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Aesthetic Communities – Art Institutions – Space

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Looking at Arts Institutions, Communities, and Space: Reflections and Research from the Field of Art Sociology

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Abstract: In this introduction to the journal issue, the editors characterize the individual scholarly articles included in the volume. They also briefly recall their research interests in the field of art. The texts in the volume deal with three intertwining dimensions: cultural and art institutions, communities (artistic and aesthetic), and space. Most of the authors presented their research at the academic conference 'Esthetic Communities and Artistic Institutions' (2023), organized by the Art Sociology Section of the Polish Sociological Association. Polish contemporary sociology of art is mainly empirical sociology. Qualitative research in the field of art sociology in Poland has been used since the 1960s. Initially, they had been treated as experimental, gradually transforming into an increasingly common approach. Sociologists most often used various types of qualitative analyses of materials as well as interviews. Researchers still often use these techniques today, but one can also see the use of other methods, e.g., as part of the art-based research approach (this methodological orientation was used in one of the articles).

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At least since the Renaissance period, the sphere of art has been treated as a unique space of human practice. The peak of this differentiation occurred in the 19th century and resulted in a romantic view of the artist as an entity of a 'demigod' status and an art system with its complex structure and system of values (Luhmann, 2016). However, the process did not include art in general. Sacralization was limited to the chosen set of artworks and artists, namely those accepted by Western elites. The other types of art, the 'adjective' ones, folk, ethnic, non-Western, applied – were treated as inferior. Sociology (Ossowski, 1966) and cultural anthropology (Clifford, 2000; Geertz, 2005) play some part in the deconstruction of this system. Although it is accepted that there is no one 'art world', but, rather, their multitude that intertwine and overlap, they are culturally contextualized spheres of social practice. This fact – sacrilegious for some artists, art historians, and estheticians – allows us to study art as other social objects. Social researchers can apply the methods and techniques they use to explore organizations, social order, deviation, systems of values, etc.

We can distinguish several stages in the development of qualitative research methodology: the period of early classical research; the period of the formation of original traditions; the period of checking the foundations and paradigm of research; and the period of new systematization of methods, procedures, and standards (Denzin, Lincoln, 2009; Bocharova, Kamińska, 2022: 312–317). At an early stage in sociology, qualitative research complemented quantitative methods. Their purpose was the detailed description and interpretation of the phenomena under study. Today, qualitative methods are a separate category. The 1960s saw the publication of a number of monographs, considered classic in the history of qualitative research. In the field of the sociology of art, both quantitative and qualitative approaches as well as mixed methods, are used. However, a statement can be made that there is a particular thematic specialization. Quantitative studies have predispositions to explore large-scale social entities and thus are applied to study audiences and vast sets of artworks to find some general patterns (Griswold, 1981). Since Bourdieu (1984), it is known that art reception demonstrates class character. Searching for common patterns and generalizing about large collectives encourages the use of statistics, sometimes supported by focus groups or in-depth interviews. The study of art and its creator needs a more nuanced approach. It can be a far echo of this individualistic, romantic discourse, but qualitative sociology seems to be more appropriate to the study of artists and their creations. A smaller number of cases that characterize qualitative research allows for a more thorough and scrupulous examination of a particular object. The 'digging in', sensitive, and meticulous perception of numerous patterns, variants, and cases of artwork and artists allows us to picture art worlds in all their glory.

Art has much to do with ambiguity; it often contains various layers of meaning, is saturated with symbols, and is open to various interpretations. Thus, interpretive, hermeneutical, and interactionist approaches often relate to art research. The symbolic interactionist perspective has dominated the field since the 1930s and, although somehow moved aside by postmodern and critical studies, still is one of the most important ways of understanding and investigating esthetic phenomena. It is significantly related to the study of social roles (Znaniecki, 1937; Becker, 2009), collective action, and social (art) worlds (Fine, 2004; Becker, 2008). Herbert Blumer's (2007) definition of symbolic interaction, through which social actors perceive and redefine particular objects according to their understanding and needs, seems promising in the sociological study of art. The aforementioned publications (except Znaniecki's analysis of the social role of artists based on historical data) use research techniques that are 'traditionally' connected to symbolic interactionism, i.e., participant observation and in-depth interviews, merging to various degrees into ethnography with their long-lasting fieldwork. It is difficult to tell how the analysis was conducted, but, as the authors discuss in various materials published in this period, it was probably analytic induction (Znaniecki, 2008; Becker, 2009). Thus, induction and abduction (Gell, 1998; Geertz, 2005) would be those ways of reasoning that are connected with qualitative social studies of art.

Symbolic interactionism is often connected with the grounded theory methodology and while it is difficult to note a particular example of a grounded theory of art, particular components of this methodology, such as several stages of coding and construction of theoretical categories, are applied to the studies in the field (e.g., Porczyński, Rozalska, 2021; Szenajch, 2022). This approach can be used in the study of social practice as well as particular art objects (books, music records, paintings, or handicrafts). In this case, hermeneutics as a method of 'reading' a cultural text and finding the meanings hidden behind it can also be applied, but it can also be used to interpret particular cases of reception (Zimnica, 1996). When it comes to the study of artists, biographical methods can be noted (Elias, Schröter, 2006; Szenajch, 2022). Proper contextualization of an individual in a particular historical period and isolation of life trajectories need, once again, precision that only a qualitative approach can provide. It would not allow writing a life story of an average artist or building a statistically-correct model of the artist's life course, but it is still possible to indicate contexts, factors, and biographic structures that somehow influence his/her life decisions and creations. The research area of the sociology of art, along with the incessantly and rapidly changing reality, is constantly expanding. New phenomena provoke the search for new methods and tools, as well as modifications of those that we have had while conducting research so far. When examining social reality, we are now increasingly sensitive to the issues of gender inequality, sexual minorities, the shameful legacy of colonialism, as well as issues related to the natural environment and climate change.

The articles in this issue are characterized by the multitude of topics covered and the methodological diversity of research approaches within qualitative sociology. The leading topics of this issue include communities, artistic institutions, and space. They are the complex subjects of reflection in the social sciences and humanities (including the sociology of art). The issue presents research on the art museum, the artistic community within plein air painting, and the case study of "Pracownia." Artistic communities and institutions can be treated separately, but sometimes they function as hybrids. Describing common space, the authors focused on architecture. The young generation is described in the various articles as a community of attitudes, values, and expectations, but also as designers, users, and audiences. The issue starts with an article titled *The Future of Art Museums: Reflections on a Young Audience* by Przemysław Kisiel, which provides an extensive characteristic of young adults (early adults, persons aged 18–30, who belong to the adult segment of Generation Z). The author focuses on the way in which this audience segment perceives the institutions of art museums and what consequences this may have in the future for cultural institutions. Despite the changes that have taken place in museums over the last decades, young adults still seem to be a group whose needs are insufficiently noticed and considered when creating the offer. The author bases his considerations on qualitative research conducted among people studying in two Polish cities in 2023, but also refers to other similar studies. The empirical material was obtained in the form of free written statements of the respondents (essay, note, set of reflections, etc.) and a survey. The article ends with practical recommendations, the application of which may influence greater interest of young adults in the cultural offer proposed by museums.

Agata Sulikowska-Dejena in the article titled *A Plein Air Painting Event as a Liminal Experience Building the Artists' Community* tries to show the importance of plein air painting events for their participants that is overlooked by many researchers. In mainstream art, this formula has been replaced by a more modern model of artist-in-residence programs. For the author, plein air meeting is primarily a place and time for building an artistic community and bonds between the participants, which is achieved through joint, quasi-ritual activities. In her text, the author combines the perspectives of art history, sociology, and anthropology. At the theoretical level, she refers to Victor Turner and Arnold van Gennep. The described research process was organized according to the rules of grounded theory, and the data was obtained using in-depth interviews and participant observation. The article presents the results of research conducted among visual artists in the Podkarpackie voivodeship.

The text titled *More Than a Photograph: An Analysis of the Photographs of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia"* uses the six-moves methodology of arts-based research. Maja Dobiasz-Krysiak demonstrates the potential of arts-based research. She proposes an authorial typology of six movements (downward /two types/, upward, inward, along, and across) to describe and reflect on the activities of an art group and a specific cultural animation institution in Warmia. The author uses photography of "Pracownia" from the years 1978–1981 to present every point of the typology. Her article aims to demonstrate the usefulness of the methodology used to research alternative movements in cultural animation. Photographs, interviews, archival material, field search for traces of the past (buildings from photographs) – all these turn out to be sources for a fascinating description of a community of people and purpose. This applies to reflections on the aims and effects of cultural animation projects as well as their critical and research potential.

The next three articles are devoted to common space and architecture, which is less frequently studied from the point of view of art sociology (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, Porczyński, Rozalska, 2021: 12). Two of them combine the themes of architecture and young adults. Each of them covers different problems and methods.

Dominik Porczyński's article titled *The Architecture of the Rzeszów Downtown from the* Flâneur *Perspective* concerns the phenomenon of architecture reception. The author undertakes the problem of the reconstruction of the process of the esthetic valorization of architecture. The analysis is limited to young adults, students in their early 1920s, and was conducted in the historical center of Rzeszów. In addition to materiality, historicity, symbolism, and functionality – which are usually discussed by researchers – the author broadens the spectrum of analysis to include the aspect of esthetics. A huge advantage of the article is the detailed description of the complex research procedure as well as the course of field research.

Magdalena Matysek-Imielińska in the paper titled *Francis Kéré: A Spokesperson of African Architecture? Modernism and Decolonization* analyzes the status of African, innovative architecture and one of its creator – Francis Kéré – in the hierarchies of the Western art world. The author wonders to what extent awarding him the Pritzker Architecture Prize heralds a necessary turn in contemporary architecture in times of climate crisis, and to what extent it could be just a patronizing gesture resulting from the feeling of Western superiority. To capture all the specific features of the context and the nuances in which the phenomena analyzed in the paper are embedded, she decided to use the case study method. The architectural prize, architecture biennial, the architectural press, and academic research in the field of architecture Matysek-Imielińska treats as discursive practices played out within architecture, and to study them, the author applies discourse analysis, which by using Jyoti Hosagrahar's categories of indigenous modernity provides a new research perspective.

Angelika Lasiewicz-Sych in the article titled *A Space of Choice: Exploring New Patterns of Common Student Spaces* discusses an especially important topic of design common and pro-social spaces that meet the needs of users in their programs. The introduction provides a comprehensive overview of the literature in the field of social sciences and architecture, regarding the main challenges and problems in user-centred design. The author analyzes changes in the understanding of the concept of "user" and how it affects the design practice of contemporary architects. In the article one can find a detailed description of the process of designing space by and for the students at the Kraków University of Technology, in which design is also the production of knowledge drawing from the practical lived experiences of the group members and some contextual factors such as the history of place.

The five articles included in the issue were presented at the academic conference titled "Esthetic Communities and Artistic Institutions", which took place in Lodz on 18th–19th May, 2023 (Faculty of Economics and Sociology, University of Lodz). The conference was organized by the Art Sociology Section of the Polish Sociological Association and this is a regular event dedicated to the Polish sociology of art.

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Cytowanie
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Patrząc na instytucje artystyczne, wspólnoty i przestrzeń. Refleksje i badania z pola socjologii sztuk

Abstrakt: W niniejszym wprowadzeniu do numeru czasopisma redaktorzy charakteryzują poszczególne artykuły naukowe zamieszczone w tomie. Przypominają także krótko zainteresowania naukowe na polu sztuki. Teksty zamieszczone w tomie dotyczą trzech wzajemnie przenikających się wymiarów: instytucji kultury i sztuki, wspólnot (artystycznych i estetycznych) oraz przestrzeni. Większość autorów prezentowała swoje badania na konferencji naukowej „Wspólnoty estetyczne i instytucje artystyczne" (2023), organizowanej przez Sekcję Socjologii Sztuki Polskiego Towarzystwa Socjologicznego. Polska współczesna socjologia sztuki to socjologia w głównej mierze empiryczna. Badania jakościowe na polu socjologii sztuki w Polsce były stosowane od lat sześćdziesiątych XX wieku. Początkowo traktowane były jako eksperymentalne, stopniowo przekształcając się w podejście coraz bardziej powszechne. Socjologowie najczęściej stosowali różnego rodzaju analizy jakościowe materiałów, wywiady. Te techniki nadal są często wykorzystywane przez badaczy, lecz możemy dostrzec również sięganie do innych metod, np. w ramach podejścia *art-based research* (tę orientację metodologiczną wykorzystano w jednym z artykułów).

Słowa kluczowe: badania jakościowe, socjologia sztuki, instytucje kultury, wspólnoty estetyczne, przestrzeń

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The Future of Art Museums: Reflections on a Young Audience[1]

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Keywords:
art museum, young adults, transformation of art museums, image of art museum, museum audience

Abstract: Art museums in Poland have been undergoing a very profound transformation over the last decades and have been transformed from institution based on the concept of the object-centered museum to the institution based on the concepts of the client-centered museum and the community-centered museum. This direction of the transformation seems to be very rational and completely justified, as the functions that museum institutions can fulfil are highly dependent on visitor interest. However, these changes may not be fully successful, because art museums have very little interest from young adults, who are a very important segment of the cultural audience, as the future of museum institutions will depend on them.
The aim of this article is to analyse – based on the results of a qualitative study carried out – the way in which young adults perceive the institutions of art museums and to identify those directions of change that could cause them to become more attractive. The conclusions formulated based on the study make it possible to define the directions of the desired transformations, and their implementation may induce young adults to take a greater interest in the cultural offer proposed by museums.

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1 The article presents the result of the Project financed from the subsidy granted to the Krakow University of Economics.

Introduction

Art museums in Poland (and elsewhere) have been undergoing a very profound transformation over the past decades. There are probably only a few institutions that have changed so much and still require further changes. Initially, the economic transformation in Poland was the impulse for change in Polish museums (Folga-Januszewska, 2008). Later changes were linked to the realisation of postulates related to the evolving paradigm in museology and to trends resulting from the paradigm of the "new museology", initiated by Peter Vergo's book (1989). Now, the impetus for change has been provided by the technological revolution 4.0, the challenges of post-COVID-19 reality, and also generational change (Gurian, 2021). To all these challenges, museum institutions are trying to respond proactively, trying to adapt to ever new social expectations. The scale of only recent efforts is perfectly evidenced by the fact that in the period 2018–2020, as many as 41.3% of Polish museum institutions took steps to change the infrastructure of the museum, and 52.5% made organizational changes. Changes in infrastructure were primarily aimed at educational needs (new rooms, workshop spaces), the purchase of educational materials, and the purchase of equipment to facilitate teaching: projectors, laptops, screens, microphones. Organizational changes, on the other hand, consisted mainly of creating new positions and recruiting new staff to facilitate visits to museum exhibitions, carrying out internal and external training, and establishing cooperation with external entities. An important area of change was also activities related to adapting museums to the requirements of people with disabilities (Kwiatkowski, Nessel-Łukasik, Grzonkowska, 2022).

The common ground for the changes being introduced is, above all, that they are in line with contemporary changes in the social status of the museum (Borusiewicz, 2012) as well as trends in defining the institution of the museum, which are perfectly illustrated by the very latest definition of the museum, approved on 24th August, 2022, by the ICOM General Assembly. It specifies that: "A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection, and knowledge sharing" (ICOM, 2023).

All these activities implement a new philosophy of museum existence, one of the basic foundations of which has become the orientation toward the audience and its needs. This means a clear reorientation of contemporary museum institutions from the concept of the object-centered museum to the concepts of the client-centered museum and the community-centered museum (Gurian, 2010; Macalik, Pluta-Olearnik, 2017; Tołysz, 2020). This can be seen, in particular, in the development and implementation of the principle of differentiating action strategies and profiling museum events according to the age of visitors, with a division into three categories: seniors, adults, and children & teenagers (Kwiatkowski, Nessel-Łukasik, Grzonkowska, 2022). This course of action seems to be very rational and entirely justified, as the functions that museum institutions can perform are highly dependent on the age of their visitors. However, these activities may not be fully satisfactory if they are not implemented in a consistent and comprehensive manner and if they do not consider the needs of all age groups.

In this context, it should be noted that the great missing in new museum strategies are the young adults (early adults, persons aged 18–30), who belong to the adult segment of Generation Z (also named Gen Z, Zoomers) or the borderline between Gen Z and Gen Y (also named Millennials). This situation may certainly be surprising, as it is precisely this age group that should be regarded as particularly important for the future of cultural institutions. It is young adults who are among the most culturally active segments, are open to experiencing a variety of cultural forms, and are most often only at the stage of defining their cultural preferences and habits. Moreover, it is also worth remembering that young adults are potential decision-makers who, in a perspective of one or two decades, will have a key influence on decisions on the allocation of public funding for cultural institutions. The lack of awareness among them that museums are an important part of the cultural offer may cause huge problems for these institutions in the future.

It can be assumed that the lack of the profiling of museum offers for this segment of the museum audience results from an unreflective and false belief that the whole adult museum audience (excluding seniors) is relatively homogenous and has similar expectations from museum institutions. Meanwhile, the specificity of the expectations of young adults is clearly visible, and the lack of an attractive offer for them causes this potential group of recipients to stop perceiving museums as entities that can even potentially satisfy their cultural needs. This is indicated, among others, by data from a report of the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts according to which only 13.7% of 18–24-year-olds visit museums frequently (National Endowment for the Arts, 2019). Similar signals are found in the results of the NIMOZ/KANTAR survey carried out in Poland in 2019, which shows that the percentage of young people (15–19 years old) visiting a museum once a year is 8.2%; however, only 0.9% visit a museum multiple times a year. For 20–29-year-olds, the figures are 5.4% and 2.1%, respectively (Kwiatkowski, Nessel-Łukasik, Grzonkowska, 2022: 110). It is also worth noting that in the case of schoolchildren, the first visit to a museum is most often organized as part of a school activity, so it is very likely that young people's unwillingness to visit a museum again is due to the museum offer being unattractive to them. This interpretation is also supported by the results of a survey among secondary school students in Kraków, in which only 11.4% of the respondents declared that their expectations regarding contact with works of art during their visit at the museum had been fully satisfied (Kisiel, 2021: 19). A confirmation of the outlined tendencies of young audiences to turn away from the institution of an art museum can also be seen in studies of student culture in Poland, according to which museums are associated as a component of student culture for only 2.1% of the survey participants (Kolasa-Nowak et al., 2020: 25).

At the same time, it is worth noting that the low interest of young adult audiences is not peculiar only to art museums; it can also be observed in the case of television audiences – young adults currently make up only 4.5% of the television audience (*Widownia…*, 2024). In contrast, the situation is quite the opposite in the case of cinema audiences (only 4–7% do not go to the cinema) and, in addition, young cultural audiences increasingly use streaming music and movie platforms (*Raport Omnichannel…*, 2023). It is also worth noting that young adults present a relatively high level of readership (Chymkowski, Zasacka, 2023).

The arguments cited above suggest that museum institutions should take a better look at the needs of the young generation and start taking the presence of young adults into account when profiling their future strategies. In fact, this problem is already being systematically signaled by researchers, museum organizations, and some museum institutions (Ittelson, 2019; Spainhour, 2019; Voges, 2021; Hester, Geegan, Parker, 2022; Gat, 2023). However, effective action in this area requires in-depth reflection on the cultural specificity of young adults and, above all, on the specific expectations of representatives of this generation toward museum institutions.

The aim of this article is to show, based on the results of a qualitative study, how museum institutions are perceived by young adults and what changes to the museum could make it attractive to them. The theoretical framework for the considerations conducted here is set by the classical concepts of generational divisions (Mannheim, 1952; Garewicz, 1983), which were supplemented by reflections on the theory of generational cycles by Howe and Strauss (1998) as well as the concept of young adults by Arnett (2000). The adopted theoretical framework fully justifies the treatment of the category of young adults as a separate collective subject in the consideration of museum audiences and forms the basis for the concept of the empirical study. The new image of the museum created on the basis of the obtained results should set the directions for the desired transformations and their implementation may induce young adults to take a greater interest in the cultural offer proposed by museums.

The sociocultural specificity of young adults

The generational category of young adults is not unequivocally defined, although it is most often assumed that it begins at the legal adulthood and ends at the age of 26 (Bonnie, Stroud, Breiner, 2015) or 30 (Rindfuss, 1991; Arnett, Žukauskienė, Sugimura, 2014). Depending on the assumed age limits, its population changes, and in the case of the Polish society, it can be estimated at approximately 3.34 million (i.e., approximately 8.8% of Poland's population – in the case of the 18–26-year age bracket), or at approximately 5.14 million (i.e. approximately 13.5% – in the case of the 18–30 year age bracket) (GUS, 2023). Accepting the first variant means that, at this moment, persons defined as young adults are identical with the adult representatives of generation Z (Gen Z, Zoomers – born between 1996 and 2012) (Dimock, 2019). Accepting the second variant means that young adults also include those on the borderline between Gen Z and Millennials. Taking this into account, it is worth noting that the current characteristics of the young adults are extremely close to the characteristics of Gen Z.

However, it is worth underlining that in the case of young adults, it is not the date of birth that is the most important. Definitely more important here is the state of mental development and the connected with it sensitivity to certain changes taking place in the present-day world. Although these changes affect practically everyone, not for everyone they are the impulse that shapes relevant (at a given time in life) and shared experiences. This is what creates a specific and common perspective for young adults in looking at the surrounding reality. Therefore, the meaning of this concept becomes close to the concept of social generations, as understood by Karl Mannheim (1952), and also takes into account the key elements pointed out by Jan Garewicz (1983).

Jeffrey Arnett identifies five key features that describe well the peculiarity of the state of mental development of young adults. Firstly, individuals falling into this age range are in a period of searching for and constructing their own identity as well as attempting to define their relationship to others. Secondly, the period of entering their adulthood is characterized by instability and susceptibility to change in the sphere of family relationships, social relations, and educational and professional activity. Thirdly, young adults are characterized by self-centeredness, as the process of constructing an identity requires trying out and evaluating different possibilities for the sake of matching one's own needs and aspirations. Fourthly, entering the adult world involves a shift from the world of dependent adolescents to the world of independent adults. This process, however, is gradual and during it young adults feel neither adolescents nor adults – they feel in between. Fifthly, the period of being a young adult is a period of openness to different possibilities in life. Not everything is set in stone yet, choices can still be made flexibly – the future can appear as a potentiality in which there is room to fulfil dreams (Arnett, 2000).

The state of mental development also correlates closely with the sociocultural context in which everyone functions. The face of contemporary young adults is, therefore, also the result of several events and processes that are the quintessence of contemporary political, economic, social, cultural, and technological changes. Among the most important factors which have a significant impact on the peculiarity of contemporary young adults is undoubtedly the fact that the whole period of their adolescence takes place in the conditions of actual political integration into European structures, which is connected, among other things, with their participation in EU programmes for the integration of the inhabitants of the continent (e.g., the ERASMUS+ program). Moreover, not only Europe, but practically the whole world is open to young adults, where they can travel or study or work anywhere. This kind of globalized perspective is linked to the simultaneous discovery of locality, the recreation of the meaning of "small homelands". This is what makes contemporary young adults feel that they are citizens of the world, but with a clearly defined local identity, which they are not ashamed to admit and can even be proud of, because locality is not a source of complexes for them. Also important in this context is the fact that Polish young adults are maturing under similar economic conditions as their peers in selected other European countries. This means that they can, without any complexes, compare, and their openness to the world does not have to be limited by economic considerations. This opportunity was not available to previous generations living in communist Poland.

Participation in the global space, however, also means vulnerability to global sociocultural processes. Young adults are digital natives – the first generation to have grown up with permanent access to the Internet and mobile digital technologies (Turner, 2015). This means that, from their perspective, the real and virtual worlds are fully integrated and form an inseparable whole. There are, therefore, not two realities (as for the older generations), but one reality in which the real and virtual worlds intermingle. This also applies to the space of social relations – physical and virtual contact become equivalent and socialization means participation in the network, and it is mostly realized through online presence (Jingjing, 2018). Anyway, for them, the network is not only the relations with acquaintances and friends; it is also a place where they find acceptance and support in difficult moments (Vogels, Gelles-Watnick, 2023). It is also a space where they can develop their creativity and have real-time access to information, opinions, and recommendations, also from strangers. The network space thus becomes a handy source of knowledge, ongoing advice and suggestions, and sometimes even takes on a role of authority. However, to function effectively in this real-virtual world, it is necessary to be able to work in a multitasking environment (Taylor, 2019).

A feature of digital natives is also an orientation toward digital modernity that is part of the rules of a culture of update. This means, on the one hand, accepting the conviction of the superiority of each novelty over the previous version and, at the same time, fully accepting the situation in which every tool used can (and even should) be updated and sometimes changed to such an extent that it requires completely different procedures. In this world, everyone must be ready to adapt to a new and obviously better version of what they own or use. On the other hand, all this also causes the world to be seen by them as a system operating according to the rules of post-modern fluidity, in which the future is unpredictable, although it will certainly be different from the present. As a result, future planning and setting life priorities takes up a long time and is a source of stress, occurring far more frequently than in older generations (*Cigna 360…*, 2022).

In social relations, young adults are strongly oriented toward social values, physical and virtual relationships with others, their own personal development, and the achievement of individual goals. This is strongly correlated with an orientation toward acquiring skills that are indeed useful in life (rational pragmatism) and skills that can make a person feel needed. They also place great emphasis on sustainability and ecology, and professional work should above all be a source of rewarding income and should flexibly integrate rather than dominate other forms of individual activity (Katz et al., 2021).

The generational characteristics of young adults clearly indicate the existence of significant differences from the older generations, which implies a different way of functioning in contemporary world. However, given the context of the phenomena and processes which have resulted in the observed differences and the fact that they are a reaction to a permanently changing reality, it can be assumed that these differences will persist and even increase in the future. This means that young adults will continue to remain distinct from generation X, baby boomers, or millennials in the future, and for this reason it is worth observing them. At the same time, it is worth remembering that over time, in the next decade, young adults will no longer have the face of generation Z, but of generation Alpha (born after 2012).

Empirical research

The previously observed, relatively small representation of young adults among museum audiences prompts an in-depth reflection on the reasons for this phenomenon. Considering the audience attendance data as a premise from which it can be concluded that the way of regarding the museum institution by young adults is not favorable, reflection on this problem should be linked to two basic questions: 1) How is the art museum perceived by representatives of young adults? 2) What changes should be made to the art museum institution from the perspective of young adults? At the same time, it can be expected that the answer to the first question will make it possible to identify the image flaws of the institution, from young adults' point of view, while the answer to the second question will make it possible to identify desirable courses of action and areas in need of change.

Obtaining information to answer the above questions required the implementation of an empirical survey. This research was carried out between February and April 2023 and had the character of an exploratory qualitative study (Babbie, 2016). The empirical material consisted of free-written statements of the respondents, and the stimulating element for their statements was the question: "Imagine you were appointed the Director of the Museum (the National Museum in Kraków / the Museum of Opole Silesia) – what would you change in this museum to increase the interest of students and secondary school pupils in it?". At the same time, the respondents participating in the survey were asked to visit the exhibitions containing the art collections of one of the indicated museums (the National Museum in Kraków and the Opole Silesia Museum in Opole) beforehand and only after becoming familiar with it to formulate, in any written form (essay, note, set of reflections, etc.), a proposal for changes and its brief justification, as well as to specify the expected effects.

The sample selection was purposive – students of two different degree programs in social sciences, studying at the Krakow University of Economics (KUE) and at the University of Opole (UO), were invited to participate in the study. These were 22–24-year-olds who, according to the characteristics of young adults referred to earlier, can be considered to represent this category. One of the study groups consisted of students of the faculty assigned to the discipline of sociological sciences (UO), while the other group consisted of students of the faculty assigned to the discipline of political science and administration (KUE). The participants in the study were not required to have previously experienced intensive cultural activity or interest in museum institutions. The collection of empirical material was coordinated by Nieroba (study conducted in Opole) and the author of the article (study conducted in Kraków).

The total of 42 respondents participated in the survey. The Opole study involved 25 respondents, while the Kraków study was attended by 17 students. All survey participants were aged between 19 and 22, so they fell within the age range specific to young adults. Most of the written statements obtained in the study took up 1–2 A4 pages, although there were some shorter comments (approximately 1/2 page) and some much longer ones (max. 9 pages). Additionally, some of the materials obtained from the respondents included photographs.

The analysis of the collected statements was carried out based on qualitative methodology and aimed at constructing a typology of the propositions made and the arguments related to them (Rapley, 2007). In this process, the procedure for constructing the typology involved the use of codes that had not been formulated *a priori* but were generated based on the obtained data, in accordance with the tradition of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006).

Three main problem areas on which the respondents' attention was focused were distinguished during the analysis of the empirical material. The first area contains critical opinions and evaluations referring to concrete exhibition solutions encountered by the respondents during their visits to museum institutions. The second area describes themes that form a kind of a diagnosis of the image of museum institutions from the young adults' perspective. The third area, however, focuses on the directions of required modernization measures in the museum.

The comments formulated within the first area were concerned with very practical and sometimes even purely technical issues, such as:

1) the way in which objects are displayed and the scope, form, and manner in which information about the objects displayed is provided:

> The information on the booklets is limited to the absolute minimum – information on what is under a given number, what age it came from. It is rare to find information on what the item was used for, or in which places it could be found, or which concrete monarch used or admired it. Furthermore, the booklets are old and unkempt. (K-09)[2]

> Another of my comments is the lighting. This problem is particularly noticeable in the room with the paintings. We can see that the light from the lamps is reflected on the paintings hanging on top of the wall. This makes it difficult to view the exhibition. (O-01)

2) the manner, in which the works are presented, the monotony and static nature of the museum space:

> The rooms I walked through for an hour seemed very static and sterile to me. In my opinion, something should be done with the layout of the rooms, or maybe paint them a different color? (K-11)

3) shortcomings and defects in the lighting of the rooms:

> First of all, I would brighten up the gallery lighting, because in some rooms it is so dark that you can't even see the black elements. (K-01)

2 The letter 'K' indicates respondents from Kraków and the letter 'O' indicates respondents from Opole.

4) unclear or unintuitive way of organizing the exhibition tour:

> […] in addition, the tour layout should be more clear. I mean, there could simply be arrows saying, 'direction of the tour'. In addition, being at the very entrance I did not know in which direction I should go to the exhibition – I did not notice any sign saying so. (K-03)

5) the lack of trust and an intrusive way of controlling visitors:

> During the whole visit I felt terribly watched, every member of staff kept looking at me as if to suggest that I would cause vandalism or steal one of the works. This is the only reason that made me feel uncomfortable. (O-24)

There is no doubt that the situations indicated here could have made a visit to the museum very difficult. However, it is also worth noting that the comments made could have been expressed by any visitor of the exhibition. The criticism concerned phenomena that could make it difficult for any visitor, regardless of age, to get to know museum objects. Although the arguments related to concrete events, they were of a universal nature, independent of generational divisions. For this reason, they will not be analyzed in any depth.

The second problem area on which the respondents' attention was focused is a kind of a diagnosis of the image of museum institutions from the perspective of young adults, and the quoted statements of the respondents can be seen as an illustration of their perception of these institutions. Admittedly, the individual statements of the respondents were stimulated by a previous visit to a particular museum, but they clearly referred to the more general face of this type of institution. Moreover, the image of the museum reconstructed on the basis of the respondents' reflections already contains a very strong component, being a consequence of the respondents' generational affiliation. It is not an image that functions in the consciousness of all visitors, but it contains features that are specific to the way in which museum institutions are perceived by young adults.

The image diagnosis emerging from the obtained empirical material is best synthesized by three statements: Museum – a place known for being unknown; Museum – a site inaccessible to all; Museum – an unmodern and unattractive place.

Museum – a place known for being unknown. This statement is the quintessence of the way museum institutions exist in the consciousness of the young generation. On the one hand, they are all aware that such institutions exist, but on the other hand, these are not part of their everyday reality and do not arouse their interest. They are one big unknown and *terra incognita*, waiting to be discovered. Information about the museum's offer, even if it appears in social media, does not effectively diffuse into the information space of young adults, and does not prompt them to visit.

> Before visiting the permanent exhibition of Polish works of art at the National Museum in Kraków, I had no idea what I might find there. I had not heard or seen social media advertisements about the site anywhere, so my first suggestion is that the NMK should be better advertised on sites such as Facebook, Instagram or even TikTok, which is currently one of the most popular social media. (K-11)

> If it wasn't for a visit to (the museum) as part of a class, I probably wouldn't have even known about it. […] A lot of students probably, like me, even if they felt like going to such a place, they don't really know which one to go to. (O-10)

In the opinion of the respondents, to be present in the consciousness of young audiences, museums obviously need to be more efficient in building an effective message about themselves and their offer. To this aim, they need to be more active on the Internet – however, an attractive (according to the criteria of young adults) website is not enough, a daily presence in social media is also necessary, in particular the use of Instagram and TikTok. It is also necessary to create a trend for visiting the museums among young people, which requires the use of influencers and celebrities as well as building a positive and attractive image of the museum in the school and home environment.

> Using 'PR' and marketing activities to modernize the museum's image, to promote NMK's unique offer can raise awareness and attract quite new visitors [to the museum – author]. In addition to this, cooperation with local media, influential public figures or 'influencers' may be needed to show the museum in a new light, in articles, reviews, social media posts. (K-08)

Museum – a site inaccessible to all. This statement primarily expresses fears about the limited general accessibility of the museum. At the same time, accessibility is regarded in terms of physical barriers as well as economic, social, or cognitive limitations:

> Another issue […] is the lack of accessibility for people with disabilities. Some of the rooms in the museum are not adapted for people with disabilities, what can be frustrating and repulsive. The museum should make every effort to ensure that all visitors, regardless of their physical abilities, can fully enjoy the artefacts. (O-04)

> On some days visitors can visit the National Museum in Kraków for free, and usually for a symbolic zloty. It seems interesting that on those days when you have to pay anything, the attendance does not exceed two or three people at most, who usually do not fall into the definition of young people. (K-14)

> Huge queues formed at the temporary exhibition of Tamara Łempicka's works, so that visitors had to wait for up to several hours to enter. The museum should introduce tickets for fixed hours so that this type of situation does not happen again. Long queues only cause irritation and fatigue among adults as well as children and young people, so that the reception of the paintings can be overshadowed by negative emotions. (K-04)

Changing the perception of a limited accessibility of museums, in the opinion of the respondents, requires various measures. First of all, the elimination of access restrictions for people with disabilities should be pursued. Furthermore, the functioning of museum facilities should be conducive to reducing organizational barriers and the financial costs of museum admission. It is also very important to build a diversified offer of exhibitions and events, which would be appropriate to the capabilities of each potential visitor, considering the age of visitors as well as their interests, preferences, and limitations. This does not mean, however, decreasing the level of museum activities to the requirements of the most vulnerable, but, for example, building a multi-variant offer.

The museum – an unmodern and unattractive place. This statement is a good illustration of the reason for not only the disinterest, but sometimes also the resistance or even opposition of young people to museums. For many respondents, these institutions are synonymous with an ancient past, and something fundamentally unattractive in times of the cult of novelty and constant change.

> The museum is a place that no one visits, because and why, if the same thing has been there for years. (K-14)

> For some time, I imagined that the architecture of the building would be fascinating, but to be honest, as soon as I saw the museum, I started to doubt whether I wanted to go inside. I missed the impressive view of the museum itself, as it seemed gloomy and old-fashioned. (K-10)

> The Museum of Opole Silesia turned out to be a really magical, interesting place that just needs a little refreshing, which would fill it with young people, charmed by what it is able to offer them and able to become part of a community that cares about its permanence. (O-10)

In the opinion of the respondents, the forms of counteracting such an image of the museum include, above all, highlighting everything that is new and modern, up-to-date, and dynamic in the museum's offer. The museum, through its offer, should become a current and active participant in the public discourse and must be permanently present in social media. It also needs to actively animate interest in what is occurring in the museum by promoting cultural and environmental events, daily posts, reports, trivia, competitions, etc.

The respondents' critical comments on the image of the museum institution clearly illustrate the different way in which young adults view the surrounding reality. It should be emphasized that many of the image features of museums that are perceived strongly negatively by representatives of the young generation, from the perspective of older generations, do not need to be changed and are even sometimes for them a symbol of the positive values of these institutions. This generational difference in the reception of the museum image illustrates the clearly crystallizing intergenerational tension. It demonstrates the complexity of the problem, as the way in which the attractiveness of the image of museum institutions is assessed depends on generational affiliation. Thus, changes in image may mean that if a museum becomes more attractive for younger generations, it may at the same time lose its attractiveness from the perspective of older visitors. In doing so, however, it is worth underlining that young people are aware (at least partly) of this problem.

> Here there would be a need to find a golden mean. Young people love interactivity, which may not necessarily appeal to older people who are not entirely interested in such modes of presentation. (K-16)

It is also worth noting that the signaled differences in the perception of the image of the museum are at the same time part of the process of the transformation of the role and social function of the contemporary museum. According to modern concepts of museology, museums are increasingly ceasing to be mere custodians of cultural heritage and are becoming a place of meetings, discussions, and culture-creating reflection, as well as a place for the active creation of an alive culture.

The third problem area on which the respondents clearly focused was the idea of contemporary modernization processes of the museum institution concept. Indeed, from the comments of the respondents there emerges the concept of a new museum paradigm and also the concept of a new way of the functioning of art museum institutions, which takes into account various aspects of the presence of these institutions in social space. The essence of this way of looking at the contemporary role of the museum is expressed in one of the opinions:

> A museum should not just focus on showcasing its output but should make visitors enjoy their time there. (K-07)

It should be clearly realized that the new perspective on the museum presented by Young Adults means negating the current order and introducing fundamental changes and a new logic of operation. According to this view, the value of a museum should not be expressed in what resources it possesses, but in how socially attractive it is and able to express the thought, reflection, or problem behind the event being prepared. The role of the museum is, therefore, not to own and "boast" about its resources, but to be able to create a socially-inspiring message and to use objects, both those it owns and those owned by others, to express it. Questions of their ownership, from the point of view of the value of the exhibition, are not relevant in this case.

The perspective formulated here grows primarily out of young adults' highly critical assessment of the social value of museum institutions:

> In my opinion, the Museum […] sends a signal to young people that it would actually be 'strange if you were interested in this'. (K-09)

> Once a young person leaves the museum, he or she may realize that they have actually taken all the trouble to go to the museum unnecessarily, because nowadays, […] most if not all of the works presented in the museum can be accessed by a young person via the Internet, sitting in the comfort of his or her room. (K-14)

> In today's world, young people really need to feel and see that something is worth their interest. Only individuals will do that on their own. (K-09)

> Increasing interest in the National Museum among young adults can be difficult. This is because of the huge dislike this age group feels for all museums. Only a small part sees value in them. (K-06)

Moreover, it is clear from this diagnosis that young adults even feel excluded from the museum audience. This is the result, on the one hand, of the fact that they feel directly discouraged from visiting the museum. On the other hand, they find nothing in this institution's offerings to encourage them to personally visit, because the museum resources, which are not very dynamically changing, are increasingly becoming available on the Internet anyway. Therefore, if museums wish to become attractive to young adults, it is necessary not only to adopt a new logic of action, but at the same time to introduce several changes affecting the creation of a new type of relationship with visitors.

When discussing the catalog of proposals, it is worth starting with the postulate of preparing a multi-variant museum offer.

> I suggest organizing themed tours and exhibitions – for example, each day of the week on a different theme that would be repeated each week. […] Such tours could also be specially selected for different age groups at different visiting times. (K-01)

Undoubtedly, activities considering the age of visitors are already being carried out in many museums, although, as indicated above, they do not consider the distinctiveness of young adults. At the same time, it is worth noting that the process of differentiating a museum's offer need not be linked solely to the age of its audiences, as it can also take other sociocultural variables into account. The most important thing, however, is that the aim of differentiation is to increase the number of audience segments interested in museum events. In this way, a larger group of people with diverse interests will be able to spend time in the museum in an interesting and attractive way. As a result, the number of participants in museum events will increase.

This can also be achieved by creating conditions for multi-sensory learning. For young adults, an art museum is a space that is not necessarily limited to the sense of sight. They are also very open to experiences with other senses, especially if these allow them to experience art in a better, deeper, or more interesting way. Moreover, it is worth emphasizing at the same time that they see the possibility of multi-sensory cognition not only as an opportunity to enrich their own contact with art, but also as a chance to open up the museum to excluded people, e.g., the blind.

> In the museum there should also be works of art that can be felt through the senses such as touch, which can also result in greater interest among young people and children. (K-04)

> I would limit the so-called dry theory and replace it with various workshops, courses, and interesting lectures, for example on porcelain making. I would like young people to see the production process, then decorate and even try it on miniature objects. I would also introduce things that can be physically touched and limit the glazed display cases as much as possible, because young people in particular can feel uncomfortable staring impassively at the glazed shelves communicating keep your distance. I would sensibly reduce the "Do not touch!" labels. (O-16)

> For those who cannot see the small text well or do not want to waste time reading or do not like to read, headphones should be placed around the artifacts so that the text can be listened to. (K-01)

> Young people often skip a lot of text and get discouraged when they see that there is a lot of text. I think that this form of listening while viewing would be more enjoyable for young people than alternating between viewing and reading. (O-08)

Music, whose permanent presence in young people's lives is very widespread, can also play an important role in enriching a museum's multi-sensory experiences. Hence, there are calls for music to be introduced into the museum, but it must be pointed out that these are accompanied by the awareness that such proposals may not be acceptable to others. The solution is seen as an option for those concerned.

> I would also remove the silence in the museum on certain days. To be honest, I felt very uncomfortable in silence while admiring the paintings. Therefore, I would sometimes offer days where there could be calming music or sounds to get into the dynamics of the paintings or exhibits. Of course, only on selected days, so as not to exclude lovers of spending time in silence. (K-10)

> I think it would also be useful to designate 'quiet hours' for autistic people so that they could visit the museum in a comfortable environment. (K-12)

All multimedia and interactive forms can also be used to broaden the scope of the museum experience. Their role is, above all, to significantly enrich the communication of information about particular artifacts and to actually achieve this for the visitor. In this way, the public not only has contact with the work of art but can also learn a lot about the context in which it was created and how it functioned in social space. All this should be realized in the form of an attractive, dynamic, and attention-grabbing message that also illustrates the practical dimension of the objects viewed. As a result, this helps the recipient to better experience the contact with the works of art and enhances their ability to create their own interpretations.

> Introduce multimedia demonstrations or lectures that can facilitate understanding and interpretation of artifacts and provide a more interactive educational experience for visitors. […] Creating interactive exhibits where teenagers can touch, play, experiment or create something with their own hands can make the museum more fascinating and interesting. (K-10)

> It would be interesting to include multimedia devices where videos of the practical use of an object or others could be shown, giving a broader context for the ancient times, so that the visitor can get a bit of a feel for the era. (K-05)

> It would be worthwhile in a computer-based or verbal way (showing or describing) what these artifacts were used for, who wore them, for what purpose and on what occasions, who could afford them, for what purpose, etc. It is worth betting on practicality even in institutions such as museums, as younger people appreciate this more. (K-02)

A very important element on which a museum's ability to focus the attention of young adults depends is also the topical relevance of the exhibitions. Pure esthetic contemplation or participation in the autotelic process of cultivating the heritage of past generations is far less attractive to young people than participation in a discussion about the future of humanity, the key challenges of contemporary social problems, or the environment. It is these types of problems that young people perceive as interesting and important, and it is these problems that they want to devote their attention to.

> The museum should adapt its program to the interests of younger generations. Generation Z and A are undoubtedly interested in contemporary issues such as climate change and environmental issues, social justice and equality, diversity and inclusion, and mental health. It is worth creating events, temporary exhibitions and workshops that explore these themes and allow for intergenerational discussion between participants and artists. […] It is worth starting by creating a temporary exhibition dedicated to Polish female artists. (K-12)

The final issue raised by the participants in the study concerns the modernity of the form of communication accompanying museum objects. Admittedly, its most important component is the technical dimension, but for the young generation, technical development and the possibilities of using new communication technologies are extremely important, as they symbolically define the difference between the digital generation (to which young adults belong) and the analog generation. As a result, they regard the presence of modern information technologies as a preliminary criterion for identifying those museums that actually have a space dedicated to young audiences.

> The form of the message should be updated as much as possible so that it crosses the mind of a young person to devote their time to the art presented in museums. Tablets or VR kits can be installed in museums to bring them into closer contact with art and, for example, in the form of a short video, introduce the visitor to the history of a work of art. It is not even necessary to install such tablets, as it would be sufficient if the QR codes could be read with a phone. In the case of VR kits, it would even be possible to temporarily enter the world of the painting in question. (K-14)

However, it should be clearly emphasized that the postulated presence of modern technologies used to communicate with the visitor is not just a symbolic distinction of particular generations, but actually has its own profound justification. The possibility of using these technologies to enrich communication in the museum space and with the social environment around the museum can bring enormous real benefits and is practically unlimited. The examples of such proposals reported by the respondents clearly convince us that cyberspace can be a tremendous support for the modern museum; only it needs to be creatively and skilfully adapted to specific needs.

> It is interesting to create an interactive guide to the museum. […]. An interactive guide will allow people to learn about history and art in a more effective and enjoyable way. Such a tool may encourage younger audiences to visit the museum as it will enable them to explore the collection and interpret the artworks themselves. (K-01)

> I think it would be possible, for example, for students and pupils to offer an audio guide for free, which could be, for example, an app for their phone. (K-03)

> My idea on how to attract the younger generation to the museum is to add integrative programes for interactive learning. This would include touchscreen computers placed in the museum, games of varying levels of difficulty, quizzes, themed tours, the ability to post their impressions and read comments from other visitors. Of course, with descriptions of the exhibits and searching by collection. (O-13)

> Indeed, at the present time it would not be a problem to create an online platform, modeled on a computer game. This would not only give the opportunity to present works of art to a much larger group of young people, as such a platform could be accessed by anyone in the whole of Poland, but, moreover, it would open up many new possibilities, such as the possibility of reinterpreting works of art live, during a visit. In turn, combined with VR goggles, this could provide young people with a much greater sense of immersion than even within a platform designed along the lines of a video game alone. (K-14)

The solutions indicated by the participants in the study are, of course, exemplary. However, it is worth noting that the direction of the postulated changes seems to be clearly and unambiguously defined. There is no doubt that the Fourth Industrial Revolution offers great opportunities for increasing the attractiveness of these cultural institutions to young audiences, as it allows for creating a museum offer that can be perceived by the young as something attractive, modern, and up to date. This can be achieved, on the one hand, by modernizing forms of contact with art and, on the other hand, by updating the museum offer and adjusting it to the expectations of young cultural audiences. This, of course, requires the implementation of a modern formula for the presentation of art that will fit in with the digital perceptive capabilities of the young generation.

At the same time, it is worth remembering that from the perspective of young adults, the museum space is a space in which it becomes possible to implement selected principles of the ideal social order. The museum space should be barrier-free and should not exclude anyone or restrict their access to cultural resources. In this space, all actors should be tolerant and accepting of others' differences – everyone here has the right to expect acceptance of their individual behavior and preferences, as long as this does not pose a threat to others. Also, everyone is entitled to their own statement, opinion, or individual interpretation. The museum space should, therefore, be an ideal space. If it is not, it becomes similar to everyday space and thus ceases to be important and interesting. After all, what is the use of visiting a museum if there is the sameness that everyone has around him/her every day?

Discussion

Analyzing the collected empirical material in more general terms, we find in it first of all a strong confirmation of the thesis of the emergence of a new segment within the museum audience that should be taken into account in museum strategies. This segment, formed by contemporary young adults and now almost identical to the adult members of Generation Z, presents an expressive and highly critical approach to the institution of the art museum. This makes it, as indicated by attendance statistics and other studies, reluctant to attend events organized by them. The research that has been carried out has shown that among the most important reasons for this situation is the very unfavorable image of these institutions in the eyes of young people. Changing this situation requires a change in the image of the art museum among young adults, and this is also linked to a change in the principles of presenting art in the museum and the way in which they communicate with visitors both during museum visits and externally. The overall conclusions of the realized study are, therefore, consistent with the directions of change suggested, for example, by the American Alliance of Museums (Kluver, 2022). Based on the collected empirical material, the more detailed analyses carried out can prove very helpful in preparing action strategies aimed at increasing interest in the art museum among young people.

At the same time, it should be remembered that the aim of the empirical study was not to formulate an objectivised assessment of concrete museum facilities, so the conclusions formulated cannot be treated as a form of the evaluation of the functioning of these institutions. It must be clearly emphasized that the aim of the study was not to evaluate the museum, but to stimulate reflection on possible ways of modifying the operating strategy of a particular type of institution in order to make them able to appear in the consciousness of young adults as valuable cultural institutions and, thus, to be able to generate greater interest among them. The suggestion to the respondents that changes in the museum are necessary stemmed from this research intention. As a result, the respondents visited museums with a suggested critical attitude, which led them to draw attention primarily to shortcomings and to overlook examples of good practice. It is worth noting that the situation is diametrically different for museum visitors. When they go to a museum, they do not come with the intention of criticizing the institution, but, instead, they would like to learn about its collections. What is more, when they enter a museum, they usually assume that the museum has something interesting to offer them. Their attitude toward the museum is, therefore, usually positive. For this reason, the opinions expressed by the respondents cannot be equated with the opinions of museum audiences.

It is worth remembering that the study was an exploratory and not a descriptive one. On its basis we cannot conclude on the scale of the phenomenon; other descriptive studies were used to estimate its scale. On the other hand, the collected empirical material made it possible to identify and describe specific thought patterns that allow us to better understand the motives behind young adults; attitudes toward the art museum institution. This makes it possible to understand the nature and context of young adults; decisions and behavior.

Concluding remarks

The aim of the article was to show, based on the results of a qualitative study carried out, how museum institutions are perceived by young adults and what changes should be made to the museum space to make it more attractive to them. The results made it possible to distinguish three groups of comments and demands for change. The first one contained critical opinions and suggestions for modifying the specific display solutions currently in use, which, in the opinion of the respondents, make it difficult to visit museum exhibitions effectively. In this context, the poor way of displaying and describing museum objects, the monotony and static nature of the museum space, as well as the apparent lack of trust in visitors were pointed out. The second group of comments and demands concerned the demanding change in the image characteristics of museum facilities, which young adults associate with a place that is unfamiliar, inaccessible, unmodern, and unattractive. The third group of postulates concerned the desired and expected directions of change in the museum space. Here, emphasis was placed primarily on an orientation toward meeting the expectations of different groups of museum audiences, reducing accessibility barriers for excluded groups, supporting diversity and inclusion, introducing VR and AR technologies into the museum space, and making greater use of multimedia as well as multi-sensory and immersive messages. Conclusions formulated based on the study may help set directions for desirable transformations, and their implementation may encourage young adults to take a greater interest in the cultural offer offered by museums. At the same time, it is important to note that the empirical results obtained in the study are consistent with the diagnoses largely formulated regarding young adults not only in Europe or the United States, but also in other regions of the world, e.g., Zimbabwe (Chitima, Makola, 2023).

At the same time, it should be clearly emphasized that the results of the survey indicate that, despite the intensive changes in museum institutions to date, further changes as mentioned in the survey are necessary. However, it is worth remembering, that their introduction will only become possible if there is a further infrastructural transformation of museums and, above all, a mental transformation of museum staff – museums must, in the opinion of young adults, build their offer not on the basis of what museum specialists want to show, but on the basis of what potential viewers want to see, what arouses emotions and vivid reactions in the audience (but not in museum staff). Only an authentic and engaged art discourse on current social issues is able to encourage young adults to take an interest in art museums. Achieving this goal does not seem impossible, as the expectations of young adults are fully compatible with the development directions of contemporary art – art that deeply engages with social problems. The role of the museum in this situation is to create a real and sometimes even virtual space for the audience to meet art. The role of the museum should also be to ensure that the recipients of art have at their disposal the appropriate information resources necessary for effective communication with the creator of the work, which should be available using modern digital techniques. What is very optimistic is that some museums are already operating in this way (e.g., Louvre, Museo del Prado, Musées d'Orsay, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Tate Modern in London, MET New York), although until this activity is not more widespread, the overall image of art museums will not change.

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Przyszłość muzeów sztuki. Refleksja nad młodą publicznością

Abstrakt: Muzea sztuki w Polsce na przestrzeni ostatnich dekad przechodzą bardzo głębokie przemiany. Zostały przekształcone z instytucji opartych na koncepcji muzeum skoncentrowanego na obiekcie w instytucje oparte na koncepcjach muzeum skoncentrowanego na kliencie i muzeum skoncentrowanego na społeczności. Ten kierunek przemian wydaje się bardzo racjonalny i całkowicie uzasadniony, gdyż funkcje, jakie mogą wypełniać instytucje muzealne, są w dużym stopniu zależne od zainteresowania odwiedzających. Jednakże działania te mogą nie przynieść w pełni satysfakcjonujących efektów, gdyż muzea sztuki cieszą się bardzo niewielkim zainteresowaniem ze strony młodych dorosłych, którzy są bardzo ważnym segmentem publiczności kulturalnej, gdyż to właśnie od nich będzie zależeć przyszłość instytucji muzealnych.

Celem artykułu jest analiza – na podstawie wyników zrealizowanego badania jakościowego – sposobu postrzegania przez młodych dorosłych instytucji muzeów sztuki oraz identyfikacja kierunków zmian, które mogłyby spowodować, że staną się one dla nich atrakcyjne. Sformułowane na podstawie badania konkluzje pozwalają wyznaczać kierunki pożądanych transformacji, a ich implementacja może skłonić młodych dorosłych do większego zainteresowania proponowaną przez muzea ofertą kulturalną.

Słowa kluczowe: muzea sztuki, młodzi dorośli, przemiany muzeów sztuki, wizerunek muzeów sztuki, publiczność muzealna

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A Plein Air Painting Event as a Liminal Experience Building the Artists' Community

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Keywords:
artists' community, plein air painting event, *liminal* experience, *communitas*

Abstract: The subject of the article is a plein air painting event, considered as a liminal experience that is widely practiced by traditional artists to create and maintain communities in the local and supra-local art fields. The interest in organizing this kind of meetings among artists, modern art galleries, and art schools is not decreasing, and one can talk about the exceptionally long duration of the phenomenon. This article discusses the experience of participants for whom these joint meetings have a metaphysical dimension. The descriptions and expressions used by the artists have become the inspiration to use Victor W. Turner's concept in the analysis. That is why this practice is discussed as a *liminal* experience and a rite of passage, whereas the relations between its participants are understood in terms of a specific type of community that is called by Turner 'spontaneous *communitas*'. All the considerations and conclusions included in this text are based on qualitative research conducted among visual artists.

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Introduction

Plein air painting events have a two-hundred-year tradition in art history. A phrase *en plein air* (from French) describes the process of painting a landscape directly from nature in an open space. In the beginning, it was an outdoor creation, outside the studio, based on studying objects in their natural conditions. The very first practices in the 19^{th} century were artists' romantic escape from the cities into the bosom of idealized nature. Plein air painting in modern art, initially associated with the Impressionists, was one of the ways of searching for truth in painting, the opposite of which were the rules created by academism. At the turn of the 19^{th} and 20^{th} centuries, these searches were supported by scientific discoveries in the field of optics, chromatics, and visual perception. Although later modern art groups and movements made the expression of the artist's inner states the main task of art and abstraction its main language, painting remained the most common medium. Nature and landscape continued to inspire modern artists. A key change in thinking about painting was caused by the appearance of the contemporary paradigm in visual arts in the 1950s, which replaced the modern one as the main trend.

For art it meant the end of the domination of esthetics as the main evaluation criterion; a shift of interest from the form to the content, from the material artwork to the concept itself. In the contemporary paradigm, there are no boundaries in art or applicable rules to be followed. Art annexes more and more areas, such as politics, religion, or social issues. Artists create in alternative spaces, abandoning the framework of traditional institutions. An emphasis is put by them on the process-oriented nature of projects, which means resignation from a material art work. This change in thinking about art places painting, especially realistic painting such as landscape, beyond the scope of interest of contemporary avant-garde artists and institutions. In Poland, mainstream artists in the 1960s maintained the tradition of joint outdoor work, but they adopted the formula of artistic and scientific symposia. To create art works they used non-traditional media or materials, and very often they were more conceptual in nature. The practice of organizing plein air painting events has not been abandoned along with the emergence of new avant-garde trends, because the specificity of plein air events in Poland is their social character; they are neither competitions nor painting shows. They are rarely organized for commercial purposes. For most traditional artists, they are an important part of their artistic practice because of being perceived as something that particularly enriches live and work, and builds bonds in artistic communities. Contact with nature and other artists is key for the participants, more important even than artistic quality of artworks they would create. Artist Marek Olszyński (2018: 3) in a catalog, answering the question he posed – What is an artistic plein air event? – defines it as "a form of artists' actions that has been proven over the years"; these actions, according to the author, primarily include: "creative confrontation with nature and various artistic activities, combined with the undoubted pleasure of being in 'beautiful natural circumstances' together with other artists."

Therefore, groups of more traditional artists and members of some art associations (such as Związek Polskich Artystów Plastyków – ZPAP) regularly met and still meet at such events. The popularity of plein air painting formula is also maintained owing to traditional artistic education provided at most academies of fine arts and art faculties in Poland. It should also be mentioned that an open air painting event is attractive to young artists, because traditional art institutions are hermetic, just like highly hierarchical artists' communities. Against this background, it seems to be a very inclusive formula, facilitating artistic debut.

The situation looks different if one looks at the trends dominating in the mainstream of the contemporary art world. Nowadays, the interest in the tradition of plein air painting among the major players of the professional art world and art history researchers in Europe is small, if any. Contemporary art institutions have moved away from the plein air formula in favor of artist-in-residence programs (A-i-R). The confirmation of the current interest is the fact that in 2014, the European Union, in cooperation with the Working Group of EU Member States Experts on Artists' Residencies, published the *Policy handbook on artists' residencies*. The publication contains not only a detailed analysis of what artists' residencies are and the dominant trends, but also specific recommendations for institutions and artists.

According to the definition cited in the *Policy handbook on artists' residencies* (European Union and Working Group of EU Member States Experts on Artists' Residencies, 2014: 9): "Artists' residencies provide artists and other creative professionals with time, space and resources to work, individually or collectively, on areas of their practice that reward heightened reflection or focus." Although the initial assumptions of a plein air event and A-i-R seem to be similar, the purposes for which they are carried out are different. In artists' residencies programs, it is crucial to act in the context of the place, which is usually the city, where the host art institution is located. During a residency, artists enter into a dialog with the place they are staying in and its history, and they talk about social and political issues by means of site-specific artworks or artistic interventions.

Summing up, one model assumes an escape from the problems of civilization to a place beyond structure and time, while the other encompasses close contact with a city and deep involvement in its issues. Although artists' residencies can also involve working together and building community through art, a detailed analysis of their specifics is beyond the scope of this article. The aim of the article is to focus on the plein air event and its importance for artists and artistic communities.

Theoretical framework

The concept of liminality was first developed in the early 20th century by ethnographer and researcher of rites of passage Arnold van Gennep, and was later continued by anthropologist Victor W. Turner, who additionally focused on a specific type of bond between the participants of the ritual called by him from Latin *communitas.*

As Turner (1991: 128) claims: "Prophets and artists tend to be liminal and marginal people, 'edgemen' who strive with a passionate sincerity to rid themselves of the cliches associated with status incumbency and role-playing and to enter into vital relations with other men in fact or imagination.

In their productions we may catch glimpses of that unused evolutionary potential in mankind which has not yet been externalized and fixed in structure".

According to Arnold van Gennep (2006) and Victor W. Turner (1974), rites of passage have three phases. The first one – the separation phase (*preliminal or separation rites*) starts with the moment of switching off; abandoning everyday life and setting off on a journey. It is followed by a transition period – liminal phase (*liminal* or *transition rites*), when a deep state of separation leads to cutting off from reality, immersing oneself in nature, finding oneself beyond time and space, structure, and status. The process ends with re-enablement, which consists in adapting to the new state (*postliminal rites* or *rites of incorporation*).

A specific condition of *communitas* appears in a liminal phase, it "breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. It is almost everywhere held to be sacred or 'holy', possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency" (Turner, 1991: 128). Existential (spontaneous) *communitas* lasts only for the limited time of the liminal phase, but it can be continued by the participants of the ritual, transforming into a normative *communitas* (i.e., the feeling of bond, which was organized into a permanent social system due to control, a certain code of behavior applicable to participants of the community) or an ideological model (often applied to many utopian social models) (Turner, 1991).

I will try to show that the plein air event is one of those moments when artists become "people of the threshold", liminal enities who "are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (Turner, 1991: 95). This new reality, the moment of being together in the "gap" of binding hierarchies and norms mobilizes them to act and think differently. Furthermore, based on the participants' narratives, three phases of rites of passage can be clearly distinguished. Reading about the meaning and ways of experiencing pilgrimages (Turner, Turner, 1978), plein air events can be also considered as a type of secular pilgrimage undertaken by artists who are looking for deeper spirituality.

Methodology and data

In order to analyze the phenomenon of plein air meetings, I will refer to the results of my own empirical research conducted in the years 2017–2019 among the visual artists living and working in the Podkarpackie Province. It was qualitative research including over 60 one-to-one in-depth interviews with artists and over 100 hours of participant observation at art institutions and during plein air events. What was also an important source of data was the qualitative analysis of the content of the publications accompanying exhibitions during the closing ceremony of such events. Artists' statements quoted in the article are marked with the code which contains information on the number of the interview (01–60), gender (W – woman, M – man), and information on the age of the research participant (e.g., 02W53, 03W44). When I quote fragments of texts written for post-plein-air exhibition catalogs by artists, I provide the author's name and publication date.

All research participants were informed about the purpose of the project and how it would proceed. They consciously agreed to participate. Individual interviews were recorded and transcribed. At the transcription stage, they were anonymized by removing any names, surnames, names of towns, villages, or institutions if they could suggest who the research participants were. Some statements for which the respondents requested confidentiality were not quoted anywhere. During the observation of the plein air painting meeting, the participants were informed that I was a researcher who was collecting information about this kind of artistic practice. The acquired data has not been and will not be re-used in any other research in the future.

As a researcher, I must admit that at the beginning of the research, I was strongly prejudiced against the plein air formula. Such activities seemed to me outdated and contributed nothing to the discourse on contemporary art. Working as an art historian in BWA Galeria Sanocka, I curated several artist residencies and site-specific projects, which further increased my criticism[1]. I have adopted the grounded theory methodology (Konecki, 2000; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, Strauss, 2009) as the main analytical strategy in my research, but not in a rigorous manner, in order to avoid projecting my biases onto the research results. Apart from the need to limit the projection of my own professional knowledge and experience on the subsequent analysis of data and the direction of the research, the choice of the grounded theory resulted from the fact that the research concerned the process and personal experience of the actors participating in it, and the above-mentioned theory focuses on the importance of an analysis of actions and processes.

According to Kathy Charmaz (2006: 2), "grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves […] Thus, data form the foundation of our theory and our analysis of these data generates the concepts we construct". She recommends adopting an insider's perspective; "being open to what is happening in the studied scenes and interview statements so that we might learn about our research participants' lives" (Charmaz, 2006: 3). Grounded theory "includes *reasoning* about experience for making theoretical conjectures and then checking them through further experience. Abductive reasoning about the data starts with the data and subsequently moves toward hypothesis formation" (Charmaz, 2006: 103). Furthermore, the constructivist grounded theory put forward by Charmaz makes one sensitive to the multi-faceted nature of constructivist practices.

In the interview scenario, one of the questions concerned the artistic practices in which the respondents participate, because they are crucial or important to them. In addition to creating artworks in their private

1 E.g., *Re-akcje plenerowe* – participants: Agata Biskup/P. Czepurko, Wojciech Gilewicz, Rafał Jakubowicz, Konrad Kuzyszyn, Kamil Stańczak, Julita Wójcik (2009), *To sztuka...* Galeria Rusz (2008), *Truth w Sanoku* Krystian Czaplicki (2007), *Rewitalizacje* Wojciech Gilewicz (2007).

ateliers and participating in exhibitions or art competitions, as many as 52 out of 60 interviewed artists mentioned taking part in plein air painting events. People who declared that they did not participate in plein air events explained it in different ways. Two of them had conflicts with the local community, two did not paint at all because they are printmakers, and the remaining four people considered plein air painting event to be a passé formula that contributed nothing to contemporary art and for them was close to kitsch. These people were involved in socially-engaged, public art, even if some of them were painters.

After the analysis had begun, fragments in which the respondents described their experiences related to this practice were isolated in the interview transcripts. Initial line-by-line coding was used to create provisional, working codes that would provide insight into how the respondents experience and interpret such events. It also allowed me to set directions for further data collection and generate some ideas for continuous comparison of new samples. Some of the codes from the preliminary stage were used during focused coding. An important decision in this phase of the analysis was to distinguish two central categories (cores) that corresponded to two dominant, but completely different attitudes toward participation in an plein air painting event. The first category was "metaphysical attitude" (there were codes such as: the feeling of being out of time, abandoning routine, immersion in nature, the feeling of a unique community, family relationships, giving up rules, the feeling of a unique understanding, the feeling of equality and lack of hierarchy, spiritual experiences, transformation, unprecedented freedom, unusual behavior, etc.), while the second one was "strategic career building" (the assigned codes were: making beneficial connections, the possibility of selling works, choices dictated by prestige, recreating academic hierarchies, searching for new contacts, self-promotion, the monopolization of resources for own group, and the division of participants according to positions, competition, elitism of the event, etc.) In the case of the first group of codes, I used the concepts of Victor Turner and Arnold van Gennep to build the theory. The metaphysical attitude was most often declared by less recognized artists, with a weak position in the local field of art. Those with a high position most often used the meetings to strengthen it and further build their careers. In this case, I used the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu. The subject of the article is the analysis of the first attitude and I will focus on it later in the article.

The crucial thing in the research was the experience of the participants and the way they make sense to their actions, not the specific features of this type of events themselves. The research aimed to show what being an artist means for the respondents and what activities it is necessarily associated with in their opinion. Observation of the participants during open air painting events was carried out after conducting the interviews and served to better understand the artists' experiences and to confirm data saturation.

Journey and place

The places where plein air events are most often organized are remote villages located in picturesque scenery. The meeting of artists is preceded by a shorter or longer journey, which takes them away from their daily routine with each kilometer.

> Plein air events are usually organized in such places as the seaside or mountains, or you go to places that are unique in a given area. (02W53)

> Circumstances of nature matter, that it must be beautiful, there must be some hills [...] In the morning sightseeing of narrow streets and nooks, walking in the forest and then painting. (09M33)

It is good when there is a mystery associated with the place, when both the organizers and the participants are surprised and intrigued:

> We went to such exotic places as Ruciane Nida or Białowieża. We had an old, disused train station at our disposal. Those were fun, interesting meetings. Meeting people in an unfamiliar place. (21W50)

Sometimes the place is so picturesque that it seems to be taken from the paintings of old masters of painting:

> After arriving at the place, a view reminiscent of Poussin's paintings appeared, and thus *invenimus nos in Arcadia*,[2] and the surroundings of the palace in Werynia became – for seven consecutive days – a place of creative work for twenty-nine young painters. (Balicki, 2013: 3)

At the moment of physically setting off on the journey, there is a cut-off from one's own community, well-known everyday life and duties:

> Plein air events are very important, because it is painting outside the studio, outside your safe environment. When you go to a different place, there are absolutely different energies, because each time there is a different group of artists, each person carries something with them and it is reflected in what you do. (34W56)

> It is something wonderful, you live in a different reality then. (03W44)

The physical change of the place for the participants has symbolic features; it is associated with a transfer to another dimension of time and space. That is why reality is experienced in a different way in the open air; the daily rhythm of classes changes, space and time are perceived differently:

> The plein air meeting is such a special time where we live in a bubble. (26M56)

> During this period of a week or two, you can immerse yourself in painting and forget about everyday life and focus on painting, talking with artists, creating in general, and living with art. (15M35)

Time flows differently when outdoors; it is not counted, no one is in a hurry, everyone has the right to their own rhythm. Even the traditional division between night and day may disappear:

2 From Latin – we are in Arcadia.

> If you want, you can paint day and night. You can eat or not eat. You paint day and night. (02W53)

> People are humble, hard-working, you paint late at night, you forget about this hour, about the time... It was in [name of the town], imagine that I painted all day after breakfast, then there was lunch, after dinner I painted, we had dinner We made one in the kitchen so that we didn't have to go anywhere, ten, eleven, twelve, one, two, three, four o'clock in the morning and I look out the windows and it's dawn… time passes differently outdoors. These are places, these are people, these are thoughts – they revolve, they revolve only around creative work. (16M63)

A new-different space is, above all, nature, all-encompassing in its impact, which is experienced in an intimate way – alone or collectively – during joint hikes:

> And when it comes to the outdoors, contact with nature is certainly important. When you go to such an open-air event, you already know that this is the time to commune alone with nature, and the impression of the act of creativity is completely different when you are there. (20W24)

> During such trips, there are conversations about charm, about escapes, very often there are conversations of this type, about this reference to nature, even if you meet someone who makes abstractions, it is still very important and during such meetings there are such conversations. About beauty or the experience itself. (02W53)

In each of these cases, experiencing nature influences the creative act and gives it a new quality. For some participants, the very feeling of the power of nature or the power of its Creator is inspiring, which "is an epiphany that brings us closer to a state of grace and may be a prelude to a mystical trance" (Morawski, 1985: 204). Working in nature can be a struggle with the power of nature; it is associated with the feeling of one's own fragility and powerlessness:

> Going outdoors is a kind of humble courage, standing face to face with nature, with its different, open space, its light and color. This is coping with its vagaries of weather, wind, rain, sun, this laborious Cézanne-esque winning of one's arguments, not against, but on nature. (Balicki, 2014: 3)

Contact with nature is always invigorating, even if instead of mystical experiences, it provides only sensual ones. When "delight comes from the lush green meadow and the multi-colored flowers scattered over it, the calm blackness and density of the forest enhanced by the singing of birds and the clear view above the trees, the sudden opening of the navy blue water with the reflections of the rising or setting sun" is such an experience from the "recovered freshness of sensual contact with nature" or – and sometimes also – from "energy regeneration", "relaxation of internal tensions" and "restoration of balance owing to the free expression of biological rhythms" (Morawski, 1985: 204). The regained freshness of contact can pay off immediately, during the outdoor session. In plein air, emotions are unlocked, actions are more instinctive, and courage and confidence rarely felt in the studio appear:

> Artistic outdoor activities are very expressive, people are eager for new experiences and courage. (19W31)

> […] it certainly opens up a lot in terms of such possibilities, about some such experiments, about searches. (20W24)

> Such flashes of consciousness happen. (08M42)

Immersion in a new reality and transferring this state to the created artworks is as important as building a community with other participants. This is also facilitated by a shared experience of the place, nature, and the creative processes:

> Meeting people is more interesting than painting in the open air, because everyone is an individual and carries a story of their own. In the case of painters, it is often an interesting story, you can learn something interesting and get to know someone's work. (07M40)

> There is a lot of emotion during such meetings. When the meetings are longer, there are more emotions [laughter]. These are usually unforgettable moments, and often those moments are more important than the artworks themselves. Often these paintings, effects of the work during the plein air event, are not so high-flying. This contact of artists is of great value. (26M56)

The relationships that prevail between the participants of the artistic plein air meetings are of a special kind. In order to describe them, the artists' statements most often include a comparison to a family, because it best reflects the exceptional closeness that develops in a group:

> I have been going to plein air events for many years and we meet people from different countries and after so many years I can confidently say that we are a family. (03W44)

> It was with painters from [names of cities] that we went to plein air meetings. There was also quite a strong group from Slovakia. We always felt like a family. We always went there with almost the same group. (33W53)

This closeness is the result of the processes that take place among the participants when sharing time and space together. The beginning of the event is the time of greetings and getting to know one another. Rules and restrictions which exist in professional life disappear. Who someone is on a daily basis, an amateur or a professor of art, ceases to matter. Hierarchies, titles, age barriers also disappear, and in their place a unique freedom appears which is confirmed already at the stage of greeting one another by automatically switching to "you" with everyone and the accompanying mutual hugs, kisses, and pats:

> These professors are professors at the university, and here they are ordinary people. (02W53)

> Then they began to introduce the participants, informing that he was such an important professor, and he replied: during the plein air meeting, I am Staszek, not a professor. (54M60)

For these days, everyone is equal and feels like an equal member of the same artistic community, even if in everyday life they have little in common:

> I guess that's what being in this group is about, in the fact that no one really defines you there, that everyone is similar, it is known there that such people basically think alike, function and actually look alike. (08M42)

There is also an immediate – unprecedented in everyday life – understanding, taking place even despite language barriers, and the participants experience a sense of unity and that differences disappear:

> During the international plein air event, it happened that, for example, with fourteen participants, there were people of five different nationalities […] Despite such a peculiar Tower of Babel, because that's how it should be called, these people found a common language, and not after a week or two, after some adaptation, after some kind of a process of matching, without any preparation, so I believe that there is some superior feature in "artists", that is people who create or people of art. There is some superior value, hidden somewhere deep in them, which makes them understand one another in a flash and fly as if by magic […] during plein air meetings there is a kind of communion, where what is most different and most distant from such a side perspective, merges into one. (11M60)

The perceived closeness also changes the nature of the conversations between the participants, creating a space for confessions and existential considerations. People stop keeping secrets from one another, pretending to be someone they are not, or hiding their weaknesses. They feel like they can talk about everything:

> They talk about life and are incredibly honest and say everything. This is, I would say, a psychotherapist's couch. This is something amazing, that I don't experience in everyday life in interpersonal relationships, for people to demonstrate such openness. And there, I find out about everything… everything. About betrayals, if they happen [laughter], about skirmishes, mistakes, good things. And it's wonderful that people can talk about it so naturally. They are not camouflaged, they are not dishonest. It becomes evident and it's so ubiquitous. I am and do of course the same, it's not like I'm just absorbing it. (03W44)

The emerging closeness helps break down barriers and makes it easier to start romances, especially since the participants feel like they are suspending their daily obligations. Plein air events are also a time when kinship rights and obligations are suspended, as shown by the story of one married artist who took part in an event with his daughter, also a painter. At the very beginning, he told her that "what happens during the plein air meeting stays there"; they are both artists here, not family, so his relationships with the other participants should remain a shared secret.

The atmosphere of freedom causes some people to lose self-control, which leads to simple drunkenness:

> It also happens that they come for a plein air event and if it is longer, they don't sober up for three days and at the last minute, at the end of the event they paint. That's how it goes. (02W53)

Also the lack of inhibitions is combined with the spirit of fun and then the participants distance themselves from their permanent identities, take on the role of imaginary characters, and throw themselves into a whirlwind of unrestrained fun:

> Various things happen during plein air meetings. There are 'theaters' and they dress up and get drunk, it's broad daylight, the water in a river is up to their knees and they go swimming naked. They play like children. The point is that the plein air is like throwing adults into a sandbox […] They dress up and give concerts for themselves. It is then very lively and spontaneous. (02W53)

The plein air event ends with an exhibition, usually organized in the last evening before returning home. An exhibition is an act of incorporation. The participants are presented as people who have experienced a breakthrough in creativity, reached a new level of artistic maturity, gained a deeper way of perceiving the world, and become part of a new artistic family. Art pieces displayed at the exhibition are a material symbol of the experience collected during the liminal phase. Then, external reality again, physically and symbolically, enters the lives of the artists. Freedom, spontaneity, improvisation are replaced by coordinated actions leading to the preparation of this show. Invited guests arrive at the opening and they include representatives of the local authorities, residents of the town, the press, and sometimes the participants' friends and family members. After the opening, there is a party. The same or next day everyone goes home.

The power of plein air experience leads to internal transformations. It also allows artists to live with it for a long time after the end of the event; the energy accumulated during it is gradually released, the physical reality is perceived differently than before the journey, and the emotions associated with it are also different:

> However, a person goes beyond this comfort zone and is somewhere else, in different conditions, with other people and does not have his/her own place. Well, this is very important and you have to participate in it, because even though these are also friendly meetings, there are some events taking place, is valuable experience in its own right when it comes to life and creativity in the future. Such a plein air event may result in such a breakthrough in oneself that will bear fruit later. (20W24)

What plays an important role in a new and fresh look at the world is memories of special relationships established at that time as well as a sense of lasting bond, which becomes the basis of common identity:

> Most of these people, let's say a half, come every year, so we are very close friends, we have a kindred spirit. And it's fantastic that the years pass and it doesn't bother me in any way. (03W44)

Conclusion

The model of the plein air event described in the article, which emerges from the respondents' narratives, is more of Weber's "ideal type" rather than one that can be implemented each time with the same intensity. An escape from social structure, professional hierarchies, and personal benefits is not easy. Many plain air events have become exclusive, closed institutions reflecting the hierarchies of a given field of art. If some elements of the ideal model were actually implemented and thus someone experienced deep emotions, such memories are clearly separated in the statements in order to emphasize the unique nature of the particular event. The fact that only some of the respondents have participated in this type of a meeting – and usually these were single examples – is the best proof of the difficulty or even impossibility of implementing the assumptions of the ideal model. In most cases, it is a goal to be pursued rather than a common practice always guaranteed to its participants.

The participants usually declare the autotelic nature of mutual relations, because spontaneous *communitas* is an element of the tradition and convention in force at plein air events. In their statements, they express satisfaction with the unique community they feel, but at the same time they unconsciously reveal their instrumentality. The principles of functioning in the local field of art are so deeply rooted in their consciousness that the sense of community mobilizes them to joint actions that are to bring measurable benefits to everyone. It often happens that the artists primarily promote their own artworks and when establishing contacts, they expect future cooperation and benefits from other participants. What was initially a spontaneous bond becomes routine over time and develops a structure in which free relationships between individuals turn into normalized relationships between social persons. Friendship is used instrumentally to increase one's own social and symbolic capital as well as facilitate access to further resources.

Quoting Turner (1991: 127), the real *communitas*, having an existential quality, "involving the whole man in his relations to other whole men", is often reduced in memories by the interlocutors to social capital easily exchangeable for other capitals, and disconnected elements of social bond are incorporated into a variety of structural relationships and re-organized in terms of positions in the social hierarchy.

Similarly to the *rites of passage*, each artists' meeting ends with a return to the structure – reborn and strengthened by the experience of *communitas*. The optimistic thing is that the bond established is an impulse to break the monopoly of the institution by taking actions beneficial for the group, and what is the test of its strength and sincerity is the successive joint exhibitions and future plein air events.

The plein air event gives traditional artists a sense of belonging to a tradition recognized by art historians as important (a two-hundred-year-old plein air movement), but also, as the research participants repeatedly pointed out, to a certain community that thinks and feels similarly.

In the case when such event is treated instrumentally for strategic career-building, as was mentioned above, plein airs are most often organized in cooperation with municipal or city offices seeking promotion, as well as owners of hotels or holiday resorts, or local entrepreneurs. In such cases, the place where the event takes place is less important considering the conditions offered by the organizer or the selected group of invited guests.

Cooperation with sponsors and institutions means that there is no freedom to create and experience nature in the open space. Time flows according to the rules set by the organizers, because the goal is to fulfill mutual obligations. Some events are even typically commercial in nature and end with a meeting with potential buyers of the works. This creates competition between the participants instead of community.

The artists primarily promote their own work. Moreover, when establishing contacts, they count on future cooperation and benefits from other participants. At some events, evening presentations are organized by the participants, so the artists take printed Curriculum Vita, catalogs of their works, and business cards to be ready for such self-promotion.

The "strategic" plein air painting event ends with a joint exhibition presenting the best artworks that are representative of the participants (paradoxically, these are often ready-made pictures brought from home). The basic assumption of the exhibition is to create a show of works of high artistic value, painted by authors with a high status (academic titles, recognition in the community, supra-local fame), and, therefore, a creation of prestigious event. Guests invited to this type of exhibitions belong to local elites (higher-level officials, entrepreneurs, directors of institutions), which makes them potential buyers of works or sponsors of subsequent ventures. Presence at the opening allows them to feel that they are among the elite group of "the best" artists.

Artists also strive for exclusive reception of their activities in the texts of open-air catalogs, emphasizing the artistic position of the participants and their achievements.

After returning home, the artists themselves are enriched not with metaphysical feelings, but with new professional contacts, acquaintances and friendships, proposals for further exhibitions, and sometimes even financially richer after selling the works.

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Cytowanie

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Plener malarski jako doświadczenie liminalne budujące wspólnotę artystów

Abstrakt: Przedmiotem artykułu jest plener malarski rozważany jako doświadczenie liminalne szeroko praktykowane przez tradycyjnych artystów i artystki, by tworzyć i podtrzymywać wspólnoty w lokalnym i ponadlokalnym polu sztuki. Zainteresowanie artystów, galerii sztuki nowoczesnej i szkół artystycznych tego rodzaju spotkaniami nie maleje i można mówić o długim trwaniu tego zjawiska. Tekst omawia doświadczenie uczestników, dla których wspólne spotkania mają metafizyczny wymiar. Opisy plenerów i sformułowania stosowane przez uczestników stały się inspiracją do wykorzystania w ich analizie koncepcji Victora W. Turnera. Dlatego praktyki artystów są rozważane w kategoriach doświadczenia liminalnego i rytuału przejścia, natomiast relacje między uczestnikami w kategoriach specyficznego rodzaju wspólnoty, nazwanego przez Turnera „spontaniczną *communitas*". Wszystkie przemyślenia i wnioski opierają się na badaniach jakościowych przeprowadzonych wśród artystek i artystów wizualnych.

Słowa kluczowe: wspólnota artystów, plener malarski, doświadczenie liminalne, *communitas*

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More Than a Photograph: An Analysis of the Photographs of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia" Using the Six-Moves Typology in Arts-Based Research[1]

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Keywords:
six-moves typology, arts-based research, Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia", culture animation, community arts

Abstract: In this article I analyze the actions of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia" using the author's art-based research typology of six moves: downward (two types), upward, inward, along, and across. The paper considers culture animation/community arts to be practices of researching oneself and the world through art. I explain this via the example of "Pracownia" and select one photo of their actions from the years 1978–1981 in order to present every point of the typology. The research aims to fill in the gaps in the history of Polish community arts/culture animation, whilst providing analytical tools for social scientists and practical guidelines for culture animators/community artists.

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Introduction

In this article, I outline a proposal of typology that might be helpful in designing and verifying the research qualities of different artistic actions. I aim to inscribe my ideas into a research/social turn in arts and place culture animation activities[2] in a slightly different perspective. To do so, I invite the reader to take a look back to the turn of the 1970s and 1980s in northern Poland and explore a pile of old photos that stimulated me to reflect on the concept of the artist as a researcher, a border-art activist that negotiates alternatives within the system in times of crisis. The photos present the unknown stories and unrecognized praxis of one of the earliest groups contributing to this transdisciplinary practice – the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center “Pracownia”, active in the last decade of communism in Olsztyn.

I assume that historical distance makes my argumentation more visible and unequivocal, and thus more useful. Furthermore, it is rooted in artistic practices as well as in anthropological and sociological theories, expressed through the lens of academia. I consider this vital, because I diagnose an urgent need to systematize the scientific knowledge about culture animation in Poland as well as to write its history in a socio-artistic manner. The location of this reflection in the academic context is also important, because social scientists need to undertake an analysis of culture animation projects as research tools providing data about animation itself but also – and most importantly – about local communities. Only in this way will we develop the field, enrich practices, and avoid poor management of funds for additional research of negligible effectiveness.

When analyzing the photos of “Pracownia”, one can detect more layers than just that of documentation and archiving. A closer look shows them as witnesses of in-depth citizen research activities engaging in dialog with the time, place, and memory; a visual memoir of the critical moment in the Polish culture that may constitute a reference for many past and future crises, and social-artistic reactions to it. In this text, I use visual material as a starting point for reflection on the aims and effects of socially-engaged arts projects as well as their critical and research potential.

More than a photograph

Over the course of many months, I examined several folders with photographs that I received from my interlocutors in the project *On the way to culture animation. An interdisciplinary research study of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center “Pracownia”*. The photos fascinated me. They show some of the community arts actions organized by the alternative art group named “Pracownia”

2 The Polish equivalent of British community arts movement – culture animation – was formed, according to scholars, in democratic Poland after 1989 (Godlewski, 2002; Czyżewski, 2017). In this text I will use both terms, because I consider the practices of “Pracownia” pioneering for culture animation.

("Workshop") in the town of Olsztyn and the villages around it in the province of Warmia, a historical area in north-eastern Poland, which till 1945 was part of Eastern Prussia.

The photos show an incomplete portfolio of the group from the years 1978–1981. Two theater performances – *Jumping Mouse*, played inside in front of an audience of children, and *Travels to many distant countries of the world*, played outside in the garden of an orphanage and in the gloomy streets of a small Warmian town; winter workshops for high school students in the post-Warmian house in the village of Trękus; a traveling exhibition of large pictures of the painter Tadeusz Piotrowski, presented in the streets of Olsztyn in the summer of 1981; a summer action named *Masks* for the children from the village of Bęsia with a street mask parade and a spectacular bird puppet in the vivid green field; an ecological-artistic action *A dragon from the river* around the Łyna river crossing the town of Olsztyn; a street concert in the busy Bem roundabout; and a performance by the group Trumbonich Mimes invited by "Pracownia" to the local high school.

With time, more photos were found in the private archives. I felt great pleasure when they appeared, as there was an element of serendipity in it. Some of the new findings add more visual information to the action already known by me, some of them document actions I only heard of, as *Journey Home* form 1979, a drift through the abandoned houses of Warmia – making stops in few ruins, painting walls, lighting candles, eating soup; or a colorful street parade from the 1980's being Olsztyn's edition of the performance *Happy Day* by "Pracownia's" befriended Academy of Movement from Warsaw. Some photos from mid 1980s, e.g., from the *Jumping Mouse* theater performance were also found in the emerging Węgajty Theater Archive by Magdalena Hasiuk and her research team.

"Pracownia", as stated in its manifesto from 1977, was primarily divided into four labs: Open, Theory and Publishing, Educational, and Documentation. Ewa Scheliga was in charge of the fourth one, and worked on a company Zenit camera, developing the photos in a darkroom in 15 Okopowa Street. The task of this Laboratory was to prepare and select documentation of the activities of "Pracownia" and activities of other institutions, events, and phenomena that were of interest. The documentation technique depended on the nature of the event and only took place if it did not interfere with the internal structure of the event (*Program Pracowni*, 1977: III). Sometimes, when Ewa Scheliga was occupied with other organizational duties, or when she was absent, other people took pictures, mostly befriended photographers Krzysztof Wołoczko or Mieczysław Wieliczko.

The majority of the "Pracownia" photographs were merely meant to document the events and were not intended to be independent pieces of art. They are photos documenting from an insider's perspective the everyday life of the group, equivalent to a countercultural understanding of work: the work-life. Sometimes when viewers and passers-by enter the frame, they show a countercultural view of mainstream social reality and make social differences visible. However, the vector of the us–them opposition is not applied to the individual members of society, but, rather, to the institutions which may not recognize this photography as a documentation of real work (Dobiasz-Krysiak, 2023: 305–306).

Illustration 1. Action *Happy Day* by the Academy of Movement in Olsztyn with members of "Pracownia", Olsztyn 1980

Source: Sienkiewicz, 2014.

The intentional lack of a conventional "Pracownia" group photo was justified by the *Group Photos* action that ironically portrayed stereotypical rituals of photographic conventions. It proves that for "Pracownia" taking photos was not so much an expression of participation in social normality, but, rather, a fight for autonomy, a right for self-presentation and for a place in the collective consciousness (Drozdowski, Krajewski, 2010: 115–117, 124); a place for otherness, or alternatives. This autonomous gesture is described by Drozdowski and Krajewski as doubly independent: "Independent, firstly, of the models of esthetic and workshop correctness […] secondly, of the dominant views and ideas [of 1970s and 1980s in Poland – note M.D.-K.] *about what is allowed to be photographed* and *in which situations one can reach for a camera and in which one cannot*" (Drozdowski, Krajewski, 2010: 124–125). Although some of the pictures were taken by photographers that later became professional, most of them display rather amateur qualities. Consequently, I treat the photos as "iconic substitutes of language" that intended to avoid subsequent oral reporting of the events experienced for the needs of the institution (Drozdowski, Krajewski, 2010: 120). They are equal to all the data I gathered and become an element of triangulation – using various types of data to construct the theory (Harper, 2014: 155–156).

There had been a lack of the social circulation of these photos before I started the research. Most had been deposited in the archives of an organization that employed the last members of "Pracownia" and moved to a private archive when they retired, just at the same time when I started the project.

They were cut into slides for viewing but had not been reviewed or publicly displayed for a long time. A few photos in the form of prints were kept in the private archive of a person who had moved abroad and had sporadic contact with members of the group before I began my research. All were scanned and put into public circulation because of the research project, which initiated their public dissemination in the media, social media, exchange between the members, and even the recognition of some of them. The photos of the Olsztyn-based performance of the Academy of Movement *Happy Day* circulated in the media, but not as one of "Pracownia's" actions. My coworker recognized people in the picture and sent it to me because of my interest as a researcher.

The photographed actions are different, the authors and the quality of photos vary, but their common denominator is that they were all taken in spaces that we would today call public, although taken in times verging on crises: in the Polish Peoples Republic, during the 1970s recession, in the "Carnival of Solidarity", and on the eve of introducing martial law (13th December, 1981 – 22nd July, 1983), and then the notion of public and private was more than problematic. This was interpreted by sociologist Elżbieta Matynia as the fluctuating dialectics of the official (that annexed the public sphere) and the unofficial (that covered the private and semi-private e.g., dissident sphere) (Matynia, 2008: 26). "Pracownia's" actions played outside the conventional scene or the safe workshop space were there to expand the area of the "unofficial" into the realm of the "official" and to elaborate on the idea of the public character of those outside spaces.

Illustration 2. Music on Bem's Roundabout in Olsztyn 1978

Source: Photo by Ewa Scheliga.

The dissident interpretation of the group's aims is alluring, because it fits perfectly in the heroic narrative that sets the actions in the ethical context of opposing communism (Banasiak, 2020: 25–26). The story is, however, more complex and less black and white when we take a look at "Pracownia's" formal location and its fate after 1982, which is less documented, sometimes forgotten, and, interestingly, hardly photographed.

"Pracownia" – the socio-artistic history

The "Pracownia" Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center comprised a group of art historians, anthropologists, and artists[3] that operated in Olsztyn from 1977 as part of the "Pojezierze" Social and Cultural Association – a Warmian-Masurian association organizing local cultural life, publishing books and magazines, taking care of cultural heritage, and connecting creatives and social activists, being, however, under constant socialist party control (Sikorski, 1995: 87). The group was an alternative art movement of the turn of the 1970/1980s and is considered a part of the broadly understood third theater, although they did not always work theatrically. "Pracownia" maintained contacts with most of the significant groups of that period, including the Grotowski's Laboratory Theater, the Academy of Movement from Warsaw, Gardzienice, etc. On its initiative, many groups visited Olsztyn, e.g., The Living Theater, Quatro Tablas, the Solvognen Theater from Christiania, and many more. The group was studied and befriended by humanistic sociologists who gathered around Prof. Andrzej Siciński from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who researched alternative ways of life, and were members of its program council. Despite this, the group has not received a monograph or a thorough analysis of its work. In order to get to know the specificity of "Pracownia", I conducted ethnographic research in the form of: free interviews with its members and supporters[4], library queries, and searches in private and state archives. I also gathered and analyzed visual materials, photos, posters, invitations, or leaflets.

3 Here is the alphabetical list of most people working at least for some time under the banner of "Pracownia" during my research period (1977–1986): Maria Burniewicz (née Jany), Tadeusz Burniewicz ("founding father" and supporting artist), Krzysztof Gedroyć, Krzysztof Łepkowski, Maciej Łepkowski, Ewa Kusiorska (then under the name Wołoczko, today – Scheliga), Marek Kucharzewski (actor), Ryszard Michalski, Elżbieta Michalska (née Pilejczyk, actress), Cezary Murawski (actor), Wacław Sobaszek, Erdmute Sobaszek (née Henkys), Waldemar Piekarski, Tadeusz Piotrowski (supporting artist), Tadeusz Szkandera, Wiesław Wachowski (supporting artist), Krzysztof Wołoczko, and others.

4 I conducted unstructured and partially standardized, narrative interviews in order to obtain empirical material which consisted mainly of "human experiences and interpretations of facts" (Gudkova, 2018: 116). Part of the standardization in the interviews I conducted was that I usually outlined in advance the research areas that should be discussed with the interlocutors during the interview, without formulating precise questions. It was assumed that standardization involves preparing a list of questions: the same ones, in the same order, to be asked to all interlocutors. Structuring is specifying a question in such a way that the answer can be given in a specific way we have planned see (Kostera, Krzyworzeka, 2018: 175). The narrative interview focuses on the structure of the story and emphasizes its "temporal, social and meaning structures" (Kvale, 2010: 127). In selecting the sample, I used the ethnographic snowball method with many beginnings: a network of commands and recommendations created by the interlocutors themselves. I conducted 25 interviews with people working in "Pracownia", their cooperators, friends, and participants (10 interviews). Abbreviations used: P – Pracownia, PO – Pracownia Otwarta (stage of the project)_Initials of the interviewee_M/K – gender_Age_MDK – Initials of the interviewer_Year of the interview.

The members of "Pracownia" were educated in significant academic centers such as Warsaw, Wrocław, and Toruń, and came back to – or arrived at – the distant province mostly for professional reasons. Their trajectory fits into the tradition of many intellectuals and specialists filling the ranks of the intelligentsia of this land since its incorporation to Poland after World War II, connecting it with the center by their contacts and friendships. Warmia functioned in the official propaganda under the name "reclaimed land", and in the 1970s and 1980s the displacement and migration processes known as the second family reunification action were still taking place there. As a result of these post-war forced displacements and emigration, most of the inhabitants – both Germans and Warmians – left Warmia, leaving their houses to the Polish state. There was, thus, a great exchange of population – the vast majority of newcomers were the inhabitants of the former borderlands, Mazovia, or displaced Ukrainians.

At first, "Pracownia" was meant to be a youth club, so its character was more workshop-oriented and closer to community arts/culture animation. In 1980, under the inspiration of third-theater groups and driven by the wind of Solidarity changes in the country, they published their second manifesto, titled the *Geography of action*, and started (at least partially) to evolve into a theater-oriented group (Kurowski, 1980). The activity of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia", whose name already suggests its research location, was inspired by contemporary artistic trends (such as conceptualism, situationism, Fluxus, paratheatre, and counterculture), but was also immersed in intellectual practices (e.g., the anthropology of culture, the anthropology of theater, humanistic sociology, history of art, new regionalism) and was characterized by a turn toward social activity.

In March 1982, during martial law, "Pracownia" was dissolved by the party-oriented authorities of the "Pojezierze" Association via various unproven accusations (artistic immaturity, drug addiction, hooliganism, rumors of their political involvement). However, only three months later, in May 1982, owing to the acquaintances and connections of the members of "Pracownia", it was reorganized under the name the "Pracownia" Center for Theater Activities within the Provincial Cultural Center in Olsztyn (WDK, later CEiIK), and the members were employed there full time as theater instructors whilst receiving monthly salaries.

Despite the crisis of 1982, the heroic narrative of freedom fighters in the totalitarian system is insufficient to understand "Pracownia". A crack in the ethical paradigm appears, as the group did not function as a bottom-up creative association but was searching for alternative ways of fitting within the communist system – marching through institutions or creating "the third place"[5]. Moreover, in 1982, they did not boycott the state-owned system of art and culture but found their place within the official structures. Their life in the years 1982–1986 was far from comfortable, as some were forced to do military service and others fled the army by faking mental problems. The years of the martial law were tough, although, contrary to stories of stagnation (that support the heroic narrative, with boycotting

5 A term used to describe a place in public space that separates the home and work environments. This concept was first used in 1989 by American sociologist Ray Oldenburg in the book *The Great Good Place*.

any state-organized culture), archival documents confirm that "Pracownia" quickly reactivated creative activities. Early in 1982, they found an old house in Węgajty and started to arrange a barn for their training studio (Sobaszek, 2020: 21). In July, Wacław Sobaszek, Krzysztof Gedroyć, Maria Jenny Burniewicz, and Waldemar Piekarski conducted workshops *The Way of the Theater* [Pol. *Droga teatru*] (Sobaszek, 2020: 21); the group played *Jumping Mouse* in the region eight times from September to December 1982. In the second half of 1982, they were already traveling to their artistic friends in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany, giving workshops and showing their performances, and they even managed to invite some western groups to Olsztyn. Between 1982–1986, they were also working on interesting inner projects in various cooperations: *Exercises in Perceiving Movement and Oneself* by Ryszard Michalski and Wacław Sobaszek; *Vacuum Project* and *Vehicle Theater* by Wacław Sobaszek and El Sur Theatre, the *Voice Studio* by Krzysztof Gedroyć, Ewa Scheliga, and Maria Jenny Burniewicz, and different theater and music initiatives for children and young adults by Maria Jenny Burniewicz. My collection of photos does not quite cover this period, as if all the activity after the introduction of martial law was meant to be invisible. The exception was events for children. Some pictures of children, dancers, and musicians accompany an article that was published on children theater workshops by Maria Jenny Burniewicz (Sobaszek, 1983). The other notable exception was mask performance *Jumping Mouse*, a photo of which was published by Wacław Sobaszek in *Life Conspiracies* [Pol. *Spiski życiowe*]. However, actors and children sitting on the threshold of the Węgajty barn are wearing animal masks – as if the activities taking place in the country at that time had to be "masked", "conspired" (Sobaszek, 2020: 26–28), or even infantilized, so that they escape the eye of censorship.

Jakub Banasiak, who researches the disintegration of the state art system in Poland in the years 1982–1993, showed that the year 1986 was an unrecognized caesura marking the artistic "second thaw". His analysis of post-martial law exhibitions of new art shows that around 1986, young artists decided to break the boycott and present their work, confront the public, get the attention of critics, and get their life together (Banasiak, 2020: 44). The year 1986 was also a clear turn in "Pracownia"s history, since they visibly started to disintegrate – the Węgajty Theater was organized in the distant Warmian village and the people working in Olsztyn in the Provincial Cultural Center were also turning from the artistic group into a loosely connected body of theater instructors, each one leading his/her own project, and sparsely cooperating. Ewa Scheliga and Maria Jenny Burniewicz both had gone abroad in 1986 and in the timeframe of "second thaw" were active in Olsztyn only in short periods of their return.

Even though the group split, the name "Pracownia" remained formally till the end of 1992 – the year of reorganization of the Provincial Cultural Center in Olsztyn – and then disappeared from documents. Similarly, Jakub Banasiak marks 1993 as the end date for the old state art system. In his perspective, the new periodization, including 1986 and 1993, makes the art history social, not political, which causes the researchers' attachment to the turn of 1989. My research on "Pracownia" fits into Banasiak's recognitions and supports the "bottom-up" perspective on human agency and the system:

> […] society is causative not only at the level of opposition to communism, but also at the level of its co-creation: constant renegotiation of its framework, influencing the shape of individual solutions, or even initiating them. Adopting a social perspective makes us rethink the issue of the attitude toward communism of both individuals and the communities functioning within it (Banasiak, 2020: 31).

This historical and organizational background helps to situate "Pracownia" in the context of social movements in the late People's Republic of Poland. The group was an alternative movement rather than an avantgarde one. The alternative involves the adoption of an either-or option. Alternativists do not seek to overthrow or completely change the system, but to find a "cultural niche" within a functioning system where they can pursue their goals. The culture they create is often complementary. Tadeusz Paleczny notes that they often use expressions "next to" or "instead of". Their social status is also usually defined – they are creators, artists, writers, scientists. As the sociologist writes, "the status of this category is related to creative searches, striving for innovation, development and progress" (Paleczny, 2010: 75). The avantgardists, on the other hand, tend to violate the existing worldviews and canons – they are "breakers" of conventions and contestants of the existing values (Paleczny, 2010: 80). "Pracownia" – although not averse to subversion, irony, or even direct criticism of the system, e.g., working conditions – was rather looking for a space in between that would enable acting in the current world and expanding the dialogical public sphere. Next to the attempts at creating better worlds, they also used the weapon of the weak (Scott, 1990: XVI), practices of relatively powerless groups, who use tactics, not strategies as understood by de Certeau (2008): slowing down the process, sabotaging orders, etc., whilst maintaining a fairly high level of autonomy (Kuligowski, 2012: 36).

Rituals of othering/dialog

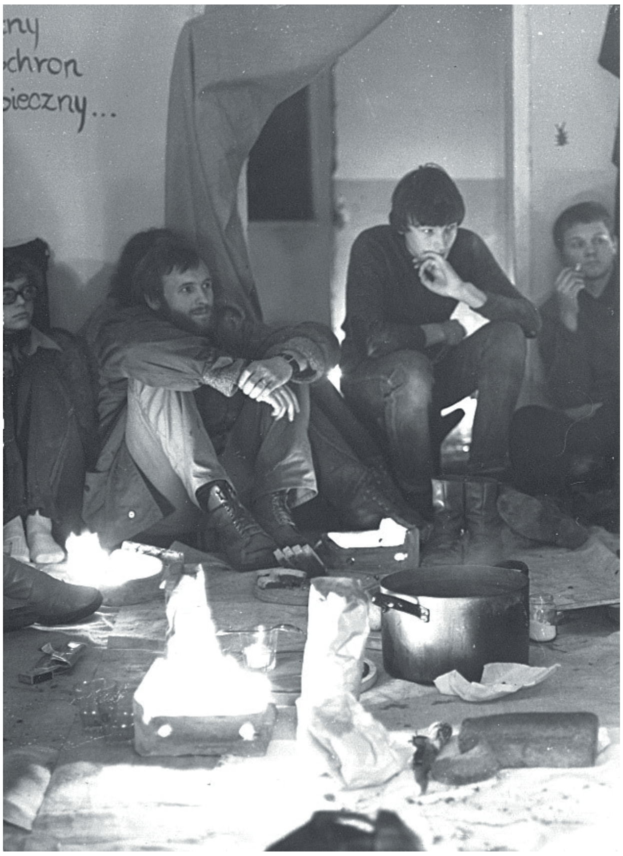
To better understand the practices depicted in the photos of "Pracownia", it is worth putting them together with another photographic project I read about in an article by Marta Smolińska. The artist and curator wrote about *East Side Story*, a photographic endeavor of Anne Peschken and Mark Pisarksy. They used old photos of families that arrived at Myślibórz after WWII, to remake them using *camera obscura* techniques and work with the social memory of migration. The town is situated in the "recovered territories" on the west of today's Poland, and until 1945 was within the borders of Germany under the name Soldin. The subject of the photos concerned settling in the regained territories – painting over old inscriptions in German, occupying post-German houses, sowing fields, harvesting, walking around the city with a stroller, posing in the yard of a newly occupied house, etc. The author interprets them after Anne Ring Petersen as photos confirming the new identity, belonging, visibility, and recognition. Appearing in the public sphere, she writes, quoting Arendt, that "it gives a person a sense of reality, that's why the newcomers needed to take photos and create the gallery of their own, inner images" (Smolińska, 2022: 96, 97).

My collection of photographs of "Pracownia" displays many similar features, but simultaneously shows meaningful differences. Both collections of the pictures were taken in the times of the Polish People's Republic in the "recovered territories"[6], and both present life practices in relation to the land and the existing cultural landscape. The *East Side Story* pictures document the moment of transition, change, discontinuity in the life of families subjected to historical politics, and a striving to regain their identity – also by producing its visual representations – picturing this process. "Pracownia's" pictures document the ephemeral street actions, workshops, and performances of an art group. Documentation was needed to confirm their existence to the employer, the public (and the befriended sociologists that formed "Pracownia's" program council) to build the portfolio and archives of the group. Documentation also sanctioned their artistic status in relation to other photos of art groups they knew as the Academy of Movement, and to establish their place in the art world. In this meaning, the photographs confirm and sanction their existence in the spirit of the old photos used in the *East Side Story*. It is about making things real, also when it comes to Arend's "appearing in the public space".

The difference in not in the artistic and non-artistic character of the photographed events. Both migrants to Myślibórz and the members of "Pracownia" perform, show something, play the role in the new land. The main difference is, however, in *what* the characters perform in the public sphere. The first group play the role of settlers that make the space of the abandoned house a home again. They re-privatize it. When they harvest the fields, pose in the porch, and drink vodka, they perform rituals of habitation through the practices of everyday life. The members of "Pracownia" do something completely different – they walk or play in the street. They visit abandoned houses and occupy them temporarily, as in a *Journey Home* action. They take the role of drifters, vagabonds, travelers, street actors, researchers. They perform rituals of othering and dialoging through art. They negotiate with the land, do not tame it in order to get used to it, to banish the German spirits, and to make it familiar. Rather, they ask the land questions of its compound identity in order to understand it and for the time (lifetime?) being, reside in a haunted house or land that we own only awhile, and to make deals with its ghosts. This type of home is not simply re-privatized but, rather, re-publicized: meaning open, common, and unofficial. This makes it close to Matynia's sense of public sphere that is supposed to be an independent, democratic space of exchange. "Pracownia" being outside (on the road, in the street) might be interpreted as a symbolic action for the sake of regaining visibility, taking over control in the moment of crisis, and visually communicating with the natural audience in the public, spreading the idea of alternative ways of working with memory.

6 The exact moment in the time frame 1945–1986/89 is not the center of importance in this study, because I assume that the practices of settling a foreign land are generally uniform, and they differ depending on the decade of the People's Republic of Poland only in time-specific details.

Illustrations 3, 4. Part of the Młyn ("The Mill") action named *Journey Home*, April 27/28, 1979



Source: Photo by Ewa Scheliga.

Francis Gross writes in the *Philosophy of Walking* that wandering reverses the division between what is "outside" and what is "inside". Gross shows that the wayfarer does not cross the land to stay in shelters but, rather, inhabits a landscape for many days and slowly comes into possession of it, makes it his/her home (Gross, 2021: 38). "Pracownia's" walking is, in my interpretation, close to inhabiting the landscape, slowly getting acquainted with it by being in it and picturing oneself in it; its inscribing oneself in the land, making it feel like home. This does not cancel, however, their dreams of the "home"; rather, it creates a different, alternative one, joining the categories of the private and the public – an art community. First, the members of "Pracownia" made their basement in the headquarters in the "Pojezierze" building, open to young people who were hanging out there after school, drinking strong tea, smoking cigarettes, and presenting their art. They also visited Warmian houses occupied by their friends in Trękus and Plutki, and organized several-day creative workshops for young people. Then members of "Pracownia" were searching for an old house where they could work and live together in a commune. The idea of commune was quickly rejected and, finally, in 1982, they found a house in the Węgajty village, and turned a barn into a theater. The space was, however, difficult to share, and shortly after in 1986 they disconnected. The introduction of martial law was the moment they took the role of the settlers. It changed their condition forever – from the group present in the landscape, to castaways perched on the outskirts of reality.

The cultural semantics of being on the road, with its liminal character, does not include only walking in the wilderness. Roch Sulima analyzes the cultural landscape of the city and notes that the phenomenon that renews the original meaning of the street, and its cultural memory, is the demonstration. The demonstration as a spectacle "refers to the semantics of the road, the symbolism of peregrination, collective movement (march, procession), refers to ritual and religious forms (pilgrimage, etc.)" (Sulima, 2022: 327). Sulima calls demonstration, a street experience of being present – intentionally being in sight – regaining "the right to look" (after Nicolas Mirzoeff), creating countervisibility, demanding perceptual equality that guarantees political equality (Sulima, 2022: 297).

The street is a space of rituals that are revitalized in the times of great trauma, crisis, or a change, being a notion of symbolic representations of the social order. Many actions of "Pracownia" were in the form of a street parade (*Masks* in Bęsia – 1979, Tadeusz Piotrowski's walking exhibition – 1981) or street performance (*Travels to many Distant Countries of the World* – 1980, *A Dragon from the River* – 1980, *Music in the Bem Roundabout* – 1978), taking place in urban space, for a random urban audience. Their dramaturgic form was so efficient that they did not require using words different from slogans similar to banners such as "Help River Łyna – do what you can" or "The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth" – tag lines from the ecological action *A Dragon from the River*. Many of those street events took place in 1980, a year of carnival of Solidarity that Sulima considers crucial for the Polish reception of street demonstrations, when the audience became more competent in reading the symbolic imagination and experiencing the visuality of it (Sulima, 2022: 299). "Pracownia's" street presence of 1980 has to be interpreted in light of the Solidarity strikes, inscribing itself in the poetics of protest. This is – in my opinion – also the clue of the lack of the visibility of "Pracownia" on the street and in photos after 1982. The introduction of martial law put an end to the street presence of demonstrators, and military forces took control of the street for the time being. "Pracownia" chose a rural hideaway and foreign getaways, and had to give up their street/landscape presence in order to outlast the crisis.

A border artist as a researcher

"Only in the road, only on paths, only on trails, we are not *here*", as Gross writes (2021: 54). Being *not* here might mean also staying in the border-like state of mind. Sulima recalls the liminal character of the road, "a space where God intervenes, but also the devil/evil lurks, where truth, justice, community can be present, where the »guest« and »strangers« appear, where the rituals of greetings and farewells – confirming the bonds of community – intensify" (Sulima, 2022: 323). The notion of border is very meaningful for my interpretation, especially if the border is a phantom, or a movable one; once political, not natural, ethnic, or social, and having significant consequences for people, culture, and the holistic development of the land.

Photos of "Pracownia" – as well as photos used in the *East Side Story* project – constitute an example of *border art* dealing with issues such as border status, surveillance, nationality, migration, identity, etc. "Pracownia's" actions such as *Journey Home*, *Winter Actions*, *Workshop in Trękus*, and *Workshop of Music and Poetry* all took place in abandoned Warmian houses and concerned the effects of migration on the land and the people. *Group Pictures* critically presented the stereotypical social interactions and masks, and negated them through their dramatized visualization. *Playing with Straw in the Gallery* was a subversive happening organized for the Central Harvest Festival Olsztyn of 1978. In the narrative of the socialist government, the festival should have confirmed the efficiency of the state. "Pracownia" challenged the surveillance and took two carts of hay to the art gallery, and immersed itself in it unproductively all day long. Smolińska writes that:

> […] key categories related to *border art* is creating alternative narratives to the officially binding ones. Therefore, it is a socially engaged and relational art, and the artist's work on the borderline like **critical researchers** who redefine aesthetic regimes, treating vernacular photography as a lens through which important historical, socio-political conditions are negotiated, and through which strategies of self-representation and negotiating the identity of newcomers are constructed. (Smolińska, 2022: 99)

Elżbieta Matynia's concept of "living through theater" from the 1980s – which she derives from her fieldwork on "Pracownia" and alternative theaters in 1980s – also focuses on research qualities:

> Another important – and hardly noticed – feature of what I term "living through theater" is **its orientation toward research**. More precisely, it means tackling problems traditionally reserved for the broadly conceived social sciences – sociology and social psychology, ethnography, cultural anthropology, and ethics. It means a kind of exploratory approach to the world. The creative process displays some similarities with the research process. Creation is here an important means of learning. (Matynia, 1983: 140)

This concept of a border artist/animator as a researcher is very fruitful for my work. As Susan Finley writes, "art-making activities can be used to expose and critique current events […] as a democratic form of practice that enables a critical examination of visual cultural codes and ideologies to resist social injustice" (Finley, 2018: 562). She calls it "critical citizenship" and "cultural democracy," because "critical arts-based researchers perform inquiry that is cutting edge and seeks to perform and inspire socially just, emancipatory, and transformative political acts" (Finley, 2018: 562). I argue that the activity of the "Pracownia" Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center that I present through the choice of photos shows these features. That is why I consider them one of the precursors shaping the Polish school of culture animation/community arts, but also art-based research.

In the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Finley and Denzin stress that there is a constant need, and even an urgency, to create and develop such horizontal, inclusive, non-conservative, "alternative" methodologies. (Finley, 2018). My proposal of typology is an introduction to addressing this demand, based on the assumption that deepened, reflective culture animation might be a Polish answer to action research, or critical art-based research. Its research inclination is also included in "Pracownia's" full name – the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center – as well as in its early animation and artistic practices that prove to be research-oriented reflective endeavors.

This is mostly shown in "Pracownia's" writings. My in-depth research in "Pracownia" archives shows a large number of notes, reflective reports, descriptions, analyses, and proposals for research criteria, made for the sake of the group or for the purposes of publication (*Interdyscyplinarna…*, 1981/1982). I obtained files from the archive of Krzysztof Gedroyć that contains very dense, handwritten notes on small postcards, grouped into files regarding voice and body exercises, and analyses of sound production methods. There is a record of independent work, called "individual work", as well as group work, especially exchanges with Ewa Scheliga and Maria Jenny Burniewicz, with whom he run the *Voice Studio*. As the file labels inform: "here are important general issues", "text and language issues", "verbs, movement in the text". One can also find traces of the author's intellectual inspirations: Grotowski, Gombrowicz, "Confessions" of St. Augustine, Merleau-Ponty and phenomenology, Husserl and Heidegger.

Gedroyć's archive confirms the research and development dimension of this work. It is a reflection that results directly from action or reading; a detailed, methodical action. The notes give the impression of field notes, i.e., immediately made right after the experience. Nevertheless, they were later described, organized, and kept until his death as documentation of this action research.

As Maria Jenny Burniewicz recalls about her work in the *Voice Studio*, practical actions were deeply analyzed there. After every exercise, there were long hours of discussions, and they were described and interpreted in a "conscious" way (P_MB_K_65_MDK_2022). Bodily and vocal practices – as well as all the other art-based media they used – were treated as research and cognitive tools, and the research techniques such as note-taking, discussing, making typologies, filing, archiving, writing, and publishing were an immediate creative and research process.

The six-moves typology

Interpreting the street demonstrations in reaction to major trauma (such as the introduction of martial law), Roch Sulima names them "rituals of withdrawal" – voluntary and spontaneous commitment to the transparent, universal, sanctioned tradition, symbolic orders, and the rules of the ritual process (Sulima, 2022: 285). He names them moments of stagnation, "simulated life", in opposition to his "rituals of success". However, the other understanding of the same rituals might be different – moments of incubation, having a positive impact on overworking the critical situation, closer to Victor Turner's interpretation of the ritual process that, when done correctly, is unyieldingly effective (Turner, 2005). Withdrawal and success are contradictory movements: backwards and forwards, regress and progress. To nuance this simple dichotomy of crisis and prosperity, I propose a typology of six different moves that may deepen the understanding of community arts activities.

Following the advice of Richard Sennet, who points out that the real cooperation between people requires dialog instead of dialectics – distanced empathy instead of emotional sympathy and indirectness (Sennet, 2013: 33–39) – I distinguish six-point typology that I call 'six movements on the map of culture animation as research'. They might be treated as six ways of problematizing the sociocultural tissue through creative tools to free oneself from the dialectic dichotomy of right and wrong**.** I call them "rituals of dialog" with the research field. They also form a "packet" of techniques that enable different ways of dealing with problems when one method is insufficient (Sennet, 2013: 264). The artistic coating makes them indirect. This is important, because it fosters empathy needed to act in the spirit of Sennet's secular rituals of cooperation, creation, and reparation (Sennet, 2013: 259–285). They are "rituals of dialog" that foster the collaboration and open new perspectives, broaden the horizons, and show the research field in a completely new light. This is why I consider them tools for critical thinking, deritualizing the dialectic thinking and searching for alternatives. I understand the research value of community arts/culture animation actions mostly through their potential of asking questions and provoking alternative answers to expand the public sphere and support communities.

In the chapters below, I outline a typology consisting of six moves. I show its potential based on the events portrayed in the photographs of the "Pracownia" Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center that I have previously described. The typology was built on the basis of the analysis of materials about "Pracownia", including interviews, articles, archives, and photographs that I used for triangulation. I grouped the latter not only according to the key related to the event they represent, but also in relation to subsequent points of typology emerging from the material. The selection of photographs presented here is both a starting point for creating a given category as well as its exemplification and visual validation.

I first proposed this distinction in the article titled "Towards an Open Methodology: Culture Animation as Research. The Case of the Activities of »Pracownia« from Olsztyn" (Dobiasz-Krysiak, 2022), and this text is an attempt to clarify, simplify, and concretize my proposal so that it becomes more and more operational and unambiguous. I intend to show how to use the typology to interpret and analyze the community arts actions. To do so, I use the example of "Pracownia" and select one photo of their actions to present every point of the typology: a ritual of othering, dialog, or method of citizen research.

The first move is the degrading downward movement. It has two dimensions. Firstly, it means being open to action in crisis areas. Secondly, it indicates readiness for "dirtying the senses", i.e., subversive, critical, political action. Then, there is an upward movement: uplifting, building *koinopolitical* communities of local thought. Another aspect is the movement inward – a journey into oneself. The last of the types of movement is moving along and across. The longitudinal research movement follows, discovers, and embodies geography. Lateral movement treads new paths and produces readiness to cross, modify, and dismantle the map.

Move downward

To move down means to search on the margins of culture. The one who is performing a downward movement is researching areas degraded and marginalized. The areas that are “in the backyard” of the official, hidden, suppressed, unrepresentative. One can learn a lot about the dominant culture by going through its refuse, looking on the back side, and asking questions of why some elements are pushed aside and not discussed. Recognizing and finding the “dirt” is the most crucial aspect of the move downward. It does not require much more than just a diagnosis and disclosure – saying it out loud, making it visual, present. Rather, it requires determination to work with the “dirt”; it is an act of courage. However, it is a necessity. There is no hope for alternatives without revealing what the underlying issue of the cultural obviousness is.

Illustration 5. Part of The Mill action *Journey Home*, April 27/28, 1979

Source: Photo by Ewa Scheliga.

The photos of “Pracownia” that helped me formulate the idea of the move downward are pictures from Ewa Scheligas and Krzysztof Łepkowskis’s action *Journey Home* from 1979. They invited local youths to a long walk around the villages of Nowe Włóki, Plutki, Kabikiejmy, and Sętal, which ended with a bonfire and a shared meal. The event was organized with minimal artistic and esthetic interference. During the research reconnaissance, Ewa and Krzysztof leaned about the houses, made some drawings on the walls picturing things that are gone (a dog, a person, a stroller), and decorated the last visited house with some colorful tissue paper, candles, and blankets. “Pracownia” mapped the area with paper flags, cleaned the final house and lit the stove, and then cooked a meal for everyone. They also wrote on the wall lyrics from the song of *The Theater of the Eight Day*: “This is our home” (*Materiały…*, 1980): “This is a house / this is our home / radiant, eternal haven / from the rainbow of dreams paradise, shelter / a dead house – so safe”[7]. By doing it, “Pracownia” raised important social topics, such as the situation of lands and houses left behind due to forced migrations. They enabled young people from the city to physically experience the subject of uncomfortable memory, difficult politics – undiscussed in schools and passed over in silence at home. They also problematized a notion of home – private though public; safe but turned into a ruin threatening security; raped; abandoned.

Warmian families left the area in two waves of migration, so the population of the villages drastically decreased in a short period of time. The houses were quickly plundered by looters and left in a bad shape. There were no media and no lakes, which are considered a proof of the value of the landscape, and the villages are till now poorly connected with the larger centers, so the very act of getting there was hedged with hardships, wading in the mud, in the dirt. These were some of the reasons why there were no new settlers, and the houses were found by the members of “Pracownia” in 1978, having been destroyed. Some of them were turned into flats for employees of nearby state farms (PGR, SKR Gradki) and communal apartments for the poorest families. People say that, apparently, today the commune does not want to divide this area into plots, since it hopes to sell the whole for large investments (PO_AZ/AW_K_25_MDK_2023).

The idea of a “move downward” is still a very inspiring one. It opens up a lot of questions concerning the status of this land in the era of pathological developers fighting for every piece of land in this tourist-oriented area. Visiting the non-existent places is also a liminal experience dealing with the subject of social memory and questioning the primacy of humans in the Anthropocene.

In April 2023, we went to Plutki with a group of my ten cooperators, my daughter, and two of my students for the project titled *Open Workshop* [Pol. Pracownia Otwarta]. We were searching for a home in which “Pracownia” had been working in 1978. Although we had the best guide – Maciej Łepkowski, a cooperator of “Pracownia” and former inhabitant of Plutki – we spent a lot of time attempting to identify the remnants of this house, which had been the biggest one in the village. Later in July 2023, my cooperator Pola Rożek tried to find more houses from the *Journey Home* action, which were only afterimages of the existing buildings. She compared the stories and written accounts, put it together with pre-war maps and satellite views, and went there. She recalled afterwards:

> I decided to check if I would be able to walk this way, if I would be able to track down these pre-war houses and check – what was left of them? I compared the pre-war topographic map

7 “This is our home”, a song from performance “Discount for everyone” from 1977. Lyrics by Lech Raczak, music by Waldemar Modestowicz.

> with a modern satellite map – I marked on Google Maps potential places of former houses, comparing the topographic layout, almost invisible traces of old roads and tufts of greenery visible on the satellite map. […] In this way, I managed to reach 4 sites of old houses. I noticed the first house when approaching Plutki – I was struck by a cluster of trees different from the others. After a while, among the greenery, I saw stones, fragments of foundations and old walls. The place matched it on the map. I went inside. In the ruins I met a vineyard snail and a frog – new inhabitants.
>
> I had to get to the next house by walking along a hardly visible path in the forest, and then in the meadow. Raspberry, larch, and linden trees helped to locate the second house. And a slight elevation covered with greenery and earth. Somewhere between the barely visible stones-fragments of the wall.
>
> The third house turned out to be unreachable. Neither the road from the pre-war map, nor the road visible on the satellite map could help – it was thickly overgrown with bushes. I had to walk home from the back, via a different path. Eventually, a path trodden by animals led me to the place. A dense grove, on a raised platform, with no visible traces of the old house. Among the trees – a roe deer's lair.
>
> The pre-war road to the fourth house was guarded by a young spruce forest. I tried to force my way through, but it was a dense and prickly maze, and I gave up. Analyzing the satellite map, I found that this is another house that I had to get to from the back, using a different way, through the meadow. The site of the house was immediately visible, distinguished by a raised area, clusters of trees and raspberries among the evenly mowed meadow. The only tangible trace I found was a brick embedded in a tree. I took a piece with me. (PO_PR_K_40_MDK_2023)

Pola Rożek made a Google Map where she marked the locations of the non-houses she visited. What status does the map have today? For whom is it created? It is surely a post-urbex practice, since (as a passer-by said when asked by my co-workers looking for a way to Plutki) "there is nothing there". It turned out that some of the members and friends of "Pracownia" still search for the old houses, or shrines. Ewa Scheliga advised Pola Rożek that one can recognize the non-existing house from the plants – e.g., raspberries (PO_PR_K_40_MDK_2023). Mieczysław Wieliczko – a photographer who took some of "Pracownia" photos – told me how he traces old Warmian shrines to take a photo, and sometimes has to drive kilometers in reverse gear, because there is no road back (P_MW_M_65_MDK_2023). I consider these practices of walking (driving) to these distant places similar to visiting cemeteries, and practicing memory of the place, landscape, and people – a "memory-place".

Maria Mendel and Wiesław Theiss have developed this helpful category of memory-places, reworking the division of "memory sensitive to place" and "a place sensitive to memory". They write that "memory is, therefore, a place, in particular a place in present reality, in which the subject processes the past, making it something that is part of today" (Mendel, Theiss, 2019: 32). It is a "third space," a real fragment of the human world emergent at the interface of the past and the present (Mendel, Theiss, 2019: 39) As I understand it, it may be a place in space, in mind, or in the body.

The interlocutor of my students Agata Zamorowska and Agnieszka Teodora Walawska, whom they met in Plutki in August 2023, showed them with his hands where the non-existing houses had been located in space, mentioning specific names of the families who had left (PO_AZ/AW_K_25_MDK_2023). His practice of working with the memory by drawing in the air with his body a map of the past village recalls the theories of embodied knowledge. The non-existing landscape was embodied in the moves of his hands, and he was the only remaining reservoir of the memory of proxemics of the place. He was a map himself.

These are only some possible implications of making a move downward, and its meaning for community arts/culture animation practices understood as a method of research.

Move downward – subversion

The second aspect of the move downward is stressed here to focus on its subversive potential. It is about not only discovering the "dirt", but also showing it in public. The second movement downward unmasks and undermines cultural mechanisms. It is an opposition to the exclusive and elitist culture, which removes from sight everything that does not meet its conventional expectations. It is exposed via a purely visual culture of appearances. It also reminds us that we are, in truth, a society of spectacle (Sulima, 2022: 293).

"Pracownia" – just like the Situationist International – tried to arrange events that would reveal the superficiality and complexity of cultural experiences. The photos that perfectly illustrate the subversive nature of the second movement downward document the ecological action titled *A Dragon from the River*, directed by Krzysztof Gedroyć in 1980. The action was versatile and dramatized, although its central figure was a dragon on wheels, built by the members of "Pracownia" out of garbage they might have fished out from the Łyna river, which flows through Olsztyn. The dragon – a very symbolic figure of threat and protection – was carried around the streets of the Old Town and in the River Park at the usual time for walks on Sunday afternoon. The dragon had a baby doll in a gas mask in the front, and cans and plastic bags on its arms. From the pipes on its back, clouds of smoke were expelled (*Interdyscyplinarna*…, 1981/1982: 71). Things that were supposed to be thrown away, hidden in the waters of the river that turned into a sewer, were brought into public view, disclosed, manifested. The subversive action caused cultural interception (*détournement* by the Situationists) (Debord, Wolman, 1956) in the spirit of performative democracy on the line of official-unofficial/public-private (Matynia, 2008). The "private" and peripheral garbage appeared in the "official" and central public place, and temporarily disturbed the existing order. The second move downward recognizes the value of what Tadeusz Kantor called "the reality of the lowest rank", i.e., the poorest places and rejected objects, devoid of prestige, which can reveal their meaning precisely through art (Kantor, 2000: 238–241). The elevation of the low (the garbage) to the highest status by artists is a carnival reversal of the official and makes room for the unofficial, then public.

Illustration 6. "Dragon from the river", 1980

Source: Photo from the private archive of Andrzej Sakson, re-photographed by Martyna Siudak.

Illustration 7. "Dragon from the river", 1980

Source: Photo from the private archive of Wiktor Marek Leyk.

The year 1980 – a very civic date in the Polish history – marks the beginning of conscious interest in ecology for "Pracownia". As a result of the meeting with journalist Juliusz Grodziński, who raised the subject of the impending climate catastrophe during "Pracownia's" cycle *Open Study of Culture*, the Ecological Section was established at "Pojezierze". "Pracownia" organized two street art actions

– *A Dragon from the River* and *There Was a Tree* – which drew attention to uncontrolled felling of trees in the city. The activities of the Section and the pressure on politicians turned out to be effective, leading to the withdrawal of the city authorities from the implementation of plans to concrete the banks of the Łyna river in the city (*Sprawozdanie…*, 1978–1980: 31). The citizen research empowered by artistic form made a real contribution to the expansion of the public sphere.

Move upward

The next move on the typology map is a movement upward. The photo that helped me to conceptualize this point is the one picturing a group of young people sitting together in a small basement room in the first headquarters of "Pracownia", i.e., at 15 Okopowa Street in Olsztyn. It is the so-called Tower [Pol. Baszta] building, where on the higher floors, the offices of "Pojezierze" were situated. They read Marcel Mauss' *Techniques of the Body* and tried to eat pudding with their fingers. The situation was a part of a cycle of meetings called *Readings*, when different anthropological, sociological books with some practical elements to it were read – e.g., drawing or experimenting with the ideas in the text. The photo that I found in the State Archive in Olsztyn is the only one in my collection showing their activities inside of this building. I greatly value it, since it shows what Krzysztof Łepkowski called "domowisko" (a neologism that might be translated "a home-ing"), understood as "a place where something begins. A place that pushes you forward, upward" (Łepkowski, Wyka, 1983: 310). This is a place that joins the private and the public, another interception (*detournement*), a place stolen from the "official". Creating such places, or situations that connect people, is a practice of – using the category of Maria Mendel – establishing *koinopolis*, i.e., a community of local thought. As Mendel writes, the common place is pedagogical; it shows the ability to teach and learn. It is a place "which is an active and unlimitedly creative, self-producing thought 'from here', common and local" (Mendel, 2017: 72). This somewhat rhymes with the thought of Tim Ingold, permeated with the idea of lines and weaves, who writes after Heidegger that "a thing originally did not mean an object, but a cluster, specifically interconnected threads of life" (Ingold, 2018: 91). Thus, "a home-ing" can be understood as a weave of lifelines of different people, times, biographies, experiences. Owing to accumulation and concentration, it gives the strength to act, to create, to start from the beginning.

The second manifesto of "Pracownia" from 1980, titled *The Geography of Action*, is full of *koinopolitical* thinking. It emphasizes the importance of acting locally – "in place". It is it that is supposed to be the nursery of the "living culture" which, by its very nature, is not capable of losing touch with the place in the physical sense: the village, the city, the university, the backyard (*Interdyscyplinarna…*, 1981/1982: 64–65). "Pracownia" also emphasizes the transgressive, creative nature of such communities as well as their natural inclination to fill in the gaps, articulate their cultural needs and practices – to transcend what has already existed and create their own culture. Common and pedagogical places are, therefore, rooted in an urban community capable of further self-creation. This self-transcendence, this "upward movement", which can only be done "in place", but never alone, is a "cluster", a "bundle", or "weave" movement – heterogeneous, common, multiple, and one that works only because of the community.

Illustration 8. "Readings" in "Pracownia" in 15 Okopowa St, around 1978/79

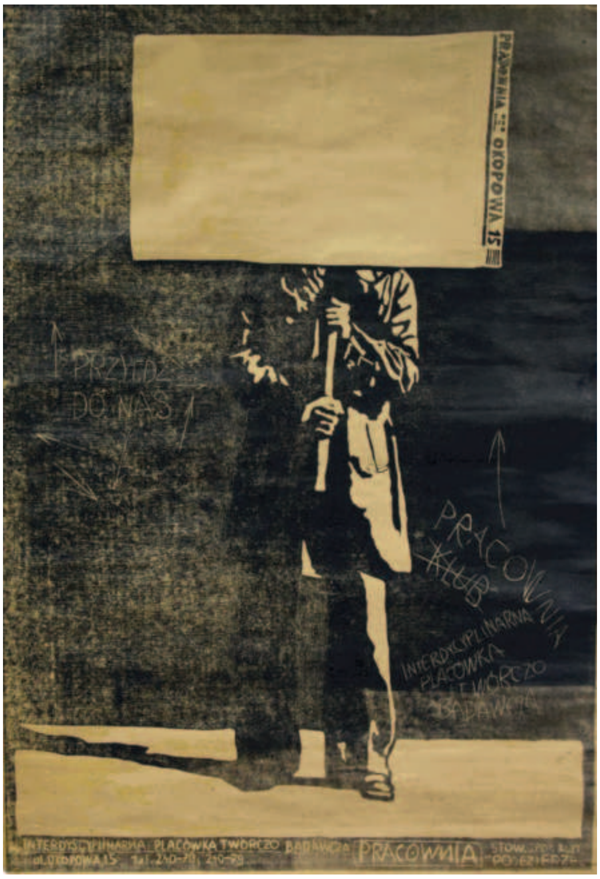
Source: Photo from State Archive in Olsztyn.

Move inward

An interesting aspect of the upward movement is the inward movement, which can have multiple aspects. One of these is connected with self-development and self-knowledge, interconnected with going beyond individual egoism for the sake of the community. It is, therefore, close to *koinopolitical* thinking, but focuses more on the role of the individual and their attitude toward creation and authorship. A move inward is "a journey into yourself", as in the artistic research of Edward Stachura, important to "Pracownia". Stachura, wanting to get closer to the ideal of the "nobody-man", tried to remove his name from the cover of his book *Fabula Rasa*, published by "Pojezierze" in 1979.

A picture that might represent the move inward is the so-called "blind poster" of "Pracownia", made by Krzysztof Janicki. It was used as a frame into which information about the various activities of the group could be displayed. It depicts a "faceless" man against a graffiti strewn wall with the old name "Pracownia-Klub" (Club), (invented by "Pojezierze") crossed out and the new one – Interdisciplinary Research Center "Pracownia" (proposed by Jerzy Grotowski) – added. The figure is holding a white banner at the height of his head as a peace manifesto and an empty space, ready to be filled with new content. The poster encourages the audience with the inscription "come to us" – inviting others to participate and co-create. It also refers to the theme of the road, through associations with a figure carrying a banner at a manifestation or pursuing "my own way" – searching for oneself or one's own group identity.

Illustration 9. The so-called "blind poster" of "Pracownia" made by Krzysztof Janicki



Source: "Pracownia" archive, photo thanks to Ryszard Michalski.

The other aspect of inward movement is connected with a focus on the internal work of the group. This point is all about the processes of nourishing the members and the organization, the internal development, which is always reflected in external development of it. "Pracownia" promoted horizontal collaboration instead of the hierarchical structures characteristic of organizations of the time. Elite art was replaced by egalitarian creativity. Stars and "names" published by the "Pojezierze" Publishing House were opposed to the "ethos of the amateur" (Czyżewski, 1991) and collective work. The best artists and thinkers from Poland and abroad were invited to Olsztyn, and the young people gathered around "Pracownia" were involved in their activities. The very name can be understood as a "workshop", and thus a place of work, a space for repairing what is broken, for tinkering, non-professional activity. A place to learn by trial and error or within theatrical rehearsals.

Janusz Bałdyga from the Academy of Movement [Pol. Akademia Ruchu] explained the use of this word in an interesting way in the context of "Pracownia Dziekanka", which he founded in the second half of the 1970s in Warsaw. The name "Pracownia" was supposed to refer to academic workshops conducted by professors at the Academy of Fine Arts. Its nature was supposed to be educational, but dissident, subversive, because it was focused on bottom-up, peer learning (Sosnowska, 2018: 89–90). Vertical knowledge transfer has been questioned. Horizontal, due to the lack of a model, focused on research and self-discovery, which lead to the search for a new way of working: not theatrical, but creative, civic, and locally-oriented – what later became known as the animation of culture.

The "nobody-man" in the "Pracownia's" poster represents also "every-man". Moving inward also means an anthropological ability to go beyond the transparency of one's own cultural, temporal, and spatial conditions; an empathic perception of the Other in oneself. This is especially important for artists working in the "recovered territories" and reflected in the performance by Krzysztof Łepkowski. It happened during the workshop initiating the founding of "Pracownia" in August 1977, which took place in the old Warmian house of the Doliwa family in Trękus, leased for years by Tadeusz and Maria Burniewicz. Łepkowski, shouting "I want to be somebody, who someone has already been" (according to the members of "Pracownia" – this was supposed to be a quote from *Kaspar Hauser* by Peter Handke) hit the wall of the barn several times with his shoulder, as if physically facing the material and spiritual heritage of Warmia and his brand-new presence under the old roofs. Many years later, another animator of "Pracownia" – Krzysztof Gedroyć – wrote in a similar spirit, outlining the spectrum, the gap between the multiman and the wholeman – the full humanity:

> I should be a man multiplied, multi-person, full of biographies […] a non-fictional, or rather multi-fictional man […]. As a multiman – a person composed of many characters – […] I am the next rung on the ladder of evolution-degradation of the spirit, but the ease of transformation and the ability to live in parallel sometimes allow me to ascend to the level of a wholeman. (Gedroyć, 2003: 31)

Making a move inward, and rejecting the individual egoism, is about not only creating the self, but also transitioning the self in order to strengthen a community and intertwine with the memory of the place and its ghosts. It is a multidimensional development of the ego, the group, and the cultural dimension of the inhabited land.

Move along

Movement along paths and roads follows the lines marked by geography – in valleys, along rivers, around lakes. It is a research movement that enables the discovery and embodiment of the surrounding space. It is a movement that learns, embodies the landscape, finding its reverberations in one's own body. The longitudinal movement on the ground enables cognition through movement. Walking in "Pracownia's" case was inevitable – nobody had a car. Conscious walking to reach important places and along paths was also – as previously shown – a tool of developing a rooted identity and inhabiting the landscape, a transformation, a mutual adjustment; the first and basic type of relationship between a human being and earth.

Illustration 10. On the way to Plutki

Source: Photo from private archives of Tadeusz Burniewicz.

Movement along does not, however, colonize the place. It is not about ownership. As in the concept of "memory-place" as home, it helps the place to "achieve its freedom by liberating it from one ownership" and leaves the place open, being "a lived world of a simultaneous diversity of space" (Mendel, Theiss, 2019: 49–50).

The photo that made me think of movement along is the worn-out photo that Tadeusz Burniewicz found in his papers. It is winter, and Tadeusz Bury Burniewicz and Ewa Scheliga are looking into the lens of the camera, while two other men go forward to the village. People are dressed in sheepskin coats and wade through the snow that covers the path. The houses emerge against the background of the forest. It is the Plutki village, where Krzysztof's brother, Maciej Łepkowski, occupied for a while an abandoned house that he received as a worker of a farmers' cooperative (SKR) in the nearby village of Gradki. In 1978, the "Winter Activities" were organized there – a week-long workshop for youths, as well as a poetry and music event, where the audience, together with Piotr Bikont, read and recited American poetry: poems by Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, Corso, McGregor, as well as contemporary Polish poets. In the spirit of "new life under old roofs", they performed alternative culture activities in places with the quality of tabula rasa – places where something could start from the very beginning.

The promise of a brave new world was, however, burdened with logistical difficulties, resignation from amenities, constantly fighting the harshness of the weather and material conditions. Przemysław Radwański, an anthropologist who cooperated with "Pracownia" in the winter of 1980/1981, remembered going back to the freezing cold house in Trękus every day after working in Olsztyn and walking many kilometers in the darkness and the snow from the train station (P_PR_M_65_MDK_2022). Getting to know the land by making a move along is sometimes a challenge. Moving along is not, however, limited to the well-known roads, but also includes less obvious paths, long unused trails that need to be rediscovered.

It is surely inspired by the situationist drift – intentionally getting lost in space to see it in a new light, via disorientation. Drifting was, however, also recognized as a research method. Situationists used it to check how the urban environment shapes the desires the lives of its inhabitants, as well as to what extent they themselves influence its space-time; they created emotional maps of the studied field (Księżyk, 2015). The situationist borrowings are very significant here, as they give political meaning to activities as trivial as walking; a common gesture which in the socio-historical context turns out to be emancipatory, as it steals peripheral spaces and hands them over to alternativists, expanding the space of their involvement. However, "Pracownia" borrowed it intuitively rather than intentionally. As Ryszard Michalski recalls, they obtained a book about situationists, but in French, which no one knew (P_R_M_65_MDK_2022). Thus, it became an object of reference for building identity rather than a source of actual knowledge about their practices.

The drifting of "Pracownia" could also happen in an urban context. In 1978, Ewa Scheliga designed a city action called *Lustration of the City* in the spirit of drifting:

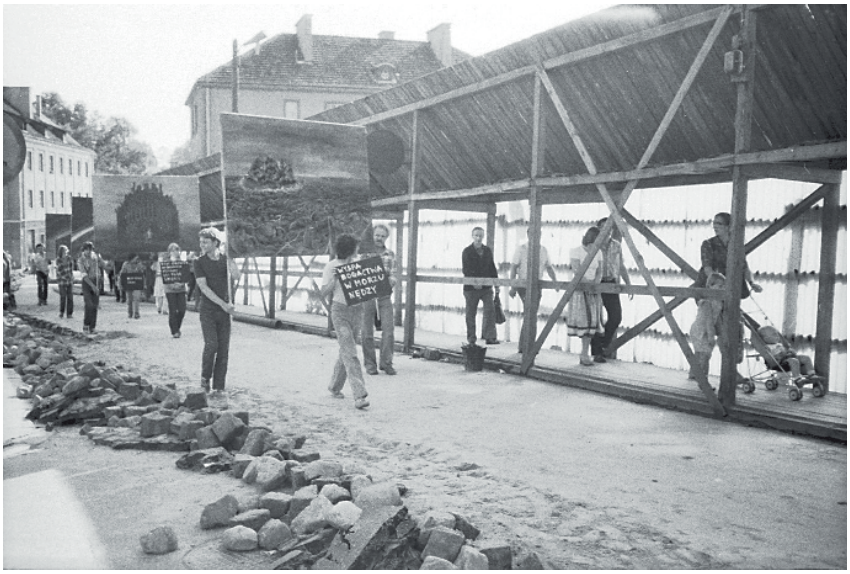
> During the day.
> Cold autumn or wintertime, when most people are studying or working. Before noon. The group gathered in "Pracownia" disperses to various parts of the city, each separately. There is an hour or two to contact some person – younger or older – who wanders around and does little useful for themselves or others. They are in a pub or somewhere. Waiting – not waiting. Thinking – not thinking. Try to bring the person over for tea, maybe a talk in "Pracownia's" headquarters. Each member of the operational group brings one, maybe even two. It may happen that one of the operational group will not come at the appointed time, but will stay in the pub.
> At night.
> A similar effect on a summer night / late evening / when more than one holidaymaker or vacationer who cannot sleep on a hot night, wanders around the city. (Scheliga, 1978)

This and more similar city activities were often performed by "Pracownia", especially in the spirit of an alternative getting to know the city, for guests and newcomers – making sightseeing non-stereotypical and liberating the tourist town from the cognitive cliches.

Move across

The last movement in this typology – movement across – makes it possible to change the world and create untrodden paths, third ways – alternatives that even if symbolic or temporary have the power of exposing the hidden possibilities of the world. By moving across we challenge the existing order, we ask "what if?", we break our habits. In practice, the "movement across" is achieved by activities that juxtapose at least two, usually non-adjacent orders. They introduce something unknown, out of place, unusual.

Illustration 11. Traveling exhibition of Tadeusz Piotrowski's art. Olsztyn 1981



Source: Photo by Mieczysław Wieliczko.

A good example of a lateral movement that made me think of it as of another point of the typology was a traveling exhibition organized for the Olsztyn painter Tadeusz Piotrowski in the summer of 1981. The photographs by Mieczysław Wieliczko documenting it show a juvenile crowd gathered in front of the "Pojezierze" headquarters at Okopowa Street in Olsztyn, where the vernissage took place. Young people hold large-format paintings by Piotrowski with apocalyptic captions and lined up on the pavement. Then, they form a procession and go to the streets of Olsztyn, showing the traveling exhibition to random passers-by on the street. However, the in-depth value of this undertaking, portrayed so suggestively by the photographer (a record of everyday life in the city, dug-up streets, defensive walls supported by wooden piles, the locations of vegetable kiosks surprising today's inhabitants, old-fashioned fashion) is not available without knowing the context. I became aware of it when I interviewed Piotrowski in the summer of 2022. While looking at the photos from the exhibition, I asked the painter: "Where are they going? Where are these streets?" He replied: "I don't know, I'm from Olsztyn, but I don't walk" (P_TP_M_70_MDK_2022).

Tadeusz Piotrowski, who died in February 2023, was a person with movement disabilities, a man who had used crutches, walking frames, and a wheelchair for years. For Piotrowski, movement was a technique, just like painting. He was fascinated with various painting methods – using different types of brush, cloth, or sponge to paint huge canvas at a very past pace. He would use this himself and while teaching his students, patients in the "Blue Umbrella" Association for Long-term Immobilized Patients where he worked as an art therapist. He painted a lot and gave away his paintings. Fascinated with horses, he would sketched with specially incised goose feathers, their silhouettes on the run, hurt, desperate. Tadeusz Burniewicz, who analyzed his art during the farewell meeting in Olsztyn's Art Gallery in July 2023, called them self-portraits (P_TB_M_70_MDK_2023).

Feathers, horses, fast mechanic painting techniques, they all resemble movement, galloping, and even flight, and for Piotrowski they were nothing like a substitute for walking. Movement was his obsession, a technique he mastered for years and which he lost in his last days.

The traveling exhibition from 1981, next to the apocalyptic imagery, was also tackling this problem. Due to the city's poor adaptation to the needs of people with disabilities, Piotrowski's paintings – set in motion by the members and supporters of "Pracownia" – could reach places that their author would not have reached. "Pracownia" put images and people who are absent, unrecognized, rejected, and marginalized in the city center.

By "moving across", one can lift the limitations, even if only symbolically; create the alternative world anew: more inclusive, open, thought differently. This is a temporary interception, the carnivalization and subversion of order, a switching of places. Although carnivalization assumes the final confirmation and re-establishment of the existing order (the safety valve metaphor), it also contains elements of subversion. It reveals the arbitrariness of conventions and shows the possibilities hidden in everyday life (Dudzik, 2005: 103–115).

Conclusion

The pictures of "Pracownia" are more than just documentary photographs. They are a gesture of autonomy, a fight for the right to self-presentation and a search for a place for alternatives in the collective consciousness. They illustrate the subversive interceptions, the bountiful creation of common spaces, egalitarian ways of research of the world and oneself. In unstable times of crisis, in the border lands, and in the face of fluid identities, they show practices of rooting, embodying, othering, and dialoging with the world, to foster cooperation and create alternatives. They tell the story of different ways of negotiating with the memory-places and the communist system. Finally, they contribute to the creation of a bottom-up typology that fosters reflection on the aims and effects of culture animation projects as well as their critical and research potential.

The typology of six types of movement I propose (Dobiasz-Krysiak, 2022) helps to recognize culture animation as research through art. All of the moves are derived from praxis, community arts/culture animation actions conducted by pioneers of the field in Poland – the "Pracownia" Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center; six moves as six rituals of dialog, a packet of techniques to elaborate on social issues in an indirect, art-mediated ways; six ways of challenging but also empowering communities and individuals in order to expand the realm of the unofficial; six ways of asking questions and searching for new answers. They might be a starting point for the grass-roots, inclusive arts-based research methodology that Susan Finley is opting for. Every move in the typology opens a new research field and raises new research questions that may be presented in a Table 1.

Table 1. Typology of six moves

No.	Type of movement	Research field	Main research question
1	Move downward	Problem identification	What is missing?
2	Move downward 2 (subversion)	Ways of resistance	How to say no?
3	Move upward	Group building	Who is with me?
4	Move inward	Self-development	Who am I?
5	Move along	Land knowing	Where am I?
6	Move across	Change making	What if?

Source: own elaboration.

By developing new, detailed research questions and applying them to new culture animation projects, I hope to eventually develop a methodology aiming at widening the democratic public sphere and expanding human agency, collaboration, and abilities of critical thinking in searching for alternative solutions in times of crisis.

By interdisciplinary study of the legacy of "Pracownia" and giving it its rightful place in the history of Polish social creative activities, the research aims to fill in the gaps in the history of the Polish community arts/culture animation. I hope this typology will provide useful tools for social scientists to understand and analyze culture animation projects in light of action research. There is a need to understand them as research tools providing information on the artists and communities. Furthermore, treating it as checklist or guidelines may allow animators from various schools and traditions to conduct in-depth animation and research activities. I hope it will stimulate discussion and contribute to building the coherence of culture animation and its theoretical amplification.

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PO_AZ/AW_K_25_MDK_2023
P_TB_M_70_MDK_2023
P_MB_K_65_MDK_2022

Author's conversation with Przemysław Radwański was recorded during the opening of the In-Spe Gallery in Trękus and recorded courtesy of Alicja Kulik of Polish Radio Olsztyn, Trękus, 1.05.2022.

Information from ethnographic interviews by Agata Zamorowska and Agnieszka Teodora Walawska from 2.08.2023 with two of three contemporary inhabitants of Plutki village. Interviews were conducted within the project "Living in the shadow of communication exclusion – anthropological research in the warmian-masurian voivodeship" funded as part of the Grants4NCUstudents competition, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Thorn. The project manager is Agata Zamorowska, and the substantial supervisor is Maja Dobiasz-Krysiak.

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Cytowanie

Maja Dobiasz-Krysiak (2024), *More Than a Photograph: An Analysis of the Photographs of the Interdisciplinary Creative Research Center "Pracownia" Using the Six-Moves Typology in Arts-Based Research*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 50–81, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.04

Więcej niż fotografia. Analiza fotografii Interdyscyplinarnej Placówki Twórczo-Badawczej „Pracownia" z wykorzystaniem typologii sześciu ruchów w badaniach opartych na sztuce

Abstrakt: W artykule autor analizuje działalność Interdyscyplinarnej Placówki Twórczo-Badawczej „Pracownia", wykorzystując autorską typologię pomocną w badaniach opartych na sztuce. Jest to typologia sześciu ruchów: w dół (dwa rodzaje), w górę, w głąb, wzdłuż i w poprzek. Uznaje ona praktyki animacji kultury/sztuk społecznych za badanie siebie i świata poprzez sztukę. Autor wyjaśnia to na przykładzie „Pracowni", wybierając jedno zdjęcie działań placówki z lat 1978–1981, by przedstawić każdy punkt typologii. Celem badań jest wypełnienie luk w historii polskich sztuk społecznych/animacji kultury, dostarczenie narzędzi analitycznych dla badaczy społecznych oraz praktycznych wskazówek dla animatorów kultury/artystów społecznych.

Słowa kluczowe: typologia sześciu ruchów, badania oparte na sztuce, Interdyscyplinarna Placówka Twórczo-Badawcza „Pracownia", animacja kultury, sztuki społeczne

C O P E
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The Architecture of the Rzeszów Downtown from the *Flâneur* Perspective

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Keywords:
sociology of architecture, perception, art reception, mobile methods, *flâneurie*

Abstract: The paper attempts to study architecture as an esthetic object with the use of mobile methods. I develop the concept of the *flâneur* view: an act of perception associated with a casual walk, enriched with reflections on the environment. The aim of the text is to describe the intricacies of the process: what makes the *flâneur* interested in particular architectural object, how one valorizes it, and what role the esthetics plays in the activity. This research walk was carried out by students in the Rzeszów Downtown. It included observation, taking notes, and photography. For the purpose of the paper, I analyze thirteen journals. The main finding is that students value visual and spatial harmony, and look for it in the cityscape. They are positive toward well-maintained, mostly historical buildings. Nature is also important to them. In their descriptions, they use everyday language and their type of esthetic reception can be named non-professional.

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Introduction

Architecture, although classified as art, is rarely studied from the point of view of art sociology. The contribution to the field is less extensive compared to research in visual arts, music, theater, or dance. As a research topic, it is more often undertaken by other disciplines of the humanities and social sciences (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, Porczyński, Rozalska, 2021). Even the relative autonomy of the sub-discipline is debatable. There is an ongoing discussion between supporters of the idea that architecture is a research topic of urban sociology and authors considering it as an independent discipline (Łukasiuk, 2011). Still, esthetics plays a minor role in it. I consider this fact an interesting field for sociological exploration. In comparison to other forms of art, architecture is a more complex phenomenon. It engages more senses than painting or music and enables more possible ways of interaction. While it shares visuality, historicity, or symbolism with other forms of visual arts, its materiality and functionality should be also considered. Because of this complexity, a catalog of possible components and approaches to the sociology of architecture would exceed the limits of this paper. For this reason, I limit my approach to the intersection of art sociology and mobile methodology. The former would allow the focus on the esthetic components of architecture and the reception of it, while the latter would provide a specific way of dealing with data collection as well as the material components of urban space.

In this paper, the problem of reconstructing the phenomenon of *flâneur gaze* is introduced. I would like to answer the question about what makes young people walking through the historical center of Rzeszów interested in particular architectural objects, why these buildings attract their attention, how they valorize them, and what role esthetics plays in the process. The fact that I use the lens of art sociology is motivated by the low interest of architecture within the field as well as the fact that the topic is too broad to be fully covered by the article. Therefore, from all possible aspects of the built environment (materiality, historicity, symbolism, functionality), I pay the most attention to its esthetics.

The complexity of architecture

There is a discussion concerning the status of the sociology of architecture. Some authors define it as a component of urban sociology, but recent developments show that it emerges as an independent field. Mateusz Włodarek (2021) argues that the statement by Robert E. Park that the city needs to be studied as a state of mind, which is fundamental for urban sociology, weakens the ability of the sub-discipline to analyze architecture. This approach is limited to psychological and relational phenomena and ignores materiality, which is an important aspect of architecture. Therefore, he advocates for the separation of architectural sociology from urban studies. Switching from the research of interactions to buildings and including the material aspects of reality allows for the development of the sociology of architecture as an independent sub-discipline. Such a perspective is attributed to, among others, Silke Steets (2016) and Paul Jones (2016; 2020), yet it is even more emphasized by approaches rooted in the actor-network theory (Latour, 2005; Latour, Yaneva, 2018).

Changes in urban and architectural sociology are driven by the so-called spatial turn, which puts stress on materiality in studies of human collectives. As Martina Löw and Silke Steets argue:

> […] thinking in terms of spaces sharpens one's awareness that the world is conceivable only as both socially and materially differentiated. (Löw, Steets, 2014: 213)

Materiality not only shapes the environment inhabited by a community (Krajewski, 2013; Kurczewska, 2015), but also enriches the study of its past (Jordanova, 1989; Baxandall, 1991). The 'reception' of the building as a practice is different from listening to music or watching a theater performance. As a 'heavy' medium (Fischer, 2009), it imposes itself on the user. It can be experienced visually, tactilely, and oltofactorily. Frontages influence the way pedestrians move or navigate the city. Streets in city centers are often 'flanked' from both sides by buildings, and frontages without windows or doors can induce a tunnel-like experience. Architecture also affects perception: high objects block the view. A detailed examination of the building would provide a written list of its properties, including size, structure, facture, or composition. Therefore, its materiality can also be 'translated' into a textual form, allowing a researcher to write field notes that contain his/her experiences with the architectonic object. The visual component of the building can also be viewed as beautiful, ugly, or indifferent. It can be viewed as functional or not. It can 'speak' about its users and inhabitants. Studies of a 19th-century tenement houses show the relationship between the organization of their structure and social stratification. The owner's family and other wealthy tenants inhabited the representative wing, adjacent to the street, with a decorated facade, while servants and members of the lower class lived in far less prestigious and comfortable annexes located deep inside the closed courtyard (Łupienko, 2013; Kilanowski, 2017).

Materiality divides space, influencing interactions (Giddens, 1984; Goffman, 2000). Yet, not only tangible barriers – walls or fences – but also symbolic ones, connected with the sacralization of particular spaces, organize spatial practices (Jałowiecki, 2010: 31). Both types of divisions can prevent unauthorized access. This also leads to the discussion of the differentiation of spaces into public and private spheres.

The historical aspect of architecture is strongly connected to social, material, symbolic, functional, and esthetic components. Both the cultural landscape and the societal systems of values are based in some way on previous periods (Bartkowski, 2003; Kurczewski, 2007). Archeological, architectural, or industrial monuments are identified by Kazimierz Dobrowolski (1967: 17) as material elements of the historical base [Pol. *podłoże historyczne*] that influence today's societies. Rzeszów's cultural landscape merges components from eight centuries. Łukasiuk (2011: 104) uses here the term 'palimpsest' for a better description of the phenomenon. The current status of the city is the result of the ongoing influence of various actors. Some of the historic buildings, which had performed important functions in the past, were intentionally or unintentionally demolished; some of them remained and continue to perform the same role while the function of the others changed. Today's *flâneur* strolls beside a baroque church, an eclectic bank, or a modern shopping center that is incorporated in the same frontage.

Although architecture is historically understood as one of the arts, none of the approaches presented above applies to the perspective of the sociology of art. Buildings are treated as memory carriers (Halbwachs, 1980; Szpociński, 2014), indicators of social structure (Jones, 2016), and templates for collective behavior (Amin, 2008). They are structures raised by humans, but at the same time, they structure social life (Gieryn, 2002). They allow the reconstruction of historical balances of power and systems of values, and allow the study of interactions between people or more complex relationships between groupings and buildings, yet rarely do they include the esthetic qualities of architectonic objects. However, as Kevin Lynch (1960) argues, looking at cities can be a source of pleasure, and several studies explore the problem of urban esthetics (Rewers, 2005; Zieliński, 2007; Dziubiński, 2014; Kotarski, 2017).

Flâneurie from the perspective of art sociology

According to Stanisław Ossowski, the art sociologist studies functions of social life in arts. This allows us to isolate three different fields of study: artwork (1) as a product of social life; (2) as an object of emotional reactions, shaped under the influence of social milieu; and (3) as a center of social relations (Ossowski, 1966: 366). This corresponds to the basic assumptions of symbolic interactionism. When Herbert Blumer (2007: 5) defines the nature of his theory, he recalls the notion of objects and the meanings connected to them. While these meanings are often derived from the process of socialization, they can be renegotiated to suit particular needs. Objects might demonstrate material, social, and symbolic features. Thus, the study of interactions does not necessarily prevent us from excluding the substantial component of the building. The application of symbolic interactionism to architectural sociology can be summed up in one sentence: a building is a central object around which social practices and interactions are undertaken. A social world emerges (cf. Fine, 2004; Becker, 2008; Kacperczyk, 2016), where architects, city planners, and inhabitants, interact with the object, influence it, modify it, or valorize it in various ways. Different interpretations of the building – either its shape, structure, locations, function or esthetics – make it a boundary object (Star, Griesemer, 1989) and produce arenas (Strauss, 1978).

This art sociology approach to architectural sociology applies the *flâneur* perspective. Such kind of person (and activity) is associated with the works of Walter Benjamin (2015). As a spatial practice, it is something between being a tourist, a walker, or an explorer. The *flâneur* "takes a walk, looks around, and notes experiences" (Jałowiecki, 2012: 69). John Urry (2002: 127) describes such a person as a forerunner of a 20th-century tourist. There are indeed many similarities in their core activities. They both walk, explore, and *gaze at* something that attracts their attention. Both practices are also separated from everyday experience (Urry, 2002: 9). However, the tourist has more to do with an organized form of travel, and it is difficult to be one in one's city. The *flâneur*, on the other hand, makes his/her own decision about which direction to follow, and any narrow and shady street offers him/her a sense of discovery. There are also some resemblances between the *flâneur* gazing at building facades and a visitor in the gallery contemplating paintings, especially when it comes to the study of esthetic experience. In all of these cases, it is the question of perception that needs further discussion.

There is a common agreement in literature that perception is socially-organized (Zerubavel, 1997; Urry, 2002; Foucault, 2003). Historical or material conditions have an impact on it (Strzemiński, 1974). The social environment influences what an individual sees in the first place. What is experienced through the senses is filtered through various interpretive frameworks that are rooted in particular social backgrounds (Zerubavel, 1997: 24). They can be connected to values and needs (Bruner, 1973), socialization, and education. Professional training allows one to perceive and identify phenomena associated with a particular area of expertise. Such examples of professional gaze are provided by Michel Foucault (2003), Krzysztof Konecki (2012), and Dominika Byczkowska (2012). A viewer, with much experience in a particular sphere, can isolate and name specific figures according to his/her system of knowledge. This means that an expert with professional knowledge of architecture would see buildings differently than an ordinary person.

The *flâneurie* as the practice of gazing upon buildings and valorizing their esthetic qualities can also be located within the field of study of art reception, which has a long research tradition in sociology (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, 2019). Although it is still about perception, it narrows the scope of the analysis to a particular phenomenon, but emphasizes its emotional and intellectual components. Research on art reception was conducted in different fields: visual arts (Matuchniak-Krasuska, 1988; Bourdieu, Darbel, 1991), literature (Sułkowski, 1972), and film (Gałuszka, 1993). As perception, it is strongly connected to the social background. Generally, two main types of reception are distinguished: professional and everyday (Biały, Ferenc, Kidoń, 2023: 19). Family and education equip an individual with knowledge and the ability to successfully interact with and decode art (Bourdieu, 1984). Members of higher classes were introduced to art as children, but for Poland, it was the school that allowed the development of skills needed to understand artworks. However, more recent studies undermine the quality of esthetic education of young Poles. From the perspective of museum staff, students do not demonstrate the skills needed to read and analyze art (Porczyński, 2016; Franckiewicz-Olczak, 2018). Symbolic culture must be put within an appropriate framework to be understood (Kłoskowska, 1981: 426). A competent reception of art (so architecture) is based on at least a rudimentary knowledge of art history (Warczok, Trembaczowski, 2011: 21). Marian Golka (2008: 171) adds that reception is not only about decoding meanings, but also about experiencing values and, as Wallis (1972) suggests, architectonic work communicates them. He also argues that the meaning of the building is clear to its constructors and users, yet with time, it can change and blur. Thus, professional knowledge gives a higher probability of listing all of those functions.

Problems with the interpretation of objects produced and used in the past by today's people are common (Krajewski, 2013). The process of musealization allows us to understand those artifacts better. Putting them under scrutiny, analyzing their function as well as their place in the human world, and, finally, exhibiting them with instructions makes them more recognizable, yet somehow separates objects from everyday experience (Krajewski, 2013: 12). When discussing the 'modern cult of monuments' in the 19th century, Alois Riegl (*Alois Riegl…*, 2012) argued that ancient and historical values should be the object of protection. There is a common area between Christian relics and monuments (Tomaszewski, 2012). Assuming that the object is old and putting it under conservator protection is a modern, secular, way of sacralization. However, instead of imbuing the object with sanctity, the effect is based on a different attribute, namely antiquity. Some empirical studies support this statement, showing that historical architecture is valued higher than modern architecture. The reason behind this is that people see contemporary architecture as "gray, ugly, and not pleasing to the eye", and, in the case of Poland, associate it with the period of communism (Michałowski, 2007: 263).

As with other forms of art, the knowledge acquired either through socialization or education would help an individual to perceive nuances in architectonic styles, making it possible to interpret the object according to rules derived from esthetics and art history. This professional perspective would make the process of deciphering the ideas and values behind particular buildings more complete. On the other hand, a nonprofessional approach to art utilizes in the first place the system of representations created and applied within everyday life, identified with the practical sphere (Brzozowska, 2008: 342).

The limitations of the *flâneur* perspective

The *flâneur* experience is to a great extent connected to the street perspective. It stresses the exteriors of building, facades, the surroundings, and visible elements, but also relates to the sphere of emotion, imagination, and symbolism. As such, it appears to be a useful technique of data collection, yet it also has certain limitations. From the perspective of the passerby, the first contact with the architectonic object is through the sense of sight. This may lead to reflection on the form, history, purpose, or esthetic experience. The *flâneur* observes and may but does not have to enter the staircase or courtyard of the building. The impression of the façade can influence the ideas and evaluation of the building as a whole. Architecture and urban planning were not only oriented toward providing a place for living, running a business, or providing services, but also toward manifesting ideas and putting people in awe, fear, and respect (Jałowiecki, 2012: 40).

Also, the current organization of space is what the *flâneur* perceives, and this brings some concerns about possible reduction of data. The building gazed upon at a particular moment also has a unique history. Especially historical monuments are building blocks of national and cultural continuity (Wallis, 1975). Even the location of a previously demolished building can still bear meanings connected to it (Wódz, Gnieciak, 2011: 82). This makes us aware that many different perspectives toward the object exist. The building will be of different value to a person who encounters it for the first time, different to its inhabitants, and different to a local historian. For a tourist, a 19th-century apartment building might be as interesting as typical housing from the period. Exploring it can be a part of his/her travel, free time, or educational experience (Urry, 2002). People travel to see famous buildings, understood as heritage, a symbol of the nation, but also to visit the land of childhood. For someone who lived in a particular neighborhood for generations, an architectonic object can be an important element of a private homeland (Ossowski, 1984). It is saturated with meanings, memories, and emotions.

Urban architecture is the case for the study of symbolization. As Anselm Strauss (2008) argues, Chicago with its urban images can be analyzed for the multitude and complexity of its city symbols. However, some buildings are also imbued with values. The style can communicate values. Gothic style can bring associations with religion (Rykwert, 2013). But also specific types of architectural objects invoke particular meanings. The museums of the 19th century were not only places to store and display artifacts, but also symbolic representations of the nation (Levitt, 2015); steel constructions were symbols of progress, while apartment buildings were indicators of the material status of their owners. Some architectonic objects change their meaning: the seat of the interwar Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education in Warsaw became a seat of the Gestapo, thus becoming a symbol of Nazi terror. After the war, it got back to performing its ministerial function, but at the same time, it is also a commemorative place. The question is about how much of all of these aspects the *flâneur* perceives. One wanders through the streets and watches the building from the outside, but can be prevented in many ways from seeing the interior. A modern walker is also constantly online, and one can learn more about the object than only by watching it. Thus, today's *flâneurie* is not only about walking and watching, but also about decisions: am I allowed to, or do I want to see more than just a façade?

Research outline

Walking is already a recognized way to conduct social research. Projects that utilize mobile methods usually focus on the everyday lives of their participants and are carried out in their living environments. They are often related to interviewing (Evans, Jones, 2011; Jones, Evans, 2012; Nóżka, Martini, 2015; Martini, 2020), but also include the use of GPS devices by the sole participants (Wiśniewski, Pol, 2021). This project brings some modifications to existing mobile methods. The study is carried out in unknown or little-known areas and without the company of the interviewer. Students were asked to explore downtown and voice-record or scribe their experience, and prepare on this basis quasi-autoethnographic notes. This approach makes it possible to compare individual perspectives. The participants were also instructed that I am interested in 'thick' descriptions that include their emotions and considerations about particular places and events. Without that, the study of esthetic reception would be hampered.

The data analyzed here is part of the larger project. The students were asked to form teams and take a three-hour walk through the downtown of Rzeszów. Out of 39 participants, thirteen three-person teams were created. Their starting points were scattered in the peripheries of the area, but their routes were not fixed. They were allowed to set their routes as long as they did not leave the area limited to the north by a railroad line, to the south by Kilar Street, to the west by Ciepliński Alley, and to the east by the Wisłok River. Each member of a three-person team has a set of responsibilities related to data collection, but they are not all the subjects of the paper. For the purpose of the study, I focus on the contributions of researchers that I called 'interpretive' ones. They were asked to make an observation, prepare a mental map, collect photographs of selected sites, and write a quasi-autoethnographic report that should include the description of the visited places as well as the experiences, emotions, and considerations of the participants related to their walk-along.

Illustration 1. The map of the study area

Source: Author's own work, on the basis of Google Maps.

The emphasis put on the material aspect of reality inclines the use of techniques that allow the collection of material or embodied data, and this is the main cause of the application of mobile methods. Although it is possible to show pictures of architecture and ask for opinions about it, in this research I was interested in participant experiences. It was *flâneurie*, yet enriched with sociological methodology. Discovering unknown parts of Rzeszów and gazing upon buildings *in situ* is a different sort of experience than looking at album photographs. Observation, undoubtedly, is the most basic method of collecting data in such kinds of study, but the mobile approach is a way of enriching it. It gives the possibility of reaching participant experience in a more detailed and more nuanced way (Gądecki, 2011), and allows the understanding of the meaning of place in everyday situations (Kusenbach, 2003). The mobile methodologies seem to be a natural choice for a researcher whose ontological assumptions include material aspects of social reality (Anderson, 2004).

Thus, while being observational research, it moves toward analytical autoethnography. Anna Kacperczyk (2014) describes autoethnography as (a) an introspective act of self-narrative; (b) a document created by the author during this self-narration; (c) a technique of receiving materials; (d) a research strategy that is purposeful and planned to conduct a self-observation over a longer period; (e) an innovative pattern of doing science. Although Leon Anderson (2014) discusses this approach as a way of including the researcher's perspective, emotions, insights, and reflections in more traditional participant observation, this project introduced some modifications. The data collection and analysis processes are conducted by different people. The students did a walk and observation, and summarized them in their journals, but I performed the analysis. Because of this separation of data collection and analysis processes, the study is close to a personal document method. There is also a distinction related to the duration of the study. Ethnography as a method, thus autoethnography as well, is based on long-lasting fieldwork. In this case, the period of data collection was short. Therefore, the research should be defined as an observation enriched with the author's emotions and knowledge. Due to the use of journals, it also bears some resemblance to the biographical method. The reports have something in common with journals collected by various sociologists (Krzywicki, 1933; Chałasiński, 1984; Abel, 1986), yet in this case they are not based on life stories but, rather, on a several-hour participant observations.

I rely only on autoethnographic notes, along with original photographs, to illustrate narratives. After collecting the data from students, I applied the CAQDAS software to code and construct categories and subcategories (Strauss, Corbin, 1998; Konecki, 2000; Charmaz, 2009). The collected data was of various details and quality. Common for all of the contributions was the focus on architecture, although the instruction suggested including all kinds of material that the researchers find significant. A large part was also descriptions and remarks on monuments and encountered social situations. There is no one narrative strategy; the students described their experiences in different ways. Their contributions also vary in detail. Some are laconic and only mention visited places, occasionally adding brief descriptions; some are based on 'hubs', discussing more elaborately certain places omitting transmissions between them; while others try to represent the practice of *flâneurie* in detail, describing the whole walk. The form and quality of the analyzed material is the combination of the contribution of the students (based on how individual participants were dedicated to the task), chosen routes, and the time limit (the whole exercise took about three hours).

For this paper, I focus on buildings. Including other pieces of data would exceed the recommended volume of the article. Since I do not have access to information on the sociocultural background of the participants, I focus on their narratives. I do not try to interpret the differences in reports by recalling separate life stories but, rather, by using a dichotomy of everyday and professional knowledge, which is more appropriate here.

Last but not least – to avoid identification of the participants, all entries are anonymous. Every contribution has its number. Since the data was collected for different purposes, I asked the authors for permission to include their notes in this paper, ensuring that their identity would be protected.

What does the *flâneur* see?

A brief description of the Rzeszów Downtown architecture

The Rzeszów Downtown District (Osiedle Śródmieście) covers the historical part of the city. Most of the historic architecture of the city is located in the studied area. The city was founded in 1354, yet medieval architecture is scarce. It is represented by the presbytery of the 15th-century St. Adalbert and St. Stanislas church (Borowiejska-Birkenmajerowa, 1994: 180; Majewski, 1994: 407). A similar situation exists with the Renaissance objects. Traits of this style can be noticed in the organization of the part that was historically inhibited by Jews and in the Old Synagogue (Majewski, 1994: 427).

Many visible elements of the urban landscape of the district include developments from the two-and-a-half century period when Rzeszów was a private town of the noble families Ligęza and Lubomirski. Baroque architecture is represented by a 17th-century church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary along with Bernardine monastery, Piarist church and school complex (Majewski, 1994), fortifications of the Lubomirski Castle (the castle itself was dismantled and rebuilt at the beginning of the 20th century) (Czapczyńska, Janczykowski, 1994), or Lubomirski Summer Palace (Majewski, 1994). After the partitions of Poland, Rzeszów became a part of the Habsburg-controlled Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. A new construction law was introduced. It forbade the building of wooden houses in towns and cities; only multi-story buildings were allowed near main streets, and those in poor conditions were scheduled for demolition (Malczewski, 1998: 26). Although the first half of the 19th century was the period of the degradation of the town (Malczewski, 1998), some classicist architectonic objects were founded, such as the Burgaller's Palace or the Karol Prevot's Mansion.

The largest part of the historical center was built during the so-called Galician autonomy, in the second half of the 19th century and before the First World War. It includes tenement buildings, banks, hospitals, shops, schools, offices, and villas. The current design of the town hall is of this period. They make a mosaic of historical, eclectic, and secession styles (Tondos, 1997). Rzeszów's architecture of the period is inspired by projects from larger cities, mostly Kraków, and although it lacks unique impressive objects, it is rather positively evaluated by art historians (Tondos, 1997; Gutowski, Gutowski, 2001).

In the 1920s, Rzeszów experienced stagnation. The situation changed in the 1930s, when two important industrial plants were located in the city and it was considered the main city of the Central Industrial District. This resulted in rapid development. Modern, functionalist apartment buildings for technical and military personnel started to emerge. Along that line, other service buildings were founded: post offices, hotels, and a hospital on Chopin Street (Chomiczewska, 2015). During and after the Second World War, some of the older buildings were dismantled and new ones were located in their places. Developments from the 1950s included seats in public institutions, including the Voivodeship Office, the office of the local Committee of the Communist Party, or the 'Zorza' cinema. There are also some examples of socialist modernism, such as the seat of the National Technical Organization, the Subcarpathian Philharmonic Hall, or apartment buildings located near the Victims of the Ghetto Square or Grodzisko Street. In the last three decades, some modern constructions appeared, usually hosting commercial or business institutions. Although there are parts where the historical architecture dominates, Rzeszów Downtown is architecturally rather eclectic (Chomiczewska et al., 2023).

The *flâneur* gaze

A core process

The *flâneur* gaze is an act of perception associated with a casual walk (unprepared in advance, different from a guided tour but also from simple, everyday walking concentrated on getting from point A to point B). I decided to develop it as a central category in this study, because it is strongly related to the applied method of data collection: students were walking, watching, and noting. I introduced the concept of gaze, because most descriptions are based on visual perception. While some narratives also invoke auditory, olfactory, or embodied experiences, the students usually described what they saw. The visual character is here *a priori*. The students either simply described what they saw (e.g., *another point of the journey was a church, we had very neutral feelings about it* [Team 2]) or named their act of perception in various ways (*observe*, *see*, *watch*, *perceive*, *admire*), and then they provided the narrative of perceived phenomena often enriched with recollection of emotions and thoughts associated with the process (*Heading out to the Chopin street we saw newly constructed buildings* [Team 11]).

Some narratives make it possible to tell whether their authors perceived a particular object while passing by or whether they spent some time exploring it. The reports give the impression of a city walk, naming the process exactly as such. They used phrases such as: *Then we went to…* [Team 11], *Approaching the…* [Team 10], *later we wandered around a bit…* [Team 7], *We entered the market square.* [Team 9]. However, the experience also included periods of sitting and resting: *Taking advantage of the moment, we took a break* [Team 1]. *The three of us moved to the bench where we were watching people* [Team 2].

Every instance of perception described in the journals provides a set of information that varies in length and detail. In the case of architecture, it allows the reconstruction of a) the observer's perspective and dynamics of a scene; b) reasons that lead to the selection of the object; c) the immersion in the process; and d) esthetic valorization.

Switching perspectives

An important part of the *flâneur* gaze is switching between different perspectives. Photographic metaphors are useful for describing how observers deal with space, material, sound, or olfactory experiences. The fact that the use of the camera is strongly connected to the tourist experience (Urry, 2002: 127), which has much in common with *flâneurie*, confirms this belief. Trying to capture the chaos of the surrounding reality, the students switched their perception from a close-up to a wide-shot perspective similar to a camera lens. I understand these perspectives as certain points in a continuum. It is more a typology than a classification, since in some situations it is difficult to draw a line between the frames. Switching between them, the *flâneurs* focused on either a detail or on a broader context depending on what they found interesting in a particular situation. Since the main topic is architecture, the basis for distinction of various perspectives is the relation of buildings to other objects within the frame. The examples are as follows:

1) The lack of architecture

It is difficult to say that there is no architecture in the studied area. It is the city center, so even if the participants were wandering through 'Bulwary' – the green part of the district located on the Wisłok River – the architecture was within their sight. The possible cause of this ignorance is the lack of interest in particular forms of architecture, and the presence of architecture is rather *a priori*. The students simply did not mention it until something attracted their attention:

> Then we headed out toward the passage leading to Jagiellońska street. Nothing attracted my attention on that street, so I don't have a picture of any object. After leaving Jagiellońska Street, we found ourselves on 3 Maja Street where a school is located that brings back good memories, as most of my family attended there. The school has also an interesting history, it is one of the oldest schools in Poland. […] [Team 12]

The first part of the citation focuses on the walk from Lisa-Kuli Street to 3 Maja Street. The students walked along Jagiellońska Street, where some institutions are located, including police and social services offices, as well as shops and pubs. The architecture of the street is mostly from the beginning of the 20th century and the interwar period. What is interesting is that in this contribution the author clearly states that she is not interested in anything on that street. She mentions the presence of some objects but gives no details. This fragment is very unique, since the rest of the authors never recall the lack of interest in the surrounding architecture so ostentatiously. They just mentioned the walk-through and then focused on something that attracted their attention:

> Then we wandered a little, I don't remember the road well, all these places seem to be so close to each other, I know, however, that the next point that attracted my attention was an old cemetery near the church. [...] [Team 7]

The narratives usually give some details about mobile characteristics of the study, noting the transmissions between places of interest, but students focus on objects that have some meaning for them. One can guess that the team passed many buildings during the stroll, but none was found interesting until they reached the Holy Trinity Church and the old cemetery.

2) Architectonic background

This perspective involves mentioning the presence of architecture but without going into details. The approach is applied by students in locations composed of modern, interwar, or Galician buildings, mostly tenement houses and blocks of flats.

> Then we moved in the direction of the Market Square and I noticed a large amount of colorful flowers in pots [located] by the road, which provided an interesting contrast to the fully concrete buildings of this part of the town. [Team 1]

The observer is not interested in the surrounding architecture. He notes it overwhelms the team, that it is concrete, but switches his awareness to the flowers, sole pieces of nature in the area. However, the attitude toward plants and buildings is not expressed directly. It can be concluded that it is positive toward flowers and negative in the case of architecture. This is a constantly recurring topic, which is more broadly discussed in section 6.2.6.

3) Wide shot

The buildings here are located within a broader context that includes many other objects. They can be as important as other elements or provide a background for material things, people, or activities.

> The group began its research walk at the railroad station. The first thing that attracted my attention was chaos, yet it was not induced by a large number of people […] but the fact that there is a reconstruction going on around the station. The street is closed, there are holes dug up everywhere, and instead of a sidewalk, stones and sand are scattered around. A path intended for pedestrians sometimes reminds one of a labyrinth (one doesn't know completely where one can pass). It was difficult for me to imagine how a visitor could move there with suitcases. In addition to that, there is loud noise from jackhammers, excavators, and loud workers. Chaos and noise are the terms that best describe the beginning of the route. [Team 5]

In this kind of representation, the building is a marker that is used to construct a setting. It helps to locate the area in the space, often being an excuse for a broader description of a scene. The cited, detailed fragment is interesting, because it refers not only to the sense of sight but also to hearing, the organization of space, and embodied data. The narrator uses her imagination and empathy to try to look at all the obstacles from the perspective of a traveler with a wheeled suitcase.

4) Full-shot

The building is the 'protagonist'. The narrative focuses on it.

> The weather wasn't too good, since the strong wind was blowing. On 3 Maja Street, we saw a cult 'Zorza' movie theater that already exists for more than 60 years and is to be closed because it is on the verge of financial collapse. It is the first cinema founded in Rzeszów, so it has a large sentimental value for its founders. [Team 4]

While 3 Maja Street is full of interesting historically and esthetically important buildings, the student focuses on the movie theater. In this narrative, the observer is not interested in the architectonic aspects of the building that hosts the institution, but, rather, in its historical significance for the Rzeszów community. There is only brief information about the context (weather and location) and the discussion immediately switches to the object.

5) Close-up

The author focuses on an element of the building: an information board on a façade, a piece of graffiti, a pub located in the object, or a figurine on a display. In all such reports, students relate to non-architectonic elements; thus, architecture is usually 'transparent' or as in the case of some 'wide shots' it is only an excuse for a detailed description of the selected object:

> Another street we were on was Jacenty Gałęzowski Street. On this street, I saw a store where a Japanese cat figurine was displayed. I decided to choose this picture because I think it has a cool meaning. In Japanese culture, it is recognized as a symbol of luck and prosperity. What's interesting, depending on the color of the figurine, a different kind of luck is attracted. In this case, a gold Maneki-neko, according to this belief, brings wealth to his owner. [Team 12]

The architectonic object is not discussed here. The observer gives some hints on the location (the name of the street and that it was seen on the shop's display), but quickly 'zooms' to the element that was found attractive. The question is whether the building was not interesting or maybe the choice was influenced by different factors. It may have something to do with the fact that the frontage was made in the Galician style. The problem is explored in more detail further.

Focusing on

I have discussed so far the frames that allow us to contextualize particular instances of the *flâneur* gaze. They help to understand the importance of the architectonic object for the narrator: is it the main topic of the entry or does it only provide some background? However, other features attract the viewer's attention even more. They are the following:

1) esthetics;
2) curiosity;
3) the fact that the building houses an institution;

4) historical value;
5) associations with the individual past;
6) the state of preservation;
7) the building is a landmark;
8) atmosphere;
9) uniqueness;
10) 1funny connotations;
11) 1association with current issues;
12) 1individual interests.

The act of concentration on a selected element along with ignoring others within sight is called focusing (Zerubavel, 1997: 35). Using once again a photographic metaphor, the best illustration of this practice would be the 'bokeh' effect, where the figure is sharpened while the rest of the picture is blurred. Focusing means a mental disengagement of the object from its surroundings. As with the process of perception in general, what is considered relevant or irrelevant in the act of focusing results from habitus. The key question is which buildings are ignored and what aspects of social background make an architectonic object to be noted or ignored in the act of perception. Is it a strategy of ignorance or a lack of interest? *Flâneurs* are roaming through the Rzeszów downtown, which is a built-up area. Buildings stretch along the streets and are always within sight. Surprisingly, the students often excluded them from their narratives.

The inclusion or exclusion of objects from the report is based on two simple strategies of differentiation: between **old and new** as well as between **distinctive and indistinctive**. The study of individual journals shows that the saturation of the space with certain architectural styles does not make them more 'visible' for the participants. The center of the city is mostly filled with the Galician period and modern interwar architecture, but they are rarely invoked in the notes. Most reports include at least one example of prepartition architecture. Only the New Synagogue is not mentioned (the Old Synagogue, however, is). The closer we get to the present day, the more omissions are made. In the case of the 19th-century buildings, the students paid attention to the secession style, but not to renaissance revival or baroque revival. Recalling modern architecture, they discuss socialist realism, socialist modernism, and more recent buildings, while almost completely ignoring the interwar modernism, which significantly contributes to the architectural landscape of the Rzeszów Downtown.

Describing particular Galician period sites, the students recall the Old Cemetery, the Wanda Siemaszkowa Theater, the Town Hall, the University of Rzeszów's Law Institute building, Radio Rzeszów, and Secession Villas. When they discuss modern architecture, they point to the socialist realism of the Voivodeship Office and the 'Zorza' cinema, socialist modernist Subcarpathian Philharmonic Hall, interwar Regional Cultural Center building (WDK), the Social Security Institution (ZUS), or the Hotel Bristol Rzeszów. Except for the villas, they are all examples of infrastructure performing particular, easy-to-describe functions. Considering this, they may be easily included in the larger set of buildings containing also older objects such as baroque palaces, churches, and monasteries. These are **distinctive** buildings. They are attended in a focused manner. Moreover, they are often landmarks, towering over the surrounding buildings (the Bernardine monastery, the ZUS building) or separated from the surroundings with vast space (the Town Hall, the Castle, the Summer Palace). This also makes it possible to designate the class of objects that are mostly ignored (that are **indistinctive**) in the narratives: tenement houses (called '*kamienice*' sing. '*kamienica*' in Polish). Most of them were built at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, but there are also several interwar, socialist modernist, and modern apartment buildings. They were almost completely excluded from the reports. They were moved to the peripheral vision, blurred into the background.

These types of structure usually have business space on the ground floor, while above the first floor, living apartments are located. Although a careful analysis would show that there are differences in their façades, the students paid little attention to them and did not bother comparing them and describing their unique features. Tenement houses create a background for more distinguishable public buildings. It is easy to tell a baroque church from a gothic one, but distinguishing a baroque revival *kamienica* from a renaissance revival one or an interwar functionalist tenement house from socialist modern blocks of flats requires expert knowledge. Paradoxically, villas that played a similar function as apartment buildings (they were built for living) were gazed upon and analyzed. However, the Rzeszów villas (as will be demonstrated further) can be easily distinguished from the surroundings. Therefore, it is not a question of style, but, rather, of function, and the saturation of space with buildings makes them 'transparent'. A passerby would see a colorful background and some interesting objects emerging from it, on which he/she would focus. One of the contributions shed some light on the process of selecting the objects.

> III Maja Street is full of well-maintained, old, colorful buildings. [It is] covered with new paving, which gives the street an elegant atmosphere. We passed the iconic 'U Myszki' ice cream parlor, the 'Zorza' cinema, [High School no 1], a nightclub and several restaurants that were still almost empty. There were few people on the street at this time and it was rather quiet around. We walked through the market square, where several restaurants were just setting up their tables outside. On that day, for the first time I noticed a frog in a well in the Market Square, which had probably been there for a long time. There, we also met several other teams on a research walk. Researcher number one paid more attention to the 'Zorza' cinema, the parish church, and the town hall. For me, these elements seemed to be only part of the street; in fact, they were irrelevant to me as separate elements. [Team 5]

Although the objects are distant from each other, for the author, they blend into the background. It is surprising, since the church and the Town Hall are separated from other buildings and are characterized by a unique architecture, while the cinema is a socialist modernist object adjacent to secession and renaissance revival tenement houses. The reporting person paid attention to the general atmosphere of the street, but moving to the description of the buildings passed by, she focused on their functional aspect, which in this case (and in many other reports) is more important than the esthetics of the buildings. Although she mentioned the overall attractiveness and colors of the facades, her esthetic analysis ended there.

It should be noted that the frameworks ‘old–new’ and ‘distinguishable–indistinguishable’ can be connected. The Lubomirski Summer Palace is an ‘old’ and also ‘distinctive’ object, while modern apartment blocks are rather ‘new’ and ‘indistinctive’. Some objects, such as the Castle, the Bernadine Monastery, or the Town Hall, may be treated as landmarks. They are unique and distinguishable in their settings, surrounded by less monumental architecture, and separated from them with some open space, thus becoming more visible. This may play a role in the process of valorization, but as the recent citation shows, it is not always the case.

Immersion in the process

So far, the discussion has shown that the perception of the participants is provoked by different phenomena, but also that the authors vary in terms of attention to detail. All reports vary in length and scrupulosity. It is difficult, however, to say whether this difference results from an individual approach to the process of data collection (e.g., it was hasty and inattentive) or from the lack of diligence in writing the reports (some descriptions are sketchy and lacking details). However, this kind of narrative strengthens the feeling of walking through the city. The process of the *flâneur* gaze is active. Since the students were asked to walk, watch, and make notes, they were trying to find something worth mentioning. On the one hand, it is about awareness and perceptivity, but on the other, the task was writing notes, and this is a far more engaging and time-consuming activity than the observation itself. To push the discussion forward, the comparison of notes about the Rzeszów castle should be made. It allows us to draw some conclusions about the students’ immersion in the process.

> We followed [in the direction] of the Lubomirski Palace where a district court is located. [Team 4]

> The next characteristic building was the Lubomirski Castle, it was a large, nice building that stood significantly from the landscape with its structure and location. [Team 6]

> Then we went straight in the direction of the Lubomirski Castle through the park, the castle did not impress me, surrounded by a large wall, seems to be a distant and inaccessible place, I’ve never been there, but also I’m not particularly attracted to it. [Team 7]

> Going further we passed by the Lubomirski Castle, a quite massive building, impressive looking, some respect can be felt. [Team 9]

Illustration 2. Lubomirski Castle

Source: Team 9, Researcher 2.

The students tried to describe the castle using their everyday language. Starting with the note from Team 4, the statement is laconic. It is limited to the act of the classification of an object to a particular type and function. The student's reading of architecture has more to do with methodologies of everyday life (Garfinkel, 2007) – only brief associations are used if they are sufficient to organize the experience of the city. Two statements: 'the Lubomirski castle' and 'a court house' seem to be enough to capture all the needed information. From the perspective of the constructed theory, this addresses the functions and historicity of the building. They statements do not discuss esthetic aspects such as architectonic style and only partially provide some historical context pointing to the castle as a seat of the noble family.

The next three contributions are more complex and add some esthetic experience. The authors described the features of the castle (*large building*; *distant and inaccessible*; *massive, impressive*), evaluated its artistic qualities (*nice*; *did not impress me*), and tried to define its relationship with the building (*I'm not particularly attracted to it*; *some respect can be felt*). Team 6 also tried to set up the castle in the space and treated it as a landmark. It is possible then to note differences in framing: wide shot in the case of the second report and full shot in the case of the others.

The comparison of narratives shows unique approaches and sensitivities in describing the same object. An obvious difference can be seen between the first note and the remaining ones. The first one is focused on simple facts, while the others show some awareness and emotions connected to this act of perception. The narratives are expressed in vernacular and lack professional terminology, but demonstrate esthetic experience and a certain degree of immersion in the practice of *flâneurie* at the particular site. One can also note the differences in emotions invoked by the castle during the act of perception. They can be positive (Team 6 and 9) or negative (Team 7). This allows us to state that an architectonic object can be a boundary object (Star, Griesemer, 1989) and can generate discursive practices.

Laconic descriptions also raise the question whether the participant was not interested in a particular object or whether different factors played a role here. The students had limited time to walk, but were not instructed which route to take or how much time they should spend observing a single spot. I see a kind of economy in their work. In this case, it is a search for balance between the richness of the data, the number of cases, and the time limit. Immersion in the case of the *flâneur* gaze corresponds to the meticulousness in observing the object and, more or less directly, the amount of time the walker spends on the practice. The basic assumption is that the more saturated and more detailed the report, the more time it took to prepare it. Observation takes time, but transferring observations and thoughts to written form is even more challenging. The difference between the details noticed during fieldwork and those written in the report should be the object of further study.

The study of an architectonic object goes beyond the sole act of watching. It may engage different senses, but it may also include learning about its current and historical functions, as well as people and events related to it. Easy access to the Internet helps to quickly get the needed information. The popularization of mobile phones blurred the border between the physical and virtual worlds. Being online is currently an element of everyday experience (Filiciak et al., 2010). It would seem that such a situation encourages the use of easily accessible knowledge to explore interesting sites. Collected data shows, however, that young people prefer to use their everyday, accessible, ad-hoc knowledge, instead of looking for more detailed information on the Internet. This does not mean that they do not try to learn something more specific about objects, but most of such attempts are based on already possessed information or text that is in their sight (e.g., historical markers). Their **perception and analysis are both superficial**. The information on the plaque is enough to satisfy their curiosity.

During this walk, *flâneurs* could explore new places and visit familiar ones. Although most of the project participants were not born in Rzeszów, they had some knowledge of its downtown. Here is the shortest way from the bus or train station to the university's main campus. The Market Square (especially the well) is a popular meeting place for people planning a bar visit (many of Rzeszów's pubs are located in the Downtown). This provides an additional perspective on the process of collecting data and writing notes. It shows the importance of not only individual cultural capital, but also of life trajectories, past events, and everyday practices. Some situations from their more or less recent past are treated as a reference.

> Another spot – perhaps a little less important from a historical perspective – but for us, the young people, it is a very important place, namely Dara Kebab. This place is known to everyone. The place itself is already iconic; we don't know a student who has not appeared there at least once after a party. [Team 2]

Illustration 3. An 'iconic' kebab bar

Source: Team 2, Researcher 2.

Contrary to the picture whose framing is something between wide and full shot, the description has more of a close-up perspective. In the narrative, the author completely ignored the architecture and esthetic qualities of the building (although it is a well-maintained historic 19th-century apartment building) and focused on the kebab bar. He also considered it important to add the information that the establishment is a focal point of the life of Rzeszów's students. The description gives a hint that it is an element of the habitus of the local students. This example shows that immersion, as a component of the *flâneur* gaze, goes beyond the simple classification of objects discussed in the example of Team 4 note on the castle. It applies various factors to the interpretation of the objects. The narrator stresses the fact that the building can be interpreted from various perspectives, namely: historical, individual, and collective, but also as an institution. This object is not important as a piece of architecture, but because of the bar that it hosts; it is the kebab establishment that connects with the sphere of emotions and biography. It invokes positive memories and links to different spheres of an individual's life. While this is a deeper than sketchy description of the castle, it still utilizes only part of possible references. The more detailed the description, the more spheres of life it relates to, the deeper the immersion.

Immersion is a dimension of the *flâneur* gaze. Perceiving objects starts a more complex process that encompasses observation, analysis, contextualization, and finding connections with various spheres of life. It can vary in intensity and should be considered as a continuum: from the superficial interaction to deep immersion in the process. A simple notion of the object during a walk is the perspective of the passerby. A student approaches an object, looks at it, notices some elements, and moves on. It is enough to remember a few details of a structure, but it is too little to provide a comprehensive description. It is close to the everyday approach when one focuses on getting from point A to B and treats buildings as markers that help to navigate. Although the situation of the project encouraged a more in-depth approach, the participants usually sparingly spoke. The *flâneur* gaze begins when a walker starts contemplating what he/she sees and utilizes additional senses, emotions, knowledge, and recollections from the past. It also includes a sense of discovery. Some rapporteurs were fascinated by newly encountered sites and went beyond simple descriptions of perceived objects. Their descriptions put emphasis on context. While focusing, they included emotions and added additional objects, people, and information on the surroundings to the frame. This kind of approach appears in the descriptions of 3 Maja Street, the Market Square, and the Ignacy Tokarczuk roundabout, but the most bright example is Aleja pod Kasztanami:

> In addition, walking around the Lubomirski Castle we found ourselves in the place I was probably for the first time, and it was a one-and-only place. So, I was the most interested in this area because it was the only one completely new for me. There were several old buildings; on one of the plaques I read that one of the buildings was built in 1899. Looking at the buildings in some way, one can move into the past and [see] what Rzeszów once looked like. For me, it is a place full of charm and very climatic, and I regret having discovered it so late. What in my opinion makes this street or alley (I don't know), even more beautiful is the fact that there is plenty of greenery in this place, so this time of year it looks beautiful. [Team 3]

> Then we went to the Lubomirski Castle, a very unique and old house. What was interesting was that all of the researchers in this team took a picture of the same building. I paid attention to the appearance of these buildings – to the magnificent architecture, to the flowers that bloom in the gardens, to the fact that they are very well cared for, to the fact that they are only such buildings in Rzeszów […]
> In my opinion, it is one of the most climatic areas in Rzeszów. The street is cobbled with characteristic Rzeszów cobblestone, there are very old and beautiful chestnut trees and wonderfully fragrant, blooming trees that provide shade. […] [Team 5]

The authors move between wide-shot and full-shot. The first description treats the alley as a whole, while the second focuses on the building, eventually switching the attention to the surroundings. There are references to historical value, uniqueness, esthetics, preservation state, emotions, and nature. The experience of the villas is more complex and rich in comparison to other discussed objects. The author also discusses the atmosphere of the place. Łukasiuk (2018) analyzes this phenomenon in the context of architecture and defines it as an influence of both sensual and emotional factors. Although it is connected with other aspects of architecture, including esthetics, it transcends them. It is significantly connected to the place and has a lot to do with its design. Records recall buildings and express admiration for their appearance, but focus on emotions. They do not include the use of knowledge of art history and art terminology during the valorization of architecture. It is still an everyday approach, yet the description is deepened. It draws on the narrator's feelings and her ability to discern details in the design of the object and its surroundings. The authors compare the street and objects with other buildings seen during the *flâneurie*, and find it unique. They define it as 'one and only'. What is interesting in this particular example is that it is the only situation where a participant applied historical imagination and tried to visualize how Rzeszów had looked like in the past.

Illustration 4. The Secession Villas (Pod Kasztanami Alley) and the northern bastion of the castle from the perspective of the villas

Source: Team 3, Team 5.

Thick descriptions appear when the students were interested in particular objects. They focused more on buildings that are somehow attractive to them, even if they lack expert knowledge about them. In such cases, they tried to elaborate using their everyday vocabulary. This makes some reports uneven – cases interesting for authors are more extensively described, while less interesting ones are more sketchy. This relates somehow to the previously described concept of research economy – having limited-time, the observers make decisions concerning the amount of details they want to include in their narratives.

Esthetic valorization

Flâneurs pay attention to different buildings for various reasons, but only some of those motives are esthetic. In such cases, they are connected to the shape, proportions, the organization of components (composition), colors, decorative elements, or the material used. This esthetic experience transforms a simple walk into a *flâneurie*. An observer not only walks by and looks at, but also involves in interaction with the object. The *flâneur* is immersed in the process. Immersion as a component of *flâneur* gaze is related to several factors that affect the attention of the social actor. The act of perception is initiated when a walker spots something that he/she finds attractive (or on the contrary) and puts some effort into *gazing upon it*. Certain processes can take place during this activity. The *flâneur* can *valorize* the object itself, but he/she can also *compare* them to indicate which one he/she is more fond of. The other features may come into play during this process, but it is not necessary. If so, the narrative may include the memories of the narrator, the specification of the function of the building, or the recollection of its past, but they are not enough to name the experience the esthetic one.

The notion of esthetics in the discussed cases covers a spectrum of reactions. They are either positive, neutral, or negative; however, the students used the word *esthetic* to address their positive attitude toward an object. Also, the use of different phrases indicates a gradation of the intensity of perceived features. I collected them and created three semantic fields to show different ways of expressing the esthetic value of a perceived building. Starting with positive ones, the architectonic object can be: *interesting, very pretty, beautiful, magnificent, neat, one and only, elegant, very well looking, fitting, worth attention, standing out, eye-catching, pleasant to the eye, one of the nicest, nice, the nicest, esthetic, interesting, climatic*.

The neutral designations are as follows: *not impressive, not evoking any particular emotion*.

To recall negative attitudes toward the building esthetics, the students wrote: *uninviting, ugly, the ugliest, lacking esthetics, unesthetic, not fit, horrible, hideous, takes the charm away, not captivating, ruins the look, causes anxiety*.

It is difficult to accurately answer which building characteristic would be unanimously accepted as positive, but I make an attempt to construct two ideal types that can be used to support this analysis and help to better understand the students. Some elements seem to co-occur more often and create a more consistent image. The first (positive) type is a well-maintained historical building surrounded by nature. The Lubomirski Summer Palace is a good example.

> After leaving the street, we found ourselves at the Lubomirski summer palace. The family was already mentioned by us because its main architect was the author of ‘The View of Rzeszów’, which caught the attention of all the researchers in our group at the beginning of the walk. I really like the building, I think its style is very artistic and, most importantly, there is nothing exaggerated or pomp in it. The garden is well maintained and has an interesting exhibition. In my opinion, it is one of the prettiest elements of the Rzeszów architecture. [Team 11]

Here, five elements should be considered. Firstly, the narrator discussed questions of building type or function (palace). Second, its historicity was considered (connection to the Lubomirski family, the fact that it was painted on an 18th-century map). Third, it is located in the garden (nature) that is, fourth, well-maintained, and fifth, there is an approach to discuss its architectural form. The palace made an impression on the student, since this esthetic analysis is more complex if compared to other groups or other cases included in this journal. Although the object was generally valued positively, also by other groups, it rarely inspired the participants to write longer and more detailed entries. In other logbooks, it was simply described as *a mansion* [Team 1] or as *an elegant and old building that was a seat of the medical chamber of the Rzeszów district* [Team 6].

Illustration 5. The Lubomirski Summer Palace

Source: Team 11.

Although the author put some effort into the discussion, the description remained at a general level. There is only a summary of the style, without an attempt to name it or describe the architectural components of the palace. Still, it is more complex than many other entries, which are limited to noting whether the building is old or new, attractive or not. Of course, the issue of maintenance addresses the garden, not the palace, so it somehow weakens the argument, but the lack of criticism concerning the state of preservation allows us to assume that it was considered acceptable. Other historical buildings, such as the Bernardine Monastery or Secession Villas, are close to this type. Their historicality, esthetic qualities, uniqueness, and green environment were noted as key points of their attractiveness.

In contrast to the discussion above, a negative type of architecture would be a modern building in a poor state without access to nature. While no object meets all the criteria, two cases are close to it.

> We passed the ZUS building, which in my opinion was the ugliest I saw during the walk. Even the foliage around it did not make it better. [Team 5]

Illustration 6. ZUS building (in the background)

Source: Team 5.

The Social Insurance Institution building was raised in the 1990s. It stands out from the rest of the developments at the crossroads of Piłsudski and Głowacki streets as the tallest object. It is also surrounded by historic, 19th century former military barracks and tenement houses. The entry describing the building is short and simple, addresses its function and esthetic features, closing them in one simple statement: *the ugliest*. The student did not recall certain esthetic elements (shape, composition, and detail). It seems that the object as a whole does not have any feature that would improve the student's attitude toward it.

A similar situation occurred in the case of the skyscrapers located in the southern part of the area:

> We finished the walk through the Boulevards near the construction site of (another) skyscraper. At the moment they look horrible, as if someone has put two concrete cubes there. Everything around it is made of concrete, there is not a single spot between them where one could plant

> grass after the construction is finished. It is another symptom that Rzeszów is becoming similar to large cities. [Team 5]

What causes the negative reaction is the current shape of the structure, which is still under construction, but also the lack of nature in the neighborhood. The organization of the concrete-filled space also suggests that there will not be much greenery when the construction is finished. Another team took up the topic, yet their perspective is less critical:

> After moving on, in the direction of the Philharmonics, the only thing that caught our attention was the construction sites, which were noisy sometimes. Two huge skyscrapers could be seen emerging slowly, on the one hand, it looked interesting and, on the other, it raised some anxiety. [Team 9]

Illustration 7. Olszynki Skyscrapers towering over the old tenement houses

Source: Team 9.

The narrative is ambiguous; on the one hand, the appearance of the buildings on the horizon draws attention and is described as interesting, but on the other, it invokes some negative emotions. The skyscrapers emerging from behind the low tenement houses and dominating the landscape are something like a foreign body in this neighborhood. The juxtaposition of old two-story *kamienice* with massive high-rise buildings brings a feeling of confusion and spatial disorder. The comparison of the entries shows that, while their reflections vary, they focus on two constructed ideal types. Although not equally enthusiastic or critical, the students' evaluation of both types of buildings – old vs. new – demonstrates similarities. The question is why the ancient ones are found to be more esthetically-pleasing while the newer ones are not. One of the possible answers is that the features of historic buildings are more unique than those of modern ones. The students live in post-World War II settings, surrounded by contemporary architecture. They are used to it. It is more natural to them, so when encountering an older building, they are more likely to focus on it than on an ordinary, unremarkable block of flats. As some of the students point out, they *stand out* from modern architecture *with their distinguishing looks* [Team 6]. They are not just looked at; they are *admired* [Team 1]. This may be linked to the cult of antiquity discussed by Riegl. They are interesting simply because they are old. From the perspective of cognitive economy, they also need less effort to be described and less complex vocabulary to be distinguished from a socialist modernist object. It is enough to tell that they are old, which is satisfactory for the majority of reporting persons. More recent architecture is simply described as ugly.

Although the typology seems to explain most of the cases, several instances do not fit the framework. Simply put, some contributions show that the argument of the valorization of old architecture above new cannot be used as a generalization. It is not just that *the old one is beautiful while the new one is not*; the situation is more complex. Although there is a tendency toward positively describing historical buildings and negatively assessing the contemporary ones, some contributions show that an additional category needs to be introduced to cover all instances. The following entries show outlier cases: one modern building whose architecture was found attractive and one historical one that was criticized.

> Then we found ourselves at the Bristol Hotel, which in my opinion is very nice and modern, but at the same time has elements that connect with Polish tradition. The combination of wooden elements with gray [façade] is probably my favorite [way of] organization of architectural [elements], so this building is one of my favorites that I saw today. […] [Team 11]

The narrator presented here a building constructed in the 2010s and focused on its architectonic style. She put some effort into describing its façade, mentioning the materials and colors used. Still, the analysis is not very detailed. The student simply listed the features of the building and then discussed the composition of its windows, slats, canopies, or reliefs. She compared the hotel to the other architectural objects encountered on this day and rated it higher. This challenges the statement of the general unattractiveness of modern buildings. But that is not all. Beginning the second part of the note, the narrator strengthened her argument by recalling the presence of nature in the vicinity.

> Also, I noticed a nice and quite large park in the hotel neighborhood, I really like it and I think there is a lack of parks like this in Rzeszów. However, in contrast to the beautiful park, there is a very ugly building nearby. It is likely that it was once a synagogue, looking at the Star of David displayed on it. I think this building worsens the mood of the area, it is very neglected and has a bad shape and mixed colors that do not fit the environment. [Team 11]

Illustration 8. Bristol Hotel

Source: Team 11.

The hotel is close to the positive type building. It is an object with a clear function with an attractive look; there is also greenery near. Since it is new, it is also well-maintained. The only difference is the lack of historicism (yet the use of elements referring to the Polish ethnography at the entrance could be treated as such). However, the esthetics of the synagog is subject to criticism. Its historicism is not contested. The Old Synagog, founded at the beginning of the 17th century, is compared here with a new hotel and a park. Once again, the student used her superficial approach to evaluate the artistic characteristics of the building. For him, they are more important than the fact that the object is one of the oldest in Rzeszów or that it is an indicator of the long history of the Jewish community of the city (Tobiasz, 2017). The synagog is located where the former Jewish quarter existed. The park is on the site of a former Jewish cemetery and there are more objects that commemorate this community here, such as plaques and monuments. The fact that the structure is poorly maintained and its (pink) color does not match the greenness of the park or the more subtle colors of the facades of the objects in the vicinity seems to be the most important part of the narrative. So, the synagogue as a historical building with clear function, located close to the park, meets almost all the criteria of the positive type. However, the narrator contested its esthetics and state of preservation. Unlike the hotel, the former prayer house is perceived as neglected. Therefore, it seems that either a combination of features that are connected to different defined types can create a dissonance, or some elements have a stronger impact on the process of valorization. Any form of corruption can affect the evaluation. Since the hotel is well-maintained, it does not show negatively associated features. There is a kind of harmony in the combination of components that make up the esthetic experience. In the case of the synagogue, elements associated with two contradictory ideal types are merging, creating a dissonance, and the cause of the criticism should be sought there.

Illustration 9. The Old Synagog

Source: Team 11.

Dissonance, the state of preservation, and foreign bodies

The entries on the new development and the synagog discuss not only the buildings themselves, but also their relationship with other objects in the area. They are found to be unfit, standing out negatively from the environment. The narrators discussed the problem, try to verbalize it, and name it. During the process, they recalled either esthetic or emotional factors. This is mentioned directly. The issue of the ZUS building is more complicated. It is distinguished from the surrounding historical buildings, but the author did not recall this fact. However, she compared the object with the ones she had encountered during the walk, and named it the ugliest one.

My argument is that the esthetic component of the *flâneur* view is based on a search for harmony. This quality is not of an immanent, aprioristic nature, but, as the cited literature on perception and art reception shows, it is social. Although the data possessed is not sufficient to link all instances of esthetic experience with the social background of the participants, it is possible to reconstruct some factors that are involved in the process. Simply put, the objective is to tell when the *flâneur* is convinced that everything is 'in its place' to find the encounter with architecture pleasing.

In the case of the skyscrapers and the synagog, not everything was in place. The features of the objects were mixed, causing uncertainty in the narrators. The example of skyscrapers shows that the juxtaposition of modern and historical architecture creates a tension that is defined as *anxiety*. The green area of Olszynki was cut to make a place for the construction site. This does not go hand in hand with the value system of the students. As the journals show, nature is very important to the participants, and they reacted positively to the green spots they encountered during the walk. This is not surprising, as young people – specifically young people from EU countries – demonstrate a high level of environmental awareness (Cynk, 2017). The status of the old synagogue denies the belief that a cultural monument should be well-maintained and protected. Thus, another dissonance emerges.

The idea that the lack of harmony, chaos, or dissonance has an impact on the esthetic evaluation of the object is supported by other contributions. The issue of spatial chaos was mentioned in an entry depicting the construction site in the Station Square. The reporting person invoked noise, disorder, and a feeling of anxiety. However, there are also narratives discussing the problem of negligence or the lack of harmony in building facades.

> However, as in every city, some streets do not look good, and so it is in this case, heading from III Maja Street toward the 'Pasaż' mall, there is also such a street. There is a lot of graffiti on the walls and the odors that we could smell when we passed there were also not very welcoming. [Team 3]

> Mostly dilapidated, old buildings, a huge number of signboards, each of a different color, with a different font. It was a shame that the city center was neglected so much. [Team 5]

The comments on signboards, commercial posters, or billboards are usually kept in a negative tone. According to the students, the design and organization of such signs are chaotic and spoil the esthetics of the building. They are **foreign bodies** in the entire composition. The statement is limited to advertising boards. The research material does not contain any case of criticism toward historical markers.

Illustration 10. Graffiti

Source: Team 3.

Illustration 11. Modern and historical buildings on Piłsudski Street

Source: Team 5.

The question of whether these claims concern the informational objects themselves or the fact of their placement on the historical tenement house needs more elaboration. Following the argument of the search for harmony, it can be shown that the students addressed either poorly-designed advertisements or their juxtaposition with the façade. The collected data is not helpful here, yet the comparison with comments on graffiti allows us to better understand the topic. Wall paintings, depending on their placement, may be contested or accepted. Posters or drawings on historical walls are criticized:

> While walking, I noticed graffiti, if you can call it that, because I would rather call it the destruction of property because, in my opinion, it was not esthetic in any way and only spoils the image of the city. There was also a poster in this place, which was probably supposed to encourage participation in the away match between Resovia and OKS Odra; it doesn't seem to me to be the right place to put such posters, especially since there are places specially designed for it. [Team 3]

On the other hand, paint markings on the Monument of Gratitude to the Red Army are described more neutrally:

> [Entering from] the market square we came across a park in which another Red Army monument is located, it is interesting that it is stained with a paint that looks like an intended act. Looking at what is happening in the world, I think someone spilled [it] in the act of demonstration to show the objection to the special operation of Russia. [Team 10]

Illustration 12. The Monument of Gratitude to the Red Army

Source: Team 11.

The attitude toward the Red Army and, generally, Russia is negative in Poland, so the destruction of the monument is rationalized here. However, it shows that monuments can be valorized differently depending on their provenience. Those rooted in the local history are generally accepted, while those connected to the difficult past become boundary objects.

However, the topic of wall paintings covers a broader spectrum of phenomena that can be crudely divided into legal and illegal ones. While graffiti is usually painted in violation of the law, murals are created on request and with permission of the local government. They are positively evaluated and cause more sympathetic behavior; therefore, the concept of foreign bodies has no application here:

> […] We went near the Fryderyk Hotel, which made me take a picture because of the large mural of Fryderyk Chopin. [Team 1]

Illustration 13. Hotel 'Fryderyk' advertising mural

Source: Team 1.

Murals in the Old Rzeszów area can be found in several places. They are usually historically themed (e.g., Irena Sendler, Fred Zinnemann, historical bomber PZL.37 "Łoś"). In this particular case, a mural is an advertisement, so on the one hand, it should be included in the group of criticized objects, but on the other, it is legal, painted on a building that, from the narrator's perspective, it is not historical, and the image's form is more sophisticated than that of an ordinary graffiti, so it attracts his/her attention. Generally, the critique of the communicative components of urban space has a long tradition in sociology. Aleksander Wallis, already in the 1970s, noted:

> The technical and artistic level of the elements of the informative layout is diverse. As a result, mediocrity is adjacent to a work of art and displays of technical perfection, with mere technical fluke. (Wallis, 1977: 277)

What is important here is that young people can perceive and discern these components of *informative layout* – which more or less correspond to architecture – and evaluate their design and quality. Compared to other aspects of valorization, they demonstrate a higher degree of awareness and esthetic sensitivity.

Conclusions

The phenomenon of the *flâneur* view does not limit itself to the architecture or esthetic elements of the cityscape. Also, this analysis shows only the perspective of Rzeszów's students. The method could be applied to a larger group and the study could include a broader spectrum of phenomena. Yet, this application of mobile methodology has proven to be useful. It allowed me to learn more about socially-driven perception acts as well as to collect, isolate, and describe a set of values that young people connect with buildings. The research outcomes also contributed to the knowledge of the reception and esthetic valorization of architecture, thus proving an added value to the field of the sociology of art.

The most important finding is that (at least in the urban space) students value harmony. They demonstrate the need for it by criticizing spatial and visual chaos, highly valorizing well-maintained, neat buildings and spaces. While they have historical architecture in high regard, they also appreciate modern objects if they are well-cared-for and do not contrast with their surroundings. Nature is also high on their list of values.

Generally, the paper confirms the statement of Zerubavel that perception is socially-determined. It does not give all the answers concerning the influence of particular sociodemographic traits on the consideration of students. It does not allow us to analyze the transmission of patterns in the families of the participants. These are shortcomings that I am aware of. Still, it allows us to draw some conclusions concerning the process of perception and the art education system in Polish elementary and high schools. The primary finding is that the ignorance of Galician and modern apartment houses and focusing on historical landmarks raises questions about the cause of this problem. It is also vital to establish whether it is only related to social background or has to do something with the 'cognitive economy'. In addition, the fact that none of the researchers used professional art history terms even once while describing the architecture of the Rzeszów Downtown prompted us to take a closer look at that issue. The reason for this might be systemic: art education is ignored in elementary schools, but architecture might also not be interesting to students. Primary school curricula include art history courses and hypothetically provide students with basic knowledge of architectonic styles. Students should be able to tell a gothic church from a baroque one, and a classicist manor from a secession villa. However, they do not use this knowledge, at least in this project they did not. They used an everyday approach, trying to note and name some elements using stocks of knowledge they possess, focusing on the most distinctive traits. Since it applies to every report, it is difficult to locate the cause in the habitus of the authors, but one of the possible answers is also that their habitus is similar.

The method and results need further development. Naming a few possibilities, they can be compared with descriptions of non-architectonic objects: monuments, people, behavior, etc. Additionally, the invitation of professional participants may prove fruitful. A comparison of observations by art historians and architects with those by students may shed some light on the educated versus uneducated perception of architecture. The more direct motivation of participants to explore interiors could be considered. This would add more opportunities to collect material data. In addition to cognitive valor, such an approach may be beneficial to urban planning and revitalization processes.

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Cytowanie

Dominik Porczyński (2024), *The Architecture of the Rzeszów Downtown from the* Flâneur *Perspective*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 82–121, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.05

Architektura rzeszowskiego śródmieścia z perspektywy *flanera*

Abstrakt: W artykule autor podejmuje próbę analizy architektury jako obiektu estetycznego przy użyciu metod mobilnych. Rozwija koncepcję spojrzenia *flanera*: aktu percepcji powiązanego ze spacerem, wzbogaconego rozważaniami o otoczeniu. Celem tekstu jest opis zawiłości tego procesu: co sprawia, że *flaner* interesuje się konkretnym obiektem architektonicznym, jak go ocenia i jaką rolę odgrywa w tej aktywności estetyka. Ten spacer badawczy studenci odbyli w śródmieściu Rzeszowa. Obejmował on obserwację, prowadzenie notatek i fotografowanie. Do celów artykułu autor analizuje trzynaście dzienników. Głównym odkryciem jest to, że studenci cenią harmonię wizualną oraz przestrzenną i poszukują jej w krajobrazie miejskim. Są pozytywnie nastawieni względem dobrze utrzymanych, głównie historycznych budynków. Ważna jest dla nich także natura. W swoich opisach używają języka codziennego, a ich typ recepcji estetycznej można określić jako nieprofesjonalny.

Słowa kluczowe: socjologia architektury, percepcja, recepcja sztuki, metody mobilne, *flaneria*

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Francis Kéré: A Spokesperson of African Architecture? Modernism and Decolonization

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Indigenous Modernities, African architecture, Francis Kéré, modernism, colonialism, postcolonial perspective

Abstract: In the context of past winners of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, how can one interpret the decision to honor the architectural work of Francis Kéré in 2022? This article problematizes the West's interest in African architecture. Is it really due to the fact that African architecture excels in conditions of scarcity and climate crisis? The 18th Venice Architecture Biennale shows that Africa can be regarded as a kind of the "laboratory of the future." Or is the Pritzker Architecture Prize more of a patronizing and orientalizing gesture that renders African architecture a curiosity, while the Global North chasteningly points out that it is time to rein in the overly spectacular ambitions of contemporary starchitecture, which has neglected its social role? The posed questions direct the analysis toward Kéré's architecture being interpreted as a local variant of modernism, and his work as a kind of advocacy. Jyoti Hosagrahar's helpful concept of Indigenous Modernities is invoked as a medium through which Africa's emerging and important current of participatory architecture may be viewed from the postcolonial perspective and considered beyond the center – periphery opposition.

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Methodological introduction

When Francis Kéré won the "architectural Nobel Prize" in 2022, those interested in architecture on the one hand rejoiced that perhaps we were witnessing at last an appreciation of sustainable, environmentally-respectful, human-scale architecture. It was a hope for the end of the triumph of big capital and the esthetic sophistication of Western architecture. Others, less enthusiastic, appreciated Francis Kéré's architecture as an exotic curiosity, an indulgent and affectionate look from the global center to the African periphery. How should we interpret this award today? Who is Francis Kéré, and what is African architecture? To answer these questions, I have chosen the case study method, for it is through this method that one can capture and nuance all of the characteristic features of the context in which the phenomena analyzed here are embedded. African architecture viewed from a non-African perspective requires special attention paid to spatiality, locality, and globality, to the specific time when certain events in the world of architecture are happening, to its absent history, to the social context of migration and climate crisis. Through the case study, all of the contextualized problems mentioned here are brought into focus[1]. The method as it is applied here is used to explain the phenomenon of architecture as a tool of power in the broadest sense (the power to look, to judge, to valorize). Of course, this does not relate to explanatory possibilities in the sense of the methodology of the natural sciences, but, rather, to a form of explanation that the humanities call critical interpretation using specific theoretical concepts – in this case based on critical postcolonial theory, engaging the notion of Indigenous Modernities proposed by Jyoti Hosagrahar (2005). This is a thick description in the Geertzian sense (Geertz, 1973).

When analyzing an architectural prize or architecture biennial, as well as architectural press and academic research in the field of architecture, I treat them all as discursive practices played out within architecture. These practices take place in the domain of the center – the Global North – and are conducted under the rules set by that culture[2]. The Pritzker Architecture Prize is thus analyzed here as a practice of distinction (Pierre Bourdieu), reward, and differentiation; as a social institution that determines the order, hierarchy, and structure of the world of architects, and in this sense is part of the order of symbolic power; it is also part of the writing of architectural history. In turn, the architecture biennial, in addition to the aforementioned function, also serves as a critical practice, not only interpreting how architects interpret reality and the role of architecture. In addition, this derivative hermeneutics is conducted as a certain emancipatory strategy – a critical one, to be precise.

I am therefore applying discourse analysis:

1) interpreting the officially formulated justifications of the jury members of the Pritzer Prize as well as placing Francis Kéré's award itself in the broader context not only of the other prize winners but also in the context of the climate crisis and sustainability discourse;

1 A case study method as an approach that is precisely sensitive to contexts, to what is temporal and local, but also evading clear categorizations, was elaborated Bent Flyvbjerg (2004).

2 A further consideration would be the extent to which these practices can be called a "culture game" in Olu Oguibe's sense (see Oguibe, 2004).

2) examining the curatorial programmatic assumptions of the Venice Biennale (as expressed in Lesley Lokko's official statement) as well as the biennale's accompanying events, such as the communiqué for the Reconstructing the Future for People and Planet conference;
3) analyzing the statements of Francis Kéré himself and his communication strategies: ways of publicizing the problem of African architecture, building his own image using autobiographical themes, and ways of using the position he has gained with the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

The analysis of discourses devoted to African architecture – but practiced mainly in the center, in the Global North – prompts the adoption of the postcolonial perspective that problematizes the center – periphery opposition and allows us to look at the discursive practices analyzed using the category of Indigenous Modernity (J. Hosagrahar, H. Haynen). This makes it possible to see African architecture as modern, but at the same time raises the question of the nature of modernism and its internal contradictions: is it a colonial, exclusionary, and oppressive architectural style, or a tool for social change? The case of Francis Kéré is examined from the postcolonial perspective of the transfer of ideas, of the merging of the global with the local.

The adopted methodology makes it possible to build an interpretation-dense description of this architect's activities as an advocate (rather than an expert in the Western European sense, as the possessor of specialized, socially-inaccessible knowledge protected by the authority of expertise and science). It also makes it possible to take a critical look at the hegemonic position taken by the West, despite its declared position of favoring equality, and to expose its strategies of orientation and marginalization, or the played-out fascination with simplicity and sensitivity ("noble savage" versus indulgent, spectacular architecture). This phenomenon has already been well diagnosed by Olu Oguibe, and his selected studies of various cases (non-Western artists) have revealed the facade and hegemonic nature of the "culture game" (2004). The discourse analysis proposed here using Jyoti Hosagrahar's categories of Indigenous Modernity provides new research perspectives and a basis for interpreting Francis Kéré's modernist architecture and the architect's projected role (as an agent of change) beyond the opposition of tradition–modernity, progressive–backward, global–local, and at the same time allows us to question not only the authority of a certain narrative about Western modernist culture – to see it in a much more pluralistic fashion (pluralism of modernism) – but also, going a step further, to delegitimize or unmask the condescending and domineering gestures toward the periphery and decolonizing thinking about Africa.

The thick description and postcolonial interpretation of modernism

Center and Periphery I – what is the Pritzker Architecture Prize?

The International Pritzker Prize, commonly known as "architecture's Nobel," is awarded annually to living architects for their significant achievements. It was established by hotel magnates, the Pritzker family of Chicago, through their Hyatt Foundation in 1979.

The current chairman of the foundation says that the Pritzker family was deeply aware of the role architecture holds, residing in the city that birthed the skyscraper and filled with buildings designed by legendary architects, such as Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, to name but a few (www.pritzkerprize.com).

Therefore, it can be argued that the founders of the award, on the one hand, appreciate the art of architecture and understand its influence on human behavior and the shaping of cities; on the other hand, through the phenomenon of this award, it is apparent that architecture – like no other art – is strongly linked to power relations. Specifically, architecture is linked with capital. Architecture is the language of power, simply because it is impossible to realize a building without having access to someone who has capital and will finance the project. When completed, it, in turn, will influence people's behavior, the shape of cities, lifestyles, and public space.

However, those awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize so far have usually been men and from the rich Global North, such as Robert Venturi, Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas, etc. The first female architect, Zaha Hadid, was not awarded until 2004, followed by Ivonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara in 2020, and the duo Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal in 2021.

The 2022 Pritzker Prize for Architecture was won by Diébédo Francis Kéré, a native of Burkina Faso, educated in Berlin, and the first dark-skinned architect in the history of the award. His architecture is far from spectacular, focusing on the budget, climate, the availability of materials, and the skills and ability of the local community[3].

This is not his one and only international award. His first was the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (2004). This award is unique for architects working in the so-called developing countries of Asia, Arya, and the Middle East. Established in the 1970s, it was a response to the state of architecture after the colonial period. Kéré has won many honors and awards in the world of architecture, but the Pritzker is considered in the area of the Global North as special, more prestigious[4].

3 The architects who come from the African continent are little known in "our" part of the world, because they are most likely to work in places where designers face many challenges. Ghanaian-born David Adjaye works in the UK, but also in Nigeria and Gabon. Kunlé Adeyemi, although he studied in the Netherlands, is now designing informal cities in Nigeria, and Urko Sanchez, who is from Spain, creates projects in Kenya and Somalia. Among the nearly fifty Pritzker Prize winners, there has not yet been a single Black architect.

4 He has won the following: the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (2004), the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture (2009), the Swiss Architectural Award (2010), Marcus Prize for architecture (2011), Holcim Awards Gold 2011 Africa Middle East, Global Holcim Awards 2012 Gold, Schelling Architecture Award (2014), Kenneth Hudson Award for European Museum of the Year (2015), the American Academy of Arts & Letters Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize (2017), Prince Claus Laureate Award (2017), Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture (2021), and the Pritzker Architecture Prize (2022).

Center and Periphery II – Francis Kéré and the social background of the Pritzker Architecture Prize

I would call Francis Kéré a spokesperson for African architecture. Despite his educational background, winning the architectural Nobel, having been a guest speaker at many of the world's universities[5], joining the New European Bauhas roundtable (*New European Bauhaus…*, 2022), and having his unquestionable insight into design, he does not position himself as an expert. His involvement on behalf of African architecture as a manifestation of sustainable development and climate consciousness – as well as his vision and concepts for the future goals of architecture, its participatory dimension, and its promotion in Africa – makes him someone far beyond this narrowly specialized social role. His expertise extends to broad non-academic and non-specialist circles. His speeches, lectures, and presentations are more of a dialog to raise awareness of what is happening beyond the Global North, and of Africa's cultural and environmental contexts. They are vivid, self-referencing, autobiographical, reconstructing the journey he went through, both as a young man leaving Burkina Faso and as an architect with a sense of duty to the place he came from (many of his autobiographical and visionary speeches can be found online: Kéré, 2012a). This kind of engaged advocacy is an opportunity to promote the idea of local architecture, based on participation, community, respect for the environment, and the use of local materials.

Francis Kéré's biography is quite well-known, and one would assume it does not need mentioning, but it is significant (for the only monograph on Francis Kéré to date, see Lepik, Beygo, 2016). It gives voice to the difficult path that an architect of African descent is made to follow, something that is not obvious to a European. Context, after all, is of great importance. Kéré often emphasizes in interviews and public appearances what a huge step forward it was for him to leave Burkina Faso, receive a scholarship in Berlin, and start studying at the Technische Universität, graduating in 2004[6]. He is also aware of the special privileges he enjoys; he began with a financial debt, which resulted from Gando's local community pitching in for his education, but also the debt of hope and trust that the villagers placed in him. While he was a student, Francis Kéré sold his handmade drawings, organized fundraisers among his fellow students, and in 1998 he founded the Schulbausteine für Gando Foundation – today's Kéré Foundation. In 2001, while still a student, Kéré returned to Gando

5 Kéré has held the post of Bauhaus Guest Professor at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar since the 2021/2022 winter semester. His lectures and workshops focus on, above all, sustainable and participatory architecture. He is constantly motivating and challenging his students to seek and develop new solutions for current global issues (*Bauhaus Guest Professor…*, 2022).

6 It would be worth conducting a sociological analysis (Bourdieu) of Kéré's architectural practices and his strategies for "arranging himself" in the Western world, taking into account Paul Gilroy's category of double consciousness (see Gilroy, 1993). Only such a research perspective would make it possible to see exactly how this architect of the African diaspora constructed his position, how he negotiated meanings, and how he met his self-defined "obligations" to his roots, on the one hand, and to his international position, on the other. I thank the reviewer for this stimulating remark. It should be added, however, that in view of the wealth of empirical material and the specificity of Kéré's own activities, such research merits a separate article. This is also due to the fact that Gilroy's own concept of double consciousness poses considerable interpretive problems (the subjectivization of social processes, the role of psychoanalysis, etc.) and needs to be updated, as 30 years have passed since it was written and much has changed in the field of both theory and postcolonial relations. In addition, Gilroy writes mainly about the African-American diaspora, and the case of Kéré, whose work has been associated with Germany, is significantly different. Kéré's casus could be interestingly juxtaposed with the Ghanaian architect David Adjaye.

to repay the debt, building an elementary school. Public buildings in Burkina Faso and many other African countries are often erected with concrete, which has symbolic (colonial) significance. The construction process is expensive, complicated, and requires access to specialists and electricity, unavailable in Gando and in most other villages in Africa. This means that concrete is an "alien" material, degrading the environment, disregarding the climate, past building and spatial practices, in addition making residents feel reliant on its availability and specialists (Choplin, 2023, in particular chapter: "Uninhabitable Concrete").

Working with resistance[7]

All this led Kéré to decide to build with clay, a material that is widely available in his country, inexpensive, and easy to work with. In Gando, this did not arouse enthusiasm; the designs were considered unmodern and unsustainable. As the residents claimed, "The clay can't withstand the rainy season, and Francis wants us to build a school out of it. He spent so much time studying in Europe instead of working with us in the fields for this?" (Kéré, 2012a; 2018; see also: Rodgers, 2014). In Burkina Faso, people traditionally build with clay, but they do not see its potential. "That's what I used my studies in Berlin for – I learned to combine traditional techniques and materials with modern technologies," as Kéré explains during his lectures.

The architectural process began with long and difficult discussions. Before the physical work began, Kéré, as in a laboratory, had built prototypes, experimented, done tests, taught, and persuaded villagers of his ideas and technological solutions.

> We made a brick and put it in a bucket of water, where it stayed for five days. After that period, we took it out and the block was still solid. That's convincing. (Baratto, 2022)

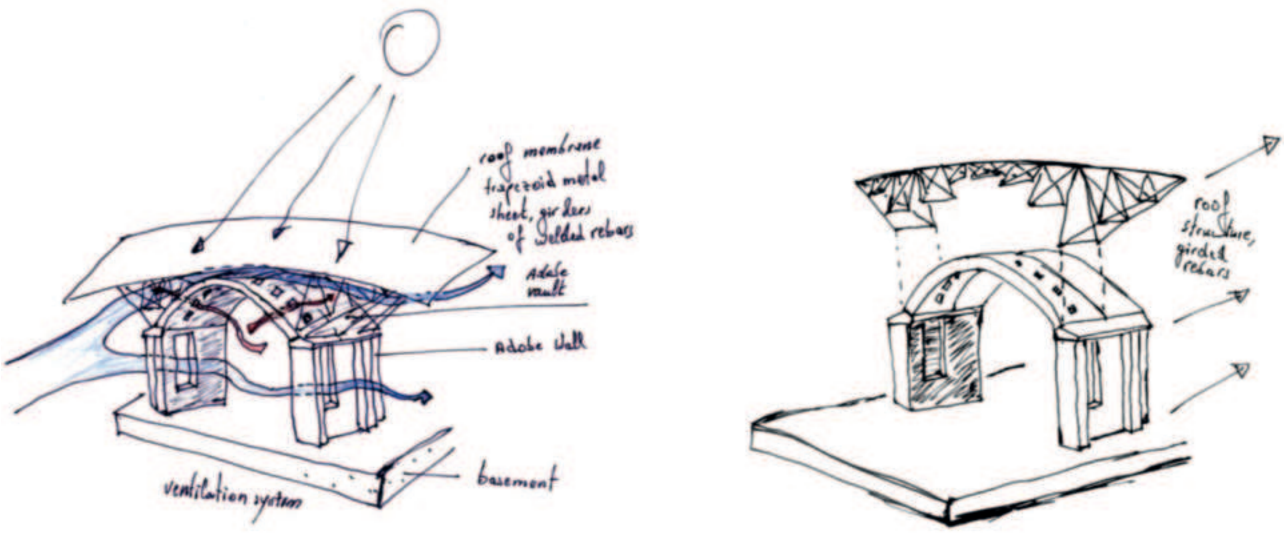
The production of bricks and clay blocks was not only cheap but also relatively easy, ensuring the participation of the local community in the project. After all, collaborative construction is a common practice in African villages. The technology was developed in such a way as to allow everyone to participate in the process. This involvement helped to expand local know-how through the use of new technological solutions, but also to deepen the understanding of the existing construction practices, identify flaws, and bring residents closer to what Richard Sennett calls "material consciousness" (Sennett, 2009: 119–146).

The clay walls were further protected by a wide sheet metal roof projecting beyond the building's outline. This, in turn, was associated by the residents with a material that was completely impractical, heating up rapidly, and releasing heat just as quickly inside the building. Besides, it was regarded as an

7 The title refers to one of the chapters, Richard Sennett's *The Craftsman*, "Resistance and Ambiguity", in which the author describes ways to deal with the environments, or materials, that show resistance. Working with resistance is delicate and conscious work, sometimes discreet, requiring creative collaboration and the use of "minimal force" (Sennett, 2009: 214–238).

“unwanted gift” or, rather, as garbage from the West. Kéré explained to the residents how ventilation worked and that the sheet metal raised on ribbed structures above the perforated brick vaulted ceiling “collects” the heat, effectively protecting the interiors from overheating. By using simple drawings, he had to explain complicated technical issues to people who were never taught to read and write. He built a prototype clay vault and encouraged people to jump on it, proving to the locals that it worked. Only then did they allow the construction to commence. Kéré also discovered the virtues of laterite, a sedimentary rock found in Burkina Faso that hardens in the sun when mined and exposed to air, making it ideal as a building material.

Illustration 1. Natural ventilation in School Extension. Sketch by Francis Kéré



Source: Kéré Foundation, n.d., Architecture.

The Gando school, built in 2001, is the first of many projects the Burkinabé architect has completed in his homeland (Kéré, 2012b). It proved so popular that it was significantly expanded in the following years. In the beginning, it was intended for just over a hundred students; today there are as many as 350 children studying there, with another 150 waiting for admittance. Alongside the main structure, a complex of houses for teachers was also built. Kéré figured that only by providing good living conditions would it succeed in attracting teachers to a poor village in the middle of nowhere.

His next project was a library in Gando, a place where children as well as adults could learn to read and write. As basic building materials were often in short supply, clay pots and jugs containing food and water were used to build the library, creating vents that give an outlet for the hot air and let in daylight by functioning as skylights.

Illustration 2. Formwork for clay brick ceiling, School Extension. Photo by Francis Kéré

Source: Kéré Foundation, n.d., Collaboration.

Illustration 3. Women carrying clay pots. Photo Francis Kéré

Source: Kéré Foundation, n.d., Resources.

Illustration 4. Gando School Library, formwork concrete ceiling. Photo by Kéré Architecture GmbH

Source: Kéré Foundation, n.d., Education.

Illustration 5. Gando School Library

Source Kéré Foundation, n.d., Education.

All of the projects in Gando are always related to educating people, consequently making the local community more proactive as well as having a causative effect on their environment and surroundings. That way, "people are able to use their skills to make money themselves. Architecture can be inspiring for communities to shape their own future," as Kéré explains (Kéré, 2012a).

What can and certainly should be mentioned is that Francis Kéré's architecture is modernist in the sense specified by the first German modernists, with Ernst May in the vanguard. It is an instrument of social change involving the emancipation of the local population, including women[8] and children; it also takes into account and respects the local environmental, social, and economic context. It is engaged and performative in the sense that it influences the formation of social relations. Architecture is not about buildings, but about the process of building – a process during which the transformation of each member of the community, of every one building, takes place. It strengthens ties and makes people feel proud and empowered, but also teaches craftsmanship, the understanding of construction processes, and material consciousness, while also granting livelihood.

Illustration 6. Polishing a rammed earth floor. Photo Francis Kéré

Source: Kéré Foundation, n.d., Resources.

8 Kéré designed the Songtaaba Women's Center, a multipurpose space that houses the Songtaaba Cooperative, which was established in 1999 by a group of Gando women to promote their financial independence. The cooperative aims to expand women's economic opportunities by providing education and training in health, agricultural production, processing, and marketing. It also operates a micro-finance system, giving women the opportunity to take out loans to start small businesses. In turn, the income generated from these businesses often serves the community, for example by investing it in tuition payments.

One of the largest projects Kéré is currently involved in is the development of a complex called Opera Village in Laongo. He designed a complex of buildings located on 14 hectares (34 acres) of land, which includes residential buildings, a school, nursery, health center, and a section dedicated to the arts – art studios and workshops, a gallery, and an auditorium for 500 viewers. This brings to mind Ernst May's comprehensive social housing projects in Frankfurt, which provided public spaces and social services for its residents – a true modernist social laboratory. Although the scale is causing controversy due to its grandeur, Kéré stands by it, explaining that although Burkina Faso is a poor country, its people do have a sense of dignity, and projects such as Opera Village help create a sense of community and self-worth. Housing in many parts of Africa is underdeveloped, and people live in dire conditions. This is not an outcome of laziness. The cause is the lack of education and opportunities. As Kéré demonstrates, these shortages can be eliminated through a cheap, affordable, and easily accessible architectural process.

The interpretation of the results in the postcolonial perspective – whose Modernities?

Is it even warranted to attribute modernist characteristics to Francis Kéré's architecture? By this comparison, are we not falling into the colonial trap of the Western civilization's fascination with simple, primitive architecture? Is the Pritzker Prize a kind of cultural game here, as Olu Oguibe wrote? Or is it an alibi for the modern remorse associated with overblown ambition and overgrown, spectacular architecture? Does an increasingly civilizationally-advanced modernity have more and more problems eliminating the irrational solutions and construction techniques which it itself produces? The legitimacy of posing such questions is substantiated in Hilde Heynen's excellent text titled "The Intertwinement of Modernism and Colonialism" (Heynen, 2013). The postcolonial perspective adopted by the author makes us look with a sensitive eye at our Eurocentric, greedy, appropriating interpretations involving the attribution of modernist features to African architecture. On the other hand, however, we cannot overestimate the hegemonic role of modernity. After all, it dispersed from the center to the periphery and took on different forms in the process (e.g., tropical modernism). Therefore, let us look at the ambivalences of modernism.

If architecture itself is the language of power, then modernism conquers its position. Why is modernism unusual, special in this? Through its use of functionalism, with universality as its key, modernism imposes, bleaches, levels, removes localisms, as well as manifests and preaches[9]. It has built its rhetoric on ethics. It perceives society as an art form (Le Corbusier, 1925/1980). However, modernism is ambiguous. It is important to recall that during the first Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM), there was an extremely important discussion taking place on determining the role of architecture. One side was represented by Le Corbusier and the other by

9 Rotbard brilliantly shows how white buildings become extraterritorial. In his book, he exposes the esthetic, political, and colonial role of functionalism, hygiene, and whiteness in the architecture of modernism (Rotbard, 2015). See also Le Corbusier, 1925/1980: 187–196, 291.

Ernst May and his associates, including Sigfried Giedion. For the latter, the aim was to establish and promote an idea of architecture that would meet the most common needs of the masses – housing (habitat) and emancipation were the main concerns. Hence, while Le Corbusier viewed architecture as an end in itself, May saw it as a tool for social change (Bauer, 1934; Syrkus, 1976; Giedion, 1985; Matysek-Imielińska, 2020: 37–59).

Thus, the inherent inconsistency of modernism lies in the fact that, on the one hand, it brought emancipation and improved living conditions, but on the other hand, at its inception, it was an instrument of exclusion, as not everyone suited the esthetic vision of the new society, the modern human being, and the new vision of the city. By losing the qualities it was initially so proud of, forfeiting political and social programs, it started focusing on style, ultimately becoming a cold and distant form. It could be argued that since the 1980s modern architecture has turned away from its original role and has become an expression of its negation.

Past Pritzker Prize winners are heirs to modernism in a twofold sense, i.e., both in terms of style and ideology. They create architecture that is spectacular, dignified, timeless, functional, and using concrete, steel, and glass. On the other hand, behind it still lies Le Corbusier's (colonial) idea of a new esthetic; a civilizational, progressive model of society – the unfulfilled fantasy of modernity.

This, of course, does not mean disregarding architecture built by the people and for the people, from the bottom up. Vernacular architecture exists, of course, but it is not the one that structures the symbolic order and the history of architecture. However, among the many socially-engaged architects, the work of Alejandro Aravena and his elemental housing project is worth mentioning, as well as his curatorial work at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition, entitled *Reporting from the Front* (ELEMENTAL, 2012; Aravena, 2016). That same year, El Anatsui, a Ghanaian artist living in Nigeria, received the Golden Lion at the 56th Venice Biennale for lifetime achievement.

In this regard, we can also witness a harbinger of change. For example, on 9th and 10th June, 2022, the *Reconstructing the Future for People and Planet* conference was held in Rome, whose organizers, Bauhaus Earth and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, were particularly sensitive to local traditions. At the event, Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, the founder of the Bauhaus Earth, stated the following: "The conference will address a key challenge of our time: averting climate collapse by the deep and rapid transformation of the global built environment. The construction sector can go from climate villain to climate hero, especially by switching to bio-based materials such as timber and bamboo. This transformation will require an unprecedented collaboration between the Global South and the Global North, the integration of advanced technology and vernacular knowledge, and the re-entanglement of nature and civilization in urban space. This is why we convene a superb diversity of experts from around the world and across all relevant disciplines" (Florian, 2022).

Adopting modernist design principles does not immediately mean accepting the dominance of the Western discourse. The modernist idea of emancipation-through-architecture does not have to remain exclusively associated with Europeans, or with those who consider themselves to be more advanced or civilized. In light of postcolonial considerations, one should be extremely careful about pointing out that modernism, and modern architecture, are inextricably intertwined with a belief in the superiority of the West, and associated with its condescending, orderly, and appropriating nature. Heynen subheads her article: "The Hopes Embodied in Modernism", and in it she suggests that it is from this postcolonial perspective that we should view the hope embodied in modernism. She deconstructs two commonly held assumptions – that modernity belongs exclusively to the West and that architecture and modernism are a matter of style. Architects not only design and construct buildings, but through architecture they aim to change the world, and they do so not only in the West. Here, she recalls Sigfried Giedion's book *Befreites Wohnen*, the very title of which indicates that architecture was meant to liberate people from oppression and deprivation. It is worth noting, in passing, that the social role of modernism is best realized by those architects and architecture researchers who, for whatever reason, happen to be on the periphery – in a broad sense, of course, situated at varying distances from the center of events. From the perspective of the Polish periphery, Helena Syrkus clearly understood the social role of architecture as well as the ideological conflict between Le Corbusier and May (Bauer, 1934; Syrkus, 1976; Giedion, 1985; Matysek-Imielińska, 2020). Hilde Heynen also sees this issue perfectly, as does the Indian architect Jyoti Hosagrahar, who is also a researcher, urban planner, and the current Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center. Hosagrahar seeks to appreciate the pluralistic nature of modernism as well as to legitimize its various interpretations. She introduced the category of indigenous or local modernities, coining the term Indigenous Modernities (Hosagrahar, 2005). She advocates reconciling the abiding opposition between tradition and modernity. This is because tradition is associated with what is non-Western, regressive, while modernity with that which is Western, dominant, colonial, and progressive. As she states, "By questioning the cultural authority of this narrative about modernity and its manifestations in architecture and exploring the influence of politics in shaping 'modern' and 'non-modern' identities, we have a chance to recognize that all modernisms derive from the characteristics of the context in which they are embedded: place, time, history and community" (Hosagrahar, 2005: 13).

Given this conclusion, we can see that architectural projects, such as those in Gando, are created as hybrid phenomena – as local versions of modernity – of an understanding of progress, or of emancipation. This is a different modernity, not aspiring to that of Europe, not seeking, adapting, or imitating modernist forms. For Hosagrahar, the idea of "modernity" is a normative attribute, a tool for social change, culturally-constructed under the extreme injustices caused by colonialism and based on the view that buildings, spaces, and society are constitutively intertwined.

These forms, emerging through Kéré's advocacy, cannot be examined in isolation from the cultural processes through which they are created and used. If modernism was colonial, it was so because it imposed, equalized, and disposed of locality. Today, localities can express their own language by using modernist solutions in a critical sense. That is why Francis Kéré's architectural advocacy is so important, as he carefully outlines his context, by highlighting the social role of buildings, their educational component, and the local setting. His buildings are a reflection of the native

African world. They are not esthetic objects. Rather, they show how the reshaping of life, labor, nature, and materiality occurs. Hosagrahar uses the term "indigenous" to emphasize context and locality. "Indigenous modernities denotes the paradoxical features of modernities rooted in their particular conditions and located outside the dominant discourse of a universal paradigm centered on an imagined 'West.' As a seemingly coherent 'traditional' built environment ruptures, indigenous modernities are expressed in the irregular, the uneven, and the unexpected. In the actualization of universal agendas in a particular place, indigenous modernities negotiate the uniqueness of a region and its history with the 'universals' of science, reason, and liberation. In using the term 'indigenous' I emphasize context and locality, the regional interpretations and forms of modernity rather than engage in an exercise of distinguishing endogenous and exogenous influences in architecture" (Hosagrahar, 2005: 6).

Through the category of Indigenous Modernities, we can understand that this polarization of "traditional" and "modern," "ruler" and "subject," or "East" and "West" is rooted in politics and has been constructed artificially.

Concluding remarks

Whether the Pritzker Prize is evidence of this, I am not quite certain. It could be an institutional "culture game" (Olu Oguibe), or a colonial gesture of orientalization (Said, 1979), owing to which the Western world is introduced to African architecture, and Francis Kéré's work is rendered a kind of curiosity. Or perhaps it is late-modern remorse, a reckoning with the existing design practices of (increasingly harmful) spectacular architecture? One may wonder whether the discernible commitment of Kéré's work to climate action (the 13th Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations) and the need to prioritize the issues of climate change have played any role in attracting the Jury's attention to his work. Is it also a reflection of Kéré's understanding of the Western culture game? It seems, however, that his understanding of the consequences of climate change comes not so much from the discernment of a double consciousness or a cultural game, but, simply, from surviving in climatically harsh conditions, which he knows very well because of where he comes from. At the award ceremony, Kéré said: "What are the challenges today? What is our big concern today? Climate crisis is real, material is limited. If we take everything, it's finito, there's no more… Conflicts for resources will intensify everywhere around the world, and population growth is imminent. No matter where we are from, this should concern us."

Does the architecture of the Global North give expression to such concerns? Does it care about resources?

It feels as if the prize judges were pointing out to modern architects what lessons they should learn from those developing countries that are destined for economics and, needless to say, architectural scarcity. Why is this only an impression? Because, it seems, it is a passing phenomenon for now.

After all, modernism has forgotten that architecture is communal, as opposed to individualized, and that it brings buildings into line with their natural surroundings, as opposed to starchitecture, which disregards the landscape as well as social and cultural contexts. It has forgotten that it seeks to create protected, well-defined spaces, as opposed to the gargantuan, urban sprawl primarily symbolizing capital and class-based housing, that it is sensitive to solving practical problems rather than focused on style and spectacular form, and that it is humane, in the sense that it serves the common good rather than generating income.

My doubts stem from the ambivalence present in the global architectural scene. Following the award for Kéré and noting sustainable architecture, the 2023 Pritzker Prize went to Sir David Alan Chipperfield, focused on the elegant heritage of the Western world. In addition to the already mentioned hopeful example of the *Reconstructing the Future for People and Planet* conference, we can add the 18th Venice Biennale of Architecture, curated by African-born Lesley Lokko, who is a Ghanaian-Scottish architect, lecturer, and researcher, as well as the founder and director of the African Futures Institute (AFI) based in Accra, Ghana.

This year's Biennial's title, proposed by Lokko, is "The Laboratory of the Future". The curator is convinced that the real laboratory of the future – i.e., what awaits us in the not-too-distant future – is contemporary Africa, with its many issues related to the climate crisis, water, and housing shortages, as well as rampant urbanization. In its official statement explaining the reason for this topic, Lokko pointed out two aspects:

> Firstly, Africa is the laboratory of the future. We are the world's youngest continent, with an average age half that of Europe and the United States, and a decade younger than Asia. We are the world's fastest urbanizing continent, growing at a rate of almost 4% per year. This rapid and largely unplanned growth is generally at the expense of local environment and ecosystems, which put us at the coal face of climate change at both a regional and planetary level (*Lesley Lokko…*, 2022).

The second aspect concerns the exhibition itself, reminiscent of the workshop from which the laboratory originated, as Richard Sennett shows. Thus, it is about collaboration, cross-learning, joint methodical meandering, searching for solutions. "We envisage our exhibition as a kind of workshop, a laboratory where architects and practitioners across an expanded field of creative disciplines draw out examples from their contemporary practices that chart a path for the audience – participants and visitors alike – to weave through, imagining for themselves what the future can hold" (*Lesley Lokko…*, 2022).

For the first time in the Biennale's history, the focus was on Africa and the African diaspora. African practitioners – and it is worth noting that Lokko deliberately goes beyond the narrow category of architect, bringing to mind Marcus Miessen's category of critical spatial practitioners – account for half of all participants in the exhibition and are described as agents of change. They have been asked to show Africa as the focus of all issues of inequality, race, scarcity, and fear, but also hope. The Biennale showcased a number of artistic and architectural decolonization practices, attempting to reimagine Africa without colonial influences (e.g., Nigerian artist Olalekan Jeyifous). Lesley Lokko's outlook on Africa is intended first and foremost to decolonize how we think about the continent, its people, and space. It is also worth noting the prizes awarded in this year's Biennale and the justifications for these choices[10]. Thus, in keeping with the exhibition's slogan, forward thinking focused on decolonization, decarbonization, and localism was appreciated.

The curator points out that ethnic or national minorities, viewed from the European perspective, are, *de facto*, the majority of the world's population. Not only in the countries of the Global South or the Arab World, but also in Europe, the subjugated or colonized groups are no longer an insignificant minority. But is that really the case? The Pritzker Prize and architecture biennials are, of course, mainstream and even hegemonic institutionalized and well-established forms of practices for maintaining distinction in the architectural world. That the topic of decolonization and indigenous modernity has found its way into their focus is, of course, a harbinger of change. Or at least, it is evidence of the recognition of this phenomenon in the world of the Global North. However, this does not come without cost.

It is impossible to ignore the fact that three curators from Ghana, whose works we can view at the Biennale, were not allowed into Europe by officials of the Italian embassy, fearing that they would leave the Biennale and not exit the Schengen zone before their visas expired (Lowe, 2023; Seymour, 2023). While it is possible to see this gesture as nothing more than local politics, as Italy's ruling party is anti-immigration, it is evidence of the absurdity of a show dedicated to Africa to which Africans were denied entry. Perhaps it is that we are eager to see Africa' architecture, just not Africans.

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10 See appendix at the end of the article.

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Appendix

Golden Lion for Best National Participation to Brazil (*Terra* [*Earth*]) – for a research exhibition and architectural intervention that center the philosophies and imaginaries of indigenous and black population toward modes of reparation.

Special mention as National Participation to Great Britain (*Dancing Before the Moon*) – for the curatorial strategy and design propositions celebrating the potency of everyday rituals as forms of resistance and spatial practices in diasporic communities.

Golden Lion for the best participant in the 18th Exhibition *The Laboratory of the Future* to DAAR – Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal – for their long-standing commitment to deep political engagement with architectural and learning practices of decolonization in Palestine and Europe.

Silver Lion for a promising young participant in the 18th Exhibition *The Laboratory of the Future* to Olalekan Jeyifous – for a multimedia installation that explores a world-building practice that expands public perspectives and imaginations, offering visions of a decolonized and decarbonized future.

Special mentions to the participants in the 18th Exhibition *The Laboratory of the Future* to:

Twenty Nine Studio / Sammy Baloji – for a three-part installation that interrogates the past, present, and future of the Democratic Republic of Congo, through an excavation of colonial architectural archives.

Wolff Architects – for an installation that reflects a collaborative and multimodal design practice as well as a nuanced and imaginative approach to resources, research, and representation.

Thandi Loewenson – for a militant research practice that materializes spatial histories of land struggles, extraction, and liberation through the medium of graphite and speculative writing as design tools (*The Awards of The Biennale Architettura*, 2023).

Furthermore, Nigerian-born artist, designer, and architect Demas Nwoko is also the recipient of the Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Cytowanie

Magdalena Matysek-Imielińska (2024), *Francis Kéré: A Spokesperson of African Architecture? Modernism and Decolonization*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 122–141, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.06

Francis Kéré – rzecznik afrykańskiej architektury? Modernizm i dekolonizacja

Abstrakt: Jak w kontekście dotychczasowych laureatów nagrody The Pritzker Architecture Prize można interpretować decyzję o wyróżnieniu w 2022 roku architektonicznej działalności Francisa Kéré? W artykule problematyzowane jest faktyczne zainteresowanie afrykańską architekturą. Czy rzeczywiście wynika ono z tego, że afrykańska architektura doskonale sprawdza się w warunkach niedoborów i kryzysu klimatycznego? 18 Venice Architecture Biennale pokazuje, że Afrykę można traktować jak swoiste „laboratorium przyszłości".
A może The Pritzker Architecture Prize to raczej protekcjonalno-orientalizujący gest, który czyni z afrykańskiego architekta ciekawostkę, a Globalnej Północy karcąco wskazuje, że czas powstrzymać nadmiernie spektakularne ambicje współczesnej starchitektury, która zapomniała o swojej społecznej roli?
Postawione pytania kierują analizę w stronę architektury Kéré, interpretowanej jako lokalna odmiana modernizmu, i jego działalności jako swoistego rzecznictwa. Pomocna koncepcja rdzennych nowoczesności (*Indigenous modernities*) Jyoti Hosagrahar jest przywoływana jako medium, za pomocą którego można postrzegać z perspektywy postkolonialnej rodzący się w Afryce niezwykle ważny nurt architektury partycypacyjnej, rozpatrywany poza opozycją centrum – peryferia.

Słowa kluczowe: rdzenne nowoczesności, architektura afrykańska, Francis Kéré, modernizm, kolonializm, postkolonialna perspektywa

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A Space of Choice: Exploring New Patterns of Common Student Spaces

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common space,
participatory design,
pattern language,
student workshops

Abstract: The paper describes a project conducted by a group of architecture students at the Cracow University of Technology. The research problem focused on common spaces in the learning environment, employing the theoretical framework of the sociology of architecture and the participatory design methodology. The project aimed to propose current design model solutions for inclusive and universally-accessible student places, reflecting on the initial studies and the design workshop experiences. The socio-spatial patterns proposed in this study were inspired by the concept of a pattern language developed by the team led by Christopher Alexander in the 1970s. In contrast to the original patterns, the new proposals for patterns of common student spaces are not statements, but questions. The answers to these questions involve different relationships between individuals (users) and the built environment, including those connecting users to the architectural work, the natural environment, other individuals, or user groups.

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Introduction

This paper confronts the experiences gained during the inquiry project "Synchronization: Together or Apart in Urban Space?" ("Synchronizacja – razem czy osobno w przestrzeni miasta?") with reflections summarizing this undertaking. The project's theme was communal and pro-social places in public or semi-public spaces in the city, with a special focus on common spaces in the learning environment. The project aimed to define some innovative socio-spatial patterns of communal space for learning environments based on the preliminary studies and the design process, in which students of the Faculty of Architecture of the Cracow University of Technology participated between 2021–2023. The principle of this inquiry based on qualitative sociology was the appropriateness of theory and methodology to solve specific practical problems (Becker, 1967), as well as a focus on the point of view of the study participants, their daily practices, and manufacturing their knowledge of the situation (Knorr-Cetina, 1981). The location of the inquiry – a particular learning environment of the home university – was viewed as a space for a potential redefinition of one's team (users of the space) and audience (other potential users, including students from another faculty, another university, and city residents) in the spirit of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Strauss, 1993; Goffman, 2000).

The problem that constituted the research challenge of this project was inspired by the sociology of architecture that views architecture as a medium of social communication, and a space for community. What triggered the project was the multi-layered meaning of the synchronicity of common spaces and communities, and the design of such spaces for the community, especially the community of learners. At the most general level, this kind of community is always "a place of intersection where political and social discourses that are completely incompatible with each other meet" (Sowa, 2014: 45). The contemporary community is not linked by "mechanical" unity, but relies on "organic" solidarity (Durkheim, 1999), "presence", and "coexistence" (Sowa, 2014: 48), as well as on "local, open, and grassroots cooperation" (Sennet, 2013: 349). However, the idea of such a community of "equals" seems quite far removed from the reality of university, where "strict rules of vertical dependencies and gradations" apply (Sowa, 2014: 45). This perspective may be often seen in planning strategies. Much contemporary design "for people", similar to the early progressive design of the 1950s, focuses on usability and ergonomics, and uses "a reductionist view of people as one element in a mechanistic system of inputs and outputs" (Hanington, 2018: 195). The term "user", introduced into the language of modern architecture to replace earlier terms (e.g., "occupant", "client", and "inhabitant") refers to the practicality and functionality of the built environment (Fortry, 2000: 312). However, unlike earlier terms, it takes into account the anonymity and abstraction of the people for whom architecture is intended. The term has had a tremendous impact on spatial planning in terms of thinking about "users" and producing an "abstract space of experts" rather than a "concrete" and "subjective" space "of everyday activities of users" (Lefebvre, 1993: 145). Such a perspective ignores the importance of architectural spaces in holding individual and collective memories and contributing to the development of personal and group identities (Fine, 2004). Indeed, a common problem in mainstream contemporary architecture is to treat the people for whom space is created not as a sum of individualities, including also hybrid subjects such as "marginal men" (see Park, 1928), but, rather, as a unified group of users. Thus, contemporary urban life – also shaped by modern, functionalist architecture – "instead of mingling people with divergent backgrounds […], more often separates and segregates them" (Paetzold, 2000: 66).

The purpose of the project described in this study was to develop alternative design proposals for an inclusive space offered to the community of learners. It was conceived as a space within the university campus, but open both to the university community and people from the city. The project aimed to define a community of users following the idea of "multiplicity" rather than "limitation" as traditionally defined communities (Nancy, 2010). The multiplicity of the project approach was then seen in terms of the community definitions, the place meanings, and design methods inspired by the participatory design leading to the production of a space of choice. The social configuration of the group of users was analyzed within the dominant group of users (students) and at the intersection with other space users (university staff and people from the city). During the project, the group was also self-defined based on the user representatives' engagements; the project participants and co-designers were at the same time the space users. What has added multiplicity to the study was the space itself. The context area of the project (a space in front of the building of the Faculty of Architecture), although somewhat neglected and not living up to its potential, has absorbed meanings from many "ontological" layers (Yaneva, 2017). Its heritage, infrastructure, information, and social and cultural nature create the potential for different variants of the city and public space. As for design methods, the project vision aligns with the concept of participation in user-centered design and place-making, which consider the diverse goals of the users, place attributes, and socio-spatial patterns (Alexander et al., 1977; 2008; Łukasiuk, 2017; Hanington, 2018).

Architectural and social space – the sociology of architecture

The concept of space is central to architecture and the sociology of architecture. In architecture, it is an essential material for creating form and enclosure, enabling the kinetic bodily experience of the subject and esthetic perception, but also a tool for organizing social connectivity. It gains new recognition in modern "anti-monumental architecture", which, as Aaron Betsky notes, is primarily concerned with "spatial planning, engineering and codification" (Betsky, 1990: 28). Importantly, architectural space is also an idea and a value, as well as a reflection of the distribution of power. For all these reasons, however, "space is the most luxurious thing anybody can give anybody in the name of architecture" (Lasdun as cited in Fortry, 2000: 256). On the other hand, architectural and urban space is a "*sui generis* humanistic" reality, which is not only limited to "productive efficiency, the functionality of spatial forms, and economy of time and space" (Rewers, 2005: 83). It is a space that also responds "to the historically and culturally diverse needs of people, arranged in irreducible dichotomies: security and freedom, certainty and adventure, work and play, predictable and unpredictable, similarity and difference, isolation and encounter, exchange and investment, independence and commitment, the immediacy of goals and long-term planning" (Rewers, 2005: 86). Such a space is not created once and for all. It is often "supplemented, enriched or changed by users", so in this sense architectural objects are ambiguous (Jałowiecki, 2005: 21). Architectural and urban forms, "as 'aggregates' of built form, both reflect and contain social forms" (King, 2003: 24). The discrete logic of architectural space affects the specific behavioral patterns or configurations such as "encountering, congregating, avoiding, interacting, dwelling" formed by groups or collections of people (Hillier, 1996: 20). However, the elaboration of architectural space into socially-sanctioned patterns is primarily influenced by the culturally-significant elaboration of physical forms during the design and construction phase. Some of the ideas incorporated into built forms may be used "as an instrument of social control" (King, 2003: 31) and as a tool to impose alien cultural values on the subject. The architectural space is not only "a decoration in which social life takes place" – but a factor that constitutes a special kind of "heavy" communication medium (Fisher as cited in Łukasiuk, 2011: 95). The important and relevant question then is: "*whose* ideas, *whose* beliefs, *whose* values, or *whose* view of the world are decisions based?" (King, 2003: 31).

So far, the mainstream research in the sociology of architecture has tended to focus on the study of larger-scale formations – urbanism and urban life. Classical accounts of this problem focused primarily on the dominance of the cultural and intellectual life of the metropolis and its "functional magnitude" laying "beyond its actual physical boundaries" (Simmel, 1999: 76), and being rather a "state of mind" (Park as cited in Łukasiuk, 2017: 45) filtered from all materiality. However, as Łukasiuk notes, the underestimation of the importance of the "tangible side of the city" and – more broadly – of "space" has triggered a counter-movement within sociology more or less since the 1970s (Łukasiuk, 2017: 45). This trend includes Guy Ankerl's (1981) extensive work devoted to the "experimental sociology of architecture" and an attempt to describe social phenomena in architectural space based on objective, physical variables of the interpersonal communication of a visual, acoustic, olfactory, or tactile nature, among others. Referring to Simmel's work on the study of "space and the spatial order of the social", Ankerl indicates the key parameters of architectural space for social face-to-face communication, including the "exclusivity of space", "partitioning", "spatial fixation", "distances" between people, "communication" and "traffic", as well as "territorial sovereignty" or "empty space" (Simmel, 1921 as cited in Ankerl, 1981: 13). This commonality encompasses different types of communication, ranging from the traditional, close "door-to-door" neighborly relationship, through the "place-to-place community", to the contemporary changes initiated by the development of the latest media in the "person-to-person connectivity" model (Brzozowska, 2017: 13–14).

The newest inquiry in the sociology of architecture, but also the theory of architecture, demonstrates a tendency to focus on issues so far peripheral to the conventional research topics of these fields. As for sociology, the focus is shifting from the human to the material and non-human. The originator of the Actor-Network Theory, Bruno Latour (2010) notes that the term "social" has come to refer less to the characteristics of a statistically emergent collective and more to how people, things, and ideas are intertwined. This in some ways undermines the idea of group constancy, but also certainty about the source and causes of events, as well as the characteristics of social agencies (such as society, culture, field, or individual). It leads to the idea that the source may not be "someone" but "something" – objects or animals, for example (Latour, 2010). This theory also has a reference in the sociology of architecture, e.g., in the work of Albena Yaneva (2009), who believes that some "artifacts are deliberately designed to shape or even replace human action. They can mold the decisions we make, influence the effects of our actions and change the way we move through the world" (Yaneva, 2009: 277). The field of architecture is changing, too: from exclusively static buildings to transformable spaces between and within buildings, involving people, objects, natural elements, as well as virtual information. A clear manifestation of this was the 11th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, entitled *Out There. Architecture Beyond Building* (curated by Aaron Betsky in 2008). It displayed immaterial architecture and spaces constructed by technical infrastructure and information that changes over time (such as the processing of stimuli registered in real-time from the environment) and, above all, through the impressions of the spectators. Such experiments reinforce the importance of the concept of "'atmosphere' in architecture that defines a state of resonance and identification (sensorimotor, emotive, and cognitive) between an individual and their surrounding built space" (Canepa et al., 2019: 7). When thinking about the social impact of architecture, it is, therefore, important to remember that the audience of architecture is influenced not only by the structure of the built space and its cultural and esthetic codes, but also by that ephemeral, atmospheric quality produced at the interface between architecture and user experience. Because this quality is ephemeral, though intensely perceived, it can be also used in a targeted way in the process of "managing the atmosphere of places, the effects of which are manifested, among other things, in the self-selective choices of potential users" (Łukasiuk, 2017: 46).

The "Synchronization" project – preliminary studies and the local context

We started our project with a group of students affiliated with a student science team ("PercepcjA") in the fall of 2021 by the organization of the seminar, open to students, faculty staff, and guests, and dedicated to the word of the year – *loneliness* – and its various meanings in architecture. Topics presented in that session included: loneliness in the crowd, and conversely – in the empty public space of the city (during the lock-down caused by the COVID-19 pandemic), loneliness perceived as a product of a foreign culture (the case of foreign students), individual differences in the perception of being together and being apart (loneliness and privacy issues), and loneliness of people who feel stress and discomfort in common places in public space. The next open seminar organized a few months later involved topics of a city for people, a city not only for people (the issue of wilderness and post-industrial nature in the city), and the role of local activists in shaping urban public space. In May 2022, our group went on a three-day trip to Łódź to confront some of the problems discussed before in a real urban environment. During this research trip, the group visited places in the public space that are characteristic of the transformation of modern Łódź, such as Włókiennicza Street, the Jaracz Market, OFF Piotrkowska, Manufaktura, and EC1, as well as some parks, parklets, and murals. We were interested in how these transformations enliven or not the city's public space and how they depend on the grassroots energy of the residents. As an example of a community space for students, we were able to see the transformed post-industrial common space of the Base Camp dormitory. An important part of our trip was also to meet people from Łódź who are experts in local architecture, urban public space, and street art[1], with whom we discussed the changes taking place in the city and their perception by the public.

The group's initial studies and experiences of community spaces were then used to analyze local conditions and to choose a suitable location within the Cracow University of Technology campus for the design studies. After considering several locations, the group decided on a site around the main headquarters of the Faculty of Architecture on Podchorążych Street. This site seemed the most challenging place; for both its strengths and weaknesses. The former included the impressive history, dating back to the Middle Ages, its specific location in relation both to the contemporary city and to its eco-system (former Młynówka River), and certainly the special meaning for students of the Faculty of Architecture – as the current headquarters of the Faculty. The weaknesses of the place included

1 Architectural critic Błażej Ciarkowski and activists of Urban Form Foundation Teresa Latuszewska-Syrda and Aleksandra Dudek.

the distance from the main campus of the University, the neglected character of the site lacking decent campus infrastructure, and disconnection from nearby city life. In turn, the proximity to the contemporary city center and other universities provides an opportunity to create an interesting space for the integration of the university and city spheres.

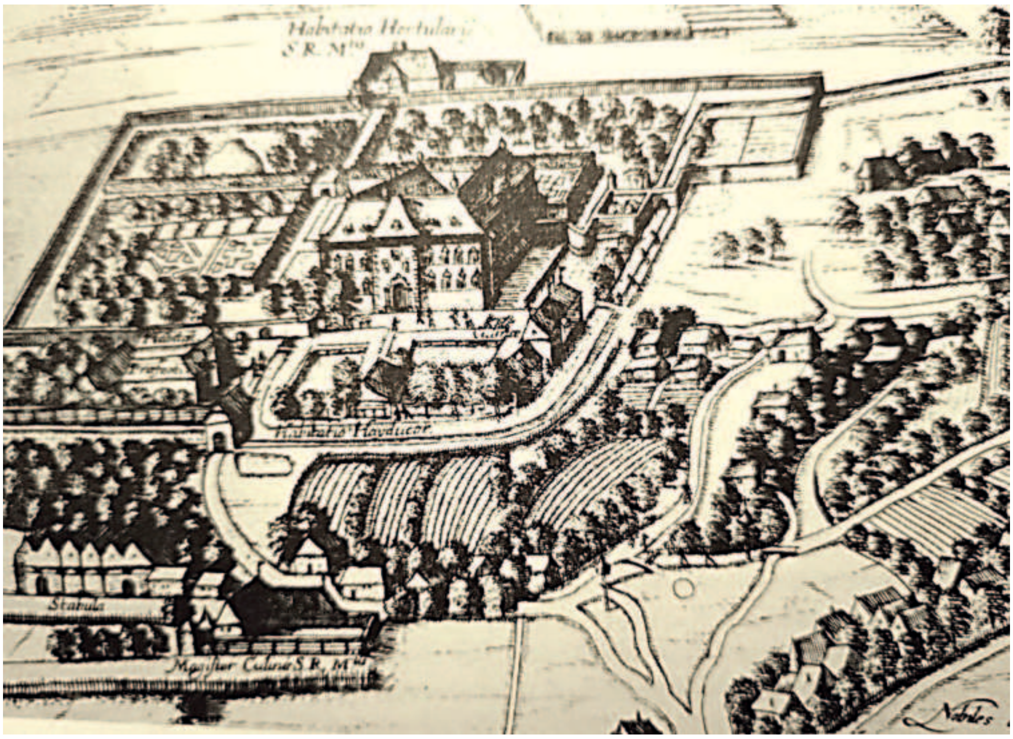
A few words need to be said here about the site's heritage. The place dates back to 1357 when the royal residence (Łobzów) – a hunting lodge in a forested setting – was constructed here. It was probably a favorite place of Casimir the Great, who built it where "in the shade of the trees of his garden he began great thoughts aimed at the happiness of the country" (Grabowski, 1822: 177). Since then up to the end of the 18th century, the place was a royal residential building (Illustration 1) developed by subsequent Polish kings and their Italian architects. Its style and function changed from a hunting lodge to a mannerist villa (Batory with Santi Gucci) and an austere Baroque palace (Sigismund III and Giovano Trevano). After the palace's grandeur was largely destroyed by the Swedish Deluge (1655–1657), it gradually deteriorated until, in 1787, King Stanislaw August Poniatowski gave the village of Łobzów and its ruined palace to the Cracow Academy, which started to restore the building, but left unfinished (Szpyt, Pikulski, 2016). Since then up to the mid-19th century, the relics of the palace served as a café in the park, a romantic ruin, a hospital, and a warehouse, before it was reconstructed again (1852, architect: Feliks Księżarski) as a military school (*Kadeten Institut*), which continued its function as Podchorążówka after Poland regained its independence, and later after World War II. In the 1990s, the heavily damaged building and its surroundings abandoned by the military was given to the Cracow University of Technology. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the building – renovated and adapted for the university function – has been the main seat of the Faculty of Architecture and the Faculty of Physics.

In addition to its history, another important feature of the site is its direct connection to the green belt of the city, formed by the Młynówka Królewska river, which was once the source of life for the gardens of the residence, but also for the neighboring horticultural villages. The river, now transformed into an underground canal, marks the route of the city's longest linear park, named after it. The former royal garden has been replaced by a parking lot and a green space devoid of any expression or engagement. Too much of the area remains biologically dead, covered with asphalt or concrete slabs. There are no remnants of its former landscape grandeur or historical significance. The only cultural elements in the area outside the building are the central monument to Józef Piłsudski, a reminder of the military past of the place, and the 3D sculptural installation built by the students of the Faculty of Architecture, which stands in the green space to the right of the main axis. This element is the only one that evokes contemporary architectural spirit of the place. In general, the site exudes a rather unwelcoming atmosphere. It is a fenced and mostly empty space, scattered in front of the building and its backyard, which are visually and functionally disconnected from each other.

According to our observations, the space does not meet the needs of the users other than people parking their cars here (including some university employees, but also commercial users);

unfortunately, even though the parking lot is usually quite empty, students cannot park here. The area outside the parking lot remains even more empty; the only users are sometimes students occupying a few worn-out benches on warm, sunny days. University employees practically never stay in the outdoor area. People from the city are not welcome here, animals are not allowed. The main entrance to the area is a car road, and there is also one-side pedestrian entrance leading through the vicinity of the gas station adjacent to the area. The technical quality of the sidewalks hinders navigation and presents accessibility challenges for disabled individuals. Additionally, the seating options for students are inadequate, consisting solely of benches that are in a state of disrepair (Illustration 2A). The bike racks also require maintenance, lacking both protective canopies and easy access. The information about the site is not very clear and is poorly placed. Inscriptions visible from the street (on the gate) inform only about the owner of the site and the access restrictions in force; the name of the institution and the commemorative plaque appear only on the building (around 100 meters from the public footpath along the street). In recent years, information about the building for the blind has also been placed in the area in front of the building, although access to this information – as well as to the building, especially for people with disabilities – is dangerous due to the technical condition of the sidewalk (Illustration 2B). The area's only positive attribute is its many trees, which provide ample shade and enhance the overall esthetic of the site, evoking its garden past (Illustration 3).

Illustration 1. Royal residence in Łobzów (c. 1605), a fragment of a copperplate depicting a view of Cracow from the northwest



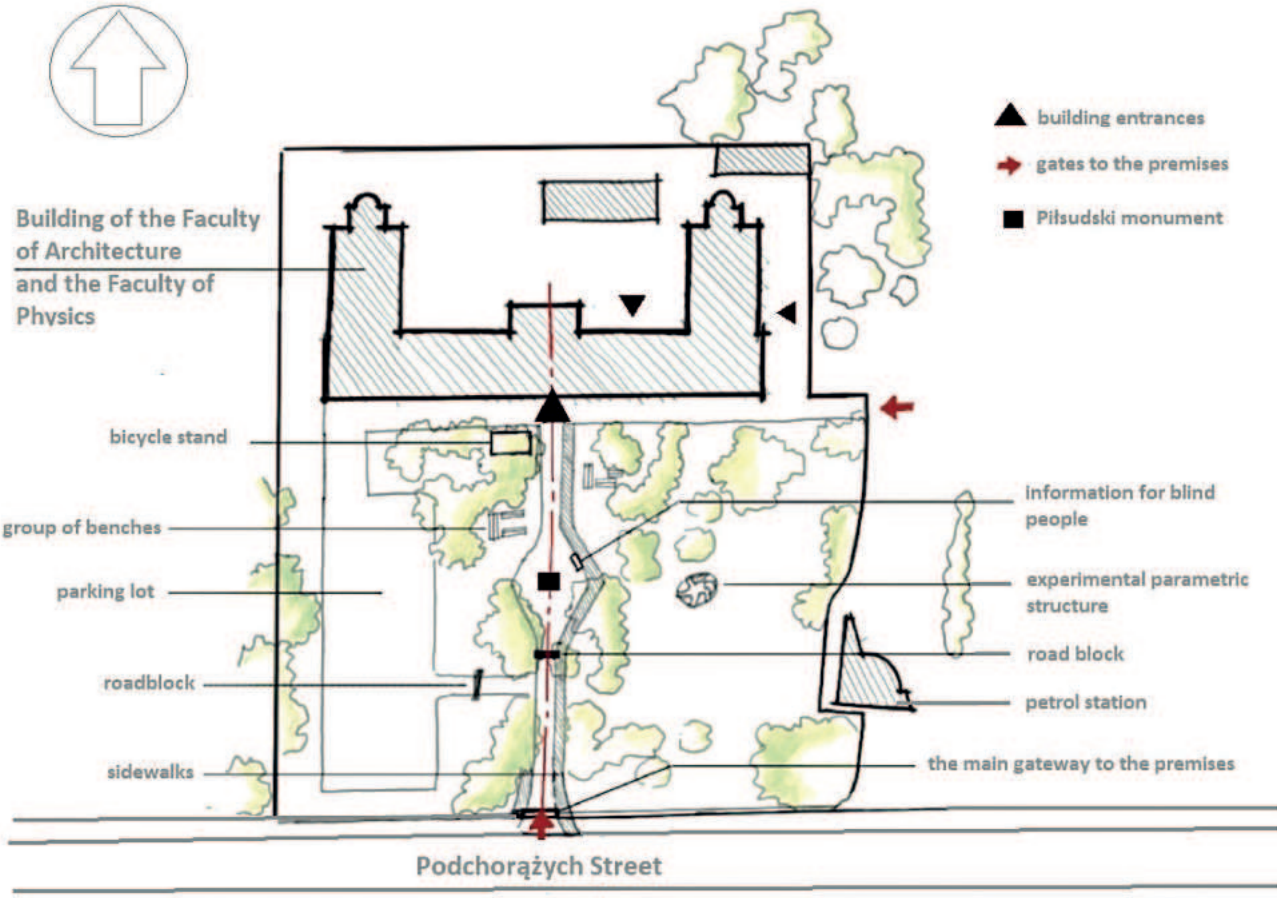
Source: Banach, 1983.

Illustration 2. The current appearance of the site: A – the seating area in front of the entrance to the building (left), B – view of the main road leading to the entrance to the building from Podchorążych Street (right)

Source: Photos by Kamil Federyga.

As part of our preliminary studies, an online survey with the participation of the Faculty of Architecture students (*N* = 96), was conducted in June 2022 with the aim of analyzing their opinions and expectations regarding the chosen place. Participants in this poll included 57 students of M.A. studies and 36 students of B.A. studies. The majority of the participants (90.6%) stated that the current space on the Podchorążych campus (Illustration 3) is either somewhat or completely insufficient. Furthermore, it was identified that both indoor (72.9%) and outdoor (81.3%) relax areas here are in high demand, followed by individual study and workspaces (66.7%) as well as group workspaces (69.8%). More than half of the participants (58.3%) assumed that the Faculty building and its surroundings provide sufficient space for students, but they suggested that the area needs better arrangement. In contrast, 41.7% of the respondents found the quantity and quality of both indoor and outdoor student spaces to be inadequate. The primary concerns with outdoor areas were the absence of seating (92.7%), technical facilities (77.1%), and decent landscaping (68.8%). The majority of the students participating in this poll (61.5%) believed that a specific space for students outside the faculty building should be located on the front-right side. Additionally, 64.6% of the students prefer the area to be more closely integrated into the city. Concerns (threads) that could arise when implementing such a space, as noted by the participants, include noise from the street (42.7%), poor connectivity to the building (20.8%), and insufficient privacy (26%).

Illustration 3. Site plan of the existing surroundings of the Faculty of Architecture building



Source: Drawing by Dzmitry Nikitsin.

The "Synchronization" workshops – working on alternative design proposals

The preliminary studies focused on understanding the problem of communal spaces and practical preparation for the designing (including the place analysis and the poll), aimed at organizing the student design workshops in July 2022. The workshop base was one of the classrooms on the first floor of the building on Podchorążych Street, which provided a good view of the site and the inner space of the building (it was the only room in this building that had a glass wall connection with the circulation space). We wanted the workshop participants to have contact with the space that the project was about while they were working. Twenty students from the Cracow University of Technology participated in the workshops; about half of them had participated in all previous activities related to the project; all but one of them were architecture students. The group included graduates from the second, third, fourth, and fifth years; most participants were women (17); the group included two students from Belarus and one from Ukraine.

The focus of the workshops was on inquiring when designing (see Zeisel, 1984), but it also worked the other way, i.e., designing when inquiring. We wanted to produce some knowledge that can be seen as local social constructs (Knorr-Cetina, 1981), formed from the practical lived experiences of the group members and some contextual factors (including the history of the place). The designing process was inspired by the *Pattern language* as a tool for communicating the goals of the project within the group (Alexander et al., 1977; 2008), whereas the Design Thinking method was used as a practical tool for enabling the creative process. In our workshops, we followed the five steps of the Design Thinking method: "empathizing", "defining the problem", "generating ideas", "building prototypes", and "testing" (Wolniak, 2017: 249). The Persona technique, a narrative activity that characterizes target users for product design, served as an idea generation tool. The *personas* created by the four emergent design groups became an emanation of the negotiated needs of the users gathered in each design group. While exercising this technique, students envisioned the designed space, integrating personal knowledge of the location (including their experiences as daily users of the space as well as reflections of the field game played on the first day of the workshops), and user-specific requirements, while incorporating data from an earlier conducted survey.

The workshops started with some lectures provided by experts from the faculty and university as well as guests[2]. The lectures focused on three topics: the analysis of the project site (history of the site, urban issues), the analysis of the methodology of the design work (issues related to design theory and creativity), and the analysis of the needs and expectations of the project users. The first day was dedicated to the place. It was spent mostly listening to the lectures on place history, the building, and the university community; the students participated in long discussions on the presented issues. The day ended with a field game (Illustration 4A) prepared by the students participating in the project, which was a form of historical and landscape research walk around and outside the building. The second day of our workshops was dedicated to the creativity issues. It started with the Design Thinking exercises and the first spontaneous visions produced by the students utilizing the Persona technique. The third day was dedicated to the problem of individual differences and sensibility in the perception of the space; the students listened to the lecture on neuroatypical persons in architectural space, developed their concept design, and discussed their ideas with the invited expert. The fourth day was dedicated to the development of form; the students working on their designs met with the opinions of the invited artist sculptor and art teacher. The fifth day was the day of finalizing the designs and presenting them and the ideas involved to the workshop guests. Starting on the second day of the workshops, when the designing process began, the students were divided into four working groups of five, chosen by a democratic draw process, and operated independently. The creative work took place in two phases using mock-ups. First, working mock-ups were made from recycled materials (Illustration 4B), and then the refined spatial visualizations in the form of 3D objects were placed on previously prepared, identical

2 The lectures and presentations were given by the Faculty of Architecture members: Maciej Motak, Ph.D., D.Sc., Assoc. Prof. (history of the site); Piotr Winskowski, Ph.D., D.Sc., Assoc. Prof. (theory of design); Angelika Lasiewicz-Sych, Ph.D. (learning environment); university staff: Anna Nowak, M.A. (Design Thinking); and guests: artist and educator: Joanna Musiał, M.A. (neuroatypical persons' perception of space) and Jan Kuka, Ph.D. (the Fine Art Academy, Cracow).

for each group, monochromatic mock-ups representing the faculty building and its immediate surroundings. Hand-drawn sketches and concept boards were utilized, whereas computer tools were not employed. Each group received individual feedback and criticism daily from guests, including faculty members who were not involved in the project as well as guest artists. The projects were analyzed from various angles, such as the psychophysiological requirements of neuroatypical persons and the esthetics and multifaceted effects of spatial design. On the concluding day of the workshop, the four groups presented their ideas and mock-ups at a 1:200 scale. The following is a summary description of each group, their goals, and design solutions.

Illustration 4. Students' activities during the design workshops: A – a field game on the first day (left), B – a preliminary phase (brainstorming) of the visualization of project concepts on the second day (right)

Source: Photos by Dominika Cieplak.

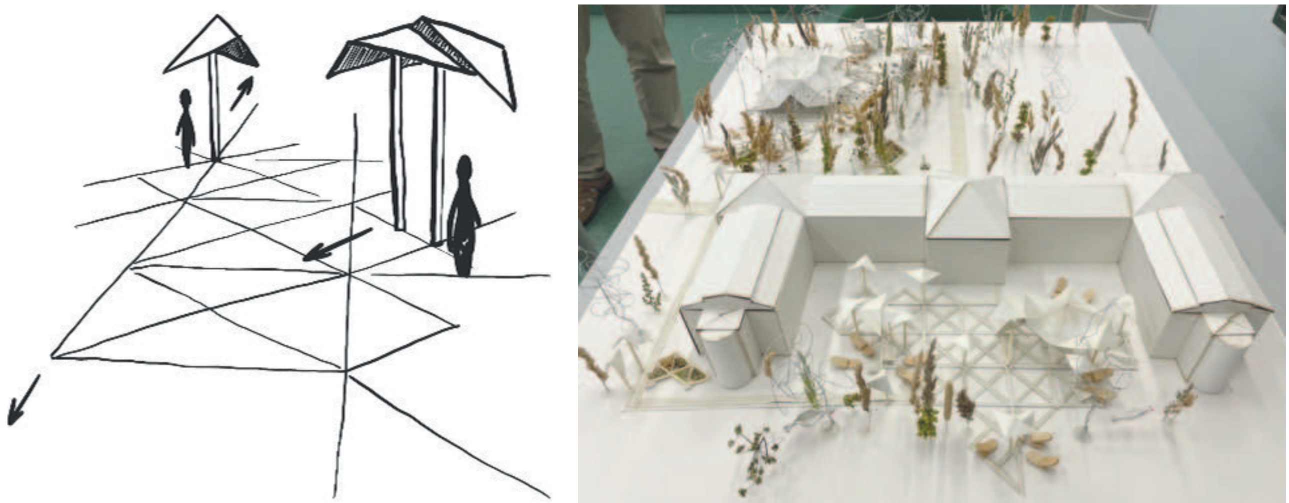
Group 1: "Base Renewal"

The first group consisted of three persons (including one male) who completed the 4th year and two graduates from the 2nd year of studies. The three people in the group worked from morning to evening, but the other two often came later than the others, with one of them kept trying to take over the group. This gave the work of this group the most turbulent character, in which a male-female co-leadership couple provided a constant dynamic. However, despite the ongoing discussions and opposing arguments, the group managed to find a way to make decisions together.

The group's project began with a definition of *persona* as an individual "in need of relaxation and calm". In the initial brainstorming phase, the group used recycled materials (egg pressings, paper, and sticks) to create a vision of a "paradise oasis": comfortable chairs and umbrellas with strings of hanging lights between them. Taking this vision to the architectural phase, the group came up with the idea of modular and foldable furniture that could be configured as desired on the plan, owing to a network of rails installed on the floor. The idea for folding and moving umbrellas came from playing with a paper umbrella, from which a plane emerged as a result of subsequent transformations.

Someone came up with the idea of using cold coffee left on the table as an ecological paint. This, in turn, sparked the idea of natural colors and materials. The color was associated by those working in the group with "linen, and canvas, it was more organic and more pleasant". This gave a way of thinking about the overall form. The roof over the cafe was created similarly, from triangular modules, glued together in a rather random, free-form shape, folded along lines that corresponded to the lines of the rails on the ground. The whole thing was finished with coffee-colored paint in a pleasant beige. An element of the design that appeared at the very beginning of the creation was the upward lighting, which went straight from the prototype phase to the final version of the project, where they no longer hung from palm trees, but from the existing trees in front of the faculty building (Illustration 5).

Illustration 5. The "Base Renewal" design concept of transformative and interactive students' space: A – a scheme of the movable umbrellas (top left), B – aerial view of the 3D mock-up (right)



Source: Drawing by Kamil Federyga, photo by Krzysztof Lenartowicz.

Group 2: "Wild Architect's Reserve"

The second group was composed of five women: two of them completed the 5th year, one the 4th year (a student from Ukraine), and two the 2nd year of the studies. The group had two poles of leadership: one was the 5th-year student and the other was one of the 2nd-year student. All the group members turned out to be animal lovers, cheerful and spontaneous, or quiet and cooperative. The work in this group was harmonious, without rivalry, and was accompanied by a mood of fun.

The group defined its persona as "a human being with a great imagination, who loves wild nature and longs for the time of childhood and free play". Therefore, the group intended to create a space for active recreation amid nature. The group's idea was to suspend a light structure of "tree houses" between the existing trees to create students' refuge: a place to relax or do individual work. The design also envisioned houses standing on the ground, surrounded by garden plots where fruits and vegetables could be grown, and scented herbs and flowers to enhance the mood. The animals would be welcome in this place, not only dogs or cats but also wild animals invited by the installation of nesting boxes for birds or insect houses. This wild reserve would be fenced off from the nearby gas station by raised canopies where students' work could be displayed, lectures could be held under a clear sky on warm days, and movies could be shown in the evenings. For this purpose, a community space with deck chairs and a pond in front of the stage was designed in the middle of the designed area. On the street side, instead of a fence, there would be a café pavilion, open on two sides, to encourage the integration of people from the city and from the university (Illustration 6).

Illustration 6. The "Wild Architect's Reserve": A – sketch drawing of the treehouses (left), B – a fragment of the 3D mock-up of the design concept (right)

Source: Drawing by Dominika Cieplak, photo by Krzysztof Lenartowicz

Group 3: "Mood Space"

The third group was composed of one graduate from the 3rd year and four graduates from the 2nd year (including one male and one industrial design student). This group struggled throughout the workshop: who is the leader of the group, and whose ideas are better? The industrial design student felt most comfortable in this role, but lacked the architectural training that the other members of the group had. Because of the interest in design and the artistic-manual skills of one of the people in this group, the group used various artistic techniques (such as knitting) to work on precise models of various elements of small architecture.

The group defined its *persona* as "an introverted or extroverted person with fluctuating moods who is often sleep-deprived". Thus, the duality of an "introverted" or "extroverted" person appeared in the very definition of persona, and this unresolvable duality became the inspiration for focusing on solutions that would provide different atmospheres and places for people with different needs. From the beginning, the group also focused more on the idea of social patterns and common goals than on pursuing a single, coherent spatial concept for the entire project. Thus, it was to be an "atmospheric" space, with the most important goal being a gradation of privacy: from an inclusive zone (café) to various zones of tranquility and solitude. Another important design goal was to allude to the history of the site, including by emphasizing the importance of individual zones of the area, such as the inner courtyard of the former residence (now an empty asphalt square – in the design a flower courtyard). In turn, the elements that would create a special atmosphere in the place would be the bright yellow color – symbolizing happiness, joy, and relaxation – the winding paths, the flowing shapes of architectural objects (the café), seats, and other elements of small architecture (such as a trampoline), water pond and hammocks, and the smells and shapes coming from nature – fruit trees, flower meadows, and herbs (Illustration 7).

Illustration 7. The "Mood Space" design concept: A – sketch drawing of the café pavilion (top left), B – wavy benches (bottom left), C – fragment of the aerial view of the 3D mock-up (right)

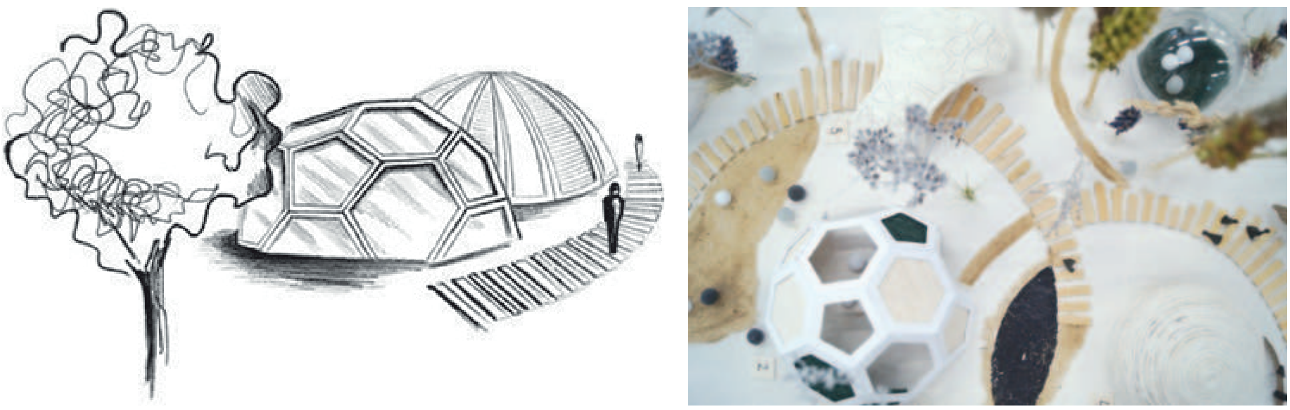
Source: Drawing by Anna Kaplita, photo by Krzysztof Lenartowicz.

Group 4: "Sensitive Space"

The fourth group was composed of two graduates from the 4th year, two from the 3rd year (students from Belarus: a male and a female), and one from the 2nd year. The responsibility for design decisions was divided `between a group leader (one of the 4th-year students) and a younger male student who was actively involved in conceptual work. There were occasional tensions between the two individuals over different perceptions of project goals or ways of working.

The group defined their *persona* as someone who was "culturally foreign, with different sensitivities, having some difficulties in working with the group". Expanding on the meaning of the distinctiveness and multiplicity of different needs, the group considered the potential user groups, including: students from the two faculties housed in the building, employees, people from the city, or students from another educational university located nearby. The group's goal was to create separate, distinguishable spaces for each user group that would be connected by a shared circulation network. The idea focused on a polycentric, fragmented space with separate pavilions. These architectural structures were designed as semi-dome, parametric forms of varying dimensions and construction methods. Some were more sheer and transparent, while others were more closed and impenetrable. Each pavilion was tailored to meet the unique needs of a specific user group. All pavilions represented some ideas, namely "Pride", "Work", "Freedom", and "Silence". The "Pride" pavilion was to be placed near the street to provide citizens and visitors with easy access. It was designed for the integration with people from the city by providing a space for exhibiting student or university staff members' works. The "Work" pavilion was designed to be a collaborative space for students with open areas for group work as well as private rooms for individual work. The "Freedom" pavilion was designated for leisure activities and socializing, while the "Silence" pavilion was intended as a private space solely for individual use. Situated among the trees, the "Silence" pavilion seamlessly merged with the surrounding natural environment and aimed to provide a tranquil location for meditation, prayer, or solitary retreats (Illustration 8).

Illustration 8. The "Sensitive Space" design concept: A – a sketch drawing of the dome-shaped pavilions (left), B – fragment of A 3D mock-up of the design seen from the top (right)



Source: Drawing by Dzmitry Nikitsin, photo by Dominika Cieplak.

From design to social innovations – concluding discussion

The four proposed spatial solutions elaborated as 3D mock-ups during the workshops have become the subject of further study. The purpose of this reflection was to find answers to the following questions: (1) what ideas inspired this project and the design solutions proposed during the workshops?; (2) how do these ideas relate to the practices (e.g., planning or architectural design)?; and (3) what are the possible theoretical implications related to the delivery of the project?

Ideas

The presented study incorporates certain ideas that prioritize people in the built environment. Despite the assumed connection between architectural design and user needs, this aspect is sometimes overlooked by architectural theorists and the creative mainstream dominated by technology and marketing. However, the problem also arises from the field of architecture; as stated by Bernard Tschumi, "the paradigm of the architect […] is that of the form-giver" (Tschumi, 1987: 207). Consider, for instance, the theory of "spatial order" (Szmidt, 1981; Kościuk, Sławińska, 2000), a common notion in Polish architectural theory that also propagated to the architectural and planning regulations. According to this concept, spatial order (ład *przestrzenny*) represents a "game" that involves factors derived from the "natural order" (nature), in which a thinking human being is included, and the "geometric order", an ideal creation of humans (Szmidt, 1981: 75). This idea relates to Florian Znaniecki's concept, wherein the notion of "order" is a practical, "commonsense reflection preceding philosophy and science" (Znaniecki, 1971: 60). According to Szmidt, an "esthetic order" is at the top of the configurational ladder, while chaos is at the bottom (Szmidt, 1981: 80–83). The project described here grows out of the opposition to the role of architecture and architects thus outlined, and follows the thought of those theorists who, instead of making conclusive judgments, pose questions, such as: What is esthetic order? Who should ultimately decide it? Does chaos always mean disorder? To these questions, we could also add those expanding the meaning of architecture beyond its aesthetic significance, such as: Whose ideas, values, and views of the world are architectural decisions based on?

As an answer to some of the questions raised, the sociology of knowledge must caution us "to distinguish between the truth of a statement and an assessment of the circumstances under which that statement is made" (Becker, 1967: 240). Our viewpoints "are not eternal truths, rather they are subject to change, they can prove to be false" (Welsch, 2005: 164). If this is the case, then the vision of the architect as a self-sufficient creator and of architecture as a discipline that locks itself and operates solely based on its truths seems questionable. This applies not only to architecture as an art form and to its recipients, but also to architecture as a kind of social service that consists in the creation of space for a particular community and its users. As Becker argues, any artistic endeavor, like all forms of human activity, "involves the joint activity of […] a large number of people" resulting in the creation and continued existence of the final artwork (Becker, 1982: 1); according to this author, "audiences determine the course of an artwork by choosing whether or not they participate" (Becker, 1982: 214). The increasing significance of audiences blurs the lines between them and creators. Similarly, if we look at architecture as a social practice, design becomes "a collective effort by 'skilled, experienced users and design professionals'" (Ehn as cited in Hanington, 2018: 196). In both cases, it is about the concept of partnership. This quality, along with "transformability", "authenticity", "conscious choice", and "structure", characterizes, in particular, Oskar Hansen's idea of Open Form (Hansen, 2005: 30; Lasiewicz-Sych, 2016). This idea, as well as many variations of participatory design, is not about a precisely defined final product (a preconceived solution), but, rather, about equipping future users with the tools necessary to give the work its final, initially unpredictable form. Although designers establish the boundaries and fields of activity for future users or even restrict their decisions to a finite number of actions, they provide them with a choice, which is a type of participation defined as an "alternative" (Sanoff, 1999). However, creating human places requires also spontaneous, unrestricted social interactions. According to Strauss' theory (1993), a necessary condition for all actions and interactions is "bodily involvement". In talking about this, he quotes the words of American dancer and choreographer Martha Graham, who said that "collective acts require bodies but also require "culture", in the anthropological sense, and traditions, and sometimes ritual and other sociological-anthropological agency" (Strauss, 1993: 110). It also assumes some transformability and sensory perceptions. All of these serve as social communication, "giving meaning to what one feels, sees, hears, smells and touches" (Strauss, 1993: 109). As Goffman elaborates, a state of "co-presence" may be "focused" when individuals are involved in the same space and activity, or "un-focused" when they are simply in the same space (Goffman, 1963: 24). These interactions relate to the space differentiation that consists of such socio-spatial qualities as "the degree of privacy", "quiet corners", "shared space", "promenade", "mosaic of subcultures", "common ground", and "open public spaces", to name but a few (Alexander et al., 1977; 2008).

Other ideas that inspired our project focus on the relationship between humans and the environment, including the natural environment and architecture. One of them could be defined as "esthetics without esthetics" (Welsch, 2005). This idea proposes to redefine the traditional link between esthetics and art, especially in terms of the appreciation of beauty. In a sense, it questions the aforementioned idea of order and the pairing of nature and culture, which are often juxtaposed as opposites. Nature is both chaotic and true, although, similarly to the world, it is always ordered in some way. The apparent disorder is due to our possibilities of understanding, giving certain names and, therefore, functions (Walter, 1985). This problem is particularly relevant in architecture, where order often means formal and functional reductionism, frequently involving the use of uncomplicated orthogonal arrangements and elementary geometric figures. At the systemic level, characteristic of modern architecture, the "legibility of space and its transparency" serves primarily the struggle to control and regulate social interactions, and can essentially lead to the "invalidation of all other competing maps or other interpretations" (Bauman, 2000: 39). At the individual level, this kind of order often leads to "the uniformization of the human psyche and its disconnection from the multidimensional structures of spirituality" (Chmielowski, 2000: 189) that are provided by the more natural settings. According to contemporary architects-artists – such as the CENTRALA collective – architecture does not exist without nature; "the phenomena that are the building materials of architecture – gravity, light oscillation, water circulation – are the same ones that serve the reproduction of the planet" (Ptak, 2018: 22). In this new view of the symbiotic rather than oppositional relationship between architecture and nature as "nature-culture", the recognition of nature "as processes rather than landscapes" is also new (Ptak, 2018: 27–28).

Practices

The ideas presented in the student designs demonstrate practical applications of some of the ideas described. The architectural concept of "Base Renewal" introduces the idea of Open Form by allowing users to interpret and transform space: by moving umbrellas and fixed furniture to places where other people are, or where they are not looking for socialization or seclusion, or simply to change their perspective. The concept of the “Wild Architect’s Reserve” focuses on biodiversity, nature conservation, and the natural cycle of aging, decay, and rejuvenation (by proposing biodegradable treehouses), and introduces some ideas of “esthetics without esthetics” (Welsch, 2005) as well as eco-esthetics. The “Mood Space” proposal experiments with an architecture that reflects some social ideas of “focused” and “unfocused” co-presence (Goffman, 1963) by creating spaces with different “degrees of privacy” (Alexander et al., 1977; 2008) and architectural objects that allow being together or apart, such as wavy benches or pavilions that isolate and connect spaces. The architectural concept of “Sensitive Space”, which creates customized spaces to serve specific social groups and interactions, introduces the idea of “subcultures” as described by one of Alexander’s patterns (1977; 2008), but also in dialog with Gary Alan Fine’s (2004) concept of architecture as preserving history and enhancing the sense of self, as well as the concept of “second nature” as a sociocultural layer of the city (Yaneva, 2017).

The architectural concepts described here, and how they have managed to demonstrate specific social and philosophical ideas, also allude to a certain type of new architecture that is created in social dialog. In a sense, developments such as the OFF Piotrkowska Center or, to a lesser extent, Manufaktura in Łódź, can be counted among them. This is even more evident in the latest, partly unrealized projects of young Polish architects, who combine architectural work with social and research activities. Aleksandra Wasilkowska, for example, in her spatial arrangements, garden projects, and interiors, refers to open form and “architecture as a background capable of evolution” – her “projects are a specific container into which users can pour their content” (Świątkowska, 2018: 108); CENTRALA analyzes relationships between the built environment and nature, taking into account aspects of local ecology: the changing seasons, hydrology, or the importance of vegetation in the city; Maciej Siuda personally engages in interdisciplinary dialog with future users and creates socially-sensitive “spaces for people” (Cymer, 2016), using as his design method simple paper drawings and mock-ups that protrude architectural forms and help communicate the design goals.

Implications

The architectural concepts developed during the student workshops aimed to produce some innovative proposals for the arrangement of common spaces in a particular learning environment. Based on this, an attempt was made to outline a theoretical translation of the design ideas into socially-innovative patterns. The proposed patterns are conceived as an extension of the original set of patterns (Alexander et al., 1977; 2008), which concerned the residential environment, to situations describing the problems of common spaces in the learning environment. The development of the pattern language (the book contains 253 patterns) seems to be in line with the intention of the authors of *A Pattern Language* book; in its introduction, one can read: “if you want to change [or add] any patterns, change them” (Alexander et al., 1977: xxxix). However, in contrast to the original patterns, our patterns do not suggest appropriate spatial designs, but, rather, focus on the imperative of choice. Therefore, the form of the patterns we propose is not a statement but a question for those interested. Our dialogical patterns relate to four types of relationships between individuals and a particular type of built environment, formed as common spaces, that we found during the project. We have called them: (1) *Reinvention or Renewal*? – a pattern that connects users and the architectural work; (2) *Chaos or Order*? – a pattern that connects users and the natural world; (3) *Together or Apart*? – a pattern that relates users with other users; (4) *For Everyone or All*? – a pattern that defines users as a sum of individuals or different groups ("subcultures") or, rather, as a unified community.

Finally, some general reflections on the impact of the project on its participants are in order here. During this project, the people who participated in the activities described in this paper came closer to understanding the power of collective activity and, in particular, the synergy that results from joint design work. Initially shy statements and attempts to describe individual ideas in the later stages of the project encouraged the project participants and made them feel satisfied and proud of the ideas developed and presented. The design workshops, as well as earlier studies and shared discoveries, equipped the participants with a new perspective on issues related to the functioning of common spaces, but also, and perhaps most importantly, to their design. The shortest way to describe it is this: creating spaces that are inclusive to all community members is about fostering a sense of belonging and social interaction in a safe and comfortable environment. The environment need not be uniform and the same for all. It does not have to be overly structured or ordered. It does not have to be just a meeting place; it should also provide privacy and seclusion. In addition, it should allow users to change the environment to suit their current needs. Taking responsibility for all of this is essential.

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Ethical concerns

The project did not violate any feelings of the participants (including the survey participants and the project collective). All the participants in the activities described in this paper were informed about the purpose of the study. The project participants expressed their consent to participate in it in writing.

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Cytowanie

Angelika Lasiewicz-Sych, Kamil Federyga, Dominika Cieplak, Anna Kaplita, Dzmitry Nikitsin (2024), *A Space of Choice: Exploring New Patterns of Common Student Spaces*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 142–165, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.07

Przestrzeń wyboru: odkrywanie nowych wzorców wspólnych studenckich przestrzeni

Abstrakt: Artykuł opisuje projekt zrealizowany przez grupę studentów architektury Politechniki Krakowskiej. Problemem badawczym stały się przestrzenie wspólne w środowisku uczenia się. W projekcie posłużono się ramą teoretyczną socjologii architektury i metodologią projektowania partycypacyjnego. Celem projektu było stworzenie propozycji aktualnych, modelowych rozwiązań projektowych dla włączających i uniwersalnie dostępnych miejsc studenckich, na bazie wstępnych badań i doświadczeń z warsztatów projektowych. Wzorce społeczno-przestrzenne zaproponowane w tym studium zostały zainspirowane koncepcją języka wzorców, opracowaną przez zespół kierowany przez Christophera Alexandra w latach siedemdziesiątych ubiegłego wieku. W przeciwieństwie do oryginalnych wzorców nowe propozycje wzorców dotyczące wspólnych przestrzeni studenckich nie są stwierdzeniami, ale pytaniami. Odpowiedzi na nie dotyczą różnych rodzajów relacji między jednostkami (użytkownikami) a środowiskiem zbudowanym, w tym tych łączących użytkowników z dziełem architektonicznym, środowiskiem naturalnym, innymi jednostkami lub innymi grupami użytkowników.

Słowa kluczowe: architektura, przestrzeń wspólna, projektowanie partycypacyjne, język wzorców, warsztaty studenckie

Możliwości wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego do operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym[1]

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Słowa kluczowe: crowdsourcing, crowdsourcing naukowy, operacjonalizacja, szkolnictwo wyższe, badania jakościowe

Abstrakt: Operacjonalizacja problemu badawczego stanowi konstytutywny etap procesu realizacji każdego badania naukowego. Jednak jej przeprowadzenie jest dla badacza wyzwaniem, wymaga bowiem dobrej, pełnej i aktualnej znajomości analizowanej problematyki. Dlatego też coraz częściej zachęca się badaczy do poszukiwania sposobów czy postępowań, dzięki którym możliwe jest doprecyzowanie i zrozumienie w sposób wieloaspektowy zjawisk, które mogą stać się przedmiotem badań empirycznych. W szczególności nabiera to znaczenia w kontekście badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym, które wymagają podejścia jakościowego. Crowdsourcing naukowy wszedł w fazę popularyzacji i wydaje się obiecujący w kontekście operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie propozycji wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego jako pomocniczego (uzupełniającego) postępowania na etapie operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego oraz zastanowienie się nad jego skutecznością w kontekście badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym.

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Wprowadzenie

Operacjonalizacja problemu badawczego stanowi trudne zadanie oraz wymaga dobrej, pełnej i aktualnej znajomości analizowanej problematyki. Ta trudność wynika z faktu, że odnosi się ona do poszukiwania, doprecyzowania i zrozumienia zjawisk, które mają być przedmiotem postępowania badawczego. Z tego powodu proces operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego powinien być poprzedzony rzetelnymi studiami literatury lub znajomością badanej problematyki. Jednak operacjonalizacja przeprowadzona na podstawie przeglądu literatury grozi pominięciem istotnych, rzeczywistych problemów badawczych lub ich szczegółowych aspektów. Alternatywnie/uzupełniająco stosuje się definiowanie pojęć w kategoriach obserwacji empirycznych. Ze względu na znaczenie lokalnego (środowiskowego) kontekstu podejście to wymaga dobrej empirycznej orientacji. Jednakże i takie podejście ma swoje ograniczenia, które w szczególności można odnotować w kontekście badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Jak słusznie zauważa Malcolm Tight:

> Istnieje wiele form stronniczości, które występują lub mogą występować w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym oraz ogólnie w badaniach edukacyjnych i społecznych. Kiedy badania są publikowane, nie są one na ogół tak łatwo widoczne, ponieważ autorzy mogą być ich nieświadomi lub zdecydować się ich nie podkreślać, lub aktywnie dążyć do ich ukrycia. (Tight, 2022: 203)

W przypadku badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym kładzie się nacisk na rolę członków badanych społeczności i korzyści, jakie odnoszą oni z uczestnictwa w badaniach, a także na ewentualne zmiany, jakie zachodzą pod wpływem procesu badawczego. Co więcej, badania nad szkolnictwem wyższym niemal zawsze realizowane są przez osoby będące częścią świata akademickiego, odgrywające w nim (obecnie lub w przeszłości) określone role społeczne i mające przez to silnie zinternalizowaną (często bardzo specyficzną) wizję nauki, jej instytucji, efektów ich działalności, kryteriów oceny czy awansu naukowego itd. Może to tworzyć pokusę nadmiernej sympatii wobec badanej grupy, tzw. *underdog sympathy* (zob. Hughson, Inglis, Free, 2005: 173), i ostatecznie wpływać na ułomną operacjonalizację problemu badawczego oraz skrzywienie teoretycznej refleksji (Huisman, 2023).

Obok sygnalizowanego umiejscowienia badacza w kontekście badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym czynników wpływających na zawężenie jego perspektywy poznawczej może być znacznie więcej, warto jednak podkreślić takie, jak hierarchia naukowa, doświadczenie zarządcze, typ zatrudniającej instytucji czy płeć lub społeczne pochodzenie badacza. W literaturze zwraca się szczególnie uwagę na dominację anglo-amerykańskiej perspektywy, która często okazuje się bezużyteczna w analizie regionalnych kontekstów (np. Barbarosa, Dwyer, 2016; Sin, Antonowicz, Wiers-Jenssen, 2021; Ben Kei, Biaso, 2023).

Wszystko to wskazuje na konieczność „kombinacji nowej wiedzy i innowacji, działania i zaangażowania" (Belcher i in., 2016: 14) oraz poszukiwania przez badaczy nowych sposobów pozwalających im na uniknięcie indywidualizmu metodologicznego oraz ograniczenie stronniczości badacza (Hammersley, 1997), a także uwzględnienie postulowanego dla badaczy (w szczególności szkolnictwa wyższego) „zwrotu partycypacyjnego" odnoszącego się do włączania szeroko pojętych interesariuszy w proces badawczy. Sygnalizowany zwrot łączy się także z otwartością nauki (Hecker i in., 2018; Uhlmann i in., 2019), wyjściem naukowców „z wieży z kości słoniowej" (Baron, 2010), ale także ze zwiększeniem transparentności, budowaniem dialogu i tworzeniem wartości dla społeczeństwa oraz zmniejszaniem dystansu między społecznościami akademickimi i nieakademickimi (Kuhlmann, Rip, 2019). W praktyce oznacza poszukiwanie sposobów na uwzględnianie opinii, perspektyw, potrzeb i priorytetów różnorodnych grup interesariuszy (Aga, 2022).

Jednym z takich sposób, który wpisuje się w sygnalizowany „zwrot partycypacyjny", może być crowdsourcing naukowy (Lenart-Gansiniec i in., 2022; Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023), odnoszący się do postępowania, w którym „naukowcy angażują grupę osób o zróżnicowanej wiedzy i umiejętnościach, za pośrednictwem otwartego zaproszenia do Internetu i/lub platform internetowych, w celu podjęcia określonego zadania badawczego lub zestawu zadań" (Lenart-Gansiniec i in., 2022: 20). W niniejszym artykule przyjęto, że crowdsourcing naukowy stanowi swoistego rodzaju postępowanie. Poprzez termin „postępowanie" rozumiemy „działanie będące czynem złożonym, a nie zaś działaniem o jednym tylko impulsie dowolnym" (Pszczołowski, 1978: 170).

Dynamiczny rozwój crowdsourcingu naukowego nastąpił przede wszystkim dzięki zwiększającym się możliwościom technologicznym angażowania szerokiego grona interesariuszy. Crowdsourcing odwołuje się do tradycyjnej koncepcji tzw. mądrości tłumu (ang. *wisdom of crowd*) (Surowiecki, 2005), zgodnie z którą „grupa osób posiada szerszą wiedzę niż pojedyncze osoby i dzięki temu może wypracować o wiele więcej wartościowych rozwiązań” (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023: 9). Przy tym podkreślenia wymaga fakt, że w socjologii mianem tłumu określa się „bardzo wiele jednostek, które wzajemnie się nie znają, nie poczuwają do żadnej szczególnej więzi, a jedyne, co ich łączy, to zgromadzenie w jednej przestrzeni i ewentualnie taki sam powód, dla którego znaleźli się razem: na przykład przyszli na wiec albo zrobić »zadymę«, albo przywitać sportowego idola” (Sztompka, 2007: 152).

Jednym słowem w socjologii tłum jest społecznością, która jest bezwolna i bezcelowa, choć niewątpliwie związana „fizycznym ściśnięciem” na określonym terytorium. Jednak pomimo że literatura anglojęzyczna uczestników inicjatyw crowdsourcingowych określa mianem *crowd*, to polskojęzyczny odpowiednik „tłum” wydaje się nie do końca niezasadny. W crowdsourcingu nie mamy do czynienia z przypadkowością czy bezcelowością, lecz z grupą osób wyodrębnioną ze względu na jakąś wspólną cechę (np. wiedzę, doświadczenie w badanym przedmiocie). Natomiast stara się on z jednej strony unikać przypadkowości, odwołując się jednocześnie do szeroko rozumianej różnorodności. Bardziej odpowiednim określeniem wydaje się zatem termin „zbiorowość”, gdyż mimo jej nieprzypadkowości badacze nie mają ostatecznie wpływu na jej strukturę.

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie propozycji wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego jako pomocniczego postępowania na etapie operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego oraz zastanowienie się, w jakim stopniu może on być użyteczny w specyficznym kontekście badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Dodatkowo, ze względu na relatywnie nową problematykę, jaką jest crowdsourcing naukowy, w artykule podjęto także rozważania odnoszące się do kwestii etycznych, w tym do:

1) postaw badacza (inicjatora procesu crowdsourcingowego) wobec pozostałych jego uczestników oraz wobec jego rezultatów;
2) realnego wpływu poszczególnych uczestników procesu na ostateczne decyzje badacza (inicjatora) dotyczące sposobu i zakresu wykorzystania/wdrożenia wypracowanych wspólnie rozwiązań;
3) statusu uczestników i katalogu ewentualnych korzyści i kosztów, jakie odnoszą oni z uczestnictwa w tego typu przedsięwzięciu.

I wreszcie refleksji poddano kwestię tego, w jakich okolicznościach i przy zachowaniu jakich warunków uczestnicy procesu crowdsourcingowego są partnerami, współbadaczami, a w jakich wyłącznie dostarczycielami informacji.

Podstawę niniejszego artykułu stanowią wyniki przeglądu literatury oraz nasze doświadczenia badawcze w zakresie badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Te ostatnie służą jako egzemplifikacja studiów nad społecznościami, których jesteśmy jednocześnie członkami, lub instytucji, w których funkcjonalnie (lub emocjonalnie) jesteśmy zakorzenieni, pełniąc w nich wyraźnie określone funkcje. Odwołując się wyłącznie do własnego doświadczenia, postaramy się teraz wskazać kilka przykładów ilustrujących konsekwencje niepełnego oglądu badanego zjawiska i potencjalnie nietrafnej operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego. Rozważania zamieszczone w artykule stanowią przygotowanie do operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego przy wykorzystaniu crowdsourcingu naukowego.

Niniejszy artykuł wnosi wkład do literatury socjologii jakościowej na kilka sposobów. Po pierwsze, proponujemy rozszerzenie dotychczasowych postępowań badawczych przyjętych w socjologii jakościowej o crowdsourcing naukowy. Pokazujemy jego potencjał i ułomności w procesie operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego, zwłaszcza w interpretacji oraz rozumieniu złożonej rzeczywistości społecznej, jej wymiarów czy kontekstów występowania określonych zjawisk poprzez odwołania się do doświadczeń indywidualnych i grupowych członków społeczności. Po drugie, w artykule pogłębiono dotychczasowe ustalenia nad potencjałem badań jakościowych w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym, które mają ogromną tradycję (Savenye, Robinson, 2005), ale często ustępują dużym ilościowym studiom ze względu na ich globalny zasięg i nomotetyczne wnioskowanie.

Zgadzamy się, że w odniesieniu do szkolnictwa wyższego „podejście jakościowe jest jednym z najlepszych sposobów odkrywania cech i wzorców kształtujących sytuacje i problemy społeczne" (Dzogovic, Bajrami, 2023: 165). Bierzemy także pod uwagę to, że badania nad szkolnictwem wyższym to „wielokrotna seria przecinających się pokrewnych pól" (MacFarlane, Grant, 2012: 621), z których każde ma często własną tradycję i nieformalne zwyczaje badawcze oraz publikacyjne. W tym ujęciu pokazujemy, że crowdsourcing naukowy, ze względu na jego interdyscyplinarny charakter (Bücheler, Sieg, 2011), pozwala na uchwycenie różnorodności tychże pól, dzięki czemu może stanowić uzupełniające postępowanie badawcze w dotychczasowej „skrzynce narzędziowej" jakościowego badacza szkolnictwa wyższego.

Dlaczego potrzebujemy jakościowych badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym?

Historycznie naukowe dyskusje o szkolnictwie wyższym czy szerzej nauce były podejmowane przez uczonych niezależnie od przedmiotu własnych badań (np. Jaspers, 1946; Taylor, Bloom, 1988; Sławek, 2002; Drozdowicz, 2009; Sowa, 2009), ale doświadczenie i pozycja w nauce wystarczały do formułowania często nawet odważnych tez dotyczących nauki i szkolnictwa wyższego (więcej: Antonowicz, 2015). Zresztą w europejskiej koncepcji uniwersytetu jako republiki profesorów (Polanyi, 1962) dyskusja o uniwersytetach (inne typy szkół doszły dopiero w latach siedemdziesiątych XX wieku) miała bardziej charakter filozoficznych dywagacji wynikających z indywidualnych obserwacji niż systematycznych badań empirycznych. Z uwagi na to, że w Europie Zachodniej do lat siedemdziesiątych XX wieku uniwersytety były traktowane jako wspólnota profesorów, to dyskusje o ich misji i ustroju traktowano w dużej mierze jako wewnętrzny problem środowiska profesorskiego. Konsekwencją tego było przyjmowanie profesorskiej perspektywy w myśleniu o organizacji i funkcjonowaniu instytucji akademickich, która z natury rzeczy była silnie redukcjonistyczna.

Dominująca rola jednej perspektywy uległa zachwianiu dopiero wraz z umasowieniem szkolnictwa wyższego w latach siedemdziesiątych XX wieku i w związku z włączeniem innych grup do współzarządzania uczelnią (przede wszystkim studentów i młodszych pracowników – z niewielkim głosem), a co za tym idzie – dostrzeżeniem również innych perspektyw w myśleniu o szkolnictwie wyższym (Neave, 2002). Wiązało się to z gwałtownym rozwojem badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym i dostrzeżeniem ich wielu wymiarów, aspektów i aktorów (więcej: Teichler, 2015).

W tym okresie w Europie pojawiało się coraz więcej systematycznych i empirycznych studiów dotyczących szkolnictwa wyższego, czemu towarzyszyło stopniowe wyodrębnienie się pola, które niekiedy uzyskuje status subdyscypliny, a nawet samodzielnej dyscypliny naukowej (Teichler, 2014; Tight, 2020; Huisman, 2023). Rozwój empirycznych badań nad szkolnictwem wyższym nie zmienił jednak faktu, że nadal w dyskusji o polityce naukowej i organizacji szkolnictwa wyższego pojawiają się mało naukowe (w rozumieniu pozytywistycznym) dyskusje. Dominuje mocno osobista perspektywa, normatywny język i często emocjonalna narracja, co zresztą dość zgryźliwie podsumował Burton Clark (1984: 4–5), dostrzegając, że profesorowie dyskutujący w obszarach, w których są specjalistami, zachowują metodologiczny rygor, czym niespecjalnie zawracają sobie głowę, dyskutując o szkolnictwie wyższym.

Można domniemywać – z pewną dozą prawdopodobieństwa – że poczucie znajomości problematyki badawczej ma również wpływ na jej wybór, konceptualizację problemów badawczych, a przede wszystkim sposób operacjonalizacji badanych problemów. Za pomocą prowadzonych przez siebie badań naukowych badacze usiłują również wpłynąć na kierunek polityki państwa wobec szkolnictwa wyższego, wskazując kwestie dla siebie szczególnie ważne, zwłaszcza w obliczu rosnącej wagi systematycznych badań zorientowanych na praktykę. Ponadto szkolnictwo wyższe ulega coraz silniejszemu wewnętrznemu zróżnicowaniu (Huisman, Meek, Wood, 2007), co powoduje, że z jednej strony wyłaniają się nowe obszary badawcze, takie jak uczelnie zawodowe (Teichler, 1998), uczelnie techniczne (Geschwind, Broström, Larsen, 2020), inicjatywy doskonałości (Shin, Kehm, 2014), a z drugiej pojawiają się nowe perspektywy interpretacyjne, na przykład pracowników niebędących nauczycielami akademickimi (Cywińska, Górak-Sosnowska, Markowska-Manista, 2023), kobiet zatrudnionych w administracji (Górak-Sosnowska, Piwowar-Sulej, 2023), dziekanów (Ngo, de Boer, Enders, 2014) czy rektorów (Antonowicz i in., 2024). Jednocześnie niezmienne pozostaje silne zakorzenienie we własnym środowisku instytucjonalnym, dziedzinowym/dyscyplinowym, co może stwarzać iluzję pełnej wiedzy o szkolnictwie wyższym, zawężać perspektywę poznawczą, a przede wszystkim ograniczać możliwość rzetelnego wyjaśniania badanych problemów.

W odpowiedzi na sygnalizowane wyzwania badania jakościowe wydają się najwłaściwszym narzędziem w odniesieniu do prowadzenia studiów nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Wynika to z faktu, że ich przedmiotem jest społeczność akademicka, a przede wszystkim instytucje, w których badacze sami pełnią określone funkcje i czują się z nimi silnie związani emocjonalnie. Istotne jest więc lepsze zrozumienie i wypracowanie kategorii opisu rzeczywistości, odkrycie sposobów jej konstruowania, podzielanych przez zróżnicowane grono uczestników społeczności akademickiej, co w ostateczności może prowadzić do ewolucji problematyki badawczej.

W tym ujęciu badania jakościowe pozwalają na zrozumienie złożoności szkolnictwa wyższego poprzez umieszczenie:

> […] obserwatora w świecie, [który składa się z – przyp. aut.] zespołów interpretatywnych, materialnych praktyk, które czynią świat widzialnym, [badania takie – przyp. aut.] przeobrażają

> go w serie reprezentacji, takich jak notatki terenowe, wywiady, rozmowy, fotografie, nagrania i własne uwagi […] Badania jakościowe obejmują studia nad wykorzystaniem i gromadzeniem różnorodnych materiałów empirycznych – studiów przypadku, osobistego doświadczenia, introspekcji, biografii, wywiadów, wytworów kulturowych, kulturowych tekstów i produktów, materiałów wywodzących się z interakcji, tekstów wizualnych, materiałów, które opisują codzienność i trudne momenty jednostek. (Denzin, Lincoln, 2009: 23)

Niemniej jednak, pomimo że badania jakościowe wydają się najwłaściwsze w odniesieniu do problematyki szkolnictwa wyższego, duże, jeśli nie największe wyzwanie dla badacza stanowi operacjonalizacja problemu badawczego (Salemans, Budding, 2022). Wynika to w głównej mierze ze specyfiki operacjonalizacji w badaniach jakościowych. W odniesieniu do badań ilościowych operacjonalizacja dotyczy poszukiwania, doprecyzowania i zrozumienia zjawisk w postaci zmiennych, które mogą być analizowane. W badaniach jakościowych nie ma mowy o przekształceniu abstrakcyjnych koncepcji na konkretne zmienne niezależne i zależne. W badaniach jakościowych mowa raczej o wypracowaniu kategorii opisu rzeczywistości podzielanych przez jej uczestników i odkryciu sposobów ich konstruowania (Singh, 2015).

Wyzwania operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w jakościowych badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym

Operacjonalizacja problemu badawczego jest jednym z najważniejszych etapów w procesie badawczym, wymogiem konkretyzacji opisu przedmiotu badań oraz ustalenia sposobu pomiaru. Co więcej, jest ona „integralną częścią procesu tworzenia koncepcji" (Gerring, 2012: 47) i ma istotny wpływ na kolejne działania w ramach poszczególnych etapów prowadzenia badań naukowych, w szczególności związanych z przygotowaniem narzędzia badawczego oraz realizacją empirycznego pomiaru.

Operacjonalizacja problemu badawczego jest procesem złożonym, w ramach którego największym wyzwaniem jest jego trafność. Może ona być realizowana iteracyjnie i sekwencyjnie. W przypadku podejścia iteracyjnego każdy etap operacjonalizacji realizowany jest w sposób powtarzalny oraz wielokrotny. Z kolei sekwencyjność operacjonalizacji zakłada, że badacz realizuje poszczególne kroki operacjonalizacji zgodnie z kolejnością określoną oraz ustaloną z góry (Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, 2001).

Błędy w zakresie operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego mogą stanowić znaczne utrudnienie w późniejszej realizacji badań czy wręcz przyczynić się do znaczącej nietrafności uzyskanych wyników. Głównym wyzwaniem jest (często nieintencjonalne) zjawisko określane mianem wpływu badacza. W naukach społecznych wpływ taki nie jest naturalnie niczym nowym i istnieje poświęcona mu bogata literatura (Cuprjak, 2019). Ważną częścią tej dyskusji jest kwestia wpływu osoby badacza na wybór i sposób ujęcia badanej problematyki (Sułkowski, Lenart-Gansiniec, 2021), która w dobie politycznej instrumentalizacji badań społecznych staje się dodatkowo ważna i aktualna.

Czym innym jest jednak sytuacja, w której poglądy badaczy wpływają na podejmowaną problematykę, a czym innym taka, w której – uzurpując sobie prawo do naukowej rzetelności – wpływają na ułomną operacjonalizację i mogą niekiedy prowadzić do błędnych wniosków w wyniku pominięcia ważnego aspektu badanego problemu, gdyż ten postrzegany jest jako mało istotny czy pozostaje nieintencjonalnie niezauważony.

W postępowaniu badawczym stosuje się zabiegi niwelujące zagrożenie nietrafną operacjonalizacją problemu badawczego poprzez gruntowne studia nad literaturą przedmiotu (Williams, 2007). W wielu przypadkach pozwala to szerzej spojrzeć na badaną problematykę, odwołując się pośrednio lub bezpośrednio do wcześniejszych ustaleń. Literatura przedmiotu jest chyba najczęściej stosowaną metodą ograniczającą błędną operacjonalizację. Trzeba jednak pamiętać, że podejście to ma również istotne ograniczenia, w szczególności w przypadku badania nowo wyłaniających się fenomenów, które nie zostały jeszcze dobrze rozpoznane przez innych badaczy albo nie zostały rozpoznane w określonym kontekście społeczno-kulturowym czy instytucjonalnym. O ile problemy *in abstracto* mogą mieć uniwersalny charakter, o tyle ich lokalne operacjonalizacje będą dotyczyły odrębnych zjawisk. Przykładem problemów związanych z operacjonalizacją przy wykorzystaniu przeglądu literatury będzie problem wykorzystania sztucznej inteligencji do pisania prac zaliczeniowych przez studentów, który jest jeszcze relatywnie słabo rozpoznany empirycznie (Nikolic i in., 2023), a więc jego operacjonalizacja z natury rzeczy musi być dość intuicyjna. W przypadku gdy operacjonalizacja została przeprowadzona przy wykorzystaniu przeglądu literatury, przykładem będą badania nad problemem deficytu kobiet w organach zarządczych uczelni, który jest dość powszechny w Europie, ale niemal w każdym kraju będzie inaczej operacjonalizowany ze względu na specyfikę krajowych oraz instytucjonalnych uregulowań dotyczących ustroju uczelni (np. Klenk i in., 2022).

Mając na uwadze powyższe przykłady, przed badaczami szkolnictwa wyższego stoi wyzwanie w postaci wstępnego rozpoznania specyfiki analizowanej problematyki – zanim podejmą właściwe kroki badawcze. W naukach społecznych jest dość częstą praktyką, że badacze szukają odpowiedzi na pytania szczególnie im bliskie – w ramach znanej im i zarazem bliskiej problematyki. Pozwala im to uniknąć „błądzenia po omacku”, zwłaszcza na początkowych etapach postępowania badawczego. Dobra znajomość badanej problematyki może rzeczywiście pozytywnie wpływać na diagnozowanie problemów, ich konceptualizację, ale przede wszystkim operacjonalizację i dobór narzędzi badawczych. Nie jest to jednak reguła, a nasze doświadczenia pokazują, że nadmierna bliskość (funkcjonalna lub emocjonalna) generuje ryzyko nadmiernego wpływu własnej perspektywy, która tworzy iluzję dobrej znajomości problemu. Przy tej okazji warto odwołać się do rzeczywistych przykładów badań, które będą tworzyły dobrą ilustrację analizowanych zjawisk. Są to duże projekty, oparte głównie na metodologii badań jakościowych i wnioskowaniu idiograficznym.

W prowadzonych przez nas badaniach nad rozwojem sektora publicznych uczelni zawodowych (PUZ) w Polsce początkowo zupełnie umknęła nam kwestia współczynników korygujących wielkość naboru oraz wagowego ujęcia w algorytmie finansowania PUZ studentów na poziomie magisterskim. Pozornie są to niewielkie rzeczy, ale kluczowe w kontekście oceny funkcjonowania PUZ.

Ocena funkcjonowania PUZ nie może być mierzona wyłącznie liczbą studentów, ich zbyt duża liczba może być bowiem problemem finansowym dla uczelni.

Kwestię zagrożenia nietrafną operacjonalizacją można również wskazać w naszym badaniu nad kształceniem w szkołach doktorskich, których sukces jest bardzo rozmaicie definiowany w poszczególnych dziedzinach nauki (oraz w sztuce), a nawet pomiędzy dyscyplinami w ramach jednej dziedziny (np. psychologia i prawo w ramach nauk społecznych). Podobnie jest z miarami sukcesu, których różnorodność udało się ustalić dopiero w trakcie pilotażu, który w przypadku badań jakościowych rzadko ma na tyle rozbudowany charakter, aby obejmować wszystkie kategorie badanych.

Ostatni przykład dotyczy badań mechanizmów wykluczania kobiet ze struktur zarządczych uczelni. Nasza uwaga i operacjonalizacja mechanizmów wykluczenia skupiły się pierwotnie na formalnych i nieformalnych relacjach zachodzących wewnątrz uczelni. Początkowo pominęliśmy znaczenie prywatnych męskich spotkań odbywających się poza uczelnią, które mogą wpływać na wykluczenie kobiet z istotnych decyzji personalnych. Dopiero w trakcie dalszych etapów postępowania badawczego stało się jasne, że operacjonalizacja zmiennej, jaką jest (nie)obecności kobiet w strukturach zarządczych, powinna obejmować również nieformalne spotkania towarzyskie, podczas których dochodzi do podejmowania najważniejszych dla uczelni decyzji, w tym personalnych.

Na podstawie naszych wcześniejszych doświadczeń trudno nam uwierzyć, że problemy z trafną i pełną operacjonalizacją problemu badawczego w studiach nad szkolnictwem wyższym nie zdarzają się innym badaczom. Raczej skłaniamy się ku tezie, że mają one charakter nieuświadomiony, co dodatkowo utrudnia jego identyfikację, tym bardziej że może mieć istotny wpływ na proces oraz wyniki badań. Warto ponadto dodać, że w badaniach jakościowych problem ten jest szczególnie ważny, wybór badanych instytucji czy dobór badanych (do wywiadu pogłębionego czy zogniskowanego badania fokusowego) często opiera się bowiem pośrednio na sieciach naukowych, których członkowie gotowi są uczestniczyć w projektach badawczych. Istotnym czynnikiem jest tu pewność, które indywidualne oceny, spostrzeżenia i poglądy nie wyjdą poza proces badawczy. Jest to oczywiście wymowny, ale tylko jeden przykład, badanie własnych społeczności czy też organizacji nie jest bowiem w naukach społecznych zjawiskiem rzadkim, stąd potrzebne jest postępowanie służące do zmniejszania wpływu badacza (badaczy) na operacjonalizację problemu badawczego w sposób systematyczny, a jednocześnie wzmacniające zaufanie badanych (i często beneficjentów ich wyników) do uzyskiwanych wyników. W literaturze wskazuje się, że pomocny może okazać się w tym przypadku crowdsourcing naukowy (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023).

Crowdsourcing – definicja fenomenu

Pojęcie crowdsourcingu pojawiło się po raz pierwszy za sprawą artykułu dziennikarza magazynu „Wired" Jeffa Howe'a. We wprowadzeniu do artykułu napisał: „Pamiętasz outsourcing? Wysyłanie pracy do Indii i Chin to rok 2003. Nowa pula taniej siły roboczej: zwykli ludzie wykorzystują swoje wolne środki do tworzenia treści, rozwiązywania problemów, a nawet prowadzenia korporacyjnych prac badawczo-rozwojowych" (Howe, 2006). Uznał on wówczas crowdsourcing za działanie, które polega na skierowaniu zaproszenia przez organizacje lub osoby indywidualne (inicjatorów) do szeroko pojętej społeczności (profesjonalistów oraz pasjonatów) z prośbą o zaangażowanie i realizację określonego zadania czy rozwiązanie problemów. Społeczność taka zainteresowana jest kreatywną pracą, samorealizacją, rywalizacją, poznawaniem nowości czy mierzeniem się z wyzwaniami (Brem i in., 2023). Zazwyczaj to zaproszenie kierowane jest za pomocą platformy internetowej w postaci witryny lub aplikacji internetowej, która umożliwia inicjatorowi dostęp do różnorodnych zasobów oraz wchodzenie w interakcje z innymi osobami.

Podkreślić należy, że przejawy zbiorowej mądrości można odnotować już w XVII czy XVIII wieku. Przykładowo, rząd brytyjski zaprosił społeczność do poszukiwania sposobów na ustalenie pozycji statków na morzu, a rząd francuski do opracowania taniego i skutecznego sposobu przechowywania dużej ilości żywności. Takich przykładów jest bardzo wiele (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2019). Nie bez powodu mówi się zatem, że crowdsourcing jest „starym winem w nowej butelce" (Afuah, Tucci, 2012; Afuah, Tucci, Viscusi, 2018).

Oczywiście bezdyskusyjne jest to, że zarówno internet, jak i wszechobecny rozwój technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych zintensyfikowały zainteresowanie crowdsourcingiem oraz otworzyły nieograniczone możliwości jego wykorzystania. Podkreślić należy jednak, że technologia w postaci platform nie jest wymogiem koniecznym w crowdsourcingu. Stanowi ona raczej wsparcie i pełni funkcję pośrednika w relacjach i komunikacji pomiędzy inicjatorem a społecznością (Brem i in., 2023). Jednak należy podkreślić, że crowdsourcing opiera się na tak zwanej zbiorowej mądrości, zgodnie z którą „we właściwych warunkach grupy okazują się niezwykle inteligentne i często mądrzejsze od najbardziej błyskotliwych swoich członków" (Surowiecki, 2010: 15).

Jeff Howe (2008) wyróżnił cztery typy crowdsourcingu – *collective intelligence*, *crowd creation*, *crowd voting* oraz *crowdfunding. Collective intelligence* odnosi się do rozwiązywania problemów organizacyjnych, co określone zostało jako „pudełko sugestii" (ang. *suggestion box*) i formy twórczego środowiska (ang. *idea jams*). Natomiast *crowd creation* sprowadza się do kreowania nowych produktów, usług i treści. Obejmuje również generowanie treści oraz ich ocenę. Z kolei *crowd voting* sprowadza się do gromadzenia opinii, sądów, filtrowania i rangowania różnych treści on-line czy też wyboru najlepszych rozwiązań. I wreszcie *crowdfunding* dotyczy społecznościowego pozyskiwania funduszy na różne zadania czy cele istotne z punktu widzenia inicjatora. Przy tym najnowsza literatura dostarcza przykładów wielu innych rodzajów crowdsourcingu (Ghezzi i in., 2018), niemniej jednak postuluje konieczność delimitacji, a więc rozdzielenia crowdsourcingu od crowdfundingu (Bouncken, Komorek, Kraus, 2015).

Niezależnie od typologii śmiało można zgodzić się z innymi badaczami (Brem i in., 2023), ale i samym twórcą pojęcia „crowdsourcing" Jeffem Howe'em, że „jedynie pasje ludzi i ich wyobraźnia" (Howe, 2008: IX) ograniczają możliwości wykorzystania crowdsourcingu. Co więcej, pandemia COVID-19 pokazała, że crowdsourcing nie jest tylko modną formą *buzzword*, a staje się coraz bardziej uznanym sposobem dostępu do nieograniczonych źródeł wiedzy i umiejętności (Pavlidou, Papagiannidis, Tsui, 2020). Potwierdzeniem tego są liczne przykłady jego wykorzystania między innymi do mapowania zakażeń wirusem COVID-19 (*AntiCoronavirus Hackathon – ideation challenge for social good*), poszukiwania pomysłów na tworzenie odpornej społecznej (*Call4Ideas COVID-19 Challenge*), skonstruowania respiratora (*CoVent-19 Challenge*) bądź zgłaszania przez ludzi aktualnych objawów chorobowych (*COVID Near You*) (Vermicelli, Cricelli, Grimaldi, 2021).

Jednym słowem crowdsourcing pozwala organizacjom (niezależnie od ich typu) między innymi na uczenie się, przechwytywanie wartości, tworzenie i wdrażanie innowacji, rozwiązywanie problemów, otrzymywanie informacji na temat sytuacji kryzysowej (np. od zwykłej awarii oświetlenia czy dziury na drodze po zagrożenia epidemiologiczne), doskonalenie procesów biznesowych czy osiąganie i utrzymanie przewagi konkurencyjnej. Co więcej, coraz częściej postuluje się, aby crowdsourcing stanowił cenny dodatek dla wspierania badań naukowych oraz tworzenia wiedzy naukowej (Franzoni, Sauermann, 2014; Schlagwein, Daneshgar, 2014; Uhlmann i in., 2019; Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023). Określamy go mianem crowdsourcingu naukowego (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023).

Crowdsourcing naukowy – istota i specyfika

Crowdsourcing naukowy stanowi odpowiedź na:

> […] obserwowane od dwóch dekad przemiany prawne, społeczne, kulturowe oraz technologiczne, które skutkują rosnącymi wymaganiami i stale modyfikowanymi oczekiwaniami wobec nauczycieli akademickich […] intensyfikacji produktywności naukowej, budowania interdyscyplinarnych, międzynarodowych zespołów naukowych, współpracy i otwartości naukowej, transparentności, inkluzyjności oraz responsywności badań naukowych. (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023: 10–11)

Ze względu na specyfikę crowdsourcingu *per se* możliwości zastosowania crowdsourcingu naukowego w kontekście nauk społecznych są niemal nieograniczone (Beck i in., 2022). Może on być wykorzystywany na każdym etapie procesu badawczego: koncepcyjnym, realizacji badań empirycznych oraz analizy zgromadzonego materiału empirycznego (Buhrmester, Talaifar, Gosling, 2018). W ramach pierwszego etapu, koncepcyjnego, następuje identyfikacja, zarysowanie problemu badawczego oraz jego uzasadnienie wraz ze wskazaniem kontekstu osadzenia. Na tym etapie formułuje się również problem badawczy oraz dokonuje jego uszczegółowienia w postaci pytań badawczych (eksplikacja), ustala się i konkretyzuje procedury badawcze, które zostaną wykorzystane podczas gromadzenia danych badawczych (operacjonalizacja), oraz przygotowuje narzędzie badawcze. Tu właśnie crowdsourcing naukowy jako postępowanie może okazać się pomocne w gromadzeniu wiedzy na badany temat, poszukiwaniu inspiracji, identyfikacji luk poznawczych, projektowaniu narzędzi badawczych, ustaleniu sposobów pozyskiwania danych, formułowaniu celu badań oraz hipotez badawczych (Parrick, Chapman, 2020), poszukiwaniu nowych rozwiązań w celu zmniejszenia ograniczeń dotychczasowych badań, a także ustaleniu ich przyszłych kierunków (Uhlmann i in., 2019). Jednym słowem crowdsourcing naukowy na etapie koncepcyjnym pozwala badaczowi na „ulepszenie istniejącej wiedzy i poszukiwania nowych rozwiązań w celu zmniejszenia ograniczeń dotychczasowych badań" (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023: 74).

Drugim etapem procesu badawczego jest realizacja badań empirycznych, co w praktyce sprowadza się do pilotażu narzędzia badawczego oraz przeprowadzenia badań właściwych przy zachowaniu założeń przyjętych podczas operacjonalizacji. Na tym etapie crowdsourcing naukowy pozwala na usprawnienie projektu badania, weryfikację protokołów eksperymentów, walidację narzędzi badawczych, przeprowadzanie badań naukowych oraz testowanie dowodów naukowych (Stritch, Pedersen, Taggart, 2017).

Etap trzeci, ostatni, odnosi się do analizy zgromadzonego materiału empirycznego oraz sporządzenia raportu z przeprowadzonych badań. Przy tym analiza danych obejmuje wiele ściśle ze sobą powiązanych zadań, takich jak tworzenie kategorii, stosowanie tych kategorii do surowych danych poprzez kodowanie i tworzenie tabel, a następnie wnioskowanie. W tym ujęciu crowdsourcing naukowy pozwala na usprawnienie i przyspieszenie przetwarzania danych badawczych, ich wizualizację oraz integrację, analizę zgromadzonego materiału badawczego, w szczególności tłumaczenie tekstów, analizę materiałów audio i wideo, treści, kodowanie, transkrypcję, kategoryzowanie, katalogowanie, kontekstualizację oraz mapowanie zgromadzonych danych. Crowdsourcing naukowy może okazać się przydatny do redagowania oraz pisania różnorodnych tekstów naukowych (Schlagwein, Daneshgar, 2014). Ponadto w jego ramach można poszukiwać współpracowników do prowadzenia wspólnych badań (Uhlmann i in., 2019). Dzięki angażowaniu społeczności naukowej rezultaty przeprowadzonych badań koncepcyjnych lub empirycznych mogą być szeroko upowszechniane (Beck i in., 2022).

Crowdsourcing naukowy – status badacza i członków społeczności

W przypadku crowdsourcingu naukowego kładzie się nacisk na status badacza oraz członków społeczności, z uwzględnieniem katalogu ewentualnych korzyści i kosztów, jakie odnoszą oni z uczestnictwa w tego typu inicjatywach. To badacz-inicjator podejmuje decyzję o chęci czy konieczności sięgnięcia po źródła „zbiorowej mądrości". Przy tym decyzja ta nie jest automatyczna i stanowi konsekwencję jego potrzeb oraz dostrzeżenia możliwości zastosowania crowdsourcingu naukowego (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023). Jest ona zależna przede wszystkim od zadania (pytania), które chce skierować do zbiorowości. Następnie, po podjęciu decyzji o crowdsourcingu, inicjator przystępuje do projektowania całej inicjatywy crowdsourcingowej, a więc podejmuje liczne decyzje dotyczące przebiegu naukowej inicjatywy. W dalszej kolejności zajmuje się jego konfiguracją, co sprowadza się do materializacji projektu na platformie crowdsourcingowej. Na ostatnim etapie badacz decyduje o tym, czy otrzymane od zbiorowości rozwiązania (odpowiedzi) zostaną wykorzystane w praktyce i przełożą się na wiedzę naukową.

W odniesieniu do potencjalnych korzyści dzięki crowdsourcingowi naukowemu badacz uzyskuje dostęp do grupy osób mających unikatowe i różnorodne doświadczenia, umiejętności i wiedzę. Dzięki interakcjom pomiędzy tymi osobami może on uzyskać korzyści zarówno w sensie metodologicznym, jak i społecznym (Beck i in., 2022). Jednak w literaturze wskazuje się również na katalog potencjalnych kosztów. W głównej mierze wynikają one z paradoksów crowdsourcingu, a mianowicie może on pomóc akademikom w gromadzeniu wiedzy czy nowatorskich pomysłów na badania naukowe, ale nadmiar otrzymanych od zbiorowości odpowiedzi może utrudnić ich przetworzenie i przekształcenie w wiedzę naukową. Co więcej, crowdsourcing *per se* jest „łatwy w rozwoju i łatwy do zepsucia" (Zhao, Zhu, 2014: 428).

Jak wspomniano we wstępie do niniejszego artykułu, w crowdsourcingu (także i tym naukowym) zbiorowość jest zróżnicowana, niejednorodna i nieokreślona pod względem wiedzy i umiejętności, pochodzenia, cech społecznych grupy osób (mogą to być zarówno członkowie społeczności akademickiej, jak i pozaakademickiej). Członkowie zbiorowości odpowiadają na zaproszenie inicjatora-badacza i wybierają do realizacji zadania, którymi są zainteresowani. To zainteresowanie wynika zarówno z motywacji zewnętrznej (np. materialnej), jak i wewnętrznej (np. chęci uczestnictwa czy pomocy). Zadania skierowane przez badacza do zbiorowości mogą odznaczać się różnym stopniem złożoności i to właśnie on stanowi wyróżnik zarówno statusu członków społeczności w crowdsourcingu naukowym, jak i przyjętej postawy wobec poszczególnych prac, a także stopnia zaangażowania w ich realizację. Przy tym to inicjator w zaproszeniu do potencjalnych uczestników nakreśla oczekiwania i wymogi co do profilu członka zbiorowości oraz wytycznych w odniesieniu do realizacji danego zadania badawczego.

Zadania kierowane do zbiorowości określa się jako proste, złożone lub skomplikowane (Lenart-Gansiniec, 2023). Zadania proste odnoszą się do takich prac, które nie wymagają współpracy z innymi osobami. Mogą być realizowane samodzielnie. Są to zazwyczaj prace nieskomplikowane, niejednokrotnie o charakterze powtarzalnym (Wiggins, Crowston, 2011). W przypadku takich zadań członkowie zbiorowości są wyłącznie dostarczycielami informacji oraz danych. Z kolei zadania złożone odnoszą się do prac, które wymagają współpracy z innymi osobami, określonej wiedzy i umiejętności oraz dużego zaangażowania i nakładów czasu po stronie członków zbiorowości. W zadaniach takich są oni partnerami. Są to zazwyczaj prace polegające na stawianiu pytań badawczych czy operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego. W tym przypadku członkowie zbiorowości są w pewnym sensie współbadaczami, choć ich wkład pozostaje anonimowy.

Jak wspomniano, członkowie zbiorowości sami wybierają zadania, w których chcą brać udział. Jednak chętniej uczestniczą w takich, które oceniają jako wiarygodne, co wiąże się z postrzeganiem przez nich reputacji, tożsamości i doświadczenia inicjatora-badacza. Jeśli w odczuciu zbiorowości inicjator nie jest wiarygodny, ocenia wykonane zadania w sposób stronniczy, nie przekazuje informacji zwrotnej w trakcie realizacji zadania czy też sformułował zaproszenie, instrukcje oraz oczekiwania w sposób niezrozumiały – wówczas może się okazać, że członkowie zbiorowości nie będą zainteresowani wzięciem udziału w inicjatywie crowdsourcingowej.

Może także pojawić się zagrożenie, że będą oni bojkotować kolejne zaproszenia, co więcej – przekazywać innym członkom negatywne opinie o inicjatorze. Łączy się to z katalogiem potencjalnych strat po stronie zbiorowości, takich jak poczucie straty czasu i zasobów. Wpisuje się to w perspektywę niewypełnienia przez inicjatora kontraktu psychologicznego (Liu i in., 2020).

Crowdsourcing naukowy – potencjał w operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w jakościowych badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym

Decyzja dotycząca tego, w jaki sposób badacz, nie tylko szkolnictwa wyższego, będzie przeprowadzał operacjonalizację problemu badawczego, zawsze będzie ostatecznie należała do niego. Przy tym nie można zapominać, że sięgnięcie przez niego do wielu różnorodnych źródeł i możliwości precyzyjnego zbudowania konstruktu teoretycznego oraz zaproponowania konkretnych procedur badawczych zwiększa szansę na trafność samego badania. Jak już podkreślono, crowdsourcing naukowy pozwala na odwołanie się do licznej, zróżnicowanej i rozproszonej zbiorowości, co może znacząco pomóc w bardziej trafnej operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego, w szczególności w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Wynika to z kilku powodów.

Po pierwsze, zaproszenie nieograniczonej liczby osób z różnym doświadczeniem oraz wiedzą, funkcjonujących w odmiennych kontekstach społecznych (dyscyplinowych, regionalnych czy wreszcie instytucjonalnych) pozwala na uzyskanie dostępu do bogactwa różnorodnych perspektyw i doświadczeń uczestników. Przykładowo, jeśli interesuje nas problematyka motywacji czy zaangażowania doktorantów bądź też chcemy rozpoznać czynniki sukcesu studiów magisterskich, przegląd literatury czy odwołanie się do własnej wiedzy może okazać się nie tylko niewystarczające, ale wręcz mylące. Istnieje obawa, że bez dodatkowych informacji kontekstowych można pominąć istotne wymiary badanego problemu, co wpływa na trafność późniejszych ustaleń. Nie ma nic bardziej złudnego niż przekonanie o słuszności i zamknięcie się w jednej perspektywie, która często jest jedną z wielu w silnie różnicującym się wewnętrznie szkolnictwie wyższym. Co więcej, bez uwzględnienia wewnętrznej złożoności szkolnictwa wyższego, w tym funkcjonujących w jego obrębie różnych perspektyw, niemożliwe jest trafne poznanie zgłębianego problemu. Crowdsourcing naukowy może okazać się pomocny w skonfrontowaniu ustaleń literaturowych z lokalną i aktualną rzeczywistością. Dla przykładu kryteria sukcesu naukowego mogą różnić się w zależności np. od dyscypliny, wielkości kraju oraz jego historii, ale i od grupy, która ustala nieformalne kryteria awansu naukowego. Sięgnięcie do tzw. zbiorowej mądrości może ujawnić badaczom nieznane im kryteria sukcesu w nauce. Uczestnicy rekrutowani za pośrednictwem crowdsourcingu naukowego są bardziej reprezentatywni i bliżsi populacji ogólnej, co pozwala na zwiększenie stopnia precyzji oraz dokładności w ustaleniu obrazu zmiennej teoretycznej (Paolacci, Chandler, 2014).

Po drugie, crowdsourcing naukowy może być zastosowany do opracowania procedur badawczych umożliwiających obserwacje empiryczne odpowiadające problemom badawczym w silnie zróżnicowanych uwarunkowaniach środowiskowych oraz instytucjonalnych. Przykładowo, jeśli poprosimy doktorantki i doktorantów o ocenę ich zadowolenia z warunków socjalno-bytowych oferowanych przez uczelnię, to możemy łatwo pominąć istotne aspekty ich potencjalnego (nie)zadowolenia, pytając głównie o kwestie, które z naszej perspektywy są ważne lub które zamieszczone są w literaturze przedmiotu. Każda z tych perspektyw zdaje się niebezpiecznie ułomna (fragmentaryczna), zwyczajnie nieaktualna czy pozbawiona kontekstu kulturowego bądź instytucjonalnego. Crowdsourcing naukowy stanowić może obiecujący sposób na radzenie sobie z sygnalizowanym zagrożeniem, umożliwia bowiem pozyskanie informacji zwrotnych od osób, które dotyka sygnalizowana kwestia.

Po trzecie, w ramach operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego przeprowadza się badania pilotażowe zorientowane na sprawdzenie, uzupełnienie zaplanowanej procedury badawczej o nowe informacje, weryfikację metodologiczną narzędzia badawczego oraz celność doboru próby w badaniach reprezentatywnych. Crowdsourcing naukowy umożliwia szybsze przeprowadzenie badań pilotażowych przy jednoczesnej dbałości o jakość uzyskanych efektów. Wynika to z faktu, że dzięki niemu badacz ma dostęp nie tylko do nieograniczonej, ale także heterogenicznej grupy, składającej się ze specjalistów i niespecjalistów (Buhrmester, Kwang, Gosling, 2011), co może przyczynić się do lepszego zrozumienia dynamik i wyzwań w danej problematyce badawczej. Na przykład w badaniach nad procesami zarządzania instytucjami szkolnictwa wyższego crowdsourcing naukowy może dostarczyć zróżnicowanych opinii na temat efektywności, komunikacji oraz strategii zarządczych. Wykorzystanie go pozwala na lepsze zrozumienie i adresowanie problemów badawczych, zapewniając jednocześnie holistyczne podejście do badań. W tym znaczeniu pozwala on na poszerzenie palety postępowań stosowanych w jakościowych badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym.

Jak wskazano wcześniej, crowdsourcing naukowy ma swój potencjał w kontekście operacjonalizacji problemu naukowego w badaniach jakościowych nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Jednakże mając na uwadze jego specyfikę, warto pochylić się nad podobieństwami i różnicami w kontekście do innych podejść, takich jak badania pilotażowe. Przede wszystkim służą one do testowania narzędzi i nie pozwalają na poszukiwanie nowych kategorii opisu rzeczywistości czy odkrywanie nowych problemów oraz ich interpretację. Pilotaż najczęściej następuje po fazach konceptualizacji oraz operacjonalizacji procesu badawczego, czyli w fazie koncepcyjnie zaawansowanej, przed którą dokonano już pewnych (strategicznych) wyborów metodologicznych. W tym kontekście crowdsourcing w badaniach jakościowych nie jest formą testowania narzędzia (choć w określonych warunkach może pełnić również taką funkcję), ale służy lepszemu rozpoznaniu badanej problematyki, zanim narzędzia zostaną zaprojektowane. Natomiast taką rolę może odgrywać w badaniach ilościowych, gdzie – jak pokazują ustalenia Oppenlaendera i współautorów (2023) – przeprowadzone badania pilotażowe przy wykorzystaniu crowdsourcingu naukowego mogą okazać się pomocne do oceny czy weryfikacji koncepcji lub pomysłu na badania naukowe.

Ponadto w badaniach ilościowych (zwłaszcza na dużych próbach) crowdsourcing może pełnić funkcję badania pilotażowego i służyć do testowania narzędzia oraz przeprowadzenia tzw. studium wykonalności, a więc sprawdzenia, czy uzyskane wyniki badań są możliwe do wdrożenia. Ponadto badania pilotażowe są wymagające pod względem czasowym oraz logistycznym, natomiast crowdsourcing naukowy może takie badania ułatwić i przyspieszyć. Royce D. Sadler (2016) dokonał symulacji operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego za pomocą badań pilotażowych oraz crowdsourcingu naukowego. Wyniki jego badań wskazują, że crowdsourcing oferuje możliwość gromadzenia danych znacznie szybciej i taniej niż w przypadku innych podejść do badań na dużych próbach badawczych. Z kolei badania pilotażowe w postaci zogniskowanych wywiadów grupowych są bardziej kosztowne ze względu na potrzebę angażowania moderatora do prowadzenia sesji badawczych.

Crowdsourcing naukowy – wyzwania w operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w jakościowych badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym

Crowdsourcing jest niewątpliwie ciekawym narzędziem, z ogromnym potencjałem wspomagającym proces operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w badaniach jakościowych nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Nie jest to jednak narzędzie bez wad i ograniczeń, z czego należy zdawać sobie sprawę. Otwarty charakter crowdsourcingu naukowego intensyfikuje wyzwanie w zakresie niepewności co do tego, kto bierze udział w zadaniu, a co za tym idzie – obawy o jakość uzyskanych rezultatów pracy (Barchard, Williams, 2008). Brak kontroli nad strukturą badanej zbiorowości może spowodować, że wynik rozstrzygnięcia może być świadomie (lub nieświadomie) manipulowany, a tym samym uwaga badacza może zostać przekierowana na problemy nieistotne czy sztucznie wytworzone przez pytaną zbiorowość. Technicznych sposobów manipulacji odpowiedziami poprzez multiplikowanie kont, fałszowanie tożsamości członków społeczności, ukrywanie prawdziwego adresu protokołu internetowego (tzw. IP) w celu maksymalizacji dochodów (np. na platformach Amazon Mechanical Turk czy Prolific) jest wiele i będzie jeszcze więcej. Dlatego istotnym wyzwaniem mogą być próby oszustw i nadużyć ze strony zbiorowości biorącej udział w badaniu. W tym kontekście istnieje zagrożenie tworzenia się wspólnot osób wykonujących zadania na platformie, co może przyczynić się do tego, że członkowie zbiorowości mogą dzielić się między sobą doświadczeniami czy „dobrymi praktykami" związanymi z potencjalnymi sposobami manipulacji i oszustw (np. wykorzystanie sztucznej inteligencji, np. botów, czy innego oprogramowania do automatycznego wykonywania kilku- czy kilkunastu zadań jednocześnie). Jak wskazuje John B. Ford:

> […] wśród respondentów MTurka na szczególną uwagę zasługuje obecność ścigaczy i oszustów, których właściwe kontrolowanie jest trudne i czasochłonne. Ścigacze to ci, którzy szybko przechodzą przez pytania, zwracając zbyt małą uwagę na zadawane pytania, tworząc błędne lub wprowadzające w błąd dane; a oszuści to ci, którzy kłamią lub fałszywie przedstawiają siebie, aby wypełniać ankiety i zarabiać pieniądze. (Ford, 2017: 156)

Wszystko to potęgowane jest przez to, że uczestnicy platform crowdsourcingowych pozostają praktycznie bez nadzoru i chcą jak najszybciej ukończyć badania, aby zmaksymalizować wynagrodzenie.

Ponadto w crowdsourcingu naukowym badacz nie ma pewności co do minimalnego poziomu wiedzy czy umiejętności członków zbiorowości. Założenie z góry, że posiadają oni wystarczającą wiedzę i umiejętności, może prowadzić do tego, że będą oni, zachęceni zyskiem, wykonywać zadania automatycznie i bezrefleksyjnie, co przyczyni się do uzyskania przez inicjatora błędnych rozwiązań lub rozwiązań o niskim poziomie jakości. Istnieją wprawdzie mechanizmy profilowania społeczności pytanych i szkolenia w zakresie badanego problemu, ale taka procedura zbliża całość do badania pilotażowego.

Z kolei z punktu widzenia społeczności biorącej udział w inicjatywie można odnotować trzy główne etyczne wyzwania – w zakresie poczucia wyzysku, własności intelektualnej oraz prywatności. Crowdsourcing naukowy uznawany jest za swego rodzaju „cyfrowy sklep" (Pittman, Sheehan, 2016: 260), w którym członkowie społeczności traktowani są jak „towar". Mówi się nawet o dehumanizacji pracowników crowdsourcingowych (Xia, McKernan, 2020). Wszystko to oznacza, że członkowie zbiorowości wykonują określone zadanie powierzone im przez badacza za symboliczne wynagrodzenie lub też bez wynagrodzenia. Mogą oni mieć zatem poczucie wyzysku czy niewystarczającego bezpieczeństwa zatrudnienia (Arditte i in., 2016). Wszystko to sprawia, że mogą wykonywać pracę według własnego uznania, a nawet nierzetelnie i chaotycznie.

Drugim wyzwaniem z perspektywy członków zbiorowości może być kwestia własności intelektualnej. W crowdsourcingu naukowym członkowie zbiorowości wirtualnej mogą uzyskać dostęp do informacji oraz szczegółowego opisu zadania, w tym pomysłów na badania naukowe. Tego wymagają wytyczne z zakresu opracowania przez inicjatora-badacza zaproszenia do wykonania zadania, które jest zamieszczane w trybie otwartym na platformie crowdsourcingowej – im bardziej szczegółowy opis, tym większe prawdopodobieństwo otrzymania przez inicjatora rozwiązań zgodnych z jego oczekiwaniami (Buhrmester, Talaifar, Gosling, 2018). Może to jednak potęgować ryzyko kradzieży pomysłów na badania naukowe. Ponadto członkowie społeczności wirtualnej angażują się w wykonywanie zadań i przesyłają swoje pomysły. Może to także zwiększać ryzyko kradzieży pomysłów innych uczestników. Zasygnalizować też należy zagrożenie w postaci tzw. paradoksu informacyjnego Arrowa (Polanyi, 1962), który wiąże się z potencjalnym ryzykiem przywłaszczenia przez badacza dostarczonego rozwiązania, bez nagradzania internautów – pod pretekstem jego rzekomej nieprzydatności.

I wreszcie warto zwrócić uwagę na jeszcze jedno wyzwanie – związane z prywatnością. Zgodnie z wymogami platform crowdsourcingowych udział w zadaniach badawczych wymaga od osoby zainteresowanej rejestracji, w tym podania danych osobistych. Obawa członków zbiorowości o wyciek tych danych może zmniejszyć ich chęć do wzięcia udziału w naukowej inicjatywie crowdsourcingowej. Literatura zawiera liczne przykłady kradzieży danych wrażliwych czy działań nieetycznych, w tym dotyczących kart kredytowych, a także phishingu, spammingu, stalkingu czy zagrożeń w postaci złośliwego oprogramowania (Xia, McKernan, 2020).

Podsumowanie

Powyższe rozważania wskazują na możliwości wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego w operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem badań jakościowych nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Otwarcie przyznajemy, że jeszcze nie udało się nam wykorzystać tego narzędzia w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Niemniej biorąc pod uwagę pewne niedopatrzenia w realizowanych przez nas projektach badawczych, a przede wszystkim wynikające z nich bardziej ogólne wyzwania dla badaczy w naszym polu, coraz bardziej skłaniamy się do tego, aby narzędzie to wykorzystać. Piszemy o tym otwarcie, ze świadomością, że badania nad szkolnictwem wyższym są przykładem studiów nad własną społecznością bądź instytucją zatrudniającą – wszystko to powoduje, że badacze mogą być szczególnie podatni na pułapkę iluzji własnej perspektywy. Staraliśmy się pokazać, że problem ten jest strategicznie ważny na etapie operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego, może bowiem zaważyć na poprawności procesu badawczego i przyczyniać się do błędów we wnioskowaniu.

Wszystko to wskazuje na fakt, że konieczne jest szersze, bardziej otwarte spojrzenie metodologiczne, uwzględniające wewnętrzne zróżnicowanie badanej społeczności, a co za tym idzie – również potencjalnie odmiennych perspektyw inny interesariuszy. Historycznie patrząc na dyskusje o szkolnictwie wyższym, widać, że ujęcie pluralizmu perspektyw przysparza pewnych trudności zwłaszcza tam, gdzie metodologiczny rygor nie jest tak istotny i niekiedy ustępuje presji czasu i potrzebie uzyskania szybkich wyników.

Crowdsourcing naukowy, ze względu na swoją specyfikę, opartą na zbiorowej mądrości, pozwala na wypracowanie kategorii opisu rzeczywistości podzielanych przez jej uczestników i odkrycie sposobów ich konstruowania. Jest to istotne w przypadku takich problemów badawczych, których zrozumienie i operacjonalizacja wymagają sięgnięcia do wielu kontekstów oraz uwzględnienia szerokiego spektrum różnych perspektyw, opinii czy doświadczeń. Należy podkreślić, że crowdsourcing naukowy pozwala na włączenie i zaangażowanie w operacjonalizację problemu badawczego nie tylko wykwalifikowanych ekspertów czy innych badaczy, ale także szeroko pojętych członków badanej społeczności. Wszystko to sprawia, że możliwe jest dostarczenie nowych perspektyw, często trudnych do rozpoznania za pomocą przeglądu literatury – co w szczególności stanowi wyzwanie w odniesieniu do zjawisk będących przedmiotem zainteresowania badaczy szkolnictwa wyższego. Co więcej, problemy badawcze uwzględniają szerokie grono interesariuszy mających odmienne spojrzenie na ten sam problem badawczy. Śmiało można powiedzieć, że im lepsza operacjonalizacja, tym lepsza reprezentacja całego zjawiska. Jednak będzie to możliwe tylko wtedy, gdy badacz podczas operacjonalizacji będzie się opierał na osądach wielu osób. Pozwoli to na dokonanie dokładniejszego rozeznania badanej problematyki.

Oczywiście należy podkreślić, że crowdsourcing naukowy nie stanowi panaceum na problemy z operacjonalizacją problemu badawczego w badaniach jakościowych nad szkolnictwem wyższym. Nie jest on bowiem wolny od ograniczeń oraz ryzyk, które mogą stanowić wyzwanie dla badaczy. Odnoszą się one do zagrożenia jakością pozyskanych danych i niewłaściwą oceną przez naukowców, związaną z tym, czy dany problem badawczy może być przekazany do szerszej grupy osób, a także do braku pewności co do uzyskanych wyników, błędu autoselekcji, zagrożenia automatyzacji pracy czy tworzenia się wspólnot osób wykonujących zadanie badawcze. Wszystko to może w ostateczności przyczynić się do subiektywizmu, manipulacji ze strony interesariuszy biorących udział w operacjonalizacji. Jednak pomimo potencjalnych ryzyk czy ograniczeń możliwości wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego do operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w kontekście badań jakościowych nad szkolnictwem wyższym może on stanowić wartościowe podejście. Może to być uzupełnienie przeprowadzanej operacjonalizacji za pomocą przeglądu literatury. Przed badaczami jednak pojawiają się wyzwania związane z ustaleniem, czy crowdsourcing naukowy sprawdzi się także w innych obszarach badawczych niż szkolnictwo wyższe, szczególnie związanych z zachowaniami obywatelskimi czy konsumenckimi. Intrygujące poznawczo może być ustalenie, jakie obawy mogą mieć różnorodni interesariusze, którzy byli włączani przez badaczy w proces operacjonalizacji. Wiedza na ten temat pozwoli badaczom zainteresowanym crowdsourcingiem naukowym zniwelować jego potencjalne wyzwania i zagrożenia.

Podziękowanie

Wyrażamy podziękowanie anonimowym recenzentkom/recenzentom za inspirujące i wnikliwe komentarze, które przyczyniły się do powstania ostatecznej wersji artykułu.

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Cytowanie

Dominik Antonowicz, Regina Lenart-Gansiniec, Łukasz Sułkowski (2024), *Możliwości wykorzystania crowdsourcingu naukowego do operacjonalizacji problemu badawczego w badaniach nad szkolnictwem wyższym*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 166–189, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.08

The Possibilities of Using Crowdsourcing in Science to Operationalize a Research Problem in Research on Higher Education

Abstract: The operationalization of a research problem is a constitutive stage of the process of implementing any scientific research. However, carrying operationalization out is a challenge for the researcher, because it requires good, complete, and up-to-date knowledge of the analyzed issues. Therefore, researchers are increasingly encouraged to look for ways or procedures that make it possible to search, clarify, and understand in a multi-aspect manner phenomena that may become the subject of empirical research. This is particularly important in the context of research on higher education, which requires a qualitative approach. Crowdsourcing in science has entered the popularization phase and seems to be promising in the context of the operationalization of any research problem. The aim of this article is to present a proposal for the use of crowdsourcing in science as an auxiliary (supplementary) procedure at the stage of the operationalization of the research problem and to consider its effectiveness in the context of research on higher education.

Keywords: crowdsourcing, crowdsourcing in science, operationalization, higher education, qualitative research

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New Roles, Old Rituals: The Mobilization of the Listener Community Based on the Example of Radio 357[1]

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Keywords:
virtual communities, radio audiences, internet radio, patronage crowdfunding, Polish Radio

Abstract: This article analyzes the community of patrons of the Internet radio station Radio 357, based on 13 in-depth interviews with the station's listeners and a former station employee. Material from the online forum of the studied community is also analyzed. The text aims to present the members of a radio community who became involved in financing a new Internet radio station through online fundraising.
An attempt is made to explain the listeners' motivations for their unique scale of involvement in this new media initiative. The research questions relate to the characteristics of the Radio 357 audience community and the role that radio plays for them. The foundations built by many years of participation around the former station and the sense of injustice intensified by its symbolic collapse became the driving forces to fight for the continuation of their previously cultivated radio practices and traditions, already incorporated within the new station.

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Introduction

It is easy to underestimate the role that radio broadcasting has played in the history of communication and media. The way people receive information or entertainment through radio has remained relatively static for many years. Despite competition from new media, the Internet, and streaming platforms, it is still many people's most important means of mass communication. This text deals with communities strongly attached to their radio identity. The inspiration to write it was a close observation of the community of the Radio 357 recipients. These are former listeners to the Third Program of the Polish Radio (hereinafter Trójka or PR3) – a radio station that, after 2015, found itself in a multidimensional crisis. Its listeners faced a challenge: from one day to the next, they were deprived of the voices of journalists and programs that had been integral to their lives. This text examines how taking advantage of a crisis situation makes it possible to mobilize community members to work toward a common goal of reviving a favorite radio station. It aims to contribute to the understanding of contemporary communities built around media and cultural projects, particularly those involving patronage crowdfunding. The research, employing the qualitative approach, allows for a deeper examination of a specific segment of the society – the participants in the world's largest radio project financed through the digital patronage model.

The analysis conducted in this paper suggests that new communities can form around shared traditions and rituals, facilitated by the favorable conditions of the virtual space. The central question addressed is: what motivated the radio listeners who participated in the study to shift the location and form of their existing practices? This research question addresses insufficient knowledge of how communities formed around the reception of a traditional medium (i.e., over-the-air radio) transit to the medium functioning entirely in online environment. Unlike the better-known cases where traditional TV audiences are shifting to watching shows online (Kuyucu, 2019), here we have a financial component embodied by digital patronage, making the whole transition unique. It can be argued that the situation in which a large group of radio listeners mobilize to support a new radio station (albeit promising continuation of the old one) through a relatively new and unfamiliar to some of them financial service requires investigation. Therefore, it is important to learn what kind of radio listening rituals (in Cohen's sense) and actions based on attachment to the community determined high levels of sacrifices (emotionally and financially) to recreate themselves in the new conditions.

The theoretical inspirations that encouraged writing this paper come from reflections on the historical evolution of forms of association, with a particular emphasis on the current stage, i.e., contemporary communities implemented via virtual networks. Of particular interest are contemporary communities, which, according to, e.g., Cohen (1985) and Rheingold (2000), are mainly based on cultural, symbolic, and ritual-discretionary foundations. The issue of the case of the radio and the community around it described in the paper is intended to show an example of the current stage of the evolution of the community as well as the elements that construct it on the example of practices related to the production and reception of radio.

The evolution of the understanding of communities – from traditional to virtual

The functioning and lives of individuals in communities have always been among the fundamental issues of sociology. The earliest historical concepts of communities can be found in traditional political ideas and the concept of the state, the prototype of which was the Greek Polis (Delanty, 2010: 1–2). Communities can often be defined by the foundations around which they are created and implemented. Historically, scholars mainly emphasized the importance of the space criterion: in the definitions of Parsons (1959), Sutton and Kolaj (1960), and Sjoberg (1965: 115), inhabiting a small, common space was a key element in constructing community action. The need to distinguish this category was also pointed out by Gregory Hillery (1955), who defined and typologized communities.

Understanding and interpreting communities raised doubts about this approach. On the one hand, the traditional approach has its place when describing the wide range of possible forms of community: the community is understood as a strong, local group that plays a key role in the survival of the individual. This type of dimension is presented, for example, by the ecological approach, in which the aspect of cooperation between individuals to pursue common interests and the requirements of everyday life is considered essential (Hawley, 1950: 180). However, one can also find a post-traditional dimension in which the community no longer plays a key role in the life and fate of individuals; this corresponds to the more dynamic nature of contemporary life. This approach is distinguished by a lack of barriers; individuals have the freedom to participate in the community or leave it. Examples include alternative communities that fit into the realities of liquid modernity described by Zygmunt Bauman (2008).

In sociological work, it is obligatory to mention the achievements of Ferdinand Tönnies, who, using the terms *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society), mapped the two poles of community organization. *Gemeinschaft* is expressed in traditional human relations in small, local social groups, the prototype of which was the family unit. The efficiency and effectiveness of a traditional community is determined by internally-imposed constraints (Tönnies, 1988). *Gesselschaft* shifts the burden of subordinating goals and means of achieving them to self-willed individuals. Legal and institutional relationships precede the kinship ties valued in *Gemeinschaft*. Individual relationships are more voluntary but, at the same time, selective and fleeting. Tönnies showed how individuals freed themselves from the implementation of previously imposed cultural obligations; the described changes and the transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesselschaft* illustrate the collapse of the former state of civilization.

Analogies to Tönnies' contribution can be found in other classic works by Emil Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber. Durkheim defined the varieties of community life through two types of solidarity: mechanical and organic. The former one was characterized by a lack of individualism and individual wills, resulting from the superior values of the community; the latter described a state that freed the individual from previously imposed traditional constraints (Mikołajewska, 1999: 15–16). In turn, Weber understood the transformation of societies as resulting from the rationalization process. He distinguished "community" and "associative" relationships. In the former, priority is placed on the internal sense of belonging within the existence of the entire community; in the latter, the focus is on the rational dimension of actions motivated by individual interests and calculations (Weber, Parsons, 1947: 136). Marx, one of the greatest defenders of community values, suggested the need to restore a new, egalitarian version of the community; he saw the growing capitalist system as the obstacle to implementing this scenario. In Marx's understanding, the community was primarily a strong and solidary working class (Kamenka, 1982).

The contemporary discourse on communities has increasingly distanced itself from understanding them by the traditional categories; a redefinition was necessary. There has been an evident decline in the importance of geographical affiliation in favor of the primary role of social relations, especially symbolic and individual factors (Frazer, 1990; Etzioni, 1998). Structures of various scopes that could exist almost anywhere began to be recognized as communities.

For Anthony Cohen, community is based on the symbolic and ritual construction of boundaries and the awareness in a given group of itself as a group. The interpretation of symbols and rituals is relatively free, which is why, according to Cohen (1985: 55), "people can participate within the 'same' ritual yet find quite different meanings for it". The fundamental condition for being part of a community is the individual's awareness of themselves, their involvement, and their attachment to a common set of symbols. Cohen's theory of the symbolic construction of community emphasizes flexibility and openness to change, clearly contradicting the treatment of social relations in traditional categories as a rule, unchangeable and mechanical. Community is ultimately what people think it is (Cohen, 1985).

The beginning of the current scientific discussion on communities came at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, by which time the world was largely globalized and based on connections mediated by virtual networks. The dynamics of the technological evolution were reflected in the changing nature of communities and the emergence of the category of "virtual communities." With the participation of media and the Internet, the virtual world began to be treated as an alternative to the physical world; an inextricable connection between offline and online life was noted (Miller, Slater, 2000). Owing to the possibilities of new media, even a simple idea or slogan published on the Internet (spontaneous aid actions are a good example) can become a sufficient argument for joining a given community. Arjun Appaduraj called such communities "diasporas" (Barłowski et al., 2019) and pointed to media egalitarianism as an essential aspect enabling belonging to the global virtual community (Bujała, 2011: 139). The need for direct contact and prior knowledge of individuals is no longer crucial.

The perspective on the contemporary shape of the community was at least twofold. As understood by Andreas Wittel, network socialization was primarily a belief in the existence of new, unstable communities that should be assessed as imperfect (Wittel, 2001). More optimistic visions were drawn by Manuel Castells, who studied the changes in contemporary societies, seeking to strengthen and develop modern urban society in a highly technological and global form (Castells, 1989; 2008a).

Castells suggested that virtual communities should be given a more important status than what had previously been the case. This belief was not affected by transience or the often-weak bonds between individuals (Castells, 2008b: 359).

Howard Rheingold made a fundamental contribution to research on the social aspects of the Internet. The term *virtual community*, which he popularized, defined a group of people who could both maintain direct contact and exchange messages via the Internet (Rheingold, 1993: 3). Apart from the lack of physical contact, he considered virtual communities analogously to organic ones. This way of perceiving online communities, based primarily on cultural foundations and the symbolic layer, can be considered as the last stage, and an example of an extreme post-traditional form of life for individuals in society.

Crisis in PR3 and the birth of Radio 357 – digital patronage as an alternative way of financing new media projects by the "Trójka" listener community

The results of the 2015 parliamentary elections in Poland, which led to the Law and Justice party (PiS) taking power, significantly changed how public media functioned. Radical legislative and administrative changes affecting the entire media sector, especially public media, have since raised concerns among international institutions (e.g., the European Commission Recommendations on the rule of law in Poland from 2016 onwards – Komisja Europejska, 2016) and contributed to Poland's drastic decline in the global media freedom ranking, from 18th in 2015 to 66th place in 2022 (Reporters Without Borders RSF, 2022). The changes to PR3 have become one of the symbols of the political revolution. The programing decisions, previously taken by journalists, were centralized. Significant personnel and program changes were also made, which, in the opinion of listeners and experts, pushed the station in a direction favorable to the ruling party (Wilczak, 2020). For years, PR3 had been known for its constant, faithful, and exceptionally engaged community of listeners, consisting mainly of educated, middle-class people who expected ambitious and high-quality musical and journalistic contents. Due to the interference, a significant part of the radio community stopped listening to PR3. In the fall of 2021, its listenership share reached a historic low of 1.59% (Gąbka, 2021). The reform of public media and the dismantling of Trójka took years, and individual aspects of the crisis were the subject of numerous scientific (e.g., Łysoń, 2021; Chwastyk-Kowalczyk, 2022) and journalistic (Wawrzyszkiewicz, 2020) publications. The crisis at PR3 intensified in 2020 when some former journalists from the station undertook to create two independent online radio stations: Radio Nowy Świat and Radio 357. Both stations were created and financed via a crowdfunding model named "digital patronage" (also called "patronage crowdfunding")[2]. The project bears the hallmarks of innovation; there are no examples of such large radio initiatives financed in the crowdfunding model. Previous research on communities involved in digital patronage had focused mainly on individual online creators (streamers, artists,

2 For further insights into the role of crowdfunding in financing online media initiatives and patron motivation, refer to Doliwa et al. (2022) and Doliwa (2022).

musicians, etc.) with a small group of donators and low incomes. Thus, this article and study also have an innovative character, as it contributes to sociological reflections on the role of virtual communities in radio projects funded by digital patronage. Crowdfunding has been successfully used to fund media projects, including film (Scott, 2015), music (D'Amato, Casella, 2020), journalism (Hunter, 2016), and video games (Planells, 2017). In the case of crowdfunding radio content, initiatives to create individual programs or podcasts are successful (Fernandez Sande, Gallego Perez, 2015), while financing an entire radio station from scratch is less common.

Modern crowdfunding involves financing small and medium-sized initiatives by collecting small contributions from a large number of individuals through dedicated platforms (Ordanini et al., 2011: 443; Brzozowska, Galuszka, 2021). Digital patronage, a recent and increasingly popular type, is distinguished by its long-term, cyclical financing of projects or individual creators (Regner, 2021: 133–142). Regular, typically monthly payments similar to a subscription model foster a stronger level of support and loyalty between the creators and the patrons[3] (Wohn et al., 2019: 99). This model is particularly popular among independent creators in new media, such as podcasters and musicians (Bonifacio, Hair, Wohn, 2021: 8).

Patronage appears to be an attractive model for financing larger-scale projects, as evidenced by the successful fundraising of Radio Nowy Świat and Radio 357 (Gałuszka, Chmielewski, 2023). Creators usually use a hybrid content distribution system, where some of the content is provided free of charge. The patronage system then encourages donors with additional rewards (including the possibility of direct communication with the creator) resulting from a specific level of support. The crowdfunding model is also increasingly used as a way to sponsor journalism (Zheng et al., 2014: 6). It is an opportunity for projects that had previously been unachievable under a different financing model or for other reasons (Aitamurto, 2015: 9).

Radio 357 is an Internet station of a music and journalistic profile. The collection to finance the project through its listeners started on October 5th, 2020, via the Patronite platform; the station began permanent broadcasting precisely three months later. Access to the station is free, and its financing is based on voluntary contributions regularly received from the listeners (called "patrons"). The station's report for 2022 showed that 76% of its budget consisted of patrons' donations; the remainder was made up of revenues from other business collaborations (Radio 357, 2022). Radio 357 has around 50,000 patrons, which translates into monthly revenue of approximately 923,000 PLN as of November 1st, 2023 (Radio 357, 2023a).

It should be emphasized that the station was not the first of the post-PR3 initiatives financed by the community. At the beginning of 2020, three projects were created: "Report on the State of the World" by Dariusz Rosiak, "K3" by Dariusz Bugalski, and Radio Nowy Świat. The decline in PR3's audience

3 In the context of crowdfunded radio projects, "listeners" refers to non-donating recipients of the station's broadcast, while "patrons" denote individuals who financially support the station through regular contributions.

and these activities by its community suggest that a significant number of its listeners have abandoned the old station in favor of at least one of the newer projects. However, it is difficult to know exactly what determined their final choice. Although there are many similarities between Radio 357 and Radio Nowy Świat, what is noteworthy is the clear advantage ot the Radio 357 project in terms of the number of patrons and the declared amount of support. According to Wirtualne Media (jk, 2023), on January 1st, 2023, Radio 357 became the world's largest media project financed by an online community via crowdfunding.

Listeners can tune in to Radio 357 free of charge. However, making a monthly donation enables patrons to access privileges assigned by the station to appropriate levels of support. Even the lowest tier (initially 10 PLN, now 20 PLN per month) allows one to comment on the station's posts and interact with other community members in closed groups, in which Radio 357 journalists are also active. The higher support thresholds (from 100 PLN per month) provide a more individualized form of contact; details are agreed upon during individual consultations between the station and the patron (Radio 357, 2023b). The primary means of communication with patrons is the Patronite platform, although a large part of the discussion also takes place on Facebook. The payment procedure operated by the crowdfunding platform means that all active patrons have access to it as well as the forum located there.

Methodology

This study focuses on a qualitative analysis of the community of Radio 357 patrons. This is largely made up of former PR3 listeners who usually have a strong emotional attachment to the former station, built up over many years. The primary empirical material included 14 semi-structured in-depth interviews: 13 conducted with Radio 357 patrons between October 17th and December 20th, 2022, and an interview with a Radio 357 representative conducted in August 2023.

Table 1. The characteristics of the patrons interviewed

Unique Identifier Code	Gender	Age	Education	Donation (per month)
fk9	Male	49	Secondary	10 PLN
r1c	Female	54	Higher	10 PLN
zrj	Female	30	Higher	35 PLN
dzd	Female	41	Higher	10 PLN
j7d	Male	41	Higher	20 PLN
8g7	Male	36	Secondary	20 PLN
20i	Female	44	Secondary	100 PLN
13k	Female	31	Higher	10 PLN

Unique Identifier Code	Gender	Age	Education	Donation (per month)
7gn	Female	64	Higher	10 PLN
5hf	Male	31	Higher	10 PLN
zwm	Female	61	Higher	20 PLN
8bq	Male	38	Secondary	35 PLN
y9b	Male	55	Higher	20 PLN

Source: own elaboration.

The main material was supplemented by information obtained from an analysis of broadcasts published by Radio 357 in various forms. These included 200 station posts on the Patronite platform (containing over 21,000 user comments) and 41 videos lasting a total of 1,050 minutes. The posts and videos were published between October 5th, 2020, and January 22nd, 2022. Virtual ethnography provided a valuable method for exploring and understanding the behavior of the virtual community, while in-depth interviews aimed to gather deeper insights into patrons' motivations and explore the most important threads that were not fully developed during the discussions on the platform forums.

The material was analyzed using the Atlas.ti software. This led to the creation of 50 detailed codes from the material obtained from the patrons' forum and 51 codes from the interviews. Special attention was paid to code categories relating to the following topics: the radio roots of the listeners, the motivations and involvement of the patrons, and the role of radio in their biographies. All patrons' statements have been anonymized. The collected material made it possible to select the threads mentioned above, enabling us to look closer and try to understand the characteristics of the community and its phenomenon. The community's activities built a professional radio station from scratch on a scale rarely seen on the global digital patronage market.

The case of Radio 357 are reminiscent of the features that distinguish the members of its community. They left their former radio station and helped construct a new radio "home." This text aims to present the characteristics of the community of the patrons of Radio 357 and to show the functioning of the listeners within a specific set of external circumstances – the symbolic collapse of the PR3. Under these conditions, a "new-old" community of recipients was formed, centered around the new radio station. To achieve the research goal, three questions were formulated, which the rest of the article attempts to answer:

1) Who makes up the Radio 357 audience community, what are its characteristics, and what were the foundations of its creation?
2) How do the patrons of Radio 357 perceive the circumstances that led to the transition of the community built around PR3 to Radio 357?
3) What role does contemporary radio as a medium play in creating and being part of the community?

The value of radio memories – the importance and status of "Trójka"

The statements of the patrons clearly showed that they found the roots of their radio histories in PR3. This illustrates the significant role that radio broadcasting and PR3 played in the biographies of the interlocutors, serving as a constant point of reference and a kind of anchor. They emphasized that both radio in general and PR3 in particular accompanied them for most of their lives, often from early youth and almost continuously throughout adulthood. In the interviews, they often recalled events from the past and their first radio experiences that stayed in their memories ever since. An example was the practice of recording Trójka programs on audio cassettes, which served to archive the programs and enable them to be played at any time:

> I started with Trójka, and this Trójka has been my entire adult life. From there, around the age of 10–12, I remember that I was already recording some "Hit Lists" from Trójka to listen to on cassettes, and that's how it all started. Well, I guess I listened to this PR3 all my life. (Patron_fk9)

Patrons also recalled attending events organized by PR3, such as concerts, which strengthened the bonds between listeners and the station. They related anecdotes, such as one about a tradition of annual meetings among the friends of one of the interviewees during 12-hour New Year's Eve broadcasts of *Top of All Time*. It should be emphasized that the broadcast of a favorite program was an obligatory part of the day for PR3 enthusiasts and in interviews, the names and broadcast times of cult programs from many years ago were quickly recalled. PR3's most devoted listeners admitted to listening to the station 24 hours daily, proving their exceptional engagement.

The interviewees described their relationship with the radio as something natural and inevitable in the context of their life history: "There has always been a radio at home, so it's kind of normal for me" (Patron_dzd). This perspective dominated the conversations, suggesting that radio is an important source of information and is the main medium – often in contrast to television. The roots of the memories reached back to the practices that had shaped them in their family homes, where the recipients had "learned" and become accustomed to listening to the radio. In many cases, they had been influenced by close relatives (parents, siblings) or friends. Listening to PR3 in youth, in the presence of their parents, was often emphasized as a daily ritual that could be interpreted in terms of a tradition to be passed down from generation to generation:

> The radio accompanied my home and my entire home life […] The first radio that I remember at my parents' house was this big box with an eye. It is known that he mainly received PR1 there. But later, I had a sister five years older than me who started listening to Trójka. And I took over because my sister went to college and moved out of home, and I continued listening to Trójka, which I liked very much. (Patron_zwm)

Hearing PR3 listeners' memories from many years before evoked an aura of nostalgia. Particularly impressive was the precision in the reconstruction of long-gone details and events. Through listening to the station, many participants became accustomed to its characteristic style and the voices of its presenters. Also critical were statements that journalists and PR3 programs had played a crucial role in "shaping" the interviewees' identities. Through this slogan, they expressed their belief that the radio had impacted not only their musical taste but also their characters, beliefs, and sense of identity. Analyzing the listeners' statements regarding the process of "forming" them, it was noticeable that, in fact, they were similar in many respects; they shared similar values and had similar ways of thinking on important issues:

> The PR3 probably shaped us, the listeners, in some way. Even socially. Broadcasts or things like that – I think it happens a little bit, that we listen a lot and identify with it. Then, our thinking is somewhat similar. (Patron_fk9)

Especially for the older generation of PR3 enthusiasts, the choice of radio stations had been limited, and finding one of the Polish Radio stations was natural. Although commercial stations appeared in their radio experiences and memories, PR3 always occupied a unique, incomparable place. Commercial radio stations, such as the most frequently mentioned RMF FM and Radio ZET, were usually described in contrast to PR3. Listeners believed that these commercial stations were of lower quality, less ambitious, and did not contribute much in terms of music or journalistic aspects.

The key features that distinguished PR3 emerged clearly in the audience's imagination, and there was a consensus on them among the participants: they shaped both the image of the station itself and that of its recipient community. Collectively, the interviewees pointed to elements such as *Hit Charts* and *All Time Tops* broadcasts and Christmas traditions: songs and charity auctions. They also referred to Trójka's style, which – according to its listeners – was characterized by a high level of content, tactfulness, high verbal culture, and musical diversity. These traditions, often maintained for many years, played an essential role in shaping the relationship and identification of listeners with the station. An interesting thread was the observation that Trójka connected different generations of listeners who had experienced the station in different years. However, the entire community still referred to the commonly understood myth of PR3 – i.e. high standards of quality: "This is the legacy of the radio station. People with this skill run programs at the highest level" (Patron_zwm).

An essential aspect in the imagination of the audience was the political context existing around the station. During state-socialism period, the role of PR3 as a kind of safety valve, helpful in relieving political tension in the society, was repeatedly emphasized. Its presenters were known for irony and subtle opposition to the state; under the Polish People's Republic, due to censorship and restrictions, they had to act carefully to avoid repression from the authorities. At the same time, this required the listeners to be able to read between the lines:

> It used to have some style. I got used to programs such as "60 Minutes per Hour", where any criticism of the authorities had to be smuggled in, and it was even much more interesting […] It wasn't forced on the listener, but if someone knew what it was about, they understood it. (Patron_y9b)

The listeners distinguished different periods in the history of the station's operation. The most challenging and critical period, according to them, was the crisis after 2015, with particular emphasis on the intensification of the station's symbolic decline in 2020. The crisis and its repercussions for the station's operation were clearly attributed to political interference, which all interlocutors agreed on regardless of their varying levels of knowledge and interest in politics. They assessed the interference with Trójka as very severe, placing it in categories such as "an attack on democracy" or "harming people."

The listeners personally experienced the problems and difficulties that the station was struggling with. They witnessed the farewells of their favorite presenters. Many listeners decided to stop listening to PR3 as a show of solidarity. They expressed pain, especially when the programs of their favorite presenters disappeared entirely from the air, resulting in a void in the schedules. It is worth noting that during the most challenging period in 2020, when the station recorded its lowest listenership figures due to the lack of employees, music blocks were presented on air without a host, emphasizing the unprecedented nature of the situation.

The listeners' sense of solidarity and empathy toward the editors encouraged them to follow their fates via social media. From then on, Trójka had only negative associations. The listeners' descriptions of the emotions they experienced were dominated by anger, disbelief, pain, despair, frustration, and experiences of emotional solid states, often crying. However, over time, there was an attempt to understand the situation and find one's way in the new reality. The listeners were open to searching for alternatives that could fill the gap left by PR3. Attempts were made to find a replacement radio station, preferably one with the participation of presenters they knew ("the voices from PR3"):

> When journalists started leaving […] I also left the radio station in solidarity, so I stopped listening to Trójka […] It hurt that this radio station was so political and that people were wrongly harmed because all the journalists started leaving. It later turned out that these were political scandals […] I wanted to show solidarity; it hurt me somewhere, and that's why I became more interested in this radio station and the fate of journalists who started to leave Trójka. (Patron_r1c)

Motivation and commitment to the Radio 357 project – financial, social, and media dimensions

Former PR3 listeners reported how they had learned about establishing the Radio 357 initiative. Most had done so through messages published on the Internet, mainly via the social media profiles of their favorite editors. On October 5th, 2020, members of the new editorial team of Radio 357 jointly published an invitation to participate in fundraising for the project. It was a success. It is worth emphasizing the dynamics and scale of the commitment demonstrated by donors in the first hours and days after the launch. On the first day of collection alone, over 4,000 patrons pledged a total of 105,000 PLN per month (Fijołek, 2020).

Some patrons knew about the earlier establishment of Radio Nowy Świat with the participation of several editors from PR3. From the respondents' perspective, Radio 357 seemed to be another initiative addressed to people who missed the characteristic tone of the programs from PR3. As one put it:

> Journalists themselves decided to create a radio station, and since Radio Nowy Świat already existed, I didn't even think twice about it. I knew that the programs I had become accustomed to on PR3, that I would still be able to listen to them on Radio 357. (Patron_j7d)

It is worth noting that the two new post-PR3 Internet stations adopted completely different strategies, which may influence the listener's choice between them. While Radio Nowy Świat clearly distanced itself from the heritage of PR3, and this was emphasized by the station's founders when explaining its name (Stawiany, 2020), Radio 357 was based mainly on elements of nostalgia and sentiments related to PR3, which was perfectly reflected in its name – a reference to the address of the PR3 headquarters at 3/5/7 Myśliwiecka Street (Gałuszka, Chmielewski, 2023). One of the creators of Radio 357 confirmed in an interview that the idea had been based on PR3. To encourage as many patrons as possible, it was decided to publish a graphic containing a list of 24 journalists associated with PR3, who were announced as the new collaborators of Radio 357. The shape of the radio editorial office, based on the former pillars of PR3, usually significantly impacted patrons' decision to join the station. The following statements confirm the success of the strategy:

> Later, I had the impression that Radio 357 was a continuation of Trójka because the programs were very similar. However, under a different name, the entire schedule was reminiscent of the best years of Trójka. (Patron_13k)

Patrons, explaining their decision to support the project and join the new radio community, emphasized the need to participate in the rituals they knew from PR3. If the project was successful, Radio 357 would be an opportunity and a promise to recreate those experiences. For them, Radio 357 naturally filled the void left by PR3 and was perceived as the heir to the achievements of the beloved Trójka, as well as its continuation: "Just as Trójka used to be my radio, now Radio 357 is my radio" (Patron_zwm).

However, one of the interviewees presented a fascinating assessment of the structure of the community of the patrons of the new radio station, confirming that its main basis was the continuation of the heritage and philosophy of PR3:

> I estimate that around 80–90% of the community consists of former Trójka listeners who accustomed to familiar mode of operation of the radio's functioning at that time. They just wanted this sequel to continue. Since they said goodbye to Trójka, they had to take this tradition elsewhere. This is a group of former Trójka listeners who were associated with the programs and their hosts. (Patron_j7d)

The patrons' statements conveyed strong emotions and excitement about the progress of the collection. This was evidenced by regularly monitoring the payment rate and the number of patrons on the Patronite platform. They believed in ultimate success and felt individual responsibility for the success of the developing project. The initial stages raised concerns about whether the initiative would be successful. The community was aware of the scale of the challenge, and the vision of participating in the process was a source of motivation and pride for many of them:

> I became a patron as soon as they said they would do something and started a collection. Right away. I didn't hesitate for a moment. It's just that, after such a long silence on the air, my editors couldn't be heard […] Knowing that I could hear them again was such a joy. I waited and counted down the hours until the premiere. (Patron_20i)

People who expected only programs from the radio were happy to listen to them and emphasized that the radio once again provided them joy, company, and relaxation. They expressed pride and satisfaction in achieving a common goal, emphasizing their emotional involvement. One patron talked about the need for the "ambitious medium" that he had known and appreciated previously in the form of PR3 to continue to exist. In his statement, one can find the motif of the intergenerational tradition of listening to the radio mentioned in the previous section:

> The motivation was definitely the desire to develop journalists who devoted part of their lives and also participated in my life so that it doesn't get lost. So that my son will also have a chance to listen to good radio in our country one day. (Patron_8bq)

There were also arguments explaining the need to support the station which presented exceptionally high quality, distinguishing it from other stations on the market. For one of the patrons, the purpose of supporting the Radio 357 initiative was to strengthen its brand and to promote, in her opinion, a valuable radio station among the public: "I thought it was right to support this radio so that it would have the power to penetrate and reach many listeners" (Patron_r1c).

It is worth noting that the transfer from PR3 to Radio 357 was fraught with technical obstacles: widespread ignorance of crowdfunding, the use of the Patronite platform, and the new form of receiving radio via the Internet. For the interviewees, it was often their first contact with support for a crowdfunded project. However, the collection's success proved the community's trust in the project and its managers. For some, access to radio "entertainment" that was important to them (e.g., voting on the Hits Chart or accessing a library of podcasts, only available to patrons) provided additional motivation for financial support. Otherwise, their participation in the traditions would be limited only to listening to live radio, which is available free of charge to everyone.

The analysis of the patrons' comments showed their positive assessment of Radio 357's offer compared to PR3. One of the most frequently mentioned advantages was the station's lack of traditional advertising blocks. Patrons perceived the new radio station in more marketable categories, considering the richness of the offer (including access to a podcast library), which was generally assessed positively. However, the need to make a monthly donation had some impact on their ability to finance other paid media projects. Hence, patrons often had to carefully consider how much they would spend their money on and on which projects:

> When it comes to patronage, however, there are so many expenses in my life that I decided that it was enough for me to pay for one radio station. (Patron_dzd)

Among the various service providers on the streaming media market, many patrons only funded Radio 357. Although it was a condition for obtaining the patronage status, a monthly donation was not usually considered an obstacle. The common opinion of patrons was that paying a symbolic fee for providing a valuable service was fair and constituted a kind of contract between the recipient and the creator:

> On the one hand, it was motivated by curiosity and willingness to participate in the project. When these radio stations opened, it was such an event, and I wanted to be a conscious participant in it. And somehow support them. And now I think it's pure decency, just like paying a license fee or any taxes. I use it especially since they don't actually make a living from advertising, which I really appreciate because I wouldn't say I like radio advertising. That it's only fair that I pay for something I use. (Patron_dzd)

One of the fundamental aspects that build patron communities is the value resulting from the sense of belonging and identification within them. The interlocutors emphasized that being part of the radio was an important element of their current identity and improved their lives. Direct and online interactions between patrons evoked positive emotions and satisfaction:

> Cool people, cool community. Even when I go to the store, and Radio 357 is on, you can recognize it by the voices and programs. "Oh, you're listening 357!" – there is immediate contact with the seller, and everything is different […] We are now chatting so freely, even the staff is different, sometimes more friendly, as if they were familiar. (Patron_7gn)

All this strengthened the positive image of the patron community among its members. Patrons also described other community members positively, often idealizing them (and themselves) as cultured, open, educated, engaged, and demanding listeners. The patrons were asked if they could find similarities with other community members; they emphasized that although it was primarily an imaginary community (usually, they had not met anyone in person), they were also internally aware that "they had a lot in common with them." The patrons presented themselves in a positive light when describing fellow community members. Commonly shared practices became distinctive in their statements, clearly distinguishing themselves – in the opinion of one of them – from the lifestyle of the average person who would definitely like to listen to something different while making sandwiches for work in the morning (Patron_dzd).

One interviewee compared being a patron to being part of a family. He thus appreciated the interactions he took part in on the online forums: "people feel needed and useful there" (Patron_r1c). The radio itself was identified as a symbolic home, which, in the form of Radio 357, was a place to which everyone (listeners and journalists) could return again and again:

> It's great. Experiencing this contact, it seems that these people have come to the house or the place where we are staying and are with us. Only with our imagination can we imagine that either we are there in the studio or they are here with us. It's a warm, very cool radio. (Patron_zwm)

This statement also fitted into the positive image of the atmosphere prevailing on the discussion forum on the Patronite platform and the Facebook group. Even an interviewee who described herself as withdrawn (she does not participate in forums) and skeptical about online interactions said that when she accidentally joined a group of patrons, she felt part of it from the very moment she entered:

> I felt this way from the first moment I became a patron; even though I wasn't involved in this Facebook group or anything, I felt like I was in some group. And that we are all building this radio together and that when I listen to my favorite programs, I feel like, "Yes! I paid for this program so that it could be broadcast!" (Patron_zrj)

The patrons pointed to similarities between themselves and other community members, noticing similar character traits and expectations. Being part of the Radio 357 community was a source of pride, further strengthening their commitment. The online store run by Radio 357, and the gadgets sold there bearing the station's logos, constituted an element of external identification for the members. The vision of belonging to the community which participates in crowdfunding and the sense of direct influence on the co-creation of the station were of great importance to patrons, also motivating them to become involved:

> First of all, the desire to co-create this project. The fact that all listeners can co-create this radio and finance it is a great idea. This was also the main reason I could contribute to creating something fantastic. (Patron_20i)

There were also patrons whose attitudes were more pragmatic and unsentimental. For such people, Radio 357 was primarily perceived as an alternative to Trójka; the move was a result of circumstances, not choice:

> It's not so great that I feel a bond with those who listened to PR3; it is more of a personal bond. I listened to PR3, and now I have to listen to Radio 357. What particularly binds us is that we were screwed at some point. It's such a negative bond. It binds. But I don't feel proud of it that I'm in a relationship where people have been swindled. (Patron_y9b)

To best understand the homogeneity that was undoubtedly the strength of the studied group, it is worth considering the station and its community's openness toward people who did not have the typical features that most patrons shared. Despite the unanimous declaration of the interlocutors that Radio 357 and its community were open to anyone willing to join the group, some reports have called this into question. One of the interviewees, a former patron of Radio 357, decided to leave the radio community. She described patrons as intolerant of people with different views. She claimed to have experienced negative comments from patrons. She also had a grudge against the group's administrators and journalists (who were forum participants) for not reacting in defense of people who were attacked because of their worldview:

> When I joined a radio group, when I expressed my view or opinion or expressed something wrong, when the majority did not like something, I was hated and ridiculed there, often even with the approval of the group's administrators […] I was often told there that I was a "PiS fanatic". Well, that's sad. People would like to listen to music, be able to talk about music, their presenters, their programs, and share their observations. And even if you don't like something, you can say without fear why you don't like it. So that the proverbial flock of crows doesn't rush out because "you're a PiS supporter, go listen to PR3". (Patron_20i)

These unpleasant experiences resulted in her resignation from patronage. The woman emotionally described her initial involvement in the collection and the disappointment she encountered. She faced financial difficulties and a dilemma regarding the possibilities and scale of radio support. Despite the lack of a permanent source of income, she declared monthly support for the station amounting to 100 PLN. Although the described case seems extreme, it illustrates the relationship mentioned by a journalist who co-created Radio 357. He emphasized the exceptional commitment of the patrons of Radio 357, who showed generosity and readiness to make financial sacrifices despite – as he claimed – often not being in the best financial situation. The diversity of the described approaches and experiences of community members opens new perspectives for explaining the phenomenon of the relations between Radio 357 and its community of patrons.

Listening to the radio as a daily practice

Radio has many advantages that attract its audience. It is a source of entertainment, provides information, fulfills an educational function, and promotes social interactions. Its accessibility and simplicity make it easy to get used to. The members of the Radio 357 community paid particular attention to the role of the radio as a source of musical inspiration. Even though they were aware of the traditional nature of this medium, it was still the most suitable for them. Compared to the younger generation, who are more likely to use music streaming platforms, for older listeners the radio is still their primary source of musical discovery. For comparison, the interlocutors often cited their children, who usually did not listen to the radio at all; it was not attractive to them, and did not play an essential role in their lives. Music streaming platforms filled the role that radio had played for the older generation:

> I'm looking for inspiration somewhere on the radio, for example. If someone (presenter) gives me something cool, I like it, I'll keep listening. And the kids seem to be able to get something out of Spotify. (Patron_fk9)

Listening to the radio is a daily routine for many people: it plays an accompanying role and often serves as a background for the activities they perform, some of which are closely integrated with specific programs. For some, the radio is a companion during everyday duties such as cooking, cleaning, and other household tasks. Radio programs and journalists can allow listeners who lead lonely or withdrawn lives to find the perfect company:

> I don't have so many different entertainments, trips abroad, etc., in my life. I am a minimalist and, for example, this radio relaxes me, except for going to the cinema or the theater once a year. However, I am also a homebody. This radio goes with me on my phone. I can listen to it everywhere, but mostly in peace, in the privacy of my home; it accompanies me and relaxes me. (Patron_r1c)

The patrons most commonly listened to the radio at home, where accessibility and comfortable conditions allowed for uninterrupted use. They also suggested various other situations for listening, including traveling by car, public transport, or walking. They emphasized that owing to easy access to the Internet, they could take the radio with them and listen to it anywhere. An essential feature of the radio is that it does not require the listener's full attention and allows selective, even short-term listening, without the feeling of losing the content. The participants repeatedly mentioned this advantage of the medium:

> Sometimes it's like, you know, I'm going somewhere, so I listen for 15 minutes, then I'm gone, I go shopping, and it's not like I sit down and listen to the program from A to Z. (Patron_dzd)

> I listen to 357 during the day. I think it's even playing in the background now […] I often answer calls and have clients; I turn down the music, and the programs have no fluidity. (Patron_8bq)

Radio 357, operating under the patronage model, should be treated as an offer on the media services market, similar to some extent to music streaming services, podcast platforms, or video-on-demand services. For the surveyed community, radio was their medium of choice, and access to it was a priority. Other media platforms did not constitute direct competition, considering the time devoted to them and the different ways of consuming content. Radio does not require the same attention and focus that watching TV or movies does:

> And when it comes to competing for time, well, no, because it's a slightly different moment of the day for me. Because Netflix is, let's say, in the evening when I watch a movie or series. And the radio is more like that; it accompanies life, when I go to work, when I get up in the morning, when something […] so it's usually not 100% concentrated. (Patron_zrj)

The radio station was also valued as a source of reliable information and extensive knowledge; unlike television, which was often perceived as less objective. The listeners appreciated the radio for its diversity of contents and a deeper approach to topics:

> For me, radio is more reliable and talks much more broadly, and I spend more time on it. Some TVN 24 and TVP info keep talking about the same topic all the time, and they keep talking about the same thing. And on the radio, this cross-section of information is large. (Patron_5hf)

Conclusions

Observing the community of patrons proved it to be an interesting phenomenon from the sociological point of view. The Radio 357's listening community derived from PR3 evolved through the interaction of four elements: human communities, radio as a medium, alternative ways of financing the media, and the crisis in PR3. This article focused on the social side, showing the sociological phenomenon. Still, attempting to understand the case without considering all the mentioned contexts could be misleading.

The collected empirical material made it possible to look deeper into the life and radio biographies of the patrons; the analysis also allowed us to present a broader picture of the community as a whole. It is reasonable to place the patrons of Radio 357 within the sociological categories of communities. A considerable role was played by symbolic factors attributed to post-traditional communities: ideas, goals, shared practices, traditions, and internal beliefs. The community members were aware of the existence of the radio community and felt part of it. The lack of direct contact and territorial dispersion were not barriers.

The birth of the Radio 357 community was, in a sense, the reincarnation of the previously existing community of the PR3 listeners in a new place. The immutability of ideas and values was clearly visible. Only the "outer casing" changed, i.e., the radio station and the method of broadcasting, although in crucial dimensions, it was almost an exact equivalent of the old station. Evolving and joining the new-old community was a demanding process from the listener's point of view. The habit of receiving Trójka over the airwaves was replaced by a crowdfunded project; an idea about which a large part of listeners had little knowledge. The role of the listener changed into that of the builder, patron, and online community member. For those who overcame technological barriers, getting involved turned out to be attractive and encouraging.

The majority of the Radio 357 community were former PR3 enthusiasts. For them, the new station was a continuation of radio traditions, habits, and practices that had carried on for many years; they were desperate to get them back. The patrons' accounts and images suggest perceiving them as a community of similar and close people: PR3 was the foundation for the new community. It is hard to imagine convincing thousands of people of an unknown idea, persuading them to try a new form of radio reception, and proving that listener-funded radio is not only the need of the hour, but also a way to offer a better-quality service (no advertising, the promise of independence, more significant influence on the recipients). The community engagement was influenced by the political context and the repercussions of the politically-induced crisis at PR3. Political interference weakened the station and resulted in the loss of legendary journalists respected by listeners. As one of the patrons put it, the crisis became a fuel for action "against the common enemy" (Patron_zrj).

The community of Radio 357 patrons has approximately 50,000 members. This study is limited by its focus on a small segment of the community – those with a high level of commitment. Further research is needed to explore the motivations behind transitioning to a new station, especially among non-paying listeners. Additionally, due to the interview length limitations, it was impossible to delve deeper into intriguing subplots, such as the differences between the studied community and the patrons of Radio Nowy Świat, which shared similar origins and financial model. Notably, despite numerous similarities, Radio 357 surpassed its competitor in both the number of patrons and declared monthly contributions. This raises a critical question: can any radio station, including commercial stations, cultivate a similar level of dedication and loyalty among its audience, inspiring them to make comparable sacrifices?

Finally, future research should strive to broaden our understanding of the role and value of contemporary media project communities from the perspectives of both creators and managers. The case of the Radio 357 community necessitates a shift in our perception of media consumers. We must move beyond viewing them solely as passive recipients, subscribers, or customers, and instead acknowledge their immense transformative power as a group capable of intervention, rebellion, and action. The symbolic fall of PR3 proves that even such a rich and powerful medium is not indestructible, especially since its recipients are a mobile group, able to follow and search for the contents and values that are key to them.

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Cytowanie

Piotr Chmielewski, (2024), *New Roles, Old Rituals: The Mobilization of the Listener Community Based on the Example of Radio 357*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 190–211, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.09

Nowe role, stare rytuały. Mobilizacja społeczności słuchaczy na przykładzie Radia 357

Abstrakt: Artykuł przedstawia analizę społeczności patronów internetowej stacji radiowej – Radio 357. Przeprowadzono 13 wywiadów pogłębionych ze słuchaczami stacji oraz jej byłym pracownikiem. Analizie poddano również materiał pochodzący z internetowego forum badanej społeczności. Problematykę tekstu stanowi ukazanie członków radiowej społeczności, którzy zaangażowali się w sfinansowanie nowej, internetowej rozgłośni poprzez zbiórkę środków w internecie.

Podjęto próbę wyjaśnienia motywacji słuchaczy do wyjątkowej skali zaangażowania w nową inicjatywę medialną. Pytania badawcze dotyczyły charakterystyki społeczności słuchaczy Radia 357 oraz roli radia w ich życiu. Fundamenty zbudowane przez wieloletnie współuczestnictwo w życiu dawnej stacji, a jednocześnie poczucie krzywdy spotęgowane jej symbolicznym upadkiem stały się siłą napędową do walki o kontynuację dotychczas kultywowanych praktyk i tradycji radiowych – już w ramach nowej rozgłośni.

Słowa kluczowe: społeczności wirtualne, odbiorcy radia, radio internetowe, finansowanie społecznościowe, Polskie Radio

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Revolutionizing Visual Communication and Digital Creative Engagement: The Game-Changing Impact of TikTok

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Keywords:
TikTok, multimodal analysis, qualitative methodology, social media, visual communication

Abstract: TikTok, a swiftly expanding social media platform, has emerged as a potent catalyst in transforming the realm of visual communication and digital interaction. This paper explores the evolving landscape of TikTok, focusing on its technological advancements, emerging forms of expression, and distinctive features in reshaping visual communication. It delves into the platform's unique capabilities for audiovisual messages, highlighting its transformative impact on digital culture. Through its unique blend of short-form videos, innovative build-in editing tools, and algorithmic recommendation system, TikTok has democratized content creation and consumption, enabling users worldwide to engage in creative expression and community-building. The aim of this paper is to qualitatively and exploratively delve into the structures of TikTok messages and the forms of visual communication that appear on it. The author employed deep observation and multimodal analysis for this purpose.

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Introduction

In recent years, TikTok has rapidly transformed from a niche social media platform into a global cultural phenomenon, reshaping the landscape of digital communication and entertainment (Montag, Yang, Elhai, 2021; Faltesek et al., 2023). With its innovative format of short-form videos, intuitive editing tools, and algorithm-driven content discovery, TikTok has captured the attention of users worldwide and revolutionized the way people create, consume, and interact online (Weimann, Masri, 2023). By providing a platform that empowers individuals to unleash their creativity, share their stories, and connect with others in novel ways, TikTok has fundamentally reshaped the dynamics of online interaction seen in various forms of visual communication, which is also redefining the landscape of contemporary sociological inquiry (Herrman, 2019; Kaye, Chen, Zeng, 2021; Literat, Kligler-Vilenchik, 2023). Its seamless blend of entertainment, creativity, and social connectivity has fostered a vibrant and dynamic community, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural barriers. As a result, TikTok has become not merely a social media platform but a cultural force driving profound shifts in how we perceive and engage with digital content.

Over recent years, scholars in the field of communication have increasingly directed their research efforts toward understanding the TikTok phenomenon. Amidst the diverse array of analytical perspectives and dimensions explored, a recurring consensus emerges: TikTok transcends the archetype of conventional social media platforms, assuming the role of a dynamic and efficacious communication channel tailored to the preferences of youth (Iqbal, 2021; Vaterlaus, Winter, 2021; Martinez, Brammer, Punyanunt-Carter, 2023). Unlike the perceived static and restrictive nature of established platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or X, TikTok offers a dynamic and expansive platform uniquely suited to the proclivities of its target audience. Numerous researchers attest to TikTok's status as one of the swiftest-growing social media platforms globally (Weimann, Masri, 2023), heralding it as an indispensable application within contemporary digital culture (Faltesek et al., 2023). Moreover, scholarly discourse emphasizes the platform's distinctive technical architecture and unparalleled user adoption, which collectively redefine the essence and functionality of online networks (Zulli, Zulli, 2022).

While TikTok shares certain fundamental attributes with conventional and widely-used social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X – e.g., including features such as user profiles, friend lists, and the ability to share posts – its distinctive focus on video creation fundamentally alters the dynamics of social interaction and network formation within the platform (Montag, Yang, Elhai, 2021). TikTok enables users to produce and consume short-form video content, leveraging intuitive editing tools that facilitate the incorporation of music and other meme-worthy elements. It was previously observed in applications such as Musical.ly and Vines, albeit not to such an extent. TikTok's sophisticated recommendation algorithms employ advanced machine learning techniques to curate a personalized feed tailored to each user's preferences and interests. These algorithms analyze user behavior – such as likes, comments, and shares – to understand individual preferences and deliver content that is likely to resonate with them. By continuously learning and adapting based on user interactions, TikTok's recommendation system ensures a dynamic and engaging user experience, contributing to the platform's addictive nature and widespread popularity (Vaterlaus, Winter, 2021). The meme-making capabilities inherent to TikTok are frequently highlighted as a pivotal aspect in engaging its youthful user base (Kaye, Chen, Zeng, 2021; Zeng, Abidin, 2021). This emphasis on meme culture not only fosters creativity and humor, but also shapes the nature of social interaction and cultural exchange within the platform, contributing to its unique appeal and rapid ascent in popularity (going viral).

However, TikTok's most distinctive feature lies in its unique method of content navigation. While users have the option to view posts from accounts they follow, the platform's "For You" page offers an endless stream of videos curated based on the user's preferences, accessible through a simple swipe-up gesture (Vaterlaus, Winter, 2021; Montag, Yang, Elhai, 2021). This algorithm-driven "For You" page operates on undisclosed algorithms, effectively eliminating the need for a substantial follower base to achieve viral success, as the algorithm prioritizes targeting videos to users with similar interests (Weimann, Masri, 2023). Consequently, TikTok users frequently attest to the platform's captivating nature, with statements such as "I can spend forever on it without getting bored" underscoring its addictive appeal (Martinez, Brammer, Punyanunt-Carter, 2023).

This paper endeavors to investigate the influence of TikTok on visual communication, examining its remarkable ascent, unique attributes, and broad-ranging consequences for individuals, enterprises, and the broader societal landscape. These effects are evident across diverse modes of communication and the technological functionalities embedded within the application. From sparking viral trends and empowering creative expression to influencing consumer behavior and challenging traditional media paradigms, TikTok's influence spans across various aspects of modern life (Herrman, 2019; Montag, Yang, Elhai, 2021; Faltesek et al., 2023). Through the deconstruction of TikTok's multifaceted influence, one can extract invaluable insights into the dynamic evolution of digital culture and the future trajectory of online communication. Due to the ephemeral and constantly evolving nature of TikTok and its characteristics and interactions, the author employed the sociological qualitative approach (Konecki, 2000; Charmaz, 2009; Flick, 2018) to vividly depict the essence of visual communication and intricately illustrate the exchange of signs and symbols among users on TikTok embedded in the sociological theory of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1986; Trevino, Lengel, Daft, 1987). This qualitative methodology allowed for a comprehensive exploration of TikTok's dynamic landscape, capturing the nuances of its evolving culture and facilitating a deeper understanding of the intricate web of communication unfolding within the platform. The author employed deep observation and multimodal analysis to showcase the interplay of content published on TikTok at both structural and thematic levels. This approach facilitated not only a nuanced understanding of the platform's content dynamics but also enabled the preliminary categorization of the diverse array of contents emerging within its ecosystem. The study likewise adopts an exploratory, in-depth, sociological perspective, delving into the intricacies of TikTok while treating the research as an iterative process (Flick, 2018).

The characteristics of TikTok

TikTok, in recent years, has emerged as a transformative force in the realm of social media, boasting a plethora of characteristics that set it apart from its predecessors and contemporaries alike (Montag, Yang, Elhai, 2021; Faltesek et al., 2023). These defining traits, ranging from its algorithmic content curation to its interactive features, collectively contribute to its widespread popularity and influence in the digital landscape. TikTok, known as Douyin in China, is a social media platform focused on audiovisual content, owned by the Chinese company ByteDance (Broderick, 2019; Kaye, Chen, Zeng, 2021). The platform was launched in September 2016, just a few months before the discontinuation of Vine, one of the biggest applications based on visual communication (Hallanan, 2018). Since its launch in 2016, TikTok (Douyin) has quickly gained popularity in East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, the United States, Turkey, Russia, and other parts of the world (Iqbal, 2021). In October 2020, TikTok surpassed over 2 billion mobile downloads worldwide. Currently, this platform has about one billion monthly active users (Dean, 2024).

The technological capabilities of TikTok are continually evolving to meet the dynamic needs and preferences of its users (Weimann, Masri, 2023). One of the notable aspects of TikTok is its ever-changing interface, which undergoes frequent updates and enhancements to improve user experience and functionality. Users have the flexibility to import files from their device's storage, enabling them to incorporate the existing media into their TikTok creations. Additionally, TikTok provides built-in editing tools and a camera interface, empowering users to create content directly within the app. Within TikTok's editing suite, users have access to a myriad of features to enhance their videos. This includes a wide array of filters, music, narrator functions, and a voice changer, allowing users to add creative effects and audio alterations to their content. Moreover, TikTok's editing process is divided into two stages: pre-editing and post-editing. In the pre-editing stage, users can apply various filters, text overlays, stickers, and other elements to their videos before recording them. This allows for real-time previewing and customization of the content before it is finalized. In the post-editing stage, users can further refine their videos by applying additional effects, editing the audio, adjusting the timing, and making other modifications after the recording is complete (Kułaga, 2024b).

Overall, TikTok's technological capabilities enable users to unleash their creativity and produce engaging and visually-captivating contents directly within the app (Zulli, Zulli, 2022; Literat, Kligler-Vilenchik, 2023). With its intuitive editing tools, extensive library of filters and effects, and seamless integration of pre-editing and post-editing features, TikTok empowers users to express themselves and connect with others in innovative ways on the platform. The "react" feature allows Internet users to record their reactions to specific videos, while the "duet" feature allows recording a video alongside another video. This feature was a characteristic one of the Musical.ly platform and is only possible when both parties adjust their privacy settings (Carson, 2016). However, it is worth focusing on the main video editing panel, which is displayed after clicking the "+" symbol, indicating the desire to add one's own content to the service. TikTok presents users with a wide range of tools to enhance their messages. Here are several examples:

1) add sound (allows choosing a song from TikTok's music database and record with the selected music in the background);
2) speed (allows modifying the video speed – 0.3x, 0.5x, 1x, 2x, 3x);
3) filters (change the intensity of light, color saturation, available in categories such as portrait, landscape, food, and vibe);
4) enhance (functions related to appearance correction in the video – smoothing, which improves skin condition, tooth whitening, contouring, lipstick, and shadow, which create "digital makeup");
5) timer (setting a recording limit, so-called hands-free recording);
6) effects (includes numerous animations, stickers, video overlays that change the background, music, voice, or user's appearance; available in categories such as trends, new, Halloween, green screen, funny, mood, beauty, accessories, interactive, editable, animals, AR effects, events, music, sports).

At the heart of TikTok's allure lies its algorithmic prowess, woven seamlessly into the fabric of the entire application (Klug et al., 2021; Zhao, 2021; Weimann, Masri, 2023). These technological capabilities are intrinsic to the platform's functionality, enhancing every aspect of the user experience and enabling seamless interaction and content creation. Unlike traditional social media platforms that rely on chronological timelines or user-following models, TikTok employs sophisticated algorithms to deliver personalized content feeds tailored to each user's preferences (Zhao, 2021). The platform's "For You" page epitomizes this approach, serving as a gateway to a curated stream of videos meticulously selected based on factors such as user behavior, engagement metrics, and content relevance. By leveraging machine learning and data analytics, TikTok ensures that users are consistently exposed to content that aligns with their interests, thereby maximizing engagement and retention (Klug et al., 2021; Weimann, Masri, 2023). Conversely, this function of algorithms may induce filter bubbles (Bruns, 2019) or epistemic bubbles (Nguyen, 2020).

Integral to TikTok's identity is its embrace of short-form video content. Unlike the long-form content prevalent on platforms such as YouTube or Facebook, TikTok's videos are brief, typically lasting from several to several tens of seconds (but longer ones, lasting up to 10 minutes, also appear). This brevity fosters a culture of concise storytelling, enabling users to convey their messages quickly and creatively. Moreover, the platform's user-friendly editing tools empower creators to experiment with visual effects, audio overlays, and other creative elements, further enhancing the appeal of short-form video creation on TikTok.

A cornerstone of TikTok's success is its vibrant ecosystem of user-generated content (Kułaga, 2024a). From amateur filmmakers and comedians to professional artists and influencers, TikTok provides a platform for users of all backgrounds to express their creativity. This democratization of content-creation not only fosters a sense of inclusivity and diversity, but also cultivates a thriving community of creators and consumers alike. By blurring the lines between content creator and consumer, TikTok empowers users to become active participants in shaping the platform's culture and identity.

Central to TikTok's interactive nature are its diverse features designed to foster engagement and social interaction. Whether through "duet", reactions, challenges, or filters, TikTok offers users numerous opportunities to collaborate with others, respond to content, and participate in viral trends. These interactive elements not only enhance user engagement, but also promote a sense of community and camaraderie among users. By facilitating connections and conversations, TikTok transcends its role as a mere social media platform, evolving into a dynamic digital ecosystem where users can connect, communicate, and collaborate in new and exciting ways.

Methodology

The researcher adopted qualitative methodology (Creswell, Clark, 2011; Flick, 2018), driven by the imperative to acquire comprehensive insights into the phenomenon under investigation, which is also embedded in sociological research because the TikTok platform is a unique space for the exchange of signs and symbols among users, displaying distinct social aspects. The pivotal rationale and motivation behind selecting this research approach stems from the dynamic, process-oriented nature of TikTok, necessitating an in-depth exploration. Consequently, the study assumes an exploratory stance (Charmaz, 2009), with its primary objective being the discovery and identification of new forms of visual communication while also illuminating the essence of TikTok, its architecture, and specifics. The study thus adopted a netnographic, sociological, and autoethnographic character (Ellis, Adams, 2014; Le Roux, 2017), employing qualitative strategies to systematically explore the evolving landscape of TikTok's visual communication. Netnography, as a methodological approach, involves the observation and analysis of online communities and digital spaces to understand social phenomena, behaviors, and interactions. Through this lens, researchers can uncover valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of the TikTok culture, the emergence of new communication forms, and the ways in which individuals engage with and shape the platform's content landscape (Kozinets, 2015).

Throughout the entire month (January 2024), the researcher systematically dedicated daily two-hour sessions to reviewing contents on the TikTok platform, aiming to identify the characteristic features of the videos present on the platform. Informed by qualitative sociological methodology rooted in the principles of netnography, the study was guided by commitment to deep observation (Gold, 1958; Kozinets, 2015). Using the research journal, the author systematically recorded preliminary categories relating to certain regularities in the forms of diverse visual contents on TikTok. Over the course of the observation period, these categories evolved through broader conceptualization or the addition of new aspects. As a result, 18 categories related to the form of audiovisual files present on the TikTok platform were developed. Due to the iterative nature of the study (Flick, 2018), research questions emerged during the exploration of the research field.

The questions are as follows:

1) What emerging technological opportunities are unfolding on TikTok?
2) What emerging forms of expression are evolving on TikTok?

3) In what ways does TikTok distinguish itself in terms of technological capabilities for audiovisual messages?
4) How is TikTok reshaping visual communication?
5) What are the distinctive features of TikTok messages?
6) How does the structure of TikTok videos differ from traditional (image-based) Internet memes in terms of length, format, and content?
7) What role do audiovisual elements play in the structure of TikTok videos compared to static image memes?
8) How does the structure of TikTok as a social media platform contribute to the emergence of new visual communication trends and cultural phenomena compared to traditional Internet meme communities?

Guided by the dynamic and intricate nature of TikTok, the researcher undertook a study employing a qualitative multimodal analysis (O'Halloran, 2011; Halliday, Matthiessen, 2013), complemented by deep observation. This methodological triangulation not only allows for a comprehensive examination of TikTok's forms of expression, but also facilitates the identification of shared characteristics. Consequently, this methodological framework serves as a robust foundation for future research endeavors that delve into the intricate evolution of visual communication and TikTok's structure. Multimodal analysis facilitated a comparison of TikTok messages to pictorial, conventional forms prevalent on the Internet in terms of their structural attributes, thereby illustrating the nature and distinctive features of TikTok. The researcher selected Internet memes due to their status as the smallest cultural unit in the online sphere (Kamińska, 2011; Shifman, 2014; Kułaga, 2024a). The researcher took the stance that a meme can be defined as a digitized unit of information, widely circulated on the Internet, subject to copying, modification, and subsequent publication in this altered form. With their often humorous nature, memes offer insight into human emotions and sentiments, serving as a vital conduit of information within the media sphere (Kamińska, 2011; Shifman, 2014). Therefore, by comparing memes on TikTok with traditional ones, it will be easier to discern technological differences. This choice aligns with the aim of the study to scrutinize the technological nuances inherent in TikTok's visual communication landscape, shedding light on its distinctive features and structural dynamics. Observation, on the other hand, enabled the categorization of communication forms on TikTok. The researcher maintained a research diary to document observations and initial categories, which were subsequently analyzed and refined.

The consideration of a multimodal analysis, however, requires some complementation. Following Lisowska-Magdziarz's words that multimodal theory is to some extent an offshoot of semiology and shares with it the object of interest, which is the production and use of signs by people and the representational practices that have grown up on this basis (Lisowska-Magdziarz, 2018: 147), the researcher focused on the user practices of projecting expression forms evident on TikTok. It is legitimate in this case to apply a multimodal analysis to decipher layers and verbal-visual elements, to distinguish modes and to chart their order and relationship in the memes. As a result, 20 static (pictorial) memes and 20 video memes, characteristic of TikTok, were subjected to multimodal analysis.

They were selected from TikTok and from a Facebook group where users share memes. The criterion for selection was their popularity.

Let us delve into the operationalization of the terms "mode", "modus", and "element", which the author of this paper employed interchangeably. One intriguing cognitive perspective suggests that modes are shaped through the prolonged collective utilization of a resource, resulting in the development of specific sign repertoires that have been socially tested and adapted for communication within a particular community. Modus, therefore, emerges when a semiotic resource is organized through sustained collective use (Constantinou, 2005; O'Halloran 2011; 2013; Halliday, Matthiessen, 2013; Chandrasekaran, Nguyen, Hemanth 2021). This theoretical framework for modes allowed the author to identify the primary moduses inherent to online messages, which are highly relevant to the employed methodology and research tools. From the researcher's viewpoint, the components of a multimodal message can manifest as dynamic and static images, non-image visual communication (such as gestures), written text, spoken discourse, sounds, music, filters, or animation. It is important to reiterate that multimodal messages encompass a combination of moving and static images, non-image visual communication, written text, sounds, music, and more. These elements are linked by various relationships, representing the constituent parts (modes) of a given message. The analysis of modes in TikTok's contents can provide insights into the complex and dynamic nature of the platform's memes, as these often combine several modes of communication to create impactful messages.

TikTok serves as a dynamic and ever-changing environment, prompting the researcher to approach it not solely through the lens of investigation, but also as an active participant and observer. It is essential to underscore that the objective of this analysis is not to generalize findings but, rather, to qualitatively delve into the phenomena and intricacies inherent within the structures of TikTok. Therefore, this approach aims to provide a general characterization of TikTok and to illustrate its dynamics and distinctive features of the messages published therein.

TikTok's forms of visual communication

TikTok, as a platform, has emerged as a vibrant hub of creative expression, fostering a diverse array of content-creators who continually push the boundaries of innovation in the digital landscape. In this exploration of TikTok's forms of expression, the researcher delved into the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of this platform, where users engage in multifaceted modes of communication, ranging from short-form videos to interactive challenges and trends. By examining the various forms of expression on TikTok, the researcher sought to uncover the underlying mechanisms driving creativity, interaction, and cultural exchange within this unique digital ecosystem. Throughout this analysis, the researcher aimed to illuminate the distinct characteristics and evolving trends that define TikTok as a dynamic platform for self-expression and social engagement.

Firstly, prior research (Kulaga, 2024a) had shed light on the intricate landscape of visual communication on TikTok, revealing a fundamental categorization into two distinct types: original and derivative contents. This classification underscores the dynamic interplay between creativity and imitation within the platform's content ecosystem. Additionally, TikTok hosts a diverse array of audiovisual files, encompassing both videos and images, each contributing uniquely to the rich tapestry of contents shared and consumed by its global audience. Understanding these distinctions provides valuable insights into the evolving nature of user-generated content on TikTok and its implications for digital culture and social interaction. However, the aforementioned categories serve as a starting point for a more detailed exploration of visual communication forms on TikTok, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. TikTok's forms of visual communication

NPC content	Daily influencers (vlogs)	Battles
NPC content on TikTok revolves around users adopting non-player character (NPC) personas, often inspired by popular culture, memes, or fictional characters. This content is frequently showcased during live streams, where users engage in various gestures and actions in response to receiving gifts, which is a characteristic feature of the TikTok platform. These videos often depict individuals portraying characters with distinctive traits or behaviors, mimicking scripted interactions commonly found in video games or media. NPCs may engage in comedic dialogs, reenact scenes from movies or TV shows, or perform scripted actions, adding a humorous or satirical twist to the content. These videos frequently incorporate relevant hashtags to facilitate discoverability and encourage user participation. Through NPC content, users can express their creativity, humor, and storytelling abilities while engaging with trending themes and cultural references within the TikTok community.	Daily influencers on TikTok are content-creators who regularly share videos showcasing their daily routines, experiences, expertise, or insights. These influencers often gather loyal followers by offering glimpses into their everyday lives, sharing tips, advice, or entertaining anecdotes. Their content may cover various topics, including fitness, cooking, fashion, beauty, or lifestyle. Daily influencers leverage their authenticity, relatability, and consistency to connect with their audience and establish themselves as trusted sources of inspiration or entertainment. Through their consistent presence and engaging contents, they may cultivate a sense of community and foster meaningful interactions with their followers. Additionally, daily influencers often collaborate with brands, participate in sponsored campaigns, or monetize their content through partnerships or affiliate marketing, leveraging their influence to promote products or services to their engaged audience.	Battles on TikTok involve two or more users engaging in a live broadcast, where viewers actively participate by tapping on the screen to support their favorite participant. Additionally, viewers can enhance their engagement by sending virtual gifts or interactive elements during the battle. These gifts can range from digital stickers to virtual coins, which users can purchase or earn within the platform. The interaction between participants and viewers adds an interactive and competitive dimension to the live battle, fostering a sense of community and excitement among the audience. The participants often showcase their talents, skills, or creativity during these battles, aiming to capture the attention and support of viewers. The dynamic nature of live battles on TikTok creates an immersive experience for both participants and viewers, contributing to the platform's vibrant content ecosystem.

Funny videos	Mash-ups	Content-oriented creators
Funny videos on TikTok encompass a wide range of content designed to entertain and evoke laughter among viewers. These videos often feature humorous skits, pranks, comedic challenges, or cleverly edited clips that capitalize on trending jokes or cultural references. Creators leverage various comedic techniques, such as slapstick humor, wordplay, visual gags, or absurd scenarios, to elicit laughter and engagement from their audience. Additionally, funny videos may incorporate special effects, filters, or editing tricks to enhance their comedic appeal. The brevity of TikTok's format encourages creators to deliver quick, punchy content that delivers laughs in a matter of seconds, making it easily consumable and shareable across the platform. Furthermore, the platform's algorithmic feed promotes the discovery of funny videos tailored to each user's interests, ensuring a steady stream of comedic content that resonates with diverse audiences. As a result, funny videos play a significant role in shaping TikTok's vibrant and lighthearted community, fostering connections through shared laughter and entertainment.	Mash-ups on TikTok involve combining multiple audio tracks, video clips, or visual elements to create innovative and entertaining content. Creators use editing tools within the app to seamlessly blend different media sources, resulting in unique and engaging compositions. These mash-ups can take various forms, including lip-syncing to music while incorporating comedic gestures or dance moves, overlaying dialog from movies or TV shows onto unrelated footage, or juxtaposing contrasting visuals for humorous or artistic effect. The creative freedom afforded by TikTok's editing features allows users to experiment with different combinations of content to produce compelling mash-up videos. Additionally, TikTok's vast library of audio clips, sound effects, and user-generated music provides a rich source of inspiration for creators seeking to craft memorable and shareable mash-up content. By leveraging the platform's editing capabilities and diverse media resources, creators can produce mash-ups that entertain, inspire, and resonate with audiences worldwide, contributing to TikTok's dynamic and creative community.	Content-oriented creators on TikTok focus on producing videos cantered around specific themes, topics, or niches to engage their audience and build a following. These creators often specialize in particular genres, such as comedy, fashion, cooking, gaming, fitness, or educational content, tailoring their videos to cater to the interests and preferences of their target audience. They regularly upload content that aligns with their chosen niche, leveraging TikTok's various features, such as filters, effects, and soundtracks, to enhance the quality and appeal of their videos. Content-oriented creators may also collaborate with other creators, participate in trends and challenges, and engage with their audience through comments, likes, and shares to foster community interaction and growth. By consistently delivering high-quality and relevant contents, these creators establish themselves as authorities or influencers within their respective niches, attracting followers who share similar interests and values. Through their creative and engaging videos, content-oriented creators contribute to the diverse and vibrant ecosystem of content on TikTok, enriching the platform with a wide range of entertaining and informative content for users to enjoy.

Challenges	Duet	Lip-syncing
Challenges on TikTok are interactive trends or activities that invite users to participate by creating and sharing their own content based on a specific theme, concept, or task. These challenges typically originate from popular trends, memes, or songs and are often associated with a designated hashtag to facilitate discovery and participation. Users are encouraged to put their own creative spin on the challenge, whether it involves dancing, lip-syncing, comedy skits, DIY projects, or other forms of content creation. Challenges may also include specific instructions or prompts for users to follow, such as performing a particular dance routine, recreating a viral meme, showcasing a talent, or sharing a personal story. The participants can engage with challenges by filming and editing their videos using TikTok's built-in editing tools, filters, effects, and soundtracks to enhance their content. Challenges provide an opportunity for users to showcase their creativity, connect with others, and potentially go viral by participating in popular trends or creating original content that resonates with a wider audience. As users engage with challenges, they contribute to the ever-evolving and dynamic culture of TikTok, driving engagement, interaction, and community participation on the platform.	The "duet" feature on TikTok allows users to collaborate with each other by creating split-screen videos that are synchronized to play simultaneously. This feature enables users to engage in creative interactions with other TikTok creators, whether they are friends, followers, or collaborators. To create a duet video, users can select the "duet" option when viewing another user's video, which prompts TikTok to open the recording interface with the original video displayed alongside a blank space for the user's contribution. Users can then record their part of the "Duet" video while watching the original video, allowing for seamless synchronization between the two clips. "Duet" videos often involve users responding to or interacting with each other's content in creative ways, such as singing duets, performing skits, engaging in a dialog, or showcasing complementary talents. The "duet" feature may encourage collaboration and co-creation among TikTok users, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie on the platform. Additionally, "duet" videos can help users increase their visibility and reach by leveraging the audiences of both collaborators, leading to enhanced engagement and interaction with their content.	Lip-syncing on TikTok involves users syncing their lips with pre-recorded audio clips, typically songs, dialogs, or soundbites from movies, TV shows, or viral videos. This feature allows users to create engaging and entertaining content by mimicking the vocals or dialog of the audio clip while recording themselves on camera. Lip-syncing videos often showcase users' creativity, personality, and performance skills as they interpret and express themselves through the chosen audio. The process of lip-syncing on TikTok involves selecting an audio clip from the app's extensive library or uploading a custom sound, then recording a video while mouthing the words or expressions in sync with the audio. The users can also add visual effects, filters, and other enhancements to enhance their lip-syncing videos and make them more engaging. Lip-syncing has become one of the most popular and recognizable forms of content on TikTok, with users of all ages and backgrounds participating in the trend. Whether it is singing along to their favorite songs, reenacting iconic movie scenes, or performing comedic skits, lip-syncing allows users to express themselves creatively and connect with their audience in a fun and entertaining way.

Comedy skits	DIY and tutorials	Dance routines
Comedy skits on TikTok are short, humorous videos created by users to entertain their audience. These skits typically feature comedic scenarios, jokes, or punchlines performed by the creator or a group of participants. Comedy skits can vary widely in style and content, ranging from scripted sketches to improvised scenes, parody videos, and slapstick humor. Users often incorporate popular trends, memes, or cultural references into their comedy skits to make them relatable and engaging for their audience. Additionally, comedy skits on TikTok frequently utilize editing techniques, sound effects, music, and visual effects to enhance the humor and entertainment value of the videos. Comedy skits are a popular form of content on TikTok, attracting millions of views and engagements from users around the world. They provide creators with a platform to showcase their comedic talent, creativity, and personality while entertaining their followers with light-hearted and amusing contents.	DIY (Do It Yourself) and tutorials on TikTok encompass a wide range of instructional videos created by users to demonstrate various skills, techniques, and creative projects. These videos typically provide step-by-step guidance on how to complete a particular task, create a specific item, or learn a new skill. DIY and tutorial content on TikTok covers diverse topics such as crafting, cooking, beauty, fashion, home improvement, and more. Creators often leverage the platform's short-form video format to deliver concise and visually-engaging tutorials that are easy for viewers to follow and replicate. They may use text overlays, voiceovers, captions, and on-screen annotations to provide additional instructions and explanations. DIY and tutorial videos on TikTok aim to inspire and empower users to explore their interests, unleash their creativity, and acquire new knowledge and abilities. They serve as educational resources, offering practical tips, hacks, and ideas to help viewers accomplish their DIY projects and learn valuable skills in a fun and accessible way.	Dance routines on TikTok are a prominent and widely popular form of content where users choreograph and perform various dance sequences to music tracks. These routines can range from simple movements to complex choreography and encompass a diverse array of dance styles, including hip-hop, jazz, contemporary, and more. The users often participate in dance challenges or create their own routines, which they then share with their followers and the broader TikTok community. Dance routines on TikTok are characterized by their creativity, energy, and expression, with users showcasing their dance skills, creativity, and personality through their performances. Many dance routines on TikTok go viral, attracting millions of views, likes, and shares, and contributing to the platform's vibrant dance culture. Additionally, TikTok has become a hub for dance trends and challenges, with users constantly innovating and building upon existing routines to create new viral sensations. As a result, dance routines play a significant role in shaping the cultural landscape of TikTok and fostering a sense of community and connection among users who share a passion for dance and music.

Art and drawing	Educational content	Storytelling
Art and drawing content on TikTok encompass a wide range of creative expressions, from traditional drawing and painting techniques to digital art and animation. Artists and creators use the platform to showcase their artistic talents, share their creative process, and engage with fellow art enthusiasts. TikTok's short-form video format allows artists to provide glimpses into their artwork, from initial sketches to finished pieces, in a visually-captivating and accessible manner. Some artists create time-lapse videos of their work, while others offer tutorials and tips on various art techniques, providing valuable insights and inspiration to aspiring artists. Additionally, TikTok has emerged as a platform for collaborative art projects, where multiple artists collaborate on a single artwork or participate in themed challenges to create cohesive and visually-striking pieces. Art and drawing content on TikTok often receives widespread recognition and appreciation from the community, with users celebrating the diversity and creativity of artistic expression on the platform. Overall, TikTok serves as a vibrant and inclusive space for artists to share their passion for art, connect with like-minded individuals, and inspire others to explore their creative talents.	Educational contents on TikTok encompass a diverse array of topics and formats, ranging from quick tutorials and informative videos to engaging lectures and thought-provoking discussions. Educators and content creators leverage the platform to share valuable knowledge, insights, and expertise on a wide range of subjects, catering to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. TikTok's short-form video format provides a convenient and accessible medium for delivering educational content, allowing creators to distill complex concepts into bite-sized, easily digestible segments. From science and history to mathematics and language learning, TikTok offers a wealth of educational resources that entertain, inform, and inspire viewers worldwide. Furthermore, TikTok's interactive features, such as live streams, Q&A sessions, and duet collaborations, enable creators to engage directly with their audience, fostering a dynamic and interactive learning environment. Educational contents on TikTok continue to grow in popularity, with users appreciating the platform's capacity to make learning fun, engaging, and accessible to everyone. As a result, TikTok has emerged as a valuable educational tool, empowering individuals to expand their knowledge, skills, and horizons in innovative and exciting ways.	Storytelling on TikTok is a vibrant and dynamic form of expression that captivates audiences with compelling narratives, personal anecdotes, and creative storytelling techniques. From heartfelt reflections to humorous anecdotes and suspenseful dramas, TikTok creators use the platform to share stories that resonate with viewers at a deep and emotional level. With its short-form video format, TikTok challenges creators to distill their narratives into concise and engaging clips, often accompanied by music, sound effects, and visual effects to enhance the storytelling experience. Storytelling on TikTok transcends traditional boundaries, allowing creators to explore a diverse range of themes, perspectives, and genres, from slice-of-life vignettes to fantastical adventures and everything in between. Whether sharing personal experiences, fictional tales, or cultural traditions, TikTok storytellers captivate audiences with their creativity, authenticity, and ability to evoke emotions in just a few seconds. Through storytelling, TikTok creators connect with viewers at a profound level, fostering a sense of empathy, community, and shared humanity in the digital realm. As storytelling continues to evolve on TikTok, creators have the opportunity to explore new narrative techniques, experiment with innovative storytelling formats, and engage audiences in meaningful and memorable ways.

ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response)	Live streams	Marketing content (companies, ads)
ASMR, or Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response, has become a popular genre on TikTok, offering users a unique auditory and sensory experience. ASMR content typically features soft, soothing sounds and gentle whispers that are designed to induce relaxation and tingling sensations in viewers. Creators on TikTok use a variety of techniques to create ASMR videos, including tapping, scratching, brushing, and whispering, often accompanied by visual triggers such as hand movements or close-up shots of objects. ASMR videos on TikTok cover a wide range of themes and scenarios, from simple triggers like tapping on objects to more elaborate roleplaying and storytelling experiences. Viewers often use ASMR content as a form of stress relief, relaxation, or sleep aid, finding comfort and tranquility in the gentle sounds and calming atmosphere created by ASMR creators. With its short-form video format, TikTok provides a platform for ASMR creators to share their unique sounds and sensations with a global audience, fostering a sense of connection and community among viewers who share a common appreciation for ASMR content.	Live streams on TikTok provide users with a dynamic and interactive platform for real-time engagement and content creation. Unlike pre-recorded videos, live streams allow creators to connect with their audience in the moment, fostering a sense of immediacy and authenticity. During live streams, creators can broadcast a wide range of contents, from casual chats and Q&A sessions to live performances, tutorials, and behind-the-scenes glimpses into their daily lives. Viewers have the opportunity to interact with creators through live comments, likes, and virtual gifts, enabling direct communication and feedback. Live streams often feature spontaneous moments, unscripted interactions, and shared experiences that contribute to a sense of community and connection among viewers and creators. Additionally, TikTok's live streaming platform offers various features and tools to enhance the viewing experience, such as filters, effects, and followers appearances. With its emphasis on real-time engagement and shared experiences, live streaming has become an integral part of the TikTok ecosystem, providing creators with a dynamic platform to showcase their talents, build relationships with their audience, and cultivate a loyal fan base. As live streaming continues to evolve and grow in popularity, TikTok remains at the forefront of innovation, offering new opportunities for creators to engage with their audience and create memorable live experiences.	Marketing content on TikTok encompasses a diverse array of strategies employed by companies and brands to engage with users and promote their products or services. With its massive user base and highly engaged audience, TikTok offers companies a unique opportunity to reach potential customers in an authentic and creative way. Marketing content on TikTok often takes the form of sponsored posts, branded challenges, influencer partnerships, and native advertisements integrated seamlessly into users' feeds. Companies leverage TikTok's platform to create engaging and entertaining content that resonates with their target audience, leveraging popular trends, memes, and challenges to increase brand awareness and drive engagement. Influencer marketing is particularly prevalent on TikTok, with brands collaborating with popular creators to endorse their products or services to their followers. These collaborations often result in sponsored posts, product reviews, or branded content that feels authentic and relatable to the audience. Additionally, TikTok's advertising platform allows companies to run targeted ad campaigns, reaching specific demographics based on user interests, behaviours, and demographics. From sponsored hashtag challenges to native video ads, companies can leverage TikTok's advertising tools to create compelling marketing campaigns that capture users' attention and drive results. As TikTok continues to evolve as a key marketing platform, companies are increasingly investing in creative and innovative strategies to connect with users and build brand loyalty in the fast-paced world of social media.

Source: own elaboration.

The table delineates 18 categories derived from comprehensive observation, each detailing unique forms of expressive communication. Consequently, these categories not only manifest a spectrum facilitated by technological affordances, but also underscore the cultural dimension and user engagement, reflecting nuanced facets of creative participation. Particularly noteworthy is the vast reach of videos, spanning from professionally-crafted messages by major corporations, ads, to scientific contents and even NPC (non-player character) contents. Particular attention is warranted for the latter, which constitutes a unique phenomenon in the TikTok space, characterized by a form of creation and enactment. In comparison to vlogs and storytelling, NPC contents present an intriguing research aspect and highlight the richness of contents emerging on TikTok. This categorization, of course, is subject to the period of ongoing observations and, considering the ever-changing landscape of TikTok, may undergo modifications. It serves to illustrate the types of visual communication emerging on TikTok.

A multimodal analysis, in turn, allowed for a closer examination of TikTok's structures. In comparison to image forms of visual communication based on image memes, the researcher delineated differences and commonalities between TikTok videos and image-based visual communication on the Internet, as illustrated in Table 2. This approach illuminated aspects related to the research questions concerning the structure, form, and modes present in the analyzed material.

Table 2. The comparison of formal features from the analyzed picture memes and video memes

	Image forms of visual communication based on image memes	**Video forms of visual communication based on video memes**
Base form	Image/photo	Audio-visual material (recorded or imported)
Average number of modes	2.3	4.8
Multimodality	Yes	Yes
Visible modes	– Written communication – Photograph/picture – Facial expression – Emoji – Visual aspects (tattoos, etc.)	– Written communication – Video – Music – Voice – Facial expressions and gestures – Dance – Props/artifacts (e.g., phone in hand) – Green screen – Animations – Filters (either visible in the video or superimposed on the voice)
Dominant modus	Photo/image	Video

	Image forms of visual communication based on image memes	Video forms of visual communication based on video memes
Technological tools used	– Collage – Emoji on a photo	– Face modifying filter – Green screen – Animation – Voice modification filter – Visual effects – Music effects
Technological possibilities of the channel	– Pre-editing – Possibility to import external material – Option to generate original material – Option to add music – Filters – Labels – Emojis	– Pre-editing – Post-editing – Possibility to import external material – Option to generate original audiovisual material – Option to add narrator – Option to add music – Option to add animation – Filters – Labels – Polls – Emojis – Green screen – Possibility to use multiple shots in one message
Multisensory	No	Yes
Average duration	It depends on the time of reading the message	0:16
Intertextuality	Yes	Yes
Relationships between modes	– Reinforce each other – Complement each other – Clarify each other – Have an empty relationship with each other	– Reinforce each other – Complement each other – Clarify each other – Have an empty relationship with each other – Introduce ambiguity – Conflict with each other
Modes functions	Intensifying and enriching the message	Intensifying and enriching the message
Text layer	Numerous abbreviations, colloquialisms, Anglicisms, often incorrect grammar and punctuation	Numerous abbreviations, colloquialisms, Anglicisms, often incorrect grammar and punctuation
User-created content	Yes	Yes

	Image forms of visual communication based on image memes	**Video forms of visual communication based on video memes**
Cohesion and coherence	Yes	Yes
Intentionality	Unknown	Unknown
Acceptability	Yes	Yes
Informativeness	Yes	Yes
Situationality	Yes	Yes
Variation	Yes	Yes
Anonymity	No	No
Colloquiality	Yes	Yes
Collectivity	Yes	Yes
Orality (secondary)	Yes	Yes
Artistry	Yes	Yes
Ephemerality	Yes	Yes

Source: own elaboration.

The conducted comparative analysis elucidates that the notable distinctions between image forms of visual communication based on picture memes and video forms based on video memes on TikTok primarily revolve around formal aspects. These disparities encompass fundamental structural elements such as the inherent form, average mode count, mode categories, technological capabilities of respective communication channels, and the employed technological solutions. It can be inferred that users predominantly exploit the unique communication tools and technological solutions specific to given platform (Facebook, X, Instagram, or TikTok). It is also worthwhile to elucidate the structural dependencies through which the author constructed a tabular comparison of visual communication forms in Table 2. Figure 1 illustrates the process of multimodal analysis for each, delineating modes, defining their relationships graphically, and determining dependencies. Consequently, the specific audiovisual format, whether static or dynamic, is inherently intertwined with the technological-communicative trends and capabilities of the digital platform.

Moreover, the comparative analysis incorporated the attributes of Internet memes as a media genre, drawing from Marta Wójcicka's framework, which encompasses cohesion and coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativeness, situationality, variation, anonymity, colloquiality, collectivity, orality (secondary), and artistry (Wójcicka, 2020). These attributes demonstrated consistent characteristics across both static and dynamic memes. The sole distinguishing factor observed within the analyzed messages was the introduction of multisensoriality. In summary, it is evident that image and video forms of visual communication share numerous commonalities across various dimensions. Both meme types exhibit a parallel reliance on the image's dominant mode, adhere to similar textual layer formats, and serve comparable mode functions. They also align with the principles of user-created content, thus reflecting the evolving landscape of visual culture and digital expression.

Figure 1. An example of multimodal analysis

Source: own elaboration.

In summary, the multimodal analysis and meticulous observation have provided insights into the intricate structures of TikTok, shedding light on its diverse visual communication forms and the underlying framework of video content prevalent within this application. This has not only allowed for the depiction of TikTok's architecture, but also facilitated the showcasing of creative participation and the categorization of expressive forms within it.

Conclusions

TikTok has emerged as a transformative force in the realm of social media, showcasing its unparalleled ability to captivate global audiences with its innovative format and dynamic content. The platform's exponential growth underscores its significance as a cultural and sociological phenomenon, reshaping digital communication and entertainment landscapes. With its diverse array of expressive forms, ranging from original creations to derivative works, TikTok offers users a platform for creative self-expression and engagement. Moreover, its technological advancements, coupled with algorithm-driven content discovery, have redefined user interaction paradigms. TikTok's success lies not only in its technological innovation, but also in its ability to foster vibrant communities and facilitate genuine connections among users worldwide.

The research endeavors sought to delve into the structural intricacies of TikTok while dissecting its communicative content. Consequently, these communications are marked by their succinct, visually-captivating nature, leveraging the technological affordances integrated into the application's interface, including but not limited to greenscreens, filters, and effects. Notably, these features undergo continual evolution, undergoing modifications daily. Furthermore, TikTok encompasses visual messages in the form of auto-scrolling image sequences or memes, often complemented by accompanying music and TikTok-specific effects. Thus, it becomes evident that the technological capabilities embedded within this platform profoundly influence the dynamics of visual communication and the crafting of innovative messages. The multimodal analysis, on the other hand, revealed that each message consists of multiple modes that complement each other, thereby endowing TikTok's characteristic messages with a multisensory nature, impacting several senses simultaneously.

The phenomenon of "tiktokization" has permeated various social media platforms, with TikTok videos becoming increasingly visible across digital spaces. This trend underscores the platform's pervasive influence on contemporary digital culture and communication dynamics. The term "tiktokization" encapsulates the process by which the stylistic, thematic, and structural elements characteristic of TikTok contents infiltrate and shape contents on other social media platforms. This influence is evident in the adoption of TikTok's visual esthetics, such as its distinctive editing styles, use of music and sound effects, and reliance on short-form video formats, across diverse digital platforms. Furthermore, the proliferation of TikTok-inspired contents underscores the platform's role as a trendsetter in the realm of digital expression and communication. Consequently, the concept of "tiktokization" offers valuable insights into the evolving landscape of social media and the cross-pollination of content styles and formats across digital platforms.

TikTok serves as a platform for a diverse range of visual communication, catering to various forms of expression and messaging. Users engage in personal storytelling, sharing snippets of their lives and narratives through video contents, fostering a sense of authenticity and connection within the community. Alongside personal narratives, TikTok is a hub for entertaining and humorous contents, with users creating and sharing funny videos, memes, and challenges that resonate with audiences worldwide. Additionally, TikTok has become a significant space for advertising and brand promotion, with major corporations leveraging the platform's reach and engagement to showcase their products and services in innovative ways. Moreover, TikTok hosts a unique category of content known as non-player character (NPC) content, where users adopt fictional personas or characters, further enriching the platform's diverse tapestry of visual communication. These forms undergo numerous alterations, given that TikTok is an ephemeral space underpinned by algorithms.

TikTok's visual communication structure is characterized by its dynamic and multifaceted nature, offering users a diverse array of expressive tools and formats. At its core, TikTok thrives on short-form videos, typically ranging from a few seconds to a minute in length, allowing for quick and engaging content consumption. These videos often feature a combination of visual elements, including moving images, text overlays, stickers, and special effects, all seamlessly integrated within the platform's interface. Moreover, TikTok's editing capabilities empower users to enhance their content with various creative tools, such as filters, transitions, and audio effects, fostering a culture of innovation and experimentation. Additionally, the platform's algorithm-driven recommendation system ensures that users are exposed to a wide range of contents tailored to their interests, further enriching the visual communication experience on TikTok. It can thus be inferred that the popularity of TikTok and its technological capabilities influence visual communication and its forms. Overall, TikTok's structure facilitates a fluid and interactive environment where users can express themselves creatively and connect with others through visually-captivating contents.

Discussion

Given TikTok's dynamic nature, it is essential to conduct systematic analyses and continuously update the understanding of the platform. This article serves as an exploratory endeavor to delve into TikTok not only as a platform but also as a tool for communication, self-expression in media space, and a marketing tool. Understanding TikTok's dynamics requires ongoing observation and analysis, considering its swift changes and the emergence of new trends and features. As such, researchers and practitioners must adopt flexible methodologies that accommodate TikTok's dynamic environment, making sure that their insights remain relevant and insightful amidst the platform's evolution.

Furthermore, TikTok's influence extends beyond mere entertainment, evolving into a multifaceted tool for personal expression, social interaction, and brand promotion. Its widespread popularity and technological capabilities have reshaped the landscape of visual communication, offering individuals and organizations unprecedented opportunities to engage with audiences worldwide. By embracing TikTok as a subject of study, researchers can uncover valuable insights into contemporary digital culture, the psychology of online behavior, and the evolving dynamics of social media platforms. Moreover, businesses can leverage TikTok's reach and engagement potential to enhance their marketing strategies and connect with consumers in innovative and compelling ways.

Therefore, the researcher encourages further investigation into TikTok, recognizing it as a complex digital environment that warrants exploration using a variety of research methods and techniques, encompassing not only media studies but also psychological and sociological approaches. This study was purely exploratory in nature, aiming to illuminate the structural aspects of visual communication on TikTok and its internal architecture. Moreover, the study should also delve into the transmission of social pathologies and pathological contents on TikTok. The author focused more on the opportunities than on the threats of this application.

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Cytowanie

Wojciech Kułaga (2024), *Revolutionizing Visual Communication and Digital Creative Engagement: The Game-Changing Impact of TikTok*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej", t. XX, nr 3, s. 212–235, https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.10

Era TikToka: rewolucja w cyfrowej komunikacji wizualnej i zaangażowaniu kreatywnym

Abstrakt: TikTok stał się znaczącym katalizatorem przekształceń w obszarze komunikacji wizualnej oraz interakcji cyfrowej jako dynamicznie rozwijająca się i popularna platforma mediów społecznościowych. Niniejszy artykuł eksploruje ewoluującą architekturę TikToka, skupiając się na jego możliwościach komunikacyjno-technologicznych, nowo powstających formach ekspresji i charakterystycznych cechach, które przekształcają komunikację wizualną online. Celem badania jest szczegółowe przedstawienie unikalnych możliwości tej platformy w kontekście konstrukcji i charakterystyki multimodalnych komunikatów audiowizualnych (tiktoków). Poprzez kondensację treści, innowacyjne narzędzia wbudowane w wewnętrzną strukturę oraz system rekomendacji oparty na algorytmach TikTok stał się wielowymiarową platformą, która umożliwia użytkownikom i użytkowniczkom z całego świata angażowanie się w twórczą ekspresję i budowanie społeczności opartych na zaangażowaniu kreatywnym. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest jakościowe i eksploracyjne zgłębienie struktur komunikatów TikToka oraz zobrazowanie charakterystycznych dla tej platformy form komunikacji wizualnej. Autor zastosował w tym celu głęboką obserwację oraz analizę multimodalną.

Słowa kluczowe: TikTok, analiza multimodalna, metodologia jakościowa, media społecznościowe, komunikacja wizualna

Wyniki XIV edycji konkursu fotograficznego „Przeglądu Socjologii Jakościowej"

Waldemar Dymarczyk

https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.11

Drogie Czytelniczki i Drodzy Czytelnicy PSJ,

„Na betonie kwiaty nie rosną". Tak niegdyś napisał Wojciech Korda. Wówczas mogło to być traktowane jako nieważna ekspiacja hippisowskiego pięknoducha. Tymczasem minęło kilka dekad i profetyczne wizje stają się naszym udziałem. Jeszcze kurczowo trzymamy się „starego świata" i starych praktyk. Myślimy, że „jakoś to będzie". Czego jeszcze potrzebujemy, by się przebudzić? Radzenie sobie z kryzysem zaczyna się od jego uświadomienia. Temu uświadomieniu służą drobne działania. Takim wkładem jest, w naszym mniemaniu, motto konkursu fotograficznego „Przeglądu Socjologii Jakościowej" A.D. 2023 – bardzo proste, powtórzone za Kordą zdanie „Na betonie kwiaty nie rosną". Chcieliśmy poznać, jak owo hasło rezonuje dzisiaj. Czy Czytelniczki/Czytelnicy podzielają nasze obawy i czy dostrzegają jakieś działania, które niosą nadzieję? Mając powyższe na uwadze, miło nam zakomunikować, że jury XIV edycji konkursu fotograficznego „Przeglądu Socjologii Jakościowej" przyznało główną nagrodę **Wojciechowi Ganczarkowi** za pracę **„Woda znaczy więcej"**. Autor zabiera nas w daleką podróż i pokazuje heroiczną i zarazem nierówną walkę, jaką o najważniejszy zasób toczą z globalnymi koncernami mieszkańcy Łańcucha Famatiny – najwyższego pozaandyjskiego wzniesienia w Ameryce Południowej.

Jury przyznało również dwa wyróżnienia. Pierwszy wyróżniony esej, zatytułowany **„Odzyskiwanie"**, wykonała **Bogna Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska**. W przewrotny w stosunku do motta konkursu sposób przedstawia ona siłę przyrody, która ponownie bierze we władanie przestrzenie niedawno jeszcze służące człowiekowi. Drugi esej, pod tytułem **„Zazielenić dzieciństwo"**, autorstwa **Hanny Łobody**, zwraca uwagę na rolę edukacji ekologicznej. Zielone przedszkola i szkoły wydają się doskonałym środkiem do celu, którym jest uwrażliwienie najmłodszych na piękno, a zarazem kruchość otaczającej nas przyrody.

Serdecznie gratulujemy laureatom i zapraszamy do zapoznania się z nagrodzonymi pracami.

W imieniu jury, Waldemar Dymarczyk

Główna Nagroda – Wojciech Ganczarek

Woda znaczy więcej

W lutym 2023 w mieście Chilecito w Argentynie zaroiło się od nowych murali. Akcję przeprowadzali dorośli – miejscowi i z różnych części kraju – ale do współpracy namawiali również młodzież i dzieciaki z sąsiedztwa. Za jakiś czas to od ich decyzji będzie zależeć przyszłość wody i życia w regionie (fot. 1).

Od dwudziestu lat w nieodległym miasteczku Famatina lokalna społeczność konsekwentnie odrzuca zakusy międzynarodowych korporacji górniczych (fot. 2). Kapitały z Chin i Kanady stają na głowie, by w górach na zachód od miejscowości zainstalować odkrywkową kopalnię złota. Chodzi o Łańcuch Famatiny, najwyższe pozaandyjskie wzniesienie na kontynencie, ze szczytem przewyższającym 6000 m n.p.m. (fot. 3). I jednocześnie o dawcę życia dla całej okolicy.

Na półpustynnych stepach La Rioja deszcz niemal nie pada, ziemia jest sucha i czerwona. Można by pomyśleć: rozgrzana do czerwoności. Biologiczne przetrwanie miejscowości Famatina czy Chilecito – a także Santa Florentina, Carrizal, Guanchin i wielu innych – zależy w sposób totalny od hojności góry: od wód, które spłyną z topniejącego lodowca lub spadną z chmur zatrzymujących się przy wierzchołkach tej górzystej wyspy na morzu równin (fot. 4). „Woda to życie” nie jest więc dla mieszkańców regionu pustym frazesem, a namacalnym faktem. Napis na jednym z wymalowanych w tym roku murali głosi: „My, ludy*, jesteśmy kroplami tej samej rzeki” (* gdzie słowo „pueblos” można przetłumaczyć jako „ludy” lub „miasteczka”, fot. 5).

Administracja państwowa widzi Łańcuch Famatiny zupełnie inaczej: oto potencjalne źródło eksportowalnego kruszcu, a więc i szumiącego strumienia dolarów. Coś, co można wysadzić w powietrze, wybrać zeń, co najcenniejsze i wysłać statkiem za granicę. Z prawnego punktu widzenia złoża metali są własnością prowincji (argentyńskiego odpowiednika województwa) i ta może rozporządzać surowcem wedle uznania. Dlatego gdy obrońcy wody z Famatiny zaprezentowali swoje racje podczas dorocznego karnawału, ich udział spotkał się z nieprzyjazną reakcją policji (fot. 6). Wśród transparentów, które nieśli manifestanci, wyróżniała się kolorowa flaga – symbol etni rdzennych Ameryki Łacińskiej (fot. 7). Do nich należą i/lub ich światopogląd podzielają obrońcy wody z okolic Chilecito, dla których tak góra, jak i my, ludzie, jesteśmy nierozerwalną częścią pewnej całości zwanej przyrodą. Planetą. Światem. *Pachamamą*.

Stawka jest wysoka. Odkrywkowe kopalnie metali zużywają gigantyczne ilości wody do płukania minerałów. Z liczb podawanych przez górnicze korporacje wynika, że te zużyłyby… całą wodę, jaka rodzi się w Łańcuchu Famatiny. Płyn, który spływałby jako odpad kopalniany, zawierałby cały szereg szkodliwych metali ciężkich i substancji toksycznych używanych przy procesie wydobywczym. Sergio, inżynier agronom z Chilecito, mówi wprost: to byłby koniec życia dla całego regionu. Pojawia się więc pytanie, czy złoto znaczy więcej niż woda. W Famatinie powtarza się, że nie, i dlatego od blisko dwudziestu lat mieszkańcy organizują opór. Przy drogach wjazdowych w kierunku górskiego szczytu budowane są strażnice (fot. 8). Służą one za schronienie dla uczestników protestów, gdy przychodzi blokować drogę nieustępliwym wysłannikom koncernów. To strategia, które powiodła się już wielokrotnie.

Wsparciem dla protestujących jest sama natura okolicy, która dostarcza materiałów na budowę strażnic: słomę i glinę (fot. 9). Gdy działania protestacyjne wymagają pokrycia pewnych kosztów – takich jak wyjazd na blokadę drogi w innej miejscowości – organizatorzy wykorzystują środki zdobyte ze sprzedaży mąki jadłoszynu (*algarrobo*). To niezwykle powszechne drzewo, którego strączki można zbierać choćby na poboczach dróg (fot. 10).

I jest to również drzewo symboliczne. W znanych nam w Europie Środkowej strączkach – w grochu, bobie czy fasoli – przeważnie częścią jadalną jest ziarno. Strączek jako taki wyrzuca się lub – w najlepszym razie – zostawia jako paszę dla zwierząt. W przypadku strączków jadłoszynu (fot. 11) jest dokładnie odwrotnie: zdrewniałe ziarna odrzuca się jako bezużyteczne, a strączek przerabia się na słodką, brązową mączkę. Być może to sugestia, by nie zakładać, że prawdy oczywiste w Europie okażą się równie prawdziwe za oceanem.

Dziś mieszkańcy północno-zachodniej Argentyny mierzą się z kolejnym zagrożeniem: moda na lit – minerał widziany w Europie jako Złoty Graal „ekologicznej" elektromobilności – doprowadza do intensywnego osuszania wysokogórskich mokradeł. Znów: jedynych zbiorników wodnych w swoich okolicach. Nauczeni 500-letnią historią ekstraktywizmu mieszkańcy są świadomi, że nie mogą liczyć na pomoc instytucji państwa, bo – jak głosi cytat – tylko zwykli ludzie pomogą zwykłym ludziom (fot. 12).

[Historia obrońców wody z Famatiny i Chilecito będzie szerzej przedstawiona w książce o roboczym tytule *Można wspólnie*, pomyślanej jako zbiór reportaży o działaniach wspólnotowych w Ameryce Łacińskiej.]

Fot. 1

Fot. 2

Fot. 3

Fot. 4

Fot. 5

Fot. 6

Fot. 7

Fot. 8

Fot. 9

Fot. 10

Fot. 11

Fot. 12

Wyróżnienie – Bogna Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska

„Odzyskiwanie”

„Na betonie kwiaty nie rosną” – na przekór dosłownemu rozumieniu przewodniej myśli konkursu pragnę przedstawić fotoesej obrazujący ponowne odzyskanie przez naturę przestrzeni, które jeszcze niedawno służyły człowiekowi. Załączone fotografie dokumentują proces rozkładu i rekolonizacji przez przyrodę miejsc opuszczonych i zapomnianych, przedmiotów uznanych za nieprzydatne. Wystarczy kilka lat nieobecności człowieka, by zawilgocony budynek zasiedliły mchy i paprocie, a w porzuconym samochodzie wiły gniazda ptaki. Praktyka odwiedzania takich miejsc, zwana często eksploracją miejską (*urban exploration*), skłania z jednej strony do refleksji nad bezmiarem marnotrawstwa pracy i zasobów, z drugiej zaś uświadamia, jak niewiele trzeba, by dzieła ludzkich rąk stały się na powrót częścią natury.

Fotografie przedstawiają: hutę szkła w Czechach, ośrodek wypoczynkowy na Śląsku, zabytkową karetkę w Belgii, samochód Austin A40 Somerset w Finlandii, tor bobslejowy w Sarajewie, budynek mieszkalny w Wielkopolsce, chatę w nieczynnym skansenie na Mazowszu, salę restauracyjną w niemieckim kurorcie oraz krzyż nagrobny na Podkarpaciu.

Wyróżnienie – Hanna Łoboda

Zazielenić dzieciństwo

Do niedawna natura odgrywała istotną rolę w życiu człowieka. Była na wyciągnięcie ręki, dawała wyżywienie, ciepło, schronienie. Spędzaliśmy na zewnątrz większość dnia, nie myśląc, że ma to jakieś korzyści zdrowotne.

Dziś wiemy, że bycie w przyrodzie wpływa pozytywnie nie tylko na zdrowie fizyczne, ale także psychiczne. Szczególne korzyści dla rozwoju płynące z przebywania na świeżym powietrzu zauważalne są w początkowym okresie życia. Swobodna zabawa na łonie natury skutkuje lepszą odpornością, sprawnością fizyczną, uważnością. Stwarza możliwości do nabywania silnych kompetencji społecznych i poznawania samego siebie od najmłodszych lat. Pozwala dostrzec zależności występujące w przyrodzie i stworzyć z nią głęboką więź, owocującą dbałością o otaczające środowisko.

Dzisiejsze przedszkolaki pytane o pochodzenie marchewki, którą jedzą, w odpowiedzi wymieniają nazwy zagranicznych sieci handlowych. Ktoś kiedyś był na wakacjach u babci. Ktoś chodzi na spacery do parku albo lasu, wiosną albo latem, kiedy jest ciepło, ale i tak za dobrze nie można się bawić, trzeba być czystym. Poza tym trzeba się uczyć. Zabawa to nie nauka, a już na pewno nie na dworze. Jednak na dworze można znaleźć odorka zieleniaka albo świerząbka gajowego i zacząć zastanawiać się, czemu niebo jest niebieskie albo jak wejść na to wysokie drzewo.

Ci, którzy chcą dać szansę doświadczyć, jak marchewka rośnie od nasionka i jak pachnie ziemia, gdy wyciąga się z niej pomarańczowy, wykrzywiony korzeń, płacą niemało. Leśne przedszkola i szkoły to placówki, w których dzieci przez większość dnia przybywają na dworze, niezależnie od pory roku czy pogody. Istnieją także w Polsce, ale zazwyczaj nie mogą nazywać się przedszkolami ani szkołami. Zakładane są przez stowarzyszenia, fundacje lub jako prywatne działalności gospodarcze. Finansowane są przeważnie z czesnego płatnego przez rodziców. W wielu krajach funkcjonują w publicznym systemie oświaty. Bywa też, że nie ma potrzeby tworzenia placówek *stricte* leśnych, gdyż uczenie się przez doświadczenie w naturalnym środowisku jest wpisane w kulturę oświatową danego państwa. Spędzanie czasu na dworze jest silnie zakorzenioną PRAKTYKĄ, a nie jedynie nierespektowanym zapisem w podstawie programowej.

Zdjęcia wykonano w ramach badań do rozprawy doktorskiej. Badanie uzyskało pozytywną ocenę Komisji ds. etyki badań naukowych. Uzyskano zgodę na wykonanie fotografii zarówno od rodziców, jak i od samych dzieci przedstawionych na zdjęciach.

Fot. 1. ***Dbam***

Fot. 2. ***Sieję***

Fot. 3. ***Akceptuję niedoskonałość***

Fot. 4. *Jem swoje*

Fot. 5. *Wykrzesam to z siebie!*

Fot. 6. ***Ja potrafię***

Fot. 7. ***Poznaję***

Fot. 8. ***Pielęgnuję***

Fot. 9. ***JesteśMY***

Fot. 10. ***Łapię chwilę***

Fot. 11. ***Próbuję po swojemu***

Fot. 12. ***Zbieram owoce***

Fot. 13. ***Doświadczam***

Fot. 14. *Kim jestem?*

Fot. 15. *Uczę się*

Fot. 16. ***Bawię się***

Fot. 17. ***Obserwuję***

Fot. 18. ***Idę dalej***

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