Anastasiya Halauniova

Languages of Beauty and Languages of Ugly. The Aesthetic Valuation and Devaluation of Architecture Made by Architects, City Officials and Activists

Bielefeld University

St. Petersburg State University

Centre for German and European Studies (CGES)

CGES Working Papers series includes publication of materials prepared within different activities of the Centre for German and European Studies both in St. Petersburg and in Germany. The CGES supports educational programmes, research and scientific dialogues. In accordance with the CGES mission, the Working Papers are dedicated to the interdisciplinary studies of different aspects of German and European societies.

Anastasiya Halauniova, a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Amsterdam, an affiliated researcher at the Centre for German and European Studies in St. Petersburg. The author graduated from the department of Social and Political Sciences, European University at St. Petersburg, in 2016. Her academic interests include urban sociology, sociology of evaluation, science and technology studies, comparative approach to urban studies, and transformations in transition economies.

Contact: a.halauniova@uva.nl

Table of Contents

Abstract

In this exploratory paper I examine the differences in how city bureaucrats, architects and activists talk, value, devalue and create urban aesthetics. While the existing literature on urban aesthetics focuses mostly on the commodification processes of urban designs, I question the very process of talking about aesthetics and its relation to the professional and political positions of various actors involved in the creation of urban space and image, as well as the relationships between political imaginaries of 'Europeanness' and urban matters. Indeed, what are the systems and hierarchies of values that various professional groups associate with beauty and ugliness of urban designs? In order to answer this question, I carried out photo-elicitation interviews with the methodology of Q-sort in Klaipeda, Lithuania, by building on 30 interviews with various city professionals evaluating images of the architecture of their 'hometowns' in relation to various political regimes, styles and maintenance routines these buildings had to withstand.

Key words: aesthetics, valuation, architecture, Q-sort methodology

Introduction

Walking in almost deserted Klaipeda in the early spring of 2018, I discovered the fortification systems accommodating the major city museum. The museum was closed. The road leading towards its entrance was covered in snow, and based on the absence of footprints, I assumed that I was the only visitor. The feeling of solitude was deepened by what seemed to be a construction site located right next to the entrance. The site was enclosed with a metal fence and covered with half-transparent posters depicting 17th to 19th centuries construction schemes. Through these intriguing, barely visible black marks I could see piles of bricks, carefully and carelessly put together, as if they were unwanted and useless, at least for the moment. There I was, trapped in-between a few urban layers: the museum, the plans of a once existing castle of a once existing city of Memel, and perfectly polished red bricks, which had not yet had the chance to become a newly constructed castle. What I thought was a construction site appeared to be an archaeological excavation point for examining the remains of the castle that used to function as a defense system for Memel, a German city, before it became the Lithuanian Klaipeda.

Today in Klaipeda the potential reconstruction of the castle is a highly debated topic within the groups of various city professionals. An urban activist Audrius included the project in the framework of city officials' efforts of branding the city as a marine attraction. A city official Richard describes the project as a symbol of Klaipeda. He uses the term 'historical' to emphasize how carefully the contractors, as well as the architects and archaeologists, take care of forms and materials of the last version of the once existed castle. The head of the museum of Klaipeda notices that it is not exclusively the age which is important, but the 'middleagedness' of the castle. As he repeatedly underlines, the reconstruction of the castle is not a project of building a monument to the German heritage, but rather a monument to the 'Europeanness' of the city.

Despite the ongoing discussions, many questions remain unanswered both for me and many other urban professionals. An urban activist Dailius wonders about what exactly is meant by 'middleagedness', and how a contemporary project can be called 'historical'. 'What period of the Middle Ages are we talking about? And how are we going to provide the expertise on the topic?', — he added, while irritably putting away the illustration of the reconstruction plans. The reconstruction is regarded to with the vocabulary of non-historicity, it being described as a 'copy', 'fake', and 'imitation'. At the same time, the project is also heavily criticized for the absence of taste and knowledge of the local context. The issues of historicity, taste and conformity to the local style are tightly intertwined in the debates.

This close intertwining of aesthetic, historical and moral frameworks in valuation of the project raises a valid question about the practice of valuation in general. While being an object of expertise of multiple groups, architecture incorporates different criteria, professional training and vocabulary, that are rarely problematized either in urban planning practice or in academic literature. This exploratory paper focuses on the issue of urban 'gazes' and their characteristics.

It asks the question of how different groups involved in the creation of the aesthetic image of the city evaluate its built environment, and what criteria and vocabulary they use.

The reconstruction of the castle is not the primary topic of the essay. Instead, my intention is to use this case in order to examine valuation as the way for architects', city officials' and activists' to engage with the material built environment, to choose and attune their vocabulary, to translate the aesthetic judgement into statements about common good, identification, belonging, nostalgia, state and municipality. In other words, my interest lies not in the project of the castle reconstruction itself, but in valuation as a practice, that makes reconstruction possible or impossible and that modifies and alters its process. The case of Klaipeda in this sense is productive, as the city has experienced multiple political and historical repossessions. Once being the German city of Memel, the Lithuanian Klaipeda and then the Soviet Klaipeda, the city offers interesting perspectives in which architecture is imbued with political meanings and connotations. Studying aesthetic valuation of architecture in Klaipeda methodologically helps to start the conversation of moral and political aspects of aesthetics, experiencing revaluation and bringing the politics of taste to the fore. Nowadays Klaipeda is a site of struggle over the definition of a 'good' style, 'modern' architecture and 'European' urban landscape.

To answer the question, I focused on how various city professionals, namely architects, city officials and activists, valuate architecture in relation to its 'attractiveness', and the Q-sort method helped me capture it. The traditional version of the method was based on categorization of a set of cards with statements rated by the study participants. Inspired by the way this method had been adopted to study valuations of visual material (Kuipers, 2015), I constructed a Q-set with images rather than statements, namely, with illustrations of urban sites. I asked 30 study participants to rate 25 buildings in the photographs according to their 'beauty or ugliness' by giving them grades from -4 to +4. The photographs depicted a great variety of architectural constructions in the city, differing in style, historical period, levels of maintenance, location and functionality. The neutral value was assigned to five slots, while the most attractive (plus four) and the most ill-looking (minus 4) had only one picture. In the process of selection and ranking participants were asked to explain their choices by answering questions such as 'What is depicted?', 'Why is it attractive/unattractive?', 'What do the ideas of historicity, authenticity, Europeanness mean to you?', 'What qualities of these buildings do you associate with these values?', 'Are there other buildings that could be compared to this one?'. This is where the aesthetic and non-aesthetic valuation can be captured. The images selected for the Q-sorts are of three major architectural 'styles': German-period, socialist and contemporary constructions. Besides, the pictures are supposed to show diversity by visualizing upkeep and 'properly maintained', restored, preserved urban sites, as well as decaying ones and/or the ones whose value is being contested. The interviews lasted from 40 minutes to 2 hours. The outcomes of the interviews were transcribed and coded, and then analysed according to the profession of the participant and the criteria that they used to evaluate the architecture in the city.

Pic. 1. Example of Q-sort in Klaipeda

Urban aesthetics and valuation

To date, the most influential line of research on aesthetics of architecture and urban space regards the issue of gentrification (Degen, 2008). This scholarship has been focusing on the role of factors subsumed into the idea of 'culture' in urban development and displacement. Scholars have been preoccupied with the importance of aesthetic properties of contemporary cities for middle-class urban dwellers choosing the place of residency (Brown-Saracino, 2009; Scott, 2006), for city officials and developers investing in 'revitalization' and redevelopment of urban spaces (Sklair & Gherardi, 2012), for artists and cultural entrepreneurs participating in transformation of urban ruins and former industrial landscapes (Zukin, 2008, 2011).

The work of Sharon Zukin on gentrification and symbolic economy in New-York is a bright example of this trend: it analyses the role of cultural factors (or 'symbols') driving urban transformation and reinterpretation (Zukin, 2008, 2011). In her work, following the history of Lower Manhattan through the changes in the use of the space and the views of its inhabitants, Zukin demostrates how the 'taste for authenticity' emerging in the 1980s set in motion the process of change in which Italian cafes and Ukrainian soup bistros were transformed into artistic studios and hipster-approved consumer spaces, which later, in turn, became dominated by popular and standardized consumer chains. The taste for authenticity displaced the diverse native dwellers of the neighbourhood.

In this perspective aesthetics is a commodity, a claim of a socioeconomic distinction made by the evaluator, an urban dweller. In other words, through aesthetic valuation of what is beautiful or ugly in the city urban dwellers express their socioeconomic position. While this argument has indeed drawn researchers' attention to material transformations of city architecture, its meaning for urban

politics of space and fluidity of aesthetic judgments, which are highly significant for my research, locates the judgment completely in the person judging, neglecting the object itself, in my case — architecture, being valuated.

More than that, considering the complexity and the multitude of layers of the urban history of Klaipeda, thinking of aesthetics only in terms of its commodification and expression of social status seems to simplify multifaceted processes of dealing with repossession, uprooting, and post-socialist transformations in urban governance in the selected cities. There material qualities of architecture are tied closely to the political orders the architecture was produced within.

Another important line of scholarship on architecture and its aesthetics has been concerned with the issues of identity-building and belonging. In that perspective, architecture is a 'basis for identity building' (Dymnicka & Szczepański, 2016) and this is where the beauty lies. Indeed, as scholars point out, 'places can create a sense of either belonging or alienation and can become a means of defining self or differentiating oneself from others, of defining home or homeland' (Pugh, 2014). This statement is equally important in understanding the problematization of and negotiations around aesthetic properties of architecture in repossessed cities. As it is assumed, the power of architecture, especially with a heritage status, lies in its capability to materialize collective memories: urban built environment, in that sense, acts, or better is used, to provoke feelings of commonality, historicity and rootedness in time (Bevan, 2016).

Acknowledging the argument on the social construction of local identities through architecture, this study moves beyond the conventional conceptualization of architecture and aesthetics as merely social projections. Considering the specificity of Klaipeda, and namely the dynamics of change in its aesthetic appearance, it is not enough to say that architecture 'expresses' belonging (Priyani, 2014) and is used to identify with the place. What is overlooked are the dynamic practices of valuation and maintenance of buildings that may either provoke or restrict identity-building processes in particular directions.

In order to avoid the assumption that architecture is a representation of belonging and identity, I turned to the question of *how aesthetics of architecture is valuated in practice*. Based on that, the research engages with the questions of what is seen as 'good' and 'bad' in architecture, whether or not it varies for various city professionals, whether or not it varies in different situations, and if it is related to the material qualities of architecture. To examine the assessment of values I turn to the concepts of *repertoires of (e)valuation* developed by Michele Lamont and Laurent Thevenot (Lamont & Thevenot, 2000). As Lamont and Thevenot stated in their collective work, 'repertoires of (e)valuation' are the arguments and evidences, 'elementary grammars [of judgments and valuation] that can be available across situations and that pre-exist individuals, although they are transformed and made salient by individuals' (Lamont & Thevenot, 2000). 'Repertoires of (e)valuation' point to their unequal distribution among different categories of population and their co-existence or competition with each other, which are important points of the study.

Repertoires of (e)valuation allow to examine how 'beauty' of architecture may mean different things to people with different professional background and everyday experiences, and how each valuation is based on a problematized legitimization of what kinds of criteria should be used. Moreover, it also shows how urban matters gain political connotations, and what vocabulary is used in order to express this connection between material qualities of architecture and political imaginary. Shifts in logics and vocabulary of valuation may reveal the competing systems of values that inform the judgments on architecture in the selected city. Is historicity more important than newness, are aesthetic qualities appreciated more than the accessibility of the place, and how 'authenticity' defies the choice of what is attractive in the city — these are the aspects of valuation processes that can be examined with the help of the concept 'repertoires of (e)valuation'.

Contrary to the classic cultural sociologists and valuation scholars who primarily analyse the criteria of valuation regardless of the actual material qualities of the object, I approach valuation not as a merely social, but as a *socio-material practice.* Over the last decade, a number of cultural sociologists have begun to investigate various roles that materials play in the creation of cultural meanings. In doing so, McDonnell, for example, questioned the way materiality limits and enables production of cultural meanings (McDonnell, 2010), Zubrzycki and Sezneva explored the way objects create changes and produce new identities (Sezneva, 2013; Zubrzycki, 2013), and Rubio investigated how materials shape cultural and institutional forms (Rubio, 2012, 2014).

In that sense, when speaking about architecture, that study participants have a constant hands-, foot-, and eye-on relationship with (Heuts & Mol, 2013), it becomes clear that repertoires of (e)valuation which are 'preexisting individuals' (Lamont & Thevenot, 2000) may be altered and changed in the course of the personal interaction of a human with the architecture. As Lamont and Thevenot state, repertoires of (e)valuation may be changed by individuals, but it remains unclear what is the origin of this change. Thinking of urban dwellers relating to architecture while they are walking, driving, cycling, using the building or participating in its maintenance, helps to theorize *how multisensory experience may indeed be changing the already existing repertoires of (e)valuation*. These are dynamic processes of engaging with and negotiating social meanings through materiality of architecture, where professional knowledge, as well as everyday experience of interacting with architecture matter. This process is dynamic and unpredictable, for buildings and, as Albena Yaneva states, their materiality 'may be surprising' (Yaneva, 2008).

The next section illustrates the differences in logics and vocabulary used by city professionals to valuate architecture in Klaipeda, where city officials, activists and architects appeared to use three different regimes of valuation: historical versus Soviet, original versus imitation, and belonging versus out-of-place.

What is historical and does it relate to time?

One of the most prominent registers of valuation for city officials was valuation along the line of '*historical versus Soviet*'. The title of the register should not mislead the reader: it does not valuate the time of construction, but rather a geopolitical regime, making one architecture attractive and the other — ugly. In this regard, 'historical' does not stand for 'historically significant buildings', but rather pre-war German constructions, while 'Soviet' remains an umbrella term for a multiplicity of different styles and architectural characteristics produced during the Soviet rule. In this register, the differences between the objects within each of the categories were not important to the informants, for them the opposition between pre-war German and Soviet constructions was of greater significance.

The register of 'historical versus Soviet' has its material attribute, which is brick, and a quality attached to it, which is age. Brick is said to be a warm and imperfect material, which 'invites' dwellers to touch it and interact with it. More than that, brick is said to carry the 'city's DNA', and to be a 'part of the collective consciousness'. As one of the city officials said, *'this is the identity that we can touch'* (Ricardo, city official). In this sense, brick is viewed as a material embodiment of 'Germanness' of the city, characterized as a 'biological' part of the contemporary Klaipeda. If taking the metaphor of DNA seriously, it becomes obvious that it is the German architecture that is considered to be the one to be kept intact and unaltered, otherwise it might end in 'urban pathologies'.

The way brick and historicity belong to pre-war German architecture stands in contrast with the valuation of Soviet constructions, which are said to have no 'historicity' — and even more so — are viewed as 'out of historical order', in other words, a disruption. 'Soviet' architecture, of course, can be considered a controversial term for describing the whole variety of constructions produced during the few decades of socialist rule in Lithuania. However, the term was used by the informants, especially city officials, in order to describe the Otherness of these type of built environment comparing to the 'historical European' ones. Valuated as not only disruptive in terms of possessing no 'historical' value, but disrupting the urban order, Soviet aesthetics mobilizes valuation as a moral practice. It is said to be ugly, having no 'humanity' and 'soul', and 'not caring about urban dwellers and their emotions':

> *This monster just reminds me that people didn't care whether inhabitants would feel nice looking at it or not. It has no soul, really, just dry, raw concrete, which provokes no emotions* (Mina, city official)

City officials, compared to the other groups, were mostly focused on the normativity of 'newness'. According to them, buildings should be not only historical, but also in good repair: renovation makes visible the municipality's efforts and attention to the city and urban inhabitants. In that sense, any kind of renovation was valuated highly, made architecture more attractive, regardless of the materials or strategies used. This goes in sharp contrast with architects, for example, who approached renovation through the register of 'originality versus imitation', and for them renovation always possesses a potential threat to 'originality'.

Beauty, honesty, imitation

In contrast to city officials, the Klaipeda architects valuate architecture along the register of *'original versus imitation'*. Consider, for example, the building number 16, a former police station and courthouse, that has recently become a potential platform for a creative cluster in the city under the condition of receiving enough municipal financial investment. Originality of this construction means the 'correct representation of times'. In other words, originality of the built environment stands for the 'honesty' of those involved in the production of aesthetics in the city, and this honestly establishes 'good' relationships with urban dwellers:

Citizens should not be tricked into thinking that architecture is something it is not. They need to see without confusion what period was it built in, and what does that mean for the city, its aspirations (Danius, architect)

*Pic. 2. Former police station*

Connotations such as 'covering up' or 'pretending' were one of the most prominent in the valuation of architecture in this register. Here, the pre-war architecture is seen as 'beautiful' not because it is constructed out of bricks or associated with the 'European' historicity, but on the basis of being non-spoiled by renovation practices:

This is untouched, no one seems to have spoilt the true nature of the brick, which is slowly and beautifully aging. Even the ageing of the brick is precious, it's natural (Eva, architect)

In the same vein, even so-called 'Soviet' architecture was considered original when not covered with additional material layers, 'decorated', as informants put it. In this framework, even the Soviet mass-building khrushchevka appeared to be more attractive than the renovated version of it. As informants emphasized, *'it has its brutal, natural, raw character, which was not spoiled by multiple paintings and plaster, hiding its true character'* (Denis, architect). What a reader might witness here are moral boundaries being drawn between the architecture that 'fools citizens' and the one that 'speaks honestly'. The normativity of newness and renovation loses its value in the framework of *originality versus imitation*.

Still, there were some major differences in how originality was described by activists and city officials comparing to architects. For activists and city officials, architecture is not a simple reflection of social relations, mirroring the intentions of its creators, but is capable of having a conversation with urban dwellers, and 'possesses a soul and spirit'. To be precise, the spirit of pre-war architecture and Soviet one differ for them. While valuating 'Soviet' architecture a militarist vocabulary was mobilized, German constructions were described with the vocabulary of 'fragility'. For example, while a 'Soviet' construction 'invades and dominates', a German one 'needs and demands care'; while a Soviet building 'takes over and shows its seriousness', a German one 'asks you to come closer and interact with it'. These differences in vocabulary show the underlying appreciation and absence of such coming from everyday attunements or detachments built and reproduced in professional practice. In that sense, the 'spirit' and 'fragility' of the pre-war German architecture that activists and city officials speak about, can be 'spoiled' or 'compromised' by city officials' practices of renovation or reconstruction, 'betraying' its 'originality'.

Another example is the picture 6, the summer theatre constructed in 1970-s for public events in Klaipeda, used to this day for folklore concerts and song contests. Even though the summer theatre did provoke informants to think about the nature of *'Soviet greyness, low quality of materials, stains on its walls'* (Lina, city official), its functionality, openness, and the 'originality' of public function made this construction attractive. In this sense, non-renovated, not perfectly polished texture of the facades does not prevent the construction from bearing a sign of beauty as honesty.
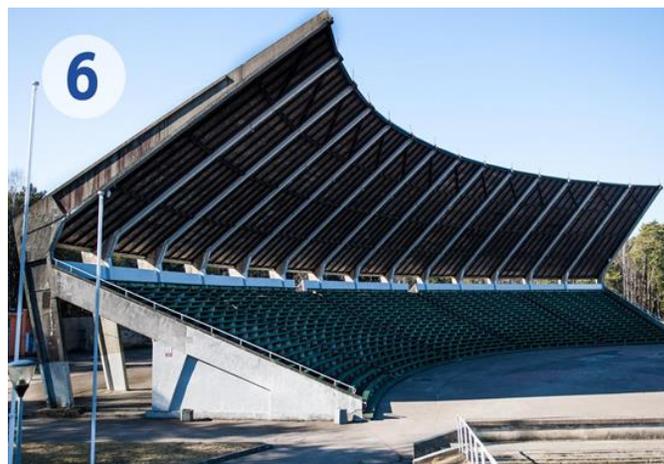
Pic. 3. Summer theatre of Klaipeda

In this sense, what informants valuate in the facades is not only the division between historical brick and Soviet concrete, but textures, colours, that make it possible to valuate the interventions made to the buildings, falling between the qualities of 'honesty' or 'imitation'.

Out-of-place

As much as beauty can mobilize and produce strong emotional replies from inhabitants, ugliness, or unattractiveness, is equally powerful. Activists mostly valuated architecture in the register of *'local versus out-of-place'*, which worked as one of the most emotionally loaded ways of describing built environment, expressed in the rhythms of valuation made by the informants, and their distancing from or relating to the pictures of various architectural objects in the city. Take, for example, the pictures 15 or 21, that represent Soviet architecture in Klaipeda. It took the informants just a few seconds to rate the pictures the lowest on the scale. They did that with moving their head away as if hiding from the illustrations, rolling up their eyes, shrivelling, or simply laughing. Despite the fact that the 21 is painted in different colours, all of the buildings were still described as of being grey: *'they dominate, annoy, create melancholy'* (Igor, activist).

The greyness of the constructions number 15 and 21, stains on the walls, connections between facades were interpreted as of being of bad quality. Still, this is not exactly the quality of materials which was implied, instead, the quality of housing was translated into the judgement on the quality of life, and more than that, the quality of people living there. Some informants assumed that inhabitants of the buildings *'must be unhappy'*, *'they are poor'* and *'they don't care much about their home, so what is there to say?'* (Andzelika, activist).

All in all, the greyness, bad quality of materials, and feelings of melancholy were used by the informants to claim that Soviet architecture *'does not belong'*, *'is out of place'*. The belonging that the informants were talking about is based on the idea of 'historical continuity' and 'regional specificity': the continuity of pre-war German aesthetics, repeated and alluded to even in contemporary architecture. Take, for example, the building in the picture number 6, a construction in the city centre from the early 2000-s. These two towers were valuated as 'belonging' and reflecting the 'local' character simply because of their form, letters K and D, and colour, which is dark red. The dark red colour is referred to as the 'brick colour', therefore making an aesthetic connection with the brick architecture of the city.

Pic 4. and Pic. 5. Khrushchevka mass-housing and Music theatre in Klaipeda.

In this frame, renovation is valued as a means of maintaining and saving the 'historical tradition' of the city, which sometimes is referred to as the 'natural development' of the city. It is mobilized as a moral category of valuing 'respect to the history' as an actual respect to the inhabitants of Klaipeda or lack thereof in cases of 'bad' or absent renovations, or new constructions in the city centre. Maintenance of the German architecture and of the view on the German architecture is significant not simply in terms of preserving heritage sites for touristic visits, but is viewed as an aspect of state/city government-public relations and its moral character, 'respect' to the inhabitants.

'Good renovation' then is situated somewhere between total ignorance and lack of care in which the German heritage is being ruined and the 'too good/too beautiful' renovation, which makes interventions too visible and perfect. The 'too beautiful' renovation, according to activists, kills the spirit of the architecture, materially covers it up or erases it, or explicitly invades the visual code of the place, making it 'non-authentic'.

Pic. 6. Soviet mass-housing from 1970-80.

Mass-housing construction in the picture number 25 is paradoxical in this sense. On the one hand, it is described as typical, banal, and disruptive, therefore, out-of-place. But at the same time, red brick and wooden framing of balconies are inscripted in the domestic world of normative 'germanised' aesthetics. It makes it

clear that what activists described as 'regional belonging' was not the belonging to Lithuania, but on the contrary — it is something that makes Klaipeda different from Lithuania. It was also viewed by the informants through the vocabulary of respect: the respect of architects caring about the distinctiveness of the aesthetic image of the city. Namely these efforts are the essential part of the activists' vocabulary in valuating architecture.

Conclusion

The paper explores differences in the way city officials, architects and activists talk, value and devalue urban aesthetics. Drawing on 30 Q-sort interviews, it illustrates what systems of values they mobilized in order to decide between 'beautiful' and 'ugly' architecture, and how the aesthetic judgement relates both to the urban matter itself and to the political imaginaries associated with it. First of all, it shows that the three groups use different repertoires of valuation. City officials valuate architecture within the register of 'historical versus Soviet', where historical bears the geopolitical connotation of 'looking German/European'. Architects make their valuation statements within the register of 'originality versus imitation', where originality means buildings un-spoiled, untouched and uncompromised by contemporary renovation practices. Activists, in their turn, valuate attractiveness of architecture within the line of 'belonging versus out-of-place'. They pay attention to the ability of contemporary architecture to 'adjust' and 'continue the tradition' of normalized 'German' aesthetics, and detach from Soviet architecture as being disruptive and 'non-caring'. These differences in valuation are also reflected in the informants' vocabulary, making obvious the ways in which different materials become mobilized as signs of particular political regimes, and therefore - valued or devalued based on that. It also shows the conflicts of understanding 'good' and 'bad' renovation as the medium through which informants assess the work of municipality in upkeeping the aesthetic image of the city, which makes the aesthetic valuation a practice of moral distinction between 'caring' and 'uncaring' government.

References

1. Bevan, R. (2016). *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War-Second Expanded Edition.* Reaktion books.

2. Brown-Saracino, J. (2009). A neighborhood that never changes. *Gentrification, Social Preservation, and the Search for Authenticity.* Chicago.

3. Degen, M. M. (2008). *Sensing cities: regenerating public life in Barcelona and Manchester* (Vol. 24). Psychology Press.

4. Dymnicka, M., & Szczepański, J. (2016). Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Cities. The City of Gdansk as an Example. *Procedia Engineering, 161,* 1225-1229.

5. Kuipers, G. (2015). Beauty and distinction? The evaluation of appearance and cultural capital in five European countries. *Poetics, 53,* 38-51.

6. Lamont, M., & Thévenot, L. (2000). *Rethinking comparative cultural sociology: Repertoires of evaluation in France and the United States*.

7. McDonnell, T. E. (2010). Cultural Objects as Objects: Materiality, Urban Space, and the Interpretation of AIDS Campaigns in Accra, Ghana 1. *American Journal of Sociology, 115*(6), 1800-1852.

8. Priyani, R. (2014). Postcolonial identity in urban Indonesia: jengki architecture and the Chinese-Indonesian builders. *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review, 26*(1), 33-33.

9. Pugh, E. (2014). *Architecture, Politics, and Identity in Divided Berlin.* University of Pittsburgh Press.

10. Rubio, F. D. (2012). The material production of the spiral jetty: A study of culture in the making. *Cultural sociology, 6*(2), 143-161.

11. Rubio, F. D. (2014). Preserving the unpreservable: docile and unruly objects at MoMA. *Theory and Society, 43*(6), 617-645.

12. Scott, A. J. (2006). Creative cities: Conceptual issues and policy questions. *Journal of urban affairs, 28*(1), 1-17.

13. Sezneva, O. (2013). Architecture of descent: historical reconstructions and the politics of belonging in Kaliningrad, the former Königsberg. *Journal of Urban History, 39*(4), 767-787.

14. Sklair, L., & Gherardi, L. (2012). Iconic architecture as a hegemonic project of the transnational capitalist class. *City, 16*(1-2), 57-73.

15. Zukin, S. (1995). *The cultures of cities* (Vol. 150). Oxford: Blackwell.

16. Zukin, S. (2009). *Naked city: The death and life of authentic urban places.* Oxford University Press.

17. Zukin, S. (2011). Reconstructing the authenticity of place. *Theory and society, 40*(2), 161-165.

Appendix 1

Informants mentioned in the paper:

1. Audrius, activist

2. Richard, city official

3. Dailius, activist

4. Ricardo, city official

5. Mina, city official

6. Danius, architect

7. Eva, architect

8. Denis, architect

9. Lina, city official

10. Andzelika, activist

11. Igor, activist