

# Urban Structure as a Repository of Social Content – the Case Study of the Lodz ‘Jewish District’

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## 1 ABSTRACT

The spatial structure of the city rests at the confluence of the human nature and the artefact of the era. Cultural factors are among important determinants of the shape of structures and of the construction process. Each community has its own distinctive social characteristics. An analysis of the spatial record of community functioning preserved in the physiognomy of a city allows for the comparison of features of different groups of city users. Lodz is said to be the city of four cultures. Its construction is attributed to Poles, Russians, Jews and Germans. The spatial distribution of different nations in the city downtown was not even, although the whole area was inhabited by the mixed population. The downtown part of the current Bałuty district was among the regions where Jewish nationality prevailed. The paper analyses the spatial features of the area, with emphasis on morphological characteristics of buildings and public spaces.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 General assumptions

Cities, understood as concentrations of large groups of people in a limited area, are places where civilisation occurs (Xenakis 1965: 336-337). Similar conclusions from empirical investigations, with regard to the large concentration of people in cities, are provided by Florida (2008). It should be noticed here that the city space is the only possible place of contacts for people belonging to various milieus. The lack of spatial relations between the location of different social groups - which Sachs (2006) defines as belonging to different periods of civilisation development: information, industry, agriculture - and the place, which they occupy remains characteristic for contemporary ‘urban regions’<sup>1</sup>. Such situation – usually of positive connotation, as mixing contributes to the equalisation of differences – is the result of many years of evolution and spontaneous transformation of social structure. This is an antithesis to the Chicago school approach<sup>2</sup>, which defined the city social structure as a juxtaposition of areas occupied by people belonging to various groups, seeing in the situation of change the transformation period between the following phases of succession. While mixture and variety create fortuity and are a source of richness of the urban environment. Carmona et al. (2009) and Gehl (2009) also underline the need for integration of different groups within an area and point at enabling direct contacts between inhabitants as the primary challenge for today’s urban design.

Studies of former cities, which successfully developed as multiethnic communities provide important guidelines, when looking for solutions for problems of contemporary multicultural cities. Thus this case study, which concerns Lodz – a 19<sup>th</sup> century, textile industry centre, the development of which was a common oeuvre of four cultures: Polish, German, Jewish and Russian. Their activities left durable traces in the city structure in the form of important edifices: factories and palaces of factory owners, and common structures: tenements and social housing, serving for factory workers and other employees. Architectural forms expressed the differences in religious habits: there are catholic and orthodox churches, whereas most of the synagogues were demolished. The analyses of urban structures, including social spaces of squares and markets, streets, passages and nooks provide an important perspective. The patterns differed throughout the city - their overlay with the distribution of communities representing various cultures indicates the correlation. Their concentrations and mixing up provided occasions for both: isolation and mutual relations.

### 2.2 Thesis

When regarding the development of physical structures in relation to culture, the built form constitutes an important repository of cultural information, an artefact of cultures and societies that created them in a given time (Lawrence, Low 1990, Dubos 1972, Alexander 1977). Studies of the physical form of the city allow to reveal the activities of former citizens. The physical urban structure constitutes part of the material culture,

<sup>1</sup> The term proposed by Zuziak (2008, 28) to describe a city and its surrounding areas.

<sup>2</sup> R. Park et al. after Jałowicki, Szczepański (2006, 18). An exemplary thesis of Otmar Spengler, used as reference by the creators of Chicago School „a city is the same for civilised man as a cottage for a peasant” stops making sense in the description of the contemporary reality.

which, as Mead states, remains a series of “*collapsed acts, the signs of what would happen if the acts were carried to completion*” (cited in Richardson 2009: 75). Material culture becomes an expression of the defined situation (as described by social scientists, e.g. Perinbanayagam (1974)), when an unity is brought about between the situation itself and the material settings. Then the situation may be described as placed as it has achieved its material existence (Richardson 2009: 75).

Hillier and Hanson (2003) underline the relation of patterns of people movements and physical environment introducing the concept of spatial logic of space. Thus, the analyses of existing and former urban structures provide an important tool for the creation of new structures, which not only follow the site’s genius loci and local tradition but also stay in compliance with the integral cultural patterns of social groups. More contemporary research on the social production of space seeks to place the understanding of built form in the larger context of the society's institutions and history: Lefebvre (2003), Lawrence, Low (1990) and their followers. Proxemics relates the human environment with behavioural patterns proper for distinguished cultures (Hall 1966, 2009). The above factors remain important, when considering the constant displacement of people in an era of globalisation and the requirement to provide an environment, which suits their needs while at the same time reducing the problems of social adaptation.

The present case study discusses the settings, which were created by Jews, who lived in Lodz in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, addressing the relation between the level of mixing up and assimilation and presence of features specific for this culture in the city structure.

### 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 The definition of the area under consideration

The delimitation of the area may raise some controversy. The common perception of the Jewish district in Lodz refers to the area of the Old Town and the adjacent part of the former Nowe Bałuty settlement, and is enclosed by Pomorska and Legionów Streets, including the former Factory of I.K. Poznański and its closest surroundings. Citizens with higher level of historical consciousness consider the area extending to Zielona and Narutowicza Streets, aware of the presence of more assimilated Jewish population in the direct neighbourhood of the pre-war edifice of the reform synagogue (*Dajcze szil*), which was erected on the corner parcel of Zielona Street and Aleja Kościuszki (former Zachodnia Street). The consistent concentration of Jews was located in the Old Town along with the most urbanised part of the former Nowe Bałuty settlement – this area is referred to in literature as the one of essentially Jewish character. In the South part the area lines up with the extent defined by analyses of statistical data of the beginning of the period between the World Wars (Grabowski 1922), shown in Fig. 1. The spatial extent of the contemporary administrative Bałuty unit differs from the common understanding of the name, and from its historical meaning. The tragic events associated with the functioning of the Litzmanstadt ghetto in Bałuty overlap on this in the public consciousness.

Basing on the Municipal Register of 1918-1920 (Grabowski 1922) the population of Moses' faith occurred in the area limited by Św. Andrzeja and Przejazd Streets (current names: Andrzeja Struga and Tuwima Streets). The greatest number of Jews lived in the Old Town (statistical unit III – 89%), in the neighbourhood of Pomorska Street (unit V – 78%), in the neighbourhood of Zielona Street (unit VII – 62%) and Dzielna Street (current name Narutowicza Street, unit VIII – 68%), in the North-East part of Bałuty (XVIII - 43%) and in the neighbourhood of Konstaktynowska Street (unit IV – ca 50%). Certain percentage lived in Górna district, in the neighbourhood of the market place. The extent of the occurrence of Jewish population for units VII, VIII, XVIII and IV did not match the borders of the statistical units, thus the aggregation to bigger units did not allow to show the effective concentrations of this group within the whole unit (Spodenkiewicz 1999).

The analysis of the spatial development of the Old Town in Lodz and of the Bałuty district, thus of the areas, the final spatial shape of which was mostly the artefact of the Jewish community, indicates the presence of a set of morphological features proper for this culture. German authorities of Litzmanstadt extensively redeveloped the area during the World War II, further redevelopment was conducted in the post-war period by Polish authorities. However, even the later alteration, which diluted most of the former character, did not utterly destroy the general character of these places, which remains present and allows for reading of the former citizens’ activities and habits.

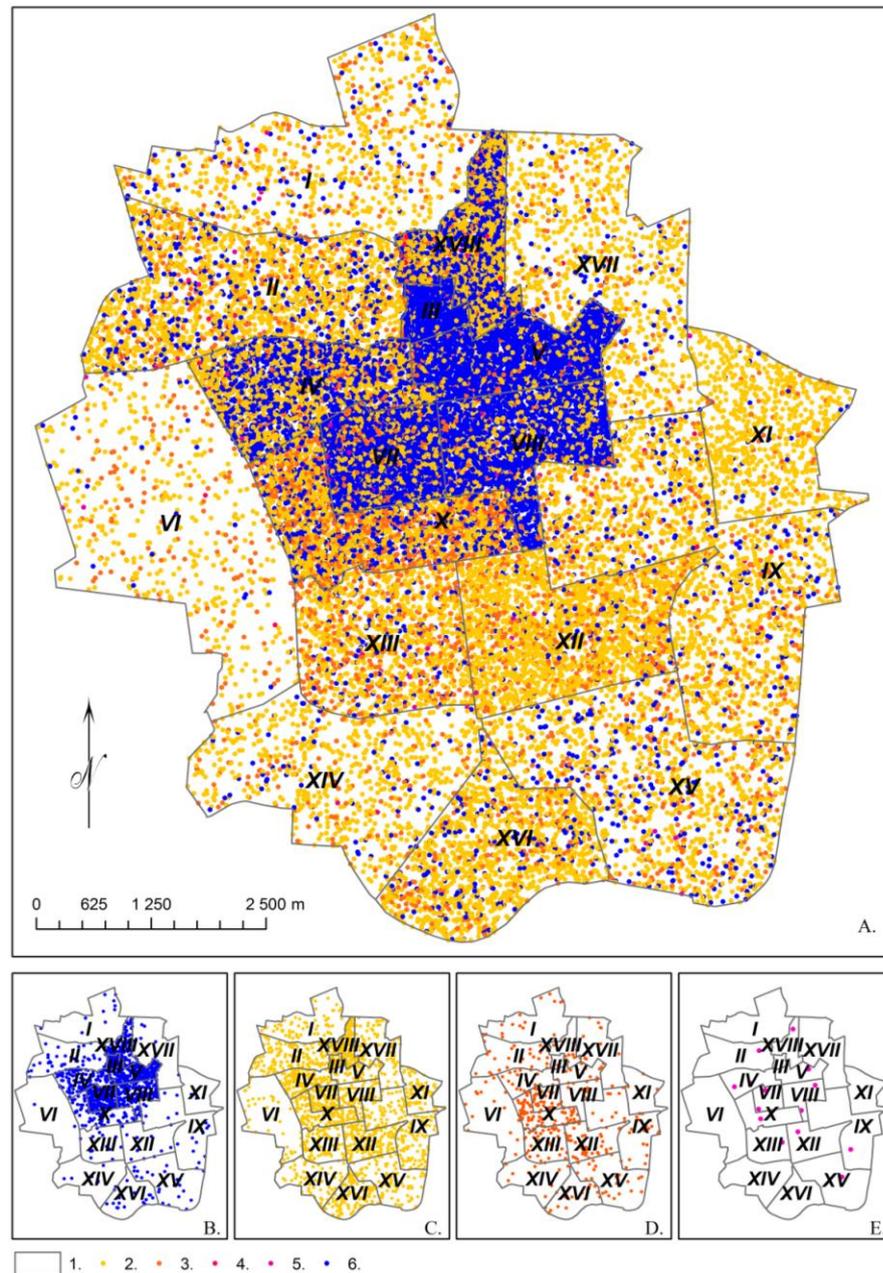


Fig. 1: Sociotopography of Lodz in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, data source: Grabowski (1922).

### 3.2 History of the Jewish settlement in Lodz

The initial low influx of the Jewish population to Lodz before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the effect of the economic stagnation of the city (Puś 2003: 11). The lack of interest continued despite the fact that Lodz, which remained the property of Wroclaw bishops did not have the privilege “*de non tolerandis Judaeis*”, that is there were no legal limitations for Jews’ settling (Friedman 1935: 22). The economic development of the city under the initially Prussian (to 1806 r.) and then in the period of the Duchy of Warsaw – Polish government administration, contributed to the considerable growth of the population - in the years 1793-1808 it was above twofold: from 191 to 434 persons. In this time, the number of Jews in Lodz grew up five times: from 11 to 58 persons (Puś 2003: 11). The conclusion about the economic development of city as the main factor inducing the Jewish population to settle in Lodz is important for further considerations (Baranowski 1988: 12).

The regulations of the Constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw, setting up the equality of all citizens “*before the face of law*” did not refer to the Jewish population. Moreover, their law to move freely was limited and the successive policy of the government aiming to transfer Jews living so far in the country (above 30% of the entire Jewish population at the Duchy of Warsaw) to cities was introduced. This was one of the factors,

which fostered the growth of immigration to cities, among others to Lodz. The treatment of the Jewish population did not change in the Kingdom of Poland (in the period between the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and 1862), however it did not reduce Jewish immigration to Lodz. The number of Jewish inhabitants of Lodz grew up from 98 persons in 1809 to 259 in 1820.

The decision of the authorities issued on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1822, concerning the establishing of Jewish districts in cities, belonging to the government, was introduced in Lodz on the initiative of the authorities of the Mazovian Province, as part of the regulation on constructions, accompanying the location of the factory settlements (first of Nowe Miasto, and then of Łódka). The decision of the governor of Congress Poland of 27<sup>th</sup> September 1825 established in Lodz the district for the inhabitants of Moses' faith and obliged all local Jews to move to the appointed zone of the city before the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1827. Exception was made for these, who showed high income, spoke Polish and French or German fluently, were sending children to public schools and did not use “*superficial signs, which so far distinguished the Jewish nation from other citizens*”. The privilege to choose the place of residence was also granted to persons of high material status, scientists, artists and wealthy merchants (Rynkowska 1960, Nr 152). Economic development was the factor attracting subsequent immigrants: in the years 1825-1841, the Jewish population grew up four times from 342 to 1359 persons. It resulted in the growth of the inhabitants' density in the zone and, as a consequence, its enlargement. The first informal enlargement, took place in 1841, when the Government Committee annotated the project presented by the Mazovian Governor Franciszek hr. Potocki, stating that the Committee „*confirms that, building intended and already begun by the Jewish population in the part of the city of Lodz proposed for spreading of their district, should not stopped*”. The district was then enlarged, including the whole of the Old Town market and the northern part of Podrzeczna and Wolborska Streets as shown on the plan from 1841<sup>3</sup>.

Nobody decided to settle outside the zone, despite the regulations allowing for this. It was partly a result of the hostile attitude of artisans, mostly German, who referred to the regulations of Zgierz, where Jewish people were forbidden to settle. The first Jewish investment outside the zone was the yarn store erected by Ludwik Mamroth from Kalisz only in 1833. Until 1848, there were only eight Jewish families living outside the zone. From 1848 to 1860, further 40 families got their permissions, there were also 312 Jews living in Nowe Miasto without permission (Friedman 1935: 82-85). The next enlargement of the zone took place in 1859, confirmed by the Decree of the Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland on 12 May 1861. It covered the territories to the East from the Old Market, where four new streets were marked out, as well as parts of the streets: Zgierska, Kościelna and Piotrkowska (currently part of Nowomiejska) and the North side of Północna Street. A year later, on 5 June 1862, tsar Alexander II signed an ukase defining the rights of the Jewish population, which, along with equalising the Jews' rights in access to merchant and artisan corporations, liquidated the Jewish zones and cancelled the former discrimination of Jews in the civil and penal law.

Concurrently, in 1853, merchants from Lodz: Szlomo Icchac Bławat and Icchat Birenzweig signed a lease contract with August Zawisza, the owner of Bałuty estate. The allotment of the New Bałuty settlement began in 1857. According to Orłowski (1984) “*its objective was the foundation of a new, industrial settlement which, neighbouring with the Jewish district, would have in it a constant source of cheap and professional labour force*”. One could argue with the term ‘industrial settlement’. Especially that the same author quotes the statement of the then president of Lodz Franciszek Traeger, describing houses, “*the structure, layout and size of which are conceived as convenient places for craftsmen and merchants*” (Rynkowska 1960, Nr 130), thus confirming the commercial character of the new settlement and pointing at the perfection of adopted solutions from the point of view of commerce. In the report for the gubernial government Traeger stressed the satellite character of the new settlement in relation to Lodz, being rather a prolongation of the city than an independent organism, the spontaneity of the new development and its possible competition for Lodz. The Nowe Bałuty settlement was inhabited mainly by poor people, both Jewish and Polish, who earned their living from small trade, home industry and domestic service in Lodz (Puś 2006: 95). The land properties belonged to all three groups (German, Jewish and Polish), though Germans seldom settled in the neighbourhood.

3 “*Plan rozszerzenia rewiru żydowskiego w r. 1841 (ze zbiorów Archiwum Akt Dawnych Miasta Łodzi)*” Map 2 in Friedman (1935)

The Jewish district in Lodz, initially restricted to ‘the zone’ was enlarged with time covering a big part of Bałuty and the North part of the downtown. Richer and better-assimilated citizens lived rather in Nowe Miasto, poorer groups in Bałuty. The main reason of Jewish immigration was the economic development of the city as textile industry centre (Puś 2006: 47). After 1890 there were about 10 000 Jewish immigrants from Russia, who arrived in Lodz – so called Litvaks (Puś 2006: 47), what fostered the development of commercial contacts with Russia and facilitated export of products to the East. This by turn indirectly influenced the wealth of this ethnical group, its position in the city and allowed to enlarge their properties outside the zone.

### 3.3 Spatial distribution of nationalities in the pre-war Lodz

The spatial distribution of nationalities in pre-war Lodz was not even and changed in time. In the period just before the beginning of the World War II Jews counted ca 231,000 people - 34,4% of the total population of the city (Baranowski 2009, 85). The Old Town, the central part of Nowe Bałuty and the North part of Nowe Miasto were inhabited mostly by Jewish population, though the social characteristics of this group, mainly its level of assimilation were varied. Most descriptions of the life in Lodz of these times, referring to the areas in question, mention Polish, Jewish or German owners of tenements, Polish janitors and mainly Jewish inhabitants. The spatial distribution of different levels of income was clear: the poorest – proletariat, small artisans, outsource workers lived in Nowe Bałuty, traders and small producers inhabited the Old Town and larger merchants and bankers resided in Nowe Miasto. Obviously, the above-described distribution is very schematic, as the mixing of professions, nations and countries of origin and the differences of the degree of assimilation was huge and not equal.

The spatial distribution of nationalities influenced also the perceived safety. The districts: Widzew, Chojny and the neighbourhoods of the garrison at Konstanyńska Street or of the Hallera Square seemed dangerous for the Jewish citizens. Parks Sienkiewicza or Poniatowskiego – safe on weekdays, could occur dangerous on Sundays or during holidays, especially on Corpus Christi or on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May – the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of 1791.

## 4 METHODOLOGY OF ANALYSES OF URBAN STRUCTURE

### 4.1 Conzenian tradition

Polish tradition of analyses of urban morphology, derived initially from the German and Austrian research and enriched by Polish scientists<sup>4</sup> drew further on from the methodology of MGR. Conzen<sup>5</sup>. Works of M.R.G. Conzen (resumed 2004), developed further by, e.g., Whitehand et al. (2000a), Whitehand (2001), concentrated on examination of urban structure in the morphological approach, against the economic and social background, looking for relations between the city, its inhabitants and the dynamics of city construction (Vernaz Moudon A. 1997: 4). Studies on morphology of plans of small towns and villages of medieval provenience, conducted since the early 60s, aimed at proving the Polish roots of the so-called Regained Territories<sup>6</sup>. Similar studies on different morphological units distinguishable in the urban structure of Lodz<sup>7</sup> also based on the Conzenian methodology of parcellation analyses. The above studies belonged to

<sup>4</sup> Koter, Kulesza (2010: 112) refer to the work of Dziewoński K.: Zagadnienie typologii morfologicznej miast w Polsce, *Czasopismo Geograficzne* 33/ 1962, 441-56

<sup>5</sup> Koter, Kulesza (2010: 113) refer to the works: Golachowski S.: *Studia historyczno-geograficzne nad Wrocławiem na przełomie XVIII I XIX* In *Sprawozdanie Towarzystwa Naukowego Seria A*, 12/1957, 3-8; Golachowski S.: *Studia nad miastami i wsiami śląskimi*, PWN, Instytut Śląski, Opole 1969

<sup>6</sup> This trend is represented by works: Pudelko: (1959, 1962, 1964), and, as referred by Koter, Kulesza (2010: 114): Pudelko J.: *Zagadnienie wielkości i proporcji rynków w badaniach nad rozplanowaniem miast średniowiecznych*, *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Wrocławskiej, Architektura* 4 (36) 1960, 25-45; Pudelko J. : *Ewolucja średniowiecznego miasta w Polsce*, maszynopis w zbiorach Zakładu Historii Kultury Materialnej PAN, Wrocław 1965, Pudelko J.: *Zagadnienie wielkości układów średniowiecznych miast Śląska*, *Prace Komisji Historii Sztuki Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego*, Wrocław 1967

<sup>7</sup> The most important studies were conducted by M. Koter (1979, 1984), also: Koter M.: *Geneza układu przestrzennego Łodzi przemysłowej* *Prace Geograficzne* 79, Instytut Geografii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa 1969; Koter M.: *Relikty osadnictwa średniowiecznego w planie współczesnej Łodzi*, *Przegląd Geograficzny*, 48/1976, 667-87; Koter M.: *Rola wiejskich elementów morfologicznych w procesie kształtowania układu przestrzennego Łodzi*, In Koter M.,

the historical geography. They were based on the analyses of the plans of cities, including their visible elements like street network, layout and characteristics of parcels, etc.

#### 4.2 Other methodologies

Bandini M. (2000, p.133) points at the lack of methodology for analyses of the physical form of the city in the field of humanistic and social sciences and presents the review of the main analytical threats in the field of analysis of the city architecture. A similar review of analytical threats is presented in the work by Panarai, Depaule and Demorgon (2009). The development of modernism as an international style set back the tradition of morphological analyses, which were in opposition to its basic assumptions (Rykwert 2000: 4-6). In the area of the British culture the continuation of the English *Picturesque* style became one of the threads recalling earlier traditions of development of urban structures, indicating the need of paying attention to the features of urban landscape including: diversity, semantics, intimacy and contrast<sup>8</sup>. This tradition is represented by the oeuvre of Cullen (2008, 1961), which assumes analyses of elements such as series of views, the way of experiencing of a site by examination of physical relations between the human body and its environment (proximity, scale in relation to human dimensions, the presence of defined, enclosed spaces). The essential features of urban environment included local colour, textures, scale, character, etc. Lynch (1960, 1994) developed the theory of perception of the urban landscape based on five elementary features: nodes, landmarks, paths, regions, and edges. Further studies on urban form (Lynch 1994, Lynch, Rodwin 1991) concentrated on the development of the notional apparatus allowing for description both of the elements of “*adopted spaces*” as well as of the system of space of *flows* – in other words of the network of open spaces: streets, squares and pedestrian passages. Attempts to conceive the notional apparatus were also made in order to describe relations between objectives and functions fulfilled by specific elements of the system and their physical properties, with the special emphasis on the concept of habit (Kropf 2009).

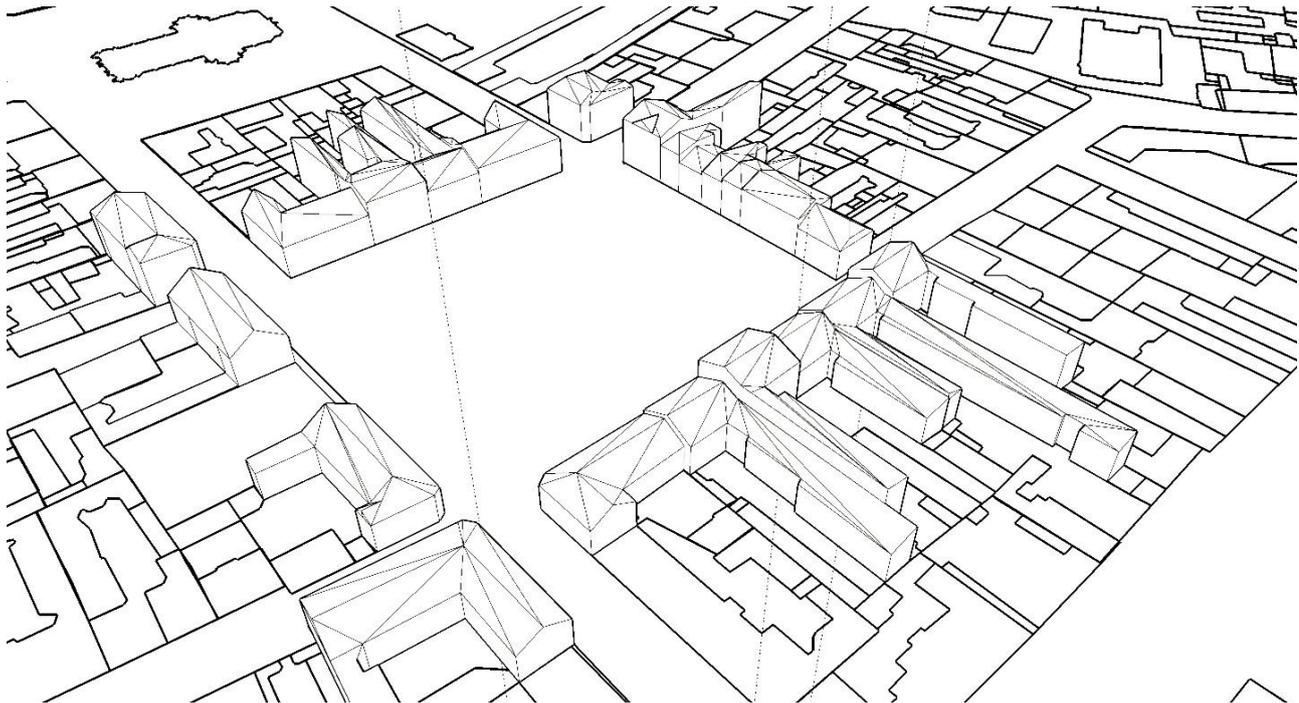


Fig. 2: Hypothetical reconstruction of the model of the Old Marker direct neighbourhood basing on archive photographs and postcards.

Traditional, morphological way of perceiving urban structures, present in the postmodern architecture and urbanism (Rossi 1984) inscribes into the general trend towards the contestation of modernism as an international style. The analyses of former structures, addressing the genius loci and the research to revert to

Tkocz, J. (Eds.) Zagadnienia geografii historycznej osadnictwa w Polsce. Materiały Konferencyjne (Uniwersytet Łódzki i Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu, Toruń Łódź 1994, 63-88

<sup>8</sup> Bandini (2000: 139) refers to the works: Hussey Christopher: *The picturesque: studies in a point of view*, G.P. Putnam's Sons London 1927 and Watkin David: *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design*, Murray, London 1982

a concretisation of the genius loci are among the key challenges. Typology of public spaces and more architectural considerations, concerning scale and form of constructions, constitute one of the basic areas of interest of the New Urbanism movement (compare Krier 1975). The comprehensive set of features allowing for the characteristics of physical structures, including the culture related features was developed, among others, by Rapoport (1990: 106-107).

## 5 CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN STRUCTURE

### 5.1 The Lodz ‘Jewish District’ – an example of ‘shtetl’<sup>9</sup> culture’

The different character of the Jewish settlements in the countries of Western and Eastern Europe was the result of initially larger spatial isolation of the Jewish population in Western Europe, followed by their more essential assimilation than it had place, among others, on the terrain of Poland (Wirth 1962). Here the initial privileges, allowing for the development of Jewish communities not only in large cities, but also in small towns as well as the permission to undertake many occupations, and further isolation and restrictions concerning the available locations for settlement, caused that this ethnic group settled in small towns, villages or districts of similar character (Wirth 1962).

A huge number of historical, demographic and social studies provide an exhaustive picture of Jewish presence both in Poland and in Lodz. Numerous monographs and collective works, popular science works as well as fiction describe in a comprehensive way the habits of the nation and the issues of coexistence between Poles and Jews, in particular problems concerning World War II and Holocaust. The numerous studies concerning the culture of Jewish emigrants from the areas of Eastern Europe deal with the characteristic features of the life in small towns, villages and districts of bigger cities defining them under the same notion ‘the shtetl’ (Zborowski, Herzog 1962, Ertel 2011).

The proxemics approach, presented by Hall (2009) and his successors, examines the relation of spatial patterns of usage of space in different cultures with the material environment. The differences between morphological structures representing various cultures are particularly apparent in cities, which like Lodz had become a melting pot of many cultures. Hall (2009) identifies direct relationships between interpersonal distances and other characteristics specific to individuals and communities and the way they shape their own physical environment.

In nomadic tribes, the members of which are accustomed to residing in small spaces, social distances are usually smaller than in other groups. Assessment based on the descriptions of the crowd in literature, e.g.: Singer (2010) or photos of the Ashkenazi Jewish population (those of Eastern European descent, e.g. Bonisławski, Keller 2002), which once used to live in Lodz, correspond to that characteristic. Hillier and Hanson (2003: 27) also refer to the usage of space, the patterns of behaviour appropriate for different communities as the determinants of the final shape of urban structures: *“Throughout the social grouping, a similar family of characteristic spatial themes is reproduced and through its repetition we recognise ethnicity in space. (...) Different types of social formation, it would appear, require a characteristic spatial order, just as different types of spatial order require a particular social formation to sustain them.”*

Much has been written about the Jewish architectural heritage in Lodz (Wesołowski 2009, Walicki 2000, Stefański, Szrajber 2009), but there is probably no description referring to the urban structure of the areas inhabited by Jewish citizens. These settings were commonly described as possessing a special ‘Jewish’ character, e.g. in Bonisławski (1998), though referring this attribution to urban structure only would be, in this case, an oversimplification. The descriptions, frequent in the literature, indicate at the presence of narrow, “circulating” back- streets of the downtown part of Bałuty district and of the Old City as at an example of spontaneous development, realised without any previous conception: *“The still curved and tight back-streets... are sad witnesses of the unusual history of origins of Bałuty”*(Friedman 1935: 94).

An attempt has been made to define a certain set of features proper to the area, describing its morphological structure, which is repeated in most Polish towns and neighbourhoods populated by Jews (Dylewski 2003, Hanzl 2011, 2011a, Hanzl *in press*). The characteristics of the physical form was significantly altered during their stay in Lodz. In this context, it seems clear that the considerations about the relation between the presence of this nation and the appearance of the area are justified.

<sup>9</sup> Yiddish: שטעטל

The characteristic of urban spaces presented below refers mainly to the areas of the Old Town and of the central part of Nowe Bałuty. The Nowe Miasto settlement, established in 1821-1823 by Rajmund Rembéliński, with the main octagonal square and rectangular, regular network of large blocks (average 230m by 190m in the proximity of Wolności Square) belongs to a different era of urban development than the areas described. Some features proper for Jewish concentration in the discussed districts concerned also the area of Nowe Miasto, which is indicated below – though the level of assimilation processes of the society living there, the mixing of different groups and the character of spaces represented different stages of urbanisation processes (Wirth 1938).

## 5.2 The ubiquity of commerce

The basic character of the area of concern may be defined as the ubiquity of commerce. In 1913 there were 4050 shops and trade companies in Lodz. Basing on the singular registry data in the “Czas” calendar of 1913, completed with the list of enterprises in the publication “*Przemysł i handel Królestwa Polskiego*”, the Jews owned ca 80% of transport and freight companies, including branch offices engaged in businesses in Russia, which in 74% belonged to Jewish entrepreneurs. In other branches Jews owned about 60% of shops and warehouses with textiles and 50% of warehouses with stationary and technical products (Puś 2006: 58). In the description of the Old Market, which used to fulfil the functions of a marketplace, one reads: “*The small, poky space was heaped high with piles of merchandise... the intensive movement, most of all on fair days, both residents of the city of several thousand, local peasants and merchants from other cities were huddling together, buying and selling.*” (Friedman 2006: 57-58) The space of commerce was not restricted to the main square or main squares only. This function of public space was present everywhere: in nooks, alleys, in the smaller squares and in the streets neighbouring the main square. The assortment of goods was very rich; one could buy or sell nearly everything.

### 5.2.1 The presence of edifices proper to the Jewish culture

Most of the studies on the Jewish cultural heritage (Rykała, Kulesza 2009: 209-210, Wesołowski 2009, Bergman 1991, 2009) point at the presence of characteristic edifices belonging to this culture, including synagogues, prayer houses, mikves and religious cemeteries. The proximity of religious buildings was indispensable, as on the Sabbath day they had to be accessible within a walking distance. The concentration of orthodox Jews around religious edifices remains a characteristic feature of this religion, though it is not as imperative as it used to be before (Diamond 2008). The specific form of these buildings was defined by religious regulations.

Among secular buildings, which are listed as traces of the presence of Jews, there are schools and buildings of educational societies, premises of different public institutions, manufacturers’ residences, and factories. Tenements seldom attract attention, though the basic city structure consisted mainly of this type of buildings. The general layout of medieval streets as well as the former allotment was preserved to a big extent but the structures were replaced, following the 19th century modes of construction. Many buildings erected in this period are still preserved, comprising a general character of this part of the city, significantly different from other areas. “*Directly next to the synagogue, on the left, there was a gate and entrance to the bes medresz plac – a vast interior yard of the synagogue, which extended until Żydowska Street; there was another entrance there. Next to this square there was bes medresz (hebr. beth midrasz) - “the house of science” sponsored by the community. The large, close yards with different buildings were quite typical for Jewish districts in Poland. The most famous one was Szulhof in Vilnius*” (Spodenkiewicz 1999: 30)



Fig. 3: Nonexistent appearance of the central part of the old Jewish district: 1. frontages, 2. distant landmarks, 3. landmarks, 4. special places, 5. buildings in 1939, 6. parcellation in 1939

### 5.3 Parcellation and street network

#### 5.3.1 Parcellation

The parcellation in the Old Town was of medieval provenience and dated from the period when the charter was granted to the city by the King Władysław Jagiełło (Koter 1984). Main streets, their directions and tracing were on one hand an effect of the pursuit to connect in one straight line the main settlement units characteristic for the Kingdom of Poland and on the other - the response to their inscribing into the preceding structure of settlements, property divisions and former terrain configuration. Koter (1984) writes about using of the passage on the Łódka river and of the formerly existing bridge on the Jasień river, when laying out the road to Piotrków and about taking into consideration the central part of the former village with the market and the church (Koter 1984: 55). At the occasion of the second enlargement of 'the zone', further streets were traced: Aleksandryjska, Św. Jakuba, Jerozolimska and Franciszkańska (Rynkowska 1960, Nr154).

Describing the allotment of grounds of Nowe Bałuty undertaken by Bławat and Birenzweyg the then president of Lodz Traeger stated "they laid out the squares and markets preserving the directions and shape of former ones, according to the character of the city" (Rynkowska 1960, Nr154). The assumption may be done that laying out the main streets in the central part around the Bałucki Market and Bazarowy Square, and also the initial scheme of the parcellation was the work of the two merchants. The streets in the remaining grounds and further parcellation in the central part of the settlement were spontaneous, devoid of any control. An example of this is Ciesielska Street traced by its owners for servicing the properties, which were located along (Sygulski 2006).

#### 5.3.2 Street network

The physical structures, in the Jewish period, due to the breaks in the lines of frontages surrounding most of the blocks, allowed for enriching of the initial network of streets with numerous passages, small squares, hooks, completing the official sociometric layout with the possibility of informal circulation in the area. The actual network of passages was thus richer than the layout of streets, laid out as part of the initial parcellation. Hillier and Hanson (2003: 53-66) indicate at the relation between the characteristic of a given society and the sociometric layout, which is created by the group.

The dense network of curvy streets, alleys, nooks, passages and pedestrian ways, including informal passages through private properties is a characteristic feature for the whole of the discussed area – also in the part of Nowe Miasto inhabited by Jews the quantity of such junctions is higher than elsewhere. The density of the street network is a feature, which Jacobs (1992) qualifies as facilitating the development of all kinds of

services, especially commerce in the ground floor of buildings, as it stimulates pedestrian movement. Most of the connections remained mostly pedestrian, which fostered the presentation of goods and making deals.

#### 5.4 Public spaces

The essential features of the outdoor space, characteristic for the given area refer to the issues of scale and dimensions. The narrowness of streets and presence of numerous slight turns and directional differentiation, providing the notion of concavity, thus closing the views' perspective and assuring perceived and felt closure, are factors favouring direct physical interaction. The irregularity of enclosures of streets, their broken line, the apparent lack of precise form, which enlarged the amount of border space, where people stop more willingly than in the centre of an open space, facilitates transactions, presentations of goods, etc. The abundance of such spaces enabled the location of numerous outdoor, commercial furniture: stalls, kiosks, stands and presentations encouraging buying. Furthermore, purchase was encouraged by the merchants' activity; by the way, not all methods were upright<sup>10</sup>. The aforementioned behaviours are also the most successful in narrow and intimate places; compare the narrowness of pavements in the street cross-section, even in the comparably wide streets such as Zgierska or Łagiewnicka. The analysis of old photographs shows that their shape remained unaltered, except for the former open gutters, which were removed.

Whyte (2009) defines the set of features of outdoor space favouring contacts and fostering relations pointing at the location inside of the human flow. Gehl (2009) indicates at small dimensions of spaces as favourable for establishing relations. In his further considerations he underlines the role of the corrugation of the edge of space (through the presence of elements of urban equipment and the shape of walls themselves) as a feature important for enhancing communal life (Gehl 2009: 150). In the case of the discussed area the tightness of some places, the complication of wall shapes, the apparent chaos could hinder concentration and easiness of perception by persons from outside, which could by turn facilitate transactions profitable for sellers (not necessarily for buyers). Attracting passersby, their stopping was fostered by the presence of numerous small size elements in the outdoor space, providing even sham shelter – Cullen (2008: 103-105) describes this phenomena using the example of a street „cross”, the main function of which was to stop pedestrians. Here such role, less formal, was fulfilled by outhouses and stalls. Whyte (2009) confirms the observation concerning attractiveness of elements freely distributed in the outdoor space.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

Recent research (Ladányi 2001) proves that concentration of ethnically distinguished groups favours social exclusion. As Wirth (1938) stated *"the larger, the more densely populated, and the more heterogeneous a community, the more accentuated the characteristics associated with urbanism will be."* The lack of an intermediate, socially mixed zone fosters separation, thus belonging to the 'folk society', following Redfield's terms (1947), rather than introducing urban, more heterogeneous culture. Ethnic and cultural groups distribution had been subject of many studies since the research by Park, as described by Gottdiener and Hutchison (2006: 155-180). The latest research on allocation of distinguished social groups in cities (Rankin 2010, 2011) confirms Wirth's (1938) and Redfield's (1947) theses, concerning the presence of heterogeneous, urban specific transition zones between ethnic groups, instead of distinct borders as proper for urban communities of high level of stability. The case study of Jewish presence in Lodz confirms all of the above observations: the core part covering the *shtetl*-like development of the Old Town and central part of Nowe Bałuty settlement presented features of distinct, socially isolated population of folk features. The social equilibrium and more accentuated city-like characteristics of development were achieved thanks to the presence of an intermediate, socially heterogeneous community, which as far as Jews were concerned was apparent along with the increased level of assimilation and the dilution of traditional religious orthodox practices and habits resulting from it.

Contemporary studies on segregation and integration processes in the globalising world confirm the presence of different social patterns and the ethnical heterogeneity as the feature proper to a contemporary, urban society (Schnell, Benjamini 2005). Spatial distribution of ethnic groups in Lodz in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century tended towards this model. The co-presence is understood in categories of social situations as Goffman (1963) defines it. The community of *shtetl*, with its specific and closed character and defined

<sup>10</sup> The interview with Don Goren in Spodenkiewicz (1999: 33).

culture along with the transition zone of assimilation provided the environment, which remained balanced and did not generate conflicts for long period of time, which may still serve as an example to follow in cases of co-presence of many different cultural groups.

Lévi-Strauss describes the city as “*the most complex of human inventions, (...) at the confluence of nature and artefact*”<sup>11</sup>. The recognition of an area as belonging to a specific culture is an issue addressed by anthropologists, cultural geographers<sup>12</sup> and urban morphologists – starting from Geddes (1904). The subject of investigations are the tangible results of social and economic forces, the outcomes of ideas and intentions expressed in actions, which are themselves governed by cultural traditions (Vernez-Moudon 1997: 3). Experiencing of culture may be effectuated via examination of its influence on the physical form of the city: spaces of flows and built-up places. A number of features confirm the influence of the presence of the Jewish community over the physical form of spatial structure. Referring the methodological remarks presented in the paper to the attempt to analyse the spatial structure of the part of Lodz, inhabited by Jews and in its important part erected by them in the second half of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century (Hanzl 2011, 2011a), the following features may be distinguished:

1. Adjustment of public space to the needs of commerce: various scale of public spaces, important quantity and density of passages, nooks, alleys, also within private properties, irregularity of border line of public spaces and thus lengthening of the edge – increased comfort of stay in public spaces,
2. Variety of building forms, diversity of styles, materials, lack of homogeneity – as an answer to the requirements of current needs only – a feature considered characteristic for Jewish communities as representative of Diaspora lifestyle (Zborowski, Herzog 1962),
3. Adjustment of the plan of medieval village to the needs of 19<sup>th</sup> century reality without significant changes in the former state, only through replacement of buildings,
4. The presence of edifices, both public and private, belonging to Jewish culture.
5. The core location of Jews constitutes the most densely populated part of the city.

Panerai et al (2009) propose a concept of habitus, which seems significant for the present considerations, and which assumes that urban structure, as reflecting the repetitions of social practices of everyday life, becomes the form of record of these practices. With time the recorded layout may become the contribution to the further continuation of the former way of use of space. Such situation happens also in Lodz, where in spite of important changes resulting from the new usage of the Old Town Market, despite the widening of some streets, demolitions and destructions of war and post-war periods, and the intensive car transit through the former Jewish district, the use of social spaces still remains to a large extent commercial, thus compliant with the one produced once by the presence of their former inhabitants.

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<sup>11</sup> Claud Lévi-Strauss (1954: 137-8), translation after Vernez Moudon (1997: 3)

<sup>12</sup> Compare recent studies referring to the post-socialism cultural settings of Polish landscape by Czepczyński (2008) or the studies of the American landscapes by Holdsworth (1997) or Lowenthal (1997).

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