

COULD WARSAW BE DIFFERENTLY REBUILT
– ALTERNATIVE HISTORY OF THE CITY

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**The financial basis for reconstruction
of Warsaw in the concept
of Lech Niemojewski**

Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences published in the “Warsaw Studies” Volume XI in 1972 widely unknown materials from the archives of Lech Niemojewski found in the collections of the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Professor Lech Niemojewski belonged to a group of prominent architects and architectural historians closely related to Warsaw. During the occupation, he was the Vice-President of the Commission of Experts of Urban Planning, and also taught at conspiratorial educational courses at the Faculty of Architecture in Warsaw. He joined to work on the reconstruction of Warsaw in 1944¹. Together with Joseph Sigalin and Bohdan Lachert, he participated in the “Operational Group of Warsaw”, which on command of the Prime Minister of the Government of Lublin on 21–31 January 1945 traveled to Warsaw in order to make a first assessment of the scale of the destruction of the city. On this basis, the group prepared the initial guidelines for the organization of reconstruction of Warsaw.

Lech Niemojewski’s observations on the situation in Warsaw from this trip were presented in the report which was addressed in 29/1/1945 to the Office of Planning and Reconstruction of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers in Lublin. He wrote at that time: *“of the four periods of damage the last period was the heaviest. According to the statements of experts who survived in Warsaw until the end and remain at their posts, the destruction of Warsaw after the uprising was carried out methodically. The city was divided into numbered districts, and the numbers painted with white paint on the walls are visible up to this day. Destructive work continued until the very last moment*

and the plan was to totally destroy Warsaw. A whole series of buildings and monuments were destroyed few days before Warsaw was taken over by the Polish and allied troops.”

Niemojewski based the reconstruction concept on the analysis and conclusions derived from the work of the Committee of Experts of Urban Planning from 1941. The starting point for this concept was formulated thesis that stated: *“The people of Warsaw suffered so great loss during the German occupation, that the losses should not be increased by any means, even for the public interest. The whole extent of private property should be respected and reconstituted. The reconstruction of private property in Warsaw should balance private and public interest looking for financial, economical and technical solutions, which would allow mutual support of private and public interests, rather than leading to conflicts, which allow the stronger party to apply the law of violence against the weaker party”*².

He noted: *“currently in Warsaw the most fantastic ideas can be implemented under the condition of finding resources for their implementation.”*

The most important thing according to Niemojewski will be gathering as much public and private capital, both domestic and foreign, and popularizing the idea of reconstruction. Assuming that the reconstruction of Warsaw cannot be carried out only from public funds, and that it is not possible to shift the obligation to fund the reconstruction only to the Germans, the best course of action would be to run all activities that encourage investment of private capital. Therefore, the main goal should be to support the owners of real estate in Warsaw by issuing the covered bonds that would be allocated on the basis of documents confirming their property rights. These bonds would be issued after an assessment of losses. Value of the property could be estimated by analogy with the methods used after the

¹ Lech Niemojewski o odbudowie Warszawy [Lech Niemojewski on the reconstruction of Warsaw] (Editors’ note), “Warszawa Stolica Polski Ludowej” issue 2, “Studia Warszawskie”, vol. XI, PWN, Warsaw 1972.

² Rozważania nad stworzeniem podstaw finansowych dla odbudowy Warszawy [Considerations on financial aspects of reconstruction of Warsaw], annex to the Inspection Report on Warsaw by Prof. Lech Niemojewski. Addressed on 24 February 1945 to the Reconstruction Bureau at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in Lublin, “Warszawa Stolica Polski Ludowej”, issue 2, “Studia Warszawskie”, vol. XI, PWN, Warszawa 1972, p. 244.

devastation in September 1939, i.e. using the experiences and routines which were accumulated by the technical apparatus and the Municipal Credit Society. The issuing, trading and repayment of the securities would be coordinated by created for this purpose financial institution – the Public Credit Institution. This institution, on the basis of established financial damages during the war, would have an obligation to demand financial compensation from Germany.

Niemojewski believed that based on the relevant statements of the calculated losses it will be possible to submit specific demands for reparations from offenders. Until the reparations would be obtained, persons who are in possession of a debt security could manage their assets. He supposed that many owners would be unlikely to come to collect the documents confirming ownership. In these cases, the property would be taken over by public authorities. This solution would relieve owners from mortgage difficulties and enable financing housing investments.

Since the destroyed houses have a specific value, which is the sum of the value of buildings and building plots, the value represented by the building plots should also be liquefied by issuing the relevant securities for the land. Therefore, reform of the mortgage of land in Warsaw would be necessary, especially in the downtown area, where considerable area of land without owners would be taken over by the city.

The municipal building authority would map out a certain number of building sites for housing development and the redemption of the securities. The recovery process could be reasonably controlled in this way. Niemojewski stressed that very important role in the reconstruction process would be attributed to the detailed recovery plans, which would determine the order and rules of building of individual properties and would prevent the so-called “*Wild reconstruction*” and land speculation. Upon taking possession of the plot and the start of construction, the owner would receive mortgage book, which would define certain assumptions derived from the development plan, protecting both private and public interests.

In the outlined concept of reconstruction process of Warsaw, Niemojewski discussed specifically the need to protect the artistic and historic values of the city. Notwithstanding the protection and restoration of monuments, he called for designation of historic preservation area within the city boundaries going back to the early

nineteenth century, where special conditions would apply additionally included in the strict local regulations. They would apply to the dimensions and the building line, reconstruction of facades of buildings and the rules for new buildings to adapt to the historic ambience. However, this area would most likely require a higher proportion of public capital for reconstruction.

The text editor of Volume XI of “*Warsaw Studies*” found it necessary to emphasize in a published commentary, probably for reasons of the political correctness at the time, that Lech Niemojewski’s report from January 1945 was created in the period, “*in which the economic content of the new system was not clearly defined, and the placement of private capital as one of the factors of reconstruction, was not questioned*”.

The concept of the reconstruction of Warsaw presented by Joseph Sigalin

In November 1944 Joseph Sigalin presented a different concept of the reconstruction of Warsaw at the meeting of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP) in Lublin³. He believed that “*according to the latest designs and principles of urban planning*” the significant role in rebuilding and reconstruction of the country and Warsaw should be played by the State “*or by using the possibility of obtaining funds by way of reparations and by employing forced labor forces from Germany*”. He suggested creating a Bank for Reconstruction by the Ministry of Finance, which would help the state in the areas of technical and financial reconstruction. A significant role in the reconstruction of the Capital of Poland would be played by law issued by the government, and brought to life the Bureau of Capital Reconstruction (BOS), as a direct agenda of the government. He thought it was right “*to carry out urban land reform and mortgage reform*”, with the aim of “*restricting the rights of urban property owners*”, that would enable implementation of far-reaching urban ideas and excluding unauthorized construction. The premise of the concept was to establish “*special agencies for land policy*”, that would be responsible for the purchase of the most extensive areas, which would allow the fight against land speculation, development control and issuing building prohibitions in the areas without urban infrastructure.

Construction, reconstruction and rebuilding of public buildings would take place within the framework

³ J. Sigalin, *Warszawa 1944–1980. Z archiwum architekta*, vol. 1, PIW, Warsaw 1986.

of national, regional and local planning – in the order provided for in those plans. Projects for public buildings would be “*achieved through competitions or commissioned to architects*”. According to Sigalin planning and construction should be the responsibility of the competent ministries and government institutions. “*The organization of construction and building control should be in the hands of the state authorities responsible for construction and reconstruction*”. The state housing policy should encourage “*collective construction based on typical housing solutions*.” Responding to allegations that the paper did not mention any means of rebuilding, he explained that “*we didn’t think about it, assuming that it would be considered by economists and the government*”.⁴

The concepts of the reconstruction and redevelopment of cities in Europe after the World War II

The destruction of numerous cities in Europe during World War II was a socio-political challenge for group of ideologists who preached the need to rebuild the capitalist cities and building in their place new structures worthy of modern society. This led to unique opportunity arising of transforming cities with accordance to the principles of the modern movement and the Charter of Athens, and, as was proclaimed, “the introduction of the geometry to chaos” on the resulting “tabula rasa”.

The publication issued on the opening of Historical Museum of Warsaw in May 1995 at the exhibition “*Urban destruction – urban hope, Warsaw 1939–1945*” included following statements: “*War creates completely new conditions. Warsaw is mutilated, and just for that reason it is dependent on the proposals based on the visions of Le Corbusier. Only the ruins allow architects to discover the primary substrate to which now they eagerly allude... In connection with a tabula rasa, even the Polish architects living in London expected the ability of full disposal of the urban area... They shared visions of their colleagues from Hamburg, Rotterdam and London: over the ruins of European cities with millions of victims, floated the elusive and promising new city.*”⁵

Designers of reconstruction plans of Warsaw were also enchanted by the possibilities created by the introduced political system, they seized on these possibilities and recognized that the war has opened up new conditions and opportunities for rebuilding the city that was defective in social, health and aesthetic aspects, according to the concepts of the avant-garde groups of architects of the socialist views.

Jan Zachwatowicz expressed synthetically that group of architects’ relation to the capitalist city in the quotation cited by Andrzej Tomaszewski in a paper delivered at the 2006 conference, “*Warsaw rebuilt or remodeled*”.⁶ It was a phrase taken from the introduction to the album released in 1952 “*Architecture of Poland to the mid-nineteenth century*”. “*Since the mid-nineteenth century, both the increase of reaction forces and the consolidation of capitalism with all its contradictions lead to unguided urban management, anti-humanistic forms of building cities and estates and devoid of ideals rise of eclectic forms of highly cosmopolitan colors*”. By reminding this sentence Tomaszewski associated it with the then state of awareness of the history of European art and architecture. He highlighted the fact that only 60s and 70s of the last century “*brought reevaluation of the views of history of art on the architecture of the second half of the nineteenth century*”. He stated that “*in the eyes of the community (architects, urban planners, communication engineers, but also politicians, sociologists, contemporary environmentalists) total destruction created an opportunity to completely modernize the city*”.

Stanisław Tołwiński (mayor of Warsaw from February 1945 till May 1950) recalled in an article developed in 1968, and published in full in 1972⁷, the grim text of Stefan Żeromski from 1925 about Warsaw, where this eminent writer, dreamer of glass houses, wrote that Warsaw “*grew alone*”, littered with the “*factory smoke*” and downtown “*piled up next to each other randomly placed frights*” and “*surroundings of the cathedral, turned into the dirty and smelly alley, habitat of poverty and debauchery*”. After this quotation Tołwiński mentioned about vigorous activities of President Stefan Starzyński, which as noted, not mastered the “*capitalist freedom*” and “*could not change the nature of the capitalist building*”. “*New,*

⁴ J. Sigalin, op. cit., p. 49.

⁵ N. Gutschow, B. Klein, *Zagłada i utopia. Urbanistyka Warszawy w latach 1939–1945*. Deutscher Werkbund e.V. Frankfurt/Main & Historical Museum of Warsaw 1995.

⁶ A. Tomaszewski, *Ku mojej filozofii dziedzictwa*, International Cultural Centre, Cracow 2012.

⁷ S. Tołwiński, *Czy były wątpliwości co do budowy nowej Warszawy na dawnym miejscu?*, “*Warszawa Stolica Polski Ludowej*”, issue 2, “*Studia Warszawskie*”, vol. XI, PWN, Warsaw 1972.

this time true freedom had to come in", through which reconstruction plans of Warsaw were passed, dispelling any ideas to move the capital to Lodz or Krakow, as well as rejecting the ideas of *"leaving the ruins of Warsaw as the eternal witness to the barbarity of fascism"* and building opposite a "modern city with skyscrapers" or "temporary closure of Warsaw" and *"building barracks for the construction workers and German prisoners"* to populate only when the city is completely rebuilt. New freedom also protected the reconstruction of the city "to the state precisely as it looked before, so that nothing got changed from the old designs."

Writing about the times when planning and building work began Tołwiński mentioned about a dispute; what role in the reconstruction of the city was meant to be played by *"social organization, and that of spontaneous activity of people coming in to their city"*. He admitted that *"spontaneity factor played a greater role in securing the most basic daily services to the public and repair works as well as rubble removal"*.

The vast majority of private sector representatives criticized the withdrawal of private investors from planning of the reconstruction and accused Capital Construction Company of construction monopoly. There have also been comments that different concepts of reconstruction unsettle the inviolability of private property and cause a lack of trust that is desperately needed in the rebuilding period⁸. Polish Socialist Party's criticized the chaotic nature of reconstruction and preventing the construction work to be undertaken by private companies and the lack of effective action taken for Warsaw to receive assistance from other capitals. Eminent sociologist Stanisław Ossowski pointed out that *"you have to rebuild the old Warsaw to that extent that the former Warsaw residents saw it as the same city, and no different city in the same place. It has to be reckoned that the fact that individual residents cling to the old forms is a factor of social ties"*.⁹ Therefore, the concept of reconstruction of Warsaw presented by Niemojewski was not so isolated. When assessing the plans presented to them that were created by Bureau of Capital Reconstruction (BOS), even the representatives of authorities complained about the excessive scale of the planned demolition of habitable buildings, as well as wastefulness in shutting down building areas for recreational and insulation greens. The rank of these comments rescued Powisle

buildings from complete destruction, which in the first sketches was meant to open from Vistula the views of escarpment of Warsaw and the skyline of Warsaw. On the basis of the quoted texts it can be noticed that at the time, the views on the reconstruction of Warsaw were not clear.

Assessment of the damage of material substance of Warsaw

Bureau of Capital Reconstruction ended the inventory take of buildings of Warsaw in March 1945. The inventory included 24 338 buildings. The data on the state of destruction were applied to the pre-war map prints on a scale of 1 : 2500, in 50 sections and in the scale of 1 : 10,000 in the boundaries of Warsaw in 1939. Moreover, in 1945 aerial photographs were made in sections corresponding to the maps 1 : 2500 (Fig. 1, 2).

Materials retained in the State Archive of the Capital City of Warsaw documented that most suffered area was the north – western part of downtown Warsaw. This is where the Jewish ghetto was located, which since 1943 was systematically being destroyed by the Nazis, so that the area was evenly covered with piles of rubble. This part of the city was described as: "Rubble areas of the former ghetto". The remaining part of the downtown was recognized in detail, classifying individual buildings as "destroyed completely, mostly but not completely burned (e.g. preserved ceilings), partially damaged (e.g. floors partially collapsed), with a damaged roof, burned in a very small percentage (e.g. roof and several rooms) and not damaged". On the map 1 : 10,000, this part of downtown was defined as burned completely, with the exception of train of Old and New Town and a few building blocks, which were found to have been completely demolished.

It has been calculated that in the downtown area and adjacent neighborhoods there was stacked up rubble and ruins of approx. 20 million m³. Only 140 thousand residential chambers were suitable for use in January, of 654 thousand existing in Warsaw before the war. 782 of 957 historic buildings were completely destroyed, and 141 were seriously damaged. Technical infrastructure of the city has also been destroyed. All train stations were blown up. The rail tracks were covered with rubble in many places. Almost all the streets were covered with piles of rubble. In addition, they were rooted up by excavations, fenced off with

⁸ "Wiadomości Gospodarcze", 1945, issue 2, p. 13–14.

⁹ "Skarpa Warszawska", 1946.

barricades, which were built mostly with flagstones and paving stones¹⁰.

Classification of buildings, which was carried out as part of the inventory, according to the type of destruction, was probably done at the beginning of 1945 in order to determine the extent of the reconstruction and possible scale of rebuilding large parts of the city. A detailed comparison of inventory maps with aerial photographs and other iconographic materials may raise doubts as for the objectivity of interpretation of inventory. Aerial photos show that most of the walls of the buildings, described as burnt to the ground, were preserved to a height of last cornices and basically look like buildings burned in large percentage, or like some of those destroyed completely. Naturally, today's interpretation of preserved materials may be challenged, however, on its basis, you can try to determine the criteria for allocating buildings, and in some places whole quarters and large areas for demolition or reconstruction.

Summary of the findings of the inventory of the preserved remains of a pre-war building shows what factors actually decided about restoration and reconstruction of the city. In many cases undamaged buildings or only partially burned do not exist, and buildings that were marked as completely demolished or completely burned were rebuilt or reconstructed. It can therefore be assumed that one of the key principles was to rebuild the historic buildings only, and demolition was determined by the so-called urban considerations.

Ninety six percent of buildings in Warsaw were represented by not historic buildings and were at the time considered to be worthless and could be preserved in cases if it was inhabited immediately after the liberation period or used for other purposes, and only that which in a few places, did not interfere with the concept of urban redevelopment of the city. As a result the factors that determined rebuilding of the city were criteria voluntarily imposed by urban planners and political premises for social melioration of inhabitants of Warsaw, and not the state and structural value of the surviving walls and foundations.

The total scale of the destruction of buildings and technical equipment of the city was estimated for approx. 85%. This assessment was based on figures related to housing, workplaces as well as service and technical facilities. It was not based on a comparison of the economic value of the entire infrastructure of buildings of the city before the war and after the liberation. Such assessment could be obtained if the financing of the reconstruction concept developed by Niemojewski was implemented. Its rules, however, could not be used against the ideological assumptions of constructing of the "socialist city", in which the capitalist market rights were not accepted. There was also no need for the implementation of such an estimate in connection with the expropriation of Warsaw residents from land properties. It can also be assumed that valuation of these properties would be tactically very risky. In fact, it was widely claimed that: "*Those residents of Warsaw, who returned immediately after the war... were the people who had lost everything they've ever had.*"¹¹

To assess the material and utility value of rental buildings of Warsaw, you can refer to the real estate and housing census made in 1919. It stated that there were 5415 built properties in the downtown of Warsaw, of which only 60 that did not include any apartments. The downtown area was 2307 hectare which gave a ratio of about 72.5 flats / 1 hectare. The number of inhabitants in this area was estimated at approx. 652 thousand people. The general number of inhabited premises in the downtown area was 147 485, which meant that on average in built-up property area there was 27.24 dwellings. The largest increase in large tenement houses in downtown, often with more than 100 apartments, was dated from 1882.¹²

Tenements were profitable houses, where in addition to residential flats there were also offices, shops, small factories and craft workshops. In the era of industrial development, they formed shopping and commercial area typical of urban downtown.¹³ The data gathered from completed in 1919 Census revealed that despite having significantly greater density, downtown Warsaw offered a lot higher standard of housing than

¹⁰ A. Ciborowski, *Warszawa, o zniszczeniu i odbudowie miasta*, Wydawnictwo Interpress, Warsaw 1969.

¹¹ B. Wyporek, "Warszawa odbudowana czy przebudowana", comments at the TUP conference, conference proceedings, Warsaw 2006.

¹² Downtown Warsaw comprised 13 precincts situated on the left bank, demarcated approximately along the pre-1916 city boundaries.

¹³ P. J. Martyn, *Przedwojenny układ zabudowy śródmieścia Warszawy w świetle rezultatów spisu nieruchomości i mieszkań z 1919 roku*, Wyd. Zamku Królewskiego, Warsaw 1999.

in peripheral areas. It was also better than in almost all the capitals of western and central Europe. Downtown Warsaw was inhabited in large percentage by the better-to-do population than those from the periphery, and owners of the tenements were from the richer, but differentiated social group, which had an impact on the quality of public spaces in Warsaw. Better housing was situated closer to the street. Outbuildings included small apartments, some were one room apartments and those were inhabited by less affluent individuals and families. State of downtown development from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century did not change significantly until 1939. Therefore, it can be assumed that tenements were this area's primary construction material, as was described in 1919.

The criticism of rental buildings as pathological forms of bourgeois development of capitalist cities was promoted mainly by advocates of its total annihilation. For these reasons, positive features of the buildings were not noticed or assessed, and the possible rehabilitation was not designed. Construction and adaptation works carried out in destroyed tenements in the first months of the reconstruction of Warsaw were spontaneous, which was often emphasized. Consequently, there is no structured data to about their reconstruction and possible adaptation techniques to changing needs. The only remaining dossiers that were left were the ones concerning the reconstruction of historic buildings, which for the housing purposes have had redesigned interior in order to adapt them to the standards of housing estates. The front facades of buildings took only a historic mask.

Under the pressure of Lech Niemojewski, Jan Zachwatowicz and Piotr Biegański Ancient Architecture Department was created in Bureau of Capital Reconstruction (BOS) and at the end of 1945 Zachwatowicz could justify the *"reconstruction of monuments by moral law program and on the urban scale..."*. Such approach to the protection of national heritage has allowed the reconstruction of the so-called Royal Route to the Old and New Town, albeit not as a true copy but the *"Neo-Romantic vision of architectural conservation"*, with a new social content with the objectives of building a *"socialist"* Warsaw. It has been argued that *"the concept of copying does not exist when it comes to reconstruction of destroyed monuments, no reconstruction will be at faithful reproduction of the original state, because for many reasons it can't be. It is a modern creation grown on the stem of history"*.¹⁴

On the basis of restoration methods of old tenements, in many European cities, as well as currently in Warsaw, one can introduce the scope of construction works, which take place in them most often. Some of the larger tenements resisted the trend of exchange; consequently their healing was followed by loosening of building tenements and retrofitting recreational green areas. Important steps in these activities were to mitigate the problem of traffic and its noise, air pollution and lack of pedestrian safety. Many European cities introduced drastic restrictions to traffic through construction of ring roads, strategically located parking lots, the development of public transport, and especially in big cities, development of metro network.

In general, urban communities after the war demanded the protection of buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a relic of the material identity of the city. The economic development of cities favored enrichment of their inhabitants. Possession of a private tenement, as well as renting an apartment in it, or the premises for service, has become attractive and commercially viable. City centers experienced social gentrification, which, thanks to their multifunctional nature gave the foundations for the sustainable development of modern cities. It was only later recognized by the conservation services that the historic buildings were part of historic urban landscape material.

When the modernization of tenements took place, the main rule was that the less valuable portions of buildings were removed. This concerned mainly outbuildings and commercial buildings that filled the interiors of quarter buildings. Also common was the complete reconstruction of the building while retaining only its front elevation and other valuable items. Wooden floors and roof trusses were mostly replaced, regardless of the extent of the damage, with fireproof construction. Windows and doors were also replaced. Modern equipment and security systems were introduced.

A significant number of tenements in Warsaw, even if they were not burned or destroyed to such extent, while adapting to modern needs they would have to be brought to a condition which caused the burn. Therefore, the argument that buildings were burnt should not determine their demolition, since construction material held its construction value and also held solid market price. If we additionally top it up with architectural and cultural value, it is clear that in many buildings

¹⁴ A. Tomaszewski, op. cit.

the fire did not err in stucco, stonework, as well as metal elements on the front facades, even details that were made from precious materials have remained intact. Therefore, demolition of Warsaw tenements, as stated before, mainly for reasons of urban planning, was proof that the cultural heritage was seen selectively from historical point of view (there applied a rule only those buildings from just before the second half of the nineteenth century would be recognized as historic monuments) and biased for socio-political reasons (it was about the liquidation of the so-called “Landlords”). Nearly century-old cultural heritage from the period of the dynamic development of Warsaw was considered at the time as unworthy of protection. Thus, the extent of reconstruction confirms doubts that were put forth by the Bureau of Capital Reconstruction about absolute necessity of destroying of burned tenements.

The first period of reconstruction – results and problems

The first draft of reconstruction plan of Warsaw was presented to the President of National Council in March 1945 by the architect Zygmunt Skibniewski. The draft presented the idea of the future urban structure of Warsaw in a most synthetic and unambiguous way. This plan laid out downtown area to serve as a socio-political center of the country that focused on following functions: administration, culture, science, etc., while providing a high concentration of jobs. Housing estates were not included originally in the plan of the downtown area. Residential areas that surrounded downtown were separated from it with green belts¹⁵. These belts were created from the east side by released from building Powiśle as well as greens surrounding escarpment, from the south belt of universities and parks: Ujazdowski, Łazienki and Mokotowskie Fields, west green belt as a continuation of Mokotowskie Fields towards powązkowskie cemeteries, and from the north greens of Saxon Axis. This plan did not include the Royal Route as the historical highlight and Muranów including the Old and New Town was included in the high building area. In addition to high buildings, the outside downtown districts were made of low and industrial buildings separated by vast green belts. Warsaw was separated with two wide street arteries, which were extensions

of Marszałkowska and Jerozolimskie Avenue with the intersection of two routes precisely in the city center. From the outside the city centre area was surrounded by transit routes (Fig. 3).

Warsaw spatial development plan that was developed in 1947 contained a greater number of findings, primarily relating to residential structures. The idea behind the plan remained similar to the initial draft from 1945. Introduced changes resulted from the ongoing discussions and the progress of implemented reconstruction. Downtown area has been extended to the north towards the W-Z route which was already marked out by then. The belt around the escarpment from the Old Town to the Piękna Street has been described as “the centers of capital’s social life”. In the draft of the plan dated to November 1947, historic zone was still not marked, while areas of the Old and New Towns have been described as “high residential development”. The downtown area has been divided by wide straight streets and Marszałkowska Street was widened by parallel green belt. In the area of today’s Palace of Culture “indicated area for tower buildings”.

The formal basis for reconstruction was government decrees published since 1945. The essential ones included:

- Decree of 24 May 1945 on the reconstruction of the Capital City of Warsaw, then changed with the law of July 3 1947 about the reconstruction Capital City of Warsaw;
- Decree of 26 October 1945 on the ownership and use of land within the Capital City of Warsaw.

The first decree gave the Bureau of Capital Reconstruction great authority, and after the statutory change appointed the Supreme Reconstruction Council of the Capital City of Warsaw, which was supposed to set the rules, programs and general reconstruction projects as well as coordinate and oversee the progress of reconstruction work. The scope of activities of the Council included enacting of the spatial development plans of Warsaw and the Warsaw Municipal Complex.

The second decree passed to city’s disposal all of the land located within the limits of Warsaw in 1939, as was claimed, this was the essential prerequisite for city’s reconstruction and restoration. According to the decree for the municipality passed ownership of land, but their possession and ownership of buildings destroyed or damaged, until its acquisition, remained at the previous owners¹⁶. In actual fact, the decree has

¹⁵ E. Szwanowski, *Warszawa – rozwój urbanistyczny i architektoniczny*, Państwowe Wydawnictwa Techniczne, Warsaw 1952.

¹⁶ A. Ciborowski, op. cit.

disinherited property owners, which resulted in failure to continue progress with construction trading, which then resulted in the area losing its value as collateral. It only came to light after the change of the system in 1990, that the decree of the ownership and use of land within the City of Warsaw was violated approx. in 17 thousand cases. This concerned primarily about 5 thousand owners of buildings in downtown area who have had documented ownership just after the war¹⁷.

Enacted three-year plan for reconstruction and development of Warsaw for the years 1947–1949 was the first attempt to bind economic and investment activity. The decision was made to interrelate social and economic planning with urban and investment planning. As a result, the first major housing developments in Warsaw began to form only in the final period of the three-year plan. Investment funds to finance them were allocated from the state budget.

Six-year economic recovery plan (1950–1955) was established after the three-year plan, and was adopted in the form of a bill passed by the Parliament on 21 July 1950, including a six-year investment plan for Capital City of Warsaw. This plan has adopted guidelines of Warsaw Committee of the Party in July 1949. Forty of the theses included formulated demands arising from the experience of the three-year plan. They contained a critical assessment of “*disparities in extension of Warsaw and meeting the needs of the population*”¹⁸. The priority of the six-year plan, in spite of this evaluation was to build headquarters of the chief political institutions and the central state authorities, as well as implementation of the communication system of the city, including the monumental shaping of urban plans in the city center.

Statistics of Building Inspection of Municipal Board¹⁹ stated that the population of Warsaw immediately after returning proceeded to removing rubble and rebuilding all that was possible to move into. This was documented by the number of new dwellings completed in 1945 which equaled 1280. The process of spontaneous rebuilding was stopped by introduction of decree on 26 October 1945, which most likely meant that an increase of new houses were equal to zero in 1946, and in the following years was minimal; 1947 – 230, 1948 – 468. In fact, the state authorities have had

to create planning, organizational and building bases of investment on the scale that has not been practiced before. The appointed Capital Reconstruction Bureau was established in the first phase of the reconstruction as an investor, planner and building contractor. Housing Estate Unit (ZOR) was appointed in 1948. It was a state institution, serving as an investor. ZOR built the whole urban units, which consisted of both apartments as well as estates’ services, such as schools, kindergartens, nurseries, shops, central heating boiler rooms and a network of residential streets.

The considerable growth in housing was noticed only from 1949 and reached 4800 chambers in 1949. Number of residential chambers in Warsaw has reached pre-war state in 1960, i.e. after 15 years of restoration²⁰. It would be difficult to determine the speed of the growth of number of dwelling rooms, if reconstruction was carried out according to the Niemojewski’ concept. However, comparing the speed of reconstruction of some of West Germany’s cities that were destroyed to similar extent, this period could be shortened, if significantly more investors would be involved, than the number that was actually involved in the centrally managed economy. The population of Warsaw in 1965 (1,256) approached the population in 1939 (1,289).

Gripping slogan “the whole nation builds its Capital” shifted local problems to the shoulders of the national authorities. Financial issues became irrelevant along with the interests of individual citizens, because the leading issue was implementation of the ideas. This slogan freed decision-makers from the accountability for the Warsaw community and authorized them to take decisions on behalf of the nation. The task of rebuilding the city adopted by the state had social consequences for the inhabitants of the capital, especially of the urban property owners. It has also deprived them of their active participation in the reconstruction and virtually ruled them out from the circle which decided on the future shape of the reconstructed city. There was a noticeable growth in the ratio of residents to the municipal authorities; characteristic was also a lack of confidence in the urban policy. The spatial structure of Warsaw changed with various city zones introduced, and with an industrial town-creating factor. Primary activity of

¹⁷ J. S. Majewski, T. Markiewicz, *Warszawa nieodbudowana*, Wyd. DiG, Warsaw 1998.

¹⁸ S. Tolwiński, op. cit.

¹⁹ M. Gajewski, *Odbudowa warszawskich urzędzeń komunalnych (1944–1951)*, Warszawa Stolica Polski Ludowej, issue 2, “Studia Warszawskie”, vol. XI, PWN, Warsaw 1972, p. 98.

²⁰ M. Gajewski, op. cit.

industrial production was to grow urban community participation in the industrial working class, which was planned to be the base of the proposed development and the guarantee of entering the communist system.

Pre-war Warsaw was a city of small, private industry and crafts. Data from 1931 indicates that in population of 1172 thousand in Warsaw, larger industry employed 15% of the population, small-scale industry and crafts 27.6% and 20.1%²¹ was employed for trade. Employment in the industry increased from approx. 100 thousand people in 1939 to 224.8²² thousand in 1965 at a similar population. According to the Central Statistical Office, employment in the socialized economy in industry and construction this year amounted to 307.5 thousand workers, which accounted for 45% of all of the employed. This percentage decreased in subsequent years. In 1970 it was at the level of 38.5%, however, the major share of it was then employed in the so-called key industry (47.4%)²³, which after 1990 virtually ceased to exist in Warsaw.

As a result of doctrinal assumptions Warsaw was rebuilt in the spirit of the modern movement, followed by the Soviet socialist realism and was deprived of the bourgeois tradition. The total reconstruction of the spatial structure of Polish capital was accompanied by the social revolution.

The factor that held back aspirations of socialist modernists and destroyers of material heritage of generations in the cities of Western Europe, in Warsaw was strongly supported by the introduced by force regime, modeled on the Soviet model. Stalin declared help to Bolesław Bierut to cover half the cost of reconstruction of Warsaw. Specialists from Moscow under the chairmanship of Prime Minister of Ukraine Nikita Khrushchev consulted assumptions of the master plan of Warsaw²⁴. Their directive was probably what decided about the rejection of the proposed help for Poland in the form of the Marshall Plan and about the voluntary renunciation of war reparations by Poland, a declaration from 23 August 1953.²⁵

The characteristics that actually spread as a result were those of the Eastern European city, where the townspeople were turned into residents and then the owners of the sleeping cabins called apartments, according to Soviet designs, owners of houses-communes. In the propagated model of the city, reconstructed streets were to replace roads with hierarchically differentiated traffic. Houses in the city should be located freely in space, apartments should be as sunlit as possible and housing estates should organize the life of families and individuals without asking them about preferences. Private investors should be replaced by the state investor. Architect Simon Syrkus praised city-machine model as reference point.

The plan of clearing of downtown of Warsaw was already outlined in the first post-war planning sketches. Accumulated over the centuries downtown Warsaw not only had overly dense development in the pre-war period, but also a confusing street plan where historical and agricultural routes overlapped with modern urban planning assumptions. Drive through downtown on the N-S direction was especially difficult. Marszałkowska Street ended at the Saxon Garden, Bonifraterska Street derived from Żoliborz from railway viaduct by Gdańsk station ended at Krasiński Square, to then connect by a narrow street Miodowa to Krakow Suburb. Castle Square, Theater Square and Iron Gate Square were the major hubs in this network. Already in the pre-war plans²⁶ the necessity was assumed to connect Warsaw northbound route to the extension to Chałubińskiego Street and the implementation of the route derived from Chłodna Street by the tunnel under the Saxon Axis in the direction of a new bridge in the area of Karowa Street.

As a result of the planned changes, the downtown was cut with wide cross roads according to the 1945 draft. This crossing designated the city center point around which center of the capital city of Warsaw was to develop, bringing together institutions and services of the highest level. This designated cross

²¹ *Warszawa Przyszłości*, Committee of the Warsaw of the Future exhibition, 1936.

²² *400 lat stoleczości Warszawy w świetle statystyki 1596–1996*, Polish Statistical Association, Warsaw 1997.

²³ Land development plan for WZM for the prospective period – 1990, compared to the directional plan, version III, (typescript), BPRW, Warsaw 1973.

²⁴ S. Tolwiński, op. cit.

²⁵ W. Czapliński, *Problematyka reparacji wojennych w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich*, expert opinion by BSiE No. 303 IP-105 P, 2003.

²⁶ Capital City of Warsaw, draft regulation plan, 1916; General development plan for Warsaw, 1931; Warsaw city plan – draft, 1938.

road was supplemented by further supporting routes such as: new W-Z route with a tunnel under the Castle Square (today's Solidarity Avenue), the new N-S route, referring to the pre-war planned course (today John Paul II Avenue), as well as the same direction Wisłostrada.

The main purpose of the street network created in the central area of Warsaw was widening of all those streets that allowed passing of the transit traffic through the center of the city. This is how the wide Świętokrzyska Street was created, which brought to the city center the traffic from the western direction, which was assisted by the connection of Royal Street with Grzybowska Street. Wide Krucza Street was founded. There was a plan to extend Emilii Plater Street, but building lines, due to the residents' houses have been only withdrawn in fragments. Such local building line shifts have affected numerous other streets, where demolition of burned houses favoured this. Transit traffic has also been introduced in the so-called Royal Route. Only in this case demolition of building sequences recognized as a historic managed to be avoided, but this does not mean all. For example, a fragment of the frontage between the Karowa Street and the Visitation Church was not rebuilt, the eastern frontage in the region of the Staszic Palace and Three Crosses Square was also not restored. In all these cases proposals were agreed for scenic openings with a view from the Royal Route towards the Vistula.

The resulting possibilities of passing through the city center until the 80s allowed delaying of the construction of road bypasses in downtown, inter-district and suburban Warsaw. The routes of the bypasses were already sketched in the 70s of the twentieth century and only on the number of sections were corrected or erased from the plans²⁷ (Millennium Route, Mszczonowska Route). Construction of bypasses continues today and increasing car traffic causes their quality to become insufficient. If the tenements in the downtown area have been rebuilt and the pernicious tendency of letting the transit traffic in was made obvious earlier, building of both ring roads and subway lines would be realized as necessity in the first period of reconstruction.

Preliminary opinion of Tadeusz Tołwiński about sketchy plan of Warsaw²⁸

Assessing the post-war planning concepts developed in BOS in 1946, Professor Tadeusz Tołwiński believed that building Warsaw Citadel esplanade with buildings around Żoliborz and Bielany enabled the return to the natural development of Warsaw along Vistula River especially in the north direction. He then accepted that it was *“necessary to move north organized modern area of Warsaw and the adoption of the axis of Saxon assumptions for the basic perpendicular line to the river in the composition of the urban plan, founded from Bielany to Królikarnia”*. He stressed that Warsaw should keep the *“compactness of its design and rational allocation of functions... uniform planning and spatial work... after the first period of reconstruction”*.

Tołwiński estimated the field needs for the planned population of Warsaw of eight hundred thousand. He accepted that in the most damaged, the left bank of the city approx. 550 thousand people could live, for whom sufficient area would be about 4000–4360 ha. He adopted the following ratios in calculating the field needs: population density of 350 residents on 1 hectare, i.e. 1571 acres, 200 employees on 1 hectare for 250 thousand jobs, i.e. 1250 ha, 220 ha for school and educational purposes for 110 thousand children and young people, with a rate of 500 people per 1 hectare and 1320 hectares of greenery, with a rate 24 m² of green per capita. Tołwiński has not included communication area in the calculation of the field needs, which usually consumes between 20% and 50% of urban space. He most likely included the surface area of streets in the estimated urban space. The obtained average population density of approx. 126 persons / ha, although relatively high, would confirm this assumption. Tołwiński referred the accepted indicators to Western European cities, where the population density usually amounted to more than 100 inhabitants / ha. However, those are cities with compact structure development, with multifunctional city centers, with preserved buildings from the turn of the century. So this is probably how he saw rebuilding of Warsaw, which is different from

²⁷ *Atlas historyczny Warszawy*, vol. 2. Land development plans dated 1916–2002, The Capital City of Warsaw State Archive Association, Warsaw 2004.

²⁸ T. Tołwiński, *Wstępna opinia o szkicowym planie Warszawy wykonanym przez BOS* [Preliminary opinion on the BOS draft development plan for Warsaw], *Warszawa Stolica Polski Ludowej*, issue 2, “*Studia Warszawskie*”, vol. XI, PWN, Warsaw 1972.

the district model, which was implemented by plans of BOS.²⁹

Tołwiński assumed that historical central part of Warsaw, i.e. *“The area of Stanisławowska Warsaw³⁰ with an area of 3400 ha”* will fit *“in itself the majority of the functions assigned to left-bank Warsaw.”* He was of the opinion that *“functional separation – especially in downtown neighborhoods – should not be treated strictly”*. He also assumed that the remaining area outside city center of approx. 1,000 hectares will enable the deployment of additional *“workplaces, buildings, state institutions and social life of the capital of the state.”* He underlined that on the outskirts of the city *“should be extended to a maximum agricultural and forest areas, erasing as far as possible chaotically spread random buildings and accumulating green spaces in larger assemblies”*. Therefore he gave a negative rating to adaptation by BOS of the principle of *“functional division of residential areas and workplaces”*. He has pointed out that the planning of remote residential areas away from employment centers will call for *“the need for huge investments in one-off transportation”* and great harm to *“the public in the form of loss of travel time and substantial costs to maintaining these networks”*.

Referring to the principles of shaping buildings, he has raised the issue of maximum use of preserved urban facilities, including burned parts of houses, walls, foundations and floors. *“Therefore, it is clearly pointless to knock down frontal walls of residential buildings.”* He believed that the vast majority of burned houses *“allow re-planning and construction of housing completely suited to today’s social and health needs”*. He also emphasized that *“the condition of rational reconstruction... is to carry out a thorough sanitation of blocks by the demolition of rear and partial sides of outbuildings, lowering of too high buildings, organization of gardens of the remaining thus larger courtyards and interior blocks”*.

When discussing the development of Powiśle area, Tołwiński assumed bringing buildings closer to the Vistula River as appropriate on the section from the Karowa Street to the Stanisławowska Axis. Therefore, he was critical of the concept by BOS of isolating the Vistula River from the city by a gardens belt. He

wrote that *“Warsaw not only lies on the slope... but mainly lies on the Vistula – the main river of Polish lands, having an immense economic and social importance”*.

He introduced the concept of Warsaw’s railway junction reconstruction, in a way that it could handle city traffic especially by convenient routes to the heart of the city, which should include *“the Iron Gate square yards with a wreath around the Saxon Garden”*. Designated city center could be linked from the south by Jerozolimskie Avenue, from the north by Konwiktorska Street that would enter the bridge in the area of the citadel, from the west planned N-S Route (today John Paul II Avenue), and from the east by Wisłostrada. According to Tołwiński there should be designated bypass railway routes for freight traffic that would manage transit transport better than road arteries.

The proposal outlined in the opinion on the transformation of the street network in the Stanisławowskie City area can lead to a lot of comments, especially in terms of excessive cutting of the area with long straight avenues. For example, the returning to pre-war concept of road crossing in Saska Axis with the bridge in the area of Karowa street seems questionable, except that Tołwiński proposed getting rid of Kierbedź Bridge. On the other hand, he has rightly suggested that from the existing dense street network, the traffic should be separated with communication and residential streets that could be rebuilt *“the garden method”*.

Professor Tołwiński’s opinion has clear characteristics of practical guidance on Warsaw’s reconstruction in terms of economic and social realities. However, despite numerous statements accepting BOS solutions, in light of the proposed detailed solutions, this opinion is far from the direction pursued by the planners of this office and it seems to be closer to the recalled earlier concept of Niemojewski. At this point, it is worth mentioning that both Lech Niemojewski and Tadeusz Tołwiński were professors of the Faculty of Architecture at Warsaw Technical University and enjoyed a high reputation among architects and urban planners. In the first years after the war, Niemojewski was the president of the SARP and Tołwiński was the

²⁹ In central districts of the left-bank Warsaw (Mokotów, Ochota, City centre, Wola, Żoliborz) the population density in 2006 was only 72.5 inhabitants/ha. Rocznik Statystyczny Warszawy [Warsaw Statistical Yearbook], Statistical Office in Warsaw, 2007.

³⁰ This is how Tołwiński referred to the left-bank Warsaw of the late 18th century, the area demarcated by Lubomirski Ramparts.

president of the TUP in the years 1936–1939. Therefore, their views on the direction of the reconstruction of Warsaw could not be so isolated.

Introduced political changes in post-war Poland meant that the team of architects and urban planners, who created the BOS, had socialist provenance associated with the avant-garde pre-war magazine “Praesens” and the Architecture and Urban Workshop called (AUW/PAU). In 1951 Tadeusz Tołwiński dies and is expelled from BOS and in 1952 Lech Niemojewski dies stripped of the title of University Professor. After the liquidation of BOS in 1951, a large part of the leaders of this office transferred to Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw Technical University.

Alternative Warsaw – an attempt to present another reconstruction model

After seventy years since the decision was made about the method and directions of reconstruction of Warsaw, evaluation of this decision can be made without emotions and outline of an alternative reconstruction model can be made using different assumptions than those used initially. Assuming that the post-war history of Poland has set the constitutional terms for the reconstruction of Warsaw, in such a framework, which in 1945 became a reality, hypothesis was made that a significant impact on the plans and technical and economic assumptions of the project was committed by the professional team of specialists. It can be gathered from previously mentioned opinions that this group’s views on reconstruction were not widely accepted. Undoubtedly, advantage of this group was their vision of the city that was related to the political goals of the Lublin’s government authorities at the time. The choice of co-workers was likely strongly influenced by architects – politicians; colonel of the Polish People’s Army Marian Spsychalski, political officer of the Army Józef Sigalin and member of the National Council Roman Piotrowski. They were activists undoubtedly seeking to change the Polish system, but also rebuild the spatial structure of the country and especially cities, including Warsaw.

However, if on the occasion of the reconstruction of Warsaw the planners of that time had not forced the necessity of its total transformation, the modern image of the capital would probably have been different. Would it be better? This question can now be attempted to be answered with experiences and observations accumulated during the seventy years of post-war history of the capital.

If policy makers had considered community involvement of residents returning to the city in the reconstruction of Warsaw as unquestionable merit, which architect Lech Niemojewski assumed in his report and documented the relationship in the first months after the liberation, the allocation of reconstruction tasks would have probably been different.

The scale of demolition would probably be much smaller if the economical values of survived buildings and land had been considered in the range presented in the opinion of urban planner Tadeusz Tołwiński.

The extent of spatial structural transformation of the city would have to be very limited, if the post-war government decrees concerning Warsaw were not aimed at the total social and ownership transformation.

In making rational decisions, even in a country that builds “*people’s democracy*”, the exclusion of nearly one million strong community from the opportunity to decide whether to rebuild their city should raise doubts. The failure to use preserved solid walls and foundations in rebuilding process, but instead their demolition and exporting of them to the rubble heap could not be justified economically. Acquisition of municipalization decree of land of approx. 140 km² of entire pre-war Warsaw, which was mostly destroyed on the surface of approx. 34 km², which is clearly shown on the map of the state of destruction from 1945, was a manifestation of irresponsible greed. Municipalization of land in destroyed Rotterdam, an example frequently referred to by Warsaw planners took only 3.5 km² of mostly destroyed parts of downtown. In order to facilitate the reconstruction process, municipalization could have been reduced in Warsaw, for example, only to Muranow area i.e. an area of approx. 3.0 km². Entrusting BOS without proper control, with almost all the powers of the reconstruction can also be considered as evidence of political irresponsibility.

The reconstruction could take stronger advantage of interwar planning achievements of Warsaw, especially in terms of the localization of objects of the metropolitan rank, which could include the planned with a flourish urban layout at the Mokotowskie Field, the space reserve at Skaryszew for future exhibition and trade fair grounds as well as the the Siekierski Arc for Olympic complex and others. Using of the planned locations would most likely allow the development of government and diplomatic district in conjunction with Ujazdowskie Avenue toward the Pole Mokotowskie, it would free the trouble spot of Washington Roundabout from National Stadium, location

of which in Siekierki would certainly be less collision prone for urban functions than the present location³¹. Fairgrounds in conjunction with greenery of Skaryszewski Park, Port of Prague and Vistula River would likely shape a more magnificent composition on the right bank of the river than the current white-red stadium's basket. Certain projects could be used from the planned communication solutions i.e. the underground metro, railway junction with the stations as well as some routes of traffic arteries.

Adoption of Tołwiński's proposal aiming future growth of the city along the river, evenly towards the south and the north, might have saved Warsaw from locating smelter in the region of Młociny and in this way disabling development in this direction, in a similar way that Tsarist Citadel did after 1831. Random spreading of the city, whether it be in the form of loosely deployed estates, or single-family housing, should have been controlled with respect to the needs of field growth, the attached to each planning concept, calculated as was proposed by Tołwiński. Similarly like it was done after the war in many large cities of the United Kingdom, surrounding the built-up area of the city with a green ring should have been introduced also in Warsaw. After the war, the ring could be designated by a combination of green fortress and suburban forests including Młociński, Wolski, Wawerski, Olszynki Grochowskiej and Tarchomin. Ventilating wedges of green could be introduced from this ring in the direction of the city center, with a width of about 200 m. They would compensate small proportion of parks that contribute to downtown development. Ring as well as the wedges of green would not restrict area of future development. The indicators of the field needs proposed by Tołwiński would guarantee development of Warsaw within the delimitation of the green ring up to 2 million inhabitants. Residential and services districts as well as larger industrial concentrations could be developed in the area outside city center of Warsaw (Fig. 6).

The importance of shaping Warsaw Municipal Complex was emphasized from the beginning in the post-war planning concepts. The rules referred to the concept of Functional Warsaw of Chmielewski and Syrkus, as well as the guidelines set out in the plan of the Warsaw district from the 20s of XX century.

The cross bands of settlements along the railway lines from Grodzisk to Wołomin and from Modlin to Góra Kalwaria was reasonably proposed, but this time lacked effective mechanisms for regulating their development, which in subsequent decades resulted in suburbanization characterized by pathological spread of housing.

In the general plan of the buildings of Capital City of Warsaw, approved in 1931, the downtown area corresponded approximately to boundaries of Stanisławowskie City extended on the right bank by the central region of Prague (Fig. 4). It is worth noting that the area of the center of the "City" in Stanisław Różański's sketches were marked in the south by Jerozolimskie Avenue (Fig. 5). Tadeusz Tołwiński suggested maintaining the historical center around the Saxon Garden. City Center in this location would have great compositional value resulting from the ring of surrounding garden squares. These squares combined by historic streets and decorated with antique edifices could shape the public space system with very cultural significance for the city. Consequently, the city center would perpetuate the spatial identity widening the Royal Route by values that have been lost due to the housing estate reconstruction model of the regions of Theatre, Banking, Grzybowski and Behind the Iron Gate squares.

City center should be freed from transit traffic and handled more with foot traffic and public transport. Separated central part of the city center should preserve historic landscape of Warsaw. Covering of these historic sites by conservation protection zone would be considered deliberate. Compact city center should be surrounded by a ring road, whose course would probably be similar to that planned in the 70s of the twentieth century, with the fact that Jerozolimskie Avenue could be the southern part of the ring road, shutting off the southern part of the city center with the function of strongly saturated housing. At the large area of downtown of Stanisławowskie City there would lie zones of distinctive prevailing features formed depending on the extent of buildings and the adapted internal street network. Within this network crossed route W-Z, today Solidarity Avenue and route N-S, today John Paul II Avenue, as well as hidden in the tunnel Wisłostrada would be the only through-streets of downtown.

³¹ J. Trybuś, *Warszawa niezaistniała, Niezrealizowane projekty urbanistyczne i architektoniczne Warszawy dwudziestolecia międzywojennego*, Museum of the Warsaw Uprising, National Museum, Bęc Zmiana Foundation, Warsaw 2012.

The area of Muranów which the occupant tied up completely, leaving only piles of rubble, could be rebuilt with multi-purpose predominantly high office buildings, large buildings of trade, culture and entertainment and housing of a higher standard, shaping Warsaw's business district of CBD. The project of such a district could arise as a result of international competition and its implementation could be facilitated by the municipalization of land introduced in the area.

In accordance with the Tołwiński's recommendation, section of the W-Z bridge to Solec should form the lower downtown of Warsaw, perhaps linked with pedestrian drawbridge, for example in the area of Karowa Street or Bednarska Street. Such bridge would link the lower left-bank downtown with downtown of Prague in a place where the buildings on both sides are the most similar to each other and closest to the banks of the Vistula. The predominant functions of the lower downtown should be services of a higher level, including culture, university facilities and housing. Escarpment belt should be protected from new buildings between the lower and upper downtown. There should also be height restrictions of buildings around Powiśle, so that the bridge abutments would not obscure the historical panorama of Warsaw. Obtained fronts of the city from the water side would give the river urban character and Warsaw value of the city on the Vistula River (Fig. 7).

Other areas of downtown would characterize predominantly residential functions in a large percentage entered in the restored tenements. Naturally, rebuilding quarters of rental housing should rely on the adaptation of only structurally strong enough walls and foundations and on the release from construction of the block interior, for the purpose of the greenery and parking for residents. Preserved facades should be protected from architectural degradation. If their design would not be possible to be completed in the first period of reconstruction, architectural inventory of the remains would be intentional so that comprehensive reconstruction would be possible in the future.

Historic facades of the houses would perpetuate street building lines that should not be violated. The ground floors of buildings would be made available for retail and other services center-creative. The streets would therefore hold their previous sizes and functional characteristics. This would require the introduction of restrictions for traffic and car parking in the downtown area relatively early on. The commutes to downtown functions would be in the form of a loop shape. Drive through downtown area should only

be allowed by means of public transport. Crossing through the area of the historic Saxon Garden and Banking square of the Marszałkowska Street possibly would not be needed.

From the current point of view, clearly reconstruction of Warsaw would be appropriate with the principles of market economy, respecting the rights of economics and property rights, as well as with war reparations as financial aid. These rules, however, would have to take into account the doctrines of the country's introduced system. Surely it would be better not to enact specific decrees for Warsaw due to the reconstruction process, and most of all legislation passed should not be broken by "duplicator's" regulations and directives, as well as voluntary management decisions, especially by the planning and building apparatus. Compliance with the law and the economic calculation would certainly protect a greater percentage of the pre-war building tissue. Commonplace would be to rebuild the destroyed buildings, which from the economic position today seems to be a more reasonable solution than its total replacement.

Summary

Presented in the paper the vision of other Warsaw refers to the idea of financing the reconstruction proposed by Lech Niemojewski and also to suggestions of urban solutions proposed by Tadeusz Tołwiński. It also includes some of the interwar plans and projects. Its development is treated as a method of assessing the assumptions, planning and implementation of the reconstruction of Warsaw, which occurred in the post-war years. The answers to the following questions are relevant: as a result of this reconstruction what has been unnecessarily lost, what has been achieved, and what could not be achieved because of the objective situation? This assessment is of retrospective nature, i.e. the characteristic that we know what happened along the way, what were the consequences of those events, as well as on the basis of accumulated knowledge, we can extrapolate future events.

What has been needlessly lost?

First of all, urban form of pre-war European downtown got erased, with its shaped squares and streets, a multipurpose structure and characteristics of public spaces that usually animate urban life, give each city personalized features and attest to its aesthetic and cultural values. Then, landscape background and context

was dis-harmonized with respect to the reconstructed monuments that have lost much of their compositional values, inserted in the contrasted to them environment, leading to violations of spatial order and aesthetics. Additionally, many material culture goods vanished in the period of the strongest urban development in the history of Europe, which would currently be covered by a conservation protection, not only because of their age, but also as medium of a contemporary aesthetic sensibility, and in Warsaw, in many cases patriotic attitudes of urban society. Warsaw was not created compact and internally consistent, economical and more efficient in the process of recreation of urban infrastructure. Building substance was not used which could have technically be used for reconstruction, and was mostly transported to landfill debris, which today is critically judged, not only as material waste, but also by the introduction of foreign matter to environment. Finally, social and individual community engagement was wasted, which resulted in prevailed lack of confidence in the government and its actions by society of the city.

What has been achieved?

Firstly, living conditions were improved for the inhabitants of Warsaw, poverty and social exclusion zones were virtually eliminated, jobs for the economically active population group were created, not only for Warsaw area but also for the residents of the suburban area. The sphere of domestic services was taken care of and this resulted in a socio-economic effect which means that the Polish capital of today has potential advantages in terms of competing with other major cities of Europe. In the first period, land speculation was prevented and spontaneous forms of reconstruction of the city were significantly reduced. Warsaw is defined today as a green city, which is visible in the vicinity of almost all residential buildings and this contributes to the relatively good health and climate. Clear transport system was created; its space reserves were secured which allowed getting around the city to be relatively smooth through the upcoming decades. Even now it still does not pose such problems as in other cities; this also applies to the absorbency of parking spaces, which is still significant despite the lack of underground and piled-up garages. Unfortunately, at the same time, albeit to a limited extent, Sovietization of urban space was successful, the most noteworthy of which is the symbol of the Palace of Culture and Science, named after Joseph Stalin.

The achievement of which issues failed?

Warsaw did not become a model city dreamed of by promoters of the ideal of modern movement. Despite the favorable political conditions and central planning and management of reconstruction compromises proved necessary. The thesis was confirmed that the city – a multiple complex organism cannot be created using construction investment methods, even if they are well-planned and consistently implemented. Urban planning of Warsaw does not create a composed whole. It has nice, ugly and bland areas. Main characteristic is the fact that that the most beautiful areas are the pastiches of the past, and the ugly and bland areas are the result of reconstruction. The capital has not been rebuilt by the whole nation. Warsaw's reconstruction was carried out at the expense of other cities, and its future shape was not decided by the nation, but only by the party and government apparatus. The pace of rebuilding was not satisfactory for residents. Most of the planned investments were created with a delay, they were only partially finished or finished with defects resulting from imposed austerity and imposed hurry. The delays caused various tensions, in many cases leading to cancellation of the planned tasks, their functional impoverishment or drastic delay. Integrated socio-economic and spatial planning also failed despite the decreed law. In spite of municipalization of land, the mortgages and their structures have not been regulated to the extent that cadastre could be established in the real estate to facilitate investment activities in the long term. The development was interfered by recurrent political crises, which impacted on the harmonious development of the city. Instead of creating a modern technical and social urban infrastructure, city authorities, in the first period, have embarked on a reconstruction of the entire complex, including housing, jobs, services and leisure. Additionally, the authorities had not taken care of rational external assistance, neither in the form of war reparations, or investments by foreign entities.

What are the promising opportunities for development and regaining of characteristics of Western European city for Warsaw?

It should be assumed that the postwar principle of creating finite and inviolable state of development was over. Contemporary cities take up renovation programs by reconstruction of already existing structures

and not by territorial expansion. In this spirit, we can assume that the planning of Warsaw will be based on the construction of a compact city, but equipped with more green spaces forming continual eco-strings. The study could be started on the possibility of transforming the housing estate built in the downtown conducted in a way that the lost historical urban forms could be restituted. This would certainly require a change in the planning and management of space, effective cooperation with the private sector and the use of urban marketing in promoting the city externally, but also in raising awareness of the public about the necessity for urban renovation in similar direction to other European capitals.

Translated by M. Szczypiorska

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