

The Role of Pedestrian Spaces in Formation of Architectural Attractiveness of Towns in Lviv Region

Abstract

Small towns of Lviv region possess large but undeveloped potential for the formation of architectural attractiveness of environment. The issue of arrangement and functioning of pedestrian spaces is of particular importance for such settlements. Despite of large cities, there is a unique possibility for small towns to sightsee using waking tours. This is particularly important for transit towns, where waking tour may also become a pleasant rest during a trip. Such towns require comfortably equipped pedestrian routes including observation decks and informative means of visual communication, elements of architectural and landscape design, which are able to play the role of the major attraction object for the town visitors.

Keywords: pedestrian spaces, small town, architectural attractiveness, Lviv region

Under current conditions one of the vital issues for small towns is a search of the own economic resources, one of which is a profit from tourism. In order to develop a local tourism industry, a small town as an architectural object should be attractive, that is to interest, to attract attention, to stimulate as much people as possible to visit it [O. Dyda, 2012]. For this purpose, firstly, the town should have attractive objects which can interest tourists, secondly, these objects should be publicly accessible, and thirdly, a tourist should be able to get appropriate information about them. One of the ways to comply with all the above stated conditions in a town is the possibility to use the architectural sources, as the basis for tourism development both in big cities and small towns are, first of all, unique, non-standard architectural space and spectacular architectural structures. However, if for big and average cities tourism is only an additional potential source of income, then for the category of small towns service for numerous visitors may become an essential, sometimes even a main source of local income. Often a small town is proved to be economically and socially unprotected under the conditions of the market economy, and therefore should independently search for additional, sometimes even non-standard sources of income. Naturally that in small towns, in contrast to rural settlements which are attractive because of their landscape and environment, potential tourists expect to see local architectural space and architectural rare objects. Therefore, for the category of small towns the issue of architectural attractiveness is very significant both in respect to prestige, and in respect to its economical development.

The process of sightseeing in a small town and a big city is essentially different. The impression you get largely depends on

your travel speed. In order to notice an object, remember its silhouette, and observe the details, you need a certain time. Within a big city a tourist uses transport – goes by bus, by car, and as a result of high travel speed, there is an effect of so called discrete perception of city architecture owing to which the city is perceived as a set of separate fragments. On the contrary, a pedestrian has got more time to become acquainted with his/ her surrounding therefore an architectural space is perceived as an unified whole space. Nowadays at historic centers and other attractive parts of the cities there are pedestrian areas. Yet if within a big city it is possible to get acquainted only with separate the most interesting parts of the city architecture then in a small town it is possible to organize a walking tour through the whole town. In respect of potential possibilities of the exposition of attractive town objects, a small town has an advantage over a big one, as due to its small size, during a slow walk it may be perceived as an unified complex. Therefore, ideally, within a small town all the municipal communications both in downtown, and other parts of a town, should be fit for pedestrian use.

A certain approach to form the architectural complex should be used while orienting on the perception of the space by pedestrians. It is necessary to work not by bold strokes, but small

parts, to dispose visual and composition dominants, elements of service-oriented infrastructure, and recreation area more often. There are also essential differences between the demands to the means of visual communication. On the one hand, at a high moving speed, a person perceives only a laconic visual information, mainly name and pictogram, on the other hand, during a slow walk a person has got more time not only to have a careful look at the object, but also to read a more detailed information about it. Therefore, from the perspective of the qualitative sightseeing of a town and its attractive objects, the arrangement of appropriate pedestrian areas in small towns is more important and principle in comparison to the big cities.

A special approach in respect to the forming of attractive architectural area should be taken in small towns with main traffic roads going through [B. Cherkes, 2012]. It is a rather complicated task, as a transit small town is not a final target for the most of people travelling through it. Pedestrian areas of such towns should not only offer a comfortable rest, but also give tourists the possibility to receive information on sights in the town and quickly go sightseeing. Therefore while projecting pedestrian areas at transit small town it is necessary also to provide: comfortable and short way from the parking places of tourist buses and private transport; disposal of main information on attractive objects of the town in the area of transfer streams; organization of alternative shortened observation route within a pedestrian area for transit tourists with tense time schedules.

The pedestrian area of a small town, being relatively small, should meet the interests of different groups of people using it. Such interests are not always the same, yet even sometimes are totally different. In the perspective of the attractiveness of architectural space, the main differences in the demands to the pedestrian area are in two large groups, namely local residents and tourists. The peculiarities of perception by the local residents are mainly caused by their long residence in this area, as well as the opportunity to see an architectural area of a town during a long time and more precisely. One and the same view they may see under different circumstances, in different seasons, observing seasonal color changes. Over the course of time, local residents get personal emotional associations with the town and its separate fragments which accumulate special individual *genius loci* [G. Curdes, 1997]. Local residents may pay attention to the shades and details; they may fix dynamics of changes of environment for the better or for the worse. As for this group of people the area of a certain town is an everyday place of residence, they are primarily interested in quality, physical and psychological comfort. Being the members of a unified system with a town, they are often not able to compare visual, concept, and functional characteristics of local architecture with the similar objects at other towns, therefore they often cannot estimate the advantages of their own town. This is also proved by the inquiry of local residents of several small towns in Lviv region conducted by the author. Most of the respondents could not answer the question which architectural object they visually associate with their native town, however, in fact those towns have got interesting architectural buildings (among the respondents – residents of town Sokal, Zhvyrka, Velyki Mosty, Briukhovychi, Brody, and others).

Tourists' perception of the architecture is somehow different. Their stay in the town is relatively short. During this time they form a general, mainly visual impression from a town area not paying special attention to the details being short of time. Compared to the local residents, tourists cannot see the town in different seasons or even part of day, or under different weather conditions. Therefore their impression essentially depends on the circumstances while visiting the town, namely: weather, service level, sometimes even sounds, smells, behaviour of the people met on their way [A. Rudnytskyi, 2009]. Tourists visiting town for the first time do not have any personal associations with its area, often they even do not have any previous concept of it. If during a short period of time they perceive a large number of different city sceneries, they may just become a unified image for a visitor and it is difficult for him/ her to remember them. However, on the contrary to the local residents visitors may compare this town area with other towns, as well as they may estimate those peculiarities of the architecture which become usual for local resident and do not attract their attention any more. So, visitors perceive the town area under other conditions and, as a result, have other demands to its architectural attractiveness. Spectacular visual characteristics and available informational content of the objects are very important for them.

Pedestrian area should contribute to attractiveness of the small town area, taking into consideration special demands and needs of both local residents and town visitors. Different, often even contradictive vision of the optimal town area by these two groups of people should be materialized in a unified, territorially limited pedestrian area. Within a small town, main pedestrian communications often coincide with tourist sightseeing routes which may cause a certain discomfort for local residents. Therefore within a town area it is essential to separate the tourist routes from the local pedestrian communications as much as possible.

It may be reached by two means dependent on the planning peculiarities of a small town. If the territory is big enough, it is reasonable to divide pedestrian streams of tourists and local residents within an unified pedestrian area. For this purpose, on the shortest routes designate the communication roads for fast transportation by the means of architectural and landscape design, and to arrange parallel routes for tourists with observation sites, places for a short rest, and stalls with souvenirs. If the territory of the town is rather small, in order to avoid heavy



il. 1. Town Dobrotvir in Lviv region. Pedestrian area in the downtown (personal archives of the author)



il. 2. Town Sokal in Lviv region. Pedestrian area in the downtown (personal archives of the author)

pedestrian traffic, it is possible to provide several tourist routes each with its own subject, instead of one observation site to provide several equivalent ones, and to spread the attractive objects on the territory of the town and outside it. Under conditions of a small town, the solution of such problem is more real, as its architectural space is visually whole and there are more equivalent places for its observation. Besides, all the parts of a small town are accessible to pedestrians, which makes it possible to offer a large number of variants of observation routes.

To let the visitors perceive an unfamiliar space most accurately, apart from a possibility of visual perception of real buildings, they should receive the information about them. It may be received by three means, namely: through a direct observation of the objects, through advertisement outside the town area and information stands arranged within a town area, near architectural buildings.

Under modern circumstances, in the perspective of architectural attractiveness forming, the buildings should have their advertisement in the information area – internet, mass-media, printed press, TV, responses etc. Presentation is very significant while creating a virtual advertisement, as it is based mainly on photo and video records. While choosing the pedestrian routes and views which are accessible from the observation points, it is important to take into consideration the peculiarities of space reflection in photo and video pictures. Creation of a special net of observation sites to some extent gives the possibility to control the look of the town in the pictures, and, if necessary, to hide its certain less attractive parts.

The issue of architectural area of small towns is urgent for Lviv region mainly because of the fact, that it is a leader in Ukraine in the amount of small towns. There are 74 of them. The region has got the old traditions of wide autonomy concerning town governing. There is an information on 36 towns granted the Magdeburg rights. Historically Lviv region was a settled and urbanized territory which has influenced the development of Ukraine, as well as other states. In the process of its historical development, on the territory of Lviv region the different cultures were combined, among them Polish, Jewish, German, and in the XX century Russian, which has also influenced the architectural area of the small towns. Modern Lviv region borders with

the European Union. There have always been the important transcontinental trade routes, and now there are traffic roads of international importance. This facilitates tourism development which is directly dependent on the architectural attractiveness of local towns and separate objects. Appropriately planned pedestrian areas may play important role in creation of such an attractiveness.

All the pedestrian areas in the regional centers of the Western Ukraine such as Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Ternopil, Uzhhorod, and Chernivtsi appeared in 1980th of the XX century. Later, pedestrian areas appeared in several small towns of Lviv region, namely in resort towns Morshyn and Truskavets, and also in Sambir and Zhovkva, where it was possible to organize an appropriate pedestrian area due to construction of the byroads. However, most of the small towns of Lviv region have transit traffic through their territory, so their downtowns are divided into several territories by the roads with a large transport loading [B. Posatskyi, 2007]. Therefore there are only several small parts of the town area in the downtown which are pedestrian [il. 1, 2]. On the one hand, in the perspective of forming of architectural environment attractiveness and local budget support, the arrangement of modern pedestrian areas in small towns of Lviv region is a task of urgent importance. On the other hand, there are some difficulties in the task realization, and the reason is not only in fund shortage, yet, first of all, in the peculiarities of functional usage of public communication areas of local small towns. Taking into consideration, that for an effective demonstration of the attractive objects, the pedestrian observation route should be organized not only in the downtown, but also on the suburbs where there are often some effective points of panoramic observation, historic



il. 3. Town Burshtyn in Lviv region. Lack of pedestrian communications along the roads (personal archives of the author)



il. 4. Town Velykyj Lubin in Lviv region. Lack of pedestrian communications along the roads (personal archives of the author)

architectural and archeological monuments, natural exotics etc. Common residential streets should be also included into the general pedestrian net. Mainly they combine on their small space the functions of traffic lane, bicycle lane, and pedestrian path, in smaller towns the function of road for domestic animals and foal is added. In spite the fact that the majority of the population goes within a town by foot or by bicycle, the town streets except for central districts do not have pavements and combining the role of pedestrian communication and vehicle transit [il. 3, 4]. Such a situation with a transport network was inherited since the times when the cars were big rarity. Besides, lots of small towns have received their town status relatively lately and for a long time they had been villages with appropriate demands to the organization of their transport network.

Surely, in respect of pedestrian safety such a combination of functions within one road is definitely negative. Yet in the respect of attractiveness of architectural environment such a peculiarity may be even attractive as being contrastive to the common for the residents of big cities standard divided urbanized environment. In this case, it is possible to apply the principle of flexibility in attractant choosing, for example, demonstrating to the tourists not only a preserved church or ruins of a castle, but also a specific atmosphere of a street, where it is even possible to meet cows coming from a pasture, domestic foal or even a horse pasturing roadside. Besides, the area of the streets in a small town is from time to time an improvised stage where folk rituals such as weddings, funerals or church processions take place. Such events are interesting and unusual, and, therefore, may be an additional town attraction, especially for international tourists. Negative side of such events is inability during a certain time to go through the street. Even if it is considerably wide, such rituals as funerals anyway causes a large traffic jam as according to local custom, it is not recommended to get ahead of a funeral procession. Similar problems for transport are made by the mentioned above domestic animals which may provoke an accident situations and slow down the speed of car traffic. This conflict of

interest may be solved by, firstly, purposeful reconstruction of the town area in division of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffics, and, secondly, with separate areas for tourist routes, rational pedestrian communications, nominally fenced yet visually accessible green corridors for domestic animals, and separate open areas for occasional rituals. Such actions would save a traditional for small towns' urban-rural atmosphere of local streets which is attractive for modern urbanized tourists, and, at the same time, it would allow to avoid accidents on the roads.

So, within small towns the pedestrian areas play a significant role for architectural attractiveness creation. Apart from a recreation and exposition tourist function, the pedestrian areas are the main town communications. Therefore they should combine these functions and divide them in space.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- [1] Cherkes B. S. *Issue of Architectural Attraction of Small Transit Towns* / B. S. Cherkes, O. A. Dyda // *City Planning and Territorial Planning*: Scientific digest/ responsible editor M. M. Osietrin. - Kyiv, KNUBA, 2012. - No. 46. - 694 p. - P.591-600. 46.
- [2] Curdes Gerhard. *Stadtstruktur und Stadtgestaltung* 2. Auflage Verlag W. Kohohlhammer Stuttgart Berlin Koln, 1997. - 248 S.
- [3] Dyda O. *Attractiveness as an Aesthetic and Meaningful Characteristics of Architecture*/ O. A. Dyda// *City Planning and Territorial Planning*: [Scientific digest], No. 44// Kyiv, KNUBA, 2012. - 586 p. - P.169-173. .
- [4] Posatskyi B. *City Area and Urban Culture (end of XX – beginning of XXI century)*: monograph/ B. S. Posatskyi/ Lviv: Published by the Lviv Polytechnic National University, 2007. - 208 p. - P. 66. .
- [5] Posatskyi B. *Small Cities in Lviv Region and Transit Transport Corridors*/ B. Posatskyi// *Problems of small town of Ukraine: self-government development and local economy reforming in the contest of national traditions and world experience. Materials from the international scientific and practical conference Lviv – Zolochiv. May 27-28, 2000.* Publisher: Derzhavnist, Lviv: 2000 – p.140–143.
- [6] Rusnutykyi A. *Issue of Environment Comfort and Prestige of the Towns of Ukraine Under the Modern Circumstances*/ A. M. Rudnytskyi, O. A. Dyda// *Digest of the Lviv Polytechnic National University, Architecture No. 656.* - Publisher Lviv Polytechnic National University, 2009. - P. 235–243.