



ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSES AND THE QUESTION OF CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT IN A CITY

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Abstract. The paper deals with the different environmental discourses and the question whether the city is a creative environment. The theses have been developed as follows: 1) there are different environmental discourses including technological, sociological, ecological, religious, philosophical (ethical), urban, and discourse of creativity; 2) a novelty of a discourse follows from the interdisciplinary character, i.e. from a combination of the discourses; 3) a city both attracts and turns away the creative workers: here there are many occasions of creative activities and spreading of creation, however at the same time there is an anti-ecological environment that also unifies creation; 4) although cosmopolitanism and globalism are intimately connected, they could be evaluated as two contrary principles: the first one is to be connected with the principle of difference, the latter – with the principle of unification; 5) although there are many debates concerning such social formation as the creative class, it is the main element and engine of a creative society.

Keywords: urban environment, social environment, creative city, creative class, environmental discourses, globalism.

Introduction

According to Florida (2012), it is a characteristic of the cosmopolitan city to show tolerance to strangers and intolerance to uniformity. First of all, the scholars face the question of what a cosmopolitan city is and why it is attractive or unattractive to creative workers. The term „cosmopolitan” consists of two Greek words *kosmos* and *polis*. The former refers to the ornament that an ancient Greek saw by looking at the sky and stars; the ornate universe is inseparable from astonishing order, incredible harmony and striking beauty¹. *Kosmos* refers to surprising with an unapproachable whole of order, harmony and beauty. Plato (1992) appeals to it by creating a polis, a self-sufficient city-state that is just as well as ensuring the harmony of different creative individuals. *Kosmos* is a phenomenon that enforces the bracketing of creative aspirations in a polis for a new emerged whole. In this sense, it could be treated as an ecological principle that appeals to our natural and cultural limits.

¹ Similarly, the starry sky astonished I. Kant (2003), who compared it with the moral law inside us.

Nevertheless, this term has experienced an inversion. By speaking about cosmopolitan city, the scholars have in mind certain variety of individuals and communities, certain cultural globalism and certain “liberations” from the national “prejudices”. As a result, it presupposes a kind of elimination of certain traditions, of certain place, of certain localities and an orientation towards global language, culture and order. Herewith it is possible to talk about the inversions of connotations between *kosmos* and *polis*. In general, the terms and concepts develop regarding the cultural changes.

After the terms *kosmos* and *polis* have been wrested from the cultural and religious whole of antiquity, there are their new installations which have not fully “forgotten” the old connotations. This partial amnesia allows for the “liberating” of ancient terms and concepts for a new hermeneutic whole but it also pushes the culture to contradictions that should develop consequently.

The environmental discourses are as follows: technological, sociological, ecological, religious, philosophical (ethical), discourse of creativity, urban discourse. The methods and models used by the technological

environmental discourse comes partly from other discourses. Philosophical environmental discourse provides both the environmental ideas from the history of human thinking and a removed perspective including a critical approach.

The discourse of a creative city has been developed by Florida (2005, 2012), Landry (2000), in Lithuania – by Samalavičius (2009), Butkus (2011), Lavrinec (2014a; 2014b), Bajarkevičius (2014), Čiupailaitė (2014), and Urbonaitė-Barkauskienė (2014). Creativity studies have been developed by Juzefovič (2013, 2015), Barevičiūtė (2014), Černevičiūtė, Strazdas (2014a, 2014b), Aglinskas (2014), Dūdėnas (2014), Mitkus (2013), Štuopytė (2013), Valivonytė (2013), and Jonkus (2015). The problems of environment, including creative environment and creative city, have been analysed by Audretsch, Belitski (2013), Baltrėnas *et al.* (2014), Baltrėnas *et al.* (2015), Cetindamar, Gunsel (2012), Markert *et al.* (2012), Scott (2010), Tyrvainen *et al.* (2014), Vasarevičius *et al.* (2013), Juškevičius, Burinskienė (2007), Zaleckis (2011), and others.

1. Technological environmental discourse comparing with other studies of environment

The term “environment” has been used in many discourses including technological, sociological, philosophical, ecological, religious, philosophical (ethical), urban ones, as well discourse of creativity (see Fig. 1).

As result, there are different combinations of environmental discourses. Technological discourse of environment deals with sociological order and data, ecological

subject, ethics of technologies, as well urban subject. Although the innovations play very important role in development of the technology, creativity in technological discourse should be related namely with interdisciplinary aspect, i.e. with combination with other discourses.

The Table 1 shows the possible combinations of environmental discourses and certain branches of sciences, as well culture (religion). The mark “+” shows a possible combination, the mark “-” – impossible combination, and the mark “’” – tautological combination. For example, it is possible to discuss religious implications to environmental approach (comp. Guth *et al.* 1995). Usually, the scientific approach presupposes the theses that could be “falsified” using a term of Popper (1983).

On the one hand, the scholars can search for environmental ideas in the history of philosophy (Attfield 1991). On the other hand, philosophy helps to reflect the environmental problems in social context from broader perspective and to test the very way of thinking (Janssens 2004) including religious connotations (Guth *et al.* 1995). The grounding of a new interdisciplinary environmental discourse is already philosophy because of appealing to different knowledge base. Beside this, many environmental discourses including technological one considers the ethical issues (Oughton, Strand 2002; Oughton 2003). Finally, one or another philosophy being a core of worldview does influence the environmental decisions (see Fig. 2). In the next chapters, the philosophical approach have been used by analysing city as creative environment.

According to Patavalis, Aravossis (2002), technological environmental approach appeals to the methods and

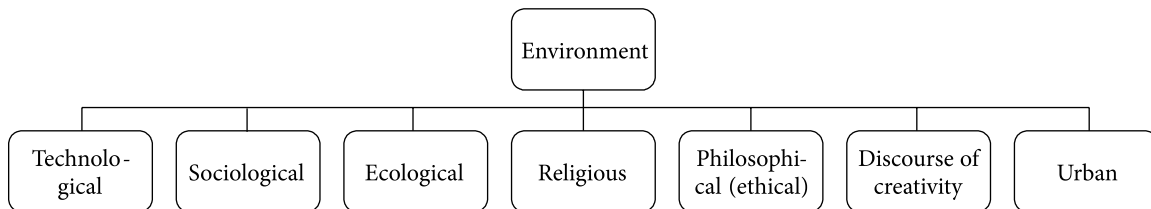


Fig. 1. Environmental discourses

Table 1. Combinations of environmental discourses

	Technological	Sociological	Ecological	Religious	Philosophical (ethical)	Creativity discourse	Urban discourse
Technology	’	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sociology	+	’	+	+	+	+	+
Ecology	+	+	’	+	+	+	+
Religion	-	-	+	’	+	+	-
Philosophy (ethics)	+	+	+	+	’	+	+
Creativity studies	+	+	+	+	+	’	+
Urban studies	+	+	+	-	+	+	’

Table 2. Methods and models used in technological environmental discourse²

Methods and models	Applied area	Authors and references
PROMETHEE and GALA methods	nuclear waste management	Briggs <i>et al.</i> (1990)
	oil and gas pipeline planning	Tavana <i>et al.</i> (2013)
	choice of systems for drying seeds and powder materials	Prvulovic <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Multi-criteria model	selection of a technology for the disposal of plutonium	Dyer <i>et al.</i> (1998)
	post-earthquake sustainable reconstruction	Opricovic, Tzeng (2002)
	measurement of sustainable performance	Ding 2005
	territory planning	Ustinovichius <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Regional planning model	planning of an urban solid waste	Caruso <i>et al.</i> (1993)
	urban planning	Juškevičius, Burinskienė (2007)
	development of creative economy	Comunian <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Decision support system	effective planning and management of household recyclable solid waste	Benson, Page (1998)
	urban planning	Mitraka <i>et al.</i> (2014)
	marine environmental	Baziuke <i>et al.</i> (2014)
ELECTRE III method	solid waste management system	Hokkanen, Salminen (1997)
	the oil and gas industry analysis	De Carvalho Infante <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Heuristic method	planning of household waste disposal	Skordilis (1989)
Cumulative Energy Extraction from the Natural Environment (CEENE) method	analysing of the environmental impact of marine areal occupation	Taelman <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Methods for screening biofilm formation in the laboratory	Understanding of surface colonization in natural environment	Fischer <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Singularity expansion method (SEM)	Dielectric sphere in various environments	Mei (2014)
Dezert-Smarandache theory	Multiple targets tracking in natural environment	Wang <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Geotechnical and hydrogeological methods	Urban planning	Berhane, Walraevens (2013)
Robotics methods	Environment and the objects therein	Toussaint <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Health promotion method for reducing stress	Urban natural and built environments	Beil, Hanes (2013)
Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (PAGE), field-flow fractionation (FFF), and size exclusion chromatograph (SEC)	Mass spectrometric measurements	Jimenez <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Mono-window algorithm	Land surface temperature retrieval	Zhao <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Ion chromatography tandem mass spectrometry (IC-ESI/MS/MS) method	Quantification and conformation of chlorate in environmental samples	Rao <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Photorealistic ray tracing methods	Imperfect invisible spheres and invisibility cloaks	Danner (2010)
B3LYP and MP2 quantum chemical methods	Analysis of the tautomerism of the four most stable conformers of the antiviral analogue D4T and natural thymidine nucleosides	Alcolea, Iza (2010)
Method of Gibbs free-energy minimization	Calculation of thermodynamic equilibria	Gaskova <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Molecular evolutionary genetics analysis (MEGA), Maximum composite likelihood (MCL)	Analyse of sequence alignments to estimate evolutionary distances	Tamura <i>et al.</i> (2007)
Comparative protein modelling	Rational design of mutagenesis experiments	Guex, Peitsch (1997)

² Although Table 2 does not refer to creativity directly, it shows the diversity of environmental discourses.

models as follows: 1) PROMETHEE and GALA; 2) multi-criteria model; 3) regional planning model; 4) decision support system; 5) ELECTRE III method; 6) heuristic method. Additionally, it appeals to CEENE, SEM, robotics, adaptive K-means methods and other methods, models and theories (see Table 2).

At least one of these models (regional planning model) follows from the urban studies. Some of them (multi-criteria model, decision support system, geotechnical and hydrogeological methods, health promotion method for reducing stress) have been successfully used in the urban planning.

The mentioned regional planning model has been used also in development of creative industries, i. e. in policy of creative industries. Since the next chapters deal with creative environment in a city, it is worth to be mentioned.

Environmental protection covers the different factors and agents (see Table 3). The technology is only one of them. Usually, the agents of world-view are the public figures including the writers, philosophers and artists. The agents of the other factors (social, technological, economical, and political) are not only the theorists, the influence of which on decision making³ is very limited.

Table 3. Factors and agents of environmental protection⁴

Factor	Agents
Factor of world-view	Public figures
Social	Sociologists, communities members
Technological	Engineers, users of the technology
Economical	Economists, businessmen
Political	Political theorists, politicians,

The interactions of mentioned environmental dimensions have been showed in Figure 2. Beside the interactions, it is possible to speak also about the conflicts and clashes both between the different interests and the environmental agents. There is no one environmental approach both within the scientific communities and within the groups of a society.

2. Urban and creative environment

The cosmopolitan city is full of contradictions. First of all, the question of the difference between a cosmopolitan and a global city does arise. A city is attractive and creative usually by appealing to its territory, culture, locality, i. e. to certain tradition. Territory here is an area of creative specialization in a city, which has been nourished both by global need and local environment. If the roots

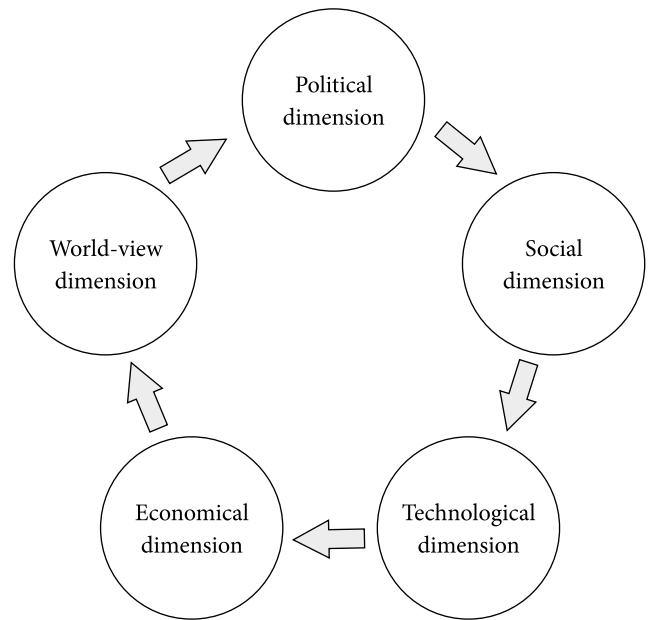


Fig. 2. Interactions of environmental attribution

of tradition have been cut and the local inequalities have been levelled, as a city orientates itself towards global tendencies, it loses identity and its culture becomes anaemic, finally not attractive. Nevertheless, a city is cosmopolitan because of the motley individuals represented by different languages, religions, robes, or skin colour.

On the other hand, a city is global because of certain features, buildings, signboards, fashions or life styles similar in different regions. The supermarkets, McDonalds, jeans, smart phones, life on credit, running through the streets and even the pursuit of ecology make the cities similar around the world despite their inimitable buildings and exceptional people. Zaleckis (2011) speaks about mentalscape, matterscape, and powerscape under the influence of globalization. Although cosmopolitanism and globalism are intimately connected, they could be evaluated as two contrary principles: the former is to be connected with acceptance of difference, the latter – with uniformity. The question arises to what extent either one attracts the creative workers and how much they represent a creative city.

In general, the bigger the city the more contradictory tendencies and conflicting situations it has. Tolerance to the strangers, including the creative workers with their different activity and life art, is not so much due to our morality, feeling of duty, principle of dialog, respect to strangeness or tolerance but rather from anonymity dictated by the enormous urban spaces. Some creative workers use this opportunity not only to spread his (her) works but also to live *incognito*.

If the ideas circulating in a city are attractive for the creative workers, although its noise (including noise of the

³ More about environmental decision making see Carraro, Siniscalco 1993; Frank *et al.* 2000; Petersen 2009; Janssens 2004.

⁴ Although Table 3 appeals to the protection of physical environment, it shows the social aspects of it.

media) and pollution are offensive, the scholars should speak about the optimal size of a city from the creative point of view. Remember Plato (1992), who spoke about a city of optimal size. It was about 20 000 citizens, consequently, about 100 000 people including the members (children and slaves) of citizens' families. A bigger city would not be harmonious because of inner contradictions such as national or religious, while a smaller one would not be self-sufficient, i.e. it could not satisfy emerging needs with its own resources. Similarly, the scholars could speak about a city of optimal size attractive for the creative workers. However, this optimal size depends on the state, culture, geography etc.

Florida (2012) assigns the creative class a modest role, i.e. to change details such as the nightlife of a city, insufficiently creative activities or non-dynamic approaches. The question why Florida underestimates the creative class presupposes three possible answers: 1) He is not as sceptical towards the development of the urban society as Horkheimer and Adorno (2002); 2) He is too optimistic towards creative class; 3) The perspective and the instruments of one science do not allow him to look at the city from the perspective of a creative society.

A city has a lot of cultural sources including both formal and informal: theatres, music-halls, philharmonics, cinemas, museums, universities, libraries, restaurants, churches. Furthermore, the spaces of a city could be used for different events, including the streets (for music festivals), squares (for installations and performances) or even the whole city (for firecrackers, light festivals). Florida appeals more to informal culture, i.e. street arts that are to be connected with music, art, cinema, recreation and nightlife. Beside this, tourism is inseparable from such forms of urban culture as the museums (Murphy, Schlaerth 2015). A city with its dynamic life is source of movement in general (Lingis 2015; Sakalauskaitė 2015). Finally, informal culture also moves the formal one by giving it ideas. Society grows into a creative society through the influence of informal culture.

Conclusions

There are different sources and their combinations of environmental discourses. The environmental discourse is inseparable from technological, sociological, ecological, ethical, urban and other subjects. The scholars can search for environmental ideas in the history of philosophy that helps, in turn, to reflect the environmental problems in social context from broader perspective and to test the very way of thinking including religious connotations. Many environmental discourses including technological ones consider the ethical problems. On the other hand, one or another philosophy being a core of world-view does influence the environmental decisions.

A city could be treated as a creative environment. A city suggests many opportunities for the creative activities and creative workers. It is not clear why a city attracts the creative workers. The question of what the city's role is towards the creative workers stays open: does it attract or repulse them? A similar question also arises towards creative society: is the city the model of a creative society? Can the uniform tendencies of a city's mediated society be harmonized with the aspirations of a creative society? Probably, these things are inseparable from each other: creative ideas circulate in a mediated environment.

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