

Roman Catholic Church Architecture in Warsaw During the Polish People's Republic Period (1945-1989) in the Context of European Trends

The essential objective of the project is to analyse the processes of formation of churches in Warsaw during the years of the Polish People's Republic (1945-1989). One of indirect objectives of my project is to compile a detailed catalogue of post-1945 churches in Warsaw. It will comprise approximately 30 churches – all the churches built in Warsaw from 1945 to 1989 and also those that were designed but never built. Post-1945 churches in Warsaw and archives concerning them have not yet been an object of a thorough both historic and artistic research.

Chronological limits of my research span the period of the PPR, characterised by specific political, economical and social conditions that had direct impact on the shape of sacral edifices designed and constructed at that time. The subject of my research will be, on the one hand, the stylistics of the churches from the second half of the 20th century and, on the other hand, the process of formation of church architecture in Warsaw during the period of the PPR. The project will be based on a research of the documents from the archives generated by the Church and State administration, and also on visual analysis of churches in Warsaw and comparative analysis between the sacral architecture in Warsaw and main movements of the contemporary church architecture in Europe.

I would like to stress the importance of the sacral architecture in the context of changing urban environment. Church architecture had to defend its symbolic rank in urban space more vividly than ever before, because of the unprecedentedly adverse political, urban and architectural conditions. Roman Catholic Church was also a subject of evolution. Reformers attained the introduction of reforms decided by the Second Vatican Council regarding, among others, the liturgy, which had direct effect on church designing. In the very title of my project I evoke the matter of 'European trends', because my aim is also to analyse church architecture in Warsaw and in Poland in a wider, global perspective.

Through the sacral architecture I will try to depict the history of social conflicts, often concentrated close to the construction of a church. The objective of my project will be to analyse sacral architecture in a wide, social, political, artistic and liturgical perspective. The religious architecture – designs, constructions – will be seen as an element of contemporary history and culture. Understanding the conflicts and motivations of individuals responsible for post-1945 religious buildings will contribute to our knowledge on the recent history. Church architecture, being *par excellence* monumental, was the only type of architecture that could compete in symbolic way with the official architecture developed by the state.

The project I submit would fill the gap in the knowledge on the PPR and Polish architecture of the second half of the 20th century. The research perspective proposed in my project combines the analysis of documents from various archives and constructed building with the implementation of the perspective of the social art history. It constitutes an original and new approach in the research of religious architecture in the PPR. The project is based on a broad query in the archives, documenting and performing of analysis of the collected materials. I will also conduct a comparative analysis of contemporary religious architecture in Warsaw in the context of European creation of this epoch.

The main outcome of my project will be preparation of a chapter of my future doctoral dissertation (prepared at the Faculty of History, University of Warsaw) and completion of the catalogue of churches build in Warsaw from 1945 do 1989. Moreover, I will submit two articles to peer-reviewed journals.