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?The Strategic Use of Heritage Representations: The Small Towns of Podlasie Province?



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Last May the open-access peer-reviewed **international academic journal "Urbanities**" published the result of the Polish case study carried on in the framework of the **Small Towns Heritage Pilot of REACH Project**. **The article was written by** Lu?a Klusáková(Charles University, Czech Republic) Halina Parafianowicz and Marlena Brzozowska (Bia?ystok University, Poland).]
The article stems from a project researching good practices in the use and re-use by small towns of their cultural heritage. Heritage representations and related participative activities may contribute to urban renaissance, or completely fail if there are no favourable conditions. The selected case of Podlasie Voivodship, a Polish province on the border with Lithuania and Belorussia, represents a peripheral border region. Its settlement is to quite a large extent represented by small towns on the edge of the countryside. To test our hypothesis that towns in border regions across Europe use heritage in their development strategies and that these are comparable through the perspective of the use and reuse of the heritage, the representations of selected settlements were analysed: Tykocin, Supra?l, Hajnówka with Bia?owie?a and Wysokie Mazowieckie. The authors are historians, and combine contextualization with observation of selected cases inspired by visual ethnography. In addition, the general public's understanding of heritage has been explored through the analysis of 248 questionnaires answered by a focus group of secondary school students from Wysokie Mazowieckie. The findings presented in the article contribute to the debate on the role of Creatives in towns from the historian's perspective
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