

River in the City Nysa – Divided or Combined?

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Abstract

The state of the master zones planning in most of the Polish cities leaves much to be requested. It does not exist from both directions – from the perspective of rational grounds management and the accompanying its infrastructure and to create a friendly environment for the work, leisure and residence, characteristic of dense social environment of today urban organisms. It is easy to observe processes often chaotic spreading suburban areas with parallel progressive the resulting degradation of the downtown and suburbs. Very often this situation is deepening in cities located on the river.

Key words: *Nysa, revitalization of the public spaces, river in the cities, social activities, chaos of urban and architectural.*

Introduction

The negative effects of out of control re-urbanization processes exacerbated poor advancement creating a local law governing spatial development in spatial Master Planning. Because of the relatively dynamic development of the economy and the growing aspirations of citizens increased demand for modern office, retail, residential and accompanying infrastructure, it seems so, that the solution to the issues identified in the first place is revitalization (renewal) of these urban areas, where the substance has degraded and that's why they do not meet modern requirements as economic, technical and social.

Post industrial objects, quite often were designed in such a way that sufficiently well to blend into the environment during their operation, even from the point of view of their efficiency. Today, they are largely unused urban areas with access to the waterfront of the rivers, blocked for the public. Many times, unfortunately, much neglected and without any prospects. Located in the city of Nysa, the other (as seen from the city center) side of the river Neisse, urban investment areas (old FSD) are still a problem for the city. Like the river, they stand in the way of free movement of the local population and tourists into the direction of the most significant in the context of the future of the city, constantly evolving to promote tourism, the northern part of the city fortifications - fort "Prussian".

It should be emphasized, that the research is not about the restoration of individual object, when we talk about space of the city located in the immediate neighborhood of the river. It would propose action of the area, when renewal of the space is combined with a comprehensive and coordinated resolution of technical issues, economic, cultural, and social, with a clear emphasis on the development of public spaces.

Research is showing how to use every single piece of space inside the urbanized zone before it will be moment to reach the outer areas. It looks like, and this is to prove, in the beginning it should be developed areas that maybe the subject to the revitalization and transformation based on the Germans experience, to new, modern useful features with simultaneous densification building up to the optimum level characteristic of the compact city, with a critical mass and the mixing of function that will be foster the positive cooperation of residents and users of the area located along the river.

Methods of research

This study aim will be to establish and justify the features of the location of the Nysa city in context of the impact on the city the Neisse River and their problematic areas.

During discussion, criticism will be focused on a misunderstanding of the DNA of the city by the post-war Polish government of the Nysa. It will be analyzed the context of the pre-war German understanding of the Nysa's DNA and post-war Polish conditions.

Determining the working methods, by analyzing the Nysa's possibilities and the presentation of the conclusions resulting from the analysis, it has become a basic result from the posed problem and the chosen method of working.

It covered criticism of the current action and at the same time offering the opportunity of synthetic selection and its presentation.

Results

Why do Germans experience? Germans, because Germans, as users of this space until 1945, with those planning activities, involving importance of the river were created a DNA of Nysa city. It was a chain of incidents from the past, recorded with historical traffic routes, carriage to the so-called "water line", referring to the course of the river, building lines shows the evolution trends that have already occurred. Understanding allows them to explore the potential of Nysa and has a direct impact on its proper spatial development.

However, some of the decisions, taken by the previous generations we do not understand to the end. Probably it's because of influences of cultural differences, and constantly too rapidly advancing civilization development.

For example, on a urban planning scale, locating huge single-family housing estates to the north of the northern Nysa's fortifications (Fig. 1.: Podzamcze – dark blue colour, Jędrzychów – red colour), in the former military training terrain, we do not understand the issue of forward detachment of this area of the city, even in the context of the lack of transport links to the center.

The presented area, standing in front of fort's moats, and "behind the river", not giving more than two bridge crossings it for car traffic, will provide its as unattainable satellite.

Germans understood perfectly the problem of the difficult riverside location of Nysa, especially with its ventilation (Ger. Neisse – low), located low in the river valley (Kleczkowski, 1946).

Climatic problems associated with a poor quality of humid air, which had a huge impact on quality of life of the citizens, Germans solved in the form of financial contributions to the budgets of each family called "climate change levy". In addition, regularly, every 12 years, residents of the city were exchanged completely to the incomes people, brought from areas free from respiratory diseases associated with poor, humid air.

In terms of pollution, Germans accepted a possible location of industrial plants on the eastern edge of the city, so that the predominant westerly winds throwing toxic substances out of the city (Fig. 2.: today Jozef Pilsudski Street – yellow colour).

In contrast to these decisions, in the post-war years, the Polish communist authorities forced the location of industrial areas in the central part of the city, next to the river (Fig. 3). It was located here Steel Furniture Factory called "West", and after Factory of Commercial Vehicles (FSD).

Committing this mistake of location for industrial functions it's possible to look for fault in the low environmental awareness ruling in those years. Today's location of industrial zones on the western road ring connection will not be justified by this way (Fig. 2 – red colour).

Mistakes in the shaping of space along the river in Nysa do not apply only to our time. Nysa from the beginning wrestle with problems of the spatial development (Kębłowski, 1972). Comparing the town-built context of the current cities – Nysa, świdnica and Wrocław, which in the past had a moment comparable development (Klose, 1980), it is clear that the status of the fortress city Nysa has not helped in its development. Nysa, located on the river Neisse, with limited amount of water passed through by the roads, surrounded by cordons of the fortifications structures, effectively stopped the development.

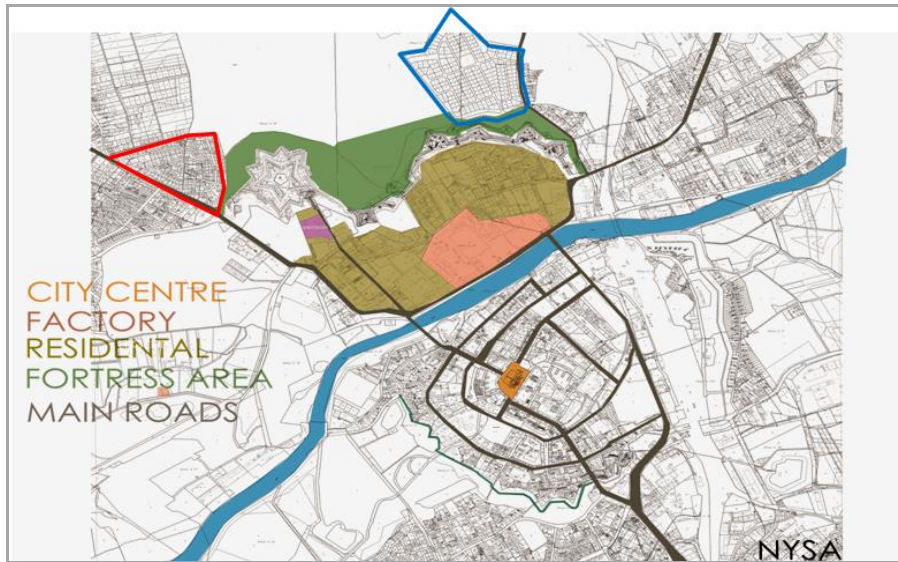


Fig.1. General situation in Nysa with explanation of the locations – Neisse river (light blue), city centre (yellow), factory FSD (orange), residential areas (light green), fortress area (green), main roads (grey), Podzamcze family housing area (dark blue), Jędrzychów family housing area (red) (Source: author work)

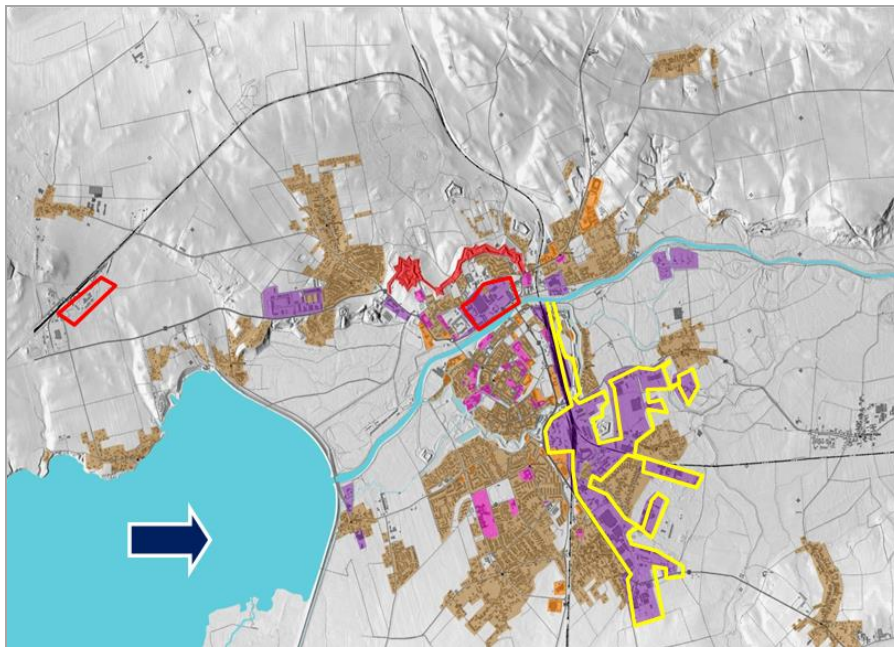


Fig.2. General situation in Nysa with explanation of the locations – Neisse river (light blue), post Germans industry (yellow), Polish industry (red). Dark blue narrow it's a main direction of the wind (Source: author work)



Fig.3. Location of the Factory Commercial Vehicles (FSD), in the scale of Nysa. Left side of the river – city center (Source: author work, photo by M. Zych)

Here I present a short presentation of studies on the quality of activities related to the use of the resources offered by the river in the city of Nysa.

Location. General characteristics of Nysa. Nysa is one of the oldest towns in Silesia. The city has homogeneous downtown buildings, where it's possible to adore the magnificent monuments that have survived despite the many ravages of war, especially the last one, when in ruins stayed about 80 % of urbanization.

Indicated may be mainly St. Agnes and St. Jacob Church, the famous bell tower at the church, the Prussian system of fortifications (Fortress Nysa), Ziębice Tower, Gate Tower, Wroclaw Gate, Municipal Scales House, Beautiful Well, Carrollinum, Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, Salt Market and any other world class famous buildings.

Decades before Wroclaw, in 1624, the city received a Jesuit college – Carrollinum. The future king of the Republic of Poland Michal Korybut Wiśniowiecki was graduated from this college.

In the eighteenth century, thanks to the numerous of the religious buildings in the city and the fountain of Triton from in 1701 year, modeled on the Roman Fontana del Tritone, under the influence of the presence and action of the Wroclaw's bishops, Nysa awarded the title of the Silesian Rome.

Since 1741, Nysa was under the rule of Prussia and has been converted into a fortress city (Klose, 1980). It changed completely the character of the town. After the wars there was development of the town, created industrial plants, including Commercial Vehicles Factory – FSD factory (producing popular in the 60s, 70s and 80s cars called "Nysa"), food industry, metal. Currently Nysa has less than 50,000 inhabitants and plays an important administrative and economic role in the region.

The Neisse River, flowing through the Nysa city, from the beginning played an important role in its functioning. It was a carrier of the most important values of its life.

At first, determined the path along the river, which safely followed between the towns, leading all its possessions. The resting place was originally a watering place for the travelers and their animals, that accompanied it, then a tavern, and with the development it was recreated into the city.

Buildings were protected with the city moat, which remained safely at night. The Nysa city becomes the fortress. The waters of the river were the stability. It gave water not only for consumption but also for operating machinery. Time has shown that helped develop the industry and transport – to change the profile of the city, to give people bread and other types of food.

Unfortunately, over the last decades, when to the voice came the development of industry and the effects of production were often thrown out to the river, vicinity of the river was more as a threat than a benefit.

At the moment, we lasted a time, when areas along the river are important for the city. They represent areas activating biodiversity from the environmental point of view and open public spaces from urban view.

Currently there are not abandoned and heavily degraded. After the flood in 1997, between 2014–2016 terrain has been thoroughly modernized.

Therefore, with increasing public awareness of the inhabitants of Nysa city on the role of the coastal terrain along the river as an ecological corridor and perfect areas for social activities, active protection and revitalization of these areas is the basic element of the activities carried out for the purpose of spatial order and sustainable development of the city of Nysa.

Discussion on the development plan of the riverine areas of Nysa. This discussion is designed to show the possibilities of correction or creation of the attractiveness of coastal areas of the Neisse River, and their immediate surroundings in the city of Nysa, as part of their sustainable revitalization. It is mainly to show adaptability and activation possibilities for the space located along the river Neisse, from the both angles – from the point of view of the architect, as well as in the urban context.

The following is present a conceptual solution, showing the capabilities and direction of the river crossing at selected locations or their lack, in order that attempts to reconstruction of the natural and cultural resources, improving the quality of the urban landscape of the Nysa city.

The development of urban public riverside space presented illustration below (Fig. 4). It shows the river Neisse, the post industrial terrain of ZSD and the north part of the Nysa's fortifications as further barriers to the development opportunities and free penetration of the urban tissue into the north direction.

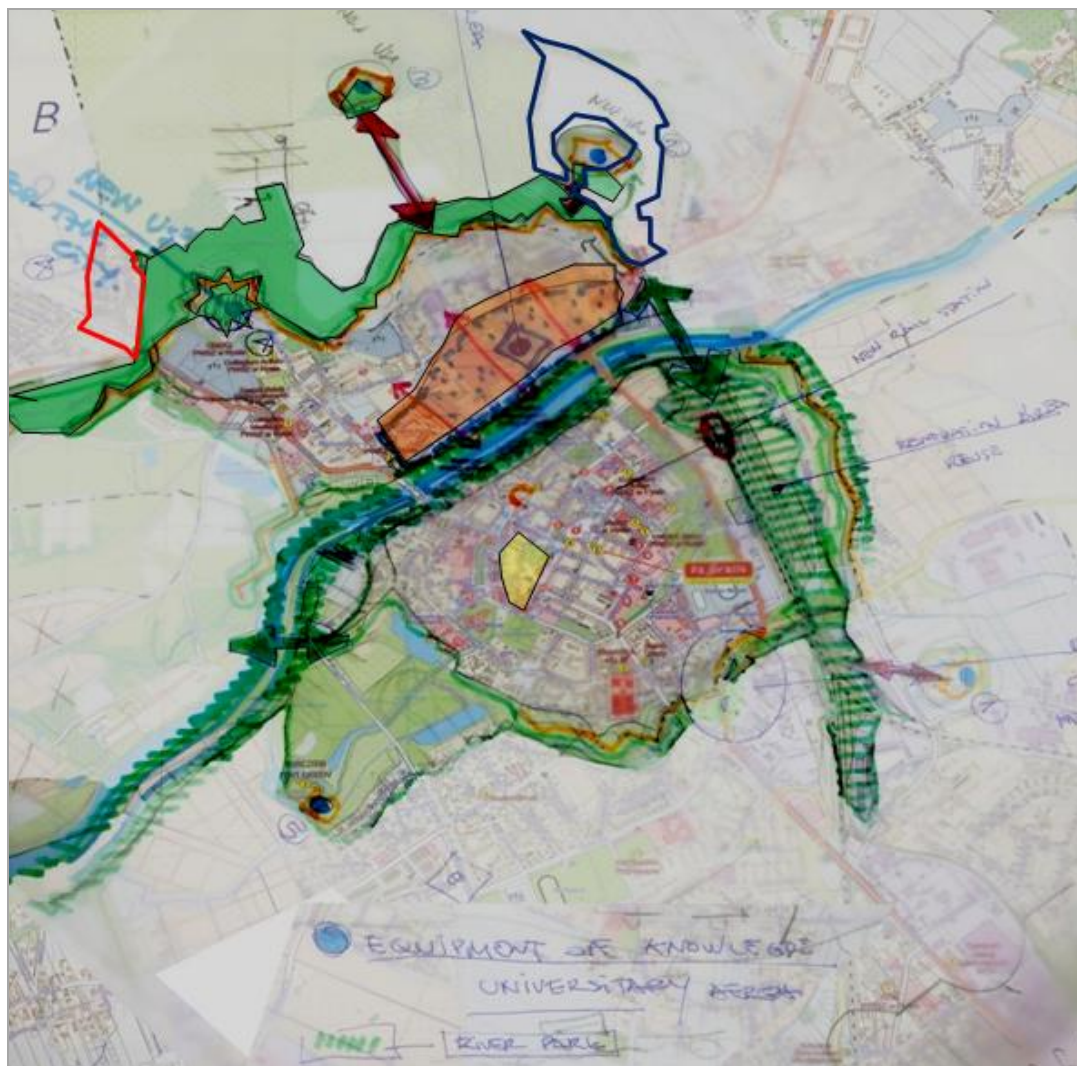


Fig.4. Conceptual draft – urban analysis, showing the barriers to the development of the city to the north direction.

Legend: Neisse river (light blue), city centre (yellow), factory FSD (orange)), fortress area (green), Podzamcze family housing area (dark blue), Jędrzychów family housing area (red)

(Source: author interpretation using the conception designed by architect Prof. Gabriel J. Fernández Adarve)

Taking into account the significant of spatial, social, environmental, and economic aspects of revitalization of the river and riverine terrain in Nysa, this concept provides into the essential elements of urban planning and financing of the development project of investment areas after the ZSD factory (<http://ssl.nysa.pl/kultura?id=16630>), and also shows how the social and spatial requirements of the revitalization the river Neisse basin and, what equally important, environmental objectives can be effectively integrated into the process of revitalization of this space (Fig. 5 and 6).



Fig.5. Conception draw showing increased to 6 (two available) the possibility of crossing the river (mostly walkways, bridge for pedestrian and bicycle traffic), explaining the opportunities for the revitalization of investment terrain after the ZSD factory, with the activation of pathways in the direction of forts to the north.

Source: author interpretation using the conception designed by architect Prof. Gabriel J. Fernández Adarve



Fig.6. Conception draw showing the possible form of crossing the river bridges for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
(Source: author interpretation using the conception designed by architect Prof. Gabriel J. Fernández Adarve)

Just like each else, so this master zone plan was not able to meet the needs of all stakeholders. The resulting environment interested in the fate of the ZSD factory has focused its attention on two issues. Designing of crossing the river possibilities, examining the number of bridges and their location and taking the issue of regulation and organization of space after the ZSD factory as a part of its revitalization, by opening it for town residents, especially in the context of carrying out communications to the north.

This last aspect deserves on a special attention because it addresses importance from the point of view of the users of that space, concerning the future quality of life in this place.

Added to this are also extremely complicated aspects of civil-public relations in law and ownership aspects, too.

The discussion, which took environmental of the stakeholders, was really about not only the barriers in communication system that supports the north part of the Nysa town, but most of all philosophy/ideas emerging new district there.

Conclusions

For the good of the city, Nysa should learn how to use the potential carried by the river. Lack of appropriate legislative base, often associated with the formation of the dead, heavy in the implementation spatial development plans, makes the process of the planning very difficult. In addition, the lack of coordination of activities and projects between the administrators of each area and the river gives devastating consequences effects, especially for the inhabitants of Nysa.

The trial, balancing opinions of all stakeholders: developers, social expectations to the specific model of spatial order and the need for high-quality public spaces, looks in these conditions very complicated.

Skipping“bottom-up“ initiatives in the development of plans is a bad practice. Past and present Germans examples in urbanization of the river space can be easily implemented in Polish reality, especially when they show that the situation doesn't have to look that way.

One would assume that the Germans did not have our Polish problems, especially with the lack of suitable connection to the financial reserves, and therefore for them it's easier to manage. It's also not quite look like that. The perspectives in Germany are different, but the needs are different too, therefore, generally more problems in both countries are similar.

However, the most important role in this area is to be open to public opinions, which, although can be rarely specific, but it still carries most of all about an idea the desired model of the city that will be built.

In fact, social activities may contribute to the correction of specific spatial solutions implemented by citizens of Nysa. An effective way to achieve real changes in the new districts located along the river is to change the local law enshrined in local plans, mode prescribed by statutory regulations.

The proposed changes must overtake practical implementation of elements of the new district, so it requires a current monitoring the progress of the stakeholders and actively participates in both the planning process and during the implementation of individual projects on certain areas of the immediate neighborhood of the river.

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