

The Gdańsk Builder Bartel Ranisch (1648–1710?): New Research on His Biography and Architectural Activity*

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ABSTRACT This essay presents the builder Bartel Ranisch, who is the author of one of the most exceptional books on architecture to appear in Europe in the 17th century. Titled *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic* and published in 1695, it was an illustrated description of Gdańsk's churches. According to the author, it aimed to re-establish the skills needed to build complex architectural structures, particularly rib vaults, in order to stimulate the development of architecture in the city. The aim of this essay is to analyse Ranisch's work and contextualise his biography by describing his background, education and position in the local architectural milieu. This approach will allow for a better understanding of the context in which his book was written. Furthermore, it will provide a better understanding of the Gdańsk architectural milieu in the second half of the 17th and early 18th centuries, which has so far remained largely removed from the interest of researchers.

KEYWORDS Bartel Ranisch, architect, architecture, Gdańsk, vaults, 17th century

ABSTRAKT *Gdański budowniczy Bartel Ranisch (1648–1710?). Nowe badania nad jego biografią i działalnością architektoniczną.* Tekst omawia działalność budowniczego Bartela Ranischa, autora jednej z najbardziej wyjątkowych książek o architekturze, jakie ukazały się w Europie w XVII w. Zatytułowana *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic* i wydana w 1695 r., stanowiła ona ilustrowany opis gdańskich kościołów. Według autora miała służyć przywróceniu umiejętności potrzebnych do budowy złożonych struktur architektonicznych, w szczególności sklepień krzyżowo-żebrowych, i w ten sposób przyczynić się do odnowy architektury w mieście. Celem niniejszego eseju jest analiza działalności Ranischa i kontekstualizacja biografii budowniczego poprzez opisanie jego pochodzenia, wykształcenia i pozycji w lokalnym środowisku architektonicznym, co pozwoli lepiej zrozumieć okoliczności powstania książki i poznać gdańskie środowisko architektoniczne 2. połowy XVII i początku XVIII w., niecieszące się jak dotąd zainteresowaniem badaczy.

SŁOWA-KLUCZE Bartel Ranisch, architekt, architektura, Gdańsk, sklepienia, XVII w.

SITUATED at the mouth of the Vistula River, Gdańsk (German: Danzig) was ruled by the Teutonic Knights since 1308. In 1454, the city, together with the province which would come to be known as Royal Prussia, was incorporated into the Kingdom of Poland. The period up to the middle of the 17th century was a time of great development in Gdańsk, which became the major trading centre of the Baltic region and by far the largest and most affluent city of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. The economic and political growth of the city resulted in a significant architectural development. Many monumental buildings were built between the 14th and the early 17th century, including churches with elaborate rib vaults. The most important of these was the church of the Virgin Mary, the parish church of the so-called 'Main City' (*Rechtstadt*) of Gdańsk.

The crisis that struck the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania in the middle of the 17th century had its consequences also for Gdańsk, as it weakened the city's economic base in the Vistula basin and disrupted relations within the Baltic region. Economic changes in the regions which were the main recipients of goods exported from the Commonwealth via Gdańsk, especially the United Provinces, also had a significant impact. From that point on, architecture in Gdańsk was mostly limited to much smaller undertakings. Additional factors limiting construction projects in the 17th century were the great cost of the new city fortifications and the fact

that the dominant Protestants did not initiate any major projects in ecclesiastical architecture, contenting themselves with the buildings taken over in the 16th century.¹

Yet in this period, the wealth of the city's architectural heritage inspired the local master mason Bartel Ranisch to publish, in 1695, a remarkable book on architecture, titled *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic*. Printed in Gdańsk by the leading local publisher Zacharias Stolle, it was an illustrated description of Gdańsk's churches and at the same time a handbook on how to build vaults just like the ones found in them (Fig. 1).² In a retrospective approach towards the local architectural tradition, Ranisch aimed to re-establish the skills needed to build complex rib vaults and thus to stimulate the development of architecture in the city.³ Towards the end of his life, Ranisch was working on another publication about Gdańsk's buildings.⁴ The work, titled *Beschreibung derer vornämsten Gebäude in der Stadt Danzig*, which until recently remained in manuscript, described the buildings administered by the city, including the town halls, armouries and gates, and was likely related to Ranisch's work for the municipal government late in the builder's career.

To properly understand the description of Gdańsk churches published in 1695 and its contexts, it is necessary to take a closer look at its author, Bartel Ranisch. So far the most comprehensive attempt to present his

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1. Jacek Friedrich, "The Architectural Landscape of Gdańsk in the Time of Johannes Hevelius", in *Johannes Hevelius and his Gdańsk*, ed. Marian Turek (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 2013), 93–97.

2. Bartel Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic* (Dantzic: Johann Zacharias Stollen, 1695). The history of the book and its readership will be analysed by the author within the framework of the OPUS grant titled *Medievalism in Gdańsk: The Builder Bartel Ranisch (1648–1709?) and the Beginnings of Scientific Research on Gothic Architecture*, implemented at the Faculty of Arts and Cultural Sciences of the University of Warsaw.

3. As such, it fits well into the essentially retrospective afterlives of the Gothic as discussed by Robert Bork, *Late Gothic Architecture. Its Evolution, Extinction, and Reception* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 14.

4. Bartel Ranisch, *Beschreibung derer vornämsten Gebäude in der Stadt Danzig. Vollständige Textedition*, eds. Arnold Bartetzky, Detlev Kraack (Marburg: Herder-Institut, 1997). It was written around 1707, as Ranisch indicated in the introduction that he had worked as a master mason in Gdańsk for 34 years.

life and work was made by Jadwiga Habela.⁵ Some information about Ranisch has also been published in scholarship dedicated to his book.⁶ The most important of these remain the studies by Helene C. Kaplan and, in recent years, by Anna Kulig and her team.⁷ In terms of architectural work, Ranisch is best known as the builder of the so-called Royal Chapel, built in Gdańsk following a commission from King John III Sobieski in 1678–1681.⁸ Early scholars considered Ranisch the main designer of this building.⁹ Gradually, however, his role began to be seen as increasingly less

significant. As early as 1910, Georg Cuny attributed a prominent role in the creation of the Royal Chapel to the sculptor Andreas Schlüter, although he continued to point to Ranisch's involvement.¹⁰ After the Second World War, Polish scholars attributed the design of the chapel to other architects active in the Commonwealth. Henryk Kondziela and Stanisław Mossakowski linked the design of the chapel to the Dutch architect Tilman van Gameren, while Mariusz Karpowicz attributed it to the Italian architect Isidoro Affaitati.¹¹ All of these scholars considered Ranisch a builder of limited

5. Jadwiga Habela, "Ranich, Bartel (Bartłomiej?), ok. 1648–po 1709", in *Słownik biograficzny Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 4, ed. Stanisław Gierszewski (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1997), 38–40.

6. Paul Frankl, *The Gothic. Literary Sources and Interpretations Through Eight Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 537; Zygmunt Kruszelnicki, *Historiografia sztuki Gdańska i Pomorza* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1980), 20–22; Werner Müller, "Architektur und Mathematik", in *Architekt und Ingenieur. Baumeister in Krieg und Frieden*, eds. Ulrich Schütte, Hartwig Neumann (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1984), 94–108, no. 69; id., *Grundlagen gotischer Bautechnik* (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1990), 159; Norbert Nußbaum, Sabine Lepsky, *Das gotische Gewölbe. Eine Geschichte seiner Form und Konstruktion* (Darmstadt: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1999), 179–180; Elena Pliego De Andrés, "The Geometry of Late Gothic German Vaults in Bartel Ranisch's Beschreibung Aller Kirchengebäude Der Stadt Dantzic (1695) and the Germ of the Prinzipalbogen Concept", in *Nexus 2016 – Architecture and Mathematics – Abstracts*, ed. Sylvie Duvernoy (Turin: Kim Williams Books, 2016), 47–53; Olaf Huth, *Entwurfs- und Konstruktionsprinzipien des spätgotischen Netzgewölbes der Kirche St. Peter und Paul in der Lutherstadt Eisleben* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2000), 23–26.

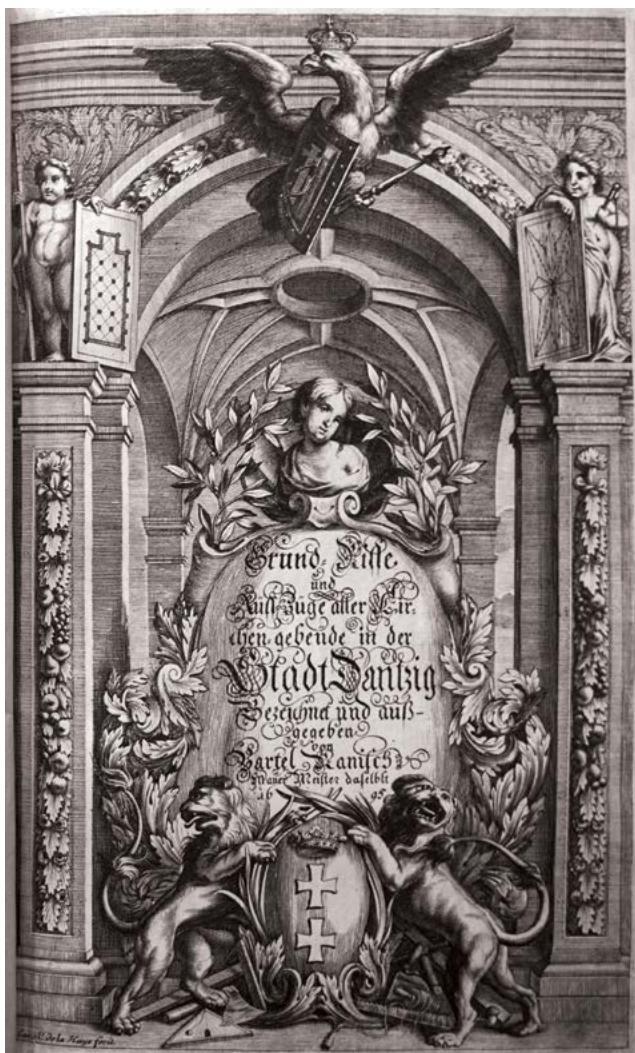
7. Helene C. Kaplan, *The Danzig churches; a study in late Gothic vault development*, PhD diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, Dept. of Art and Art History 1974; Helene C. Kaplan, "Bartel Ranisch i sklepienia gdańskie", *Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki* 22, no. 3 (1977): 167–90; Anna Kulig, Krystyna Romaniak, "Monumentalne budowle Gdańska w ujęciu XVII-wiecznego architekta / Monumental buildings of Gdańsk as seen by a seventeenth century architect", *Wiadomości Konserwatorskie* 25 (2009): 70–76; Anna Kulig, "Wirtualne rekonstrukcje sklepień gwiazdzystych wykonane na podstawie analizy dzieła Bartla Ranischa", *Modelowanie inżynierskie* 17, no. 48 (2013): 78–85.

8. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic*, 18.

9. This is how his roles were interpreted by, among others, Cornelius Gurlitt, *Andreas Schlüter* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 1891), 13–15; Tadeusz Kruszyński, *Stary Gdańsk i historia jego sztuki* (Kraków: J. Czernecki, [1912]), 61, 108–109; Bolesław Makowski, *Sztuka na Pomorzu, jej dzieje i zabytki* (Toruń–Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Instytutu Bałtyckiego / Kasa im. Mirowskiego – Instytut Popierania Nauki, 1932), 127; Otto Kloeppel, *Das Stadtbild von Danzig in den drei Jahrhunderten seiner großen Geschichte* (Danzig: A. W. Kafemann, 1937), 266.

10. Georg Cuny, *Danzigs Kunst und Kultur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Heinrich Keller Verlag, 1910), 113–114, and [Georg Cuny], "Ranisch, Barthel", in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler*, vol. 28, ed. Hans Vollmer (Leipzig: A. E. Seemann Verlag, 1934), 9. See also Bruno Lucks, "Die Königliche Kapelle in Danzig", *Die Denkmalpflege* 22, no. 5 (1920): 35–37, and Henryk Kondziela, "Kaplica Królewska w Gdańsku i jej twórcy", *Studia Pomorskie* 2 (1957): 303.

11. Kondziela, "Kaplica Królewska w Gdańsku i jej twórcy", 316–323; Stanisław Mossakowski, *Tylman z Gameren, architekt polskiego baroku* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1973), 139–141. However, Mossakowski later rejected the hypothesis of Tilman's authorship, see Stanisław Mossakowski, *Tilman van Gameren. Leben und Werk* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1994), and id., *Tylman z Gameren (1632–1706). Twórczość architektoniczna w Polsce* (Warszawa–Monachium–Berlin: DiG / Verlag Otto Sagner, 2012), 7. This hypothesis



competence who only carried out a design produced by another, more capable architect. Ranisch is occasionally mentioned also with regard to his other works, such as the church in Piaseczno [German: Pehsken] near Gniew [German: Mewe] and the so-called *Spendehaus* in Gdańsk.¹²

Despite numerous references to Ranisch in scholarly literature, knowledge of his work remains fragmented and unstructured. The aim of this essay is, therefore, to analyse systematically Ranisch's work and contextualise his biography by describing his background, education and position in the local architectural milieu. This approach will allow for a better understanding of the context in which his book was written. Furthermore, it will broaden our awareness of the Gdańsk architectural milieu in the second half of the 17th and early 18th century, which has so far remained largely removed from the interest of researchers.

ORGANISATION OF CONSTRUCTION IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN GDAŃSK

In Gdańsk, as in many other cities, organisational structures that had formed in the late Middle Ages

← 1 Bartel Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig* (Danzig 1695), title page, Polska Akademia Nauk. Biblioteka Gdańska / The Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Od 1643 2°

was based on weak premises, as the relationship of the drawing underlying it to the Royal Chapel remains uncertain; moreover, it was recently excluded from the corpus of designs by Tylman van Gameren, see Przemysław Wątroba, *Rysunki architektoniczne i dekoracyjne. Tylman z Gameren*, vol. 1–2 (Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2019). Regarding the attribution of the design to Affaitati, see Mariusz Karpowicz, “Kto jest autorem Kaplicy Królewskiej w Gdańsku?”, *Barok* 7, no. 1 (2000): 133–145, and id., *Architekt królewski Isidoro Affaitati (1622–1684)* (Warszawa: Neriton, 2011), 102–106. Only recently have attempts been made to take a critical look at the existing literature on the Royal Chapel, see Bożena Noworyta-Kuklińska, “Kaplica Królewska w Gdańsku – fakty i wątpliwości”, in *Sztuka i humanizm. Księga pamiątkowa ku czci Profesora Antoniego Maślińskiego* (Lublin: Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, 1994), 159–180; Jacek Kriegseisen, “Plebania kościoła Mariackiego i Kaplica Królewska. Fakty i wątpliwości”, in *Kościół Mariacki w Gdańsku. Architektura*, ed. Jacek Friedrich (Gdańsk: Fundacja Karrenwall, 2017), 40–61, and Tomasz Torbus, *Ein Fremdkörper in der Danziger Architekturtradition? Die Königliche Kapelle – Zuschreibung, Form und Funktion* (paper presented at the conference *Die Danziger Marienkirche – Der Bau und seine Ausstattung im europäischen Kontext* in 2017). 12. Ernst Blech, “Schlüter und Ranisch. Zur Danziger Kunstgeschichte”, *Mitteilungen des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins* 3, no. 2 (1904): 34–38; Grzegorz Woliński, “Bartel Ranisch a jego związek z kościołem w Piasecznie”, *Kociewski Magazyn Regionalny* 71 (2010): 2–5; Jacek Friedrich, *Gdańskie zabytki architektury do końca XVIII wieku* (Gdańsk: Uniwersytet Gdański, 1995), 136, 202; Adam Szarszewski, Marta Bogotko-Szarszewska, *Imago mundi pauperum. Dom dobroczynności w Gdańsku według Johanna Jacoba Feyrabenta i Samuela Donneta* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2006).

functioned without substantial change until the end of the early modern era.¹³ Construction fell under the jurisdiction of the deputy burgomaster (*Vicepresidenten Burgermeister*), while the municipal building supervisors (*Bauherren*) oversaw municipal construction projects on behalf of the city government.¹⁴ They were mainly responsible for controlling finances and the supply of building materials. The Gdańsk *Bauherren* were helped by the so-called *Bauknecht*, who played an important role in the organisation of municipal construction projects, assisting officials with supervision and builders with facilitating construction work. His tasks included hiring and supervising unskilled labourers, watchmen and others who were indispensable to the construction sites, as well as procuring and securing building materials. He reported regularly on

these matters, above all financial ones, to the *Bauherren* and other people appointed to oversee municipal construction.¹⁵

To direct the work, civic authorities employed the so-called city builders; this position was common in many European cities. A well-known example is provided by Elias Holl, the city builder (*Stadtwerkmeister*) of Augsburg.¹⁶ In Gdańsk, the city builders were called *Stadt Baumeistern* or, more often, simply *Baumeistern*. They were primarily specialists in defensive architecture and engineering, although, typical of the 16th and 17th century, they were versatile and could also participate in other projects. City builders did not have a monopoly on carrying out construction or engineering work for the city. Unlike regular masons or carpenters, they were not required to belong to local guilds, as is

13. The organisation of the building industry in German-speaking cities between the 14th and the 17th century is discussed in Gerhard Fouquet, *Bauen für die Stadt. Finanzen, Organisation und Arbeit in kommunalen Baubetrieben des Spätmittelalters. Eine vergleichende Studie vornehmlich zwischen den Städten Basel und Marburg* (Köln–Weimar–Wien: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlag, 1999); see also Günther Binding, et al., *Baubetrieb im Mittelalter*, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993), 86–101, and with regard to other European regions for instance see: Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence. An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore–London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980) and Richard J. Goy, *Building Renaissance Venice. Patrons, Architects, and Builders c. 1430–1500* (New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 2006).

14. Even though Gdańsk was one of the most important architectural centres of the Commonwealth, the organisation of the building industry there has not yet been studied. References to the Gdańsk building industry appear in Cuny, *Danzigs Kunst und Kultur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Max Foltz, “Der Danziger Stadthaushalt am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts”, *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins* 49 (1907): 131–184, Maria Bogucka, *Gdańsk jako ośrodek produkcyjny w XIV–XVII wieku* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962), 65–79, Erich Keyser, *Die Baugeschichte der Stadt Danzig*, ed. Ernst Bahr (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1972), and Arnold Bartetzky, *Das Grosse Zeughaus in Danzig. Baugeschichte. Architekturgeschichtliche Stellung. Repräsentative Funktion*, Bd. 1 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000), 79–101, as well as more recent studies, but on selected aspects, see for instance Edmund Kizik, “Cechowe oględziny budynków mieszkalnych w Gdańsku w XVII–XVIII wieku”, in *Studia i materiały do dziejów domu gdańskiego*, vol. 1, ed. Edmund Kizik (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2009), 145–161 and other studies in the series *Studia i materiały do dziejów domu gdańskiego*.

15. His tasks were set out in the *Bauknecht Ordnung*, The Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Polska Akademia Nauk. Biblioteka Gdańska, henceforth: PAN BG), sign. Ms. Ortm. fol. 76, 137–138.

16. On Holl, see Bernd Roeck, *Elias Holl. Architekt einer europäischen Stadt* (Regensburg: Pustet Verlag, 1985); *Elias Holl und das Augsburger Rathaus*, eds. Wolfram Baer, Hanno-Walter Kruft, Bernd Roeck (Regensburg: Pustet Verlag, 1985); Thomas Fichtner, Kai Wenzel, “Elias Holl”, in *Die Baumeister der “Deutschen Renaissance”. Ein Mythos der Kunstgeschichte?*, ed. Arnold Bartetzky (Beucha: Sax Verlag, 2004), 213–235; Julian Jachmann, “Die Künstler des Augsburger Rates. Kompetenzstrukturen und Organisationsformen in der städtischen Kunst um 1600”, *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben* 99 (2006): 65–109; Eva Haberstock, *Der Augsburger Stadtwerkmeister Elias Holl (1573–1646). Werkverzeichnis* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016); *450 Jahre Elias Holl (1573–1646). Meister – Werk – Stadt*, eds. Christoph Emmendorffer, Christof Trepesch (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2023).

explained in the statute of the masons, stonecutters and sculptors' guild.¹⁷ Among the best-known city builders were Hans Kramer, Hans Schneider von Lindau, Fredrik Vroom and Anthonis van Obbergen, as well as Peter Willer after the middle of the 17th century.¹⁸ Some of the city builders in Gdańsk enjoyed supra-regional fame, including Hans Schneider von Lindau, who towards the end of his life worked for the imperial court, or Vroom, who was originally a sculptor and was mentioned by Karel van Mander as a specialist in architecture and geometry.¹⁹ As highly competent individuals, Gdańsk city builders, including Vroom and Van Obbergen, also worked outside the city at the invitation of high-ranking patrons.²⁰ The town employed several other specialists as well, who dealt with, among others, the construction and maintenance of water infrastructure; this task was carried out by the so-called *Kunstmeister*, a function that Daniel Wilcke held for many years.

Craftsmen carrying out specific types of work – masonry, carpentry, etc. – also worked on behalf of the municipal authorities. In Nuremberg, Basel and many other cities, separate masters were responsible for masonry,

stonework, carpentry, blacksmithing, as well as bridge construction and water infrastructure.²¹ It was similar in Saxon towns, where the Ranisch family originated. In Dresden, civic authorities employed a city builder, called a *Baumeister* or a *Werkmeister*, to supervise the construction work they were carrying out.²² In the 1630s, at a time when Hans Ranisch, the father of Bartel Ranisch, could still be active in Saxony, this function was held by Georg Böhme. Specialists in various crafts responsible for specific jobs, including masonry, were subordinate to the city builder. These craftsmen were referred to as town servants (*Rathsdienere*).²³ They were held accountable to the city builder through weekly reports, which covered the number of skilled and unskilled workers, their working hours and the sites at which they were employed. Together with similar reports submitted by men overseeing other types of work, these were collected into bound volumes of accounts that formed the basis of the municipal bookkeeping.²⁴

In Gdańsk, municipal authorities also employed local craftsmen to carry out building work. The town carpenter (*Stadt Zimmerman*), who managed the municipal

17. State Archive in Gdańsk (Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku, henceforth: APG), Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2095, 4.

18. Details of the contract closed with Hans Kramer in 1565 are presented in Cuny, *Danzigs Kunst und Kultur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, 15, 122.

19. On Hans Schneider von Lindau, see Kurt Bimler, "Hans Schneider von Lindau, Ein Breslauer Stadtbaumeister (†1606)", *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens* 68 (1934): 118–132, and Karl Hauke, "Hans Schneider von Lindau, ein Baumeister des 16. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Osten", *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung. Länder und Völker im östlichen Mitteleuropa* 8, no. 4 (1959): 533–549; on Vroom see Karel van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first Edition of the Schilder-boeck 1603–1604*, trans. and ed. Hessel Miedema, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), 406, 409 (fol. 287r, 287v), and Karel van Mander, *The Lives*, ed. Hessel Miedema, vol. 5: *Commentary on lives / fol. 262r01–291r47* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1998), 228.

20. Hermann Ehrenberg, *Die Kunst am Hofe der Herzöge von Preußen* (Leipzig–Berlin: Giesecke & Devrient, 1899), 213, no. 602; Bogusław Dybaś, "Memoriał burmistrza Henryka Strobanda Von Befestigung der Stadt Thorn", in *Miscellanea źródłowe do historii kultury i sztuki Torunia*, eds. Bogusław Dybaś, Marek Farbiszewski (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989), 87.

21. Fouquet, *Bauen für die Stadt*, 180–278; see also Binding, *Baubetrieb im Mittelalter*, 86–93, and Günther Binding, *Meister der Baukunst. Geschichte des Architekten- und Ingenieurberufes* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), 125.

22. The term "Baumeister" was used in Dresden in the mid-16th century to refer to, among others, Hans Walther and Melcher Trost. The term "Werkmeister" appears there in the 17th century, e.g. in reference to Christian Roth. Both terms were in common use in German-speaking areas in the late medieval and early modern periods.

23. Regarding hired servants of municipal councils, see Roman Czaja, "Urzednicy najemni i sludzy rad miejskich w duzych miastach Prus i Inflant w sredniowieczu", in *Wladztwo komunalne w hanzeatyckich miastach Prus i Inflant w sredniowieczu. Studia i materialy*, eds. Roman Czaja, Janusz Tandecki (Toruń: TNT, 2022), 347–400.

24. Stadtarchiv Dresden, 2.5, Rechnungsarchiv, 1, 2, Kämmererechnungen (Belege).

carpentry workshop (*Zimmerhof*), played a particularly important role. He carried out the carpentry work, employed and supervised the workers – usually several dozen men – and dealt with the supply of materials. The term ‘town mason’ (*Stadtmaurer*) also appears in sources, although, thus far, no documents indicate a formalised nature of this position. This name was usually applied to master masons who were consistently and over a long period employed to work for the town. These included Hans Strakowski, who was involved in the construction of the Royal Granary and the rebuilding of the façade of the Artus Court, Reinhold de Klerck, who was responsible for the construction of the so-called Old Pharmacy and the New Armoury, and later Hans Schindler, Michael Keyser, Jacob Ingber and others. Builders who carried out specific work were usually documented through weekly bills (*Wochenzettel*). Unlike the city builders, they were masters of the local guild. Ranisch held such a position for some time. However, he did not become involved with the city government until late in his career, at the turn of the 17th century.

THE RANISCH FAMILY, BUILDERS FROM SAXONY

Ranisch came from a family of builders. His father, Hans, was a mason, his grandfather, Matthes, a carpenter. While Matthes, who was probably active in the early 17th century, remains a completely obscure figure, more is known about Hans. He came from the village of Großsedlitz, located about four kilometres west of Pirna in Saxony.²⁵ His education and early work remain unknown, so only general assumptions can be made about these biographical aspects. Hans came from an area with a rich architectural tradition with several nearby major architectural centres including Pirna, an important centre for stonemasonry, and Dresden, the largest city and main residence of the Saxon court. He was most likely

trained in one of the numerous workshops operating in the region. A list of craftsmen and labourers engaged in work for the ducal court dating from 1591 gives some idea of the scale of the Saxon construction industry and the number of builders it supported. The list records 36 stonemasons (*Steinmetzen*), 93 stonemasons engaged in the procurement and initial processing of materials (the so-called ‘stone breakers’, *Steinbrechern*), 181 bricklayers, 111 carpenters, 298 day-labourers and 691 other workers, totalling more than 1,200 men, including more than 300 skilled craftsmen.²⁶

Hans Ranisch probably began to work during the Thirty Years’ War, a political situation that also impacted architecture. Fortification projects dominated the work carried out during the protracted crisis. These included works in the city of Wittenberg, where one census recorded more than 70 masons, and in the town of Torgau.²⁷ Other architectural projects were also carried out on the ducal residences, such as the castle in Dippoldiswalde and in Dresden, but these were limited in scale.²⁸

Perhaps the events of the Thirty Years’ War and the resulting labour shortage encouraged Hans to leave Saxony for Prussia. His decision to move from his home region was not unusual, however. Long before the outbreak of the war and long after its end, many builders at various stages of their careers wandered along the route leading from Saxony through Wrocław (German: Breslau) in Habsburg Silesia to the cities of the Commonwealth, Poznań, Toruń (German: Thorn) and Gdańsk, and on to Ducal Prussia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which was also a part of the Commonwealth. In 1600, the mason Ditrich Engelman from Dresden was granted citizenship in Poznań and subsequently played an important role in the local building community, serving as the guild elder as early as 1603 and acting on behalf of Poznań bricklayers and carpenters in the efforts to re-establish their guilds in 1615.²⁹ He may have been

25. APG, Akta Miasta Gdańska (henceforth: AMG), Weta – księgi obywatelskie, sign. 300, 60/5770a.

26. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Loc 4455/16, 24.

27. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Loc 4456/15, Loc 4457/1, Loc. 4456/10.

28. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Loc 4451/3, Loc 4452/1, Loc 33452/9. For Dresden Schloss, see in particular *Das Residenzschloss zu Dresden*, vol. 2: *Die Schlossanlage und ihre frühbarocke Um- und Ausgestaltung* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2019).

29. State Archive in Poznań (Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu, henceforth: APP), Akta Miasta Poznania (henceforth: AMP), sign. I/273, 76, Album Civitatis Posnaniensis 1575–1793; *Władze miasta Poznania*, eds. Jacek Wiesiołowski, Zofia Wojciechowska, vol. 1: *1253–1793* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Miejskie, 2003), 177; Witold Meisel, *Wilkieże poznańskie*, vol. 3: *Organizacja cechowa* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1969), 106–107. Regarding the functions in the guild by these three masters, see *Władze miasta Poznania*, 170, 172, 176, 180, 181, 183–186, 192, 194, 196, 197, 199–201.

related to Bartholomeus Engelman, who became a citizen of Poznań in 1618.³⁰ Saxon builders also wandered further north, as evidenced by references to several journeymen from the Meissen area mentioned in the census of the confraternity of mason journeymen in Toruń (Michael Kendtler, 1641; Georg Koch, 1648; Hans Lehner, 1649).³¹ Saxon and Silesian builders also worked in Gdańsk. These included the above-mentioned city builder Hans Kramer, as well as many others running or recorded in local workshops, such as Peter from Dresden, Jörg from Guben, Merten from Freiberg (probably Freiberg in Saxony), Georg from Wrocław, Jacob from Gotha, Michel from Chemnitz, and Gert from Halle.³²

Hans Ranisch presumably travelled north via this route. The first traceable evidence about him originates in the town of Bartoszyce (German: Bartenstein) in Ducal Prussia. There, in 1647, a document confirming his origin and profession was issued (Fig. 2).³³ Soon, equipped with this document, Hans Ranisch arrived in Gdańsk, where he joined the local guild of masons. The guild had existed since at least 1388 and apart from masons, included stonecutters and stone sculptors (*Maurer, Stein- und Bildhauern*).³⁴ The guild documents record Hans Ranisch's presence in 1653, and in 1654 and 1655

he was listed as one of two senior journeymen (*Alt Gesellen*).³⁵ As early as 1657, he became a master and quickly attained a prominent position in the corporation. The guild authorities consisted of an elder (*Elterman*) and his companion (*Compan*), as well as two so-called *Beysitzern*. In 1659–1662, 1663–1666 and 1668–1671 Hans Ranisch followed the typical path: from *Beysitzer* to *Compan* to guild *Elterman*; he again became a *Compan* and an *Elterman* in 1680 and 1681 respectively.³⁶ At the same time, he employed numerous foreign (*frembde*) journeymen, the largest number of which, eighteen, was recorded in 1672.³⁷ He also took on apprentices: Jacob Willemberg and Ambrosius Drewes (1657), Hans Eschert (1658), Daniel Eugwer (1659), Jacob Stublau (1660), Michael Kliks (1661), Nathaniel Lauenhagen (1684) and Marten Hartwich (1687).³⁸

Hans Ranisch made his mark in the history of the guild with the acquisition of a new silver cup for use during guild ceremonies.³⁹ The vessel, called the 'Peace Cup' (*Friedens Becher*) and made by the accomplished Gdańsk goldsmith Hieronymus Holl, was given to the guild by a representative of the municipal authorities, Benjamin Engelcke, and unveiled at a guild meeting on 26 March 1669 (Fig. 3).⁴⁰ The cup had several names engraved on

30. APP, AMP, sign. I/273, 119, Album Civitatis Posnanienis 1575–1793. Also, the registry of the brotherhood of masonry companions records Christopher Engelman of Freiberg in 1647, see Stanisław Wiliński, "Regestr czeladników i mistrzów cechu muratorów w Poznaniu z lat 1618–1679", *Przegląd Zachodni* 9, no. 9–10 (1953): 227.

31. State Archive in Toruń (Archiwum Państwowe w Toruniu, henceforth: APT), Bractwo czeladnicze murarzy, sign. 3, 34, 35.

32. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2051, 22, 36; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2057, 71, 80.

33. APG, AMG, Weta – księgi obywatelskie, sign. 300, 60/5770a.

34. Marian Biskup, "Pod panowaniem krzyżackim (od 1308 r. do 1454 r.)", in *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1: *Do roku 1454*, ed. Edmund Cieślak (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Morskie, 1978), 419, 422; see also Franciszek Skibiński, "Cechy murarskie i rzeźbiarskie w miastach Prus Królewskich", in *Wspólnoty pracy i wiary. Cechy w miastach Prus Królewskich*, vol. 1: *Eseje*, ed. Franciszek Skibiński (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2024), 81–88.

35. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 187; APG, 300, C/2067, 65, 67.

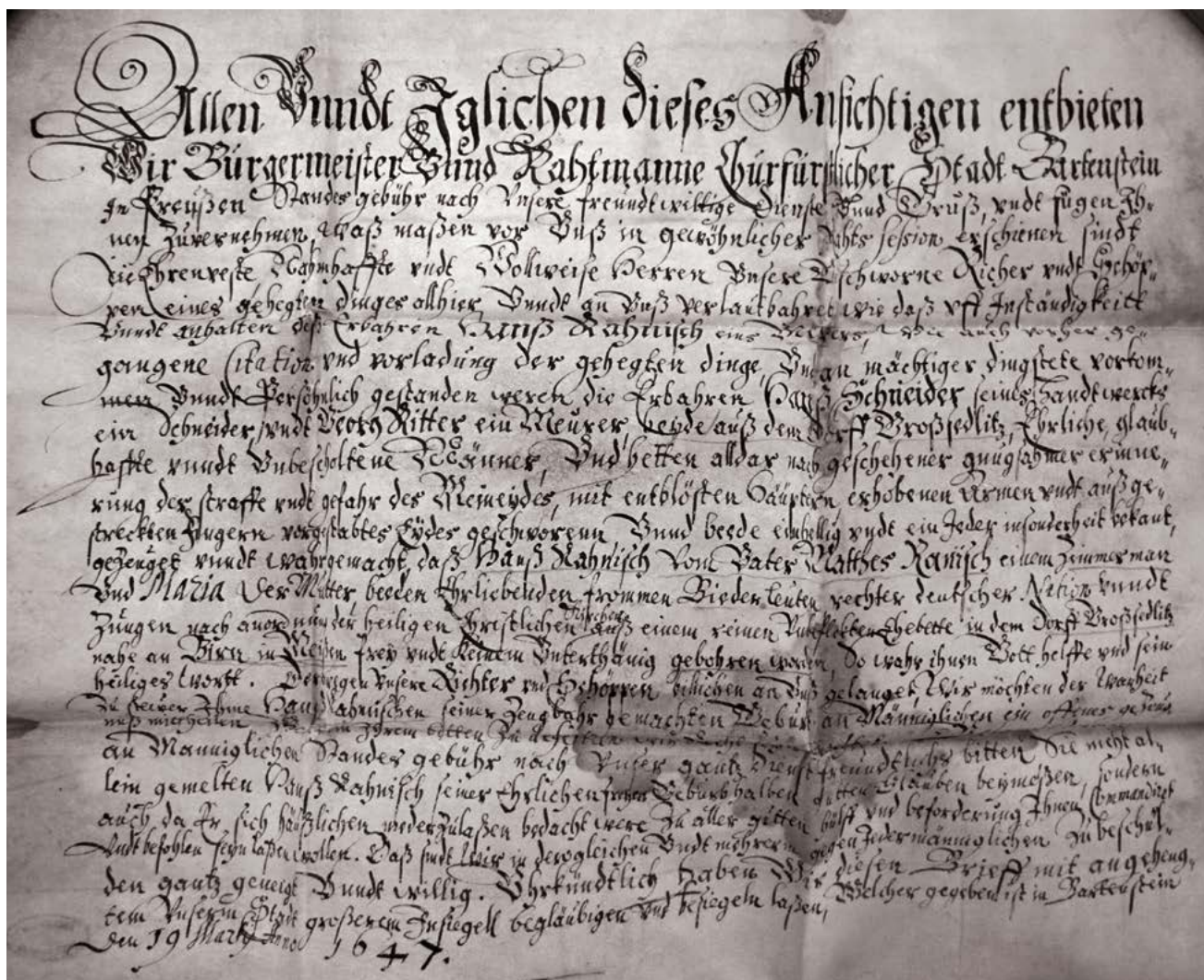
36. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2067, 75, 77, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2060, 86, 89, 92, 95; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2091, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 17, 18.

37. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2060, 91 (9, 1670), 93 (14, 1671), 97 (18, 1672).

38. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 193, 195, 197, 198, 201, 278, 290.

39. The cup is held in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (MNG/SD/124/Mt); see Barbara Tuchołka-Włodarska, *Złotnictwo od XIV do XX wieku. Katalog zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Gdańsku* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2005), 51–52, no. II. 2, and Anna Baranowska-Fietkiewicz, Franciszek Skibiński, "Wilkom gdańskiego cechu murarzy, kamieniarzy i rzeźbiarzy (tzw. Puchar Pokoju)", in *Wspólnoty pracy i wiary. Cechy w miastach Prus Królewskich*, vol. 2: *Katalog*, ed. Franciszek Skibiński (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2024), 350–351, no. 10.10.

40. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2067, 96.



2 Document confirming the origin and profession of Hans Ranisch, issued in Bartoszyce in 1647, Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku / State Archive in Gdańsk, Akta Miasta Gdańska, Weta – księgi obywatelskie, 300, 60/5770a

it, including Hans Ranisch, the *Beysitzer* that year, as well as the sculptor Caspar Günter, the *Elterman*, his *Compan* Andreas Wirth, Christoff Krosch, the other *Beysitzer*, as well as Hans Eckhart, the elder journeyman (*Alt Gesell*), and Michael Armschyn, his *Compan*.

Despite Hans Ranisch's important position in the corporation, his professional achievements remain little known. Ernst Blech mentioned his work at the church of St John; this may have been related to the maintenance

of the guild chapel located in this church.⁴¹ He also carried out occasional work for the town, such as in one of the municipal armouries in the accounting year 1682–1683.⁴² He must have died by 1687, since this date is recorded in his widow's will.⁴³

It cannot be ruled out that the family's Saxon background influenced Bartel Ranisch's later interest in vault construction, although this possibility is only a hypothesis.⁴⁴ Saxony was an important region for

41. Blech, "Schlüter", 37. Maintenance work on the chapel paid by the guild was recorded in the guild's expenses, see e.g. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2067, 52, 78.

42. APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/119, 122–128, 148. His work for the city government is mentioned already in June 1672 (APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/114, s. 100).

43. APG, Sąd ławniczy, sign. 300, 43/93, 66–66v.

44. Kulig, Romaniak, "Monumentalne budowle Gdańska w ujęciu XVII-wiecznego architekta", 72. This topic will be analysed by Jakub Adamski within the framework of the monograph



the development of vaulting and was also strongly connected to neighbouring lands, including Bohemia. Many sophisticated and original vaults were built there especially in the 15th and 16th century, such as the ones in the church of St Anne in Annaberg, as well as in numerous other buildings, including both churches and residences, in Chemnitz, Pirna, Meissen, Lauenstein, Dohna, Dippoldiswalde and Dresden.⁴⁵ These elaborate creations were admired in later decades. When work was carried out on the ducal residence in Dippoldiswalde in 1638, a time when Hans Ranisch may still have been working in Saxony, the builders there sought to protect the “beautiful vaulting” (*schöne Gewölbe*).⁴⁶ The existing vaultings were often integrated into the new spatial arrangements and ornamentation, as is epitomised by the interior of the Dresden Castle chapel shown on the title page of the *Geistreiches Gesangbuch* published in 1676 by David Conrad, which depicts the composer Heinrich Schütz in the chapel after its 1662 renovation.⁴⁷ New vaults were also being built, such as those created after the fire at Lauenstein Castle in 1594 (Fig. 4). Although they differed considerably from earlier examples, efforts were made to give them a decorative form reminiscent of older vaults. If Hans Ranisch brought this kind of skill from Saxony, Bartel may have already become familiar with vault construction techniques during his apprenticeship and master traineeship in his father’s workshop. Such an early experience in architecture may be indicated by the fact that Bartel undertook the construction of

← 3 Hieronymus I Holl, Peace Cup (*Friedens Becher*) of the Masons, Stonecutters and Sculptors’ Guild in Gdańsk, 1669, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku / National Museum in Gdańsk, MNG/SD/124/Mt. Photo by National Museum in Gdańsk

on Bartel Ranisch, which is being prepared as part of an OPUS grant implemented at the Faculty of Arts and Cultural Sciences of the University of Warsaw (planned year of publication: 2027).

45. See, for instance, Stefan Bürger, *Figurierte Gewölbe zwischen Saale und Neisse. Spätgotische Wölbkunst von 1400 bis 1600* (Weimar: VDG-Verlag, 2008); *Das Schlingrippengewölbe der Schlosskapelle Dresden*, eds. Jens-Uwe Anwand, Holger Krause (Altenburg: Klaus-Jürgen Kamp-rad Verlag, 2013); *Traces of Making. Entwurfsprinzipien von spätgotischen Gewölben Shape / Design and Construction of Late Gothic Vaults*, eds. Katja Schröck, David Wendland (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2014); *Entwurf und Planung spätgotischer Gewölbe und ihrer Einzelteile*, ed. David Wendland (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2019); *Werkmeister im Konflikt. Quellen, Beiträge und ein Glossar zur Geschichte der sogenannten Bauhütten. Der Annaberger Hüttenstreit und andere Streitfälle im Bauwesen des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts als Spiegel bauorganisatorisch-rechtlicher Verhältnisse großer und kleiner Handwerksverbände der Steinmetzen*, ed. Stefan Bürger (Leipzig: Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, 2020).

46. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Loc 4451/3, 14.

47. <https://www.deutschefotothek.de/documents/obj/70217778>.

vaults in the church in Piaseczno just two years after he became master in 1673.

However, Gdańsk builders also held considerable skill in vault construction. Some of them, such as Bartel Pieper, even specialised in this kind of work. Between 1573 and 1574, Pieper created the vaulting of the church in Nowy Staw (German: Neuteich), and, in 1593, he vaulted the refectory at the Cistercian monastery in Oliwa (German: Oliva) and possibly the nave as well (Fig. 5).⁴⁸ These were not the only works of their kind in and around Gdańsk; at the turn of the 16th century, parts of the church of St John were vaulted – a work sometimes attributed to Pieper – and so was the church of St Brigid, as mentioned by Ranisch.⁴⁹ If Ranisch is to be believed, however, by the time he was active in Gdańsk, the skills necessary to build complex vaults had declined.⁵⁰ His intention, therefore, was to restore these skills and thereby enable the city's architecture to flourish.

THE GDAŃSK MASTER BARTEL RANISCH

Bartel Ranisch's early career in Gdańsk was typical of the professional path taken by masons in the city. On 23 April 1663, he began an apprenticeship in his father's workshop, which he completed following the guild regulations: after four years, on 9 May 1667.⁵¹ The accomplished sculptor and stonecutter Wilhelm Richter and the master mason Hans Schindler, who carried out numerous works on behalf of civic authorities, witnessed Bartel's admission into the guild. In the spring of 1672, Bartel began a one-year master traineeship (the so-called *Meisterjahr*) in his father's workshop, completing it in the spring of 1673.⁵² The same year, he became a master in the guild and was granted citizenship



4 Vault in Schloss Lauenstein in Saxony, after 1594.
Photo by Franciszek Skibiński

48. Bernhard Schmid, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler des Kreises Marienburg*, vol. 1: *Die Städte Neuteich und Tiegenhof und die ländlichen Ortschaften* (Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Westpreussen, vol. 4: Marienburg) (Danzig: A.W. Kafemann, 1919), 219; *Annales Monasterii Olivensis Ord. Cist. Aetate posteriores*, Fasciculus I, Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, Fontes XX, ed. Paulus Czaplewski (Toruni: TNT, 1916), 55. Master Pieper is also associated with the construction of the new vaults in the Oliwa church, mentioned in the *Annales*, 17–19, 55, 65, 71; see also Iwona Strzelecka, Barbara Rol, Andrzej Włodarek, “Oliwa”, in *Architektura gotycka*, eds. Teresa Mroczko, Marian Arsyński, vol. 2: *Katalog zabytków*, ed. Andrzej Włodarek (Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki PAN, 1995), 172, and Jakub Adamski, “The Influence of Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century English Architecture in the Southern Baltic Region and Poland”, in *Decorated Revisited. English Architectural Style in Context, 1250–1400*, ed. John Munns (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 167.

49. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 56.

50. Kaplan, “Bartel Ranisch i sklepienia gdańskie”, 189.

51. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 206, 207. It is worth adding that the term ‘mit gutem Zeugnis’, which appears in the graduation record, is a standard formula and does not mean, as some authors thought, that Bartel stood out among the apprentices.

52. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2060, 98, 101.

in Gdańsk.⁵³ There is no information about his activities during the crucial five-year period between the end of his apprenticeship and the start of his *Meisterjahr*. At that time, Bartel probably took a trip during which he gained further experience. Gdańsk builders such as the carpenter Jacob van den Blocke and the mason Hans Strakowski typically travelled to other places in the Baltic region, the German states and the Low Countries. Since clans of builders migrating across Europe often maintained contact with their place of origin, even among the second and further generations, it may also be possible that Bartel travelled to Saxony.

From 1676 onward, Bartel held multiple positions among the guild's elders.⁵⁴ In 1706, as the guild's *Elterman*, he was among the guild elders who established a widows' fund.⁵⁵ As a guild master, Bartel regularly took on apprentices, some thirty men in total.⁵⁶ Noteworthy among them were Daniel Schindler, son of the above-mentioned master Hans Schindler, and Ranisch's own son Johann Michael Ranisch, who continued the family tradition by becoming a master mason.⁵⁷ His last apprentice, Thomas Rakowsky, who enrolled in 1707, completed his training in the workshop of another master, Franz Dominic Leitz, in 1711.⁵⁸ As information

about the work carried out by Bartel Ranisch appears in the town accounts until the summer of 1710, it may be assumed that he either died or for some reason ceased his professional activities in the autumn or winter of 1710. It is also at this time that he is mentioned among the guild elders for the last time.

References in his publications and engravings, as well as in municipal accounts, provide the most important information about Bartel Ranisch's activities. These sources complement each other to give a relatively complete picture of his work as a builder. Ranisch's references should be considered first, since they relate to an earlier phase of his building activity, before the publication of his description of the Gdańsk churches in 1695 and his subsequent work for the municipal government.

In the early stage of his career Ranisch carried out works in churches located outside the city boundaries and renovated and repaired several churches and monasteries in Gdańsk. His first work was the construction of the church of the Reformed Franciscans at Chełm (German: Stolzenberg), a large, quasi-urban village located outside the walls of Gdańsk and governed by the cathedral chapter of Włocławek since the mid-17th century.⁵⁹ The Franciscans received land there as early as 1666; church

53. APG, AMG, Weta – księgi obywatelskie, sign. 300, 60/4, s. 38; APG, AMG, Weta – księgi obywatelskie, sign. 300, 60/4, s. 223; *Księgi przyjęć do prawa miejskiego w Gdańsku 1536–1814*, eds. Andrzej Groth, Dariusz Kaczor, Ewa Łączyńska-Bartoszek (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2019), vol. 2, 271, and vol. 6, 32. See also a document confirming his origin, dated January 9th, 1673 (APG, AMG, Weta – księgi obywatelskie, sign. 300, 60/5787).

54. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2091, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40.

55. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2028, 1–7.

56. Daniel Schindler (1679; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 260), Jacob Lauenhagen (1680, 262), Christian Zimmermann (1681, 266), Daniel Klement (1681, 268), Michael Meltzer (1682, 270), Jacob Grübner (1683, 276), Hans Rommel (1684, 278), Nathanael Theleman (1685, 282), Albrecht Spielman (1687, 296), Johann Muchlke (1688, 296), Andreas Kopanski (1689, 302), Peter Kluck (1690, 304), Bartel Pauli (1690, 306), Matthias Laszkiewicz (1691, 310), Peter Dommerowski (1691, 312), Johann Heuchlinger (1692, 316), Melcher Peschel (1694, 322), Johann Gottfried Peschler i Gottfried Fentzcken (1696, 324), Peter Manske (1697, 330), Daniel Müller (1698, 332), Christian Knebel (1698, 336), Christian Krechan (1698, 338), Johann Casimir Abend (1701, 342), Johann Michael Ranisch (1702, 346), Michäel Hoppe (1702, 346), Carel Pechman (1703, 350), Hans Günther (1705, 354), Michäel Storch (1706, 356), Martin Grün (1706, 360), Thomas Rakowsky (1707, 362).

57. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 346, 347; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2056, 34; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2076, 40–41.

58. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2075, 362, 363.

59. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 74 (proper page number: 76); on the church and monastery, see Gentyliś Trybalski, "Klasztor oo. Reformatów w Gdańsku Chełmie w latach 1666–1813", *Pietas et Studium* 3, no. 15 (1960): 157–74; Sławomir Kościelak, "Fundacja klasztoru OO. Reformatów w Chełmie (Stolzenbergu) w 1666 roku. Kulisy utworzenia nowej katolickiej instytucji w zespole miejskim protestanckiego Gdańska", *Rocznik Gdański* 65, no. 1–2 (2005): 73–83; Sławomir Kościelak, "Dzieje chełmskiego

construction, however, did not begin until the summer of 1673, just a few months after Ranisch became a master in the Gdańsk guild. The church, a modest timber-frame construction with two altars, was completed a year later, while work continued on the monastery buildings.⁶⁰ According to Ranisch, the church's founders were members of the Catholic elite of Royal Prussia, including the bishop of Włocławek Kazimierz Florian Czartoryski and the voivode of Malbork (German: Marienburg) Ignacy Bąkowski; other patrons included King John III, the archbishop of Gniezno Andrzej Olszowski and members of the Catholic noble elite from across the Commonwealth. Resenting the construction of a Catholic church just outside the city walls, the Protestant authorities in Gdańsk were obliged to rebuild the complex should it be destroyed.⁶¹ The church stood until the siege of Gdańsk in 1734, when it was pre-emptively demolished by order of Stanisław Leszczyński, pretender to the throne.⁶²

In 1675–1676, Ranisch worked on the Catholic church in Piaseczno near Gniez, some 50 kilometres south of Gdańsk. The church in Piaseczno is a brick building with an aisled hall nave, erected in the 14th century on the orders of the Teutonic Knights. Ranisch was tasked with the construction of the vaults in the



5 Bartel Pieper (?), vault in the Cistercian church in Oliwa, c. 1595. Photo by Jakub Adamski

klasztoru Reformatów od drugiej połowy XVII do początku XIX w.”, in *Historia gdańskich dzielnic*, vol. 1: *Chełm*, eds. Janusz Dargacz, Katarzyna Kurkowska, Piotr Paluchowski (Gdańsk: Muzeum Gdańska, 2018), 125–156.

60. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 74 (proper page number: 76); Kościelak, “Fundacja klasztoru OO. Reformatów w Chełmie (Stolzenbergu) w 1666 roku”, 82.

61. Kościelak, “Fundacja klasztoru OO. Reformatów w Chełmie (Stolzenbergu) w 1666 roku”, 81.

62. Kościelak, “Dzieje chełmskiego klasztoru Reformatów od drugiej połowy XVII do początku XIX w.”, 133.

nave. The work was carried out on the orders of King John III expressed in a letter dated 27 January 1675.⁶³ The vaults Ranisch built are reminiscent of late medieval vaults in form, but they do not have structural ribs; instead, they feature decorative ribs made into stucco.⁶⁴ The authorship and dating of the vaults is confirmed by the stucco signature “M: Bartel Ranisch” and the date “1676”, placed on the sides of a large cartouche with the coat of arms of the Commonwealth and the monogram of John III (“I 3 R”), placed on the vault of the bay adjacent to the chancel (Fig. 6). Ranisch probably also rebuilt the crypt located under the church’s presbytery, as the same date can be found on its vault.⁶⁵

From the spring of 1676 to the summer of 1677, Ranisch built the Jesuit church in Stare Szkoty (German: Alt Schottland), a village located just outside the walls of Gdańsk and belonging to the bishop of Włocławek.⁶⁶ The efforts of the Catholics to bring the Jesuits to Gdańsk lasted for a long time, but due to the resistance of the city authorities, they could only settle outside its borders, in the nearby estates belonging to the bishop.⁶⁷ The previous church was destroyed during the war with Sweden in 1655–1660. However, work on the new church progressed slowly, mainly due to the considerable impoverishment of the congregation

at that time.⁶⁸ In the 1660s, King John II Casimir and later King Michael I pledged to donate timber from the royal forests for this project; in 1672, the acquisition of bricks was also recorded in documents. The support of the Catholic nobility and gentry, also from outside Prussia, was essential as well.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the church built by Ranisch was a modest construction, probably a timber-framed one.⁷⁰ The church stood in an increasingly deteriorating condition until the mid-18th century; when the construction of a new church began in 1748, the old structure was demolished.⁷¹

Ranisch’s next architectural project was the construction of the Royal Chapel in Gdańsk, the first Catholic church to be built within the city walls since the time Gdańsk became a predominantly Protestant city (Fig. 7). Negotiations between the king and the city government regarding the Catholic place of worship went on for many years and included disputes over the return of the church of St Mary to the Catholics. Eventually, it was decided to build a new church next to St Mary’s. This was made possible due to, among others, a bequest from Archbishop Andrzej Olszowski. The work began in April 1678 and was completed in May 1681.⁷² Although modest in scale compared to the church of the Virgin Mary, the new church emphasised

63. Ks. Jan Wiśniewski, *Parafia i sanktuarium maryjne w Piasecznie w okresie nowożytnym (XVI–XVIII w.)* (Gniew: Powiatowa i Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna im. ks. Fabiana Wierchowskiego, 2008), 31; Woliński, “Bartel Ranisch a jego związki z kościołem w Piasecznie”, 3–4.

64. The construction of the Piaseczno vaults will be analysed by Jakub Adamski as part of a monograph on Bartel Ranisch, which is being prepared as part of an OPUS grant being carried out at the Faculty of Arts and Cultural Sciences of the University of Warsaw (planned year of publication: 2027).

65. Tomasz Dudziński et al., “Badania w krypcie pod prezbiterium kościoła pw. Narodzenia Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Piasecznie, gm. Gniew, woj. Pomorskie”, *The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 15 (2020): 243–255.

66. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 74 (proper page number: 76).

67. Sławomir Kościelak, *Jezuici w Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku* (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 2003).

68. Ibid., 104–105.

69. Jerzy Paszenda, “Zabudowania jezuickie na przedmieściu Gdańska Stare Szkoty”, in id., *Budowle jezuickie w Polsce, XVI–XVIII w.*, vol. 2 (Kraków: WAM, 2000), 14–15; Kościelak, *Jezuici w Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, 121–122.

70. Paszenda, “Zabudowania jezuickie na przedmieściu Gdańska Stare Szkoty”, 21–22; Kościelak, *Jezuici w Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, 121–122.

71. Paszenda, “Zabudowania”, 15–16; Kościelak, *Jezuici w Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, 124.

72. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 18: “Den 25. April ist angefangen im Grunde zu mauren / über welches Werck der Autor Meister gewesen / und dasselbige Gebäude / nebst aller Zubehörung verschaffet und verfertiget. Den 21. Julii selbigen Jahres frühe morgens umb 4. Uhr ist der erste Stein eingeweihet worden [...] Anno 1681. den 10. May ist dieses Gebäude ganz fertig geworden”.



6 Bartel Ranisch, vault in the church in Piaseczno with the monogram of King John III Sobieski, 1675–1676. Photo by Jakub Adamski

its Catholic character through its dome flanked by smaller lanterns, which referenced the basilica of St Peter in Rome.⁷³

Also in 1678 or shortly before, Abbot Johann Bilstein commissioned Ranisch to draw a view of the Carthusian monastery in Kartuzy (German: Karthaus), some 30 kilometres west of Gdańsk.⁷⁴ Hypothetically, the drawing may have been executed on the occasion of some work Ranisch was conducting at the monastery

complex.⁷⁵ In 1678 the view was engraved by Issack Saal and monastery accounts reveal that in August of the same year the Carthusians acquired 200 copies of the view of “our monastery”.⁷⁶

In the following years, Ranisch mainly carried out renovation and repair works at various churches and monasteries in the city. In 1681 and 1688, at the behest of the city council and the church fathers, he repaired the turrets of the church of the Virgin Mary.⁷⁷ Around

73. Friedrich, *Gdańskie zabytki architektury do końca XVIII wieku*, 117; Friedrich, “The Architectural Landscape of Gdańsk in the Time of Johannes Hevelius”, 97.

74. Kazimierz Raepke, *Kościół dawnej kartuzji kaszubskiej w Kartuzach. Zarys historii*, vol. 1 (Wejherowo: Oddział Zrzeszenia Kaszubsko-Pomorskiego i Muzeum Piśmiennictwa i Muzyki Kaszubsko-Pomorskiej w Wejherowie, 1992), 69; Krzysztof Nierzwicki, *Biblioteki kartuzji kaszubskiej oraz jej konwentów filialnych w Berezie Kartuskiej i Gidlach* (Pelplin: Bernardinum, 2001), 37–38, 78–79; Jolanta Talbierska, *Grafika XVII wieku w Polsce. Funkcje, ośrodki, artyści, dzieła* (Warszawa: Neriton, 2011), 355.

75. Such works were carried out there in previous years, see Archives of the Pelplin Diocese (Archiwum Diecezjalnym w Pelplinie, henceforth: ADP), Monastica, Kartuzy, sign. 19.

76. ADP, Monastica, Kartuzy, sign. 19, 61. Original prints are preserved in ADP, Monastica, Kartuzy, sign. 6, *Apparatus ad annales Cartusiae Paradisi BMV prope Dantiscum*, Tomus. II ab anno 1521 ad annum 1582, collectus a F[ratre] G[eorgio] S[chwengel] priore, fol. 84, and ADP, Monastica, Kartuzy, sign. 7, *Documenta de alienatione et restitutione Cartusiae Gedanensiae* (on the reverse of the title page); for the reproduction I kindly thank the Rev. Prof. Jan Walkusz. The original copper plate, as well as a later print (made by Maria Muttray), are in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (MNG/SD/4086/G and MNG/SD/3476/G); for information I thank Alicja Andrzejewska-Zajac. See also Talbierska, *Grafika XVII wieku w Polsce*, 355.

77. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 17. On the position and tasks of the church fathers, see Christofer Herrmann, “Die Kirchenväter der Danziger Marienkirche. Stellung, Aufgaben und Wirken vom 14. bis zum Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts”, in *Chronik der Marienkirche in Danzig. Das “Historische Kirchen Register” von Eberhard Bötticher (1616). Transkription und Auswertung*, eds. Christofer Herrmann, Edmund Kizik (Cologne–Weimar–Vienna: Böhlau, 2013), 115–149.

1690, Ranisch was involved in the extension of the monastery buildings at the Catholic church of St Brigid and the repair of one of the piers of the church; the latter work was financed by the abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Oliwa, Michał Hacki (Fig. 8, 9).⁷⁸ At the same time, between 1689 and 1691, Ranisch worked at the Carmelite complex.⁷⁹ The Carmelite buildings suffered a fire in 1668 and then were damaged during a riot in 1678, when a mob attacked and looted the monastery. In 1689–1690, Ranisch demolished some older parts of the complex and in the following years he extended the monastery by adding three wings (Fig. 10).⁸⁰

In the late 1680s, Ranisch's professional position was marked by an important change. In 1688, on the orders of the Gdańsk deputy burgomaster (*Vicepresidenten Burgermeister*) Christian Schröder, he reconstructed the hospital church of Corpus Christi, located in the Nowe Ogrody (German: Neugarten) district just outside the city walls of Gdańsk.⁸¹ Apart from minor work at the church of the Virgin Mary, this was the first Protestant church built by Ranisch and his first major construction project commissioned by the Gdańsk

authorities. In the summer of 1695, Ranisch began the construction of another Protestant church, namely the church of Our Saviour in Zaroślak (German: Petersshagen) (Fig. 11).⁸² The work was carried out on the orders of the Gdańsk burgomaster Gabriel Schumann. It was followed by other works carried out for the city. The most important among these was the construction of the *Spendehaus*, which served as a workhouse for the poor and an orphanage. According to Ranisch, construction had begun on 21 September 1698 and was completed by the end of March 1699 (Fig. 12).⁸³

The construction of the *Spendehaus* marked the beginning of Ranisch's regular work for the city.⁸⁴ In 1699–1700, in the summer of 1704, in the late 1705 and early 1706, and in the accounting year 1706–1707, he worked at the Main Town Hall.⁸⁵ In 1699–1700 and 1706–1707, he worked in the city armouries and at the Wisłoujście (German: Weichselmünde) Fortress.⁸⁶ In addition, an account dated 22 September 1705 concerning building materials for the construction of a timber-framed *Kalckmuhle*, i.e. a lime-crushing mill, mentions Ranisch.⁸⁷ The rather general municipal

78. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 56, 58. The buildings served their purpose until the cessation of the convent and were demolished between 1849 and 1851; the buildings are shown in a drawing by Georg Ferdinand Gregorovius from 1843 (Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, MNG/SD/331/R), see Grażyna Zinówko, *Rysunki artystów gdańskich i obcych działających w Gdańsku w XIX wieku. Katalog zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Gdańsku* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2016), 72, no. 123. On the church see also Helmut Fritzler, *Die Birgittenkirche zu Danzig* (Danzig: A.W. Kafemann, 1940); Willi Drost, *Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Danzig*, Bd. 5, *St. Trinitatis, St. Peter und Paul, St. Bartholomäi, St. Barbara, St. Elisabeth, Hl. Geist, Engl. Kapelle, St. Brigitten*, ed. Franz Swoboda (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1972), 179–219.

79. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 61–62.

80. Sławomir Kościelak, *Katolicy w protestanckim Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2012), 147.

81. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 74–75; see also Kondziela, "Kaplica Królewska w Gdańsku i jej twórcy", 318.

82. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig*, 75 (proper page number: 77).

83. Ranisch's involvement is confirmed by his own words, contained in a manuscript description of Gdańsk municipal buildings, see: Ranisch, *Beschreibung derer vornähmesten Gebäude in der Stadt Danzig*, eds. Bartetzky, Kraack, 46.

84. APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/123, 144–51, 174–76, 230–31; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/124, 138–42, 146–51, 214; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/125, 128–32, 134–39, 198; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 124–35, 149, 156–57, 188; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/128, 145–52.

85. APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/123, 230–31; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/124, 214; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/125, 198; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 188.

86. APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/123, 174–76; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 149 (here both the Great and the Small (New) Armoury are mentioned), APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 156–57.

87. APG, AMG, Bibliotheca Atchivi, sign. 300, R/Uu 10d, 7.



7 Bartel Ranisch and others, Royal Chapel in Gdańsk, 1678–1681.
Photo by Franciszek Skibiński

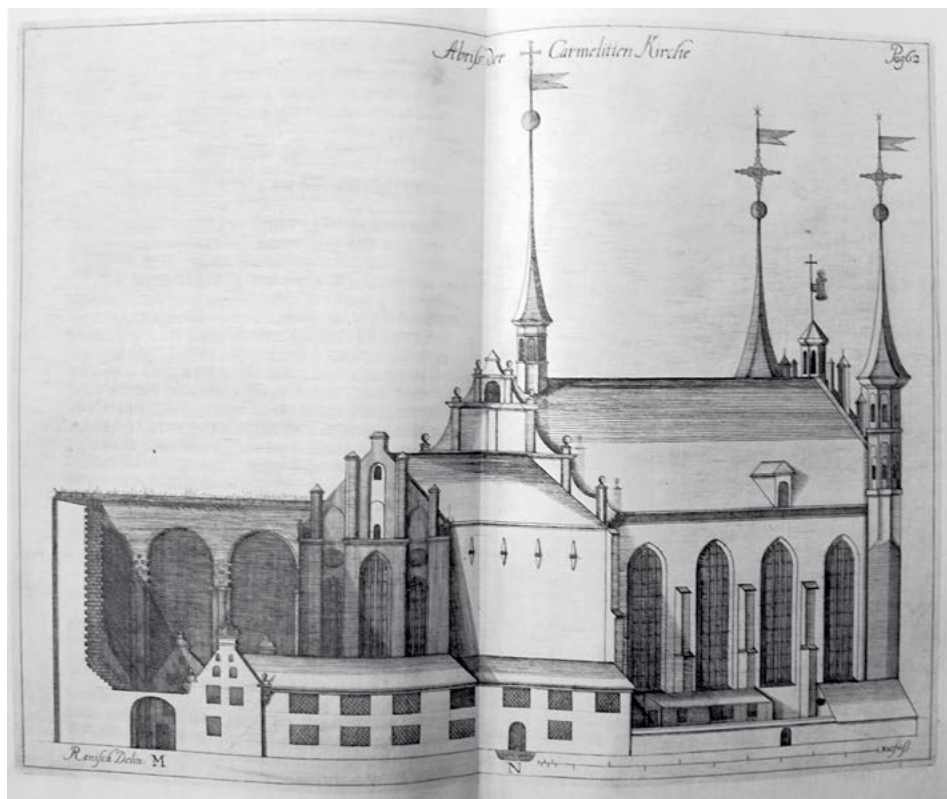


8 Georg Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Former Monastery of St Brigid in Gdańsk before Demolition*, 1843, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku / National Museum in Gdańsk, MNG/SD/331/R. Photo by National Museum in Gdańsk



9 Otto Rahn, *Refectory at the Former Monastery of St Brigid in Gdańsk before Demolition*, before 1849, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku / National Museum in Gdańsk, MNG/SD/663/R. Photo by National Museum in Gdańsk

10 Bartel Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig* (Danzig 1695), the Carmelite complex in Gdańsk, Polska Akademia Nauk. Biblioteka Gdańska / The Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Od 1643 2°



bookkeeping does not allow for a precise determination of the scope of the work that he carried out. It is likely that his work concerned typical day-to-day maintenance works or minor modifications to existing buildings, which were carried out daily by masons working for the city government.

DOCUMENTED ARCHITECTURAL WORKS BY BARTEL RANISCH

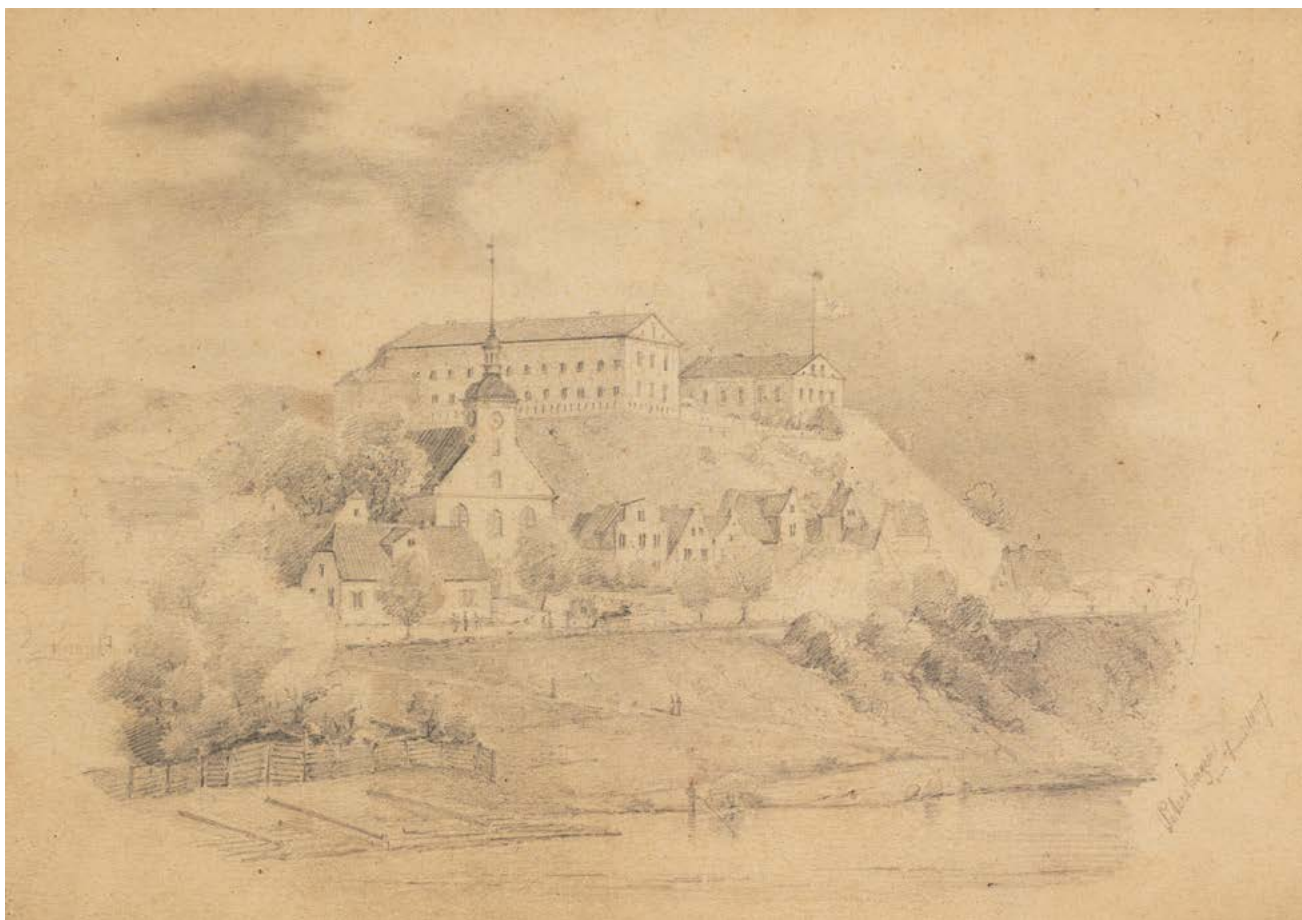
A systematic, source-based overview of Ranisch's work indicates two main phases in his career. From becoming a master in 1673 until the late 1680s, Ranisch worked mainly on the construction of Catholic churches, largely outside Gdańsk. It is noteworthy that the Ranisch's activities between 1673 and 1681 can be identified uninterrupted. His works at that time included the construction of the church of the Reformed Franciscans

at Chełm (1673–1674), the church in Piaseczno (1675–1676), the Jesuit church in Stare Szkoty (1676–1677) and the Royal Chapel in Gdańsk (1678–1681), as well as a drawn depiction of the Carthusian monastery in Kartuzy (1678). At the same time, he remained an active member of the Gdańsk guild and one of its elders. The chronology of Ranisch's work also shows that the construction of his most important work, the Royal Chapel, was the culmination of successive works carried out for influential Catholic patrons. Contrary to standard opinion, the construction of the Royal Chapel took place long before Ranisch began to work for the city. Although the city initially was supposed to become financially involved in the construction of the chapel, the work was eventually financed by money bequeathed by Archbishop Andrzej Olszowski and from the royal coffers.⁸⁸ Those with financial power and

88. The long negotiations over the construction of the chapel are discussed in Adam Sierakowski, "Pobył Jana III w Prusiech Królewskich w latach 1677 i 1678", *Roczniki Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu* 19 (1912): 239–241, and Kościelak, *Katolicy w protestanckim Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, 116–119. The earliest known reference to Archbishop Olszowski's will is to be found in Gottfried Lengnich, "Leben Andreae Olczowsky, Erz-Bischoffs zu Gnesen und Primatis Regni", in *Polnische Bibliothec, welche von Büchern und anderen zur Polnischen und Preußischen Historie dienenden Sachen ausführliche Nachricht giebt* (Danzig: s.n. 1718), 48. In the course of my research, I was unable to find the original will or its reprint *in extenso* in the older literature. The matter is further complicated by the

Building	Date	Patron	Type of Work	Source
church of the Reformed Franciscans at Chełm (Stolzenberg) near Gdańsk	1673–1674	Catholic	construction of a timber-framed church and possibly also a monastery	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 74 (proper page number: 76)
church in Piaseczno (Pehsken)	1675–1676	Catholic	construction of vaults and a crypt	signature on the vault
Jesuit church in Stare Szkoty (Alt Schottland) near Gdańsk	1676–1677	Catholic	construction of a timber-framed church	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 74 (proper page number: 76)
Royal Chapel in Gdańsk	1678–1681	Catholic	construction of a masonry church	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 18
church of the Virgin Mary in Gdańsk	1681, 1688	Protestant	repair of turrets	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 17
church of the Corpus Christi in the Nowe Ogrody (Neugarten), a Gdańsk suburb	1688	Protestant	restructuring of a masonry church	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 74–75
Carmelite church in Gdańsk	c. 1689–1690	Catholic	extension of a monastery	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 61–62
church of St Brigid in Gdańsk	c. 1690	Catholic	extension of a monastery and repairs in the church	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 56, 58
church of Our Saviour in Zaroślak (Petershagen), a Gdańsk suburb	1695	Protestant	construction of a timber-framed church with a masonry tower	Ranisch, <i>Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzig</i> , 75 (proper page number: 77)
Spendehaus in Gdańsk	1698–1699	Protestant	construction of a workhouse and an orphanage	unpublished manuscript by Ranisch <i>Beschreibung derer vornämsten Gebäude in der Stadt Danzig</i> , eds. Bartetzky and Kraack, 46
Town Hall in Gdańsk	1699–1700, 1704, 1705–1706, 1706–1707	Protestant (municipal authorities of Gdańsk)	repairs and maintenance work (?)	APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/123, 230–31; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/124, 214; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/125, 198; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 188
municipal armouries in Gdańsk	1699/1700; 1706/1707	Protestant (municipal authorities of Gdańsk)	repairs and maintenance work (?)	APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/123, 174–76; APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 149
Kalckmuhle	1705	Protestant (municipal authorities of Gdańsk)	construction of a timber-framed lime-crushing mill	APG, AMG, Bibliotheca Archivi, sign. 300, R/Uu 10d, 7
Wisłoujście (Weichselmünde) Fortress	1706–1707	Protestant (municipal authorities of Gdańsk)	repairs and maintenance work (?)	APG, AMG, Kamlaria, sign. 300, 12/126, 156–57

Table 1 Documented architectural works by Bartel Ranisch



11 Julius Gottheil, *View of Zarosław (Petershagen) with the Church of Our Saviour*, 1847, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku / National Museum in Gdańsk, MNG/SD/1127/R/2/2/R. Photo by National Museum in Gdańsk

means controlled the project, including the employment of builders and craftsmen. According to Ranisch, Bishop Stanisław Sarnowski oversaw the recruitment of builders.⁸⁹ Moreover, construction was carried out on land outside of the jurisdiction of the municipal government.⁹⁰ Consequently, the municipal government and craftsmen employed by the city were not involved in this project. This is further confirmed by the fact that the city account books of the time make do no mention of the construction of the chapel.

A shift in Ranisch's architectural work occurred in the 1690s. In the mid-1690s and perhaps only from around 1699 his name began to appear regularly in

the accounts of the Gdańsk building office. Notably, Ranisch began to work for the city at the same time that he published his description of Gdańsk churches in 1695. Several indications suggest that Ranisch had been working on the book for many years, as early as the 1680s; for instance, the ground plan of the church of the Virgin Mary published in 1695 bears the date "Anno 1684 Die 24 Januarii".⁹¹ However, the publication date, the persona of the publisher – Zacharias Stolle, who collaborated closely with the municipal government, and the dedication of the book to the Gdańsk City Council reflected his growing professional ties with the city and its authorities.

fact that, if Lengnich is to be believed, the archbishop's will was declared invalid (Lengnich, "Leben Andreae Olczowsky", 48).

89. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic*, 18.

90. This is indicated by the negotiations between the city government and the king, see Sierakowski, "Pobyty Jana III w Prusiech Królewskich w latach 1677 i 1678", 239–241 and Kościelak, *Katolicy w protestanckim Gdańsku od drugiej połowy XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, 116–119.

91. Ranisch, *Beschreibung Aller Kirchen-Gebäude der Stadt Dantzic*, plan before p. 1.



12 Samuel Donnet after Johann Jacob Feyerabend, *Workhouse (Spendehaus) in Gdańsk*, 1707, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku / National Museum in Gdańsk, MNG/SD/663/R. Photo by National Museum in Gdańsk

MASTER MASON, BUILDER, ARCHITECT

Ranisch's long list of architectural projects attests to his professional standing and competence, especially in terms of his technical and organisational skills. However, addressing the question of his actual architectural knowledge is difficult, primarily due to the lack of a unified architectural education at the time and the multitude of career paths architects and engineers could take. In attempting to answer this question, it is necessary to return to indirect sources and contextualise Ranisch's biography.

In the pre-modern period, professional life was strongly linked to private life. One's profession was often inherited, and training occurred in the workshops of one's father, a relative or a friendly master. Bartel Ranisch also learnt his trade from his father and

later served a master's traineeship with him. Becoming a master was the key achievement in one's training and career development at the time. It involved the most important test of professional skills through what was known as a master trial. The trial, in the German-speaking lands usually specified in the guild's statutes, determined the minimum competencies of a master. In the Gdańsk guild, the scope of the trial was defined in the statute of 1564. The candidate for a master mason had to make a chimney and an arch between the fire walls, while the candidate for a master stonemason had to make a Corinthian capital, a Doric support on a pedestal, and a keystone of a cross-ribbed vault featuring floral decoration and the motif of a doubled cross.⁹² From 1625, candidates were also required to make a design for a building alongside a valuation of the

92. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300 C/2142, 13-14; APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300 C/2095, 7-8; Hauke, "Hans Schneider", 535; Dariusz Kaczor, "Przepisy dotyczące majstersztyków w cechach rzemiosł artystycznych wielkich miast Prus Królewskich od XVI do końca XVIII wieku", in *Klejnot w koronie Rzeczypospolitej. Sztuka zdobnicza Prus Królewskich. Eseje*,

work.⁹³ At the time of Bartel's application for master-ship, Gdańsk masters were therefore obliged to acquire both technical knowledge and practical skills, as well as proficiency in the design and management of the construction process.

Further professional experience was gained in practice by completing projects. After all, in the early modern era architecture remained closely linked to practice, empiricism and experience.⁹⁴ Ranisch's professional development was marked primarily by his early work on ecclesiastical architecture. Each of these projects, which differed considerably from one another in terms of the scope and type of work, as well as techniques and architectural forms to be used, brought new experience and enhanced his competence. When publishing his renderings of the vaults of Gdańsk churches, Ranisch relied on empirical knowledge and experience derived from practice and familiarity with building techniques. The text is based on Ranisch's more than twenty years of experience in work carried out in churches. He built some of them from scratch, while he carried out alterations and renovations for others. These buildings ranged

from small and relatively simple timber-framed structures to monumental structures such as the church of the Virgin Mary, and varied in construction technique and form. His long and varied professional experience greatly impacted the preparation of his publication, giving Ranisch direct, practical knowledge of different types of building construction. His practical approach is indicated, for example, in his instructions on how to construct centrings.⁹⁵

The architect's knowledge of various architectural forms used in Europe at the time is also difficult to assess. In Ranisch's case, this issue is particularly interesting in the context of his involvement in the construction of the Royal Chapel, the most distinct building he erected and one that remains unique in the architectural landscape of Gdańsk and its region. Its style derived mainly from the Dutch variation of 17th-century classicism, as indicated by the shaping of the façade with colossal pilasters and decorative festoons and the raising of the main storey, reminiscent of Philip Vingboons's designs for townhouses and palaces.⁹⁶ Solutions drawn from Dutch classicism were combined with

ed. Czesława Betlejewska (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2006), 33–34; Skibiński, "Cechy murarskie i rzeźbiarskie w miastach Prus Królewskich", 83.

93. APG, Cechy gdańskie, sign. 300, C/2095, 21; Bogucka, *Gdańsk*, 76; Kaczor, "Przepisy", 34; Skibiński, "Cechy murarskie i rzeźbiarskie w miastach Prus Królewskich", 83.

94. See, for instance, Werner Oechslin, "Architektur – Wissen, Bücherwissen und dergleichen", in Werner Oechslin, Tobias Büchi, Martin Pozsgai, *Architekturtheorie in deutschsprachigen Kulturraum 1486–1648* (Einsiedel–Basel: Colmena Verlag, 2018), 12–34, and Werner Oechslin, "Der Gegenstand der Architektur(theorie) und seine Verortung", in *ibid.*, 35–70.

95. Kaplan, "Bartel Ranisch i sklepienia gdańskie", 124; Franz Bischoff, "Les maquettes d'architecture", in *Les bâtisseurs des cathédrales gothiques*, ed. Roland Recht (Strasbourg: Editions les Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, 1989), 292. It is worth highlighting that the construction of centrings suitable for the various types of vaults remained one of the elements of the master's trial for masons in many cities in the early modern period.

96. Classical architecture in the Northern Netherlands of the 17th century is most fully described in *Unity and Discontinuity. Architectural Relationships between the Southern and Northern Low Countries 1530–1700*, eds. Krista De Jonge, Konrad Ottenheim (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 87–161; see also *Jacob van Campen. Het klassieke ideaal in de Gouden Eeuw*, eds. Jacobine Huysen, Koen Ottenheim, Gary Schwartz (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Pers, 1995), Konrad Ottenheim, "Classicism in the Northern Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century", in *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books, Travellers, Architects*, ed. Guido Beltrami (Milan: Skira, 1999), 151–155. On Vingboons, see Philips Vingboons, *Gronden en afbeeldsels der voornaamste gebouwen, Van alle die Philips Vingboons geordineert heeft* (Amsterdam: Clement de Jonge, 1665), nos. 34 and 38, as well as Koen Ottenheim, *Philips Vingboons (1607–1678), architect* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1989). References to Northern Dutch classicism were already pointed out by Kondziela, "Kaplica Królewska w Gdańsku i jej twórcy", 314–316. The decorative motifs used in the Royal Chapel's façade were also popular in the northern Netherlands, see Michał Wardzyński, "The Flemish Current in Sculpture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the High Baroque: An Introduction", in *Art of the Southern Netherlands, Gdańsk and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*, eds. Jacek Tylicki, Jacek Żukowski (Gdańsk: Gdański Teatr Szeźpirowski, 2017), 168–169.

a dome flanked by smaller lanterns, which, by referring to the basilica of St Peter in Rome, emphasised the Catholic character of the new church built in the heart of the Protestant city.⁹⁷

Ranisch may have been familiar with both the architecture of Dutch classicism and the design of the basilica of St Peter in Rome. Netherlandish architecture was well known in Gdańsk and throughout the Baltic region, both directly and through prints such as the above-mentioned designs by Philip Vingboons.⁹⁸ Prints also provided insight into the plans and appearance of the most important buildings to builders who did not have the opportunity to see them in person. Among these buildings was, of course, the basilica of St Peter, which was depicted in numerous prints, some more detailed like those by Mattheus Greuter, and others more general, such as those by Giovanni Battista Falda published by Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi.

The album of Jacob Ingber, preserved in the Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (sign. MS 2283) is an excellent source attesting to the architectural knowledge of Gdańsk builders at the time. It is relevant to this present study, as Ingber took over the role of the city mason after Ranisch. On this basis,

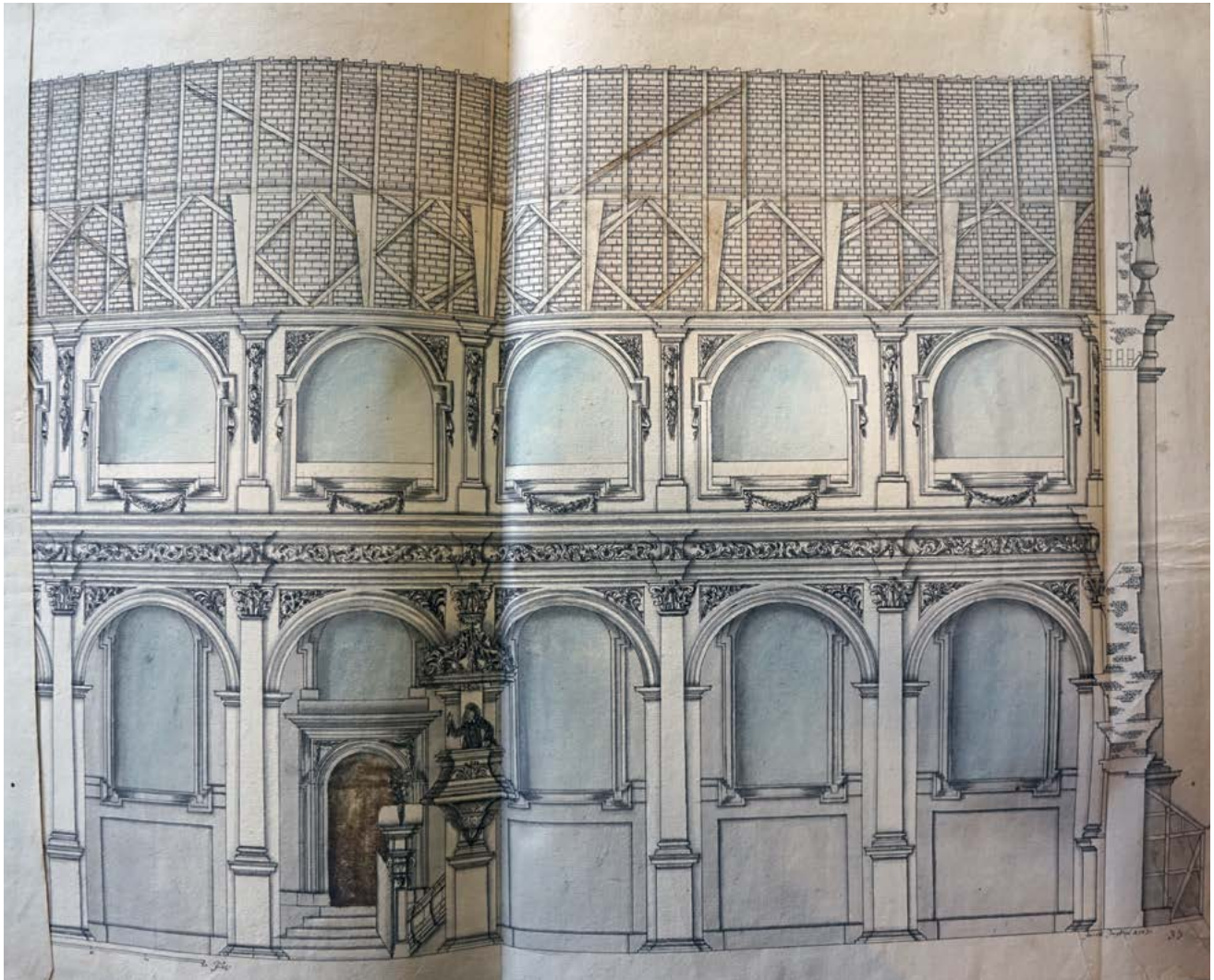
it is reasonable to believe that his knowledge and competence were similar to those of Ranisch. Most of the drawings were made between 1694 and 1709 before Ingber undertook work for the city in Ranisch's stead. Making a collection of drawings and prints was a common practice among builders. These drawings may have included their own original sketches and designs, copies of designs known from treatises and pattern books, as well as drawings by others (Fig. 13).⁹⁹ Ingber's album too comprises original designs as well as copies of designs by others.¹⁰⁰ Some of them were based on iconic 16th-century designs, including by Vignola and Palladio; for instance, the design of the villa made in Lübeck in 1699 is a copy of the Palladian design for the *palazzo* of Floriano Antonini in Udine. Some of the drawings also indicate familiarity with Dutch classicism of the mid- and late 17th century, emblematised by the works of architects such as Pieter Post and Philips Vingboons. Regarding interior decoration, Ingber referred to popular designs by French authors such as Jean LePautre and Daniel Marot. Several drawings indicate a familiarity with the manual by Augustin-Charles d'Aviler, perhaps acquired via a German edition by Leonhard Christian Sturm. The album also includes two series of engravings.

97. Mossakowski points out the lack of connection between the lanterns and the interior disposition, which reinforces the thesis of their symbolic function; see Mossakowski, *Tylman z Gdania architekt polskiego baroku*, 141.

98. On the dissemination of the classicising architecture the 17th century in the Baltic Region, see Konrad Ottenheim, "Models of Modesty and Dignity in the Age of Absolutism", in *The Low Countries at the Crossroads. Netherlandish Architecture as an Export Product in Early Modern Europe (1480–1680)*, eds. Konrad Ottenheim, Krista De Jonge (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 333–355, as well as Kurt W. Forster, "Palladianism in Germany", in *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books, Travellers, Architects*, ed. Guido Beltramini et al. (Milan: Skira, 1999), 169–176, Jörgen Bracker, "The Circulation of Palladianism in Germany", in *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books, Travellers, Architects*, ed. Guido Beltramini (Milan: Skira, 1999), 177–181, Gabri van Tussenbroek, "Classicism in Berlin and Brandenburg: Architects, Entrepreneurs and the Restoration after the Thirty Years' War (1648–1688)", in *The Low Countries at the Crossroads. Netherlandish Architecture as an Export Product in Early Modern Europe (1480–1680)*, eds. Konrad Ottenheim, Krista De Jonge (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 311–331.

99. Andrzej Betlej, "Kopersztýchów niechaj zażywa. Uwagi na temat oddziaływania augsburskich 'rycin ornamentalnych'. Zarys problematyki i perspektywy badawcze", in *Abrys, delineatio, kopersztých... czyli „przednie rysowane, godne poszanowania, dobrych magistrów rysunki”. Projekty dzieł małej architektury ze zbiorów krakowskich*, eds. Andrzej Betlej, Agata Dworzak (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Kasper, 2014), 7–29, and Andrzej Betlej, "Osiemnastowieczne ornamentalne 'Klebebandy' w zbiorach polskich", in *Ornament i dekoracja dzieła sztuki. Studia z historii sztuki*, eds. Joanna Daranowska-Łukaszewska, Agata Dworzak, Andrzej Betlej (Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, 2015), 249–260.

100. On the importance of drawn copies, see Andrzej Betlej, Marek Walczak, "Giacomo Baston – nieznany architekt na usługach Janusza Ostrogskiego", in *Artyści włoscy na ziemiach południowo-wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w czasach nowożytnych / Artisti italiani nelle terre sud-est della Repubblica Polacca nell'epoca moderna*, ed. Piotr Łopatkiewicz (Rzeszów–Łańcut: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, 2016), 199–224.



13 Jacob Ingber, design for a church, Polska Akademia Nauk. Biblioteka Gdańska / The Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences, MS 2283

The first, *Artis sculptoriae, vulgo stuccatoriae paradigma*, includes designs for ceiling decorations by Carlo Mario Pozzi, engraved by Johann August Corvinus. It was published in Augsburg in 1708 by the well-known publisher and dealer in illustrated publications (*Kunsthändler*) Jeremias Wolff, who was responsible for several important publications on architecture, notably Paul Decker's *Fürstlicher Baumeister* of 1711.¹⁰¹ The other series, titled *Adeliche Land und Lust-Häuser, nach Modernen Gout* and also published by Wolff in 1710, presents designs

by Johann Friedrich Nette, an architect associated with the court of Eberhard Ludwig von Württemberg.¹⁰²

Bartel Ranisch probably had at his disposal a similar collection of drawings and prints, which may have included models of Italian, Dutch and French architecture. Together with his technical knowledge and experience, this repertoire would have given him at least a basic knowledge of European architecture. This knowledge, together with the skills he had acquired during his training and his subsequent building projects,

101. On Jeremias Wolff's publications on architecture, see Dietrich Erben, "Augsburg als Verlagsort von Architekturpublikationen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", in *Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagswesen von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, eds. Helmut Gier, Johannes Janota (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1997), 973–978; Daniel Fulco, "The Architectural Folios of Jeremias Wolff", in *Gateways to the Book. Frontispieces and Title Pages in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Gitta Bertram, Nils Büttner, Claus Zittel (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2021), 527–555.
102. Fulco, "Architectural Folios of Jeremias Wolff", 540–545.

would have allowed him to plan, design and direct the construction of a variety of architectural structures. Undoubtedly, as master of the Gdańsk guild, Ranisch was competent enough to carry out work on the vast majority of civic buildings and churches, both masonry and timber-framed. The question of his involvement in the creation of complex and less typical buildings, such as the Royal Chapel, remains more open. As this was a building erected on the initiative of the king and elite representatives of the Catholic Church, it is likely that architects from outside the city, perhaps even ones connected to the royal court, were involved in the project. However, architectural design was often a complex, multi-stage process, involving many participants, such as the patron and sometimes a collective including the designer or designers, consultants and contractors, all of whom could exercise a significant influence on the final shape of a building. Consequently, an *a priori* rejection of the possibility that Bartel Ranisch influenced the shape of the Royal Chapel, as has prevailed in the literature for more than a century, seems premature.

CONCLUSION

Although Bartel Ranisch was associated with Gdańsk throughout his life and for many years remained a master of the local guild and one of its elders, his activities largely extended beyond the city. In particular, he erected or restructured several Catholic and Protestant churches in the immediate vicinity of Gdańsk, including the church of the Reformed Franciscans at Chelm (Stolzenberg), the Jesuit church in Stare Szkoty (Alt Schottland), the church of the Corpus Christi in the Nowe Ogrody (Neugarten), and the church of Our Saviour in Zaroślak (Petershagen), thereby shaping the architectural landscape of the city's immediate

surroundings. For much of his career, he performed work for patrons outside of Gdańsk, including the royal court and church elites. Of particular note is the fact that early in his career he worked for Catholics, including on the construction of the church of the Reformed Franciscans at Chelm (1673–1674), the church in Piaseczno (1675–1676), the Jesuit church in Stare Szkoty (1676–1677) and the Royal Chapel in Gdańsk (1678–1681). His first major work for Protestant patrons dates to around 1688, i.e. fifteen years after he became master in the Gdańsk guild. Only towards the end of his career as an experienced builder did he become more firmly attached to the city government, carrying out tasks as the city mason.

Ranisch's unique description of Gdańsk churches was published at this time, distinguishing him from the typical builders of his era. Ranisch's interest in vault construction was mainly inspired by the Gothic churches of Gdańsk, as he mentions in the introduction to his book. However, the Saxon background and possible experiences of his father Hans, from whom Bartel learned his craft, must also be considered as a possible influence. Ranisch's book was largely based on practical experience resulting from his many years of work on various church buildings, including the construction and repair of vaults. His involvement in the Gdańsk architecture community, and the example of the album of architectural drawings and prints that belonged to Jacob Ingber who succeeded Ranisch as the city mason on Gdańsk, further indicates that he probably had a fairly broad knowledge of European architecture of the time, likely derived from popular and widely available prints. This diverse background, combined with his technical knowledge and extensive, or at least very varied, experience, presents Ranisch as a competent and versatile builder.

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