It has been long acknowledged that the years 1939-1944 were the time of strenuous efforts of architects, art historians and conservation officers. However, this period remains to be overlooked in the chronology of the history of architecture. Thus, the ideological continuum is being broken, and the significance of both the projects and the theoretical works of the time escapes our notice. However, the feeling of transience triggered by the wartime reality and awaiting the end of the war encouraged people to make plans for the future, plans that at times took shape of architectural-urban planning fantasy. Due to wartime destruction the subject of reconstruction was most urgent. From the onset, however, it was viewed as an opportunity to ameliorate the urban tissue.

In occupied Warsaw, architects were active in both utter conspiracy and institutions officially in operation but in fact acting as a cover for underground activities. The risk was high, especially that involvement in planning and making projects for Warsaw reconstruction was treated by the Germans as an offence. The cooperation between experts and municipal officials was key in the process. Jan Pohorski, the Vice-Mayor of Warsaw, in particular supported the initiative to work on the post-war urban planning. Aside from

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1 Jan Pohorski was Vice-Mayor of Warsaw until March 1940, when he was arrested and executed in Palmiry.
the City Planning Department, which functioned officially within municipal structures, individual experts as well as groups of experts organized on the basis of external assignments engaged in the process. That is how the The Architecture and Urban Planning Workshop (PAU – Pracownia Architektoniczno-Urbanistyczna) was established in 1940 as part of the Communal Building Corporation. The official goal of the Studio, managed by Szymon Syrkus (and, following his arrest, by Helena Syrkus and Roman Piotrowski), was preparing technical documentation and supervision over the process of rebuilding the Warsaw Housing Cooperative (WSM – Warszawska Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniowa) estate in Rakowiec and the houses of the Workers’ Estates Association (TOR – Towarzystwo Osiedli Robotniczych) in Koło. Simultaneous work on a far larger scale was carried out on the ‘Warsaw of the Future’ concept – developing the northern residential quarters, the western district (light industry, food industry and warehouses) as well as regional studies.

The Architects-Urban Designers Studio was by no means the only studio that attracted pre-war Warsaw architectural milieu. In 1939, the Urban Planning Experts Commission (KRU – Komisja Rzeczoznawców Urbanistycznych) was founded as an auxiliary body of the Municipal Office. The Syrkus Studio was a typical architectural office whereas the Commission served mainly as a consulting organ with regard to the plans for the City of Warsaw drawn at the City Planning Department by the team led by engineer Stanisław Różański. During nearly five years of its operation, the Commission produced a text titled Opinia o planach miasta Warszawy opracowanych w Zarządzie Miejskim (Opinion on the plans for the City of Warsaw prepared at the Municipal Office), published in 1941 as a typescript in just over a dozen copies. The Commission also dealt with projects commissioned au courant by the Municipal Office.

**The State of research and primary sources**

Despite the significant impact of the Urban Planning Experts Commission theoretical texts which encompassed the broad area of urban planning in Warsaw, the Commission output has not yet been collected and published.

Immediately after the war, the Commission members readily spoke about their work during the occupation. The first post-war recollection of the Commission’s activity was a lecture delivered by Lech Niemojewski at the architects’ convention in Lublin on 5 November 1944. In the years of reconstruction, despite the fact that intellectual output of the Commission and the work of its individual members were by all means being used, the memory of its

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achievements was gradually fading away. It was not until the 1980s that, owing to the efforts of Jan Zachwatowicz, the last living member of the Commission at the time, the most important work of the Commission was published: *Opinia o planach miasta Warszawy opracowanych w Zarządzie Miejskim* (Opinion on the plans for the City of Warsaw prepared at the Municipal Office)*⁵*, followed one year later by *Uwagi Wydziału Planowania Miasta do Opinii* (Remarks of the City Planning Department on the Opinion)*⁶*. Source materials were preceded by Zachwatowicz’s reminiscences pertaining to the Commission’s operations.

In recent years, Małgorzata Popiołek was the only person to research the Commission’s output. In her published Master thesis titled *Powojenna odbudowa ulicy Nowy Świat w Warszawie* (The Post-War Reconstruction of Nowy Świat Street in Warsaw)*⁷* the author dedicated an entire chapter to the works carried out during the occupation. However, due to the area of her research devoted to a very specific space within the city, the report on the Commission's work was limited to Nowy Świat Street. Therefore, we still lack a comprehensive study on the works of the Urban Planning Experts Commission – a detailed account of the content of *Opinia* and of other aspects of the Commission’s activity.

Research on the Commission’s output is rendered difficult by the lack of primary sources. The documentation of the Municipal Office and the administrative Mayor of Warsaw, scarcely preserved, does not allow us to chronologically reconstruct the Commission's work. Fortunately, the legacy of its individual members shed light on its activity. The materials of architect Lech Niemojewski and economist Michał Kaczorowski, kept at the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences, contain fragments of studies and documents from the war years. Original copies of *Opinia* and *Uwagi* are among Michał Kaczorowski's materials as well as in the State Archive in Warsaw, donated by Jan Zachwatowicz.

**Founding of the Commission and its members**

Following the surrender of Warsaw on 28 September 1939, professors of the Warsaw Polytechnic issued a resolution in which they offered to cooperate

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with Stefan Starzyński, the Mayor of Warsaw at the time. Representatives of the Association of Polish Architects and The Society of Polish Urban Planners came up with a similar idea. Professor Lech Niemojewski presented the offer to the Mayor shortly before the Mayor’s arrest. Starzyński accepted the offer and assigned Niemojewski with setting up groundwork for cooperation together with the director of the Planning Bureau, engineer Stanisław Różański. New advisory body – the Urban Planning Experts Commission – was formally established by the administrative Mayor of Warsaw Julian Kulski on 13 December 1939. The Commission was an adjudicating body with regard to the reconstruction of Warsaw, the task assigned to the Municipal Urban Planning Bureau. The Commission’s work was of civic nature and as such did not entail any kind of emolument. The Commission members, in cooperation with the employees of the Warsaw Polytechnic, prepared a large number of studies which encroached on the competence of the depleted municipal design offices. As Niemojewski reminisced:

These projects notwithstanding, the Experts Commission’s task was to prepare an organizational project for the future (post-war) construction management in the Capital City and the scope of its operation. As a result of this work, an official document was produced by the Commission which encompassed the totality of architectural issues pertaining to reconstruction and rearrangement of the city centre, the so-called „Stanisławowska Warsaw”. The document, together with the replica of the Planning Department, was to serve as an organizational policy of the Building Organs of the post-war Warsaw⁸.

Until today, the Commission legacy is a most vital testimony to the direction of the works on the reconstruction of Warsaw. It is worth noting that the Warsaw Municipal Office has had a long tradition of founding commissions made up of experts expected to offer advice to the municipal authorities. During the occupation, the Experts Commission was also in operation; it comprised members who had been high in the state administration structures: Jan Strzelecki (director of the Association of the Workers’ Estates), Stanisław Podwiński (Director of the Self-Government Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs) and Marceli Porowski (Director of the Union of Polish Cities). Formally, the Commission’s task was to provide opinion on the preliminary municipal budget. In reality, it served as a body of social control, a surrogate of the City Council Commission⁹. The Municipal Commission for the Protection of Monuments was also a social organ, led by Stanisław Lorentz, Director of the National Museum¹⁰.

⁸ L. Niemojewski, Świat architektoniczny Warszawy..., p. 15.
⁹ J. Kulski, Zarząd Miejski Warszawy..., p. 103.
¹⁰ M. Popiołek, Powojenna odbudowa ulicy..., p. 35.
The Urban Planning Experts Commission comprised well-known architects: Romuald Gutt, Jan Zachwatowicz, Bohdan Pniewski, Michał Kostanek, Lech Niemojewski; urban planners: Jan Chmielewski, Tadeusz Tołwiński, Adam Kuncewicz, Adam Paprocki, and economist Michał Kaczerowski. In 1943, art historian Michał Walicki and urban planner Stanisław Filipkowski joined the team.

The Germans were indifferent towards the work carried out by the Commission, despite the fact that its meetings were held at Mayor Kulski’s office, at the Jablonowskis Palace or at the office of the head of the Planning Department, right in front of the occupying authorities. The Commission’s members, being municipal officials, received identity cards sealed with the Nazi eagle (pic. no. 1), which was supposed to protect in case of being caught in a roundup. Alas, the ID card did not protect Adam Paprocki, who was arrested in 1940 and subsequently murdered at the concentration camp in Gusen. The German administration’s indifference towards the Commission activity could be partially justified by being engaged in the preparation of their own projects under the name Warschau die neue deutsche Stadt, presented to Hans Frank by president Oskar Dengel as early as 194011.

The professional experience of the Commission’s members exerted a fundamental impact on the direction of its work. The members included architects and urban planners as well as theoreticians. They could all boast vast portfolios of design projects or theoretical work dedicated to spatial planning or urban regulations. Tadeusz Tołwiński, an eminent urban planner and theoretician, one of the chief authors of the regulation plan for the Great Warsaw of 1916, author of the bible of sorts within the field of urban planning titled Budowa miasta w przeszłości (Building a City in the Past) and Budowa miasta współczesnego (Building a Contemporary City), first published in the 1930s12. During the occupation, he ran the Building Construction Faculty (Institut für Bautechnik) located on Koszykowa Street and serving as a cloak for the conspiratorial Department of Architecture at the Warsaw Polytechnic. The Faculty formally employed Lech Niemojewski, Jan Zachwatowicz and Piotr Biegański; its primary task was to prepare technical-engineering studies for the Municipal Urban Planning Department. It was here that the Urban Planning Experts Commission’s works were carried out, with the support of students. Members of the Faculty simultaneously worked for the conspiratorial Department of Architecture run by Professor Stefan Bryła and, after the Professor had been shot dead, by Tadeusz Tołwiński. An exceptionally intensive work at the Department of Architecture resulted in 25 master degrees, 12

11 The project was prepared by urban planners from Würzburg, under the leadership of Hubert Gross. See: N. Gutschow, B. Klain, Zagłada i utopia. Urbanistyka Warszawy w latach 1939–1945, Warsaw 1995, pp. 22–25.

doctoral and 13 post-doctoral degrees awarded, i.e. Piotr Biegański’s doctoral thesis titled *Antonio Corazzi na tle epoki (Antonio Corazzi and his era)* and, in the field of urban planning, Kazimierz Weichert’s thesis titled *Miasteczko polskie jako zagadnienie urbanistyczne (Polish town as an urban planning issue)*. The State Technical Academy (Höhere Fachschule für Bauwesen), established in 1942, was yet another officially functioning educational institution. It was run by Albert Güttünger, a German Professor. It was a two-year semi-academy. There was no faculty of architecture there, just a building construction faculty.

Tołwiński’s immense knowledge of urban planning was taken advantage of by the Polish Government in Exile. Following setting up the Government Delegation for Poland in 1940, Tołwiński became the head of the Division of Building the Cities which was a section of the Public Works and Reconstruction Department. The Division’s task was to establish guidelines for developing cities, to assess wartime destruction and to prepare an inventory of listed historic buildings for future reconstruction. A project for Warsaw reconstruction was also prepared; it was sketched as an enterprise financed from a special credit and Polish emigree funds and was envisaged to last for many years.

The remaining members of the Commission were also distinguished experts in the field who were active in many different areas of activity in occupied Warsaw. From the very onset of the Commission, Lech Niemojewski served as its vice-Chairman. He was a professor at the Warsaw Polytechnic, author of a rich body of work on the topic of architectural history and theory, specialist on the Stanisławowska era, author of a monograph on the Royal Łazienki complex and a series of articles on the architecture and urban planning of Warsaw. Prior to the war Niemojewski, being a member of numerous commissions, pronounced opinions on architectural competitions for Warsaw. Another architect-theoretician who was among the experts was Michał Kostanecki who had gained his professional experience in the United States. He dealt mainly with contemporary architecture and coined the term „half-modernism”, which referred to the architecture of the first quarter of the 20th century, as well as the 1930s.

Jan Zachwatowicz, the Commission’s secretary, was most involved in the issue of protection of historic monuments. As an employee of the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw Polytechnic, he conducted extensive research into the history of architecture. In 1938, together with Stanisław Hempel, he developed and realised the unveiling of Warsaw city walls. A gothic bridge over Nowomiejska Street connecting the street with the Barbican, as well as...
part of the Barbican itself were unveiled at the time. These were the first re-
construction works within the city, described by Zachwatowicz as follows:
„In these particular works one can discern our intention of restoring historic
monuments to their former shape, as well as preservation of those mono-
ments with all technical means available”16.

Jan Chmielewski was the „liaison” between the activities of the Polish Acad-
emy of Sciences and the Urban Planning Experts Commission in the area of
urban planning. He was a pioneer of regional planning, since 1930 head of
division at the Warsaw Regional Planning Bureau, co-author – with Szymon
Syrkus – of the work Warszawa funkcjonalna (Functional Warsaw)17, the first
project for the capital city based on the guidelines indicated in the Athens
Charter and as such taking into consideration the natural environment as
functionally connected with the city, public transportation, distribution of
productive forces and settlement network. Throughout the war, Chmielewski
pursued his studies on the Warsaw Municipal Complex, as well as the fu-
ture East-West route18.

Amongst the members of the Urban Planning Experts Commission were
Romuald Gutt and Bohdan Pniewski - active architects, authors of large scale
urban projects, the latter also designer of the Temple of Divine Providence as
well as the final version of the Marshall Piłsudski Quarter. Urban planners
who were members of the Commission could also boast a high volume of re-
alised projects. Stanisław Filipkowski, who joined the Commission in 1943,
was co-author of Plan ogólnego zabudowania m.st. Warszawy (Plan for the gen-
eral development of the Capital City of Warsaw) from 1931. Adam Paprocki, on
the other hand, specialized in projects devoted to urban regulation and de-
velopment. Among others, he is the author of plans for Ciechocinek, Sarny,
Radomsko, Końskie, Otwock, Świder, Piastów19 and – together with Adam
Kuncewicz – Chełm20.

Finally, it is worth paying attention to Michał Kaczorowski, a trained
economist and expert urban planner, engaged in the establishment of the
Association of the Workers’ Estates, vice-president of the Warsaw Regional
Planning Commission. In the years 1945-49, Kaczorowski was the minister
for the state restoration and chairman of the Central Urban Planning Office21.

The most vital task of the Commission was a verdict on the General Plan
for Development of the Capital City of Warsaw (Ogólny plan zabudowania m.st.
Warszawy), prepared in the years 1937-1938 at the offices of the General Plan

17 J. Chmielewski, S. Syrkus, Warszawa funkcjonalna: przyczynek do urbanizacji regionu warszawskiego,
Warsaw 2013.
18 A. Kotarbiński, Jan Chmielewski – sylwetka twórcy i zarys działalności, [in:] Początki planowania prze-
15, p. 36.
20 K. Sasaki, „Planowanie miast w Polsce w okresie powojennym”, Architektura i Budownictwo, 1925/26,
no. 6, p. 18.
of the City Planning Division at the Municipal Office, headed by Marian Spychalski. The verdict's content was developed in the course of 67 meetings held between 13 December 1939 and 31 March 1941. The resultant text was an opinion, therefore it was mostly an assessment and further suggestions pertaining to works conducted by the Planning Department. The final version of the expanded material which covered a much broader area, including specific issues pertaining to further development and transformation of the City of Warsaw. The analyses were carried out on various levels – from the factors of historic development to the question of art in the urban space. The entire content was divided into six subject areas, each area assigned to a separate team of several people. Studies prepared by the teams were presented in the form of papers during the Commission meetings. The division of work reflected the interests and direction of research conducted by the Commission members:

I. The economic factor in the process of reconstruction of Warsaw
   1. Economic background of the city development prior to the war
   2. Economic consequences of the war:
      a. for the city as a whole
      b. for the economy of the Municipal Office
   3. Impact of the forseen economic conditions on the targets of the urban planning project for Stanisławowska Warsaw
   4. Drafting a programme for the next 3-5 years and further
   5. Legal and administrative proposals

Speakers: Michał Kaczorowski, Michał Kostanecki, Adam Kuncewicz, Bohdan Pniewski

II. Regional plan and its impact on the construction of Stanisławowska Warsaw
   1. Selection and division of grounds into those for building purposes and other
   2. Landscape
   3. Main transportation routes in the region and in the peripheries

Speakers: Jan Chmielewski, Romuals Gutt, Michał Kostanecki, Adam Paprocki

III. Transportation layout for Stanisławowska Warsaw
   1. Transportation needs stemming from the city development in the recent years
   2. Transportation needs in the future
   3. Setting up plans for the immediate future and further on the basis of the actual measures of municipal economy

Speakers: Jan Chmielewski, Adam Paprocki

22 The plan was confirmed by the Provisional Board of the City Council on 25 June 1938; P.E. Weszpiński, „Plan miasta stołecznego Warszawy Książnicy-Atlas z 1939 roku”, [in:] Plan Warszawy 1939: Plan miasta stołecznego Warszawy, Warsaw 2015, p. 118.
IV. The city's artistic and historic nature
   1. Mapping out squares, streets and historic quarters of the city
   2. Impact of the foregoing artistic development of the city on the scale and form of the
      new quarters within the boundaries of Stanisławska Warsaw
Speakers: Romuald Gutt, Lech Niemojewski, Jan Zachwatowicz

V. Residential house, interior of a block of flats, green areas
   1. Rebuilding houses which had been destroyed, their function (apartments, shops, offices etc.)
   2. Transformation of blocks of apartments
   3. Creating green areas
Speakers: Jan Chmielewski, Romuald Gutt, Michał Kostanecki, Adam Kuncewicz, Adam Paprocki, Jan Zachwatowicz, Stanisław Tołwiński

VI. Public buildings (state, self-government, social, office etc.)
   1. Planned layout of the buildings, their visual composition within the boundaries of Stanisławska Warsaw
   2. References to historic centres
   3. Creating the scale and architectural nature of the newly planned complexes
Speakers: Lech Niemojewski, Bohdan Pniewski

Stanisławska Warsaw

One of the key terms used by the Commission was 'Warszawa Stanisławowska' ('Stanisławska Warsaw'). The term referred to the historic quarter delineated by: „on the north - the Wisła River, via Warszawa Gdańska Railway Station to Okopowa and Twarowa Streets, Lindley’s Filters, Polna Street, the south border of the Royal Łazienki and further towards the Wisła River.”

The boundaries were defined by the Lubomirski Ramparts from 1770 (pic. 2). Despite the fact that the Commission was engaged in determining further course of works in Warsaw – taking into account economic factors, mechanisms by which the city operated and the city development - its main point of reference was the historic area of Stanisławowska Warsaw. The Commission looked at the city in its wider context; all the changes under discussion, however, were considered in relation to their impact on the historic quarter. It is worth noting that the work simultaneously carried out by the Architects-Urban Designers Studio pertained to new districts located beyond the historic quarter. Thus, works of both teams complemented each other, providing a comprehensive view of what direction the transformation of Warsaw should take, even if they have not always been considered as a whole.
Focusing on Warsaw in its 1770 boundaries was a result of research conducted in the early 20th century. That is when the Stanisław August style as a separate artistic era emerged. However, already in the early 19th century it was noted that art and good artistic taste were revived at the times of the King Stanisław August, contrasting good antique models introduced at the time with the Saxon art and imitation of French art (mainly Rococo). Throughout the 19th century the political climate in Warsaw acted as a hindrance for conducting research. Therefore, the first detailed studies on art during the reign of Stanisław August come from the period immediately preceding World War I. Cutting edge research based on materials from Sankt Petersburg was made public in 1914 by Władysław Tatarkiewicz, who also abstracted the Stanisław August style in reference to the art in Royal Łazienki and interiors of the Royal Castle.

The concept of the Stanisław August style was developed and established – by justifying its application – Alfred Lauterbach in his book titled Styl Stanisława Augusta. Klasycyzm warszawski wieku XVIII (The Stanisław August Style. Warsaw Classicism of the 18th Century). The author focused on the role of royal patronage and the research into art at a royal court. Already in the interwar period the newly proposed style was criticised by virtue of the complexity of the notion of Classicism. The name was applicable to merely a small segment of classicist architecture and ignored everything that had been constructed outside of Warsaw. Terminological debates notwithstanding, the classicist era became one of the most vital subjects of research of art historians and architects in the interwar period. It was in keeping with the politics of referring to the period of independence, autonomy and glory of Polish culture. Ideological affinity could also be discerned in the manor house style popular at the time and the Stanisław August style. Both styles were an attempt at demonstrating a manifestation of Polish artistic distinctiveness of sorts, seeking „the vernacular”; bearing the stamp of sentimentality, they led to mythologising the phenomena they described. In the interwar period, the need to legitimise the history of the Polish nation – ideologically and politically as well as culturally – was indeed very strong. To quote Lauterbach: „I wanted to [...] draw the attention to architectural forms prevalent in Poland just before its fall and at the time the restored state was being built again [...]”.

The architecture of the „stanisławowski” period and of the Congress Poland was juxtaposed with the architectural chaos during the Partitions. In the book

26 Abstracting a new artistic era was a thoroughly artificial measure, with no solid grounds in the history of art.
31 Quoted from: T. Jaroszewski, Od klasycyzmu do nowoczesności..., p. 42.
titled *Piękno Warszawy* (*The Beauty of Warsaw*), Stefan Starzyński wrote in the introduction:

[...] our capital city’s centre developed at the time of captivity and the urban planning chaos was supported by the Partitions authorities. Hence the banality of forms of the eclectic architecture of the second half of the 19th century, hence the lack of perspectives or ruining them with the disharmony of adjacent buildings, factory chimneys sticking out in the central quarters, hence ruining the former richness of Warsaw’s greenery, rearrangement of squares etc.\(^{32}\)

The term „Warszawa Stanisławowska” (Stanisławowska Warsaw), extended to the historic quarter within the 18th century city borders, was in fact a continuation of the creation of the Stanisław August style. It was an ideal spatial being, as the classicist architecture did not prevail in the designated area. The key role in the coined term was not so much specific buildings but rather a larger section of the urban tissue; it was supposed to testify to the character of the city and its historic urban planning targets and was a sign of the breakthrough in thinking about a city. It should be noted, however, that already in the second half of the 1930s, urban planning was perceived - for propaganda purposes - as an illustration of the nation’s history: „[...] Warsaw reflects social development of the nation and a thorough explanation and presentation of its urban planning palimpsest may serve as a perfect motif for our foreign propaganda."\(^{33}\) It was assumed that the urban development of historic Warsaw was strongly influenced by the Saxon Warsaw with its axis of the Saxon Palace and the Ujazdowski Castle as well as Warsaw of Stanisław August which produced an urban plan for Warsaw enclosed by the turnpikes. As for the artistic value, classicism was the ultimate precious element in the urban development; the subsequent positive examples were summoned by the politics of the 1930s, the majority, however, remained in the sphere of planning.

Interest in classicism demonstrated by architects from the interwar period could be interpreted from the modernist perspective. Modernism led to re-evaluation of historiographic awareness – according to one of the theories, cognition was possible only through avant-garde. Starting off from the avant-garde seemed the only way to understand the history of art\(^{34}\). Throughout the ages, people frequently reverted to the classicist forms; however, it was not until looking at classicism through the modernist lense that the synthesis of this idea was created. An opposition towards historicism, eclectism and secession, increasing since the late 19th century, led to the birth of an entirely new theory of art. Paradoxically, the proclaimed break from tradition did not entail rejecting the output of the aniquity – building of a new order was per-

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33 ibid., p. 16
Le Corbusier’s *Vers une architecture* (Towards a New Architecture) offers numerous references to antiquity, studies of Greek buildings such as Parthenon, Propylaia or the Acropolis as an urban proposal. Le Corbusier looked for primeval patterns and proportions in the antique tradition. He wrote: „We need to strive to set the standards which will allow us to address the issue of excellence. Parthenon is a product of selection applied to a standard.”

He was in awe over the Acropolis plan, designed with the aim of “extensive vista: the axes follow the valley, false straight angles being the work of a genius film director. […] The striking variety of plans notwithstanding, all buildings create a coherent whole.” In the chapter titled “Pure creation of the mind”, he analysed the poignancy – emotions, or perhaps even the level of spirituality, that may be stirred by architecture, especially by the architecture of Athens.

Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud dubbed the new style of contemporary architecture as “unhistorical classicism”. The parallel studies on the antiquity and the contemporary fruit of the age of technique sought the common denominator – all-time rules. As Szymon Syrkus wrote upon his return from the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (Congrès internationaux d’architecture modern - CIAM): “[…] the pilgrimage to Greece confirmed our opinion on the RULES of Greek architecture – it is them, rather than its EXTERNAL FORMS, that should serve as guidelines for the new building strategy […].”

The classic field of architectural theory was related to a system of rules and proportions which constituted a consonance of available, recognizable and repetitive forms. Such a manner of interpreting classicism is also included in the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission’s *Opinia*: “It is all about the classic forms, the classic rule, the spirit of classicism, order, logic and peace, balance – rather than a classicist motif, understood in a run-of-the-mill fashion and applied indiscriminately.” Thus, we speak of classicism which steps beyond history in order to acquire features usable for buildings of each historical era, of the logic of forms, proportions and construction. According to the philosophy of modernism, the world is constructed on objective and a-historical rules which are easily recognisable by a man as a rational subject. Science is a road to recognition, as it provides objective knowledge – therefore, progress was connected to a cult of the mind. In such rationally constructed vision of the world, the order was a paramount category, sought after in architecture and urban planning. The order could be analysed on
various levels: a functional level, an aesthetical level and a social level – and all that in line with conviction that a modern world can and should be built. A belief in the possibility of changing the world into a better place is particularly visible in the fight against the “malign” contemporary city. The attempts at reform, in process since the beginning of the 20th century, were also made in the cityscape of Warsaw.

The problem of urban aesthetics and hygiene

There is no other city in Europe, comparable in size and population, which could possibly rival Warsaw in neglecting the issues of zoning, not taking advantage of possibilities, lack of perspectives, forfeiting and uglifying piazzas, nooks, gardens, lack of monuments, fountains, ponds, benches, monumental stairs, arches, masts, candlesticks and so forth.41

The intensive urban development which took place in the 19th century led to a spatial crisis of large cities, not at all ready for the demographic explosion. Warsaw, similarly to other metropolises, was struggling with inadequacy of the urban tissue when faced with the industrial and civilizational progress. Warsaw’s development in the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century as a governorate city within the Russian Empire was subordinate to the restrictive policies of the partitioning power. Erecting the Fortress of Warsaw as well as a ban on constructing buildings within the fortification zone and the Citadel esplanade was a resultant of this situation.

Urban explosion in the years 1864-1914 resulted in the construction of profitable tenement buildings. In a city devoid of substantial involvement of state authorities and of municipal initiative, urban development was dependent on private interest. In Warsaw, limited by the fortification zone, all the investment energy was focused in the city centre, which in turn led to extreme density of population at places. Simultaneously, there was a stark contrast between the city centre - dotted with barrack-type buildings but still offering minimal adequate sanitary conditions – and the peripheries and city outskirts. This “disadvantageous and abnormal” development was statistically described and emphasized for the very first time in the first volume of Rezultat spisu nieruchomości i mieszkań Wielkiej Warszawy 1919 roku (The Effect of the Real Estate and Apartment Census of the Great Warsaw of 1919).42 It was Alfred Lauterbach, however, who first addressed the problems of Warsaw in his 1915 publication titled Potrzeby estetyczne Warszawy (The Aesthetic Requirements of Warsaw). The criticism of urban pathologies, amongst them: the anarchy of “pseudo-individual ideas”, buildings with “arrogant and mindless façades”, dense, tall housing which creates “dark, stifling and humid gorge”, narrow plots developed towards inner courtyards, creating successive annex-

42 P. Martyn, Przedwojenny układ zabudowy Śródmieścia Warszawy w świetle rezultatów spisu nieruchomości i mieszkań z 1919 roku, Warsaw 1999, pp. 45–47.
es and small enclosed courtyards - led to preparing reformatory programme of battle for the urban aesthetics:

In order to improve Warsaw aesthetically in a rational way the following is required: 1) passing a new building law, 2) setting up art commission for urban affairs, 3) plan for Great Warsaw and regulating the city centre with division into building zones, 4) architectural revision of squares and streets, 5) arranging municipal gardens, 6) making the city attractive with monumental graphic art, 7) making the urban look more Polish.43

The idea of ‘sanation of the urban space’, i.e. healing through preparing a plan of regulating housing development, improving the existing buildings and making them comply with the newly set guidelines, as well as introducing greenery into the cityscape was the basis of further operation. It is worth noting that, within the borders of the former Polish Commonwealth, Warsaw was the city in which the campaign for the sanation process was launched relatively late. The architectural milieu of Lviv was especially active in debates pertaining to the issue of urban regulations – it had proposed the topic of “sanation of the cities” to the Polytechnic Society already in 1894. From the 1890s onwards, Polish and foreign articles on the subject of rearrangement of cities and their streets were published in Czasopismo Techniczne (Technical Magazine).44 The growing awareness in the necessity to protect historical monuments fostered development of studies on the Warsaw cityscape: documenting the existing street grid and historic buildings. The idea of ‘healing’ the urban space thus combined the modernist idea of reorganizing a city with the need to protect its historic urban tissue. All these ideas are included in the text of Opinia.

Within the boundaries of Stanisławowska Warsaw, the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission distinguished four categories of streets and squares, depending on their historic value. Each category was fitted with special conditions which created local guidelines for location and housing, i.a. building frontages, front façade outlines, architectural character, level and offset of the axes of openings, as well as building techniques and material. The lower the category, the less restrictive rules applied. Aside from the aforementioned four categories, there was a fifth one, pertaining to single architectural objects and complexes located beyond the historic quarter. Not merely buildings, but also their surroundings were to be granted protection; the existing buildings in need of conversion were rebuilt and the newly designed buildings had to be in keeping with the existing ones. According to the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission, the basis for protection should be the aesthetic character of the city - significant artistically, historically and educationally. Drawing on the

aesthetic character should serve preservation of the continuance of a city’s cultural development. In the reality of German occupation and intentional operations of the Nazi authorities aimed at turning Warsaw into a German provincial town, the call for preserving the city identity as a national value were all the more valid (similarly to the process of de-rusification of Warsaw landscape following the First World War). According to the Commission, the aesthetic character of the city relied not merely on architecture but also transportation arteries and a network of squares. One of the most vital postulates was protection of the two-level city silhouette. The natural lay of the land with the Wisła River escarpment provided the city with two levels and two vistas: one from the bottom of the escarpment, Czerniaków and Powiśle, and another one from the Praga bank. The historical significance of the second vista was especially high. The oldest preserved images of Warsaw were the vistas from the right bank.

Thinking of comprehensive protection of Warsaw cityscape required a special supervisory board, hence the creation of a position of the Chief Municipal Architect and the Municipal Art Council. Their main tasks were not only protection but also preventing construction of buildings not complying with the set guidelines and converting the buildings which were blemishing the aesthetics of a given neighbourhood. One of the elements of aesthetically improving the space was sanation, i.e. demolishing annexes. It provided space for improving disastrous hygienic conditions for the residents through introducing more air and light. This process, postulated already in the late 19th century, was filtered through the postulates of the Athens Charter in the mid-20th century, as well as through Le Corbusier’s slogan of “urban surgery”. The architect called for the need of urban restoration by way of exchanging dense urban tissue for loose housing surrounded by greenery. The improving operations were in line with the historic quarter’s character and, consequently, with its newly assigned function. Within the Old Town, removing the annexes was supposed to free the area which was designed for residential housing. The 18th century district was freed from traffic and programmed as a home of academic, cultural and administrative institutions. Powiśle, which served as a link with the Wisła River, both transportation-wise and visually, was to remain loosely built, its historic tissue preserved. The last district - from the second half of the 19th century, most densely built, tall, with deep blocks - required most extensive intervention in order to provide medium standard apartments with modern installations. Aside from demolishing, the improvement process was also supposed to establish the required height of the buildings (by setting separate guidelines for specific streets) and distance between buildings. The manner in which the improvement process was to be carried out depended on historic considerations in older quarters, and hygienic in the 19th century quarters.45

Aside from the Opinia, the issues of the order and sanation of urban space were raised in the commentaries to projects of reconstruction of tenement houses along Nowy Świat Street, as mentioned by Małgorzata Popiołek. The preserved correspondence between the tenements’ owners on Nowy Świat and the Municipal Planning Department confirms the introduction of the postulated uniformization of the street – getting rid of annexes, normalising the height of buildings. The Urban Planning Experts’ Commission together with the Municipal Commission for the Protection of Historic Monuments provided its own comments on the projects submitted to the Municipal Office\(^46\), i.a. simplifying the facades, lowering the height of buildings.

The Municipal Office had limited possibilities to realise the submitted projects; lack of funds, followed by a ban on starting construction works posed serious hindrance. Introducing the ban – construction works worth over 40,000 Polish zlotys required the German supervision consent – was a reaction to the reconstruction of the Staszic Palace, carried out without the consent of the German administration. The only projects realised by the Municipal Office, as listed by Julian Kulski, were the partial reconstruction of the Warsaw Housing Cooperation buildings and the edifice of General Office of Counter Insurance.\(^47\) The latter project, being located beyond the historic area of Stanisławowska Warsaw, was submitted to the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission. In March 1940, Romuald Miller’s project for the reconstruction of the building destroyed in 1939 was to be discussed during the Commission meeting. The building, located between Kopernika, Słowackiego and Sewerynów Streets\(^48\), was erected in the 1920s and had a stepped form – a polygonal central volume rose from the extensive base (pic. 3). The building was clearly visible in the Kopernika Street building line.

According to the rule of protecting the immediate vicinity of Krakowskie Przedmieście, the street entered in the 1\(^{st}\) group of historic streets, it was stated that the building in its current form should have never been erected. Its destruction opened the possibility of introducing serious changes. Among the most important recommendations addressed to the author of the project were: altering the building’s form in its upper section (the proposal suggested introducing the silhouette motif 7-12 metres high and similar to, for example, the tower of former Marywil Palace and commercial centre, in the openwork form), connecting the bottom section with the immediate proximity, applying the suitable colour and texture scheme (tested as a trial). The latter issues constituted the bulk of the Commission’s opinion; a warm shade was proposed (shades of yellow or pink), counterposed with the greyish sky, tonally varied – darker shade at the bottom, lightening up towards the top. Covering the fa-

\(^46\) M. Popiołek, Powojenna odbudowa ulicy..., pp. 35–37.
çade with tiles made of cement mixed with marble flour, as a contemporary method, was treated cautiously due to the character of the quarter:

“It is imperative that the fact of the building existence in this very spot does not in any way overshadow the glorious architecture of the Church of St. Cross, one of the most beautiful, if not the most beautiful church in the city. The volume of the Society’s building [it regards the building of the General Office of Counter Insurance] brutally overbears the exquisite silhouette of the church’s towers, when you gaze at the city panorama from afar. For close-up, on the other hand, the overly mercantile character of the cement facing tiles could overbear the adjacent buildings of the Scientific Society and the Polski Theatre.”

Regulating plans for Warsaw

The first studies on a contemporary city stemmed from the school of the critics of urban civilization. Thinking of a city as an organism which requires activity on a broader scale was becoming more and more prevalent. The works of utopians as well as operations of social activists, architects, engineers, economists, sociologists and representatives of many more fields led to the emergence of a new area of expertise – urban planning. The new planned policy of the municipal authorities pertaining to the cityscape and its aesthetics was to finally bear fruit.

Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, both the local authorities and the architectural milieu in Warsaw launched various activities aimed at regulating the cityscape. The most spectacular ones, taken up in the 1930s and aimed at simplifying the urban layout and making it more aesthetically pleasing and monumental, were presented at two exhibitions titled Warszawa Przyszłości (Warsaw of the future”) in 1936 (the organizing committee included members of the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission, Adam Kuncewicz and Michał Kaczyrowski) and Warszawa wczoraj, dziś, jutro („Warsaw yesterday, today and tomorrow”) (open on 13 October 1938 at the National Museum). The idea of introducing urban change on a large scale, initiated with their help, was carried out throughout the German occupation.

During numerous meetings of the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission the text of Opinia, as well as smaller projects assigned au courant, were widely discussed. One of the recurring subjects were the primary urban layouts for transportation routes, i.a. Trzech Krzyży Square, Marshall Piłsudski Square (Saski Square), junction of Waszyngtona Avenue and Grochowska Street presented as a large square of homogenous housing, remodelling the Saski Gar-

The remodelling of the Saski Garden, which was to be cut through by Marszałkowska Street, was most fervently debated. In *Opinia*, the Commission firmly opposed such proposal, as it encroached on the historic-monumental, aesthetical and utility value of the place, without providing any spectacular profit for the municipal system of transportation. Connecting Zielna and Poznańska Streets was postulated, as an alternative of unburdening the traffic along Marszałkowska Street. In 1940, during one of the meetings held together with Stanisław Różański, Stefan Tomorowicz, Władysław Czerny and Stanisław Albrecht, representatives of the Regulating Plan Bureau, a course of Marszałkowska Street on a curve was discussed; thus the Bureau intended to make reference to traditional Baroque layout (initially, the street was to remain in its existing course, in order to turn on the axis of the Garden at the back of the Blue Palace). The Commission members drew attention to the fact that Zielna Street potential was not being used and that its end should be broadened. Eventually, the Commission passed a decree on, among others, extending Zielna Street up to Żelaznej Bramy Square, liquidating the Ministry of Internal Affairs garden to open up the vista on to the new wing of the Brühl Palace, leaving the building of Marconi’s waterpipes and remodelling the Saski Garden’s enclosure.

Already here one may discern discrepancies between the vision of modelling the Warsaw artery as promoted by the Planning Department and the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission. The discrepancies were described both in *Opinia* and subsequently in *Uwagi*. Tadeusz Tołwiński was of an opinion that the plan of developing Warsaw as prepared by the Planning Department shows hypertrophy of transportation and overly dense network of very wide main arteries. The Planning Department approached the issues of transportation as spontaneous phenomena; the Commission members approached them as auxiliary phenomena. They criticised road arteries crossing densely populated areas as too wide, stating that a street’s width did not guarantee its throughput. They stressed the importance of peace and security which could be provided by a small number of main arteries and few crossroads, as well as separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The proposed pull-over bays were rejected; the Commission postulated moving them to the less expensive areas. The solution for transportation issues was sought in distributing various functions in different parts of the city, i.a. by way of rendering the suburban districts and estates self-sufficient (own offices, workplaces, relaxation areas). For example, the N-S I route (the route from Chałbińskiego Street towards Mirowski Square) was considered as monotonous, delineated with ‘stiff fingers’ which had no powers to protect from monotony. The model route provided was Krakowskie Przedmieście and Nowy Świat Streets where non-parallel and recessed street frontages made the impression of

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breaking with uniformity. Moreover, the Commission held that the road arteries should have varied cross-sections, depending on the volume of traffic. The Commission presented their own project of a network of road arteries divided into the parallel and perpendicular to the river. The street layout of Stanisławowska Warsaw was analysed through division into residential and transportation purposes, the main and auxiliary streets. As for the commentaries to specific road arteries, the N-S route remained at its 30-35 metre width, Piłsudskiego Avenue end at Grójecka Street was completely blocked, and the street was turned into as a park avenue. One of the topic which have not been included in the final version of Opinia was a masterplan for developing Pole Mokotowskie. Tadeusz Tołwiński wrote in his comments on the papers of his colleagues:

The southern semicircle of grounds not intended for building purposes – should enter in two large wedges the very core of Stanisławowska Warsaw. On one side, through the Siekierkowskie meadows, along Wisła towards Ujazdów; on the other side, through Rakowiec, Pole Mokotowskie, Piłsudskiego Avenue and further towards Ujazdów. Thus, a grand system of parks will be created: Pole Mokotowskie, Ujazdów, Łazienki, Siekierki with the centres of the Ujazdowski Castle, Łazienkowski Palace and Belvedere Palace. The aforementioned grounds should be excluded from any construction works, aside the Church of Providence in Pole Mokotowskie and sport and recreational grounds planned in specific locations.

A vital element of debates pertaining to the transportation routes as well as to another issue, most important to the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission, the issue of the escarpment and the green areas was Stanisławowska Axis. In the autumn of 1943 the administrative Mayor of Warsaw assigned the realisation of the project dedicated to regulation, development and forestation of the Stanisławowska Axis on its entire length, from the Wisła River bank all the way to the Warsaw West Railway Station which was being designed at the time. The project was subdivided into three assignements:

a. From the river bank at the Czerniakowski port, through the Piaseczyński canal, the Mazovian Princes castles to Rozdoroże Square
b. 6 Sierpnia Street with Zbawiciela and Politechniki Squares, up to the crossing with Topolowa Street
c. 6 Sierpnia from Topolowa Street, the Filters, and further to the Warsaw West Railway Station, currently being designed.

53 T. Tołwiński, Uwagi do referatu III (komunikacji) z dz. 5.07.1940 r., Michał Kaczorowski Materials, Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences, III-314/9 , p. 53.
54 Ibid., p. 52.
55 Projekt zamówienia w sprawie opracowania regulacji i zabudowy Osi Stanisławowskiej w Warszawie, The Archive of the Museum of Warsaw, A/V/1625.
According to the above mentioned division, specific sections were assigned to Antoni Dygat, Waclaw Tomaszewski and Adam Krzyszkowski. Following the death of Marshall Piłsudski on 12 May 1935, the area in question was to become a glamorous district named after the Marshall. On 23 February 1939, a Provisional City Council adopted a resolution on the Plan of the Piłsudski Quarter. In 1939, a section of Piłsudskiego Avenue was delineated from Marszałkowska and Polna Streets to Niepodległości Avenue.\textsuperscript{56} In the order from 1943, the issue of Piłsudski Avenue had not been mentioned, which could have been related to a semi-conspirational method of operation. A protocol from the meeting of the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission with the designers and two drawings slightly differing in details have been preserved. During the meeting, the first section of the route, up to Rozdroże Square was discussed. Jan Zachwatowicz postulated reverting to the historical form of the castle, leaving the surrounding greenery and not intervening in the course of the canal. Pniewski praised creating the water axis via canal and the Wisła River. Jan Chmielewski, the other of the pre-war designers, was of a different opinion: he postulated separating the green and historic areas from the transportation area. He opposed building a bridge on the river on the axis of the castle as well as connecting it with the Warsaw West Railway Station.\textsuperscript{57} Out of the two preserved projects (both lacking signature and date), the project drawn with the use of colour crayon and pencil (pic. 5), depicting bridge artery parallel to the Piaseczyński Canal and Na Rozdrożu Square in the form of a semi-circle from the west, appears to be more akin to the one discussed at the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission meeting. In the second project, preserved as a diazo type print copy (pic. 6), the arteries running east of the castle were less straightforward, similarly to the layout of Na Rozdrożu Square, still a semicircle but with more arteries coming out of it. Both projects addressed the immediate vicinity of the castle and linked the castle with Na Rozdrożu Square by removing the housing between the square and the castle.

In line with the Municipal Office commission, the section of the Stanisławowska Axis from the river bank up to Na Rozdrożu Square was to be designed by Antoni Dygat. The drawings preserved at the Museum of Warsaw are in all likelihood produced by him (especially the one drawn in pencil bears many formal features also present in the architect’s other works). It was by no means the first project by Dygat dedicated to this quarter of Warsaw. In 1919, the City organized a competition, through the agency of the Architects’ Association, to prepare a plan for Ujazdów, Belweder and the surrounding area, along with design for the Sejm and National Museum buildings. Antoni Dygat was a runner-up with his three museum buildings, including a grand

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Palace of Art at the location of the Ujazdowski Castle. The project – aimed at regulating the surrounding area – envisaged changing the shape of Na Rozdrożu Square into an oval, as well as tyding up the Piaseczyński Canal as an axis stretching from the Palace of Art to the port. The canal was turned into several ponds along a wide artery adorned with lawns honeycombed with footpaths. Some elements of this project were continued in the assignment carried out during the occupation: cambered axis led from the castle to Na Rozdrożu Square to sustain the Castle-Canal axis, despite the alterations within the square itself.

Postscript, or Warsaw as envisaged by the members of the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission versus the post-war reconstruction

Opinia, the definitive work by the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission, was written in 1941. The documents from 1943, pertaining to the Stanisławowska Axis, are the last known materials testifying to the Commission’s activity. Therefore, we cannot be sure whether the vision for the future stemmed from the initial war destruction, or from the ghetto being razed to the ground. Aside from the postulates to prepare for reconstruction, there is no detailed data pertaining to the extent of destruction following the 1939 bombings included in Opinia. Thus, despite the declarations made in Opinia, the direction which Warsaw transformation was supposed to follow was semi-idealistic, a resultant of many years of striving to regulate the situation in the Capital City. From the very first lines of Opinia the fact that there is no going back to the past transpires. The war opened a door to the future which was to be much better than the past and today – on condition that one is thoroughly prepared to meet the future:

We are on the eve of a massive building construction operation. At the moment, it is difficult to set an exact date when it is about to begin. Nonetheless, there are no doubts that the city centre will seek to heal its wounds as quickly as possible. The reconstruction will be rapid, hectic, misguided and deplorable from the point of view of aesthetic outcome. Thus, we are facing the danger of trifling away a truly grand opportunity.

What was the vision of the city and guidelines postulated by the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission? Despite the fact that the Commission focused on Stanisławowska Warsaw and debated changes only within the historic quarter, it showed distinct signs of a modernist way of thinking about a city, including postulates from the Athens Charter such as: aiming at dividing the city into zones according to function (i.a. relocating housing estates to new dis-

districts), significance of green areas (intervened within the housing estates and also as green belts separating various districts of the city), attempts at improving the hygienic conditions of the residents by the process of sanation of the urban space, differentiating between transportation lines according to function as well as separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This vision permeates thinking of a city as an element of historical-artistic tradition, whose historic monuments require particular care. According to the Commission, one of the ways leading to sustaining the creative continuity of a city was the postulated classic trend. On the other hand, preserving Warsaw’s cityscape did not entail restrictive conservatorial rules. Quite the opposite, it was to be subject to the paramount idea of a cityscape and aesthetic sanation. The proceedings of the Commission were based on the method of modernist quest for order and harmony, and thinking holistically about the streets, the city and the entire region, as well as the future and progress.

Many of the postulates included in Opinia lost their validity after the city had been razed to the ground in 1944. The situation in which architects found themselves while working on planning the reconstruction was altogether different from the situation of 1941, when Opinia was being written. Still, many postulates set forth by the Commission remained in force, requiring merely an adjustment to the new conditions.

On 5 November 1944 in Lublin, architects’ convention took place. Lech Niemojewski was appointed Chairman of the Association of Polish Architects. The immediate result of the convention was submitting an appeal to the entire architectural milieu:

[Warsaw] requires you to make an utmost effort – the city herself and the entire nation. Under the supervision of the state administration, the nation launches the process of reconstruction. Polish architect must fulfil his duties, must prove that he is worthy of a Polish soldier who had already reconstructed the foundations of his country – YOU will rebuild its capital city.

Soon, in January 1945, the Planning and Reconstruction Bureau appointed the “Warsaw” Operational Group. The Group comprised: Józef Sigalin – the chair, Lech Niemojewski, Bohdan Lachert, Eleonora Sekrecka, Julian Sadlowski and Hanna Sigalin. Following a trip to Warsaw, Lech Niemojewski produced a report in which he estimated the wartime destruction in an essay titled Rozważania nad stworzeniem podstaw finansowych dla odbudowy Warszawy (Treatise on creating financial basis for the reconstruction of Warsaw). The text was published years later in a collective volume Warszawa stolica Polski Ludowej: L. Niemojewski, „Rozważania nad stworzeniem podstaw finansowych dla odbudowy Warszawy”, [in:] Warszawa stolica Polski Ludowej, pp. 242–256.

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62 The text was published years later in a collective volume Warszawa stolica Polski Ludowej: L. Niemojewski, „Rozważania nad stworzeniem podstaw finansowych dla odbudowy Warszawy”, [in:] Warszawa stolica Polski Ludowej, pp. 242–256.
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The author analysed all the postulates included in *Opinia*, adjusting them to the current state of affairs. Aside from the preliminary estimate on the destruction, preserved primary sources and information pertaining to which buildings can be rebuilt, Niemojewski drafted a project of organizing the work of reconstruction offices. Amongst the points awaiting realisation, he listed delineating the N-S routes, Nowy Świat Street, Na Skarpie Avenue (all the way to the Kierbedzia bridge), Zielna Street and broadened Marszałkowska Street. Reconstructing facades along Nowy Świat and Krakowskie Przedmieście Streets was amongst the priority tasks. In the *Treatise*..., Niemojewski concentrated on the problem which had already been touched upon in *Opinia*, namely the way in which local administration acquired grounds for regulating and reconstruction. Already at the time of the Nazi occupation it became clear that private properties might have to be expropriated for the sake of municipal districts. The extent of work ahead and the need to coordinate the reconstruction required freedom of movement for the municipal authorities. The basis for all enterprises was determining public and private interests. Already prior to the war, people had been aware of investment problems in a city dominated by private property. In the period of Stefan Starzyński at the Mayor’s office, the Municipal Office purchased plots of land at the city outskirts in order to provide grounds for the developing city (in 1919, Warsaw owned 2% of land, in 1938 – already 10.3%).

Wartime destruction was turned into an advantage for the city residents – among other things, sanation of the plots was finally complete. The text contains references to the value of historic monuments according to the division into groups as made out by the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission and therefore the sequence in which the monuments were to be restored or rebuilt in the form closest possible to the original, especially the facades.

In May 1946, Tadeusz Tołwiński, chairman of the Urban Planning Experts’ Commission, voiced his opinion on the topic of reconstruction. His report titled *O planie odbudowy Warszawy wykonanym przez BOS (On the Plan of the Reconstruction of Warsaw Prepared by the Warsaw Reconstruction Office)* referred to numerous postulates set forth by the Commission, including the significance of Staszicowka Warsaw on the city map. Simultaneously, Tołwiński was a proponent of the idea that Warsaw is part of the central Warsaw Urban Complex, which was a continuation of his idea stemming from his plan of 1916. Tołwiński supported the Warsaw Reconstruction Office idea of shifting the core centre of the city north, which would allow for development of former tendencies in the development of Warsaw. The estimated number of the residents – 800,000 – was also in line with the Commission’s postulates.

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Tołwiński, however, stressed the necessity of allowing free space and rational design of the network of main road arteries which would allow for further demographic and local development.

Tołwiński professed a fair rule of functional division between residential zones and workplaces, but at the same time he was an avid critic of excessive interspersing and long distances between residential and work zones in the centre of Stanisławowska Warsaw and the subsequent necessity to invest large sums of money on transportation. As was the case with Opinia, transportation issues were, in Tołwiński's opinion, the weakest link of the plan. He held the crossroads of the Saska Axis with the extended Marszałkowska Street as the most vital crossing of arteries along the Bielany-Królikarnia route, rather than the famed Marszałkowska-Aleje Jerozolimskie crossing.66

The text was submitted to the The Central Office of Spatial Planning but it went unnoticed. It was published as late as 1972.67 Despite the fact that neither the work performed by the Commission nor the texts written by Niemojewski and Tołwiński were ever used in the activities of the City Reconstruction Office, some of the postulates set forth in Opinia used to recur and are still occurring in the debates on reconstruction. However, the most neglected and completely obliterated issue which had been repeatedly raised by the Urban Planning Experts' Commission is the two-level setting of the City of Warsaw and its relationship with the Wisła River, until today not properly addressed.

Urban Planning Experts Commission and its vision of transforming Warsaw – summary

The years of German occupation 1939-1945 were a period of intensive work for many Warsaw-based architects. From the capital city perspective, the decision to cooperate with the Municipal Office was an absolute priority. On 13 December 1939, Julian Kulski, the administrative Mayor of Warsaw, established the Urban Planning Experts Commission as a consulting body. The Commission's main oeuvre was an opinion on the General Plan for Development of the Capital City of Warsaw developed in the years 1937-1938 at the office of the General Plan at the Municipal Office City Planning Division headed by Marian Spychalski. The content of Opinion on the plans for the City of Warsaw prepared at the Municipal Office was a fruit of 67 meetings held between 13 December 1939 and 31 March 1941 and was the quintessence of a modernist vision of the city. One of its main postulates was the “sanation of the urban space” with regard to living conditions and urban aesthetics (e.g. less dense housing, introduction of green areas). Among the Commission’s other works one should

list opinions on projects related to regulating quarters in the city centre, i.a. Trzech Krzyży Square, Grzybowski Square, reconstruction of Jerozolimskie Avenues and Marszałkowska Street, and development of the Stanisławowska axis from the Wisła River all the way to the Warsaw West Railway Station (assigned by the Municipal Office in 1943).

**Key words:** Urban Planning Experts Commission, sanation, occupation, modernism, cityscape, urban planning, Warsaw