

Original research paper

## ECOLOGY OF CRIME AND ECOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS IN CRIMINOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

The delinquent area, as the basic concept of ecological theory in criminology, is a natural area that exists in the city, such as ghettos, which arise in the process of urbanization and development and is significant for its characteristic patterns of antisocial behavior. The concept of a delinquent area comes directly from the concept of a natural area in environmental theory, and the epithet “delinquent” refers to the dominant pattern of behavior expressed by a large number of residents in that area. The theory of crime prevention, through the appearance of the environment, is based on the simple idea that the crime partly originates from the circumstances that are in the physical environment. Some of the research in the field of victimology was devoted to examining the impact that a ‘satisfactory’ neighborhood would have on victimization and social participation of the population, and ultimately on the experience of security in the neighborhood. It is emphasized that such an approach presupposes systematic testing of the relative importance of victimization, the importance of the quality of the neighborhood environment and social integration within society in preventing the fear of crime. The observation of child abuse in the delinquent area, related to the unity of the environment-sociology-culture model, is focused on the experience of stress in society, which is considered to be the primary cause of victimization. This category of abuse includes the following causes: stress environment model; social learning model; socio-psychological model and the model of psychosocial systems.

**Keywords:** delinquent area; ecology of crime; ecological theory; crime prevention

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## 1. Introduction

The delinquent area is a natural area that exists in the city, such as the ghetto, for example, which arises in the processes of urbanization and development and is significant for its characteristic patterns of antisocial behavior. Within the boundaries of the delinquent area, delinquent or criminal behavior is something that is expected, like rules, among its residents. This expectation affects the development of hostility among social services and the police, so a form of cultural enclave is formed that stands out from the rest of the city. The formal characteristics of the delinquent area are usually manifested as: physical perversion, overpopulation, mobility of the population, mainly towards industrial and commercial zones. On the other hand, social characteristics are mostly reflected in a small number of informal social control services, as a result of which norms of behavior accepted by the wider society survive.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of a delinquent area comes directly from the concept of a natural area in environmental theory, and the epithet “delinquent” refers to the dominant pattern of behavior expressed by a large number of residents in that area.

Therefore, the relationship between ecology and crime can be observed in the double representation in modern criminology, through the areas of criminal phenomenology and criminal etiology.

The issues covered by the explanation of criminal phenomenology refer, among other things, to the dynamics of crime, which unites the changes in the scope of crime, as mass social phenomena, in a certain period of time and in a certain area. In addition to the dynamics of total crime, it is possible to observe and statistically monitor the dynamics of certain forms of crime: economic, political, property, juvenile delinquency or, on the other hand, to study the regional prevalence of crime (geography of crime) or the prevalence of crime on a global and national scale, in certain national and state areas, in cities and villages, in certain parts of the city (ecology of crime).<sup>3</sup>

The study of regional characteristics of crime is one of the most important areas of interest in criminal phenomenology.<sup>4</sup> Traditionally, criminological study in the socio-spatial sense includes two central issues: the explanation of the spatial distribution of delinquency and the explanation of the spatial distribution of delinquents. Also, in recent times, the study of the spatial distribution of anti-social behaviors has been added to these topics.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, criminological study in the socio-spatial sense includes two central issues: the explanation of the spatial distribution of delinquency and the explanation of the spatial distribution of delinquents. Also, in recent times,

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<sup>2</sup> Morris, T. (1971). *The criminal area*, London: Routledge&Kegan Paul, New York: Humanities Press, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Konstantinović Vilić, S., Nikolić Ristanović, V., Kostić, M. (2009). *Kriminologija*, [Criminology] Niš, Pelikan print, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> See *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology* (ed. by Mike Maguire, Rod Morgan and Robert Reiner), (2007). Oxford University Press, p. 230.

the study of the spatial distribution of anti-social behaviors has been added to these topics.<sup>6</sup>

In the latest criminological literature,<sup>7</sup> when explaining the phenomenological characteristics of crime, it is stated in the introductory texts, the premise that “the basic and long-established criminological truth is that the level of crime is higher in urban than in rural areas.”<sup>8</sup> For this reason, rural crime (village crime) has long been ignored by criminologists.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, criminologists, with a gender-oriented approach, point to the gender perspective of a long-standing controversy, according to which “urban lifestyle, no matter how difficult, influenced women’s emancipation more than rural life or life in suburban households.”<sup>10</sup>

Based on these assumptions, some criminologists, such as Quinney,<sup>11</sup> are shifting the angle of view and research to the distribution of crime in the rural-urban relationship. Namely, according to Quinney, the results of environmental studies indicate that the crime is largely functionally related to social and cultural influences. Due to the consistency of the collected data on rural and urban differences in the manifestation of crime and delinquency, it is often assumed that criminalization and urbanization go together. In his research, Quinney started from the assumption that the extent of delinquency in rural areas is lower compared to areas that are more densely populated. Differences in the level of crime are becoming apparent in the process of urbanization. However, as local communities become part of larger urban-industrial environments and reduce the gap between rural and urban areas, so the gap between the extent of urban and rural crime is becoming smaller.

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<sup>6</sup> The term ecology is taken from physical science and refers to the study of adaptation of plant and animal organisms to the external environment. Cities are territorially distributed according to the “natural order”, through the processes of competition, invasion and change, ie similar processes that take place in biological ecology. See more: Giddens, E. (2005). *Sociologija*. [Sociology]. Beograd: Ekonomski fakultet, p. 586.

<sup>7</sup> See also: Костић, М., Константиновић-Вилић, С., „Разлике у феноменолошким обележјима криминалитета на селу и криминалитета у граду“, XIV Међународни научни скуп: „Власински сусрети 2008“, Зборник радова: *Село у транзицији*, Завод за проучавање села, Српско удружење за социологију села и пољопривреде, Балканска асоцијација за социологију села и пољопривреде, Београд-Власотинце 2008. [Kostić, M., Konstantinović-Vilić, S., “Differences in the phenomenological features of rural and urban crime”, XIV International Scientific Conference: “Vlasina Encounters 2008”, Proceedings: Village in Transition, Institute for Studies sela, Serbian Association for Sociology of Village and Agriculture, Balkan Association for Sociology of Village and Agriculture, Belgrade-Vlasotince 2008], p. 482-495.

<sup>8</sup> Cressey, D. (1964), *Delinquency, Crime and Differential Association*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology* op. cit., p. 528.

<sup>9</sup> According to Susan Moody, the main problem remains the lack of involvement of criminologists in the rural distribution of crime. Ruralism, however, has something significant to offer criminology. “Sadly, however,” the author writes, “how criminology has little to offer in return.” In: *ibid*.

<sup>10</sup> Wilson E. (1992). *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, The Control of Disorder, and Women*, Berkeley, Cal: University of California Press, p. 10., In: *ibid*.

<sup>11</sup> Quinney, R. (1966). “Structural Characteristics, Population Areas, and the Crime Rates in the United State”, *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, Vol. 57, No. 1, p. 45.

Therefore, the interest of criminologists should be redirected from the difference in the level of crime in urban and rural areas to the different influences of the social structure on the level of crime in urban and rural areas. It is possible that structural differences do not work in the same way in relation to the level of crime in different forms of human settlements.

Empirical research shows that crime and delinquency increase with the process of urbanization. Illich<sup>12</sup> believes that due to the immediate industrial development, many dangers threaten modern city man. Industrial growth, which transcends its borders, threatens the human right to unite with the environment in which it originated and threatens the right to human autonomy in action. Increased action of resource exploitation mechanisms threatens human heritage, composed of traditions, myths, languages and rituals.

The data obtained from the results of the research on the ecology of crime indicate that frauds, forgeries and property crimes are more common in urban areas, and rape and arson in the countryside. The crime of urban children is incomparably higher in scope and is constantly increasing in relation to the crime of rural children. Liddell (E.G.)<sup>13</sup> believes that juvenile delinquency is viewed as an exclusively urban phenomenon and in most cases this is an almost completely accurate assumption. According to this author, delinquency is not such a significant phenomenon in rural areas, where everyone has a passionate interest in others. Those who commit illicit behavior in the countryside quickly become aware that it is very difficult to achieve anonymity in such a community, and even limit their delinquent activity during visits to urban areas. Therefore, the dark figure of delinquency survives in rural areas not because of ignorance, but because of the concealment of knowledge.

Clinard states that the extent of delinquency increases much more slowly in rural than in urban areas. In India, according to an official statement from the Intelligence Bureau, it has been determined that child delinquency, in one general form, is limited to Indian cities where economic difficulties are manifested, while this is not the case with rural areas.<sup>14</sup>

Apart from the phenomenological approach to the ecology of crime, in another important field of criminology, criminal etiology, as one of the basic etiological explanations, ecological theory stands out, within the direction of criminal sociology. Ecology is the study of the prevalence of a phenomenon and its relationship to the environment. The Ecological School of Criminology seeks to explain crime as a function of social change that occurs in accordance with changes in the environment. In other words, according to the definition of Reed (Sue Titus Reid, 2003), the ecological

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<sup>12</sup> Illich, I. (1980.) *Selbstbegrenzung*, Ronjohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, p. 88. cit. in: Cifrić, I. (1989). *Socijalna ekologija*, Zagreb: Globus, p. 104.

<sup>13</sup> Liddell.E.G., “Rural Problem Families and the Primary School”, *The British Journal of Criminology*, Vo.7, No.1 january 1967. p.45.

<sup>14</sup> Urbanization in Asia and the Far East, p.233., A Report on Juvenile Delinjuency in India (Bombay: The Children’s Aid society, 1956.), p. 8. In: Clinard, M., (1968) *Sociology of Deviant Behavior*, Holt, Rintehart and Winston, Inc. New Jork, p. 98-103.

school is an approach or teaching about the quantitative relationship between a geographical phenomenon and a crime. Economic difficulties are manifested, while this is not the case with rural areas.<sup>15</sup>

Human or social ecology describes the relationships between people who share the same habitat or local territory and these relationships are clearly related to the character of the territory itself. It is, in fact, learning about the social structure in relation to the local environment.

The history of human civilization, as Morris (1971) points out, “is largely an assessment of man’s effort to free himself from the limitations imposed by his natural environment; not only can it now live and work in virtually all possible climatic conditions, but huge urban agglomerations can emerge that, since they cannot support themselves, can survive in terms of ingenious technology and efficient transport. “ However, what degenerated as a consequence, Morris further believes, is that man has created his new environment which, in turn, is beginning to manifest its own limitations in relation to man.<sup>16</sup> A big city or suburb can place restrictions on human activity which, although it comes from a completely different meaning, is no less realistic than the one set in the past, in relation to mountains and rivers, deserts and oceans. Recognizing the existence of diversity between urban and rural lifestyles is a recognition of the basic association between patterns of behavior and characteristics of the local community.

## 2. Historical context

The term “ecology”, borrowed from the field of biology, was first used in 1878 by the German biologist and philosopher Ernest Haeckel (Ernst Haeckel, 1878). However, Eugenius Warming (1895) brought this term much closer to the social sciences in his book *Plant Communities* (1895), drawing attention to the fact that different plant species tend to grow together and, similar to human beings, societies, have a time beginning, experiential changes and finally enter a period of decay, gradually replacing other plants. This is precisely the form of manifestation of the dynamic aspect of ecology, which is perhaps the closest to the field of sociology. Thus, in the later years of the 20th century, sociologists included ecology in studies on the social development or evolution of human institutions and widely incorporated this concept from the domain of natural sciences to the domain of social sciences.

A further approach is related to the work of the Park (Robert Ezra Park, 1864) and his followers at the University of Chicago, in the form of a special sociological theory. The park started by considering social changes and their consequences for the immigrant population. From the 1960s, immigrants from all over Europe began to inhabit the areas of the midwestern United States. The speed and intensity of social change and the dramatic difficulties associated with the emergence of cultural conflict

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<sup>15</sup> Видети: Sue Titus Reid (2003) *Crime and Criminology*, New York: McGrawHill, p. 120.

<sup>16</sup> Morris, T., op.cit., p. i.

were social facts that were difficult not to notice, and which had an impact on Park's later formulation of sociological theories. The work of the Park had a direct impact on a large number of American sociologists, as well as on Clifford Shaw and his book “Clifford Shaw, Delinquency Areas”.<sup>17</sup> This was the beginning of the development of the well-known school in criminology in the field of urban sociology, called the Chicago School.

Representatives of the Chicago School sought to explain the relationship between ecology and crime in Chicago. The city was viewed as a living, growing, organic whole, and different areas of the city as a means to achieve different functions. Studies on various areas of Chicago, where high rates of crime and other forms of deviant behavior occurred, pointed out to researchers that even the world of deviance is characterized by different social roles, which are determined and stratified by the rules imposed.

Representatives of the Chicago School observed the city's characteristics, social changes and the distribution of people and their actions through the prism of a concentric circle. The theory of the concentric circle divides the city into five zones. The city center is zone 1 or the central business area. This area is characterized by light manufacturing, small shops and commercial entertainment. Zone 2, which surrounds the central business area, is a transit zone from the place of residence to work. This part of the city is popular among people who earn their money legally and who live in very expensive, luxurious apartments. Zone 3 is an area of working-class houses that is less ‘corrupt’ than the transit zone, and is inhabited largely by “workers whose economic status allows them to afford many comforts, even some form of luxury the city has to offer.”<sup>18</sup> “Zone 4, an area of the middle class of urban residents, is widely populated by professionals, priests, small business owners, and managers. On the outer edge of the city is zone 5 or the area of non-permanent population. This zone includes satellite cities and suburbs. Many of its residents leave the area during the day and go to the city for work.

In the opinion of the Park, the key area for explaining crime / delinquency is zone 2, ie transit zone. Due to the relocation of jobs to this zone, it is becoming an undesirable place to live. Housing is deteriorating, the legitimate way of life in the area is changing. People who could afford it are moving out and there is no progress in improving housing in the area without state financial aid. The population in the city is divided according to economic status and occupations. Low-income people, most often unskilled workers, live in Zone 2, which often leads to racial and ethnic segregation. This zone is characterized by: warehouses, pawnshops, cheap theaters, restaurants, as well as a complete breakdown in the application of common institutional methods of social control. Therefore, the researchers hypothesized that crime, vice, as well as other types of deviation will continue to occur in such socially disorganized environments.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Видети: Morris, T., op.cit., p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Sue Titus Reid, op.cit., p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, primary researchers in the concept of environmental theory, argued that there was a link between: school unemployment, young adults, child mortality, tuberculosis, mental disorders, and other factors, and levels of adult delinquency and crime.<sup>20</sup> They pointed out that “there is not a single instance in which there is no intertwining between these elements ... Based on the presented facts, it is clear that delinquency is not an isolated phenomenon.”<sup>21</sup>

However, it is clear from certain critical views on these explanations that Shaw and McKay did not claim that zone 2 causes crime, but warned that the cause-and-effect relationship should not be assumed only because of the high correlation between existing variables. While Zone 2 may attract or even bring together criminals, the following explanation for the high crime rate may be related to the lower performance of members of formal social control. It may be the police who will have to make a much larger number of arrests in Zone 2 than in some other zones.

### **3. Contemporary context - crime prevention in the criminal field**

The development of attitudes and understandings about crime prevention, or according to some authors, preventive mentality,<sup>22</sup> has gone through many phases, twists and innovations, “which began to draw the terrain, focus and technologies of prevention.”<sup>23</sup>

It is necessary to emphasize, once again, that the term “crime prevention” is a widely used concept with fairly freely defined meanings, which are in use. For some authors, this term refers to the conventional operation of criminal justice. Still others, such as van Dijk and J. de Waard, advocate a definition that helps put alternative or special crime prevention programs at the center of interest. Therefore, they point out that crime prevention is “a set of all personal initiatives and state policy, to a greater extent than the retribution of criminal law, with the aim of reducing the damage caused by actions that the state incriminates as criminal acts.”<sup>24</sup> This definition also includes programs to reduce the fear of crime, as fear can also be seen as damage caused by crime; then, victim assistance programs, because this can be seen as a form of harm control, as well as preventive police activity, such as ongoing monitoring and treatment or training of current / former offenders. Investigation and criminal proceedings against perpetrators, punishment and execution of conventional punishments are excluded from this definition of crime prevention.

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<sup>20</sup> See also: Petrović, B., Gorazd, M. (2008). *Kriminologija*. [Criminology]. Sarajevo: Faculty of Law, p. 120.

<sup>21</sup> Sue Titus Reid, loc.cit.

<sup>22</sup> *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, op. cit., p. 870.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>24</sup> J. M. van Dijk, J. de Waard, „A Two-Dimensional Typology of Crime Prevention Projects; With a Bibliography“, p. 483-503.

<http://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=80100>, Access: 17.9.2010.

The theory of crime prevention through the appearance of the environment<sup>25</sup> is based on the simple idea that the crime partly originates from the circumstances that are in the physical environment. This leads to the conclusion that it would be possible to change the physical environment, so that a crime is less likely to occur.

There are three separate approaches or theories that go into the basic name of crime prevention theory through the appearance of the environment. The original version and the name of the theory are related to criminologist C. Ray Jeffery, who published his book in 1971 in which he criticizes sociologically oriented criminologists, because they consider only those factors of a social nature as causes of crime, while neglecting biological, as well as determinants that originate from the environment. Therefore, this criminologist states that prevention should be focused on biological factors (brain damage, for example), on the one hand, and on eliminating opportunities to commit crimes, on the other hand.

Another approach to this theory is the theory of “defended space” and they are related to Jacobs (1961), who criticized post-war urban planning, emphasizing its destructive component in relation to the natural processes of order within the neighborhood. However, its founder is Newman (Newman, 1972), whose thought developed on the basis of Jacobs’ critique. Newman managed to identify architectural solutions that would discourage the commission of criminal acts, and strengthen preventive social control. Hence, the theory of defended space is “a model for a residential environment that prevents crime by creating the physical appearance of a social structure that defends itself.”<sup>26</sup> Newman argued that architectural form can release a latent sense of territory and community among residents, so that these characteristics become integral parts of what residents appropriate as part of their responsibility to preserve a safe environment and for the well-being of life. Newman identified several components for a good environmental design that encourages a network of social control: territoriality, constant monitoring, appearance and environment. Essentially, territoriality requires a physical space that separates areas of control, while constant surveillance requires a form of buildings that allows and allows easy observation of territorial areas.

Mass housing projects from the post-World War II period have supplanted important social control processes. In their place, there was a “flourishing” of “undefended space”, which included: anonymous pedestrian paths, passages, corridors with stairs from the ground floor to the top floor of the house, elevators, long dark passages, all easily accessible. They have thus created “confusing” areas that do not belong to anyone, that no one cares about and that no one controls.<sup>27</sup> These Newman’s theses have been sharply criticized by criminologists and other sociologically

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<sup>25</sup> R. Clark, „The Theory of Crime prevention Through Environmental Design“, <http://www3.cutr.usf.edu/security/documents%5CCPTED%5CTheory%20of%20CPTED.pdf>  
Access: 27.9.2010.

<sup>26</sup> *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, op. cit. p. 875.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*



oriented scientists, who have accused him of “environmental determinism” and of oversimplifying explanations of human behavior based on territorial behavior in animals.<sup>28</sup>

The third approach to this theoretical determination stemmed from the criminological research on situational prevention, which was carried out at the expense and at the request of the British government in the 1970s. This would be a general approach to reducing the chances of committing any form of crime, which occurs anywhere, such as: hijacking, theft of social funds, making harassing phone calls, violence in cafes, domestic violence, as well as in cases of committing any crime. in the form of blood and sexual offenses.<sup>29</sup>

#### **4. Victimological connotations of ecology: child abuse**

Some of the research in the field of victimology was devoted to examining the impact that a ‘satisfactory’ neighborhood, in general, would have on victimization and social participation of the population, and ultimately on the experience of security in the neighborhood. It is emphasized that such an approach presupposes systematic testing of the relative importance of victimization, the importance of the quality of the neighborhood environment and social integration within society in preventing the fear of crime.

The observation of child abuse in the delinquent area, related to the unity of the environment-sociology-culture model, is focused on the experience of stress in society, which is considered to be the primary cause of victimization. This category of abuse includes the following causes: stress environment model; social learning model; socio-psychological model and the model of psychosocial systems.

The model of stressful environment accepts the proposition that factors such as: lack of education, poverty, unemployment, stress related to the profession result in child abuse. As these external circumstances increase, it becomes increasingly difficult for a parent or guardian to fight them, so he reacts by hitting or injuring his child.

The social learning model highlights the inadequacy of parenting skills in abusing a prone parent. These parents never learn the correct answers to their child’s behavior, so their reduced parenting skills lead to frustration. This frustration, in turn, leads to abusive behavior.

The socio-psychological model is based on the fact that stress is a consequence of a large number of psychological and social factors, including: disputing marital relations, unemployment, as well as the birth of numerous, unwanted children. These factors induce stress, which results in the individual reacting to the child in an abusive way.

The model of psychosocial systems indicates that abuse results from interaction within the family. The family, as a system, may be “out of balance” and thus unable

<sup>28</sup> . Clark, „The Theory of Crime prevention Through Environmental Design“, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem

to care for the child. The child becomes a target of frustration for family members, and abuse is the result.

In criminology, there are a large number of explanations, which belong to different criminological directions, about the causes of child abuse. Even these views, which start from the model of the criminal area and environmental explanations, as well as others, regardless of whether the primary causes are exogenous or endogenous, do not indicate a single factor that causes child abuse. Therefore, the general conclusion is that child abuse is multifactorial. However, it is necessary to investigate and find out who the victims or “recipients” of abuse are, in order to fully understand the phenomenon itself.<sup>30</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

The accelerated process of urbanization has influenced the creation of numerous changes and maladaptation to those changes, both for the family as a whole and for children. Urbanization has a good effect on the development of backward rural areas,<sup>31</sup> however, the transition of the rural population to cities is accompanied primarily by economic maladaptation to new working conditions for adult members, as well as the requirements of the schooling process for underage family members. Young people, who have decided to interrupt the schooling process, often cannot get a job and are forced to engage in illegal jobs in order to ensure their survival. They were exploited and forced to work in taverns or serve as instruments of criminal organizations.<sup>32</sup>

But, according to Bergel (E.E.), it is wrong and unjustified to understand that only in social societies there is a serious social disorganization. It is also a misconception that the rural population is happy, mentally healthy and well organized. Social ecology should rather examine specific forms of disorganization that manifest only in cities or investigate whether some of them occur more in cities than in rural areas.<sup>33</sup> That is why there were perceptions about the return of man to nature, about the establishment of a new period of “romantic pastoral care”. At the same time, this alternative is criticized as a “return to the Middle Ages” and is called a “conservative utopia.”

Certainly, the man of the industrial age is accustomed to a certain way of life and material standards that are difficult to give up.<sup>34</sup> Even if he does that, it does not mean that he will adapt qualitatively to completely new living conditions and that he will raise his offspring well. This is especially true for young people for whom the splendor of the city, opportunities for education and earnings are much more important and attractive than returning to the softness and security of the “natural

<sup>30</sup> See: Harvey Wallace, Cliff Roberson, (2011) *Victimology – Legal, Psychological, and Social Perspectives*, New Jersey: Pearson Education, p. 144.

<sup>31</sup> Todorović, A. (1971). Conditions and causes of juvenile delinquency in urban and rural areas, Belgrade: Institute for Criminological and Criminalistic Research, Institute of Social Sciences, p. 86-87.

<sup>32</sup> La prevention des formes de criminalite resultant des changements sociaux et accompagnant le progres economiljue dans les pays peu developpes, London, 8-20 aout 1960, p.11, In: *ibid*.

<sup>33</sup> E.E.Bergel, *Urban Sociology*, Mc Graw-Hill Book Company, New York 1955, p. 368. In: *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> Cifrić, I., *op.cit.*, p.233.

state". Easier work, more rest, less social control, more personal freedom, much wider opportunities for entertainment, availability of cultural goods, as well as greater opportunities for education and schooling is what most often attracts young people to urban living conditions.<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, poverty cannot be taken as a decisive criminogenic factor in the delinquency of rural children. In today's conditions, the weakening of the influence of parents, the breaking of the coherence of the family community and anomie at the level of global society influence this phenomenon to occur in the countryside on a larger scale than before. The illusion of an oasis of family ties and strong ties continues its role in covering up the deviant behavior of rural children, but also those illicit practices that victimize them.

The already established criminological premises related to juvenile delinquency, as a typical urban phenomenon, will surely become only refuted hypotheses in time. It is still considered that the crime of urban children is incomparably higher and is constantly increasing in relation to the crime of rural children. However, with the development of spatial mobility and electronic media, it happens that delinquent children from rural areas are increasingly finding a role model for their behavior in urban life. The behavior of urban children serves as a model for them to imitate and form attitudes.

Sociologists of the modern age have largely maintained the view that the village is a micro world with close acquaintances with each other, dominating personal ties and subjecting the individual to constant observation and control by the community. Such specific knowledge, which everyone has about every other resident, emphasizes the personal role in all mutual relations and daily activities. Approving and disapproving of some behaviors, expressing sympathy or antipathy towards others have a major share in conditioning opinions about good and evil within the rural community, but even according to the need to then operate or not a formal system. Hence, criminologists believe that crime in the countryside is characterized by a large "dark number", but also objectively less than in the city.

However, all the beauty and well-being of the rural way of life have long since lost their influence and original form. However, the attachment to nature and the desires of the earth and the sky strongly influence even today the better distinction between good and evil and respect for the domestic order in the order of events and mutual relations. Children certainly cannot give up and must not be deprived of the achievements of modern civilization, especially in exercising their rights. However, is it possible to create such an environment for children that will be 'romantic pastoral' in its moral characteristics, and the modern urban world in terms of protective properties and conditions of development?<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Šuvar, S. (1988). *Sociologija sela*. [Rural sociology]. Školska knjiga, Zagreb, tom drugi, p. 116.

<sup>36</sup> The Bible says:

1. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb which bears seed in all the earth, and all the fruitful trees

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bearing seeds; it will be for your food.

1. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to all the birds heavenly and all that moves on earth and in what a living soul has, I have given all the grass to eat. And so it would be.

2.15 And the Lord God took the man, and set him in the Garden of Eden to do it and to keep it. “

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