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w przestrzeni miejskiej i podmiejskiej

pod redakcją
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Adaptation or creation of a new cultural ecosystem?

Summary

The development of technical civilisation changed the existing cultural system, it forced individuals and social groups to adapt to the modern cultural environment. Environment whose creators and users got used to gradually identified themselves with. The cultural space in which people live and with which they identify themselves is as important for them as the ecological space. In that sense, it acquires features of an ecosystem. The threats to cultural landscape are as vital (however not to the same extent) as threats to natural environment. It is often the case that they both unite being a threat not only for human existence but also human identity.

These statements are reflected in the changes of the ecosystem and cultural landscape of Upper Silesia in the period of the last two centuries. They may be traced back analysing the process of adaptation of Silesian communities during the industrialisation this region, its gradual ecological degradation in the natural and cultural space and at the same time cultural stabilisation of the local industrial communities. The new variables of social and cultural degradation revealed themselves in the last years in the situation of unemployment caused by the necessity of restructurisation the industry. Adaptation to such conditions evoked certain attitudes. On one hand, the tendency to the decline of the old social and cultural harmony and on the other defensive and adaptive attitudes. Both in the past and nowadays we can still talk about social activity in creating new cultural system constituting local cultural system thanks to traditions and values of family life and diligence.
The sociodemographic analysis of alcohol problems’ occurrence in the city

Summary

So far the problem of alcoholism’s occurrence in various regions of the city was researched mostly in the aspect of alcoholism prevention. Impoverishment of the urban building areas or unfortunate plans of city’s housing estates were listed as those where places for cultural and useful leisure were scarce. The study presents sociodemographic analysis of alcohol addicts living in Tarnowskie Góry treated on psychiatric wards in 1989—2002 period. Among those hospitalised inhabiting the following districts: Sowice, Osada Jana, Lasowice, Rybna, Stare Tarnowice and the city centre — sex, age, marital status and the attitude to work were analysed. The variables are similar for the hospitalised receiving pension — the greatest number of pensioners live in the following districts: Sowice, Osada Jana, city centre, Strzybnica, Lasowice and Stare Tarnowice.

Most of the hospitalised pensioners live in Lasowice district and in the city centre. The working alcohol addicts hospitalised psychiatrically came mostly from the following districts: Sowice, Osada Jana, Stare Tarnowice, Opatowice and the city centre. The highest rates of psychiatric hospitalisations in given districts taking into considerations bachelors and unmarried women (in the diminishing order) were noted in: Sowice, city centre, Osada Jana, Bobrowniki, Lasowice, Stare Tarnowice, Strzybnica, Rybna, there were no patients from Opatowice and Pniowiec districts. Taking into consideration married patients the highest rates were observed in the districts: Sowice, city centre, Osada Jana, Stare Tarnowice and in the remaining districts those rates were lower. Rates concerning widowed patients were highest in the districts: Sowice, Osada Jana and in the city centre with zero rates in the remaining districts. Analysing the age of the patients hospitalised psychiatrically the author concluded that the greatest number of them is in the fourth and fifth decades of their lives.
The picture of Jastrzębie Zdrój in the last five decades

Summary

The centenary of 1859–1995 period played an important role in the history of Jastrzębie Zdrój as the small city with 5 thousand inhabitants was a health resort with a wide range of health procedures. Five mines were established since the sixties of the last century within the city boarders and its neighbouring areas and in 2001 the city exceeded 100 000 inhabitants. Its geographical setting and natural environment is more than unusual. The estate standard is also high despite of the fact that most of the flats is in the block of flats so called grand plate. Unfortunately, the percent of autochthons is low and after retiring part of the retired minors returns to the places of their family origins. These are mostly Northeast territories of Poland. Those who stay in Jastrzębie can be characterised by the type of regional mentality, which is connected with conservative political views and religiousness. Jastrzębie Zdrój is 'a small homeland' for the inhabitants of the suburban districts, former independent villages, which after 1975 were included to the city. Out of all the inhabitants of the city centre only the young generation identifies themselves with the city and plans to live their lives there.
Living in the city noise

Summary

The researchers indicate to the increasing number of diseases of different kind. It is especially apparent in the city communities. Out of many causes of this, noise can be listed as a factor.

Its source are often human behaviours and the noise of numerous machines (car engines, city transport, machines in the building sites, kitchen appliances, radios, TVs, CD players etc.). It is difficult to imagine life without them but they do have an impact on our environment.

Many authors indicate to the negative influence of noise on a human. It becomes serious social and cultural problem. In some cities of the world there are actions undertaken to reduce the level of noise to a minimal extent, but first of all — highlighting the presence of a human to other human, especially taking them into consideration (this is the element modern upbringing lacks).

In Warsaw at the beginning of 2005 the authorities of the city fought with people listening to loud music, especially late in the evening and at nights disturbing their neighbours. These were short term actions and they brought no effect. At the same time in the capital within housing estates, allotments, nature reserves, hospitals, churches and monasteries motorways, international transit highways are built. It negatively influences the health of people living near by, it makes them change their styles of lives and their plans for future.

The author refers to the study of Siergiej Rumiancew entitled The book of silence (Russian: Kniga tisiny). As Rumiancew claims silence and noise are one of the key binary oppositions which should be taken into consideration in the studies of the city and village culture. The text presented here is an attempt to view noise as a sociocultural phenomenon and also as an element of inner culture boarder.
Symbolic acts in the devaluated space. The example: urban exploration and graffiti

Summary

After political transformation in 1989 industry fell into decline, especially factories which were centred round the big cities in Upper and Lower Silesia. As a result the cultural system of industrial communities broke down. The landscape of the urbanised areas of Silesia was composed of ruins of factories and other places connected with the previous political system. Some of them changed their functions and were turned into institutions of public utility. An example can be the Town Hall or the Museum of Technology and Textile Industry in Bielsko-Biała.

Many of the objects were not that fortunate and they fell into decline, which did not mean liquidation. Isolated the urban areas with caution signs serve as monuments of the previous generations and system. They became attractive areas for the phenomenon called city exploration which increases in popularity. Urban exploration is a fashion which came from the West and is a kind of entertainment, leisure and a hobby based on taking pictures. In Poland this kind of activity characterises the ethos of commemorating. Analogical to the folk culture with its perception of the elements of the natural environment users of urbanised spaces find places which are both unusual and magic, which indicate the mythic paradigm of urban exploration. The interesting way of utilising urban space is building climbing which is called building and le parcours defined as a run through the city whose architecture constitutes kind of hurdles and a challenge to the physical fitness of the inhabitant of 'the concrete jungle'.

Manifestation of destruction is accompanied parallelly with process of modernisation and further urbanisation. Also in this context the urban landscape is filled with characteristic elements of grey, concrete walls, bridge and flyover's spans. These elements also constitute the area of the devaluated, unwanted, not aesthetic space where different symbolic acts appear - graffiti. Nowadays we are talking about the third phase in the development of graffiti which is called 'third wave'. Originally this kind of graffiti is aimed at communication of the up-to-date problems like violence, and aggression, anorexia or ecology playing important sociocultural functions.
The city dwellers and the issue of degradation of the country landscapes

Summary

A human undergoes the process of the development of civilisation and culture leading to the greater gap separating them from the natural environment from which they originated and which is essential for them. In the era of globalisation and alienation, particularly the inhabitants of big agglomerations desiring to save their psychic and physical health try to come closer to natural environment which means rural areas.

Many city dwellers, tired with noise and the pace of life of the big cities, seek escape and relaxation in the environment known from childhood or stories told by parents. That is why they willingly redecorate old family nests and those who do not have memories from childhood spent in the countryside simply choose to live quietly in accordance with nature building summer houses or moving permanently to smaller or bigger country houses. The next group constitute agroturists. There is yet one more group which is connected with rural areas on everyday basis these are mainly people commuting to villages to work being employed most often in schools and cultural institutions.

Each city dweller, no matter what their provenience is, coming to the countryside interacts with its cultural environment; environment which they seem to know as they accept it. At the same time the value system and attitudes of a city dweller are very much different from the behaviour and hierarchies of the inhabitants of villages.

The process of degradation of the cultural landscape of rural areas (whose authors are the city dwellers) happens unconsciously. The very common manifestations of the lack of tolerance and willingness to integrate in the behaviours of city dwellers make the interactions with the members of village communities really difficult and at the same time their behaviours and attitudes result in a very negative impact on village cultural environment.
Cultural integration and adaptation in the near boarder communities
— on the example of Opole Silesia region

Summary

The study is composed of the following issues: the analysis of the notions of cultural integration and adaptation as operational categories ordering the social space of Opole Silesia; description of the institutional and political factors of cultural integration and adaptation functioning at schools and in education; application of the concept of 'a melting pot' and 'a mosaic' as a way of interpretation cultural and social processes in Opole Silesia after 1945; reflecting on groups of settlements in Opole Silesia after 1990 in the aspect of crystallising the German minority and native Silesian population.
In the small city space of Sławków — one of us or a stranger

Summary

Social and cultural effects of the antagonism of the common consciousness of the inhabitants of Sławków are analysed in the paper. Antagonism which agrees with the urban diversity of city space. In the common judgement of inhabitants of Sławków the area of block of flats is certain opposition to the city centre, considered to be 'the proper' city. At the same time clear division into 'the city' and 'the housing estate' dominates in the consciousness of the inhabitants, which coexists with well established division (or maybe segregation) connected with people's qualities who live in those alternative parts of the city, where the 'worse' part is the housing estate of block of flats settled by immigrants from different parts of the country. As a result of that segregation there are well established differences between members of that local community. Autochthons living here for generations developed their traditional type of social and cultural bonds, and the block of flats settlers' interactions are characterised by certain kind of vacuum. Among the autochthons of Sławków there is a common belief about their group separateness which is a result of different features of culture, common historic experiences, sharing the same territory for generations. We can talk about functioning of common conscience of the original inhabitants of Sławków, their own image as community differentiated from wider community. Undoubtedly, this kind of knowledge and sociocultural conscience is a factor contributing to maintaining in that small town community the feeling of cultural conscience.
Social and cultural erosion of identity of Będzin’s residents

Summary

The local identity of Będzin, or a relatively established and stable form of social awareness, underwent a profound erosion as a result of the post-Holocaust trauma. Created by the Jewish majority, the unique genius loci of Będzin — called the Jerusalem of Zagłębie — being a crucial component of Heimat (the Small Motherland), was irreversibly eliminated. The communist ideology with its resultant urban development policy completed the devastation by degrading and destructing the urban space. This turned the city’s centre into a degraded and culturally desolate zone.

The situation described above has created, for more than a decade now, the necessity of undertaking long-term revitalizing activities and carrying out a thorough gentrification of this part of the city. All the more, with the reactivation of local self-government after 1989, an authentic interest in the multiculturalism of the city and its Jewish roots revived. The representatives of opinion-making circles, followed by the general community, have noted that the Zagłębie identity creates indeed a feeling of the sub-regional unity of particular communities within the city. However, the formation of a distinct cultural unity out of the territorial community is hampered by obstacles lying both in social and spatial behaviors and in the conceived pictures of the city of numerous historical connotations, which emotionally stigmatize its residents.
„Ecological style” as an element of local identity

Summary

„Ecological style” is a multimeaning notion and it is present in different spheres of contemporariness. It is a notion in which groups of views can be differentiated („ecological thinking”), and also particular behaviours whose aim is keeping in touch with nature. This style became fashionable in certain circles of people: mostly in the city and also the region which constituted definite element of elite community’s strategies.

The aim of the paper is not an analysis of this notion in the aspect of popular culture, its aim is to see how this style functions in communities influencing the rest of the society to which they belong. My considerations concern three main issues.

Firstly, I assume that ecology as a watchword became an element of the notion constructing local identity, which is not an analysis of relationships between ecosystem and culture adaptation of a given group/culture. I will only prove that in local communities there is a certain sensitivity to the issues of maintaining balance of the local ecosystems. It is normally revealed in the form of watchwords, slogans and behaviours influencing the type of elements constituting common ground of identification (identity) of given communities to a large extent.

Secondly, within the sphere of my interests is the issue of cultural identities of societies of modern Europe. However, I am not answering the question of what the European identity is, but what the constructing of identity at the local level may look like and how this process functions in the sphere of declaration and behaviours.

Thirdly, I focused on a fact that the awareness of environment preservation becomes an element in the discourse of local elites of identity and given community. The main object of the description and analysis are the initiatives of housing estates councils whose actions I had been observing for years.
OS LIBERTE as a space of alternative communities’ activities — specificity of the place and the urban space at the cultural contact point in Czech Cieszyn

Summary

The following text is devoted to urban space perceived as sui generis cultural point of contact. The analysed space is a conglomerate of social groups, which exist, contrast and compete with one another simultaneously. All of them need and look for their own space, in which they could develop (at times competing for the same physical space of the city). The city is a space in which individuals can enjoy certain kind of ‘freedom’ (as there are no mechanism of social control, which is characteristic for so called traditional societies) and at the same time they are subject to constant search of their group of reference. It gives individuals access to a wide range of life styles or forms of expression and realisation. At the same time they derive from it different (sometimes contradictory) culture patterns and contexts which are provided to them by life in the city and mass media. The specificity of an urban space — a particular city and space understood generally — influences the structure of personality of an individual, decisions taken within group interaction and social actions. The city is at the same time place of actions of individuals (and groups) and the component of their cultural capital. The structure or the character of the group’s activities, coming across things which determine specificity of a given city, creates unique variants, cultural forms and the spaces of social activity. The city is perceived as a space which can fulfil needs of groups contradicting with the mainstream one. Taking the above data into consideration, chosen forms of activities of alternative and contesting communities from Czech Cieszyn (concentrated around LIBERTE association were analysed). The specificity of the above sociocultural space is influenced by: the group’s character which composes it (mostly contestant communities, counterculture and subculture, etc.) on one hand and on the other the specificity of the very city, being the capital of Cieszyn Silesia (former Duchy of Cieszyn), divided between Poland and Czech Republic, its history, culture, language and the presence of the official cultural and social institutions on both sides of the border. The actions of LIBERTE seem to reflect and connect what has the local aspect with what is more than local, inscribing in the horizontal network of new, unofficial social movements.
„Glass houses” – about certain literary concept and its realisation

Summary

The last Stefan Żeromski’s novel – published at the end of 1924 Early Spring aroused many controversies. Some of the critics accused the author of – against his declaration and present protests – favouring revolution and communist movement. The motif of glass houses – a story about new civilisation built from ruins of independent Poland also appears in the book.

After the World War II Żeromski’s novel was included to a tradition whose maintaining – especially after a proper interpretation – considered to be possible in the new circumstances. Undoubtedly, its reception in socialist Poland was influenced by its positive reception in postrevolution Russia. The motif of glass houses was focused on, considering it not an icon of independent but socialist Poland, the class-free society of workers and peasants. The propaganda literature of six-year plan identified the „greatest building site of socialism” – Nowa Huta with building the socialist system. The propaganda of those times created an ideal model of a new, growing – thanks to collective effort – world. There are also surprising parallels between the imagined propaganda picture of the building of Nowa Huta and Żeromski’s literary concept of glass houses. The references to the work of that writer were also more literal – the authorities decided to call a school, street and hospital after his name to honour him. One of the housing estates is called „glass houses”.

The similarity of the propaganda’s ideas during the period of building socialism and Żeromski’s concept result from the fact that they both realised a vision of the wishful world, which combined elements of technologic and political utopia.
Human and nature in literature

Summary

The issues connected with ecology, being originally in the field of sciences, now are of interdisciplinary nature and they are of an interest for humanists. This phenomenon is a result of an awareness that civilisation brings many dangers. Solution to that problem might be sought among others in well organised ecological education, and literature in that respect has an important role to play, mostly because it has a possibility of an emotion influence on the readers.

Justifying the above thesis, I chosen the examples referring to the publications of Jacek Kolbuszewski. In my opinion, a text connected with the region close to the receiver play special role. As an example I gave texts by Paweł Łysek, Gustaw Morcinek and Zofia Kossak-Szczucka – writers connected with Cieszyński Silesia.

The interpretation of chosen texts allowed to differentiate the approach of their authors to the feeling of a human bond with nature; text by Łysek showing the old world of culture of Beskid prove an intuitive, unconscious bond of a human with nature. However, The chopped gallery by Morcinek, Unknown country by Kossak-Szczucka indicate to the inscription of the phenomenon of the surrounding world in the consciousness of a human as a result of the author’s intentions. Furthermore, the examination of the relationships of a human with nature, which I also emphasised in the paper allows for its closer interpretation by the axiological, making people sensitive to essential values in life of both the individuals and social groups. The problem is of universal nature, starting from the views of Jean Jacob Rousseau, Ernest Hemingway until now.
Ecology of culture in the context of autogenous art

Summary

A human, living in a given environment, „adopts” themselves to the surrounding space, ascribing names and functions to phenomena they experience. In this way they create their own environment with a defined inner organisation, structure which consists of artefacts of cultural and natural environment. Culture becomes the result of human contacts with nature as it does not only constitute human adaptation apparatus (as it is mostly perceived by researchers) but it allows to shape only human culture reality in which two systems: natural and cultural become inseparable, they constitute an ecosystem.

Culture allows a human not only to perceive their surrounding environment. A man „Equipped with culture” assigns features, meanings and values to the elements of nature subjecting the nature to certain process of humanisation. Symbolic thinking and language allow verbalising this human interpretation of natural environment in which they exist. Specific kind of this interpretation is autogenous art which is folk and unprofessional also called amateur or naive. Art in which natural environment determines form and content to a large extent. It is best illustrated on the following examples: small sacral architecture, sculpture and paintings.

Communing with nature by art makes a human function better in the reality they exist. This phenomenon does not only refer to artists. Close relationships connecting a human with nature influence many aspects of their lives. Undoubtedly, they arouse their imagination and shape their sensitivity. They are the primary experience of beauty whose patterns a human transfers to different fragments of culture reality.
„Hobbists are happy people”
On chosen forms of leisure in the city environment

Summary

In modern culture the social changes and changes of customs which are taking place under the influence of the revolution in science and technology, fascination of human power connected with it and technique resulted in completely new perception of leisure. Instead of a model stemming from Greek-Roman tradition, which treated work as preparation to real human life spent on contemplation or entertainment there is one which is filled with work. In the traditional model leisure was a sign of belonging to a higher class. Nowadays this sign is marked by lack of time and devoting the whole life to work activities. The pace of every day’s life favours the tendetion of generating attitudes focused rather on „the quantity” of leisure and not its quality.

The phenomenon referred to as hobby is definitely an opposition to such „hectic”, modern style of life. Modellers, short-wave listeners, anglers, pigeon breeders, scat players, tourists, cyclists, scouts, beerphiles (collectors of everything that is connected with beer, maximaphiles (collectors of analogical cards), collectors of fountain pens, medals, records of given music bands — these are only few representatives who constitute modern urban and suburban communities. They are an example of how one can spend time in a valuable way at the same time playing important social functions, which among others contribute to shaping defined behaviours, documenting important local events, constituting to broadening the knowledge about outstanding characters.

Various kinds of hobbies require form the collectors thorough knowledge, both theoretical and practical. Meetings and exhibitions where you can see the effect of work of other hobbyists, change the existing reality, creating a retreat from every day life. Hobbies bring local communities together contributing to their cultural development, bringing new experiences.
„Golden cage”
Modern space of entertainment consumption

Summary

It is the authors' conviction that in consumption society into which Polish society turned, consumption and entertainment become one. Consumption became a form of entertainment or at least entertainment constitutes an inseparable feature of each consumption. The degree of ludique that is tendency to play and entertain in consumption society grows constantly, which might be proved by e.g. multiplication of situations (occasions), places (spaces) and forms of entertainment.

One of the new means of consumption of entertainment are the shopping centres (malls), which are considered by researchers to be the temples of consumption, cities in the city, as if cities, or metal cages or even archipelagos of mini cages serving as a means of enslaving people. The author does not share this point of view, he would rather call a shopping centre a „golden cage” believing that it might enslave a number of people by the compulsory consumption but it does not deprive the representatives of human species of a possibility of presenting their free will. It is still an individual who decides who they are going to be in the consumption society. Most people can still harmlessly combine the ludic and the levels of every day life (real one) and the other way round.
Functioning of the communities of Jehovah's witnesses in the urban environment in Poland — sociocultural analysis

Summary

The paper presents situations of Jehovah's witnesses' communities in the urban environment. The urban culture for centuries was a centre of multiculturalness. Cities attracted people of different religious beliefs who very often belonged to minorities. These were the cities where it was possible to establish religious and educational institutions summoned by religious and national minorities. The above analysis is based on the fundamental assumptions. The first is the feeling of alienation of Jehovah's witnesses in their community. The second assumption is that this minority functions in foreign very often hostile minority surrounding it. The third is that its followers constitute an integral part of a world-wide religious community of Jehovah's witnesses. These assumptions are realised in many aspects of social life: by the religious doctrine, ways of evangelisation and the attitude to state institutions.
Jan Kajfosz

About changes in public space

Summary

The following text concentrates on the public space perceived as an object of modern ecology of culture. The characteristic feature of public space is that for many of its participants it is generally invisible the same as codes functioning in it, which take a form of conventions the participants are not aware of. The possibility of noticing the public space by its participants is connected with noticing its transformation. Noticeable transformation gives a man certain distance in relation to space in which they exist and in relation to codes present in it. Noticeable transformation in that sense a condition of objectification of public space. The methodological basis of the research over public space presented here is a mild version of constructivism. It is assumed that on one hand the public space is always governed by some defined discourse and in that respect it has a relative character, on the other that public space as such is inseparable condition of the discourse’s functioning. It is characteristic for modern communities that the difference between “own” and “foreign” refers to the “here” and “there” to a lesser extent and it is more connected with the question if a given individual who administers or not a proper code. The presence in a defined public space (which might be virtual) more often results from an ability of participation in a discourse governing it regardless of its material presence. Talking about devaluation of public space as result of the decline of the relationship between the space and time (Bauman) we consider inaccurate as the disappearing processes are accompanied by processes of consolidation of other public spaces, which (even if they are controlled by discourse) are places where human creativity and freedom might be realised.