

# The school of wives

The unique case of Stanislaw Noakowski Female School of Architecture in Poland (1926-1972)

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## Abstract:

The research looks at the role of architecture education in the female architects practising between 1930 and 1972 in Poland. It investigates not contested women's contribution to architecture development, as they are unquestionably underexplored and underappreciated. Women's participation in the construction of Polish cities remains a blank page in the literature, with only a few names of female architects appearing infrequently. This paper aims to track down female architects working and those unnoticed in the descriptions, to identify the reasons for and differences in the architectural education of people in Poland during the chosen time.

More specifically, the research investigates the beginnings of the "wives' school" (*Szkoła żon*) dates to 1927, established by architect Władysław Jastrzębski and architect Aleksander Kapuściński and Dr. architect Mieczysław Popiel, that was primely called "Female Architectural Courses" (*Żeńskie Kursy Architektoniczne*). This incongruous name came from the focus of female education on being architects' wives and drafting technicians working in their studios. In 1960 the name of the school was changed to the Stanislaw Noakowski State School of Architecture (*Żeńskie Liceum Architektury im. Stanisława Noakowskiego*). Since 1970 the school has had a co-educational character and function as a technical High School of construction engineering and architecture (*technikum Architektoniczno – Budowlane*), graduating with a Building Technician title.

In post-war Poland, women were educated not only as architects but also as housewives according to 20th-century standard, so-called "Mother Pole" (*Matka Polka*) – family-focused, musical, talented in painting and interior design. Therefore, the curriculum included building-related subjects and those enriching "sensitivity" and "imagination" such as "The Sunlight in Architecture" or "Musicology". The original idea was to organise during design classes. The pieces performed were, of course, related to the theme of the architectural project.

In the pre-war period, the school was completed by 150 - 200 female graduates<sup>1</sup>, obtaining the title of architectural technician, not an architect, which prevented them from potentially starting their businesses, building projects, or signing plans. Their only position opportunity was to work as an

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<sup>1</sup>Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

assistant to an architect or drafter. There is no documentation of their later fates, as nobody recorded and stored data about technicians. Many remained housewives: others worked in architectural offices, building men's world dreams.

The school was developing very dynamically due to the highly qualified staff members recruited from the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology. The teachers - architects - were male as architecture was considered a male department. It is worth noticing that no female teacher from the early years of school activity appears in the data record. However, due to this dependence, some graduates met their future husbands, the architects, through an organised social event as dances and games with the students from the University, forming architectural tandems, which enabled them to work in the creative process of architecture.

The paper traces female graduates, their fates, historical circumstances, and stereotypes entering post-school life, elaborating on the dynamics between the "husbands" and "wives" who formed architectural teams between 1930 and 1970.

## INTRODUCTION (600) 877

Behind every office, every building, and every design throughout history, hidden figures are not mentioned in the final process. Their work is crucial but not recognised. Vital but minor. Their work hides behind the pages and lines, so obviously visible and at the same time blindly unrecognised. The history of female drafting technicians, trained by the best architects and designers to serve them and complete their visions, is wildly unappreciated.

Throughout history, females were often politically invisible; the case of the research touches on the invisibility of Polish female drafters, so valuable in the architectural field and so undervalued at the same time. In every single political and social system, females encountered different problems. Every single time, they were suppressed with different methods and had to fight for their value and recognition. The situation of female drafters is fascinating as they were constantly and continuously valuable in their field. However, they never gained recognition for their work due to the political and social establishments and stereotypes. Although those establishments changed with time, their work was never traced and appreciated because they were not architects, and their signatures do not exist on any blueprints.

This paper explores the context in which they were working, different eras and obstacles they encountered while being women and having technician education. It aims to tell the story of hidden values and reveal the names behind the big offices rebuilding the whole country.

Tracing back Polish education history, few women began to study architecture as early as 1915 at the Warsaw University of Technology (*Politechnika Warszawska*). However, until 1945, men had priority and advantage while making a career in the building industry. Due to widespread propaganda about the intellectual superiority of a male and the position of women in society, females could not attend universities. Moreover, till 1915 the Warsaw University law forbade females to study at technical universities. The interwar period noted an increase in the number of women studying architecture, although, for most, this later meant collaborating with an architect husband.<sup>2</sup> Few women architects gained independent recognition at that time. After the First World War devastation and the shortage of men, women got professional opportunities to prepare to be drafters. However, the main reason for their admission to education and the law change was the economic crisis that forced both partners to work<sup>3</sup> and created a need for architects as cities were in ruins. Both partners had to earn a living to maintain a minimum standard, family and get government-funded housing units.

In 1926, the private Stanislaw Noakowski Female School of Architecture (*Żeńska Szkoła Architektury*), known in the community as the "School for Wives" (*Szkoła Żon*) because many female graduates collaborating with architects became their wives, was established in Warsaw

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<sup>2</sup>, Piotr Marciniak. "Famous or Forgotten: Women Architects in Communist Poland..." Accessed March 10, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Miłoszewska-Kielbiewska, *Obraz kobiety XX i XXI wieku w wybranych polskich czasopismach i poradnikach dobrego wychowania* Warszawa, 2018

by Professor Władysław Jastrzębski. It became a phenomenon as it was the only such institution in Poland. The school operated in the building of the State Construction School at 81 Wspólna Street in the city of Warsaw. During the day, the building served as a technical school and as a private female architectural course in the afternoons. After graduating from school, many women found employment in low-level positions as technical assistants. They became cheap labour driving large architectural studios, rebuilding capitals, with no chance for advancement as achieving higher positions or leading the team. Despite proclaimed equality,<sup>4</sup> many managerial higher positions still belonged to men. Female architects helped rebuild the royal castle, decorated the interiors, and worked in the reconstruction office of the capital (*Biuro Odbudowy Stolicy*) on state jobs. Many of them cannot be identified as authors today because "proper", with an architectural degree and state entitlements, architects signed their work, not draftspeople. Many names are not included in "*im Memorium of polish architects*" as they were not architects. Therefore, documenting their work and conducting this research was exceedingly difficult despite reviling their names.

The paper deals with the phenomenon of female architectural education in 20th century Warsaw. It traces back to females working professionally and earning the title of architectural technician in Poland between 1930 and 1970. The research covers the form of education, the subjects, and the histories of chosen individual graduates of the Female School of Architecture (*Żeńska Szkoła Architektury*) – the case of a women's design school in eastern Europe. The first chapter traces the school's history and its characteristic features: the phenomenon of creating such a school and its subject analysis and specifics of teaching. The second chapter examines the uniqueness of the school and the circumstances that made it possible. More specifically, the second chapter develops "extracurricular" activities -such as being a soldier, and factors conducive to changing the position of women in the eyes of Polish society. Moreover, it outlines the historical context. The chapter also addresses the most relevant known cases, described in the appendix, and stories of women who graduated from the school, analysing their role in professional and private lives. Overall, the research aims to trace the names and fate of these women and document their merits and achievements, which are often omitted and ignored by textbooks.

The collected visual data comes from the Warsaw National Archive, including – diplomas and lists of subjects. Moreover, the paper includes the memories of former students- Ewelina Górna - Gładzik, Wanda Mołoniewicz, Anna Czapska, Anna Kuran, Barbara Zaleska-Matarewicz, Anna Czochorowska – Płucińska, Leonard Jastrzębski, Halina Migurska - Mojsewicz, Stafan Hołówko, Janina Kucharska, Krystyna Bukowczyk. It also features data based on interviews with the contemporary students: Oliwia Czerwińska and Kacper Sonnenfeld, who shared their knowledge and helped identify people on the photographs and documentation provided by the school - Stanisław Noakowski Architectural and Construction Technical School (*Technikum*

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<sup>4</sup> As according to the March Constitution (*konstytucja marcowa*) (1921) all humans - man and woman had equal rights, equal chances, and opportunities.

*Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego*). It includes documents such as a graduation certificate, id card and photographs with former professors. The school's history was portrayed in a booklet published for the 70th anniversary of the school published privately in a small edition. Concerning the limitations of the research, the documentation consists of letters and books in Polish and English and preserved documents, as a majority of them from the early years of school history burned in a fire in 1945 when the first school building was bombed. Moreover, many of the women mentioned by name in the alumni books [Appendix 1] have already passed away, and many are difficult to trace due to the change of surname from maiden to husband. This, however, leaves an expansive room for exploration of the research.

## CHAPTER 1 - THE UNIQUE CASE OF THE FIRST FEMALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

The story of women architects begins with the regaining of independence. This critical event opened a new chapter in history for Polish women, who gained voting rights the same year in 1918. Polish suffrage happened earlier than in Great Britain (1928), France (1944) and Switzerland (1971). While British or American suffragettes pressured the government, demanding equal rights, the three partitions scattered female Polish activists across the country. As three occupants - the Prussian, Russian and Austrian partitions, divided the territory of Poland between themselves, they applied different laws derived from their country of origin. Each one had its legislation, greater or lesser political freedom, and different struggle strategies and cooperation with the partitioner; consequently, different laws applied to women. In each of the partitions, there were movements for the emancipation of women. Russian women gained this right as early as 1917 and contributed to creating organisations and struggles for women's rights. Polish women had to contend with accusations that it was time for only one battle: for their own country's independence.<sup>5</sup> As soon as the opportunity arose and the country gained independence, Poles unitedly fought for their autonomy.<sup>6</sup>

The necessity to rebuild the country after the devastation of World War I and to merge the three partitions became one of the priority tasks of the state, creating new architectural challenges. The principal founders of the school [Figure 1] established in 1927; were Władysław Jastrzębski,<sup>7</sup> Aleksander Kapuscinski<sup>8</sup>, Mieczysław Popiel<sup>9</sup> and Stanisław Noakowski<sup>10</sup>, whose name the school took after his death in 1928.

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<sup>5</sup> Unknown Author, "Sto Lat Praw Wyborczych Polek." *Niepodległa - stulecie odzyskania niepodległości*. Accessed March 28, 2022. <https://niepodlegla.gov.pl/o-niepodleglej/sto-lat-praw-wyborczych-polek/>.

<sup>6</sup> "Unknown author, *Sto Lat Praw Wyborczych Polek.*" *Niepodległa - stulecie odzyskania niepodległości*.

<sup>7</sup> Władysław Jastrzębski- more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/wladyslaw\\_jastrzebski,15042](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/wladyslaw_jastrzebski,15042)

<sup>8</sup> Aleksander Kapuściński- more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/aleksander\\_kapuscinski,18074](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/aleksander_kapuscinski,18074)

<sup>9</sup> Mieczysław Popiel- more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/mieczyslaw\\_popiel,35202](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/mieczyslaw_popiel,35202)

<sup>10</sup> Stanisław Noakowski- more info: <http://www.tab.edu.pl/images/pliki/2017-01-stanislaw-noakowski.pdf>



Figure 1: Founders of the school from left to right – Władysław Jastrzębski, Aleksander Kapuściński, Mieczysław Popiel. Source: Konkurs z okazji 90-lecia szkoły, Historia szkoły na wesole. 1927 - 2017

As the name suggests, private Female Architecture Courses were a private 2-year school where classes took place in the afternoons. The teaching took place in the building of the State Building School (*Państwowa Szkoła Budownictwa*) at 81 Wspólna Street in Warsaw. In 1938, it transformed into the 3-years long St. Noakowski's Female School of Architecture (in the afternoon) and the Female High School of Architecture (daytime classes). The graduates of the school from that period were granted, by the decision of the Ministry (*Decyzja WRiOP z 25.05.1939 roku*), rights equal to those of the graduates of the State Secondary Building School - building technicians. After 1938, by the law article (*Artykuł MOiOP z dnia 14.12.1938*), they were given the title of "architectural technician" (*Technik architektury*). Moreover, according to Ministry document from 1929 (*§2 Rozporządzenia Rady Ministrów z dnia 8 listopada 1929 roku o zakładach i egzaminach szkolnych wystarczających do osiągnięcia stanowiska urzędniczego*) the title allowed woman to hold a public service position, which meant that they could work in state-driven architectural offices such as BOS - capital city reconstruction office (*Biuro Odbudowy Stolicy*).

## EARLY YEARS

When Jastrzębski founded the school, he based the main principles on the Second Female Polytechnic Institute in St. Petersburg<sup>11</sup>, established on his initiative in 1878. Before moving to Poland, during the First World War (1914-1918) and the Bolshevik Revolution (1917),

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<sup>11</sup> First Russian female colleges were established in the area of the Neva River, but it was St. Petersburg that became the largest centre of higher education for women in Russia. Before that, women were not, in principle, allowed to enter universities. They could only attend university lectures as free listeners. The function of a women's university was performed by the University of St. Petersburg which established the Higher Female Courses (the so-called Bestuzev Courses), founded in 1878.

he had been a professor and vice-rector of this female institution. While teaching at St. Petersburg Institute, he derived his conviction that girls were more useful in offices based on the stereotype that they worked out drawings more carefully and had a better sense of form, colour and proportion than boys of the same age. Upon his return, he decided to translate these same values by opening the first architecture school just for women in Warsaw.<sup>12</sup> One of the early photographs [Figure 2] preserved from the fire represents one of the first fifteen students during the drafting class in 1933. The photo includes three founders standing in the background. It is an exceptional example as such everyday school photography was not so commonly accessible.



*Figure 2: Girls during the drafting class, teachers in background from left: Mieczysław Popiel, Aleksander Kapuściński, Władysław Jastrzębski, 1933 source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

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<sup>12</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

Only the graduation portraits [Figure 3] were taken regularly, as it was considered a critical moment in one's history. The casualty and "fun" portrayed in the picture is particularly interesting. Picture shows 13 female graduates taught by their professors –among others Alfons Gravier<sup>13</sup>(left one), Mieczysław Popiel (with glasses), Aleksander Kapuściński (right to Mieczysła) and Władysław Jastrzębski (top right).



*Figure 3 diplomats and recognised professors from left: Alfons Gravier, Mieczysław Popiel, Aleksander Kapuściński, Władysław Jastrzębski, ca.1940, source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

A Caryatid became the symbol of the school [Figure 4] - supporting "on her fragile female head"<sup>14</sup> a capital, architrave, and a beam. She was supposed to embody the graceful, elegant, and charming qualities that the school's creators believed a female graduate should possess. "On her head was to rest the architect's studio and the burden of detailed preparatory

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<sup>13</sup> Alfons Gravier, more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/alfons\\_emil\\_gravier,13899](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/alfons_emil_gravier,13899)

<sup>14</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

work. On her reliable, professional knowledge, sensitivity to beauty, intelligence and culture depend on whether the project realised by the architect receives a proper setting".<sup>15</sup>



*Figure 4 logo of the school designed by Stanisław Jastrzębski, 1927, source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

## SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND TEACHING METHODS

From 1927 to 1933, the school developed its teaching methods and curriculum. From the very beginning, the school emphasised artistic subjects such as freehand drawing, watercolour, sculpture, perspective, the study of architectural forms, an encyclopedia of architectural structures, the composition of architectural details, interior decoration, architectural design, and the history of architecture. The curriculum included technical subjects such as draughts geometry, building materials, building structures, encyclopedia of specialised equipment, rural and urban construction, statics, ferroconcrete, construction drawings, surveying, construction work, cost estimating, building law, professional hygiene. The curriculum covered subjects for "gifted girls from intelligentsia homes". The graduation certificate (*świadectwo*) [Figure5] from 1934 included citizenship studies, mathematics, musicology, ethics, art history, handwriting, and calligraphy.<sup>16</sup> According to memories of Wanda Mołoniewicz (a student who graduated in 1943 and later became an architect), from early on, the school made attempts to combine architectural education with the musical education of female students, which resulted in regular concerts and lectures on lyrical themes and dancing.

<sup>15</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

<sup>16</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

As an assessment of their progress, girls were drawing "klauzura", a freehand drawing exam based on imagination. For example, they had to draw an imaginary "witch house" during the given time while listening to Wagner's opera.

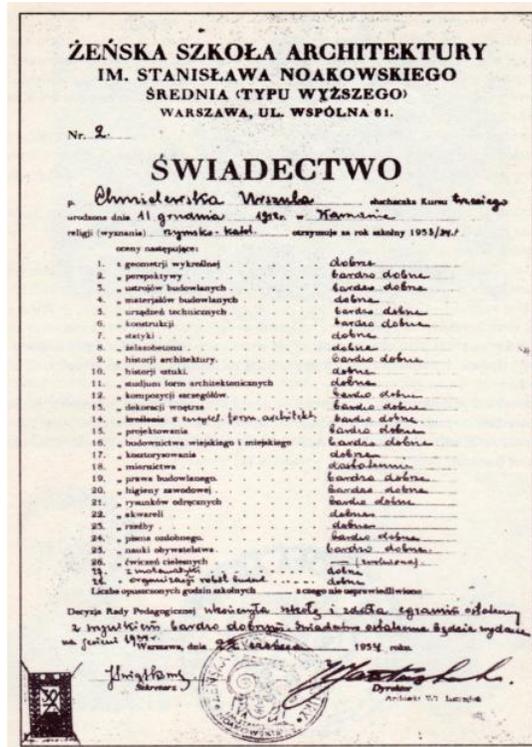


Figure 5 graduation certificate of Urszula Chmielewska with a list of the subjects in Polish, 1934, source: Warsaw National Archives

According to Anna Kanon – a former student of the Female school of architecture who graduated in 1944 and was later a teacher in this school, musical education was an essential part of the curriculum. She wrote in her notes that Władysław Jastrzębski believed that the students should develop a love of art and humanism. He also maintained that music developed these qualities, and therefore he often organised concerts at school with his friends, e.g., the Witkomirskis.



*Figure 6 School exhibition, 1936*

*source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

Every school year ends with the alumni exhibitions [Figure 6].<sup>17</sup> The featured photography illustrates hand drawings of buildings with highly innovative forms and concrete shells that reflect the spirit of functionalism in architecture. The school had a very modest material base. The premises were rented in the afternoons and consisted of several classrooms, a drawing-room, a secretarial office, and a library. Despite this, exhibitions of students' works were held at the school almost every year. Then the lecture rooms and corridors turned into exhibition halls. The works presented included designs, sculptures and bas-reliefs in clay and plaster, drawings and watercolours, graphics, perspectives, and competition entries in technical subjects. Combined, they all showed the graduate's skillset portrayed in the following photo [Figure 7].

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<sup>17</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997



*Tak wyglądała praca dyplomowa 20 maja 1934 r.*

Figure 7 Graduation exam, 1934 source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives

The school was honoured for their level and achievements with the honorary medal (*diplome d'honneur*) awarded by the jury of the International Paris Exhibition in 1937 [Figure 8]. In the Warsaw architectural community, the school established its new reputation. Teaching the younger generation at this institution was as prestigious as lecturing at the Warsaw Polytechnic.

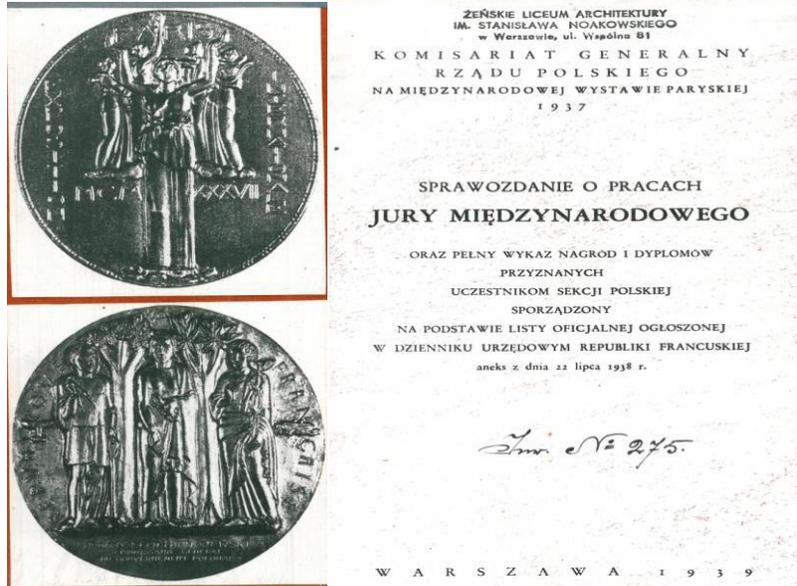


Figure 8 honorary medal and certificate source: *Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

## EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS DURING THE WAR

At the beginning of 1930', the number of students was thirty, but this value decreased from year to year for two main reasons. The first one was the lack of talent to meet the school's requirements. The girls were dropping the school on their conviction or due to suggestions from their professors. The second reason was economic - the school was a private institution, and the fee was sixty złotych per month, which was a considerably significant amount of money.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, many students decided not to continue their studies to take a job or stay at home. From the records prepared by dean Władysław Jastrzębski, we know that between 1927 and 1939, about 400 students enrolled on the school, but only 140 graduated.<sup>19</sup> This proportion indicates that only 35%, which means nearly only 1 out of 3 women graduated, had enough money, did not get married, did not emigrate because of their religion, were not shot, or arrested and could graduate during this period. It is currently impossible to reconstruct the exact list of students and graduates from mentioned years because the school archives did not survive the bombing during World War II.

The outbreak of World War II and the closure of higher education institutions by Germans radically changed learning and living conditions. With the arrival of the bombers, schools cancelled their classes. The occupants demanded the ruthless destruction of Polish

<sup>18</sup> Unknown author, *„Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997”*, Warszawa, 1997

<sup>19</sup> Stanisław Jastrzębski, *Annual Report, and notes of Stanisław Jastrzębski*, National Archive

culture, closing all colleges and high schools. In November 1939, the German authorities decided to open public elementary and high schools, but the youth took up jobs due to the need for material support for their families.

Since the law offered Poles the possibility of professional- technical education, the Female School of Architecture could continue to operate. Its students often attended classes organised by the clandestine underground<sup>20</sup> Department of Architecture of the Warsaw Polytechnic, earning their architectural diplomas after the war.

In the meantime, young people organised themselves in the underground movements. In 1940 the German authorities agreed to open technical vocational schools and craftsmen's schools, seeing their benefits in constructing new state edifices - the architecture of power. As a result, Władysław Jastrzębski received permission to open the Second Grade School of Architecture <sup>21</sup>(*Szkoła Architektury 2 stopnia*). However, the state authorities did not allow the word 'architecture' to be used in its name, as it was supposed to imply a Polish school or style of architecture. Consequently, the school took the name: Władysław Jastrzębski's Privat Female School for draftsman for the construction industry (*Prywatna Żeńska Szkoła dla kreślarek Przemysłu Budowlanego II stopnia arch. Władysława Jastrzębskiego*). The name clearly defined the position and profile of women studying there. However, thanks to this title, the occupation authorities tolerated it as a school for drafting technicians for the construction industry.



Figure 9 Warsaw uprising, on the picture Barbara Śliwińska, one of the graduates, who delivered the letters and important information to the front, source: 70-anniversary book

<sup>20</sup> Underground (*podziemny*) in a sense of illegal, hidden for Germans.

<sup>21</sup> At that time, the government introduced the new system of school division. The education went as followed: primary school or six classes (first-class school) high school or technical school (second class school)

Students at this school were particularly active in the defence movement. Barbara Śliwińska [Figure 9] participated in the Warsaw uprising, where she delivered letters and valuable information to the front. However, she was certainly not the only one. One of the students, Barbara Bojanowska-Ziemska, participated in the uprising and was part of a conspiracy movement. She used the school as a cover to redraw the maps for soldiers. She shared her memories from that period that I find particularly important as they reveal the true hidden meaning of "female work" during the war:

I went to a school for draftswomen; it was such a school, but it was a female school of architecture, like before the war. For example, we were taught by professors from the Polytechnic and the Academy of Fine Arts, like Professor Soliński, for instance. And because my colleagues from the Army knew about it, they brought me to redraw the staff maps. I redrew the staff maps. I sat and redrew the staff maps of the Kabaty and Chojnowski Forests - those fragments which they ordered me to do. Mom did not know anything about this - she thought I was working, drawing. It was a bit reckless because if they had come in and seen these bars. And I had such a lightness of drawing (I still have it now) that I did not need any cam, nothing, and I could draw, more importantly, draw fast. I drew many fragments of the Kabaty and Chojnowski Forests. Later, together with Zosia Pietrzakówna, who had the pseudonym "Marta", we went to Służew with various messages to the insurgents' parents; we sewed armbands for the insurgents before the uprising. Apart from that, I used to go out with Halszka - unfortunately, I do not remember where.<sup>22</sup>

During the occupation years, the school was a refuge for the youth and the lecturers. The school ID [Figure 15] was equivalent to a certificate of employment. Every Pole was obliged to work, have employment documents, and register in the employment office (*Arbeitsamt*). Anyone who did not comply with these obligations and did not have their ID card with them

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<sup>22</sup> Translated from Polish by the author from the original quote: "Chodziłam do szkoły kreślarek, niby to była taka szkoła, ale właściwie to była żeńska szkoła architektury, taka jak przed wojną i tam uczyli nas profesorowie z Politechniki i z Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, jak na przykład profesor Soliński. I ponieważ moi koledzy i koleżanki z AK wiedzieli o tym, to przynieśli mi, żebym przerysowywała mapy sztabówki. Przerysowywałam sztabówki. Siedziałam i przerysowywała sztabówki Lasów Kabackich i Chojnowskich – te fragmenty, które oni mi kazali. Mamusia o tym nic nie wiedziała – myślała, że ja pracuję, kreślę. Mnie się zdaje, że była to trochę lekkomyślność, bo jak by tak weszli i zobaczyli te sztabówki. A ja miałam taką lekkość rysowania (mam ją z resztą do tej pory), że nie musiałam mieć żadnego krzywika, nic, i mogłam rysować. Mogłam rysować i to szybko, tak że dużo narysowałam fragmentów Lasów Kabackich i Chojnowskich. Później chodziłyśmy z Zosią Pietrzakówną, która miała pseudonim „Marta”, na Służew z różnymi wiadomościami do rodziców powstańców, szyłyśmy przed Powstaniem opaski dla powstańców. Oprócz tego wyjeżdżałam z Halszką – niestety nie pamiętam, dokąd. "

when randomly identified on the street risked being sent to forced labour, deported to Germany, imprisoned, or sent to a concentration camp. The school certificate (*ausweis*) enabled many students to stay in Warsaw, facilitated their so-called "underground activities," and protected them from repressions. Moreover, it saved many teachers' lives. Many academic teachers found legal work at the school at that time, which brought many benefits connected with upgrading the study program at the school. The Female School of Architecture gained all the best architects of that time with Mieczyslaw Popiel, Maciej Nowicki<sup>23</sup>, Brun Zborowski<sup>24</sup> and Kazimierz Wejchert<sup>25</sup> at the head.<sup>26</sup>

There were no known records of Jewish female students. Assuming that they did attend school, they might emigrate from Poland or give up their studies because of the massive persecution of Jews and sentencing them to the ghetto in Warsaw. Neither the POLIN - Jewish Museum nor the Warsaw Uprising Museum found any records that would link Jewish female architects to the Female School of Architecture.

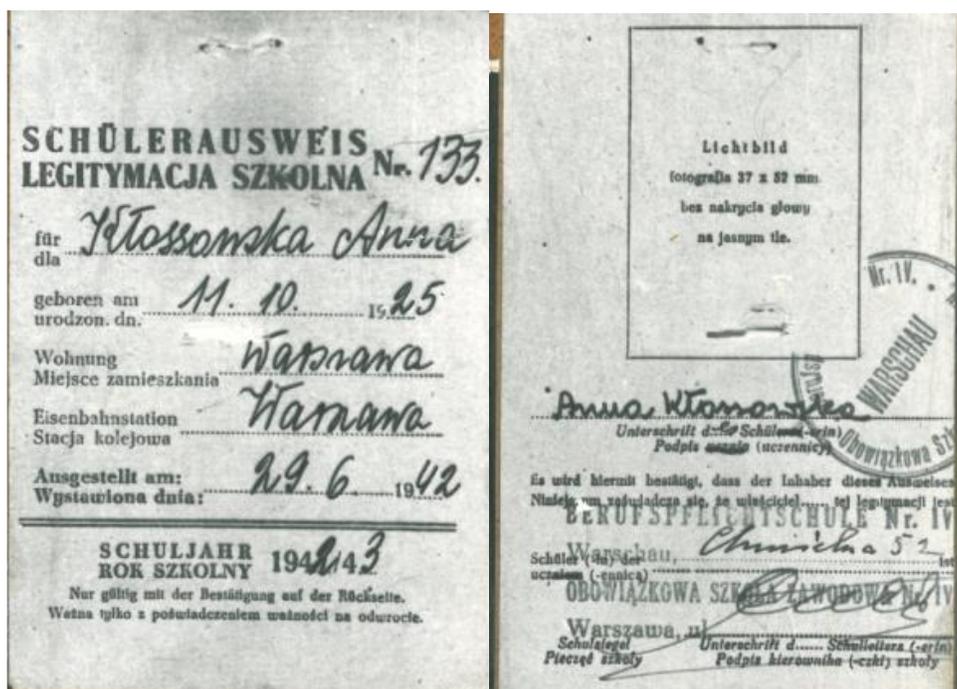


Figure 15 Anna Kłossowska student ID card that served as employment document during the war and prevented many from concentration camps or army, source: National Archives

<sup>23</sup> Maciej Nowicki – designer of paraboleum – more info: <https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/maciej-nowicki>

<sup>24</sup> Bruno Zborowski, more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/bruno\\_henryk\\_zborowski,5229](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/bruno_henryk_zborowski,5229)

<sup>25</sup> Kazimierz Wejchert, more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/kazimierz\\_wejchert,1995](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/kazimierz_wejchert,1995)

<sup>26</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997



phenomenon for those times. More importantly, the engineer title allowed them to sign their projects and gain higher wage and position in the manufactured world.

After the war, no one anticipated establishing a secondary architecture school during the initial period. The government believed that the existing construction high schools (*Technikum budowlane*) would sufficiently prepare the new generation of technical staff for work in design offices. These circumstances led to the closure of the female school for the next 13 years (from 1944 to 1957).<sup>28</sup>

However, these predictions could not have been more wrong. It turned out that the education of technicians focused on civil engineering did not meet the needs of personnel in architectural studios. They needed employees that had to be skilled in architectural design, colour theory, esthetics, interiors, and form-finding instead of simple technical construction knowledge. The only place that could potentially provide this lacking type of skills was The Female School of Architecture, which was closed years ago. For the positions of drafters, technical assistants, and architecture assistants, self-taught drafters were recruited, at best, after several months of a drawing course. There was a lack of educated drafting staff who would be able to make real the fantasies of postwar architects. The unique skills of graduates and the Female School of Architecture's unusually designed curriculum turned out to be essential in the industry. This situation forced the Ministry of Education to agree to reactivate the Female Architectural Courses and educate professional drafters to help rebuild the capital.

In the 1970s, those young people [Figure 10] took an active part in rebuilding the Royal Castle in Warsaw, from clearing the land to decorating the interiors and making inventories.<sup>29</sup> Anna Czochrowska Płóćinska, together with her friends, inked their names in a jar and embedded it in the new castle wall. Afterwards, the royal court acknowledges their help and contribution with the official certificate [Figure 11] in school corridors.

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<sup>28</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

<sup>29</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997



Figure 10 reconstruction of the old town oamong others Anna Czochrowska Płócińska, source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives

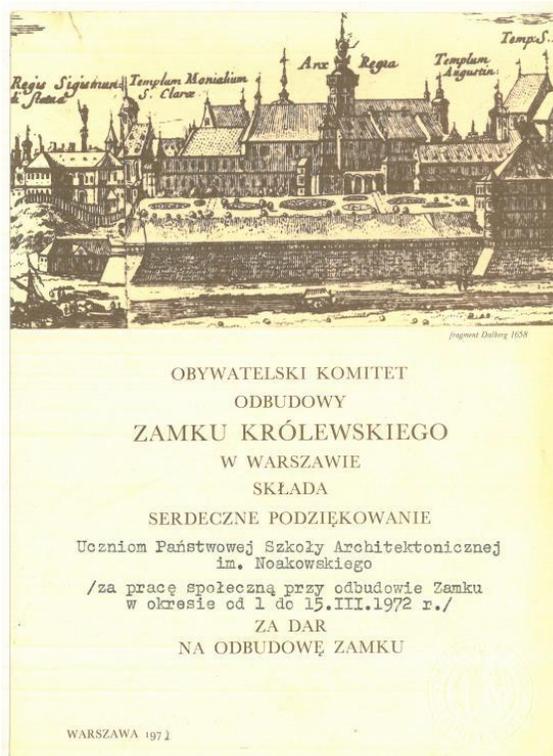


Figure 11 official acknowledgements from royal castle, source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives

## THE END OF EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE FEMALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Another reform of the school took place on 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1960, when Stanisław Noakowski's Female school of architecture (*Żeńska Szkoła Architektoniczna im. Stanisława Noakowskiego*) became Technical School of Architecture and St. Noakowski State School of Architecture (*Technikum Architektoniczne and Państwowa Szkoła Architektury im. St. Noakowskiego*.) The profile of the school changed from public to private. In 1964 the teachers, together with students, constructed a new building for both schools at Przyrynek Street nr 9 [Figure 12]. The primary author of the new project was the dean – the architect Konstanty Kokozov<sup>30</sup> and the teachers collaborating with him.



*Figure 12 The main building, Przyrynek street, 1964*

*source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives*

The new school retained its architectural profile but had to conform to new demands - the proper preparation of students for the role of assistants in architectural studios of state design offices. The school's main goals were to develop general artistic culture, spatial

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<sup>30</sup> Konstanty Kokozov – more info: [http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/konstanty\\_kokozov,4950](http://www.inmemoriam.architektsarp.pl/pokaz/konstanty_kokozov,4950)

imagination, and the ability to think in architectural categories so that the assistants could independently prepare technical documentation. When a new replacement from the ministry was hired and deprived Konstanty Kokozov of his position as dean and in his place, the time of comprehensive education ended. As a result of the audit committee and budget cuts, many subjects of a graphic nature - lettering, visual arts, historical architecture exercises - were eliminated from the timetable. The new dean replaced them with topics such as building organisation and encyclopedias of civil engineering sciences that were more construction-based and required more technical knowledge suited for technical school.<sup>31</sup>

In 1968, to maintain the relationship between the technical school and architecture, the school created an extracurricular after-school club of SARP (Society of Polish Architects) with Stefan Hołowko, one of the teachers, as president. They established a prize for the best diploma in the school for the best graduate, thus cultivating the architectural traditions of the school. According to the SARP, these projects are in their archives, but they do not display them often to direct sunlight exposition due to fragile paper conditions.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 13 piece of newspaper from 1972 - "no more female", source: Technikum Architektoniczno-Budowlane im. Stanisława Noakowskiego archives

It is worth noting that the 1970s were the school's greatest heyday. The growing staff of former female graduates allowed the school to expand its subjects to include "decorative arts," "freehand drawing," "textile design," "dressmaking," "sewing", "tableware design", and

<sup>31</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

<sup>32</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

"sensitisation to beauty". Thanks to the new staff, cooperation with the architecture faculty also developed. They received recommendations for innovative designs of model single-family houses. The female drafters from the architectural and technical school made construction drawings and details for the projects assigned for execution. Male architecture students - the authors – consulted their works with the contractors. According to Hanna Karpińska (former Warsaw University of Technology teacher), it was a great moment for the students to meet their future employers.<sup>33</sup>

In November 1971, by the decision of the Board of Education (*kuratorium oświaty*) justified by equal rights to education, the 3-year female architecture school was cancelled and established the 2-year school of building construction. Despite the intervention of the Women's League (*Liga Kobiet*), especially the construction section under the leadership of Zaoffi Fafius, they attempted to regain its inclusive status without success. In 1972 the first boys began to be admitted to the technical school. The school changed its face - from a "wives' school" to "co-educational." Therefore the year 1972 marked the end of the unique period of the only Female School of Architecture.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

<sup>34</sup> Unknown author, „*Żeńska szkoła Architektury 1927-1997*”, Warszawa, 1997

## CHAPTER 2– POSITION AND HIDDEN ROLES OF FEMALE ARCHITECTS IN DIFFERENT POLITICAL SYSTEMS

During the 1920s, It was not as common for females to work in the industry;<sup>35</sup> only when heavy industry and the war expanded did the problem of labour shortage arise. The political situation forced the admission of women to any kind of work. In the United States, legal regulations specified when, where, and how a woman could work. In Poland, however, the situation of women in the Second Republic can be briefly described as equal rights and unequal opportunities.<sup>36</sup>

### MOTHER POLE MODEL – 2<sup>ND</sup> REPUBLIC OF POLAND

In 1921 the new government established the "March Constitution" (*Konstytucja Marcowa*), which ensured equal rights for all Polish citizens. It eliminated formal barriers to equality, higher education, professional work, and political participation. A few months later, the amendment abolished restrictions on entering contracts without a man's authorisation. The law no longer forced a wife to obey a man as the head of the family, nor did it oblige her to live together with the master of the house – according to the marriage law of 1836. Unfortunately, although legally regulated, equality was still pure fiction.<sup>37</sup>

Neither intellectual predispositions nor the best education and passion opened paths to prestigious positions for women. They had difficulties translating the ideal of equality into concrete regulations and practices in work, family, and property. It was primarily the result of attachment to the traditional division of gender roles that stopped them from growing and reaching higher positions. Stereotypes predestined women to take care of the family and raise children; therefore, professional work, if necessary, must have been subordinated to household duties.<sup>38</sup> This model of femininity, deeply rooted in the "fabric" of interwar society, echoes the Partition-era figure of the Polish mother. In the privacy of the home, the latter instils in her children the Catholic creed and patriotic virtues.

Furthermore, even though World War II once again re-evaluated the gender hierarchy, it proved that females were perfectly capable of taking care of family and working as nurses, doctors, or engineers. They become tough workers, spies, and soldiers, intelligent, independent, and capable of fighting for themselves and their county. The narrative of the

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<sup>35</sup> Dziennik Ustaw, „Ustawa z dnia 2 lipca 1924r o przedmiocie młodocianych kobiet”, July 02, 1924

<sup>36</sup> Anna Żarnowska, *Równe prawa i nierówne szanse: kobiety w Polsce międzywojennej*, Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, (wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa, 2000.)

<sup>37</sup> Iwona Kienzler, „Nauka.” in *Dwudziestolecie Międzywojenne.* ( Bellona / Edipresse, 2014.)

<sup>38</sup> Katarzyna Stańczak, Piotr Perkowski, Małgorzata Fidelis, and Barbara Klich-Kluczevska. “Kobiety w Polsce 1945-1989. Równouprawnienie- KOMUNIZM - Nowoczesność.” , (TAiWPN Universitas, January 1, 2020.)

supposedly natural vocation of the female sex toward nourishing the family nest would persist, to a greater or lesser extent, throughout the communist era and after the fall of communism.<sup>39</sup>

## FEMALE EDUCATION DURING 2<sup>ND</sup> POLISH REPUBLIC

During the Second Polish Republic (1919-1939), an intense period of experimentation in Polish architecture began. Women obtain suffrage (1918) and the opportunity to study at universities (1920). According to the research, the number of women studying architecture increased by a factor of ten<sup>40</sup>. The number of universities offering higher architectural education in Poland grew from 1 to 6. As a result, the percentage of women in architectural studies and later in the architectural profession sometimes exceeded 50 per cent, far exceeding the proportions in pre-war Poland and abroad. This implies that more and more women started studying architecture at the universities after the law changed, proving the intellectual equality between females and men. Despite the demand for architecture and the abundance of work, after the same education, they were still underpaid.<sup>41</sup>

The most crucial problem standing in equal access to education for people in the Second Polish Republic was the small number of female secondary schools. After girls graduated from free and compulsory public school at age 14, they faced difficulties continuing their education at the secondary and higher levels. Wealthy parents sent their daughters to expensive private schools, but few could afford them. The financial situation excluded the rest of the girls from acquiring secondary and higher education.<sup>42</sup> Paradoxically, however, the percentage of women among Polish students was relatively high, in the European lead: 28%. As a result of the enormous war damages, the profession became highly sought after. The shortage of men caused by the war also became noticeable.

In his book "Functionalism in Polish Architecture" architectural historian Wojciech Leśniakowski emphasises the importance of Polish women architects collaborating with their husbands and the uniqueness of marital collaboration throughout Europe. From Helena Syrkus, who worked with her husband and was an active member of CIAM introducing modernism to Polish architecture, to Barbara Brukalska with her husband Stanisław Brukalski, who was building new residential areas following principles of Athen's Charter. The tandem allowed them to gain recognition and work together as an architecture couple. Considering their

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<sup>39</sup> Emilia Świętochowska, „Do 1996 Roku Kobiety Nie Mogły w Polsce Wykonywać 90 Prac.” October 6, 2018.

<sup>40</sup> Mart Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen, „The limits and merits of internationalism: experts, the state, and the international community in Poland in the first half of the twentieth century” EUI Working Papers RSCAS 41, 2009.

<sup>41</sup>, Piotr Marciniak. „The Polish House and Women. about the Architecture, Users ...” Accessed March 10, 2022.

<sup>42</sup> Anna Żarnowska, „Równe prawa i nierówne szanse: kobiety w Polsce międzywojennej”, (Warszawa: Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, wydawnictwo DiG, 2000)

influence on the development of functionalism in Poland, it is not difficult to wonder why many female students followed them after the war.<sup>43</sup>

## II WORLD WAR AND POLISH REPUBLIC 1944-1955

Under the influence of the suffragette movement, among the upper class arose a conviction about making companionate marriages over money or status. This period is known for such duos as Barbara Brukalska and Stanislaw Brukalski or Helena and Szymon Syrkus - both of whom taught at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw Polytechnic time were active in CIAM and associations such as BLOK or PRAESENS. According to Prof. Marciniak, their marriages were twofold: to overcome the difficulties of running and establishing an office as a woman to satisfy the desire of a "new woman" fulfilling herself professionally with a husband who shared their professional interests.<sup>44</sup>

Shortly after the war, a period of little stability (*mata stabilizacja*) began. The authorities tried to purify and create a new society, so the intelligentsia instigating their plans became enemies of the system. Educated people and the upper class became enemies of the regime. Many architects lost their jobs and could not count on state commissions without being part of the party or cooperating with it. Consequently, the number of universities reduced from 6 to 4 (only increased in the 1970s), which forced women to stop their education one more.<sup>45</sup>

The Marriage Bar was a policy that operated in many countries, and Poland was not an exception. The law demanded that women must give up work upon becoming married. It did not apply to all occupations but was particularly prevalent in the civil service and other 'white collar' work as architecture. It stated that married women should not get an income but stay at home taking care of children and husbands. Unlike in the Western countries such as UK or Netherlands, where women could not work at all due to the marriage bar, after 1945, architects could only work in state offices, design offices, or construction companies that existed in Poland at that time.<sup>46</sup>

A remarkable example of a fulfilled woman from that time was Teresa Krystyna Król-Dobrowolska. She graduated from the Women's School of Architecture and the Faculty of Fine Arts Painting in Budapest and Cracow, the Faculty of Architecture at the Cracow University of Technology in 1945 and received her master's degree in Warsaw 1948. She married Jan Jeremi Dobrowski, an architect. After graduation, she became an advisor to the general conservator

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<sup>43</sup> Wojciech, Leśniakowski „Functionalism in Polish Architecture” in *East Uropean Modernism. Architecture in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland between the Wars 1919 – 1939*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1996.)

<sup>44</sup> Mary Pepchinski,, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

<sup>45</sup> Wojciech Świątkowski,, in *"Fragmenty stuletniej historii 1899-1999: relacje, wspomnienia, refleksje: w stulecie organizacji warszawskich architektów"*, (Warszawa: OW SARP, 2000.)

<sup>46</sup> Piotr Marciniak. *"Women's Creativity since the Modern Movement (1918–2018)."* Accessed March 10, 2022..

and worked in Bohdan Pniewski's studio. She was awarded five times in the Association of Polish Architects competitions for her design work.<sup>47</sup>

Another not recognised graduate was Alina Galewska. She graduated from the Female School of Architecture and attended private classes at the Warsaw Polytechnic. To avoid being transported to the Third Reich for forced labour, she started working in the centre as a nurse. She performed this function until the end of the camp's operation - helping the wounded and sick and participating in the illegal transfer of prisoners. She also met her future husband, Wiesław Galewski, who helped in the camp as an interpreter. After completing technical school, she went straight to work. She worked at a carpentry workshop as a draftsman, drawing up blueprints of furniture to be made, and later became the manager of a large group of skilled carpenters.<sup>48</sup>

Not every graduate became an architect. Many gave up their lives during the Warsaw Uprising. They fought for the freedom, and the one who survived as Łucja Kołodziejska-Świątkowska<sup>49</sup> (graduate 1944) shared their memories with the young generation. Her voice and memories from those years were recorded and stored in the Oral History Archive in Warsaw. Other as Izabela Zachwatowicz, married an architect and became a researcher. Together with her husband, they created the atlas of Polish architecture, including Warsaw, before the bombing during the war. Many pre-war Warsaw's buildings could be reconstructed thanks to her drawing skills and attention to detail.

## THE COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST FEMALE FIGURES

From the end of World War II until the end of martial law<sup>50</sup> in Poland in 1983,<sup>51</sup> large state architecture departments were responsible for all architectural production during the Polish People's Republic. According to Wojciech Tomasiak, who researched the female position in socialism, the statistical family would not be able to support itself without women's work. The government needed women's labour, for example, in the textile industry and medicine, and according to the socialist doctrine, they were necessary to maintain an exemplary model society of workers.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Unknown author, "Teresa Krystyna Król-Dobrowolska (KRÓL)". Accessed March 01, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Unknown author, "Galewska Alina z D. Cydzik – Rozmowa." Interview, Muzeum Dulag 121. Accessed March 02,

<sup>49</sup> Narodowy Instytut Architektury i Urbanistyki. "Łucja Kołodziejska-Świątkowska" Accessed March 25, 2022.

<sup>50</sup> Martial law in Poland was a state of emergency introduced on December 13, 1981, throughout the People's Republic of Poland, in violation of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Poland.

<sup>51</sup> Mary Pepchinski, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

<sup>52</sup> Małgorzata Dajnowicz, and Miodowski Adam. *Ruchy Kobiety Na Ziemiach Polskich W XIX i XX Wieku: Stan Badań I Perspektywy*. (Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2020.)

The occupation left behind the memory of the heroic attitudes of many women: they took on the burden of providing for the entire family, supported military operations, and replaced men in factories. After the war, when a new power system crystallised, female communist activists began to play on these emancipatory notes. Propaganda promoted the image of women as particular victims of capitalist exploitation, oppressed both at work and home. The socialist woman must redefine her place in marriage and the family.<sup>53</sup> The state takes on the burden of guaranteeing, among other things, mother and childcare, protection for pregnant women, paid leave before and after childbirth, and expansion of nurseries and kindergartens.<sup>54</sup> The socialist woman must have redefined her place in marriage and the family. There were no more "male" or "female" jobs, and performance determines promotions.

This was the general perception until the socialism period (Polish People's Republic period 1952-1989,) when equality rhetoric was vital—until then, females mainly occupied low-profile jobs.<sup>55</sup> To ensure the economy's stability, Poland implemented the Soviet model of work, where females and males were equally obliged to work and pay taxes. Socialism was striving for a social order based on the principles of community, equality, and rational economic management, which meant that no one could be privileged enough not to work. The MDM (*Marszałkowska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa*) residential complex was the most famous construction project of that time built by architects from the reconstruction office (BOS). The bas-reliefs [Figure 14] on its' walls on Constitution Square show the party's ideology intended to remind people about the commonwealth through art.

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<sup>53</sup> Katarzyna Stańczak,, Piotr Perkowski, Małgorzata Fidelis, and Barbara Klich-Kluczevska. "Kobiety w Polsce 1945-1989. Równouprawnienie- KOMUNIZM - Nowoczesność." (TAiWPN Universitas, January 1, 2020)

<sup>54</sup> Danuta Graniweska, *Żłobki i przedszkola w PRL* (Warsaw: IW CRZZ, 1971.)

<sup>55</sup> Wojciech Tomasiak, „Socrealizm albo milczenie kobiet” in „Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja nr 5 (113), 89-94” Warszawa, 2008



Figure 14 Karol Tchorek "Mother with a child", "opening of MDM" source: culture. pl

The shift in the focus of state policy from the professional emancipation of women to the protection of mothers as potential market consumers at the end of the 1950s initiated a general regression in eliminating gender inequality in the public space. This trend intensified throughout the Gierek era (1970-1980). It is best evidenced by the frequent references in the official party language to the symbol of the Polish mother responsible for the upbringing of young generations and the nation's vitality. Patriotic allusions and the identification of women's needs with those of the family accompanied the expansion of social protection.<sup>56</sup>

The communist years contributed to extreme political and cultural development and the spread of education. The number of architecture faculties increased, as did the positions available to women.<sup>57</sup> Many saw this as a new professional opportunity to achieve a higher material status, and others saw it as an opportunity to live a decent life, as the family income increased due to the higher education of both spouses. However, the nuclear family model and the country's economic problems diminished the drive for self-actualisation in favour of earning a living. As Marciniak writes, although "women may have entered the labour force in larger numbers, the ideology of gender equality, combined with the right to work, receive an

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<sup>56</sup> Małgorzata Dajnowicz, and Miodowski Adam. *Ruchy Kobiety Na Ziemiach Polskich W XIX i XX Wieku: Stan Badań I Perspektywy*. (Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2020.)

<sup>57</sup> Katarzyna Stańczak,, Piotr Perkowski, Małgorzata Fidelis, and Barbara Klich-Kluczevska. "Kobiety w Polsce 1945-1989. Równouprawnienie- KOMUNIZM - Nowoczesność." (TAiWPN Universitas, January 1, 2020)

education and take advantage of social welfare benefits did not ensure that women had equal access to all avenues of work."<sup>58</sup>

Socialist propaganda also referred to gender equality and the development of women's potential. Professional careers were supposed to be a chance for creative fulfilment.<sup>59</sup> However, with increasing inflation, work became less of a pleasure and more of a necessity for survival, adding to the responsibilities placed on women. This data is illustrated in the development of social infrastructure and the number of crèches and kindergartens<sup>60</sup> built at that time that were also ported on reliefs [Figure 15] by Jerzy Januszewicz.



Figure 15 Jerzy Januszewicz „kindergarten nurses” source: culture.pl

## TRACES OF FEMALE TECHNICIANS

However, for female architects, work was not a necessity as a welcome opportunity - it provided steady-state employment and an income that contributed to gender equality between partners.<sup>61</sup> During the modernisation of Poland in the 1960s and 1970s, a new wave of women architects emerged. Many prominent designers born in the 1920s contributed to the development of urban planning, higher education, history, and the theory of architecture. Like their female colleagues of earlier years, most of them had husbands that were architects.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Mary Pepchinski,, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

<sup>59</sup> Wojciech Tomasiak, „Socrealizm albo milczenie kobiet” in „Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja nr 5 (113), 89-94” Warszawa, 2008

<sup>60</sup> Danuta Graniweska, *Żłobki i przedszkola w PRL* (Warsaw: IW CRZZ, 1971.)

<sup>61</sup> Katarzyna Stańczak,, Piotr Perkowski, Małgorzata Fidelis, and Barbara Klich-Kluczewska. “Kobiety w Polsce 1945-1989. Równouprawnienie- KOMUNIZM - Nowoczesność.” (TAiWPN Universitas, January 1, 2020)

<sup>62</sup> Mary Pepchinski,, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

Although many female architects worked on large-scale residential projects, few engaged in urban planning. The exception was Hanna Adamczewska Wejchert, a graduate of the female architecture school and later the wife of one of the professors teaching there. Hanna was even more recognisable than her husband, Kazimierz Wejchert, and it was the first such case in Poland. Both spouses graduated from Warsaw University of Technology. In 1950 Anna and Kazimierz won a competition for a city - Nowe Tychy [Figure 16] - a project for 130,000 inhabitants. They also won professional awards in 1964 and 1982 - they were both honoured and treated as a design team.<sup>63</sup>



Figure 16 Nowe Tychy Plan, Hanna i Kazimierz Wejchert, 1955 source: <http://polskisocrealizm.org/sztuka/osiedle-a-w-nowych-tychach1>

Another outstanding female architect of that time was Maria Handzelewicz – Waławek (also a graduate of the female school of architecture), who, together with her husband Zbigniew Waławek, was working at the state-run studio Design Office for General Construction

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<sup>63</sup> Mary Pepchinski,, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.).

(*Biuro Projektów Budownictwa Ogólnego*). Later, beginning in 1982, Waclaweks headed one of the first private design studios, where they designed several public buildings and churches.<sup>64</sup>

Women did not commonly practice involvement in politics. It is difficult to estimate how many female architects were part of the communist party, but it is worth noting that it was often a condition of success. Political connotations were a ticket to public contracts. One of them is Halina Skibniewska, also married to urban planner Zygmunt Skibniewski. Although they were both architects, they worked separately; he was the chief urban planner of the City of Warsaw. After graduating from the Female School of Architecture, she was an architect and teacher at the Warsaw University of Technology. Her best-known project is the "Żoliborskie Orchards", a response to urban overpopulation in the 1950s and 'sixties. She established an entirely new living level and requirements for residential buildings with her architecture<sup>65</sup> and was a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

However, not everyone was sympathetic to the party, and those who disagreed with their views had their projects taken away. One such victim was the incredibly famous and recognisable architect Regina Pawuła- Piwowarczyk, whose project "Rataje" was given to other architects after the architectural ideology did not agree with the party. Regina recalls her difficulties as an architect working under communism in a book published after her death. Although she does not mention inequality, she emphasises the importance of being part of the communist party.<sup>66</sup>

According to Piotr Marciniak, a Polish researcher who documents and researches female architects from the Polish People's Republic period, "The cumulative strains of work and marriage, combined with the lack of recognition for their contributions, may have driven many women working in spousal partnership to seek activity in areas on the periphery of practice, including education, professional organisations political activity."<sup>67</sup> After graduation from the Female School of Architecture, Hanna Adamczewska Wejchert joined the Association of Polish Architects as one few females. Halina Skibniewska became the first female Deputy Marshal of the Polish Sejm (1971-1995). She was rescuing political prisoners and represented female interest during the period of martial law.<sup>68</sup>

Nevertheless, not every woman has this opportunity. After graduation, most of the graduates worked in private architectural studios in Warsaw and other cities, working under the direction of an architect on essential parts of preliminary, primary, and working designs,

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<sup>64</sup> Unknown author, "*Maria Małgorzata Handzelewicz-Waclawek (Handzelewicz)*." Accessed March 09, 2022. [http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/maria\\_malgorzata\\_handzelewicz-waclawek,1320](http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/maria_malgorzata_handzelewicz-waclawek,1320).

<sup>65</sup> Iwona Szustakiewicz, "*Halina Skibniewska's Good Flat*." Accessed March 20, 2022. <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1757-899X/603/4/042001>.

<sup>66</sup> Henryk Marcinkowski, *Projekt - Miasto: Wspomnienia Poznańskich architektów 1945-2005*. (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Miejskie Poznania, 2013.)

<sup>67</sup> Piotr Marciniak, "*Women's Creativity since the Modern Movement (1918–2018)*." Accessed March 10, 2022.

<sup>68</sup> Mary Pepchinski, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

drawing perspectives, axonometric drawings, and cost estimates.<sup>69</sup> BOS Office (*Biuro Odbudowy Stolicy*) was the main studio where they could find a job, working arm by arm with their male colleagues that graduated from architecture studies. As a drafter, their work was a crucial part of the design process, yet not recognised due to the inferior character of their work and men's superiority in crucial decisions. As they were not architects, they were perceived as less valued, paid less salary, and hidden behind the offices' glass doors.

The scope of job preparation of graduate female architectural technicians was fundamentally different from the practice and employment of construction technicians. Architecture technicians cooperated in creating building designs, and construction technicians dealt with implementing finished projects. It is worth emphasising this diversification of tasks, as the scope of education for these two different fields and functions cannot be unified. In the 1980s, the law removed the title of the architectural technician from the nomenclature of professions, and the new Construction Law eliminated the possibility of graduates obtaining authorisation to design and supervise. The purpose of the famous "wives' school" education was undermined due to the lack of the title and possibility of further professional development of graduates by the inability to obtain the authorisation. After 70 years of the school's existence, female graduates with the title of architectural technician became a relic of a nonexistent profession.

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<sup>69</sup> Mary Pepchinski,, and Mariann Simon. *Ideological Equals Women Architects in Socialist Europe 1945-1989*. (London: Routledge, 2018.)

## CONCLUSION

Tracing the female drafters, usually overlooked in the credits, unnoticed in the big studios was quite a challenge. As the research revealed, the level of education of those females was as good as their male peers. Based on the curriculum, their wisdom included construction knowledge and activities that develop creativity and spatial vision. The school's unusual teaching methods shaped a valuable program that proved essential to the functioning of the architectural offices over time. As hidden figures, they did not gain recognition because of the belittling of their merits and the work they put into projects on a daily basis.

The question of the title, its value and the ever-changing entitlement is an essential argument in the perception of their work. It changed from the right to hold state positions, assisting architects, to consulting. As a grand final, by the end of the 1970s, their profession had become a nonexistent relic of the past. Moreover, the lack of permission to sign their designs made them dependent on architects, thus preventing them from establishing their own companies.

Another aspect of their absence in architectural history is linked with their role. Polish Association of Architects created *im Memorium* only for them, which means that drafters were not entitled. Nobody traced the technicians, considered less valuable than the men behind the building invention with a university title. Although they were a core of an office, the value of their work was smaller than the architects. Therefore, it was hard to find any information about them.

Another essential point is their double carrier. As research describes, females' responsibilities were socially less valued most of the time. They had to split their time between careers – work, and home. Domestic chores were not recognised as work. At the same time, they had to take care of the house, have children, and put themselves and their desires aside. The combination of the pattern of a Polish mother and a successful professional often put women in a lost position before they even had a chance to develop their skills. No matter the times, they always had to face problems and suppression. Whenever propaganda and other circumstances changed, somehow, someone managed to lessen the value of their work.

The dynamic of relations between "husbands" and "wives" was primarily about the desire for fulfilment and mutual understanding. Many female graduates found their spouses in the architectural field and later worked with them in an office, or as some cases indicated in research, started their own studios. What is more, pairing up with an architect provided them with protection - their self-worth of time spent studying, love for their passion, and allowed them to spread their wings despite the responsibilities of marriage and taking care of children.

Most importantly, the research stresses the value of those women. It raises awareness about them and values their essential contribution to the development of architecture in

Poland and the country's survival. Many of the graduates fought in the uprising. They used their skills for redrawing the maps, their excellent knowledge of Warsaw for delivering the letters to the front and their skills to document the city and prevent it from being forgotten.

Described examples also showed the great desire for learning and faith in changing the world. After finishing the Female School of architecture, they often graduated later from Warsaw University of Technology. Few developed a scientific career and became professors; others came back to their alma mater to teach new generations of girls. Despite the obstacles, they became marshals, rescued lives, and fulfilled themselves in their professional and domestic fields.

Through the chosen methodology, the research identifies many names, leaving the blind spots of yet not revealed facts. Interviews and collected memories helped connect certain well-known female architects with the school's history and trace back more names and resources for further development, included in the appendix. It opens the possibility to research and trace the families and private archives of those females. Moreover, historical research and archives that allowed further research access to the quantitative data are still valuable sources as most documents are still not scanned. It might be possible to trace the design teams and maybe even the project by identifying a few of the offices they work in throughout the documents. All of the above leaves a path for further research and exploration.

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## Appendix 1. list of graduates and known data about them

nr	surname	Additional info	Links with more information
1	Skibniewska (Erentz)	architect and urban planner, MP, and deputy speaker of the Sejm	<a href="https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/halina-skibniewska">https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/halina-skibniewska</a> Szustakiewicz, Iwona. "Halina Skibniewska's Good Flat." Accessed March 20, 2022. <a href="https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1757-899X/603/4/042001">https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1757-899X/603/4/042001</a>
	Halina	wife of an architect	
	Handzelewicz – Waclawek	architect, representative of modernism, winner of the Honorary Award of SARP (1987)	"Małgorzata Handzelewicz-Waclawek." In <i>memoriam - Pamięci Architektów Polskich</i> . Accessed March 09, 2022.. "Maria Małgorzata Handzelewicz-Waclawek (Handzelewicz)." <i>Maria Małgorzata Handzelewicz-Waclawek</i> . Accessed March 09, 2022. <a href="http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/maria_malgorzata_handzelewicz-waclawek,1320">http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/maria_malgorzata_handzelewicz-waclawek,1320</a> .
2	Małgorzata	wife of an architect	"Małgorzata Handzelewicz-Waclawek." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, January 23, 2022. <a href="https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%C5%82gorzata_Handzelewicz-Wac%C5%82awek">https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma%C5%82gorzata_Handzelewicz-Wac%C5%82awek</a> .
	Król-Dobrowolska		"Teresa Krystyna Król-Dobrowolska (KRÓL)." <i>Teresa Krystyna Król-Dobrowolska</i> . Accessed March 01, 2022. <a href="http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/teresa_krystyna_krol-dobrowolska,2811">http://www.beta.architektura.warszawa.sarp.org.pl/projektant/teresa_krystyna_krol-dobrowolska,2811</a> .
3	Teresa Krystyna Galewska (Cydzik)	Wife of an architect	"Galewska Alina z D. Cydzik – Rozmowa." Interview, <i>Muzeum Dulag 121</i> . Accessed March 02, 2022. <a href="http://dulag121.pl/encyklopediaa/alina-galewska-z-d-cydzik-rozmowa/">http://dulag121.pl/encyklopediaa/alina-galewska-z-d-cydzik-rozmowa/</a> .
4	Alina	Wife of an architect	
5	Hasse		Grażyna Hasse, "wspomnienia", Warszawa

	Grażyna		2017
	(z d. Biedrzycka) Stachocka		
6	Danuta		
	Kołodziejska- Świątkowska		Narodowy Instytut Architektury I Urbanistyki." Łucja Kołodziejska- Świątkowska   Narodowy Instytut Architektury i Urbanistyki. Accessed March 25, 2022. <a href="https://niaiu.pl/zasob/lucja-kolodziejska-swiatkowska/">https://niaiu.pl/zasob/lucja-kolodziejska- swiatkowska/</a> .
7	Łucja Kosecka		Archiwum Historii Mówionej - Alina Kosecka." Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego. Accessed March 21, 2022. <a href="https://www.1944.pl/archiwum-historii-mowionej/alina-kosecka,187.html">https://www.1944.pl/archiwum- historii-mowionej/alina-kosecka,187.html</a>
8	Alina	"Pantera" – war cryptonym	
9	Zachwatowicz Izabela	Wife of an architect, researcher	
10	Górna – Gładzik Ewelina		
11	Mołoniewicz Wanda		
12	Czapska Kuran		
13	anna		
14	Zaleska-Matarewicz Barbara	Wife of an architect	
15	Czochorowska – Płucińska anna		
16	Jastrzębski Leonard		Son of the founder
17	Migurska – Mojsewicz Halina		Teacher
18	Kucharska Janina	Deans' secretary	Student, later Deans' secretary
19	Bukowczyk		Teacher in 80s

	Krystyna		
	Mołoniewicz	Architect	<a href="https://www.1944.pl/archiwum-historii-mowionej/wanda-julita-moloniewicz,2120.html">https://www.1944.pl/archiwum-historii-mowionej/wanda-julita-moloniewicz,2120.html</a> ,
	Wanda	During the war, she was a patrol commander and nurse, later graduated from Warsaw University of technology	memoirs of Wanda Mołoniewicz née Siedlanowska from the first days of the uprising, ref. P/2163, materials by Ewa Orlikowska-Krasnowolska, obituary in the press, issue date 22.03.2011
20			
21	Białowąż Zofia	became an architect	
22	Zalewska-Matarewicz Barbara	no data	
23	Kołodziejska-Świątkowska Łucja	wife of an architect	
24	Boguszewska-Zaburda Krystyna	no data	
25	Slupska-Rozner Krystyna	no data	
26	Kuźmierska-Markowska Mirosława	no data	
27	Szeronos Krystyna	no data	
28	Cretti Zofia	became an architect	
29	Bojanowska Barbara	no data	
30	Miernik Barbara	no data	
31	Kwiecińska Irena	no data	
32	Zamojska Izabela	no data	
33	Nowakowska Wanda	became an architect	

34	Kuźmińska Halina	no data
35	Boguśławska Danuta	no data
36	Szyszko- Rędziejowska	became an architect
37	Dmochowska Helena	no data
38	Dunkowska-Malek Danuta	wife of an architect
39	Gloch-Leykam Danuta	became an architect
40	Zielinska Maria	became an architect
41	Zieminska Domicela	no data
42	Modzelewska Irena	wife of an architect
43	Dyniewicz Krystyna	no data
44	Biedrzycka- Strachocka Danuta	wife of an architect
45	Sznajder-Kobielska Danuta	wife of an architect
46	Szpotańska Krystyna	no data
47	Bajewska-Biegańska Ewa	wife of an architect
48	Lewandowska Jadwiga	no data
49	Lewandowska Maria	no data
50	Bogusowna Zofia	no data
51	Bierut Krystyna	no data
52	Wołczyńska Przybytkówna Irena	no data

53	Kaminska- Jakubowska Alicja	no data
54	Dybowska- Szurmakowa Anna	no data
55	Lewndowska- Widigier Alicja	no data
56	Hausman Maria	no data
57	Wahren Sokolnicka Maria	no data
58	Lipszyc-Kowalska Zofia	wife of an architect
59	Balicka-Kozłowska Helena	wife of an architect
60	Migurska Barbara	no data
61	Wejchert Elzbieta	no data
62	Baranowska- Rostkowska Maria	wife of an architect
63	Bryl-Guerquin Anna	no data
64	Boyé-Jamilska Krystyna	became an architect
65	Brukalska Kamila	no data
66	Sztoss-Kuninska Izabela-Maria	became an architect
67	Królowna Krystyna	no data
68	Lewandowska Zofia	no data

69	Sobieszek- Blazejowska Danuta	no data
70	Morsztyn Monika	no data
71	Flis Kunegunda	no data
72	Bielińska Nasierowska Wacława	no data
73	Melanowska Krystyna	no data
74	Milczarska-Hausman Maria	wife of an architect
75	Olszewska Weronika	no data
76	Kostrzewianka Mirośława	wife of an architect
77	Suwczyńska Irena	no data
78	Machewicz Maria	wife of an architect
79	Maciejewska Stefania	no data
80	Stamberger Alicja	no data
81	Bużkiewicz- Ostrowska Wanda	no data
82	Kurkus-Deptula Anna	no data
83	Vaedtke Hanna	became an architect
84	Biernacka Zuzanna	became an architect
85	Popiel Krystyna	wife of an architect
86	Wołguska-Laslan Irena	became an architect
87	Garlińska-Hausen Zofia	wife of an architect

88	Adamczyk Zofia	became an architect
89	Fijałkowska Krystyna	became an architect
90	Przybylska Wanda	wife of an architect
91	Chomentowska Maria	became an architect
92	Jarząbek Irena	became an architect
93	. Mierzykowska Helena	became an architect
94	Plucińska-Mireyko Maryna	no data
95	Cydykówna- Galewska Alina	wife of an architect
96	Waydel-Knothe Janina	no data
97	Sobeska- Tomaszewska Katarzyna	wife of an architect
98	Fortini Jadwiga	no data
99	Szulcówna Krystyna	no data
100	Olszewska Bolesława	no data
101	Olszewska Janina	no data
102	Kurzel Janina	no data
103	Uklejska-Zakrzewska Maria	wife of an architect
104	Policzkowska Krystyna	no data
105	Bogusławska Anna	no data

106	Jurczynowska-Szymańska Irena	wife of an architect
107	Majcherek Alina	no data
108	Wituska-Grochowska Anna	wife of an architect
109	Trepka Jadwiga	no data
110	Goldman Krystyna	no data
111	Rowicka Halina	no data
112	Rytel Jadwiga	wife of an architect
113	Kowalska Zofia	became an architect
114	Augustowska Maria	no data
115	Białkowska Janina	became an architect
116	Dobiszewska Jadwiga	no data
117	Gromadko Lidia	wife of an architect
118	Grzelak Stanisława	no data
119	Wojcik Józefa z d. Iwańska	no data
120	Karwowska Wiesława	no data
121	Kozłowska Maria	no data
122	Kowalik Urszula	no data
123	Krzywicka Maria	no data
124	Pietrzyk Jadwiga	no data
125	Redkowiak Kazimiera	no data
126	Zomer Teresa	no data

127	Błaszczuk Janina	no data
128	Dziatkiewicz Danuta	no data
129	Gonet Irena	no data
130	Goslawska Danuta	wife of an architect
131	Grala Alicja	no data
132	Józefowicz Halina	no data
133	Jędrzejewska Krystyna	no data
134	Klukowska Ewa	no data
135	Palczynska Izabella	became an architect
136	Pomawska Jadwiga	no data
137	Przekwas Urszula	wife of an architect
138	Smagala Zdzisława	no data
139	Rek Bogumila	no data
140	Miarczyńska Zofia z d. Sztetyllo	no data
141	Zalewska Anna	no data
142	Zurawska Zofia	no data
143	Romańczuk Teresa	no data
144	Skuriat Halina	wife of an architect
145	Domańska Krystyna	no data
146	Gwiazdowska Izabella	became an architect
147	Wojkowska Maria	no data
148	Banach Małgorzata	became an architect

149	Burzyńska Anna	no data
150	Czubek Bożena	became an architect
151	Danilczuk Anna	no data
152	Deluga Anna	wife of an architect
153	Domańska Barbara	became an architect
154	Glazewska Maria	no data
155	Golciminska Krystyna	no data
156	Gokciniak Bożena	no data
157	Jung Elżbieta	no data
158	IL Kielak Stanisława	no data
159	Krzeminska Alicja	wife of an architect
160	Kulikowska Barbara	no data
161	Lewandowska Barbara	wife of an architect
162	Niewiarowska Alicja	no data
163	Paczuska Elżbieta	wife of an architect
164	Prosator Barbara	no data
165	Rozpierska Wanda	became an architect
166	Rutkowska Marianna	no data
167	Soszynska Hanna	became an architect
168	Swiń Barbara	no data
169	Szalkiewicz Teresa	no data
170	Szydłowska Longina	no data

171	Dąbrowska Halina	no data
172		no data
173	Gizowska Elżbieta	no data
174	Górecka Wiesława	no data
175	Gruszka Maria	wife of an architect
176	Janusiewicz Teresa	no data
177	. Łysko Helena	no data
178	Matuszczyn Ewa	no data
179	Mościanica Lolita	no data
180	Smoleńska-Kubiczek Józefa	no data
181	Święcicka Hanna	no data
182	Syrocka Marta	became an architect
183	Pawłowska Anna	wife of an architect
184	Kempfi Maria Magdalena	wife of an architect
185	Berent Anna	wife of an architect
186	Fangrat Elżbieta	no data
187	Hampel Teresa	became an architect
188	Kacprowicz Teresa	became an architect
189	Kallenbrun Ewa	became an architect
190	Kordek Maria	became an architect
191	Kowal Wanda	no data
192	Kruszewska Wiktoria	no data

193	Lipiec Elżbieta	no data
194	Malczewska Ewa	no data
195	Matuszewska Janina	became an architect
196	Pokorna Maria	became an architect
197	Bujak Teresa	became an architect
198	Cabaj Józefa	became an architect
199	Ciesielska Barbara	became an architect
200	Damm Barbata	became an architect
201	Gawryszczak Dobrosława	no data
202	Grabowska- Wojtkiewicz Mirosława	no data
203	Hommel Maria	became an architect
204	Howicka Krystyna	became an architect
205	Januszewska Ewa	became an architect
206	Klotz Krystyna	no data
207	Kłopotowska Barbara	no data
208	Kolankiewicz Elżbieta	no data
209	Kwapińska Izabella	no data
210	Leśnik Irena	no data
211	Ludwig Ewelina	no data
212	Łabno Barbara	no data
213	Matysiak Lucyna	no data
214	Mędrzycka Halina	became an architect

215	Michałowska Elżbieta	became an architect
216	Minkiewicz Barbara	became an architect
217	Ostrowska Barbara	became an architect
218	Pawlak Ewa	became an architect
219	Peda Alicja	became an architect
220	Rogalska Barbara	no data
221	Runo Anna	no data
222	Rylska Maria	became an architect
223	Słowikowska Zofia	became an architect
224	Śmietanowska Barbara	no data
225	Strzemieczna Urszula	became an architect
226	Szulczewska Alicja	became an architect
227	Trąbczyńska Elżbieta	no data
228	Widula Elżbieta	no data
229	Wolszakiewicz Jolanta	no data
230	Żbikowska Małgorzata	no data
231	Wieczorek Maria	no data
232	Wiklińska Wiesława	no data
233	Banaś Janina	no data
234	Kozina Maria	no data
235	Kubik Jadwiga	no data
236	Latos Stefania	no data
237	Szpecht-Michalska Elżbieta	became an architect
238	Skalska Anna	no data

239	Zarębska Bożena	became an architect	
240	Kosewska Izabella Hanna	no data	
241	Konarska Janina Maria	no data	
242	Przerwa-Tetmajer Anna	became an architect	