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THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN ARCHITECTURE: ROOTS AND EXPRESSIONS OF FORMAL LANGUAGE

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Abstract. Studies its roots and reveals hitherto lesser-known examples of the style, analyses the development of the style in different countries and in Latvia, and compares the quality of different implementations of its formal language in different stages of history. Special attention is paid to different early examples that paved the way for the later development of the style. The historical place of the Modern Movement in the cultural heritage has been assessed. All images in the text are photographs by the author if not indicated otherwise.
Keywords: modern movement, functionalism, 20th century architecture

Introduction

The Modern Movement is the most characteristic style in the contemporary system of architectural styles. At the beginning of the 20th century, contemporary system replaced the previous system of styles of the new era, which was based on interpretations of classical vocabulary. The basic principle of the contemporary system of styles – "form follows function" – was precisely formulated by the American architect Louis Sullivan as early as 1896 [1]. Beginning of this system was Art Nouveau or Jugendstil. The essence of its artistic method was aptly described by the prominent Latvian art critic and publicist Jānis Asars: "a building should not be constructed from the outside inwards, as was done in the past, when only an imposing facade was taken care, the interior layout comes out as it comes out, but it should be constructed from the inside out, the interior spaces should be arranged in a completely useful and beautiful way, and the external shape of the house should follow to their order" [2]. In the 1920s, Art Nouveau was replaced by the Modern Movement. It continued to develop after World War II and is perhaps still the dominant style in architecture today. It is often simply called Modernism, but "modern" in a broader sense generally means something that relates to the present or recent time as opposed to the past. In several languages, Modernism means Art Nouveau, for example, in Spanish, Catalan and Russian. In Latvian, Art Nouveau is called Jūgendstils, but once also "Secessionist Modernism" [3]. The Modern Movement (or MoMo in abbreviation) at certain stages of history has also been called Functionalism, New Objectivity (German Neue Sachlichkeit, English New Objectivity), International Style or Avant-garde. Other names are also known, for example, Constructivism (mainly in Russia).

The Modern Movement was the art of "pure" planes and volumes. Buildings in this style are distinguished by a strongly articulated, cubic massing, flat roofs, ribbon fenestration and extensive glazing. In the 1930s, the Modern Movement often merged with the expression of Neo-eclecticism rooted in the language of classical architecture. In this form, the style continued after World War II, but in the 1950s, the "glass and steel building" – a framework-structure building with more or less completely glazed facades – became the symbol of the Modern Movement in the world. Such architecture, as a brand of the era, has also retained a significant place in the formal diversity of architecture in the first decades of the 21st century.

The origins of the Modern Movement

The earliest examples of the Modern Movement are generally considered to be the T. Schröder's House in Utrecht, the Netherlands, built in 1924 to a design by Gerrit Rietveld (Fig. 1), and the Bauhaus art school building by Walter Gropius in Dessau, Germany, built the following year. It is one of the most well-known icons of the style (Fig. 2). Origins of the style, however, can be found much earlier. The possibilities for implementing the formal expression of the style were facilitated by the technical innovations of the 19th century – reinforced concrete, rolled glass and rolled profile steel products, while the elevator, along with the introduction of electricity, paved the way for the construction of high-rise buildings. True, architectural styles in history and today have never been determined by the use of materials, structures or technology. They are only means for implementing in architecture the social needs and artistic ideas dictated by each era.

In treatises on modern architecture, the Crystal Palace in London, Hyde Park, is traditionally cited as the first germ towards modernism. It was a more than half a kilometre-long hall, where the 1851 World Exhibition was held. The building was assembled from pre-fabricated metal rods. The outer walls were completely glazed. After the exhibition, the building was dismantled and moved to the London suburb of Bromley, but it burned down in 1936. As early as 1850, New Yorker, watchmaker and architect James Bogardus patented a method of constructing buildings in cast iron structures. His buildings in New York, at 85 and 87/89 Leonard Street (1862, Fig. 3) are mentioned in many, many architectural history

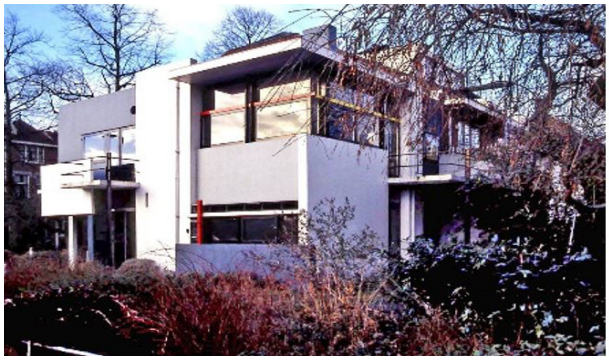


Fig. 1. Utrecht, the Netherlands. T. Schröder's House at Prins Hendriklaan 50. 1924. Gerrrit Rietveld

Fig. 2. Dessau, Germany. „Bauhaus" building at Gropiusallee 38. 1925. Walter Gropius

books as one of the earliest examples of modern glass and metal architecture.

Paradoxically, the department stores in Glasgow, Scotland, built around the same time in similar structural system, have not received much attention in the history of world architecture. The earliest of these is the Gardner's Warehouse at 36 Jamaica Street (Fig. 4). It was built in 1856 to a design by architect John Baird I and civil engineer Robert McConnell, who developed and patented a metal frame structural system in which cast iron elements of any span could be connected with wrought iron elements. Such a structure was less prone to sudden failures in the case of overload or metal casting defects [4].

Another building of similar structure and visual appearance, built around this time in the British Isles was the Oriel Chambers offices at 14 Water Street in Liverpool, England (1864–1865, architect Peter Ellis, Fig. 5). It was noticed as having been significantly ahead of its time already durig the interwar period of the 20th century. The building is argued to be the first "skyscraper" in the UK, although the building measures just five storeys high. This building is often declared "the first in history to feature a metal-framed, glass curtain wall" [5].

Glasgow's innovative contribution to the development of architecture is usually celebrated in connection with Art Nouveau, which Glasgowers themselves proudly call "Glasgow style". The most widely known is the Glasgow School of Art building (1897–1909) by the famous architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh, however, in the context of the genesis of the Modern Movement's language, the Daily Record newspaper publishing house, built in 1900–1901 according to the design of the same Mackintosh (Fig. 6), is more characteristic. The upper floors in the western part of the building were built in 1903–1904 [6]. To the uninitiated, the building may seem to have been built at least thirty years later than it actually was. The architectural language is based on a tectonically very clear massing, as well as the use of finishing materials of different textures and tonalities.

Metal-framed buildings with rhythmically arranged large apertures in their facades are particularly characteristic of the so-called Chicago School. It began with the city's reconstruction after the catastrophic fire of 1871. Chicago was the birthplace of modern skyscraper architecture [7]. Most of the new buildings in the city centre were commercial buildings, which housed large offices or retail premises. These functions also had the greatest impact on the semantic image of new buildings [8]. The Chicago School, although its decorative language was strongly eclectic, is rightly considered as one of the forerunners of the Modern Movement.

The central figure in Chicago architecture is often called Sullivan [9], but one of the pioneers of this school was William Le Baron Jenney. Many of his works have not survived, but the Second Leiter Building (1891) still graces the corner of the block at the intersection of South State Street and East Ida B. Wells Drive (Fig. 7).

In late 19th and early 20th century, buildings with extensive or even completely glazed facades appeared in many European cities. Most of them were department stores or office buildings. One of such striking architectural innovations is the commercial building "Magasin Manrique" in Strasbourg, France, at 33-37, rue des Grandes Arcades (Fig. 8). It was built in 1897 to the design by architects Julius Berninger and Gustav Krafft. In 1899, it was expanded with right-hand wing having one window-axe.

The "Old England" department store in Brussels, at 2, rue Montagne de la Cour (Fig. 9), built in 1899 to a design by architect Paul Sentenoy, pays attention already from afar with its large windows filling the spaces between the metal frame elements clearly exposed in the facades of the building. Another masterpiece of glass and metal construction in Brussels was the People's House (La Maison du Peuple), designed by the Art Nouveau architect Victor Horta, but in 1965, it fell victim to "Brusselization": the building was demolished and replaced by ordinary "modern" office tower.

Glazed facades became more widely used in Art Nouveau architecture only around the middle of the 1910's. During this time, a particularly large number of office and commercial buildings with large windows were built in Hamburg, a city that had not yet been widely noticed in the context of Art Nouveau. Among these buildings, one of the earliest is the residential, office and commercial building "Heine-Haus" at Jungfernstieg 34 (1903, architect Ricardo Bahre).

Fig. 3. New York, USA. 85 & 87/89 Leonard Street. 1862. James Bogardus
Fig. 4. Glasgow, Scotland. Gardner's Warehouse at 36 Jamaica Street. 1855–1856. John Baird I, Robert McConnell
Fig. 5. Liverpool, England. Office building Oriel Chambers at 14 Water Street. 1864–1865. Peter Ellis [10][1]
Fig. 6. Glasgow, Scotland. Daily Record publishing house at 20-26 Renfield Lane. 1900–1901, 1903–1904. Charles Rennie Mackintosh
Fig. 7. Chicago, USA. Second Leiter Building. 1891 William Le Baron Jenney

[1]Liverpool Architecture and Cityscapes [online]. The Victoriam Web : Literature, Histoey, & culture in the Age of Victoria [cited 01.06.2025]. https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/liverpool/34.html

Fig. 8. Strasbourg, France. Commercial building "Magasin Manrique" at 33-37, rue des Grandes Arcades. 1897–1899. Julius Berninger, Gustave Krafft
Fig. 9. Brussels, Belgium. Department store "Old England" at 2, rue Montagne de la Cour. 1899. Paul Saintenoy
Fig. 10. Hamburg, Germany. Residential, office and commercial building "Heine-Haus" at Jungfernstieg 34. 1903. Ricardo Bahre
Fig. 11. Paris, France. Offices at 124, rue Réaumur. 1905. Georges Chedanne (?) [11]

Its dynamically articulated facade with a bay window in the middle is almost continuously glazed (Fig. 10). Similar commercial buildings were built in quite an impressive number around this time in many other German cities – Munich, Leipzig and, of course, Berlin, where most of them were unfortunately irretrievably destroyed during the World War II. One of the most impressive completely glazed facades had the Tietz department store (Warenhaus Tietz) at Leipziger Strasse 46/49 (1899–1900, architect Bernhard Sehring).

A large collection of glazed facades is concentrated on rue Réaumur in Paris. True, the architectural and decorative finish of most of these facades, which were built around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, is saturated with details taken from the vocabularies of historical styles in the spirit of typical eclecticism. However, the office building at 124, rue Réaumur, built in 1905, supposably to the design of the architect Georges Chedanne, visually strongly resembles the "modern building of glass and metal" (Fig. 11). The "La Samaritaine" department store buildings, especially at 75, rue de Rivoli (1912, architect Frantz Jourdain), which has lost many filigree metal details from its facades, are also of an equally modern architectural character.

An impressive example of glazed facades is the Turkish Bank at Szervita tér 3 in Budapest, Hungary (Fig. 12). It was built in 1906 to a design by architects Armin Hegedüs and Henrik Böhm. The facade of the building, with its continuously glazed bay windows and huge shop windows on the lower floors, strongly resembles office buildings or department stores of today. The upper part of the facade is covered with a mosaic by the outstanding mosaic and stained-glass master Miksa Róth, above which a cornice designed in the spirit of the architectural language of Budapest Art Nouveau luminary Ödön Lechner undulates. From the perspective of the methodological principles of the Modern Movement, this technique is not an architectural contradiction, but a convincing example of the synthesis of the arts. It is a quality that the architecture of the Modern Movement also strived for in the second half of the 20th century, but which was then rarely achieved.

One of the cradles of the Modern Movement was the Netherlands, but its contribution to the Art Nouveau period is still less well known. However, in The Hague alone, there are not only individual dazzling decorative Art Nouveau buildings, but also a whole collection of department stores with completely glazed facades. The earliest of them – the Department Store at Dennweg 56 (architect Jan Willem Bosboom) – was built as early as 1898. The facade of the small building, crowned with filigree metal lace, looks like one large mirror. The tectonics of the facades of the rest of these buildings clearly reflects the structural system of the buildings: they all have a metal framework. Such, for example, are the fashion store De Duif at Venestraat 17 (1905, architect Willem Molenbroek), the department store "Magazijn Hollandia" at Prinsegracht 42 (1908, architect A. W. Meyneken), and the Schroder department store, located in the very heart of the city's historic centre, at Dagelijkse Groenmarkt 25 (Fig. 13). It was built in 1906 to a design by architect Lodewijk Antonius Hermanus de Wolf. The architect studied in Vienna, and his works are attributed to the "Viennese Secession style" [12]. It is true that the most famous buildings in Vienna, created by Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos and other architects, whose architecture can be considered direct precursors of the Modern Movement, were built no earlier than this building in The Hague.

Denmark is also not particularly notable in the context of architectural innovations of the first half of the 20th century, but in 1906, the commercial and apartment building "Løvenborg" was built at Vesterbrogade 34 in Copenhagen, based on a design by the most famous Danish Art Nouveau architect Anton Rosen (Fig. 14). This building is also an accurate reflection of the framework structure in its extensively glazed but finely detailed facade architecture.

Among the examples of glazed facades with strong massing, the "Wuorio" office building in Helsinki, Finland, at Unioninkatu 30 (Figure 15), built in 1908–1909 according to the design of the architect Herman Gesellius, stands out. Certain architectural details in the facade finish are precursors of the Art Deco language. Even prominent art historians, evaluating this building, have stated that it "was free from both Jugendstil and National Romanticism" [13]. This statement apparently reflects the long-held prejudiced neglection of Art Nouveau, recognizing the architecture of the "Wuorio" building not as a product of its time, but as ahead of its time. Strikingly similar to the "Wuorio" building is the "Buttericks" office building in Stockholm, at Drottninggatan 57 (1908–1910, architects Victor Dorph & Anders Höög) built at the same time.

In Barcelona, which is widely known for the works of Antoni Gaudí and other Art Nouveau masters, the department store (now C&A) located almost in the heart of the city, at Carrer de Pelai, 54 (Fig. 16), is rarely mentioned. It was built in 1913–1915. Construction work began according to the project of the master builder Agustí Mas i Sauris, but it was later modified by the architects Eduard Ferrés i Puig and Lluis Homs i Moncusi. It is one of the first buildings in Barcelona with a cast-in-situ reinforced concrete framework structure. This allowed the facade to be designed freely, with slightly curved continuous glazing arranged in several columns.




Fig. 12. Budapest, Hungary. Turkish Bank at Szervita tér 3. 1906. Armin Hegedüs, Henrik Böhm
Fig. 13. The Hague, the Netherlands. Schroder department store at Dagelijkse Groenmarkt 25. 1906. Lodewijk Antonius Hermanus de Wolf. Photograph by D. Valentijn [12]
Fig. 14. Copenhagen, Denmark. Commercial and apartment building "Løvenborg" at Vesterbrogade 34. 1906. Anton Rosen
Fig. 15. Helsinki, Finland. "Wuorio" office building at Unioninkatu 30. 1908–1909. Herman Geselliuss. Upper floors: 1913–1914. Armas Lindgren


Fig. 16. Barselona, Catalonia. Department store at Carrer de Pelai, 54. 1913–1915. Eduard Ferrés i Puig, Lluis Homs i Moncusi, Ignacio Mas i Morell
Fig. 17. Ljubljana, Slovenia. Drofenig department store at Mestni trg 23. 1914. Karl Brünnler

The idea of the synthesis of arts is also organically implemented in this modern architecture: the fifth floor above the cornice decorated with sgraffito ornaments is designed as an attic, which is decorated with two allegorical sculptures.

An outstanding achievement in the field of Art Nouveau architectural innovations is the Franc Drofenig department store in Ljubljana, Slovenia, at Mestni trg 23 (Fig. 17). It was built in 1914 to a design by architect Karl Brünnler. The building has a cast-in-situ reinforced concrete framework, but the facade, in accordance with the client's ideas about a modern department store, is made almost entirely of glass and metal. During construction, the city's Building Commission tried to impose a proposal for a traditional facade [14], but the original design was implemented, and Ljubljana gained a unique architectural monument.

The Art Nouveau period also saw the emergence of the corner window, which is considered one of the iconic elements of the Modern Movement architecture. The Schröder's House in Utrecht (Fig. 1) also has such one, but it seems to have first appeared in the Fagus shoe factory in Alfeld (Leine), Germany, built in 1911 to a design by Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer (Fig. 18). Since 2011, the building has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

An even more characteristic brand of the Modern Movement's vocabulary is the ribbon fenestration, whose tectonics derives directly from the external wall attached to the framework structure. However, this form is already known in various formal and structural versions in Art Nouveau.

Several works by architect Béla Lajta in Budapest, Hungary stand out with its wide glazing on the lower floors and emphasized horizontal window strips on the upper floors. Such are both the large apartment building with shops and a bank at Dohány utca 15 / Rákóczy út 18 (1911–1913), and the retail and apartment house at Szervita ter 5 (1912). Both buildings speak the formal language of the Modern Movement of the 1920s.

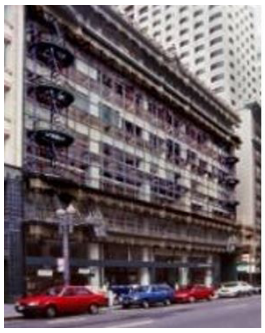
For the uninitiated, several actually Art Nouveau buildings in Vienna, Austria is also difficult to visually distinguish from the icons of the Modern Movement. In this respect, the works of Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Loos are well-known, but that is not all. A perfectly accurate example of ribbon fenestration is the sanatorium of the dermatologist Friedrich Luitlen at Auerspergstraße 9, constructed in 1907–1908 to the design by architect Robert Oerley (Fig. 19). Its façade has retained authentic appearance up to the main cornice, but in 1964, when it was rebuilt into a student hotel, the two prismatic volumes of the operation halls surmounting the building were demolished, replacing them with a continuous attic with simple window apertures. The facade of the apartment house named "Schokoladenhaus" at Wattmanngasse 29 (1914) also has a similar architectural composition, only here the architect Ernst Lichtblau filled the gaps between the windows with ceramic reliefs, so emphasizing the horizontality of the composition (Fig. 20). The reliefs were created by the sculptor Willy Russ.

Curtain wall facades attached to the structural framework of a building, were one of the architectural principles of the Modern Movement. The earliest "true" example of a curtain wall facade is usually considered to be the Hallidie Building, an office building in San Francisco, California (USA), at 130 Sutter Street (Fig. 21). It was built in 1917–1918 to a design by architect Willis Polk. The facade surface of the building is effectively a completely transparent screen, behind which the load bearing structure of the building is also visible.

The anticipations of the Modern Movement in the architecture of the early 20th century were also marked by the vigorous massing, mostly of cubic shape. This language is most widely found in the architecture of small or single-family residential buildings. It was certainly influenced by the "prairie buildings" style created by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, which was characterized by a spatially open layout, flat roofs with large overhangs and a distinctly horizontal artistic composition. Apparently, under the influence of Wright's architecture [17, 18], one of the direct preludes of the Modern Movement in Europe was also created – the Henny House (Fig. 22) in Huis Ter Heide, near Utrecht, in the Netherlands.



Fig. 18. Alfeld (Leine), Germany. Fagus factory at Hannoversche Straße 58. 1911. Walter Gropius, Adolf Meyer [15]
Fig. 19. Vienna, Austria. Sanatorium Luithlen at Auerspergstraße 9. 1907–1908. Robert Oerley. Photograph by Thomas Ledl [16]
Fig. 20. Vienna, Austria. Apartment house at Wattmanngasse 29. 1914. Ernst Lichtblau. Photograph by Māris Krastiņš



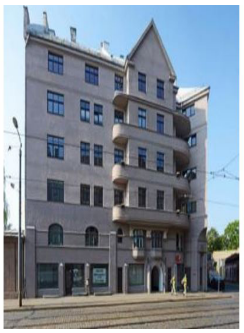




Fig. 21. San Francisco, California, USA. Hallidie Building at 130 Sutter Street. 1917–1918. Willis Jeferson Polk
Fig. 22. Huis Ter Heide, the Netherlands. Henny house. 1915–1919. Robert van't Hoff
Fig. 23. Rīga, Latvia. Apartment house with shops at Ģertrūdes iela 23. 1909. Eižens Laube
Fig. 24. Rīga, Latvia. Apartment house with shops at Miera iela 5. 1912. Alexander Schmaeling, Edgar Hartmann and Viktor Unverhau
Fig. 25. Budapest, Hungary. Apartment house with shops at Népszínház utca 19. 1911–1912. Béla Lajta

It was built in 1915–1919 to the design by the architect Robert van't Hoff.

Several buildings with a strongly articulated cubic massing can also be found in the architectural heritage of early 20th century in Rīga, Latvia, for example, apartment houses with shops at Lāčplēša iela 70, 70a and 70b, and at Ģertrūdes iela 23 (all 1909, architect Eižens Laube, Fig. 23). A unique architectural monument is the apartment house with shops at Miera iela 5 (1912, architects Alexander Schmaeling, Edgar Hartmann and Viktor Unverhau, Fig. 22). The stylistics of the building with its emphasized horizontal, rounded-end balconies and the motif of ribbon-fenestration seems far ahead of its time. It hardly differs from the characteristic examples of the Modern Movement of the 1920's and 1930's. A very similar architectural language has the apartment building with shops at Népszínház utca 19 in Budapest, Hungary (Fig. 25), built at the same time to the design by the architect Béla Lajta.

Theoretical background

Although the first buildings of the Modern Movement appeared in the mid-1920s, comprehensive flourishing of the style was noticeable only around the turn of the 1920s and 1930s. Various theoretical manifests, developed and popularized by individual masters, as well as various art movements or professional associations, played an important role both locally and internationally. The most famous were the German Association of Craftsmen "Werkbund" (Deutscher Werkbund), the Dutch "De Stijl", the Italian "Gruppo 7" and the Barcelona "GATEPAC" group, the so-called constructivists in Soviet Russia, etc. Architects Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier regularly published their theoretical works. In order to spread and popularize the principles of the Modern Movement, an international group of the most prominent architects of the time founded the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM from French: Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne) in 1928. Almost all the theoretical manifests of the Modern Movement in radical way explicitly denied tradition and everything historical. This factor later became a stumbling block for the style.

Articles devoted to theoretical issues of architecture can also be found in various periodicals in Latvia during the interwar period. Most of them were attempts to understand the architectural scene in Latvia, comparing it with the current trends in the world at that time. Architect Heinrihs Pīrangs stated in 1932: "Our slogan is "new practicality"" [19]. Architect Georgs Dauge also tried to explain the basic principles of this architecture: "Modern architecture strives to be functional, i.e., it wants that each building component and the entire building corresponds to its function – meaning and its special requirements", adding that modern architecture is a "style of practical basic forms" [20].

Like every innovative phenomenon, the Modern Movement had its opponents, and G. Dauge soon joined them, labelling the Modern Movement as "a characterless, abstractly theoretically invented internationalism" [21]. The term "International architecture" was introduced into international circulation by W. Gropius in 1925, when he published a collection of articles on the current architectural trends of the time [22]. However, W. Gropius later recognized this term as a "misleading label", since there is "no such thing as an "International style" unless you want to speak of certain universal technical achievements in our period which belong to the intellectual equipment of every civilised nation, or unless you want to speak of those pale examples (..), which you can find among the public buildings from Moscow to Madrid to Washington" [23].

G. Dauge warned that there was nothing more dangerous in architecture than such internationalism, noting that the "teachings of international Marxism", which had initially established its power in Latvia in 1919, "had really brought our lives almost to a catastrophe" [21]. The experience of Latvian

political history naturally had an impact when assessing everything that was happening in Russia at that time. The Modern Movement, which flourished there in the form of so-called Constructivism, was called the "international cube", a phenomenon that was foreign to the understanding of art or destructive to the development of Latvian architecture, a phenomenon which "also suck international forms prepared according to an oriental recipe" [24].

In the wide criticism of the Modern Movement, particularly vivid epithets can be found in several statements by the architect Eižens Laube. He called the Modern Movement "extraterritorial, applicable generally and to all kinds of tasks, lifeless, monotonous" [25], with an "anational" orientation and "cold, abstract forms", which were "smooth, naked, technical, often poor, without profiles, without ornaments, monotonous, sometimes even repulsive" [26]. Architect Aleksandrs Birzenieks, analysing E. Laube's own creative work, pointed out that in his perception the Modern Movement was "a manifestation of spiritual poverty", which "yields to anyone who knows how to handle a triangle and a rail" [27].

Most of the assumptions, opinions and positions on the architecture of that time, including E. Laube's public statements, were devoted to the problems of the national style or specifically Latvian architecture. However, the Modern Movement, although often taking something from Art Deco and folk ornament motifs or the range of neo-eclectic details rooted in the language of classical architectural art, remained the dominant architectural style.

The Modern Movement in the interwar period

An important contribution to the early development of the Modern Movement was architecture of the Netherlands. The works of De Stijl members Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud and Theo van Doesburg have become canonical architectural monuments of the 1920's (Fig. 26 and 27). They reflect the ideas of "neoplasticism" promoted by De Stijl and the use of primary colours of the spectrum, which in fact also fit into the Art Deco aesthetics of the time. However, it is often strictly separated from the Modern Movement, which is perhaps why the Industrial School in Groningen, the Netherlands (1922–1923, architect Leendert van der Vlugt and engineer Jan Gerko Wiebenga, Fig. 28) has so far received insufficient attention in the context of the history of the world Modern Movement. The building has a cubic massing, flat roof, ribbon windows, wide glazing and everything else that corresponds to the canons of modernist language, but the entrance is designed as a wide, stepped portal coated in dark green and brown ceramic tiles. Such an element was quite common in Art Deco architecture.

One of the earliest, most striking and most widely known icons of the Modern Movement is the Van Nelle tobacco, coffee and tea factory in Rotterdam, at Van Nelleweg 1 (1925–1931, Fig. 29). In 2014, the building was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List with the following statement: "It represents an exemplary contribution by the Netherlands to the Modernism of the inter-war years, and has since its construction become an emblematic example and an influential reference throughout the world" [28]. Several other Dutch outstanding contributions to the history of the Modern Movement were made by Jan Duiker, an architect who devoted his talent to improving social welfare, creating innovative projects and publishing articles about a better world [29]. His best-known buildings include the Nirvana Apartments in The Hague, at Benoordenhoutseweg 227 (1926–1929, together with J. H. Wiebenga), and the Open-Air School (Openluchtschool) in Amsterdam (1927–1930, together with Bernard Bijvoet, Fig. 30).

The prominent architectural historian Sigfried Giedion has named the tuberculosis sanatorium in Paimio, Finland (Fig. 31), designed by the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, as one of the three major works that contributed to the progress of modern architecture, along with the Bauhaus building in Dessau and Le Corbusier's not executed project of the League of Nations Palace in Geneva, Switzerland [30]. It has even been called one of the wonders of the modern world.

Significant place in the overall development of the Modern Movement had construction of small or single-family homes. Housing exhibitions organised by Deutscher Verkbund in Stuttgart in 1927, in Wrocław in 1929 and in Vienna in 1932 were well-known. Different types of small-scale residential buildings were constructed there to the designs of well-known architects, and various methods and possibilities of the use of different materials were tested during their construction. In France, as early as 1924–1925, i. e., simultaneously with Schröder's House in Utrecht, the villa for the fashion designer Paul Poiret in Mézy-sur-Seine, at 32 Rue de la Côté d'Apremont was constructed to the project by the architect Robert Mallet-Stevens (Fig. 32). The building displays impressive dynamic cubic massing, large glassing, balconies and terraces.

Several single-family houses designed by Le Corbusier are also classics of the early heyday of the Modern Movement. The most famous of these is "Villa Savoye" in Poissy, 82 Rue de Villiers, built between 1928 and 1930 (Fig. 33). It is an almost perfectly accurate illustration of Le Corbusier's well-known "five points of a new architecture" published in 1923 [31]. Those included replacement of load-bearing walls with a reinforced concrete framework, open layout, free design of the facade, ribbon fenestration, and flat roof with a garden on it.

Fig. 26. Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Replica of the Cafe "De Unie" at Mauritsweg 34/35. 1924. *Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud*
Fig. 27. Strasbourg, France. Cinema-Dance Hall in Café Aubette at *Place Kleber*. 1926–1928. *Theo van Doesburg*
Fig. 28. Groningen, The Netherlands. Industrial School at *Petrus Driessenstraat* 3. 1922–1923. *Leendert van der Vlugt & Jan Gerko Wiebenga*



Fig. 29. Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Van Nelle fabrika Van Nelleweg 1. 1925–1931. Leendert Van der Vlugt
Fig. 30. Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Open Air School (Openluchtschool) at Cliostraat 40. 1927–1930. Jan Duiker, Bernard Bijvoet
Fig. 31. Paimio, Finland. Tuberculosis sanatorium. 1929–1933. Alvar Aalto


Fig. 32. Mézy-sur-Seine, France. Poiret's villa at 32 Rue de la Côté d'Apremont. 1924–1925. Robert Mallet-Stevens
Fig. 33. Poissy, France. "Villa Savoye", 82 Rue de Villiers. 1928–1930. Le Corbusier

In Latvia, the Modern Movement or Functionalism in architecture emerged almost simultaneously with architectural innovations in Europe. One of the pioneers and most prolific masters of the new style was the civil engineer Teodors Hermanovskis. Already in the eyes of his contemporaries, he was active in "construction, bringing a new direction to us" [32]. One of his earliest works in architecture is an apartment building with shops at Marijas iela 8 (1926), next to which arises another house he designed at Marijas iela 6 (1928, Fig. 34). The strongly articulated facades of both buildings are designed in the spirit of "pure white" flat surfices, but at Marijas iela 8 formal expression of Art Deco is also quite noticeable. T. Hermanovskis's range of works includes a whole series of buildings with a more or less emphasized cubic massing and ribbon fenestration often contrasting with the vertical continuous glazing of the staircases, which have been quite aptly called thermometers. Such buildings, for example, are the apartment house with the cinema "Teika" in Riga, at Zemitāna laukums 2 (1933, Fig. 35), the apartment house at Stabu iela 4 (1932, Fig. 36), etc. Unfortunately, the balconies of the last building in 2024 were dismantled and the facade architecture was distorted. Typical symbols of the Modern Movement's vocabulary are clearly visible in one of the most outstanding and also the earliest monuments of the style in Rīga – the office and apartment house with shops at Elizabetes iela 51 (1928, Fig. 37). The author of the building's design, architect Paul Mandelstamm, along with T. Hermanovskis, was one of the most active promoters of the Modern Movement in Latvia.

A brilliant example of the Modern Movement or Functionalist language is the former building of the Latvian Joint Stock Bank (now the Rīdzene branch of SEB bank) in Rīga, at Kaļķu iela 13 (1931, Fig. 38), designed by the architects Alfred Karr and Kurt Baetge. Several other canonical architectural monuments of the Modern Movement also were built to the designs of the same architects – the building of the Latvian Booksellers' Association in Rīga, at Lāčplēša iela 43/45 (1930), the office and apartment house with a cinema at Vaļņu iela 9 (1935), etc.

One of the most vocal defenders of the Modern Movement architecture in Latvia was Aleksandrs Klinklāvs. Among the buildings built to his designs, the Tērvete Sanatorium (1930–1934, together with architect Ansis Kalniņš) stands out – a large and unusually modern building for its time, unique in the Latvian rural landscape (Fig. 39).

The characteristic cubistic massing, characteristic of the Modern Movement, is effectively applied in the architecture of many school buildings. In Riga, this shape is present in several schools built according to the designs of the architect Alfrēds Grīnbergs. The most characteristic is Rīga City Primary School No. 10 (now Rīga Čiekurkalns Primary School) in Rīga, at Čiekurkalna 1. garā līnija 53 (1933–1935). Regarding another similar work by A. Grīnbergs – the project of the Rīga City Primary School (now Rīga 34th Secondary School) at Kandavas iela 4/6 (1934–1937) – the Commission for the Review of Monumental Buildings of the Ministry of the Interior, which included some other architects along with E. Laube, pointed out in October 1934 that the "formal architectural solution of the school building is not sufficiently coherent, felt and balanced" [33], and moreover, the content and character of the school were not sufficiently expressed in the architecture. However, the project was implemented




Fig. 34. Rīga, Latvia. Apartment houses with shops at Marijas iela 8 (1926) un 6 (1928). Teodors Hermanovskis
Fig. 35. Rīga, Latvia. Apartment house with shops and the cinema at Zemitāna laukums 2. 1933. Teodors Hermanovskis
Fig. 36. Rīga, Latvia. Apartment house with shops at Stabu iela 4. 1932. Teodors Hermanovskis
Fig. 37. Rīga, Latvia. Office and apartment house with shops at Elizabetes iela 51. 1928. Paul Mandelstamm



Fig. 38. Rīga, Latvia. the Latvian Joint Stock Bank at Kaļķu iela 13. 1931. Alfred Karr and Kurt Baetge
Fig. 39. Tērvete, Latvia. Sanatorium. 1930–1934. Aleksandrs Klinklāvs un Ansis Kalniņš
Fig. 40. Alūksne, Latvia. City Primary School at Lielā Ezera iela 26. 1938. Elza Meldere-Ziemele

without any special changes. A similar principle of spatial composition is also used for the Ernests Gliks Primary School (now Alūksne City Primary School) at Lielā Ezera iela 26 in Alūksne, designed by architect Elza Meldere-Ziemele (1938, Fig. 40). These examples, although quite characteristic, are only a small part of the rich and diverse heritage of Latvian interwar Modern Movement architecture.

The Modern Movement after World War II: Currents and Echoes

The post-World War II Modern Movement worldwide was a continuation of the pre-war Modern Movement, or Functionalism. The symbolic beginning of the post-war Modern Movement was the United Nations (UN) complex in New York, USA, at 760 United Nations Plaza (1947–1950). It was built to a design developed by an international team of architects. One of the architects of the UN complex, Oscar Niemeyer, became an outstanding master of the principle of contrast. One of the most characteristic examples of his rather simple, but clear, precisely balanced and expressive architectural compositions is the Brazilian Parliament or Congress Palace in the Brazilian capital, Brasília (1959–1960, Fig. 41).

The idea of universal architecture, nurtured by the great architect of the 20th century, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, was embodied in box-shaped glass and steel buildings. They became the general symbol of the Modern Movement. The earliest example of this stereotype executed by Mies van der Rohe himself is the residential buildings at 860–880 Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, USA, built in 1948–1951 (Fig. 42). One of the icons of this architecture is the office building Lever House, designed by architect Gordon Bunshaft at 375 Park Avenue in New York (1952, Fig. 43). It is a high box-shaped building rising above a wider two-story platform.

The architecture of the glazed box-shaped buildings, however, led to an artistic dead-end. The well-known architectural critic Lewis Mumford, analysing the work of Mies van der Rohe noted in 1962: "His own chaste taste has these hollow glass shells a crystalline purity of form: but they existed alone in the Platonic world of his imagination and had no relation to site, climate, insolation, function or internal activity [..]. This was the apotheosis of the compulsive, bureaucratic spirit. Its emptiness and hollowness were more expressive than van der Rohe's admirers realized" [34]. Mies van der Rohe's works have been recognized by many authorities as poorly articulated, poor in form and full of destructive technical and functional errors, architecture that does not fit in the environment. Theorist of Postmodernism Charles Jencks has devoted extensive research to this issue [35]. Postmodernism flourished starting in the 1970s as a conceptual counterpoint to the Modern Movement.

One of the methods of overcoming the artistic poverty of the Modern Movement was the New Brutalism – the deliberate use of finishing materials and building technical installations or structural elements to achieve architectural and artistic effects. Such a technique has been well known already since the times of Art Nouveau. E. Laube, for example, in 1908 emphasized the need to use only real, natural building materials, stating: "plaster has been used until now as an imitation of stone. [..] naturally, it must be treated like a surfice" [36]. The New Brutalism mostly focused on rough surfaces of cast-in-situ concrete (in French, béton brut), which are given expressiveness by the untreated imprint of the wood texture of the formwork. The name of the movement was introduced into wider circulation after the publication of Peter Banham's book "The New Brutalism" [37].

The New Brutalism was strongly influenced by the post-war work of Le Corbusier. It is often even called the Le Corbusier style [38]. Almost all of the master's works, starting with the famous "residential unit" (Unité d'habitation) in Marseille, France (1946–1951, Fig. 44), are distinguished by the strong massing and articulation of architectural elements, achieved by using the artistic and technical possibilities of cast-in-situ concrete. One of the masterpieces of such architecture is the Dominican monastery of Sainte-Marie-de-la-Tourette near Lyon, in Éveaux-sur-L'Abresle, built in 1951–1963 (Fig. 45).

The New Brutalism was also an integral part of the creative methods in the work of the architect Marcel Breuer. M. Breuer was a bright star in the constellation of Masters of 20th-century architecture. His well-known work is the UNESCO headquarters in Paris (1954–1958), designed together with Bernard Louis Zehrfuss and Pier Luigi Nervi (Fig. 46 and 47). It is an emblematic building of the Modern Movement. The building plan is a trefoil with gently concave "armpits". M. Breuer used the spatial composition scheme of the UNESCO building in the US Department of Housing and Urban



Fig. 41. Brasilia, Brazil. Congress Palace. 1959–1960. Oscar Niemeyer
Fig. 42. Chicago, USA. Residential buildings at 860–880 Lake Shore Drive. 1948–1951. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Fig. 43. New York, USA. Lever House at 390 Park Avenue. 1952. Gordon Bunshaft


Fig. 44. Marseille, France. Residential unit (Unité d'habitation). 1946–1951. Le Corbusier, André Wogenscky
Fig. 45. Éveaux-sur-L'Abresle, France. Tourette monastry (Couvent Sainte-Marie-de-la-Tourette). 1951–1963. Le Corbusier, André Wogenscky and others



Fig. 46 and 47. Paris, France. UNESCO headquarters at 7, *place de Fontenoy*. 1954–1958. Bernard Louis Zehrfuss, Marcel Breuer, Pier Luigi Nervi
Fig. 48. Rīga. Building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Latvian SSR at Elizabetes iela 2. 1970–1974. Jānis Vilciņš, Alfons Ūdris, Gunārs Asaris

Development building in Washington, 451 7th St SW (1968), creating the building plan from two trefoils put together. Here and there, more direct reproductions of the UNESCO building plan configuration also appeared. For example, in the 1970s, the current European Parliament building was built at 8 Square de Meeûs in Brussels, designed by architect Michel Barbier. Its three wings have different lengths, but the facades, unlike the New Brutalism characteristic of the eventual Parisian prototype, are clad in fine bronze-colored mirrored glass.

A much more direct imitation of the UNESCO building is the former building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Latvian SSR in Rīga, at Elizabetes iela 2 (Fig. 48), built in one of the historical parks of the Riga city centre (Kronvalda Park) in 1971–1974 to the design by architects Jānis Vilciņš, Alfons Ūdris and Gunārs Asaris. It lags behind the prototype not only in size, but also in terms of the culture and quality of execution of architectural details. The spatially and functionally different trefoil armpits on the park side, as well as the arrangement of vertical communications, absolutely do not correspond to the emphasized monumental symmetry of the main entrance facade. The scale of the building that does not correspond to the specific location and the conceptual denial of values of historical built-up environment meet the principles of the Modern Movement that were still widely recognized at that time: this building "implanted into the network of parks and greenery on Elizabetes iela 2, is clear testimony to the irreverence of the architecture of the time concerning the context of environment and the conclusive role of political powers in making professional decisions" [39]. Of course, at that time "no one was allowed even beep against the communists' plans to erect their headquarters within the park in the city centre" [40]. In 1970, when the design of this building began, disagreements arose between the city architect of Riga, Edgars Pučiņš, who was consistent in his professional activities, and the city's top management. E. Pučiņš was fired and replaced in the position by G. Asaris.

The so-called laboratory building with a library of the Riga Technical University (then the A. Pelše Riga Polytechnic Institute) at Kaļķu (then Ļeņina) iela 1a (1964–1967, architect Ilmārs Paegle) was also strange and inappropriate in the environment. It stretched for almost 140 m from the main building of the Riga Technical University at Kaļķu iela 1 across both Mazā Jauniela and Tirgoņu iela to Mazā Monētu iela. The building was demolished in 2000, when the reconstruction of the Town Hall torn down in 1954 began. In the 1960s, the issue of environmental context was not an actuality. On the contrary, in order to "eliminate the unpleasant legacy", it was recommended to replace the existing buildings with buildings designed in "in modern structures with equal structural spans and architectural solutions" so that they could be "used for any task similarly to universal spaces in the industrial architecture" [41].

Conclusion

The legacy of the Modern Movement forms an important part of the contemporary built-up environment. The Modern Movement had broad and deep roots. In different periods, it has acquired different artistic expressions and ambiguous evaluations.

Most of the post-war Modern Movement buildings have already been heavily modified or disappeared. This is not a coincidence, but rather a regularity: their architecture, execution and urban quality have not stood the test of time. They have become both physically and morally obsolete much faster than the heritage of previous periods, including the monuments of the Modern Movement of the interwar period. They are much more thoroughly constructed and mostly perfectly inscribed in the environment.

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Kopsavilkums

Pētījumā tiek aplūkoti un izvērtēti līdz šim mazāk zināmi piemēri, analizēta attīstība dažādās valstīs un Latvijā, kā arī salīdzināta tā formālā valodas izpausmju kvalitāte dažādos vēsturiskajos posmos. Pētījumā ir izvērtēta Modernās kustības vēsturiskā nozīme kultūras mantojuma kontekstā. Īpaša uzmanība pievērsta agrīniem piemēriem, kas iezīmēja pamatu stila turpmākajai attīstībai. Modernās kustības mantojums veido nozīmīgu daļu no mūsdienu apbūvētās vides. Modernajai kustībai bija plašas un dziļas saknes, dažādos laikposmos tā ieguvusi atšķirīgas mākslinieciskas izpausmes un pretrunīgus vērtējumus. Lielākā daļa pēckara perioda modernās kustības ēku jau ir būtiski pārbūvētas vai pilnībā zudušas. Tas nav nejaušs gadījums, bet gan likumsakarība, jo konkrēto ēku arhitektūra, izpildījums un pilsētbūvnieciskā kvalitāte nav izturējusi laika pārbaudi. Tās fiziski un morāli novecojušas daudz ātrāk nekā iepriekšējo laikmetu mantojums, tostarp arī starpkaru perioda modernisma pieminekļi. Pēdējie ir daudz rūpīgāk būvēti un lielākoties harmoniski iekļaujas apkārtējā vidē.