

Collective memory, identity and urban landscape: Poznań regional online media and their readers

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This study connects with the main leitmotif of the conference, i.e. how multiculturalism (understood as the past religious diversity) has influenced the (re)-construction of national and regional collective identity in Poznań. The aim of this project, specifically, is to investigate the interaction between memory and identity in the context of dynamically transforming cultural cityscape. Golka (2009) in his book on social memory and its implants identifies memory 'carriers' with cityscape featuring significantly among them. One of such urban memory carriers are the city cemeteries. In our study they will be used as search words for constructing the corpus of the Poznań regional information websites and the below-the-line-comments on these websites. The particular research questions are: (1) How the image of collective memory of the past religious variation created by city media differ or coincide with that created by the grassroots website readers? (2) What effect do the urban landscape variables such as the denomination of the cemetery (Jewish, Protestant, Catholic) or its administrative status (liquidated or closed) have on their discursive representation by the media and the grassroots readers of these websites. The analytic method employed includes: (1) critical discourse analysis (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Wodak and Meyer 2009) and (2) metaphor analysis (Musolff 2006, 2012, Fabiszak 2007, Baker et al. 2008, Mautner 2009a and b). The pilot study of selected regional newspapers has revealed that as the wide scale construction works unearth many of the former liquidated cemeteries, the Poznań public opinion has shown a sustained interest in the commemoration of the city multicultural past. For example, in 2008 part of a Jewish cemetery in Głogowska street has been reconstructed to commemorate rabbi Akiba Eger (died 1837) and his followers. The reconstruction sparked some controversy as the former cemetery fragment is now an inner yard of a housing estate.

References

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