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ECLECTICISM OF 20TH – CENTURY TENEMENT HOUSE FAÇADES AS A REITERATING OCCURRENCE

EKLEKTYZM FASAD KAMIENIC XX WIEKU JAKO POWTARZAJĄCE SIĘ ZJAWISKO

S u m m a r y

Architecture as a status symbol for people, families and cities is well established. The forms that it takes depend on preferences in an epoch, investors' and architects' tastes, as well as financial and technical capability. Changes in tastes may be gradual, evolutionary, "imported" or imposed. Usually, little by little they become part of a local architectural tradition. Eclecticism originated as an architectural trend at the turn of the 20th century. It combined neo – style elements freely and selectively with a preference for their decorative values. The trend coexisted with Art Nouveau, which rejected all historical references and paid extreme attention to detail. Then the time of gradual fascination with the highlighted construction and texture of material ensued – a result of artistic and historical events, and social changes. There were also expressionists on the peripheries of these events that created non-conventional buildings reflecting meanings and emotions. It was only later that constructivist and futuristic trends became inspirational.

After the Second World War an era of architectural unification based upon a rigid theory style arose, that had never been known previously in history. But soon monotonous blocks of flats and box-like tenement houses were counterpoised to post-modernist compositions, in the case of which citations of historical references were placed in a new context and presented in new materials.

The changes that came afterwards were exponential and in 1997, James Steele singled out eleven trends in contemporary architecture, justified their uniqueness and discussed examples. As intermedia developed, the accumulation, attractiveness, and availability of new aesthetic concepts led to a situation in which architects were faced with a significant challenge of finding new architectural forms. However, as opposed to the previous stylistic fusions that explored the aesthetic experiences of previous epochs, now inspiration is derived from fine arts, construction solutions and technological inventions.

Few star-architects have the unprecedented capabilities of completing their own visions. They are able to use computer programs, construction details, and materials created or customised for them. Works of art created in their workshops reverberate and become a source of inspiration, also in residential housing.

For this reason it is justified to say that the situation that occurred at the very beginning of the 20th century is repeated. Then historical forms of façade design were combined to draw people's attention to a tenement house, a symbol of status, without considering its internal divisions and

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functional areas. Today's façades, are based on construction layouts which are determined by the functions of particular rooms. Again they are eclectically enriched with structural/historical/artistic elements.

As the spirit of the age and people's tastes have altered, there has been a change in tools and materials, yet the conceptual inconsistency between tenement façades and its structure have persisted. The paper aims at showing the similarities in tectonics of façades of buildings, especially residential, at the beginning of the 20th and the 21st centuries. Today's façades are created from an amalgam of the achievements of contemporary, highly diversified styles and technologies.

The research methods used in the work include: review of the literature of the subject, including archive materials, studies of contemporary and historic tenement houses façades, comparisons, tables, and graphs.

Keywords: Tenement house, façade, decoration, trends in arts, trends in architecture, new technologies, architectural detail

Streszczenie

Architektura jako symbol statusu ludzi, rodów i miast ma pozycję ugruntowaną. Formy, jakie przyjmuje zależą od upodobań w danej epoce, gustów inwestorów i architektów oraz możliwości finansowych i technicznych. Zmiany gustów mogą zachodzić stopniowo, ewolucyjnie, być przywożone jako „import”, bądź narzucane. Zazwyczaj stopniowo wpisują się w lokalną tradycję architektoniczną. Eklektyzm w architekturze uformowany został jako jeden z jej nurtów na przełomie XIX i XX w. Łączył elementy stylów „neo-” w sposób dowolny, wybiórczy, ze wskazaniem na ich walory dekoracyjne. Współwystępował z odrzucającą wszelką historyczną stylistykę secesją operującą równie bogatym detalem. Później nastąpił czas stopniowej fascynacji rytmami eksponowanej konstrukcji i fakturą materiałów; wynik wydarzeń artystycznych, historycznych i zmian społecznych. Na peryferiach działali ekspresjoniści, tworząc niekonwencjonalne budynki odzwierciedlające znaczenia i emocje. Nurty konstruktywizmu i futuryzmu dopiero w przyszłości miały stać się inspiracją.

Po II wojnie światowej nastąpił okres niespotykanej w dziejach historii architektury unifikacji stylistycznej. Przeciwwagą monotonnych bloków i pudełkowych kamienic stały się postmodernistyczne kompozycje, gdzie cytaty historycznych rozwiązań umieszczano w nowym kontekście, prezentowano w nowych materiałach.

Kolejne zmiany następowały lawinowo i w 1997 roku James Steele wyróżnił ponad jedenaście trendów współczesnej architektury, uzasadniając ich odrębność i omawiając przykłady. Spiętrzenie nowych koncepcji estetycznych, ich atrakcyjność i dostępność za sprawą rozwijających się intermediów, spowodowały sytuację, w której poszukiwanie nowych form architektury, a w tym fasad, stało się istotnym wyzwaniem dla architektów. Jednak w odróżnieniu od poprzednich fuzji stylistycznych, eksplorujących doświadczenia estetyczne poprzednich epok, obecnymi inspiracjami są rozwiązania konstrukcyjne i nowości technologiczne.

Nieliczni architekci mający status gwiazd i związane z tym niespotykane nigdy przedtem możliwości realizacji swoich wizji byli i są w stanie korzystać z programów komputerowych, detali konstrukcyjnych, materiałów tworzonych lub modyfikowanych wyłącznie na ich potrzeby. Powstające w ich pracowniach dzieła odbijają się wielokrotnym echem, stanowiąc źródło inspiracji również w budownictwie mieszkaniowym.

Dlatego uprawniona jest teza o powtórzeniu się sytuacji z pierwszych lat XX wieku, gdy łączenie historycznych form wystroju elewacji miało na celu zwrócenie uwagi na kamienicę – symbol statusu, nie uwzględniając jej wewnętrznych podziałów i stref funkcjonalnych. Dziś elewacje, których kanwą jest układ konstrukcyjny budynku, a wyznacznikiem funkcje pomieszczeń,

stanowią często połączone w eklektyczny sposób rozwiązania wzbogacone o elementy historyczne. Narzędzia realizacji i materiały zmieniły się, tak jak zmienił się duch epoki i gusty ludzi, jednak zjawisko niespójności koncepcyjnej fasady kamienicy i jej struktury pozostało. Praca ma na celu pokazanie podobieństw, jakie zachodzą w kształtowaniu fasad budynków, zwłaszcza budynków mieszkalnych, w zabudowie miejskiej na początku XX wieku i na początku XXI wieku. Fuzja osiągnięć współczesnych, bardzo zróżnicowanych nurtów tworzy elewacje – swoiste *déjà vu*, wykorzystując nowe środki wyrazu.

W pracy zastosowano następujące metody badawcze: analizę literatury przedmiotu, w tym materiałów archiwalnych, badania współczesnych i historycznych fasad kamienic, zestawienia, tabele i wykresy.

Słowa kluczowe: kamienica, fasada, dekoracja, trendy w sztuce, trendy w architekturze, nowe technologie, detal architektoniczny

1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

*“in an age whose architectural emblem is the airport waiting lounge, few people today are likely to walk through the ornate streets of Edwardian London thinking, ‘How Dull’” (Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*)*

Façades have always been at the centre of architects’, owners’, and inhabitants’ attention, as they gave an impression of what the inside of a building may look like. In the past, they were a manifestation of the owner’s occupation, interests, and values¹. Moving from façades full of meaning towards those manifesting construction, technical, and technological capability does not change the fact that various artistic forms are combined in the name of similar premises.

The diversity, uniqueness, and rich detail of old metropolitan tenement houses determined the character of cities thanks to a number of features that they share. Paradoxically, a lot of shopping centres, contemporary trade sanctuaries, are designed to allude to authentic urban streets. The models that are created are meant to produce an illusion of a sometimes fairy-like, sometimes historic and more often contemporary city. This world of illusion appeals to the users².

Among the old fabric of real cities new residential/tenement houses are built, which become part of the existing frontages and create another stage in the historical continuity of cities. Their styles are now far from the ante-modernist tradition, yet the extreme attention to new detail is similar.

Research was conducted to identify and describe the formal features common to contemporary tenement houses and downtown residential houses, and those built a hundred years ago. The following questions seem to be of significance: does the external tectonic of old and new buildings show common *constans* exists, and how is it expressed; and will the façade of the contemporary tenement house create its own archetype, as was the case for 18th and 19th-century houses?

¹ Z. Tołłoczko, *“Sen architekta” czyli o historii i historyzmie architektury XIX i XX wieku, (“The Architect’s Dream”, or the History and Historicism of the 19th and 20th century architecture)*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Krakowskiej, Kraków 2015, p. 45.

² M. Kaus, *Sztuka współczesna w strukturach handlowych (Contemporary Art in Shopping Centres)*, doctoral thesis typescript, Gdańsk 2014.



Ill. 1. Tenement house gate entrance into Hartwig Kantorowicz's property, Poznań, ul. Grochowe Łąki 6, 1907, *relievo* shows buildings of the owner's two previous factories (photo by the author)
 Ill. 2. Bureau de change-an advertisement of a stucco decoration workshop (1882) belonging to A. Krzyżanowski, ul. Garbary 96, (photo by the author in 2000) Ill. 3. Modernist tenement house – gallery type block of flats), ul. 28 Lutego 4, Poznań, 1970s. (photo by the author) Ill. 4. Modernist tenement house of the 1980s, reinforced concrete, filling: local tuffš. Yerevan, Armenia (photo by the author)
 Ill. 5. Bosco Verticale (Vertical Forest) residential towers near Porta Garibaldi in Milan, consisting of apartments with private green terraces with trees high up to 6m (photo by the author, 2014)
 Ill. 6. Residential building, façade the structure of which combines Deconstructivism and ecological activity Ill. 7. “Ginger and Fred” – a dancing house, 1996, office and residential building, Frank Gehry, Praha, Jiráskove náměstí no 1981/6 and Rašínove nábřeží (photo by the author)
 Ill. 8. Supplementary buildings, Brantasgracht / Amsterdam, https://c1.staticflickr.com/3/2347/2255974900_8cfa708c80_b.jpg Ill. 9. Inhabitants also contribute to shaping the façades of houses they live in...

2. TENEMENT HOUSE FAÇADE AS A SYMBOL OF THE OWNER'S AND ARCHITECT'S TIME, STATUS AND TASTE

Tenement houses as a concept of habitat were abandoned for ideological reasons in modernism. They later regained their own place in new street frontages, creating, supplementing, and enriching the shape of downtown and suburban areas of cities.

In the past, tenement house façades and entrances were seen as the owner's show piece which confirmed the architect's talent and the capabilities of masonry and stucco decorator workshops (Ill. 1, 2). Their forms were diversified and characteristic of that epoch. Lavish detail was used around entrance gates and on gables and corners. Composition axes were accentuated and tectonics of fronts was composed of window frames, balconies, and loggias³. These composition rules were also applied to entire frontages of street development on condition that they were built simultaneously⁴.

The style came from antique, mediaeval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classicist architecture. Neo – styles selectively drew on proportions, elements, detail, and structure from previous periods. The styles were also combined eclectically on one façade. The fact that ground floors had to be adapted for shops and that the traditional Renaissance *piano nobile* was still stressed meant that functional pedestals had to be created, the role of which could be played by arcades⁵ or rhythms of entrances and shop windows⁶.

Art Nouveau was the second trend of the same period. It used lavish detail with different themes. The shift towards soft, vegetal, and organic lines was a protest against the repetitiveness of the elements that were previously known and a reference to an entirely new pattern. Art Nouveau and Art Deco, a geometrical trend that concluded it, did not provide new stylistic perspectives. They became an experimental area for a further architectural quest in the field of technology (iron, reinforced concrete, glaze⁷) and aesthetics, which lasted in parallel in the fine arts.

Knowledge of physics, mathematics, and acoustics pervading artists, painters, sculptors, and architects gradually redefined the established principles⁸. Expressionism was powerful in a number of countries⁹. Its non-conventional buildings reflected meaning and emotions, and

³ R. Cielątkowska, L. Onyszczenko-Szwec, *Detal architektury mieszkaniowej Lwowa XIX i XX wieku, (Residential architectural detail in the Lviv of the 19th and 20th centuries)*, Wydział Architektury Politechniki Gdańskiej, Gdańsk 2006, p. 66, 110.

⁴ The first, 18th century residential units in London, namely Adelphi Terrace 1768–1777 (Robert and James Adam), and Paris: Rue de Rivoli had unified frontages starting from 1757. The concept was continued in the 19th and 20th centuries. S. Kostof, p. 138.

⁵ Shops in Rue Rivoli arcades (1804–1848). L. Benevolo, p. 788.

⁶ Warszawa, S. B. Zug, Kamienica i dom handlowy Roeslera i Hurtiga (1785), Krakowskie Przedmieście 79; (Reosler and Hurtig's Tenement House and Department Store (1785) in Krakowskie Przedmieście 79). Light upper floors were crowned with a neo-renaissance cornice, a decorative *piano nobile*, and a robust, bossaged pedestal. Near tenement house entrances Palladian windows serve as "frames" for individual shops.

⁷ Louis Sorel, a tenement house at Rue Le Tasse 9, Paris, 1905 – white, glazed tile façades were a new and effective solution in a city with coal-heated houses, because glaze was seen as a self-cleaning material.

⁸ It took place in several centres simultaneously with the best scientific and theoretical foundation belonging to the creators of the De Stijl centre that knew the achievements of sciences thanks to Schoenemaekers, a mathematician. K. Frampton, p. 142–143.

⁹ Especially in Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

made use of new construction and technological capabilities. The forward-looking constructivism and futurism of the beginning of the 20th century were only to become an inspiration for another generation of architects. Both trends drew on the surrounding reality and the intuitive predictions concerning the technical possibilities and ways in which cities would be developed.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a gradual departure from historical narration in architecture was brought about, among other things, by the necessity of providing new, inexpensive flats in developing cities¹⁰. The need for simplification and meeting tight budgets unambiguously led to solutions by avant-garde creators, who rejected decoration for ideological reasons. After the Second World War, a time of destruction, simple modernist solutions were introduced that made use of industrialized production of elements and standardized dimensions,¹¹ facilitating investment processes¹². The predominance of modernism in architecture, especially residential housing, became a fact. The façades of the period carried an emotional value expressed by means of modernist devices: solids were simplified and multiplied for functional reasons as much as possible, and the rhythm of windows, staircases, and simple entrances were parts of a new façade (Ill. 3, 4.).

At the same time new urban concepts¹³ that rejected streets and squares as the basic element of a city's structure changed the character of developments: tenement houses were replaced with blocks of flats. The concept did not prove effective: the time of *a machine for living in* and modernist urbanism came to an end on 15 July 1973, when a modernist estate was demolished for the first time¹⁴.

During Postmodernism, façades regained their original role. They were characterised by symmetric compositions, traditional tectonics and bizarre effects and “jokes” with reference to traditional decorations. Analysis shows close similarities between historic and postmodernist façade structures. Subsequent changes underlain by the departure from modernism came rapidly. In 1997, James Steele¹⁵ singled out eleven trends in contemporary architecture, justified their uniqueness and discussed examples.

According to this author, contemporary architectural trends included: ▪ Post-Modernism, a trend already in decline in 1997, ▪ Deconstructivism, ▪ Ecological Architecture, ▪ New Expressionism, ▪ Contemporary Vernacular, ▪ the Classical Revival, ▪ Minimalism, ▪ High-Tech, ▪ Rationalism, ▪ Populism, ▪ The New Modernism.

Stylistic forms of solids and façades range now from those known from the history of architecture, including regional architecture in the broad sense of the term and expression of technological solutions, including ecological ones.

¹⁰ The work of Deutscher Werkbund and Bauhaus established in Germany in 1907 and supervised by Walter Gropius was essential for the future of architecture and design.

¹¹ The institutions established to standardise dimensions and quality of goods, including building materials, comprised: Deutsches Institut für Normung (German Institute for Standardization) created in 1917 (Standards Association of German Industry) and the British Standards Institution 1901–1914, initially for steel constructions.

¹² Socrealism was not included in our research as it was perceived as a local phenomenon in the development of 20th century architecture, imposed by the state and not continued later.

¹³ Le Corbusier. Frampton K p. 178 and subsequent pages.

¹⁴ Demolition of Pruitt–Igoe, urban housing project, the complex designed by Minoru Yamasaki in the fifties of the 20th century.

¹⁵ J. Steele, p. 4–5.

Not all the trends mentioned above were used in residential housing, which is now based on repeated constructions. This property means that residential building façades are often a manifestation of architects' aesthetic attitudes rather than the actual structure of the objects. Ecological solutions ensure better environmental and health conditions, while High-Tech and Rationalism make use of technical and technological achievements by depicting them also on façades. Trends such as Postmodernism, Deconstructivism, and Minimalism have their origin in attempts to find pure art, but also branches of science, including philosophy¹⁶. They form a “robe” put on a building, as was the case at the turn of the twentieth century. Contemporary Vernacular explores regional relationships on several interpretation levels: cultural (location of a building in the cultural landscape of a place), landscape (inspiration with a building silhouette and its role in the surrounding landscape), formal (inspiration with proportion, façade articulation, characteristic form elements etc.), workshop (inspiration with architectural detail, building material used, techniques of combining construction elements)¹⁷.

New Expressionism, the Classical Revival, and Modernism made references to the creations of the beginning of the previous century and reinterpreted the concept of abstract exaggeration, monumentalism, and geometricalization¹⁸. Populism in architecture is a counterpart of deliberate kitsch in art.

Because of the diversity there was an accumulation of new, attractive aesthetic concepts in residential housing in the presence of a stable market of construction solutions (Ill. 5, 6). Architects were faced with the considerable challenge of searching for forms in residential architecture¹⁹.

Since the 1970s a new trend has been observed that ensues from a concentration of global capital and globalization of the architectural market. Architects and architectural firms that achieved “star” status are able to impose new, expensive, and innovative solutions for prestigious projects, having comfortable financial conditions. Such a status enables them to experiment, make demands on the contractors, and commission personalized versions of computer software (Ill. 7, 8). The final result is soon replicated and multiplied in various versions by other companies and creators²⁰.

In multi-family residential housing the situation is similar to that a hundred years ago: the structure of a building remains more or less the same since flats and apartments have stable parameters. Façades take on various forms, creating the “style” of a building referring to the shape of flats and apartments to a limited extent.

Regardless of the architect's decision inhabitants also contribute to shaping the appearance of the façades of houses they live in²¹. (Ill. 9)

¹⁶ Jacques Derrida is seen as a philosopher whose theories underlay Deconstructivism in architecture. E. Węclawowicz-Gyurkovich, *Architektura emocji; Architecture of emotions*, p. 63–79.

¹⁷ T. Bardzińska-Bonenberg, A. Bonenberg, *The Vernacular Trend in Contemporary Implementations by Polish Architects*, Technical Transactions, Architecture, 7-A/2010/1, Krakow 2010, p. 14–20.

¹⁸ T. Kozłowski, p. 189.

¹⁹ S. Murray, *Contemporary Curtain Wall Architecture*.

²⁰ The Olympic Fish in the Olympic village in Barcelona in 1992 and the Frederic Weisman Museum of Art at the University of Minnesota in 1993 were the first forms in which Frank Gehry used bent metal plates. This form became the greatest novelty in the architecture of the end of the 20th century and is still used in various forms all over the world, also in residential housing.

²¹ T. Bardzińska-Bonenberg, *On Unarchitectonic Genealogy of Contemporary Architectural Details*, Technical Transactions – Architecture, 5-A/1/2012 Issue 15, Year 109, Kraków 2012, s. 7–20.

3. ECLECTICISM OF FAÇADES: COMPARISON

Each of the contemporary trends in architecture discussed tends to create an idiosyncratic type of facade by applying available construction solutions and highlighting them to a greater or lesser extent. The results include austere or decorated forms, impacting perception by way of destabilizing forms or a rational composition, as well as inserting references to old and contemporary history of architecture.

A similar situation can be observed for the trends appearing a hundred years ago.

A. A wide variety of forms of tenement houses at the beginning of the 20th century ensues from their basic features.

- The lack of formal connections to their neighbouring buildings except for the ones in plots developed and entire frontages built at the same time.
- The highlighting of points of façades which are formally important: edges and axis.
- The symmetric location of windows and portals regardless of the interiors.
- The highlighting of the pedestal and symmetric location of service facilities on the ground floors.
- The wide range of decorations, divisions, and rhythms, various forms of loggias, balconies, and bay windows on one façade.
- The greater number and diversity of shapes of buildings' gables.
- The building material diversity of façades.

B. Modernist tenement houses are characterised by:

- no formal connections to the buildings close by
- departure from highlighting points of façades which are formally important
- highlighting construction divisions
- using diversified rhythm of windows that stems from functional internal divisions
- replacing the variety of decorations and diversity of forms with the texture of façade material
- using unified finishing materials

Table 1. Details that form the tectonics of tenement house façades: (A) trend of Historicism, Eclecticism, Art Nouveau and (B) Modernism

No.	Leading guideline for creating a façade	A			B
		Historicism (y)	Eclecticism	Art Nouveau	
1.	façades highlighting new construction solutions				
2.	façades highlighting new technological solutions				
3.	façades as an interpretation of historical tradition				
4.	searching for new formal solutions (source: fine arts)				

C. The variety of forms of the tenement houses of the beginning of the 21st century stems from the wide range of solutions used in contemporary architecture and mutual inspirations:

- Post-Modernism – combining historical and modernist elements in architecture, manipulating the texture of materials, bold use of colour
- Deconstructivism – shocking by using a-tectonic construction and formal solutions: breaking down and manipulating solids
- Ecological Architecture – aimed at improving the living conditions by employing technological and pro-ecological solutions, using greenery on façades, terraces, and rooftops,
- New Expressionism – highlighting/exaggerating functions (also technical/technological solutions) and creating new *leitmotivs*
- Contemporary Vernacular – using construction elements typical of a region on four basic levels²²
- The Classical Revival – return to classic forms, proportions, and colours
- Minimalism – limiting detail to minimum, using simple and unambiguous forms
- High-Tech – highlighting advanced technical and technological solutions, richness of detail coming from them
- Rationalism – highlighting construction and functional solutions in the form of a building
- The New Modernism – referring to the architecture of Bauhaus and old Modernist masters
- Populism – dazzling with surprise, a mix of styles, and pop-culture references.

The dimensions of flats and apartments have not changed significantly for a hundred years²³. The appearance of contemporary façades sometimes reflects the interior and structure of a building. They are created according to the “reliable” rules of Modernism. Most façades of contemporary tenement houses and residential buildings result from an architect’s vision that realises her or his own aesthetic concept, as was the case more than a hundred years ago²⁴.

²² T. Bardzińska-Bonenberg, A. Bonenberg, *The Vernacular Trend in Contemporary Implementations by Polish Architects*, Technical Transactions, Architecture, 7-A/2010/1, Krakow 2010, p. 14–20.

²³ The height of most rooms in most European cities has never reached 2.5 metres, as was the case in countries of the so called people’s democracies, where architecture was influenced by standards that led to the creation of factories of housing structure elements. They limited invention of civil engineers and architects alike. In principle, the rooms were higher. In the Unité d’habitation Le Corbusier used the height of 2.2 metres for two-level apartments but that did not gain popularity in residential housing. L. Benevolo, *Die Geschichte der Stadt*, Campus Verlag; Frankfurt/New York 2000, p. 825.

²⁴ T. Kozłowski, *Tendencje ekspresjonistyczne w architekturze współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Krakowskiej, Kraków 2013, p. 186.

Table 2. Details that make up the tectonics of tenement house façades: contemporary architectural trends (C)

	Leading guideline for creating a façade	Postmodernism	Deconstructivism	Ecological Architecture	New Expressionism	Contemporary Vernacular	Classical Revival	Minimalism	High Tech	Rationalism	New Modernism	Populism
1.	façades highlighting new construction solutions		■		■				■	■	■	
2.	façades highlighting new technological solutions			■					■	■	■	
3.	façades as an interpretation of historical tradition	■			■	■	■				■	
4.	searching for new formal solutions: source: fine arts	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■

The table above shows that contemporary architects use a wide range of expression devices with various genealogy, giving them new formal meaning. The starting point may be seen by highlighting technical solutions (High-Tech, Deconstructivism, Rationalism) and using them as elements of the “exterior design” in line with contemporary trends in the area of fine arts. Other trends shift towards interpretation of architectural tradition, also using modern expression devices: materials, proportions, and colours (Ill. 8).

Research was conducted to identify formal features common to contemporary tenement houses and those built a hundred years ago. Comparing the sources of the tectonics in façades at the beginning of the 20th century with the properties of the front façades of buildings erected now makes it possible to conclude that the intensity of detail is of considerable importance. The detail of the façades of the beginning of the 20th century was based on stuccoes of various types placed on a brick wall as well as wrought and cast iron elements. Contemporary trends in architecture are characterized by the diversity of finishing materials, which makes it possible to produce details of contradicting textures, interesting combinations of antithetical elements, exaggeration of forms thanks to colour and artistic effects²⁵. After the period

²⁵ Leupen Bernard et al., *Projektowanie architektury w ujęciu analitycznym*, “Śląsk” Sp. z o.o. Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Katowice 2012, p. 106 and p. 127–128.

of rigorous Modernism the intensity of detail on façades in tenement houses became close to those at the beginning of the 20th century.

4. SUMMARY

Eclecticism in the façades of urban tenement houses still exists. Elements that make up the structure of a wall have diversified origin: they come from construction and technological solutions, interpret historical prototypes, refer to the achievements of fine arts, and propose their own changeability depending on the time of the day. They differ from the decorations present a hundred years ago but the role that they play on the most often rectangular façade is similar. Now the diversity of forms is pursued by use of the properties of materials of shutters, balconies, covers, highlighted flashings, vents; colour and, and other characteristic elements of exposed residential interiors.

There is also a *constans* in the structure of façades: the rhythms imposed by the dimensions of a flat: height and construction span which are similar in most cases. They are also characterized by the rhythm of repeated divisions, result of repetition of the sequences of flats present in old and new architecture.

Contemporary development has not as yet created an archetype like the 19th and early 20th-century tenement house did. Since it is seeking more and more interesting solutions that make use of achievements in science, technology, and arts it has changed and developed over the recent decades of the 21st century.

Perhaps as time passes, researchers will be able to notice this regularity.

R e f e r e n c e s

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