Lifestyles and patterns of housing environments in peri-urban areas in Flanders

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Research questions

- morphological patterns...
- housing environments...
- lifestyle groups...
- urban-rural dimension?

in the peri-urban areas?
Context elements

Urban-rural typology, based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover
- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
Context elements
Context elements

Spatial Structure Plan 1997: Flanders, open and urban
Case study area
Morphological patterns?

- City centre of Ghent
- No clear boundary between urban and rural part
- Urban sprawl
  - villages
  - ribbon development
  - ‘dots’ or ‘clusters’
Morphological patterns?

- urban-rural gradient?
Morphological patterns?

- Methodology: GIS
  - Ribbons
  - Dots
Morphological patterns?

- urban-rural gradient?

Legend
- Urban area
- Residential cores
- Ribbons of buildings
- Dots of buildings
Housing environments ⇔ lifestyles

- PhD-research

- Hypothesis: there is a relation between actual/ideal housing environments and the lifestyles of their inhabitants (Wirth, Bourdieu, Rapoport, ...)

- Four subdimensions as factors for demand preferences for housing:
  - Economic status
  - Openness
  - (un)safety
  - Ecology

- Explorative research (quantitative and qualitative)
Housing environments

- Quantitative cluster analysis on data related to:
  - Economic status
  - Openness
  - (un)safety
  - Ecology

- 7 clusters:
  - Residential areas
  - Multiple land use areas
    - Urban city centres
    - (Urban or) rural villages
    - Mixed housing environments with higher status in the fringes and the urban sprawl area
Housing environments

- City centres
- No clear boundary between urban and rural part
- Residential areas (urban fringes)
- Village centres
- Urban sprawl areas
Housing environments

- Qualitative: fieldwork by students in 4 housing environments
Housing environments “Villa parks”

- High economic status
Housing environments “Villa parks”

- Low openness
Housing environments “Villa parks”

- Low ecological potential
- Safety is very important
Housing environments “City centres”

- Low and high economic status
Housing environments “City centres”

- Ecological potential is high
- Safety is a problem?
Housing environments
“Village centres”

- Safety is no problem except for the aspect of traffic safety
- Mixed status and openness
- Relatively high ecological potential
Housing environments
“Villaparks for mid-incomes”

- Moderate status and low openness
- Low ecological potential
Housing environments

“Villaparks for mid-incomes”

- Safety is very important
Lifestyle groups

- Explorative
  - Fieldwork by students in 4 housing environments
  - Interviews with 30-40 inhabitants per area

- Lifestyle = related to values, personality and behaviour

- Relation between lifestyles and neighbourhood?
- Differences between different neighbourhoods?
Lifestyle groups: inhabitants of the villa parks

- “Respondents living in the villa parks value security highly, the other values are not so important to them. Especially the low value for economic status is striking comparing to their neighbourhood. They score the lowest on openness. The major part of them secured their homes.”
Lifestyle groups of the city centres

“They consider the value ‘openness’ as most important, security is not so determining for them and they do not wish to achieve a high economic status. Ecology is important but other groups have a higher score for this value. These values are reflected in their actions because they have not secured their homes and the majority is an enthusiast user of public transport or goes to work or school by foot or by bike. Their openness score (Gosling, 2008) is the highest of all respondent groups.”
Lifestyle groups: inhabitants of the village centres

“The inhabitants of the more rural parts of Flanders, value ecology most of all respondents. Half of them goes to work or school by bike or foot or uses public transport. It is rather important for them to be open to other social and cultural groups.”
“The inhabitants of the villaparks for mid-incomes, have the same value pattern as those living in the more exclusive villa parks, regarding to security (very important) and openness (not so important). They differ on the value of economic status, which is obviously very important for the inhabitants of the mixed housing environments. Their score on openness is moderate.”
Conclusions

- No clear morphological urban boundary
- Urban-rural housing environments?
  - Urban centres
  - Residential areas in the fringes
  - (almost) residential areas in the urban sprawl area
  - Urban and rural villages
- Lifestyles are related to their housing environment for safety, openness and status but not for ecology