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ATTITUDES TOWARDS TYPE OF BUILDING-UP  
IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

This article analyzes results of researches on attitudes of local inhabitants towards examples of residential and non-residential building-up both modern and possessing historical value in their own living environment. The concepts quoted in the title of the article have very rich connotations in the sociological literature. And thus to start with, it should be explained that there was accepted for the purposes of this article the so-called structural concept of the attitude, according to which its components are the following aspects: emotional-affectionate (positive or negative attitude to the attitude's object, its evaluation), cognitive aspect (conviction about the attitude's object), and finally - behavioural. The following analysis will encompass the first two aspects of the attitude.

The local environment will be understood as physical space inhabited by territorial aggregation of people within boundaries of four rural communes - organizational forms of the state's activity at the basic level in the field of political, economic, and socio-cultural relations covering an administratively isolated small territory. Such aggregations possess a definite, formed during the history of their development - demographic, socio-professional, spatial and economic structure as well as functioning structure of institutions and organizations of the rural commune community.

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It was also accepted that the local environment implies several basic, mutually interlinked spheres with the most important of them being: the sphere of social relations, cultural, and material-spatial spheres. Each of these spheres possesses its own structure as well as organizational or material correlates, although only jointly they form the rural commune's structure.

This article analyzes attitudes towards building-up - an element of material-spatial sphere of the local environment. It simultaneously represents a selected fragment of a more comprehensive research project<sup>1</sup>, which aimed at identification of social determinants of the rural commune's dwelling environment to be utilized in spatial and urban planning. Registration of inhabitants' attitudes towards different types and forms of building-up in their own environment was to serve cognitive and practical purposes - as a reference point for planning and architectonic decisions. Apart from that there were other prerequisites, and namely such questions as:

- what social and professional characteristics of inhabitants, and
- what components of their attitudes towards other elements of the local environment determine the inhabitants' attitude to building-up.

The settlement network of four rural communes, being an object of the research project, consists of the so-called commune centre dominating in the functional aspect (housing both administrative-political institutions, local authorities, and institutions providing for the needs of the population), and smaller settlements and villages. From the viewpoint of economic forms, these four rural communes show a predominance of socialized agriculture as well as - and that for the most part - private agriculture in the form of individual farms.

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<sup>1</sup> Research project concerning "Attitudes towards Local Environment" carried out by research team from Institute of Sociology, Łódź University headed by prof. dr. W. Piotrowski in 1977.

## 1. Attitudes towards examples of old building-up

The number and objective architectonic value of objects possessing historical importance is largely differentiated in the analyzed rural communes. Of the greatest historical value are objects in the Opinogóra commune centre<sup>2</sup> (Ciechanów province) including the castle of great romanticism poet - Krasicki in Neo-Gothic style from the first half of 19th century, park in the "English" style, classicistic church, the so-called manor out-buildings - forming a homogenous architectonic complex built in one style. The castle houses today the poet's museum visited by numerous tourists. In the centre of the second rural commune - Pepowo (Leszno province) there was preserved a large baroque palace with a park, and a former hospital in Neo-Gothic style. In turn, in the third centre of the Widawa rural commune (Sieradz province) being of a small town character, there were preserved two churches in late baroque and Neo-Gothic styles as well as a few burghers' houses from the early 19th century. The fourth commune centre - Sulmierzyce in Piotrków province does not possess any historical monuments besides numerous examples of traditional rural architecture.

Inhabitants of these communes were asked to enumerate the examples of local, old architecture. The number of indicated examples was distributed as in Tab. 1.

Table 1

Number of indicated examples of old architecture	A	B	C	D
Don't know	1	12	51	21
None such	-	28	56	55
1 object	12	32	70	58
2 object	44	54	20	15
3 and more	103	85	8	3
N	N = 184	N = 214	N = 207	N = 152

<sup>2</sup> In the included Tables rural communes will be marked as follows: A - Opinogóra, B - Pepowo, C - Widawa, D - Sulmierzyce.

The biggest share of negative answers appeared in aggregations of inhabitants in commune C (where historical objects include two churches), and D (where there existed a possibility of indicating examples of traditional rural architecture). This testifies to the fact that the name of local "historical monument" is attributed most often to objects not performing any instrumental functions - such as an apartment, or public - such as church.

In detailed evaluations and in indicated motivations for acceptance of examples in commune A prevailed references to definite elements of a building to be followed only next by general evaluations. In commune B general descriptions concerning "nice" appearance, style, or construction were obtaining the same share of respondents as references to definite elements of a building. In commune C - respondents were most often pointing at definite details while in commune D, on the other hand, were again predominating inconcrete references to nice appearance. Thus these evaluations are largely differentiated. Negative evaluations of such objects allowed to obtain a more clarified picture of attitudes: in four rural communes predominated indications at bad repair state, negligence, poor utility values.

General aesthetic evaluation of buildings quoted as examples of local old architecture, consisting in indication of their va-

Table 2

Total evaluation of buildings - examples of old architecture	A	B	C	D
Absence of attitude object (no buildings indicated)	2	38	96	68
Positive attitude (only positive evaluations)	113	63	32	31
Ambivalent attitude (positive and negative evaluations)	35	50	17	14
Absence of attitude (lack of positive and negative evaluations)	14	31	14	7
Negative attitude (only negative evaluations)	16	25	33	27
N	N = 184	N = 214	N = 207	N = 152



lues and shortcomings, was submitted to synthetic transformations pointing at direction and intensity of attitudes.

Hierarchy of positive attitudes distribution proved to be concordant with reality (according to objective criteria) hierarchy of architectonic values of buildings, which were objects of attitudes. This result confirmed once again that buildings with practical-instrumental functions, such as e.g. churches in commune C (Widawa) are not considered to be "historical monuments".

Meanwhile, the fact, that both the number of indicated examples and general attitudes towards them proved to be independent of the social situation characteristics, appeared to be much more interesting.

Researches were conducted on purposefully and systematically selected representative samples. The above variables as well as others discussed here were submitted to quantitative statistical processing on a digital computer, which allowed to perform a comprehensive correlation analysis with respect to their differentiation in particular categories of independent variables. A big number of checked correlations made it possible to employ a correlation level of significance 0.05 in the correlation analysis. In turn, the correlation strength was analyzed at a constant value of V. Cramer's coefficient not lower than 0.15.

Thus the only discovered regularity on the whole population's scale appeared to be the fact that intensity of positive attitudes of respondents was the bigger the more examples they indicated.

An even more significant indicator of attitudes was considered to be the attitude of inhabitants to employment of old architectonic designs of local origin (and thus height, roof shape, building material, ornamental patterns etc.) in construction and ornamentation of new houses.

Most respondents were fully in favour of "modernity" rejecting the local tradition of rural housing construction; a part - allowed for a possibility of applying only certain old designs although this referred, as a rule, to details in ornamentation and not the architectonic shape of a building. Only in rural commune C it was discovered that in most cases individual farmers and agricultural workers employed in the state sector were

in favour of continuing the tradition even though they were simultaneously displaying diversified and ambivalent attitudes towards the old local architecture. Aggregation of commune D's inhabitants revealed that rejection of old designs, which might serve as a model for new housing construction, was consistently connected with a negative attitude (or its absence) towards old architecture and the lowest educational level. Again, however, the obtained result appeared to be generally independent of basic characteristics of the respondents' social situation.

As it was already underlined above, analysis of attitudes towards building-up had a cognitive aim while the selected results presented here were to serve spatial planning purposes in the examined rural communes. Registration of attitudes towards old building resources showed that there do not exist any particular factors which might e.g. force designers to respect traditional ways of shaping architecture, and this was one of fundamental dilemmas and hypotheses at the same time.

## 2. Attitudes towards new building-up

To determine the research object there was accepted here a chronological criterion according to which as new building-up (both residential and non-residential) are treated objects erected after 1945; in practice, for the most part, were indicated the latest investments.

The analysis set forth to decide:

- which elements of present buildings, from among those existing in 4 rural communes, are accepted or rejected, and
- what are predominant, spontaneous preferences of inhabitants as regards architectonic form of building-up for rural areas.

Rapidly improving living standards, especially in the last decade, accompanied by growing replacement of traditional resources by new ones, possessing similar to urban technical-utility designs, caused that the share of new housing resources in analyzed communes is quite high, e.g. in relation to all housing resources the percentage figures of private houses constructed in the period 1969-1977 amount correspondingly to<sup>3</sup>:

<sup>3</sup> It should be added that this index is not equivalent to degree of progress in modernization, especially in other dimensions.

Rural communes	A	B	C	D
%	38.0	35.0	32.5	38.0

This is equal to the quantitative average for rural areas in Poland.

Although new housing resources in the four rural communes are differentiated with respect to their utility standard and rather monotonous in their architectonic aspect, there can be found here also examples testifying to inventiveness and wealth of investors. However, it appeared that not such objects which would find approval - in several cases - of an architect ranked highest in local polls of aesthetic acceptance.

The highest approval (on the whole population's scale) obtained two-story one-family houses with flat roof, without any architectonic ornaments - and thus capacious architectural forms most strongly contrasting with a traditional model of the country house in Poland - one-story house with sloping roof.

The following categories were distinguished among justifications of selected examples accepted by respondents: see Tab. 3.

Table 3

Reasons for acceptance of residential buildings in commune centre	A	B	C	D
Utility values	18	14	-	28
Aesthetic values of building	46	54	65	62
Values of building's environment and site's cleanness	24	61	69	29
"Modernity", "novelty"	34	25	32	11
Unique type, urban style or form	20	16	10	27
Mass composition reasons (e.g. balconies, terraces, porches)	10	20	20	10
Note: N > 100	N = 230	N = 278	N = 207	N = 226

The obtained results were leaving no doubt that aesthetic values rather than architectonic enjoyed the biggest approval. In respondents' attitudes prevailed subjective, detached from

utility functions of evaluated buildings, acceptance of aesthetics in finishing, maintenance state, and tidiness of the building plot - which also represent aspects independent of architecture.

From among many analyzed factors, let us quote here (as the most significant for the discussed problem) spontaneous preferences with regard to the most appropriate type of new residential buildings for the commune centre (and thus for functional and urbanized commune centre) (Tab. 4).

T a b l e 4

Construction type	A	B	C	D
Multi-family buildings	80	61	37	25
One-family houses	60	59	90	79
Other kind	7	23	-	8
Any kind	26	54	55	23
Hard to say	10	13	17	12
N	N = 184	N = 214	N = 207	N = 152

Distribution of preferences revealed a differentiation here, which on one hand, was resulting from character of the agricultural economy in rural communes, and on the other hand - from investment level in particular types of housing construction. Big state agricultural farms functioning in communes A and B either constructed or adapted for their workers buildings constituting small housing districts at present. Thus if numerous studies conducted so far in Poland especially with regard to town people show explicitly that an independent, one-family house represents the most desirable type of residence - it appears that experience provided by living in multi-family buildings determines the direction of preferences concerning form of spatial structure of rural commune centres among inhabitants of 2 analyzed communes. Absence of a similar reference group in communes C and D produced a picture of preferences being in line with the general trend.

Preferences given to a given type of housing construction with the aim of its potential development in respondents' own dwelling environment were strongly corresponding to the accep-



tance of the so-called blocks of flats<sup>4</sup> both in aesthetic, and functional-utility sense in communes A and B and - conversely - to their negation in communes C and D. A reservation explicitly made in relation to their architectonic form was (in the first two cases) adequacy in relation to scenic scale of rural housing construction i.e. height of 2-3 stories being stressed in responses.

However, approval given to blocks of flats would concern most often the sphere of shaping the rural commune's space, and not location of a respondent's apartment in this architectonic form. Preferences in this respect revealed the following distribution: see Tab. 5.

Table 5

Given free choice we would rather live in	A	B	C	D	Four communes
Multi-family block of flats (with proper technical standard)	65	74	43	23	209
Independent one- family house (even without proper technical standard)	112	130	150	114	505
Hard to say	2	8	9	7	26
N	N = 184	N = 214	N = 207	N = 152	N = 740

A different scope of ideas about directions of developing housing resources in respondents' own local environment and their preferences as regards their own house/apartment proved to be strongly connected with a common conviction about inevitability of spatial changes, which will be effected in the four commune centres in the near future. Against the background of optimistic hopes that they will be changed into "towns" the approval of blocks of flats, an urban building-up form, was only to be expected.

<sup>4</sup> By this term should be understood multi-family, socialized housing construction.

Like it was the case with attitudes towards old architecture, the preferences in relation to new building-up appeared to be connected, to an insignificant extent, with social and professional characteristics of inhabitants. Only in the case of persons being spatially more mobile these attitudes are more concrete or more pronounced, while the attitude to blocks of flats is more positive in the case of the so-called biprofessional persons, who working also in town have an opportunity of confronting themselves their preferences with differentiated types of building-up.

### 3. Research conclusions

Research findings selected for purposes of this article and illustrating attitudes towards old and new building-up lend themselves for generalization with one reservation, however, that they cannot be fully referred to the contemporary Polish village (although they meet representativeness requirements on the scale of four analyzed rural communes). The second reservation is of a more general character. Similar studies are usually placed against the theoretical background of analysis of wider process of villages urbanization.

Bypassing here epistemological difficulties with definition of what is "urban" or "rural" in conditions of general social transformations; of what is urbanization factor and what its object - it should be stated, at least following R. Dewey<sup>5</sup>, that expansion of town characteristics does not undermine unique features of these two forms, i.e. of town and village in their ecological sense while transformations in social relations or participation in culture do not have to be synonymous with changes of spatial units. Undoubtedly urbanization leads to acculturation of traditional village communities, changes in previously accepted values. This process is, however, taking place on many planes and it is differentiated in its manifestations.

It appeared that despite progress in technical, social and

<sup>5</sup> R. D e w e y, The Rural-Urban Continuum: Real but Relatively Unimportant, "American Journal of Sociology", Vol. LXVI, No 1, p. 66-67.

cultural urbanization, attitudes to old building-up did not change character of perception typical for village inhabitants, and namely there are known and mainly evaluated technical and utility values while more seldom values of historical significance and originality. Thus attitudes assume a pragmatic form even in those rural communes where attractiveness and objective value of objects are internalized in inhabitants' awareness. Elements of sentimentalism and automatism of positive evaluation are, however, almost completely absent in the analyzed attitudes. These elements are characteristic for perception of town's inhabitants. The shape of these attitudes corresponds more to typology of characteristics typical for inhabitants of traditional town districts<sup>6</sup>: caution, conservatism, unawareness of time value, susceptibility to irrational beliefs accompanied by rationalism in outlook and actions, than to hypotheses which might be formulated in the era of common impact of mass culture.

The situation in the field of urbanization in spatial utilization of rural areas was well described by P. Rambaud<sup>7</sup>: "Many villages are slowly modifying their architecture and house interiors according to borrowed but adapted urban patterns [...]. Village inhabitants thus express their control of that which comes from town".

Acceptance for geometrical simplicity in residential architecture, which was revealed in attitudes towards new building-up, represents a distinct indicator of establishment of a new value hierarchy the effect of which is to be elimination of cultural and economic gap separating the village from the town. That is even more clearly reflected in negation of possibilities for continuation of local traditions in new housing construction. Thus "urban features" understood superficially enjoy popularity leading to homogeneity of architecture, approval of environment aesthetization understood as absence of "pollution" inseparably connected with work in fields. On the other hand, propositions of architectonic solutions enjoyed a smaller popula-

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. M. Anderson, K. Ishwaran, *Urban Sociology*, London 1965.

<sup>7</sup> P. Rambaud, *Wież i urbanizacja* (Village and Urbanization), "Wież i Rolnictwo" 1974, No 3, p. 116-117.

city. These were aesthetic in "town" sense of the term and consisted in complication or bigger decorative effect of form accompanied by all features of modernity.

Without going any deeper into the problem it is worth mentioning here once again, as a separate regularity discovered in the course of researches, the fact that there are no relationships between attitudes and characteristics of respondents' social status. It is irreconcilable especially with the concept of socio-economic determinants of attitudes towards one's dwelling environment as represented by H. J. Gans and his followers. Postulates of taking into account by planners social differentiation mechanisms, formulated by H. J. Gans in relation to town residents on the basis of extensive studies - prove to be useless in case of attitudes displayed by the examined population<sup>8</sup>.

The gathered materials allow to state with certainty that predominant attitudes are functioning as strongly internalized norms. And even if that does not explain the essence of the problem, to any extent, it simultaneously provides an essential prerequisite for spatial planning, which should be carried out on the basis of detailed analysis of real needs.

Andrzej Majer

#### LA ACTITUD DEL AMBIENTE LOCAL HACIA LAS CONSTRUCCIONES Y EDIFICIOS

En el artículo se están analizando los resultados de las investigaciones del grado de conocimientos y de apreciación, por parte de la población local, de los edificios de valor histórico y de las construcciones modernas (habitables o no-habitables).

La investigación de las actitudes se realizó entre los habitantes de 4 municipios (g m i n a) que tienen diferencias históricas y demográfico-sociales. Tres sedes municipales conservaron construcciones antiguas de gran valor histórico. Todos los municipios tienen el porcentaje bastante

<sup>8</sup> H. J. Gans, People and Plans. Essays on Urban Problems and Solutions, N.Y.-London 1968.



alto de las construcciones modernas, el valor funcional de las cuales y el equipo de técnica sanitaria son por lo general de nivel medio.

En estas investigaciones nos hemos propuesto el objetivo de determinar tanto los rasgos sociales y profesionales de los habitantes de regiones diferenciadas, como los componentes de las actitudes hacia otros elementos del ambiente local, que influyen en la formación de las opiniones sobre las construcciones antiguas y modernas en el medio del lugar de residencia.

Resultó, que, a pesar del progreso de la urbanización técnica, social y cultural, las opiniones sobre las construcciones viejas conservaron la percepción típica para los habitantes del campo: principalmente son de mayor conocimiento y apreciación las cualidades de técnica y explotación (las de antigüedad y autenticidad lo son más raramente). Las opiniones llevan el carácter pragmático incluso en los municipios, en las cuales la atracción y el valor objetivo de las construcciones se refleja plenamente en la consciencia de los habitantes. Las opiniones carecen casi por completo de sentimentalismo y de automatismo del apreciar positivo, que son típicos para la percepción de los habitantes de la ciudad.

En las opiniones sobre las construcciones nuevas predomina la apreciación positiva y negativa de valores estéticos, que adelantan el interés hacia las cualidades funcionales y de explotación. La apreciación positiva se refiere ante todo a la estética de conservación y limpieza; más raramente se aprecia la arquitectura.

Los rasgos sociales y profesionales de los habitantes de municipios influyen poco en sus actitudes. Los factores más importantes en este caso son los traslados espaciales y la actividad profesional en el lugar de residencia.

Анжей Маер

#### ОТНОШЕНИЕ МЕСТНОЙ СРЕДЫ К ПОСТРОЙКАМ ЖИЛОГО И НЕЖИЛОГО ХАРАКТЕРА

На основе результатов исследований некоторых построек жилого и нежилого характера, обладающих историческими и современными

достоинствами, автор проводит анализ объема знаний о них и их оценки местным населением.

Обследованиям подвергались группы лиц, проживающие в 4 гминах и отличающиеся друг от друга своими судьбами а также общественно-демографическими чертами. В трех основных центрах — местонахождениях гминных властей — сохранились исторические памятники, обладающие высокими архитектурными достоинствами. Во всех гминах удельный вес современных жилых домов довольно высок; в основном, они представляют собой средний уровень по эксплуатационным качествам и технически-санитарному оснащению.

Исследования имели целью установить социальные и профессиональные черты жителей разных местностей и слагаемые отношения к другим элементам местной среды, определяющие их отношение к избранным старинным и новым постройкам в месте проживания.

Оказалось что, несмотря на технический социальный и культурный прогресс урбанизации, отношение сельских жителей к древним постройкам не изменилось; они воспринимаются и оцениваются, в основном, с точки зрения технических и эксплуатационных качеств, а в меньшей степени с точки зрения достоинств старины и подлинности. Отмечается почти полное отсутствие элементов сентиментализма и автоматичной положительной оценки, которые характерны, в таких случаях, городским жителям.

В отношении к новым постройкам преобладает положительная или отрицательная оценка эстетических ценностей, а не функциональных и эксплуатационных качеств. В большинстве случаев привлекают внимание и положительно оцениваются напр. эстетический внешний вид и чистота, в меньшей мере архитектурные достоинства.

На отношение к рассматриваемым постройкам в меньшей мере оказывают влияние социальные и профессиональные черты жителей гмин, в большей же степени их пространственные отношения и профессиональная активность вне своей деревни.

*Andrzej Majer*

## POSTAWY WOBEC ZABUDOWY W LOKALNYM ŚRODOWISKU

Artykuł zawiera analizę wyników badań zakresu wiedzy oraz oceny dotyczące przykładów mieszkalnej i niemieszkalnej zabudowy o walorach historycznych, a także o profilu współczesnym - w lokalnym środowisku zamieszkania.

Zbiorowością, w której rejestrowano postawy, byli mieszkańcy 4 zróżnicowanych pod względem losów historycznych i cech społeczno-demograficznych gmin. W trzech ośrodkach centralnych - siedzibach władz gmin - zachowały się obiekty zabytkowe o dużych walorach architektonicznych. We wszystkich gminach udział nowej zabudowy mieszkalnej jest dość wysoki, choć na ogół odznacza się średnim standardem użytkowym i wyposażeniem techniczno-sanitarnym.

Badania miały za zadanie ustalenie, jakie cechy społeczne i zawodowe mieszkańców zróżnicowanych obszarów oraz jakie składniki postaw wobec innych elementów lokalnego środowiska - wyznaczają postawy i stosunek do przykładów starej i nowej zabudowy we własnym środowisku zamieszkania.

Okazało się, że mimo postępu urbanizacji technicznej, społecznej i kulturowej postawy wobec starej zabudowy nie zmieniły charakteru percepcji typowej dla mieszkańców wsi, a mianowicie znane są i oceniane głównie walory techniczne - użytkowe; rzadziej natomiast wartości dawności i autentyzmu. Postawy przybierają więc kształt pragmatyczny nawet w tych gminach, gdzie atrakcyjność i obiektywna wartość obiektów jest wkomponowana w świadomość mieszkańców. Brak jest w postawach niemal zupełnie sentymentalizmu i automatyzmu pozytywnego wartościowania - charakterystycznych dla percepcji mieszkańców miasta.

W postawach wobec nowej zabudowy dominuje pozytywna i negatywna ocena wartości estetycznych, a nie funkcjonalnych czy użytkowych. Dostrzegane i pozytywnie oceniane są najczęściej takie walory, jak estetyka stanu utrzymania, czystość; rzadziej natomiast cechy architektury.

Społeczne i zawodowe cechy mieszkańców gmin wpływają na ich postawy w niewielkim stopniu. Silniej natomiast takie czynniki, jak ogólna ruchliwość przestrzenna i pozalokalna aktywność zawodowa.