

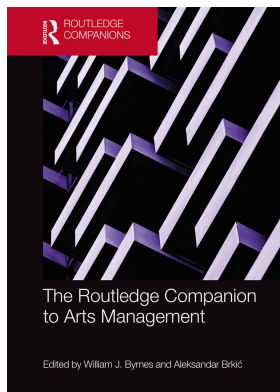
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 26 Mar 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Companion to Arts Management

William J. Byrnes, Aleksandar Brki

New organisms in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of cities

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351030861-19>

Marcin Poprawski

Published online on: 26 Sep 2019

How to cite :- Marcin Poprawski. 26 Sep 2019, *New organisms in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of cities* from: *The Routledge Companion to Arts Management* Routledge

Accessed on: 26 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351030861-19>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

NEW ORGANISMS IN THE CULTURAL ‘ECOSYSTEMS’ OF CITIES

The rooting and sustainability of arts and culture organizations

Marcin Poprawski

Introduction

Since 2008 Poland has been perceived as one of the largest construction sites for arts and culture institutions in Europe. The data clearly show that the culture sector in Poland was, until recently, one of the most important consumers of EU funds allocated for numerous new buildings for cultural institutions: concert halls, museums, theatres, cultural centers and libraries, newly emplaced in modernized urban spaces. According to data provided by the STRATEG (2018) system, which is run by the Polish statistical office, there has been similar growth with other cultural institutions: in four years, almost 300 local culture centers were established. In 6 years, up until 2014, the number of museums in Poland increased by over 100. This emergent phenomenon raises a series of questions concerning the opportunities and challenges for new cultural locations and the impact on their users, audiences, employees, institution leaders, institutional competitors, local authorities, individuals or communities. These emplacements or rooting processes are challenging economic, social and cultural sustainability in cities. This study attempts to provide insight, based on empirical cases, into how to best cope with the realities of rooting and operating new venues for culture and the arts.

The point of departure is a set of findings from the research project entitled *New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of Polish cities*, conducted in 2016 and 2017 by the author’s academic team, and co-funded by the Union of Polish Cities and the Polish Ministry of Culture. The researchers from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan have qualitatively investigated eight carefully selected cases of newly emplaced, or rooted cultural institutions in Poland: the Gdansk Shakespeare Theatre, the location of art museum in a former mining site – the Silesian Museum in Katowice, an early Christianity memorial – the ICHOT Heritage Interpretation Centre in Poznan, the Dialogue Centre in Lodz, a public library located in a railway station – ‘Stacja Kultury’ in Rumia, the Philharmonic Hall in Gorzow and two cultural centers in smaller cities in central Poland: Grodzisk Mazowiecki and Wloclawek.

The research process focused on delivering the content in eight aspects:

- 1 The emplacement genesis
- 2 The new object in the context of the existing cultural 'ecosystem' of the city
- 3 The aesthetics and functionality of the building for cultural purposes
- 4 The social rooting and accessibility of the new cultural investment for the local community
- 5 The value, image and social reception of the new cultural site
- 6 The impact of the new cultural 'organism' on the city's cultural 'ecosystem'
- 7 The organizational cultures of the newly located cultural institutions
- 8 The developmental potential of the new cultural space

The qualitatively collected data bring to light the set of findings and practical recommendations aimed both at existing, newly located cultural venues, as well as the objects of future investments. In this chapter, those insights on newly emplaced cultural spaces, culture and arts venues in Poland are, at the same time, food for thought and discussion on the purpose, use and relevance of the metaphors of 'cultural ecosystem', 'rooting' in arts management studies, as well as the concept of sustainable development and the subsidiarity principle.

This is a canvas for a sequence of reflections concerning overlapping domains, where the first field of experience is *the rooting* of the new cultural organism or newly emplaced existing arts institution. This includes the social, political, urban and economic dimensions of the process. The key perspective correlated with the research objects is the one introduced as an inspiration borrowed from the metaphor and concept of the ecology of culture or *cultural ecosystems* (Holden, 2015, pp. 5–12; Markusen, 2011, pp. 8–9). Particular attention is paid here to the cultural ecosystems of cities and local urban communities.

One could ask where this will take the reader who is not familiar with the Polish or European models of financing culture and the arts, or who is not engaged in the practice of establishing and operating a public institution. There is a lesson we can learn here together, from particular stories of beginnings, as George Steiner (2010, pp. 322–326) would say, the foundational efforts of arts administration leaders, stories of attracting engagement in local communities. Again, taking Poland's case as the laboratory of socio-economic transformation, with a few local cases having universal relevance, reveals the potential of the broader applicability of such solutions.

On the threshold of the political transformation in Poland in the early 1990s, the eminent sociologist (Dahrendorf, 1990) predicted the rhythm of the change from communism and a centrally regulated economy to a democratic, free society. He used the image of three clocks of the transformation. According to his prediction, it would take six months to reform the political system, six years to change the economic system, and sixty years to bring about a revolution on the people's hearts and minds. Arts and culture organizations are basically and explicitly operating according to the tempo set by the third clock, in terms of the sphere of cultural policies, cultural education, and communities implementing the cultural regeneration processes in their playgrounds of change – their cities, towns and villages.

The study is motivated by a sequence of research questions and aims. The first one is to confront the apparent enthusiasm for the construction of new cultural facilities with the real practice and context, and the challenges and opportunities, after the initial period. Another aim is to provide an overview of how newly emplaced cultural institutions impact, influence or engage the inhabitants of their cities. Finally, the aim of the inquiry is to deliver some recommendations for the future initiators of construction projects, as well as the existing managers of new venues.

Arts and culture organizations rooted in cultural ecosystems

The primary concept adopted at the beginning of this research project on new arts and culture investments was the term *emplacement*, which aims to grasp both newly founded cultural institutions emplaced in the city space, as well as newly constructed cultural facilities for already existing institutions. In the latter case, the perception of the local residents is of importance, as they are often unaware of the formal nuances associated with the existence of a cultural object, and for whom the new space of the institution (even if it previously functioned elsewhere) becomes a new object on their ‘mental map of the city’, and thus is often an invigorating, attractive and intriguing object of interest.

The second reason for using the term ‘emplacement’ lies in its ambiguity, which is interesting for humanists and researchers in the field of social sciences. Referring, on the one hand, to the historically important ‘location’ of cities, which is also significant in terms of identity, and on the other hand to the concept of the ‘deposits’ made, and investment funds set up by, local governments, especially in the context of EU funds.

Thirdly, “emplacement” is particularly relevant for marketing activities. With this last meaning, we touch on the very complex issue of the marketing of places, and the positive or negative effects associated with the instrumentalization of cultural objects for promotional purposes and building the image of cities – for example the Basque Guggenheim Museum and the so-called Bilbao effect. In future years, could this also apply to the places investigated in these case studies? It is important, therefore, to establish new institutions as organisms that have a fresh impact on the urban environment, but on the other hand, new infrastructure investments, buildings, headquarters, locations that represent a significant opportunity (most often PR, promotional, identity, pro-development in the sense of cultural competence) but which sometimes also constitute a threat or a challenge (e.g. for the city budget in subsequent years of the institution’s functioning).

The ambiguity of the notion of *emplacement* seemed to me appealing as it addresses three or four aspects in one term. One is derived from investment – funds placement, the other is derived more from branding vocabulary – cultural product placement, or place branding for city promotion, targeted at tourists or businesses – city brand placement following the opening of a new cultural venue. Finally, emplacement also relates to historical city location process or places of settlement. Rooting, however, as an alternative notion of a purely ecological origin, adapted to the social sciences, furnishes even more options due to its polysemic potential.

Indeed, according to the concept of the ecology of culture (Holden, 2015), culture is a much more complex and dynamic reality than logical processes framed in the numbers and trends forecast by economists and politicians. Culture is more of an organism than a mechanism. Holden does not concur with the privileged position of the financial and economic value of culture in relation to other values, which are more deeply rooted. Thinking by means of the metaphor of the ecosystem helps to understand the nature of the relations between cultural organisms, in the Polish context this applies above all to cultural institutions and their social environment, and ultimately leads to an improvement in the quality of cultural policies and access to cultural values.

The realm of arts and cultural activities can be defined as the reality inhabited by the following interrelated organisms: (1) subsidized cultural institutions, (2) commercial enterprises and projects, and (3) co-creative individuals, private amateur art and culture actors who are more or less ready to volunteer to help with an art organization or to create cultural artefacts in their homes or on their digital devices, either individually, or within a circle of close friends, or with total strangers who share the same interest or passion. This co-related trio is now a basic triangle of interchanges that is not regulated by monetary exchange, or simple transactions in

the economic sense. All three types of players observe and learn from each other, and the third type of player, the creative individual, is at the same time the most observed and most influential for decisions taken by the other two kinds – public and commercial organizations active in the arts and culture field.

The organic approach proposed by the *ecology of culture* concept, and the metaphors of *regeneration*, *symbiosis*, *growth* and *life cycle* could bring a much more fruitful picture of the processes in the broad field of culture when they are explained in terms of cultural policy, cultural heritage and cultural management studies, and teaching and training. One example here is the *art festivals life cycle model*, which was adapted from Ichak Adizes' business studies concept by Chris Maugham (Maugham and Bianchini, 2004), who uses it to analyze festivals as growing and aging, from courtship to death. What is particularly important is, again, the perspective of the local cultural ecosystems, as the observation of crucial places where cultural activity is rooted and exposed to different conditions for growth or death. Not all Polish cities carry out advanced, conscious or strategic actions in the area of cultural policy; however, in every city we can find a cultural ecosystem, involving the natural circulation of content, value and activity in the field of culture.

Holden's ecology of culture is his name for complex interdependencies that shape the needs and processes of creating art and offers in the sphere of cultural activity. The 'ecological' attitude of researchers and decision-makers in the field of culture involves the assessment of multifaceted relations between various professional cultural entities and people involved in shaping the proposals and places for the implementation of cultural phenomena, within the scope of developing cultural competence, but also transferring funds, and rooting cultural organizations and their headquarters in the city space, which is the subject of this research project. These processes have received attention from many researchers who do not employ the ecosystem metaphor, but who are effectively seeking a way to theoretically grasp the phenomenon of planning and implementing investment processes in the field of cultural institutions (including Landry and Bianchini, 1995; Bianchini, 1996; McGuigan, 1996, 2010, pp. 39–57; Silver and Nichols Clark, 2016).

The presented study, based on eight case studies of arts and culture organizations, is an example of an inquiry which adapts and tests two ecological metaphors more intensely. One is that of *rooting* – to describe the processes activated by arts organizations; while the other is the term *ecosystem* – to describe the relations of arts and cultural organizations – coexisting organisms – sharing one city space.

An empirical study of rooting arts and culture organizations

Four of the case studies are institutional brands created from scratch, new kids in the block. The case of the Gdansk Shakespeare Theatre relates the process of how the NGO-based International Shakespeare Festival team transformed into freshly funded institution operators. It was the first newly constructed drama theatre building in Poland for over 40 years. The 7,935 square meter venue with an open roof and a full armory of stage engineering facilities was erected between 2011–2014, costing over €25 million. It employs 26 people and its total budget is around €3 million.

The Philharmonic Hall in Gorzow, a town of 100,000 inhabitants, located next to the German border in central western Poland was built in 2008–2011. The primary intention was for it to be the main element of a bigger Art Education Centre, a philharmonic venue of 6,589 square meters, integrated with new music schools for kids and adults. In the end, however, the schools were omitted. Costing over €35 million, with 65 employees and a yearly budget of over €1.6 million, the new public institution was launched.

The third case study of a newly founded culture institution is the ICHOT Heritage Interpretation Centre in Poznan, which has the combined aims of promoting city cultural tourism and commemorating early Christian heritage. The language of this place is predominantly conveyed through a set of multimedia tools. From 2010 to 2014 over €22 million were spent on the project, resulting in a 5,070 square meter cube where over 53 employees work, having an annual budget of €1.5 million.

The Browar B. Art & Culture Centre in Wloclawek, a town located in the centre of Poland, is a revitalisation and district re-cultivation project based on a former brewery. 7,000 square meters were revitalised at a cost of over €8.5 million between 2012–2014. The employees, totaling 47 people, now work for one new cultural organization, as a result of two previously existing cultural centres being merged. They share an annual budget of over €800,000.

The four other case studies focus on the relocations of existing arts or culture public institutions, or new branches.

The most impressive in size and scale is The Silesian Museum, the project involving both the construction and revitalisation of a former mining area in the centre of the city Katowice, the capital of the heavy industry region in southern Poland. Its seven floors, three of which are underground, combine three separate themes and contain an impressive art collection, as well as a narrative museum of the complex history of the Silesia region, and is the location for a theatre scenography centre. €70 million were spent in the period of 2011–2015 for the hybrid actions, providing over 25,000 square meters of new and revitalised buildings. The complex process of the rearrangement of this post-mining area is still in progress. The institution, which moved from the old headquarters, enlarged to the size of a Museum with nearly 180 employees and restarted in 2015 with an annual budget of over €7.5 million.

The new building of the Edelman Dialogue Centre in Lodz was the new emplacement for a hybrid type of culture institution – located in a housing estate area consisting of blocks of flats. Celebrating the Jewish and multicultural legacy of the city of Lodz, the Centre is funded by the contributions of the public, the municipal budget and private donors. The building consists of over 1,440 square meters and was constructed between 2008–2014 for about €3.5 million. It employs 13 people and has an annual budget of about half a million Euros.

The next example is the Art & Culture Centre in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, which is the new building for a previously existing institution. Its new space of over 3,700 square meters contains the main facilities of a culture centre, and in addition a cinema, an existing radio studio, and the headquarters of a local newspaper. Its construction in the years 2006–2008 cost €5 million. The centre has 33 employees and an annual budget of over €2 million.

The last case of rooted cultural investment is the public library branch in Rumia, named Culture Station, as it is located in a train station building. In 2016 this place was awarded an international prize, The Library Interior Design Award. In addition to its normal library function, the Culture Station became the new address for the activities of several local NGOs. It cost €1.5 million, spent from 2013 to 2014. It consists of 1,150 square meters; employs 20 people and has an annual budget of €370,000.

The research team, employing the concept of cultural ecosystems (Holden, 2015), identified various fields and characteristics of the relations created by the new public cultural institution with the urban socio-economic environment. In this regard, we were interested in both the strategic and spontaneous activities of the organization, which wants to establish itself in its new environment, as well as the local, municipal or regional self-government responsible for running a new or newly located institution.

Table 19.1 Data on selected, newly rooted arts and culture venues in Poland

Place	Emplacement context	Open	Concept/ Construct start time	Cost (approx.) EUR	Size m ²	Co-financing – EU funds (approx.) EUR	Visitors '15 (approx.)	Events number '15	Budget '15 (approx.) EUR	Staff '15–16
GRODZISK MAZ. Cultural Centre	Existing institution – new building (constr.)	IV 2008	2004/ III 2006	5,000,000	3,713	2,500,000	110,000	150	2,000,000	33
GORZÓW WLKP. Philharmonic Hall	New institution – new building (constr.)	V 2011	1998 XII 2008	35,000,000	6,589	8,000,000	43,000	172	1,600,000	65
LÓDŹ – Edelman Dialogue Centre	Existing institution – new building (constr.)	I 2014 – IV 2014	2007–2008/ IX 2008, 2009 – IX 2010, II 2013	3,500,000	1,442	–	25,000	188	500,000	13
POZNAŃ – ICHOT Heritage Centre	Existing institution – new brand – new location, new constr.)	V 2014	2007/ XII 2010	22,000,000	5,070	12,500,000	108,000	11,129	1,500,000	53
WŁOCŁAWEK BROWAR B. Cultural Centre	New institution through merging – revitalis. of heritage/postindustrial area	V 2014	2007/ IX 2012	8,500,000	7,000	6,000,000	20,000	120	800,000	47
GDAŃSK Shakespeare Theatre	New institution – new building (constr.)	IX 2014	2008/ III 2011	25,000,000	7,935	13,000,000	81,000	777	3,000,000	26+
RUMIA – 'Culture Station' Library	Existing Institution (new location, interior revitalisation)	IX 2014	2012 I 2013	1,500,000	1,150	–	7,700 (+ 6,300)	385	370,000	20–
KATOWICE Silesian Museum	Existing institution – new building (constr. and revitalisation of post- mining area)	IV 2015	2004 (1950's) VII 2011	70,000,000	25,067	43,000,000	250,000 (inside) 413,000 (outside) (IV – XII 2015)	154	7,500,000	178

Source: *New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural 'ecosystems' of Polish cities*, Research Project Final Report, Poznań 2017, p. 11; table transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-insytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF.pdf>

An important purpose of the research was to study the methods through which a new organism is rooted in the social and economic fabric of Polish cities, but also to investigate how the brands of institutions are shaped, and the impact that identity activities have on the inhabitants of the city.

In these studies, we were also interested – from a comparative perspective – in cases of previously existing institutions which have been newly located and seek, through their new headquarters, under a new address, methods for increasing their audience and strengthening their brand. On the other hand, of key importance was the functioning of new institutions and cultural locations in the context of urban cultural policies, including the appearance of an institution or a new location, the growth of new headquarters for cultural activities in the local community, and finally the cooperation with the socio-economic environment in the city.

This project has not only diagnosed the conditions that determine the functioning and impact of new cultural institutions, but also reveals a number of variables which affect the effectiveness of the strategies they implement and the cultural policies adopted towards them or with their participation (to be specific: social environment, material resources, competence resources, the social media environment, the media environment and forms of management). The project revealed areas of various potentials, opportunities and resources, but also obstacles and barriers. It described the conditions conducive to both cooperation and competition, which, when managed in an appropriate way, may become a driving force for the development of competing parties.

The research model adopted by the team, which combined on the one hand a comprehensive approach: desk research, netnography and, on the other hand, research conducted directly in (and with) the environment of the institution being studied (FGI, IDI, field studies, surveys of staff working in the institution, a survey of the institution’s prospective audience) enabled an image of the institution’s environment and the elements of its organizational culture to be assembled. The research project was carried out in a series of planned activities. We can divide them into three basic stages of the research process. The team employed both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Table 19.2 Empirical research in numbers

8	Arts and culture organizations – publicly funded institutions
8	Fieldwork – socio-cultural research
8	Netnography research
34	Individual in-depth interviews (IDI): directors, employees from the new and the ‘old’ representative institution in the city, the representatives of local authorities
91	Focus Group Interviews with participants – opinion leaders and cultural activists from the city being researched
153	Questionnaires – employees
434	Questionnaires – prospective clients of the institutions
712	All the participants of the research process

Source: *New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of Polish cities*, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 12; table transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF.pdf>

An important element of the preliminary phase of the research was netnography – an analysis of the institutions' resources that are available on the Internet: analysis of the offer, communication–marketing models, the communication skills of the staff, and how the cultural institutions build relationships with their target audience via the Internet. The second stage of research was the case study proper – carried out in the eight institutions covered by the study, consisting of several elements and research methods (quantitative and qualitative). The innovative aspect of the research model lies in the fact that when the field researchers visited the eight institutions they were already equipped with knowledge about the given institution in the areas covered by the initial stage of research: the communication conducted between the institution and the target audience via the Internet (thanks to netnography), and an analysis of the strategic and financial documents related to cultural policies of the cities and institutions concerned.

The researchers were able to present this knowledge to the management of a given institution, and this became the starting point for further research and activities supporting the institution. During this stage of the research, the prepared tools were used in each of the institutions:

- Quantitative surveys – questionnaires tailored to the target audience and employees of the case study institution
- Qualitative research – focus group interviews with representatives of the culture–opinion making environment in each of the eight examined cities, and individual in–depth interviews in each of the eight cities with representatives of four groups of people:
 - a the director of the institution,
 - b key employees/management staff of the institution,
 - c a director/employee from the management of the 'old' institution in the city being researched,
 - d a local government officer or official responsible for the cultural policy including the activity of the case study institution.

To provide even more complete data, the research team included an element of field research. During this stage, field researchers assigned to each of the eight cultural institutions made scientific observations, photographic documentation and observational reports. During these activities, the researchers:

- Had the opportunity to take a direct look at the functioning of the newly located or new institution
- Observed the methods used in the institution
- Investigated the forms and quality of the institution's offer to the public
- Observed how the institution developed relationships with its audience
- Gathered the reactions of the target audience to the institution's offer
- Obtained data on the competences of the staff working at the institution

Field research was effective for obtaining non–declarative information and to compare declarations with reality. As a result of the qualitative part of the research project, the team collected for analysis:

- 34 individual in–depth interviews (IDI) with the most competent and knowledgeable people
- 8 focused group interviews (FGI) in which 91 people participated – the opinion and culture–forming environment of the cities studied

- 153 employee surveys
- 434 target audience surveys

In total, 712 subjects participated in research activities of the project.

The research findings – an overview

The research focused on the current place and role of new cultural institutions and new cultural locations in the cultural tissue of a given city, which could become an even stronger influence in the future. An important need for the majority of newly established institutions and the new headquarters of existing institutions is the problem of the life of the institutions after the creation of – often costly – cultural infrastructure, especially if the financing came from EU funds. Guaranteeing stable financing for these institutions and investments and ensuring a harmonious process of rooting in the socio-economic and cultural identity of the city, requires undertaking very intense, strategic actions. These actions should be a component of the institution’s practice and be based on close cooperation between local or regional governments and the institution as part of the development of urban cultural policies.

An important element of the research was to tackle the important topic of coping with the real or predicted post-investment crisis of cultural institutions (including the institution successfully spending European, regional or local and its own funds on the investment, but then facing the problem of obtaining funds for ongoing maintenance of the facility and institutions in subsequent years; institutional cannibalism – i.e. other, old institutions are forced to give up some of their budgets to a new organism in the city).

Some visual representations of selected outcomes of the study are provided in Figures 19.1 through 19.6. Both employees and visitors see the new venues as having potential and better chances of convincing the local community of the value of their offer. The points of reference in this question were other, well-established arts and culture institutions in the town.

It is much easier/harder for new cultural institutions to convince members of the local community of the value of their offer

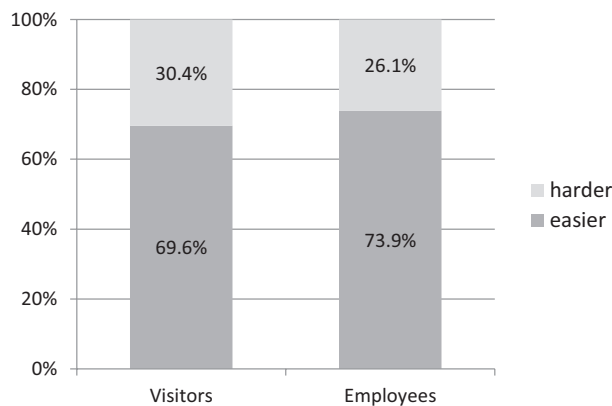


Figure 19.1 The new venue and its offer in the context of the existing cultural ‘ecosystem’ of the city, as seen from the perspectives of the organization’s employees and visitors ($n = 587$)

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 51; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF.pdf>

A difference in the opinions is more noticeable in the answers to the question on the acceptance of minor failures of the newly opened venue. Here the visitors are much more generous, with over 70% expressing understanding for such situations, while only 44% of the new organizations' employees share the same attitude.

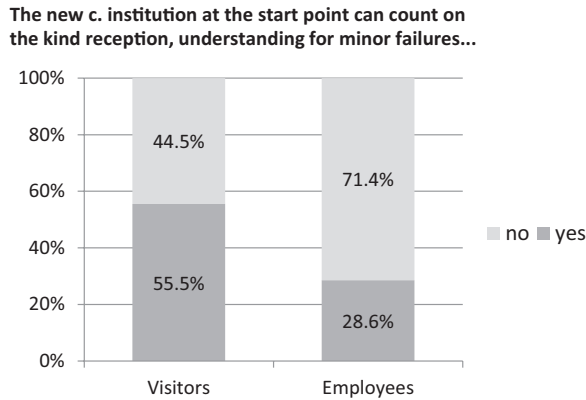


Figure 19.2 The understanding for minor failures of the newly opened culture venue, from the perspectives of visitors and employees ($n = 587$)

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural 'ecosystems' of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 50; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejscich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF>

The comparison of old and new cultural venues which are present in the same city or town, aims to show the relevance of the competitive and co-operative conditions for new organisms in local cultural ecosystems from the perspective of the employees of new venues. Figure 19.3 shows the discrepancies between 8 different organisations. We can see that three of them are perceived as being in a tough, competitive or even hostile local environment. And only one out of eight sees itself as working in definitely friendly, co-operative relations.

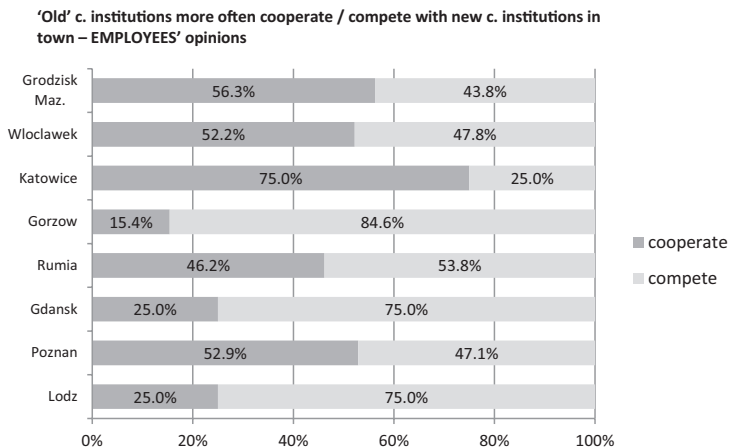


Figure 19.3 The perspective of arts and culture organizations' employees on co-operative or competitive environments ($n = 153$)

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural 'ecosystems' of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 52; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejscich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF>

This perspective is well supported by other sets of outcomes delivered by all 8 organizations, when the social rooting and the accessibility of the new cultural investment for local community are finally addressed directly. The employees of the new venues are asked to indicate who the rooting process of their venue is more dependent on: their organization or its external environment. Here most of the organizations see themselves as relying on their own resources and being unquestionably responsible for their rooting process and its success. While very few rely more on others, among the latter are merely those that see more competition than cooperation in the cultural ecosystem around their organization.

Rooting of the new c. institution in the local community depends more on: activity of the new institution or openness of the social environment to the presence of the new institution – EMPLOYEES’ opinions

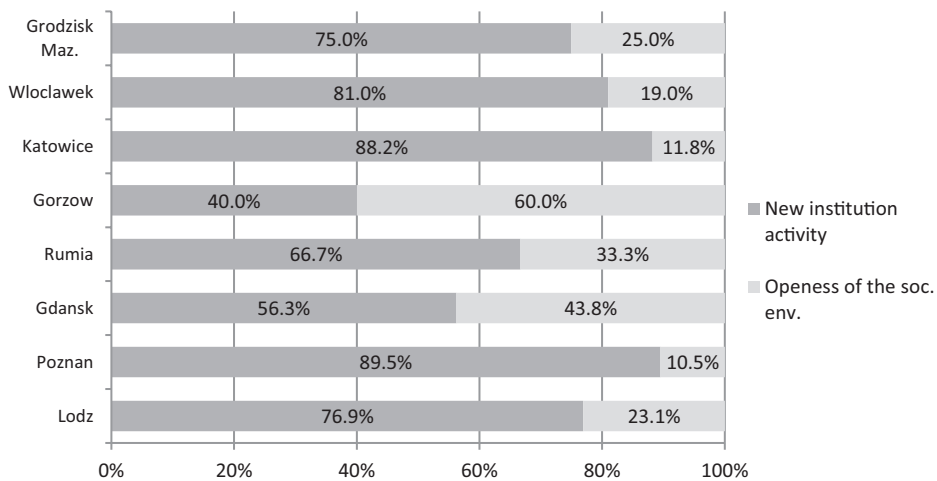


Figure 19.4 Attributing the responsibility for rooting work to the new venue or its external environment (n = 153)

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 94; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF>

The last selected graphs illustrating the outcomes of the research on the rooting process among new arts and culture venues in Poland focus on the question on the value, image and social reception of the new cultural site among both their visitors and staff. This selection shows the differences in the attitudes of the organization’s clients and employees. The first outcomes concern the opinions on the impact of the new venues on the local community, with the leading positions taken by changing the city’s promotional and developmental image, bringing change to the city space and increasing the access to the cultural offer in the city, and giving a feeling of pride to city inhabitants. One can see that there is a predominance of image, symbolic and identity components.

New c. institution's influence on particular aspect of the city and its community (median for a scale 1–5)

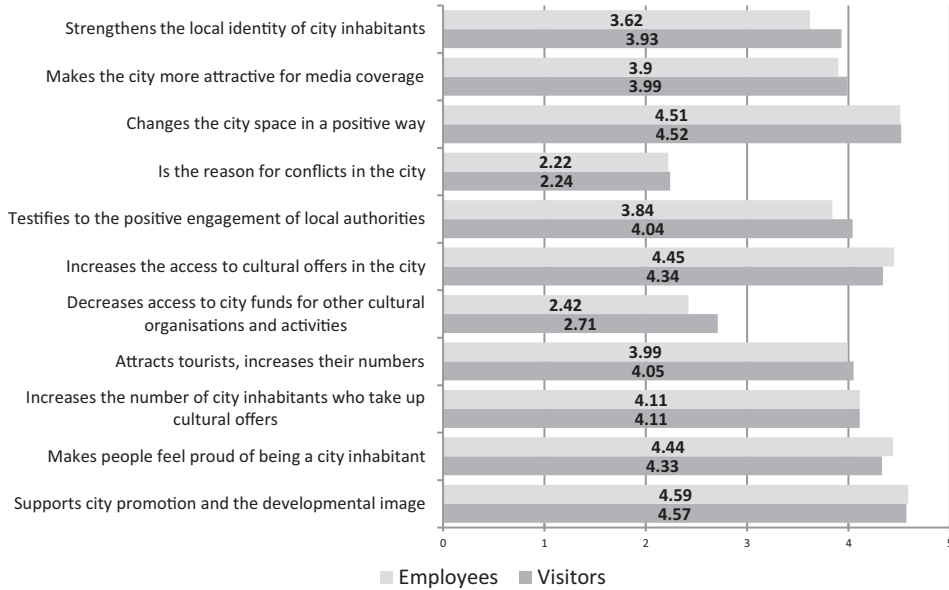


Figure 19.5 How the new arts and culture venue is influencing its city in a broad sense

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural 'ecosystems' of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 117; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF>

The last figure illustrates the perspectives of both visitors and staff on the before – after effects, when it comes to impacting the particular city space in terms of the local cultural ecosystem. Both visitors and employees appreciate three aspects the most: the change of the climate and style of the place, the aesthetics of the building and the place itself, and the openness and friendly look of the area. What employees appreciated more is the place, and the reputation and popularity of the area. Visitors were much more eager to highlight 'the feeling of the clean space', the subjective feeling of security, and the improved transport facilities and communication.

The process of rooting a new cultural institution in the urban space, or a new location for a pre-existing institution, is associated with numerous dilemmas. Do the decisions made, and projects undertaken, in this area meet the needs of the residents? What narratives, reasons and ambitions are present in discussions in the public sphere. Who and under the influence of what needs decides that such an institution will be created in the city, and not another institution? What is the motive for setting up a new building for a cultural entity previously present in another place? Are many options considered in these processes, are the decisions made on the basis of a reliable analysis of the social needs of the residents? The situations from the initial phase of creating eight new locations for the institutions investigated in this project provide examples, various scenarios written by the needs and realities of the functioning of local

Crucial changes for new c. institutions visitors and employees, before and after appearance of the new building (multiple choice questions)

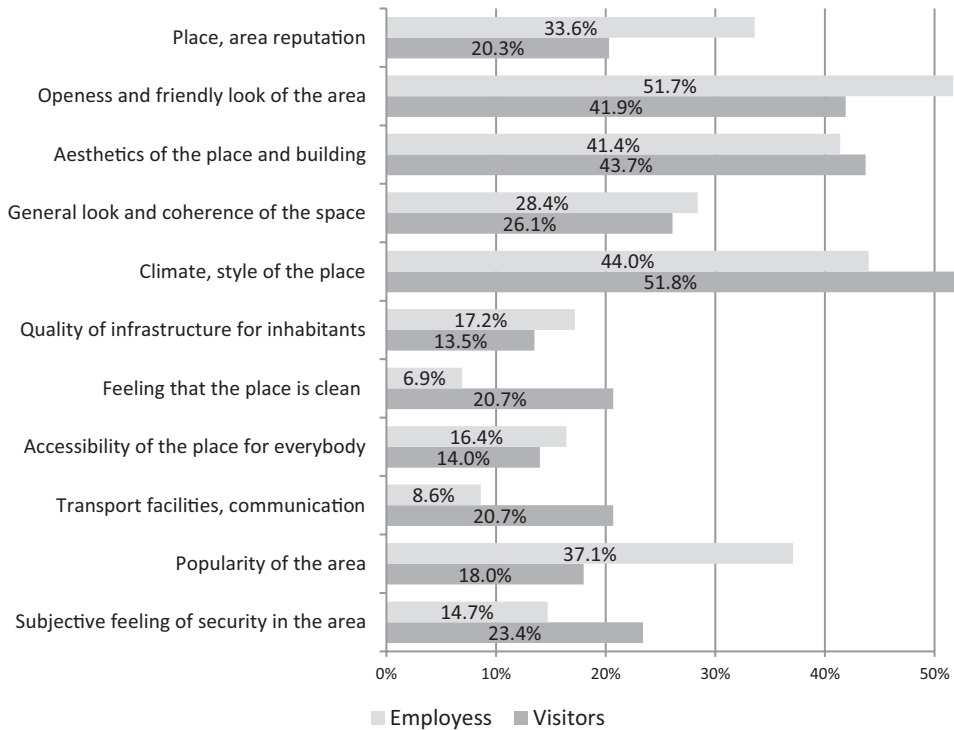


Figure 19.6 The impact of the new cultural ‘organism’ on the city’s cultural ‘ecosystem’ – The rating of improvements

Source: New emplacement of public cultural institutions in the cultural ‘ecosystems’ of Polish cities, Research Project Final Report, Poznan 2017, p. 133; figure transl. by the author. <http://rok.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Nowe-lokowanie-instytucji-publicznych-w-miejskich-ekosystemach-kultury-w-Polsce-2016-RAPORT-PDF>

communities in Poland. The process of locating new cultural institutions is implemented in an area already ‘inhabited’ by numerous organizations, institutions and environments operating in the city. In the netnographic study, deepened by qualitative research, places were recognized as attracting the cultural public and generating a magnetic field for particular environments. And a new object lands in this field – a cultural institution or its new headquarters, which must enter into relations with the existing spectrum of organizations offering cultural content and activities.

In these studies, we also devote space to the perception of cultural institutions as architectural objects that have their own visually aesthetic features, as well as functional features that are tested in use. Institutions also draw their power to influence the residents of the city and people visiting the city with these aesthetic attributes. They are architectural icons, models and reference points for other projects. It can be an architectural non-entity or a controversial idea that challenges the city’s aesthetic; architectural kitsch or an incomprehensible modern masterpiece. Functionality is purposefulness, balance, a successful investment from the perspective of those who use it – the public and employees. When a building is functionally designed, it facilitates use, helps,

makes work and reaching particular places in the building easier, does not create barriers, solves problems. Aesthetics and function do not constitute opposing poles, and the best architectural and location projects create a common, non-exclusive field of values.

The empirical research brings to light several processes and shows the range of effects that accompany the rooting of new arts and culture venues in local environments. There are a few selected outcomes and general observations worth highlighting:

- 1 Municipalities do not hesitate to provide conditions for the development of arts and culture, or for their protection, with the use of external public funds.
- 2 A new culture venue is a tool for revitalizing the appearance, look and style of the cultural scene in the city, region or country.
- 3 A new building brings opportunities to activate new (hybrid) functions, and is the space for new fields of arts and cultural practice, which is predominantly, participative and educational.
- 4 A new building is a new stimulus for inhabitants to visit the arts and culture institution, even if they do not consider themselves as belonging to the cultural audience.
- 5 Citizens are generally proud of the aesthetic quality of these buildings and the rearrangement of the neighbourhood.
- 6 However, citizens do not know much about the costs already paid (and to come in the future), yet.
- 7 The participatory practices of newly rooted organizations are rather spontaneous projects, not strategically tailored in advance.

There are few more outcomes that address more managerial and leadership issues related to new arts and culture venues:

- 1 Some processes activated by the rooting of the new place raised the level of competition between arts organisations. Some are motivated to cooperate and bring about the self-improvement of organizational practices; others express indifference or attack the new venue with their biased judgments on its impact or *raison d'être*.
- 2 There are both positive and negative effects of being in the spotlight (including multisource pressure on the leader & employees).
- 3 Another very essential effect is the real risk of *lowering the ground waters* of financial stability of the whole (eco)system of cultural institutions as organisms sharing mostly the same financial (re)sources.

Practical recommendations for the rooting of arts and culture organizations, based on an empirical study

The final section of the chapter provides a spectrum of selected recommendations for the leaders and managers of art and culture organizations, city authorities, policy and the decision-makers of local communities. These recommendations clearly illustrate the gaps in rooting processes. The list below is a direct outcome of the research discussed. The following proposals are based on the issues detected through empirical research based on the selection of public organizations freshly rooted in local cultural ecosystems. They were prepared with two areas in mind. The first is to strengthen the conditions of the leaders and staff of the newly located cultural institutions, with a view to the benefit for the local communities – the current and potential audience. The second

is to draw conclusions from the experience of emplacing cultural institutions, to raise awareness of the opportunities and threats for the future rooting of this type of investment in cities.

- 1 There is a necessity of well-timed and well-processed public consultations and discussions with local environment representatives on the whole process of rooting new arts and culture venues.
- 2 There is a need for the advanced benchmarking and study visits of the organization leader, decision-makers, funders and staff representatives to the other new arts and culture venues that are already rooted.
- 3 Functionality is the key word – meaning, the obligation to provide enough time for consultations and workshops with the future users, including staff members.
- 4 Keeping control over the framework and rules of the architectural design process (all of its stages) should not be taken for granted.
- 5 The key task is the elaboration of the new venue's coexistence study/future relations study on the consequences of the rooting process, which result from there being a new organism in the local ecosystem. Providing the first response to the question of how the new object will change the rest of the ecosystem, with the consideration of its new functions, old and new users, new demands, costs and others impacts. The outcome of the study should contribute to the definition of the strategic role of the institution, contextualised in the cultural city and regional ecosystem, inhabited by diverse actors.
- 6 What is often neglected is the effort to provide access to a wide range of expertise to the rooting process leader, in the form of consultancies, experts, peer support for the rooted organization director at hand.
- 7 The main goal should be the construction of the new cultural space adjusted to the new trends in cultural participation and the leisure behaviours of its users.
- 8 There is a need for diversified talent capital among the newly rooted organization staff, people ready to respond to new challenges and demands.
- 9 Social rooting activities that involve the neighbourhood inhabitants are necessary right before and during the construction work. Moreover, new art and culture venues should be rooted with care for improving the material and environmental quality of the surrounding space and landscape.
- 10 Tailored planning, keeping just proportions, the advanced long-term programming of the new facility are security guarantees against overscaling. All the indicators should be planned carefully.
- 11 The rooting of the new cultural venue should be done along with the cultivation of existing organisms in the local cultural ecosystem.
- 12 The new rooting of an existing institution is the best, natural opportunity to improve, reconfigure or refresh its organisational culture.
- 13 The practice experienced by the new venue, with the use of new resources of every kind, is the best chance to share innovative solutions with the cultural 'ecosystem' actors, keeping some smaller players and projects under the umbrella of the success and visibility of the new cultural brand or its new image. This is the gate through which 'know-how' could be introduced to smaller players in the region. This is also the right moment to strengthen cooperation with partners when sharing the same cultural ecosystem.
- 14 Budget issues are crucial for the new venue, including the necessity of the long-term (at least biennial or triennial) budgeting and programming. The sustainability values and the perspective of the future long-term presence of the new organization in the local ecosystem requires systemic decisions from the public funders on the prevention of budget discrepancies among cultural institutions in the city or region.

- 15 The experience of local, municipal cultural policies, proves that the common issue is that culture, sports, and health compete in the area of public investment and the budget of subsidies. The solution for this could be an effort to indicate overlapping moments of goals and costs integration. The harmonisation of this group of disciplines and public spending could be beneficial for the cultural ecosystems in the town and regions.
- 16 What new venues funded from public subsidies should strive for is a clever balance between elitist and egalitarian values when programming and branding a newly funded arts and culture organization. At the same time the new organism should have the courage to be sharp and direct in communicating the value and identity of the newly rooted cultural institution. To achieve this it needs to 'speak to' a well-defined audience, who are the carriers of a variety of values, behind their behaviour as participants, in more or less organized forms of arts and culture experience.

New venues – from rooting to cultural sustainability

How do new venues impact the local cultural ecosystems, and what are the implications for cultural sustainability? To reflect on that, we shall at last approach a redefinition of sustainability in the context of cultural practice (Throsby, 1995). One of the most interesting recent research initiatives on culture and sustainability (Dessein et al., 2015) generously defined this relation with a three-dimensional perspective: culture *in* sustainability, culture *for* sustainability and culture *as* sustainability. I would like to extend the third dimension, and the newly rooted arts and culture organizations are a good basis for this.

Arts and culture organizations are faced with multiple tensions and the cultural consequences of globalization and digitalisation processes, characterised by the unlimited transmission, relatively broad accessibility and mobility of cultural objects, human artefacts, texts, meanings, symbols, narrations and interpretations. Arts and culture artefacts, as objects of curiosity and co-creation, are exposed to very hazardous, predatory competition with what is offered through commercialised communication channels. There are huge tensions in arts and culture organizations caused by marketing players that are on the opposite side in the sustainability debate.

We witness the flexible individualization that shows the real power of taste. The practices of 21st-century consumers and marketers have proved the omnipotence of the new meaning of marketing as predicted in 1963 by Sydney Levy, who wrote that marketing is a process of providing customers with "parts of a potential mosaic from which they, as artists of their own lifestyle, can pick and choose to develop the composition that for the time may seem the best" (Levy, 1963). This goes in hand with the dilemma of whether brands, as the objects of substantial aesthetic experience, will replace artworks, the main objects of such experience up till now. Or thinking ahead, whether marketing practices will replace the offers of art institutions. This is something that we are reminded of by Chris Bilton, who states that it is marketing that today provides 'open texts' which allow space for viewers, readers, and listeners to negotiate their own personal readings, even if (especially if) these readings seem to 'deviate' from, or 'resist', the encoded message of the advertiser (Bilton, 2007, pp. 155–158). The function 'patented' by the creators of artworks has been taken over by the marketers.

Open texts or *elements of the mosaic*, as mentioned earlier, co-created in the interpretations of the user or audience are recalling the rudiments of the notion of participation, which are grounded in the aesthetic theories of such philosophers as Hans Georg Gadamer. In several of his writings, including the milestone *Truth & Method* or *Actuality of Beauty*, he highlights the essence of participation and co-creation in the interpretation process, all in the frame of the

universal concept of play. Art is a playground for the free activity of interpreters, where you play and are played, where play makes you a participant, integrates you into a community.

In the public realm, and in the areas of public policies, there is another important element of participation, one which has been discussed since the Middle Ages, namely the *subsidiarity principle*, referred to by such thinkers as St. Thomas Aquinas, Alexis de Tocqueville and John Stuart Mill. Here the term participation and the rooting processes of the new art and culture venues reaches the next level of reflection.

The *subsidiarity principle* is too often taken for granted in investment processes and cultural policies, but ultimately, it matters as the regulating principle for those orchestrating the construction or cultivation of a new cultural venue in town. Basically, this concept is understood as an organizing principle stating that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized, competent authority. It is the idea that a public authority like a government or a city hall should have a subsidiary function, more supportive than subordinate, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. It is nicely summed up in the brief sentence of Reid Buckley, stating that *no public agency should do what a private agency can do better*. This is essential in the context of local community funding, or constructing an architectural object, or providing new space for arts and culture practices. Finally, this principle is the greatest law of social philosophy, as a democratic social doctrine, which aims to protect individual citizens from rising totalitarianism and exploitation (Millon-Delsol, 1992; Putnam, 1993). It was one of the key concepts for the restitution of democratic states after communism, and the decentralization of administration in countries of the former Eastern Block, such as Poland. It expresses, and organizes the response to, a desire to limit the influence of the state, where smaller communities or individuals themselves can take care of their own interests. It is the framework for rethinking practice in shaping cross-sectorial relations between the public, private and civic sectors in the cultural field.

Subsidiarity is an emergent principle in local cultural ecosystems, as a framework with local grassroots cultural organizations and individuals as its basic units and leaders of development – the most dynamic, active cultural ecosystems inhabitants and local public authorities – seriously motivated to be the stimulators, facilitators and guardians of the subsidiarity principle. The metaphor of the ecosystem again seems very appropriate for discussing sustainability, where culture and its primary playgrounds – all arts and culture organizations – are understood as organisms, and not mechanisms. This shift in metaphor is breaking through purely financial arguments and crossing or bypassing the economy – ecology – social pillars which are typical for sustainable development debate.

Play, participation and subsidiarity are, at different levels of sophistication, tools for expressing and understanding cultural sustainability. What is the content of cultural sustainability? When cultural sustainability is seen as much more than an amalgamation of the three conventional pillars, it invites the cultural notion of the transmitting dialogue between generations, where the keywords are memory, heritage and cultural identity. It engages the realms of craft, slow life patterns, localisms, it recalls the meaning of a good life, meaningful frictions, a sense of community. It emphasises the role of continuity, consistency or literacy. It highlights the roles of masters and mentors, with their skills, experience and methods of choice making, and shows that they matter (Poprawski, 2016). It is like learning to select, decide, lead and engage in the essential creative processes. Something we are missing today, enormously. Culturally-led sustainability is also the diversity which comes from settled, meaningful work with a comprehensive community; it is a balance between reflection and action, the continuity of aesthetics and ethics (Berger, 1999).

Leaders of new arts and culture venues get the role of curators of bipolar relations between the cultural institution and the social environment. The issue is what the organization is taking

from its ecosystem, the city, and what it is giving back to the community of citizens. Here the subsidiarity concept returns with the domestication of new and newly rooted arts organizations. Its essential goal – and the measure of the success of the rooting – is for people to locate the new institution on their mental map, convincing them to treat it as their own, taking both responsibility and enjoyment. New arts and culture constructions sites are potentially the best participative organizations in their towns, if certain recommendations are reflected on, or not taken for granted.

References

- Berger, K. (1999). *A theory of art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bianchini, F. (1996). Cultural planning: An innovative approach to urban development. In: J. Verwijnen and P. Lehtovuori, eds., *Managing urban change*. Helsinki: University of Art and Design Helsinki.
- Bilton, Ch. (2007). *Management and creativity: From creative industries to creative management*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Dahrendorf, R. (1990). *Reflections on the revolution in Europe: In a letter intended to have been sent to a gentleman in Warsaw*. New York: Times Books.
- Dessein, J., Soini, K., Fairclough, G., and Horlings, L. (eds.) (2015). *Culture in, for and as sustainable development. Conclusions from the COST Action IS1007 Investigating cultural sustainability*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Holden, J. (2015). *The ecology of culture*. London: AHRC. Available at: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/project-reports-and-reviews/the-ecology-of-culture>
- Landy C. and Bianchini, F. (1995). *The creative city*. London: Demos.
- Levy, S.J. (1963). Symbolism and life style. In: S.A. Greyser, ed., *Proceedings, American Marketing Association*, pp. 140–150.
- Markusen, A. et al. (2011). *California's arts and cultural ecology*. San Francisco: James Irvine Foundation. Available at: www.irvine.org/publications-by-topic/arts/arts-ecology-reports
- Maughan, C. and Bianchini, F. (2004). *Economic and social impact of cultural festivals in the East Midlands*. Report for Arts Council England. Available at: <https://static.a-n.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Economic-and-social-impact-final-report.pdf> [Accessed 15 Jul. 2018].
- McGuigan, J. (1996). *Rethinking cultural policy*. Maidenhead: Oxford University Press.
- . (2010). *Cultural analysis*. London: Sage.
- Millon – Delsol, C. (1992). *L' état subsidiaire*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Poprawski, M. (2016). Intergenerational transmission of values and cultural sustainability: The cultural participation of local, small town communities in Poland. *Law Social Justice and Global Development Journal*, 1(2016). Available at: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/law/elj/lgd/2016-1/>
- Putnam, R. (1993). *Making democracy work: Civic tradition in modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Silver, D.A. and Nichols Clark, T. (2016). *Scenescapes: How qualities of place shape social life*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Steiner, G. (2010). *Grammars of creation*. London: Faber & Faber.
- STRATEG. (2018). Available at: <http://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/culture-tourism-sport/culture/> [Accessed 15 Jul. 2018].
- Throsby, D. (1995). Culture economics and sustainability. *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 19, pp. 199–206.