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Revitalised Heritage of the Former Congress Poland Textile Industry as a Supra-Regional Potential

Abstract: The aim of the paper is to present cultural heritage of the textile industry, crucial for the past development of central parts of Poland, which could be an important value for supra-regional identity and potential. The analysis based on the case studies of three historical post-industrial complexes includes data examination and study walks. The chosen complexes are situated in Zgierz, Łódź and Żyrardów, i.e. towns that have been subject to consistent and long-term urban regeneration processes done in the spirit of sustainable development and multifunctional exploitation. The conducted analysis proves that the historical and cultural values of these complexes are of supra-regional nature and that their accessibility as well as existing service infrastructure and highlights make them attractive not only locally. The article leads to the conclusion that in order to use their potential to the fullest, there is a need of a common action on the regional level, such as the creation of a cultural route.

Keywords: cultural heritage post-industrial area, urban planning, regeneration process, supra-regional potential

1. Introduction

Post-industrial areas, especially the 19th century factory complexes, are often centrally located, adjacent to the city oldest historic districts. Due to the convenient location and cultural, historical and architectural values, such brownfields can become an important development potential (Jarczewski and Kułaczowska, 2019). At the same time, due to their scale, industrial plants, closed as a result of the country political transformation in the 1990s, are a real challenge for Polish municipalities that most often have become their owners. A survey conducted in 2008 by the Institute of Urban Development identified over 240 sq. km that could be classified as post-industrial areas (Domański, 2009), located mainly in large and medium-size cities. Larger estimations come from the study by Huculak (2009), who, based on various sources, including the Central Statistical Office, determined their size as 300–400 sq. km. Due to the large post-industrial area degradation, already in the 1990s, the problem of their development became the subject of scientific reflection and

analysis (e.g. Dresler, 1995; Lorens and Załuski, 1996; Glumińska et al., 1996; Gasidło, 1998; Gasidło and Gorgoń, 1999; Domański, 2000) regarding, among others, typological issues (Gasidło, 1998; Lorens, 2005; Domański, 2009). Therefore, depending on the view, these areas can be perceived either as untapped potential or as unnecessary ballast (Jarczewski, 2010).

Initially, in the Western Europe, where regeneration processes started earlier than in Poland, i.e. in the 1980s (Bryx and Jadach-Sepi-
oło, 2009; Guzik, 2009), the so-called flagship projects, implemented in valuable architectural, cultural or historical buildings, adapted to innovative functions (e.g. Tate Modern gallery in London, IBA projects in Germany), prevailed as the idea for developing post-industrial areas located in downtown areas. Such buildings were supposed to achieve iconic status, becoming a magnet attracting visitors. However, the overflow of very expensive in the reconstruction and maintenance flagship projects caused that the formula of the so-called the

Bilbao effect, in general, seems to have been exhausted.

That is why, recently, rather more comprehensive urban regeneration measures, treating the issues of degraded areas in a more sustainable way, have become the leading approach for transforming post-industrial areas. In Poland, in accordance with the 2015 Act on Revitalization (Ustawa z dnia 9 października 2015 r. o rewitalizacji), urban regeneration processes are dedicated primarily to residential areas. However, uninhabited brownfields may conditionally be included within the intervention area, if planned activities are expected to have a positive impact on the inhabitants of the regeneration area. It was found that out of 14,576 planned urban regeneration projects, 315 (2.2%) concerned uninhabited areas, of which 193 projects were or would be implemented in post-industrial areas (Jarczewski et al., 2019).

Intervention logic requires that brownfields should first be reclaimed and then developed. The final goal of the activities should be re-urbanisation, i.e. a long-lasting incorporation of the area into the city fabric (Ziobrowski, 2010). Thus, regeneration activities in post-industrial areas, in addition to saving historical buildings, valuable in terms of architecture, history or culture, are primarily associated with the change of function. Former factories can be transformed into cultural facilities (museums, concert halls), flats and business centres (industrial parks, universities, business incubators, etc.), water reservoirs, service facilities (shopping malls, office buildings, etc.) (as cited in: Jarczewski et al., 2010, p. 7).

2. Article background and methodological issues

Congress Poland (1815–1832) (popularly referred to as *Kongresówka* in Polish), located in the present-day central and south-eastern Poland (Fig. 1) and connected by a personal union with the Russian Empire, was established during the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) and comprised most areas of the former Duchy of Warsaw. Thanks to preferential export duties to Russia, light industry quickly developed in the country, with textile production amounting to 53% of the total value. The dynamic devel-

Activities carried out in centrally located post-industrial areas, including spatial transformations and the introduction of new functions, can also play a city-forming role, as well as contribute to the image and attractiveness of the entire city (Kaczmarek, 2001; Janas et al., 2010). Although according to Polish law urban regeneration does not directly aim at the development of culture or tourism, activities related to the transformation of brownfields may result in changes regarding these areas as well.

Polish literature studies on the subject leads to a conclusion that scholars focus predominantly on post-mining and post-metallurgical areas of Śląskie and Dolnośląskie Voivode-ships (e.g. Gasidło and Gorgoń, 1999; Staszewska-Ludwiczak, 2007; Koj, 2011; Jarczewski and Kułaczowska, 2019). Authors rarely raise issues related to the heritage of light industry, and if they do, they usually focus on typological issues, such as new facility functions (e.g. Huculak, 2009; Ziobrowski, 2010) or on a study case of a selected city, most frequently Łódź (e.g. Kaczmarek, 2001; Liszewski, 2009). However, there are no studies on light industry heritage in connection with the current or historical region, which seems particularly important for the reflection on post-industrial heritage as a potential of supra-local significance. Hence, the purpose of this article is to present less known cultural heritage of textile industry, crucial for the development of the historic region of Congress Poland in order to check if it could constitute a valuable cultural element for supra-regional identity and potential.

opment of the textile industry focused in the cities of the Łódź region and in western Mazovia. Although Congress Poland in its original shape lasted only fifteen years, it had a lasting impact on Poles' perception of history. The economic development that began in that period continued despite the temporary crisis after the November Uprising (1830–1831). Further development of the local textile industry was related, among others, to the 1842 lifting of the

embargo on machines imported from England, thanks to which production could be improved.

Translating historical conditions into the modern administrative division of the country, it should be pointed out that the heritage

of the former Congress Poland textile industry is at present concentrated mainly in two central provinces: Łódzkie and Mazowieckie Voivodeships (Fig. 1).

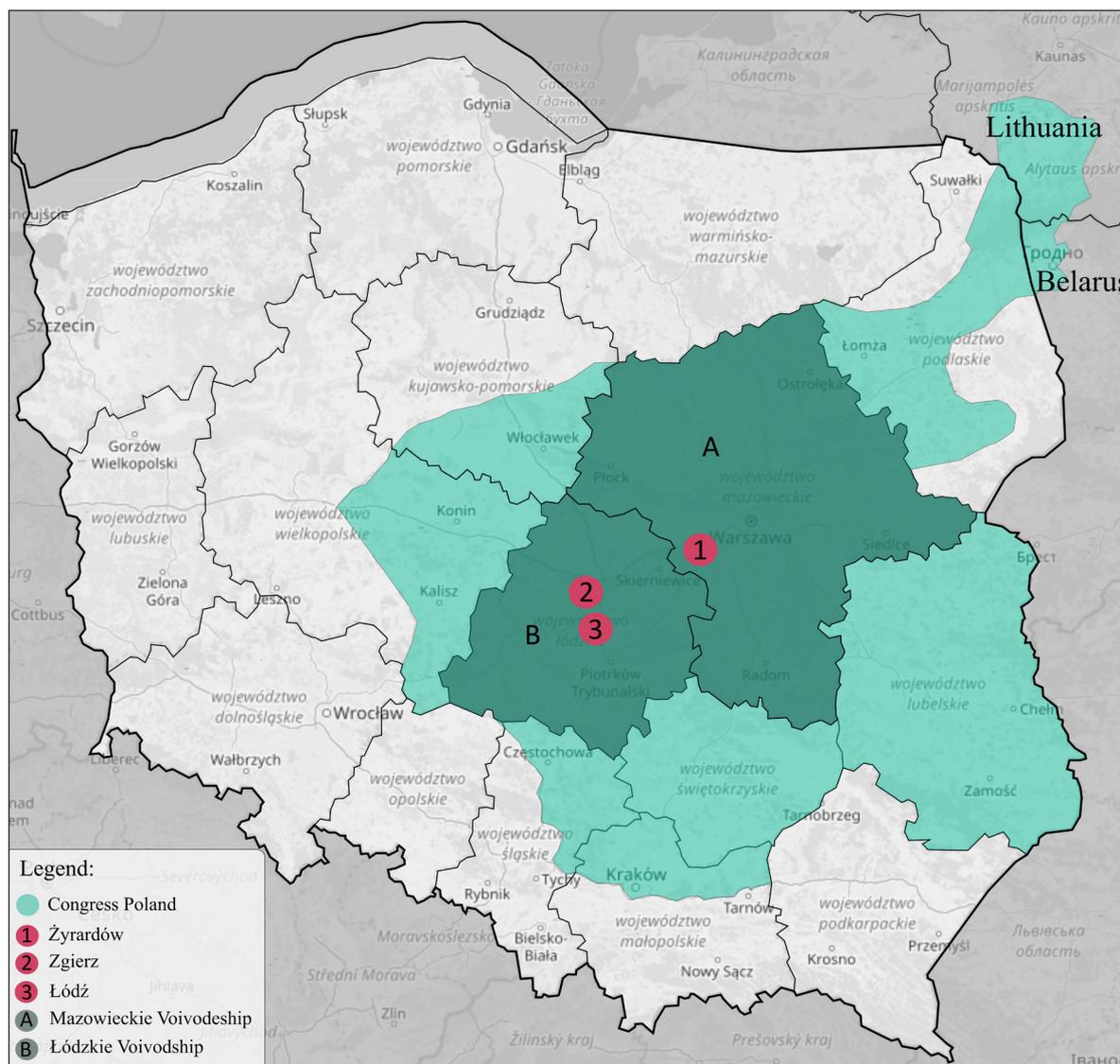


Figure 1. Kingdom of Poland (Congress Poland) against the background of the current map of Poland with the location of voivodeships and the cities being described (source: Paulina Basińska, *Institute of Urban and Regional Development*)

It is difficult to estimate the number of historical buildings related to the textile industry located in this area. A certain indication may be provided by the research carried out by the National Heritage Board of Poland (NID) in the years 2009–2015, which, however, covered just monuments listed in the register of historical monuments and indicates only a general category of industrial monuments, distinguished by their primary function. According to such classification, there would be 82 industrial monuments in Łódzkie Voivodeship and 250

in Mazowieckie Voivodeship (Rozbicka, 2017). However, historical industrial facilities are also included in other categories distinguished by the NID, i.e. utility (e.g. warehouses), residential (factory owners' palaces), housing (workers' estates) or even public (e.g. near factory schools) buildings. Thus, determining the number and types of objects associated with the textile industry requires separate studies.

For the purpose of the paper three historical complexes have been chosen and analysed based on a case study method which enables

their detailed examination. The analysis included data examination (strategic documents and websites of the cities, the National Heritage Board of Poland, press articles), as well as study visits.

The analysed post-industrial complexes are located in Zgierz (Łódzkie Voivodeship), Łódź (Łódzkie Voivodeship) and Żyrardów (Mazowieckie Voivodeship) (Fig. 1). They will be presented in this order, taking into account their

geographical location, south-north direction and the date of their creation. Each case study will include historical and spatial analysis of the chosen post-industrial complex, assessment of its historical, architectural and cultural value, attractiveness for visitors as well as sustainable, complex, long-term regeneration intervention which ensures long-lasting effects. The in-depth examination of the cases will lead to a conclusion regarding their supra-regional potential.

3. Results

3.1. Case study: Zgierz, Weavers' Town

Zgierz, located 15 km north of Łódź, is one of the oldest cities in Łódzkie Voivodeship¹. It is also the cradle of textile industry in Congress Poland and, for some, the capital of Polish wool industry as the largest producer of wool cloth. 1821, the year of signing the so-called "Zgierz agreement"², establishing the rules for 300 foreign settlers (mainly from Prussia, Saxony and the Kingdom of Poznań), is considered the beginning of the town industrial period. Settlers received plots of land located on the eastern bank of the Bzura River, where the Nowe Miasto district was established. The new settlement was set on a regular plan with streets intersecting at a right angle, with Town Market Square (now Kilińskiego Sq.) and the axis (Długa St.) running west towards the Old Town (<http://cms.miasto.zgierz.pl/index.php?page=historia&hl=pol>).

Currently, the weavers' settlement is located in the very centre of Zgierz, which until the end of the 19th century was subject to intensive spatial development. A valuable urban layout of the new district and a complex of weavers' houses testifying about the industrial past of the town have survived. One-story wooden or brick houses with a residential attics sometimes topped with triangular gable, half-hipped

roof are decorated with columns or pilasters. Interesting post-industrial monuments include former factories of wool producer Adolf Gustaw Borst, cotton producer Lorentz & Krusche and yarn producer Otton Meyer. Other historical buildings are former residences or public facilities built in the Neoclassical style, including residence of the Cypel family (now Museum of the City of Zgierz), evangelical school, former firehouse, factory owner Ksawery Pniewski's residence.

In total, 32 buildings, mainly weavers' houses, and three urban complexes are listed in the voivodeship register of historical monuments. In addition, 184 buildings are listed in the municipal register of monuments. In 2003, to protect 30 most valuable houses, pursuant to Resolution No. XV/142/03 of the Zgierz City Council, Park Kulturowy³ "Miasto Tkaczy" (Weavers' Town Cultural Park) was established, which was one of the first Cultural Parks in Poland. The Park which aims to protect the unique urban layout from the 1820s as an example of the model industrial city of Congress Poland stretches along Narutowicza, Rembowskiego and Barlickiego Streets.

The creation of the park marked the beginning of the urban regeneration process, the pur-

¹ The first information about the village: 1231, city rights: 1288.

² This document became a model for similar agreements concluded later in Congress Poland

³ A cultural park is one of the statutory forms of monument protection in Poland, created to protect the cultural landscape and to preserve a distinctive landscape with monuments, typical for local building and settlement tradition [as cited in: https://www.nid.pl/pl/Dla_wlascicieli_i_zaradcow/dla-samorzadow/parki-kulturowe].

pose of which is to revive the historical centre in accordance with the entire city sustainable development. Activities carried out so far include: reconstruction of the street old character (gas lamps, cobblestones) as well as gradual renovation of the wooden houses, intended for various functions. Currently in the Park there are: Cafe & Bistro “U Tkaczy”, Hostel FOLKier with a conference hall, Art Gallery with historical dolls exhibition, Wood Conservation Centre, running carpentry workshops and a community day care centre. Muzeum Miejsca (Museum of the Place), which presents wool production process and an exhibition devoted to the ongoing regeneration process as well as offers workshops with an original loom from the 1820s, refers directly to the post-industrial heritage (<http://www.miastotkaczy.pl/o-projekcie/rewitalizacja-miejsca/dom-tkacza-rembowskiego-1>). The town past is also presented

3.2. Case study: Łódź – Księży Młyn

This largest city factory complex, built by Rhineland Karol Scheibler, thanks to whom Łódź became one of the main textile industry centres in Europe, is located in the central part of the city, south of Piłsudskiego Ave, in the quarter between Kilińskiego, Przędzalniana, Tymienieckiego and Milionowa Streets. It consists of three smaller complexes: the first one created in 1854–1865 in the north, the second one from 1870–1885, i.e. the proper Księży Młyn, and the third one built in 1878–1914 in the southern and western part of the area. Scheibler and his successors built an industrial self-sufficient city modelled on English settlements. The complex, designed on a regular grid of cobbled streets, included factory buildings with a huge spinning plant, residential buildings (owners' residences, directors' villas, workers' houses), service facilities (school, hospitals, fire station, gasworks, factory club, shops), railway siding, and green areas (<https://lodz.travel/turystyka/co-zobaczyc/ksiezy-mlyn/>).

To the present day, a clear urban layout of all complexes, green areas, and various buildings have been preserved, testifying about the former power of the manufacturers and constituting a key element of local identity. The most important monuments found within the first

in the Museum of the City of Zgierz where an exhibition, opened in 2018 and dedicated to the city history, shows, among others, the local bourgeois houses interiors.

The Cultural Park and the whole district is also the area designed for the urban regeneration process in the Local Zgierz Regeneration Programme 2016–2020 + adopted in 2016 (Lokalny Program Rewitalizacji Zgierza 2016–2020+), which is a continuation of the activities carried out within the previous programme (Uchwała Nr XXVI/245/04 Rady Miasta Zgierza). Social and economic recovery gained through the regeneration process adds to the restoration of the city-forming functions as well as the district place brand. Projects planned for this area, strengthening the potential of the Zgierz cultural heritage, include, among others, further renovation of houses and designation of a textile architecture trail in the city.

complex are: the first spinning plant, the oldest in the complex, the Renaissance Revival Palace of Scheibler (now Museum of Cinematography), and the owner's park (Źródlińska II). In the proper Księży Młyn, the most valuable monuments include: the workers' housing estate of two-story brick houses arranged in lines with the inner courtyard, the oldest school in Łódź, a store (now, publishing house) and a huge new spinning plant with a 207-meter-long façade located on the axis. Other important monuments are the Renaissance Revival palace complex (1875–1877, now Herbst Palace Museum), as well as a former fire station with a Gothic Revival tower and an original steam pump in the courtyard.

The Księży Młyn area features protected buildings and urban complexes considered unique both in the scale of the city and the entire country. The complex was listed in the register of historical monuments in 1971. The park (Źródlińska II) and the Herbst's garden are also listed as well as 62 individual houses, service, residences, service and industrial facilities. In 2015, the most important parts of the complex, along with other city quarters testifying to the city multiculturalism, industrial character and an important role of manufacturers in

shaping its identity, were recognised as Historic Monument⁴ referred to as “Łódź – a multicultural landscape of an industrial city” (Gminny Program Opieki nad Zabytkami Miasta Łodzi na lata 2014-2017).

The collapse of the Łódź textile industry in the 1990s contributed to the degradation of closed factory buildings and surrounding public spaces. Manufacturers’ residences, restored and converted into museums, were in the best condition. Regeneration activities carried out in this area since 2012, have contributed to a slow recovery. Księży Młyn has also been included in the Municipal Regeneration Programme for the City of Łódź 2026+ (Gminny Program Rewitalizacji dla miasta Łodzi 2026+).

Currently ongoing activities in the spatial and technical sphere include renovation of subsequent buildings in the workers’ estate (installation of central heating, renovation of outbuildings) as well as arrangement of surrounding public space (reconstruction of pavement, rainwater drainage, small architecture, gate), which are done in a participatory way. In

total, 21 buildings, 270 apartments, 14 service facilities and over 0.05 sq. km of green areas will be renovated.

In addition to the residential function, renovated buildings fulfil also other functions. In the area of the estate there are: a centre for social inclusion, a centre for children and a post office. Other buildings have been turned into a tourist centre (information, organisation of workshops and events, souvenir shop), artists’ workshops, pubs and restaurants (e.g. Fatamorgana Restaurant, 4 Stroke Moto Café) and a brewery producing craft beer. The new spinning plant has been converted into lofts (421 apartments). Shops and service facilities have been opened in neighbouring buildings. Buildings with cultural functions include the Museum of Cinematography, Herbst Palace Museum and Book Art Museum. Activities aimed at both residents and tourists include: cyclical events, such as flea markets and concerts. Księży Mill is also part of a tourist route, “Industrial architecture” running in the central part of Łódź.

3.3. Case study: Żyrardów – 19th century Factory Settlement

Żyrardów as the largest Congress Poland linen industry centre is a valuable testimony to the textile tradition. The preserved urban complex is considered unique not only in the context of the region and country, but even in Europe. The factory complex (0.7 sq. km) lies in the city core, near the train station, fully embedded in the existing urban fabrics.

The settlement was founded in the 1870s, after the existing company was bought in 1857 by Austrian industrialists Karol Dittrich and Karol Hielle, who expanded and modernised the production, and erected a residential quarter. From that time until the WWI, the city and the factory, employing up to 9,000 people, flourished.

The settlement was one of the first modern urban centres on the territory of the present-day Poland. The urban concept was considered innovative because of zoning related to

functional spheres (industrial and residential ones), architecture subordinated to functions as well as a concept of a compact and complete urban organism, including schools hospital, shelter, bathhouse, factory merchants’ club, etc. A spinning plant and church dominated the landscape. The market square (now Jana Pawła II Sq.) was surrounded by public buildings and service facilities. The settlement was connected to the main railway line through a railway siding, Warsaw-Vienna Railway.

The collapse of industry in the 1990s led to the closing of the factory, but despite the degradation of post-industrial facilities, the centre of Żyrardów has retained its authentic character, which remains its main value. 95% of the historical buildings have survived, as well as the regular layout, homogeneous brick worker’s houses with courtyards and wooden outbuildings inside the quarters, and tree-lined streets.

⁴ It is one of the statutory forms of the monument protection in Poland. Historic Monument is of particular importance for the country culture, which is emphasised by the fact that it is appointed by the President of the Republic of Poland (as cited in: https://www.nid.pl/pl/Informacje_ogolne/Zabytki_w_Polsce/Pomniki_historii).

Other important historical buildings include: the Gothic Revival parish church dominating the area, the Renaissance Revival villa of Karol Dittrich in a landscape park, villa of Wilhelm Haupt in the so-called Swiss style and the Tyrolean Palace. In the former factory area, the buildings of the old and new spinning plants (called “Centrala”), weaving mill and finishing plant have survived.

The factory settlement as a unique urban complex was listed in the register of historical monuments in 1979. Individual monuments are also listed in the register: 119 buildings (residential, public, utility, residential, religious monuments) and 25 industrial monuments included in the “Centrala” and finishing plant complexes. In 2012, “Żyrardów – 19th century Factory Settlement” as the 19th century industrial organisation model was recognised as Historic Monument (Gminny Program Opieki nad Zabytkami dla Miasta Żyrardowa na lata 2014 – 2017).

Urban regeneration activities in Żyrardów, assuming spatial, economic and social renewal, began as early as 2004 and are currently being continued under the Local Revitalization Programme of the City of Żyrardów until 2020 (Program Rewitalizacji Miasta Żyrardowa do roku 2020). The factory settlement has been designed as the intervention area. One of the first projects covered the renewal of the Dittrich Park, completed in 2006. Another important project was the adaptation of the former merchant club for cultural and artistic purposes, such as an information centre, a performance hall, club rooms, accommodation facilities, and an exhibition presenting the history of Żyrardów, completed in 2010. Later, other public buildings, residential quarters, including courtyards, have been modernised and the post-industrial facilities adapted for housing, hotel and other services functions. The current project, which aims to increase the potential of

the area and the entire city, is “Culture Quarters – renovation of Historic Monument, Żyrardów – 19th century Factory Settlement”.

A characteristic feature of the factory settlement, both in the past and now, is its multifunctionality. Interestingly, most buildings have the same or similar function as in the past. Due to the downtown character of the area, historical building fulfil mainly residential and service functions (shops, restaurants, e.g. Szpularnia Restaurant, Restaurant in Stara Pralnia, Beer Bros Brewery). On the other hand, the development of the former factory area, which, unlike other facilities, was to change its function after adaptation, was a challenge. First, it succeeded in the case of the old spinning plant, where 80 lofts, Aparthotel Stara Przędzalnia, service facilities and shops were opened in 2014. In 2016, the new spinning plant was converted into flats (178 lofts, 30 penthouses) with a shopping arcade (shops, restaurants, post office).

Currently, one textile producer of industrial past has remained, a small enterprise using original loom to produce jacquard fabric, and a souvenir shop selling linen products. Both enterprises are located in the Bielnik complex, which was part of the linen factory. Its main building houses the Museum of Linen, opened in 2014, which aims to commemorate the 180-year city industrial history. In raw spaces one can see the entire technological process of fabric production and a display of old photographs related to textile machines and multimedia presentations. Another building with cultural function is Muzeum Mazowsza Zachodniego (Museum of Western Mazovia), located in the Dittrich villa in the park. This regional museum presents, among others, an exhibition relating to the city history. Activities aimed at both residents and tourists include a trail running through the historical settlement and the European Heritage Days held in Żyrardów every year.

4. Conclusions

Cultural heritage is one of the key values on which city-forming processes can be based. The industrial city identity, described in the case studies, has been used to restore the centre-forming functions of the degraded

sites. Degradation processes have effectively limited the impact of historical factory complexes, unlike in the past, when they had an impact on the development of the entire cities.

The analysed post-industrial complexes have several common features. These valuable 19th-century post-industrial complexes of the former Congress Poland are located in downtown areas, easily accessible and functionally connected with the rest of the city. Their creators wanted to build self-sufficient settlements performing all socio-economic functions. Their isolation from the other parts of the cities was emphasised in many ways by a distinctive architecture, but above all by urban planning. A characteristic feature of the complexes were semi-closed urban quarters.

All complexes are situated in the areas included in the urban regeneration processes. The regeneration activities, carried out in stages, are still ongoing and will be continued in the future. These comprehensive interventions taking into account whole complexes, and not individual buildings, providing a lasting change in the spirit of sustainable development, constitute undoubtedly an important potential of all above-described cities. It also seems that the regeneration process, contrary to flagship projects, is therefore a better idea for the preservation and more effective use of cultural heritage resources.

It should be noticed that the industrial building architectural values have increased over time. Therefore, valuable historical monuments in all presented cases, as an important cultural heritage of supra-local significance, are protected in many ways (register of historical monuments, Cultural Park, Historic Monument). The status of the monument also helps to construct a new identity, important for the development of the city supra-regional potential. Currently, trends related to the renewal of post-industrial areas as part of regeneration processes aim at building such potential while improving life of local communities. New museums and other cultural facilities, which not only archive the memory of past times, but also promote the current offer of historical post-industrial complexes, help to achieve that task. Thus, the post-industrial complexes take into account cultural heritage, while adapting them to current socio-economic conditions and needs.

It should also be noted that the supra-local potential resulting from the value of the

case study historical heritage, despite the introduction of cultural functions addressed to the visitors, is still not fully used. Thus, the value of the textile industry preserved heritage is at the least of a supra-regional character. It seems that in order to fully use it, activities of supra-local character are needed. These include cooperation between the cities to build a brand based on the textile industry heritage by referring to the light industry development history, i.e. the period of Congress Poland. Such networking would serve to develop a common product by highlighting the common potential.

A possibility to achieve that task would be a common cultural route (e.g. former Congress Poland textile industry route) of a supra-regional nature, which is favoured by the central location of the cities. The cities are conveniently situated along main communication routes, including the A2 motorway. All of them provide necessary service infrastructure for visitors (eating places, hotels, souvenirs shops, information centres). Of course, such route would require promotional activities, common graphic identification, website, as well as, for example, special events organised under the common name. A good example of a successful trail promoting post-industrial heritage is the Industrial Monuments Route opened in 2006 in Śląskie Voivodeship, which since 2009 has recorded a double increase in visitors (<https://www.zabytkitechniki.pl>). In the case of the textile industry route other towns related to the textile industry of the former Congress Poland, such as Ozorków, Brzeziny, Aleksandrów Łódzki or Milanówek could also be included in it. Projects planned under the current urban regeneration programmes in Ozorków, Zgierz and Łódź assume the creation of a route connecting Księży Młyn, Weavers' Town in Zgierz and the centre of Ozorków, post-industrial cities related to the textile industry, could be regarded as the beginning of such a route. A proposal of such a route requires however further studies on other Congress Poland towns known for textile industrial past in order to determine their historical and cultural values as well as their present attractiveness for visitors – their supra-regional potential.

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