

IDENTITY AND AUTHENTICITY IN URBAN REGENERATION

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Present urban development processes – both in cities aspiring to become metropolitan centres and in smaller ones having different functions in the settlement network – are increasingly related to the concept of regeneration. This concept – frequently mistaken for restoration and modernisation of city structures – has become a part of the urban development cycle, defined by Klaassen already decades ago, and has become common practice since then in many cities around the globe.

INTRODUCTION

- > The urban regeneration concept is frequently associated with problems of preservation and rehabilitation of heritage areas, which are often in need of serious actions to regain their original values and functions. But this process – happening within the circumstances of the liberal development paradigm, globalisation trends and other associated phenomena – has to be associated not only with a proper assessment of the historic importance of the site, but also with its commercial value and possible ways of increasing it. This approach demands to take into account issues such as site identity and the value of the authentic elements of heritage structures. Both can have a certain value, not only symbolic but also economic, thus both of these have to be a part of comprehensive regeneration and development policies.
- > The definition of complex regeneration processes (also named 'revitalisation') states that it should be understood as comprehensive action, combining the redevelopment of physical structures (along with the creation of new ones on vacant sites) with social and economic transformation and upgrading. As a result, the historic urban areas should become more vital parts of city structures and – in many cases – new hubs of economic activity. Besides other effects, regeneration

contributes to the conservation of the cultural identity of a given area, quarter or city – including the preservation of essential assets of the cultural landscape. Thus, regeneration not only builds on the notion of site identity and authentic elements of the urban structure, but it also contributes to the enhancement of the values of the cultural landscape. Therefore, the relation between regeneration, identity and authenticity is not one-dimensional and needs proper elaboration.

GENERAL TRENDS AFFECTING URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

Contemporary transformations of the structure of cities are the result of many processes occurring in the economic and social spheres of the modern world. One of these is globalisation, which is a consequence of modernity (Sztompka, 2002). This process is currently believed to be the primary driving force of the global economy. At the same time, globalisation is a combination of a range of different processes, one of which is urbanisation. Globalisation is connected primarily to economic transformations, including the creation of a single global market of goods and services. One of the effects of this transformation is the world-wide expansion of so-called Western culture. This development results in increasing uniformity and regression of local cultures. At the same time, as Western culture spreads across the entire globe it gets simplified, diluted, and even degraded. This occurs even when the simplest, most superficial, and most primitive fragments of culture are most readily accepted (Sztompka, 2002). This process leads to indiscriminate copying of certain ready-made patterns of shaping space that have become their own cultural 'icon'. The phenomenon of globalisation is concentrated primarily in cities, which is where the consequences are most deeply felt. A new structure of spatial relationships is being formed, which, is connected with the benefits of the big city and its suburbs and the expansion of international networks of exchange (Harańczyk, 1998). Concurrently,

a new model of the 'global city' is born, where increasing socio-spatial inequality is noted and existing areas of extreme poverty and wealth are expanding considerably (Węclawowicz, 2002). The creation of the 'global city' is also a result of new relationships forged between participants of the global economic game. No longer is competition played out among countries; cities are competing with each other for both capital (investment, employment) and large-scale events such as the Olympic games or other festivals. The tourist trade is also subject to especially tough competition among cities. Moreover, they compete for the highly-paid, educated elite. However, in order to guarantee long-term positive development, North American and European city authorities adopt pro-development policies. Frequently, key elements of these are a range of prestigious projects related to aiding the renewal of city centres or downtown areas physically, economically, and culturally. Such projects are also known as 'flagship projects' and are the nucleus of a wide variety of transformations at city-wide or local scales (Loftman, Nevin, 2003). Many of these 'flagship projects' are connected with the transformation of urban public space, and to be competitive the city must guarantee to place them in a given space and time to combat the 'non-cityness' of the age of globalisation. In effect, cities are attempting to reinforce the aesthetic identity of symbolically important areas, especially centres. They seek to reinstate a stable tradition that can continue into the future as both a retrospective of the past and a way of defining the future. The way they strive to overcome the risk to identity posed by the 'disappearance of the present day' is by the very expansion and stabilisation of the present day. Cities try to achieve a distinctive position through the creation of, among other aspects, *'a Mediterranean atmosphere with life on the streets, festivals, and summer cultural programmes that are free of charge and held in open-air venues'* (Goschel, 2003). Thus, cities are seeking individuality, while cultural identity is understood to be one of the factors that guarantee stable,

long-term development. In cases when authentic elements are missing, the simplest way to solve the problem is to create substitutes or copies. Often such undertakings do not face even the slightest opposition and are devoid of any attempt to create modern architecture and public space that would make their mark on the image of a given city.

Why is this? The answer appears to be a complex one: designers, city officials, and public opinion lack faith in the attractiveness of innovative solutions, including their ability to reinforce local identity. If we visit a number of European cities and compare the modern architectural forms of their public spaces, we find that the only aspect that differentiates them is the name of the designer who made them (usually a famous, contemporary architect). However, as a rule, these creations are not distinguished by any particular trait that can be perceived as a 'characteristic local feature' of a given city. In effect, the city and its modern public complexes are fast becoming similar to one another both with regard to programme and architecture. When browsing through albums of images of modern realisations, it is often impossible to identify the city where the structure is located without referring to the captions. It is far more likely, however, that we are able to identify the name of the architect. Unfortunately, this information is not all that useful since today's great architects boast with realisations that are strewn throughout the world (Lorens, 2004).

On the other hand, the process of globalisation, which is also responsible for the standardisation of urban architecture, can contribute to the artificial reinforcement of the individual character of a given place, so that residents or visitors remember it as distinctive from others. In order to achieve the desired effect, the process of theming of cities is frequently applied, often – according to individualised patterns. This ensures that the urban environment created is unique with characteristic local features. Therefore, the significance of places as areas with particular identities and often with their own characters, is on the rise. Places



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can be interpreted as spaces that are tamed and humanised; often this is also referred to as the 'magic' of a place. Magic places should be understood as those which are authentic or have myth-creating properties or are sentimental (Rykiel, 2005). As previously mentioned, this magic of place is frequently associated with a feeling of oneness, or the feeling of being among one's own.

- > Globalisation also influences the rapid growth of real estate prices in city centres of global significance. This could be observed in the 1980s in cities such as New York, London, or Tokyo, and currently in many other cities. This results from the rapid development of new companies in the service sector that provide for global companies. In effect, the land in city centres is becoming a commodity traded on the international real estate market. Simultaneously, cities strive to attract such international investment as a symbol of economic development (Sassen, 2001).
- > Although the global city can be discussed in terms of the phenomenon of globalisation, no such thing as a fundamentally new spatial order exists. What must be noted, however, are the far-reaching changes related to segregation, income disparity, the lifestyles of various social groups, the tendency to the marginalisation of various social groups, and the transformations of public space (Marcuse, van Kempen, 2000). Contrary to theoretical forecasts, they have not lost their significance. Quite the opposite has occurred and 'place' appears to be more important than ever. It bears remembering that not all cities have been successful in the transformation processes linked to economic globalisation. There are examples of battles lost in the fight for new technologies and jobs, as well as those of partial success in which the struggle with serious problems continues (Musterd, 2003).
- > The free market economy, globalisation (and the related neo-liberal capitalism), and the mobility and individualism of community life have destroyed traditional public space. Simultaneously, there is a growing need among

various social groups for that ever elusive product that public space has become. However, the need is not for space of a universal character but one that is adapted to the requirements of a given group. This need leads to the conscious production of meaning, the creation of atmosphere, and the development of themed space. Their single goal is to guarantee as diversified and attractive a way of spending free time as possible. This apparent diversity hides the fact that ownership of such areas is concentrated in the hands of a small number of huge corporations. Contrary to appearances, this leads to the unification and standardisation of the product on offer (Chatterton, Hollands, 2003).

URBAN REGENERATION AS PART OF CONTEMPORARY URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES – THE POLISH EXPERIENCE

As mentioned in the introduction, current urbanisation practices are associated with domination – or even over-domination – of the free market. At the same time, new products are required on this market – both in terms of housing and other types of urban programmes. But only in a few cases are they developed in inner-city locations and other already urbanised areas. Therefore, these sites have to compete for development, which is scarce – in the realities of globalised markets. One has to remember that as a result of suburbanisation and de-industrialisation processes, the inner cities started to suffer from some degradation and urban blight. But in many cases this did not lead to lower land prices. The market still indicates that inner city areas are the most expensive ones, even besides the fact that most of them need major regeneration. Also, in some cases land titles are not clear, or the sites need major infrastructure upgrading. The best example of this is the Granary Island (Wyspa Spichrzów) in Gdańsk – the most attractive site for redevelopment in the whole agglomeration, also very expensive – but nobody will invest there unless a new infrastructure connection is provided to the site.

- > As the societal needs get differentiated, so does the market offer – this is the old rule of the free market. In the pure market-led urbanisation of Poland this is also true for a new urban programme. At the same time a large portion of society is not willing to change its living standard and wishes to maintain the existing one. These people are usually housed in the buildings developed before the Second World war. In general they were not maintained properly during the post-war times and were not undergoing any major renovation. Therefore, over the last decades Polish cities started to face another problem – the problem of decaying housing structures, which is becoming a general problem for the society and cities. During the last few years many conferences, research and seminars were devoted to the analysis of this problems and a search for the best possible solutions.
- > In general, this problems has three dimensions. One of them is related to the bad technical condition of pre-war structures. In these cases the renovation efforts should have as a goal the technical upgrading of the material substance, and solving some of the over-population problems. The second dimension is associated with post-war housing, mainly prefabricated large-scale housing. Usually it still does not suffer major technical problems (but they will appear soon), but it is decayed morally and socially, and shows many societal problems. And finally it is necessary to mention post-industrial, post-harbour, post-railway and post-military areas still awaiting redevelopment, which are usually ready for development, but suffer from underdeveloped infrastructure.
- > In market-led development realities – which is the case of Polish cities – regeneration programmes are usually realised by the private sector, which is interested in developing new market products. But these initiatives are supplemented by ‘spontaneous’ regeneration – like for instance old factory halls acquired to become artists’ workshops. Due to such efforts the face of run-down districts like Praga in Warsaw and Młode Miasto (Young City) in Gdańsk started to be altered.

At the same time one has to understand the difference between complex socio-economic revitalisation and just physical regeneration of urban structures. While physical regeneration means just putting new buildings and retrofitting old ones, complex revitalisation includes activities associated with societal improvements and economic development. It is also worth remembering that revitalisation should be understood in a slightly different way when it refers to housing areas (where the improvement of the physical structure is connected with social and economic revival, with special emphasis on improvement of the situation of the local community) and derelict structures connected with technical and industrial infrastructure (where the creation of new physical structures is sometimes connected with the restoration of historic buildings or historic technical objects, but mainly by bringing new economic activities to the areas and by creating new local communities).

OBJECTIVES AND DIMENSIONS OF COMPLEX URBAN REGENERATION PROCESSES

Objectives of revitalisation efforts are different in each of the cases described in the literature of the subject. It is due to the different situations and problems of cities and centres taking up such activities. Very often, however, the objectives are similar, or touch on similar issues. Thus, they can be grouped by the problems and revitalisation processes they refer to. The following revitalisation groups of objectives can be distinguished:

- **urbanistic and architectural** – connected with repair and modernisation (or sometimes restoration) of architectural complexes, housing and post-industrial structures – including conscious shaping of cultural landscapes of given areas;
- **technical** – connected with upgrading the quality of urban structures – including utilities and road infrastructure;
- **social and economic** – connected with economic revival and reversal of negative social

tendencies – including reducing development of pathologies;

- **environmental** – connected with improving the condition of the natural environment, and reducing pollution and emissions.
- > The above mentioned four groups of revitalisation objectives are interrelated. Interdependence results, for example, from the mutual impact of the improvement of the condition of urban structures, the enhancement of the quality of the environment or the creation of conditions for social and economic revival. It means that each of the actions taken up as part of a revitalisation process is connected with effects in another area, which can have either a negative or positive impact on the area. A good example can be observed when large scale urban actions are undertaken without a proper programme of social and economic improvement. Without integrated action these programmes may lead to subsequent degradation of such sites, despite great amounts of money spent on repairs and modernisations of individual objects and their complexes. That is why it is so important to initiate activities in all areas of the revitalisation process – with particular attention to social and economic regeneration.
- > Regardless of the adopted objectives of revitalisation, the preparation of the process is connected with the necessity to take up actions in different areas. It means that what is needed is interdisciplinary, multi-subject and multi-dimensional activity. The initiatives can be divided into three basic groups:
- **planning and design** – connected with the development of relevant action plans and strategies;
 - **organisation and financing** – connected with forming organisational structures to handle the revitalisation process and provision of necessary funds;
 - **promotion and information** – connected with cooperation with local communities to specify objectives and directions of the revitalisation process.

It is necessary to integrate all the dimensions of the activities mentioned above. Avoiding to take up activities in any of them may constitute a threat to the success of the entire project. For example, not conducting social consultations in time and neglecting real participation of local communities (in particular in the case of revitalisation of housing structures) can lead to tensions and conflicts, quickly spreading to local politics, which can paralyse the whole process. The same applies to organisational and financial activities; very often the existing management structures are not able to prepare and implement such complex projects and programmes. Entrusting organisational and financial tasks to such inadequate structures can lead to delays in the implementation of the programme, its non-implementation or partial implementation. The same is true for financial issues: the operator of the revitalisation process must have the skill to combine various public budgets, subsidies and private funds to achieve an adequate level of financing individual projects. Planning and design is of some significance here as well. Only the development of an adequate action strategy and its transformation into programmes and operational projects can make the overall process a success.

KEY ISSUES IN COMPLEX URBAN REGENERATION – THE IMPORTANCE OF HERITAGE

On the basis of the above considerations it is possible to identify a set of key issues in undertaking and executing the process of complex urban regeneration. Of course, not all of them have to be taken into account when dealing with a specific site – in many cases the site-specific development conditions call for giving more importance to some of them, while the importance of others can be diminished.

Despite this, among the most important issues in urban regeneration the following elements should be mentioned:

- improving the physical structures,
- regenerating the heritage structures,

- upgrading the local economy,
 - regenerating the social structure,
 - involving the local stakeholders in planning,
 - preparing viable organisational and financial solutions.
- > When discussing complex urban regeneration, sooner or later the issue of physical improvements arises. One has to remember that this process can take very different forms, including regeneration of the technical infrastructure (roads, public spaces, underground infrastructure networks, etc.), renewing and modernising the existing buildings (which – in many cases – include structures of historic importance and meaning, representing various types of urban heritage), as well as developing new structures – including both buildings and elements of technical and transportation infrastructure.
- > Most of these activities contribute towards defining the character of the site. However, the historic heritage and its remnants, in many cases still present within the site, play a special role in this process. One should also remember that the valuable elements of heritage can be of different nature. One should distinguish here the following elements:
- spatial heritage and values associated with it (including site plan, historic layout of the formerly existing and/or still surviving structures and spatial distribution of these);
 - material heritage and values (including historic buildings and elements of landscaping as well as remnants of industrial heritage);
 - immaterial heritage and values (including specific site history, name code and other elements interesting for the possible future users).
- > When dealing with heritage areas one should remember that not all of them need regeneration. But the reality is that most of them need such an action, which is biased towards protection of the site values or enhancement of its potential. Conversely, many regeneration areas include a heritage component, which can be an important

or minor part within its structure. It is possible to imagine a regeneration area with no major heritage component, which can emerge from a situation where historic structures were either never existing or were already completely destroyed.

In conclusion, when dealing with regeneration sites, one should remember that most of the heritage sites are subject to various processes associated with urban regeneration. At the same time, many regeneration sites include elements of heritage. But they can be of different meaning and value and can become a part of the regeneration process in many different ways. Despite these differences, all of the heritage sites play a key role in identifying the development potential of a site, and thus in the creation of its competitive position within the city.

IDENTITY AND AUTHENTICITY – TWO KEY CONCEPTS OF CONTEMPORARY URBANISM

As discussed above, regeneration processes have a key role to play within contemporary development processes as they make a major contribution towards building the competitive position of cities. These processes involve – in many cases – dealing with sites which have a certain history. On this basis one can distinguish two separate concepts: site identity (being the result of a certain ‘image’ of the area) and site authenticity (emerging – among others – from the value of the preserved elements of the heritage). Both seem to play an important role in making the regeneration project interesting for local communities and possible developers.

SITE IDENTITY, ITS ASSESSMENT, CREATION AND VALUE

The problem of identity as a characteristic of public space has become a key issue. In recent years it has attracted a wide interest of researchers and designers of urban structures. This stems from a variety of factors, including the aim to create urban structures that are well integrated in local context and conditions.

- > The concept of identity has several meanings. Sociologists emphasise the reflective character of identity of society. A slightly different meaning is assigned to the idea of city identity. The identity of space describes the relationship among elements which exists even if they lack external similarity. In this meaning, identity refers to the existence of common traits which do not lead to a literal similarity of architectural forms. One example of this is architectural style (Szmygin, 2001). Describing the 'identity of urban space' is thus recognised as a characteristic conceptual shortcut that reflects physically the historic and traditional character of the city, of its residents, as well as of the urban community which makes the city discernable from other places or communities.
- > One of the concepts used in the discussion of the identity of space is the 'canon of place'. According to the definition by Myczkowski, '*...the canon of place is a set of factors comprising the landscape of a given place (interior) which defines its image. The forms of this landscape are of a character that is either originally or contemporarily substantiated and perceived by people. These factors are often layered historically and should form the basis for defining the rules of investigation as well as guide steps taken to preserve and shape architectural forms and the landscape of a given place (interior)...*' (Myczkowski, 2003). This definition leads to a wide array of reflections regarding the elements that impact the 'canon of place', and, thus, its identity. These refer in particular to questions of the historic significance of the city. In the opinion of Barbacci, an urban complex '*might not possess even a single building of great value and be comprised of rather modest structures; however, their common utilisation, the harmony of shapes and colours, and mass and space, the attractive homogeneity or stylistic variety, as well as other factors, present a whole that is striking from the point of view of urban planning...*' (Barbacci, 1966). We must remember at the same time that the 'past' which remains in buildings and monuments relates to former times that shape our sensibilities and imagination (Śpiewak, 2003).
- The consciousness of people, the inhabitants of a city, can be reflected enduringly in the cultural traits of this group. This includes its history, which is either experienced personally or passed down from the older generations, or the fact that groups refer to themselves with a common name that emphasises their place of residence and the region in which they live, etc. Identity is not created in a social vacuum but in a particular territory, with a defined culture and in a given historic period (Latoszek, 2003). The concept of regional identity, which is related to individual, social (group), and cultural identity, should be distinguished here. Simultaneously, regional identity is a particular example of a social (group) and cultural identity based on regional tradition that refers to the expression of a defined and limited territory and the specific social, cultural (symbolic), economic and even topographic characteristics that distinguish it from other regions. Among other aspects, regional identity can be described through urban planning and architectural perspectives, of which the constitutional elements of the region are the dominating forms of construction and urban planning solutions in a given region that have similar or even identical traits and technical parameters (Szczepański, 2003). The attributes of identity are, thus, history, local tradition, unique forms (including those that are characteristic), and the traits (including those that are unique) of the natural environment and the magic of place (Kochanowski, 2001).
- Therefore, the concept of the identity of place can be viewed as the relationship that develops between the culture and the traditions of place and their form (also referred to as the 'canon of place', Myczkowski, 2003). The particular shaping of these relationships can be acknowledged as the landscape traits of a given space. It follows, thus, that landscape is an expression of the identity of place (Myczkowski, 2004). The concept of the 'former identity of place' should be understood as the set of factors which express through the landscape the entirety of the continuity of tradition, culture,

and the ‘canon of place’ in the historic layering perceived by people. However, new identities of place include *‘the set of factors that express through the landscape the entirety of contemporary content, forms, and function that either consciously continue or negate the entirety of tradition, culture, and ‘canon of place’* (Myczkowski, 2003).

- > Thus, a given place is but a fragment of cultural space, during the creation of which it was given various meanings more or less consciously. In order to understand the significance of structures, streets, squares, etc., it is essential to know the code, which is the characteristic ‘language’ written into material forms. We learn this ‘language’ as we learn our natural language; we learn to recognise and internalise space. This ‘language’ is also part of the cultural equipment of people belonging to the spheres of a given civilisation and is a fragment of the common heritage. Thanks to this, the meaning of spatial forms is immediately recognisable and is generally independent of the viewer’s historic knowledge (Jałowiecki, 2003; Mironowicz, Ossowicz, 1998]. This ‘place code’ is also referred to as *genius loci* or ‘the spirit of place’. As sociological studies reveal, however, city residents do not identify with all the aspects of their space and usually refer to centrally-located spaces or to specifically shaped elements (Szczepański, 2003).
- > The attitude of contemporary people towards the relationship of identity to time is based on the concept of *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the age) introduced by Hegel. *Zeitgeist* was for Hegel the expression of subsequent stages in the development of ideas in the light of achievement and the self-fulfilment of the global spirit. The *Zeitgeist* of each historic period emerged most forcibly in the visual form, as is seen in historic architectural styles (Myczkowski, 2003). This means that architectural style is of huge significance in the creation and reflection of the identity of a community.
- > Presently, in an effort to maintain, regenerate, or acquire a particular identity of place or community, various desirable and valued environmental traits are being appropriated, and, thus, identity is being

appropriated. This is achieved through attempts to make references to particular cultural codes that are perceived positively by potential customers and users. The result of this process is the creation of new forms of identification for certain groups or places, often achieved through imitation or pastiche. The opportunity of implementing this type of element is possible thanks to the intellectual weakness of today’s mass recipients of these creations (Kochanowski, 2001). At the same time, for the past two decades we have been witnessing the revival of assorted types of localisms and regionalisms. In other words, in becoming citizens of Europe and the world, not infrequently do we remain associated with a ‘private homeland’, sometimes referred to metaphorically as ‘the lesser heaven’, and thus to a unique place on the planet shaped by our personality. Exaggerated attachment to the homeland can give rise to many negative attitudes, such as xenophobia and ethnocentricity, in particular, or to those that are closed to the social and cultural surroundings. The space of the ‘homeland’ is characterised by factors that include a feeling of safety and order and a limited number of players and the immediate nature of the contacts occurring between them. People are connected to the local scene through certain common goals and means that originate in the community of daily life, as well as the characteristic self-sufficiency of the local community (in which nearly all aspects of people’s daily lives can occur within these communities, Szczepański, 2003).

This renaissance of the ‘homeland’ is accompanied by the characteristic discovery of the memory of places and the people who inhabited them, and history begins to surrender its place to this memory. This advancing memory is related to its democratisation, which leads us towards the decentralisation of the cultural model. Presently, it is not the state with its centralised administration and generally centrist orientation that determines the identity of groups, but the groups themselves that discover, outside of the decrees of leadership, their own distinct character. The democratisation of

memory is identical here with the regionalisation or even federalisation of the cultural model (Śpiwak, 2003). This tendency leads to the discovery or renaissance, and also to the resurgence, of the genius loci or 'spirit of place', which frequently stands in glaring contradiction to Hegel's 'spirit of the age' *Zeitgeist*.

- > A good example of this 'fight' is the history of the design of the Gdańsk Granary Island (Wyspa Spichrzów), a fragment of the former medieval port, which has remained largely unexploited since the end of World War II. In November 1989, Gdańsk played host to a seminar dedicated to discussing the future of Wyspa Spichrzów during which the likes of Michael Graves and Rob Krier presented their concepts. This forum provided a stimulating framework for the exchange of experiences and design ideas. Interestingly, it was not possible during this event to designate the best building concept for this sore spot on the identity of Gdańsk. Concurrently, it initiated its own kind of auction of ideas. One of which is *'the idealised and historicising option of reconstructing former Gdańsk historic monuments inspired by the cult of the city's past'*. The Gdańsk architect Stanisław Michel finished some time ago a design for Wyspa Spichrzów, the mock-up of which is presently on display in the Church of Saint Mary. Some architects refer to it as the 'Gdańsk Disneyland', which stems from the character of the design concept – its own variation on the theme of the city marketplace surrounded by rebuilt nineteenth century townhouses. It goes without saying that such forms never appeared in the urban planning or architectural tradition of Wyspa Spichrzów. However, this concept is being promoted aggressively by local history buffs as being *'in the character of Gdańsk'*.
- > The principle of the aspiration to the egalitarianism of the landscape value of space should be treated as a basic criteria for the development of the city in a democratically organised society (Staniszkis, 1995). However, the tourist industry plays a huge role in *'the heritage of the city'*, at once altering the structure of trade, services, and land use, thus

impacting its identity and the authenticity of structures (Pound, 2001). A similar phenomenon occurs during the realisation of planned programmes for the transformation of historic districts. The urban regeneration process of these spaces leads to the recreation or 'redetermination' of the cultural landscape. This means that the needs and identity of the inhabitants of areas subjected to regeneration are also called into question. Large regeneration projects do not often lead to strengthening the local production of culture, but lead to the introduction in these areas of new elements and spatial concepts often in forms that are foreign to the local architectural tradition (Evans, Ford, 2003). This refers also to the introduction of new local customs or trends that are often foreign to the cultural tradition of the place.

The concept of 'taste', understood as the perception of beauty, harmony, and elegance, is associated closely with architectural criticism, which refers also to the shaping of the landscape of urban public spaces. However, in situations requiring the intellectual engagement of the viewer and openness to new currents and tendencies – whether in art or architecture – somewhat smoothed over pseudo-historic kitsch usually wins. It is easier and more convenient to explain this by claiming *'this is what society wants'*; it does indeed want this, since nothing is proposed that would develop perceptions of beauty (Taraszkiewicz, 2002).

SITE AUTHENTICITY, ITS MEANING AND VALUE

The issue of the authenticity of the structure of cities and their public space is presently of interest to many art historians, architects, and urban planners. As with identity, we must refer to the definition of authenticity that comes from the social sciences. In the opinion of Anthony Giddens, authenticity depends on being honest with oneself (Giddens, 2002). From this definition, authenticity can be recognised as a work that remains true to itself, thus with the period in which

it was created, the personality of the creator, and the 'canon of the period'. With regard to material works, the principles of authenticity were first defined by the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl in the early twentieth century (Lubocka-Hoffmann, 1998). These referred mainly to questions of the authenticity of material works, and, in the light of them, we recognise as authentic only those works whose material was created in the period to which they are assigned.

- > This definition has very far-reaching consequences when determining if the material structure of a city is authentic. It can be assumed that authenticity is the harmony between 'the spirit of the age' (according to Hegel) and architectural style and the landscape of place, and, thus, with its identity. The criteria of material authenticity are, however, debatable. After all, the cultural heritage of a city is comprised of both material relics and history. The authenticity of a city is created jointly by its collective memory, individual historic events, and the lives of its inhabitants (Zarębska, 2002). Authenticity is also a changeable concept. It should encompass the continuity of the cultural climate, identity, and building traditions (Pound, 2001).
- > The concept of authenticity of structure takes on a special significance with regard to the historic urban structure. Regardless of the question of spatial planning or maintaining the material heritage of the past, non-material values such as urban traditions, onomastics, or uniquely formed social relations are also significant here (Cielątkowska, 2001). In Poland, we have a singular opportunity to analyse the authenticity of the urban structure that stems from the destruction of World War II and the manner in which historic urban centres were reconstructed after 1945. In the opinion of Teresa Zarębska, it was assumed at the



time that *'the degree of authenticity is impacted by preserving the plan of a given area and the ownership structure of the land and maintaining the spatial rank of predominant features, the carrier of the former utilisation and ideological programme, and the former richness of function'* (Zarębska, 2002). The fact was

ignored that recreating the shape of monuments did not return to them their essential historic and artistic value or, above all else, their authenticity. Quite to the contrary, it was believed that even ruined structures are a kind of monument to former transformations. This is why the rebuilding of so-called destructions, which is done in ways that reflect the skills of the builders and the preferences of the investors, must be recognised as consistent with the essence of the city. In Poland, rebuilding using historic forms was applied in many urban areas, and in effect this gave rise to the 'Polish school of historic preservation'. These practices, however, generated disagreement; it was declared that the material value of a monument is only justified by its authentic structure and material. As early as in 1946, the only justification Ksawery Piwocki could find for rebuilding was emotional (Lubocka-Hoffmann, 1998).

On the basis of the above statements one can conclude that authenticity is associated with values that cannot be reproduced or rebuilt – as in case of post-war reconstructions. Therefore, surviving elements of authentic structures within a regeneration area have a very special meaning for its cultural landscape: they are the 'standing witnesses' of the site's history, decide about its unique and unrepeatable values and – in the end – can contribute to the increase of the development value of the site. But one has to remember that keeping the authentic elements of historic urban structures within the development and/or regeneration areas demand a lot of effort and careful understanding, which are not necessarily welcome by the site owners and/or developers.

**AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTITY
 IN URBAN REGENERATION**

On the basis of the above considerations one could state that both concepts are important parts for urban regeneration programmes and policies. We should remember that these concepts are not inherently contradictory, but their use can lead to contradictory conclusions regarding the design of

the site. This comes from the fact that authentic values of heritage can contribute towards building site identity, but only in the case when this identity is based on its history. Building and enhancing site identity can also be supported or opposed with the needs of preserving its authentic values. This approach is related to the concept of theming, when the result of the design action is the creation of a structure resembling the historic periods within a development pattern which is distant from local history and culture.

CONCLUSIONS

- > All of the above considerations lead to the conclusion that heritage conservation – which should be understood not only as renovation of buildings and structures, but mostly as complex actions leading to the social and economic change within which the cultural landscape of the sites is preserved – can become not an action in itself but a part of the development strategy, focusing on the enhancement of the site identity. This comes from the fact that competitive cities require innovative development strategies within which identity creation and authenticity preservation policy can play a crucial role. Therefore, one should note that what matters is not only heritage, but also how we deal with the heritage resources and to what extent we can build a complex development strategy on site identity and authentic values associated with the preserved elements.
- > In this process the main challenge is to create, improve and maintain the identity of the site without compromising its authenticity. This problem can be solved in many different ways, which – to a large extent – depend on the situation of the city itself as well as the site conditions. Therefore, any complex strategies should be based on some general guidelines and recommendations, as well as on conclusions emerging from complex site assessment.

Among the basic guidelines, regarding this topic, one can mention: <

- keeping as much as possible of the authentic structures – from buildings to elements of street furniture and paving;
- avoiding a 'copy and paste' approach, which can lead to reproduction of inauthentic historic patterns in architecture and urban design;
- considering spatial, material and immaterial values of the site as equally important.

These guidelines do not guarantee the final success of the development strategy, but they can ensure that we avoid the most frequent conflict situations. <