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**Machines for Living: Architects' Houses in the Czech Lands, 1890-1939**

My thesis is concerned with houses architects designed for themselves. They are a particularly fruitful area of investigation because the architects were not constrained by their client's requirements. In theory, therefore, the architect could thus fully express their vision of individual living, and their houses could showcase the architect's abilities.

There are some famous examples of houses designed by architects for themselves. Most notably, perhaps, Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin houses or Alvar Aalto's house in Helsinki. However, the architect's house as an architectural typology has not been studied as such. Moreover, this is certainly not the case, in relation to Czechoslovakia, the subject of my PhD.

Although my PhD examines classical aspects of the designs, related to norms in architectural history, such as visual and spatial analysis of the building designs, using archival sources (e.g plans, historical photographs, period literature) my PhD is concerned, too, with the self-presentational potential of the houses. In other words, I am looking at the way these houses presented an image of the architects' personal and professional identity in the environment where their creators lived and worked. It was essential for architects to carefully consider the design of their own houses as these promoted their work in the community and to clients. Therefore, these houses are valuable sources of information about architects' thinking and should be considered an important clue in their right as to the approach of the architect.

Because my PhD is concerned with the social function of the architect's house, I am deliberately avoiding any focus just on well-known examples by canonical figures of the modern architectural movement in Czechoslovakia, such as Jan Kotěra, Bohuslav Fuchs or Vladimír Karfík. Hence, I am additionally interested in marginal figures whose designs are no less important for the social-historical study of the subject. Often located in regional and provincial towns. They also provide an invaluable guide for understanding how ideas of 'modern' architecture disseminated across the country from the established 'centres' of modernist culture: Prague, Brno and Zlín.

The PhD addresses the following research questions:

- How did the architects understand the design of their own house? To what extent did they use it as an opportunity to demonstrate their ideas of modern living?
- How did the ideas architects used in the designs of their own houses relate to their designs for the houses of clients? Hence, to what extent are architects' houses a window to the architects' thinking?
- What do the buildings' location, scale, and design solutions the architects came up with reveal to us about how the architects viewed their social and professional status?
- What do the designs tell us about their understanding of private space and its relationship to public identity?

For the conference, I shall present a paper focusing on the houses of Josef Místecký, built in 1926/7 and 1936. It is a case study in which I can present the wider ideas I am dealing with in the thesis as a whole.