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## ŁÓDŹ LEISURE TIME SPACE AS PERCEIVED BY *LICEUM* STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE 'UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE'

**Abstract:** The article is a summary of research into the perception of leisure time space, conducted in 2014 among *Liceum* students (aged 16-19) and members of the 'Universities of the Third Age' (U3A) in Łódź. The author compared perceptions of the idea of leisure time by both of these groups, studied how they spent it and described the factors which have a significant influence. Next, he analysed different approaches to the urban space of Łódź as well as comparing them to the spatial range and the types of visited places and events.

**Keywords:** perception, Łódź, leisure time, leisure time space, *Liceum* students, senior citizens.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Ali once said that "a 50 year old man who perceives the world in the same way as he did when he was 20, has lost 30 years of his life". Our image of the surrounding world is not static; it changes as we are maturing, gaining life experience as well as going through seemingly insignificant events. Discovering the world as it really is can be extremely difficult or even impossible. Reality is perceived due to the complex workings of the intellect which is fed with basic perception data provided by the senses (SZAFRAŃSKA & KACZMAREK 2007). Any attempt to learn objective reality must start from defining the truth. St Thomas Aquinas defined truth as an accordance between judgment and reality<sup>1</sup>. However, in line with this theory, how can truth be recognized, assuming that even the most honest and wholehearted human judgment may differ from the reality perceived by another. This is where science comes in, aiming at discovering an objective picture of the world.

While physical geography is a relatively exact science which can be described, human sciences always have a margin left for imprecision and the not stated. Some trends in geographical studies are related to human life and behaviour. The human being as a significant but not the most important element of real space is an interesting object of study. People

influence space, shape it, adjust it to their needs, destroy and embellish it. Every person perceives their surroundings slightly differently – thus, despite our physical similarities, the world of individuals will be different, filled with diverse emotions, stereotypes, fears and hopes. Researchers, in opposition to the scientism approach predominant<sup>2</sup> in history, notice that spaces described with mathematical formulae may differ from subjective spaces as perceived by individuals. Writh remarked that: 'There are no areas on the globe any more which are completely unknown, apart from those in human minds' (MORDWA 2003).

Researchers' attention has turned to new approaches to geography – the humanistic perspective and, slightly differently, the behavioural. According to Y.F. TUAN (1979), human geography deals with the study of space perceived, felt and evaluated with the help of the senses, in order to understand people and the conditions of their lives by explaining the concepts, symbols and aspirations concerning this space. Human geography is then a study of the subjective vision of the world. In this approach, the environment is defined on the basis of the physical and objective conditions as well as personal and subjective experiences (LIBURA 1988). In opposition to this approach are the ideas of behavioural geography,

based on the behavioural school of psychology. A link between humanist phenomenology and behaviourist positivism is, for example, the study of decision making.

The first approach will provide us with an analysis of decision making and evaluation processes, while the other with the results of making a decision, which is behaviour in space (WALMSLEY 1979). The two approaches are competitive as regards their philosophical assumptions but complementary as regards the geography of images (MORDWA 2003). This article is based on the ideas of humanism and behaviourism. The author has assumed that space and the phenomenon of leisure time vary in the subjective human approach, but it is possible to study them using different research methods, draw realistic conclusions and define existing relationships.

The article is based on an MA thesis entitled 'Leisure time space perceived by Łódź *Liceum* students and the members of the Universities of the Third Age', written at the Institute of Urban Geography and Tourism, University of Łódź, and supervised by Prof. Bogdan Włodarczyk.

The main aim was to see whether the perception of leisure time space varies between the two different age groups<sup>3</sup>. The issue is significant because earlier studies on space perception included homogenous groups consisting of similar individuals. Discussing the changing perception of the world, the author found it interesting to confront the responses of these two groups who differed by several decades of life and experience. The questions were the same and concerned the essence of leisure time, ways and places of spending it, as well as the image of the city emerging from them. The results of such a survey may be helpful for urban planners as well as provoke discussion on the existence of a space which is common to all individuals. Can a city meet the expectations of all inhabitants and create successful living conditions without matching, for instance, only the preferences resulting from age? Does the perception of the city and its image encoded in the human mind change with age?

It is also worth considering the location of services related to leisure time and matching them to the age of the users. Other questions concern the ability of city authorities and private service providers to create a personal space for leisure time by organizing events, festivals, offering discounts for certain services, as well as diversifying the language of the tourism promotion of the city (should it be single, homogenous, or should it be varied, depending on the user?).

The analysis concerned Łódź and the author was searching for responses to questions strictly connected with leisure time space. Where in Łódź is leisure time spent by the young and the elderly? Which places in

the city are worth showing to visitors? Do Łódź residents who spend their free time in their city choose the same places as tourists, or perhaps the places are not the same? The results of the research are not fully reliable and clear, but they show that some differences exist and that differences in sex and age must not be ignored when considering the perception of urban space. The article is a summary, a presentation of some interesting results concerning the issues discussed and a way to highlight the value of studying perception in different social groups.

The study was conducted in 2014 among randomly chosen final year students of state *Liceums* from all the administrative districts of the city, as well as among members of three largest Universities of the Third Age in Łódź (affiliated with the University of Łódź, Łódź University of Technology and the Medical University). The groups differed by several decades of life and were relatively available for the study. The final year school students are practically adults which gives them greater freedom of decision and choice than younger students have. As regards U3A members, we must remember that they do not exactly represent the whole range of the elderly being physically and intellectually fit and mobile. The sample group consisted of 1025 people, who provided 828 properly filled out forms (197 were discarded by the author due to unfilled spaces or a place of residence outside Łódź). The *Liceum* students returned 554 questionnaires (67% of the whole sample) and the older respondents – 274 (33%).

According to data obtained from the Central Statistical office (*GUS*), in 2013, Łódź *Liceums* had 4,309 final year students. Assuming that in the year of the research (2014) this number should be similar, a random sample should consist of a minimum of 527, at a 95% confidence level and 4% error rate. The final number of the questionnaires collected from the students (after rejecting invalid and empty ones) was 554.

Assuming that there are one thousand U3A members, the minimum sample would consist of 375, at a 95% confidence level and 4% error rate. After discarding invalid questionnaires, 274 properly filled out were collected.

## 2. SEEING AND PERCEIVING

The basic question is: 'Can the perception of urban space by respondents be understood as 'ordinary seeing' or as something more profound?' According to *Słownik wyrazów obcych...* (1967).

*Perception is the organization and interpretation of sensual impressions in order to understand surroundings. Percep-*

tion is a conscious reaction of a sense organ to an external stimulus, a way of reacting to experience.

The main difference was emphasized in the first sentence of the definition – ‘organization’ and ‘interpretation’. Seeing is limited to receiving a direct image from the organ of vision and such an image may be recalled in a specific way. Next, the mind ‘sorts’ it out into its own categories and adds additional qualities, e.g. ugly, safe, associated with the family, etc. This process is already an interpretation of experience and an organization of the received image. It is then a more advanced form – perception. A given form of perception is also influenced by a person’s previous experience, education and personal worldview (coming from cultural or social models). According to K. SKARŻYŃSKA (1981), the process of perception is divided into three stages:

- attribution, i.e. temporary and permanent qualities;
- ascribing expectations;
- evoking emotions.

Thus, it is a long-lasting but changeable activity. The final, fully formed image will never be ‘complete’ – it can always be transformed on the basis of new impressions, reflections and personal development. What is more, we cannot adopt a single model of perception which could be ascribed to all individuals. People are different and perceive the same place differently. A more developed definition derived from the psychological sciences was presented by P.G. Zimbardo in 1999:

*Perception is a registration of the outside world taking place in three stages: reception, internal interpretation (i.e. understanding), and identification which means recognizing and ascribing meanings to observations. Through interpretation, an individual transcends the physical aspect of experience and forms his/her own creative and personal vision of reality.*

Perception is a relatively complicated process despite happening automatically. It may seem that perceiving means seeing a specific image. We do not realize that a picture thus recorded has already undergone internal classification based on the individual’s earlier observations and prejudices. S. LEM (2009) writes: “Every picture of the world contains holes, but for those who have created it, they remain invisible. The ignorance of ignorance consistently accompanies cognition.” In this way, exactly the same real image may be perceived differently by two people standing side by side.

E. SZAFRAŃSKA & J. KACZMAREK (2007) gave studies of perception of space the form of research questions:

- object of perception – what is perceived?
- subject – who perceives the object?
- process of perception – in what way does the subject perceive the object?

- situation of perception – in what environment does the process of perception occur?
- result of perception – what image of the object does the subject receive?

Trying to achieve as truthful an image of a given place as possible in the perception of a given group, researchers (including the author) select common elements. Such generalizations are often correct (with appropriate methodology and the right size of sample), but it must not be forgotten that for an individual they may be completely missed. When examining perception, it is necessary to operate in a paradigm of post-modernism, i.e. assume that objective reality does not exist. Only what is seen at a given moment exists.

### 3. ŁÓDŹ SPACE OF LEISURE TIME

Apart from issues concerning the general idea of leisure time and the perception of leisure time space, the research undertaken by the author raised questions connected with Łódź space. The author considered it interesting and important, in the study of Łódź space of leisure time, to identify the ‘first association’ when considering leisure time and the city. Unstructured responses were grouped into twelve categories and the majority did not indicate the time or activity, but mainly referred to specific places (Fig. 1).

‘FIRST ASSOCIATION’ CATEGORIES

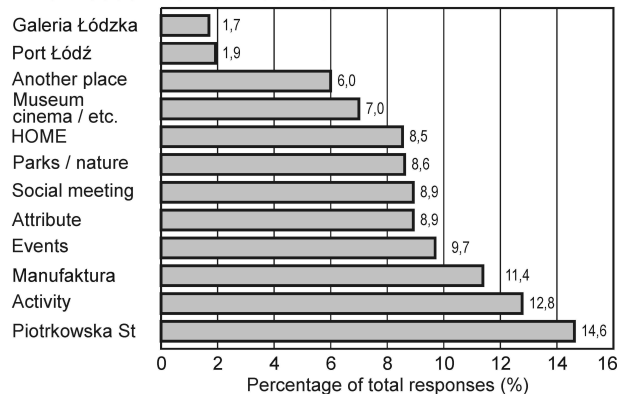


Fig. 1. Respondents’ associations related to leisure time in Łódź  
Source: author based on research

Out of all the associations, the most popular was one connected with the main street of the city – Piotrkowska. The second most frequent was a specific activity (e.g. ‘jogging’, ‘resting’, ‘having fun’) and the third was a place – *Manufaktura*. Further associations concern events, attributes of leisure time (e.g. ‘spent as someone wishes’, ‘cheerful’), and a social meeting. The next refer to specific places again – Łódź open areas, the respondent’s home, cinemas and others. The

responses concerning two large shopping and entertainment centres (*Port Łódź* and *Galeria Łódzka*) were few, but the author purposefully classified them into separate categories in order to show the gap in the inhabitants' awareness between these two shopping centres, and *Manufaktura* or the entertainment and restaurant centre – *Piotrkowska St.* Such responses point to a very strong identification of leisure time with the place where it is spent. The respondents, who could give any answer they liked provided it was connected with Łódź, usually (60%) gave a specific place. A leisure time activity (including events and meetings) was mentioned second most often (31%) while an attribute unconnected with location was mentioned only by 9% of *Liceum* students and U3A members. This confirms the fact that leisure time space is present in Łódź. What is more, this means that some spaces and activities are strongly rooted in the respondents' minds and 'emerge' as their first association of leisure time with Łódź. Remembering about differences in the perception of leisure time and about its varying character and ways of spending it (depending on sex and affiliation with a given social group) the results of 'first associations' were divided according to these factors (Fig. 2).

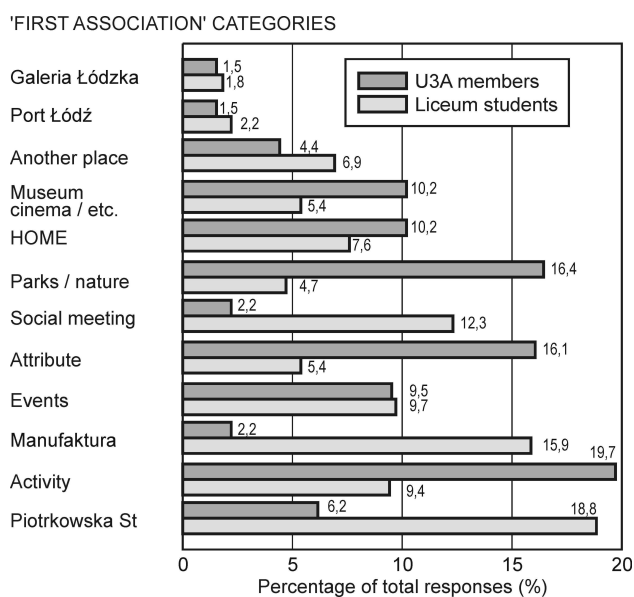


Fig.2. First associations with leisure time in Łódź among respondents from different social groups  
Source: author based on research

The *Liceum* students' most frequent 'first association' with leisure time in Łódź was a place – usually *Piotrkowska St* or *Manufaktura*. These responses were not common among U3A members (eight times less frequent than among *Liceum* students in the case of *Piotrkowska St* and three times less in the case of *Manufaktura*). The older respondents often quoted

other places as well. However, they did not refer to shopping centres but rather to culture-related (museum, cinema) and natural places (parks and green areas). With these responses, they greatly outnumbered *Liceum* students (natural places were mentioned over three times more frequently). U3A respondents generally quoted a free time attribute more often than *Liceum* students. This may be a sign of their comprehensive view of the phenomenon, in contrast to the younger respondents who seem to be thinking along more down-to-earth and practical lines than the older ones ('Leisure time in Łódź – where or how I spend it' vs 'Leisure time in Łódź – it does not matter where, the important thing is what'). Following this way of thinking, the larger number of associations with specific activities by U3A members, less focused on the character of the location in Łódź, confirms this. The results show the popularity of social meetings among the younger group. Social meetings were indicated six times more frequently by *Liceum* students than by U3A members. The percentage of responses pointing to the home or events, as a 'first association' with leisure time, were similar in both groups. The category of events included responses like 'concerts', 'fairs', and 'volleyball world championships'

After dividing the respondents' responses according to sex, it turned out that the differences are small, except for the greater popularity of associations with home and events among men. Slightly more women than men mentioned associations with nature, *Piotrkowska St* and *Manufaktura*. It is worth stressing that *Piotrkowska St* plays an enormous role in respondents' associations. It turned out that after years of being 'forgotten', the street is coming back into people's minds because it appeared in respondents' awareness more often than *Manufaktura*.

In order to discover the most attractive places to spend free time and at the same time define specific spaces, the respondents had to imagine a situation in which they have a visitor from another city. Next, they were asked to name the place where they would take the visitor (assuming they have a whole day and an unrestricted budget), as well as the activities which they would do there. As a result, the obtained responses to the question about the places in Łódź which are seen by the inhabitants as the most desirable to spend leisure time. Obviously, the places where the inhabitants really spend time are different from 'place-symbols' guaranteeing enjoyable moments (i.e. the best to take the visitor to). The kinds of places discussed here do not have to remain in 'imaginary space'. It can be said with great probability that the inhabitants recommend places which they know very well, and suggest activities which they themselves enjoy. The author assumes then that the places and activities indicated by the respondents not only show

their willingness to present the best sides of the city but also materialize their own dreams and interests.

The respondents could quote any number of places and activities, although the space provided for the responses had a form suggesting a maximum of three responses. However, at the same time, it motivated respondents to indicate more locations than a single one which might have happened with an open question. Usually, three places were given, and U3A members tended to indicate more (3.13 on average, while for *Liceum* students – 2.61).

The most popular places in Łódź (where respondents would take a visitor from another city to spend free time together) were *Manufaktura* and Piotrkowska St. Both these places were chosen by over 50% of respondents (Fig. 3).

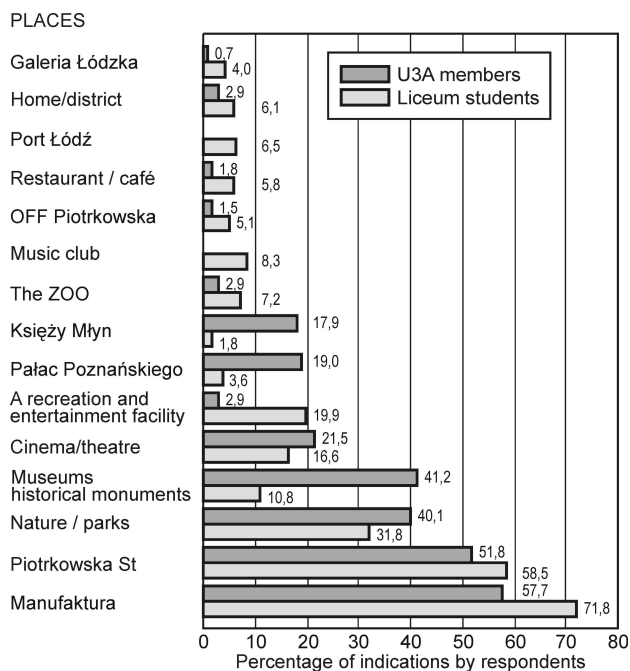


Fig. 3. The most attractive places to spend free time in Łódź with a visitor from another city  
Source: author based on research

These two locations were slightly more popular among *Liceum* students (14% more popular in the case of *Manufaktura* and 6% in the case of Piotrkowska St). The most popular place is *Manufaktura* – indicated by 7 out of 10 respondents. The third most popular were the green areas in Łódź, put together. They were given more by older respondents – 40%, than by young students – 32%. The reason why several natural sites were classified as one answer was the great variety of similar places. For instance, sometimes a respondent indicated a specific park near where he/she lived. General responses were given as well (e.g. ‘I would show the wonderful Łódź open spaces’), or several locations were mentioned (‘A walk in Łódź parks’).

The author decided that from the statistical point of view, it was no use treating each park or open area as a separate place. Among the responses mentioning open spaces, it was possible to observe some recurrent ones: the park in Zdrowie (75), Łagiewniki together with Arturówek (63), the Botanical Gardens (40), the Palm House (23) and Poniatowski Park (12). The author did the same in the case of the next most common group – Łódź museums and historical monuments. A disproportion in the choice of this place between the two groups of respondents should be emphasised. One such location was quoted by 41% of the U3A members and only 11% of *Liceum* students.

All the responses analysed in this chapter confirm that leisure time space in ‘static’ and quiet locations is much more popular among the older respondents. *Liceum* students obviously decided that showing Łódź’s historical monuments to a guest from another city, taking him/her to a museum was not worth the effort. Perhaps those included in the survey were not aware of the tourism attractiveness of the city and the heritage they could be proud of, in contrast to the older who participate in excursions in Łódź and lectures about the city and the region. The most frequently given locations included Herbst Palace (35 responses), Art Museum (32), Dętka ‘Canal’ Museum (30), Cathedral (15), Museum of Cinematography (25), Museum of the Textile Industry (17), and shrines in Łagiewniki (10). The Museum of the City of Łódź (Israel Poznański Palace) as well as *Księży Młyn* (Priest’s Mill), were classified as separate responses (due to their popularity and the symbolic character of the buildings).

Smaller differences between the groups of older and younger respondents concern cultural facilities. It was the fifth most popular response to the question about the places worth showing to a visitor from another city. A location of this type was chosen by 17% of *Liceum* students and 22% of U3A members (Table 1).

Let us also stress the different understandings of the term ‘cultural place’. The young respondents thought of the cinema here, while the older pointed to the Grand Theatre or Łódź Concert Hall. The biggest differences in the choice of places were observed with regard to the following three locations: any recreation-entertainment ‘facility’ (except in *Manufaktura*), Poznański Palace and *Księży Młyn*. The first was quoted by every fifth *Liceum* student and by only 3% of the older respondents. Entertainment-recreation facilities usually meant climbing walls, swimming pools and sports clubs. The greater popularity of such dynamic places requiring active leisure time among the younger group is not surprising. U3A members more willingly chose places guaranteeing more passive entertainment and pleasures. The two flagship historical monuments

(belonging to the top five Łódź attractions, according to the Łódź Bureau of Tourism and Foreign Cooperation) – *Księży Młyn* and *Poznański Palace* (Museum of the City of Łódź) – had greater popularity (18% and 19%) among the older group than the younger (2% and 4%).

Table 1. Places worth visiting in free time with a visitor from another city according to respondents

Miejsce	Liceum	U3A
	students	members
	% responses <sup>a</sup>	
<i>Manufaktura</i>	72	58
Piotrkowska St	58	52
Łódź nature/parks	32	40
Recreation, entertainment, sports facility	20	3
Cinema/Theatre	17	22
Łódź museums/historical monuments, other	11	41
Music club	8	0
Zoo	7	3
Home/District	6	3
Restaurant/cafe	6	2
<i>Port Łódź</i>	6	0
Off Piotrkowska	5	1
Poznański Palace	4	19
<i>Galeria Łódzka</i>	4	1
<i>Księży Młyn</i>	2	18

Source: author based on research.

U3A members were more willing to present Łódź heritage (probably due to their greater knowledge about it or spending their free time in this way) than *Liceum* students. The remaining places marked on the map (Fig. 5) and on Table 1 had less than 10% of the responses. We can see large differences between the groups of respondents here. Places such as the zoo, OFF Piotrkowska or shopping galleries where *Port Łódź* and *Galeria Łódzka* were indicated several times more frequently by the younger respondents. The same regularity could be observed as regards a music club (or disco), which was mentioned only a few times by older respondents. *Liceum* students pointed to their own home as a place where they would invite a guest more often than older respondents (6% and 3%, respectively).

This table lacks facilities which are well known and also visited in free time – the *Atlas Arena* sports and performance hall as well as sports stadiums. Obviously, they are treated more as venues of attractive events, lasting for a specific period of time. At other times, when events are not held there, they are not perceived as attractive places to spend leisure time.

The advantage of *Manufaktura* and Piotrkowska St over other places is presented in Fig. 4.

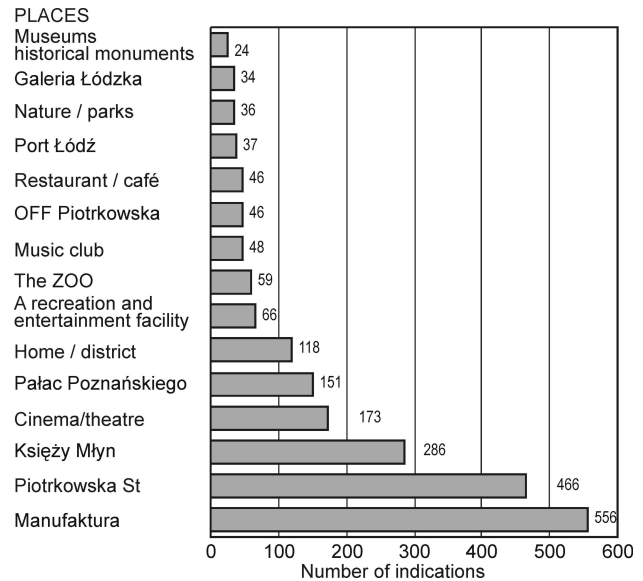


Fig. 4. The varying popularity of locations to spend leisure time with a visitor from another city

Source: author based on research

The location of the places most frequently given by respondents is presented in Fig. 5 and the map shows specific places if they were mentioned at least 10 times. Categories like 'Łódź nature', 'Łódź historical monuments', etc., created for the purpose of previous analyses and graphs, were divided into individual places. A response of 'a park' or 'some museum' was excluded from visualization on the map, while in the earlier analyses they were included into general categories.

The first conclusion that can be drawn is that they are concentrated in central part of the city. The majority being situated in the centre bordered by Włókniarzy Av on the west and Kopcińskiego St on the east. The northern border is the area of the 'old town' and the southern one – Plac Niepodległości, i.e. in fact the limits to the Piotrkowska St axis. They are thus situated in the area defined in the strategy for the spatial development of Łódź in 2012 as the metropolitan zone:

*The Metropolitan Zone is a cultural asset due to its urban structure and architectonic expression, because it is the last link in the natural evolution of cities. It is also the most optimal form of the city. Its character determines the identity of the city. It is the oldest, the best developed urban structure, containing the largest number of stately residential buildings and factories, as well as regular and fully built up blocks between streets..*

The central locations prove the important role of the city centre as a leisure time space for Łódź residents. Apart from areas near places of residence, where time is spent every day, housing estates lacked places which the respondents quoted more than a few times. This is in a way understandable – housing

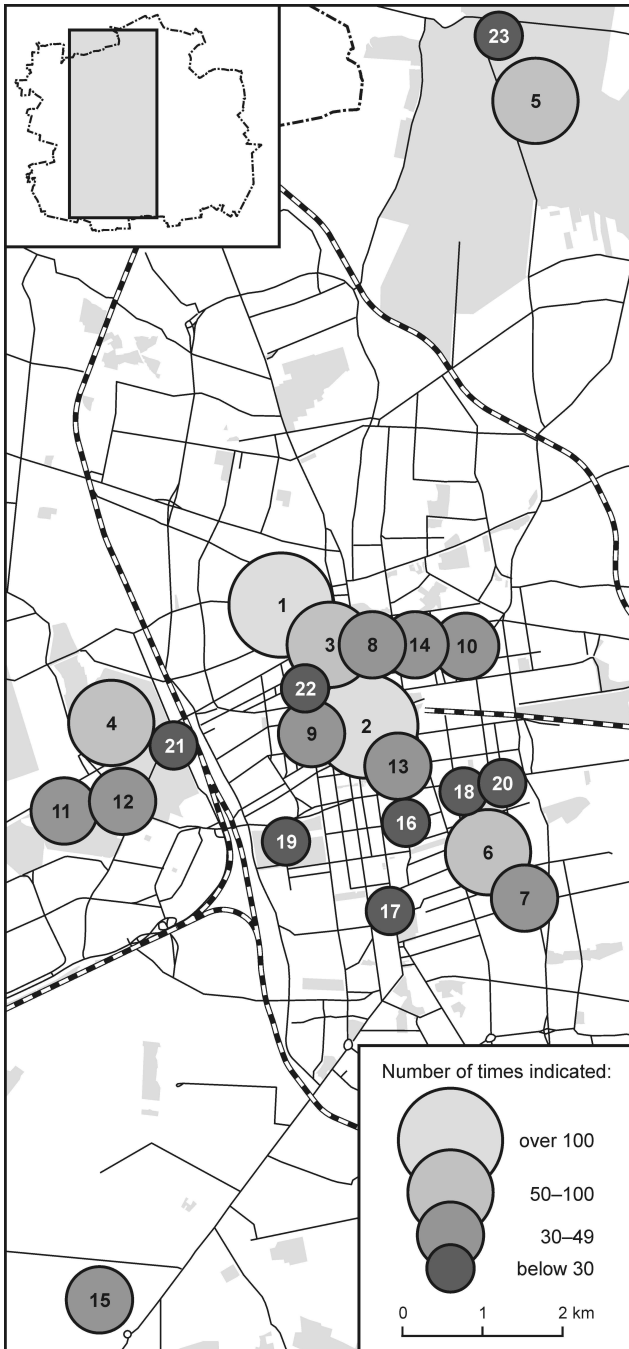


Fig. 5. Locations on a map of Łódź

- 1 - *Manufaktura*, 2 - Piotrkowska St, 3 - Poznański Palace,
- 4 - Park in Zdrowie, 5 - Łagiewniki, 6 - *Księży Młyn*, 7 - Herbst Palace,
- 8 - *Dełka* 'Canal' Museum, 9 - Art Museum, 10 - Grand Theatre,
- 11 - Botanical Gardens, 12 - Zoo, 13 - Off Piotrkowska,
- 14 - Concert Hall, 15 - *Port Łódź*, 16 - *Galeria Łódzka*,
- 17 - Cathedral, 18 - Museum of Cinematography, 19 - Ponia-towski Park,
- 20 - Palm House, 21 - '*Fala*' Aquapark, 22 - Nowy Theatre, 23 - Shrines in Łagiewniki

Source: author based on research

estates consist mainly of residential buildings and shops; they lack spaces created for the purpose of spending leisure. Naturally there are gyms, squares and parks, but they are not attractive enough to be

given as places worth taking a visitor from another city to (which was the question). Consequently, from the point of view of the inhabitants, the most attractive places to show to a visitor could be found in the city centre. There were places outside the city centre which were mentioned several times, for instance the green areas in Zdrowie or Łagiewniki. An exception is *Port Łódź* – a shopping centre on Pabianicka St. According to research undertaken by J. KACZMAREK (1996), concerning daily life paths, places of everyday shopping and services are connected with the places of living and working. Recreation activities usually take place in the area where people live or work. Socializing takes place all over the city.

Apart from the place where they would take a visitor from another city, the respondents also gave examples of activities that they would do there. Generally speaking, the responses were recurrent and could be divided into five types: shopping, eating, dancing/socializing (understood as a party, dance, game, going to a concert, etc.), sightseeing/ going for a walk, and broadly understood relaxation (resting, picnic, leisure sport). The distribution of activities at a given location suggested by the respondents is presented in Table 2.

Responses are predictable as regards most and 90% sightseeing is not surprising as an activity typical for museums or *Księży Młyn*.

The places most often associated with eating as the main activity are of course restaurants and a part of the main street of the city – Off Piotrkowska. As regards inviting a visitor from another city to their home, the main activity was relaxing. 'Parties/socializing' and 'eating' had 18% each. Let us make a detailed comparison of the two main locations, i.e. *Manufaktura* (Fig. 6) and Piotrkowska St, which significantly outnumbered any other place.

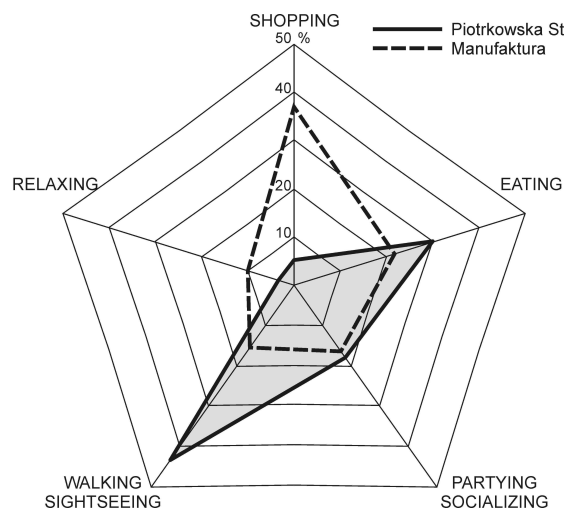


Fig. 6. A comparison of leisure time activities in *Manufaktura* and Piotrkowska St  
Source: author based on research

Table 2. Leisure time activities at selected places of spending free time (% responses)

Place	Shopping	Eating	Partying /socializing	Sightseeing/walking	Relaxing
<i>Manufaktura</i>	37	22	17	15	10
Piotrkowska St	5	30	18	44	3
<i>Port Łódź</i>	78	6	6	6	6
<i>Galeria Łódzka</i>	92	8	0	0	0
Łódź museums/historical monuments, other	0	0	1	93	6
Poznański Palace	0	0	0	100	0
Cinema/theatre	0	0	11	1	88
Łódź green areas/parks	0	0	3	22	75
<i>Księży Młyn</i>	0	0	0	97	3
Zoo	0	0	0	29	71
Music clubs	0	0	81	0	19
OFF Piotrkowska	0	67	30	0	3
Restaurant/cafe	0	78	5	5	11
Recreation, entertainment, sports facility	0	0	29	0	71
Home/district	0	6	18	18	59

Source: author based on research.

As reported, the main activity in *Manufaktura* was 'shopping', making up over one third, followed by a meal in one of the restaurants or bars. 'Partying/socializing' in one of the discos or entertainment facilities, as well as 'visiting' this post-industrial site (or the Art Museum and the Factory Museum it includes). Every tenth respondent was willing to relax there.

The situation is completely different in the case of Piotrkowska St (Fig. 6). Here, 'shopping' makes up only 5% of responses. A much more popular choice is 'sightseeing/walking' (nearly half) and 'eating'. A similar number (18%) point to 'partying and socializing, probably due to the fact that there are many discos and clubs situated in this street.

The conclusions that can be drawn are that for the intention of shopping, Piotrkowska St loses heavily to *Manufaktura*. There is not much competition between them, though, as regards sightseeing/walking. Socializing and partying are equally popular at both places. As for eating, it was mentioned more often with regard to Piotrkowska St. Relaxing was a rarely quoted activity, but it was more popular in the case of *Manufaktura*. Such a pattern is probably related to the number of services at both these locations (Table 3).

More shopping and entertainment facilities can be found in *Manufaktura*, while Piotrkowska St may boast double the number of restaurants and bars, as well as a considerable number of clubs and cultural facilities. We should add that the majority of shops on Piotrkowska St are cheap (contrary to *Manufaktura*), usually selling basic products (drugstores, food shops, kiosks, etc.).

The events and festivals attracting both tourists and inhabitants are elements shaping leisure time space. Large music, sports and other events are usually

Table 3. The number of specific services in *Manufaktura* and Piotrkowska St

Servis	<i>Manufaktura</i>	Piotrkowska St
Shops	393	232 (154*)
Restaurants	47	102 (92*)
Clubs and Discos	2	38 (36*)
Galleries and Museums	2	19
Entertainment and recreation facilities	9	0

\*In the pedestrian zone.

Source: author based on information found on websites [www.manufaktura.com](http://www.manufaktura.com), [www.ulicapiotrkowska.pl](http://www.ulicapiotrkowska.pl).

attended by large numbers of people. An event may be the only reason why a given place is visited in free time (e.g. a sports facility or a factory). Over the last year, more *Liceum* students than U3A members have attended an event or festival (61% and 45%, respectively) (Fig. 7).

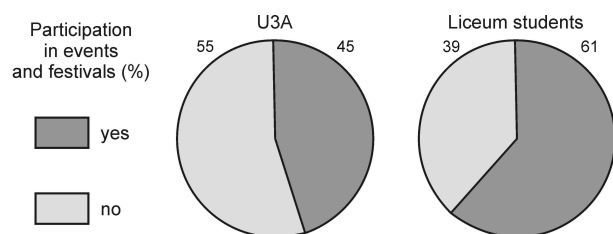


Fig. 7. Participation in events and festivals in Łódź over the last year

Source: author based on research

Among the *Liceum* students and U3A members who attended events held in Łódź, the most popular was the *Light Move Festival* (Table 4).



Table 4. Events in Łódź attended by respondents  
(% of YES responses)

Events popular among <i>Liceum</i> students	<i>Liceum</i> students	U3A members	Events popular among U3A members
<i>Light Move</i> Festival	31	51	<i>Light Move</i> Festival
Football match (ŁKS/Widzew)	13	14	'Senioralia'
Volleyball World Championships	13	9	Festival of Four Cultures
Festival of Colours	11	9	Volleyball World Championships
Sport events in <i>Atlas Arena</i>	7	7	Fairs
Festival of Good Taste	5	6	Days of Łódź
Concerts	5	4	Concerts
Night of Museums	5	3	Jazz Academy
<i>Touch the Theatre</i> Festival	4	3	<i>Książę Młyn</i> Day

Source: author based on research.

It is a relatively new event which has quickly won the hearts of Łódź inhabitants (in the year of research it was being held for the fourth time). According to the city authorities' estimates, it is also the event which is attended by the largest number of people – in 2014, it attracted about 350 000 visitors. The festival of the kinetic art of light – *Light Move* Festival, is a free event organized in Piotrkowska St and Staromiejski Park. The attractions include both a programme and atmosphere (the festival takes place after dark) and a great number of installations (in 2014 the program included over 60 installations and shows) and artists (over 100 in 2014). Every year, nearly twice as many visitors are attracted as in the previous year (Fig. 8).

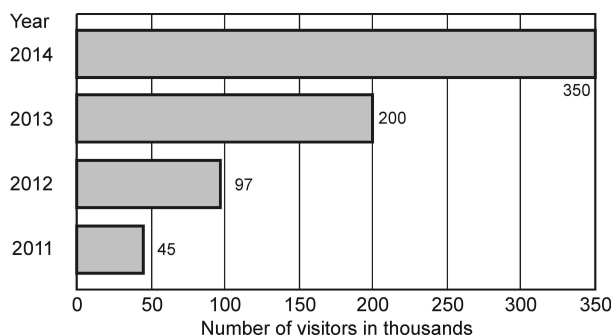


Fig. 8. Attendees of the *Light Move* Festival in 2011-14  
Source: Media report prepared by the organizer – the *Lux Pro Monumentic* Foundation, 2014, from [www.Inf.com.pl](http://www.Inf.com.pl)

It is a relatively new event which has quickly won the hearts of Łódź inhabitants (in the year of research it was being held for the fourth time). According to the city authorities' estimates, it is also the event which is attended by the largest number of people – in 2014, it attracted about 350 000 visitors. The festival of the kinetic art of light – *Light Move* Festival, is a free event organized in Piotrkowska St and Staromiejski Park. The attractions include both a programme and atmo-

sphere (the festival takes place after dark) and a great number of installations (in 2014 the program included over 60 installations and shows) and artists (over 100 in 2014). Every year, nearly twice as many visitors are attracted as in the previous year (Fig. 8).

The respondents were to express their opinion about one element which could theoretically create personal leisure time space, i.e. the discounts offered by city institutions and private service providers, and they admitted using such discounts (63% of U3A members and 75% of *Liceum* students). What is more, most of them admit that discounts are important for choosing how and where to spend free time (65% of the older and 55% of the younger). The respondents mostly take advantage of half-price tickets to institutions of culture, entertainment facilities, as well as discounts in restaurants. This shows that the availability of a discount system may change how leisure time is spent e.g. enabling people to use better (cheaper) transport or persuade them to choose one form of entertainment over another.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the responses of both groups of respondents, the differences in their perception of leisure time space in Łódź become obvious. Firstly, it emerges from 'first associations' of the idea of leisure time with Łódź where *Liceum* students without hesitation pointed to *Manufaktura* or Piotrkowska St; they also often mentioned socializing. The members of U3A were oriented more towards Łódź green areas, a specific free time activity or a general feature of time. The differences between men and women were small – perhaps the frequent mentioning of 'events' or 'home' by men is worth noting. According to the respondents, the most attractive locations for spending

free time are *Manufaktura*, Piotrkowska St and Łódź green areas, quoted nearly equally often by both groups, with slight differences (more *Liceum* students than U3A chose *Manufaktura* and Piotrkowska St, and more U3A members Łódź green areas). However, differences concerning other locations are significant. The older respondents perceived leisure time space in more static and educational-cultural terms. They also pointed to such places as museums, flagship historical monuments and theatres/cinemas more frequently than *Liceum* students. The latter perceive leisure time space through entertainment, places where they actively spend time, e.g. music clubs, entertainment facilities, shopping galleries or the zoo.

According to the respondents, the best places for spending leisure time are situated mainly in the city centre but attractive recreational areas, mainly open spaces, are away from the centre. This illustrates the significance of green areas in the urban fabric, as well as confirming the service function of the city centre. The places where the inhabitants spend leisure time are mostly the same as those attractive to tourists. Housing estates do not have clearly specified places – simply supplementing everyday free time behaviour. The places quoted by respondents differ as regards the main activities done by the visitors. The differences are best visible in the two locations selected most often. In *Manufaktura*, the respondents pointed to shopping as the main activity they would like to do if they had a guest from another city. This choice was followed by partying and eating. As for Piotrkowska St, shopping comes last; the main activity is walking and sightseeing. Piotrkowska St is also the place where going to restaurants and partying were mentioned more often. The choice of activities depends on the range available. While in *Manufaktura* one can find more shops, Piotrkowska St ‘wins’ as regards the choice of restaurants, discos or cultural facilities.

The study provided a number of important conclusions. Firstly, the leisure time spaces of both groups of respondents differ as do the places and activities important for them. This may result from health, interests, affluence and life experience. The perception of the city also varies – the students perceive it through individual locations, usually connected with fun and entertainment, while the older respondents look at it through its history, identity and long tradition. The image of the city which the respondents would like to show to a visitor from another city is different (probably assuming that the visitor’s age matches the host’s). This clearly shows the priorities of older people (the beauty of the city, history, historical monuments) and the younger ones (fun, spending time in an active way). It is important in promoting a given place and it is obvious that the message directed to the younger and the older must be different.

Both groups are not particular about the location of the places visited within the city space and did not mind travelling to the city centre where the majority of the places chosen are situated. There are events and facilities which attract people regardless of their age e.g. *Light Move* Festival, *Manufaktura*, Piotrkowska St. Some responses and differences are visible with smaller events and with places which are visited less frequently or occasionally. Variations in the perception of cultural locations are also interesting; for younger respondents they are mainly cinemas, and for the older – theatres and the concert hall. The city can encourage specific social groups to spend leisure time in specific ways, e.g. by supporting events or giving discounts for tickets to cultural institutions.

The perception of urban space (the example of the leisure time space of selected Łódź inhabitants) depends on demographic features, in this case on age (sex-related differences were insignificant), and it can be assumed that it changes over time. The study of perception gives an opportunity to confront the approaches of different social groups. There is no single image of city space for all people, but it is possible to see some common related features.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> The words have been ascribed to Saint Thomas Aquinas, but they are also a generalization of the theory which philosophers (e.g. Aristotle) had proclaimed earlier. Saint Thomas presented his theory in the dissertation entitled *Summa contra gentiles*.

<sup>2</sup> Scientism – is a philosophical belief, related to empirism, materialism and utilitarianism, proclaiming that gaining true knowledge of reality is only possible through scientific cognition; in methodology, recognizing the applicability of mathematical-naturalist methods (*Słownik wyrazów obcych ...* 2004).

<sup>3</sup> The article is based on an MA thesis entitled *Leisure time space as perceived by Łódź secondary school students and the students of the Third Age University*, written in the Institute of Urban and Tourism Geography, University of Łódź, under the supervision of Prof. Bogdan Włodarczyk.

<sup>4</sup> One of Łódź green areas with ponds and recreation infrastructure.

Translated by Ewa Mossakowska

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