

Abstract

Martin Veselý

At home at the large housing estate? Local identity and place identification in different types of urban environment

The thesis is concerned with the question of local identity and place identification in urban environment on the example of Prague's Southern Town representing a large, centrally planned housing estate, and "old" Vršovice as an example of a traditional city quarter. The author distinguishes two theoretical-methodological approaches to the analysis of urban environment. The first approach is ontological-historical, ethnic perspective describing the city with the use of theoretical devices of urbanism and phenomenology of architecture. The second approach – anthropological – is an emic approach studying the interpretation of a place by social agents. The author shows on numerous examples, how do the people identify with a place and what is the role of the physical attributes of the place and its memory in the process of place identification. The relation between ontological-historical and anthropological perspective is according to the author dialogic and he is looking for points of intersection. He shows that the consequence of one-sided way of interpretation is insufficient understanding for place identity. In other words, it is not able to answer convincingly the question what does the genius loci consist in.