

The ideal city, a liveable city?
An Ethnography of Post-Socialist Heritage of Nowa Huta

In many historic cities, cultural heritage is a symbol of pride and identity. However, it can also create tensions. Although it enriches our urban experiences, it sometimes clashes with the everyday needs of residents, especially when it becomes a commodity.

This project examines how residents of Nowa Huta – an iconic post-socialist district in Krakow – interact with their cultural heritage. Once a model socialist city, Nowa Huta fell into decline in the 90. but in the recent years, the area has been experiencing a revival.

Focusing on how local actors – activists, cultural workers, residents – engage with heritage in their neighborhoods, the project explores everyday tensions between protecting the past and improving urban life in the present. How do local actors (re)activate socialist-era heritage through civic engagement, tourism, and everyday spatial practices?

Through interviews, fieldwork, and participatory mapping, this research will explore how heritage can be a dynamic, living part of a city's presence.

The project will result in various publications, conference presentations and dissemination materials.