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“URBAN LABYRINTHS”: THE IDENTITY OF CITIES
AND THE CREATION OF THEIR IMAGES AS TOURIST
ATTRACTIONS. THE CASE OF THE BACKYARDS
AND LANES OF LUBLIN, WROCLAW AND KATOWICE

„LABIRYNTY MIEJSKIE”: TOŻSAMOŚĆ MIASTA
A KSZTAŁTOWANIE JEGO WIZERUNKU JAKO ATRAKCJI
TURYSTYCZNEJ NA PRZYKŁADZIE PODWÓRZY
I ZAULKÓW LUBLINA, WROCŁAWIA I KATOWIC

Abstract

Tourists are tired of mass tourism and are therefore seeking places and experiences they could call genuine and different. In city tourism, focus is being increasingly shifted towards direct and authentic experience of urban space through spontaneous contact with the space itself and the inhabitants who create it. The authors, on the basis of three Polish cities being known as tourist destinations, analyzes the role of backyards and lanes in building up the identity of a city and the way their image as a tourist attraction is created.

Keywords: backyards, lanes, identity of a city, image of a city, tourist attraction

Streszczenie

Zmęczeni turystyką masową turyści poszukują odmienności i autentyzmu miejsc oraz doświadczeń z nimi związanych. W turystyce miejskiej coraz więcej uwagi zwraca się na bezpośredniość i prawdziwość doświadczenia przestrzeni miejskiej poprzez spontaniczny kontakt zarówno z nią samą, jak i jej wytwórcami – mieszkańcami miasta. Autorzy artykułu na przykładzie trzech turystycznych miast Polski analizują rolę podwórz i zaułków w budowaniu tożsamości miasta, konfrontując jednocześnie wykorzystanie ich potencjału z kształtowaniem turystycznego wizerunku miasta.

Słowa kluczowe: podwórka, zaułki, tożsamość miasta, wizerunek miasta, atrakcja turystyczna

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1. Introduction

In the twenty-first-century world, where not much is left to discover, tourism still searches for authenticity and freshness, offering more distant and wilder destinations which are apparently untouched by civilization. Considered more demanding, cultural tourism is not limited to searching out new spaces, rather, it strives to fathom out ‘the truth about places’, and offer it to tourists, revealing ‘hidden’ stories, meanings and symbols in the places that they already know. The search for niches that have potential for exploration seems to be particularly important in cities, which traditionally count as key tourist attractions/products wherever there are aspirations to make tourism something more than just trivial entertainment.

Tourist brochures are full of slogans promising inspirational, unforgettable experiences through contact with urban space or participation in events emphasizing the cultural uniqueness or identity of cities. This leads to questions about the components of urban space identity, and to what extent the images of cities as tourist attractions promoted through various tourist media channels are consistent with or reflect their *genius loci*. In the example of three large Polish cities, the authors try to answer to what extent the identity of a city comes from instantly recognizable public places (including tourist attractions) and to what extent it is formed by private or semi-private places where residents live their daily lives.

2. City tourism and the identity of a city

Broadly speaking, the notion of *city tourism*, is applied to all kinds of tourist activity taking place in a city and incorporates both leisure/cultural and business/event tourism. However, as Kowalczyk points out [6, p. 156-157], there is a special kind of city tourism – travels in search of qualities related to urban space identity, ‘a hidden dimension’ of a city, understood symbolically. Such a travels reflect its specificity and determine its distinctive features (though in fact it is difficult to define these qualities precisely or even give them a physical shape). From this perspective, even well-known cities which are top brands on the tourist market become areas of tourist exploration and, ultimately, of assimilation. The notion of a *tourist exploration area in a city* is difficult to define for several reasons. With interests varying from individual to individual, each tourist will have a different idea of what the *new* and the *unknown* are, which makes these notions multidimensional in terms of space and meaning. They are also heterogeneous; the *new* may be ‘a rare gem’ or ‘an unknown face of the *old*’. Identifying the tourist exploration area as historical space (e.g. conservation areas, see [31]) seems too narrow and far from the heart of the matter.

A *tourist exploration area* in the context of searching for the authenticity and identity of a city seems to be even more difficult to define. What is it that creates the identity of a city? Is it material objects or is it something that we often refer to as the ‘atmosphere’ of a city, so elusive and intangible yet perceptible to senses? In other words, is it space or people? Szymski (2008) writes that ‘every city that has seen growth of more

than one generation has its own special places – areas that determine its original character, which are also unique in terms of the forms that define them...’ [26]. He does not fail to observe that whether these areas will emerge or not depends on a number of factors. Their collective, cultural significance and their role in building up the identity of a city are determined by history, the prestige of buildings and the architect’s or planner’s conception as well as important events for local and individual history which the residents wanted to preserve in urban space as a token of experiences they shared. As Lalli (1988) points out, those geographical, architectonic or cultural elements, to which urban communities subjectively attribute greater significance, may become symbols of a unique spirit of a city, which no other city has [8]. Thus, we can say that physically, the identity of a city may be formed by both objects and places and their specific features, which may exist alone or in combinations. It also seems that in this context, the identity of a city may reflect both the specific cultural landscape of a city (the real, physical landscape which is associated, for example, with a panorama or a certain region of the city) and the symbolic, which cannot be referred to any particular place, but reflects a specific combination of architectural space features (thinking of a city, one may associate it with a certain architectural style or detail or solutions that were commonly used in building structures).

3. Role of backyards and lanes in building up the identity of a city

‘Architecture is not limited to purely technical aspects, but there is much more to it. It represents aspirations and values of man, and in this sense it becomes a legible cultural text’ [30, p. 10]. Just as the body is the basic point of reference allowing men to determine their identity, so are planning and architecture such reference points for a city. Architecture is largely responsible for the formation of the collective memory of communities, and indirectly affects everyone who comes into contact with it, be it short or long-lasting. *Architecture parlante*¹ – architecture tells stories of places, communities and people, and becomes a medium which goes beyond trivial linguistics, language barriers or purely aesthetic impressions.

The unique spirit of the city is not born from public buildings alone (whether they be grand or less impressive). The character of the city depends on what happens on the surface, in the open, elegant public spaces and underneath, including backyards².

¹ Here, architecture is not just a general term to describe the designation and functions of buildings, it is also understood broadly and becomes a medium which has its own story to tell through shapes, forms and architectural details. Among others, Barbara Bossak-Herbst seems to start from this assumption in her *Antropolis* [3].

² It is the ‘anomalies’ that create the specific character of the so-called ‘invisible city’ [7, p. 11]. According to Krajewski, the anomalies are those elements that are ignored by authorities and dominant big-city culture, often considered provincial or even embarrassing, trivial and inappropriate. In other words, it can be anything that emerges (or happens to emerge) in urban space as a result of the residents’ daily routines.

Backyards are immensely interesting as they seem to exist in both public (in cities, they are open and usually available to everyone³) and private or semi-private space (to some extent the residents lead their private lives under the very eyes of their neighbours: children play there, the elderly rest on benches; in the past, the backyards were places where laundry was hung and cars were repaired, etc.). Even though backyards have been downgraded to playgrounds (now even this is becoming rare), car parks or dog-walking areas (sometimes they are areas of poverty or pathology), it is hard to negate the significant social function that, until recently, they typically provided. They provided the stimulus for the establishment of neighbourhood structures and tightened bonds between their members. Backyards are an open area where everyone can come (though it has boundaries, i.e. surrounding tenements). At the same time they are a microcosm, a precisely codified, multi-dimensional space, full of symbols and meanings. The meaning of some may be obvious: religious symbols may express the residents' commitment to religion, grass, trees and hedges kept in neat order can be a message saying that those who live there feel highly responsible for the shared space. Other signs can be read by but a chosen few, such as graffiti or those objects that apparently convey no meaning but there are individual or collective memories connected with them. Everyday life anthropologist Roch Sulima, as Niezgodna (2005) writes in her paper, says "Backyard history reflects social transformations. The backyard establishes a diagnosis, but it also serves as a model of behaviour to be followed" [13].

The most popular definition of the Polish word *zaulek* (English: *lane* or *blind alley*) is a 'short, narrow street' or a 'place which is hidden or difficult to reach' [21]. Lanes are often remainders of old, usually medieval, urban systems. Closely packed buildings resulted in the formation of a great number of lanes, particularly near walls or other fortifications surrounding the cities. In the past, they were home to craftsmen and the poor. They were often breeding grounds for diseases, lacking basic sanitary facilities and were dangerous⁴. Yet their status has changed over the centuries, and today many of them are considered 'magical' places, where 'time has cast its spell'. The lanes may have put off dwellers and strangers in times of old because of their narrow and claustrophobic nature, but today, what once was weakness in many cases has turned to strength as they offer quietness, a refuge from noisy main streets and a close contact with the living organism of the city. Lanes and backyards form urban labyrinths are viewed as intriguing and illuminating, even if they pose a slight risk of getting lost.

If one is to assume that lanes and backyards emphasize the specific atmosphere of the city, and they have their own intimate stories to tell, which are complementary to the formal history recorded in dates and reflected in the cultural landscape of public space of cities, then the question arises here on the value of these lanes and backyards as tourist assets. To what extent are they capable of becoming a medium for communicating knowledge about the nature of a city, and who will find them worthy of interest if they were indeed to become one? Paradoxically, tourists may not understand or even notice signs and

³ The authors refer to traditional backyards, though obviously there are also gated backyards (temporarily or permanently), e.g. in gated housing estates.

⁴ In colloquial Polish, the word is often preceded by adjectives carrying negative connotations such as 'ciemny' (literally: dark) or 'ślepy' (literally: blind), etc.

symbols in the backyard space that are perfectly comprehensible and familiar to residents. The literature on tourism has frequently addressed the issue of authenticity of tourist attractions but rarely in the context of urban space components described above⁵.

4. Tourist images of Wrocław, Lublin and Katowice and the identity of cities

Marketing activities taken to promote large tourist destinations create the image of a place where culture and historic sites prevail. This image is predominantly built up around stately churches, secular buildings and lively city centres full of students, tourists and, less often, residents. To a certain extent, the space for tourists has been reduced to a façade – a tourist on a well-beaten track has no chance to experience a more intimate picture of a city, as this can only be seen if one decides to go on a trip through a labyrinth of hidden passages, narrow lanes and backyards that can be found ‘off the beaten track’. They keep records of the past that are more human, more personalized (even if it has no name) than the version contained in stiff forms of grand public buildings.

Lublin

Available tourist brochures refer to Lublin as ‘the city of inspiration’ [27]. ‘A long and rich history’, ‘a location en route from Europe to Asia and the Far East’, ‘history of the city’ that secured a safe and prosperous environment for nations and religions, are considered as tourist assets of Lublin. Notable landmarks include: the Old Town; the Crown Tribunal; the Dominican Basilica in Lublin; the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Castle; the Chachmei Yeshiva; the Open Air Village Museum in Lublin. According to the description in the tourist brochures, the Old Town of Lublin is most noteworthy for its ‘spatial structure dating back to medieval times and richly-ornamented, old houses’. It takes readers a while to find the following sentence: ‘this enchanted place attracts through the magic of backyards and hidden lanes’ (and it is contained in the ‘entertainment’ section). Yet it is the intimacy of the tiny Old Town, where it is hard to tell where public space ends and private space begins that seems to determine the specific character of the place itself and a majority of other buildings in Lublin. The tourist image of Lublin is a facade that allows no insight into the often squalid yet so authentic backyards and the labyrinths of narrow passages, gates and lanes, and even though it does not seem to be artificial, it is certainly incomplete.

The fact that the houses of the Old Lublin were clustered closely together (or built in such a way as to ensure efficient use of space) was due to the location of the earliest town, which sat compactly on a headland between the Bystrzyca and Czechówka

⁵ In 2007, a survey on tenement backyards on Piotrkowska Street in Łódź was carried out to determine their value as tourist assets and their potential for creating a new, authentic and unconventional tourist product. The respondents (a group of residents and city guides from Łódź) felt that the backyards reflect the specific nature of the city and, squalid as they are, they still have the potential to enrapture visitors with an abundance of details, architecture and planning. They may become a tourist attraction (though the distribution of opinions was ambiguous), but still they require upgrading and adaptation for tourism [14]. Unfortunately, the results of the survey have not been compared with the tourists’ opinions.

Rivers. The town grew on a very small area (6 ha) and had an irregular form imposed by the topography and communications routes [4]. Space was at a premium, as a result the streets were narrow and ran irregularly, surrounding distinct and diversified urban blocks. Gawdzik (1954) emphasizes the relationship between the natural landscape and picturesque buildings of the city within its medieval limits, where in his words “the streets, squares and empty spaces intertwine and merge” [4]. Over the centuries, the city area increased, and many new city buildings were built (houses being erected close to each other, particularly in the Renaissance). The spatial development of the city was halted at the end of the 18th century, which was connected with the general political situation in the country, but then decentralized settlements began to grow under the jurisdiction of secular and ecclesiastic lords. Town planning control in the first half of the 19th century did not affect the intimate atmosphere created by most buildings in the Old Town and its surroundings. In the second half of the 19th century, Lublin developed in a dispersed, haphazard fashion. The disastrous 20th century with atrocities of World War II brought the demolition (completely or partially) of entire districts (Podzamcze, Wieniawa). These districts are conspicuous by their absence as the space they used to occupy has still not been properly developed.

The Old Town backyards share specific features such as wooden galleries and stairs attached to annex walls. Their balustrades usually are delicately carved. In summer, washing pegged out on lines and colourful flowerbeds are typical elements of landscape interiors.



III. 1. Characteristic architecture of interblock spaces in the Old Town of Lublin – wooden galleries of annexes. Source: D. Chylińska (2012)

These features were part of the city landscape in the past, and they are also present today (Ill. 1). The role of backyards in understanding the *genius loci* of the city is even more important, because people still live in Śródmieście [City Centre] and in the Old Town. Even with students, tourists and also residents, seeking for opportunities to socialize, somewhere in the back, the residents of this part of the city live their daily lives. There is an authentic experience of space intimacy; because of narrow lanes (Ill. 2), the labyrinths of passages and backyards of the Old Town and the old houses of Śródmieście, the tourist has it all ‘within arm’s reach’.



Ill. 2. Lane in the Old Town of Lublin (Ku Farze). Source: D. Chylińska (2012)

Since 2007, the city authorities have been implementing the *Lublin Brand Project* step by step in accordance with the *Promotional Strategy for the City of Lublin*. The authors of the strategy consider the ‘rich historical and cultural heritage of the city in its intimate and thereby unique and inspiring form’ as ‘one of the key aspects of history of the brand that is important for its identity today’ [20]. It can be said that the statement concerning intimacy is true for the Lublin backyards as they potentially constitute perfect scenery for an authentic tourist experience. Over ten years ago, Lublin authorities had tourist tracks marked out around the city⁶. Some of these take the tourists away from the main streets and beaten tourist routes

⁶ The Jagiellonian Trail of the Lublin Union, the Heritage Trail of the Lublin Jews, the Multicultural Trail, the Trail of Famous Lubliners, the Architectural Trail.

into a labyrinth of lanes (but not the backyards), emphasizing the buildings that stand along the way, which although not seen as particularly unusual, commemorate notable residents of Lublin or the Jewish community exterminated during World War II. Yet even though the tourist has a chance to see what is below the surface, it is still a mere foretaste of the essence of the city in its entirety. Open-air cultural events (fairs, street theatres) were a successful attempt to include quiet public urban space into the tourist space of the city. Wide streets and city buildings of Lublin were not chosen as a setting for the 2010 commercial that was shot as part of the *Lublin. City of Inspiration* promotional campaign. Instead, the commercial features narrow, quiet passages and lanes, backyards humming with life (one can hear sounds of playing children or a barking dog) and encircled interiors acting as guardians of the past. Also, in 2010, during the Night of Culture, the tourists' and residents' attention was directed to the potential of the Old Town's urban space⁷ (including the backyards) and its material heritage and history.

Wroclaw

Over the past few years *Wroclaw – the Meeting Place* has been the main tagline used for building up the image of the city as a tourist attraction [24]. Flagship landmarks (the Centennial Hall, the Market Square or Ostrów Tumski) and local cultural and business institutions are intended to create a common ground for agreements. In *Strategia rozwoju turystyki dla Wrocławia na lata 2008–2013* (2008), brand products include event and cultural tourism exploiting the potential of the historical heritage and the living culture of the city (official and institutionalized as it is) as well as business tourism and 'multiculturalism' [23]. The *Strategia rozwoju turystyki...* authors have classified the 'atmosphere of the city' as a component of event and cultural tourism. They claim that 'a great number of young people' and 'the city centre with its undying business, scientific activities and entertainment' are characteristic features of this component, but as a matter of fact, these traits are only indirectly linked with the space. These young people are certainly students spending most of their time in the centre (this is where academic buildings and popular student clubs are located), but when they leave for summer, the city is not asleep. On the contrary, it still teems with life. In case of business, science or to a smaller extent, entertainment, life goes on in interiors rather than on the streets.

Tourist routes described on the official city website rarely go beyond the most important (popular) and standard landmarks. There are but a few routes that offer a different and more human/personal perspective, and refer to the events that (re)shaped the identity of the city. Among them are the routes included in the WroclawCityTour agency offering:

⁷ The project website for 2010 reads: "This time we'd like to take you to quiet places, off the main streets and into the labyrinth of lanes and backyards of the Old Town to rediscover the beauty of our city that we often miss in fuss and bother of everyday life. History is not only monuments and dates. It is also the city itself, our Lublin, a living witness. Let's take a fresh look at our historical heritage and see how powerful and relevant it is. Let us ride the tide of history, and we shall set course for the future!" (http://www.nockultury.pl/Noc_Kultury_2010-1-145-3.html, access: 3.04.2013). A brochure under the title *Lubelskie podwórka. Zapis subiektywnego odbioru miasta* (Lublin backyards. A record of subjective reception of the city) was published as part of the project. It is a collection of stories about the Old Town backyards published in daily newspapers.

Festung Breslau, Old Breslau, New Wrocław or War Damage and Festung Breslau History – 1945. By contrast, the Municipal Office has embarked on an interesting project known as *The Look Up! Project* in cooperation with the University of Technology. Its aim is to draw the tourists/passers-by attention to interesting architectural details of buildings by fitting illuminated *Look Up!* tiles in paving slabs⁸. A tour ‘in the footsteps of Eberhardt Mock’ is another noteworthy tourist product. Even though Commissioner Mock himself is a fictional character⁹, the tour is an opportunity for tourists to set out on a symbolic journey ‘away from the city centre’ to more ordinary places (e.g. Psie Budy [Doghouses Street]) or sites where the tourists do not go (the Police Headquarters in Podwale Street). There they can feel the atmosphere of the pre-war Breslau including its dark side.

A survey of tourist traffic in sub-regions of Lower Silesia carried out in 2012 for the Marshal’s Office of the Lower Silesian Voivodship studied the results of image creation and the reception of this image in practice. It revealed that the image of the city as a tourist attraction relied on such factors as multiculturalism¹⁰, a rich cultural offering or the buildings of the Old Town (the Market Square, old tenements and the City Hall). The fact that the marketing activities taken seem to be clearly in line with the created image of the city may be pleasing, but the tourists still have no guarantee of a close, authentic encounter with the city, its space or its residents. It all points to a conclusion that the tourist image of the city resembles a jigsaw with some of its elements missing; we can see the representative city buildings, but they seem to be marginal rather than representative against the huge urban landscape.

With a number of organizational units responsible for tourism in a broad sense (the Bureau for Sports, Tourism and Recreation in the Municipal Office, the Office for City Promotion and the Lower Silesia Tourist Organization), it is surprising that the authorities fail to run consistent campaigns to promote the image of the city. Their actions seem incidental and haphazard (in terms of the relationship with the city, its residents and culture¹¹) in the context of Wrocław’s aspirations to ‘remain’ the European Capital of Culture and accordingly, the centre of cultural tourism exerting international influence for more than just a year.

The question arises here regarding the role of the Old Town’s lanes and backyards in building up the identity of the city. As was the case with Lublin and other cities, the shape of Wrocław’s Old Town is determined by topography as well. The oldest part of the city emerged in a place where the Oder River is easiest to ford and splits into

⁸ Projekt „Głowa do góry” (2013).

⁹ Eberhardt Mock is a character of Marek Krajewski’s bestseller detective stories taking place in interwar Wrocław (Breslau – at that time).

¹⁰ Multiculturalism in the local context can only be thought of from the historical and physical perspective of heritage left by the pre-war Breslau society, which was diversified both in terms of culture and ethnic origin.

¹¹ The European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016 logo features a stylized letter “W” as the only reference to characteristic elements of urban space. The letter represents a simplified image of the steep roof of the City Hall. Wrocław’s Dwarves and the Four Temples Quarter are equally significant as promotion tools, though, except for the location, the Dwarves’ relationship with the city and its history, culture and heritage is very remote, if any.

several branches flowing around a number of islands. Churches and other historic buildings prevail on Ostrów Tumski as virtually none of the houses or defensive structures of the oldest settlement have survived to the present day. For topographic reasons, the city mostly developed on the flat terrain on the southern bank of the river along a trade route running from north to south. The *Starówka* encompasses the Old Town (i.e. the Market Square and its surroundings) and the so-called New Town situated within the limits formerly demarcated by the defensive walls that were pulled down in the 19th century and the moat that has survived to the present day. What has also survived is the regular, geometric system of streets around the Market Square, dating back to medieval times. Wide streets running from north to south, such as Piaskowa, Szewska or Świdnicka/Kuźnicza, create steep perspectives ended with stately buildings standing on the Oder River bank (e.g. the main building of Wrocław University or the lofty towers of Ostrów Tumski that can be seen in the distance). They are promenades by nature, they merely connect two points, and, straight as they are, they have lost their ‘mysterious atmosphere’. Characteristic features of the urban system and buildings in the historic heart of the city show that, unlike Lublin, where everything is typically small, not to say cramped, the today’s Wrocław is marked by openness and a vast panorama. Yet this has not always been the case. According to Szafkowska (2001), in the early 20th century, Wrocław was still being associated with a maze of winding lanes with irregularly built houses straddling the inner moat (the so-called Oława Miejska) [25]. Wattle-and-daub houses with wooden galleries on storeys were built from cheap materials, they were mostly home to craftsmen. Although they were poor, cramped and gave rise to sanitation concerns, the lanes of Alt-Breslau enjoyed great popularity in iconography¹², and to some extent, they served as a tourist attraction in the 19th century portrayed on postcards and lithographs.

The Old Town’s lanes (Zaulek Ruski [Ruthenian Lane], 7 Kół [Seven Wheels Lane], Zaulek Zamkowy [Castle Lane], Zaulek Pokutniczy [Penitents Lane] or Zaulek Koci [Cats Lane], see [10]) fell victim to both planned redevelopment and the turmoil of war. These factors resulted in the filling in of the inner moat, the redevelopment of the street system in the first half of the 20th century, war damage, and construction works on the East-West Route. Zaulek Koci that had been situated in the northern part of today’s plac Dominikański [Dominican Square] was ultimately pulled down in the 1950s [25]. This points to the conclusion that to some extent, both post-war Wrocław and the pre-war Breslau have wilfully eliminated the ‘provincial features’ from its identity, connected with the closeness of buildings and social diversity. As a result, the lanes and backyards no longer determined the *genius loci* of the city, and gave way to open planes, fine squares, facades and public buildings.

The way the *Starówka* looks today can be largely attributed to post-war reconstruction planning, where the restoration of patrician houses to their original form had to give way

¹² Artists often portrayed lanes and some of the backyards in the Market Square. The images were then printed on postcards, which suggests that the lanes and the backyards were visually attractive, and to some extent, valuable as a tourist attraction. An interesting collection of pictures featuring Oława Miejska (before and after it was filled in) can be found in *Breslau malerische Architekturen* by O.F. Probst, dated 1900.

to public buildings and churches. Consequently, squares and residential blocks marked by the absence of any style (so typical of the Communist regime) began to emerge in what was once the historic old town. The squares were primarily used as car parks. The pre-war redevelopment of the centre and its oldest buildings was connected with the pulling down of the city fortifications, infrastructure development and the improvement of sanitary conditions. Though the *Starówka* dates back to the Middle Ages, building exteriors mainly resemble Baroque, Art Nouveau or Modernist styles. Historic character (or pseudo-historical in many cases) is reflected in buildings near the Market Square and in the historic suburbs of Przedmieście Oławskie and Przedmieście Świdnickie. Only very few places, such as lanes within the inner block of the market square (Stare [Wielkie] Jatki, Psie Budy) or buildings in the so-called Four Temples Quarter seem to be quiet and atmospheric.

The Old Town's backyards have been deprived of their residential function nearly completely in favour of being used for administrative, commercial and educational purposes. The majority of them seem to be spaces that belong to nobody, and they are fully occupied by cars (Ill. 3). This is particularly true about the backyards of houses adjacent or very close to the Market Square. They are used for a variety of purposes, almost none of them connected with the residents' daily activities. It is impossible for tourists to get there as they are used as workplaces for service establishments that can be entered into from the Market Square only (Ill. 4). In some cases, they are used as cafe or restaurant patios, but these are only made available to guests in season. Backyards in the Four Temples Quarter, between Świętego Antoniego and Włodkowica streets, are slightly different. They are used for commercial and other purposes, but their primary residential function is still significant. Though enclosed with buildings, they are large areas with mixed recreational (green areas, shabby playgrounds or sandpits) and practical functions (garages, cubbyholes, overfilled dustbins, Ill. 5). They have deteriorated considerably in terms of social functions and landscape, and their 'wounds' are showing where buildings had once stood, but were pulled down (Ill. 6). Yet surprising, but ugly and mostly with impersonal image, they do not give much information about their former residents, and even less about those who live there today. As a matter of fact, the only backyard that has not lost its identity is the one at the back of Włodkowica Street, in front of the White Stork Synagogue. It is a popular meeting place for young people with patios being opened there in summer, and only a small plaque has been put on the wall to serve as a reminder that the yard was a place where the Nazis had been rounding up Jews prior to deportation during World War II (Ill. 7).

Backyards surrounded by quiet houses at Plac Wolności [Freedom Square] and Kazimierza Wielkiego Street are quite surprising. They conceal architectural details that the tourists are not familiar with (Ill. 8). The backyards on Ruska Street are marked by a surprising mixture of past (historic buildings or empty spaces where houses once stood) and present (carpet hangers, dustbins, small squares, graffiti, see Ills. 9, 10). With their ugly architecture and somewhat industrial character, they have become a place where old meets new. It can be said that a specific, contemporary community used graffiti to claim ownership of the historical (alien) space, even if there are people who call such 'personalization' acts vandalism.

To sum up, the backyards of Wrocław's Old Town, as well as those few lanes that have survived to the present day, are predominantly important for the reconstruction of the

historical identity of the city. Their low aesthetic values are irrelevant because their ugliness and deficiencies are determined by specific processes that created the contemporary image of the city.



III. 3. Backyards situated behind the southern frontage of the Market Square in Wrocław are partly blocked with cars. Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 4. Commercial outlets and car parks in the backyards located behind the eastern frontage of the Market Square in Wrocław. Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 5. A partially upgraded backyard between Św. Antoniego and Włodkowica Streets (the part that is adjacent to the revamped White Stork Synagogue). Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 6. Gable-end walls of houses in an unkempt backyard at Włodkowica Street show where no-longer-existing buildings used to stand. Original cobbles can be seen in the central part. Source: Chylińska (2013)



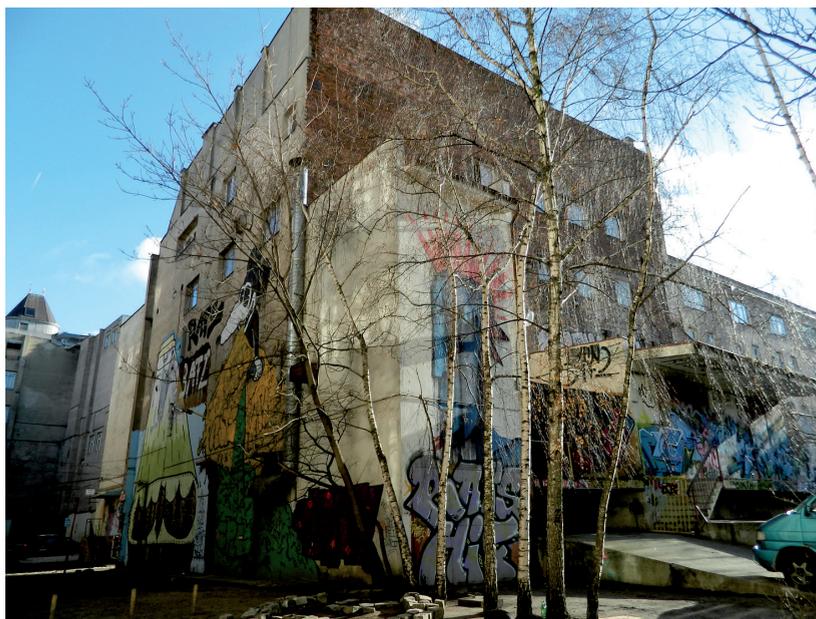
III. 7. The yard in front of the White Stork Synagogue at Włodkowica Street and a plaque that has been put on the wall to remind that it was a place where the Jews of Wrocław had been rounded up prior to deportation to death camps. Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 8. A rear, 'hidden' facade of the former Bank of Reich (pl. Wolności 10). Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 9. The old and (meets) the new – backyards at Ruska, Włodkowica and Św. Antoniego Streets (Wrocław). Source: D. Chylińska (2013)



III. 10. “Personalized” backyards at Ruska, Włodkowica and Św. Antoniego Streets (Wrocław). Source: D. Chylińska (2013)

Katowice

There is a fundamental difference between Katowice and the other two cities. In 2015, Katowice will only be celebrating its 150th anniversary. Town rights were a consequence of the development of industry and transport systems in Upper Silesia in the 19th century. Katowice grew up around the village of the same name with housing estates being built, rebuilt and merged. Yet none of these locations was chosen to be a new city centre. Instead, it was established around the square lying at the crossroads of trade routes running from east to west and from north to south. The transportation functions and industrial character of the city are most likely to have caused the authorities to give up classical or medieval urban planning concepts. Hence, the city does not have a market square¹³. In Katowice, the development of modern planning concepts seemed to be in line with urban system planning control, but it often led to the deterioration of the semantic value of urban space [26].

Today, the city centre encompasses a quadrangular area with four squares in each corner of the quadrangle: plac Wolności [Freedom Square], plac Andrzeja [Andrew Square], plac Sejmu Śląskiego [Silesian Parliament Square] and rondo im. gen. J. Ziętka [General Jerzy Ziętek Roundabout]. Here, at the crossroads of the main trade routes emerged the most important institutions and objects. At present, only the Wrocław–Kraków railway crosses the city centre with the main roads (crosstown expressway and the A4 motorway) running across its outskirts from east to west.

As the notion of ‘the market square’ is understood differently, so are those of ‘starówka’, ‘stare miasto’ (the English term *old town* can stand for both of them) or ‘śródmieście’ (English: city centre). The buildings lined along Staromiejska and Mariacka Streets were built less than 200 years ago, and as a matter of fact, they are younger than some districts (such as Szopienice or Bogucice) that were only incorporated to Katowice later.

Large city centres are often popular destinations in city and cultural tourism, but Katowice has no buildings/monuments/places that would generate tourist traffic and serve as a ‘flywheel’ comparable to the Market Square or Ostrów Tumski in Wrocław, or the Old Town in Lublin. Hundred-year-old working-class districts of Nikiszowiec and Giszowiec, which receive the widest coverage in promotional leaflets, are situated on the eastern fringe of Katowice. Neither the image of the city nor the specific tourist offer presented in the official promotional materials allows it to be said without doubt, where the *genius loci* of the city is, what the factors determining its atmosphere are, and what elements of urban space will catch the tourist’s eye and inspire.

The question remains as to whether or not the city centre backyards have their own unique features that would make them part of the landscape that is clearly identified with the city and its identity. In most cases, the answer is *No*. Rows of cubbyholes (Ill. 11), used by workers to store tools, coal, or keep animals such as doves, were quite common in the backyards in the past. Today, they are non-existent or have been transformed. Bread ovens, cubbyholes, and even pigsties were quite typical of the green backyards

¹³ The above-mentioned square situated at the crossroads of aleja Korfantego [Korfanty Avenue] and Staromiejska Street is referred to as the Market Square. Additionally, the borough architect who is currently in office would refer to the Market Square as a “public space in the centre of Katowice” rather than as “a market square” [19].

of Nikiszowiec and Giszowiec, which, in the architects' opinion, were intended to have practical and social functions. All of these objects no longer exist or have been transformed to serve other, more contemporary purposes (e.g. garages).



III. 11. A backyard in Kochanowskiego Street (Katowice) – traditional cubbyholes located in backyards are disappearing from the city landscape. Source: G. Kosmala (2013)

Among various logotypes used for promotional campaigns, there is one featuring *Spodek* (The Saucer), an entertainment venue erected in 1951 (it is symptomatic that this object is the best known/most recognizable building) [11]. But in the last couple of years, when Katowice applied for the title of the European Capital of Culture, another logo was promoted. Its authors intended it to be a colourful, cubist heart, but interpretations varied widely (some even thought it was a paintbrush stained with paint). Today, the promotional slogan of the city is *Katowice. City of Big Events*, but it is worth remembering that in 2012, the city had a different slogan, *Katowice. City of Gardens*¹⁴, and yet another slogan, namely *Katowice. The New Forms Centre*¹⁵ is to appear soon. These big events are mainly

¹⁴ It has never been clear why Katowice should be associated with gardens. It might have been a reference to the concept of the city as a garden coined in the early 20th century when the construction works on the district of Giszowiec were underway. Katowice is stereotypically associated with mines and industrial areas rather than gardens. It is the forests and parks covering nearly half of the city area that are a distinctive element, except for the industrial buildings and transport system.

¹⁵ As part of the new promotional strategy, cf. Media Partner, 2012. The logo will still feature the cubist heart (or the paintbrush). One has to admit that variants of the logo corresponding to individual categories to which the slogan refers are less controversial. According to the Media Partner, 2012, the authorities want to make its message concerning the image more consistent in order to tame the present chaos. Katowice intends to emphasize, among other things, its multi-ethnic roots, the

music (e.g. Rawa Blues, Nowa Muzyka, Off Festival, etc.) and theatre festivals (e.g. *Letni Ogród Teatralny* [Summer Theatre Garden], *Festiwal Teatrów A PART* [The A PART Theatre Festival], *Festiwal Teatrów Lalek Katowice – Dzieciom* [Puppet Theatre Festival – ‘Katowice for Children’], etc.). In nearly all cases, location is the only element connecting the promoted events with the city.

The invitation extended to tourists via the Department of Promotion and Tourist Information Centre is not really consistent with the message concerning the image. The Department’s official leaflet and website inform readers about the most important events, but the absence of a simple, attractive event calendar in a ‘city of big events’ is striking. In terms of information and promotion, emphasis is placed on history and its physical and spatial dimensions, e.g. architecture and buildings. The working-class districts of Nikiszowiec and Giszowiec, which date back to the early 20th century, already function as tourist products – they receive the widest promotional coverage, and they have been placed on the Industrial Monuments Route promoted by the Upper Silesian Voivodeship. Two tourist tracks have been marked out around the city centre¹⁶, and they concentrate on history and architecture with elements of cultural policy (at least this is what the list of objects situated along the tracks suggests).

The authorities are creating an image of Katowice as a developing, modern, open-minded and lively place rooted in industry, where (post)modern architecture and culture¹⁷ play a central role. There is very little room left for Upper Silesian culture, and this is quite surprising as Katowice is thought to be (quite wrongly) the capital of Upper Silesia. Scarce references to the Upper Silesian identity are predominantly historical and political, and connected with the Silesian Uprisings and their role in the history of Poland in general¹⁸.

What is the place of lanes and backyards in this turmoil of concepts for imagery and promotion, if there is any? No more than three references to backyards can be found in promotional materials after a close scrutiny, and in all cases, the backyards seem to be insignificant. Reconstruction of the House of Press (a building adjacent to the

image of the city as a meeting place (like Wrocław), and Upper Silesian heritage. This seems to be difficult to achieve considering the fierce disputes concerning exhibition plans of the Silesian Museum.

¹⁶ They have been marked out on a map of the city centre (Katowice. Step by Step...). The *Przewodnik...* (2012), also describes two tracks (referred to as ‘walks’), but they run elsewhere [18]. On top of that, there is also the *Route of Modernism in Katowice*, which runs through other places than the previous two. This might suggest diversity and a great number of options for tourists, but such an interpretation is in contradiction with the official statement of the Tourist Information Centre mentioning two marked out tourist tracks. It would be more accurate to say that it reflects chaotic search, just as in case of the logo and the slogan.

¹⁷ The reconstructed main railway station, the underground bus station, and the shopping and commerce centre *Galeria Katowice* [Katowice Mall] are referred to as “a new city centre – a new, timeless landmark of the city”, see [15].

¹⁸ Awarding the historical monument status to the Silesian Parliament, the Polish president Bronisław Komorowski uttered words that seemed to reflect this trend: “the heart of Silesia was beating here for many years” [29].

Market Square) is expected to display as a side effect ‘an authentic piece of Silesia’, i.e. a backyard at the back of the building, explains borough architect Michał Buszek [19]. In the *Nikiszowiec Giszowiec* brochure there are several photographs of backyards that are hard to identify, probably from these mentioned districts. In the note about Nikiszowiec one can read that ‘life was comfortable: backyards were green and there were gardens’ [18].

Nonetheless, promotional materials fail to communicate the message about something that the borough architect calls ‘an authentic piece of Silesia’. Consequently, they fail to raise (mass) tourists’ awareness of this place. Tourist tracks are far away from the backyards, and visitors can only see the fronts of the buildings¹⁹, which is also true of the *Route of Modernism in Katowice*. Whether the backyards have been ignored deliberately or not seems irrelevant, but an attempt to analyze the conditions of this situation does seem worthwhile.

Except for districts where tower blocks prevail, backyards can be found nearly everywhere, including the city centre (but not in its northern part) and the much promoted districts of Nikiszowiec and Giszowiec. With promotional efforts concentrated on these three areas, the backyards might have a certain role to play in attracting tourists as well. It is possible, though, that backyards (especially those found in working-class districts associated with native Upper Silesian people²⁰) might be contrary to promotional concepts or visions of the city. Being Upper Silesian is associated with traditionalism/conservatism, religiousness and diligence (particularly in manual labour). All these elements, plus the Upper Silesian language and (vague) references to German heritage, are the opposite of the vision of a modern, developing city where people have a good time and look ahead rather than back [11]. Even so, the abovementioned arguments fail to explain why backyards are disregarded in the centre of Katowice as it had not been dominated by the working class in the past (at least not until 1945).

No matter what intentions people and institutions responsible for promotion might have, the backyards themselves must be able to attract tourists. They also have to be in a relatively good condition so as not to drive tourists away. From the point of view of general appearance and aesthetics, the backyards of Katowice look bad. Dirty and devastated, they often stand in stark contrast to renovated building exteriors. They ceased to be places where residents doing their everyday errands and, occasionally, can meet each other. Today, only drivers meet in backyards, and for good reason – backyards have been turned into car parks (Ill. 12). In some backyards, there is some space left for playgrounds, but they offers limited possibilities and more often than not, provoke destructive behaviours in the presence of overwhelming dirt, dullness and devastation (missing bricks, rubbish and offensive graffiti not to mention the social aspects). An attempt made in 2011, as part

¹⁹ The *Przewodnik...* (2012) often encourages tourists to stop in front of gates leading to backyards and pay attention to all sorts of architectural details, but they never go beyond the frontier, and thus the backyards remain intact [18].

²⁰ Movies directed by K. Kutz did much to create these stereotypes. In his book *Invented Silesia* (2012), M. Smolorz challenges stereotypes and myths, particularly those produced by movies and television [22].

of the TAKK project²¹, to revive the backyards and make them resident-friendly failed to change anything. What initially seemed a success (the intended activities had been performed in three backyards, and highly acclaimed by residents and media in particular) proved an insignificant, one-off artistic act. The backyards deteriorated again, the only difference being the faded traces of the performers' work [9] (Ill. 13).

There are also backyards, to which outsiders have no access. Heavy gates, solid bars and intercoms prevent them from getting in, and it does not necessarily mean that these devices were put in to protect a newly renovated backyard. Locked gates appear when backyards become car parks or yards used by businesses seated in tenements or annexes outside official channels or when the residents want to protect themselves and their cars from strangers who come there and use these areas quite contrary to the principles of social conduct (as public toilets, for example).



Ill. 12. The main function of backyards in Katowice is that of a car park, followed by that of a waste storage area (even in very small backyards). Where the backyards are big enough, garages and commercial outlets emerge, but they bear no resemblance whatsoever to the surrounding buildings in terms of architecture and, in some cases, construction materials (corrugated sheet!). Source: G. Kosmala (2012, 2013)

²¹ TAKK was the acronym for *Tymczasowa Akcja Kulturalna Katowice* [A Temporary Cultural Action for Katowice] – a project its organizers intended to involve street artists in activities aimed at smartening and livening up the selected backyards. These actions were taken with the residents' consent, and they were supposed to strengthen community bonds, and consequently, make the residents feel more responsible for this element of shared space [12].



III. 13. One of the three backyards that was upgraded as part of the TAKK project. Some ornaments are left on walls. Traces in the snow show that the backyard is used as a car park. Source: G. Kosmala (2013)



III. 14. Backyards in the central business district are where the trade is concentrated. Source: G. Kosmala (2013)

In the central business district (Stawowa, Mickiewiczza, 3 Maja and other streets), backyards have become commercial spaces. New, mostly small commercial outlets were built next to the existing shops, making the cramped spaces even more cramped. Advertisements, signs and neon lights bring illusive accents of colour to dull and grey backyards, adding to visual and spatial chaos rather than improving their aesthetic qualities (Ill. 14). Development and the walling off of backyards sometimes leads to the creation of mazes – this can make it very difficult to find a way out, and do not seem to offer any significant benefits.

The backyards of Giszowiec and Nikiszowiec have different characteristics. In Giszowiec, where cottage-like single-family houses²² prevailed, the backyards have become private spaces. In each case, the condition and (only visual) availability of backyards and houses depends on the owner. Abandoned, unkempt properties stand next to properties that are well maintained and upgraded (sometimes also fenced in) or the properties whose features have been changed completely through extensions and upgrades. Today, the backyards, along with the entire development plan for Giszowiec, are but a shadow of their past. In opposition, backyards of the old Nikiszowiec seem really unique.

Nikiszowiec consists of rows of low-rise, red brick buildings surrounding big backyards situated in central parts of plots (Ill. 15). This sort of planning might have helped eight backyards survive. Furthermore, in other places backyards have been redeveloped and put to various uses (car parks, green areas, devastated communal areas). All backyards in Nikiszowiec are marked by a great variety of green areas²³. They remain social interaction areas with many benches, tables, sandpits and playgrounds, miniature gardens and paths (Ill. 16). Carpet hangers can be found there, and laundry is often pegged out. From open windows, come the sounds of family life or pop music songs, with lyrics in stylized Upper Silesian. The fact that the backyards and the estate are full of life is also clear when one takes a look at refuse lying here and there, heaps of rubble from renovated apartments strewn against the walls, graffiti²⁴ and traces indicating that gates and backyards were used as substitute toilets. Some backyards have been turned to car parks, in others there are waste containers – sometimes in the very middle. Brick and cobblestone-paved streets and squares of Nikiszowiec are unbearably hot in summer and there is nowhere there to sit. Such places can be found in backyards, which guarantee some shade and more bearable temperatures, but this space is reserved for residents and not for tourists, and even if the latter are brought there by guides as part of the tour, they will find no tourist infrastructure whatsoever there.

If someone decides to go through one of several gates that lead to each backyard, they might have a feeling of being immersed in the past or at least escaping from everyday reality, slowing down and coming to a halt. Those who came to see the estate noticed it and shared

²² Giszowiec was based on the concept of a city-garden. It was an ambitious spatial development plan, but what remains can only be seen in a few streets now, and in most cases, the perspective is obscured by multi-storey apartment blocks.

²³ In the 19th century, greenery was believed to be crucial for physical and mental hygiene, which were very important in industrial estates. Today, trees and grass might not be the same, but the concept has been preserved (in fact, the backyards could have been turned to car parks, but they were not).

²⁴ Graffiti is sprayed as a token of support for one of the local football clubs, which can be considered a manifestation of identity as well.



III. 15. A “green” backyard in Nikiszowiec. Source: G. Kosmala (2013)



III. 16. Backyards of Nikiszowiec have been “developed” by residents for practical and leisure purposes. Source: G. Kosmala (2013)

their observations on numerous websites. They encourage, or even urge, readers to go and see the backyards. Visits to Nikiszowiec are also documented in photographs, and pictures of backyards are not rare in photo galleries²⁵ shared over the Internet.

The ‘young’ city of Katowice has almost no lanes, one of the reasons being that city planning and development gathered momentum in the industrialization period, but more importantly, it might have been caused by an intention to change the image of the Polish Katowice in the interwar and post-war periods. The lanes are few, and they seem to have emerged coincidentally when the new investment project blocked the existing spatial sequence. They are used for commercial purposes (cafes, shopping arcades) or as car parks. The situation is different in those parts of the city that have not been entirely redeveloped (Nikiszowiec, Ill. 17). Tourists walk along the lanes or pseudo-lanes because they simply have to do so if they want to do some sightseeing around the estate (by chance? because no references to them are made in tourist brochures).



Ill. 17. Lanes in Nikiszowiec are primarily used as car parks. Source: G. Kosmala (2012)

Cognitive values might be a motivation to come and see the backyards next to (very few) aesthetic qualities because the city authorities promote architecture in the first place. Such styles as Modernism, Art Nouveau, Eclecticism, Neo-Baroque, Neo-Classicism or Neo-Gothic are frequently found in Katowice. On the surface, architectural solutions and details are becoming more and more interesting to look at, but the accessible backyards

²⁵ M. Malanowicz-Pęczak (2013) is the author of one of the most interesting galleries [16]. Available from: <http://www.malanowicz.eu/mm/pasje/architektura/industria/osiedla/Nikiszowiec.htm>.

are void of any embellishments as if architects and constructors were driven by extreme functionality and minimalism. Gates sometimes suggest what might be expected inside, but the message they send may be misleading. Rid of aesthetic or architectural qualities, devastated and used for commercial purposes or merely as car parks, the backyards in the city centre of Katowice are completely dead. They have not become a platform for daily social interactions, and they do not create the atmosphere of the city.

The timeline seems to show a *status quo*. Unlike Wrocław, the backyards and lanes of Katowice were not advertised in the past either, not even on postcards or leaflets. In publications about the city as it was a century ago and in the interwar period, which were based on the then drawn materials²⁶, no reference is made to the spaces discussed herein. Backyards and lanes in Katowice have never had any significance for tourism except for being used to a small extent for commercial purposes as locations for cafes or travel agencies.

5. Summary

The three examples discussed herein show that old town backyards may reflect the *genius loci* of a city, but in each case, in a slightly different manner.

Backyards and narrow, winding lanes determine the specific urban and social/cultural character of the *Starówka* in Lublin. They enhance the feeling of a close 'physical contact' with the city, which is connected with its topography. In the social aspect, they make it possible to sense the atmosphere of places, where nations and individuals always lived very close to, or even intimately with one another. Creating the image of the city as a tourist attraction, which is obviously based on its most valuable tourist asset, i.e. the *Starówka*, the authorities only indirectly refer to atmosphere, intimacy and close contact with the daily lives of contemporary residents in their promotional materials. The development of tourist tracks and facilities plays but a marginal role in this concept.

The roles that backyards play in the creation of the *genius loci* of Wrocław city centre should be analyzed separately for those areas that are directly adjacent to the Market Square and those located between the East-West Route and the city moat. The former do not guarantee an close contact with the city nor do they define the identity of this part of the *Starówka*. Their development can only be significant for location of tourist services such as cafe patios that offer an intimate atmosphere to tourists who are tired of the buzzing market square. On the other hand, the backyards in the Four Temples Quarter (ugly and unkempt, with wounds from demolitions or with surprising structures) may be significant for defining the identity of the place, and as such they have considerable potential for the reconstruction of the historical identity of the city. With the entire population having been replaced in the past, the backbone of the city was broken in a way. Entering the world of backyards in the Four Temples Quarter allows visitors to touch this lost identity²⁷.

²⁶ A considerable number of such works have been published. For example, Kaganiec (2012) is focused on the cities situated in the east of Upper Silesia, and the postcards featuring Katowice have the largest share in the publication [5].

²⁷ This potential has been noticed, and partially exploited by the Municipal Office of Wrocław. The cultural tourist track could be marked out through backyards and lanes of the Four Temples Quarter.

The backyards situated at plac Wolności are a *terra incognita* for tourists, although building exteriors such as the back facade of the former Bank of Reich inspire awe with their grandeur and architectural details. On the other hand, the backyards between Św. Antoniego, Włodkowica and Ruska Streets allow visitors to discover the link between historical and contemporary Wrocław despite spatial chaos and low aesthetic qualities (not to say ugliness).

At present, the city authorities seem to greatly underestimate the tourist potential of the backyards and lanes of Wrocław's *Starówka*. Even the activities taken in the Four Temples Quarter area²⁸ are not integrated with the whole district space, and they seem to be concentrated on the White Stork Synagogue only.

In Katowice, backyards are used as car parks or locations for waste containers conveniently placed in the very middle. In the central business district, they also have a commercial function. Tourists should keep their distance from backyards developed in this way or pay but a short visit, if necessary, as they are a foreign space, a kind of no-man's land, and as such they repel and, irrational as it might be, evoke a sense of danger. Because of having low architectural and poor aesthetic qualities, and being mostly inaccessible to visitors, the backyards of Katowice are not a tourist attraction.

Nonetheless, Katowice is only beginning to create its image and prepare a consistent offering for tourists. As such, the city is probably yet to discover that tourists are interested in everything, and backyards can be a valuable component of the offering as they allow visitors to find out what the city life looks like from the inside. They may have a certain potential, and there are a few restaurant owners who try to exploit it to some extent (although this might be purely incidental or caused by the lack of room in front of the establishment), but this potential is much smaller in comparison to Wrocław or Lublin, which is connected with a short history of the city and contemporary visions and activities of its authorities in the area of planning and development. The borough architect is aware of the significance of backyards, and this is rather important as the architect has tools to exert influence with an aim of improving their condition (particularly visual), which is essential for tourism. However, the city authorities have ambitious redevelopment plans for the city centre, and these plans generate a serious risk that backyards will remain in the background, and some of them will even disappear. Furthermore, the residents' commitment (most of them are still 'strangers' even though they have been living in the city for years) does not hold much promise for quick changes.

In practice, the concept is difficult to implement, which is mainly due to complex ownership structures and investment plans of the city and private investors. So far, the focus has been placed on the upgrading of the inter-block space around the White Stork Synagogue.

²⁸ Lost in urban space without any help from the tourist brochure, the tourist will find it difficult to say where the limits of this district are. He can find 'The Crystal Planet', a monument by Ewa Rossano, which was put up nearby in 2012, representing a dancer (possibly a ballet dancer) wearing a dress embroidered with outlines of the continents, features small symbols of the religions present in the Four Temples Quarter. This is the only reference to history and significance of the place that the sculpture was meant to commemorate. A tourist information outlet located at the symbolical entrance to the borough, i.e. at the beginning of Św. Antoniego Street where the *Crystal Planet* monument stands, is expected to solve the problem.

Nikiszowiec and its 'living' backyards, which are both a tourist asset and an element defining the identity of the place should be analyzed separately. Both of these aspects are rooted in history, and it might well be that they have survived only because Nikiszowiec lies off the main roads. The redevelopment of Nikiszowiec and its status of a historical monument give reason to believe that the backyards will not be lost, and that the imminent changes will be well thought out and controlled.

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