

KRZYSZTOF BIERWIACZONEK
TOMASZ NAWROCKI

University of Silesia in Katowice

**FUNCTIONS OF THE PUBLIC REALM
IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
(THE CASE OF KATOWICE AND GLIWICE)**

Abstract: The social life in the city's public realm can be analyzed from many different points of view. One of them is focused on the functions of the city's public realm. This text bases on the classification of functions proposed by Lyn Lofland and Aleksander Wallis. Lofland enumerates six of them: an environment for learning, respites and refreshments, a communication center, the „practice” of politics, the enactment of social arrangements and social conflict, the creation of cosmopolitans. Wallis added next five: cognitive function, selection of values, realization of prestige, social identification, social integration. A public realm of different cities can be analyzed according to these functions. The text focuses on few of them: city centers of Katowice and Gliwice and malls (shopping centers). These places compete about users of space, so comparison of its functions seems to be the important issue to understand contemporary cities processes. Data shown in the presentation derived from quantitative (survey) and qualitative (observation) research which was made in Katowice and Gliwice in 2009-2010. Conclusions show that city center of Katowice does not fulfill many of functions of the public realm. Some of them (not every) takes over the biggest Katowice mall. Gliwice city center, especially the main square, fulfill many of these functions and it is more satisfying for the residents and plays more important role than mall. The reasons of these lie either in urban structures of these cities or in culture factors.
Key words: Public realm, functions of public realm, city center, mall.

The notion of public realm (or public space) is ambiguous and interdisciplinary. Discourse about public realm as a scientific category is conducted by town-planners, economists, social geographers, anthropologists, environmental psychologists, sociologists. Furthermore public realm is a subject of interest also to journalists, politicians and ordinary people. It shows that the form, function and use of public realm is very important both for a man in the street or scientists.

This text tries to present analysis of the function of public realm in the sociological perspective. The analysis will be based mostly on the ideas of Lofland [2007]

and Wallis [1977]. The empirical point of reference exemplifies chosen public realms in two Upper Silesian (Poland) cities: Katowice and Gliwice.

1. Theoretical issues

There is not enough place in the empirical kind of text to present multithreaded aspects of the theory of public realm. So only some crucial information will be indicated here. The main point of reference constitutes Lofland's theory so it is worth to quote her definition of public realm:

“The public realm is constituted of those areas of urban settlement in which individuals in copresence tend to be personally unknown or only categorically known to one another. Put differently, the public realm is made up of those spaces in a city which tend to be inhabited by persons who are strangers to one another or who “know” one another only in terms of occupational or other nonpersonal identity categories (for example, bus-driver, customer)” [Lofland, 2007, p. 9]

Such understanding indicates that public realm is a place of interaction, at least visual, with other unknown person. Although, of course, among unknown people we can meet some friends, relatives, colleagues, neighbors. The existence of public realm is the condition which differ, according to Lofland, cities from other settlement forms.

Public realm is also different from another type of space: private realm which “is the world of household, friend and relatives networks” [*ibidem*, p. 10] and parochial realm which is “the world of neighborhood, workplace or acquaintance networks” [*ibidem*, p. 10]. Such understanding shows that private realm is this one which belongs to individuals. Lofland does not use here the law criteria. It allows to include shopping centers (malls) as a part of public realm what is crucial for latter analysis.

The definition of public realm proposed Lofland is generally accepted in this text. But it is worth to indicate some other characteristics of it which are important from the sociological point of view.

1. Public realm is a place of “making something known to the other” [Marody, Giza-Poleszczuk 2004, p. 274]. It allows to “publicly reveal knowledge, intentions and feeling either in the way of behaviour (or acting) or linguistic communication. It constitutes co-knowledge, co-intentions and co-feelings” [*ibidem*, p. 268]. Because of it public realm is one of the conditions which create public sphere [*ibidem*, p. 274];
2. Public realm should be accessible for everyone who wants to stay there [*ibidem*, p. 274]. It allows to make unplanned interaction with known and unknown persons. But the accessibility of space must be considered in five dimensions:
 - physical – existence of physical borders or obstacles (like fence or wall);
 - social – existence of social rules which do not allow to stay in the public realm (because of being a part of the enemies group for example ethnic minorities or football fans);

- symbolic – existence of the cultural code which exclude some people;
 - discussion and acting – existence of such situation which are not allowed for everybody;
 - information – existence of the mechanism of making some information unavailable.
3. Public realm is under control. It could be either public (make by local or regional institutions) or private actors control. Today it is hard to say that control is held on city's community. It works rather by "overlapping spheres constituting, for example, different socioeconomic, gender and ethnic groups" [Ercan 2010, p. 24] and public actors, as well.
 4. Public realm should serve to public goods and, because of it, should be inclusive. But nowadays is not so obvious. Particular public realm could give profits to private actors (for example the owners of shops or cafes located nearby market square) or commercial place (private from the law point of view) could give profits to city's community (for example shopping center which organizes some cultural event). In this case private space is getting public.
 5. Public realm influences culture identity. There are three trends, according to Sharon Zukin, which create such identity nowadays: going from local to global image of the cities, from public to private institutions and from homogeneity to heterogeneity [Zukin 2008, p. 24].
 6. Public realm must be safe. People use places where they feel safe and avoid dangerous ones. But a total safety in public realm is impossible to achieve. When the public realm is being used it makes some risk of unpredictable situation, meeting disliked people, *etc.* So public realm generates mild fear [Lofland 2007, p. 243] of some surprising situation, meeting, visual aspect of place.
 7. Public realm should be legible and understandable. The meanings of this characteristics underlined Kevin Lynch and linked it with imageability. This feature is important both for whole city and particular places. They should include distinguished and intelligible signs. They communicate what kind of place it is and which category of people are welcome or not welcome there. [Carr *et al.* 1992, p. 188-190].

Features mentioned above make the public realm more precisely defined, but they are not all. Although from the sociological perspective it seems to be not so important whether space (or place) is private or public, commercial or civic, open or closed but the character of public realm is determined by users [Hajer, Reijndorp from Carmona *et al.* 2008, p. 58]. The clue of public realm is possibility of acting and sharing this space with other people [Worpole, Knox from Carmona *et al.* 2008, p. 58]. So the crucial feature of public realm is possibility of "meeting people and engaging in accidental relationships, making short conversation, agreeing or disagreeing with others, overvaluing private problems and undervaluing public ones" [Bauman 2000, p. 28].

2. Methodological background

Empirical analysis of public realm bases on sociological research made in Gliwice and Katowice in 2009-2010¹. The recognition of social function of the public realm was one of the aim of the research. Choosing Gliwice and Katowice was conditioned by three main factors:

1. The key (economical, scientific, cultural) role which these cities play in the Upper Silesia conurbation.
2. Comparable number of inhabitants (196,000 in Gliwice and 308,000 in Katowice in 2009).
3. Comparable city center structures with main street(s) created in the end of XIX century, market squares (but there is a difference: Gliwice has old traditional, medieval market square and Katowice market square comes from XIX century) and big shopping center (mall) located nearby city center ("Forum" in Gliwice and "Silesia City Center" in Katowice). In the research the rule of methodological triangulation [Konecki 2000, p. 20] inside the widely understood culturalistic paradigm of the sociology of the city was used. [Jałowicki, Szczepański 2002, pp. 21-23, Majer 2010, pp. 95-99].

Three main research techniques were used:

1. Personal schedule-structured interview with 250 respondents in each city. Quota sampling was used. Interviews were made in May and June 2010.
2. Qualitative interview with 28 experts: architects, historians, university teachers, local authorities *etc.* Interviews were made in 2010.
3. Systematical participant observation of the chosen place of public realm: market squares, main street in the city center, shopping centers and cemeteries (understood as a sacrum public realm; this text will not include analysis of cemeteries). The observation was made from October 2009 to September 2010. During this time 667 observation in the city centers (divided into market squares and streets) and 320 in shopping centers were made. One unit of observation lasted 1 hour, except night observation which lasted 30 minutes. Observations were made in different hours and days. During observations we concentrated on demographical and status characteristics of people who were in the public realm, their typical and untypical activities, types of interaction. Because of variety form of social behavior and rather big area under observation not every aspects of social life in public realm were able to notice. Analysis of gathered data shows that observers often noticed rather untypical situation then typical one. In spite of this fact data which were gathered give full view of the social uses of the place (Figures 1 and 2 on coloured insert, pp. 7-8).

According to gathered data we can make the analysis of the functions of market squares, streets and shopping centers in the sociological perspective.

¹ Research „Public realm in the Silesian cities. The case of Katowice and Gliwice” was funded by Ministry of Science and Higher Education as a grant N N116 230736 (project manager Krzysztof Bierwiazzonek, participants: Barbara Lewicka and Tomasz Nawrocki).

3. Functions of public realm – empirical analysis

Functions of public realm can be defined and divided in many different ways. This part of text bases on typology made by Lofland and Wallis. Lofland enumerates six functions of public realm: an environment for learning, respites and refreshments, communication center, the „practice” of politics, the enactment of social arrangements and social conflict, the creation of cosmopolitans. [Lofland 2007, pp. 232-244] Wallis [1977, pp. 210–216] writes about five social functions of city centers: selection of values and making decisions, cognition processes, social realization of prestige, social identification and social integration. Although Wallis indicated them as functions of the city center, they can also be adopted to analysis of public realm.

First of all, as an introduction to the main analysis, data from the survey which show the social perception of the main functions of the chosen public spaces in Katowice and Gliwice will be presented. Here, respondents could choose the main functions from the list which included more traditional understanding of functions of public space (rather space than realm) [see Jałowicki, Szczepanski 2002, pp. 382-387; Wolaniuk 2008, pp. 291-29] (Table 1).

General view of this data shows the similarity in the social perception of functions of main streets in both cities and shopping centers. Generally we can say that main streets play mostly commercial and service role. Additionally, Zwycięstwa street fulfill administrative role because of the location of the town hall at the street. The same functions – commercial and service play malls. These functions are stronger perceived by respondents – it is obvious that malls are places of shopping and services. Respondents indicated additionally that shopping centers are places of entertainment and consumption and Silesia City Center is also a place of social integration (for 15,5%). So streets in the city center have to compete with malls as a place of commerce and service. And it seems – according to data – that streets (or widely – city centers) rather lost this competition. But of course streets can have (and have) more functions (for example transport or administrative) than shopping centers.

The interesting differences are noticed in the social perception of market squares in Katowice and Gliwice. Market square in Katowice is mostly a place of transport (there are tram-stop nodes), commerce (there are two socialist shopping centers) and administration (nearby there is a town hall). Gliwice play rather cultural, entertainment, integration, recreational and consumption role. So it can be concluded that Katowice market square is rooted in the industrial era which is reflected by traditional functions. Market square in Gliwice has transformed from traditional functions to postindustrial ones, rather symbolic, cultural and integration than transport or administrative. At least such functions of these places are perceived by inhabitants.

Data present some characteristics of the researched places but do not show many of the functions of public realm. Coming back to functions of public realm in

Table 1

Functions of chosen public space in the social perception in Katowice (n-250) and Gliwice (n-250) (data in %, respondents could indicate three answers in each type of public realm)

Function	Gliwice			Katowice		
	Market square	Zwycięstwa street	Mall Forum	Market square	3 Maja street	Mall Silesia City Center
Commercial	20,6	71,1	91,2	53,8	72,6	92,2
(retail)	17,4	69,1	58,8	25,3	48,8	53,5
Service	51,8	3,2	10,4	20,1	7,7	6,9
Cultural	33,2	8,4	8,4	4,8	9,3	9,8
Recreational	45,7	4,8	30,0	8,8	15,3	41,2
Entertainment	9,3	41,8	0,4	36,5	10,9	0,4
Administrative	34,4	4,8	5,6	12,0	14,5	15,5
Social integration	0,8	25,3	1,6	63,1	27,8	3,3
Public transport	32,0	9,6	22,4	4,0	35,9	27,8
Consumption	1,6	0	0,4	0,4	0,8	1,6
Religious	22,7	17,7	2,0	11,2	8,1	3,7
Representative	3,6	9,6	0	10,4	0,8	0,4
Political	0,8	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,8
Other						

Source: *Research Public realm in the Silesian cities. The case of Katowice and Gliwice* (project manager K. Bierwiazzonek, participants: B. Lewicka and T. Nawrocki) (Tables 1 and 2).

the Lofland and Wallis understanding, data that come from survey or observation research will be used. The analysis will have synthetic character (without a lot of quantitative data).

1. **An environment for learning** – this function – according to Lofland statements – is connected mainly with childhood. She stated that children learn to make the relationships with other people, look for help, feel comfortable between strangers [Lofland 2007, p. 232]. Lofland statements can be broaden to the other age categories. People, who used the public realm all the time, learn obligatory social rules. Realization of this function needs a long stay in public realm. So only those places which are able to stop and get people interested can fulfill it. It does not happen on Katowice market square which is mainly transition and node area (in the meaning of the node of public transport) but it happens on Gliwice market square, which is an aesthetic place with pubs and cafe bars without traffic and public transport. Paradoxically environment for learning are shopping centers – in our research more Silesia City Center because of wider offer of cultural events then Forum. But, obviously the aim of the socialization in malls is to create loyal customer not citizen.
2. **Respites and refreshments** – Lofland emphasized that the uses of public realm should provide with experienced pleasure [Lofland 2007, p. 233]. These experiences

stem from having a rest on streets bench, drinking café, speaking with other people. Central places in Katowice do not allow to fulfill this function. There is only one enclave, in which resting is possible (it is a short Wawelska street). The other important Katowice streets in the center (especially 3 Maja street and Stawowa street) are full of people moving between bus and tram-stops and railway station. Although moving people in the city center is not a surprise but the lack of respites and refreshments places is a fault and serious problem of Katowice public realm. Lack of these is used by shopping center (Silesia City Center) which offer place for resting and meeting. Systematic observation of Silesia City Center reveals that people belong to different social categories spend time in this mall not only shopping but also having a rest. It concerns especially people who belong to middle class. The opposite situation is in Gliwice. City center, especially market square, offers places for having a rest. So Gliwice's mall Forum is only an additional possibility of spending time. So city public realm is a real competitor for mall in Gliwice. In the context of respite and refreshment there must be underlined, what the survey shows, that the main places which people use for respite and refreshment are parks, especially Chopin's Park in Gliwice and Kościuszko park in Katowice. Both of them lay nearby city centers and are highly evaluated by inhabitants.

3. **Communication center** – Lofland underlined that it means “especially communication between and among diverse individuals and groups” [Lofland 2007, p. 234]. This function actually does not exist in the center of Katowice. People mainly go across market square or by streets according to transport nodes or to another places which are situated rather outside unattractive city center. The short conversation and communication acts are possible (and were observed during the research) mostly during the waiting for a tram or in the café bar in Wawelska and Stawowa street. For some, especially young people (it means between 15 and 30 years old) the place which fulfill the communication function in Katowice is Mariacka street which was revitalized in 2009 (but we did not make the systematic observation of it). The creation of pedestrian zone, opening of some clubs, pubs, organization some events: concerts, performances resulted in attracting young people to the street. Gliwice as opposed to Katowice has places in the city center where people can communicate with each other. First of all it is a market square but also some green places nearby Zwyciestwa street. The insufficient number of places of communication (especially in Katowice) causes that this function try to take over malls, especially Silesia City Center.
4. **The practice of politics** – this function logically stem from the previous one. According to Lofland, even treating public realm as the area that generates information exchange leads to another function concerning practice of politics. Meaning of the politics practicing function is connected rather with civil society activity and it “provides citizenship schooling” [Lofland 2007, p. 235]. Public realm is here a free space “in which people are able to learn a new self respect, a deeper and

more assertive group identity, public skills, and values of co-operation and civic virtue” [Evans, Boyt 1986, p. 18 for Lofland 2007, p. 235]. Katowice has no such places, except slowly creating such atmosphere and role of Mariacka street (but it is more entertainment area than a space of dialogue). Silesia City Center is not interested to play such role either. Here a community of consumption is being created, not the city’s citizenship community. This function is fulfilled little bit better in Gliwice. Both on a market square or at Zwycięstwa street we observed some civic activity, for example protest against liquidations of trams and collecting supports for city referendum for recalling the mayor. Paradoxically, the mayor’s opponents were collecting it directly under the mayor’s window in front of the town hall. But such civic actions took place very rarely.

5. **The enactment of social arrangements and social conflict** – “public realm is such an effective setting for visualizing current arrangements *also* makes it an effective setting for enactment of change or proposed change, for the enactment of social conflict” [Lofland 2007, p. 236]. Public realm in both cities fulfill this function slightly. For example they are used for demonstration. More often Katowice public realm is used, but not this one which lies in the city core. Political demonstration are mostly organized on the Silesian Parliament Square (because of the regional government and institutions located nearby). Sometimes market square or 3 Maja street are only transfer paths which lead towards Silesian Parliament Square. The most visible event was organized by Silesian Autonomy Movement – the autonomy march in July 2010 – and it gathered about 1000-2000 supporters of the autonomy idea. Very interesting act was also a protest against demolishing of Katowice railway station building. Although this building was evaluated very negative by inhabitants [Bierwiazzonek 2010; Nawrocki 2005] it had architectural values as the “pearl of brutalism” style. In spite of protests the building was demolished. Such processes are not observed in shopping centers. They are forbidden or strictly restricted. Only in Silesia City Center a flash mob which supported the idea of location in Katowice one of the regional office of the European Parliament was organized (but promoters of this action had an agreement on it). This idea included the marketing image of this mall as well as some action which promote healthy way of life or presentation of arts. [see also Makowski 2004, p. 111].
6. **The creation of cosmopolitans** – The definition feature of public realm are possibilities of meeting other people and potentially interacting with them or at least, noticing them. It leads to dealing with many different styles of life, which causes the necessity of tolerance for others. So this function is rather not fulfilled in Katowice. When people go quickly across the center of the city they have no chance to understand or learn different ways of life [see Zukin 2008]. People do get such a chance when they stop in a place like market square in Gliwice. Here they can observe the different others. Rather in the meaning of subculture identity, style of life than ethnic identification – during the observation both in Katowice and Gliwice – only sometimes we could

observe people that belong to ethnic minorities or foreign tourists. Such people are easier to observe in the shopping centers. But in such cases we can say rather about participation in the consumption spectacle rather than interaction with other's system of values. Malls, on the other hand, exclude beggars, Gypsies or street artists who are present in the city centers. Nevertheless, the creation of cosmopolitanism is hard to realize both in Katowice and Gliwice. Creation of cosmopolitans are connected with metropolitan life and both researched Uppersilesian cities are not metropolises yet.

Public realm has also other functions. According to Wallis typology, we can say about next five:

1. **Selection of values and making decisions** – In different types of public realm “the process of evaluation, choice and promotion of different values is being done continually” [Wallis 1977, p. 214]. Wallis underlined the formal process of making decision but in fact selection values connects also other spheres. For example choices connected with fashion or art can be also made during the social interaction in the public realm. Such understanding of the process rather does not exist in the central places in Katowice. This area is connected, most of all, with formal process of making decision by local authorities. Decisions which create values in art, fashion or even political elections are made on the Mariacka Street or in Silesia City Center. The observation of people in the biggest Katowice mall reveals what is fashionable and “passé”. Similar to SCC role plays Forum in Gliwice but it has to compete with Gliwice market square. This place offers wider area of promoted values not only connected with fashion and consumption. But in fact in both cities the area of revealing social ideas and values is rather not so wide.
2. **Cognitive processes** – staying with the others let people “investigate current values hierarchy of visual information, discover new products on the shop-windows, new trends, subcultures arts or fashion” [Wallis 1977, p. 212]. Nowadays such processes exists also in media, especially in the internet. However they are present in public realm as well, so people are able to gather the information about social environments [Gehl 2009, p. 21]. Both Gliwice and Katowice city center fulfill this function in high degree. There is a lot of visual information about current events, spectacles and mostly new products. Sometimes there is too much such information and we can say about visual pollution in the public realm in the city centers. The similar situation takes place in the shopping centers. But here commercial information are not disturbed by other. Moreover, in the shopping center people are prepared for perception of such communication. So the cognitive processes in the visual sphere in the shopping centers mostly concentrate on commercial ideas (exhibition of art changes it only a little bit). City center offer wider spectrum of communication (sometimes too wide and too chaotic).
3. **Social realization of prestige** – Being in the public realm and revealing yourself to other people during events, meetings or even simply a walk allows to confirm or obtain social status. It satisfies the need of prestige. Katowice has no place in the city center

which allows to communicate itself to the other and underline the prestige. Only Mariacka street has tried to play this role since 2010. But it is considered mainly by young people and some cultural milieu. Silesia City Center takes advantage of this situation and offers some categories of people (especially middle class) safe and attractive place

Table 2

Functions of chosen public realm in Katowice and Gliwice
 (++) – function is fully fulfilled, + – functions is partly fulfilled,
 0 – function is not fulfilled)

Function	Katowice			Gliwice		
	Market square	3 Maja, Wawelska, Stawowa streets	Mall Silesia City Center	Market square	Zwycięstwa street	Mall Forum
An environment for learning	+	+	++	++	+	+
Respite and refreshments	0	0/+ (+only in Stawowa and Wawelska)	+ / ++ (++ for some categories f.e part of middle class)	++	0/+ (+ some green extensions areas)	+ / ++ (++ for some categories f.e part of middle class)
Communication center	0	0/+ (+only in Stawowa and Wawelska)	+	++	+	+
The practice of politics	0	+	0	+	+	0
The enactment of social arrangements and social conflict	+	+	+	+	+	0
The creation of cosmopolitans	0	0	++	++	+	+
Selection of values and making decisions	+	+	++	++	+	+
Cognitive processes	+	++	++	++	+	++
Social realization of prestige	0	+	++	++	++	++
Social identification	0	+	+	++	+	+
Social integration	+	+	+	++	+	+
			(as a consumption community)			(as a consumption community)
			(as a consumption community)			(as a consumption community)

for revealing themselves. Research observation showed that people come to Silesia City Center not only for shopping or going to the cinema but also meeting friends or simply walking. Such situation allows to reveal itself to the other. The opposite situation is observed in Gliwice where market square is still a place of realization the social prestige both for young people who visit music club or older who go to café bar. Even when the market square was being renovated people went there to café.

4. **Social identification** – Public realm, especially the city center, “foster creating the feelings of identification, continuity and community on different levels of social life.” [Wallis 1977, p. 214]. Walking in the city, across its squares, streets, parks is first of all a contact with value system which is written in the space and second interacting with known or unknown people. In this way we gain the possibility of identification with some category of people for example district’s inhabitants or frequent visitors of club. Katowice lack in such places. Respondents from Katowice when asked about place which confirm their identification with the city most often indicated a multipurpose arena complex “Spodek” (38%). But it is rather a landmark than a place of building identity with the city. Gliwice has such place. It is market square, which was indicated by 51,8% of inhabitants as a meaningful place. What is significant, the new shopping centers rather do not play such roles. They were indicated by 3,2% (Forum in Gliwice) and 8,8% (Silesia City Center in Katowice). Of course they attract people but their purpose is to create community of global consumption not identification with the city.
5. **Social integration** – Fulfillment of every or many enumerated functions effects in social integration. If the functions are not fulfilled it is hard to say that public realm fosters the social integration of city (or district or street) inhabitants. The results of the research show that it is hard to say about playing some serious role in public realm by central areas of Katowice. The opposite situation is in Gliwice. Here market square plays key role in the process of integration of inhabitants and constitutes the most important public realm in this city. In such situation ambitions of shopping center to play an important role in the system of public realm are minimized. The situation in Katowice shows that when there is no attractive public realm in the city center, the crucial role as a public realm starts playing shopping malls.. Fortunately the situation in Katowice is changing because of the new pedestrian zone with Mariacka street which attracts especially young people. Moreover, Katowice still has a chance to rebuilt its city center and create attractive public realm. This analysis can be summarized in the Table 2.

Conclusions

Presented analysis shows examples of functions of public realm only in two cities. From one hand it is rather case studies from the other hand described situations

look the same in many other cities, especially the ones that look for a new role in postindustrial age. So some conclusions can be more general.

The case of Gliwice shows that in the city which has traditional center with the core in the market square this place still has a functional and attractive public realm. It is still the heart of the city which integrates Gliwice community. Of course such situation can only take place if the city is not so big. Situation in policentric metropolises is different. But Gliwice is not a metropolis. It can be a part of Upper Silesia and Dabrowa Basin metropolis but nowadays it is a separate city. The comparable results of the research concerning the role of the market square were achieved in some other cities, for example Krosno [Malicki 2007] and Rybnik [Nawrocki 2009]. Market square and old town play the most important role and be the most meaningful public realm in these cities.

Case of Katowice shows the other general conclusion. If the city has no functional and attractive public realm in the city center the more important role plays big mall. Silesia City Center mall gets on some function from city center. The most important is commercial one but also some other concerning the presentation of the social prestige and creation of cosmopolitanism. The similar situation is diagnosed for example in Łódź [see e.g. Brzozowska 2010; Saryusz-Wolska 2010; Szmytkowska 2008]. Paradoxically the space structure in Silesia City Center reminds traditional city with main square, streets and smaller squares. Such structure, often used in designing of shopping centers, helps people to feel comfortable in this simulacrum [Baudrillard 2005] space. So it shows that people like places which are organized according to archetypical patterns [see Jałowiecki, Szczepański 2002 pp. 331-332]

Both cases present that public realm in the contemporary cities must compete with commercial space. Modern world is based on widely understanding notion of consumption. So the popularity of different consumption space from supermarket across entertainment park to casinohotel is not surprising. Such situation forces local authorities to think of some new ideas concerning public realm. It seems that one of them is organized in an attractive way, themes places attract particular categories of people. It is the way which is introduced in Katowice in Mariacka street which concentrates young people because of the localization of clubs, pubs and organizing some cultural events.

The last general truth, which is only mentioned in this text, says that people estimate parks and other recreational places very high. They are also public realm which play mainly respites and refreshments function but also concentrate a lot of people who belong to different social categories.

References

- Baudrillard J., 2005, *Symulakry i symulacje*. Przeł. Sławomir Królak, Wyd. Sic!, Warsaw.
Bauman Z., 2000, *Globalizacja i co z tego dla ludzi wynika*. Przeł. Ewa Klekot, PIW, Warsaw.

- Bierwiazzonek K., 2010, *Między galerią handlową, ratuszem i bazyliką. Miejsca charakterystyczne centrów śląskich miast w percepcji społecznej*, [in:] *Studia etnologiczne i antropologiczne*, I. Bukowska-Floreńska (Ed.). Vol. 10, *Problemy społeczne i kulturowe współczesnego miasta*, Wyd. UŚI, Katowice.
- Brzozowska B., 2010, *Manufaktura – nowa przestrzeń konsumpcji*, [in:] *Sztuka – kapitał kulturowy polskich miast*, E. Rewers, A. Skórzyńska (Eds.). Wyd. Naukowe UAM, Poznań.
- Carmona M., de Magalhaes C., Hammond L., 2008, *Public Space. The Management Dimension*. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, New York.
- Carr S., Francis M., Rivlin L. G., Stone A. M., 1992, *Public Space*. University Press, Cambridge.
- Ercan M. A., 2010, *Less Public than Before? Public Space Improvement in Newcastle City*, [in:] *Whose Public Space. International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*, A. Madanipour (Ed.). Routledge, London.
- Gehl J., 2009, *Życie między budynkami. Użytkowanie przestrzeni publicznych*. Przeł. M. A. Urbańska, Wyd. RAM, Cracow.
- Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M. S., 2002, *Miasto i przestrzeń w perspektywie socjologicznej*. Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw.
- Konecki K., 2000, *Studia z metodologii badań jakościowych. Teoria ugruntowana*. PWN, Warsaw.
- Lofland L. H., 2007, *The Public Realm. Exploring the City's Quintessential Social Territory*. Aldine Transaction A division of Transaction Publishers, London.
- Majer A., 2010, *Socjologia i przestrzeń miejska*. Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warsaw.
- Makowski G., 2004, *Świątynia konsumpcji. Geneza i społeczne znaczenie centrum handlowego*. Wyd. Trio, Warsaw.
- Malicki K., 2007, *Percepcja i waloryzacja przestrzeni miasta Krosna. Wybrane aspekty*, [in:] *Przemiany przestrzenne w dużych miastach Polski i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, M. Malikowski, S. Solecki (Eds.). Zakład Wyd. NOMOS, Cracow.
- Marody M., Giza-Poleszczuk A., 2004, *Przemiany więzi społecznych. Zarys teorii zmiany społecznej*. Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw.
- Nawrocki T., 2005, *Miasto bez centrum? Centrum Katowic w oczach mieszkańców*, [in:] *Przemiany miasta. Wokół socjologii Aleksandra Wallisa*, B. Jałowiecki, A. Majer, M. S. Szczepański (Eds.). Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw.
- Nawrocki T., 2009, *Śląskie Detroit – śląska Siena? Kilka uwag o przestrzeni publicznej dwóch śląskich miast*, [in:] *Człowiek – miasto – region. Związki i interakcje. Księga jubileuszowa profesora Bohdana Jałowieckiego*, G. Gorzelak, M. S. Szczepański, W. Ślęzak-Tazbir (Eds.). Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw.
- Saryusz-Wolska M., 2010, *Łódzka Manufaktura – przemiany przestrzeni publicznej i muzealnej*, [in:] *Sztuka – kapitał kulturowy..., op. cit.*
- Szmytkowska M., 2008, *Kształtowanie nowych funkcji centrów czy symptomy kryzysu ulic „salonów miast”* [in:] *Szata informacyjna miasta*, B. Jałowiecki, W. Łukowski (Eds.). Wyd. Naukowe Scholar Warsaw.
- Wallis A., 1977, *Miasto i przestrzeń*. PWN, Warsaw.
- Wolaniuk A., 2008, *Centra miast*, [in:] *Geografia urbanistyczna*, S. Liszewski (Ed.). Wyd. UŁ, Lodz.
- Zukin S., 2008, *The Cultures of Cities*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.