RESIDENTIAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS URBAN HERITAGE IN BUDAPEST - THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF THE WEKERLE QUARTER

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Abstract Cultural heritage of various cities or neighbourhoods on the one hand gives a special character to places and on the other hand it provides the residents with the feeling of home and emphasizes the cultural distinctiveness for the outside world. In the study a 100-year-old garden city-like neighbourhood of Budapest, the Wekerle estate is examined. The houses of Wekerle built in Art Nouveau style, its unique street pattern contribute to the peculiar cultural heritage of the area. The aim of the study is to find out whether the residents regard the cultural heritage to belong or contribute to their own identity and also to find out whether the attitudes of the “aboriginals” and the “new comers” differ from each other.

Keywords: Wekerle estate, local community, cultural heritage, identity, residential questionnaire

1. INTRODUCTION

There are no two identical places in the world. As all the places are the outcomes of their history and have their own cultural heritage, all the places are unique. While some of the places are more special with more easily recognisable characters that are rather unique and exceptional in the world, other places seem to be just “average” with no outstanding features. The places where this special atmosphere is easily sensible usually become international tourist attractions. Places with less characteristic features may not be internationally known but at a narrower level, for example at the level of nation, they may become still highly appraised and visited places. However when visiting these places a higher level of knowledge regarding the regional and local culture is needed as to be able to sense their not so sharp-featured peculiarities (Rátz T. - Michalkó G., 2006). In some cases it is only the residents, who can sense the mild differences, the slightly perceptible genius loci, and the special atmosphere of their cities or neighbourhoods.

In big cities the various neighbourhoods often have different atmospheres. In some cases the cultural heritage of a territory gives a special, easily recognisable atmosphere to a quarter (for example the architectural style may be a rather easily perceptible characteristic of an area) and in other cases not even the residents are able to sense or to phrase the peculiarity of their area.
Beyond the fact that cultural heritage gives a special character to places it also gives the residents the feeling of home and raises the attention of the outside world for the cultural distinctiveness of the area (Scheffler, N. – Kulikauskas, P. – Barreiro, F., 2009). Cultural heritage may also support the identity of the residents. According to Ennen the fact whether cultural heritage strengthens the identity depends on the attitude of the residents. She classified the residents into the groups of “connoisseurs”, “take-it-or-leavers” and “rejecters” based on their attitudes (Ennen, E., 1999).

In this paper the Wekerle estate, a more than a 100-year-old garden city-like neighbourhood of Budapest, is examined. The neighbourhood of Wekerle is easy to distinguish from other parts of Budapest, as it has a rather unique but regular street-pattern and its houses are built in the Hungarian Art Nouveau style.

The aim of the study is to find out whether the special character of the Wekerle estate is perceived by the residents of the Wekerle in their everyday life, whether it is regarded to form the part of the local cultural heritage and thus whether it strengthens their local identity. On the other hand the study also tries to reveal whether there is a difference in the attitude of “aboriginals” and the “newly arrived people” regarding the perception of the local cultural heritage of Wekerle. Up to now there has not been any study on the Wekerle estate from this point of view. As the inhabitants of the Wekerle are changing fast, it is important to sense and understand these processes.

2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE, IDENTITY AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

As cultural heritage highly influences the development and the economic performance of a territory, it may enhance the competitiveness of territories (Czene Zs, 2002). Thus cultural factors are important factors of the economy and help to create an innovative milieu.

All the territories are unique. The uniqueness of the spaces is determined by the complex of its material-historical, spiritual-social and natural characteristics. These characteristics must not be handled separately as social or natural factors, as all these factors taken together; their complexity is the cultural heritage itself (Fig. 1).
Fig. 1: The approach towards cultural heritage from the perspective of development (Source: Czene Zs., 2002)

Thus cultural heritage is not interpreted as the heritage of culture. Cultural heritage is heritage in a broader sense that is inseparable of culture; that is heritage soaked with culture. From the point of view of planning cultural heritage is the complex ensemble of cultural, social and economic characteristics of a territory. Cultural heritage can be divided into three main fields: the material-historical, the spiritual-social and to the natural heritage, all of which is contributing to the uniqueness of the territory (Czene Zs., 2002).

According to another approach heritage can be divided into intangible and tangible heritage. This approach is the most commonly used. It I used be the UNESCO as well, as the protection of cultural and natural heritage (tangible heritage) ratified in the convention signed in 1792 (UNESCO 1972, 2003) was expanded in 2003 to the protection of intangible heritage (e.g. folk songs, habits, traditions etc.).

Whichever division of heritage is used, it is highly important to emphasize that the notion of the cultural heritage is always strongly connected to the past. In fact heritage is defined through the elements highlighted from the past, thus through history (Graham, B., 2002). As by time the interpretation of the past may change, the scope of things that are regarded to be cultural heritage changes as well (Graham, B. et al., 2000). Thus cultural heritage is not a given virtue, but a social construction which is, per se, changing by time and is shaped by social relations.

Identity is also a constantly changing social construction, the possessing over which is an important question. Thus identity is in the crossfire of powers struggling to acquire the ability to be able to decide which identity is the dominant, which is accepted and tolerated (Castells, M., 1997, Bugovics Z., 2007). On the other hand identity has different scales: local, regional, national, and on the other hand it can be seen from various perspectives: personal, collective, external, etc. As several of our identities seem to weaken due to modern times and globalisation, other identities become more important. This way local
identity becomes an issue of growing importance these days. Local identity is strongly related to tangible and intangible heritage: buildings, history, habits, etc. (Fig. 2.).

It helps the citizens to become more strongly attached to their neighbourhood and it increases the feeling of belonging somewhere, which contributes to the residents’ willingness to advocate for it.

As identity can help to form the image of an area (Scheffler, N. – Kulikauskas, P. – Barreiro, F., 2009) it is becoming more important for mayors and urban planners as well. By creating a distinct image a city is more easily distinguished from other cities, which is a rather significant advantage in the global competition as positive image attracts people and investments as well (Boros L. – Garamhegyi Á., 2009, Boros L., 2010). Thus identity provides continuity in a fast changing world, it preserves the traditions of communities and makes sure that the changes do not destroy the essential qualities of cities or quarters. In urban development the existence of a positive image means that it has to be preserved or even built on (Scheffler, N. – Kulikauskas, P. – Barreiro, F., 2009).

Urban planning is successful only if it improves the development of the population living at the territory in question. According to the 2nd § of the Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Physical Planning one of the aims of urban development is also to “keep and strengthen the national and the territorial identity” (Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Physical Planning of Hungary). Thus the development policies that do not take into consideration the identity of the residents do not strengthen their identity and their feeling of home, but on the contrary, it may launch the alienation from the neighbourhood. As space is a social construction (Lefébvre, H., 1991), urban development needs to focus not on the place but on the residents of the place (Bugovics Z., 2007). The feeling of home is rather important for residents, as home is the place where people feel to be in security and home is the place over which they dispose. Identity is formed in space.

Fig.2. The relationship between cultural heritage, identity and development
Source: Scheffler, N. – Kulikauskas, P. – Barreiro, F., 2009
and is formed by space - especially by the spaces of home. In developed societies the feeling of home is very important. Residents want to experience the feeling of home, and in case they lack this feeling, they are less committed to their neighbourhood and they participate less intensively in its formation and improvement (Bugovics Z., 2007).

The special feature of today’s globalising and fast-changing word is that identities are changing rather fast. In times of change and in times of crises societies look for stability and unity more intensively, which is the reason why the collective identities have been strengthened in the last years. People feel it necessary to keep up their cultural distinctiveness and to have the power over their life and their environment. These tendencies result in proactive (feminism, environmental movements) and reactive movements (religious movements), which oppose globalisation and cosmopolitism (Castells, M., 1997). Some have the opinion that globalisation, the changes it generates and the new technologies weaken national units and strengthen particularism. According to this view the role of places is becoming less important as the internet and the mobile phones makes it possible that individuals geographically far away from each other form so called quasi-communities regardless of the geographical distance between them (Bugovics Z., 2007 referring to Price E. M.).

According to others local identities are not so much affected by globalisation but by the constantly changing political-economic processes and structures and by the current relationship among the actors having influence over the territory. Thus local residents, like one of the actors participating in this process, have a significant role in shaping local identity (Kneafsey M., 2000).

In some countries, especially in countries having experienced radical changes (e.g. becoming independent, the change of regime) it often happens that the state intends to turn the identity of citizens into a different direction than the direction the citizens would like themselves. For example, in Singapore nearly all the religious places and buildings fell victim to urban development, even though they served as a source for local identity as these buildings were erected on sacred places usually chosen by divine revelation. By erecting a modern metropolis all the oriental mysticism disappeared from the city, which resulted not only in a weakened local identity but also in the decrease in the number of tourists visiting Singapore (Kong, L.L., 2006).

In some cases various quarters or neighbourhoods have specific, rather sensible atmosphere different from that of the whole city. These quarters often become the popular tourist attractions of the cities. For example in many cases the neighbourhoods inhabited by immigrants and guest workers became interesting spectacles of North-American or European cities. From North-America the best example is the Little Italy in New York and the Chinese quarters both in San Francisco and in New York. This happened also in Berlin, where the neighbourhood called Kreuzberg, which is populated by guest workers from Turkey and Yugoslavia, became a “bohemian quarter” by today. In Krakow, in the Kazimierz quarter the traditions and the atmosphere of the Jewish culture is kept alive, even if there are living only a few Jewish inhabitants in the city. As the quarter has become an important tourist attraction in Krakow, not only the Jewish people but also the catholic inhabitants of the town aim to preserve the uniqueness of the quarter (Shaw, S. et al, 2004).
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

Cultural heritage gives a special character to neighbours or cities. This special character on the one hand confirms the cultural distinctiveness to the outside world, and on the other hand it provides the inhabitants with the feeling of home and thus contributes to their local identity. The aim of this paper is to find out if the cultural heritage of the Wekerle estate enhances the feeling of home in the residents and if it contributes to their local identity. The aim of the paper is to find out whether this area, which is rather special in its architectural character and rich in cultural heritage, is regarded to belong to the heritage of the residents. This research also intends to detect if there is any difference in the evaluation of heritage of the residents who moved to the Wekerle in the last few years and the residents who have been living here for several decades or maybe all their lives. The question is whether the special atmosphere of the quarter strengthens the local identity?

As to find out the attitudes of the residents at Wekerle an inquiry based on a residential questionnaire was prepared. The research was carried out in March 2012. The selection of the sample was simple random sampling. Every 4th household (based on a territorial collation) was delivered a notification letter about the research. Besides the aim of the research it was also written in the letter that an interviewer will come on an exact date and will ask some questions on the indicated topics. Off course not all the households were opened for filling in the questionnaires and only residents above 18 years were asked. Apart from the notified persons further locals, met on the streets of the neighbourhood, were asked to fill in the questionnaires. Finally 384 people filled in the inquiry form, which means that about the 8.5% of the households was asked.

The questionnaire contained closed and open-ended questions, two scales (a five-point Likert-type scale and a five-point Osgood-type scale) and several questions regarding the socio-economic parameters of the residents filling in the questionnaires.

The analysis of the results of these questionnaires brought on an overall view on how the locals live there and what kind of attitudes they have towards the built cultural heritage and the atmosphere of the Wekerle.

3. THE STUDY AREA: THE WEKERLE ESTATE

4.1. The history of the Wekerle estate

The Wekerle estate is situated in the 19th district, which is one of the outer districts of Budapest (Fig.3.). The establishment of the Wekerle estate is strongly connected to the garden-city movement popular at the end of the 19th century in Europe. The creation of this estate was the biggest development of Budapest at that time. The estate was established over the borders of the then time city, where there was still enough place to raise the buildings and where the strict construction rules of the city were not valid. New dwellings were fairly needed at that time in Budapest, as between 1873 and 1900 the population of the city was doubled due to the intensive industrialisation, which required human labour. At that time people from villages moved to the city in favour of better job opportunities. As the population was growing rather fast, Budapest suddenly suffered from the lack of dwelling spaces (Kovács Z., 2006). This was the reason why Sándor Wekerle the prime minister of that time decided to buy the territory close to south-eastern border of the town and to create
a housing estate for workers and civil servants (Nagy G. – Szelényi K., 2001, Remeczki R., 2005). The estate was created in accordance with the characteristics and requirements of then modern and fashionable garden-city movement. In Budapest, for example, there were some other garden cities built in that time: the garden city built for the workers and officers of the gasworks in the IIIrd district or the garden city built for the workers of the national railway company in the XVth district.

In the case of the Wekerle estate the garden city was designed to have a small-town-like character so that the newly arriving residents, who came mainly from rural areas, could easily get used to the new environment (Csanádi G., 2010.).

![Fig.3. The location of the Wekerle estate (within Budapest and within the XIXth district) and its radial street pattern (Source: Pap Agi)](image)

While preparing the plans of the estate a highly meticulous attention was devoted to the details. The planner wanted to avoid the monotony of similar estates thus not only the functional arrangement of the streets and the houses were taken into consideration but also their aesthetic value. Its radial street-pattern looks like a spider web with a square in the middle (Fig.3.). The houses are built in the Hungarian art Nouveau style, thus various motifs of the rural architecture can be seen on nearly all the houses. The very special elements of the Wekerle houses are the shutters, which are regarded to be the iconic elements of the estate (Fig.4. and Fig.5.).
The construction works lasted for 16 years (between 1909 and 1926), during which time 1007 houses were built, that contained 4412 flats. Four schools and several kindergartens, 2 gymnasiums, a police headquarter and a post office supplied the needs of the inhabitants (László Gy., 1926). At the beginning all the flats were in the property of the state. The situation remained the same during the socialist era, and only after the change of the regime were most of the dwellings privatised. Most of the flats were bought by the tenants already living in it for several years or decades.
As the Wekerle estate is of outstanding value the National Office of Cultural Heritage of Hungary (NOCH) put the estate under temporal protection in 2009 and finally in September 2011 it was nominated to be a conservation area of special historical and architectural interest.

Even before the National Office of Cultural Heritage highlighted the importance of the Wekerle estate, the local government of the 19th district had already made steps to preserve the special character of the neighbourhood. In the appendix number 16 of the Planning and Urban Regulation Order of the 19th district (the Decree of the Representative Body of the Government of the 19th district No. 43 of 2000 (XI. 24)) it was already stated that special means are to be used in the urban planning of the Wekerle estate.

The regulations for the Wekerle estate rather accurately declare how the various interventions are to be executed. According to the regulations the street pattern, the urban landscape and the built environment have to be preserved. All the alterations carried out on the buildings, all the modernisation and renovation have to be in harmony with the original form, colours and materials of the buildings. For example the regulation clearly states how and what kind of roof windows can be inserted if the flat is extended by creating a loft. The parameters of the fences, of the terraces, of the newly built garages, of the store-houses in the gardens etc. are all defined.

When renewing or changing the windows or the doors of the flats, the owners must stick to the original design. The panel-like folding shutters, that are characteristics of the houses of Wekerle, must not be removed or changed for any other type. The exterior part of the air conditioners, the satellites and other constructions of public utilities (e.g. gas pipes, electric cables, etc.) have to be installed on the houses in a way that they could not be seen from the streets or if they are on the front of the house they have to be covered in a prescribed way.

Before the renovation or the modernisation of the houses is started, it has to be preceded by permission procedures which are rather time-, money- and energy consuming. Thus these permission procedures are often omitted, which results in the much diversified methods of renewing. On the other hand some resident’ violating the rules irritates the residents who take the trouble and try to preserve the uniqueness of the quarter.

4.2. The social characteristics of the Wekerle estate

The number of inhabitants living at Wekerle was the highest (around 22 000 inhabitants) in 1926, the year when the building operations were finished (László Gy., 1926). Today around 11.000 people live in these houses (Budapest 19th district – Kispest Integrated Urban Development Strategy 2008).

The proportion of inhabitants belonging to the age-groups under 14 (14.2%) and over 60 (27.1%) are higher than the average value concerning Budapest (12.8% and 22.9% respectively) (Table 1).1

Table 1

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1 All the statistical data used in the chapter 4.2 are the data collected by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the population census in 2001. As the sub-city data of the 2011 population census is not yet available, the statistical data of the study is based on the data of the 2001 census.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>the Wekerle estate</th>
<th>the 19th district</th>
<th>Budapest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of resident population</td>
<td>10899</td>
<td>63181</td>
<td>1 777 921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group 0-14 within the resident population (%)</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group 15-59 within the resident population (%)</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group 60-x within the resident population (%)</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of graduated persons within the age group of 25-x (%)</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of persons without labour income within the age group of 15-59 (%)</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>no data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of persons with no more than primary school education and without labour income within the age group of 15-59 (%)</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>no data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of employed persons within the age group of 15-64 (%)</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of households without employed persons (%)</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Census 2001

The high proportion in the age group under 14 is due to the tendency that young couples with one, two or more children move to the Wekerle. Families with young children seem to have been discovering the Wekerle estate lately and move into this “village-like neighbourhood, where the children are in green and calm environment, where there is less traffic, where the air is better and where the children and the families live in houses with gardens” (based on the results of the questionnaire, focusing on the opinion of the inhabitants who live less than six years in the neighbourhood). The high proportion of people in the age group over 60 is due to the fact that the calm environment is absolutely convenient for people in their pensioner years, so people of the older generations, even if economically could afford it, do not move out from the Wekerle. Particularly do not move out those who lived all their life at Wekerle. They are rather attached to the neighbourhood and do not feel necessary to search for another living area for their old ages.

The Wekerle neighbourhood can be characterised with a relatively high percentage of graduated persons (19.8 %) when persons over 25 years are taken into consideration. The percentage of employed persons within the age group of 15-64 (61%) is somewhat lower than that of the 19th district and Budapest. The high values showing the percentage of households without employed persons in Wekerle (41.4%) (as opposed to the 33.2 % of the 19th district and 38% of Budapest) is due to the fact that many of the households are one-man households often consisting of a pensioner. The Wekerle neighbourhood compared to the whole of the 19th district shows more favourable values in the indices demonstrating the percentage of the underprivileged groups (like persons without labour or income within the age group of 15-59 or persons with no more than primary school education and without labour income within the age group of 15-59) within the society.
4. RESIDENTIAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS URBAN HERITAGE IN THE WEKERLE ESTATE

Local residents of a place are only one, but a rather important, of the actors shaping the present life and the future development of a place. The more the residents feel home at a territory, the more they care about it and advocate for it.

According to one of the questions of the questionnaire (where statements had to be values on a five-point-scale, where 1 was strongly disagree, 2 was somewhat disagree, 3 was cannot decide, 4 was somewhat agree and 5 was strongly agree) the results of the questionnaire the residents of Wekerle have the unanimous opinion that their neighbourhood has to be preserved (Fig.6.). Some of the asked (mainly the elder ones) added the comment that the present state of the neighbourhood is only the faded form of its sometime state, and they think that preserving the present state is not sufficient, it should be restored to its former form. Most of the residents agreed on it that the monument buildings give a special character to the neighbourhood (average 4.63), even though a bit less strong was their agreement whether these buildings are strongly connected to their living milieu (average 4.26). The residents of the Wekerle estate do not think that the protection of monuments hinders the development of the neighbourhood (average 2.56). They also do not think that the neighbourhood’s richness in monument buildings does not meet the requirements of modern life (average 3.59). These two were the questions were the opinion of the residents varied the most from each other (the deviation was 1.4 and 1.34 at these two questions respectively).

The residents also strongly agreed that they feel home at Wekerle and that they are also proud of being Wekerle residents and they also found it right if the government is making steps to call the word’s attention to the uniqueness of their residence. They would not oppose the arrival of tourists (whose visit is rather rare at the present) and they think tourists would not have negative effect on their neighbourhoods. However the opinions were not so consonant regarding these questions (the deviation was 1.31 and 1.24 at these two questions respectively).

According to the results of the questionnaire the tourists are more warmly welcomed then the new inhabitants. This refrain from the new residents is one of the sensitive topics that were mentioned in all the interviews and it also appeared on the pages of the Wekerle newspaper. Due to these sources there is no harsh, but still a sensible disagreement between the „aboriginals“ and the „intruders“. The aboriginals, the residents who have been living for all or nearly all their lives at Wekerle, find it difficult to tolerate that young and well-to-do families move to the neighbourhood. According to “aboriginals” the newly arrived residents do not integrate to the society or to the environment. The new settler, who are often in a more favourable financial situation, frequently make changes on their houses and fences, in their gardens and do not take into consideration the special regulations of the neighbourhood and thus the changes carried out erode the atmosphere and the unity of the neighbourhood. The aboriginals also find it irritating that majority of the new residents treat Wekerle only as a sleeping place, as it was phrased in the local newspaper several times: „He [the new residents] may not even know his neighbours. He is rarely seen to walk on the streets... He gets in the car in the morning and gets out from it in the evening. That’s all that he does at Wekerle. And he spends the nights here as well” (Wekerle paper, 2000, 18. Are you from Wekerle?).
On the other hand the persons who have moved to the estate in the last years think that the aboriginals are too conservative people with no financial background and with no intention to refresh, renew their houses and their surroundings.

Nearly 1/3rd of the residents claim that there is a “Wekerle-type person”. According to some the “Wekerle-type persons” are calm, helpful, caring, rather friendly living in a cohesive community where everybody knows everybody else. Other residents think that the community of Wekerle is a closed, snobbish community where the newcomers are not accepted nor welcomed.
Regarding some questions, like whether the residents feel at home, or whether the residents feel attached to the built cultural heritage of the area, there is a slight difference in the opinion of the various groups of the Wekerle residents - grouped according to the number of years they have been living for at the neighbourhood (Fig. 7).

![Figure 7: Differences in the opinion of the Wekerle residents (divided into groups based on the length of time they have been living at the Wekerle)](source: residential questionnaire, 2012)

There is a rather mild difference concerning the question whether the monument buildings give a unique character to the area. It seems that the persons who have been living all their life in the quarter sense less sharply its uniqueness, probably because they did not leave anywhere else and have no basis for comparison.

It is the attitude towards the newcomers where there is a significant difference in the opinion of the various groups of residents. For the longer time the residents have been living at the Wekerle estate, the less willing they are to accept the new residents moving to their neighbourhood.

All the residents of Wekerle, regardless of the length of time they have been living there, feel to be home there and are proud of being Wekerle residents. In general all the four groups think that the buildings give a unique character to the Wekerle, and would not feel home if these buildings would disappear.

Based on the answers of the residents’ choice between the pairs of attributes listed in the questionnaire (multifarious – monotone, particular – average, boring – lively, international – local, unfriendly – intimate, opened – closed, chaotic – transparent, well-groomed – neglected, dirty – clean, silent – noisy) the semantic profile of the Wekerle estate can be drawn (Fig. 8).

In general Wekerle is regarded to be a rather silent, clean and well-groomed particular neighbourhood which is also very friendly and very lively, not at all monotone.
There were only several cases when the opinion of the residents, grouped into 4 groups based on the length of time they have been living at the Wekerle, showed a significant difference. According to all the residents the Wekerle estate is a special neighbourhood. It is especially particular according the residents who have been living in the neighbourhood for 10 or less years, thus according to the residents who have moved in lately. Those who have been living here all their life said more often that it just an average neighbourhood. Those who have been living here all their life said more often that it just an average neighbourhood. The biggest difference in the opinion of the four groups of the residents was shown when they had to decide about the cleanness of the territory. Interestingly the longer time the residents have been living at Wekerle, the less clean they regarded it to be. Probably this is due to the fact that in the early days of the Wekerle (the days only those residents remember who have been living there nearly all their lives) the streets of the neighbourhood were cleaned and kept in order (cutting the lawn, pruning the trees etc.) centrally and on a regular basis. Today the residents do these works themselves in a way and in a time they want to. Or in some cases they do not do them at all. Thus the common neatness and the consistent well-groomed character of the whole Wekerle has been fading away.

6. CONCLUSION

As there are no two identical places, there are no two places the cultural heritage of which is also identical. While some of the places are more special with more easily recognisable character that are rather unique and exceptional in the world, other places
seem to be just “average” with no outstanding features. Let it be a place with more or with less visible cultural heritage, in urban planning the heritage of a place must be taken into consideration. Cultural heritage gives a special character to the area, which on the one hand confirms the cultural distinctiveness to the outside and on the other hand provides the inhabitants of the area with the feeling of home and thus contributes to their identity. In the study a slightly more than a 100-year-old garden city-like neighbourhood of Budapest, the Wekerle estate is examined. The aim of the study was to find out whether the residents regard the cultural heritage of their neighbourhood belonging to their heritage and thus contributing to their local identity. It was also the aim of the study to examine whether the attitudes of the “aboriginals” and the new comers differ from each other.

As to answer these questions a residential questionnaire was carried out asking local inhabitants about their opinion and experience they have regarding the cultural heritage in their residence. According to the results of the questionnaires all the asked residents strongly agreed that they feel home in Wekerle, and that they are proud of being Wekerle residents. They think that the built cultural heritage give a unique character to their residence and that neighbourhood is to be told about to the rest of the world. There was a bit less general agreement on questions whether tourist should visit the estate and whether their presence would cause any negative harm to the estate.

If the analysis is carried out based on the groups formed according to the time for how long the residents have been living in the neighbourhood, the results show that the persons who have been living there for all their lives do not perceive the special, unique character of the neighbourhood than the other three groups. This is rather dangerous for cultural heritage and thus for identity. If residents do not see the uniqueness of their residence, how would they know what to preserve and why to preserve? This is in contradiction the fact that, even though, they think there exists a “Wekerle-type person”. The persons who have been living for all their lives at the Wekerle are also less welcoming towards the newcomers and think that the newly moved in families and persons do not feel the social and environmental atmosphere of the Wekerle estate, and this way they are not very eager in maintaining it.

The study will be continued by carrying out a similar research at two other neighbourhoods of Budapest that are also rich in cultural heritage: the area of Buda castle and the area around the sometime Jewish quarter. The comparison of the results gained at the three territories will show which issues and problems appear at all of these residences and which are the unique characteristics of any of the neighbourhoods.

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