The marketers of dreams vs. romantic gentrifiers: reflections on consumption in the Polish housing market
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Jacek Gądecki

Abstract

The paper focuses on the opinions of a group of "romantic gentrifiers", those who have decided to move into the heart of the ideal socialist city of Nowa Huta, a district that is commonly perceived as a debased and dangerous place. The marginal gentrifiers compare their new location to a different urban and social milieu, the much-desired and dreamed-of spaces of the gated communities located in another part of Kraków, the new Ruczaj district. Their opinions, and, most of all, unpopular choices, offer a chance to discuss the role of a new, important type of market – the housing one, and a new type of client, one highly interested in lifestyle creation.

Housing market, post-socialist city, gated estates, marginal gentrification, life style

Zusammenfassung

Die Vermarkter von Träumen versus romantische Gentrifizierung – Überlegungen zum Konsumverhalten auf dem polnischen Wohnungsmarkt

Die vorliegende Arbeit stellt die Meinungen einer Gruppe „romantischer Gentrifizierer" in den Mittelpunkt, die sich für einen Umzug in das Herzen der sozialistischen Musterstadt Nowa Huta entschlossen haben, ein Stadtteil, der im Allgemeinen als minderwertig und gefährlich angesehen wird. Die marginalen Gentrifizierer vergleichen ihre neue Wohngegend mit einem anderen städtischen und sozialen Milieu, nämlich den heiß begehrten und umworbenen Wohnräumen der abgeschlossenen Wohnanlagen, die in einem andern Teil Krakaus, im neuen Ruczaj-Stadtteil, liegen. Ihre Ansichten und besonders ihre unpopulären Entscheidungen bieten die Möglichkeit, die Rolle eines neuen und bedeutenden Markttyps – dem Wohnungsmarkt – sowie die Rolle einer neuen Art von Kunden – eines Kunden, der ein großes Interesse an der Schaffung von Lebensstil hat – zu erörtern.

Wohnungsmarkt, postsozialistische Stadt, abgeschlossene Wohnanlagen, marginale Gentrifizierung, Lebensstil

The aim of the paper is to present a particular element of the market economy in a post-socialist context, the housing market, from a critical perspective, through the eyes of marginal gentrifiers[1]. Although both processes of ghettoization and gentrification seem to work as universal and international phenomena, the studies suppose to understand how they are embedded in the local (material and social) landscape. The direct impulse to cope with those two processes occurred during in-depth interviews with marginal gentrifies of Nowa Huta, who massively – and significantly – completely spontaneously, defined their new locations as an antithesis to popular gated and guarded estates located on the other bank of the Vistula River[2].

The latter seem to be a quite evident marker of new class identity for most Poles, not only for the journalist and researchers, who are particularly interested in the phenomenon of gating, but also for average Poles, who have a chance to experience the omnipresence of such urban forms on a daily basis all over Poland and not only in metropolitan areas. This paper follows Anthony Giddens's "global-local dialectics" (Giddens 1991) and looks at the local social contexts in which the new segments of the housing market emerged, and the way in which the relations between supply and demand are shaped in the case of the Polish urban and social landscape, while gated communities become the main sector of newly built estates on the local housing market, as in fact it is hard to find non-gated locations in metropolitan areas such as Warsaw.

Last but not least it is critical to localize the agency in the process of urban changes, both in the case of massive ghettoization and the less apparent but still

evident cases of classical gentrification[3]. Both are cases of "modernized milieus", the effect of a gradual change from a class society to the 'lifestyle' or 'event society', we find ourselves in today (Alheit 1999; Schulze 1992). Along with the differentiation of public fields (work, rest, settlement and education, among others) it is precisely the private sphere and domestic life, which is becoming a more and more significant source of constructing an individual identity. In this sense, the decision of where to live remains one of the most important questions not only in the economic but also in symbolic categories. So-called "elective belonging" can be treated as an important component enabling one to understand not only gentrification itself (Butler 2007, p. 163; cf. Webber 2007), but also the much more common process of ghettoization.

Gentrification debates

Nowadays we are dealing with a spectrum of more or less mature and considerably diverse processes conceived together as gentrification. The changes described by Ruth Glass which primarily took place in working-class neighbourhoods in central London in 1960 (Glass 1964), can be seen nowadays in many other metropolitan areas all-over the globe. The diversity of forms of gentrification, or how the critics used to say, the chaos of such a concept weakens the explanation potential, but – on the other hand - it expresses the variety of postmodern city and its inhabitants. Tim Butler, pointing to the social and economic aspects of actual gentrification, mentions that gentrification as a concept is stronger than ever because of the greater range of people feel compelled to express who they are through to where they live and with whom they share their neighbourhood" (Butler 2007, p. 163).

The culture and the economy are among the most extensively discussed

topics within the research on gentrification. These disputes revolve around several complementary axes such as: supply versus demand, or those designated by the dichotomies as the economy vs. culture, and production vs. consumption which are the "pillars" of any literature reviews in such area of research. Here the differences between the revanchist vs. emancipatory visions of the gentrification are going to be presented in order to signalize the own perspective and to point the main research problem of the paper.

From one side gentrification has been recognized as a process that brings significant profits in the central parts of the cities. It is often an equivalent of displacement of indigenous, less affluent residents whose housing situation is deteriorating constantly while the process is deepening. Such benefits as i.e. improving the quality of services or renovation of buildings turns out to be shared only by a part of the population of the district – fairly speaking by more affluent newcomers. The increase in the number of wealthier, better-educated strata leads to social segregation – hence the term urban revanchist taken from Smith. In his opinion the gentrification as a process of the middle class to the city centre refers to revenge for previous pushing their members into the suburbs of the western cities. It is than an extreme expression of spatial segregation, inequality and social barriers – gentrified spaces define a new urban frontier – "the frontier of profitability." Although its form varies depending on the city scale, geographical location (continents, or regions) still is influenced by and influences the local economy and culture according to the logic of the free market economy.

The back of so-called new middle classes to city centres meant also important changes in expectations for sufficient economic and social infrastructure. For reach strata the acquisition of properties in the formerly unattractive places means looking for well-maintained and safe public and commercial spaces, in which they can fully experience the charms of

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1 By the marginal gentrifier I understand the person, who initiate the gentrification on the bases of own cultural capital and who accept the high risk of such investement. See also characteristics of pioneers of gentrifictation (Rose 1984) or "producers of gentrification" (Rofe 2003).

2 This kind of self-positioning at social and geographical map was especially interesting for a researcher, who previously had deal with the gated communities in Poland.

3 By the classical gentrification I mean the cases of the models of gradually perceived processes of gentrification, not the cases of much more popular processes of commercialization of the city centers, which seems to be much common and advanced in the post-socialist cities (Sykora 1999, 2005).

urban life, without feeling threatened by the dark side of the urban realm. Those changes in urban spaces and social relations between old residents and newcomers leads to a well-documented in literature on the urban studies and thoroughly described processes of urban life thematization (Sorkin 1992, pp. XI-XV). The universal theme is subordinate to the new values and consumption patterns: all night-time economy, cafés, and art infrastructure suit the needs of newcomers and its supported by almost invisible technologies of security, such as CCTV. The revanchist vision of the process is underscored by the prevalence of terms such as "outpost" used to describe the newly renovated apartments or new housing projects in the in the gentrifying areas and referring explicitly to take over enemy territory. These militaristic or even directly colonial narratives showing how different groups are fighting for "the access to the city and the symbolic control of the centre" (Zukin 1995, p. 43). As one can imagine, the colonization takes particularly dramatic character in a situation of sharp conflicts and far-reaching social changes in the districts in which the tenants are forced, even by using illegal methods being to leave their rented homes, just like it takes place in the centre of Krakow for few years.

In contrary, the so called "emancipatory theory of the city" proposed in the context of gentrification by Loretta Lees, shows much peaceful and less dramatic vision of such changes then revanchist one. Whereas the latter represents the urban environment as a space threats or pure violence, the first depict the same spaces as welcoming, safe and habitable. In this sense, gentrification is a part of much older and more fundamental processes of city formation – i.e. the process of connecting people with the different backgrounds in the city centre, creating opportunities for social interaction, tolerance and the development of cultural diversity. Loretta Lees thesis is the aftermath of previous studies of Jon Caulfield and David Ley. Ley was the one, that stressed the role of the counter-cul-

ture gentrification stressed in the context of the class dimension of the process. However, those emancipatory sources of gentrification were articulated by Caulfield, who perceived gentrification itself as a kind of the social practice that stands in opposition to the dominant patterns derived from the practice of suburban life. Taking the gentrification, the actors in this process "evaded the dominance of social and cultural structures and the establishment of new conditions of experience" and the source of their inspiration was not so much the old buildings, and a longing for the past, as subjectively experienced present: the desire to escape from the routine (Caulfield 1989, p. 624). In this vision, the process of gentrification creates so tolerance, and the meeting itself and the contact is more important than the negative effects of gentrification described by "revanchists".

Marginal gentrification of post-socialist space

The reorganization of time and space, reconfiguration of local and global and, the role of everyday choices and lifestyle, converge in the opinions of the respondents, with whom I had chance to talk during a project realized in Nowa Huta another one dealing with the discourse on gating in Poland finished in 2008 (Gądecki 2009). In both cases the aims of projects were quite similar: to depict the way in which urban forms of the post-socialist city are reshaped, conceptualized and finally used by various actors both individual and institutional, and to explain how it shapes new, emerging social divisions and constructs new identities in the urban realm.

The gentrification of the ideal socialist city was a kind of provocative inquiry proposed in 2009 and started in 2010 in the highly stigmatized but very interesting milieu of the former "ideal city of socialism", the "old part" of Nowa Huta (founded in 1949-1953), now administratively within the district of Krakow. In the latter case the purpose was to capture the image of the district constructed by a group of newcomers, or "the pio-

neers" of gentrification, by using the ethnographic methods of participatory observation and in-depth interviews.

The members of the group, defined by Damaris Rose as "pioneers of gentrification" (Rose 1984) are the actors who can pave the way for degraded areas of the city and prepare such milieus for advanced stages of the process. As Loretta Lees and Tim Butler observed in the context of Barnsbury, London, representatives of such a marginal group consciously sought out social diversity and difference (Butler, Lees 2006). My hypothesis was that in the case of the old part of Nowa Huta marginal gentrification could be perceived in categories of emancipatory practice.

One of the main objectives of the project was to verify the emancipatory character of such marginal change – to verify if the pioneers of gentrification really and consciously are searching for social diversity (Caulfield 1989, p. 624). The members of the group, defined by Damaris Rose as "pioneers of gentrification" (Rose 1984, pp. 47-74) are the actual actors who can pave the way for devaluated areas of the city, preparing them for advanced stages of the process. As Loretta Lees and Tim Butler observed in the context of Barnsbury, London, representatives of such a marginal group consciously sought for social diversity and difference (Butler, Lees 2006, pp. 467-487). My hypothesis was that in the case of Nowa Huta so called marginal gentrification could be perceived in categories of emancipatory practice. Distancing myself from perhaps overly enthusiastic vision Caulfield, and taking a more balanced approach to gentrification, one can – in my opinion – get an interesting description of reality, defined in terms of the process, not the final result.

Marginal gentrification seems to be the relevant theoretical frame for this study for two reasons. Firstly, gentrification processes, as it was mentioned earlier, are described primarily from the perspective of such global cities as New York or London. If one will take into account research in cities of smaller urban cen-

tres of regional importance, the characteristics of the gentrifiers would be different from those in London or New York (BRIDGE 2003). I am not sure whether changes in smaller centres have as strong importance and as distinctive form as those occurring in the large ones.

Secondly, the marginal gentrification is gaining importance in the context of post socialist town. The criticism around fragments of "The New Urban Frontier"" devoted to gentrification of Budapest (KOVÁCS, WIESSNER 1999, p. 76) proves how important is the context for the study of this process. Most of the changes in many post-socialist cities could be better described as commercialization than the gentrification: the presence night time economies and western companites doesn't determinant the gentrification. One can talk more about the „commercial gentrification" (COOPER, MORPETH 1999; see also SYKORA 2005; SYKORA 2000), which is associated with the commercial functions not the residential one. Furthermore, the gentrification proceeded very quickly in the realities of the post-socialist. SYKORA, referring to the reality of Prague, Czech Republic, states that the pioneering phase actually hadn't place and was replace by the more advanced and organized forms of gentrification planned by foreign developers for foreign buyers (SYKORA 2005, p. 96). It can be concluded that the processes of this type often take too rapid and wide-ranging forms that can be applied to them the term „classic gentrification" of clearly separated pioneering phase.

Methodology

This study is based on a critical discourse analysis, in-depth interviews (IDI), and participant observation. Aside from the material and spatial aspects of gentrification and symbolic creation of the image and representations of Nowa Huta as a whole in media discourses I wanted to depict behavioural and socio-spatial practices of new residents the old part of Nowa Huta.

The first part of the study was based on online survey of 96 households whose members moved into the old part of Nowa Huta in the last few years, mostly from 2009. The households members responded to 68-question on-line questionnaire published in the web just after the article informing about the research in local supplement of Gazeta Wyborcza[4]. The tool was designed to get answers on the housing preferences of new residents, their daily activities and relationships in and with the district[5]. On it's basis, I wanted to see whether (and if so), how the behavior and attitudes of residents can be regarded as characteristic of the pioneers of gentrification.

The second, i.e. qualitative phase of the project base in-depth interviews in 18 interviews with marginal gentrifiers realised in their households. The IDIs were designed to obtain answers on the housing preferences of new residents, their daily activities and relationships in and with the district. On the basis of that, I wanted to see whether, and if so how, the behaviour and attitudes of residents can be regarded as characteristic of the pioneers of gentrification.

The motive which I will provisionally call "anti-Ruczaj" came up in almost all talks with the marginal gentrifiers in the old part of Nowa Huta, and, as mentioned earlier, completely spontaneously. The collocutors, while reconstructing their housing experiences, mentioned the new part of Ruczaj, the district in Krakow commonly associated with new, often

4 In the context of the term "houshold" it is necessary to point to the demographic and cultural changes among the middle-classes, especially those associated with rise of number of women among specialists and the emergence of households with double-incomes. Households included in the first part study were represented by women in 56 % of cases. The households analyzed in 1. part of the study were occupied by two (50 %) or three (20 %) residents. Most respondents remain childless (57.4 %). In 10 cases, we are dealing with single households. The interviewees taking part in the 2.phase of the study have been selected purposely to reflect the diversity of gentrification: they were journalists, artists, students, singles, couples and families with children.

5 It consisted of main parts, describing the topics of: the biography of housing, the strategy of buying an apartment, the daily life in the district, which has been studied topics related to new residents opinions about life in the district and on issues related to their daily functioning within it, the employment and income – allowing to determine important indicators related to education, age, subjectively perceived and objective sense of wealth and the type of employment undertaken by the new residents and their life partners.

guarded and gated housing (Fig. 1). This theme appeared in almost all of the eighteen in-depth interviews, in fact quite spontaneously and in different contexts, thus confirming some analogies between the process in the case of the old part of Nowa Huta, and a classic study of gentrification implemented in the Western cities making reference to the social reality and the suburbs as a symbolic element that contributed to the "return to the cities".

Fig. 1: Kraków – Location and urban structure of the case study areas 2012

Study site description: from ideal city to the devaluation

In order to understand the context of this paper, one needs to go back to the socialist and post-socialist context, particularly in the case of Nowa Huta[6]. No other town or city in Poland reflects the idea of a socialist town better than Nowa Huta, as that is where political, ideological symbolic factors, and social characteristics strongly influenced the shape of the area.

Nowa Huta is the best known example of the urban planning of the socialist era, and because of its urban compactness more interesting than Dunaújváros in Hungary or Eisenhüttenstadt in former GDR. As art historians pinpoint, in Nowa Huta planners attempted to transplant into the Polish reality the utopian concept of an ideal industrial town, devel-

6 I intended to emphasise that the aim is not the presentation of the monographic area itself. Hence, the information on the social and historical changes and phenomenoes are rather on the limited side.

oped in Soviet Union, with a simultaneous reference to the large, eighteenth-century Baroque assumptions combining: "the urban beauty of socialist realism in version referring to the native tradition, as designers tried to play was «national in form and socialist in the content»" (Sibila 2007, pp. 3-4). Nowa Huta started to be built in 1949 next to simultaneously funded the Lenin's Steel Works. One can analize the Nowa Huta city in two ways: first, as a "product of urbanism of real socialism" but also as a doctrine extremely strong and present in European urban planning and architecture of the twentieth century" (Jalowiecki 1999, pp. 371-375). The concept of socialist city corresponded to ideologues of the period, as gave rise to the creation of new cities in which the assumptions provided were to be „optimal relationships between home, work, services and leisure (...) mixing of different social and demographic categories" and – what is more – new cities supposed to produce better forms of social interaction, based on strong social ties (Jalowiecki 1999, pp. 371-375).

The abrupt shift from the socialist to the post-socialist period, in 1990., which took place with a significant participation of Nowa Huta's citizens was concurrent with the whole set of changes and 'moral shifts', not only in the economic, but also in the social and cultural spheres. The crash of the centralized economy resulted in long-term chaos, from the end of the crisis and the phase of recovering from it. (This was linked to the simultaneous decomposition of state property and the development of the economy, privatisation of land and real estate). The main problem of the post-socialist cities was the inadequate urban structure. As Neil Leach pointed out they were environmentally inadequate or structurally unstable, some were designed for a now-redundant social program, while others still carry the stigma of the previous system (Leach 1999, p. 3). Nowa Huta came to be perceived of as a "failed experiment" soon after 1989 (see Stenning, Smith, Rachovska, Świątek 2011).

All of the symbolic changes took a radical turn: the removal of the statue of Lenin in Central Square, changing of names of squares and streets, and finally the gradual fall of the steelworks bearing the name of Lenin. The local government has taken the land and housing, which used to be the property of the steelworks, as a result of changes in economic and political planning. Nowa Huta as a "city of paradoxes" and "failed experiment" turned into an area of intense changes in representation. Since the mid-1990s, for the representatives of local authorities, science, and culture Nowa Huta has been embraced as a "ready theme park" and a museum "for foreign tourists" (Stanek 2007, p. 299) (Photo 1). The activities of tour agencies such as Crazy Guides organizing tours of Nowa Huta in GDR "Trabi" car often depict the area in an unfavourable light.

Simultaneously, the past ten years have shown the huge scale and the complex nature of the changes that have taken place there. One can point to the presence and actions of Laznia Nowa Theatre and other bottom-up local social and cultural initiatives, which show how strong the local community is. All of those have been helpful in reworking and establishing a new kind of strong and independent local identity constructed most of all by young inhabitants around the age of twenty or thirty. As Alison Stenning, the British geographer who had a chance to observe the post-socialist life of the ideal socialist city, summarised in 2008 the contrast between the earlier negative stereotype of the district with its present vision can be seen as the best example of the transformation of Nowa Huta: to see new social and economic initiatives emerging and succeeding, new cafés appearing, new cultural spaces and activities developing and, most of all, young Nowohucianie wearing Nowa Huta T-shirts and hooded tops with an everyday pride is an amazing thing (Stenning 2008, p. 17).

The potential of old part of the district

The old part of Nowa Huta district seems to have all the direct attributes of gentrified neighbourhoods introduced by David Ley in the 1980s. The first and most crucial element is certainly location. The proximity to the city centre and the areas of work is only one of the aspects of a good location. The other factors are the proximity to leisure destinations, to cul-

Photo 1: The Central Square (Plac Centralny) of Nowa Huta and its distinct architecture (Paulina Grabska 2012)

ture centres, and to the services that are available in the city centre. The second element is the socio-economic status of the area. The cheaper districts will be settled if they have certain advantages such as availability, a distinct housing stock, and a kind of lifestyle atmosphere (LEY 1996, P. 104). Another attribute is the presence of environmental amenities, such as the Nowa Huta Meadows, the presence of the arts and the artistic community in the district, or the architecture of a particular historical period, which "is a carefully restored as part of the urban lifestyle habitus" (LEY 1996, p. 105).

(29 %) and good transport connections with other parts of the city, including the city centre (29 %). Open answers give us some idea of the area as seen from their perspective. Here is one of them, which can be considered as representative of the rest: (The old part of Nowa Huta – J. G.) *is a being independent from Krakow, time flows differently here, the streets are wide, no traffic jams, you can always find a place to park your car somewhere, great public transport network–you can get everywhere* (…).

An important, complementary factor that argues for the potential for gentrifi-

cept of the ideal city: *the unique character of the place: it supposed to be the perfect city, and, I think, that it's not missing anything. In Warsaw one can find the Palace of Culture, Muranów, MDM, but they are kinds of buildings incorporated somehow into the "normal" streets and surrounded by something else and here we have more extensive architectural establishment of the ideal city is, and, good infrastructure of course…* (IDI 9)

The local housing market and the power of distinction

Emphasizing the specificity of marginal gentrification we can say that the difference between the identities of those involved in marginal gentrification and those of the advanced stages results from different approaches towards identity created based on place.

This paper divides the gentrifiers into two distinctive groups, as proposed by ROFE, the so-called "producers of gentrification" and its "consumers" (cf. ROFE 2003, 2004). The former are trying to actively build their identity based on a place, while the latter are investing in the already moulded, ready identity: "Consumption gentrifiers include those individuals involved in the practice of sweat equity who are attracted to terraces and cottages. Alternatively, production gentrifiers (…) are considered to differ from consumption gentrifiers in their motives for inner city residency. Production gentrifiers are considered to be investors in a pre-fabricated identity, rather than individuals actively constructing their own place-based identity" (ROFE 2004).

My own previous research on gated communities (GĄDECKI 2009) proved that a guarded housing estate does not only create a comfortable home for the inhabitants who are aspiring to success, or those who have already accomplished it, it constitutes a "complex product" based on a blend of traditional and modern architectural solutions. By using new building materials (steel, glass walls, marble wall claddings, etc.) and solutions (underground garages, terraces, private lifts in case of penthouses, etc.) such an estate
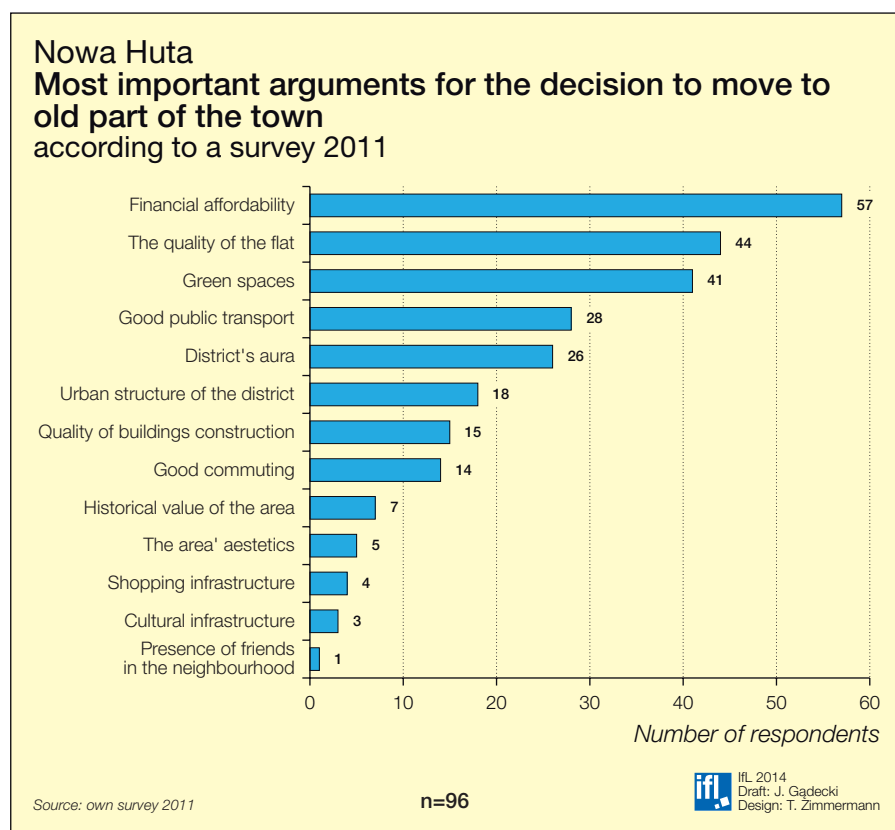

Nowa Huta
Most important arguments for the decision to move to old part of the town
according to a survey 2011

Argument	Number of respondents
Financial affordability	57
The quality of the flat	44
Green spaces	41
Good public transport	28
District's aura	26
Urban structure of the district	18
Quality of buildings construction	15
Good commuting	14
Historical value of the area	7
The area' aestetics	5
Shopping infrastructure	4
Cultural infrastructure	3
Presence of friends in the neighbourhood	1

Number of respondents

Source: own survey 2011   n=96

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Fig. 2: Most important arguments for the decision to move to old part of the town Nowa Huta

Analysing why respondents chose to move to the old part of the district indicates the three main reasons for that relocation (Fig. 2). The new residents, above all, emphasized the "affordability" of apartments (60 %), the advantages of the apartment (spaciousness and a good floor plan) (45 %) and green nature of the district (41 %). Other motives determining the choice of the district were, in equal measure, the district's atmosphere

cation may be the "atmosphere" of the old part of the district (Photo 2). This attribute was indicated by one-third of respondents participating in the first phase of the study. Indicating the "aura" of the district, or its specific "atmosphere" (as a result of three elements: architecture and urban structure, social composition of residents and the area's history) pioneers are noticing its potential. At the same time, many of them referred to the con-

Photo 2: Old Nowa Huta (Paulina Grabska 2012)

is able to produce the particular lifestyle and practices associated with it, and a strong symbolic transmission understood by the creators (architects, interior designers and decorators) and new owners, as well as their visitors.

The gate and fence are more than just physical boundaries – they reinforce the message of ostentatious consumption. The fenced estates are therefore required to conduct daily territories of strategic actions that have to continue in order to maintain the status. The experience of the city is very limited, and has a superficial character. The scenario of this show is based mostly on the coexistence in the same space while ignoring ostentatious members of other classes.

The housing environment is prepared to meet the needs and to provide conditions for supporting the status of its inhabitants, the housing market consumers. In analysing the situational context, one should point at three important trends in Polish press discourse (found mostly in lifestyle magazines), indirectly connected with the appearance of gated housing estates in Poland:

1. the increase in the popularity of discourse on housing fashion and design,
2. the presence of property developers and of their media image and finally

3. the appearance of discourse characteristic of the culture of control.

First of all, over the last decade or so, the housing environment has undergone an intense aesthetization, most of all in the metropolitan areas. The pressure of fashion on the private sphere seems to be stronger than ever before. This process is possible mainly thanks to print media, as they promote the latest trends in interior design, impart knowledge of architecture and shape the current tastes of their readers. Looking at the growth of sales rates in the market of the interior design press, it apparent that Poles are quickly becoming consumer cosmopolitans, members of a new community, who are able to recognise and purchase particular objects and products coveted by the higher strata worldwide (King 1990, p. 449). The inhabitants of such estates are not necessarily the transnational elites (Rofe 2003), but surely are members of the metropolitan class, the urban professionals. Still, their identity and status are based primarily on such housing types, a desirable postal code and collected goods, which come to be a more and more evident reason for recognition and distinction (Bourdieu 1986). The usage of new materials, sophisticated technologies and designer gadgets or professional assis-

tance services provided by designers, seems to be more common among them, even if the respondents do not want to admit this explicitly.

Gated estates are being founded in the vicinity of high-rise building neighbourhoods or in suburban, often chaotically developed, environments and in such contexts they are commonly perceived of as strange, not only due to their closed character, but also their distinct, sophisticated architecture. Thanks to the application of new architecture (in the modern or post-modern style), or as sellers put it, "more-than-standard" solutions, these estates differ from their surroundings. Without any doubt the aesthetization of the landscape is one of the crucial elements of the context of the gated community phenomenon in Poland.

The second element of the market contributing to the popularity of such estates is the presence of the developers. The scale and the pace of transformation in Polish cities would not be possible without the participation of property developers functioning in the Polish housing market. They are becoming new, important players in real estate, controlling the entire investment process, from the phase of designing the real estate to the sale. Watching the market from the beginning of the 1990s, it becomes apparent that along with the rise in the share of developers in the market the number of gated housing estates is constantly increasing. In 2006 large development companies already controlled 30 % of the primary housing market in the country, mainly in Warsaw and other major cities in Poland.

Finally, alongside the transformations in the real estate market, changes are taking place in the market of private security. Press discourse shows how the image of crime prevention has been changing, how diverse forms or models of security provision are applied to the Polish situation, and how the strategy of the privatization of safety has been consequently recognised and naturalized. Focusing on print media, we can identify at least two beliefs formulated mostly by the middle

class strata which, as David GARLAND noticed, are typical of the "culture of control" (GARLAND 2001): first, opinions on crime rates (the conviction that higher levels of crime have become increasingly common), and second, the opinion that the State is unable to provide adequate safety for its citizens. Aside from the fact that issues associated with crime prevention have been strongly politicized in the Polish context, one can still easily identify with a whole subcategory of articles focusing directly on privatization of the security sector and community based policing.[7]

Development of gated communities

Even if one is aware the context of ghettoization in the case of Polish housing market still it is hard to localize the agency in the process of ghettoization. Generally speaking the rapid development of Gated Communities (GC) estates is not treated as a problem at all. The neighbourhoods are pictured as divided into "us" and "them", or "residents" and "strangers", but no clear agency is presented: both sides of the fence seem to be casualties (either out of fear or because of the wallification process). It is quite symptomatic that GCs, even if criticized, were still described mostly by the cancer metaphor (vide FAIRCLOUGH 1989)[8]. GCs were presented to the public as a cancer cells attacking the weak body of the Polish city. The significance of using such a metaphorical expression and image is the fact that process of city "wallification" was perceived both as a dangerous and irreversible. Still, the critical label of "ghettos for the rich" suggests that a GC could be seen as a quite specific type of exclusion, one that is voluntary. GCs are residential areas serving as spaces of vol-

untary exclusion in which in fact a minority is in a position to exclude the majority. What is crucial here is the power relationship. There is no agreement among scholars as to whether is gating a manifestation of power or rather a manifestation of a lack of it. The debates among scholars have been polarized between those who consider GC as a result of "escape of the elites" (caused by anxiety and fear) or as the culmination of the "revolt of the elites" who take power into their own hands to replace the power of the state in the local context. The gated community as a milieu is neither the "revolt against elites" nor the "revolt of elites" which build the fortified enclaves. This case is far more fundamental: it is the process of creating a class of elites through using the urban in specific, social, economical and political contexts. It is about shaping one's own identity simply by taking advantage of the city, by using the urban fabric for one's own purposes, for constructing one's own identity in opposition to the urban. The gated estates are transmitters of ostentatious consumption and taste.

Anty Ruczaj – Producers of gentrification vs. its consumers

The process of construction or creating an elite through such gated milieus refers to the consumer practices of those, who

can be labelled according to ROFE, as consumers of gentrification, those who invest high economic capital to build up their social and cultural status. In contrast, the producers of marginal gentrification, who invest more cultural and social capital than economic capital in creating their particular area, are, not surprisingly, highly critical of gated estates.

The producers of gentrification are making more of an investment in a sense of risk: their decisions, in the vast majority, have not been accepted or understood by relatives and friends. The interviews with the marginal gentrifiers proved that a particular "counter-cultural" aspect of the housing choice was linked not so much to the defence of their own choices, but rather redefined, in full awareness and willingness, "against the dominant trend". Buying a property in this part of town is not only a rational choice "for" (a spacious apartment, greenery, good communication, etc.), but also a clear choice "against" approved residential patterns of behaviour, and the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois mentality.

The new part of the Ruczaj district in Krakow seems to be a good representative of such a dominant, new middle class milieu (Photo 3). This particular location is being recognised as the antithesis of the "ideal city" settled by the marginal

Photo 3: New Estates (Jarosław Matla 2012)

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gentrifiers. There are at least three main axis of criticism: the urban issues (urban chaos and traffic problems caused by uncontrolled development of such estates and poor infrastructure provided by local administration), architecture and planning issues (the size and quality of design and construction), and last, but not least, neighbourly relations prevailing in the new housing and lifestyle represented by its residents.

As it was mentioned earlier the theme of "anti-Ruczaj" emerged in the context of the neighbourhood choice. As one interlocutor mentioned reactions of friends, when he informed them about the decision to move to Nowa Huta he heard: "One of the basic question we have heard was: "Why Nowa Huta?", "Why not Ruczaj?", the answer was "Because it's too *fashionable*" (IDI 15).

Ruczaj thus seems to be an important explanatory frame of reference regarding the housing choices of Nowa Huta gentrifiers. Even if they don't use such metaphors as "the fortress", or "ghettos for rich people", which are quite common among the critics of gating still, they have in mind that GCs are residential areas which serve as spaces of voluntary exclusion, and, most of all, are highly standardized spaces. Those milieus become places for residents of a similar status to gather, in which certain aesthetic standards are appointing and shaping tastes, reducing the freedom of individual choices.

The gentrifiers from the old part of Nowa Huta are aware that the "gating" and "guarding" which function as standard elements of most of newly built estates are illusionary and superficial. Even the image of a master-planned community must be confronted to the suburban reality and poor infrastructure. Gentrifiers are aware that, besides the slogans, the reality of such estates is different: "*The same as for example a Ruczaj, yeah, after all there generally speaking it won't be possible to leave the area (...) We are naming it all over Silesia „Królicoki" (Rabbit Hutches) ,it means that, one person live on the other, one can look into someone*

else flat, because a space between buildings is so narrow (...). Yeah, I don't want also to mythologise the Ruczaj now – several times there I was only and so I have feeling to this subject." (IDI 9)

The master-planned Nowa Huta with public and green spaces on all scales: from the neighbourhood unit to the district as a whole, is contradicted to so-called "green enclaves". New inhabitants are aware that the nature is highly limited, but heavily promoted in gated estates: *"That is no such greenery in the other neighbourhoods, such as new Ruczaj, that already starts to deny its own name (Ruczaj – The Brook), that every single piece of land is to build-up."* (IDI 12)

This kind of physical space, despite all external attributes of differences and highly aesthetic character (which suppose to guarantee the commercial success of the investment) first of all, must be standardized. The main purpose of a GC is to provide the most predictable environment and to discipline the inhabitants. The standardisation is so obvious as to render it almost boring. Each estate seems to be both unique and standardized. As Minton points out in her report on British gated communities this consumer product is characterised by two trends. The first is the increased level of control over the environment necessitated both by the demands of high quality

product management and the need to exclude undesirables. The second is that, ironically, despite their competing claims of uniqueness 'private-public' locations display a tendency to look the same and to exhibit a very similar 'feel', in part as a result of the relatively controlled nature of the environment (Minton 2006, p. 27) (Photo 4).

This standardization creates a feeling of outdistance to such a form of housing and living, which is characteristic of those who are involved in marginal forms of gentrification. They perceive their own practices as opposite to the dominant middle-class housing trends, referring to the theme of diversity and differences in social mixing. Urban atmosphere of diversity is, according to theorists of gentrification, a constant source of stimulation and renewal and a reminder of the relativity of their own lifestyle. The kind of subcultural uniformity offered by gated estates and its "boredom" is similar to classic studies of many suburban communities (Allen for: Lees 2008, p. 2450). As one of the gentrifiers noticed: *"I lived at Ruczaj previously (in the old part of the settlement – author) (...) This space tired me, I wasn't sure what was it neither the city nor a village, nor a housing estate, nor is it exclusive estate and all such is messed up, and here (in the old part of Nowa Huta – author) is not so consistent (...)."* (IDI 17)
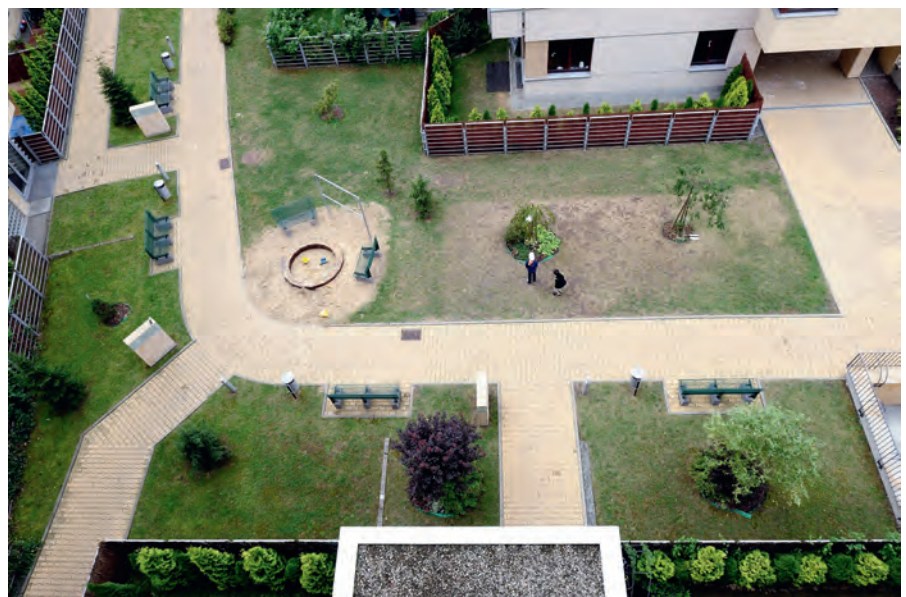

Photo 4: Greenery and public spaces (Jarosław Matla 2012)

Still, the tinsel of new and gated estates can attract many potential buyers. Some of the interlocutors who finally move into the old part of Nowa Huta were seriously considered buying an apartment in gated estates in Ruczaj, but after few visits they rejected the idea: *"We were looking for, first Ruczaj, but Ruczaj busted. There, after seeing three or four flats we realised that this not make any sense. Besides, it suddenly turned out that Ruczaj just so built up, there is no space at all for not a single tree and a made a terrible paranoia, one big housing estate just the concrete (...). Flats in Nowa Huta are more,so to speak, pro-family. Here everything is "normal": the kitchen is always a kitchen, there is e such silly, abstract design."* (IDI 14) *"Well, why not looking for anything in the new buildings? (...). Because, there is no basements (...). Imagine that, well, winter tires of your car is going to hang in the bedroom, just above your bed."* (IDI 10)

The criticism wasn't focused only on space composition, but also the social relationships in new housing: *"All of those buildings constructed now (...) well, they are okay if one have to live there: just for coming in and going away, you own your parking lot, well, it is working only in this way, but no for the family life, social life... Well, here (in Nowa Huta) is cool, because there are relatively many friends here ..."* (IDI 17)

To sum up, regarding their relations with new neighbours in the old part of Nowa Huta, the respondents note concerned neighbours and traditional methods of social control. In theirs opinion they are "sympathetic" and more "human", compared with those that can be observed in the new settlements:
„K: So it's not intrusive (social control – J.G.), because there is more of sympathy I would say.
M: We don't have our internet forum, where we would have a chance to know if someone talk over anyone else.
M: Nobody leaves a post-it on your doors (...).
M: Like at the European Estate, where post-it was used when it was too loud, the day after the party

K: not to mention the fact that thee is no CCR, that define the colour of the curtains etc." (IDI 8)

Conclusions

The paper offers a critical perspective on the changes that the Polish housing market faced after 1995, when well-organized developer companies offered the first gated communities. The striking presence and popularity of such a communities based on the promoted "uniqueness" and actual "sameness" makes them the most preferred type of newly built estates on the housing market.

Still, this omnipresence is weakening their distinctive power – the lifestyle of such communities, inscribed to the middle classes, becomes more evident, and more criticized, by those who are looking for a different modes of living and different social and geographical locations, those known as marginal gentrifiers. Their highly sceptical attitude towards the dominant consumer patterns could be read as a kind of emancipatory practice, which – according to classical studies of such marginal processes – is characteristic of "pioneers" of urban change strongly interested in looking for diversity in the urban realm.

The situation described in the paper is based on the two particular sites, newly built Ruczaj, treated as an example of a gated community district, and the old part of Nowa Huta, a well planned district undergoing marginal gentrification. Those two cases provide the framework to illustrate the creation and development of different "modernized milieus" for both those called the producers of gentrification and its consumers. One should appeal to the category milieu. It seems particularly useful in the case of transition from the traditionally recognized class society to a society based on more liquid categories, such as a lifestyle (cf. ALHEIT 1999, 2003; MOCHMANN and EL-MENOUAR 2005; VESTER 2005).

As Gerhard SCHULTZE Peter ALHEIT pointed out, we – due to on-going aestheticization of urban environment and urban life – are currently experiencing a gradual change from a class society to the 'lifestyle' /'event society' (ALHEIT 1999) or experience society (SCHULTZE 1992). The role of the new milieus is crucial as they are capable of creating "a new identity based more on the lifestyle than on the attributes of 'income' or 'title', alone. The traditional class boundaries, which run vertically, are joined by horizontal symbolic and real borders that are perhaps even more effective at creating distances" (ALHEIT 1999).

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Résumé

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Vendeurs de rêve contre boboïsation (ou gentrification): réflexions sur la consommation sur le marché polonais du logement

Cet article se focalise sur les opinions d'un groupe de „bobos" parmi ceux qui ont décidé d'aller s'installer au cœur de la cité socialiste idéale de Nowa Huta, un arrondissement qui est généralement perçu comme défavorisé et dangereux. Ces marginaux aisés comparent leur nouveau quartier à un milieu urbain et social différent, le très convoité quartier des communautés fermées situé dans une autre partie de Cracovie, le nouvel arrondissement de Ruczaj. Leurs opinions et surtout leurs choix originaux offrent une opportunité de débattre du rôle d'un nouveau type de marché important: celui de l'habitat et d'un nouveau type de client qui est fortement intéressé par la création d'un style de vie.

Marché du logement, ville postsocialiste, quartiers fermés, boboïsation marginale, style de vie

Резюме

Яцек Гадецки

К вопросу о поведении потребителей на польском рынке жилья – «романтическая» джентрификация

В настоящей работе анализируются мнения группы «романтиков от джентрификации», решившихся на переезд в самое сердце социалистического образцового жилого района Кракова Нова-Хута (*Nowa Huta*), в район, который вообще считается депрессивным и небезопасным. В ответах приезжие сравнивают свой новый жилой район с иной городской социальной средой, а именно, с востребованными и ухоженными изолированными жилыми комплексами/кондоминиумами, находящимися в новом городском районе Ручай (*Ruczaj*) расположенном в другой части Кракова. Их точка зрения и особенно их непопулярные решения дают возможность обсудить роль нового и важного вида рынка – рынка жилья – а также роль нового типа клиента – клиента, который имеет большой интерес к созданию соответствующего образа/стиля жизни.

Рынок жилья, постсоциалистический город, закрытые кондоминиумы, маргинальная джентрификация, стиль жизни