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Report on the 16th National Scientific Conference in the “Humanistic Ecology” Series: “Man for the City – the City for Man” (Warsaw, 26 October 2022)

Sprawozdanie z XVI Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji z cyklu „Ekologia Humanistyczna”
pt. „Człowiek dla miasta – miasto dla człowieka” (Warszawa, 26 października 2022)

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The 16th National Scientific Conference “Man for the City – the City for Man” is one in the series of events organized by the Department of Ecophilosophy at the Faculty of Christian Philosophy of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. Initiated in 2006 by Fr. Prof. Józef Marcełi Dołęga, the series of conferences was first titled “Social Ecology” and it comprised ten events held in the period between 2006 and 2016. The conferences’ profile was modified after Fr. Prof. J.M. Dołęga’s death, and in 2018 a new cycle, titled “Humanistic Ecology”, was first launched. However, the organizers had decided to continue the numbering of conferences in memory of its initiator and his original concept, hence this year’s edition which addresses the current environmental challenges is already the sixteenth conference.

The thematic scope of the present conference revolves around a highly topical issue, namely, the city. As cities have shaped our civilization for thousands of years, they seem to be an indispensable component paramount to the development of modern civilization. Along with the continuous growth

of the human population, the average density of population as well as the percentage of people living in cities is systematically increasing.

Since the mid-20th century, various UN agencies have been conducting systematic research on demographics. Data provided by the UN show that in 1804, humanity reached the level of 1 billion, in 1999, it was already 6 billion, and in 2022, 8 billion (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2022).

As the population is increasing, so is the population density. It is estimated that shortly before the Neolithic revolution, the average population density calculated based on the number of inhabitants per 1 km² was about 0.115 (Simmons 1990, 81). By contrast, in 1951, the world’s average population density was 17 inhabitants per 1 km²; in 1975 – 27; in 2000 – 41, and in 2020 – as many as 52 inhabitants per 1 km² (Worldometers.info 2022). The increase in population density entails a change in the structure of population in rural and urban areas. While the percentage of city dwellers in 1800 was only about 10%, in 2007, it increased to about 50%, and, according to forecasts,

in 2050, as much as 68% of humanity will live in cities. It is worth noting here that currently almost 50% of all city dwellers live in cities with up to 500,000 inhabitants, while approximately 13% in the so-called megacities, i.e., urban agglomerations with more than 10 million inhabitants. The number of megacities is steadily growing. In 1970, there were only 3 of them, in 1990 – 10, in 2018 – 33, and according to the forecasts for 2030 the number of megacities in the world will reach 43 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018, xix, 59; Woldometers.info 2015).

The data cited here clearly point to the significance of urban-related issues, both because the majority of the human population already lives in cities, and because of the quality of life in urban areas and the environmental impact associated with the functioning of cities. For several decades, intensive research has been carried out on the concept of a city which, on the one hand, would be as environmentally friendly as possible, and on the other, would ensure a high quality of life for its inhabitants. The research resulted in developing the concept of a sustainable city meeting these challenges. The weight of this issue is also evidenced by the fact that the 11th Sustainable Development Goal is directly devoted to these matters. The initiators of the “Man for the City – the City for Man” conference, in response to the constantly growing importance of urban issues, decided to approach this topic within the conference.

The organizers intended the conference to provide a forum for representatives of various fields of knowledge, from representatives of natural sciences, through representatives of technical, social, and legal sciences, to representatives of humanities. It is our belief that such a multidisciplinary approach will allow us to develop adequate responses to the challenges related to urban issues.

The significance of the conference topic was confirmed by the honorary patronage of:

- Grzegorz Puda from the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy of the Republic of Poland
- Adam Struzik, Marshal of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship
- Bolesław Stelmach Director of the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning.

The main organizer and originator of the conference was the Department of Ecophilosophy at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, and it was co-organized by the Marshal’s Office of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship and the Warsaw Seminar of Administration Axiology.

The conference was held in hybrid mode. All speakers participated in the conference on site which provided additional opportunity for unofficial discussions and exchange of views. Other participants of the conference could either be present at the venue or they could follow the conference program on the Internet.

Out of all submitted conference proposals, 16 papers and 4 posters were accepted for presentation by the Scientific Committee. Paper and poster presentations were prepared by 26 participants representing 9 research centres, 4 non-governmental organizations, enterprises, and local government entities. Seven papers were published in the “*Studia Ecologiae et Bioethicae*” journal as part of 3/2022 issue “*Miasto zrównoważone*” (“Sustainable City”), while the eighth paper was published in 4/2022 issue.

Speakers and authors of poster presentations represented the following research centres:

1. Archive of the Salesian Inspectorate in Piła
2. Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw
3. Institute for Sustainable Development
4. SGH Warsaw School of Economics
5. University of Łódź
6. University of Silesia in Katowice
7. University of Warsaw

8. Warsaw University of Life Sciences
9. WIT Warsaw School of Information Technology.

Apart from the speakers and authors of poster presentations, the conference was attended by 66 participants, including 49 in the offline and 17 in the online mode. Passive participants represented 19 scientific and research institutions and 5 local government units, enterprises, and non-governmental organizations.

The topic of the conference was introduced by a plenary lecture presented by Prof. Ryszard F. Sadowski "Remarks on the Concept of a Sustainable City in Light of Konrad Lorenz's Concept of Man. From the Perspective of Cities in Poland." Other presentations were made in two parallel thematic sessions.

The first session included the following presentations:

- Krystyna Najder-Stefania, *Ecosystem Understanding of the City-Human Being Relationship*
- Marcin Leźnicki, *Eco-city – designing in harmony with nature*
- Agata Kosieradzka-Federczyk, *Towards climate-neutral cities*
- Irena Burzyńska, *Forest in the city and the quality of the environment and the needs of residents*
- Małgorzata Falencka-Jabłońska, *Bees in the City*
- Adam Kapler, *Pro-ecological activities in cities of Polish State Water Holding*
- Agnieszka Rzeńca, Oliwia Wierucka, *A City for People in the Light of Studies on Urban Stress: Case Study of a Medium-sized City in Poland – Zduńska Wola*

The second session included the following presentations:

- Ewa Boryczka, *Problems and Challenges Involved in Using Integrated Urban Development Planning Tools. Example of a Development Strategy and Revitalisation Programmes*
- Ewa Jastrzębska, *Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 12 in Cities: Best Practices*

- Wojciech Szymalski, Andrzej Kassenberg, *Determining the Climate Risk in the City Using the Risk Matrix Method – Examples from Poland*
- Wojciech Szymalski, Aneta Afelt, *Urban Thermal Comfort – Reality and Challenges*
- Jakub Majewski, *Sustainable Mobility in the Cities and Agglomeration Areas*
- Michał Bijata, *Sustainable transport and the climate of the city*
- Stefan Jarecki, *Modern public transport – law and public policy*

The papers will not be discussed here as most of them have been already published.

All published papers are available to readers in the so-called open access on the journal's website: www.seib.uksw.edu.pl.

The organizers express their gratitude to the Honorary Patrons of the conference as well as all its participants for creating a friendly and inspiring atmosphere for the exchange of thoughts and joint effort to find solutions to the complex environmental challenges facing mankind today.

References

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