

RESUMEN / RESUM / **ABSTRACT**

The work shown below offers the analysis of one of the most unique areas in the city of Valencia from both architectural and urban points of view. We're not talking about a historic scene placed in the heart of the old city. It's not a set of listed buildings area as well, but it becomes a special, extraordinary case on urban renewal. Valencia's *Avenida Barón de Càrcer* -outlined under the name of *Western Avenue*- is self-defined as a new urban space, both in new typologies and uses. It's referred as a practical answer for updating Valencia's *Ciutat Vella* -Old Town- against the abandonment after the successful works on city extensions from 19th century.

Western Avenue in Valencia is an urban and architectural case study object by itself, due to its next first centennial celebration last 1911 in one hand. In the other hand, because of the modernity shown in its architectural pieces and the whole ensemble. As if that were not enough, its long, unique construction process –and specially its unfinished completion- leads us to rethink its current situation. The echoes of 19th century urban renewals in Europe translate into the early 20th century plans in Valencia. Two plans -1911 and 1929- draw the future *West Avenue* lines, whose execution will not be started until finishing the Spanish Civil War. Both economic and social difficulties in that moment added to an excessive municipal delegation on private initiative, brought that only the first phase the whole project was completed. In this way, the initial urban layout plan connected San Agustín square in the South and San José bridge in the North, to be developed into five sectors. In practice, only two of them were raised, by the point where the avenue lies Mercado Central. Its connection with the rest of the city was in fact the main objective of the plan in order to reach a progress for the whole town. That situation of an adjourned conclusion deflated social interest and investments, and a new gradual abandonment raised because of other new activity poles in the city. A weak administrative involvement in its execution, playing a role of a simple viewer by providing some benefits and grant aids, led the private sector to reach real heroic accomplishments, just as every building story tells.

Time grants to *Western Avenue* urban area a new dimension. It became a central point in a new city, occupying a prominent place in social and cultural walk paths. In the other hand, time covers its built heritage and highlights its uniqueness as an urban scene. That's why it's time to return its renewal situation. It's time to proceed with this urban renewal update, as well as get a final integration into the city.

These papers present three readings on the same Avenue reality: studying its urban origins, by analysing its architectural materiality, and finally making a proposal for its requalification. That's why this can be one of the star areas into the old town for the 21st century in Valencia.

Finally, this work reinforces the most singular feature of the Avenue, as a superb urban environment offering interesting examples on a local rationalist expressionist architecture. It can be seen both at the project lines by an expressionist architect –Goerlich- and in the other hand up to the construction of its different buildings by several other important valencian architects between 1940 and 1975. All that deserves a review on 20th century valencian listed architecture, and the consideration of *West Avenue* as the core of an interesting catalogue on rationalist expressionist architecture in Valencia as well.

Then, here you find a study devoted to rethink and update a singular area into Old Town. This dissertation concludes that the current *Avenida Barón de Càrcer* -*Western Avenue*, or *Avenida del Oeste* from now on- represents the hugest chapter on urban regeneration approach along the 20th century in Valencia.