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Summary of doctoral thesis
"Revitalization in Urban Transformation Process"
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The area of the present thesis is evaluation of the effect of revitalization schemes upon urban transformations, defining where and how it alters the existing social and spatial structures. Evolution of theoretical approach to urban revitalization assumed that it was one of the forms of reorganization or urban social and spatial structure which may be considered and investigated as a reorganization factor, but also, if not primarily, as a phenomenon – occurrence resulting from such reorganization, which may be observed and localized within a city. The territorial and complex character of phenomena and processes comprised by revitalization is a real reflection of Ritter's dependence of everything on anything which makes a researcher reach for methods specific for social geography.

The objective of the study was to determine whether revitalization processes taking part in Polish cities brought any changes measurable in their social and spatial structure as well as topographic location and to evaluate how such revitalization concept was embedded in contemporary geographical thought. Aiming for those, three major research areas were formulated:

- Revitalization- a thinking construct along with its theoretical background set in social geographical patterns.
- Perception, preferences and social attitudes towards revitalization (the discourse on revitalization).
- Social and spatial urban structures as the subject of revitalization.

The fundamental thesis of this study is that revitalization, an extensive process, introduces real changes into Polish cities, where the actual position depends on the degree of complexity of their social and urban structures. Therefore, particular hypotheses took into consideration the dichotomy of the notion and paradoxes of the theoretical backgrounds of revitalization; differentiation of social perception of revitalization correlating with a type of urban structure and location – the space of actual transformations; differentiation of cities depending on the position of revitalization in their transformation schemes as well as similarities between the course of revitalization in Polish cities and models described in international literature.

The study presents the results and discusses the effects of investigations which comprised two interrelated and subsequent stages of empirical projects. The objective of the first stage was to formulate answers to questions of perception, interpretation and application of the notion of revitalization, making use of a countrywide survey comprising a targeted sample. Conclusions of the first stage verifies part of the detailed hypotheses and defined the area and specific scope of the second stage of empirical studies. Comprising two case studies of the cities of Cracow and Szczecin, that stage brought the research material to address the remaining questions of the study. Both cases

included documented onsite observation, analysis of texts, statistical data, documents, images as well as transcripts of interviews which were carried out in both cities as individual, structured, in-depth ones comprising a dozen or so group of inhabitants – professionals.

Acceptance of the main hypothesis as a target one resulted in the structure of the manuscript, determined the contents of 10 chapters and brought the decision to include the records of surveys and individual interviews. The first two chapters were devoted to presumptions of the study, its area and objectives as well as results of the wide-scoped review of the literature available. Chapter 3 presents the main hypothesis, the detailed hypotheses and the research questions. The area of the study, the agenda and the methods applied were described in chapter 4. Urban considerations systematized by the phenomena of vitality and crises are contained by chapter 5. Chapter 6 concludes the studies to define urban transformations from a cognitive perspective shaped by the notions of process, progress and development. The inclusive discussion of revitalization is contained by chapter . Chapters 8 and 9 characterizes two subsequent stages of the study, presenting and interpreting the results or explaining the outcomes. The final chapter 10 delivers conclusions, focusing therefore on verification of the hypotheses presented and addressing the study questions.

The empirical studies carried out brought positive verification of the hypothesis of a prevalent revitalization process and some real changes it causes. This was proved by both, interpretation of results of the first stage of the study (countrywide survey) and the scope of transformations associated with revitalization, identified throughout two selected case studies. Verification of the second part of the hypothesis was only partial as the comparative analysis comprised a single group of cities, i.e. those characterized by high complexity of the social and spatial structure. The collected and interpreted research materials proved that revitalization processes taking part in Polish cities focused on transformations of the urban fabric or the functions performed to make up for deficits, corresponding therefore to the earlier, theoretical assumptions. Moreover the study contributed to closer definition of the origin of the concept of revitalization in Poland and internationally (e.g. through association with Spector's theory of change and Wallace's theory of revitalization movement).