

CRIME AND THE SOCIALIZING IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC SPACES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The article focuses on the environment and its importance for man and his socialization. The environment is a bearer of cultural values and acts as a factor of interaction. For a person, public space and its characteristics play an important role. Public space influences emotions and behavior. An important element of public space is urbanism and architecture, which influences feelings and how one feels in certain places. Given that the majority of the population currently lives in urban settlements, the characteristics of urban public spaces and the perception of urban public spaces and its rules are important. Due to industrialization, specific urban spaces, known as brownfields, are created, which also modify behavior and affect feelings of safety. The Chicago School and its sociology of the city were the first to deal with the relationship between man and the elements of the environment. This school pointed out the influence of marginality and ethnic segregation, dealt with juvenile delinquency, drug problems, alcoholism and its effects on crime. The study points to a number of theories dealing with the causes of crime in relation to the environment, ie spatial crime. Another issue that the Chicago School has dealt with and which is still very topical is the so-called high-risk neighborhoods, referred to as excluded localities. These localities strongly influence spatial segregation and residential mobility and feelings of safety. The case comparative study points to the development of the urban environment from the point of view of comparing selected industrial centers that have a very close historical development. The way of solving brownfields and crime is monitored. The global population explosion places demands on urban spaces and their adaptation to new requirements. Gentrification, ie the adaptation of brownfields for high-income residents, offers a solution, which significantly affects feelings of safety and the level of crime.

Keywords

crime, perception, environment, public space, socialization

Introduction

The existence of man is inextricably linked and conditioned by the environment and its functioning, especially its social and material aspects, which significantly affect the functioning of the human psyche and human behavior in the environment. Urban

elements of the environment in the form of settlements, which are towns and villages and their functionality, mediate the social integration of man into society and participate in the implementation and satisfaction of some social needs, as well as the influence of architecture, which is an expression of aesthetic or artistic processing of individual residential elements and significantly affects the inner experiential area of man. Man and his personality is highly individual, the formation of which is determined not only genetically, but to a large extent precisely by the influences of the environment in which man moves during his life and which influences him.

Public space and environment and their socialization potential

Public space is understood as a place intended for meetings and communication on all levels, including the physical nature of this space. It is therefore a space that is open to all and is intended for the public.

The environment and its character are the bearers of cultural values that determine what forms of behavior are acceptable in this type of environment. Each environment contains a number of meanings that form interactive communication rules and a cognitive framework. Each environment contains

- fixed feature space
- semi-fixed feature space
- non-fixed feature space ¹

"The mutual representation and interconnection of these individual elements of the environment creates its character and influences perception".²

The character of public spaces and the character of urban elements in it influence the character of the behavior of the inhabitants. However, the behavior of the population is also influenced by mutual interaction elements, communication, emotions, cultural influences, traditions, etc. Each environment is still evolving and has its own space-time dimension called the chronotop.³ This element becomes an important part of a number of criminological theories linking a specific crime scene with a certain type of crime which is the basis for a number of other theories seeking to explain the causes of crime based on individual characteristics and local influences⁴ and depending on place and time.

1 RAPOPORT, Amos: The Meaning of the Built Environment: A Nonverbal Communication Approach. The University of Arizona Press, 1990.

2 RAPOPORT, Amos: The Meaning of the Built Environment: A Nonverbal Communication Approach. The University of Arizona Press, 1990, 16.

3 BACHTIN, Michail Michaljovič: Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a historical poetics. In: Richardson, B.: Narrative dynamics: essays on time, plot, closure, and frames. Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 2002, 15–16.

4 HERBERT, David T.: Crime and place: an introduction. In: Evans, David J., Herbert, David T. (eds.): *The Geography of Crime*. Routledge, London, New York 1989.

Behavior, emotions and meaning of the character of the place

The character of urbanism and architecture strongly influences the perception of a given space, including emotions. Many authors speak of the social and psychological characteristics associated with physical space that are in constant variability, such as in public spaces that change their social significance and social use over time.⁵ Other authors point out the importance of the place and its attractiveness from the geographical (location in the territory), political (historical context), socio-cultural (influence of indigenous ethnoculture and indigenous ethnic groups).⁶ The meaning of a place, its character or the reputation of a place influences the behavior of people in this space, which is influenced by emotions – talks about localities that have the ability to create strong emotional responses in people for their specific characteristics or historical events, which also took place there indirectly to people who have never visited these places, through imaginary ideas that are formed by stories, drawings, photographs or information from the media.⁷ Genius loci is thus a term used to denote the atmosphere, the meaning of a place, but other terms are also used, such as "the spirit of the place" or the charisma of the place, the image or reputation of the place. The genius loci has several evaluation dimensions, the genius loci with a positive component (sense of place) and the genius loci with a negative accent (desainst of place), according to the characteristics that influence the evaluation judgments. From the point of view of clarifying behavior in relation to the characteristics of the meaning of places and decision-making based on emotions, the theory of somatic markers plays an important role in this context. This theory simply states that thoughts and evaluations of a certain stimulus elicit a certain bodily response that sends signals to the somatosensory cortex, which causes automatic responses to a certain situation that is evoked by a stimulus.⁸ These processes explain why some places evoke positive emotions and some negative emotions affecting experiences and behaviors.

Crime and characteristics of the inner space of the city

In the first half of the 20th century, the so-called Chicago School was one of the first to deal with the issues of the relationship between the century and the elements of its environment. She dealt with marginality, ethnic segregation, crime, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, etc. The high increase in crime and social pathology, in urban areas, were the cause of a number of theories explaining the processes

5 KOSKELA, Hille, PAIN, Rachel: Revisiting fear and place: women's fear of attack and the built environment. *Geoforum*, 31, 2000, 269–280.

6 FALŤAN, Ľubomír: Pozícia Bratislavy v regionálnom rozvoji Slovenska. In *Aktuálne problémy regionálneho rozvoja. Zborník z medzinárodnej konferencie. Banská Bystrica (UMB), 1997*, 155–161.

7 COSGROVE, Denis: Sence of place. In Johnston, Ron J., Gregory, Derek, Pratt, Gereldine, Watts J. Michael, Whatmore Sarah, eds. *The dictionary of human geography, 4th edition*. Oxford (Blackwell Publishing), 2000, 731–734.

8 DAMASIO, Antonio R.: A note on the neurobiology of emotions. In: Stephen G. Post, Lynn G. Underwood, Jeffrey P. Schloss, & William B. Hurlbut (Eds.), *Altruism & altruistic love: Science, philosophy, & religion in dialogue* (p. 264–271) 2002, Oxford University Press.

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of organization and reorganization of the city as a key factor influencing social integrity and cohesion of the population. Many of these theories were based on the assumption of the internal layout of the city and the occurrence of a certain type and nature of crime. These theories are still being applied and re-used today, as the population expands into a number of cities and cities become the center of economic and social development and crime becomes part of them.

The Chicago School and its Influence on the development of urban sociology

Robert E. Park is considered one of the first founders of the so-called "Chicago School", with his publication "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment", which was published in the "American Journal of Sociology" in 1915. The Chicago School developed the sociology of the city, based primarily on the social morphology of urban settlements, examining the arrangement and spatial distribution of the city's social functions and associated facilities with an emphasis on security criteria. It is no coincidence that the first skyscrapers were built in Chicago at the end of the 19th century under the influence of architect William LeBaron Jenney, also called the father of American skyscrapers and the predecessor of the first Chicago architectural school. The first beginnings of the segregation of urban spaces can be included in this period for the emergence of the first so-called skeletal systems, which were initially used for the construction of tall buildings and infrastructure buildings and only later for residential blocks. In Europe, the skeletal system of building construction began to develop after the war in France under the influence of Le Corbusier. During this period, several mega residential blocks were built in France for several hundred inhabitants, satisfying all services, including housing. However, these projects proved to be high-risk in terms of the absence of social ties, high anonymity of the population and the absence of contacts with urban spaces and its elements creating belonging to places. This has led to an increase in a wide range of crime. The industrial expansion that took place in America, but also in Europe at the end of the 19th century, caused the concentration of the population in industrial centers and caused the need to develop urbanism. An example of this social transformation was Chicago, where there were dramatic changes in settlement by different ethnically diverse groups and immigrants, accompanied by an increased incidence of crime. For these reasons, it was necessary to build economically efficient urban infrastructure and hostels. At that time, the construction of skyscrapers and skeletal systems seemed to be effective. The Chicago school thus began to study city districts and the study of so-called high-risk neighborhoods. Thus, a number of theories have emerged in order to explain the causes of the dynamic growth of cities and the specific nature of the internal organization of the city in comparison with the behavior of living organisms, ie the city as a living organism. This theory of social ecology was one of the first, followed by the Theory of Concentric Zonal Structure of W. Burgess, understanding the development of the city according to concentric zones of human activities, where within groups of individual zones group different groups

of people with their own traditions, customs and history. which is reflected in the behavior. The theory of social disorganization (R. E. Park, E. W. Burgess, R. D. McKenzie, etc.) was also based on the study of city behavior. This theory saw the causes of crime in the destruction of social relations, which create a socially disorganized environment producing different definitions of morality. The theory was that the disintegration of the social order is a prerequisite for the emergence of deviations, which endanger immigrants and their children. The theory of social disorganization has experienced several renaissance over time, most recently in the 1990s. New self-report research has highlighted the importance of informal social control in influencing crime.⁹ Other successors to the Chicago School began to focus on finding the causes of high crime in urban areas, and a number of theories emerged to monitor spatial crime. Sutherland's Theory of Differentiated Association was based on the assumption of the internal organization of the city and the observation of the occurrence of a certain type and nature of crime. This theory has found its innovative application and new use even today, as the expansion of the population to a number of cities continues, cities become the center of economic and social development and crime becomes part of them. Until recently, the vast majority of researchers addressed the issue of social disorganization in connection with the concept of the city and its individual parts or zones because crime was always much lower outside the city. However, recent statistics suggest that this trend is changing, as economic variables (income inequality, unemployment, poverty) change the population in a given community, as do social factors, which sometimes play a more important role in predicting crime in rural communities. We are talking about so-called rural crime.^{10,11}

Spatial crime and perceptions of safety feelings

The theory of non-civilization and collective effectiveness is one of the theories focused on the relationship between the environment, fears of crime and the degree of victimization. It is based on the assumption that a neglected (uncivilized) environment is a cause for fear of crime, which is the result of a violation of social control in a particular locality, a violation of social norms and social values, and this environment is perceived as dangerous. The basic signs include dilapidated buildings, parked cars, garbage, etc.¹² Very close to this theory is the "Broken windows theory", which causes a domino effect. A broken window that remains broken is a signal of the absence of social control and the low quality of life of the community. It attracts attention and more broken windows are added

9 KUBRIN, Charis E., STUCKY, Thomas D., & KROHN, Marvin D.: *Researching Theories of Crime and Deviance*. New York, 2009, Oxford University Press.

10 BARNETT, Cynthia – MENCKEN, F. Carson: Social Disorganization Theory and the Contextual Nature of Crime in Nonmetropolitan Counties. *Rural Sociology*, 2002, 67, 3, 372–393.

11 BOUFFARD, Leana Allen – MUFTIĆ, R. Lisa, The "Rural Mystique": Social Disorganization and Violence beyond Urban Communities. *Western Criminology Review* 7, 2006, 3, 56–66.

12 SKOGAN, Wesley G.: Measuring what matters: crime, disorder, and fear, in: LANGWORTHY, Robeert H. (ed.), *Measuring What Matters: Proceedings From the Policing Research Institute Meetings*. (37–53). Washington 1999, National Institute of Justice.

because the community tolerates it, the so-called zero tolerance.¹³ Another analogy is Eyes on the street theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cohesion, which can reduce fear and anxiety about crime by tracking the movement of dangerous people in space.¹⁴

The sharp increase in population and its concentration in large cities has resulted in a sharp increase in crime. This was the impulse for the implementation of further research focused on spatiotemporal characteristics, segregation of the population, personality characteristics of the offender, etc., and everything related to evoking feelings of fear and danger. Thus, concepts known as "defensible space" or "gated communities" have emerged, which enclose and fortify their spaces with physical and technical forms of security, and this space is perceived as safer¹⁵ with less threat.

Criminological theories focused on the importance of elements of environmental design of the environment are among the most important. They are based on the assumption of the importance of certain environmental stimuli, which in some way activate the offender and the offender responds to them. Crime is more common in these places than elsewhere.^{16,17} Researchers are based on the opinion that crime is not randomly distributed, but is influenced by the nature of the place.

Excluded localities as a source of crime

In connection with the search for the causes of the increase in crime, the concept of the so-called high-risk neighborhood emerged at the end of the 20th century. In the countries of Eastern Europe, which can also include the Czech Republic, the term high-risk neighborhoods are understood as so-called excluded localities (ghettos), which are stratified by property, sub-ethnicity, gender or caste, acquired status and length of stay in the city. Their inhabitants do not form typical communities in the true sense of the word. Even these urban spaces and their urban character are a source of crime and negatively affect the perception of feelings of safety. According to research conducted in selected areas, they are localities inhabited by a high number of people with higher status, racial diversity and the cheapest municipal dwellings.¹⁸ In the conditions of the Czech Republic, high-risk neighborhoods are understood as so-called excluded localities with the absence of mutual ties between their inhabitants, with the absence of identification with the locality and with other inhabitants. Therefore, these localities cannot be approached as family

13 NEWBURN, Tim, JONES, Trevor: Symbolizing Crime Control: Reflections on Zero Tolerance, *Theoretical Criminology* 11 (2), 2007 SAGE Journals.

14 WHITZMAN, Carolyn: Stuck at the front door: gender, fear of crime and the challenge of creating safer space. *Environment and Planning*.39, 2007, 2715–2732.

15 COZENS, Paul Michael, SAVILLE, Greg, HILLIER, David: Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED): a review and modern bibliography. *Poverty management*. 23, 2005, 328–356.

16 NEWMAN, Oscar: *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design*. Macmillan, New York, 1972, 254.

17 HERBERT, David., HYDE, Stephen W. (1985) *Environmental criminology: testing some area hypotheses*. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 10, 259–274.

18 SMITH, S. J.: *Crime, Space and Society*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, 228 p.

or neighborhood communities,¹⁹ but it is a matter of social exclusion. "The problem of social exclusion is formed in the city environment, which is marked by a decline in population, average educational structure and aging of the local population."²⁰ Over the last few years, the number of excluded localities in the Czech Republic has been growing sharply in connection with unemployment and the decline in industrial production in localities that were previously considered important industrial centers. Examples are Ostrava, Kladno, Most, etc., where the metallurgical industry or coal mining is declining or stopped. Excluded sites and the solution to their problems is not just a social and legislative issue. Their increase and location in localities affects territorial development from the point of view of changes in spatial development planning and real estate prices, and also has an impact on intra-urban migration of inhabitants. Excluded localities inhabited by low-income groups are a source of crime. "The negative phenomenon accompanying life in social exclusion is the use of addictive substances and gambling, which can be perceived as a certain escape strategy from a hopeless situation, but also as a trigger for crime."²¹ Among the most common offenses dealt with in excluded localities or their proximity are public order offenses (disturbance of night rest, civil cohabitation, pollution of public spaces, petty theft, trade in unstamped cigarettes or alcohol and verbal attacks). The occurrence of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drugs, truancy, petty crime, especially theft, is registered in children and adolescents. Young people growing up in hostels who did not know life in the ordinary neighborhood are perceived as a particularly risky group.²² In the Czech Republic, the nature of social exclusion is changing, more and more localities are moving to areas of the periphery and inner peripheries.²³ Addressing the issue of social exclusion means not only addressing issues of material poverty, but also issues of education, increasing job opportunities, intensive implementation of community work and increasing the overall regional level and quality of life of the inhabitants of excluded localities.

Comparative study in the European context

With the development of industry and industrialization in the 18th and 19th centuries, a number of industrial centers with characteristic architecture were created, which were purposefully focused to fully suit the character of the industry under construction. Over time, together with declining production or depletion of resources, the decades-old architecture of these industrial centers ceases to serve its purpose and becomes problematic urban spaces with difficult usability, requiring high revitalization or renovation costs. In many cases, these are industrial centers of global importance that share this common issue. Therefore, comparative studies are being carried out looking for and exploring possible solutions. For this reason, a study was created that compares 2 industrial centers -Ostrava and Halle (Salle).

19 TOPINKA, Daniel, JANOUŠKOVÁ, Klára: *Výzkum rizikových faktorů souvisejících s existencí sociálně vyloučených romských lokalit ve městě Přerově*. SocioFactor, Ostrava, 2009.

20 TOPINKA, Daniel, JANOUŠKOVÁ, Klára: *Výzkum rizikových faktorů souvisejících s existencí sociálně vyloučených romských lokalit ve městě Přerově*. SocioFactor, Ostrava, 2009, 16.

21 ČADA, Karel a kol.: *Analýza sociálně vyloučených lokalit v ČR*. GAC,s.r.o.Praha 2015, p.85.

22 Ibidem.

23 ČADA, Karel a kol. 94.

The aim of the research was to compare the logic and dynamics of the process of social segregation of the population in residential areas of two selected European cities. In Ostrava and in Halle (Saale) it is possible to identify localities with socio-demographic differences, which in these cities lead to specific forms of socio-spatial segregation.²⁴

The following were chosen as comparative indicators of socio-spatial segregation:

- Indicators of the physical and geographical structure of the city. The share of houses and buildings built in certain periods of the city's development was chosen as an indicator of the city's physical structure
- Functional indicators, ie the distribution of individual activities in the city and the resulting use of buildings, land and territory
- Social indicators, ie housing functions and characteristics of the permanent resident population.²⁵

In Ostrava, processes of socio-spatial segregation took place throughout the period of socialism. Although socialist housing construction was the same as in Halle (Saale), ie the newly built prefabricated housing estates were attractive to all professions and educational categories of the population, socially needy residents were allocated flats in the original unrepaired housing stock near industrial plants and spatially disadvantaged localities. The process of socio-spatial segregation has been evident in this sense since the 1950s and deepened even more significantly during the period of transformation. In Ostrava, the perception of this issue is associated with a clearly negative concept and the idea of long-term excluded localities in which the Roma population predominates. Within Ostrava, panel housing estates cannot be perceived as a factor of socio-spatial segregation, as residents of various professional, educational and age groups still live here. A characteristic feature of socially segregated localities in Ostrava is the absence of basic infrastructure, especially school and medical facilities.²⁶

The process of social segregation is not perceived by the Halle (Saale) city administration as a topical issue to be resolved. Socio-spatial segregation is not perceived as a state, but only as a natural process of urban development. A much more fundamental problem is the process of permanent depopulation of the city and the related increase in empty housing units, especially in high-rise prefabricated houses, which are the least attractive for residents.²⁷

Despite the many similarities between the two industrial centers, the researchers came to fundamental differences, mainly in the different historical context of the development of both cities, in the different perception and location of socially segregated localities in both cities, including different policy approaches. This also differentiates approaches to solving this problem.

24 BAUM, Detlef, VONDROUŠOVÁ, Kamila, TICHÁ, Iva: *Charakteristika sociálně prostorové segregace ve srovnání dvou měst (Halle - Ostrava)*. Ostrava, 2014, 8.

25 BAUM, Detlef, 11.

26 BAUM, Detlef, 56.

27 BAUM, Detlef, 65.

Conclusion

In relation to crime and security, public spaces are a much-discussed issue, because all spatial crime takes place here. The correct behavior of the inhabitants in the urban space should be influenced not only by individual moral norms and values, but also by elements of urban regulation, referred to as urban order. When these rules of conduct do not work in public, external mechanisms of social control come into play, such as camera systems, legislation in the form of municipal ordinances regulating the regime in public spaces in an effort to purify public space.²⁸ Public spaces in the Czech Republic are legislatively defined by Act No. 128/2000 Coll. on municipalities, § 34,²⁹ as all "squares, streets, markets, sidewalks, public greenery, parks and other spaces accessible to everyone without restriction, ie serving general use, regardless of ownership of this space." Public spaces are then further defined by Decree 501/2006 Coll.³⁰ on general land use requirements. The basic functions of public space include:

"Social", intended for real interaction of people and establishing mutual relations

"Residential", intended for relaxation, rest of the population

"collective" enabling people to meet in social and cultural events

"Service", designed for the transit of users and their access to the city's infrastructure.³¹

Other authors also mention functions that are symbolic as bearers of significance for a given community or an environmental function, intended for parks and forest parks that help maintain better air quality, preserve specific ecosystems and contribute to the revitalization of urban areas.³²

Urban and architectural elements of the environment significantly influence the inner experience and behavior of man and are the bearer of cultural values. The public environment has a number of other aspects related to behavior, it has implications for the emergence of segregation, migration, fluctuation, etc. The public environment significantly affects feelings of security, which is important for maintaining the overall integrity of a person. Due to industrialization, the environment is being devastated, which is a challenge for finding opportunities for new urban solutions. In this regard, it brings new solutions for the F to the locality and is an important element in building social capital.

28 SENNETT, Richard: *The Uses of Disorder*. New Haven, London, 2008, Yale University Press.

29 Zákon č. 128/2000 Sb. o obcích, § 34.

30 Vyhláška 501/2006 Sb. o obecných požadavcích na využívání území.

31 KUČEROVÁ, Zdeňka: Veřejná prostranství. In: *Principy a pravidla územního plánování*. Brno 2019, Ústav územního rozvoje.

32 MARCUSE, Peter: Ohrožení veřejně využívaného prostoru v době stagnace měst. In: *Architektura a veřejný prostor: Texty o moderní a současné architektuře IV* (44–57). Praha 2012.

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