

## REVIEW ARTICLES

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### **PUBLIC SPACES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS – THE EXAMPLE OF WARSAW**

**Abstract.** Public space in cities is widely seen as a developmental resource. It thus becomes a kind of urban product, and a lure for a range of groups of current and potential users. Cities compete for prestige and standing by creating new spaces or altering existing ones. The author attempts to assess the extent to which filling such a space with historical content is a significant contributing factor to the pursuit of such goals and the fulfilment of these tasks. The background for the analysis are projects submitted for the citizens' participatory budget for the Polish capital, Warsaw.

**Key words:** public spaces, participatory budgeting, social participation, city development, Warsaw.

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Public spaces are an essential element of the functional system of each city. In cities with a long and interesting history, these spaces contain the tangible cultural heritage and in the minds of the inhabitants they are saturated with historical connections, personal meanings and feelings. Assuming that the resources included in public space can increase the city's development potential, the question arises: how and in what circumstances historical resources can contribute to increase the development potential of the historic city.

The aim of the study is to verify the hypothesis that in the context of a significant city community exchange, elements of cultural heritage and links with cultural memory that are rooted in the public space are both: the development potential, and

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equally – the potential source of conflicts between old and new inhabitants (space users). Those conflicts can generate the phenomenon of appropriation of space by supporters of one of historical narratives. This threat poses the question of the possibility of using the heritage resources in the public space as the development potential of the city in this particular situation. Hypothesis verification was conducted on the basis of a case study – that of the Polish capital, Warsaw – and the participatory budgeting procedure carried out annually on the initiative of the borough council. The analysis covered the projects submitted in the citizens' budgets for 2015–2016. These were the first two editions of the citizens' budget in the Polish capital, where 1–2% of each city's district budgets were designed to the direct decision of inhabitants. In the principles of carrying out the citizens' budget, the following sequence of actions was determined: (1) project submission by citizens; (2) project verification by city's officials (main verifying criteria: legal compliance and technical and financial feasibility); (3) public discussion on projects; (4) project promoting meetings and finally; (5) project voting. Local authorities have declared that voting results are binding.

The choice of Warsaw as the centre for analysis was due to its history of *longue durée* (since the Middle Ages) and the especially traumatic period of that history in the twentieth century. Mikołaj Madurowicz wrote of the capital that 'tragedy became the main element of the city's structure' (2007, p. 128). The pivotal situation in which it found itself in the mid-twentieth century transformed both its physical and social aspects. Contemporary Warsaw is thus a classic, full example of a city that has survived a cataclysm, a palimpsest city, in which both *urbs* and *civitas* have largely been redeveloped from nothing very recently (Królikowski and Rylke, 2010; Madurowicz, 2007; Chomałowska, 2012).

Warsaw is also an interesting city for analysis in the dimension of the issues covered by this article, because in terms of its wartime trauma it is currently at the point of moving from the fading of communicative memory (sustained by living witnesses to events) to an upsurge in the role of cultural memory. The country's capital is today also a city of rapid spatial and social development. Contemporary transformations of its space are frequently criticized; charges of dysfunctional administration and illegible form are levelled at it. Moreover, this spatial chaos and the erosion of the city's urban and architectural identity exist alongside a high level of migration to the capital, which over the past few decades has been fed with a vast flood of new residents. Warsaw is thus a city which for its 'old' residents will be a 'land sanctified by its martyrdom', a mythical, intractable small homeland, a city of ghosts. To its new residents it may seem like a chaotic, dangerous, dirty urban sprawl that is hard to assimilate, and has not yet become more than a new address. But there is a chance that it will. For a new wave of interest in the city and its difficult, polyphonous history is building, and the new Varsovians are one of its social elements (Pessel, 2014). The analysis of citizens' projects was preceded by theoretical considerations of public spaces and public participation in the shaping of public spaces using the resources of cultural heritage.

## 2. PUBLIC SPACE AS A DEVELOPMENTAL RESOURCE

Public space is shared-use space, purpose-developed in such a way as to meet the varied needs of both the local and supra-local communities (*Karta...*, 2009). It is treated as a strategic asset in view of its role in creating the value of a city, including real property prices (*Karta...*, 2009). In recent periods public space has become a special type of product, a lure in the rivalry between cities for prestige and standing (Wantuch-Matla, 2016).

In the *longue durée* structures that cities are, cultural heritage contributes to preserving the memory of people and events. Historical features or connotations are elements frequently employed as fillers of public space in both the material and symbolic dimensions. Thus by its very nature the public space plays a number of roles of universal character and also serves many functions connected specifically with heritage and the emotions that accompany its presence. These functions share numerous common elements and interdependencies. A detailed breakdown of these two groups of features is given in Tab. 1.

The above breakdown points to the fact that the various characteristics, parameters and functions may be divided into those for which there are full technical specifications and which are quantifiable and related to good urban planning practice; and others which are harder to generate but are hugely significant, related to the sphere of human experiences, emotions and feelings. Sociology defines this space as one that is humanized, pregnant with meaning, assimilated, a magical (mythologized), even intimate space (where it relates to the feelings of a specific person) (Rykiel, 2005). In the economic dimension, these ephemeral, often intangible parameters take on more concrete form with the increasing economic significance of 'experiencing' as a type of product, supplied to consumers in a similar way to commodities, goods or services (Pine, Gilmore, 1998). Interesting, exciting places draw people to them with a certain magnetism (Beckley, 2003), luring them with the promise of exploring the unknown or experiencing something new. Uninteresting places without that power of attraction are lost, as G. Cullen writes (2012) – 'The fire has been laid but nobody has put a match to it'. One of the factors that may be of considerable significance in creating such emotions is heritage and cultural memory. At this point it should be emphasized that both the attribution of different types and dimensions of cultural heritage value and cultural memory itself are subjective phenomena. Different groups of people will have their own heritage valuation criteria (Throsby, 2010) and their own narratives describing historical events. This is exactly what cultural memory differs from the history as a science (Halbwachs, 1980; Assmann, 1995). Different versions of cultural memory are part of the general differentiation of space users, and thus their varied expectations regarding these spaces, their forms of use and development. M. Carmona (2015, p. 375) writes 'the 'public' in public space is not a coherent, unified

group but a fragmented society of different socio-economic (and, today, often cultural) groups, further divided by age and gender. Each part of this fragmented society will relate to public space (and to each other) in different and complex ways.'

Table 1. Characteristics, parameters and functions of public spaces

Universal parameters/ characteristics/functions	Good technical level of the infrastructure
	Safety of usage and occupancy
	Accessibility (lack of physical barriers)
	A pleasant place to spend time in
	A pleasant place to pass through
	A place that reinforces community bonds
	A place where democratic rights to express one's views may be exercised
	Good composition (in utilitarian, aesthetic and legibility terms)
	An attractive space that makes an impression, and is interesting and functionally diverse
	A unique, original, recognizable place, not 'generic'
	Authentic
A place for all – accepting of the diversity of its potential users	
Parameters/characteristics/ functions rooted in the history of the city/place	Preserves the memory of events and people, and the symbolic value of its memoryscape
	Material heritage resources or the memory of them, symbolic value
	A place that reinforces community ties based on the history of the city, place, community or nation
	A space that reinforces the effects of educational initiatives connected with history
	A unique, original, recognizable place – where these characteristics arise out of its heritage and cultural memory resources
	Authentic – where its authenticity is a function of the historical connotations of the site, and represents a skilled blend of the 'old' and 'new' elements of the space

Source: author's own study on the basis of: Cullen 2012; Gehl, 1987; Gehl, 2014; Wantuch-Matla, 2016; Rykiel, 2005; Kapralski, 2010; Florida, 2010.

Looking for substantial correlations between the group of universal parameters and those rooted in the history of the city/place, attention should be paid to the concept of pleasant places to spend time and pleasant places to pass through, created by J. Gehl (1987). Each of these categories can only refer to technical parameters or the utility of space. On the other hand, when the tangible and intangible interconnections of space with history are concerned, the main role is played by places that are pleasant to spend time in, where historic elements and historical

memory are important features that define their value to users. This delimitation is also consistent with the concept of ‘real’ and ‘non-real public spaces’ by R. Senet (1977, pp. 14–15) and the concept of ‘places’ and ‘non-places’ constructed by M. Augé (1995, p. 77). According to Augé, ‘a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity.’ ‘Non-Places’ will not have these qualities. The author points out that nowadays many public spaces are ‘non-places’, they are deprived of individual features and emotional connections.

The set of characteristics, parameters and functions of public spaces affects the life of the city’s users and the entities operating within it in a certain way. Interest in this space may take on either of the following dimensions:

- direct – i.e. the space itself is the interest factor – its properties, functionalities, street furniture, the potential it offers, the emotions it provokes, and the quality of life it assures (to residents, tourists, employees of nearby companies, and other users of the space alike);

- indirect – i.e. the quality and form of the spatial planning are important as a neighbourhood (they boost the value of neighbouring properties, and raise the revenues of businesses operating in the vicinity).

A further group that may be identified are potential users of the space, whose choice of new residential area may be influenced by public space that meets their needs. Identification of this group is becoming increasingly important, as R. Florida, for one, points out. He writes that at present the human identity is more and more often affected by place of residence rather than place of employment, which, given employees’ increasing mobility, invites the conclusion that the selection of a new place to live is not solely determined by a good offer of employment, but also depends on the potential role of the new place of residence in building or sustaining the individual’s own identity (Florida, 2010).

### **3. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN SHAPING PUBLIC SPACES USING CULTURAL HERITAGE**

In economic terms, public space is a rare asset, and for precisely this reason the policy by which it is shaped should aim to rationalize the use and sustainable exploitation of its values. One of the most significant options inherent in this sustainability is the implementation of participatory instruments (Dymnicka, 2013; *Karta...*, 2009). Users of the space receive a tool with which to highlight their preferred directions of spatial transformation, drawbacks to its use, and potential loss of cultural resources. Moreover, these participatory actions also provide a forum in which the respective community may exercise its need to take responsibility for the common good. The benefits of exploiting this knowledge are universal

in character – not only in the dimension of precious cultural heritage, but also, for instance, in areas of unique outstanding natural beauty (cf. Zawilińska and Szpara, 2016). A key element of this universality is the process of identifying and establishing an emotional bond with the space, which in turn has both a historical aspect (ancestral heritage) and a creative side (new users of the space discover its assets and resolve to cooperate in their preservation).

The development of participatory forms is thus undoubtedly of immense positive significance in shaping socially acceptable, desirable public spaces that are used to the full. On the other hand, the participatory process may generate certain feedback mechanisms, whereby a rise in the value of a space for one group may mean a devaluation for others. This is connected with the subjective character of the creation of space, which again has its roots in the individualized perception of the value of elements of cultural heritage and various variants of the collective memory (Waterton and Smith, 2010; Kapralski, 2010; Huigen and Meijering, 2005; Rampley, 2012; Wertsch and Billingsley, 2011; Whelan, 2005). For this same reason many of the projects proposed will be exponents of a particular vision of the past and judgment of it. This, in turn, is a source of possible conflict and potential appropriation of the space by one version, or one mode of perception of past events and/or figures (Luczys, 2011). And any appropriation by one group, option or community automatically generates another group – a community of the excluded (disherited) (Howard, 2003). Thus, the process of appropriation of space by various groups can take place at the level of historical interpretations, but also in the dimension of perceiving some universal values of public space. These are situations in which many interest groups will have different views on the desired land use. Often the choice of a particular option will depend on the strength (political, financial) of the group. It should be stated, however, that investing large amounts of money in space will not always mean that its utility values will increase for a specific group of people. New or remodeled space may cease to be interesting, lose its existing functions and utility (Mitchell, 1995). Similar conclusions are made by K. Iveson (2013), stating that the emergence of new forces accenting their rights and needs in the city will not always mean that the process of space development takes place in a democratized way. On the other hand, another aspect of the fight for the fulfillment of needs and rights is presented by L. Staeheli (1994), writing that the struggle unites the community, creates new social bonds, and relationships that define the meaning of citizenship. Those are very important conclusions because we are currently dealing with the redefinition of the citizenship concept.

People can be connected with space by a variety of ties, including emotional, genealogical (family history), historical (including traumatic events for nation, community, creating the sense of loss), property rights, cosmological linkage through religion, spiritual or mythological relationship, or those resulting from the knowledge of space conveyed in the stories (narrative linkage) (Low, 1992).

So, public space and cultural heritage or memory are products of society. Behind each of these concepts is the individual and the collectivity which created them in response to its own interests, ideology, religion and needs. Most broadly speaking, the actors fall into three groups: regulators (public regulators – government or local government offices, and expert regulators, i.e. urban planners and conservators), contestors (e.g. the media, and organizations and associations representing given viewpoints or communities), and users (residents and investors) (Jałowiecki, 2010). The need for particular parameters in respect of space in each of the above groups depends on what, in each collectivity's view, lends value to that space, and value is connected with nationality, gender, ethnicity, class, religion, poverty, insiderness, and age. Moreover, direct users and tourists will have a different approach to valuation than commercial investors (who will prioritize economic profit). Experts, in turn, will select what is objectively precious, beautiful, technically suitable, etc. (Howard, 2003).

To return to previous findings on public spaces as development potential, it would be fair to say that the factors which will determine the importance of a project for a city's development will be expectations regarding the space, which influence the ways in which that space is used, and even the chance or possibility of using it. The reception of a change to spatial development, whether it is accepted or rejected, will be a function of the values which the space represented for a given user or group of users before that change, and which it represents since the change. It may also be assessed differently depending on the importance to the user of cultural heritage and memory, and depending on the reasons why that user visits the space. For instance, a theming process that incorporates heritage potential will be judged differently by authentic residents of the area who have an emotional bond with it than by tourists or representatives of the sector that works for its upkeep. These dependencies are also related to differences in the value of heritage. The same resource may be assessed in extremely different ways – from priceless to worthless.

The importance of launching participatory procedures in order to improve the quality of public spaces and deepen their magnetizing effects on the community is doubtless vast. Nonetheless, alongside these positive characteristics we must also pay attention to potential threats, which have the same etiology as in development projects based on ideas mooted by local authorities, architects, urban planners and developers. Differing visions of heritage may give rise to social conflicts that can not only halt investments and public works, but also weaken the social capital of the collectivity (Murzyn-Kupisz and Działek, 2013; Hołuj, 2014). This is a threat that is caused by forcing the assumption of a particular interpretation or assessment of historical events and figures in submitted projects (deliberate, directed 'remembrance' or 'oblivion') (Jałowiecki and Szczepański, 2010). In such a situation the balance of those in favour of the redeveloped space and those for whom it takes on an alien aspect may prove unfavourable if we consider the level of social acceptance of,

attachment to and use of the space a fundamental element of that assessment. One negative impact of participatory projects may thus be the privatization of space, which means the development of space according to one (individual) version of historical memory. Privatization occurs when one particular development takes so much space that it excludes the possibility of it being developed by groups representing other (often quite different) narration of historical memory (Smolarkiewicz, 2012). Everybody naturally has their own ‘private’, individual opinion of a space, which accords with their own mental map. The threat here lies in the externalization of this private vision, and in the domination of the image of the past and forms of its commemoration by that vision. This is a particularly real threat because we are living in times of oblivion or obsessive remembrance. These two mutually exclusive phenomena clearly co-exist and struggle with one another, becoming indicators of the concept known as the ‘policy of memory’ (Kapralski, 2010). Acceptance of dominant, unilateral space developments creates physical and psychological barriers in space using and is creating the so-called exclusionary spaces (Carmona, 2015).

#### **4. CULTURAL HERITAGE IN PROJECTS SUBMITTED IN WARSAW CITIZENS’ BUDGET IN THE YEARS 2015–2016**

The analysis covered the projects submitted in the citizens’ budgets for 2015–2016. The author used data obtained from local authorities of Warsaw. The contents of the applications submitted by the residents and the project verification protocols were analyzed. In case of doubts in interpretation of documents content, the Warsaw City Hall was asked for explanation and comments. A total of 3,726 submitted applications were analysed and those meeting specific criteria were chosen for further research. The selection was made using the following criteria: the projects analysed were those in which a significant role was played by tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources, and/or projects have strong connected with cultural memory and memoryscape. Using those criteria 120 (3%) were selected. Analysis of the citizens’ projects revealed the aims they aspire to achieve for the city and its users, and further provided grounds for an analysis of the potential opportunities and threats to the development of this urban centre relative to the projected interventions in the public space. In each of the project applications, the applicant had to determine what objectives the project would implement. Aggregating goals into homogeneous groups has become the basis for categorizing projects and dividing them into 12 groups. Figure 1 shows the 12 aims identified in the project applications, with the premise that each project could address more than one aim, and the profile of the various aims indicates their mutual complementation and correlations. The detailed analysis of the projects

application content was carried out. It consisted of comparing the thematic scope of project, forms of implementation and ways of interfering with space in each case. The results of this query were confronted with the phenomena described in the theoretical part of the study. This action has become the basis for creating a list of potential problems and dangers resulting from project implementation.

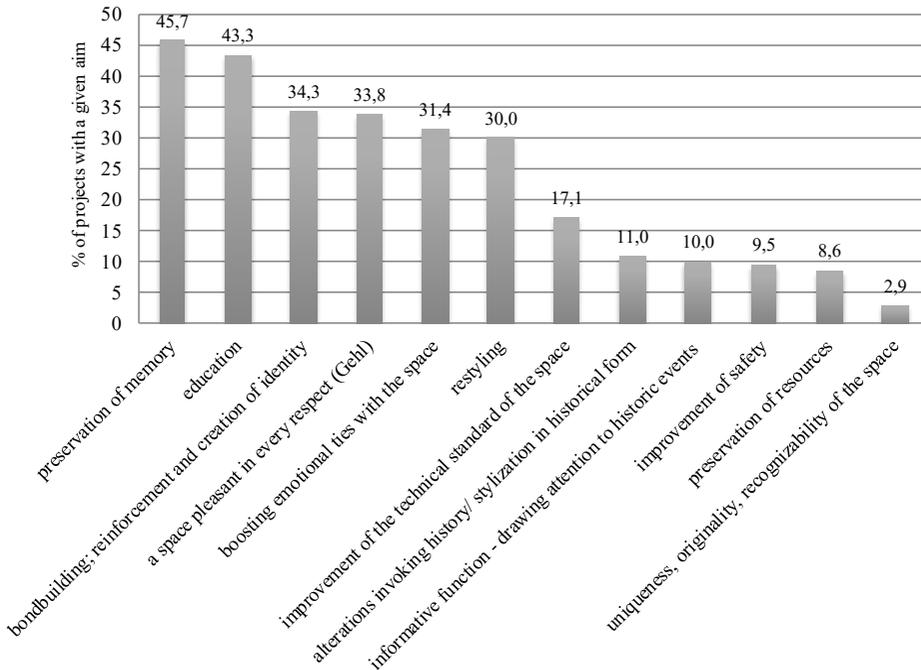


Fig. 1. Aims identified in the project applications

Source: author's elaboration based on analysis of submitted applications

The two most numerous groups of cited aims are preservation of memory of events, developments and/or people (45.7%), and educational aims (43.3%). There is a considerable degree of substantive concurrence between these aims, because restoration of memory always has an educational dimension, but the former category also includes initiatives designed to restore a former appearance or functionality of a given space (e.g. green spaces where they once existed but had at some point been built on; changes in the form of street furniture from contemporary to a historical style). As such, a distinction was drawn between education *sensu stricto*, where dissemination of knowledge about events, people, etc. was a fundamental premise of the project application, and restoration of the memory

of a previous appearance, where the foremost aim was to improve the appearance and functionality of the space using forms that had historically existed there. The educational dimension of these undertakings is restricted to raising awareness among the city's users of its historic urban layout and design, and to preserving the memory of its planners (as in the projects proposing to add 'relaxation zones' in the public space using the bench design created by prof. J. Sołtan, and 'In memoriam Piechotkom' – a project to recreate the layout and quality of the greenery in one residential estate as per the architects' original vision).

The next most numerous categories of aims are those connected with creating community bonds using cultural heritage and memory (34.4%), and the related aim of boosting emotional ties to the space (31.4%). The former category was identified as one that related directly to communities resident in Warsaw or a particular district of the city. The authors of the many projects in this category argued that the city is seeing successive waves of incomers from all over Poland who, as they become 'new Varsovians', start to build a new identity for themselves in the city. The second of these categories was aimed at an unlimited target group; not only residents but also visitors to the capital.

A similar proportion of projects (33.8%) fell into the extremely wide-ranging category of those in which cultural heritage and memory had a role in helping to create 'spaces pleasant in every respect' as per the definition coined by J. Gehl – i.e. places where it is pleasant to spend time, wait or pass through. The majority of projects in this category involved restoring previous functionalities or development qualities in situations where those existing at present are functionally and qualitatively degraded, or where certain types of activity have simply been forgotten. The initiators of these projects believe that historical designs and urban thought, or forms of community usage previously in use should be the starting point for renovation or revitalization work. Thus this category covered not only historical stylizations (stylized benches, lighting and/or advertising media, etc.), recreation of non-extant, destroyed elements (e.g. the recreation of the botanic garden at the Stefan Batory High School), and protection and conservation of dilapidated elements (e.g. green areas around residential buildings, including community gardens; or the renovation of entrance doors or gateways in tenements in Praga), but also reintroduction of certain forms of community activity (e.g. open-air dances with traditional music and the chance to learn once popular dances).

In 30% of projects the role played by cultural heritage was considered to be instrumental in improving the aesthetic appearance of the space. In this category it might be said that the subjective sense of beauty was identified with historical forms. In 17% of the projects high technical quality was placed on a par with a return to historical forms, materials, functionalities, etc.

Further categories were cited in far fewer instances (from 11% to 8.6%), which was partly due to the fact that these are groups with a narrow profile, such as projects to undertake alterations invoking history or stylization based on historical

forms, or projects designed to increase safety (based on historical plans or forms). Projects whose declared aim was to serve an informative function (10%) were counted separately where there was found to be a need for increased awareness of significant historical facts or links to historical figures in the space (e.g. information on sites of battles). In 8.6% of cases the project initiators stated unequivocally that they were submitting their project because it presented an opportunity for preserving a particular material heritage resource, such as by creating places where that heritage could be displayed (e.g. an open-air museum with a display of sections of bridges blown up during World War II and dredged up from the Vistula), or by bestowing a new function or meaning on it (e.g. the project to convert the site of a disused railway siding into a walking trail).

In a relatively small group of projects the authors stressed that the cultural heritage and memory resources would contribute to the creation of unique, original and recognizable sites.

## **5. THE POTENTIAL INFLUENCE OF CITIZENS' PROJECTS ON PUBLIC SPACE AS A DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE OF THE CITY**

Analysis of the declared aims of the citizens' projects permits the formulation of the following conclusions regarding possible effects of their implementation on the quality of the public space and its role as an element of the city's development potential.

A considerable proportion of the projects examined generated a range of technical and functional improvements to the space, or others connected with safety in using a given space. Thus irrespective of whether or not its users had emotional ties to the place, in the vast majority of cases they would benefit from the proposed changes. Such initiatives, if implemented, could thus be said to contribute to improving the quality of public spaces in objective categories and hence to increase their role as elements of the city's development potential.

Situations in which implementation of a project might produce a separate effect might, however, arise out of a desire to preserve existing forms of use, for instance (e.g. car users preferring car parks to green spaces).

Another plane on which opposition to a proposed change might emerge is the situation in which a given group does not approve of stylization according to historical forms, either for practical reasons (technologically outdated, impractical) or on aesthetic grounds (in projects which propose a specific model for stylization/execution or a specific contractor for the project).

One factor in the way the above projects are received may be the way particular users define 'authenticity of place'. If authenticity is identified with historical (original) form, stylizations will be found acceptable and desirable. If, however,

authenticity is construed as a constant process, which over the passage of time involves the adept blending of old elements with new, the reception of a 'return to historical forms' may be entirely different. The latter definition is confirmed in the results of the research by R. Florida into the choices of representatives of the creative class (2010, p. 235).

Projects that have a markedly positive influence on the quality of space and its economic value are those which lend new functionalities to abandoned, degraded spaces. In this way such spaces are 'restored' to the city and its users.

A number of projects propose the addition of new functionalities, equipment and/or infrastructure to spaces. Analysis of the forum for discussion of citizens' projects (the internet service for the citizens' participatory budget) reveals a constructive polemic with project authors where new developments would be interesting but expensive, which in a situation of possible acts of vandalism, unfavourable weather conditions or overuse could generate significant repair costs or cause an extended period of non-functioning (such comments were made in respect of the project to install a mini-photoplasticon in an open space).

For the most part, projects to restore memory and educational projects can also have a positive impact. They offer those with an interest in information on the history of a place, so rendering time spent in a space rewarding, and supplying extra impressions and emotions. They can help to build bonds and historical awareness, and moreover to shape national or local identity.

In some cases, potential threats were discerned in connection with this group, however. These arise where the project authors push one excessively radical assessment of an event or individual which is subject to varying (sometimes extremely different) assessments by historians or society at large. Such a one-sided narrative renders the space pleasant for its advocates, but those who take a different view or have formed different judgments become a disinherited community. For them, implementation of such a project would entail the loss of the place and its values. In the case of Warsaw, the most exposed example of such a conflict is the assessment of the traumatic event that was the Warsaw Rising, which broke out on 1 August 1944. Not all contemporary Varsovians consider this an event to celebrate, and events organized by residents suggesting that the partisan fighters were responsible for the destruction of the city and the genocide of its people by the Nazis (the Wola Massacre) are held in the public space (Krzemiński and Thiriet, 2016).

The above issue also draws attention to the problem of over-thematization, a particular symptom of which is the dominance of certain leitmotifs in the projects analysed here (e.g. those of the Warsaw Rising, mentioned above, and more broadly the theme of World War II). The over-saturation of the space can produce the opposite effect to that intended, and moreover (especially in the case of historical reconstructions) can generate over-simplified images of the trauma and complexity of historical events. In projects connected with World War II the initiators frequently emphasized that the aim of their ventures was to make 'new

Varsovians' more aware of the social and physical cataclysm visited on the city. But the question arises as to how far its new residents will want or be able to take an emotional part in experiencing those events. Will the trauma-imbued space be their space, assimilated by them, will they recognize it as theirs?

In examining the matter of the influence of such projects on the city and its space it would be fair to say that the subject of the choice of forms and content to be displayed in the public space essentially always gives grounds for discussion regarding that choice, and every choice made will have advocates and opponents, whether of its form, of its content, or both. Projects relating to cultural heritage and cultural memory may be the object of particularly fierce criticism because they are highly emotive. Non-acceptance of particular solutions may be due to the incompatibility of the interpretation of history with an individual judgment of the content (as suggested above), but also to non-acceptance of the form of its presentation.

Analysis of these Warsaw projects reveals a broad repertoire of interventions in space whose aim is to salvage memory or to educate (from traditional information boards to forms currently fashionable in cities). Contemporary forms in particular can provoke controversy, as they may be seen to devalue memory. In recent years murals, including those with a historical theme, have become something of a Warsaw speciality. They are becoming recognized as one of the city's calling cards, and exploring them is an increasingly popular way of discovering the capital. This is reflected in numerous citizens' projects. This contemporary form may not gain the approval of society in view of the original, new techniques it employs and the styles of interpretation of a given theme, though in light of Florida's research it is an example of an ideal blend of history (in the theme) and contemporaneity (the form), one where the executed projects themselves have the chance to become elements of local cultural heritage in the future.

Projects whose aim is to develop local patriotism are undoubtedly valuable from the perspective of long-term users of the city. Numerous district-level educational and bond-building projects were submitted for consideration in the citizens' participatory budget ( $n = 16$ ). These projects would seem to be unequivocally beneficial, because although they do not leave a permanent trace in space, they popularize the history of a given place, especially among new residents. They render the space more humanized, and have the potential to set in train the process of shaping the incomers' new identity.

In some projects emphasis is placed on preserving the memory of the diversity of Warsaw society in bygone times; traces of the presence of those communities, whether partially extant or non-extant, are salvaged and recalled by contemporary residents (work is underway to preserve monuments in the Lutheran cemetery, and there are educational projects on subjects including the life of the Jewish community). Such projects are valuable both from the perspective of building knowledge about this small homeland, and as an element of products available on the tourist market.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis permits the observation that the presence in the public space of the city of elements or events connected with cultural heritage and cultural memory tends to contribute to improving its quality, functionality and magnetism. The fullness of these benefits is enjoyed by both those with emotional ties to the city's history and its 'new residents' or temporary users (e.g. tourists). The effects of implementing citizens' projects are visible in spatial changes, but also in indirect effects such as an increase in historical awareness and sense of belonging. Both heritage resources and references to or information on sites and figures help to convey the history of a place and promote understanding of it. This may subsequently generate demand for further interventions in the space (not necessarily related to heritage, but for instance connected with servicing the traffic generated by the presence of the resources analysed here), and also have a positive impact on the space (by increasing the numbers of people willing to take responsibility for it) in the form of protective actions taken, care of the surrounding area, and also related creativity (such as the project to create a gallery of photographs in the open air, where the collection on display would consist of vintage photographs of Warsaw contributed by residents). Projects improving the quality of the space also help to grow the value of real property and the profitability of businesses in the vicinity or otherwise connected with it.

As such, it might seem that interest in tangible and intangible heritage resources is guaranteed to generate development potential for a city. Nonetheless, the analysis presented in the article indicates potential problems with such one-sidedly positive reception of the ideas for space submitted by users of the city in the citizens' participatory budget. When can heritage and memory become problematic for urban development, particularly in major cities?

The first situation is that of over-exploitation of the assets of a space by the economic sector (e.g. developers and the tourism market) in connection with new developments created as a result of a community project. The actions of commercial entities can constitute a clear threat to the quality of the spaces themselves and to the quality of life within them. The effects of over-exploitation of space can generate conflicts between permanent users and others such as tourists, due to overcrowding and over-engagement of restricted spaces. There is the risk of occurrence of problems such as loss of the values of authenticity, and loss of the *genius loci* by over-thematization and introduction of simplified narratives considered to be more legible for wider audiences.

Another situation in which the past as encapsulated in the development of public spaces may affect the ambivalent dependencies between new developments and their impact on the wider city is that arising from the phenomenon, described in the article, of multifaceted interpretations of history. Differing interpretations

will be more likely to provoke conflict if a one-sided narrative of the past – or a particular ‘policy of memory’, as S. Kapralski terms it – is imposed, with a tendency towards obsessive remembrance or oblivion (2010). Here, the concept of a homogenized space can be cited, which means its unification, mainly as a result of globalization forces (Carmona, 2015). In the analyzed case, the homogenization of space also takes place but has other operating force. This force is chosen one particular overwhelming narration of cultural memory. In such situations there will always be a group that recognizes this narrative, but its counterpart will inevitably be a group of those who feel rejected and disinherited.

In view of these problems, the skilled moderation of dialogue with the aim of seeking possibilities for the co-existence of these versions and achieving a sharing of the space, a spatial compromise (van Assche and Duineveld, 2011; Silberman, 2013), is a major challenge in heritage planning. Both residents and public services should strive to eliminate any attempts at such forms of appropriation. In addition to authenticity and multidimensionality, space should be democratized in terms of access to it, and care should be taken to preserve urban diversity and memory of historical diversity, as well as room for users’ own interpretations, thoughts and opinions. One method of solving conflicts of this nature is seen in the consultative character of several of the projects submitted. Their authors supplied the idea (e.g. for a mural in the Ochota district), but the constituent elements of the ultimate project and the choice of contractor were put to a residents’ vote.

In summary, then, the city must not lose sight of the proportions between preserving heritage and memory, and the present. In view of the question of *longue durée*, the city itself is a palimpsest, in both material and social terms. As such, it must be able to reconcile the past with the needs of its current users. It is important that changes and new elements of development are accepted, as these will form the successive strata of this palimpsest in the city’s history. This is the source of what is sometimes the controversial reception of historical stylizations. Balance in blending the old with the new is vital, in order on the one hand to preserve precious elements of the past but on the other to avoid defining the city by its past to such an extent that its contemporary users feel oppressed by that past. Thus the key is to maintain an equilibrium between paying tribute to the past and remaining open to the present (including in the area of contemporary forms of presentation and contemporary executors of such projects). This should be an immanent characteristic of a large historic city. Openness encourages new and potential users of the city to develop a bond with it – and this applies not only to people but also to businesses. In addition, openness to change, the adoption of new residents is a necessary feature for the city to retain its authenticity. S. Zurkin writes

‘Origins’ refers not to which group settled in a neighborhood earliest; that would be difficult if not ridiculous to prove, since every city is built up of layers of historical migrations. ‘Origins’ suggest instead a moral right to the city that enables people to put down roots’ (2010, pp. 5–6).

In this area Warsaw has a difficult task because its traumatic history, which, as analysis of the submitted projects shows, is present in almost every part of the city within its wartime limits, is still an open wound for its 'old' residents. At the same time, of all Poland's cities this is the one that in recent years has experienced the greatest influx of new residents, for whom its history is a cognitive and possibly also emotional challenge, and this naturally renders implementation of the above postulate potentially very difficult. The capital has to learn to accept its new residents, some of whom will undoubtedly assimilate the city's fascinating history as their own, while for others it will never take on emotional significance. If, as J. Rykwert writes, the urban fabric is to be a 'metaphor for society' (2013, p. 357), but also an element of the city's development resources, Warsaw will need to be able to 'share out' the right to the city adroitly among all these groups.

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