a) rzut pierwszego piętra (źródło: Ekielski 1904, 155, 156), b) elewacja (fot. B. Makowska)

#### The Corner Townhouse

at 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street



Fig. 11. Townhouse at 35 Karmelicka Street / 28 Batorego Street – map (source: OpenStreetMap) with marked observation posts (elaborated by A. Kulig, photo by A. Kulig, B. Makowska)

Il. 11. Kamienica przy ul. Karmelickiej 35 / Batorego 28 – mapa (źródło: OpenStreetMap) z zaznaczonymi stanowiskami obserwacji (oprac. A. Kulig, fot. A. Kulig, B. Makowska)

designed risalits, along with a visually appealing integration of surfaces and articulation, is close to the Modernist tendencies of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

6. The location of the plots at the junction of the streets contributed to the creation of non-schematic floor plan layouts of the townhouses, as well as dwellings of varied volumes, well lit, functional and with durable (long-lived) structures; these buildings tended to underscore the corner (through bay windows, towers, turrets), and carefully

composed façades and common spaces (hallways, staircases).

7. The corner townhouses designed by the selected three architects established a dialogue with their neighbours, repeating the rhythms, directions and lines of the elevations, also maintaining a similar scale; their corners were accentuated by a characteristic detail, roof form, gable, attic, bay window, balcony or turret, thanks to which they functioned as a visual dominant in the wider urban context; the details



The Corner Townhouse  
at 40 Piłsudskiego Street / 25 Krasieńskiego Street

SCALE 1:2000

0 20m 100m



Fig. 12. Townhouse at 40 Karmelicka Street / 25 Krasieńskiego Avenue – map (source: OpenStreetMap) with marked observation posts (elaborated by A. Kulig, photo by B. Makowska A. Kulig)

Il. 12. Kamienica przy ul. Piłsudskiego 40 / Krasieńskiego 25 – mapa (źródło: OpenStreetMap) z zaznaczonymi stanowiskami obserwacji (oprac. A. Kulig, fot. B. Makowska, A. Kulig)

The Corner Townhouse  
at 11 Łobzowska Street / 2 Biskupia Street

SCALE 1:2000

0 20m 100m

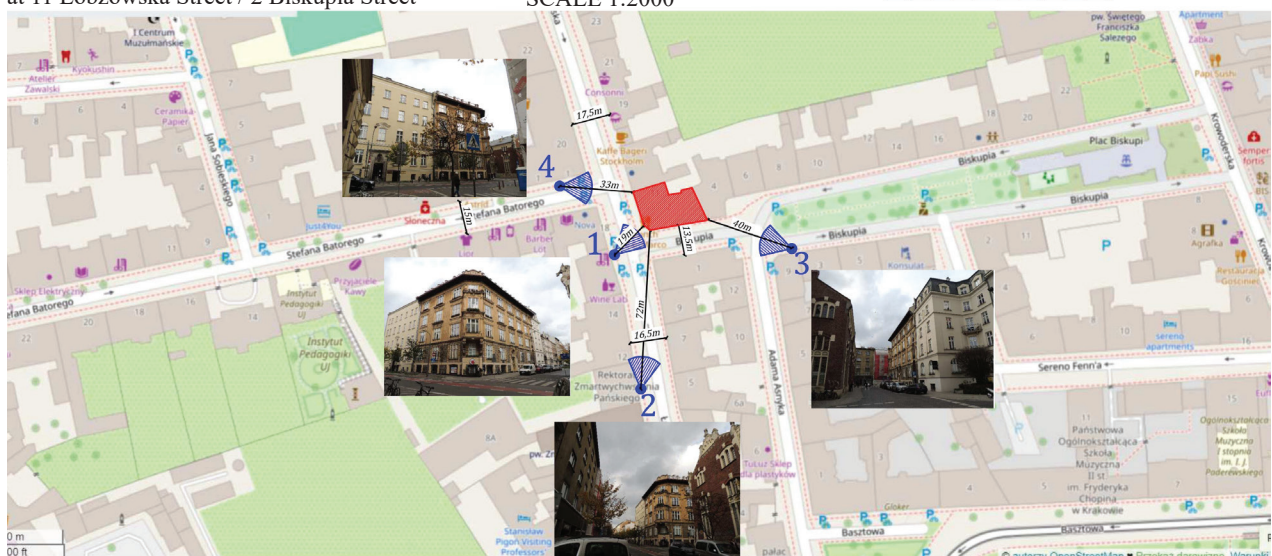


Fig. 13. Townhouse at 11 Karmelicka Street / 2 Krasieńskiego Avenue – map (source: OpenStreetMap) with marked observation posts (elaborated by A. Kulig, photo by B. Makowska)

Il. 13. Kamienica przy ul. Łobzowskiej 11 / Biskupiej 2 – mapa (źródło: OpenStreetMap) z zaznaczonymi stanowiskami obserwacji (oprac. A. Kulig, fot. B. Makowska)

of Talowski's and Ekielski's townhouses refer to those of Wawel Castle, while Zawiejski's are a creative interpretation of Renaissance motifs.

8. The features of the historic townhouses described here are aligned with contemporary design recommendations developed by Christopher Alexander and colleagues, described as positive patterns making buildings lively places, where people like and want to stay, appreciating both their interior qualities and their exterior forms.

## Summary

The townhouses shown are a valuable heritage asset, influencing the further development of architecture. The designs of prominent architects contributed to the popularisation of a more freeform way of building (plans, elevations) and foreshadowed later Modernist trends. They emphasised how important it is to create a positive relationship between the townhouses and the historical and urban context.

Preserved in good condition, the townhouses illustrate the architectural and cultural conditions that existed in that era. The novelty of this study is based on an analysis of the forms of the townhouses from a contemporary perspective and their assessment using Alexander's criteria, in addition to an analysis in a wider urban context and comparing them to other corner solutions from this period.

This study draws attention to the need to protect the architects' own precious houses, their original forms of detailing and decoration, and to popularise this heritage among the wider public.

Translated by  
Krzysztof Barnaś

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## Streszczenie

**Krakowskie domy własne wybitnych architektów z przełomu XIX i XX w. – analiza oryginalnych narożnych kamienic z historycznej i współczesnej perspektywy**

W artykule omówiono kamienice krakowskie z przełomu XIX i XX w. zaprojektowane przez Teodora Talowskiego, Władysława Ekielskiego i Jana Zawiejskiego. Projekty te, będące ich domami własnymi, dały im możliwość swobody twórczej, która zaowocowała powstaniem oryginalnych i wybitnych form. Nośnikiem nowatorskich i nieschematycznych rozwiązań kamienic było także ich narożne położenie na nieregularnych działkach o szczególnej konfiguracji przestrzennej (układ koncentryczno-radialny Krakowa) i lokalizacja przy ważniejszych ulicach. W opracowaniu projektów dla architektów ważne było uwzględnienie istniejącego kontekstu, a także dbałość o kontakt z naturą poprawiającą jakość życia mieszkańców („zielone elewacje”, loggie, przedogródki).

Celem autorki artykułu była szczegółowa analiza kamienic – ich fasad, układu rzutów, konstrukcji i funkcji, a także odpowiedź na pytania, jak są one dziś użytkowane, oceniane i adaptowane. Praca oparta została na dokumentacji historycznej i fotograficznej kamienic, badaniach in situ, analizie dostępnych opracowań naukowych i innych (studia waloryzacji przestrzeni, karty obiektów).

W wyniku badań wyciągnięto wnioski, że narożne domy własne architektów stanowią wyróżniające się rozwiązania formalne, które współcześnie nie straciły na wartości artystycznej i użytkowej. Analiza charakterystycznych w urbanistyce miasta form o rozpoznawalnych detalach ze współczesnej perspektywy wydaje się ważna, ponieważ są one cennym dziedzictwem architektonicznym, które należy chronić i popularyzować.

**Słowa kluczowe:** architektura Krakowa, kamienica narożna, detal architektoniczny