

THE SUMMARY OF PhD THESIS
Development paths of cities of Łódzkie Voivodship

PhD thesis is inscribed in path dependence theory. This theory arose in the 1980s and was used to explain adaptation processes of new technologies and industry development. It also gained popularity in social science like sociology, political science and economic geography. Authors of theory indicated that history matters and shown the connection between crucial decision made in past and the current and future state. It found application in explaining economic, social or spatial dynamic processes with incidental character, which are irreparable or difficult for a change. The concept is also used for clarifying untypical results which are not matching predictions of widely accepted theories. In geography the theory served for explaining location and concentration of business activity in the space and mechanisms of the development of cities and regions.

The subject of the research was 43 cities forming the urban network of the Łódzkie Voivodship (localities having a town charter 1 January 2011; Łódź, a capital of voivodship, was excluded from the research). The object of the research was development paths of these cities. Author formulated the following hypotheses:

1. The demographic development of the city affects the complexity of its development path (the more populous city, the more complexed its development path);
2. Location of a city is the main factor deciding on its development.

The following objectives were assumed:

1. Verification of hypotheses;
2. Following the development paths of researched cities on three levels: social-cultural, economic and administrative, from the moment of their foundation to 2011;
3. Determining the influence of the city location on his development.

Receiving town charter was assigned as an initial point of its development path. Author assumed that a commercial-craft/service path had been developed by the entire life cycle of the city.

The urban network of the Łódzkie Voivodship was composed of old cities with medieval origins (36 cities) and young cities founded in the 19th and the 20th century (7 cities). For cities founded to 1793 the author appointed factors initiating the path development (speeding up a town charter). There were: natural conditions of the geographical environment (riverside putting); putting cities on communications trails and the proprietary status of the city. 6 cities were founded due to industry and one – Koruszki thanked to communication (junction of railways).

Based on researches, for the period to 1793 the author created 6 types of development paths: administrative (12 cities), academic (2), communications (16), industrial (1), craft specialization (8) and accommodation (1). In 1793-1939 years most intensively an industrial path were developed (19 cities). An administrative path was continued (15 cities). Also, as in earlier centuries a communications and academic paths were developed (7 and 2 cities). They were included in new types of path development: residential (1 city); holiday-tourist (3) and health (2). After 1945 the most popular was an industrial path which turned up in 39 cities. Also administrative path was common, it appeared in 20 cities and most often had medieval origins. A scientific path which was recorded in 16 cities, was a continuation of the academic path. Considerably a number of cities rose with the holiday-tourist path (from 3 to 8). In 9 cities a communications path was observed.

With the health path it attached to 2 cities, third - Zgierz. Also 2 new types of paths were determined. First from them, cultural path appeared in 10 cities, second – path of wholesale trade in 2. To sum up, to 2011 in researched cities appeared 11 types of development paths. Cities were divided on account of the degree of complexity the path. Author singled simple (17 cities), complex (13) and multi-complex (13) types of path development.

Conducted researches allowed verifying appointed hypotheses. First from them assumed that the demographic development affected the complexity of development path. This hypothesis was verified positively. A strong relation was observed between the degree of complexity the development path and number of his population.

The second hypotheses assumed that location of a city is the main factor deciding on its development. The author validated this hypothesis negatively. This factor was significant only in pre-industrial period (to 1793). The relation between the time of the location and riverside and communication system was observed. For years 1793-1939 the author assumed that laying on the railway line influenced on the development of the city. The impact of the railways was measured by population growth in the period between beginning construction of the line and 10 years later. If the medium rate of growth of the population exceeded the 25%, author acknowledged that the built railway line had an impact on development of the city (8 cities were ranked among this group). However, according to the author these results are not confirming the leading role of the location (communications) in the development of cities. It had only assisting character. Years 1793-1939 were a time of the demographic boom of researched cities, which was caused by industrialization. The high rate of the increase of population was noticed practically in every city. After 1945 author examined cities location in the communication system of Łódzkie Voivodship (networks of motorways and national roads and railway lines; state on 2011). In this period the location was not also a main factor of development of cities.