

Issues concerning the status of urban development, hence, urban planning, are a subject of debate of long history, currently discussed not only in narrow expert circles, but also by the general public. A better understanding of the causes of the current state of affairs e.g. quality of life in big cities, suburbanisation or the crisis of spatial arrangement as well as the analysis of future prospects requires an inquiry in the past of these issues. Especially that the past supplies the knowledge of not only widely known facts such as the internationally recognized programmes of post-World War II reconstruction of cities, but also various interesting and inspiring cases of activities and solutions contributing to the improvement in quality of the living environment in subsequent periods. The figure of Piotr Zaremba (1910-1993), urbanist from Szczecin, is an example of a forgotten, international oeuvre and success in the field. His innovative and original thought together with his extensive planning, teaching and consulting activity, conducted in several tens of countries on four continent, have made a significant impact not only on the shape of practical and theoretical urban planning in Poland and abroad, but also on the character of build environment of numerous regions and cities at home and worldwide.

A direct inspiration for the research project is the preserved, rich collection of Zaremba's personal records and notes, including e.g. richly illustrated diaries of business trips. The results of extensive projected archive research and library queries will not only contribute to reinstating the exceptional figure to his appropriate position in the history of Polish and international spatial planning, but they will also make possible the completion of the current, highly insufficient state of knowledge of the figure. This will provide a solid basis for further research and interpretations, making an important contribution to further development of the most significant issues, currently debated by historians and theorists of architecture, enriching it with a perspective of an expert from a socialist country, which so far has only been marginally present. The case of Piotr Zaremba's professional activity casts new light on issues concerning the teaching of architecture, evolution of urban-architectural practice, international circulation of knowledge and the connection of urban planning and politics. Additionally, the proposed research project is not limited to a completion of the current outlook on the history of architecture, urban and spatial planning, but aims to provide a case allowing for a critique of assumptions of contemporary historiography regarding e.g. the significance of the Cold War global divide for the formation of international cooperation networks.