

EARLIEST ARCHITECTS' OWN HOUSES IN WARSAW¹

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Not many architects, who worked in Warsaw during early modern era could afford to build their own house. A majority of few erected objects did not survive to the present day (Fig. 1). This can be a result of – on one hand – a variable economic situation in the building industry, at times worsened by plagues and wars fought by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also affected positively by the growth of Warsaw's political and economic status, as a town of kings' elections, Crown and Lithuania's common parliamentary assemblies (since 1569) and finally as a regal seat (gradual dislocation of the court from Cracow between 1596 and 1611)²; on the other hand – architect's social status – still more a mere builder (*murator*; *aedificator*), than a scholarly artist (*artifex doctus*) in the spirit of post-renaissance humanism.

In the difficult times of the second half of the seventeenth century, after the campaigns of the Second Northern War, which left the town in ruins, there weren't many investors ready to commit themselves to large construction works, and finance architects responsible for them. One of the leading architects of this age: Tylman van Gameren, who came from the Netherlands to Poland in 1661, in his vast drawing archive didn't leave any indication of working on a design for his own house. Being for a majority of his life in service of Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski and his family, Tylman moved permanently to Warsaw in 1674³. Here, he worked also for other noble families and the royal court. He assembled a large collection of books on architecture, which can indicate rather decent earnings, nevertheless he didn't build a house worthy of the position he gained – reaffirmed by ennoblement done by king John III in 1676 and confirmed by an act of parliament in 1685⁴.

Two other prominent architects of the end of the seventeenth century managed to build small palaces. Born the island of Murano in the Venetian Lagoon, Józef Szymon Bellotti (died ca. 1708) bought in 1685 from the Town of New Warsaw a plot called "Pasture" (Polish: "Wygon", land registry number: 2191). The appearance of this edifice is a matter of speculation, it is known only from written accounts and schematic outline in (among others) plan of Warsaw by Tirregaille or by Hiż (Fig. 4, 5). The building was constructed in the back of the courtyard, opposite to entrance gate. Its rectangular seven-axis wide shape had three projections, one in the centre and two on the sides, joined by side pavilions. Behind the palace were two elongated annexes, a garden was situated to the west of the courtyard. A distinction of this architect's residence among other small suburban estates was the presence of small industrial works to the south of the courtyard – a brickyard⁵. This way the seat of Bellotti was not only a combination of residential function with a presumptive place of design work but also a facility supporting the owner's building services, providing building material needed for construction of buildings designed by him. Moreover, production of bricks could have been an additional source of income, independent from current commitment to building projects.

Augustyn Locci the Younger (ca. 1640–1732) erected his residence differently. Leading architect of the times of king John III chose for his house a plot located much closer to the town than Bellotti, on Bielańska street (land registry number: 603). Its development, presumably designed by Locci himself, was also of a different sort. Due to an elongated shape of the plot, the small palace was situated on the side of the courtyard and not on its end on the

¹ This article is a part of a doctoral thesis, prepared under guidance of prof. zw. dr hab. inż. arch. Jadwiga Roguska.

² M. M. Drozdowski, A. Zahorski, *Historia Warszawy*, Jeden Świat, Warsaw 2004, p. 31, 35.

³ M. Kopińska *Katalog rysunków Tylmana Gameren*, in: *Tylman z Gameren – Architekt Warszawy, Holender z pochodzenia, Polak z wyboru*, Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, Warsaw 2003, p. 112.

⁴ S. Mossakowski, *Twórczość Tylmana z Gameren w Polsce na tle sztuki europejskiej*, in: *Tylman z Gameren – Architekt Warszawy, Holender z pochodzenia, Polak z wyboru*, p. 27.

⁵ M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura mieszkaniowa Warszawy*, PIW, Warsaw 1989, p. 36-37.

axis. A masonry construction, the building had two floors with an area of ca 500 sqm each. The rest of buildings on the plot surrounded the courtyard. On both sides of the palace stood small wooden annexes in the shape of a small country manor-house, on the opposite side – a stable, elongated according to the plot's shape⁶. Thanks to this spatial disposition it was possible to fit a palace and its supporting edifices on a small piece of land, at the cost of resignation from a more representational character of the residence. This architect's house hadn't got a garden.

A larger number of architects' seats were constructed during the eighteenth century. Apart from manor houses and small palaces, architects were also building for themselves tenement houses in dense urban sites.

Three suburban realizations of the eighteenth century can be a sign of a rise in status of architectural profession and architects' incomes. In the 1720s and architect and general of Saxon army Daniel Jan Jauch (1688–1754), who had already owned a tenement on Ćwiętojańska street close to the Old Town Market (land registry number: 9)⁷, bought a former Sobieski family manor, localized in the Solec suburb, close to the present-day Ludna street (land registry number: 2915). The architect turned it into a palace surrounded by garden with a spit in the waters of Vistula river⁸. The position of a summer residence, in a distance from the town, in an attractive area close to the river alone was a sign of a financial potential of the owner. Its prestige is raised also by neighbourhood, comprising of summer palaces of wealthy noble families and the social position of former owners – a family elevated to royal rank.

The same, prestigious neighbourhood was chosen for a summer residence by Jakub Fontana (1710–1773). He owned a manor house in Solec near other residences of this type of notable families: Godzki, Konstancja Zamojska, Ossolinski⁹ among others – the most important aristocratic houses of eighteenth century Commonwealth. Later,

not far away on top of Vistula escarpment a summer home with a garden was built by Dominik Merlini (1730–1797)¹⁰.

Józef Fontana (1670–1741) built for himself a palatial residence opposite to monastery of the Fatebenefratelli (land registry number: 2162). The house, resembling a manor, stood in the back of the plot, preceded by a courtyard, separated from the street by two outbuildings divided by a magnificent three-way gate. The author of the design for this residence was probably the owner¹¹. The gate was thus not only an entranceway to the estate but also a prominent symbol of the architect's creative work (Fig. 2, 3, 4).

Jan Zygmunt Deybel (died 1752), an architect and colonel of the army was the owner of a palace in Wielopole. Firstly he worked as an officer in Saxon building authority in Warsaw, later he designed magnificent baroque residences of the richest nobility in the capital and outside of it. Thanks to this activity he managed to gather quite a fortune¹². He bought the building known today as Lubomirski Palace probably around 1730, when he was working nearby for the king on the barracks for the crown horse guards. The palace consisted of the main corpus, joined from the north by a rectangular courtyard surrounded by annexes. Around 1743 the site was already the property of Stanisław Wincenty Jabłonowski, voivode of Rawa. It is possible, that the architect swapped this residence for a plot on Senatorska street (land registry number: 461)¹³, where he soon began to erect a manor house for himself¹⁴.

A true mogul among architects, who worked in eighteenth century Warsaw was undoubtedly Jakub Fontana, the son of Józef. Splendid reputation, fame reaching outside Warsaw, brought with them many commissions, which gave him high incomes. Two lucrative marriages and a talent for business caused that, apart from the abovementioned manor house in Solec, the architect gathered a portfolio of buildings in Warsaw and arable land in the countryside. With

⁶ Ibid., p. 47.

⁷ *Wymiar podatku łokciowego miasta Starej Warszawy*, in: *Źródła do dziejów Warszawy*, PWN, Warsaw 1963, p. 297.

⁸ M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura mieszkaniowa Warszawy*, p. 83.

⁹ A. Bartczakowa, *Jakub Fontana Architekt Warszawski XVIII wieku*, PWN, Warsaw 1970, p. 205-206.

¹⁰ M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura pałacowa i willowa w Warszawie XVIII wieku*, in: *Warszawa XVIII wieku*, zeszyt 3, PWN, Warsaw 1975, p. 69.

¹¹ M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura pałacowa i willowa w Warszawie...*, p. 27, 113.

¹² T. S. Jaroszewski, *Pałac Lubomirskich*, PWN, Warsaw 1971, p. 10-11.

¹³ A. Sokołowska, *Jurydyka Wielopole w Warszawie w świetle nieznanymi planów Tylmana z Gameren*, w: „Rocznik Warszawski”, R. XI, 1972, p. 44.

¹⁴ *Wymiar podatku łokciowego przedmieść Starej Warszawy z 1743 r.* in: *Źródła do dziejów Warszawy...*, p. 353.

a thought of development of his architectural-construction work Jakub Fontana bought the Murano palace, which earlier belonged to Józef Szymon Bellotti. The new owner continued the work of the brickyard, which was established by Bellotti. Adjoining lands, belonged to another architect, also of Italian origin – Antonio Solari (1700–1763), who owned a manor there, an inn and a brickyard¹⁵. Settling of artists close to one-another was practiced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in other European cities – also in Italy and was a part of a long tradition of aggregating people of the same profession in towns¹⁶. It is possible that Fontana, settling next to Solari, wanted to link to this tradition. Even more probable is that the purchase of the former Bellotti estate was caused by the need to own a brickyard and thus supplement Fontana's income. Fontana owned also an inn located near the manor house on Bonifraterska street he inherited from his father¹⁷, which also must have provided him with additional money, independent from his current commissions. Apart from this real estate (the manor on Bonifraterska street was sold by Fontana after purchasing Murano) the architect owned a tenement house on Krakowskie Przedmieście (land registry number: 450) next to Ma³achowski palace, which he bought around 1750 and sold before 1770 and the abovementioned summer manor house in Solec¹⁸.

A crowning achievement of Jakub Fontana's career was the construction in the New Town between 1770–1771 at the junction of Franciszkańska and Zakroczymska streets (land registry number: 326/7) of a large tenement house¹⁹ (Fig. 6, 7, 8). The building, preserved until the second world war, and afterwards rebuilt until today closes the perspective of Freta. The corner plot, adjoining the New Town market was almost fully built over by Fontana, leaving only a very narrow backyard. On the ground floor, adorned mainly with rustication

there is a space for shops. Above the architect outlined four floors of flats. Facing the market square is a narrow, three-axis façade with a balcony covering its entire width at the most representational third floor (counting from street level). The side elevation, which is longer – facing the church and a small cemetery, which was there until 1818²⁰, along Zakroczymska street has nine-axis and has accents in to flat projections on each side.

Jakub Fontana in majority of his work was a baroque architect, but for this tenement he chose a shade of early neoclassicism, drawing inspiration from a book by Jean Francis de Neufforge²¹. It was a very early, or even precursory reference to a publication by this French architect, published in Paris in 1760. References to Neufforge propositions can be found in the composition of front of the building, easily seen in a long perspective from the Old Town gate (Fig. 9). It wasn't a direct copy of patterns drawn by the Parisian creator though, but a transformation. Fontana enriched a cool aesthetic of the French designs with a more varied decorative elements: four types of pediments, numerous massive stucco details above and around windows. In the place of semi-circular arches above doors and windows in the ground floor he introduced segmental arches. Even closer to the aesthetic of neoclassicism is the less exposed, side elevation of the tenement. Raw, seven-axis main body, divided by cordon-cornices, stripped of adornments is accented only by side projections.

Undoubtedly a tenement with shops and flats for rent in a prestigious location on the New Town market square was a good investment and a supplementary, constant source of income, independent from the owner's profession. With his former investments, including land property outside of Warsaw Jakub Fontana proved, that he could have efficiently manage his assets. In the case of this, last large

¹⁵ *Rewizja Nowej Warszawy z 1734 r.*, in: *Źródła do dziejów Warszawy...*, p. 282, compare *Taryffa z roku 1784*.

¹⁶ In Rome and Florence existed „artistic districts”. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Venice many artists lived in Saint Apostles parish in sestiere Cannaregio. A member of the Fontana family, Domenico, lived in saint Lucas parish in sestiere San Polo, which was popular among painters in the eighteenth century. R. E. Spear, Ph. Sohm, *Painting for profit. The economic lives of seventeenth-century Italian painters*, Yale University Press, New Haven-London, 2010, p. 224, 252-253.

¹⁷ A. Bartczakowa, op. cit., p. 15; *Taryfa posesji Warszawy z 1770 r.*, in: *Źródła do dziejów Warszawy...*, p. 491.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 42, 206; *Spis mieszkańców i nieruchomości Starej Warszawy z 1754 r.*, tzw. *Lustracja Dawidsona*, in: *Źródła do dziejów Warszawy...*, p. 415.

¹⁹ M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura pałacowa i willowa w Warszawie...*, p. 48.

²⁰ A. Bartczakowa, *Kościół franciszkanów w Warszawie*, „Biuletyn Historii Sztuki”, R. XXIX, 1967, nr 3, p. 420.

²¹ R. Mączyński, *Warszawska kamienica Jakuba Fontany (Przyczynek do dziejów polskiej recepcji wzornika Neufforge'a)*, „Rocznik Warszawski”, R. XXXII, 2004, p. 193.

investment of the architect, who was sixty at the time the construction started, it is interesting to see him interested in new architectural ideas, coming in from abroad. The tenement in Franciszkańska was not only another financial insurance for an already wealthy proprietor, but also a demonstration of his enduring creative potential and knowledge of current architectural writing.

Karol Bay (died ca. 1742) – the author of the façade of Visitation Sisters' church – was also an owner of a tenement house. His home, on Miodowa street no. 12 (land registry number: 483) was built before 1733. It was a five-axis building. The central, slightly recessed three-axis part was flanked by two large projections with rounded corners²² (Fig. 10, 11). It is one of the earliest examples of a tenement façade with accents on its sides, which grew in popularity during the second half of the eighteenth century²³. The projections are dominated by large areas of wall, perforated by single axes of windows. Three remaining axes are closely grouped in the central part. The axis of the building is highlighted by a entryway leading to the backyard, which adjoined a single, long annex in the south side. The décor of this façade designed by Bay, apart from the layout of the perforations, which probably never changed, is not preserved. The building was rebuilt as early as the 1770s in neoclassical forms – in this shape it is visible in one of Zygmunt Vogel watercolours, and this is how it looks today. One can only assume, that the decoration was denser in the centre of the façade in a baroque way – similarly to the layout of the windows.

Not all of the prominent architects of eighteenth century Warsaw, even those, who reached highest acclaim in their profession, and probably high incomes, took on a task of designing and building a house for themselves. Jan Chrystian Kamsetzer, had only an apartment in a house belonging to the Pauline Fathers on Podwale street no. 21 (land registry number: 501), where he lived with two other persons²⁴. Szymon Bogumił Zug lived on the first floor of the west (kitchen) wing of the Saxon Palace. He was an owner of a small plot on Królewska

street (land registry number: 1069), where there was a shed and a wooden bower, there is no information though about any larger constructions works there²⁵.

Architects' own houses in the early modern age in Warsaw were often not only their seat, but also a supplementary source of income. The creators owned tenements with rooms for rent or brickyards, aiding their primary business. Józef Fontana owned temporarily an inn. Only very few could afford palatial residences and summer manors, and their income was often not only result of design commissions, but also from different sources: Daniel Jan Jauch and Jan Zygmunt Deybel were high ranking members of the military. Jakub Fontana inherited real estate from his father and his assets was enriched by dowries of two wives. Moreover probably only those architects, who linked their future permanently with Warsaw erected their own residences here, and they were not designers of such talent as Tylman, Kamsetzer or Zug, who could have hoped for commissions not only for the capital's nobility and royal court, but also in other cities in Europe.

Translated by the Author

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²² M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura mieszkaniowa Warszawy*, p. 91.

²³ M. Kwiatkowski, *Kamienice warszawskie drugiej połowy XVIII wieku. Próba systematyzacji*, in: *Warszawa XVIII wieku*, z. 2, Warsaw 1973, p. 197.

²⁴ N. and Z. Batowski, M. Kwiatkowski, *Jan Chrystian Kamsetzer Architekt Stanisława Augusta*, PWN, Warsaw 1978, p. 238.

²⁵ M. Kwiatkowski, *Szymon Bogumił Zug Architekt polskiego oświecenia*, PWN, Warsaw 1971, p. 10.

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Taryffa miasta Warszawy do składki na koszary na rat sześć cztero-miesięcznych w 1784 roku ułożona, perceptę z kwitami zgodną okazująca.

Taryffa domów miasta Warszawy i Pragi z planem ogólnym i 128 szczegółowych planików ulic i domów, Warsaw 1852.

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