

Architects in the General Government: Activities, Reckoning, Memory

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyses architects as a professional group in General Government (GG) during the Second World War. It showcases some of their design work, projects, employment, education, and other aspects of everyday life in an occupied country. The focus is on architects working in three cities: the former Polish capital of Warsaw, the GG's new capital city of Cracow, and Zakopane, localized in the Tatra Mountains, which was intended to become a modern resort and sport center. The paper also mentions cases from Zamość and Radom. Most of the projects were realized by Polish architects employed by the German authorities. In Zakopane, Polish architects had a stronger position and more freedom in their work than in the other cities of GG. The article investigates the relationships between architecture and politics as well as the ideological impact of the architects' work. Using unpublished archival sources, it evaluates the post-war requitals of the German architect Hubert Groß and a Polish town planner Stefan Żychoń. Neither of the two had to face a court after the war due to his activity as an architect during the occupation. Groß was accused of having been a member in different Nazi organizations, and Stefan Żychoń was suspended from the Association of Polish Architects for one year. For political reasons, both German and Polish architects seldom included war-related activities in their official curricula after 1945. In Poland they remain a taboo until today.

KEYWORDS: architecture, city planning, architects, memory, General Government, Poland, Germany

Declaration on Possible Conflicts of Interest

The author has declared that no conflicts of interest exist.

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Introduction

Inter arma silent musae, the Latin saying goes: art has no say at war and needs to make room for more pressing needs. *Inter arma non silent musae* is the title of an anthology edited by Czesław Madajczyk in 1977, in which a number of authors demonstrate that during the Second World War in Europe, the Muses did not stay silent.¹ The title seems particularly apt in the case of architecture and urban planning: as bombs were falling on cities, killing people, and leaving thousands homeless, numerous European architects were planning the future reconstruction and transformation. The motif of a “blessing in disguise” reappears in the history of the reconstruction of European cities destroyed during the Second World War: the reconstruction became an opportunity to remove architectural errors of the past. Yet the occupation was also a period of intensive design work. Both sides of the conflict made plans: the occupiers as well as the occupied, together and separately, legally and clandestinely. Design work could go on, thanks to the opportunity offered by an exceptional situation created by the war: the planners made unofficial plans for a nondescript future.

The aim of this article is to closely examine the case of architects working in the General Government (GG) as a professional group working under the reality of an occupation, with a particular focus on Polish architects, who were the majority in the group.² I discuss selected examples of the architects’ activities, the available education, work, and contacts between the occupier and the occupied. I also describe the work of architects in three cities (Warsaw, Cracow, and Zakopane) in more detail. Finally, I discuss the history of post-war reckoning with two key players (German and Polish) in the project of designing the New German East. The article is far from a comprehensive overview of all forms of planning and construction activities, or all architects working in this region; rather, it is meant to act as an outline of the issue. Neither does it include the District of Galicia, incorporated into the GG on 1 August 1941, which remains the least studied to this day.³

¹ CZESŁAW MADAJCZYK: *Inter Arma non silent Musae: The War and the Culture 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1977.

² The topic was the subject of the author’s postdoctoral project at the Center for Historical Research, Polish Academy of Sciences in 2018/19. The first results of the study were presented at Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg’s seminar at Gießen University in 2018, as well as at a conference titled “The Onset of the New Order: Europe 1939–1940,” organized by the Pilecki Institute. As part of the project, a conference was organized in 2019, titled “Designing the New East: Architecture and Urban Planning in Eastern and Central Europe under German Occupation,” prepared in collaboration with Annika Wienert from the German Historical Institute in Warsaw. The project led to this series of articles.

³ We know that architectural designs were prepared for the cities of Stryj and Brzeżany. From 1941, Wilhelm Hallbauer, who had previously worked for Łódź, prepared designs for Lviv. Among his plans was the construction of representative buildings (set to play the role of *Stadtkrone*) on a hill that is the site of a citadel still standing there to

While the plans to Germanize the GG with spatial planning following the abandoning of the conception of the Reich's *Nebenland* have been analyzed in secondary sources,⁴ the architecture and urban planning of the GG has not been comprehensively analyzed. Research published so far has concerned the wartime architecture of Cracow,⁵ Warsaw,⁶ Zamość,⁷ Zakopane,⁸ and Radom.⁹ Compared to lands annexed by the Reich such as Wartheland¹⁰ or

this day. NIELS GUTSCHOW: *Ordnungswahn: Architekten planen im "eingedeutschten Osten" 1939–1945*, Basel et al. 2001, p. 159; WILHELM HALLBAUER: *Stadtbaukunst im Generalgouvernement*, in: *Das Generalgouvernement 4* (1944), 1, pp. 12–17; *Deutsche Künstler sehen das Generalgouvernement*, Krakau 1942, pp. 57–58.

⁴ CZESŁAW MADAJCZYK (ed.): *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan*, München 1994; BRUNO WASSER: *Himmlers Raumplanung im Osten: Der Generalplan Ost in Polen 1940–1944*, Basel et al. 1993; KARL KEGLER: *Deutsche Raumplanung: Das Modell der "Zentralen Orte" zwischen NS-Staat und Bundesrepublik*, Paderborn 2015.

⁵ GUTSCHOW, pp. 51–57; JACEK PURCHLA: *Hubert Ritter i hitlerowskie wizje Krakowa* [Hubert Ritter and Nazi Visions of Cracow], in: *Rocznik Krakowski 71* (2005), pp. 159–187; ŻANNA KOMAR: *Architecture in German-occupied Kraków*, in: *kunsttexte.de/ostblick* (2019), 3 (11 pages), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21477/Komar.pdf> (2021-07-30); WOJCIECH SZYMAŃSKI: *Vernacularism, Lesser Poland's Heimat, and Auxiliary Sciences in the Study of Architecture for the Third Reich*, *ibidem* (14 pages), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21478/Szymanski.pdf> (2021-06-15); JADWIGA GWIZDAŁÓWNA: *Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1934: Przemiany architektury 1939–1945* [The Wawel Castle during German Occupation, 1939–1944: Architectural Changes 1939–1944], in: *Rocznik Krakowski 77* (2011), pp. 113–141; EADEM: *Architektura Wawelu w czasie okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945* [The Architecture of the Wawel Castle during German Occupation, 1939–1945], Kraków 2019.

⁶ NIELS GUTSCHOW, BARBARA KLAIN: *Vernichtung und Utopie: Stadtplanung Warschau 1939–1945*, Hamburg 1994; GUTSCHOW, pp. 43–51; MARTIN KOHLRAUSCH: *Warschau im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Besatzungspolitik und Stadtplanung*, in: FRITZ MAYRHOFER, FERDINAND OPLL (eds.): *Stadt und Nationalsozialismus*, Linz 2008, pp. 23–42; RICHARD NĚMEC: *Die Ökonomisierung des Raums: Planen und Bauen in Mittel- und Osteuropa unter den Nationalsozialisten 1938 bis 1945*, Zürich 2020, pp. 379–389. See also articles by Wojciech Wólkowski and Ewa Perlińska-Kobierzyńska in the present issue.

⁷ ALEKSANDRA PARADOWSKA: "Niedoszły Himmlerstadt": O niemieckich planach przebudowy Zamościa i Zamojszczyzny ["Failed Himmlerstadt": On German Development Plans for Zamość and the Zamojszczyzna Region], in: *Quart* (2017), 1–2, pp. 55–78.

⁸ ZBIGNIEW MOŹDZIERZ: *Architektura i rozwój przestrzenny Zakopanego 1600–2013* [Architecture and Spatial Development of Zakopane, 1600–2013], Zakopane 2013, pp. 357–365; IDEM, ROMAN MARCINEK: *Rys historyczny rozwoju przestrzennego i architektury obszaru parku kulturowego Krupówki w Zakopanem* [A Historical Sketch of the Spatial Development of the Krupówki Culture Park in Zakopane], Zakopane—Kraków 2016, pp. 72–80.

⁹ SEBASTIAN PIĄTKOWSKI: *Radom w latach wojny i okupacji niemieckiej (1939–1945)* [Radom during the War and German Occupation (1939–1945)], Lublin 2018; JAKUB FREJTAG: *Turning "Polish Boxes into German Houses": On the Transformations of Architecture in Poland during the Second World War as Exemplified by the Changing Design of the Zajdensznr Tenement in Radom*, in: *Ikonotheka* (2018), 28, pp. 97–120.

Silesia¹¹, in the GG such projects were significantly fewer in number and had a lower chance of being successfully carried out. This was due to the particular situation of this administrative-territorial unit, which was exploited economically and used as a source of cheap labor. The Germanization of the GG was not initially planned and thousands of Poles and Jews were relocated here from the lands annexed by the Reich. It was here, in large part, that the extermination of Jews took place, and that the Poles were supposed to become a nation without elites, subordinate to Germany and governed by it. This specific political situation in the GG in the first period of its existence contributed to the fact that no coherent architectural or urban planning program was ever created for the territory, barring a few exceptions.¹²

Given the history of the region, then, it is no wonder that scholarship has focused mostly on political issues, studying the fate of the civilian population, the activities of the resistance movement, and the extermination of Jews.¹³ In

In 2019, Freitag defended his MA thesis on the occupation-era plans to rebuild Radom, under the supervision of Gabriela Świtek at the Institute of Art History, University of Warsaw.

¹⁰ Aleksandra Paradowska has been working on her habilitation on the Reichsgau Wartheland. She has published a series of articles on the topic (selection): ALEKSANDRA PARADOWSKA: Architecture, History and Their Representations in the (Nazi) Propaganda in the Reichsgau Wartheland, in: *kunsttexte.de/ostblick* (2019), 3 (16 pages), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21474/Paradowska.pdf> (2021-10-15); EADEM: "Wyjątkowe zadania" na "nowym niemieckim Wschodzie": Nazistowska urbanistyka i architektura w Kraju Warty jako element okupacji polskich terenów podczas drugiej wojny światowej ["Extraordinary Tasks" in the "New German East": National Socialist Urban Planning and Architecture in the Warthegau as a Means of the Occupation of Polish Lands during the Second World War], in: ANNA WOLFF-POWĘSKA, ROBERT TRABA et al. (eds.): "Fikcyjna rzeczywistość": Codziennosc, swiaty przyzywane i pamiec niemieckiej okupacji w Polsce, Berlin 2016, pp. 133–158. For research on Poznań, see HANNA GRZESZCZUK-BRENDEL: "Made to Human Measure": Nazi Architecture in Poznań, in: *kunsttexte.de/ostblick* (2019), 3 (11 pages), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21475/Grzeszczuk-Brendel.pdf> (2021-07-30).

¹¹ For architecture and urban planning in Silesia, see the dissertation (in preparation) by Karolina Jara at the University of Wrocław. Works published to date: KAROLINA JARA: Wrocławski waterfront w czasach Trzeciej Rzeszy [The Wrocław Waterfront during the Third Reich], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 25 (2016), pp. 133–152; EADEM: The Architecture of the Third Reich in Silesia and Spatial Planning in the "German East," in: *kunsttexte.de/ostblick* (2019), 3 (13 pages), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21476/Jara.pdf> (2021-10-15).

¹² For an overview of official architectural and urban planning projects in the GG, see *Deutsche Künstler*, pp. 56–58.

¹³ A selection of publications from the very broad scholarship on the GG: STEPHAN LEHNSTAEDT, ROBERT TRABA (eds.): *Die "Aktion Reinhardt": Geschichte und Gedenken*, Berlin 2019; BARBARA ENGELKING, JAN GRABOWSKI (eds.): *Dalej jest noc: Losy Żydów wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski* [Night without End: Fate of Jews in Selected Counties of Occupied Poland], vol. 1–2, Warszawa 2018; TIMOTHY D. SNYDER: *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York 2010. An over-

light of the Nazi ideology and its legacy, the history of architecture seems to be a secondary issue. However, the architects operating in the GG also contributed to the German occupation regime. Architecture and urban planning, despite their practical dimension of responding to the needs (or suspected needs) of the population, may become, under certain circumstances, a political instrument. They leave their ideological mark on a given space, thereby becoming a tool for its colonizing. Characteristically for the Second World War, civilian experts, including architects, were included in a number of tasks related to introducing and maintaining the new order.¹⁴ Even though there was no doubt about the collaboration of German architects in building the regime and their shared responsibility, they were largely exempt from political reckoning after the war as a result of their line of work. Even Albert Speer, convicted in the Nuremberg Trials, was prosecuted for his work as Minister of Armaments and not as General Building Inspector of Berlin.¹⁵ Responsibility for service to the totalitarian regime was limited to within architecture circles and was not subject to ethical judgments. Architects saw themselves as an expression of “the spirit of the times” and as such, on some level, as destined to work with the regime.¹⁶ The attitudes and choices of Polish architects in the occupation reality, the work of whom has only been documented by scholars in a fragmentary fashion,¹⁷ have not yet been reflected upon systematically.

The Situation of Polish Architects

As a group, Polish architects in the GG were granted more freedom than other professions. While members of the Polish intelligentsia were persecuted, the deaths of architects were not due to their professional activities; rather, they shared the fate of the general population, dying in public executions after

view of earlier scholarship: HANS-JÜRGEN BÖMELBURG, BOGDAN MUSIAL: *Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen 1939–1945*, in: WŁODZIMIERZ BORODZIEJ, KLAUS ZIEMER (eds.): *Deutsch-polnische Beziehungen 1939–1945–1949: Eine Einführung*, Osnabrück 2000, pp. 43–105, here pp. 71–105.

¹⁴ JEAN-LOUIS COHEN: *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War*, New Haven—London 2011, p. 28.

¹⁵ Speer was directly responsible for removing Jews from apartments and using forced laborers from concentration camps to carry out architectural projects in Berlin. Furthermore, the propaganda dimension of his work as an architect serving the Nazi regime should not be underestimated. MAGNUS BRECHTKEN: *Albert Speer: Eine deutsche Karriere*, München 2017.

¹⁶ WERNER DURTH: *Deutsche Architekten: Biographische Verflechtungen 1900–1970*, 3rd ed., Braunschweig—Wiesbaden 1988, pp. 18, 117, 327.

¹⁷ For a pioneer work focusing on not only occupation-era design work, but also its authors, see GUTSCHOW/KLAIN. The book centers on German and Polish designs for Warsaw, but it does not include the activities of the more conservative Polish architects, who did not belong to the group of radical modernists.

street round-ups of civilians, in camps, or in ghettos, in the case of architects of Jewish origin.¹⁸ Architects (who did, after all, belong to the Polish elite) were often treated as apolitical professionals who posed no risk to the German political order. They were used in all kinds of design work: on the one hand, this was a phenomenon caused by the lack of German specialists (who were often uninterested in working in the GG or were fighting on the front lines), but on the other hand, it must also have resulted from a positive assessment of their qualifications.

An interesting aspect of the study of Polish architects in the GG lies in the attempt to describe in more detail their day-to-day experiences as a professional group in occupied Poland. A photographic depiction of sorts of the moment where the day-to-day meets the background drama and big politics can be seen in Janusz Durko's memoirs;¹⁹ he was an employee of the Warsaw-based Architectural-urbanistic Workshop (Pracownia Architektoniczno-Urbanistyczna, PAU), a studio led by Szymon Syrkus.²⁰ The Studio was commissioned by the city to create plans for the expansion of the housing schemes for the Warsaw Housing Cooperative (Warszawska Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniowa, WSM) in the Rakowiec district and for the Society for Workers' Housing (Towarzystwo Osiedli Robotniczych, TOR) in the Koło district. Durko writes:

“The arrest of Arch. Szymon Syrkus was a great loss for PAU [...] We had many conversations on [...] contemporary architecture. These talks led to the suggestion that I read a scholarly work in German, *Plastik und Raum* (I do not remember the author)²¹ [...]. One sunny Sunday, on 22 June 1941, with the book under my arm, I took the tram to the Bielany Forest, where I sat reading under a spreading tree.

¹⁸ There is no precise data about the number of architects who died during the war. Tadeusz Mrówczyński estimates that there were 1,700 active architects, of whom 350 died, while the fate of another 250 could not be determined. In Warsaw, out of 699 members, two hundred did not survive the war, and the fate of a hundred is unknown. TADEUSZ MRÓWCZYŃSKI: *Wojenna lista strat architektów warszawskich* [List of War-time Losses among Warsaw Architects], in: TADEUSZ BARUCKI (ed.): *Fragmety stuletniej historii 1899–1999: Ludzie, fakty, wydarzenia. W stulecie organizacji warszawskich architektów*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 105–112.

¹⁹ Janusz Durko (1915–2017) was an archivist and museologist, as well as head of the Central Archive of the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR), subsequently director of the Historical Museum of Warsaw. He was awarded the title of Righteous among the Nations.

²⁰ For more on Syrkus and the activities of PAU, see MARTIN KOHLRAUSCH: *Brokers of Modernity: East Central Europe and the Rise of Modernist Architects, 1910–1950*, Leuven 2019, pp. 250–256.

²¹ The book in question was: ALBERT ERICH BRINCKMANN: *Plastik und Raum als Grundform künstlerischer Gestaltung*, München 1922.

When I came home for lunch, I found out that the German invasion of the USSR had started that morning.”²²

The juxtaposition of the arrest of the supervisor (who had just recommended a book by a German author) with a trip to the park and the pairing of the news of the attack on the USSR with a return home for lunch offer a contrasting view to the common-sensical depictions of day-to-day reality under occupation, dominated by fighting the occupier, the resistance movement, and the fear of arrest.

In this context, the statement by Witold Cęckiewicz, who lived next to the Jewish district in Podgórze in Cracow during the occupation, is symptomatic: when asked about the ghetto, which was adjacent to his house, he answered that he never walked in that direction and “did not notice” the disappearance of Jews living in his building. He saw the impossibility to study architecture as a much bigger problem, which he recounted in the following sentence:

“In 1941, after I failed to get into the clandestine university, I learned that the Staatliche Fachschule für Bauwesen [State School of Construction] was set to be opened in Cracow. I applied, got in without exams, and started my studies in the two-year program. There were great people there, an excellent teaching body consisting of a number of professors from Cracow universities.”²³

The statement illustrates well the parallel nature of the experiences of two different social and ethnic groups under the occupation reality. For Polish youth who wanted to study, the closing of all institutions of higher education in the GG was a significant problem. In big cities such as Warsaw, Cracow, or in Zakopane towards the end of the war (where many architects wound up following the failure of the Warsaw Uprising), the training of future architects took place clandestinely or through vocational schools, which were allowed to legally function and which often employed instructors who had previously worked at universities. This meant that instruction was at near-university-level.²⁴ In addition, there were three units at the Warsaw University of Tech-

²² JANUSZ DURKO: *Muzeum Warszawy i jego współtwórcy w mojej pamięci 1951–2003* [Museum of Warsaw and Its Co-creators in My Memory, 1951–2003], Warszawa 2008, p. 257.

²³ MARTA KARPIŃSKA, DOROTA LEŚNIAK-RYCHLAK et al. (eds.): *Witold Cęckiewicz: Rozmowy o architekturze, projekty* [Witold Cęckiewicz: Conversations on Architecture, Projects], vol. 1, Kraków 2015, pp. 10–11. I would like to thank Robert Traba for pointing this book out to me.

²⁴ PIOTR BIEGAŃSKI: *Konspiracyjne kształcenie architektów w Warszawie w okresie drugiej wojny światowej* [Clandestine Architectural Education in Warsaw during the Second World War], in: *Architektura i urbanistyka w Polsce w latach 1918–1978*, Warszawa 1989, pp. 7–11; HENRYK JOST: *O ekspozyturze Politechniki Warszawskiej w Zakopanem* [On the Zakopane Branch of the Warsaw University of Technology], in: *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 29 (1984), 1, pp. 145–158; *Dokumentacja archiwum tematycznego Zofii i Witolda Paryskich (“Teki Paryskich”)* [Records from the Thematic Archive of Zofia and Witold Paryski (“Paryski Papers”)], in: *Ośrodek Dokumentacji Tatrzńskiej Parku Narodowego, Zakopane* (a 16-page-

nology that continued to legally operate: the Construction Research Department, headed by Stefan Bryła, the Urban Planning Department ran by Tadeusz Tołwiński, producing projects commissioned by the city government, and the Polish Architecture Department, under the tutelage of Jan Zachwatowicz. The official activities of these units allowed them to run parallel underground activities such as clandestine teaching.²⁵

The situation was much easier for those architects who had been employed by Polish city governments before the war and were largely allowed to stay in their posts throughout the occupation. Employment in administration, i.e. working for a German employer, guaranteed wages—starvation-level, but at least regular—and, more importantly, an *Ausweis*, an identification document confirming employment that could shield them from arrest or deportation to forced labor sites.²⁶ Work for Polish city governments, managed by Germans, led to the creation of designs for public utility buildings which, despite being annotated in German and not credited to their authors, were prepared entirely by Polish architects. Examples include the project for the reconstruction of the Museum of Old Warsaw, authored by Jan Zachwatowicz,²⁷ or the project for the expansion of the Radom town hall by Kazimierz Prokulski.²⁸ Architects who were assigned to work on such tasks were mostly ones who had worked prior to the war or knew the buildings well, and thus did not have to start from scratch.

In the GG, in addition to Polish architects, there were also Polish construction and engineering companies, which offered their services to the occupiers as well as, to a lesser degree, the occupied. One such company was the Warsaw-based engineering firm “K. Strończynski, R. Czarnota-Bojarski i s-ka,” which worked on prominent commissions related to road infrastructure.²⁹

paper); TADEUSZ MRÓWCZYŃSKI: Architekci warszawscy podczas okupacji [Warsaw Architects during the Occupation], in: BARUCKI, pp. 95–102.

²⁵ MRÓWCZYŃSKI, Architekci, p. 96.

²⁶ JERZY KOCHANOWSKI: Cywilne strategie przetrwania 1939–1945 [Civilian Survival Strategies, 1939–1945], in: WOLFF-POWĘSKA/TRABA, pp. 87–103, here pp. 95–96; TOMASZ SZAROTA: Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni: Studium historyczne [The Daily Reality of Occupied Warsaw: A Historical Study], 4th ed., Warszawa 2010, pp. 77, 88–89.

²⁷ MAŁGORZATA POPIOŁEK: Od kamienicy do museum: Historia siedziby Muzeum Warszawy na Rynku Starego Miasta / From a Tenement House to a Museum: The History of the Museum of Warsaw’s Site in the Old Town Market Square, Warszawa 2016, pp. 73–74, 83.

²⁸ PIĄTKOWSKI, Radom, p. 195.

²⁹ Karol Strończynski, who died before the war, was an outstanding engineer and entrepreneur. His collaborator, Roman Czarnota-Bojarski, who took over Strończynski’s company after his death, worked at the Warsaw University of Technology after the war and served as the head of the Department of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering at the Faculty of Civil Engineering, [https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/karol-stronczynski?print\(2021-03-30\);http://www.geotechnika.org.pl/?page_id=1110\(2021-03-30\)](https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/karol-stronczynski?print(2021-03-30);http://www.geotechnika.org.pl/?page_id=1110(2021-03-30).).

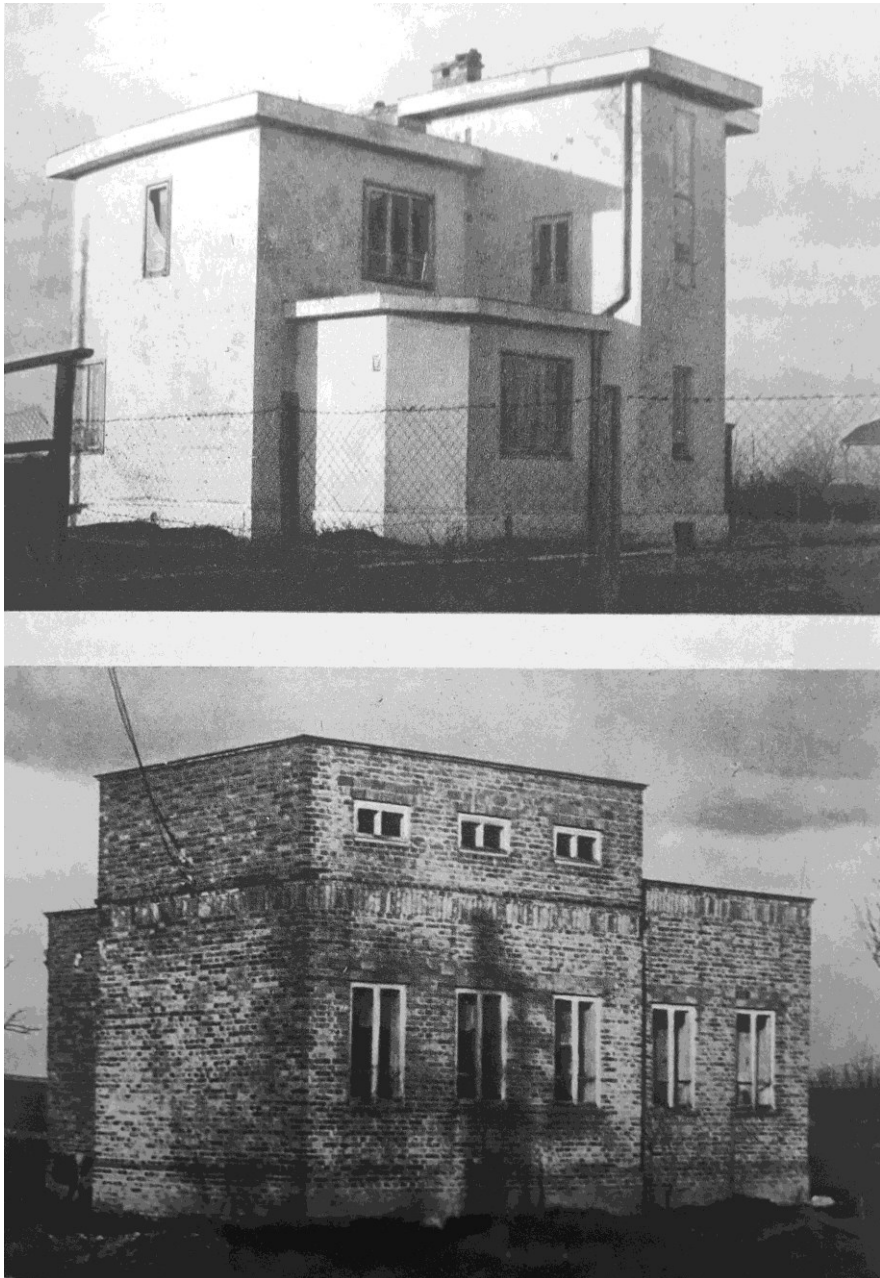


Fig. 1: Pictures from: FRIEDRICH GOLLERT: *Zwei Jahre Aufbauarbeit im Distrikt Warschau*, Warschau 1941, p. 141, illustrating “typical Polish dwellings”

This pragmatic approach to Polish professionals directly contradicted Nazi ideology, which proclaimed the need to colonize the Eastern lands and saw the role of their inhabitants as subservient. Propaganda publications characterized Polish pre-war architecture and urban planning as savage, uncivilized, and devoid of value (Fig. 1). Only remnants of cities founded on the Magdeburg Law, or those left behind by the Teutonic Order, the German bourgeoisie, or the Friedrich-II-era colonization were perceived as having belonged to a high civilization.³⁰ The lack of German professionals, however, coupled with the clear benefits related to the Poles' familiarity with the area, led to the cooperation (albeit an unequal one) between the German administration and Polish architects.

The Geography and Organization of Design Work in the GG

The character of architectural activities in the GG and the participation of Polish architects in those activities depended largely on the political position of the respective localities. The largest volume of construction and design activity can, of course, be seen in the capital of the occupied territory, Cracow, where it was deemed necessary to give the city a representative character because of its political function, and where the extensive territorial administration required the construction of new buildings. The occupation in Cracow looked slightly differently from that in Warsaw. During the war, Cracow was the only city where, as Czesław Madajczyk calculates, there were more Polish civil servants at work than there had been before the war, including those dealing with construction.³¹ Cracow also saw the greatest number of large construction developments during the occupation.³²

The coordination of architecture-related activities in the GG fell in the purview of the tenth department of the General Government—the Main Building Department, headed by civil engineer Theodor Bauder and headquartered in Cracow with local branches in every district, and where Polish employees were hired as well.³³ Moreover, Cracow was the seat of the Construction Directorate of the General Government, headed by Otto Hofer, and tasked with overseeing administration buildings. Its administrative structures includ-

³⁰ H. KURTZ: Die geschichtliche Vergangenheit des Weichselraumes, in: MAX DU PREL (ed.): Das Generalgouvernement, Würzburg 1942, pp. 1–15, here pp. 6–15; FRIEDRICH GOLLERT: Zwei Jahre Aufbauarbeit im Distrikt Warschau, Warschau 1941, pp. 140–141.

³¹ CZESŁAW MADAJCZYK: Polityka III Rzeszy w okupowanej Polsce [The Politics of the Third Reich in Occupied Poland], vol. 1–2, Warszawa 1970, here vol. 2, p. 24.

³² For a selection of publications on Cracow, see KOMAR, Architektura, pp. 122–125, and recently GWIZDAŁÓWNA, Architektura.

³³ TOMASZ ŚLEBODA: Edgar Norwerth 1884–1950: Artysta i człowiek [Edgar Norwerth 1884–1950: The Artist and the Person], Warszawa—Toruń 2018, p. 150.

ed Polish architects.³⁴ Other architectural developments in Cracow were coordinated by the Department of Building Construction and City Planning, headed by Georg Stahl, who supervised the Polish city government with its pre-war director, Czesław Boratyński, at the helm. As Żanna Komar demonstrates, chief German construction officials were associated with the University of Stuttgart circles.³⁵

The first plans for Cracow were prepared by Hubert Ritter, who based his work on the pre-war designs by Kazimierz Dziewoński. The city was divided into functional construction zones. Ritter planned a government-building complex in Dębniki, across the Vistula River from the Wawel castle. The Germans were not supposed to just live in one district, but rather be dispersed all over Cracow. Ritter eventually left the city as a result of a personal conflict related to the location of the administration district, which was finally supposed to be located in Błonia park, by the Kościuszko Mound, and not—as Ritter planned—in Dębniki.³⁶

The most famous architectural development in Cracow was the reconstruction of Wawel, and particularly the construction of a new wing for the Governor-General Hans Frank, realized by Edgar Horstmann and Heinz Koettgen's company (Fig. 2). The residence of Otto von Wächter, the Cracow district governor, was built in Przegorzały near Cracow (Fig. 3). Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, who prepared the drawings for both projects, had been chief preservation officer of the Wawel Castle for several years before the war. The designs, as Szyszko-Bohusz claims, were later corrected by German officials.³⁷ In addition to representative buildings, works in Cracow included an expansion of the German residential district on Królewska Street. As Kazimierz Butelski demonstrates, one of the chief authors of the project was Zbigniew Kupiec, together with a team of Polish architects, who finished the construction of the district after the war.³⁸

The situation was different in Warsaw, which was purposefully deprived of its capital status during the war. The first and probably only urban planning project for Warsaw was prepared around the end of 1939 by the first German city administration, formed by city officials from Würzburg and headed by

³⁴ See Ewa Perlińska-Kobierzyńska's and Wojciech Wólkowski's articles in this issue.

³⁵ KOMAR, *Architektura*, pp. 125–128; EADEM: *Stuttgartczycy w okupowanym Krakowie [Stuttgartians in Occupied Cracow]*, in: EADEM, JACEK PURCHLA (eds.): *Kłopotliwe dziedzictwo? Architektura Trzeciej Rzeszy w Polsce, Kraków 2020*, pp. 127–142.

³⁶ PURCHLA, pp. 159–187; NEMEC, pp. 391–404.

³⁷ ADOLF SZYSZKO-BOHUSZ: *Wawel pod okupacją niemiecką [The Wawel Castle under German Occupation]*, in: *Rocznik Krakowski 21 (1957)*, pp. 153–182, here p. 164; GWIZDAŁÓWNA, *Wawel*, pp. 120–121.

³⁸ KAZIMIERZ BUTELSKI: *Architekt Zbigniew Kupiec 1905–1990: Ewolucja twórczości od modernizmu do regionalizmu [Zbigniew Kupiec, Architect (1905–1990): The Evolution of His Work from Modernism to Regionalism]*, Kraków 2012, pp. 149–155.



Fig. 2: Polish laborers rebuilding the Wawel Castle (1943), in: Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC) [Polish National Digital Archive] 2-6049



Fig. 3: Construction of the Przegorzały Castle (1942), photograph by Ewald Theuer-garten, in: NAC 8646a

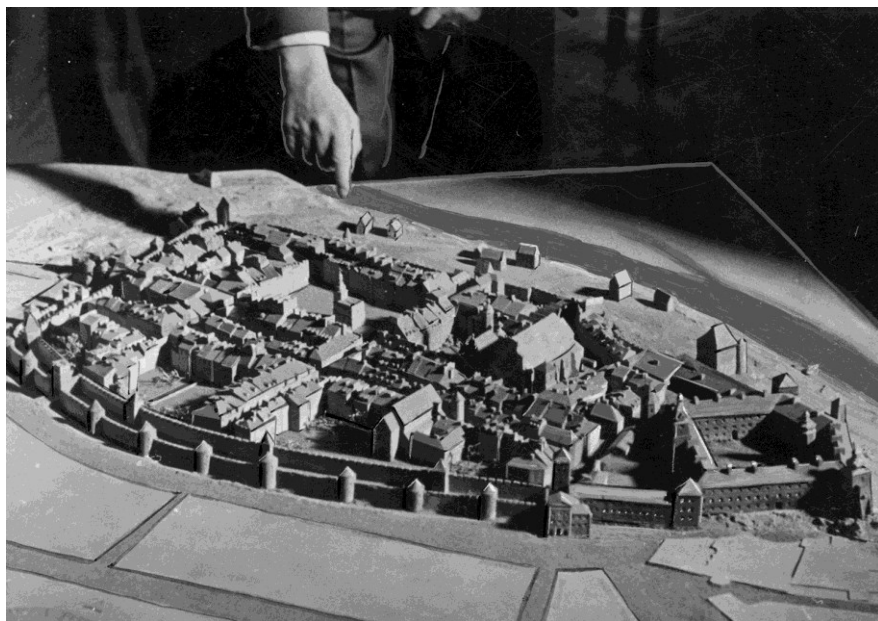


Fig. 4: An Old Town model from Huberta Groß' documentation "Neue Deutsche Stadt Warschau" (1940), in: NAC 2-8986

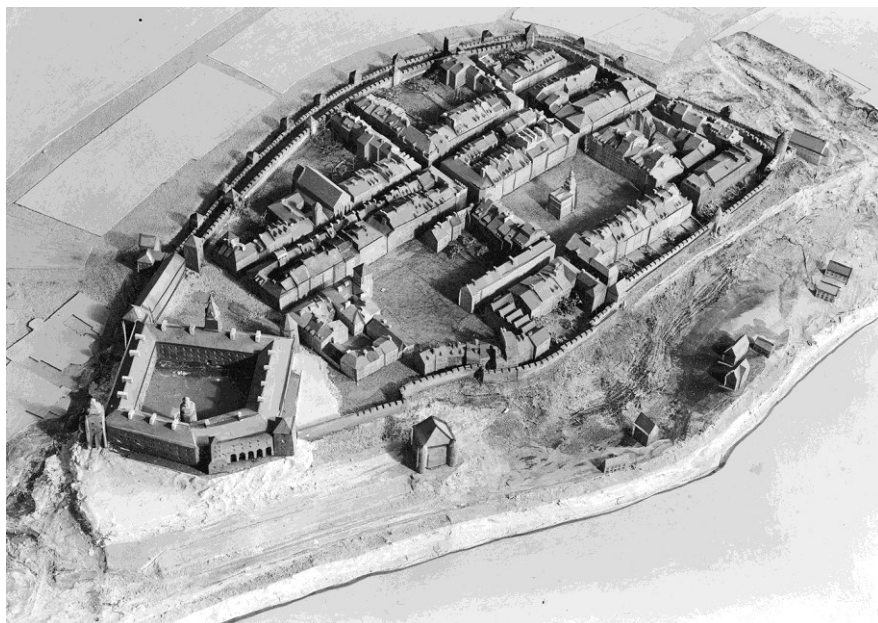


Fig. 5: Same model at the „Warsaw of the Future” exhibition (here without the cathedral) (1936), in: NAC 1-U-8487-7

Mayor Oskar Dengel. The famous project, mistakenly referred to as the “Pabst Plan,” was authored by Hubert Groß, the Würzburg city architect who presided over the planning department in Warsaw. Finished in 1940, the project envisioned downscaling Warsaw to a mid-sized city whose main function would be the management of east-west transit. Instead of the two main squares—Piłsudski and Theatre Square—the plan foresaw a *Gauforum* with an administration building, surrounded by German residential districts. The Old Town was supposed to be preserved as proof of Warsaw’s German roots. The Polish population would live on the right bank of the Vistula River and the Jewish northern district, which was later converted into a ghetto, was to be effaced, even in the early plans.

Interestingly, the model of the German Old Town presented as part of the project documentation was not prepared by Groß, as it has been assumed,³⁹ but stemmed, as I found out, from the exhibition “Warsaw of the Future” from 1936 and showed the historical city center of Warsaw after the planned restoration in the 1930s. Using a project developed by Polish architects to emphasize the city’s German history showcases the shared architectural values of German and Polish architects when it came to the historical urban fabric. This unexpected appropriation questions the political dimension of the whole project as well as the ideological attitude of its architects (Fig. 4–5).

As in the case of Cracow, a conflict in the administration accelerated the departure of the author of the plan and led to its abandonment. The project greatly exceeded the competence of the Mayor, who turned directly to Hans Frank. It was likely as a result of the district governor Ludwig Fischer’s intervention that Dengel needed to leave Warsaw, together with his architect. The next head of the planning department, Friedrich Pabst, focused on the construction of the German residential district. His tenure also saw the creation of a project for a People’s Hall in place of the Royal Castle, which was supposed to be razed to the ground following the damage it sustained in 1939.⁴⁰

On top of unrealized urban planning designs, the first months of the occupation saw a series of transformations of representative buildings, including that of Council of Ministers Palace into the German House, Brühl Palace into the seat of the Governor of Warsaw, and the Belvedere into the Warsaw seat of the Governor-General (Fig. 6). The projects were created by the architectural firm owned by Juliusz Nagórski, with Jan Łukasik as chief preservation specialist.⁴¹ As Nagórski’s monographer Marek Tomiczek claims, both worked for Germans with the approval of the Polish underground state. Jan

³⁹ NĚMEC, p. 383.

⁴⁰ GUTSCHOW/KLAIN, pp. 26–41, 103–107; KOHLRAUSCH, *Warschau*; NĚMEC, pp. 379–389.

⁴¹ ZBIGNIEW BANIA, TADEUSZ S. JAROSZEWSKI: *Pałac Rady Ministrów [Council of Ministers’ Palace]*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 138–147.



Fig. 6: The Council of Ministers Palace, transformed into the German House (1941), in: NAC 5702

Łukasik, who died during a Soviet bombing and Juliusz Nagórski, who was shot during the Warsaw Uprising, have been accused of collaborating with the Germans—unfairly so, according to Tomiczek.⁴²

In Warsaw, where the architect circles were the strongest prior to the war, architectural activities took different forms. The Warsaw city government included the City Planning Department, similar in composition to its pre-war predecessor, as well as two other advisory bodies: the Urban Planning Experts Commission, headed by Tadeusz Tołwiński, and the City Commission for the Protection of Historical Monuments, headed by Stanisław Lorentz, the Director of the National Museum. The two institutions advised on plans prepared for Warsaw by the City Planning Department, as well as reconstruction and transformation plans for damaged buildings, submitted by citizens of Warsaw. Additionally, Lorentz continued to serve throughout the occupation as Museum Director, although he was supervised by commissar Alfred Schellenberg, and the two rarely managed to agree on a shared plan of work.⁴³ In parallel to these institutions worked the PAU. There was also clandestine education at the Warsaw University of Technology, which produced drawings for the city government. Both the more conservative plans discussed in the city government as well as the modernist ideas created in the PAU were a

⁴² MAREK TOMICZEK: Juliusz Nagórski 1887–1944: Monografia architekta [Juliusz Nagórski, 1887–1944: The Architect's Monograph], Warszawa 2015, pp. 41–45.

⁴³ MAŁGORZATA POPIOLEK: Alfred Schellenberg: Ein Kunsthistoriker im besetzten Warschau 1940–1944, in: *Historie: Jahrbuch des Zentrums für Historische Forschung Berlin der Polnischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 10 (2016), pp. 164–182.

continuation of pre-war projects and many of them were later realized after the war. After 1945, architects eagerly recalled their participation in clandestine education and their work for PAU, but their work in the city government was absent from the narrative about the occupation.⁴⁴

Polish architects faced a truly unusual situation in terms of spatial planning in Zakopane, which was the most important city of the so-called Goralenvolk. Highlanders (*górale*) lived in Podhale-region in Nowy Targ county and were to be Germanized in the future, as they were supposed to have German origins. A special highlander committee, formed in Zakopane after the arrival of the German army, made an official visit to Cracow to pay symbolic homage to Hans Frank at the Wawel Castle.⁴⁵ During the occupation, Zakopane was supposed to be transformed into “Eastern Garmisch-Partenkirchen,” a modern resort and sport center for Germans.⁴⁶ The task was delegated to a group of Polish architects headed by Stefan Żychoń, born in Zakopane and educated at the Warsaw University of Technology, who presided over the new City Planning Department, known as the Bauamt.

The main planning task of the architects working in Zakopane during the occupation was the preparation of a new functional division: a delineation of the city, the town, and the resort. Stefan Żychoń invited local and Warsaw-based specialists to collaborate on the task.⁴⁷ Interestingly, the hiring of the Warsaw architects was not a problem and they were treated on a par with the “highlander” architects, a group which included Żychoń himself. The architects were tasked with preparing a zoning plan, a spatial plan, and detailed plans for the German district, the city center, and the town, among others (Fig. 7).⁴⁸ The transformation of the city began with the so-called *Ordnungsaktion*, an order action consisting in demolishing shanties and other objects standing on planned development sites. Over a hundred buildings were demolished in total in 1940–1942, including buildings owned by the Jewish

⁴⁴ HELENA SYRKUS: Działalność architektów i urbanistów w Warszawie w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej 1939–1945 [Activities of Polish Architects and Urban Planners during Hitlerist Occupation (1939–1945)], in: KRZYSZTOF DUNIN-WĄSOWICZ, JANINA KAŻMIERSKA et al. (eds.): Warszawa lat wojny i okupacji 1939–1944, vol. 3, Warszawa 1973 (Studia Warszawskie, 17), pp. 317–344.

⁴⁵ WOJCIECH SZATKOWSKI: Goralenvolk: Historia zdrady [Goralenvolk: A History of Treason], Warszawa 2012.

⁴⁶ NAVE: Heilbäder und Luftkurorte des Generalgouvernements, in: DU PREL, pp. 217–220, here p. 219.

⁴⁷ Anna Tołwińska (later Górska), Michał Górski, Andrzej Czarniak, Józef Nowobilski, Jerzy Mokrzyński, Juliusz Żórawski, Marian Sulikowski, Janusz Warunkiewicz. MOŻDZIERZ, pp. 352–357.

⁴⁸ Aufgaben des Bauamtes, 1940-12-30, in: Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie (AN) [National Archive in Cracow], sign. 32/16/199: Planowanie miasta, regulacje [City Planning, Regulations], fol. 117.



Fig. 7: Plan for Zakopane by Jerzy Mokrzyński (1942), in: AN, 29/3066/219

population, as well as a local synagogue.⁴⁹ The entire action was praised as “a first step to a rational transformation of the city” by Tadeusz Tołwiński, head of the Warsaw-based Urban Planning Experts Commission, who had been

⁴⁹ Muzeum Tatrzańskie (MT) [Tatra Museum], Zakopane, sign. A/37: Ordnungsaktion 1940; sign. A/38: Ordnungsaktion 1941; sign. A/39: Ordnungsaktion 1942.

brought over from Warsaw in 1942 and who advised on the occupation-era transformation plans for Zakopane.⁵⁰

The occupation period saw the successful realization of several urban planning solutions that continue to serve the population of Zakopane to this day: the establishment of a town square (today's Niepodległości Square), the laying out of Grunwaldzka Street, and the extension of Krupówki, the main commercial street, towards the South and the North (to the Gubałówka mountain). In 1943, a Main Technical Office was founded in Cracow, and consequently, Bauamt became its small sub-unit and lost its significance.⁵¹

Bauamt, staffed with Polish architects, operated for almost three years, and was a unique phenomenon in the GG. Stefan Żychoń created an independent spatial planning unit that collaborated with the Germans. An interesting insight into the atmosphere of the office can be found in an album gifted to Żychoń by his collaborators as an April Fools' joke in 1941. The humorous depiction of the "order action" and jokes about the military-style discipline of the boss who showed up to work at half past ten demonstrate that Żychoń's office was an ersatz of normality, a parallel reality to the terror of the occupation, and—to a certain degree—a sense of security related to the special status of the employed architects.

Post-war Reckoning

The only architect working in the GG who later bore responsibility for his political past was Groß, the author of the Warsaw plans and of the Nazi projects transforming Würzburg. During denazification, he lost his position in the Würzburg city government (where he had gone back to work in 1945)—not for his activities as an architect, however, but rather for his membership in the SA in 1934–1939 as well as his membership in the NSDAP, the National Socialist League of German Engineering (NS-Bund Deutscher Technik, NSBDT), and the Reich League German Family (Reichsbund Deutsche Familie, RDF). Even though Groß disclosed in his denazification questionnaire that he was delegated to Warsaw "at his own request" in order to work on urban planning issues, and that in 1943–1945 he worked in the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian territory as part of the Organisation Todt, the details of his work were not analyzed and played no role in the post-war trial.⁵²

⁵⁰ Uwagi do planu zabudowy Zakopanego z roku 1941–1942 / Bemerkungen zum programmatischen Bebauungsplan vom Jahre 1941–1942. Tadeusz Tołwiński, 1942-02-25, in: MT, sign. 1103: Regulacje Zakopanego [Regulations of Zakopane].

⁵¹ HENRYK JOST: Zakopane czasu okupacji [Zakopane during the Occupation], Zakopane 1989, p. 93.

⁵² Notice of removal 1946-05-03. Stadtbaurat Groß, Stadtplanungsamt; denazification questionnaire, in: Stadtarchiv Würzburg, Personalakten bis 2002, sign. 102: Personal file of Hubert Groß, not pag.

Groß' main line of defense was the threat of losing his job in the city hall in the 1930s if he did not join the party, which would result in him being unable to support his family. Groß and his family were also allegedly repressed for their membership in the Catholic Church. He also behaved apolitically throughout the war, and his house had "no furs, carpets, paintings, jewelry, or furniture that had belonged to Jews or had been taken from the occupied territories. [...] He took no part in attacks on Jews."⁵³ Groß was initially put in Group Two ("Belastete/Schuldige")⁵⁴ and the appellate court assessed the level of harm caused by his activities at Group Four ("Mitläufer").⁵⁵ The ruling was later upheld by a court of cassation in Munich.⁵⁶ Despite the ruling, Groß did not go back to work at the city hall and opened up his own architectural firm in Würzburg. Engineers Karl Böhler, Erwin Suppinger, Max Kretschmer, and Josef Hanika, with whom Groß had cooperated during the war in Warsaw and who had lost their employment at the Würzburg city hall for the same reasons, joined "Bauring," a private architectural studio that worked on external commissions for the city.⁵⁷ It was Groß who came up with the idea of forming the studio and sidestepping the ban on employment of former Nazi sympathizers in the city hall.⁵⁸ In the 1960s, in a letter to the Würzburg city hall, Groß characterized his responsibility for his wartime activities as participation "not in collective guilt, but in collective shame, shared by everyone."⁵⁹ Until his death in 1992, he received birthday wishes from the city hall every ten years and local newspapers published laudatory articles on his achievements as an architect, leaving out the wartime episodes that took place outside Würzburg.⁶⁰

⁵³ Hubert Groß, Veitshöchsheim, Kerzenleite 4, 14.6.1914, betr. Vorstellungsverfahren. Hinweise zur Entlastung, *ibidem*, not pag.

⁵⁴ Der öffentliche Kläger bei der Spruchkammer Würzburg-Land, Klageschrift, Würzburg 10.1.1947, in: Staatsarchiv Würzburg, Akten der Spruchkammer Würzburg Land, sign. 3122, p. 7.

⁵⁵ Spruchkammer Würzburg-Land 14.2.1947, *ibidem*, p. 18.

⁵⁶ Der Kassationshof im Bayerischen Staatsministerium für Sonderaufgaben, 1. April 1948, *ibidem*, p. 11.

⁵⁷ Listen der Mitarbeiter mit dem Grad ihrer politischen Belastung, 1946–1948, in: Stadtarchiv Würzburg, sign. 73: Bauring.

⁵⁸ Betr. Ruhestandversetzung, Oberbürgermeister 6.3.1961, *ibidem*, Personalakten bis 2002, sign. 102, not pag.

⁵⁹ Hubert Groß to Würzburg's mayor, Helmuth Zimmerer, 1961-03-24: "[...] nicht an Kollektivschuld, wohl aber an der auf allen lastenden Kollektivbeschämung mitzutragen mich verpflichtet fühle," *ibidem*.

⁶⁰ Newspaper clips, *ibidem*: Ein Architekt aus Leidenschaft: Stadtbaurat a. D. Hubert Groß 70 Jahre alt—Bedeutende Bauten geschaffen, in: Main-Post from 1966-04-14; Seinen Beruf ernst genommen: Der bekannte Architekt Stadtbaurat a. D. Hubert Groß wird 70 Jahre alt, in: Fränkisches Volksblatt from 1966-04-14; Regierungsbaumeister Groß feiert 80., in: Fränkisches Volksblatt from 1976-04-15.

None of the Polish architects had to face the court after the war on account of their activities. Rumors and smears about collaboration with the Germans did not usually leave professional circles and at worst could mean a slight obstacle in continuing an architectural career after the war. Information about the immediate post-war accusations of collaboration and interpersonal conflicts between architects and preservation specialists are relayed anecdotally today by the generation of their students and cannot usually be cross-checked with other sources. Such is the case of Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, who did not return to his work as a preservation specialist at the Wawel Castle because of accusations of collaboration and instead devoted himself to creating the department of architecture in Cracow as well as entering various architectural contests.⁶¹ The main critic of Szyszko-Bohusz's occupation-era activities was Stanisław Lorentz, the director of the National Museum in Warsaw. Andrzej Rottermund, the former director of the Royal Castle in Warsaw claims that the reason for the conflict between Lorentz and Szyszko-Bohusz can be traced back to their differing assessment of the preservation efforts of Wawel Castle, which, according to Lorentz, interfered too much with the shape of the buildings. The difference of opinion between the two preservation specialists can be traced back to before the war.⁶² Stanisław Lorentz, in turn, maintained until the end of his life that he had only preserved and saved the museum collection during the war. Even in a long-form interview he gave in the 1980s, he did not decide to give up the narrative.⁶³ Similarly, other architects who worked for the city hall during the war and joined the Warsaw Reconstruction Office after 1945 usually did not go over details of their occupation-era work in the city hall—nor did anyone ask.

The only one to undergo official reckoning was Stefan Żychoń, who faced the peer tribunal of the Association of Polish Architects (*Stowarzyszenie Architektów Polskich*, SARP). Finally, on 13 June 1946, the tribunal decided to suspend Żychoń as a SARP member for one year. The lenient ruling was due to the mitigating nature of the particular historical circumstances in Cracow and the surroundings.

“The committee has decided that when evaluating the behavior of colleagues, one must take into consideration the environment in which they worked and lived. [...] In Cracow and on the territory impacted by the Cracow milieu, the attitude towards Germans was different from that of other groups. This was a result of the long-term Austrian occupation and its powerful influence, the widespread knowledge of the German language in the population, and close bonds to, as well

⁶¹ Neither Jadwiga Gwizdałówna nor Michał Wiśniewski decided to address the issue of suspected collaboration in their publications. Gwizdałówna mostly emphasizes the attempt to preserve the Wawel Castle by Szyszko-Bohusz. GWIZDAŁÓWNA, *Wawel*, p. 117.

⁶² I would like to thank Jacek Purchla for assistance in contacting Andrzej Rottermund.

⁶³ ROBERT JAROCKI: *Rozmowy z Lorentzem* [Conversations with Lorentz], Warszawa 1981.

as constant contact with, the German-Austrian culture. All this led to the creation of a particular atmosphere and a related attitude among the people, so different from the unconditionally hostile, uncompromising and hardy stance of other groups. This milieu did not take to the position that Germans are mortal enemies who are bringing to us a planned annihilation, which led to the deplorable fact of collaboration between distinguished members of the Polish society with the occupier, and in institutions with an openly anti-Polish program (e.g., Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit), no less. [...] It is under such circumstances and against this background that one should consider the occupation-era activities of Engineer Stefan Żychoń. His direct involvement in the offices of the so-called administration of the General Government, or even acting as a plenipotentiary of that administration⁶⁴ show a lack of good sense and judgment as to the conditions of such collaboration, and can be somewhat explained by the prevailing atmosphere of his milieu.”⁶⁵

The justification led to protests among representatives of the Cracow branch of SARP, who thought such a framing depicted the entire Cracow group in a bad light, as if its ranks did not include victims of the war.⁶⁶ Despite Żychoń's full rehabilitation a year later,⁶⁷ his past was used on numerous occasions as a moral argument against assigning him to administrative roles.⁶⁸ In his later publications on the topic of Zakopane, Żychoń himself included the results of his occupation-era urban planning projects.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ This part of the wartime biography of Żychoń, as well as the scale of the activities by other Polish architects in the Main Building Department of the GG administration have not yet been studied in detail. Cf. ŚLEBODA, p. 150.

⁶⁵ Sprawa Kolegi Stefana Żychonia, Odpis orzeczenia Komisji Weryfikacyjnej SARP po rozpatrzeniu formy zakresu i warunków działalności inż. Stefana Żychonia w okresie okupacji niemieckiej [The Case of Stefan Żychoń, Copy of a Decision by the SARP Verification Committee Following a Consideration of the Form, Scale, and Conditions of Engineer Stefan Żychoń's Activities during German Occupation], 1946-07-13, in: Archiwum Stowarzyszenia Architektów Polskich (SARP) [The Association of Polish Architects (SARP) Archives], Warsaw, SARP Kraków: Sąd koleżeński. 1. Sprawa Stefana Żychonia, fol. 192.

⁶⁶ Letter from Stefan Świszczewski to the Executive Board of the Cracow Unit of SARP, 1947-03-08, *ibidem*, fol. 195; Cracow SARP to the SARP Verification Committee, 1946-08-23, *ibidem*, fol. 191.

⁶⁷ Decisions of the Verification Committee, 1947-07-14, *ibidem*, fol. 130.

⁶⁸ Letter to the Director of the Cracow Office of Industrial Construction Design, 1952-04-10, *ibidem*, fol. 163.

⁶⁹ Archiwum Muzeum Tatrzańkiego [Tatra Museum Archives], Zakopane, sign. 1104; STEFAN ŻYCHOŃ: Elementy struktury przestrzennej polskiego i słowackiego Podtatrze [Elements of the Structural Space of the Polish and Slovak Podtatrze], habilitation manuscript, ca. 1967, pp. 229–233; <https://portal.muzeumtatrzańskie.pl:5081/api/getPdf/archiwum%200000561e> (2021-10-25); IDEM: Rozwój przestrzenny i budownictwo [Spatial Development and Construction], in: RENATA DUTKOWA (ed.): Zakopane: Cztery lata dziejów, Kraków 1991, pp. 455–469.

Concluding Remarks

Design work in the GG territory had a rather ephemeral character: most projects prepared during the war were not realized, and the ones that were built did not find a lasting place in the collective memory of the occupation. The most famous example of a forgotten material testament of wartime planning is the wing of the Wawel castle that was built in place of the demolished royal kitchens, a project co-created by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz. Official tourist guides to Wawel do not mention the time and circumstances of the construction of the building. As Andrzej Tomaszewski sarcastically observes, it is the only piece of Nazi architecture (other than the camp at Auschwitz) to be found on the UNESCO World Heritage List.⁷⁰

The topic of the activities of Polish architects in the General Government is related to the question of collaboration, which continues to stir emotions in both public discourse and among historians in Poland, “a country without a Quisling.”⁷¹ In Germany, most biographies “interrupted” by war have been updated to include activities carried out in allegiance to Nazi ideology.⁷² In post-war Poland, architects generally did not include their legal work during the occupation in their professional *vitas*, fearing accusations of systemic collaboration with the occupier. An example of such an approach can be seen in the *vita* of Tadeusz Zaremba, the city architect for Zamość, who described his occupation-era activities as follows:

“During the last war, in July of 1944, on the day before their evacuation, the Germans forcibly relocated me to Chyrów, with an order to oversee fortification work. I ran away from the site immediately, but I was captured during a roundup while hiding in Nowy Sącz (unregistered) and taken to a labor camp in Nowy Sącz, and later in Krynica. [...] After I recovered from the exhaustion, I immediately (in March 1945) returned to work in Zamość as city architect.”⁷³

Zaremba omitted the fact that he continued to be employed as city architect by the Zamość city government until at least 1943, although with limited duties.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ JANUSZ L. DOBESZ: Der Umgang mit den Bauten aus der NS-Zeit in Polen, in: DIETER BINGEN, HANS-MARTIN HINZ (eds.): *Die Schleifung: Zerstörung und Wiederaufbau historischer Bauten in Deutschland und Polen*, Wiesbaden 2005, pp. 188–198, here p. 197 (discussion of the article, remark by Andrzej Tomaszewski).

⁷¹ Vidkun Quisling was the Prime Minister of Norway during the German Occupation. The reference to Poland as “a country without a Quisling,” meaning one with no systemic collaboration, entered public discourse thanks to: STEFAN TADEUSZ NORWID: *Kraj bez Quislinga* [A Country without a Quisling], Rzym 1945.

⁷² Cf. DURTH.

⁷³ TADEUSZ ZAREMBA: *Życiorys* [Curriculum Vitae], in: *Archiwariusz Zamojski* (2004), 3, pp. 89–90, here p. 90.

⁷⁴ PARADOWSKA, “Niedoszły Himmlerstadt,” p. 67; *Sprawozdanie z robót miejskich za rok budżetowy 1942/1943: Zarząd miejski m. Zamościa, Wydział Techniczny* [Report on Public Works, Fiscal Year 1942/1943: Technical Department, City Government of

That collaboration with the occupier is still a taboo in Poland can be seen in the debate over the doctoral dissertation by Anetta Rybicka on the Institute of German Work in the East (Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit) in Cracow, defended in 2001 at the University of Warsaw. The dissertation, in which the author mentions 150 Polish employees of the institute, and the word “collaboration” appears several times, caused a scandal in the Cracow academic community. The Institute of National Remembrance (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, IPN) launched an investigation into the claims presented in the dissertation and eventually concluded that collaboration charges should be rejected.⁷⁵

The architecture of the GG and its architects are yet to be covered by a comprehensive and more detailed study. Examination of the activities of architects and design work during the war contributes to more profound knowledge of the history of the architecture of that period. Moreover, it expands knowledge of the day-to-day reality under occupation as well as the situation of Poles, Jews, and other ethnic minorities, the sociological aspect of architectural work, the organization of clandestine higher education, the role of the Polish civil servant corps in different stages of the occupation, and the complicated issue of contacts between the occupier and the occupied. Filling this void in scholarship will help us understand more fully the functioning of the GG and will become a foundation for further study of German occupation in Poland.

Translated from the Polish by Krzysztof Rowiński

Zamość], in: Archiwum Państwowe w Zamościu [State Archives in Zamość], Akta miasta Zamościa [City Files of Zamość], sign. 566.

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