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Between Fear and Admiration. Social and Spatial Ghettoes in an Old Industrial Region

It would be more decorous not to live. To live is not decorous,
Says he who after many years
Returned to the city of his youth. There was no one left
Of those who once walked these streets.
And now they had nothing, except his eyes (...)

Czesław Miłosz
(City of my youth, *Facing the river*. Cracow 1994)

Abstract: More and more frequently a notion of space ghettoization is used to describe a phenomenon of dividing urban space into various enclaves of social life—or socially isolated worlds. Ghettoization that we describe results from various social processes which are increasingly reflected in urban space. It results from differences in the economic standard of inhabitants of given areas (riches–poverty) There is one more criterion, very important if we view the case from a profoundly humanistic perspective—the criterion of social emotions accompanying urban space. This justifies the title of this article.

Today's ghettoes may result from relatively automatic choices (lifestyles) and relatively objective processes—marginalization. We will try to make a general outline of the problems of ghettoization in a traditional industrial region, namely in Upper Silesia, related to diversification of income as well as the aesthetic and architectonic and urban criteria.

Keywords: ghetto, ghettoization, Upper Silesia, old industrial region, marginalization, exclusion

Introduction

The main goal of this article is describing two types of ghettoes: social and spatial, located in traditional industrial region, Upper Silesia.

The first of them are ghettoes of poverty. Since 1989, that is the beginning of the system transformation, a degradation of the entire urban sectors can be observed in the former Katowice, and present Silesia Voivodship. This concerns areas, where flats of closed down factories were located. The observed poverty pockets are identical with the sociological term of natural area, that is an area inhabited by the population of

common professional tradition, interests, or other cultural features (mining districts can be a model example). Poverty pockets become a sort of ghettos. They originated as the result of degradation of city quarters located just near big industrial plants.

The second type, which are not very often in Silesia region yet, ghettos of affluence, have the roots in the transformation processes. Even though very rarely they could be described as typical *gated communities* but for sure they could be identify as a place of good ecological condition, higher economical status of inhabitants and also higher level of education and aspiration what means the place where nascent middle class is living.

Well planned estates of colorful houses, reminding the Lego buildings, with the streets named by cartoon creature or other pop culture heroes. Estates of prosperity more and more frequently, very clearly separate form the city space. Located in the attractive form ecological point of view areas, fence off with clearly marked borders. Borders have here the double meaning. Not only literal (wall, fence, gate) but also metaphorical one—social borders, which divided citizens for the rich and the present and the poor—the absent. Borders create two societies: “luxuries and normal” and “poor and pathological.”

In our project we also analyzed 650 digital photos made in Tychy, Katowice, Świetochłowice, Będzin, Czeladź, Ruda Śląska, Bytom and Sosnowiec in January / June 2006. We were trying to answer for following questions: how does the ghettos in cities of Silesian voivodship look like? Who are actors who play the main role in the processes of ghettoization, how do their daily life goes on?

Fear and admiration, contempt and envy, escape and missing. The most important result for us is a portray and characteristic process of *ghettoization* in an old industrial region, and also paying attention on the reason and result of ghettos in our region.

What is the Ghettoization Process?¹

Traditionally the notion of ghetto causes an association with World War II and the problem of isolation of the Jewish community from the rest of the society; however, few people know that the first ghetto in the world was set up as early as in the

¹ The common view indicates the Venetian origin of the word *ghetto* which meant enclosed space where the Jews were forced to live. In the area designated for the Jews to live was located in the place where an iron foundry had been earlier, called *ghetto* in the Venetian dialect (from *gettare*—to found).

The Jewish ghetto in Venice dates back to 29 March 1516 the quarter inhabited by Jews was surrounded with two high walls, all other exits were to be locked, doors and windows bricked in. Sentries were to be there all the time to guard the place. The Jews were also to pay for two boats to continuously patrol the canals surrounding the area. The isolated, marginal, peripheral ghetto was Jewish space, the *teatrum* of life of the contemporary Jews. A large square, a centre of Jewish and Christian life during the day, at night became ex-territorial, became an independent Jewish republic in the heart of Venice. On the one hand it was a place of exile as well as a safe asylum in which the inhabitants could carry out their daily tasks.

The ghetto as an enclosed area separated from overall space—became a peculiar state of consciousness of all the inhabitants. With time, the area of the ghetto in Venice became a relative local system for its inhabitants in which the time passed in a rhythm of “long persistence” and it became a way to maintain one’s own identity. Instances of leaving the ghetto, “exit to freedom,” emancipation were perceived as loss of identity (Calimani 2002: 189–193).

16th century in Venice and was a clearly separate spatial unit in the urban system of the city in those days.²

More and more frequently a notion of space ghettoization is used to describe a phenomenon of dividing urban space into various enclaves of social life—or socially isolated worlds. Ghettoization that we describe results from various social processes which are increasingly reflected in urban space. It results either from differences in the economic standard of inhabitants of given areas (riches–poverty), also demographic criteria can be taken into account (old age–young age), medical criteria (health–illness). Also professional, religious, ethical, aesthetic, political, ecological or urban and architectonic criteria can be taken into account. There is one more criterion, very important if we view the case from a profoundly humanistic perspective—the criterion of social emotions accompanying urban space. This justifies the title of this article. Today's ghettos may result from relatively automatic choices (lifestyles) and relatively objective processes—marginalization. We will try to make a general outline of the problems of ghettoization in a traditional industrial region, namely in Upper Silesia, related to diversification of income as well as the aesthetic and architectonic and urban criteria.

The first historic ghettos were ghettos of poverty, resulting from degradation of residential quarters located close to industrial installations dating back to the end of 19th and beginning of 20th centuries as well as the times of real socialism. Another type of ghettos, not very much present yet in the space of the region, is clearly due to the transformations—ghettos of prosperity. Although very seldom they are the classical gated communities, they are characterized by: location in good ecological space, which cannot be overestimated in Silesia, economic status of the inhabitants above standard, creating the emerging middle class as well as a higher level of education and aspirations. This type of ghettos, typical for Third World societies, frequently borders sub-standard residential areas, common in the region, occupied by lower classes or the textbook underclass. We can also mention the infrequent but present residential ghettos and a risk of emerging of enormous ghettos, based on housing estates, commonly called LeCorbusier's ghettos.

Although access to both types of ghettos usually is not restricted, crossing the border by persons from the outside seems difficult due to numerous reasons, including also symbolic reasons. Presence of an outsider in degraded residential areas, such as Bobrek in Bytom, Lipiny in Świętochłowice, Załęże in Katowice or Konstakowice in Sosnowiec, Orzegów in Ruda Śląska, is often connected with existential hazards or at least fear for one's safety. For completely different reasons visitors enter with uncertainty the exclusive quarters, built by developers and intended for the middle class.

² The famous poet R. M. Rilke wrote about ghetto in Venice: "In the bit of Venice of which I shall tell, there are only poor ordinary sounds, the days passed monotonously over it, as though they were but a single day, and the songs one hears there are swelling plaints that do not mount upward but settle like curling smoke over the alleys. As soon as twilight comes, much furtive humanity mills around the streets, countless children have their homes upon the squares and in the narrow cold doorways and play with chips and leavings of varicolored glass flux, the same from which the Masters pieced together at the stern mosaics of San Marco" (Rilke, 1996: 79–80).

Maxwell Street in Chicago

As sociologists involved in urban problems, we have to mention the first ghetto researcher—Louis Wirth, a representative of the Chicago School. In the monograph *The Ghetto* published in 1928 he concentrated on an analysis of spatial isolation of the Jewish community in Chicago, located around Maxwell Street. The notion of ghetto acquired a pejorative meaning and was defined as an urban area with a concentration of all unfavourable conditions that may occur in a city. That is all types of mechanisms that produced progressive isolation of the area from the surrounding.

The ghetto described by Wirth was related to a category of degraded and trapped people. Social pathology were sort of transferred to the space occupied by it and caused that the areas occupied by the poor and disturbed were valued as unattractive and unfavourable with every respect. It should be noted here that the conditions that allow us to value urban space may be analysed with reference to the concepts of order determining the ecological position of given space.

We mean here five orders:

- urban and architectural order—meaning the degree of harmony of urban space,
- functional order—meaning usable values of apartments, residential area, district or city as a whole,
- aesthetic order—meaning evaluation of the beauty or ugliness of urban space,
- social order—determined by assessment of social relations,
- environmental/ecological order—referring to the ecological values of the space where inhabitants live.

An analysis of the ghettoization phenomenon requires a broader look. Referring to the urban ecology, the process of ghetto development can be treated as a process of “biotic” rivalry for the best place in a territory carried out by social groups distinguished on the basis of common social features, such as class position or origin.

We define *ghetto* as the area which is characterized by the followed:

- clear spatial separateness—even when no clear physical borders can be observed (wall, fence, gate) but boundaries in space or mental maps can be identified, that speak for the analysed area’s difference,
- relative status homogeneity of the inhabitants,
- relative buildings homogeneity,
- perception of social and mental separateness,
- perception of enclaveness (feeling of exclusion) both by the inhabitants as well as external observers—The word ‘exclusion’ translated into Polish in sociological terminology often means pushing to the margins people who are unadjusted or incapable to function fully in the society. However, one cannot forget that the word “ekskluzywny,” derived from the French “exclusif” (Latin *excludere*), in the Polish language carries an unequivocal connotation of wealth and luxury. It’s associated with elitism and privilege. Therefore language difficulty becomes an issue in defining one of ghetto’s indicators. Exclusion as a ghetto feature should not only and exclusively be associated with ghettos of poverty, inhabited by people relegated to the outer edge, but should signify broadly perceived isolation and

separation from the remaining society, which relates to both poor people i.e. excluded and the residents of ghettos of wealth. Discussion should be rather focused on whether exclusion happens by choice or under compulsion. On this ground a difference between ghettos takes place.

- low level of osmosis (low penetration) between the enclave and the external environment.



Bobrek. Ghetto of poverty in Bytom



District Z1. Ghetto of affluence in Tychy

Such a catalogue of variables, qualifies a given area as a poverty pocket and enclave, made it possible to describe the Silesian ghettos, inhabited by the underclass.

The most degraded areas are situated within the Dąbrowa Górnicza-Ruda Śląska belt, and embrace a number of districts, sometimes just streets. To-date, the following areas have been identified as poverty pockets, where concentration of all unfavourable factors exist; starting with the environmental and aesthetical degradation, followed by fatal dwelling infrastructure, not to mention the pathologies and social exclusion. Below are presented the names of towns (underlined) followed by districts or streets which can be qualified as poverty pockets:

Siemianowice: Hugo, Richter, Nowy Świat, Sobieskiego, Hutnicza

Świętochłowice: Lipiny, Chropaczów

Bytom: Bobrek, Łagiewniki, Rozbark, Szombierki

Chorzów: Chorzów II, Stary Chorzów

Ruda Śląska: Orzegów

Zabrze: Zaborze, Makoszowy

Katowice: Załęże

Mysłowice: Piasek i Rymera

Będzin: Ksawera, Stare Warpie (a north quarter from the railway station)

Sosnowiec: Pogoń, Konstantynów, the quarter of the streets: Towarowa, Mierosławskiego, Kołłątaja, oraz Sosnowiec-Kazimierz—the Kazimierz coal mine neighbourhood

Czeladź Piaski—old limestone buildings

Dąbrowa Górnicza—a quarter around Limanowskiego and Robotnicza streets

These areas generate the largest number of customers for social welfare centres. Therefore, a reasonable poverty pocket indicator could be the percentage of customers benefiting from the social welfare in a given area.

As much as one tenth of flats in the Silesia Voivodship was not equipped with bathrooms nor sanitation in 2006. These substandard flats were inhabited by 561,000 persons, which makes 11.9% of the Voivodship population. Nearly 24% of the Silesian flats are entirely exploited, with no financial resources to revitalize them. More than one third of the buildings were built before 1945 and they require full renovation. (taken from the Strategy of the Social policy for Silesia 2006–2020).

In view of the above characteristics, ghetto does not necessarily has to be understood as a collection of unfavourable conditions, space without orders but more generally as an area in urban space distinct from the surrounding that may be described and distinguished with its specific features. Therefore, the process of ghettoization is a process of development of *homogenous areas, distinct in space*, regardless of the value of the space or affluence of its inhabitants.

About Old Industrial Region

The development of the poverty pockets—ghettoes in Silesia is not a result of mere social and developmental changes that took place in the past eighteen years—that is, in the final phase of restructurization undertaken in the coal mining, the region's leading industry. Social scientists, when analysing the local communities, adopt the approach of *long lasting*. Seeking the reasons for social exclusion, an increasing phenomenon embracing an ever growing number of people, should be embedded in a period of more than a decade. System transformation and industry restructurization seems to be the turning point for social changes observed in Silesia.

A rapid industrial development in the area of Upper Silesia and Zagłębie Dąbrowskie, at the end of 19th and beginning of 20th centuries resulted in changes in the social and spatial system of the region. The vast demand for coal and steel, exported to the developing European superpowers and used in the 1920s and 1930s in Poland for a fast rebirth of Poland after over 100 years of non-existence caused the establishment of a large number of mines, steelworks and large industrial installations in the area. Numerous now historic workers' districts were built in which the life of local communities was concentrated. We can say that the time passed quietly and in measured steps, marked with the striking of the lock on the local church tower, constructed by the local factory owner. After World War II, along with the PKWN manifest, stress was put on the creative role of industry and the working class.

In order to illustrate the scope of the problems touching nowadays the region of Silesia, it is inevitable to start with some general remarks, before moving on to sociological analyses of social, cultural, political and economic context as well as consequences of the former Katowice Voivodship restructurization.

The former Katowice Voivodship—often unprecisely mistaken for Upper Silesia—covers 6650 square kilometres, which constitutes only 2.1% of Poland's surface. It is inhabited by nearly four million people, which makes 10.2% of Poland's population. As much as 87% of the Katowice Voivodship population was settled in 53 towns, the remaining part lived in 43 urbanized rural communes. The average population density

(590 persons per square kilometer) was almost five the country average (123.5 persons per square kilometer—as of 31st December 1997).

In the former Katowice Voivodship, 1.3 m people worked in the public sector in 1989. Analyzing this figure further, 779.800 of them were employed in the industry (which makes 20.9% of all employed in this sector in Poland), 112.700 (15.6%) in construction works, 59.700 (9.1%) in transportation, 14.000 (8%) in telecommunication 45.400 (19.8%) in trade. In 1989 private sector gave jobs to 265.500 employees (5.1% of all people employed in this sector in Poland), of which industry employed 89.600 (11%) and construction works 40.200 (12.3%). The Voivodship mined 97,6% of hard coal; produced 48,7% of all Polish passenger cars, 56,6% of steel, 53,2% rolled products and 100% of zinc and lead. One quarter of the GDP and one fifth of the export goods was created here.

In accordance with the real socialism leading principle, Katowice Voivodship, just like all Poland, observed the phenomenon of full employment. This resulted in over-employment in industry, and hidden-unemployment in the rural areas. Social jobs were functioning in the key industry branches. From the operations management point of view, a large number of employees turned unnecessary, however not made redundant for social and doctrinal reasons. In 1989 no institutions existed neither to monitor the scale and the scope of explicit or implicit unemployment, nor to analyze the related statistical data.

These processes, rooted in the economy transformation, were encompassed by the historic context of the demographic structure. Namely, the Katowice Voivodship was dominated by the working class presenting low level of competences and ability to adapt to the new situation requiring self-reliability and flexibility.

Restructurization processes that started, were not supported by the institutional environment, specifically offering labour exchange or professional consultancy. Regional job agencies followed by district (poviat) job agencies focused mainly on registering the unemployed, with no activating initiatives oriented towards the re-inclusion to the labour market.

Indunature—Social Aspects

The later national development plans contained provisions of a need to intensify coal mining, production of steel and related products, machines. Efforts were undertaken to attract new labour force. People were attracted from the villages of today's Świętokrzyskie, Podlaskie or Małopolskie voivodeships. Work orders forced people to leave their private motherlands to construct the socialist landscape *Indunature* where the sky was spotted with high voltage lines, chimneys became a symbol of connection to heavenly space and the rotating wheel of the mine shaft was evidence that also things hidden under the surface have been conquered.

The industrialization processes in the region were accompanied by very important social processes. There was a fast development of ties between the place of work and the place of everyday life. There was an increasingly emotional tie of the employees with their steelworks, mines or factories. They were not only providing employment



Indunature...

but also organised the employees' cultural life. Work places became centres of set industrial values, becoming in many instances a complement to local churches, parishes, wherever the authorities agreed to have them constructed.

The rapid growth of the working class resulted in a complete spatial and architectural mess. The residential districts built hastily of prefabricated elements resulted in development of "artificial towns," devoid of history and tradition with the work place being the only factor developing relationships. A very outstanding example of such a town is Dąbrowa Górnicza, located in the immediate vicinity of Huta Katowice (Katowice Steelworks) and serving as sleeping quarters for its employees. Some housing estates have been named "district of miracles," Bronx or Harlem.



Socreal paradise...

Let us now try to present what the poverty ghettos look like in Indunature, what the space is, who inhabits it, what is the pace of their everyday's rhythm. The mines are no longer there, the steelworks are gone, the local house of culture is gone and the local food store does not need a cash register as the products are sold and debts are

entered in the “book,” the store is ugly, its signboard is ugly and it has dirty windows like the entire environment. We are watching mimicry of people, buildings and space. Everything becomes alike, similarly ugly and repellent.

**Poverty Ghettos in the Indunature Landscape.
The World According to the Crummies or People without Properties?**

In 2004, nine district towns (powiat towns) from the Silesia Voivodship entered the top ten of the poorest district towns. The pattern of a Silesian town decline is simple: closing down large factories and increase in unemployment. This results in decreasing tax revenues, and makes the town budget a place of tug of war. There is no money for investments, nor for creating new jobs. First of all, some local governments lack vision for the future. Instead, there is an ever-growing complaining on restructurization and reminiscences of the old days, where three mines and one steel-mill employed half of the town.

Table 1

No.	Town	Population	Income per capita in polish zloty	Number of firms	Unemployment rate in %
1.	Świętochłowice	56,000	1436	3640	27.0
2.	Żory	63,000	1497	4200	25.2
3.	Piekary Śląskie	60,000	1561	2731	22.3
4.	Jastrzębie Zdrój	96,000	1603	4931	18.7
5.	Sosnowiec	229,000	1643	27,500	22.0
6.	Częstochowa	250,000	1691	25,000	15.8
7.	Siemianowice Śląskie	75,000	1730	5900	30.0
8.	Chorzów	117,000	1741	9641	23.9
9.	Mysłowice	74,000	1785	6854	17.3

Source: Own work based on the local government *Community* (Wspólnota) magazine.

The creation of poverty ghettos can be observed more and more clearly in the town space, and is connected with the creation of the sociological vacuum. Once dynamic, working class districts became extinct due to closing down of a coal mine. A chain reaction followed, with closing down of the whole infrastructure: cafes, shops, squares, where the every-day living concentrated.

A conventional division into transformation winners and losers became already a social cliché. A research carried out by the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) in 2004 shows, that a majority of Poles (93%) are convinced about unequal opportunities for becoming rich, possessed only by a few. Recently, a percentage of people sharing this opinion has increased, while less people believe in equal opportunities. Moreover, wealth nowadays—as opposed to the 1990’s—is less frequently treated

as something natural and just. 29% of Poles indicate, that it becomes a socially unfavourable phenomenon.

Recent years in Poland recorded an increase in the number of the poor, as well as an increase of poverty intensity. Persons living below minimal existence needs constituted: 5,6% of the society in 1998, 11,1% in 2002 and 11,8% in 2004. Income gap for this group reached 16%, 20% and 21% respectively. According to the Chief Central Statistical Office (GUS) the increase in poverty was parallel to the increase in average material situation created by high incomes, which is an evidence for growing disproportions in the level of incomes and consumption of the Polish society. In 2004, an average monthly income of 20% people with highest incomes was 1 536 zł per person, and was seven times the average income of 20% people with lowest incomes. Comparing to the previous year, an increase in income differentiation was observed (in 2003, it was 6,5 times the lowest income group).

Economic transformations of the Silesia Voivodship are followed by the degradation of working class families, especially miners' families. A first type to be mentioned is the economic degradation. During the period of real socialism, miners were a financially-privileged professional group, and their incomes doubled the county average. During 1995–1999 the relations changed, and the average income of miners was 1.5–1.7 of average incomes in other branches.

Privileging steel industry and coal mining workers, as well as a decrease in industry jobs resulted in loss of attractiveness of the former Katowice Voivodship, followed by the decay of the regional *Eldorado* myth.

What is more, recent years observe an advancing socio-economic stratification of different social groups.

In the years 2000–2003 a number of people benefiting from the social welfare gradually increased (514,500 people in 2000, 516,100 in 2001, 586,000 in 2002, and 607,200 in 2003.). Then, in 2004 a number of people benefiting from the social welfare dropped to 531,500. This decrease results to a high extent in legal and procedural changes. A number of people using social welfare so far turned to family services, or they started using social services of the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) (e.g. disability pension). It is worth mentioning, that in Silesia in 2005, 149 out of 167 social welfare centres realized the tasks defined by the Act on Family Social Services from the 28th November 2003 (Source: Regional Centre for the Silesia Voivodship Social Policy, on the basis of the analysis titled: The Balance of the Social Policy Needs in Silesia during 2005–2006) (Source: Regional Centre for the Silesia Voivodship Social Policy using data of the Social Policy Department of the Silesian Voivodship Office; Reports MPiPS-03 for 2000–2004).

In 2004, similarly to the previous years, the main reasons for granting social welfare were: unemployment, poverty, helplessness in bringing up children and running a household, disability, chronic disease.

From the above analyses it becomes clear, that the existing institutional resources do not completely meet the existing needs. As an evidence, a number of persons applying to the social welfare centres can be given. According to the information

Table 2

Persons and families benefiting from social welfare by reasons 1998–1999

Reasons of difficult situation	1998		1999	
	FAMILIES	PERSONS IN FAMILIES	FAMILIES	PERSONS IN FAMILIES
Poverty	35134	116739	34029	105230
Orphanhood	476	1478	704	1975
Homelessness	2106	3368	2838	3499
Need of maternity protection	9393	39162	9130	38398
Unemployment	57711	185185	58829	183884
Handicap	34993	85526	35543	89500
Chronic illness	39225	103154	35859	95697
Helplessness in educational matters and household maintenance	40653	160854	39153	150411
Alcoholism	11032	33145	10000	28581
Drug addiction	308	675	278	566
Difficulty in adaptation after leaving penitentiary institutions	2068	4141	1806	3393
Natural or ecologic calamity	4	15	298	900

Source: Data obtained from the Silesian Voivodship Office.

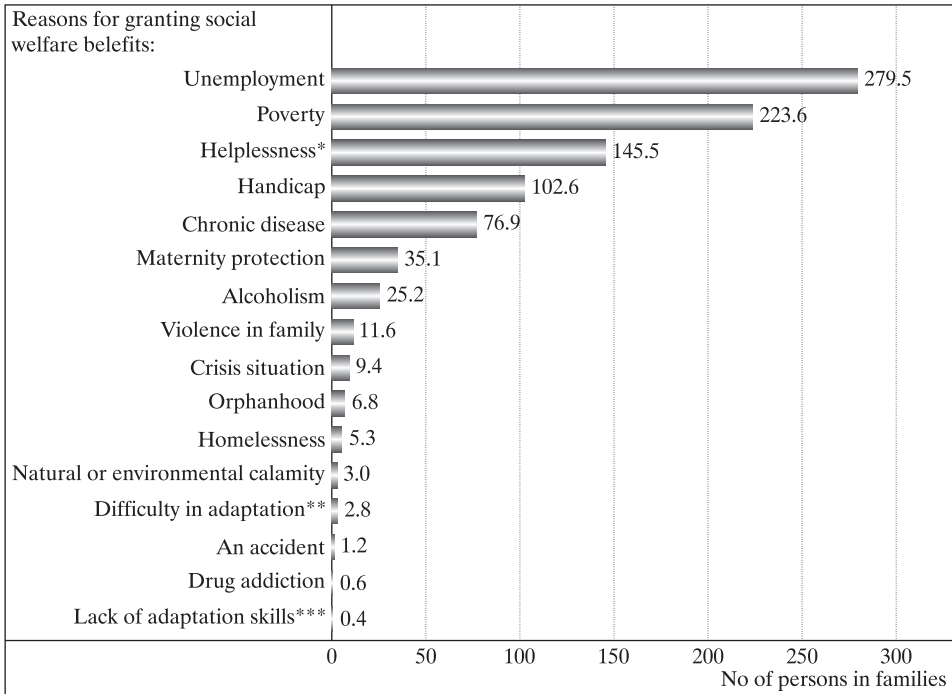
collected in 2005–2006 about 2,356 persons (10% of the places granted) waited to be granted a place in a social welfare centre.

Ghetto as a Condition of the Mind

Mental maps of the inhabitants of the Śląsko-Dąbrowskie Indunature with clearly marked borders of “good” districts and “bad” districts take us directly to the old workers’ districts where various social pathologies are concentrated. Since inhabitants of those districts were tied primarily with their work place, which organised their life and provided jobs, which was a guarantor of maintenance and therefore with a fall of the factories there was a slow but very profound degradation of entire residential districts. Poverty was reinforced with weak infrastructure of such old districts. Lack of fundamental sanitary equipment and other facilities caused that anybody who had some courage and independence was running away from those shabby apartments. Those buildings have turned into ruin frequently. As Zbigniew Herbert, the famous polish poet wrote they are “buildings with scarce hair and sick complexion, buildings coughing quietly.”

Thus, on the one hand we have poverty ghettos in the areas of the oldest residential districts, like Bobrek in Bytom, Lipiny in Świętochłowice, Załęże in Katowice or Konstantynów in Sosnowiec, and on the other hand there are ghettos developing in housing estates, called LeCorbusier’s ghettos by us, built in the period of real

**Number of people in families granted social welfare by reasons of grants, Silesia Voivodship,
Jan–Dec, 2004**



*bringing up children and running a household

** for living after leaving prison

*** youth after leaving reformatories

socialism as sleeping quarters for the working people, who had come to Indunature as to a promised land. It was very heterogeneous people, from different kinds countries, different places with low level of culture capital. The construction of identical worker's houses or the later prefabricated elements" stems from the commonly known Athens Card.



LeCorbusier's Ghetto in Dąbrowa Górnicza

The phenomenon of ghettos inhabited by excluded people is known all over the world. Just to mention the northern districts of Buenos Aires, inhabited by 800 thousand poorest people, called *villas miserias*, the Brazilian *favelas*, Chilean *poblaciones* and the vast *ranchos* inhabited by 40% of Venezuelan population. Our poverty centres in Silesia and Zagłębie are quite modest in comparison but exceedingly visible.

The underclass inhabiting poverty ghettos is an internally dense segment. Those people are outside of the labour market and public affairs of the entire society. The most important sources of poverty are: long unemployment, no education and professional qualifications, traditions of poverty, the people are characterised with acquired helplessness, passivity and intention to be satisfied with very little. The people have low professional and educational aspirations. Over-represented categories among the poor are young lonely mothers, so called social margin, invalids and ethnic minorities. Those people are a majority of neglected and devastated districts. Either due to material deprivation (eviction from a “good” district) or by inheriting the status.

The following social phenomena can be observed in poverty pockets:

- poverty as a result of long-period unemployment, lack of education and professional skills, learned helplessness, passiveness, and tendency to minimalist approach,
- marginalization and structural unemployment resulting from technological advancements and increase in required professional skills, that cannot be delivered by the lower classes,
- appearance of *poverty lawyers*, and *poverty professors*—people who are perfectionists in benefiting from all kinds of social welfare,
- behavioural sewer—deviations in coexistence and pathologization of behaviours due to overdensity,
- disintegration of family structure—seclusion from the issues that normally absorb the society,
- functioning on the verge of law,
- improvised existence on the spot.

Poverty is the resultant of various processes and phenomena. The most essential aspects of poverty are: (a) deprivation of the material life conditions, (b) social marginalization.

Marginalization is the result of structural unemployment, that has its sources in technological advancements and increase in the required professional qualifications, that cannot be delivered by lower classes—Silesian miners and workers, whose only capital was the power of muscles. The following features of the social underclass can be identified:

- low or even very low income of its members,
- low level education,
- long-lasting (more than one year) unemployment of the bread-winner,
- social aid institutions dependence,
- low social status,
- poverty heritage from generation to generation,
- many children,

— settlement in socially, architecturally or even environmentally degraded zones.

It is also vital to describe the ghettos inhabitants by the most commonly observed features.

The poverty ghettos inhabitants are:

- poor people whose poverty is a consequence of passive attitude (long-period beneficiaries of social welfare, especially mothers),
- criminals—street criminals and thieves—blockers and drug addicts nowadays,
- smugglers, illegal traders operating in the grey zone, oscillating on the verge of law,
- alcoholics, tramps, psychically disabled persons in the production age, and all the people living in the street.



Inhabitants in the ghetto of poverty in Ruda Śląska



Inhabitants of the ghetto of poverty in Świętochłowice—Lipiny

A striking feature of the extreme poverty is a high percentage of young people with many children, low level of education, low qualifications, and some degree of functional analphabetism. In the light of the research carried out every year in Poland by the Chief

Children of the Ghettos

It is also not possible to ignore the increasing problem of the “children of the street” within the Silesian ghettos.

Children of the Silesian street are mostly street working children. They are finding (“settling”) everything there, starting with money, not to mention food, toys and clothes. They do not recognize the value of money and things. They find it exciting to devastate the common property. They are often members of informal children gangs, where “the cult of power” is valued, and expressed in street fights. “Earning” is limited to begging and stealing. Acquired goods are traded and exchanged either within the group, or in the street bazaars. Part of the children experiment with alcohol, glues and drugs, since lack of care or intensive schedule makes it an attractive way of spending leisure time. All of these children have substantial problems at school due to truancy,

aggression, and low intellectual opportunities. They duplicate their parents' lifestyle, becoming a social margin. Lack of proper patterns in the family makes it impossible for them to create close and fruitful relations with their contemporaries. Blocks of flats in towns remain difficult to be analysed precisely. Still, a large number of unemployed live there—people who lost their jobs as a result of industry restructurization.



Children of the ghettos of poverty in Silesia region

“Lawyers” and “Professors” of Poverty

Marginalization results from structural unemployment due to technology development and increased level of professional requirements that cannot be met by lower classes. In the case of Indunature those are miners and workers whose only capital had been their muscles.

In sociology we are most afraid of so-called inherited poverty. For the first time it was called the “Somali syndrome” after observations of Somalis living in fugitive camps. One generation after another of children could not learn how to get out of the vicious circle; they only perfected the art. of using international assistance. Before our eyes, a social sub-class of poor people is being developing whose children are perfect “poverty lawyers, poverty professors,” that is they have mastered the art. of functioning basing on assistance institutions at all levels.



Ghetto of Poverty in Czeladź



People without properties... Świętochłowice-Lipiny

People without Properties

Behavioural marsh is a phenomenon deeply rooted in biology and characteristic for the time when at the break of one century the global population was multiplied: in a situation of dense population, the rules of co-existence become distorted and behaviour becomes pathologic. Such a situation can be found in dense slums, old mansion houses without overhaul for almost one hundred years where sometimes three generations live in one room. We also turn towards the increasingly intimidating housing estates, filled with unnecessary people who have no goal. A dramatic example is the district of Miedźna Wola, constructed for 8000 inhabitants of miners from the Czczott mine. After twenty years of mining, the deposits are almost exhausted and the mine will be closed. It is scary to think of the future of the district in which life was guided by the business of the mine. Especially so when we remember the fate of the district Pruitt Igoe in St. Louis, where after twenty years of a housing estate that was to become a hope for better life for the slums community, it was demolished in a spectacular manner.

Disintegration of family structure, isolation from the affairs shared by the society at large, functioning on the border of the law, a specific rhythm of life consisting in improvised existence — those are characteristic structural features of poverty ghettos.



“Hollow People” Lipiny in Świętochłowice



Czeladź



Walls of the Ghetto in Czeladź



Cemetery of life sense... Sosnowiec



Indunature step by step becomes “waste land,” a cemetery of social sense where there are more and more of the Crummies, “hollow people,” people without properties.

A land of dead energy inhabited by people who may not draw on the past and therefore are not able to build a future, who are not able to identify their identity since whatever had been their identity so far stopped being important.

In a way they are people living in the Matrix. On each, even the most shabby building there is a satellite dish—one plug to the social world, the only form of connection of poverty ghettos and exclusion from the environment. However, ghetto inhabitants are submissive—they scan TV programs and walk around programmed in accordance with the currently promoted model. Unable to make a single step. Finding with surprise and disbelief that the former Promised Land has become God knows when Paradise Lost.

Ghettos of Poverty—Conclusions

Analysis of the existing documentation as well as the research results and observations make it possible to formulate a general proposition concerning main trends about poverty pockets, and people socially excluded.

— Environmental calamity (natural system)

- Economic monoculture, heavy industry domination (production system)
- Deformed employment structure connected with low capital of education (social infrastructure system)
- Desintegration of the regional community (socio-cultural system)
- Chaotic urban and architectural space (settlement system).

The above trends lead—on different levels—to gradual social exclusion of certain community members. This exclusion was mainly connected with gradual movement to the peripheries of political, economic, cultural and citizen life. Indexes of exclusion make up the following listing.

- Lower scope of rights to social life participation
- Low level of education and lack of adaptation to the labor market needs
- Limiting consumption (poverty and the minimal existence income; no income; inheriting poverty)
- Limited access to healthcare, culture, relax
- Dwelling situation below the average.

Poverty, exclusion, marginalization in the Silesian region, though justified by the contextual issues, remain an element of the domestic social policy, which—on the other hand—corresponds with the EU policy in this area. Special international programs aimed at social integration and elimination of poverty have started already in the 1990's.³ Among the ways of preventing exclusion one can mention the following:

- Warning informational and educational strategies directed to the society
- Preventing activities (directed to the people from risk groups)
- Intervention activities (directed to excluded groups and threatened by the social exclusion.

Ghettos of Affluence or Welcome to Legoland

Modern residential developments that we see today in the space of Indunature are often literally walled in or simply form clearly distinct areas. We have called them Legolands. They maintain the traditional layout of streets, sometimes even squares, combined with no dense developments. The buildings in Legolands are most often built on the plan of a rectangle or horseshoe, usually not closed and separated with free space. At the affluent districts much pressure is put on access for light, greenery, freedom. In this way, developments are built with a traditional orderly mesh and dispersed buildings. Those are separated areas. Towns in towns, living its their own separate lives. Islands of happiness and affluence.

Enclaves of affluence, creating a “postindunature” landscape, inhabited by representatives of the developing middle class. Those people are the winners of the transformations. Beneficiaries of the systemic change. Those are people brave enough to be part of the transformations, step by step they create the middle class. They are completely opposite to the inhabitants of poverty ghettos. Their success does not

³ See Gore Ch., Figueiredo J. B. Social exclusion and the poverty prevention policy (Wykluczenie społeczne i polityka przeciwdziałania ubóstwu), <http://www.ips.uw.edu.pl/problemyps/iils.pdf>



Brynów. Legoland in Katowice



Będzin—palace of affluence

result in resting on their laurels or becoming unproductive or impotent but becomes another starting point to face new challenges.

Ghettos of affluence are an essence of al. systems—urban, architectonic, functional, aesthetic, ecological and social.



Green Valley—Ghetto of affluence in Sosnowiec



Street of happiness in Czeladź

Well ordered planned districts of colourful houses make an impression as if made of children's bricks. Frequently with internal streets called with the names of fairy tale heroes or names from TV or film productions. So there are sesame, rainbow, flower, bird developments, green valleys, eldorados, arcades—artificial worlds associating with imagined lands of fairylands.

The developments of affluence more and more frequently become clearly distinct in space. Located in ecologically attractive suburban areas, fenced in, with clearly marked borders. The borders are not always physical (wall, fence, gate) but also metaphoric—social borders dividing the inhabitants into rich and present and poor—absent. The borders create two compact communities—“luxurious and normal” and “poor and pathological.” Enclaves of affluence enable to get enclosed within secure space where the sun is always shining. Even the sky is bluer in the photos from the ghettos of affluence, over the poverty ghettos the sky is as grey as all round. Legolands are easier called enclaves than ghettos of affluence as ghetto always brings about

negative associations. In social understanding, ghetto always means pathology. Ghetto is connected with stigma, an enclave with voluntary exclusion, closing in out of choice. Thus, the enclave is positively valued, even subconsciously it is associated with quite and safety.

Enclaves of affluence are a visible manifestation of systemic transformation. The inhabitants of the Silesian enclaves of affluence are more and more frequently equated with the consumer society, that is demanding continuous consumption, larger and larger and always with new dimensions.

Among the modern developments, increasingly frequently there are *residential ghettos*. Residences straight from Beverly Hills. Enormous buildings, sometimes resembling castles, on very spacious plots of land, with a swimming pool, tennis court and sometimes a small golf course. If the inhabitants of the modern developments constructed by developers are most often representatives of the emerging middle class, residential ghettos become associated with a do-nothing class, characterised by doing nothing to show off, ostentatious consumption.

Development of ghettos of affluence, similarly to ghettos of poverty, causes pathologies. However, those pathologies concern completely different aspects of humanity. Gates and fences of the enclaves, often of wrought iron, remind of barbed wire with their form and structure. Those wires cause admiration and jealousy, they create distances and borders, converting development of affluence in equally inhospitable areas like the pathologic and dangerous, violent ghettos of poverty.

In the perception and assessment of danger, we are always subject to pressure of the social group in which we live, and the culture we belong to. Therefore, the division into ghettos in today's urban space is very much subject to social determination of the space, to its social valuation. Frequently anger is escalated in poor districts through the mechanism of labelling, stigmatisation of certain spaces. Therefore, the process of decapitalisation of poverty districts is so difficult. Consolidation of the attitude "from" intensifies the process of ghettoisation. The fact if we place a given area within our mentality, in a category of an enclosed enclave depends on our perception and attitude. Negative feelings get reinforced spontaneously. Emotional rigidity consisting in lack of possibility to free from the prevailing feeling deepens the sense of alienation among the inhabitants as well as the onlookers.

Rural areas are a specific borderland of the world and man—inhabitant of large metropolis.

Our urban trip to an old industrial area was very much like discovering an unknown land, penetrating the space, crossing borders. Everywhere we are strangers, be it a poverty ghetto or a ghetto of affluence—the goal is to broaden our horizons, especially when we want to perceive the space in a sensible manner and—due to experience—exert impact on the space, transform it. However, we have to be very careful observers with a large portion of "boldness in looking." In order to observe changes in the space of the Katowice conurbation, it is enough to board a tram parting from the most powerful symbol of Indunature—Huta Katowice in Dąbrowa Górnicza—and to the terminus of Silesia City Center on the border of Katowice and Chorzów. On the route we will see a great change that took place over the last two decades, a change



Gates to the Ghetto of affluence in Katowice

symbolically marked with two extremes; coal-based economy and knowledge-based economy, from production to consumption; a change that generated new social space in the metropolis of the Katowice conurbation—spaces of poverty and riches, ghettos of poverty and ghettos of affluence, Barren Land and Legolands. A change that created new spatial and social borders, determined by the volume of possession as well as emotions felt by everybody for whom the city is the fundamental space of wandering.

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