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POST-SOCIALIST GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES IN POLISH CITIES

Abstract. This paper discusses the specific character of gentrification processes in Polish cities, with a particular focus on Warsaw, Łódź and Gdańsk. It explains the forces and factors behind gentrification, and highlights its types and effects as well as the gentrifiers. It also addresses the problem of the absence of reprivatisation law in Poland. The paper concludes that gentrification processes in Polish cities occur in a different way and less intensively than in Western cities. They often have a localized character, mostly in the form of new-build gentrification carried out by developers and state-led gentrification with significant participation of the public sector.
Key words: gentrification, gentrifiers, factors of gentrification, types of gentrification, Polish cities.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW: GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES

The term 'gentrification' first appeared in academic literature in 1964 – it was used by R. Glass (1964) to describe changes in the social composition and housing structure in some of the working-class districts in London. In the early 1980s gentrification was the theme that dominated studies on social and spatial transformations in cities of Western Europe and North America (Schwirian, 1983). During the several decades of research investigating the processes and forms of transformation of social and demographic composition of inner city residents, the term 'gentrification' has evolved from denoting a specific social phenomenon that occurred in certain central areas of large cities at the end of the Fordism era to de-

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scribe a process that has spread globally (Smith, 2002). It has, therefore, become a key issue in social geography of cities.

The definition of gentrification has widened gradually, both in respect of its content and the spatial scope. In early works on this subject, the term 'gentrification' was used to describe the rise in social status of former working-class quarters and renewal of the existing housing (Glass, 1964). 50 years later its meaning broadened to embrace not only the emergence of new luxury housing on post-industrial sited in central parts of large and medium-sized cities (Cameron, 2003; Davidson and Lees, 2005; Rerat et al., 2009), but also the social and spatial transformations in small towns and rural areas (Philips, 2005).

Today, besides the middle class, which was the leading group of gentrifiers already half a century ago (Glass, 1964), many other social groups participate in this process – from students (Smith, 2005) to the highest-income residents (Butler and Lees, 2006).

Evolution of the gentrification concept is well illustrated by the model of gentrification as a process taking place in 'waves', which was developed for North American cities (Hackhworth and Smith, 2001).The first wave of gentrification is also called pioneer gentrification. In the initial stage, the groups participating in this process are usually young professionals, freelancers and artists, who rehabilitate dilapidated buildings in working class quarters, often with their own money and/or labour. In the 1970s, real estate development firms joined this process alongside with the spontaneously acting pioneers. The 1990s saw the beginning of the third wave, when the public sector and international capital became active participants in the gentrification process.

Considering the challenges faced by large cities in the age of global capitalism and the rise of the creative class (Florida, 2002), gentrification is becoming for many city councils an important element of local policy and regeneration projects (Lees, 2012; Wacquant, 2008). At this stage, gentrification is becoming a global phenomenon, no longer confined to central areas, and can be observed at all levels of the settlement hierarchy (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005).

Bouzarovski et al. (2007) argue that the changes which are now taking place in central parts of large cities are better denoted by the term 're-urbanization', which views classic gentrification, alongside revitalization, as one of the many processes that transform inner cities. Social and/or spatial upgrading are not the only processes occurring in central areas of contemporary cities. We can also observe the processes of social exclusion and the resulting concentrations of low- or very low-status population (Mingione, 1996). What differs present-day gentrification from other processes that shape the spatial structure of inner cities is the displacement of lower social tiers by wealthier residents and the resultant social conflicts (Wyly and Hammel, 1999). The essence of the phenomenon of gentrification is the specific process of invasion-succession, which assumes a rise in the social and material status of urban areas (Wyly et al., 2010).

Gentrification is understood today as a phenomenon consisting of: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) rise in social and material status of a neighbourhood; (3) changes in the townscape; (4) direct or indirect displacement of lower-income residents by wealthier groups (Davidson and Lees, 2005).

Gentrification processes in post-socialist cities are dependent on the rate of social, political and economic transformation and the level of integration of the city and its region with global economy. In the first decade of the system transformation, the process of social upgrading was most advanced in central districts of East Berlin (Bernt and Holm, 2005). In East-Central Europe, the gentrification process was slow and was confined to small parts of inner cities (Brade *et al.*, 2009; Chelcea, 2006; Kovács, 1998; Sýkora, 2005). Remodelling of the social structure of inner city residents was more advanced in the capitals, but also in some other large cities in this part of Europe (Haase *et al.*, 2012; Kaczmarek and Marcińczak, 2013; Marcińczak and Sagan, 2011; Murzyn-Kupisz, 2013; Nagy and Timar, 2012). Gentrification processes accelerated in the second decade after the collapse of the communist regime (Bernt *et al.*, 2015; Kovács, 2012).

Quick liberalisation of the economy, reintroduction of land rent, privatisation and restitution of residential buildings and land created opportunity for profit-driven rehabilitation of potentially attractive areas , such as deteriorated central districts of large post-socialist cities (Kovács, 1998; Sýkora, 2005). Inner cities in East-Central Europe appeared to be perfect spaces for gentrification, which soon began its progress and brought specific social and spatial transformations (Smith, 1996).

Gentrification processes in East-Central European cities have not yet been included in the main stream of research (Bernt and Holm, 2005). After the collapse of the socialist system, free market rules of socio-economic development were introduced with simultaneous limitation of social welfare benefits. The effects of these changes are still most visible in central parts and in the outskirts of post-socialist cities (Borén and Gentile, 2007).

Gentrification is not the only process resulting in transformation of inner cities after the fall of communism. The social status of centrally located neighbourhoods and the housing in city centres are undergoing changes in consequence of such processes as: regeneration and revitalisation (Kiss, 2002; Scott and Kuhn, 2012), commercialisation (Temelova, 2007), demographic and spatial changes caused by the second demographic transition (Grabkowska, 2012; Haase *et al.*, 2012), and re-urbanisation (Grabkowska, 2015). Gentrification is part of a set of processes which lead to diversified upgrading of inner cities (Kovács *et al.*, 2015).

Research on post-socialist gentrification shows that this process can be initiated by various types of pioneers (young households, artists, students) (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2013; Chelcea *et al.*, 2015; Grabkowska, 2015; Kovács *et al.*, 2015; Murzyn-Kupisz and Szmytkowska, 2015), but also by development companies building designer apartment houses in city centres (Badyina and Golubchi-

kov, 2005). At the beginning of the 21st century, and especially after accession of East and Central European countries to the European Union, the shape of gentrification, like in the first decade, depended on the specifics of the local institutional context, public sector activity (Bernt, 2012), and access to domestic and EU funds for infrastructure development (Kaczmarek and Marcińczak, 2013).

Globalization of the economy affected the post-socialist gentrification process in two ways:

1. In the most quickly developing cities a new social group appeared, which, though not very numerous, was able to acquire luxury apartments in central districts – they were foreign specialists engaged in direct foreign investments (Cook, 2010). This, plus the growth of the middle class, led to a growing demand for high quality dwellings in good locations, which motivated domestic and foreign developers to intensify the construction of high standard housing in central parts of large cities (Holm *et al.*, 2015; Kovács, 2012);

2. Due to accelerated privatisation of the housing stock and regulations protecting the occupiers of private dwellings, gentrification of the existing housing is progressing slowly (Chelcea *et al.*, 2015; Marcińczak *et al.*, 2015; Sýkora, 2005). This is why the only possibility to benefit from increased land rent was construction of residential buildings on former waste land or post-industrial sites in inner cities (Holm *et al.*, 2015).

One of the first Polish authors to deal with gentrification was Lisowski (1999), who pointed out the integrative role of the gentrification concept in geography of cities. He identified three meanings of this concept: (1) neighbourhood changes; (2) elitisation/'embourgeoisation'; (3) metaphor describing positive effects of revitalisation.

Polish geographers use the term 'gentrification', meaning transformations in the city, interchangeably with the term 'revitalisation', e.g. *Rewitalizacja miast polskich 2009–2010* (Revitalization of Polish Cities 2009–2010). In the work *Demograficzne i społeczne uwarunkowania rewitalizacji miast w Polsce* (Demographic and Social Determinants of Revitalisation of Polish Cities, Zborowski, 2009) the author states that it is revitalisation that results in gentrification, while specifically Polish mechanisms of gentrification have not developed yet (Jadach-Sepioło, 2009).

Liszewski (2012) argues that revitalisation and gentrification involve different forms, ways and scopes of urban space transformations – revitalisation concerns the material substance, while gentrification relates to socio-demographic changes. Górczyńska (2012) has identified three forms of social changes depending on the social structure, type of change and type of housing in a given area: gentrification, redevelopment (reconstruction/modernisation) and embourgeoisement.

The most comprehensive coverage of gentrification issues worldwide, including post-socialist countries and Poland, is offered in a monograph by Grzeszczak (2010). It provides a review of the concepts of gentrification as well as research on this topic. In a subsequent publication (Grzeszczak, 2012) the author proposed methods for measuring this process.

The phenomenon of gentrification was analysed at two national conferences on Knowledge about the City, organised in Łódź and followed by publication of two volumes: *Procesy gentryfikacji w mieście. Część I* (2012) (Gentrification Processes in the City. Part I) and *Procesy gentryfikacji. Część II* (2013) (Gentrification Processes. Part II). The first volume addresses various issues – from terminological discussions and reflections on the relation between gentrification and the socio-economic condition of a city, to gentrification in the context of social exclusion. It also presents the findings of research on housing and social changes in Polish cities in which gentrification processes are observable: Warsaw, Łódź, Cracow and Silesian cities, and provides a characterisation of the gentrifiers participating in these processes.

The second volume explores the nature of gentrification and presents further examples of gentrification processes in Wrocław, Bielsko-Biała and Łódź. It also addresses the issue of gentrification in rural areas.

One of the most recent Polish works devoted to gentrification is the monograph *Procesy gentryfikacji w obszarach* śródmiejskich *wielkich miast na przykładzie Warszawy,* Łodzi *i Gdańska* (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015) (Gentrification in the Inner-city: the Lessons from Warsaw, Łódź and Gdańsk). The Polish context of gentrification is discussed in a publication by Górczyńska (2015).

2. GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES IN POLISH CITIES: WARSAW, ŁÓDŹ AND GDAŃSK

2.1. Factors Conditioning Gentrification

Investment in degraded housing in central parts of cities is the factor that mainly affects the development of the gentrification process in the West. The persons interested in this type of upgrading are those who work and consume services in such areas, i.e. the middle class. The economic benefits resulting from the land rent gap contribute to the attractiveness of such actions.

In Poland and other post-socialist countries attempts at social and spatial amelioration of central urban areas were undertaken quite early. Inner cities were suffering from progressing degradation during the entire socialist period. In theory, the central area of the post-socialist city was an environment very favourable to gentrification processes (Smith, 1996).

Despite the regime transformation, which began in Poland in 1989, the rate of gentrification to the end of the 1990s was slow, and its extent was confined to certain areas of large cities.

Gentrification processes in East-Central European countries, where the change of the political and economic regime involved restoration of ownership rights, are conditioned by the legal status of land and buildings, especially in city centres, the economic condition of cities and wealth of their residents, and the policy of local authorities. In many instances, gentrification is in the initial phase. The process is observed in the largest, mainly capital cities and is characterized by a small spatial extent – usually one tenement house/block of flats or several tenements (Sýkora, 2005), so it is often termed 'spot gentrification'.

In post-socialist cities, including Polish cities, key factors influencing gentrification are ownership changes connected with privatisation and reprivatisation as well as primary and secondary investments. Privatisation relates to the possibility of purchasing houses and flats, while reprivatisation is involved in regaining property by owners expropriated after 1945. Primary investment is in new housing construction, and secondary investment is involved in revitalisation and renewal of built-up space.

Among major socio-economic problems after the 1989 transition was reprivatisation of property, both land and residential buildings taken over after 1945 by the communist government. Successive Polish governments have not yet been able to deal with this problem. The Reprivatisation Act of 1997, prescribing the payment of 50% of the value of the lost property, was vetoed by the then president of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski. Poland is the only post-communist country that has not carried out the reprivatisation process. Only the religious associations have got back the property seized from them after 1945 or have received compensation. Also the Poles who were forced after WWII to leave their place of residence, which found itself in the USSR territory because of the redrawing of the Polish boundary in 1945, received a small compensation (up to 29%). The total amount of financial claims in Poland is estimated at 70 billion zlotys (c.a. 17 billion dollars) – 20 billion zlotys (c.a. 5 billion dollars) in Warsaw alone. Since 1996, private owners (and their heirs and so-called buyers of claims) can seek restitution of property or compensation only by taking legal action.

Warsaw is in a specific situation, as 70% of the city was destroyed during the war. In 1945, the then president of Poland, Bolesław Bierut, using as a pretext the need to reconstruct the city, issued a decree on nationalisation of all private property in the capital. It applied to 25.5 thousand buildings (including 11.2 destroyed buildings) and 40 thousand registered plots. Warsaw is now having problems with the acquiring of ownership rights from former owners for next to nothing by specialised law offices or so-called tenement cleaners. Reprivatisation that is mainly carried out by the buyers of claims often means rent increases and brutal 'cleaning' of tenements by forcible displacement of former occupiers.

A so-called small reprivatisation law was approved by the Constitutional Tribunal as late as August 2016. It amends the provisions on real estate administra-

tion and represents an attempt to solve long-lasting problems and disputes concerning real estate in Warsaw. It is designed to eliminate the pathology connected with the absence of proper regulation of ownership (e.g. trading in claims). Under this law, restitution can be denied if the property is used for public purposes (e.g. school), if the value of a building newly constructed on a given plot exceeds the value of the property, or if more than 66% of a building was destroyed in the war. Trade in claims will only be possible in the form of notarial act, and the city and State Treasury will have the right of pre-emption. Also, it will not be possible to establish custody for persons who can be presumed dead. What is also important, it will be possible to dismiss claims for restitution of more than two thousand properties for which no one has applied in over 70 years.

Since the 1990s, central areas of Polish cities have witnessed population movements in the form of outflow of lowest-income residents and inflow of middle- or high-income groups. The factors stimulating social mobility in urban space include social rehabilitation of pre-war housing and the growing preference for living in inner city due to the changing character of the traditional household as well as the change in the lifestyles of its members to typically urban. Other factors that should be mentioned are the imbalanced housing market, which limits the choice of dwelling conditions, and the intergeneration transfer of rented or owner-occupied flats inherited by family members in old, inner-city buildings. Central districts still have a mixed social character despite the physical degradation of old tenements (Sagan, Grabkowska, 2013).

The article is largely based on the findings of research presented in publications devoted to gentrification processes in Polish cities (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2015). Research on gentrification processes in large Polish cities – Warsaw (1.7 million inhabitants), Łódź (700 thousand) and Gdańsk (460 thousand) – reveals some differences between these processes, as each of the mentioned cities has different problems which, often being a legacy of historical events, directly affect the current gentrification processes.

All three cities were founded in the Middle Ages, but they vary widely in terms of historical development, functions performed and place in Poland's settlement network hierarchy. For many centuries Gdańsk – Poland's largest seaport – was the most important city. Warsaw became the capital of the country at the end of the 14th century. Łódź joined the group of big cities only at the end of the 19th century, becoming Poland's second largest city due to dynamically developing industry. But the steadily growing population of Łódź, both in the interwar period and after the Second World War, did not corresponded to its relatively low position among Polish cities. At present, Warsaw is the leading city in the transformation process initiated in Poland in 1989. Gdańsk, too, is among the winners of this process, whereas in the case of Łódź the regime change and economic transformations resulted in a decline of the textile industry, which had played a dominant role since the 19th century, and in depopulation of the city.

The development of many areas in Warsaw is impeded by their unregulated legal status. The buildings with unclear legal status are in very bad technical condition, so that demolition is sometimes the only solution. The great number of claims resulting in the large scale of areas with unsettled ownership obstructs functional changes and hampers the development of the city, which was pointed out by Węcławowicz (1996) already in the mid-1990s.The most recent research, too, indicates negative effects of still unregulated property rights on the development prospects of downtown Warsaw (Górczyńska, 2015).

Gentrification processes in Łódź, driven by city authorities since 2010, have brought a number of problems for both the authorities and the residents. Only the tenements which are municipal property and have a regulated legal status are being renovated. Given the fact that the municipality manages the largest stock of housing that has not been renovated since the post-war period, the cost of the necessary repairs is huge, much higher than the funds at the disposal of the city. Public authorities of Łódź do not have sufficient funds for revitalisation of the municipal housing stock (Liszewski, Marcinczak, 2012). Major problems connected with gentrification in Łódź include unregulated property rights in some of the municipal housing, indebted council flats and very limited dialogue between the authorities and the residents of tenements being renovated. What is lacking is meetings with the inhabitants to explain the benefits of the revitalisation as well as psychological and financial support for lowest-income families.

Gentrification processes in Gdańsk are initiated in consequence of various interventions of local authorities. The factors that are conducive to this process include the selling out of the municipal housing stock and the repair and rent policy resulting in increased rents in council flats in neighbourhoods undergoing revitalisation. This leads to relocation of the poorest residents, who are forced to leave as a result of losing the right to reduced rent, and to influx of new tenants with higher economic and social status, who should be better able to pay rents regularly and less likely to create problems. Intensification of gentrification processes in Gdańsk is impeded by the specific, historically determined housing ownership structure (Grabkowska, 2015). Since the scale of reprivatisation, compared to Warsaw or Łódź, is marginal, and the institution of "tenement cleaners' does not exist in Gdańsk, the ownership changes that are taking place have a voluntary character and are thus free from undesirable processes connected with gentrification.

In Warsaw there is no consistent urban policy. The Integrated Program of Revitalisation of the City of Warsaw is in effect up to 2022. In this program the central part of the capital is not an object of action, so there is no consistent policy concerning the transformation of this part of the city. Łódź has had a number of revitalisation programs , such as 'The City of 100 Tenements', 'Local Revitalisation Program', or the most recent 'Housing Policy for Łódź 2020+',

all of which envisage transformation of the city centre. Gdańsk has the 'Local Revitalisation Program', which follows earlier rehabilitation programs of 2004 and 2009.

3. GENTRIFIERS

The main actors in gentrification processes in the West represent the middle class also called the cultural class (Ley, 1994) or creative class (Florida 2002). In Poland, the middle class, including the creative class, rarely has an active part in gentrification processes because of a relatively low level of wealth. It only plays the consumer role, such as buying new high quality apartments in the central part of the city. The key gentrifiers are development companies and local governments, the latter being practically forced to take this kind of action due to being owners or co-owners of dilapidated buildings demanding immediate repair.

The social and spatial transformations characteristic of gentrification processes in Polish cities can be examined through study of demographic data of the Central Statistical Office, Local Data Bank, and materials kept in City Offices (e.g. number of Social Security clients, municipal housing stock, real estate prices, new housing investments). It is also necessary to carry out field work, such as interviews with residents of areas undergoing gentrification and chief actors representing the supply side (developers, public authorities).

The contexts of gentrification vary considerably in the three cities under study. In downtown Warsaw it is mostly the developers and private owners that participate in the regeneration actions. The city authorities are only engaged in the difficult process of reprivatisation, with varying intensity and various consequences, including local government crisis.

Local authorities of Łódź are the biggest owner of tenement houses of all Polish cities. Before WWII these buildings mostly belonged to the Jewish and German population. The municipal housing now comprises 38% of the city's total housing stock (Fig. 1–2).

Council housing is mainly found in the central area. It is generally characterised by low standard of buildings, flats and their environment, so the municipality is the only potential as well as actual gentrifier (Wolaniuk, 2013). Apart from the local government, other actors engaged in the gentrification process are developers (Fig. 3–4), private owners (in a very small degree), and students (in a minimal degree). The dominant part played by city authorities differentiates Łódź from other cities. Particularly important for the reshaping of central spaces is the 'Housing Policy for Łódź 2020+ .
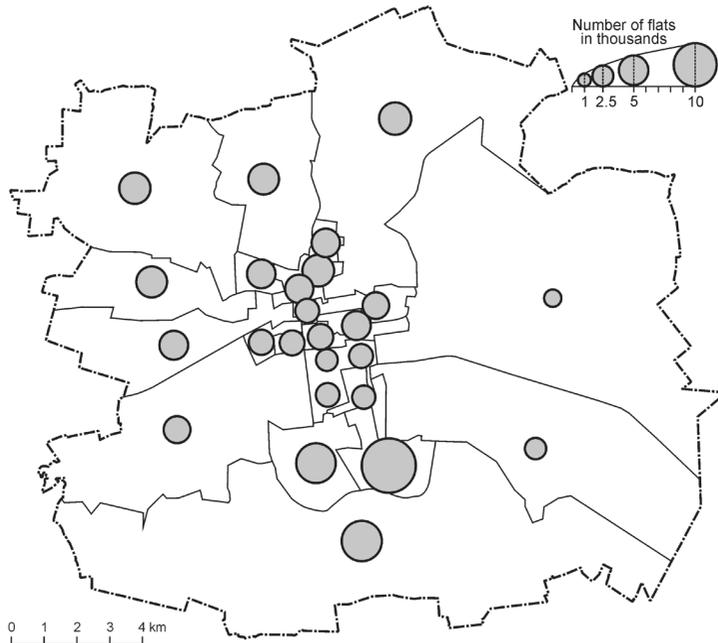
Fig. 1. Municipal housing stock in Łódź
Source: Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz (2012)

Fig. 2. A tenement building after renovation by local government of Łódź
Fot. J. Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz
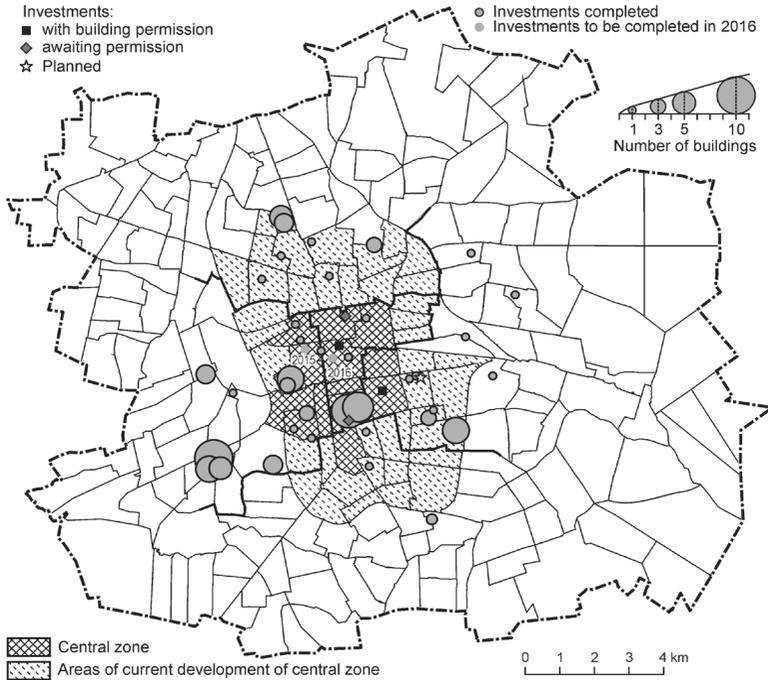
Fig. 3. Location of housing developments in Łódź in 2010–2013
Source: Wolaniuk (2013)

Fig. 4. One of the most expensive building developments in the centre of Łódź
Fot. J. Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz

In Gdańsk, gentrification is carried out by developers, TBSs (Social Housing Associations) and local government, with small participation of students. Gentrification processes in this city are stimulated by local authorities (urban renewal projects) and development companies rather than by consumer behaviour on the secondary housing market. Potential pioneer gentrifiers are present in the inner city. They are new, higher income residents coming to live in run-down neighbourhoods in the so-called central zone – mostly aged under 30, with higher education, without children. Urban development policy represents the inward-oriented type.

4. GENTRIFICATION EFFECTS

Gentrification involves social and material transformation, i.e. "upgrading' of the residents and buildings, while revitalisation only concerns the material side of this process – the improvement of the housing (repairs and renovation).

Gentrification along with re-urbanisation and revitalisation are processes transforming inner cities. What differentiates contemporary gentrification from other processes shaping the socio-spatial structure is the displacement of lower social tiers by higher-income groups, and the resulting social conflicts.

The outflow of higher and middle social categories from central areas of large cities began in East-Central Europe in the 1970s, when the intentional lack of intervention on the part of city authorities led to degradation of the old housing (Marcińczak *et al.*, 2013; Węcławowicz, 1988). Gradually, old buildings were mainly inhabited by workers and older people (Węcławowicz, 1988). The quick privatisation action aimed at getting rid of the municipal flats turned poor tenants into poor owners, who neither had nor have any chance of changing residence or investing to upgrade their dwellings (Marcińczak *et al.*, 2015). The municipal housing that has not been privatised, mainly consisting of pre-war tenement buildings, is generally still inhabited by low-income occupiers and socially excluded persons (Marcińczak *et al.*, 2012). Research on poverty enclaves in the post-socialist city shows that social exclusion (poverty) is inherited in families inhabiting such areas (Grotowska-Leder, 2000).

Present-day gentrification processes connected with renovation of degraded inner-city municipal housing result in social changes, involving arrival in such neighbourhoods of more affluent people and displacement of poorer residents who are no longer able to afford living there and are thus forced to relocate. Such population migrations are caused by local authorities, who carry out the necessary repairs of obsolescent buildings and have to offer the occupiers some replacement accommodation for the time of the repair action. Due to increased rents, only one in three former residents returns to the upgraded flat (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2012).

This type of population relocation causes numerous social conflicts and hostility of old residents towards new neighbours and local authorities who generate these changes. The lack of possibility, due to financial reasons, of returning to the formerly occupied flat makes worse or even initiates the process of social exclusion of these groups of residents. In the case of Łódź the government openly postulates 'elimination of pathology' from the most representative central areas, meaning not only the homeless and those at the bottom of the housing class ladder, but also the households with incomes below the average for the city. The result of this policy is not improvement of the living conditions of the population or activation and restoring to society of the poor or excluded people, it is just getting rid of the problem from central areas and moving it to other parts of the city (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2015).

Łódź is an interesting example of gentrification processes. A high proportion of municipal housing in central areas determines the key role of the public sector in the renovation and revival of this part of the city. Historical buildings in the form of tenements are still inhabited by lower social groups. Classic gentrification (involving rehabilitation of the existing buildings) is progressing very slowly. Apart from re-urbanisation and revitalisation activities (the New Centre of Łódź Project), the public sector has initiated the process of gentrification. City authorities not only conduct rehabilitation of attractive tenement buildings in the centre, but also pursue the policy of change in the social composition of the residents. The removal of social dwellings from the central part is the strategic goal of the housing policy in Łódź.

Gentrification of the city centre, which is part of the government-led housing policy in Łódź, is progressing rather slowly (Ogrodowczyk and Wolaniuk, 2014). For instance, in the period 2008–2013, about 1200 residents had to move out of 70 tenements under rehabilitation. Relocations caused by city centre gentrification mostly take place within its boundaries, which seems a positive fact from the displaced residents' perspective. They move to buildings of a comparable standard and socio-demographic character. Due to proximity to the former place of residence there are favourable conditions for maintaining contacts with former neighbours, using the same services, etc., but also for forming new social ties. The least favourable changes involve relocations to peripheral areas, mostly to new block housing far away from the former place of residence. Despite the higher standard of flats and greenery, relocated persons generally do not feel well in the new environment and miss the city centre and old neighbours.

Polish cities are also witnessing brutal practices of forcible displacement, which take place in connection with the reprivatisation process. Former owners of buildings, their heirs or buyers of claims hire so-called tenement cleaners, who force the tenants to leave their flats, often throwing them out onto the street. Particularly drastic cases of such practices took place in Warsaw, Łódź and Cracow.

In Gdańsk, apart from Letnica, gentrification in its social and spatial dimensions occurs in only a few locations: Wrzeszcz Dolny and new housing developments in Wrzeszcz Górny. Wrzeszcz Dolny stretches along the main transport route connecting Gdańsk with Sopot and Gdynia, and together with Wrzeszcz Górny adjoining it from the south-west forms the functional centre of the city (Fig. 5–6).
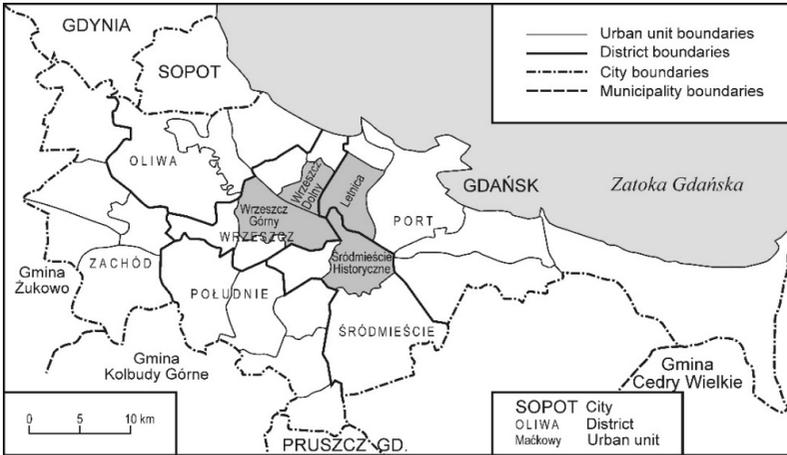

Fig. 5. Gentrified areas against the background of the housing districts of Gdańsk.
Location relative to the historical centre

Source: own work based on Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz (2015)

Fig. 6. Social housing in Letnica

Fot. M. Grabkowska

Gentrification processes in large Polish cities usually take place in inner-city spaces, associated with old tenement houses and post-industrial areas. It is interesting to note that in the case of Łódź and Gdańsk the developers participating in these processes have carried out the majority of housing projects in central areas, while in Warsaw they were most active in peripheral districts (Fig. 7–8).
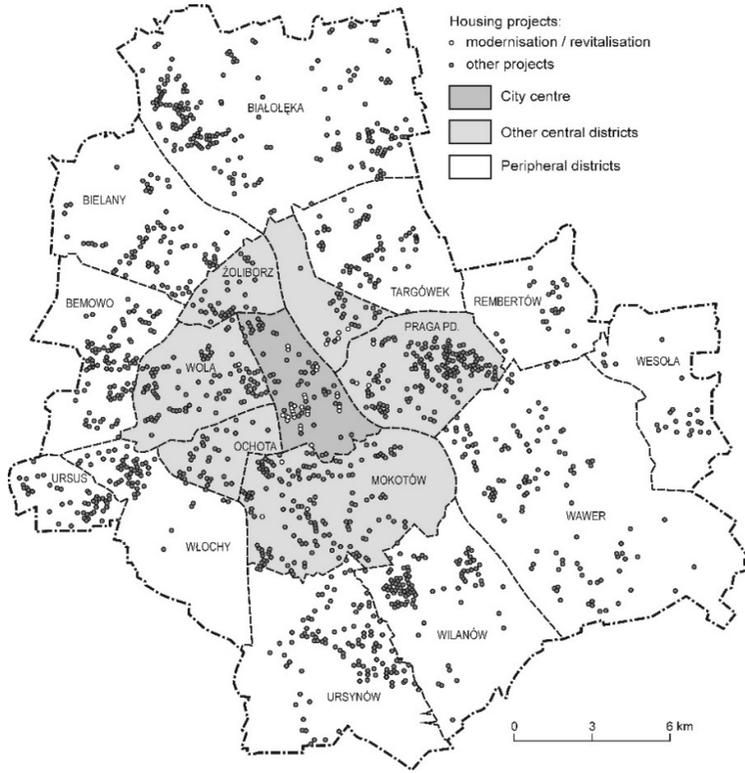
Fig.7. Housing projects in Warsaw by type of project
Source: own work based on Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz (2015)

Fig. 8. A modernised tenement in the centre of Warsaw
Fot. M. Stępniak

In downtown Warsaw, gentrification is mainly visible in two areas: in Powiśle around the newly-built academic infrastructure and the Science Centre Kopernik (Copernicus), and in the south of the district, in pre-war housing quarters.

In Łódź and Gdańsk, an increasing number of residents choose more expensive smaller apartments in convenient central locations rather than larger, peripherally located flats, associated with time-consuming and costly commuting.

Besides the displacement of lower-income residents from inner cities and the influx of the middle class, there is also progressing commercialisation of space. The prices of land and other real estate, including flats, are growing quickly. The influx of more affluent groups attracts costly higher-order services oriented to their needs, usually beyond the reach of poorer residents. Small service establishments, such as grocery shops or shoe repair workshops, are disappearing from city centres (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2012).

5. TYPES OF GENTRIFICATION

Gentrification processes in Polish cities are generally in the initial phase. Their spatial fragmentation is due to the limited purchasing power of the middle class, lack of legal regulation of ownership rights concerning real estate in cities, and commercialisation of social housing in old inner city districts. The slow pace of gentrification results in the emergence of small 'islands' of wealth – hence the term 'pocket gentrification'.

In the central part of Warsaw, gentrification is mainly promoted by developers. They create new, enclosed residential estates, which can be regarded as new-build gentrification. City authorities' activity in this respect is confined to a few investments in urban infrastructure and modernization of a number of tenements. Gentrification of central city spaces is most visible in Powiśle, around the Warsaw University Library and the Science Centre Kopernik, as well as in post-industrial areas, where exclusive housing developments are emerging (Jakóbczyk-Grysz-kiewicz, 2015).

In Łódź, local government is the leading gentrifier of the city centre. Due to fragmentation of the ownership structure and a high proportion of social housing in the centre, the public sector is and will be playing a key role in this process. The evident goal of Łódź authorities' housing policy is elimination of social dwellings from central areas. We can observe examples of pioneer gentrification as well as third-wave gentrification involving active participation of the public sector (state-led gentrification) and developers investing in new housing projects (new-build gentrification). In the city centre, new-build gentrification seems to be the dominant form. 'Studentification' is in the initial stage, though in the central zone in

the vicinity of university buildings the process of renting rooms/flats by students is increasingly observable. The spaces in Łódź where gentrification is the most intensive are areas of new housing developments and places of intensive tenement rehabilitation in inner city (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2015).

In Gdańsk, four types of gentrification can be distinguished, broadly corresponding to those identified in literature, with certain local modifications: re-urbanisation, gentrification stimulated by place-oriented revitalisation, new-build gentrification and studentification. Re-urbanisation involves the coming back of residents to central places, without pointing to suburbs as place of former residence, and is regarded a positive process. The second type, associated with local authorities, is considered negative, because orientation to place is believed to eliminate orientation to human needs. The third type denotes construction by developers of high-standard, enclosed housing estates or isolated apartment buildings in the city. Studentification in Gdańsk is seen as having negative effects (worsened quality of life, degradation of space). Gentrification processes are the most intensive in Letnica, Wrzeszcz and along the transport route Gdańsk- Sopot-Gdynia, especially near the housing district Przymorze (Fig. 3). The attractiveness of these locations, apart from accessibility, is enhanced by the proximity to the beach and the newly developed Seaside Park (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, 2015).

6. CONCLUSIONS

Gentrification processes in Poland and in other post-socialist countries differ to a varying extent from those occurring in Western cities and generally are less intensive, which is due to different conditions in which they are taking place.

Central parts of large Polish cities, that suffered degradation in the communist period, experienced attempts at social gentrification already in that period. The regime change brought acceleration of the gentrification process, especially since the beginning of the 21st century. Its extent, however, is still confined to certain urban areas.

Major factors that are modifying gentrification in Poland include ownership changes and investments involving construction of new housing and revitalisation of the old degraded housing stock.

A problem that needs to be resolved is the lack of legal regulation concerning property seized by the communist government after 1945. There is only a so-called small reprivatisation act of 2016 which only applies to Warsaw. Reprivatisation law for all the country is not likely to be enacted soon. The absence of relevant regulation complicates social transformations resulting from displacement of poorer residents from city centres. This process gives rise to social protests. The

influx of higher-income population to the new and rehabilitated buildings drives up the prices of land and apartments.

Since the degraded housing stock in inner cities often has unregulated ownership or is municipal property, local authorities play a major part in gentrification besides developers and small businesses.

The classic progress of gentrification in the form of successive waves does not occur in Polish cities – the three gentrification waves overlap each other.

The most common types of gentrification observed in Polish cities are: pioneer gentrification, new-build gentrification and state-led gentrification. Studentification is still in the initial phase.

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