

# Feeling Void

Nalewki - Andersa Square

Muranów Warsaw

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Guided by

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# INTRODUCTION

In September 2012, I visited Warsaw. At the site of the former Jewish ghetto, I was overwhelmed by the void I met. The physical built environment was so different from the bustling urban locale that used to be there. I was disappointed by the inability of the existing memorials in the public space to deliver a meaningful experience of this prewar vitality or convey the fact that a 4 km<sup>2</sup> area housed almost half a million people “living” in deadly conditions during the war. On the other hand, I witnessed how Warsaw is rapidly developing and attracting investors and young people who seek job opportunities and an exciting urban scene.

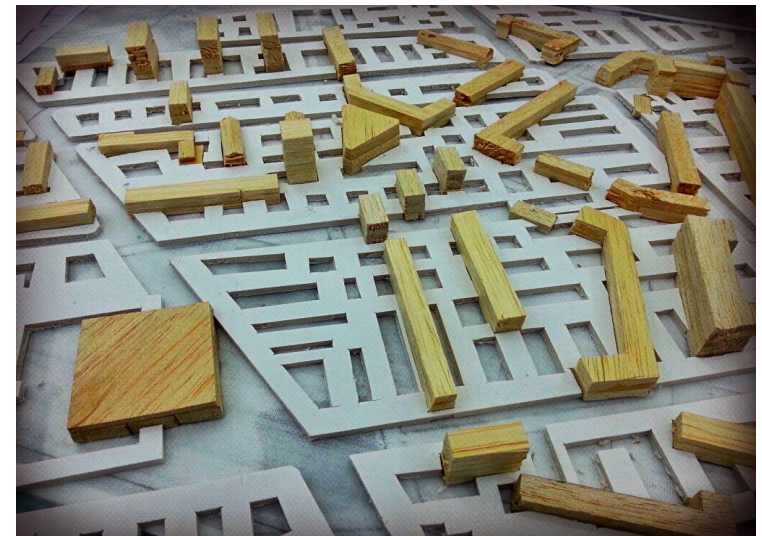
The former ghetto neighborhoods, with their endless communist blocks and the emptiness in between, seemed stuck in time, waiting for a vibrant facelift. With my final 5th-year project in the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning in the Technion approaching, I chose to accept this urban renewal challenge.

I started by deepening my understanding of Warsaw urban development. The amount and quality of material, much of it available online, is outstanding. Endless bits of information forming images, videos, and texts create an unbelievable picture of pre-war, war-torn, post-war, and communist Warsaw, and amplify the astounding physical and demographic contradictions between current Warsaw and its pre-war representation.

To emphasize the mass destruction during the war and the lack of urban vitality that resulted from communist rebuilding, I superimposed two layers: a footprint of pre-war urban layout and a footprint of current urban layout. I then represented these layers in a 1m<sup>2</sup> model. Consequently, with the main issue being how to address current sparsity, I called the project “Feeling/Filling Void.”



**Stark contrast: The memorial, commemorating a traumatic event, is situated in a totally unrelated background**



**Layers superposition**

# INTRODUCTION

The existence and extermination of the ghetto and its inhabitants was a vast urban occurrence and scattered memorials fail to convey its scale and intensity. In addition, I feel that memorialization should be evocative of life, rather than war and death. It must address the physical aspect, and not the narrative. It should create places for memories rather than memorials, allowing those who wish to remember to do so, but at the same time be integrated with the current functional urban entities.

I had to consider how to serve, on the one hand, local residents - who lead their daily lives here, continuous in time and space, and on the other hand, tourists, who come and go, discretely, and seek to retrace the past. I came to the conclusion that pre-war urban tissue and vivid street life should provide the springboard for architectural intervention in current Warsaw, alongside preservation of the existing fabric. Warsaw, with 85 percent of its buildings destroyed, had enough destruction.

Yet, how could I suggest responsible urban renewal that will be inspired by the past but will cater to current Warsaw? I visited Warsaw again in February 2014. The project became focused on a site located on Andersa Street in Muranów - the heart of the ghetto and the area that witnessed the worst human suffering and urban obliteration. Andersa Street is a wide road with colossal residential buildings dotted with shops at street level, carrying vehicle traffic, tramways, and the existing metro line runs underneath.

I started with an urban design proposal for the area, creating additional constructions for mixed use based on the pre-war urban tissue. I am reconstructing a major junction of pre-war streets, based on prewar Nalewki street, adding vital and versatile public space elements to the lifeless road. The design also includes the metro station ("Stacja Muranów"), that was planned, yet never built, which will serve as an important urban generator to the neighborhood, as well as a physical window to the current vs. pre-war urban layouts.



The site is located in Warsaw, capital of Poland, on the north-eastern part of the neighborhood of Muranów. This area used to be the bustling residential and commercial hub of the Jewish community before World War II, became part of the walled Ghetto during the Nazi occupation and was the main area where the Ghetto uprising took place. The Nazis razed this area to the ground, which became a huge rubble field. It was rebuilt after the war during the communist era, literally on the left rubble, mainly as a residential area. Current development includes building of contemporary high rise office and commercial buildings on the edges of the area, as well as a new Museum dedicated to the history of life of Polish Jews.



Pre-war Muranów was characterized by dense urban tissue based on courtyard tenement houses. Each house was like a city within a city: an extensive mixed-use world of workshops, warehouses, stores, restaurants and apartments above nestled around the small courtyard, in the Jewish area which had its unique cultural character, within the city of Warsaw. The Jewish area developed from the 18th century, and since Jews were restricted to live in certain areas, the Jewish enclave evolved. The industrial revolution shaped the character of streets and buildings – classical facades, courtyards behind, building facades creating the street lines. Buildings were built by entrepreneurs to host workers, sometimes in crowded conditions. Life was vivid with rich culture of literature, poetry, theatre and education.

In September 1939 the area was affected by the Nazi air bombings. Following the Nazi occupation Jews were forced to build a wall around the neighborhood, and it became the Ghetto. Thousands of Jewish people from other parts of Warsaw and surroundings were forced to move into the Ghetto area. Almost 500,000 people occupied the Ghetto walls. From 1940 to 1943 this 4 square kilometers area witnessed the worst of human suffering, murder and urban destruction. 300,000 Jews were deported to the gas chambers of Treblinka. Dozens of thousands died from hunger and illness. Others were perished during and after the Ghetto uprising. The Nazis, as planned, systematically burned the neighborhood houses.

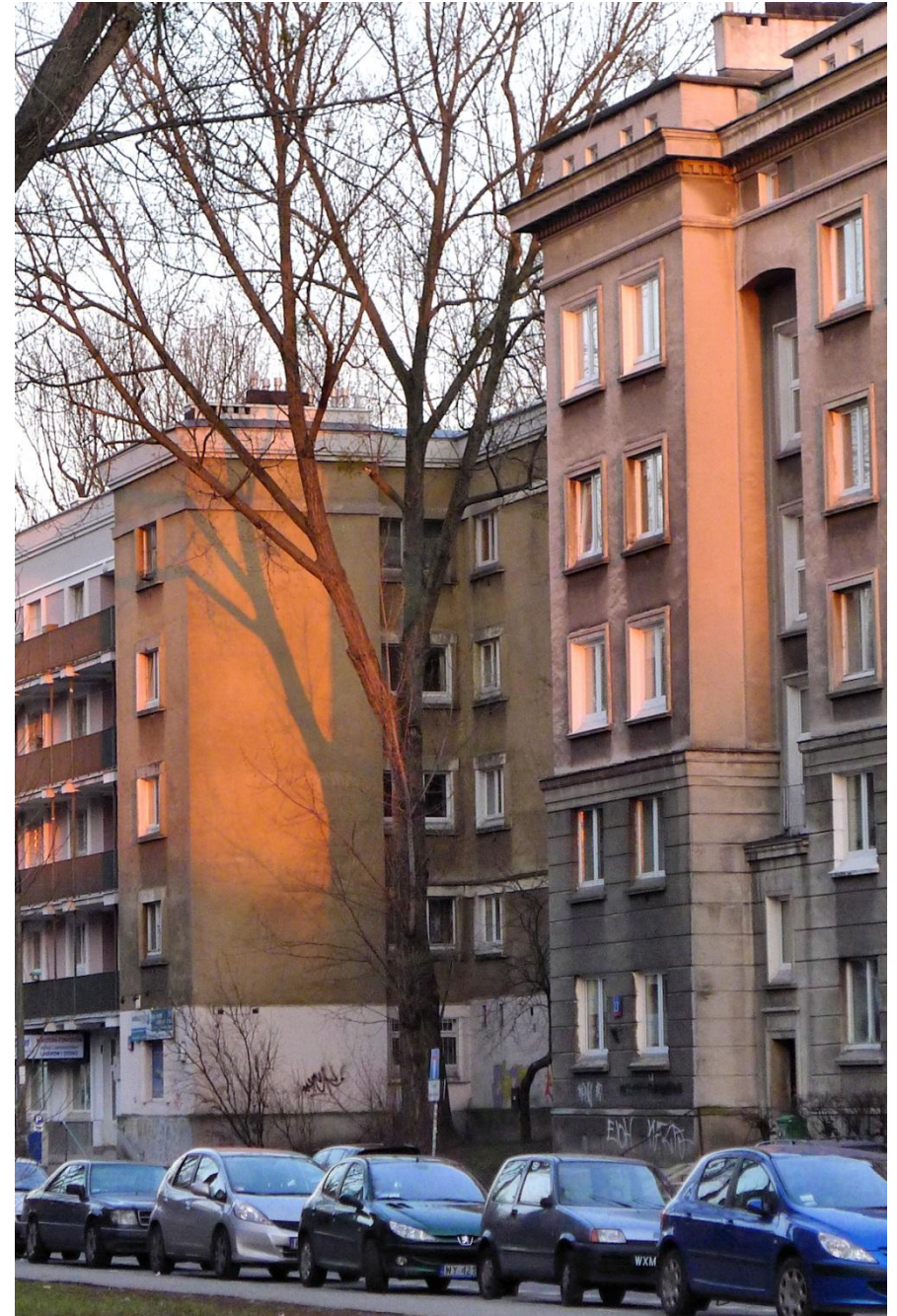
Following the war, most of Muranów was in rubble. During the '50s the area was rebuilt according to 'classical' Modernist approaches – public housing in long apartment slabs or high rise apartment buildings, nestled in wide streets and avenues rich with vegetation. In the area I chose for the project, not only building types and street characters were dramatically changed, but also the street layout was redesigned. There was an urge to rebuild the city and supply apartments. The pre-war remains of the buildings were partially reused to build new houses, and in between, rubble was covered with soil and became part of an invisible 'landscape architecture' of the neighborhood.

Following the collapse of communism, since the '90s, speculative development sets the tone in area surrounding the neighborhood – private initiatives for commercial and office buildings create the de-facto master plan of Warsaw center, and affect Muranów edges.

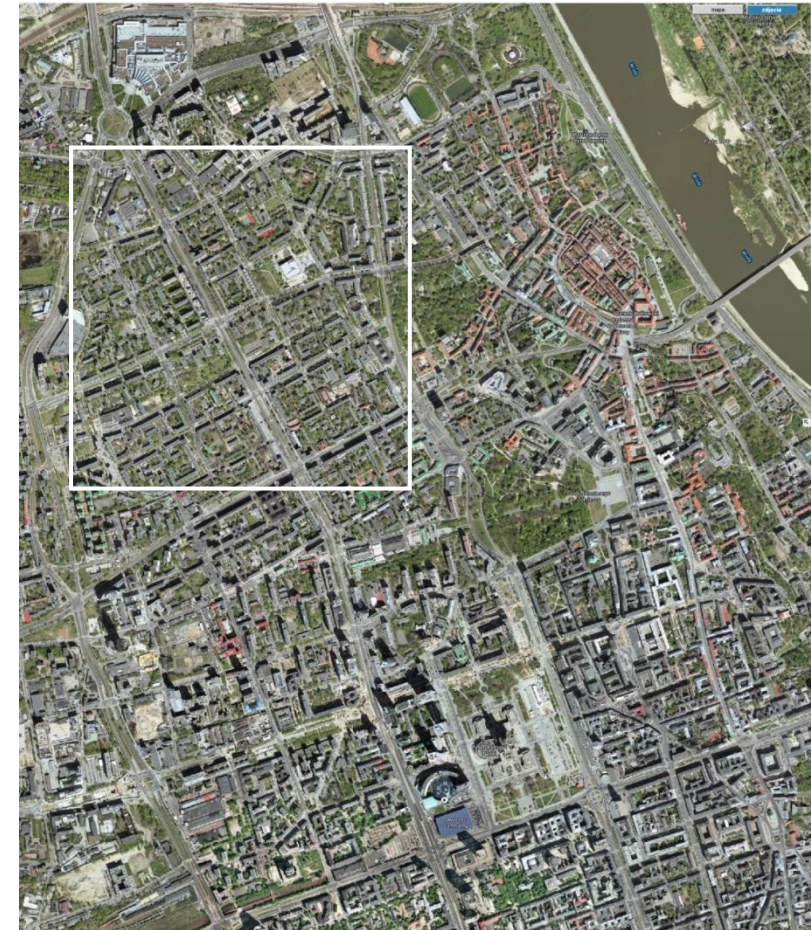
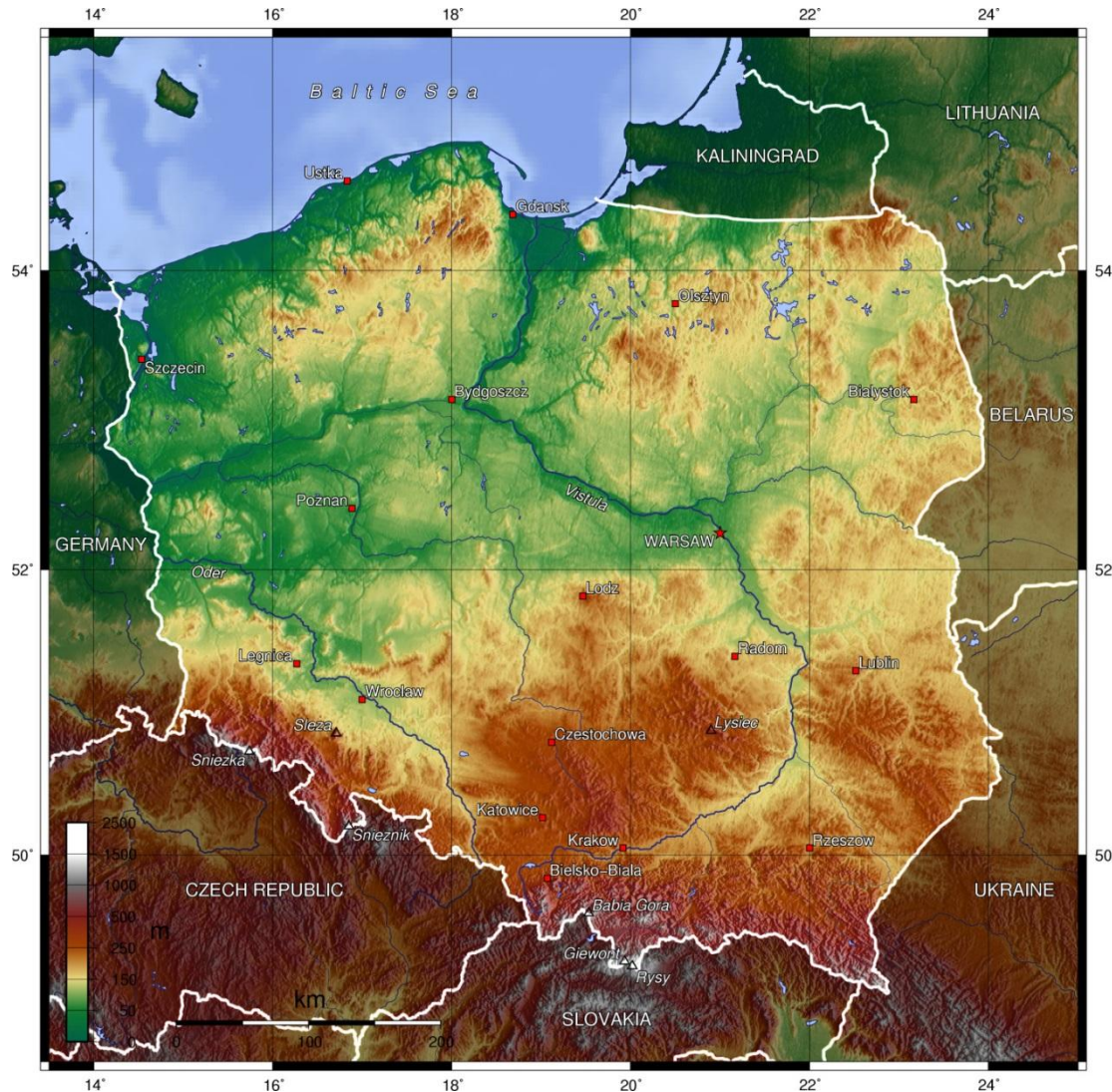


Today, when walking in Muranów streets, especially in the area I'm focusing on, nothing is left from the bustling pre-war neighborhood – neither physical nor humane. Only wide, quiet, green streets carrying people and cars to and from residential blocks. Commemoration is focused on traumatic events of the war rather than on life that existed before. In order to learn something about the life, one has to step into a contemporary museum which is itself built on that pre-war layer. This feeling of void in current outdoors Muranów is not unique to visitors like myself. People from Poland who come to live there have similar feelings. Warsaw is rapidly developing and changing its image of the gray city in the shade of Kraków, to a booming, growing, dynamic city, attracting investments and young people who seek job opportunities and exciting urban life. Generation change occurs as young people come to live in the neighborhood instead of older population who came to live in Muranów in the building blocks built following the war. Muranów was and still is closely related to the life of Jews in Warsaw, but also to the life ties between Jewish and Polish people. It is today a ground where narratives of both Jewish and Polish people mix, where Poland now deeply recognizes and commemorates Jewish culture and its influence on the country, and where interesting meetings and friendships form between people of many nations, beliefs and opinions.

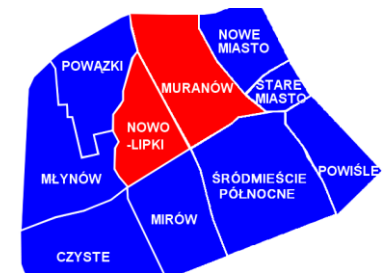
Focusing on Muranów is highly interesting both due to its unbelievable past and the current status that calls for a planned urban renewal and revival, rather than speculative construction the sets an unwanted tone. Pre-war Muranów was a fascinating physical ground where vivid life and culture flourished and serve as an inspiration and even guiding path and layout for a current architectural intervention, both in a master plan level and in a building level.



Warsaw, capital of Poland, is home to 1,700,000 people and located on the Vistula (Wisła) river plains.



Muranów neighborhood is located in the districts of Śródmieście and Wola in Warsaw, west of the "New city" and "Old city"- the former walled city where the settlement in Warsaw began.





## The beginning

Warsaw is a relatively young European city. Settlement by the Vistula river started in the 13th century as fortified Warszowa.

In the 15th century it became the capital of Masovia. Between the 14th and 16th centuries Jurydykas (small privately-owned proto-towns) were developed outside the royal city.

In the beginning of the 18th century the population including the royal residences reached 14,000 people. In 1791 the Jurydykas were incorporated into Warsaw. At that time the population reached 115,000 people.



1779 map of Warsaw showing the old city by the Vistula and the estates stretching west forming the base for Warsaw grid of streets and building blocks.

## Development of Warsaw and the Jewish area since the 19th century

19th century saw the settlement of Jews in Warsaw. They arrived mainly from Lithuania and Belarus. Most of the years they were restricted to settle in designated areas, which led the development of a Jewish quarter. According to data from 1840 there were 36,529 Jews in Warsaw. In November 1918 there were 320,000 Jews living in the city, 42% of the total population of Jews in Poland.

The spatial characteristics of the Jewish quarter started to get shape in the 1860s, following the industrial revolution in Warsaw, especially around Grzybowski square, an important Jewish hub, which was close to the first railway line built in 1860s as well.

The Warsaw tenement house, modeled on the Berlin prototype, made its appearance in the 1850s. Its great variety of forms, as occurred in Britain with the terrace row, emphasizes the tenement block's primacy in late-capitalist metropolitan development. Relative uniformity was maintained during the early building boom in the 1870s and part of the 1880s, when rather monotonous, richly-decorated three- and four-storey housing replaced lower or wooden building. To avoid building higher than the street's width, mansard roofs accommodating attic apartments became quite popular.

These tenements were seen in opposing ways. They were built either for new industrialists as palace-like buildings intended to express the newly acquired status (1st type, lower and more decorative), or later as cheap housing for factory workers (2nd type, tower-like and overcrowded). They were a product of economical growth and land speculation.



Three building types from three different eras. One-storey house with attic floor from the 1820s, regular four-storey tenement housing from the 1880s and high rise (six-storey) from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Nowolipie Street in 1934.

Generally, both types were present in Nalewki Street area, which was a wealthier part of Jewish 'northern' district, and 2nd poorer type dominated further from centre the on Miła or Dzika Streets and in Powązki area. Both were criticized politically - Warsaw was a capital of a Russian province and since 1918 a capital of Poland, and there were strong active workers' movements (Jewish or generally Polish) who opposed this development type as inhumane for factory workers. Polish nationalists also criticized this type of development, as it induced their phobias about Jewish communists and revolution.

The tenements were typical to all parts of Warsaw, but the ones in the Jewish areas were particularly crowded. In the 1930s it was estimated that the population density in Muranów - which was at that time more than 90 percent Jewish – was 54,000 people per square kilometer. There were areas that were even more crowded - 69,000 people per square kilometer lived in Grzybow quarter.

Muranów became one of the most overcrowded districts in Warsaw. Filled with shops, workshops, small factories, and markets, it was a bustling economic area made up mainly of small craftsmen and retailers that provided the city with many of its basic consumer goods and services (half of Warsaw's clothing and linen was bought there). The Jewish population was generally poor, but it produced an exceptionally rich intellectual, political, cultural, and religious life that made Warsaw one of the most vibrant Jewish cities in the world.

*“On Saturday morning the streets were full of the scent of cholent and kugel. The sound of Sabbath songs rang out from all windows. Here was the Land of Israel. ...“Those” streets included the following: Dzielna, Pawia, Gęsia, Miła, Niska, Stawki, Muranowski Square and first and foremost Nalewki and Franciszkańska. Those Jews traded before the First World War with Vladivostok, Petropavlovsk and even China. They had their stores packed up to the rafters with merchandise. ... It is hard to imagine that all of that pulsating and glittering life has been extinguished, that this gigantic collection of human singularities was wiped off the face of the earth.”*

(Yitskhok Varshavski, "Yede Yidishe Gas in Varshe - Geven a Shtot Far Zikh" Forverts July 2, 1944; quoted in Jan Jagielski, Jewish Sites in Warsaw (Warsaw: City of Warsaw, 2002), 14-15.1

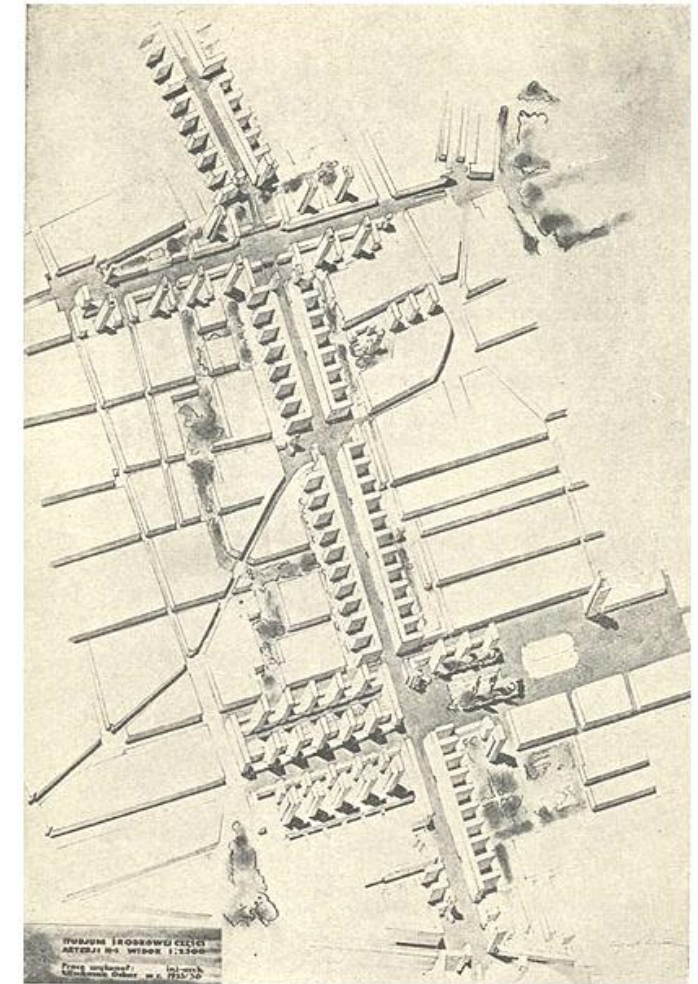
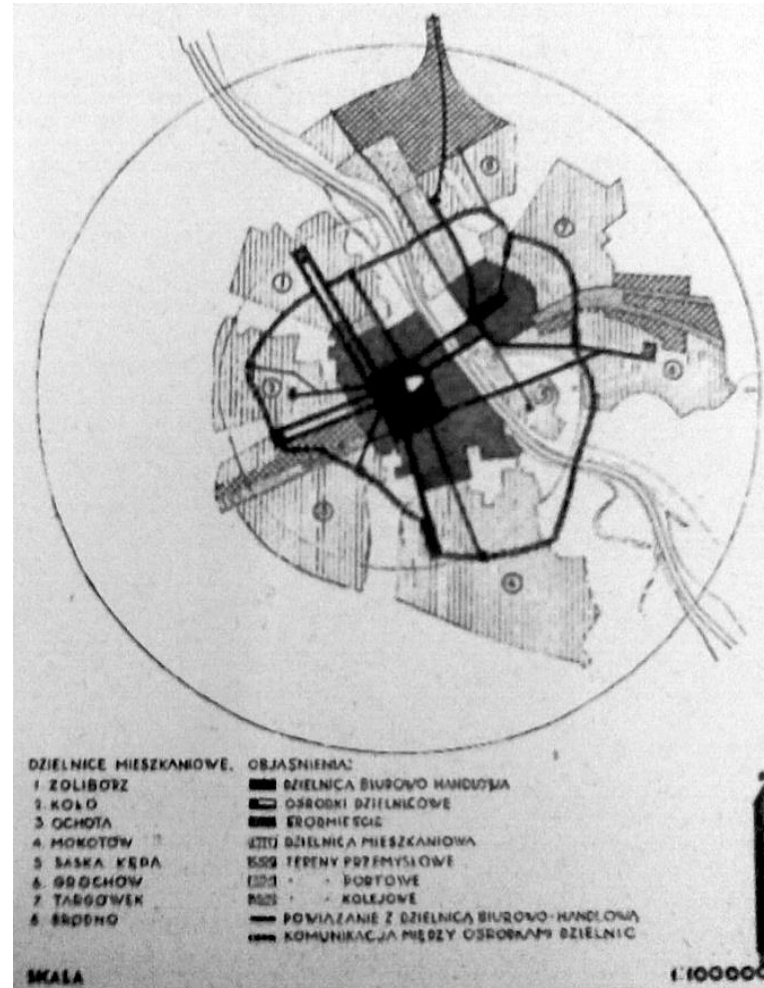


Gathering in the corner of Nalewki and Swietojevska streets

This is how Jewish areas are described in Unilowski's guide to Warsaw, 1938, with an anti-Semitic sense:

*"The Jewish district, that festering big-city wound, livens up and takes on a sick energy in the warmth of the spring sunshine. The microbes of the gloomy ghetto crawl out, for that moment, from their stinking shelters..."*

Avant garde architects and activists responded to such criticism. Powered by waves of 1930s modernism, they started to suggest "Le Corbusian" solutions and designs to Warsaw. "Functional Warsaw" ("Warszawa funkcjonalna") scheme developed for CIAM 4 (1933) by Jan Chmielewski & Szymon Syrkus and later served as an inspiration to the post-war design of Warsaw.

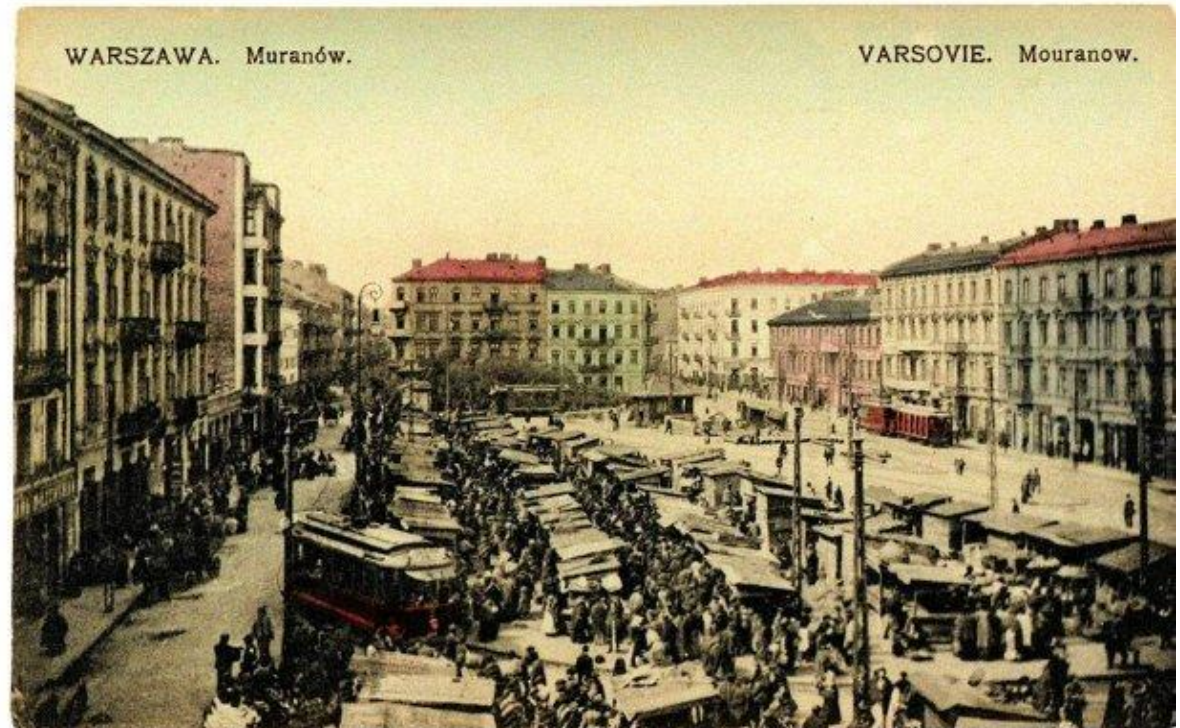


**"Warszawa funkcjonalna".**  
 Plans include a major North-South artery,  
 and high rise separated buildings

On the other hand, people who lived in Nalewki or Grzybowski square perceived these tenements as the environment of their childhood and liked them, and much memoir-like literature have been written about it by Polish Jewish authors, either before World War II or after, by those who survived.

This crowded environment with intensive mixed use urban life also created unique lively atmosphere. A collective study, "Warszawa", published by the city hall in 1929 describes the place bustling with energy:

*"... a district which pulsates with more life than any other district of Warsaw... of petty trading and cottage industry in countless Jewish families... What a bustle there is here, what a powerful living current... Every tenement is posted all over with shop signs, all the courtyards are surrounded by four-story outbuildings, and work goes on in all of them: ties, artificial flowers, wallets, boxes, bags... noise, uproar, haste pulses through these great multi-courtyard tenements, for here wealth is created, here capital grows... this district does not live but bursts with cunning, ingenuity, hard work, undoubtedly greater than in other districts. Streams of people pour by..."*



Plac Muranowski – Market and transportation hub in Jewish Muranów

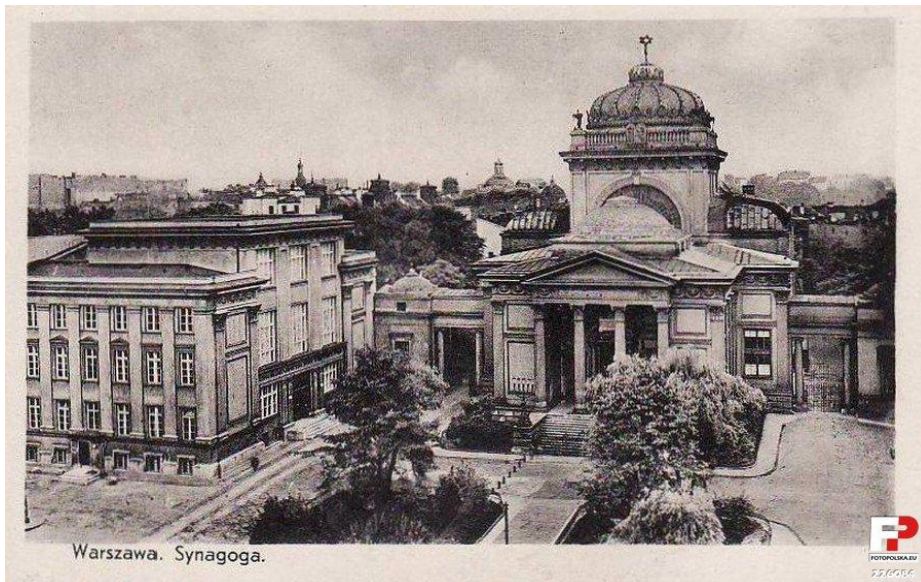


A courtyard in Nalewki area - example for a bustling mixed use to a level of a building

The bustling commercial activity together with a rich urban landscape made Warsaw a leading capital in Europe and in the world. In the 1930s it was known as “Paris of the north”. Jewish life, especially in Muranów, was a core part of the city, not only in terms of commerce, but also in its contribution to culture. On the eve of World War II, Warsaw population reached almost 1,300,000 people, 23 percent of them Jewish.



Trade yard in Nalewki Street – 120 shops and 47 crafts



The Great Synagogue of Warsaw in Tłomackie Street – symbol of the rich Jewish heritage, on Muranow edge

## World War II

While the era before World War II (“Pre-war”) characterizes in life and growth, World War II is characterized in an ‘industrial’ destruction of Warsaw, especially the Jewish districts. The destruction of Warsaw by the Nazis was a pre-war plan.

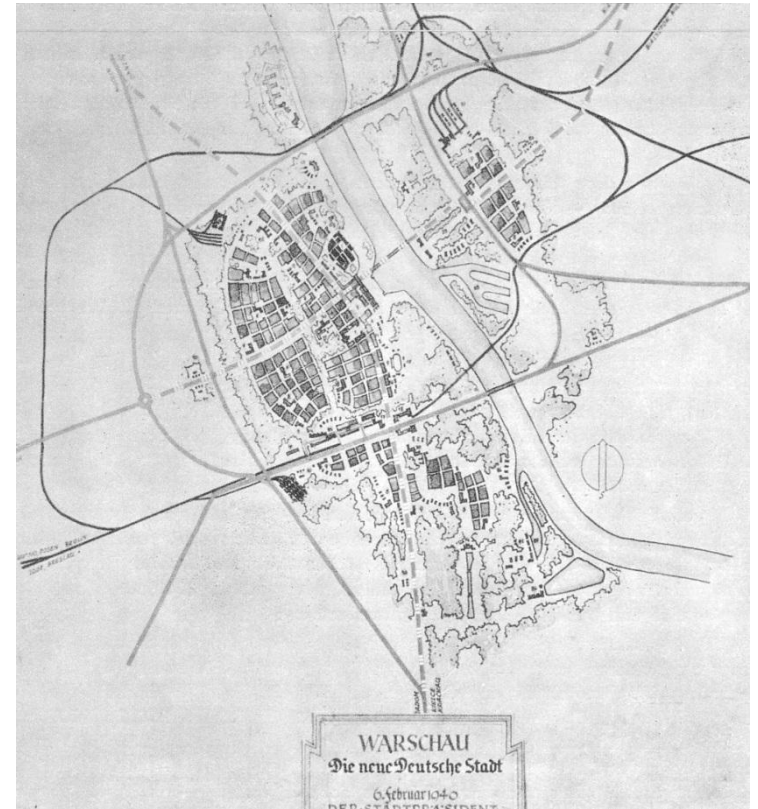
Pabst Plan, prepared between 1935 and 1942 was aimed at building a Nazi model town for 130,000 residents that will replace the existing city.

Damage to the city occurred already in September 1939 following heavy bombings of whole Warsaw. But the true unprecedented damage was concentrated in the Jewish districts. The Nazis who occupied Warsaw forced the Jews to build a wall surrounding their district, thus creating the Ghetto. Jews from other part of the city and from places outside Warsaw were forced to move into the Ghetto. The Ghetto consisted of 4 square kilometers of the city and almost 500,000 people were forced to stay in it - 125,000 people per square kilometer “living” in horrible conditions of hunger, illness, fear, despair and death.

The Ghetto boundary was changed several times but during the whole period had two main sections – the northern “large” part in current Muranów, and the southern “small” part. Due to the tremendous density in apartments, people spent much time outside – walking to nowhere or trying to survive by smuggling or trading the little they had for food.

Life in the Ghetto were summarized by Jan Karski:

*“It wasn’t humanity. It was a hell”.*



**“Pabst Plan” –  
Warsaw as a Nazi model  
town for 130,000 residents**

Important events affecting Warsaw Jewish areas and Muranów neighborhood during WWII:



- 7.8.1940  
Special area for Jews
- 2.10.1940  
Ghetto building order
- 15.11.1940  
Ghetto Closing
- Mid 1941  
~500,000 people in the Ghetto
- From the end of 1941  
Division to "Large" and "Small"
- 26.1.1942  
Bridge above Chłodna
- 22.7.1942 – 12.9.1942  
(Tisha Beav - Yom Kipur)  
Deportation of 300,000 people to Treblinka
- 18-21.1.1943  
January deportation and first resistance
- 19.4.1943 (Passover Eve) – 16.5.1943  
Ghetto Uprising  
(demolition of the Great Synagogue)





Life in Warsaw Ghetto – the wall and the bridge above Chlodna St. connecting the “Large” and “Small” parts of the Ghetto; building the wall; death on the streets – a daily sight; a toilet seat in one of the hideout places

Following the Warsaw Ghetto uprising the Nazis performed systematic demolition of all buildings of the Ghetto.

*“Warsaw has to be pacified, that is, razed to the ground”*

Adolf Hitler, 1944

*“The city must completely disappear from the surface of the earth and serve only as a transport station for the Wehrmacht. No stone can remain standing. Every building must be razed to its foundation.”*

Heinrich Himmler, 1944

The symbol of the destruction was the explosion of the great synagogue in May 1943.



**Bottom: Demolished Tłomackie Synagogue**

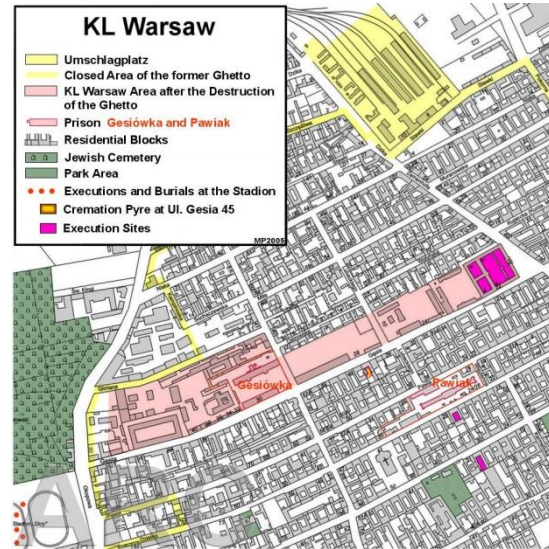


**Nazi soldiers on the background of a burning house in Muranów**



**Middle: Capturing of survivors who stayed in basements during the Ghetto uprising**

In summer 1943 the Nazis built a concentration camp (Konzentrationslager Warschau or KL Warsaw) in Muranów for workers recycling building material in demolished Muranów. Located on the site of the prison on Gęsia Street, the place was unofficially called Gęsiówka (literally: 'Goose Farm').



Important events in “KL Warsaw”:

19.7.1943

August - November 1943, Spring 1944

April 1944

27.7.1944

Completion of building the prisoners camp. capacity: 5000 prisoners

Transports of thousands of Jews into camp

Sub-camp of Majdanek. 2,180 Jewish & 2,439 Polish workers recycling building material

Camp evacuation

In 1.8.1944 the Warsaw uprising started.

The Nazis left Warsaw not before January 1945.

World War II Fatalities in Poland: Jewish: 2.7-3 million. Polish: 2-3 million.



Bundesarchiv - Bild 146-1994-054-30  
Foto: Arens | 1944 September - Oktober

**Fighters of the Polish Uprising after liberation**

## War aftermath – “Tabula Rasa”

WWII added yet another meaningful physical layer to Muranów – rubble.

Besides the awful humane loss resulting from mass murder of the innocent, the physical destruction in Warsaw was shocking. 85% of the buildings were destroyed. 10,455 buildings lost, including 923 historical buildings (94%), 25 churches, 14 libraries including the National Library, 81 primary schools and 64 high schools.



1946 photo of St. Augustine church – a lonely surviving building in an ocean of rubble in north Muranów - a symbol of the complete destruction of the northern areas of Warsaw, where the Jewish neighborhoods used to be

War aftermath deserves its own title, as the rubble that once was the buildings and life of the city was left in Muranów, as we shall see in the next section. Thus, this layer of brick piles and basements still exists as physical layer affecting the area today.



Warsaw, August 1947 Photographs by Henry N. Cobb

Post War – Communist Rebuilding

The postwar reconstruction of Warsaw relied heavily on the "Functional Warsaw" ("Warszawa funkcjonalna") scheme developed for CIAM 4 by Jan Chmielewski & Szymon Syrkus (presented on page 12) and the resulting street-sidewalk-green space prototype that differed greatly from the prewar model, in most cases was not motivated by any desire to "erase" any perceived "Jewish" qualities of the prewar urban fabric. Rather, it was a combination of fulfilling prewar functionalist ideals combined with emerging social realist planning practices. In addition, in the case of Muranów specifically, it was a cost- and time-saving measure: to build as quickly as possible much-needed housing in the demolished city without clearing away all the rubble.

The first housing complexes built in Muranów after the war and designed by Chmielewski specifically made this claim: saving the remains of the destroyed Muranów - the former Jewish neighborhood and ghetto site during the Nazi occupation constituted a memorial act to the lives and the city that were lost. Thus, these first residential blocks were elevated on a podium (like the Parthenon on the Athenian acropolis) - which provided a new datum for the new postwar "ground level" and, ironically, became structurally problematic within a few years due to the instability of the actual ground.



Warsaw rebuilding project

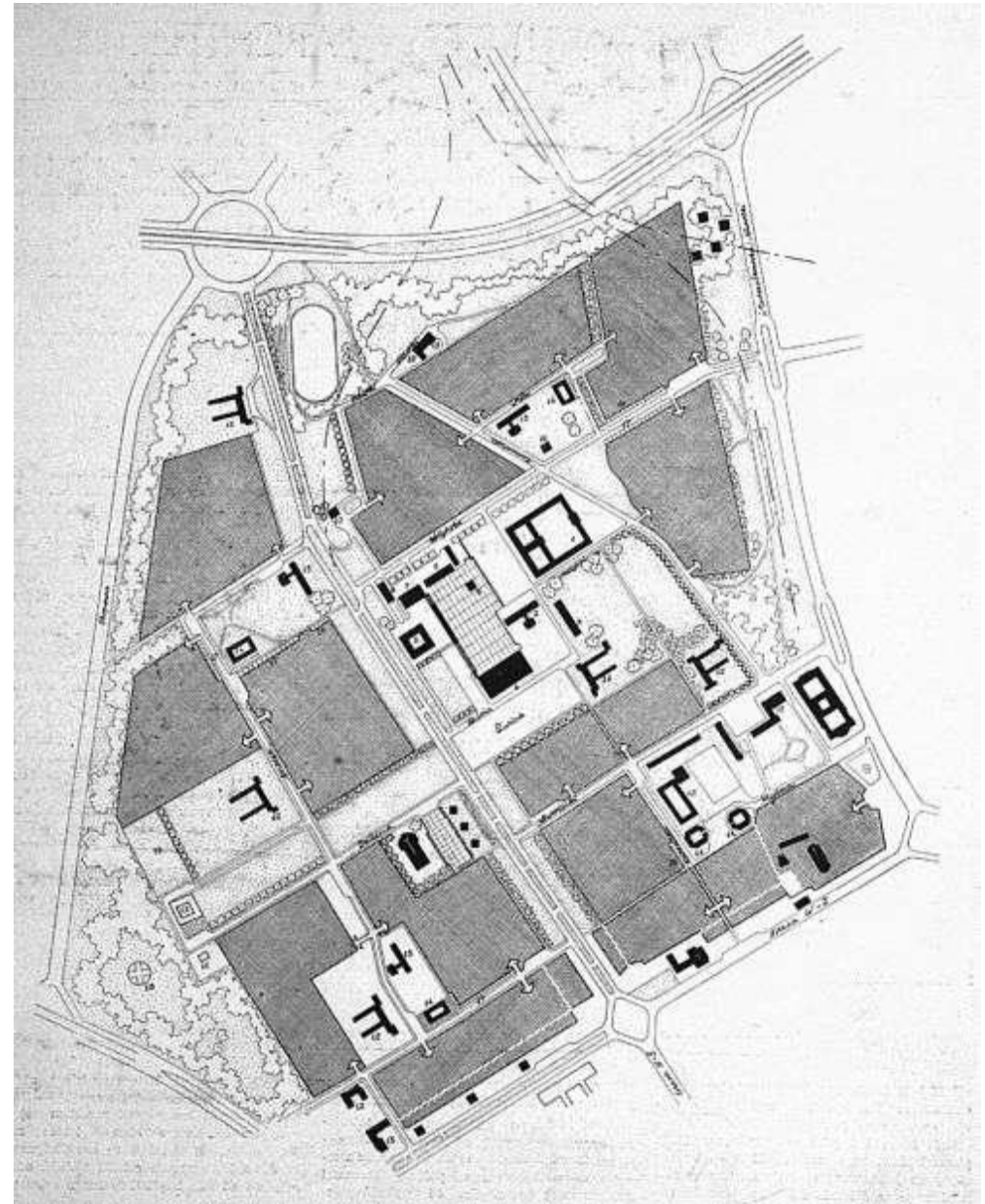


Reusing building material in Nalewki St., May 1947

Another post-war modernist architect that immensely shaped post-war Muranow was Bohdan Lachert. As the designer of post-war Muranów, Lachert hated the pre-war dense tenements. He planned an open estate preserving old streets and blocks grid and leaving bricks and basements in place. His idea was to create a “Phoenix from the ashes”, and envisaged the area as a form of “monument of the ghetto to live in it”. His decision was also largely economical and utilitarian. The rubble was used for landscaping works - building terraces and slops - and for prefabricating blocks of concrete to be used as building material.



“Technical Council” of new city planners  
Bohdan Lachert on the left

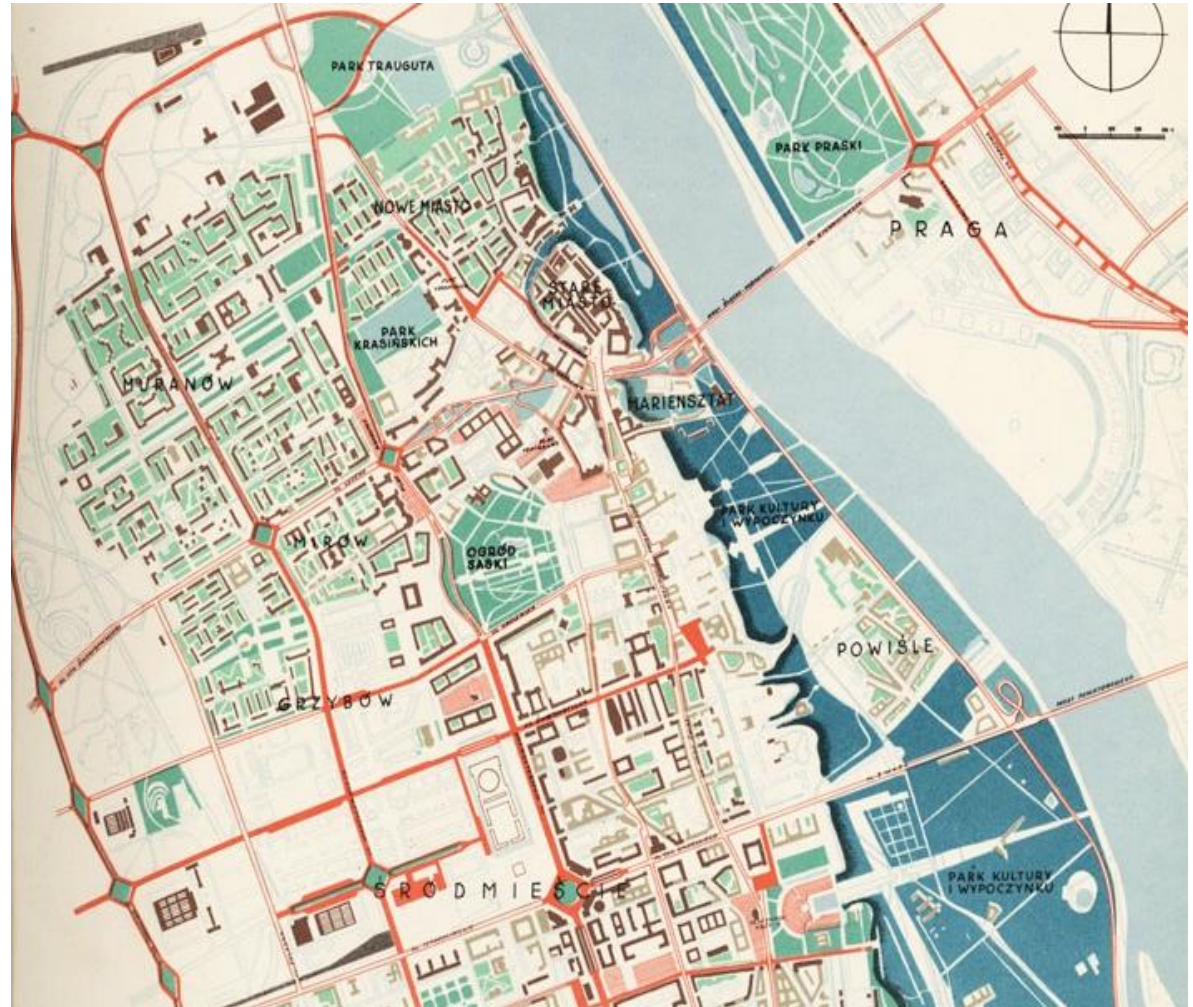


Bohdan Lachert’s plan for post-war reconstruction of Muranów.

By 1955-56, the social realist "ethos" (in terms of language if not entirely in terms of form) became the dominant (only legitimate) planning practice and stylistic vocabulary. The practices eventually deemed "ideologically acceptable" were consistent with the inter-war Polish avant-garde approaches and only took on the external appearances of socialist realism as dictated by the political regime in the mid-1950s.

Technical reasons also caused the estate - however new and different - to be planned more or less in keeping with the old street network with its still operational plumbing and the other infrastructure. Consequently, the overall urban layout of the district was somehow preserved. Even so, the new Muranów of the late 1940s, which continued to be developed in the 1950s and 1960s, embodied a complete reversal of the local tradition.

What had been before the war a unique combination of tradition and private investment resulting in a building freedom became after the war a planned, rationally organized whole, subordinated to the common good and oriented toward meeting social rather than individual needs.



1949 Six years master plan for Warsaw. The “green” modernist plan for Muranów with the typical modernist residential blocks can be clearly seen.





As opposed to Muranów, which was rebuilt in a modernist style, Warsaw Old Town (Stare Miasto) which was heavily damaged during the war, was reconstructed in order to bring it back to its prewar glory.

It became a UNESCO world Heritage site for this reconstruction effort, and today it serves as a major attraction among visitors.



*“The reconstruction of Warsaw’s historical centre was a major contributor to the changes in the doctrines related to urbanization and conservation of urban development in most of the European countries after the destruction of World War II. Simultaneously, this example illustrates the effectiveness of conservation activities in the second half of the 20th Century, which permitted the integral reconstruction of the complex urban ensemble.”*  
UNESCO World Heritage List Website



Do we want Muranów areas to be reconstructed in a similar manner..?



## Post Communist Era – from 1990s

The turn from communism to democracy brought freedom and spirits of entrepreneurship, investments, young intellectuals and contemporary high rise architecture.

In the last 20 years development is concentrated in Warsaw CBD and along main traffic routes such as Aleja Jana Pawla II. These are being strongly utilized economically. A model of a post-socialist city is dominating in Warsaw, so phenomena such as 'wild' privatization, growth of land speculation, or a decrease of planning office's influence are visible, with little regard to the past or to the right of the former inhabitants of these spaces - either victims or survivors and their descendants - to be symbolically present in these spaces on equal rights.

Nevertheless, much infill building and new construction occurred over the period 1993-now is far different than what was originally planned and built after the war and left undisturbed until after the end of the Cold War. The more recent infill projects seek to achieve (intentionally or not) a smoothing down of the rather "soul-less" social realist voids and produce a more textured urban fabric more consistent with western European models and totally shift the "reading" one gets from these less hospitable urban schemes characteristic of the '50s and '60s.

This development process currently skips the core areas of Muranów, especially its north-eastern area.



Contemporary high rise buildings in Warsaw CBD – north of the main train station, and south of the former Jewish district and Muranów

## Pre-war, post-war and Current – timeline visual journey – North-East Muranów

Pre-war (1935), post-war (1945) and current (2012) views of north-eastern Muranów.

In 1935: The characteristic maze-like sight of the courtyard tenement house blocks is well seen. Plac Muranowski, an important commerce and transportation hub, is seen in the middle upper part of the photo. Nalewki St., an important urban artery, stretches south. The Diagonal street is Zamenhofa. The disguised area on the upper left part is the railway tracks that will later serve the Umschlagplatz – the deportation square. Note how building blocks actually shape the streets.

1945 photo shows the vast devastation of the neighborhood.

2012 photo shows the dramatic spatial change the area has undergone. In this part of Warsaw both streets layout and building shapes changed. Muranów was rebuilt after the war in modern / socialist realism architectural style, characterized by long residential slabs nestled in large open areas. Note that current streets are no longer shaped by building lines. Streets are merely lines between almost arbitrarily located buildings, containing roads for cars and separate paths for pedestrians. The whole meaning of streets in Muranów has changed after the war.



Pre-war, post-war and Current –  
timeline visual journey – Waliców St.

Pre-war (1935), post-war (1945) and current (2012)  
views of Waliców st. area.

Note the four courtyard tenement houses in the middle  
of the photos, that survived the war. Two of them are  
currently half demolished.



In specific points, remains of buildings or fragments of the ghetto wall emerge. These isolated monuments serve as a sad reminder to the erasure of the past, blending with contemporary development which itself contradicts post-war ideologies, affecting the built environment again, currently limited to Muranów edges.



Remaining fragment of the Ghetto Wall behind Złota St.



One of the few remaining prewar buildings. Walicow St.

Residential blocks nestled in greenery still dominate Muranów environment today. This urban but suburban like area reminds nothing of the pre-war past. Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak best describe this situation in the epilog of their book “The Warsaw Ghetto – A guide to the perished city”:

*“The place where the ghetto used to be is empty; even though it is built up, it is bare and dead, although life goes on there at a fast pace. The place survived, but was somehow hollowed out, deprived of contents, an interior. The ghetto that was here was exterminated but the “here” remains, screened by the presence of today’s Muranów. The framework remains within which a different reality is located; a topographical point remains, a cartographical abstraction.*”



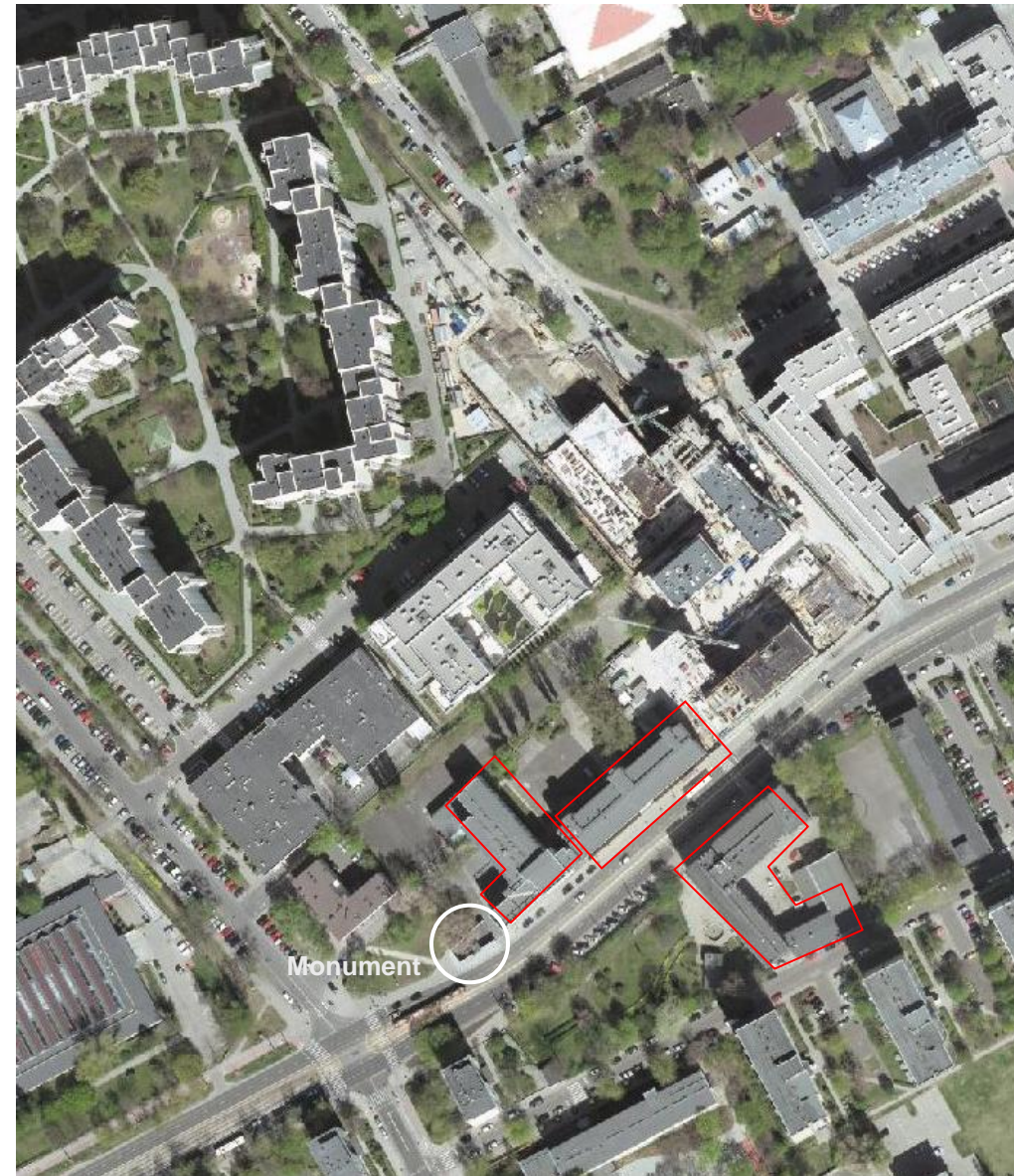
*The area of the Warsaw ghetto is today almost entirely deprived of physical traces that might aid our memory. The people were wiped out, and the area – the physical substance of this palace – was also exterminated. The ghetto now only exists under the asphalt of the Muranów streets, under the sidewalks, under the squares in the courtyards, under the school playgrounds, under the kindergarten courtyards, under the terraces of piled-up rubble that are now grown over with grass, under the poplars, limes, and sycamores, which are exceptionally luxuriant in this district. That is where you can find the roofs of cellars covered with rubble and earth – the strong ghetto roots of memory.” (P.810).*

# SITE » Historical Cultural Background » Current Status

Former Umschlagplatz, where 300,000 Jews were deported to die in Treblinka death camp, is an example of commemoration and prewar void.



A vast compound that could deliver a significant troubled times experience was turned into another plot of high rise apartment buildings and unrelated green area. Tiny monument area does not deliver any meaningful feeling.





Dr. Angelika Lasiewicz-Sych summarizes this notion in Stacja Muranów project website:

*“A dull space between apartment buildings, it reveals absolutely no link with the past... The traditional “living” atmosphere of Muranów with its specific shops, restaurants and meeting places has been vanished and nothing comparable has been created in its stead. It is almost as if the new town was mourning the dead one.”*

*“Squares turn like cobras,  
houses stand like peacocks,  
give me any old stone,  
and I'll be back in my city. ”*

*“They drink sea water, crying:  
'lemonade!' returning home  
secretly to vomit”*

**ADAM WAZYK**  
“Nowa Kultura” (Warsaw),  
August 21, 1955.



As it seems in 2014, speculative development affects Warsaw extensively, focusing on CBD areas where land values are highest. Even municipal authorities put their effort on the center of the city, where towers pop up rapidly. In Muranów no significant project is currently planned, and the Jewish Museum is the only significant addition to the neighborhood. North of Muranów an area of office buildings and commercial centers is developing, leaving the neighborhood in its void.



**“TO BE IN HERE, IS TO BE AT THE TOP OF THE GAME”**  
A new tower being built in the CBD



**Future plans for Warsaw CBD. Warsaw Municipal office**

## General

When speaking about values in Muranów, we should take into account values from at least three different eras (Pre-war, war aftermath and post-war), which present non-existing as well as existing layers. The important values of non-existing pre-war Muranów are identified in order to serve as guidelines and generators for suggested urban revival master plan for the neighborhood. Identifying values in current built environment is important in order to preserve them in the suggested process. Therefore, while the historical part of this document was organized by timeline and periods, the following section will be organized by types of values, and values from relevant eras will be mentioned.

## Urban design and landscape

### Pre-war

#### Dense built environment

Large urban blocks comprised of adjacent plots for buildings, serving as a base for a bustling and varied city life.



1936 plan of Muranów showing the adjacent plots and urban blocks

### Streets with defined edges/facades

Continuous facades created by the adjacent building blocks formed distinct street experience



Elektoralna St. Before World War I.  
Continuous street facades were evolved in the 18th century.

### Mixed-use development

Mixed use, a dream of any urban planner and designer today, vastly existed to a level of a building, and together with rich commercial streets and dominant squares, created a unique urban vitality. Even when the area turned into a Ghetto, life momentum continued when endless local initiatives supporting the poor could be contained in this tissue. This very same dense built environment enabled people finding hiding places in Ghetto times and rebellions. This urban feature was largely supported by the courtyard tenement houses scheme, which will be described in the aesthetic and architectural section.



Graniczna Street before First World War.  
Photo taken from Grzybowski Square

## War aftermath

War left two significant layers in Muranów, which turn the neighborhood into a large potential archeological site.

### Basements layer

Basements of buildings were not demolished after WWII and remain as a subterranean layer in Muranów. In addition to their architectural aspect, they hold a significant historical story and narrative related to hideout places during the Ghetto period and the uprising events.



Left: A basement turned into an equipped hiding place.  
Right: Fighter released from a hiding place

### Rubble Layer

Rubble was left in its place from both economical reasons (reuse of material and high cost of transporting it to another place) and commemorative reasons. Some of the buildings in Muranów estate are literally built on rubble. In other places rubble makes the foundation of landscape design of the current lush neighborhood.



Left: Muranów in rubble. In the background: St. Augustine church that survived the war. Right: Buildings of Muranów estate elevated on rubble layer

## Post-war

Post-war communist-modernist urban design of Muranów demonstrates almost the opposite approach of pre-war Muranów. If pre-war Muranów was an extreme version of dense continuous urban design, post-war Muranów is an extreme version of a sparse suburb like design, a magnificent manifestation of the modernist approach, which has its own values to preserve.

### **Sparse built environment**

Design based on abundant space between buildings allows large public spaces rich with vegetation, as opposed to the overcrowded vegetation-less pre-war environment.



**Green public open spaces between building blocks**

### **Wide Streets and Avenues**

Wide streets and avenues allow easy commuting and support various means of transportation such as tram lines. They can also serve as a venue for large crowd events. They are scalable and flexible for upgrades and adjustments.



**North-Eastern Muranów – wide streets, green open areas and main Andersa Avenue – 64 meters wide**



Current residential blocks in Nowolipki Street

### Massive Residential blocks

Large scale residential blocks dominate the neighborhood and serve as a typical fulfillment of modernist socialist public housing approach. Simple and functional dwelling units nestled in rows and stacked to form distinct blocks which create yet another type of edge to the streets.

### Pre-war and post-war sample sections

Following image demonstrates the values of each era – Dense built environment with building courtyards and narrow streets as opposed to sparse large building blocks separated by wide streets and avenues rich with vegetation.

1935



2012



Sample north-south sections taken west of Zamenhofa St. south of the present Jewish Museum

## The combination of pre-war and post-war approaches

The combination of the contradicting pre-war and post-war urban values, when stacked one upon each other, emphasizes values of each era and enhances the notion of aiming to a “hybrid” tissue as the base for intervention, as will be further discussed later.



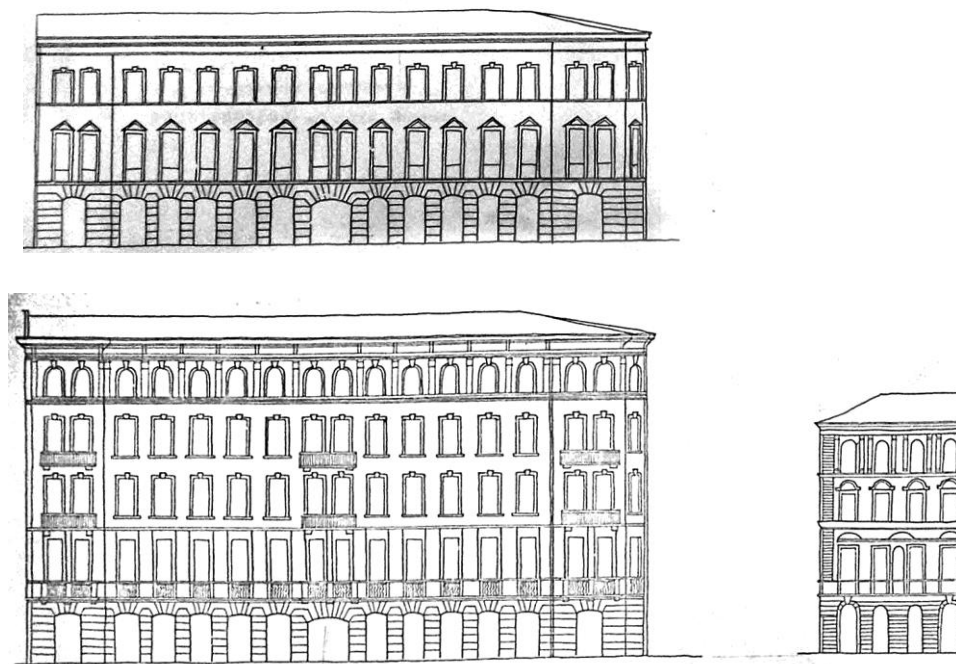
Built up areas of Warsaw – prewar tissue (red) and current buildings (blue)

## Aesthetic and Architectural

Pre-war

### Typical Neo Classical facades

Rich decorated facades characterized Warsaw buildings and Muranów in particular. They symbolized the healthiness of their owner. But this is where fine architecture ended – facades facing the inner court had simple plain walls.



Sketches of Prozna 14 facades

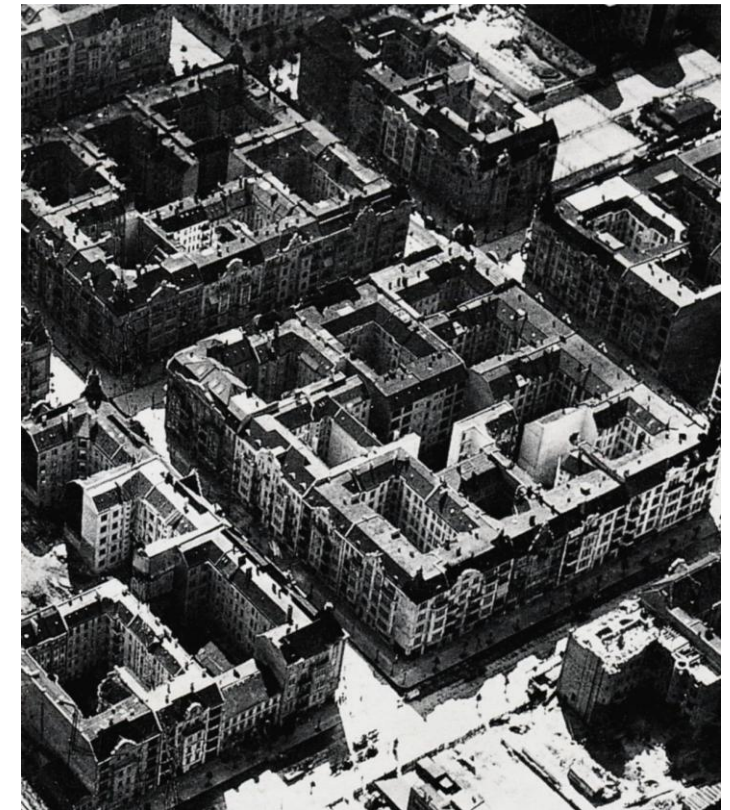


Apartment building in Nowolipie 66, 1938



### Courtyard Tenement House

Warsaw tenement house was modeled on the Berlin prototype – the “Berlin Mietskaserne” or “Berlin Mietshaus” as a microcosm of the mixed-use city (A city within a city within a city). Building blocks were square or rectangular containing inner courts that served as a miniature urban nerve system, surrounded by shops, workshops, restaurants, warehouses, inns and apartments.



“Berlin Mietskaserne” / “Berlin Mietshaus”, Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

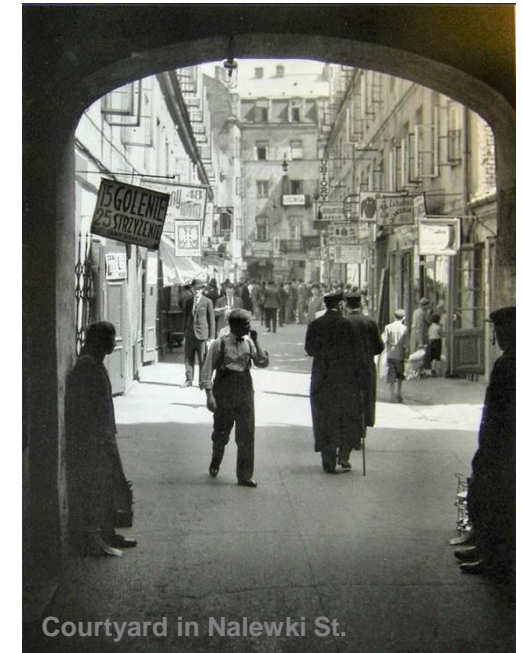


Courtyard in Nalewki St.



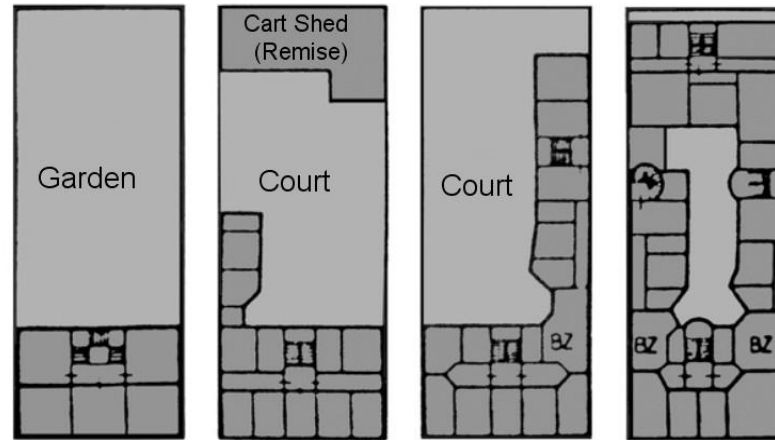
*“Every tenement is posted all over with shop signs, all the courtyards are surrounded by four-story outbuildings, and work goes on in all of them: ties, artificial flowers, wallets, boxes, bags... noise, uproar, haste pulses through these great multi-courtyard tenements”*

Warszawa city hall report, 1929

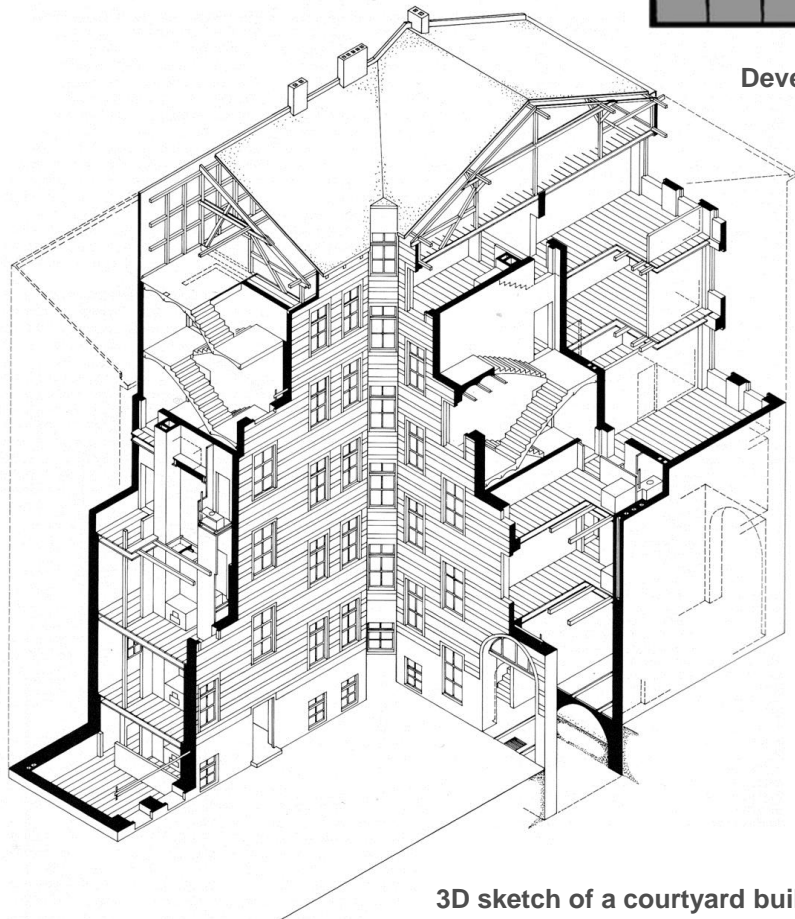


Courtyard in Nalewki St.





Development of the Courtyard Tenement House



3D sketch of a courtyard building

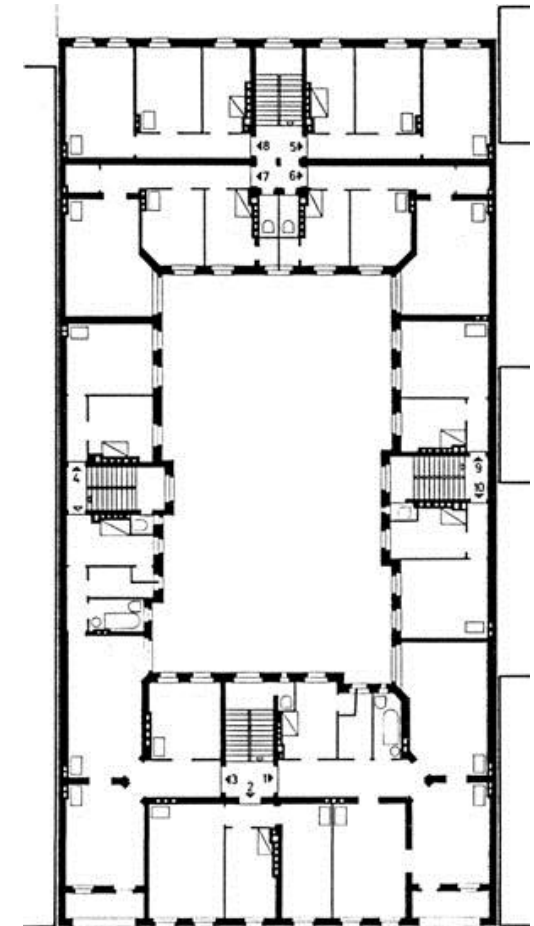
### Sample floor plan with 10 units

This model enables:

- Flexibility in floor arrangement – a flexible mix of various sizes of units for various purposes
- Maximizing number of dwellers in an era of rapid population growth

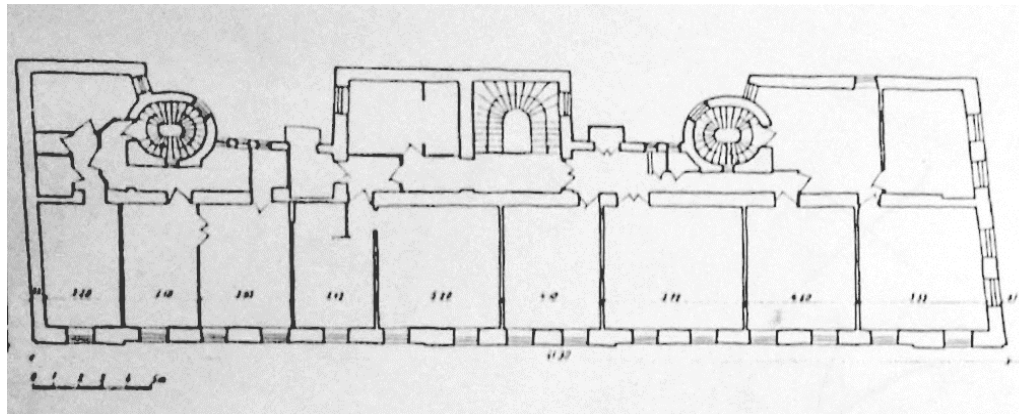
### Lack of air and sunlight

A notable disadvantage of this plan is the limited ability of sunlight and fresh air to penetrate rooms, especially in lower floors. This became a serious problem as density in the Jewish districts grew, and reached a deadly peak during the Ghetto period.

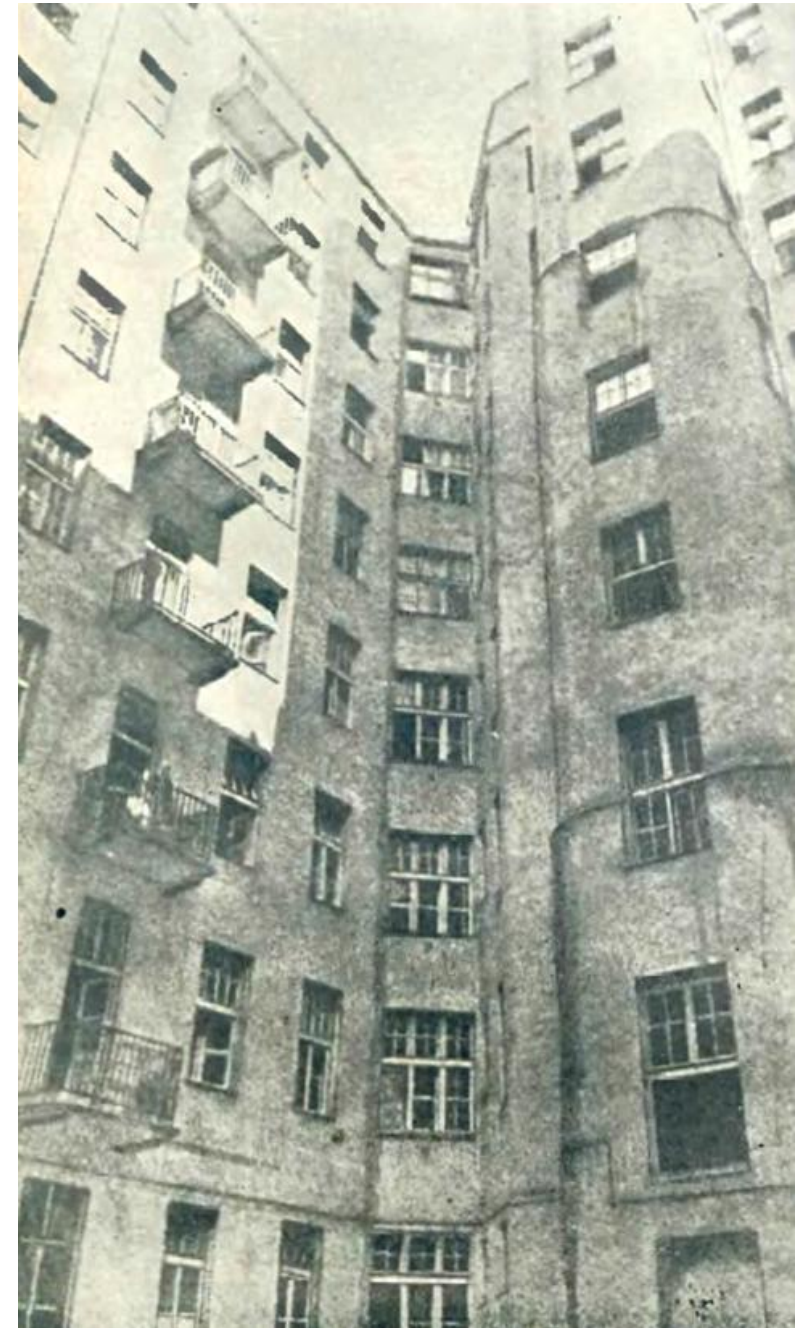




Próżna 9 – The courtyard of the neglected building. March 2014



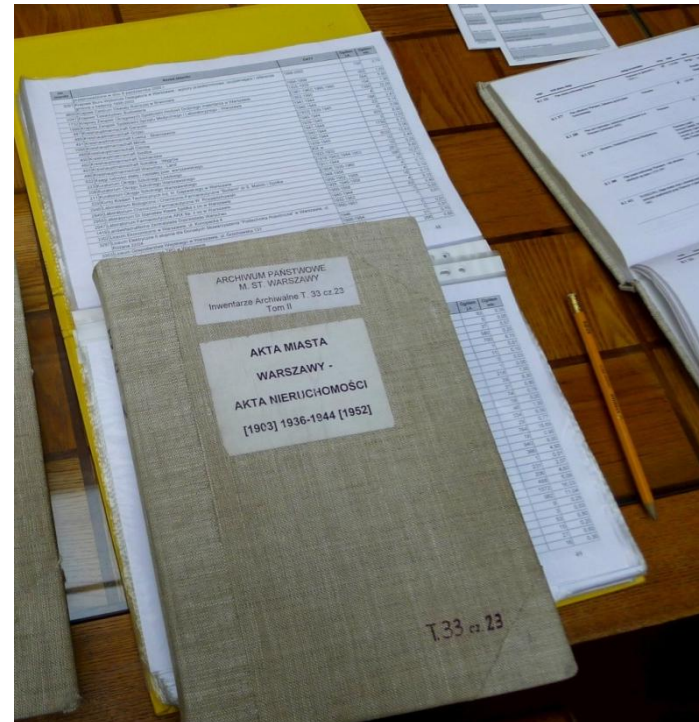
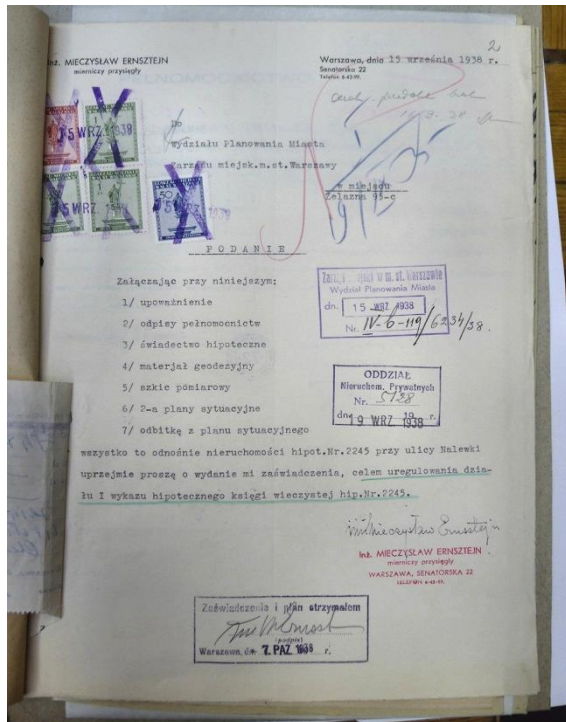
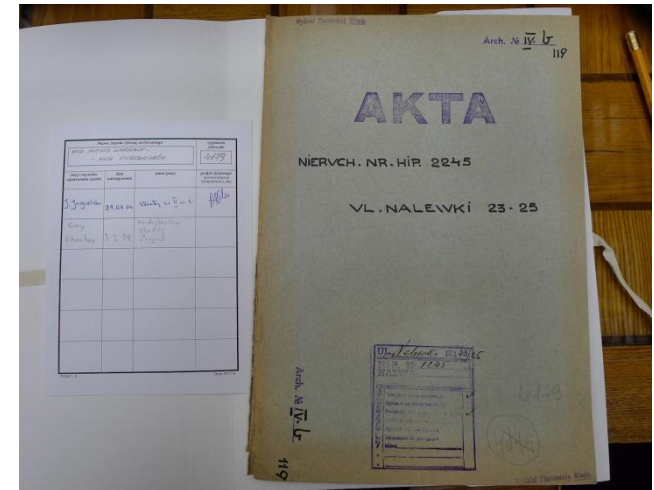
Próżna 9 Front floor plan. One of the few courtyard tenement houses that survived in Warsaw, located near Warsaw CBD.

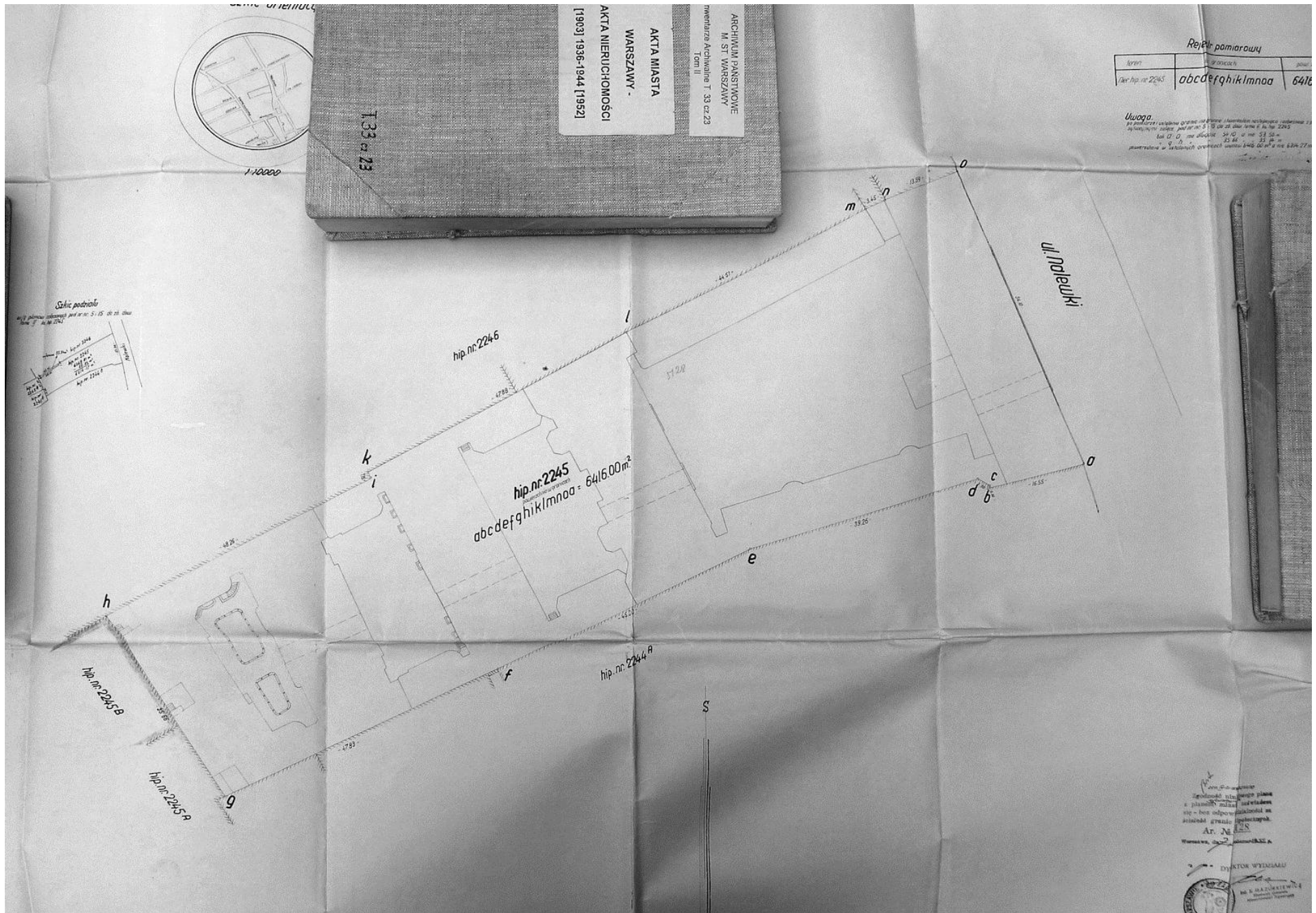


7 stories high tenement courtyard building

### Courtyard Tenement Houses of Nalewki Street - Research

In March 2014 a visit to Warsaw City Archives was conducted in order to collect information about houses of Nalewki St., core of the planning area. Only a handful of building portfolios survived the war, shedding some light on plans and development of houses before the war.



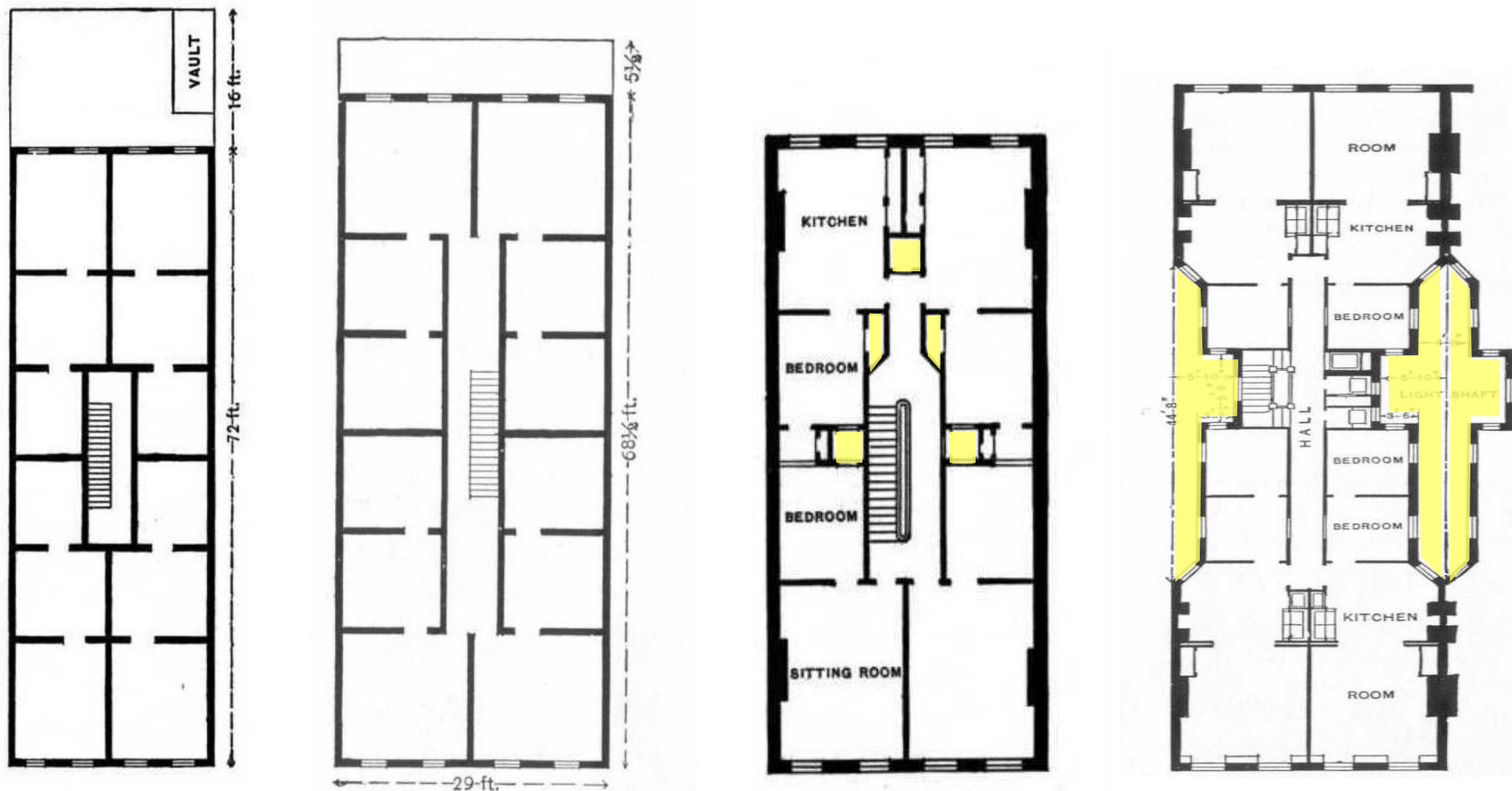


Concatenated yards of Nalewki 23-25



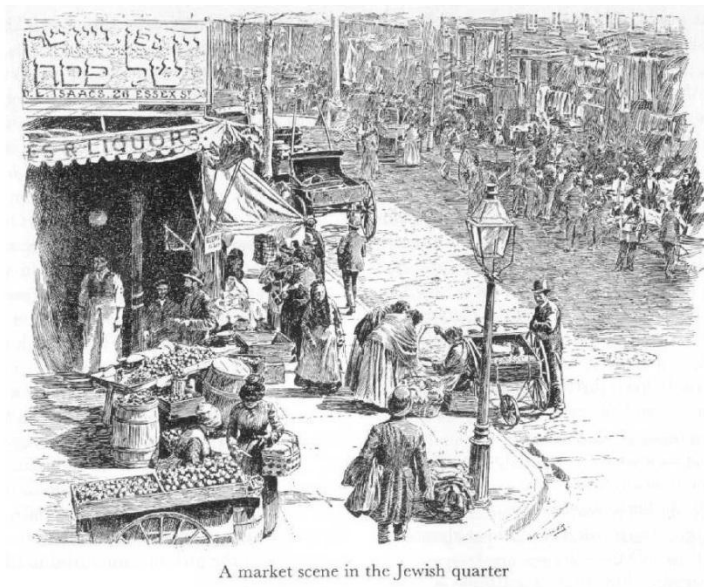
**Courtyard Tenement Houses - Manhattan Case – a comparative view**

It is interesting to explore the courtyard tenement house’s “cousin over the ocean” through the book “How the Other Half Lives”, published in New-York City at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the heyday of this type of building development in the industrialization era.



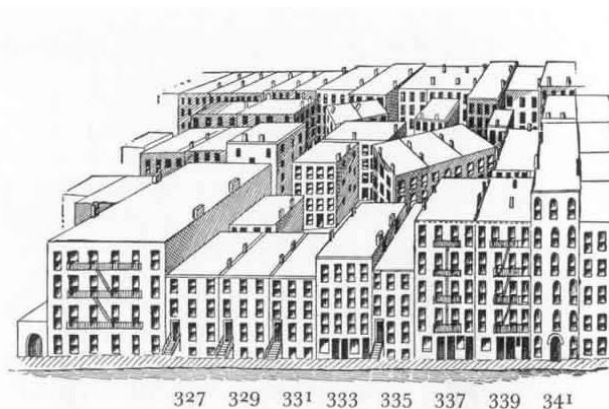
Development of the New York Courtyard Tenement house:  
From windowless rooms, through introduction of air shafts to current model with enlarged light-air shafts





A market scene in the Jewish quarter

**A market scene in “Jewtown” –  
Manhattan Lower East Side Jewish quarter**



**Bird's eye view of an  
East Side tenement block**



**The Barracks, Mott St. between Bleecker  
and Houston St. Lower Manhattan**



**Commercial scene in  
Jewish Muranów -  
Corner of Gesia and  
Nalewki**

**Lower Manhattan – Muranów  
Street Scene - a comparative view**

In addition to building characteristics, there is a notable similarity among urban design and street scenes in Manhattan and Muranów. Same bustling streets with continuous building blocks, with facades that share similar proportions in floor heights and windows organization.



**Warsaw, Nalewki 26**



“Knee-pants” – at forty-five cents a dozen – a Ludlow Street sweater’s shop, Manhattan

### A view to inner spaces

Warsaw buildings were mostly photographed from the outside, showing the richness of their facades. Inner spaces, where dense conditions in workshops and sights of poverty could be observed, were left out of reach of a camera.

Jacob A. Riis, photographer and author of “How the Other Half Lives” was deliberately seeking such sights.

Thus, we can have a clue about working conditions in tenement houses

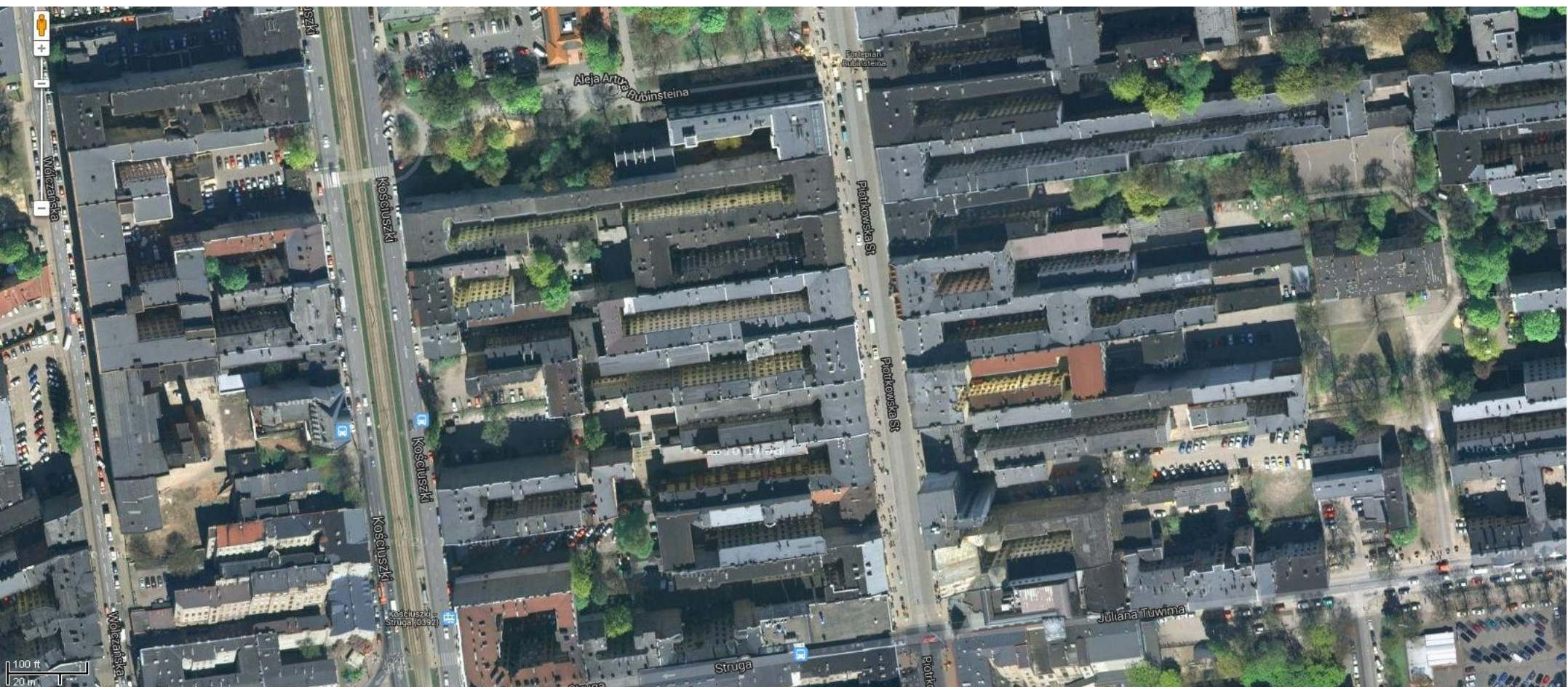
*The question is asked daily from the teacher's desk: "What must I do to be healthy?"  
and the whole school responds:  
"I must keep my skin clean,  
Wear clean clothes,  
Breathe pure air,  
And live in the sunlight."*



Warsaw – 1945 (Top) and 1935 (Bottom) – Postwar aerial photo is a sad aid in understanding inner plan of Warsaw courtyard tenement houses

### Courtyard Tenement Houses – the case of Łódź

Research in the Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH) in Warsaw led me to a visit in Łódź. Once a bustling industrial center with a notable German entrepreneurship and population, the city did not suffer in WWII as Warsaw did. As a matter of fact, its buildings remained intact. Its city center urban design is based on courtyard tenement houses. Walking in its main street, Piotrkowska in March 2014, entering the numerous courtyards, was an exciting experience that took me to prewar Warsaw.



Satellite image of Łódź center, where the topology of courtyard tenement houses can be clearly seen. (Google Maps, April 2014)

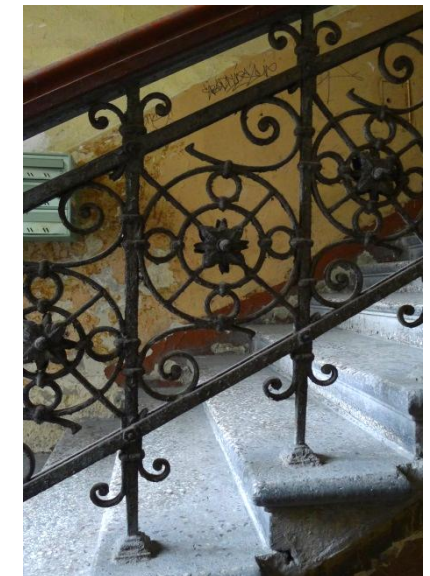
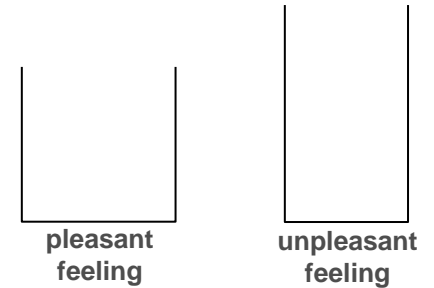


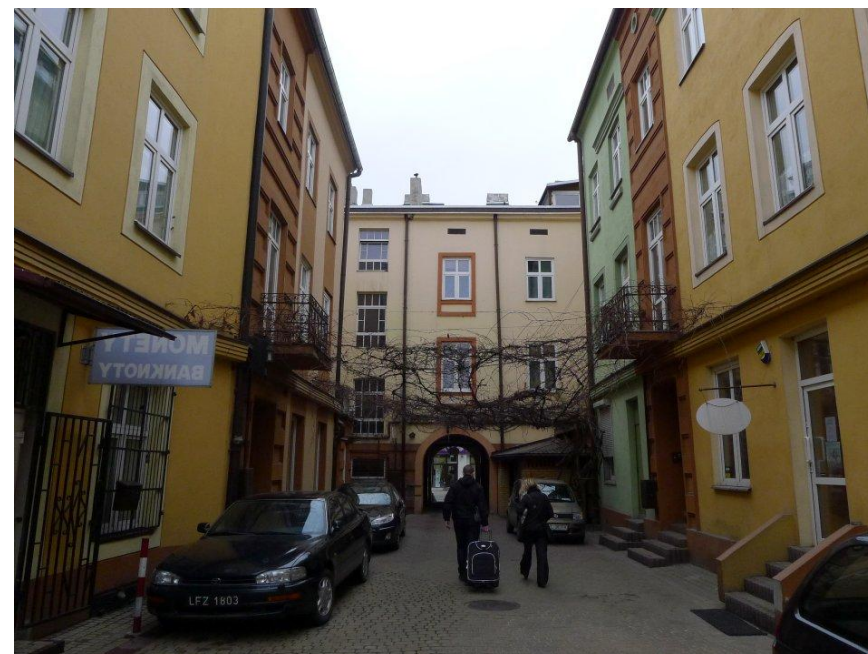
Courtyard of a building that was not renovated in many years. Cars manage to pass through the passage that links the main street to the courtyard and apartments are usable.



### Understanding courtyard section

Visiting numerous courtyards in Łódź was important in many aspects. One of them was to understand which courtyard sections works better than others. Looking at the width of the courtyard compared to the height of the surrounding buildings, I learned that a ration of  $\sim 1:1$  gave the most pleasant feeling in the courtyard.





Most courtyard buildings along Piotrkowska Street are renovated.  
Cars still park in some, but others turned into attractive spaces with cafes, restaurants and shops





Typical courtyard plan as seen when looking from the bottom of a courtyard, up. Niches on corners allow additional light and air into corner apartments

**Basements as direct remnants from the past**

Since in Warsaw remains of basements are the main relics from prewar Warsaw, it was exciting to find active basements in courtyard tenement houses of Łódź. Back then, an opening from the street enabled supply of coal to the basement. Nowadays these spaces are used for general storage, and some of them were turned into shops, like this antique book shop.





## Post-war

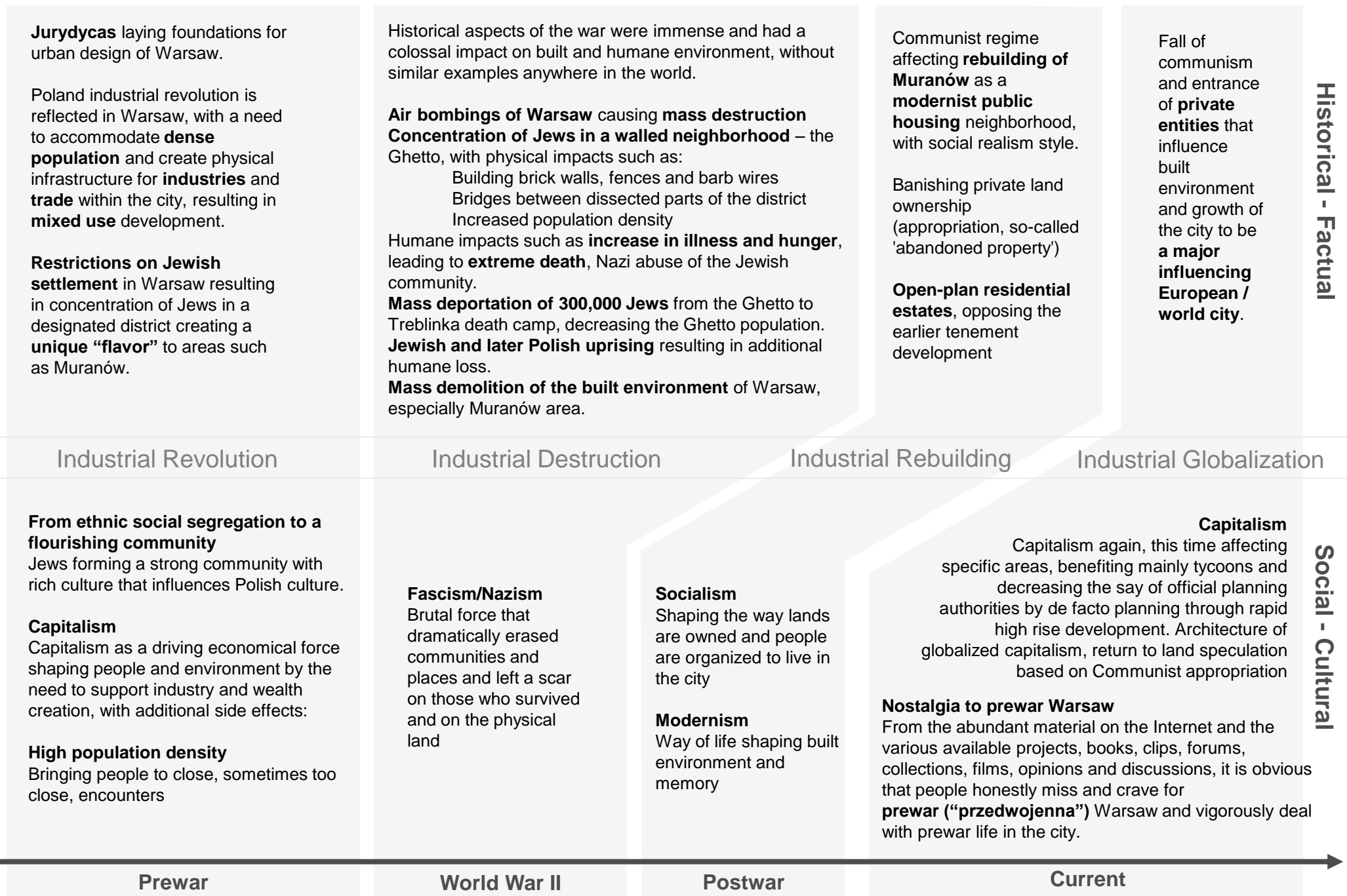
### Social Realism

Socialist realism was an official Communist doctrine used by the pro-Soviet government of the postwar People's Republic of Poland. The policy was enforced between 1949 and 1956 and architecture became a key "weapon" in the creation of a new social order. Elaborations and decorations created a controversial added value to the new massive building blocks.

*"... after the beginning of construction followed a period of socialist realism and interventions of the third parties that in the authoritative way claimed the conception of socrealism architecture"*

Bohdan Lachert, 1976





**lively** capitalism  
 culture neoclassic  
 mixed use commerce  
 private bustling  
 details



**density**  
 poverty cold  
 hunger death  
 segregation illness  
 walls **captivity**  
 smuggling



debris  
**rubble**  
**Tabula rasa**



**social realism**  
**sparsity** socialism  
 common  
 gardens modernism  
 residential  
**zoning**



intellectual  
 contemporary  
**human capital**  
 young growth  
 capitalism  
 global investments



**Prewar**

**World War II**

**Postwar**

**Current**

# SITE » Declaration of Significance

Formalizing the different significance aspects in Muranów and Warsaw as a whole must be done through a multi-layered and multi dimensional (including the time dimension) approach.

Considering the time dimension, each era affecting the area had its own contribution in forming the area by building, destructing and rebuilding it again, shaping the physical as well as the humane environment:

Prewar development created urban qualities that serve as a model to contemporary urban design approaches, and nestled a flourishing community that left an important legacy and tradition.

War destruction erased but left noticeable traces that turned the area into a huge archeological site containing building basements with traces of life and rubble which directly implies to the traumatic history.

Postwar rebuilding contributed a totally different urban approach shaping the area again, with some values as well.

In addition to physical values, in such a place, most physical aspects directly imply for historical facts and arouse memories stories and narratives of those periods.

To summarize, values are physical, factual and narrative. In addition, the stacking of layers (from the three type mentioned above) has its own “mega value”, as confronting those layers one against each other creates a noticeable value of its own – the extremes that this area has undergone, not seen in any other place in the world to this extent.



## Remembering the Ghetto

Immediately after the war, the operation to rebuild the city started. Architecture and urban design characteristics were different in various parts of the city. The old city was reconstructed to bring it back to its glorious day, as if nothing happened during the war. In Muranów, a totally different approach was led by planners, especially Bohdan Lachert. His aim was to leave traces of the deadly events, by building upon leveled layers of rubble. Bohdan Lachert wrote in Muranów:

*“The history of the great victory of the nation, paid for through a sea of human blood, poured out for the sake of social progress and national liberation, will be commemorated in the Muranów project. ... The building of a new residential district in Muranów for the working class, on a mound of rubble, will testify to the emergence of a new life on the old ruins of social relations, on an area that commemorates the great barbarity of Nazism and the heroism of the Ghetto fighters.”*

(Dzielnica mieszkaniowa, Architektura Nr. 5 1949).

Additional articles published about Muranów recognized Lachert’s attempt to capture the ghetto as a “symbol of human tragedy and human bestiality”. (Meng, 2008. p.127)



Ghetto Heroes Monument by Nathan Rapoport commemorating Ghetto uprising warriors . The memorial was built during the “Tabula Rasa” period between 1946 and 1948.

In April 1948, the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes was inaugurated, commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943. The monument, designed by Nathan Rapoport, is located near the building that used to be the last location of the Judenrat.

Following the inauguration of the monument Lachert wrote:

*“The grim atmosphere of this great mausoleum, erected among a cemetery of ruins, soaked with the blood of the Jewish nation, should remain, as new life comes into existence. The architectural project, carried out in the rebuilding of Muranów, should not reduce these artistic elements, which the sculptor Rapoport created through a magnificent sculpture of bronze and granite ... The ruins, in the largest possible amount, should remain in place, remembering the days of terror and resistance, constituting the ground on which a new city, a new life will be raised.”*

In a symbolic sense, Lachert's apartment buildings constructed from the rubble in a rusty red brick could have been an extension and even a dramatization of Rapoport's monument.

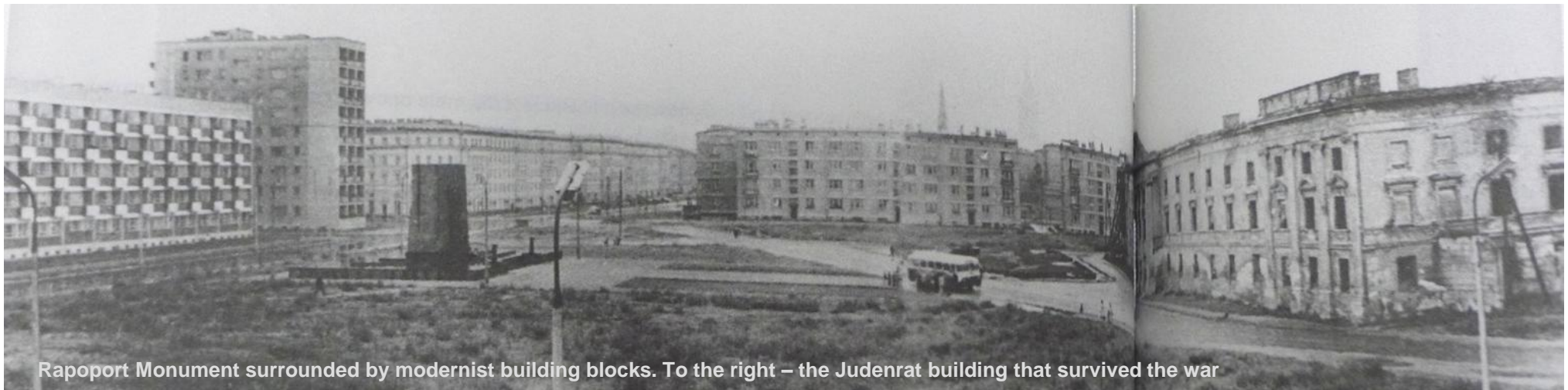
But as actual residential blocks started to pop up around the monument, Nathan Rapoport had other thoughts in mind:

*"Had I known that projects would emerge in the area round the monument, I would have designed it in a completely different way"*

(Natan Rapoport in a conversation with Richard Yaffe)



Księżycowy krajobraz – pomnik Bohaterów Getta na pustym, jeszcze nieobsadzonym drzewami, ale już wstępnie „zagospodarowanym” placu, w tle blok o czerwonych balkonach.



Rapoport Monument surrounded by modernist building blocks. To the right – the Judenrat building that survived the war

## Erasure of bad memories

In addition, Lachert's plans were altered. In early building stages, there was a criticism about the grim look of his buildings. Communist leaders decided that Muranów should to be a cheerful, bright, and colorful place for the working class. This decision reflected the ideological demands of socialist realism with its emphasis on ornamental and monumental architecture. As a result, Lachert's buildings were covered with ornamental stuccoing, which had painted over — both literally and figuratively — Lachert's attempt to represent a space that had been “soaked with the blood of the Jewish nation”.

The communist party contributed to memory erasure through architecture, as it did not want to meditate upon death and destruction of the ghetto; neither to reflect upon the ghastliness that lay beneath the Muranów apartment buildings. It preferred pretty apartments to surround the Ghetto Monument that increasingly represented the heroic, triumphant pages of Polish and communist history. Any sign or symbolic representation of what happened to Jewish Warsaw — both to its inhabitants and its urban landscape — was to be buried under beautiful, stuccoed apartment buildings. (Meng, 2008, p.131)

In Muranów, which was completely destroyed, the Judenrat building managed to survive till mid 1960s, when it was demolished. Other pre-war Jewish related buildings that survived the war suffered from a similar fate. In early postwar decades, urban planners, historic preservationists, and political leaders generally completed the destruction of numerous damaged Jewish spaces or allowed them to go to ruin by neglect. Jewish sites reflected spaces of violence and a minority culture that did not easily fit into the temporal demands of urban modernism, socialist realism, and the culturally inscribed boundaries of historic preservation. The physical remnants of Jewish life gradually disappeared over the 1950s and 1960s as Poles rebuilt their cities and restored only those historic buildings deemed worthy of saving (Meng, 2008, p.iii)

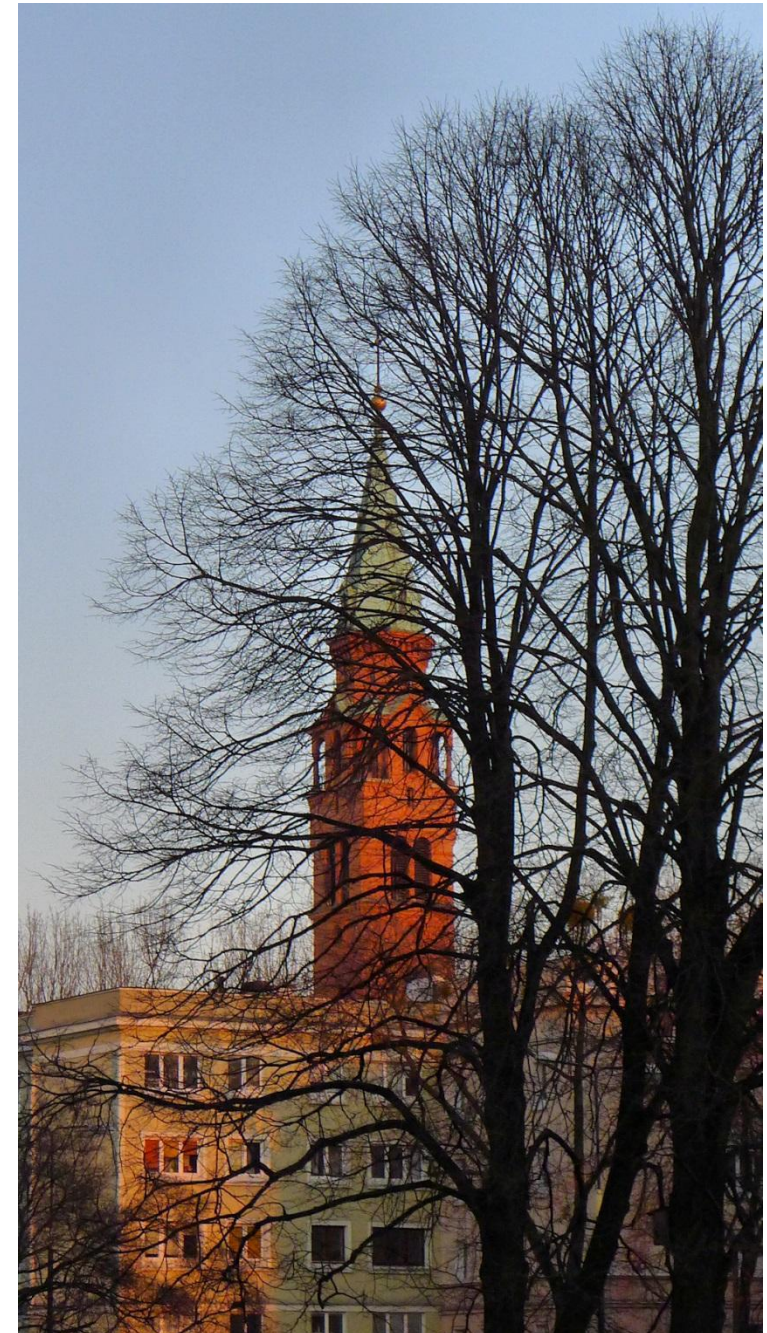


In 2012 the memorial is surrounded by a massive background of apartment blocks which have nothing to do with prewar Warsaw. This contrast does not emphasize the loss of places and people, but rather casts a shade on the memorial and the period.

With its eastern most edge bordering the old town, Muranów reflected the unique blending of the socialist and the nationalist — of the new and the old — that shaped Warsaw's rebuilding. Historic preservation and socialist realism were two co-existing and intertwined aspects of Warsaw's reconstruction. The meticulous reconstruction of the old town represented the revitalization of the Polish nation from the ruins of war, while Muranów reinforced the importance of the new, communist order in that rebirth. (Meng, 2008, p.131-132)

Furthermore, the rebuilding of Muranów was also to erase the memory of the prominent role Jews played in Poland's economic modernization, which symbolized capitalism at that time, in search of a normative, socialist future free of ethnic strife in the now homogenous Poland. (Meng, 2008, p.173)

In addition, as Poles sought to rebuild their lives from tattered ruins, the markers of persecution, violence, and hate were gradually paved over, expunged, and neglected not necessarily out of malice but out of a deep sense of discomfort with the fragility of human empathy that these shattered symbols reflected. (Meng, 2008 p.239)





## Seeking the traces of Past

As years went by, the absence of physical remains pushed Poles, Americans, Israelis, and others to search for traces of the past. It stemmed from an urge for something seemingly old, authentic, and real that goes beyond the modernist obsession with functionality and novelty; and was part of the postmodern embrace of the “historic” in the urban landscape. (Meng, 2008, p.342).

Along the interest about the past, there is a growing interest in everything “Jewish”, parallel to the reemerging of Jewish life in Poland, especially following the collapse of communism. This interest stems in part from the perception that Jews represent a minority culture that is uniquely rich, authentic, and cosmopolitan. This urge to experience a “culture” that is at once singular and transnational has perhaps not surprisingly become expressed most clearly in the urban environment. (Meng, 2008, p.353).

This almost frantic interest in the Jewish past results also in bringing to the front Jewish artifacts in museums, restoring Jewish sites and recreating Jewish streets (Meng, 2008, p.394)

Alon Confino states that at the start of the twenty-first century, memory has become a fundamental creed of group and individual identity as a result of the capitalist economy. History moves forward at such a speed that the past of even twenty years ago seems distant and alien. Commercialization and commodification of every aspect of our lives produce, with the help of the mass media, an ever-growing number of memories, ‘old’, new, and instant (Confino, 2011)



**Original tram tracks along southern part of former Nalewki St. (Now “Ghetto Warriors St.”) north of the “Arsenal”, one of the few buildings that survived the war in Muranów area. The tracks end abruptly in front of the entrance to Krasinski Garden**

## The nature of Traces and adoption of "Jewishness"

When speaking about "traces", concrete sites are central. Physical spaces seem particularly real, they can be touched, experienced, photographed, examined, discovered, protected, preserved, recreated, restaged. This act of searching out for the past produces real effects on the built environment, not least of all with the reconstruction of "old" sites or the creation of new ones that display artifacts of the old: "authentic" Jewish sites have been restored, while new "Jewish" spaces, especially museums, have been or are currently being built. (Meng, 2008, p.352).

An embrace of "Jewishness" has become a central marker of cosmopolitanism in Poland: Jewish festivals are held in major cities in Poland, and it is not uncommon today to see Catholic Poles take Hebrew lessons, learning bible, and digging into the rich history of Jewish life in Poland.



**FESTIVAL  
KULTURY  
ŻYDOWSKIEJ**  
**JEWISH  
CULTURE  
FESTIVAL**



Jewish Festival in Warsaw



Krakow Jewish Festival

## The Jewish museum

In this sense, the building of the Jewish Museum in Muranów neighborhood is the peak of such a trend. In 2005, the Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski remarked “The Jewish community, which has lived here for eight hundred years, found in Poland a climate of freedom and tolerance. Many generations of Polish Jews had made a splendid spiritual, cultural, and economic contribution here and made an enormous contribution to our joint history, while also drawing on Polish influences and experiences.” (Newsletter of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Summer 2005).

In that same year, the president also pulled from a traumatic past glimpses of catharsis:

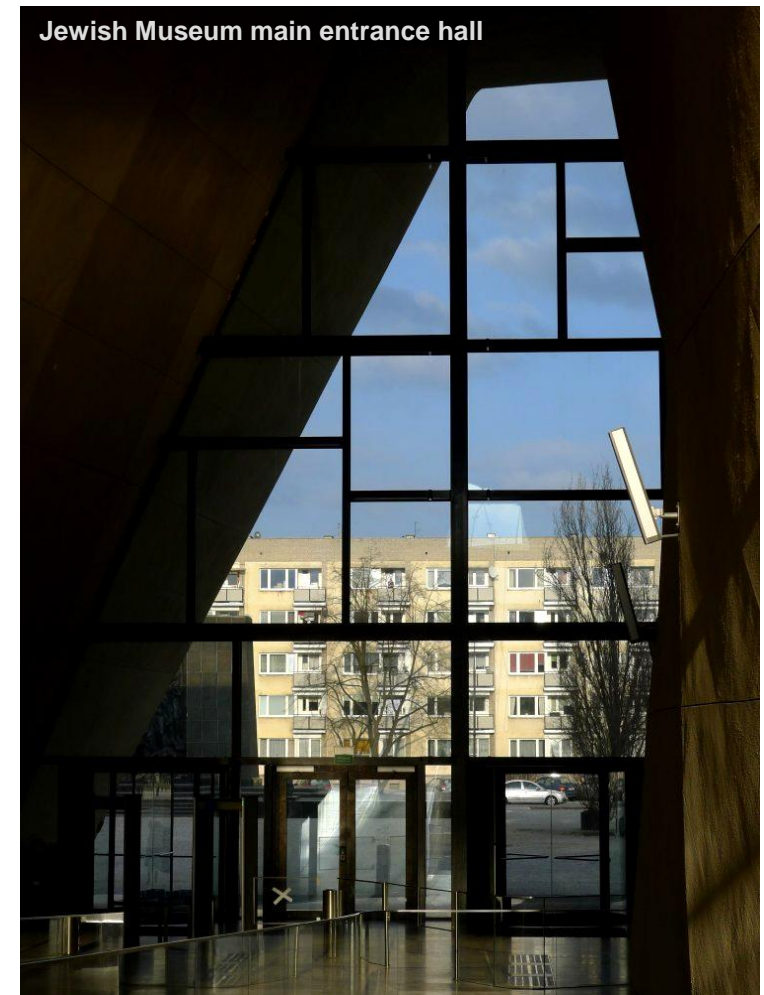
*"The truth will allow the cleansing of memory's wound. That is our hope. That is why we are here... We do this in order to be better, stronger in a moral sense, free of aversions, anger, and hatred. To respect mankind and love people. To turn evil into goodness".*

Kwaśniewski admitted that such remembrance is a form of redemptive cleansing — a communal baptism that washes away Polish sins.

As of summer 2014, the permanent exhibit of the Jewish Museum is not opened yet, although scheduled to be open to the public by 2013. Is it a dispute over the meaning of memory that causes a delay in opening?

In any case, it is interesting to examine the Museum building in light of its planners intentions.

While visiting the museum in March 2014, the museum guide emphasized that the transparent nature of one of the museum's façades is to create transparency between the museum, representing the past, and the current neighborhood. The museum aims at bridging any gap between “Jewishness” and locals living around it. The notable “crack” in its eastern façade intends to open sight to Rapoport monument, thus – creating a line of sight between “life” which are supposed to be represented in the permanent museum exhibition and “death” as represented by Rapoport monument.

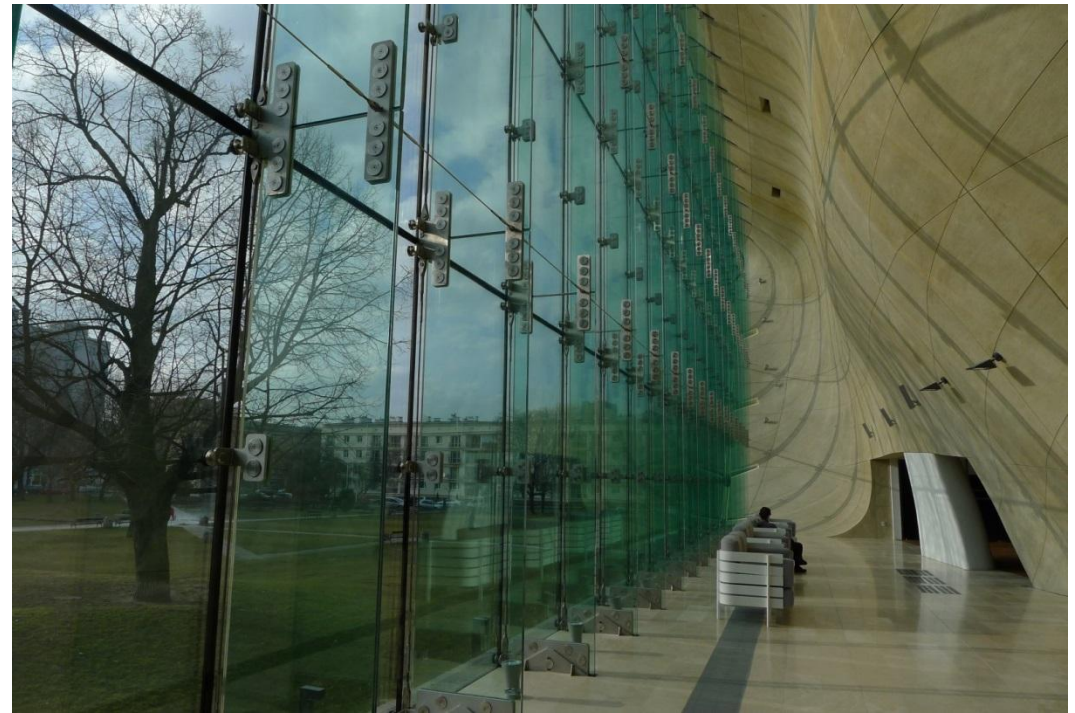


Let's examine the museum contribution from two viewpoints: Visitors (“Jewishness” seekers”) and local residents.

From an immediate point of view, the museum building is baldly standing in the middle of communist blocks environment. Its architectural style, although transmitting some transparency, is contemporary, not to be ignored, and extremely different from its surroundings. It does nothing to emphasize the importance of two adjacent monuments - The Willy Brandt Monument and the Rapoport monument. Furthermore, during the winter, when sunset approaches, the museum casts a shadow on the Rapoport monument, while illuminating the residential block on the back. When looking from the museum through the large “Crack” (see picture in previous page), it is not the Rapoport monument which is seen, but rather the residential building on the back.

The open area surrounding the museum from the east only emphasizes void and confusion. A statue of wondering Jan Karsky, Polish World War II resistance movement fighter (see picture in next page), adds a sort of a too verbal, ironic aspect to the unsuccessful commemoration aspect.

From community point of view, whether or not the museum will be a success relating to the neighborhood, we shall learn while the permanent exhibition will be opened, and hopefully the museum will have time and resources for cultural activities. In the meantime, the grass area west of the museum serves as an amusement ground and toilettes for neighborhood dogs, as most green areas in the neighborhood.

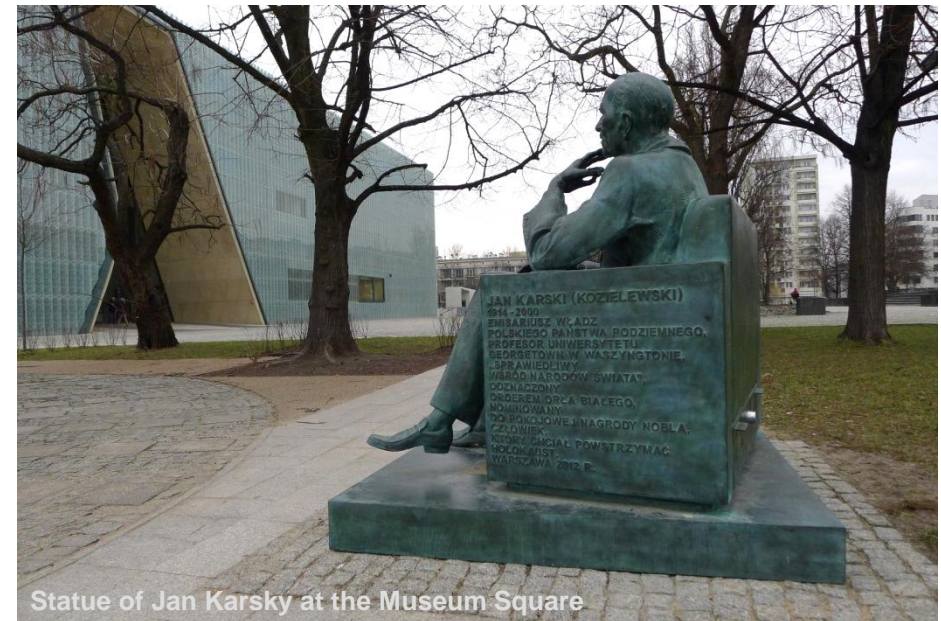


Winter sunset time in Rapoport monument square

In the meantime it is interesting to see an exhibition that was held in the museum in the beginning of 2014.

Children from local schools and kindergartens built models of Muranów Jewish district houses, reconstructing the life they contained. This approach of exposing children to the history of the district via its architecture and physical characteristics implies for the notable ability of these tools to convey a historical experience.

In any case, as the museum will present the life of Jews in Poland and in Warsaw, I see it as a complimentary entity to any intervention in public space that will have a commemorative aspect.



Statue of Jan Karsky at the Museum Square



Kindergarten children rebuild prewar Jewish district houses

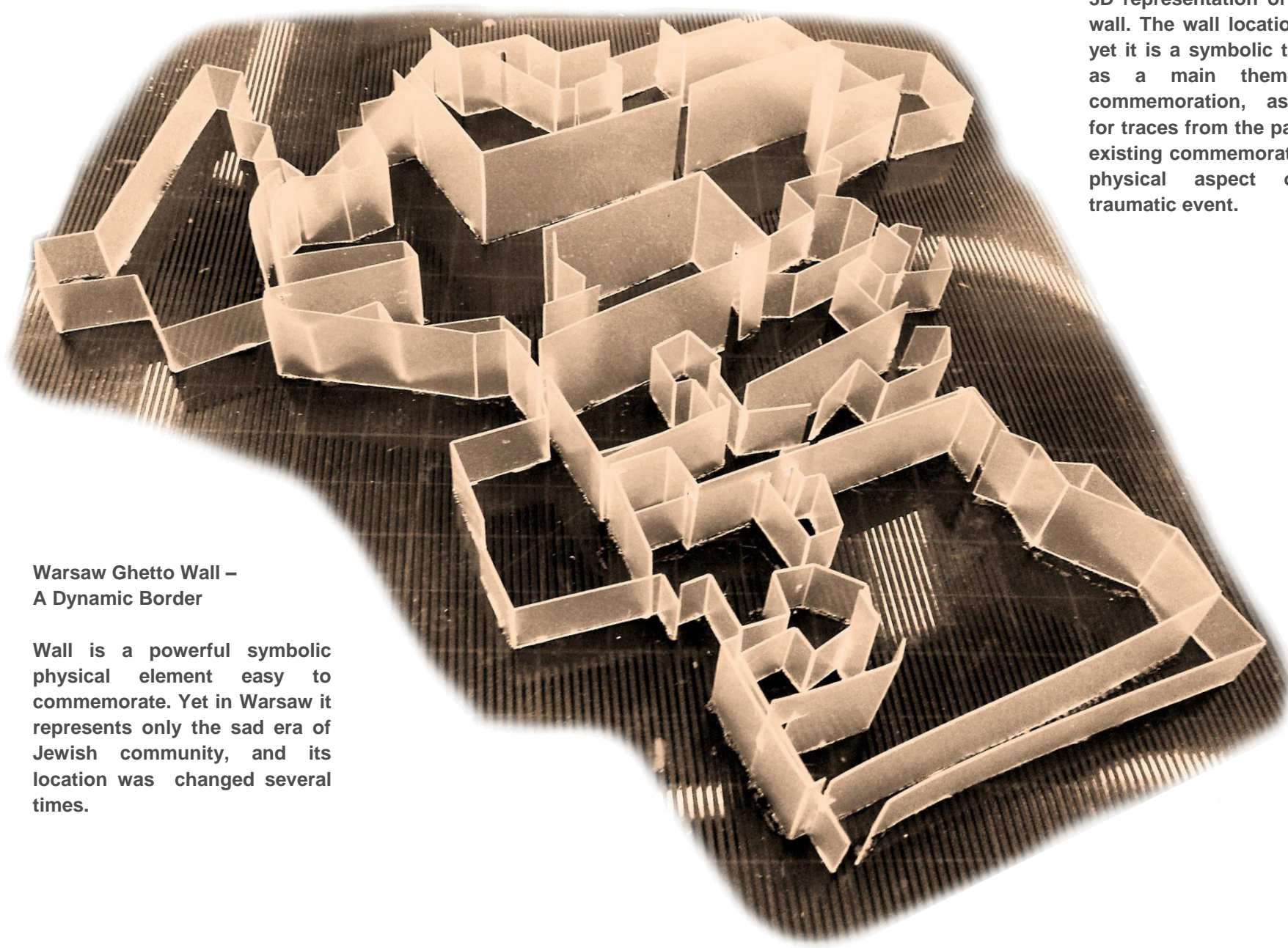
## Commemoration in public space

Except for Rapoport monument, it is important to discuss other means of commemoration existing today in public space of Muranów.

### Warsaw Ghetto Boundary Markers

The Warsaw Ghetto boundary markers are memorial plaques and boundary lines that mark the maximum perimeter of the former ghetto established by the Germans in 1940 in occupied Warsaw, Poland. The markers were erected in 2008 and 2010 on 22 sites along the borders of the Jewish quarter, where from 1940-1943 stood the gates to the ghetto, wooden footbridges over Aryan streets, and the buildings important to the ghetto inmates.





3D representation of Warsaw Ghetto wall. The wall location was dynamic, yet it is a symbolic trace that serves as a main theme for current commemoration, as visitors seek for traces from the past. Such kind of existing commemoration deals with a physical aspect of a specific traumatic event.

### Warsaw Ghetto Wall – A Dynamic Border

Wall is a powerful symbolic physical element easy to commemorate. Yet in Warsaw it represents only the sad era of Jewish community, and its location was changed several times.

Tracing several of these markers in two separate visits in Warsaw, I feel that they fail to deliver a significant meaning. They are scattered on a large area, the distance between them does not enable imagining a continuous line, thus they cannot give a true understanding of the real vast area the Ghetto occupied. The amazingly unrelated building blocks environment distracts the mind from any attempt to imagine what these markers describe. In addition, the idea of marking the Ghetto borders focuses on a specific period representing one of the worst times in Warsaw's Jewish community history, and even by doing so, it does not tell the whole story of how the Ghetto Boundary was constantly changed as a result of the German occupation, Ghetto annihilation, etc.



Location of 22 Ghetto boundary markers across Warsaw



Marker near Warsaw CBD, with unrelated background



“The Route Recalling the Martyrdom and the Struggle of the Jews 1940-1943”

This route connects the Umschlagplatz and Heroes of the Ghetto Monument. Along this route, stone blocks commemorate individuals who were active in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. As can be seen, the casual background of these stones – apartment building facades and parking spaces, leave no place for historical reflection. Even the route itself is mostly done along current Zamenhofa St., which has nothing to do with an authentic prewar route.



## Reference to Gusen Concentration camp – Alon Confino

Alon Confino, history and memory expert, describes the Gusen Concentration camp audio tour and emphasizes the power of the dissonance between the cruelty of the past and the calm current life. He claims that Past is revealed mainly due to its absence (Confino, 2009).

It is interesting to compare his feeling to my feeling when walking in the void of Muranów. I felt that absence is indeed present, but instead of implying for the past it just leaves a great void that creates a feeling of confusion. The reason may be the scale of events and nature of the built environment before the war and currently.

While Gusen was a suburban area that is now occupied by private villas, Muranów was a dense urban neighborhood that is now occupied by extensive built up areas which are clearly identified with another period. These buildings are so dominant, and the urban characteristics they create is so different from the one that was before the war, that they do not leave any place for interpretation or reflection to the past.



**Current site of Gusen Concentration camp**  
Photos: Dana Arieli Horovitz

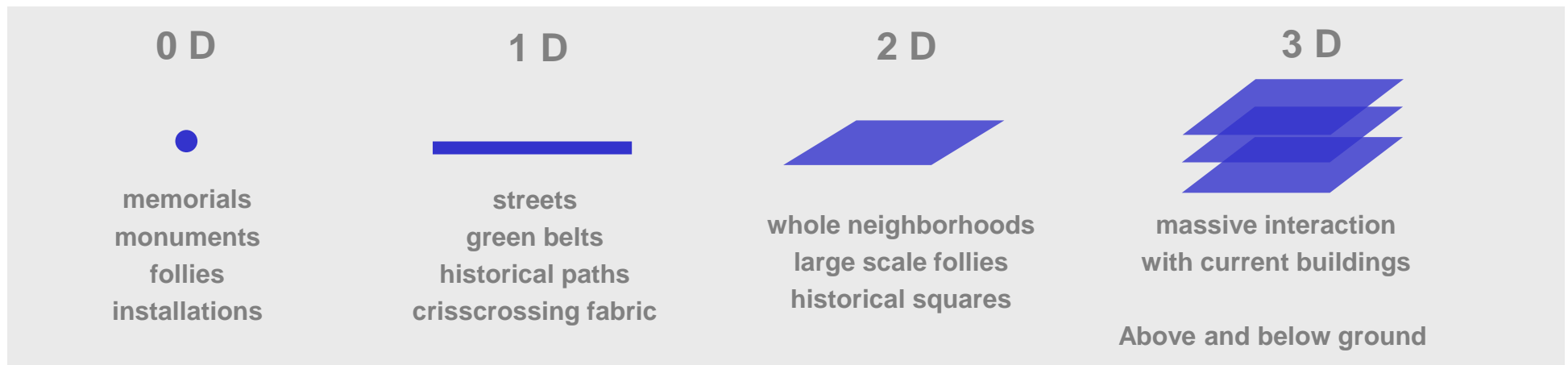


## Inability of existing scattered memorials to deliver a significant experience

As I showed, current Jewish commemoration Muranów public space is comprised of scattered and isolated items. This is a “Zero Dimensional” commemoration. Let me elaborate:

In mathematics and physics, a dot in space is zero dimensional, a line is one dimensional, a plane is two dimensional and something with a volume is three dimensional. Now let’s apply dimensions to the city. A city, mainly a flat one like Warsaw, can be seen as a two dimensional plane. Upon this plane, whole neighborhoods as well as very large squares and venues can be described as two dimensional entities. Linear elements such as streets, avenues, green belts, utility lines and exceptionally long building blocks can be described as one dimensional. Point specific elements such as buildings, statues and memorials are zero dimensional.

Conclusion: what happened to the former ghetto area took place in this whole 4 square kilometers area. The life and death people and place was a vast two dimensional urban occurrence. The current zero dimensional scattered memorials fail to deliver the scale and intensity of those events. Another notion is that the memorials mainly deal with the Jewish narrative, which becomes isolated from the whole story of a nation conducting a deadly war on the land of a second nation aimed at a third nation.



Konrad Matyjaszek, a Polish architect and researcher of Post-Jewish space reacts to the conclusion about the inability of neither the contemporary architecture or the commemorative objects (including the Warsaw Jewish Museum) 'to deliver a significant experience'.

"I consider this inability, visible in both a material/architectural and in a symbolic order, to be a primary issue of either the practices of commemoration of the prewar Polish Jewish communities and of the entirety of contemporary urban space of Warsaw.

I identify the sources of this inability in the continued visions of urban modernity that were/are applied in Warsaw - first with the prewar capitalist growth and dense development, then through postwar reconstruction of the city on/from the rubbles of the ghetto, and finally with today's return to capitalist economy resultant in the emergence of high-rise architecture. I consider this problem to be resultant to a large extent from the way the buildings and spaces that earlier belonged to Jewish citizens of Warsaw were/are utilized in the postwar times. While legal according to the postwar Communist legislation, the appropriation that took place in 1950s is today a source of either spatial and symbolic instability, as the appropriated places now constitute a centre of Warsaw, a city economically and symbolically central to contemporary Poland.

"politics of memory" - memory which becomes an illustrative reflection of political development Alon Confino

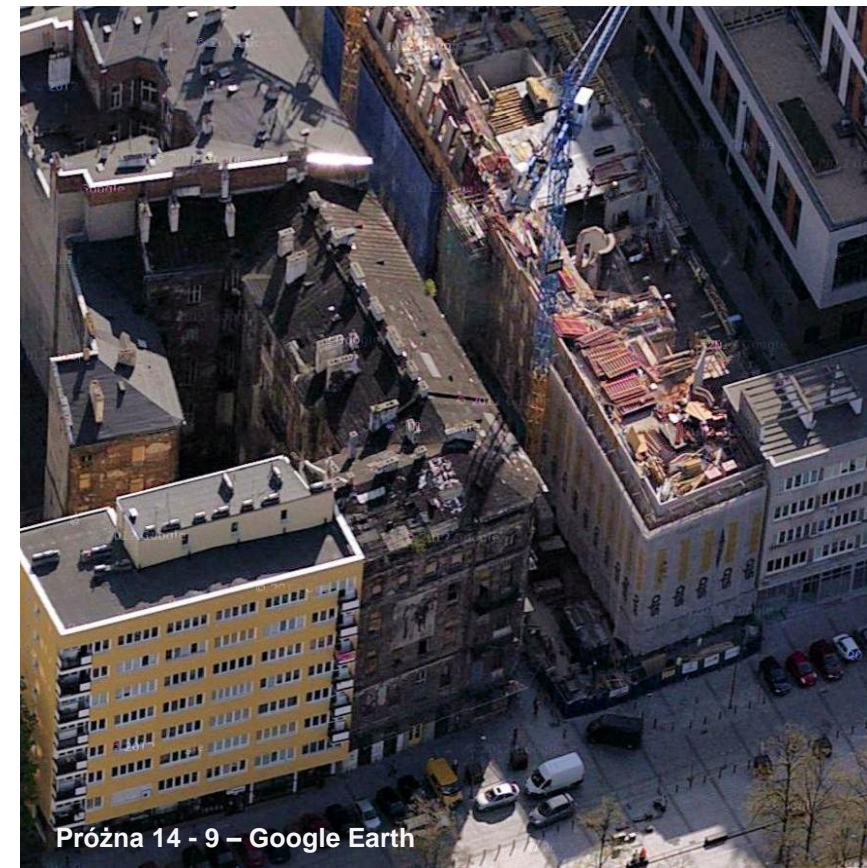
As a result, there are many unmarked places where remains of houses exist and people are buried - as in the case of Anielewicz bunker on Miła street, where a commemorative mound was created. If we design there, what to do with such places?



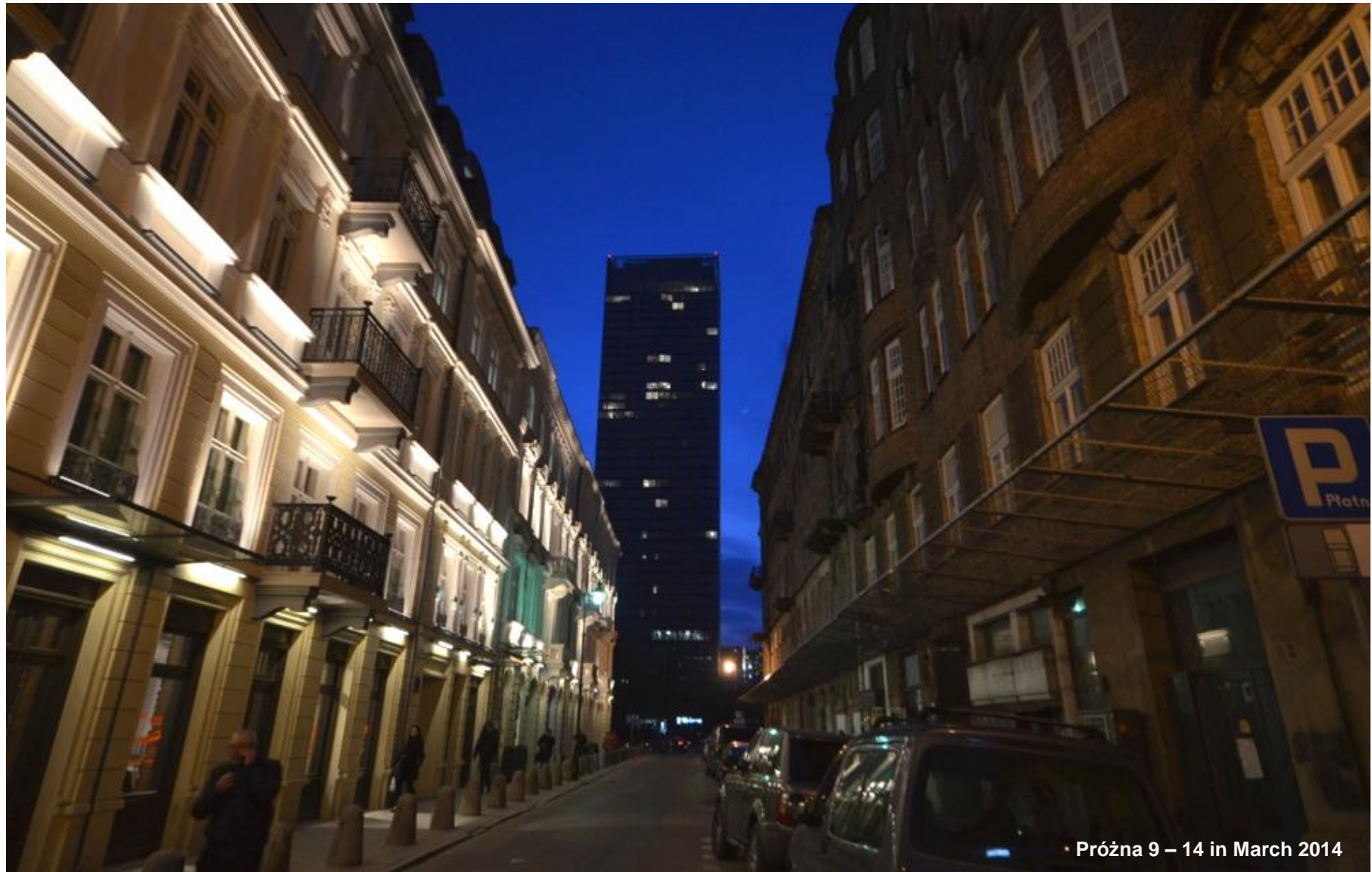
Monument above former Miła 18 – The bunker where Anielewicz warriors found their death

Ulica Prózna (In a macabre coincidence meaning “empty” in Polish) is an interesting example to existence of Jewish relics in Warsaw. It is located out of Muranów, in what used to be the southern part of the Jewish district and currently on the edge of Warsaw CBD, next to the surviving Nożyk Synagogue and Grzybowski Square. It is a narrow, almost non existing passage, that provides a time travel to prewar Warsaw. The building at Prózna number 14 was left neglected, with only its bare red bricks left to tell troubled stories. Portraits of prewar tenants cover the blocked windows. Not surprisingly, for visitors who seek traces of the past, this building is a thrilling example. Israelis in particular are spotted staring continuously at its facades.

Prózna 9 provides another side to the story. A few years ago it was bought by the Louder family and was designated to serve part in a reconstruction of a Jewish Street in Prózna. Understanding the high costs of such a project, the family sold the property to an Austrian real estate company that turned renovated the building (Seen in the bottom picture) in order to return in to its original glory.



This is how Prózna St. looks like (photographed from the other side, Prózna 9 to the left) in March 2014. For those searching for authenticity, the renovated neo classic façade of Prózna 9 looks no different from facades in numerous European cities, telling no story.



Prózna 9 – 14 in March 2014

In 2007, artist Joanna Rajkowska created “Oxygenator” installation in Grzybowski Square, which was an interesting intervention in a memory soaked central place in Warsaw

Plac Grzybowski is a place suspended between different temporal orders, architectural layers, social groups. There is a synagogue nearby and a church, corporate offices and small hardware stores. Approaching the square down Prózna street is like entering from another world, another time - as if the ghetto still existed. Around, thousands of people live in drab high-rise apartment blocks - once the symbol of modern, post-war Warsaw. Among them new, symbolic, architecture has been erected - the free-market capital city's office buildings and financial institutions; top-class residential condominiums are springing up nearby. All these layers meet physically in the same space, but they are unconnected. Their residents pass each other every day, but they do not communicate - their common space virtually does not exist. The place's identity is fragmented, no single narrative exists. The atomised present is based on those different, incompatible layers, it is fragile, there are gaps in it, places that need to be filled, in which there sometimes flashes some afterimage of the past. The past is a sensitive subject, usually perceived as history, a duty, a form of our thinking about the past. (Kaja Pawelek, Curator, 2007)

Oxygenator was an attempt to create a virtually ideal place, an enclave of fresh air in the centre of the city. The pond was an intervention firmly rooted in a specific context, a distortion of the place's hitherto order. It did not propose a single viewpoint but rather suspended the everyday patterns, and created a space open to interaction and communication.



“Oxygenator” installation in Grzybowski Square, 2007



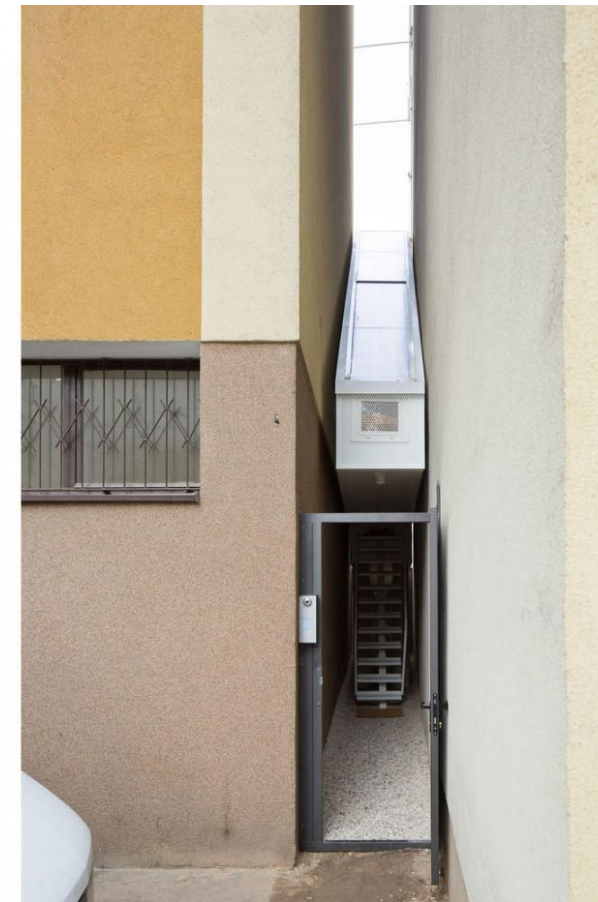
Keret House is an art installation in the form of an insert between two existing buildings, representing different historical periods in Warsaw's history. It is located on a gap between prewar and postwar buildings, measuring 92 centimeters in its narrowest point and 152 centimeters in its widest point. Its architect, Jakub Szczęsny, decided to fill such a crack, to restore its existence by turning it into a perfectly functional living space and by inviting people to take care of this space. Szczęsny invited the Israeli writer of Polish descent Etgar Keret to be the first tenant of the House.

By creating a usable space that contributes to the current community, Szczęsny created a notable commemorative intervention which is both private and public - it provides privacy in a controlled inner space, while create a notable but gentle gesture which is reflected in public space. Dealing with the gap remind us the past, but the use of the installation as an active apartment for creators connects the act to the present – renewing Warsaw.

Nevertheless in an urban aspect it is a specific point act, and it is interesting to find ways to turn this kind of an urban intervention to a two dimensional and three dimensional intervention.



Etgar Keret, first tenant of "Keret House"





While the Jewish narrative is well recognized in Poland and in Warsaw in particular, the Jewish story is not surprisingly mainly told in the area of Muranów, in the museum and adjacent Streets, where people perished and where Ghetto uprising took place and its warriors died.

The Polish narrative has its own geographical area. Perhaps more spread around the city, but with a clear physical and narrative segregation from the Jewish narrative, to the extent that it sometimes seem as if these are two totally separate places, periods and events.

Polish narrative is remarkably unfolded in “Warsaw Uprising Museum”, located west of the city CBD, 2kms from the Jewish museum. The Warsaw uprising memorial can almost be looked at as a two dimensional object, due to the large area it consumes, thus, leaving a notable impression on the viewer even if he just passes by.

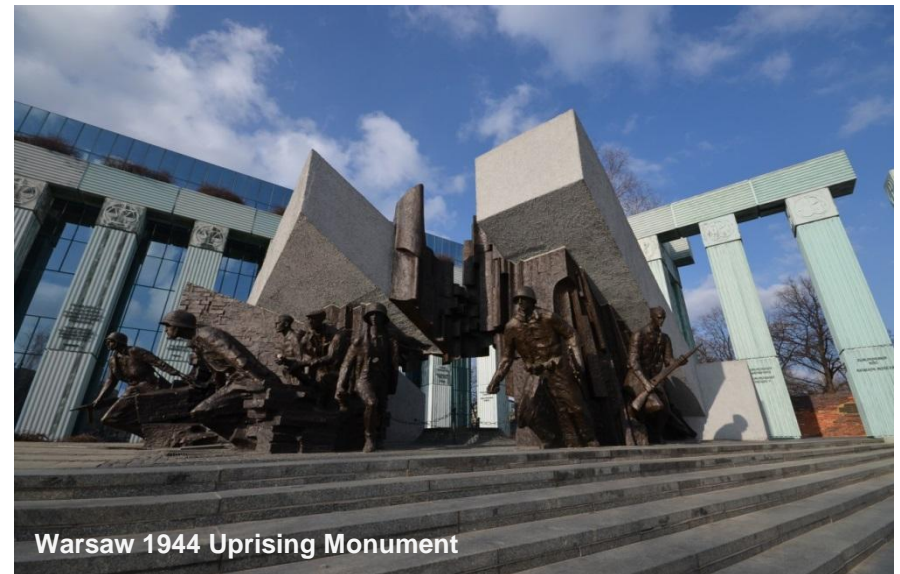
Other monuments commemorate Polish Army soldiers and commanders, among them general Władysław Anders, who is commemorated on the wide street which is my main project site.



Exhibit in “Warsaw Uprising Museum”



Polish Army Soldiers Monument, South Andersa St.



Warsaw 1944 Uprising Monument

One of the main subjects that requires attention when dealing with Muranów are the “customers” of any intervention. We are looking at two different groups, with different needs and often conflicting memories.

Locals – run their daily life here, some of them elderly people who came to live here after the area was rebuilt, some of them are young creative people, symbolizing developing Warsaw. Their life here is continuous in time and space and at least one dimensional as they move along the neighborhood.

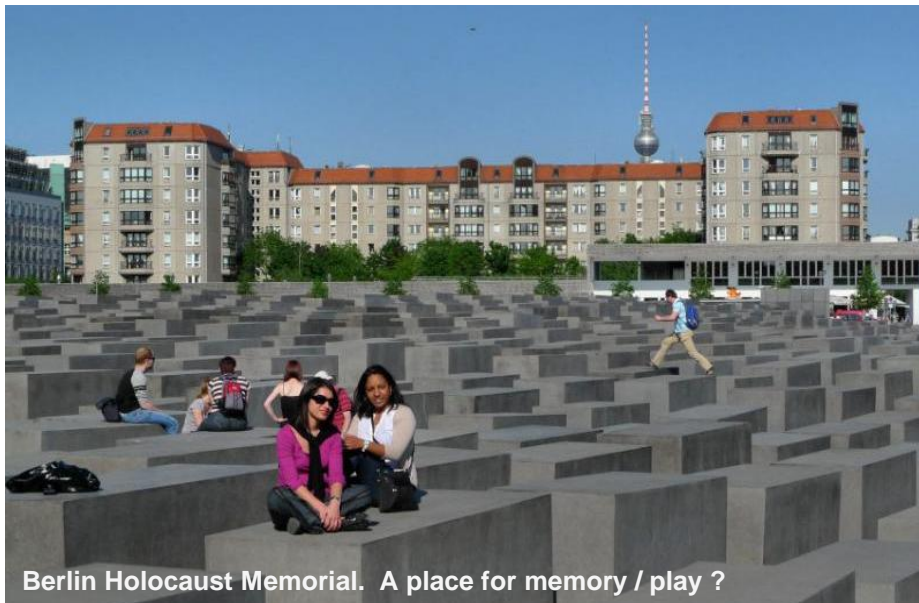
Visitors – their experience here is discrete in time and in many cases in space. They come and go, usually looking for a specific experience related to a certain narrative. Since most of them do “memorial hopping”, occasionally even with a bus, their experience is zero dimensional, thus far from delivering a significant commemorative experience.

*“The past is constructed not as fact but as myth to serve the interest of a particular community”* Alon Confino



In order to better understand commemoration through memorials and monuments, I turned to some other public space references, and chose Berlin - soaked with Holocaust memory, to be the place in focus.

Naturally, I first looked at Berlin's Holocaust Memorial designed by architect Peter Eisenman and engineer Buro Happold. Spread upon 19,000 square meters, although it is confined to a single site, it may be regarded as a two dimensional act. It is also intriguingly multi layered – the above ground level may symbolize a huge graveyard for one, and a playground or a background for model photos for others. This is a physical act that leaves the freedom for interpretation for the visitors. An additional underground level contains a museum that directly deals with certain narratives. This controversial mixture of a memorial and a playground cannot be ignored and lets visitors choose their experience on the site.



Berlin Holocaust Memorial. A place for memory / play ?



I then looked at two other examples, ones that are less dominant in public space, almost unnoticed, which gives them the commemorative power.

"Stolperstein" or "stumbling block" are tiny monuments created by Gunter Demnig which commemorate victims of the Holocaust. Each small, cobblestone-sized memorial represents an individual victim of Nazism. They are located not only in Berlin, but currently extend to several countries and hundreds of cities.

I would call this a "gentle commemoration". One that allows some to see these blocks as a mere decoration, and others to see them as a commemoration to troubled history. This duality of an urban intervention, that may be interpreted differently by different observers, is an important character which is relevant to the intervention needed in Muranów: Current residents of Muranów arrived after the war and have no direct connection to the events happened before and during the war, hence their attitude towards memory is completely different from a visitor's attitude.



Another interesting site in Berlin is Mucha Ullman's "Library" – A Memorial for the book burning. Located in Bebelplatz, you can usually see people who watch together on a spot on the floor. Only on closer inspection you can identify a sunken glass plate between the pavement that provides a view into a room full of empty bookshelves. The subterranean bookshelves could accommodate about 20,000 books - and remind at the approximately 20,000 books, which the Nazis burnt on May 10th, 1933 on this place.

This is another example of a monument that does not impose itself but rather enables those who wish to remember, to stop for a moment and reflect.

*"our honour demands an immense expression of remembrance of the murder of European Jewry".* Willy Brandt



But I looked for a broader meaning to commemoration. Stumbling upon a recent interview with sculptor Dani Karavan provided the point of view I was looking for –

*“A monument should be a place of life rather than death”*

(Dani Karavan, “Binian Vediur”, May 2014).

And he continued: *“I did not wish to build a memorial where flowers will be laid once a year, but rather a place that children will take their parents to, while telling the story of Independence war”.*

Karavan was referring to his Monument to the Negev Brigade in memory of the members of the Palmach Negev Brigade who fell defending Israel during the 1948 Arab Israeli War.

In the same interview he provided other interesting guidelines for commemoration. To the question “What do you first look for? A place for a monument or a monument for a place?” he replied:

*“The place, simply, is leading me. By referring to the place I shall curate the most suitable creation that was ordered from me”*



Dani Karavan's Negev Memorial. Designed to be a place to play

*“The beauty of memory is that it is imprecise enough to be appropriated by unexpected hands, to connect apparently unrelated topics to explain anew old problems” Alon Confino*

- Zero Dimensional commemoration of a Three Dimensional saga
- Focus on events and narratives
- Remembering traumatic period ignoring rich life of the Jewish community on site
- Formalization by Monuments and Memorials

*“I would like to view memory as an outcome of the relationship between a distinct representation of the past and the full spectrum of symbolic representations available in a given culture”. Alon Confino, 1997*

## MONUMENT

1. building, statue, etc., that honors a **person or event**

2. building or place that is important because of when it was built or because of **something in history that happened there**

## MEMORIAL

something (such as a monument or ceremony) that honors a **person who has died** or serves as a reminder of an **event in which many people died**



Janusz Korczak Monument in Okopowa Jewish Cemetery

# ISSUE » Between Physical, Factual and Narrative

The notion that commemoration is inevitably influenced by politics, viewpoints and narratives led me to a conclusion that the commemoration issue should be broken into several more specific questions, divided to three elements that take part in the “commemoration stack”.

Following is a list of questions that were brought up at early stages of the project. Throughout the analysis phase, a refinement process was done to narrow the search and pinpoint the project issue to be more specific / find a sentence that best represents the issue.

## NARRATIVE

(what) do we want to remember?

Can **physical design** be separated from memory and commemoration ?

Can we make a **physical spatial action** that may imply for historical facts and/or arouse narratives?

Should reconstruction be based on exact footprint of pre-war buildings and streets?

How do we cater both locals and visitors?  
"trauma tourists" seek for troubled history remnants  
locals want a beautiful peaceful lively neighborhood

What is the balance between a **commemorative generator** and a **neighborhood renewal generator**?

Current urbanism trends call for dense cities. Referring to the dense but deadly ghetto conditions, **can we accommodate today 125,000 people per square kilometer yet provide them with desirable quality of life?**

How can we create a **hybrid style** that takes the best from traditional and modernist tissues?

Are there **benefits for bringing back old tissue**?  
In what way they can **contribute to current life in the city**?

## FACTUAL

How can various and contradicting **factual aspects** that existed and existing in this place **reflect in an architectural act**?

Should **troubled times** be reflected in shape and function? Or maybe **good times of satiety and warmth**?

Is there a **combination** that allows **various users** to choose their experience?

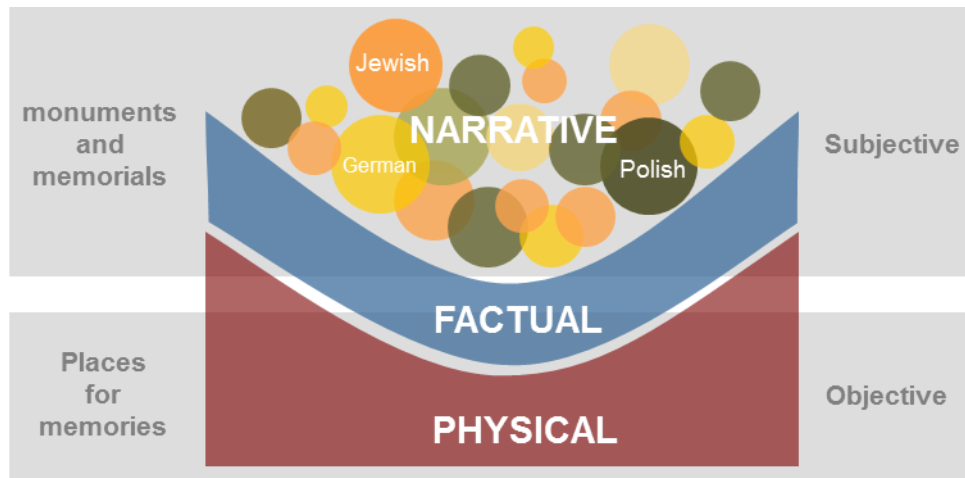
Shall I **recreate the mere physical representation or/and the atmosphere and life qualities** that existed in this area?

How to represent the **dialogue between current environment and recreated past environment**?

## PHYSICAL

Another understanding is that monuments and memorials deal mainly with the narrative and factual levels, thus prone to politicization of the memory. Since we have an abundance of sites that formalize these levels, I tend to deal mainly with the physical level, which is itself objective and upon which, various interpretations can be made.

When speaking about the physical level, I aim for at least one dimensional intervention, but a three dimensional act is more likely to be the proper guideline. In this case, the meaning of three dimensional does not refer to volume, but rather to a multi layered solution, in which the existing above ground city structure is only one layer. The combination of a multilayered solution which is spread on a vast area may yield the desired aim.



Following these approaches, the main project issue can be summarized by describing the tension between dealing with commemoration (mainly represented by narrative and factual levels) and with urban renewal (represented by physical level). These poles will be reflected via planning and design.

## Commemoration vs. Urban Renewal

This notion also sets the main goal for the project, which is creating urban renewal interventions that will benefit the daily neighborhood life while suggesting commemoration aspects. The main challenge of the project is therefore doing the careful fine tuning between a mere urban renewal action and a memory arousing one.

The main issue “commemoration vs. Urban Renewal” contains the following terms which were dealt with in the analysis process:

Past vs. Present

“Jewishness” vs. “Polishness”

For visitors vs. For locals



## Summary of guidelines

Memories need places. Create  
**PLACES FOR MEMORY**  
where memories may be  
contained or stimulated

A  $\geq 1$  dimensional intervention

Preserve or recreate a place  
Enhance its positive characteristics  
Adjust it to current needs and trends

Places inspired by life and built  
environment of a rich community

Leave current built-up areas  
intact. No more destruction

Create close encounters between current and  
reconstructed tissues to emphasize differences  
and enhance understanding of devastation

A climbing wall or a place for memory to lost urban life?



In this chapter I shall present three European cities that suffered mass destruction during World War II, and demonstrate how various parts of them were rebuilt after the war.

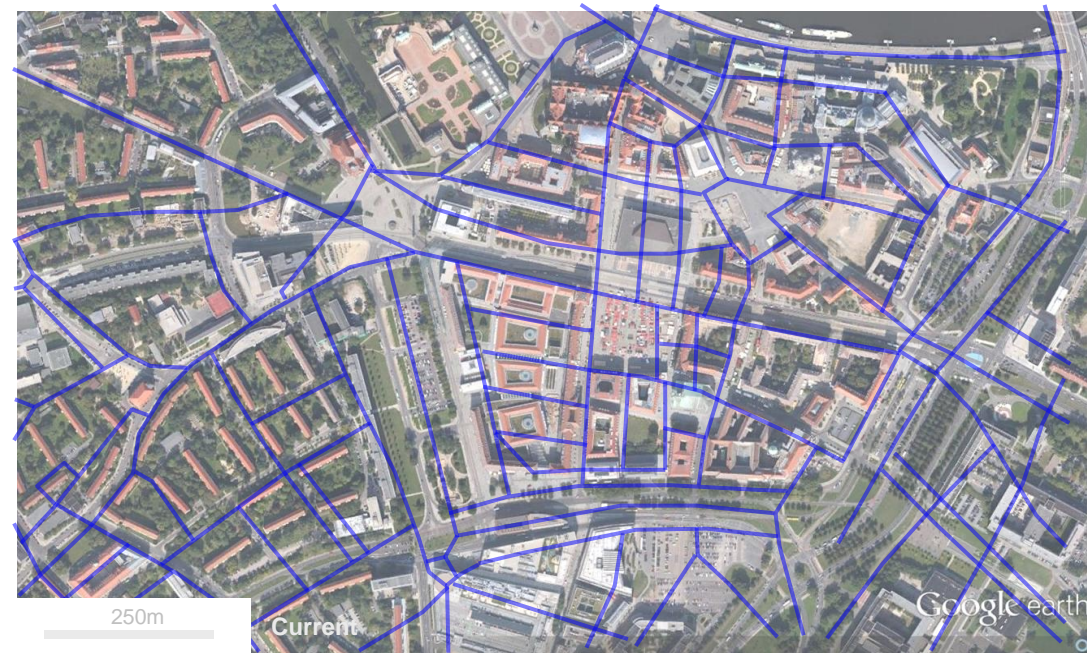
First case is Dresden, Capital of Saxony, Germany. This is one description of prewar Dresden:

*“Florence on the Elbe ...storybook place of palaces, fountains, and elegant avenues... Renaissance and Baroque styles”*

Michael Z. Wise, February 2002

The city was heavily bombed in air raids by RAF and USAAF on February 13-15 1945. Thousand tons of high-explosive bombs and incendiary devices destroyed 7 km<sup>2</sup> of the city center causing 25,000 fatalities

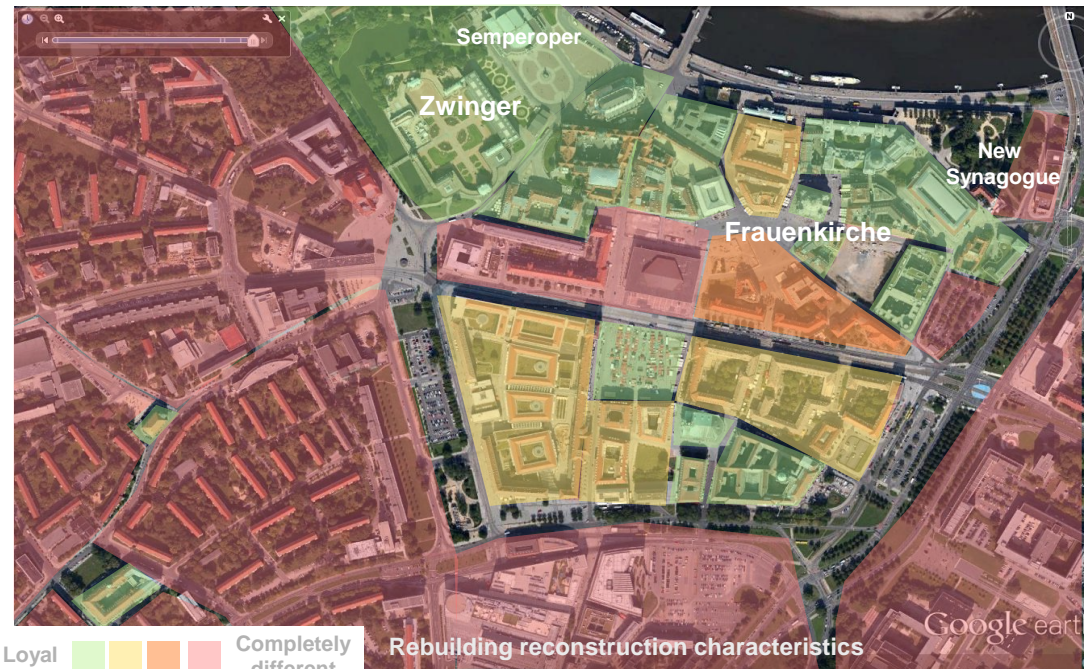


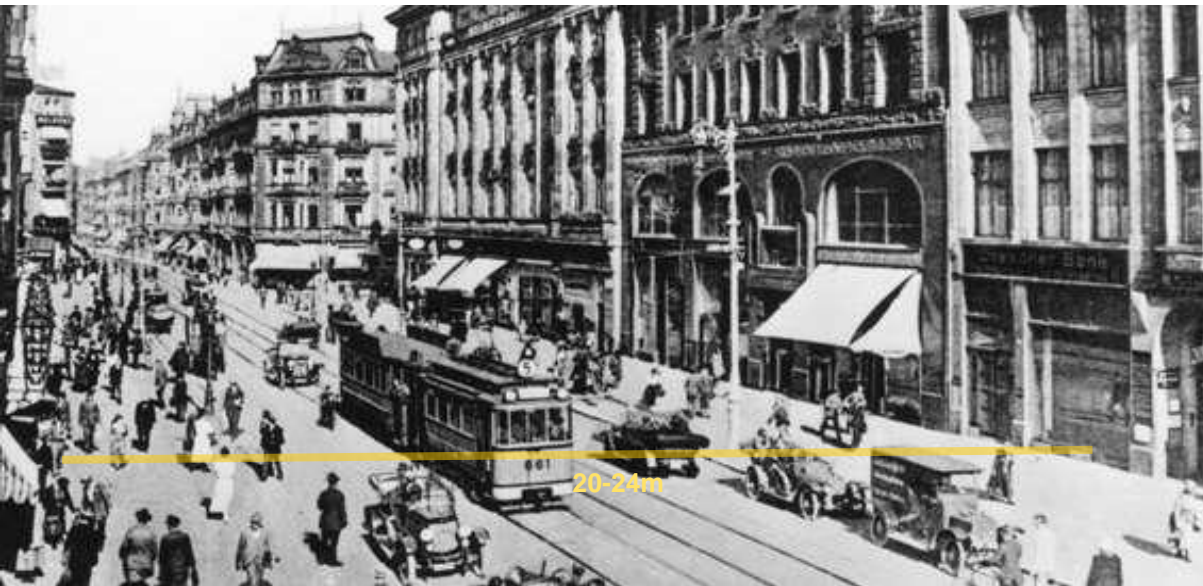


Prewar Dresden urban tissue and street grid was an example of a classical European town, with dense built up areas, building blocks that form street edges, and meaningful public squares in human scale.

After the destruction, Dresden was not rebuilt in a coherent manner. Some areas in the historical core were reconstructed, but most areas were rebuilt in modernist approach.

The bottom-right scheme shows Dresden rebuilding of the city center – from loyal reconstruction (green) to completely different tissue and grid (red).





Prewar Prager Straße



Postwar Prager Straße

It is interesting to see Prager Straße façade design and section before the war and after it was rebuilt.

Nowadays, "The Society for the Historic Neumarkt" is a group advocating the traditional reconstruction of some 80 houses, palaces, and other buildings that once surrounded the Frauenkirche. Back in 1955, East German regime had dubbed such a reconstruction "backward-looking" and "harmful to municipal cultural policy."

Reconstruction of additional prewar buildings is controversial: "If we were to rebuild it the way it was before the destruction, many Dresdeners would be deeply disappointed," says Günter Just, who was responsible for city planning from 1994 until September 2001. "It would be a Disneyesque lie."



Communist rebuilt Prager Straße

Once Dresden disappeared behind the Iron Curtain, most of its core was rebuilt in a boxy modern style. In 1953, Communist chief Walter Ulbricht proclaimed that Dresden's architecture "would mirror the historic victory of the working class."

The Communists had little use for what remained of old churches, theaters, banks, and department stores, dismissing them as worthless feudal and bourgeois relics. Most of the city's bombed-out structures were razed to make way for the future: boulevards broad enough for military parades, a communal square to accommodate mass celebrations.

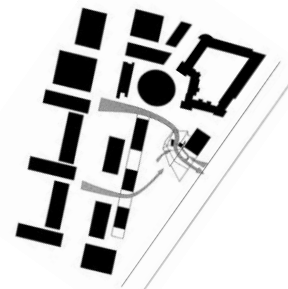
Michael Z. Wise February 2002

Summary of problems in Dresden rebuilding, highly relevant to Warsaw:

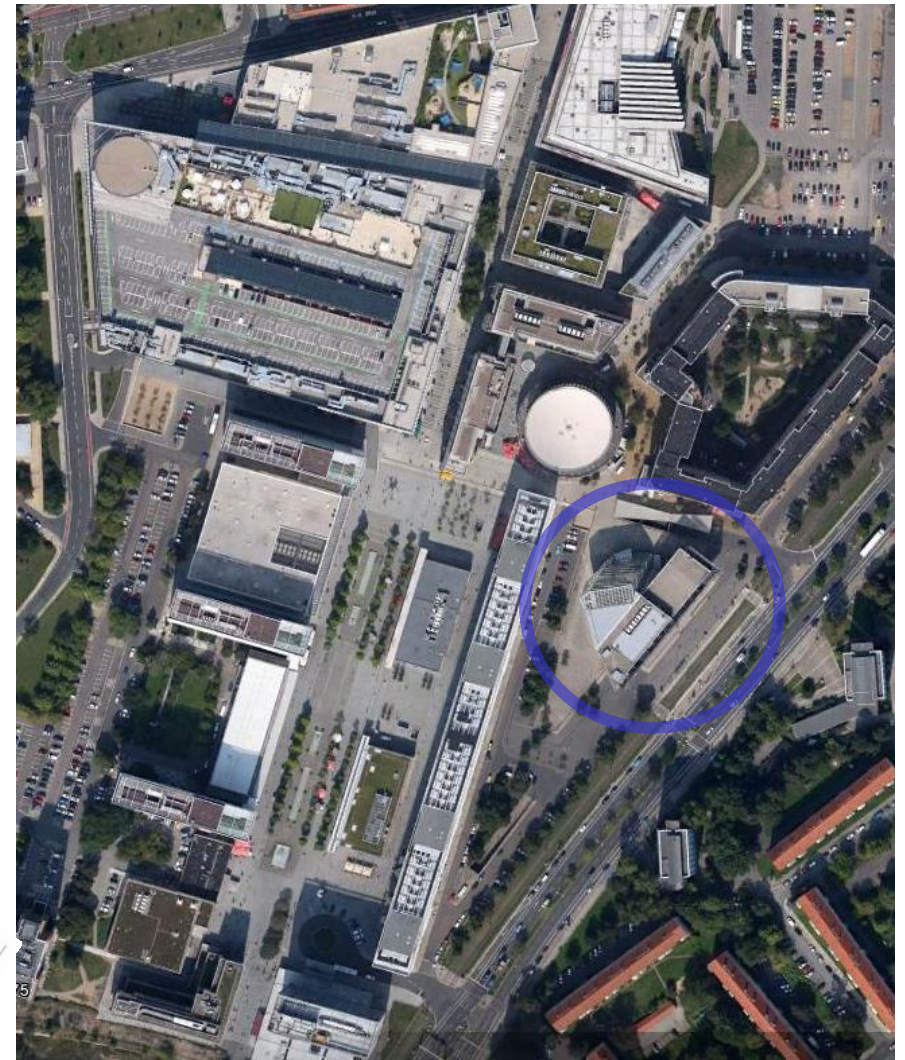
- No overall policy
- Unbalanced mixture of reconstruction and new construction
- New construction lacks urban vitality and character
- Problematic scale
- Contradicting forces shaping the city
- Arbitrary buildings and styles
- No identity
- Loss of integrity of the city center (Frauenkirche area <-> Prager Straße)



Down to the building level, I was looking for a good reference for a contemporary project that copes with the vast urban space created by modernism. “UFA Cinema Center” by Coop Himmelb(l)au was an interesting reference to study. With high expectations for an urban regenerator, examining the building in its immediate context revealed an architectural attempt in the midst of an urban desert, disconnected from any pedestrian meaningful place and does nothing to enrich it.



COOPHIMMELB(L)AU  
Website



“The interweaving of public squares, public interiors, and passageways was proposed as a way of energizing and densifying the new center of Dresden. The UFA Cinema Center is located at one of these junctures; it is formulated as the urban connection between Pragerplatz and St. Petersburger Straße. Thereby The Cinema itself is thereby transformed into a public space”.



1

Prewar Kreuzberg



Postwar Kreuzberg

2

3

4

Similar sights can be seen in Berlin. The neighborhood of Kreuzberg, that was characterized by the Berlin Courtyard Tenement House design (1), suffered mass destruction in the war (2). It was rebuilt in several periods, where various styles can be seen. From long modernist apartment blocks (3,4) to contemporary designs that revive courtyard tenement house idea (5,6)

5

6



Current Kreuzberg



Quite a different rebuilding approach is seen in France. The city of Le Havre in Haute-Normandie was occupied by the Nazis during WWII. The city was largely destroyed following Allies bombings. But as opposed to Dresden and Berlin, the whole affected area redesign was handed to a single architect, Auguste Perret.

Although conceived during modernism and characterized as so, the plan and rebuilding that took place in the years 1945-1964 show a coherent approach, overall design, uniformity and identity, decent scale, while preserving the prewar street structure.





## Characteristics of Auguste Perret plan:

Basic grid module of 6.24 m<sup>2</sup> to facilitate production & introduce 'musical harmony' into the city.

Lots were laid out on a 100 m grid, some were combined to make larger lots.

Architect's ideal to create a homogenous ensemble, where all details are designed to the same pattern.

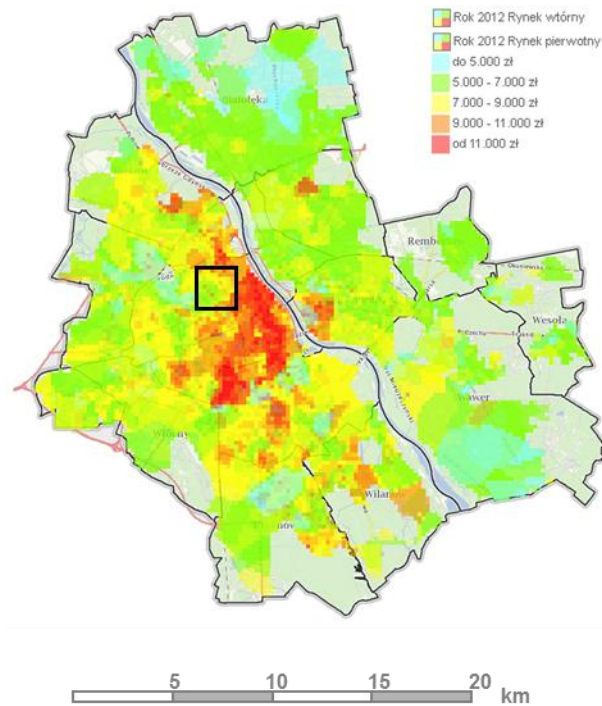
A few buildings that had not been destroyed in the bombardment were retained as part of the new town scheme.

Average density was reduced from the pre-war 200 to 80 inhabitants to a dunam.

The spirit of the town was conceived as 'neoclassical', where the building blocks are closed and the streets remain streets.

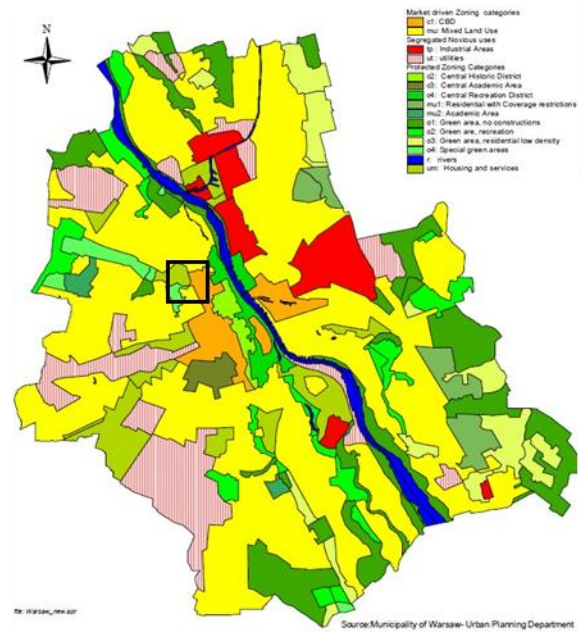
The essence of Perret's project is in structural design, based on an avant-garde use of reinforced concrete elements ... make it modular and completely transparent so that no structural elements remain hidden... uniformity to all architecture.





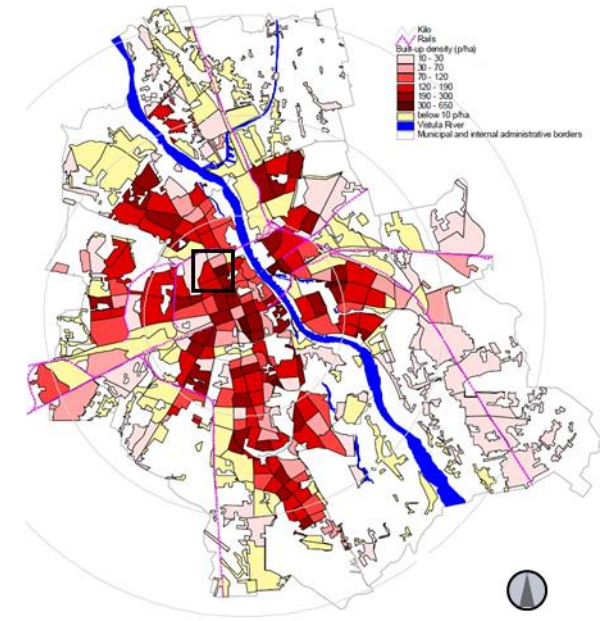
Warsaw real-estate value (2012)

High values were recorded in the CBD, old town and Nowy Swiat commercial axis. Muranów values are low, but it is on the edge of the expanding CBD.



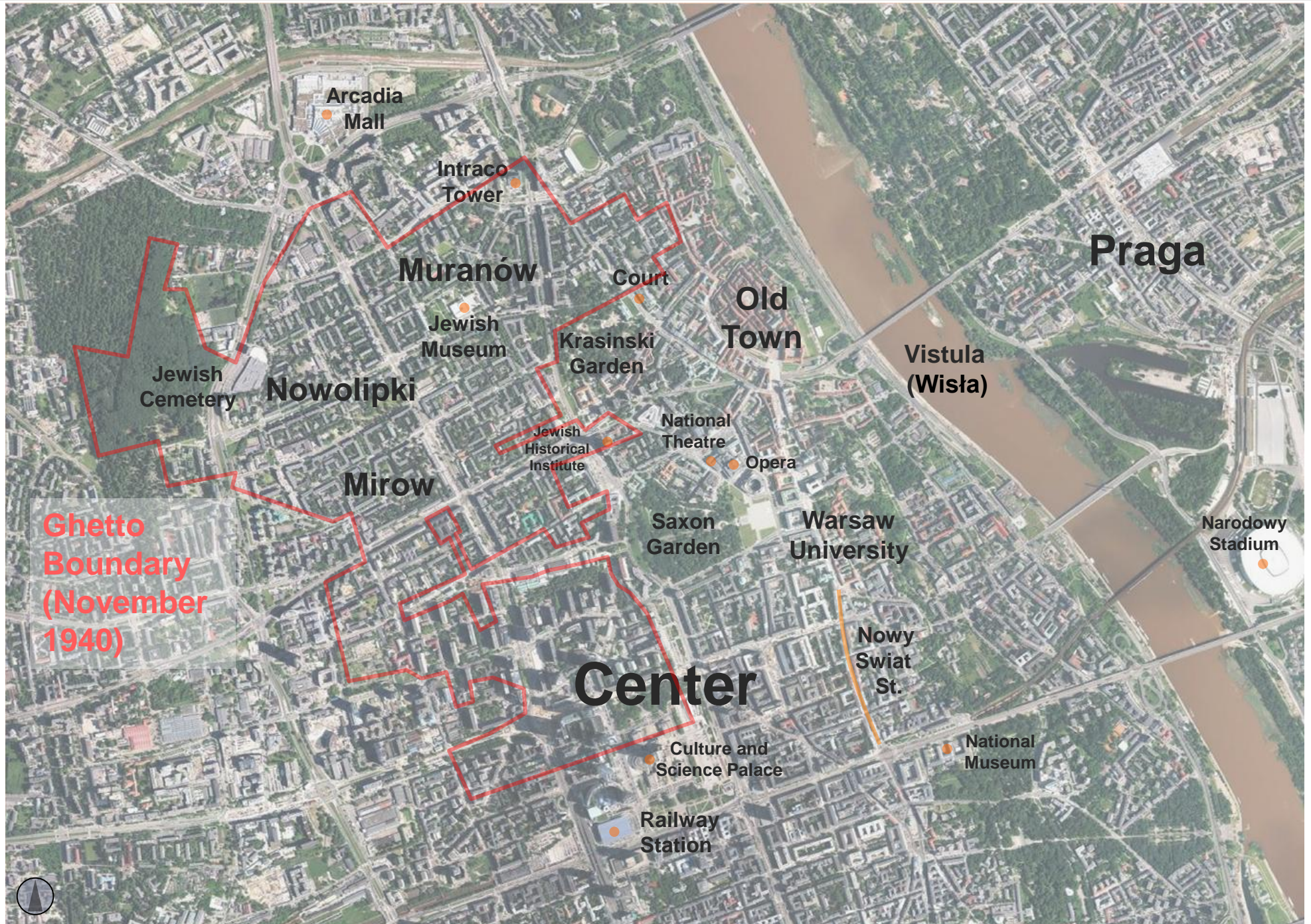
Warsaw municipal zoning plan

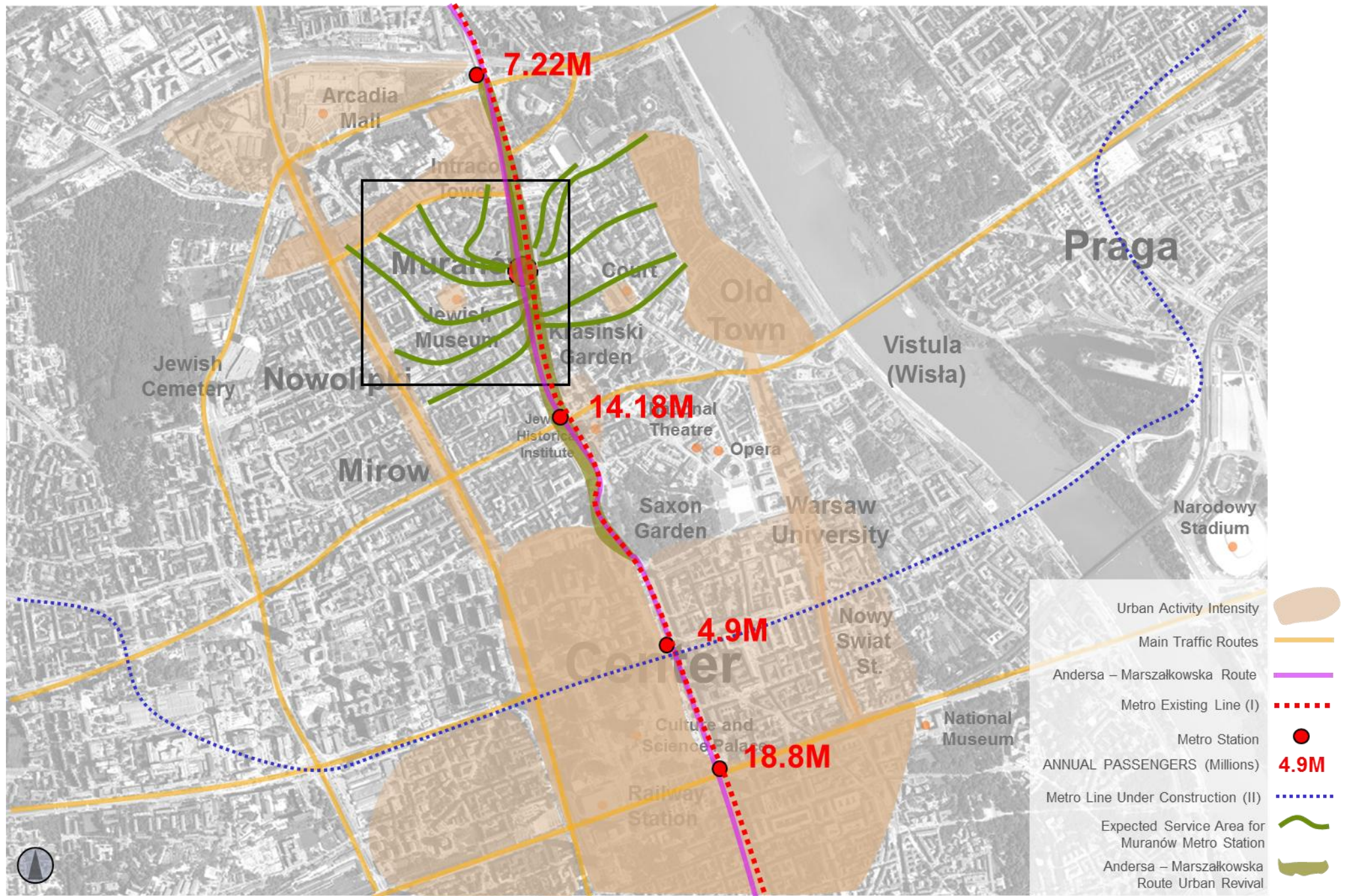
East Muranów is designated as part of the CBD (orange) while West Muranów is designated as "Mixed Land Use" (yellow)



Warsaw population density in built-up areas (1993)

Population is spread heterogeneously throughout the 517 square kilometers of the city. Muranów is a relatively dense neighborhood.





Muranów is a notable urban void near Warsaw Center. Andersa – Marszałkowska route as a whole is part of this void, lacking urban intensity, edges and human scale. It has a potential to be an important urban generator with proper sensitive and creative interventions, and serve as a vital urban link between Muranów and city center, as well as the old city.

## Stacja Muranów

### The station that wasn't built

During the late 1990s when Metro Line I was built, it was decided, due to budget considerations, to cancel the building of two planned stations – A12 and A16 – Muranów.

Commuter figures and urban analysis show, that Muranów station has a potential to serve at least 5 Million passengers, as well as serve as a meaningful URBAN HUB for this void area.

Annual Passengers



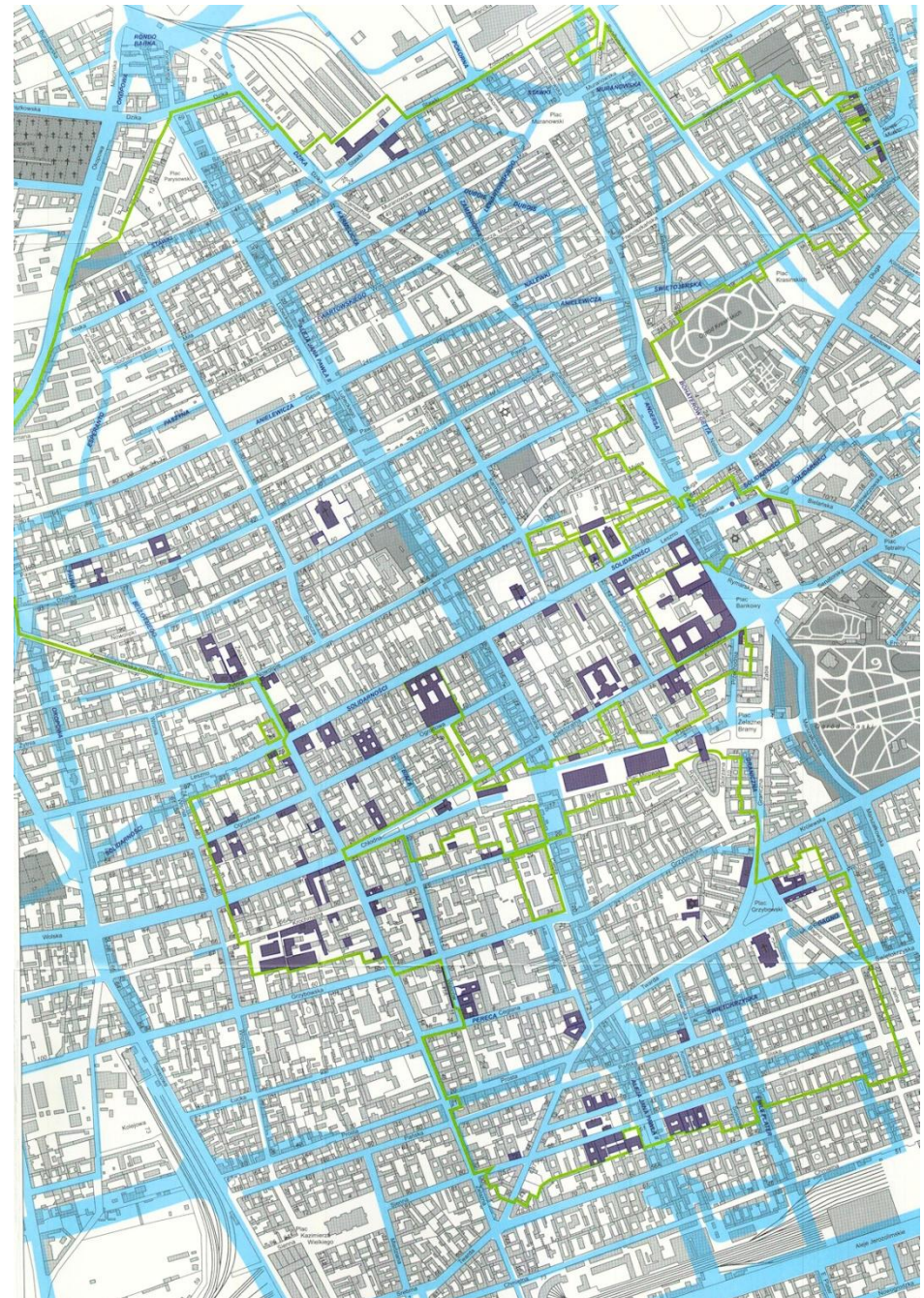
“Stacja Muranów” is also a NGO initiating community activities in Muranów as well as promoting the station construction.

From an early stage in the project research I had the feeling that intervention guidelines are concealed within prewar layers of Warsaw. The abundance of sources available in printed books and online sites supported exploration of the layers as a planning aid.

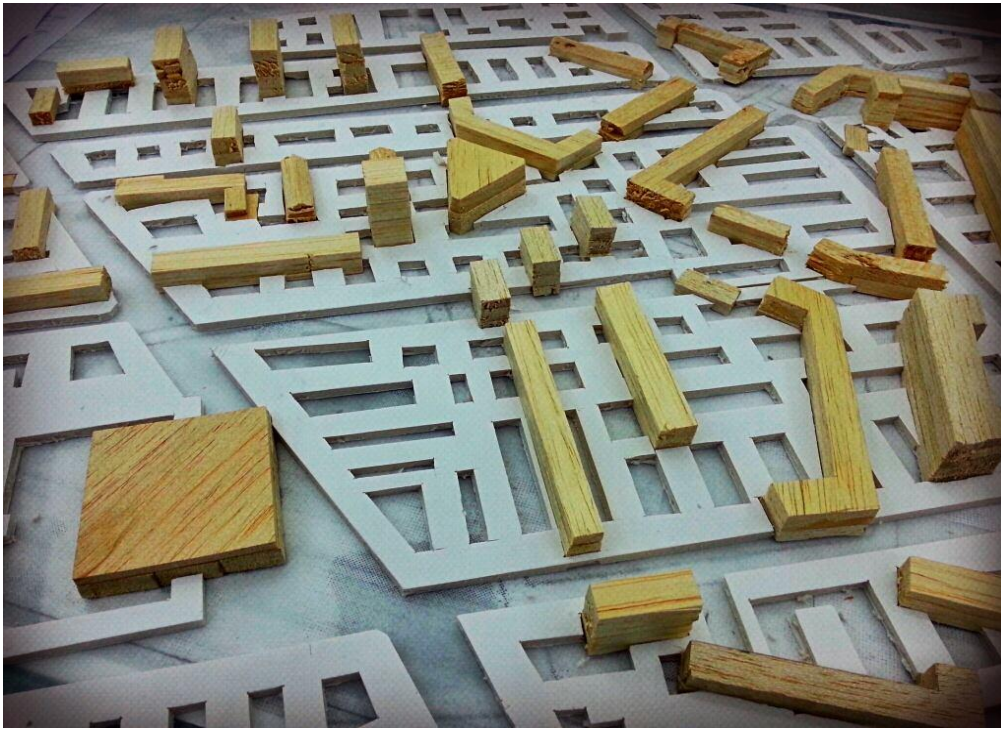


Above: Superposition of 1935 photo showing courtyard tenement houses urban tissue which creates the “low resolution” guidelines – envelope walls, and 1945 photo (colored red) showing destroyed buildings where floors were burned down exposing inner walls, eerie version of floor plans – the “high resolution” guidelines of the non existing city. Source: Warsaw City online GIS website.

Right: Prewar precise cartography (gray), the buildings that survived the war (purple) and current streets (light blue) as appear in one of a series of 6 maps mapping prewar Warsaw, in the book “The Warsaw Ghetto - A Guide to the Perished City” by Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak – one of the best resources concerning prewar Muranów.







In early planning phases I chose an initial area of 1 km<sup>2</sup> in the north-eastern part of Muranów. Within this area, the former Plac Muranowski is on its north-east, the former Umschlagplatz is on its north-west, Mila 18 is in the middle, pre-war bustling Nalewki St. is on the east, and the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes as well as the Jewish Museum are on the south. This area contains current streets that follow pre-war streets location, as well as current streets that are totally different from the pre-war grid, especially around the former Plac Muranowski. It also contains part of current Aleja Jana Pawla II and a major 64 meters wide section of current Andersa street.



**Previous page and Top:** Building a 1:1000 work model of the chosen 1km<sup>2</sup> area from Balsa wood and foam board ; Close up on the work model

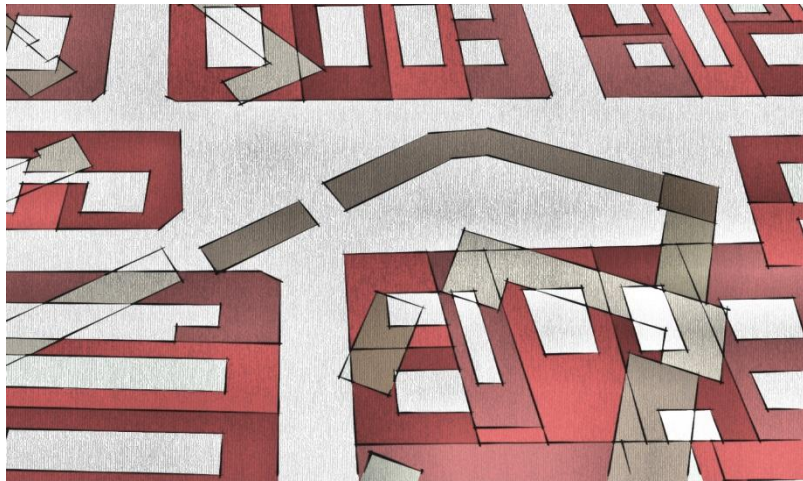
**Left:** Digital cartography of the area – prewar and current building footprints

**Right:** Final acrylic glass model of layers superposition





One of the key questions that was raised in the early urban design stages was the role of the actual prewar footprint of streets and building blocks in the suggested intervention. Should I follow the exact footprint or use it only as a general scheme and guideline?



Former and current urban tissues (Plac Muranowski and former tissue in red)

I found that there are several advantages of sticking, where possible, to the original prewar footprint:

Interesting architectural opportunities

Enhancement of differences between current and pre-war

Stimulating memories by recreating exact places for memories

A historical transportation layer dedicated now to pedestrians

Guidelines for intimate and human scale urban actions

Caters visitors who look for traces of the past

## Infill Guidelines

### Multidimensional Infills

#### Mixed use program

Including: small office spaces, workshops, shops, restaurants and cafes, hostels and boutique hotels, shared spaces for various activities

### Add public spaces / Upgrade existing ones

#### Critical mass of infills

Revive pre-war atmosphere

Continuous experience

Meaningful commemorative effect

Positive mixed use urban impact

#### Cater Visitors

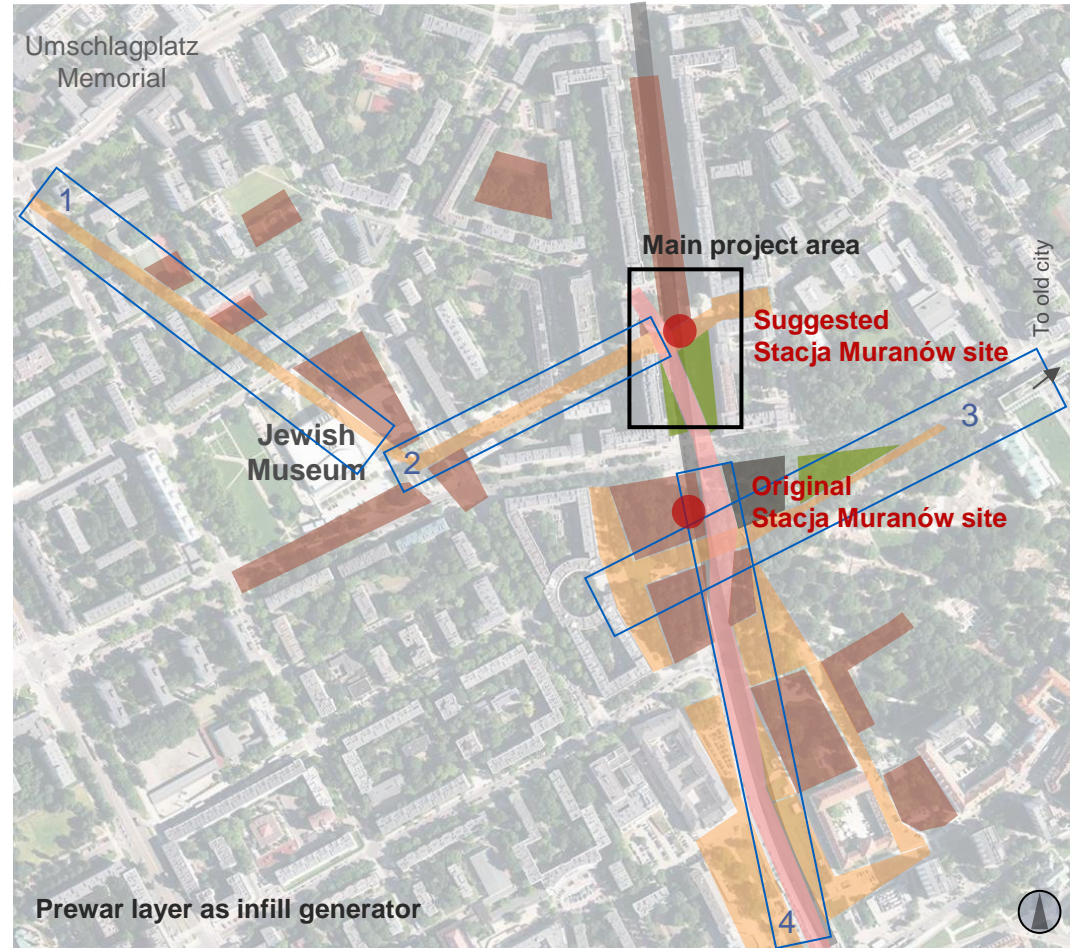
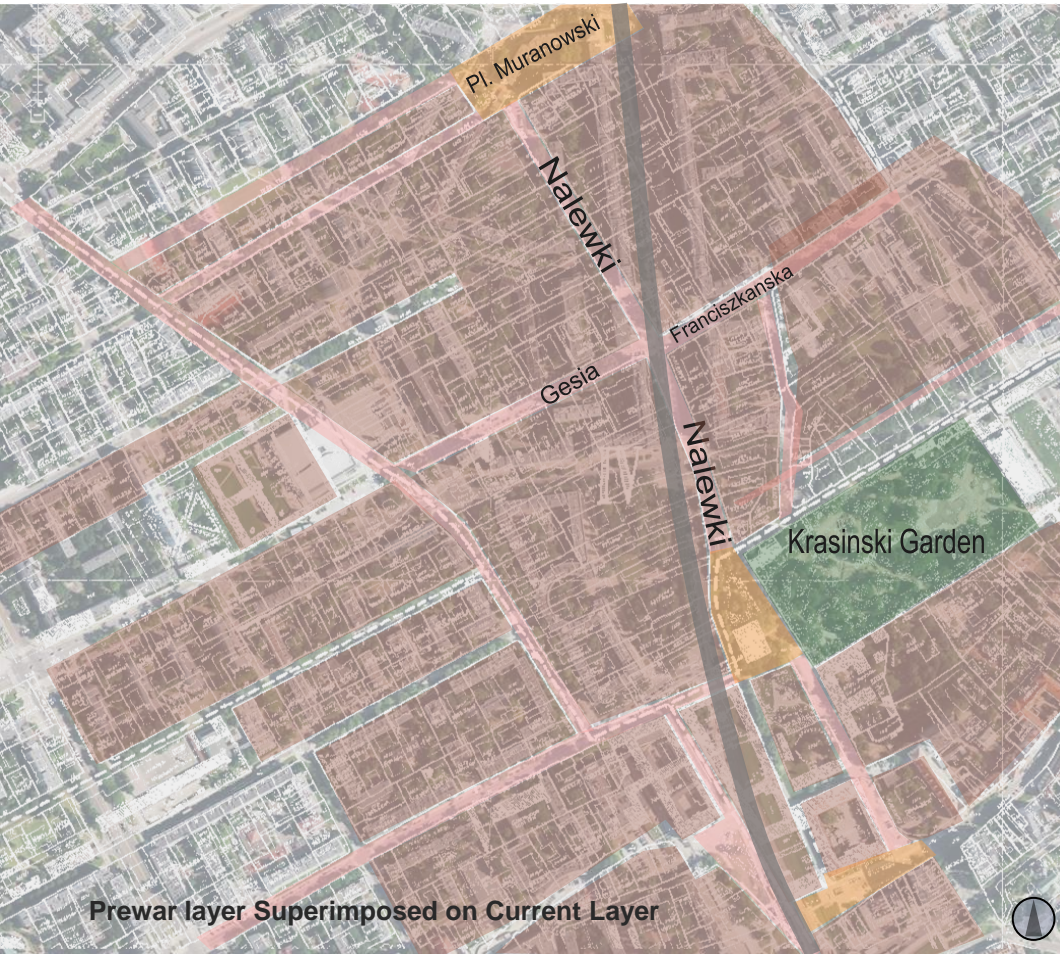
Walking in actual paths of pre-war Warsaw, enabling reliving its perished life.

A supplementary to the Jewish Museum – giving form to a lost era “in-situ”, in the public space.

# Planning » Urban Design » Prewar layer as infill generator

Next step was identifying urban elements which dominated Muranów prewar design: Dense blocks of courtyard tenement houses shape streets, 16-20m wide.

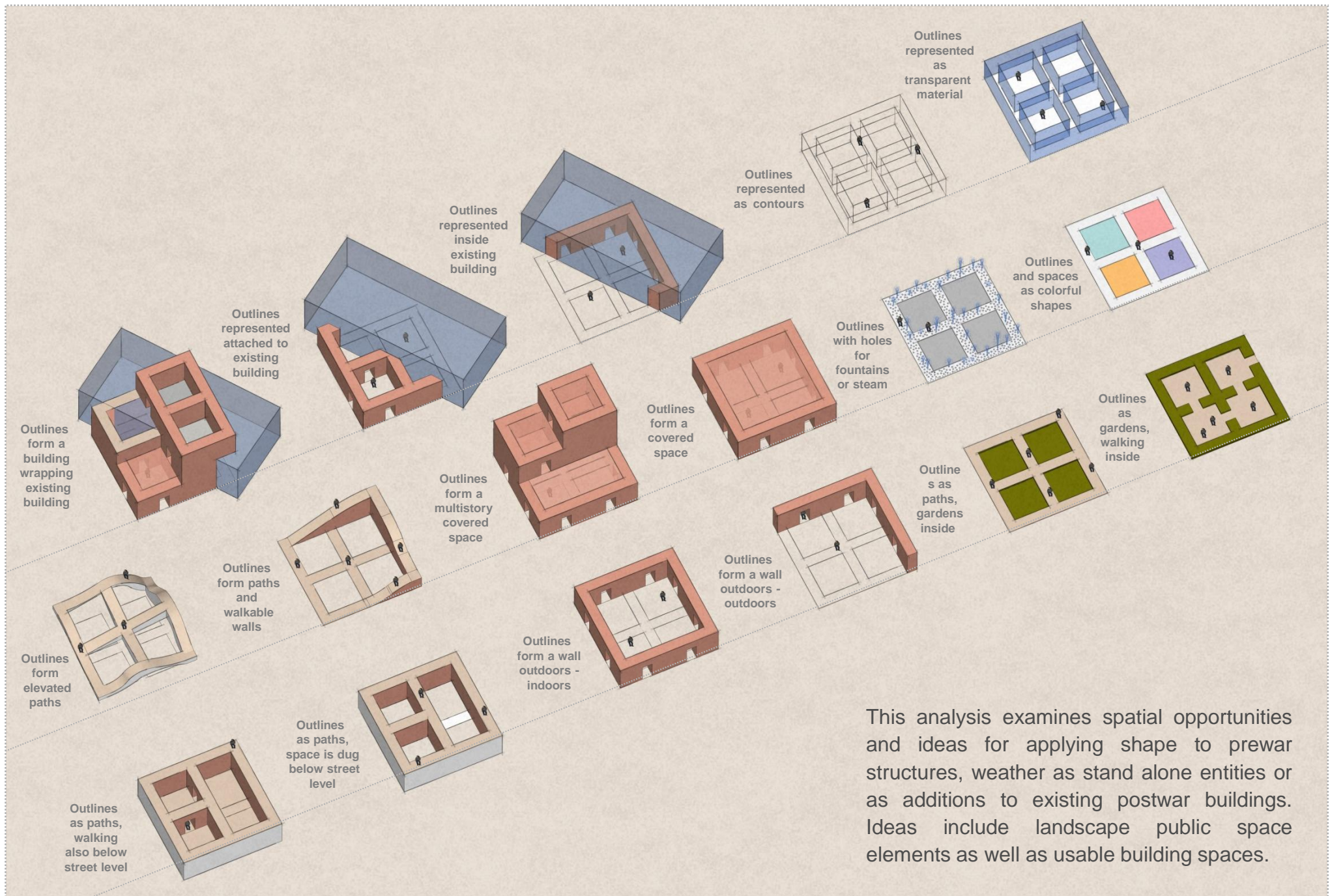
Then, I subtracted the footprint of existing buildings and streets from the dense prewar footprint, and revealed the current empty spaces where infills can be done based on prewar footprint. I also identified 4 important routes.

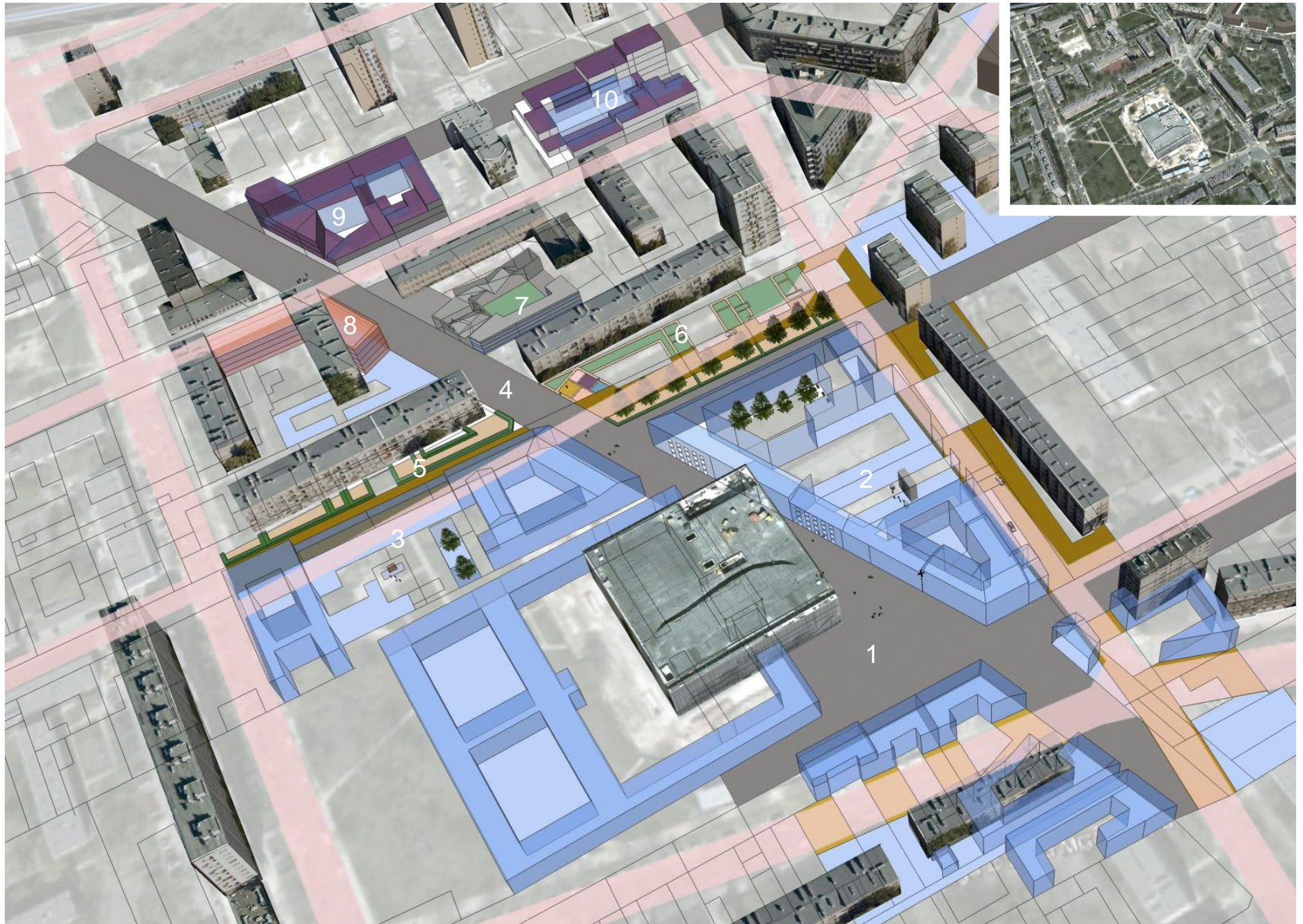


- Built up block
- Street
- Public Square
- Garden

- Infill – Buildings (Public + Private)
- Infill – Public Open Space
- Pedestrian Area
- Reconstruction of Transportation Route
- Archeological Area

1. Original Zamenhofa St. – Authentic Route of Martyrdom and Struggle
2. Jewish Museum – Stacja Muranów main project site
3. Muranów – Old City
4. Andersa – Marszałkowska route





## Intervention in the Jewish Museum Vicinity

Intervention is focused on the Jewish Museum Square and “sends arms” to nearby streets.

Museum Square (1) is enhanced by rebuilding prewar facades and main building walls using a transparent material or outline only. This human scale addition is a supplement to the museum that provides “in situ” experience of former environment. It also provides the “hugging” feeling which is absent in current Muranów.

Specifically it creates “Places for Memory” for two important monuments – Ghetto Heroes Monument (2) and Willy Brandt monument (3) – by surrounding them with a meaningful envelope rather than the sight of post-war communist blocks.



As shown in the “intervention catalog”, much potential exists in bringing up prewar layer gently using landscape gestures such as paths and gardens that follow footprints of former buildings.

These interventions can create meaningful public space (6) as well as benefit tenants in existing apartment blocks by providing them with private yards (5).

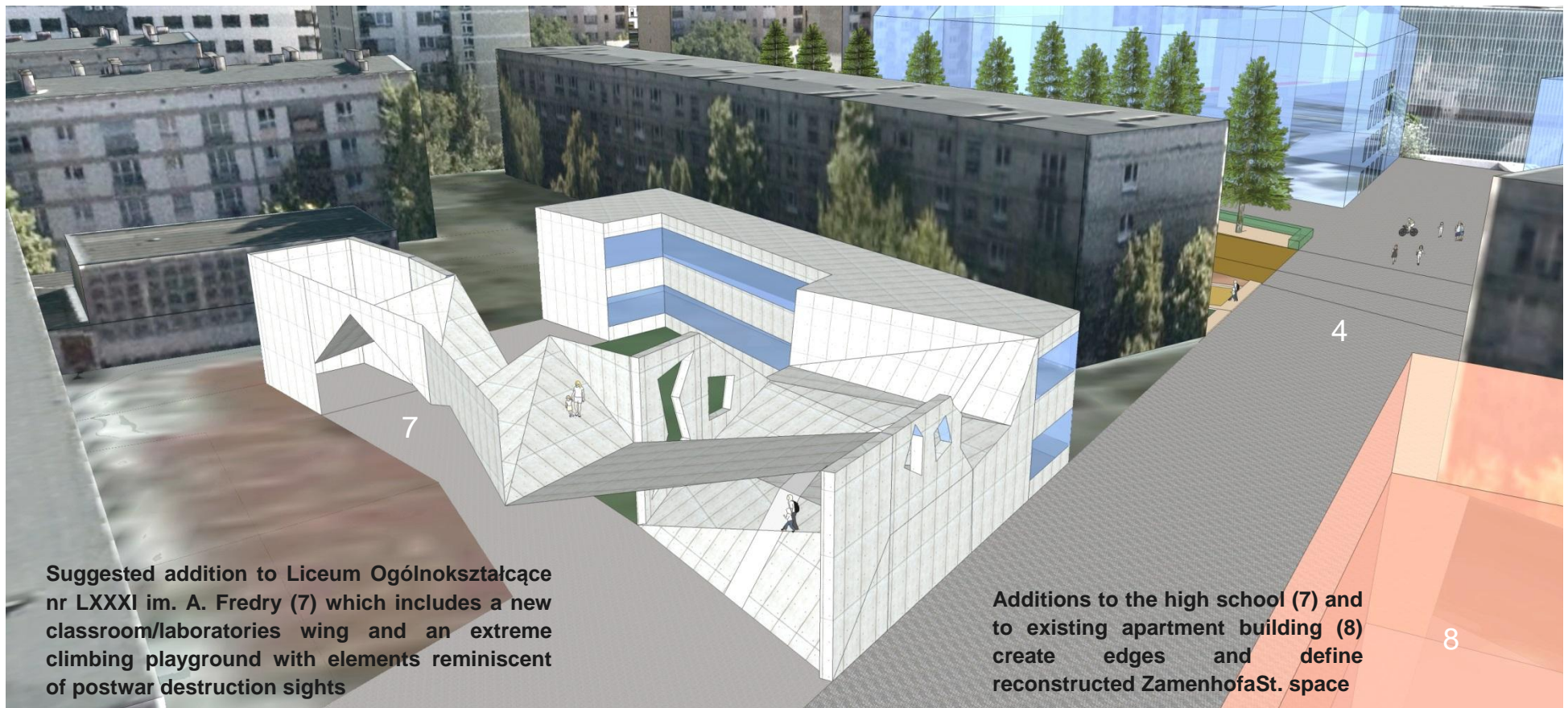
It is also suggested to shift Lewartowskiego St. path a bit north to the original location of prewar Wołyńska St.



From the Museum Square, the original Zamenhofa St. can be reconstructed (4), as its path was left free of buildings. Recreating this path caters the two communities: For locals – a neighborhood “shortcut” and a space for pedestrians and bicycle riders; For visitors – a meaningful path for walking in the footsteps of heroes and victims – the former Zamenhofa street links the current museum with the former “Umschlagplatz”.

The path of pre-war Zamenhofa St. is recreated as pedestrian and bicycle domain, adding another layer of movement in the area, one which is separated from movement of motor vehicles.

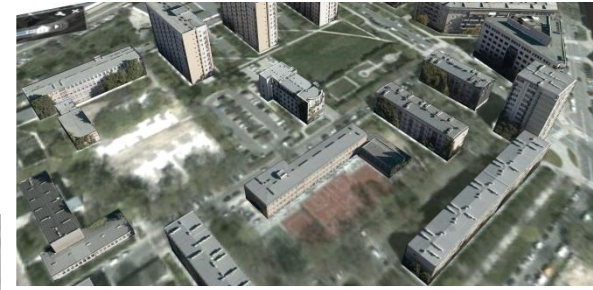
It is desired that where possible, reconstructed paths of pre-war streets will be used only by pedestrians and bicycle riders, thus enhancing the difference between “regular” current streets and streets of prewar Warsaw. It will also serve as a safer movement network for locals as well as visitors exploring the area. But most important, it will give visitors a much more meaningful path through which they experience Warsaw and seek traces of past. Reconstructed Zamenhofa St. can be an alternative to the Route Recalling the Martyrdom and the Struggle of the Jews, passing today through current Zamenhofa St. that did not exist back then.



**Suggested addition to Liceum Ogólnokształcące nr LXXXI im. A. Fredry (7) which includes a new classroom/laboratories wing and an extreme climbing playground with elements reminiscent of postwar destruction sights**

**Additions to the high school (7) and to existing apartment building (8) create edges and define reconstructed Zamenhofa St. space**

Empty spaces in Miła St. call for infills in order to create a continuous street (9, 10). One of these empty spaces is located in Miła18, where a basement floor served Warsaw underworld and later Jewish resistance fighters. Today a memorial is located on a tiny hill in a middle of an open area surrounded by post war building blocks far from reminding the actual building that used to be here. A suggested program for such an intervention will be shown in the next page. Design suggests receding floors to allow better light and ventilation into courtyard area.





# Planning » Urban Design » Initial interventions » Courtyard Tenement Houses

This image suggests a multi layered multifunctional scheme based on the courtyard tenement house. It relates to past events by preserving rubble layer, corresponding to functions of prewar basements, while inserting life into upper floors through various uses, thus – bringing together commemoration and urban renewal.

- Basements Level** • Authentic or recreated, with various opportunities for contents such as galleries, pubs, clubs, multifunctional spaces, empty voids
- Rubble Layer** • A direct authentic large scale window to the trauma
- Street Level** • Various shops, cafes & restaurants
- First Level** • Small offices, workshops, kindergartens
- Top Levels** • Apartments – various sizes – from 25 to 150 sqm (bachelors to large families), student dorms, hostel, residents' common rooms

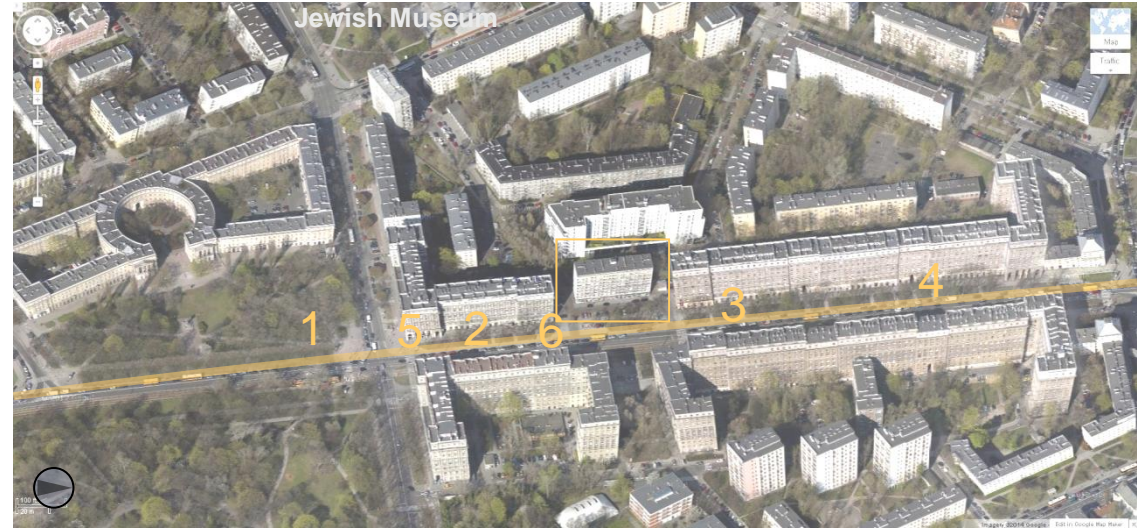


Receding floors due to climatic considerations bring light and fresh air into a large open courtyard.  
Multifunctional courtyard: Rich vegetation; Passage to building sections, Common space for tenants and visitors

# Planning » Urban Design » Focusing on Andersa Street » Andersa Void



As the project is focused in Andersa St., I shall now elaborate on the immediate urban context of this street. A few photos show the lack of edges and urban vitality along this major part of this route



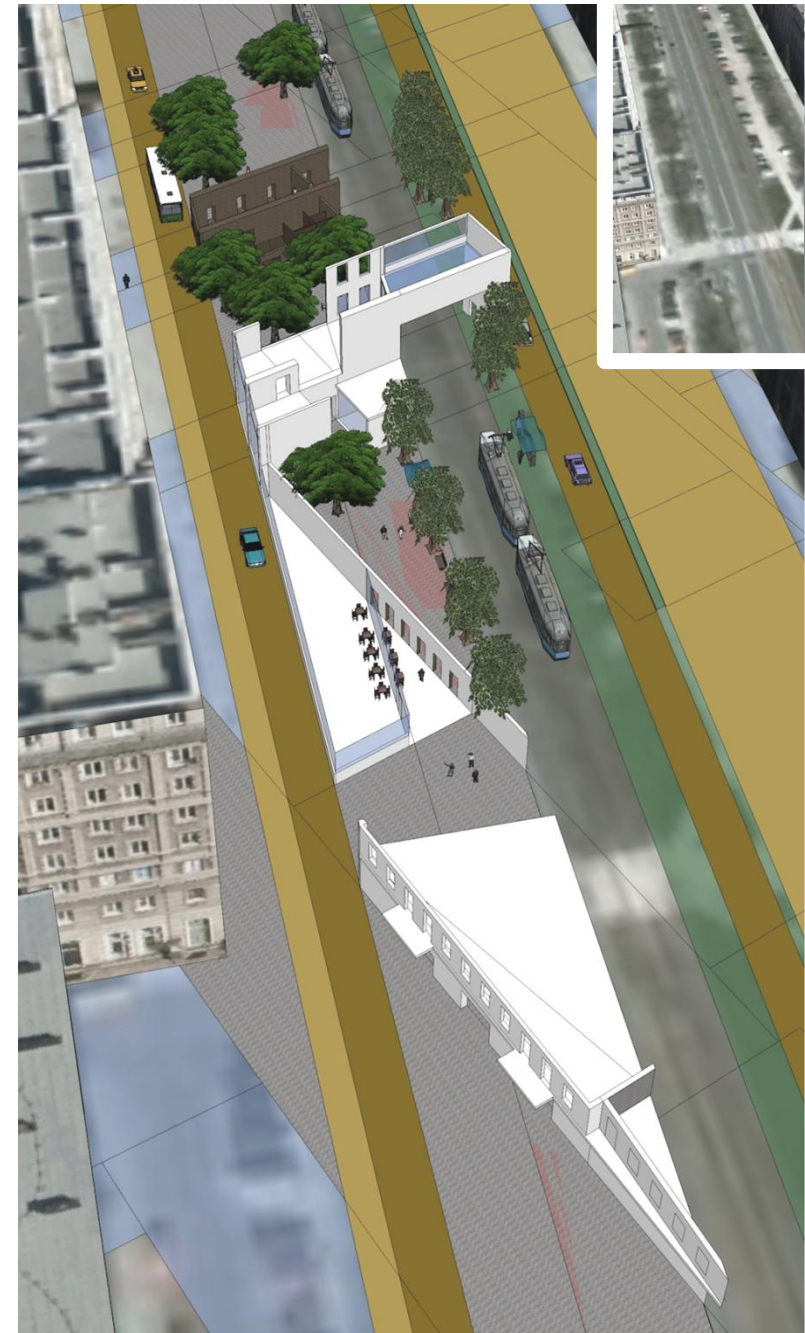


Andersa is a 64 meters wide Street, that has a potential to be an attractive “Boulevard”.

This initial intervention sketch did not make radical changes in the street, but rather utilized unused space following a separation of vehicle traffic lanes.

The result suggests unified green belts integrated with tram lanes, supporting pedestrians, bicycle riders and space for structures based on pre-war outlines for various uses such as: shops, cafes, refreshing and resting corners for public use.

This sketch served as an initial step and an inspiration for the detailed planning and design of the project.





Wide area in front Andersa 21b – A void conquered by cars



Winter outdoors heating on prewar building footprints

Yet another landscape design approach suggests taking advantage of an unused wide area in front of Andersa 21b.

The idea is to provide public heated spot for pedestrians in public space in the winter. Hot air (that can originate in underneath Metro tunnels) comes out of openings along a prewar building footprint, thus serves also as a commemorative installation.

When snow covers the street, snow melts on heated stripes making a “snow drawing” of prewar building footprint.



Snow melting “draws” prewar building footprints

Feeling in current Andersa

display **windows too small**

brick **wall facades** along **long building blocks**  
**monochromatic, monotonous**

feels **too open**, like getting **lost in space**

Residential Streets with **highway billboards**

**too much green**, as if it's **endless**,  
**monotonous forest, alienating**,  
not for me - **dogs' toilet domain**,  
people only have benches on paths

**seemingly too many possibilities**  
which are **actually nothing**

feels it's **over organized**

**no heated public space**, only a mall

**tram** is separated by a **fence – intimidating barrier**

Desired elements – urban aspect

elements need to **“communicate”** more  
more **variety** and **colorfulness**

walk **along** something **interesting**

**Distinct, “hugging”** street edges

smaller, **human scale**

**street elements** that represent **intimacy**

**green in right amount**, variety of  
plants, **inviting**, arousing, with **rest**,  
**recreation and play** areas

i want the **city** to **lead** and **guide me**

infrastructure for a **pleasant mess**

**roofed places** for **encounters in public space**

**Tram** should be a **mixed territory** with **pedestrians**

Desired elements – commemoration aspect

clues to **life** that have  
been here once

clues to **past physical**  
**urban tissue**

**feel the urban space**  
that was here

**meaningful points** of prewar life  
**in their actual site**

**“walk in the footsteps”**  
of prewar residents

get a **clue** on **events intensity**  
– physical / humane

Solutions hidden in prewar layer

**Commercial front** in **courtyards and streets**  
**Interesting passages** to yards, **surprise**  
**Variety of signs**, in human eyes height

**Variety of facades** –  
each building with its **unique design**

**Clear grid** dictated by **building**  
**blocks and street edges**

**Various building heights** –  
from one to seven floors  
**Various plot widths**  
**Various street angles**

**15-20m wide** streets  
**Continuous distinct facades**  
**Dense** buildup areas, **narrow defined yards**

**Various uses** – Shops, workshops,  
restaurants, cafes, hotels, inns, apartments,  
courtyard entrances

**Urban Microcosm**

**Tram** at the **heart of narrow streets**,  
**cobble stone** paved

**Lack of green areas!**

Refinement of planning guidelines

Edges

Interest

Street Continuity

Human Scale

Follow Past Paths

Mixed use

Communication

Recreation

Intimacy

Public Gathering Places

Pedestrian Territory

Variety

Public Transport

Refinement of project program

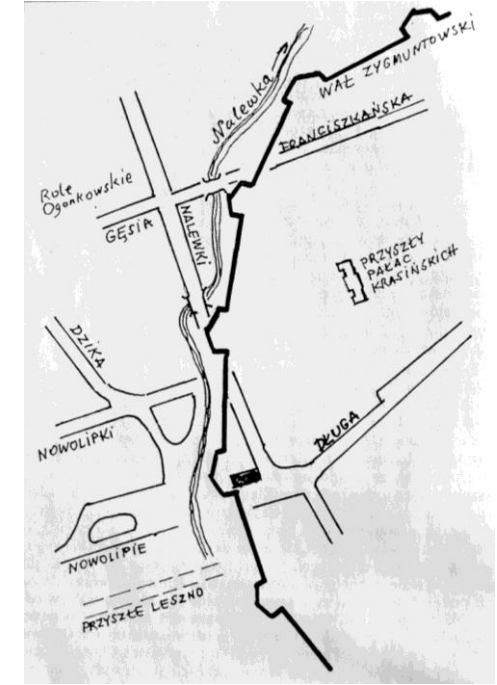
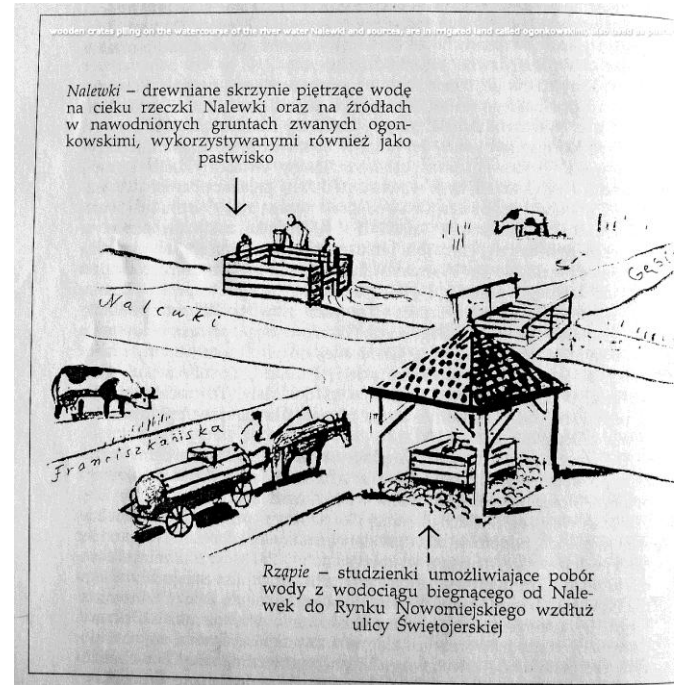
The project programs aims at creating a supporting environment for various uses that will enrich the character of the neighborhood which is currently mainly residential.

From an urban aspect a variety of uses will contribute to life in the neighborhood and at the same time may directly reference the past. As today the neighborhood is residential and lacks mixed use, any addition that combines apartments, offices, restaurants and commerce may be a good start. Hotels and inns existed in bustling Muranów and tourists are curious to see the area today so that's another current needed use. Infills that will make the neighborhood more densely and diversely populated and bring various uses into the neighborhood will be a catalyst to urban vitality and commemorating prewar life while fulfilling current urbanism approaches.

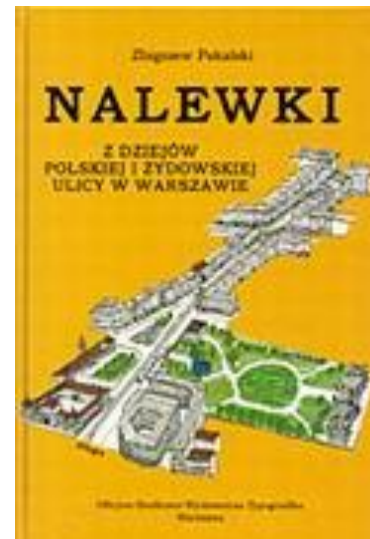
At this stage it was already clear that a major act in the suggested intervention will bring to life parts of Nalewki Street, which ran almost at the same path as today's Andersa St.

A thorough research was done deep into character and details of the street that was one of the most important commercial arteries of prewar Warsaw and the Jewish district.

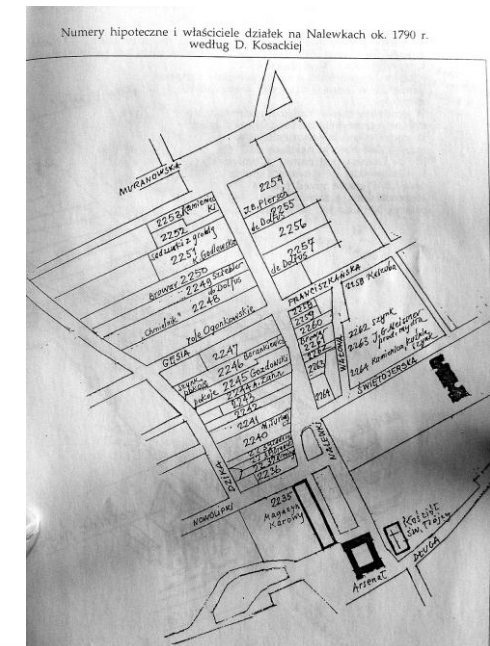
Useful sources started with the book "Nalewki" by Zbigniew Pakalski, a visit to the Jewish Historical Institute and a meeting with Jan Jagielski, study of building portfolios at the institute archive, thorough photo retrieval from various sources and a research in Warsaw City Archive as described in page 44.



Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH)



**Agricultural history of the project area – former corner of Nalewki – Gesia – Franciszkańska and the Nalewki Stream**



**Nalewki St. Plot organization and numbers**

A peep into owners and businesses of Nalewki Street

**Nalewki 2** (and Długa 50)

Simons' Passage. Azazel puppet theatre, Maccabi, Herszfinkiel restaurant - fried geese with pejsachowka (Jewish liquor), elegant clothes, cotton, silk...

**Nalewki 10** (corner Swietojska 44)

built 1830, rebuilt 1864. After the war - Pluga - sort of hostel for Jewish youth mainly from Krakow for refuge. 25 young people ages 14 - 21.

**Nalewki 27**

Hotel Londynski + businesses, shops, small factories. Londynski 1860s. 1870 run by Adam Krajerkraft. 1876 -building replaced by two-story apartment house. Narrow land, two annexes, creating a sort of courtyard. 1939 in the building - glovemaker - Bielkina, tiemaker - Adler, overall, belt and garter belt workshop - Wolf Alpern, cardboard box maker - Janas Rotblat, coat and leather jacket workshop - Salomon Lejzerowicz, underwear maker - Abram Piernik, leather goods maker - Plomnik, underwear "Factory" - Sapira, Robe shirt and waterproof coat workshop - Siekiera, belt and leggings - Ostroleka, dinner at the home of Abram Joska Rzetelny ("reliable")

**Nalewki 16**

Linoleum shop - Juljan Meisel, silver shop - Josef Fraget

**Nalewki 18**

Haberdashery - A. Goldberg

**Nalewki 23/25**

courtyard - Augustowski Inn - main destination for Jewish businessmen. In a classical building from 1824 with stores: leather goods - Juda Leybel Felsenhart. 1837 - bookstore - Salzstein (Nalewki 23). 1869 - vinegar factory - Abram Krajerkraft, medicine warehouse - Izrael Rozendorf, Women's coats - Judka Erenberg, colonial store - Rojza Leffeld. Bavarian beer garden - Dyna Jakowiak. Bookstore of Hebrew literature 1860s-1870s - Josk Jawitz. 1930s - more concrete annexes, food shops, colonial goods, sewing materials, hat feathers, fake flowers, transport businesses

**Nalewki 33**

Storage - Aronowicz, craftmaker (especially from bones) - Joel Bajcza, glass maker - Apelblat, Cotton goods - Borensztein, 4 transport companies - Borychowski, Gelblum, Glezin, Jastrzab brothers. 3 stores with notebooks, writing books, other writing stuff - Izrael Glaszmit, Szya Cukier, Kornblum, confectionary products - Rabinowicz, Copper workshop - Rotenberg, leather products and metal goods - Silman, raw animal hide - Pentelka, shoemaker - Chaskiel Lipa Wurcel, cold-cut store - Moszka Kornblum, coffee house - Wajnberg (only the ones who had a telephone...) Street level - shop, + the courtyard. First floor - the shops + miniature factories and workshops. 1930 - change from wooden storefronts to new modern interiors.

**Nalewki 37**

Bernard Singer - writer. Courtyard - performing beggars. House before 1840. Long plot - over 30m. "a sort of residential ant-farm - with storehouse for various goods, shopping arcade full of tiny shops in the annexes on the ground floor and first floor, and rather large stores facing the street. Apartments: artisans, merchants, negotiators, agents, brokers, doctors, midwives.



Nalewki  
Photo  
Poster

A collection of all available photos of prewar and postwar Nalewki St. depicting facades, courtyards, street life, and more. This visual research became a significant design inspiration and tool.



Urban context planning of the project started with sketching a layout for intervention along Andersa St. from Stawki St. down to Plac. Bankowy. The rationale was to understand what role and form will Andersa St. take in the whole process of revitalizing this route, adding infills, edges meaningful public spaces and the Metro station.

A cardboard work model was built in order to examine ways to bring life Nalewki – Gesia – Franciszkańska corner. An underground level was considered, but eventually rejected in order to keep as much activities to a single street level.



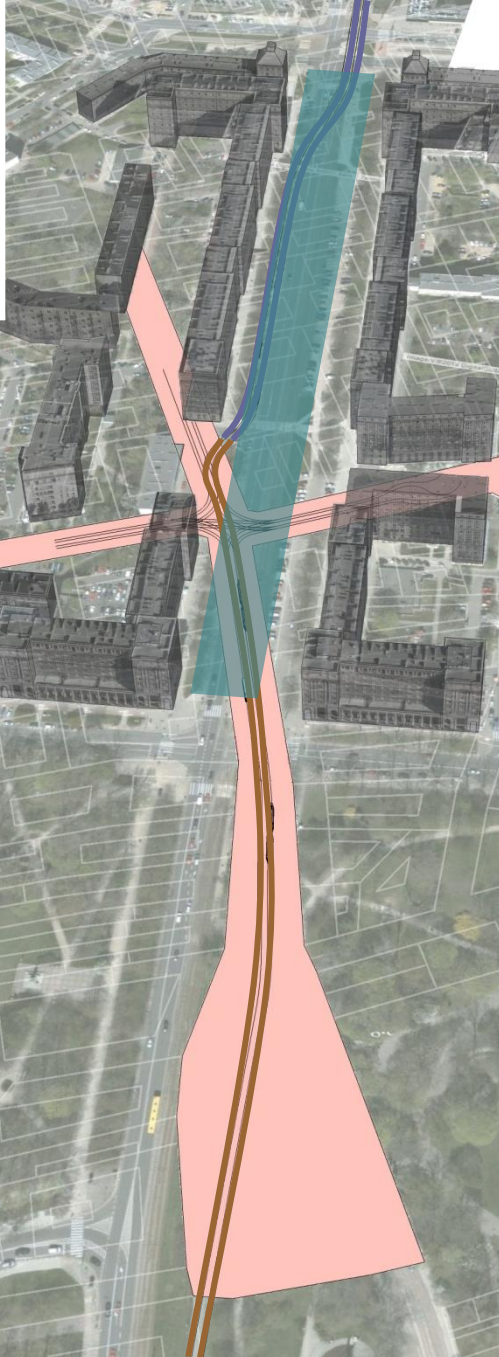
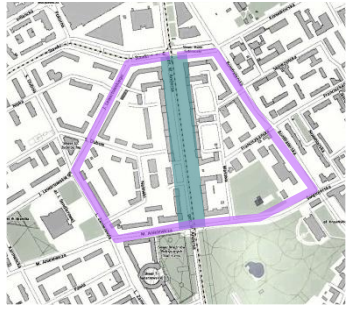
1:1000 plan of infills along Andersa St. based on Nalewki prewar plan



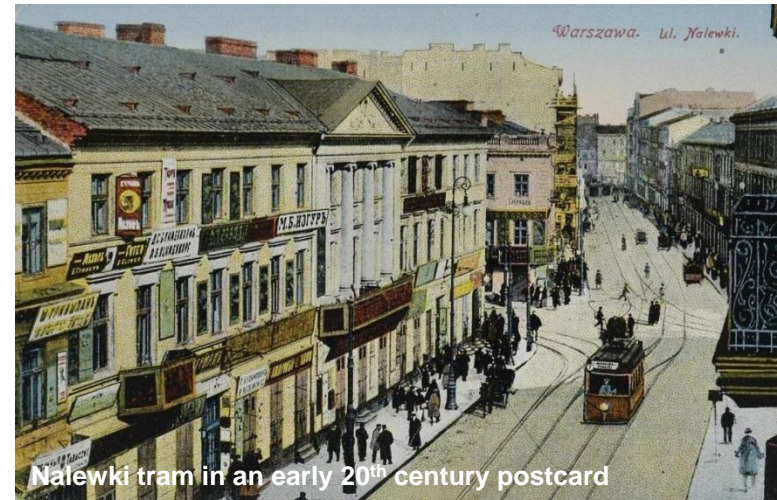
1:500 plan of central Andersa St. and suggested site of Stacja Muranów



1:250 cardboard work model of Nalewki – Gesia – Franciszkańska corner, examining its reconstruction in various street levels



Year 1900 Nalewki tram line



Nalewki tram in an early 20<sup>th</sup> century postcard

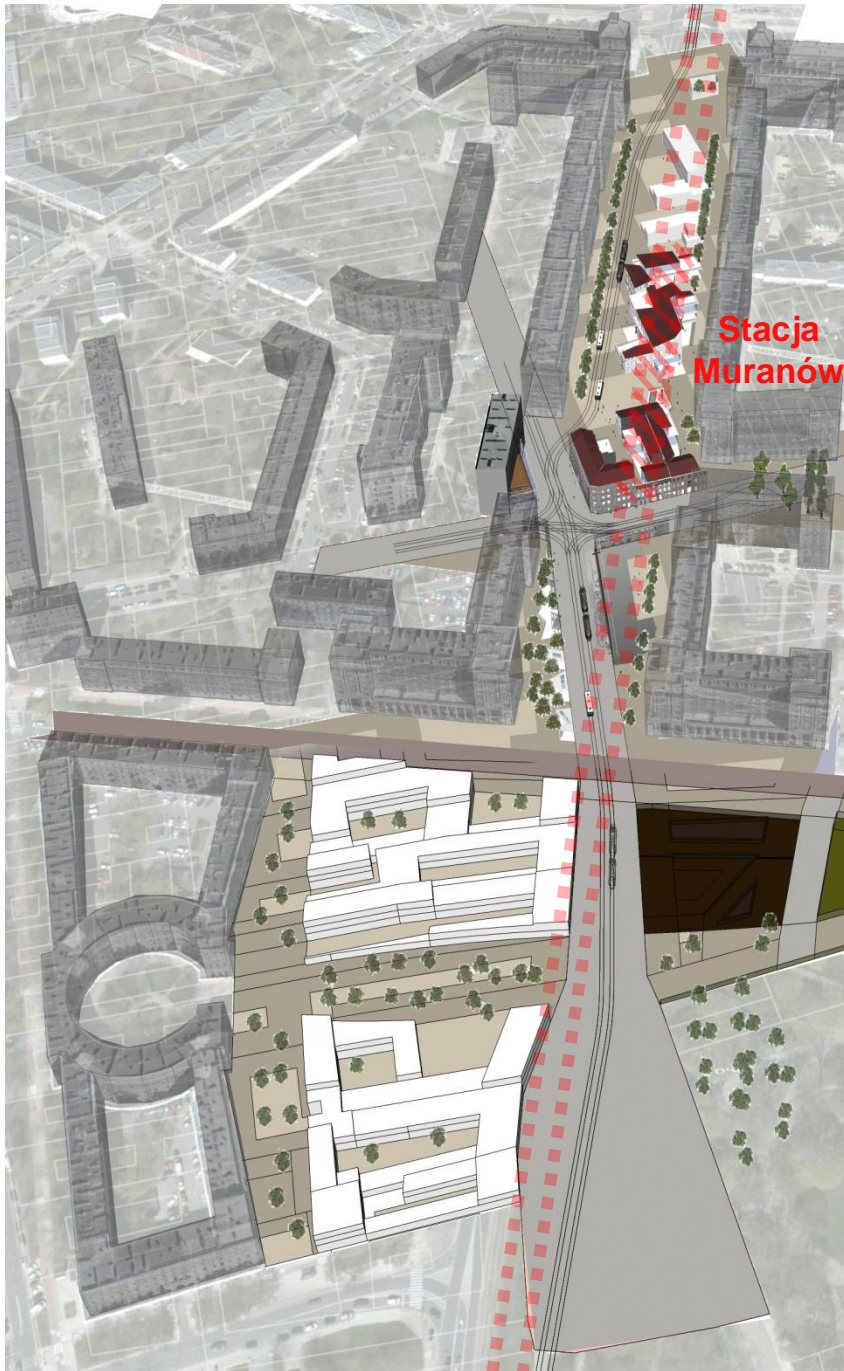
Tram has been a major transportation means in Warsaw from the cradle of the city. Bringing back the tram based on the former path of Nalewki Street directly into Andersa Street is a meaningful traffic oriented act but has meaningful urban renewal and commemorative aspects. This disruption brings back traffic into a slower pace, adjusted to a vivid pedestrian oriented space based on public transportation.

Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

## 1. Constructive Disruption

Traffic slows, People regain valuable public space inspired by past

- Layout of Nalewki – Franciszkanska – Gesia streets
- Tram reroute to prewar Nalewki path
- Tram on Andersa path, shifted west
- Pedestrians Public and Service traffic only
- Alternatives for Private vehicle traffic



Next step after laying the Nalewki transportation foundation was bringing up building blocks and recreating the delicate prewar tissue within current Andersa St.

Main project area includes “Stacja Muranów” metro station on existing Metro line I. Above it, a reconstruction of Nalewki – Gesia - Franciszkanska corner is done as a main focal point and public space. Around it, prewar buildings on this corner come to life in various manifestations.

The area south of Anielewicza St. is not on the main scope of this project, and was developed only in general outlines. It introduces a new pedestrian west-east area, surrounded by mixed use built up area based on prewar courtyard tenement houses of this area, which were characterized by exceptionally long courtyards.

East of former Nalewki, an archeological park is suggested (brown) and a recreation area as part of Krasinski Garden.



Above is a series of aerial photos of the main project area – Prewar Nalewki – Gesia - Franciszkanska corner superimposed into current Andersa St. The total devastation of the area is clearly seen from the 1945 photo, as well as the different grid and urban tissue of today.

Below is a zoom into the corner - heart of the project area. Note that prewar streets fall exactly in current un-built spaces. The reason is that prewar sewage tunnels were still functional after the war, and were left intact to be used after the war. That's why no buildings were built on their path. A careful analysis of building footprint and courtyard location was done to get inspiration for design.



Layers were taken from Warsaw Municipality GIS system and enabled exact matching and planning

This is an area plan of the core project area. South of Nalewki – Gesia - Franciszkanska corner prewar buildings were brought up essentially in a landscape design form suggesting useful public spaces for various climates and uses.

Red roof buildings are positioned above two Metro Station levels and are the main structures in the project containing mixed uses for commerce, offices community services, studios and apartments

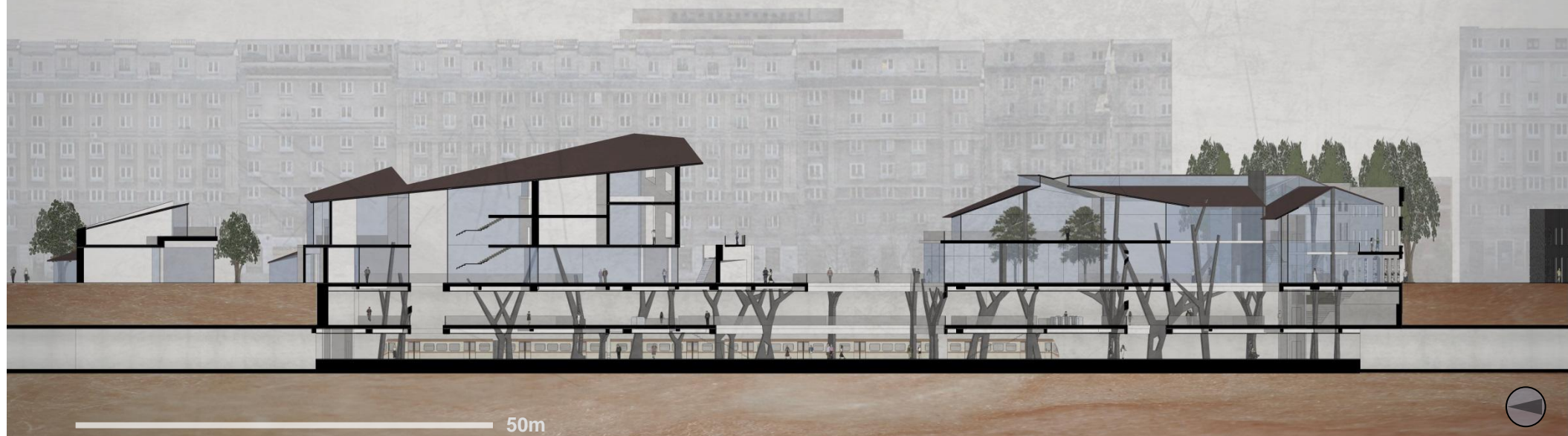
North part of Andersa infills was not in this project scope and is shown only in outlines to emphasize the area planning scheme – Distinct infills separated by public open spaces based on prewar courtyards.

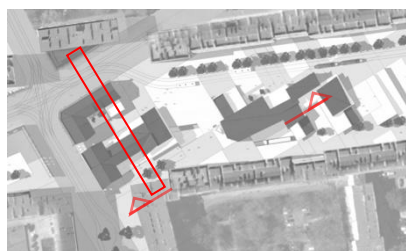
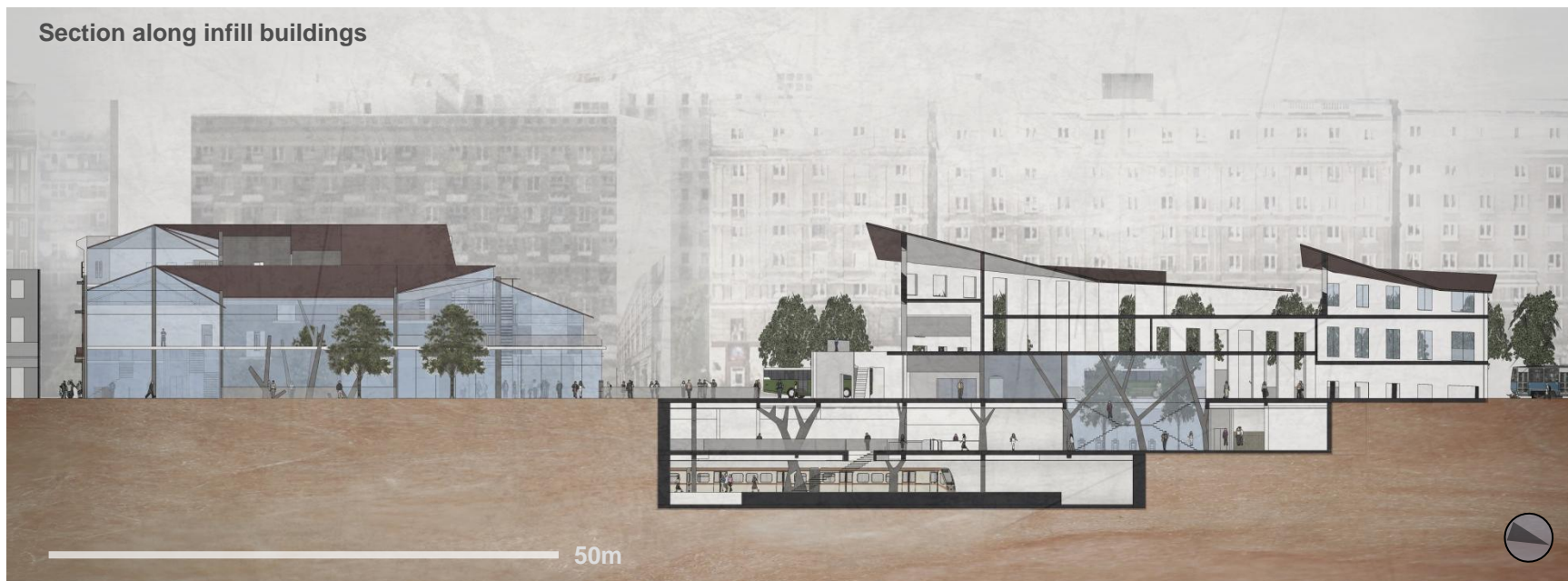


Section along Andersa St. and metro line facing West



Section along Andersa St. and metro line facing East









A series of sections to the width of Andersa St. with added buildings.

50m



Next part of the project book will go deeper into the design and experience of the new buildings in Nalewki – Andersa Square.

Andersa (current and real) shapes Nalewki (old and virtual), and vice versa - virtual shapes the real. In the main planning area, the metro station and the corner itself, Nalewki shapes the place, as it is the focal point of the new design where prewar aspect is at "its peak".

But the shaping process is not immediate. As we shall see, some principles are adopted from the past, but adaptation to the present is extensive.

Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

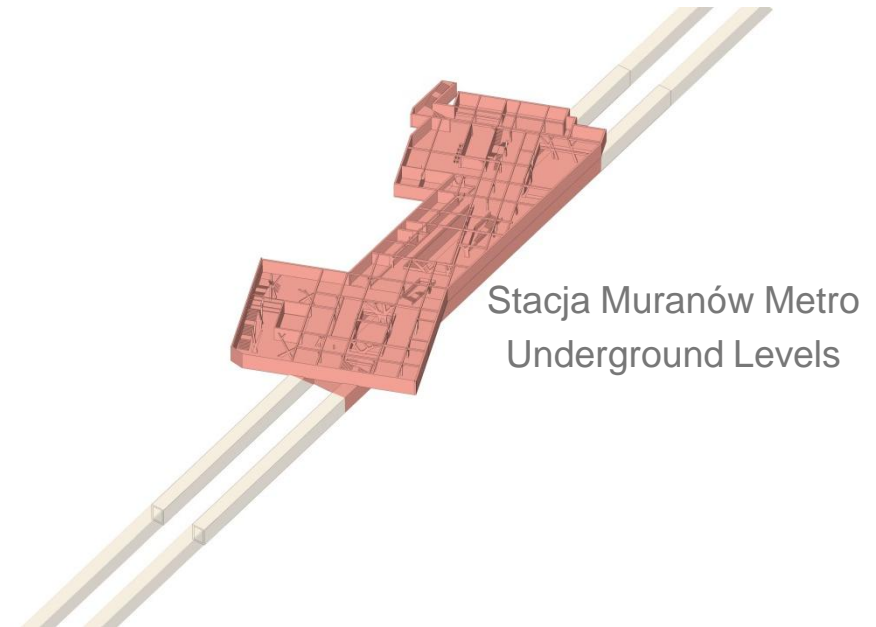
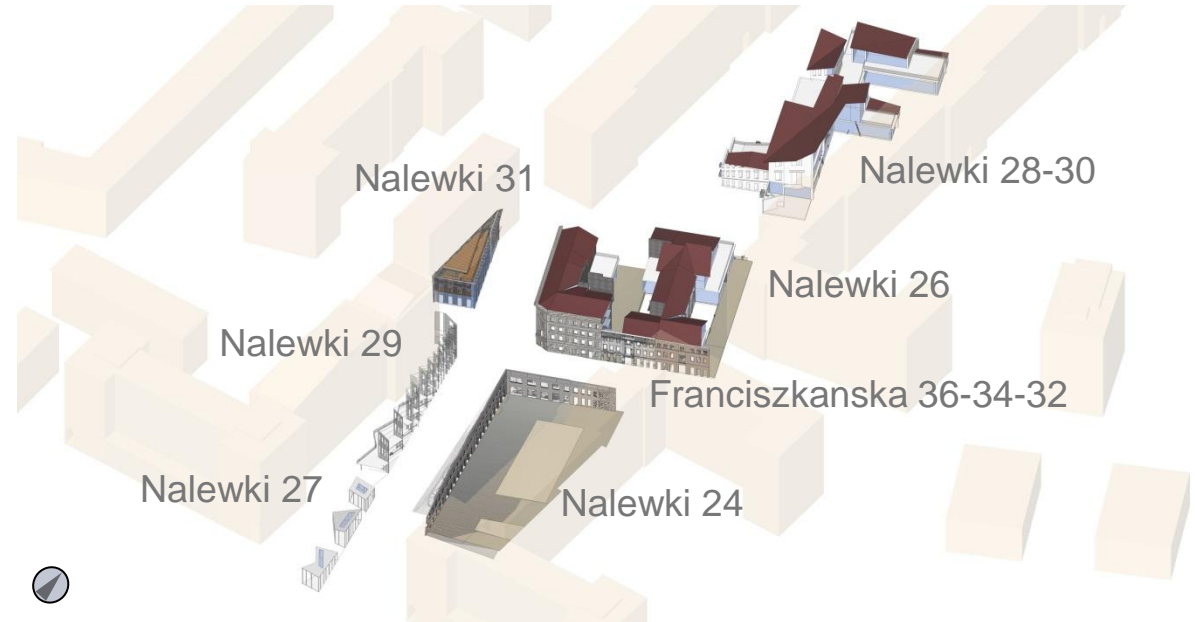
## 2. Adopt vs. Adapt

Adopt (from past)

Planning - Street Section, Edges,  
Scale, Mixed use program

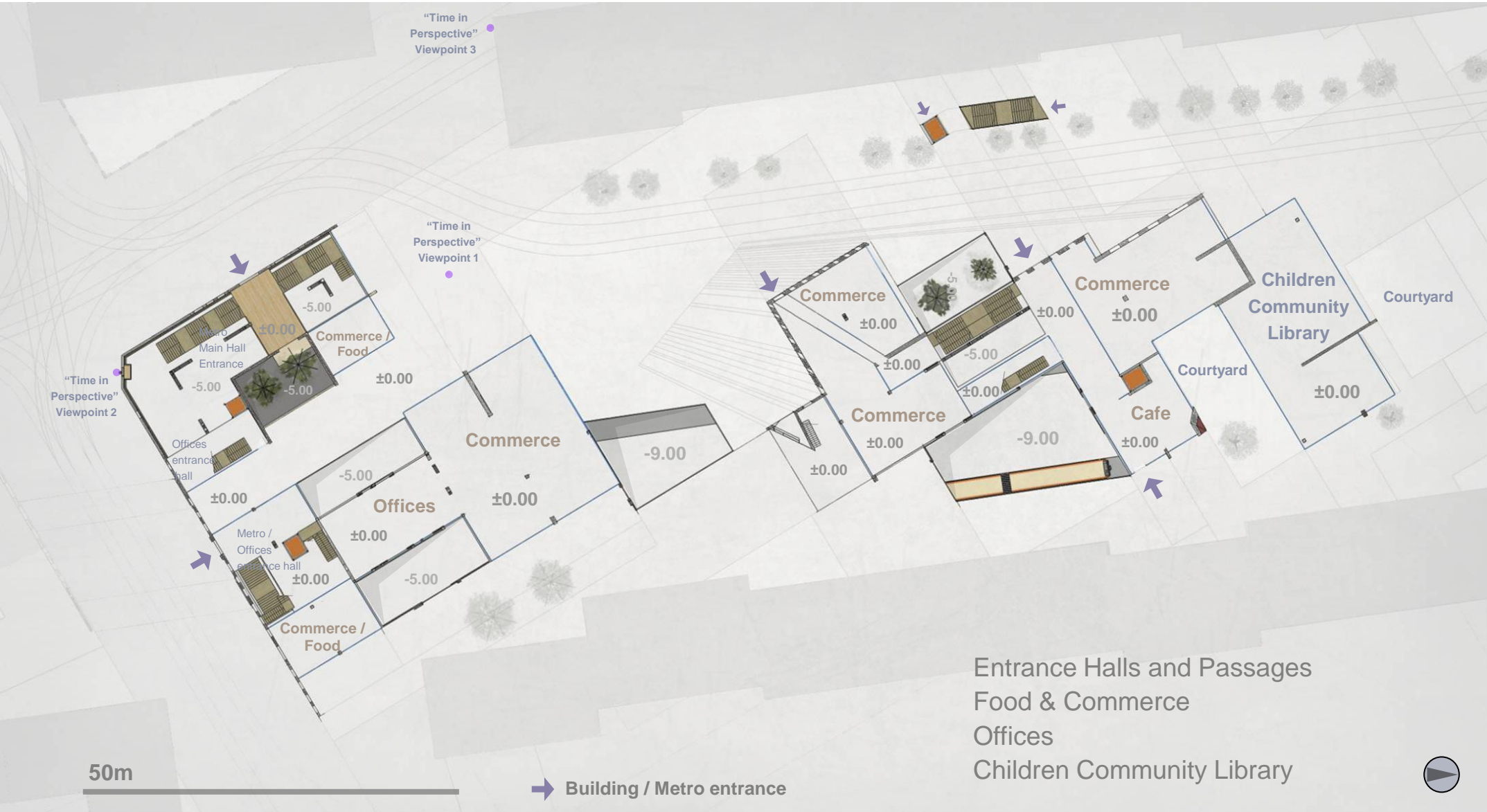
Adapt (to present)

Design – Façades, Materials, Interior spaces  
Transportation – Metro Station



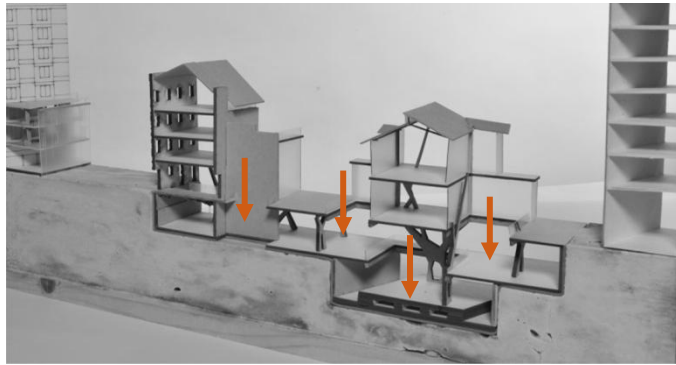


Ground Level plan of the main buildings above the Metro Station. Several entrances lead to metro main halls. Most area is dedicated to commerce, with display windows facing the street to increase urban vitality.

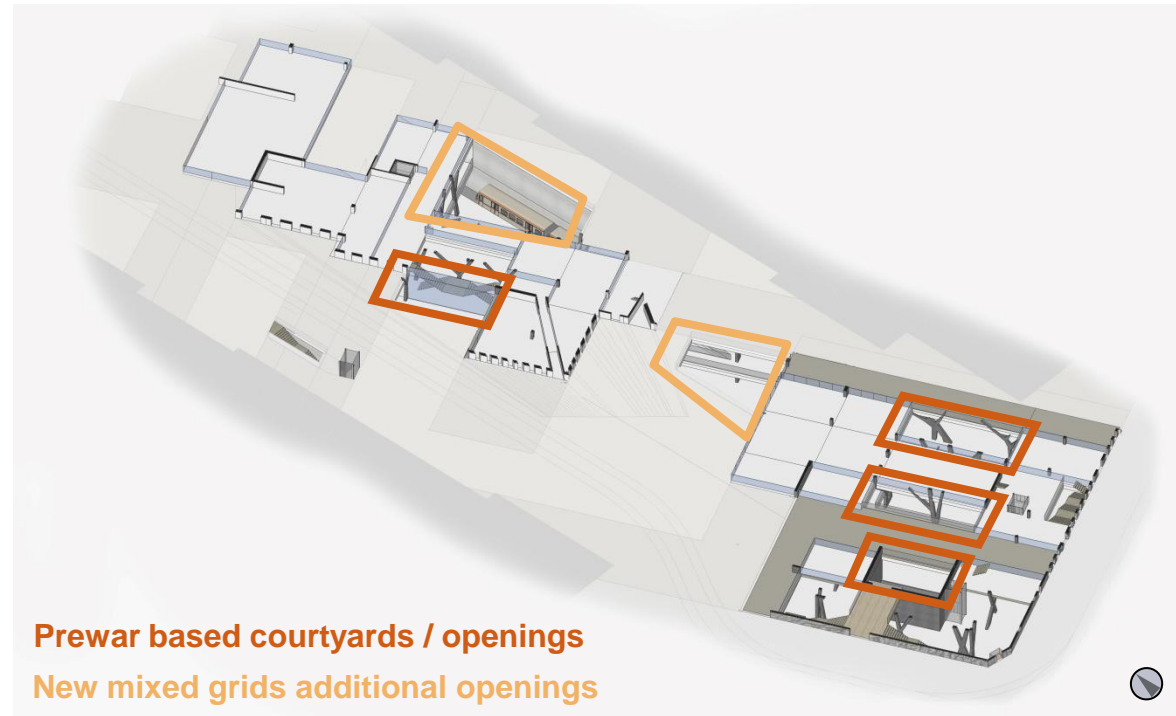




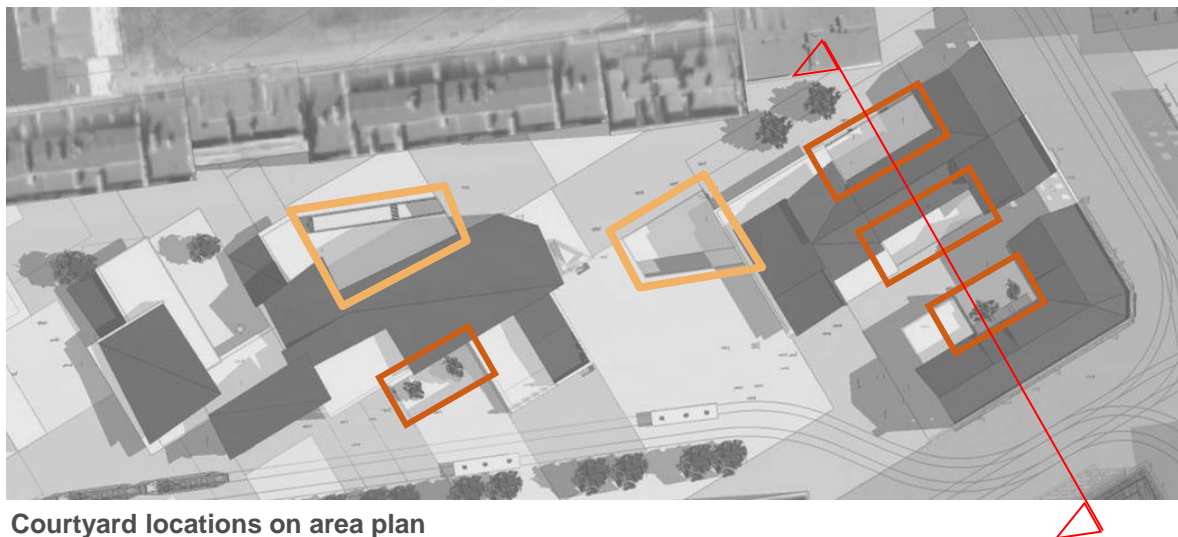
Ground level prewar courtyards are evolving to level -1 patios and openings between levels to allow sunlight and view to outside world, thus reducing fear involved when going underground as well as keeping orientation.



Courtyard locations on section



Prewar based courtyards / openings  
New mixed grids additional openings



Courtyard locations on area plan

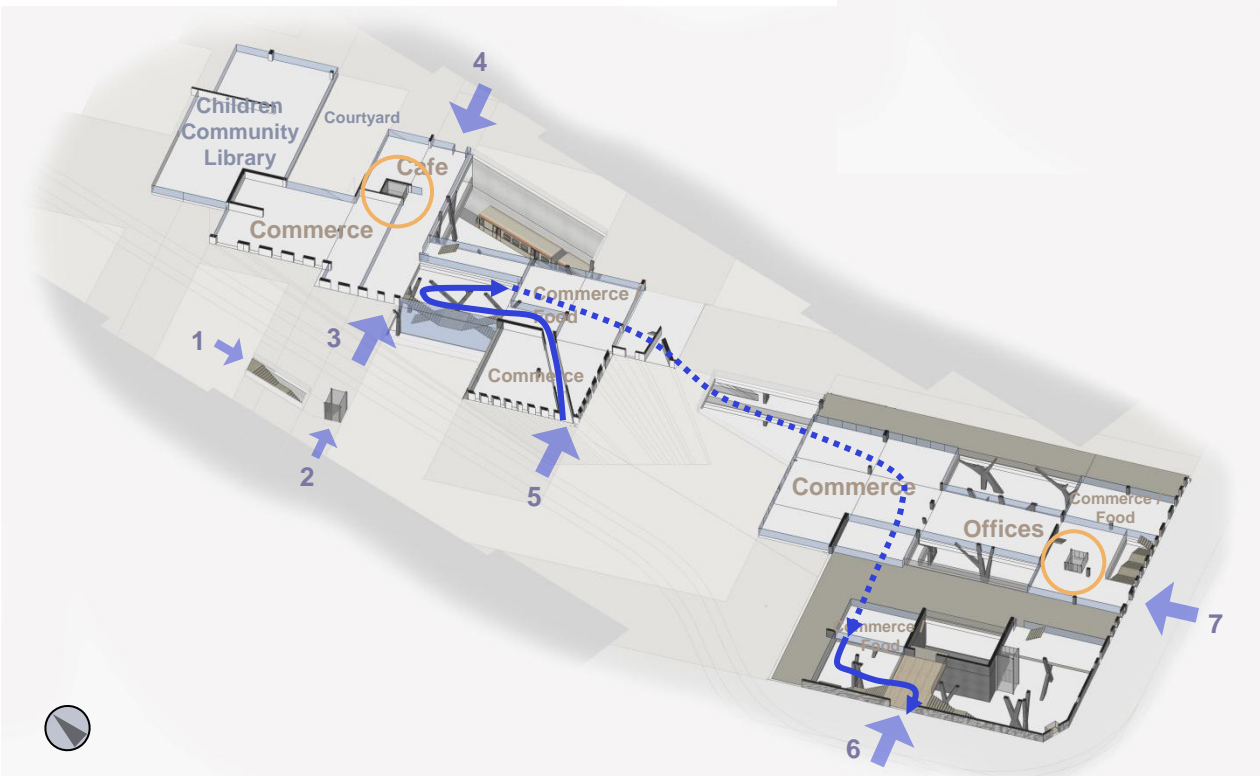
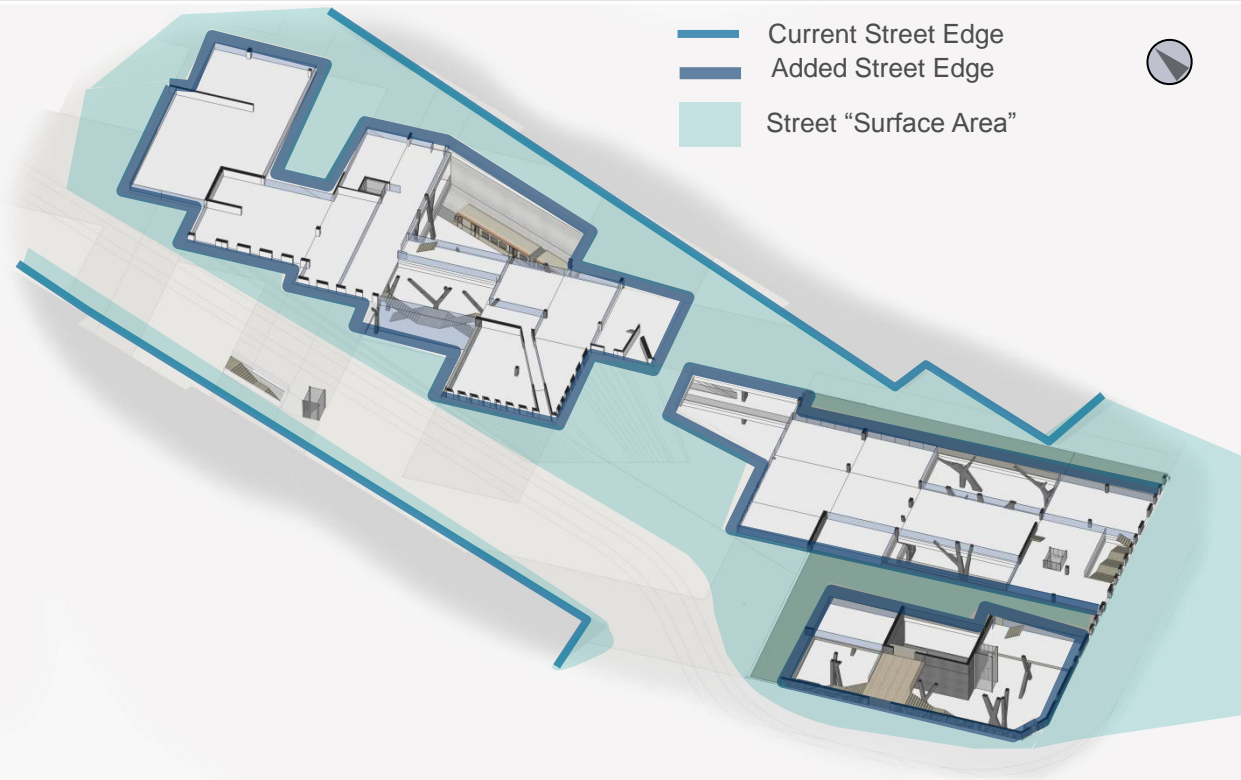


Prewar courtyard tenement houses on site



Street “Surface Area”

Street “Surface Area” is an area available for pedestrians to walk. It should be measured not only by its mere area in m<sup>2</sup> but also by the total length of all active edges that surround it. Active edges mean display windows, cafes, etc. The “broken” design of the suggested buildings is derived from prewar footprint, adapted to current layout of Andersa St. and the new transportation scheme, creating an interesting and surprising edge while significantly enlarging street “surface area”.



Several entrances allow access to the metro station. From the square in the south (6,7) from the north (3,4) and west (1 - stairs, 2 - elevator) – the other side of the tram tracks / vehicle lanes. Two elevators (marked orange) allow direct access from ground level to platform level (-2) edges. Entrance 5 from the middle is unique as it is done via an opening which is allegedly an entrance to a prewar courtyard.

Nest page is a tour from entrance 5 to 6 via metro levels (path marked blue).



Level -1 -2

A tour into the metro station. (1) Entering through entrance 5 along a passage into (2) the northern staircase. Down to level -1 in northern hall and to controlled access (3) and further down to platform level -2. Up again (5) to level -1 south hall and up again (6) to street level.

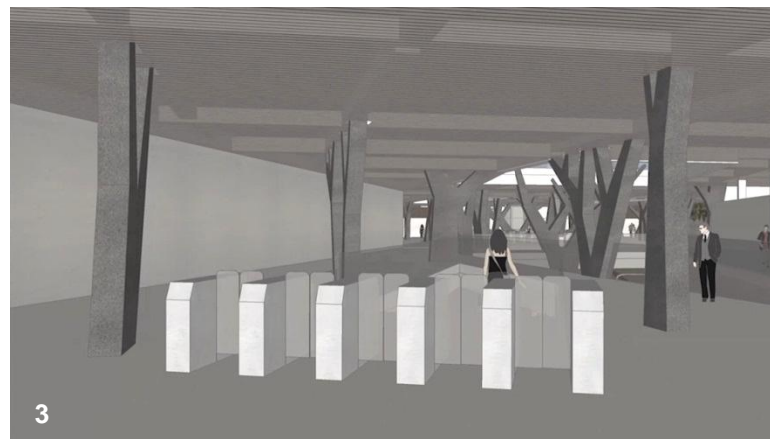
South hall walls are based on Nalewki 26 foot print, thus basement wall remains of the original building may exist on site, and will be incorporated to south hall walls.



1



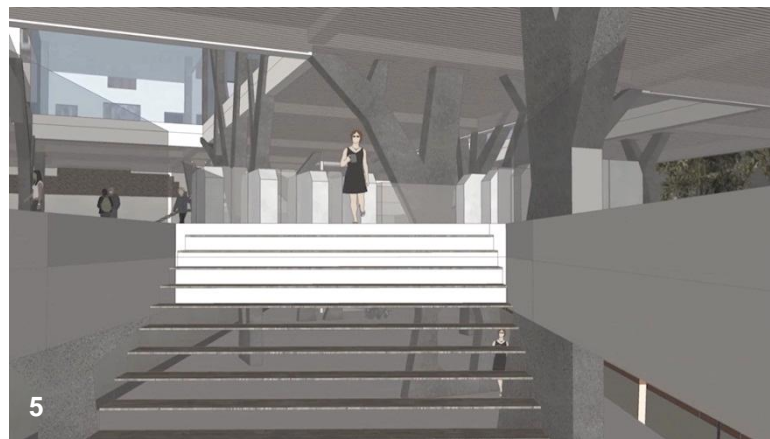
2



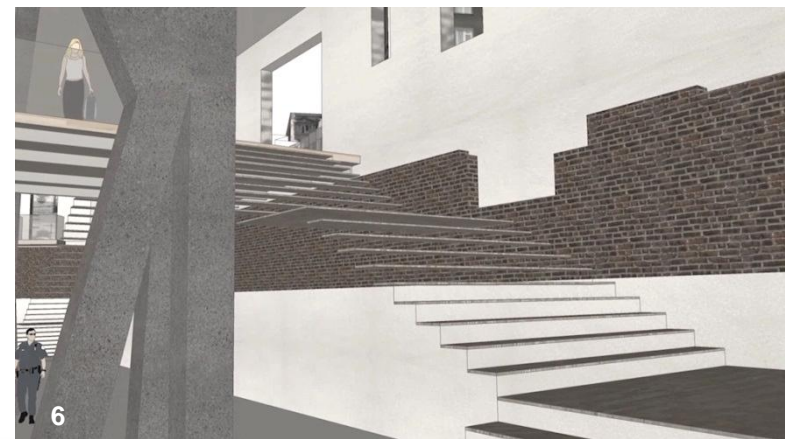
3



4



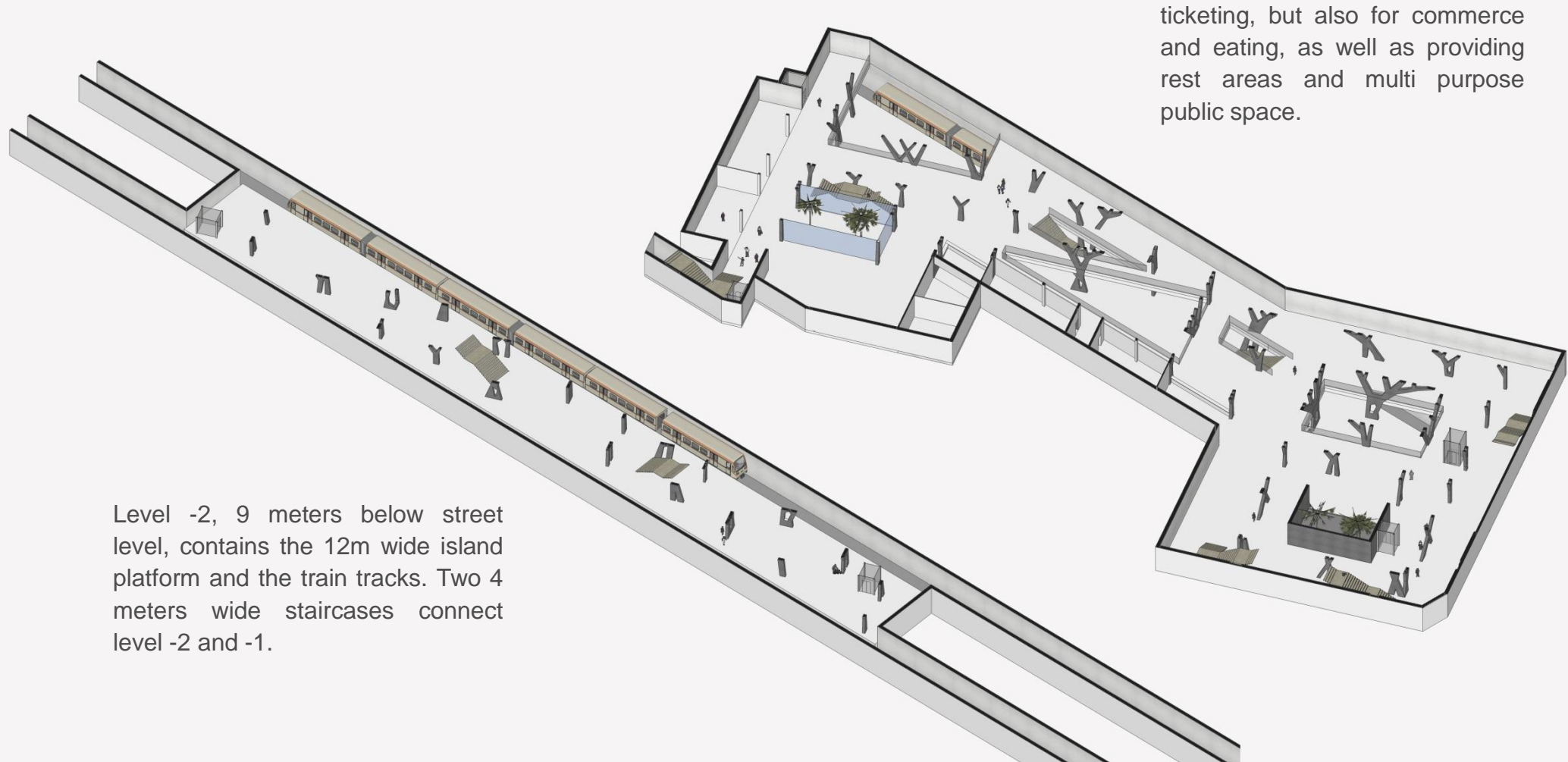
5



6



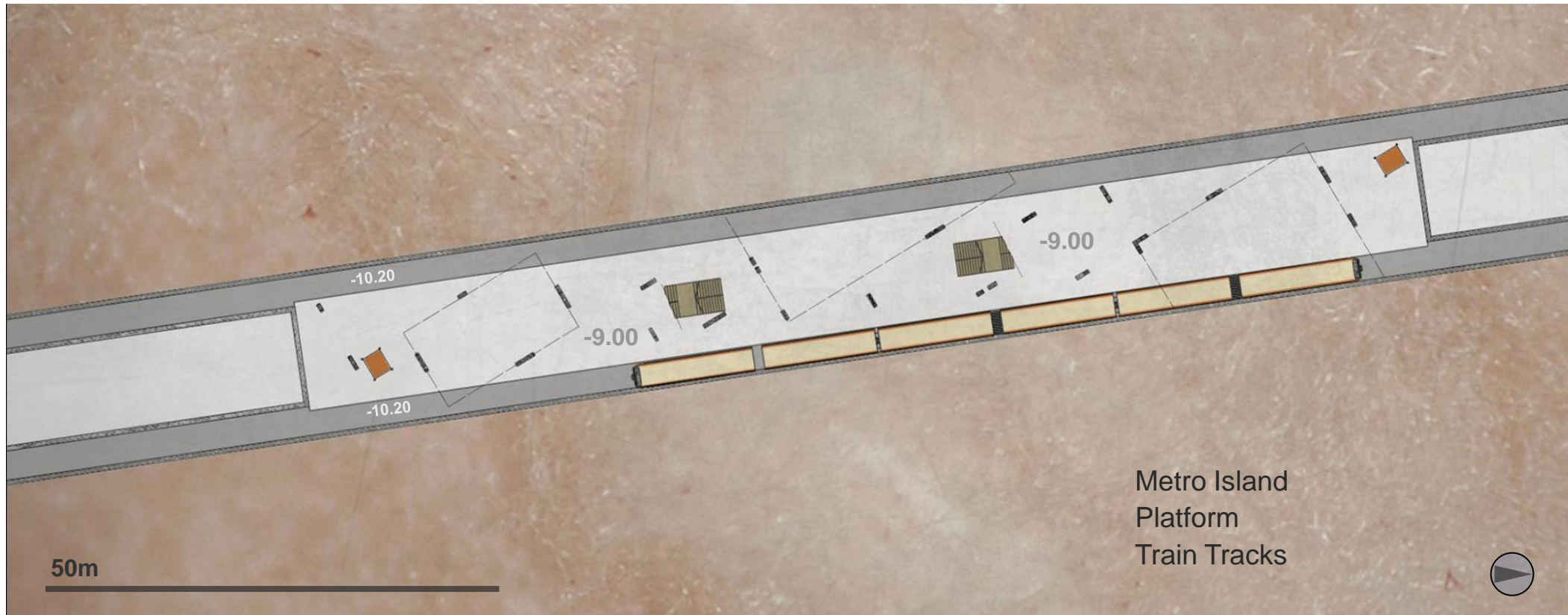
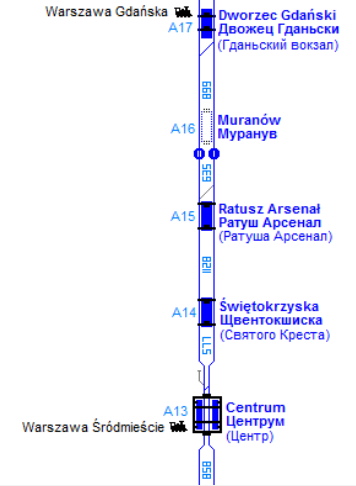
Level -1, 5 meters below street level, is the intermediate metro level, designated both for metro services such as information and ticketing, but also for commerce and eating, as well as providing rest areas and multi purpose public space.



Level -2, 9 meters below street level, contains the 12m wide island platform and the train tracks. Two 4 meters wide staircases connect level -2 and -1.



A thorough study about existing metro stations was done by visiting all metro stations of line I. Most of them are “island platform” stations, including a preparation for the un-built Stacja Muranów, as seen in the diagram on the right.



Metro Island Platform  
Train Tracks

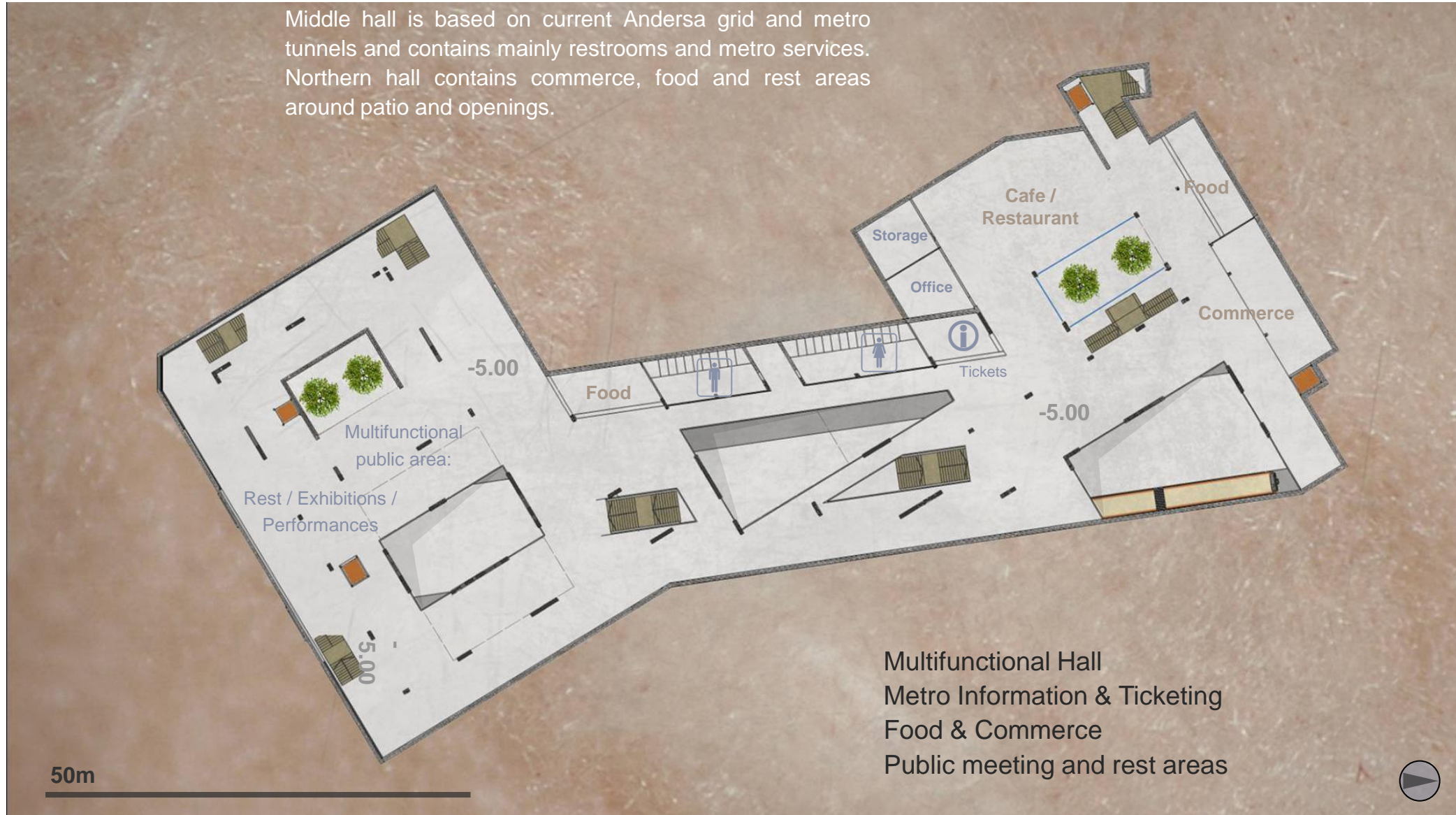




Level -1

Level -1 of the station is divided to 3 main parts. Southern hall, designed upon prewar grid, with patio and upper openings allows multifunctional use and public areas.

Middle hall is based on current Andersa grid and metro tunnels and contains mainly restrooms and metro services. Northern hall contains commerce, food and rest areas around patio and openings.

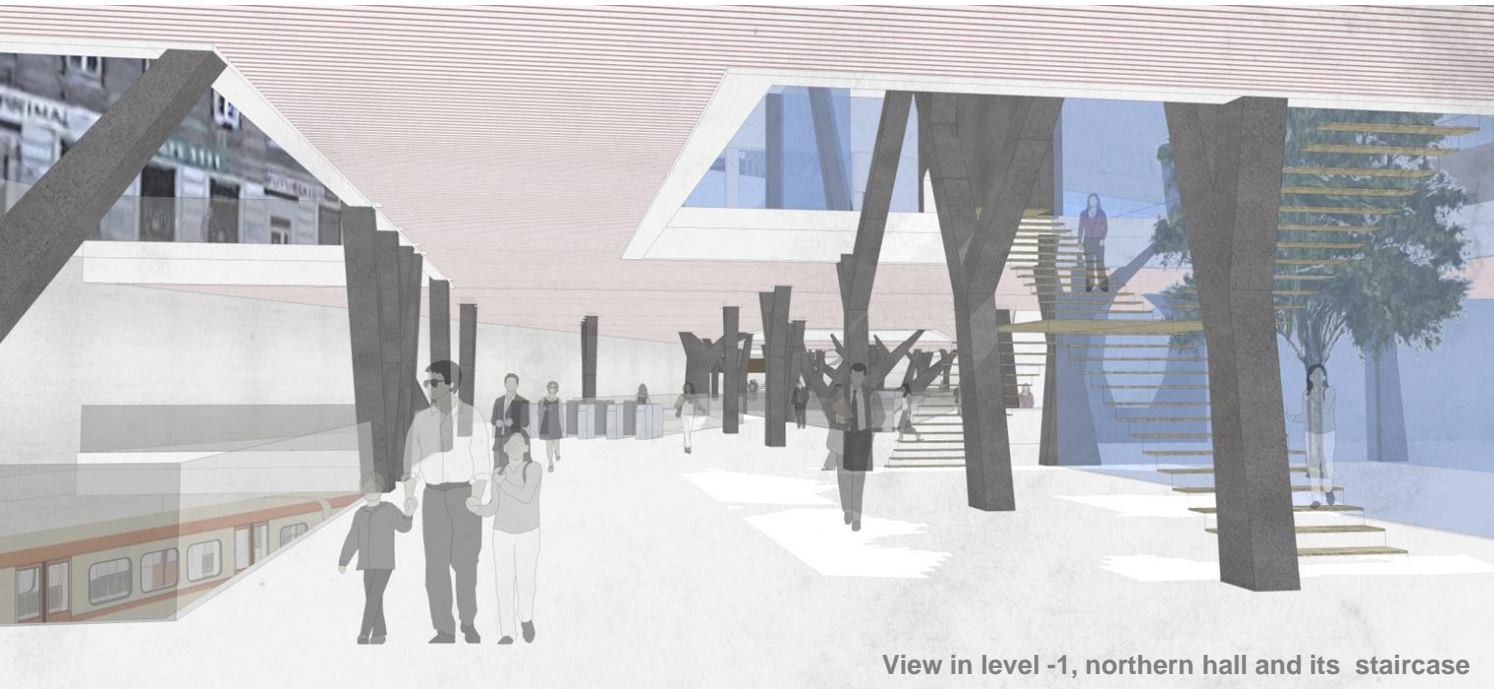


Multifunctional Hall  
 Metro Information & Ticketing  
 Food & Commerce  
 Public meeting and rest areas



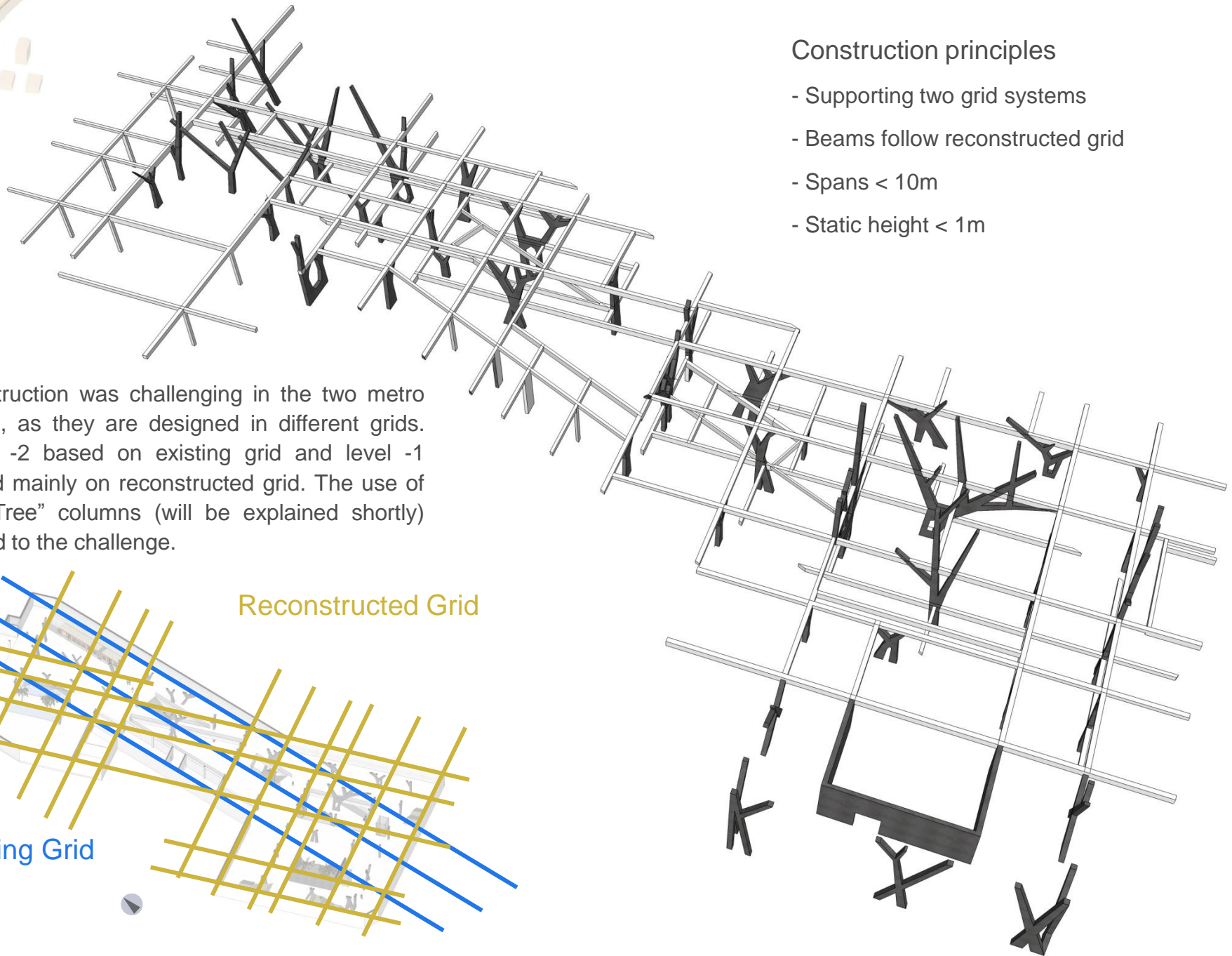
A view from level -1. Openings allow sight to level -2 and outside, for light, ventilation, orientation and feeling of open space.







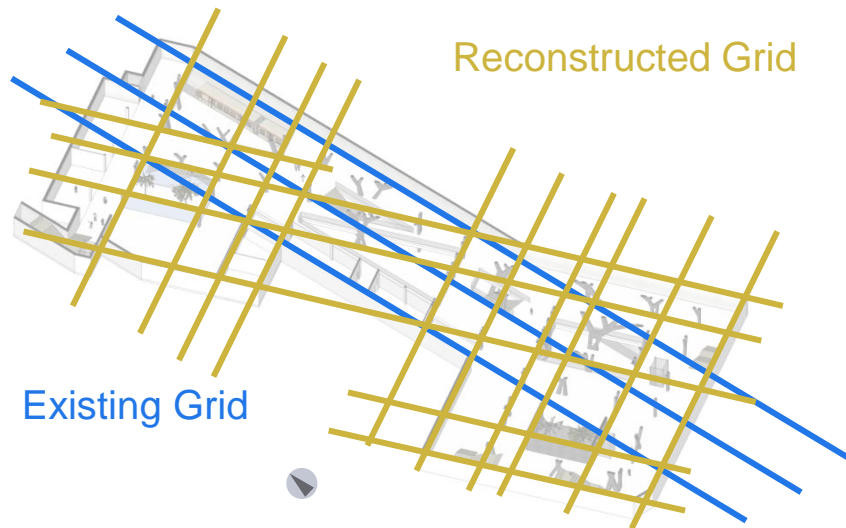
Level -1 -2



### Construction principles

- Supporting two grid systems
- Beams follow reconstructed grid
- Spans < 10m
- Static height < 1m

Construction was challenging in the two metro levels, as they are designed in different grids. Level -2 based on existing grid and level -1 based mainly on reconstructed grid. The use of “2D Tree” columns (will be explained shortly) added to the challenge.



Reconstructed Grid

Existing Grid

Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

### 3. 2D vs. 3D

#### Physical 2D

Prewar constructive 2D envelope and wooden floors

War aftermath 2D façade remains and no 3D life space

#### Conceptual 2D

Memories are mainly 2D (pictures, film)



Post war “2D” sights

Third design principle is the 3D construction of 2D elements. This idea is implemented both in the shape of the “Tree columns” and the shape of supporting walls.

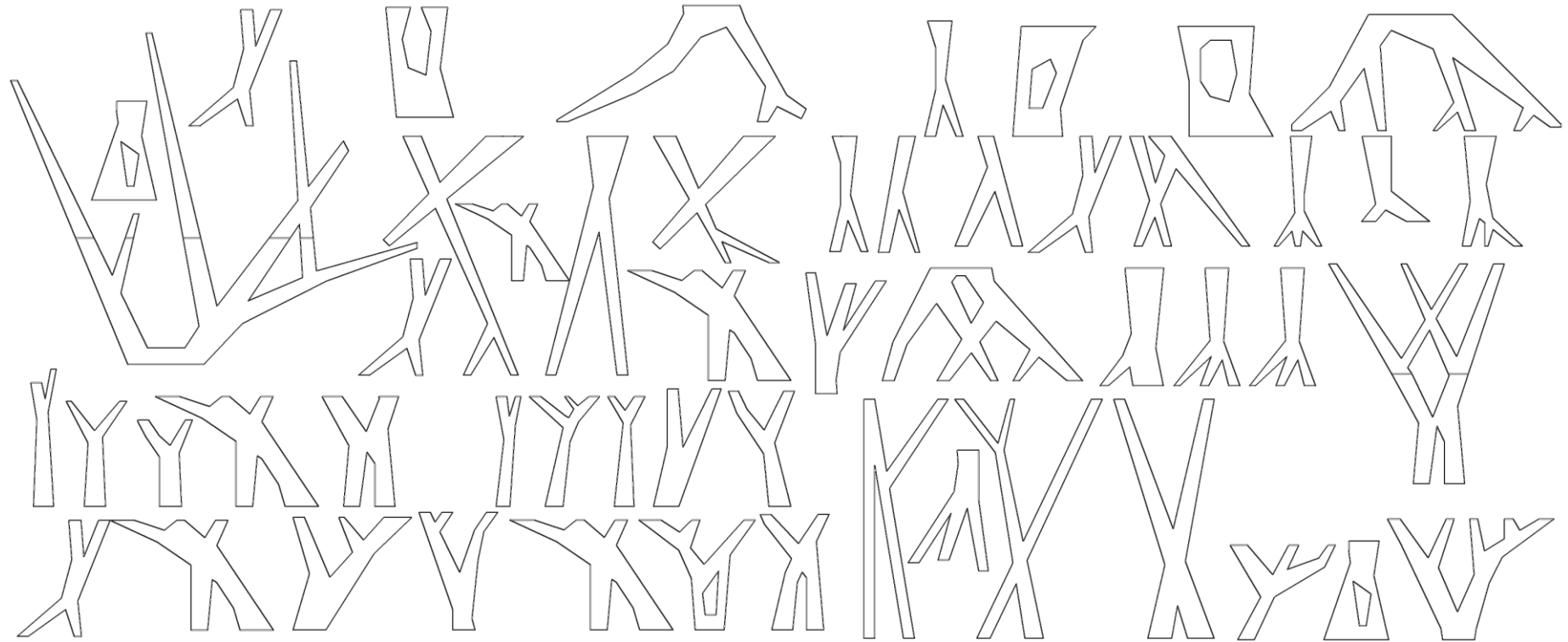
Creating 2D like elements is reminiscent of postwar “2D” sights of remains: only building facades and walls were left after the Nazis set buildings on fire destroying their wooden floors and roofs.



“2D Tree” columns are easier to be pre-fabricated and assembled on site

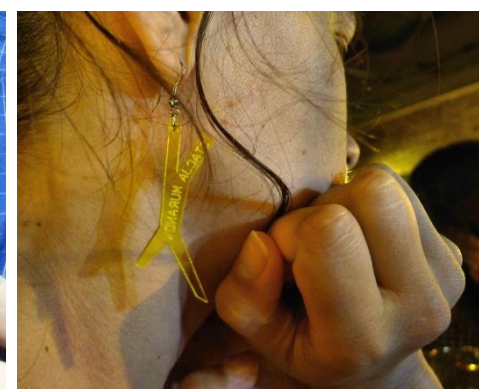


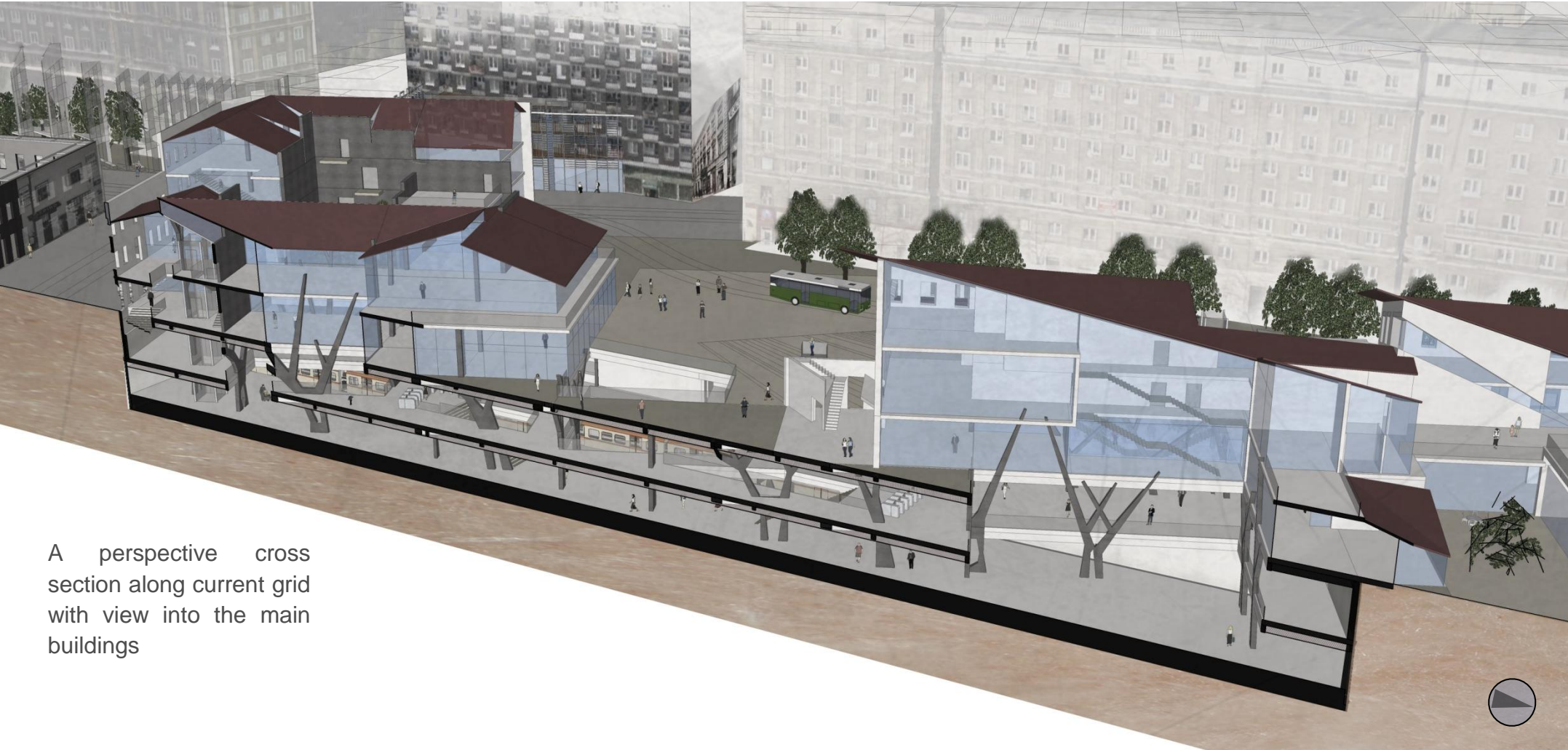
“Broken” supporting walls – reminiscent of 2D war aftermath



The Tree Collection -  
Stacja Muranów Trademark / Mascot

As NGOs and residents of Muranów call for the construction of Stacja Muranów, the use of tree column collection as mascots can be used to promote building the station. Once it is built, they can serve as souvenirs: key holders, pendants, earrings, magnets...





A perspective cross section along current grid with view into the main buildings



Metro levels, Tree columns and area.  
Are the above ground levels really needed?





Should the above ground levels contain empty spaces or dense mixed uses?

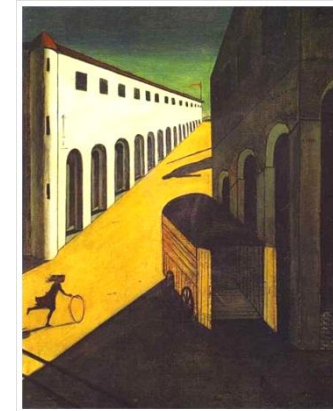


Nalewki 28-30

Nalewki 28-30 is designed such that from a specific viewing angle, its walls converge into a sight of the prewar building façade.

Commemoration «» Urban Renewal  
**4. “Time in Perspective”**

Points where history reappear for a glimpse in time and space



“Mystery and Melancholy of a Street”  
Giorgio de Chirico



Nalewki 28-30  
Early 1930s



Nalewki 28-30 as appears from the south



Nalewki 28-30 as appears from “Time in Perspective” Viewpoint



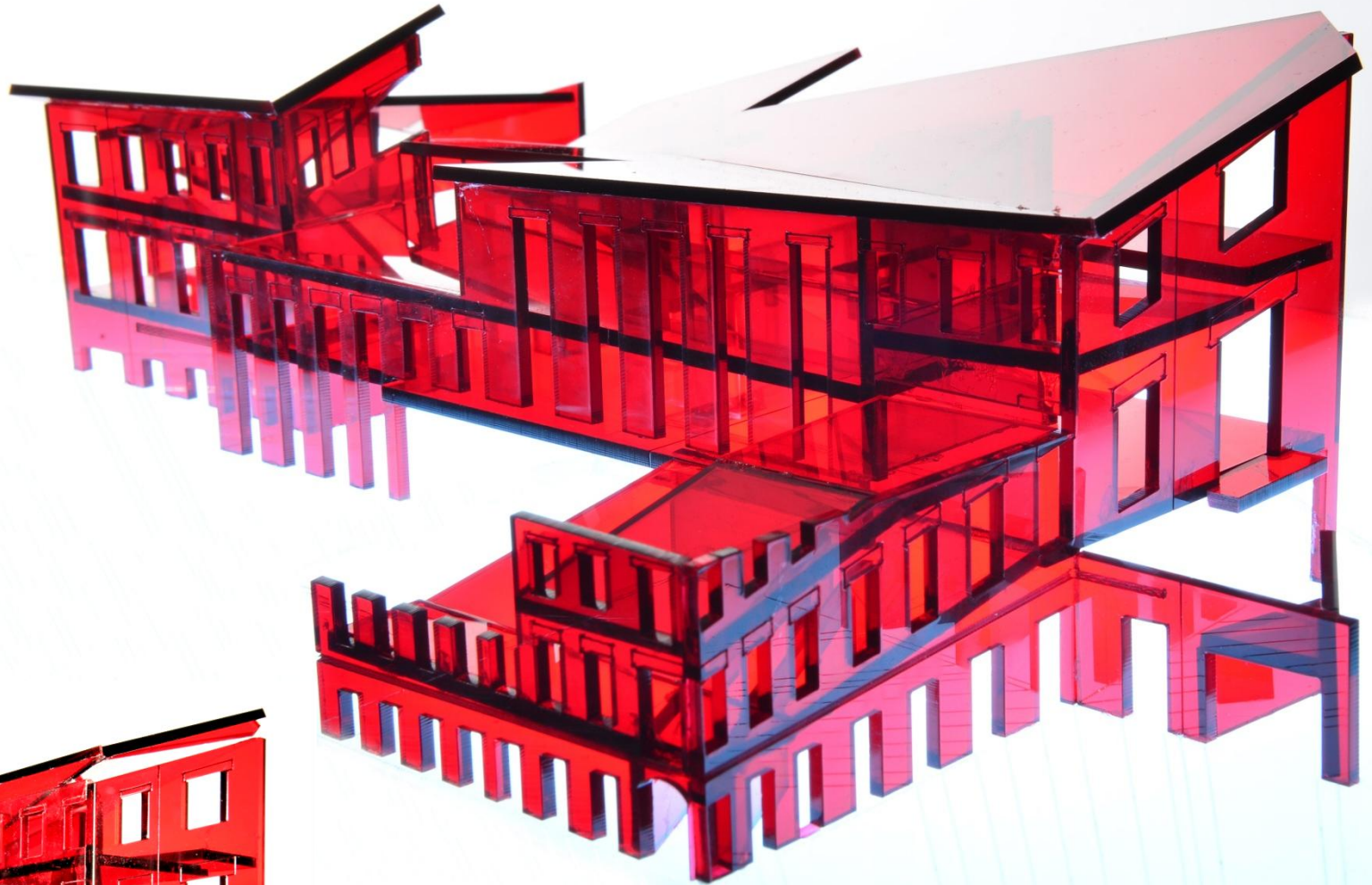


Nalewki 28-30

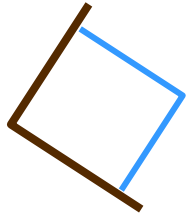
### INWARD Architecture

Nalewki 28-30 design is what I call “INWARD Architecture”.

“Function Follows Form” in this building, where strange diagonal windows created opportunities for the interior, such as inclined floor for a lecture hall and a rest terrace and high inclined ceiling for studio or loft space.



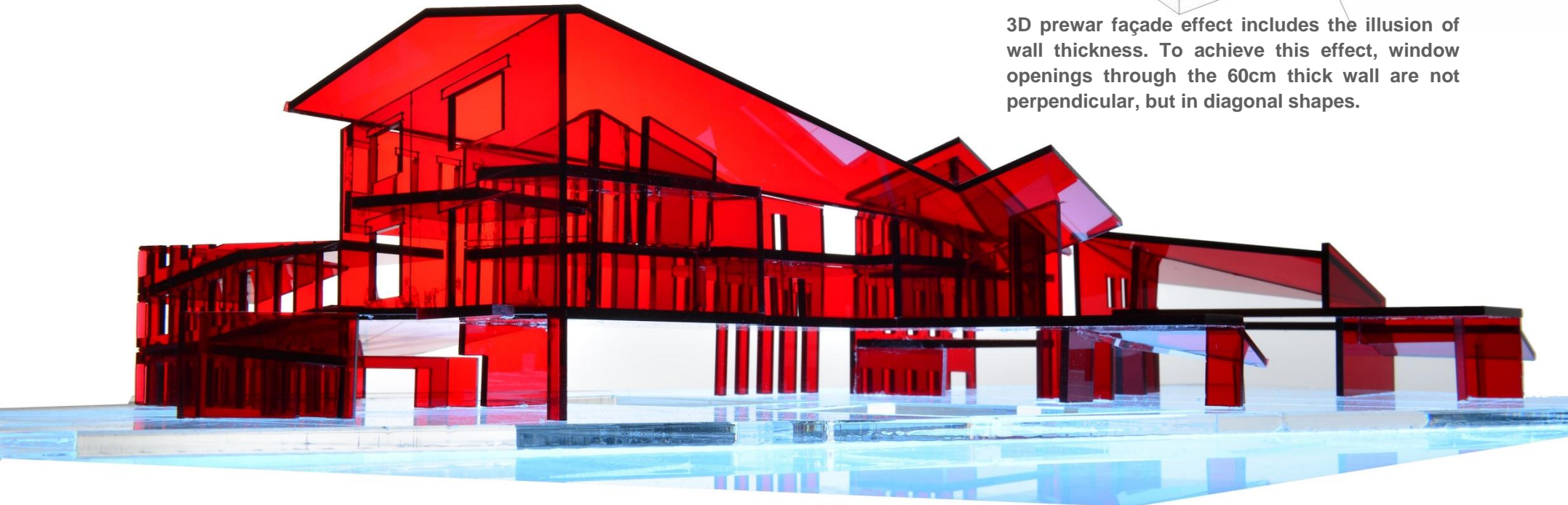
1:200 Laser cut acrylic glass model of the building. The “Time in Perspective” effect works also with this model



### Duality of a Building design

South and south-western facades are derived from the prewar building: Thick walls and repetitive openings. North and north-eastern facades are mainly curtain walls. This approach is implemented in Nalewki 26 as well.

3D prewar façade effect includes the illusion of wall thickness. To achieve this effect, window openings through the 60cm thick wall are not perpendicular, but in diagonal shapes.





### Perspective Serves Sustainable Design

Roofs are inclined northbound due to the designed perspective, thus, allowing more sunlight into courtyards in climatic challenging Warsaw. Even in December 25th, the kindergarten roof gets some sunlight at noon.



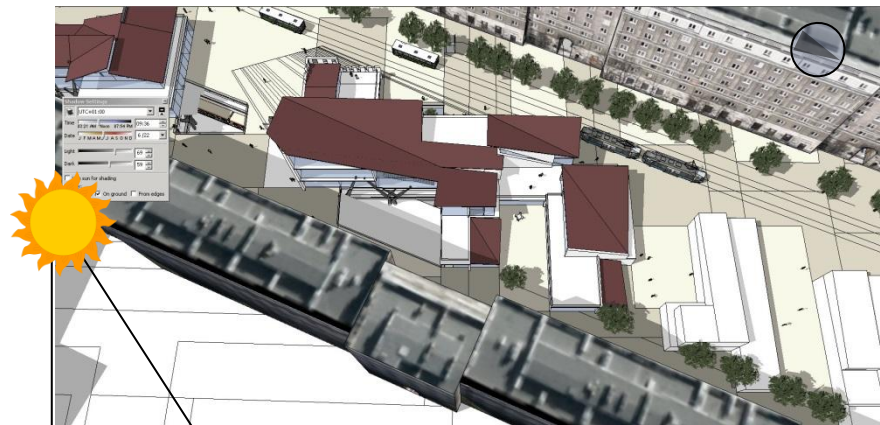
Sketchup shading tool was used during design process for optimization of sunlight into public spaces



February 21 (sun @25°)



March 22 (sun @36°)



June 22 (sun @57°)



December 25 (sun @12°)



Nalewki 26

Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

### 5. “Digitizing History”

Contemporary interpretation by state of the art materials & production techniques

Nalewki 26 (as well as other buildings in the project) demonstrate an important guideline, which is adaptation of design to contemporary techniques and materials.

Prefabricated production of façade panels

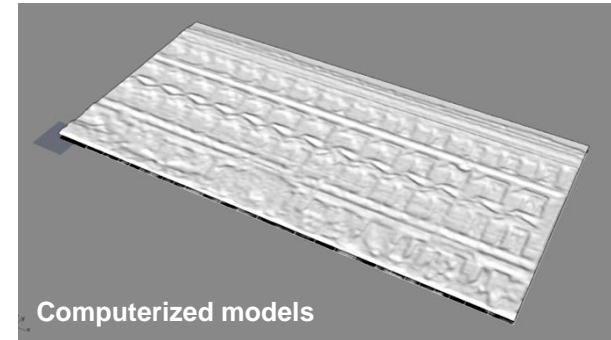
For Nalewki 26 I suggest translation of a 2D grayscale photo of the building to a 3D façade “topography”. Implementation can be done as wooden or concrete panels.

1. Carved Wooden Panels (CNC / 3D Print / Laser Carve)

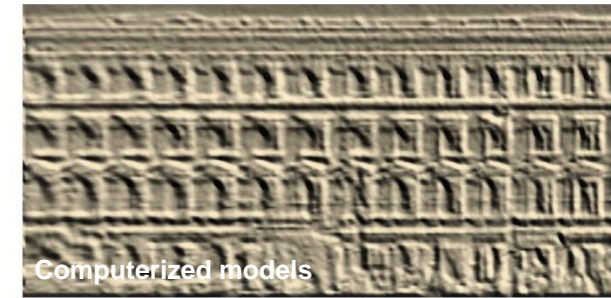


Production in Laser Lab, 1:200 model

2. Concrete Cladding Panels



Computerized models



Computerized models



Nalewki 26 in its Glory - Early 1930s



In ruins, German soldiers, 1939



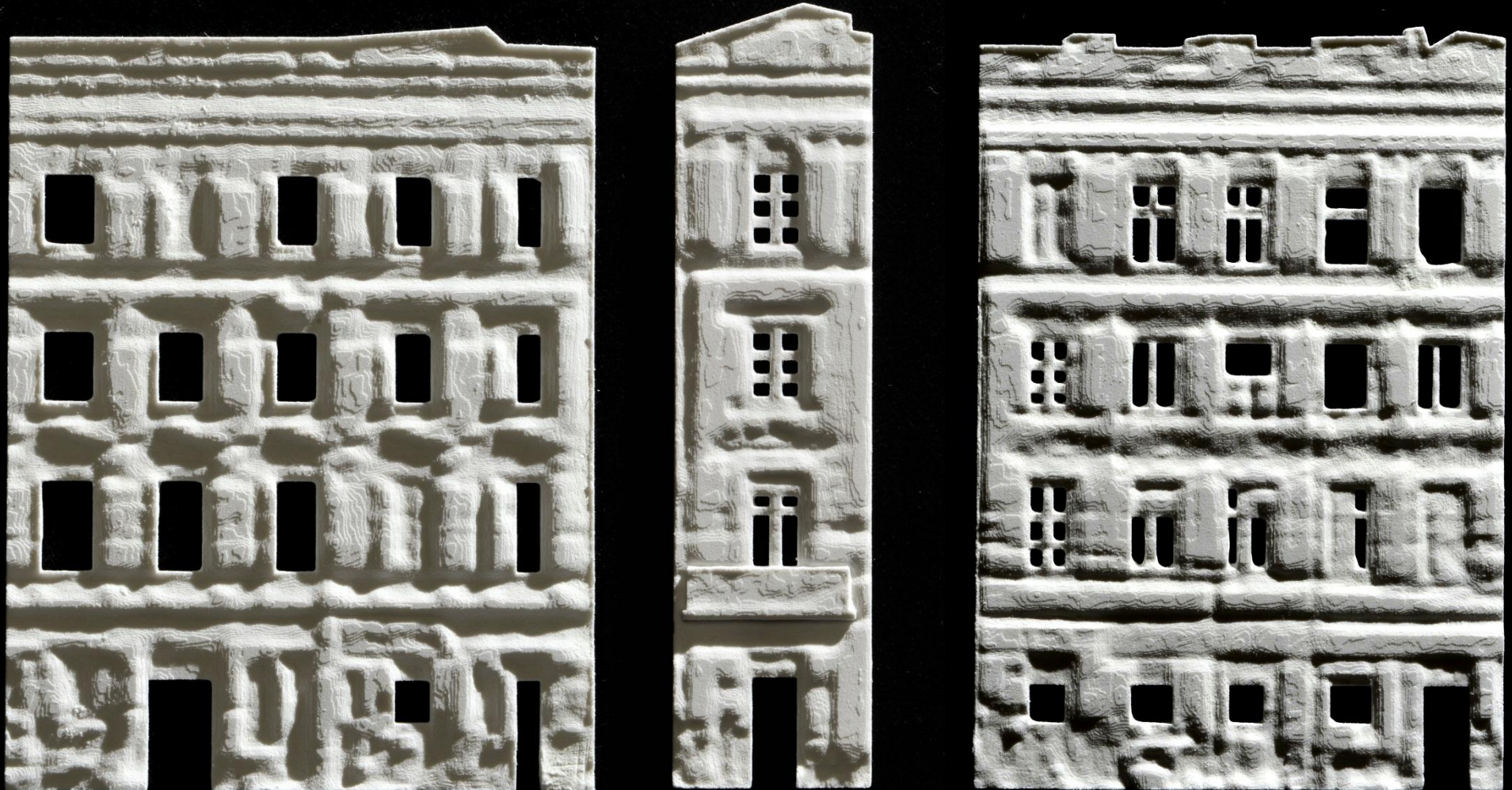
In ruins, Later period



Nalewki 26

I decided to turn this project into an experimental lab of techniques, harnessing the Technion's Faculty of Architecture Digital Fabrication Labs. Mockups shown in previous page were done in laser carving/cutting machines.

Models shown here were 3D printed using ZCORP ZPrinter 350. The printer prints plaster-like material. They represent a 1:100 part of Nalewki 26 façade which can be tested in different light conditions.

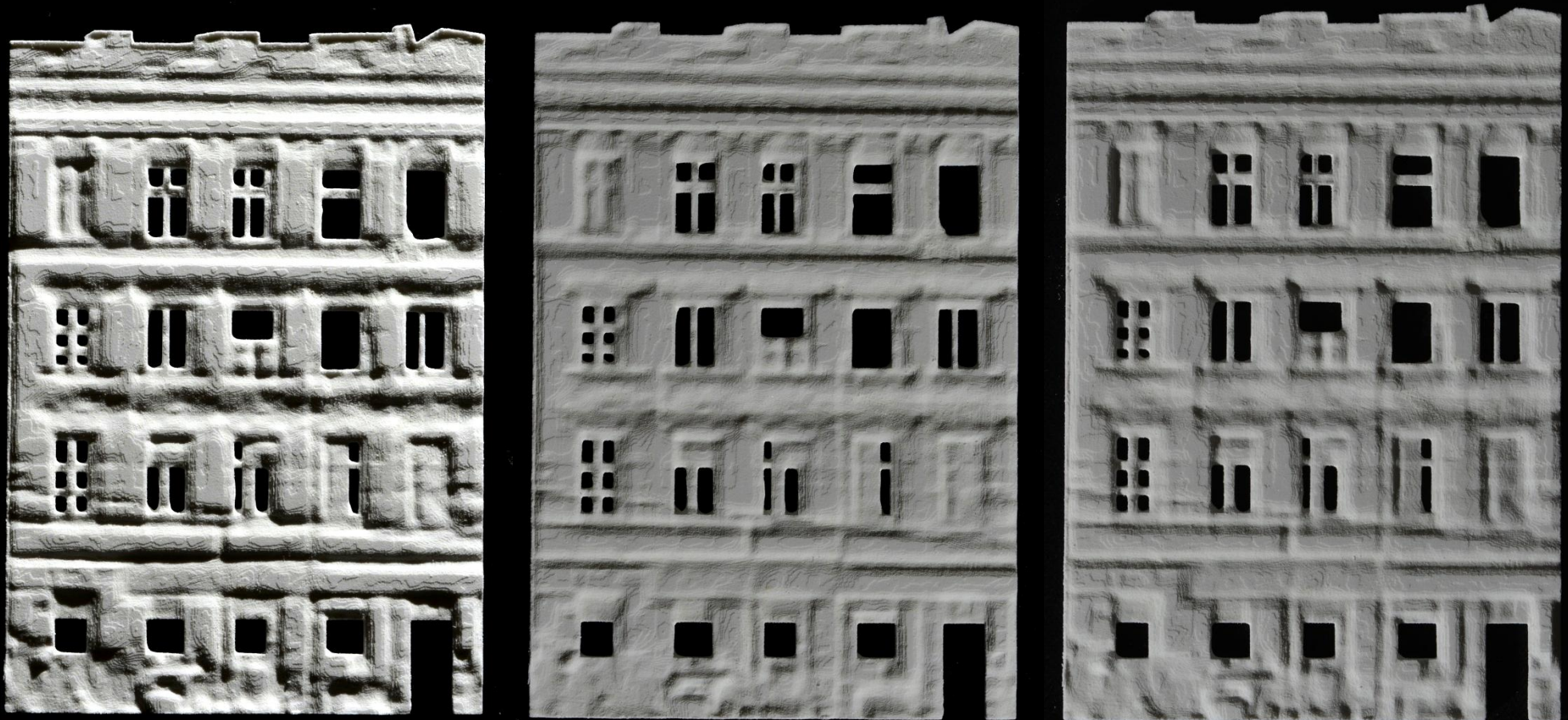


3D plaster-like Printing of a 1:100 façade model



Nalewki 26

Projecting light on the façade mockup from different angles reveals interesting alterations in façade “topography”. In its site, such façade may turn “negative” under certain conditions of light – whether sunlight or artificial illumination at night.



3D effect changes dramatically with light directions (Right)





Nalewki 26



Nalewki 26 with 3D concrete cladding façade



## Contemporary Materials

For the façades along reconstructed Franciszkanska St. I examined use of contemporary materials.

Materials such as Corten steel get a dual meaning when implemented in a reconstructed environment that suffered a deadly war.

A combination between materials such as Corten and Wood conveys a dual feeling: bitterness as well as warmth, thus representing the contradicting feelings associated with Muranów history.





Franciszkanska 34-32

Franciszkanska 32

Corten, Rusted Steel, Wood

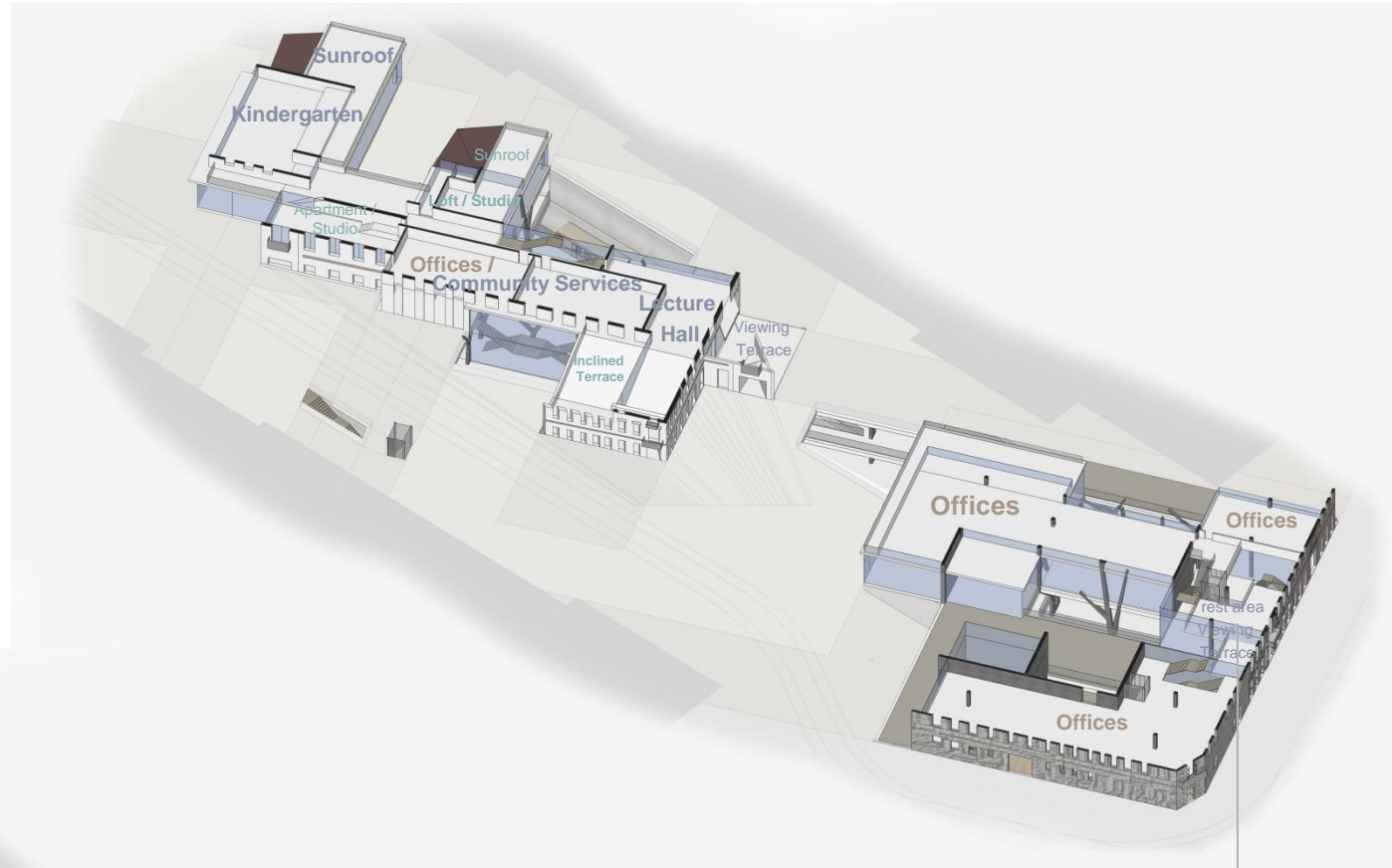
Franciszkanska 34

Stone Cover

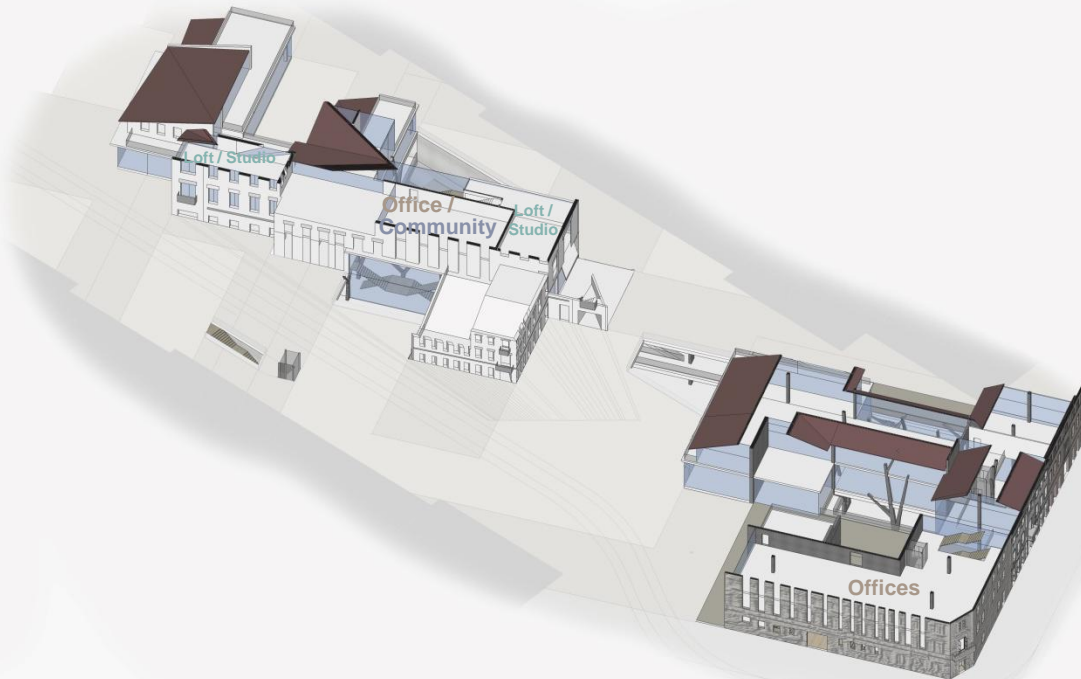




Level 1 is designated mainly to offices and community services. An inclined lecture hall is formed as a result of perspective window layout. The northern edge of the building is designated for children with a kindergarten and adjacent sunroof – playground.



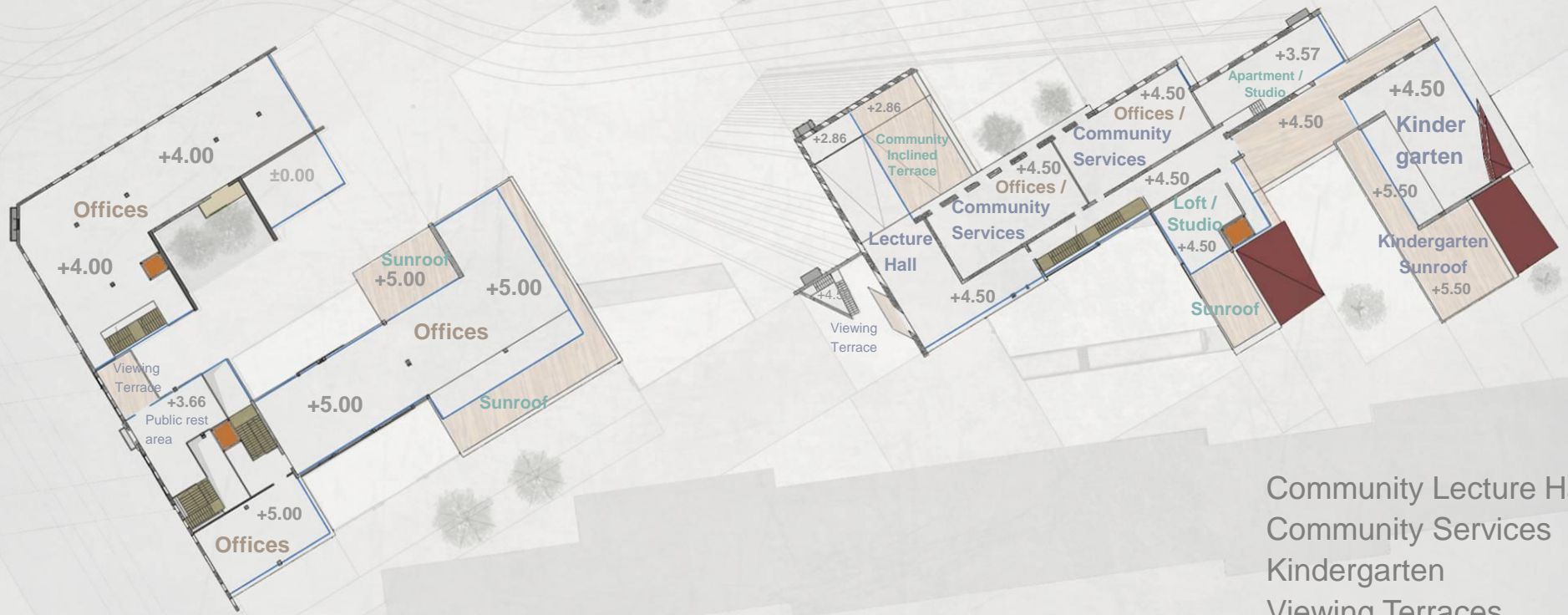
A separate level provides indoors and outdoors public rest area, separated from the entrance to the offices, accessed via a dedicated staircase from street level.



Level 2 adds additional office / community space, and two spaces for loft / studio.



Level 1



50m

- Community Lecture Hall
- Community Services
- Kindergarten
- Viewing Terraces
- Offices
- Apartments / Studios

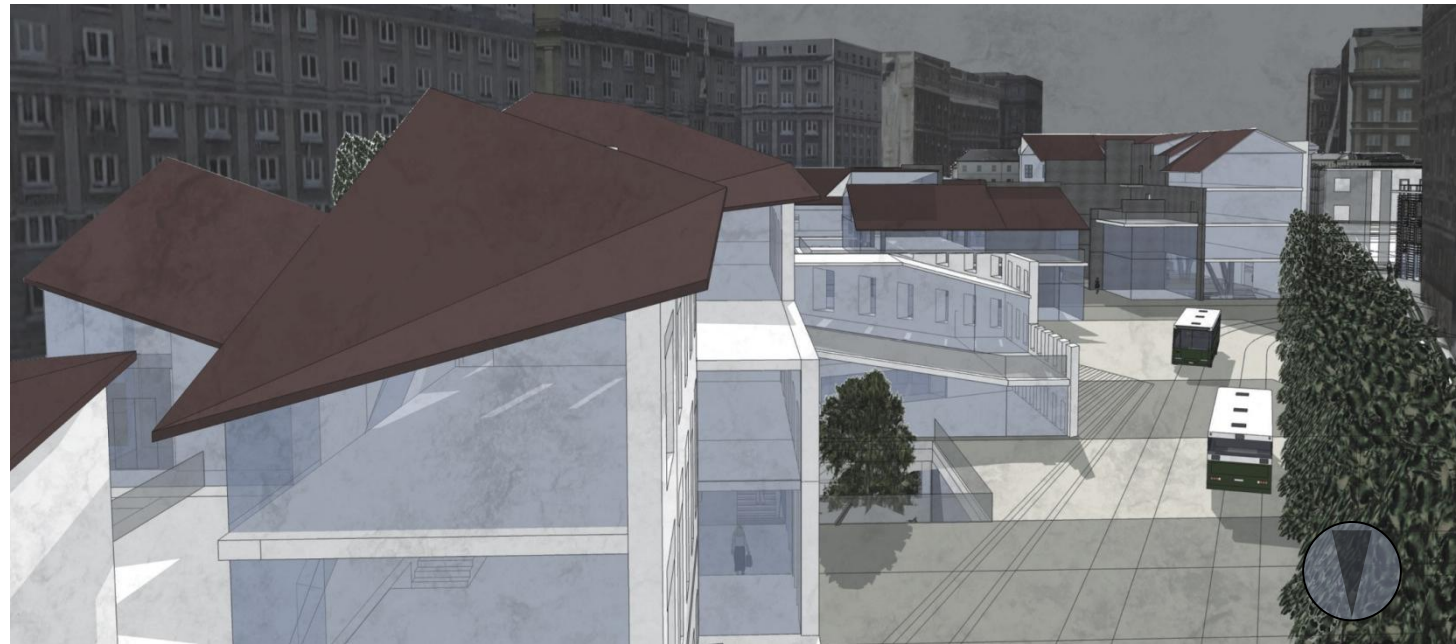




### Gradual exposure to past

The corner of Nalewki – Gesia - Franciszkanska is the heart of the project, and where the four building facades are designed such they create the most authentic (yet adapted...) “hugging” feeling.

As you walk away from this corner, northbound or southbound, authenticity decreases, and design interpretation increases.



One aspect of this principle is demonstrated in these two sights.

Northbound (bottom image), continuous and complete facades are revealed, implying for prewar life. Southbound (top image), facades appear either broken or transparent, as if they were gone, symbolizing post war destruction by contemporary design characteristics.

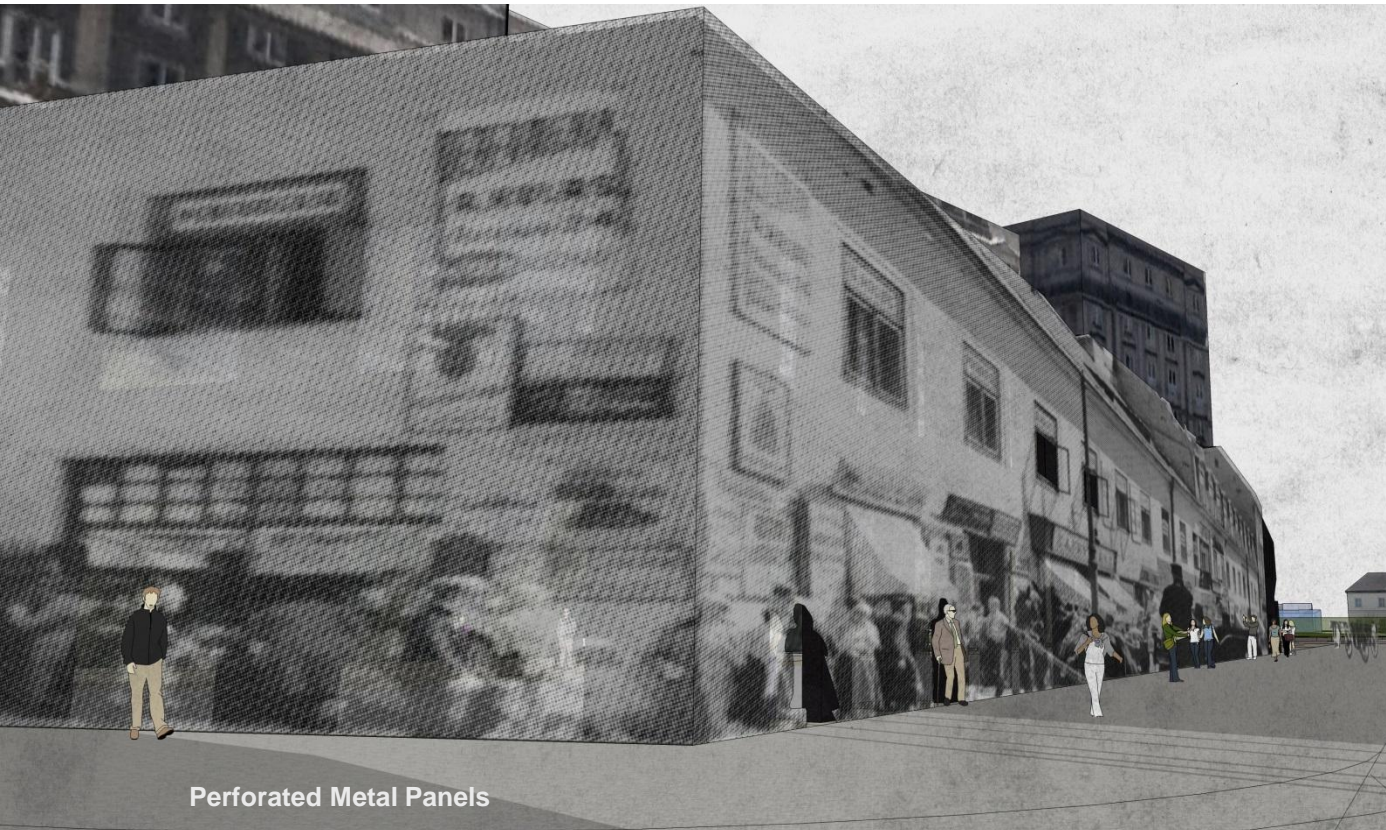


Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

## 6. Double Facade

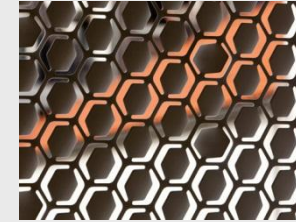
Nalewki 24 is represented as a double facade. Its “outer skin” is a semi transparent image based on authentic photo of the building and made of perforated metal panels. The “inner skin” is a 30cm thick wall with prewar like openings.

Some people that appeared in the prewar image were cut completely leaving a human-like cutout where people can stand and fill the historical void. It also allows entrance to a “balcony” on the pool (see next pages).

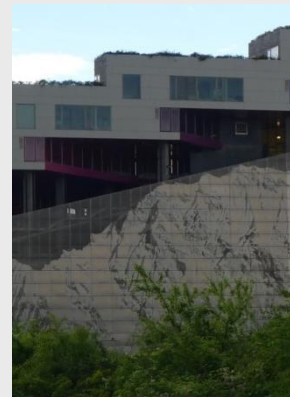
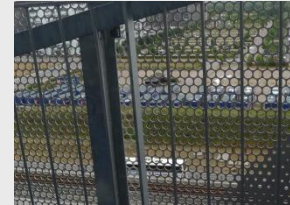


Perforated Metal Panels

“Bent”, Amsterdam  
Chris Kabel  
with Abbink X de Haas



“Mountain”, Copenhagen  
BIG

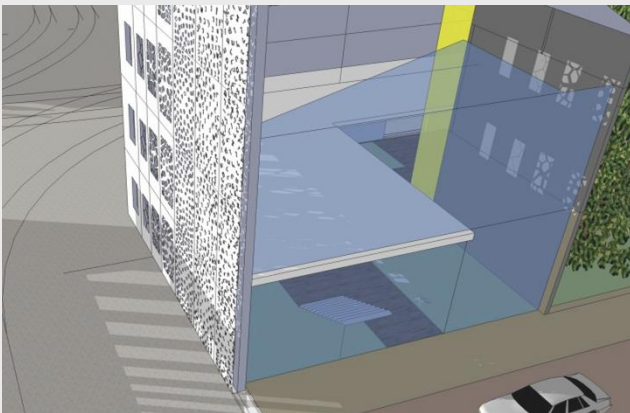


Nalewki 24 and street scene in 1938





Initial sketches of double façade for Nalewki 26 and interesting shadows that appear in certain hours of the day inside the building



Real people blend with virtual people along blended Nalewki - Andersa



Nalewki 24

### Prewar building area as public venue / pond

Nalewki 24 façade “hides” a vast public space. The footprint of prewar building is a shallow pond, in which the water level can be controlled – from dry to 20cm deep. Prewar courtyards serve as “islands” and “home” to current Andersa trees.



Pond Section – < 1% inclination

### Pond Features

#### Shallow

(up to 20cm deep)

#### Reflecting pool

Controlled water level  
**(Dry for events – performances, market days, etc)**

Can be filled by **rain**

**Freezing Easily – Winter Ice Skating Rink**

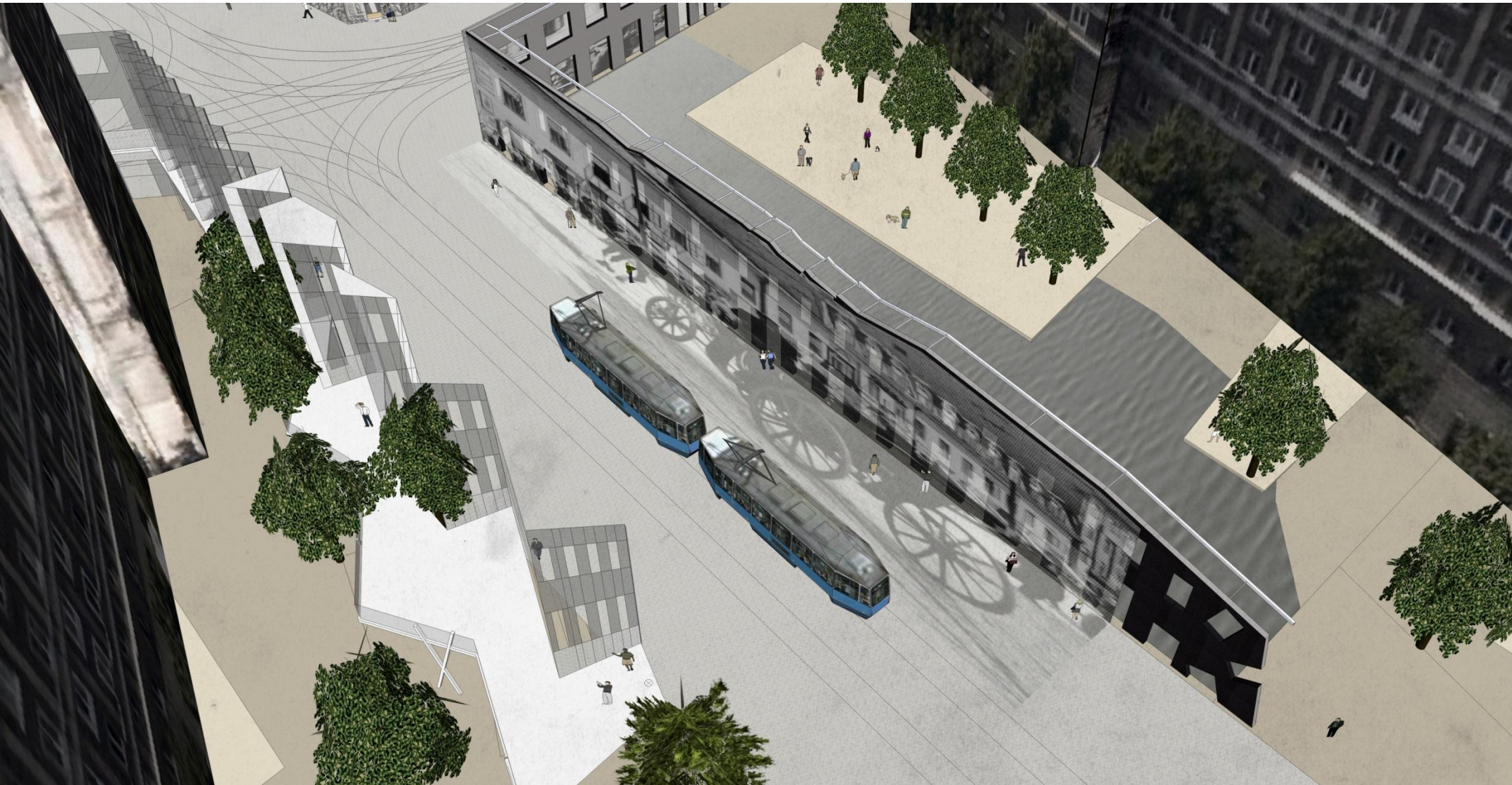
**Over 60m long  
 13m wide**



“Inner skin” - Concrete wall with prewar oriented openings

View of Nalewki 24 and Nalewki 29 interventions. Bottom part of Nalewki 24 image can be completed as grayscale cobblestone pavement.

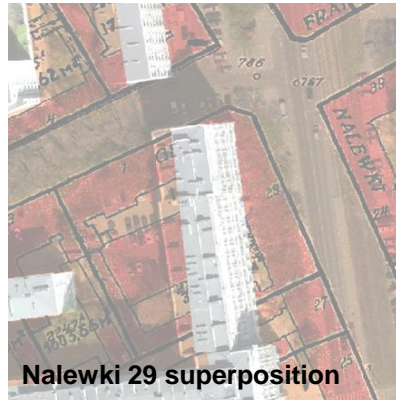
Nalewki 29 intervention creates a street edge without blocking existing buildings, and provides useful public rest spaces and viewing balconies.





Nalewki 29

Façade  
near existing  
building facade



Nalewki 29 superposition



Glory days of Nalewki 29 - postcard



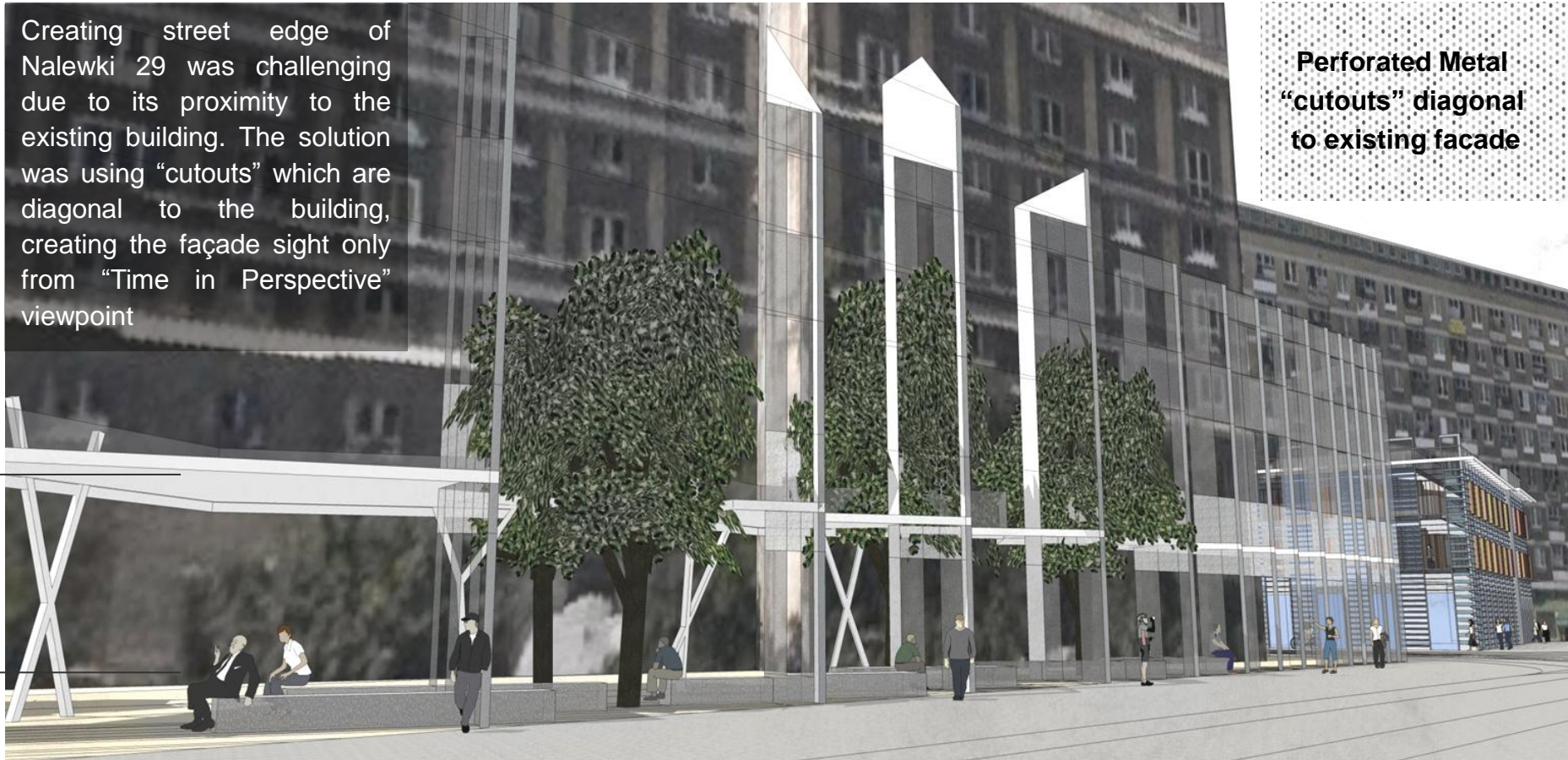
Destroyed Nalewki 29

Creating street edge of Nalewki 29 was challenging due to its proximity to the existing building. The solution was using “cutouts” which are diagonal to the building, creating the façade sight only from “Time in Perspective” viewpoint

Perforated Metal  
“cutouts” diagonal  
to existing facade

Viewing  
Terrace

Covered  
rest /  
meeting  
places

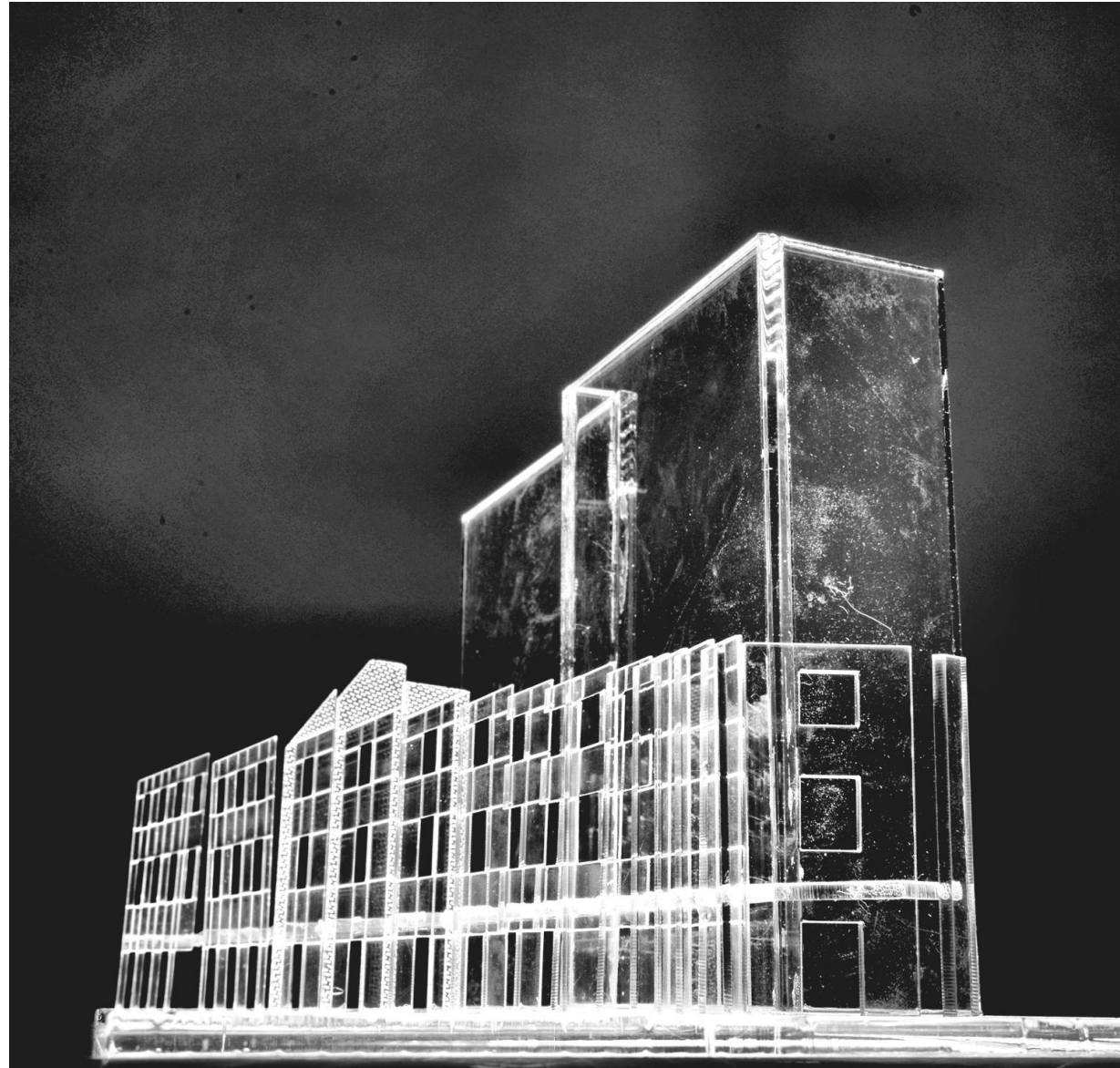
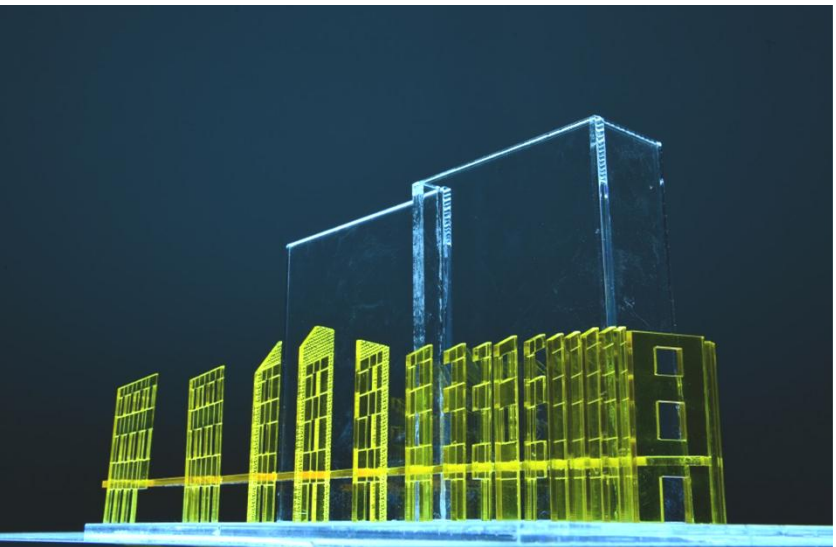
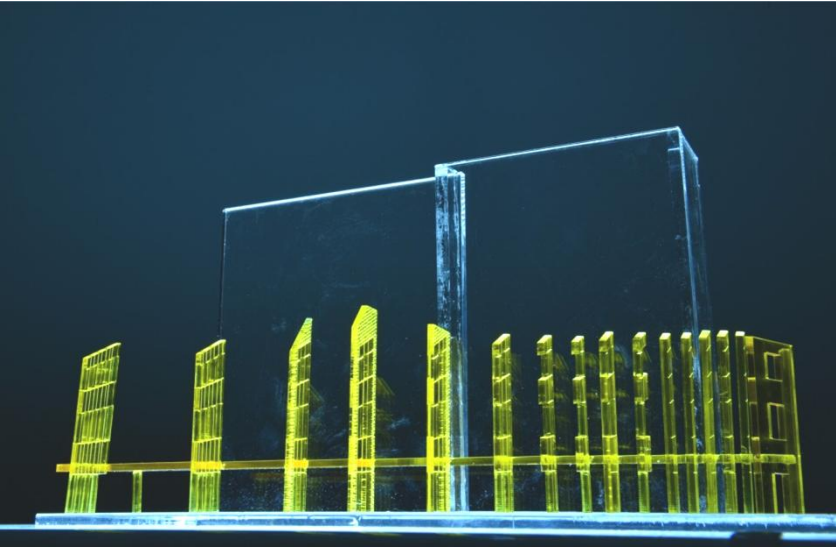




“Time in Perspective” Viewpoint



Acrylic glass 1:200 laser cut model tested with various illumination schemes reveals the advantage of using lit glass rather than perforated metal.





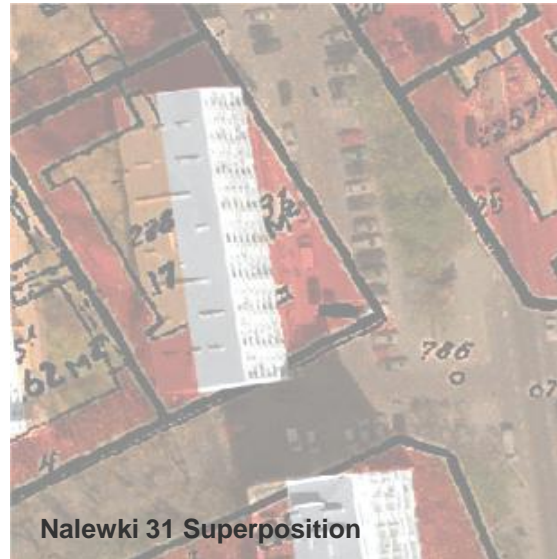
Nalewki 31

Extension to Existing Building

Nalewki 31 challenge was to create an extension to the building which will be beneficial to building residents – apartments and shops, while reflecting the past.



Nalewki 31 in the 1930s



Nalewki 31 Superposition

Mestre Nicolau 19,  
Barcelona  
B720 Arquitectos

Kindergarten Kecec,  
Ljubljana  
Jure Kotnik Architecture



Construction Details inspired by details of prewar building

Curtain façade with Glass / Polycarbonate Slats and Aluminum Frame



Nalewki 31

Level 3  
Common  
Balcony

Level 1, 2  
Apartment  
Extensions  
Common  
Balcony

Level 0  
Commerce  
Extensions  
“Mini Mall”

Part of prewar  
façade is printed on  
the blank side wall to  
create “Time in  
perspective” effect







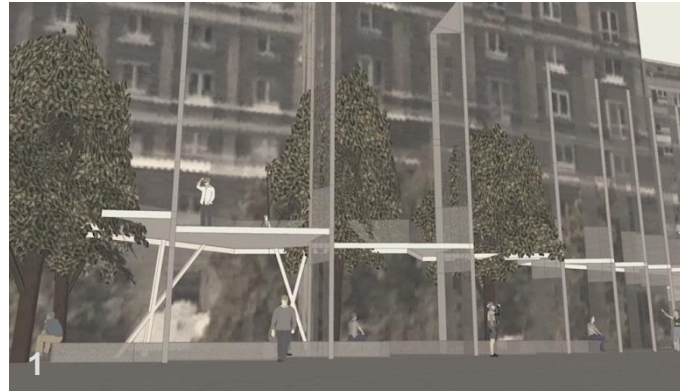
Prewar photo printed on the building windowless side blends with reconstruction of the building.

The whole prewar image can be printed on the building side as a mural only - without any architectural intervention - thus creating the “time in perspective” effect with a little investment.



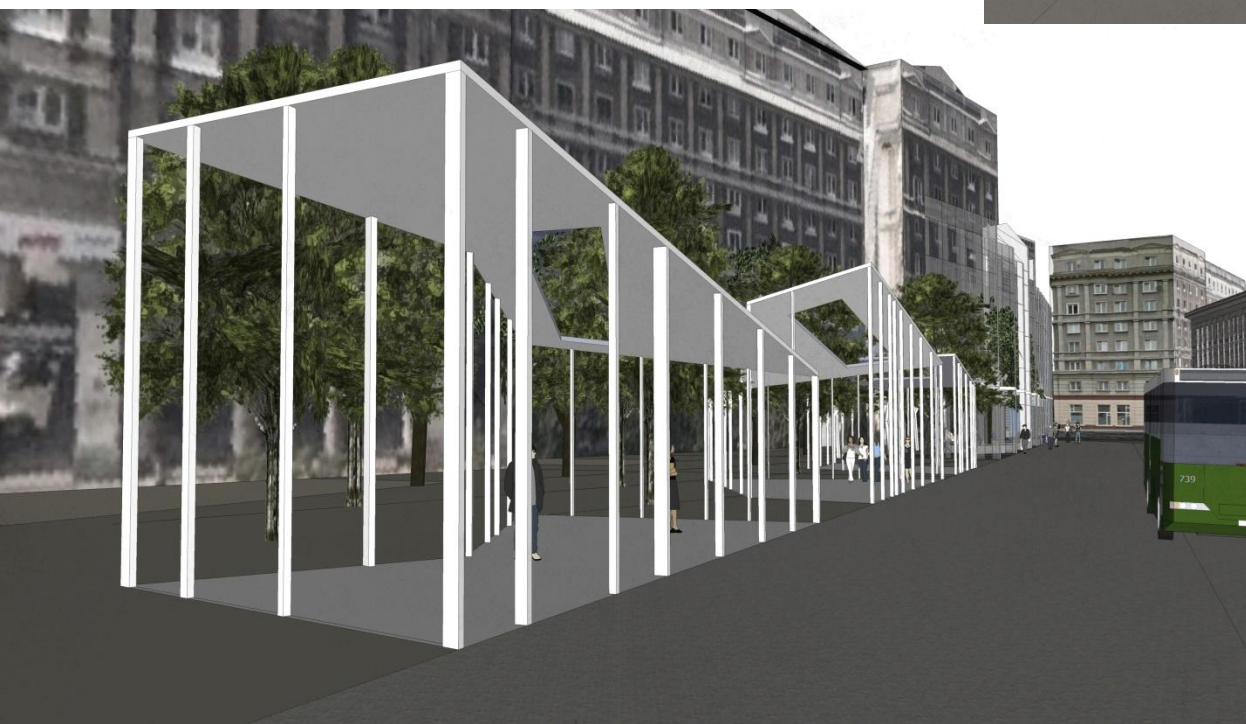
“Time in Perspective” Viewpoint

A tour northbound along reconstructed Nalewki showing “time in perspective” points of Nalewki 29 and Nalewki 31.





The area of Nalewki 27 was turned into a mini forest – with additional trees and additional narrow columns of multi purpose public pavilions that can be covered and heated in the winter.



Commemoration «» Urban Renewal

## 7. Encounter with actual past remains

Although extensive leveling was conducted in Muranów after the war, some remains, especially of basement walls and floors, may be found on site. Once found in preliminary excavations, they can be incorporated into new walls.



Possible remains of basement walls in Level -1 main metro hall entrance

# Planning » Nalewki – Andersa Square » Tram tracks inspired installations

As explained before, tram was, and still is, a major transportation means in Warsaw and an integral part of its urban scene.

In Nalewki – Andersa Square, only the north-south tram tracks will be actually operational for the current tram lines.

I suggest to build the other tracks as well and leave them as silent reminders, as well as adding two special installations (see next page)



Tram tracks – a graphic street decoration



Tram tracks “star” in many prewar and during war photos



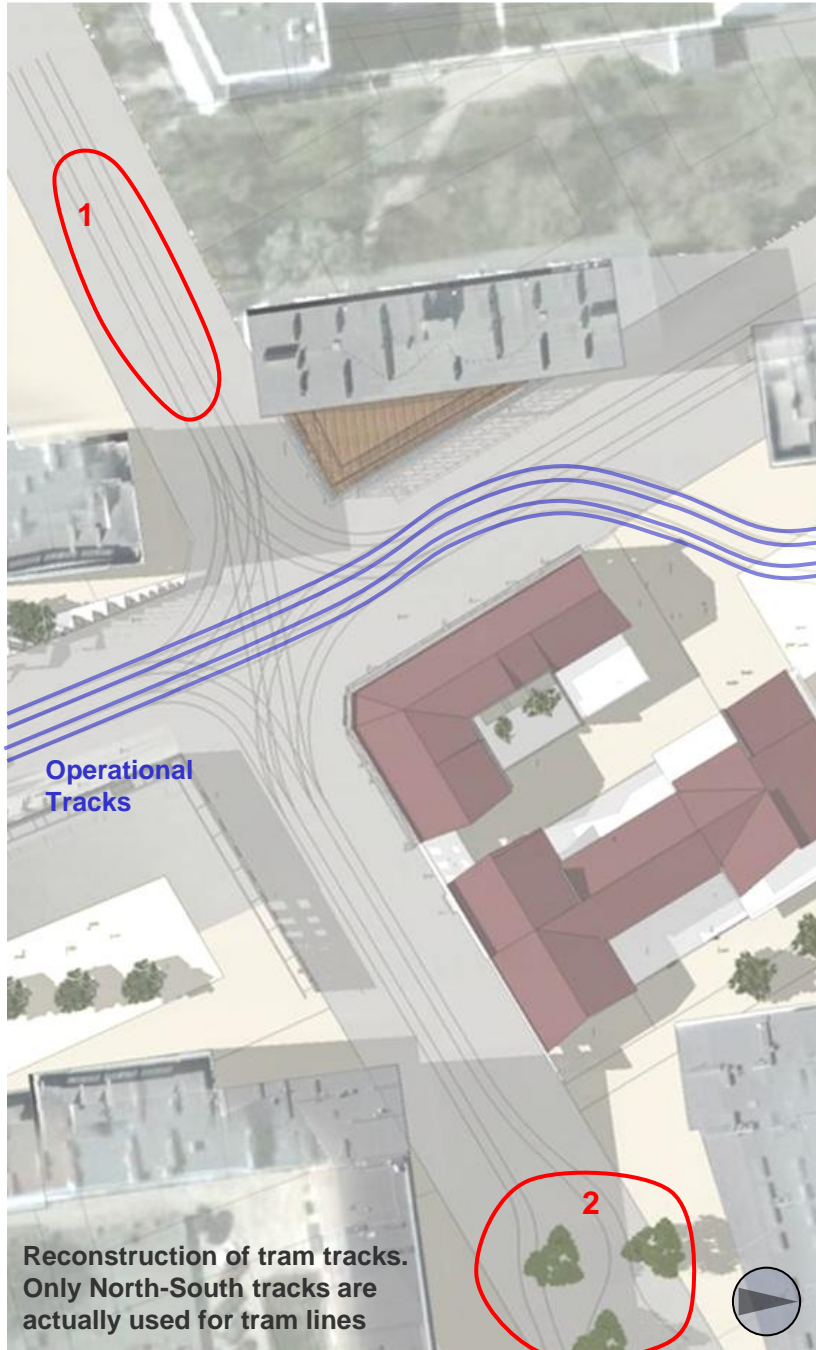
Tram tracks – part of the urban scene

### 1 Tram Tracks Playground

Based on the “Looping Bench” design by Studio Weave



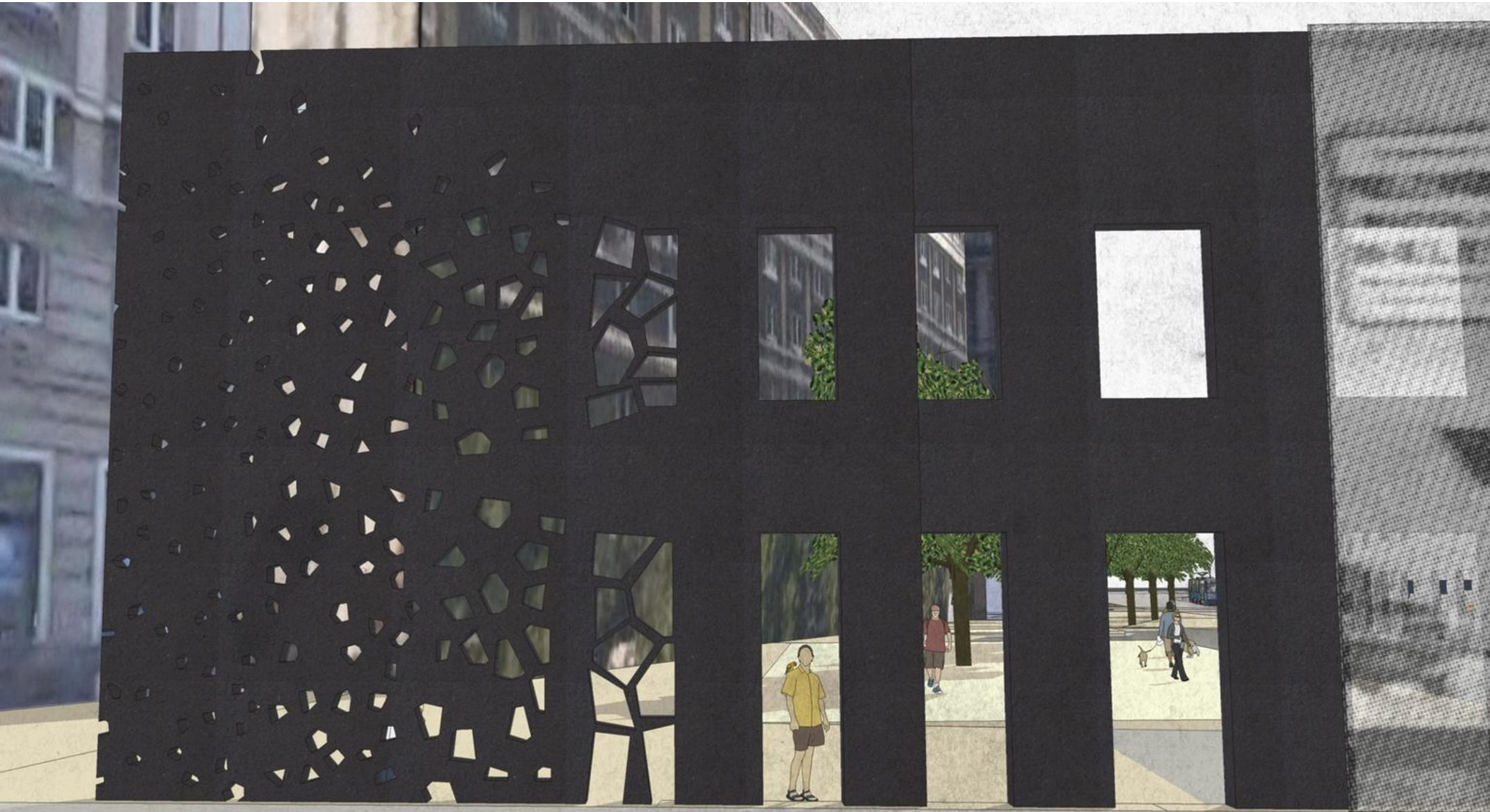
### 2 Twisted Tram Tracks Statue



Reconstruction of tram tracks.  
Only North-South tracks are  
actually used for tram lines



Tram tracks twist and bend as they get far from Nalewki, then emerge from the ground as if were pulled or blown out



The “exploded” wall – playful / climbing wall



Commemoration «» Urban Renewal  
**8. “Controlled Chaos”**

“Controlled Chaos” or “Ordered Mess” can be another description of the eclectic design revealed in Nalewki – Andersa Square. It is a feeling I wanted to create, from several reasons. First, Breaking the current boring monotony. Second, referring to the chaotic bustling prewar times.

What mainly led me during design process was the "usable" way, hence - make the new "street/s" interesting and thoughts inspiring yet easy for orientation and attractive due to their activity.

The places where tram goes from current Andersa into Nalewki path are almost literally the places where times meet, and also places where prewar inspired infills break and dissolve into current Andersa.

Regarding “Jewishness” vs. “Polishness”: Prior to adopting Nalewki’s “Jewishness” I was trying to adopt its urban qualities: street section, continuous facades, human scale, mixed use, etc. Hopefully Everyone will be able to see in the place what they like - Warsaw at its glory, Jewish community at its glory, nice urban spaces, nice shopping and eating areas, etc...





Notable prewar remains are located in the north-western part of Krasinski Garden. Recently excavated in search for parts of the Ringelblum archives, the area was covered as if not to leave the wound exposed for too long. I suggest turning this site into an open archeological site, exposing audience to prewar Muranów layer.



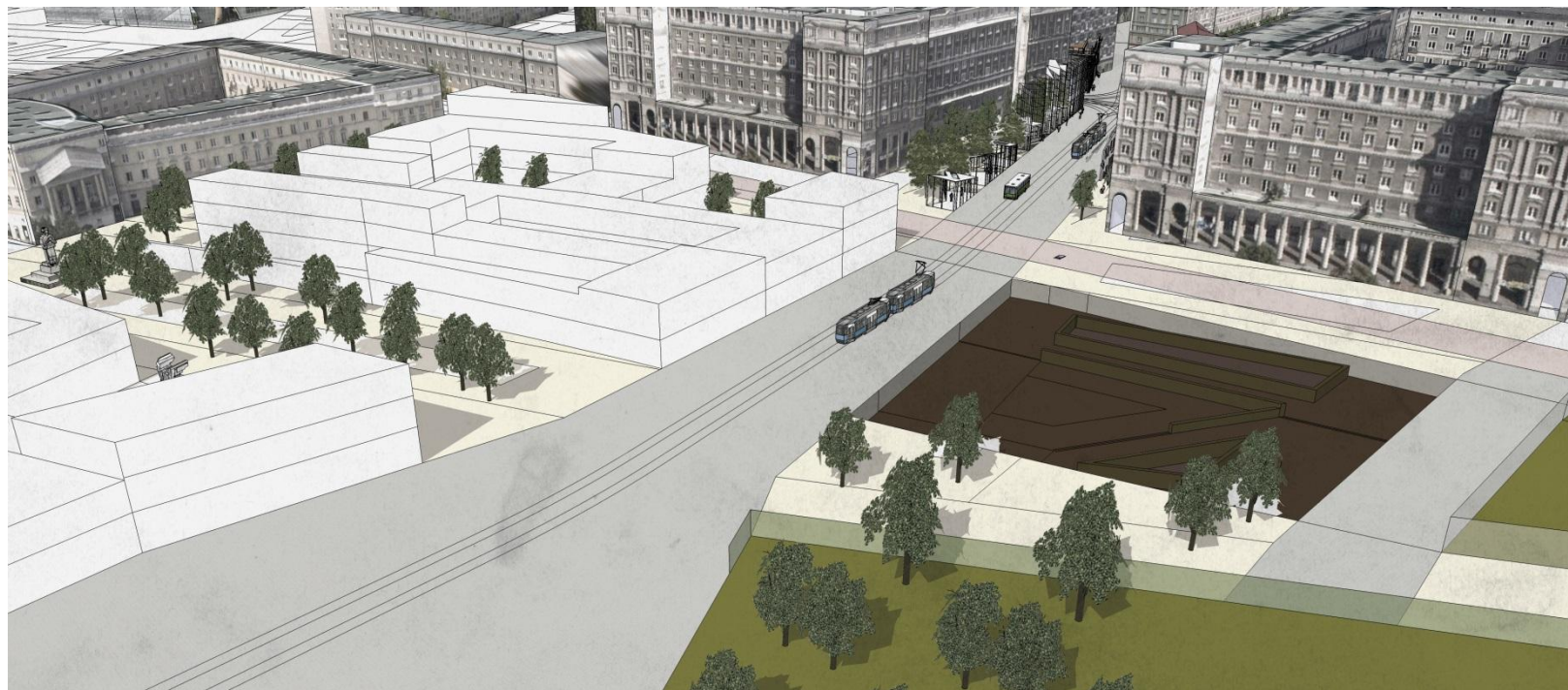
Krasinski Garden excavation site (2013)



Not in the scope of this project, these images provide an outline of building blocks based on prewar courtyard tenement houses, which in this area characterized by exceptionally long courtyards.

The suggested plan includes a pedestrian path leading to the round courtyard of the existing social realist building, being part of a meaningful pedestrian route from the old town through Krasinski Garden across Muranów heart to Jana Pawla II Street.

The space also serves as a new home for the two monuments to the Polish Army.



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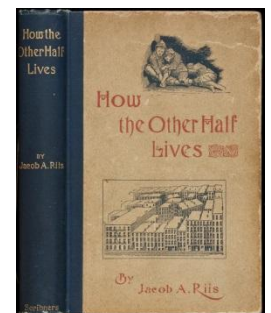
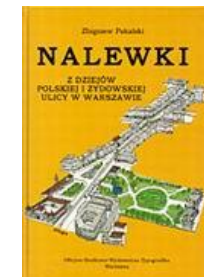
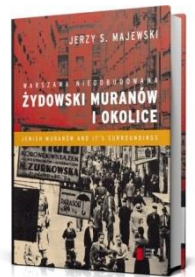
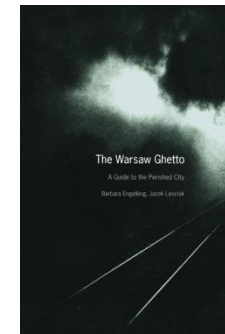
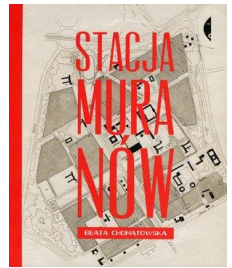
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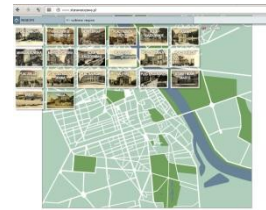




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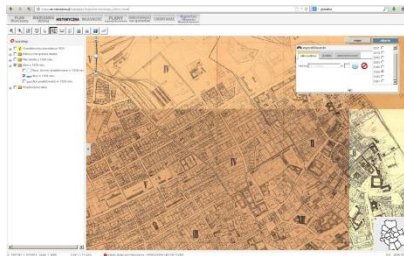
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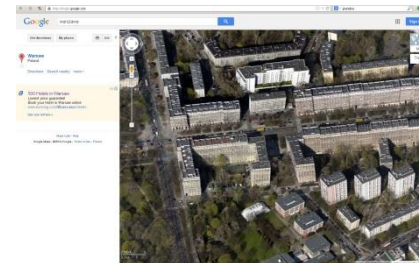
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# Thanks

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