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„LATVIJAS ARCHITEKTŪRA” (1938-1940):

NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF BALTIC MODERNISM IN AUTHORITARIAN LATVIAN REPUBLIC

Table of Content

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

„Latvijas Architektūra”, the first architectural periodical

1.1 Chronology of Latvian architectural print-media

1.2 Authors and content of „Latvijas Architektūra”

CHAPTER 2

National aspirations and pluralist realities

2.1 Dominant narratives of „Latvijas Architektūra”

2.2 National against international, the conflict

2.3 Hybrid realities: synthesis of modern and classical

Conclusions

Bibliography

Abstract

Increasingly, the attention of the architectural history researchers is drawn to periodicals of the 20th century. However, “Latvijas Architektūra” (1938-1940), the first Latvian architectural magazine, is not yet well known outside of its place of origin. Latvian Republic was among the young independent states, which emerged in Europe after WWI and later on became authoritarian. The national awareness increase and the political environment’s change found their reflection in the interwar architecture and its central print media – “Latvijas Architektūra”.

This article consists of the analysis of 22 digitally available magazine’s issues out of the 24 existing ones. “Latvijas Architektūra” was given its position in the overall chronology of Latvian architectural journalism. Further study focused on the magazine as a published media, investigating the relations between authors and content. Recurring ideas of monumentality, social and green attentiveness, and search for a national expression were identified as dominant narrative, drawing parallels to the ideological agenda of the period. The conflict of

the national and international was examined from a wider perspective, looking for similar tendencies in neighboring territories.

It was found that more recent Latvian architectural publications are even less studied than “Latvijas Architektūra”. The magazine, though written in times of censorship and limited political freedom, did not promote a single idea. It rather became a source for public debate, reflection and observation, showing on its pages both the harsh criticism of modernism and descriptions of modernist projects. Architecture of Latvian Republic, being a synthesis of modernist, classical and vernacular, embodied a contradictory nature of visions that shaped it.

Introduction

As a consequence of political power redistribution after World War I and growing national awareness among previously subjected lands, a number of newly independent European republics arose, including the Baltics – Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. In the first decade of its independence, which was proclaimed on November 18th 1918, the built environment of Latvian Republic faced multiple challenges – necessity to repair the cities' parts destroyed in the war, to solve the emerging housing crisis and to transform the capital Riga from a former provincial city into a modern metropolis. The second decade, however, brought another significant change in the political state of Latvia – it established an authoritarian regime, after the coup of Kārlis Ulmanis in 1934. The interwar architecture of Latvian Republic was shaped under the influence of various aspects. The pre-war stylistics continued their development in the new republican reality in line with the international trends of modern movement on one side and local discussions on the need of a national expression in architecture on the other.

In the environment saturated with confrontational discourses the first Latvian architectural periodical “Latvijas Architektūra” originated. The magazine, published in the final independent years of the already authoritarian republic, is a testament of the narratives that dominated the Latvian architectural area in that period. The shift of political background brought new requirements to the architecture of a young republic. In addition to its intended purpose, it had to represent the legitimacy and welfare of the new state in the worldwide cultural space. “Latvijas Architektūra” as a central architectural media of the late 1930s can be a helpful source in tracing the existing ambitions in architecture, their implementation and representation to masses. However, it is impossible to analyze the journal without taking into consideration the historical context it was published in. The analysis of the magazine's content reveals a noticeable ideological agenda, which can be inscribed in the bigger picture of authoritarian reality.

This article aims to contribute to the global research of modernist periodicals by introducing “Latvijas Architektūra” and its dominant narratives to the wider international audience. Recently considerable attention was brought to study of architectural periodicals of the 20th century, however, “Latvijas Architektūra”, unlike many other modernist magazines, seems to be yet unknown outside of Latvian field of architectural history research. The most extensive existing study on Latvian interwar architecture is a book of prof. dr.arch. Jānis

Krašņiņš “Latvijas Republikas būvmāksla”, which widely mentions “Latvijas Architektūra” among the great deal of its information sources (Krašņiņš, 1992). The non-Latvian architecture historians, which are well familiar with the topic of Latvian Republican architecture and, accordingly, existence of “Latvijas Architektūra”, are Mart Kalm – Estonian modernism expert, and Steven Mansbach, who devoted a number of his works to the architecture of the Baltic republics. The work of Suzanne Pourchier-Plasseraud “Arts and a Nation” discusses the formation of Latvian national identity through visual arts, mentioning the architecture of the Ulmanis period (Pourchier-Plasseraud, 2015). Polimi's project “Mapping the Discourse” included the analysis of the 20th century architecture periodicals in the curriculum of the history course for architecture masters. After six years of work, around fifty journals from 18 countries were analyzed from various perspectives. Although the research by Polimi might be the most profound, it doesn't observe any Latvian architecture journals yet (Caramellino, 2021).

In the beginning of this article the history of “Latvijas Architektūra” is presented. The magazine is given its position in the overall chronology of Latvian architectural periodicals. Further, the analysis observes the magazine as a published media – it explains who was involved in the production and what the issue consisted of. The next chapter highlights recurring ideas from articles and defines them as dominant narrative, proposing association with the authoritarian agenda. The conflict of national and international, evident in the magazine, is afterwards compared to actual built development of the period. It is supplemented by the international academic background, drawing on texts of Kalm, Šlapeta, Cohen et al on the theme of Eastern-European and Central-European modernism.

CHAPTER 1

„Latvijas Architektūra”, the first architectural periodical

1.1 Chronology of Latvian architectural print-media

The representation of architecture in mass media, similarly to the overall evolution of architectural thought, is characterized by successive development. As the primary role of periodicals is capturing the current events, the built environment's transformation has always been a significant topic for discussion.

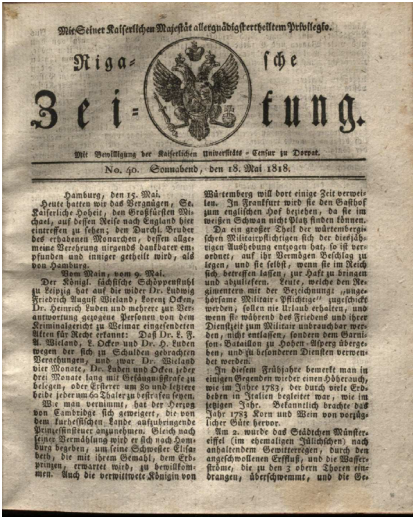
Throughout the 19th century periodicals in Latvia, which back then was part of the Russian Empire, were sometimes touching on the theme of architecture. The updates on the current architectural competitions, for instance, were published in various local German-language newspapers, such as “Rigasche Zeitung” (1802-1919), “Düna Zeitung” (1887-1917), “Rigasche Rundschau” (1895-1939) etc (Leitāne-Šmīdberga, 2015). Later on, they continued to appear in the established Latvian-language daily newspapers. These notes not only informed about the ongoing competitions, but also provided the results of past competitions supplemented with the jury commentaries, critique and graphic material. Moreover, already in the 19th century foreign architectural journals were available on the territory of Latvia (Lejnieks, 2008). There was, however, no unified media platform yet that would share the achievements of local architecture and provide space for open public dialogue.

The first attempt in creating a periodical that would speak about modern Latvian architecture is “Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst in den Ostseeprovinzen” - a work of Architects' Association of Riga. A richly illustrated yearbook included examples of Fine Arts from contemporary Latvia and Estonia, and was published from 1907 to 1913 with an additional last edition in 1926. Architect's Association of Riga, founded in 1889, was the first professional union of architects in Latvia and consisted mostly of Baltic Germans. Even in the independent Latvian Republic the reestablished Association continued to be German-oriented with the vast majority of its members still representing Baltic Germans. The lack of a Latvian-oriented union resulted in the formation of the Architect's Association of Latvia in 1924. A year after, Pauls Kundziņš made an agreement with „Ilustrēts Žurnāls” to create a section about architecture under the edition of the AAL members (Lejnieks, 2008). The diversity of topics in the published articles went from descriptions of projects and recent architectural exhibitions to theoretical manifesto-

like texts. Although it was still about a decade before the first independent architectural magazine appeared, this section brought its creation one step closer. In 1927 the AAL discussed the possibility to start a separate magazine, but concluded it to be unprofitable (Lejnieks, 2008). However, the discussion was often brought back over the next few years. Another periodical, related to the presented storyline, is «Latvijas Inženieru un Tehniķu Kongresa Biroja Žurnāls». It was supervised by the Congress of Latvian Engineers and Technicians from 1923 to 1928 and covered the themes of civil engineering. Even though the AAL did not at first participate in the production of this journal, some members, Pauls Kundziņš for instance, joined the editor's team in 1928 after the rebranding. Until 1930 it was published under the name «Tehniskais Žurnāls», but still focused mainly on technical aspects of the construction.

Alongside with the proclamation of the authoritarian regime the censorship was introduced in 1934. 54 print-medias all over Latvia were immediately closed. Four years later, the press law was updated. Although the first point of the law stated that „the main task of Latvian press is to promote the development of the spiritual and material culture of Latvia”, the second point already drew the boundaries saying “In Latvia, there is freedom of the press within the limits of this law” (Treijs, 1999). The 12th point elaborated that every periodical must „promote the nation's aspirations for unity and consensus, popularize the ideas of May 15 in the nation, support the work of the government in cultivating the political, economic and cultural life of the state and the people”.

In parallel, the AAL continuous debate on creating their own architectural magazine has reached its peak and in July 1938 the first Latvian architectural journal “Latvijas Architektūra” originated. It was published monthly until 1940, in total counting 24 issues. Among the activities that associations of architects undertook in order to popularize architecture in society, “Latvijas Architektūra” is the AAL's initiative. In addition to AAL and AAR in the mid 1930s young professionals created the Architects' Union, which mainly focused on urban planning and issues of multi-apartment housing design. The AU contributed to the development of Latvian architecture through the organization of professional events, exhibitions, lectures



1 Rigasche Zeitung, Nr.40 (18.05.1818)



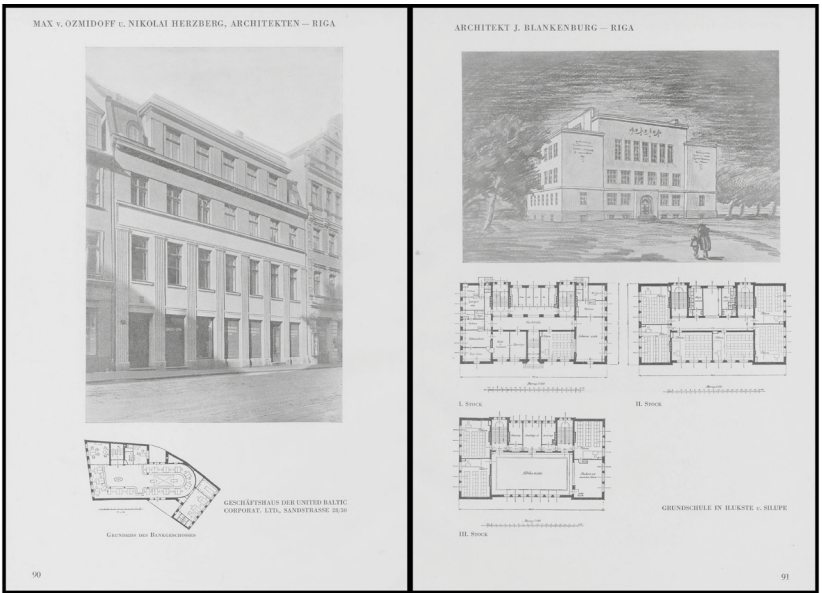
2 Düna Zeitung, Nr.85 (15.04.1897)



3 Rigasche Rundschau, Nr.258 (13.11.1898)



4 Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst in den Ostseeprovinzen, Nr.8, 1926 - cover



5 Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst in den Ostseeprovinzen, Nr.8, 1926



6 Ilustrēts Žurnāls, Nr.5 (01.05.1927) - cover



7 Ilustrēts Žurnāls, Nr.8 (01.08.1927) - article written by AAL member T. Brensons



etc (Krastiņš, 1992). The annexation of the Latvian Republic in 1940 by the Soviet Union ended a twenty-year period of independence and the magazine, despite the pro-Soviet introductory words in the last of its issues, for some reason stopped further publication.

The chronology of architectural journalism after WWII can be subdivided into two categories - publications created by the AAL members in exile and publications of Soviet Latvia. After the war, most Latvian architects immigrated to different parts of the world (Lejnieks, 2008). As a way of maintaining professional relationships among expatriate architects, the magazine «Arhitekts» was created in 1950 in Stockholm. Initially an A5 format brochure was published irregularly, with long interruptions until 1993. The chief editors were P. Kundziņš, who moved to Canada, and R. Legzdīņš, who worked from Sweden. The magazine discussed the architecture of the countries where the AAL members lived at the moment, and sometimes covered the architectural events in their homeland Latvia. In 1980 the AAL members started another periodical „Architektu kopraksts”. It was produced until 1989 from the USA and shared among architects in the form of photocopies as a means of internal communication among former colleagues (Lejnieks, 2008).

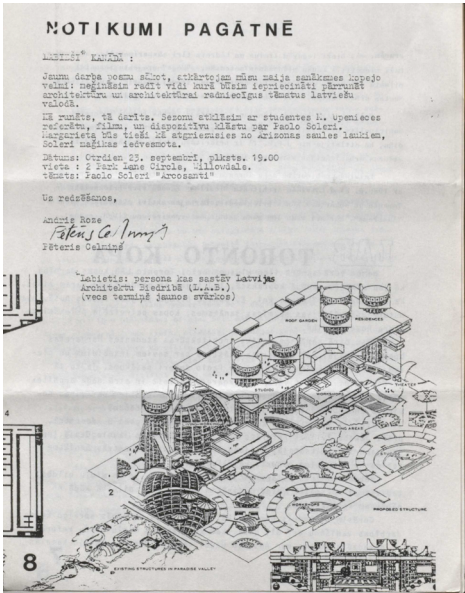
Speaking about the Soviet Latvia, a separate architectural magazine no longer existed. Articles on architecture were once again published in various art magazines such as “Māksla” and „Literatūra un Māksla”. The press censorship was still active. In 1978, the magazine «ACD» was created, which stands for «Architecture, Construction, Design», and it was published until 1981 (Lejnieks, 2008). At the dawn of the Soviet Union in 1989 the Latvian Union of Architects attempted to resume the publication of the late 1930s periodical. A single issue of the magazine titled “Latvijas Arhitektūra” was published under the editorial of Uldis Pīlēns, in which the iconic essay «Arhitektūras tautiskums» by Janīna Jasena, firstly published in the 1940 issue Nr.1 of “Latvijas Arhitektūra”, was reprinted. Moreover, it included stories about Latvian architects abroad.

On May 3, 1990, the process of restoring independence began. As a result, after about a year Latvia left the USSR and was again recognized as an independent democratic republic. From 1995 to 1999 the publishing house «Baltika» produced the magazine «Latvijas Arhitektūra. Dizains. Interjers. Dārzs» every two months. In 1999 the magazine was rebranded and published by the publishing house «Lilita» with the support of the Latvian Union of Architects under the name «Latvijas Arhitektūra». The choice of a name is curious, since the word architecture in modern Latvian is translated as

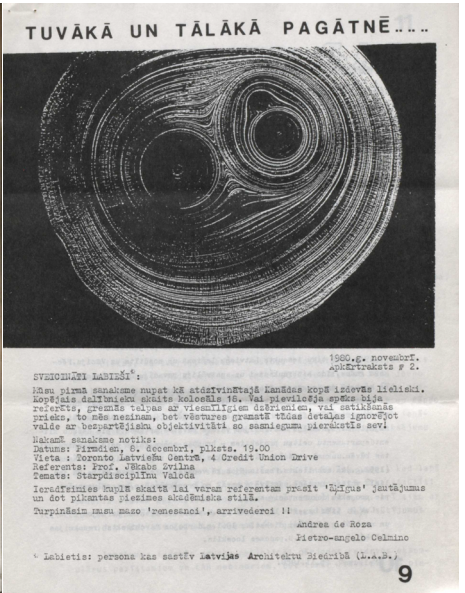
arhitektūra, so the retention of „ch” positions the new magazine as a continuation of its legendary predecessor. At the moment, 158 issues have been published and the magazine remains the central architectural periodical in Latvia. The new millennium and the development of information technology has introduced a new platform for publishing. Digital architectural media began to appear, such as the a4d.lv portal created in 2003. However, in order to grasp the whole spectrum of architectural publications in the contemporary Latvian media another research would be needed. In the context of this article, mentioned publications only demonstrate the chronological succession in the changing realities of the Latvian state's life in order to provide a general understanding.



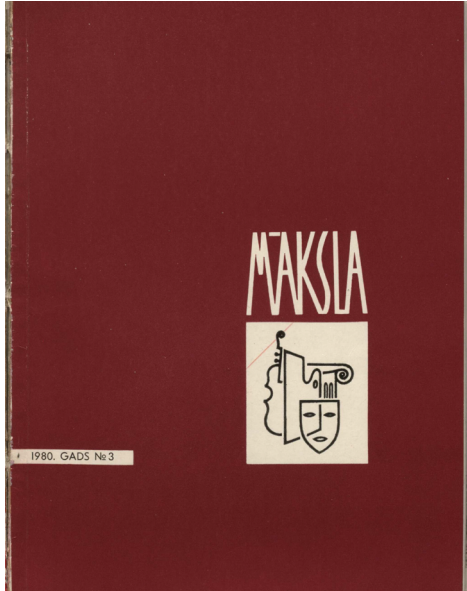
15 Latvijas Arhitektu Biedrība. Kopraksts., Nr.46 (01.12.1980) - cover



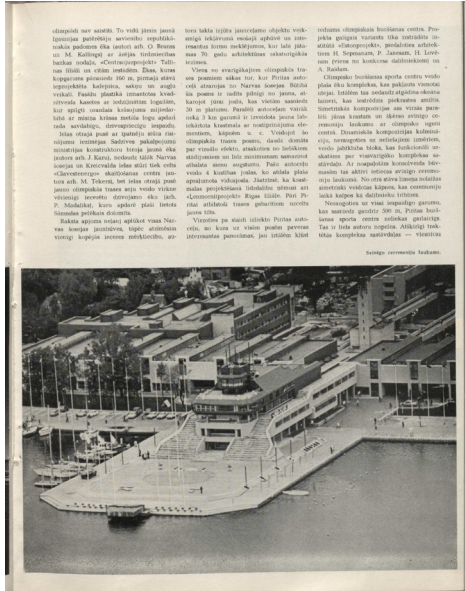
16 Latvijas Arhitektu Biedrība. Kopraksts., Nr.46 (01.12.1980)



9



17 Māksla, Nr.3 (01.07.1980) - cover



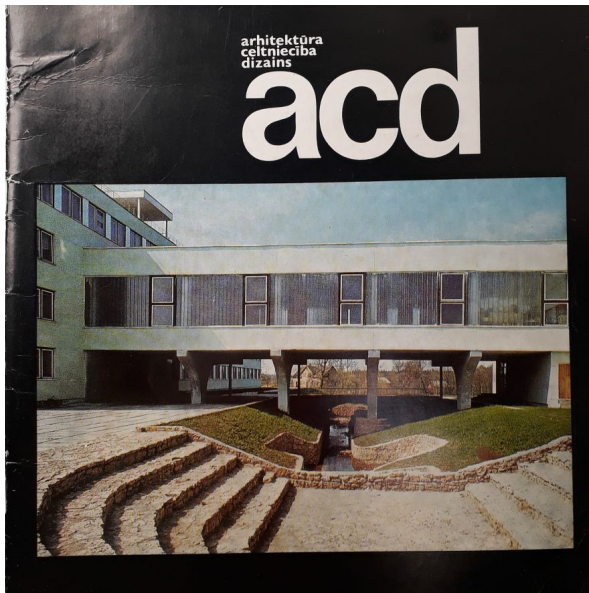
18 Māksla, Nr.3 (01.07.1980)



19 Literatūra un Māksla, Nr.24 (16.06.1973) - cover



20 Literatūra un Māksla, Nr.24 (16.06.1973)



21 acd, 1978



22 acd, 1978



23 Latvijas Arhitektūra. Dizains. Interjers. Dārzs, Nr. 3, 1996 - cover



24 Latvijas Arhitektūra. Dizains. Interjers. Dārzs, Nr. 3, 1996



25 Latvijas Architektūra, Nr. 158, 2022 - cover



26 Latvijas Architektūra, Nr. 158, 2022



27 Latvijas Architektūra, Nr. 158, 2022

CHAPTER 1

„Latvijas Architektūra”, the first architectural periodical

1.2 Authors and content of „Latvijas Architektūra”

As previously mentioned, the original “Latvijas Architektūra” was a work of the Architect’s Association of Latvia. Prof. dr. arch. Jānis Lejnietis, who as well is the editor in chief of the contemporary edition of “Latvijas Architektūra”, assumes that the magazine was self-financed. The end of each issue was accompanied with a number of advertisements, however, Lejnietis suggests that the first issue could have been subsidized (Lejnietis, 2008). The editorial committee, according to the magazine, was formed by Eduards Grosbergs, Eižens Laube and Jānis Rutmanis. The last two of them took an active part in writing articles.

A typical issue at first presented a selection of “main” articles, an average of about five. Combined issues, such as “LA” 1938 Nr. 4/5 or “LA” 1939 Nr. 4/5 for April-May, included more main articles - 11 and 9, respectively. The articles were followed by a series of either regular or frequent columns. The «Technique» talked about innovative materials and construction technology. The competitions section informed about current competitions and conditions of participation. Sections «Works and Auctions», «Chronicle» and «Institutions and Organizations» touched upon the topics of architectural practice, legislation etc. «Thoughts and Observations» consisted of articles that went beyond project descriptions or historical essays, which usually were included in the main body of the magazine. This section, as well as the introductory articles in individual issues, was a place for reflection and one’s position manifestation. The literature column included lists of foreign architectural journals available in Latvia and titles of their previous articles organized by topic. Sometimes there were notes about new books or compiled lists of articles on construction from Latvian press. Most of the main articles were supplemented with short summaries in English.

The architect Jānis Rutmanis (1894-1978) was the editor in chief of „Latvijas Architektūra”. In addition to journal work and active architectural practice, he was a professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Latvia. During the analysis* of the journal’s main articles, six articles by Rutmanis were detected. Among them are a review of the largest architectural exhibition of Latvian Republic (Rutmanis, 1939), an introduction to an article about the graduation projects of the Faculty of

Architecture (Rutmanis, 1940) and analytical descriptions of various completed projects, none of which, surprisingly, were of his authorship. A special place is occupied by his article on residential houses designed by Latvian architects for themselves. Rutmanis’ narration, accompanied by photographs, illustrates the houses of the architects G. Verners, P. Kampe, A. Kalniņš and A. Birkhāns (Rutmanis, 1939).

Prof. dr. arch. Eižens Laube (1880-1967) is a key figure in the history of Latvian architecture. After graduating from the Riga Polytechnic Institute and years of work in the bureau of another acclaimed Latvian architect K. Pēkšens, he founded his own practice, which already before the war became one of the largest in Riga and won several competitions. He taught at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Latvia, and was twice the Dean of the Faculty and once the Rector of the University. In addition, he is known for his theoretical works on architecture «Par būvniecības stilu» (1908) and «Krāsu un formu loģika» (1921), and a number of essays. During the Ulmanis period, he was appointed chairman of the Architectural Commission of the National Construction Committee. Among the articles written by Laube for „Latvijas Architektūra” are the introductory words to the first issue, two articles on his contemporaries and their activities - Jānis Alksnis (Laube, 1939) and Pauls Kundziņš (Laube, 1938), and three articles discussing Latvian architectural forms (Laube, 1938), the development of Latvian architecture in the independent republic (Laube, 1938) and, a similar one, about spirit of architecture in the renewed Latvia (Laube, 1939).

Osvalds Tīlmanis (1900-1980), who at the time of „Latvijas Architektūra” production was the chief architect of Riga and one of the chairmen of the Architect’s Association of Latvia, numerically wrote the largest number of articles. The topics of his articles varied like no other. Among them are a description of the results of the Victory Square competition (Tīlmanis, 1939), an article about Kundziņš in the issue dedicated to him (Tīlmanis, 1938), and introductory words to two issues – „LA” 1938 Nr.1 and „LA” 1939 Nr.8, an extensive discussion on the construction achievements of Riga in recent years (Tīlmanis, 1939), descriptions of two projects, one of which was his authorship, and much more.

** As part of this article, 22 out of 24 magazine’s issues were read and analyzed. The combined issue Nr.10/11 of October-November 1940 has not yet been scanned and is not available in the unified digital archive of periodicals periodika.lv.*

The repeatedly mentioned Pauls Kundziņš (1888-1983) was an architect, a professor at the Faculty of Architecture, a researcher of traditional Latvian architecture, a founder of the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia, a member of several councils and commissions etc. In 1933, he defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic „Dzīvojamā rija Latvijā” about traditional buildings that combined residential spaces with barns for drying and grinding grain. The bulk of the articles written by Kundziņš for „Latvijas Architektūra” were historical essays, with the exception of a review of the 1939 housing award (Kundziņš, 1939) and a laudatory article for Eižens’ Laube jubilee (Kundziņš, 1940). Another architect who had a similar fascination with the history of Latvian architecture was Pauls Kampe (1885-1960). His articles about the interiors of Riga residential buildings of the 17th and 18th centuries were included in the March and August issues of „Latvijas Architektūra” in 1939. In the issues, dedicated to Kundziņš – „LA” 1938 Nr. 6 and Laube „LA” 1940 Nr. 4 he as well wrote articles about their creative activities.

In addition to the above architects, 42 other authors wrote their articles in the journal. For a number of articles the author is not indicated, and for seven others the author is signed as «p». Slightly more than half of the reviewed articles are descriptions of completed projects - 63 articles. Forty of them are written by architects about their own work. At the same time, some articles include more than one project. The second position is shared between the competitions’ result descriptions, articles on personalities, and, with a slight difference, thoughts. Considering the historical articles published by „Latvijas Architektūra”, supplementary to the texts of Kundziņš and Kampe, there is one article each by H. Skrastiņš about the baroque church in Apriķi (Skrastiņš, 1940), a phd summary of A. Krūmiņš about the wooden churches in Latgale of the 18th century (Krūmiņš, 1940) and the last lifetime article of V. Penģerots about the evolution of the Latvian Song Festival buildings (Penģerots, 1938).

Speaking about the role of female architects in the creation of the magazine, it is not as notable as the participation of their male counterparts. In addition to the mentioned essay of J. Jasena, which will be discussed in more detail in subchapter 2.2, there are two descriptions of Elfrīda’s Legzdiņa projects –railway stations’ landscaping “LA” 1938 Nr. 4/5 and two projects of gardens for children’s institutions “LA” 1939 Nr.7. Moreover, the February issue of 1938 tells about the new Ziedoņdārzs garden. In the article A. Kalniņš is mentioned as the garden’s pavilion author. He had, however, a joint architectural practice with his wife architect Emma Kalniņa (1899-1985), who

was involved in the design of the said pavilion (Eniņa, Beitane, 2018). The June 1940 issue’s article on the recent graduation projects of the Faculty of Architecture includes a work of a graduate Iza Putniņa for a kindergarten in Riga. According to the list of members of the AAL, published at the end of „Latvijas Architektūra” April 1940 issue, out of 82 association members only eight were women.

Tirdzniecības un rūpniecības a/s „KIEGELIS” Rīgā, Raiņa bulvārī 11
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Būvniecībai
Kūstiem elementiem
Kūstiem
Ventilēm
Armatūrai
„Newalls” izolācijas masai

Gāzes aparātiem „JUNKERS”
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Būvuzņēmējs

A. MISIŅŠ

R I G Ā,
Marijas ielā Nr. 123
Tālrunis 92919

Būvmateriāli

JĒKABS PILVERS

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Kantoris un dzīvoklis:
Avotu ielā Nr. 11. Tālrunis 32379

KALĶUS perkot būvniecībai, krāsošanai, remta mēlo-
darbām, mazamērogiem, kas garantēti labi precī
par mērogiem cenām bez maksas

A/S-bas „KALĶIS”

Cenā uz vietas vienā sabiedrības piederības
kalnā dedzināšanas:

Nedēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 25,— to
Dēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 22,—
Balta māla Ls 58,— līdz 65,—

Cenā nodiktava:

1) Rīgā, Sarkanās ielā Nr. 56, tālr. 32980;
Nedēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 25,—
Dēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 22,—
Balta māla Ls 58,— līdz 65,—

2) Cēlos, Būvniecības ielā 18, tālr. 333;
Nedēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 25,— to
Dēstīti mīrkaļķi Ls 22,—
Balta māla Ls 58,— līdz 65,—

Akaiņpriežu un ielākiem būvniecī-
bai, apmetot pilnas vagonas, sevīks rabas.
Kalnā piegādājam par mērogiem transporta atli-
dzes uz būves vietām, kā arī ielākiem va-
gonā.

A/S „KALĶIS”
kantoris Rīgā, 18. maija ielā Nr. 1, tālr. 29732.
Kalnā dedzināšanas:
Kalkūnā, tālr. Nr. 9.
Nīrānā, tālr. Nr. 41.
Alūksnē, tālr. ielā Nr. 249.

J. Birkenfelds

Būvgaldniecība

R I G Ā,
Augustines ielā Nr. 7
Tālrunis 94232

Z. Levins

**Būvskārdniecība,
skārda, šifera,
papes jumtu
un asfalta
darbi**

**Šoseju darvošana
un bitumēšana
Kanalizācijas darbi**

R I G Ā, Augustines ielā Nr. 13
Tālrunis 91738
Dib. 1955. g.

A/S.

G. ŠENFELDS

dib. 1872. g.

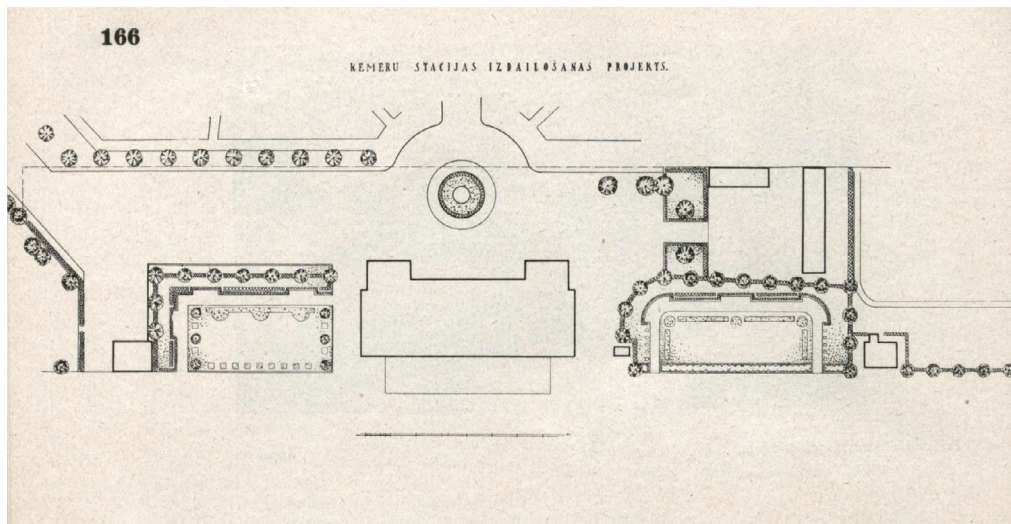
L. Grēcinieku ielā Nr. 14
NODAĻA:
Matīsa ielā Nr. 29

Būvapakalumi
Mēbeļu apkalumi
Lielā izvēlē pēdējie jaunumi

27 advertisements in the end of «Latvijas Architektūra», Nr.1, 1938

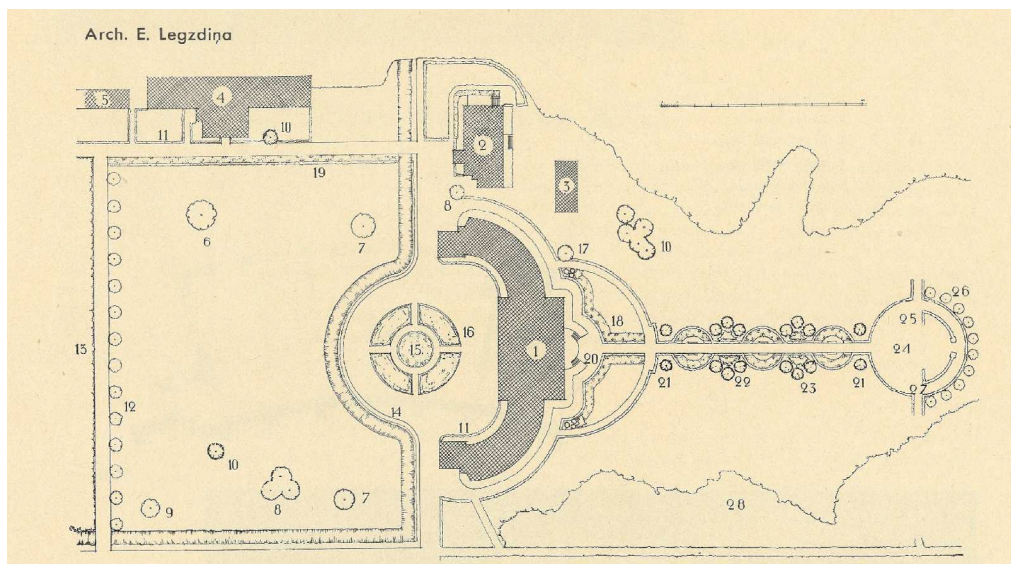
28 single-family house of A. Kalniņš in Mežaparks (Rutmanis, 1939)

29 P. Kampe's summer house in Ogre (Rutmanis, 1939)

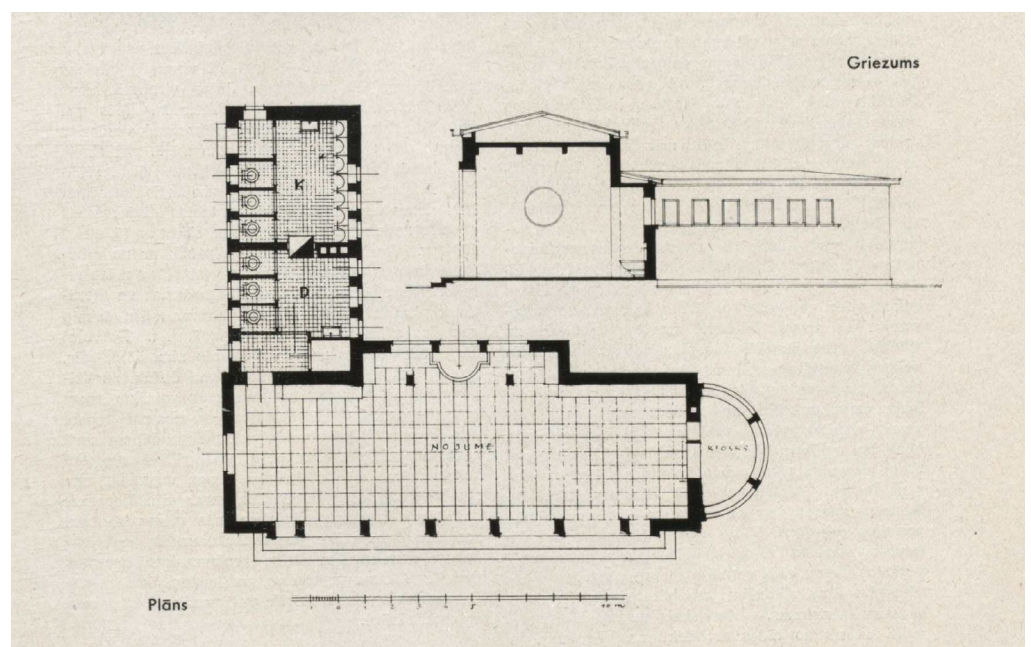


33 Landscaping project at Kēmeru Station (Legzdina, 1938)

34 Sanatorium garden project (Legzdina, 1939)



35 Pavilion in Ziedoņdārzs, arch.-s A. Kalniņš, E. Kalniņa (Rutmanis, 1938)

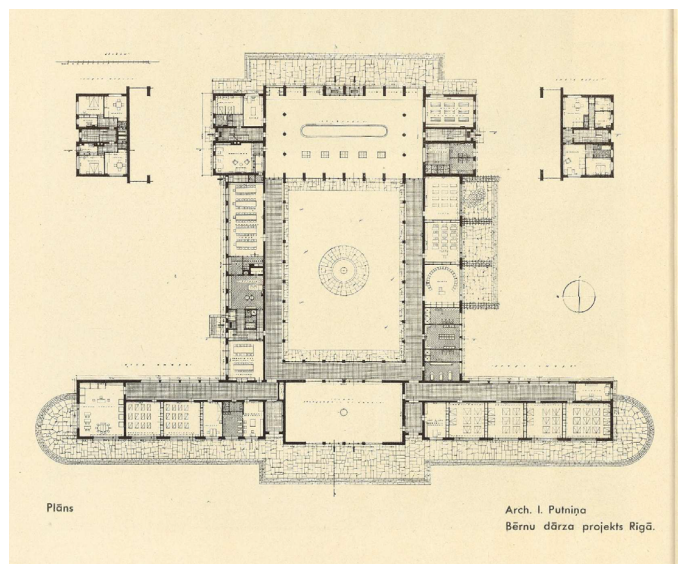




Paviljons. No dienvidiem.
Arch. A. Kalniņš

71

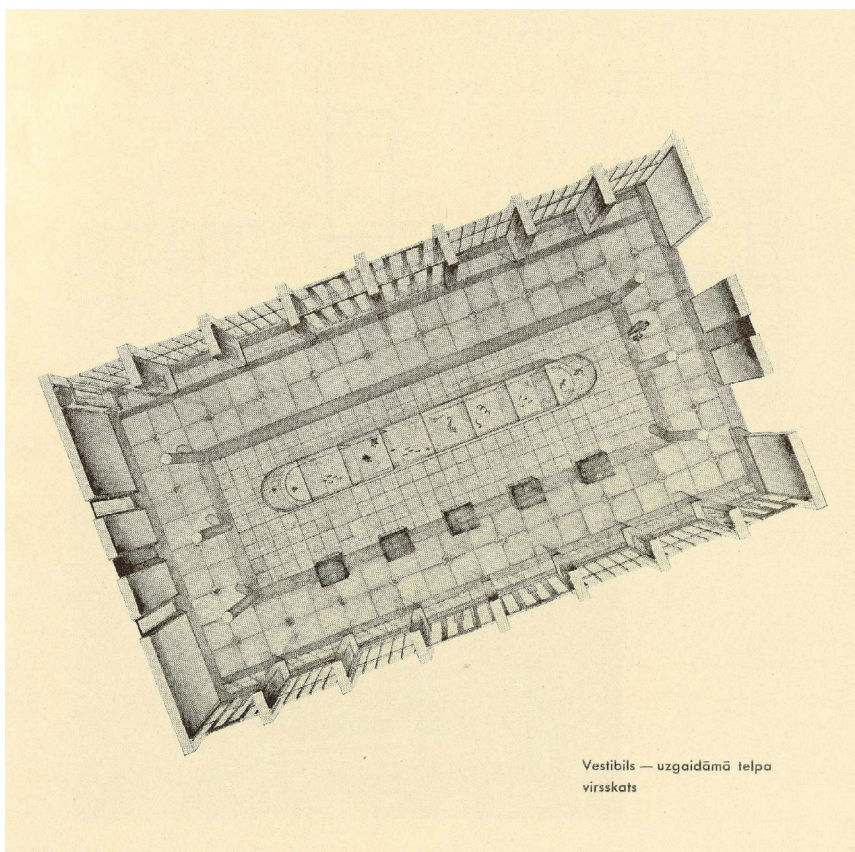
36 Pavilion in Ziedoņdārzs, arch.-s A. Kalniņš, E. Kalniņa (Rutmanis, 1938)



Plāns

Arch. I. Putniņa
Bērnu dārza projekts Rīgā.

37 Kindergarten in Riga, arch. graduate
I. Putniņa «Latvijas Arhitektūra», 1940, Nr.6



Vestibils — uzgaidāmā telpa
virsskats

CHAPTER 2

National aspirations and pluralist realities

2.1 Dominant narratives of „Latvijas Architektūra”

As a result of the analysis of the main articles from the 22 available issues of the magazine out of the 24 existing ones, recurring themes were noticed. The author of this article conditionally defined these topics as: monumentality, the social factor, green development and the national question. This work interprets these themes as the dominant narrative of „Latvijas Architektūra”.

Louis's Kahn definition of monumentality in architecture is “a spiritual quality inherent in a structure which conveys the feeling of its eternity, that it cannot be added to or changed” (Kahn, 1944). Among the projects that will be discussed further, monumentality is primarily observed in their scale. Ambitious projects aimed to create the image of an advanced modern state for the young republic. During the authoritarian period, the trend towards monumentality intensified by the polemics of Kārlis Ulmanis. An article from the illustrated weekly magazine «Atpūta» from 1937, titled «Riga becomes Latvian», begins with an Ulmanis' quote about how Riga, with its new squares, buildings, gardens and streets, is brushing off the dust of old times. The narration is accompanied by a massive portrait of Ulmanis and a collage of recent year large-scale projects (Atpūta, 1937). The vision of the great Riga of the future suddenly appears in one of the „Latvijas Architektūra” issues. The stained-glass window created by the glass painter Sigismunds Vidbergs in 1936 for the former Congress House, now the Great Guild, was signed in the magazine as «Building a New Riga». Behind the ruined medieval houses of the Old Town, shown in the foreground, powerful high-rise buildings strive with their grandeur up to the sky (p, 1938).

The completed large-scale projects represented on pages of „Latvijas Architektūra” are the Army Economy Department Store in Riga (Galindoms, 1940) and the Unity House in Daugavpils (Vitands, 1939). A colossal building of the period is the Palace of Justice by F. Skujiņš, finished in 1938. However, this project is mentioned in „Latvijas Architektūra” only in relation to the description of the new statue of Justice by K. Zemdega in its entrance hall (LA, 1940 Nr. 5). Another huge administrative building, the Ministry of Finance by A. Klinklāvs, surprisingly, is not shown in the magazine. The construction work began in 1937 and until WWII has not been completely finished. In addition to administrative buildings, the magazine

included large-scale building projects of other functions, such as an airport, educational institutions, a factory etc.

Among the unrealized grandiose projects shown in „Latvijas Architektūra”, one can list the reconstruction project of 13. janvāra street, the bridge from Kr. Valdemāra street to Pardaugava district with a large-scale urban redevelopment of the adjacent area, as well as competition projects for the Victory Square complex and The Post Office Savings Bank in Riga. Nevertheless, these examples that have remained in history rather as “paper architecture” serve as confirmation of the Latvian architectural thought's grandeur. On the initiative of Ulmanis, a territory in the Riga Old Town was assigned for the new administrative buildings. This required demolition of a significant number of medieval quarters and a redevelopment of the street system. However, the tendency to neglect the historical heritage in order to create a new urban environment with hypertrophied free-standing buildings and straight wide streets, according to J. Krastiņš, was characteristic of almost all countries at that time, and especially the totalitarian ones (Krastiņš, 1992). Krastiņš partly attributes this to the influence of Le Corbusier, whose ideas were well-known and appreciated in Latvia. A curious, and even unusually avant-garde concept, was described in one of the „Thoughts” sections. The anonymous author „p” criticized the location of airports on the cities' outskirts, because the journey to them is „boring” and takes much time. As an alternative, he proposed to unite Zaķu and Zvirgzdu islands in the center of Riga and place an airport there. He referred to the utopian concepts of an airport over the railway station in Munich and A. Lurcat's project from 1932, where in the center of Paris over the Île aux Cygnes it was proposed to place an elevated airport platform. “P” commented: “These proposals are called utopias by sensible people. But utopias end up being funny once someone has the courage and opportunity to make them happen” (p, 1938).

Looking at the actual scale ratio of projects published in „Latvijas Architektūra”, subdividing them into categories, one can notice that large-scale projects are less than a quarter of the total project number. The most represented are the projects that the author of this article conventionally defined as „medium scale”. Among them, as especially monumental, could be mentioned the lion

pen for the Riga Zoo (Kalniņš, 1939) and the crematorium in Riga (Tilmanis, 1939). The second position is taken by a separate category of housing projects, which includes both private villas, standard projects and housing for workers. A single-family residential house, as a result of the agrarian reform, has become an ideal for most Latvians (Krastiņš, 1992). This idea is embodied in the inscription on the pre-war façade designed by K. Pēkšēns, stating “Mans nams – mana pils” which means “My home is my castle”. Only one of the housing projects is characterized as large scale, which is the apartment building at 90 Brīvības Street (Rengarts, 1938). The length of the facade along Brīvības Street is about 210 meters. The ground floor is devoted to commercial premises, and 115 apartments are located on the upper four floors. In projects of a smaller scale, such as representative interiors for administrative buildings, monuments and even sculptural groups next to some buildings, there is a similar presence of monumentality. It follows from this that the sense of monumentality is encoded not in scale, but in the very nature of the architecture of Latvian Republic.

Numerous projects of non-commercial public buildings and the general strive to improve the living conditions of residents characterize the Latvian republican architecture as attentive to the social factor. Two issues of „Latvijas Architektūra” document the projects of the new large-scale municipal swimming spaces. The one closer to the city center, on Zvirgzdu island (Kiršbergs, 1939), with a capacity of 1500 visitors, was surpassed by a bigger one, meant to accomodate for up to 2000 persons per day, and located next to Kīšezers lake in the suburbs of Riga (Tilmanis, 1938). Another example is the review of an award for the best design of a multi-apartment house, which took place in 1939. The Municipality of Riga has taken this initiative in order to promote the development of the apartment culture in the capital city (Tilmanis, 1940). Moreover, the analyzed issues of the magazine included three projects of the recreation premises for the workmen – the one of the Riga Municipal Tramway workshops (Bode, 1939), of the Public Cleanliness Section of the Municipal Real Estate Administration (Krūmiņš, 1939), and of the “C. Ch. Schmidt” cement factory (Laukirbe, 1939), accompanied with a project of housing for the director and the workmen of the same factory in another magazine’s issue (Laukirbe, 1940). Educational institutions were actively built and repaired. The emphasis on educational policy led to the fact that already in 1930 the illiteracy rate in Latvia was 13.5% of the total population (Krastiņš, 1992). In 1938, 47% of 838 Latvian schools had new buildings. O. Tilmanis in his article “What and how the capital Riga has built for public needs in recent years”

mentions that over the past five years 9 schools have been built and expanded in different capital’s districts (Tilmanis, 1939). The emphasis on green development continues the general theme of urban environment improvement. “Latvijas Architektūra” presented two projects of the new parks, both located outside of the capital center – the previously mentioned Ziedoņdārzs and the one on the corner of Balvu Street and former Latgales Street, now known as Maskavas Street.



Kara muzeja mēts.

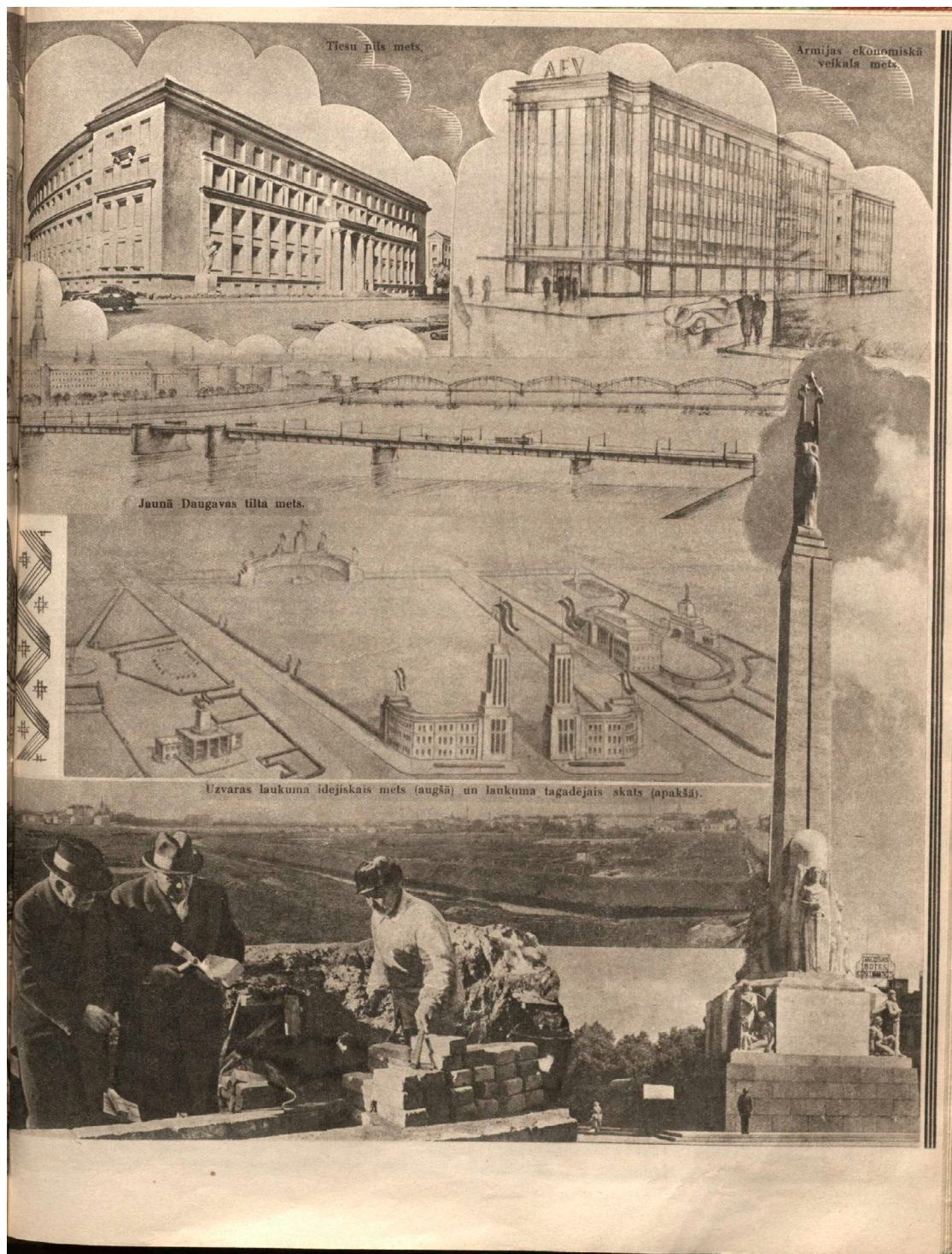
Finanču ministrijas jaunā nama mēts.

Rīga top latviska

„Latviskā Rīga ar saviem jaunajiem, plašajiem skatiem, ar jauniem laukumiem, ar jaunām celtnēm, jauniem dārziem, jaunām ielām — kā pērle iznirst no veeo laiku putekļiem un gruvelēm,“ sacīja valsts prezidents Dr. K. Ulmanis pagājušos Latvijas neatkarības svētkos.

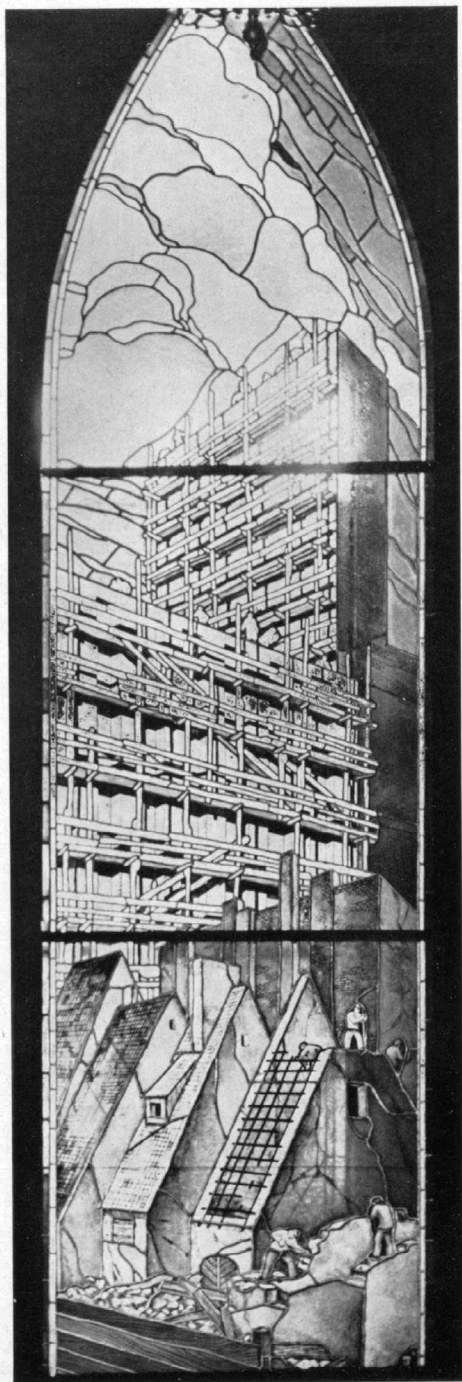
Rīgā, tiesām, sācies radošas jaunbūves laikmets. Pastaigājoties pa Rīgas ielām, paskatāties, kas tur notiek. Rīgā celj jaunus, lielus namus. Rodas laukumi, kas ir par daļumu un krāšņumu un par liecinieku, ka mūsu dzīve attīstās. Jaunais laiks, kas devis garam tiesības un iespēju vadīt mūsu dzīvi, nospaudis arī mūsu celtniecībā jaunus mērķus, kuru uzdevums ir paust un liecināt paaudžu paaudzēm, ko latvju tauta, būdama brīva un noteicēja savā zemē, var un spēj veikt, lai padarītu savu nacionālo dzīvi stipru un daļu. Šis monumentalās celtnes, ko sniedzām attēlos, ir pirmās, kas ievada ceļu uz mūsu sirmās galvaspilsētas arhitektonisko izdaiļošanu. Vislielākais piemineklis valdības laikmetam būs Uzvaras laukums. Tautas atsaucība Uzvaras laukumā izbūves lietā izvērtusies patiesībā daudz plašāka, nekā sākumā varēja likties. Atsaucība no pilsoņu puses ir daudz sirsniņāka, dzīvāka un plašāka. Laukuma izbūvei jau savākti pāri par 2 milj. latu.

Rīgas Latviešu biedrības nama mēts.

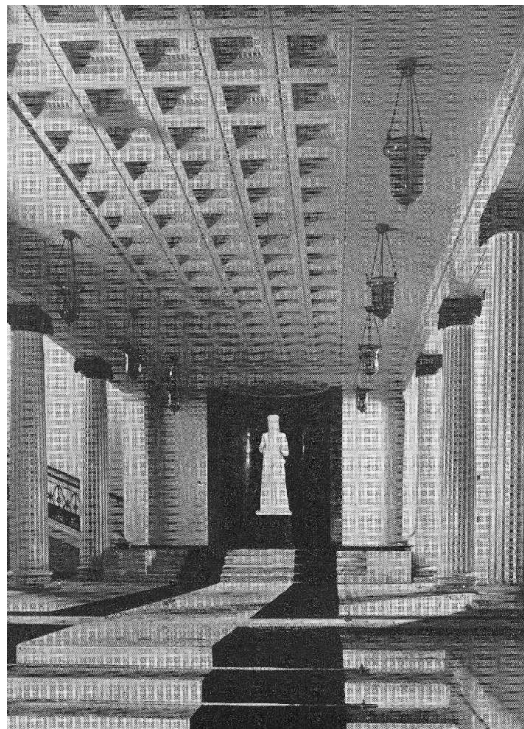


Jaunās Rīgas
celšana

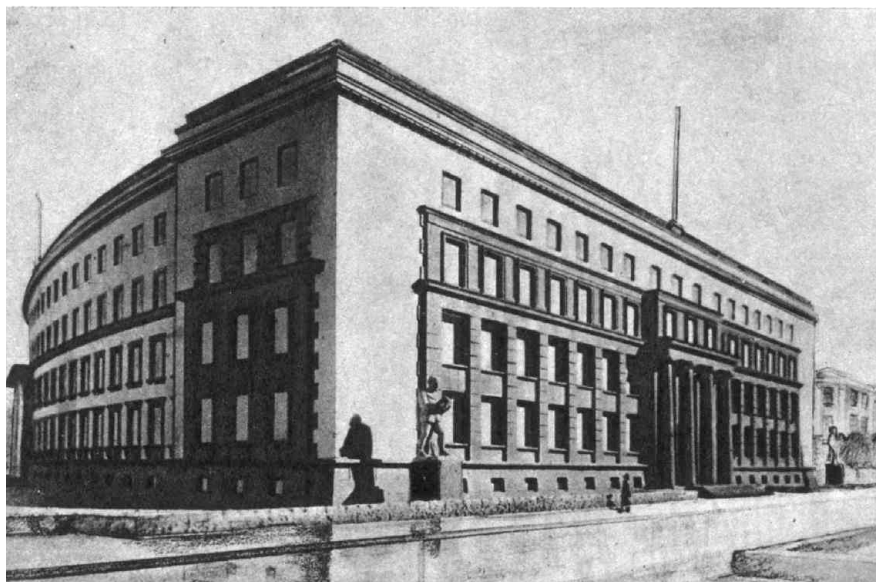
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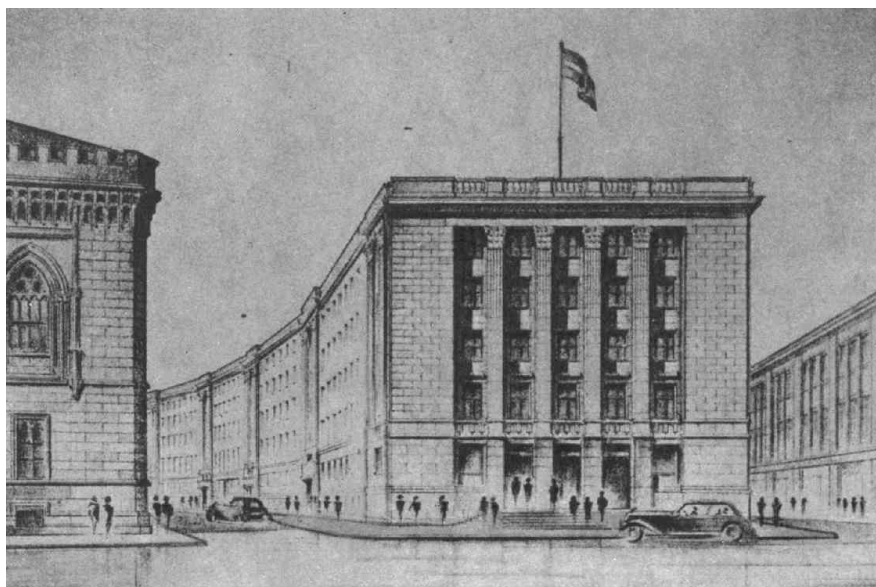
Kongresu namā,
Rīgā. 1936. g.
90 × 330 cm.



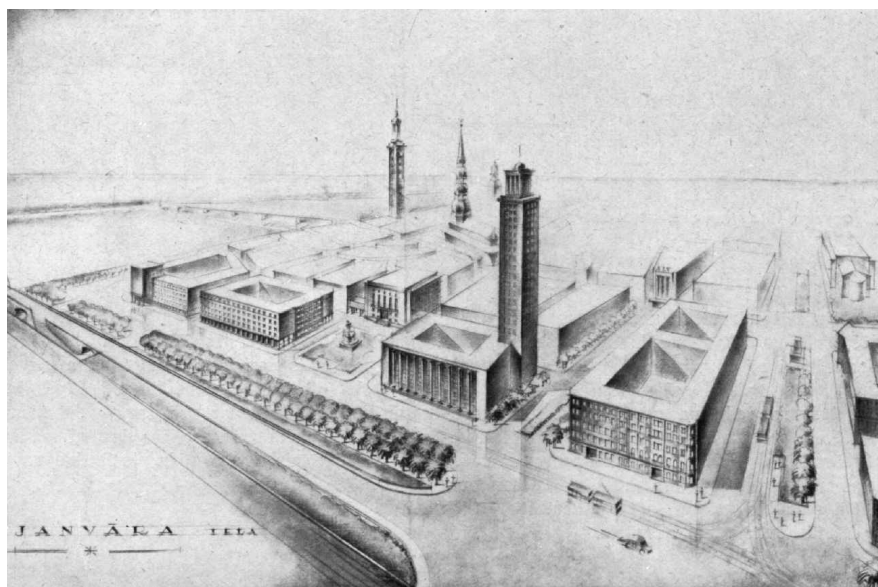
40 Statue of Justice in the Palace of Justice,
art. K. Zemdegis. «Latvijas Arhitektūra», 1940, Nr.5



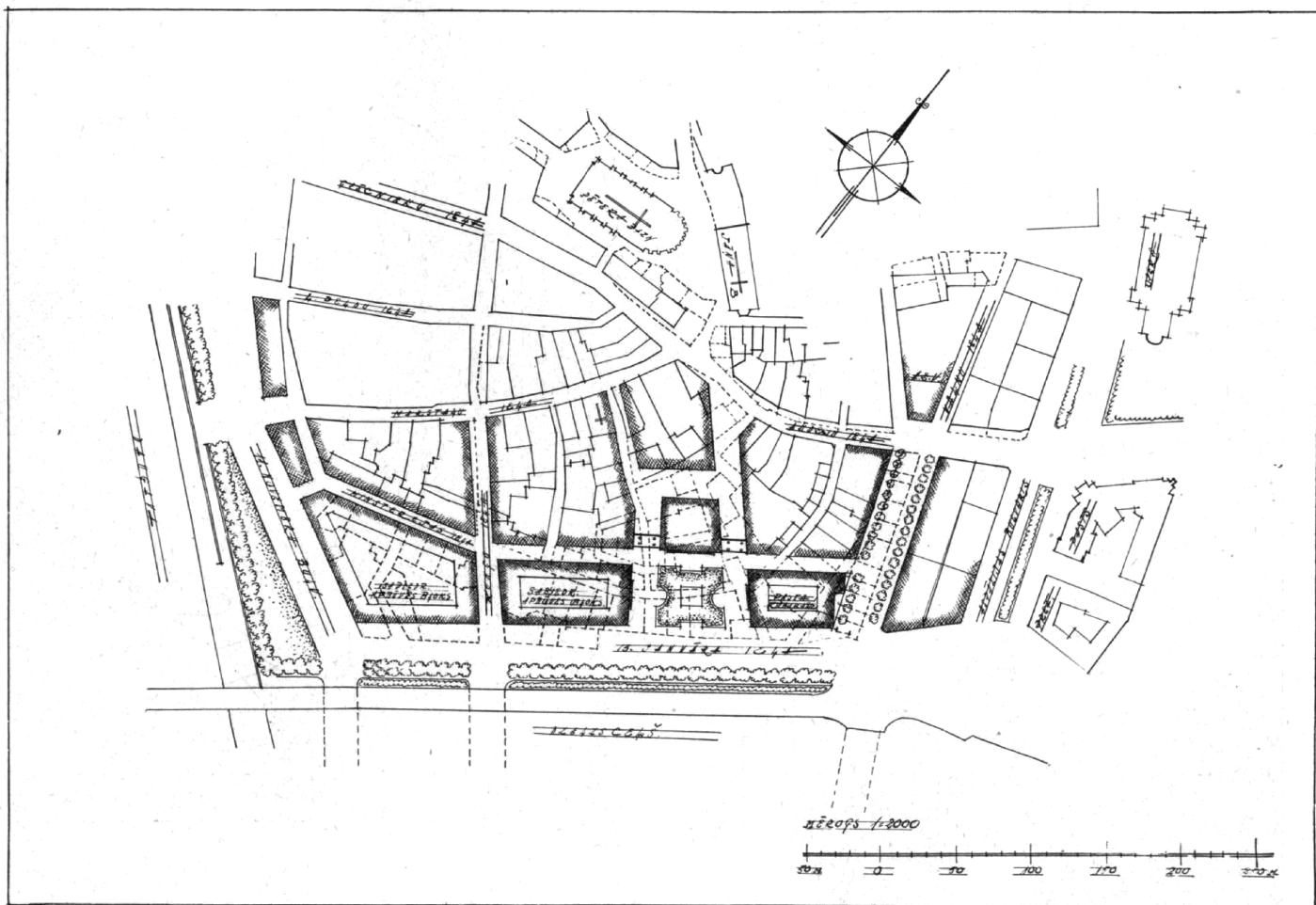
41 Palace of Justice, arch. F. Skujiņš, 1936. Senatne un Māksla, 1939, Nr.1



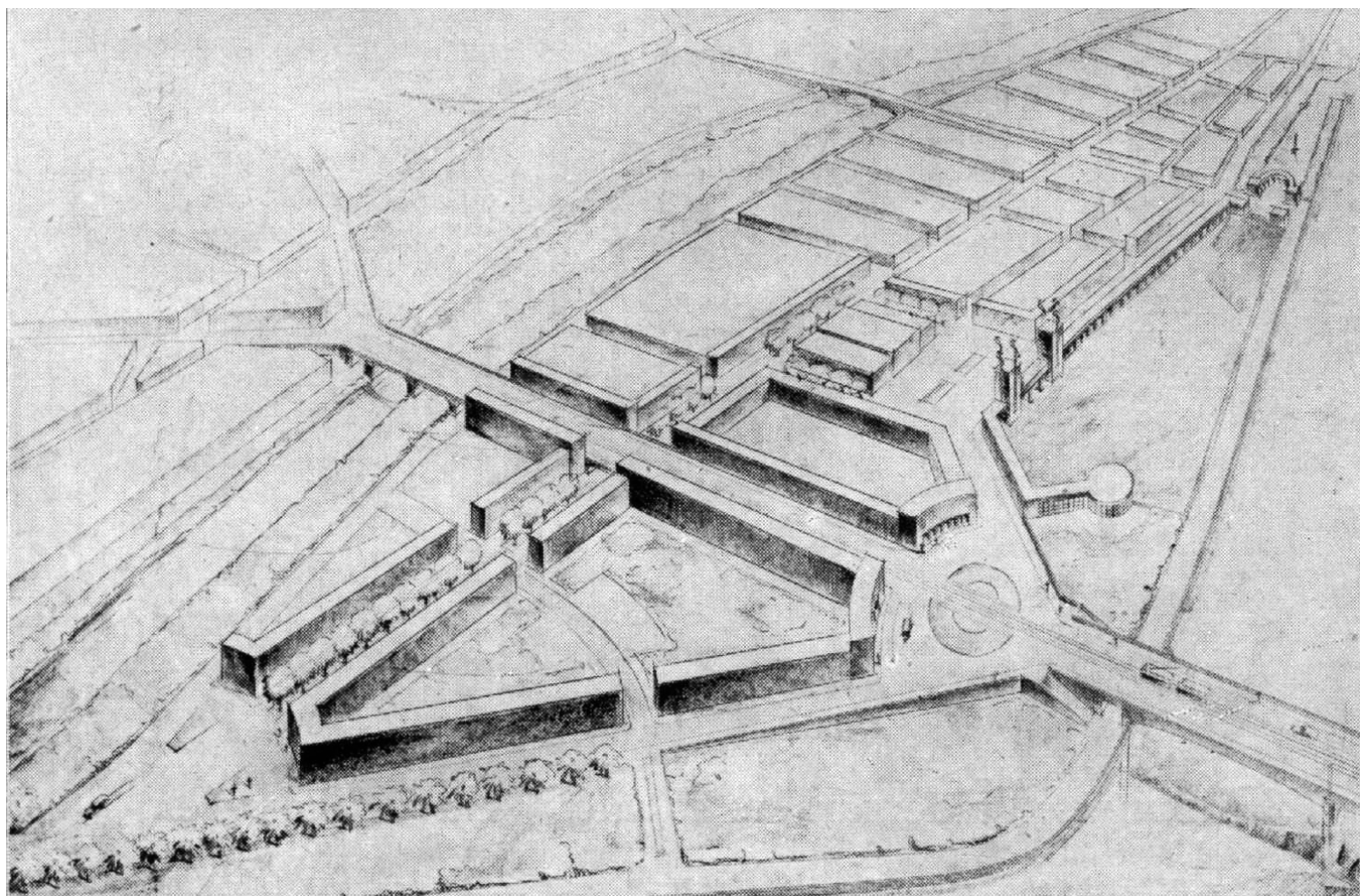
42 Ministry of Finance, arch. A. Klinklāvs, 1940. Senatne un Māksla, 1939, Nr.1



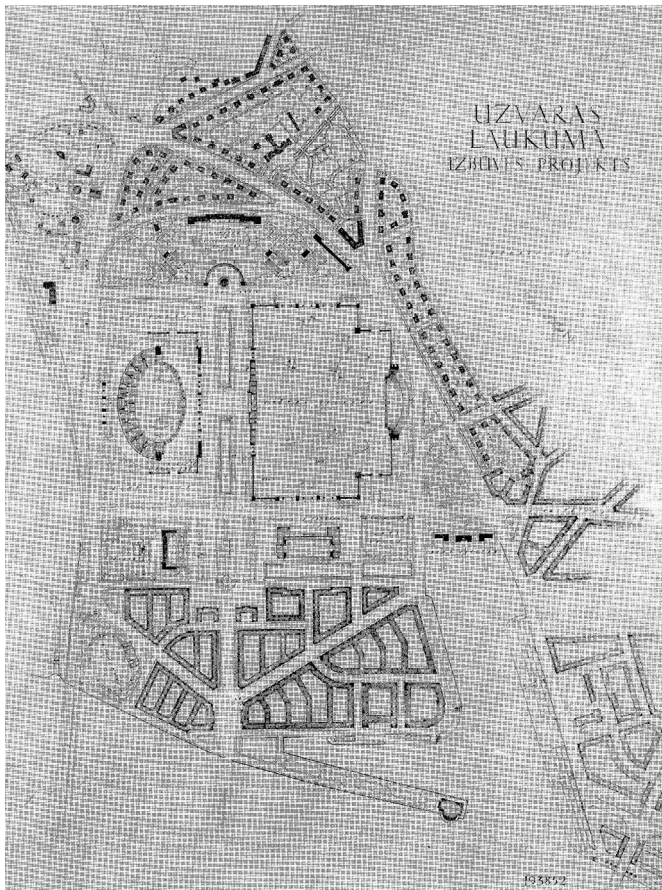
43 Reconstruction project of 13. janvāra street and the Post Office Savings Bank. (p, 1939)



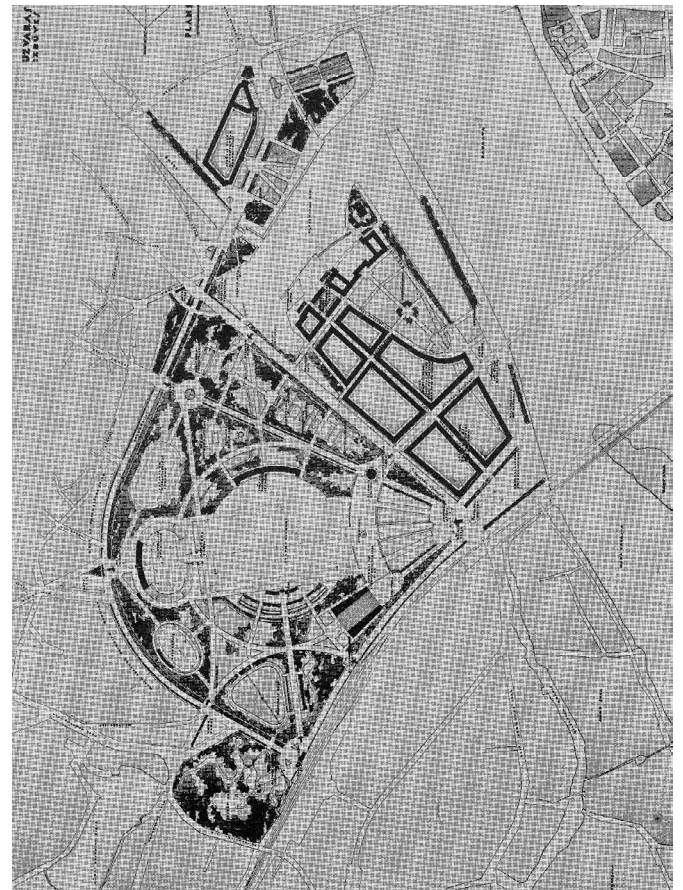
44 Old Town redevelopment plan (p, 1939)



45 Kipsala redevelopment plan (Leimanis, 1938)

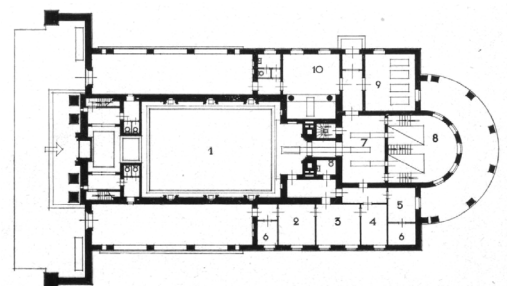
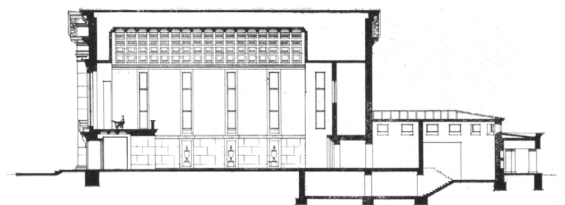
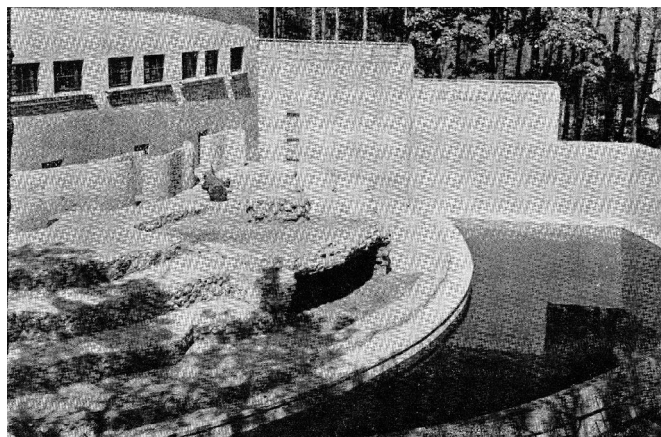
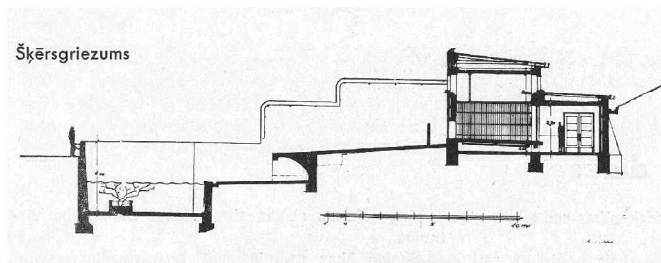


46 Victory Square competition proposal, I prize. Arch. F. Skujiņš, G. Dauge (Tilmanis, 1939)

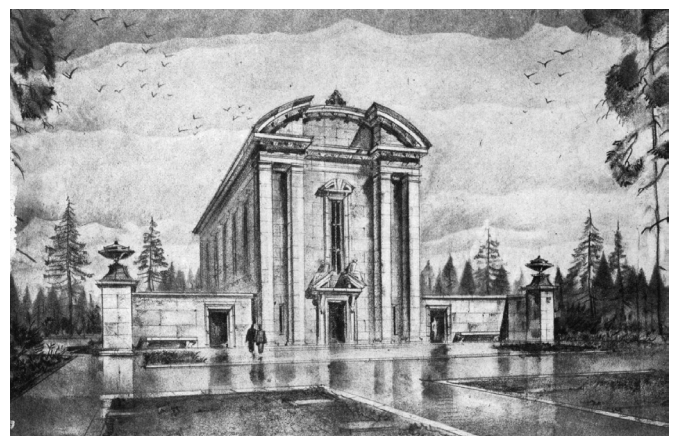


47 Victory Square competition proposal, II prize. Arch. V. Zebauers (p, 1939)

48 Lion pen for in Riga Zoo (Kalniņš, 1939)

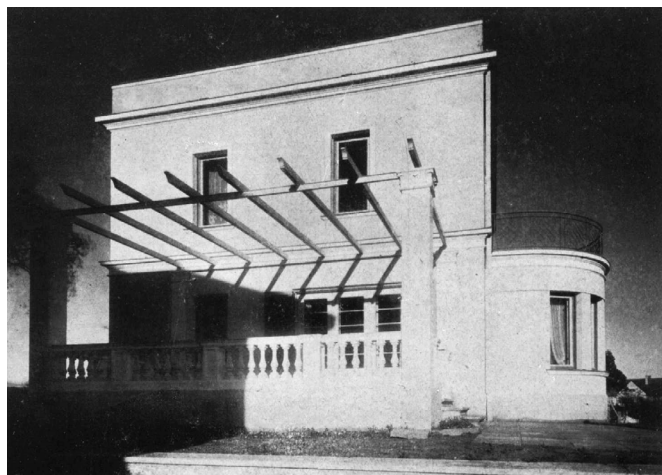


49 Crematorium in Riga (Tilmanis, 1939)





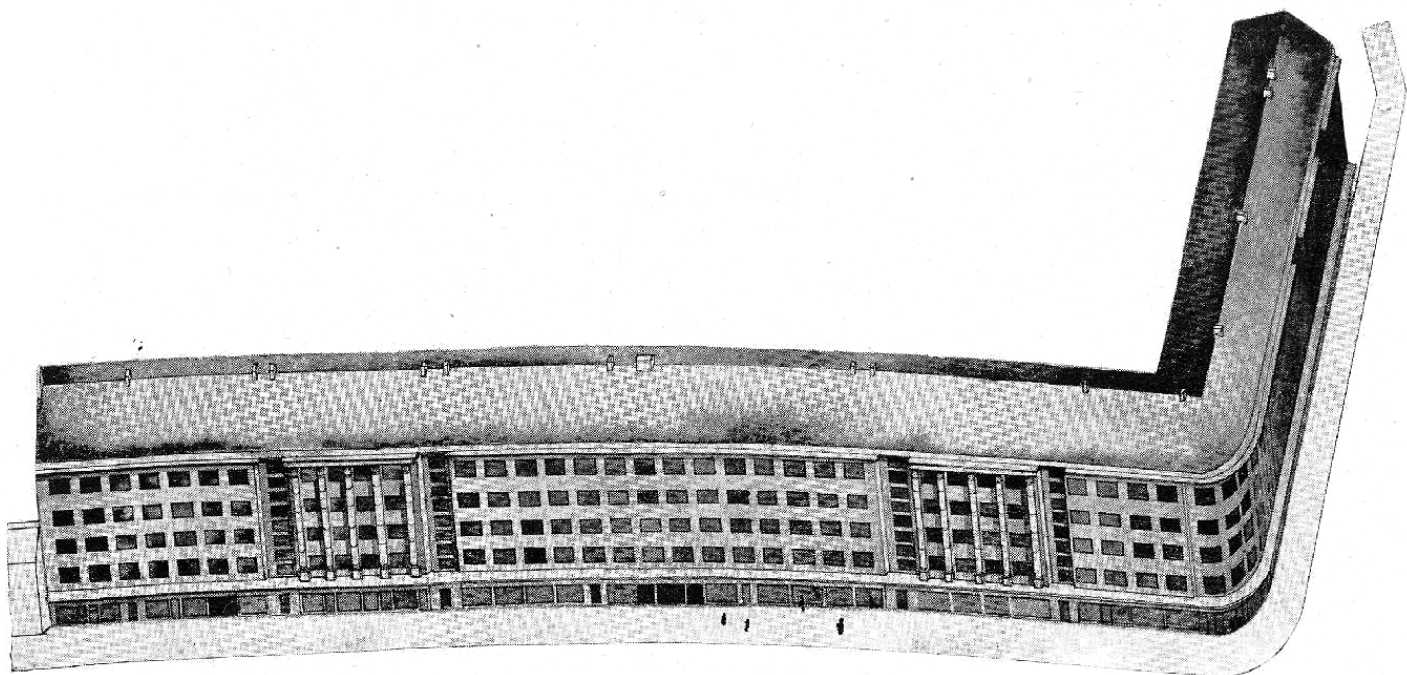
50 «My home is my castle», arch. K. Pēkšēns, 1905, 26 Aleksandra Čaka Street
(span_tourist, 2012)



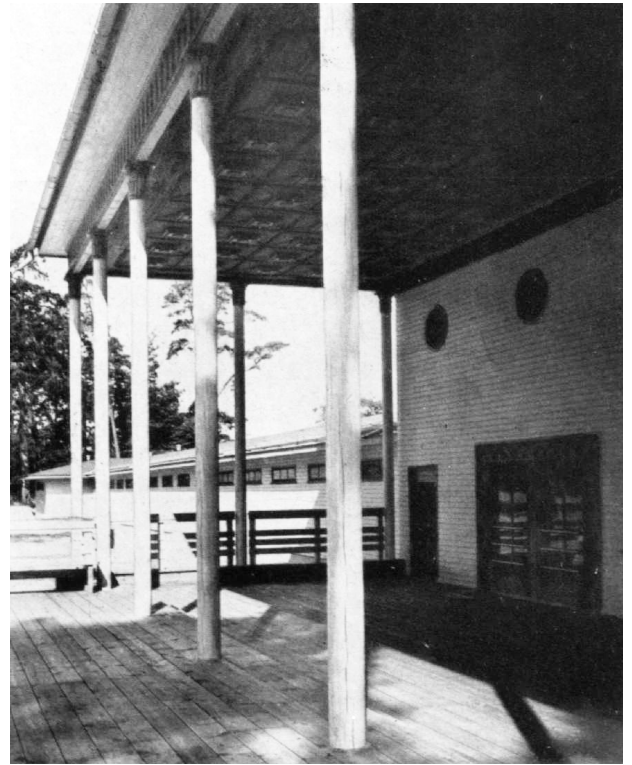
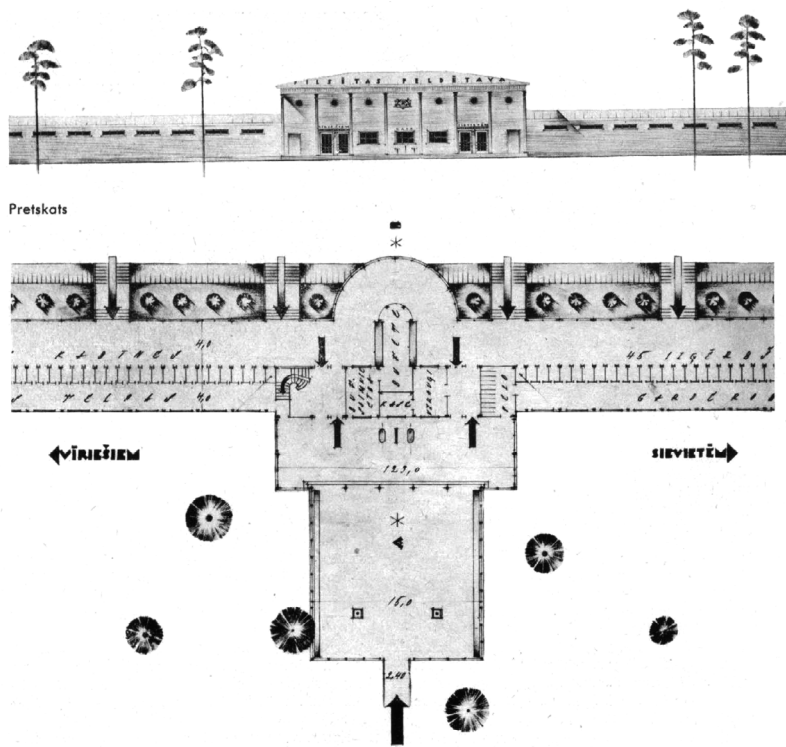
51 Residential house in Mežaparks, arch. A. Vilmanis (Vilmanis, 1938)



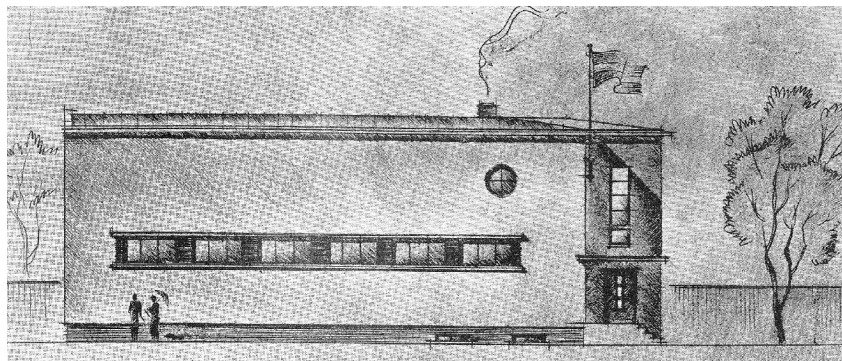
52 Fountain in the courtyard of the apartment block, author R. Maurs, 1930 (p, 1938)



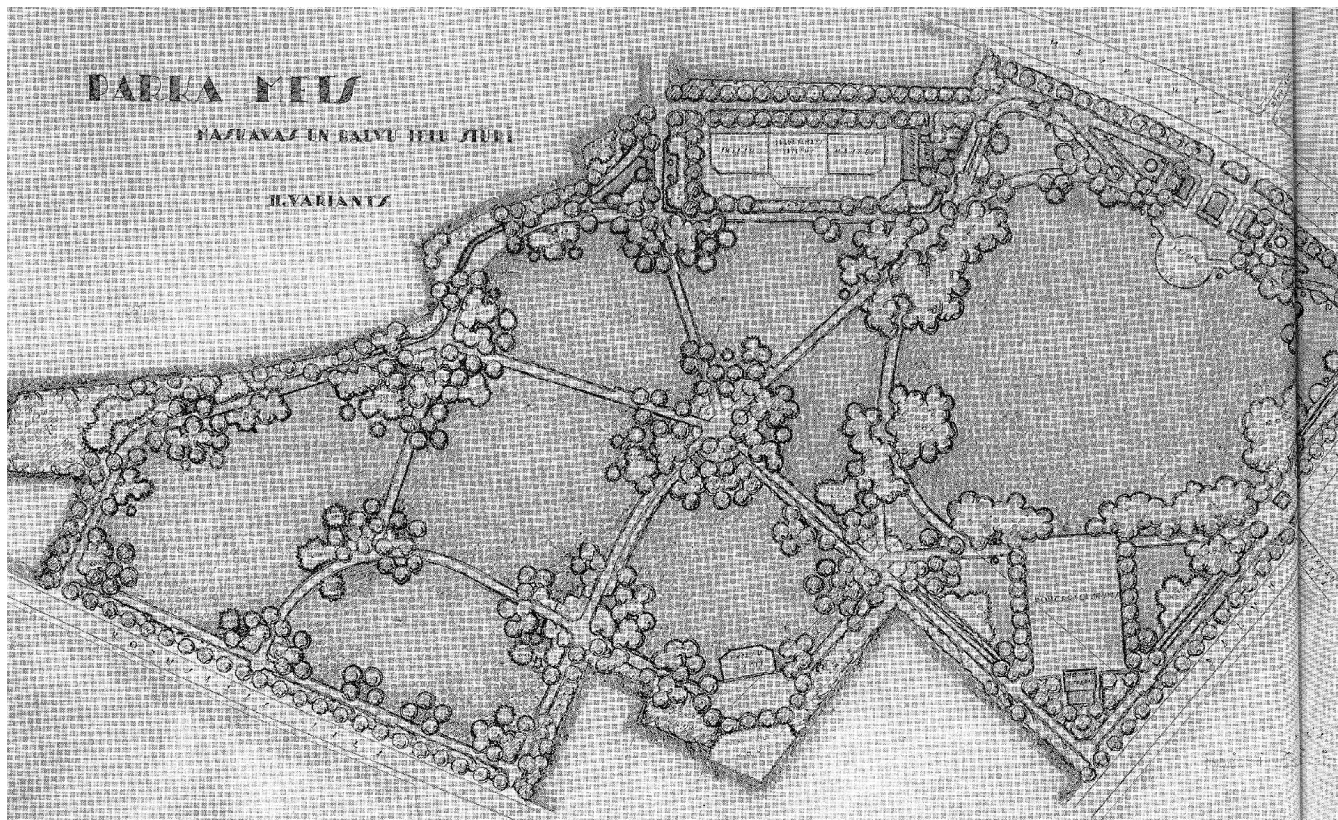
53 Large-scale apartment building on 90 Brīvības Street, arch. J. Rengarts (Rengarts, 1939)



54 Swimming area on Ķīšezers, arch. A. Grinbergs, 1938 (Tilmanis, 1938)



55 Recreational premises for the workmen of the Riga Municipal Tramway workshops, arch. N. Bode, 1938 (Bode, 1939)



56 Public garden between Latgales and Balvu Streets, author A. Zeidakš (Bošs, 1939)

CHAPTER 2

National aspirations and pluralist realities

2.2 National against international, the conflict

Question of national architecture appears in „Latvijas Architektūra” from the very first issue and actively continues through subsequent editions of the magazine. The first issue of „Latvijas Architektūra” begins with a portrait of President K. Ulmanis and his quote from the first meeting of the Council of the National Building Committee in 1936. In the quote, Ulmanis called for the creation of a new “face and expression” for Latvian villages and cities, which needed to be more “beautiful, soulful and Latvian”. The polemic is continued by the introductory words from Laube, Tilmanis and Dreimanis. Architects spoke about the lack of a «unified national line» in contemporary Latvian architecture. Latvia for the first time began to live as a conscious independent state. National architecture was supposed to serve as confirmation of «the special and independent value of Latvia among the cultures of other countries». Laube emphasized that the government of Ulmanis led to the renewal and further strengthening of the national spirit. Tilmanis spoke about the importance for Latvian architects to get acquainted with and constructively criticize each other's work. Additionally, he stated that these architectural discussions should not be isolated in the professional field but instead brought to the attention of the wide public, because «the aesthetic soul of our nation is the basis and the only source for the Latvian style in any art».

Most often, Laube was the one who addressed the topic of the national identity of Latvian architecture on the pages of the magazine. He believed that in order to give a “Latvian character” to a building, it is necessary to use the “Latvian composition principles”, which should be sought in other Latvian works. The architect himself needs to develop his national spirit by studying the history of the nation and the state, monuments of art and literature, continually discovering his country, language etc. (Laube, 1938). In the subsequent thoughts-manifestos of Laube, a harsh criticism of modernism appears, which, in his interpretation, is the opposite of national architecture. Before the events of May 15, the architecture of Latvia was dominated by heterogeneity. As the main architectural movements he defined the international, which in another manifesto he called “anacionals” or “non-national”, and the consciously Latvian. He subdivided the international movement into classical and modern. The modernism

Laube characterized as a „materialistic-technical and abstract-objective” architectural movement, which «is born from a pure mind» and logic. He reproached modernism for the lack of a personal attitude and emotional aspect, and even wrote that such architecture cultivates soullessness to some extent. The forms in modernist architecture - «abstract, smooth, bare, technical, often poor, without profiles, without ornaments, monotonous, sometimes even intimidating» - gave buildings of different functions the same look. Moreover, Laube believed that in these forms it is difficult to discern the reflection of their author's personality. However, despite all the criticism, he did not consider the former popularity of modernism in Latvia to be something fundamentally wrong. Laube recognized that certain concepts of modernism would remain and be applied for the development of a unique national architecture (Laube, 1939).

Pauls Kundziņš was looking for a „Latvian expression” for architecture of the new state in traditional regional forms. In one of his articles, he discussed the use of the traditional wooden architecture elements to decorate modern buildings (Kundziņš, 1938). Traditional forms inspired not only him, since other issues of «Latvijas Architektūra» showed examples of buildings, pieces of furniture and urban design elements made in a similar regional style. In articles published in the magazine, Kundziņš was not as critical towards modernism as Laube. In his reflection on the award organized by Mortgage Bank of Latvia for the best completed single-family house, he criticized the overall quality of this type of housing built in Latvia in recent years. He explained that a significant proportion of residential buildings were built without the participation of an architect, which not only resulted in low technical quality and inefficient spatial organization, but also created a chaotic appearance of the built environment in the larger picture. He wrote that some of these houses had a «claim for ‘architecture’», which either copied the elements of modernism, being horizontal or vertical ribbon windows for instance, or “awkwardly attached columns and pilasters”, or decorated the building with Latvian ornaments often seen in fabric patterns. Used without the understanding of their meaning, they did not lead to an artistically valuable project. Relatively brief criticism of modernism, however, is as well present in that text.

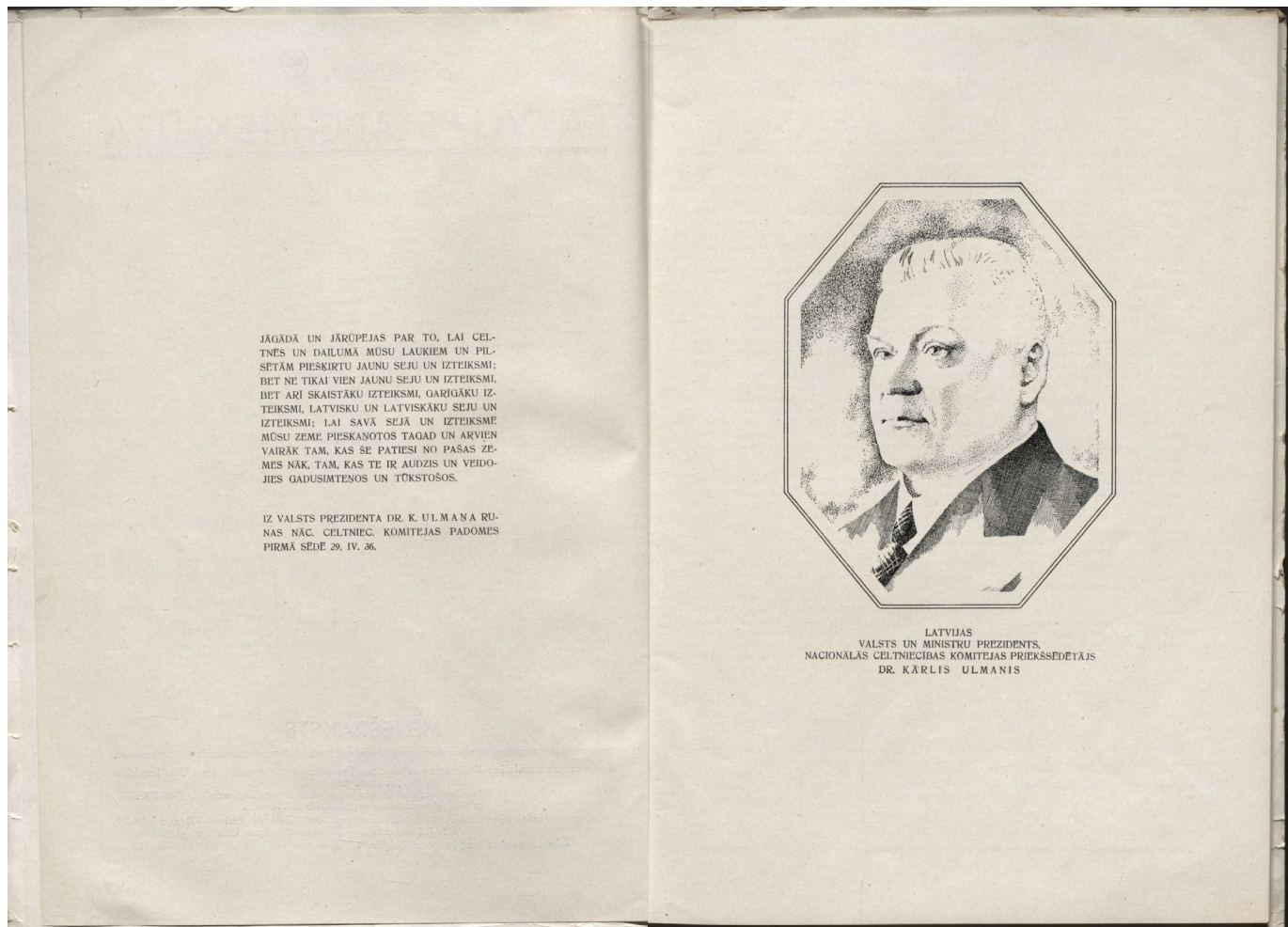
Kundziņš talked about the climate aspect in architecture and emphasized the importance of the traditional roof slope in Latvian buildings, which he opposed to “roofless cubes” of dubious quality alien to Latvian architecture (Kundziņš, 1939).

Thinking about the conflict between national and international presented in the magazine, one may wonder what was the impact of the authoritarian regime during which it was written. Throughout many magazine's issues the name and quotes of Ulmanis were periodically mentioned. It was often repeated that it was Ulmanis's initiative that led to the awakening of economic life and blooming of the construction industry. Laube's text «The Spirit of Architecture in a Renewed Latvia» is entirely devoted to how the events of May 15 opened a new, undoubtedly improved, chapter in the history of Latvian architecture. Laube quoted words from the leader's speeches and supplemented them with his own reflections on national architectural expression and high expectations from the work of Latvian architects. «Our work must be one that creates and leaves monuments» is one of Ulmanis' many quotes that Laube addressed to his colleagues (Laube, 1939). Prof. dr. arch. J. Lejnieks, however, calls the journal's position “relatively objective and evaluative, considering certain limits of the cultural policy of the authoritarian regime” (Lejnieks, 2008).

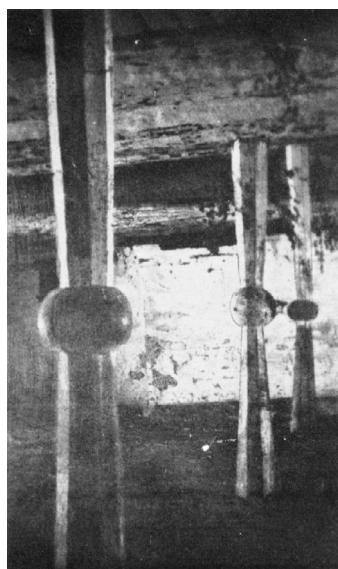
The previously mentioned text by the architect Janina Jasena (1910-1990) is particularly bold and provocative. Although criticism was present in almost every issue of „Latvijas Architektūra”, Jasena's reflection on the national aspect in architecture opposed the words of her greatly respected older colleagues. She stated that the personal thought of the artist is not obliged to obey the existing traditions. The connection of an individual with the world is expressed through the form. The architect, as an artist who makes the spirit of the times tangible, is able to «move centuries and change times». “The task of “living” history is to awaken in man the meaning of the present, but not to revive a closed past. In the reality of the new architecture, there is no room for a grueling historical retreat”, Jasena quoted the text of a Swiss modernist Alfred Roth from “La nouvelle architecture”. She criticized the existing arguments about «Latvian beauty», saying that they did not give any convincing description of «Latvianness». Adding an external optical Latvian character to buildings with the help of decoration she called a speculation. The work of an architect is a creative work, so the ability to express „nationality” in architecture depends on the national qualities of its author. In order for the creative spirit of the author to be “fresh” and “viable”, it must be nourished not only by traditions,

but also by “ the meaning of the organic present”. “ Some of our architects, walking in the shadow of the past, do not want to understand the essence of the architecture of the present” (Jasena, 1940).

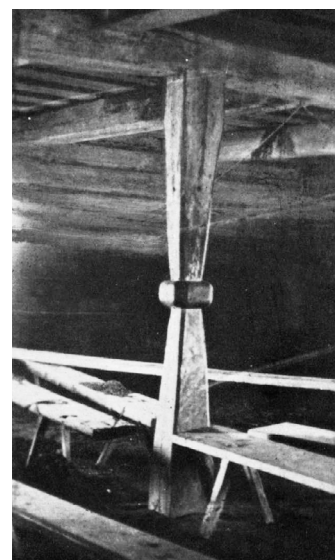
With the change of the political regime, the national agenda disappeared from the pages of the magazine. The last issue of “Latvijas Architektūra” began with an anonymous introduction saying that from August 5, 1940, Latvia was accepted in the Soviet Union. “The bourgeois dictatorship has fallen. ... A free, happy, full of joy person can get to work ...”, the article wrote, urging readers-architects to learn to “work and think communistically”. As a new main task for architects, it was asked “to transform your small man psyche... and small man approach to work. With conceptually simple solutions, the architect should try to bring his works closer to the understanding of the wider masses. ... We have lacked objective criticism of architectural work so far”. The former search for the “Latvian face” of the architecture of the Latvian Republic, which Ulmanis called for, was replaced by calls for the creation of an “architectural face of Soviet Latvia”.



57 First spread of the first issue of «Latvijas Architektūra» - K. Ulmanis' quote and portrait, Latvijas Architektūra, 1938, Nr.1



58 Vernacular Latvian column decor, 1765 (Kundziņš, 1938)



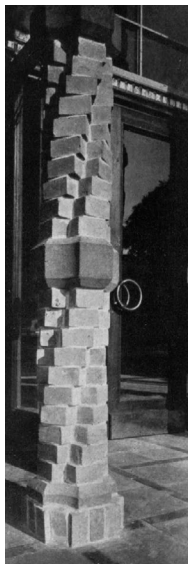
59 Vernacular Latvian column decor, 1769 (Kundziņš, 1938)



60 Traditional forms in the Zemgale exhibition entrance pavilion, arch. Tums, 1937 (Kundziņš, 1938)



61 Student House column in Riga, arch. A. Vanags, 1909 (Kundziņš, 1938)



62 Entrance column in the pavilion of the Bank of Latvia at the Zemgale exhibition, arch. P. Kundziņš, 1937 (Kundziņš, 1938)



63 Bridge over the canal in Kronvalda park, Riga, arch. O. Tīlmanis, V. Zaķis (V.Z., 1938)



64 Bridge over the canal in Kronvalda park, Riga, arch. O. Tīlmanis, V. Zaķis (V.Z., 1938)



65 Furniture of the conference hall at the Latvian Chamber of Agriculture, arch. V. Zēbauers (Zēbauers, 1938)

CHAPTER 2

National aspirations and pluralist realities

2.3 Hybrid realities: synthesis of modern and classical

The projects presented in “Latvijas Architektūra”, even though there were numerous discussions about a unified national idea in architecture, were often stylistically different from each other. According to prof. dr. arch. J. Krastiņš, there was such a wide variety of movements in the architecture of that period that it was not so easy to navigate them. However, he called functionalism the dominant movement over the general stylistic pluralism. It became a logical continuation of the pre-war rational Art Nouveau. Building engineer Teodors Hermanovskis (1883-1964) was a pioneer of functionalism in Latvia, erecting the first houses in this style in 1926 and 1928 on Marijas Street in Riga. The artistic principles of the modern movement were actively «propagated» in the press. Latvian architects, however, for the most part did not adhere to one style, and looking at their work in the republican period, one can see the throwing between modernism and classics. During the authoritarian period, criticism of functionalism gained popularity. Krastiņš explains that the classic was opposed to international modernism, which in turn was the opposite of the national style. That is why neo-eclecticism - a synthesis of the principles of classical architecture, modernism, and sometimes regional elements, is characteristic of many buildings of that period. Krastiņš also notes some similarities with the architecture of Germany, Italy and other authoritarian countries of that time (Krastiņš, 1992).

Stylistic pluralism was also present at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Latvia, where three design studios were organized - A, B and C. Studio A was led by Laube and focused on classical principles of architecture. Studio B, led by Kundziņš, studied regional vernacular architecture. Štālbergs led the studio C, which had an inherently functional direction (Krastiņš, 1992). However, looking at the graduation and academic works, such a strict division is completely imperceptible. Even in university projects, the diversity of architecture of that period is captured.

The project of an apartment building at 90 Brīvības Street is a prime example of the neo-eclecticism architecture of Latvian Republic, shown in “Latvijas Architektūra”. The minimalist functionalist façade, combined with its imposing scale, is complemented by monumental classical columns stretching across all

4 upper floors. Another striking example of the many is the Unity House in Daugavpils, in which the volume and facades are made in the spirit of functionalism, but from the side of the main square there is a monumental portico with a colonnade. Mart Kalm explained this by the need to cultivate a national culture and “to Latvianize” a region in which a significant part of the population was made up of ethnic minorities (Kalm, 2018). Looking at the projects of the Army Economy Department Stores in different cities, one can see how the Riga metropolitan store is much more classic than the functionalist one in Liepāja, although they were both described in one issue of the magazine. Moreover, even though functionalism in the texts of the magazine was presented as an enemy of the national style, in one of the issues the project of the hotel by T. Hermanovskis was published, and he was the only one in his work who adhered exclusively to functionalism.

Similar symbiosis of apparent opposites was characteristic of the architecture of other Baltic republics - Lithuania and Estonia. Despite the similarities in languages between Latvia and Lithuania, and in the historical past, between Latvia and Estonia, the starting positions of the newly independent countries differed significantly. Kalm wrote that all three countries “though small and poor, were eager beginners and had great ambitions regarding modernisation” (Kalm, 2018). Riga was the most developed capital of the Baltic region, and also had the largest number of architects, since a polytechnic institute was founded there back in 1879. Lithuania became functionally independent in 1920, but soon after that Polish military forces captured part of its territory, which also included the capital Vilnius. The young republic was forced to create a new capital in the provincial city of Kaunas. However, Tallinn and Riga were provincial cities as well and it was not until the 1930s that large-scale government buildings began to be built in them. All three countries subsequently faced an authoritarian regime - Lithuania from 1926 was ruled by Antanas Smetona, and Estonia from 1934 by Konstantin Pats. “Even though in the European context these regimes were quite mild in the limitations they imposed on democracy, the task of architecture changed and needed to demonstrate the might of the nation and the people, and neoclassicism with a blend of national motifs was perfectly suited to this,”

wrote Kalm (Kalm, 2018). Lithuanian architecture, due to the earlier coup, experienced more independent design experimentation as neo-eclectic tendencies emerged in the mid-1930s. Kalm, describing the interwar architecture of the three Baltic states, considered Estonia “possibly the most modern”, Latvia because of Riga’s size and wealth “the most professional and varied in terms of architectural briefs as well as technically”, and Lithuania “where they were starting with a clean slate, was that of a decoratively interpreted functionalism with an academicist undercurrent». “With the help of this architecture they were able to Estonian-ize, Latvian-ize and Lithuanian-ize their own lands,” Kalm wrote. Latvia and Estonia, because of their German past, continued to keep an eye on Germany - to read German magazines, attend exhibitions, etc. Kalm wrote that Estonians visited exhibitions in Finland, but “Latvijas Arhitektūra” also talked about how Latvian architects took part in this. The architecture of Kaunas is especially fascinating since it was only a provisional capital. Because of this, the authorities preferred to finance the cultural sphere instead of the representational one, and instead of building the monumental parliament, they erected a national museum of modern art (Mansbach, 2014).

The aspiration for classical expressive forms was inherent not only in the young Baltic republics, but rather was the next stage in the general chronology of architectural styles’ succession. «The path to modernity was a winding one, and strategies based on selective readings of historical forms contributed as much as ones proposing new spatial and plastic languages», Jean-Louis Cohen wrote (Cohen, 2012). In his book “The Future of Architecture. Since 1889” Cohen subdivided this classic-oriented movement into several categories, and the description of the “traditionalist” group describes Latvian Republican architecture most accurately. Among the examples of traditionalism and self-critical modernism he mentions the Stockholm City Hall by R. Östberg, which evoked “the brick architecture of Italian civic palaces” and rejected “any overall classical composition”, J. J. P. Oud’s project for the Shell Headquarters in the Hague, where “Oud had come to regard modernism as overly ascetic” and other buildings. He also mentions the radical stylistic change that happened to some architects, like Andre Lurcat, who due to the “Stalinist ideological pressure” modified his work from strikingly modernist to partly classical.

Speaking about the young Central European republics, which as well became independent after WWI, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland each had a different expression of modernism. “The new state needed an image of strength, representing the nation through its

public buildings and complexes”, V. Šlapeta wrote about Czechoslovakia (Šlapeta, 1996). Back in the early 1920s, a conservatively traditional character of rondocubism prevailed in architecture. However, in the late 1920s, a younger generation of functionalist architects started to actively build in the spirit of the International Style. «For the Czechoslovak elite, modern forms were an expression of the industrial values on which their prosperity was based», explained Cohen (Cohen, 2012). Due to that, modernism became the main architectural language of a new state. The scope of the municipal and industrial commissions allowed Czechoslovak architects to embody their ambitious modernist visions into a variety of spatial programs and scales.

Destructions of the WWI, following revolutions and the loss of a significant part of the territory after the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, led to Hungary not being “the most fertile soil in which to plant the seed of modern architecture” (Bonta, 1996). Nevertheless, the modernist Hungarian architecture has achieved a unique avant-garde character. In the pre-war Hungarian architecture the Secession and Otto Wagner’s influence prevailed. It was followed by the neo-baroque trend, which flourished across Hungary in cities with a vast baroque heritage. After the stylistic shift to modernism, the neo-baroque continued its existence until 1944, while “dictator Miklos Horthy’s appreciation of Mussolini assured a positive reception for Italian Novecento forms” (Cohen, 2012).

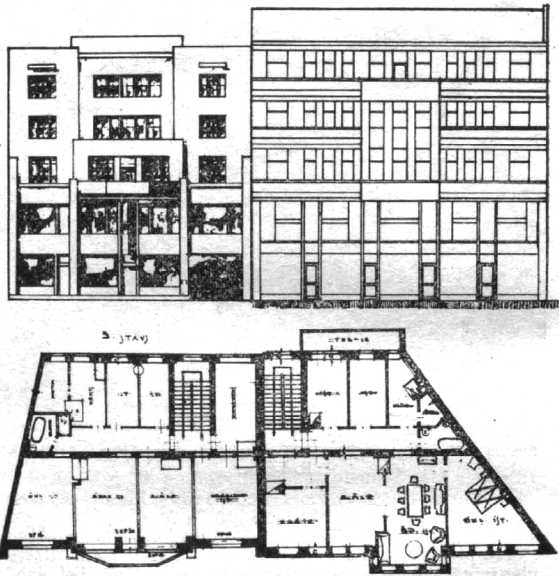
The Polish Manor Style, inspired by the 18th century neoclassicism, became immensely popular after 1918, when Poland regained independence (Czerner, 1996). Academic classicism dominated Polish architecture of the 1920s and 1930s. “It was practiced with the greatest intensity in the 1920s, but its simplified and monumentalized forms were also used in 1930s”, Czerner wrote. The Krakow Workshop group, however, formed another stylistic movement – expressionism. Over a period from 1919 to 1921 they published a magazine “Formizm”. They found inspiration in the Gothic glass tradition and regional vernacular elements. Even the Polish Pavilion for the 1937 Paris International Exhibition was made in neoclassical style.



66 Rational Art-Nouveau of Riga, 3 Miera Street.
Arch. A. Šmēlings, 1912 (city24.lv, 2021)



67 Rational Art-Nouveau of Riga, 1 Vidus Street.
Arch. K. Pēkšēns, 1909 (RJC, 2022)



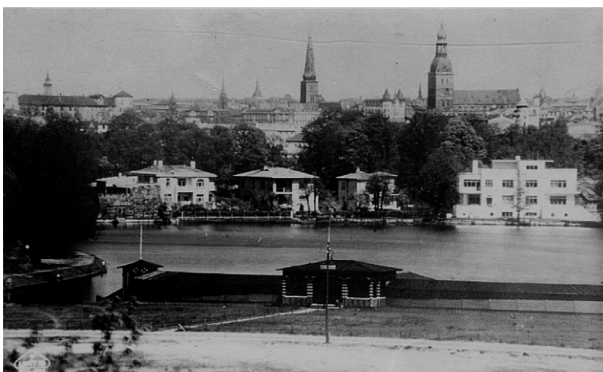
68 First functionalist buildings in Riga - 8 and 6 Marijas Street,
b. eng. T. Hermanovskis, 1926, 1928 (Krastiņš, 1992)



69 8 Marijas Street, b. eng. T. Hermanovskis, 1926 (Krastiņš, 1992)



70 Cinema «Teika», b. eng. T. Hermanovskis, 1938 (Ellīņš, 2017)



71 Villa next to Māras pond (first at the right), 13 O. Vācieša Street,
b. eng. T. Hermanovskis, 1931 (zudusilatvija, 193-)



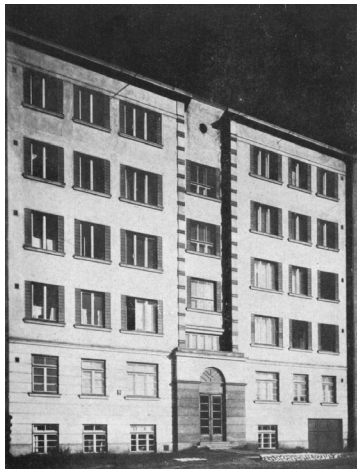
72 Rental house at 27 Ģertrūdes Street, b. eng. T. Hermanovskis, 1934
(Binde, 1980)



73 37 Brīvības Street, arch. E. Laube, 1909 (zudusilatvija, 193-)



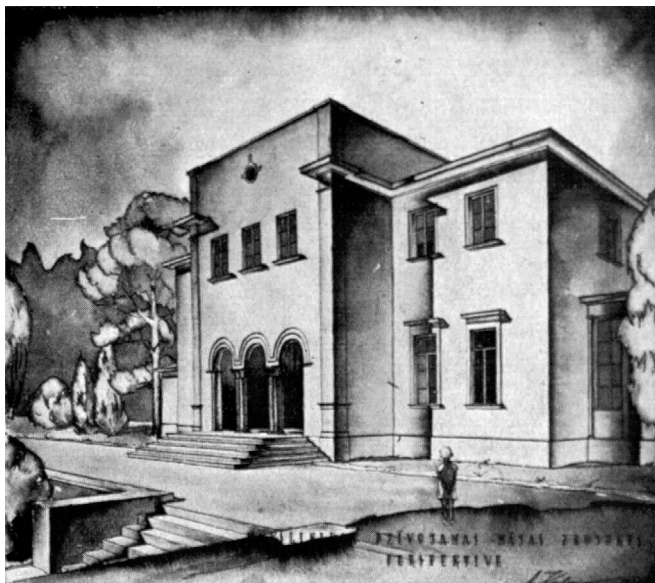
74 39 Brīvības Street, arch. E. Laube, 1929 (city24.lv, 2022)



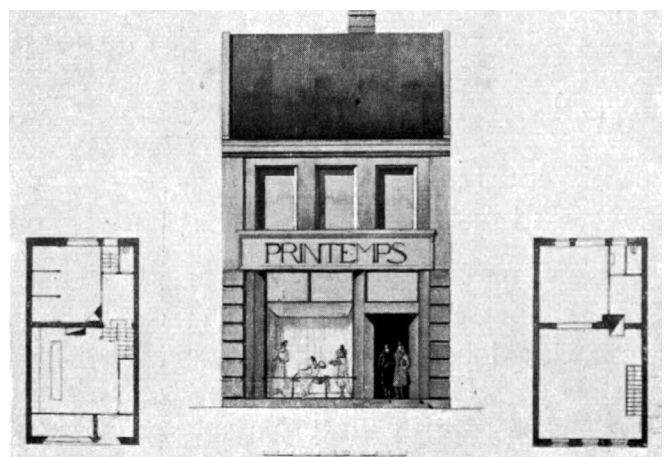
75 4 Tomsona Street, arch. P. Kundziņš, 1936 (Tilmanis, 1938)



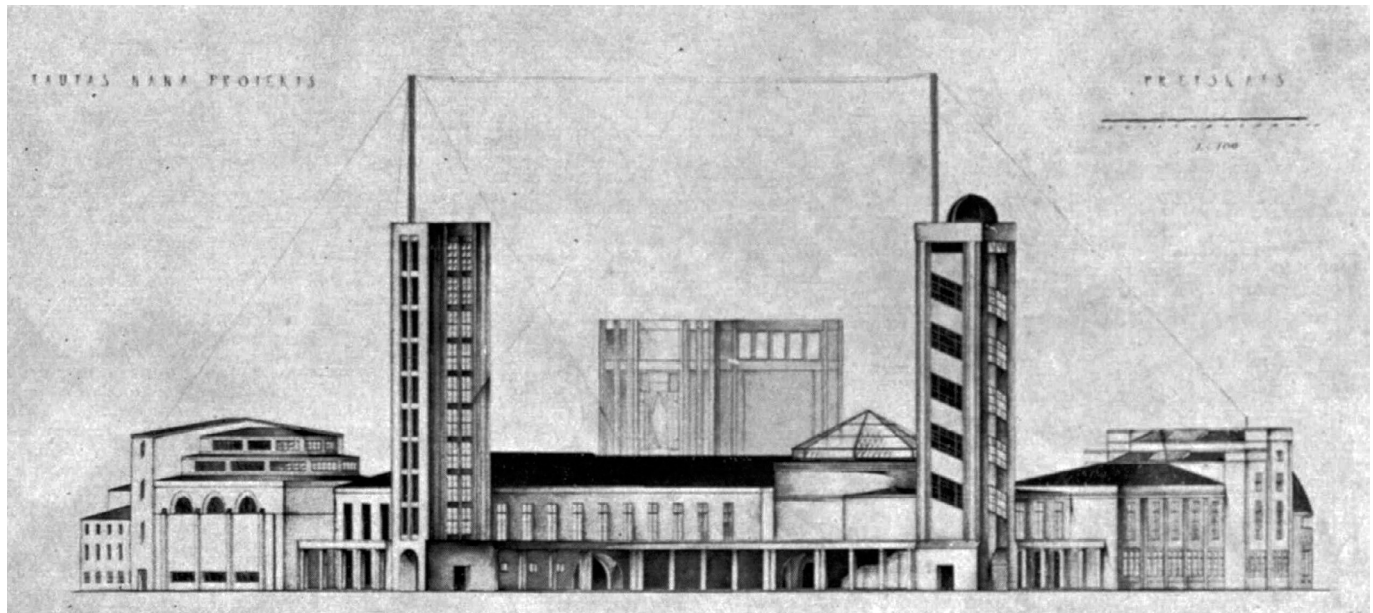
76 Regional motifs in new buildings, 4 Tomsona Street, arch. P. Kundziņš, 1936 (city24.lv, 2022)



77 Author student arch. A. Kalniņš, P. Kundziņš' Studio (Rutmanis, 1927)



78 Author student arch. D. Feiertag, E. Štālbergs' Studio (Rutmanis, 1927)



79 Author student arch. R. Rabinovics, E. Laube's Studio (Rutmanis, 1927)



80 Apartment building on 90 Brīvības Street - modernist volume, arch. J. Rengarts (zudusilatvija, 1938)



81 90 Brīvības Street - classical facade motifs, arch. J. Rengarts (zudusilatvija, 196-)



82 Daugavpils Unity House - modernist volume, arch. V. Vitands, 1937 (Vitands, 1939)



83 Daugavpils Unity House - main facade's classical portico, arch. V. Vitands, 1937 (Vitands, 1939)



84 Army Economy Store in Riga, arch. A. Galindoms, 1938. Shown in «LA» 1940 Nr.5 (Bormane, 2015)



85 Army Economy Store in Liepāja, arch. A. Rāčenis, 1935. Shown in «LA» 1940 Nr.5 (Silakaktiņš, 2022)



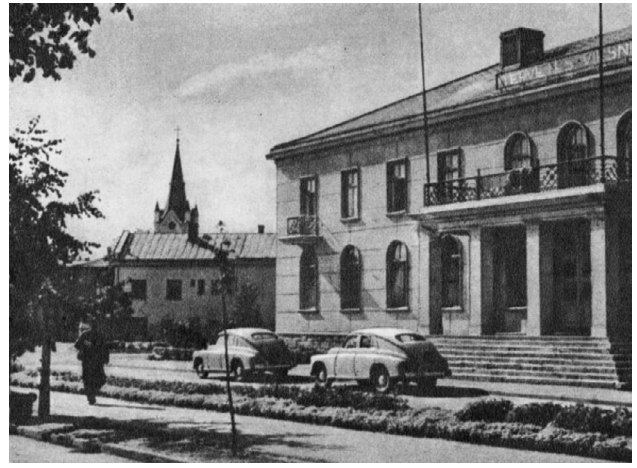
86 Hotel in Rūjiena, b. eng. T. Hermanovskis. Shown in «LA» 1939 Nr.8 (Āboltiņš, 197-)



87 Hotel in Jelgava, arch. A. Laukirbe. Shown in «LA» 1939 Nr.7 (wikimapia, 2020)



88 Hotel in Cesis, arch. A. Vilmanis. Shown in «LA» 1939 Nr.7 (zudusilatvija, 1940)



89 Hotel in Cesis, arch. A. Vilmanis. Shown in «LA» 1939 Nr.7 (Dubavs, 1958)



90 Estonia: Beach pavilion. Eng. R. Ederma, E. Otting, 1935 (Lige, 2017)



91 Estonia: Villa in Tartu. Arch. N. Kusmin, 1937 (Lige, 2017)



92 Lithuania: Central Post Office in Kaunas. Arch. F. Vizbaras, 1932 (Dremaite, 2020)



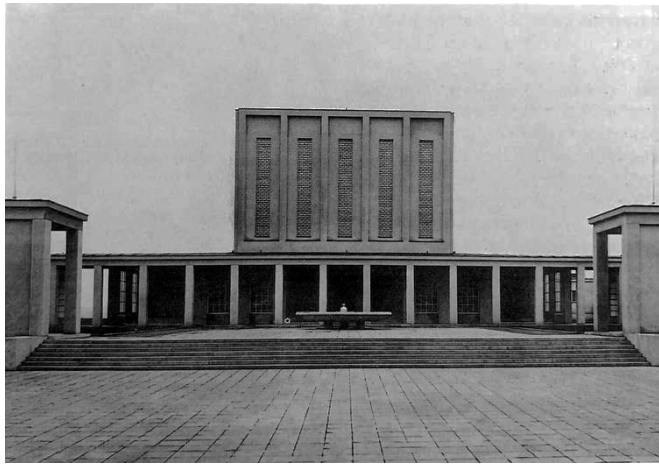
93 Lithuania: Daina Movie Theatre in Kaunas. Arch. A. Breimeris, S. Kudokas, 1938 (East, 2016)



94 Sweden: Stockholm City Hall. Arch. R. Ostberg, 1923 (Chevallier, 2020)



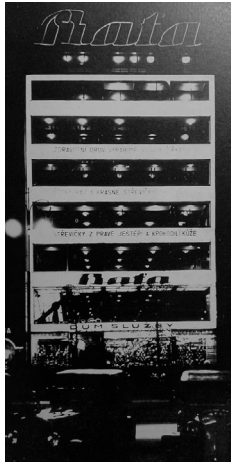
95 The Netherlands: Shell Headquarters, The Hague, 1938. Arch. J.J.P. Oud (SHIE, 2022)



96 Czechoslovakia: Prague crematorium. Arch. A. Mezera, 1929 (Šlapeta, 1996)



97 Czechoslovakia: Triple House, Brno. Arch. B. Fuchs, J. Štepanek, 1928 (Šlapeta, 1996)



98 Czechoslovakia: Bata department store. Arch. L. Kysela, 1935 (Šlapeta, 1996)



99 Hungary: House in Budapest. Arch. J. Fisher, 1935 (Šlapeta, 1996)



100 Hungary: Apartment building in Budapest. Arch. B. Hofstatter, F. Domany, 1937 (Šlapeta, 1996)



101 Poland: PKO Savings Bank, Krakow. Arch. A. Szyszko-Bohusz, 1925 (Šlapeta, 1996)



102 Poland: National Museum, Krakow. Arch. B. Szmidt, J. Juraczynski, 1939 (Šlapeta, 1996)



103 Poland: Apartments, Katowice. Arch. T. Michejda, 1931 (Šlapeta, 1996)

Conclusions

Architectural periodicals of the past century are actively studied and even serve as an educational material in the course of the history of architecture in some institutions. Latvian architectural magazines and scattered publications in other periodicals during the periods when there were no unified architectural magazines have not yet been sufficiently studied. The chapter on the chronology of architectural publications in Latvia showed that more recent publications such as “acd” are even less known than “Latvijas Arhitektūra” described in this article.

In the history of the diverse architecture of the Republic of Latvia, the magazine has become the very platform for open dialogue and reflection that Latvian architects have been striving for for years. They actively took part in the creation of the magazine, shared their vision of the modern national architecture of the young country, also regularly resorting to constructive criticism, which seems to be no more present in modern mainstream architectural media. The aspiration to find a unique national identity for architecture was only partly due to the authoritarian regime, although its polemics and ideology has undoubtedly strengthened the need.

The synthesis of classics and modernism was also found in other countries of Eastern and Central Europe of that period, and therefore this trend is a consistent step in the history of the evolution of architectural styles. The ideals of the new architecture that the magazine promoted were not limited to monumentality, attention to the social aspect and green development. The magazine showed a wide range of different manifestations of the architecture of that time, including «pure» functionalism, which was actively at the same time criticized in other issues.

The fusion of an international style, national motifs and classical principles combined seemingly contradictory directions, but it was precisely this ambivalence of influences that created the unique look of the architecture of an independent republic. Hybrid modernism, despite all the criticism of it as a «placeless» trend of architecture, in each of the countries has acquired its own regional variations.

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