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## THE ORDER'S HOUSES – FUNCTIONAL CHANGES

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### DOM ZAKONNY – ZMIANY FUNKCJONALNE

#### Abstract

Religious houses have changed their function over the years of their existence. The Juvenile House of the Pauline Fathers in Krakow is a case in point. The paper presents the transformations the house has been through over a period of 80 years. Although it has always been the Order's property and built for the purpose it has basically served since then, modern times have called for alterations. They result from economic reasons, the residents' needs and heritage protection requirements. Yet, the object can be said to have an identity irrespective of time, epoch or style

*Keywords: religious house, architecture, function, the Order of Saint Paul*

#### Streszczenie

Domy zakonne w trakcie swego istnienia ulegają zmianom funkcjonalnym, na przykład Dom Juwenatu oo. paulinów w Krakowie. Zaprezentowano zmiany, jakie zaszły w trakcie 80 lat jego użytkowania. Pomimo że obiekt ten jest własnością zakonu i w zasadzie pełni tę samą funkcję, dla której został zaprojektowany, to jednak współczesne uwarunkowania mają wpływ na konieczność jego przekształceń. Uwarunkowania te można rozpatrywać w aspektach ekonomicznych, potrzeb jego mieszkańców oraz ochrony dziedzictwa kulturowego. Można stwierdzić, że obiekt ten ma swą tożsamość bez względu na czas, epokę i stylizację.

*Słowa kluczowe: dom zakonny, architektura, funkcja, zakon paulinów*

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Architecture is a very special functional art; it confines space, so we can dwell in it, creates the framework around our lives. In other words, the difference between sculpture and architecture is not that the former is concerned with more organic forms, the latter with more abstract. Even the most abstract piece of sculpture, limited to purely geometric shapes, does not become architecture. It lacks a decisive factor: utility.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The form and architecture of the house has changed over the centuries. This has been mostly due to the varying needs, the resultant functions and application of new materials and technologies. Religious architecture is a special sign of cultural presence, as it constitutes a major part of our heritage. Religious houses are interesting representatives of religious architecture. They are the smallest administrative units of a religious order and places of residence of monastic communities. They are usually regarded as dwellings of monks. The function of a religious house has evolved over the centuries. According to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, *domus alicuius religionis in tenere* (a religious house is a house of an order in general)<sup>2</sup>. The term refers to two significant functions that a religious house performs. One is formal and the other one is material. In formal terms, a religious house is a monastic community, while in material terms, it is an object where the monks live<sup>3</sup>. The duties of a resident of a religious house are strictly defined in the Code of Canon Law, 1983, can. 662–672. Despite some modifications over the centuries, their basic scope has been retained until today. Apart from other things, a religious house has a specific architectural style. There are some distinctive features, which make an average observer realise that it is the architecture of a religious house irrespective of the epoch when the object was erected. S. Rasmussen once wrote that *when a tourist visiting Nördlingen suddenly comes across a church he/she immediately realizes that it is a church. We look at a church as a distinct type of a building a symbol so easily recognizable as a letter of the alphabet*<sup>4</sup>. A similar statement seems to apply to a religious house, no matter if it stands next to a church or is an independent building.

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<sup>1</sup> S. E. Rasmussen, *Odczuwanie architektury*, (Experiencing Architecture) Wydawnictwo Murator, Warszawa 1999 p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Code of Canon Law 1917, Can. 488, 5°. As cited [in:] B. Szewczul, *Pojęcie domu zakonnego i jego znaczenie w życiu zakonnym*, (The notion of a religious house and its significance in monastic life) [in] *Prawo Kanoniczne*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, *Kwartalnik Prawno – Historyczny*, 56 (2013) nr 2, Warszawa 2013, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. B. Szewczul, *op.cit.*, p. 27, 28.: *Formally, it is a community of monks comprising at least three, at times two, individuals united by spiritual bonds rooted in the evangelical counsels proper to the institute; legal bonds such as making a profession and leading a life according to the character and proper purpose of the institute. () In material terms a religious house is also a domicile of a monastic community comprising both the living quarters, the adjacent buildings and e.g. gardens*

<sup>4</sup> S. E. Rasmussen, *op.cit.*, p. 42, 43.

## 2. THE ORIGINS OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE ORDER OF ST. PAUL

The Pauline Fathers have made a significant contribution to our culture. The Order of St. Paul dates back to the 13th century.<sup>5</sup> It originated from hermit communities that united in Hungary. Initially, hermits in the Pannonian plain, Swabia and the Iberian Peninsula lived in small communities called cenobia. This form of a religious house dates back to the 4th century.<sup>6</sup> The seven-centuries-old architecture of the Order of St. Paul has some specific features that make it different from the monastic buildings of other religious communities. Father General of the Order once said that *This continued presence is, on the one hand, a source of genuine satisfaction, but, on the other, raises awareness of a great responsibility for the future based on such foundations. At such moments we refer to the Order's spiritual and cultural heritage. It has put its unmistakable Stamp on the history of the Church, Central Europe and, especially, on the history of Hungary and Poland ( ) the Pauline Fathers' contribution to Polish history and culture cannot be denied or underrated*<sup>7</sup>. The first monasteries of the Paulines were erected in similar locations, but their architecture varied. Between the middle of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century, when the Order was no longer a typical eremitic community, a certain pattern was established in the layout of monastic complexes, which usually comprised a large, oriented church linked through a chapel on its north side with a religious house – a monastery. In the 15th and 16th centuries, apart from new foundations, the Pauline Fathers also converted monasteries taken over from other religious communities. A distinct functional model of a monastic complex was thus established. It is still used in the newly-erected modern monastic complexes of the Order of St. Paul. The curator of the Jasna Góra collection once wrote: *The ideals cherished by the Paulines in the Middle Ages and in modern times are still pursued today. Wherever it is possible and required by the spirit of modern times, we see a direct continuation.( ) the venerable monasteries of the 'white monks' have not become lifeless museums of historic art and culture*<sup>8</sup>.

## 3. THE JUVENATE HOUSE OF THE ORDER OF ST.PAUL FROM 1936 TILL 1949

A special kind of a religious house is the Seminary<sup>9</sup>. It is a place of formation of clerics who obey the rules of monastic life and are provided with the necessary knowledge. On January 13, 1931, the central Board of the Order of St. Paul at Jasna Góra decided to have

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<sup>5</sup> E. Kisbán, *Historia Zakonu Paulinów Macierzystej Prowincji Węgierskiej*, (A History of the order of St Paul of the parent province of Hungary) Vol. I, Wydawnictwo Zakonu Paulinów, Jasna Góra 2009, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. B. Szewczul, *op.cit.*, p.14.: *Cenobitic monasticism was started by St Pachomius in the 4th century. He built cells for the monks who had lived as hermits before and rooms where they gathered for prayer, meals and work. A community of this type was referred to as cenobium.*

<sup>7</sup> Izydor Matuszewski, Father General of the Order of St.Paul. *Introcution* [in:] J. Golonka, J. Żmudziński, *Mecenat kulturalny i artystyczny paulinów polskich. Jubileusz 700-lecia Zakonu Paulinów*, (Sponsorship of culture and art by the Paulines of Poland. The 700th anniversary of the Order of St.Paul) Published by: Muzeum Częstochowskie, Jasna Góra, Częstochowa 2008, p. 4, 5.

<sup>8</sup> J. Golonka, J. Żmudziński, *op.cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> According to church law, a religious house is a place of formation. Due to its formal significance, the Seminary of a particular province is a special religious house.



III.1. Kraków, Skaleczna street (photo by A. Białkiewicz)

III.2. Facade of the Pauline Fathers' Seminary (photo by A. Białkiewicz)

III.3. The Pauline Fathers' Seminary, chapel (photo by A. Białkiewicz)

III.4. The Pauline Fathers' Seminary, corridor of the residential part (photo by A. Białkiewicz)

the Juvenate House built<sup>10</sup>. Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz was commissioned to design the building. Initially, he suggested a one-storey structure. However, in February 1931, the Order presented their program proposing the location of the building and its size<sup>11</sup>. The investor provided a detailed description, including a list of all the facilities and their layout on specific levels<sup>12</sup>. Shortly afterwards, the design of a two-storey building with an elongated rectangular floor plan and a flat roof was ready<sup>13</sup>. The building was to stand alongside Skalczna Street. The architect designed grand stairs with modernist decorative elements on the south side of the building. The north-west side was accentuated by a slightly projecting volume of the chapel with a characteristic horizontal band of stained glass, which referred to a similar solution used on the northern elevation for admitting light to the staircase. The whole structure was to be topped by a modernist tower. The project was not approved by the investor or the Voivodship conservator of historic objects. It was feared that the building with expressive modernist details would compete with the historic urban interior<sup>14</sup>.

After A. Szyszko-Bohusz had made the necessary corrections, the second version of the project was approved for implementation in August 1931<sup>15</sup>. The building, stripped of the original expressive detail, was moved away from Skalczna Street. This way, a view of the church and the monastery was opened from Skalczna Street. The dominating elements of the façade of the Juvenate house were the vertical staircase, slender buttresses and round windows of the chapel. The building was completed in 1935.

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<sup>10</sup> Archives of the Pauline Fathers at Na Skalce monastery in Krakow, inv. 383, p. 93: *the Central Board of the Jasna Góra Order decided to have a house for eighty seminarians built in the garden of the Na Skalce monastery. The house is to be designed by Szyszko Bohusz, PhD, an architect, professor and supervisor of the works on Wawel hill.*

<sup>11</sup> Archives of the Pauline Fathers at Na Skalce monastery in Krakow. C. M. C., inv. 1716: *A letter of February 25, 1931 from the monastery to the Rector: "As for the construction of the Juvenate house, we have heard from Father Bernard that your Eminence suggests a one-storey building so that it does not obstruct the view of the Skalka. On our part, as the house is to be built 4 or 5 meters away from the fence, it can have two floors ( ) The house is to have two parts with a 4–5 m wide corridor in the middle, on the south side: living quarters and classrooms, other rooms on the north side. In the basement :the refectory, boiler room for central heating, bathrooms, showers, storeroom, quarters for servants .*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>13</sup> A. Bialkiewicz, *Gmach zakonny a paradygmat luksusu / Monastic edifice and the paradigm of luxury*, [w:] *Oblicza modernizmu w architekturze*, "Śląsk" Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Katowice 2013, p. 18–20.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, a letter to A. Szyszko-Bohusz: ( ) *Father Prior suggests changes so that the house looks modest and he wants the tower and the outside stairs to be removed. ( ) He also asked me to inform you about his requests 1) the levels 4 m high, except for the basement, but he wants the refectory to be 5 m high which can be achieved by deepening it. 2) the recreational Hall also 5 m high. 3) the Chapel – 6 metres. 4) The corridor should be at least 4 m wide. 5) Instead of the stairs outside leading to the garden, there should be a hall like at the front. 6) Instead of the stained glass in the chapel and staircase, install circular windows at the top .*

<sup>15</sup> Archives of the Pauline Fathers Na Skalce in Krakow, inv. 383, p. 95: *20 VIII 1931. Plans for the construction of the Juvenate have been made. 29 VIII 1931. Today, a Municipal Committee has met to inspect the site and plans of the Juvenate. 1 IX 1931. Engineer Struszkiewicz has started land surveying works for the Juvenate.*

Originally, the house combined educational functions (a minor seminary) and residential functions (a boarding school). In order to meet the investor's precisely defined requirements, it comprised a chapel, a large recreational hall, classrooms of varying size, studies, teachers' rooms, lounges, bathrooms, infirmary and other utility spaces. Following several months of debates with Krakow's Department of Education, the official name was agreed: "Prywatne Gimnazjum Męskie im. Ks. A. Kordeckiego OO. Paulinów w Krakowie"<sup>16</sup> (Father Kordecki Private Male Gymnasium of the Pauline Fathers in Krakow). The house was designed for 80 pupils who lived and learned there, receiving formation for monastic life. The object met all the requirements needed for a religious house to function. It was modern and comfortable. The Paulines continued using it until 1949, except for the period between the end of World War II and March 1, 1946, when it was occupied by the Soviet army<sup>17</sup>. In 1947, part of the building was taken over by the state for educational purposes and turned into a dormitory for teachers attending training courses.

#### 4. THE JUVENATE HOUSE OF THE ORDER OF ST.PAUL FROM 1949 TILL 1991

On March 26, 1949, the Order was expropriated from the building, which was taken over by the Krakow District Education Department. Formally, it was no longer a religious house as it was no longer a dwelling place of a religious community. It housed a state comprehensive school. The chapel was liquidated and the building's interior was adapted to the new needs.

Over the 42 years that followed, the new owner failed to make the necessary refurbishments. The 55-year-old services were not repaired. The aluminium electrical wiring was still working. Central heating and plumbing were in a poor state. The leaking roof was repaired with layers of roofing paper, in some places, 10 cm thick, which overloaded the damaged roof framing. Peeling plaster, damp walls, damaged windows and door joinery contributed to the dismal condition of the building.

#### 5. THE JUVENATE HOUSE OF THE ORDER OF ST.PAUL FROM 1991 ON

In 1991, the Order of St. Paul repossessed the building whose technical condition was deplorable. At that time, Major Seminary occupied the monastery building where the attic

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 131: *The Order wanted the name to be: "Juwenat oo. Paulinów, Gimnazjum męskie im ks. A. Kordeckiego w Krakowie na Skalce" (the Pauline Fathers' Juvenile, Father Kordecki male gymnasium Na Skalce in Krakow) but the Department of Education did not agree and after 4 months of exchanging letters between Father Director and the authorities the agreed name was: "Prywatne Gimnazjum Męskie im. ks. A. Kordeckiego OO. Paulinów w Krakowie". (Father Kordecki Private Male Gymnasium of the Pauline Fathers in Krakow).*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, inv. 383, p. 223, 229, 252, 308, 326: *1.III.1946. – the Soviet soldiers have left the Juvenile; 27.IV.1946. – the seminarians have been transferred from the monastery to the Juvenile house; 19.VIII.1946. – some of the rooms have been rented to Augustinian sisters for a kindergarten; 30.VI.1947. – transfer of clerics to the Juvenile; 28.X.1947. – part of building taken over by the state for a dormitory for teachers attending training courses.*

space was also converted to meet its needs. However, there was insufficient space for lecture rooms, the standard of accommodation of over seventy clerics was very low. After the Juvenate house had been repossessed, it became necessary to consider the economic aspect of the necessary refurbishments and conversions. The cost of the latter proved to exceed the cost of having a new object built. Reusing the object meant adapting it to the needs of a major seminary, which involved functional changes. The object was to accommodate eighty clerics and have a chapel, lecture halls of varying size, a recreational hall, a library, studies for lecturers, a kitchen and a refectory. A gym was also considered, but the idea was finally dropped because of insufficient space. There were not enough rooms to be converted into accommodation for eighty clerics. The building was designed in 1931 with teenage inhabitants in mind, so most rooms and bathrooms were shared. The refurbishment and adaptive reuse were to result in double, triple and quadruple rooms and a greater number of bathrooms. Despite all the problems, the Order decided to have the building refurbished and adapted to contemporary requirements, as the object was a significant part of the Order's cultural heritage.

In order to increase the space necessary for contemporary conversions, it was suggested that a new level should be added. However, this solution was not approved by the conservator of historic objects. The building retained its original form. The attic was converted into accommodation space and skylights were installed to admit light. All the modernist details were restored and accentuated. The polychromy of the chapel was restored. The interior decoration of the chapel changed because of the new liturgy.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Major Seminary of the Pauline Fathers Na Skalice in Krakow is a religious house whose function has changed over the 80 years of its existence. Initially, it was a minor seminary; then, a state comprehensive school, and now, it is a major seminary. Although, formally, it did not function as a religious house when it was occupied by a state comprehensive, its architecture and location continued to bear witness to its identity as a religious house.

Current conditions, standards and needs make religious houses and other objects change their functions completely. Religious houses are, in a way, elements of the cultural heritage of the religious communities for whom they were built. It is not only material, but also spiritual heritage, as they are often places of worship. This is the reason why they are particularly protected. It is a significant fact that the buildings have retained their original functions and their owners treat them with due care. At this point, it is worth pointing out that the number of abandoned religious buildings, including religious houses, in Europe has been growing. There are many reasons for this. In Poland, this is not a large-scale phenomenon. It is also worth pointing out that the Order of St. Paul not only repossesses its monastic buildings, but also takes over objects abandoned by other religious communities.

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