

# POSTWAR RECOMPOSITION :WARSAW

## ABSTRACT:

The liberation of Warsaw from the yoke, in one hand, of Nazi's occupation and in the other one, of the Soviet allied siege, in the year 1945, entailed a process of rapid recomposition of the city.

The inheritance during years was fulminated in five years causing the social collapse by the urban disidentification of the inhabitants. After the catastrophic destruction of the emblematic monuments and buildings of its historic center, the situation was addressed through three methodologies: historical, renovating and innovative.

Therefore, those urban processes that followed the lines that the memory had drawn for them were used to carry out an involutive and regressive interpretation, in the historical recomposition of fragments, monumental pieces and embers of the ruins, with references to the value of its memory, of its identity, reworking the same historicist discourse.

Under the command of Reconstruction's Office for Warsaw Capital, and forming a multidisciplinary team led by the conservative Jan Zachwatowicz, there were discussions on how to address the reconstruction and reconfiguration of the damaged urban center.

To this end, the intervention showed a green ring around the old urban center, founding the basis for the implantation and integration of the projects bordering the area and its traces, many of them disconnected from the historicist, eclectic and fragmentary drawing of the compact pre-war urban mesh.

Supported by emblematic actions on patrimonial elements and infrastructures, a city was conceived behind the scenes during the Nazi domination, which was later diverted to the influence of a socialist political ideology whose future would mark the relationship between the city center and the peripheral areas.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of the urban Metabolism, it is very welcome to speak about the changes acquired for the growth and development of the city, as well as the processes generated in the same way.

“The word Metabolism induces a biological analogy that comes to substitute the mechanical metaphor of the orthodox modern architecture. He compares ours

buildings and our cities with the energy process of the life: the cycles of

change and the constant regeneration and destruction of the organic textile.

It doesn't talk each other so much of creating forms and styles, provisional declarations of a moment situation, is more than a limit, as of expressing a philosophy and a new way of understanding architecture.

In the oriental sphere, the technology is an extension of the proper one humanity; and, in any case, it must serve to the new transformations. Separating those parts that experience different change processes, one stems certain flexibility before the phenomena of growth, metamorphosis and death, common in the living organisms. With it the human beings are facilitated control of your own habitat; that, for addition or replacement, might adapt himself to its desires or specific circumstances".<sup>i</sup>

The emptiness after the reduction to ashes and ruins of the buildings and main infrastructures encouraged a wish of urban overcoming by architects, urbanist and artists in the city of Warsaw.

The capital of Poland, oppressed and attacked for centuries, already in the west of the Second World war that destroyed completely its heredity, and taking a similar appellant, there might be commented its case as a metabolic process of urban transformation.

The work in singular nodes of intersection and meeting led in this Second Postwar period to raising their inherent process of change, in which they contained, with different perspective, the urban enclaves from which one began to reproduce the new city model, inside the urban mesh.

During the composition of arguments for the new Warsaw, the way realized provided a manuscript transmitted from the diverse methodologies experienced on this period. They ended in a consisting primary structure on which the new city was established.

Could be possible to make understand that mentioned urban processes to confront the projection of the internal gaps generated in the city, after a catastrophe of the nature of the Second World War, accelerated their intrinsic transformation processes.

Its conjunction did finally of this city, "refills" of gaps, a unitary performance in the time, comprising varied oscillating conceptions surrounding from the radical and innovator projects to the historicist, executed in parallel during the Full Quarter understood between 1945 and 1970. With this diversity it was formed, in only a quarter of century, a finished quarter of city, where they were writing the opposite tendencies in contrasts dialogue form.

For it the interventions appeared, founding the base of the future, like integration between the projects and its trace, many of them detached from the historicist, eclectic and fragmentary drawing of the urban mesh of prewar period.

With the appearance of the Office of Reconstruction for Capital<sup>ii</sup> and the stratification in ideologically opposite multidisciplinary teams, a prosperous period inaugurated of projects that ended in the current mesh that configure Warsaw.

## 2 GLOBAL VISION.

In the hierarchic layout framework in which Warsaw was re-formed, they began to arise from the postwar period, (green) public spaces which link to the main lines. It contributed to induce the high integration in the structure of the consolidated nucleus, being part of the system of nets of the city.

Starting in the connection of Warsaw from a few new traces, South North much differentiated as for its project of shape (it removes Marszałkowska was conceived as the avenue for the masses, it implanted and arisen from urban projects like the MDM that its spacial and environment develop were giving it, while Jana Pawla II arose like a bet of road shape, inserted in residential projects) public spaces of new formation that began to integrate in these avenues the existing green spaces, the parks and those growing areas.

In similar way, the existing relation between East and West across the Route of the Heroes and Jerozolimskie, received performances with extensive wooded areas, emphasizing the link of spaces realized in connection of these two road lines along the Vistula.

The work in the scarp turned out to be important from two physical levels, one placed in the low level next to the river. Other where the level jump was taking place, was located in the top of the hill serving as transit towards these hoisted spaces which practised like elements of landscape integration.

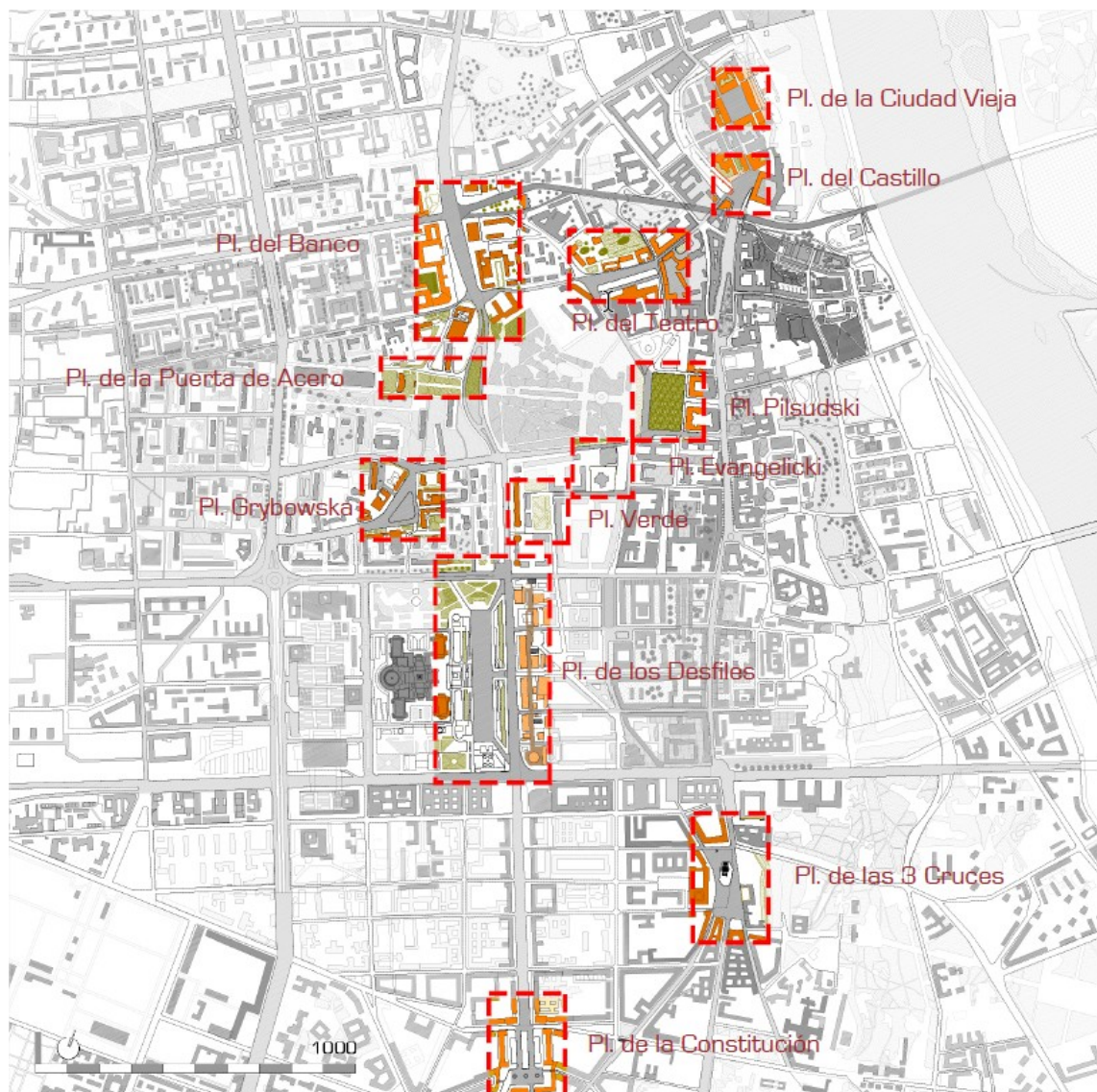


Figure 1. MESH .Global Vision. Authors

### 3 PERIMETRAL LINES. THE SCARP OF THE RIO VISTULA AND ITS GREEN RING

The works of recomposition, in the first moment, did not link its performances near to the river area, the Vistula, cause between other things, for the excessive buildings destruction, although



the acceptable regeneration of this band close to the historical heart of the city permitted the creation of areas for free time tied to the scarp.

Figure 2. Surrounding areas near the Scarp of Vistula. Authors

Little by little the works carried out so much in Stare Miasto as in the district of Mariensztat, they defined the transit towards the environment of the river Vistula. To the North, in the stretch understood from Nowe Miasto, up to the Route of the Heroes, there took place a transitional space linked to the relief of this area, inserting transverse routes of pedestrian character that gave exit towards this area of the river.



Figure 3. Surrounding areas near the Wall.Stare Miasto. The green line. Authors

The proposals developed in the Old City passed completing the wall, which served like green trip from which the approach was taking place to the riverbed of the Vistula. In parallel there had been reorganized the environment of the historical helmet, where from the foreland next to the square of the market a wide look out was located.

Under the square of the Castle, along the tunnel planned at the arrival of the Silesia Bridge to the city, one was employed at a versatile solution and environmental integrated, descending along a green park to the newly Marienstadt district. The ascent towards the square of the Castle was contemplated by stairs and ramps excavated in the same green hill side towards the above mentioned area. Already for the year 1962, an intervention had been foreseen to save the difference in which green spaces were contemplated along of the residential area that finished with the expansion of the city from the bridge Poniatowski.

The project for the renewal of Powisle area, was directed by Adolf Ciborowski and Sigmund Stepinski, between others, contemplating the substantial modification of the left shore of the Vistula, to be able to complete the regeneration of these spaces and integrate them inside the complex.

#### 4 THE HISTORIC WALL.

After the Warsaw Uprising which finished with the of the permanent yoke, in a side, of the Nazi occupation and in the other side, of the Soviet allied siege to be done by the control of the city, the process of reconstruction of the buildings in the most historical area tackled by means of a line based intervention the legacy that the memory and the character identificative was offering them.

There was confronted a vernacular reconstruction, in which from the fragments, monumental pieces and cinders of the ruins, the same preexisting speech was re-prepared. Of another part, the interferences of the team of work of the BOS directed by Josef Sigalin, they raised the line of an evolutionary and progressive speech it appeared to carry out an innovative repairing of the surrounding crown to the wall of the Old City.

Avoiding any of a last traditional epoch the vision of the center was re-formulated decked in recapturing the past but with clear vision centred on the future of the nets, by means of the appropriation of pieces, structures and arguments of the city destroyed to tackle its new urban exposition.

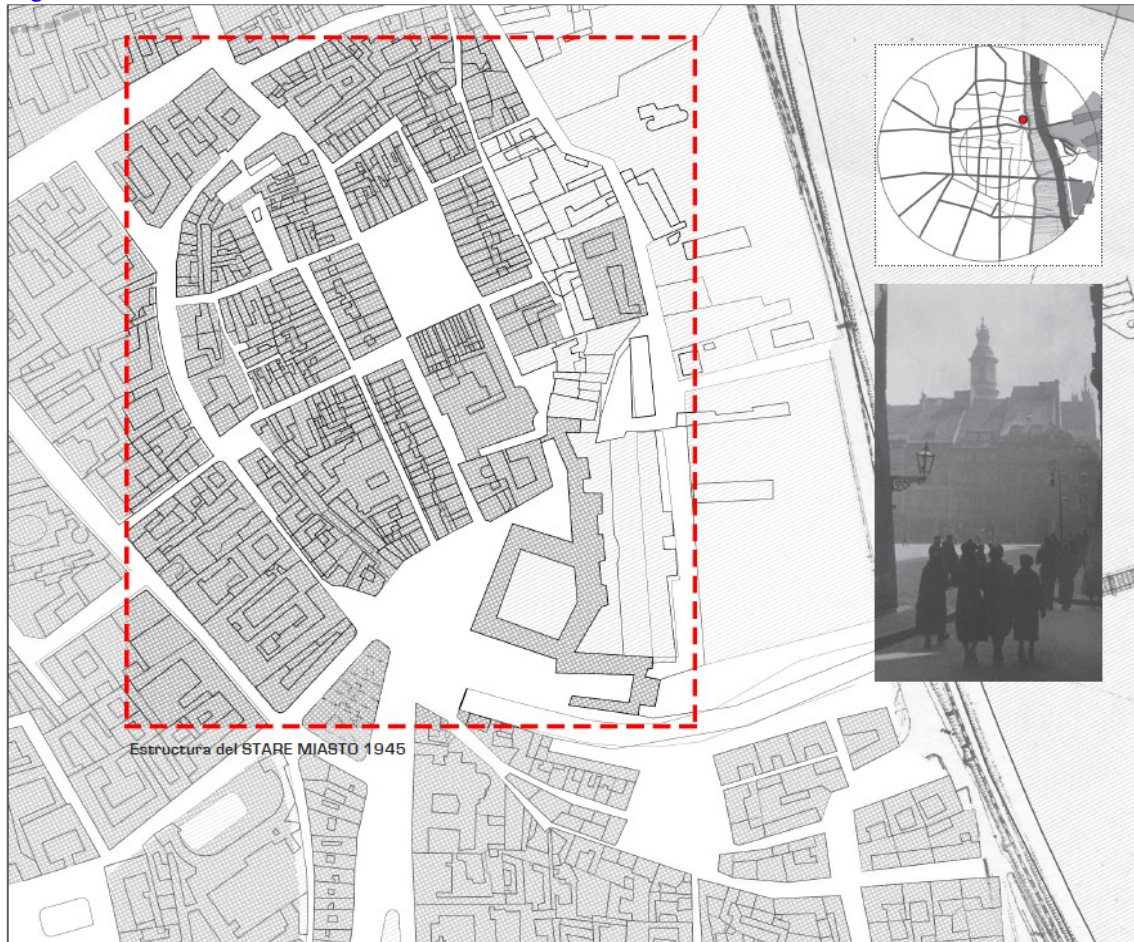
The recognition to the reconstruction works for the center of the Old City of Warsaw came in the year 1980, on having begun to be part of the legacy of the Cultural Heritage of the UNESCO, for the value of the artistic set recovered after the pressing and hard submission suffered by the Polish people to hands of Hitler's army, a destruction programmed meticulously by the German troops, by means of bombings, plundering, fires and continuous sieges up to the extermination of the city.

The destruction period in Warsaw, had always come preceded by big fires from 1431 until 1669 and already in the year 1945 the pretensions were always to reconstruct the heart built with the previous constructive conceptions.

At the end of 1944, as soon as the first teams were established, under the tutelage of the architect Marian Szychalski (the first mayor after the victory), to initiate the evaluation and reconstruction of the ruins provoked by the barbarism Nazi, the Professor Jan Zachwatowicz, began to be employed at newly founded BOS hand to hand with Piotr Bieganski and Stanislaw

Albrecht, looking for the way of conceiving the recovery of the ruinous Old City Center, one of the most long-awaited goals of the citizens of Warsaw in the first postwar period compasses. The differentiated ideological proposals began to hit from the first moment, since the mimetic claimed by the conservative currents and restorers, which was opposed to the unlike progressive guesswork that were ranging from the socialistic band to the modern movement.

Figure 4. Stare Miasto 1945. Authors



The Department of Historical Architecture, it managed to cut itself off towards the line of historical preservation of the Cardinal City Center of Warsaw, headed by already said Zachwatowicz<sup>iii</sup> who was commenting *“The reconstruction of the historical (....) parts was realized in a lot of and different ways, depending on the attitude towards the problems of the leaders, architects, planners, urbanist, and even of the frame of mind of the people in general”*

The team composed principally for students of Architecture, obtained enough information of the experiences in the clandestine laboratories where worked about the city, while works of art were hiding and preserving during the occupation.”

If in its beginnings Bieganski and Jan Zachwatowicz did boasting to maintain the predominant social ideology in the country to direct the urban reconstruction bets with certain modern mood, this case supposed an exception for the grade and form with which the heart of Poland had been attacked, choosing for a reconstruction vernacular of Stare Miasto, with a few values that with the Plan Pabst, the Führer had tried to devastate. For it the politicians of the Polish State, were

that more supported the recovery of the idntitaries references and monuments of the cultural heritage of the city, paying special attention to the recreation as precise as possible of the ornamental features.

The visible break of the built-up areas was capturing this strong annihilation of the cultural emblems, and was encouraging the answer before few historical traces that were still staying in foot after the battle for its liberation the year 1944.



Figure 5. Stare Miasto 1970. The Green Line surrounding the Wall. Authors

There would be the varsovians<sup>iv</sup> inhabitants those who would proceed to "reconstruct" the historical nucleus, from the projects based on pictures and compiled images, hidden and stored during the war, what they were making them feel owners of its city, being the main participants, and recovering the values of the useless ruins, to which the historical helmet of Warsaw was limited.

Although in the beginning, the directors of the BOS, raised the entire destruction of the area understood between Swietojanska and the street Piwna, Zachwatowicz moved forward a proposal based on the integration of the Square of the Market and of the housings on the structural network of services.

The repairing of this part of the city took a historicist appearance as the incessant search in its patrimony of the formal frame: there would be restored the reproductions of the previous

models, inside a strict acceptance of the parameters in which the actions of modernization were promoted. The above mentioned intervention, of completely conservative mood, recovered faithfully the practical totality of its fronts, in the most recent image, being completed simultaneously with a similar conception for its monumental environment, under the baton of the Professor Zachwatowicz.

The project of urban repairing began for recovering the ancient central square, of rectangular geometry. From her one arranged an orthogonal network of alleys closed towards the old walls seeing the light across a jumble of exclusive walls of housing. With that it became possible to absorb in the peripheral egg-shaped ring the ancient touches contenedoras of the wall. Of effective and rapid form, it originated in the same process, the restructuring and the reconstruction. Following the established parameteres in the different fronts, finished off the residential needs, and the touch of incoherent units was cleaned desestructuradas, homogenizing the patios of the apples, reorganizing the surrounding peripheral space for a pedestrian trip which tie with the walls granted a big artistic and valuable potential to the intervention in the whole area, integrating it in the public network of green and social spaces of Warsaw.

The urban reconstruction of the historical center saneó the apples, granting him a spatial homogeneity, with the creation of these proper patios of apple of a historical center of compact city, while its fronts re-behaved for the way of the visual recovery of its previous image, where even in some cases, the "fortune" existed of maintaining certain alive elements. In her one was trying to recover the urban extract of the past recalling with the sugerentes idyllic visions of Canaletto<sup>v</sup> the urban composition, the typology and existing esthetic models in the previous period.



Figure 6. The Green Line surrounding the Wall. Interior Passage Authors

The surrounding buildings, like the Real Castle or the urban empties in the shape of the Square Zamkowy were reached in parallel, with a faithful language in its reconstruction, to the draws and writings that were showing its character, traditional and historical.

Considering the guessed right one to proceed with which Stare Miasto materialized, for the functional regeneration of Warsaw, the performances in the rest of cultural emblems of its environment allowed to take for the apathy of the eclectic domination.



Hence the frequent insults came with the team of Josef Sigalin, the director of the team BOS in this moment, with an ideology originated from the socialistic tendencies opposed to the instigating line of a maintenance at any cost of the “Letter of the Restauro”.

The models of housing raised in the historical center, tried to adapt themselves to the new urban situation, forming an interior network of semiprivate spaces capable of being consistent with the evolution experienced in this new epoch, to guarantee a suitable standard of life, which answer to the healthiness that was sufficiently suitable to revitalize this central area.

Nevertheless, the repairing of the interior helmet in this point of the city fitted practically to the almost literal definition of the word “reconstruction“. The teacher Jan Zachwatowicz, with the conservative's charge of the Patrimony (joined to its group of architects that was supporting a scientific reconstruction based on the existing papers), with a conservative mood, it faced openly the Soviet eclecticism, foreign to the Polish tradition, which did not see the need to reconstruct the ruins. Finally, like bad minor, the authorities allowed to create the Stare Miasto as a socialistic housing quarter, somewhere near 1949. This maneuver took place during the period from 1947 to 1953.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The central and historic core of the old town of Warsaw, was concentrated for centuries environment to the market square, being the image of most relevant historical events Fund, political speeches and public executions.

Initially structured with the building around the main market square, as expression of the system and social change, political forum, a venue and everyday life giving way to the Town Hall, until the demolition of the same. Planner announcements of the medieval market square, would not be spatially integrated with the rest of the city, until the demolition of the building in the year 1857. In the interwar years, the functioning of the market in the square, sized for a next and a residential zone, urban scale remained virtually unchanged until 1944.

His image identity devastated during the Warsaw Uprising by the nazi army, formalized a fast reconstruction process evaluated by the team of the BOS. Despite the eclectic and vernacular, from the year 1947 resumed studies by the Office of historic preservation; based on the work done by the school of architecture with the professor Zachwatowicz, sought integration within the structural plan of the metropolis of the old town.

The wall, shown as outer belt, was transformed into a pedestrian green line orchestrated as part of green areas and relaxation linked to the Vistula, leaving a hallmark of the original location of the same, close up to trace the surrounding Centre in your landing on the escarpment, about raising her gaze towards the river. For this process, it was necessary to restructure the added that emerged in a disorderly manner and without planning in the environment of that area, specifying the regularisation of the area ahead of time. The selective reconstruction adapted to

the contemporary life of socialist society, was expressed in the literal reinterpretations of the facades and the release of space for lighting and ventilation of their apples, homogenizing the courtyards, and introducing small indoor green areas.

The marks of the legacy of centuries served to reconstitute the historical trace in the form but with content mainly according to their time, made that was recognized and award after the designation by UNESCO in 1980 as heritage. The valuation of the intervention can be defined as a place where the structure returns to his roots in shape and site, playing the value of the collective memory of the Polish people, giving suitable link with its past capacity.

Its transformation, with a performance of asset recovery was addressed as shown in the generation of a green line able to restructure the densified old town with a view to building pleasant and livable spaces can serve as exemplary of integration of historical centers with sustainable proposals.

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i (Aumkolk, Kämmerer, & Niemczyk, 2010)

ii (Biuro Ostolice Spolecznie) The reconstruction office was employed at different fields registering the emergent multidisciplinarity in the historical, town-planning field, building constructions, divided in work features teams

iii (Zachwatowicz, Comentarios, 1958)

iv The paintings of Canaletto as well as the drawings of the School of Architecture and the architects who worked in secret in the Office of Planning in the period of War made it possible to specify the restorative intervention within the Stare Miasto based on those documents.

v (López, J.M., Gomez, J.C. & Moreno, F.,2018)