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## Gentrification, revitalization and children raising. Family gentrifiers in a post-socialist city

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**Abstract** The aim of the article is to provide a case study of a post-industrial, post-socialist city analyzing gentrification processes in their initial phase within the context of a large municipality-led revitalization program with focus on experiences of family gentrifiers. Inspired by Robert A. Beauregard's framework (1986), the analysis concentrates on 'the potentially gentrifiable neighborhoods', 'the potentially gentrified', 'the facilitators and active agents of gentrification', and 'the potential gentry themselves'. The empirical part of the text is based on qualitative study, that is, selected interviews collected within a research project on gentrifiers in the process of social revitalization, conducted in the city of Lodz (central Poland).

**Keywords** gentrification, revitalization, family gentrifiers, children, post-socialist city

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In his widely discussed article 'The chaos and complexity of gentrification' (1986) Robert A. Beauregard argues that in the gentrification process the image of the city is and its neighborhoods are manipulated in order to reduce the perceived risk and to encourage investments. Large revitalization projects dedicated to transforming a deprived inner-city into a flourishing area offering high quality of life, work, and leisure is definitely a kind of a promise, an incentive, an advertisement, if not a manipulation.

The article concentrates on socio-spatial changes in a post-socialist city which undergoes a complex local government-led revitalization program. The aim of the article is to provide a case study of a post-in-

dustrial, post-socialist city analyzing gentrification processes in their initial phase within the context of a large municipality-led revitalization program with focus on experiences of family gentrifiers. In the article, I am drawing a line between gentrification and revitalization with regard to Polish and Central and Eastern European context and, following Robert A. Beauregard's analysis framework, document gentrification process occurring in the city of Lodz, central Poland. Referring to initial results of the empirical study with participation of individual gentrifiers, I focus on living in the inner-city experience of Yuppies – Young Urban Professional Parents (Karsten 2003). 'Very little is known about gentrifiers with children', wrote Lia Karsten (2003: 2574). Still, not much is known generally about the processes of gentrification in post-socialist cities of Central and Eastern Europe and especially on family gentrification. I hope the article will contribute to filling this knowledge gap.

The object of the case study, the city of Lodz, is the third largest city in Poland, which under socialist regime used to be the center of the Polish textile industry. In the process of transformation from socialism into capitalism, factories and plants were shut down and the city was hit with mass unemployment and poverty. Since the second half of the socialist period (the 1970s), the inner-city of Lodz has been turning into poverty pockets (Warzywoda-Kruszyńska and Grotowska-Leder 1996; Warszzywoda-Kruszyńska 2001a; Warszzywoda-Kruszyńska 2001b; Warszzywoda-Kruszyńska nad Jankowski 2013; Bunio-Mroczek, Potoczna, and Warszzywoda-Kruszyńska 2016). Nowadays, the impoverished inner-city has been embraced with a complex revi-

talization program. The process of post-transformation gentrification in Lodz has already begun (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015a). As more than half of the housing in the city is owned by a municipality, the main actor of the gentrification process is the local authorities. Nevertheless, other forms of gentrification such as pioneer, individual gentrification and new-built developer gentrification are also taking place (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015a:5).

### Gentrification, revitalization and post-socialist cities

Gentrification is a phenomenon that has been under research for the last fifty years. Since scholarship on gentrification has been developed in various scientific fields (for example sociology, urban planning, social geography, economy) by academics of different theoretical backgrounds and methodological orientations, it is problematic to provide an unquestionable definition of gentrification and to mark a clear boundary line between gentrification and revitalization. Additionally, the beginnings of gentrification scholarship had been rooted in 'Anglo-Fordist-Keynesian' city of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s (Mayer 2017), whereas the socio-spatial segregation of a contemporary city takes place in different social and economic contexts, reflecting 'dramatic changes in the global distribution of wealth' (Burrows, Webber, and Atkinson 2017:185) evoked by 'global marketization, deregulation, privatization, individualization, regeneration, and gentrification' (Burrows et al. 2017:187).

Theories of gentrification offer various and often-times contradictory explanations of gentrification

processes. One of the key questions is about key mechanisms of gentrification and their nature. Gentrification can be either interpreted as a structural product of markets: the land and the housing market—from this point of view gentrification is first and foremost a process of capital movement (Smith 1996:67), or as a cultural phenomena—urban expression of postmodernism (Caufield 1984 after Smith 1996:43) or a spatial expression of new social regime of consumption (Ley 1978 after Smith 1996: 44). Authors such as Tamaris Rose (1984) and Robert A. Beauregard (1986) point to a lack of one single causal explanation of gentrification processes. Both authors claim that gentrification is a ‘chaotic concept’ referring to numerous diverse and interconnected events and processes. Beauregard (1986) provides examples of processes labeled as gentrification taking place in different cities and concludes: ‘each of these instances not only involved different types of individuals, but also proceeded and had varying consequences. Therefore, the diversity of gentrification must be recognized’.

Another key element in gentrification studies is the investigation of the consequences of the process. On the one hand, gentrification is under critique as a form of social violence acted by the economically and socially stronger on the poor, an exploitive process leading to deepening of social inequalities, pushing poverty out of sight and out of the city center, resulting in further marginalization of those who already had been marginalized. On the other hand, it is hoped that gentrification results in renewal of deprived neighborhoods, brings social progress and improvement of inhabitants’ quality of life, diminishes the negative ‘neighborhood effect’

(Wilson 1987), and leads to gainful social, economic, ethnic, et cetera, diversification. An important question here is: who benefits from gentrification?

Some authors provide a “trickle down” theory arguing that thanks to social mixing benefits, of gentrification, are shared by lower and working classes (Alshuler 1969, Lowry 1960, and Smith 1971 after Lees 2008:2449). To the expected benefits of gentrification belong: improvement of public services such as street repairs, sanitation, policing, and firefighting (Freeman 2006 after Keels, Budrick-Will, and Keene 2013). Children in gentrified areas are expected to profit from the improvement of neighborhood educational norms, increased safety, and better child-care or after-school opportunities (Keels, Budrick-Will, and Keene 2013:241). Lia Karsten (2003:2583) notices emancipatory potential of gentrification in the context of family living: it may lead to disconnection between family and suburbanization.

But, many studies point to mainly negative effects gentrification brings. First of all, because gentrification causes displacement of low-income groups of inhabitants (Atkinson 2004 after Lees 2008) and instead of social mixing, it leads to socio-spatial segregation (Marcuse 1986, Smith 1996, and Wyly and Hammel 2004 after Lees 2008:2457). Empirical studies showed middle-class gentrifiers’ little engagement in social mixing with local low-income groups (Butler 1997, and Butler and Robson 2001, 2003 after: Lees 2008:2458). This refers not only to adult gentrifiers, but also to their children. Butler and Robson (2003 after Lees 2008:2458) showed that there is little evidence of cross-class friendship and that children of gentrifiers spend their time in exclusion for

non-middle class children pre-school clubs where there is no possibility of social mixing. As Loretta Lees states (2008:2458), gentrification results in ‘tectonic’ juxtapositions of polarized socioeconomic groups rather than in socially cohesive communities’. Secondly, gentrification destroys social capital and social networks in the gentrified neighborhoods and lowers the quality of life of the ‘old’ inhabitants (Smith 1996; Atkinson 2000 after Lees 2008:2461).

Theories and empirical studies on gentrification have been to a large extent focused on Western cities. Still, little is known about the processes of gentrification in post-socialist cities. It is doubtful that gentrification in Central and Eastern Europe has the same patterns as in Western societies. First of all, it is claimed that gentrification in post-socialist cities of Central and Eastern Europe is still in its initiative phase (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015c:149), whereas in the cases of cities like New York and London we are witnessing the process of super-gentrification – gentrification of city areas that already had been gentrified before (Lees 2003). Secondly, gentrification in post-socialist cities is of little territorial scope – often refers to a very limited area or unit, such as one tenement house, one block of flats, a couple of neighboring buildings (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015c). In the first decade of transformation period from the socialist into capitalist system (i.e. the 1990s) gentrification was most advanced in capital cities, but it was a rather slow and gradual process, taking place in limited parts of inner city areas (Marcinićzak 2015). In the second decade of transformation gentrification accelerated, but still it turned out to be much less advanced than it had been foreseen in the 1990s. It led to more balanced composition of

inhabitants, but not displacements. In the post-socialist gentrification there are various groups of gentrification pioneers involved: young households, students, artists, developers. After a group of former socialist Central and Eastern European countries joined the European Union (in 2004) a new category of potential gentrifiers appeared: expats, who stimulated a growing demand for good quality housing in city centers. Also, gradual development of ‘home’ middle class contributed to unfolding of processes of gentrification (Marcinićzak 2015).

For many authors gentrification is a form of a conscious urban policy applied to changing the city into a more middle-class and investor-friendly place and to dispose of social problems. Marguerite van den Berg (2013:524) argues that gentrification is one of three key elements of strategy of urban regeneration which is meant to ‘move a city away from their industrial past into a new economy and spatial organization’ (city marketing and stimulation of a ‘creative economy’ being the other two). Loretta Lees uses the term ‘gentrification’ along with ‘urban renaissance’, ‘regeneration’, ‘sustainability’, and ‘revitalization’ (Lees 2008:2452) as if they were synonymous. The author argues that ‘encouraging socially mixed neighborhoods and communities [gentrification] has become a major urban policy and planning goal in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Australia, Canada, and the United States’ (Lees 2008:2451). This ‘neo-liberal’ idea is an expression of fiscal pragmatism: the aim of urban policy-makers is to bring middle-class home-owners to city centers to increase tax incomes (Lees 2008:2454). Neil Smith claims that it is the state who initiates gentrification as continuation of urban renewal projects (Smith 1996:65).

In the Polish context revitalization has a very precise definition written down in a national level legal act, namely the Bill on Revitalization ('Ustawa o rewitalizacji' passed by the Polish Parliament on October 9, 2015) which states that revitalization is a 'process of leading the deprived city areas out of crisis'<sup>1</sup>. This process must be complex, integrated, and focused on local communities, space and economy (Bill on Revitalization, article 2, paragraph 1). In the case of the city of Lodz, Municipality who, according to the Bill on Revitalization is responsible for coordination and programming of the revitalization process, used to define revitalization as a 'wide process of social, spatial and economical changes in the area which, like the inner-city of Lodz, is in a crisis'<sup>2</sup>.

The strategic documents of Lodz's urban and social policy stress the social aspect of revitalization venture, underlining that revitalization is more than just a technical renovation. Except for spatial, infrastructural, and technical, it is supposed to have strong social and economic dimensions. 'It is all about making the center of Lodz a better place to be, to live, to work. Improvement of space, technical conditions, and infrastructure, must go along with improvement of quality of life, secured by wide social, cultural, educational, and economical changes' (<http://uml.lodz.pl/rewitalizacja>, access: 13.04.2014). Previous experience of revitalization projects' fruitions in Poland shows, however, that the process of revitalization is inevitably connected with change

<sup>1</sup> All the translations from Polish into English by the author.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.uml.lodz.pl/rewitalizacja/konsultacje\\_spoleczne\\_dotyczace\\_projektu\\_uchwaly\\_w\\_sprawie\\_wyznaczenia\\_obszaru\\_zdegradowanego\\_i\\_obszaru\\_rewitalizacji/](http://www.uml.lodz.pl/rewitalizacja/konsultacje_spoleczne_dotyczace_projektu_uchwaly_w_sprawie_wyznaczenia_obszaru_zdegradowanego_i_obszaru_rewitalizacji/). Retrieved April 24, 2017.

in social structure in a revitalized space. Gentrification either appears as an unwelcome result of revitalization and proof of revitalization's failure, or as a strategic element of urban regeneration policy and a necessary condition a city must meet in order to 'revive' the deprived areas. Polish researcher Bohdan Skrzypczak (2011:6) claims that 'projects meant to revive urban spaces – revitalization projects (...) so far usually ended up with gentrification, understood as something negative, as moving away the 'old' inhabitants (those with problems) and replacing them with 'new' inhabitants (those without problems)'. As the authors continues, 'in this way financial assets meant to be used for counteracting social exclusion contribute to deepening the phenomena of social exclusion, enhancing the process of ghettoization of Polish cities' (ibid.).

In the text I will refer to revitalization as a planned and programmed process coordinated by state/municipality focused on the impoverished, socially, economically, and infrastructurally deprived city areas meant to introduce social, economic, and infrastructural change conducted with specific measures and tools. I will refer to gentrification as to a growth in number and share of inhabitants of relatively high socio-economic status in the deprived and, until-now, perceived as unattractive central city areas. I understand gentrification as a process that may accompany revitalization, but, which can also take place separately, not necessarily resulting from revitalization projects. Revitalization and gentrification are therefore not the same processes although gentrification often becomes a side-effect of revitalization or is being consciously stimulated by urban policy planners within revitalization ven-

tures. Gentrification may lead to displacement of socially underprivileged inhabitants, although displacement of low-income households is not included in all gentrification definitions (Jordan and Gallagher 2015:2-3) and, as it was stated above, has not been so far proven to be typical of gentrification in post-socialist cities.

### Study methodology

In further parts of the text, for the case analysis of the process of gentrification in Lodz I will apply the framework proposed by Robert A. Beauregard in his already cited above article 'The chaos and complexity of gentrification' published in 1986. The author distinguishes four dimensions of gentrification process, namely: (1) the generation of the potentially gentrifiable neighborhoods; (2) the creation of the potentially gentrified; (3) the facilitators or active agents of gentrification in addition to potential gentry themselves; (4) the production of the potential gentry. Using academic literature, press articles, policy documents and – in the latter part – results of an empirical study led in Lodz, I will refer to socio-spatial changes in a post-socialist, post-industrial city undergoing a complex local government-led revitalization program, with a focus on family gentrifiers' experience, which is rare in Polish literature on gentrification.

The empirical material presented in the latter part of the article comes from a research project titled 'Saviours, explorers, invaders? Gentrifiers in the process of (social?) revitalization – the case of Lodz', carried out in the years 2016-2017 at the University of Lodz, Poland, in the Department of Applied So-

ciology and Social Work at the Faculty of Economics and Sociology. The empirical component of the project involves analysis of strategic national and local policy documents in thematic fields related to revitalization and gentrification, as well as qualitative study with participation of the 'new' inhabitants of the neighborhoods being and meant to be revitalized in the city of Lodz. The main project's research question is about the role of individual gentrifiers in the process of revitalization of the inner-city and on the individual gentrifiers' attitudes towards the neighborhoods they move into and neighbors who live around them. The idea behind the projects is that motives, values, attitudes, plans of the 'new' inhabitants of the revitalized city areas are important as to some extent the possible future success of the social component of revitalization depends on them. Policy documents and literature on revitalization underline the importance of integration, social bonding and recultivation of local communities in the revitalized areas. Community organization (being one of the three primary methods of social work) depends on participation and commitment of representatives of various social groups building up community, all 'users' of revitalized areas (inhabitants, entrepreneurs, people spending time in a given space).

Within the project, qualitative in-depth interviews with elements of biographical interviewing (concerning housing biography) are being carried out with individuals or couples who are highly educated and equipped in relatively higher levels of social, cultural, and economical capital than typical inhabitants of Lodz's inner-city, who voluntarily moved into one of the squares covered by the 'Municipal

Program of Lodz Revitalization 2026+’ (so-called ‘areas in crisis’) since the year 2007. In the year 2007 the Lodz City Council passed a resolution on the New City Center which was a visible notice that there will be a substantial change in the inner-city of Lodz and the first sign of revitalization policy. So far 10 interviews have been done. The research sample consists of middle-class professionals, specialists, people who perform ‘creative’ occupations.

For the purpose of this article, eight out of ten interviews have been selected as in eight cases interviewees were either parents (6 interviews) or people expecting their first child (2 interviews). The interviewees were from 28 to about 40 years old at the time of the research. They were either married or stayed in long-lasting informal relationships. Their children were from 3 months up to 8 years old. The number of children in the interviewed families ranged from one to three. The parents held occupations such as: architect, screenwriter, researcher and academic teacher, engineer, entrepreneur, translator, civil servant, salesperson (for a large international company), creative manager in a company. All of the interviewees owned the apartments they lived in. Two couples were given the apartment by family members. The other six bought their apartments themselves in the free housing market, usually with long-term banking loans. In all interviewed couples both partners were working full-time. After having a baby it was women who took parental leave (in Poland there is 1 year long paid parental leave available to parents) and were primarily responsible for taking care of the baby, whereas their male partners were working intensively. Both pregnant interviewees were at home on sick leave at the time the re-

search was conducted. Seven out of ten interviewed households inhabited tenement housing, one couple lived in a new-built gated community. Six couples had been living in the city center before the decision to start a family, two couples moved into the inner-city already having children (but one of the two had been living in the city center before moving to the outskirts so they basically came back to the city after a couple of years). The interviewees at the time the research was conducted had been living in the city center from two and a half to ten years.

The interviews were carried out at the respondents’ homes, with participation of either just one or both adult household members. The interviews lasted from about 35 minutes to approximately 3 hours and were recorded with respondents’ permission. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with support of QSR NVivo Software. It is important to stress here that respondents were not interviewed on child raising in the center of the city directly. Interviews were generally about experience of living in the inner-city, reasons for moving into the city center, perception of neighborhood and of the changes going on in the city, and long-term housing plans. The analysis was focused around the famous Ray Pahl’s question of “whose city?” and the issues of perception of inequalities by middle-class respondents, as well as on their vision of the future of the city and gentrifiers’ claims.

### **Lodz poverty pockets. The gentrifiable neighborhoods**

Gentrification process demands creation of gentrifiable housing, occupied by inhabitants easy to

become displaced/replaced, unwilling or unable to resist displacement (Beauregard 1986). As R.A. Beauregard (1986) argues, the gentrified city areas are specific spatial locations, characterized by ‘architecturally interesting housing’ or/and commercial and industrial structures ‘with potential’<sup>3</sup>. The potentially gentrified neighborhoods are usually working-class inner-city housing districts, where buildings have become devalued and deteriorated. They can also be mixed-use areas, combining industrial, commercial, and residential functions (Beauregard 1986). Disinvestment is considered an important factor establishing the opportunity for gentrification (Smith 1996:39).

The above summarized characteristic of gentrifiable neighborhoods correspond well with a description of the center of the city of Lodz. The impoverished central areas of Lodz are historically the oldest parts of the city. Rapid development of Lodz (in the second half of the 19th c., beginnings of the 20th c.) led to low quality of housing. Some tenement houses were built for the pre-war riches, but numerous private investors built tenement housing of low standard for poor factory workers. In 1930s Lodz offered the worst housing conditions among all cities in Poland (Ginsbert 1961 as cited in Grabkowska, Stępnia, and Wolaniuk 2015a:50). During the Second World War Lodz lost its elites, usually of Jewish or German ethnicity, and became a city of workers. The egalitarian housing policy under socialist regime caused social mixing in the tenement housing of the inner-city. Nevertheless, already in the 1970s and in

<sup>3</sup> Gentrifiable spaces may also include areas with unique spatial amenities such as access to a waterfront, a hilltop location, or a spectacular view (Beauregard 1986).

the 1980s inhabitants of higher socio-economic status began to move out from the city center: first to the blocks of flats built in the new housing city districts, next to single-family or terraced houses in the suburbs (Liszewski and Marcińczak 2012:79-85).

During the first years of transformation period the central city areas turned into poverty pockets. They became the city parts with the highest rate of poor inhabitants – individuals and families supported by social welfare system. Within research projects on poverty and social exclusion carried out at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Lodz, ‘poverty maps’ of Lodz were created. First in 1998 seventeen poverty enclaves were identified, twelve of them located in the historical center of the city. A poverty pocket was defined as at least two neighboring street quarters wherein at least 30% and 40% of inhabitants experienced poverty. A decade later, in the year 2008 another poverty mapping proved that the inner-city poverty enclaves became petrified (this time poverty pocket was identified as elementary school district where large share of students were provided with free meals financed within a governmental program) (Warzywoda-Kruszyńska 2001a; Warzywoda-Kruszyńska 2001b; Warzywoda-Kruszyńska and Golczyńska-Grondas 2010).

The Municipal Program of Lodz Revitalization 2026+ (Gminny Program Rewitalizacji Łodzi 2026+), a strategic and operational document regulating the process of revitalization in the central areas of the city (passed by the Lodz City Council on September the 28th, 2016) contains a diagnosis of the areas meant to be revitalized (‘the areas in crisis’). According to the document, to the main problems of the

Lodz city center belong: (1) concentration of inter-related problems such as unemployment, poverty, low level of social capital, low level of participation in public and cultural life, children's learning problems at the level of primary and secondary education; (2) technical 'challenges' related to bad technical conditions of buildings and infrastructures; (3) bad conditions of numerous small enterprises (called in the program the 'economy of survival'); (4) ecological problems – high emission of CO2 and coal dust, produced mainly by old heating systems and transportation (individual cars, but also public buses); (5) 'catastrophical' condition of historically and architecturally valuable buildings, protected by law (Municipal Program of Lodz Revitalization 2026+ 2016). When it comes to the city center potential, the document points to the following inner-city strengths: (1) unique cultural capital; (2) strong feeling of identity of inhabitants; (3) intense entrepreneurial activity; (4) intense and still growing civil participation; (5) demographically young age (ibid.).

Most of the historical housing in the city center is owned by the municipality and remains in very bad condition. Fifty per cent of the pre-war housing belongs to the municipality. Of the housing owned or co-owned by the municipality, seventy per cent is in bad or very bad technical condition. Only two per cent is in a good technical condition (Grabkowska et al. 2015:74, 92).

The gentrifiable neighborhoods in Lodz are the oldest, historical parts of the city, with high share of municipality-owned communal and social housing, high share of welfare clients among inhabitants and dense concentration of social problems. This area

is generally perceived as ugly, poor, dangerous, and unattractive to live in. At the same time, in this area theaters, public and private universities, hospitals and health centers, schools, kindergartens, and other places of public interest are located. The inner-city of Lodz is not an isolated ghetto, but a place where many people come to work, learn, study, and spend their leisure time. It is also the 'area in crises' where municipality-coordinated process of revitalization has begun.

### **'The inner-city poor'. The potentially gentrified**

As R.A. Beauregard (1986) claims, people most likely to be gentrified (which according to the author means: displaced) are inhabitants of inexpensive, but architecturally desirable buildings near central business districts. Beauregard characterizes the potentially gentrified as people marginal to or out of labor market, such as the unemployed, elderly, women-headed households on welfare, working-class youth (in his analysis those are 'white, black, Hispanic working-class youth', in the context of racially homogenous Polish society this is not applicable), working poor ('underemployed'), people redundant in the labor market. R.A. Beauregard calls them 'powerless households', as they lack economic, purchasing, political power, as well as familial stability. They are easily exploited and unable to resist landlords, buy-outs, and government or municipal policies. They live in the inner-city for different reasons: they have no other place to go, living there is cheap, there are employment opportunities in the city center, there are services available there which they need. R.A. Beauregard calls them the 'inner-city poor' (1986).

In the case of Lodz, tenement housing in the city center is inhabited by people of lower socio-economic status than in other city areas. For example, for a person with an elementary education it is five times more likely to inhabit a tenement house in the city center than any other type of housing in other city areas compared to a person with higher academic education (Grabkowska et al. 2015:91-92).

In the very center of the city there is a high concentration of households being supported by social welfare provisions as most of the municipality-owned and social (also municipality-owned, but usually substandard and very inexpensive, meant for the poorest) housing is located there. At the very center of the city are buildings where there are a couple dozen welfare recipient families living, for example 86 families at Ogrodowa Street 24<sup>4</sup>, 71 families at Piłsudskiego Street 67, 49 families at Limanowskiego Street 26 (Grabkowska et al. 2015b:91-92).

The potentially gentrified in Lodz are the poor inhabitants of the poverty pockets. They are the descendants of the former working class, pushed into the margins of social life in the process of transition from socialism into capitalism, experiencing chronic and cross-generationally transmitted poverty accompanied by multidimensional social exclusion (Warzywoda-Kruszyńska 2010). The potentially gentrified population is characterized by low levels of economic, social, and cultural capitals. They of-

<sup>4</sup> The building at Ogrodowa Street 24 is now empty as all the residents have been moved out due to general restoration works within the municipality-led 'Miasto Kamienic' – 'The city of tenement houses' program. The inhabitants of social apartments will never come back because in line with contemporary city strategy social apartments will no longer be placed in the city center.

ten experience chronic unemployment, as they are redundant in the contemporary labor market. They do not possess professional skills that are of market value. Although they are members of households supported by social welfare, social interventions do not help them in overcoming problems they experience (Bunio-Mroczek 2016, Bunio-Mroczek, Potoczna, Warzywoda-Kruszyńska 2016).

The new municipal policy is meant to eradicate social housing from the city center (Jakóbczak-Gryszkiewicz 2015c:191-192).

### **'City reinvented'. Facilitators or active agents of gentrification**

R.A. Beauregard (1986) seeks an explanation of why certain inner-city areas with inexpensive housing opportunities occupied by the powerless become gentrified. He points to facilitators or active agents of gentrification other than the potential gentry themselves, which are: federal government policies, local government policies, designation of historic districts, labeling the neighborhoods, landlords, developers, real-estate agents, savings and loans institutions, banks, financial institutions.

In the analyzed case, it seems important to refer to national-level housing policy. Since the transformation period, Polish governments prioritized private housing ownership over the public. The idea of nation-wide programs of building inexpensive housing for rent for middle- and low-income inhabitants have never obtained enough state funding. Instead, two large programs meant to increase the number of apartments and improve housing quality for Polish

families are based on supplemented funding for commercial bank loans for apartments bought on the free housing market ('Family on their own'—'Rodzina na swoim' and 'Apartment for the young'—'Mieszkanie dla młodych') (Springer 2013). This makes the position of developers stronger and creates growth in the new-built developer housing market.

At the commune level, local authorities tend to sell off municipality-owned housing for small percentage of its market value (for example, with a 90% discount). Since 1989, 3 million commune or cooperative apartments have been handed over to their tenants (Springer 2013:255). Inhabitants who often cannot afford bearing the costs of usually large and disinvested apartments often sell them as soon as they can (they are obliged to inhabit the apartment which they bought from the commune with reduced price themselves for 5 years after the transaction, otherwise they need to pay the discount back). Also, since after the WWII housing in Poland had been nationalized and then after 1989 privatized again, there are claims from real or mock inheritors of former buildings owners who take over the buildings and sell apartments. The above described mechanisms may support gentrification processes in the inner cities.

In the city of Lodz, the municipal policies are aimed at reduction of suburbanization and decline in the number of municipality-owned housing. The new vision of city spatial development focuses on the inner-city areas where among the 19<sup>th</sup> century historical buildings there is plenty of empty space and post-industrial amenities. Additionally, there are numerous buildings in such a bad condition they

can only be demolished. This, as chief architect of the city of Lodz Marek Janiak says, allows for inner-development and growth in density of inner-city housing (press article 'Lodz will be developing... to the inside', 'Gazeta Wyborcza' Lodz, 16.01.2013<sup>5</sup>). This means a green light for intense new-built construction works, as well as regeneration work in old tenement housing and loft conversion of old industrial buildings. In the end of the year 2016 there were a couple thousand new developer-built apartments in the central district of Lodz under construction and the price per square meter was growing (press article 'The center of Lodz comes back to life', 'Gazeta Wyborcza' Lodz 6.12.2016<sup>6</sup>).

At the beginning of 2010 the Municipality of Lodz owned 55,894 commune apartments. The city of Lodz had the highest share of municipality-owned housing among Polish cities (18.7% of total housing in the city in 2009, compared to 11.3% in Warsaw, 6.7% in Krakow, 6.7% in Poznan, 17.6% in Wroclaw and 13.7% in Gdansk). The commune housing in the city of Lodz as it was stated in official policy document, was in 'catastrophically technical condition' – 47 per cent of it should be out of use. The municipal housing policy aims at diminishing the number of commune housing apartments to approximately 15,000 in the year 2022. One of the four operational goals of Lodz Housing Policy 2022+ (document published in 2012) is to increase the share of pri-

<sup>5</sup> 'Łódź będzie rozwijać się... do środka', 'Gazeta Wyborcza Łódź', 16.01.2013. Retrieved February 4, 2013 ([http://lodz.gazeta.pl/lodz/1,35153,13247725,Lodz\\_będzie\\_rozwijać\\_się\\_\\_\\_\\_do\\_srodka.html#ixzz2JvbdrYr0](http://lodz.gazeta.pl/lodz/1,35153,13247725,Lodz_będzie_rozwijać_się____do_srodka.html#ixzz2JvbdrYr0)).

<sup>6</sup> 'Centrum Łodzi wraca do życia', 'Gazeta Wyborcza Łódź', 6.12.2016. Retrieved 27 April, 2017 (<http://lodz.wyborcza.pl/lodz/1,35136,21082041,centrum-lodzi-wraca-do-zycia-kolejne-mieszkania-w-srodmiesciu.html>).

vate-owned apartments in Lodz. The document also mentions introduction of incentives for developers to build new housing estates in the city center (Lodz Housing Policy 2022+, Polityka Mieszkaniowa Łódzki 2022+).

In the municipal housing, the city plans to keep a municipality-led gentrification takes place. Within programs such as Miasto Kamienic ('The City of Tenement Houses'—a program within which over the years about 170 municipality-owned tenement houses are being restored), the area revitalization program (its first stage involves revitalization of eight quarters in direct vicinity of the New City Center which is included as eight separate projects into the Municipality Lodz Revitalization Program 2026+) and renovation of historic worker's settlement Ksiezy Mlyn, municipality owned buildings are being renovated which results in temporary or permanent displacement of inhabitants. As the quality of housing after renovations increases, so do the rent prices. Some of the inhabitants cannot afford moving back into their old apartments so the apartments are being rented to new tenants with higher income or remain empty. Therefore, so far, the dominant type of gentrification in Lodz, unlike in the other big Polish cities such as Warsaw and Gdansk, is state- (or: municipality-) led gentrification. Other forms of gentrification, such as the first-wave pioneer individual gentrification and the new-built developer gentrification, as well as studentification are also present, but still in their initial phase (Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz 2015c).

Another element of municipal policy are large-scale investments financed with public and private assets

meant to evoke change in socio-spatial structure of the center of the city. Of the projects that already influenced or will influence the situation of the inhabitants of the inner-city, but also the overall quality of life and the image of the city, the following must be mentioned: the new Lodz Fabryczna Train Station – a central underground train station located at the very center of the New Center of Lodz district; the New Center of Lodz itself – a new area at the heart of the city, designed and built from the ground; renovation of Piotrkowska Street, the city's main street.

Local authorities are making effort to label and promote the city of Lodz as 'the city of culture', 'the creative city', 'the city of the young'. Lodz was a candidate to organize the 'small' Expo exhibition 2022-23. In the final voting Lodz lost 56 to 62 votes to Buenos Aires (Argentina). The topic of the planned Lodz Expo was city revitalization. Lodz promotes itself as a pioneer city in revitalization projects, laboratory, and at the same time expert on revitalization. The proposed name of the Expo exhibition in Lodz was "The city re-invented."

### Yuppies or yupps? The potential 'gentry' themselves

Writing about the potential gentrifiers R.A. Beauregard (1986) describes changes in the industrial and occupational structure of the American society, refers to the process of international restructuring of capital and shifts in types of economic activity, and appeals to the bimodal urban labor market. The author relates the production of potential gentrifiers with decline of manufacturing sector (meaning: displacement to the suburbs) and the

rise of professional and managerial employment with its expansion in central city districts. He also touches the subject of demographic and cultural changes such as postponement of marriage and childrearing, increasing popularity of decisions to remain childless. He argues that the potential gentry are those who establish areas as desirable, especially for people in similar life situations. The potential gentry presents different consumption patterns than those who have traditionally migrated to the suburbs. The 'ostensibly prototypical gentrifier' is therefore a rather affluent single professional person or a DINK (double income, no kids) household, enjoying living close to the place where they work, enthusiastic about 'urban lifestyle', committed to their neighborhood (Beauregard 1986). The gentrifiers' childlessness is beneficial: they pay taxes, but do not demand quality services for children, such as schools or day-care centers.

The classification of certain populations as gentrifiers belongs to one of the most fundamental research problems in gentrification studies (Friedrichs 1995 after Maik 2013). Neil Smith (1996:66) distinguishes three categories of gentrifying developers: '(a) professional developers who purchase property, redevelop it, and resell for profit; (b) occupier developers who buy and redevelop property and inhabit it after completion; and (c) landlord developers who rent to tenants after rehabilitation.' The real gentrifiers are the 'owner-occupier developers': those who buy houses (apartments) in an impoverished neighborhood, renovate, and move into them (Smith 1992 after Grzeszczak 2010). Important feature of the first-wave individual gentrifiers is their readiness to take risk related to investing money and moving into

a deprived city area (Kerstein 1990 after Grzeszczak 2010:26). There are different opinions about the individual gentrifiers commitment to the neighborhood tradition and preservation. The concept of elective belonging, which means that incomers are mostly focused on aesthetics of the neighborhood instead of traditional community and neighbor-to-neighbor interaction (Savage 2005 after Watts and Smets 2014) may describe one of the possible attitudes of first-wave individual gentrifiers towards their new social environment. Gentrifiers have been identified with 'yuppies' or 'middle-class', or representatives of 'creative class'. However, as Neil Smith (1996:101) points out, it is problematic to identify a 'new middle class', especially in economic terms. Relatively high economic position of gentrifiers is questioned by some authors, for example Tamaris Rose argues 'We ought not to assume in advance that all gentrifiers have the same class position as each other and that they are 'structurally' polarized from the displaced' (Rose 1984:68 after Smith 1996:100).

Oftentimes characteristics of the individual gentrifiers involve childlessness. In literature, one can read that gentrified districts and households are 'afamilial' (Lees, Slater, and Wyly 2010:14). Lia Karsten (2003:2574) points out that gentrifiers are often identified as yuppies meaning young urban professionals, being singles, and couples without children. However, in recent studies, women and children play important roles in gentrification processes. Gentrifiers with children are 'a category that is becoming more and more visible in central urban areas' (Karsten and van Kempen 2001 after Karsten 2003:2574). Marguerite van den Berg (2013) points to the gender dimension of gentrification

process, which she refers to as "genderfication" (understood as production of space for different gender relations). The author claims that families with children become new catalysts for gentrification (van den Berg 2013:526) and take place of inhabitants of 'alternative' lifestyles as important agents in gentrification processes.

It is assumed that women who are mothers play especially important roles in the family gentrification process as living in the city it is easier for them to reconcile the role of carers and professional workers (Warde 2001 after Karsten 2003). The gentrifying families however have some special features that distinguish them from 'suburban' families. They appreciate the 'liberal climate' of the city which is less conservative as far as gender-role division is concerned. Not only women, but also men in gentrifying families enjoy the less patriarchal family role patterns (Karsten 2003:2575). In Lia Karsten's research on family gentrifiers in Amsterdam, gentrifying parents pointed to 'cultural appeal' of the city, as well as 'challenging architecture' and 'liberal climate' as elements which make the inner-city an attractive place to inhabit for families with children (Karsten 2003). In her study, residential choices were explained with family gentrifiers' 'city mindedness', rejection of 'rural mentality' and 'urban orientation' (Karsten 2003:2579).

Lia Karsten called the family gentrifiers Yupps: Young Urban Professional Parents. Yupps are the embodiment of a combination of careerism and familism. Yupps are often Yuppies who have evolved into parents (Karsten 2003:2582).

M. van den Berg (2013) argues that 'child-friendly' urban policies play important roles in contemporary urban regeneration strategies. Middle-class families with children are supposed to play the role of a solution to urban problems. Municipal policies are meant to attract, into 'problem areas', new 'desired' inhabitants who can afford to buy a family home in the city, who are a nuclear family, who share work and care tasks, earn dual incomes and perform specific, non-traditional gender roles and norms (van den Berg 2013:531). At the same time, young urban inhabitants of lower socio-economic status are treated as problematic. The image of a 'child-friendly city' is combined with punitive youth policies (against inner-city, low-income families' youth). In this context, there are two categories of children: having 'potential' 'opportunity-rich' middle-class children and 'opportunity-poor' being 'risk youth' (van den Berg 2013:525).

One of the themes in gentrification studies has been the influence on gentrification processes on children of 'old' inhabitants of gentrified areas (Formoso, Weber, and Atkins 2010) and on the way gentrification shapes provision of public services, for example, quality and accessibility of public schooling (Jordan, Gallagher 2015). Keels, Budrick-Will, Keene (2013:239) refer to an 'idealized gentrification scenario' which assumes that gentrifying families enroll their children in the local public school, where they interact with children of low-income residents and learn from each other (Cucchiara and Horvat 2010, and Kahlenberg 2001 after Keels, Budrick-Will, and Keene 2013:240). In an empirical study conducted in Chicago authors found out that gentrification had little effect on neighborhood public schools. Lo-

cal public schools experience no benefits from socio-economic changes in the neighborhood as far as students' academic results are concerned. Another research finding showed that urban schools provide middle-class parents with disproportionately big influence on school policies and activities. Low-income families' children might become disadvantaged once middle-class parents make an effort to bring more middle-class children to their local school, as they are in a stronger position to demand things from teachers and school authorities (Keels, Budrick-Will, and Keene 2013:241). Most importantly, authors found 'no effects on the growth trajectory of low-income students' reading and math scores' in gentrified neighborhoods (Keels, Budrick-Will, and Keene 2013:256). The positive impact of gentrification on low-income family children is therefore questionable.

### Yuppies that have become Yupps. Family gentrifiers in Lodz

Although, as it was stated above, families with children play more and more important roles in the gentrification processes, it is not easy to combine child raising and living in the city center. Lia Karsten documented family gentrifiers having 'frustrating experiences' (Karsten 2003:2578), showing that 'raising children in cities is a challenge to overcome the many disadvantages' (Karsten 2003:2576). Couples who took part in the referred study in Lodz seemed to be of the same opinion. Most of them (6 out of 8) moved into the city center being childless. Enthusiastic about living in the inner-city of Lodz as Yuppies, they began to notice disadvantages of the city life as Yupps. Five out

of eight interviewed couples declared they were planning to move out.

One of the most important issues for parents is safety of their children. This banal statement finds its reflection in family gentrification literature: 'parents living in urban areas most vividly express safety concerns' (Hillman et al. 1990, van der Spek and Noyon 1993, Zinnecker 1995, and Valentine 1997 after Karsten 2003:2576). In a Lodz research sample, most respondents spontaneously spoke about safety in their neighborhood which might mean it is an important matter and that they know the area they inhabit has an opinion of 'unsafe'. Although not asked about safety issues, they felt obliged either to confirm or to deny the 'unsafe' label of their neighborhood. However, as many respondents were parents for a short time period, they usually referred to their negative experience (being verbally or physically attacked in the street at night, for instance) at times when they were childless, enjoying nightlife and going out a lot. *After we moved in here, we used to come back from Piotrkowska Street at night on foot [...]. It was fun, to have a quick walk before going to bed, even in winter. Until... someone threw a bottle at us [...] there was a whole gang of them, all drunk [...] I got scared of this aggression. Now we always take a taxi (I5F). I don't like it in here. I do accept this place, but I don't like the neighborhood, I don't like the 'joint' on the other side of the street, the 'disco' [neighbors who drink, play loud music and make rows]. [...] I don't feel safe, coming back from Piotrkowska at night, not in this neighborhood (I2F).* Referring directly to the safety of their children, respondents usually mentioned heavy traffic, numerous street crossings, and dangerous in their opinion organization of the street traffic, for exam-

ple, pedestrian crossings located far from each other, bike routes ending suddenly out of nowhere, et cetera. They expressed fear of how their children would get around the neighborhood: *It isn't safe in here. When I think he [the son] would go somewhere by himself... this is stressing me out, he would have to cross so many streets... (I4F).* One couple who took part in the research prepared a participatory budget project to make the neighborhood more secure for pedestrians: *I think there's heavy traffic here and it isn't safe. There are too few pedestrian crossings, they are very far away from each other. We, with our neighbors, filled in a project within the municipal civil budget, we wanted to have new pedestrian crossings painted, new parking slots, a green-zone (...). But we didn't get the financing (I5M).*

Another safety problem which came up during interviews was homelessness in the inner-city, and precisely homeless people spending nights in the stairwell or in the attic. One of the interviewed couples were afraid of fires started by the homeless spending nights in the last floor of the tenement house they lived in. They solved the problem by installing new doors and an entry phone at the entrance to their building's wing. They did it informally, as they did not want to waste time waiting for administrative decisions. The only neighbors who decided to share the cost of the new door with them were three other families with children.

Interestingly, only one interviewee mentioned air pollution as a health threat. The interviews were mostly conducted in winter and air pollution at levels exceeding the norms by a couple of times in the city center were widely discussed at that time. There were also smog alarms and instructions not

to leave home for small children and elderly people. Surprisingly, this did not turn out to be an issue for the interviewees.

Lia Karsten (2002) distinguishes three important daily domains for children: children's outdoor play spaces, leisure centers and caring institutions. Most respondents in Lodz study stressed that living in a city center is convenient due to the proximity of kindergartens, schools, bike lanes, sports facilities, and various places offering different forms of spending free time with their children. Interviewees claimed the center of Lodz is full of parks and green zones with walking paths and playgrounds, public squares where children can ride a bike or roller-skate, cinemas and sport clubs. Parents of children at school- or kindergarten-age pointed to the wide range of after-school activities available in the city center, such as foreign language lessons, yoga classes for children, sports groups, restaurants, and cafes targeted at families with children organizing events and activities for children. Some respondents questioned the quality of the facilities available (for example, there is a park nearby, but it is full of people drinking alcohol, dogs running around unleashed and the children's playground is set on fire twice a year, I2M). Only one of the respondents noticed that, as people of relatively high socio-economic status, she and her partner can enjoy with their children any number of attractive forms of leisure activities: *I am aware of the fact that I am privileged, that me and my family can use all the opportunities that arise when the city develops. All those places we go to, usually you need to have money to get there or do something there, they are not for free (I6F).* As Lia Karsten (2002) argues, spaces created in the

city for children are characterized by privatization, institutionalization, and segregation (Karsten 2002). Except for the one person, respondents either did not notice social and economic inequalities in their neighborhood (*People here are more elegant, they dress nicer, speak with a louder voice, are more expressive [than in the suburbs], I1F*), or saw them very clearly, but were of the opinion that the poor (and as such, problematic) inner-city inhabitants should be moved away: *This is some kind of pathology one has to get rid of, it will not get better just like that. You cannot educate those people now* (I4M, about people living in buildings without toilets). Interestingly, respondents did not mention any kind of inequality or segregation problem as far as the education system is concerned. Maybe this was because only two of the interviewed couples had school-aged children. Both of them were students of public institutions. However, both of those schools were quite exceptional: one of them was a public primary school considered the 'best' school in the city center (the school informed parents of pupils that about 90 per cent of children are not from the school's district), the other one was the only school in Lodz with just three primary grades, for the youngest children only, and also focused a lot of interest of middle-class parents. In the case of the interviewees, those were their district schools. In the interviews they did not mention if their residential choice was made with regard to those school's locality. Anyways, the interviewees had little chance to experience class diversity and cross-class mixing at schools.

An important issue in gentrification studies is social mixing and gentrifiers' integration with 'local' people. Most of the respondents had not made any

friendships or acquaintances with neighbors since they moved in. Three of the interviewed couples established very close relationships with people they met as neighbors, but those were people of the same class position, living in the same building, sharing a common yard. *Neighbors make a big difference. There's a lot of people of our age, they have children in the age of our kids. Children play, we hang out together...* (I7F). Those respondents who mixed with other middle-class neighbors stressed the importance of a common social space for inhabitants which allows for starting good interpersonal relationships and the building of a community. Those spaces were, however, closed, private with a restricted entrance for residents only: a yard behind a tenement house and a patio in a gated community. In the case of a newly built gated-community, female neighbors had an opportunity to get to know each other because they would spend time with their children on the playground or on the patio. *(...) this is a pro-social space. We all exit our building's wings on the patio, and we have to meet, we have to get to know each other, or at least recognize each other. There's no anonymity. (...) I met A.'s [child's name] mother just because she was spending all day on the patio'* (I5F). Those interviewees who did not have common social space at their places of residence had much more limited neighbor-to-neighbor relations.

In the sample, there were two households inhabiting an old tenement house with a yard which was turned into a playground, a little sports field for children, and a social space for adults (with wooden benches and tables, and grilling facilities). Children would play outside and the adult neighbors would also meet in the yard on the summer evenings for a chat. Neighbors would watch each other's kids,

interchangeably bring them to/from school, organize a neighbor day twice a year. They also set up a little neighbors' library in one of the tenement house corridors. Interestingly, the building was inhabited by a mix of inhabitants of different social statuses: some apartments had private owners (the interviewees among them) and some belonged to the municipality of Lodz (communal, but also social apartments). The community leased space for building the playground from the neighboring tenement building and so they started to cooperate, also the neighbors' children would come and play at the playground. One of the interviewees described her relationships with the neighbor community: *This is my greatest life accomplishment* (I6F).

Looking into more details of the above described case, it turns out that the close neighbor relationships respondents talked about were among the middle-class residents. Their patterns of leisure time spending (going together for brunch on weekends, drinking wine together, taking children to children's yoga class or foreign language lessons, jogging in the nearby park, having a neighbor library to share books and magazines, participation in ecological food cooperative) are very middle-class. The middle-class neighbors seemed to set the behavior and cultural norms and ruled the community, creating the community management board and initiating all neighbor activities. This goes along with M. van den Berg's argument that to enhance the 'opportunities' of the urban poor, there are middle-class norms set for social behavior, and deviant potentials are being cut off (van den Berg 2013:526). This attitude can be noticed in respondent's statements such as: *The city center is supposed to be a place*

*for the elites* (I2M) or *There are other people living in that building* (about a neighboring tenement house) (I7F), or *This is a specific neighborhood* (I5F).

In the above described case of 'integrated' residents there was also an interesting issue of a neighboring tenement house where a year before the research was done there was a daycare center for socially underprivileged children and youth. It is a place where children who are not taken care of enough at home can come in the afternoon after school and eat something, do homework, play, spend time together. Some centers offer various forms of therapy and developmental support. The members of the well-integrated neighbor community were against localization of the center – they were afraid of 'risk-youth'. As one of the respondents said, *I've never been there [at the center], but it was widely discussed, some neighbors had issues. Me, I don't like these kinds of conversations, how can you assume that if there's a center for children, there must be trouble, so I tried talking to my neighbors, saying that since there are no problems so far, there is nothing to be afraid of. I really don't know if this center is still open, but I don't think there were real problems because of it* (I6F). This might be an illustration of 'punitive youth policy' of informal character, which as M. van den Berg claims, is the other side of the 'child-friendly city' strategy designed to produce 'an orderly, middle-class future city' (van den Berg 2013: 533). The child-center case shows also that the idea of inter-class integration is illusive and 'notions of diversity [are] more in the minds of these gentrifiers, rather than in their actions, reflecting one way in which they defined themselves as a specific class fraction and, in particular, as cosmopolitan citizens (Butler and Robson 2001 after Lees 2008:2458).

Another family-gentrification specific issue present in the literature is the adjustment of inner-city housing for family need. In Rotterdam study on family gentrifiers buildings were adapted for middle-class families, for example two small apartments were joined into a bigger one, to meet a family's wants. Also, a new type of family housing in the inner-city was introduced (van den Berg 2013). In the case of Lodz, apartments in tenement housing are usually larger than in the newly built apartment buildings. As it was stated above, the interviewees inhabited flats from 60 up to 160 square meters. Some respondents, especially women, complained that although large, their apartments are difficult to arrange because of the layout, which is especially important when there are children at home. The lack of an elevator (or having an old and small elevator one can hardly get into with a baby carriage), lack of parking space, hearing all the sounds neighbors produce were among the common complaints. *We already got used to it, but the only thing we don't like in here, the only thing we were looking for and we didn't get here was this feeling of isolation from the neighbors, as far as sounds are concerned (I1F). F: A shortcoming of this apartment is that it is in the wing part of the building, and because of that it has this layout [a very long corridor, rooms along]. M: I'm not sure if it's a shortcoming. F: You know, I've seen better ones. Especially with a child, this isn't convenient. M: But he [the son] can crawl all the way. F: Yes, but I must follow him all the time [laughter]. I can't just stay in the kitchen while he's playing. That's impossible, and this is inconvenient' (I4F/M).*

Also, mostly female interviewees complained about the quality of public space and transport. It was difficult for them to walk with baby carriages due to

uneven and destroyed pavement. Unreliable public transport, cold and smelly buses and trams that are difficult to get into being pregnant or with babies [high stairs at the entrance] and lack of parking space close to the inhabited building were serious everyday problems for mothers who, as it was said before, spend all day with their children on maternal leave.

### Conclusions

The analysis portrays the inner-city of Lodz as an area of initial individual gentrification, high concentration of poverty, and social-welfare supported households, with revitalization, housing, and social policies aimed at privatization of municipality-owned housing supplies and displacement of lowest-income or no-income households. The complex revitalization program offers a promise of comfortable and culturally rich life in the city center and lures the middle-class young, but the reality of the inner-city does not necessarily satisfy the needs and aspirations of middle-class families with children.

The interviews with Yuppies showed different attitudes towards life in the city center under revitalization. Some interviewees were enthusiastic, some ambivalent, and some very skeptical about living in the inner-city with children. For some, having children was the reason to move in (or move back in) to the central city areas; for others starting a family was the reason to plan moving out to another city area or to the suburbs. Those who were planning to move out soon claimed the city center is a good place to live for young people: students,

people starting their career, people enjoying night life, generally – childless people. *This is a great location for the young. It is so comfortable. From April to October you can just jump on the bike and get to work fast. Or take just one bus, no need to change to another bus or tram (I2M). We want to move away only because of the baby. This is the only reason. If it was just the two of us, I would definitely prefer to live in the center. It is closer to... to the whole city life (I4F).*

Those who were enthusiastic about living in the city center claimed that this is the place that offers everything families with children might want: *I cannot find a thing we need more. Here's everything we need (...). It is a great place to live, especially for families with small children (I7F). It is a very good and very comfortable place to live. And my friends who also love to live here would confirm it, they would never move away (I1F).*

Family gentrification studies showed the important role of women in middle-class gentrifiers' family residential choices. Women with children want to live in the city center as it is easier for them to reconcile family and professional duties. It is interesting that in the Lodz study it was women who wanted to move out from the city center, persuading their male partners to find another place to live, further from the inner-city or outside the city. This may be the result of traditional gender role division in Polish families, especially at times when children are small. As long as they are childless, both parties in a couple enjoy all the advantages of urban life equally. Once the baby is born, men still benefit from the advantages, but for women who spend most of their time taking care of their babies, inner-city life becomes full of obstacles.

In one of her articles, Lia Karsten (2003:2574) asks an interesting question: if family life and urban living are going to mix further in the near future, what does that mean for urban planning? Urban planning in Lodz so far does not take families with children and children-friendly, non-privatized, non-segregated, and non-institutionalized spaces under serious consideration. In the municipal social policy there are only general statements about catastrophic depopulation and the need to counteract it. Lodz promotes itself as 'the city of the young' ('Miasto Młodych'). So far, 1/6 of the city inhabitants are students. The city anti-depopulation policy of attracting 'the young' involves offering municipal apartments to the best student and highest-score graduates of Lodz universities. Will the students and college graduates stay for longer? What will happen, once the next generation of Yuppies turn into Yuppies?

The referred empirical study, although not focused primarily on family gentrifiers, showed that a thorough research on urban space with regard to children and families with children, as well as elderly citizens and groups with specific needs of all class backgrounds is very much needed, also in revitalization context. In line with Loretta Lees' recommendations for gentrification studies ('interviewing both gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers living in the same neighborhoods, social mixing in neighborhoods at different stages', Lees 2003: 2466), as a continuation of the referred study on individual gentrifiers, the second stage of the research project will involve interviews with 'old' inhabitants of the neighborhoods under research on socio-spatial changes in the inner-city with applications of visual sociology methods.

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## Gentryfierzy-rodzice w postsocjalistycznym mieście

**Abstrakt:** Artykuł stanowi analizę przypadku postsocjalistycznego miasta przemysłowego oraz procesu gentryfikacji w jego początkowym stadium, w kontekście dużego koordynowanego przez władze miejskie programu rewitalizacji oraz doświadczeń gentryfierów z dziećmi. Artykuł zainspirowany został ramą teoretyczną stworzoną przez Roberta A. Beauregarda, według którego na proces gentryfikacji składają się cztery elementy: potencjalnie gentryfikowalne sąsiedztwa, potencjalnie gentryfikowalni mieszkańcy, czynniki/podmioty ułatwiające lub wpływające na gentryfikację oraz sami potencjalni gentryfierzy. Empiryczna część artykułu oparta jest na jakościowych badaniach na temat gentryfierów w procesie rewitalizacji społecznej, realizowanych w Łodzi. **Słowa kluczowe:** gentryfikacja, rewitalizacja, gentryfierzy z dziećmi, dzieci, miasto postsocjalistyczne