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The Meaning of the Urban Recreational Space in the Process of Designing Outdoor Creative Events: The Case of Łódź

Znaczenie miejskiej przestrzeni rekreacyjnej w procesie organizacji plenerowych wydarzeń twórczych: przykład Łodzi

Abstract: Leisure activities have become a significant value for society, so the offer of urban events is gaining importance. The urban recreational space offers diverse conditions, especially noticed by the organisers. The originality of events is sought after by the public, and participation experiences have been extensively investigated. The aim of this article is to reconstruct the process of organising events. The organisers' point of view seems to be important in broadening the spectrum of research into the experience of events. The research problem of the study was related to what urban recreational space means to organisers in the process of designing outdoor creative events using the example of Łódź. The results were based on the interpretation of interviews and an analysis of the ethnographic visual study. The importance of the relationship of the organisers with the urban space was investigated, and the different elements of its organisation: accessibility, amenities, cooperation of the entities. Their work comfort and stimulating conditions for the development of creative ideas can translate into an improved quality of life in the city.

Keywords: urban recreational space; creative leisure; designing events; Łódź

Abstrakt: Aktywność rekreacyjna staje się istotną wartością dla społeczeństwa, dlatego oferta wydarzeń miejskich zyskuje na znaczeniu. Miejska przestrzeń rekreacyjna oferuje różnorodne warunki, na co szczególnie zwracają uwagę organizatorzy. Społeczeństwo jednocześnie wymaga oryginalności wydarzeń, a doświadczenia związane z uczestnictwem w nich zostały już szeroko zbadane. Celem artykułu jest rekonstrukcja procesu organizacji wydarzeń. Punkt widzenia organizatorów wydaje się istotny dla poszerzenia spektrum badań nad doświadczaniem wydarzeń. Problem

badawczy artykułu dotyczył tego, czym jest miejska przestrzeń rekreacyjna dla organizatorów w procesie projektowania plenerowych wydarzeń twórczych na przykładzie Łodzi. Wyniki oparto na interpretacji wywiadów oraz analizie etnograficznego badania wizualnego. Zbadano znaczenie relacji organizatorów z przestrzenią miejską i poszczególnych elementów jej organizacji: dostępności, udogodnień, współpracy podmiotów. Komfort pracy i stymulujące warunki do rozwoju twórczych inicjatyw mogą przełożyć się na poprawę jakości życia w mieście.

Słowa kluczowe: miejska przestrzeń rekreacyjna; twórcza rekreacja; projektowanie wydarzeń; Łódź

INTRODUCTION

Referencing recent turns to studying space and affect within leisure studies, it seems important to analyse how people relate to and understand urban environments (Merchant 2017). Free-time activities in urban recreational space are taking on new forms, innovations, and making use of changes in infrastructure arrangements and identity (Mokras-Grabowska 2019, 2020). Society is looking for innovative and original forms of leisure activities also in the context of individual strategy to cope with diseases and disabilities (Creek 2008). Therefore, both Stevenson (2006) and Hegarty (2009) call for a debate on access to such services and a concept – creative leisure. Oh et al. (2001) also pointed out the lack of widespread accessibility to this type of activity. Creative leisure activities in urban spaces are increasingly being explored in a variety of contexts, as a strategy for the development of the city (Campbell 2011), or even as a solution to collectively improve the social, cultural, environmental, and economic quality of life of communities (Ortega Nuere, Verdet Peris 2019). The importance of creative events in urban space is growing, but accessibility seems to be insufficient. There may be a lack of knowledge about the experiences of designing creative events from the perspective of the organisers: Why do they want to create them, what do they stimulate or inhabit in the urban recreational space?

The importance of creating the right conditions to support grassroots initiatives for creative activities in urban spaces is pointed out (Wall 2012), but not just in popular public spaces. The appropriate development of urban recreational space can foster the emergence of new venues for events, for example, the assurance of comfort and safety (Held 2015), inclusiveness (Hindley 2018), accessibility (Johnson, Glover 2013), and attractiveness (Mokras-Grabowska 2018). It seems crucial to analyse the right conditions from the organisers' experiences of designing the outdoor creative events.

The analysis of events in the context of the experiences of participants has been popularised by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 2011) as experience economy.

Currently, the study of experiences resulting from the organisation of events is the subject of quantitative and qualitative research (e.g. Moss et al. 2019; Simons 2020). The ways in which the measurement and meaning of experiencing events is carried out is increasingly debated, particularly in the area of research on event participation experiences (Biaett, Richards 2020), participants' motivations (Salerno 2009), types of activities (Trnka et al. 2016), preferences (Van Holm 2014) in creative leisure activities. Little is still known about the supply side of the market. Therefore, it is important to determine what urban space means to organisers in the process of designing events.

Reconstructing the process of organising events from the point of view of the organisers, therefore, seems important in broadening the spectrum of research into the experience of events. Events should be carefully planned and executed to weave narratives (content) into places (context), and their design should not be ignored (Brown, James 2004). As Antchak (2018) has argued, space is an important context for organising events, as it becomes a new way of reading urban space. The phenomenon of outdoor creative events can also be analysed through the aspect of external factors affecting creativity described in psychology and pedagogy of creativity (e.g. Runco, Jaeger 2012; Kozbelt et al. 2010), especially in the context of creative cities (Florida 2010, Landry 2013) because they focus on the physical and sociocultural environment favours or blocks creative activity. Creating creative places has become a strategy with cities and regions seeking to increase their attractiveness (Richards 2020).

The example of analysing the experiences of creative event organisers in Łódź seems apt given that the city has been part of the UCCN (UNESCO Creative City Network) since 2017 as "Łódź, UNESCO City of Film" (Urząd Miasta Łodzi 2017). Łódź is described as a city of creative explorations where a specific tourist and artistic space is created (Mokras-Grabowska 2014). In particular, examples of the use of post-industrial spaces as new recreational spaces stand out (Mokras-Grabowska 2018; Mroczek-Żulicka 2015, 2018).

The main goal of this paper is to reconstruct the experiences of the organisers of outdoor creative events that accompany the organisation of these events. The research question concerns what urban recreational space means for organisers in the process of designing outdoor creative events in the case of UNESCO Creative City of Film – Łódź. On the basis of this research process, the most relevant conditions and factors influencing the undertaking of creative events were determined. To deepen the results of the interviews, a visual survey made it possible to clarify the meaning these organisers give to selected fragments of space, describing them as "their own creative places". The research questions covered the following issues: What is the importance of urban recreational space

for the organisation of outdoor creative events? How does the process of or-
ganising outdoor creative events work? How is the urban recreational space
perceived in Łódź?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research problem emphasises the relationship between humans and space,
as well as the perception of space and the making of meaning, using a humanistic
approach in contemporary research within human geography (Rembowska 2013).
In this perspective we may speak of using a humanistic approach to analyse urban
space, and places, i.e. as it is experienced, felt by the organisers of creative events.
An important context for the research was also the use of the concept of place
(Walmsley, Lewis 1993). Humans, through their experience, transform space into
"places", understood as concentrations of meaning based on a sense of identity
with a particular fragment of space, according to Tuan (1987). Therefore, the
author conducted the visual study of the organisers' creative places.

In the research author also focused on urban recreational space which trans-
formations are described in the literature. Examples are the studies of Mottiar
and Walsh (2012), which traced changes in the development of leisure space
in the context of demographic change using Dublin as an example. In turn, Yuen
and Johnson (2017) analysed the potential of leisure spaces for local community
building. In their publication, they used the concept of "third place" proposed
by Oldenburg (1999), also important to this research, which distinguishes three
spheres of human activity: work, home, and social life. The term "third place"
is understood as a space where social life is concentrated. Thus, various forms
of creative events are also realised in "third places". This concept is again ex-
plored in the context of current research on leisure spaces (Hindley 2018; Yuen,
Johnson 2017).

Numerous definitions of space where leisure behaviour can be observed can
be found in the literature (Mottiar, Walsh 2012; Yuen, Johnson 2017). Research
on urban recreational space conducted by Mokras-Grabowska (2017, 2018, 2019)
was particularly useful. Therefore, the concept of urban recreational space is un-
derstood in the article as a part of the urban space where recreational activities
of both residents and visitors take place. Due to the wide spectrum of recrea-
tional space elements, the research in this article focused on outdoor creative
events. This choice made it possible to refer to widely discussed issues related
to recreational development of urban areas, or the potential of public space for
the development of recreation (Pawlikowska-Piechotka 2009; Tanaś et al. 2008;
Wantuch-Matla 2016).

The need for research on creative activities in urban space is exposed. Whiting and Hannam (2015) point to a scarcity of publications describing the relationship between creativity, self-expression, and leisure activities. Salerno (2009) conducted a study on motivations to participate in creative leisure activities. Trnka et al. (2016) examined how emotional creativity is related to real-world engagement in different types of creative leisure activities and to four categories of fields of study. A qualitative study of daily creativity was conducted by Elisondo and Vargas (2019) in a selected group of women.

It was therefore necessary to review the literature on the concept of creativity and the determinants of the development of creative activities, explained in the broadest way in psychology and the pedagogy of creativity. Creativity is usually defined as a process leading to the generation of new, original, and useful, effective products (Runco, Jaeger 2012). Based on psychopedagogical theories explaining the phenomenon of creativity, the author used an operational definition of creative events in the described research. Creative recreation is an activity undertaken in leisure time with such characteristics as:

– novelty – introducing something new, going beyond the routine proposals, distinguished by its originality in terms of organisation, theme, place of activity in comparison with other forms of activity in a similar place and time,

– value, in terms of at least one of the following criteria: social usefulness, developing ethically, aesthetically, cognitively, spiritually or culturally.

The research described here focuses on events of creative recreation organised in Łódź in 2019 in open space. The role of events is growing, but it is less known about the practical, micro aspects of design and far more about how events are designed to meet a range of different needs and aspirations for the society (Richards et al. 2014). Event design started to be considered as a contributor to value creation and an ongoing pursuit carried out over time and space. Therefore, it seems interesting how this value is co-created by actors – one of them is the organiser (Orefice 2018). The event organisers are also called one of key players in the event industry (Dowson, Basset 2015). In the article, the author focused on one part of organising event called pre-event management (Berners 2017) or event planning from the organisers point of view. In this part of the process, the organisers answer crucial questions of what the purposes, motives, and objectives of the event are (Dowson, Basset 2015). In this research, the author reconstructs the experience event designing searching for the role of urban recreational space in event planning. This aim can broaden discussion of how events and the utilised urban spaces can be the site of contestation and negotiation over place, identity, and access (McGillivray, Duignan 2022).

To explain the importance and meaning of urban recreational space for the development of outdoor creative events, the author used systemic theories of creativity (Kozbelt et al. 2010) which analyse the social determinants of creativity. Thanks to them, creativity was described in the context of a complex system of interacting and interrelated factors: e.g. Kozielecki's (1997) theory of creative transgressions, Sternberg and Lubart's (1991) investment theory of creativity, Simonton's (2010, 2018) historiometric concept, Csikszentmihalyi's (2009) systemic theory of creativity, Amabile's (1983, 1996) component theory of creativity, Stasiakiewicz's (1999) interaction system theory, Urban's (2003) model of creativity, Schulz's (1990) ecological theory and Florida's (2010) concept of creative class. The above-mentioned theories emphasise the role of non-subjective conditions of creativity, which became the foundation of the research assumptions. Therefore, concepts such as inhibitors and stimulators of creativity, explained within the framework of the above-mentioned theories, were used.

The main research problem undertaken in this paper is concerned with what urban recreational space means for organisers in the process of designing outdoor creative events, using the case of Łódź. It seemed crucial to identify and explain what is inspiring in the urban recreational space from the perspective of the selected respondents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To reconstruct the experience of organising creative events in the context of the role and importance of urban space, assumptions of humanistic geography were used. In the presented study, two techniques were implemented: free interviews and ethnographic visual survey. As Davies and Jaimangal-Jones (2020) argue, to truly understand the complexity of event experience and meaning, rich data needs to be collected and ethnographic and constructionist approaches should be used. The author decided to use grounded theory method (GTM) (e.g. Geiselhart et al. 2012; Knigge, Cope 2006) and methodological triangulation (Yeung 1997) to answer the research questions in the broadest possible way. The results of the ethnographic visual survey deepened the answers from the free interviews. First, the respondents described their process of organising events (free interviews) and then selected organisers interpreted the meaning of space in their experience (ethnographic visual survey). Methodological triangulation has several advantages. It gives the opportunity to capture issues from different perspectives, collect results that can be enriched and mutually verified, and it gives the opportunity to minimise errors and limitations of one method or research technique.

The GTM assumptions were useful for an in-depth research interpretation of what urban space means to organisers in the event design process, without assumptions and ready-made answers. The respondents during the free interviews and ethnographic visual survey reconstructed their experiences of organising events, and thanks to this it was possible to reach the subjective meanings they give to space (Konecki 2005). The pioneers of GTM are considered to be Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, who aimed to learn the perspective of the social actors under study and to capture the processual dimension of the phenomena under study through systematic data collection. Consequently, it is possible to build a theory (Konecki 2008). The theory underpinning the explanation of the data "emerges" from coding the collected research material (Charmaz 2009).

The purpose of the interviews (using the interviewing method described by Kvale (2010) was to analyse such issues as: the role of the organisation of recreational space in Łódź in the development of creative recreation, the description of the activities undertaken by the respondents in urban recreational space, the reconstruction of the experience and interpretation of the above-mentioned activities among the respondents, and the perception of recreational space.

The interviews were conducted according to a prepared interview script in 2019 with a group of 10 organisers. The respondents were selected on the basis of a search of outdoor creative events organised in 2019 in Łódź, and in their selection the diversity of the types of actors they represent was ensured. The interviewed organisers were people between 30 and 60 years old, representing NGOs (3 interviews), public institutions (3 interviews), grassroots initiatives (3 interviews) and a private company (1 interview).

Data analysis was performed according to a qualitative approach, coding (Konecki 2008), using NVivo CAQDAS software. During the coding process, main codes and subcodes were specified, which detailed the themes taken up in the interviews and then became the basis for analysing the links between them and creating interpretative categories with the use of the continuous comparison method. The analysis allowed reconstruction of the process of experiencing the organisation of events. The selected and willing interviewees were then invited for an ethnographic visual survey.

The ethnographic visual survey aimed to obtain an in-depth observation and interpretation of urban recreational space by the respondents. This was done by respondents indicating 3 to 5 pictures of "my creative places" and justifying their choice during an additional interpretative interview. Visual methods and photography are considered in the social sciences as the most appropriate means for carrying out both social research on the meanings given to geographical space (Duda 2020; Konecki 2005; Mordwa 2003; Sztompka 2005; Tobiasz-Lis, Wójcik

Tab. 1. Characteristics of the interviewed organisers of creative events

Inter-view no.	Name of the entity	Organisational form	Examples of organisation or co-organisa-tion of creative events
O1	"Łódź od drugiego wejrzenia"	Grassroots initiative	"W bierki z dziadkiem, w klasy z babcią" – family picnic
O2	Bałucki Ośrodek Kultury	Public institu-tion	"Bałuckie sPloty – Bałuty Po Łódzku" – backyard games
O3	Ośrodek Kultury Górna	Public institu-tion	"Plac Zabaw Twórczych. Wakacyjne Inter-wencje Artystyczne" – family arts picnic
O4	Centrum Dialogu im. M. Edelmana w Łodzi	Public institu-tion	"Tęskniąc za domem..." – jazz concert inspired by music played in 1945–1949
O5	"Krzyżówka"	Grassroots initiative	"Ustawki plastyczne na Starym Rynku"
O6	Centrum Inicjatyw na Rzecz Regionu REGIO	NGO	"Haftowany kolaż rewolucyjny"
O7	"Łódzki Detal"	Grassroots initiative	"Łowcy detali. Spacery śladem łódzkich detali architektonicznych: Wycieczka szlakiem łódzkich rzeźb plenerowych"
O8	Fundacja "Przędzalnia Sztuki"	NGO	"Miejskie KODY kultury _IMPROWIZ-ACJE _Plenerowe warsztaty per formaty-wno-choreograficzne"
O9	Stowarzyszenie "Społecznie Zaan-gażowani"	NGO	"Republika wakacji"
O10	"Szlifiernia Szczęścia"	Private com-pany	"Filmowy Kurort w Pasażu Róży"

Source: Author's own study.

2014). Visual research has also been carried out in event studies (Davies, Jaiman-gal-Jones 2020). The organisers (4 people) who participated in the visual survey provided the author with 19 photographs. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed and coded using the NVivo CAQDAS software. The ethnographic visual survey provided a very rich set of additional content and meanings that extended the collected research material.

RESULTS

Reconstructing the experience of organisation

The interpretation of the collected material made it possible to distinguish stimulators and inhibitors in the different stages of the process of organising outdoor creative events. This analysis helped to answer the research questions: How does the process of organising outdoor creative events work? What is the importance of urban recreational space for the organisation of outdoor creative events? How is the urban recreational space perceived in Łódź? The process of organising events was divided into the following stages: creation of an idea (including definition of the goals), confrontation of the goals with their own organisational and technical possibilities, promotional activities, effect of the analysed event (Fig. 1).

The main sources of ideas for the organisation of events were the organiser's personal interests, passions, and talents. Important factors also include the desire to show or discover the city and to carry out activities for others. At this stage of the process, inspirations related to urban space, as well as observed new social needs and leisure activities, were particularly stimulating for the organisation.

IDEA

STIMULATORS: inispirations from urban space; new social needs; new ways of spending leisure time	**INHIBITORS:** inconsistent city policy on events management

CAPABILITIES

STIMULATORS: cooperation network; instruments and tools of support from local authorities	**INHIBITORS:** formal and legal activities; free of charge events; insufficient development and safety of urban space

PROMOTION

STIMULATORS: network of cooperation; government support	**INHIBITORS:** limited own funds; competition

EFFECT

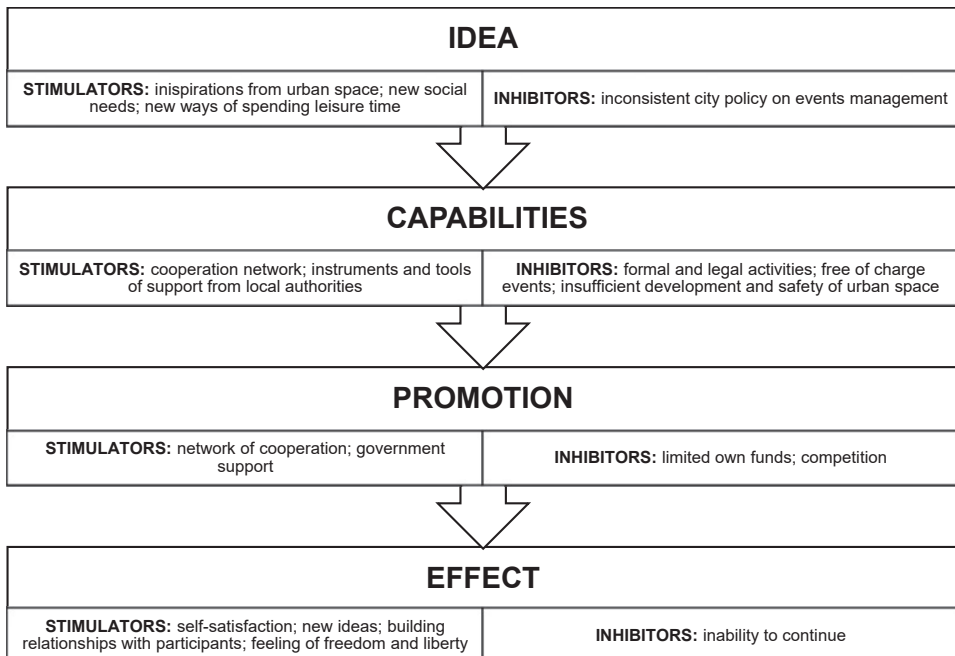|	
STIMULATORS: self-satisfaction; new ideas; building relationships with participants; feeling of freedom and liberty	**INHIBITORS:** inability to continue

Fig. 1. Stimulators and inhibitors in the organisation process of open-air creative events
Source: Author's own study.

The most important source of inspiration for organising creative events in the open air was the widely used urban space, especially the history of places and objects in Łódź and the discovery of hitherto unknown areas.

> And these kinds of stories of smaller people who actually made up the main fabric, that is, workers, the labourers, the strikes by women who worked in the factory, for example, it's not talked about because it's dirty, you don't touch it and even these people don't want to know what it was really like there. I have the impression that it was really like there. And for us that's the real picture, we don't want it to fade away. We don't want to, so we decided, to encode this image again in a form referring to sculpture, to performance art, to painting, to music and to encode, as it were, this past in new ways. (Organiser 8)

The organisers seem to have paid less attention to infrastructural facilities in their choice of venue. More important was its idea of the event and the coherence with the objectives of organised creative recreation and the desire to show participants, often city residents, a new place and its heritage or to rediscover it. An appropriately chosen venue made it possible to deepen the message and provide more stimuli, including aesthetic ones.

> I find it very important that these things happen in the space, to show that it is worth using this space, to build a sense that it is our common space, that is, to take care of it, to make it valuable to us. (O3)

In turn, the lack of coherence of urban policy in terms of development strategies and oversight of such events and initiatives was inhibiting. The interviewed organisers made the accusation that it was impossible to continue valuable initiatives without funding sources.

The idea of organising an event and its purpose was confronted later stage with organisational and technical possibilities, which was dubbed "organisational machinery" or "necessary evil". These statements were explained by the time-consuming nature of their implementation. Cooperation networks have been an improvement in this aspect. In this way, it was possible to organise a more interesting event and attract a larger audience.

> We invite different organisations to join us so they can show what they are doing... to the community of the city. (O2)

The cooperation was not only about developing the idea but also about technical and organisational support. Important stimulators included support tools

such as financial instruments, support programmes, and local government units willing to cooperate with the organisers. Additional funding has been a great help in organising events, without which opportunities are limited. By raising funds, events of this type can be better organised, continued and more can be organised.

> They become difficult because unfortunately everything costs money and that money has to be raised somewhere. If we wanted to implement all our ideas, we cannot physically afford to do so, which is why we obtain external funding, which is becoming increasingly difficult, because everyone is trying. But money, unfortunately, is very important. (O2)

On the other hand, tedious formal and legal procedures were discouraging and hindered the organisation of the events analysed. The difficulty was that the events were free, as the budget did not include receipts from participants. Neglect of cleanliness, development, and safety were also identified as impeding the development of the phenomenon under study.

The respondents stressed the importance of adequate promotion of events. A stimulus in this element of the process was the use of cooperation networks and the support of individual local government units, providing promotional support for initiatives. The limited funds allocated for promotion had a negative impact on the reception and interest of potential participants in creative events. A greater challenge then was to promote one's own initiative against the background of the rich offer of events in the city.

> We, as a foundation, also have limited resources at the moment, so we are not able to spend tens of thousands on advertising our projects to increase reach, so the budget is much smaller for advertising and promotional activities, which is not always positive, because you know it is always about advertising and money. (O9)

The positive effect of the organised event appreciated by the audience and the self-satisfaction of the organisers was stimulating for the development of further activities. The relationship built with the participants and the expectations they showed for new ideas positively influenced their willingness to initiate events. The sense of freedom felt by the organisers, brought about by the organisation of events in the open air, made them more willing to plan further initiatives. The only, albeit important, limitation to the development of activities was the impossibility of continuing or creating a series of events due to various kinds of constraints (e.g. discouragement, bureaucracy), including, of course the most, financial ones.

Creative places of the organisers

The analysis of the research with the organisers revealed a distinctive category of their relationship and their sense of identity with the city. This was considered an important perspective for considering the main determinants and experiences of organising creative events. All respondents live in Łódź, although not all of them come from this city. The strong relationship with the city was connected to the knowledge and respect for "peculiar" history of Łódź. Understanding the identity of Łódź led the city to "attract", "inspire" and "fascinate" them. Participants in the study were asked to take or indicate the three photographs most consistent with their interpretation of the statement "My creative place". That deepened the answer to the research question. How is the urban recreational space perceived in Łódź? The places photographed were usually open spaces, buildings, and rarely their interiors. Relatively often, photographs depicted courtyards, streets, squares, and more extensive areas around one chosen location.

The analysis resulted in the characterisation of creative places which, in the author's opinion, had the following common features:

1. They were important and close to the respondents (they were related to them).

A photograph of a building, located in Helenów Park in Łódź. The park was created by the Anstadt family (owners of the brewery) in the 1880s and was originally a private park, famous for hosting many events. The photographed building was partly unused, the other parts belonged to a private company and a sports club. The choice of this photograph was justified by the frequent use of the park space as a place for walks and relaxation. The photographed building and its history (it once housed the restaurant owned by the Anstadts – owners of the historic Helenów Park) were also important to the researcher. Its poor state was a source of concern and at the same time an inspiration to plan actions for its change: "it is a symbol of Łódź's history and heritage, and how something interesting can be done with it today" (O6).

Fig. 2. Interpretation of the photograph "An old restaurant with potential"
Source: Author's own study based on a photograph provided by O6.

2. They knew the history and understood the changes that were taking place in these places.
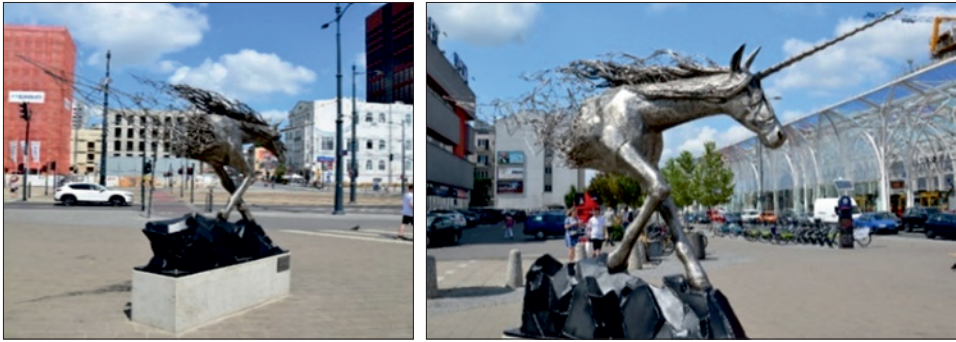
The photographs show the area around the so-called "transfer centre" – the "Centrum" tram station, known in Łódź as "Przesiadkowo", or the "Unicorn Stable" at Mickiewicza Avenue (Śródmieście). The station includes, among others, a Unicorn monument (visible on both photos), "Central" cooperative department store, and the "Manhattan" housing project. North of it you can see the representative part of Piotrkowska Street (promenade), modernist tenement houses and at that time construction of a new hotel (Hampton by Hilton Łódź City Centre). This kind of "contact", in which the richness and diversity of transformations and elements of Łódź's space can be observed, evoked joy, but also sadness that certain elements were demolished for new investments. The place was inspiring and frequently used by the respondent both in her private and professional life. The respondent values it greatly: "in Łódź, I am driven by this overlapping of layers, orders, emotions, time. This is great for me. It's a constant construction in process" (O7).

Fig. 3. Interpretation of the photograph "Syncretism of space"
Source: Author's own study based on a photograph provided by O7.

3. They were rediscovered, the respondents sought surprises and discoveries, looked for symbolic contents and meanings in them.

The above photographs are of backyards on Młynarska Street in the northern district (Bałuty). The respondent chose them because of her fascination with the neighbourhood, which she described as inspiring, diverse, colourful, unusual and "not obvious". A designated part of the district used to house the Łódź Ghetto, and nowadays you can still see the neglected residential areas. In her work as a tour guide in Bałuty, she talks not only about its difficult history but also about the present day. She shows various "flavours" of Bałuty in order to "disenchant" it and share her discoveries. The place evoked conflicting emotions in the respondent. On the one hand, she recognised the difficult history, neglect or social problems of the inhabitants, while on the other she was able to admire the charm, artistic initiatives and atmosphere of the area: "However, I see some charm in it and this turpist Łódź is also somewhere in me and I like this kind of atmosphere" (O4).

Fig. 4. Interpretation of the photograph "Contrasts"
Source: Author's own study based on a photograph provided by O4.

4. They were used in both their private and professional lives.

The above photographs were taken at Piotrkowska Street in the Środmiescie district (main street). The first one shows an acrobat walking on a rope during the "Hokus Pokus" Street Art Festival organised in Łódź. The second one shows a cube located on one of the tenement houses (87 Piotrkowska Street), with the inscription "Live colourfully" visible on the picture. The choice of these photographs, and above all Piotrkowska as a creative location, was obvious to the respondent. Piotrkowska Street was particularly important and close to her and inspired her both in her private and professional life. In her work as a guide she always takes her groups to this street: "this is, I believe, the backbone of Łódź" (O4). She associated Piotrkowska with numerous personal memories, and she still spends her free time there. Living nearby, it is also the site of her daily walks and shopping. The respondent also agreed with the inscription on the cube, it is her motto. For her, both the writing on the cube and the acrobat were proof that the city is full of surprise and life. She likes to explore Łódź (backyards, nooks and crannies), absorbing the atmosphere of city life. For her, Piotrkowska Street was the most important place in Łódź: "I really love it" (O4).

Fig. 5. Interpretation of the photograph "Live colourfully"
Source: Author's own study based on a photograph provided by O4.

The identification of these kinds of places allowed for a broader understanding of how elements of space (above all – the relationship to them) can foster, inspire innovative and valuable actions.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The described study broadened the spectrum of analysis of event design and experiences in the events but from the organisers point of view. The results underlined the importance of urban recreational space, and especially what the right conditions are for organising creative events in urban space in the opinion of the selected respondents in the case of Łódź – the example of a postindustrial city and the UNESCO Creative City of Film. The respondents described their perception of the urban recreational space in Łódź, and based on their experiences explained the process of organising outdoor creative events. Among the stimulators and inhibitors for the organisation of the analysed events described by the respondents, three aspects were highlighted in particular: the widely understood

accessibility and amenities of urban recreational space, the cooperation of creative people, and the strong identification of the organisers with the city.

The organisation of the events analysed was favoured by the adequate accessibility of the space and its natural and anthropogenic qualities. The urban recreational space was assessed as attractive, "encouraging" and "inspirational" for activities. It even became the subject of organised events, not just their background. The concept of accessibility is related to one of the criteria for the attractiveness of public space (Wantuch-Matla 2016), and refers to the possibility of free use, bridging barriers of physical and non-physical nature, for people of all ages. In this context, communication accessibility is of lesser importance. The research highlighted the importance of this aspect and identified the most important challenges for improving accessibility: improved infrastructure for outdoor events, greater attention to cleanliness and safety of recreational spaces. In terms of improving access control, it is important to minimise the difficulties associated with obtaining permissions for open space events. The accessibility of the space is also important for the users and recipients of the proposed events, the inhabitants. It increases the quality of life of the urban community, which has been an important postulate of a number of researchers of urban space (e.g. Biaganski et al. 2009; Bielecki, Będkowski 2020; Dawid 2019; Dymnicka 2013; Kongres Ruchów Miejskich 2020; Meyer et al. 2016; Pawlikowska-Piechotka 2009). The results coincide with ideas about the conditions for the development of creative cities and elements of the pro-creative environment, in which one of the most important determinants affecting creative processes in the city is the quantity, quality, diversity and accessibility of various arrangements of facilities and elements of public infrastructure (Landry 2013).

The essence and advantages of cooperation between the organisers of the phenomenon analysed were highlighted. It allows for more elaborate events (Zieff et al. 2016). The role of networking and relationship development in their initiatives is also underlined by the researcher (O'Brien, Gardiner 2006). The aspect of cooperation between artists was also discussed in the context of the discussion of creative environments and cities (Landry 2013; Popek 2003).

Strong identification of the organisers with the city is the third very important determinant. The richness of relationships, connections, and feelings towards the city have heightened their ingenuity, desire to act, and to change the image of the city. Consequently, it is also an important aspect of creating a pro-creative environment (Kozielecki 2008). According to the concept of Florida (2010), members of the creative class seek places where they can build and shape their own identity. Their own interpretation of space, which was a very important

determinant of the organisation of the analysed events, fits in with the concept of the study of a personal city (Majer 2015).

Using the statements of the organisers interviewed, it was possible to high-light the essence of "place", its creative character, its dependence on individual experience, its influence on actions undertaken, and its perception (Jędrzejczyk 2007). The interviewed organisers described their own "place" – city of Łódź as a creative source of inspiration. They perceived is as close to them, useful in their private and professional lives, allowing rediscovery through understand-ing. Their interpretation and meaning of own "place" can broaden described indicators of creative place in urban space (Rahimi Gendeshmin et al. 2023).

The environment of an urban recreational space considered as creative influ-ences the inhabitants, the participants of the events, and its organisers. By con-ducting research in one calendar year in Łódź, explanations were sought for the subjective phenomenon of a peculiar "spirit of the times", were sought, which is at the same time one limitation of this study. Consequently, this subjectivity may raise some concerns about interpretative possibilities and limitations, but using the assumptions of visual sociology (Sztompka 2005), tested methods and tools of analysis were used. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised. There-fore, it was puzzling whether the occurrence of creative activities in a certain place and time might increase in the future and in which directions. It would be interesting to carry out further research to explain the presence of creative people, including outstanding artists, in Łódź.

The author hopes that the importance of individual relationships with space and outdoor creative initiatives highlighted in the analysis will allow further deepening of research on the experience of events not only from the point of view of participants but also organisers. Their work comfort and stimulating conditions for the development of creative ideas can translate into an improved quality of life in the city, what is expected by the society. The urban recreational space requires changes that increase accessibility to creative events. This can have a positive impact on the ability of its residents to develop their daily needs.

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