ATTACHMENT NO. 2.4
COMPETITION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FUNCTIONAL–SPATIAL CONCEPT FOR CENTRAL SQUARE IN WARSAW

MARIA SOŁTYS
THE WATERSHEDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARSZAŁKOWSKA ST.
The complex of the Palace of Culture alongside Plac Defilad [Parade Square] and Świętokrzyski Park occupy an area delineated by the streets: Marszałkowska, Jerozolimskie Ave., Emili Plater and Świętokrzyska of a total surface of nearly 50 ha.

In Ulica Marszałkowska,¹ Stanisław Herbst described the urban development of the area as follows: *It was pursued during the period of the reconstruction of Warsaw and the suburban "jurydyka" settlements after the destruction wreaked by the Polish-Swedish wars, when between 1754 and 1764 the population grew from 23 000 to 30 000 people. The Grand Marshal of the Crown Franciszek Bieliński (1683–1766) arranged the settlement on the lands of his own "jurydyka" settlement (Bielina) in orderly forms as three parallel streets: Jasna – on the axis of his own seat in Królewska St., with a square that was to function as a marketplace, Bielińska (called Marszałkowska since 1770) and Zielna as well as their cross streets.*

Summarising that process at the turning point of 1794 – the year of the fall of the Commonwealth, Herbst writes: *The war ordeal, the ruination of the state, city and street...[preceded] the years of its rapid emergence in 1757–1771, when the rush to arrange, parcellate and develop determined the city's border for 100 years...and for the years of stagnation, snail's pace development and collapse...The street devised in a rationalist and utilitarian way: cobbled, wide (26 m) and straight, and endlessly long with buildings appropriately stretched along regulation lines, intersected by twelve parallel cross streets will become a street of funeral processions to the Holy Cross Cemetery [the area of today's Saints Peter and Paul Church in Koszyki] and carts with bricks [manufactured at the nearby Holy Cross Farmstead – the area of today's Infant Jesus Hospital]. It will be omitted by construction activities throughout two generations of classicism. The only historic monument structures, which means structures displaying artistic, historic and scholarly values for the generation born in ca 1900, who planned the modernisation of Marszałkowska St. between 1935 and 1939 and its reconstruction between 1940 and 1965 were: toll gates (architect Jakub Kubicki, 1816–1818) in the square, today's Unii Lubelskiej Sq., and the building of the former horse-breaking building redeveloped for the Stock Exchange (architect Witold Lanci, 1876–1879) – both outside the boundaries of the development of Central Square.*

In the first decade of the 19th century, *in the conditions of incessant wars and economic devastation, which led to universal impoverishment and bankruptcy of the state, the northern stretch of Marszałkowska was a dead area. What contributed to a rise in construction activities was the approach of Count Feliks Lubieński, owner of Bielin since 1810, Minister of Justice in the government of the Duchy of Warsaw, who responded to the Prussian regulations from 1808 concerning the displacement of Jews from the main streets of the city (Senatorska) by indicating a place for them to settle down in the streets Marszałkowska, Zielna, as well as their cross streets.*³

When in 1940⁴ the occupation authorities presented to the Municipal Authority the plan of the borders of the ghetto, the latter – in order to reduce the scale of resettlements of both Jewish and non-Jewish population – tapped into statistical data. On the one hand, the data revealed the degree of assimilation of the community that had settled

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² 1978, p. 53
³ 1978: p. 55

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The Watersheds in the Development of Marszałkowska St.
down there one century before, while one the other hand – contributed to determining the southern border of the closed district – the Warsaw Ghetto – between the streets Sienna and Złota, currently marked within the borders of development with the linear monument “Ghetto Wall 1940–1943” (architects: Eleonora Bergman, Tomasz Lec & team, 2008). The forced resettlements – which took place several times, as well as the imposed population density, which failed to meet any sanitary standards, led to the fatal physical exhaustion of the people and technical degradation of the buildings, which were ultimately burnt down and demolished after the fall of the uprising in May 1943. It may not have been a coincidence that the design of the regulation of Świętokrzyska St. from 1948, which consisted in broadening it and merging into a thoroughfare with Prosta St. (outward thoroughfare to the west) did not determine frontage alignment on the stretch between Marszałkowska St. and Emilii Plater St.

The next watershed date in the development of Marszałkowska St. was the delineation in 1823 of the New Jerusalem Road on the marshy meadows of Kłęczyn [1978; p. 59]. Two canals and two lines of black poplars with three rows each arranged along the regulation lines of Jerozolimskie Ave. should be treated as a specific kind of drainage undertaking that improved the ground conditions in an area that two decades later came to be used by railways. The immediate vicinity of the station of the Warsaw-Vienna Railway (architect Enrico Marconi; 1845) that operated domestic and international services essentially changed the value of the developed and undeveloped properties west of Marszałkowska St. The functional significance of that thoroughfare will be revealed at the turn of the 20th century, when the partitioning authorities agree to the construction of the “second bridge,” with Prince Józef Poniatowski chosen as its patron in 1915.

Finishing work on the book_Ulica Marszałkowska_on the 28th of February 1945, Prof. Stanisław Herbst (1907–1973) summarised the street’s role in the structure of Warsaw until 1914 as follows: _Combining the functions of a marketplace and the most important thoroughfare with considerable entertainment traffic was causing the first symptoms of pollution that culminated during the two decades between WWI and WWII._

A response to that culmination of pollution was to come in the form of urban planning regulations drawn up after 1935 by the Municipal Authority of the Capital City of Warsaw and its Urban Planning Department. It was already in 1931 that Stanisław Filipkowski, drawing on statistical research pursued since 1919, hinted in his account of the general development plan at the process of transformation of the city centre development in the City: _private apartments, which hold too little financial value, are repressed from the city centre by commerce and offices. The city centre is becoming depopulated._ In order to support the expansion of that process towards the south-west, it was necessary to remove (redevelop) the Main Station and the thoroughfares that served it towards the north and the south, _and especially building an N-S thoroughfare that will ameliorate the now wrongly developed districts and offer the possibility to rationally develop the expropriated grounds to introduce buildings typical of the City. Concentration of people in the City causes an amassment of means of transport whose distribution requires numerous and spacious squares, which has been provided for in the regulation plan._

The paper as of 1938, which provided a summary of study works on the degree of implementation of the general development plan from 1931, included the following evaluation of the development of Warsaw in the first decade of Revived Poland in its functions as the capital city. Previously [i.e. in 1931] the plan was based on the existing state and was aimed at improving it; currently, the aspects that the plan has solved have mostly been preserved but, apart from that, the building of the organism of Warsaw has been embraced on the basis of a new city centre, selected on the basis of research concerning the process of depopulation (ca 10% between 1921 and 1931) of the city centre area between the streets: Królew ska, Marszałkowska, Jerozolimskie Ave. and Nowy Świat as well as near the Main Station between the streets: Jerozolimskie Ave., Niepodległości Ave. (Chałubińskiego), Piusa and Kruza. i.e. replacing residential housing with workplaces.

Devised for the city centre, the plan of modernisation of its spatial and functional structure presented by the Municipal Authority of the Capital City of Warsaw at the International Exposition in Paris in 1937 was awarded the Grand Prix, which was reported to the head of the General Plan Studio, architect Marian Spychalski by Prof. Lech Niemojewski, Government Commissioner of the Polish Section. It is through the prism of that work, known today only from a general description in papers devoted to the general development plan, that the later functional programmes and plans of rebuilding the capital city function of Warsaw should be considered.

A paper from April 1938 for the conference related to the intended revision of the general development plan as of 1931 includes the following analysis of the development of the city in its function as the capital: In order to embrace the case of the general plan on an appropriate scale, it needs to be stated that the questions of building and redeveloping Warsaw as the Capital City did not exist since the Saxon times and the era of Stanislaus Augustus. Throughout the 19th and the 20th century the city grew on its own with more or less successful fragments without reflection concerning the whole and creating broad foundations for a well-functioning metropolis.

The complexes that matched the scale of the capital city created in the Saxon times, which met the then requirements, today need to serve, in a form destroyed by the 19th century, new grand requirements. And, after all, when they were created, the needs of the capital authority were satisfied by the royal palace and several magnate’s residences, whereas today it comprises a giant complex of political-administrative, economic, social authority, issues of the culture and science centre, vast issues of the exchange and production centre, immense issues of the transport hub. The number and size of functions in the city is growing...

New arrangements and buildings are drawn up, redeveloped and created for the needs of the centre of authority, exchange and production. Provisional spaces are sought to accommodate collective manifestations on different occasions, especially those celebrated in the Capital City.

Given the inventory of destruction resulting from bombardment and air raids in September 1939, the area of Marszałkowska St. became the topic of the Urban Assessor Committee, which operated in 1940–1941 as an advisory body of the Municipal Authority under the commissary’s supervision of the occupier (the protocol has not been found so far).

In the post-war reconstruction plans, Central Square oscillates as a broadening of Jerozolimskie Ave. on the stretch between Marszałkowska St. – Chałubińskiego St. (N-S route) or Marszałkowska St. between Jerozolimskie Ave. and Królew ska St. in the municipal spatial development plan confir-
The construction of a multifunctional skyscraper – which the Palace of Culture and Science essentially is (contract as of 1950, building completed in 1955) – ascribed that functional element of the City, featured in the programme of modernisation of the city centre as of the second half of the 1930s, to a clearly determined stylistic epoch, which – given its modern-day evaluation – gives priority to historical arguments, related to politics and propaganda over those of compositional and utilitarian nature, which are important from the point of view of the functioning of the city and events held in the public space.

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