

Marek Rawecki

# Auschwitz-Birkenau Zone



GLIWICE 2003

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Phot. Marek Rawecki, 1987

page 1: a view at the camp building section II of the KL Birkenau. Phot. SS, 1943-1944  
(Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 20995/398)

page 205: the former Judenrampe in Oświęcim. Phot. Marek Rawecki, 2003

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### *An outstandingly important book*

*Contemporary knowledge about the organisation and spatial structure of the Auschwitz extermination camp owes its basic work to Marek Rawecki. For almost ten years, as from 1992, lasted the long and arduous process of identifying the material traces of genocide in the Auschwitz-Birkenau zone, on the area of today's town and commune of Oświęcim. However we must not forget that the site of the most extensive and the most precisely planned martyrdom of 1,100,000 victims deported from all over Europe belonged at that time to Hitler's Third Reich. The indigenous inhabitants of this area and of the nearby places were evicted and the only lands where in 1939-1945 ethnic Poles formally existed was a limited enclave of the so-called General Government managed by Hans Frank, and his Gestapo and police forces. After the war Hans Frank was considered to be a war criminal by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. Poland was the only European state and nation which never became stained by quislingism. What happened in Auschwitz-Birkenau resulted directly from the racist theories and the precision of German planning of the so-called Lebensraum. But first of all those lower races had to be simply dispensed with. And the 40 square kilometres of the administrative unit "Kreis-Bielitz O/S" of the newly-formed district ("Regierungs-Bezirk Kattowitz") that was incorporated to the Reich, served that purpose. The invaluable merit of Marek Rawecki is that he has revealed this card, today already forgotten, and that he reconstructed its spatial structure with scientific precision.*

*Although many years have passed since the capitulation of the Nazi Germany and the liquidation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau gas chambers, there have been no attempts to reconstruct the genocide's "technological lines" system, which would be supported by detailed inventories of its remnants on the spot. Never has anyone been able to perceive the scale and importance of future spatial conflicts between the Museum grounds, the pressing urbanisation and the needs of the developing town. Marek Rawecki's "Zone" is, as all borderlands, an area of dramatic and contradictory interests, which eludes any planned actions. In his book the Author not only notices and classifies those phenomena but also shows the way to prevent their further propagation. He also presents some concepts how the most important spatial relics should be preserved on the spot.*

*The results of his work are novel on a vast scale. As well as the very phenomenon which had never existed in the history of our civilisation - the methods presented are new and they do not have counterparts in the world. Terminology is correct and this work is also well-grounded on contemporary scientific literature; what is more it constitutes an important progress in the knowledge to date. Thoroughly prepared illustrations are an important element of this progress. Themselves they are an invaluable cartographic and iconographic source. It is a source of precious documentary material as well as the basis for future research.*

*There is even more than we usually read in monographs of this kind. This book presents a surprisingly wide approach, it appeals to emotions, discussions and extreme attitudes which seemingly cannot be reconciled. It quotes world authorities, their emotions and speeches, it refers to political aspirations on the national scale and to the obvious needs and pursuits of the contemporary inhabitants of the Zone. It is a needed and wise book. It is wise for its direct audience - all those who remember and who seek knowledge about the years of terror and German Nazi crimes and all those who in the contemporary world have been deprived of this knowledge. It is also wise thanks to a group of distinguished people who had helped to create it and particularly thanks to the thorough professionalism and the great engagement of Architect Jadwiga Rawecka to whom I humbly dedicate these few words and who I warmly ask to accept my sincere appreciation.*

*Prof. T. Przemysław Szafer*



*It was real, thus the work of people, the work that can be researched...  
Auschwitz must be understood as the historical past, must be  
recognisable in the here and now, and it must not be  
ignorantly detached from future perspectives.  
Auschwitz does not lie only behind us...*

*Günter Grass*





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## Preface

*This book discusses one of a less known, or at least less visible so far in the publications, aspect of Auschwitz-Birkenau - its direct impact on the post-war development of the Oświęcim region. As a result of an extremely painful wound inflicted by the German Nazi system to many nations, and particularly to the Jewish nation, so far has survived not only scars in the social conscience and in the individual lots of many families all over the world, but also frightening material traces in the real space of Oświęcim and Brzezinka. The German Nazis, by building here in 1940-1945 a huge functional and administrative structure, implanted de facto this criminal creation into the settlement system of both places. This influenced their further history. The events which after the war accompanied the process of marking out the borderlines of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, the conservation and commemoration actions, establishing of the protection zones - distinctly illustrate the helplessness of the contemporaries in the face of a peculiar conjunction of Oświęcim and Auschwitz, of Brzezinka and Birkenau. The unprecedented nature of this process cannot always justify this helplessness. Without going deeper into the reasons for this state of affairs, it must be noted that because of the ongoing clash of these two opposite realities, the need for a new perspective on the conservation and commemoration of the post-camp sites appeared.*

*The beginning in 1992 of the research on the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum protection zone was the opening a long lasting and arduous process of identification, out of the normally running life, of the tragic legacy of Auschwitz-Birkenau and looking for ways of taking it out of the spatial structure of the town and commune of Oświęcim. When I started this work I was not aware how complicated was the issue which I was to tackle. However I think that at that time no-one expected that apparently practical reasons why this research was taken up - i.e. finding a way to reconcile the opposing positions of Life and Remembrance - would reveal so many unsolved problems requiring further research.*

*It is a book about this problem. It sums up the research works done so far, the renewal programmes for the Auschwitz-Birkenau post-camp complex prepared for the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Oświęcim Town Office with the co-operation of the Conservation Commission of the International Auschwitz Council and Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Bielsko-Biała. The preparation of the final version of the conservation guidelines were preceded by extensive social consultations. The issue of the protection zone was presented at the village meetings, at the meetings of the village councils of Brzezinka and Pławy, at the meetings of the Town Council in Oświęcim, at the meeting of the Parliamentary Commission for Local Authorities and the Parliamentary Commission for Culture and Mass Media and during the discussions of the International Auschwitz Council. It was presented during the conferences at the Ministry for Culture and the Arts and at the President's Palace as well. Farmers from Brzezinka, Polish and foreign journalists, members of Parliament, ambassadors got acquainted with it. The former Auschwitz inmates were asked to evaluate it. Discussions were conducted by the employees and guides of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, at the meetings of international expert groups and during the visits of the representatives of Jewish organisations, institutions and other circles. A number of opinions obtained were used to verify the accepted assumptions, making feasible the suggested conservation and planning solutions.*

*This is a popularising publication. It presents the reasons and methods that accompanied undertaken research efforts. It can also be considered as a specific offer. The suggested changes in the Museum environs can fortify the integration of the post-camp complex, make efficient and richer the access of the visitors to both parts of the Memorial Place, separate from the contemporary landscape the important historical structures and sites.*

*This paper is an open material. It is to form a platform for further quest for priorities of the development in the Museum environs. What is necessary here is not only conservation and scientific engagement, but also the practical actions of the local authorities, ministries and the government, individuals and organisations. It is important to respect the emotions of those for who Auschwitz has a personal, generation or communal meaning, but also the emotions and needs of those who happen to live in this region.*

*This publication has been written on the basis of a doctoral dissertation which I prepared supervised by the late lamented Professor Zbigniew Gądek and then Professor T. Przemysław Szafer. I presented my thesis in May 2000. In its essential layer it covers the period 1984-1992 when the key issues of the protection zone were defined and the years 1992-1999 when the particular points of the research programme were implemented. In the Introduction I present the facts which I think have determined the post-war history of Oświęcim and Brzezinka. I trust that the Reader will excuse my leaving out certain aspects of the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau. I focused on the spatial development factors. The general knowledge about the history of the former camp is presented in many widely accepted works including a monograph "Auschwitz 1940-1945. Central Issues in the History of the Camp" published by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in 1995.*

*It is a concern of each author who publishes a book referring to the contemporary problems to make it up-to-date. I was also bothered. I happened to publish my doctoral thesis three years after my doctoral exam. Despite my initial doubts whether this book would answer many current issues and particularly those that appeared after 1999 as a result of legislative actions of the Government - I accepted the challenge. The research work that has been done is still an open chapter. And it is independent of the fact that its results have already been used in the way about which many researchers can only dream. Oświęcim Programme was created. Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim was created. Financial support for local authorities was given for the implementation of the conservation tasks within the Museum protection zone. However there are issues which require further research. There are in Oświęcim and Brzezinka contentious issues, whose solution would be facilitated, I suppose and as my professional experience prompts me immodestly, thanks to the methods adopted in the research on the protection zone. After I had finished the works in Oświęcim and Brzezinka I did not discontinue my activity in this field. I took part in the works of the International Group of Experts, I co-operated by the commission of the Silesian University of Technology with the International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim within the students seminars "The Oświęcim-Auschwitz Topography", at the University I supervised semester papers and MA theses referring to Auschwitz-Birkenau. In the Appendices I present the selected results of these actions. I also present there my own evaluation of the planning activity of the town and commune of Oświęcim and the current photographic documentation of selected sites in the Museum environs. The latter I dedicate for consideration to the conservation and self-government authorities.*

*If the Reader expects detailed reports and evaluations in relation to the many notorious conflicts "around the former KL Auschwitz", he will be disappointed. I am not writing about them. It is surely an important issue, but for another dissertation. From the perspective of the research objectives presented in my work and the results achieved, the conflicts are marginal, paradoxically - contrary to their publicity. However I do not avoid the discussion about this issue and I do not think that there is no problem. It would be really strange if my work referring to Auschwitz-Birkenau was not accompanied by a reflection of this nature as well.*

*Someone who is interested in the problems of the contemporary Oświęcim and Brzezinka may have ambivalent feelings. On one hand irresistibly there appears a conclusion that the controversies "around the former KL Auschwitz" never teach us anything. The recurring rows in this place stigmatised by the history are a regularity rather than an exception. The consecutive conflicts do not lead to compromises. On the other hand one can see that for more than 50 years on a unique scale the most important remains and relics of Auschwitz-Birkenau have been preserved, many research programmes have been taken up and implemented, educational programmes have been started, conservation priorities have been put into practise, a wide international discussion has been initiated.*

*The analysis of the conflicts that have taken place so far brings clear conclusions. The analysis based not on the political or religious reasons which were the essence of furious arguments, but based on what is the most important for a scientist - on the matter-of-fact consideration of the documents, on researching the historical, legal, administrative and social factors. In this aspect the role of the ratified by Poland Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is essential and the consequences of the inclusion of Auschwitz-Birkenau on the UNESCO list - obvious. It quickly leads to the conclusion that in the majority of cases the origin of the conflicts was very commonplace and a mistake once committed implied further ones. For example if in 1984 a small plot of*

land had not been excluded from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and given to the Carmelite Nunnery, we would not have had either the conflict of Carmel or the Papal Cross issue, the religious symbols on the Museum grounds, the scandalous manifestation of Kazimierz Świtoń, the controversial law on the former German Nazi extermination camp protection. If it was not for the journalist hoax with the "supermarket", we would not have had the arguments about the Museum protection zone, the shameful demonstration of the skinheads, the problem of the extraterritoriality of Oświęcim or lately a new problem - a discotheque in the former Oświęcim tannery. On the other hand however, if it was not for the Carmel issue we would not have known that the Jews perceive the former camp differently and what Auschwitz-Birkenau stands for now for this nation. If it was not for the "supermarket" most probably there would not have been the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim.

There is however a question: whether the aforementioned positive aspects could not have been achieved in a different way? And whether always at the basis of each accepted activity in Oświęcim and Brzezinka has to lie someone's evident mistake, an oversight or a fact that is interpreted in a biased way by the media? Is this an immanent feature of this special place, or do we meet in the problem of Auschwitz a permanent ignorance, indifference and only working the issue up to the extreme can restore normal proportions of things?

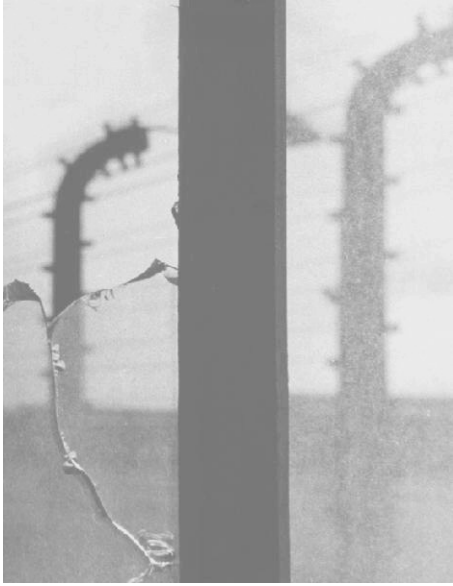
I leave these questions to the Reader. I cannot answer them unambiguously. Even though I have been engaged in the Oświęcim problems for many years. People do lack common sense in many issues. Despite the passionate emotions evoked by this place - from the point of view of the material structure it does not stand out among other historical structures and complexes in such a way that the procedures implemented in other places could not be used here. It is these emotions and sometimes politics that screen this simple truth. The fact that the former camp is included on the UNESCO list confirms the obligation of Poland in front of the international community to protect the tragic legacy of Auschwitz, but it also makes sure that in the implementation of this task the best standards, techniques and procedures will be applied. It is because of lack of professional attitude that there are new conflicts and phobias in the region of Oświęcim. It is also true that the atrocity of the crime committed here is conveyed to our times by with the irrational behaviour and attitudes. Perhaps it cannot be otherwise.

To ensure a conflict-free implementation of the protection zone priorities it was essential to take into account the widest possible spectrum of standpoints and opinions. So in this book the Reader will not find the cardinal truths, morals or the undisputed indications of authorities. No-one knows if these will ever appear in the question of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The vicinity of the Memorial Place might never be a closed chapter, might never be finished, finally designed, it might go on stirring up emotional and provoking arguments, this might be the only way in which the countless victims of the German Nazism can be preserved in the memory of the next generations. Because what are the differences of opinion? They are a chance to sit down at the table and talk. They are a chance to become sensitised to other people.

*Let it be that way...*

*It is how I understand the legacy of the Auschwitz-Birkenau victims.*





## Introduction

Pronunciation of some Polish place names used in this book

Oświęcim: **oshWENCim**

Zasole: **zaSOle**

Soła: **soWA**

Brzezinka: **bgeZINKa** ("g" as in "genre")

Pławy: **Puavy**

Harmęże: **HarMAGe** ("a" as in avant, "g" as in genre)

Rajsko: **RAIsko**

Babice: **baBItse**

Broszkowice: **broshkoVItse**

Budy: **BUdi** ("u" as in "actually")

Monowice: **monoVItse**

Dwory: **DVOri**

Warszawa: **VarSHAva**

Kraków: **KRAkoov**

Wieliczka: **VeLIchka**

Bielsko-Biała: **BIELsko-BIAwa**

Katowice: **katoVItse**

Gliwice: **gliVItse**

## Oświęcim, Brzezinka - the historical context

Oświęcim - situated where the Soła River flows into the Vistula River, in the centre of the Oświęcim Valley, dates back to the Middle Ages i.e. the times of the Piast dynasty. It was chartered as early as in the 13 c. In the 14 c. it became the capital of an independent Principality of Oświęcim, which shortly afterwards was subjected to the Czech rule and regained its independence only in 1457. In the years 1457-1564 the Principality of Oświęcim was a separate state linked with Poland by personal union

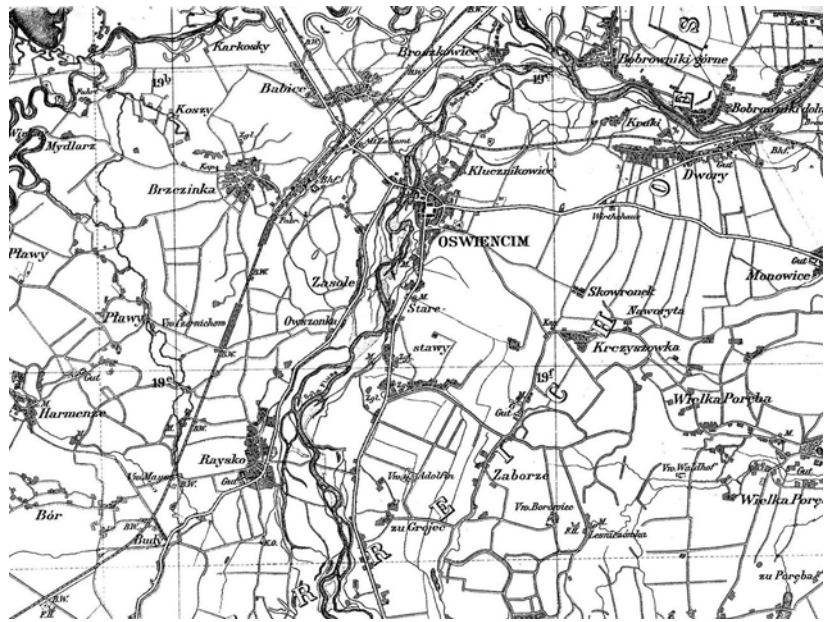


Fig.1. Part of the topographical map of 1894. Published by Berliner Litogr. Institut. [State Archives, Branch Office in Gliwice, sign. Zb.kart.173]

and was incorporated to Poland in the 16 c. during the reign of King Sigismund II Augustus. After the first partition of Poland in 1772 the town and region of Oświęcim were annexed to Austria as a part of the so-called Galicia. When Poland regained its independence in 1918 Oświęcim turned up within its borders as a self-governing county in the Voivodship of Kraków<sup>1</sup>.

Lying at the crossing of the main communication routes i.e. east-west (from Kraków to Silesia along the Vistula River) and north-south (from Olkusz to Żywiec along the Soła River) Oświęcim was from the dawn of history an important marketplace with salt from Wieliczka and lead<sup>2</sup> as staple commodities. Notwithstanding its favourable geographical location, even in the period of its most intensive development Oświęcim was only a little or at most an average-sized town. What hindered its development were wars (especially the Swedish wars in the 17 c.), numerous fires in the 15 and 16 c. and floods in 1805, 1813 and 1915<sup>3</sup>. In the pre-war period 12,000 inhabitants lived in Oświęcim, half of whom were Jewish.

Brzezinka - a village situated between the Vistula River and the town of Oświęcim. It was mentioned already in the 13 c. In the pre-war period 3,000 persons lived there. The village had 12 shops, 4 inns, 7 workshops, 2 processing plants, an elementary school, 2 nursery schools and 536 houses including 513 made of stone and brick<sup>4</sup>.

The railway played an important role in the development of both sites at the turn of the 20 c. Three of its lines crossed in Brzezinka and in Zasole i.e. the left-bank part of Oświęcim: the Emperor Ferdinand Northern Railway (Dziedzice-Trzebinia), the Prussian

<sup>1</sup> L.Danilczyk, L.Sulerzyska, B.Wojnar: *Oświęcim - Studium historyczno-urbanistyczne*, PP PKZ Pracownia Naukowo-Historyczna, Kraków 1990, pp.44, 54, 79, 83; J.Ptaszkowski: *Opowieści spod zamkowej góry. Karty z przeszłości Oświęcimia*, vol.1, Towarzystwo Miłośników Ziemi Oświęcimskiej, Cieszyn 1983, pp.25-27, 30-35; E.Skalińska-Dindorf: *Oświęcim - zarys dziejów*, Cieszyn 1989, pp.10, 27, 39-40; J.Stanek: *Z dziejów ziemi oświęcimskiej*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1959, pp.23, 45, 50, 225-226, 234, 254-255.

<sup>2</sup> L.Danilczyk... op.cit., pp.3, 78; J.Ptaszkowski, op.cit. vol.2, pp.7-9; E.Skalińska-Dindorf, op.cit., pp.23; J.Stanek, op.cit., pp.57, 220-221, 270-271.

<sup>3</sup> B.Kolniak: *Rozwój przestrzenny Oświęcimia*, Uniwersytet Śląski, Wydział Nauk o Ziemi, Instytut Geografii, Sosnowiec 1981 (unpublished), p.5; J.Ptaszkowski, op.cit. vol.1, pp.54-56; E.Skalińska-Dindorf, op.cit., pp.25, 29; J.Stanek, op.cit., pp.230-234, 240.

<sup>4</sup> K.Krzemień: *Brzezinka*, Sołectwo Brzezinka 1982 (unpublished).

Railway (Wrocław-Mysłowice) and the Charles Louis State Railway (Oświęcim-Kraków). Railway lines accelerated the development of the industry (at that time came into being e.g. the Zinc Rolling Mill, the Józef Nathanson's Tar Paper and Asphalt Factory, Landan and Wolf's Roof Building Paper Factory, Leo Schönker's Chemical Products Factory "Union", the First Galician Joint-Stock Society for Manufacturing Screws, Rivets and Female Screws) and also contributed to the development of Zasole, where a Barrack Settlement was built<sup>5</sup>.



Fig.2. The inhabitants of the Barrack Settlement. 1930s [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 8871]

The origin of the Settlement is to be found in the official record of the 80. ordinary session of the Communal Council of the Royal Town of Oświęcim of 1 December 1915<sup>6</sup>: „On account of the widely progressing liberation of counties and the refugees returning home, the matter appeared that because of the existing main railway junctions of the line Vienna-Kraków, the Central authorities are to choose a place in our part of the county for the construction of supervisory huts for the refugees. These facilities have to be of greater style and erected for a considerable number of persons. The town of Oświęcim is in this measure

*topographically best situated and for its own development, cannot and should not skip effort to attract such considerable public investment [...] Next to the railway line the commune possesses a plot of over 5500 acres in the so-called "Łazy" in Oświęcim-Zasole and it may be considered that this or that part, should be transferred to such greater public Works useful and suitable."*

After a stormy discussion the Communal Council of the Royal Town of Oświęcim on 16 February 1916 passed a resolution to sell the communal ground in the so-called "Łazy" in Zasole to the High Imperial-Royal Government of Austria<sup>7</sup>. On 6 October of that year a buy-sale contract<sup>8</sup> was signed, by virtue of which the Exchequer purchased 3,080 acres of land.

The construction of the Barrack Settlement commenced as early as in the spring of 1916<sup>9</sup>. Building works were managed by the firm Heler-Wassenberg "Bau und Reconstructions Gesellschaft" from Vienna and the Kraków Association of Builders administered by Hipolit Śliwiński. The works progressed quickly and two years later the inhabitants of Oświęcim, the founders of "Oświęcim Industrial Society Ltd", wrote in a special brochure<sup>10</sup>: "...The new town of 2,750 acres in size, was provided with a railway track, a net of roads and pavements, with a sewage system, waterworks, electric plant (...), a disinfectant-bath institution with a laundry, surgical and infectious hospital, the post office and telegraph, police and militia station, the edifice of labour exchange, a theatre and a number of other brick buildings necessary for the camp administration, furthermore 22 brick buildings were erected to house 3 thousand workers apart from 90 wooden buildings which can house 9 thousand workers".

<sup>5</sup> L.Danilczyk... op.cit., pp.47, 49, 98; E.Skalińska-Dindorf, op.cit., pp.45-46.

<sup>6</sup> *Księga uchwał król. miasta Oświęcimia. Rok Pański 1913*, Magistrat Król. Miasta Oświęcim, AP Oświęcim, sign.MO 37, pp.372-373.

<sup>7</sup> *ibidem*, p.405.

<sup>8</sup> *Akt Notarialny. Kontrakt Kupna - Sprzedaży. L.R. 16415*, AP Oświęcim, Mortgage documents - volume 1917, sign.L.tab.672/17, pp.1-13.

<sup>9</sup> B.Kolniak, op.cit., pp.51-53; J.Ptaszkowski, op.cit. vol.2, p.94.

<sup>10</sup> Brochure published by Oświęcim Industrial Society Ltd, 14 January 1918, AP Oświęcim, sign. MZ.



The enlightened inhabitants of Oświęcim saw in the Barrack Settlement the chance of the development of the town which fulfilled all conditions to become “*the habitation of the great industry*”<sup>11</sup>. Nevertheless already in the year 1919 the construction of the Settlement was suspended, and the central authorities decided to transfer it to the Ministry of Military Affairs. In the same year, after the defeat of the first Silesian uprising, 1,100 refugees were quartered in the Settlement, and a year later - 4,000 persons from the Cieszyn Silesia<sup>12</sup>.

In 1923 the Settlement was divided and as a result some installations were taken over by Polish Tobacco Monopoly, which built a branch from the existing railway siding to its own plant<sup>13</sup>. In 1925 a combined garrison was formed in Oświęcim and quartered in the Settlement building complex situated close to the Oświęcim-Rajsko road. There stayed the light artillery battalion soldiers of 21 Bielsko regiment of artillery, 73 regiment of infantry from Katowice, 6 Unit of the Mounted Artillery from Kraków and the Reserve Centre of 23 Division of Infantry, and immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War, soldiers of the 5 Unit of the Mounted Artillery were quartered in buildings from which the Polish Tobacco Monopoly plant had been evacuated<sup>14</sup>.



Fig.3. Oświęcim. Polish Army Barracks. 1930s. In the foreground the officers of the 8 Battery, in the background the latter Block 24 of the KL Auschwitz [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 21059/9]

<sup>11</sup> *ibidem*, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> J.Ptaszkowski, *op.cit.* vol.2, pp.94-98; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Hermina Zwias, vol.85.

<sup>13</sup> B.Kolniak, *op.cit.* p.56; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Czesław Pniak, vol.95, p.238.

<sup>14</sup> account Czesław Pniak, *op.cit.* p.237; J.Ptaszkowski, *op.cit.* vol.2, p.95; letter from Jan Bronikowski, APMO Zespół Materiały, vol.194, pp.9-10, sign.Mat/1441; account Jan Kiszka 7.07.1994, PLAN; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Józef Soja, vol.39, pp.34-36.

## KL Auschwitz

On 3 September 1939 the German Wehrmacht entered Oświęcim starting the military occupation of the town. Polish administration and educational institutions were wound up. Two months later Oświęcim was incorporated into the German Reich under the name of "Auschwitz" as a part of the administrative district "Kreis-Bielitz O/S" within the newly formed the Kattowitz governmental district („Regierungs-Bezirk Kattowitz")<sup>15</sup>.

In the first months of 1940 special SS commissions conducted several on-site inspections of Oświęcim considering the possibility of establishing a concentration camp in this area. These inspections resulted in the decision that the former Barrack Settlement would be the most appropriate site. Shortly afterwards the Wehrmacht transferred the Barrack Settlement to the SS authorities. On 27 April 1940 Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler issued an order that a concentration camp should be set up in Oświęcim and prisoners were to be used to build it. Rudolph Höß was appointed KL Auschwitz commandant<sup>16</sup>.

At first the German Nazis planned for Auschwitz to be a transit camp (*Quarantänelager*) with the task to relieve the crowded prisons of the Kattowitz district, wherein prisoners would be quarantined before being deployed to camps situated in the depths of Germany. This concept however was quickly abandoned and a standard concentration camp was formed in Oświęcim<sup>17</sup>.

The SS started the preparatory works for the deportations. In June 1940 the inhabitants of the Barrack Settlement were expelled<sup>18</sup>, less than a month later - a dozen or so families from houses in Legionów, Krótka and Polna Streets, and on 1 April 1941 - the remaining inhabitants of Zasole. In March and April of that year Polish population from the following nearby villages were also deported: Brzezinka, Pławy, Harmężę, Babice, Broszkowice, Budy and Rajsko, as well as the Jews from the town and region of Oświęcim<sup>19</sup>.

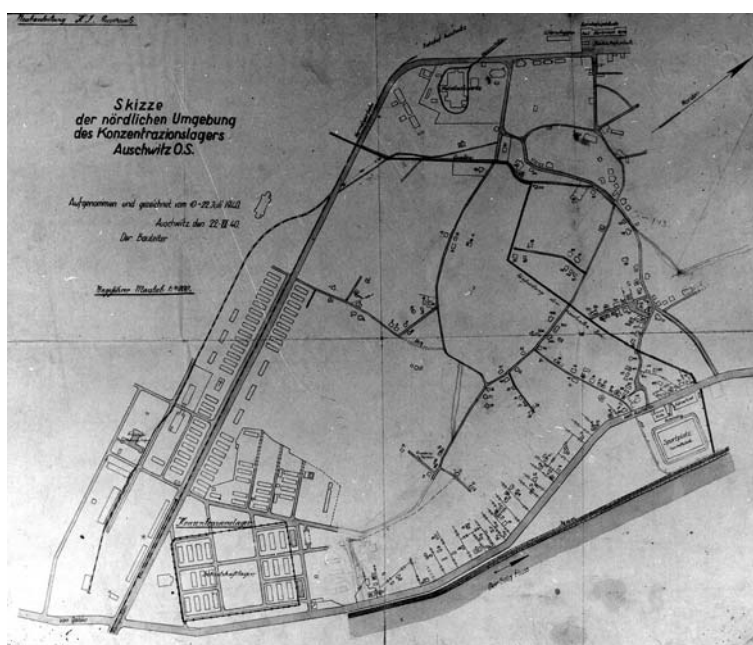


Fig. 4. One of the first plans of the Barrack Settlement and the Zasole district made by the SS in June 1940 before the extension of the camp [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, sign. Dp-Z.Bau/168]

<sup>15</sup> S. Mączka i F. Piper: *Kronika miasta Oświęcimia*, excerpt from the period 1939-1946, APMO Zespół Materiały, sign. Mat./1174; E. Skalińska-Dindorf, op.cit. p.50; A. Szefer: *Przesiedleńcy niemieccy na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1939-1945*, Śląski Instytut Wydawniczy, Katowice 1974, p.16.

<sup>16</sup> D. Czech: *Kalendarz wydarzeń w KL Auschwitz*, Wyd. PMO 1990, pp.9-11.

<sup>17</sup> ibidem, p.120; A. Konieczny: *Uwagi o początkach obozu koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu*, Zeszyty Oświęcimskie No 12, Wyd. PMO 1970, pp.13-14; J. Marszałek: *Obóz jeńców polskich w Oświęcimiu w 1939 r.*, Biuletyn TONo No 18 (Special ed.), June 1993, p.119.

<sup>18</sup> ibidem, pp.37-42; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Jan Knapik, vol.85; Helena Mataniak, vol.66.

<sup>19</sup> D. Czech, op.cit., pp.20, 53, 56, 58, 60-61, 119; D. Czech: *Geneza obozu, jego budowa i rozbudowa*, [in:] *Auschwitz nazistowski obóz śmierci*, Wyd. PMO 1993, pp.23, 25; T. Iwaszko: *Ucieczki więźniów z obozu koncentracyjnego Oświęcim*, Zeszyty Oświęcimskie No 7, Wyd. PMO 1963, pp.4-6; W. Jekielek: *W pobliżu Oświęcimia*, Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza 1963, pp.14-15, 41; J. Kajtoch: *Znałam ludzi dobrej woli*, [in:] *Kominy*, "Czytelnik" 1962, pp.262, 265-268; A. Szefer: *Hitlerowskie próby zasiedlania ziemi śląsko-dąbrowskiej w latach II wojny światowej (1939-1945)*, Śląski Instytut Naukowy, Katowice 1984, pp.125-127, 138, 141; idem: *Przesiedleńcy...* op.cit., pp.67-69; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Augustyn Gładyszczek, vol.37; Kle-

On the deserted area of 40 square kilometres situated in the bifurcation of the Vistula River and the Soła River *Interessengebiet des Konzentrationslager Auschwitz* was established - the interest zone of the Auschwitz concentration camp<sup>20</sup>. The zone was under constant close surveillance and a complex net of informers operated there. This huge area was designed to protect the camp e.g. against partisan groups. The mass deportations of Polish population were to dispense with inconvenient witnesses and to limit the contacts with prisoners which could promote the organisation of help and escapes as well as the exchange of information.



Fig.5. The plan of the camp interest zone worked out in the SS Central Construction Office (marking - MR) [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 6197]

There were also other reasons for deportations. In March 1941 Himmler visited Oświęcim. In a result of this inspection the camp commandant received the order that KL Auschwitz should be enlarged to house 30,000 prisoners, camp workshops should be extended, a camp for 100,000 prisoners of war should be established in the nearby Brzezinka, and the *Interessengebiet* area should be extensively developed. Reichsführer ordered as well to deliver 10,000 prisoners to the syndicate *Interessen Gemeinschaft Farben-Industrie* for the construction of gigantic chemical plant in Dwory in the environs of Oświęcim, where synthetic rubber and methanol were to be produced. He also observed the necessity to place large armament plants in the vicinity of the camp<sup>21</sup>.

To carry out those plans the SS demolished 123 houses in Zasole and 524 farms in Brzezinka<sup>22</sup>. Demolition material was used for the extension of KL Auschwitz, especially for its second part i.e. KL Birkenau in Brzezinka. The grounds and farms of the expelled were taken over with the full inventory to create specialised SS crop and stock farms using the prisoners' labour<sup>23</sup>. Large German plants were moved to Oświęcim: building plants (DAW - *Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH*, DEST - *Deutsche Erd-und Stein Werke GmbH*), arms plants - (*Krupp A.G. Werke*, *Wiechsel Metall UNION Werk*) and alimentary

mens Krzemień, vol.130; Jan Paszek, vol.85; Józef Paszek, vol.48; Józefa Paszek, vol.50; Stanisława Rysztoji, vol.118; Maria Sanak, vol.67; Jadwiga Timmel, vol.27; Józef Tobiasz, vol.38; Stanisław Wesecki, vol.102, Franciszek Zemła, vol.27; APMO Zespół Wspomnień, memories Adam Jurkiewicz, vol.91.

<sup>20</sup> *Akta dochodzeń przeciwko byłemu komendantowi obozu oświęcimskiego R.Hössowi*, APMO Zespół Proces Hössa, vol.12 sign.Dpr-Hd/12, pp.4-6; T.Iwaszko, op.cit., pp.15-17; A.Kalczyński: *Rybacy*, [in:] *Kominy*, op.cit., p.161; E.Pęczalski: *Jak wyglądał obóz oświęcimski?*, AGKBZHWP Zespół OKKr, sign.565, pp.20-21; J.Sehn: *Obóz koncentracyjny Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau)*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warszawa 1956, pp.14-15.

<sup>21</sup> D.Czech: *Geneza...* op.cit., p.25; *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hoessa komendanta obozu oświęcimskiego*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warszawa 1960, p.115.

<sup>22</sup> „*Memorial*” *Obywateli Miasta Oświęcimia*, APMO Zespół Proces Hössa, vol.12 sign.Dpr-Hd/12, app.12, pp.42-44, app.13, pp.45-47; letter from the Bielski District Office to the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków, 31.12.1946, No: L.Bd.1/431/46, AGKBZHWP Zespół OKKr sign.126.

<sup>23</sup> D.Czech: *Kalendarz...* op.cit., pp.202, 203, 204; F.Piper: *Zatrudnienie więźniów KL Auschwitz*, Wyd.PMO 1981, pp.188-203.

plants (*Deutsche Lebensmittel GmbH*)<sup>24</sup>. Over 30 private building companies were engaged in the investments on the camp premises<sup>25</sup>. For their needs the *Gemeinschaftslager* was formed next to the railway station in Oświęcim, i.e. a camp of civilian workers forced to work for KL Auschwitz<sup>26</sup>. With the development of the *interest zone*, as the economic subsidiaries of the camp and engagement of prisoners into the production of German arms industry, the camp management created within the *Interessengebiet* as well as beyond it a network of sub-camps which supported the economic and productive activity of the German invader being a source of cheap labour<sup>27</sup>.

The camp's interest zone was organised as a separate administrative district the head of which became the camp commandant. The commandant was in charge of all administrative matters, he was also the manager of all SS industrial companies situated there. The district had its own police and construction services - *Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS und Polizei Auschwitz O/S* (The SS Central Construction Office of the Waffen SS and Police)<sup>28</sup>.

The SS Central Construction Office was a special SS institution dependent immediately on the SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt in Berlin (SS-WVHA) qualified to work out the technical documentation and manage the constructions within the *interest zone*. This institution was a versatile design department, where over a hundred prisoners supervised by the SS members worked dealing with the following<sup>29</sup>:



- the preparation of concepts and designs for camp structures and their extensions,
- technical infrastructure designs including tracts, bridges, land development,

Fig.6. One of the photos of the extension of the KL Auschwitz taken by the SS as appendices to buildings reports. Visible the so-called „Schutzhaftlagererweiterung”, the complex of the newly built blocks for prisoners [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 20995/56]

<sup>24</sup> ibidem, pp.203-213.

<sup>25</sup> *Wykaz prywatnych firm budowlanych uczestniczących w budowie i rozbudowie KL Auschwitz*, APMO Zespół ZBL, sign.BW 1/6/28, D-Z.Bau/32, pp.1-3.

<sup>26</sup> APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Krzysztof Bednarczyk, vol.76; Wincenty Ciesielczuk, vol.115; Edward Chałupnik, vol.125; Stanisław Czopek, vol.124; Jan Krawczyk, vol.79; Tadeusz Matysek, vol.124; Stanisław Noworyta, vol.79; Jan Sarapata, vol.11; Władysław Sporysz, vol.35, 39; Antoni Sroka, vol.-; Alfred Ulmarz and Andrzej Biedak, vol.125.

<sup>27</sup> *Akta dochodzeń...* op.cit. vol.12, pp.7-8; F.Piper: op.cit. pp.227-228, 234-240, 382-385; idem: *Podobozy KL Auschwitz w świetle publikacji Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu*, Zaganie Śląskie z.1 1976, pp.148-151.

<sup>28</sup> *Akta dochodzeń...* op.cit. vol.12, pp.6-7; Protocol of the Eugeniusz Nosal statement, *Akta dochodzeń...* op.cit. vol.4, pp.63-65; A.Lasik: *Obozowe władze SS*, [in:] *Auschwitz nazistowski obóz śmierci*, Wyd.PMO 1993, p.41.

<sup>29</sup> A.Palarczykowa: *Władze obozu hitlerowskiego w Oświęcimiu...*, Archeion vol.40 1964, pp.246-247; F.Piper: *Zatrudnienie...* op.cit. pp.134-135; I.Trochanowski: *Zadania Baubüro w KL Auschwitz-Birkenau*, Biuletyn TOnO No 18 (Special ed.), June 1993, pp.61-62; Zespół b.więźniów KL Auschwitz-Birkenau: *Działalność „Zentralbauleitung”*, Biuletyn TOnO No 20, March 1994, pp.64-77; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Anatol Adamczyk, vol.97; Johan Frederik Beckman, vol.114; Ryszard Brzozowicz, vol.35 (dupl.); Stanisław Czopek, vol.124; Tadeusz Flis, vol.130; Zenon Frank, vol.126; Janusz Goślinowski, vol.31; Zbigniew Goszczyński, vol.105; Krystyna Horczak, vol.135; Włodzimierz Kiszczyński, vol.115; Józef Koczorowski, vol.60; Jan Kowski, vol.71; Józef Kret, vol.4; Ludwik Lawin, vol.114; Rudolf Latawiec, vol.99; Janusz Manalowicz, vol.75; Jan Mrozek, vol.95; Eugeniusz Nosal, vol.29; Ludwik Piotrowski, vol.68; Władysław Plaskura, vol.17, 115; Stanisław Serafini, vol.19; Igo Trochanowski, vol.105, 115; Pavel Vitek, vol.74; Witold Wierusz, vol.77; APMO Zespół Wspomnień, memories: M.S.Foryś, vol.180; Seweryn Frączek, vol.66.

- surveying and cost estimate of building investments,
- spatial development planning of the *interest zone*,
- architectural and building measurements,
- preparation of design models of the KL Auschwitz land development plans and mother camp extension<sup>30</sup>,
- landscaping (gardens and squares for the SS housing estate),
- preparation of photographic records of the construction works progress<sup>31</sup>.

In addition to these the *Zentralbauleitung* was the investor and the general building contractor and thus in charge of the construction material depot called *Bauhof*<sup>32</sup>, the timber yard called *Holzhof*<sup>33</sup>, camp building workshops and the stock of machinery. All building assignments - *Bauwerke* (BW) listed on special lists<sup>34</sup> were recorded in the Central Construction Office in five basic groups. They had separate numbers and precise localisation (*Baugelände*) within the *interest zone*:

- 1) KL-Gelände Auschwitz: investments connected with the extension of the main camp (KL Auschwitz I - *Stammlager*) and sub-camps (*Babitz, Birkenau, Budi, Harmense, Plawy, Raisko*), the construction of roads and the technical infrastructure,
- 2) KGL-Gelände Auschwitz: investments connected with the construction of the camp in Brzezinka (KL Auschwitz II - *Birkenau, Kriegsgefangenenlager*),
- 3) Industrie-Gelände Auschwitz: investments connected with a Krupp syndicate plant (from 1.10.1943 - *Weichsel Union Metallwerke*) and German Equipment Plant DAW (*Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH Werk Auschwitz*) in Oświęcim,
- 4) Erd-und-Steinwerksgelände Auschwitz: investments connected with the administrative and production base and residential facilities for German Clay and Stone Plant DEST (*Deutsche Erd-und-Steinwerke GmbH Kieswerk Auschwitz O/S*),
- 5) TWL - SS Truppenwirtschaftslager: investments connected with the economic and storage facilities for the SS military troops in Oświęcim (on the premises of the former Polish Tobacco Monopoly Plant).

<sup>30</sup> APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Zenon Frank, vol.126; APMO Zespół Wspomnień, memories Janusz Machnowski, vol.136.

<sup>31</sup> see: photographic album „*Bauleitung d.Waffen SS und Polizei KL Auschwitz*”, APMO Dział Dokumentacji Mechanicznej, comp. Yad Vashem, K.IV-8520/89/81; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Ludwik Lawin vol.114.

<sup>32</sup> J.Bielecki: *Kto ratuje jedno życie...* Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza 1990, pp.113, 134; F.Piper: *Zatrudnienie...* op.cit., pp.105, 134, 142; T.Sobolewicz: *Wytrzymałem więc jestem*, Wydawnictwo „Śląsk” 1986, pp.71-76; I.Strzelecka: *Pierwsi Polacy w KL Auschwitz*, Zeszyty Oświęcimskie No 18, Wyd.PMO 1983, pp.50-51; A.Strzelecki: *Ewakuacja, likwidacja i wyzwolenie KL Auschwitz*, Wyd.PMO 1982, p.124; testimonies: Zbigniew Bendkowski, vol.17; Frantisek Benes, vol.78; Zenon Frank, vol.126; Marian Gisterek, vol.118; Janusz Gośliński, vol.31; Bolesław Grzyb, vol.49; Edward Kiczmachowski, vol.11; August Korzuch, vol.52; Zbigniew Majewski, vol.71; Józef Małynia, vol.79; Piotr Nawrot, vol.43; Zygmunt Nowacki, vol.41; Roman Olszyna, vol.74; Aleksy Przybyła, vol.96, 110; Tadeusz Przybyłowicz, vol.49; Stanisław Rubaszewski, vol.29; Stanisław Serafini, vol.19; Jerzy Skowroński, vol.74; Kazimierz Sowa, vol.71, 97; Jerzy Strzelecki, vol.106; Leon Szwengler, vol.45; Witold Wierusz, vol.77; Leszek Więckowski, vol.41, APMO Zespół Oświadczeń; memories: Stefan Czerniejewski, vol.108; Artur Krzetuski, vol.22; Karol Kuldane, vol.92; APMO Zespół Wspomnień.

<sup>33</sup> J.Bielecki: *Kto ratuje...* op.cit., p.114; F.Piper: *Zatrudnienie...* op.cit., pp.134, 142-144; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Zbigniew Majewski, vol.71; Waldemar Nowakowski, vol.94; Tadeusz Przybyłowicz, vol.49, Andrzej Rablin, vol.50

<sup>34</sup> *Aufteilung der Bauwerke (BW) für die Bauten, Außen- und Nebenanlagen des Bauvorhabens Konzentrationslager Auschwitz O/S*, APMO Zespół ZBL, sign.BW1/1/1 D-Z.Bau/1, p.11; *Aufteilung der Bauwerke (BW) für die Bauten, Außen- und Nebenanlagen des Bauvorhabens Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz O/S*, APMO Zespół ZBL, sign.BW1/2/13 D-Z.Bau/17, pp.136-138.

All designed, newly constructed or converted buildings in the area administered by the camp management had assignment numbers put on spatial development plans, what was also practised in other building documents: correspondence, building cost estimates, contracts, official acceptance records, lists and material orders, reports and accounts.

The SS Central Construction Office activity led to a gradual extension of the main camp, which made possible constant reception of more and more transports of prisoners sent from the General Government district and from Silesia. The analysis of the preserved *Zentralbauleitung* dossiers proved that the SS investments were extensive and referred not only to structures immediately connected with the function of the camp as a place of detention. Buildings were erected to provide housing, service, recreational and economic facilities to the camp crew; the industrial production satisfying the war needs of the Third Reich was organised, the technical infrastructure and roads were built, gradually the *interest zone* was developed for agriculture. Within the SS manor district<sup>35</sup> (*SS-Gutsbezirk*) planned here back in 1940, targeted at the development of crop and stock farming around the Auschwitz camp, the SS placed in the *interest zone* a chicken farm, a fish-farm (*Harmense*), gardening facility (*Raisko*), agro-breeding farms (*Babitz, Birkenau, Budi, Plawy*) which cultivated cereals, potatoes, sugar-beets, fodder beet and worked in pig, cattle breeding and poultry rearing. Land melioration was carried out and river-beds of the Soła and Vistula were regulated. Two water intakes with pumping station and mechanical-biological sewage treatment plant were built.

By the August 1942 the German Nazis had built a new camp in Brzezinka. Its earlier-planned function, as a place of detention for prisoners of war (*Kriegsgefangenenlager*), was changed. In connection with the *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage* action<sup>36</sup> (Final Solution of the Jewish Question) initiated by Hitler and implemented by the SS, the *Zentralbauleitung* built four gas chambers with crematoria on the premises of Brzezinka and transferred them to the camp administration. The genocide of the Jewish population started: Jews were delivered to the camp from camps and temporary ghettos formed by the SS in France, Belgium, Greece, Germany, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Italy. Simultaneously the *Zentralbauleitung* prepared storage and technical facilities for the plunder of the murdered people's property and for human dead bodies' exploitation. KL Auschwitz became the central place of genocide, where along with the gradual extermination of prisoners of various nationalities through executions, hard labour and inhuman living conditions, the instantaneous mass murder of hundred thousands of Jews was carried out.

**Between 1940 and 1945 in KL Auschwitz the German Nazis murdered at least 1,100,000 out of 1,300,000 people deported to the camp. In this tragic number the biggest group are the people of Jewish origin of whom 960,000 men, women and children died in this camp. German crime affected also 74,000 Poles, 21,000 Roma, and 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war detained in the camp. Historians estimate that further 12,000 victims were Czechs, Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavians, Frenchmen, Germans, Austrians and representatives of other nations registered in KL Auschwitz<sup>37</sup>.**

<sup>35</sup> D.Czech: *Geneza...* op.cit., p.24; A.Pankowicz: *KL Auschwitz w procesach norymberskich (1945-1949)*, Zeszyty Oświęcimskie No 18, Wyd.PMO 1983, p.297 .

<sup>36</sup> D.Czech: *Kalendarz...* op.cit., pp.77-78, 120, 126, 127.

<sup>37</sup> F.Piper: *Ilu ludzi zginęło w KL Auschwitz. Liczba ofiar w świetle źródeł i badań 1945-1990*, Wyd.PMO, Cieszyn 1992, pp.122-124.

## After the liberation

On 27 January 1945 the four-and-a-half-year period when the German Nazi extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau existed, came to an end. On that day the first groups of the 100. Lvov Infantry Division of the 60. Army of the First Ukrainian Front entered the camp. They brought freedom to seven thousand prisoners who had not been evacuated inside the Reich<sup>38</sup>. Many of the freed were severely ill, famished and needed immediate hospitalisation. In the first days of February a Camp Hospital of the Polish Red Cross was organised on the premises of the former camp, which along with Soviet field hospitals provided medical care to 4,500 persons<sup>39</sup>. A proper burial was granted to those who did not live to see the liberation. On 28 February 1945 the funeral took place in Oświęcim. The deceased were buried in a collective grave in the vicinity of the main camp<sup>40</sup>.



Fig.7. Oświęcim, February 1945. Photo taken from the building of Polish Tobacco Monopoly in the south-east direction. In the foreground visible the Bauhof grounds of the KL Auschwitz building yard. In the background on the left: "Schutzhaftlagererweiterung", the historical suburb of Oświęcim, the main camp development including the building of the so-called "Theatre". Photo by St.Mucha [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 796 and 797]

From the beginning of February 1945 the area of the former camp was inspected by special commissions qualified for investigating, collecting evidence of and documenting German crimes. On the part of the Soviets - *the Extraordinary Soviet State Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the German-Fascist Aggressors*<sup>41</sup>, on the part of the Poles - *the Main Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland* and *the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków*<sup>42</sup>. By the autumn of the same year the members of those Commissions had inspected the premises and buildings, recognised the material traces of the crime, executed autopsies, accumulated and protected thousands of camp documents. Many former inmates were interviewed.

<sup>38</sup> A.Forbert: *W Oświęcimiu po oswobodzeniu obozu*, Przegląd Lekarski No 1, 1980; A.Strzelecki: *Ostatnie dni obozu Auschwitz*, Wyd.PMO 1990, pp.26, 28.

<sup>39</sup> H.Kodź: *Praca ochotniczego zespołu PCK w szpitalu obozowym w Oświęcimiu*, 1945 (unpublished), AGKBZHWP Zespół OKBZHWP, sign.129 1344/46, pp.2-23; A.Strzelecki op.cit., pp.32-44.

<sup>40</sup> APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, testimonies: Zdzisław Bosek vol.82; Anna Zięba (photographic albums, vol.20).

<sup>41</sup> *Komunikat Nadzwyczajnej Komisji Państwowej dla ustalenia i zbadania zbrodni niemiecko-faszystowskich agresorów i ich spółników*, „Krasnaja Zwiezda” No 106, 8.05.1945, AGKBZHWP Zespół OKKr, sign.148, pp.4-29.

<sup>42</sup> R.Kotarba: *Okręgowa Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Krakowie 1945-1953*, „Krzysztofory” vol.17, Kraków 1990; M.Motas: *Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce i jej oddziały terenowe w 1945 roku - Wybór Dokumentów*, GKBZpNP-IPN Warszawa 1995; idem: *Zabezpieczenie dowodów zbrodni i działalność komisji do zbadania zbrodni popełnionych w KL Auschwitz*, IPN Warszawa, a paper presented during a popular-scientific conference held 17-18 Jan.1995 in Oświęcim in the 50th anniversary of the KL Auschwitz liberation [ZG TOnO]; APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Krystyna Szymańska, vol.125; AGKBZHWP: Zespół GKBZHWP, sign.123, pp.30-34; Zespół OKKr, sign.123, pp.13-14; sign.128, pp.2-3, 3-5; sign.565, pp.23-26.

Till mid-January 1946 the Red Army administered the premises of the former camp in Oświęcim, Brzezinka and in Rajsko. As early as in the first half of 1945 in former *Stammlager* and Birkenau transit camps were formed for German prisoners of war who were later taken away to the USSR. At that time the *Volksdeutschen* were held there, as well as persons of alleged German origin<sup>43</sup>. Soviet military authorities treated the occupied camp assets as war spoils; thus not only movable property gathered by the Germans, but also KL Auschwitz documents were taken away to the east, and Soviet soldiers plundered camp buildings, dismantled wooden barracks which they then took away to Silesia to sell. In some cases human ashes were raked up and washed in search for dental gold and jewellery. In this disgraceful trade took part both the Red Army soldiers and inhabitants of the vicinity of the former camp and farther areas<sup>44</sup>. Qualified by the then Kraków Voivod already in February 1945 a special protective formation called: *The Auschwitz Camp Guard* led by a retired Polish Army major M i e c z y s ł a w Ś w i d e r<sup>45</sup> was unable to counteract those atrocities. That formation did not have access to buildings occupied by the Soviet army, and out of planned 300 persons only 67 unarmed guards were in service. To make matters worse those persons did not receive due pay, what favoured the demoralisation in the ranks of guard members as well<sup>46</sup>.

At that time the life round the former camp was gradually coming back to normal. The expelled inhabitants of Oświęcim, Brzezinka, Harmęże, Pławy, Babice, Rajsko came back. Not all however found homesteads. Those whose grounds lay closest to the camp returned to empty places. In gloomy camp buildings they would recognise the building materials taken from their own demolished houses. They began from scratch at first raising primitive buildings out of wooden post-camp barracks handed over to them by the communal authorities<sup>47</sup>. In Oświęcim all German inscriptions were removed, the town council was elected, streets, pavements, water network and sewerage network were repaired, a slaughterhouse and a bazaar were opened and some jobs provided. Five elementary schools, two secondary schools and a vocational school were opened. The chemical plant in Dwory was taken over from the Soviets, already stripped almost bare of industrial devices. According to the population census of May 1945 Oświęcim had 6,948 inhabitants<sup>48</sup>.

The year 1945 ended with an important parliamentary initiative. On 31 December on the general session of the Home National Council (KRN) Alfred Fiderkiewicz, a former KL Auschwitz camp inmate, lodged an application of the commemoration of the extermination camp grounds as a place of the martyrdom of the Polish nation and of other nations. On 1 February 1946 the Parliamentary Commission of Culture and Arts accepted this application unanimously<sup>49</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> APMO Zespół Oświadczeń, account Jan Gondek, vol.83; AGKBZHwP Zespół GKBZHwP: letter from GKBZN to MSZ 15.10.1945, sign.52<sup>B</sup>; Z.Woźniczka: *Obozy pracy przymusowej na Górnym Śląsku*, Wyd.Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 1994, pp.64-65; A.Wrazidło: *Zdobycz wojenna - człowiek. Śląska tragedia '45*, „Trybuna Śląska” No 69, 23.03.1990.

<sup>44</sup> AAN Zespół URM sign.5/760, pp.18, 20, 23; AGKBZHwP Zespół GKBZHwP, sign.52<sup>B</sup>, p.1; Report of the Kraków Department of the Special Commission for Fighting against Abuse and Economic Harmful Activity, 23.02.1946, pp.1-5 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała]; comp. E.Dmitrów: *Niemcy i okupacja hitlerowska w oczach Polaków. Poglądy i opinie z lat 1945-1948*, „Czytelnik”, Warszawa 1987, pp.107-108; W.S.: *Oświęcim zabezpieczyć przed zniszczeniem i profanacją*, „Dziennik Polski” No 73, 15.03.1946; *Profanacja mogił Oświęcimia. Poszukiwacze złota w popiołach ludzkich*, „Dziennik Ludowy” No 138, 20.05.1946; S.Stomma: *Problem Oświęcimia*, „Tygodnik Powszechny” No 27, 6.07.1947.

<sup>45</sup> AGKBZHwP Zespół OKKr, sign.143, pp.2-7.

<sup>46</sup> AAN Zespół URM sign.5/760, p.19; *Sprawa ochrony obozu koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu*, dated? - after 8.01.1946 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała].

<sup>47</sup> AP Oświęcim, Zespół GO 24: protocol in re of distribution of the barracks, 1.12.1945; AGKBZHwP Zespół OKKr, sign.143, p.11.

<sup>48</sup> E.Skalińska-Dindorf, op.cit., pp.56-59; S.Mączka i F.Piper: *Kronika miasta Oświęcimia*, op.cit., pp.20, 21.

<sup>49</sup> AAN: Zespół KRN 31, p.60; Zespół KRN 32, p.6.





Fig. 8. Brzezinka, May 1945. Photo taken from the Gate of Death in the eastern direction. In the foreground visible the side track to the camp. Phot. St.Kolowca and St.Łuczko [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 21366/27]

At the beginning of 1946 a survey and protection commission of the Temporary State Management (TZP) worked on the premises of the former camp. The real property in Oświęcim, Brzezinka and Rajsko were taken over from the Soviet military authorities. The land and buildings were scrupulously inspected, plans, inventory descriptions and official records were prepared. All movables were inventoried<sup>50</sup>. Of paramount importance was then to protect the former camp against further plunder and devastation, to settle debts towards the guard services and to start “the planned economy on the post-camp grounds”. About 950 preserved barracks were to satisfy the needs of the army, the industry and the neighbouring population affected by the war<sup>51</sup>.

Prior to taking over the former camp buildings from the Red Army the preparations started for a local spatial development plan of the town of Oświęcim. In October 1945 the Regional Urban Planning Office (RUPP) in Kraków informed the municipal authorities in Oświęcim that work had started to prepare a “*Land Development Plan of Oświęcim*” in charge of which was architect Wanda Wyszyńska<sup>52</sup>. Professor Romuald Gutt from Warszawa and Professor Tadeusz Tołwiński<sup>53</sup> from Kraków were invited to co-operate as experts.

In April 1946 the first group of former inmates supervised by Tadeusz Wąsowicz came to Oświęcim to start works for organising the place of the memory - the future Museum. *The Permanent Guard of the Auschwitz Camp* was organised. The incentive for creating the Museum was essentially the deep care of those who survived the nightmare of KL Auschwitz to prevent further deterioration and profanation of the resting-place of the camp victims<sup>54</sup>. The area of incineration pits was temporarily enclosed. In September 1946 the daily “*Dziennik Ludowy*” wrote: “*The camp area which until recently was prey to graveyard vultures, now thanks to the energetic action of former inmates, to the co-operation of local forces and to the help of national security organs - is completely free of those criminals*”<sup>55</sup>. No less attention was devoted to the adaptation of the post camp blocks for the future Museum, for cleaning them up from dirt and rubbles. Flats for the staff were also planned.

<sup>50</sup> AAN Zespół URM sign.5/760, pp.45-46, 67-76; AP Oświęcim Zespół RUL (dispersed acts): protocol TZP 17.01.1946; protocol TZP 26.01.1946, pp.1-6; protocol TZP 7.02.1946, pp.1-3; protocol TZP 11.02.1946, p.1; *Sprawozdanie z działalności komisji inwentaryzacyjnej i zabezpieczającej T.P.Z. na terenie obozu koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu od dn. 21.I.1946 - 10.II.1946*, 13.02.1946, pp.1-2; letter from TZP to Kraków Voivod 15.03.1946.

<sup>51</sup> AP Oświęcim Zespół RUL (dispersed acts): report TZP 14.02.1946, p.1.

<sup>52</sup> AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia: Letter from RUPP in Kraków to Town Management Office in Oświęcim 1.10.1945.

<sup>53</sup> T.Tołwiński: *Referat do programu planu Oświęcimia*, 11.03.1946, AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia.

<sup>54</sup> AAN Zespół URM sign.5/760, p.25; AGKBZHWP Zespół OKKr sign.86a, p.5; Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to the Local Court Prosecution Office in Wadowice (with the list of detained)18.04.1947, *Lista statystów z Oświęcimia zatrzymanych jako hieny cmentarne przez Stałą Ochronę Obozu Oświęcimskiego*, 4.07.1947; T.Szymański: *Moje spotkania z hm. Tadeuszem Wąsowiczem ps. „Baca”*, Biuletyn TOnO No 29, October 1996, pp.14-15.

<sup>55</sup> „*Dziennik Ludowy*” No 265, 28.09.1946, p.3.

It was negotiated with the District Liquidation Office (RUL) in Kraków to take over the movables, which were to be the exhibits, and construction materials necessary for the repair of museum buildings. The activity of the Social Building Company (SPB) from Katowice within the boundaries of the future Museum had to be urgently deleted. On behalf of the Ministry of Reconstruction, the Company was engaged in dismantling the wooden post-camp barracks and delivering them for rebuilding towns and villages all over Poland. Only in 1946 at least 160 barracks were taken away from Brzezinka<sup>56</sup>.

At the turn of July 1946 the Regional Urban Planning Office in Kraków worked out a draft decree on the takeover of the areas of the former concentration camp in Oświęcim by the Polish State with the intention of creating the monument of the martyrdom of the Polish nation and of other nations.<sup>57</sup> Wanda Wszyńska specified the scope of the future Museum taking into account the recommendations of the special commission of experts that on 26 May 1946 prepared arguments for the programme of spatial development of the former camp premises and its vicinity. The commission suggested the nationalisation of the hamlet Harmęże, Pławy, Brzezinka and Rajska and parts of the town of Oświęcim of joint area of 1,720 hectares, although there was also an idea of expropriation of all former area of the *Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz*<sup>58</sup>. The draft decree was consulted with the Polish Society of Former Political Prisoners (Tadeusz Hołuj), with the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków (Jan Sehn), with the Land Office of Kraków Voivodship, with the Administrative Department of the Kraków Voivodship Office. It was then conveyed to the Central Museums Management in Warszawa (CZM). The project was also presented to the Commission of Culture and Art of the Home National Council which in September supported this endeavour<sup>59</sup>.

The perspective of extensive expropriations from the beginning met a strong opposition of the local populace who were returning from expulsion. Due to the protests sent to Home National Council and the Ministry of Culture and the Arts the suggested perimeter of the Museum was revised when the wishes of the community concerned were taken into account<sup>60</sup>. As Tadeusz Wąsowicz, the then manager said: *“The State Museum (...) would not be able to support the construction work based on harm done to the population already once badly experienced”*<sup>61</sup>. After consulting the Land Office the suggested the Museum premises were limited to 1,343 hectares.

<sup>56</sup> AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 23, p.4; T.Kinowski: *Oświęcim na liście światowego dziedzictwa*, „Muzea Walki” No 19, 1986, p.98.

<sup>57</sup> AGKBZHwP Zespół OKKr sign.84, pp.4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17; AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia: *Dekret z dnia... o przejęciu przez Państwo Polskie na własność terenów b. obozu Koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu* (with the copies of opinions), pp.1-4.

<sup>58</sup> Jan Sehn, the Head of the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków justified the necessity to expropriate the area of the *Interessengebiet* for the Museum needs: *“At the meeting discussing the definition of the area of the future place of memory of the martyrdom of the Polish nation and of other nations in Oświęcim and during the visit to the scene of crime on 25 May 1946, I was of the opinion that this place should have a proper technical background and I thought the Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz to be the best boundaries shown on German maps owned by the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków and the authorities and offices concerned. This thesis is justified because most villages and settlements within the Interessengebiet were almost completely demolished. Their restitution is pointless due to the high cost and first of all because of improper climate conditions. Obviously these expropriation could be possible only as long as proper compensations were given to the inhabitants in the form of the land owned the Exchequer”*, AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia.

<sup>59</sup> AAN Zespół KRN 31, p.221; AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia: *Protokół komisji terenowej w sprawie planu zagospodarowania obszarów obozu w Oświęcimiu z dnia 25 maja 1946 roku; Sprawozdanie z komisyjnej podróży służbowej odbytej dnia 14 i 15 listopada (...) do Oświęcimia, Harmęża i Rajska*, Kraków dnia 16.11.1946.

<sup>60</sup> AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia: *Protocol of a meeting of the MKiS delegate with the representatives of Oświęcim, Brzezinka, Pławy*, 22.01.1948; letter from PMO to Central Museums Management, 6.02.1948.

<sup>61</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to Central Museums Management, 15.01.1947, p.4.

On 14 June 1947 i.e. in the seventh anniversary of the arrival of the first transport of inmates from Tarnów to the KL Auschwitz, a meeting took place in Oświęcim of those who survived the imprisonment in the camp. That day at 11 a.m. the Museum was ceremonially opened. Over 50,000 persons came. Requiem masses were celebrated on the yard of Block XI, in Block IV and in other places of the former camp. After numerous speeches people formed a several-kilometre-long march towards Brzezinka. Delegations from all over Poland carried wreaths and flags<sup>62</sup>.

A special issue of "Wolni Ludzie" (Free People), the magazine of the Polish Society of Former Political Prisoners (PZBWP), described the work that had been done so far over the creation of the Place of Memory. According to the suggestions at that time, the Museum was to comprise: the premises of the main camp, the camp in Brzezinka, the cemetery - the incineration pits and crematoria, the mausoleum and the living monument of the Polish nation - the vocational school in the blocks called *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung*<sup>63</sup>. The Act on *the commemoration of the martyrdom of the Polish nation and of other nations in Oświęcim* prepared by the government was published. The State would expropriate a part of the land of the former camp to organise the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum as well as the Centre for Vocational Training for Polish Young People where children and orphans of the former inmates of German Nazi prisons and concentration camps would be granted priority. The Minister of Culture and the Arts was authorised to transfer those grounds under the PZBWP management. The authors wrote in the justification of that Act: "*The Monuments of Martyrdom in Oświęcim and Majdanek have in fact existed ever since the invader was expelled from Poland and are maintained from credits of the Ministry of Culture and the Arts; their organisation is so advanced that they are ready to be legally acknowledged*"<sup>64</sup>.



Fig. 9. Oświęcim, May 1946. In the background visible former "Schutzhaftlagererweiterung". Photo taken in the south-east direction [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 9062]

<sup>62</sup> J.Słowacki i S.Zborowski: *Oświęcim 14.6.1940 - 18.1.1945*, Brochure published by the "Care for Oświęcim" Society 14.07.1947; AGKBZHWP Zespół OKKr sign.145; Cz.Stanisławski i W.Rawicz: *Podniosłe dni Oświęcimia. Otwarcie Muzeum Martyrologii polskiej*, „Wolni Ludzie” No 5, 1.07.1947; A.Strzelecki: *W historii Muzeum dzień pierwszy*, „PRO MEMORIA” No 7, June 1997, pp.41-42.

<sup>63</sup> 20 post-camp blocks adjacent to north off the Museum in Oświęcim.

<sup>64</sup> „Wolni Ludzie” No 5, 1.07.1947: *Jak będzie wyglądało muzeum*; ibidem: L.Rajewski: *Oświęcim 14.6.190 - 14.6.1947*.

## The Museum boundaries

On 2 July 1947 Polish Parliament passed *the Act on the commemoration of martyrdom of the Polish Nation and other Nations in Oświęcim*<sup>65</sup>. However in the accepted version the legislator gave up the idea of organising the Centre for Vocational Training for Polish Young People on the post-camp grounds. The Ministry of Education opposed this idea claiming that: *“The premises of the former camp and the atmosphere of hatred and hostility are not fit for educating young people”*. This opinion was supported by former inmates. The detailed description of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum boundaries was to be stated in the decree of the Minister of Culture and the Arts, given in agreement with the Minister of Public Administration, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of the Agricultural Reforms and the Minister of Reconstruction (article 2) after consulting the Council of the Protection of Monuments of Martyrdom which had just been formed<sup>66</sup>.

The specification of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum boundaries proved however an arduous process which dragged on for years. Out of 1,343 hectares agreed-upon in 1946 in Brzezinka, Pławy, Harmęże, Oświęcim and over 4 hectares in Rajsko (greenhouses) that were to create the Museum along with its technical background<sup>67</sup>, remained less than 450 hectares already after the conference of 13 October 1947<sup>68</sup>. In the conference report Irena Woźniakowska justified the limitation of the Museum range: *“The ponds in Harmęże and Pławy intended to be the economic base (of the Museum - note MR) had been taken over by the Peasants' Self-Help Cooperative (Samopomoc Chłopska) which had made investments there up to 6,000,000 PLN and runs a fish farm. In the present economic situation the State cannot afford to expropriate and pay compensatory damages for such a huge area, so this idea (...) - was dropped”*. Simultaneously at the conference which took place the previous day in Oświęcim with the participation of Ludwik Rajewski, the Ministry of Culture and the Arts delegate, it was decided not to build any houses or housing estates within the radius of 300 metres from the Museum line<sup>69</sup>. However after Rajewski had consulted the representatives of the Brzezinka and Pławy communities on 22 January 1948, Tadeusz Wąsowicz, the then Museum manager, described to the State authorities the attitude of the neighbouring population: *“...as far as the leaving of a certain undeveloped space is concerned, the community expresses their doubts, they clearly want to strengthen gradually their influence on the area around the camp in Brzezinka to achieve the liquidation of the camp and leaving only burial-grounds with the crematorium as a monument. Right away this is not clearly visible, however there is no doubt about it”*. Wąsowicz appealed for swift preparation of the executive order to the law of 2 July 1947, so that the rational activity can begin on post-camp premises, since, he claimed the hitherto activity of the Museum especially on the premises of Brzezinka *“boils down to protecting these grounds against further looting and to showing (...) excursions around.”*<sup>70</sup>.

On 3 July 1951 the commission met again to discuss the problem of Museum boundaries<sup>71</sup>. After a visit to the premises it was concluded that the Museum would comprise alto-

<sup>65</sup> Dz.U. Nr 52 item 265.

<sup>66</sup> ibidem, item 264.

<sup>67</sup> According to this concept out of joint area of 1,343 ha - 1/3 would constitute the Museum managed by the MKiS, and 2/3 would be the economic base (fish ponds, agricultural land), which being subject to the PZBWP was to support the Museum area (note MR on the basis of the assumptions worked out by the State Museum at the beginning of 1947, PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała); comp. *Oświęcim*, raport of Irena Woźniakowska, 18.02.1947, AGKBZHwP Zespół OKKr sign.145, p.5.

<sup>68</sup> AGKBZHwP Zespół OKKr sign.145, p.29.

<sup>69</sup> *Sprawozdanie z konferencji w dniu 13/X.1947 r. w sprawie organizacji Muzeum Martyrologii Polskiej i Międzynarodowej w Oświęcimiu* [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała].

<sup>70</sup> AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m. Oświęcimia: letter from PMO to CZM, 6.02.1948, No: or.org/143/48.

<sup>71</sup> AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 21, pp.9-12.

gether 225 hectares divided into two complexes: one (eastern) on the area of the cadastral community of Oświęcim and Brzezinka, the other (western) on the area of the communities of Brzezinka and Pławy. For economic reasons the commission decided to exclude from the Museum the whole of *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* since one part of it had already been transferred to the Jaworzno Coal Industry Union (JZW), and the other part was planned to be transferred to the Ministry of Culture and the Arts. A different stand was taken in relation to the so-called “Villa Hoess” - the former house of the camp commandant -



Fig.10. Brzezinka, May 1945. Photo taken from the Gate of the Death in the north-east direction. Visible the empty village areas. Phot. St.Mucha [Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 842]

suggesting its incorporation to the Museum<sup>72</sup>. It was recommended to build ring roads around Brzezinka south and north off the former Birkenau in connection with the necessity of closing the existing roads that ran across the basic camp and were used by the local population. Within the Museum boundaries was to be the so-called “Mexico”, the side track from the *Judenrampe* to the former KL Birkenau (within a belt of 7 metres), the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters, former camp waterworks, potato stores and the foreground of the Gate of Death. However the post-camp greenhouses in Rajsko were given up being taken over by a local State Farm (PGR), the “*economic arguments*” were considered to be correct<sup>73</sup> (see Fig.11 p.28).

In September 1952 the Kraków Regional Land Surveying Company finished works on the expropriation survey. The arrangements of the commission of 3 July 1951 to exclude the side track leading to the Gate of Death were taken into account. The Museum was to consist of four separate complexes: in Oświęcim - the former *Stammlager* (19 ha), the collective grave of prisoners and the area of the former camp slaughterhouse (3 ha); in Brzezinka - the former KL Birkenau with “Mexico”, the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters, with the foreground of the Gate of Death and potato stores (213 ha). The whole area of the Museum according to this project would have 235 hectares<sup>74</sup>. On the basis of the expropriation survey the Museum prepared a project of the executory provision which in July 1953 was sent to the Central Museums Management for evaluation. The amended document was accepted.

However already in December 1953 the President of the Committee for Town Planning and Architecture decided that until a detailed local development plan was prepared the executory provision should not be published<sup>75</sup>. The Museum firmly objected to this decision, supported by the Presidium of the Voivodship Home National Council (WRN) in Kraków: “*According to the Museum Management the project of the spatial development of the community of Brzezinka, within which no industrial buildings are to be erected, must perforce make allowance for and be adapted to the fact that the State Museum exists within the boundaries provided by the law of 1947. Since these borders would have reached considerably farther, because they assumed that all grounds of the former concentration camp would be included*

<sup>72</sup> Earlier the Ministry of Culture and the Art decided to exclude the “Villa Hoess” from the Museum and returned to the pre-war owner.

<sup>73</sup> AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 21, p.7.

<sup>74</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: *Opis granic terenu Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu*, Krakowskie Okręgowe Przedsiębiorstwo Miernicze 22.09.1952; letter from PMO to CZM, July 1953, No: I-3)364)53.

<sup>75</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from President of the Committee for Town Planning and Architecture to MKiS, 17.12.1953 No: Nr.I-Pr.2/02-6/24/pfn/53.

*within the Museum and the present project is a minimum project restricting the Museum to the area most tightly connected with the camp, therefore it is unquestionable that the detailed plan whenever finished, must not change the project of the boundaries...*" it was argued in the letter addressed to the Central Museums Management<sup>76</sup>.

Concurrently with the problem of funds for redeeming the museum grounds appeared the question who was to table a motion for starting the expropriation proceedings. It was discussed whether the expropriation awards should be paid in cash, or whether land should be given in exchange. The Central Management opted for the latter. Because of the lingering procedure of the boundaries co-ordination, introduction of numerous corrections and eliminating errors, the funds for redeeming the grounds were not estimated in the following years<sup>77</sup>.

On 8 January 1955 in the letter to the Central Museums Management, the Museum management summed up the hitherto existing state of work. In Oświęcim "Villa Hoess" should be included in the Museum, the former camp slaughterhouse should be transferred to the State Motor Transport Company (PKS), and the collective grave of prisoners should be transferred to the Town of Oświęcim, in Brzezinka the "Mexico" area was corrected for the sake of the pre-war owners, the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters were dropped together with the foreground of the Gate of Death and potato stores situated at the former female camp of KL Birkenau. It was suggested that the necessity of keeping a 250-metre belt of undeveloped area around the former camp should be added to the executory provision<sup>78</sup>.

Sent for interdepartmental adjustments, the project was criticised by the Minister of Finance: *"the Ministry's of Finance opinion is that the redeeming of grounds on such big scale should be given up (...) the condition of the former camp in Brzezinka, demands enormous funds for restoring it to its original state i.e. for the reconstruction of the barracks, watch-towers and fencing it with barbed wire. Then the reconstructed camp would demand further outlays on its maintenance and protection. Under these circumstances it should be rather considered to keep only a part of the former camp in Brzezinka of about several hectares as a symbol of martyrdom and returning the rest of the grounds to their owners"*<sup>79</sup>.

In October 1956 Tadeusz Hołuj spoke. Criticising fiercely the neglects in the exposition and scientific activity of the Museum he also mentioned the question of the boundaries: *"So many organisations and institutions deal ex officio with the Museum: the Central Committee of Polish United Workers' Party - the Department of the Polish United Workers' Party History, the Cabinet Presidium, the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, the Organisation of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, FIR, the Jewish Historic Institute, the Main Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, etc. For 10 years no-one has managed to settle such matters as e.g. the regulation of the ownership status on the premises of the Museum. Cows grazing by the ruins of crematoria are an idyllic picture, to be sure, but the situation is by no means idyllic. Thousands of foreign visitors and hundred thousands of Poles look at the completely neglected cemetery at the camp entrance where lie the bodies of inmates who died after the liberation of the camp. Nearby stuck are beggarly mud shelters inhabited by people waiting for the regulation of the problem of expropriation and nobody can deal with it. The buildings of the former camp have been given to the Salesians, to PKS, to the miners, to the cereal plant, but no-one could regulate the legal matters and take care of the environs of the former camp..."*<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to MKiS, January 1954 No: VIII-31)234)54.

<sup>77</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from CZM to PMO, 23.12.1953 No: M.VIII-21/1/53; letter from PMO to CZM, 22.12.1954; AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 21, pp.28-30.

<sup>78</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter No: VIII-31)1615)54.

<sup>79</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from Ministry of Finance to MKiS, 28.04.1955, No: GM.2875/2/55.

<sup>80</sup> T.Hołuj: *Sprawa Wiecznej Pamięci*, „Życie Literackie” No.44(197), 30.10.1955; comp. AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 21, pp.58-63.

In the meantime as a consequence of the critical opinion of the Ministry of Finance voices appeared that because of the cost of the expropriation and for the sake of local population the area of the Museum should be even smaller. Called on 8 December 1955 in Oświęcim an inter-ministry conference diminished the area due for expropriation to 192 hectares. As a result of the discussion it was resolved: to include within the Museum “Villa Hoess” and the *Theatergebäude* building, to transfer the PKS depot somewhere else as quickly as possible, to keep the hitherto existing borders in Brzezinka<sup>81</sup>.

Already in January 1956 the Museum endeavoured to have new land survey made. However because of the late notification all land surveying institutions requested, refused to accept this commission. In the second half of April after the intervention in the Central Office of Geodesy and Cartography, the Kraków Regional Land Surveying Company was ordered to carry out measurements, but meanwhile lacked credits and the company started the work only in December 1956<sup>82</sup>.

Upset with the course of action the inhabitants of Brzezinka and Oświęcim addressed a petition to Józef Cyrankiewicz, the then premier, a former KL Auschwitz prisoner. “*The problems of expropriation payments which have not been solved for 12 years are the object of constants skirmishes between the municipal authorities and the desperate population of Brzezinka and environs (...) our children for 12 years have been being eaten up by dampness and tuberculosis of the cellars and basements*” - informed the indignant authors of the petition. Condemning the Museum Management which, according to their accusations, had “*misinformed the public opinion, promoting the need to create a world sanctuary on the premises of the former camp*”, the suppliants suggested to convert several museum blocks in Oświęcim into flats for the neighbouring population. An alternative idea was suggested to move the military unit quartered in the former *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* and to allot building materials gratuitously to the aggrieved<sup>83</sup>.

In September 1957 the Museum sent to Warszawa another project of the executory provision. According to the new proposal museum boundaries were to enclose the area of 191 hectares, 20 hectares in Oświęcim and 171 hectares in Brzezinka. In compliance with the Central Museums Management recommendations, the former camp slaughterhouse was not included being occupied by PKS which since 1956 had made considerable investments there, “Villa Hoess” was excluded as well, and in Brzezinka over half of the “Mexico” area was given up. In the letter to the Ministry of Culture and the Arts Kazimierz Smoleń, the then Museum manager, thus explained the necessity to issue urgently the executory provision: “*For the incompetent settlement and for the protraction of the proceedings the local population have been blaming central and local authorities and the State Museum employees, since the Museum was founded (...) Because the bitterness of the population increases, what is expressed in impetuous pronouncements to the Presidium of Communal Division of the Home National Council and in threats directed by the population towards the employees, the Museum would like to draw attention to the gravity of the problem and necessity solve it as quickly as possible. All explanations that have been presented to the population over several years are already aimless*”<sup>84</sup>.

As a result of the arrangements made in October 1957<sup>85</sup>, the Minister of Culture and the Arts gave on 9 December 1957 the regulation on *the detailed definition of the boundaries of*

<sup>81</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: *Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Międzyministerialnej w dniu 8 grudnia 1955 roku (odpis)*, pp.1-4.

<sup>82</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to MKiS CZM, 11.02.1956, No: VIII-31)122)56; letter from PMO to CZM, 27.07.1956; a note by Wincenty Hein (undated).

<sup>83</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: *Petycja mieszkańców dzielnicy Brzezinka-Zasole, miasta Oświęcimia*, 26.01.1957.

<sup>84</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to MKiS CZM, 20.09.1957 No: I-2)1657)57.

<sup>85</sup> The agreements were made with: Law Office of the Council of Ministers Office, Administrative Division Affairs Office, Ministry of Public Utilities, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission of the Council of Ministers, Committee for Urban Planning Affairs and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

the premises of the Monument of Martyrdom of the Polish Nation and of other Nations in Oświęcim<sup>86</sup>. This regulation did not bring to a close all arguments about the museum lines. The owners of the grounds intended for the expropriation asked the Voivodship authorities to hand over the compensation decisions to them. Since in accordance with the then ruling provisions the Ministry regulation replaced the expropriation proceedings, in September 1958 the Home Office in Kraków notified of the beginning of the compensation proceedings on the application of the Museum in May that year. The proceedings affected 100 owners in Oświęcim, 464 in Brzezinka and 20 in Pławy.

Meanwhile the inhabitants of Brzezinka complained to the State Council about the tardiness in settling the expropriation payments, questioning again the size of grounds covered by the expropriation. Another contentious issue was the 38-hectare part of the pre-war village pasture, which was now within “Mexico” and on the Museum premises. „Taking into consideration the wishes of the petition authors to the extent given by them, constitutes a threat that

### The stages of determining the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum lines

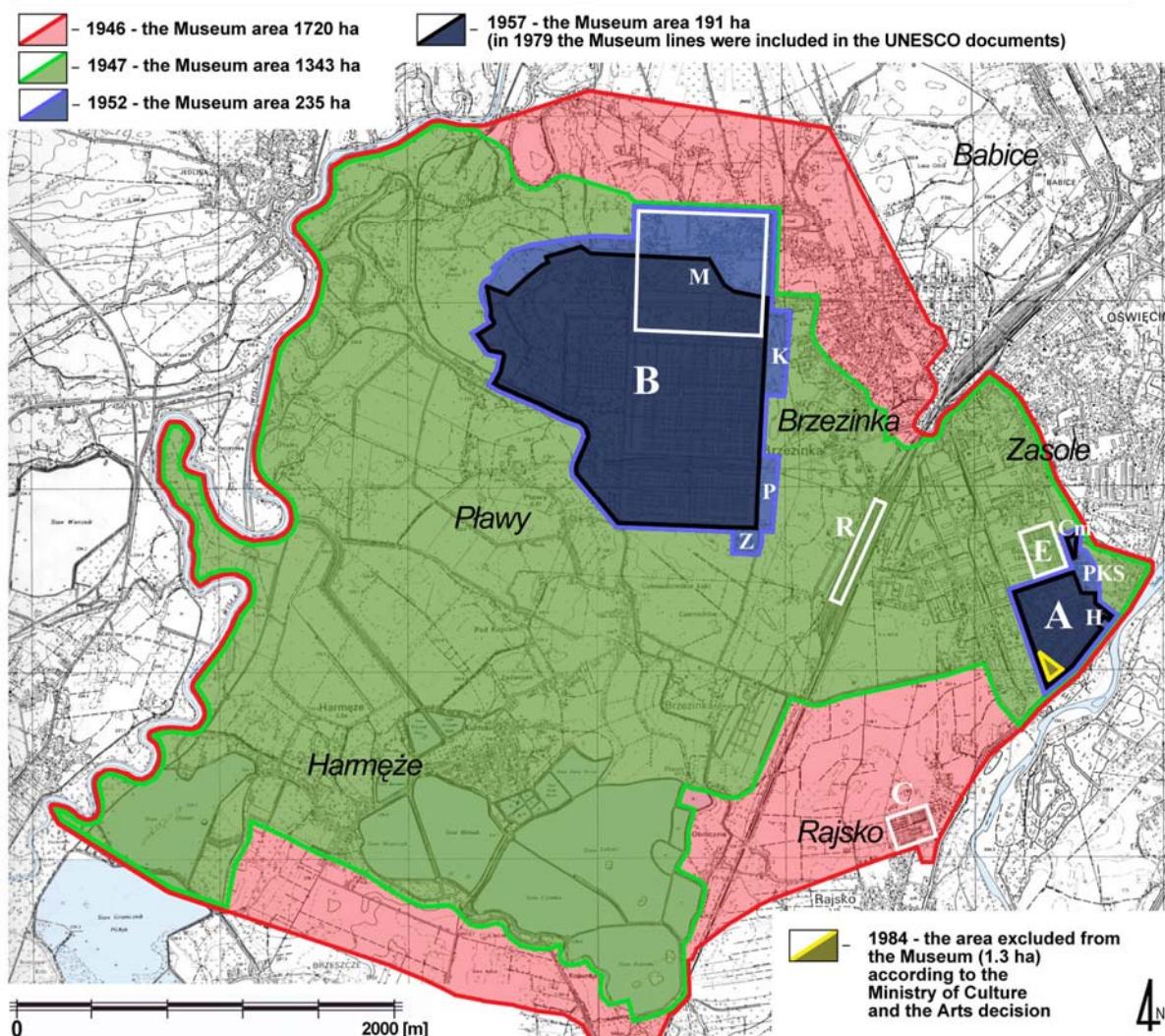


Fig.11. Map showing the stages of the demarcation of the territorial range of the Museum. White letters denote: A - the former mother camp (KL Auschwitz I - Stammlager); B - the former KL Birkenau; C - the greenhouses in Rajsco (the former KL Auschwitz sub-camp); Cm - the mass grave of the Inmates; E - “Schutzhaftlagererweiterung”; H - the so-called “Villa Hoess”; K - the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters; M - the so-called “Mexico”; P - the foreground of the Gate of Death; PKS - the PKS depot; R - Judenrampe; Z - the camp potato store; (worked out by MR)

<sup>86</sup> Dz.U. No 6/1958, item 20.



*the cattle will pasture on the camp ground, and this problem has appeared several times in the press...*” opposed the Museum<sup>87</sup>. Of the same opinion was the Museum Council which represented by Jan Sehn expressed its univocal opinion for the maintenance of the borders defined by the regulation: „...*This affair is difficult to solve due to the long proceedings, because had it been dealt with at the very beginning in compliance with the law, today there would not be problems which we are now trying to solve. At the time when borders were being marked one would yield whenever possible for the sake of the population. (...) The State Authorities marked the boundary of the Museum and it is necessary now to come up with a sensible coexistence with the local population, but people must not overthrow adjustments. We must get it over with once and for all and either pay the condemnation payment for these lands or deliver land in exchange (...) Birkenau makes an impression by its enormity and its premises cannot be diminished ad infinitum*”<sup>88</sup>.

From September to December 1958 the expropriation committee interrogated about 500 persons and made a list of 275 official records determining the ownership status of each plot. The inquiry was very arduous, because within the past years 40% of land owners had changed. The committee together with the Museum and the local and district authorities representatives, organised several conferences informing the parties concerned about the possibility to obtain plots from the 100-hectare reserves in Pławy, what was also to be the condemnation award for the public pasture lost by Brzezinka. By February 1959 the committee had issued opinions on 2,288,428 PLN of compensation awards whereof 600,000 PLN was paid, and 1,021,000 PLN was delivered to the court deposit<sup>89</sup>.

In August 1959 the Home Office in Kraków announced another hearing whose subject was to be the final decision concerning the condemnation payments and compensatory grounds. However the matter dragged on into the year 1961 in connection with the lack of the formal confirmation by the Department of the Agriculture of the allotment of grounds in Pławy. Only in December that year did the experts prepare official records on the spot with all concerned, fixing the final area of compensatory grounds<sup>90</sup>.

## Protection zone

The establishment of the protection zone for the Museum took place in 1962 and at that time it referred exclusively to the post-camp complex in Brzezinka. The Museum management thus justified the necessity to set up a protection zone in a letter to the Historical Monuments and Museums Management (ZMiOZ) in Warszawa<sup>91</sup>: “*The developing in the past time village building of the villages of Brzezinka and Pławy is closer and closer to the areas of the former camp in Brzezinka. There is a danger that in a few years’ time the former camp will be surrounded by residential buildings till the very borders of the Museum.*” In the next letter, this time to the Voivodship Home National Council in Kraków<sup>92</sup>, the Museum stressed that: “*The grounds which constitute the closest neighbourhood of the former camp in Brzezinka should be preserved in a similar state as during the time when the camp existed i.e. they should be left for agricultural lands and meadows*”. The authors of this motion decided that the following supported this idea: “*The historical aspect - Brzezinka was created in an open space and was surrounded by fields. All buildings were erected only after the liberation. Thus this development should not be brought closer to the former camp.*”

<sup>87</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to MKiS, 24.12.1958, No: GM-GM-III-19/IX/11/53, p.3.

<sup>88</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: the Museum Council meeting protocol, 23.01.1959, p.16.

<sup>89</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from the Home Office in Kraków to MSW, 12.01.1959 No: L.Sa-21/377/58, L.Sa-19b/256/58; letter from PMO to MKiS, 27.02.1959 No: X-382/59.

<sup>90</sup> Składnica Akt PMO: letter from PMO to MKiS CZM, 8.04.1960 No: X-730/60; letter from PMO to MKiS CZM, 21.02.1961 No: V-325/61; letter from PMO to MKiS, 1.02.1962 No: GM-II-1 n/5/62.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from PMO, 28.12.1961, No: V-3484/61 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>92</sup> Letter from PMO, 14.02.1962, No: V-4/666/62 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

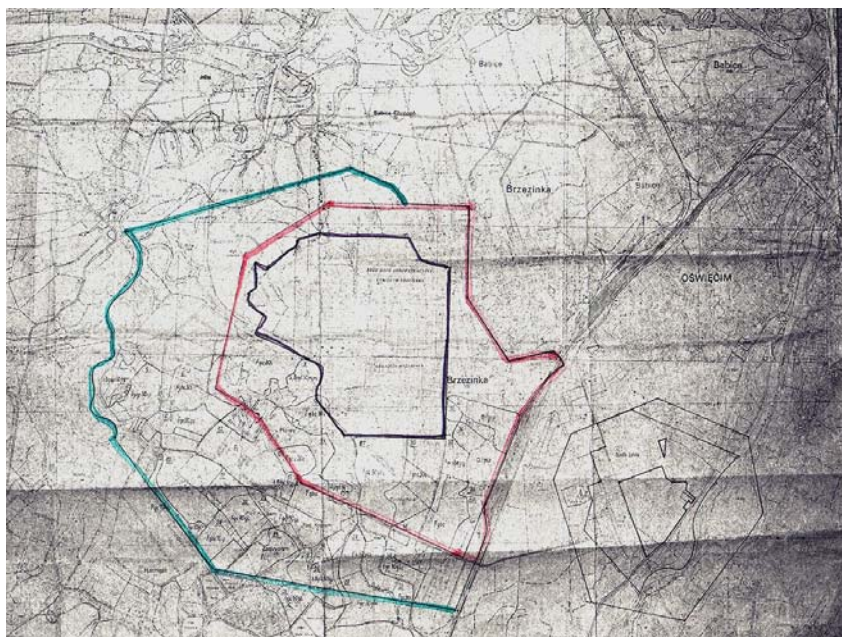


Fig. 12. Reproduction of a graphic appendix to the decision of the Home National Council Committee of 1962 to establish the protection zone (the red colour) for the Museum in Brzezinka [orig. in the scale 1: 5000, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Preservation Dept.]

*The social aspect* - It is not (...) advisable that in the closest vicinity of the former camp or on its premises children should play, what can be detrimental to their sensitivity and simultaneously the memorial area can be in danger of profanation.

*The visual aspect* - the post-war changes in the former camp environs are now: an inadequate background for the memorial place, a strange background for photos, closing the perspective from the access road”.

On the basis of the above-mentioned justifications the Department of

Building, Urban Planning and Architecture of the Committee of the Voivodship Home National Council in Kraków issued on 19 April 1962 a decision about the detailed localisation of the protection zone in Brzezinka<sup>93</sup>. In this decision was stated the necessity of preserving the environs of the Museum grounds in the shape similar to that at the time when the camp existed and not allowing new investments including: industrial devices and plants, warehouses, equipment bases (see Appendix 1 p.124).

The above decision did not refer to the Museum grounds in Oświęcim, which was not protected by the zone and developed freely basing on the industrial investment that existed from the pre-war time and was extended by the German Nazis<sup>94</sup>. The establishment of the protection zone for the Museum in Oświęcim took place towards the end of the 1970s as a result of a letter of the Ministry of Administration, Local Economy and Environment Protection (MAGTiOŚ) addressed to the Main Architects of the following voivodships: bielskie, gdańskie and lubelskie. The Ministry advised that the following rules should be observed, consider-

<sup>93</sup> Detailed localisation decision No 156/62 No: A.B.I-7/Ośw-35/62 [Dział Konserwatora PMO] basing on the Article 3 of the then ruling law on urban planning [Dz.U. No 7/1961, item 47] and the regulation of the president of the Committee for Building, Urban Planning and Architecture in re of establishing the detailed localisation of building investments and protection zones and agreeing to the changes of the land use [MP No 62/1961, item 268].

<sup>94</sup> For the sake of order it should be added that until the protection zone was established in Oświęcim in 1979 some investments in the Museum environs despite of the lack of legal bases were evaluated by the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Kraków and the State Museum in Oświęcim management. However because of the temporary character of these actions the problem was not tackled comprehensively and obviously this could not have prevented all cases of inappropriate investments in the vicinity of the Museum grounds. One of the few effective actions was the case of the criticised motion of the Kraków Aggregate Exploitation Plant of 1964 in re of constructing a gravel transshipment point on the historical siding in Topolowa Street (now Leszczyńskiej Street) in the direct neighbourhood of the “Theatre” and Block 11. The controversial structure was not built, and in the protocol of the conference held in this matter in Oświęcim, a motion was put for the first time that: “The Museum in Oświęcim should prepare a design of the protection zone of the former camp in Oświęcim and having consulted it with the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, appeal to the Committee of the Home National Council (...) to revise in this aspect the Oświęcim local development plan.” This motion was not implemented and only in mid 1970s was further debate started how the Auschwitz Museum environs should be managed.

ing the investment requests in the vicinity of the former camps in Oświęcim, Majdanek and Sztutowo: *“each request concerning the localisation of the site and conditions of the investment in the vicinity of a former camp must be agreed with the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator and the representative of the Voivodship Social Committee for the Protection of the Monuments of Struggle and Martyrdom; the establishment of a protection zone with high greenery at least 500 meters wide around the former camp; the application of the rule of not allowing localisation of investments in the 500-meter belt around the former camp.”*<sup>95</sup>

Formulating of the above guidelines was preceded by a discussion, which took place in mid-1970s within the *T e a m o f E x p e r t s*<sup>96</sup> formed under the auspices of the Voivodship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (KW PZPR) in Kraków. The direct reason for appointing this Team was the necessity of solving problems, which might result from the implementation of the perspective development plans of the left bank district of Oświęcim (Zasole). Municipal authorities planned to introduce in the vicinity of the former KL Auschwitz I large-scale housing estates. The experts decided that this development could come into being but at a certain distance and with small-scale buildings. They said that to create on the premises of the Museum an atmosphere of solemnity and reflection, the distance of at least of 350 meters is indispensable in the form of an undeveloped foreground, so all enterprises and plants existing in this belt must be removed.

The reflection of thus formulated conclusions was the position of the Museum stated in the letter of 7 February 1977 addressed to the Voivodship Design Office in Bielsko-Biała (which worked out the revision of the general development plan of the Town and Commune of Oświęcim): *“Museum both in Oświęcim and in Brzezinka demands separation by proper surround from the developing housing and industrial buildings”*. The following postulates were presented: *“Around the Museum in Brzezinka and especially south, east and west off it undeveloped areas should be left at least 1 km from the borderline of the Museum. Depots or industrial plants should not be located within this belt (...) Mark out a protection zone at least 350 meters wide from the lines of the Museum in Oświęcim. It will constitute the silence zone. The Museum suggests the following development of the zone:*

- a) move the arduous industrial plants and institutions beyond the zone (KPRI, Spolem, PKS, Army Unit),*
- b) do not place in this belt new buildings, as now the Aggregate Plant and PZZ do,*
- c) the buildings from the time of the war that are within the zone should preserve the appearance and shape without any changes,*
- d) the zone should be developed by means of greenery only. At the borderline of this zone car parks and car service stations should be planned.”*

In 1978 the Museum appealing to the Main Architect of the Bielskie Voivodship thus expressed its positions in reference to the protection zones:

*“The State Museum in Oświęcim cannot agree to the development of the protection zone other than a belt of high greenery (...) The Museum in accordance with the motions of the Team of Experts suggests the following development of the zones:*

- 1. Leave all existing buildings of the years 1939-1945 and preserve them in an external appearance unchanged.*
- 2. Structures erected after 1945 should be dismantled or moved together with the plants.*
- 3. The existing greenery should be preserved and completed with trees as the grounds are freed.”*

<sup>95</sup> Letter from the MAGTiOŚ Department of Town Planning, Architecture and Construction Supervising, 14.03.1977, No: UAN-DR/77 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>96</sup> *Zespół Ekspertów - Raport w sprawie Muzeum w Oświęcimiu 1973-1974*, sign.Opr./zbiorowe/189, vol.60, APMO.

The works of the Team of Experts were not resumed, and on 5 May 1979 according to the resolution of the Voivodship Home National Council in Bielsko-Biała *The general spatial development plan of the settlement units complex of the town and commune of Oświęcim* was adopted. What earlier was suggested by the Museum was reflected in the regulations of this plan - the preservation of the zone as an undeveloped area used exclusively for agricultural purposes (Brzezinka). The existing farms were not included, which clearly suggested that in the future they were planned for liquidation. Brzezinka was to base its development on the land reserve in the northern part of the village on the border with Babice, and on the premises of Pławy would be left only crop fields, pastures and meadows (comp. Appendix 2 p.125). For the Museum in Oświęcim the plan marked out a 500-meter zone with an imprecise entering about: "leaving the so-far development without the right to repairs and extension as long as the detailed plan is prepared based on the Museum guidelines".

In 1978 based on the ratified by Poland the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*<sup>97</sup>, the former Auschwitz camp was entered on the UNESCO list. In the application the Polish side justified that the grounds of the former camp fulfil all entrance conditions formulated in the UNESCO guidelines, and specially the criterion (vi) indicating the outstanding universal

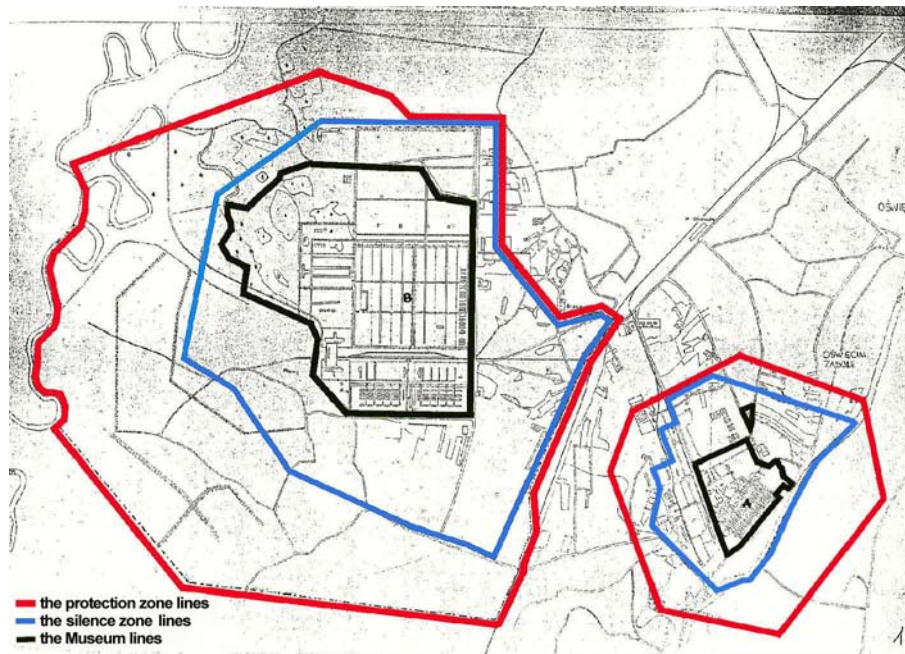


Fig. 13. Reproduction of a graphic appendix to the motion to list the former Auschwitz camp as the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Colour marks - MR [orig. black-and-white, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Preservation Dept.]

value of a historical monument complex or historical zone in connection with important historical events<sup>98</sup>. The World Heritage Committee confirmed the justification of the initiative of the Polish Authorities in this matter and at its III Session in Cairo and Luxor in 1979 decided to: "...enter Auschwitz concentration camp on the List as a unique site and to restrict the inscription of other sites of similar nature"<sup>99</sup>. In the documents sent to the Committee included were the protection zones. The Museum lines were presented as well as the lines of the silence zone and the protection zone. It was declared that: "The Museum (...) is now extending the protection zone from 300 meters to 1000 meters to preserve or restore the character of the site close to what it used to be at the time of the war or to establish a silence belt and prevent the urbanisation of the grounds surrounding this huge cemetery."

<sup>97</sup> *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, adopted by The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation at its seventeenth session, Paris, 16 November 1972 [Dz.U. No 32 item 190 with app. 1976]; Government announcement 14.09.1976 [Dz.U. Nr 32 item 191].

<sup>98</sup> „Wniosek do UNESCO”, 6.06.1978 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>99</sup> comp. Michel Parent: *Rapport du rapporteur de la troisième session du Comité du patrimoine mondial*, File: CC79/CONF.003/13, pnt.XII 46, No 31, p.11, Paris, 30.11.1979 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

In April 1990 the Department of Spatial Planning of Polish Town Planners Society (TUP) in Katowice managed by J a c e k M r o c z k o w s k i finished the works on the *General spatial development plan of the town and commune of Oświęcim*. In connection with the protection zone in the formal sense the plan did not introduce any fundamental changes. Its run was preserved as well as the hitherto ruling obligation to agree all investments with the Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator (WKZ). In Brzezinka and in Pławy a number of changes were introduced. The existing residential houses were to remain and it was even allowed to fill up gaps in the areas that were not planned for investment. The arrangement of the residential areas and community services in Brzezinka was to be solved by a detailed development plan, taking into account the conservation guidelines.

However the authors of the plan did not pay attention to all consequences of the inclusion of the former Auschwitz camp on the UNESCO list and the laws concerning the establishment of the Museum. Although the notions *protection zone* and *landscape protection zone* were used in the text of the plan, this plan took into account only *the protection zone of the historical structures insulation* whose run corresponded with the protection zone line as in the decision of 1962 and at the same time was the equivalent of *the silence zone* of the UNESCO documents. *The landscape protection zone*, that is to say *the protection zone* of the UNESCO documents, was not marked out at all. Serious mistakes were made at the marking of the Museum lines. Beyond the Museum e.g. 59 hectares were found for which the plan regulations assumed the land-use categories “RL” (grounds of forests and plantings) and “RZ” (grounds of meadows and pastures). The fact that these categories were accepted for the grounds where in 1942-1944 mass extermination took place and where now lie the ashes of the burned victims and that the Museum areas were balanced within the remaining lands of Brzezinka - must be considered scandalous (comp. Appendix 3 p.126).

Those mistakes were repeated by the next revision of the general development plan for the Oświęcim Commune worked out in 1994 by the design team of J a n u s z C u b a ł a<sup>100</sup>. To the revised document were not introduced the corrections of the Museum lines and the land-use categories. Instead of *the protection zone* and *the silence zone* included in the UNESCO documents, the planners established the “A” zone of strict conservation protection and the “B” zone of partial conservation protection, basing on the arrangements with the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator. The first one comprised the grounds of the very Museum however without its most important part: the former incineration pits and the so-called “Little White House” - the ruins of a gas chamber. The other was the insulation zone where according to the plan is allowed: “*the design of modern houses adjusted to the historical urban layout in respect of the scale, shape, proportions and in connecting the modern forms with the local tradition and the features of the local building style*”<sup>101</sup> (comp. Appendix 4 p.127).

## Monographs

As early as in 1947 Jan Sehn, the investigating magistrate of the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków in a conference, which took place in Oświęcim, claimed: “...*German fascism was not a political illness but a common crime (...) the hitherto results of the forensic research have proved (...) that to research the history of that period the methods of modern forensic science should have been used. Aiming at the reconstruction of the material truth this science treats a crime as the result of an action of forces which results*

<sup>100</sup> *Zmiany Miejscowego Planu Ogólnego Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego Gminy Oświęcim - Ujednolicony tekst planu, Ujednolicony rysunek planu - Załącznik do Uchwały Nr V/23/94 Rady Gminy Oświęcim, 5 December 1994 [Dz.Urz.Woj.Bielskiego No 13/94 item 118, pp.863÷864].*

<sup>101</sup> *Zmiany Miejscowego Planu.... op.cit. pnt.1.11.1, p.8.*

*in the changes in the essence, shape or location of the physical substance. These changes are traces. Such trace of the operation of a destructive force of the enemy is the whole Auschwitz camp*"<sup>102</sup>.

Such perception of this problem brought many scientific researches. However the specificity of the camp issue made difficult the solution of current problems of the functioning of the Museum and its protection zone. Because of an urgent need for researching the unprecedented problem of genocide the works on the topography of the camp events were not conducted, which made impossible the early determining of the historical factors of the protection zone development. In effect this delayed by many years the chance to work out the rules of the protection of the relics preserved within it, which for sure would have averted many later conflicts.

The first monograph which tried to answer the conservation problems which appeared just after the war was the *Perspective Plan of conservation works of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum for the years 1958- 1959*<sup>103</sup> prepared by the Museum in March 1957. Technical surveys were conducted. The range and cost of the necessary repairs and protection works was estimated. However, due to lack of sufficient funds the "Perspective Plan..." was directed exclusively on the salvaging of what was within the Museum itself<sup>104</sup>.

In November 1963 The Municipal Office of Building Studies and Designs Kraków commissioned by the Museum prepared a documentation by Szczepan Puzio, entitled: *The Former Camp in Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Design and Conceptual Preliminary Preparation - development and arrangement of the land*. This monograph had a wide content comprised in four volumes and referring to the following problems: housing, road communication system, technical infrastructure, greenery and the landscape - analysed both within the existing state of development and in the context of the postulated transformations and, what is important, within the Museum and its protection zone. A large amount of documentary work was used and a great conceptual effort was put into the preparation of this monograph aimed at e.g. improving the road communication system so as to make all important sites and historical structures accessible for visitors. Many ideas presented at that time are still acceptable. For example the idea of a ring road around the Museum grounds. The concept of indicating with a line of poplars the borders of the section B III ("Mexico") which have been blurred by the post-war transformations can still be considered to be a novelty. Szczepan Puzio limited the range of the protection zone to the minimum suggesting the freezing of all investment activity in this area. The existing buildings in Brzezinka and Pławy were to remain but without the right to carry out any repairs or extension. However, the basic drawback of this documentation, as well as of other later monographs, was a complete lack of historical research of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex in the aspect of its spatial development, which could give the answer to the question which of the places within the zone should be particularly protected.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> *Historia Oświęcimia utrwalona na wieki*, „Wolni Ludzie” No 7, Warszawa 17.07.1947, p.4.

<sup>103</sup> AAN Zespół MKiS CZM 23, pp.1÷103.

<sup>104</sup> The Museum has been struggling with the lack of funds for basic conservation actions ever since it was founded, which 10 years after the war led to the disastrous technical state of the structures in Brzezinka. In the discussed "Perspective Plan..." the authors alarmed: "*The tasks that the Museum has in the aspect of conservation works foreseen in the law with the simultaneous cutting the necessary finance limits cannot be executed by the Museum, and what is more the Museum's activity in this aspect is constantly criticised by the visitors. The Museum despite all real efforts cannot fulfil those tasks and at the same time all signals sent to the higher authorities about the disastrous state the Museum is in, has no effect (...) If the renovation works are extended over the years or will be delayed the structures will be in danger of collapse and further sectors will have to be closed, which may cause the closure of the whole Museum and this must be averted*".

<sup>105</sup> Historical analyses made after the war by the scholarly specialists of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum were either limited to the area of the former Auschwitz camp within the Museum boundaries or they were connected with very distant places (KL Auschwitz sub-camps). No-one handled the vicinity of the Museum.

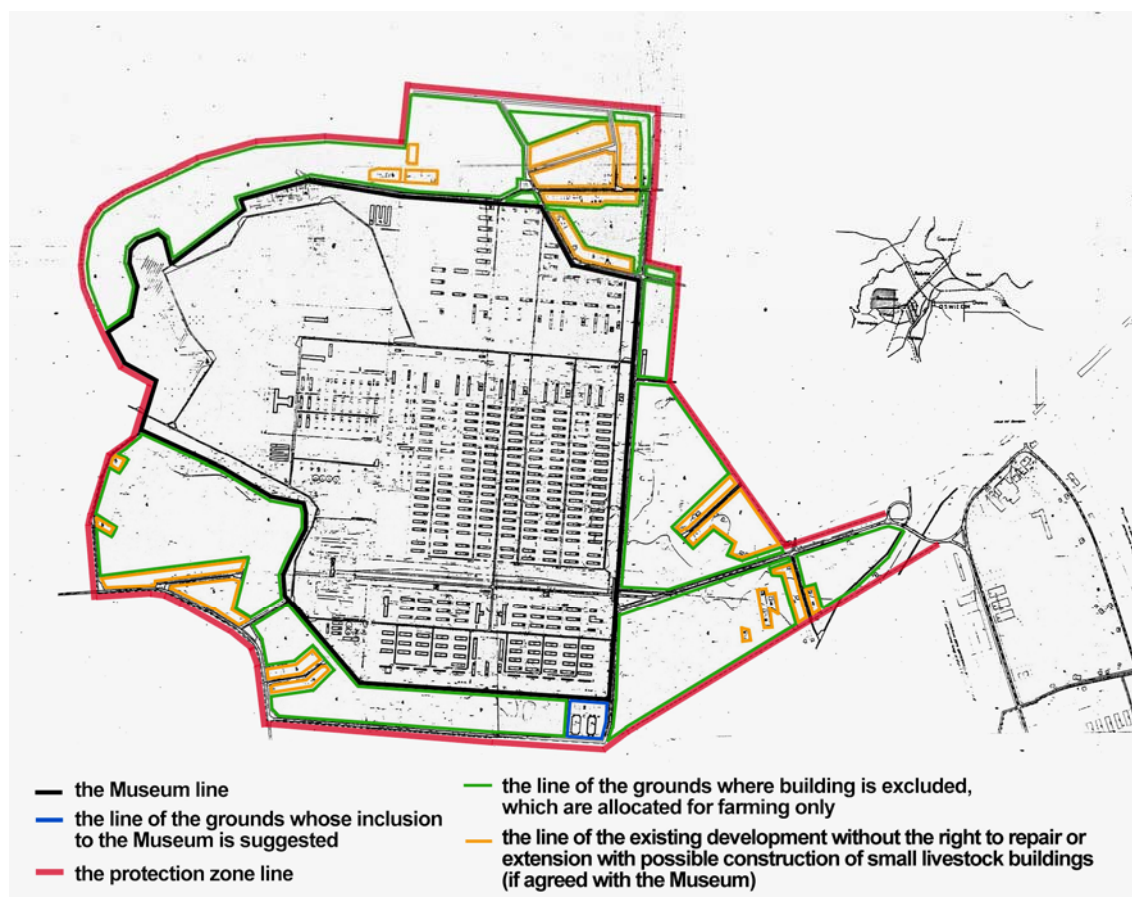


Fig.14. A part of the plan of the Museum protection zone in Brzezinka from Puzio's documentation worked out in 1963. Colour marks and comment by MR [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:2000, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Repository, sign.A-110/B-416]

The matter was resumed only at the beginning of the 1970s. In 1973 under the auspices of the Voivodship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Kraków, the earlier-mentioned Team of Experts was appointed. In the Team were the representatives of the State Museum, the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, conservation services, politicians and the scientists from the Kraków University of Technology. The experts discussed first of all the problems of the closest neighbourhood of the Museum in Oświęcim. The lack of the protection zone for this part of the complex dominated the debate. As far as the Museum in Brzezinka was concerned the experts univocally claimed that the authentic character of the place should be preserved. It was an important issue to create the spatial link between the two parts of the Museum and to improve communication routes and car parks in Brzezinka making possible visiting the Museum not only on foot. The Museum employees suggested that the point of gravity should be transferred from Oświęcim to Brzezinka by placing on the foreground of the former KL Birkenau on the borderline of its protection zone, the main visitors centre with an introductory exhibition. *"In the hitherto system of visiting the visitors familiarise themselves with the former KL Auschwitz in the chronological order so first of all with the former mother camp, then in a much smaller scale with Brzezinka, but a more proper is the thematic order according to the criteria of the importance of the problems: first the mass extermination and then the life of prisoners"* - argued the authors of the motion. In conclusion it was stated that an open architectural and urban planning competition on the concept of a general town plan and a concept of a detailed plan of Zasole and Brzezinka should be announced. The Team of Experts wound up in 1974. Further works were not resumed.

At the beginning of the 1980s it became necessary to take prompt and serious actions for the renewal of the protection zone. The degradation progressing for years, due to uncon-

trolled development of industrial and municipal facilities, caused a shameful state of the buildings and public spaces around the Museum. Made Andrzej Telka, the new Mayor of the Town of Oświęcim, initiate in co-operation with the Museum Management and the Municipal Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party the *Program of works connected with the arrangement of the areas adjacent to the State Museum in Oświęcim*. The working out of the programme was preceded with the preparation of a special movie<sup>106</sup>, which showed to the Party decision-makers the disgraceful state of the many years' neglect. Necessary were not only the widely understood tidying on private plots and in enterprises (renovation of the elevations and fencing, creating the lawns) as well as the modernisation of the access roads to the Museum, repairs of pavements, car parks, sewage system, the replacement of street lights, bus shelters, road signs. The authors of the project estimated the cost of the first stage to be 166,800 PLN. The Programme was accepted by the Town Home National Council (MRN) in Oświęcim<sup>107</sup>. Implemented in the following years it added to a considerable enhancement of the aesthetics of the Museum vicinity. Within the project the renovation of the Prisoners' Mass Grave was done, what Tadeusz Hołuj had postulated back in 1956 and the modernisation of Leszczyńskiej, Obozowa and Więźniów Oświęcimia Streets.

In November 1983 the Technical Experts' Commission of the Auschwitz Preservation Society (TOnO) whose members were former KL Auschwitz inmates and at the same time experts in various fields, prepared a *special report*<sup>108</sup>. It discussed the problems of conservation and renewal of the Museum grounds including the issue of the protection zones. The authors claimed that the Museum environs should be protected against the encroachment of the town of Oświęcim and the villages of Brzezinka and Pławy. Particular anxiety among the former inmates was caused by the construction projects of a large-scale housing estate of the coal mine "Czeczott" in the south-west part of the protection zone in Pławy and Harmężę<sup>109</sup>. It was suggested to extend the Museum grounds to the protection zone border and to insulate the Museum against the surroundings by a dense 10-meter wide greenery belt.

In 1990 the Oświęcim Town Office commissioned the Historical Monuments Renovation Studios (PKZ) in Kraków to prepare the documentation: *Oświęcim - a historical and urban-planning study*<sup>110</sup>. Although - as the title suggests - the commissioned works referred to Oświęcim, at the very beginning the authors of the study made a reservation that: "*The issue of the concentration camp (...) because of its specific importance, exceeds the subject of the conservation and architectural study*", in the documentation the Zasole district within the KL Auschwitz I was analysed. The limitation which left out the years 1940-1945 assumed by the authors at the beginning, made considerably smaller the amount of information needed to prepare correct conservation conclusions including the localisation of the former places of martyrdom. In the documentation many mistakes appeared concerning the chronology of the buildings and the conservation evaluation of the ruling local development plan. The authors did not comment on the Museum protection zone. However the conservation issues of the former KL Birkenau were outlined in a short supplementary monograph<sup>111</sup> by

<sup>106</sup> The movie *Jak cię widzą, tak cię piszą* (*Fine feathers make fine birds*) was initiated by Andrzej Telka and it was made by Henryk Lehnert a well-known Oświęcim amateur film-maker [AKF Oświęcim].

<sup>107</sup> Resolution No XXVIII/95/83 of the Town Home National Council in Oświęcim of 9 March 1983 in re of the programme of improving the aesthetics of the town and its further arrangement.

<sup>108</sup> *Problematyka zabezpieczenia potrzeb konserwatorskich i funkcjonalnych terenów i obiektów Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka*, TOnO, Zarząd Główny, Komisja Techniczna Rzeczoznawców, Warszawa 1983 [ZG TOnO].

<sup>109</sup> *Notatka służbowa w sprawie możliwości zabudowy stref ochronnych Muzeum w Brzezince*, 26.02.1982 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>110</sup> L.Danilczyk... op.cit.

<sup>111</sup> B.Wojnar: *Państwowe Muzeum w Oświęcimiu-Brzezince. Były obóz koncentracyjny - KL Auschwitz II - Birkenau. Strefy ochrony konserwatorskiej*, PP PKZ Pracownia Dokumentacji Naukowo-Historycznej, Kraków 1990 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].



Barbara Wojnar. It included the topographic description of Brzezinka, a synthetic calendar of the history of KL Birkenau, a laconic historical analysis and the conservation conclusions. Nevertheless, even the over-generalising character of the monograph assumed by the author should not have prevented her from basing the conclusions she formulated on a wider range of source materials, particularly in view of the accumulation of factors from various historic periods which was extremely important for the issue of the protection zone, as well as because of the obvious necessity of taking into account the Auschwitz-Birkenau topography. The monograph, marking out the two protection zones: of “*strict conservation protection*” and of “*strict landscape protection*” did not introduce anything new apart from mechanically copying the guidelines which had been formulated as early as in 1962.

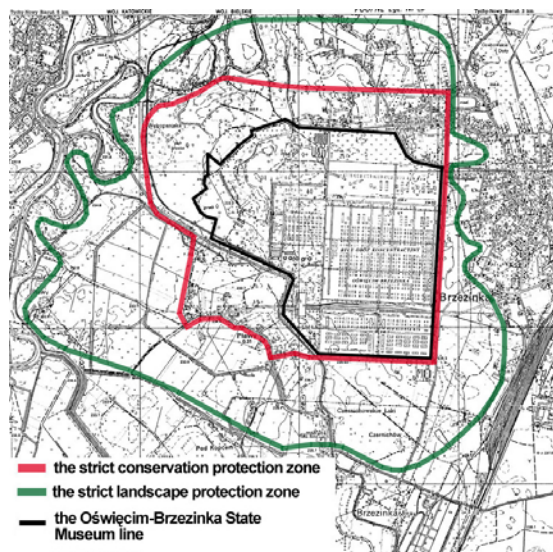


Fig. 15. A graphic appendix to the documentation by Barbara Wojnar, 1990 [orig. Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Preservation Dept.]

In conclusion it can be said that none of the hitherto legal regulations or documentary monographs gave the basis for the proper conservation policy on the grounds adjacent to the Museum. Formulated in 1962 justification of the marking out the protection zone can be considered to be simplified, to put it mildly. The stereotype of “the historically empty space” around the KL Auschwitz perpetuated for years - untrue also because the German Nazis intensively extended the industrial and economic infrastructure of the *Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz* - cause a very unilateral view of the problems connected with the development of the Museum environs. The concepts of preservation of the authenticity of the Museum surroundings over the years, and because of the lack of specialist research, has become unfeasible. The lack of a detailed knowledge among the conservation services of the spatial specificity of the former camp caused the consecutive editions of the municipal law to contain serious mistakes leading to gradual degradation of the relics preserved in the zone and made it impossible to effectively solve the problems of the social nature.

The conditions resulting from putting the former Auschwitz-Birkenau on the UNESCO list were not fulfilled either. It was not defined how in the aspect of the ruling law<sup>112</sup> the declaration addressed to UNESCO should be introduced. What is more, the establishment of the protection zones was not preceded by the preparation of the documentation which would state precisely what and how should be protected. As a result the zone not only did not protect the camp legacy preserved outside the Museum<sup>113</sup>, but also were not able to avert the degradation of its environs caused by uncontrolled investments. It is lamentable that the those who initiated the inclusion of the former camp on the UNESCO list did not undertake any actions to improve the inefficient arrangements and they did not inform the World Heritage Committee about the appearing threats and problems. The postulate included in the information, with which in 1978 the Polish authorities provided the World Heritage Committee has never been more than just theoretical considerations. At the very moment when the former camp was listed the state of the development did not justify the declaration to “prevent the urbanisation” of the Museum environs. The urbanisation of the Oświęcim-Zasole has been a fact since at least 100 years and those processes were considerably strengthened when in 1940 the SS au-

<sup>112</sup> The laws on the spatial planning, construction regulations law, cultural heritage protection laws.

<sup>113</sup> It is characteristic that left beyond the UNESCO zones was Judenrampe - the site where from May 1942 to May 1944 mass transports with the deported from various countries of the world were received.

thorities decided to build and then extend the KL Auschwitz and to attract here German industrial plants. The outcome of the post-war arrangements on the Museum boundaries was the exclusion of a considerable part of the post-camp areas from the management of the future Memorial Place. It was justified on one hand in the huge area of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex and on the other - was connected with the necessity of providing the basic living conditions to people who were coming back after they had been evicted during the war. It was then decided that first of all those parts of the former camp should be commemorated which testify most obviously to the crimes that were here committed.

You cannot help thinking that the attempts to solve all problems connected with the protection zone have been at best initiated by the political and party debates without basing the suggested concepts in at least preliminary estimation of the historical values and the assessment of the real state of land development. Until the year 1977 there were no legal bases for taking action resulting from the discussions<sup>114</sup>.

The analyses of the opinions issued by the State Museum and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Bielsko-Biała shows that only some investments within the zone were blocked. It referred first of all to the requests of private owners in Brzezinka. The state-owned enterprises in Oświęcim received positive opinions for the repairs and extensions of the existing structures and for erecting new buildings<sup>115</sup>. The opinions were issued after each case was examined individually. As the formal and legal bases were quoted the guidelines included in the ministry letter of 1977 and article 4, 5 and 20 of the law concerning the cultural heritage protection. This opinion-issuing system had the characteristic features of manual steering, it was incoherent and conflict-causing, because apart from the reference to the above-quoted regulations and the guidelines, the refusal or acceptance of the investments described in the applications were not justified. The legal bases for the ministry guidelines seem to be rather doubtful. The formulated "*rule of not allowing investments within the 500-meter belt around the former camp*" did not have any reference to the ruling laws and technical standards of the establishment of the protection zones. Moreover, because the protection zone area was not put on the historical monuments register the article 20 of the quoted law could not be applied.

From time perspective it has to be said that this state of development of the zone was influenced a long-term lack of funds which made impossible not only the fulfilment of the protection zone guidelines but also the implementation of the basic conservation tasks in the Museum itself. From this point of view the actions of the then Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator, which gave positive opinions for some investments in the zone, seem to be right. The executing from the investors effective conservation actions was at that time the only chance to undertake any renewal actions in the Museum environs. The rigid fulfilment of the general development plan requirements: "*to leave the hitherto development without the right to repair and extension*" would in a short time have surely led to the total degradation of the KL Auschwitz legacy.

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<sup>114</sup> The best example is a statement of dr Hanna Pieńkowska, the then Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Kraków, at the Team of Experts meeting on 16 November 1973 in Oświęcim: "...*the extension of the PKS depot and Spolem is absolutely controversial and these works should be instantaneously suspended by a decision of the political authorities. There are no legal bases so far, but there are political, ideological bases*".

<sup>115</sup> An example of such actions could be the extension in mid 1980s of the PKS depot in Więźniów Oświęcimia Street and the construction of a huge 8-container Granary Complex on the premises of the District Cereal and Milling Enterprise in Kolbego Street.

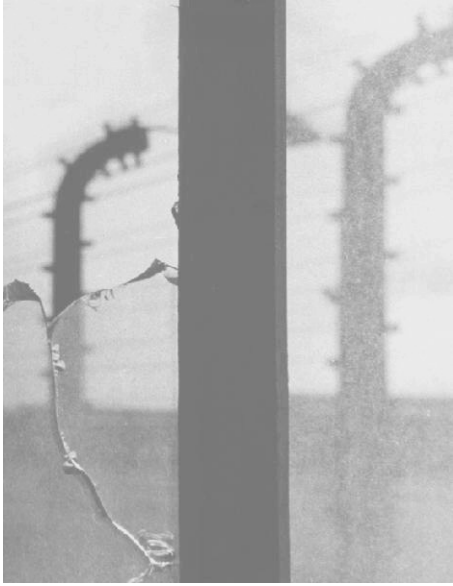


Fig.16. Oświęcim 1996. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum environs. View towards the north-east. Phot. Wojciech Gorgolewski. 1 - Museum (former Stammlager), 2 - Prisoners' Mass Grave, 3 - Car park for visitors, 4 - Pilecki housing estate and Army Unit (former Schutzhaftlagererweiterung), 5 - Premises of the so-called "supermarket", 6 - Zasole housing estate of the 1980., 7 - Oświęcim Old Town, 8 - The riparian grounds of the Soła River, 9 - the so-called "Villa Hoess", 10 - the so-called "Theatre" and the former KL Auschwitz gravel pit. The red line - Museum line. Marks by MR



Fig.17. Brzezinka 1996. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum environs. View towards the north-west. Phot. Wojciech Gorgolewski. 1 - Museum (former KL Birkenau), 2 - The Gate of Death, 3 - International Monument of the Victims of Fascism, 4 - The old Vistula valley, 5 - Pławy village, 6 - former camp potato store, 7 - former KL Birkenau New Headquarters, 8 - the so-called "Mexico" within the Brzezinka village, 9 - Brzezinka development. The red line - Museum line. Marks by MR





**Preliminary research**



## The origin and the research programme

The Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice has participated in the research of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex since the first half of the 1980s. At that time Professor Z b i g n i e w G ą d e k , the then Head of the Town Planning Team in the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning of the Silesian University of Technology, suggested a study of the development of the protection zones of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. During one of the sessions of the Auschwitz Preservation Society in April 1984, in the presence of former Auschwitz inmates, he promised to do so. The selected team: the researchers of the Faculty of Architecture and final-year students welcomed the accession to such a noble assignment as an honourable deed done for the sake of the whole society. Professor's Gądek initiative resulted in the author's engagement in the team work as the organiser and direct performer of studies and planning analyses<sup>116</sup>.

Contact was established with the Oświęcim Town Office, the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Bielsko-Biała and with the Management of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. The then Mayor of the Town of Oświęcim A n d r z e j T e l k a accepted the role of the co-ordinator of works on the municipal level and gave to the Team all help through his dependent units<sup>117</sup>. The Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator K a r o l G r u s z c z y k, offered his long experience and his knowledge of local problems. The Museum threw open its archives. It was agreed that on the first stage a preliminary diagnosis would be produced basing on the analysis of archival materials and of the present state of the protection zones development. Simultaneously Professor Gądek undertook to pronounce his opinion about current matters concerning the investments in the vicinity of the Museum. In November 1985 an inspection was carried out together with a meeting in re of the rules of spatial development in the zone<sup>118</sup>. It was affirmed that a detailed development plan was necessary and that all investments of permanent character should be suspended until its basic assumptions were accepted.

In years 1986-1987 extensive photographic records of the Museum environs were prepared<sup>119</sup>. The intention of landscape analyses was to obtain the answer to the basic question: From how large an area should one expect influences on the Museum environs? And a related question: what is the scale of urbanisation processes which must be taken into account in the research? It was also important to record and evaluate the changes in the landscape, which took place in the post-war years.

A scientific report finished in November 1987 summed up the hitherto activities of the Team<sup>120</sup>. The objectives of further research were formulated. A number of threats to the Auschwitz-Birkenau material heritage were pinpointed. Ever since the end of the war the negative effects of the investments in the vicinity of the Museum had been accumulating, what led to the gradual degradation of the historical landscape. The scale of the post-war transformations of Oświęcim was unambiguously testified in the almost tenfold increase of the number of inhabitants triggered by the existence of the Chemical Plant, and consequently the development of the industrial structures, residential and service areas as well as commu-

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<sup>116</sup> Letter from Professor Zbigniew Gądek to the Rector of the Silesian University of Technology and to the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, 7.03.1987 [WAPŚI].

<sup>117</sup> *Notatka służbowa ze spotkania roboczego w dniu 2 kwietnia 1985 r. w Urzędzie Miejskim w Oświęcimiu w sprawie opracowywanej przez Politechnikę Śląską w Gliwicach „analizy zagospodarowania strefy ochronnej wokół Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu”* [WAPŚI].

<sup>118</sup> *Protokół z wizji w terenie i narady przeprowadzonej w Urzędzie Miejskim w Oświęcimiu w dniu 23.11.1985 w sprawie zasad prowadzenia gospodarki przestrzennej na terenach położonych w obrębie strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu* [UMO].

<sup>119</sup> M.Rawecki: *Dokumentacja fotograficzna stref krajobrazowych Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka*, November 1986 - April 1987 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>120</sup> M.Rawecki: *Strefa ochronna Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka - Zagadnienia ogólne*, Gliwice November 1987 [WAPŚI].

nal investments connected with them<sup>121</sup>. The results of the transformations questioned a faithful reconstruction of the former camp's atmosphere in the cityscape. The landscape studies revealed that forty years after the war one could only consider the saving of the few fragments of the historical scenery around the Museum. It was accepted that the idea of the protection zone development should be aimed not at the reconstruction of the historical structures, but at compromising the contrasting aspirations: the zone users' basic needs with the necessity of protecting the relic of the tragic past.

That report did not gain practical support. The lack of funds led to the suspension of the works in 1988. The studies were resumed three years later. In March 1991 the author addressed the management of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum with the proposal to continue the research. The new Museum Manager, Jerzy Wróblewski, having familiarised himself with the report, decided the offer was extremely helpful. The proposal of reopening the research coincided with the efforts made by the Museum to solve the rapidly growing problem of the zone<sup>122</sup>. In connection with the political change in Poland at the turn of the 1990s, the so far hidden social emotions were released. For many years, irrespectively of the real needs, all small investments on private grounds in the Museum environs in Brzezinka and Pławy were blocked. At the same time the state-owned enterprises in Oświęcim, undisturbed, raised arduous industrial structures at the distance of just a dozen or so metres from the Museum line. This triggered bitterness and resistance, but also crippled social trust for the conservators recommendations. The inhabitants of Brzezinka presented their critical remarks about the rules of protecting the former extermination camp environs. They also questioned the very size of the protection zone.

In January 1991 Local Self-Government of Brzezinka asked Edward Baścik, the then MP of the Bielsko-Biała constituency to intervene in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts in re of the diminution of the zone and the sharing by the Museum the cost of setting up the lighting system and road repair around the former camp<sup>123</sup>. The inhabitants' motion reached Professor Andrzej Rottermund, the First Deputy of the Minister of Culture and the Arts. Professor Olgierd Czerner, (PKN ICOMOS), Professor Janusz Bogdanowski (Faculty of Architecture of Cracow University of Technolo-

<sup>121</sup> Professor Tołwiński as early as just after the war drew attention to the possible development of Oświęcim in connection with the existing there Chemical Plant. When asked to comment on the problem of Oświęcim urban plan worked out by arch. Wanda Wyszynska, he wrote in 1946: "...the factor of great social importance will be the rebuilding and further development of industrial centres in the vicinity of Brzezinka and Babice as well as east off the town - the State Factory of Synthetic Fuels. The latter will particularly trigger the flow of industrial population and will give an industrial character to the populace of Oświęcim". Simultaneously professor Tołwiński commented on the problem of the development of the former camp premises: "The emotional and educational aspects should lead to a proper comprehensive tackling of these grounds, unique in the world, the only of this kind. The huge size of about 1.5 km length of the camp shows that in the architectural and landscape aspects one should concentrate only on some parts and shape them properly in the spatial and landscape aspects." He thought that one should take into account: "in the town architecture and in its future economy the flow of tourists connected with visiting the memorial places and concentration camps monuments" and that "it is indispensable to (...) plan pedestrian routes and access roads, which will lead from the railway station to bus stops, bus lines and car parks, hotels and tourist hostels for the concentration camps". [T.Tołwiński: *Referat do programu planu Oświęcimia*, 11.03.1946 AP Kraków Zespół OPOW, Materiały dot. planów zagospodarowania przestrzennego terenu m.Oświęcimia].

<sup>122</sup> comp. A.Molenda: *Strefa ochronna*, „Przegląd Tygodniowy” No 29(538), 19.07.1992.

<sup>123</sup> In the letter it was stressed that the suggestions for the revision of the protection zone presented by the inhabitants and the local authorities of Brzezinka in 1985 when the general development plan was being updated, were not taken into account at all by the planners. They concerned: "a) decreasing the zone from 60 to 30 meters from the axis of Męczeństwa Narodów Street, b) moving the zone beyond the already existing houses i.e. to 300 meters from the Gate of Death, c) diminishing the zone from 150 to 100 meters along Ofiar Faszyzmu Street starting with the road axis because of the already existing buildings, d) making available the areas in Pławska and Czernichowska Streets for building to the distance of 400 meters from the camp, e) establishing the protection zone north off the camp in the middle of Bohaterów Radzieckich and Leśna Streets" [letter from the Local Self-Government of Brzezinka, 14.01.1991 - Sołectwo Brzezinka].



gy) and Professor *Bogdan Rymaszewski* (Team of Experts of the Interdepartmental Commission for Renewal of Cities and Old Town Complexes) were asked to express their opinion. The president of PKN ICOMOS claimed that it was not possible to comment on the inhabitants' attitude without analysing the local development plan, the conservation guidelines and the Museum records; Professor Bogdanowski suggested that the zones should be kept unchanged but some of the requests could be taken into account<sup>124</sup>. On the other hand Professor Rymaszewski flatly opposed the idea of diminishing the zone and at the same time he acknowledged that the Commune of Oświęcim was right to apply for help to implement the necessary communal works around the Museum. The experts stressed the necessity of organising a meeting of specialists (Czerner) or appointing a special commission to take the decision in the matter under consideration (Bogdanowski).

However the commission was not called, but at Wróblewski's suggestion already from April 1991 working meetings were organised with the representatives of municipal and conservation authorities to obtain a common opinion in connection with the objective and range of necessary works in the zone. There appeared the possibility of their financing from the means of the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp<sup>125</sup>. Based on the report produced in 1987, the stages of the research agreed with the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator were presented:

- I. Landscape Study of the areas surrounding the Museum,
- II. Noise Map of the Museum and its environs,
- III. Urban Inventory of the Museum environs,
- IV. Study of the Auschwitz-Birkenau spatial development,
- V. Result Study.

The above-mentioned range of works resulted from the thesis that the solution of the zone problems should be based on the diagnosis of the present state not only in the context of historical conditions, but also in the context of contemporary aspects of spatial development, though considered from the angle of the historical heritage protection requirements. This was a novelty. In hitherto conservation studies no-one had analysed these basic factors namely: current ownership status, the location of technical infrastructure, road communication system parameters, investment plans - those factors which obviously have a direct impact on the state of preservation of the historical heritage and the possibility of its protection. To date no negotiations had been conducted either and no-one introduced the initial stages of research works to the parties concerned. The participation of all stakeholders in the research was to create a common discussion forum and to identify all problems and threats to the preservation priorities.

The author's presentation of the research programme on sessions of the Conservation Commission and of the Board of the International Auschwitz Council was received with great interest. On 21 July 1991 the International Council under the leadership of Professor *Władysław Bartoszewski* acknowledged that the postulated works should be urgently undertaken<sup>126</sup>.

### The research area

To determine the range of research area, the criterion of landscape connections in the Museum-environment relation was accepted. This resulted from reasons on which the delimitation of the hitherto existing zones was based: the necessity to preserve the unchanged histori-

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<sup>124</sup> Professor considered possible to take into account the inhabitants' motion concerning the opening the zone for building at the distance of 400 meters from the Museum, assuming certain kind and size of the structures. [letter from Professor Bogdanowski to MKiS, 10.06.1991, PMO].

<sup>125</sup> The Foundation was formed a year earlier and was operating by the Museum.

<sup>126</sup> Statement from the meeting of the International Auschwitz Council Board in Oświęcim, pp.1-2, [PMO]; comp. *Oświęcimskie muzeum potrzebuje pieniędzy*, „Trybuna Śląska” No 166, 22.07.1991.

cal landscape around the Museum. However, in order to establish the ruling zones one operated exclusively with a stiff distance of 500 or 1,000 metres not giving explanations why this and no other radius was the most proper to protect the Museum grounds. In contentious situations it was difficult to justify or even to specify univocally the concrete run of the zone, because in many cases the zone cut a building or a farm. Thus the range of ruling conservation limitations became blurred, which obviously did not promote their execution. The landscape studies should have come first and on their basis the actual size of the grounds visually related to the Museum should be specified.

The above-mentioned works were executed at the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning of the Silesian University of Technology within the author's own research. The photographic records prepared in years 1986-1987 were used in the analyses as well as specially prepared film records. In general 2,500 photos were taken in 288 panoramic seizures and over 18 hours of film were recorded in 242 seizures. The lines of the research area were determined by the location of border structures visible from the surveying route. When the structures had been localised on a map, a drawing of the ruling local development plan was placed over the map in order to identify the balance units to which the structures belonged. Essentially it contained the range of legally feasible functional and spatial transformations. The research area line was obtained when the border structures with their balance units were selected. Isolated areas were formed for distant structures. They were not included in further analyses either because of their permanent physical character (mountain ranges), their own development limitations (protection of the architectural landmarks), their negligible exposi-

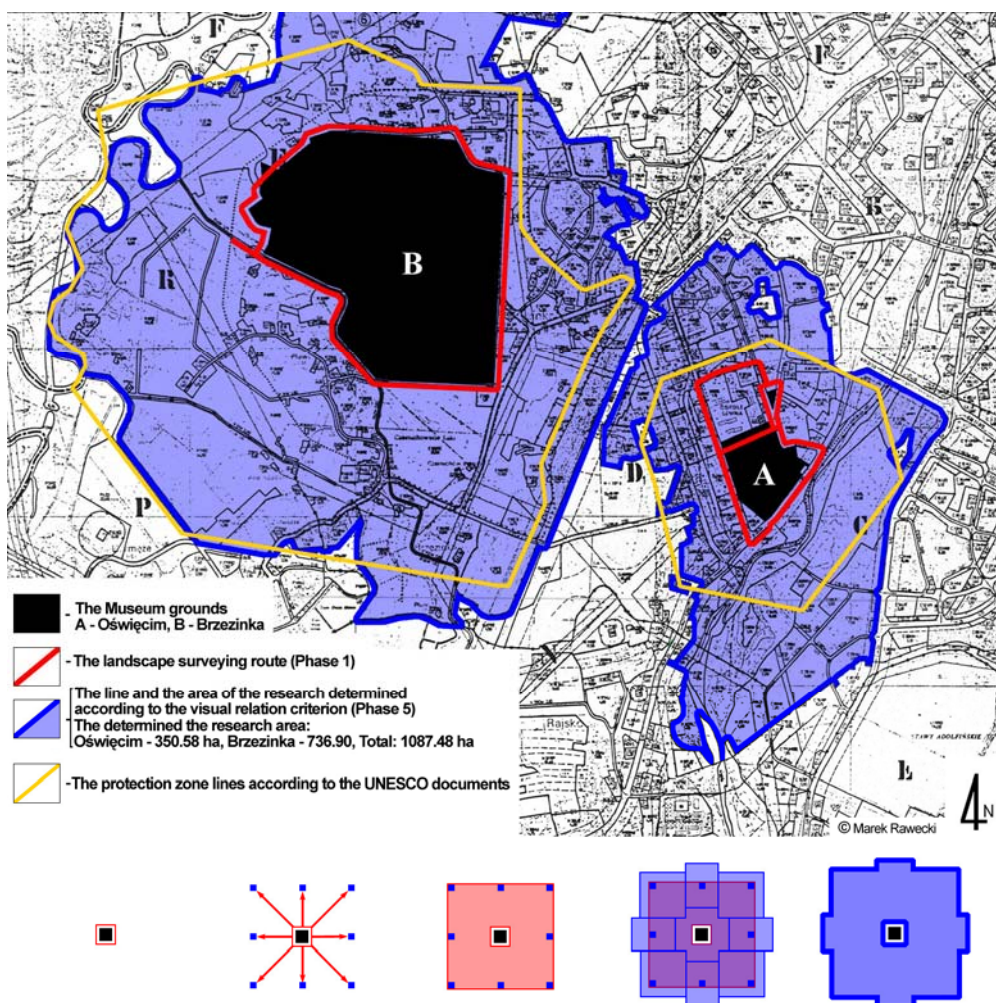


Fig.18. Map illustrating the marking out the research area on the basis of the landscape analyses (worked out by MR)

tion in the context of the environs analysed, or because of the possibility of making corrections in the research area itself. Instead, those units were selected which should find proper exposition in the Museum environs through the height limitations for new buildings and the greenery<sup>127</sup>.

In a result of landscape analyses the visual aspects of protection zones were bound with the local development plan regulations, which made it possible to estimate the latter from the point of view of the intentions of protecting the environs of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum.

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<sup>127</sup> After the evaluation of the distant landmarks it was stated that it is necessary to protect in the vicinity of the Museum the view of the Beskid Mały Mountains south off the former KL Birkenau (23-33 km) as well as the skyline of the Oświęcim centre east off the Museum (3 km). Very often in the memoirs and the witnesses' testimonies appears the descriptions of the distant mountains, the view of which strengthened the morale of the inmates, offered hope for recovering freedom and gave strength to survive the camp nightmare (comp. S.Szmaglewska: *Dymy nad Birkenau*, "Czytelnik", Warszawa 1982, pp.101-102).





## The study of the zone in Oświęcim



The Study of the protection zone of the Museum in Oświęcim comprises all organisational and realisation activities executed in the years 1992-1995 whose objective was the implementation of the research works programme accepted by the International Auschwitz Council in July 1991. The Research Team of architects Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki of the Studio PLAN in Gliwice were the co-ordinators and the direct executors of the major part of the programme. The Team worked on behalf of the Museum in co-ordinations of the programme with the municipal authorities of the town of Oświęcim and in the implementation of the research - per procurationem of the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Bielsko-Biała. They were also the initiators of the additional monographs, the need of which manifested itself only during the research works. Every stage the Study was preceded by a consultation with the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator<sup>128</sup>.

### Specialised monographs

In March 1992 the urban inventory<sup>129</sup> was started. However, the research, which was to cover the joint area of 1,075 ha around both parts of the Museum, had to be limited to Oświęcim. The fieldwork in Brzezinka met with a determined opposition of the local population in spite of the earlier explanatory meetings and agreements made with the local authorities. The deep sense of harm, caused by the rigours of the protection zone ruling there since 1962 and earlier by the prolonged process of determining the Museum lines, so far suppressed, awakened. Irrational fears of the expropriations appeared, which resulted in the aggressive attitude of the inhabitants of Brzezinka towards the people who did the fieldwork<sup>130</sup>. Explanations were not of any help. The social anxiety grew and was reflected in the resolution of the Brzezinka Village Meeting of September 1992 on “the liquidation of the protection zones”<sup>131</sup>. Faced with the lack of comprehension of the intentions of the undertaken works on the part of the local community, the efforts were focused on the implementation of the research in Oświęcim exclusively. The works in Brzezinka were to be undertaken at a later time after the conditions and the mode of research had been agreed with the local authorities.

Finally the inventory covered the area of 408 ha within the administrative borders of the town of Oświęcim. In the area inhabited by 7,722 persons 845 structures were identified and assessed. The majority of structures proved to be post-war buildings (81%), both industrial buildings and houses. Industrial buildings, mostly dating back to the years 1960-1980, with durable frame construction, form isolated sets of uniform spatial expression. The residential buildings are on one hand the housing estate Zasole with high-rise blocks of flats dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, and on the other hand detached family houses expanding along the streets on separate plots, without style, built in the traditional technology, that form both settlement units as well as isolated houses among service buildings and blocks of flats. The ser-

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<sup>128</sup> K.Gruszczyk: *Opinia w sprawie umowy pomiędzy Państwowym Muzeum w Oświęcimiu a firmą PLAN Architektura-Urbanistyka mgr inż.arch. Marek Rawecki - Gliwice na opracowanie dokumentacji studium zagospodarowania strefy ochronnych PMO*, 14.03.1992 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała]; *Opinia konserwatorska w sprawie programu i zakresu opracowania „Studium zagospodarowania przestrzennego strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu”*, letter from WKZ, 5.06.1993 [PLAN].

<sup>129</sup> *Inwentaryzacja urbanistyczna strefy krajobrazowej Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Strefa A - Oświęcim*, Pracownia Projektowa PLAN Gliwice, December 1992 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>130</sup> K.Gruszczyk i M.Rawecki: *Informacja w sprawie mieszkańców i użytkowników domostw w strefie ochronnej dawnego obozu w Brzezince*, 15.05.1992 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała]; K.Gruszczyk: *Strefa ochronna wokół Muzeum w Oświęcimiu i niepokoje* [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała]; letter from Bielsko-Biała Voivod to MKiS, 3.06.1992 [Sołectwo Brzezinka]; letter from Oświęcim Commune Administrator to Bielsko-Biała Voivodship Local Parliament Chairman, 7.08.1992, No: UG-7322/10/92 [UGO]; comp. B.Wisłocka-Trombska: *Brzezinka nie Birkenau*, „Kronika Beskidzka” No 31, 31.07.1992; M.Kęskrawiec: *Strefa*, „Dziennik Toruński” No 108, 4-6.06.1993; A.Woźniak: *Przekleństwo Brzezinki*, „Dziennik Zachodni” No 72, 13.04.1994.

<sup>131</sup> *Protokół nr 1/92 z Zebrania Wiejskiego wsi Brzezinka gm. Oświęcim odbytego dnia 25.09.1992* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].

vice development are first of all industrialised structures in the form of low-rise commercial buildings and typical school buildings on separate plots. The historical structures proved to exist in sets preserved in an unaltered form (the Tobacco Plant, the Pilecki Housing Estate), in the form of transformed sets (The Oświęcim Car Repairs Company - OZNS, Walcownia Blach "Czechowice" - The Sheet Rolling Mill), and in the form of single historical structures either preserved or transformed. The historical structures do not manifest any high architectural qualities. These are simple block buildings of very modest elevation ornamentation, mostly dating back to the period 1920-1944, rarely to the turn of the 20 c., the majority of them being made of brick, with pitched or hipped roofs made of timber, tiled or tarred. The sets of historical buildings do not dominate the landscape in this part of the town, and single structures are merely relics of the former house rows. However they are closely connected with the history of the camp because they used to be its housing and economic background. After the war almost all of them were used for current needs either continuing their original function (houses) or geared towards current demands of industrial production or converted into warehouses, stores and depots. The inventory concluded that the industrial and storage district as well as the housing area around the Museum manifest a high degree of investment. Thus the development processes can only be based on the modernisation of the existing resources or result from their replacement. In the period when the research was conducted the majority of enterprises did not plan any investments, aiming at the limitation of their possessions through the offers to sell.

In April 1992 the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum commissioned a dendrology research<sup>132</sup>. The authors of the documentation Anna Fabiańczyk and Barbara Gołąb did the inventory works on identification of the dendroflora within the joint area of 1,100 ha in Oświęcim, Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże. Eighty-five landscape units were described. These units were filed together with the specification of their character, chronology and role in the landscape, the transformations of the land, the kind and type of composition, age and trees species list. The biological state of greenery proved to be good in spite of the environmental pollution, but their composition was being distinctly degraded in some areas. The protection zones were established according to the rules accepted by the Interdepartmental Commission for Renewal of Cities and Old Town Complexes<sup>133</sup> and detailed conservation guidelines were formulated. The high-rise housing estate Zasole in Oświęcim was excluded from the monograph area since it lacked dendrology values. Because of the aggressive landscape form of this housing estate it was suggested to introduce neutralising elements (insulating elements) off the Museum. The authors suggested to protect the palace and park complex in Harmęże and greenhouses in Rajsko. In conclusion it was considered to be the most urgent matter to create the legal bases for the protection zones through the local development plan regulations. Within the protection zones the possible landscape transformations should be subordinated to the principal idea of the insulation of the Museum grounds against the contemporary life in order to assure the correct perception and create a proper atmosphere of dignity in this special place.

In August 1993 the necessity appeared to prepare specialist hydrological records of the Soła River<sup>134</sup>. The lack of embankments of the right bank of Soła next to the Museum made it impossible to specify the development rules of the area

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<sup>132</sup> A.Fabiańczyk, B.Gołąb: *Waloryzacja przestrzeni komponowanej zielenią strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka*, Pracownia Konserwatorska AKANT, Katowice 1992 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>133</sup> „A”, „B”, „K” and „E” protection zones; comp. M.Witwicki: *Strefy ochrony konserwatorskiej (cechy obszarów chronionych, wyznaczenie granic ochrony, podstawowe wytyczne konserwatorskie)*, Zespół Ekspertów Międzyresortowej Komisji ds. Rewaloryzacji Miast i Zespołów Staromiejskich, Warszawa 1984 (unpublished).

<sup>134</sup> *Ocena zasięgu wielkich wód rzeki Soły w Oświęcimiu w sąsiedztwie Muzeum wraz z ogólną charakterystyką klimatologiczną regionu*, Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej, Kraków 1994 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].



within the 500-metres UNESCO zone, which was subject to various investment pressures<sup>135</sup>. It was essential as well to recognise whether the high flood water could cause a threat to the historical structures within the Museum itself. A contact was established with the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW) in Kraków. In January 1994 the Institute passed the documentation within which the hydrological surveys were realised and transferred to the map in the form of flood isolines. It proved that the lower terrace of the Soła River next to the Museum is en bloc subject to centenary floods. This excluded the possibility of the land development other than park greenery, which was to the advantage to the historical landscape protection.

In September 1993 geological documentation<sup>136</sup> was commissioned to recognise the possibilities for the development of the Museum environs from the point of view of the geologic conditions. Krzysztof Sobol worked out *The Map of the Geotechnical Conditions* on the basis of collected archival materials. He used numerous profiles of archival openings from the soil substratum from the technical research documents, engineering geology documents and hydrogeologic documents collected in the Voivodship Geologic Archive in Bielsko-Biała. The morphology and the hydrography of the land, its geologic structure and hydrogeologic conditions were described. The land under research was divided into 6 regions similar in geotechnical conditions. Those regions were classified in either of the two groups: Group I contained regions of geologic and engineering conditions useful for the building, Group II contained regions of geologic and engineering conditions which made building difficult. The research concluded that in the ground in question there are deposits of the Quaternary fluvial accumulation which generally create good geotechnical conditions for building.

In 1993 specialised agreements<sup>137</sup> were made with units which possessed infrastructure within the areas of under research or administered various components of the natural and cultural environment by virtue of separate regulations. It was essential to obtain information not only on the current state of investment, but also on particular department administrations plans in order to assess them from the point of view of the conservation priorities of the former KL Auschwitz.

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<sup>135</sup> An example could be the placing a landfill site of the area of 6 ha in the former KL Auschwitz gravel pit at the distance of 80 metres from the Soła River opposite the Museum. Such close localisation resulted in the contamination of the Soła River by the flows from the unprotected bottom of the landfill site. The Museum management notified the town authorities of its arduousness to the visitors as well (odour nuisance). In December 1993 the wastes were no longer deposited there in connection with the opening of the new garbage dump in the district of Monowice. Another example is the proposal of 1992 of locating in the riparian forest of the right bank of the Soła of a Buddhist temple "Peace Pagoda" of the Nipposan Miyohoji Order. The planned construction of the pagoda was connected with the necessity of felling 4 ha of riparian forest. The idea of introducing in the vicinity of the Museum a temple of the spatially dominating architectural form did not gain acceptance of the International Auschwitz Council and eventually was not implemented.

<sup>136</sup> K.Sobol: *Opis warunków geotechnicznych w rejonie strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu*, Bielsko-Biała 1993 [in:] *Studium Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego Strefy Krajobrazowej Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka w Oświęcimiu*, vol.5 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>137</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 24, 26. Agreements were made with the following units (Polish names are given): Państwowa Służba Ochrony Zabytków o.Bielsko-Biała, Zakład Energetyczny Bielsko-Biała, Rejon Energetyczny Kęty, Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Wodociągów i Kanalizacji w Oświęcimiu, Górnośląski Zakład Gazowniczy Rozdzielnia Gazu Oświęcim, Telekomunikacja Polska SA Oświęcim, Miejski Zakład Energetyki Ciepłej Oświęcim, Rejonowy Zarząd Wodnych Melioracji w Oświęcimiu, Inspektorat Eksploatacji Wód w Żywcu, Okręgowa Dyrekcja Gospodarki Wodnej o.Kraków, Wydział Gospodarki Miejskiej Urzędu Miejskiego w Oświęcimiu, Wydział Ochrony Środowiska Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Bielsku-Białej, Wojewódzki Inspektorat Ochrony Środowiska w Bielsku-Białej, Okręgowy Urząd Górniczy w Krakowie, Dział Geologiczno-Mierniczy KWK „Czczcott”, Śląska Okręgowa Dyrekcja Kolei Państwowych, Dyrekcja Okręgowa Dróg Publicznych w Krakowie, Wojewódzka Dyrekcja Dróg Miejskich w Bielsku-Białej - Placówka terenowa Oświęcim, Wojskowy Rejonowy Zarząd Kwaterunkowo-Budowlany w Krakowie, Miejski Inspektorat Obrony Cywilnej Urzędu Miejskiego w Oświęcimiu.

In April 1994 ownership documentation of the land<sup>138</sup> was prepared to obtain current data about the owners and users of the property. The base for this document was the ground register of the Department of Geodesy and Land Management of the Town Office in Oświęcim. The following ownership structure of the research area was identified: the Exchequer - 51,1% of the land, private areas constituted 30,4%, communal grounds - 13,1%, co-operatives - 4,0%, religious organisations - 0,9%, and the remaining 0,5% - social organisations.

### The historical study

The objective of the historical study<sup>139</sup> was to visualise the state of the development of KL Auschwitz I grounds in the years 1940-1945 (buildings, the road and railway system, technical infrastructure, agricultural and farm grounds) and to determine the character of the development in Zasole before 1939. Materials for the analyses were chosen so as to render it possible to assess the role of each building in the spatial, functional and administrative structure of the camp and to localise the documented places of martyrdom (prisoners' slave work, mass executions, disposal of ashes of the incinerated corpses of the genocide victims). It was essential to acquire information which would help to specify the guidelines for the conservation protection, to establish the range and scale of the conservatory and renewal actions. Because of this the archival inquiries had to cover a wide (both in terms of time and subject) and the very diffuse source base containing planning and design documents, witnesses' testimonies, former inmates memories, iconographic records.

Between October 1993 and January 1994 an inquiry in the Archives of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum was carried out with the objective to recognise the documents of the SS Central Construction Office that remained after the war. One hundred photocopies of German plans and projects from years 1940-1944 were ordered. They were subject to comparative analyses in the context of the current state of the Museum environs development. In connection with the fact that after the liberation the Red Army took away a considerable part of the camp documents to the USSR, in December 1993, an additional inquiry was conducted in the Center for Preservation of Historico-Documentary Collections in Moscow. A number of materials were identified which complemented the archival resources of the Auschwitz Museum.

Planning and design documents of the former KL Auschwitz inherently demanded the comparison with other source materials: with photos, with witnesses' testimonies. The photos kept in the Museum Archive were interpreted topographically. The collected material was divided into three groups: photos of Zasole, the Barrack Settlement, Polish Army barracks taken up to 1939; photos taken between 1939-1945 both by the SS, as well as the aerial images taken over Oświęcim by the Allied intelligence and photos taken in the post-war period showing the remains of the farm and industrial buildings of the camp as well as greenery. All photos were analysed including those which, although not thematically connected with the target of the enquiry, presented the structures of the historical development in their parts, in the background or in details. The Museum film records were also analysed and those with scenes presenting the state of the development of the former KL Auschwitz I immediately after the war and later. Large-format copies of the aerial images taken by the Allies in 1944-1945 were ordered. Those images overlaid on contemporary maps made possible the full recognition of the present state of the preservation of post-camp buildings.

Another source of information were the testimonies collected in the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Archive given after the war by former prisoners, slave workers of German construction companies doing works in the camp, the inhabitants of Oświęcim and Brzezinka.

<sup>138</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

<sup>139</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

ka<sup>140</sup>, and also the accounts of Museum employees who organised it during the first years after the liberation.

In research the Memoirs Section of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Archive was used as well. However, the witnesses' memories in a small extent reflected the subject matter of the inquiry. In memories appeared mostly personal reflections and emotions, descriptions of sufferings, characterisations of fellow-prisoners and the SS members. The topography of the camp appeared marginally, most often as the background of the related events.

To recognise the post-war history of the area under research an inquiry was executed in the State Archive in Oświęcim. There, documents concerning the spatial development of the town at the turn of the 20 c. were examined<sup>141</sup>.

The information collected were used to present the historical development of the camp on contemporary maps. This made possible a precise localisation of the elements of the spatial and functional structure of KL Auschwitz in the context of the contemporary development and thus enabled to determine the feasible measures of their protection.

## The result study

*The General Guidelines of the development of the updated protection zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum*<sup>142</sup> were the first stage of preparing the conservation strategy. The area of the updated zone was divided into 21 units on the basis of the conclusions of the obtained materials and monographs. The basis of the division was the location of preserved historical sites analysed in the context of their current use and ownership structure. The grounds were included in the updated zone which form the spatial context of the Museum both in the historical aspect (landscape relations and exposition) and in the contemporary aspect (the limitations in the use to maintain an atmosphere of solemnity and dignity).

The principle of initial arrangements with stakeholders (conservation policy rules, construction activity, correction of the zone lines) was adopted. It was essential to recognise whether the presented proposals fulfil the social expectations and thus whether they mitigate the conflicts that arose in relations between the Museum and the local community. Affirmative opinions were obtained from: the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum, the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator, Professor Bohdan Rymaszewski<sup>143</sup>, Kazimierz Smoleń<sup>144</sup>, . The Voivodship Office in Bielsko-Biała did not express its opinion. The Town Council Development and Planning Commission in Oświęcim proposed considerable reduction of the updated zone area (units 9, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20 - to be deleted, see Fig.23 p.86)<sup>145</sup>.

In view of such large differences in the assessment of the necessary size of the zone, an advisory meeting was organised with the Conservation Commission of the International Auschwitz Council in July 1994. The members of the Commission acknowledged the *General Guidelines* en bloc to be correct and compatible to the rules of the historical cities renewal and accepted the limitation of the range of units 12 and 13 to be the only tolerable compromise. The development of unit 11 was also discussed because the Deputy Mayor of Oświęcim questioned the regulations for this plot. The Commission decided that it was indispensable to keep this area in its current use (municipal greenery) and to protect it against any

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<sup>140</sup> including women working as house maids at the SS-men's houses.

<sup>141</sup> Building permits, plans, auction protocols, Town Council Resolution records, correspondence, the administrative and economic matters, protocols of building cases, housing consents.

<sup>142</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol. 25/1.

<sup>143</sup> Chairman of the Conservation Commission of the International Auschwitz Council.

<sup>144</sup> A former KL Auschwitz inmate, manager of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in 1955-1990, deputy chairman of the International Auschwitz Committee (MKO).

<sup>145</sup> Letter from the Chairman of the Oświęcim Town Council to PMO Manager, 25.05.1994, No: BR-0058/901/94.

investment, to preserve the documented site of torment of the KL Auschwitz prisoners. This position was also confirmed by the independent opinion of Kazimierz Smoleń<sup>146</sup>.

*The General Guidelines* were the subject matter of a proposition to include the issue of the protection zone to the revision of the town general development plan, what was suggested by the Voivodeship Historical Monuments Conservator and the Oświęcim-Brzezinka Museum manager in their letters to the Oświęcim Town Council. However the *General Guidelines* were not taken into account in the plan revision<sup>147</sup>. This made it impossible to present the conservation conclusions when the plan was presented to the public. As a result the plan received negative opinions of the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator and of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. Since it was not agreed if the *General Guidelines* would be included in the plan, the Research Team started to prepare the *Detailed Guidelines* based on the received opinions and taking into account the final standpoint of the Conservation Commission of the International Auschwitz Council.

*The Detailed Guidelines of the development of the updated protection zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum*<sup>148</sup> were the final stage of determining the conservation policy within the updated zone. The agreed findings of the *General Guidelines* were developed by dividing the updated zone into 46 units (separated in the next stage of the research) and next - into 170 sub-units with assigned (specified for the needs of the Study) land use categories. As a result of a detailed analysis of the historical, functional, environmental and ownership factors, for each sub-unit required actions were given. The borders of the zone went along the ownership division lines according to the ruling land registration maps.

*The Detailed Guidelines* formulated the rules of the protection and exposition of the KL Auschwitz structures identified in the Museum environs as well as the rules of building activity. It was assumed that the new zone was to realise two superior functions. One function was to protect the post-camp structures preserved in this area; the other function was to eliminate from the Museum environs any activity that does not become its character as the site of martyrdom. To realise those functions it was of paramount importance to render the conservation guidelines more flexible so that they could give the possibility to choose between various directions of the development depending on the actual situation and consequently the social needs. Since the study showed the gigantic spatial scale of the camp complex, the considerable dispersion of its preserved relics and the extent of the post-war transformations, it was assumed that the most proper would be the exposition of particular sites and structures in the forms of protected enclaves, without unduly limiting the investment activity in other areas.

The rule of “conscious isolation“ which had been applied earlier during the conservation works on the Museum premises, was used there as well<sup>149</sup>. In order to obtain a clear division between historical buildings and modern ones, it was necessary to create the spatial isolation

<sup>146</sup> K.Smoleń: *Opinia*, op.cit.

<sup>147</sup> J.Kowacz: *Aktualizacja miejscowego planu ogólnego zagospodarowania przestrzennego miasta Oświęcim*, Oświęcim 1994 (not approved) [UMO].

<sup>148</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol.25/2.

<sup>149</sup> Meant here is the accentuation of all conservation interference in order to preserve the uncontaminated original. Professor Bohdan Rymaszewski during a symposium organised in Oświęcim in 1993 remarked: “When in 1903 Aloisy Riegl published a work defining the essence of the value of historical monuments he was not able to foresee the events that took place in the first half of the 1940s in Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Par force he did not take into consideration that the values presented as the source of the historical monuments cult namely: “historical”, “memorial”, “documentary”, or “old” are imminent to the post-camp remains. Among the historical monuments values defined by Riegl and today treated all over the world as the basis of evaluation of the protected heritage, only the value “artistic” does not apply to the Auschwitz complex as a historical monument. [...] This historical complex [...] has a special meaning for human memory: not because of the documentation of artistic or technical achievements but as an instrument for annihilating the humanity that must not be forgotten. If then a protection zone is marked out and the protection of the post-camp spatial system is assumed, meant here is the maintaining of the clarity of an extremely important document, the clarity of a historical function and no a spatial composition that is worth the attention”.

of the post-camp structures, to make sure it had a suitable exposition context without paralysing the activity of the disposers of those structures. To obtain a proper perception of historical sites, it was suggested to limit the size of new buildings. The rule of “aesthetic neutrality” was accepted to be implemented through the architectural distinction of contemporary buildings from the historical ones. In practice this should consist in the use of neutral elevation materials and subdued colouring. The same rule ought to refer to other elements of the land development as well: small architecture (benches, dustbins, bus shelters), fences, street lighting. Thus formulated guidelines were to create a clear image of the zone: to stress the chronology of buildings, and at the same to draw visitors’ attention to what would help to form the proper first impression before entering the Museum. The dissonant modern elements unrelated to the leading function of the zone (industrial and storage facilities, economic, technical and communal infrastructure), were to be surrounded with belts of insulating greenery, and in extreme cases removed.

It was important to evaluate the use of land and buildings. A list of functions was presented that should not be placed close to the Museum because of the need to maintain an atmosphere of silence and dignity. It was suggested to prohibit in the zone the development of arduous industry, transport depots, open storage yards, market places, primary education buildings, sport, recreation, amusement, all forms of advertisement and door-to-door sales. It was also acknowledged that in the face of the hitherto existing conflicts new places of religious worship should not be created in the zone.

The borders of the zone were adapted to the real location of historic structures and to the feasibility of highlighting them in the landscape. Simultaneously, it was suggested to strengthen the conservation supervision through including thus updated zone (and the enclaves of historical structures outside it) in the monuments register.

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## **The study of the zone in Brzezinka**





## Research: the social context

In August 1996 the Study of the protection zone in Brzezinka was resumed. The Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp commissioned Studio PLAN the continuation of research based on the programme agreed five years earlier with the International Museum Council.

In 1992 the unfavourable attitude of Brzezinka inhabitants made the continuation of the research impossible. The attempts undertaken by the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator and Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki to convince the distrustful people to accept the research plan failed. The odium of the local community, with whom no-one had earlier discussed the problem of the zone, fell on persons who then started the actions. Emotions came to light as well as long-hidden accusations of belittling vested interests of the population by the Museum and conservators. The size of the zone was criticised, the Museum management was accused of not co-operating with the local authorities in the organisation of mass ceremonies.

In the letter of January 1992 addressed to the Ombudsman the Village Council of Brzezinka presented their attitude to the protection zone: *“To the present day we have not found any understanding at none of the addressees of letters sent on behalf of the inhabitants of the Village of Brzezinka (...) The inhabitants are losing patience, because as inhabitants and property owners they have been struggling with difficulties ever since 1941 when they were evicted by fascists who then used their land to erect the Extermination Camp i.e. for over fifty years now. After the liberation when the war finished they were expropriated again and no-one sought their agreement, and then various regulations were enforced which limited the owners’ rights to their own land. (...) You cannot go on taking everything away and not giving anything in exchange. If one wants to decide about somebody’s property, first they have to offer to purchase it and only then talk about its use. Otherwise (because of e.g. the lack of funds) it is necessary either to accept the ownership or to make life easier by proposing the possible exchange of grounds.”*

In reply the Bielsko Vicevoivod P i o t r M o l l said that to solve the problem the property in the protection zone would have to be redeemed. *“Through the dependent services I will seek the possibility of gaining funds from international organisations whose statutory duty is to preserve the sites of such importance”* - he claimed. In Brzezinka it was perceived as the announcement of the gradual liquidation of the village. The already initiated inventory was interpreted by the inhabitants to be the preparation for future expropriations. Logical arguments were ineffective. To make matters worse, in connection with the clumsy organisation of one of the first Marches of the Living<sup>150</sup> absurd suspicions appeared that Jewish organisations stand behind these actions which, as local gossips would have it, after redeeming the grounds within the zone were to build hotels in the Museum environs<sup>151</sup>. The Bielsko Vicevoivod explained that it was the Village Council that suggested the redeeming of the land. *“It is not and it has never been the intention of the authorities to deprive the legal owners of their property. It is necessary though to look for measures of solving this complex problem (...).It is with this intention that the present research works are conducted. Tackling this*

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<sup>150</sup> The Oświęcim Commune Administrator wrote in a letter to the Local Parliament President of the Bielskie Voivodship: *“...a nuisance for the inhabitants of Brzezinka are the ceremonies and manifestations organised on the premises of the former camp, at these times the roads are converted into car parks and the traffic is blocked. An example of this can be the March of the Living organised on 30 April 1992. At that time there was a complete blockade so that the inhabitants were ‘incapacitated’, unpleasant incidents took place e.g. a father returning with his child from a kindergarten was not allowed by the guards across the road to his own house, some employees did not get to work (...) simple decency requires that the organiser should inform about the planned events so that the inhabitants were prepared for these inconveniences and knew the date of the ceremonies (...) during the events roads are devastated and the grounds covered in litter (nothing is earlier prepared) and the Commune Office has no funds for this target...”* [letter 7.08.1992, No: UG-7322/10/92, UGO].

<sup>151</sup> B.Wisłocka-Trombska, op.cit.; M.Kęskrawiec: op.cit.; A.Woźniak: op.cit.

*problem will allow to state what can be done in the protection zone” - he concluded. The tone of Piotr Łukasiewicz, junior minister in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, was equally reassuring. Having received the opinion of the General Historical Monuments Conservator he said: “Taking this area under the conservation protection is not a hindrance to changes in the land development which are reasonable and possible to accept by conservation services.”*

These arguments did not appeal to the people concerned. Already on 8 September 1992 at the session of the International Auschwitz Council Stanisław Dziubek, the then administrator of the village of Brzezinka, admonished the people present: *“You should at last finish with these makeshift state of the zones around the former camp. There should be no improvisation. Since we have now the lawful state the interests of the inhabitants must also be noticed, and not only the interests of the Museum as it has been so far. It is necessary to state at last where the Museum ends and where normal life begins. We are requesting to diminish maximally the protection zone and permit the development of the village outside it...”*<sup>152</sup> He also mentioned another matter, the mass celebrations on the former camp premises. The inhabitants of Brzezinka consider these celebrations to be a real apocalypse:

*“For several decades the Museum management have not done virtually anything to prepare the Museum premises for the reception of so big groups of tourists and pilgrims. I mean first of all parking spaces, stable and portable public toilets, garbage collection and disposal and even some sort of provisional commercial facilities and tourist services. If financial and organisational considerations are an insurmountable barrier for the Museum management then the character of celebrations ought to change. They should be adapted to fit in the conditions i.e. they should be modest celebrations for a small number of participants, without the unnecessary pomp. The organiser of any celebration must be aware that he does not work in a desert but in an inhabited area, with its own local authorities...”*

The International Council listened carefully to the village administrator. Professor Władysław Bartoszewski said that this petition contained a number of explicitly stated problems which could be discussed by the central authorities, especially as far as the size of the protection zone was concerned: *“We ought to think prospectively, in a view of future generations who will not take these events so emotionally, but will more practically approach the problem of living in this area. We could consider commemorating only some chosen places with symbols or plaques”*<sup>153</sup>.

In the situation of the increasing social tension it was acknowledged that in Brzezinka no research should be conducted and the all effort should be focussed on the completion of research in Oświęcim and only later accede to the study of the zone of the former Birkenau<sup>154</sup>. From time perspective this approach proved to be absolutely right. After the Study in Oświęcim had been completed even the most distrustful Brzezinka and Pławy inhabitants could see what the intention of the research was, and consequently its effect. It occurred that conservation guidelines need not necessarily be connected with administrative “persecution”, but can create normal living conditions, and offer significant support to the local authorities from the state budget for the implementation of indispensable renewal and municipal works<sup>155</sup>.

However the inhabitants of Brzezinka learned about the benefits of the documentation prepared for Oświęcim only in May 1996, that is to say eighteen months after it was deliv-

<sup>152</sup> *Wystąpienie Soltysa Brzezinki na posiedzeniu Międzynarodowej Rady Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu w dniu 8 września 1992 r.* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].

<sup>153</sup> *Protokół z posiedzenia Międzynarodowej Rady Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu w dniu 8 września 1992 r.*, pp.11-12 [PMO].

<sup>154</sup> *Notatka służbowa spisana w PSOZ Oddział Wojewódzki w Bielsku-Białej 7.04.1995* [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała].

<sup>155</sup> Here is meant the Oświęcim Programme and the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim - documents which came into being thanks to the *Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum*. This is discussed in the chapter: *Implementations*.

ered to the Museum Foundation. Contrary to earlier declarations further activities were not resumed immediately. The offers of the co-operation made by the Research Team were turned down by the Museum apparently because of “the lack of financial resources”. The postponement of research made impossible the simultaneous development of the Oświęcim Programme and the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim and Brzezinka. In result the city has already implemented many renewal assignments, and the commune is not even on the threshold of their specification.

The resumption of the research in Brzezinka was paradoxically accelerated by the conflict about the so-called “supermarket” that appeared in the meantime. Faced with irrational accusations from all over the world the Museum management realised the need to resume the research works in the zone. This conflict added an international dimension to the problems of the zone and simultaneously informed the national and world community about the importance and complexity of local problems of Oświęcim and Brzezinka.

At the beginning of 1996 the Research Team started intensive preparations. The contact with Józef Strychariski, the new village administrator of Brzezinka, was renewed<sup>156</sup>. Already in March that year the first meeting with the Village Council took place. The participants were acquainted with the documents prepared for Oświęcim. To extinguish the existing conflicts and to enable the smooth research Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki appealed to create conditions for a close contact between the researchers and the inhabitants concerned. The idea of consultations within village meetings was proposed. The Team was to prepare an appeal to the inhabitants, which once published in the local press would make easy to obtain their acceptance to the reopening of the works<sup>157</sup>. Further financing of the research by the Museum depended on the agreement of the local community. A month later the problems of the protection zone were presented on a session of the Pławy Village Council meeting. The Research Team obtained an unanimous approval.

On the 8 May 1996 a Brzezinka village meeting took place. The reopening of works at the zone was one of the items on the agenda. Not only did the inhabitants have the opportunity to see the conclusions of the completed research presented by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki, but could also hear the opinion of guests. Grażyna Staniszevska, the Bielsko-Biała constituency MP, stressed the ignorance of problems of Oświęcim and Brzezinka in decision-making circles, the effect of which was, according to her, the lack of a proper reaction to the question of the “supermarket”. She thought that the “clerical” decision to enter the former Auschwitz-Birkenau on the UNESCO list should be corrected after the study had been completed. She claimed that it was possible to finance the local infrastructure from the state budget and form the international resources, though should be preceded with suitable documents. Andrzej Telka, the Mayor of Oświęcim, appealed for permission for the Rawecki to continue the works because in his opinion it was the indispensable condition to undertake co-ordinated actions within the communal infrastructure and also to minimise the arduousness of the zone. A similar opinion was presented by Stanisław Rydzóń the Chairman of the Oświęcim Commune Council. Promoting the position of the Mayor of Oświęcim he expressed the conviction about liable advantages that may result for the inhabitants and municipal authorities from the scientific research. Jerzy Wróblewski

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<sup>156</sup> In prospect of soon being given the commission for the works in Brzezinka, despite the lack of formal commission, as early as in 1995 the Research Team started working contacts with the representatives of the local authorities, with the future executors of the specialist documentation and made research in the archives. It was the result of the meeting at the Oświęcim Town Office on 10 December 1994 in which the following took part: the Mayor of the Town of Oświęcim, the Chairman of the Oświęcim Commune Council and the Head of the Oświęcim Commune Management, the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator, the Manager and the Conservator of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. It was agreed at that time that the Research Team would be the co-ordinator of all actions connected with the study of the zone in Brzezinka.

<sup>157</sup> *Protokół nr 4 z zebrania Rady Sołectkiej, Radnych i zaproszonych gości*, 22.02.1996 [Sołectwo Brzezinka]. The appeal mentioned of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki was published in the April issue of „Oświęcimska Gmina” (1996).

the Manager of the Museum calmed down the participants arguing that the study would not lead to the violation of the private property. The Village Meeting eventually voted for “*the consent to start the study of the zone*”<sup>158</sup>.

In September 1996 the study started. Because of the difficulties with financing by the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp the research was divided into two stages: the first of which was to consist in preparation of preliminary materials and the other was to comprise problem syntheses and conservation guidelines. This track had been consulted with and approved by the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator<sup>159</sup>.

The specificity of the research area different than in Oświęcim demanded a different approach to the study programme. Due to the strong pressure from the local community to free the building areas in the zone, stronger focus was put on the analysis of the technical infrastructure factors and of limitations in investing caused by reasons other than the preservation protection. In order to avert the potential social tensions the inspections of private estates were limited to the indispensable minimum. This was also dictated by the fact that this land had a different function during the war: it almost entirely lacked historical buildings which had been caused by the expulsion of the inhabitants and actual liquidation of the village by the German Nazis as well as the lack of such intensive development as in the vicinity of the former KL Auschwitz I. The character of the research area demanded also to put a greater stress on the problems of agricultural, mining and road communication.

### Specialised monographs

In 1998 the urban inventory<sup>160</sup> was executed of the land around the former KL Birkenau of the area of 666 hectares within village circuits of Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże. 397 structures were inventoried, whereof 282 in Brzezinka, 98 in Pławy, and 17 in Harmęże. It was stated that the post-war buildings are in majority (94%). Historical structures constitute only 6% of resources whereof 18 buildings date back to the period before 1939. The rest are post-camp relicts: the KL Birkenau New Headquarters, the ruins of the water supply station, two potato stores and one vegetable store. The functional character of the buildings proved to be relatively homogeneous - 83% of resources are family houses on plots along with appropriate facilities (garages, barns, cow-sheds, house workshops). Industrial buildings appear exclusively in two working companies: *Przedsiębiorstwo Produkcyjno-Wdrożeniowe “Polinowa”* (Enterprise for Production and Implementation) and *Przedsiębiorstwo Przerobu Wtórnych Metali Nieżelaznych “Wtórmet”* (Enterprise for Non-ferrous Secondary Metals Treatment). The services in Pławy are represented only by a shop and a club room, whereas in Brzezinka there is a parish church (in a post-camp building) and a tourist hostel. In the research area there are mainly private buildings (84%). The remaining 16% buildings belong to the Exchequer, the commune of Oświęcim, to *Spółka Pastwiskowa* (Pasture Co-operative) in Pławy, *Rolnicza Spółdzielna Produkcyjna* (Agricultural Production Co-operative) and religious organisations. Six buildings have mixed form of ownership and the ownership status of one building is not regulated. 91% of buildings are made of brick. 6% of buildings have steel construction skeleton or reinforced concrete skeleton, only 3% of buildings are made of timber. All of them are in good technical condition.

Within the research area 1,329 persons live, whereof 955 live in Brzezinka, 309 in Pławy, and 65 in Harmęże. However more reliable is the balance in the context of the entire number

<sup>158</sup> By 82 votes with 4 abstaining and 2 against - Protocol of the Village Meeting of Brzezinka on 8 May 1996. [Sołectwo Brzezinka]; comp. *Mieszkańcy Brzezinki wyrazili zgodę*, „Oświęcimska Gmina”, No 3/96.

<sup>159</sup> *Opinia konserwatorska do zakresu studium zagospodarowania stref ochronnych b. obozu Auschwitz II (Birkenau) w Brzezince* (letter from WKZ o. Bielsko-Biała to JM Rawecki, 19.05.1995 No: PSOZ-BB-534u/19/95 and 5.02.1995 No: PSOZ-BB-534u/19/95) [PLAN].

<sup>160</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ...w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol.20 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

of inhabitants of each village area which shows the degree of engagement in the problems of the Museum protection zone. According to this analysis the village of Pławy occupies the first place where as many as 94% of inhabitants (out of 328) live within the area of elaboration, the second place is occupied by Brzezinka (43% out of 2,201), and the third - Harmężę (11% out of 537). The analysis of all collected information showed the Museum environs as mainly invested by single-family houses placed on individual plots along existing streets and village roads. In the north-east part and eastern part (Brzezinka) and in the central part (Pławy) dwelling houses are of the thick suburban development along narrow streets, whereas in the north-west area and west area (by the Vistula River) dwelling houses appear in the form of separate enclaves and small loose farm clusters among which pastures and plough land spread. The architectural character of the buildings is uniform as far as the dimensions are concerned (2-3 storeys of the 10x10 m projection) and the type (detached), whereas diverse as far as the elevation is concerned (brick, plaster, siding), roofs construction (gable roofs, hipped roofs, camping roofs, flat roofs), their cover (tar, metal sheet, asbestic and cement tiles, ceramic tiles) and fencing. In the conclusion it was said that the area shows reserves for the new structures which can either develop along the existing tracts using the already existing infrastructure, or can fill up numerous gaps in the street frontages. The development of the separate enclaves is limited because of the lack of connection to the technical infrastructure.

In November 1996 the geological documentation was prepared<sup>161</sup>. It described the morphology and the hydrology of the protection zone, the geological structure analysis, the analysis of the hydrogeological conditions, the characteristics of the chosen areas with specific geological and engineering conditions. The Quarternary fluvial accumulation deposits were found which cause mostly unfavourable geotechnical conditions. In Brzezinka and in Pławy 60% of grounds make building difficult, in Harmężę it is 6%. In general: 55% of the area under research poses serious difficulties for building.

To estimate resources of the soil environment the Commune Office of Oświęcim made available to the Research Team a paper from 1975<sup>162</sup> the only one on this subject they had. According to this documentation within the area under research there are first of all brown alluvial soils of the average and heavy mechanical composition with the level of humus of 25-35 cm. These are soils whose the level of ground waters differs considerably in different seasons and depends on rainfall and thaws as well as on the water-level of the Vistula River. Their fertility is high enough, but is sometimes unreliable. The proportion of agricultural grounds to the area under research is 62% (416 of hectares), whereof ploughs land is 27%, and grassland is 35%.

In November 1996 aerial images<sup>163</sup> were taken from the height of 300 and 4000 metres. The images closely showed both the present state of the development of the Museum environs as well as the historical sites and structures condition. This gave the basis for comparative analyses with aerial images taken in 1944 and 1945 by the allies' intelligence<sup>164</sup> and with the photogrammetric documentation worked out by the State Geodetic and Cartographic Enterprise in Warszawa in 1979-1981<sup>165</sup>.

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<sup>161</sup> K.Sobol: *Dokumentacja geologiczno-inżynierska dla rejonu strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum w Brzezince*, Bielsko-Biała listopad 1996; *Studium Zagospodarowania ...w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol.7 item 1-7.

<sup>162</sup> M.Wywiół: *Środowisko glebowo-rolnicze dla gm. Oświęcim (Aneks do map glebowo-rolniczych w skali 1: 5000)*, Wojewódzkie Biuro Geodezji i Urzędzeń Rolnych w Krakowie, 1975; *Studium Zagospodarowania... w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol.7 item 8-25.

<sup>163</sup> Wojciech Gorgolewski was the author of these images; *Studium Zagospodarowania ...w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol.8A and 8B.

<sup>164</sup> sign.Opr./Klein/194 [APMO]; comp. Dino A.Brugioni, Robert G.Poirier: *The Holocaust revisited: A retrospective analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination complex*, sign.Opr./Brugioni i Poirier/187 [APMO].

<sup>165</sup> Aerial images in the scales 1:5000 and 1:2000 of the Oświęcim town and commune area, Państwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Geodezyjno-Kartograficzne Warszawa [WAPŚI].

The ownership documentation of the land<sup>166</sup> was commissioned by the Commune Office of Oświęcim in 1997. The works covered the area of 683 hectares, out of which 297 hectares in Brzezinka (43% of the area under research), 270 hectares in Pławy (40%), 88 hectares in Harmęże (13%), 11 ha in the city of Oświęcim (2%), and 17 ha in Jedlina (2%). It was ascertained that in the area under research manifests a diverse ownership structure. More than half (60%) real estates belong to natural persons, the rest are various forms of non-private rule; less than 9.6% belongs to the Exchequer, 13.6% belong to collective farms and pasture companies, 1.2% are communal grounds, 5.7% are district grounds. Mortgaged and public properties are 8.9%. The percentage of mixed forms of ownership is minute (the Exchequer and private owners and the exchequer and co-operatives) - 0.11%, religious organisations (parishes) - 0.07% and firms - 0.24%. The ownership status of 0.2% of land is not regulated. Considerable differences in the ownership structure are present in each precinct. In Brzezinka 77% of grounds are private property, in Pławy - 44%, in Harmęże - 70%, and in Oświęcim - 13%. Within Jodłówka the whole of the land under research belongs to the Exchequer. Mortgage research showed what the inhabitants of Brzezinka had signalled for a long time: the ownership of roads that were designed by the Germans for the future camp has not been regulated since the Second World War<sup>167</sup>. It occurred that Męczeństwa Narodów Street and Ofiar Faszyzmu Street (Voivodship roads) are still registered as private property.

In the years 1996-1997 specialised agreements<sup>168</sup> were effected with units which owned infrastructure within of the research area or which administered various components of the natural and cultural environment by virtue of various regulations.

The State Service for Historical Monuments Protection (PSOZ) in Bielsko-Biała provided a list of sites and structures which either were or were to be under legal protection because of their special historical value. It occurred that in the research area apart from the post-camp complex there were no other listed structures. Only five structures were under indirect legal protection in the form of an entering in the local development plan records<sup>169</sup>. In Brzezinka it was the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters and a chapel in Brzozowa Street. In Pławy it was a brick building dating back to 1920s. and the John of Nepomuk figure dating back to the end of the 19 c. In Harmęże it was a roadside cross dating back to the beginning of the 20 c. In Brzezinka the following were to be entered into the historical monuments list: the former camp potato stores in Piwniczna Street, the camp former potato stores in Kombatantów Street, the side track (to the Gate of Death), the so-called "Little Red House" the site of the first gas chamber in KL Birkenau, the ruins of KL Birkenau water supply station. The Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator informed as well that in the west part of the research area at the Vistula River flood embankment there was an archaeological site: traces of the late medieval settlement.

With the support of the Department of Environmental Protection of the Voivodship Office in Bielsko-Biała the areas under legal protection were identified. According to the information given by the Voivodship Nature Conservator (WKP) natural researches were conduct-

<sup>166</sup> *Rejestr posiadaczy gruntów w „Strefie widokowej” Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka w Brzezince*, Z. Dąbrowski, Centrum Obsługi Geodezyjnej Inwestycji i Rolnictwa, Oświęcim November 1997 [UGO].

<sup>167</sup> comp. *Protokół Zebrania Wiejskiego w dn. 18.09.1999* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].

<sup>168</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Agreements were made with the following units (Polish names are given): Państwowa Służba Ochrony Zabytków o. Bielsko-Biała, Urząd Gminy Oświęcim, Zakład Energetyczny Bielsko-Biała, Rejon Energetyczny Kęty, Oddział Eksploatacji Sieci Przesyłowych Polskich Sieci Elektroenergetycznych SA Katowice, Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Wodociągów i Kanalizacji w Oświęcimiu, Górnośląski Zakład Gazowniczy Rozdzielnia Gazu Oświęcim, Telekomunikacja Polska SA Oświęcim, Rejonowy Zarząd Wodnych Melioracji w Oświęcimiu, Okręgowy Urząd Górniczy w Tychach, Wydział Ochrony Środowiska Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Bielsku-Białej, Wojewódzki Inspektorat Ochrony Środowiska w Bielsku-Białej, Dział Geologiczno-Mierniczy KWK „Czeczott”, Śląska Okręgowa Dyrekcja Kolei Państwowych w Katowicach, Dyrekcja Okręgowa Dróg Publicznych w Krakowie, Zarząd Dróg w Wadowicach.

<sup>169</sup> *Zmiany Miejscowego Planu...* op.cit., pnt. 1.11.3., pp. 11, 12, 14.

ed in the vicinity of the west Museum line in order to create a Nature and Landscape Complex "Stare Wiślisko" which would protect the values of plant complexes, fauna and landscape elements of this area<sup>170</sup>.

The Commune Office of Oświęcim provided data on a new express way "S1"<sup>171</sup> from Kosztowy to Bielsko-Biała designed by the General Director for National Roads and Motorways in Warszawa (GDDKiA) which is to lead through the west part of the research area between the Vistula River and the Museum premises. The site study<sup>172</sup> shows this road as being an important element of the basic Polish road system thanks to the fact that it joins the Upper Silesian Industrial Region (GOP) with the outlet to Slovakia. In the Northern part it is to create a link with the Motorway A-4 (Berlin-Katowice-Kraków-Kiev) and the extension of the direction of the Motorway A-1 (Gdańsk-Katowice-Vienna), whereas in the South it is to link the direction of the express way Bielsko-Cieszyn and the direction Bielsko-Zwardoń. The importance of this direction has increased since the contracts between the Minister of Transport and Maritime Economy and the Ministry of Transportation of the Slovak Republic were signed<sup>173</sup>, as a result of which Poland has undertaken to stake out a dual-carriage way throughout the Podbeskidzie, which is in the network of the Trans-European North-South Motorway. Its course in the research area was envisaged in two variants, whereas the link with the local road system of the Oświęcim County was to be built in a form of a two-level junction "Museum" in Pławy. As a result of a detailed analysis the Research Team noticed an important clash in this investment. It occurred that in the basic variant the road led too close to the Museum (100 m) making it impossible to secure proper conditions for the commemoration of the victims of the camp, whose remnants lie in the area of incineration pits. Although in the other variant the road led at a larger distance from the Museum (350 m), it still clashed with the conditions of the protection of the Nature and Landscape Complex of "Stare Wiślisko". Bearing in mind the need for ensuring in the perspective of many years the Museum services in connection with the constantly increasing flow of visitors<sup>174</sup>, the high importance of the designed road for the tourist service is worth stressing, however it absolutely requires adjusting i.e. moving it further west off the Museum lines<sup>175</sup>.

After having consulted the coal mine "Czeczott", District Mining Office (OUG) in Tychy and the Commune Office of Oświęcim the research area development conditions were specified in relation to the planned exploitation of natural resources in Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże. The research area is situated within the "Wola" mining area of the coal mine "Czeczott" in Miedźna Wola<sup>176</sup>. The mine decided not to extract coal within the administrative lines of the town and commune of Oświęcim in future. The chief engineer of the coal mine "Czeczott" ascertained that the present and the planned exploitation would not influ-

<sup>170</sup> J.Żarnowiec, H.Klama, A.Herczek: *Waloryzacja przyrodnicza projektowanego Zespołu Przyrodniczo-Krajobrazowego „Stare Wiślisko” w Gminie Oświęcim*, Bielsko-Biała 1998 [Wydział Ochrony Środowiska Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Bielsku-Białej].

<sup>171</sup> Załącznik do *Rozporządzenia Rady Ministrów z dnia 23 stycznia 1996 r. w sprawie ustalenia sieci autostrad i dróg ekspresowych* [Dz.U. No 12 item 63].

<sup>172</sup> *Studium rozpoznawcze lokalizacji trasy ekspresowej Kosztowy (d.k. nr 15) - Bielsko-Biała*, Biuro Planowania Rozwoju Sieci Drogowej Warszawa, Pracownia Studiów Sieci Drogowej „Południe” Kraków, Warszawa-Kraków, January 1996 [UGO].

<sup>173</sup> *ibidem*, p.3: *Porozumienie pomiędzy Ministrem Transportu i Gospodarki Morskiej RP a Ministerstwem Transportu Republiki Słowackiej o miejscu połączenia planowanej autostrady D18 po stronie słowackiej i planowanej drogi dwujezdniowej po stronie polskiej na granicy państwowej, pomiędzy miejscowościami Skalite i Zwardoń oraz ich przebiegu w strefie przygranicznej* - an agreement signed in Bratislav on 29 November 1995.

<sup>174</sup> Currently the number of visitors to the Museum is c. 500,000 persons yearly, out of which only 10% come to Oświęcim by train, according to the estimates of the Museum Visitors Services Section.

<sup>175</sup> along the distance kilometre 12+800.00 ÷ kilometre 16+710.00.

<sup>176</sup> The "Wola" Mining Area established by the decision of the Minister of Mining of 8 December 1997 sign.VMP/136/77, comprising the area of the town and commune of Oświęcim, listed in the register of mining areas in vol.1/1 no 155 - Announcement of the Bielski Voivod of 25 January 1978 of the establishment of the Wola Mining Area.

ence the research area. However the inquiry in the Commune Office of Oświęcim proved that the District Mining Office in Tychy had introduced for the investors, who apply for a building permit, an obligation of securing the planned structures against the influences of mining in the following: II - III land mining category, the lifting of the ground water-table to the height 0-0 m and the seismic shocks of the acceleration magnitude of 20-50 mm/s<sup>2</sup>. In connection with this the District Mining Office was asked to explain that issue. If the influences of the exploitation were in fact to have those parameters according to experts' opinion it would have a significant impact on the historical post-camp structures<sup>177</sup>. The District Mining Office requested the mining executives of the mines: "Czeczott", "Piaś" and "Brzeszcze" to develop a uniform opinion about the past, current and future influences of the mining exploitation on the research area. The coal mine "Czeczott" informed that in the documentation of the deposit management that was being prepared a protection pillar is planned under the Museum and its protection zone. In April 1997 the Research Team received the answer from the District Mining Office: *"Immediate impact of the past, current and future mining exploitation by the coal mines: "Ziemowit", "Piaś" and "Czeczott" do not and will not to the year 2010 cover the area of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Brzezinka."*

### The historical study<sup>178</sup>

The study was realised from January 1997 to April 1998. The materials collected in 1993 were used<sup>179</sup> as well as supplementary inquiries were executed in the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Archive and in the Voivod Geodesic and Cartographic Documentation Department Centre in Oświęcim. The objective of the research was to visualise the investment state of the area of the KL Birkenau in the years 1941-1945 (structures, the road and railway system, agricultural and economic areas) as well as to determine the character of the development of the neighbouring villages (Brzezinka, Pławy, Harmęże) before the year 1941. Materials for the analyses were chosen so that it would be possible to estimate the role of particular structures in the spatial, functional and administrative organization of the camp. It was important to obtain information helpful for the specification of the conservation guidelines to settle the range and scale of the renewal actions.

The *Zentralbauleitung* Section of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Archive was scrutinised. In the Testimonies Section of the Museum Archive data were collected on the spatial development of the KL Birkenau camp within the pre-war villages of Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże. During the research particular attention was paid to the information that could explain the connection between this camp and the remaining parts of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex. That is why the inquiry was enlarged to look for data on the sub-camps in Rajsko, Budy and Babice as well as data concerning the dislocations of the prisoners working commandos in connection with the implementation of the investment and economy actions of

<sup>177</sup> The expert's opinion worked out in 1993 thus presents the above-mentioned problem: *"If beyond the year 2015 under the Museum in Brzezinka mining activities were executed of the planned (...) parameters of the terrain deformation (III category), it would have a significant impact on the structures. None of the structures on the premises of Brzezinka is in any way protected against the influence of the mining deformations. Additionally they are characterised by very low resistance to these influences. In the 5-degree scale of the resistance of the existing structures to the influences of the continuous deformations, the majority of the structures in Brzezinka (brick housing barracks, the Gate of Death, sauna, kitchens, baths) are classified into the category 0 (...) In the buildings of brick construction the III category deformations would cause considerable damages in the form of cracks, splits and dislocations with the danger of loss of stability of parts of the structures. All these structures should be safeguarded by special construction measures in the form of braces, anchors, bands, new dilatations, supports, etc."* According to: M.Gryczmański, J.Sękowski, G.Mutke, Z.Pająk: *Ekspertyza o stanie technicznym budowlanych obiektów Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Część I: Warunki gruntowo-wodne i analiza wpływów górniczych na terenie Brzezinki*; P.A.Nova Zakład Wielobranżowy Oświęcim 1993 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>178</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ...w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

<sup>179</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ... w Oświęcimiu*, op.cit., vol. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.



the German Nazis. Information that was collected identified the places of mass executions, places where the corpses of prisoners were buried and places for storing or eliminating the burned victims of genocide. In connection with the concurrent inquiry of the *Zentralbauleitung* Section it was essential to identify the character and the degree of implementation of the German investment plans as shown in the SS documents by confronting them with the testimonies of witnesses who had taken part in the construction and the extension of the camp complex. The source of information were the accounts given in the post-war years by former inmates, slave civilian workers of German construction companies which performed works on the KL Birkenau premises, the inhabitants of Oświęcim, Brzezinka, Pławy, Babice, Rajsko, as well as the accounts of long standing employees of the Museum who had taken part in its organisation in first years after the liberation.

One hundred-and-forty-six photocopies were ordered of plans and projects from the years 1940-1944 and nine hundred-and-ninety-two pages of selected excerpts from two-hundred-and-ninety-two testimonies of witnesses containing plans and topographical sketches. Historical information was provided by the rich reminiscence literature and numerous scientific papers given by the Museum. Thus prepared material was used to formulate preliminary conservation guidelines of the area under research.

### The result study - The First Stage<sup>180</sup>

As a result of the research works a number of problems were identified which demanded immediate solutions because in the perspective of the next few years they might cause serious threats to the Auschwitz-Birkenau sites and structures. First of all faulty regulations in the ruling local development plan were identified<sup>181</sup>. The planners did not take into account the real borders of the Museum area, UNESCO zones were not introduced either. Basing on the arrangements with the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator instead of the UNESCO zones a *strict conservation zone "A"* and a *partial conservation zone "B"* were introduced<sup>182</sup>. These zones were linked to the conservation zones theory. The incompatibility of this theory to the relicts of the former KL Auschwitz was proved by the research conducted in the years 1992-1994. The obligation of designing in the zone "B" of "*modern structures adjusted in their scale, size and proportions to the historical urban layout*" should not be introduced because of the unique role of the post-camp remnants as tangible evidence of crimes.

Proper forming of new structures in the vicinity of the Museum has been many times discussed during the meetings of the International Museum Council Conservation Commission in the years 1993-1994. It was acknowledged that the "conscious isolation rule" suggested by Professor Rymaszewski should be applied and not the actions derived from the conservation zones theory, and especially not so in the reconstruction of the historical spatial layout. It is not possible in Brzezinka or Pławy to "*link the modern forms with the local tradition and the features of the local building style*" as written in the local development plan. It is so not only because it is not sure to what historical period one should refer while meeting this requirement, but first of all because of the fact that during the war both villages were totally demolished. The present rural development is thus exclusively the effect of the post-war process of the reconstruction of the former farms that had been pulled down by the German invader. The only value of the village spatial layout preserved to the present day is the road system because it had not been effaced in spite of the SS destructive activities. It is essential to adjust the new buildings to the character of the already existing structures, both in the scale as well

<sup>180</sup> *Studium Zagospodarowania ...w Brzezince*, op.cit. vol. 9 and 10.

<sup>181</sup> *Zmiany Miejscowego Planu...* op.cit.

<sup>182</sup> comp. *Wytyczne konserwatorskie dot. projektu zmian w miejscowym Planie Ogólnym Zagospod. Przestrzennego gminy Oświęcim*, November 1994 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała]; *Uzgodnienie-Opinia*, Bielsko-Biała 2.12.1994 [PSOZ o.Bielsko-Biała].

as in the architectural features in order to obtain the effect of neutrality in relation to the post-camp relics.

The road communication network impacts proved to be extremely important. In the current street network, Ofiar Faszyzmu Street in Brzezinka serves the transit traffic from the national road Katowice-Oświęcim which is not provided in the local development plan. It results in an intensive traffic in the vicinity of the former KL Birkenau. The Gate of Death is especially exposed to unfavourable impacts (shocks). There are basic collisions between the visitors' traffic, which is especially intensive in the vicinity of the Gate of Death, and the heavy traffic. Back in the 1980s a project was prepared of putting Ofiar Faszyzmu Street and Męczeństwa Narodów Street away from the Museum. However, the correction introduced to the local development plan on the basis of this project gave negative effects. Namely commercial and service facilities were allowed in the vicinity of the Gate of Death which should never have happened in the face of the historical landscape protection requirements (compare Appendix 4, p.127). In 1996, still prior to the research onset, the Research Team qualified the revision of these regulations to be the first priority. When the research had started the Museum management was asked to commission a specialist opinion to estimate the impact of the traffic on the construction of the Gate of Death<sup>183</sup>. Simultaneously a more radical correction of the road communication system was suggested which assumed the removal of all traffic from the Museum lines.

The issue of securing the post-camp relics situated outside the Museum proved to be extremely urgent. A progressive degradation of the potato stores was noticed as well as of the ruins of the former KL Birkenau water supply station and the railway side track between *Judenrampe* and the Gate of Death. It was necessary to prepare proper conservation documentation and to undertake practical technical actions. The Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator's request to inscribe the above-mentioned structures in the monument register, should be heard immediately. On the other hand the listed *Judenrampe*<sup>184</sup> is in a critical state and in the face of its extreme historical and moral importance it requires an immediate intervention. It was also suggested to give legal protection to the drainage ditches of the former KL Birkenau situated beyond the Museum. It refers first of all to the so-called "Königsgraben" (at present the "Pławianka" brook) and the so-called "Mexico" - the third post-camp building section.

Having analysed the parameters of the technical infrastructure network it was stated that the spatial development of Brzezinka and Pławy based on this network, in the perspective of the next few years is not a threat to the KL Birkenau relics. The location of existing infrastructure leads to construct new residential houses exclusively near the streets by filling in the empty spaces in frontages.

In February 1997 during a Brzezinka Village Meeting the first results of the Study were presented (the specialised agreements, the photographic documentation, the historical conditions). The adopted mode of research, agreed with the representatives of the local authorities, brought measurable effects. The regular information on the research results calmed down the negative moods, made possible achieving the preliminary acceptance for preservation priorities as well as defining social expectations. The meeting was preceded with talks with village authorities. The village administrator suggested that the inhabitants concerned should get to know the documents well before the meeting. Thanks to such an approach the Research Team was able to conduct individual consultations thus getting to know wishes and motions of par-

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<sup>183</sup> In the above-mentioned matter in 1996 the Research Team got in touch with dr Witold Mrukwa's Team - a Ministry expert (MOŚZNiL) on the protection against noise and vibrations, who works at the Laboratory of Technical Acoustics, Laser Technique and Radiometry of the Main Mining Institute in Katowice. On 13 February 1996 the research area was visited in the presence of the Main Mining Institute experts and the Museum Conservator. The technical feasibility of safeguarding the structure of the Gate of Death by using the vibroacoustic dilatation was confirmed.

<sup>184</sup> Siding and the unloading ramp at the goods station in Oświęcim - register number A-483/87.

particular owners of real property within the protection zone. Referring to the modern development conditions the assembled were awakened to the fact that the protection zone is not, as it had been so far thought, the only hindrance of the spatial development of the village. As many as sixty-four hectares in Brzezinka and in Pławy are excluded from development only because of the high-voltage lines running there. Other limitations are railway grounds, agricultural economy (soil types, land melioration), the geologic structure of the ground (high level of ground water), the existing infrastructure (high cost of development of new areas), the location of services (the necessity of the providing the urban access isochrones), roads (high costs of serving new areas). The inhabitants received this with understanding. The most often expressed wish was the need to identify new building grounds. On account of the international publicity given to the protection zone by the issue of the so-called "supermarket", the problem of expropriation resurfaced. The Research Team once again reassured there was no reason for worry as the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage signed by Poland required that each state-party should respect and implement its own legislation in all conservation activities.

Next village meeting took place in June 1997. The Research Team presented the preliminary concept of development, which took into account both the tabled motions and the historical conditions. The essential issue was the local ring-road east and south off the former KL Birkenau which would separate the already existing investment of Brzezinka from the grounds which because of the post-camp complex landscape protection should remain undeveloped. The ring-road idea had been earlier consulted with the local village councils of Brzezinka and Pławy<sup>185</sup>. This project met with great interest. The clear demarcation line between the so far conflict-bearing grounds could help to eliminate the collisions between the visitors' traffic and the local and transit traffic. The Museum would guarantee to keep the historical context and local people would be given building reserves between the planned ring-road and the existing rural development. It was equally important that a chance appeared to develop new areas, because naturally technical infrastructure runs along the road communication lines. In the presented concept the issue of post-camp relics conservation was accentuated. It was stressed that the historical importance of these structures does not have to mean that they would necessarily be taken over by the Exchequer. There are procedures that make it possible to preserve actively historical monuments while at the same time preserve their ownership status. The owners are obliged to care in accordance with conservation guidelines but it is possible for the State to refund the major part of costs connected with it. As a result of the discussion it was suggested to vote the presented concept. However voices were heard that the final evaluation should be postponed till after "*the Polish Government and the Jewish organisations will have expressed their opinions*". Eventually an entering was added to the protocol that the inhabitants have familiarised themselves with the direction of the works<sup>186</sup>.

In June 1998 the Research Team delivered to the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp the first stage of the Study documentation. Contrary to earlier arrangements the Foundation did not continue the co-operation to achieve the planned effect of research in the form of general and detailed guidelines for the zone development. As a result of the talks with the Museum Management in July and August 1998 the Research Team received information that there was no money and the Management were not able to specify the date when they could undertake to find funds.

The disruption of the research met with the disappointment of the inhabitants of Brzezinka and particularly those who in this research saw the chance to specify new development areas or the final solution of the issue of the post-camp structures that belonged to them (the rail-

<sup>185</sup> *Protokół z Zebrania Rady Sołectkiej, Radnych i Państwa Raweckich, Brzezinka 26.04.1997* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].

<sup>186</sup> *Protokół z Zebrania Wiejskiego Nr II, Brzezinka 23.06.1997, p.2* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].

way siding, the water supply station ruin). The press which carefully followed this problem, commented: *“The inhabitants do not like that the research of the zone was disrupted. Now they will still have to go from office to office and ask if they could dig a well or build a stable in one place or other. If the zone was definitely specified there would not be such problems”* - *“Gazeta Wyborcza”* said<sup>187</sup>. Earlier on 18 September 1998 at the Brzezinka Village Meeting a resolution was adopted which *“engaged the Voivod to take action in order to enable Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki to continue the work over the Study of the zone around the Museum”*<sup>188</sup>.

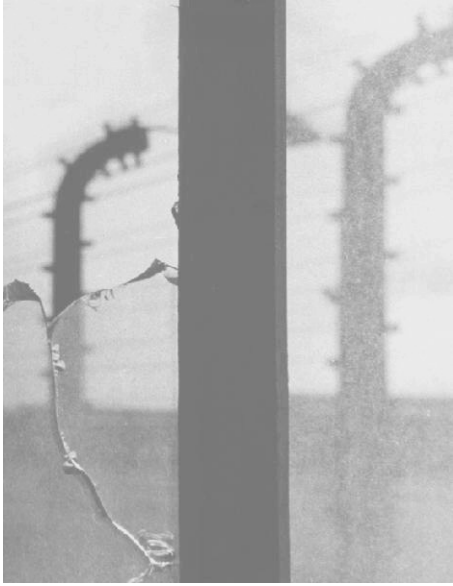
In February 1999 new perspectives opened to continue the works. After strenuous arrangements in May 1999 the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp signed a contract with the Research Team of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki to realise the second stage of the research however limiting its range to the *General Guidelines*.

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<sup>187</sup> M.Nycz: *Nie będzie map? Brzezinka. Koniec prac przy strefie?*, „Gazeta Wyborcza” 22.12.1998; comp. A.Wolna: *Stop dla Brzezinki*, „Trybuna Śląska” 23.11.1998; BK: *Strefa Brzezinki. Zabrakło pieniędzy na dokończenie studium zagospodarowania terenów wokół byłego obozu*, „Dziennik Polski” 27.11.1998.

<sup>188</sup> *Protokół z Zebrania Wiejskiego dn.18.09.1998 r. Uchwały zebrania Wiejskiego, pnt.I* [Sołectwo Brzezinka].



## Results



## **Guidelines**

As a result of the research general guidelines were defined for the updated protection zones of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum:

### **I. Conservation and protection of the preserved structures of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex and of the documented places of martyrdom, which in detail consists in:**

1. conservation of the historical architectural features of the buildings, their elevations and roof covering,
2. conservation and preservation of the architectural features of the post-camp ruins,
3. preservation of technical parameters and structure (localisation, spatial form and function) of other camp remnants: railway ramps and sidings, fencing, air raid shelters, fire pools, ditches, flood banks,
4. exclusion of documented places of martyrdom from the present agricultural and business use,
5. development of project documentation containing the scope of conservation works and the concept of adaptation, spatial presentation and visitors' accessibility,
6. conducting specialist research of structures and sites: preparing an architectural and construction inventory, historical studies, technical expert assessment, structure and surface analysis (architectural and archaeological uncovering, thermographic and thermographic mapping research, surveying geophysics),
7. conducting specialist research in order to identify the places of deposition of remains and ashes of genocide victims (archaeological research, photogrammetric thermovision mapping),
8. conducting conservation works (current repairs, major repairs, adaptation, modernisation) based on the preserved technical documentation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, iconographic documents and historical studies,
9. development a project of commemorating the documented places of martyrdom as well as marking and description of historical structures in a uniform system of outdoor information,
10. development a project of making the historical sites and structures accessible to the visitors by preparing access roads, walking routes and parking facilities.

### **II. Conservation and protection of the historical landscape consisting in:**

1. preservation of the historical ground relief parameters: dykes, embankments, parceling system,
2. preservation of the historical road network - the access roads to the former Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, pre-war streets, field roads and tracks,
3. preservation of the existing forest complexes, field greenery and roadside greenery,
4. preservation of the existing riverside greenery of the former bed of the Soła River, Vistula River and Pławianka Brook,
5. ban on the planting of high greenery limiting the perception of the former camp complex,
6. ban on increasing the existing forest areas by afforestation.

### **III. Ban on demolition, reconstruction, rebuilding and extension of the former camp structures.**

- IV. The obligation to establish “the advertisement silence zone” consisting in introducing:**
1. ban on placing large-size advertisement boards and other forms of visual information connected with commercial activities, on buildings, fencing, lamp posts,
  2. ban on advertisement activities in the conspicuous form of door-to-door selling,
  3. ban on markets and direct selling,
  4. ban on street lights on crossroads,
  5. ban on electric road signs, taxi rank signs, bus stops, information boards and address boards, street and square name labels,
  6. ban on fluorescent paint on objects other than road signs,
  7. a uniform visual information system concerning the marking of business and administration facilities, direction boards, Central Information Points placed near the main communication tracks leading to the Museum area.
- V. Preservation of existing residential areas and of existing local places of worship.**
- VI. Preservation of the existing structure of land use, with the exception of cases where the change of function will be the result of negotiations and agreements with particular real estate owners in order to implement the conservation arrangements.**
- VII. Preservation of the existing ownership structure of the area except where the change of legal status will be in result of family divisions or the result of negotiations and agreements with particular real estate owners in order to implement the conservation arrangements (refers to historical sites and structures as well as to open areas).**
- VIII. Implementation of new investment projects exclusively to provide service to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum visitors and in order to satisfy the basic needs of local community, consisting in detail in:**
1. construction of a new reception centre and new parking facilities for Museum visitors,
  2. preservation of the existing roads and construction of a local ring road in order to separate the stream of local traffic from the stream of visitors as well as to give full access to the Museum area (Brzezinka, Pławy),
  3. satisfying housing needs of local community exclusively by construction of detached single-family houses on separate plots (Brzezinka, Pławy),
  4. providing the local community with the basic services by preservation of existing buildings or by construction of new small-scale structures for retail trade and catering services (Brzezinka, Pławy).
- IX. Implementation of new investment projects according to the following guidelines:**
1. ban on introducing new structures similar to the historical structures of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex in spatial layout or in architectural features (in the shape of structure, facade decorations and details),
  2. adopting the rule of contrast in reference to the historical structure of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex, complied with the use of modern facade materials (structures connected with Museum visitors’ service),
  3. adopting the rule of neutral aesthetics in reference to historical structures of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex, complied with use of modern facade materials in connection with the architectural features of the existing buildings (structures addressing the needs of the local community),



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4. ban on architectural, artistic and sculptural stylisation in facades, fencing and small-scale architecture,
  5. residential buildings only in the form of detached single-family houses on separate plots situated along the existing or planned roads (Brzezinka, Pławy),
  6. archaeological supervision over excavation for foundations and other ground works.
- X. Ban on prospecting, defining and retrieving of basic and common fossils and conducting geological works in this respect; ban on containerless storage of substances in the rock body.**
- XI. Ban on conversion, expansion and extending the height of existing buildings or construction of new structures and area arrangement for the following purposes which could interfere with the martyrological aspect of the Museum and with the need to maintain an atmosphere of contemplation and respect, or for the purposes which could provoke social controversy:**
1. housing as far as multi-family buildings and houses complexes are concerned,
  2. burdensome industry and workshops, transport depots, open and sheltered storage places,
  3. technical infrastructure not connected with the service of existing structures: transit tracks and objects of underground, ground and overhead infrastructure,
  4. road communication in respect to construction of transit routes and basic system routes: main roads (Z, G and GP), express ways (S) and motorways (A),
  5. transport in respect to: filling stations, new developments of railway infrastructure, depots, collective garages and complexes of individual garages,
  6. wholesale trade as well as retail trade and catering services in respect to large-scale structures,
  7. education as far as new separate structures are concerned,
  8. culture in respect to: places of entertainment and recreation (open-air places and buildings) and new places of worship,
  9. tourism in respect to: hotels, motels, boarding houses and camp-sites,
  10. sport.
- XII. Conservation supervision on real property transactions in order to implement the adopted guidelines (refers to historical structures and sites as well as to open areas).**



**Legend:**

**KL Auschwitz grounds used for detention of prisoners, (with administrative and economic facilities)**

**Au I** — grounds of the KL Auschwitz I - the so-called "main camp"  
**AG** — *Aufnahmegebäude*, reception building for prisoners freshly brought to the camp  
**E** — *Schutzhaftlagerverweigerung*, 20 camp blocks built as a result of the plains aimed at the expansion of the KL Auschwitz

**Au II** — grounds of the KL Auschwitz II - Birkenau  
**B I** — *Baubeschnitt 1* - first completed camp section in Birkenau  
**B II** — *Baubeschnitt 2* - second camp section in Birkenau  
**B III** — *Baubeschnitt 3* - the so-called "Mexico", the third partially completed camp section in Birkenau  
**Q** — Exti quarantine for female prisoners  
**S** — Disinfection facilities, bathhouse - the so-called "New Sauna", at the same place where new transports of prisoners were received

**Mass extermination facilities**

**K1** - Crematorium and gas chamber in KL Auschwitz I  
**B1** - the so-called "Little Red House", first temporary gas chamber in Birkenau  
**B2** - the so-called "Little White House", second temporary gas chamber in Birkenau  
**K2, K3, K4, K5** - gas chambers and crematoria in Birkenau

**JR** — *Judenrampe*, unloading platform where from May, 1942 to May, 1944 people deported to the camp were directed  
**R** — Unloading platform where from May, 1944 people deported to the camp were directed



Sites where the genocide victims' ashes were hidden

Gravel-pits related with camp's extension, sites of hard labour, torment and execution of prisoners

*Große Postenkette*, "large cordon", line of sentry posts surrounding the main camp and Birkenau

Line marking *Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz*, administrative and economic area comprising KL Auschwitz-Birkenau grounds and covering 40 square kilometers

*Königsgraben*, "The King's Ditch", main drainage ditch taking the water from Birkenau to the Vistula river. Prisoners from penal company were employed at its digging

Residential, social, administrative and utility facilities where the SS camp staff and enterprises were located (quarters, offices, warehouses, medical service)

**Truppenwirtschaftslager / Hauptwirtschaftslager SS**  
 area of main warehouses and utility buildings for the SS; laundry; food, weapon and uniform warehouses; gunsmithery; warehouses for property stolen from the mass murder victims

**Kü** — *SS-Küche*  
 kitchen for the SS camp staff, commissary, warehouses and canteen doubling as performance and cinema room

**KUn** — *Kommandantur Mannschaftsunterkunftsbarracken*  
 Residential barracks for camp SS non-commissioned officers (quarters, isolation ward, sauna and among others a barack where dental gold was prepared)

**ZBL** — *Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS und Polizei Auschwitz O/S*  
 Design offices, utility barracks of the SS Central Construction Office

**Zi** — *Zivilarbeiterlager*  
 Residential area for civilian workers who took part in the camp extension

**DEST** — *Administrative, utility and residential area for SS enterprises*  
**DAW** — *"Deutsche Erd- und Stein Werke GmbH"*  
**DL** — *"Deutsche Lebensmittel GmbH"*

**SS-Unt.** — *Truppenunterkünfte*  
 Residential barracks for the SS Birkenau camp staff together with the KL Birkenau New Headquarters building

**SS-Laz.** — *Truppenlazarett*  
 Hospital barracks in Birkenau for the SS camp staff

**H** — *Hundezwinger*  
 Rooms for SS dogs in Birkenau, kitchen, veterinarian facilities

**D.H.** — *Deutsches Haus - Haus der Waffen SS*  
 SS hotel with a restaurant and barber's in the vicinity of the railway station in Auschwitz

**Post** — *Postamt*  
 Administrative and storage facilities of the German post in the vicinity of the railway station in Auschwitz

**b** — *Bauhof*  
 Construction materials store, branch of the SS Central Construction Office

**h** — *Holzhof*  
 Timber storage area, branch of the SS Central Construction Office

**nb** — *Neuer Bauhof*  
 Construction materials warehouses used by the SS Union Werke enterprise

**kp** — *Kohlenplatz*  
 Coal yard

**DAW** — *Holzlagungs-Platz der D.A.W*  
 Timber yard of the Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH enterprise

**Sklh** — *"Kartoffellagerhalle I u. II"*  
 Potato stores at the ramp and at the south-east corner of "B" section in Birkenau

**klh** — *Krautstill*  
 Cabbage storing building

**ks** — *Effektenkammer "Canada I"*  
 Warehouses for property stolen from the genocide victims (in Auschwitz)

**kl** — *Effektenlager "Canada II"*  
 Warehouses for property stolen from the genocide victims (in Birkenau)

**kII** — Warehouses for property stolen from the genocide victims (in Birkenau)

**Industrial area, camp workshops, technical infrastructure and transport facilities**

**SM** — *prov.Schlachthaus mit Molkerei*  
 Slaughterhouse and dairy

**G** — *Lederfabrik*  
 Pre-war tannery (established in 1897)

**BW** — *prov.Bauleitungs-Häftlings-Werkstätten*  
 Construction camp workshops

**FK** — *Fahrzeugschiffahrt der Kommandantur*  
 Vehicle-transportation base of the KL Auschwitz Headquarters

**F** — *prov.Fernheizwerk*  
 Heat and power generating plant to serve KL Auschwitz land industrial structures

**DAW** — Industrial area of the Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH enterprise

**Krupp Union** — Industrial area of the Krupp A.G. Werke enterprise (from VI.1943 to X.1943)

**ZBL** — *Pferdeställe u. Werkstätten der Zentralbauleitung*  
 Stables and workshops of the SS Central Construction Office

**ZF** — *Zinkfabrik Metallwalzwerke*  
 Zinc Rolling-Mill established in 1892 by the Austrian Industrial Company

**PF** — *Papierfabrik*  
 A pre-war Ruznický tar paper factory (established in 1888)

**PH** — *Pragahalle*  
 Before war: the *Osvičim United Machine and Car Company Inc.*

**Bä** — *prov.Bäckerei*  
 Camp bakery

**Wa** — *Wasseraufbereitungsanlage*  
 Water supply station for the needs of the KL Auschwitz I

**Wb** — *Wasseraufbereitungsanlage*  
 Water supply station for the needs of the KL Auschwitz II - Birkenau

**klä** — *Kläranlage*  
 Sewage-treatment plant in KL Birkenau

**Zerlegeb.** — *Scrap-metal yard of the L.W.Zerlegebetrieb Ost/Auschwitz* enterprise

**Agriculture-related structures**

**LV** — *prov.Landwirtsch. Viehstallung*  
 Stable, blacksmith's shop and cowshed of the farm at KL Auschwitz I

**L** — *Fertilizer warehouses*

**ogr.** — The SS kitchen gardens

**LS, KS** — *Landwirtschaftliche Stallhof* — *Kommandantur Stallhof*  
 Stables of the KL Auschwitz Commandant's office, stables of the farm

**BB** — *Betriebshof Birkenau*  
 The SS farm in Birkenau (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)

**WP** — *Wirtschaftshof Plawy*  
 The SS farm in Plawy (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)

**HH** — *Hühnerfarm Harmense*  
 The SS poultry farm in Harmenze (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)

**Residential area for the SS camp staff: officer's quarters (SS-Siedlung), together with utility facilities**

**F** — *Führerheim*  
 SS officer's hotel with a casino and garden

**H.7** — *"Haus 7"*  
 A store for the SS families

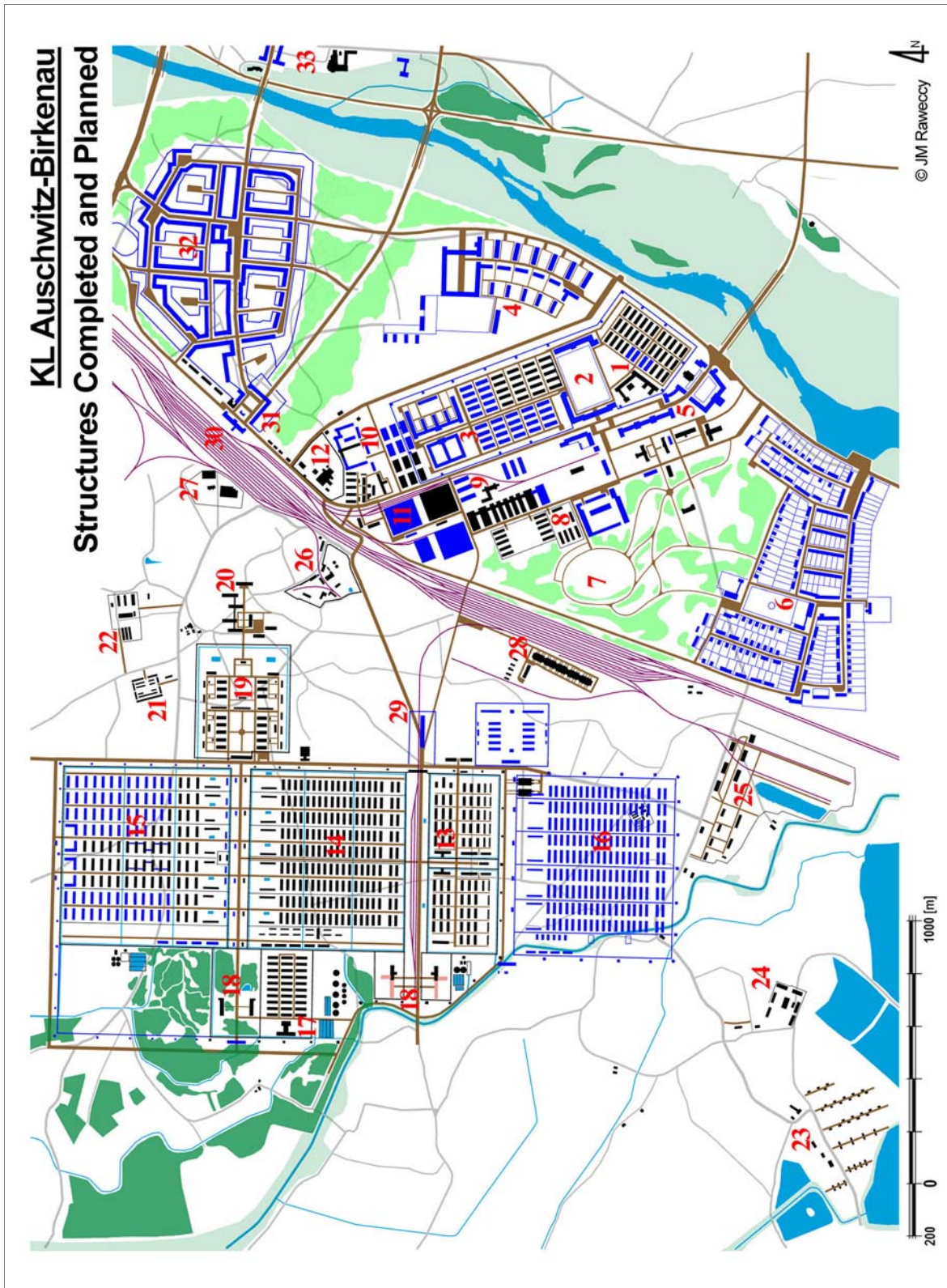











Fig.20. Diagram shows structures adapted and newly built by the German Nazis in 1940-1945 for the needs of the two parts of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex. To show the real scale and character of the investments, the planned structures, that were not realised, have also been marked on the diagram (from the preserved documentation of the Zentralbauleitung and the plans for expansion of the town of Auschwitz by Hans Stosberg - Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive) (worked out by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki)

## Legend:

-  Structures which existed, were converted or built in 1940-1945
-  The planned structures (not completed)
-  Railway lines and sidings
-  Roads adapted or built in 1940-1945
-  Pre-war roads
-  The existing forests
-  The riparian greenery
-  The planned greenery
-  Open waters (including drainage ditches and fire-extinguishing pools)

### The structures within the KL Auschwitz I

- 1 -** The extended mother camp (Stammlager) 33 prison blocks and the laundry building
- 2 -** The planned roll-call area for 30,000 prisoners between the entrance building in the west and the prison kitchen in the east
- 3 -** The extended mother camp (Stammlager) 50 prison blocks together with the prison building and the hospital (in the north)
- 4 -** The planned SS barracks complex
- 5 -** The planned new KL Auschwitz headquarters consisting of a two-wing main building, sentry office, officers' club, officers' living quarters and the staff, the exposition building
- 6 -** The planned housing estate with 1911 houses for the SS (SS-Siedlung) with service buildings
- 7 -** The planned SS recreational areas
- 8 -** The Stable complex and the planned SS garages
- 9 -** The DAW (Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH) industrial structures
- 10 -** The extended complex of stables and workshops for the SS Central Construction Office (Zentralbauleitung)
- 11 -** The extended complex of industrial rooms of the Krupp A.G. Werke
- 12 -** The industrial structures of the zinc rolling-mill

### The structures within the KL Birkenau

- 13 -** Bauabschnitt 1 - the first completed camp section
- 14 -** Bauabschnitt 2 - the second completed camp section
- 15 -** Bauabschnitt 3 - the third, partially completed camp section (the so-called "Mexico")
- 16 -** Bauabschnitt 4 - the fourth planned camp section (not completed)
- 17 -** 30 barracks used for storing the property stolen from the mass extermination victims (the so-called "Canada II") and the building of the camp bath house (the so-called "New Sauna")

- 18 -** The mass extermination facilities - crematoria and gas chambers
- 19 -** The new KL Birkenau Headquarters with the housing barracks for the sentry
- 20 -** The hospital barracks complex for the SS camp staff
- 21 -** Kennels with the kitchen and veterinary facilities for the SS dogs

### The structures within Birkenau

- 22 -** The SS farm in Birkenau
- 23 -** The SS live-stock farm in Harmęże
- 24 -** The SS farm in Plawy
- 25 -** The scrap-yard of the L.W. Zerlegbetriebe Ost-Auschwitz
- 26 -** The industrial structures of the tar factory
- 27 -** The industrial structures of Praga-Halle

### The railway transport structures

- 28 -** The goods station Auschwitz Bahnhof West with the so-called Judenrampe and the potato and vegetable storage
- 29 -** The planned storage room at the KL Birkenau railway siding
- 30 -** Passenger railway station of the town of Auschwitz

### The structures within the town of Auschwitz

- 31 -** The planned building complex of the railway station area
- 32 -** Neustadt-West - the planned west residential district of the town of Auschwitz
- 33 -** The redeveloped historical Oświęcim town-centre

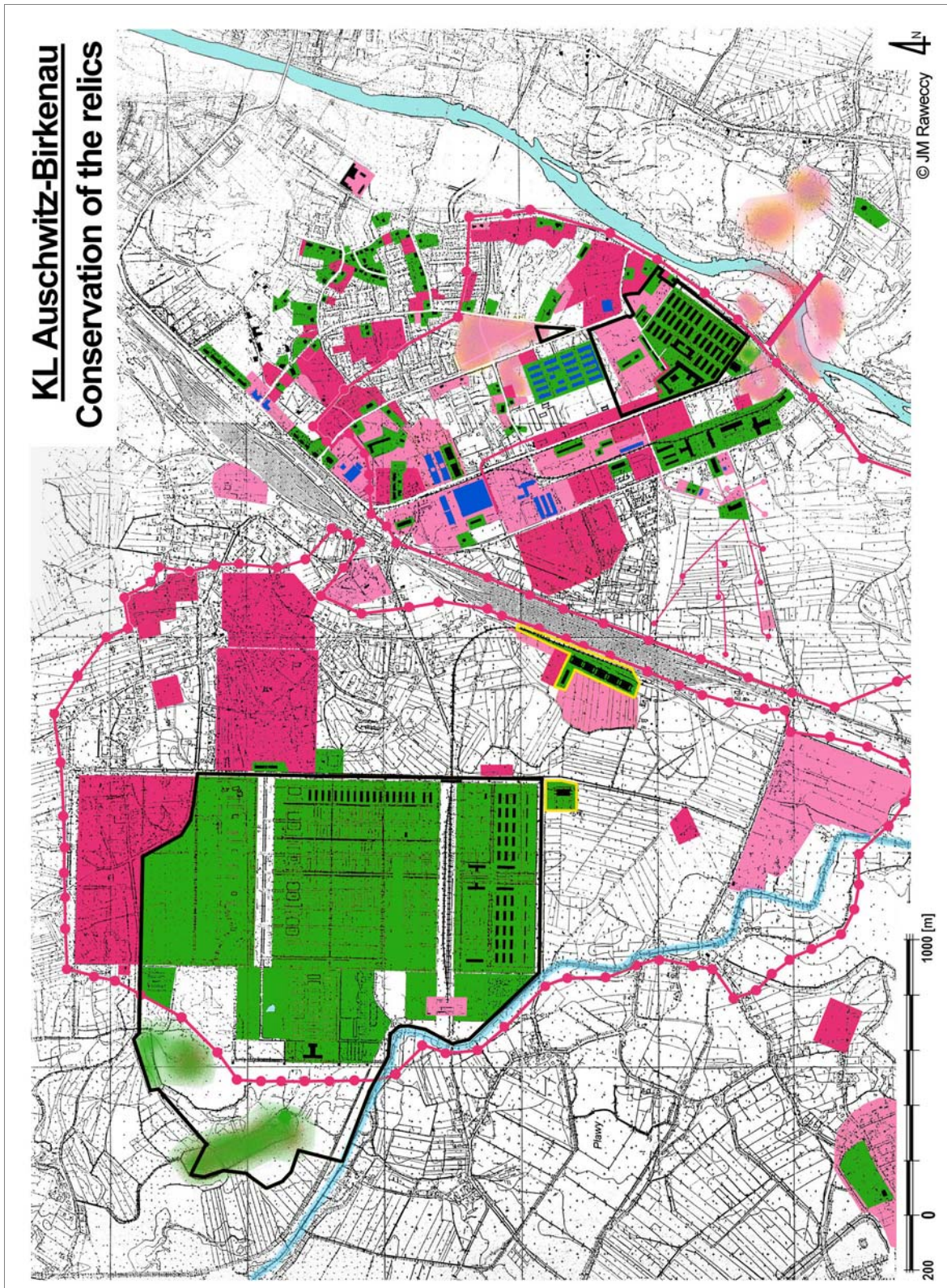


Fig.21. Diagram shows the present state of preservation of the historical structures and the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau. It illustrates in a three-stage scale the range of the transformations sparked off by the post-war urban development. The state of preservation of the relics is one of the key indices for the development of the Memorial Place surroundings. It shows what has been preserved to our times and could possibly be renovated, and what does not exist anymore and can only be documented through the presentation of the archival and iconographic materials. In the diagrams two enclaves of historical development were selected, which should be covered by the Museum protection (worked out by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki)

## Legend:



—  
Non-modified camp grounds with historical building structures, preserved in the form of relics enclaves. The land relief preserved with partial or complete post-war surface changes

Suggested course of action:

*Current conservation of the status quo so as to maintain or make visible the historical features of the building structures*



—  
Modified post-camp grounds with partially or entirely obliterated historical building structure features and partial or entire changes of the relief.

Suggested course of action:

*Depending on the area function, its spatial context and the result of detailed factual and conservatory expert opinions: either to undertake intensive conservatory proceedings aimed at bringing out historical features of the existent building structures or concentrating on putting the status quo in order so as to preserve the original building substance*



—  
Pre-war and camp structures existing in their original architectural form, in the non-modified or slightly modified spatial context



—  
Pre-war and camp structures existing in a modified architectural form, with changes in their construction, placed in the totally or partly modified spatial context



—  
Camp grounds comprised within the boundaries of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum



—  
Suggested camp grounds to be comprised within the boundaries of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum



—  
Totally modified camp grounds without any structures or installations of the former KL Auschwitz complex or with scarce structures but in a very limited and deformed spatial context, thus rendering impossible their full exposition. Grounds fully adapted for the needs of the present residential, utility, communal and industrial functions.

Suggested course of action:

*Continuation of the current urban policy with full conservation of the few remaining camp structures*

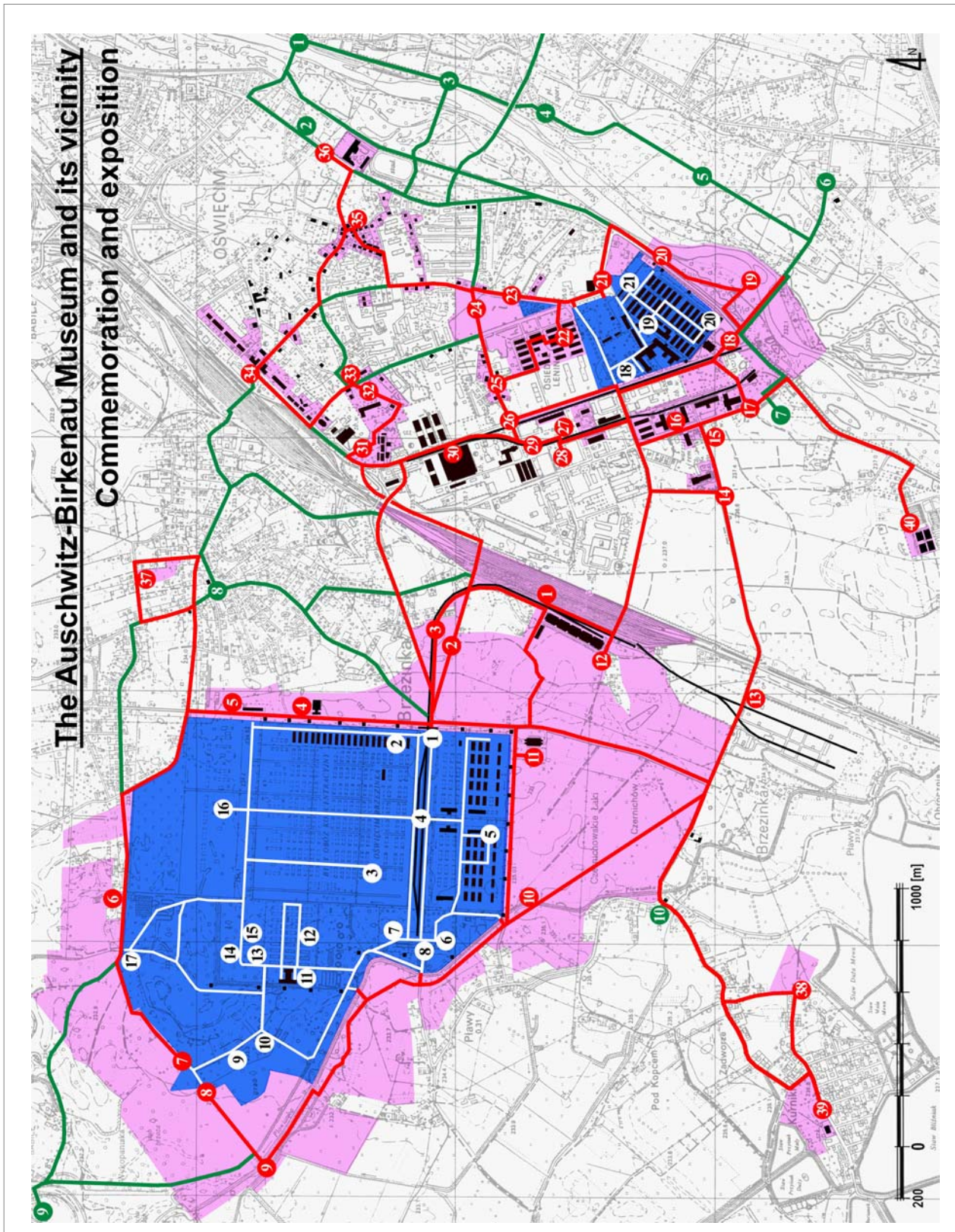


Fig.22. Diagram presents the system of exposition of the sites connected with Auschwitz-Birkenau history situated within the Museum and in its vicinity. Routes were marked out linking the Museum with the Oświęcim town centre, railway station, educational and tourist structures and with the riparian and park greenery. A new pedestrian route was suggested linking the Museum in Oświęcim with the Museum in Brzezinka. The construction of a footbridge over the rails in the area of Judenrampe will make possible to move the present route linking the two parts of the former camp to a place which will guarantee insulation, calm and non-collision passage (worked out by MR)



## Legend:



The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum



The preserved historical structures



The preserved historical landscape or historical structure complexes



The visitor routes within the Museum



The suggested visitor routes in the Museum environs



The paths linking the Museum and its environs with the remaining grounds of the town and region of Oświęcim

### The Museum in Brzezinka (KL Birkenau)

- 1 The Gate of Death building - the main entrance to the grounds of the former KL Birkenau
- 2 quarantine barracks for the KL Birkenau inmates
- 3 The Roma Commemoration Place
- 4 Railway platform on which from May 1944 the deported were directed
- 5 the penal company barrack
- 6 the gas chamber and crematorium ruins (II)
- 7 the gas chamber and crematorium ruins (III)
- 8 The Fascism Victims International Monument (erected in 1967)
- 9 the incineration pits - the site where the corpses of the genocide victims were burnt in open-air
- 10 the remains of the second temporary gas chamber KL Birkenau - the so-called "Little White House"
- 11 the camp bath house the so-called "New Sauna", at the same time the place where new prisoners' transports were received
- 12 the relic of the so-called "Canada II" - the storerooms of the property stolen from the genocide victims
- 13 the remains of the gas chamber and crematorium (IV)
- 14 the remains of the gas chamber and crematorium (V)
- 15 the pond where the ashes of the genocide victims were dumped
- 16 the so-called "Mexico" - the third incomplete section of KL Birkenau
- 17 the mass graves of the Russian prisoners of war

### The Museum in Oświęcim (KL Auschwitz)

- 18 the so-called "Hobzof" - the area of the timber yard of KL Auschwitz I, now a car park for the visitors to the Museum
- 19 The "Arbeit macht frei" gate with a sentry building and the camp manager's office
- 20 The Wall of Death and Block 11 (the so-called "Block of Death")
- 21 The gas chamber and crematorium (I)

### The environs of the Museum in Oświęcim and Brzezinka

- 1 the so-called "Judenrampe" - place where in 1942-1944 the transports arrived bringing the deported to the camp
- 2 the road where the KL Auschwitz I prisoners were shepherded to the construction of KL Birkenau, and in 1942-1944 transports of the deported were led to the camp
- 3 the railway line to KL Birkenau, working from May 1944, where the deported were transported near the gas chambers
- 4 the ruins of the KL Birkenau water pumping building
- 5 the KL Birkenau New Headquarters building, now the parish church in Brzezinka
- 6 the site of the first KL Birkenau temporary gas chamber the so-called "Little Red House"
- 7 the entrance to the area of incineration pits where the corpses of the genocide victims were burnt in open-air
- 8 the former "Königsgraben" - the drainage ditch taking groundwater from the KL Birkenau area, the place of labour and torture of the Penal company prisoners; now the Pławianka brook
- 9 "Kartoffelgelände" - the camp potato store
- 10 "5. Kartoffelgelände" and "Krautslab" - the camp potato and vegetable stores
- 11 the former scrap metal yard of the "L.W. Zerkelgebühbe Ost Auschwitz", now a private firm of non-ferrous metal recycling
- 12 the building of the KL Auschwitz water supply station now the Oświęcim Water Supply Station
- 13 the KL Auschwitz camp bakery, now the building of the Aggregate Exploitation Enterprise in Oświęcim
- 14 the complex of the pre-war Polish Tobacco Monopoly, the site of the former "Krautslab" camp established on 14 June 1940; and the SS storage and utility base
- 15 the canteen barrack: "SS-Küche"
- 16 the building of the so-called "Theatre" - the store of Zyklone B and the property of the genocide victims; next to it - the gravel pit, the site of mass executions and torture of the penal company prisoners
- 17 the ashes of the mass extermination victims disposal
- 18 the so-called "Hoes House" - the pre-war residential building, where during the war the Camp commandant Rudolf Hoes lived with his family
- 19 the site of the first mass execution in KL Auschwitz in November 1940 and the former slaughter-house and camp dairy, now the PKS depot (Car Transport Company)
- 20 the complex of the blocks of the former "Schutzhaftlagererweiterung" and the site of the last execution in KL Auschwitz in January 1945; now a housing estate
- 21 the mass grave of the prisoners buried after the liberation of the camp on 28 February 1945

- 24 the site of one of the biggest camp gravel-pits - "Kiesgrube Haus Paltzsch", the place of torture of KL Auschwitz prisoners
- 25 the pre-war residential buildings of Zasole adapted by the SS; the former canteen "Haus 7" and the SS officers quarters
- 26 the pre-war railway siding "Barak" adapted for the KL Auschwitz
- 27 the area of the so-called "Bauhof" - the camp construction material storage; the place of torture and slave labour of prisoners
- 28 the area of the so-called "Canada I" - the camp storage of the property stolen from the genocide victims, the site where on 28 September 1944 the German Nazis killed 200 Jews from the Sonderkommando
- 29 the pre-war railway siding "Do Monopolu" where in June 1940 the first transport with prisoners arrived to the camp
- 30 the former Krupp A.G. industrial hall, the place of KL Auschwitz prisoners slave work; in the vicinity - the so-called "Neuer Bauhof" a new camp construction material storage; now town Communication Company depot
- 31 The pre-war workers houses of the Zinc Rolling-Mill, converted during the war into a civilian workers camp
- 32 the stables and the workshop of the SS Central Construction Office
- 33 the former SS officer hotel with officers' club "Führerheim"
- 34 the complex of the pre-war residential buildings near the railway station
- 35 the enclave of the pre-war residential housing of Zasole, adapted during the war for SS officers' quarters and their families "SS-Siedlung"
- 36 the buildings of the pre-war tannery, converted during the war to the KL Auschwitz utility and storage base
- 37 the site of the SS farm in Birkenau (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)
- 38 the site of the SS farm in Pławy (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)
- 39 the site of the SS poultry farm and fish farm in Harmże (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)
- 40 the site of the agricultural labor on the SS farm (gardening) in Rajsko (KL Auschwitz sub-camp)

- 1 the Oświęcim historical town centre
- 2 The International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim
- 3 Town Park
- 4 Sports centre
- 5 Nations' Reconciliation Park
- 6 The tourist inn in the palace and park complex "Kamieniec"
- 7 The Centre for Dialogue and Prayer in Oświęcim
- 8 the Village of Brzezinka Centre
- 9 The nature and landscape complex "Stare Wąsisko"
- 10 the Village of Pławy Centre

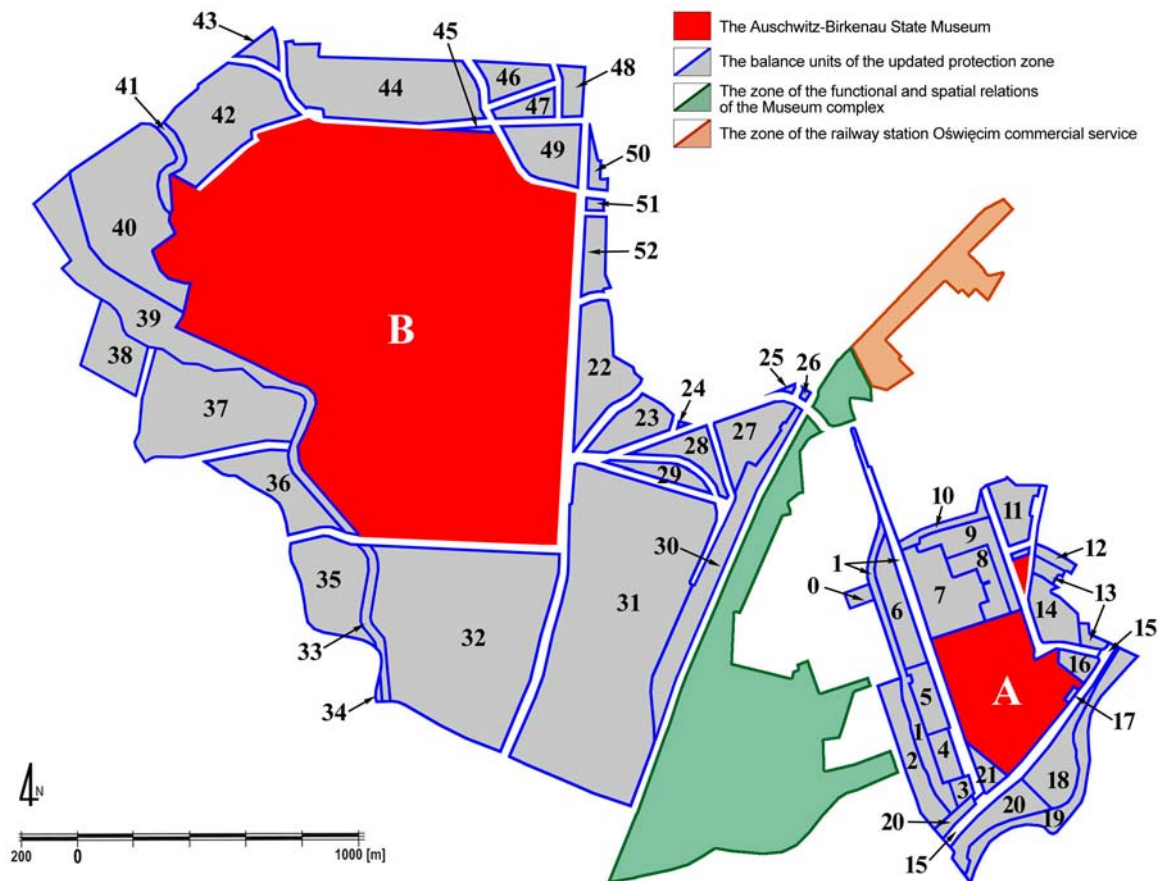


Fig. 23. Diagram illustrating the range of particular units of the updated protection zone of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the supporting zones (worked out by MR)

## O Ś W I Ę C I M

### Unit 0 - The storing grounds at 12 Kolbego Street<sup>189</sup>

In 1915-1924 an undeveloped land of the Barrack Settlement. In the years 1942-1944 the so-called "Canada I". In connection with the taken up by the SS mass-scale stealing of the belongings of mass extermination victims the camp authorities created a network of yards and stores of all goods and movable property taken away from the deported (*Effektenlager* - in prisoners' jargon the so-called "Canada"). In mid-1942 on this site "Canada I" was created. It was a complex of six barracks and a disinfectant chamber in a pre-war building converted to this purpose - the whole was fenced with barbed wire and surrounded by SS sentry units on watch towers. In the barracks a special prisoners commando unpacked, searched and sorted the goods taken from the unloading ramp. Clothes were disinfected with Zyclone B gas. The goods prepared in this way were then sent by rail into the depths of the Reich (from a nearby siding). On 25 September 1944 the SS brought to "Canada I" a group

of 200 Jews of *Sonderkommando* who had been employed at the burning of corpses at the incineration pits in Birkenau. At the pretext of moving them to another camp they were taken to a "bath", they were shown in a gas chamber and then killed with Zyclone B gas.

Preserved historical structures: none

### Unit 1

**Stanisławy Leszczyńskiej Street** - Former Topolowa Street, built in the period when the Barrack Settlement was being constructed (1915-1916) as its main road communication axis. It serviced the complex of residential and service barracks situated in both street rows as well as the Nathanson Melcer tar paper factory and the buildings of the Zinc Rolling Mill Ltd. in Brzezinka. From 1925 - one of the access roads to the Polish Army Barracks and the Polish Tobacco Monopoly Plant. In the years 1940-1945 the main access road to the KL Auschwitz I premises, servicing the timber yard *Holzhof*, the construction materials yard *Bauhof*, *Theatergebäude* and *Landwirtschaft* stores as well as industrial structures of *Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke*, *Krupp A.G. Werke* and the civilian workers camp.

**"Baraki" railway siding** - built in the period when the Barrack Settlement was being constructed, surround-

<sup>189</sup> in the titles of the units - the present land use of the unit is given.

ed by a line of poplars in 1916. In 1916-1939 connected with the Barrack Settlement, Military Barracks service and with the gravel and sand exploitation from the Soła river-bed (the loading took place near the "Theatre" building from a ramp situated at the height of 3 meters where narrow-gauge railway carriages were provided from the right bank of the Soła River). In the period 1940-1945 a siding connected with KL Auschwitz I, servicing the transports of the deported to the camp, the transport of prisoners to the Dwory Station for the work at the construction of the I.G. Farbenindustrie plant (the so-called *Lagerzug* going daily from autumn 1941). By this siding provided were construction materials to the *Bauhof* yard, food was transported to the camp stores, gravel was taken away from the ramp at the "Theatre", the belongings of the mass extermination victims were taken away from the "Canada I" stores.

**"Do Monopolu" railway siding** - built in 1931, leading to the Polish Tobacco Monopoly plant (running since 1924). In the period 1940-1945 a railway siding connected with KL Auschwitz I, servicing the camp ancillary buildings: "Canada I" - the stores of the belongings stolen from the victims of mass extermination, which after preparation (sorting and disinfection) were sent to the Reich, - the coal store *Kohlenplatz*, *Bauhof* store, - the SS service and food stores. Along this siding on 14 June 1940 the first transport of prisoners to KL Auschwitz was sent - 728 Polish political prisoners from Tarnów. In 1942-1943 next to the siding an underground central heating channel was constructed running from the electricity and heat generating plant (*Fernheizwerk*) erected between "Canada I" and TWL/HWL to the *Aufnahmegebäude*.

Preserved historical structures: rails and railway sidings branches

### Unit 2 - Post-industrial areas

In 1915-1924 the area of the Barrack Settlement, the site of the bakery and hospitals: surgical hospital and internal diseases hospital. From 1924 the area owned by Polish Tobacco Monopoly, structures converted to tobacco stores. In 1939, after the evacuation of the Plant just before the outbreak of the war - the site where 5 Division of Mounted Artillery was quartered. In 1940-1945 TWL/HWL - the storing, service and residential base of the SS troops; the site where on 14 June 1940 the first prisoners transport from Tarnów was placed. The site where the women prisoners were quartered and worked of the commando *SS-Wäscherei* and the commandos: *TWL*, *Koksablader und Heizer*, *Getreidespeicher*, *Lagerdruckerei*, *SS-Küche*, *Kartoffelschälerei*. In the years 1941-1942 erected here was the *SS-Küche* barrack, housing a kitchen and dining room for the SS, which also had the function of a performance and cinema hall with a stage and a cinema screen.

Preserved historical structures: former buildings of *SS-Unterkunftsgebäude*, *SS-Stabsgebäude*, *Truppenwirtschaftslager-Hauptwirtschaftslager*, *Lagerhaus*, *SS-Küche*, latrine, storage and garage buildings *Scheune-I*, *Scheune-II* and *prov.Kartoffelbunker 2*

### Unit 3 - Non-used areas

In 1915-1924 the Barrack Settlement area, the site of the loading ramp for the gravel exploited from the Soła river-bed. From 1924 part of the grounds owned by Polish Tobacco Monopoly. In 1939 the military training square of 5 Division of Mounted Artillery, at that time construction of the brick stables for the Oświęcim garrison started. In 1940-1945 the area within the KL Auschwitz I, the site of the fundament diggings (?) for the non-built complex of the new KL Auschwitz headquarters (1943-1944). Pre-war military stables demolished in 1940; the demolition material was used for the camp extension.

Preserved historical structures: none

### Unit 4 - Green areas

In 1915-1924 the grounds of the Barrack Settlement, the site of the loading ramp for gravel exploited from the Soła river-bed. From 1924 a part of this land owned by Polish Tobacco Monopoly. In 1939 the military training square of the 5 Division of Mounted Artillery, at that time started the construction of brick stables for the Oświęcim garrison. In 1940-1945 the site of two barracks of the *Pferdestall* type where the shoes belonging to the mass extermination victims were stored and sorted; in the vicinity - the site of the fundament diggings (?) for the non-built complex of the new KL Auschwitz headquarters *Kommandanturgebäude*. Pre-war military stables were demolished in 1940; the demolition material was used for the camp extension.

Preserved historical structures: none

### Unit 5 - Service areas

In 1915-1924 the site of the timber residential barracks of the Barrack Settlement. From 1924 the area partly taken by Polish Tobacco Monopoly converting barracks into plant stores. In 1939 the military training square of the 5 Division of Mounted Artillery quartered to the outbreak of the war in the buildings left by the evacuated Plant of Polish Tobacco Monopoly. In 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz service area - a fenced construction materials yard *Bauhof* (initially called *Industriehof II*), storing materials for private companies taking part in the extension of the camp. Here were stored parts for crematoria sent from the *Topf und Söhne* company (Erfurt). The site of slave work of thousands of prisoners of the *Bauhof* commando consisting in unloading the construction materials sent by rail; work was done at a murderous pace and was purchased with suffering and death of many prisoners (the death rate was as high as 20%). In 1942-1943 through the *Bauhof* area an underground central heating channel was built which ran from the electricity and heat generating plant that was being erected in the vicinity to the *Aufnahmegebäude* building. From September 1944 the SS started the evacuation of *Bauhof* successively transferring into the depths of the Reich the construction materials gathered here.

Preserved historical structures: fire-fighting water tank and the KL Auschwitz I central heating channel

### Unit 6 - Production and storage areas

In 1915-1939 the premises of the Barrack Settlement, the site of the local electricity plant, timber residential barracks, primary school and a Catholic chapel consecrated on 23 May 1916 by Kraków bishop Adam Sapieha. In 1940-1945 KL Auschwitz service ground - a fenced construction materials yard *Bauhof*, garage and workshop service *Fahrbereitschaft-Bauleitung* servicing the vehicles of the SS Central Construction Office (used e.g. to transporting materials for the construction of crematoria and the barracks in Birkenau and for the extension of KL Auschwitz sub-camps). The workplace of prisoners commandos *Betonkolone* and *Eisenbiegerei* (in the concrete plant barrack erected on the turn of 1942). In 1943-1944 the construction site of a KL Auschwitz voltage relay station with the 30kV/6kV switch chamber, a building which housed an emergency electricity-generating unit and a water tower for the KL Auschwitz water-works network.

Preserved historical structures: KL Auschwitz infrastructure buildings: voltage relay station, emergency electricity-generating unit, former concrete plant barrack

### Unit 7 - Military area

In 1915-1939 part of the area within the Barrack Settlement, part within the arable lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called "Doły". The site of the timber and brick residential barracks. In 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz service area, artificial fertilisers stores and the workshop of the *Landwirtschaft* farm. The workplace of the *Landwirtschaft* prisoners commando (created in summer 1940 for developing the lands from which the Zasole inhabitants had been evicted and for rearing the cattle and poultry left in the farmsteads). In December 1944 near the *Landwirtschaft* barracks a passage for prisoners, the so-called *Löwengang*, was built fenced with barbed wire leading from the *Arbeit macht frei* gate to the structures of *Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke* and *Wiechsel Metall-Union*. *Löwengang* was built to facilitate the flow of prisoners to work and to reduce the number of sentry needed for escorting. Towards the end of 1942 started was the construction of prisoners blocks *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* within the project of the main camp extension. On the premises of *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* there were clothes stores with the belongings of the mass extermination victims, professor Carl Clauberg's laboratory who executed criminal experiments on sterilisation, a women's camp *Frauenlager* where 6000 female prisoners transferred from Birkenau were quartered.

Preserved historical structures: 8 blocks of the former *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung*

### Unit 8 - Housing estate

Till 1939 area within the arable lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called "Doły". In 1930-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises, the site where towards the end of 1942 was started the construction of prisoners' blocks of the *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* within the project of the main camp extension. On the premises

of the *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* found place the camp tailor and shoemaking workshops, camp printing house, women's camp *Frauenlager*, the SS sentry barracks, uniforms store. Within the *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* the following prisoners commandos worked: *SS-Schneiderei*, *SS-Schuhmacherei*, *Häftlings-Schuhmacherei*, *Trennerei*, *Lagerdruckerei*, *SS-Unterkunfts-kammer*, *SS-Bekleidungskammer*. From July (August?) 1944 to half-September 1944 quartered in the *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung* were the soldiers of the broken *SS Panzer Division Wiking*. On 13 September 1944 as a result of Allied bombardment 40 prisoners and 15 SS-men died. On 6 January 1945 the SS executed by hanging four Jewish women prisoners who had been sentenced to death for having helped prisoners - *Sonderkommando* members - to organise a rebellion on 7 October 1944.

Preserved historical structures: 12 blocks of the former *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung*

### Unit 9 - Housing estate squares

Till 1939 the area within the arable lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called "Doły". In 1934-1939 the construction site of the houses belonging to the families: Horodecki, Łukawski and Wojas. In 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises, the base for the construction site of the blocks *Schutzhaftlagererweiterung*, the site of gravel exploitation (*Kiesgrube*). In 1940 the eviction of the families and conversion of the houses for the SS needs (non-commissioned officers' quarters). In 1944 the construction of an air-raid shelter for the SS sentry staff and the construction of a fire-fighting water tank.

Preserved historical structures: KL Auschwitz fire-fighting water tank

### Unit 10 - Jaracza Street and a square

Till 1939 area within the arable lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called "Doły", a part of a field-path. From 1934 a hard-surfaced access road to the residential houses that were being built in this area. In 1940-1945 KL Auschwitz premises - the construction of a link road between the camp streets *Strasse A* (former Topolowa, now Leszczyńskiej) and *Strasse B - Führerheimstrasse* constructed in 1943-1944 (now Więźniów Oświęcimia). This road serviced the pre-war houses whose inhabitants were evicted and which were converted to the quarters for the SS non-commissioned officers and a shop-canteen for the SS-men families the so-called *Haus 7*.

Preserved historical structures: none

### Unit 11 - Low greenery areas

Till 1939 undeveloped area within the arable lands of the village of Brzezinka. In the period 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz economic area - gravel pit *Kiesgrube Haus Palitzsch* (the name comes from the surname of one of the biggest camp criminals - Rapportführer Gerhard Palitzsch living in the vicinity in a house of the evicted family of Kapuściński). Gravel pit was a place of murderous work in result of which many prisoners died - out of exhaustion or shot by the sentry after a suicidal or provoked trespassing of the

sentry line. A part of this area was used by the SS Central Construction Office as arable land. On 28 February 1945 the site of the ceremonial funeral of the prisoners who died within the last days of the camp existence.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 12 - Non-arranged green areas**

Till 1939 the undeveloped area within the arable lands of the town of Oświęcim; the gravel exploitation site by private owners. In the period 1940-1945 the economic area of KL Auschwitz used by the SS Central Construction Office as an arable plot.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 13 - Single-family houses**

Till 1934 (?) the area within the arable lands of the town of Oświęcim; in 1936-1938 the construction site of two single-family houses. In the period 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises - pre-war buildings converted to quarters for the SS officers with families. From 1941 also the area of the office barrack and garage shed of the SS Central Construction Office.

Preserved historical structures: two pre-war residential buildings

#### **Unit 14 - The PKS depot premises**

Till 1939 the area within the arable lands of the Town of Oświęcim and the village of Brzezinka; the site of the ammunition bunkers of the Polish Army barracks. In the period 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises; gravel pit where on 22 November 1940 the German Nazis executed by shooting forty Poles provided by the Criminal Police from Kattowitz; from 1941 to 1943 the construction site of the camp slaughterhouse and dairy. The site of the erected in 1942 a residential and service barrack of the SS Central Construction Office (next to the barracks vegetable gardens were laid for the SS-men designed by the prisoner Ludwik Lawin). From 1944 (?) a part of the land used by the SS Central Construction Office as an arable plot.

Preserved historical structures: the former camp slaughterhouse and dairy building

#### **Unit 15 - Legionów Street**

Originally a government tract Oświęcim - Rajsko, a state road no 13/12 named Legionów Street in 1932. In 1917 the construction of the left-bank flood embankment of the Soła River. In 1940-1945 the street was called *Reichstrasse Auschwitz-Bielitz* renamed *Kasernenstrasse* - a street servicing within the KL Auschwitz the main service entrance to the camp, the access to Villa Hoess and linked with other camp streets - *Strasse A* (former Topolowa, now Leszczyńskiej Street), *Strasse B* (built in 1943-1944, now Więźniów Oświęcimia Street), *Strasse D* (built in 1943-1944, now Obozowa Street), *Strasse F HWL-DAW* (built in 1943-1944, now Kolbego Street). *Kasernenstrasse* was linked with *Hauptdurchgangstrasse Auschwitz-Kenty* situated on the other bank of the Soła River (by a timber bridge built by the prisoners in 1942-1943) and by a newly-built link road *Verbindugstarsse* (now Kamieniec Street). Along

*Kasernenstrasse* ran the line of the sentry posts of the camp "large cordon" (*Grosse Postenkette*).

Preserved historical structures: the course of the street, the left-bank flood embankment

#### **Unit 16 - Single-family houses and gardens**

Till 1939 the land within the arable lands of the town of Oświęcim and the village of Brzezinka; the site of the buildings belonging to the Witalski family, to Maria Herod and to August Borowski. In 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises. On 8 July 1940, the eviction of the Legionów Street (*Kasernenstrasse*) inhabitants, at the turn of 1941 - the demolition of the pre-war buildings; from 1941 the site of four timber residential barracks of the camp SS staff, isolation ward barrack for sick SS-men and a barrack where dental gold was molten. In December 1943 the construction of a timber sauna for the SS-men was finished and by June 1944 an air-raid shelter was built.

Preserved historical structures: the air-raid shelter and the sauna for the SS camp staff

#### **Unit 17 - Single-family houses area**

Till 1935 undeveloped area within the arable lands of the town of Oświęcim adjacent to the complex of brick houses of the Barrack Settlement, from 1925 belonged to the barracks of the Polish Army Garrison. A plot of land of the Soja family where in 1935-1937 a one-storey residential house was erected (Józef Soja - before the war sergeant major in the Polish Army). In 1940-1945 the KL Auschwitz premises. In April 1940 the Soja family was evicted from their house; from May that year - house inhabited by the family of the SS-Hauptsturmführer Rudolph Hoess, the KL Auschwitz commandant. In 1940-1942 the house rebuilt for the needs of the KL Auschwitz commandant - the roof construction was altered, bathrooms were finished, central heating was installed, an air-raid shelter was built accessible from the cellars of this building; in 1941-1942 next to the Villa Hoess a garden was arranged with a greenhouse and a summer-house designed by a prisoner Ludwik Lawin; directly next to the commandant's house there was the main entrance to the main camp servicing the headquarters buildings, the camp administration, the SS hospital and the *Politische Abteilung* barracks.

Preserved historical structures: former KL Auschwitz commandant's house

#### **Unit 18 - Inundation areas of the Soła River**

The old Soła valley, originally "Pastures" - the former riparian area; at the turn of the 20 c. the site of gravel and sand exploitation leased to the Weissenberg Company by the Commune of the Town of Oświęcim. In 1940-1945 the economic areas of KL Auschwitz, the site of gravel exploitation by prisoners commandos *Sola Kiesgrube* and *Flussskies DEST* (?).

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 19 - The Soła River**

The Soła River, since the dawn of history connected with the development of Oświęcim; navigable river, in the old times made possible the transport of timber

from the Żywiec region to the Vistula River; till the 20 c. unchannelled, doing a lot of damage by numerous floods (1803, 1813, 1894, 1915). The first pieces of information on the river regulation date back to 1810 when a project of banks reinforcement was prepared; as early as before the year 1914, when these lands belonged to Austria, regulation works were conducted consisting in building fascine dams; the construction of the embankments was started in 1916 on the initiative of the then municipal authorities; in 1928-1937 a dam on the Soła River was built in Porąbka; in the pre-war period opposite the then army barracks, the State Aggregate Plant exploited gravel and sand by dredging the river bed and the output was transported by the narrow-gauge railway to the loading ramp in the vicinity of the "Theatre" building. In 1940-1945 land in the direct vicinity of KL Auschwitz; till March 1941 the exploitation of gravel and sand was continued, after that period the loading ramp was dismantled. In 1942-1943 over the Soła near KL Auschwitz a timber bridge was built with a linking road (now Kamieniec Street). On 27 January 1945 the retreating German troops blew up some bridge spans; the bridge was completely dismantled after the war. During the war the German Nazis did works at the Soła regulation using for this the prisoners of the camp; these works consisted in laying turf on the leaning river banks and stabilising them with a wire net; prisoners commandos worked as well at the gravel exploitation (*Sola Kiesgrube* and *Flusksies DEST*). From the timber bridge the ashes of the burned victims of the mass extermination were dumped into the river.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 20 - Inundation areas of the Soła River, I zone of the potable water uptake protection**

The old Soła valley, on the turn of the 20 c. the site of gravel and sand exploitation leased to the Weissenberg Company by the Commune of the Town of Oświęcim; in the pre-war period the site of a timber bridge of a narrow-gauge railway transporting gravel and sand exploited by the State Aggregate Plant from the dredged Soła bed. In 1940-1945 an economic area of KL Auschwitz, the site of the exploitation of gravel by the prisoners commandos *Sola Kiesgrube* and *Flusksies DEST* (?). In 1942-1943 the construction site of a timber bridge. On 27 January 1945 the retreating German troops blew up some bridge spans; the bridge was completely dismantled after the war.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 21 - Administrative area**

In 1915-1925 the area within the Barrack Settlement, the site of the so-called "Theatre" a building erected in 1915-1917 for the labour office for the working emigrants, where the contacts between the hirers and emigrants were to be made; in 1925-1939 area within the Polish Army barracks, the "Theatre" - unfinished in raw state; next to the building - the military training square. In 1940-1945 the premises of KL Auschwitz; the area of the gravel pit (*Kiesgrube*) - the place of

slave work and of the death of many prisoners of the penal company, the place of mass executions: on 14 March 1941 the SS shot here seventy-two Polish political prisoners; the "Theatre", during the war *Theatergebäude*, converted for the store of the goods of the mass extermination victims, the main Zyklone B gas store, mineral water store for the SS canteen; the workplace of the *Warenlager* commando and a special group of prisoners working at the soap melting and at searching through the belongings of the deported in order to find the hidden valuables. The area adjacent to the building - the site of the fundaments diggings for the non-built complex of the new camp headquarters (the existing building of the "Theatre" was to be the SS Officers' club).

Since 1958 an area within the premises of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum, in 1979 included on the UNESCO list; in 1984-1993, a Carmelite nunnery in Oświęcim.

Preserved historical structures: the building of the former *Theatergebäude* and the KL Auschwitz gravel pit

#### **The zone of functional and spatial relations of the Museum complex**

Area integrating both parts of the post-camp complex. Gives the opportunity to introduce new walking links of the former Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II that do not collide with the hitherto investment of the in-between areas. It makes possible a convenient pedestrian connection of the Museum with the Oświęcim railway station. A considerable percent of the grounds there is used for extensive agriculture. In the future it can be a convenient reserve for the possible investments connected with scientific and educational activity, with the movements for reconciliation and cooperation. For a closer integration of the post-camp complex the following are suggested:

- to build a pedestrian footbridge over the rails at the southern end of the Judenrampe,
- to create a Memorial Park on the basis of the reclaimed grounds of the Western Freight Railway Station in Oświęcim,
- to place a view tower where Kolbego, Leszczyńskiej, Wyzwolenia and Męczeństwa Narodów Streets converge, which would confront the visitors with the spatial scale, the historical context and the contemporary face of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Place.

In the zone persists the hitherto use of the few industrial areas, communal enterprises, technical infrastructure and residential areas, with simultaneous implementation of the renewal tasks of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim.

#### **The zone of the railway station Oświęcim commercial service**

Covers the area of the railway station and the railway grounds situated along the northern frontage of Wyzwolenia and Powstańców Śląskich streets. In 1997 the then Oświęcim Town Office initiated the concept to convert this area into a zone of commercial

function development. This would release the vicinity of the Museum of the necessary but arduous tourist infrastructure and would ensure that the visitors receive a comprehensive and unhampered service in the way of commerce, services, tourist information, car and bicycle rental, accommodation.

## B R Z E Z I N K A

### **Unit 22 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 croplands of the village of Brzezinka with a single farmstead demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1942-1944 the site of the work of the prisoners commandos; the site of field railways and the gravel pit which provided gravel for the extension of the KL Birkenau; in 1942-1944 the construction site of the waterworks station of KL Birkenau - *Wasseraufbereitungsanlage K.G.L.* with the water network leading from the deep water intakes to the station building; the construction site of the auxiliary part of the camp SS staff quarters *SS Truppenunterkünfte*; the KL Birkenau agricultural lands.

Preserved historical structures: ruins of the KL Birkenau waterworks station; remains of the drainage ditches around the area of the former SS camp staff quarters

### **Unit 23 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the deep water intakes of the KL Birkenau waterworks - *Wasseraufbereitungsanlage K.G.L.*; agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 24 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 25 - Accompanying green area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka on the foreground of the Tar Paper Factory "Emil Kuźnitzky" (1888); in 1942 - the construction site of a new access road to KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 26 - Accompanying green area**

A flyover between Oświęcim and Brzezinka erected after the construction in 1856 the Emperor Ferdinand Western Railway, open till 1990, in 1991 dismantled in connection with the construction of a new flyover.

Preserved historical structures: western bridge head of the historical flyover

### **Unit 27 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau and the eco-

nomical background of the goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* (storage yards).

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 28 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau and the economic background of the goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* (storage yards).

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 29 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau and the economical background of the goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* (storage yards).

Preserved historical structures: none

### **Unit 30 - Railway area of the Polish State Railway**

The premises of the former Emperor Ferdinand Northern Railway built in 1856; till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with residential development demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941.

In 1942-1944 the premises of the 18-platform goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* and the unloading ramp the so-called *Judenrampe* where, the SS brought in railway transports people deported from various countries occupied by the Nazi Germany, as well as from other camps, ghettos, and prisons. In the period from the spring 1942 to May 1944 on the ramp surrounded by a cordon of the SS sentry posts took place selections of almost all newly come Jews. The segregation into the fit and unfit for labour took place directly after a train had stopped. Those brought to Auschwitz for extermination were not filed, and only 20 percent of people of each transport would survive. Those intended for instantaneous death were shepherded to gas chambers; the weak and crippled were driven in vans. Here came also transports with people of other nationalities, mainly Poles and Gypsies. All luggage stayed on the ramp, then taken to the so-called "Canada", and the fit for work went in columns to the camp.

The alleged site of a mass grave of the camp victims whose corpses were buried by the SS in March or April 1942 before the construction of the goods station.

Preserved historical structures: rails

### **Unit 31 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau and the economic and storage base of the camp - the site of two auxiliary structures of the KL Birkenau built in 1943-1944: the potato store (*fünf Kartoffellagerhallen*) and cabbage store (*Krautsilo*); the site of an open timber and coal yard (*Holz u. Kohle*), two barracks of preliminary quarantine for female prisoners erected in 1943, rail-

way siding to the scrap metal yard of the plant *L.W. Zerlegebetrieb Auschwitz Ost* and local access roads for the camp yards and temporary storage structures.

Preserved historical structures: the former potato store and vegetable store of KL Birkenau, railway siding to the former scrap metal yard of *L.W. Zerlegebetrieb Auschwitz Ost*

#### **Unit 32 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called "Czernichów" with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau and the economic and storage base of the camp - the site of two potato stores of KL Birkenau (*I u. II Kartoffellagerhalle*) built in 1943-1944; the site of the planned and not completed extension of KL Birkenau (*Bauabschnitt IV*, Building Section IV for 60,000 prisoners).

Preserved historical structures: the former potato store of KL Birkenau (*I Kartoffellagerhalle*)

#### **Unit 33 - the Plawianka drainage ditch**

Till 1941 the *Strumieniec* brook and agricultural lands of the village of Pławy with houses demolished by the SS for the construction of a drainage ditch after the eviction of the inhabitants in March 1941; in 1942-1944 the construction site of *Königsgraben* - the main drainage ditch of KL Birkenau built with the prisoners slave labour.

Preserved historical structures: *Königsgraben* - the former KL Birkenau drainage ditch

#### **Unit 34 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 green crops of the village of Pławy with houses; in 1942-1944 green crops of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 35 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Pławy with houses (5 farmsteads) demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in March 1941; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 36 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 the *Strumieniec* brook and croplands of the village of Pławy with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in March 1941; in 1942-1944 KL Birkenau agricultural lands.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 37 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Pławy with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in March 1941; in 1942-1944 the KL Birkenau agricultural lands.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 38 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Pławy; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 39 - Inter-embankment zone of the Plawianka drainage ditch, forested areas**

Till 1941 the area of the *Strumieniec* brook and of the croplands of the village of Pławy with houses; in 1942-1944 the construction site of *Königsgraben* - the main drainage ditch of KL Birkenau and the flood control embankments, built with the slave labour of the prisoners.

Preserved historical structures: embankments and the drainage ditch *Königsgraben*

#### **Unit 40 - Agricultural area, forested area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands and forested lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 41 - Drainage area**

Till 1941 the forested areas of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 the site of the construction of KL Birkenau drainage ditch.

Preserved historical structures: the former KL Birkenau drainage ditch

#### **Unit 42 - Agricultural area, forested area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 the agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 43 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 the agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 44 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 forests and agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses partly demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941.

In 1942-1943 the site of the mass extermination structure - the so-called "Little Red House" the first temporary gas chamber of KL Birkenau. The German Nazis organised a gas chamber in the house from where in March 1942 a Polish family of Gryzik was evicted. In the empty building the windows were walled up with only small holes left which were shut with flaps insulated with felt. The number of rooms was reduced from four to two by demolishing the inner walls. Each room was equipped with doors made of planks with notices "Zur Desinfektion". The doors did not have peepholes and were locked by two bolts tightened with screws. Both rooms were painted white and the floor strewn with sawdust. Around the house grew fruit trees. The SS-men informed the deported that before being quartered in the camp they would be bathed and disinfected. They ordered them to strip down and then beating and baiting with dogs run them to the gas chamber. After the chamber had been filled up with people (according to Hoess the chamber held c. 800 persons) the gasproof



door were tightly closed and then the SS-men poured Zyklone B gas through the small holes. Death came within minutes. The corpses were removed to the mass graves prepared in the vicinity and masked with twig fences and then taken to the incineration pits by the specially prepared field railway. „Little Red House” was demolished in spring 1943 when the new gas chambers and crematoria were started in KL Birkenau.

In 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up towards the end of 1944; the site of the KL Birkenau drainage ditches.

Preserved historical structures: KL Birkenau drainage ditches

#### **Unit 45 - Agricultural area**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up towards the end of 1944.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 46 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up towards the end of 1944; the site of the KL Birkenau drainage ditches.

Preserved historical structures: drainage ditches of the former KL Birkenau

#### **Unit 47 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 the agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up towards the end of 1944; the site of the KL Birkenau drainage ditches.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 48 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up at the end of 1944; the site of the KL Birkenau drainage ditches.

Preserved historical structures: drainage ditches of the III Building Section of the former KL Birkenau

#### **Unit 49 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka with houses demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941; in 1943-1944 the construction site of the III Building Section of KL Birkenau the so-called “Mexico”, gradually wound up at the end of 1944; the site of the drainage ditches KL Birkenau

Preserved historical structures: drainage ditches of the III Building Section of the former KL Birkenau

#### **Unit 50 - Agricultural area and single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka; in 1942-1944 - fallow lands.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 51 - Single-family houses**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village Brzezinka with the housing development demolished by the SS after the eviction of the inhabitants in April 1941. In 1942-1944 agricultural lands of KL Birkenau.

Preserved historical structures: none

#### **Unit 52 - Agricultural area, service and family houses development**

Till 1941 agricultural lands of the village of Brzezinka on the so-called “Sapotka”; in 1942-1944 the site of work of prisoners commandos; the site of the field railways providing materials for the extension of KL Birkenau; in 1943-1944 the construction site of a complex of quarters for the camp SS staff *Truppenunterkünfte* with the building of the KL Birkenau New Headquarters, economic and recreational base.

Preserved historical structures: the building of the former KL Birkenau New Headquarters; the remains of drainage ditches around the area of the former SS staff quarters

#### **The railway siding of the former KL Birkenau**

The siding marked out and built within the construction of KL Birkenau, linking the area of the goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* with the unloading ramp within the KL Birkenau situated between the sections BA I and BA II; used from May 1944, carrying the transports of the deported near the gas chambers and crematoria II and III.

#### **The railway siding of the former Zerlegetrieb**

The siding marked out and built within the construction of the KL Birkenau in 1943 (?), linking the area of the goods station *Auschwitz Bahnhof West* with the scrap metal yard of the plant *L.W. Zerlegetrieb Auschwitz-Ost*.

#### **Road 04-104 - The Voivodship Road Babice - Brzezinka - Harmęże**

Between the crossroads with Skotnicka Street and the crossroads with Męczeństwa Narodów Street - the route of the road marked out and built in 1942-1943 within the construction of KL Birkenau.

Between the crossroads with Ofiar Faszyzmu Street and the crossroads with Pławianka Street - the route of the pre-war local road of the Pławy village.

#### **Road 04-105 - The Voivodship Road Brzezinka - Pławy**

The section of the road between Brzozowa Street and the crossroads with Ofiar Faszyzmu Street - the route of the road marked out in 1942-1943 within the construction of KL Birkenau; the section from the crossroads with Ofiar Faszyzmu Street to the crossroads with Pławianka Street - the route of the road marked out and built after the war; the section from the cross-

roads with Pławianka Street - the route of the pre-war local road of the Pławy village.

**Boczna Street - *A commune road***

The first road marked out and built in 1941 during the construction of KL Birkenau (*Zufahrtstrasse*); the road where in 1941 prisoners commandos were

directed from KL Auschwitz I for the construction of KL Birkenau, and in the period from early spring 1942 to May 1944 the transports of the deported to the camp were shepherded from the unloading ramp (so-called Judenrampe).

## Conclusions

The research has proved that there is an urgent need for further actions in order to implement, comprehensively and effectively, the worked out methods of conservation protection of the structures of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex as well as protection, commemoration and making accessible the sites connected with the history of the death camp:

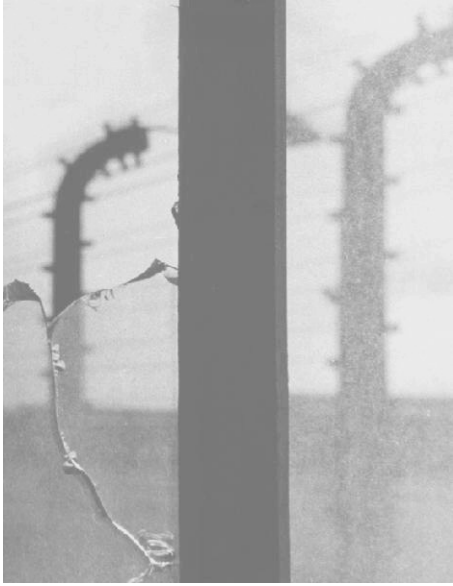
- I. Listing the updated the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum protection zone in Małopolska Voivodship register of monuments in connection with the laws of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which was ratified by Poland.**
- II. Undertaking negotiations and achieving agreements with particular owners and users of real property within the updated protection zone in order to identify:**
  1. conditions for former camp structures accessibility for specialist research, conservation, adaptation and marking as well as conditions of commemorating and accessibility of places connected with the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau,
  2. form and amount of compensation for limitations in property disposal caused by protection zone conditions,
  3. final ownership status of sites and disused structures (including ruin) connected with the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau as well as open areas subject to limitation caused by landscape protection,
  4. detailed localisation as well as legal and technical conditions of investments connected with improvement of Museum visitors' service (reception centre, car parks, new local and access roads),
  5. the scope of expected involvement of local community in the Museum visitors' stream service.
- III. Preparation of the *Detailed Guidelines of the Development of the Updated Protection Zone of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Brzezinka*, in relation to the scope and procedure of the documentation prepared in the years 1993-1995 (former KL Auschwitz I in Oświęcim), in order to formulate final guidelines for the former KL Birkenau surroundings.**
- IV. Conducting specialist research on the areas beyond the updated the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum protection zone in order to identify the places of deposition of remains and ashes of genocide victims and Auschwitz-Birkenau relicts; turning them into enclaves under legal protection, listed in the Małopolska Voivodship register of monuments. Research should include making architectural and building inventories, technical expert opinions, historical studies, archaeological research, photogrammetric thermovision mapping, and surveying geophysics.**
- V. Preparation of a noise map for the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum surroundings in Oświęcim and Brzezinka in order to update "the silence zone" for the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex entered into the UNESCO list<sup>190</sup>.**
- VI. Undertaking by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in co-operation with the government administration actions aimed at:**

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<sup>190</sup> The sound level tests of the protection zone, despite their being a part of the research programme accepted by the International Auschwitz Council in 1991, were not commissioned within the *Study of the Spatial Development of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Landscape Zone* because of the lack of funds.

1. defining a programme of new structures for visitors' stream service: the reception centre, the main car park and auxiliary car parks,
2. re-organisation of visitors' routes within the new system of the Museum road communication service,
3. defining the scope of Museum management of sites and disused structures connected with the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau situated within the updated Museum protection zone,
4. participation of scientific, conservation and research departments of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in specialist research concerning the identification, protection and commemoration of sites and structures connected with the history of the death camp and situated inside the updated protection zone as well as beyond it.

\* \* \*



## Implementation



## Legal conditions

*The Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Oświęcim* was made available to all parties concerned<sup>191</sup> in compliance with the assumed objective of the monograph. Basing on the findings of the Study, the conservator's services began the evaluation activity within the updated protection zone. This prevented several inappropriate investments in the vicinity of the Museum even those that were legally justified by the ruling local development plan.

According to the information contained in the plan conclusions at the time when it was prepared, there were no bases to establish clear rules for development of the protection zones, as the very authors of the project claimed: *"In this situation the general development plan has to be the guideline for the zones development although it should be the other way round."* This remark was preceded by the statement that: *"The problems with the landscape zones and protection zones come from the evaluation of the present state of development and needs programme and investment decisions that should be solved in the near future."* As the final form of these arrangements the elaboration of a detailed development plan of the zone was accepted. Until this condition was met, the rule was to co-ordinate "all location policy" and "all investment activity" with the Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator. This requirement, which provisions for other structural units of the plan lacked, testified to a special treatment of the protection zone, for which the agreements with the Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator were considered superior as far as the legal effects were concerned. Thus the plan regulations for this part of the city were of temporary and auxiliary character.

Such treatment of the problem becomes understandable if the circumstances that accompanied the preparation of the plan are taken into account. In mid-1980s the Oświęcim municipal authorities endeavoured to develop an overall study on the Museum protection zone. As it was already mentioned Professor Zbigniew Gądek<sup>192</sup> committed himself to work out the Study. At the stage of formulating the plan concept, it was indicated that: *"...to be able to choose correct programme and spatial solutions it is necessary to extend the basic materials through preparing studies and analyses concerning: (...) the development of the protection zone and the landscape zone of the Museum in Oświęcim and Brzezinka"*<sup>193</sup>. When the works on the plan were being finished, those studies and analyses were at the early stages of development, which did not give the basis to set up appropriate plan regulations in compliance with the requirements of the cultural heritage protection. In the plan documentation a remark appeared saying that: *"The development plan of the zone around the Museum in Oświęcim and also around the camp in Brzezinka is being worked out by The Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice"*<sup>194</sup> and that is why the location policy within the zones was temporarily transferred under the supervision of the Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator.

Since there were no scientific bases for spatial development policy, such "manual steering" was best since it made possible to control the investment activity by those institutions and offices which guaranteed (at least theoretically) to fulfil the requirements of cultural heritage protection. This was all the more essential since there proved to be numerous errors and

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<sup>191</sup> In April 1995 one copy of the Result Study was submitted to the State Service for Historical Monuments Protection in Bielsko-Biała, and in December that year - to the Oświęcim Town Office.

<sup>192</sup> comp. *Protokół ze spotkania w Urzędzie Miejskim w Oświęcimiu w dn.16.01.1988r. w sprawie stanu zaawansowania prac nad planem ogólnym zagospodarowania przestrzennego miasta Oświęcimia*, pnt.4, p.1. [UMO].

<sup>193</sup> *Koncepcja planu ogólnego zagospodarowania przestrzennego miasta Oświęcim. Opis Planu. Tekst Planu*, TUP Zakład Planowania Przestrzennego Pracownia w Katowicach, pnt.2 - *Podstawowe uwarunkowania obszaru. Ocena materiałów wyjściowych*, p.9.

<sup>194</sup> *Plan ogólny...* op.cit. „Opis Planu” pnt.5.1, p.8.

evident oversights in the local development plan and only the requirement to consult the investment activity with the Museum management and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator was able to prevent many conflict-causing investments which nevertheless were in law.<sup>195</sup>

*The Study* introduced one important aspect to the track of conservation arrangements; namely a comprehensive approach to the problem. The data base unique for both the Museum and the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator was able to counteract the inevitable errors of the “manual steering” by force based on investigating each case individually. The so-far existing activities certainly did not serve to create a coherent image of the zone, and sometimes brought outright injurious decisions<sup>196</sup> and surely did not favour planning of any comprehensive renewal undertakings.

### The Oświęcim Programme

The programme was initiated in April 1996 by Andrzej Telka, the Mayor of Oświęcim. The direct impulse for this initiative was the necessity to start the practical renewal of the vicinity of the Museum, not only in the context of many years’ neglect, but also because of the increasing social interest in the issue of the protection zone, following the conflict of the so-called “supermarket” of February 1996.

The conflict connected with a modest investment of the “Maja” company woke all concerned up to the fact that an attempt at a rational solution of the accumulated problems of the zone, could become a subject of political pressures on the part of circles and persons not well-versed in the complex issue of Oświęcim, but also that the solution of this problem is a vitally urgent issue.

The controversies around “the supermarket” were based on erroneous and biased press reports of “Trybuna Śląska”<sup>197</sup>, which caused a wave of groundless accusations addressed to the investor, to the Museum Management and to Oświęcim local authorities. The Polish government got interested in the issue of the zone development, and as a consequence created a chance to finance by the State budget of the considerable part of the cost connected with the implementation of the necessary changes in the vicinity of the Museum. So far though all activities in the zone had been financed by the modest resources of the town authorities, and despite the international character of the place of martyrdom no funds were added from the State budget. Oświęcim, a town of 40,000 inhabitants, was not able to implement by itself all modernisation works and particularly those connected with the tourist infrastructure and road communication investments to adapt them to the needs of over 500,000 visitors who each year come to see the former extermination camp. The hitherto existing legal regulation of the protection zone did not facilitate this assignment. Since the very beginning it has been laden with serious defects and its practical application proved that for almost twenty years no-one succeeded in working out a complex concept of the development of the area adjacent to the Museum.

In connection with the commitment that the government authorities have expressed in relation to the above mentioned issues, the Mayor of Oświęcim started intensive works to prepare a document which, showing the most important problems of the Town and the Museum, would create simultaneously a base to take steps to solve them. The Research Team of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki, invited to co-operate, were contracted by the Oświęcim Town

<sup>195</sup> comp. The opinion of the JM Rawecki Research Team in the letter to the Head of the Local Court of Appeal of the Bielskie Voivodship 8.07.1996, No: L.dz.88/7/96 [PLAN].

<sup>196</sup> Thereby for example the commission of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in 1993 gave its consent to dismantle a part of the historical siding in Oświęcim, which was fortunately never completed - comp. *Protokół nr 2 z posiedzenia Komisji doradczej do Zadań Konserwatorskich PMO*, Oświęcim 9.12.1993 [Dział Konserwatora PMO].

<sup>197</sup> Bebak J.W.: *Supermarket „Auschwitz”!*; idem: *Lagergeszeft*, „Trybuna Śląska” 19.02.1996.



Office to work out the main assumptions of the Oświęcim Programme in relation to the problems of the protection zone<sup>198</sup>. The programme was based on four problem groups:

- I. Modernisation of the road communication system to adjust it to the requirements of the service of the visitors to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, regarding the needs of the transit and local traffic service;
- II. Identifying the so-far existing development functions of the grounds surrounding the Museum which are in conflict with the character of the site and disturb the atmosphere of dignity of the memorial place; finding the methods for elimination of those conflicts;
- III. Identifying the sites and structures negatively influencing the aesthetic state of the vicinity of the Museum; specification of the range of renewal actions;
- IV. Finding the ways of exposition, making accessible and commemoration of the historical sites and structures connected with the former extermination camp situated outside the Museum and the historical structures connected with the pre-war history of the town of Oświęcim.

The already worked out *Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Oświęcim* fixed the scale and the range of activities possible from the conservation point of view. Stressing the problems connected with the historical heritage protection, *the Study* allowed to take into account the basic needs of the local community, especially those who live and work in the perimeter of the zone. Based on the findings of *the Study* a number of investment assignments were prepared. Taken into account were the recommendations of the International Auschwitz Council and a special Ministry Commission in relation to the issue of the “supermarket”, to the necessity to enlarge the silence zone within the Museum itself by removing the car park and the visitors' service facilities from this area and situating them at the site of the suspended construction of the “Maja” company investment<sup>199</sup>.

The Museum management outlined the needs of this institution in connection with the necessity to adjust it to the new functions: to make a new main exposition, to work out a new system of opening the Museum grounds to the visitors and of visitors service, to remove all staff apartments from the Museum area, as well as a number of organisational suggestions concerning the teaching about the Holocaust and the co-operation in this respect with the Ministry of National Education.

Within the comprehensive approach to the problems of Oświęcim in the Programme appeared suggestions prepared by the Town Office and the Museum management of creating a new image of the town, as a European congress and educational tourism centre. The following were suggested: to create in Oświęcim the International Congress and Seminar Centre, the International Education Centre, European Teacher Training Institute; to renovate the Old Town; to renovate the most interesting historical structures in Oświęcim; to create tourist facilities for visitors in Oświęcim.

Three variants of the Oświęcim Programme were worked out starting with the most economical to the variant covering all needs claimed by the local authorities and the Museum. Accepted was the motion of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki suggesting that the problem of the protection zone would be considered in full range in all variants (65,8 million PLN) because

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<sup>198</sup> JM Raweccc: *Ramowy program niezbędnych prac modernizacyjno-inwestycyjnych w obrębie strefy ochronnej Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka w Oświęcimiu*, Pracownia Projektowa PLAN, April 1996 [UMO].

<sup>199</sup> comp. *Komunikat z zebrania Prezydium Międzynarodowej Rady Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka w dniu 30.IV.1996 r.*, pnt.2, p.1 [PMO]; *Sprawozdanie z działania Komisji powołanej przez Ministra Kultury i Sztuki w dniu 12 marca 1996 r. dla zbadania zgodności z prawem działań Wojewódzkiego Konserwatora Zabytków w Bielsku-Białej oraz dyrekcji Muzeum w Oświęcimiu w sprawie budowy pawilonu handlowego w strefie ochronnej wokół byłego Obozu Koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu*, pnt.IV, p.5 [PLAN].

of high priority of this issue. Full cost of the implementation of the programme was as follows<sup>200</sup>: 247,3 million PLN (variant I), 329,8 million PLN (variant II), 416,3 million PLN (variant III).

The issues of the protection zone development in Brzezinka was not included in the Oświęcim Programme. Only the conclusions pointed out the necessity to do further research. The renewal assignments of the Programme were supported by *the Study of The Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum* and it involved at that time only the problems of the former KL Auschwitz I. The political and social situation after the “Supermarket” conflict extorted a quicker more practical attitude to the problems of the zone than the research schedule accepted by the Museum<sup>201</sup>.

### The Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim

On 25 June 1996 the Oświęcim Programme was discussed at the meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet). The Council of Ministers decided that the solution of the problems connected with the proper commemoration of the genocide of Jews and the martyrdom of the Polish and other nations requires comprehensive actions within a programme accepted and implemented in agreement with and in collaboration with all institutions and circles concerned in Poland and abroad. It was stated that the range of indispensable works justify the division of the endeavour into stages. It was assumed that the implementation of the first stage<sup>202</sup> should be done within the Strategic Governmental Programme, whereas the consecutive stages demand the engagement of social resources, including those of the international community. It was hoped that people of great authority from Poland and abroad would join in the implementation of this task. The Council of Ministers decided that the Minister in charge of the Cabinet Office in co-operation with the Minister of Culture and the Arts, using the variant I of the Oświęcim Programme would present before 15 September 1996 a project of the Strategic Governmental Programme<sup>203</sup>.

Following the meeting of the Mayor of Oświęcim with the Head of the Cabinet Office, it was stated that the local authorities would prepare a set of appendices containing the materials which develop the Variant I of the Oświęcim Programme. In connection with the above, the Oświęcim Town Office commissioned Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki to prepare “Appendix 3” to the Oświęcim Programme entitled: *The Arrangement and Development of the Protection Zone around the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum*. The Museum Management undertook to work out “Appendix 4” entitled: *The Adaptation of the State Museum in Oświęcim to new functions*. The Oświęcim Town Office undertook to prepare “Appendix 1” entitled: *The most important undertakings related to the modernization of the road communication system in the town of Oświęcim* based on the document prepared by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki<sup>204</sup>, and the Oświęcim Commune Office was to develop “Appendix 2” entitled: *The most important undertakings related to the modernization of the road communication system in the Oświęcim Commune area and village areas of Brzezinka and Pławy*.

Towards the end of August 1996 “Appendix 3” was presented to the Oświęcim Town Office; it defined the following: the complete range of necessary works connected with the renewal of the Museum environs, the deadlines of particular assignments divided into execu-

<sup>200</sup> according to the prices of May 1996.

<sup>201</sup> As it was already mentioned, the cause of considerable delay in the preparation of the protection zone study was the unfavourable attitude of the local community to the conducted research. If in 1992 the inhabitants of Brzezinka had not protested against the fieldwork, in 1996 the commune authorities would have had all information on the conservation guidelines of the former KL Birkenau, which would have made possible the full formulation of the Oświęcim Programme assignments.

<sup>202</sup> the arrangement and development of the protection zone and the modernisation of the road communication system in the Museum environs.

<sup>203</sup> *Komunikat po Radzie Ministrów - 25.06.1996.*

<sup>204</sup> JM Rawecci: *Ramowy program... op.cit.* pnt.I.

tive stages, the estimated cost and its distribution. Because of the synthetic character of this document, in all assignments there were references to the *Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Oświęcim*, which was the professional basis of those assignments.

On 8 October 1996 the Council of Ministers accepted *The Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim* which included the Appendices prepared by the local authorities. It was stated that the program involves the architectural and urban renewal of the Town and Commune of Oświęcim, and its objectives were as follows:

- \* to create conditions to express respect for the victims of genocide and to learn about the problems connected with the legacy of the war and the martyrdom of the nations,
- \* to arrange the zone around the former extermination camp and to enhance its aesthetics,
- \* to open the International Education Centre.

It was accepted that the first stage (to the year 2001) should comprise the arrangement and development of the protection zone and the modernisation of the road communication system in the Museum environs (separating the traffic connected with the Museum from the transit and local traffic). It was stated that the investment and modernisation assignments would be financed mainly by the target reserve of the State Budget. The Town and the Commune of Oświęcim were to finance only the works which directly benefited the inhabitants.

“Appendix 4” was not included in the Programme. The costs of the adaptation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum to the modern functions were to be cover by the Minister of Culture and the Arts and the General Historical Monuments Conservator from their budgets and target reserves.

In December 1996 a disposition of the Council of Ministers was issued in re of establishing the office of the Government Plenipotentiary for the Implementation of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim<sup>205</sup>. As a result of the agreement made by the Bielski Voivod with the Town and Commune Offices, the local authorities were trusted with the assignments of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim<sup>206</sup>. The Bureau for the Implementation of the Oświęcim Programme was opened at the Oświęcim Town Office.



Fig.24. Oświęcim. An example of implementation of “Appendix 3” tasks of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim. The final stage of Task 6/II “The area of the historical railway siding - the branch towards the Monopoly”. Photo on the left - state in 1996. Photo on the right - state in 1999. View of the middle part of the siding towards the south. Phot. M.Rawecki

<sup>205</sup> Dz.U. No 145 item 672.

<sup>206</sup> Dz.Urz.Woj.Bielskiego No 15/97 item 129 and 130.



Fig.25. Oświęcim. The final stage of Task 6/II "The area of the historical railway siding - the branch towards the Monopoly". Photo on the left - state in 1996. Photo on the right - state in 1999. View from Spółdzielców Street towards the north. Phot. M.Rawecki



Fig.26. Oświęcim - Stanisławy Leszczyńskiej Street. The final stage of the Task 2/III "Fencing" in the range of the Army Unit. Photo on the left - state in 1996. Photo on the right - state in 1999. View towards the north from the Museum main entrance. Phot. M.Rawecki

## Strategy

In March 1997 the Research Team of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki appealed to the Museum with a motion to prepare a document which would present in a concise way the conservation and preservation policy of the Auschwitz-Birkenau post-camp complex worked out in a long-term research within *The Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum* and applied in the Oświęcim Programme and the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim. The intention of this initiative was to start a dialogue with the suggestions for the development of the Museum protection zone which were presented to the Polish authorities by the representatives of the Jewish organisations in 1997. As early as July 1996 a presentation took place of the Oświęcim Programme in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland. Aleksander Kwásniowski supported that endeavour and during his visit to the USA he presented the assumptions of the Programme to the Jewish organisations consolidated around the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. The Oświęcim Programme became the incentive to develop contacts with international scientific circles connected with the keeping of the memory about Auschwitz and to get to know the expectations of the Jewish side concerning the ways of the development of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum environs.

The representatives of the Jewish organisations invited by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum prepared *The Answer to the Oświęcim Programme*<sup>207</sup> presenting a number of solutions concerning the future development of the Museum protection zone<sup>208</sup>. It was stated that the main problem of the Oświęcim Programme was the lack of “the general conceptual plan”, without which, according to the Jewish experts, it was impossible to assess the detailed suggestions presented in the programme. In connection with the above the Jewish side suggested *Conceptual Master Plan for Auschwitz-Birkenau*<sup>209</sup>, as the counterproposal to the Oświęcim Programme. However, in confrontation with the factual state of the development of the protection zone, it occurred that the theoretical postulates included in *The Answer to the Oświęcim Programme* are possible for consideration, but their implementation in the suggested form was unfeasible and could lead to the infringement of the rights of the local community<sup>210</sup>.

In 3-4 March 1997 during the meetings in Warszawa and in Oświęcim of the representatives of the Jewish organisations with the Polish central and local authorities, with the members of the International Auschwitz Council, with the Museum employees and the former Auschwitz inmates, the Jewish experts presented another document entitled: *Strategy for the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau*<sup>211</sup>. This new proposition took into account some of the critical remarks of the Polish side, but still contained numerous controversial solutions. The document manifested the lack of the full understanding of the historical specificity of this area and the contemporary aspects of its development. Despite these imperfections, *Strategy for the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau* was a positive step towards a matter-of-fact discussion. It was necessary to work out solutions which would give the post-camp complex more spatial and functional integration and render the access of the visitors to both part of the Museum more efficient. On 5 March the participants of this meeting signed the *Declaration concerning principles for implementation of the Oświęcim Programme*.

The direct result of these meetings was that the Museum undertook to prepare a *Strategy of the Arrangement, Development and Commemoration of the Areas Surrounding the Memorial and the Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau*<sup>212</sup>. The title consciously alluded to the *Strategy for the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau*. The form of discussion suggested by the Jewish side made possible the presentation of the key issues of the protection zone development and thus the promotion of findings resulting from the conducted analyses and research. In December 1997 the work on the *Strategy* was finished. A concept was prepared which took into account the results of the earlier researches, the conclusions of the Oświęcim Programme and

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<sup>207</sup> USHMM: *Odpowiedź na Program Oświęcimski. Wymagania stawiane przyszłemu planowi*, 4 December 1996 [UMO i PMO].

<sup>208</sup> To evaluate the Oświęcim Programme the Jewish party appointed a “Committee for Reviewing the Oświęcim Programme” with the representatives of: *American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, Ronald’s Lauder Foundation, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, World Jewish Congress, Yad Vashem* and as consultants: prof. Debórah Dwork (Clark University) and prof. Robert Jan van Pelt (University of Waterloo).

<sup>209</sup> R.J.Pelt, D.Dwork, V.Rynnimeri: *Conceptual Master Plan for Auschwitz-Birkenau. Preliminary Proposal*, 25 November 1996, University of Waterloo and Clark University [UMO and PMO].

<sup>210</sup> The authors of the *Conceptual Master Plan* suggested for example that the Museum area should be increased by 60 ha in Oświęcim and by 20 ha in Brzezinka. The implementation of this suggestion would require to dismantle 100 private residential houses, 70 industrial and farm structures, to liquidate 5 employing institutions; comp. JM Rawecy: *Stanowisko Zespołu Autorskiego w sprawie opinii środowisk żydowskich na temat „Programu Oświęcimskiego”*, Gliwice 27.01.1997 [UMO i PMO]; S.Bubin: *Niezgoda na niezgodę. Środowiska żydowskie proponują w sprawie Oświęcimia koncepcje oderwane od rzeczywistości - twierdzą polscy naukowcy*, „Dziennik Zachodni” 28.02.1997; P.Włodarczyk: *Życie na cmentarzu. Strefa niepokoju*, „Fakty” 3.04.1997.

<sup>211</sup> R.J.Pelt and Team: *Strategy for the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau*, Auschwitz-Birkenau Collaborative, March 1997, School of Architecture University of Waterloo, Center for Holocaust Study - Clark University [UMO and PMO].

<sup>212</sup> JM Rawecy: *Strategia uporządkowania, zagospodarowania i upamiętnienia terenów otaczających Miejsce Pamięci i Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau*, Pracownia Projektowa PLAN Gliwice, 1997 [PMO].

the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim, the guidelines of the *Declaration concerning principles for implementation of the Oświęcim Programme* and projects of the solutions for particular elements of the programme. The following suggestions were presented:

- \* to commemorate the documented places of martyrdom situated outside the Museum,
- \* to improve the ways of visiting the Museum,
- \* to increase the functional and spatial integration of the post-camp complex,
- \* to prepare a land reserve for the future structures connected with the integration processes around the Memorial: with the scientific and educational activity and with the movements for reconciliation and co-operation.

*Strategy* stressed the exposition of the Judenrampe, the former unloading ramp where in 1942-1944 the German Nazis directed the transports with people deported to KL Birkenau. This site, which so far is outside the protection zone, is situated mid-way between the two parts of the post-camp complex. Another important place is the railway siding in Oświęcim which received the first transports of the prisoners of KL Auschwitz I (outside the Museum). It was assumed that people arriving at the Museum should start their visit at these very places and then follow the same routes which the thousands of camp victims took. That is why the road communication service of the Museum was located on the two main car parks (next to the historical side track - for Auschwitz I, and next to the Judenrampe - for Birkenau). Because of the extensive area of the former KL Birkenau four additional auxiliary car parks were planned around the Museum lines. So that the visitors would not disturb the specific atmosphere of the Memorial it was suggested to put next to the car parks all necessary infrastructure, which is now situated within the Museum (toilets, restaurants, tour guides' units, book- and flower-selling, etc.) and to introduce minibus service between them. It was considered sensible to plan a local ring-road south and east off the former KL Birkenau. Such solutions would make it possible to move the vehicle traffic farther off the Museum grounds and clearly separate the undeveloped areas subject to conservation rigours from Brzezinka development areas.

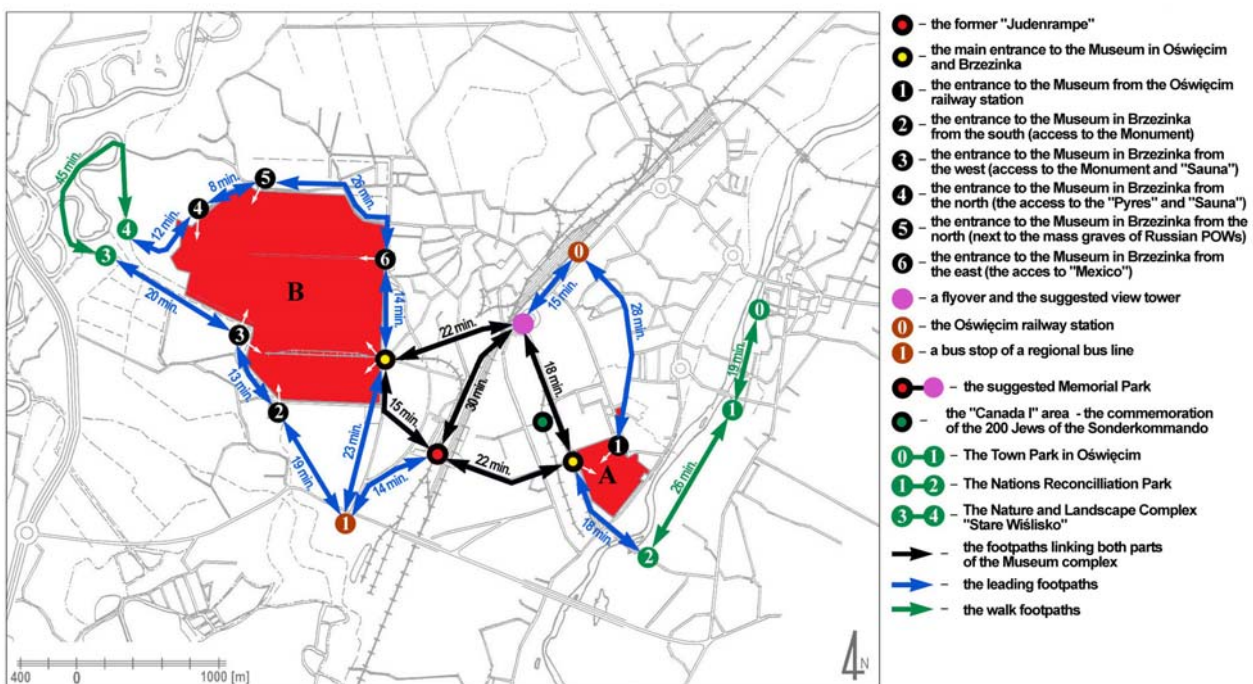
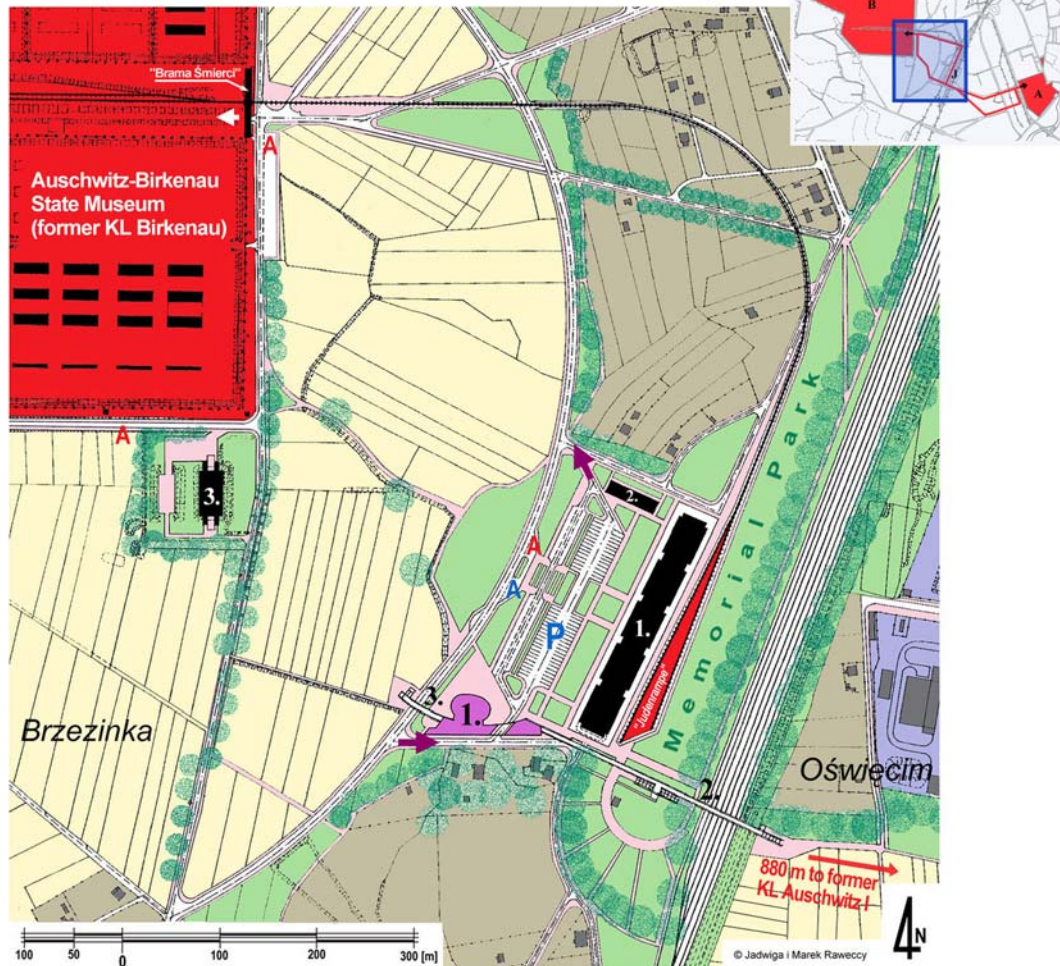


Fig.27. Concept of the new pedestrian links around the Museum taking into account the paramount role of the Judenrampe in the integration of the post-camp grounds (worked out by MR)

### Suggested rebuilding plan for the foreground of the former KL Birkenau and the Judenrampe



#### Legend:



















- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | - Grounds of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum   |  | 1. - New reception centre for visitors  |
|  | - Place of the camp victims commemoration  |  | 2. - Footbridge over the rails linked with the first floor of the reception centre                            |
|  | - Railway siding built in 1944 and open in May that year. It joined the Judenrampe and the KL Birkenau and was used to bring the deported people nearer gas chambers |  | 3. - Footbridge over the planned ring-road linked with the first floor of the reception centre                |
|  | - Open green areas   |  | - The main entrance and exit from the reception centre  |
|  | - Existing greenery (including old-growth trees) and planned green areas (new plants and isolating greenery)   |  | - The main car park for the visitors  |
|  | - Open footpaths   |  | - Museum minibuses stops  |
|  | 1. 2. 3. - Former camp warehouses adapted for the use of the Museum  |  | - City bus stops  |
|  | - Other contemporary buildings, not connected with the Museum  |  | - Residential areas (with the land reserves). Private land with single-family housing                         |
|   |  |  | - Agriculture production areas (private land)   |
|   |  |  | - Area of existing industry, stores, private and municipal enterprises in Oświęcim being under re-structuring |

Fig.28. Concept of the renewal of the former KL Birkenau foreground taking into account the commemoration of the Judenrampe, new car park and reception centre for visitors and the construction of a local ring-road moving the traffic off the Museum lines and separating the areas under landscape conservation protection from the development areas of Brzezinka (worked out by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecky)

To create a new way of visiting the Museum and accentuating the former size of the camp complex, divided after the Second World War into two separate Museum areas at 3 kilometers' distance - a new walking route was planned linking the former Auschwitz I with the former KL Birkenau. The planned footbridge over the railway tracks situated mid-way between the two parts of the Museum would not only make shorter the distance between them but would also add into the visitors' route the centrally-situated Judenrampe, in the vicinity of which a new place commemorating the camp victims (The Memorial Park) could come into being in the future, as well as a new reception centre for visitors. The route was planned to avoid the industrial and service areas (Oświęcim) and the rural development (Brzezinka), which would allow to walk in silence without being disturbed. In order to make available the places connected with the history of the camp it was suggested to mark out *educational paths* for study groups and for people who stay in Oświęcim longer than one day to know the history of the former camp better. To visualize the solutions of the *Strategy* a model was prepared showing the areas of the Museum protection zones.

Already during the works on the *Strategy* wide-scale consultations were conducted among the parties concerned<sup>213</sup>. The final form of the *Strategy* was also the effect of taking into account the future-oriented exposition and reorganisation plans of the Museum management comprised in "Appendix 4" of the Oświęcim Programme. The presentation of the *Strategy* during the plenary session of the International Auschwitz Council in 2-3 February 1998 was highly rated by the members of the Council. The continuation of research was recommended<sup>214</sup>.

## Site planning

In June 1996 the Town Council in Oświęcim adopted a resolution on preparing the revision of the local development plan for the areas situated within the protection zone together with the areas adjacent to this zone<sup>215</sup>. In the same resolution the Council decided:

*"To give a positive opinion on the "Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. Zone A - Oświęcim - The Protection Zone of the State Museum in Oświęcim" prepared by The Research Team: Jadwiga Rawecka and Marek Rawecki"*.

These decisions were the effect of numerous presentations during the Town Council Sessions and the effect of a long process of negotiations and agreements concerning the conservation policy suggested by the *Study*. In December 1995, after a copy of the *Study* had been conveyed to the Oświęcim Town Office, the local authorities commissioned an independent evaluation of this document in the aspect of its usefulness for the spatial planning, as a starting point for the revision of the local plan within the protection zone in Oświęcim.

In March 1996 an architect Andrzej Mastej presented a definitely positive evaluation writing<sup>216</sup>: *"The professional information of the "Study", enormously rich, is a compendium of the state-of-the-art knowledge about the area under the Museum landscape pro-*

<sup>213</sup> Main assumptions of the *Strategy* were agreed with (Polish names are given): Rada Gminy Oświęcim, Rada Miejska w Oświęcimiu, Rady Sołeckie Brzezinki, Pław, Sołtys Harmęż, Przewodniczący Komisji Konserwatorskiej Międzynarodowej Rady przy Państwowym Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, Wojewódzki Konserwator Zabytków, Wojewódzki Konserwator Przyrody, Towarzystwo Opieki nad Oświęcimiem, Stowarzyszenie Romów w Polsce, Federacja Zielonych w Oświęcimiu, and with the specialist units - Śląska Dyrekcja Okręgowa Kolei Państwowych w Katowicach, Biuro Planowania Rozwoju Sieci Drogowej w Krakowie, Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Wodociągów i Kanalizacji w Oświęcimiu.

<sup>214</sup> *Komunikat z posiedzenia plenarnego Międzynarodowej Rady Muzeum*, pnt.3, p.2 [PMO].

<sup>215</sup> *Uchwała Nr XXVIII/235/96 Rady Miejskiej w Oświęcimiu z dnia 5 czerwca 1996 roku w sprawie przystąpienia do sporządzenia miejscowego planu zagospodarowania przestrzennego*, § 2 - 6.

<sup>216</sup> A.Mastej: *Opinia do wykonanego opracowania pt.: Studium Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego Strefy Krajobrazowej Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Strefa A - Oświęcim - Strefa Ochronna Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu*, Katowice, March 1996, pnt.B, p.7 (unpublished) [UMO].



tection. I think that this monograph constitutes an important material that can be the basis for evaluation, project, and implementation works in the issue of the spatial planning policy. When it has been regulated according to the urban studies rigours and adapted particularly in the procedural and formal aspect according to the requirements of a local development plan and when it has fulfilled their conditions, this monograph can be the local law as a development plan.”

The revision of the local development plan was started only a year after the Town Council adopted the resolution. Biuro Rozwoju Krakowa S.A. won the tendering for preparing this project. The Oświęcim Town Office gave the documentation of the *Study* to Jerzy Grzymek, the main author of the plan. In a letter to the Research Team, The Mayor of Oświęcim informed: “Your monograph was received as one of the key starting point materials for the plan the more so that the value of the “Study...” was confirmed by the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator, as the representative of the most competent officials of the Bielsko-Biała Voivod.”

The long agreement procedure on the central and international levels delayed several times the act of making the prepared local plan project public.

In June 1998 the Oświęcim Commune Council adopted a resolution to revise the local development plan of the Oświęcim Commune within the protection zone<sup>217</sup>. In the specification of conditions, which was prepared for the tendering by the Commune Management, *Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum* was listed as one of the main preliminary materials for the revision of the local plan. As a result of the tendering the Biuro Rozwoju Krakowa S.A. offer was chosen.

### Didactic activity

“*Study of the Spatial Development of the Landscape Zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum*”, as well as all later monographs connected with it, were introduced by the author as preliminary materials for didactic activity at the Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice. In October 1992 the final year students were to prepare a concept of “A Park over the Soła River” for the “Urban Design” subject taught at the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning.

Theoretical knowledge of the students who are at the threshold of their MA thesis made it possible to assign such a difficult task to them: the task to prepare a concept for the renewal and development of the area between the Soła River embankments in the vicinity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. The area under elaboration was situated in the field where many factors were present: historical, natural, hydrologic, social, political; the students were given a short time to prepare this development plan. That task was difficult because its specificity, demanding that many apparently contradictory needs and expectations should be taken into account, it required special care in suggesting practical design solutions. The project assumptions included the basic dilemma of the protection zone:

“*The park over the Soła River. The area being under the influence of two elements: the developing town and the former extermination camp... Two elements, two values: Life and Death. How do we find a common space for them? How do we realise at the same time and in the same place the need for reflection and pondering and the need for relaxation, rest after work, play? How do we make the two Truths, the historical truth and the modern truth: Oświęcim and Auschwitz, Town and Museum, co-exist in the Park space? The idea of a Park as an element which joins the needs of the Oświęcim inhabitants and the needs of the Museum visitors. A link between the Museum and the normal life...*”<sup>218</sup>

<sup>217</sup> Uchwała Nr XXXV/259/98 Rady Gminy Oświęcim z dnia 17 czerwca 1998 r.

<sup>218</sup> M.Rawecki: *Oświęcim - Park nad Solą*, the project assumptions for the subject “Urban Design”, Gliwice 12.10.1992, p.1 [WAPŚI].

Led by Professor Zbigniew Gądek and provided with the didactic help by the researchers of the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning the students prepared more than 10 design concepts for this area. In the following years the theme was continued and in October 1996 students ideas were presented to the Oświęcim Mayor, at an exhibition in the Culture Centre in Oświęcim (OCK). Student works were an impulse for starting a public debate about the development of this area<sup>219</sup>. One of the student groups saw the future role of the Park in this way: *“A park is a place which allows a versatile use. It fulfils many functions e.g. the recreational function, integrating function (family walks). Despite its artificial spatial arrangement a stay in a park is for a human being a meeting with the world of nature. However, with the Museum the park should be a place where a person can relieve the psychic tension generated by the touch of the “machinery of death” that the concentration camp used to be. A park realises the need for reflection, it reduces the contrast between the death and the city life dynamics. The greenery, benches invite to pay homage by a short while of silence to the dead - distant and close. The image of the inhabitants resting makes us realise that the death of the murdered had its value - the value of life for the future”*.<sup>220</sup>

The openness and the fresh look of the students that are not contaminated by the professional routine, the polarisation of the factors influencing the project decisions in the Museum protection zone, at the same time a very rich set of source materials - all these are reasons which made the author continue the issue of the protection zone in the terms of didactics in the following years. Since 1997 it has been a fixed point of the programme within the subjects “Urban Design” and “Urban Renewal”. The discussion of this issue is always preceded by a visit to the site. Thanks to the co-operation with the Museum management, the Town Office and the Commune Office in Oświęcim the students can count not only on the help getting the starting materials, but also on a practical interest of these units in the results of their work. Now in the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning there are more than twenty student design concepts touching very important solutions that are awaited in Oświęcim and Brzezinka: the Museum’s visitors service, the commemoration of the places connected with the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The achieved high level of these projects confirms that the students treat this difficult issue not only as a planning exercise, but for them it is an opportunity for a deeper reflection on the obligations of the contemporaries towards the historical heritage.

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<sup>219</sup> *Park nad Solą - wystawa i temat do dyskusji*, „Głos Ziemi Oświęcimskiej” No 18, 11.10.1996; *I love Solą*, „Głos Ziemi Oświęcimskiej” No 19, 25.10.1996.

<sup>220</sup> M.Poznachowska, A.Griksa, A.Hławiczka, E.Stawowa, B.Dobrzańska: *Commentary to the design*; comp. *Park z marzeń*, „Głos Ziemi Oświęcimskiej” No 18, 11.10.1996.



## Conclusion



The researches presented in this paper adopt, in their ideological layer, the will expressed by the Polish Parliament on 2 July 1947 in the law founding the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum. The commitments on which this legal document was based are still relevant today. Time has not changed the moral imperative to “forever preserve” the relics of the camp as a painful evidence of crime and at the same time the sign of the memory about those, who had suffered and died here. As once Jan Sehn had said, it is *“a sacred mandate that was given to the Polish Nation by all nations and countries whose citizens sacrificed their own lives behind the barbed wires of this camp.”*

In the face of the unusual moral importance of the grounds, structures and all other Auschwitz-Birkenau relicts, the research was undertaken to obtain such state of the development of the vicinity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, where:

- \* the full protection will be assured of the post-camp heritage identified on this area and conditions will be created for making possible its exposition and the accessibility,
- \* the use of areas in immediate vicinity of the Memorial Place will harmonise with the need to keep the atmosphere of dignity in compliance with the KL Auschwitz victims.

During the research the following problems were identified, which demand practical activities in order to achieve the model of transformations assumed:

#### A r r a n g e m e n t

It is indispensable to obtain the spatial order, which would be conducive to solemnity and reflection and through this would achieve the proper attitude of the visitors even before entering the Museum premises. All that collides with the superior function of the Memorial Place, disturbs the perception of the post-camp relics, makes this perception difficult or effaces the specific character of this place should be removed or isolated from the vicinity of the Museum.

A constant and unhampered access should be kept to both parts of the post-camp complex and simultaneously all standards, which are due to the sites listed by UNESCO must be met. The international character and the extension of the visitors traffic demand overall solutions to modernise the road communication system both in the vicinity of the Museum and on the regional scale.

An essential problem is to make visible the functional and spatial relations of the post-camp complex. The fact that the two parts of this complex are situated in different administrative units, in different urban contexts demands the full co-ordination of activities of local authorities of the Town of Oświęcim and the Oświęcim Commune and induces to seek, on one hand solutions individualising the problems of preservation, and on the other hand - solutions conducive to the spatial integration of the Auschwitz-Birkenau sites and structures separated and scattered over the area.

The remodelling of the protection zone will make possible the reorganisation of the Museum itself by removing the existing arduous functions: car parks, the gastronomic base, the trade, and also staff apartments and garages.

#### T h e c o m m e m o r a t i o n

It is urgent to start the legal protection of the identified post-camp structures and the marking of places of the martyrdom situated outside the Museum premises.

In view of intensive transformations of the post-camp grounds situated outside the Museum, it is impossible to commemorate them all by increasing the area of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Because of their quantity, their dispersion and diverse ownership status and the degree of their preservation, it can refer to only a small percentage of the preserved heritage. It is thus essential to elaborate the rules of the long-wave co-operation with local authorities of the Town of Oświęcim and the Oświęcim Commune and with particular

owners with the aim of negotiating other means of commemorating the preserved relics and making them accessible.

The commemoration cannot lead to the rebuilding of the no longer existing post-camp structures and to the reconstruction of the “camp scenery” on the basis of the KL Auschwitz records. After fifty years it is neither possible nor advisable to reconstruct in the real space of the living city and region of Oświęcim the camp scenery from the years 1940-1945 within the area of 40 square kilometres. The historic state of development of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp should be overall presented through documents, photos, plans, maps and models on expositions and in museum guides, in scientific and popular publications.

## D e v e l o p m e n t

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum together with the protection zones lies within the administrative borders of the Town of Oświęcim and the Oświęcim Commune administrative units: Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże. In relation to the above most of problems connected with preservation, with visitors service and mass celebrations are also problems of local community and have a direct impact on the functioning of all settlement units. And vice versa: social, industrial and economic activities, as well as the spatial development implied by these activities affect the perception of the very Memorial Place and its neighbourhood.

The development of the Museum environs demanded balancing the programme of transformations and setting the priorities of the development. The research determined how the Museum environs can be integrated with the remaining part of the urban and rural structure and where it should be insulated from it.

It was essential to clearly divide the sites and structures, which have to be subject to limitations in development because of their historical background from those which can develop freely for the sake of the visitors and the local community (the development of services, housing, creating new jobs).

It was necessary to find land reserves for potential development of widely understood culture services being the derivative of integrative processes around the Memorial Place: investments connected with the scientific and educational activity, with the creation of facilities for the spontaneously created new forms of the co-operation and reconciliation (sites of international and national, social, non-governmental organisations, religious associations, foundations, university branches etc.). Those investments cannot disturb the protected spatial arrangement or the relics of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau. Neither can they be created in isolation or be in conflict with vested interests of the local community; on the contrary, they have to favour the joining inhabitants of Oświęcim, Brzezinka, Pławy, Harmęże into the work for the creation around the Memorial Place a modern, open for all the centre of reconciliation and co-operation.

The accepted model ought to be accompanied by the following rules and measures of the implementation:

## T h e c o m p l i a n c e a n d t h e e x e c u t i o n o f t h e l a w

For a conflict-free implementation of the established model of transformations it is necessary to abide by the existing democratic state legal procedures and to comply with the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage ratified by Poland.

One of the reasons of the inefficacy of the protection zone was not the lack of legal basis of the protection, but the non-conformance with them in the practical preservation, planning and executive activity. The law on the protection of cultural heritage and on museums, which has been in force in Poland since 1962, gives, through the historical monuments register, good bases for effective conservation works in the Museum environs. The consequence of listing the protection zone in the international UNESCO register should have been immediate

analogous decisions on the level of the national law in order to apply the implementation procedures. However, this was not the case. The premises of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum were listed in the historical monuments register of the Bielsko-Biała Voivodship only in 1995. The protection zone is still waiting for this decision.

### I n f o r m a t i o n

*Defence, in my opinion, is first of all information*  
Simon Wiesenthal

The source of most conflicts “around former KL Auschwitz” is often the lack of knowledge about different perception of this place by different social, environmental, religious, national groups.

The only defence against conflicts is to develop a mechanism of full and quick exchange of information among interested parties, and for the public opinion to make possible a free access to its sources. Even the best guidelines and ideas of the development of the area adjacent to the Memorial Place will be for nothing, when there is no underlying knowledge about mutual feelings, needs as well as about planned and executed activities, when there are no mechanisms, which could facilitate their signalling.

### P a r t i c i p a t i o n

A considerable differentiation of the Museum environs: historic, administrative, functional, ownership, technical, scenery, natural, architectural, urban, with the observed social pressure on the realisation of their own expectations and lobby interests, makes one outright the acceptance of the rule of participation as the basic norm of conduct.

This renders necessary to develop organisational frames which would make possible the unhampered exchange of thought, introduction and popularisation of problems concerning the Memorial Place environs and the active participation of the public opinion in the discussion on this subject. The representatives of various communities, organisations and institutions should take part in the process leading to final solutions.

### A s s i s t a n c e

The range of investment in the Memorial Place environs demands financial support of the local autonomy by the government.

The quantity of visitors to the former extermination camp is each year tenfold the joint number of inhabitants of Oświęcim, Brzezinka and of Pławy. This shows clearly that the modernisation of the road communication system and the adaptation of the existing technical infrastructure to support new investments (facilities for visitors, future educational centres, research centres, etc.) must be financed from the state budget. This refers also to the renewal of the vicinity of the Museum as far as the improvement of aesthetics of the existing structures is concerned and the conservation work to preserve the post-camp heritage.

### C o - o r d i n a t i o n

The issue of the development of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum environs touches on many spheres of life. The diverse nature of this area gets involved many government, local and special administration units in management, maintenance and development of existing investments.

Besides the specific function of protection of the material heritage of the former camp there are almost all problems typical for urban and rural areas, problems connected with technical infrastructure, road communication system, public utilities and land turnover, water and forest economy, agriculture, building, environmental protection, industry, transportation, education, army and civil defence.

With the assumption that the conservation problems are superior to others this situation demands the co-ordination of activities of many offices to realise the priorities of the Memorial Place.

### The comprehensive approach

Conducting an effective protection policy and visitor traffic service is difficult due to the functional differentiation of the Museum environs and its division into several separate administrative units.

Two separate protection zones do not favour the integration of both parts of the post-camp complex, on the contrary, they consolidate its functional partition.

The comprehensive approach demands co-ordinating procedures and schedules of local development plans of the Town and the Commune of Oświęcim. Simultaneously it will help to organise the visitors' facilities for both Museum parts and to create the indispensable functional connections between them.

### Individualisation

As opposed to the necessary functional integration of the Museum area the problem of priorities of conservation protection of the environs of each part of the post-camp complex demands an individual approach.

The former KL Auschwitz I environs manifests a non-homogenous character: there is a considerable condensation of structures of various use, moreover, situated close to the Museum. Numerous post-camp relicts are plaited into the context of the modern industrial building.

In Brzezinka and Pławy the situation is different: the agricultural use of the extensive foreground of the Museum creates a good exposition for relicts of the former KL Birkenau situated there.

Thus the basic objective of preservation activities in Oświęcim should be the protection of particular enclaves of historic structures, whereas in Brzezinka and Pławy it should be first of all the protection of the remaining fragments of the historical landscape and the exposition of the few relicts.

### Monitoring

The increasing complexity of the development processes which is observed nowadays imposes the necessity for constant tailing of the changes that take place in human environment in order to prevent those which could negatively influence the natural and cultural environment.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum environs is not void of such threats either. However the problems connected with the environment protection overlap with the duty of protecting the Auschwitz-Birkenau relicts. Those relicts were subject to intensive modifications after the Second World War and thus they were and still are exposed to the danger of losing those features which testify the character and the scale of the crime. A system of the periodical evaluation of their state of preservation is indispensable in order to identify potential threats and to take proper prevention measures.

### Scientific research

*“The duty of the international group of experts is to destroy the myths and to build knowledge about Auschwitz-Birkenau history on the basis of the historical truth. The effect of reliable historical research is the only truth which we are obliged to express together and in the same way.”*



Such declaration was made in July 1997 in Warszawa at the international meeting concerning the co-ordination of study and planning documentation within the protection zone of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex. This declaration accurately captures the principal rule which should lie behind all actions taken in the neighbourhood of the former extermination camp.

The exceptionality of this place, and especially its unique symbolical dimension, induce sometimes to seek abstract planning solutions, projects or artistic designs exhibiting not so much the objective historical truth and the moral message that comes from it, but individual views of creators, groups of interested persons or of religious circles. Basing the idea of development of the Museum environs on objective premises coming from scientific research, can guarantee to eliminate solutions that create an inauthentic, false or misshapen image of the former extermination camp.

In conclusion it can be said that the argument and the method of research were verified in practice. It proved that the participation of interested parties can guarantee a conflict-free implementation of conservation priorities when the vested interests of the local community are taken into account. At present new researches are possible. The works at the zone brought to light areas that had not been so far known. It becomes necessary to focus all effort on the initiation of further studies extending the knowledge on the topography of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and also the enlargement of the investigative field to analyse also other aspects of the development of the Museum environs (sociology, psychology, theology, culture studies). The complex identification of all factors which have influence on the state of the development of the Museum environs will certainly enrich the already created and socially accepted base for further renewal works in future.

\* \* \*

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which I enormously widened my knowledge of history; Mrs *K r y s t y n a I ż y c z e k*, the Manager of the Department of Geodesy and Land Management of the Town Office in *O ś w i ę c i m*, for providing me with help in collecting the ownership data of the area of the Museum protection zone, and all employees of the Department for their warm welcome and making the work on the spot possible; mgr *K r y s t y n a K o t* of the Voivod Geodesic and Cartographic Documentation Department Centre in *O ś w i ę c i m* for making available the geodesic resources including the pre-war maps of *O ś w i ę c i m* and its environs.

I thank all inhabitants of *O ś w i ę c i m*, *Brzezinka*, *Pławy* and *Harmężę* whom I reached with my camera and notebook, disturbing them in their homes, for their warm welcome, for their unusual moving and touching reports of their own lives, for making available family documents. Only thanks to you my knowledge about the history of the *O ś w i ę c i m* Region could acquire a personal dimension without which I cannot imagine suggesting any actions within the Museum protection zone.

I also thank all managers of the plants, enterprises, institutions and offices situated or working within the Museum protection zone to have kindly given me indispensable information and documents as well as making the structures available for research.

Scientific work, as any other work anyway, is not done in detachment from the reality of everyday and private life. On the contrary - it is, I suppose, also done with the effort and care of the people close to the author not only professionally. This was also true in my case. I am particularly grateful to my parents *M i r o ś ł a w a* and *A d a m R a w e c k i* for their unfaltering faith in the final of my many years' research efforts, for their everyday help and for, I must say disconcerting however justified, questions about the deadline for handing in my doctoral thesis. My parents-in-law, *K a z i m i e r a* and *J a n C h m i e l e w s k i* showed similar care and helped me in practical matters, for which I also thank them enormously. I thank my daughter *M a ł g o r z a t a* for the fact that she did not want to care for her father's problems, but in the way characteristic for teenagers engaged me in her affairs and introduced me to the newest trends in techno music.

Similarly I would like to thank Mr *M a r e k M u s i a ł* and Mrs *A n n a S m o l e ń* for their faith that in my work on the dissertation I did not forget what in practice the profession of an architect is. Thanks to this faith I was able to design houses; the owners of one of them can already rejoice their house and the owners of the other are on their way to enjoy theirs.

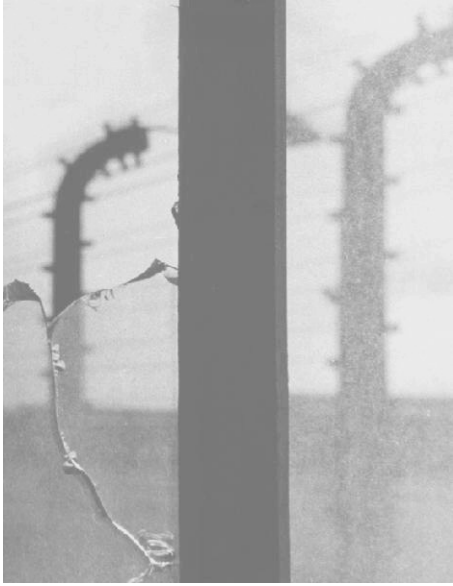
*J a g o d a*, my partner in my private and professional life, asked me not to thank her for her cooperation and help. I understand. I do not thank you. I am happy that you are.

I thank the ghosts of the *Judenrampe*, who very much want to be commemorated and so far they have escaped all conservation guidelines and governmental arrangements. They helped in a strange and different way...

*Gliwice, June 1999*

I would also thank Professor *K a z i m i e r z K u ś n i e r z* for his acute comments and his guidelines which helped me to prepare my doctoral thesis for publishing as well as Professor *S t e f a n Z e m ł a* for sharing with me his own remarks which confirmed me in the rightness of the way I have taken and the solutions concerning *Auschwitz-Birkenau* I have assumed.

*Gliwice, June 2003*



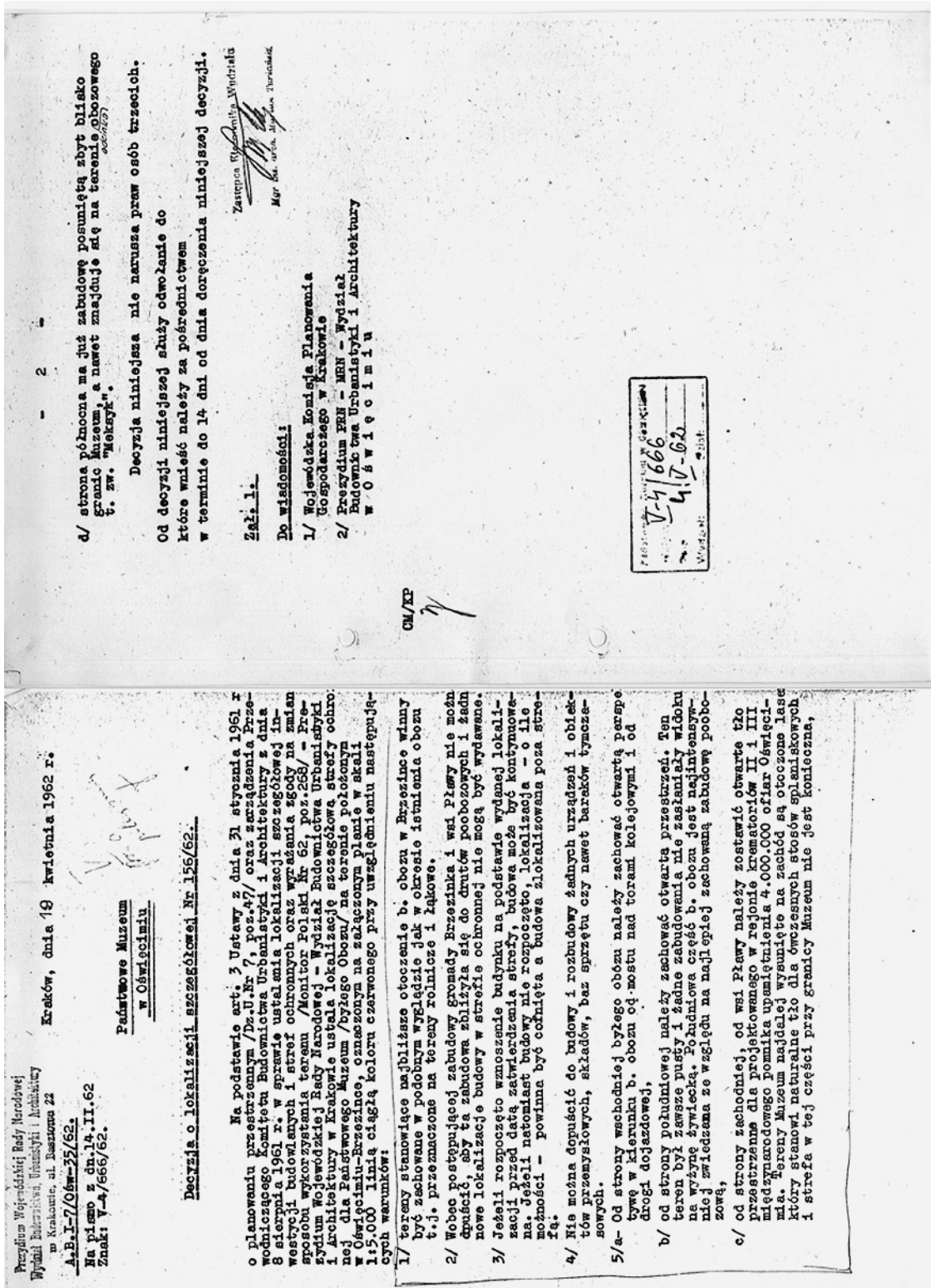
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## Appendices

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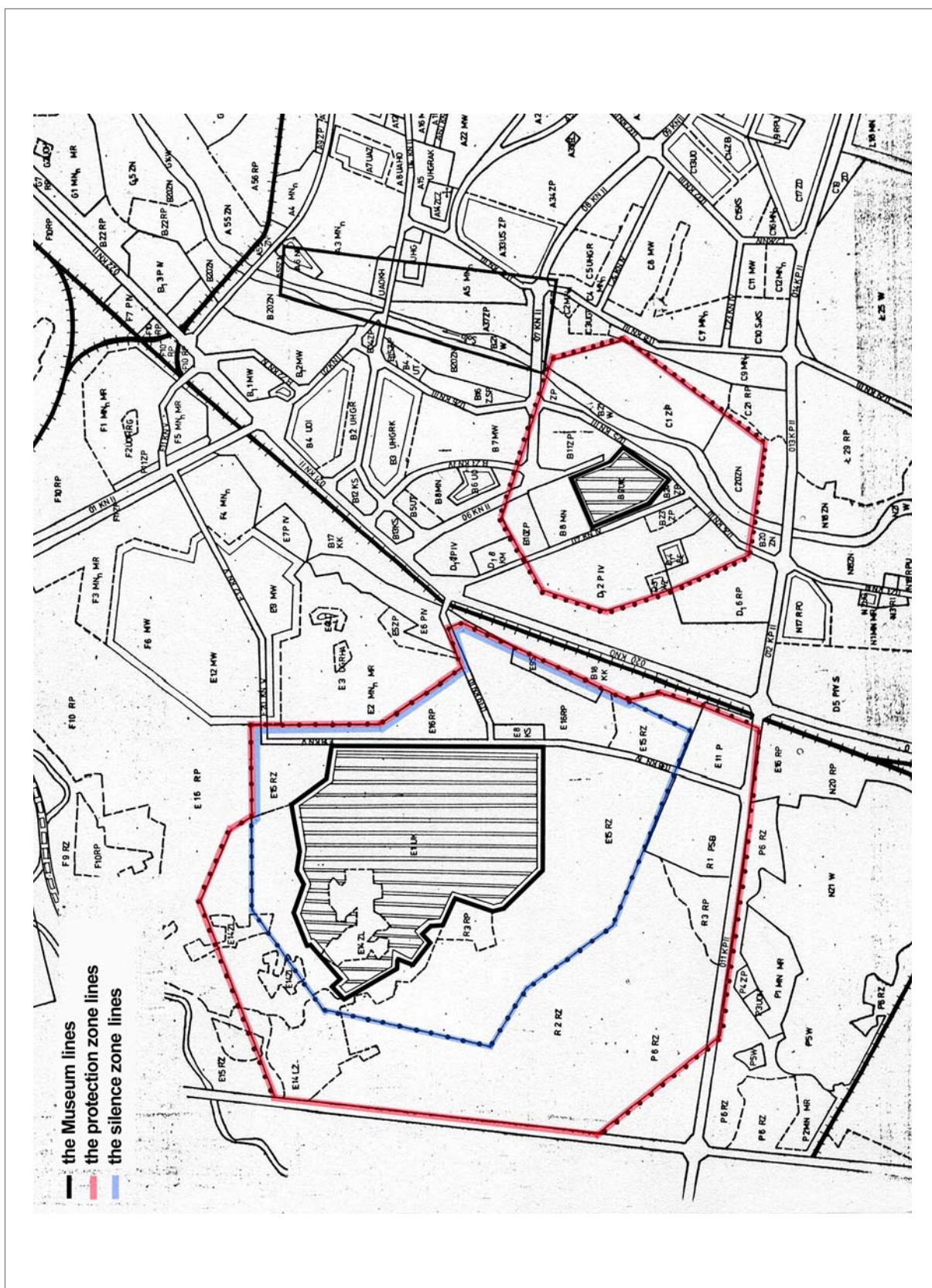
Appendix 1



Reproduction of the decision of the Voivodship Home National Council Committee in Kraków of 1962 to establish the protection zone of the post-camp complex of KL Auschwitz II- Birkenau [orig. Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Preservation Dept.]

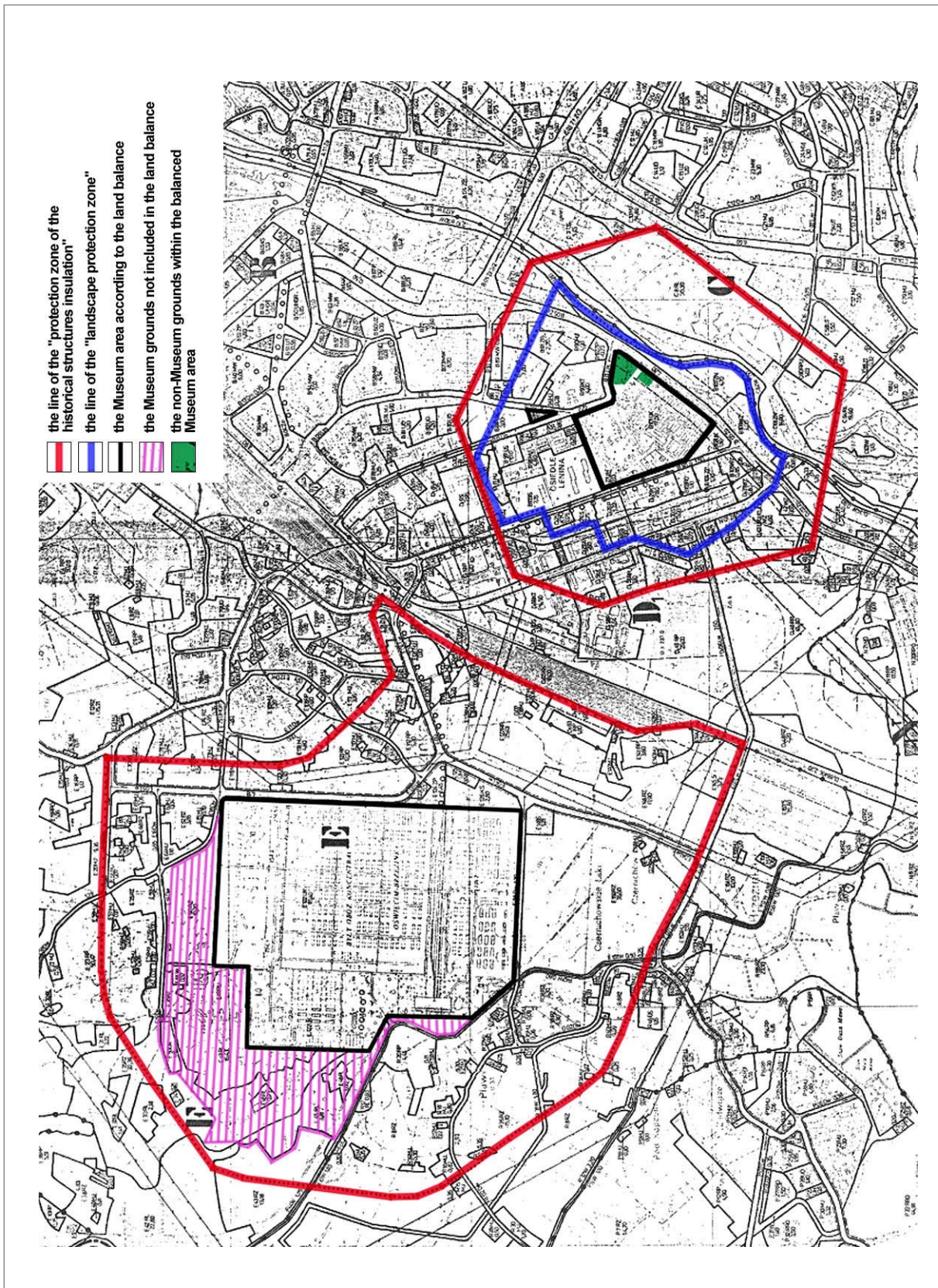


Appendix 2



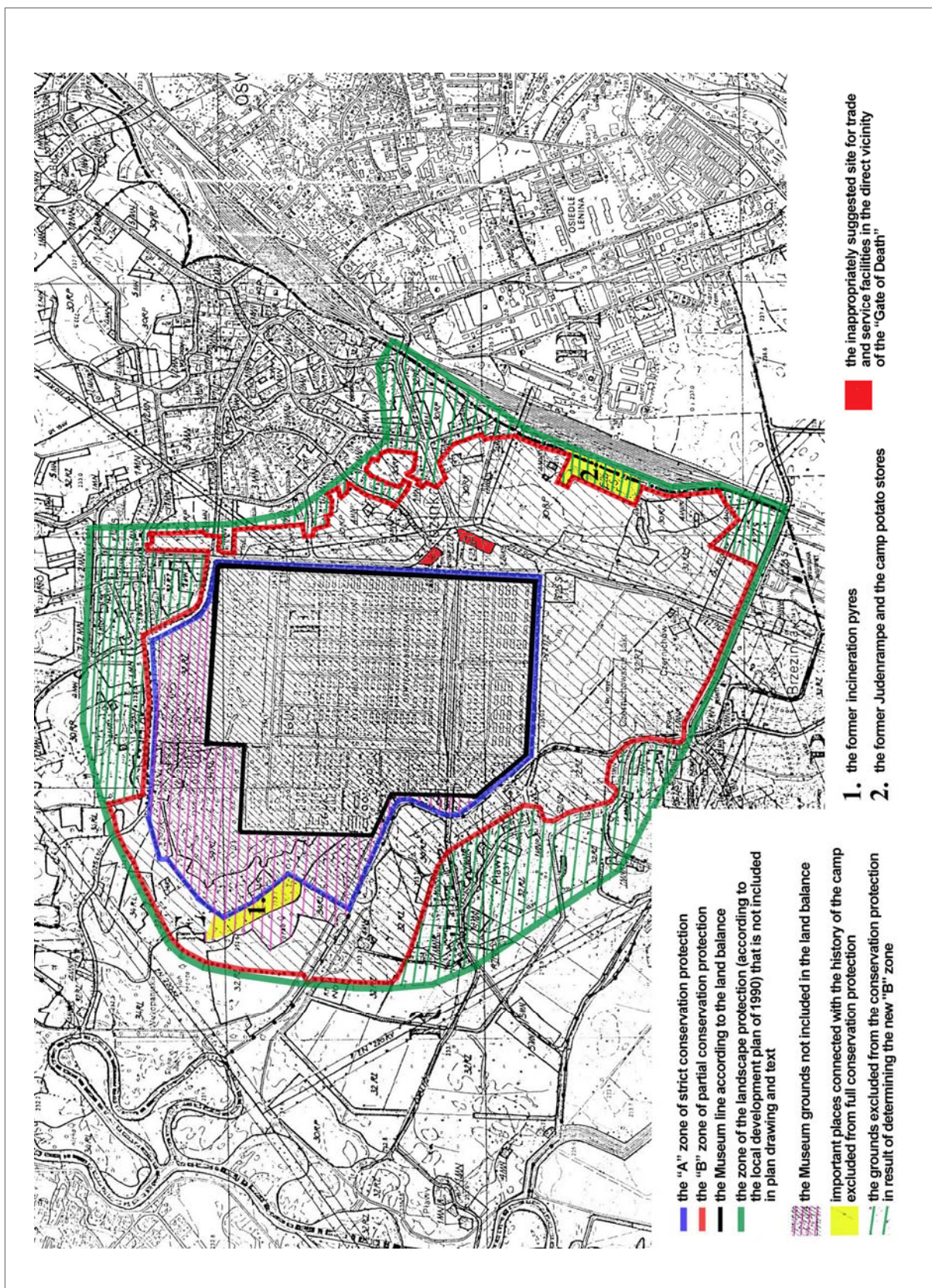
Reproduction of a drawing of the *General spatial development plan of the settlement units complex of the town and commune of Oświęcim* accepted by Resolution XIX/72/79 of the Voivodship Home National Council in Bielsko-Biała 5 May 1979 [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:5000, the colouring of the Museum lines and the protection zones by MR]

## Appendix 3



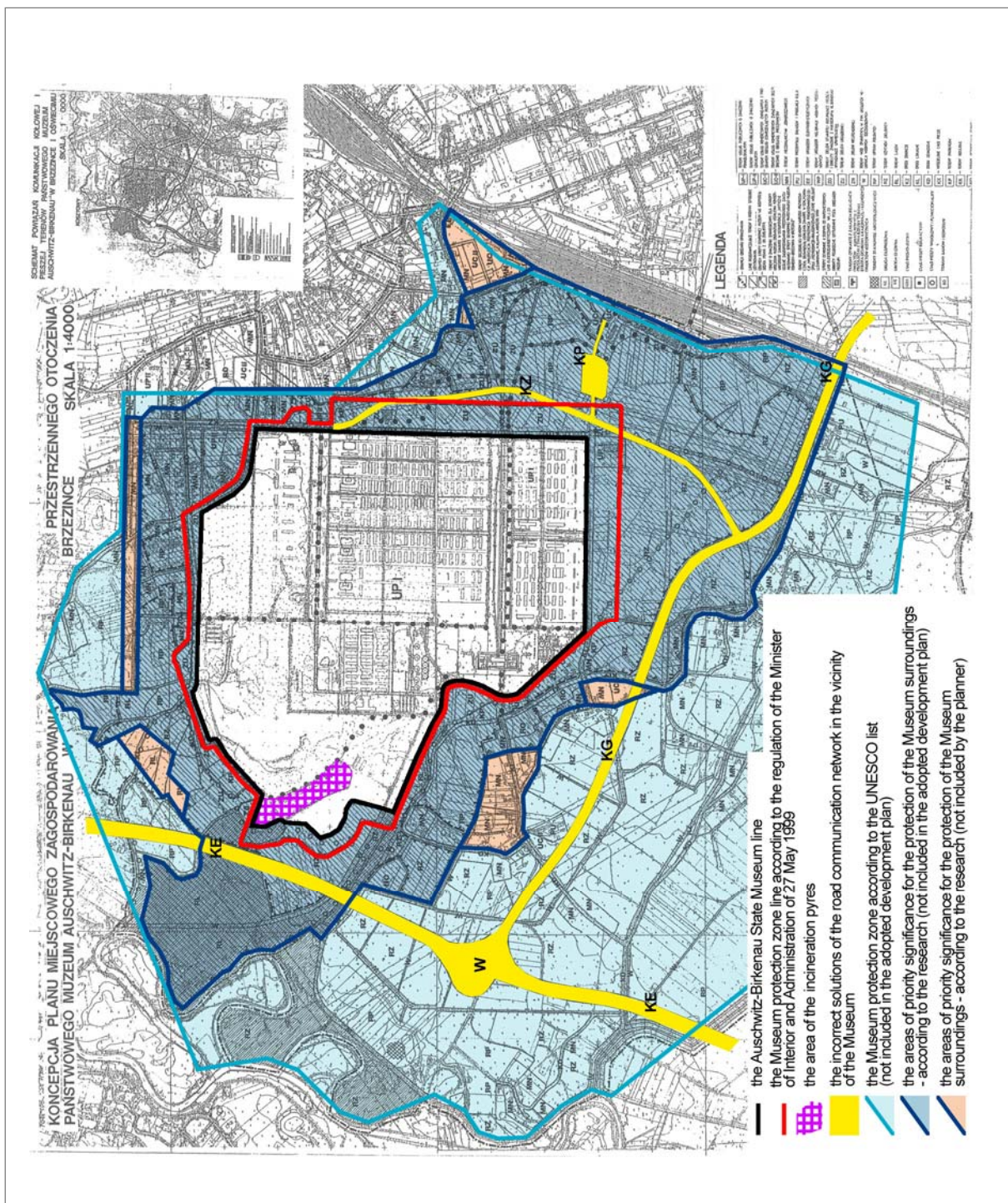
Reproduction of a drawing of the *General spatial development plan of the town and commune of Oświęcim* accepted by Resolution XI/56/90 of the Commune Home National Council in Oświęcim of 18 April 1990 [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:5000, colour marks and comments by MR, orig. Voivodship Office in Bielsko-Biała]

Appendix 4



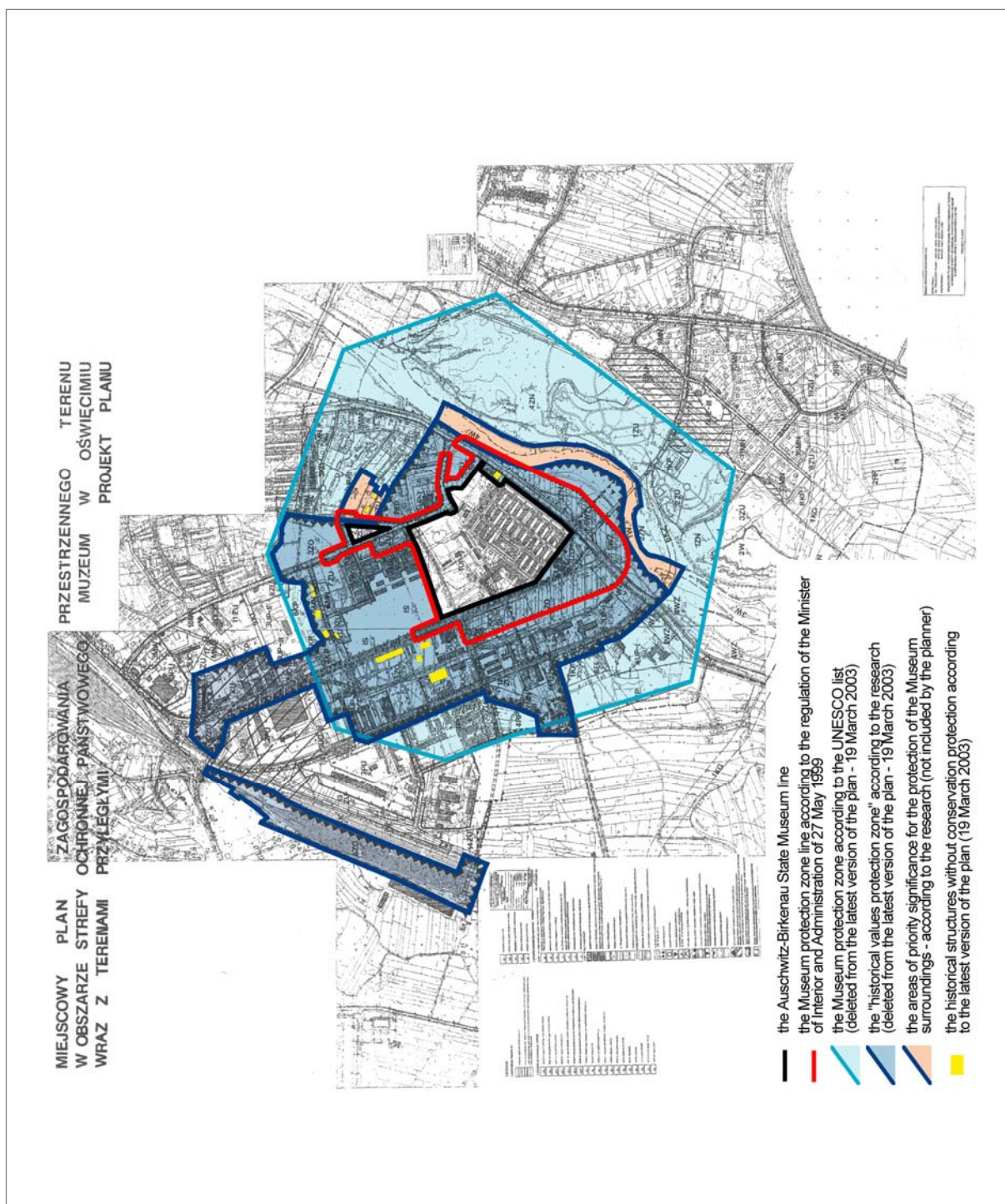
Reproduction of a drawing *Changes of the general spatial development plan of the commune of Oświęcim* accepted by Resolution V/23/94 Oświęcim Commune Council of 5 December 1994 [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:5000, colour marks and comments by MR, orig. Commune Office in Oświęcim]

## Appendix 5



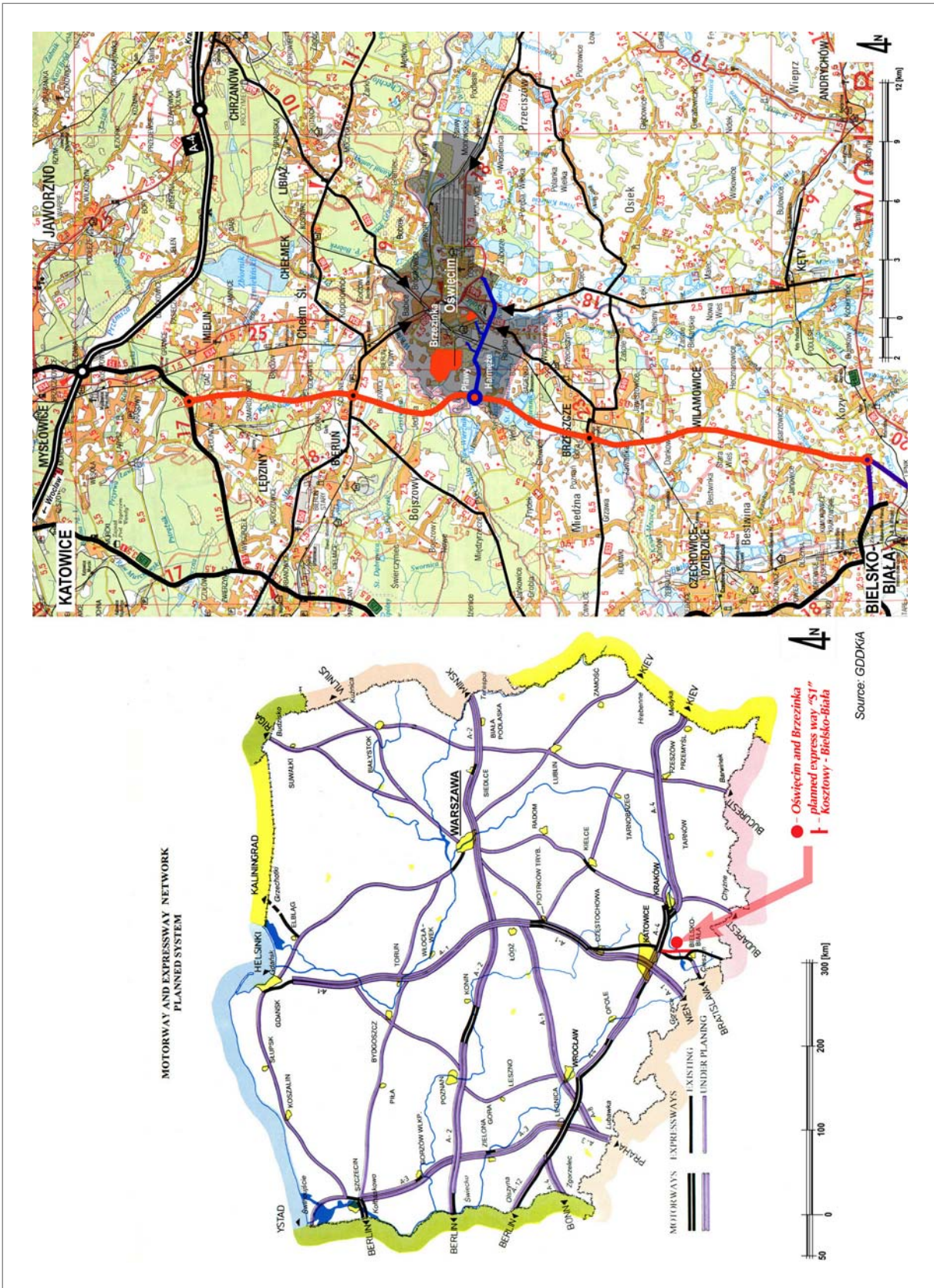
Reproduction of a drawing of the *Concept of the local spatial development plan of the environs of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Brzezinka* prepared by Jerzy Grzymek's team in Biuro Rozwoju Krakowa S.A. sent to the author by minister Piotr Stachańczyk in May 2000 during the works of the International Group of Experts. This plan was accepted by the Oświęcim Commune Council on 30 December 2002. In the final version all controversial road communication solutions were sustained. The UNESCO protection zone was removed and the conservation limitations of the Museum environs protection suggested by the results of the research were annulled. [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:4000, colour marks and comments by MR]

## Appendix 6

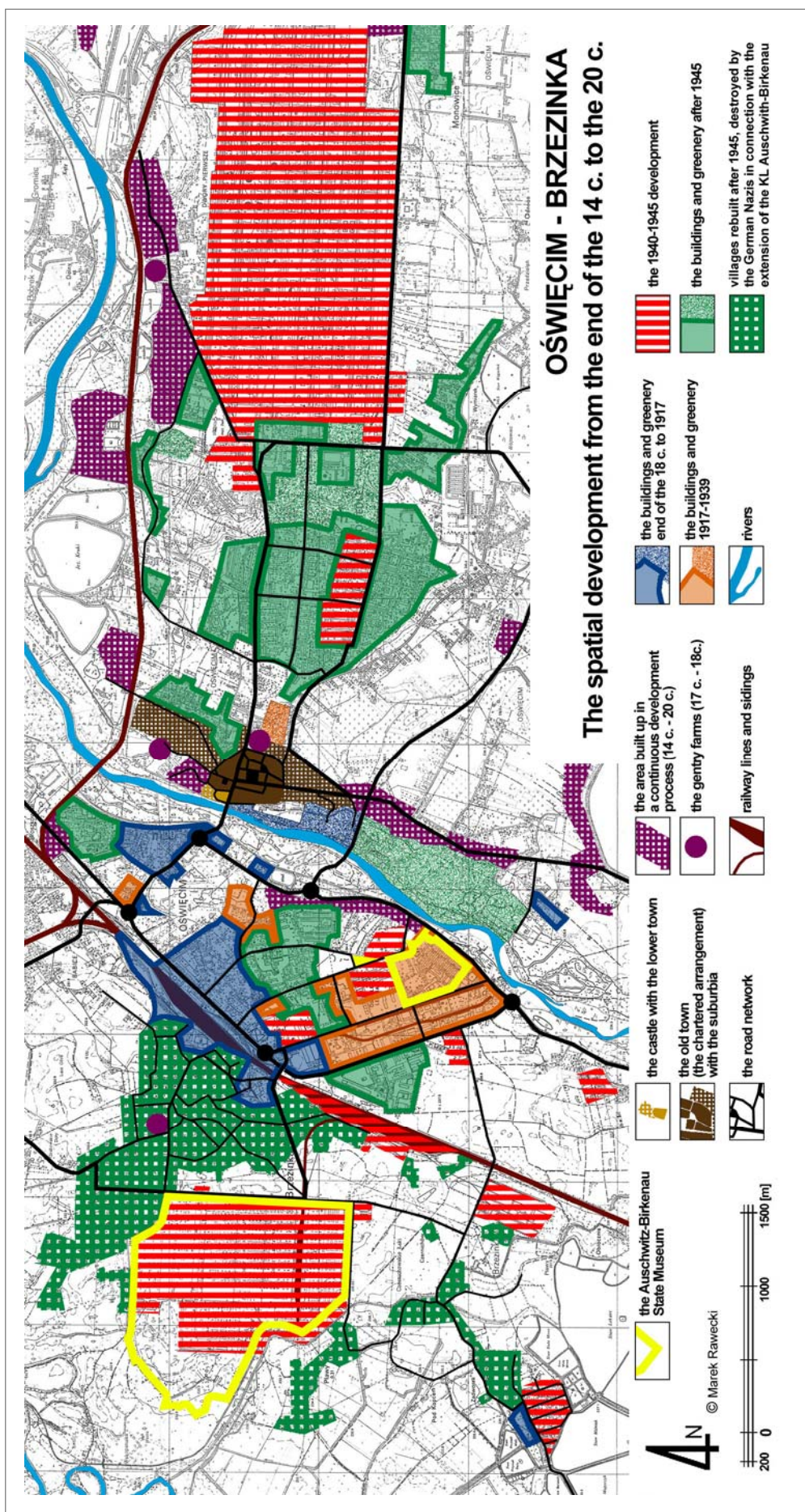


Reproduction of a drawing of a draft *Local spatial development plan of the area within the protection zone of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim with the adjacent grounds* worked out by the team of Jerzy Grzymek at Biuro Rozwoju Krakowa S.A., sent to the author by Minister Piotr Stachańczyk in May 2000 in connection with the works of the International Group of Experts. The non-enacted plan. In the last version (March 2003) the UNESCO protection zone was removed from the plan and the conservation guidelines suggested by the research for the Museum environs were abolished [orig. black-and-white in the scale 1:4000, colour marks and comments by MR]

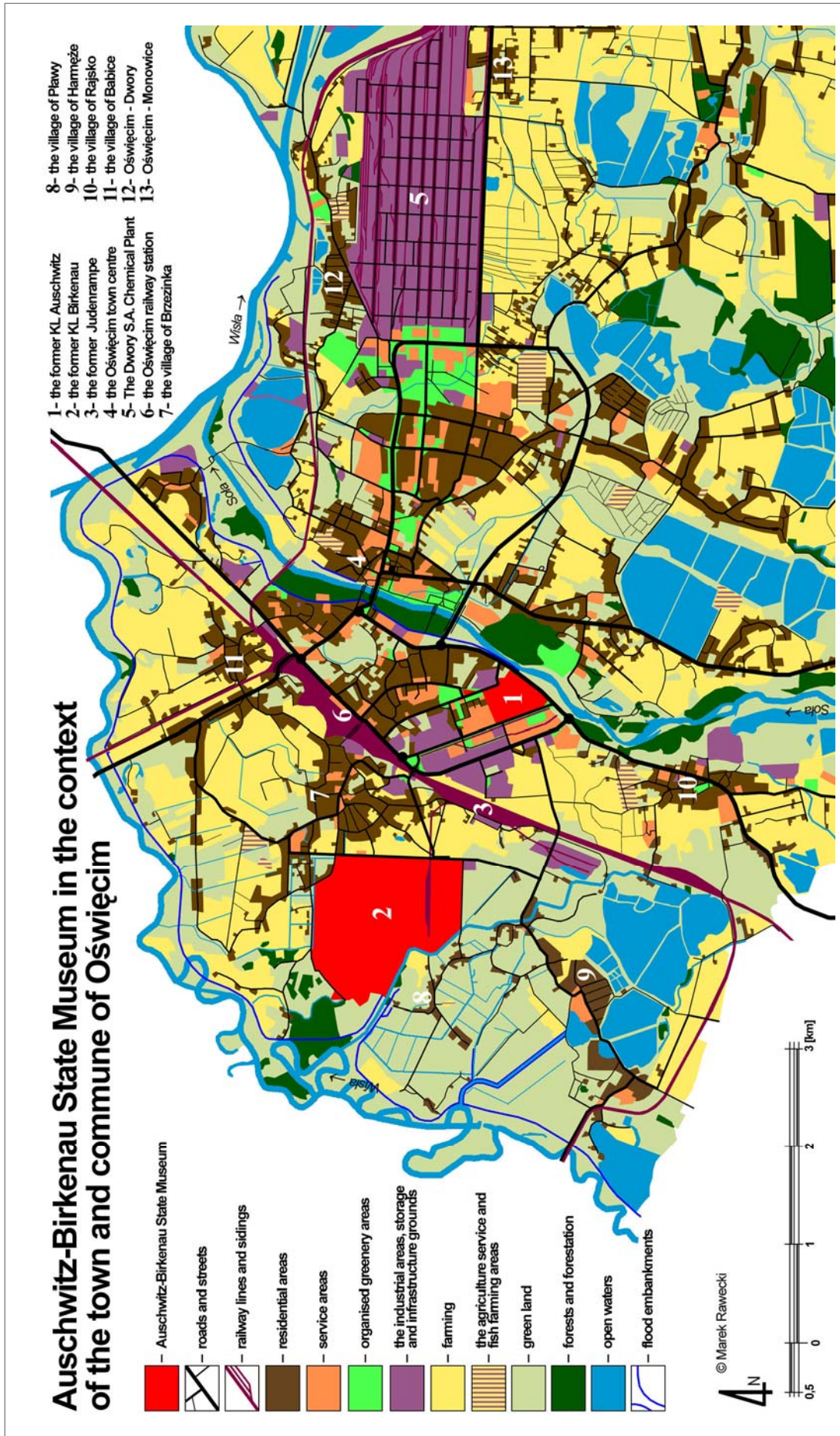
Appendix 7



The planned road communication network of the Oświęcim region and Poland. Red line - planned express way "S1". The new express way changes the direction of the access to the Museum. This confirms the correctness of the assumed localisation of the planned car park and the reception centre for the Museum in Brzezinka



Appendix 9





## Appendix 10

Text prepared in July 1997 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, published in the newsletter PRO MEMORIA (7/1997)

## ANTINOMIES OF MEMORIES

Jadwiga Rawecka

Marek Rawecki

Anniversaries make us look back. The half-century existence of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum inclines us to recall the many initiatives which have accompanied discussions in various circles about the moral message of Auschwitz and about the ensuing imperatives for the present generation in the spheres of education, research, politics and community programs, as well as in practical conservation work. It is impossible not to observe that in this place, so stigmatized by history, a new value has been created over the last fifty-plus years by the voices of those present. Remembering the provisions of the legislation from July 2, 1947, which established the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, today one can confirm the unaltered correctness of the general provisions of that act, proven through experience, supplemented by the many voices of ex-prisoners, intellectuals, philosophers, artists, journalists, politicians and pilgrims. Opinions about Auschwitz over a half century have helped create the "cemetery", the "museum", the "monument", the "document", the "research centre", the "sanctuary", the "historical reservation" - or have challenged the whole point of maintaining them. They have supported or found fault with "conservation", "reconstruction" or "artistic memorialization" of this place of torment. Regardless of their sometimes very disparate views, the idea of passing on to our descendants a lasting trace of the memory of the Auschwitz-Birkenau victims has been dear to all those involved.

Already in 1944, when the chimneys of Birkenau were still pouring smoke, one of the Auschwitz prisoners, **Jerzy Adam Brandhuber**, made the first sketches of a future monument in Birkenau. After the war, Brandhuber recalled it this way: *"I made a design for a monument for after the war. I had an official, secret order from Col. Benek Świerczyzna (of the resistance movement). I did it. It was gigantic.... All the land west of the camp in Brzezinka, west of the crematoria, was to be levelled, like a colossal roll-call yard, kilometres, kilometres square. In the middle a chimney colossus, square in cross section - like in a crematorium - only X times bigger, 50-60 meters high. And stone symbols mounted on it, rough-hewn on four sides. Visible from far away - far away. Gas hooked up to it - like an eternal flame. Day and night. At night a glow, like it was back then. And around it, rows like blocks (of prisoners), when they stood for roll call, in formation, squared up in units like stones, like urns (not graves, because there were none), divisions in ten rows - like there in the camp - 500, 600 prisoners, five, six million stones. That is how they counted then. And between these groups, nothing, no grass, no trees. And only a row of posts with sections and lamps on the posts, so at night it would be pearls, a wire of light pearls - like it was then - kilometres, kilometres."*

After the liberation, the first priority before any memorial was the matter of properly protecting the remains of the camp as physical evidence of the crimes, which was understandable not only because of the ongoing German Nazi war crimes trials but also in view of attempts to question the fact of the atrocities committed in Auschwitz-Birkenau. *"This huge death factory for millions of women, men and children was to proclaim what fascism had led to for all time"* wrote **Ludwik Rajewski** in 1948.

The need to preserve the authentic character of the grounds of the former camp was particularly strongly accented by all those who expressed an opinion in this matter. **Jan Sehn**, investigating magistrate of the District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Kraków, [...] said: *"In all the trials before the Nuremberg Tribunal, the greatest weight was attached to all pieces of evidence connecting a given war criminal with Auschwitz (...) That is why from the first moment I defended the position that the Museum should occupy and appropriate the area of the entire so-called Interessengebiet (...) - that in planning and implementing the Museum plan it is necessary to find and maintain the proper scale for the reserve, and finally, that the interior conformation of the Museum should be based above all on the documents."* On the other hand, **Jalu Kurek** saw the nature of the Auschwitz Museum this way: *"Not only for Poland but for many, many nations in Europe, Auschwitz is something which cannot be forgotten. Because if we preserve the memory of it, we do it because it is a document and a warning. We preserve Auschwitz not in eternal remembrance of pain, but in remembrance of one thing, in eternal remembrance of infamy..."* On the pages of "Tygodnik Powszechny", **Stanisław Stomma** summed it up as follows: *"Auschwitz needs no retouching and needs no designs aimed at creating atmospheres. It is enough to show people the truth. That is why Auschwitz has to be left as much as possible as it was. The realism of facts has the strongest voice. And the tragic pathos of facts does not have to be supplemented or rein-*

*forced by creating atmospheres through some kind of auxiliary designs. The best artistic ideas can only weaken and interfere with the expression of naked facts. There is no artistic genius who could equal the voice of reality. To search for effects in this way sows disharmony and can easily disturb the solemnity of the place."*

However, at the same time opinions were voiced that the authenticity of the camp was not enough. Parallel to the statements quoted above there were proposals to specifically commemorate the victims of the camp by erecting a mausoleum with a visual accent in the form of a chimney and to create a park/cemetery on the grounds of the camp. The mausoleum was to be built of bricks with the names of murder victims engraved on them, and the interior was to be a place for epitaphs dedicated to particular nations. Professor **Romuald Gutt** was charged with designing the memorial. Evaluating this project, Stanisław Stomma wrote: *"Such a design would be an extreme dissonance against the background of the whole camp, which is correctly conceived as a 'reservation'. The mausoleum would be an attempt at some kind of symbolic ideological synthesis of the camps. In the face of the incomparable pathos of the naked facts, such an artificial ideological synthesis can only be a rather annoying false note, spoiling the style of the whole design. I would not hesitate to speak of profanation of the site through a lack of the necessary discretion and a tendency toward completely unnecessary effects of additional pathos."*

In the end the mausoleum project was not realized, but in the spring of 1955 a small urn containing soil from concentration camps and sites of mass murder all over Europe was erected in Birkenau. The matter of specifically memorializing this place of torture and martyrdom remained open.

Two years later, the **International Auschwitz Committee** launched an appeal to sculptors and architects around the world to take part in a competition for the construction of an International Monument in Birkenau. The competition rules called particular attention to the protected status of the grounds of the former death camp. There were 618 competition entrants from 31 countries, and 426 designs were submitted, but none of them met the organizers' expectations, so the three best teams were invited to make a new design based on the critical remarks expressed by the jury. A new project was made. Its main element was a wide stone road running diagonally through the camp, cutting through the barracks, streets, tracks and the ruins of Crematorium II. The jury accepted it. However, it violated the basic rule of the competition on the "inviolability of the camp structures".

At the same time in the Polish press there was lively discussion of ways to memorialize the post-camp grounds. **Seweryna Szmaglewska** appealed for moderation and caution: *"The basic monument is the camp itself, and therefore the Museum along with the documents gathered in it, which constitute a huge indictment, and every piece of evidence of the truth preserved on the grounds of Auschwitz and Birkenau... Auschwitz is a book which, with the present state of knowledge of the subject, the visitor can read without commentary. It is all the more incumbent on us to tend to the state of the book, the state of Auschwitz and its secret annex which the Germans built in Birkenau... Auschwitz still remains an argument in a discussion which continues on the globe. That is why it cannot be compromised."* The famous English sculptor **Henry Moore**, the jury chairman, asked, *"Is it really possible to create a work of art which expresses the emotion Auschwitz evokes? In my opinion, a great sculptor - a new Michelangelo or a new Rodin - could perform this task. The chance of finding such a design among the huge number of models presented was minimal. No one has succeeded in solving this problem."*

Because of the many doubts expressed about the selected monument design, its team of authors presented a new design incorporating the principle of the inviolability of the post-camp remains. One of the three variants submitted in February 1962 was approved and built. In a booklet published on the occasion of the monument's unveiling on April 16, 1967, **Helena Blum** explained the choice of the implemented design: *"The competition jury eliminated most of the designs, stating that the guiding idea for the future monument had to be monumental simplicity. Maudlin, anecdotal designs could not be selected. Birkenau as a protected site, and therefore the parts of the Museum where the mass extermination of millions occurred, could not be allowed to be disturbed."* A statement by the selected project's designers was instructive. Sculptor **Pietro Cascella** and architect **Giorgio Simoncini** put it this way: *"We attempted not to interfere with the great silence of Birkenau, which in itself is a monument of unsurpassed power. Our monument rejects loudness and vehemence, it attempts to be only an accent on the camp landscape, a materialization of the memory of those who were murdered, it is an homage to their solidarity and dignity. It is humble, human in proportions and dimensions..."*

As a backdrop to the problems of memorializing the victims of genocide and the question of selecting the most fitting design for the monument in Birkenau, ceaseless discussion of Auschwitz subjects went on. In the early 1970's, Kraków **ZNAK** journal published a collection of reflections and statements from people particularly close to the subject of Auschwitz, in order to fulfil, as the editors declared in their preface, *"the desire to reveal as if anew, from the perspective of the distance of years and generations, the enduring message of the most tragic monument of human history..."* The participants considered which shape or means of expression would prove most enduring: would Auschwitz someday be a monument, a historical institute, a mausoleum, or a kind of sanctuary for humanity? Opinions were expressed that art, rather than other means, even means employing the most scrupulously and realistically presented factual material, would convey the human issues of

Auschwitz on a mass scale. The idea was entertained that *“perhaps even these places would have a deeper effect through... the mediation of art rather than through direct means”*, in view of the definite influence of the memorial sites on the output of artists born after the war. Father **Władystaw de Grohs**, a former Auschwitz prisoner, proposed the erection of an ecumenical place of worship in Oświęcim, with chapels for the different faiths, as a sign of memory of the victims and at the same time a sign of the unity among people of good will which had existed in the years of terror and which should always persist in every battle against the degradation of humanity. **Stanisław Rodziński** pointed out that the form which the Auschwitz Museum takes as the years passed would change, and that, when its last witnesses passed on, it would be possible to understand the crime of Auschwitz-Birkenau only through images of the destruction of the individual and through protest against it, since, as he concluded, *“the wooden barracks and posts, despite the most careful conservation measures, will someday lose the documentary character which they still have today.”*

**Aleksander Małachowski** perceived another aspect of the problem. *“Despite all the efforts to preserve the meaning of this place, even here there is the threat of a 'historical circus' - the unavoidable pressure of the curious tourist crowd, ever less able to see it properly. The monument in Birkenau does not fulfil its role: 'Contemporary art has turned out to be completely impotent in the face of the deaths of millions... This monument is part of Europe's tourist complex, and we people of the war still want to see the place where millions of our brothers were tortured to death.’”*

*“Apparently we will not think up anything new here, nothing more profound than the centuries of human culture which have created cemeteries. The only places where there is no shouting and no display of empty show, where the atmosphere itself protects the memory and the presence of the dead”* “Tygodnik Powszechny” journal commented upon Małachowski's reflections. On the other hand, **Maciej Szumowski** saw the contemporary face of the Museum in this way: *“Greenery, the intense greenery of Birkenau, a myriad of wildflowers, the birds and their song. A pigeon, not shy of people, sitting on a branch right next to a crematorium. No - this is not a symbol. This is not just a museum of death. This piece of our globe is alive. In this juxtapositioning of life and death there is something which is more eloquent than thousands of documentary photographs...”*

At the same time, far from the discussion-filled media, humbly and without fanfare, the staff of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum scrupulously carried out their assigned tasks. The mission legally entrusted to this handful of people by Polish legislation in 1947 was being steadily carried out. The fundamental purposes of the Museum then established - to care for the post-camp grounds, to conserve, exhibit and provide access to the objects, documents and evidence of German Nazi crimes there, to initiate research, to educate and provide cultural activities, to run the Museum - presented unending challenges to the Museum staff through all those years. **Jadwiga Bezwińska**, summing up more than twenty years of Museum operations, recalled that *“up to then there was no model for this type of museum, and in the course of strenuous organizational work its essential framework had to be created from the ground up, the proper profile of activity had to be decided, and in the hierarchy of its needs and tasks the ones most urgent and brooking no delay had to be distinguished from those which could be deferred for a later time. The work began in difficult financial circumstances.”* As the Museum went about its practical work, many different problems arose: problems of ideology, research, conservation, urban planning and technology. *“Everything here is frighteningly real and at the same time as if impossible, unreal. And elevated, like in church, where one doesn't speak publicly about repairing the monstrosity. But the problems are prosaic and devoid of metaphysics. Like this one: how to conserve two tons of human hair?... How to extend the life of more than 40,000 pairs of shoes, hundreds of barracks, or artificial limbs?”* pondered an anxious journalist in *Tak i Nie*.

Years later, **Kazimierz Smoleń**, long-time director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, recalled an issue extraordinarily important in the work of this institution: *“There emerged... a singularly important question: how far should the Museum's intervention go in fulfilling the obligation to conserve the historic structures and relics of the camp? Should their appearance and placement be maintained according to their state at the moment of the camp's liberation (1945) or the Museum's establishment (1947)? The point was, could and should these turning-points be reflected, should objects no longer existing or destroyed be reconstructed?... The principle of not restoring the original appearance of these objects (and many others), adopted by the Museum, proved to be particularly sound during several site inspections on the grounds of the former camp by the jury from Frankfurt am Main... The consistent application of this principle, among other things, was critical to UNESCO's decision to enter the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum on the World Heritage List.”*

**Tadeusz Kinowski**, Museum conservator at the time, wrote the following in reference to the World Heritage Committee's decision: *“Besides preserving the objects, the Museum performs many functions and, having adopted the principle of not altering the exterior appearance and character of the buildings, and not erecting new buildings, has had to use many interiors for permanent and temporary exhibitions, Polish and other national exhibitions, archives, storage of the collections, offices and workshops. Birkenau is under strict protection - there the changes are minimal, resulting only from renovation imperatives...”*

In the mid-1980's there were proposals from Auschwitz ex-prisoner circles aimed at imparting a more emphatic symbolic expression to the Museum grounds - architectural/sculptural, artistic and urbanistic. *"The real elements of the former Birkenau camp, the greatest shame of the German Nazism... were almost completely removed by the occupier, and nature is doing the rest... This martyrdom of millions of people is not calling for a gigantic monument against the backdrop of the monumentalized landscape - it is screaming for it"* - warned a report of the Technical Experts' Commission of the **Auschwitz Preservation Society**. *"Through the years, the vegetation... has grown excessively and, in a way that was not planned, unnecessarily detracts from the authentic climate of life in the camp in those days... The vision of the former Auschwitz camp as it was, is being effaced... There is a need to create the kind of atmosphere that would help the young visitors to form an image of the enormity of the experiences and the sufferings of their mothers, fathers or grandparents... Verbal means, numbers, speeches, explanations by guides, publications, can serve as a message to the descendants only to a small extent. We live in a world flooded with such media. Strong visual means are essential for full effects"* - it was argued. The authors of the report also recommended reconstruction of one of the crematoria together with its gas chamber, as an exposition.

In January 1986 the Town Chapter of the Auschwitz Preservation Society in Katowice made its "Auschwitz Appeal" to Polish society and the world. Former Auschwitz-Birkenau prisoners demanded that this unique cemetery which is the death camp should not only be a fearful monument designated exclusively for visiting and that it should be surrounded with special remembrance and homage. *"We want a mausoleum to arise in this place, as a temple of unification and peace, constituting, together with the cemetery, a sanctuary for the memory of nations. A mausoleum built to last for centuries!"* - said the authors of the Appeal. At the same time, the former prisoners appealed to the Minister of Culture and the Arts to appoint an Organizing Committee for Construction of a Mausoleum of the Martyrdom of Nations on the grounds of the Museum in Birkenau, with due regard for the state of preservation of the grounds of the former camp, which according to the applicants *"... has undergone visible and rapid deterioration, raising justified fears in our society that in the not-distant future the specific character of that place will disappear entirely."*

After inspecting the grounds of the former camp, the ministry authorities did not substantiate significant changes in its historical substance, but recommended that more effective countermeasures be taken against the invasion of plants, particularly in the area of the incineration pits, and that the area be properly cleaned up. It was recalled that from the moment the Museum was established all actions had been directed toward permanent maintenance of the authenticity of the former camp and the remains situated on its grounds. In conclusion they noted that in view of the need to keep to the principle of the inviolability of the Museum area there was no possibility of appointing an Organization Committee for Construction of a Mausoleum and that this position also represented the view of the Council for Protection of Monuments of Struggle and Martyrdom.

The press took up the subject eagerly. **Ewa Owsiany** of "Przegląd Tygodniowy" journal came to Oświęcim. *"... Birkenau? In fact only the monument can be seen, because left of the ramp there is no entry, everything is lying in ruins there, the ground is sodden, nothing has been touched for forty years. The crematorium is overgrown, somebody has started to dismantle the chimneys on the right for the bricks, and the barracks for the wood"*- revealed the journalist, not sparing the readers sensationalism. Professor **Józef Bogusz** was supposed to have said in answer to questions that *"Auschwitz-Birkenau is a very neglected sanctuary."* Asked for a statement, **Władysław Terlecki** of the Łazienki Artists' Group said: *"Everything should be done... to preserve the physical traces on which our memory rests. Because it is clear to everyone that the monument does not tell us much, whereas the bunk, the real one, where dozens of women slept dreaming night after night of the homes to which not all returned, says it all."*

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum stood on the position of preserving the authenticity of the post-camp relics. Director Kazimierz Smoleń, in a 1987 letter to the Council for Protection of Monuments of Struggle and Martyrdom, pointed out that: *"... essential technical improvements related to infrastructure cannot violate the existing layout of the former camp. Similarly, new monuments, mausoleums, etc., should not be built (within a defined zone). Only supplementation with historical information is permissible, in the form of small visual objects (signs, documentary photographs, technical equipment for giving information about historical events)."* A convergent position was presented by a 1987 research report prepared within the framework of a study on conservation and urban planning problems of Auschwitz-Birkenau, undertaken at the **Department of Urban and Spatial Planning of the Silesian University of Technology** in Gliwice. In the course of analyses it was observed that the unquestioned need to preserve the authentic substance of the former death camp was leading to an antinomy in the collision with the changing aspect of the post-camp grounds, which was changing as a result of both natural processes and the emerging tendency to adapt the Museum for new functions - museum expositions, educational and conservation work, research - and also because of the need to commemorate the uncounted victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was stated in the report that the antinomy, a lasting, immanent characteristic of the post-camp complex, should be accepted on the basis of understanding and respect for all processes occurring in its present structure, because to disturb the balance and to have one of the functions dominate could negate the many-stranded and reflection-inspiring character of that distinctive place. [...]

A new aspect, not seen earlier, was brought into the Auschwitz debate by the conflict over the Carmelites. The 1984 siting of a Carmelite convent on the UNESCO-protected post-camp grounds of Auschwitz I (the "main camp") and the placing of a cross in the former gravel-pit sparked protests from Jewish circles. In the flood of complaints and accusations there formed a clear sense that heretofore the particular role which Auschwitz-Birkenau - the place where more than a million members of the Jewish nation had been murdered, where *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage* began and where in the German Nazi conception it was to have ended - plays in the collective awareness of Jews had not been taken into account. The growing dispute stirred the enormous layers of ignorance of the very different Jewish perception of the former death camp. Invited to act as narrator for Maciej Szumowski's film *Czy w Oświęcimiu Bog jest jeden?* (*Is There One God in Auschwitz?*), **Konstanty Gebert** said: "*Auschwitz is our cemetery, our largest cemetery... We honor our dead differently than Christians do. There cannot be a permanent place of worship, a chapel, a synagogue, at a cemetery. Prayers by the grave are said in a hurry and quickly. We pray before the entrance to the cemetery, after leaving it, and later in the synagogue. Because the cemetery, though it is sometimes called a bet chaim in Hebrew, a house of life, is a house of death. Our faith is a faith in life. We distinguish these two spheres very precisely, very carefully. At a cemetery it is not permitted to reside... to eat, to take meals, because that is to mix life and death - which Jews are not allowed to do.*"

Poland's changed political situation in the 1990's allowed broader circles of interested people to confront their knowledge and emotions with the reality of the authentic place. In 1990 **Jonathan Webber**, lecturer at Oxford University, submitted his *Memorandum* to the International Auschwitz Council, containing many constructive remarks about the Museum's exhibitions and the ways in which the mass murder of Jews was presented. Writing of the Museum in Birkenau, he referred to ideas expressed years before: "*I subscribe to the view that the visual impact of Birkenau should be interfered with as little as possible. Naturally a balance has to be struck between the needs of visitors to be informed about the place and their need to feel that the site contains dignified memorials...*"

An international symposium organized in Oświęcim in 1993, entitled *The Future of Auschwitz: Should the Relicts be Preserved?* brought many, sometimes mutually exclusive, opinions and ideas. For example, a group of American architects and historians including **Robert J. van Pelt**, **Debórah Dwork**, **Paul Backewich** and **Peter Gallagher** proposed the complete transformation of the relict character of "Canada" and "Mexico" on the grounds of the former Birkenau camp. They designed a large exposition room under reconstructed "Canada" barracks, and at "Mexico" a huge "Reflecting Pool", monumentalizing this part of the former Death Camp and in this way visualizing "*... the megalomaniac ambition of the Germans with Birkenau.*" Other voices called for the Auschwitz-Birkenau vestiges to be allowed to "age with dignity"; still others called for a ceremonial burial of the victims' hair, which up to then had been shown in a museum exhibition. Professor **Bohdan Rymaszewski** calmed the extreme voices in his address: "*I believe that the general guideline for conservation work should be conservation of the existing, present state...*" Speaking of the post-camp legacy, Professor Rymaszewski noted that: "*it is not... a site for reconstruction, but only, to the extent we are able, for preservation work.*"

Thus the new view of Auschwitz did not fundamentally affect the previous trend of initiatives aimed at a more suggestive commemoration of the death camp victims. Despite the intensification of all kinds of conservation work in the early 1990's, carried out with significant commitment of funds and supported by the experts' theoretical considerations, concern for the state of preservation of the post-camp relics shone through all the concepts for memorialization which flowed in from the outside, a concern which questioned the chance of keeping these relics as moving evidence of the crime and as a warning to future generations. According to the authors of these conceptions, strong efforts had to be undertaken to resist these inevitable processes.

**Józef Szajna**, an artist and ex-prisoner of Auschwitz, made an appeal in October 1994: "*For me and for many others the site of the former camp is first and foremost a place of remembrance worthy of preserving and passing to the generations in the name of the idea of freedom and a dignified life lived in peace. That is why the raising of a memorial mound to the victims should become a place of cleansing - catharsis and uniting of the nations. I summon all visitors to a joint effort to raise a mound which will last longer than the vestiges of the camp, which will be an answer - a protest by people of good will - all of us - against resurgent fascism and intolerance.*" In a landscape design proposal for the former Auschwitz-Birkenau in November 1994, Professor **Edward Bartman**, landscape architect from the Main School of Rural Economy in Warszawa, stated that: "*time is working against the preservation of the historical substance*" and in light of this he proposed not only: "*faithful reconstruction of the infrastructure*" but also: "*the use of various natural and cultural objects of great symbolic power.*"

In 1996 the Auschwitz Preservation Society considered another variant for memorializing Birkenau. **Bogumil Trętko** of Katowice, initiator of a project to build a Sanctuary/Mausoleum, shared this concern for the original state of the post-camp material: "*Looking at the present pace of destruction, the camp will cease to be an authentic, historical object sooner or later. The scale and extent of this object will not permit it to endure without any loss.... Fairly indistinct ruins... will remain. Human memory could also begin to fade*" he observed. Thus he proposed that, for the fifty- or hundred-year perspective, the idea of constructing a Sanctuary-

Mausoleum on the grounds of the Museum in Birkenau be considered, integrating all world religions in shared homage to the death camp victims and in protest against all atrocities and depravity.

The direction of undertakings made for many years to permanently memorialize the former death camp has not always presented the overriding, universal value of this place, nor has it always reflected what has been preserved at the cost of great effort through the almost fifty years of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum's existence, while many meetings, discussions and even conflicts and disputes were going on, preserved through laborious research and conservation work, the individual and collective activity of many generations of people for whom Auschwitz was not a pretext for undertaking spectacular propaganda, political or artistic campaigns, for whom Auschwitz represented above all a singular duty to the victims and a moral signpost for the future, a place which was to unite us in deep reflection on the nature of man, and not divide us in attempts to dominate with one's point of view, one idea, or one artistic notion.

**Günter Grass** said: *“Auschwitz was not some mystery which had to be pondered with intimidated trepidation and with the appropriate inner distance. It was real, thus the work of people, the work that can be researched (...) Auschwitz must be understood as the historical past, must be recognizable in the here and now, and it must not be ignorantly detached from future perspectives. Auschwitz does not lie only behind us...”*

*Translated by Michael Jacobs*

\* \* \*

## Appendix 11

An unpublished essay written in May, 1999

## URBAN SCIENCE OF THE CRIME

Jadwiga Rawecka

Marek Rawecki

*"We work under the ground and on the ground, under a roof and in rain, with a shovel, at a lorry, with a pick and a crowbar. We carry packs with cement, lay bricks, rails, we fence the grounds, tread the earth..."*

*We put the foundations of some new monstrous civilisation. Only now did I learn the price of the antiquity. What monstrous crime are the Egyptian pyramids, Greek temples and statues! How much blood must have been shed onto the Roman roads, boundary walls and town buildings!*

*This antiquity which was a huge concentration camp, where slaves had a sign of property burnt on their foreheads and were crucified for escapes. This antiquity, which was a great conspiracy of the free against the slaves!"*

*Tadeusz Borowski*

Modern urban planning is a science and an art of shaping the space. It uses theory and practice. The objective of urban studies is to establish the principles of functioning of settlement complexes: cities, estates, village units. It aims at fulfilling the basic social needs: organising places for living, working and relaxing. Its actions are based on the guidelines from many fields: archaeology, economy, ethnology, physiography, history, law, engineering studies and sociology. Its practical effects are architectural realisations (buildings), engineering (roads, bridges), arrangement of open areas. It takes into account and distributes rationally within the research area various functions: housing, services, industry, storing places, road communication, technical infrastructure, greenery, agriculture - it is thus a science. It takes into account the aesthetic factors: decor, form, scale of the buildings, their mutual composition. It considers emotional factors: the tradition of a place, local customs. It is also an art. In all countries there are specialised institutions and offices for urban planning. Everywhere its action is based on the diagnosis of the present state, the analysis of the needs and on the preparation of visions for the future. Urban science links the past, the present and the future.

KL Auschwitz like all German Nazi concentration camps was a state institution of the Third Reich acting on legal bases and on a set of highly confidential orders. The annexation in 1939 of a part of Poland to Germany was connected with administrative, civil, police and military expansion, which apart from military actions covered all other fields of life including urban planning. In this context KL Auschwitz had to be and was an element of conscious spatial planning.

When we analyse the still visible traces of the investment activity of the German invader: buildings, roads, technical installations, it is a horrifying fact that a science whose objective is the human development, could be used for preparation of a spatial structure devoted to the extermination of over a million people and the enslavement of hundreds of thousands. Without an efficiently functioning administrative structure, railway network or roads, without building barrack developments on a mass scale, without a technical infrastructure, construction and social facilities, and finally without planning, design and technical support - KL Auschwitz could not have arisen in such a short time and such a size.

To reveal the image of the German Nazi urban utopia after more than 50 years one should analyse 40 square kilometres of the former *Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz*, locate the 40 sub-camps, prisoner commandos marching routes, prisoner evacuation routes, all places of their work. The full analysis of this extensive phe-

nomenon would require a map of the sites from which the deported came and the map of railway roads by which they were brought to the camp. Let us however discuss the technical and ideological sources of what constitutes the spatial framework of the extermination camp itself.

This knowledge can be gained from the SS Central Construction Office preserved dossiers (*Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS und Polizei Auschwitz O/S*). The office, housed at the no longer existing timber barracks near the Soła River in Oświęcim not far from the mother camp, handled all this what in peace time is handled by a versatile design studio. *Zentralbauleitung* prepared land development plans, concepts and technical designs for extension of particular structures. Green areas were designed, installations and networks of technical infrastructure including: roads, bridges, underground development, drainage. It handled the geodesic and cost estimate services. It did architectural and construction inventories and models. Photographic documentation of the work progress was taken. Here supervised by the SS staff, worked over a hundred prisoners of various trades and specialities.

After such a long time it is difficult to visualise and present in the landscape all aspects of the former camp, which during its existence was a constant construction site, adapted to consecutive needs dependent on the changing concepts of spatial development, economic and political situation. Not knowing the testimonies of the former Auschwitz prisoners one could think that the designers aimed at creating here a model of an ideal city in keeping with the theoretical considerations from the debates of urban planners led since the early 1900s. Having at their disposal a huge number of slave labourers, a wide administrative and executive background, construction materials, "regulated" legal matters of the area under construction, they realised a considerable percent of the initially assumed urban investments.

The architecture of KL Auschwitz itself does not reflect the scale and the nature of these projects. Beyond its common aesthetics it hides the methods by which it was realised and the purposes which it was to and did serve. In the brick blocks of the former *Stammlager*, in the timber barracks of Birkenau, in many post-camp relics - you cannot see the engraved in each brick and plank dramas of those who built those structures, for whom they were a cover, for whom they were the places of horrible death. Only the tour guide's comment, documents presented in the Museum, memorial literature can convey the truth about this modest set of buildings which manifests all the features of good functional urban planning. The elements, which can be seen in other parts of Poland and the world as well the tiled sloping roofs, brick walls, lines of poplars, timber barracks, the vivid colours of extensive fields, pastures and forests - all this makes the camp architecture imperceptibly merge with the usual everyday reality and its aesthetics denies what we hear about the facts and events. Even the barbed wire and concrete fences are typical elements used nowadays to erect structures in their function so very distant from the camp reality.

The German Nazis did not aim at creating a special camp aesthetics. *Stammlager* as a master camp (Musterlager) was to be extended in the future. Surrounded with the SS houses with gardens, recreational and sports areas, a monumental complex of the new SS Headquarters it would have become an integral part of the cityscape. Only Birkenau with its carefully hidden in the technical dossier and in real space - a gloomy SS invention - the gas chambers for people - having fulfilled its function was to disappear giving way to farmland.

The designers of the Auschwitz-Birkenau urban layout must have been acquainted with the planning theories of the early 1900s. The main principle formulated by Arturo Soria, a Spanish urban planner, the author of the linear city concept, saying that "*from the problem of road communication all other problems of urban planning are derived*", was extremely strongly confirmed here. It was the railway lines that created the functional foundations of KL Auschwitz making possible the transport of the deported and then the transport into the depths of the Third Reich of the goods that were stolen from them. The spatial layout of the camp and its localisation (KL Birkenau) was also adapted to the linear specificity of the railway transport. The built in 1942 the eighteen-platform goods station (*Bahnhof Auschwitz-West*), one kilometre long and situated mid-way between the two parts of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex which was able to receive the longest trains in Europe - became the functional axis of the whole investment.

In the spatial and administrative structure of the camp (*Interessengebiet*) one can identify a criminal mutation of the idea of a garden city suggested by Sir Ebenezer Howard. That modest English stenographer suggested in 1898 a hierarchical structure of a city based on the main unit and smaller satellite units concentrically placed around. Between them there would spread farm areas used by the city population. On the outskirts of each city there would be industrial areas and the inhabitants would avoid the arduous commuting to work. This idea, being the answer to the problem of depopulation of village regions, became later food for thought for authors of the concept of satellite cities. In KL Auschwitz the "garden city" was replaced by the "camp city". The functional values of Howard's concept found their misshapen reflection in the network of sub-camps created by the SS near the industrial plants and the crop and stock farms. If you compare the ideological basis of garden cities described by their author as "*a happy marriage of the city and the village out of which a new hope,*



*a new life and a new civilisation will emerge*", with Himmler's agrarian visions which grew on the philosophy of *blood und boden* - the influence of the garden cities idea is even more striking.

The geometrical regularity of the plan as a characteristic feature of many utopian concepts of future cities was also reflected in Auschwitz-Birkenau. The chessboard plan pattern - whose roots are in the cities of Egypt, the Near East, India, Greece, in the Roman camps, in colonial cities in South America and developed during the industrial revolution in North America because of its functional values - found its followers in the SS design studios. The space "rasterization" (characteristic of the later times of computer science and digital machines) paved the way for the administrative control of the increasing complexity of social processes. In KL Auschwitz it became a tool of steering the masses of people cramped into the geometrical frames of building sections, camp sectors, barracks and three-storey plank beds. The rule of the structure symmetry and square net of hierarchical streets which gives the possibility of an unlimited multiplication of such spatial system keeping its full functional efficacy - was industriously used by the Auschwitz-Birkenau planners who aimed at a quick concentration in one place of a great number of people meant for slave labour and extermination.

The urban and architectural effect of these actions coincided with the general concepts of the times when the demographic increase connected with the industrialisation made it necessary to find a new spatial organisation subjected to the technological logic of the industry. A geometric, grill-like system facilitated the introduction of another characteristic feature of the industrialisation - standardisation. "*House-building is becoming the issue of mass production*" wrote in 1915 Hendrik Berlage a Dutch urban planner. "*Long rows of low buildings create the walls of the extensive green interiors of the modern city. An individual house loses its importance and the alignment of the housing elements stigmatises the mass housing of our times.*", repeated eight years later Ernst May, a German architect, the creator of the linear development.

Standardisation was also a feature of another invention of the time of industrialisation - balloon frame, a new construction of American settlers which consisted in nailing together a thin prefabricated timber framework. Without this construction tightly connected with the winning of the American West, according to Siegfried Giedion, a Swiss critic and propagator of the avant-garde in architecture "*houses either in the prairie or in the cities would not have appeared at such miraculous speed*" and "*Chicago and San Francisco would not have turned cities from small villages over a year.*" Hitler was impressed by the impetus of the American winning space. He even thought that the Germans are capable of more: "*It is not American speed any more it is German speed. I think that my achievements are bigger than those of my counterparts in the so-called democracies. I suppose that we also manifest a different political speed and if it is possible to annexe a country to Germany in three or four days, it is possible to erect a building in a year or two*" he said in Nuremberg in 1938.

Four years later in the annexed Polish village the German building speed norm was broken many times. Hundreds of army stable barracks *Pferdestall Typ 260/9 (OKH)* with the prefabricated timber construction in no time covered the empty fields of Birkenau. Each barrack designed for 48 horses was this time planned for people and could house more than 1,000 prisoners. The SS supervisors in Birkenau also lived in barracks but those had windows, were insulated, furnished and had full installation equipment (*Luftwaffenbaracke Typ 501/34* were used) and they were not criminally overcrowded. The idea of cheap prefabricated development of timber framework was born even earlier and was welcomed by the SS Main Budget and Construction Office, which in autumn 1941 signed a catalogue worked out by Hans Kammler of typical barracks for concentration camps. In the set of plans there were all possible functional variants: quarters, offices, kitchens, washstands, toilets, common rooms (for the SS), hospitals, stores.

The wooden prefabricated barracks were the rational answer of German engineers to Hitler's colonisation ambitions. A standard barrack could be erected by a group of prisoners in one day. It could be also quickly dismantled and moved to another site. In a short time out of a properly arranged set of barracks it was possible to get a functional complex of structures for any purpose: a bigger or smaller concentration camp, auxiliary buildings for farming, SS quarters, stores, military hospitals. Thus ideologically distant but technologically close idea of the Balloon frame, which helped in the urbanisation of the American West, found many followers among German *Lebensraum* conquerors.

Just before and during the war Hitler's urban planning fancies and his megalomaniac ideas of rebuilding Berlin were realised by architect Albert Speer. An architectural boom covered the designs of new party buildings in other cities of the Third Reich as well as, the construction of motorways and plans and designs for German army, police and civil institutions. It also accompanied the whole sphere of German propaganda of success and "*the vision of an order in the time of chaos, the impression of energy in the atmosphere of widespread hopelessness*". One of the widely discussed Speer's designs was the "Cathedral of Light" - impressing with a surrealist fairy-like spectacle of 130 searchlights throwing into the night sky 8 kilometre-long beams of light and illuminating the thousands of banners with shining eagles over the high embankments of Zeppelinfeld in Nuremberg. Ten years later in Birkenau Seweryna Szmaglewska witnessed another surrealism:

*“Delusion is what one has ever considered reality. There is only one sure, undoubted, non-delusive thing: smoke. In and out of barracks, under the sky and above the earth, in the moving air, heavy, unmoving as a solid, fills up mouth, throat, lungs, nose, permeates the clothes, penetrates into the food. Out of four crematoria pillars go in dark coils striking straight into the sky and then fall down in twines. Sometimes in the thick lava, fire would burst with quick flames out of the depth of the chimney, rushing through the blackness into the light blue sky and disappearing after a while. At times especially at night crematoria throw out flames for long hours...”*

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## Appendix 12

## Opinion of the Research Team of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki on the government Bill on the protection of the Places of Martyrdom of the Nations and on the change of some laws

Gliwice, 4 March 1999

[...] Having analysed the Bill of 8 March this year, in the aspect of the problem of establishing and functioning of the protection zones around the Places of Martyrdom which, as the Bill says, is to be the way of their protection - one comes to an unambiguous conclusion that this Bill does not bring any constructive changes to the existing legal state. What is more - if the Bill is accepted in its present form it will stop the implementation of the basic conservation tasks in the vicinity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

In the case of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau the protection zone cannot be seen exclusively as a "buffer space" whose aim is to limit the building or business activity inside it. In the neighbourhood of the State Museum there are preserved many areas and structures directly connected with the history of the former extermination camp. These are the sites of execution, sites where the corpses of victims were buried, where the ashes of victims were dumped, the sites of prisoners' slave labour, the post-camp structures, roads, sidings and railway ramps, drainage ditches, former gravel-pits. Even the so far empty space especially in the foreground of the Gate of Death and south off the former KL Birkenau, has a significant documentary value and conveys to the visitors the enormity and the specificity of the post-camp complex. In this aspect its limitation suggested by the Bill to "*a belt not wider than 100 meters*" should be considered exceptionally inadequate.

The authors of the Bill as if did not see the whole discussion and the so far made efforts, to reconcile the protection requirements of the former extermination camp with the necessity of providing the basic living conditions to the local community.

The solution of this complicated problem is not possible through the limitation of the radius of the zone. The 100-metre zone is as erroneous a solution as the 500-metre zone, which in 1978 was declared for the UNESCO. Similarly, at that time only the borderlines were marked out. No research was made. The way in which the zone was to be developed was not settled with the local authorities. No procedures, which ensue from the ruling regulations, were implemented. In this Bill the continuation of these incompetent actions is visible.

A 100-metre zone around the former Auschwitz-Birkenau complex compromises Poland, as the administrator of this tragic legacy. It diminishes the historical and spatial context of the former extermination camp. It establishes restrictions for the owners and users of the zone, instead of activating them for actions for the conservation priorities. This was the message of the Oświęcim Programme, accepted by the Council of Ministers on 8 October 1996 and confirmed by the resolutions of the Municipality of Oświęcim and Oświęcim Commune Council.

The attempt to politically tame the immanent activity of the owners and users of the zone escalates the already tense social relations in Oświęcim and Brzezinka. A striking example of it are the opinions recently broadcast in the media that no protection zone around the State Museum is justified. It is a surprising fact that the support for these views is the standpoint of the Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator in Kraków. This office should participate in the identification, protection and exposition of the post-camp legacy situated outside the Museum, executing the Polish obligations arising from the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage ratified in 1976, and continuing the work carried out to date by the Bielsko conservator.

The Bill lacks a basic element to ensure its effective and conflict-free implementation - the exhaustive list of the permitted and prohibited activities in the zone (in the aspect of the laws on the spatial development and business activity). The dependency of the building and business activity on the Voivod's decision, without presenting clear - and first of all transparent rules of action in this special area, suggests an instrumental character of the proposed regulations. It negates the educational function, which the Places of Martyrdom should fulfil as well.

From the point of view of the ruling legislation in Poland and the intentions of the authors of the Bill - the suggested regulation is redundant. Since 1962 the Act on the cultural heritage protection has been ruling, which together with the implementing rules is an effective tool of conservation, adaptation and exposition of the historical sites and structures. There is the administrative service (National Service for Monuments Protection), there are effective procedures (monuments register), there are specialists and technologies, there are norms and sanctions. Last but not least, there is the formed for years social trust in the existing regulations. That is why it is an incomprehensible idea to suggest a new law in the field where, thanks to the many year practice, Poland has world-wide known achievements.

## Appendix 13

An unpublished press article written in November 1999 for "Gazeta Wyborcza", a Polish daily

### **A RIBBON AROUND THE CAMP (or: The zone of dissatisfaction)**

Marek Nycz  
in co-operation with Dariusz Kortko

**The new 100-meter protection zone around the Auschwitz Museum is a nonsense, just as the 500-meter old one - the architects from Gliwice claim.**

The line appeared on the map in the end of May, together with the new act on the national memorial places protection. It closed the 100-meter belt around the former Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, and imposed prohibitions. In this zone it is forbidden to build anything without permission, put up crosses, or demonstrate.

There are various opinions about the new border of the protection zone:

- *Its run was not consulted with the local authorities* - Józef Krawczyk, the Mayor of Oświęcim, claims.
- *They made the zone, to get rid of Świtoń from the gravel pit and at the same time to finish with Marszałek* - says Janusz Marszałek who is building a shopping centre in front of the Museum gate.
- *At last we're going to build houses and put up barns, because we can do it a hundred and one metre away from the wires* - the Brzezinka farmers are happy.
- *The new 100-meter protection zone around the Auschwitz Museum is as nonsensical as the 500-meter old one* - Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki say; they are architects from Gliwice and the only to have inventoried the places of martyrdom around the Museum.

#### **Funny business in Brzezinka**

Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki, young researchers of The Silesian University of Technology, first appeared in Oświęcim in 1984. - *The city and the Museum asked the University to examine, whether the uncontrolled building activity on the grounds around the Museum could be bad for the former camp. I volunteered.* - Marek Rawecki says. There was a mess around the Museum. State enterprises were given permissions for virtually anything, private investors - for nothing. A person who wanted to build anything in the zone had to ask for permission from the Museum Management and the Voivodship Conservator.

- *It was necessary to arrange the area, to check where the places of martyrdom were. We started from scratch, from the inventory* - Jadwiga Rawecka remembers. - *We moved our studio from Gliwice to one of the post-camp blocks and we lived in the Museum for six months. We looked through piles of German plans, we compared the photos of the camp taken by planes of the Allied with those taken now, we put old maps on new ones and we discovered where what was. For example next to the siding there are two identical buildings, but one dates back to the times of the camp, and the other was built after the war. We buried ourselves into the remembrances of the former prisoners. We focussed on the descriptions of the premises and on mentions about any buildings. We described over 900 structures: blocks and barracks, sidings, loading platforms, roads and enclosures, waterworks, treatment plants. All of them were photographed from two sides* - the Rawecki say.

In 1993 the inventory of the zone around the Auschwitz camp was ready. It consisted of 13 volumes. It showed that the 500-metre zone around the camp is a nonsense. Some structures connected with the camp were found even one kilometre away, and there were places within the zone that had nothing to do with the commemoration of the camp victims.

- *After the war consecutive zones were created, but nobody co-ordinated anything with the inhabitants of the nearby villages* - Marek Rawecki says. - *It has never been written what and how should be protected, and where you can give up. Private property was disregarded by consecutive authorities. Anyway, people would find ways to evade the regulations. If you were not allowed to build a barn, then garden shelter was put up, because no permission was necessary. Then things were gradually added around this shelter. The space around the Museum was transformed in a chaotic way. Pre-war structures intertwined with the places of martyrdom, new buildings reminded camp buildings, a conflict between the Museum and the inhabitants of the region escalated.*

- *On top of all that, they started doing some funny business in Brzezinka* - Marek Rawecki continues. - *First the conservators from Warszawa suggested to exclude the protection zone from the spatial planning procedures and to render the former camps ex-territorial, later politicians came up with "the 100-metre zone".*

#### **People mustn't be wronged**

The Rawecki invite us for a lecture in their flat in Gliwice. Earlier they prepared presentations at the University for students, for various groups of conservators, for people in Brzezinka, for decision-makers for the Polish President and members of parliament. On the table there is a heap of plans. Auschwitz-Birkenau was the biggest

German Nazi extermination camp. Towards the end of the war its own interest zone covered 40 square kilometres. Around the camp there were additionally forty sub-camps, workshops, factories and farms where the prisoners worked.

The Museum that came into being after the liberation of the camp could not be so large. - *In the act of 1947 it is recorded that the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum would cover the area of 1,720 hectares. This act mentioned the post-camp "grounds" and the need of their protection „forever”* - Kazimierz Smoleń says, the former manager the Museum (from 1955 to the end of 1980s.) and a former KL Auschwitz prisoner. - *Unfortunately, these umbrella phrases are inaccurate. All structures on the other side of Topolowa Street (then Findera Street, today Leszczyńskiej Street) were left outside the Museum: barracks, workshops, stores, depots, plots and production halls.*

People who before the war had lived in Oświęcim and the nearby villages returned to their own houses. What they found was only barracks or empty grounds. The German Nazis had dismantled everything, because they needed materials for the construction of the camp.

Around the Museum free reconstruction began. At that time nobody cared about borders, expropriations or compensation damages. Farms grew, and small co-operatives and state enterprises moved to post-camp buildings.

- *When I took over the Museum in 1955, many things were irrevocable.* - Smoleń remembers.

In 1957 for the first time the borders of the Museum were marked out. The Museum occupied the area of 191 hectares. The Voivodship Office expropriated former owners. - *People got money or land in compensation* - Smoleń remembers. - *Prices were high enough, because we thought that people mustn't be wronged.*

### **Cigarettes for the metre of the land**

- *My family house has been standing here for already a hundred years* - says Stanisława Rysztogi and points out to the former Villa Hoess visible from the room windows. - *There have always been people who wanted to repurchase us.*

Before the war the army tried to take over the ground of the Rysztogi family because the farm stood too close to Polish army barracks. Stanisława Rysztogi's father did not give in, two years before the war he put up a large stable next to the house.

Afterwards the Germans came. In June 1940 the barracks filled up with prisoners. Two months later the Germans convened all farmers from the neighbourhood. Nobody came back from this meeting. They were all sent to the quarries in the Sudety Mountains. Their families were sent away after them. - *The Germans allowed us to take with us only what we could hold in hands* - Stanisława says.

A year later the Germans sent the Rysztogi family back "home", because the father had an accident in the quarry. The family settled far outside the "Interessengebiet" (the interest zone of the camp). - *We often walked along the Sola River looking at tress growing in our garden. There was not a trace left of the farm* - Stanisława remembers.

The Rysztogi rebuilt the house just after the war. - *To get permission we had to go as far as to Kraków. They did not want to give it to us, because the Museum had come into being, and our house stood too close by. Father intended to write about it to Gomulka* - Stanisława Rysztogi says.

In 1957 the Museum and the PKS (the State Motor Transport Company) depot took over the best part of the farm. For what remained in the Museum the Rysztogi family got damages. - *For each metre of the land the equivalent of a pack of the cheapest cigarettes was paid.* - Stanisława remembers.

### **We held "Czczott" back**

Kazimierz Smoleń, the former Museum manager: - *To the former SS slaughterhouse, where the Germans shot first 40 prisoners, a co-operative "Społem" moved in. We fixed it that they would take care of the buildings. At the beginning of 1960 it seemed everything was in order. And then came to us an engineer from the coal mine "Czczott" which was being built outside Brzezinka. He drew out plans and showed us that just behind the monument of the murdered in Birkenau the mine transportation depot was to come into being, and farther still large-scale housing estates. We raised the alarm and we held "Czczott" back.*

The time came to mark out the first protection zone. It came into being in 1962, was 150 metres wide and nothing could be built within it. In 1977 when the Auschwitz Museum was listed by the UNESCO as world heritage site, the zone was extended to 500 metres.

Smoleń does not agree with the accusation that the zone was marked out mechanically, simply with a pair of compasses. - *Every metre was corrected and marked out along the real topographical and ownership borders. The authentic landscape dating back to the time of the war was to be preserved.*

Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki: - *The establishment of the consecutive protection zones was not preceded by the preparation of documentation specifying what and how should be protected. Neither were the rules of zones development agreed with the inhabitants. At that time the knowledge of history, town-planning and conservation were different, there was a different approach of the authorities to the problems of private property. That is why in spite of marking out the zones, the space around the Museum was transformed in a chaotic way. However, the chance of saving some places and structures is not lost yet. But it is necessary to act because the life outside the Museum flows more quickly.*

### The zone is no more

At first people in Brzezinka received the Rawecki coolly. They asked what the inventory was for and who needed that. They said that the Jews would come and evict people from Brzezinka; the Germans had also made promises, and afterwards they took everybody away; the zone does not permit to build anything, and the village administrator washed his hands of it. In 1992 they called a village meeting and accepted the resolution about the liquidation of the protection zone.

- *They thought that the zone should end at the wires* - Jadwiga Rawecka says. - *It was necessary to explain that nobody would take anything from them and nobody would disturb their homes, that we were only after the preservation of the camp heritage and the elimination of the activity which is not in harmony with the character of the place of martyrdom e.g. beer advertisements from the vicinity of the Museum.*

- *For 50 years nobody has talked with these people about their needs or about the protection zone. We were the first after the war – the architects say. - People wanted to open themselves, to complain. Then they gave in.*

The Rawecki suggested that in the protection zone the following should be prohibited: the development of industry, transport depots, open storage yards, markets, schools, amusements and advertisements. According to them the zone should protect the historical structures. - *The so far existing 500-metre zone did not fulfil its functions. It protected e.g. Kolbego Street where nothing important ever happened while omitting the Judenrampe where the German Nazis executed the selections.* - the Rawecki say - *The state-owned firms enjoyed a privileged position. In the former camp slaughterhouse PKS prepared a depot adding workshops and garages, OZNS extended the historical building of into an office building.*

Two years ago, on commission of the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp, the Rawecki prepared the development and commemoration strategy for the grounds around the Museum. They suggested to exhibit the Judenrampe where in years 1942-1944 mass transports of Jews from all over Europe arrived. It was here where most transports finished. The loading platform inside the KL Birkenau is much later. The first one is situated mid-way of both camps. From here the pilgrims could start the visit to the Museum. In Brzezinka the strategy suggested a central car park and four smaller auxiliary car parks for buses which would receive people finishing the visit to the former KL Birkenau. Visitors' service would be transferred from the Museum to the vicinity of the car parks. In the plan there was a project of a pedestrian route linking the former Auschwitz I with the former KL Birkenau. The route would keep away from industrial parks and inhabited areas. It would lead through the open fields, much the same as fifty years ago, when prisoners were run here. The existing industrial plants would be separated with isolating greenery.

- *We also afforded some professional folly. We designed a viewpoint tower from which both camps would be perfectly visible* - Marek Rawecki says.

The plan was accepted by Polish authorities and international Jewish organisations.

### New fears all the time

The greatest trouble has always been with the grounds around the former KL Birkenau. The camp did not have clear borders. The German Nazis rebuilt it all the time. For example in 1944 they knocked down 80 barracks on the so-called "Mexico" and left naked ground. Today private houses stand on a part of "Mexico".

- *When I came back here, there was nothing.* - 90-year-old Klemens Krzemień, a Brzezinka farmer, remembers. - *For ten years I lived in a one-room cottage which Russians had built after the liberation. They did not want to stay in the former concentration camp so they put up this shack on my field. When they left, I could settle there.*

Klemens Krzemień knows very well where his land that remained within the Museum is. He is worried whether he will be able to use his fields when they are within the zone.

Stanisław Dziubek, the former village administrator of Brzezinka shrugs - *The Parliament makes the laws, by which no-one abides. Since 1941 we have been the victims of the camp. All this Holocaust has been affecting us to the present day. When I was the village administrator, I wrote to various "Dear Sirs" in Warszawa. They all cheated all right, they would say: "Remember what happened here". How could I ever forget? With every trifle you had to run to the Museum to beg for permission from the conservator.*

Stanisław Dziubek's house stands 20 metres away from the road to the former KL Birkenau. - *When I wanted to extend the house, I had to ask the conservator round and show everything to him. Only then did he agree.* - he says.

- *And we were all scared stiff when we heard, what the American Jews wanted to do here... They were to knock down all our houses.* - he adds.

People in Brzezinka eagerly listen to the news about the zone. They cannot put up with the fact that somebody is always making decision for them, that they were expelled, that they lost their houses, that no one gave them a penny for the rebuilding.

- *Each of us was given twelve wooden plates from the knocked down barracks. We looked for bricks in smouldering ruins and rubbles. We built the houses from this. The road, water, gas, telephones...* - enumerates the former village administrator Stanisław Dziubek. - *People did all that by themselves, voluntarily. And what did we get in return? New fears all the time: 50 metres, 100 metres, 150 metres and 500 metres of the zone!*

### **The zone for Świtoń**

In summer 1998 Kazimierz Świtoń appeared in Oświęcim. He padlocked the gate of the gravel pit, put up a tent and called himself the defender of the Papal Cross standing there since the end of the 1980s commemorating the Pope's John Paul II first pilgrimage to Poland. Some Jewish circles protested against the presence of the cross. On the place of the extermination there should not be any religious symbols.

Świtoń demanded a guarantee that the cross would not be removed. To the gravel pit pilgrimages come from all over Poland. The forest of crosses is growing. The government asks Świtoń not to make provocation, but he refuses. The bishops ask him not to aggravate - he does not listen.

The MPs find out how to get rid of the defender of the crosses: the new law about the zone where no-one can perform any religious activity. Nobody listens to Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki's warnings that the zone is not limited to the cross.

### **The zone contaminated with history**

The Oświęcim Car Repairs Company (OZNS) employed 1,200 people still in 1980s. It was second big firm in Oświęcim. The STAR trucks were repaired here. Every car was dismantled, repaired and put together again. Every day 20 trucks would leave the repair line. Cars waited several months for the general overhaul. Mechanics earned best in the town.

The same firm today: 120 workers, workshops and rooms leased, you can see a "For sale" banner with the offer (1,000,000 PLN for a hall and 3.5 hectare of land). People prefer to buy new trucks than to repair old ones.

Ryszard Rogucki, the official receiver of the Company: - *We are trying to sell the firm. There have been some buyers but all have given up. The last one wanted to make here a food discount, but decided he'd better not go into the zone around the camp. It's like Chernobyl. Nobody will risk to do business in the zone contaminated with the history of extermination.*

The new 100-metre zone did not help. OZNS is a kilometre away from the Auschwitz Museum and one and a half kilometre to Brzezinka. The factory lies right mid-way. The town decided that the ground should be cleaned. There will not be here any new plants, bases or depots.

- *The town authorities are more radical than the new law that was to be the remedy for Świtoń.* - claims Richard Rogucki. - *Now people are going to lose their jobs.*

Józef Krawczyk, the Mayor of Oświęcim: - *It's not our fault. Various conditions refer to the area between the former camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. Every investment must be consulted with the historical monuments conservator. There is for example the Judenrampe, so in this area there will never be full freedom.*

Rogucki says that soon the town is going to take over OZNS for debts.

### **The co-operative is going to collapse**

When the project of the new zone was ready, Krystyna Huczek, the chief accountant of the co-operative "Społem" looked at the map and went pale.

The border of the zone crossed the fields, farms and factories in half. It ran across the gateway the co-operative „Społem” which produces the equipment for “Społem” shops: cooling counters, shelves and stands. - *Now there is going to be a mess.* - the chief accountant of the co-operative foresaw.

Troubles of co-operative started in 1996 when Janusz Marszałek, the president of the “Maja” company decided to adapt the old ugly halls and stores from the 1960s opposite the Museum gate for a shopping centre, later called a supermarket. In Rajsco near Oświęcim Marszałek built a village for 26 orphans and surrogate mothers. The supermarket was to be their source of income. The “Maja” president managed to get all necessary permissions and received money from a foreign investor from Germany. When bulldozers appeared on the construction site, the world protested. Works were suspended.

For three years Marszałek has been suing the city and the Voivod. He lost 4,000,000 PLN and the German investor was sold by auction by the banks.

Newspapers wrote every day about Marszałek's problems. Not a word about the fall of the co-operative “Społem” although, according to the chief accountant, both issues intertwined. - *Customers, who asked where our office was, would leave us at once. They are afraid that after what happened to “Maja” our institution will fall down, and they will lose service.*

### **Let them take the supermarket away**

- *Świtoń as well as that scandal around the gravel pit was a provocation. It was to reverse attention from the problem of the “Maja” investment, although we won all trials and recovered all permissions for construction.* - says Janusz Marszałek, the president of “Maja”.

He still cannot build his “supermarket”, in spite of that fact that the latest investment title, agreed-upon with Very Important Persons is, in compliance with the recommendations of the International Auschwitz Council: „a car park complex with facilities” for Museum visitors. Against the permissions was... Jerzy Wróblewski, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum manager. He claimed that the construction was not co-ordinated with the museum plans.

Professor Władysław Bartoszewski is convinced that the project of the shopping centre “Maja” corresponds splendidly with the plans of removing bars, stalls and cafes from the Museum. A large parking lot would be placed at Marszałek’s shopping centre, so that cars do not have to enter the Museum premises.

Marszałek demands 4,000,000 PLN, money, which he calculates to have lost because of the retention of the construction.

The 100-metre zone includes two thirds of the ground of “Maja”, but it is new, so Marszałek has to apply for permissions for the construction once again - *I am not building the shopping centre to spite anybody. It is all about maintaining the village and about the fate of the children for who I sought sources of maintenance.* - he says resigned, shrugging. - *Let them take this dammed “supermarket”.*

### **The strange zone**

Józef Krawczyk, the Mayor of Oświęcim is not satisfied with the zone. - *Even without it Oświęcim is perceived by the world as a burial-ground. I do not believe that the inhabitants will be aware of any change. I suppose there will be fewer changes than some optimists expect.*

On top of it all the government ignored the comments of the local authorities. The clerks in Warszawa probably did not even read the plan prepared by the Rawecki.

That is why the new zone has errors. President Krawczyk enumerates:

- *The border of the zone was drawn along the bank of the Sola River. The river must be regulated, necessarily the borderline will have to be changed. Will the conservator’ agreement be necessary every time? In summer the banks of Sola are blocked up with people sunbathing. Will the police punish people in bathing suits for disturbing the dignity of the zone?*

- *The zone touches the gate of the co-operative “Społem”. Nobody knows why.*

- *We suggested to exclude the plot which belongs to the “Maja” company. I thought it logical, because the company got a permission for the construction, and Marszałek won all trials connected with this. No-one listened to this suggestion either.*

- *The new protection zone runs around the Auschwitz Museum in a very odd way. PKS remains outside it, the military unit, the Pileckiego housing estate, even Mrs. Rysztoż’s house. Only the two-thirds of the “Maja” plot lies within the zone. The inhabitants of the Pileckiego housing estate think that they are outside the zone, so that the state does not have to pay for repairs of the post-camp houses. Let the local authorities do that.*

- *The Małopolskie Voivod is now the keeper of these grounds. Our voice in the zone is no longer important.*

### **There will be no sky-scrapers**

Jadwiga Rawecka: - *Our project stated what was allowed in the zone and what was not allowed. First of all we wanted to prohibit the building of houses which resemble the architecture of the camp buildings. We meant the tiled sloping roofs, and the clinker on the elevations. In our opinion the difference should be clearly visible round the Museum: This was the crime, and this is new.*

People in Brzezinka are convinced that the problem of the zone is already finished. No-one will any longer limit their ownership rights. Anyway they do know full well that apart from the real border there are still other limits beyond which you do not go. There will be no sky-scrapers here. They are planning to build farm buildings and extend their houses. Some people demolish old sidings and are thinking of putting up advertisements on walls of their own buildings for money. And they won’t have anyone pry into their affairs.

Jadwiga Rawecka looks at the new zone and shrugs: - *It is not the line that is important, it is the space it outlines. And the new zone? It looks like a ribbon around the camp.*

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## Appendix 14

A letter written by the author to Eleonora Bergman, which is one of the comments in the discussion of the members of the International Group of Experts for the Government Plenipotentiary for the Implementation the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim<sup>221</sup>

Gliwice, Wednesday, 21 June 2000

Thank you for your nice letter and congratulations. I passed my doctoral exam. During the discussion the participants noticed the importance of this problem and I was encouraged to continue the work to prepare the synthesis of this subject in the context of the protection of other Memorial Places as well. I think that soon I will take up this problem as my next degree thesis.

We have received the materials from Minister Stachańczyk. It is a bad thing that the date of the meeting of the Group of Experts is changed over and over again. A serious discussion on all problems connected with the protection of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau has never been as necessary as it is now, although it can be too late for this. The issues of the protection zone, after a longish delay, have been accelerated, but unfortunately in the wrong direction.

As the sent materials show<sup>222</sup> in the concept of the local development plan for Brzezinka controversial run of the express way S1 Kosztowy - Bielsko-Biała (marked on the plan with the symbol KE) designed as early as in 1996 at the distance of ... less than 80 meters away from the so-called incineration pits of the former KL Birkenau, remained. Also the access road to Oświęcim (KG on the plan) was laid out too close (200 meters) to the former KL Birkenau "female camp", not talking about the new ring-road (KZ - the eastern foreground of KL Birkenau) laid out at the distance of only 160 meters away from the Gate of Death.

It is a paradox that the above-mentioned solutions are the consequence of the latest legislative actions of the Polish Government: i.e. the adopting of the act on the protection of the grounds of the former German Nazi extermination camps and the executive regulations for this law.

In all discussions that took place before this act was accepted my Research Team were of the opinion that any legal solutions referring to Oświęcim and Brzezinka should take into account not only temporary political aspects (see Świtoń) but first of all the conservation angle of the protection zones.

But it was not so. Ignoring the social consequences, not taking into account the results of the research works, Polish Government promoted in the local circles the idea of "at most 100-meters wide protection zone" as a remedy for all conflicts. In this situation you could not have expected that various interests and investment appetites of the local community (so far efficiently blocked by the UNESCO protection zone) would stay in hiding. It is characteristic that during the negotiations of this strange idea, there were voices in Oświęcim saying that no protection zone is needed around the Museum (sic!)

And something extremely bad happened: the inhabitants of Brzezinka, Pławy and Oświęcim were made to think that one cannot live in the protection zone. As a consequence after the agreements with the local authorities such a piece of land was marked out so that all residential and church structures will be exempted from the future protection zone. As a result 90% of the UNESCO zone grounds were excluded from the MSWiA zone.

And the preliminary assumptions which were the auspices for the research started in 1991 - were absolutely different. The International Museum Council supported the research programme to find within the UNESCO zone a sensitive compromise between the needs for protecting the history and the requirements of the modern life. In this concept there were to be included both functions for servicing such an extensive visitors traffic and the fulfilling of elementary needs of the local community and at the same time the historical aspects were to be respected. Thinking along those lines we worked out with the late Karol Gruszczyk and the local authorities the urban planning and conservation documentation which in 1996 was positively evaluated (by a resolution) by the Oświęcim Town Council, and in the next years was successfully negotiated at the village meetings and at the meetings of the Brzezinka Village Council. It seemed that the conservation conclusions required only to be implemented.

And then the PKN ICOMOS woke up of the 15-year sleep. At first everybody hoped that the Professor Pawłowski's team would take up this subject, that they would be an intermediary between the World Heritage Committee and the central and local authorities in the problem of working out a satisfactory model of the Muse-

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<sup>221</sup> The International Group of Experts was appointed by Minister Piotr Stachańczyk (Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration - the Government Plenipotentiary for the Implementation of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim) in June 1999. The following accepted the invitation to work on the Group led by Professor Andrzej Tomaszewski: Eleonora Bergman (Poland), Ralph Grunewald (USA), Helmut Morlok (Germany), Sylvio Mutal (Holland), Jacek Nowakowski (USA), Max Polonowski (France), Jadwiga Rawecka and Marek Rawecki (Poland), Andras Roman (Hungary), Giora Solar (Israel), Eugenio Gentili Tedeschi (Italy), Michael Turner (Israel).

<sup>222</sup> comp. Appendix 5 and 6 (pp.128-129).

um environs urban development. In reality the team started independent actions - strictly planning - for which they did not have either preparation, or skill or legal basis. At the same time they provoked a general outrage in Oświęcim and Brzezinka by officially pronouncing suggestions to *“exclude the areas of the protection zones from the spatial planning procedures”*, opinions about *“the extraterritoriality of the former camps”* or the idea of the necessity to *“making relative”* the war lot of the inhabitants of Oświęcim and Brzezinka. We drew attention of the people interested to the debatable aspects of the PKN ICOMOS concepts: the fact that important historical and contemporary development factors were not taken into account, there were no arrangements on the local and specialist level and that were left out the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim that was prepared in the meantime. [...] A really strange thing was an idea of the ICOMOS to dig a tunnel under the railway line in the site where according to witnesses there was a mass grave of the camp victims of the year 1942 (the remains which we have found there are now being examined by the Jagiellonian University Forensic Medicine Department in Kraków).

And thus were unfortunately wasted the results of our many-year negotiations with the local community concerning the rules of the Museum environs protection. It would not be that bad if it was only about the documentation. But a huge potential of goodwill was wasted. Now we cannot expect that in this schizophrenic polarisation between the ICOMOS ideas about the extension of the protection zones and moving the people living in the vicinity of the Museum to other areas, and the idea of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration of the *“at most 100-meters wide protection zone”* - we cannot expect that the local populace will remain as pragmatic and sensible as they have been for the last years when we negotiated the rules of the protection zone development. After the socially disastrous activity of Professor Pawłowski, the Polish government came and *“did a good job for the people”* giving the 100-meter zone. Unfortunately, they did not do a very good job with the issue.

December last year we got the negative opinion of the Village Councils of Brzezinka and Pławy in re of the evaluating the document *“General guidelines of the development of the updated protection zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Brzezinka”*, which we had worked out on commission by the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp (a research work synthesis).

In view of the new protection zone suggested by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration the Village Councils withdrew from all previous agreements that we had reached together during the long and difficult process of negotiations. In 1997 our works according to the meeting protocols *“guaranteed to minimize the conflict between the State Museum in Brzezinka and the owners of the lands directly touched by problem of the protection zone development”* and the Oświęcim Commune Council: *“out of the known concepts of the development of the protection zone, unambiguously supported the concept created by Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki, being convinced that it best conciliated the interests of the inhabitants of Brzezinka, Pławy and Harmęże with the interests of the State Museum in Brzezinka”*.

A year later, after the research works were discontinued, the Brzezinka Village Meeting made a resolution which *“obliged the Voivod to take actions in order to make possible for Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki to continue the works on the study of the development of the zone around the Museum”*.

Towards the end of 1999, when the new Ministry zone had been ruling for only six months, our research was already *“an impediment and imposed solutions which are not necessarily optimal solutions for the interests of the inhabitants of Brzezinka and Pławy”* and the Village Administrations thought that: *“Oświęcim Commune Council as the Commune legislative body will not consider materials which are not prepared on the initiative of the Oświęcim Commune Office”*.

One thing is characteristic in this issue. When the Polish government implemented the new law and regulation on the protection zones it showed to people that the protection of the KL Auschwitz legacy is only a matter of geometry. The pair of compasses of the UNESCO zone was replaced by scissors of the Ministry of Inner Affairs and Administration, and once you cut something it is very difficult to stick it together again ... particularly in the sphere of human sensitivity and emotions.

I apologise for these longish and not very optimistic comments. However the present situation in the zone is the direct result of the last few years, the fruit of the work of those who realised more their own professional and political ambitions than the real conservation and planner work. Unfortunately in the social conscience the UNESCO zone does not exist anymore. A lot of effort was put in achieving this result. Last year over 90 thousand PLN was spent to put up signs marking the borderline of the *“at most 100-meters wide protection zone”*. Now it will be very difficult to negotiate anything beyond this area.

Back to local development plans. The guidelines for the protection of the post-camp sites and structures that are included there fulfil, in my opinion, the conservation requirements. And it is the only positive aspect of this issue. Jerzy Grzymek used some conclusions of our documentation, anyway we co-operate with him closely. However the protection and exposition of these sites will be a flash in the pan anyway if the accepted are the disastrous road communication solutions for Brzezinka and Pławy. Still October last year one could think about moving the S1 road towards the west. The Bojszowy Commune adjacent to the area under research had in its *Study of Conditions and Development Directions* two variants of its run, one of which was advantageous for the Museum. We pointed it out to the Administrator of the Oświęcim Commune. No reaction. In December 1999 the Commune of Bojszowy accepted the Study with the variant disadvantageous for the Museum. Now the road

corridor is legally taken. And this could have been averted. As early as in autumn 1997 we talked with Professor Pawłowski about it, and in 1998 we pointed out this problem to Mr Andrzej Sikora the Bielski Voivod. They both did nothing. What happens now? I don't know. The last resort is the Małopolska Conservator of Historical Monuments. After six months we received a letter from the Kraków division of the State Service for Historical Monuments Protection which confirms that the *General Guidelines of the development of the updated protection zone of the Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum in Brzezinka* were accepted.

Finally I would like to tell you some more optimistic information. In March this year the Museum manager asked us to prepare documentation in order to transfer to the Exchequer (and finally to the Museum) of the site where there was the first temporary gas chamber of the KL Birkenau. This is a very sensitive issue indeed. On the site where there was the "Little Red House" there is now a farm, people live, farm animals walk (the owners of the pre-war house, which in 1942 was converted by the German Nazis into a gas chamber, came back to their land just after the war). After a number of talks the owner agreed to move to another house, which will be built by the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp. If we manage to realise this, which I deeply believe, it will have been one of the first positive action in the zone for the last few years. Still open is the issue of the Judenrampe, the railway siding to the former KL Birkenau, the ruins of waterworks, the post-camp potato stocks and drainage ditches. In the plan concept their protection was guaranteed, however practical actions are necessary for regulating their ownership status (the majority are private property), conservation, protection, and exposition - best within the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim, which was created for this very purpose. I will surely ask Minister Stachańczyk about it when I have the opportunity.

Best wishes, from Jagoda as well

Marek Rawecki

\* \* \*

## Appendix 15

E-mail of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki of 16 December 2000 to Ralph Grunewald, which is one of the comments in the discussion of the members of International Group of Experts for the Government Plenipotentiary for the Implementation of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim

Dear Ralph,

Thank you for your message as well as for your positive reaction to the enclosed materials. We are glad that you sent your answer to other people who, as we believe, are full of good will to find the best solutions for Oświęcim and Brzezinka. Thus, in our opinion, in this way, even without the personal contact, we have started to discuss the issue of the protection zone. [...] Bearing this in mind, we would like to draw your attention to several issues, which are, in our opinion, of paramount importance.

In 1991, when we were preparing the research programme, the issue of co-operation with the local community was the leading idea of the undertaken task. In this respect we saw eye to eye with the members of the International Auschwitz Council, who in July 1991, chaired by Professor Władysław Bartoszewski, accepted the presented research programme. Also the management of the Museum and the Memorial Foundation for the Victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp Board saw it in this way, when they commissioned us to prepare concrete documentation. The same was true for the Conservation Department of the Bielsko-Biała Voivodship. Also the Bielsko-Biała Voivod saw it in the same way. It was clear to everybody at that time, that what should be taken into account in the research work is the voice of owners, users and inhabitants of the protection zone, i.e. those whose lives will eventually be influenced by the zone.

The beginnings were not easy. Especially in Brzezinka. People looked suspiciously when we started field-work. They kept asking what the research was for, whether they would lose their houses, their workplaces, why we were doing such detailed inventory of real estates. The memories of wartime displacements were revived. The uncertainty of post-war years was revived; the uncertainty of time when for 12 long years the Museum boundaries were being marked out and consecutive protection zones established without any negotiations, agreements or research. Up to the 1990s the unclear guidelines of these zones were freely interpreted according to particular political and economic situations.

The objectives of research work had been presented on many village meetings, meetings with the representatives of Brzezinka and Pławy local authorities, the Oświęcim Town Council and Oświęcim Commune Council. The attempts at encouraging a positive social attitude and providing solutions, which would combine the need to protect the history and the needs of modern life, succeeded. The representatives of Bielsko-Biała Voivod, of Museum, of state conservation department took part in those meetings very often, giving us support of their authority and knowledge. The results of the research were consecutively consulted with the Conservation Commission of the International Auschwitz Council and with local authorities of all levels.

We gained the trust of the inhabitants of the zone. We met many of them personally. We listened to unusual, touching and moving stories from their own lives. People opened their private archives for us - it is a living history of this land also in relation to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Thanks to those people our knowledge of the history of Oświęcim area acquired a personal dimension, without which it would be very difficult for us to suggest anything in the protection zone. In our work on the zone we adopted the principle of providing the inhabitants concerned with full information on the research progress. We negotiated each step bringing us closer to on one hand to introducing the protection priorities, on the other hand to fulfilment of the basic needs of the local community. As you probably know, this role of a town planner was confirmed by the New Charter of Athens, later decreed by the European Council of Town Planners (1998) - a town planner not as the great creator and demiurge, but first of all as a mediator. As this document, important for our profession, states, the appearance of the 21st century city will be created not so much in the process of a general plan, but in the process of negotiations and engaging all interested groups in the decision-making practise. Needless to say, this very important statement applies to the problem of the protection zone of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

It is a pity that these correct principles have not found confirmation in Professor Krzysztof Pawłowski's activity. In October 1997 Minister Nikolski appointed Professor Pawłowski the chairman of the international panel of experts. Further negotiations on the local level were abandoned. Instead, individual "visions" were encouraged. The effects of our research and agreements achieved in the meantime were disregarded. No wonder that the lack of social basis for those actions brought about very negative reactions of the local authorities best expressed in the statement of the Oświęcim Commune Council of 18 June 1998. The Council firmly demanded that all issues discussed and presented by Professor Pawłowski on the international level should be consulted with local communities. This problem did not emerge at the consultation meeting organised several days before in Bielsko-Biała, because, at the organisers' request we did not make a statement there. As you remember, during this meeting our work was neither presented nor, the more so, discussed (except for the map "KL Auschwitz-Birkenau. Structures and land use"). On the other hand, the publication issued by Polish ICOMOS after the

meeting included Professor Pawłowski's assessment of the documentation we have prepared (pp.7, 57). To put it very mildly, this assessment does not reflect the actual state of things.

More of inauspicious events took place in 1999 in connection with the implementation of the former German Nazi death camps protection law. The government representatives began promoting in the local communities of Oświęcim and Brzezinka the idea of "a 100-metre wide zone at the most", which was supposed to be a remedy for all problems and conflicts. Minister Stachańczyk's speech given in Parliament on 8 April 1999 introduced the idea that the government would mark the zone out taking advantage of our research. None of government representatives ever consulted the matter with us. Certainly, the "100-metre wide zone at the most" is not the result of our research. As soon as a project of new legal regulations appeared we presented our definitely negative opinion to all people concerned. Except for Senator Janusz Okrzesik no one reacted. So we were reduced to observing the course of action.

At the beginning of April 1999 Ryszard Masłowski, Małopolska Voivod sent a letter to the inhabitants of the area adjacent to the Museum in which he presented the government's statement in connection with the new legal regulations. This letter read as follows:

*„...We want to create a 100-metre wide protection zone around the camp. In many cases this zone may only be symbolic and be just 1-metre wide. [...] The new law abolishes the fictitious 500-metre wide protection zone. The Government will try to have the 500-metre wide UNESCO zone deleted from UNESCO statements. We have support of all international groups promoting the commemoration of the camp. The abolition of the 500-metre wide UNESCO protection zone will ascertain that people employed beyond the 100 metres from the camp wall will not have to worry about their jobs. Business there will be able to carry on without any obstacles...”*

We are racking our brains which "international groups promoting the commemoration of the camp" supported the idea of replacing the UNESCO zone with a zone "100-metre wide at the most". Maybe you know something more about it? It is true though that no one from the outside has yet criticised these regulations. It is also true that a false, so dangerous, idea has been implemented in the minds of the inhabitants, that the issue of the zone can be solved exclusively on the level of political and legal solutions and not through concrete work in conservation and planning. Just one letter from the Voivod turned the clock many years back and destroyed all painstakingly achieved compromises.

The effects of such policy towards the local community soon became visible. Trouble emerged when Mr. Grzymek tried to take the conservation conclusions into account in new editions of local development plans. There were voices claiming that local authorities act against the Parliament and Government laws. The conflict was particularly sharp in Brzezinka. On analysis of the project plan the Business Association of the Oświęcim Area (Stowarzyszenie Gospodarcze Ziemi Oświęcimskiej) inferred that the Commune authorities were planning to increase the width of the zone to 1,5 km (UNESCO zone is this wide in some places). Several thousand leaflets were scattered informing the inhabitants about the plans to introduce a "death zone", about demolishing houses etc. The Commune Authorities organised a special Brzezinka Village Meeting on 22 November 2000 to explain everything and to mollify people. It was also the intention of their inviting us there. We tried to do our best. However, it is difficult to appeal to reason when you only have the scientific arguments to support you, whereas the authority of the state backs the laws and implementing regulations. Everybody quoted the "100-metre wide zone at the most". No other reactions could be expected, as on many farmers' fields in Brzezinka boards marking the borders of the zone already stand. At Pławy there are no boards in the fields because there the zone's border runs along... the Museum border.

Dear Ralph, sorry for this longish and not exactly optimistic account. But these are issues, which we planned to discuss in the first place at the Group meeting, which failed to take place. What more, we think that the sense of the expert work (at least in our case) depends on whether this complicated social situation will be solved. It is not really our role to persuade the local community that we are still obligated to observe the World Heritage Convention, which Poland has ratified. Some people in Polish government are morally responsible for introducing the "100-metre zone wide at the most". That's why you were right to have sent your answer to Ms. Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska as well. As you do, we also think that Poles themselves should solve above-mentioned issues. However, if, as you say "pressure needs to be applied", it means that the situation is taking an unfavourable turn. Without clarifying all these issues, without creating a positive social atmosphere, our common work, of whatever kind, will stay where it was created - on paper. And it certainly is not what we all have in mind.

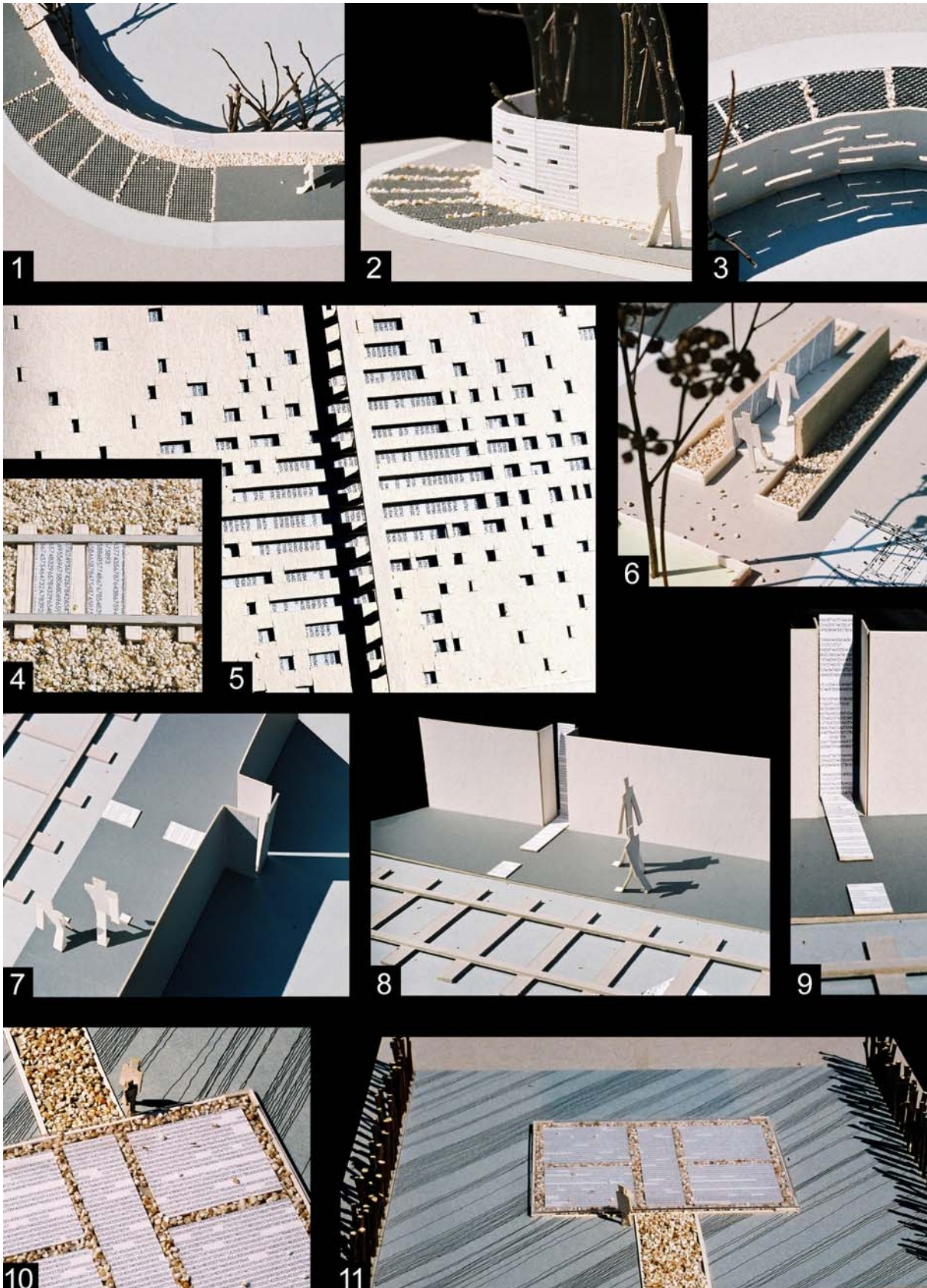
Waiting for a more favourable turn of the situation

With best wishes

Jadwiga and Marek Raweccc

## Appendix 16

Selected student works of the seminar for students of the Departments of Architecture in the International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim, November 2001. Phot. M.Rawecki



Concepts of commemoration of selected places in the vicinity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum made by students of the Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice at the international seminar "Oświęcim-Auschwitz Topography" in the International Youths Meeting Center in Oświęcim, November 2001.

Authors of the designs: Kamila Cieśla, Magda Telenga, Paweł Cichocki, Michał Górczyński, Tomasz Kusznirowski, Jakub Skrzypiec.

Phot.1-3: Concept of commemorating the victims of the first mass execution in KL Auschwitz on 22 November 1940 (the fence of the PKS depot in Oświęcim, 15 Więźniów Oświęcimia St.)

Phot.4-5: Concept of commemorating of camp victims on the *Judenrampe* with a footbridge over the railway tracks within the pedestrian route linking the Museum in Oświęcim with the Museum in Brzezinka

Phot.6: Concept of commemorating the victims of the last execution in KL Auschwitz on 6 January 1945 (Pilecki Housing Estate between the blocks 22-24 and 25-27)

Phot.7-9: Concept of commemorating 200 Jews of *Sonderkommando* killed with Zyclone B gas in the disinfectant chamber of the so-called "Canada I" on 25 September 1944 (Oświęcim, the eastern fence of the yard in 12 Kolbego St. in the vicinity of the "Do Monopolu" railway siding)

Phot.10-11: Concept of commemorating the mass extermination victims in the so-called "Little Red House" - the first temporary gas chamber of KL Birkenau (Brzezinka, a former farm in Brzezinka in 26 Leśna St.)

Scientific supervision and seminar preparation:

Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki - the Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice

Organisational supervision and seminar preparation:

Hartmut Ziesing - the International Youths Meeting Center in Oświęcim

## Appendix 17

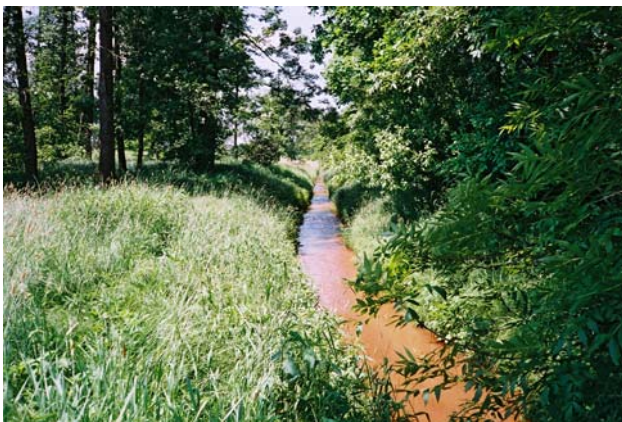
Photos of selected sites in the vicinity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum taken by the Author in May 2003



*Phot.1. Brzezinka. Meadows west off the former KL Birkenau, adjacent to the so-called incineration pits. On the left - the inter-embankment zone of the drainage ditch "Königsgraben" (now Pławianka). View towards the north-west*



*Phot.2. Brzezinka. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. The incineration pits area. View towards the east*



*Phot.3. Pławy. Drainage ditch "Königsgraben" of the KL Birkenau (now Pławianka brook). View towards the north-west*



*Phot.4. Brzezinka, Leśna Street. The site of the so-called "Little Red House" - the first gas chamber of KL Birkenau. View towards the north-east*





*Phot.5. Brzezinka. KL Birkenau railway siding and the Gate of Death. View towards the west*



*Phot.6. ... and view towards the east*



*Phot.7. Brzezinka. KL Birkenau siding overgrowing with grass surrounded by village houses. View towards the north-west*



*Phot.8. Brzezinka, Boczna Street. The first road marked out during the construction of the KL Birkenau, where the deported to the camp were shepherded. View towards the west*



*Phot.9. Brzezinka. Unsecured and decaying ruin of the KL Birkenau water supply station. In the background visible barracks of the section II of KL Birkenau. View towards the south-west*



*Phot.10. Brzezinka, Ofiar Faszyzmu Street. Former KL Birkenau New Headquarters (now parish church). View towards the south-east*



Phot.11. Oświęcim. The area of the Judenrampe. In the foreground - overgrowing with grass historical rails. On the right - former camp potato stores. View towards the south



Phot.12. Brzezinka. Abandoned and devastated potato stores at the Judenrampe. View towards the north-west



Phot.13. Brzezinka. The inside of the potato stores at the Judenrampe. View in the north-west direction, in the gate clearance visible a sentry tower of KL Birkenau



Phot.14. Brzezinka. The inside of the camp potato stores at the Judenrampe



Phot.15. Brzezinka. The view from the inside of the former camp vegetable store "Krautsilo" at the Judenrampe. In the background - The Gate of Death. View towards the north-west



Phot.16. Brzezinka. The inside of the camp vegetable store "Krautsilo" at the Judenrampe, devastated by youths subcultures. View towards the east



*Phot.17. Oświęcim, the area between Więźniów Oświęcimia and Obozowa Streets. The site of one of the biggest gravel pits of KL Auschwitz "Kiesgrube Haus Palitzsch. View towards the north*



*Phot.18. Oświęcim, Więźniów Oświęcimia Street. Prisoners' Mass Grave - the grounds of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. View towards the north*



*Phot.19. Oświęcim, Więźniów Oświęcimia Street. PKS depot. The site of the first mass execution in KL Auschwitz on 22 November 1940. View towards the north*



*Phot.20. Oświęcim, Pilecki housing estate - former "Schutzhaftlagererweiterung". The site of the last execution in KL Auschwitz on 6 January 1945. View towards the north*



*Phot.21. Oświęcim, Legionów Street. Former villa of the KL Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höß. View towards the north*



*Phot.22. Oświęcim. The Soła River in the vicinity of the former KL Auschwitz. The site where the ashes of the genocide victims were dumped. View towards the south-west*



*Phot.23. Oświęcim, Kolbego Street. A timber barrack "SS-Küche" - the former SS kitchen and dining-room. View towards the north*



*Phot.24. Oświęcim, Kolbego Street. From the left: former camp bakery (now the Kraków Aggregate Exploitation Plant); former "TWL/HWL" - the SS economic and store base - the site where the first transport of prisoners from Tarnów were placed on 14 June 1940; the wall of the "SS-Küche" barrack. View towards the north*



*Phot.25. Oświęcim, Ostatni Etap Street. From the left: former KL Auschwitz waterworks (now town waterworks); former "TWL/HWL" - the SS economic and store base; Centre for Dialogue and Prayer, new Carmelite nunnery. View towards the east*



Phot.26. Oświęcim, Spółdzielców Street. "TWL/HWL" - the former SS economic and store base. In the foreground - decaying KL Auschwitz potato stores. View towards the south-west



Phot.27. Oświęcim. The premises of the so-called "Canada I" stock of the goods stolen from the genocide victims, the site where 200 Jews of the Sonderkommando were killed on 25 September 1944. View towards the west



Phot.28. Oświęcim, Leszczyńskiej Street. "Bauhof" premises - former KL Auschwitz construction materials yard (now Road Management). View towards the north-west direction



Phot.29. Oświęcim. Scrap metal yard in the vicinity of the historical siding "Do Monopolu". On the left - former KL Auschwitz heat and power generating plant. View towards the north-west



Phot.30. Oświęcim, Leszczyńskiej Street. Abandoned and decaying building of the KL Auschwitz voltage relay station. View towards the north-east



Phot.31. Oświęcim. On the left - block 1 of KL Auschwitz. On the right - the extended "Spółem" office building at the entrance to the Museum in Leszczyńskiej Street. An example of an incorrect interpretation of the protection zone conservation guidelines



Phot.32. Oświęcim, the Jaracza and Leszczyńskiej crossroads. A warehouse extended contrary to conservation guidelines in the bifurcation of the historical KL Auschwitz sidings. View towards the west



Phot.33. Oświęcim, Jaracza Street. The pre-war housing adapted during the war for the needs of the SS. In the background the so-called "Haus 7" a former shop for the SS families. View towards the north-east



Phot.34. Oświęcim, Leszczyńskiej Street. The former Krupp Works hall in Auschwitz (transformed after the war, now disused and decaying). View towards the north-west



Phot.35. Oświęcim. Leszczyńskiej Street. Pre-war workers' houses of the Zinc Rolling Mill converted during the war to a civilian workers camp "Zivilarbeiterlager". View towards the north-east



Phot.36. Oświęcim, Więźniów Oświęcimia Street. Pre-war villa converted by the SS to "Führerheim" - Officers' hotel and club. View towards the north-east



Phot.37. Oświęcim, Osiedlowa Street. Pre-war houses converted during the war to officers' houses "SS-Siedlung". In the background - the blocks of the housing estate Zasole built in the 1980s. View towards the south



*Phot.38. Oświęcim, Legionów Street. International Youth Meeting Center. View towards the north-east*



*Phot.39. Oświęcim, Legionów Street. Pre-war tannery converted during the war to the KL Auschwitz economic and store base. View towards the north-east*



*Phot.40. Oświęcim, Kolbego Street. Centre of Dialogue and Prayer. On the left - new Carmelite nunnery. View towards the north-west*

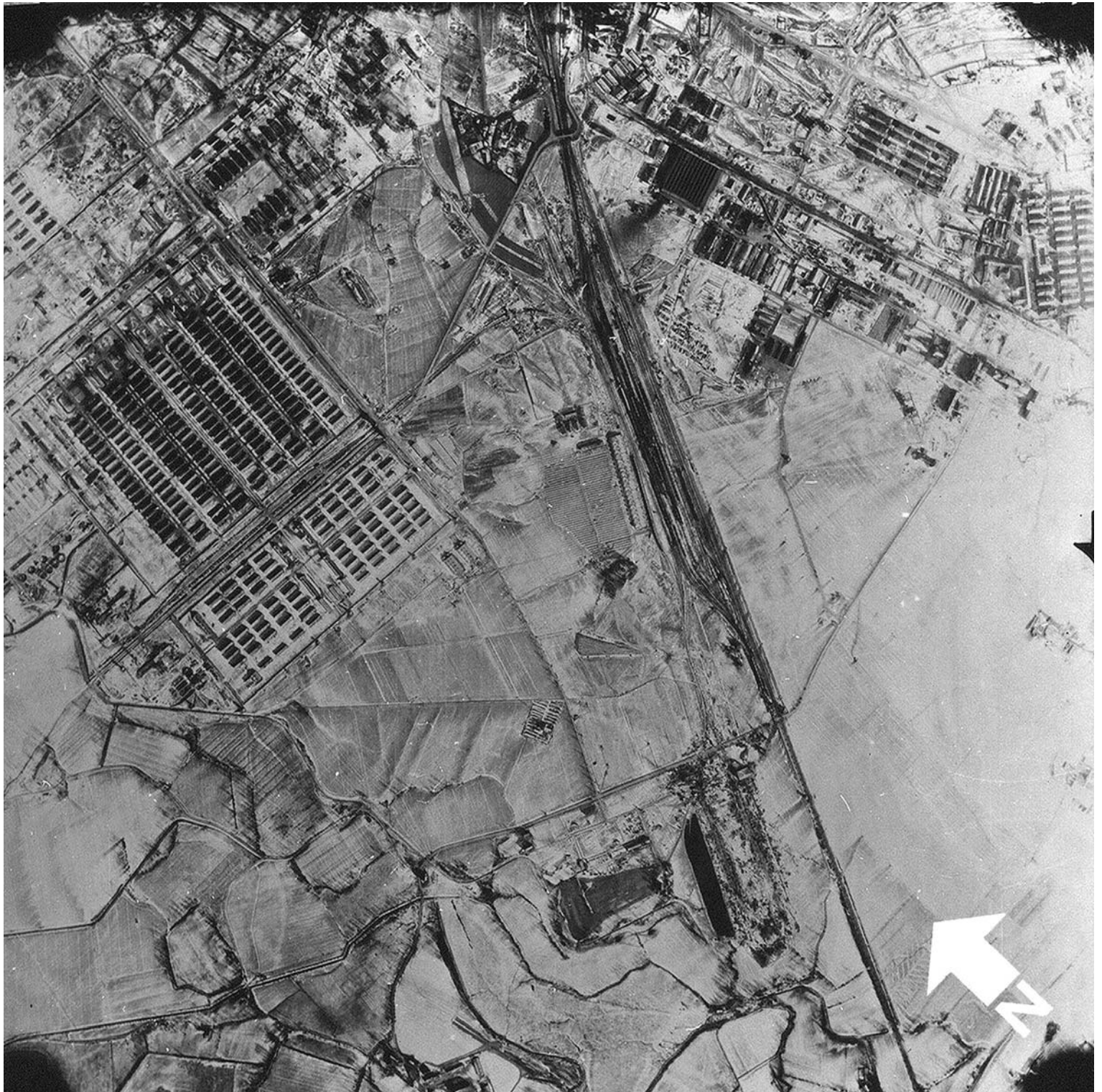


*Phot.41. Oświęcim, ks. J.Skarbka Square. The Auschwitz Jewish Center and the Chevra Lomdei Mishnayot Synagogue. View towards the west*



*Phot.42. Brzezinka. Nature and Landscape Complex "Stare Wiślisko" west off the former KL Birkenau. View towards the south-west*

## Appendix 18



*Auschwitz-Birkenau. Reproduction of an aerial photo taken by the Allies intelligence over Oświęcim on 14 January 1945 [orig. Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archive, neg. 20939/44]*



## Appendix 19



*Oświęcim-Brzezinka. Reproduction of an aerial photogrammetry photo taken by Wojciech Gorgolewski on 6 November 1996 [orig. Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Preservation Dept.]*





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## Abbreviations

AAN	- Central Archives of Modern Records (Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warszawa)
AGKBZHwP	- Archive of the Main Commission for Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation (Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warszawa)
AKF	- Amateur Film Club (Amatorski Klub Filmowy, Oświęcim)
AOKBZHwP	- Archive of the District Commission for Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation (Archiwum Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Kraków)
AP	- State Archive (Archiwum Państwowe)
APMO	- Archive of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oświęcim)
arch.	- architect
bw	- own research (badania własne)
BW	- construction work (Bauwerke)
c k.	- Imperial-Royal (cesarsko-królewski)
cyt.	- quotations in the media of: monographs, declarations, opinions of Jadwiga and Marek Rawecki, (see chapter: <i>Selected newspaper publications from 1946-2003</i> )
CZM	- Central Museums Management (Centralny Zarząd Muzeów, Warszawa)
d.k.	- national road (droga krajowa)
DAW	- Deutsche Ausrüstungs Werke GmbH
DEST	- Deutsche Erd- und Stein Werke GmbH
Dz.U.	- Journal of Parliamentary Acts (Dziennik Ustaw)
Dz.Urz.Woj.	- Voivodship Official Journal (Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa)
FIR	- Fédération Internationale de la Résistants (International Federation of the Resistance Members)
GDDKiA	- General Director for National Roads and Motorways (Generalna Dyrekcja Dróg Krajowych i Autostrad, Warszawa)
GKBZN	- Main Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce)
GKBZpNP	- Main Commission for Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warszawa)
GM	- Minister Cabinet (Gabinet Ministra)
GOP	- Upper Silesian Industrial Region (Górnośląski Okręg Przemysłowy)
GRN	- Communal Division of Home National Council (Gromadzka Rada Narodowa)
HWL	- main supply depot (Hauptwirtschaftslager)
IMGW	- Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej)
inż.	- Polish for engineer, an academic degree
IPN	- Institute of National Remembrance (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej)
JZW	- Jaworzno Coal Industry Union (Jaworznickie Zjednoczenie Węglowe)
KGL	- POW camp (Kriegsgefangenenlager)
KL	- Concentration camp (Konzentrationslager)
KPRI	- Katowice Engineering Enterprise (Katowickie Przedsiębiorstwo Robót Inżynieryjnych)
KRN	- Home National Council (Krajowa Rada Narodowa)
ks.	- priest
KW PZPR	- Voivodship Committee of Polish United Workers Party (Komitet Wojewódzki Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej)
KWK	- coal mine (Kopalnia Węgla Kamiennego)
MAGTiOŚ	- Ministry of Administration, Local Economy and Environment Protection (Ministerstwo Administracji, Gospodarki Terenowej i Ochrony Środowiska)
mgr	- Polish equivalent of Master of Arts or Master of Science
MKiS	- Ministry of Culture and the Arts (Ministerstwo Kultury i Sztuki)
MKO	- International Auschwitz Committee (Międzynarodowy Komitet Oświęcimski)

MOSZNiL	- Ministry of Environment Protection, Natural Resources and Forest Management (Ministerstwo Ochrony Środowiska, Zasobów Naturalnych i Leśnictwa)
MP	- Polish (Government) Journal (Monitor Polski)
m-pis	- unpublished
MR	- Marek Rawecki (refers to figures and notes)
MRN	- Town Division of Home National Council (Miejska Rada Narodowa)
MSW	- Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych)
MSWiA	- Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration (Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji)
MSZ	- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych)
O/S	- Upper Silesia (Oberschlesien)
OCK	- Culture Centre in Oświęcim (Oświęcimskie Centrum Kultury)
OKBZHwP	- District Commission for Investigation of German Nazi Crimes in Poland (Okręgowa Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce)
OKH	- Oberkommando des Heeres
OKKr	- District Commission in Kraków - identical with OKBZHwP (Okręgowa Komisja w Krakowie)
OPOW	- Division of Village Settlements Planning (refers to the State Archive in Kraków) (Oddział Planowania Osiedli Wiejskich, Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie)
OUG	- District Mining Office (Okręgowy Urząd Górniczy)
OZNS	- Oświęcim Car Repairs Company (Oświęcimskie Zakłady Naprawy Samochodów)
PGR	- State Farm (Państwowe Gospodarstwo Rolne)
PKN ICOMOS	- Polish National Committee of International Council on Monuments and Sites, Warszawa (Polski Komitet Narodowy Międzynarodowej Rady Zabytków i ich Zespołów, Warszawa)
PKP	- Polish State Railway (Polskie Koleje Państwowe)
PKS	- State Motor Transport Company (Państwowa Komunikacja Samochodowa)
PKZ	- State Studios for Conservation of Cultural Property (Pracownie Konserwacji Zabytków)
PLAN	- PLAN Design Studio, Gliwice (Pracownia Projektowa PLAN, Gliwice)
PMO	- Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum, Oświęcim (Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka) - since 1947 to 1999, - Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim (Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau) - since 1999
PP	- Polish State Enterprise (Przedsiębiorstwo Państwowe)
PSOZ	- State Service for Historical Monuments Protection (Państwowa Służba Ochrony Zabytków)
PZBWP	- Polish Society of Former Political Prisoners (Polski Związek Byłych Więźniów Politycznych)
PZPR	- Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza)
PZZ	- Polish Cereal Company (Polskie Zakłady Zbożowe)
RP	- Republic of Poland (Rzeczpospolita Polska)
RUL	- District Liquidation Office (Rejonowy Urząd Likwidacyjny, 1944-1950)
RUPP	- Regional Urban Planning Office (Regionalny Urząd Planowania Przestrzennego)
SPB	- Social Building Company (Społeczne Przedsiębiorstwo Budowlane 1929-1949, 1957-1960)
SS	- Schutzstaffel (Protection Squadron)
SS-WVHA	- Main Office of SS Economic and Administrative (SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt, Berlin)
TONo	- Auschwitz Preservation Society (Towarzystwo Opieki nad Oświęcimiem)
TP SA	- Polish Telecommunication Ltd (Telekomunikacja Polska SA)
TUP	- Polish Town Planners Society (Towarzystwo Urbanistów Polskich)
TWL	- military supply depot (Truppenwirtschaftslager)
TZP	- Temporary State Management (Tymczasowy Zarząd Państwowy)
UGO	- Oświęcim Commune Office (Urząd Gminy Oświęcim)
UMO	- Oświęcim Town Office (Urząd Miejski w Oświęcimiu)
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

URM	- Office of the Council of Ministers (Urząd Rady Ministrów)
USHMM	- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
USSR	- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WAPŚI	- Department of Urban and Spatial Planning of the Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology (Katedra Urbanistyki i Planowania Przestrzennego Wydziału Architektury Politechniki Śląskiej, Gliwice)
WKP	- Voivodship Nature Conservator (Wojewódzki Konserwator Przyrody)
WKZ	- Voivodship Historical Monuments Conservator (Wojewódzki Konserwator Zabytków)
WRN	- Voivodship Home National Council (Wojewódzka Rada Narodowa)
ZBL	- Central Construction Office of the Waffen SS and Police (Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS und Polizei Auschwitz O/S)
ZG	- Main Management (Zarząd Główny)
ZMiOZ	- Historical Monuments and Museums Management (Zarząd Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków)

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\* The spelling of the surname of the KL Auschwitz commandant has been assumed according to the preserved camp documentation i.e. Rudolf Höß. However, because of other spelling versions used in publications and monographs, original spelling has been preserved in quotations and documentation names ( Höss, Hoess).









*Jadwiga Rawecka  
Marek Rawecki*

***Marek Rawecki***

*Born 1958. Architect. Since 1985 scientific and didactic work at the Department of Urban and Spatial Planning of the Faculty of Architecture of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice.*

*Doctorate thesis, 2000: "The Oświęcim-Brzezinka State Museum Protection Zone" (supervised by Professor Zbigniew Gądek and by Professor T. Przemysław Szafer). Prepared numerous architectural and conservation documentations. Co-author of the Oświęcim Programme and the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim. In 1999-2001 member of the International Group of Experts for the Government Plenipotentiary for the Implementation of the Strategic Governmental Programme for Oświęcim.*