



## Directions of transformations of public spaces on an academic campus with the example of the Czestochowa University of Technology

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### ABSTRACT:

In this article the authors present current issues related to shaping public spaces within the academic campus of the Czestochowa University of Technology. The development of public zones has a direct impact on the architectural and urban structure of both the students' facilities and the space between them. This space is equivalent to cubature objects. It not only complements and enriches the surroundings of the building, but also provides a platform for stimulating change processes in line with the needs of the academic community. The article describes activities related to the functional and spatial solutions of open areas of the Czestochowa University of Technology. Attention has been paid to the development of the entrance zones of the main university buildings.

### KEYWORDS:

urban planning; architecture; public space

## 1. Introduction

The urban layout of the campus of the Czestochowa University of Technology has a special place in the urban structure of the city. Due to its extensive educational and cultural function, it is an important platform for contact between the entire university community and the inhabitants of Czestochowa. Due to the aesthetic and functional value of the university's facilities built in the 1960s and 1970s, continuous modernization processes are carried out. Their goal is to emphasize the architecture of the facilities and functional adaptation to modern needs. The modernization of university buildings is not limited to the buildings themselves. It is a broader stage of the urban and social process. The design work also covers the quality of common spaces within the academic area. The academic campus has a unique location within a vast open area intended for recreation. Good sunlight and ventilation of the entire urban structure as well as extensive green areas give an opportunity to create an academic complex with high functional, social and cultural parameters.

The article presents examples of the possibilities of evaluating space within the academic campus of the Czestochowa University of Technology. The designed spaces should provide the possibility of adaptation. Each of them is a response to the local program offer and the context of the cultural space.

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## 2. Design of open spaces

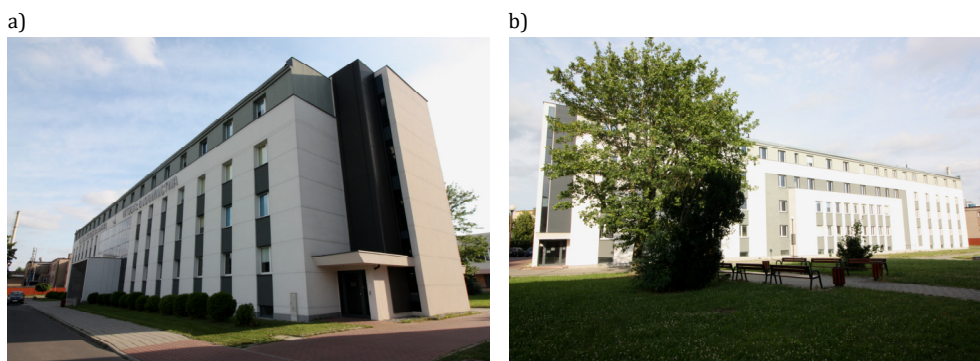
The image of an academic campus is largely shaped by the quality of its public spaces. They are created both by the architecture of objects and their surroundings [1]. Public spaces on academic campuses are the scene of many cultural events of various types and scales. In the case of the urban structure of the Czestochowa University of Technology, there is no sequence of urban interiors that would create a coherent layout of open spaces. On the other hand, the variety of forms and architectural styles of individual objects encourages caution when undertaking design activities [2].

An attempt to integrate the entire space of the campus involves activities that take into account the context of the place. These involve reference to the existing environment, its past and present. This approach is in line with contemporary trends in the design of urban spaces in urbanized areas [3].

The modernisation and design work mainly concerns the space between the buildings. This open and flexible structure evolves between the buildings according to the changing needs of the users [4]. The Architecture Club at the Faculty of Civil Engineering at the Czestochowa University of Technology organised a competition for the development of space within the Faculty of Civil Engineering and the Academic Cultural Centre at the university. Within the framework of the competition tasks the students focused on highlighting the architecture of the buildings and functional-spatial solutions embedded in the urban context of the university campus.

### 2.1. Development of space within the Faculty of Civil Engineering

The development of space within the Faculty of Civil Engineering aims to introduce functional and spatial solutions for new places. The modernization of the Faculty of Civil Engineering carried out in recent years has enhanced the aesthetic and functional values of the building while maintaining a simple, disciplined form. An important assumption of the modernization works was the addition of a staircase with an elevator. This solution increased the safety of the building's users, and facilitated access to the building for people with physical disabilities (Fig. 1a).



**Fig. 1.** Building of the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Czestochowa University of Technology: a) View of the building from the north-east. In the foreground, an added fragment of the building with the staircase and the elevator, b) View of the building from the west. A green zone with a small square and benches is visible in front of the building

Such measures provided the impetus for further works. These consisted of highlighting the architecture of the building and its entrance area and introducing additional functions in the building's surroundings (Fig. 1b). The student's work presents a number of solutions for spaces serving as places for meetings, recreation, study, exercise. The material solutions emphasise the atmosphere of the designed open interiors. An important role is played by green areas with

high-quality landscaping elements (stainless steel, stone, wood) [5]. The designed space serves all users by creating a network of communication (e.g. bicycle infrastructure), recreational spaces and green connections with the urban structure [6] (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 2.** Design concepts of the 'Politechnik' Club, the Czestochowa University of Technology – works created under the professional supervision of the Circle's tutors (Nina Sołkiewicz-Kos, Malwina Tubielewicz-Michalczuk)

## 2.2. Development of the space within the Academic Cultural Centre at the Czestochowa University of Technology

The building of the 'Politechnik' Club – currently the Academic Cultural Centre, occupies a special place among the whole urban development of the Czestochowa University of Technology. Constructed at the end of the 1960s, the building has continuously activated the academic community, providing an important platform for contact between the entire university community as well as the inhabitants of Czestochowa. The building is currently in need of modernisation.

In an attempt to meet these expectations, a competition for the colour concept of the Academic Cultural Centre at Czestochowa University of Technology was organised within the Architecture Club at the Faculty of Civil Engineering. The students, having at their disposal the latest solutions in terms of the techniques and technologies used, tried to emphasise the architecture of the building whose body refers to the best traditions of the modernism period [7]. Another focus of the design activities within the academic zone was the development of space within the Academic Cultural Centre. The design work was intended to emphasise the architecture of the building and its rich programme offer in the fields of culture and art as well as physical culture and sport. The design concepts developed by the students under the guidance of their teachers (the authors of the article) allowed for the creation of a variety of design proposals for the development of the area around the Academic Cultural Centre.



**Fig. 3.** Design concepts for the Academic Cultural Centre at the Czestochowa University of Technology – works created under the supervision of the Circle's tutors (Nina Sołkiewicz-Kos, Malwina Tubielewicz-Michalczuk)

The development concept presented in the competition work emphasises the modernist architecture of the building. Practical spatial solutions such as small architecture elements, discreet lighting, carefully designed greenery and landscaping reinforce the interaction between the building and the surrounding space (Fig. 3). The idea behind the project is to create a creative environment that acts as a catalyst for academic and urban space [8].

### 3. Conclusions

Improving the quality of common spaces is an important subject of design activities within the academic area. The article presents examples of the possibilities of evaluating space within the academic campus of Czestochowa University of Technology. Each of them is a response to the local program offer and the context of cultural space.

Although access to information and communication is nowadays based on electronic networks, there is still a need to design specific places with access to good infrastructure. A university campus is a place where educated, independently thinking and creative people form the basis of the student community. Improving the quality of the spaces they use is a prerequisite for the enjoyment of everyday life in this unique academic structure.

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## **Kierunki przekształceń przestrzeni publicznych kampusu akademickiego na przykładzie Politechniki Częstochowskiej**

### **STRESZCZENIE:**

Nieustanne procesy urbanizacji miast zwracają uwagę na rozwiązania formalne i funkcjonalne przestrzeni miejskich. Są one odpowiedzią na współczesne wymagania społeczne i gospodarcze. W artykule przedstawiono kierunki przekształceń przestrzeni publicznych kampusu akademickiego Politechniki Częstochowskiej. Działania te polegają na odwoływaniu się do zastanego otoczenia, jego przeszłości i teraźniejszości oraz wpisują się we współczesne tendencje dotyczące projektowania przestrzeni miejskich na terenach zurbanizowanych. Częstochowa to miasto o bogatej historii i czytelnej strukturze przestrzennej. Jego architektura i urbanistyka o szczególnej wartości historycznej, kulturowej i społecznej zobowiązuje do rzetelnej analizy działań projektowych prezentujących wizję przyszłości tych miejsc.

### **SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:**

urbanistyka; architektura; przestrzeń publiczna