

# The Architecture of the Third Reich in Cracow – a Dissonant Heritage?<sup>1</sup>

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## **Abstract**

On 12 October 1939, Hitler signed a decree creating the *Generalgouvernement* (General Government), which comprised the Polish lands occupied by Germany but not subsumed directly into the Reich. Cracow became the capital of the General Government. This decided the fate of the city, for which the Nazi authorities had essentially predestined the role not only of capital of this *Nebenland*, but also that of a model German city in the East.

How, then, should we evaluate the contribution of the Third Reich to the shaping of Cracow's cultural landscape during the 1,961 days of the city's enforced status as capital? There is no unequivocal answer to this question, and the building stock left by the Germans in Cracow is extremely heterogeneous. We do have a certain number of intriguing examples of the dissonant heritage left by the German Third Reich in Cracow today. These represent above all a broad spectrum of conflicts of memory, and also the problem of non-memory.

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<sup>1</sup> This article has been based on the research partially earlier presented in Polish, in a book: Jacek Purchla, *Miasto i polityka. Przypadki Krakowa*, Cracow 2018, 101-128, as well as in a paper: Jacek Purchla, "Architektura III Rzeszy w Krakowie – dziedzictwo kłopotliwe?", in: *Rocznik Biblioteki Kraków* 3 (2019), 15-55.

## The General Government and its capital

[1] The collapse of the Polish state in September 1939 opened up a new chapter in the history of Cracow. On 6 September, the city was occupied by the Wehrmacht (Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> Thenceforth its remarkable fate under German occupation between the years 1939–1945 was to be decided by decisions taken in Berlin. On 15 September, Adolf Hitler appointed Hans Frank (1900–1946) – a minister without a portfolio in the government of the Reich, and head of the Munich-based Academy for German Law (Akademie für deutsches Recht) – chief of the civilian administration in the Polish territories occupied by the Wehrmacht.<sup>3</sup> On 12 October, Hitler signed a decree creating the *Generalgouvernement* (General Government), which comprised the Polish lands occupied by Germany but not subsumed directly into the Reich.<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to this decree, which came into force on 26 October 1939, Frank was promoted to the rank of general governor and became directly subordinate to the Reich chancellor.<sup>5</sup> Frank at once interpreted this to mean that he held the supreme authority in the nascent General Government, and that he himself was answerable only to Hitler.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, within 'his state' he imposed

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<sup>2</sup> Tadeusz Wroński, *Kronika okupowanego Krakowa*, Cracow 1974, 13; Andrzej Chwalba, *Kraków w latach 1939–1945 (= Dzieje Krakowa, 5)*, Cracow 2002, 17–18.

<sup>3</sup> Dieter Schenk, *Hans Frank. Biografia generalnego gubernatora*, trans. Krzysztof Jachimczak, Cracow 2009, 141.

<sup>4</sup> *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka 1939–1945*, [selected under supervision of Stanisław Płoski by Lucjan Dobroszycki et al., trans. Danuta Dąbrowska and Mieczysław Tomala], ed. Zofia Polubiec, 2 vols., Warsaw 1970, vol. 1: 1939–1942, 116–117.

<sup>5</sup> *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka*, 116. The ultimate territorial shape of the General Government in 1939 was the outcome of the rivalry between leading Third Reich politicians. It was arbitrarily adjudicated by Wilhelm Frick, the Reich Minister of the Interior, to Frank's disadvantage. The General Government was stripped not only of access to a sea coast, but also of economically significant territories, which Frank had lost as a result of his unsuccessful rivalry with the Gauleiters of the neighbouring provinces: Bracht (in Silesia), Greiser (in Warthegau), and Koch (in Eastern Prussia). Frank himself estimated his 'losses' to be 50% of his 'rightful territory'. The territorial decisions of 1939 predestined the General Government to extreme economic weakness. Cf. Martyn Housden, *Hans Frank. Lebensraum and the Holocaust*, Houndmills and New York 2003, 92 ff.

<sup>6</sup> "Frank's views may be summarised as follows: while the General Government is subject to 'German supreme authority', as a 'march [*Nebenland*] of the Reich' it is independent of the Reich ministries, and hence he, Frank, had the freedom to operate autonomously, enjoying benefits uncontrolled by anyone." Cf. Schenk, *Hans Frank*,

his own *Führerprinzip* from the outset.<sup>7</sup> It was this creed of Frank's – as Hitler's representative and as a sovereign in the German *Nebenland* on the Vistula – that also determined the general governor's specific plans for Cracow. On 26 October 1939, Frank signed the "Pierwsze rozporządzenie o odbudowie Administracji okupowanych polskich obszarów" ("First ordinance regarding the reconstruction of the Administration of the occupied Polish regions") in Warsaw. The second paragraph of this document, which was published in German and Polish, stipulated unequivocally that: "The seat of the General Governor is the city of Cracow."<sup>8</sup>



1 Wehrmacht 'conquers' Wawel Hill. Propaganda photograph of 1939 by Franz Bauer. National Digital Archives (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), Warsaw, [file no. 2-4584](#)

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152. In the following years this interpretation was to precipitate a vicious dispute between Frank and Heinrich Himmler, who as Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood laid claim to every region occupied by the Wehrmacht. Cf. Beata Maćior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, Cracow 2007, 175-176.

<sup>7</sup> Housden, *Hans Frank*, 87. "Frank behaved like a 'little Hitler' in the General Government, handing out autographed photographs of himself to 'deserving party comrades'. He demanded tributes and subordination, and on his birthday he ordered that he be woken by a fanfare of horns. He had an SA 'guard of honour' and an 'honorary formation' of the *Schutzpolizei* installed at the castle. The red carpet would be rolled out because he had ordained so." Cf. Schenk, *Hans Frank*, 161.

<sup>8</sup> *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka*, 123.

[2] The choice of Cracow as the capital of this quasi-statelet created by the Third Reich was not only the result of Hans Frank's personal ambitions. It fitted perfectly with Hitler's strategy of eradicating Polishness. Jan Dąbrowski, history professor at the Jagiellonian University (1890–1965), in his immediate *post factum* analysis of the genesis of Cracow's unexpected 'promotion', wrote:

*What was needed was a city of metropolitan character that could offer the vanquishers all the benefits of a large city but whose size did not render it a position hard to control. Warsaw, which was located at a considerable distance from the border of the Reich, Warsaw as a city of almost one and a half million, which in 1939 had offered evidence of its belligerent mood, deterred the Germans due to both distance and size. The fear was that it would take a rather long time for a sufficient number of Germans to be brought to Warsaw and settled there to play any significant role in the city, let alone to take control of it and transform it into a German city. Cracow, five times smaller and only an hour and a half's journey from the former border, was expected to be much easier to swallow; it would be possible to attract more Germans here far sooner, and a similar number which would be lost as a small minority in Warsaw would be well able to gain the upper hand in this city.<sup>9</sup>*

This decided the fate of the city, for which the Nazi authorities had essentially predestined the role not only of capital of this *Nebenland* but also that of a model German city in the East. In order to achieve this goal a special programme for the 'depolonisation' of Cracow was compiled, involving not only the use of bloody terror, but also the annihilation of Polish cultural and academic elites and institutions.<sup>10</sup>

[3] On 4 November, Hans Frank was received by Hitler in Berlin. At that meeting it was agreed that the seat of the general governor was to be the Royal Castle on Wawel Hill.<sup>11</sup> Three days later, Frank staged a triumphal

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<sup>9</sup> Jan Dąbrowski, "Rządy niemieckie w Krakowie", in: *Kraków pod rządami wroga 1939–1945*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski, Cracow 1946, 5-46: 5-6.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. Jacek Purchla, "Die Widersprüchlichkeiten der Hauptstadtproblematik", in: *Krakau und Nürnberg in der europäischen Zivilisation*, ed. Jacek Purchla, trans. Dominik Peteruk, Cracow 2006, 195-230: 205-206; Chwalba, *Kraków w latach 1939–1945*, 41-85.

<sup>11</sup> One telling element of the briefing of 4 November 1939 was Hitler's 'favourising' of Cracow over Warsaw: "Herr Generalgouverneur hatte von 13.30 bis 15.15 Uhr eine eingehende Besprechung mit dem Führer. Der Führer besprach mit Herrn Generalgouverneur die Gesamtlage, unterrichtete ihn von seinen Plänen und billigte die Arbeit des Generalgouverneurs in Polen, insbesondere die Niederlegung des Schloßes in Warschau und den Nicht-Wiederaufbau dieser Stadt, ferner den Einzug in die Burg

ingress into Cracow.<sup>12</sup> The taking of power by the German general governor at Wawel was enacted with the kind of pomp that was to be a foretaste of the great ambitions harboured by the new 'king of Poland'. These ambitions were to be carried over into the urban planning visions and plans for spectacular construction projects, which Frank personally oversaw, and which were intended to boost the rapid transformation of Cracow into the "Nuremberg of the East".<sup>13</sup> Emulating Hitler, Frank saw himself as the great builder of Cracow.<sup>14</sup>

[4] The visions and plans of the general governor were implemented only to a certain degree, which was a result of both events on the fronts of the Second World War and the evolution of German conceptions for the General Government. The latter were restricted by the economic potential of the *Nebenland* and by the political position of Frank himself within the party structures in the Third Reich.<sup>15</sup>

[5] At first, the German authorities defined the General Government as an occupied country. On 2 December 1939, at a conference of the heads of the divisions of the General Government, Frank said that "it is not yet clear what

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zu Krakau, die Überführung der Kunstschatze und die Einrichtung einer Quäkerspeisung." Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, eds., *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945*, Stuttgart 1975, 59. Further, the report on another conversation between Frank and Hitler in Berlin, on 6 February 1944, reads: "Der Führer fragte dann nach Warschau und meinte, Warschau würde mir wohl die meiste Sorge im Generalgouvernement bedeuten. Der Führer bezeichnete es als absolut richtig, daß wir Krakau zur Hauptstadt gemacht hätten; Warschau müßte, sobald sich die Möglichkeit dazu ergebe, abgebaut werden." Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 788-789.

<sup>12</sup> Dieter Schenk, *Krakauer Burg. Wawel jako ośrodek władzy generalnego gubernatora Hansa Franka w latach 1939–1945*, trans. Paweł Zarychta, Cracow 2013, 57-59.

<sup>13</sup> Jacek Purchla, "Hubert Ritter i hitlerowskie wizje Krakowa", in: *Rocznik Krakowski* 71 (2005), 159-187; Purchla, "Die Widersprüchlichkeiten der Hauptstadtproblematik", 204-212 and 222-229.

<sup>14</sup> Schenk, *Hans Frank*, 189. Schenk, the biographer of Hans Frank, emphasises that the construction projects launched "were conducted to Frank's directives. [...] In time there were so many of them that at a meeting in 1944 budget experts even warned the general governor of the prohibitive costs, which were becoming a danger to the budget of the General Government." Schenk, *Krakauer Burg*, 108.

<sup>15</sup> An extensive examination of the changing German conceptions surrounding the General Government has been penned by Maçior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 126-130 and 176-177.

the ultimate structure of the General Government will be. Neither is it a foregone conclusion that the General Government will exist at all." On this issue, he stressed, "it is the will of Hitler that is the reliable indicator, and he wants this region to be the first colonial territory of the German nation".<sup>16</sup>

### Cracow as a "model German city" in the East

[6] The fall of France prompted a change in conception for the occupied territories in the East.<sup>17</sup> On 8 July 1940, Frank spoke with Hitler in Berlin again about the future of the General Government.<sup>18</sup> It was at this point that a significant change in the name of the General Government occurred: the phrase "für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete" was dropped.<sup>19</sup> The conception for the treatment of the General Government evolved from an occupied territory to a region "elevated to the status of a component element of the Reich".<sup>20</sup> This also entailed consequences in the form of the launch of work on drawing up a new urban vision for Cracow, as a "model German city" in the East, and the seat of the government and central government agencies of the *Nebenland* (Fig. 2).

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<sup>16</sup> Maćior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 129; cf. also: Stanisław Piotrowski, *Dziennik Hansa Franka*, Warsaw 1957 (= *Sprawy Polskie przed Międzynarodowym Trybunałem Wojennym w Norymberdze*, 1), 400.

<sup>17</sup> Czesław Madajczyk, *Generalna Gubernia w planach hitlerowskich: studia*, Warsaw 1961, passim.

<sup>18</sup> *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka*, 229; cf. also: Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 251-254.

<sup>19</sup> Maćior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 130.

<sup>20</sup> *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka*, 230.



2 A poster advertising Cracow as a capital of the General Government in Germany! (1940/1941). The National Archives in Cracow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), Department III – Files of the City of Cracow, local government, religious denominations, schools and social organisations, file no. 29/665/0/-/2717 (previously 29/665/2717)

Shortly thereafter, in the summer of 1940, Cracow found itself on the list of *Gauhauptstädte* – cities of the Reich which were to be 'restyled' in a more monumental vein to reflect their function – alongside the recently occupied Strasbourg and Luxembourg City.<sup>21</sup>

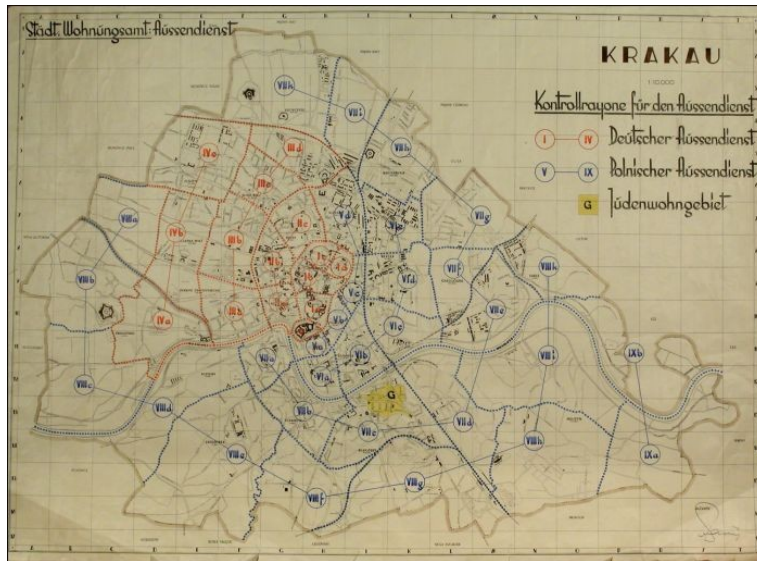
[7] In the case of Cracow, the goal must have been not only to transplant the Nazi model of reinventing cities in the spirit of the Third Reich, but also to use the very urban architecture as a tool for *Eindeutschung*, to reinforce the depolonisation policy that was to be employed in the city (Fig. 3).<sup>22</sup> The urban planning visions which Frank began to weave for Cracow in 1940 were directly related to his cultural ambitions and his active cultural policy for the capital of the General Government as a new German metropolis.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> "Die Schauseite des NS-Reiches: Gauhauptstadt- und Großplanungen (Übersichtskarte)", in: *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus. Bayern 1933–1945*, ed. Winfried Nerdinger, Munich 1993, 20-27.

<sup>22</sup> Chwalba, *Kraków w latach 1939–1945*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert. Metropolen als Akteure und Orte der Innovation*, Göttingen 2017, 140-160.



3 German Cracow. The division of the city into zones for Germans, Poles and Jews, signed Stadthauptmann Rudolf Pavlu, ca. 1941. The National Archives in Cracow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), Department V – Cartographic materials and technical documentation, file no. 29/663/0/9/6750 (previously 29/663/Okupacja 6)

[8] In his report on his Berlin meeting with Hitler, on 12 July 1940 in Cracow, Frank said:

*The fact that the Führer expressed an interest in the Castle, and in the construction of new public buildings and clubs in Distrikt capitals, is to me clear evidence that the Führer wishes the vigorous construction of the global German state to be accompanied by a broad range of moves in this field. The Führer was very interested in our plans in the area of culture. I had to submit a report on my plans regarding theatre. The Führer said that he considers the Castle to be a splendid equivalent to the cathedral in Strasbourg, and that an impressive line of German cultural awareness and symbols of German might run all the way to Cracow, from Strasbourg through Nuremberg and Prague.<sup>24</sup>*

[9] This euphoria and illusion of large-scale urban creation that was to begin in Cracow in the summer of 1940, was connected with the pinnacle of Hitler's success and the victories of the Third Reich on the fronts of the Second World War; it also came at the high point of Frank's own career. This latter aspect is stressed by Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, who wrote overtly in the preface to the publication *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945*:

<sup>24</sup> Madajczyk, *Generalna Gubernia w planach hitlerowskich*, 230-231; cf. also: Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 252.



*Despite the overlapping of the administration, the period from spring 1940 to the end of 1941 is likely to have been the high point for the governor-general's position of power. Not only had Frank consolidated his personal position, but he was also able to enforce the autonomy of his administration against the demands of external management.*<sup>25</sup>

[10] On 15 July 1940, Hans Frank convened a meeting devoted to urban planning issues and architecture in the capital of the General Government. The record in the *Diensttagebuch* reports that its agenda included:

*Discussion on construction issues in Cracow; the expansion and restoration of administrative buildings, streets and hotels; evacuation of the Jewish quarter with 60,000–70,000 Jews; creating residential quarters for families of German civil servants; urban planning.*<sup>26</sup> (Fig. 4)



4 Construction of a wall for the Ghetto in the Podgórze district of Cracow, 1941, photo: Koch. Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, image 183-L25516

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<sup>25</sup> "Trotz der daraus resultierenden Überlagerung der Zivilverwaltung dürfte die Zeit vom Frühjahr 1940 bis Ende 1941 den Höhepunkt für die Machtposition des Generalgouverneurs darstellen. Frank hatte nicht nur seine persönliche Stellung festigen, sondern auch die weitgehende Autonomie seiner Verwaltung gegenüber den Ansprüchen von Fremdverwaltungen durchsetzen können." Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 27.

<sup>26</sup> "Besprechung über Baufragen in Krakau, Ausbau und Wiederherstellung der Verwaltungsgebäude, Straßen und Hotels, Evakuierung des Judenviertels mit 60 000–70 000 Juden, Schaffung von Wohnräumen für deutsche Beamtenfamilien, Stadtplanung." Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 255.

Participants in the meeting were the governor of *Distrikt Krakau* Otto Wächter, the *Stadthauptmann* (administrative head of the city) Carl Schmid, and Frank's secret senior advisor Richard Rattinger.<sup>27</sup> A second meeting devoted to the expansion of Cracow was convened by Frank for 23 July. Significantly, this meeting was also attended by Rattinger.<sup>28</sup> In the years 1940–1942, he played a key role as Frank's chief advisor and the coordinator of his architectural visions in Cracow (Fig. 5).



Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe, sygn. 2-3042

5 Richard Rattinger discussing the rebuilding of the Belvedere in Warsaw with Hans Frank, April 1940, photo: Otto Rosner. National Digital Archives (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), Warsaw, file no. 2-3042

## Architect Richard Rattinger

[11] Most likely, the architect Richard Rattinger was – like many of Frank's other Cracow colleagues – a close acquaintance of the general governor from his Munich days. Indeed, Rattinger had been a well-known and active figure in Munich. Born in 1875, he had graduated from the Technical University of Munich as an engineer in 1903. His first professional position had been that of government architect at a Bavarian construction office, and between 1911 and 1920 he had held managerial posts in the Bavarian Landesverein für Heimatschutz.<sup>29</sup> He had not been chosen arbitrarily for this office. Rattinger's own architectural work, which drew on tradition and local contexts, was close

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<sup>27</sup> Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 255.

<sup>28</sup> Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 257. Also present at this second meeting, as well as Rattinger, was the architect Edgar Horstmann.

to the vernacularist philosophy in the spirit of the Heimatschutz movement founded in Germany in 1904 by Ernst Rudorff (1840–1916) and Paul Schultze-Naumburg (1869–1949). Heimatstil, as a reformed model of architecture seeking its inspirations in local and regional construction traditions, corresponded well with *völkisch* ideas. The *völkisch* ideology had developed as a reaction to modernity. Rapid and turbulent urbanisation processes, precipitated by industrialisation, were perceived by those with *völkisch* sympathies as a threat to the security and status of local communities.<sup>30</sup> This rejection of modernity led to an idealisation of nostalgia for a rural lifestyle and of a "rootedness in nature and the *Volk*".<sup>31</sup> Two of the fundamental principles of the *völkisch* ideology were the prime significance of the *Volk* (people in the ethnic, and by extension thus also racial sense), and a hatred of Jews. *Völkisch* anti-modernism also incorporated antisemitism.<sup>32</sup> The *völkisch* movement, which was extremely popular in Munich in the first quarter of the 20th century, had a strong influence on the views of both Hitler and Himmler, including areas such as living space and racial purity.<sup>33</sup> Frank also came under the considerable influence of *völkisch* circles during his time at Munich University in the early 1920s.<sup>34</sup>

[12] Rattinger's active public service and his sympathy with the *völkisch* ideology rendered him a suitable candidate for the prestigious office of chancellor of the Technical University of Munich, to which he was appointed in 1920, holding the position until his retirement in 1937.<sup>35</sup> In the years 1927–1929, Frank attempted to launch an academic career at the same university, as an assistant at the Legal Seminary.<sup>36</sup> It is thus hardly likely to have been a coincidence that in April 1940, Rattinger, who had returned to the civil service

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<sup>29</sup> Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich, personal files of Richard Rattinger: BayHStA, MK 36057, Rattinger.

<sup>30</sup> Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Okultystyczne źródła nazizmu*, trans. Jerzy Prokopiuk, Warsaw 2001, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Mañor-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Mañor-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 16.

<sup>33</sup> Mañor-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 20-35.

<sup>34</sup> As early as the summer of 1919, Hans Frank became a member of the extreme right-wing association Die Thule-Gesellschaft, which propagated *völkisch* ideas in Munich. Cf. Housden, *Hans Frank*, 20-21.

<sup>35</sup> Personal files of Richard Rattinger: BayHStA, MK 36057, Rattinger. On his retirement Rattinger received a letter of thanks from Hitler, which is dated 13 September 1937.

<sup>36</sup> Schenk, *Hans Frank*, 37.

at Frank's behest, took up the post of "Sonderbeauftragter und Chefreferent für alle Hochbaufragen im Generalgouvernement" in Cracow.<sup>37</sup> He discharged this office with great dedication until his death in July 1942,<sup>38</sup> i.e. throughout Frank's most intense period of urban planning and architectural activity.<sup>39</sup> At the meeting on 23 July 1940, Frank revealed his architectural vision for Cracow to Rattinger. In the general governor's view, one of the most urgent investment projects was the construction of a luxury hotel for German dignitaries, to be of a standard featuring attributes of modernity typical for "cities of global significance"!<sup>40</sup>

[13] *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs* records several 'construction meetings' between Frank and Rattinger.<sup>41</sup> The last of these, which

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<sup>37</sup> As early as 9 September 1939, Rattinger submitted a handwritten letter to the Bavarian Ministry for Education and Culture requesting reinstatement into the civil service. The fact of Frank's personal intervention in having Rattinger seconded to Cracow is documented in the correspondence of the latter with the Bavarian Ministry for Education and Culture dated 18 May and 30 September 1940, which has been preserved in Rattinger's personal file in: BHStA, MK 36057, Rattinger.

<sup>38</sup> Richard Rattinger died on 24 July 1942 and was buried in the Ostfriedhof in Munich; BHStA, MK 36057, Rattinger. Cf. also: Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 526, in which Frank noted, under 26 July: "Veröffentlichung eines Nachrufes für verstorbenen Geheimen Oberbaurat Rattinger".

<sup>39</sup> Rattinger's special role at 'the court' of Hans Frank is confirmed by a note entitled "Baufaufgaben in Krakau" published in the September 1940 issue of *Der Baumeister*: "Nach Mitteilung des Leiters der Baudirektion für das Generalgouvernement ist die Schaffung eines deutschen Viertels in Krakau beabsichtigt. In diesem Viertel sollen zunächst die Behörden des Generalgouvernements ihren Sitz erhalten, in deren unmittelbarer Nähe weite Sportanlagen und umfangreiche Wohnungsbauten später errichtet werden sollen. Die Gestaltung dieses Stadtviertels ist bereits praktisch in Angriff genommen worden. Für die umfangreichen Arbeiten und Planungen stehen dem Leiter der Baudirektion die Architekten Panther, Köttgen und Horstmann zur Verfügung. Der Verbindungsmann zwischen der Baudirektion und dem Generalgouverneur ist Geheimrat Rattinger." *Der Baumeister* 38 (1940), no. 9, 165.

<sup>40</sup> Housden, *Hans Frank*, 84.

<sup>41</sup> Subsequent meetings between Frank and Rattinger as recorded in *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs* were held in Cracow in 1940: 6 November – "Bau- und Planungsfragen (GehR Rattinger, SchloßHptm Löv)"; 2 December – "Ausbau von Verwaltungs- und Repräsentationsgebäuden, Stadtplanung in Krakau (GehR Rattinger)"; and in 1941: 8 May – "Besprechungen über Baufragen (OBauR Rattinger)"; 31 July – "Bauten in Krakau (OBauR Rattinger)"; 21 November – "Errichtung von Verwaltungs- und kulturellen Bauten in Krakau und Warschau, Beginn

took place on 11 April 1942, was attended not only by Rattinger but also by Theodor Bauder, the head of the central construction division (Hauptabteilung Bauwesen) in the General Government.<sup>42</sup> There can thus be no doubt that Rattinger was deliberately handpicked by Frank and brought over from Munich (considered the "cradle of the movement") to be an 'ideologist' responsible for the political correctness and artistic standard of the urban planning concepts and architectural designs created in Cracow at the 'court of the general governor', in accordance with the Third Reich style and with the line of Nazi 'national-political science'.<sup>43</sup> It is also important to stress that most of these visions never got beyond the planning stage; just as certain other 'depolonising operations' in Cracow, such as the "task of removing the Piłsudski and Kościuszko memorial mounds as soon as possible", which Frank entrusted to the then acting district head (and later Stadthauptmann) Rudolf Pavlu in April 1941.<sup>44</sup> The idea to destroy the Kościuszko and Piłsudski memorial mounds, the endpoints of the outward vista from the city's Błonia Common, was connected with plans being formulated by a body called the "Baudirektion des Generalgouverneurs", which commenced its work in Cracow in 1940; it was responsible for planning and executing all the construction projects undertaken directly by Hans Frank. The head of this body was Oberbaurat Otto

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eines großen Wohnungsbauprogramms 1942 (GehR Rattinger)". Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 303, 309, 371, 391, 446.

<sup>42</sup> Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 485.

<sup>43</sup> One fundamental question and broader issue connected with Rattinger's influence on the form of the Nazi visions for Cracow as conceived at Wawel is that of his relationship to the *völkisch* movement, which may be intimated not only from his activeness as an architect in the Heimatschutz movement, but also from his membership in the Deutsche Volkspartei in the years 1927–1928. Cf. BHStA, MK 36057.

<sup>44</sup> This order was issued by Frank on 16 April 1941 at a meeting "addressing the issue of the plans for the Germanisation and expansion of Cracow and for the toppling of Polish monuments in the city"; cf. *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka*, 339–340. The only remark entered into the *Diensttagebuch* under 16 April 1941 reads: "Besprechungen über Einzelfragen des Ausbaus und der Verwaltung der Stadt Krakau (Gr Wächter, Distriktbeauftragter Pavlu)." Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 356. Tellingly, the order to raze the two mounds was issued by Frank immediately after his confidential meeting with Hitler at the Reich Chancellery in Berlin in March 1941. Hitler reportedly said on that occasion that the GG could become just as German as the Rhine Province. They agreed that it would be colonised and Germanised, and in place of Poles it would be settled by 4–5 million Germans.

Hofer, who in October 1940 started work on a conception for the "Deutsches Viertel", a compact complex of buildings for the government and district administration and other central GG offices which was to be built on the Błonia Common (Fig. 6).<sup>45</sup>



6 German government quarters on Błonia Common, sketch by the "Baudirektion des Generalgouverneurs", October 1940. The National Archives in Cracow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), Department V – Cartographic materials and technical documentation, file no. 29/1410/0/-/ABM TAU Konkursy3p26 (previously TAU Różne 94)

### Hubert Ritter and his "Generalbebaungsplan von Krakau"

[14] At the same time, Hubert Ritter, a former city planning officer in Leipzig, who had been sent to Cracow, was designing an alternative concept.<sup>46</sup> In July

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<sup>45</sup> "Ein neues deutsches Viertel in Krakau", in: *Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen. Offizielles Organ der Deutschen Arbeitsfront für Wohnungs- und Siedlungsbau* 20 (1940), no. 15, 516; Niels Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn. Architekten planen im "eingedeutschten Osten" 1939–1945*, Gütersloh and Berlin 2001, 54-55; Marcin Fabiański and Jacek Purchla, *Historia architektury Krakowa w zarysie*, Cracow 2001, 91-92; National Archives in Cracow, Cartographic materials and technical documentation, *Deutsches Viertel in Krakau, Entwurf der Baudirektion des Generalgouverneurs*, Oktober 1940, file no. Okup 8.

<sup>46</sup> A broader context for Ritter's engagement in Cracow and his designs for the city is discussed in an article by Jacek Purchla focusing on Hans Frank's idea of a "Nuremberg of the East". The article is to be published in 2020 in Polish and in English in the book *A Dissonant Heritage. The Architecture of the Third Reich in Poland*, edited by Jacek Purchla and Żanna Komar. Some of the chapters of this book are the papers presented at a conference in Cracow in 2018, dedicated to the dissonant heritage of the

1940, Ritter was charged by the *Reichsministerium* in Berlin with the task of drawing up a "Generalbebaungsplan von Krakau". In May 1941, his plan was finalised (Fig. 7).

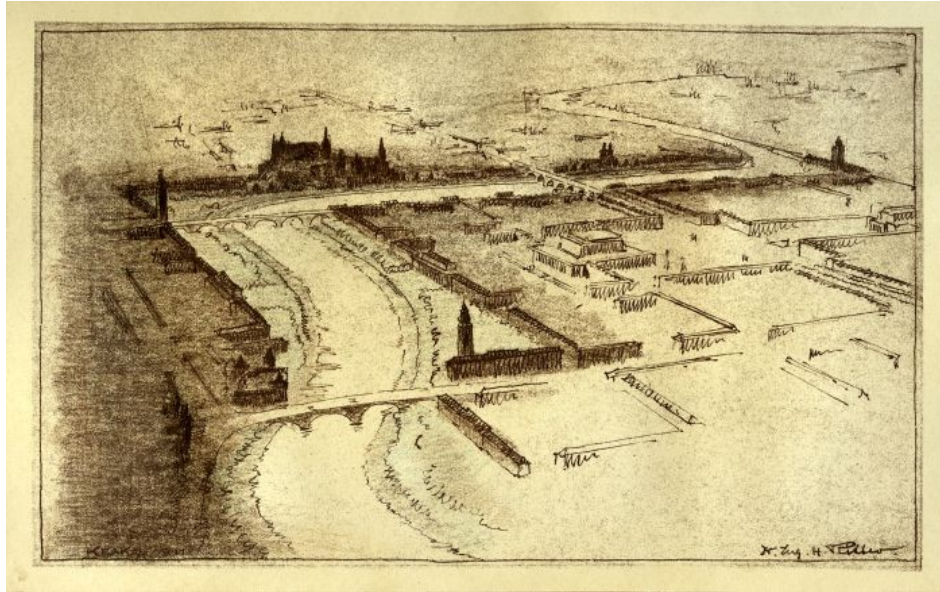


7 Hubert Ritter, master plan of the city of Cracow (*Generalbebaungsplan der Stadt Krakau*), 1941. Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, Nachlass Hubert Ritter, sygn. rit\_hu-167-1006

The most spectacular and unique element of it was the idea of a representative German government quarter in the city district of Dębniki, where an area of some 250 hectares in size was to become the site of this "showcase of the 'New Germany' in the East" (Fig. 8).

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architecture of the Third Reich in Poland, which was a result of a research programme of the International Cultural Centre in Cracow and the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich.



8 Hubert Ritter, draft for a German government quarter ("Regierungsviertel") in the Cracow city district of Dębniki. Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, Nachlass Hubert Ritter, file no. S/Regal/Ritter,Hubert rit\_hu-301-200

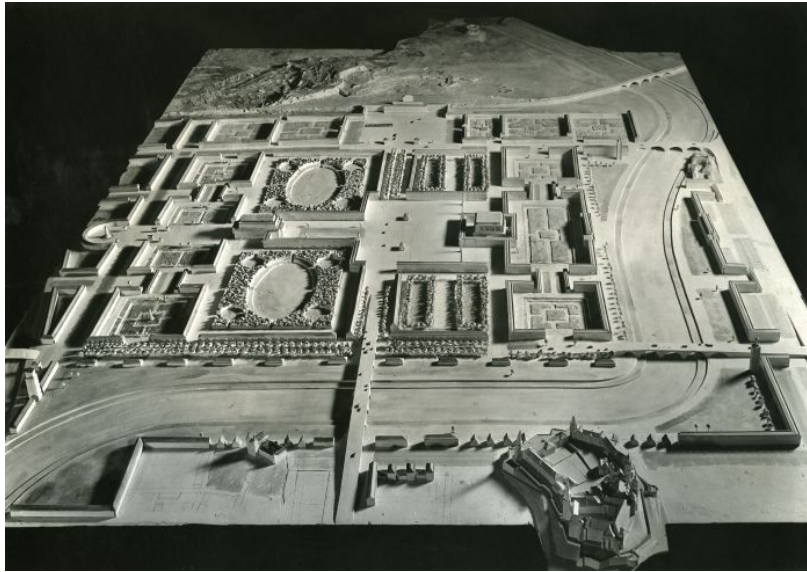
[15] In his conception, Ritter envisioned the German government quarter as holding both administrative and representative functions, and as the place of employment for some ten thousand civil servants and other officials. The functional programme for the "Regierungsviertel" included the seats of government, the district administration, the NSDAP party authorities, the Wehrmacht, the post office, and the railway board, as well as other General Government offices, along with a canteen and casino, recreational areas, and sports facilities. The need for a prestigious location was the main reason for the choice of Dębniki as the site. The area was nested in the bend of the Vistula beneath Wawel Hill, and it also offered suitable urban qualities to satisfy Ritter's quest for the optimum relation to and connection with the historic centre of Cracow. In the centre of the new quarter, on its main square, a monumental "Festhalle" was to be erected as the venue for large Nazi gatherings and ceremonies – the main 'municipal temple' (Fig. 9). The functional programme for the "Regierungsviertel" was subordinated to a kind of sacralisation in the planning of the space, which was to have been dominated by extensive "gathering places and march squares".<sup>47</sup> In their spectacularity, these plans for a German government quarter in Dębniki put Cracow on an equal footing with many other German metropolises in the Third Reich. Neither is it a coincidence that Ritter's vision for the area is starting to be featured

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<sup>47</sup> Purchla, "Hubert Ritter i hitlerowskie wizje Krakowa", *passim*.



increasingly frequently in German literature on the architecture of the Third Reich, alongside the most prominent works of fascist urban design.<sup>48</sup>



9 Hubert Ritter, model of the German government quarter in the Cracow city district of Dębniki ("Regierungsviertel"), 1941. Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, Nachlass Hubert Ritter, file no. S/Regal/Ritter,Hubert rit\_hu-167-200

[16] The high class of Ritter's architectural work was unquestionably an exception in the context of other German architects who passed through the capital of the General Government in the first half of the 1940s. The *Eindeutschung* of Cracow, as proposed by Ritter, was connected with an earlier 'project' of Hitler's, known as the *Neugestaltung deutscher Städte*, which was undoubtedly the basis for Frank's early visions.<sup>49</sup> In this sense, Ritter's vision for Dębniki anticipated the *Generalplan Ost* and the *völkisch* visions of Heinrich Himmler – Frank's great rival.<sup>50</sup> The case of the Ritter Plan is at the same time an intriguing example of an attempt to superimpose the dogmas of the Nazi

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<sup>48</sup> "Die Schauseite des NS-Reiches", 26; Christoph Hölz, "Veit Stoss in Nürnberg – Wit Stwosz w Krakowie", in: *Wit Stwosz – Veit Stoss. Artysta w Krakowie i Norymberdze*, ed. Christoph Hölz et al., Munich 2000, 8-17: 10 and 12-13; Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn. Architekten planen im "eingedeutschten Osten" 1939-1945*, 51-54; Winfried Nerdinger, "Hubert Ritter, 1886-1967, Siedlung Rundling, Lipsia: un modello dimenticato", in: *Casabella* 66 (2002), no. 698, 70-77: 72-73.

<sup>49</sup> The "Neugestaltung deutscher Städte" programme unveiled in October 1937 was to be the basis on which plans for the remodelling of some forty of the Reich's largest cities were to be drawn up. Cf. Piotr Krakowski, *Sztuka Trzeciej Rzeszy*, Cracow 1994, 66.

ideology and the poisoned fruits of its urban planning diktats onto the fabric of a city which for centuries had lived according to an entirely different philosophy and narrative.<sup>51</sup>

[17] The embroilment of the Third Reich in the war in the East, and the subsequent military defeats of the Wehrmacht from the turn of 1942 and 1943 (since the debacle at Stalingrad) forced the deferment of the implementation of these grandiose urban visions, and in practice resulted in their abandonment.<sup>52</sup> On 18 February 1943, Hitler announced "total war".<sup>53</sup> Even

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<sup>50</sup> On 7 October 1939, Hitler signed the decree on the consolidation of German nationhood. "Pursuant to this decree, Himmler was appointed Reich commissioner for the implementation of projects of key significance for German population policy [*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*, author's note]. The reinforcement of German nationhood was of supreme importance in Hitler's general decrees. The objective of this project was to 'shape new German territories for settlement', i.e., to Germanise the western regions of Poland which had been taken and subsumed into the Reich." In this way, as early as October 1939, Himmler obtained his mandate for the later *Generalplan Ost*, which gave him a political advantage over Frank and a broader scope of competencies. Cf. Maçior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 92 and 93. For more on the subject of the *Generalplan Ost* and the nature of the conflict between Himmler and Frank, see: *ibidem*, *passim*.

<sup>51</sup> Beata Maçior-Majka stresses that scholars of the *Generalplan Ost* have to date tended to ignore the "ideological context of that plan". Cf. Maçior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 239. This comment is also applicable on a wider scale to many scholars of the architecture of the Third Reich.

<sup>52</sup> "Hitler realised this, given that he ordered planning of these projects to be suspended until after the war. Joseph Goebbels also understood the situation, and in a memorandum dated 15 February 1943, he set out the new position of the Reich in respect of the nations of Europe living under German occupation [...]. Likewise Himmler, as Reich commissioner for the consolidation of German nationhood, scaled down his interest in the work on the *Generalsiedlungsplan*, which was to have been a modified version of the GPO [*Generalplan Ost*]." Cf. Maçior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 7.

<sup>53</sup> Maçior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 124. It is thus no coincidence that – aside from the question of Frank's seat at Wawel – construction matters were recorded in the general governor's official *Diensttagebuch* on only three more occasions: 31 January 1942 – "Besichtigung eines Modells der Stadt Krakau und Besprechung über Baugestaltung der Stadt Krakau (StS Mühlmann)"; 26 March 1942 – "Baubesprechung u. a. über Stadtplanungen, Errichtung eines Italiener-Hauses in Krakau mit italienischer Unterstützung (RR Zinkau, BauR Stahl)"; 19 April 1944 – at a GG government session: "StadtHptm Dr. Krämer berichtet über den Ausbau des Luftschutzes, Hotel- und Wohnungsfragen...." This was the last mention [in the

prior to that point, however, Frank's ambitious plans for Cracow had been frustrated by the unregulated status of the General Government. Beata Maścior-Majka, in her analysis of the five phases of the Reich's stance on the General Government up to 1941, as proposed by Gerhard Eisenblätter,<sup>54</sup> rightly emphasises that the definition of the status of the GG in respect of the Reich, so long awaited by Frank, did not produce solutions that satisfied him. The General Government retained its status as a quasi-colonial "Nebenland" of the German Reich. Hitler deliberately stalled on the task of defining the status of the relations between the two entities, above all in order not to have to commit in future to any particular nationhood policy.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, it is vital to point out the poor economic grounds for undertaking huge investment projects in wartime. One such project was the construction of the Regierungsviertel in Dębniki as foreseen by Ritter's plans.<sup>56</sup> This type of gigantomania also provoked scepticism and even irony among Cracovians themselves. Edward Kubalski (a lawyer, local politician and social activist, 1872–1958) wrote in his diary, on 3 April 1941:

*I had the opportunity to view the Germ. plans for the new representative quarter in Dębniki vis à vis Wawel (drawn up by Ger. Eng. Richter [sic!], employed in municipal construction). On the design documentation the whole of the left side of Kościuszki Street disappears, with only the Premonstratensian convent left. All of present-day Dębniki disappears. In their place [occur] huge squares and green spaces, blocks of buildings including a central one 500 m in length. Planned in the Berlin Party style. Further back, by Krzemionki, [they planned] a Railway Station. Taken together [it seems to be] one comical, inviable humbug. And these Gentlemen are paid money for that. [spelling of the capitals as in the original].<sup>57</sup>*

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*Diensttagebuch*] of matters relating to urban planning and construction in Cracow under German occupation. Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 467, 483, 837.

<sup>54</sup> Gerhard Eisenblätter, *Grundlinien der Politik des Reichs gegenüber dem Generalgouvernement 1939-1945*, Frankfurt am Main 1969, 195-200.

<sup>55</sup> Maścior-Majka, *Generalny Plan Wschodni*, 177.

<sup>56</sup> Purchla, "Hubert Ritter i hitlerowskie wizje Krakowa", *passim*.

<sup>57</sup> Edward Kubalski, *Niemcy w Krakowie. Dziennik 1.IX.1939 – 18.I.1945*, Cracow and Budapest 2010, 123.



10 Hubert Ritter, design for Vistula riverbank area, April 1941. Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, Nachlass Hubert Ritter, file no. S/Regal/Ritter,Hubert rit\_hu-301-200

### Hans Frank as "the great builder of Cracow"

[18] In spite of an ordinance prohibiting all construction work in the territories of the Reich from March 1942 owing to the war, Hans Frank did not abandon his investment plans for Cracow. As late as February 1944, the head of the GG government's central finance department, Hermann Senkowsky, issued Frank with an official warning that the extensive construction work he was pursuing constituted a threat to the GG budget.<sup>58</sup> The construction of a new Chancellery on Wawel Hill, in which Frank was personally engaged until 1944, was the general governor's pride and joy.<sup>59</sup> Christoph Klessmann proposes the thesis

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<sup>58</sup> Schenk, *Hans Frank*, 189.

<sup>59</sup> This is confirmed by successive entries in the general governor's *Diensttagebuch*:

2 December 1939 – "Reichsminister Dr. Seyß-Inquart bespricht die Einteilung des Amtes des Generalgouverneurs in seinen einzelnen Abteilungen und die zukünftige Unterbringung dieser Abteilungen in den beiden hierfür zur Verfügung stehenden Gebäuden Bergakademie und Pilsudski-Heim. Die Unterbringung werde dahin geregelt werden, daß die Regierungs- und Hoheitsabteilungen und die Wirtschaftsabteilungen im Pilsudski-Heim ihr Unterkommen finden. Im wesentlichen solle daran festgehalten werden, daß die Abteilungsleiter bei ihren Abteilungen verbleiben. Generalgouverneur Reichsminister Dr. Frank teilt mit, daß er auf der Burg eine eigene Kanzlei eingerichtet und mit ihrer Leitung den Landgerichtsrat Dr. Keith betraut habe."

4 September 1940 – "Im übrigen trifft der Herr Generalgouverneur auf Anregung von Landgerichtsrat Dr. Keith folgende Anordnung: Die Kanzlei Burg wird mit sofortiger Wirkung ihren Namen in 'Kanzlei des Generalgouverneurs' ändern. Sie hat ihren Dienstsitz ausschließlich auf der Burg zu Krakau. Für die gesamten unmittelbaren dienstlichen Geschäfte des Herrn Generalgouverneurs gibt es als Zentralstelle nur die

that such far-reaching engagement and effort in attempting to bestow prestige on the new Chancellery, on Frank's part, were a projection and attempt to compensate for his political marginalisation as general governor.<sup>60</sup> It is characteristic that even in February 1944 Frank was still attempting to justify the continuation and even intensification of work at Wawel, by arguing that it was a "'Machtausdruck des Großdeutschen Reiches' – mit Zustimmung Hitlers".<sup>61</sup> This is also evidence that Frank's actions in Cracow were not entirely subordinated to Nazi ideology. Subsequently, it begs the question of the architectural heritage left behind by the Third Reich in the space of this heartland of Poland and of its value for us today.

[19] The Nazi German investment outlay in Cracow was analysed several years ago by Krzysztof Broński.<sup>62</sup> In his study, he demonstrated that the volume of German construction activity in Cracow – above all in the public services sector, in the fields of education, culture, and the health service – was significantly smaller than that which had been planned by the municipal board before the war.<sup>63</sup> The occupation-era building administration office also gradually introduced rigorous prohibitions on civil construction. While at first

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Regierung des Generalgouvernements für die allgemeinen Staatsgeschäfte und die Kanzlei des Generalgouverneurs für die persönlichen Angelegenheiten. Landgerichtsrat Dr. Keith erhält weiter den Auftrag, den großzügigen Ausbau der Kanzlei des Generalgouverneurs, insbesondere durch Heranziehung führender juristischer Mitarbeiter, durchzuführen und sich außerdem unverzüglich um den Ausbau des Verwaltungsgebäudes auf der Burg für die Zwecke der Kanzlei des Generalgouverneurs zu bemühen. [...]."

18 July 1941 – "Baufragen, u. a. betr. Kürzung des Bauetats und Ausbau von Verwaltungsgebäuden (OBauR Hofer, KGR Keith, Architekt Koettgen)."

16 December 1942 – "Baufragen u. a. betr. Frage einer Einstellung der Arbeiten am Neubau des Kanzleigebäudes auf der Burg und Stand der Bauarbeiten an diesem Gebäude (Präs. Bauder, BauDir Hofer, Architekt Kaulfuß, KGR Dr. Keith)."

11 June 1943 – "Besprechung über Kanzleineubau auf der Burg (Chef der Kanzlei Erster Staatsanwalt Dr. Meidinger)."

9 February 1944 – "Besprechung über Intensivierung von Neubauten auf der Burg als 'Machtausdruck des Großdeutschen Reiches' – mit Zustimmung Hitlers – (Erster Staatsanwalt Dr. Meidinger, Architekten Palezieux und Korinthenberg)."

Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 74, 269, 386, 593, 685, 795.

<sup>60</sup> Christoph Klessmann, "Der Generalgouverneur Hans Frank", in: *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 19 (1971), 245-260: 255. Martyn Housden polemicizes with this thesis. Cf. Housden, *Hans Frank*, 105.

the restrictions on civil investments in Cracow were not severe, following the attack on the Soviet Union permits were strictly rationed, and in the summer of 1943 construction activity in the civilian sector was essentially frozen.<sup>64</sup> The construction market also changed markedly. Almost at once it became dominated by German companies and the *Baudienst im Generalgouvernement* (Construction Service in the General Government: a forced labour organization).<sup>65</sup> Compared to pre-war construction output levels, contracting potential in conditions of war and occupation was very limited, and the construction stock it produced minimal.<sup>66</sup>

[20] One energetic investor did emerge, however: the German railways. As early as November 1939, a General Directorate of Eastern Railways (Generaldirektion der Ostbahn) was established, with its seat in Cracow. It was directly subordinate to the Reich Transport Ministry in Berlin and administered the railway network throughout the General Government in close cooperation with the Reich Railways.<sup>67</sup> One effect of the *Ostbahn* directorate's programme of investment in the capital of the GG was the major modernisation of the Cracow rail hub, which proceeded in two phases. The plans, codenamed "Otto" and "Ostbau", were implemented in direct connection with the preparations for and subsequently launch of the war in the East.<sup>68</sup> The most significant effect of these operations was the construction of the "Mała Kolej Obwodowa" (Small Bypass Line) between the years 1942–1943, which was over 9 km long and linked the stations of Kraków Łobzów and Kraków Płaszów, and the freight

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<sup>61</sup> Präg and Jacobmeyer, *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs*, 795.

<sup>62</sup> Krzysztof Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", in: *Rocznik Krakowski* 53 (1987), 161-181.

<sup>63</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 165.

<sup>64</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 166.

<sup>65</sup> At the end of 1943, there were 47 construction companies registered in Cracow. Thirty of them were German firms, which employed a combined total of 7,971 people (the majority of them Poles and Ukrainians), compared to just 1,561 people employed in Polish businesses. The *Baudienst* construction service was already employing over 11,000 youths in 1941. Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 167-168.

<sup>66</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 181.

<sup>67</sup> Dominik Lulewicz, "Z dziejów krakowskiego węzła kolejowego – przebudowa i modernizacja w latach 1939–1945", in: *Krzysztofory* 27 (2009), 105-128: 110.

<sup>68</sup> Lulewicz, "Z dziejów krakowskiego węzła kolejowego", 110.

connecting line linking Płaszów to the main Warsaw line. This large-scale, rapidly completed investment rendered Cracow's Main Station entirely free of transit traffic.<sup>69</sup> Other effects of the "Otto" and "Ostbau" plans included not only the important modernisation of the technical infrastructure of the entire hub, but also the extension of the large freight complex extending from Płaszów to Prokocim, along with the construction of a residential estate for employees of the hub.<sup>70</sup>

[21] Over the period 1940–1943, the Germans also made major extensions and modernisations to the Rakowice-Czyżyny airfield, which from June 1941 was one of the main Luftwaffe bases serving the Eastern Front. This work included the construction of a state-of-the-art two kilometers long concrete runway, and new taxiways.<sup>71</sup> The city's road network was also of strategic significance.<sup>72</sup> Its modernisation and expansion served a threefold purpose during the war, meeting military, sanitary, as well as aesthetic and propaganda needs. For these reasons, in addition to improving and paving or cobbling streets and squares in the city centre (including the remodelling of the station forecourt), the Germans also left two major transit routes in Cracow: 1943 saw the opening of the westbound Reichstraße (now Królewska Street), as the axis for the new German residential quarter, while a year later construction of a major road connecting the middle ring road (Aleje Trzech Wieszców) with Wielicka Street was completed (the stretch which is now Aleja Krasińskiego and Konopnicka and Kamieńskiego Streets).<sup>73</sup>

[22] There can be no doubt that both Cracow's status as the capital of the General Government and the Third Reich's war in the East were significant factors contributing to the expansion and modernisation of the city's transport infrastructure in the years 1940–1944.

[23] The ambition and grandiosity of Frank's plans resulted in almost fourfold growth in the metropolitan area, to over 165 km<sup>2</sup>. On 1 June 1941, another initiative of Frank's brought about the annexation of 28 villages and two rural communes to his 'global capital', thereby increasing the population of Cracow

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<sup>69</sup> Lulewicz, "Z dziejów krakowskiego węzła kolejowego", 114-115.

<sup>70</sup> Lulewicz, "Z dziejów krakowskiego węzła kolejowego", 116-127.

<sup>71</sup> Andrzej Olejko et al., eds., *Śladami lotniczych tradycji Małopolski (przewodnik dla niestereotypowych turystów)*, Cracow 2006, 10.

<sup>72</sup> Housden, *Hans Frank*, 84-85.

<sup>73</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 175-176.

by 72,000 to 320,000.<sup>74</sup> This was the biggest extension of the city's boundaries in its history up to that point, and, significantly, a decision of the occupying German authorities that was upheld after the war. As such, then, it remains one more operation that must be counted as being an asset left behind by the Third Reich to the former capital of Poland.<sup>75</sup>

[24] In the initial phase of the occupation, the Germans completed or continued the construction of a number of monumental buildings in Cracow, which were at the frame stage in 1939. These included the Municipal Market Hall (Miejska Hala Targowa) at Daszyńskiego Avenue (Fig. 11),<sup>76</sup> the State Agrarian Bank (Państwowy Bank Rolny) at Dunajewskiego Street (including the reduction of the original 'skyscraper' concept by a number of storeys),<sup>77</sup> and the National Museum (Muzeum Narodowe, adapted on Frank's orders for use as a casino).<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Chwalba, *Kraków w latach 1939–1945*, 33. Interestingly, the German occupying authorities had originally planned to extend Krakow to a size of 243.27 km<sup>2</sup>, which would have entailed the incorporation of a further 14 suburban villages: Swoszowice, Opatkowice, Przewóz, Mydlniki, Zielonki, Olszanica, Bosutów, Boleń, Mogiła, Mistrzejowice, Batowice, Dziekanowice, Węgrzce, and Bibice. Cf. A. Fiderkiewicz, "Sprawozdanie Prezydenta stoł. król. m. Krakowa w przedmiocie dzielnic przyłączonych do miasta w r. 1941", [Cracow 1945], duplicated typescript, p. 36, City of Krakow Historical Museum, file no. III 8908.

<sup>75</sup> For more on this subject cf. Jacek Purchla, "Dzielnicowe dylematy Krakowa 1791–1991", in: *Kraków – metropolia*, vol. 2: *Dylematy rozwoju*, ed. Jacek Purchla, Cracow 2017, 7-32: 16-18.

<sup>76</sup> Barbara Zbroja, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa 1918–1939. Budynki. Ludzie. Historie*, Cracow 2013, 249.

<sup>77</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 181.

<sup>78</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 177.





11 German Municipal Market Hall in Cracow, October 1940, photo: Otto Rosner. National Digital Archives (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), Warsaw, file no. 2-7172

[25] Some public facilities whose construction had begun before 1939 were redesigned several times over the course of the war to serve new public functions. One typical case in this respect is that of the Balneological Institute at 33 Focha Avenue, the construction of which began in 1938. From 1940, the first plans and then alterations were made with the intention of housing a municipal hotel in the institute building. Ultimately, in 1942, the decision was made to give the building over for office space, as the administrative building of the *Werke des Generalgouvernements AG* and *Ost-Energie AG Krakau*. Successive versions of the plans were made by Józef Gałęzowski, the author of the original pre-war design for the Institute building.<sup>79</sup> Gałęzowski – until 1939 a professor of architecture at the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts, and twice rector of that institution – was a graduate of the Technical University of Dresden. During the Nazi occupation he was active in the underground

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<sup>79</sup> *Katalog rysunków architektonicznych ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie* [Catalogue of architectural designs from the collections of the National Museum in Cracow]. *Cracoviana*, part 2, ed. Wanda Mossakowska et al., Warsaw 1986, items 1168-1567, 176-233.

Committee for the Reconstruction of Wawel Castle,<sup>80</sup> while at the same time drawing up architectural plans to German commissions (including design documentation for Ritter).<sup>81</sup>

[26] The German occupiers engaged outstanding Polish architects such as Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, Gałęzowski, and Zbigniew Kupiec for work on major design projects in Cracow for a range of reasons. One of these was the evident lack of outstanding German architects prepared to work on Frank's visions.<sup>82</sup> How, then, are we to evaluate the contribution of the Thousand-Year Reich to the shaping of Cracow's cultural landscape over the course of the 1,961 days of the city's enforced status as capital? Was this a time of brutal terror for the city, and did its venerable walls fall victim to an unprecedented attempt at disinheritance? There is no obvious unequivocal answer to this question, and the building stock left behind by the Germans in Cracow is extremely heterogeneous. One telling fact is that the vast majority of the architectural output of the Third Reich has "blended in with the cityscape" and does not provoke strong emotions. This is true above all for residential architecture. In October 1940, Stadthauptmann Schmid estimated that 65 such buildings, comprising a total of 300 apartments, had been built in Cracow (Fig. 12).<sup>83</sup> There were plans for a further 180 buildings with 1,000 apartments.<sup>84</sup> The war in the East rapidly forced those plans to change, however. Ultimately, in the period 1941–1944, residential buildings totalling 296,000 m<sup>3</sup> – available solely to the city's German population – were erected in the city.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Antoni H. Stachowski, ed., *Encyklopedia Krakowa*, Warsaw and Cracow 2000, 227.

<sup>81</sup> On the cooperation between Józef Gałęzowski and Hubert Ritter see Purchla, "Hubert Ritter i hitlerowskie wizje Krakowa", 179.

<sup>82</sup> A characteristic fact of this period is that many eminent German architects, among them Albert Speer and Clemens Klotz, worked for *Gauleiter* of provinces adjacent to the GG in the years 1940–1944.

<sup>83</sup> In the years 1940–1941, many residential buildings in Cracow were completed, including tenement projects started before the outbreak of the war.

<sup>84</sup> Housden, *Hans Frank*, 84.

<sup>85</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 174.



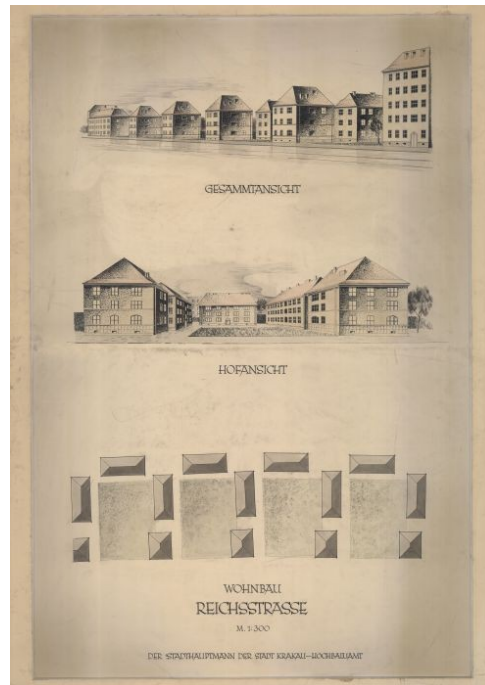
12 The beginnings of a German residential quarter at Karłowicza and Symfoniczna Streets, February 1941. National Digital Archives (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), Warsaw, file no. 2-5588

### The new residential quarter "Nur für Deutsche"

[27] The showcase of Third Reich construction in Cracow was supposed to have been the new residential quarter "Nur für Deutsche", with a total cubic capacity of some 260,000 m<sup>3</sup>.<sup>86</sup> This was designed specially to meet the needs of the German functionaries and administrative personnel coming to the city from the Reich. It was sited in the western part of Cracow, in the vicinity of the headquarters of the government and other GG institutions which were ranged along the representative thoroughfare that is now Aleje Trzech Wieszców. The axis along which this German residential quarter was laid out was the newly opened road out of the city, Reichstrasse (now Królewska Street). In this way, residential architecture typical for the Third Reich (designed according to the older "Licht und Luft" principle then dominant in Nazi Germany) was grafted into Cracow's soil. Cracow's "Nur für Deutsche" quarter was a complex of 65 characteristic 3-, 4-, and 5-storey apartment blocks recognisable by their white window framings and hipped ceramic-tiled roofs (Fig. 13).

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<sup>86</sup> Kazimierz Butelski, *Architekt Zbigniew Kupiec 1905–1990. Ewolucja twórczości od modernizmu do regionalizmu*, Cracow 2012, 150.



13 German residential quarter at Reichsstrasse (Królewska Street) – general view. The National Archives in Cracow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), Department V – Cartographic materials and technical documentation, file no. 29/1410/0/-/ABM TAU BUDMIESZK27p692 (previously TAU Bud. Mieszk.27. pl. 692)

The buildings were separated by broad swathes of greenery, on which air-raid shelters were built.<sup>87</sup> The complex as a whole is open in character. The solutions employed in the Reichstrasse development were innovative for Cracow. Throughout the interwar period, the tenement townhouses had remained the main form of residential construction in the city, and by the 1930s they had come to dominate the cultural landscape of the new quarters.<sup>88</sup> On Reichstrasse, the compact fabric of tenement houses, based on modules strictly subordinated to the traditional principle of squares and streets, was superseded by the introduction of residential fabric built into the depth of the plots. This gave rise to spacious green courtyards and spaces, and a non-continuous building line of the facades along the street.<sup>89</sup> This was a breakthrough moment in the history of Cracow's urban planning and architecture. Interestingly enough, the authors of this breakthrough – those

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<sup>87</sup> Fabiański and Purchla, *Historia architektury Krakowa w zarysie*, 92.

<sup>88</sup> Jacek Purchla, "Urbanistyka, architektura i budownictwo", in: *Kraków w latach 1918–1939*, eds. Janina Bieniarzówna and Jan M. Małecki, Cracow 1997 (= *Dzieje Krakowa*, 4), 149-189: 174-175.

<sup>89</sup> Butelski, *Architekt Zbigniew Kupiec 1905–1990*, 151-152.

who both designed and built the German residential quarter "Nur für Deutsche" – were Poles!

[28] The design work on the German residential quarter started in the Municipal Construction Office (Stadtbauamt) – which was under the leadership of architect Georg Stahl (who was sent to Cracow from Stuttgart) – in the middle of 1940 and the development was ultimately completed shortly after the war. The chief architect of the Reichstrasse residential complex was Zbigniew Kupiec, who worked with Zbigniew Olszakowski, Tadeusz Futasewicz, and Prot Komornicki.<sup>90</sup> All the buildings were erected by Cracow construction companies, among them the one owned by Tadeusz Tombiński, and another called Żeleński i Pogany. The work was supervised by a German engineer by the name of Weber.<sup>91</sup> The history of the development of this residential quarter, along what is now Królewska Street, between the years 1940–1946, is a good illustration of the real circumstances in which German architecture was built in the capital of the General Government. The former "Nur für Deutsche" quarter is today one of the most popular residential areas of Cracow, and is in no way viewed by its residents as a remnant of dissonant heritage.

[29] Moreover, this is no isolated example. Most of the construction 'legacy' of the Third Reich completed in the years between 1940–1945 has blended in with Cracow's urban fabric. This applies, for instance, to the campaign of organising Cracow's urban layout, vigorously implemented by the *Stadtbauamt* under architect Georg Stahl. Among the effects of this work was the 'tidying' of the area at the foot of Wawel Hill, the opening up of the vista from Krakowska Street towards Corpus Christi Church, and the creation of arcaded walkways on the fronts of some of the houses on Grodzka and Krakowska Streets, as well as in front of St Giles's Church.<sup>92</sup> These 'adjustments' by Stahl are today an

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<sup>90</sup> Butelski, *Architekt Zbigniew Kupiec 1905–1990*, 151; Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 174. Zbigniew Kupiec was a graduate of Lviv Polytechnic and a student of masters including Witold Minkiewicz. From 1932 he ran a thriving construction business in Gdynia, becoming one of the foremost architects of this city, which burgeoned in the 1930s. He made a number of outstanding works in Gdynia, which are now counted among the classic examples of Polish modernism, such as the Orłowski townhouse "Bon Marche" at Świętojańska Street, and the townhouse for a company called Pantarei at Abrahama Street. Expelled from Gdynia by the Germans, after 1939 he returned to his native Cracow. Cf. Butelski, *Architekt Zbigniew Kupiec 1905–1990*, passim.

<sup>91</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 174.

<sup>92</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 178.

integral element of Cracow's historic centre as inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Nonetheless, they did on occasion meet with the criticism of Cracovians at the time of their introduction.<sup>93</sup>

### The architectural heritage of the Third Reich in Cracow – a dissonant heritage?

[30] Without attempting an inventorisation of the entire architectural heritage left by the General Government in Cracow in the years 1939–1945, it is safe to say that the Nazi visions and monarchic ambitions of Hans Frank did not in fact leave many lasting traces of the Third Reich's presence in this area. Furthermore, only a few of the buildings from that era are (or could be) the subjects of conflict. However, if we agree with John E. Tunbridge and Gregory Ashworth that all heritage is by definition a forum for debate and controversy,<sup>94</sup> we do have in Cracow today a certain number of intriguing examples of dissonant heritage left over from the German Third Reich. These represent above all a broad spectrum of conflicts of memory, and also the problem of oblivion (non-memory). In the former capital of the General Government this is still an issue throughout the space extending from the site of the Nazi *Zwangsarbeitslager* Plaszow to Frank's chancellery at Wawel.

[31] One particular case of 'non-memory' surrounding Frank's 'architectural creations' in Cracow is the elegant house called *Feniks*, at 41 Main Market Square. Its author, Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, proposed a bold, modern design for a luxury tenement house, which he intended as a kind of '*Looshaus*' (an avant-garde provocation) on Cracow's Main Square. Its design and its construction in the years 1928–1932 provoked heated discussions and controversy in Cracow.<sup>95</sup> There can be no doubt, however, that Szyszko-Bohusz created a masterpiece. The Chimney House (Dom pod Kominami) – as it became known

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<sup>93</sup> One critic of Stahl's campaign to bring "order" was Edward Kubalski, whose diary contains entries including the following: "18. July. The mun. construction board, or rather its current head, Ger. Eng. Stahl, has succumbed to arcades. Now he is knocking through new ones on Grodzka Street, on the left-hand side walking from the Square, between Św. Józefa and Senacka Streets, the length of 3 houses, one of which, with an attractive Rococo façade (at no. 40), will lose out on what is in any case an unnecessary operation." Cf. Kubalski, *Niemcy w Krakowie*. 227.

<sup>94</sup> Gregory J. Ashworth and John E. Tunbridge, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*, Chichester 1996, *passim*.

<sup>95</sup> Zbroja, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa 1918–1939*, 132-135; Michał Wiśniewski, *Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz*, Cracow 2013, 132-137.

in the city – was to be one of the first architectural victims of National Socialism in Cracow. Located as it was in the most prestigious space in the city – *Adolf-Hitler-Platz* – its ostentatiously contemporary form was too provocative for the Germans, and it was thus rapidly declared an example of 'degenerate Jewish architecture'.<sup>96</sup> The remodelling of the front elevation of *Feniks*, carried out by Stahl in the summer of 1941, offered an ideal opportunity to promote Cracow architecture in line with the Nazis' "national-political science".<sup>97</sup> It also provided an opportunity for the German propaganda press published in Poland to roll out its antisemitic rhetoric and create a campaign against modernist architecture.<sup>98</sup> Szyszko-Bohusz's "entarteter Bau" was ultimately clad in classicist pilasters on the front elevation and partly along Św. Jana Street (the corner visible from the Main Market Square), while its 'chimney' attic disappeared, replaced by a mansard roof in the *völkisch* style (Figs. 14 and 15). Today the Square-front façade of *Feniks* still sports this mediocre costume from the period of the Third Reich; as such it degrades the artistic value of a monument that represents the interwar avant-garde Cracow.



14 *Feniks* House at 41 Main Market Square in Cracow, 1928–1932, designed by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, photographed in 1934 (repr. from: Barbara Zbroja, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa 1918–1939*, Cracow 2013, 134)

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<sup>96</sup> Zbroja, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa 1918–1939*, 135.

<sup>97</sup> Herbert Urban, "Krakaus gegenwärtige und zukünftige Neubauten", in: *Das Generalgouvernement*, vol. 1, nos. 7/8 (April/May 1941), 27-33: 31.

<sup>98</sup> *Krakauer Zeitung*, issue dated 10 July 1941.



15 *Feniks* House, 41 Main Market Square, Cracow, after the remodelling in 1941. The National Archives in Cracow (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie), file no. 29/670/0/-/10704 (previously MI-23c-279)

[32] The most legible extant relic of Third Reich architecture in Cracow is *Schloss Wartenberg*, erected in the years 1942–1943 in Przegorzały district, on what had been before the war an estate belonging to Szyszko-Bohusz (Fig. 16).<sup>99</sup> Otto von Wächter, governor of *Distrikt Krakau* from September 1939, first requisitioned Szyszko-Bohusz's picturesque *villa Odyniec* for his own personal use.<sup>100</sup> In 1941, however, Wächter's new summer residence, adjacent to *Odyniec*, started to be designed in the style of a "Rhineland chateau". The plans for this monumental edifice, prominently sited on a Jurassic outcrop above the Vistula river valley, were made, at Wächter's behest, by Szyszko-Bohusz himself. Ironically, the Cracow architect repeated in this design the floor plan of the Castle of the President of the Republic of Poland in Wisła, which he designed at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s for the then president Ignacy Mościcki.<sup>101</sup> The basic shape of *Schloss Wartenberg* was 'dressed' in its *völkisch* style by two Austrian architects: Richard Pfob and Hans Petermair. The very idea of building a summer residence of such proportions is evidence of the 'dissolute' lifestyle of the Nazi dignitaries delegated to the General Government. Wächter, who was from Vienna, made no secret of his rapacious ambitions. When in February 1942 Wächter moved to Lviv, taking up the position of governor of *Distrikt Galizien*, Frank was forced to complete the

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<sup>99</sup> Fabiański and Purchla, *Historia architektury Krakowa w zarysie*, 93.

<sup>100</sup> Zbroja, *Architektura międzywojennego Krakowa 1918–1939*, 84-87; Wiśniewski, *Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz*, 127-130.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Jacek Purchla, ed., *Zamek Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w Wiśle*, Cracow 2005.



inconvenient investment that had already been initiated in Cracow. In November 1943, during Heinrich Himmler's visit to Cracow, Frank officially handed the Reich Commissioner the keys to the completed *Schloss Wartenberg*, which was to house a sanatorium for SS functionaries.<sup>102</sup> Today used by the Jagiellonian University's Institute for European Studies and the popular restaurant *U Ziyada*, the intended residence of one of the greatest Nazi criminals active in the General Government is an attraction in which the sinister memory of Otto von Wächter and Heinrich Himmler has been obliterated by the delights of Kurdish cuisine and the spectacular views across the Vistula valley.



16 Construction of *Schloss Wartenberg* in the Przegorzały suburb of Cracow, 1942, photo: Ewald Theuergarten. National Digital Archives (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), Warsaw, [file no. 2-8646a](#)

### "Krakauer Burg"

[33] The most intriguing example of the dissonant heritage of the Third Reich in Cracow, however, is Wawel. As early as 1940, the residence of the general governor – the "Krakauer Burg" – was soon transformed into a construction site. The hasty alterations to the royal hill to meet the needs of its new 'host', undertaken under Frank's personal supervision, were carried out by a design office established specifically for this commission by a German company owned by Franz Koettgen and Edgar Horstmann.<sup>103</sup> Over the years 1941–1944, the German incumbents at Wawel erected buildings, including the general governor's office, on the site of the former royal kitchens (building no. 5 at the

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<sup>102</sup> Barbara Zbroja and Konrad Myślik, *Nieznany portret Krakowa*, Cracow 2010, 298-301.

west end of the castle courtyard),<sup>104</sup> redeveloped the west wing of the former Austrian hospital<sup>105</sup> (building no. 9), and built a new Bernardine Gate (Fig. 17).<sup>106</sup>



17 Bernardine Gate at Wawel Hill. Wawel Royal Castle, file no. AZK PZS-III-35\_2090

[34] The purpose of these major alterations to the structure of the architectural complex on the hill was not only to adapt Wawel to its function as the representative seat of the general governor and occupying authorities of the General Government, but also to dress the new buildings in an architectural style that was in line with the spirit of the Third Reich. The dominant building complex on Wawel Hill, in particular building no. 5 (the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg", Fig. 18), was the outcome of discussions and design studies, and the overall conception for its form was approved by Hans Frank personally in March 1941.<sup>107</sup>

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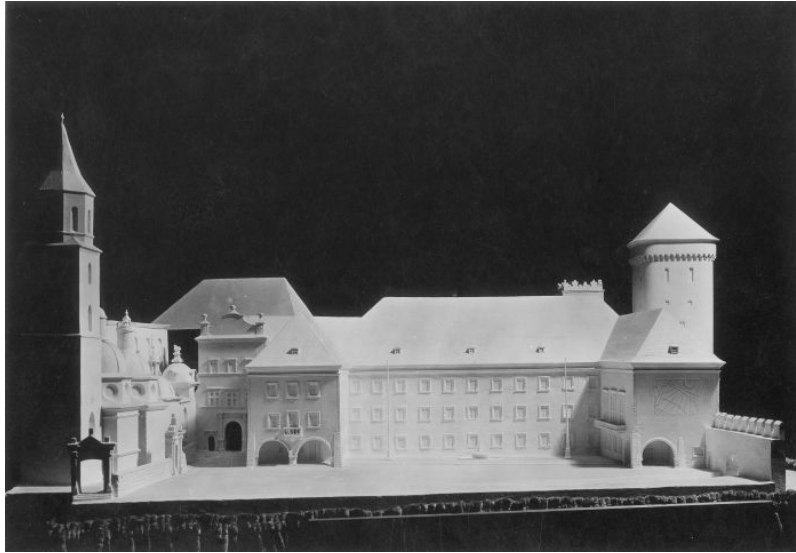
<sup>103</sup> Jadwiga Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945. Przemiany architektury. Echa architektury nazistowskiej", in: *Rocznik Krakowski* 77 (2011), 113-141: 113.

<sup>104</sup> Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945", 119-126.

<sup>105</sup> Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945", 126-130.

<sup>106</sup> Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945", 130-132; Jadwiga Gwizdałówna, "Brama Bernardyńska na Wawelu", in: *Studia Waweliana* 15 (2013), 85-101.

<sup>107</sup> Urban, "Krakaus gegenwärtige und zukünftige Neubauten", 29-31.



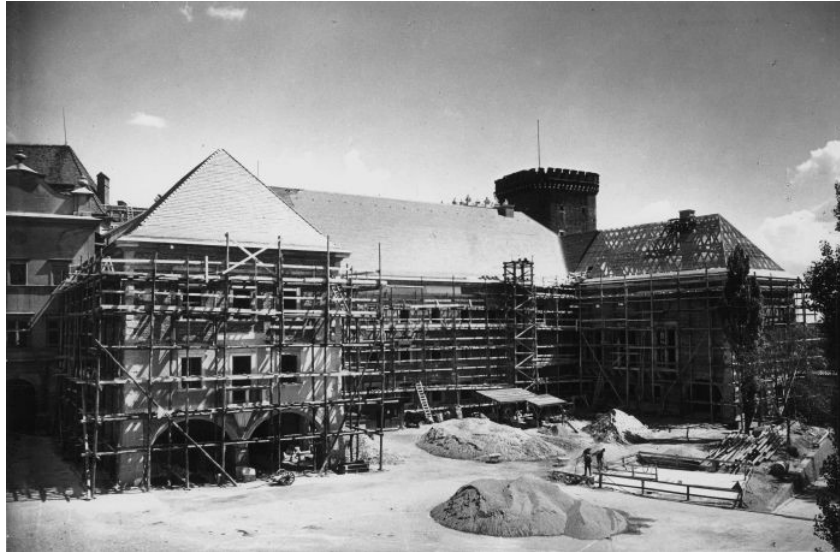
18 Model of the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg", 1941, photo: S. Kolowca. Wawel Royal Castle, file no. AF 458-III (repr. from: Herbert Urban, "Krakaus gegenwärtige und zukünftige Neubauten", in: *Das Generalgouvernement*, vol. 1, no. 7/8 [April/May 1941], 32)

[35] Both the design of the main shape and the façades of the building, as well as the attention granted to the design of the interiors, left no doubt that this was supposed to have been a monument to the presence of the Thousand-Year Reich on Wawel Hill.<sup>108</sup> Szyszko-Bohusz, an unwilling witness to those events, wrote that the seat of the general governor's offices was: "a dull body

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<sup>108</sup> It is interesting to note the numerous analogies in solutions employed in the interiors of the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg" at Wawel with aspects of the interiors of the "Haus des Deutschen Rechts" in Munich, at Ludwigstrasse 28. The latter was erected with verve in the years 1934–1939 for Frank as the founder and president of the Akademie für Deutsches Recht. The author of the design was Oswald Bieber, a professor of the Munich Academy of Fine Arts and after 1933 one of a group of 'trusted' architects who received the most prestigious commissions for the development of the "Hauptstadt der Bewegung". The design concept document for the seat of the Academy stressed that the building "soll die steingewordene Fassung des Programmpunktes 19 der NSDAP sein, einen Markstein darstellen für den Beginn eines neues Abschnittes der deutschen Rechtsgeschichte". These words were at the heart of the extensive programme of the representative part of Frank's Munich seat, which comprised elements including a lecture theatre, the office of the president of the Academy, and a meeting room designed in the 'National Socialist' style. Frank was so proud of his 'House of Law' that he even put his name to a slim monograph, *Haus des deutschen Rechts in München* (published in Munich on the eve of the outbreak of war). Cf. Christian Gries, "Erziehung und Ausbildung", in: *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Nerdinger, 98-145: 129 and 131.

rendered with coarse-grained plaster beneath artificial stone, roofed with tiles artificially dyed to the colour of linoleum, with unattractive, mechanically measured stone quoins on the corners of the façades".<sup>109</sup> These bitter words by the chief conservator of Wawel, whose alternative designs for building no. 5, made as early as 1940, were rejected by the Germans, lent the seat of the general governor's office the stigma of unwanted heritage from the very moment of its erection (Fig. 19).<sup>110</sup>



19 Construction of the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg", photo S. Kolowca. Wawel Royal Castle, file no. NegKOZK-odb (repr. from: Jadwiga Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945. Przemiany architektury. Echa architektury nazistowskiej", in: *Rocznik Krakowski* 77 [2011], 123, fig. 9)

[36] In spite of this stigma and the politically incorrect pedigree of building no. 5 as the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg", it survived as Wawel's own Third Reich heritage, in its original, unaltered state, during both the Communist Poland period and the first decade and a half of the Third Polish

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<sup>109</sup> Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, "Wawel pod okupacją niemiecką. Wspomnienia z lat 1939–1945", in: *Rocznik Krakowski* 31 (1949/1957), 153-182: 166.

<sup>110</sup> Neither Edgar Horstmann (a graduate of an industrial school and a relation to Frank) nor Franz Koettgen (a former textiles merchant) had any architectural competencies! It was for this reason that they employed Szyszko-Bohusz in their design studio. Szyszko-Bohusz, by drawing up successive variations on the plans for the new Chancellery and effectively delaying their implementation, had a major influence on the ultimate form of building no. 5. Cf. Wiśniewski, *Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz*, 43.

Republic after 1989. Not until the years 2006–2009 did Frank's Chancellery undergo spectacular alterations. In the report on those recent works at the Royal Castle, we read that

*Of immense importance for our museum work is the commissioning in 2007, following the completion of modernisation work and alterations, of the s. wing of building no. 5. [...] Over 600 m<sup>2</sup> of space has been designated there for a historic furniture conservation laboratory (including an impregnation and disinfection chamber) and storage for artworks [...].<sup>111</sup>*

Yet it is hard to deduce from this information that this witness to history, the former seat of the general governor's office, which was so thoroughly Nazi in both spirit and architectural form, had been obliterated from Wawel Hill!<sup>112</sup> This most recent chapter of the 'battle against Germanism' has aimed to "remove, at least in part, the stigma of German doings on the hill and to improve the architecture of such an important and representative site".<sup>113</sup> In this case it was the long stone balconies and 'high doors' of Frank's *Festsaal* that were the dissonant, even unwanted heritage ("ungewolltes Erbe").<sup>114</sup> (Fig. 20) The *völkisch* interiors of building no. 5 remained untouched, however.

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<sup>111</sup> "Sprawozdanie z działalności Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu w latach 2007–2008", in: *Studia Waweliana* 14 (2009), 285-292: 285.

<sup>112</sup> This came about at a time when scientific research on the architecture of the Third Reich had been pursued for some considerable time. See e.g. Krakowski, *Sztuka Trzeciej Rzeszy*; Janusz L. Dobesz, *Wrocławska architektura spod znaku swastyki na tle budownictwa III Rzeszy*, Wrocław 1999.

<sup>113</sup> Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji", 140.

<sup>114</sup> Gwizdałówna, "Wawel podczas okupacji", 140.



20 "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg", 1944. Wawel Royal Castle, file no. AF-1206-II\_33

[37] This procedure was thus not merely a much-needed extension of the museum's ancillary space, but in fact a new stage of creationism on its part. It not only constituted the effacement of the dissonant heritage left by Hans Frank on Wawel Hill, but also represented a step beyond the classic dilemma between conservation and restoration. For it cannot be said to have been either conservation or restoration. Building no. 5 has been transformed from a witness to the history and tragedy of the twentieth century into a conservator's fantasy AD 2007. This cannot be evaluated according to the standards of conservation doctrine; it is an element of historical policy. It is also important to repeat after the Wawel report that this significant alteration "has not been [...] noticed by public opinion, which is sensitive to all changes – or at least has not been the subject of any protests".<sup>115</sup>

[38] Over sixty years on from the fall of the Third Reich, it has been decided that there is no longer room at Wawel – a revered site of Polish collective memory – for the "Verwaltungsgebäude der Kanzlei Burg". The reason: this architectural heritage of the Third Reich, in the opinion of the Polish conservators of the royal residence, did not fit in with the construct of national memory of the 'Sacred Hill of the Poles'. It was the subject of controversy; particularly as Wawel, a special site of memory for Poles, is a constitutive element of our identity.<sup>116</sup> In this way Wawel, as a laboratory of our Polish collective memory, has in recent times also become an acid test of our attitude

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<sup>115</sup> "Sprawozdanie z działalności Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu w latach 2001–2002", in: *Studia Waweliana* 11/12 (2002/2003), 291-314: 291.

towards the heritage of the Third Reich. Will its material relics in Cracow remain dissonant heritage, and should they really be erased from our memory?

### The Holocaust and places of memory

[39] The above-mentioned aspect is of relevance not only in respect to a few monumental buildings left by the Third Reich in Cracow, but also regarding the issue of the Holocaust. Sites of memory have a very important role to play in our 'game of heritage'. They are a composite of both tangible and intangible elements; they are long-lasting catalysts of collective memory and identity sustained over generations – an integral element of social, cultural and political mores.

[40] The German camp in the Płaszów suburb of Cracow is one such symbol of the Holocaust. It was established in 1942 on the orders of Heinrich Himmler.<sup>117</sup> The justification for its location was the 'vast building site' that Cracow was to have become under Hans Frank. The Germans treated the construction of the camp as a specific type of building work that would form part of their campaign to "solve the housing issue!"<sup>118</sup> The centre of the camp was located – with premeditation – on the site of two Jewish cemeteries. Originally intended for Jews, as an extension of the Cracow ghetto, the barracks complex that made up Płaszów camp was systematically expanded.<sup>119</sup> The work was carried out by Polish construction companies whose employees were also subsequently incarcerated in the camp. In April 1944, KL Plaszow had 12,375 Polish and 12,147 Jewish prisoners.<sup>120</sup> In all, in the years 1942–1945, some 30,000–40,000 people passed through the camp. It is estimated that 8,000–10,000 people were murdered in KL Plaszow.<sup>121</sup> In spite of many attempts at commemorating this place of torture, the site remains not only a symbol of the Holocaust, but in today's Cracow it is also a symbol of both an 'impasse of

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<sup>116</sup> On this subject see: Jacek Purchla, "Wawel – dziedzictwo kłopotliwe?", in: *Velis quod possis. Studia z historii sztuki ofiarowane Profesorowi Janowi Ostrowskiemu*, ed. Andrzej Betlej et al., Cracow 2016, 491-498.

<sup>117</sup> Ryszard Kotarba, *Niemiecki obóz w Płaszowie 1942–1945*, Warsaw and Cracow 2009, passim.

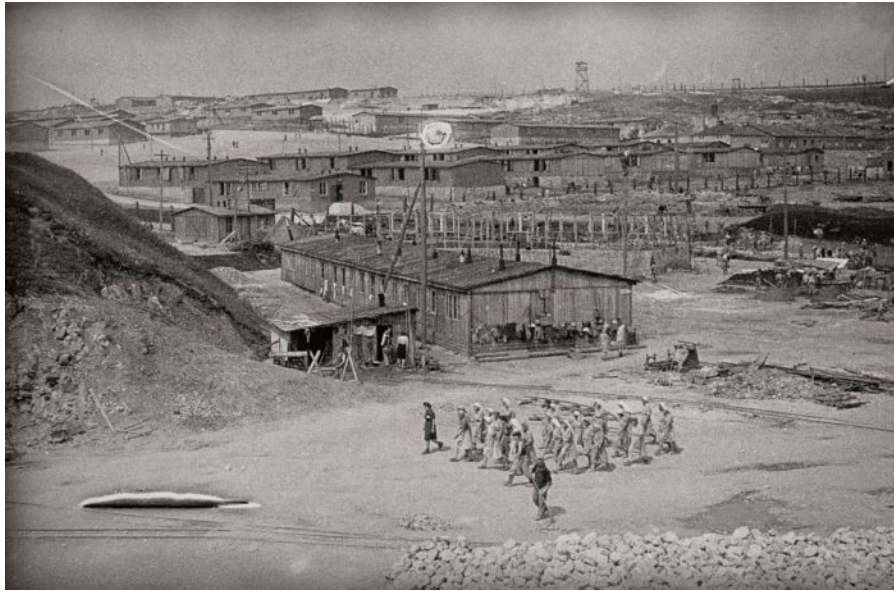
<sup>118</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 181.

<sup>119</sup> Katarzyna Kocik, "Płaszów. Próby upamiętnienia (1945–2007)", in: *Płaszów. Odkrywanie*, ed. Michał Niezabitowski et al., Cracow 2016, 97-141: 98.

<sup>120</sup> Broński, "Ruch budowlany w Krakowie pod okupacją hitlerowską", 181.

<sup>121</sup> Kocik, "Płaszów. Próby upamiętnienia (1945–2007)", 99.

memory' and the ineffective administration of the forty hectares once occupied by the camp.<sup>122</sup> (Fig. 21)



21 Concentration camp Plaszow, in the Plaszów district of Cracow, general view, 1943/1944. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., file no. USHMM.32058

[41] Common memory is an artefact, which we are constantly reconstructing, even though people claim that the core of their identity is constant. Collective memory in fact reconstructs rather than registers the past. It is always burdened with the stigma of the present, for history and memory are two entirely different issues.<sup>123</sup> After Marcin Król, we might also say that "historical memory is an image of events, while collective memory is the seat of tradition".<sup>124</sup> The assertion made by Tunbridge and Ashworth, that all heritage is by definition a forum for debate and controversy, thus remains incontrovertible. The heritage that constitutes our memory is – in a sense – our daily choice, and it simultaneously contributes to our collective identity. This is no less true of the dissonant and unwanted heritage left behind by the Third Reich in Cracow.

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<sup>122</sup> Michał Niezabitowski, "KL Plaszow. Przełamanie niepamięci", in: *Plaszów. Odkrywanie*, ed. Michał Niezabitowski et al., Cracow 2016, 9-10: 10.

<sup>123</sup> Jacek Purchla, "Naród – Dziedzictwo – Pamięć", in: *Zagadnienia Sądownictwa Konstytucyjnego* no. 2(4) (2012), 59-68: 67.

<sup>124</sup> Robert Traba, *Historia – przestrzeń dialogu*, Warsaw 2006, 26.



### **About the author**

Jacek Purchla is a Polish Art Historian and Economist, Professor of Humanities, a member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is the founder of the International Cultural Centre in Cracow, and was its director since its inception in 1991 until 2018. He is the head of the Department of Economic and Social History and the UNESCO Chair for Heritage and Urban Studies at the Cracow University of Economics. He specializes in urban studies, social and art history, as well as the theory and protection of cultural heritage. Since 2015, he has been the President of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO. Between 2016 and 2017 he was the President of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. He is the author of over 400 academic works, including a number of books published in many languages.

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