

01 ŠIAULIAI CITY HOSPITAL

V. Kudirkos str. 99  
Architect Vytautas Landsbergis-Zemkalnis,  
1939 – 1940, 1944

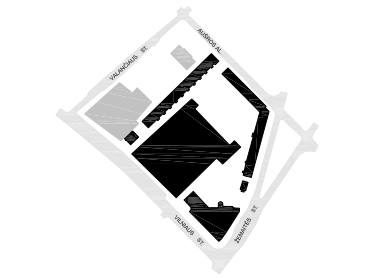
In 1937, the City Municipality was thinking about the establishment of an exemplary city park on the unused site in the end of Aušros alley; next to it, under the care of "Aušros" museum, it was planned to establish Air Museum – open air museum. However, the site was given to Šiauliai Department of Red Cross to build a city hospital housing 300 beds. An architect V. Landsbergis-Zemkalnis prepared several variants of projects for hospital building. In accordance with the chosen to be implemented project, the hospital building was of three blocks, architecture of T letter plan, solidly calm, and corresponding to global tendencies. The requirements for the building of hospitals were preserved in functional zones of the building, the conditions were created for recreation and hygiene. In 1939, the building was interrupted by the war, the hospital was finished in 1944, according to slightly changed project. After the war, the territory of hospital expanded, the entire medical town was established here.



06 NEW MARKET PLACE OF ŠIAULIAI CITY

The crossroad of Aušros al. and Žemaitės str.  
1938 – 1940

Until the middle of the 4th decade of the 20th century, the markets were open three times a week in the city centre in the former Market Square in front of St. Peter and Paul's Church. The location for a new market place was chosen on the crossroad of Aušros alley and Žemaitės street. In that time Aušros alley was under repair, the shacks were demolished and in their places new two-storey brick and wooden houses, modern buildings of administrative offices were built, the street was paved in stones. In 1937, the site intended for a market place was flattened and paved, and in 1938 the market was moved to this place. On the grounds of concession, business persons were provided with areas in order to build trade pavilions, which after the determined time had to be given to the Municipality's care. Before the beginning of war, the market place was not fully built with objects, the main entrance to the market place was from the corner of Aušros alley and J. Basanavičius street.



11 BUILDING OF HEALTH INSURANCE FUND OF ŠIAULIAI COUNTY

Aušros al. 15  
Engineer Vladas Bitė, 1937

In order to sequentially shape a modern urban view of Aušros alley, one-storey brick building of the company "Progresas", that had been standing on the crossroad of Aušros alley and Dvaro streets since the beginning of the 20th century, was demolished. In 1937, the House of Healthcare Insurance Fund, projected by V. Bitė, was built in this place. The building also housed Šiauliai Healthcare Centre, which took care of babies, children and mothers, Society of Cultural Education and its bookshop, the editorial office of journal "Culture". The building is of more restrained architecture and more of traditional, historical architectural expression. The influence of modernism is felt less.



16 ŠIAULIAI DRAMA THEATRE

Tilžės str. 155  
Karolis Meisonas and Stasys Kudokas are mentioned, 1938

Šiauliai Drama Theatre was built in 1938, the theatre staff started to work in it in 1941. During World War II, the building was burned. After the war, the building was quickly rebuilt. In the March of 1945, there was the first premiere in post-war years. In 1978, the extension was built next to the theatre intended for production premises. Historical interiors have not survived, however, primary building structure and spaces of interior have remained.



02 THE RESIDENTIAL HOUSE OF PAINTER G. BAGDONAVIČIUS

Aušros al. 84  
Architect Karolis Reisonas  
The 2nd half of the 3rd decade, the 20th century

It is stated, that a wooden one-storey residential house with an attic, expressive side line entrance loggia and balcony, also with a stylish interior decorated with openwork carvings was designed by the painter G. Bagdonavičius himself. It is mentioned, that architect Karolis Reisonas assisted him. The building appeared in the newly formed part of Aušros alley, which was stretching far behind the city, thus wooden residential buildings were the most popular there. Famous 20th century painter from Šiauliai lived here from 1936 to 1986. Here he had a workshop, accepted orders for advertising projects, drew ordered paintings, posters, graphic works, lectured lessons on painting and penmanship.



07 RESIDENTIAL HOUSES IN MAIRONIO AND VAIŠIŲ STREETS

Maironio and Vaisių str.  
The 4th decade of the 20th century

The tendencies of new modernist architecture in the 4th decade reflected in residential houses. Quite a lot of houses with rational features remained in the segments of Maironio and Vaisių streets, were the building developed together with the view of prestigious Aušros alley street, which was intensively changing in those times.



12 BUILDING OF POST OFFICE

Aušros al. 42  
Architect Klaudijus Dušauskas-Duž, 1938 – 1940

In the spring of 1940, about 150 employees of Šiauliai Post Office, telephone and telegraph office started to work in a new building of Post Office. The creators of spacious three-storey corner building of L letter plan were criticized for the shape of windows and their monotonous arrangement. Nevertheless, the building naturally matches to the aesthetics of surrounding buildings. Massive granitic socle and entrance portal are emphasized in the facade. The area of the hall for client service remained almost unchanged. The space and structure of modernistic architecture interior is felt inside. The upper illumination of hall is functionally solved. During the Soviet times, while renovating the interior, its structure was preserved.



17 WATER TOWER

Vytauto str. 103  
Professor P. Morkūnas and engineer A. Janulionis, 1939 – 1948

The first projects of sewerage and plumbing equipment in Šiauliai were started to be prepared in 1922 – 1925. However, intensive works of sewerage and plumbing were started in the 4th decade. In 1938, after the main lines of sewerage were laid, the plumbing works were started. After a year, the water tower was started to be built, it was finished after the war in 1948.



03 PRIMARY SCHOOL "AUŠROS" MUSEUM

Aušros al. 47  
Engineer Vladas Bitė, 1932

An engineer from Šiauliai city, Vladas Bitė, designed a brick primary school in the new part of the city, on the sold out land of former Gubernija Manor. The building was designed for a ten-set school, however, when in 1933 "Aušros" museum was temporary moved to its second floor, the school was open only in the ground floor, and in the basement there were two flats for the guards. The museum had its premises in the school temporarily, as the construction of the Museum and Library Palace, planned by architect Karolis Reisonas' project, was postponed. It was planned to move the museum and to establish additional four classes, a hall, a book shop, and needlework class to the second floor of the school, as well as to establish school's museum in the attic. However, it happened quite the opposite – today the whole building is owned by Šiauliai "Aušros" museum. The volume of the building is symmetric, the central symmetry is emphasized by avant-corps. The composition of the facades is clear, dominated by horizontal windows' rhythm. School's typology is clearly seen in the architecture of building.



08 HOUSE OF LITHUANIAN NATIONALISTS UNION

Aušros al. 21  
Engineer Vladas Bitė, 1934

Even amongst the modern buildings of this part of Aušros alley, the House of the Nationals stands out due to its live playfulness of asymmetric shapes. A special focus – corner of a glazed staircase above the main entrance, at the top ending with a long staircase wall. The building hosted the editorial office of "Mūsų kraštas", Šiauliai region Nationalists organization headquarters' right wing journal, printing house of Lithuanian Nationals' Union "Viltis", National "central" bookstore, which was moved from Vilniaus street. The building housed a spacious, bright reading hall, separate premises for catalogues and a cloakroom.



13 MORDELIS' BLOCK OF FLATS FOR RENT

Aušros al. 13  
Engineer Anatolijus Rozemblumas is mentioned, 1938

The Mordeliai were the cousins of the largest leather factory owner Jokūbas Frenkelis in Šiauliai. Hiršas Elijas Mordelis was Director General of Frenkelis factory and limited company "Batas". In about 1938, the house of luxurious flats for rent was started to be built in Aušros alley. Four-storey residential house was probably the largest and most modern apartment building in Šiauliai. The house is of corner plan, however, symmetrical facade of Aušros alley dominates in composition. There are two staircases in the building, they are doubled by two household staircases with entrances from the yard. The lifts equipped in the main staircases were the first in Šiauliai. The flats were of four or five rooms, the interior has partly remained. The constructions of building are combined – masonry and reinforced concrete frame.



18 TRADE INSTITUTE (ŠIAULIAI UNIVERSITY)

Vytauto str. 84  
Architects Steponas Stulginskis, Eugenijus Manomaitis, 1941

In the spring of 1939, the Trade Institute which had been already working for three years, was moved from occupied Klaipėda to Šiauliai – the industry and trade centre of North Lithuania. This was the first higher education institution in Šiauliai, which later became the university. At first, the institute was established in the part of Nationalists' House and Teachers' Seminary, later, in the premises of a new building of post office. In 1940, according to engineer E. Manomaitis' project, the institute was moved to the unfinished to be built three-storey hotel, that was projected by the city engineer S. Stulginskis. The building was on the corner of Vytauto and Vasario 16-osios streets. The building is of corner type, the main facade faces Vytauto street. The entrance is clearly expressed in the facade with its vertical segments.



04 ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Vilniaus str. 263  
Engineer Vladas Bitė, 1933 – 1935

The place to build Šiauliai District Municipality was chosen in the very outskirts of the city, adjacent to country fields, behind the Hill of Rebels, on the crossroad of a small street and Kuršėnai road (continuation of Vilnius street). This is one of the most expressive buildings projected by V. Bitė. In the interior of the central part of two-storey spacious corner building, there is a spacious staircase with lobbies, in the side wings – rows of offices. The facades of building are symmetrical, their dynamic composition is created by the rhythmical and horizontal division of rows of small rectangular windows and emphasized vertical divisions between windows. After World War II, the third floor was built by preserving the architecture of historical part of the building.



09 ŠIAULIAI COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Aušros al. 19  
Engineer Kazys Kriščiukaitis, 1936

During the interwar period, the section of Aušros alley between Varpo and Žemaitės streets developed as a modern street of "New" Šiauliai, where besides private buildings the majority of new administrative and public buildings accumulated as well. After demolition of the former Šiauliai Economics Administrative building, spacious three-storey corner plan County Courthouse of conservative and solid architecture was built here. In the press of those times, it was called as the biggest building in Šiauliai. The composition of building's facade is laconic and asymmetric. A clear rhythm of windows prevails.



14 MANUFACTURER B. POŠKUS' BLOCK OF FLATS FOR RENT

Vilniaus str. 215  
c 1936 – 1940

The block of flats rented by the owner of large footwear workshop was built in the end of the 4th decade of the 20th century on empty area that remained after the destructions of World War I. This corner house has expressive rounded corners in the junction of blocks on the crossroad as well as the recessed niches of staircases in the facade of Vilniaus street. The lines of narrow windows horizontally joint by rims dominate in the composition of facades. At the level of ground floor, spacious windows emphasize trade function. Here "Kuniųkaiščių baras" of brewery "Gubernija" was working, brand footwear shop "Bata", other different shops, the footwear workshop of B. Poškus was established in the building as well.



19 SIMONAS VOLPERTAS' PRIVATE CLINIC

P. Višinskio str. 24  
Architect Erich Mendelsohn, 1930

It is believed, that S. Volpertas' private Clinic for Skin and Venereal Diseases built in 1930 was designed by German architect Erich Mendelsohn, the author of Potsdam Observatory and other famous projects. It is said the architect himself used to visit Volpertas. In order to ensure confidentiality of the patients, due to sensitive nature of their health problems, the building was designed so that the patients would not be able to meet each other. The clinic was modern not only in its architecture, but also in its equipment. It is said, that S. Volpertas was the first one to buy and use an X-ray machine in his clinic. In 1940, Volpertas's house was inhabited, first, by a Red Army commandant an later – by a German commandant. During the Soviet times it was a secret hotel for the government.



05 THE MONUMENT FOR INDEPENDENCE ON THE HILL OF REBELS

Vilniaus str.  
Architect Karolis Reisonas, 1933

The killed rebellion participants of 1863 uprising were buried here in a small hill outside the town. In the downhill next to Vilnius str. the German pilots who were killed during World War I, Russian army soldiers, German soldiers, who were killed during World War II were buried here too. City Municipality took care of the territory called the Hill of Rebels during the inter-war period. In the autumn of 1931, according to K. Reisonas' project, a hewn granite monument was started to be built for those who died for Lithuanian independence. A high stela on the top was finished in shield with Gediminas posts and a small window, an electricity bulb inside it – eternal fire. In the foundation of monument, there are urns with the remains of rebels who were found here. In 1957, the monument was reconstructed, the metal tablets with the inscriptions "For those who died for Lithuania" and "Homeland, be happy for ever" were removed, Gediminaičiai posts were bricked up, the cross and the rebels' names were dismounted. On its front part, the sculpture group of three figures "1863 Rebels", created by a sculptor A. Dimžys, was mounted. In 1988, the original authentic appearance was returned to the monument.



10 ENGINEER V. BITĖ'S RESIDENTIAL HOUSE

Aušros al. 15 a  
Engineer Vladas Bitė, c 1934

In 1930, Vladas Bitė (Bitis) became the chief engineer of Šiauliai city (today corresponds to chief architect's post). The works by this young and talented graduate from the Technical Faculty of Vytautas Magnus University in the 4th decade of the 20th century shaped new urban face of Šiauliai. His works are specific in expressive volumes and shapes, the harmony between symmetry and asymmetry. New constructive approach and architectural aesthetics are declared by a private residential two-storey house of dynamic composition of volumes and lines, which was projected by the engineer himself at the beginning of his career, in about 1934.



15 BUILDINGS ON THE CROSSROAD OF VILNIAUS AND TILŽĖS STREETS

Book Shop of Press Fund, Tilžės str. 151, c 1930  
Feinbergal house, Vilniaus str. 140, 1935 – 1937  
Jewish Central Bank, Tilžės str. 149, the 4th decade of the 20th century

This is perhaps the best preserved part of Šiauliai old town in the end of the 19th century – the 1st half of the 20th century. After World War I, the buildings on the crossroad of the main Vilniaus and Tilžės streets were almost or fully destroyed. The present buildings appeared here in the 4th decade. The buildings on crossroad show the main principles of city building – two or three floors, rounded corners, horizontal rhythm of lines between windows, emphasized window sills and lintel. The entrances to buildings are emphasized, large windows in the ground floor. The columns of monolithic reinforced concrete are used in the construction. During the reconstruction of Photography Museum, it was found, that present columns in the ground floor can withstand the load of five-storey building.



20 LAWYER KAZIMIERAS VENCLAUSKIS' HOUSE

Vytauto str. 89  
Architect Karolis Reisonas, 1925

In the 3rd decade of the 20th century, retrospectivism was still prevailing in Šiauliai. Eclectic and modern motifs were intertwined in the residential house located in Vytauto street. The house was projected by the city engineer K. Reisonas. In 1926 – 1940, the family of a famous lawyer K. Venclauskis lived in this house. K. Venclauskis was a representative of Constituent Assembly (Seimas), and was elected the first mayor of Šiauliai in independent Lithuania, later – District Chairman of the Board. Together with his wife S. Juškevičiūtė-Venclauskienė raised two daughters and over one hundred foster-children. The large family lived in the ground floor and the premises of basement, other floors of the building were rented. Royal Danish Consulate was among tenants as well. In 1991, Gražybė and Danutė Venclauskaitės gave their parents' house to the museum. The planned structure of the building remained without major changes, though the interiors have not remained. The object is included in Register of Cultural Property and recognized as protected by the state.





Together with a historian Vilija Ulinskytė-Balzienė and an architect Šarūnas Sabaliauskas, we will overview the panorama of Šiauliai city in interwar period. We can see significant features of modernism style of the city centre that was twice destroyed during the wars of the 20th century and which was again rebuilt. Not only the most interesting residential and public buildings of this style, but also the public spaces of city that formed during the interwar period are included in the route of this excursion. During the excursion, we will familiarize with the buildings projected by architects Karolis Reisonas and Vladas Bitė, Vytautas Landsbergis- Žemkalnis, Erikas Mendelsoonas (Germany), as well as by other famous architecture masters who worked as engineers in Šiauliai city.

This architectural excursion is devoted for all citizens and city guests, who are interested in architectural, cultural, and historical heritage of Šiauliai city. During the excursion, we invite to visit the outstanding and the most interesting objects of interwar period modernism in Šiauliai city. It is possible to take the sightseeing route on foot or by bicycle, independently or with a guide.



RECOMMENDED READING:  
Catalogue "Old Šiauliai in Postcards. 1902 – 1944"  
(Compiled by A. Šivinskas, P. Kaminskas, R. Baristaitė)  
Šiauliai, 2006, 389 p., with illustration

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RECOMMENDED PLACES TO VISIT:  
Ch. Frenkelis villa (Vilniaus str. 74, Šiauliai)  
In the villa, we recommend to see the model reminiscing old Šiauliai and to review the video material accumulated in the museum.

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## INTERWAR MODERNISM. ŠIAULIAI

