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EVALUATING URBAN IDENTITY OF GDAŃSK HISTORICAL INNER CITY AND GRANARY ISLAND URBAN REGENERATION FROM A NEIGHBOURHOOD PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study focuses on the post-socialist urban development that evolved in Gdańsk, Poland. It aims to evaluate the effects of an urban regeneration project implemented in Granary Island, a central historical district, on the city identity. To achieve this goal, the study measures citizens' identification by comparing both the new urban regeneration project and the historical inner city. The study discusses the relationship between urban identity and urban transformation. The methodology includes visual documentation, mapping, and social surveys supported by statistical analysis methods. Aiming to have a city-scale social representation, the survey was conducted with respondents (N = 210) from seven selected neighbourhoods within the city, evaluating identification and exploring its factors, considering physical and non-physical aspects. The identification with historical inner city is higher when compared with the newly regenerated area of Granary Island, although in both cases, most residents replied positively. The main reasons for identification with historical inner city are reported as self-described pride due to its cultural heritage values and historical old built environment, whereas for Granary Island, usage of old architectural elements in modern built environment, qualitative new built environment, and atmosphere created by new activities, social life, and cultural diversity. The citizens of more distant neighbourhoods reported lower identification.

Keywords

urban identity • historical city • urban regeneration • neighbourhood • Gdańsk

Introduction

The city is the lasting memory of a culture; thus, what is present today is firmly rooted in the distant past (Jałowiecki, 2010). Historic urban areas have a significant impact on place identification, memory, and a sense of belonging (Lalli, 1988). Moreover, they frequently help the rest of a city, and its surrounding neighbourhoods develop their own urban identities. This is not only related to their tangible features like buildings, streets, and landmarks (Oktay, 2002), but also its intangible values like historical cultural legacy that gives towns a distinctive character (Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2023). Thus, to maintain a strong sense of continuity with the past, it is crucial to preserve its constructed legacy without compromising its tangible and intangible values.

Apart from maintaining a city's architectural legacy, it is also crucial to preserve other qualities connected to memory and identity since they are fundamental to a city's urban character and help to make a place stand out, such as by societal interpretations of distinctive urban features (Lynch, 1981). Such an approach to urban identity also draws attention to the reality that it is constantly revealed and reproduced. This part of the sentence should be removed. Even though change is a fact of life, it is important that changes take place gradually in sensitive areas with fragile historic treasures to avoid major evictions and gentrification of the local population (Grabkowska, 2015).

In cities dealing with the social, political, and economic upheavals brought on by the post-socialist system, the transformation process has emerged as a central concern. Thus, following the collapse of socialism in the 1990s, studies on the urban identity of Central and Eastern European cities developed, since many of them underwent urban transformations intending to distance themselves from their socialist heritage (Light, 2002; Marciniak, 2009). Obviously, the need to transform can be considered a common aspect for these cities, whereas their differing

local past had an important effect producing different transformations. In the case of those cities that had a glorious pre-socialist past, the goal of regeneration initiatives was to create a city identity by reconstructing historical symbolic landmarks of that period. In the case of those that had no pre-socialist past, there was an approach to erase or reframe the symbols of socialist period landmarks (Balockaite, 2012).

Examples of urban transformations of the first group can be considered Berlin (Tölle, 2010), where regeneration initiatives sought to restore symbolic historical structures from the pre-communist era to create a new, united urban identity for the two divided areas at the expense of socialist legacy. The same approach is observed also in the case of Lodz, the new post-socialist urban identity was conceptualized on its industrial pre-socialist past (Young & Kaczmarek, 2008). Examples from those cities that had no pre-socialist past, can be considered the case of Visaginas (Lithuania) where the post-socialist identity is achieved through the modification of the symbols of the socialist past or Nowa Huta (Poland), which is promoted as a young green city (Balockaite, 2012). In many socialist cities, the new urban identity was also aimed at by the usage of colourful designs on façades of the buildings, as in the case of Tirana (Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2020) or East Berlin (McCarthy 1997). The urban regeneration initiatives in the case of Gdańsk can be categorized into those of the first group that has a strong pre-socialist historical urban heritage.

This research aims to reveal the impact of the urban regeneration project that was carried out on "Granary Island," part of the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk. Furthermore, the effects of this urban intervention on the city's urban identity after the implementation of this project are analysed by revealing the identification of the selected citizens with both regenerated Granary Island and Historical Inner City. Furthermore, the project is evaluated by sampling selected citizens from (7) seven neighbourhoods and understanding

how Gdańsk's residents feel about the changes in their city. In this research, the concept of place identity is elaborated on different place scales and the impact of urban regeneration on city identity is discussed. Thus, for a better understanding in the following section, the study provides an overview of the urban historical development of the city and the urban regeneration of the Granary Island.

Urban historical development of Gdańsk

Gdańsk was established as a small agriculture and fishing village in the 9th century, in and around the contemporary Main Town (Główne Miasto), located on the Motława River's left bank. In the 10th century, it joined the Hanseatic League and became a prominent port and trade center in the Baltic Sea region (Lorens & Mironowicz, 2020). This sparked the growth of the city. New neighbourhoods, like the Old Town (Stare Miasto), begin to develop, which later became a crucial hub for commerce and trade. The Suburb (Przedmieście) and the Granary Island (Wyspa Spichrzów) extended the development's southern axis (Cieślak & Biernat 1995).

Under the status of a "Free City", Gdańsk saw notable architectural growth, including the construction of landmarks, like churches in the Gothic style, such as St. Catharine's Church, located in Old Town. The city walls were expanded to increase security and space for the city's growing population (Mickiewicz, 1999). In the 16th and 17th centuries, Gdańsk flourished economically and culturally as a city in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, new neighbourhoods emerged, and the Main Town Hall, the seat of the authorities, was completed. At the beginning of the 20th century, the formation of Tri-City between Gdańsk, Gdynia (gained town rights in 1926), and Sopot (gained town rights in 1901) dictated the shape of the city's central area (Lorens, 1998; Lorens & Mironowicz, 2020).

The historic centre of Gdańsk largely grew on the mediaeval structure. Fortifications

were levelled, allowing for urban growth on the city's so-called "western front" (Lorens, 1998). Due to Poland's partitions that happened between 1772 and 1794, Gdańsk experienced turbulent political times, which were further followed by French occupation during the Napoleonic Wars, and again returned under Prussian rule in 1815 (Tölle, 2008). The city's political, cultural, and demographic aspects were affected by these changes. Neoclassicism had an impact on the city's architecture throughout the Prussian era (Paner, 2004). During this time, brand-new neighbourhoods like the Wrzeszcz district started to emerge. The infrastructure of the city was considerably enhanced with the establishment of new factories, shipyards, and railroad links.

During WWII, Gdańsk suffered significant destruction, including the demolition of numerous historical structures. The Main Town and Old Town resulted in the loss of a substantial architectural legacy. The city centre was reduced to ruins after the Red Army mass bombardments, and estimates range from 80% to 95% of urban structures were destroyed (Siuchniński, 1965). Under communist rule, most of the old city's architecture was restored by Polish craftsmen. The city slowly recovered from the war damage, and enormous shipyards were erected. The Old Town was devotedly rebuilt with the goal of recapturing its pre-war appearance. To preserve the city's historic and cultural identity, some destroyed structures were reconstructed while others were rebuilt in a similar style.

In the post-communist era, as Poland shifted to a democratic system, Gdańsk saw political and economic transformations. The city underwent urban renewal and modernization while regaining its status as a significant port. Today, Gdańsk is regarded as a dynamic city that showcases the fusion of its mediaeval past and contemporary developments. In recent years, the city has seen the emergence of urban growth and new neighbourhoods like Wielkie Przymorze and Zaspą. Modern architecture and contemporary styles are more common, particularly





Figure 1. View after WWII 1945 (top) and Granary Island as of 1970 (bottom)

Source: <https://www.gdansk.pl/wiadomosci/Gdansk-zniszczenie-odbudowa-1945-1948-Niemcy-Armia-Czerwona,a,167704> (top) and <https://gdansk.gedanopedia.pl/gdansk/?title=SPICHLERZE> (bottom).

in areas like the Granary Island (Wyspa Spichrzów) and the old shipyard region, vibrant areas with modern buildings, housing complexes, and cultural venues (Lorens, 2019).

Urban regeneration of Granary Island

Granary Island (Wyspa Spichrzów) is a small island in the centre of Gdańsk, situated between Radunia Canal and Motława River. Its 24-hectare area was covered mostly with port warehouses. By the 15th century, 120 granaries had been constructed (Gedanopedia, 2013). However, the big wooden structures were destroyed in several fires, only to be rebuilt again in the 17th century. Granary Island and the entire Motława Waterfront significance were reduced as the

key harbour area in Gdańsk at the start of the 19th century (Lorens, 2019) because of the creation of additional dock areas in the city. During World War II, the island was destroyed, with only three of the buildings left. The region was never completely rebuilt after the devastation caused by the war, and only a small number of the sites were subject to transformation.

The complex redevelopment of the site, however, was based on a multitude of plans and studies that were created throughout the entire post-war period. Based on the outcomes of Fischer Atelier's 2007 urban design workshop, the final effort was created. Following that, this analysis was used as the foundation for creating the site's final planning regulation. Only after 8 years, in 2015, a PPP



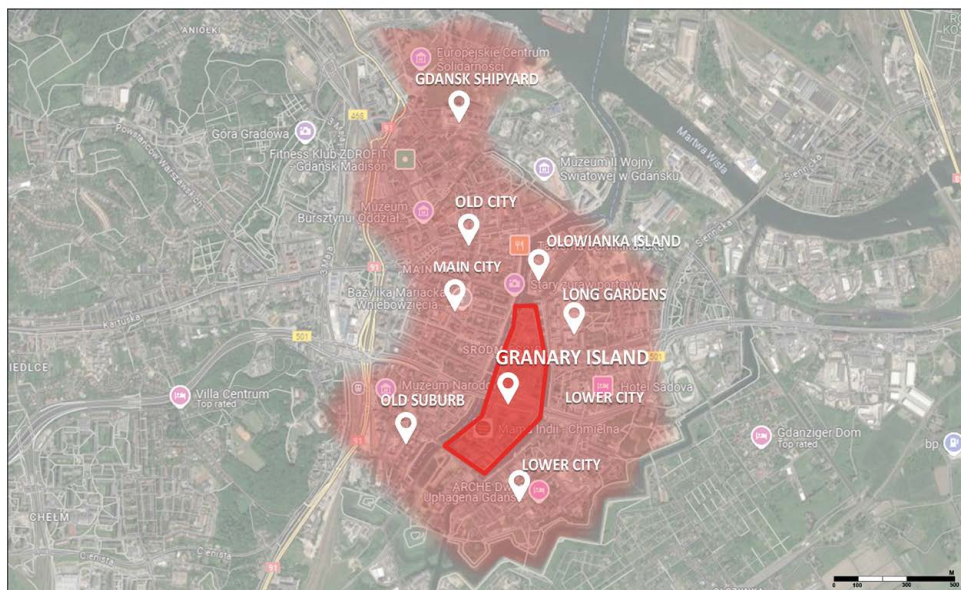


Figure 2. Map of Granary Island location within the Historical Inner City

(public-private partnership) agreement for the development of the area was signed between the city of Gdańsk and the consortium “Granaria Development Gdańsk.” Both public and commercial structures were designed, financed, and put into operation as part of the project by the private partners (Interreg Central Europe, 2016). The architectural studio RKW Architektura + (2019) prepared the overall concept for the entire area. In contrast to the vivid old town, the new structures were geometrically linear and minimalist in style, with the characteristics of the old warehouses reinvented innovatively.

The proper redevelopment process was initiated after the City Council approved the concept; however, it proceeded piece-by-piece and plot by plot by each site owner, referring to the urban local plan. As a result, the urban organization of the area started to be considerably more diverse than in the original project. The project combined the requirements of a contemporary European city while honouring its rich history and existing urban identity, the post-war identity (Granaria, 2018).

The project is a return to the traditional layout of urban space, based on the history, ambiance, functional mix, and construction customs of the area. It intends to conserve the remains of the old granaries while also creating a new area with a variety of services to draw tourists because, in the present era, this area of the city is not only the source of local pride but also the most popular travel destination. There are three main forms of intervention included: reusing parts of the remaining historic granary walls as important components of the newly built structures, reusing the historical buildings for new purposes, and redeveloping the historic landscape of the area by introducing buildings whose shape and structure resemble the historic originals (Lorens, 2019). Thus, the widths of the streets were adjusted to the historical fabric, and the urban design of the island aimed to satisfy pedestrians and cyclists. Commercial services and facilities, including bars, shops, and offices, were introduced on the ground floors of the buildings, while the upper floors house apartments of various sizes that meet the highest quality and aesthetic





Figure 3. Granary Island – state as of 2012 (top) and of 2019 (bottom)

standards, offering views of Długie Pobrzeże, the Crane, and Motława. Also, green areas and carefully arranged relaxation places are added throughout the island, incorporating the concept of internal green patios for the apartment blocks (Granaria, 2018).

Place identity at different scales and urban identity

The distinguishing qualities and originality of a place are indicative of its identity (Belanche et al., 2017). The connection between a person's identity and the identity of a place can be seen as the outcome of the identification process (Lalli, 1992). The concept of place identity was defined by Proshansky (1978) as a “potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings” as a part of self-identity. Slightly differently, Relph (1976) and Canter (1977) grouped its components into three:

1. the physical settings,
2. the activities, situations and events conducted in that place,
3. and the meanings created through people's experiences regarding a place.

Later, Proshansky and Fabian (1987) explained the physical settings in different scales, like homes, neighbourhoods, or cities. The most significant scale of place where the identity of an individual is expressed is considered home (Porteous, 1976). The concept of “home” connotes a closer connection to and comprehension of the immediate surroundings, sort of merging space, time, and material aspects into a single, resulting in dwelling. To dwell means to feel you belong in a building or specific area (Norberg-Schulz, 1985). Home is frequently thought of as a place where we feel safe and free to be who we are; therefore, it is connected to our sense of self and identity.

Place identity in a neighbourhood entails identifying and conserving its distinctive traits, history, and social dynamics while encouraging locals to actively participate in and influence the neighbourhood they call home (Harrison & Dourish, 1996). The role of community is crucial for neighbourhood identity (Fleury-Bahi et al., 2008). The cultural production of its residents and, at the same time is a form of preservation of the cultural continuity of the city. The social identity and environmental quality determine the liveability of a neighbourhood.

Also, a neighbourhood with certain constant themes in its shape, materials, and arrangements are more likely to elicit positive place experiences (Steele, 1981).

Especially research on the identity of cities emerged after the 1950s because of modern urbanism principles, which promoted implementation of similar architecture, causing repetitive and monotonous cities (Davison, 2013; Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2020). This context pushed scholars to develop concepts that reveal local peculiarities related to both physical and non-physical aspects of urban settlements, which were used to develop strong identities, or to depict negative aspects that cause loss of identity. Some concepts related to physical aspects of urban settlements were image of the city (Lynch, 1960), townscape (Cullen 1961) or town character (Kropf 1996). Other aspects related to non-physical aspect included sense of place (Lynch 1960, Relph, 1976), place and placelessness (Relph, 1976), genius loci (Norberg-Schultz, 1980) or place attachment (Altman and Low, 1992). While sense of place is a broad term that includes place attachment and place meanings (Jorgensen and Steadman, 2001), place attachment itself includes an emotional bond between places and people (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Summing up, although the relation between place attachment is intricate, in research conducted in the Canary Islands it was revealed that while natives were attached and identified with the city at the same levels, the non-natives level of attachment was higher compared to identity (Hernández et al., 2007). Thus, these results reveal identity as a deeper relation with a city compared to attachment.

Urban identity is a concept that reflects the degree that a person can identify with an urban settlement as being different from other places (Lynch, 1981). A city's character is greatly influenced by the quality of urban public places as well, particularly the streets and plazas (Lalli, 1992). Urban identity can be approached from two different perspectives.

The first perspective put the emphasis on the physical components, which is further

related to cities' natural environment or built environment (Oktay, 2019; Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2024). The second perspective focuses on the non-physical aspects of place identity, considering the activities, functions, and perception of place (Goličnik Marušić & Nikšič, 2012). The non-physical aspects of urban identity that generate an identificatory relation (Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2020) with a particular urban settlement are categorized by Lalli (1992) as cognitive, phenomenological, self and self-concept, and sociological aspects.

A city's identity is necessary and crucial because it fosters harmony between the "changing" and "constant" parts of its people and history. Today, it is widely believed that the loss of local identity is a result of uniform planning and development ideals and the commodification of places (Erickson & Roberts, 1997). Therefore, identity is a tool for enhancing the built environment's spatial quality. A city has architectural features that give a person a sense of belonging (Proshansky, 1976). The challenge is to preserve the values of the community while developing structures that correspond to modern standards, rather than establishing an "open museum" type of city for the benefit of tourists (Saleh, 1998).

Urban Transformation and Identity Issue

The city has a dynamic nature and is always undergoing several urban changes, among which urban transformation, renewal, and regeneration are thought to be the most significant. Urban transformation is one of the hotly debated urban concerns that has arisen because of globalization. It can be defined as the science of altering a city's appearance, the outcome of a planned or spontaneous change, with successes but also failures (Gür & Heidari, 2019). The absence of a sensitivity towards its urban identity is to blame for some of these failures. However, urban transformations often attempt to involve the dynamic system of urban identity, which must be considered



while evaluating the socioeconomic structure and ecological components of urban transformation techniques (Tutkan, 2021).

Urban renewal evolves because of the influence of economic and social factors on urban areas, is the physical change, or the change in the use or intensity of use, of land and structures (Couch, 1990). The renewal process is not an unplanned process. Urban renewal is frequently considered to be one of the key elements of urban transformation, adopted as a term from the slum clearance procedure (Couch et al., 2003). This movement's overarching goal is to modernize and change the city's physical character, yet it varies from one region to another, depending on the political, economic, social, and cultural circumstances, as well as the physical characteristics of the area that is intended to be subject to renewal.

Urban regeneration aims to enhance the urban environment, put vacant and abandoned land back to productive use, provide new employment opportunities where existing ones have been lost, and address a variety of urban socioeconomic issues. This initiative is necessary, especially for post-war cities, to achieve sustainability following devastation. As a result, the revitalization of historic city centres aims to strengthen and cultivate the sense of identification and connection that locals have to the place's past (Boussaa, 2017). A place's identity plays a major role in establishing a thoughtful urban regeneration, an activity that aims to improve urban life (Hashim et al., 2022).

This research inquires to comprehend what is the impact of the urban regeneration project of "Granary Island". Thereafter, the urban identity prior and after the implementation of it is measured to reach a differentiation between this historic area's old and modern states.

Materials and Methods

The methodology used in this research consists of visual documentation, sampling, mapping, and social surveys. The visual documentation includes images and photo shoots

of the current situation of Historical Inner City and Granary Island by the authors. Also, images documenting the historical urban development of these parts of the city are gathered by local sources.

Sampling involves the selection of the 7 neighbourhoods, including Main City, Olshynka, Wrzeszcz, Suchanino, Niedźwiednik, Chełm, Ujeścisko. The selected neighbourhoods are aimed to achieve a city scale representative sampling, and located in their different locations are also featured by different socioeconomic characteristics. Mapping is used to show the location of Granary Island within Inner Historical City and the selected neighbourhoods within Gdańsk.

The survey was conducted via a questionnaire in April 2023 in Gdańsk. The survey took place in 7 selected neighbourhoods, and it was completed by 210 dwellers in total, 30 dwellers per each. To have a diversity of opinions and outcomes related to urban identity measurement, we selected participants of even distribution of age ranges; thus, a larger number of respondents than the estimated target was interviewed. Also, when the respondents were not patient to reply to all questions, in those cases we discarded their interviews.

The respondents were interviewed in their homes by knocking on their doors, or they were interviewed in the green areas and streets after confirming that they were dwellers of the selected neighbourhood.

The questionnaire, apart from information about their sociodemographic indicators (gender, age, homeownership, duration, education, and number of family members), included 5 questions, 2 open-ended ones and 3 close-ended, as below:

1. Do you identify yourself with the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk (Yes/No)?
2. If yes, why (Open-ended)?
3. Do you identify yourself with the Granary Island after the urban regeneration project (Yes/No)?
4. If yes, why? (Open-ended)?
5. How do you evaluate the urban regeneration project of Granary Island? (The



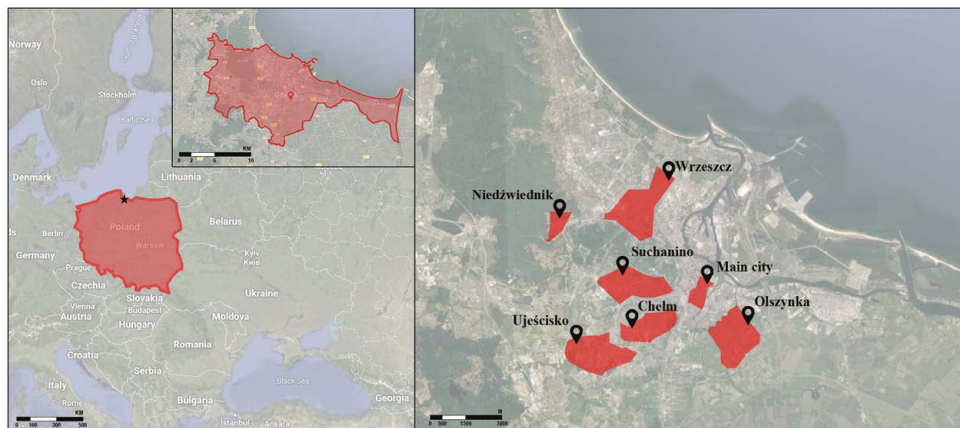


Figure 4. The selected seven districts of Gdańsk part of the research

respondents had to choose between the options: very good, good, so-so, bad, very bad).

The results were elaborated at two levels: on a city scale and based on neighbourhoods. The city scale results provide a comprehensive evaluation about identification with historical inner city and Granary Island, whereas based on neighbourhood, they are helpful to understand the perception of the proper residents regarding the identification with both districts. The neighbourhood based results, apart from revealing a comparative view of the identification with the historical urban zones and the newly regenerated central zones and the reasons for their identification, also show the role of their location in the identification, although logically the residents of the closer neighbourhoods were expected to have a higher level of identification.

Data clustering was used to group the reasons for identifying with both districts subject to the study since all respondents reported their reasons individually. Thus, by drawing upon theorization about the predictors of identification, which could be unique physical aspects like historical architecture, old buildings, beautiful architecture, or non-physical identificatory relation aspects like atmosphere, activities or social interaction, cultural diversity. These clusterings becomes important especially, in the discussion

section, where we did comparisons with the other studies and this terminology serves as common ground.

Results and Discussion

The survey results are processed at two levels, the neighbourhood level, and the city level, to provide a more comprehensive view of the data collected. The analysis begins with a comprehensive examination of the chosen participants' user profiles, considering seven indicators: gender, age, resident, ownership, family members, duration, and education. Part of the questionnaires became 210 inhabitants, 119 females, and 91 males. Among them, the largest group consisted of 147 individuals aged between 18 and 44. Most of the inhabitants, including 175 of them, were locals, while 35 were newcomers. Similarly, 163 were owners and 47 were renters. Most of the participants obtained a university degree, typically had 3-4 family members, and had been living in the city for over a decade.

Identification with the Historical Inner City and Granary Island Regeneration Project in city scale

Most of the interviewees, respectively 80,0% reported to identify with the Historical Inner



Table 1. Profile of the citizens included in the study

Gender		Age		Resident		Ownership		Family members		Duration		Education	
210 dwellers													
Female	56.7%	18-29 years	36.2%	Local	83.3%	Owner	77.6%	No.	Count	<5 years	11.95%	High school	35.7%
Male	43.3%	30-44 years	33.8%	New comer	16.7%	Renter	22.4%	2	19.05%	5-10 years	4.80%	University	64.3%
		≥ 45 years	30.0%					3	29.05%	11-20 years	9.05%		
								4	29.05%	21-30 years	22.9%		
								5	13.3%	≥ 31 years	51.3%		
								6	7.6%				
				7	1.95%								

City of Gdańsk, based on a variety of factors. This outcome demonstrates their connection to the city’s history and its past roots and shows their sense of pride and devoutness towards what is nowadays considered an important asset of development. On the other side, 42 dwellers, respectively 20,0% reported to not identify with the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk. They claimed to not identify with the area, despite its historical meaning, as in general it doesn’t directly affect their lives. Overall, the number of dwellers that identify with the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk is lower than the number of dwellers that identify with the neighbourhood they live in.

When asked whether they identify with Granary Island or not, most of the dwellers (56,19%) reported to identify with it, while 43,81% of the dwellers replied not to identify with it. Overall, the number of dwellers that identify with the Granary Island is lower than the number of dwellers that identify with the neighbourhood they live in and the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk.

When the interviewees were asked about how they evaluate the Granary Island regeneration project, most of them reported replies that can be clustered as positive, including “good” evaluations (53,33%) and “very good”

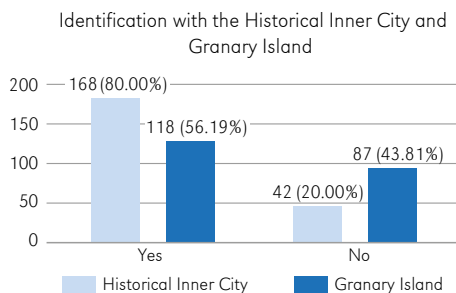


Figure 5. Identification with the Historical Inner City and Granary Island overall

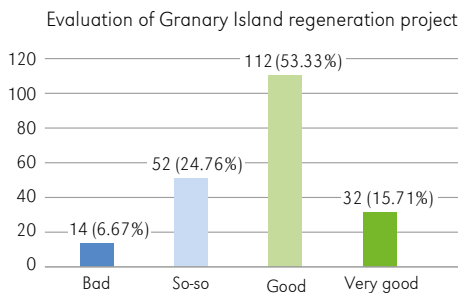


Figure 6. Evaluation of Granary Island Regeneration Project - overall

ones (24,76%), while (6,67%) of participants answered “bad” and (24,76%) answered “so-so”. In general, the dwellers appreciated the development of this area, as before it was

a leftover, neither functional nor appealing area in the middle of a very important context. Anyhow, a considerable part of them remains sceptical about the new development approach.

Identification with the Historical Inner City and Granary Island according to neighbourhood

Aiming to reveal the identification with the Historical Inner City and Granary Island according to the selected 7 neighbourhoods, the results are given in Figure 7. Furthermore, this approach aimed to explore the factors that may contribute to the identification, such as the nature of neighbourhoods' local communities, recent developments, and location or proximity aspects. As such the socioeconomic characteristics of the Main Town are featured by a middle-class mixed community,

which has a lot of apartments for rent and is a much touristified area. Ujeścisko is more middle-upper middle class, while Wrzeszcz consists of lower-middle and working class. As for Chełm, Suchanino and Niedźwiednik are middle-lower class, but they are not poor communities. Olszynka consists of working class and farmers. From a location perspective, only Main Town has direct relation to Granary Island. While Chełm, Suchanino and Olszynka are closer to Granary Island, the neighbourhoods of Wrzeszcz, and Ujeścisko are more distant.

When asked about the identification with the Historical Inner city of Gdańsk most of the dwellers in the 7 neighbourhoods were positive, based on a variety of factors. Respectively, Main City residents replied 80% positive answers, Olszynka 80%, Wrzeszcz 83.3%, Suchanino 83.3%, Niedźwiednik 76.7%, Chełm 83.3%, and Ujeścisko 73.3%. Among



Figure 7. Identification with Historical Inner City (top) and Granary Island (bottom) by neighbourhood



them, the district of Ujeścisko has the lowest number of identifications. More than one-fourth (26.7%) of the dwellers that participated in the survey reported to not identify with the Historical Inner City since they do not visit the area often and their daily life activities are not connected to it.

The respondents were asked for further information about the influencing factors of identifying with their neighbourhoods. The reasons of identification are clustered in physical aspects reported by 27.6% of respondents and non-physical aspects of identificatory relation reported by 52.4% of respondents. The physical elements include "I like old, historical buildings," mentioned by 18.6%, followed by because it is "a beautiful place with beautiful architecture (5.2%) and lastly, "I like old streets and their surroundings", was reported by 5.2% of the respondents. As for identificatory relation, the most reported reason was that they identify with Historical Inner city because it "represents our history, culture, heritage, values, and pride," mentioned by 30.5% of the dwellers of the 7 districts, followed by "maintains the old character/vibe" mentioned by 13.8%, and "provides the historical atmosphere", mentioned by 6.2%.

Most of the dwellers of the 6 neighbourhoods reported that they identified with Granary Island Regeneration Project, except the one of Olszynka, where the majority reported

not identifying with it. Although when compared to the results of Historical Inner city the values were lower. Respectively, the Main City neighbourhood residents 63.3% replied positively, in Wrzeszcz 53.3%, and in Suchanino 60%, whereas in the other three neighbourhoods of Niedźwiednik, Chełm, and Ujeścisko 56.7% of residents replied positively. In the case of Olszynka 53.3% of interviewees replied negatively, and as a reason of non-identification was reported that they preferred the old, didn't like the mix of old and new in the area, or the fact that it attracts too many tourists, it was noisy and messy.

Regarding the reasons of identification with Granary Island, most of them can be clustered as physical elements and are reported by 42.9%, whereas reasons clustered as non-physical identificatory relation aspects were reported by 23.5% of the respondents. Physical aspects included reasons reported in the form of "I like the improvement, contemporary development, and modern" reported by 13.8%, followed by "I like the mix of old and new, find it interesting" reported by 11.4%, followed by "I like the interpretation of the old details, similar to the old buildings (5.2%), new buildings represent a modern version of the old ones (4.8%), "Granary Island is a beautiful area" (3.8%), "A positive and attractive new landmark of the city" (2.4%). Other physical aspects provided as reasons were reported in

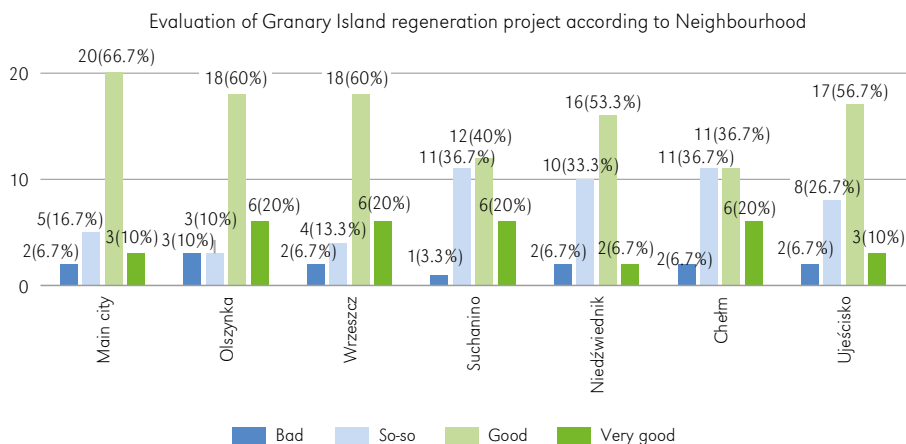


Figure 8. Identification with Granary Island according to neighbourhood

Table 2. The reasons for identification with the Historical Inner City according to neighbourhood

	Answers	Main City	Olszynka	Wrzeszcz	Suchanino	Niedźwied- nik	Chełm	Ujeścisko	Total
		[%]							
Physical aspects	I like old, historical buildings	23.30	26.70	16.70	16.70	20.00	20.00	6.70	18.60
	I like old streets and their surroundings	3.30	6.70	3.30	3.30	-	6.70	3.30	3.80
	A beautiful place with beautiful architecture	-	-	3.30	3.30	10.00	3.30	16.70	5.20
Nonphysical aspects	Represents our history, culture, heritage, values, and pride	36.70	26.70	30.30	30.30	26.70	30.30	33.30	30.50
	Provides the historical atmosphere	6.70	3.30	10.00	10.00	6.70	6.70	-	6.20
	Maintains the old character/vibe	6.70	16.70	16.70	16.70	10.00	16.70	13.30	13.80
	Offers activities and social interaction opportunities	3.30	-	3.30	3.30	3.30	-	-	1.90

Table 3. The reasons for identification with Granary Island according to neighbourhood

	Answers	Main City	Olszynka	Wrzeszcz	Suchanino	Niedźwied- nik	Chełm	Ujeścisko	Total
		[%]							
Physical aspects	New buildings represent a modern version of the old ones	13.3	6.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	-	3.3	4.8
	I like the improvement, contemporary development and modern	13.3	10.0	10.3	26.7	20.0	10.0	6.7	13.8
	I like the interpretation of the old details, similar to the old buildings	10.0	3.3	3.3	3.3	6.7	3.3	6.7	5.2
	I like the mix of old and new, find it interesting	20.0	16.7	20.0	6.7	10.0	3.3	3.3	11.4
	A positive and attractive new landmark of the city	-	3.3	3.3	-	3.3	-	6.7	2.4
	I like this approach better than having high rise towers in the area	-	3.3	-	-	-	-	-	0.5
	Is a beautiful area	-	-	-	3.3	3.3	10.0	10.0	3.8
	Distinctive concept, clever approach	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.7	1.0
Nonphysical aspects	Offers new opportunities for activities and social interactions	-	-	3.3	6.7	3.3	13.3	6.7	14.8
	Has cultural diversity	-	-	-	3.3	3.3	-	-	1.0
	Respectful to the old and history, that's a value	6.7	3.3	10.0	-	3.3	6.7	3.3	4.8
	Added life to the city, offers better living quality	-	-	-	6.7	-	10.0	3.3	2.9

lesser values: "I like this approach better than having high rise towers in the area" (0.5%) and Granary Island is a distinctive concept, clever approach (1%). As for reasons grouped as identificatory relation aspects, they were reported in the form of they identify with Granary Island because "offers new opportunities for activities and social interactions" by 14.8%, followed by because "respectful to the old and history, that's a value" 4.8%, followed by "added life to the city, offers better living quality" 2.9%, and it "has a cultural diversity" 1%. The majority of the participants according to neighbourhoods evaluated positively the regeneration project of Granary Island, claiming the evaluation was "good" and "very good," respectively Main City with 76.7%, Olszynka with 80%, Wrzeszcz with 80%, Suchanino with 60%, Niedźwiednik with 60%, Chełm with 56.7%, and Ujeścisko with 66.7%.

Discussion

The results of identification with Gdańsk historical inner city and those with urban regeneration of Granary Island are discussed in the framework of urban identity concept being compared to each other at the city scale and according to neighbourhoods' levels. While at the city scale it gives an overall or aggregate view, in the other level, it finds out the impact of different neighbourhoods in identification with the priorly mentioned city zones, especially considering aspects like their communities and location in terms of proximity. Furthermore, we will compare our results with similar studies that include research related to the identity of historical urban zones and those that have been subject to urban regeneration.

The results in aggregate show higher values of identification with Historical Inner City of Gdańsk (80%) when compared with Granary Island regeneration project, in the case of which is much lower. (56.19%). This result reveals that the interviewees have a stronger identification with the old town, compared to a newly regenerated central zone. The results are in line with Kutsal (2012), who revealed

that historical urban patterns developed a higher level of identification compared to newly transformed urban patterns and Manahasa E. and Manahasa O. (2020), who found that historical housing produced a higher level of identification with the city compared to new housing which was built in post-socialist period Tirana. These results are partly in line with Boussaa (2017), who similarly found that the urban regeneration projects under the effects of globalization wave in Doha created global identity but weakened the local identity and Beyhan and Gürkan (2015), who stated that urban transformation of Isparta city has caused the loss of its identity. The results contrast with Gür and Heidari (2019), who revealed that the residents of Çeliklepe neighbourhood after transformation were evaluated as attractive.

The results according to neighbourhoods show a high level of identification with the Historical Inner City, varying from 73.3% (the lowest) to 83.3% (the highest). Compared to identification for Granary Island regeneration project, the identification with which varied from 46.7% (the lowest) to 63.3% (the highest), there is observed also a significant reduction in identification.

Regarding the identification with the Historical Inner City according to neighbourhoods, the data shows similar high results without major differences among them. The lowest identification was reported from the residents of Ujeścisko neighbourhood, who stated that they do not identify with the Historical Inner City since they do not frequently visit the area and their everyday activities are unrelated to it, also considering the long distance from their living place. In fact, although our expectations were that more distant neighbourhoods (Ujeścisko 73.3%, Wrzeszcz 83.3%, and Niedźwiednik 76.7%) would have a considerably lower identification to the Historical Inner City. Surprisingly, in the case of Wrzeszcz, the results are the highest, in the case of Ujeścisko and Niedźwiednik, there is observed a reduction in identification; however, the difference value with other neighbourhoods' values is very slight. From this point of view,



it can be said that partly there is an impact of distance in identification, but it is low and quite unimportant.

The most important reasons that have produced identification with Old Inner Town can be grouped under two main clusters which are physical aspects, reported by 27.6% of respondents and non-physical identificatory relation aspects reported by 52.4% of respondents. The physical aspects can be subclassified into:

- a) historical built environment (22.4%),
- b) positively evaluated built environment (5.2%).

The non-physical identificatory relations aspects also can be subclassified into:

- a) self-described pride due to historical values (30.5%),
- b) historical non-tangible aspects like atmosphere and old vibes (20%),

The self-described pride as a reason of identification with Old Inner Town, agrees with Breakwell (1992), who stated that based on the principle of distinctiveness, people identify with a specific settlement, or Hummon (1986), who revealed that city centres produce the distinguishment needed for identification compared to peri-urban zones. Also, it is in line with Manahasa E. and Manahasa O. (2020), who also revealed in the case of Tirana's historical neighbourhoods' residents a reason for identification with their city. The historical built environment as a reason for identification is in line with Oktay (2002) and Kropf (1993), who emphasized the importance of the historical districts in providing a distinctive image of cities for the identification. The atmosphere of the districts as a reason for identification agrees with Fleury-Bahi et al. (2008), who described it as the social image of the neighbourhood, and Manahasa et al. (2024) in the case of Nantes. The positively evaluated built environment is in line with Lalli (1989; 1992), who emphasized the importance of the perceived quality of the neighbourhoods in identification.

Regarding the identification with Granary Island's regeneration project, positive results of all the neighbourhoods are slightly higher

than 50%, whereas interestingly in Olszynka they were 46.7%. These results can be interpreted as saying that although there is a tendency to embrace the newly regenerated Granary Island, it still is not evaluated as a city part, which produces a very strong identification and attachment. In fact, the results of Olszynka neighbourhood were surprising and unexpected. The reported reason for lower identification of Olszynka neighbourhood residents was related to the fact that they considered their neighbourhood as left over, and although it was close to Historical Inner City, it had a lack of investments, and they did not like the existence of a large number of tourists, which caused the leave of local residents.

The most important reasons that have produced identification with the Granary Island regeneration project can be grouped under two main clusters, which are by identificatory relation aspects (42.9%) and by physical aspects (23.5%). The reasons included under the physical aspects most reported can be subclassified as:

- a) interpretation and usage of old architectural elements in modern built environment (21.4%),
- b) positively evaluated new built environment (20.5%),

On the other hand, the reasons under non-physical identificatory relation are subclassified into two as well:

- a) newly offered non-tangible positive aspects of life, including new activities, social life, and cultural diversity (18.7%).
- b) a non-tangible value that Granary Island has achieved by respecting the old and history.

An important role in producing this level of identification also on a neighbourhood scale can also be considered the respondents appreciation for the effort made to develop a modernized, regenerated district while honouring and interpreting the old historical architectural elements into a contemporary version, of Granary Island.

The interpretation of old architectural elements in the regenerated Granary Island as



a reason for identification is in line with Saleh (1998) who found that interpretation of traditional historical towers produced identity in Arab cities, and Malhis (2004), who revealed that historical elements used in modern style facades establish local urban identity of Amman, Jordan. The positively evaluated new built environment is in unison with Oktay (2019), who found that transformation of an old tobacco factory into a new multifunctional complex and new public spaces in Samsun, Turkey, as a reason for identification. The last reported reason for identification with regenerated Granary Island is non-tangible elements like new activities, social life, and cultural diversity, which can be summarized as the new atmosphere. This result agrees with Valera (2002), who found that the social discourse about the neighbourhood of Olympic Village in Barcelona has produced identification after its urban transformation, but disagrees with Heidari and Gür, who revealed that new activities in the transformed neighbourhood of Çeliktepe are not enough and create low attachment and identifications. It disagrees also with Beyhan and Gürkan (2015), who found that urban transformations in the case of Isparta have not been able to produce a meaningful environment.

As for reasons of non-identification with Granary Island, the most reported one were aspects related to its physical features (26.1%), followed by non-physical aspects (7.1%). Physical aspects reported as reasons for non-identifications by respondents included that they would prefer the older/historical physical environment (10.9%), followed by those who would prefer a different modern physical environment (8.5%) and those that did not like the mix between old and new (6.6%). The most reported non-physical reason was that the regeneration project caused the loss of historical identity (3.3%), followed by those who preferred the old atmosphere (2.8%), followed by those who reported the absence of activities (0.9%). Only 0.5% reported that the Granary Island does not have any local community, only tourists. An interpretation for such a low value can be the fact that

the respondents live in different neighbourhoods of Gdansk, but also the lower number of tourist accommodations located in Granary Island compared to Historical Inner City (Almeida Garcia et al., 2021) and therefore a lower perception of gentrification.

To understand the impact of certain socio-demographic predictors on identification on both Historical Inner City and Granary Island, we provide identification according to these indicators and discuss them here. Regarding age identification to Historical Inner City, the highest identification is seen among middle age (30-44) and older (≥ 45) respondents, whereas regarding the Granary Island, the higher values are seen among young (18-29) and middle age (30-44). Thus, older respondents reflect a stronger identification with historical inner city, whereas younger people have a stronger identification with Granary Island. This can be interpreted with the fact the Granary Island was recently constructed and offers more opportunities to younger people.

Regarding duration, obviously respondents that have a longer length of stay (≥ 31 years) in both historical inner city and Granary Island cases, have a stronger identification. Although the results of historical inner city among this range of duration are much higher. Since in order that identification evolves, passage of time is required, this result is in line with mainstream scholars Lalli (1992), who revealed the critical role of duration in identification, or Hernandez et al. (2007), Casakin et al. (2015), and Manahasa E. and Manahasa O. (2020), who revealed it a crucial indicator.

As for the impact of ownership status, the results show that regarding Historical Inner City, predominantly owners identify, whereas related to Granary Island, most of the owners do not identify and renters predominantly identify with it. These results can be interpreted as that owners have a higher identification with a historical part of the city, whereas in the case of a newly renovated district, the renters have a higher identification. This result for the historical part of the city is similar to Lalli (1992) and Belanche et al.

(2017), who revealed that respondents who own a house had a higher identification compared to dweller who lived in rented dwelling. Already it is known that owners have stronger social ties in comparison to renters (Rollero & De Picoli, 2010; Manahasa E. & Manahasa O., 2020) thus, this can also be a reason for the case of historical inner town. In the case of Granary Island, the respondents reveal as a reason the modern style and also the created built environment that is characterized by both old and new architectural features. This can be interpreted also as renters are newcomers in Granary Island, that offers more opportunities for them, generating identification.

Table 4. Selected predictors and identification

User profile		Historical Inner City		Granary Island	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
		%			
Age	18-29	22.00	14.20	23.80	12.40
	30-44	32.40	1.40	20.00	13.80
	≥45	23.80	6.20	11.50	16.30
Duration	1-4 yrs	4.80	7.15	7.15	4.80
	5-10 yrs	2.90	1.90	1.90	2.90
	11-20 yrs	7.60	1.45	3.80	5.25
	21-30 yrs	20.00	2.90	16.70	6.20
	≥31 yrs	44.70	6.60	26.60	24.70
Ownership	Owner	63.30	14.30	36.20	42.40
	Renter	16.70	5.70	21.00	1.40

Conclusion

The research explored the relations between urban identity and urban regeneration, focusing on a newly regenerated district named Granary Island, which is part of the Historical Inner City of Gdańsk in Poland. Furthermore, it measured the identification of residents from different neighbourhoods of Gdańsk with Granary Island regeneration project and Historical Inner City, by comparing them. The residents were selected from 7 different neighbourhoods, providing results in both city scale and according to neighbourhoods.

The Granary Island Regeneration project strategy relied on the interpretation of previously existing historical buildings but was built with modern materials and technology.

The research shows that in both cases most of the citizens identified with both, although they had a stronger identification with Gdańsk's Historic Inner City, compared to Granary Island. This result reflects that interviewees have a stronger identification with the historical part of the city, compared to a newly regenerated area. This is because the historical urban areas have a considerable influence on place identification and a sense of belonging, since they reinforce a city's unique identity and character. Nevertheless, the Granary Island as a regeneration project, despite the short time of being accomplished, has achieved its goal of becoming a strong representation in terms of city identity. Thus, the most important contribution of this research to the theoretical knowledge is that while the historical central zones of a city, featured by old architectural style buildings, develop a stronger urban identity, also the newly regenerated historical districts, when historical architectural elements are reinterpreted and reused, develop a good built environment, and a positive atmosphere can generate urban identity as well.

The most important reasons for identification with Historic Inner City are found to be self-described pride due to its historical values and non-tangible historical aspects like old atmosphere and old vibes clustered as identificatory relations and its physical features reflected in the form of positively evaluated built environment. On the other hand, the most important reasons for identification with Granary Island regeneration project are its physical features reported in the form of the interpretation and usage of old architectural elements in modern built environment, the positively evaluated new built environment, and an identificatory relation generated due to the newly created atmosphere by non-tangible positive aspects of life, including new activities, social life, and cultural diversity.



The identification with the Historic Inner City according to neighbourhoods, revealed high results without major differences among them, showing the predominance of this old part of the city for its urban identity. Although our expectations were that more distant neighbourhoods (Ujeścisko, Wrzeszcz, and Niedźwiednik) would have a lower identification to the historical inner city, the difference in value with other values is very slight, thus not meaningful.

While in all neighbourhoods most of the interviewees identified with the Granary Island regeneration project, only in the case of Olszynka, the majority did not identify with the district. Surprisingly, although this neighbourhood was adjacent to Granary Island, the residents argue that since most of the attention was given to it through urban transformations, their neighbourhood has been

neglected, and due to that, many tourists stay in their neighbourhood, causing discomfort to them. However, in all the neighbourhoods, the Granary Island regeneration project in majority was evaluated positively.

Further research can focus on the role of urban transformations of particular districts or neighbourhoods in the city identity. Especially in the case of post-socialist cities where developmental dynamics are rapid and the pressure of developers can result in the gentrification of zones with investment return rates that are high, in both physical and non-physical aspects.

Editors' note:

Unless otherwise stated, the sources of tables and figures are the author's, on the basis of their own research.

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