

Summary of the Ph.D. Thesis

Name of the author of the thesis: Adrianna Krzywik

Academic title of the doctoral supervisor of the thesis: dr hab. Barbara Pasamonik, prof. APS

Name of the auxiliary promoter: dr Zuzanna Bogumił

The title of the thesis: Commemorative murals from the perspective of their initiators and creators. An analysis of the presented attitudes of the actors of public space memory.

Key words phrases: muralism, commemorative murals, memory carriers, place memory, memory actors, politics of memory, public history, urban activism, visuality of the city.

Streszczenie:

Murals are now one of the most common alternatives to statues or commemorative boards. They are used to commemorate important figures and events in the history of a country. As monumental, commemorative murals, they are products of street art and memory carriers. Furthermore, the phenomenon of this artistic form makes it classified as a kind of urban activism. The research I have presented is based on the assumptions of memory studies (sociology of memory), urban sociology and visual sociology. My main objective was to investigate the community of memory actors (muralists and originators) of commemorative murals and, in particular, to determine the meanings and values they assign to commemorative murals. In addition, I looked at commemorative murals and the concept of their implementation in a specific urban space and attempted to examine the discourse around commemorative murals. The study allowed me to diagnose the environment of Polish muralists and the occurrence of the so-called professional muralist specialising in memorial themes. Data from in-depth interviews with both the muralists and originators of commemorative mural projects showed that the majority of commemorative murals are carried out as part of top-down initiatives, therefore their message and themes are more often negotiated with the government. Furthermore, the analysis of Polish murals pointed to a dynamic increase in the number of commemorative murals in relation to social or artistic murals. An important conclusion from the research is that Polish muralism is rooted in fighting graffiti, which has been and continues to be a form of public opposition to the appropriation of space by the state. The respondents

showed that urban activism, interference in the visual sphere of the city, is not unknown to them. The main motive for the activities undertaken in the sphere of remembrance was shown to be their family's sustained affection for history.