

Regional metaculture of Spisz

Purpose of the Project

The aim of the project is to investigate and develop a cultural phenomenon defined as metaculturality, the importance of which seems to be increasing in recent years in the Polish Spisz region. This concept covers a new type of attitude of the inhabitants towards their own cultural legacy, which is characterized by reflection on it and a selective attitude towards it. The essence of its meaning is well reflected by the prefix meta-, which indicates the mediation, secondary, and interpretive attitude towards one's own cultural legacy, which results in its transfer to a different level of experiencing and practicing, secondary level, to a specific meta-level. Let the canon of regional music (primary level of culture) serve as an illustration, which is transformed into the form of musical improvisations and variations (secondary level of culture); the same applies to regional dress, architecture, etc. A well known analogy illustrating this process is jazz, a musical genre (secondary), which derives from African-American folk music (primary).

Work Plan

In terms of territory, the scope of the research covers the Polish part of Zamagurze Spisz, referred to as the Polish Spisz. The region is characterized by a significant cultural diversity in terms of dialect, folk costumes, musical folklore or customs. The research project is scheduled for a period four years. During this time, ethnographic fieldwork will be carried out, for which about twenty trips are planned - from a few days to two weeks. In the period between the field research, desk research will be carried out (in-depth studies of the issues, refining theories, correcting research tools, developing the obtained data and materials). The research will use techniques such as participant observation of festivals, competitions, workshops and everyday life of residents, interviews (with animators, experts, representatives of local authorities, members of regional teams and a relatively uninvolved majority of residents), preparation of photographic documentation, reading regional Internet forums, analysis of local press and literary works, crafts and arts. The research results will be presented at national and international conferences and in a series of publications in specialist periodicals in the field of humanities and social sciences.

Reasons for Taking up the Project

Metaculturality is a feature of the present day that shows significant potential in the sphere of regional creativity (verbal and musical folklore, art, literature), social relations, values distinguishing the local community. It is a new and creative way to approach one's own cultural heritage. It also serves to free oneself - both individually and as a group - from the corset of canonical patterns of regional culture, often created by external activists and researchers, preventing the development of unrestricted creativity inspired by the local cultural legacy. Metaculturality also means drawing from other cultural resources, producing specific assemblages that introduce new qualities in the cultural landscapes of the relevant cultural circles. In the case under discussion, it concerns, for example, the mutual influences of the regional cultures of Polish Spisz and Podhale.

Expected Results

The planned research is to serve to better identify the indicated phenomenon, its importance in shaping the regional group identity and the self-reflection of its representatives, as well as to indicate the possibilities of culture-forming meta-reflection and cultural meta-practices understood in this way. The findings made during the research may gain application value and contribute to the strengthening of independent creative and social initiatives, which will enable a more unhindered use of one's own cultural legacy and reaching for other cultural inspirations. The way of the recognition of the above is ethnographic fieldwork, which guarantees obtaining data from the source itself, and the theoretical approach that gives voice to the subjects of exploration - the inhabitants of the region.