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## Architecture and History and Their Representations in German Propaganda in the Reichsgau Wartheland\*

Amongst the surviving traces of German urban planning in Poland during World War II peculiar artefacts happen to be found. A large-scale map of the Reichsgau Wartheland is a case in point,<sup>1</sup> now part of the collection of the State Archive in Bydgoszcz, Poland (Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> The map belongs in a series of various illustrations, very much redolent of children's prints and providing synthetic representations of the territories annexed Germany or occupied by it.<sup>3</sup> As the style of the representation suggests, the publisher, namely *Heimatbund Wartheland*, intended the map as an accessible means of circulating information on the "the heartland of the German East" [*Kernland des deutschen Ostens*]. Featured in the framing, the lyrics of Heinrich Gutberlet's song "March of the Germans in Poland" [*"Marsch der Deutschen in Polen"*] add to the map's educational import. The song uses poetic language to describe the war as a German reconquest of the Polish territories, which are said to have always belonged to the Reich, and the victory of 1939 as the advent of divine justice.<sup>4</sup> The map was intended to combine visual and auditory sensations, namely, a popular song actualized in one's mind. As such, the mendacious propaganda message became all the more pronounced. As a result, Polish history and culture became utterly obliterated, and so was the everyday reality of Poland under Nazi-German occupation, that is, the deportation and extermination of Polish citizens.

The map uses pictorial terms not only to render Warthegau itself, but also to provide basic information on the region in the context of the entire Third Reich and also more locally. Silesia was similar in that the region was considered a frontier province, and a bridgehead for further expansion to the East. Whereas Silesia was defined by its industry, Warthegau was primarily an agricultural region. The fact that Warthegau was one of the first areas captured by the Germans in September 1939 was also of some importan-

ce. Escutcheons to the left of the map comprise symbolic representations of the trades typical of the region. These include: soldiering, agriculture, crafts, industry, science, joinery, and navigation. The central section on the map renders Warthegau in relation to the capitals of other provinces: Berlin, Wrocław [*Breslau*], Katowice [*Kattowitz*], Kraków [*Krakau*], Königsberg, and Gdańsk [*Danzig*]. Escutcheons to the right bear the new coats of arms of the major cities in the region: Poznań [*Posen*], Łódź [*Litzmannstadt*], Inowrocław [*Hohensalza*], Kalisz [*Kalisch*], Gniezno [*Gnesen*], and Włocławek [*Leslau*].

The expanse within the outline of Warthegau features simplified drawings which describe each of its parts. Four major themes come to the fore: architecture (mainly town halls and palaces), industrial facilities, historical symbols, and transportation routes such as rivers and railways. The representation is rounded off with human figures: soldiers, farmers, and foresters (a painter and a wanderer also make an appearance), all of them German by default, inhabiting and transforming the land represented in the map.

In its import, the map combines different eye-catching elements to thoroughly integrate the images of the past, present, and future. One such section represents a Gothic church in Września [*Wreschen*] and construction works in its vicinity. The architectural image of Warthegau brings together depictions of both existing buildings and those in the making, human activity being the driving force and a contact point between the past and the future. This visual representation of the German-occupied territories of Poland and the activities they witnessed brings out the ideas underlying German policies and their tools: urban planning and architecture. These two areas, in combination with a broad social and economic programme, were intended to change Polish territories.<sup>5</sup> Their thorough integration was considered a precondition to ultimate victory.

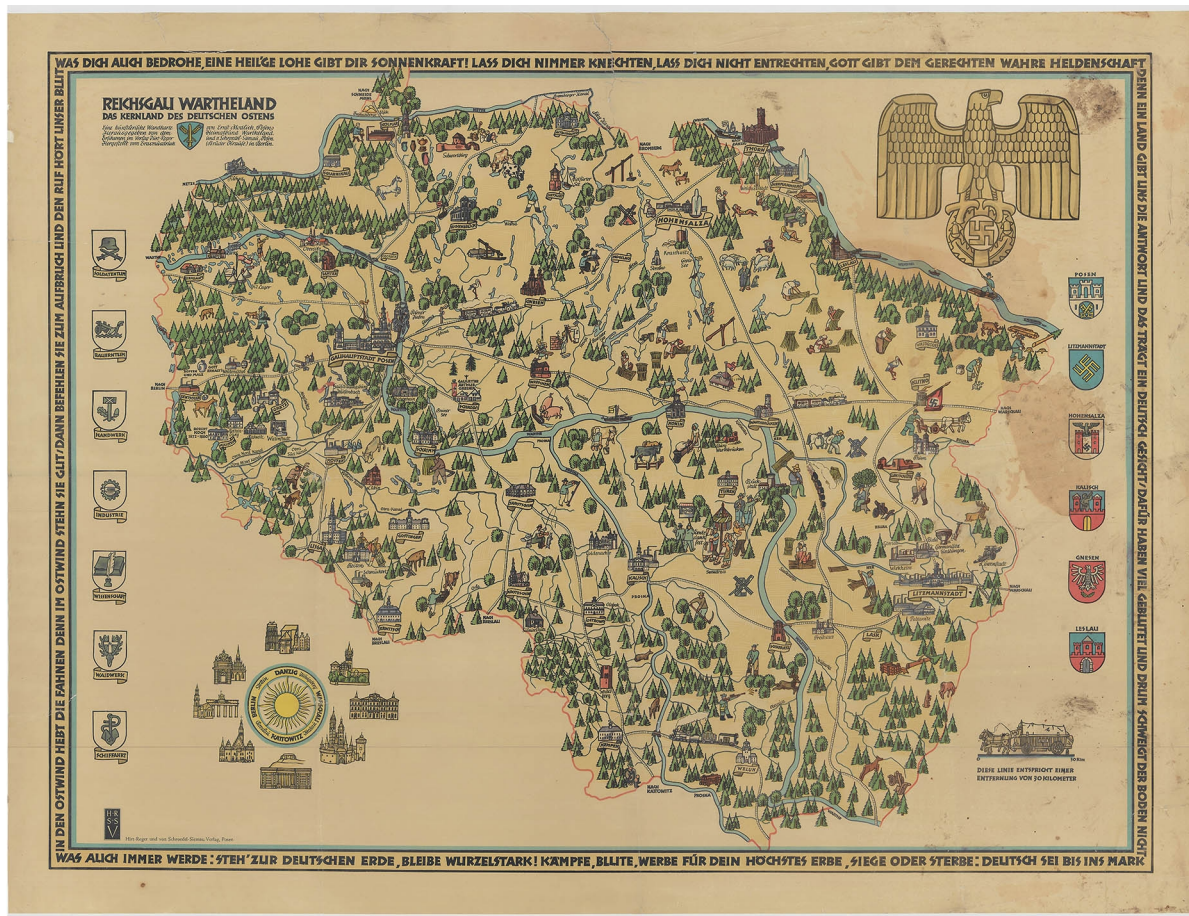


Fig. 1 Map of Reichsgau Wartheland, ca. 1940

These and many other elements of the map's import are a starting point for my investigations into the position of Warthegau's architecture and urban planning in the German war policy. The major goal of this article is to explore how architecture became a propaganda tool and how it was used to reinforce German rule in the annexed territories. My understanding of architecture goes beyond the actual buildings in the map, which may have been instrumental in developing a new German image of the annexed territories, as it also comprises a network of associations spanning the past, present, and future. The issue seems important inasmuch as the urban planning and architecture of the region were described in literature in similar terms to other Polish regions annexed to other German provinces (Gau Danzig-Westpreussen, Gau Ostpreussen, Gau Schlesien) or treated as occupied territories (the General Government). However, as suggested by recent research, the issue calls for a broader

examination of a whole range of historical, economic, and social determinants; in fact, the investigation must be broader than for other regions. The major factors underlying German urban plans and setting Warthegau apart from other provinces are, on the one hand, the harnessing - broader than elsewhere - of the Germanization tradition from the period of the Partitions and the likelihood of its revival; and on the other, a massive displacement of people, i.e., the deportation and extermination of its Polish and Jewish populace, who were replaced by German colonists.<sup>6</sup> Other German administrative units, which Polish territories were incorporated into, did not witness such processes on a similar scale or of similar consistency.

Thus, Warthegau may exemplify an area exposed to comprehensive urban planning processes, architecture being one of the tools in the service of the German war policy. At every possible opportunity, photographs, drawings, and descriptions of both existing



Fig. 2 Georg Salzmann, Model of „new and old Gniezno” [neu und alt Gnesen], 1940

buildings and building designs were placed at the core of propaganda releases, even if their content failed to address the issue of spatial planning or management. Architecture and urban planning became the very tools to be used for the education, assimilation, and shaping of the identity of German colonists, who had newly arrived from various locations and identified with their little homelands. Postcards, press releases, guide books, school atlases, and various other publications were used to inculcate the idea that public buildings and the very space of Polish towns and cities were indigenously German. In so doing, they had pictured the annexed territories as already captured before any actual investment process began. The strategy transformed the measures hitherto undertaken by Nazi authorities; it was supplemented with elements deriving from the German experience of history.

At the core of the Nazi policy was the ideologically charged historical understructure, leaning both towards the past and future, which made it very much akin to the map and its import. Various periods of German supremacy in Polish territories or the fact that Polish people adopted some of the German standards were considered to be the evidence of German cultural superiority. In so doing, these elaborations offered

a repertory of references to commendable German history. They were described in academic publications and, at the same time, circulated by the press. Publications developed by researchers from various fields of study at the Reich University of Poznań/Posen served as a complement to previous elaborations, which were created in the nineteenth century as part of a broader tradition of the *Ostforschung* (Eastern Studies).<sup>7</sup> This line of research focused on particular events or buildings of symbolic import, which later made their way to daily press releases. Even prior to the outbreak of World War II, German intelligence made a reconnaissance of Polish territories and provided reports on the cultural and economic activity of the Polish state.<sup>8</sup>

Particular buildings became symbols (charged with a clear agenda) as well as lodestars for future development. This was the case irrespective of the particular towns and cities in Warthegau and their varying pasts, the region encompassing both the areas of the former Prussian partition and the territories which had been under Russian rule in the nineteenth century. In the latter case, the interpretations of the buildings' history were more likely to contain serious distortions while captions describing their current role fraudulently suggested their German origins. Public buildings,

developed by interwar Poland and mostly Neo-classical in style, fell an easy prey to such practices.<sup>9</sup> The visual propaganda drew on architecture while becoming a foundation for the identity of newly arrived German colonists. Circulated through various prints and publications, image reproductions became omnipresent in everyday life, and their impact was impressively broad.

### The New Vision of History and Urban Planning

Historical references were chiefly made to two periods: the Middle Ages (as in Silesia) and Partitions. In urban planning, the basic argument for the allegedly German past of the Polish cities was the fact that they had been granted a location privilege known as the “settlement with German law.” Since the laws and the spatial planning they stipulated had been brought to Poland by what we know as German colonists, the propaganda used it as an argument in promoting the German nature of the colonization process. What went unnoticed was that mediaeval location privileges may have taken different forms, including church or ducal privileges. The extant copy of the Magdeburg Law codex served as one of the major show pieces in the “German Land of the River Warthe” [*Das deutsche Wartheland*] exhibition, held by the Poznań Museum in 1940.<sup>10</sup> The reference to the location privilege was intended as a marker of progress. One case in point was the town of Kępno [*Kempen*] in southern Greater Poland, where the remains of the mediaeval urban grid were used as a basis for a new urban development plan.<sup>11</sup> The restoration of the urban grid of an allegedly German origin was intended to develop a new space for German colonists where they could live in order and harmony.

Churches were also used as a basis for ideologically charged interpretations of the Middle Ages. Located in Greater Poland, the buildings were closely linked to the beginnings of Polish statehood and Christianity. Yet, they were showcased as the achievement of German masonry. In order to erase Polish presence, some churches were converted into concert halls, with blatant disrespect to their historic value. One such spectacular undertaking was the destruction of the fittings of the Gniezno Cathedral. In his accounts, the city’s planner Georg Salzmann ex-

tolled the church as the achievement of German Gothic, and to a lesser extent, that of Italian Baroque.<sup>12</sup> Despite Salzmann’s own pronouncement, who saw it as Italian in style, the major furnishing in the church, i.e., the Confession of Saint Adalbert, was earmarked to be removed from the interior. The very presence of the holy relics and the size of the altarpiece failed to fit in with a new development concept. The elevations of the cathedral were left intact (Fig. 2). Towering above its surroundings, the building was to become an inherent part of a new urban design, which provided for the development of housing estates on the nearby hills. The Gniezno town planner Georg Salzmann argued: “One thing is certain: the cathedral may no longer serve the Catholic Church (...). Therefore, the Gnesen Cathedral is and will always be one of the many instances which show how vital it is to obliterate the Polish shell and Polish filth in order to showcase the German nature of this land and its culture.”<sup>13</sup> Similar plans which provided for the conversion of churches into concert halls and museums were offered for Gothic churches in the town of Wieluń [*Wielun, We-lungen*]. Notwithstanding these futuristic visions, most of the churches were temporarily used as storage facilities.<sup>14</sup>

After its conversion, sacred architecture began to serve educational purposes, as it were, by promoting Nazi ideology as a new breed of religion. All cultural and religious buildings belonging to either Polish or Jewish communities were not only expunged of their ethnicity, but also converted to suit new purposes: the education and shaping of the new German man. Culture and sports became the priority to be pursued regardless of the reality of war. One of the first construction initiatives in most of the Warthegau cities was to develop a stadium or swimming pool, and also a cinema auditorium for film screenings or propaganda purposes.<sup>15</sup>

The second historical period which served as an ideological foundation for German activity in Warthegau was that of the Partitions. References to the nineteenth century were driven by the ambition to complete a massive project of the Prussian authorities, which ultimately had faced defeat. Gauleiter Arthur Greiser was greatly aware of the issue: “While previously — before 1918 — the political measures the former great

Free State of Prussia deployed to take control of the eastern territories were focused on management standards to be on a par with those in Prussia and other free states of Germany, the focus of today is not only on management, which obviously must live up to the rest of Germany, but on something more, that is, development.”<sup>16</sup> The rivalry between Arthur Greiser and Hans Frank as General Governor played an important role in the process.

The ideological references were primarily concerned not so much with the reign of Emperor Wilhelm II, which was relatively close in time, but the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ca. half of the Reichsland Warthegau overlapped with what is known as Southern Prussia [*Provinz Südpreußen*], the area awarded to the Kingdom of Prussia after the Second and Third Partitions of Poland (1793 and 1795). After 1807, the area was incorporated into the Duchy of Warsaw. A predominant goal of the Prussian authorities and their policy at the time, and also later in the post-1807 area, was to bring sea change in the newly acquired territories. Designs for Polish cities from the time were mainly concerned with providing corrections in urban planning and creating benchmark residential housing, understated in style, i.e., devoid of lush ornaments, their façades decorated only with window frames and ornamental friezes.<sup>17</sup> Concurrently, from the late eighteenth century, a number of locations saw the arrival of German colonists as part of King Frederick’s Colonization. In both fields, Prussian measures from the time may serve as an ideological analogue of the action performed during World War II, when Germans from the East were brought to Warthegau and new architecture designs for the area were developed.

Undeniably, the nineteenth-century urban reality shaped the principles of the Master Plan East [*Generalplan Ost*], which provided for the development of the special settlement zone [*Siedlungszone*], spanning central Greater Poland and the entire eastern reaches of Warthegau, i.e., Mazovia as well as Łódź and the surrounding area. It was to be interconnected with settlement zones in the Regierungsbezirk Ciechanów [*Regierungsbezirk Zichenau*] in the north and the formerly Polish parts of Silesia, incorporated into the Gau Upper Silesia [*Gau Oberschlesien*].<sup>18</sup> The fact that

the eastern reaches of Warthegau were earmarked almost exclusively as a settlement zone was linked to measures planned on a scale larger than in Greater Poland. In fact, the area — under Russian rule before 1918 — was considerably different from the former Prussian partition, and the gap continued to exist in the independent Polish state from 1918-1939. A new wave of German reform was radical in nature, and possible only after a nearly total deportation of local populace.

Experts were striving to define how much of the existing infrastructure could be used in the project. According to a series of categories elaborated by the architect and urban planner Ewald Liedecke, Warthegau would meet the criteria for a “redevelopment” zone [*Umbauzone*] in the west, which required only a few corrections, and a “development” zone [*Bauzone*] in the east, which was supposed to involve works on a much greater scale.<sup>19</sup> The analysis of Nazi architects’ legacy in Warthegau, including Liedecke’s classification and the guidelines of the *Generalplan Ost*, allows a differentiation between German strategies deployed in former Prussian and Russian partitions of Poland. Developed during World War II, the urban plans for towns and cities belonging to the Prussian partition until 1918 followed the spirit of the nineteenth-century development plans.

This regularity is best noticed in Poznań, a case in point being the former Imperial Castle, the residence of the last German Emperor and the King of Prussia Wilhelm II, converted into Hitler’s residence from 1939–1943 by Hans Böhmer and his studio, who were commissioned by Albert Speer.<sup>20</sup> Böhmer designed the Anaberg Thingstätte (the Amphitheatre on Saint Anne’s Mount). The most prominent changes which created a new context for the interplay between the castle and the urban fabric were a new entry from ulica Św. Marcin and a new balcony provided for Hitler in the tower (Fig. 3). In symbolic terms, the balcony heralded a likely arrival of Hitler. Even though Hitler would never appear in the balcony, the very possibility of his doing so defined the relationship between the castle and its surrounding urban fabric. The elevation was expunged of numerous ornamental carvings. Consequently, the neo-Romanesque bulk of the castle lost its import, and the reference to a particular



Fig. 3 Former Imperial Castle in Poznań, converted into Hitler's residence from 1939–1943 by Hans Böhmer and his studio, view from 2019

mediaeval style was transmogrified into a merely general reference to the Middle Ages. Both before World War I and during Nazi occupation the castle served as an implant of collective memory, as it told a fictitious story of the centuries-long German rule in the area. The most prominent reference in the interior was that to the New Reich Chancellery.

From the city's perspective, the conversion of the castle for representative purposes supplanted the initial and extremely costly idea to develop a new building, the design of which had been provided by Walter Bangert in 1940.<sup>21</sup> Other buildings in the castle quarter were converted only to a limited extent; together with the castle, they continued to add to the "ancient" aura of the German rule in the eastern frontiers of the Reich.

Its former symbolism remade and the ideas dating to Wilhelm II's rule still in place, the imperial residence in Poznań encourages a comparison to other residences of analogous import: the Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork [*Marienburg*] and Hohkönigsburg in Alzace.<sup>22</sup> In both cases, Emperor Wilhelm II's idea to (re)develop the buildings in their mediaeval splendour facilitated their transmutation into the symbolic strongholds of German supremacy in the frontiers of the Great Reich. The perception of the two continued to hold during the Nazi era. After 1939, the castle in Poznań was likely to encourage similar perceptions, namely, that it was German by default.

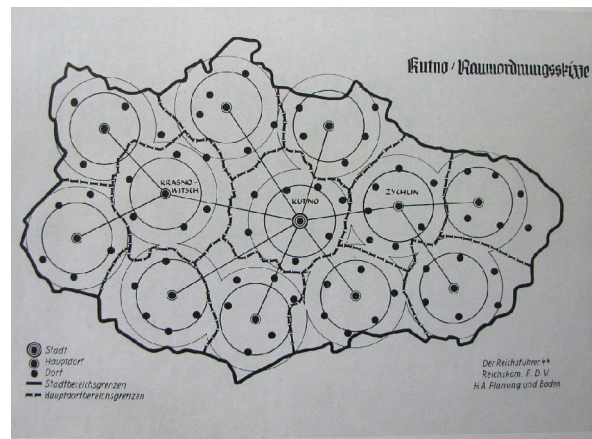


Fig. 4 Walther Christaller, Plan for rearranging the network of towns and villages for the region around Kutno, ca. 1942

Designs for the areas with no pronounced symbols of ancient German supremacy had to address a different urban reality. A starting point for urban planners was completely different in Łódź [*Litzmannstadt*], the second largest city in Warthegau and formerly in the Russian area of influence.<sup>23</sup> The fact that much of the city centre was covered by industrial facilities only complicated German designs. Walter Bangert's design of Litzmannstadt provided for separate industrial and residential areas and an impressive avenue. The first step in the execution of the design was to provide a separate ghetto area. Thus, the design was much broader in scope than the one for Warthegau's capital. Propaganda releases emphasized the presence of German colonists in the history of the city and the alleged role they played in its development: "German enterprise and craft laid the foundations for the development of the city as we know it: the stronghold of German industrialization and an important part of the German war manufacturing base."<sup>24</sup>

Łódź served as a major point of reference for further projects in the region, a case in point being Bangert's urban development plan for the town of Pabianice [*Pabianitz*]. Walther Christaller himself, the author of the central place theory ("*Zentrale Orte*"), pointed out that these places created one prominent industrial network with Zgierz. The celebrated German geographer provided a design for rearranging the network of towns and villages in occupied Polish grounds, i.a. for



Fig. 5 Herman Jansen, Model of redevelopment of Wieluń, ca. 1941

the region around Kutno (Fig. 4).<sup>25</sup> The designs were never put in place; however, they became a stimulus for similar plans to emerge. One such meticulous design was provided for the town of Uniejów. Every village was to be rearranged according to the concepts provided by individual planners, which were intended as a stimulus for future development.<sup>26</sup> Particular buildings were designed so as to fit in with the existing urban fabric. That said, land was divided into new plots. The almost total replacement of local populace and the scale of development gave an almost boundless scope to the project. All this was possible under pretence of bringing sea change in the area.

### Warthegau vs. East Prussia and Silesia

Gauleiter Arthur Greiser used to describe Wartheland as the “model province” [*Mustergau*].<sup>27</sup> Although the phrase was pure propaganda, it did convey Warthegau’s different standing as the largest administrative unit of the Third Reich. As envisioned by the Master Plan East, the area was to serve as what was already mentioned as the settlement zone, which overlapped with neighbouring provinces, mainly the Reichsgau Danzig-West Prussia and Reichsgau Upper Silesia.<sup>28</sup> As indicated by the extant records, the areas earmarked for new settlements were most likely to witness new urban planning initiatives.

The main goal of the comprehensive redevelopment plan for towns and cities, which was launched in 1940, was to create suitable living conditions for newly arrived German colonists, i.e., to provide them with new housing estates (Fig. 5).<sup>29</sup> Those Polish inhabitants who were not displaced to the General Government were forced to take poor quality living quarters or workers’ barracks, while Jews were confined to ghettos, separate enclosed areas within the cities.<sup>30</sup>

The estates were prioritized to secure housing for German colonists from the Baltic countries, Volhynia or today’s territories of Romania, which attracted a wave of German migration in the nineteenth century. The idea to relocate them to Polish territories during World War II was described as the restoration of German rule over the area. At the same time, the estates were to integrate their dwellers from different directions and convince them that German rule in Polish territories is stable and firm. In their generic designs, the estates followed a particular style, which gave Polish cities a semblance of those from so called „old Germany” (Germany in the shape from before 1935). The symbolic import of architecture was consonant with that of various publications, including the map described in the introduction.

New residential areas were predominantly located in almost all cities and major towns in Warthegau.



Fig. 6 Residential estate in Ostrów Wielkopolski, view from 2017

They were mainly composed of building complexes, each of which comprising a dozen or so two-storey houses placed along picturesquely curved streets. The estates were based on standardized *Heimatschutz* designs, which gave them a semblance of the estates developed in so called „old Germany”. The realities of war effort made it impossible to develop buildings other than for residential purposes, such as public buildings previously developed in Germany.

The designs of the estates and complex plans for the future were provided by architects who responded to adverts in the press. One important way to encourage new arrivals in Warthegau were competitions, which were available only to those candidates who inhabited the eastern territories of the Reich. Competitions were intended to rearrange particular spaces such as city centres, but also to provide benchmark solutions.<sup>31</sup> Urban planners travelled from one region to the other in search of best commissions and jobs. Georg Salzmann, already mentioned in the article, exemplifies such a career path; initially, he left Freiburg, Saxony, for Gniezno, where he collaborated with his friend - Kreisleiter Julius Lorenzen and was appointed the city planner; eventually, he settled in Bielsko-Biała in 1941, where he stayed until the end of the occupation.<sup>32</sup> These frequent relocations were probable due to his appetite for rapid self-advancement.

Herman Jansen, a celebrated urban planner and an active figure in German Silesia, accepted a commission to redevelop Wieluń, a town located near the province's southern border. Little is known to date on what actually made Jansen relocate to Wieluń. Jansen

resided in Turkey at the time, Alfred Cuda acting as his representative in Warthegau.<sup>33</sup> The planners enjoyed much liberty as the town's fabric had been destroyed in 70% by air raids on the outbreak of World War II (Fig. 6). Once redeveloped, the town was expected to change beyond recognition. The new town centre was to be concentrated around the main square with a seat of the authorities, whose presence was accentuated in the townscape with soaring towers. The style of the buildings followed the spirit of *Heimatschutz*, which was also a common feature in other urban plans. Eventually, the design would never see its execution, and only a few little residential areas were developed near the centre. With Jansen involved as its main planner, Wieluń emerged as a living memorial to German victory. The 1941 publication, which was solely devoted to Wieluń's redevelopment, said: "If the history of the Poland Campaign [the German term for the Invasion of Poland in 1939] is ever to be written, it is going to extol the achievements of our victorious armies that captured the Wieluń area."<sup>34</sup> Under German occupation, not only Wieluń, but also a nearby town of Wieruszów was to receive a general urban plan by Jansen.<sup>35</sup>

Another unique initiative was undertaken in Soczewka, a small village located on the border of the Reichsgau East-Prussia, on the bank of the River Vistula, in the vicinity of Płock, which was located on the other side of the border. Known for its paper mill, the village was called Moździerz before World War II.<sup>36</sup> The place saw its nineteenth-century name restored under German occupation. The village was provided with Alfred Mensebach's design for the development of a Hitlerjugend residential area (Fig. 7).<sup>37</sup> Mensebach had previously overseen the reconstruction of Soczewka's paper mill, and would later make his name as the author of the photographic records documenting the demolition of Warsaw, where he served as part of the engineers' commando [*Sprengkommando*], who were handed the task to obliterate the remains of Warsaw's urban fabric after the Uprising of 1944.<sup>38</sup> The extant design was conceived as prestigious, which is suggested by its lavish binding. That said, the figures in the design featured generic residential solutions: *Heimatschutz* houses and buildings were one-storey high and provided with simple roofing.



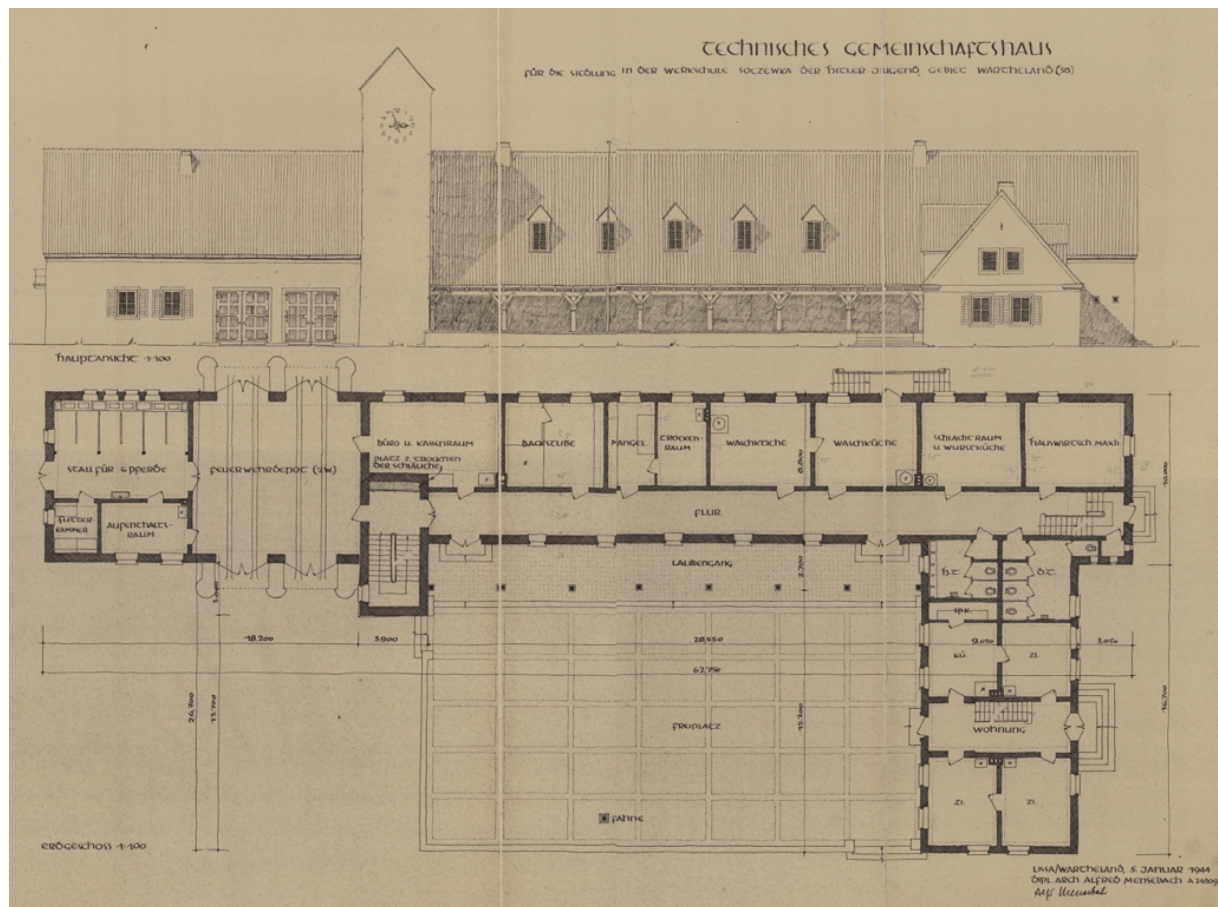


Fig. 7 Alfred Mensebach, Plan for Hitlerjugend residential in Soczewka, 1944

The decision to develop the Hitlerjugend estate in Soczewka was made probably due to its unique location on the bank of the River Vistula in the close vicinity of Płock. The city of Płock played a prominent symbolic role and was renamed Schröttersburg in 1941 as a tribute to Friedrich Leopold von Schrötter, the minister in charge of West and East Prussia when South Prussia had still been in existence. Schrötter made his name with a forceful colonization initiative in the Vistula Valley, which saw the arrival of farmers from the regions of Württemberg, Baden, and Schwaben. The new name was intended to bring back the memory of the German expansion pioneer. Circulated in the press, German urban plans envisioned Schröttersburg as a scenic “stronghold” [*Bollwerk*], perched on a river bank and a prototypical example of the German construction legacy in East Prussia. The new residential estate in Soczewka also served as a symbolic

“stronghold”, both consonant with and complementary to the import of Płock on the other bank of the River Vistula, which was already part of Warthegau.

All of these construction initiatives were perceived as a way to bring sea change in the area, a mission very much similar to that of a broad city redevelopment programme in East Prussia following the ravages of World War I. The strategies and experiences from the time were repeated and extended also in Warthegau, which saw similar planning initiatives in combination with efforts at the modernization and spatial rearrangement of the territory. The statements of urban planners from the time, who promoted East Prussia as „more productive and more attractive,” resonated in the articles on the modernization of annexed territories.<sup>39</sup> As a result, *Heimatschutz*, which had been adopted in East Prussia, was still relevant twenty years later.

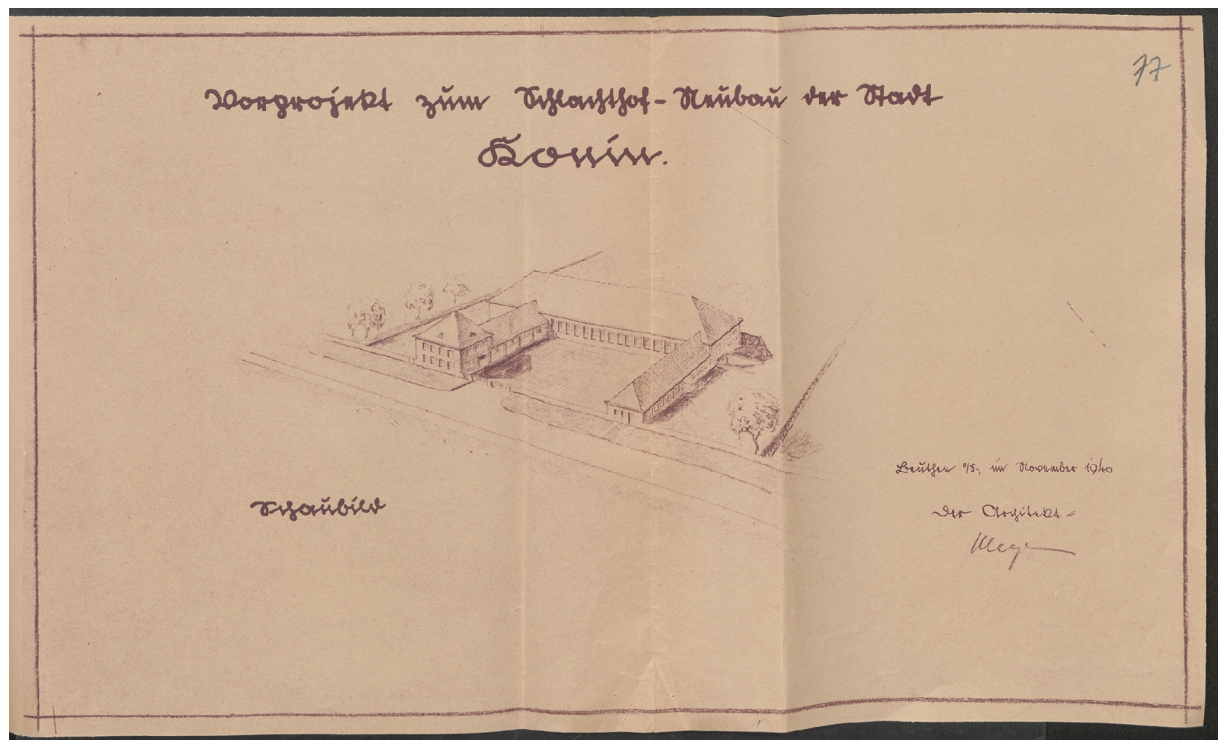


Fig. 8 Friedrich Meyer, Slaughterhouse in Konin, 1940

### A Multi-faceted Modernity

These historical references and their effect on conceptual designs were closely linked to the general ideas of the modernity of the Third Reich, including the modernity of its architecture and urban planning. As stipulated by German propaganda, no acknowledgement was given to modernizing initiatives undertaken by Polish architects in interwar Poland, even though their legacy was actually put to use. Many of the German solutions imitated Polish ideas, which may be exemplified by the design for the distribution of green areas in Poznan by Hans Bernhard Reichow, who offered a copy of Władysław Czarnecki's "wedges of greenery."<sup>40</sup> Both projects were driven by almost the same idea, which was to plant greenery along rivers, streams or canals, whereby forested areas morphed into parks extending into city centres. The German and Polish concepts and their execution differed only in terms of ideology. Two reservoirs which Reichow immersed in the wedges of greenery were built over an extremely short period of time by prisoners and forced labourers, many of whom were

either executed or died of exhaustion during the project. Therefore, Paul Jaskot's insight whereby monumental architecture of the Third Reich must be considered exclusively in the context of the concentration camp system is also valid for spatial planning. Such massive projects would have never been completed without forced labour.<sup>41</sup>

The declaration to modernize annexed territories had an ideological basis in the slogans promoting modern architecture, even though the designs adhered to different styles. Robert Taylor argues: "The contemporary attitude to architecture was eclectic; a 'German' or 'Nazi' quality was expressed through different styles of varying backgrounds."<sup>42</sup> In each of the cases, all of the qualities of modern architecture remained invariably relevant: building according to the spatial rules and requirements laid down by the authorities, the usage of particular materials, or the provision of sanitary facilities. Thus, modern and conservative qualities of architecture were very much intertwined with each other. As such, architecture reflected Nazi ideology, which combined references to the

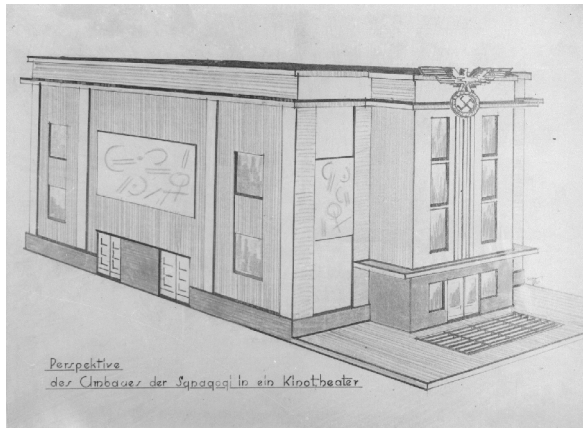


Fig. 9 B. Jäger, Project of a cinema converted from a synagogue in Września, 1940

past, including slogans featuring blood, race, and struggle, as well as progressive elements such as industrialization, transport, or modern warfare.<sup>43</sup>

Divergent ideas and styles were combined much more freely and more frequently in Warthegau than in the „old Reich”. For example, whereas a slaughterhouse would most probably have been designed as a simplified cuboid building in the Reich, the slaughterhouse design in Konin followed the *Heimatschutz* style, which made it more akin to residential housing (Fig. 8).<sup>44</sup> In Września, designs for a stadium to be developed and a synagogue to be converted into a cinema were given a similar treatment (Fig. 9). The urban planner, who took liberty with modernist forms, decorated their elevations with onlays featuring Nazi symbols, the mouldings having little to do with the original aesthetics of the building. The drawing of the synagogue as a future cinema reveals in particular that the style of the design was exploited to erase the traces of Jewish culture in the building.

Concurrently, concentration camp designs, which until lately have failed to attract the interest of researchers in the architecture of the Third Reich, followed generic designs typical of modern architecture. The fact was pointed out by Robert Jan van Pelt, who described Auschwitz as the only true city to have been developed by Nazi ideology.<sup>45</sup> Fritz Ertl and Walter Dejaco, the architects who provided the Auschwitz design, followed an adjusted stable design (*Pferdestallbaracken OKH-Typ 260/9*), developed by Ernst Neufert for his famous 1943 textbook, which was provided with a foreword by Alber Speer.<sup>46</sup> The same pu-

blication was probably used as a benchmark for the barracks provided in the forced labour camp at Żabikowo near Poznań.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, benchmarking and standardization, as well as lifestyle and productivity engineering, which were part and parcel of modernist slogans, became an integral part of the architecture of the Third Reich.

As a side remark, it is worth noting that extremely rationalist thinking on architecture had a bearing on the way existing buildings were used in other camps. A case in point was the first extermination camp in Polish territories, i.e., the one in Kulmhof (Polish Chełmno nad Nerem), which utilized a former palace as a segregation facility. The camp was launched in December 1941, that is, before the Wannsee Conference of 20<sup>th</sup> January 1942, when the formal decision on the extermination of the Jewish population was made.<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, the camp area was located only 20 kilometres away from Uniejów [*Uniejow*] (previously mentioned), the surroundings of which were to be rearranged in a number of ways. As a result, two domains, i.e., extermination and urban planning, found their manifestations in a close proximity to each other.

## Conclusions

The content of the map described in the introduction, which provided a one-sided representation of Warthegau as an idyllic country, may be challenged by various archive records providing completely different accounts. This reveals a whole spectrum of determinants for German urban planning in Polish territories during World War II. These designs envisioned the Germanization of Polish territories, which is reflected by numerous extant propaganda records from the era, including newspapers, books, postcards, pamphlets, or calendars. Based on the representations of architecture and its users, the multi-faceted nature of German propaganda reflects the way Germans integrated their two-prong measures: wide urban planning and the replacement of local population. The rendering of historic monuments as inherent parts of the allegedly German past in Polish territories invited the newly arrived colonists to gradually identify with their new living space. Previous German supremacy in these territories was particularly emphasized so that the existing circumstances could be perceived as the em-

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bodiment of historical justice. The reality of war and the propaganda pushing German victory reinforced such thinking and its alleged validity.

One may argue that didactic import of the map reflected not so much the overall German message about Polish territories, but a clearly defined programme by Gauleiter Arthur Greiser. Greiser was striving to build the position of Warthegau not only in the context of the Reich, but also other frontier provinces. Formulated in his first speech, the concept of the “model province” [*Mustergau*], which Wartheland was set to become, addressed the most vital issues: “Our distant goal, which we nonetheless may not lose sight of in each and every measure we undertake, is to earn the title of the ‘model province,’ which to a large extent will provide food in ready supply to the Reich, shield against Polish and Jewish invasion, and develop buildings to match the Reich in its greatness.”<sup>49</sup> Wartheland stood out from other provinces with its very size and the symbolic role it played as a frontier province in the East. No other annexed territory witnessed so many deportations and extermination as Warthegau. In this respect, Greiser was surely the one who developed a real benchmark for future German territories in the East. The quick and efficient delivery of his project would not have been possible without a system of labour camps and the use of non-deported Poles as forced labour. Selected areas in the General Government, a case in point being *Aktion Zamość*, would soon follow suit. They were similar to Warthegau in that new urban designs were offered soon after the deportations.<sup>50</sup>

The accounts from Warthegau demonstrate that ruthless deportation policies allowed for spatial planning that did not have to adjust to local property distribution or Polish history and Polish heritage. The only thing that stood in the way of these concepts was war, and they saw execution only to a limited extent in selected residential estates and public buildings. Military operations served as an incontestable argument for those who tried to shift the focus of newly arrived German colonists towards history and the glowing vision of the future after the war. That said, this grand vision became a reality not so much in architecture but in its propaganda representations.

## Endnoten

- \* The article sets out to present the outcomes of the study carried out as part of the FUGA 3 grant, awarded by the National Science Centre, Poland, completed from 2014-2017 under the supervision of Professor Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos at the University of Wrocław, Poland (DEC-2014/12/S/HS2/00387). The content of the article will also occur in a planned book on architecture and urban planning in the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945.
1. The paper uses the historic proper name Reichsgau Wartheland / Warthegau to describe a Nazi German Reichsgau covering some of the Polish territories annexed in 1939. It comprised Greater Poland and adjacent areas. Much of Warthegau matched the pre-Versailles Prussian province of Posen.
  2. Archiwum Państwowe w Bydgoszczy [State Archive in Bydgoszcz], Fonds 5, item no. 185.
  3. More on maps and their propaganda import, cf. Karolina Jara's article.
  4. Schmidt 1939, Weichsel und Warthe.
  5. More on the subject, cf. my other publications: Paradowska 2016, *Polskie drogi*; Paradowska 2016, *Wyjątkowe zadania*.
  6. First mass shootings and round-ups of Polish nationals were seen as early as September 1939. More on deportations, cf. Rutowska 2003, *Wysiedlenia ludności polskiej*; Böhler 2009, *Zbrodnie Wehrmachtu*.
  7. During German occupation, researchers made conscious references to their predecessors. Cf. Aubin 2014, *Nowy początek*.
  8. Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde, items no. R 113/2090; R 113/1640; R 153/1380; R 153/1373; R 153/1309; R 153/855; R 153/2100. Numerous pre-1914 elaborations enjoyed a similar standing.
  9. The buildings included: the town hall (designed by Sylwester Pazderski, 1920-1924) and theatre (designed by Czesław Przybylski, 1920-1923) in Kalisz or the building of the former Poznań School of Economics (today's Poznań University of Economics and Business) (designed by Adam Ballenstedt, 1928-1932).
  10. Petersen 1940, *Das Deutsche Wartheland*.
  11. *Die städtebauliche Neugestaltung* 1943.
  12. Salzmann 1940, *Das Gnesener Stadtbild*, p. 86.
  13. "Eines ist selbstverständlich: Niemals wieder darf der Dom kirchlichen Zwecken dienen (...) So ist und bleibt der Gnesener Dom einer der vielen Beweise dafür, daß es nötig ist, polnische Tünche und polnischen Schmutz herunterzuwaschen um zu zeigen, wie Deutsch dieses Land und seine Kultur ist", Archiwum Archidiecezjalne w Gnieźnie [The Archdiocesan Archive of Gniezno], item no. AMG 9, G. Salzmann's notes, p. 1-3.
  14. The urban plans are held in the collection of the Wieluń Regional Museum; Olejnik 1973, *Hitlerowska polityka walki z kulturą polską*, p. 58-59.
  15. Janicki 1996, *Wieś w Kraju Warty*, p. 164-170.
  16. Greiser 1942, *Der Aufbau im Osten*, 3. More on Greiser's personal involvement in urban planning activities can be found in the reports from conversations on urban designs: Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, item no. R 4606/711, k. 160, p. 181-182.
  17. Paradowska 2016, *Archiwalia dotyczące*.
  18. More on the Master Plan East, particularly spatial planning, cf. Madajczyk 1990, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*; Wasser 1993, *Himmlers Raumplanung*; Heinemann 2006, *Wissenschaft, Planung, Vertreibung*; Aly 2004, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*. Based on Czesław Madajczyk's elaboration, a detailed map is provided by Niels Gutschow: Gutschow 2001, *Ordnungswahn*, p. 24; Durth / Gutschow 1993, *Träume in Trümmern*, p. 81.
  19. Liedecke also offered a “supplementary zone” [Ergänzungszone], which encompassed the areas annexed to pre-1939 German provinces: Silesia, East Prussia, and the vicinity of Gdańsk [Danzig], Liedecke 1940, *Der neue deutsche Osten*.
  20. On the castle and its symbolic import, cf. Pazder 2003, *Kaiserschloss Posen*; Schwendemann 2003, *Hitlers Schloß; Pałat* 2011, *Architektura a polityka*.
  21. Pazder 2003, *Kaiserschloss Posen*; More on Bangert's designs cf. Gutschow 2001, *Ordnungswahn*, p. 161-168; Grzeszczuk-Brendel 2005, *Zwischen Gauforum und Ehebett*.

22. They may serve as one more example of political historicism, which is broadly described by Crettaz-Stürzel 2017, *Eine feste Burg*.
23. More on German urban plans for Łódź, cf. Bolanowski 2013, *Architektura okupowanej Łodzi*; Gutschow 2001, *Ordnungswahn*, p. 143-160.
24. "Deutscher Gewerbeleiß und Unternehmergeist schufen die Voraussetzungen für diese Entwicklung und machten im Laufe eines Jahrhunderts aus dieser Stadt das, was es heute ist: Eine Hochburg deutscher Industrialisierung und damit wichtiger Bestandteil der deutschen Kriegserzeugung", a 1944 calendar (without the title page) from the collection of the Instytut Zachodni w Poznaniu [Institute for Western Affairs in Poznan], item no. IZ\_dok\_I\_228.
25. Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, item no. R 113/45, p. 28-30; Planung und Aufbau 1942, p. 7; Kegler 2015, *Deutsche Raumplanung*, p. 183.
26. Planung und Aufbau 1942.
27. Ueberwältigende Kundgebung 1939.
28. Gutschow 2001, *Ordnungswahn*, p. 24.
29. These cities with new housing estates include: Poznań, Łódź, Pabianice, Inowrocław, Mogilno, Ostrów, Kępno, Sieradz, Turek, Września, Konin, Koto, Włocławek (and others). See a separate article by Brendel on Poznań's residential estates (in this issue). On settlements and their contemporary perceptions cf. Paradowska 2018, *Schwieriges Erbe*.
30. The largest ghetto was created in Łódź; Baranowski 2009, *Getto łódzkie*.
31. For example Poznań and Jarocin held competitions for the redevelopment of their market squares; the collection of the Regional Museum in Jarocin; Wettbewerb über die Gestaltung 1941.
32. On Salzmann's biography, cf. Düsing 2018, *Georg Salzmann*.
33. Walter Moest, who also signed the plans does not occur in the official reports, *Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu* [State Archive in Poznań], *Reichstatthalter*, item no. 3013.
34. "Wenn einmal die Geschichte des polnischen Feldzuges geschrieben wird, werden dabei auch die Waffentaten unseres siegreichen Heeres bei der Eroberung des Kreises Welun ihre gebührende Würdigung finden," *Ein Jahr Aufbau* (1941), p. 2.
35. The collection of the Regional Museum in Wieluń. Jansen made his name as an architect primarily as the author of the great urban plan for Berlin of 1910.
36. *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego 1880-1914*, p. 7.
37. *Archiwum Państwowe w Lesznie* [State Archive in Leszno], *Technical Records*, item no. 30.
38. The photographs are held in the collection of the Western Institute in Poznań; Serwański 1946, *Zbrodnia niemiecka w Warszawie*, p. XII-XIII and the appendix with photographs.
39. About redevelopment of the cities in East Prussia after World War I see: Salm 2006, *Odbudowa miast wschodniopruskich*.
40. Paradowska 2016, *Wyjątkowe zadania*, p. 146.
41. Jaskot 2000, *The Architecture of Oppression*.
42. Taylor 1974, *The World in Stone*, p. 10. Some researchers argue that the architecture of the Third Reich combines a particular style with a particular function: the Heimatstil with residential housing, Neo-classicism with public buildings, and industrial facilities with functionalism (e.g. Nerdinger 2004, *Baustile im Nationalsozialismus*). The diagnosis loses its relevance for the areas outside of the so called „old Third Reich“.
43. Nerdinger 1993, *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus*, p. 13-14, see more in: Fehl 1995, *Kleinstadt, Steildach, Volksgemeinschaft*. Orłowski 2000, *Nazizm, Trzecia Rzesza a procesy modernizacji* and Griffin 2007, *Modernism and Fascism provide a thorough overview of the discussion on modernization, functionalism and Nazi ideology*.
44. *Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu, Oddział w Koninie*, [State Archive in Poznań, Konin Division], *Construction Records*, item no. 75.
45. Pelt 1991, *Architectural Principles*, p. 361; 369, as cited in: Świtek 2017, *Planowanie i higiena*, p. 65. More on Auschwitz designs cf. Dwork / Pelt 2011, *Auschwitz*.
46. Pelt 1991, *Architectural Principles*, p. 121, as cited in: Świtek 2017, *Planowanie i higiena*, p. 66. In her publication, Gabriela Świtek provides an in-depth analysis of the relationship between urban planning and hygiene in the Third Reich.
47. *Unterkünfte als Befehlsdauerwohnung*, Neufert 1943, *Bauordnungslehre*, p. 323.
48. Grzanka / Grzanka 2016, *Cień zagłady*; Ziolkowska 2005, *Obozy pracy przymusowej*.
49. "Unser Fernziel, das wir jedoch von vornherein bei allen unseren Handlungen stets im Auge behalten werden, soll sein, ein Muttergau des Grossdeutschen Reiches zu werden, der die Ernährungsfreiheit für Grossdeutschland zum wesentlichen Teil gewährleistet, der einen Schutz bildet gegen polnische und juedische Invasion und dessen Bauten der Größe des Reiches entsprechen werden," *Ueberwältigende Kundgebung 1939*, p. 3.
50. Paradowska 2017, *Niedoszły Himmelstadt*; Kegler 2015, *Deutsche Raumplanung*, p. 240-244. Deportations in the Żywiec region, Upper Silesia, Pomerania, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau (polish Ciechanów), and less prominent towns in the General Government, e.g. Oświęcim, were completed on a slightly smaller scale.

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## Illustrations

- 1: Archiwum Państwowe w Bydgoszczy [State Archive in Bydgoszcz], Fonds 5, item no. 185.
- 2: Jahrbuch des Kreises Gnesen 1939/1940, ed. Heinrich Casselmann, Gnesen 1940, p. 97.
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- 7: Archiwum Państwowe im. Dzieci Wrzesińskich we Wrześni [Regional Museum in Września].
- 8: Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu [State Archive in Poznań], Konin Division, Construction Records, item no. 75.
- 9: Muzeum Regionalne im. Dzieci Wrzesińskich we Wrześni [Regional Museum in Września].

## Abstract

The article sets out to describe the main ways with which architecture and urban planning were used for propaganda and Germanization purposes, the focus being on Warthegau. In the process, spatial planning was strictly combined with a particular economic programme and the replacement of local population. No other German-annexed territory witnessed so much deportations and extermination. The paper is divided into three sections, which discuss historical determinants, links with neighbouring administrative units, and different facets of modernization and its esthetic representations that can be traced in German spatial plans.

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Domy i ich mieszkańcy” [Stary Grunwald Residential Estate. Houses and their Dwellers] (Poznań, 2012, in collaboration with Piotr Korduba). From 2014-2017, Paradowska carried out the research project “Nazi Architecture in the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945” as part of the FUGA 3 grant, awarded by the National Science Centre, Poland, under the supervision of Professor Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos. She has been awarded the following scholarships, DAAD (2010), START by the Foundation for Polish Science (2014), as well as a scholarship for leading young researchers in Poland by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (2017).

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