

## Wspomnienia / Memories

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### *Romantic and enthusiast or an architect in excavations*

#### *Abstract*

This outline is an attempt to show the beginnings of the wide-ranging archaeological and architectural research of the Old Town of Głogów, almost completely destroyed as a result of the defense of Festung Glogau in 1945, carried out under the leadership of Professor Tadeusz Kozaczewski, in which the author participated since his studies at the Faculty of Architecture of the Wrocław University of Science and Technology. He shows the changing role of the architect in the research process; from a romantic explorer and discoverer – in the likeness of Winckelmann or Schliemann – to the head of a large, interdisciplinary research team and chief coordinator of the documentation work. It focuses on a forgotten episode in the research on the chancel of St. Peter's Church, when numerous burials of prehistoric and medieval chronology were discovered. It became a pretext for re-presenting the discovery along with the archaeological context. As a long-time educator, the author draws attention to the need to conduct and constantly improve methods of interdisciplinary research and systematically verify findings with representatives of other sciences.

**Key words:** Głogów, archaeology, architecture, Middle Ages

#### *Archaeological beginnings or about the advantages of the stratigraphic method*

Głogów became the place of my first experiences in the field of archaeological and architectural research. The studies on the beginnings of this town, which was important for the history of Silesia and the Polish Middle Ages, were carried out by German [1]–[7] and Polish [8]–[35] researchers for many years and I participated in them during a relatively short period, i.e., in the years 1964–1968. These were annual four-month cycles of works which lasted from June to the end of September and used a break period in academic teaching. It was there that I found out how crucial the awareness of responsibility for the entire process of archaeological exploration is during such research. The successively uncovered layers, whose content

is accurately recorded, must be removed in order to reach the layers below. It resembles reading a book, whose subsequent pages, after reading them, are removed because this is the only way you can get further and read the next ones. It is therefore a destructive method. This peculiarity requires great accuracy and reliability because subsequent researchers will only rely on our data records as well as on the information contained in artifacts in museums. Archaeological research, although seemingly only ancillary to works of architecture, remains the domain of archaeologists who are supposed to determine key facts regarding these architectural works.

The author of these words, who studied at the Faculty of Architecture of Wrocław University of Science and Technology in the years 1959–1965, recalls here his first encounter with the already advanced architectural and archaeological research precisely in the Old Town of Głogów [11], [12], [15]–[21]. Being a lover of history since the high school time, I was confronted there with something that I had only briefly encountered during my studies. This was a cursory look at the current

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archaeological research in the area of the Old Town in Wrocław only; the works were carried out by Professor Józef Kaźmierczyk at that time (1926–1993). Then, just like today, a student was burdened with a lot of historical facts and supposed to know transformations of architectural forms in great detail. It had its justification in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or even a little longer. After all, they were used in architectural design. It ended with forced, therefore imminently outdated socialist realism after World War II. Architecture was to present national forms which had socialist contents. At present, the only justification for an expert knowledge of the full range of historical forms is the profession of a conservator-restorer who deals with the protection of monuments, although it is the architect who meets tough competition from both professional conservators and art historians. Hence, such a current appeal to draw attention in the didactic process not only to the encyclopaedic knowledge of facts, but above all to the research methodology itself and therefore an independent individual analysis of stratification in architectural structures, similarly like in the case of archaeological stratigraphy. And it is a difficult art, yet at the same time very much needed.

I came into contact with architectural research, which was connected with limited in its scope archaeological works and also with the conservation of the discovered architectural structures, as early as July 1962, while participating in the inventory measurements of the castle in Iłża. Measurements were made possible thanks to the gradually revealed outlines of the main walls of this structure, which remained in illegible ruin at that time. After a two-week practice, Professor Jerzy Rozpędowski (1929–2012) who carried out the works, suggested that someone from the group of students stay in Iłża to control further actions. I volunteered without much thought. In my new role as work manager, I also acted as an engineer at the same time because this was the only way I could maintain authority and obedience among workers. The works lasted a couple of weeks. During this time, while keeping an eye on the method of securing the crown of walls, due to a large cavity in the gate roundel bastion facing the bridge, I decided to fill this gap in order to prevent further destruction. In this gap there were traces of an embrasure outlet, which I ordered to fill. For this purpose, I personally made a centring corresponding to the conical shape of the outlet of this embrasure. To this day, it probably “peeks” at the city stretching out at the foot of the castle with this reconstructed “eye”.

In my fourth year of study, after receiving a research scholarship, I became a volunteer in the Department of the History of Universal Architecture, which was then headed by Professor Tadeusz Broniewski (1894–1976). At that time I also met Professor Tadeusz Kozaczewski (1916–1992) who directed me – a history enthusiast – to participate in the ongoing research in the area of the Old Town in Głogów. By supervising these works, the Professor became my Master and introduced me into the secrets of architectural and archaeological research, more precisely into the skill of the stratigraphic analysis. Even when I later changed my research interests, the method I had learned at that time has been successfully applied

by me, proving its effectiveness in relation to diverse research areas and different historical eras.

In Głogów, the research was carried out in many places in the old town area and also on Ostrów Tumski (Cathedral Island), i.e., in the Collegiate Church which was located there [29]. I started with a drawing of the discovered stratigraphy, both in vertical and horizontal cross-sections, in the exposed presbytery of the post-Dominican St. Peter's Church (Figs. 1, 2) which was situated in the outer bailey of the castle. The drawings, which were made on a scale of 1:10, included stratifications dating back to the Neolithic (female burial), then fragments of the Lusatian culture urn field, and the graves of church dignitaries, which were located right in front of the altar. Inside the outline of the coffin, the silhouette of the deceased with a large handful of bones from a Lusatian culture urn placed on his chest was visible [29, Fig. 87, p. 103]. Shortly thereafter, I participated in the works which were conducted on the premises of St. Nicholas' Parish Church which until now remains in the form of a permanent ruin [12], [29, p. 115 et seq.]. I made a non-implemented project of its preservation in ruins right after obtaining my architect's diploma on March 15, 1965.

I prepared a rich inventory and stratigraphic drawings, including reconstructions, which covered all sites, in the form of large colour boards and with the use of pastels on the cardboard. They served as illustrations for the nationwide conference which took place in Głogów at that time. It was attended by many famous archaeologists, historians, and architects. The conference was devoted to the origins of medieval towns which were often preceded by pre-foundation settlements. In this case, Głogów was an example of a model solution of an early urban agglomeration, which was typical of the early Middle Ages. It was reflected by the late Romanesque phases of architecture, which were discovered in the churches of Głogów, still surprising today with its scale and quite European-class architectural detail [16], [17], [20], [29].

The researched structures also included the Głogów Castle [10], [26], [28]. Its initial phase, which corresponded to the early form of an urban settlement and preceded the stone perimeter of the castle, was hidden – which was revealed by a gigantic excavation under the former castle garden – in the so-called outer bailey. The excavation, approximately 60 meters long and 6.5 meters deep, ran across the existing slope of the terrain. It revealed subsequent stratifications, i.e., from a row of graves of Wehrmacht soldiers (plundered by unknown perpetrators at night) to the relics of a once powerful wooden and earth embankment covered with a thick coat of clay. In order to record the stratigraphy at the bottom of this excavation, I drew it while hanging upside down hoping that the excavation would not suddenly collapse. It could have turned the author of these words into another relic determining the exact time of deposition of the stratifications constituting the fill of the excavation we had made. Out of the numerous archaeologists attending the nationwide conference, only the aged Professor Józef Kostrzewski (1885–1969), the doyen of Polish archaeology, descended into this excavation at that time.

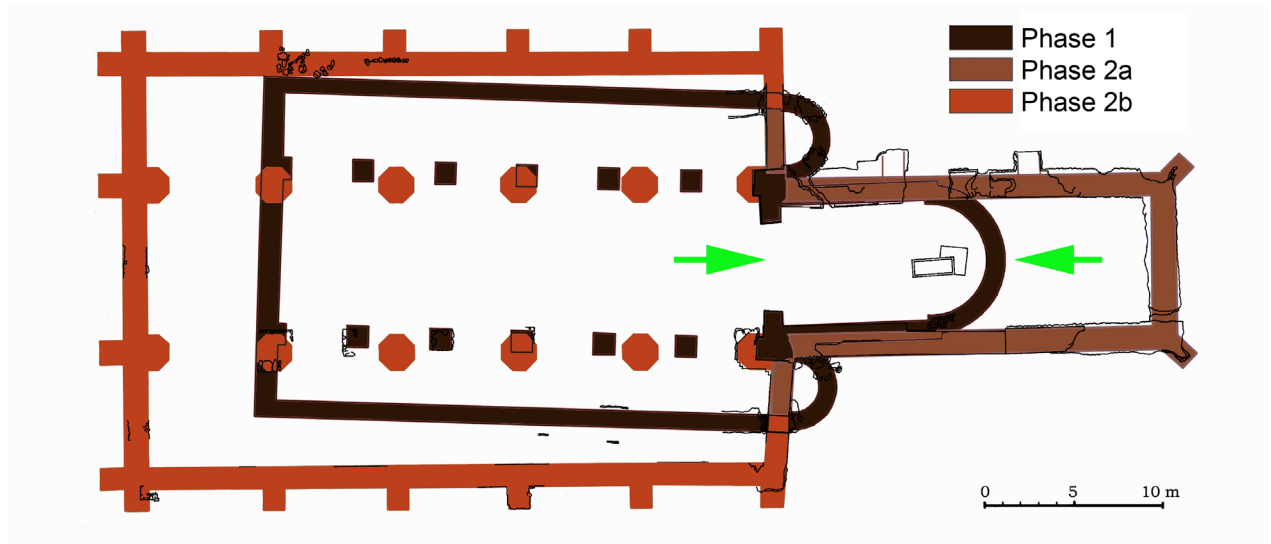


Fig. 1. Głogów, Old Town. Relics of St. Peter's Church discovered during excavations (elaborated by E. Niemczyk after: [29]). Green arrows indicate the location of the archaeological discoveries described in the article

Il 1. Głogów, Stare Miasto. Relikty kościoła św. Piotra odkryte podczas wykopalisk (oprac. E. Niemczyk za: [29]). Zielone strzałki wskazują lokalizację odkryć archeologicznych opisanych w artykule

The described research was overseen by the then Provincial Conservator Stanisław Kowalski MSc [12], whereas the archaeological conservator from whom I learned a lot was Edward Dąbrowski MSc (1921–2007), also from Zielona Góra, a passionate field researcher and an expert in typology based on ceramic forms [11].

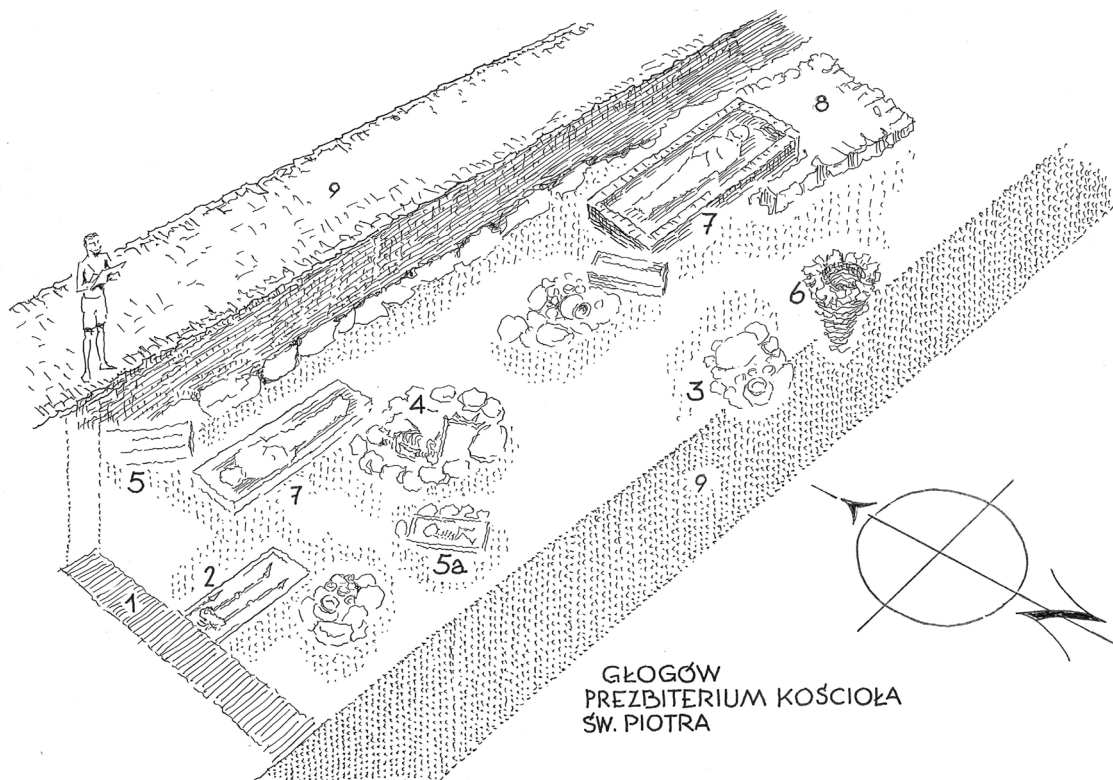
Since 1965, archaeological works in Głogów have become the domain of a graduate of the University of Wrocław, an archaeologist, Czesław Lasota MSc (1941–2023), my peer, and then an invaluable researcher of Wrocław's past as well as greatly distinguished for researching the beginnings of Wrocław, its urban planning and architecture [15], [22], [23]. Although the castle was not yet fully adapted for settling down and was still in a shell state, Czesław Lasota and I stayed in one of the rooms on the ground floor, taking care of the collection of artifacts there, including numerous skeletons exhumed during the church research. Our sleep, in such an austere and romantic setting, illuminated by candles only, was not disturbed by any visits from "ghosts of the past". This is how my imaginings of romantic discoveries, which in my high school days were inspired by such books as the then bestseller entitled *Gods, Graves and Scholars* by C.W. Ceram, came true.

### *The archaeology of (non)memory*

The first objects that I dealt with as a draftsman – and a future researcher of architecture – during the excavations in Głogów were the already mentioned relics of the parish church, then Dominican St. Peter's Church (Fig. 1). This structure, which was mentioned in 1258 as *ecclesia laterita*, disappeared from the town's panorama at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and until post-war research, even its precise location was not known. As it turned out, the architectural and functional transformations of the church were much more complicated than expected. Initially – after Blessed

Virgin Mary's Church of the Gord lost its importance and the construction of the basilica Collegiate on Ostrów Tumski began – it performed the role of the first parish church on the left bank, but during the period of foundation charter transformations it was abandoned and – similarly like St. Adalbert's Church in Wrocław or Basilica of Holy Trinity in Cracow – was handed over to the Dominicans who came to the town. It was then that the regular spatial and functional layout of late medieval Głogów crystallized, in the southern part of which the third late Romanesque brick basilica was built and this time it was dedicated to the patron of merchants – Saint Nicholas. The Dominicans, in turn, dismantled in stages the very archaic, three-apsed, brick basilica of St. Peter and replaced it with an innovative church with a long, rectangular choir and an avant-garde, hall body, comparable to the oldest and most significant churches of *predicantes* in this part of Europe. Using the walls of the former presbytery, after the demolition of the apse, a model Dominican presbytery was constructed. It was built on a rectangular plan with external dimensions of approximately 23.80 m × 10.36–10.64 m and internal dimensions of 20.75–20.93 m × 6.69–7.40 m. It was a three-span and vaulted (probably with cross and rib vaults) structure, as evidenced by the use of typical cross buttresses. In the construction of both the older and the new church, bricks were used and laid in the Slavonic and two-stretcher bond, in the *opus empletum* technique with the use of sand and lime mortar. The bricks from the older church had a wrinkled texture typical of that time and non-uniform, reduction-oxidation firing, which gave them a specific appearance.

When I started documentation work, the outline of the Dominican presbytery (Fig. 2.9) along with the foundation of a probably Gothic altar was already visible (Fig. 2.8). In order to make my drawing – which was published four decades after the end of the research, i.e., in 2006 and presented archaeological discoveries made inside it



**Fig. 2.** Głogów, Old Town. Burials discovered during excavations in the chancel of St. Peter's Church ([29], contemporary drawing interpretation by author). Legend for the drawing: 1. A modern wall located between the half-pillars of the chancel arch of the Dominican church, 2. Skeletal burial of a man with a dagger in his left hand, 3. Ashtrays/urns of the Lusatian culture, 4. Skeletal burial of a woman in the fetal position, 5. Skeletal burials from before the construction of the church, 5a. Burial of a small child, 6. A conical depression filled with stones and ash, 7. Skeletal burials of church dignitaries, 8. Gothic altar (?), 9. The wall of the presbytery of the Dominican church.

**II. 2.** Głogów, Stare Miasto. Pochówki odkryte podczas wykopalisk w prezbiterium kościoła św. Piotra (za: [29], współczesna interpretacja rysunkowa autora]. Legenda do rysunku: 1. Nowożytna ściana znajdująca się między półfilarami łuku prezbiterium kościoła dominikanów, 2. Pochówek szkieletowy mężczyzny ze sztyłem w lewej ręce, 3. Popielnice kultury lużyckiej, 4. Pochówek szkieletowy kobiety w pozycji płodowej, 5. Pochówki szkieletowe sprzed budowy kościoła, 5a. Pochówek małego dziecka, 6. Stożkowate zagłębienie wypełnione kamieniami i popiołem, 7. Pochówki szkieletowe dostojników kościelnych, 8. Gotycki ołtarz (?), 9. Ściana prezbiterium kościoła dominikanów

– more readable and to supplement it with a commentary [29, Fig. 87, p. 103], I prepared the interpretation again with a comprehensive legend (Fig. 2). For this purpose, I reached into my own memory, which has fortunately been stable so far – probably due to the fact that I participated in both the discovery of the relics and their drawing registration. My memory must also replace the lack of my original drawing, which was much richer with numerous details, as well as the diary of the works carried out there, which probably resulted from the emphasis put on discovering the relics of monumental architecture. Stratigraphy of stratifications, i.e., the only possibility of establishing at least a relative chronology of structures, was usually treated as an ongoing aid in the interpretation of spatial transformations in a partially preserved monument.

As a draftsman, I also made numerous drawings of the stratigraphy visible in archaeological surveys carried out within the presbytery. The western part of the church, which was disturbed by modern mainly baroque stratifications, was legible only in a few fragments. It only made it possible to specify the western boundary of the body and the rhythm of the supports between the aisles. The modern wall (Fig. 2.1) in the chancel's arch of the presbytery, also constituted its western boundary. The mentioned wall (Fig. 2.1)

destroyed the upper part of the outline of a skeleton burial (Fig. 2.2), probably of a man. He had an iron dagger in his left hand which lay next to his thigh. The location of this burial almost on the axis of the presbytery, from which the coffin was also visible, gives rise to the assumption that it was the burial of someone of high social status.

The entire area of the presbytery, as the drawing makes clear, was rich in numerous burials, which proves that the necropolis was located there and used for a very long time. Its location on the left bank of the Oder may indicate that the settlement at that time was located across the river, in the area of Ostrów Tumski, which results from a long-living tradition of separating the dead from the alive, protecting the latter against the interference of uninvited guests from the afterlife.

Probably most of the foundation stones of the presbytery walls came from numerous graves, in which they served as a kind of guard or improvised chests. The most numerous were cremation burials from the times of the urn fields of the Lusatian culture (Fig. 2.3).

The oldest was probably a skeletal burial of a woman (?) surrounded by large boulders (Fig. 2.4). In the fetal position, the skeleton's head faced the north and its face faced the east. This corresponds to long-living cult tradi-



tions seeing in the Sun a guarantee of return – rebirth from the sleep of death. Due to the lack of equipment to facilitate the determination of the chronology of its creation, the only hypothesis left is the suggestion that it may come from the Neolithic period.

Apart from the listed burials, several skeletal burials were also found in the presbytery (Fig. 2.5). Their orientation – similarly to the orientation of the woman's skeleton – indicates their origin from before the construction of the church. Particularly moving was a small coffin with a barely legible skeleton of a small child, also resting in a fetal position on its left side (Fig. 2.5a).

A difficult to interpret finding was a conical depression – from before the construction of the church because it was hidden under the foundation of the southern wall of the presbytery (Fig. 2.6). Reaching about 1.5 meters inside, it was formed by a coat of broken stone. Similar stone, burnt with a great deal of ash, filled the interior of this cone. Perhaps it was a trace of a part of the funeral cult of the cremation rite, in which an important role was assigned to the element of fire which freed the souls of the deceased from the bondage of their bodies. It was probably believed then, as in many cultures around the world, that until the soul of the deceased is released in the process of decomposition of the body in the earth, it may haunt the settlements of the living in the form of revenants and ghosts.

Finishing this a bit too long reconstruction of discoveries in which I participated and which I included in the form of drawings for convenience, I must recognize and indicate medieval burials on the basis of their location on the axis of the presbytery, i.e., burials of church dignitaries (Fig. 2.7). One of them, in a brick tomb, damaged the foundation of the altar with its excavation (Fig. 2.8). The second one, which was located in some distance from the altar but also on its axis, contained an interesting finding. In the outline of the coffin, it was possible to see the silhouette of the deceased who held his hands on his chest, onto which – probably at the time of burial – a handful of burnt bones had been poured – probably from a Lusatian culture grave which was damaged during the inhumation. This proves the awareness of medieval people who realized that they violated the burial, although pagan because it was cremated, but also of someone who waited for the Last Judgment, being redeemed by Christ. For me it was a touching example of solidarity beyond time and cultural differences.

In this general reconstruction, I tried not to succumb to nostalgia for the past, irrevocably gone youth that idealizes the past. I hope that with the above-mentioned drawing and the legend explaining its contents, I will be able to save at least some of these unusual and always surprising discoveries, which often moved us while exploring them in the Old Town of Głogów.

### *Farewell to Głogów*

Unfortunately, despite my full commitment and contribution to field research – and I was already an assistant at that time – I did not receive a proposal from Professor Tadeusz Kozaczewski to analyse even a small fragment of the obtained data. This became the source of my dilemma

and disappointment. Fortunately, it was not in vain that the education of an assistant professor at the Faculty of Architecture was and remains multifaceted, introducing a wide range of technical and artistic skills. And this in line with the function of architecture, combining these two spheres of life, i.e., technology and artistic creativity. It was during the excavations that I deepened my skills in realistic reconstruction of discovered relics and their exhibition.

Artistic passions found their effective implementation in the development of a competition project, presented together with my friend, then a graduate of the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Wrocław, sculptor Andrzej Wojciechowski. It was a competition to commemorate the “Return of the Western and Northern Lands to the Motherland”. In it, which was decided in 1967, we received a first-degree distinction. This finally confirmed to Professor Tadeusz Kozaczewski that there was a substantive disagreement between us.

I expected to give up the assistantship, but a pleasant surprise was the proposal of Professor Jerzy Rozpędowski, who remembered my participation in the works in Iłża – to take up an assistantship at the Department of the History of Polish Architecture, which was transformed shortly thereafter, in 1968, into the Institute of the History of Architecture, Art and Technology, Wrocław University of Science and Technology.

And the research in the Old Town and Ostrów Tumski in Głogów was continued and is continued with varying intensity and success to this day. Studies were conducted, among others, by: Prof. Olgierd Czerner, Prof. Jacek Kościuk, Prof. Rafał Czerner, Dr. Czesław Lasota PhD, Dr. Jerzy Romanow PhD and Dr. Maciej Małachowicz PhD. From the beginning of the 1980s, the Archaeological and Historical Museum in Głogów took over this valuable initiative. The researchers included Prof. Józef Szykułski, Dr. Krzysztof Czaplą PhD, Aleksander Dobrowolski MSc, Zenon Hendel MSc, Waław Pogorzelski MSc, Marzena Grochowska-Jasnos PhD, and Zdzisław Wiśniewski MSc, along with the employees of his enterprise: Dr. Roland Mruczek PhD, Michał Stefanowicz M.Eng., Maciej Broda, MSc or Tomasz A. Kastek, MSc. The exploration certainly gained the greatest momentum after 1989, when, under the substantive supervision of Dr. Czesław Lasota PhD, individual quarters of bourgeois buildings were systematically examined using a wide-area method [30]–[35]. It can be said that this researcher – an archaeologist by profession – created something like his own school of architectural exploration and educated a large group of students, also finding many followers.

Archaeologists have finally become full participants in the research process, and architects and architectural historians seek their opinions and often even adopt their working methods, successfully exploring the secrets of stratigraphy and stratification as well as the complicated nuances of post-depositional processes. Has the Głogów research model worked and has it actually set a new standard or at least the current ceiling of possibilities and expectations? Time will tell. However, it was certainly an excellent interdisciplinary research training ground; one of the best in this part of Europe.

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## Streszczenie

*Romantyzm i entuzjasta, czyli architekt na wykopaliskach*

Niniejszy szkic stanowi próbę ukazania początków szerokopłaszczyznowych badań archeologiczno-architektonicznych Starego Miasta w Głogowie, zniszczonego niemal doszczętnie w wyniku obrony Festung Glogau w 1945 r., prowadzonych pod kierownictwem Prof. Tadeusza Kozaczewskiego, w których autor uczestniczył od czasów studiów na Wydziale Architektury Politechniki Wrocławskiej. Pokazuje zmieniającą się rolę architekta w procesie badawczym; od romantycznego eksploratora i odkrywcy – na podobieństwo Winckelmanna czy Schliemanna – po kierownika dużego, interdyscyplinarnego zespołu badawczego i głównego koordynatora prac dokumentacyjnych. Koncentruje się na zapomnianym epizodzie z badań prezbiterium kościoła p.w. św. Piotra, kiedy to odkryto liczne pochówki o chronologii pradziejowej i średniowiecznej. Stał się on pretekstem do ponownej prezentacji odkrycia wraz z szerszym kontekstem archeologicznym. Jako wieloletni dydaktyk, autor zwraca uwagę na konieczność prowadzenia i ciągłego doskonalenia metod badań interdyscyplinarnych oraz systematycznej weryfikacji ustaleń z przedstawicielami innych nauk.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Głogów, archeologia, architektura, średniowiecze