

Summary

MAGDALENA MARKOWSKA/ “Monument of the first years of the new Reich” – a contest for sanitation of central market block in Wrocław

At the site of the disassembled in 1821 Sukiennice [Cloth Hall] “the most beautiful street of the capital city” was created, with Classicist tenement houses built on its both sides. This street quickly became an architectural and stylistic pattern for the buildings raised at that time. The following century brought many ideas that came up with a representative centre, which would result in knocking down the whole quarter of central market buildings, in some cases even knocking down the very Town Hall.

The last attempt at transformation of the market square was made in March 1938. A competition for a design of arrangement of the central market block, situated next to the Town Hall, was announced. The contest jury awaited the new buildings to be inspired by the style of ca. 1800, but with modern forms corresponding with the modern taste of that time. Thanks to which the new buildings were supposed “to serve as a monument of the first years of the new Reich for the next generations”. From among 32 sent in designs the contest commission (including Werner March, Günther Grundmann and Rudolf Stein, among others) chose the ones which could have been estimated thoroughly in their opinion. The competition did not meet the expectations as, according to the jury, not a single work was interesting enough to be directed into realisation. On the occasion of the competition the discussion over conservation and protection issues of the old buildings in Wrocław and the local architectural tradition emerged.