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RESTRUCTURING THE POSTSOCIALIST CITY
Special Issue. Guest Editors: Judith Bodnár and Rudolf Poledna

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Guest Editor's Foreword

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Postsocialism is over. There is a generation in the former state socialist countries which does not have memories of state socialism and does not compare their current experience to their lives under socialism. The usefulness of postsocialism as an analytical category has also faded. The time has come to not compartmentalize the experience of eastern Europe as socialist, not separate state socialism from capitalism, and post-socialism from the rest of the world.

A global perspective is necessary not because anyone readily accepts that we live under globalization but because a change of perspective redefines the fundamental questions of state socialism and its aftermath, the way we theorize the difference that state socialism exhibited and what got dissolved with its departure. The socialist urban was part of European urban modernity, a slower and less glittery one, which, while different in many aspects, revealed important parallels with Keynesian urban and spatial regimes in western Europe. State socialism produced underurbanization, curtailed the urbanity of cities, filtered their marginality with the rule of the state in planning, financing and managing urban development (Szelényi 1996). It used urban space, from the perspective of capital, in a wasteful manner; the socialist city was a city of tempered consumption, less excess and often of luxuriously uneconomical use of space (Bodnár 2001).

The changes that followed are conveniently explained by the withdrawal of state socialism, which makes the recent experience of these societies unique. A closer look, however, reveals that the simultaneity of global restructuring and the end of state socialism was more than a temporal coincidence; the latter was part of the very process of globalization, and the changes that mark the postsocialist cityscape may well be familiar to urban dwellers outside the region. Differences, however, do not get dissolved in the stream of global urban restructuring completely; places, people, objects and ideas retain their historicity and the process itself produces differences.

How this happens is a task, in which most of the articles engage here, shifting the analysis a little by giving more attention to how east European postsocialist cities relate to global urban restructuring rather than how state socialism ended. Does it make sense to talk about a postsocialist urban condition? In a very general sense, it is an umbrella term for urban change of rarely seen intensity as it happens with every radical political change,—not only with the end of state socialism—a condition, in which institutions and people are caught between two regimes of truths, and 'posting' one of them (in this case, socialism) suddenly becomes imperative. Such quick distancing of the past explains, among other things, the poverty of planning in postsocialist cities, fast-track privatization of housing, or urban policies in general. The postsocialist condition thus captures an uncertainty associated with restructuring that is more fundamental than urban restructuring elsewhere. Yet, most of the changes which the following articles consensually note in postsocialist cities are similar to what have taken place in other urban contexts. It is precisely this tension that gives the gist of these analyses.

Vais demonstrates the importance of motorization in Cluj, Ouředníček and Temelová note the same phenomenon in Prague, and Ursic remarks on the radically altered proportion of private and mass transportation in Ljubljana, and its influence on the spatial structure of the city. Pichler-Milanović, Ouředníček and Temelová as well as Vais convincingly demonstrate how postsocialist cities have lost their compactness, which used to be their unique feature, during the post 1989 process of rapid suburbanization. In fact, it seems that residential suburbanization became the most visible symbol of post-socialist urban transformations, but not to the same extent in all major cities. Along with the diminishing significance of collective means of consumption, authors generally note the reconfiguration of the role of the state in urban management and planning, a shift from centralized to decentralized models, from mandatory to non-mandatory strategic planning, and in general, to a more market-friendly model (Ursic). Cities have witnessed a wild differentiation of urban space—both residential (as in the shift from the simply functionality of housing to residence by Vais) and commercial, including the appearance of new genres of public space such as digital art galleries (as Ionescu shows). The "housing question" of postsocialist cities is partly the legacy of state socialism argue Pásztor and Péter reminding the reader that more than 70% of the population of Cluj lives in pre-fab housing estates (block flats) which were constructed under state socialism and became inseparably associated with its memory. Cucu and Faje relate the integration of the memory of historical traumas through the analysis of two social memory sites and urban identity in Budapest.

The contributions present vibrant localities from a perspective that consciously goes beyond the local, and positions cities in global structures and processes with constant references not only to western Europe and north America but by making horizontal comparisons between the cities of central and eastern Europe. This is a decided difference with the majority of similar writings fifteen years ago and a welcome move in urban studies, which the post-postsocialist generation has brought.

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Guest Editor's Foreword

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This issue of Studia Sociologia is dedicated to the topics of micro-macro perspectives related to the field of urban anthropology and sociology. It is the result of a selection of submitted papers after an open and international call for papers. We would like to thank to all the contributors for submitting their papers.

For decades the Romanian social sciences defined themselves and where characterized by others as operationally closed in the frame of methodological nationalism (Poledna, 1997). Sociology was a science dedicated to the development of the Romanian nation. As a consequence of this self-understanding the content of publications dedicated to the domain of sociology was rather autochtonistic, both with respect to the authors and the topics. Social sciences "publications-scapes" in Romania shows as this kind of national isolation.

In this context we have to explain the reasons of the editorial board of *Studia Sociologia* to dedicate a special attention to the field of urban questions and problems.

The statistical data show the dynamic of modernization of the Romanian society during the XX century. One indicator of modernity of a society is the share of the urban residents in the total population. According to the census data from 1930, 21,4% of the population of Romania at that time was living in urban settlements, and 78,6% in rural areas. In 1985, after the massive socialist industrialization and urbanization, the Romanian society registered parity in the urban-rural distribution of the population. The trend has been clearly oriented towards urbanization. From this point of view, Romania is part of the global process of urbanization. In 2008, 55.1% of the population in Romania is living in urban areas, 44.9% in rural areas.

The fact that the majority of the population in Romania was living in urban settlements and working mainly in agriculture until 1985 had considerable impact also on the theoretical, methodological, epistemological options of sociology. The rural system and Lebenswelt had been the focus of sociological inquiry and reflection. Rural sociology had been for a long time the mainstream. We could say: Romanian sociology was rural sociology.

Urban sociology had minimum chances of development, mostly because the object - the system of urban settlements - was in *stadio nascendi* and because the social problems of the Romanian society - and the solution for those problems - where located in the rural/agricultural settlements.

The knowledge-object of urban sociology came into being after 1985, mainly after the revolution 1989. The socialist type of society was/is (?) replaced by a capitalist type of society. In this context urbanization has flourished. And all the economical, political, cultural, social consequences to.

We can say that urban sociology and also anthropology have now an expanding research object/s in the reality of the Romanian society. The Romanian sociology is under reconstruction, in various aspects: institutional, epistemological, professional, cultural. Desinstitutionalized in 1977 due to political reasons, sociology and anthropology underwent since the 1990 massive changes. We can define this process as a revival, an updating and an insertion in the international scientific community.

In this larger context we have to place this issue of Studia Sociologia. The articles analyze the reality of post socialist societies, mainly the changes, restructurations, transitions occurred in cities after 1989. It is obvious that the issue of housing and residential reshaping is in the focus of knowledge interest of all the authors. The housing question is related to social stratification and inequality and also to the problems of spatial and social mobility.

Globalization is among the keywords and it sets the perspective of many of the present articles. How is the spatial and social structure of urban settlements affected by globalization? How are global inputs transformed and adapted at local (regional, national) level? In what ways and how do cities manage their identity? And their past (history) as a constituting part of their identity? What new challenges bring the digital technologies in our life? Some of these challenges are analyzed from the perspective of digital art in the virtual world.

We hope that the selection made by the editors in charge of this issue is a starting point for fruitful discussion and collaboration.

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TWENTY YEARS AFTER SOCIALISM: THE TRANSFORMATION OF PRAGUE'S INNER STRUCTURE

MARTIN OUŘEDNÍČEK[a] and JANA TEMELOVÁ[b]

ABSTRACT. The cities of Central and East Europe have by now passed through 20 years of democracy and market economy. The new political, economic and societal climate brought a revival of urban processes which had been interrupted by forty years of socialism. The article discusses the relevancy of the post-socialist city concept. We search for specific aspects of development of cities influenced by socialism taking the example of urban processes, which have been changing the inner spatial structure of Prague. Globalization, new technology and new forms of work and mobility have similar impacts on urban development on both sides of the former Iron Curtain. However we argue that other aspects, such as the inherited physical and social structure of the socialist city as well as the institutional context of post-socialism, have resulted in a specific form of urban processes, at least during the transformation era, in the majority of European post-socialist countries. Although similar key urban processes are forming the spatial patterns of post-socialist and western cities, they often have different causes, dynamics and consequences in the two contexts.

Keywords: Prague; post-socialist city; urban (transformation) processes; inner structure

Introduction

The shift from a communist to a democratic political regime and from a centrally planned to a market economy represents the pivotal change in the political and economic transition in Central and East European cities. Internationalization and globalization also leave their mark on the development of post-socialist cities. The post-socialist society and space are today more influenced by economic mechanisms, while the role of state and administrative decisions has greatly diminished. Although much is still due to the legacies of historical development, contemporary dynamics are significantly transforming the structure and organization of post-socialist cities. The overlap of socio-economic patterns inherited from socialism and the new influences and dynamics produce here specific conditions for urban development, that are distinct from

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processes encountered in Western cities. Although similar key urban processes are forming spatial patterns of post-socialist and western cities, their causes, dynamics and consequences often differ between the two contexts.

As suggested by Enyedi (1998), the combination of local political and economic transition, delayed shift from the industrial to the post-industrial city, and the general transformation of the global economy createsunique conditions of urban development in Central and Eastern Europe. Tthe features of socio-economic processes in post-socialist cities vary as a consequence of different transformation policies, historical legacies and levels of social and economic development in each country (Dostál and Hampl, 1994; Enyedi, 1996; 1998; Kovács, 1999; Musil, 1993; Musil and Ryšavý, 1983; Weclawowicz, 1992). Such is the case offormer East German cities, where the country's re-unification created peculair conditions of urban transformation (Cochrane and Jonas, 1999; Herfert, 2006). Eastern Germany and the western part of Czechoslovakia had developed quite similarly to the West during the last century. Prague was the heart of the most industrialized part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century, and the general character of concentration and deconcentration processes was relatively similar in Prague and other Western European cities even under the communist regime. The Czech capital grew mostly due to spatial stretching and the development of new residential areas on the urban edge. Similar deconcentration processes were typical also for other western European cities (van den Berg et al., 1982), many of whichwere significantly influenced by welfare state policies supporting social housing (Weclawowicz, 1992). During the post-war era mainly suburban areas have been developed on both Eastern and Western sides of the Iron Curtain.

While the location of new housing was fairly similar, we can identify several crucial differences in the post-war development of cities under socialist and welfare state cities. The first and most visible one is the variability of housing construction within suburban zones in Western Europe compared to the homogeneity of new developments in socialist cities. The social heterogeneity of housing estates was specific to socialist countries and distinguished them from social housing in Western Europe. Other differences include i) very limited development in the other areas of the city, with minimum investment in the reconstruction of the existing housing stock in the central and inner parts; and ii) zero development around the compact city (except housing estates), so that suburbanisation was an unknown process in socialist countries.

Since the political change, post-socialist cities have been undergoing the formation of new socio-spatial differentiation (Enyedi, 1998; Häussermann and Kapphan, 2005; Ouředníček, 2006; Ruoppila and Kåhrik, 2003). While the core of the cities are historically structured environments, other parts of metropolitan regions are developing according to various scenarios during the post-socialist

transformation. In the case of Prague, the two zones which created the pre-war Greater Prague (centre and inner city) today have a similar face to comparable cities in Germany or Austria. The central and inner city neighbourhoods could easily return to their pre-war development trajectories since there are now no major differences in their physical structure compared to other western European cities. The social structure of the population has also been slowly transforming to pre-war conditions. On the other hand the urban zones built under socialism, especially housing estate areas, have no parallel in Western European cities and represent the main common feature of all post-socialist cities (Stanilov, 2007). The physical and social structure of the outer city and the rest of the Prague metropolitan region are today mixed areas of the survivals of socialism and new suburban development. This paper offers an overview of the socio-spatial differentiation and the main urban processes in Prague, which are discussed separately for each of the four concentric zones of Prague.

General development and inner structure of the city

Under the socialist regime, the dominant position of the state in the economy, housing system, and planning shaped the development of cities. Perhaps the most significant divergence in urban development between Western cities and Prague occurred during the first decade of communist rule. While Western cities followed the pre-war processes of urbanization and suburbanization, the communists' effort to balance the development of the urban system halted the dynamic population concentration and spatial expansion of Prague. It shifted the allocation of investment, jobs, housing construction and other functions to other cities (Musil, 1991). More recently, the regulation of population growth has disappeared, but the consequences of the restriction of immigration enforced in the 1950s are still obvious now, particularly in the age composition of Prague (Graph 2). Certain "underurbanization" (Szelényi, 1996) and the hidden potential of growth in Prague can be traced when comparing the concentration of residential and working functions. While the concentration of population was regulated to a high degree by housing and labour policy, the allocation of jobs was much more influenced by the attractiveness of the capital city (Dostál and Hampl, 1994). During the 1970s and 1980s a strong preference was shown for the major urban centres, particularly to the capital cities, which represented the cores of national settlement systems and the main development areas (Enyedi, 1998; Musil and Ryšavý, 1983). The housing system in former socialist countries was based on state ownership, publicly controlled distribution and centrally planned production, which diminished the operation of market mechanisms in housing (Clapham, 1995; Kovács, 1999). Socialist state housing policy favoured investment in prefabricated high-rise housing estates in peripheral areas of cities, while the inner city residential areas were left to decay (Enyedi, 1998).

Suburbanization in the form of single family housing did not take place in the socialist cities, as building activity in the periphery was concentrated in large high-density housing estates (Häussermann and Kapphan, 2005; Musil, 2005a; Ouředníček, 2007).

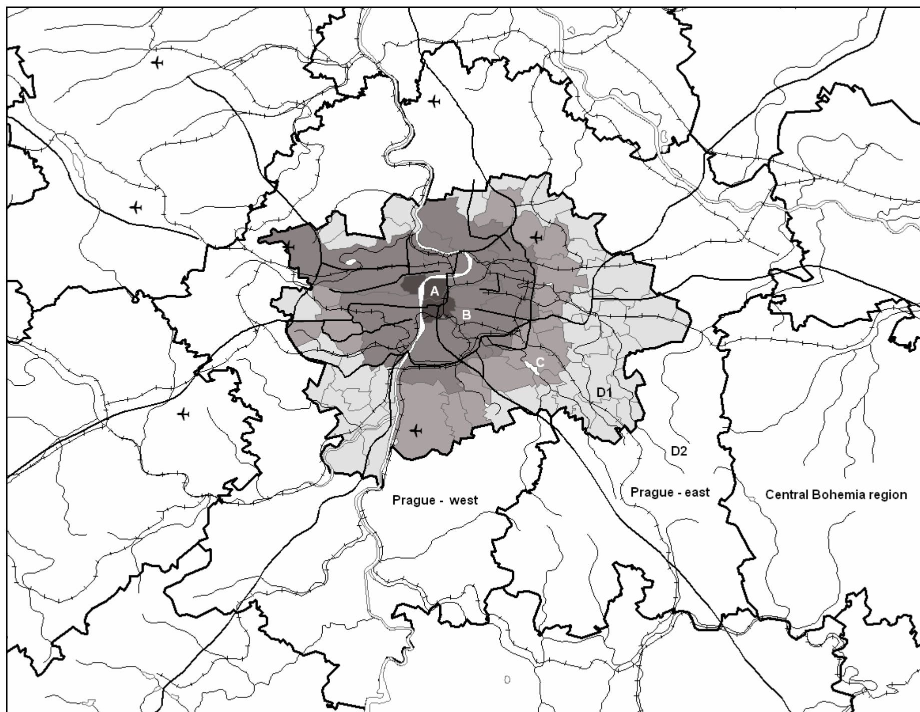
While urban development depended on the redistribution of the central budget under state socialism, today the economy (companies, entrepreneurs, and households) is the principal agent, and local governments and civil organizations, the main coordinators (Drozg, 2004; Enyedi, 1998). Land rent was not a significant factor in urban development in socialist countries as rents were very low and did not depend on location or quality (Kemper, 1998; Sailer-Fliege, 1999). The reestablishment of private ownership and real estate market tremendously influenced the internal spatial structure and urban landscape of post-socialist cities (Häussermann and Kapphan, 2005; Illner and Andrle, 1994; Kovács, 1999). Location in post-socialist cities regained an economic value which brought a re-evaluation of many areas and produced new patterns of land use, especially in the most attractive locations. Moreover, the housing sector in Central and East European countries underwent the decentralization of state responsibility to the local government, the privatization of housing stock, a decline in new housing construction, and a restructuring of housing supply (Baross and Struyk, 1993; Clapham, 1995; Pichler-Milanovich, 1994). The new socio-spatial patterns have been primarily formed by the increasingly selective mobility of the population with various residential preferences, and a growing differentiation of housing supply (besides the vertical mobility of people).

Alongsidevisible, symbolic changes, such as the removal of communist signs and the changing of names of streets, squares, bridges and metro stations (Kaltenberg-Kwiatkowska, 2008) – the character of the social environment also started to change. The social stratification of Prague society gradually changed during 1990s. Privatisation processes, the development of entrepreneurship, and even the grey economy, gave rise to a new group of rich people. On the other hand, unemployed and homeless people, prostitutes and beggars, are an inherent part of the contemporary social milieu of the city. Prague opened its gates to foreigners from the Western world as well as to workers from the East, which, together with increasing tourism, have made it a multicultural city. The social inequalities and socio-spatial polarization in cities have thus been growing rapidly during the post-socialist transition (Enyedi, 1998; Kovács, 1999).

Zones of Prague

Prague could generally be divided into four concentric zones which correspond to the periods of historical development of the city. The historical centre is formed by the medieval city built during the Charles the IVth era. The inner city developed during the industrial/capitalist period in the time of Greater

Prague[1]. The outer city of housing estates was established under state communism. Newly developed settlements within the metropolitan area constitute the hinterland of Prague. Table 1 sums up the main characteristics of the four zones (the hinterland is divided into two zones, inside and outside the capital's boundaries). The Prague metropolitan area is made up of the administrative districts of the Capital of Prague and the two adjacent districts of Prague-east and Prague-west (Graph 1). Altogether it has a population of 1.38 million in an area of 1,666 square kilometres. The territory of the metropolitan area is divided into the 57 city districts and 171 municipalities in surrounding districts, all of them self-governed.

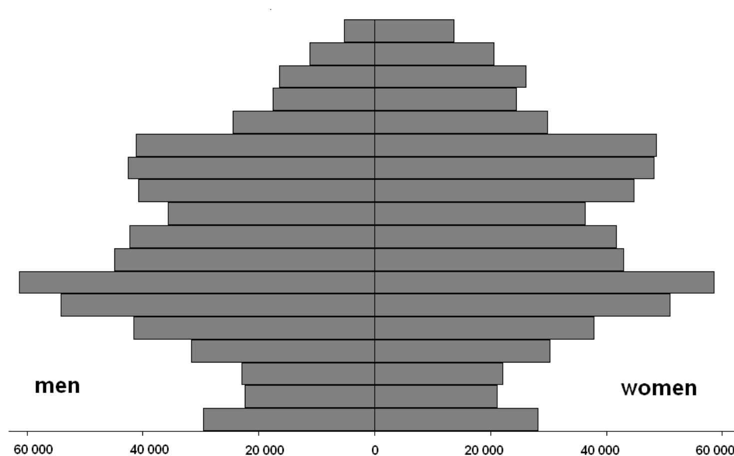


Note: A = Historical centre; B = Inner city; C = Outer city; D1 = Hinterland (city parts within the administrative boundaries of Prague); D2 = Hinterland (administrative districts of Prague-west and Prague-east)

Graph 1. The division of Prague metropolitan area into four zones

[1] Greater Prague was established in 1920 and was made up of the newly adjoined towns and villages in the agglomeration of Prague. This delimitation persisted until the 1960s, and then two large extensions were approved in 1968 and 1974.

The demographic structure of Prague's population is today characterized by a high percentage of economically active people, further supported by foreign and domestic migrants mainly of productive age. However, demographic aging with a regressive age composition and the substantial generations of post-war parents and their 1970s children represents one of the worries of the capital's future (Graph 2). The strong demographic differentiation typical for socialist cities has been replaced with a relatively homogenous age structure of individual zones of Prague (Table 2).



Graph 2. Age composition of Prague in 2007 (5 year categories)

Source: Czech statistical office (2008).

The evolution of the population of Prague's four zones is described in Table 3. The increase/decrease in the population is influenced mainly by migration. The population of Prague is relatively stable as many people bought co-operative or municipal apartments during the privatization in the 1990s. New construction mainly involves commercial projects for higher-income groups. Prague's poorer inhabitants remain partially excluded from the housing market. On the other hand, thanks to wide-ranging social assistance and surviving rent regulations[2], there is no great pressure to leave larger, more attractive and more expensive apartments for economic reasons. Residents of lower socio-economic status are thus only being pushed out from the attractive residential areas very slowly, although inevitably.

[2] For example 36% of households live in regulated rental houses (only 19% in the whole Czech Republic; Living Conditions, 2008).

The most intensive processes shaping contemporary Prague include suburbanization, international migration, and revitalization. These processes support, to a large extent, the growing social differentiation of Prague's neighbourhoods. Their main impacts are visible in the target places of this mobility: i) in the suburban zone of Prague, the migration destination of higher and middle status residents, where a few "hamlets" of foreigners have also emerged; ii) in attractive residential quarters within the central and inner city, where gentrification of yuppies (often foreigners) and increasing concentrations of students and singles are typical features[3]; iii) in housing estates representing zones in transition and the entry gates for foreign workers from Eastern Europe and Asia.

Table 1.

Basic characteristics of Prague metropolitan region zones in 2005

zone	Name	number of city parts (municipalities)	population (2005)	area	density
A	historical core	2	80369	10	8268
B	inner city	9	670264	163	4104
C	outer city	14	326988	115	2841
D1	hinterland a	32	98470	208	473
	Prague total	57	1176091	496	2370
D2	hinterland b	171	199534	1170	171
PMR	Prague Metropolitan Region	228	1375625	1666	826

Source: Statistical bulletin of Prague 2005, Pohyb obyvatelstva v ČR 2005

Table 2.

Age structure of Prague metropolitan region zones in 2008

		Share of people by age (2008)		
Zone	**Name**	**0-14**	**15-59**	**65 and more**
A	historical core	10.5	73.0	16.5
B	inner city	11.4	69.8	18.8
C	outer city	12.9	77.0	10.1
D1	hinterland a	14.9	72.9	12.2
	Prague total	12.1	72.3	15.6
D2	hinterland b	16.5	70.9	12.6
PMR	Prague Metropolitan Region	12.8	72.1	15.1

Source: Population censuses 1991, 2001; Czech statistical office 2009

[3] Around one hundred thousand university students live in Prague.

Table 3.

Natural, migration and total increase of population within Prague metropolitan region's zones in 1995, 2000 and 2005 (all numbers per 1000 inhabitants)

	natural increase	net migration	total increase	natural increase	net migration	total increase	natural increase	net migration	total increase
		1995			2000			2005	
historical core (A)	-10.00	-17.59	-27.58	-7.50	-12.65	-20.16	-3.53	-8.71	-12.24
inner city (B)	-6.99	-0.30	-7.29	-5.44	-2.72	-8.16	-2.65	7.81	5.16
outer city (C)	1.57	10.58	12.15	1.46	0.37	1.82	3.32	10.99	14.31
hinterland a (D1)	-2.88	8.29	5.42	-0.32	13.05	12.74	2.51	36.96	39.46
Prague total	-4.71	1.74	-2.97	-3.35	-1.48	-4.84	-0.62	10.01	9.39
hinterland b (D2)	-4.51	5.18	0.68	-2.35	20.41	18.06	2.06	38.91	40.97

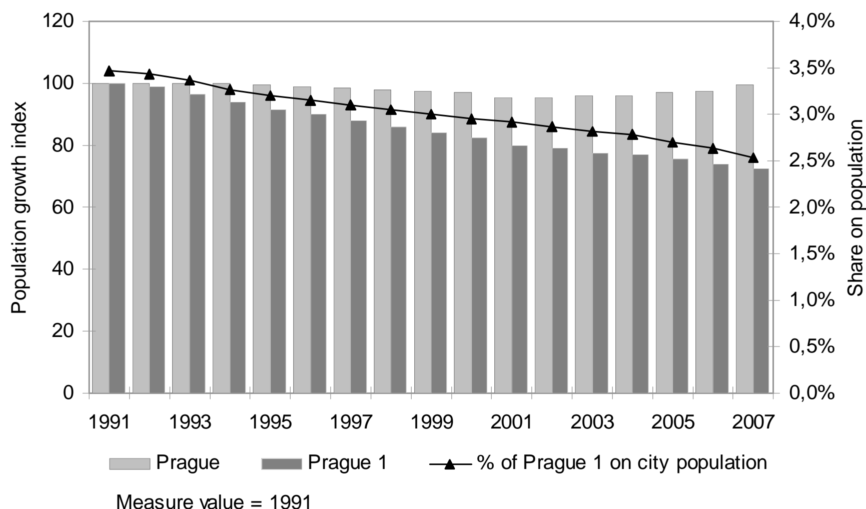
Source: Statistical bulletin of Prague (1995, 2000, 2005), Pohyb obyvatelstva v ČR (1995, 2000, 2005)

Historical centre

After 1990 the capitals of Central and Eastern Europe became the focus of a growing interest in real estate investments, as a result of their thriving economy. (Berry and McGreal, 1995). There was pressure to maximise the economic utilization of space especially in the most attractive city locations. The historical cores of many post-socialist cities have thus experienced a dramatic transformation since the fall of the socialist regime. Tthe revitalization and expansion of central business districts has been spectacular (Enyedi, 1998; Kotus, 2006). With the increasing attractiveness of the city core there was a battle for space between various functions as well as between social groups. Economic activities able to generate higher profits pushed out less competitive functions from the urban locations most in demand, so that office and retail uses have replaced housing and warehousing in many of the post-socialist city centres (Kovács, 1999; Sailer-Fliege, 1999).

After 1989 the neglected historical core of Prague became a prime location for progressive economic activities (consultancy, real estate, law and financial services, luxury boutiques), a prestige residential address for high-income households, and a popular tourist destination. The influx of international visitors to the historic city of Prague brought both positively and negatively perceived changes, including a cosmopolitan atmosphere, transformation of the built environment, pressure on land-use, erosion of the place identity, street congestion (Simpson, 1999). The internationalization of the city centre manifests not only in the growing number of international tourists, but also in the presence of foreign companies and immigrants. The renovation and the construction of

new commercial spaces has been forcing out manufacturing, warehousing, and low-cost housing from the central areas, as the new office and retail uses provide more economically effective utilisation of land and buildings. The prime role of Prague's centre thus shifted from a relatively significant residential function to the concentration of economic activities, contacts, control and command functions, a position common to the cores of major West European capitals (Castells, 1993; Dostál and Hampl, 1994; Sassen, 1995). On the one hand, the huge inflow of commercial investment facilitated the physical and economic revitalization of the dingy city centre; on the other hand, however, it led to rather negative consequences, including population decline, traffic overload, and conflict with the historical heritage bodies. The demise of the city centre's residential function was a major concern during the 1990s and compelled the local government to regulate a minimum proportion of residence in the historical core. Both long term natural decreases and losses through migration lie behind the decline in the resident population (Graph 3). While city centre population had been aging, presently Prague's core has become a sought-after residential destination for young singles, childless couples, and foreigners. The traditionally high social status of the city centre has been further strengthened during the post-socialist transformation thanks to the inflow of university educated residents. There is a significant difference however between the night and day populations of the city centre. Despite the decline of itsresidential function, Prague's historical core day-time population consisting of workers, students, tourists, and other visitors and is on the rise. (Pospíšilová, 2007).



Graph 3. Population development in Prague and in the centre of Prague since 1991

Source: Czech Statistical Office, 2008.

Inner city

Under socialism, the central and inner parts of cities in CEE countries declined in economic, physical, and social terms (Enyedi, 1998; Musil, 2005b). New political and economic conditions, however, created opportunities for the revitalization of neglected urban zones and neighbourhoods, particularly in proximity to the city centre, which offered good potential for commercial or residential development. Despite a general similarity of the major revitalization processes in post-socialist and western cities, their causes, dynamics, and consequences differ. In Western Europe urban revitalization often relies on strong involvement of the public sector, entrepreneurial urban governance, targeted urban policies and public private partnerships. In post-socialist cities, the real power and scope of public authorities (particularly local self-governments) in guiding revitalization remains much weaker, often together with tight local budgets, restrictions imposed by private land ownership, protracted bargaining processes, and the lack of experience and expertise (Badyina and Golubchikov, 2005; Feldman, 2000; Keivani et al., 2001; Sailer-Fliege, 1999).

Urban revitalization displays varied patterns for neighbourhoods located in different parts of the inner city of Prague. Although some elements of revitalization have been apparent in almost every inner city area since 1989, the process has been most intense in several locations which offered promising development potential. The high property prices, spatial stress, and dense traffic in the commercially overloaded city centre prompted the revitalization of some inner city neighbourhoods. New office, shopping, and residential projects developed on brown field sites in former industrial neighbourhoods, led to the formation of new secondary centres in Prague (e.g. Smíchov, Karlín) (Graph 4). Local revitalization is mainly a private-sector driven process, where foreign companies hoild the pivotal role. Public authorities lack fiscal capacity and strategy for development, while the new development projects require capital-intensive investments (Temelová, 2007). In the dynamically developing new centres, the combination of changes in land uses, physical structure, and urban morphology created new urban landscapes marked by modern architecture and progressive economic activities (Ilík and Ouředníček, 2007; Temelová and Novák, 2007). Alongside functional change and physical upgrading, rising socio-economic status has been apparent in many neighbourhoods experiencing revitalization. At the same time, however, fragmentation and polarization between low- and high-profit economic functions and low- and high-income social groups often marks the area around the revitalizing node (Polívka, 2007; Temelová and Novák, 2007). Although there are no real ghettos or segregated communities in Prague, abandoned properties, low-profile economic activities, and socially disadvantaged populations indicate the stagnation of unattractive localities.

Graph 4. Brownfield regeneration in Karlín and Smíchov in the inner city of Prague

Photos: Jan Škorpil, Jana Temelová

Residential revitalization in Prague is a gradual process. The 'slash and build' renewal (Johnston et al., 2000) known from American and also some West European cities, resulting in dramatic physical modifications and forced relocation of the population, is not the case in post-socialist cities. Gentrification can be seen to a rather limited extent in some traditionally popular inner city neighbourhoods, with old housing stock, in Central and Eastern European capitals (Bernt and Holm, 2005; Hrychová, 2000; Rebernik, 2004; Sailer-Fliege, 1999). In Prague, this process has led to physical upgrading, population change, and social status growth. The role of foreigners is particularly important, both as developers investing in the rehabilitation of neglected housing stock, as well as occupants of luxurious flats. Although the social costs of revitalization are generally moderate, it is apparent that the presence, in one neighbourhood, of social groups with distinct life styles and needs, can lead to conflicts in the local arena. The arrival of foreigners and high-income newcomers to a revitalizing neighbourhood can clash with the lifestyles and everyday needs of other groups, such as the socially disadvantaged or the elderly. Although Prague has not acquired a large culturally distinct population through immigration, the arrival of foreigners and new cultures is evident in the display of international signs, the sound of foreign languages in the public space, and the presence of ethnic restaurants and shops.

Outer city

The outer city is the zone with the most visible impacts of the socialist past in the majority of European post-socialist cities (Parysek, 2004). Prague's outer city is almost a synonym for residential quarters of housing estates. More than 40% of the capital's inhabitants live in one of Prague's 54 housing estates built under the Communist Party's 'Complex Housing Construction Programme',[4]

[4] Similar share of population in housing estates is also in other post-socialist cities (Tosics, 2004, Dimitrovska Andrews, 2005).

The construction of housing estates stopped in 1993, and the responsibility for finding housing was completely handed over to individuals. The introduction of the mortgage market during the second half of the 1990s provided a certain impetus for housing development, but it also encouraged the outflow of the more affluent people from housing estates to the suburbs (Ouředníček, 2007).

In the early 1990s, as the former Czech president Václav Havel called housing estates "rabbit hutches," the media forecasted their rapid deterioration or even demolition. Indeed, the housing estates of most post-socialist cities are particularly endangered by physical degradation, and the outflow of the more educated and wealthier people. Prague's housing market lacks sufficient supply of flats, and the prices of apartments have climbed significantly in residential areas of all types, including housing estates. Thus, a standardized apartment on a Prague housing estate costs approximately 2.8 million Czech crowns, which is more than 100 times the average monthly salary in the Czech Republic. Today, new smaller residential projects are slowly filling the empty areas of Prague's outskirts, previously adjoined to the city to this aim. While quite different from socialist constructions in terms of the technology and equipment used to build them, as well as in price, the new housing estates are very similar to the older surrounding panel houses (see Graph 5).

Graph 5. Typical twelve-storied block of flats on the Novodvorská housing estate, and new condominiums from the late 1990s (Velká Skála).

Photos: Martin Ouředníček

The growing ethnic heterogeneity of the population is a relatively new phenomenon in post-communist cities. The spatial distribution of foreigners and ethnic groups within the city is quite uneven, with concentrations of Vietnamese, Chinese, and Roma people on housing estates, while westerners are more visible in the city centre and the suburbs (Drbohlav et al., 2007;

Uherek, 2003). Vietnamese street markets, a Russian village on a housing estate in the South West Town, growing ethnic heterogeneity in elementary schools, and the inflow of Roma people to some housing estates (compare with Ladányi, 1993 for Budapest) are among the new characteristics of the ethnic composition of Prague's outer city.

Demographic homogeneityand social heterogeneity of the population were the typical characteristics of Czech housing estates (Musil, 1993). The quota system of communist housing policy favoured young families with children and thus shaped the age structure of housing estates into two-generation communities. On the contrary, the socio-economic composition of housing estates was a mosaic of different professions and social statuses. While selective migration has gradually sifted and sorted inhabitants according to social status and economic power in the transformation era (Tosics, 2004), the demographic structure of housing estates remained almost unchanged. Demographic aging is one of the most discussed problems, especially with regard to the oldest generation of housing estates. Built during the 1950s and the 1960s, they are in least demand, as they present small apartments and construction faults. These quarters are inhabited mainly by pensioners with low purchasing power, fact that determines specific demands of social facilities, shops, and services. Demographic aging and the concentration of ethnic communities are, in our opinion, the two main threats to the future development of housing estates built during the communist era.

The mono-functional residential use of housing estates has undergone considerable changes during the twenty years of democracy and capitalism. Immediately after the Velvet Revolution tiny shops and services colonised public spaces (compare with Cochrane and Jonas, 1999 for Berlin) and the ground floors of panel houses. Police stations, physicians, groceries, small boutiques, and various other enterprises have squeezed into former apartments and storerooms in many housing estates. Higher-level services including restaurants, cinemas, senior citizens' homes and hospitals emerged in various places on the housing estates, replacing local boiler houses, crèches, or kindergartens. In the near future we expect the division of Prague's housing estates into two categories depending on the general quality of housing (Maier, 1997). Stabilization of the population with minor changes in socio-economic status is most probable in housing estates well served by transportation infrastructure and services (compare with Mládek et al., 1998 for Bratislava). Housing estates with smaller apartments, in dilapidated physical condition, and with a poor quality of living environment are the most endangered urban residential areas - not only in Prague, but in other post-socialist cities as well (Kovács, 1999; Sailer-Fliege, 1999; Szelényi, 1996).

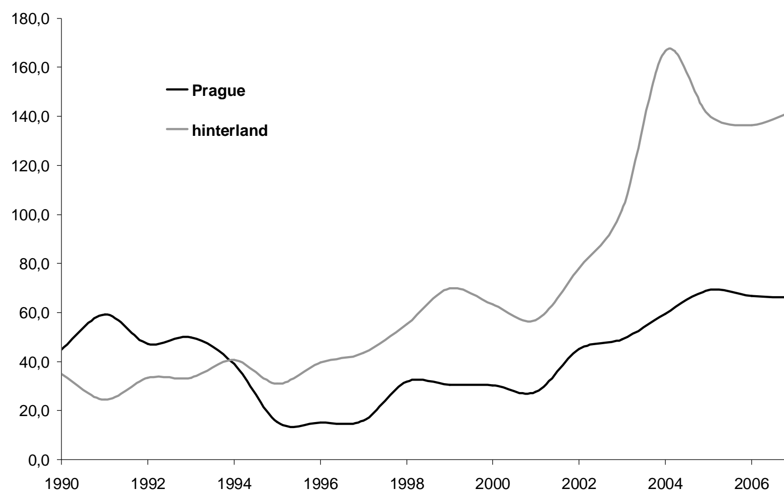
Hinterland

Despite specific exceptions (Herfert, 2006), suburbanization is a common feature of large post-socialist cities in Central and Eastern Europe (Drozg, 2004; Kåhrik and Tammaru, 2008; Ouředníček, 2003; 2007; Reberik, 2004; Sedláková, 2005). Selective migration to new residential districts in suburban zones brings substantial changes in the municipalities adjacent to large cities. During the last twenty years, the Prague metropolitan region became the epicentre of suburban development in the Czech Republic. Its suburban municipalities gained thousands of people annually, during this period. Under communism, small and medium sized municipalities were highly neglected and discriminated against in favour of medium sized cities. By the end of the socialist period, elderly people with low socio-economic status formed the predominant population of the outskirts of many post-socialist cities (Herfert, 2006; Kåhrik and Tammaru, 2008; Ouředníček, 2007; Timár and Váradi, 2001). Then new suburban construction attracted thousands of young and well-off people. Social polarisation, the demand for new kinds of infrastructure, and changing demographic behaviour and life styles are among the crucial consequences resulting from the suburbanisation process.

Today the city periphery and many municipalities of the wider metropolitan region of Prague are among the most progressively developing areas in the Czech Republic. Yet the intensity of suburban development in post-socialist cities is relatively low in comparison with the suburbanisation boom of Western Europe in the 20th century. The development of new residential areas around Prague is scattered among many municipalities. The construction of tens of new houses adjacent a former village, using the existing infrastructure and facilities, is the typical form of new residential expansion. Residential suburbanisation started immediately after the Velvet Revolution in areas located close to the city or even within Prague’s administrative boundaries. Migration to the suburban zone is still increasing annually and new housing construction is sprawling out to more distant and less attractive locations across the metropolitan region. The inflow of young people influences the age structure and demographic behaviour of the population within the suburban zone, resulting in migration and a natural increase of the suburban population (see Table 3).

Suburbanisation has both negative and positive impacts on the source and target localities of suburban migration. While slowly declining housing estates cope with the out-flow of the younger and economically stronger population, suburban municipalities are experiencing a revival of their demographic and social composition (compare with Dövényi and Kovács, 2006 for Budapest). Alongside the stimulation of community life and the strengthening of the demographic and socio-economic status of the suburban population, specific

problems have emerged in many municipalities. The localities exposed to dynamic or excessive growth now suffer from increasingly insufficient social infrastructure, especially kindergartens and elementary schools. The spatial mismatch between the demand and the supply of social services, entertainment, culture, and work has caused immense increase of traffic flows between the city and the suburban municipalities. Teenagers, young adults and mothers (parents) with small children are among the most disadvantaged groups. The strain on social and technical infrastructure, social polarisation, and transportation problems seem to be the most crucial impacts of suburban development. While it is likely that technical problems will be solved, the different needs of villagers and new suburbanites can lead to the creation of two separate social groups with opposing interests on local development. The most problematic aspect, though not for the suburban municipalities, is the immense growth of individual transportation. Traffic jams are the direct result of suburban development and the dependency of suburban dwellers on cars.



Graph 6. Dwellings completed in Prague and its hinterland during 1990-2007 (relative numbers per 10,000 inhabitants)

Source: Czech statistical office 2008

The growth of traffic density on suburban roads is to a large extent supported by a second form of suburbanisation – the development of commercial functions along the main transportation highways leading to Prague. Hypermarkets, shopping malls, offices, sport facilities, and especially logistical areas which grew up during the transformation period, have attracted more and more trucks not

only to the highways, but also to smaller roads in the metropolitan area. The position of Prague in the centre of Europe, new investment in highways, and liberal legislative provisions towards transportation companies have brought about a huge invasion of logistics operations to the Central Bohemia region. A similar situation is described for Slovakia (Falťan, 2008) and other Central European post-socialist countries (www.skladuj.cz, 2008). The lack of experience and professional knowledge of local governments led to the carving of large areas for commercial zones in municipal master plans. Presently, the regulation of residential and commercial development falls completely within the responsibility of individual municipalities, accompanied by little regional coordination.

Graph 7 – Suburban housing colonizes many fields within the Prague metropolitan region.

Photos: Martin Ouředníček

Comparing the Czech suburban development with Western European cities, one notices that housing construction around Prague is relatively chaotic and typically involves small scale development projects. While the impact of suburban development on increasing densities of individual transportation is similar to Western cities, the influence on the social environment has a specific nature in post-socialist countries. The growing social polarisation of existing populations with low social status and younger and richer newcomers is a typical feature of settlements with new suburban development. Timár and Váradi (2001:351) argue that post-socialist suburbanisation results in social tensions, segregation, and exclusion - just like those experienced in Western Europe. Detailed research shows that degradation of the social environment is not typical of Czech suburbs (Puldová, Ouředníček, 2006) and elements of segregation occur rarely within suburban communities (Ouředníček, 2007).

Conclusion

At the turn of the millennium Prague is among the most successful regions in the former communist bloc[5]. Its geographic position, historical heritage, economic power, and cultural tradition make the city capable of competing with other centres in Central Europe and of serving as an important gateway for foreign people, cultures, investments, and other flows to the region. European economic, social and cultural elements have been essential features of the Prague environment throughout its historical development. The communist period interrupted this natural development for forty years. The former regime brought specific elements to the pre-war inner structure of the city, some of which – mainly physical features of the city – will survive for decades. While communist symbols and statues disappeared quickly after the Velvet Revolution, large housing estates or transport systems are integral parts of the contemporary city and can only be slowly transformed. The development of settlement system and the general character of urbanisation in Prague (and in many other post-socialist cities) corresponds closely to post-war development in Western European cities, while displaying certain specific features. Jiří Musil speaks of the "modification of a universal model of urbanisation" in socialist cities, and argues that the impact of state socialism was highly significant in the socio-spatial structure of central areas and peripheries (Musil, 2001: 294). During the post-socialist era, new processes emerged to shape the urban environment and spatial structure of contemporary Prague including international migration, internationalization, suburbanization, and revitalization. The new urban processes seem to work in two ways, bringing both positive and negative consequences. Increasing car traffic, the decline of the city centre population, demographic aging and social deterioration of some housing estates, unregulated suburban development are only some of the problems which need to be tackled by local governments.

Grzegorz Weclawowicz (1998) compared the contemporary development of social structures in Prague, Budapest, and Warsaw and concluded that a large part of the society had suffered a considerable economic decline, and that the majority of the people had lost rather than gained from the economic transformation. Although the growing social, economic and ethnic differentiation of Prague's population is slowly being transformed into spatial patterns of physical and social environment, many elements of socialist, industrial, and even medieval development still persist, and together create the specific milieu of today's city. Thanks to the communist legacy, the moderate course of the new urban processes, and to welfare security, the social costs of post-socialist urban

[5] The unemployment rate on 31st October 2008 was 2.06% (5.20% in the Czech Republic); Average salary 29,697 CZK (23,569 CZK in the Czech Republic); CZSO, 2008.

development have been so far restrained. However, conflicts between different demographic and social groups do emerge in certain areas, and more serious problems may burden the city in the future.

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THE PROCESS AND PATTERN(S) OF RESIDENTIAL SPRAWL IN POST-SOCIALIST CITIES: A STORY OF LEIPZIG-LJUBLJANA-WARSAW

NATAŠA PICHLER-MILANOVIĆ[a]

ABSTRACT. The processes of urban sprawl are very *heterogeneous* across Europe, much more than in the US. Rooted in the diverse history and cultures of European nations, they call for a *European perspective* on urban sprawl. The term is often used today rather negatively, typically to describe low density, inefficient, suburban development around the periphery of cities. Many of the definitions tend to emphasise the idea of urban sprawl being a *type of urban form* or a *pattern of urbanisation*, rather than a *process of urban change* that leads to undesirable urban development patterns, in which *anti-sprawl* policies must intervene. The aim of this paper is to provide a more general overview of the nature of residential urban sprawl in three case study cities of Central and Eastern Europe: Leipzig (Germany), Ljubljana (Slovenia) and Warsaw (Poland). Since 1990, these cities have experienced a major transformation of the economy, society, policies, and institutions. Despite some significant similarities between them, there are specific differences with respect to their post-socialist residential urban sprawl. Though very distinct with regard to their starting conditions at the end of 1980s, and the amount of investment during the transition period in 1990s, some general conclusions on residential patterns, causes, and consequences of urban sprawl in these cities are possible[1]. The study has its origins in a comparative research project examining aspects of European urban sprawl, undertaken within the EU FP 5 research project URBS PANDENS: *Urban Sprawl: European Patterns, Environmental Degradation and Sustainable Development* (2002-2005).

Keywords: European urban sprawl; process of urban change; suburbanisation; residential patterns; post-socialist cities; anti-sprawl policies; Leipzig; Ljubljana; Warsaw

Introduction

The processes of urban sprawl are very *heterogeneous* across Europe, much more than in the US. Rooted in the diverse history and cultures of European nations, they call for a *European perspective* on urban sprawl. In

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[1] The scientific results of the project were published in the book by Couch, C., Leontidou, L., and Petchel-Held, G. (Eds.): *Urban Sprawl in Europe: Landscapes, Land-use change & Policy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.

definitions based around morphological form, urban sprawl is generally measured as a deviation from the compact city form, such as *suburban growth, ribbon* or *leap-frogged development*. Definitions based on land use tend to associate sprawl with the spatial segregation of land uses, and with the extensive mono-functional use of land for single-family residential development, freestanding shopping malls, industrial or office parks, large recreational areas (e.g. golf courses, theme parks, etc.). Many of the definitions tend to emphasise the idea of urban sprawl being a *type of urban form* or a *pattern of urbanisation*, rather than a *process of urban change* that leads to undesirable urban development patterns, in which *anti-sprawl* policies must intervene. The aim of this paper is to provide a more general overview of the nature of residential urban sprawl in three case study cities of Central and Eastern Europe: Leipzig (Germany), Ljubljana (Slovenia) and Warsaw (Poland). These cities have experienced major transformations in terms of the economy, policy, and institutions in the past two decades. Though very distinct with regard to their starting conditions at the end of 1980s, and the amount of investment during the transition period in 1990s, some general conclusions on patterns, causes, and consequences of residential sprawl in these cities are possible.

The historical and political legacies of city development after the Second World War in Central and Eastern Europe show that the urbanisation processes in socialist countries differed from those in capitalist countries. The differences between the socialist and the capitalist urban development were mostly significant at the intra-urban level. The socialist model of housing development and urban planning, the centralised planned economic system, and the lack of (urban) land markets were the most important features shaping the distinctive structure of socialist cities, in a significantly different way from capitalist cities in Western Europe. Socialism has left its most lasting imprint on the inner-city periphery, where large housing estates were built, and in the central city areas, dominated by deteriorating historic buildings (Enyedi, 1992; Kennedy and Smith, 1988, etc.). According to Musil (1993) the analysis of the housing system, housing policy, and urban planning in former socialist countries were more adequate than the analysis of land markets, as key factors explaining the pattern and dynamics of residential differentiation. Hence, in accordance with avowed principles of "equality, " residential patterns of socialist cities did not generally display the extremes of social class segregation. The suburbanisation process did not play an important role before mid-1980s in shaping the growth patterns of socialist cities. As a result, they were more compact than capitalist cities. Their development was in many ways unique, but they also shared great similarities at the beginning of the transition period, in early 1990s.

Intra-urban transformations in Central and Eastern Europe

The dramatic changes following the collapse of communist regimes in 1989, the break-up of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, and the end of the Cold War, have reconfigured the Central and Eastern Europe. The countries have undergone a political, economic, and institutional transition from various forms of socialist structures toward democratic and market-economy systems. Political, economic and geo-strategic reforms have lead to important structural changes, characterised by the re-orientation of trade to European Union (EU) markets, price liberalisation, and economic reforms; industrial re-structuring, shift to service economy, transformation of enterprises, and privatisation; the draw of foreign direct investments (FDI), a shift from supply- to demand-oriented economy; the membership of international organisations and associations, especially the EU.

Urban sprawl in Central and Eastern European cities can thus be interpreted as a consequence of the processes of *transition* to democratic societies and market-based economies (e.g. privatisation, restitution, decentralisation, individual choices), and *internationalisation* - the functional (re)integration in the global processes. In this respect, the pressures of the world economy, particularly in terms of city competition for attracting capital investments, are just as present in Central and Eastern Europe as elsewhere in the world (Enyedi, 1998; Hamilton et al., 2005; Keivani et al. 2001; Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000). The accession of most Central and Eastern European countries to fully-fledged membership in the EU from 2004 represents a completely new phase of institutional development (Hamilton et al, 2005).

In the early 1990s it was assumed that the transition from a single party system, centrally-managed socialist economy towards a market economy and a civil, democratic society, would project cities of Central and Eastern Europe rather uniformly along a linear trajectory, which would result in their convergence through time toward the spatial-structural and functional characteristics of cities in advanced market economies. Such thinking, however, was not only naïve, but was often based on a lack of understanding of the "power of the past" to differentiate city trends. To varying degrees, contemporary urban developments and the city characteristics in Central and Eastern Europe are also *path dependent* on their pre-socialist, as well as their socialist legacies. During the 1990s, the paths of city development and change in Central, South-East, and Eastern Europe appear to diverge in different degrees and on different levels.

Central Europe has re-emerged as a distinctive "sub-region" embracing the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia (or more precisely *Central-East Europe*). Although former East Germany became in 1990 part of Germany and European Union (EU), it is also in some respect part of this sub-region. According to this *subregionalisation,* some areas can be differentiated

according to their distinctive features, and trends in city transformation and development, including patterns of residential sprawl (Hamilton et al., 2005; Pichler-Milanović et al, 2007).

One can thus speak of the following urban areas: cities in the former *East Germany*, integrated overnight into the German social market economy and the EU (including Leipzig) - "shock therapy" has radically altered East German cities. The regeneration and reintegration of Berlin is a special case, as it has also acquired the functions of a capital.; cities in the "fast track" reforming states in *Central Europe*, new 2004 EU member states. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia have experienced varying degrees of commodification of production and productive capacities, and have been amongst cities in the region most exposed to globalization and Europeanisation flows of capital, information, people, technology and trade. East Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary underwent radical reforms, while Slovenia went through a more gradual transition. The differences in terms of the speed of transformations the ascendance of private ownership, or the role of (foreign) capital are also evident among their cities. Indeed, capital cities in these states have played the leading role in achieving a major shift in economic trends from recession and decline in the early-to-mid 1990s, to significant economic growth in the mid-to-late 1990s.

In the 1990s, *intra-city transformation* with regards to urban sprawl was influenced particularly by decentralisation and local government reforms, property restitution and privatisation, physical upgrading of the built environment, changes in land use patterns, and capital investments in property development. These transformations of urban pattern were also a product of demographic decline, social diversification, and restructuring of urban activities. Changes in property ownership, public administration and finance, transport and energy costs, employment opportunities and housing prices have raised questions about the competitiveness and sustainability of Central and Eastern European cities, and their roles in social, economic and political affairs within and beyond Europe (Pichler-Milanović, 2001). City transformation in Central and Eastern Europe is most notably associated with de-industrialisation, commercialisation of the historic core, and revitalisation of some inner city areas, and residential and commercial suburbanisation in the outer city ("urban sprawl"). The process of housing rehabilitation and revitalisation of the old historical cores can be observed in combination with growing tourism and demand for space in central locations, for expanding retail and office activities. Reconstruction of historically important buildings and sites are promoted also through the preservation of cultural heritage, respect for tradition, and growing awareness of environmental quality.

The most significant changes in the land use pattern of post-socialist cities in Central and Eastern Europe are the residential suburbanisation, with selective revitalisation of the central city areas, the intensive infrastructure development, especially transportation and telecommunications, the relocation of industry from city centres, and the establishment of new commercial zones

and shopping centres at the city periphery. However, disputes about restitution and unresolved ownership rights have until recently limited more intensive (re)development in the central parts of Ljubljana and Warsaw; Leipzig experiences a boom due to the *Investitionsvorranggesetz* ("priority of investment law"), enabling the authorities to grant land in the city to capital investors, and merely compensate the former owners (Nuissl and Rink, 2003). Restitution with land and property market price deregulation had significant impact on the urban form of post-socialist cities. However, effects have mainly been visible in the historic core of cities, as the peripheral urban areas mainly comprised prefabricated housing estates, subject to privatisation. The high demand for office and retail space in the central city areas have led to large housing price differentiation between the central and peripheral locations. Urban transformation at the city periphery is characterised by (Pichler-Milanović et al., 2007):

- residential suburbanisation takes several forms such as speculatively built multi-dwelling houses for sale (e.g. low rise, row houses, or sale of land plots for single-family housing construction), transformation of existing suburban villages with "in-fill" of new single family, usually detached, houses, or urban villas. Residential suburbanisation contributes to a reversal of the traditional socio-spatial pattern of the socialist city with the socio-economic status of population declining with distance from the centre;
- commercial development has more significant impact on the transformation of the city periphery than housing construction, with concentration in larger complexes built along major highways, at important transport intersections, and around rail and subway stations. Speculative industrial and warehousing development are usually developed, and important proportion of retailing is moving to out-of-town shopping centres. The creation of suburban business, science parks, and office complexes (e.g. near to the airport) has followed the trend.
- increased personal mobility with the rise in car ownership, and increasing efforts to develop international transportation and telecommunication networks. Priority has been given to the construction of multi-modal transport corridors, to improve connection between national transport networks and those of neighbouring EU countries. The shift from public to private and individual transport is closely connected with the shift from rail to road. The subsidies to public transportation are decreasing, with serious consequences in suburban areas. The concentration of investments in transport has focussed on the construction of ring roads and motorways for better connection of the city road systems with newly built motorways. Traffic congestion has rapidly become a common problem in all post-socialist cities.

The patterns of residential sprawl in post-socialist cities

As a consequence of several decades of strong political, institutional, and economic regulations during the socialist period, the Central and Eastern European cities underwent significant changes in their spatial organisation, that were most evident in the intra-urban structure of particular cities. Medieval historic core and inner-city areas built at the end of 19th century, with the exception of modest high-rise office development, were composed of a deteriorating building stock nationalised in the 1950s, and badly maintained until the 1990s. High-density housing estates were constructed at the city periphery, while the high quality low-rise housing estates of the political and economic elites were located in the green belt. Self-built detached family houses were built in suburban settlements (villages) lacking appropriate infrastructure, and largely inhabited by lower socio-economic groups. Until 1990, the housing stock in the Central and Eastern European capital cities (with the exception of Sofia and Ljubljana), was dominated by the public rental sector, although the owner-occupied sector was always substantial, in the form of owner-occupied single family houses or dwellings in co-operative or condominium multi-family buildings. At this time, because of growing economic problems, public sector housing construction, which in 1980 accounted for between 40-60 percent of the new housing production in most of the Eastern European countries, and even up to 85 percent in the Baltic countries (Tsenkova, 2005; Pichler-Milanović, 2001), began to decline, dropping significantly in the early 1990s. Comparative data from the 1990s (UN, 2001) show that the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Bulgaria still managed to maintain a significant public housing supply with more than 20 percent of the total housing stock, followed by Poland, Slovenia, Lithuania and Estonia with about 10 percent. However, recent evidence suggests further decline of public supply in this sector, with the extreme example of Latvia, whose 68 per cents of dwellings held by the state in 1990 declined to zero per cent at the end of 1990s (Donner, 2006, Tsenkova, 2005).

Residential suburbanisation has occurred in some socialist cities (e.g. Ljubljana, Budapest) since the 1970s, predominately in the form of 'satellite' dormitory neighbourhoods or in the existing suburban villages. These processes deepened in the 1980s, and were followed in the 1990s by industrial and commercial suburbanisation, mainly along motorways and access roads. Political and economic reforms in 1990s have had important effects on city transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. In the urban context, the reintroduction of land and housing markets represented the main effects of transition reforms (Pichler-Milanovich, 1994, 2001). A sophisticated system of property prices has developed reflecting the location, quality, size, accessibility, and level of services in particular city areas. Property prices in capital cities are often 30-50 percent higher than

in other cities. Price increase is most significant in attractive inner-city locations, and in some residential areas at the city periphery, pointing to sharp differences between the city centre and the peripheral areas (Struyk, 1996; Hegedüs et al. 1996; Pichler-Milanovich, 2001).

Under the previous socialist systems, housing policy had been aimed at guaranteeing all citizens equal opportunity of access to housing. Although this goal was never entirely achieved in any of the former socialist countries, a variable but continuous supply of housing was nonetheless maintained through the provision of low-cost prefabricated high-density housing estates. A substantial amount of the funds required for the construction of these large housing estates was secured through various forms of public financing and state subsidies. The most important changes after the fall of the communist regimes were the withdrawal of direct state financing of new housing construction, the privatisation of the previous public housing stock, and the restitution of housing nationalised during the previous regime, to their former owners. The rapid privatisation of public rented housing in the 1990s has substantially increased home ownership in most of the former socialist countries, with the exception of East Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic, which implemented different models of housing privatisation, with levels ranging from 85 to 90 percent, well above the EU average of 62 percent (Tsenkova, 2005).

The privatisation of the housing sector was one of the most import political decisions at the beginning of the 1990s in Slovenia (and Hungary) in support of private property rights and a market economy. It triggered a major increase in housing prices, both for rent and buying. In contrast, the construction of new multi-dwelling housing decreased in the city of Ljubljana in the 1990s, despite presenting some of the highest housing costs in Central Europe (Pichler-Milanovic, 2001, 2005). With the exception of former East Germany, the sharp decrease in the level of house construction is characteristic of all Central and Eastern European countries. The liberalisation of the labour market, resulting of the liberalisation of the economy, has meant new opportunities for labour mobility and migration. Due to a lack of suitable alternative housing policies to match the new macro-economic situation, labour mobility and positive migration have, however, been seriously restricted.

Leipzig, Ljubljana and Warsaw illustrate similarities and differences of the *revolutionary* change from socialist to market economy after 1989. Warsaw and Ljubljana are also capital cities and benefit of additional types of investment. Ljubljana became a capital city in 1991, but, compared to Warsaw and Leipzig, it is only a middle-size city. Leipzig illustrates the experience of urban sprawl during periods of sustained economic and population decline.

Table 1.

Population change in Leipzig, Ljubljana, and Warsaw, 1991-2001.

City	(a) Core (b) LUZ (1991)	Population change (%) of LUZ (b)* (1991-2001)	Change in the percentage of LUZ population living in the core city (a)* (1991-2001)	(a) Core (b) LUZ (2001)
Leipzig	(a) 542.512 (b) 940.822	-3.1%	-3.7%	(a) 493.052 (b) 912.064
Ljubljana	(a) 272.650 (b) 470.641	+3.8%	-2.5%	(a) 270.506 (b) 488.364
Warsaw	(a) 1.644.515 (b) 2.300.000	+8.9%	-0.1%	(a) 1.609.780 (b) 2.631.902

*(a) Administrative city (core) and (b) larger urban zones - LUZ ("urban region").

Source: URBS PANDENS calculations from the URBAN AUDIT data.

Leipzig

Leipzig is situated in the Free State of Saxony in eastern Germany. Together with the city of Halle (population 270,000), Leipzig has historically been at the heart of one of the largest industrialised regions of Central Europe. The population of Leipzig has been in decline since the early 1960s, a process that accelerated with the building of new social housing estates on the periphery of the city in the 1970s. Throughout 1970-1990, residential areas continued to decay and urban infrastructure became ever more outworn. As everywhere in the former East Germany, the economic and social transformation in the 1990s imposed difficult structural changes on the city and surrounding region. Today, industry is no longer the region's leading economic force, and the growing service sector has by no means made up for the large loss of jobs in industry. Leipzig has lost almost one fifth of its inhabitants between 1990-2000, approximately half due to migration to more prosperous regions in western Germany, and half due to suburbanisation and residential sprawl. These trends have given Leipzig the peculiar character of a massively *sprawling though declining* (e.g. "dwindling city") *urban region* (Nuissl, Rink, 2003).

In the first part of 1990s Leipzig experienced a period of heavy urban sprawl that was induced by a set of incentives that largely stemmed from the institutional framework. Urban sprawl began almost immediately after the fall of the Berlin wall, with shopping malls appearing in the suburban areas, followed by new industrial and *low density multi-dwelling housing estates*. Compared with the decaying inner city under restitution, this new suburban housing is very

attractive to many inner city inhabitants. The federal housing and tax policies have provided strong incentives for urban sprawl, the most famous of which is a subsidy for the acquisition of property by private households *("Eigenheimzulage")*, the vast majority of which are built on greenfield sites. This triggered a building-boom, frequently incompatible with the idea of sustainable land use, and of limited relevance to the urban region, ailing from a shrinking economy and decreasing population. In addition, demand was governed by the low quality of the housing in the inner city areas, and was exacerbated through unresolved property rights, at that time. The latter made renovation and reconstruction almost impossible, determining lower and middle-income residents to look for alternative housing of higher quality.

Table 2.

Residential sprawl in Leipzig

<1989	**1989-1992**	**1992-1997**	**>1997**
During the socialist period Leipzig did not experience urban sprawl.	Commercial sprawl occurred immediately after the German reunification in 1990. Numerousinvestors came to Leipzig, developing land and constructing new buildings to explore the business opportunities and take advantage of the new market.	Residential sprawl was induced mainly due to the lack of good quality inner city housing. New multi-dwelling buildings at the city periphery of Leipzig were erected to serve the wishes of many people.	The suburbanisation trend started to decline after 1997 due to inner city revitalisation, resolving of restitution claims, property market development, and provision of new retail and leisure facilities. Urban sprawl turned into provision of single family houses. But due to oversupply of dwellings in the suburbs, many dwellings in the inner-city were left empty. The property prices declined both in the inner city and in the periphery of Leipzig.

Peculiarities of urban sprawl in Leipzig:

-The context of post-socialist transition and "dwindling"

-Residential sprawl was almost completely induced by investors from outside Leipzig and massively supported by public funding and capital incentives for investments in new infrastructure, housing, retailing, etc.

-" "High speed residential sprawl (in the first part of 1990s) with a sudden end" " (at the end of 1990s) due to oversupply of housing and shopping facilities;

- The best example of extensive and ""top down"" residential sprawl in Central and Eastern Europe

After 2000, residential suburbanisation in Leipzig has fallen to very low levels and there are very few peripheral development projects planned or under construction in either the retail or the residential sector. Today, Leipzig is experiencing significant urban sprawl only in the commercial and industrial sectors, oriented towards the enabling of economic growth and city competitiveness. As a result, local authorities often compete for investments, meaning that investors have a strong bargaining and decision-making power over the new developments.

Warsaw

Warsaw, the capital of Poland, is located in Mazowieckie NUTS 2 province, in central-east Poland. The city of Warsaw has a population of about 1.6 million, representing about 4% of the total population of Poland. The city of Warsaw covers an area of 512 sq. km and is divided into 18 districts. The urban region includes more than 2.5 million people in a sprawling agglomeration that stretches up to 40 kilometres from the city centre. The central city remains a popular residential location. As yet, it does not appear to suffer from the social, economic, and environmental problems ofmany other European cities. Despite common preference for a house with a garden, no major population flows from the city of Warsaw to the suburbs have been observed. In recent years, the rate of growth of the suburban population was below that of previous decades. But with the gradual elimination of present constraints such as the hardships of daily commuting due to inadequate and inefficient metropolitan transport, and the high cost of a single family house with a garden in relation to the average salary, the improvement of living conditions in the suburbs will likely stimulate residential sprawl in Warsaw in the future.

In the 1990s, the ring of Warsaw agglomeration has become an attractive place for new jobs and residences as a result of market and institutional reforms, such as the transformation of the economy, the shift in location of economic activities, the re-introduction the land rent, the decentralisation of decision-making, the local government and fiscal policy reforms, and the differentiation of incomes. At the local level, the suburbs are becoming very attractive locations for the well-educated and wealthy people . In Warsaw, the growth rate of new dwellings was higher at the city periphery, compared to the inner city.

Table 3.

Residential sprawl in Warsaw

< 1991	1990-1995	1995-2000	>2000
During the socialist period, Warsaw did not experience residential sprawl due to provision of housing, jobs, and services in the city of Warsaw, and low investments in infrastructure in suburban areas and surrounding villages.	Commercial sprawl due to the de – industrialisation and growth of SMEs in suburban areas. Availability of private and unregulated land at lower prices in suburban and rural areas.	Residential suburbanisation due to preferences of wealthy people for single family houses, and middle class for new multi-dwelling low density houses in the suburbs, with a good access to central Warsaw (urban railway or main road). Well-educated and wealthy people predominate among suburbanites.	New trends in urban development of Warsaw will induce suburbanisation and residential sprawl in the future, coupled with the improvement of metropolitan transport and roads. Further increase of property prices and higher residential density in central Warsaw, income growth, and social differentiationwill induce urban sprawl.

Peculiarities of residential sprawl in Warsaw:

- Weak evidence of socio-economic and environmental problems in the inner-city of Warsaw
- Large areas of accessible open space in the inner city
- Difficulties of daily commuting due to inefficient metropolitan transportation and roads
- Deferred residential sprawl

Similar to Leipzig, the very first years of the 1990s saw intensive construction of new buildings, often built without planning or building permits. There is, however, a rather limited extent of residential sprawl around Warsaw due to relatively low propensity of people to move, especially due to the relatively high costs of the new dwellings. The only significant new development in the 1990s occurred in the form of owner-occupied single-family detached houses at the city periphery and in the surrounding rural and urbanised settlements, contributing to residential sprawl. The main problems caused by sprawl in the Warsaw agglomeration concern the conversion of open land to urban uses ("greenfiled" development) in the suburbs, while at the same time there is vacant land within the central city. Built-up areas occupy 50% of the total area of Warsaw. Open land for investment in the central city is still estimated to about 100 km^2 (20% of the total area of the city). The central city of Warsaw suffers from a lack of co-ordination in the urban management and still unregulated land ownership relations (Gutry-Korycka, 2005).

Ljubljana

At the end of 1980s a population decline was observed for the first time in the city of Ljubljana and its agglomeration, showing the shift from (sub)urbanisation to disurbanisation. The data from the last Censuses (1991-2002) show a decline of population in Ljubljana urban settlement (city proper), and overall stagnation in the City Municipality (inner-city), and population growth in the suburban municipalities, and other municipalities in the Ljubljana urban region. The most important historical (or cultural) reasons for urban sprawl n is the existing settlement pattern, i.e. large numbers of small (rural) settlements and secondary employment centres (small towns), and the high share of "deagrarised'' population, living in rural settlements.[2] They are usually employed in nearby urban settlements and commute daily from their private, predominantly self-built, family detached houses, constructed on their own land.[3] The close access of urban settlements (for employment, services and education), ownership of private land (inter-generation inheritance or purchase), availability of detached single-family houses (self-built or inherited), and overall quality of life in rural areas were the most important "pull" factors, first for "urbanisation of the countryside" in 1960s and 1970s, and then for suburbanisation, in the 1980s.

The predominant (traditional) residential pattern of self-built owner-occupied single family houses in smaller settlements was also supported by socialist housing policies (1960-1990). Self-built construction of private single-family houses (for personal use) was intensified in Slovenia from the 1960s onwards using the 'informal' or 'semi-formal' (private) land market as a result of housing shortages in urban areas. Private ownership of land and availability of (public) subsidies for construction of owner-occupied single-family houses, relatively good provision of roads and communal infrastructure in the rural areas, and the high quality of landscape, have all contributed to the residential sprawl until the 1990s.

After 1991 the most important causes of urban sprawl were the reforms, i.e. the privatisation of housing (1991-1995), restructuring and privatisation of enterprises, and local government reforms after 1994, the system of local tax revenues, deferred planning regulations and control, higher incomes and intergenerational equity, increased investments in motorways and car ownership. The new lifestyle patterns have been also important causes of residential sprawl since 1995. The city of Ljubljana and its agglomeration provide also a high quality of living environment, with low crime levels (Pichler-Milanović, 2001, 2005).

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[2] Around 50% of Slovenia's population live in rural settlements, however less than 5% of the active population is employed in agricultural activities, showing a high share of "deagrarised'' population. This term is used to describe population living in officially classified rural settlements, but working in secondary and tertiary activities in urban settlements.

[3] In Slovenia and Poland more than 80 percent of land was in private ownership even during the socialist period.

Table 4.

Residential sprawl in Ljubljana

< 1991	1991-1995	1995-2000	>2000
""Urbanisation of the countryside"" since 1960s and residential suburbanisation in 1980s, due to availability of private land and construction subsidies for single family houses in suburban and rural settlements.	Residential sprawl due to privatisation of public rented housing, restitution of property, and deferred supply of new multi-dwelling housing in inner-city areas. Increase of new single family (detached and row) houses built without any subsidies in suburban municipalities.	Commercial sprawl due to privatisation of social enterprises, growth of SMEs, de-industrialisation, FDI, new enterprise zones and shopping centres at the greenfield sites, and expansion of motorways. Recycling of urban land for new multi-dwelling buildings in inner-city. Residential sprawl still dominant in the form of newly built single family detached houses, low density row and multi-dwelling houses for purchasing at lower prices than in the inner city of Ljubljana. Introduction of mortgages since 1998.	Mixed type of new development and urban sprawl patterns: new office, technological, and science parks, commercial zones, new shopping and leisure facilities, recreation areas, mixed type of housing developments.

Peculiarities of residential sprawl in Ljubljana:

-""Urbanisation of the countryside"" from the 1960s onwards, with the provision of public subsidies for construction of single family detached houses in suburban and rural areas;

-Relatively small size of the inner-city of Ljubljana and a number (cca 1000) of small settlements in agglomeration and the urban region within 30 min accessibility from the city centre;

-Transition reforms in the 1990s (privatisation, restitution, local government reforms, deindustrialisation, etc.)

- High levels of housing ownership (e.g. from 67% to 90% after privatisation of housing in the 1990s);

- Higher land and property prices in the inner-city of Ljubljana than in suburban municipalities

- Accessibility and good quality of roads and motorways

- Rather ""sustainable"" patterns of residential sprawl

After2000, the residential sprawl in Ljubljana urban region was further enforced by the low availability of urban land for sale and high property prices, low number of non-profit rented dwellings in the inner-city of Ljubljana, competition of local authorities for (new)residents ("suburbanites"), the provision of building permits, and decreased land development taxes. The improvement of the roads, and the completion of motorways, has induced multiple commuting patterns for work, education, shopping, and leisure purposes, but not on a large scale.

Table 5.

Characteristics of the city of Ljubljana and urban region

Administrative and functional classification of the city of Ljubljana	*Area*	*Population*		*Density*	*Annual population change (%)*			
	(Sq.km)	(1991)	(2002)	(Pop. per sq.km)	*1961-71*	*1971-81*	*1981-91*	*1991-02*
Ljubljana Urban Settlement (NUTS 7)	147	267008	257338	1750	2.86	2.09	0.25	-0.34
Ljubljana City Municipality (NUTS 5)	272	272637	264269	972	2.84	1.90	0.41	-0.28
Ljubljana Agglomeration (NUTS 4)	902	321607	321235	356	2.44	1.86	0.54	-0.01
Ljubljana Urban Region (NUTS 3)	2555	463802	485843	190	2.10	1.84	0.67	0.43
Metropolitan Area (or FUA)	4990	617892	646868	130	1.63	1.58	0.66	0.42

Inner-city: Ljubljana urban settlement ("city-proper");

Administrative city (>1994): Ljubljana City Municipality;

Administrative city (1955-1994): Ljubljana agglomeration (five communes);

Ljubljana Urban Region ("statistical" NUTS 3 region);

Metropolitan area (FUA): Ljubljana Urban Region (NUTS 3) + 16 NUTS 5 municipalities from neighbouring Gorenjska and South-East NUTS 3 regions.

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the City of Ljubljana (various years); SORS (various yeas).

The causes of residential sprawl in the post-socialist cities

Leipzig, Ljubljana and Warsaw have been dominated by the rapid transition from a planned to a market economy, but the central and local governments and the planning systems played different roles in the sprawling process, and engendered different effects on the local economies, social patterns, and the environment. The most important causes of residential sprawl in the three case study cities are:

- **Economic restructuring** (lack of affordable housing for rent or purchase in the inner city area, income growth and differentiation, inter-generation equity);
- **Demographic change** (low natural increase, population decline, ageing, decline in the size of households, social differentiation);
- **Land policy and property rights** (lack of adequate institutions, instruments and rules of planning, inexperienced planning authorities, lack of development control, problems of restitution and privatisation of housing, competition between local authorities for investors and newcomers, conversion of agricultural land and ""Greenfield"" development, lack of building land for single family houses in inner-city areas);

- **Quality of life** (new life styles patterns, preference for single family detached house with a garden in green areas, increased motorisation, and leisure patterns).

The consequences of residential sprawl in post-socialist cities

Ecosystem fragmentation

The industrial pasts of the former socialist cities were infamous for their legacy of poor environmental quality, which is a major determinant in both attracting and retaining economic activity and high quality labour force in the city. In the 1990s, the energy consumption has increased in the Central and Eastern European cities, due to higher numbers of new and larger dwellings, and to the increase in the number of motor vehicles. Commuting traffic congestionrepresents one of the most important problems, especially with regards to increase in air and noise pollution. Loss of agricultural land and forests (including areas of natural beauty) to urban uses has occurred due to residential, commercial, and recreation developments, and transport infrastructure at the city periphery. Surface sealing is a consequence of decline of agricultural activities in rural areas, through conversion of agricultural land, and building activities on open ("greenfields") land. Unplanned (or poorly planned) sprawl at the edge of the existing settlements cuts-off the green areas and therefore disconnects the network of "eco-corridors" important for migration of some animal species. The increase of concentration of heavy metals in the soil threatens the quality of (underground) drinking water reserves, and first-class agricultural land is lost to low-density houses.

Loss of "local identity" of rural settlements can also be considered a negative impact of urban sprawl. The new settlement patterns and the architectural diversity of the new residential buildings significantly change the rural landscape. The new developments often ignore natural factors (i.e. geomorphology, forest edge, streams, etc.) and traditional settlement patterns. The traditional distinction between "urban-rural" landscapes is often not visible any more (i.e. "placelessness"). Most significant changes appear along the main roads, which attract various types of developments, of highly diverse appearances – i.e. car retail shops, McDonalds and Chinese restaurants, large shopping centres, businesses premises, large petrol stations, etc.

The case study cities of Warsaw and Ljubljana for example are characterized by satisfied environmental quality (i.e. diversified system of green areas, preserved fragments of natural vegetation). The contamination of air is lower than in most highly urbanised areas of Europe. The inhabitants of the Warsaw agglomeration suffer from low quality of drinking water and the lack of a developed sewage

system, and of an organised waste management system, especially in the suburban areas. In Ljubljana, the risk of environmental pollution comes mainly from transport activities and inadequate local sewage system(s) in rural settlements. In Leipzig, the new roads, industrial estates and settlements spread along the corridor Halle-Leipzig. Land use development at the urban periphery was enormous (mainly on agricultural land) compared to Ljubljana and Warsaw, with deferred urban sprawl development due to lack of appropriate infrastructure and investments.

Economic costs

Since 1989, the restructuring of international economy and the permeability of national borders affected post-socialist cities. City competitiveness is very much dependent on the strength of their economies. Transition reforms and EU accession requirements have had an important impact on the competitiveness of large and capital cities, as centres of political, administrative, commercial, financial, technological, scientific, and cultural activities. City competitiveness emphasises the effects of city transformation on supply and demand constraints for economic development, property, and labour markets. The evidence of patterns, processes, and changes in international integration of post-socialist cities is most visible through trade flows and foreign direct investment, which became key elements in shaping the evolution of globalising decision and activities. Internationalisation has also had a profound impact on the labour market. The growing number of western employees working in (some) cities (e.g. 50,000 in Prague) is an important force on the property market, demanding new or renovated up-market housing, and thus contributing to changes in the built environment. Improving city accessibility and transport infrastructure is reflected in the number of large-scale projects undertaken in the urban areas (e.g. upgrading of airport facilities, motorways, ports, intra-city transport, etc.). In the urban form this means demand for space for new housing, warehouses, shopping, and leisure centres, industrial, office, and science parks, infrastructure and other urban land uses to increase local employment, value added activities, accessibility, budget revenue, etc. This demand will further increase the amount of the built-up land, and consequently the overall cost of land development and consumption. High economic costs are related not only to increased construction activity and provision of infrastructure at the city periphery, but also to oversupply and under-utilisation of social and technical infrastructure in declining parts of the inner city. Large investments are seen in motorways, but not in rail infrastructure or efficient public transport system.

In the Leipzig-Halle conurbation, oversupply of built-up land and facilities during 1990s at the city periphery has produced vacancies and decline in housing prices, with "saturated" market coupled with uncertain economic conditions after the year of 2000. In the inner city of Ljubljana, the overall increase of property

prices from 1995, and the high price-to-income ratio, has produced "speculative" urban land markets, unaffordable housing, and higher loans-to-income ratio. The more extensive residential sprawl process seems to be inevitable in the Warsaw agglomeration in the near future, but the question is whether it can be planned and managed on sustainable principles, in order to avoid the negative consequences of urban sprawl as experienced by Leipzig or Ljubljana.

Social consequences

Since 1990, the socio-spatial differentiation in Central and Eastern European post-socialist cities has been reinforced by industrial restructuring, decentralisation of economic activities, stagnation or bankruptcy of enterprises, privatisation, rising unemployment levels, growing income polarisation, etc. The process of selective socio-spatial differentiation and segregation has emphasised particular city locations with specific housing, demographic and social structures, and urban land use patterns. This transformation process is linked with growing dependence of cities on international resources as their local economic and social potentials. Therefore, the main social consequences of residential sprawl are related to the deterioration of the inner city, social and spatial differentiation, and increased crime rates in suburban areas.

Due to residential sprawl, the inner-city areas are in decline. The large number of vacant dwellings in the inner city of Leipzig is a consequence of oversupply of housing in suburban areas - high cost of dwellings in Ljubljana occurred due to deferred provision of affordable housing and speculative urban land banks. Depopulation and ageing of older inner-city areas are visible in both Leipzig and Ljubljana. Decline of retailing in the city centre occurred due to development of new large shopping centres at the city periphery. Renewal and up-grading of the older housing stock has been evident in recent years with the support of some subsidies and "equity" loans (e.g. combined EU funds, national subsidies, local municipality grants, bank loans, individual investors, through different forms of public-private partnerships). Spatial segregation is still not a serious problem, but it has been increasing since 1995. Inner city area is fairly mixed in Warsaw and Leipzig due to low rents in the rather large public housing stock. In Ljubljana, despite high ownership of housing, the inner-city has preserved a residential function mainly due to lower costs of maintenance in comparison with high property prices for sale and rent, and firm connection of older residents to their housing. There are very few "gated communities" as yet, but differentiation is evident between traditional and new types of housing in both inner-city and suburban areas. Lifestyle conflicts are evident between newcomers ("suburbanites") and traditional ("rural") residents. There are also problems related to the unequal distribution and accessibility of jobs, schools, shopping, and leisure facilities in suburban areas, with increased distances and time consumption that is a burden for the young, the elderly, and the women.

Policy Responses

Physical planning was introduced in the former socialist countries as a tool for urban development in the 1960s. The physical plans laid down the macro-spatial structure of urban areas, and their general land use patterns, especially focusing on the allocation of land for new housing and industrial development. Town plans had to be embedded within overall national economic plans, translating the requirements of economic planning into land-use proposals, along with centrally prescribed planning and construction standards or norms. The amount of services at the city levels were also planned according to nationally set standards. The protection of agricultural land and the preference for higher density high-rise and middle-rise housing estates at the inner city periphery led to the creation of compact urban structures and limited urban sprawl. Another characteristic of the urban fabric, as a result of socialist urban planning, was a very low economic utilisation of land in city centres, due to the small differential in land rents, and the absence of a "gravity model" of land values. However, some benefits resulting from these processes were the well preserved historic cores of most Central European cities, and also a significant underdeveloped land of derelict industry (e.g. factories, warehouses, gasworks etc.) that can be released for other uses.

The neo-liberal thinking of the early 1990s has been characterised by low political priority given by central governments to physical planning, regional development and housing policy (Sýkora 1998, Pichler-Milanovic, 1994). The absence of comprehensive national spatial development strategies and coherent regional policies, together with the local and regional government reforms and disputes regarding the basis of new planning legislation, have been significant in Central and Eastern Europe. Consequently, land use planning at the municipal level has been characterised by the prevalence of *ad hoc* political decisions rather than long-term strategic vision, weak development control and *laissez-faire* approach to urban development. In terms of spatial planning, this resulted in a kind of "planning vacuum" in the 1990s (Nuissl and Rink, 2003), was aggravated by the fact that "urban planning has been neglected in the 1990s because of the priorities of macro-economic reforms and the connotation of such planning with the former socialist regime" (Pichler-Milanovic 2001). In this situation, it was often easy to get building permits that did not comply with the respective local development plans. Thus, market forces, not planning, prevailed until the end of the 1990s, when the need for planning regulation was recognised as necessary to control and direct the spatial development. This problem was further aggravated by the unresolved property rights (e.g. privatisation and restitution of land and buildings tenure). The lack of planning and regulation resulted in suburbanisation to the city adjacent municipalities and settlements, and drives up the residential sprawl.

In the 1990s, even the new generation of urban development plans were prepared in an old fashioned way of physical planning, lacking up-to-date implementation mechanisms. There has been very limited use of economic tools to encourage urban development, and consequently, a lack of economic incentives. The unwillingness of urban planners to identify or adapt to new circumstances, fostered unregulated urban development practice and weak development control, especially in relation to issuing building permits for housing construction in suburban areas, and the deficient coordination between the city government and the local governments of the surrounding municipalities.

Since 1995, urban policies have revolved around the search for comparative advantages, in order to establish a new role within the network of European cities, to establish modern transportation networks, to encourage the shift from industry to service based economies, and to resolve the problems of efficient guidance and regulation of private initiative in the dynamic process of city transformation. Since the late 1990s, as a response to pressures of globalisation and competition, a shift can be seen in the spatial planning process, moving from the more traditional "master plan" model, to strategic planning methods with greater flexibility and adaptability. Recent development in urban planning and management show positive changes towards comprehensive strategic approaches, enhancing the image and local identity of specific urban areas.

Strategic Developing Plans and Urban Development Concepts have been introduced in many cities (including Warsaw, Ljubljana, and Leipzig) for achieving better effectiveness of the planning process and subsequently better quality of the physical development. Transparency of urban planning and development, public involvement in the decision-making process, integration of physical planning and real estate regulation, and urban renewal projects, have also been introduced in the process of urban planning.

The principle goal of the new comprehensive *Strategic Development Plan of the City Municipality of Ljubljana (2009)* is the *"smart city growth",* emphasising *the* quality of life for local citizens, preservation of city identity, enhancement of city competitiveness, while at the same time solving the urban development constraints such as the suburbanisation and urban sprawl, decline of the city centre, inadequate maintenance of cultural heritage buildings and housing estates. At the (inter)national level it is important to strengthen the innovative, competitive, attractive, and polycentric Ljubljana urban region, including balanced distribution of activities and investments in relation with municipal land development in the urban region.

According to the *Warsaw Development Strategy*, until 2010 the European integration and globalisation processes will have a substantial impact on the future development in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. The important element of this city strategy is the improvement of living standards and preservation of extensive

green areas, but also development of Warsaw as European metropolis with a rapidly growing economy and substantial increase of the city's competitiveness in relation to other European cities. This includes infrastructure and property development with densification of the inner-city areas, but also further (planned) residential and commercial suburbanisation (Węcławowicz, 2005). In Leipzig, as in other (East) German cities, the new comprehensive urban planning concept gained ground with a new version of the integrated urban development plan focusing on urban revitalisation, recycling of urban land, mixed-use development, improved public transport, preservation of green areas and municipal cooperation in formulation and implementation of the urban and regional planning and development strategies.

Therefore Central and Eastern European cities are competing now for international investments and development, which has become a matter of national prestige. This requires commitment from the city and regional planning authorities to pursue market-oriented strategies for economic growth, but at the same time to preserve social cohesion, cultural heritage, and improve quality of life. These new developments are also a way of promoting city competitiveness within the new planning paradigm of sustainable development.

Conclusions: what is needed for 'sustainable' residential sprawl in post-socialist cities?

Urban sprawl used to be an American research and policy topic, but a revival of interest indicates the new dynamics of urban sprawl in Europe (Phelps et al. 2006; Bruegman 2005; Hoggart, 2005; Richardson, 2004; EEA, 2006, Couch et al., 2007). Urban sprawl has been a matter of policy and planning ever since it has been acknowledged as a particular pattern of spatial development. The desire to control the dynamics of urban sprawl was one of the earliest motivations for state intervention in spatial development. In Western European cities, urban sprawl evolved after the Second World War, on a background of unforeseen accumulation of welfare and wealth. Living in the green areas has become the vision of an affordable lifestyle to the growing middle classes. The governments of Western countries encouraged urban sprawl through investment subsidies in the construction of privately owned housing in the suburbs of the large cities. Suburbanisation was seen throughout most of the 20th century as a positive development, a necessary countermovement to the overcrowding of the 19th metropolis. Virtually the whole planning profession was dedicated to this process, and most of the governments attended it (Fishman 2005: 66).

One can say that since mid-1995, the Central and Eastern European cities experienced more or less processes of heavy suburbanisation and urban sprawl. Urban sprawl was stimulated during the transition period in the 1990s, from the supply side through investments in new housing, infrastructure, and

commercial premises in suburban areas (especially in Leipzig), while demand for privately owned detached houses in suburban and rural settlements characterised the suburbanisation process in Ljubljana and Warsaw. Central and Eastern European cities are still facing huge challenges of economic, social, and environmental development, most evident in the rapid transformation of land use patterns and built-up structures, especially in the capital and larger cities, and their regions. By the year of 2000, the population of Central and Eastern Europe reached 125 million, with 60 percent living in urban areas. The region has experienced the most rapid post-Second World War growth in total and in urban population (of any region in Europe), but with large differences between the countries. More than half of the urban population in Central and Eastern Europe lives in cities with less than 100,000 inhabitants, while cities with 100,000 or more inhabitants contain a quarter of the region's population. More than 200 largr cities in Central and Eastern Europe experienced serious population losses (Oswalt et.al., 2006). Yet 55 of the 211 NUTS 2 regions of the EU-15 already saw a fall in population during the second half of the 1990s. This is also the case in most of the regions of the new EU member states (35 out of 55 regions) because of the natural decrease and net emigration (EC, 2005). There is much evidence that Central and Eastern European cities are embarking on a process of desurbanisation. However, this does not exclude growth in individual cities and urban regions – mainly the capital city regions – but these are exceptional cases. Likewise, the process of reurbanisation, which, according to the cyclical model of van den Berg et al (1982), follows desurbanisation, is still unlikely to become dominant in Central and Eastern European cities in the near future.

Nevertheless, there is now a remarkable consensus between different European countries and societies and between different levels of government about the overall aims of policy with regard to urban sprawl. The need to control urban sprawl and develop more compact cities is generally accepted by governments across Europe**.** Policies for the control of urban sprawl consider what should be the aims of future policy in the context of the need for sustainable development. According to the *Brundtland Commission* (1987) the uncontrolled physical expansion of cities with provision of housing, roads, water supply, sewers, and public services has had serious implications for the urban environment and the economy. Cities are often built on the most productive agricultural land, and unplanned growth results in unnecessary loss of this land. Three years later, the European Commission's *Green Paper on the Urban Environment* (1990) suggested that strict zoning policies had led to the separation of land use and the development of extensive residential suburbs, which stimulated traffic generation. The UN *Agenda 21* (1992) and the UN *Habitat Agenda* (1996) asked that all states promote sustainable patterns of urban development and land use, and the European Commission (1998) called for sustainable urban

planning strategies that would emphasise mixed use and more compact urban development that would use less land and reduced energy consumption. By the end of the 20th century, the control of urban sprawl had become a major consideration of urban policy in most European countries. Furthermore, the *European Spatial Development Perspectives* (ESDP, 1999) emphasised that "it is necessary to work together to find sustainable solutions for planning and managing urban growth" (European Commission, 1999, pp. 64-65). Most recently a report on urban sprawl in Europe, jointly commissioned by the *European Environment Agency* and the European Commission, concluded that according to the "good governance" criteria the EU has specific obligations and a mandate to act and take a lead role in developing the proper frameworks for intervention at all levels, and to pave the way for local action. Policies at all levels - including local, national and European, need to have an urban dimension to tackle urban sprawl and help to overcome the market failures that drive urban sprawl (EEA, 2006; *Territorial Agenda of the EU*, 2007; *Leipzig Charter on Sustainable Cities*, 2007).

The URBS PANDENS study (2005) found that urban sprawl, as a phenomenon and asa process of urban change is affecting different cities in a different manner. Besides important differences between Europe and North America, there are also intra-European variations in urban sprawl because of the great diversity in *urban cultures* in space and time. European cities vis-à-vis North American cities are more concerned about the loss of specific culture and urbanity, as cities have always been important symbols and focal points of European societies. A major lesson of post-socialist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe has been that the rapid transformation of formal institutions did not bring the intended results immediately. The implementation of new instruments was rather obstructed by the lack of experience of the planning professionals, and the influence of informal institutions in the "planning vacum," and the stress on macro-economic reforms in the 1990s, and the investment-led approaches of the local authorities since 1995. As a consequence of these forces during the last decade, Central and Eastern European post-socialist cities are somehow becoming more alike, struggling to dismantle the negative effects of the socialist development and to enhance their competitiveness and international status through property development.

The cumulative effects of the transformation process on inter- and intra-urban development is essentially a process of city competitiveness, revitalisation, and *reconnaissance in different urban networks*, emphasising also their cultural heritage and local identity. The future of these cities depends now not only on their (pre)socialist legacies, or the success in the adoption of more market oriented principles, the establishment of new public regulation, and the effectiveness of

city governance, but also on the implementation of sustainable development goals and policies, including the management of urban sprawl within the city administrative boundaries and in the urban region.

Therefore, new types and instruments of urban management and planning are needed to meet these challenges. Master plans are losing their role, changing from "compulsory" guidelines to "strategic" plans. Urban planning, development, and management have become more complex processes, involving a wide range of actors, who must learn to assimilate change into the very processes of managing that change (Faludi, 2002). However, there is evidence of increasing concern that these problems can only be resolved by an integrated approach between different actors, at both local (regional) and central (national/state) level. Very important to underline, according to the URBS PANDENS (2005) project findings, is the fact that a well implemented and functioning planning system can be a good institution to work against urban sprawl developments (Couch et al., 2007). It is generally accepted that policies to control urban sprawl need two elements: the *discouragement of sprawl and the encouragement of urban revitalisation.* Traditionally the discouragement of urban sprawl has relied heavily on the regulation of peripheral development through land use zoning and the prohibition of peripheral development through instruments such as the "green belt" or protection of agricultural land from conversion to urban uses. The encouragement of urban revitalisation is a newer planning instrument, but since the 1970s a variety of mechanisms have emerged, such as locationally specific development subsidies or tax-breaks, relaxed planning controls, and the creation of special agencies to promote the urban revitalisation process. Therefore the combinations of a set of policies are important: *stronger land use planning and development control, powerful subsidies to urban revitalisation, changes to systems of local taxation and administration, and careful planning of infrastructure*.

Urban sprawl can be contained and Central and Eastern European cities may move towards an urban revitalisation and more sustainable urban development. In combination with effective subsidies and the institutional interventions to encourage urban regeneration of older urban areas (as seen in Great Britain) attempts to lower urban sprawl can be very effective. In Great Britain, where the urban sprawl commenced in the 19th century, the rate at which urban sprawl is occurring now is lower than at any time over the last century. For this purpose ***co-operation*** between the central city and the surrounding areas must be intensified, with new forms of reconciling interests on a partnership basis in wider urban areas.

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FROM HOUSE TO "RESIDENCE". PERIPHERAL GROWTH IN POST-SOCIALIST CLUJ (ROMANIA)

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ABSTRACT. This paper addresses the recent evolution of the *physical environment* at the *peripheries* of Cluj, a *secondary city* in Romania. It focuses on the issue of *housing* and it tries to explain the typological and scale differences that occurred at different stages of recent *peripheral growth*. The first part of the paper is an *argument* for the approach: the analysis of physical urban forms is relevant for reading the transition process in its local specificity, as a particular post-socialist situation. The second part analyses the notion of *suburbia*, as the dominant form of developing the cities' peripheries in the industrialized world, in order to put the post-socialist experience into a historical and geographical perspective. The third part presents in more detail the case of recent residential growth at the peripheries of *Cluj*. The *conclusion* is that in this smaller secondary post-socialist city, the trend to suburbanization is less clearly present so far; future suburban development is however probable, in more fragmented forms, depending on the regional infrastructure supply, and more generally, on the success of urban-regional governance.

Keywords: housing; suburbia; urban region; Eastern Europe; post-socialism

Argument

The starting point of this analysis is an empirical observation: at the periphery of Cluj, three conspicuously different (and approximately subsequent) forms of growth have been materialized in three quite distinct trends of residential developments so far:

1. The *house* trend: a sprawl of single-family *houses*, in the immediate vicinity of the city physical limits (in parallel with densification of older residential areas of detached houses, or occupying other available spaces, inside the city). Before urban infrastructure could keep pace with them, several chaotically built areas of (mainly) single family detached houses emerged, all along the post-socialist period, but with a clear boom in 2003-2004.

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2. The *residence* trend: a wave of *serial housing* developments - mainly apartment buildings or rows of terraced housing, and, later on, bigger *"residential parks"*. This is a completely new kind of estate development. I use the term "residence" in order to distinguish this new phase from the previous one, and because this is the label actually used in most of the cases by the real estates promoters themselves. These developments were still kept in the immediate vicinity of the city. The scope of their peripheral proliferation was rather moderate than excessive, and it went along with the inner city densification without decisively overcoming it. Like in the case of the houses, peripheral "residences" emerged chaotically, before an appropriate urban infrastructure. This highly speculative form of development began mainly after 2005, and it rapidly evolved into an explosive boom. It was deeply hit by the 2008 financial crisis.

3. The *suburbia* trend: an inconsistent series of diverse *suburban* residential developments (including both forms, of family houses and "residences" trends), in the nearby localities or at a considerable distance from the physical compact body of the city, yet functionally depending on it, and relying on car connection to it. Even when promoted by the local and county governments, and in the frame of a national policy (an ANL project, for instance), these developments lacked proper infrastructure and they developed in a chaotic relation to each other and to their environment. Suburban developments are not many, compared to the developments that kept close to the city limits or contributed to the densification of the inner city. Although suburban constructions emerged all along the post-socialist period, the suburbia remained more an expectation than a consistent reality so far. Nevertheless, it is probable that more substantial suburban developments would occur in the future, when the necessary local and regional transport infrastructure investments will take place.

The above mentioned three successive *trends*, which are also different *stages* of growth at the city's peripheries, display changes in *architectural type, promotion* and *scale*:

a. in type: from the detached house, to the collective apartment block or terraced housing or group of serial houses; that is, from the individual punctual, to the generic serial developments;

b. in the kind of promotion: from self-promotion and self-construction, often based on informal economy, to the speculative marked-driven real estate developments, and further, to private-public promotion, supported through pro-active public policies;

c. in scale: from the family-size parcel-lot investment to multi-family size, or even the urban-fragment scale of the "residential park"; then further on, to the regional-scale implications of the *suburban* residential developments, where the considerable distance from the core city adds to the scale of the developments themselves.

These most visible aspects of the peripheral physical environment clearly reflect different stages of post-socialist transition and the specific way Cluj went through it. Tosics (2004: 1-14) remarks that the transition period in Central-East European cities in general consists of subsequent distinct stages, rather than being a smooth transformation. He identifies a "three stages transition" as a possible general *model of urban growth* in the post-socialist period, with differences from city to city and country to country. One certain feature of this model is that "the step from one stage to the next is politically decided" (Tosics, 2004: 1). The three main stages that Tosics' model defines are: the *vacuum* period, the *adaptation* period and the *adjustment* period. In the vacuum period, there is no regulation and "there are examples of developments which would not have been possible later"; in the adaptation period, laws regulate developments but there are no public policies expressing different public preferences yet; and finally the adjustment period occurs only when public policies are adopted, on national and local level, and actors and institutions can fully develop their own strategies, making only adjustments. Eventually, after this last period, "real-market based development starts, transition is over" - Tosics claims (Tosics, 2004: 4). Obviously, there is no perfect overlap between this general *societal* transition model and the three stages of *physical* shaping of the peripheries of Cluj. It is nevertheless useful to confront them.

Spatial processes are politically, economically and institutionally determined; this is why spatial structures, and their most visible physical forms, are useful means of reading the changes of the society at its many levels. The ways in which Tosics' basic model of post-socialist urban development can be read into the physical environment at the peripheries of Cluj is very telling - especially concerning its chaotic forms. Chaotic appearance is maybe the first point of an empirical observation in our case. It is obvious that there is still no effective public control over these peripheral developments. This is the consequence of the fact that the "vacuum period" lasted in Romania much longer than in other post-socialist countries, and that it actually overlapped the other two stages too. The "residences" - i.e. real-market based developments - are no less chaotically developed than the first phase of self promoted familial small investments. Laws regulating constructions have been adopted indeed later than in other Central-Eastern European countries, and local building regulations even much later. Nonetheless, the real problem is the lack of effective local control which could determine urban development *comply with* those regulations. Even if a General Plan for the city has been adopted (indeed late, in 1999), the actual practice was mainly derogatory from it and the true functional urban planning has been through Zone Plans, always drawn in the exclusive interest of the private developers, in total disregard to public space and uncoordinated between them. Illegal constructions proliferated, and the practice in their case served

almost to institutionalize them: there was no single case of demolition for reason of illegality; the payment of a fine assured the *post-factum* "legalization" instead. Real market-driven development - the "end of transition", in Tosics' terms - emerged before the detailed regulation became effectively functional. Also, the little financial support received by the local public sector prevented it from promoting an appropriate infrastructure development. Physical infrastructure is usually made in the 2nd stage of the model (Tosics, 2004: 5) - that is, before policies would be developed. But here, for instance, even the suburban development initiated by the county council under the national housing policy of ANL has been built with no appropriate infrastructure development. Finally, according to Tosics' model, in the third stage, financial decentralization should also allow governments at city levels to finally develop their own local integrated policies (Tosics, 2004: 12); but in Romania the decentralization of tax-administration has not actually occurred yet. To sum up, in Cluj - as in Romania in general - if one were to follow Tosics' model, the conclusion would be that transition had been over too soon.

In spite of a conspicuous peripheral growth, the spatial structure of the city remained mainly unchanged - it just received an additional residential layer, outwards the housing estates. But there is no excessive shift of population from core to periphery and no substantial growth of the suburbs - as in other bigger post-socialist cities, or (even less) as in Western cities. The paper tries to explain why the city growth after the fall of communism, and especially in the accelerated development of the last decade, took rather the form of a chaotic peripheral growth and why suburban development is still very inconsistent. Of all the empirical observations, the one that in Cluj the peripheral growth did not actually produce the expected Western style "suburbia" is the most relevant and deserves more analysis. This is what this paper proposes to do.

Suburbia

In the major Western industrial cities, suburbanization emerged at the turn of the 20th Century, tightly connected to the expansion of public transportation (Hall, 1999). The generalization of large scale "residential suburbs" - the extensive sprawl of car dependent single family houses developments at the city peripheries - marked the western cities during the 1950s and 1960s.

It was primarily an American reality; in the US, the periphery was positively valued and suburbia was clearly the urban space of prosperity, the inner city being left behind to the poorest populations. Suburban model has also become quite easily attainable: suburbia became a *mass* urban reality. From the very beginning, post-war American suburban growth was connected to mass consumption and highly industrialized - one might think of Levittowns, for instance.

These were large scale standardized developments, not just an accumulation of a multitude of individual investments. Living in a single-family detached house, on one's own land close to nature, commuting daily to work by one's personal car - "The American Dream" - became the most common condition the industrial age produced: that of the middleclass.

This democratic dream of an accessible property was later massively shared both sides of the Atlantic, and eventually became a mass condition. Suburbia, with its homogeneity and massiveness, is the spatial embodiment of the industrial middleclass lifestyle into the modern Western city today - both American and European.

It is true that in Europe, the centre-periphery relation is not as clearly polarized as in US. Here, the centres have always kept a certain appeal and the peripheries a certain pejorative status. The European post-war suburban residential developments also consisted of large scale areas of collective housing estates, at a scope and with a motivation on social "happiness" (Wagenaar, 2004; Kalm and Ruudi, 2005) - the very image of the welfare state - never attained in US. While the most affluent people always chose the peripheral areas in America, in Europe they still rather preferred the city centres (Merlin and Choay, 1988: 85-90).

But if there is a difference between the American and the Western European model of the centre-periphery spatial relationship and valuation, this concerns rather the centre than the periphery itself. It is the centre of the city - the downtown - which remained radically different in the US as compared to the more valued historic city-cores of Europe. The peripheral house "dream" clearly conquered Europe too. In which residential mass development is concerned, in spite of nuances and differences between Western countries, the suburban single family house has become the dominant form of dwelling in the entire industrialized world, with a definitely positive image, being actually identified with modern "Western" lifestyle. With the globalization of lifestyles, it has been exported all over the world, as an ideal model of inhabiting.

If Eastern European cities did not develop large scale suburbia during socialism, in the way Western cities did, it was because of the communist prohibitions to have individual ownership. Eastern European cities have skipped the stage of classical suburbia because they endured a different kind of modernization. Housing developed here extensively in the collective forms of the large estates: another homogeneous modern urban embodiment of another mass social reality. Although the scope of these housing estates varied among Eastern countries, they could be nevertheless considered the Eastern choice in mass modern housing, the socialist counterpart of the Western suburban space in the city.

The physical form and its motivations

If they were to be spatially described by a simple overall image, Western and Eastern cities would look a little different: while the Eastern socialist city showed a clear "camelback" section shape (Tosics 2004: 2), with a lower density area between a dense centre and the dense periphery of socialist large housing districts, the Western city was shaped either like a flat homogeneous disk around a central vertical core, an endless sprawl of lower density around a central high density, or on the contrary, like an "urban doughnut" (Hall, 1998: 55), with the centre and inner cities relatively low rise and deserted and a denser exterior ring of mainly suburban or ex-urban development. Nevertheless, all these *modern* physical forms of the city were coherent and unitary.

This coherence has been altered lately - mainly since the 1980s. Although still dominated by suburban residential lifestyles, cities in the West have now entered a "post-suburban" stage (Hall, T. 1998, p. 150). Old “organic” centre-suburbia coherence has been replaced with a more "galactic" (Hall 1998: 80) appearance: the cities are increasingly incoherent constellations of fragmented unarticulated realities, with spectacular residential and commercial developments emerging here and there, with vast environmentally degraded spaces in between. The physical insularity of these fragmented developments is often the mirror of the extreme fragmentation and privatization of governance itself; communities with "private governance" emerge. The most extreme forms of this kind are the private residential neighbourhoods, usually called "gated communities" - even when without actual "gates". This fragmentation of urban development is also considered to be an "American model" too, although it has spread all around the globe during 1990s (Glasze, Webster and Frantz, 2006). An even more specific American reality are the "edge cities" - forms of independent urban centralities on the peripheral limits, effective alternatives to the city rather than mere expansions of the city (Garreau, 1991 cited by Hall, 1998: 106). Today, post-modern planning produces new forms of centralities, and especially over-designed independent spatial fragments, meant for aesthetic rather than social purposes (Hall 1998: 83). The fact that urban *planning* is now so directly translated into urban *design* is maybe best explained by what Schwegler called the "aesthetic governance": "to focus on built environment as the centrepiece of urban reorganization", closely "outlining the logics of capital" (Schwegler 2004: 2). Spatial form - understood in its most physical materiality - now follows more closely than ever urban politics. Schwegler eloquently writes that "urban aesthetics, a domain that development template cast as secondary to economic function", becomes now primary, and cities, or city fragments, become marketable material commodities (Schwegler, 2004: 3). But Schwegler's most interesting remark is that this "aesthetic governance" is perfectly working in the East European cities today.

The radical shift of liberalization has thrown Eastern cities too now - with their still compact forms, generally deprived of sprawling suburbia[1] - directly into this post-modern age. The question is whether they would catch up with the missed phases of modern urban development, and grow the mass sprawl of industrial age suburbia, or rather, once integrated into this post-modern West, they would follow its current urban trends and its present-day economic and social realities.

The trend of suburbanization has been considered "one of the most spectacular processes of spatial change of the post-socialist towns in the 1990s" (Kotus 2006: 365). Yet, he also observes that this statement is always made in reference to capitals - Budapest, Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Moscow. Although suburbanization is noticeable and sometimes even substantial in smaller cities too, these developments are "not necessarily indicators of a sprawl of urban structures" (Kotus 2006: 371), he insists, and he focuses on the case of Poznan in order to illustrate that. Poznan's inner city is definitely not declining and not decaying, as a consequence to suburban developments; on the contrary, the internal building pattern becomes denser (Kotus, 2006: 366-379). A clear shift in residential development from the city to suburbia, or at least a substantial trend, is out of the question. He also refers to the example of Leipzig, which, after an initial stage of suburbanization in the early 90s, is now even expected to face a depopulation of its suburbs (Kotus, 2006: 366). The observation is interesting, in that it opens the possibility of considering that cities other than capitals might have evolved less clearly towards sprawl than capitals did in post-socialist countries. In fact, literature on post-socialist cities hardly approaches other cities than capitals, so the matter of this difference is still widely open to research.

According to Kotus (2006) the issue of suburbanization shift is beyond planning: "In the recent years it has turned out that one of the solutions to the problem of urban sprawl and the compact city is not planning related; rather it focuses on demographic and lifestyle changes" (Kotus, 2006: 365). Indeed, economic and social realities today are much different than those that once produced and shaped the thoroughly planned industrial suburbia. Planning is not just the technical means of shaping the city; planning is politically motivated, the result of a social pressure. It is precisely the social reality - the suburbanizing middle classes - that becomes now questionable as possible pressure to further developing suburbia forms.

[1] There are notorious exceptions, though, like for instance Budapest, which developed considerable suburban residential areas even during socialism.

The new middle classes

Referring to the emergence of new patterns of centrality, Sassen (1991, 2006) remarked that recent urban trends are now opposed to those associated with the industrial middleclass. It doesn't necessarily mean this would be disappearing, just that "the core of the middle class will continue to thin out, as the sectors that ensure its reproduction are a smaller part of developed economies" (Sassen, 2006: 174). It is the advent of a really new work culture and a new "ideology and practice of consumption", she observes: this is characterized by style, high prices and an ultra-urban context, rather than functionality, low prices and suburban settings (Sassen, 1991: 317). Formal labour markets are replaced now by increasingly flexible employment relations. The new class of "professionals" prefer the amenities, mobility and lifestyles offered by urban centres, rather than life in suburbia. Smaller scales and less standardization characterize the forms of the new urban life. Therefore, the increasing urbanization of the professional class replaced the previous middleclass suburbanization (Sassen, 1991: 249-335; Sassen, 2006: 170-174).

For Eastern Europe, the right question would be whether it had to turn back and recover all its missed phases of the "normal" Western capitalist development. Or else, maybe it has taken "a historic shortcut" instead (Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley, 1998: 2) and it has not actually built the same "capitalism", by having passed through the same stages as the Western one. There is maybe a multitude of "capitalisms", and even one without its common social base, a "capitalism without capitalists", as Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley (1998) notoriously put it.

Indeed, this trend of "thinning out" the old suburbanizing middle classes is identified in Central-East European societies too. For the Czech Republic, for instance, Keller (2005) remarked that the growth of inequality was too rapid and it "has blocked the development of a middle-class society"; there was thus the "failure to consolidate the middle strata, (…) (which) involves both the old and the new middle classes (…), a significant part of this social group is more or less fictitious" (Keller, 2005: 471). What Keller calls "the old middle classes" are the small entrepreneurs that have been finally "decimated on a mass scale" in the recent post-socialist years, while "the new middle classes", i.e. "the upper and middle employees of organizations, mostly endowed with tertiary education" have seen their income stagnate: there is a clear "stagnant status and living standards of these failed or failing middle strata" (Keller, 2005: 473), and this is what prevented Czech society to fully catch up with the West. Keller reminds that, within the Czech society, the number of children has greater impact on the living standards of families than the level of education (Keller, 2005: 480). This difference clearly implies a difference in housing preferences too - a higher social standard, and thus a greater desirability, is connected to the ultra-urban habitation - i.e. no-children apartment - than the suburban larger family home.

For the Polish case of Poznan, Kotus mentions the "empty nesters", which tend to come back to the compact city (Kotus, 2006: 365). In both cases, there is a clear preference for more urban types of housing forms.

Although the Romanian situation cannot be considered identical with the Czech or Polish one, it is nevertheless similar enough. For now, the middleclass - the social base of industrial capitalism, the "savings-oriented" class relying on the "capital intensity" (Sassen, 1991, 335-279), valuing a larger family, and thus inclined on investing in suburban property - is seemingly not the leading social force in shaping the city. And because spatial and social orders are closely interconnected, this is a possible explanation why certain post-socialist urban developments, especially in smaller secondary cities, did not produce the urban spatial materialization of middleclass lifestyle - suburbia - in substantial forms.

The last but not the least, spatial structures have certain inertia of their own, just like cultural habits tend to be persistent. As Lentz (2006) remarked, legacies from the past and particular cultural patterns remain "structural factors" in the current evolution of post-socialist cities. Their spatial reorganization follows long-term trends and depends on historical roots, although there might be also short term effects of transition - like rapid shifts in the use of land and buildings, for instance. Consequently, the new patterns of land-use do not reproduce those from the West (Lentz, 2006: 207-208). "Thus, even in periods of radical change, a society will not necessarily 'invent' a totally new spatial order, but will orient itself as far as possible on existing patterns" (Lentz, 2006: 209) In fact, besides the selective import of Western urban models, Eastern cities would sooner shape their new physical structures after the models they already know.

Suburbia is a controversial subject today. It has its defenders: low density outward growth is the most sustainable form of development for cities today, Bruegmann (2006) holds. Nevertheless, its criticism is more widespread and consistent: the humanists criticized its monotony and lack of originality, the Marxists its elitist isolation as a form of capital accumulation, the feminists its stereotypes of domesticity which imprisoned the woman, the ecologists the destruction of the natural countryside and the car dependency, and so on (Hall, YEAR: 105). A harsh critique to what homogeneous mass industrial age suburbia meant has been notoriously formulated even at the time of its widest American boom, by Jane Jacobs (1961), who wrote about garden city suburbs that they were

> ...really very nice towns if you were docile and had no plans of your own and did not mind spending your life among others with no plans of their own. As in all Utopias, the right to have plans of any significance belonged only to the planners in charge (Jacobs, 1961:17).

This hardly sounds like an appealing urban model for ex-communist Eastern Europe.

Cluj

Cluj is a medium-size secondary post-socialist city[2], with a physical spatial configuration marked by the typical communist legacy. It was a fairly compact city, with clearly defined boundaries. All the 5 large socialist housing estates (Manastur, Marasti, Zorilor, Gheorgheni and Grigorescu) ended sharply against green land - the last blocks of flats directly neighbouring an empty no man's land countryside. On these "green-fields", new buildings emerged during the 1990s.

From houses to "residences"

Until around 2004 (the year of the political change of the city administration[3] and the start of the relative constructions "boom") this uncontrolled residential growth consisted mostly of self-promoted (and often self-constructed) single family houses. It was the consequence of the outmigration from the city of both the better-off, who were positively looking for a higher life quality than the one offered by the socialist housing estates, and the poor categories of the population, who were running from the rising living costs. The actual figures of new housing units during the first post-socialist decade are nevertheless relatively small[4]. The wave gained more substance only during the 2000s[5]. This residential expansion was exclusively the result of cumulated minor, mostly familial, investments. It was indeed the time of "micro-actors".

Rather than having the consistency of a proper "suburbia", this city periphery remained a mere "urban-rural fringe" (Gallent, Andersson and Bianconi, 2006: 17): the peripheral space where town and country met, a dynamic mixed-use landscape, with a lot of uncertain areas of green combined with a lot of informal developments, fragmented and unplanned. This "fringe" was (and still is) also a territory of informal waste grounds, of fly-tipping, where illegally dumped waste was literally pushed further and further, with every new construction, house after house (this is still an ongoing process in the peripheries of Borhanci-Becas, for instance). It is indeed an urban "landscape without community" (Gallent, Andersson, and Bianconi, 2006: 36).

[2] Cluj has a population of 310.194 (the census 1 July 2005) (INS, 2006). In the list of Top 15 most dynamic Romanian cities made by the economic review "Capital" for the year Oct. 2006 - Sept. 2007, Cluj was placed second, after Bucharest (Amariei, 2007).

[3] Between 1992 and 2004, the local administration has been dominated by the ultra-nationalist party, and the development of the city has been rather modest. The ultra-nationalism has profoundly marked the city of Cluj (Brubaker, 2006).

[4] Between 1992 and 2003, in the entire county (judet) of Cluj, there were only 6,091 new residential units built (compared to 358,298 in Romania); about 80% of these were self-construction family houses (INS, 2004).

[5] The boom in constructions only at the beginning of the 2000s might be also explained, for Romania in general, by the rather late adoption of the restitution law (2001).

Around 2005, a real estate boom occurred in Cluj[6]; and this was a totally different kind of growth. More powerful actors entered the scene, ones able to invest on larger scales, driven by totally different incentives to build: speculative profits. The self-constructed family houses gave way to more spectacular larger scale developments, professionally promoted, with foreign capital and with global-style publicity. The year 2007 (the first year after Romania's EU accession) was considered to be explosive in terms of such developments. Also, prices increased: apartment prices tripled between 2002 and 2007. But the 2008 financial crisis abruptly ended this wave.

However, it is not only the too short time of speculative fever that prevented these (potentially big enough) investments to coagulate a "suburban" space. It is the very typology and the locations of these developments - extremely sensitive to market demands and thus very relevant - which do not fit the suburban model and which explain best the ambiguous expansion of the city at its peripheries.

"Residences": collective and peri-central

For the last three or four decades, the dominant form of dwelling in Cluj has been (and still is) the block of flats apartment. At the mid 2000s, almost 80% of the city population was living in former socialist homes (Cluj-Napoca City Hall, 2005). In spite of the prediction that the socialist large housing estates would decay and left abandoned (somehow following the post-war Western inner-city model), in Cluj they still constitute the main residential stock. They are differently valued, according to zone, some in worse and some in better shape - but they remained nevertheless functional. Socialist apartments are sold and bought at good prices on the free market. Their social mixture determines these estates not to be regarded as derogatory in terms of social prestige, as they more typically are in Western Europe (Murie et al., 2005). They have thus proved out to be an acceptable residential form.

Cluj belongs to the category of university-cities. Besides many other considerations, this profile is relevant as far as it alters the demographic balance of the city, which has decisive influence on the housing market provision.

[6] The number of permits for family houses, for instance, increased from 199 in 2004 to 694 in 2006; the Urbanism Department of the city hall is overwhelmed. In December 2007 it had about 5000 unanswered applications for construction permits: 3000 from 2006 and 2000 from 2007. There were only 25-30 new applications per month in 2004 compared with 120-130 in 2007 (Urbanism Department, Cluj-Napoca City Hall, 2007).

[8] For a population of 310.194 (the census 1 July 2005), Cluj had 70.294 students enrolled (INS, 2006). The latest "Strategy of Development" posted on the web site of the City Hall (dated 6 December 2006) comes up with the figure - probably a little exaggerated - of "over 100.000 students in the academic year 2006-2007" (Cluj-Napoca City Hall, 2006).

In Cluj, more than one fifth of the inhabitants are students[8] (INS, 2006). The universities attract tens of thousands of young people, who live in the city for at least 3-6 years; many remain to live here after graduation too. They are a highly mobile and transitory, but also a substantial social group. Therefore, the typical demand for new housing is liable to come rather from what is described as "dinky"[9] users. This demand coming from mainly dynamic young mobile people with more urban lifestyles represents the main driver of the new residential investments. The central urban apartment is far more marketable than the peripheral family house: apartments (old and new) accounted for about 80% of the transactions in real estate agencies in recent years. The statistics[10] concerning new private housing developments after 2005 show that the blocks of flats are the favoured form of provision.

A research on what the real estate agencies in Cluj were offering during 2008 clearly reveals two things: the dominance of the new *apartment* buildings (over the single family housing developments), but also - and this is revealing in terms of what kind of *social demand* is this real estate market provision meant to meet - the modest architectural *quality* of these new developments. It is first of all the low quality of the apartments themselves, in terms of spatial organization and dimension (and as they are mostly sold in project or semi-finished phase, in terms of detailing too). This might give an explanation why old apartments in socialist estates are still considered acceptable. Also, the urban space is treated exclusively in terms of urban *land*, subject to financial speculation, with an accentuated trend to over-densification, neglecting the green space and thus providing a lower urban living quality. In fact, new developments bring about neither new housing typologies, nor a better quality of urban life. It is only the fact of being new and the imported construction materials - apart their speculative profit driven promotion - which could account for their higher prices.

What is indeed their novelty is in fact only the commercial *image* of their promotion, their aggressive advertising as enclaves of western-style inhabiting identities. Promoters present the new developments as islands of "quality" - they all insist on their paradise *enclave* quality, disconnected with the supposedly less appealing urban landscape around them. Their names usually include the word "residence" (as such, in English). Some have exotic names - "Luxor", "Costa del Sol", "Carmel" (not really themed; just fancifully labelled), according to the whim of their promoters. Most of the time, their names are

[9] Double income, no kids, young professionals couples (Hall, 1998: 149).

[10] The absolute figures show more new apartments than new houses; for instance, in 2006 the city hall authorized 694 new family houses and 142 blocks of flats comprising 1458 apartments; in the first 5 months of 2007, the figures were 152 non-collective residential units, 55 collective blocks comprising 714 apartments (Urbanism Department, Cluj City Hall, 2007).

actually given exclusively in English: "American Village", "Tower Park", "Young Residence", "Green Side Residence". Their image is overbidding the "green" close-to-nature quality (most often not actually true), also explicitly asserting the out-of-the-city-still-in-the-city advantage. In fact, the *central or semi-central location* is always stressed as a quality and reason for an increased price, so it is obvious that "suburban" (a term never actually used) is not considered as a notion of desirability. It is as like promoters tried to address two very different kinds of possible users at once, none of them potentially "suburban": a more affluent international class, which would be hoped to come to Cluj too in the near future, but which is still rather hypothetical; and if not, then there is always the (most probable and still very substantial) local demand, coming from young, mobile, educated, cosmopolite people, who are also deprived of any spectacular incomes but in urgent need of a dwelling. They would accept the offer anyway. The promotion image, which strives to keep up the appearances, is made for the first category; but the content and the actual quality address the second, who are the more reliable buyers.

Suburban development

The lack of a satisfactory local and regional transportation infrastructure has been an important impediment for suburbanization in post-socialist Cluj. Motorization had a sharp increase nevertheless, during the first years after the fall of communism; statistics at the mid 1990s gave Cluj as the 5th city in Europe in cars/inhabitants ratio (Verdery, 1996: 171). However, the problem of accessibility to the peripheries - especially the lack of any orbital ring roads - has been definitely one of the main inconveniences that still kept the city of Cluj in a rather compact form after two decades of post-socialism.

The "suburbanization" of retail, which is usually an incentive to residential suburbanization, had very little such effects in Cluj. The agglomeration of large retail big-boxes at on the outskirts of the city, mainly carried out during 1999-2007, still kept in the immediate vicinity of the city limits. It has substantially increased cross-town traffic, but it has not boosted new suburban "settlements". Moreover, large-scale commercial developments are returning to the inner city now: the next shopping centres are promoted within the city limits, in the lower density area between the dense centre and the dense peripheral housing estates, where they would be more easily accessible.

However, the large big box retail district that has developed so far at the Western side of the city, at the administrative limit between the city of Cluj and the village of Floresti, appeared for now to have decided the balance in peripheral development towards this more highly valued outer side of the city. This compact commercial district has received in October 2007 the first shopping

mall of Cluj. This is moreover the side where the connection to the future motorway will pass through. On the Eastern side[11], on the other hand, an area with a more productive character has developed, reaching as far as the Jucu village; here, an “industrial village” is expected to coagulate a suburban development too. It seems that suburbanization will finally affect Cluj too.

So far, the only nearby village truly affected by a mass suburbanization effect was Floresti. And it is far from being a success. Floresti is the closest village, 2 km outside of Cluj. The impact of the recent residential boom has had a major effect on it, but most areas were developed without any new infrastructure. Intense land speculation has produced relatively high densities. Private developers had sold the houses already in the project phase and then they simply withdrew. The quality of the public place have been almost totally neglected – there are no neat public spaces, no green areas, no utilities, no paved streets, no adequate distances between buildings, etc. The situation in Floresti is now described by the press as "estate chaos" and "urban disaster".

Even the subsidized housing within the governmental program of the National Housing Agency (ANL) has been relatively unsuccessful in Floresti. ANL has promoted a bigger housing complex - a true "residential park" - out of which only eight blocks with 200 apartments were finished in 2006, accounting for less than half of the initially planned outcome[12]. This complex also included houses to be sold on mortgage loans; but there were not enough interested buyers for the 94 houses put up for sale in 2006. The ANL officials admitted to the press that this was an unprecedented situation and that there was no standard procedure for dealing with it. Nobody expected that there would be not enough people interested in ANL's subsidized housing offer. Obviously, it was not about the houses themselves, but about the location, which proved out to be unattractive. One of the main reasons for this failure was definitely the inadequate infrastructure of the area. As a result, the remainder of the project was abandoned, the rest of the land was returned to the local council of Floresti, and the ANL financing ceased. This is an example, moreover, where all three levels of public governance were involved - national, intermediary and local: a project financed in a national housing program could not succeed, carried out by the county council in association with the local council. Obviously, the echo of this kind of failures is not likely to boost suburbanization in the future.

[11] The East side, where the airport is located too, is traditionally the least valued side of the city, with predominantly industrial land; but even here, Apahida has reached the tipping point where land is already too expensive for new industrial developments, and began attracting residential developments instead. The industrial pole has now been pushed further eastward, to Jucu, a village 18 km NE from Cluj, where the Nokia Village has been developed since 2007.

[12] The ANL project in Floresti ("Cetatea Fetei") has been initially planned for 500 apartments to rent and 500 houses to be sold on mortgage credit (ANL, 2007).

Large scale peripheral neighbourhoods

Around 2006-2007, the local city government of Cluj tried to put up a pro-active policy of increasing the council's social housing stock (Vais, 2009). This has been materialized, besides a few inner city small developments, into a couple of public-private ventures, of much larger planned expansions in open countryside, which are not just peripheral, but more explicitly inscribed in a concept of "suburbia" - i.e., residential districts totally detached and distanced from the compact body of the city. They were designed as real city fragments, also comprising well controlled mixed-functions developments. There is a long list of amenities and urban functions that these new districts would assure: schools, police, post-office, fire station, community centre, administration, churches, banks, recreational and commercial spaces. Indeed, since the 1980s, one of the Western experiences has been that of eventually abandoning the conventional suburban zoning, where large areas used to consist of nothing more than house parcels and streets - strictly dormitory zones; it is agreed now that the mixed-use developments are more sustainable.

The first to be built, the neighbourhood Cartierul Tineretului[13], is planned for about 16,000 inhabitants and should consist of around 5850 residential units, of which more than 4,500 flats. The advertisement insists on its low density: 78 inhabitants/ha (compared to 370 inh./ha in Manastur[14]). A second such big public-private development is Dealul Lombului[15]. In both cases, the participation of the council is limited to providing the land. This land is located outside of the city limits, near to the industrial zone, in the most devalued part of the city peripheries. These projects are still on paper and it is yet too soon to say if they will be built and function as planned. Nevertheless, they are relevant to the argument that the peripheries of the city need an explicit policy in order to be developed in suburban forms.

This kind of isolated mixed development could almost satisfy - *mutatis mutandi* - the "edge city" definition. Edge cities are known as a kind of mini-urban centres, mostly based on the service economy, emerging on the edge of the city sprawls. (Gallent, Andersson and Bianconi, 2006: 118). It is true that in Cluj they are still in relative vicinity to the core-city, given that the city does not have a proper "sprawl"; its "edge" is closer. Nonetheless, these developments

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[13] A public-private venture, with 51% council and 49% private shares; the council's participation has been the land; the land is 203 ha; the first to be finished, would be the 384 social housing council apartments; construction has begun in May 2008 (http://www.cartierultineretului.ro).

[14] Manastur is the largest and densest socialist housing estate in Cluj, with almost 70.000 inhabitants.

[15] About 2500 apartments and 3200 houses are planned (the figure is not yet final). The council provides 267 ha land and the private developer finances the infrastructure. In this project, the first 75 apartments and 33% of the upgraded land are to be given to the local council. The completion date is planned for 2015.

in Cluj lack the (essential) "production services", which would have assured employment opportunities and thus the possibility for the proximity of work and reduced car dependency for their inhabitants. This economic base would have given them the independence from the core-city, which characterizes the genuine edge city. Yet these new future districts in Cluj claim having all the rest nevertheless: they are large enough residential developments, including all kinds of other functions and urban amenities found in the city centre. They are entirely controlled by a single developer too, as edge cities are[16] (Garreau, 1991 cited by Hall, 1998: 106).

Yet there is another essential critical difference. In order to be sustainable, edge cities, as any other consistent suburban developments for that matter, are always centred on major transport hubs (Garreau, 1991 cited by Hall, 1998). "Sustainable extensions" would be those that "integrate communities with existing urban infrastructures, rather than leaving them out on a limb" (Gallent, Andersson and Bianconi, 2006: 119). Suburban developments always need good transportation infrastructure in order to become viable. It is definitely not the case for Cartierul Tineretului or Dealul Lombului, which are literally islands, left out isolated on limbs. Infrastructure is, in general, the major critical issue in post-socialist Cluj.

The "Metropolitan Zone"

Nevertheless, major infrastructure improvements are planned at the national and regional scale, and it would be these infrastructure investments that might finally make the difference for a "suburban" development around Cluj. Putting infrastructure as the first point on the list of its "strategic elements", the County Council (Consiliul Judetean) is promoting the creation of the "Cluj-Napoca Metropolitan Zone".

Metropolitan Zones (usually called "Urban Regions") are, in general, the key in boosting suburbanization, because they allow policies to re-orientate toward the surrounding rural hinterland. But this *top-down* planning and control of development flows (from city to suburban hinterland) is immediately mixed with the motivation of a *bottom-up* accession of the city to the *global* sources of those flows: the second element of the "strategy" formulated by the project in Cluj is to increase the international competitiveness of the city (Consiliul Judetean Cluj, 2005). This is not just in the case of Cluj; also the authors of the Iasi Metropolitan Zone project, for instance, promote it by considering "globalization" as "a key factor in planning development" (Vrabete, 2005: 104-105).

[16] They are also situated right to the cities' administrative limits, which could also lead to the more elusive characteristic of "edge cities": that of benefiting from authority ambiguities and becoming - in terms of taxation regime - "stealth" (Hall, 1998: 106).

Suburbanization appears thus as perfectly inscribed in the ideology of globalization today - and I follow Sassen (2006) in considering this as the *ideological* side of the Metropolitan Zone or Urban Region, as a concept of local governance.

As Sassen (2006) insightfully remarked, Urban Regions are, especially in Europe, more than just an administrative level; she identifies them as embodying an "ideology of regionalism" (Sassen, 2006: 196), and she observes that this is an effective force in shaping cities today. Exemplifying with the case of the Frankfurt Urban Region, she notes that there is an ideological motivation, in the late 1980s, in the call by politicians to officially recognize the "region" as a means to strengthening the city's position in the global competition. "Regionalism then emerges as the concept bridging the global (...) with the local agendas (...)" (Sassen, 2006: 196). This "ideology of regionalism" is contrasting, for instance, with the "city discourse" of other important and competitive cities, like Chicago or Sao Paolo, even if these too have functional regions which are actually massive economic complexes. The issue of global-local negotiation aiming at increasing competitiveness seems to be rather a European theme; in the US, the conflict between different interests inside regions has never been an issue, as Sassen (2006) remarks. However, finally "the delicate point at the level of urban region" still remains the "articulation between the residential suburbs and the city"; therefore, this "ideology of regionalism (…) (is) totally submerged under the suburbanization banner, a concept that suggests both escape and dependence on the city" (Sassen, 2006: 196). In other words, it is just as though cities would have to firstly assert an articulated local regional top-down centrality, before claiming any competitiveness on higher levels and connect, bottom-up, to international or global urban networks.

Although obviously further down in the hierarchy of the global urban system, the "Metropolitan Zones" of Romanian cities are also conceived by mixing an ideology of competitiveness on a higher level - global or at least inter-regional - into the local policies of planning urban growth in suburban forms. A "Metropolitan Zone" makes sense, after all, only as an area with a clear centre-periphery relationship: where a consistent part of the population commutes daily from the suburban settlements to the central city for work; it must be substantially based on the classical polarized model of suburban residence and metropolitan employment, where more population is located at the peripheries than in the centre, and this population would reach this centre regularly by reliable infrastructural public facilities. It is definitely not the case of Cluj for now, where the city still mainly consists of a compact highly populated centre, with the total population of the surrounding villages altogether comprising only about 10% of its inner city population (Consiliul Judetean Cluj, 2005), and even less actual commuters.

However, the Metropolitan Zones would increase the power of the intermediary level of governance, between the all-powerful national government, on one hand, and the too weak local government on the other, which is a necessary step towards decentralization. It would increase the power of the public sector in principle: if it were still something that differentiated post-socialist East European cities from the ones in the West, this would be the more powerful public sector in the latter. In post-socialist countries in general (and in Romania in particular), the lack of substantial financial autonomy given to local governments, which left them powerless, has led to an increased role of capital cities, as the only alternative power centres in the national urban systems, as Tosics rightly remarked (Tosics, 2004: 6). For a secondary city like Cluj, developing a "Metropolitan Zone" is also a way of strengthening the position of the city inside the national urban system. And this issue of inter-regional competitiveness, although apparently unrelated to it, intertwines - as Sassen interestingly remarked - with suburbanization.

Conclusion

Urban development in Cluj has boosted after EU accession became a certainty in the mid 2000s. Residential projects exploded especially between 2004 and 2008, most of them located at the periphery. Yet there is no substantial "suburbanization" going on for now. Cluj is still a rather compact city. The majority of the population still lives in the old socialist housing estates. The new real market housing developments are neither substantial enough nor qualitatively different enough to replace them. They are still dominantly collective housing forms, which keep as close to the city core as possible.

From the point of view of urban dwellers, this is not entirely a disadvantage. Sustainable development, in principle, requires the use of the existing urban infrastructures, rather than their expansion on green-fields. Yet in the case of Cluj, urban infrastructure is so underdeveloped, that it will suffer most certainly major expansions. The orbital ring-roads and the connection to the (future) motorway have already been designed. The creation of a new intermediary level of governance, the "Metropolitan Zone", would support the achievement of the much needed publicly financed regional infrastructure supply. It is expected that these new major transportation lines would also push the residential expansion farther from the city peripheries and boost suburbanization. However, suburban development is not the most sustainable form of development; a well controlled inner city densification, if made on brown-fields, constitutes a significantly better solution in the view of many urban planners. The problem is that the inner city and the overcrowded inner

infrastructure have reached in Cluj a critical point; a lot of development was and still is made by consuming inner city green land. As an alternative to this decrease of environmental quality inside the city, a well controlled suburban development is preferable.

Two decades after the fall of communism, Cluj passed through two waves of peripheral residential expansion - a small wave of self-promoted houses, and a second, of real estate market "residence" developments, both keeping close to the city limits. A future third wave of "suburban" developments would be conditioned by the planned but not yet built major infrastructure developments. And this suburban growth is most likely to happen in more "post-modern" forms indeed (fragmented, enclave-like, disconnected from the surroundings, "galactic") than the ones the industrial age suburbia produced.

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ROMANIAN HOUSING PROBLEMS: PAST AND PRESENT

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ABSTRACT. The Romanian housing question is different from other East Central European reality (see Enyedi, 1988; Szelényi, 1996). Due to the specific urbanization and modernization process (Ronas, 1984) that took place in the socialist era and the rapid privatisation of the housing stock after the turn of the regime (Tosics-Hegedüs, 2003), Romania faces an interesting situation. More than 70 percent of the urban population lives in so called block of flats, in large and sometimes overcrowded neighbourhoods. 95 percent of these blocks of flat are privately owned (Pásztor, 2003), while the possibility to acquire one is low due to the high prices. In these circumstances the housing issue is one of the most disturbing structural and functional social problem, with certain cultural aspects – the social pressure upon the young generation to acquire their own houses is very powerful while renting is a strong social stigma (Zamfir, 2001). The present article not only brings out the Romanian general process on the early post-socialist practices (as structural causes and larger social context) but also describes the housing issue along the following aspects: the socialist legacy, the appearance of housing market after 1989, as a regulatory institution; the lack of available and/or affordable housing. Briefly, the social problem (Macionis, 2004; Castells, 2000) of housing is described and presented with empirical examples in conflictual perspective embedded in the larger process of the Romanian transition; the narrative is based on statistics. All these could be an instrument not only for social scientists but also for social policy makers and real estate developers.

Keywords: housing problem; post-communism; block of flats; Romania

Introduction

When exploring the housing issue each social scientist should answer the question: Why becomes the housing issue a social problem? This issue is an important matter of the modern society. Its shortage or inadequate stage could generate a serious social problem, this way becoming one of the most important issues of social sciences and urban sociological researches. In the present article we assume that the housing issue *constitutes a social problem*

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with various social, economical and cultural implications. By social problems we mean those phenomena, which cause considerable damage to society and/or social groups, persist over longer periods of time and elicit a number of proposed solutions (Parrillo, 2002:3-8).

Concerning the specialized bibliography there are three types of approaches of the housing issue. Firstly, according to the *economical viewpoint* the housing sector is an important part of the economical system. The housing consumption has an important role. While it constitutes a basic necessity it is also one of the most expensive goods; it is not transferable in space: one should consume it, use it where it was built. The house is characterized by the social resources, by the economic standards of the society and by the disposable technologies. Its distribution is realized due to the market mechanisms of supply and demand (see Henderson and Ledebur, 1972; Hegedüs-Tosics, 1998; Myers, 1990). Secondly, due to the *cultural approach*, housing has a strong cultural and social function: it provides shelter and security from the outside world, society and nature. It is also a status, a social and a cultural symbol (see Arias, 1993; Taylor, 1990; Kapitány andKapitány, 2000). According to this approach housing is part of those aspirations of the large mass which regard search for identity and self-expression during the lifetime (S. Nagy, 2003). Thirdly, the specialized bibliography considers the housing-stock *as a system,* which is strongly connected to the social, political and economical systems. This way its nature can be deduced from its subsystems and from the nature of other connected systems. Its characteristic themes are the housing shortage and the housing inequality (see Hegedüs-Tosics, 1993, 1998; Szelényi and Konrád, 1969; Szelényi, 1990; Lowe and Tsenkova, 2003; Petrovici et al., 2006).

This study tends to reveal the reasons of the Romanian urban housing-problem and the problem of the block of flats inherited from the socialist era. It is expressive that a U.N. Report in 2001 considering the Romanian housing situation concludes that by 2020 only 17 percent of the country's housing stock will assure safety and proper living conditions. The cause of this serious problem, besides the rural clay and straw mortar houses, are the blocks of flats. As 70 percent of the urban house stock is composed of this kind of estates we consider that right at this moment the issue of the block of flats are at the core of the Romanian urban housing problem.

In the study we will confirm the presumption that the Romanian housing problem is caused by two important factors: first, the heritage of the socialist system, which tried to solve the housing problem by *building mainly bad quality, low comfort providing block of flats mostly built of prefabricated elements which offered poor living circumstances*. Second, *the lack or low efficiency of the housing policy measures after the change of the regime*. The analysis starts with the presentation of the procedures and distinctiveness, which defines the socialist

urbanization and housing system. Then we will trace the peculiarities and changes concerning the last twenty years, focusing on the special urban social problems that are tide with the housing problem. During the analysis we use data from the Romanian census, the statistic yearbooks, the registers from the publications of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as well as data provided by our colleagues' and the first author's previous research.[1]

Housing as a social problem

The brief historical context

Even if the countries from the former communist block have a very different history, the most important common element in their past is the socialist heritage of 40-45 years, starting after the Second World War until the beginning of the 1990s. According to Remmert et al., (2001), not even this can be considered as singular seeing all the countries, since Yugoslavia followed a special path of socialism (based on self-management and open relations with the West), while Albania can be considered just the opposite, s far as it has been the most separated, closed country of them all. The differences in the housing sector were also very substantial: Albania followed the original "Stalinist" model, extended with harsh controls over mobility; Yugoslavia was an alternative to the mainstream in the East European model, with a large role for self-management and for employers; Bulgaria could be described with a special version of the socialist model, based on a high share of – controlled – ownership; Romania was close to the mainstream version of the socialist model (Remmert et al., 2001).

For a better understanding we must get back in time and we need to highlight some of the major characteristics of the socialist regime regarding the urban development and politics of housing. According to the Soviet Marxism socialism means the dominancy of the working-class, characterized by an industrial, urban society. This is an ideological imperative, providing a fast industrialization and urbanization in concordance with it. As the confidence in the efficiency and strength of the socialism was stronger than the one in the capitalism, the theory was followed by fast action to meet the goals (Andrusz, 2001). The major objective of the socialist project was the ultimate modernization of the Romanian society and the creation of the New Man (Kligman, 1998).

[1] The research "Socio-spatial differentiations" has been carried out by Traian Rotariu, Rudolf Poledna, Norbert Petrovici, Silviu Totelecan and Gyöngyi Pásztor from the "Babes-Bolyai" University Cluj-Napoca. CNCSIS research project No. 1364/19/2006.

At the beginning of the 20th century Romania was characterized by a low level of urbanization which was behind the Western European pattern. In 1930 the level of urbanization was at a 21.4 percent (142 towns). In 1945, the socialism, the new political and economical system aroused and produced its own specific space-structure. It might seem strange but considering only the numbers, this is the most intensive period of urbanization. Between 1948 and 1989 the proportion of urban dwellers within the whole population raised from 23.4 percent to 53 percent. This means that socialism built a very specific space-structure which differs significantly from the space-structure of the Western societies. Its nature, besides the oppressing (tending to control) character of the system, can be defined by the low intensity of the urbanization (urban life), due to the fast rhythm, and the relatively short time period of urbanization, and also to the low social integration ability of the cities (large towns). Even so the socialism was missing all the significant elements of modernization, such us industrialization, market economy and a specific mentality, and these appeared only long after the Romanian change of regime. Though the antidemocratic communist regime after the Second World War tried to appear as an ideology of modernity, it repressed the existing actors of modernity and the process started by these actors and realized a dictatorial, centrally directed economical system, in fact eliminating the basic elements of modernity (Kligman, 1998; Tismaneanu, 2007). As the Romanian society tried to gain on the Western European advance mainly by the tools of industrialization and urbanization (Verdery, 1996), the urbanization had raised at the highest level in the history of Romania.

Table 1.

Index of urbanization in Romania between 1910 and 2002

Period	Year	Number of urban population	Percent of urban population	Number of cities
Pre-socialist; capitalist	1910-1912*	2,065,020	162	118
	1930	2,865,027	20.1	142
	1941	3,512,909	21.8	147
Socialist	1948	3,486,995	22.0	153
	1956	4,746,672	27.1	171
	1966	6,220,089	32.6	183
	1977	9,395,729	43.6	236
	1985	11,370,092	50.0	237
Post-socialist	1992	12,391,819	54.3	260
	2002	11,436,736	52.7	265

Source: 1930, 1941, 1992 and 2002 National Census; * Romania formed by Moldavia and Walachia.

The forced industrialization – the increasing need to hire more and more workers in the newly built industrial plants (labour intensity) – generated a massive rural-urban migration (Rotariu and Mezei, 1999) and established real "urban jungles of block of flats" (apartment buildings) in the cities. Moreover, the official ideology thought that *urban* principally means *houses* – all over in the city including the historical city centres, the inner core of urban landscape (Petrovici, 2006). The urbanization also represented a good opportunity to reshape the social and cultural environment and to strengthen the socialist taste and aesthetics (Troc, 2003; Pásztor, 2004). In this regard the façade of the new neighbourhoods and the style of blocks was the reflection of the authoritarian system. The socialist housing practice was not only to rising blocks but also demolishing old buildings – especially those representative for the capitalist regime: old apartment houses, old fashioned edifices, small factories, parks, even churches; searching for new spaces for blocks and to erase the undesirable past (Bodnár, 1998; Pásztor, 2004; Petrovici, 2006).

The new urban landscapes represented mainly uniform apartment buildings four or ten stories high; densely populated places with basic infrastructure (roads, public transport, commercial units, schools and kindergarten). To communist ideology thought that these new neighbourhoods – having essentially living function – was going to be some kind of new small towns by themselves, representative for the regime and new social order (Csizmady, 2003). Practically, all other functions of space were neglected in favour of housing (Pásztor, 2003; Troc, 2003;). The relative homogeneity of the neighbourhoods – many of the tenants come from the nearby village being formerly agricultural labourer, now factory workers – and the same age and quality of the buildings made these places similar everywhere in Romania. The flats mostly were owned by the state.

Housing as a structural and functional problem

In the very end of the socialist period (e.g. mostly at the second half of the Eighties, but practically since the end of Seventies) some functional problems came out to the surface. Due to the massive in-migration and the acute need for new flats, the pressure upon the housing sector had dramatically increased. The free lots between the blocks were used to build new ones, thus increasing the density. Furthermore, the quality of the blocks declined; the number of second and third quality blocks were increasing. Additionally, among the new tenants the members of the lower class (low skill workers and the unskilled) were over-represented (Csedő et al., 2004). This boosted the tension and even conflict between the "old dwellers" and the "newcomers" (Troc, 2003). Side by side with the shortage of consumer goods and the "system of portions" specific to the "economy of shortage", interesting urban vil-

lages were born. Specific forms of defensive traditionalism were developed (Péter, 2007). Some of the townies with rural background and agricultural skills started to plant vegetables behind the blocks and to raise animals – all this because of the lack of food in the stores. Suddenly, an interesting mixture of urban and rural (rurbanisation) became obvious; the upcountry hutches gone to be part of the landscape (Mihăilescu et al., 1994; Pásztor, 2003).

After the change of the regime the dysfunctions of *cartiere* (neighborhoods) was gradually revealed. First, due to the economic restructuring many of the former factory workers were laid off. Colleges at the factory and neighbors at home, entire parts of urban dwelling zones spatially concentrated the unemployed: impoverishment and segregation went side by side (Kostinskyi, 2001). Suddenly some parts become "dangerous" for the employed majority and target for labelling and stigmatisation (Ladányi, 2002). The post-socialist cities started to split in two parts: ones inhabited by higher social groups in areas that look western and others inhabited by those who have lost out in the post-socialist transition which tend to resemble areas in the cites of developing country (Tosics, 2003).

Another issue arose: the extensive privatisation of the housing stock (Tosics and Hegedüs, 2003). Till the middle of Nineties the state sold the flats to the former renters. They took a "gift" (Remmert et al., 2001; Budisteanu, 2000), but in fact the state freed him by the responsibility to maintain the huge housing stock. Accordingly, because around 95 percent of the flats are privately owned, the cultural pressure on the younger generation to get a flat is excessively high – the cultural norm and expectation is to have an apartment independently from any cost. Renting is highly stigmatised. This is a tricky and also unfair and unjust expectation, because only a fraction of the present owners bought their condo in the circumstances of free market. A majority of them took it directly from the state paying a symbolic amount of money (Noica, 2003). The prices – during the economic crisis too – are still high banning many from the opportunity to have one (UNECE, 2001).

The average age of the blocks is already a latent (not recognized) problem and in the next future will be one of the central issues. The degeneration in quality and condition will occur relatively in the same time. Later on we will discuss this in detail (Noica, 2003). In sum, the basic assumption is that the housing in Romania is a serious social problem. The present article tries to highlight this hypothesis.

Housing in socialist Romania

In this chapter with the help of some synthetic indicators and statistics we will describe the most important features of the socialist housing system, focusing on the indicators concerning the block of flats. If using synthetic indi-

cators to comparing the Romanian estate-stock with other post-socialist countries, it appears to be satisfactory and convenient. According to the census in 1992 the number of dwellings exceeded with 5 percent the number of the households. The number of the dwellings also exceeded by far the rhythm of population growth. Meanwhile between 1977 and 1992 the growth of population increased by 5.3, the number of dwellings increased by 21 percent.

Romania's dwelling stock is relatively new in comparison to that of Western Europe, and quite similar in age to that of many countries in transition. The oldest part of the stock, previous to 1930, constitutes roughly 14 percent of the total, and only some 22 percent has been added since 1970. The 52 percent share from 1945-1970 is higher than in both Western Europe (33%) and comparable countries in transition (about 28%) Only Bulgaria has a similar share of about 49 percent. (UNECE, 2001).

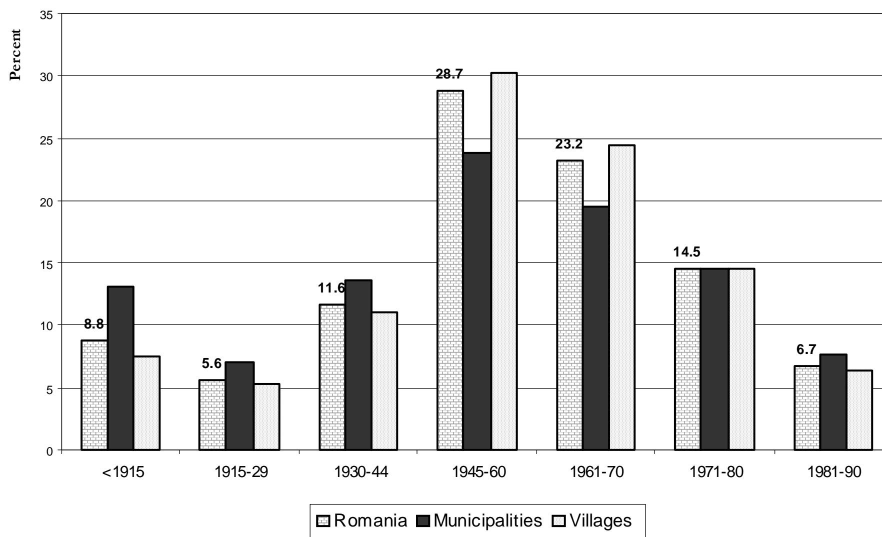
The age of the building stock is the result of the extremely high rates of new construction during the first half of the socialist era. This new constructions are mainly apartment blocks. It is obvious from the analysis of the data that while in 1966 only 17.4 percent of urban population was living on block of flats, in 1977 this number exceeded the 42 percent, and at the beginning of the nineties it increased to 71.4 percent.

Table 2.

Housing consumption in 11 countries in transition, 1994

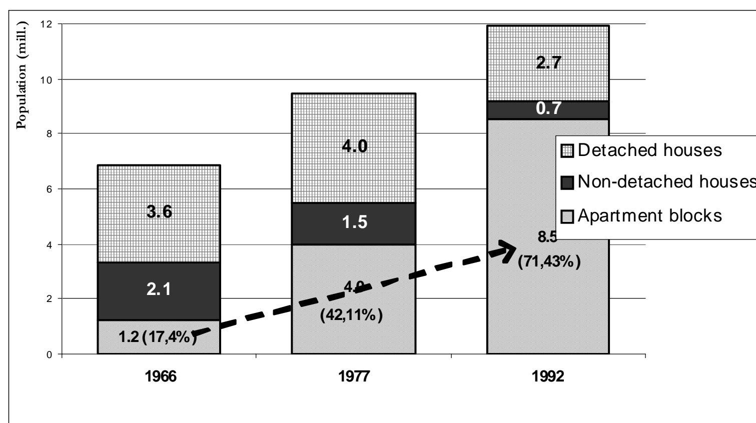
Country	Dwellings/ 1000 inhabitants	Household/ dwelling	Persons/ room	Living space/ person (sqm)
Albania	219	1.00	2.70	8.0
Poland	296	1.06	1.02	18.2
Lithuania	329	1.06	1.30	19.7
Slovakia	334	1.00	1.14	21.9
Slovenia	338	0.95	1.33	19.0
Romania	**341**	**0.95**	**1.19**	**17.4**
Latvia	370	1.13	1.21	20.9
Hungary	385	0.99	0.92	32.1
Czech Republic	397	1.01	1.04	25.5
Bulgaria	405	0.88	1.00	16.7
Estonia	410	1.03	1.18	32.0

Source: Hegedüs et al. (1996).



Graph 1. Age of the housing stock in 1992

Source: Statistical Yearbook 1990.



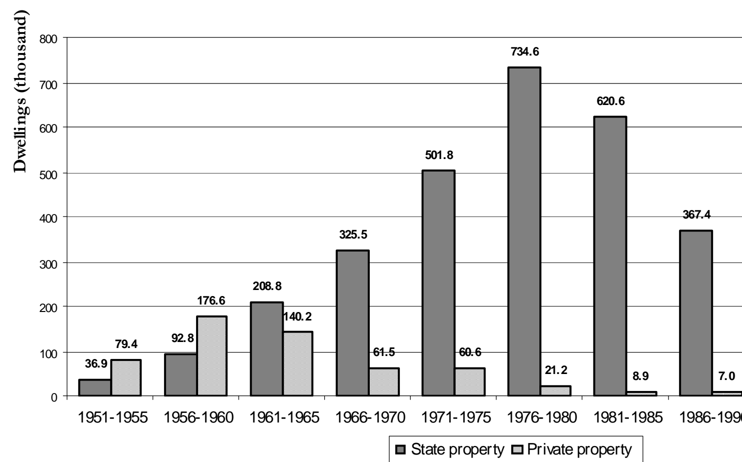
Graph 2. Urban population by dwelling types in 1966-1992 period

Source: National Censuses from 1966, 1977, 1992.

To understand the socialist housing system, one should understand the property relations of the era. It is a specific issue, for communism it constitutes a political and economical ideology that considers private property as the source of social inequality and generally of all social problems. In accordance with this, the system engages to eliminate this form of ownership transferring it into public (state) property. In reality this meant that the state mainly owned the production agents, but not necessarily the movables.

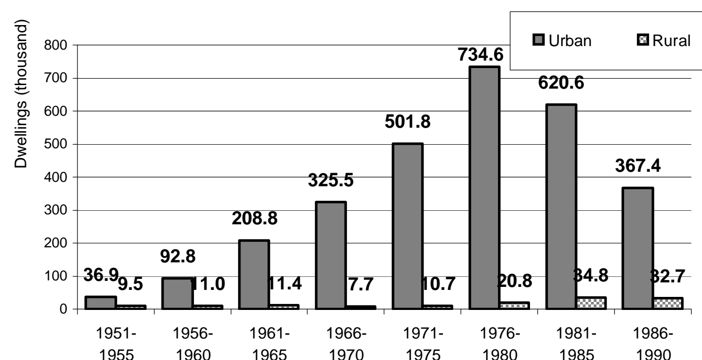
The state of real estate was specific also. After 1950 in the process of nationalization of the large part of urban dwellings, most of the owners became tenants. The way to get a dwelling (rent) was centrally controlled, by allocation. If the living space was large enough (sqm/person) it might have happened that other people were also moved in the same dwelling with the former owners. As a consequence of these practices the quality of the houses went trough a fast declining process. Facing the problem, beginning with the 1970's the state started to encourage and finance the construction financed from private financial sources and also the purchase the buildings built from state founds. (Noica, 2003:113). These measures were mainly effectuated in rural areas, where it was easier for people to build houses financed from their private resources. As it is indicated in Graph 3, the number of dwellings in private property was much inferior to the ones in state property.

As a conclusion it can be stated that the real estate built from state founds were solely block of flats, and that by the 1990's the significant part of urban real estate was represented by block of flats in state properties.



Graph 3. Number of dwellings in urban areas by type of property constructed between 1951-1990

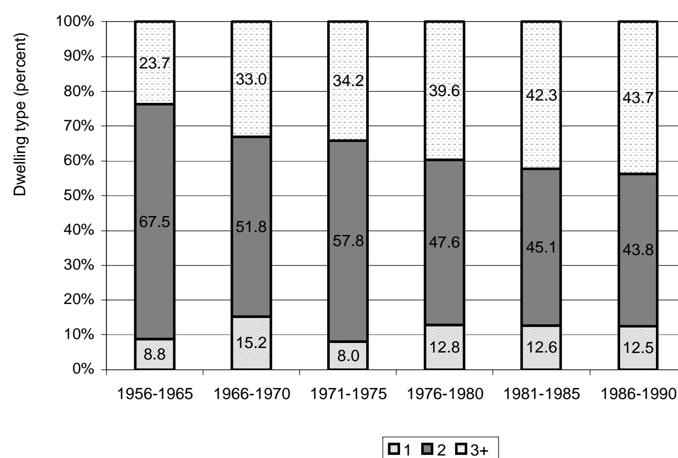
Source: Statistical Yearbook, 1990.



Graph 4. Number of state property dwellings by areas constructed 1951-1990

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 1990.

Concerning the quality of the flats we used the following variables: *measure, number of persons, the type of constriction material* and *infrastructural endowments*. According to the census in 1992 the largest frequency have the two-room (48%) flats with 37-51 square meters. This are low-comforted, low-spaced flats. In the following figure you can see the change in measure of the building financed form state founds. Even though one can observe a continuous accession in measure it is only in the 1980's that the number of three or more-room flats transcend the number of two-room flats.



Graph 5. State property dwellings by number of rooms constructed in 1956-1990 period

Source: Statistical Yearbook 1990.

The situation can be detailed if we consider not only the number of rooms, but also the living surface and the number of persons per flat. The average living surface in 1992 was 41.2 sqm. The one or two room flats with the most frequency had a much lower living surface. The average surface was 14.1 square meter for the one-room flats and 25.3 square meter for the two-room flats. If we consider the number of persons living in the same flat above the living surface of the flats the picture becomes even more full of nuance. According to the data of the 1992 census there is a mismatch between the rooms available and those needed for different sizes of household. For instance there are 1.7 million households with 3 or more persons living in more than one- or two-room flats. This adds up to 24 percent of the total dwellings stock. In 10 percent of the flats the number of the persons is more than two persons/ room. The 17.4 square meter/person compared with the situation in the surrounding countries show that Romania has a strong lag (see Table 2).

Table 3.

Occupied dwellings by household size and number of rooms, 1992

Households size – person	Size of dwelling by number of rooms					
	1	2	3	4+	Total (no.)	Total (%)
1 person	401,059	563,475	193,650	56,055	1,214,239	16.90
2	236,320	933,602	486,455	165,479	1,821,856	25.35
3	122,319	699,161	500,452	169,329	1,491,261	20.75
4	67,373	550,160	548,062	211,730	1,377,325	19.16
5	31,971	215,351	258,852	154,565	660,739	9.19
6	17,724	99,736	129,461	101,699	348,620	4.85
7	10,395	49,456	55,887	45,306	161,044	2.24
8	4,501	19,103	19,520	17,036	60,160	0.84
9	2,098	8,517	8,175	7,402	26,192	0.36
10+	1,990	8,116	7,670	7,535	25,311	0.35
Total (number)	895,750	3,146,677	2,208,184	936,136	7,186,747	100.00
Total (%)	12.46	43.78	30,73	13.03	100.00	

Source: 1992 National Census.

Regarding the material of the buildings, the block of flats is made of durable construction materials: brick with reinforced concrete skeleton, or reinforced concrete and prefabs. The biggest part of buildings stock made with wood-skeleton was build before 1945. The water and electricity supply is almost at a level of 100%. The gas supply covers about 90% and the district heating about 70 percent (Noica, 2003:130-132).

Available statistics provide only a partial picture of the situation. Far more significant is the quality, reliability and cost of the services provided. The UNECE Report (2001:24) shows that the price, the poor management and reliability of some networks (water supply and district heating in particular) aggravate the poor living conditions in much of the urban housing stock. The obsolete infrastructure in the old parts of most cities and the heating problem should be addressed as a top priority. Mass replacement and upgrading are urgently needed (UNECE, 2001). Meanwhile in some areas earthquake possibility distresses the buildings with unstable structures and bad infrastructure.

As a summary of the Romanian housing situation before 1989, we can pronounce that in spite of the macro-statistic indicators, which consider the housing estate quite satisfactory, a deeper examination indicates a significant imbalance. 70 percent of the urban immovable estate is represented by the block of flats built in the second part of the 20th century, during the communist regime. These are small, overcrowded, low comfort flats with inefficient infrastructure.

Though there have been dwellings in private ownership, the housing system was built on the logic of rental and housing-mobility. This means that the housing allocation for every person or family was adjusted to the personal needs, and with the chance of changes in the lifecycle (marriage, growth or decline in number of persons) and theoretically one could have changed it to a larger or to smaller one. Of course this did not really happen, the new flats were preserved for the continuously coming newcomers. But the criteria of allocation were, at least formally, adjusted to the need of the families (Noica, 2001).

As we have already mentioned, because of the forced industrialization policy there were built a large number but low quality block of flats. The block, as the typical building for the system was both solution for the problem of housing, and also an architectural key for space-adjustment. One can find block of flats all over, in the centre as well as at the periphery of the towns. In other words, due to the ideology of the regime, the blocks represented the regime itself. It is almost the sole form of city and space adjustment. The block, as an architectural creation and the perspective of the town is one of the fulfilments of the socialist regime. And by this, it is the symbol of the "greatness" of the socialist regime, and its symbolic "triumph" over capitalism.

Block of flats in post-socialist Romania

Radical reforms of housing and urban policy in almost all post-socialist cities are seen as a necessary step because of their economic inefficiency and social ineffectiveness. During socialism the role of market mechanisms in city development were deliberately neglected resulting in destruction of resources for urban development (Petrovic, 2001). One of the problems is that new policy

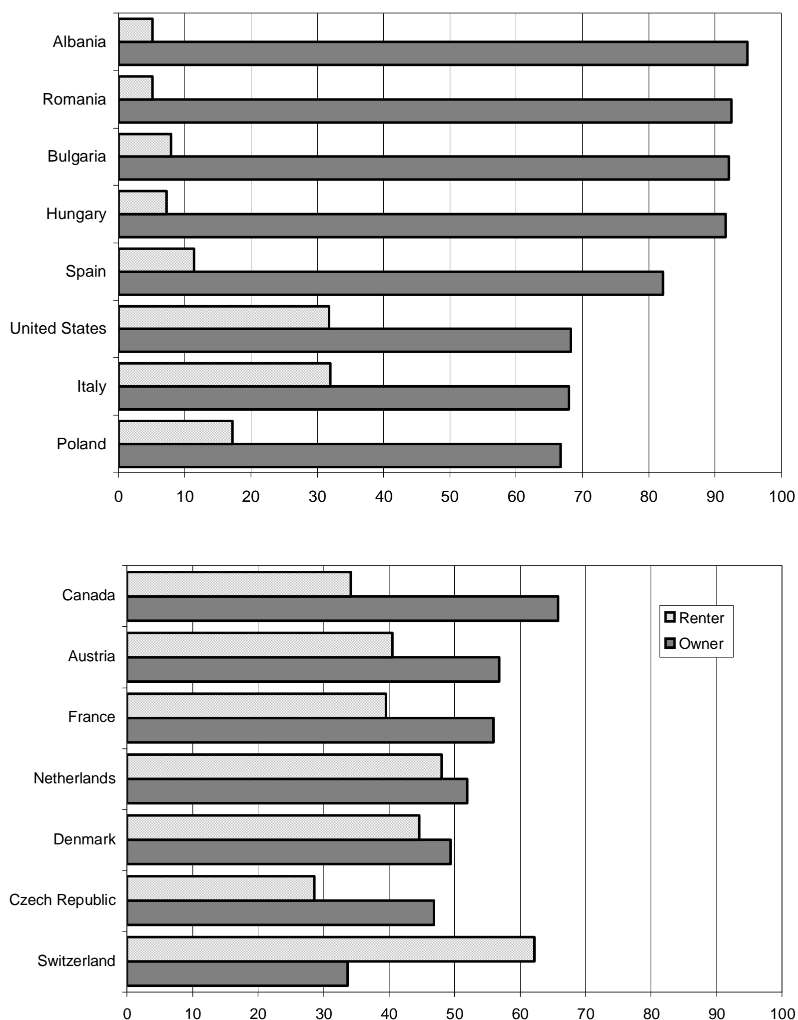
concepts have developed in an almost exclusively top-down manner (Stanilov, 2007). The political elite is usually open to economic globalisation as internationalisation. Westernalisation and Europeanisation are among the prime goals of post-socialist transformation. The new political elite of the post-socialist countries is prone to pressure from international financial institutions to implement neo-liberal strategies that favour the fastest possible abandonment of all aspects of state socialism with the least possible role for the state compatible with free market and private ownership (Harloe, 1996:5). Such policy approach suggests a monolithic ideology based on the unquestionable superiority of a market-driven world in which there exists allegedly only one "correct" type of state-regulating policy – the minimalist and residual one (Ferge 1997:24; Deacon 2000:112).

In the early 1990s, all the conditions for the housing sector changed dramatically, the general trend was a change towards the free-market direction: a property market appeared; the former huge construction companies were split up and privatised; the sale of construction materials was liberalized; restrictions on property ownership were lifted; and a significant portion of state-owned housing was privatised. All these paved the way for a market-oriented housing model.

In the case of Romania the law, which promoted the privatisation[2] of the flats came into operation in 1990. As a result, the Romanian housing policy was characterized by the lack of state intervention. The only justified measures were the ones, which stimulated the market mechanism.[3] According to the survey data in 2006, 93 percent of the flats in Romania were in private ownership. At this topic Romania is in the front line along with Albania, Bulgaria and Hungary. It is important to notice that in the western world private ownership of the homes are less characteristic. In England only 70 percent of the dwellers live in their own home. This proportion is under 60 percent in Austria and France, under 50 percent in Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany and under 40 percent in Sweden and Switzerland. In these countries, just as in North America or Australia there do block of flats resemble our "blocks". This type of building architecture has not been invented by the Eastern-European communist regime, it appeared as a part of the Northern, especially Swedish social policy after the Second World War. The block of flats built during the 60's and 70's followed this model. In this case we can rather talk about tenement houses or social homes.

[2] According to the Law 61/1990 each immovable in state property can be bought by the dwellers by cash or by state loan. Afterwards there were several modifications, partly because of the return of nationalized immovable, partly because the change in the prices of immovable.

[3] The Laws 19/1994, 114/1996, 152/1998 and 190/1999 are pointing in this direction.



Graph 6. Dwellings by tenure in selected countries

Source: www.unece.org (November 2008).

No matter how positive were the common feelings caused by privatisation, the owners of these block of flats should consider that the privatisation of flats can generate important and serious problems in the future, too. The high rate of housing ownership can result some unexpected problem.

According to the specialized bibliography we talk about housing problem in the case when the social status and the housing situation (the living circumstances, the place and quality of the house) are not in balance. Certain strata of

the society can feel that their status is not reflected by the state of their home (Szelényi, 1969; Pásztor and Péter, 2007). This is exactly what happened as a result of the privatisation of the flats: the majority kept with the flat the status also conferred to it, which was classified by the former system. This might be one of the most important problems. Moreover, right now the lack of housing is one of the most important poverty-risk factors (Zamfir, 2001; Poledna et al., 2006).

Even though the socialist urban development ("systematisation") eliminated extreme poverty and the slums, the aim of building block of flats was also to homogenize and thus the emerging housing-structure exposed a larger number of people to the menace of poverty. Notwithstanding within the homogenizing intention of the communist regime even before the change of regime one could observe the premises of structural stratification considering the residence. After 1989 with the appearance of market, the segregation process was started or accelerated (Pásztor, 2003). The change of regime and the instauration of the (totally) free market mechanisms made possible the change and option for living places. Even though according to a research made in 2000 by the Desire Foundation the residential areas with block of flats are more heterogeneous than the ones with houses: people with higher incomes still live in higher proportion the block of flats than those living in houses with gardens (Pásztor, 2003). But the out migration already started. This is at the root of that process of separation, which leads to segregation processes in the block areas, and to the formation of possible slums (Weclawowitzs, 1998:66).

As we have shown before, the majority of public rented stock was in damaged condition when privatization started at the beginning of the 1990's. The new owners acquired their dwellings at a very low price directly from the state and most of them were able to pay off the debt quickly (otherwise high inflation would have washed it away). This was the immediate advantage of giveaway privatization, many people were practically housed free; they only had to pay their utility bills. This situation made the declining incomes more bearable and raised, at least theoretically, the possibility for renovation works (Budisteanu, 2000:6). As a consequence of privatization, the administration and servicing of flats became the responsibility of the new owners. But this is almost impossible – we would state. These blocks were not built according to this logic. Just to notice a peculiarity of Cluj/Kolozsvár. This city hosts the largest block of Eastern-Europe (it has 11 levels, 51 staircases, and 2,244 apartments). If we count with an average of three persons in a family we will state that this block has around 7,000 dwellers. (The largest village in Romania has approximately the same number of people.) In the case of renovation works (after inundation, change of drain pipes, gas pipes) not less than 2,000 households (44 per staircase) should have to agree their interests. In the recent economical circumstances it is quite obvious that there would be persons

and families who would not want to contribute. Of course the average size of the blocks is much lesser, but even in this way in most of the cases the administration of the immovable would consider some hundreds of households.[4]

The absurdity of the situation is revealed by the ineffectiveness of the heat-isolation program. The European Directives for Romania considering the energy-efficiency specifies that between 2008-2016 Romania should diminish by 9 percent the energy consumption. Beginning with 2002 Romania tries to correspond to this expectation starting different programs. The program with the most expectation was the one that started with the 1735/2006 Governmental Decision. The aim of this program was to support the heat-isolation of the block of flats. According to the decision one-third of the expenses would be financed from the central budget, one-third from the local council budget and one-third would be supported by the dwellers. After the process the immovable will get an energy-efficiency warranty. Without this warranty beginning with 2010 will be forbidden to make real estate transactions. To get the support from the central budget the dwellers will have to make documentation and to register it at the Local Council. This offer is undoubtedly favourable as far as one of the most pronounced problems of these blocks of flats is the lack of heat-efficiency (Budisteanu, 2000; UNECE, 2001).

Two years after the program was started – in spite that the Ministry of Transportation, Public construction and Tourism considered it as a successful one (MRDH, 2008) – its effects are not even close to the expectations. In 2007 14 block of flats were insulated, in 2008 the number increased to 111. According to the ministry less than dwellers of 5,000 blocks expressed their will to join the program, but only 693 requests were accepted, and from these there are 372, which have a plan of work (MRDH, 2005, 2006). Comparing this with the number of 80,632 blocks of flats will show the real efficiency of the program. Meanwhile it seems that the dweller are the those who refuse the program. It seems they are not able to make an agreement in financing the last third of expenses. The specialists interested in the process also lay the blame to the dwellers.

> *Seven associations of owners out of the 300 existing in Deva tried to apply for this program. But all of them had to resign for they could not gather the 33 percent of the expenses of the investment. If only one dweller refuses to contribute, the program fails. The program is completely blocked in Deva, and the associations gives authorization only for those dwellers who decide to finance the insulation program from their own sources.* I. B., president of the Association Union Owners, Deva

[4] We don't have exact data about the size of this immovable but as it was due to the Romanian socialist town planning, beginning with the 70s the wall-like, all-covering ornamented architecture was in vogue, which also had representative functions, too (Petrovici, 2006). According to the registers the major part of the block was built during that period of time. And most of them are not block-like four leveled houses with one or two staircases, but much larger buildings than that.

It is a matter of mentality. People don't understand that the investment pays back quite fast, in 3-4 years, and the thermo-comfort effect can be experienced immediately, regardless of the season. The winter is warmer the summer is colder. A.I., executive manager of the Construction Society of Employers

A consequence of the change of regime was the very strong sense of ownership, and the attachment to the property (Verdery, 1996). In the case of the block of flats the sense of property was not related to the real estate (the immovable, block), but only to the flat: according to the principle: "everything that is common, is mine". And what is common (owned by everybody) belongs to nobody. This is not only true with the financial side of the things, but also has another consequence: people are not interested to invest neither money, nor time in common places. The staircases, the areas around the living place are mostly neglected and usually dirty.

Other problems that conclude from the high level of real estate ownership is that this appears as a norm. It is socially expected that people should have their own homes. This puts a heavy burden to the shoulder of the younger generations of today. For them it is by far not as easy as it was 15 or 20 years ago to purchase their own flat. I think it is very expressive the large number of those people who bind a significant part of their incomes for 25-30 years to buy their own home. I repeat, the youth find themselves in a very specific situation, where the ownership of home appears to have a strong pressure from the part of society.

There is a large scale of possibility for the loans, which could help the youth to finance them in their house purchase. But here appears the question of sustainability: how much do people risk, and for what do they risk. According to some economical analysis there is a growing number of those people who are not able to pay off the granted loan. This shows that youth overestimate their possibilities and therefore they risk a lot to conform the strong social pressure. This matter rises a lot of questions: does it worth to risk so much, how much will the building worth when they finally can "own" it? Can it be called a good investment? There is little guaranty that these blocks of flats will keep their prices thirty years later.

Conclusion

Many authors conceive the housing-privatisation as a gift given from the part of the state as a "compensation" changing the status of the residents (renter), giving them "free reside possibility" (Budisteanu, 2000; Remmert et al., 2001;). Meanwhile this conformed to the expectations after the change of regime, which conceived the market policy not only the most effective, but also the only appropriate and expectable way (Ferge 1997: 24).

In our opinion the causes of the mass housing privatisation are more complex. At the time period right after the change of the regime, the privatisation was good not only for the "gifted" citizens, but also for the state. The state assigned to the residents the burden of administration of these blocks which otherwise would have taken significant part of the not really rich budget. We would say that the state transferred for low money the responsibility of administration of these low quality buildings. Along with this generated long-term structural problems, which supersede the capacity of the owners.

The reasons for the unmanageability of the block of flats are several: it has physical, social, political and urban projection. First, the badly designed and low quality buildings have disused infrastructure and high density of residents. The public spaces around them are neglected. Secondly, the sense of community, which can gather the people for the resolution of common identity and goals is missing. With the increasing level of social inequality the society has come to the level of atomisation, and the former neighbourhoods laying on solidarity ceased to exist (Troc, 2003). Meanwhile the housing issue is a latent social problem (Merton, 2002) neither the society nor the politics discuss about it as a real problem. This means that political actors are not interested in resolving this topic. There is not expressed a political or social need for such architectural and urban solutions which could make these buildings viable.

It is not easy to find a solution for the situation. It will not be sufficient, for example, to pass a law on blocks of flats, as it is almost certain that its regulations will – in order to enhance co-operation – fall into conflict with the general political and legal protection of the individual decision-making rights of owners. It is not even easy to find a proper system of state financial support for the maintenance of common parts of privatised multi-family buildings, as any subsidies are immediately criticized by those people who were unable to participate in housing privatisations, i.e. those who were – in other words – excluded from the huge "gift" made by the state in the process of give-away privatisations (Remmert et al., 2001).

The main challenge in Romania is to find solutions to housing problems in highly privatised housing systems with a high share of poor households. The main problem is not a shortage of housing *per se* but, on the one hand, deferred maintenance and the low infrastructure level of the existing stock, and, on the other hand, the lack of any social safety net measures.

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MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE POST-SOCIALIST CITY – GLOBALISATION, SPACES OF CONSUMPTION AND EXCLUSION OF LOCAL URBAN CULTURES

MATJAZ URSIC[a]

ABSTRACT. During the last 15 years, Slovenia passed through various phases of economic and socio-political transformation. Each of them has left its contribution in the organisation of urban space. Focusing on the "dialectic" of central and edge city development, the text will first expose the transformations made to the city centres in the light of new consumption activities introduced after the formal change of socio-economic system in Slovenia. Secondly, the text will explore to what extent spaces in the city centre have been standardised and privatised by global economic entities that evicted local urban cultures from the central areas. While describing the emergence of new spaces of consumption, special attention will be paid to socio-spatial transformations, i.e. the upgrading of transport network that inevitably influenced the way individuals perceive the shopping activity in the post-socialist period. Finally, the text will analyse some of the linkages formed between the new spaces of consumption and the changes in lifestyles.

Keywords: consumption spaces; mobility; accessibility; post-socialism; transformation of lifestyle

Introduction

During the last 15 years, Slovenia passed through various phases of economic and socio-political transformation. Each of them has left its contribution in the organisation of urban space. Similarly to other post-socialistic European countries, which tried to ensure support for fast economic development, Slovenia has been obliged to make quick changes: adaptations to its spatial planning procedures. The abolishment of old formal planning procedures and spatial hierarchies, that guided the process or urban planning in the socialist period, was followed by the constitution of a new and, at the same time, weaker spatial planning principles that appeared to be the fastest, cheapest and easiest way to assure a relatively good economic growth. The formation of new planning procedures enabled good basis for the economic growth and attracted global flows of capital into the city, but, on the other hand, also led to radical transformations of Slovenian cities.

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After the introduction of free-market economy and activation of intensive global economic flows, the relationship between the suburban and central areas of many Slovenian cities started to change with the cities no longer having exclusive power over its surroundings. In other words, many "traditional" city services moved away from the city centres to the outskirts and sometimes even further. This outwards movement, i.e. suburbanisation of the population, consumption and other activities (e.g. shopping, cinema), was fuelled by various socio-political, economic and technological transformations, which changed the way inhabitants perceive the city centre. In the post-socialist period, the classical notion of the city centre (which used to be the focal point of consumption activities) was replaced by a new "post-modern" understanding of the city, where various socio-economic functions may shift from area to area.

Slovenian cities are being transformed according to new investment strategies, characterised by the re-installation of specific economic entities, tourist facilities and global actors into the city. In these circumstances, cities attempt to attract different groups of people by utilising the role of consumption in the processes of urban regeneration and revitalisation. During the course of this type of re-development, a certain degree of standardisation, i.e. diminishment of diversity in the inner-city consumption spaces can be witnessed. The same retailing shops found in any high streets have substituted many specific "local establishments" (small shops, workshops, bookshops), which in part contributed to the vibrancy of particular locales and interests, but were not perceived as profitable by the new economic actors.

Moving consumption activities to the outskirts and the standardisation of consumption spaces in the central urban areas helped the Slovenian cities to raise the overall level of consumption and to regain some vibrancy, but it has not really succeeded in integrating local urban cultures, which help to differentiate the public space from other privatised and globally standardised consumption spaces. Focusing on the "dialectic" of central and edge city development, the text will first expose the transformations made to the city centres in the light of new consumption activities introduced after the formal change of socio-economic system in Slovenia. Secondly, the text will explore to what extent spaces in the city centre have been standardised and privatised by global economic entities that evicted local urban cultures from the central areas. While describing the emergence of new spaces of consumption, special attention will be paid to socio-spatial transformations, i.e. the upgrading of transport network that inevitably influenced the way individuals perceive the shopping activity in the post-socialist period. Finally, the text will analyse some of the linkages formed between the new spaces of consumption and the changes in lifestyles. The case study of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, will serve as a starting point for analysing these complex urban developments.

Globalisation and spatial transformations in the post-socialist city

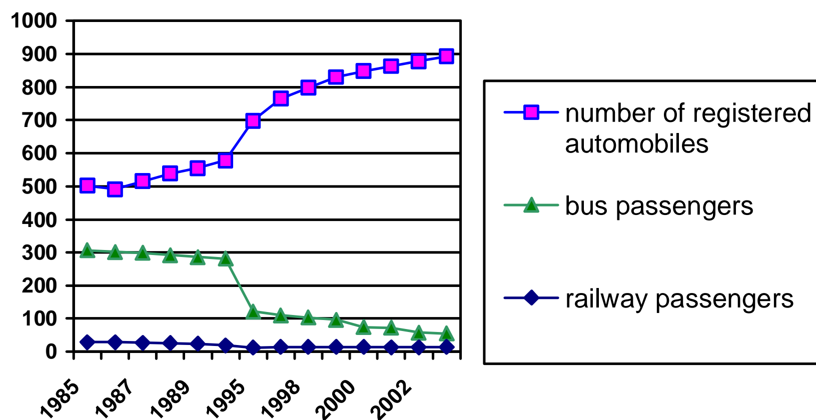
In the Socialist period, the limits of politically directed spatial planning activities were particularly evident in the field of commerce. The development of certain commercial activities, especially shopping, was limited by political decisions and not regulated by the laws of free market. By restricting the free flow of goods and neglecting the importance of consumption offer and demand, the political elite artificially interfered in the development of consumption spaces. The spatial planning agenda was characterized by a high level of formal rationality and poor evaluation of achieved goals.

After the collapse of Socialism and the turn towards a free market economy, the "old", well established mechanisms of urban planning, were abandoned. The expertise of urban planning and knowledge accumulated during the socialist period was substituted by a new, but not yet consolidated neo-liberal model of spatial planning. The consequences of shift in planning traditions were two-folded and brought more freedom to spatial planning activities and also negative side effects to specific urban areas. In this sense, Berlin (1969) discusses the acquisition of "negative freedom" in present societies, where freedom is reflected only in specific domains like economy with global flows of goods and capital. On the other side, freedom was not acquired or fully implemented on the level of values and life orientations that reflect in the social development. Negative freedom includes negative rights, which allow citizens to remain free from state interference in some aspects of life (such as speech, thought, religion, consumption etc.) but limits them in the acquisition of "positive freedom" that represents the "freedom to set the range of choices and the agenda of choice-making" (Bauman, 2000: 51). In the context of spatial planning, we may assume that social and economic conditions in post-socialist Slovenia generated some elements of negative freedom, which are expressed in the fast economic development of Slovenia and the negative side-effects like urban sprawl and gradual degradation of specific areas in the spatial system.

The contemporary situation in Slovenia suggests that state institutions have limited power when trying to implement measures which would improve spatial planning procedures and diminish the negative effects in space. These limitations are often activated in order to prevent state involvement in economic activities and suppress certain situations which would obstruct the fast flow of goods and capital in the state. The cases of the emerging consumption areas in Ljubljana and the unilateral development of the automobile transport system are good examples of possible side effects of such incremental, i.e. neo-liberal planning.

The development of individual transport system based on automobiles proved to be an indispensable element for the quick economic development of the state and suburban consumption areas in Ljubljana. In 1990s, the state authorities decided to commence with the development of Slovenian highway

system. The majority of the funds were directed towards the modernisation of road infrastructure while other transport infrastructures received considerably lower economic support. Such a transport scheme gave priority to individual, automobile transport compared to public transport (see data in Graph 1) and supported the rise of consumption areas on the edges of Ljubljana. In this sense, Kalbermatten (1999) notes the extreme importance of urban services in transition countries: "In the absence of effective regulation (a real risk in most developing countries), privatisation is likely to result in efficiency gains and better service for those who already have service or who can afford to get connected to the existing system." (Kalbermatten,1999: 15).



Graph 1: Number of registered automobiles, bus and railway passengers (in thousands)

Source: Statistical Institute of Slovenia (2003).

With the liberalization of the economy and by giving priority to individual transport system, the state continues to function in congruence with short-term economic development goals. Instead of a more holistic approach which includes the promotion of positive freedom and long-term socio-economic goals, the obsolete type of negative freedom from the socialist period was just exchanged with the new type of negative freedom. The long-term negative effects of neo-liberal economic logic in urban planning can be noticed in the intense transformation of urban areas, which are not suitable for automobile transport (e.g. historic city centres with condensed urban structure) and prospering of peripheral areas that are well adapted to the new highway system.

The gist of the problem of Ljubljana city centre transformation lies in the combination of various ongoing processes throughout the post-socialist period. In this text, especially two processes are exposed. The first process

may be described as the formation of chaotic conditions generated by the dissolution of the "old" planning traditions. The disintegration of "old" hierarchies goes hand in hand with the second process, that may be described as globalisation, which left its impact on the present organisation of space in Ljubljana. The internationalisation of economy in the era of globalisation was most evident in the sudden emergence of new consumption spaces, which introduced not only a variety of new products but also transformed the everyday life of inhabitants in the city. In this sense, we may say that the new spaces of consumption, together with the liberalization of the economy, laid the basis for the evolution of an individualized mass-consumer in post-socialist countries like Slovenia.

"Westernization" of consumption spaces and lifestyle changes in the post-socialist period

During the socialist period, the majority of Eastern European countries, due to political decisions, experienced a certain degree of isolation from the economically developed Western European countries. However, the level of isolation was never so high that some elements of consumption could not penetrate the socialist states. Even if consumption was not so intense, it was inherently present in the everyday life of inhabitants, especially in countries like Slovenia, which at the times of ex-Yugoslavia bordered Italy and Austria, and which never reached a high level of isolation in comparison to other socialist countries like Poland, Romania or ex-Czechoslovakia. The change of the socio-political system brought a shift in the intensity of consumption, which was at the time of socialism limited to "specific products and periodical shopping excursions" to Western countries (Luthar, 2006). The differences between socialist and "Western", i.e. economically developed societies, existed on the level of political ideology, which perceived consumerism as a negative social and cultural phenomenon of capitalist countries. In spite of this ideology, consumerism was upheld by the influences from foreign media and the "transnationalisation of economic propaganda" always present as a developmental factor of socialist societies (Pavlič, Splichal, 1981). The consequence of those influences was the development of specific value-system in socialism, which was aware of consumerism but was due to limited experiences with excessive shopping "caught" relatively unprepared i.e. not so well adapted to the intensification of consumption and emergence of mass consumption possibilities that followed in the post-socialist period.

After the change of socio-political regime, the value-systems of post-socialist countries experienced several transformations. The introduction of market economy changed the vision upon consumerism. Consumption instantly became an element of the post-socialistic economic mechanism, which was seen

as constitutive to the society, and whose negative side-effects were not fully acknowledged. According to Inglehart (1997), who analysed the impact of cultural values on national socio-economic systems in the European countries (World Values Survey, 2006), the economic development plays an important role in the transformation of existing social values and it is retroactively influenced by their change. In discussing the different pace of values shift in Western European countries, Inglehart (1997) emphasizes the conjunction between economic growth and social development. The improvement of economic conditions, social security, educational and occupational opportunities may prompt at a shift towards postmaterialist values: these are indicated by the greater emphasis on goals such as self-expression, quality of life and belonging.[1] The data from 1995 and 1997 reveal the value-shift in several Eastern European countries such as Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Probably due to influences from the socialist period, those countries have a stronger materialistic orientation and experience a rigidity of the socio-economic development. This indicates that post-socialist countries, due to a sudden shift in socio-economic system combined with the dissolution of old hierarchies, entered the new period without a proper "defence" mechanism, i.e. a value-system which would enable a smooth transition from materialism to postmaterialism.

The effects of globalisation on the macro level triggered the liberalisation of the Slovenian economy and brought important structural changes on the local level, represented in the growth of services and decline of industrial sector. The consequences of so-called tertiarisation or deindustrialisation of economy did not only influence the composition of the labour market, but also affected the social structure of Slovenian cities. The once numerous and relatively homogenous middle class has become much more differentiated in terms of lifestyle and consumption patterns. The intensification of the flows of goods, capital and information, helped to change the organization of everyday activities of individuals and promoted new spaces of consumption in the city. Featherstone (1998) defined these lifestyle transformations as a part of the postmodernisation process, where the individual shifts from solid to fluid, active stylisation of life. The individuals try to diversify their roles and activities as much as possible in order to improve the quality of their life.

Diversification of individual activities to a certain extent happened also in Ljubljana. In comparison to some Western European cities, where emphasis was laid on the development of public transportation, the process of

[1] Inglehart (1990) indicates that the shift from materialist to postmaterialist values is not a uniquely western phenomenon. It is rather found in societies with widely different institutions and cultural traditions. The value change from materialism to postmaterialism is thus not a direct consequence of greater wealth but depends from the very different societal environment characteristic of societies – extensiveness of welfare provision, expansion of education, growth of employment in third and fourth employment sector etc.

diversification of consumption spaces in Ljubljana was combined with the process of automobilisation, leading to the construction of a specific lifestyle, which highly depends upon individual transport. In this sense, due to internationalisation of the economy, the central and peripheral areas in Ljubljana in the post-socialist period face not only the diversification of activities and consumption spaces, but, more importantly, they simultaneously face also the changes in the patterns of transportation used by the inhabitants. The synergic effect of both processes gradually led to eviction of specific services and local establishments, i.e. local cultures that were not perceived as profitable. This is shown in the next paragraphs, which present the transformation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana, based on the comparison between shopping spaces in the central and peripheral areas of the city. Special focus was given to the largest commercial centre in Slovenia – BTC. Then, our attention is redirected to the changes in transport patterns of inhabitants and the (non)accessibility of specific spaces in the city.

Transformations of the consumption spaces in Ljubljana during the post-socialist period

As the majority of European cities, Ljubljana has its old, historic city centre and a relatively new part of the city, which developed mostly during the post-war period. The main characteristic of the city centre is its historic built structure protected not only by the laws on national heritage, but also by the public opinion of Ljubljana's citizens[2]. Because of its unique ambiental structure, the city centre was especially attractive for commerce in the old days. However, the city centre is nowadays surrounded by the new part of the city, spread nearby it, which was defined by the majority of residents as a historically less important part of the city and thus enjoys lower level of legal and public protection. This part of the city experienced the largest physical transformation of its environment in the post-socialist period. The uncontrolled development of consumption spaces in Slovenia and particularly in Ljubljana caused big structural changes in both central and peripheral urban areas. Similarly, to the United States in the 1960s and Western Europe in 1970s and 1980s, the spontaneous emergence and construction of larger consumption centres, i.e. shopping malls on the edges of the city, influenced the vulnerable social fabric of Ljubljana.

Large consumption areas emerged in places which were once utilized by other services and industries, but which experienced during the transition period a strong decline in their activities. These brown fields and abandoned

[2] For example, public opinion research carried out in 1993 by Pavle Gantar and Drago Kos showed that strong majority of respondents in the city centre expressed negative opinion about putting a new, modernistic fountain in the old part of the city.

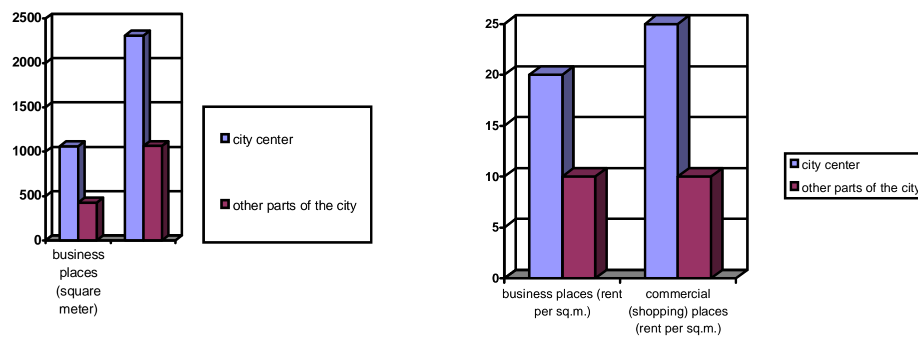
industrial spaces were soon occupied by other economic activities, including shopping, which proved to be one of the most propulsive economic fields. New shopping malls were extremely successful even due to the fact that they emerged on spaces that lacked ambiental or architectural quality and were not planned for such type of activities. The transformation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana during the post-socialist period may be divided into three phases that deeply influenced the urban structure of the city.

First phase 1990 – 1993: Introduction of free-market economy and formation of large commercial centres

The biggest commercial centre in Slovenia – BTC, was developed in 1990 from a large cargo distribution centre. Comprising a surface of 250,000 square meters, it was one of the largest cargo distribution areas in this part of Europe and the most important centre of this kind in former Yugoslavia. Because of the special geopolitical position of Slovenian region, close to the Western European countries, the capacities ob BTC were during the Yugoslav period always used to the maximum. All the merchandise coming from Western Europe was stored in the area of BTC and then distributed all over former Yugoslavia. With the collapse of Yugoslavian state, BTC lost its primary function of cargo distribution centre. In 1991, when Slovenian independence was declared, only 30% of cargos storing areas were actively used. Approximately 150,000 to 180,000 square meters of cargo area were left unused. The management committee of the distribution centre decided to reorganize the area before it would collapse and be sold to the city authorities as a free building terrain. The decision of the management committee was to construct a new commercial centre.

Simultaneously to the formation of new consumption areas on the edges of the city, the transformation of consumption spaces was carried out also in the old, central part of the city. Due to its historic architecture and high ambiental quality, the introduction of global market economy, combined with some other crucial factors such as privatisation of realty, has led to partial revitalisation of the city centre, which gradually developed into a highly attractive commercial spot with extremely high rents and expensive luxury selling products. Comparing the data from 1981 (research realized by Rakar, Dedek and Bogataj, 1981) and 1989 research realized by Drobne and Bogataj, 1995), we can notice a significant change in the rating of shopping terrain in the city centre and the rest of the city. According to this data, in 1981 the prices of rents and shopping terrain in the city centre did not much differ from the prices in other parts of the city. As a consequence, during that year, the non-luxury shops and local establishments from the old city centre proved to be more successful compared to similar shops from the surrounding areas. In 1989 the

trend has reversed, the rents have increased and small local enterprises from the old part of the city have begun to feel the burden of attractive location. Meanwhile, the shops in the surrounding areas proved to be more successful compared to the shops in the old part of the city. Similarly, research results from 1995 (research project European Urban Observatory, 1997) showed an important difference in prices and rent rates that depend on the location of commercial or business place (Graphs 2 and 3).



Graphs 2 and 3: Prices and rents of business and commercial places (per square meter) in Euro, 1995

Source: European Urban Observatory (1997).

In the central part of the city, the prices of business places varied from 710 to 1415 Euro (1062,5 Euro on average)[3] per square meter, whereas rents were increased up to 20 Euros per square meter. In other parts of the city, the prices varied from around 425 Euros, whereas rents have run high up to 10 Euros. For commercial places, the prices varied from 1780 to 2835 (2307,5 Euro on average) Euro per square meter in the central part of the city, whereas rents have gone up to 25 Euros. In other parts of the city, buyers had to pay around 1065 Euros per square meter and if somebody wanted to rent a commercial place, the rent would be around 10 Euros. What happened in the next few years was that the small local entrepreneurs (various craftsmen, artisans, public library, workmen as for example shoemakers, bookseller's) could not compete with the corporative logic of large international or multinational companies, and as well Slovenian international companies. As a consequence of this process, the majority of small local establishments were closed or have moved out from the city centre into the surrounding areas or even to big

[3] The prices are presented in Euro, but calculated on the basis of Slovene Tolars i.e. Slovene national currency that was in circulation before the introduction of Euro.

commercial centres on the edge of the city where the rents were not so high. The result of the process of transformation of consumption spaces is the opening of a new commercial “A hall” at commercial centre BTC in 1993. The A hall was a 12,000 square meters large building, which consisted of 70 new small shops. At the same time, BTC also opened a large shopping centre, with the purpose to concentrate the mass consumption activities and increase the number of visitors in BTC (Štamcar and Mićić, 2001).

Second phase 1993 – 2000: Diversification and social differentiation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana

In 1993 the managerial board of BTC set the priority to expand shopping areas and become the biggest commercial centre in the country. The plan was mostly successful, and in 1997 BTC became the biggest shopping area in Slovenia. The “A hall” expanded the number of shops from 70 to 160 and the new “B hall” expanded the BTC area for another 100 shops. New shopping capacities have included several specialised shops: for electronics and technical appliances, for sport equipment etc. The diversification of activities within BTC has been reinforced by the Go-cart hall, numerous restaurants, market halls and fruit and vegetable open market.

After 1997, the managerial board of BTC decided for further improvements of the area. A new direction in development of BTC was set in order to construct a so-called “BTC City”. Following the examples of American multifunctional shopping malls, the idea was to build a city within a city with a wide range of diverse programmes: shopping, but also business, recreational and leisure facilities. To the approximately 450 shops which existed in BTC at the moment, other facilities were added, e.g. a lot of amusement areas (Multiplex cinema centre Kolosej opened in 2001), sports areas (e.g. the sports hall Millenium, which includes fitness, tennis courts, squash courts, water park Atlantis), business offices (e.g. BTC Tower) and several accompanying services like car wash, banking and postal services.

In BTC the process of diversification and condensation of activities was obviously wider and faster than in the old, historic part of the city where the prices of business offices have been higher and included various law restrictions. The process of internationalisation of consumption spaces has begun immediately after the change of political and economic system in 1991. The internationally established companies have begun to search for attractive locations in the city. However, it was not until 1997 when the process of internationalisation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana began to intensify and the number of foreign based shops substantially increased. This process had profound effect on both shopping areas in the centre and at the outskirts of the city. In BTC the emphasis was on large shopping centres, while in the city centre the quality and prestige

of the merchandise prevailed among other characteristics. This was pointed out in the research conducted by the Urbanistic Institute of Slovenia in 2001, on a sample of 500 households from Ljubljana (Table 1).

Table 1.

Types of shops where the inhabitants of Ljubljana buy luxurious products

Type of Shop	Percentage
Department of superstore	1.4
Specialised shops located in the old, historic centre of the city	12.4
Specialised shops located in the area of BTC	0.8
Specialised shops under the patronage of other shopping centres outside city centre	1.8
Specialised shops dispersed over the greater area of Ljubljana	10.4

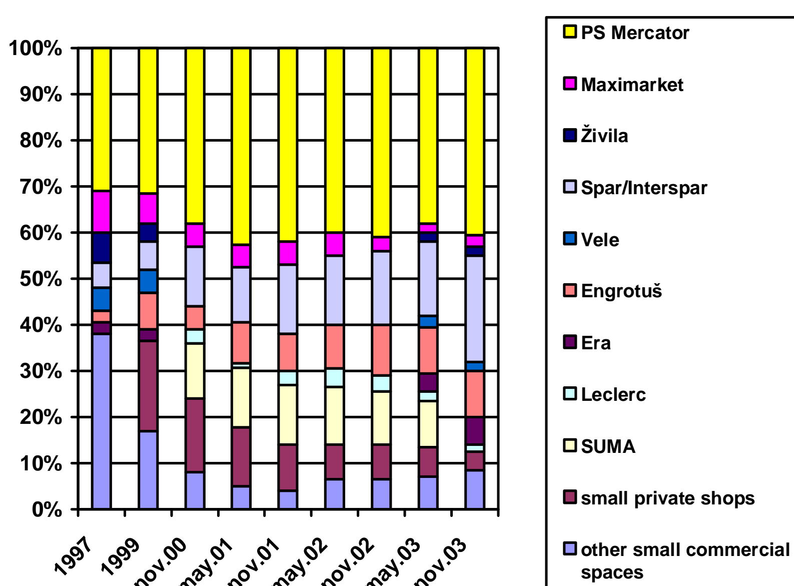
Source: Stanovnik, Peter (2001): Trgovina – Usmerjanje razvoja trgovine na drobno v prostoru Mestne občine Ljubljana (Trade – Directing the development of small retail trade in the area of Ljubljana municipality). Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana.

Table 1 shows that the majority of people (12.2%) buy luxurious merchandise, such as fashionable wardrobe, jewellery, various art objects, music instruments in the central area of the city. At the same time, we can notice a low percentage of people buying high quality articles in BTC (only 0.8 %). This may be explained by high evaluation of ambiental, architectural quality of old, historic city centre by a specific group of inhabitants with higher income. For this group of consumers, the ambiental quality of city centre represents an important element of shopping which functions as a form of "added value", i.e. materialised "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1986: 248-250) that is inevitably linked with the articles purchased at those prestigious locations.

Third phase 2000 – 2003: Destructive competitiveness of consumption spaces in Ljubljana

The most significant change caused by the internationalisation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana in the period between 2000 and 2003 can be described as "destructive competitiveness" (Uršič, 2003: 69) between the consumption spaces in the city centre and large shopping malls on the edges of the city. Consumption spaces in the city centre which were not oriented to offering luxury products tried, during this period, to compete with the large shopping malls. During this process, their situation considerably deteriorated. In BTC, the process of heterogenisation and concentration of activities was obviously larger and faster than in the centre of Ljubljana, where the prices of land were much higher, and other crucial factors as "denationalisation of

realty"[4] blocked the renovation of larger urban areas and development of larger consumption areas. In these circumstances, the ambiental quality of the old city centre did not prove to be a sufficient element for attracting a mass of consumers. Many shops were forced to close as they were not able to compete with shopping malls due to smaller shopping spaces, lower variety of goods, problems with automobile access, parking for consumers, high rents, etc. The reduction in the number of small shops during this period is visible on Graph 4.



Graph 4: Market shares of commercial enterprises in Slovenia, 1997-2003

Source: Rogelj, J. (2004).

Graph 4 shows that the number of small private shops considerably diminished during the period from 1997 to 2003. In 1997, various small shops represented almost 40 % of all commercial activities in the shopping sector of Slovenia. In the period after 1997 their market share was cut to approximately 12%. The cut-down of small private shops was marked by simultaneous growth i.e. expansion of large commercial enterprises. These big enterprises

[4] After the Second World War a part of private realty was nationalised (put under state control). After the change of political system, the process of denationalisation has begun. With various individuals trying to regain the ownership over the land, the process of renovation was for some time blocked due of undetermined status of the land or building ownership.

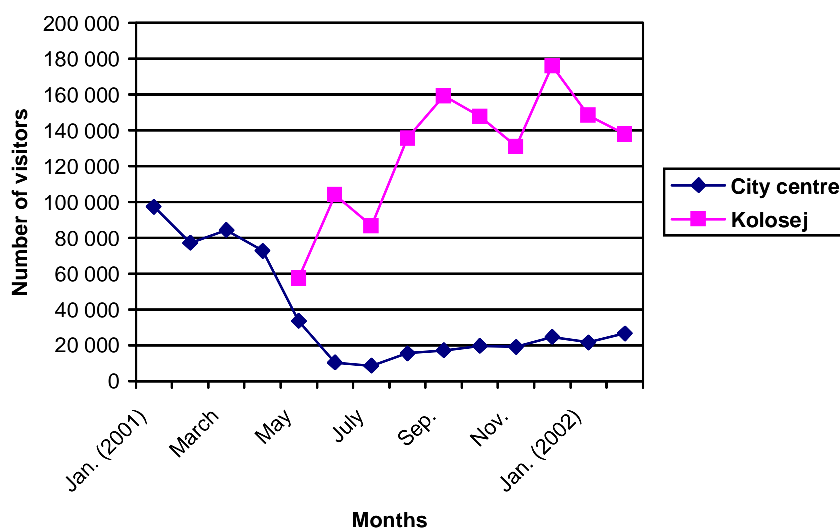
diminished the share of small private shops in two ways. Firstly, by dragging consumers from small locally based shops to big shopping malls at the outskirts of the city. Secondly, as the small local shops were not able to compete with large enterprises for consumers, some of their spaces were bought by large enterprises. These big enterprises have begun to buy some of the most strategic locations in the city and offer their branded products to consumers on those locations.

The offer of consumption spaces in the city centre that was self-regulated by spontaneous market conditions led to the diminishment of small private shops and standardisation of products and services. Chaotic competitiveness under free-market conditions excluded less profitable but socially important consumption spaces that contributed to urbanity i.e. "urban way of life" (Wirth, 2000) in the city centre. Non-luxury consumption spaces and local establishments like craftsmen, artisans, artists, workshops, bookstores undoubtedly raised the level of diversity and liveliness in the city centre. By gradual elimination of both non-luxury consumption spaces and small private local establishments, the overall number of consumers in the city centre decreased.

In the same vein, it is important to mention that the surface of commercial areas in Ljubljana largely extended after the change of political system and liberalization of economy. The surface of commercial areas extended from 0.39 square meter per inhabitant in 1986 to 1.21 square meter in 2000 and even to 1.3 square meter in 2001[5]. This increase, exceeding 200%, did not result in the higher number of diversified small shops in the city centre but was the result of emergent new consumption areas on the edges of the city. New spaces of consumption have in this period succeeded to extend not only the offer of their shopping facilities but also the offer of leisure time activities. Shopping malls were transformed, in this sense, into multifunctional commercial areas that began to take over functions which were once characteristics of the city centre. This situation is evident from the data that show a decrease in the number of cinema visitors in cities like Kranj[6] (approximately 20 km from Ljubljana) and Ljubljana city centre after the opening of multiplex cinema complex Kolosej (opened in may 2001), which is located in BTC (Graph 5).

[5] Daily Newspaper (Dnevnik), date: 2.2.2001. Available on http://www.dnevnik.si/iskanje.asp (25.3.2002).

[6] The numbers show that after the opening of multicinema complex Kolosej (May 2001), the number of cinema visitors in Kranj decreased for 13.4 % (Source: Commercial Report 2001 (Poslovno poročilo za leto 2001 - komercialni del) Kranj, Kinopodjetje Kranj d.o.o.). Kranj used to have the third largest cinema audience in the country (after Ljubljana and Maribor) but in 2002 fell to the fourth place due to the diminishment of cinema audience in 2001.



Graph 5: The gap in the number of cinema visitors per month; comparison of Ljubljana city centre and multiplex cinema Kolosej in BTC (period from January 2001 to February 2002)

Source: Cinema Ticket Office – Report (2002). Ljubljana, Ljubljana Cinemas d.d. and Kolosej Cinemas d.o.o.

Graph 5 shows that before the opening of Kolosej multiplex the number of cinema visitors in the city centre of Ljubljana was relatively high (between 80,000 to 100,000 visitors per month). After the opening of multiplex the number of cinema visitors in the city centre suddenly dropped. The data show that after the opening of Kolosej, more than 90% of cinema visitors moved to the commercial centre BTC at the edges of the city. This situation can be mainly explained by poor utilisation of traffic (ineffective public transport) infrastructure and an inadequate city centre revitalisation strategy, which was not suited for the circumstances of the free-market economy. The Ljubljana city centre in this period lacked appropriate strategic development programme. In circumstances of spontaneous market competitiveness, the revitalisation of Ljubljana city centre should have been based on a more integrative revitalisation strategy which does not exclude economically less profitable but socially important consumption spaces, local establishments and public services that constitute the urbanity in the city.

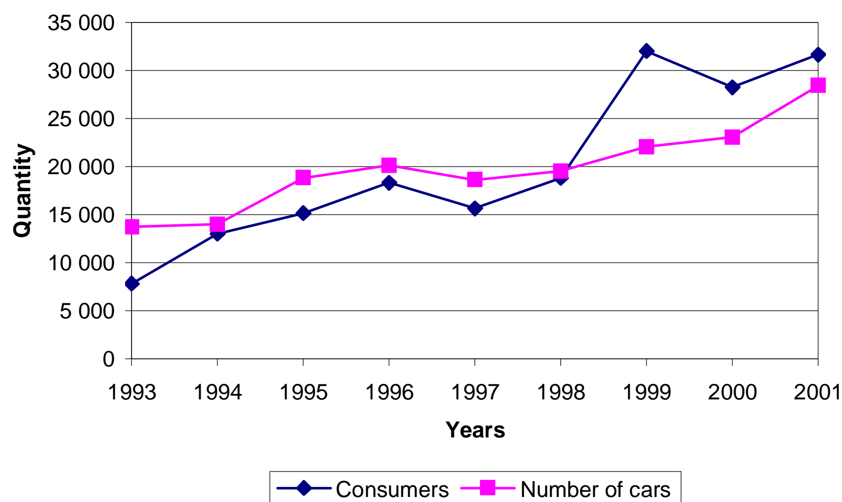
Mobility, accessibility and new spaces of consumption in Ljubljana

One of the most important services in the city centre represents an effective public transport, which provides good accessibility for potential consumers. Contrary to this idea, by improving only specific transport infrastructure (highways and roads) in the post-socialist period, the authorities are now faced with a problem of growing number of automobile users. The intensive automobilisation of the Slovenian population produced the effect of "automobile consumers", which use their automobile for all kinds of everyday activities. Any possible development of urbanity and spaces of consumption in the centre of Ljubljana is momentarily blocked by the high dependency upon personal vehicles.

Automobile transport represents the fundamental operational mechanism of Ljubljana urban region. In the research *Critically about traffic* (Ninamedia, 2000), the opinion polls showed that only about 30% of residents of Ljubljana use public transport (16% of inhabitants regularly use bus public transport and 14 % of them often use bus transport), and that only 18 % of the interviewed use public transport vehicles to get to work (Štravs, 2000: 45). The number of automobiles in the city ranges between 130,000-150,000 daily, which is extremely unfavourable, if we take into consideration that Ljubljana has only 280,000 inhabitants. In Ljubljana, the average number of people per automobile is approximately 1.3 persons, which shows that the car is totally uneconomically and unecologically used. Other interesting data show that, for example, in Vienna 3 people share the same automobile in comparison to Ljubljana where only 2.1 people share the same vehicle (Mićić, 2000). In total, the proportion between public and individual transport in the capital is 20% to 80% in favour of individual transport vehicles. In other European capitals the proportion between individual and public transport is approximately levelled – 50% to 50% (Štravs, 2000: 45).

Due to the reason that Ljubljana does not have any efficient alternative means of public transport, a large number of people decided to change the routine of their everyday activities. They adapted to new circumstances that stimulated the usage of individual means of transport. The consumers adjusted their spatio-temporal paths in order to avoid the traffic congestions, problems with parking places, smaller offer and other problems, connected with the transport of purchased goods in the city centre. Existent traffic conditions generated a context in which consumers acted rationally and responded to unregulated traffic conditions with a shift in the location of consumption. The success of new consumption areas in Ljubljana represents a typical example of consumers' reaction to disordered traffic conditions. The consumption centre BTC offered contextual facilities to the traffic problems that appeared in the city centre. By taking advantage of problems in the city centre, suburban consumption spaces diverted the flows of consumers out from the city centre to areas where larger number of free parking places, easy access to highways, large shopping and amusement

spaces were available for the costumers. This presumption is best represented in Graph 6, which shows simultaneous augmentation of daily consumers and automobile vehicles in BTC consumption centre.



Graph 6: Graphical interpretation of increase in number of consumers and automobile vehicles per day in the period from 1993 to 2001

Source: BTC –Public Relation Sector (2002).

The case of cinema visitors implies that people found new ways to satisfy their needs for shopping, amusement, relaxation and have organized their everyday time-space geographies around the usage of automobile transport. In this context "automobility" (Urry, 1999: 1), i.e. patterns of socio-cultural behaviour dependent on car transport, indeed provides individuals with a relative sense of freedom with personal transport always being at their disposal. On the other hand, automobility actually diminishes accessibility to specific spaces in the city. In fact, automobility supports "time-space distancing" (Giddens, 1984: 171) that enables separation of social interactions from material, physical presence and simultaneously increases distances between particular nodes in the spatial system. For the automobile users, it is crucial to analyze the distances between the places of work and residence. Simultaneously, general accessibility to urban services, such as hospitals, kinder-gardens, schools and spaces of consumption considerably diminish.

The increasing number of automobile consumers in consumption areas at the edges of the city raises a question whether the shift in location of consumption really affects the urban functioning in a negative way or only

represents the addition that enriches the urban structure of a post-socialist city. The embeddedness of individual transport system in Ljubljana has had large effects on the functioning of the city centre, which after the socialist period importantly transformed its structure of economic activities. On the short-term basis, the intensification of automobile flows indeed increased the level of economic capital in the city but at the same time the city gradually lost its long-term advantages that would be brought by the development of an efficient public transport system. Besides the diminishment of offer in the city centre, other long-term negative effects of automobilisation also include ecological damage from excessive automobile usage and urban sprawl. Another problem represents the degradation of small towns, local urban centres that lie in the proximity of peripheral consumption centres. The case of multiplex cinema complex located in consumption centre BTC, this shows that the new "edge cities" (Garreau, 1991) attract and redirect the flows of consumers not only out from the city centre of Ljubljana but also from the nearby cities like Kranj.

The relation between the concepts of accessibility and mobility is of key importance for understanding the rationality of individuals' movements in the context of Ljubljana. Accessibility applies to the "quantity of opportunities or settings of events that are accessible at a certain distance or voyage time" (Handy and Niemeier, 1997: 1175-1194), while mobility applies to "the possibility to move between various settings, where events occur" (ibid.). By increasing the distances between various consumption spaces and other settings of events in the post-socialist period, the accessibility of those spaces gradually became more dependent upon individual modes of transport. In fact, the relation between automobility and the increasing separation of functions and uses that are attributed to specific areas in the city was a two-way process. The need for automobilty is not just a consequence of a more and more separate use of urban spaces, but it is simultaneously the cause of the increasing separation of functions in the urban spaces. Dependence upon individual transport system thus provoked condensation of spatial uses in Ljubljana and diminished the diversity of balanced urban concentration of functions. As a consequence of this process, the city centre had to orient towards the offer of luxury products and services that are connected with good ambient and architectural quality (e.g. bars, restaurants, art galleries). In the period from 2003-2008, the city centre of Ljubljana is experiencing an increase in the offer of economic services that are connected with the touristification of the area. The increasing number of facilities for tourists has brought, to a certain extent, new economic resources and liveliness to the city centre. Nevertheless, it hasn't succeeded to revitalise the city centre in the full meaning of the word, i.e. to form a socially diversified and functionally heterogeneous space.

Conclusion: transforming consumption spaces in Ljubljana – degradation or enrichment of urban functioning?

According to Hočevar (2000), the increased (global) heterogeneity inside the city or the virtual access to "interminable" heterogeneity cannot totally substitute the need or wish for physical experience with diverse spaces or places. In this sense, the new luxury spaces of consumption in the city centre and mass consumption spaces at the edge of the city could represent the enrichment of urban structure and increase the differentiation of service offer inside the city. In a similar vein, the shift from public to automobile transport could increase the individual spatial mobility and support the diversity of everyday life trajectories in the city. The logic of either "residency or mobility in conditions of increased access to heterogeneity changes in such way that inside this continuum emerge new, more complex forms and combinations of complementary social practices" (Hočevar, 2000: 40).

Nevertheless, the increasing functional diversity emerging from the globalisation processes, is based on the premise that there exists a balanced development of versatile services in the spatial system of Slovenia. This assumption also includes the development of services like public transport and agencies that try to preserve socially important locales for specific communities. Concerning the possibilities to increase the diversity of "time-space geographies" (Hägerstrand, 1975) and the differentiation of consumption patterns inside the city, we should take under consideration the conditions that enable people to use various forms of private and especially public transport. In the case of Ljubljana, not all the requirements for the development of diverse spatial practices and consumption patterns are met. The unilateral approach in the development of transport infrastructure supports the evolution of specific time-space geographies that coincide with the individualized, automobile-based transport system. By increasing the number of automobile users and reducing the number of public transport users, the city municipalities operate according to short-term economic development logic and prevent a faster multiplication of spatial practices, which would allow easier and more diverse access of consumers to the city centre. By prolonging the development of public transport, Ljubljana on long-term basis looses its heterogeneity in the offer of diverse and socially attractive consumption spaces in the city centre.

The specific development of consumption spaces in Ljubljana during the post-socialist period was, to the detriment of small local establishments, generated by spontaneous market conditions, where bad provision of public transport services played a major role. To majority of population, automobility represents one of the most common elements of social action, and contrary to all spatial plans, most profoundly influences the spatial development of the

city. Automobilty became integrated into lifestyles of Slovenian population in the post-socialist period and is now perceived as normal praxis and routine in the everyday life.

Another important element which contributed to the transformation of consumption spaces in Ljubljana and Slovenia was the shift from "collective" i.e. politically based ideologies that perceived consumption as a negative effect to "individualism" and free market economy. This shift from restrained consumption in socialism to mass consumption in post-socialism was not followed by a change of the system of values, which remained based on the materialistic domain. During the socialist period, materialistic values formed especially in time of economic crisis and shortage of specific goods. These values, marked by extreme individualism, possession of goods, high evaluation of economic prosperity as opposed to the quality of life, were in part transferred from one socio-political system to another. The transfer of materialistic values to the post-socialist period succeeded also due to extremely low esteem of values of "authority, leadership and power" (Ule, 1996), which would enable the transfer of specific beneficiary elements from old traditions and well established socialization mechanisms.

In the first part of post-socialist period in Slovenia, the creation of new, differentiated lifestyles based on individual needs and wishes undoubtedly had negative connotations, as it supported destructive economic competition and degradation of small local establishments in central urban areas. However, many authors (Deth and Scarbrough, 1998; Turnšek, Uhan et al., 2000) assert that after 1995, changes in the direction of postmaterialistic value orientation have been noticed in many post-socialist countries. If this is correct, the adoption of concepts and strategies connected with the development of a more inclusive, sustainable and less materialistic based society should in the long run have effect on values and beliefs in post-socialist countries. Consequently, a new perception and approach towards socially important but economically non-profitable urban spaces may develop.

We may conclude that the shift from materialistic to postmaterialistic value orientation is a gradual and long-term process. Momentarily, a synergic effect, where two values systems are converging into one, is taking place in Slovenia. In order to ensure an optimal spatial development in Slovenia during the period of conversion it is therefore reasonable to make a compromise between the demands that arise from the new economic structures and demands of public actors (civil groups, NGO's, groups of experts), which try to maintain or even improve the quality of life in specific locations. The optimal approach would seem to be the application of new spatial planning criteria, which gives public actors more possibilities to express their ideas and concerns regarding spatial interventions from the new economic structures. Implementation

of such criteria would on the long-term prevent or at least diminish the risk of possible conflicts that may arise from specific negative spatial trends which are now taking place in Slovenia.

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REMEMBERING DEATH, REMEMBERING LIFE: TWO SOCIAL MEMORY SITES IN BUDAPEST

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... the promise of permanence a monument in stone will suggest is always built on quicksand. Some monuments are joyously toppled at times of social upheaval; others preserve memory in its most ossified form, either as myth or as cliché. Yet other stand simply as figures of forgetting, their meaning and original purpose eroded by the passage of time.

Huyssen

ABSTRACT. The study explores the relationship between the politics of memory, the identity of a community and the social construction of places. This relationship means that place, identity and memory are mutually constitutive. Thus exploring the way past is represented offers insights into the ways in which the present is constructed. We analyze the place of social memory sites in the production and the reproduction of memories about the Holocaust, using as a reference point the case of Budapest. Our research rests on three important assumptions. First, there is a fundamental link between community's identity and the historical events its members choose to remember. The identity of a community is usually built around such events therefore insights regarding their commemorations are also insights into the way identity is actively constructed. Second, the memory of these events is not only preserved, but also produced through social memory sites as the ones we observed in Budapest. Third, we assume a relational social world in which identities are products reinforced by socially constructed and continuously renegotiated stories. Our results shed light on the dialectical relationship between memory, its politics, and the ways in which social roles are selected and defined for communitarian identification.

Keywords: politics of memory; identity; social construction of places; relational perspective

Introduction

Critiques have emphasized the pitfalls of the philosophy underlying urban modernizing projects (see Boyer, 1994; Hayden, 1995) arguing that the strong belief in progress, brought about through rational planning and technological

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innovation and harnessed by the modern states, produced a totalizing view of the urban landscape while at the same time rendered obsolete any recourse to the diverse and situated experience of the individuals and communities populating these realms (Scott, 1998). The main corollary of this ideology has been an almost exclusive preoccupation with architectural forms and technical solutions in urban planning. Undifferentiated masses were expected to be the beneficiaries of these material transformations in a direct, unmediated way under the assumption of the didactic force of these pleasant views (Boyer, 1994). Analyzing the processes shaping the contemporary western cities urbanists and urban historians have come to stress the partiality of these modern projects in an attempt to uncover the silenced and hidden histories of marginalized groups (Hayden, 1994). The critical engagement with the urban past involves a radical questioning of the narratives tracing mainly the evolution of abstract architectural forms and asserts a renewed interest in issues of meaning, representation, identity and memory (Boyer, 1994; Hayden, 1995). In this context, monuments, commemoration sites, and festivities become privileged sites of urban analysis, as spaces where memories and meanings get to be transformed through active social processes of remembering, forgetting and understanding.

Using both ethnographic and historical material we explore two social memory sites in Budapest following the processes of their construction as places and as sites of enactment for differently-oriented politics of memory during the socialist and the postsocialist periods. The first monument is the Stolpersteine project on Raday Utca, "a project meant to keep alive the memory of the expulsion and elimination of the Jews, Gypsies, politically persecuted, homosexuals, Jehova's witnesses, and the victims of euthanasia during National Socialism"[1]. The second one is the ensemble of commemorative monuments built around the Synagogue on Dohany Utca which includes the Synagogue – the biggest in Europe – the Jewish Museum, the Heroes' Temple, the Raoul Wallenberg memorial park and the graveyard of 2000 Jewish people, victims of the Holocaust.

Recent literature on social memory is infused with what Tim Cole (2000) understood as the two analytical layers of the Holocaust: the historical and the rhetorical. While the history of the Holocaust narrates its actual events, the rhetorical level of the episode functions as an ethnic marker and it's the result of a need for a consensual symbol of Jewish identity. We consider, along other authors (Cole, 2000; Lebow, 2006; Novick, 1999), that there is a dialectical relationship between memory and the ways in which social roles are selected and defined for communitarian identification. This relationship rests on the fact that identity and memory are mutually constitutive, thus exploring the way the past is represented offers an insight into the way the present is constructed. In the present study we analyze the place of social memory sites

[1] www.stolpersteine.com, accessed on 02.05.2008.

in the production and the reproduction of memories about the Holocaust, and consequently in the construction of Jewish identity. For the case of Budapest we argue for an understanding of these sites as processes of both production and construction of places (Low, 1996), deeply shaped by a history of political transformations which meant the enactment of various discourses not only around Jews but also around other actors. We follow the process of the constitution of the two memory places in Budapest, analyzing how the logics of remembrance and commemoration are defined in socialism and postsocialism. The fall of the socialist regime opens a new space of possibilities, the ground of alternative forms of memory, proposed by different actors, and based on various perspectives on how the Holocaust can be understood. The post-socialist period becomes the field of multiple, and sometimes competitive narratives which are enacted in commemorative places and practices. A fragmented identitarian discourse finds its way to the public space, as memory places like the Stones are proposed as vivid alternatives to the official hegemonic history. Urban space emerges as both a possibility for the Jewish community to publicly commemorate the tragic events of the Holocaust, and as a chance for other communities of memory to appear around these events. We show how these different discourses not only constructed a multiple and fragmented identity of the Jewish community, but also instrumentalized this identity by connecting it to a broader political context, in which certain actors should be voiced and others should be silenced.

Our research rests on three assumptions. First, there is a fundamental link between a community's identity and the historical events its members choose to remember. The identity of a community is usually built around such events therefore insights into the way past is recalled are also insights into the way present identity is actively constructed. Second, the memory of these events is not only preserved, but also produced through social memory sites as the ones we observed in Budapest. Following Pierre Nora's distinction between 'lieux de memoire' and 'milieux de memoire', we argue that the memory site in Dohany Utca functions more as a 'lieu de memoire', while the stones on Raday Utca are closer to a 'milieu de memoire', emerging not only from different discourses but also from different politics of memory. Third, we assume a relational social world in which identities are "social arrangements reinforced by socially constructed and continuously renegotiated stories" (Tilly, 2002: xiii) and therefore they are "always assertions, always contingent, always negotiable, but also always consequential" (Tilly, 2002: xiii). From a profoundly relational perspective, mnemonic production is not equivalent to what is generally understood as 'discourse' but it represents the outcome of continuously transforming social relations which never involves only one category of actors. Hence, the way the Holocaust is remembered not only translates the Jewish past as a foundation for the present and the future community but also serves as a means of expression for various meanings which need to be articulated by other actors.

Our ideas have developed around the relationship between the politics of memory, the identity of a community and the social construction of places. In the first part of the essay we identify some key concepts which enable us the frame the analysis of the two social memory sites in Budapest. In the second section we shortly describe how the two monuments were founded and how they developed, exploring the complex configuration of social relations which have given them the present form. We trace the historical development of the sites while stressing the importance of the memory places in forging a unitary and stable Jewish identity centered on the Holocaust. Then, we compare the two cases trying to understand the differences and the similarities between them following a set of dichotomies that we found relevant when interpreting our data: individual/collective, open/closed, life/death and victim/savior. We conclude by emphasizing the mutually constitutive configuration in which certain forms of remembrance are shaped by various identitarian narratives, relate to meanings articulated by other actors, and help at the creation of boundaries of certain mnemonic communities.

Politics of Memory, Identity, and the Social Construction of Places

The concept of 'collective memory' was introduced by Maurice Halbwachs (1992 [1925]). Following the Durkheimian line, which accentuates the idea of integration, solidarity and coherence of a community, Halbwachs claims that memory can only be social, since people are social beings that acquire, recognize and recall their memories in society. Thus, society represents the framework for memory; it stands for its unity, coherence and stability, memory being the reflection of the norms and values which the group shares in the present. The group decides what should be remembered, what is relevant for its present life, therefore the past is never just preserved but dialectically reconstructed on the basis of its present needs (Halbwachs, 1992 [1925]). This perspective is similar to Hutton's idea that memory involves not only "recollection", but also "repetition", in the sense of the "presence of the past" (Hutton, 1993), and it assumes that the past has its own reality which is brought in the present by the needs of the community. In Halbwachs' view the main function of memory is to reinforce the solidarity of the group, setting out its boundaries in time and space. Society integrates this plurality in the most general framework of memory, the tradition of the dominant group and in this way the identity of a group is shaped by a shared and unified past. With the help of these social frameworks different images are transformed in coherent narratives of the community (Halbwachs, 1992; Anderson, 1991 [1983]; Deutsch, 1953).

This does not mean that a mechanical remembering of the past is possible. Olick and Robbins (1998) argue that the persistence of the past depends on how this is constituted: through mythic logics or through rational logics. Mythic

logics are much stronger; they produce "taboos and duties", while rational logics produce "prohibitions and requirements", as such they can more easily be changed. All these features are strongly related to context, so they are not rooted in the dynamics of memory itself but in the dynamics of time (Olick and Robbins, 1998). The postmodern stubbornness to deconstruct the idea of essence led to the understanding of identity as an ongoing process, construction, project and practice, not as propriety or characteristic. Social identity becomes equivalent to historical identity; in order to be a member of the community one has to position himself in relation to the past of the community. Any community is also a community of memory. Individuals pass through a "mnemonic socialization" in order to become members of "mnemonic communities" (Olick and Robbins, 1998). Being social means to experience events which are experienced only by your community, to give to these events unicity, and to appropriate them. As social memory studies show, the link between the representations of the past and the identity of a certain group is not a direct one. Only the relevant memories are selected to be part of the narrative of a community. The link between the real and the remembered or between the history and the rhetoric is neither natural, nor direct. What is important is that the collective relevance of memories is the result of a process of structuration, representation and usage by specific actors in specific social settings (Kansteiner, 2002), since the power to decide what memories are relevant or not for a community is the basis for the politics of memory.

Pierre Nora's distinction between *lieux de memoire* and *milieux de memoire* (1996) closely follows the ways in which politics of memory are embodied in specific places. In the *lieux de memoire* the act of remembrance is no longer "spontaneous"; it becomes "deliberate" and "experienced as a duty." For Nora, postmodern memory is above all "archival" and "individualized", insofar as each social group defines and redefines its identity appealing to a fragmented history, reconstructed in a perfectly coherent narrative. "Archive-memory", "duty-memory" and "distance-memory" represent the contemporary forms of political resistance to the "regime of historical discontinuity" in which we live (Nora, 1996). The realms of memory become battle fields against the loss of identity and contain in themselves an unfulfilled promise of retaining the past in an a-temporal regime of permanence. Each memory place can be understood as a communicative act in a process that links the producer of the message with the receivers. This relation is important also for Nora's distinction because a *lieu de memoire* is instituted through an act of political will, while a *milieu de memoire* is the result of an organic link between a community and the remembered event. A *lieu de memoire* represents the political will to remember a certain event to which the community is no longer organically connected. The event is taken from its original space-time configuration and placed in a temporal regime in which only certain features of the community are evoked and

represented. In this way, there is a continuous production and a reproduction of the identity of the community through these images. On the other hand, a *milieu de memoire* represents "the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists" (Nora, 1996: 17).

Social memory sites are constructed not only as the *loci* of the community but also as places. We can understand places as points on a space – time map created by various social processes. They are a "bounded permanence" (Harvey, 1996), attempts to keep things the way they were and at the same time to allow change. They are locuses of imaginaries, institutionalizations, social relations, practices, power, discourse, events, possibilities and constraints, identity, community, social action, meanings or difference. They are both produced (in the material sense) and constructed (symbolically and as shared experience) (see Low, 1996). Places are made to last because both the material and the symbolic character of a place possess a form of continuity which transcends both time and space. The material quasi-permanence and the contingent meaning of memory sites embody the dialectic between stability and change. The politics of memory represent a continuous battle for preservation and for keeping the places alive. The act of remembering always functions through exclusion: erecting a monument means that the space is saturated with a specific meaning, chosen from an entire field of possibilities which cannot be actualized (at least at the same time). In this context, forgetting has the same social function as remembering (Yerushalmi et al., 1988). Therefore, social memory sites represent embodiments of one meaning and the forgetting of all the others. They testify "to a will or desire on the part of some social group or disposition of power to select and organize representations of the past so that these will be embraced by individuals as their own. If particular representations of the past have permeated the public domain, it is because they embody an intentionality – social, political, institutional and so on - that promotes or authorizes their entry" (Wood, 1999: 291).

The Holocaust and the Rhetoric of Identification

The Synagogue on Dohany Utca is the first among the houses of prayer erected as part of the "Jewish Triangle" in Pest. It was built in 1859, followed by the one in Rumbach Sebestyen Utca (1872) and the one in Kazinczy utca (1913). By the mid nineteenth century approximately 40,000 Jews lived in Budapest, so building religious places represented the sign of a big and prosperous Jewish community. The leaders of the Jewish community chose Ludwig Föster as the architect for the temple. The plans of the Synagogue reflected the need of the Jewish bourgeoisie to be integrated in the Hungarian culture; therefore they were heavily influenced by the Austro-Hungarian architectural fashion.

Moreover, the two towers of the temple, and the presence of the organ inside are also symbols "of the reform for Neolog Jews who wanted to modernize the service" (Komoroczy, 1999: 109). From the very beginning, the "Israelite cathedral" had a double function: a religious, and a political one, serving the idea of integration of the Jews in the Hungarian society. Immediately after its inauguration, Jewish-Hungarian brotherhood festivals, memorial services for Hungarian leaders, and the celebration of the Jews' emancipation were held in the Synagogue (Komoroczy, 1999). At the same line, in addition to the main building, the Heroes Temple was erected in 1931 for the memory of the Jews who fought in the Hungarian Army during the World War One. The building of the Jewish Museum was erected between 1930-1931 and it was inaugurated in 1932. It came to accommodate a collection of religious and profane objects that have been on display in other locations since 1915. Closed during the Second World War the museum reopened in 1947. The most valuable objects have been saved by two employees of the Hungarian National Museum that have preserved these artifacts in some of the National Museum's chests. Although the activity restarted under socialism, the museum's faith was rather bitter: it even closed its doors once, due to the lack of funds and the deterioration of the building. In December 1993 a large part of the exhibited objects were stolen, only to be later discovered abroad. By 1995 the building went through a much needed restoration and reopened the same year in its current organization.

During the socialist period, the Synagogue loses its symbolic integrative function, as all the assimilation processes flow through Party relations and State institutions. Only in 1991 the reconstruction of the Synagogue begins, funded partially by the state, partially by Jewish immigrants. The restoration process is part of a larger new social and political configuration which takes form during the '90s. The opening of the Hungarian society towards the Western countries represented an important element which enhanced a certain form of remembrance of the past in the postsocialist context. In 1988 the Hungarian Jewish Cultural Association came into being, and this founding act was again centered on Holocaust and martyrdom. The membership numbering began with the number 600,001, as a symbolic act of commemoration of the *Shoah's* victims (Komoroczy, 1999). In 1989 the Budapest office of Jewish World Congress was opened, a line of Hebrew and Jewish Studies started at the "Eötvös Lorand" University, a Hungarian-Israeli Friendship Society was founded, and, at the highest political level, the diplomatic relations between Budapest and Tel Aviv were reinstated.

During the postsocialist period and after, a continuous process towards making collective victimhood the central point of the Synagogue site can be observed. The Jewish community needed a reference point to claim a common and unique identity. The choice of the former Neolog symbolic and administrative place is not a random one. It reflects a double historical identitarian choice of

the Jewish community, crystallized at the beginning of the postsocialist era. During the winter of 1988-1989, the Hungarian Jewish circles were caught in a major debate over the nationality status of their community because of the emerging Hungarian law regarding the status of the national and ethnic minorities, a status which guarantees certain collective rights for them. The Jews were asked to declare their nationality during the census but most of them refused and followed the old Jewish politics of integration and assimilation in the Hungarian nation. It is very probable that the prosecutions suffered enhanced the need of the Jewish people to become part of the majority group. However, if on the one hand the adopted political position is the "safe" one, on the other hand, a necessity of creating a unique, coherent Jewish identity and community becomes manifest. Therefore, hegemonic elements of discourse are added and incorporated in places of memory and become parts of the process of their construction. It is interesting to see how a sacred place designed to support the moderate reformist wing of the Jewish community becomes the most important symbol of Jewishness as bounded and closed group or, in other words, how a discourse of quasi-assimilation becomes an exclusionary one during the socialist and mostly during the postsocialist period.

Selecting only particular experiences in social memory sites represents a way of forgetting since the collective meanings are constructed through exclusion as much as through identification. "We", the Jews, represents as much a voice as the possibility of silencing all the other voices, no matter if these are individual stories, forms of resistance, people who refused to be included in the Ghetto in 1944, Zionist groups which try to put pressure on Hungarian authorities and on international decision-making bodies, quick conversions for escaping the faith of their fellows or foreseenings of the tragic events and choosing *Aliyyah* to Palestine. Treating the Holocaust as a singular, unique, and exceptional event means also silencing other forms of victimhood except for death. The gradual (and legal) exclusion of the Jews from public life, from national Hungarian culture, from white-collar professions, from higher education and from owning property, the Jewish labour battalions, the ban on the marriages between Jews and Gentiles, and the whole definition of Jewry in terms of race, are generally regarded by historians as being preparatory steps for the tragic faith of the Jews during the war. Many forms of disempowerment and humiliation are part of the anti-Semitic Hungarian policy between 1920 and 1945. However, what the community chooses to remember publicly, through its social memory sites, is death itself, which transforms collective suffering into martyrdom and sets the historical roles of the victims, executioners, and saviors.

The politics of representation are obvious if we consider the relationship between memory and history as embodied in the Synagogue complex. Not only are the monuments surrounding the Synagogue constructed following the rhetoric

of the Holocaust but also exclude almost completely the historical event itself. In social memory literature, the transformation of space in a commemoration site for the Jewish community as victims of the Holocaust was sometimes called the ghetto-ization of Budapest (Cole, 2000). The choice of placing such an important commemorative complex around the Synagogue follows only a discursive and an economic logic, since actually the Jews from the Budapest ghetto did not have a completely similar faith as the rest of the Hungarian Jews. While the Jews in the Hungarian provinces were basically decimated by the Nazi, many of the Jews in Budapest were spared deportation on the basis of Horthy's decision and 70,000 of them were still alive in the ghetto when the Soviet Army reached Budapest on January 18, 1945. The liberation of the ghetto by the Russian military forces is commemorated by a stone slab placed on the wall on Wesselenyi Utca, outside the space of commemoration dedicated to the Jews and their recognized and praised saviors. The inscription on which the Soviets are the main actors does not mention the Jews, but only the space of exclusion in which they were confined. On the slab, the following words are written: "In the Fascist period one of the gates to the Budapest ghetto stood here. The liberating Soviet Army broke down the ghetto walls on 18 January 1945". It is the place which is important, created by Fascists, and freed by the Red Army. The people themselves are excluded from the connection with the Soviet regime, and neither their victimhood, nor their can be associated an act of the Red Army.

An identity construction based on victimhood and disempowerment also requires silencing all the occasions in which members of the Jewish community were in power positions and used those power positions to oppress other people. Empowerment, especially the immoral one, cannot be associated in a coherent manner with the Jewish identity. During the late '40s there is a tendency to positive discrimination for compensating the suffering of the Jewish people during the war (Karady, 1986). Moreover, Jewish origin becomes a marker of ideological correctness which allows the members of the community to penetrate the higher education institutions, the Party and the work hierarchy of the time. There was no legitimacy of the new power, associated by the Hungarians with alien elements, the Soviets as the external deterministic force, and the Jews as the internal one. As Viktor Karady claims, in the first decades of socialism, the Jewish cadres "felt no qualms about occupying all the seats of power in the newly created Hungarian state, without the slightest regard to the historical symbolism – and to the great sensitivity – of these key positions. They behaved as if they did not have to give a thought to their Jewish origins" (Karady 1986: 119).

There is a continuous effort of the Jewish leaders to build one single, strong, and coherent community, not only at national, but also at international level. Nevertheless, looking at the history of Hungarian Jewry, one cannot find

many sources of coherence. Historically, the distinctions between Eastern and Western Jews, or between the ones oriented towards change and integration, and the Orthodox ones were sometimes more important than the Jew/Non-Jew distinction. In Budapest, different perspectives on the place of the Jews in the Hungarian society were enacted in three different communities, with separate religious, educational, and administrative bodies. They were grouped around Dohany Utca, Rumbach Sebestyen Utca, and Kazinczy Utca Synagogues, at the same time spatially connected and detached inside the Pest Jewish neighborhood. It was under the communist regime when the sources of difference within the community were erased. It began in 1948 when the communist authorities forbid the legal and illegal immigration to Palestine and banned the Zionist organizations, under the paradoxical pretext that the routes to Middle East constituted possibilities for Nazi people to escape Hungary. Until 1949 the different wings of the Jewish community, Neolog, Orthodox, and Status quo were forbidden by the socialist regime, this being the first politically forced step towards the construction of a unified Jewish community. Although before the war the Synagogue in Dohany Utca was the center of the Neolog wing of the Budapest Jewry, in the postsocialist context, after decades in which the whole discourse around Holocaust evolved, the progressive house of prayer became the symbolic axis of the entire imagined and desired Jewish community, precisely through adding the memorial dimension of the place. Thus a "mythic logic" (Olick, Robbins, 1998) is instated in place defining the basic elements of a model for the politically correct representation of the Holocaust and consequently of the Jewish identity.

Taking a guided tour of the Synagogue seems to be the best way to comprehend what the place stands for, what hegemonic meanings are voiced, what experiences are silenced, and how certain representations about the Jewish community come to life only within a fully relational configuration of present actors, including Hungarian State, Christianity, other ethnic and religious minorities from Hungary, or international politics. There are several central themes which put the Hungarian Jews in relation with other social categories. First, the guide talks repeatedly about the integration of the Jews within the Hungarian life. At the very beginning of the tour, the guide emphasized how the Synagogue gives people a "Church feeling", being built in a "basilica style". The historical context of its construction is presented in relation to the "independence movement" of 1848-49 when Jews have devoted themselves to the Hungarian cause because they were "well integrated into the Hungarian society". The Holocaust itself is used to accentuate the temporal fracture between "before" – when Hungary was a "normal" country, and "after", in 1944 when the Nazis came to power and everything collapsed. There is no responsibility placed on the shoulders of the Hungarians. Ordinary everyday life details like schools and

banks functioning are narrated for representing functionality and normality and there is no ambiguity around the oppressors: violence, crime, and humiliation were brought by the Nazi. As we also showed in the section dedicated to the historical development of the discourse around the Holocaust, there is no mention about the anti-Semitic Hungarian policy between 1920 and 1945.

As we mentioned above, loyalty is what defines the relationship between Jewish minority and the Hungarian State. The guide shows how the Hungarian State covers all the costs for maintenance of the Synagogue, for facilities, and for the salaries of the staff. There were also two periods of restoration: in 1950 and 1991 to 1997 and each time the State paid the costs. The guide tells that there are four supported religions in Hungary: Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran and Jewish. This is a problem because there are many other religious communities that feel "harmed" by State policy and it becomes a reason to "hate" the Jews. The situation of another minority, "the Gypsies", is used also to underline the centrality and the desirability of a complete integration within the majority way of life. To be part of a larger community is a reason of pride, a valued form of loyalty which is alien to the Roma people. As the guide says, "the big problem with the Gypsies is that they don't want to assimilate", and this is obvious because of their "low education, which is their fault, because they have the chance to learn but they just don't do it. They only want money from the state." The guide ensures the visitors that "she knows what she is saying" because she was a teacher.

The way all these complex social relations are represented, partly silenced and partly explained transform the Synagogue in a space where meanings are produced and reproduced as "proper" ways of imagining communities. Nonetheless, the present study shows that the urban space of postsocialist Budapest represents also a public arena able to accommodate counterhegemonic discourses. In different places, different logics of remembrance emerge. They can complement, contradict or even conflict each other, but they are connected in a broader, more complete and more generous narrative in which what is silenced in one place is voiced in another.

The Stolpersteine project started in 1993 when the artist Günter Demnig exhibited 200 plaques commemorating Sinti and Roma victims of the Holocaust in Cologne. He went on to place stones in a few places in Cologne and Berlin, although first lacking an official authorization. By 1997 Demnig's work attracted enough attention for him to start being invited by various foundations to place his "stumbling stones" both in Germany and abroad. Since then the project has been a definite success, more than 12,000 stones have been placed and the schedule available on the project's website shows that the artist is working almost daily throughout the year. The Stolpersteine have also sparked controversy in some communities, the most notable case

being München, where both the local administration and the Jewish community have opposed the project on different grounds. The local representatives claimed that the projects intentions are noble, but in practice these noble intentions will be destroyed by vandalism. The Jewish association saw the project as yet another occasion for Jewish names to be trampled on. In spite of that, stumbling stones have been finally installed in the city albeit on privately owned land and an action group emerged to pressure the local representatives to accept the project[2].

The usual procedure for mounting a stone is as follows: the information inscribed on the stones by Demnig comes from school teachers and youths, relatives of the victims, or the various foundations that investigate facts about people who were deported or persecuted during the regime of Nazi Germany. Once the investigation work has been done, Demnig manufactures a concrete cube of 10 cm, which he covers with a sheet of brass. Then he adds the writing "Here lived", the name, year of birth and the fate: mostly the date of deportation and of death. The Stolperstein is then put down flush in the pavement/ sidewalk in front of the former residence of the victim. The financial requirements are covered by donations, collections, individual citizens, contemporary witnesses, school classes, or communities. One Stolperstein costs €95, which covers the actual cost of the cube and contributes towards the artists living expenses.

As we said at the beginning of the essay, we identified four dichotomic dimensions which are helpful in organizing our findings: individual/collective, open/closed, life/death and victim/savior. This form of analysis allows us to follow the changes in the discursive practices of the socialist and of the postsocialist periods and to see for whom these places speak. We follow the stories of the two monuments, exploring the different ways of representing the Jews which were in place in various historical settings.

Realms of Memory: The Case of Budapest

The two monuments can be analyzed on an individual/collective dimension. The stones on Raday Utca refer to individuals, each of them carrying the name of one person, and being placed in front of the house where the person actually lived. The victims are assigned a name, an age, and a house, and even their death, far from being related only to a collective faith, is concretely placed in time and space and it has an individual significance. For example, the inscription on one of the stones reads:

> Here lived Szinai Sandor, born in 1917, died in 1945, during his service in a forced labor detachment at Sopron.

[2] See: http://www.stolpersteine-muenchen.de/Aktuell/aktuell-english.htm, accessed on: 18.08.2008.

The identification of the Stones with a place is extremely important for the way the monument functions. The act of remembering is dedicated to a person and to a life as the Stones make the idea of "home" phenomenologically accessible. The dialectic relationship between individual and collective is very subtle for this monument: as the project takes place around Europe each stone is in relation with the more than 12.000 stones scattered around the continent. This relationship is not an experiential or a visual one and can be understood only by those who know the meaning given by the artist to his work and to those who are aware of the existence of a community of memory around the Stones.

Photo: Alina-Sandra Cucu and Florin Faje

Following a different logic of representation, the willow at the Synagogue is a symbol of collective victimhood. Although, the names of the victims are present, all the named persons are part of the same organism, leaves of the willow tree, and the inscription on the monument reads:

> This monument was built by the Emmanuel Foundation in the memory of 600 000 Hungarian Jewish martyrs, who were the victims of a cruelty unique in history. 8 July 1990, during the presidency of Keller Laszlo.

Looking at victims through numbers means excluding the personal, unique and possibly contradictory experiences that mark a community. While the Stones are not visible because of their size and position, the names of the people in the Memorial Tree are invisible because of their collective and impersonal representation. The quote above also sets the main components of the particular discourse around the Jewish community, centered on martyrdom, victimhood, and uniqueness. It is this exceptionality of the Jews' historical faith that is a desirable feature to be associated with for the political power, here represented by its highest symbolical authority. And it is the martyrdom

of the Jewish people which is connected to the name of an international foundation which has among its most distinguished members many politicians, including US Jewish senators. The purpose of the foundation is to perpetuate the Jewish memory of the Holocaust and the history of the Jewish community in Hungary. It is concerned with restoring old synagogues and historical Jewish monuments and it was the initiator of the Raoul Wallenberg memorial at the Synagogue.

The stereotypical Jewish images exhibited by the small shops around the Synagogue go hand in hand with the portrayal of the Jewish community as an undifferentiated and unchanging collectivity constructed by the commemorative site. Since the Synagogue is one of the major touristic attractions in Budapest**,** an industry of memory is developing around it, proving that "'Shoah' business is big business" (Cole, 2000). Colorful postcards, miniature kipas or menorahs, dolls representing orthodox Jews with a Santa laughter and small silver stars are sold as images of the "typical" Jew. But what really seems to makes the Jewish people a community is the death itself. At the Synagogue, commodifying memory means actually selling death, all the objects which are sold around the temple being valuable precisely because they represent the identity of the victims themselves. Not only individual experiences are silenced in this embodiment of selective memory, but also other collective stories, like what happened to the Jews who returned to Budapest after the war. Their story is not connected to any monument, street, building, or square, and there is no place for the memories of the survivors (Komoroczy, 1999).

Photo: Alina-Sandra Cucu and Florin Faje

For almost half of the 20th century, the monument at the Synagogue constituted more a memory site for the liberators than for the victims. The victim/savior dimension is central even today and actualized in the Raoul Wallenberg Park. The inscription at the entrance of the park is the first sign of this double treatment of victims and rescuers and of the centrality of the latter.

> May this park commemorate as an exclamation mark for the post-Holocaust generations the name of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg who saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews. May it also remind all of the hundreds of thousands of Jewish martyrs, of the labour-camp inmates who died unknown, and of all those righteous men and women who, putting their own lives at risk, saved persecutees of certain death.

There is a collective representation of the rescuers of the Jews during the World War II on four marble blocks surrounding Wallenberg's false grave. Although the monument for Raoul Wallenberg is very similar to a grave, he is not buried there. Actually, his body was never found and it is supposed that he was deported and killed by the Soviets after the war. Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who helped many Hungarian Jews to escape the Nazi terror is the only individual figure of the Synagogue complex and through his unique representation the memories of rescue are made more important than the victimhood itself. The performance of the visitors is conducted in the same direction: the stones can be added only to Wallenberg's grave and the guides spend much more time at the rescuers' monument than at the symbolic representations of the Jewish people, explaining every symbol to the visitors. The language used emphasizes the central role of the rescuers whose fight against Fascism reproduces the eternal myth of the battle between Good and Evil and the opposition between the collective portrayal of the Jewish community and the individuality of the rescuers continuously enhances the narrative construction of victimhood as an ethnic identity marker for the Jewish people.

The Jewish tradition of putting stones at graves is central both in the Memorial Park at the Synagogue, and in the Stolpersteine project. There are two equally recognized roots of this tradition. First, the gesture is a symbol of remembrance, a sign that others have previously visited the tomb. Second, there is an old tradition originating in the Antiquity when the tombs were made of stones and always in the making, people contributing to it by adding stones when passing. Yet again, in the case of the Synagogue, the centrality of the traditional gesture is reserved to the savior, Raoul Wallenberg, while the project on Raday Utca keeps alive the memory of each of the remembered deported individuals.

Photo: Alina-Sandra Cucu and Florin Faje

Although both monuments are commemorative, Stolpersteine is centered on the life of the individuals, while the monuments at the Synagogue focus almost exclusively on death. The Stones present the minimum information needed for the monument to become an act of remembering of a real person. The emphasis is on the fact that a particular individual was among the victims of the Holocaust. Seeing the stone in front of a particular house, located in a specific place in Budapest constructs the memory of a singular life, a real person, with family, profession, and a home. The Stones communicate multiple meanings, and, as one of our informants said, "they trigger reflection". Being involved in the project, the bookshop keeper on Raday utca watches sometimes people passing, tourists, families with small children, old people, or new managers working. He actively monitors the "success" of the Stones as it was understood when they were placed:

> The other day I saw a couple with a small child. She saw the stone and showed it to her husband. They talked about it and they looked the house next to it. They were wondering if the person lived there and they were trying to imagine which ones were the windows of the apartment. She asked if the man is still alive or if the relatives still live there. Her husband replied: He would have come back if he had been alive but maybe the relatives are still there.

At the Synagogue the desired meaning is mechanically transmitted; there are guided tours and the visitors are explained the symbolic value of every object. The complex stresses the collective faith of Jews during the Holocaust without any individual references. The guided tours begin in the Memorial Park. They continue in the Synagogue, where the discourse is professional, centered on the architectural qualities of the monument. The last stop is the Jewish Museum in which the space is organized to suggest a journey from life to death. The first three chambers present religious and everyday objects with less information regarding the particular origin of these objects than in other museums. The lack of such information decontextualizes and depersonalizes the objects and consequently, everyday life appears to be the less important part of Jewish identity. These chambers lead the visitor to the last, dark room presenting the story of the Holocaust. All the images and the objects exposed in this room refer to the death of the Jews, the central pieces in the room being the objects from the concentration camps. The guides spend little time in the first chambers and hurry people to enter the last room. Approximately two thirds of the visit in the Museum is dedicated to the story of the Holocaust. The Jews are depicted as completely powerless, passive victims of a force above them, so there are no individual voices and no stories of resistance. Time freezes once one enters the last room of the Museum as at this point the visual narrative of the Hungarian Jewish life stops. There is no depiction of the life under the socialist regime and in the postsocialist era.

Another important element in the way identity is constructed by the two monuments is their openness, both in spatial terms and as communicative acts. On one hand, the Synagogue complex represents both a closed space and a finished project. The monuments are concentrated around the building and the entrances are guarded. The small changes suffered in time by the monument are all inside the complex and as we showed above, the changes in meaning are at the most partial. On the other hand, Stolpersteine is open both spatially and as a project. The Stones are placed in a public everyday life and it is precisely their "invisibility" what that them part of the ordinary space without fracturing it. Also the project itself is open as interested people can still get involved, therefore if at a local level the Stones are very small, the space occupied by the idea itself is much larger. It is a continuous process which connects many localities and many actors, at different levels, without involving directly the political power as initiator, and requiring a deeper, and more active connection to the act of remembrance.

Concluding remarks

Memory sites are infused with power both as places and as possibilities of constructing or ossifying the identity of a community. There is a rhetoric of memory, remembrance and political correctness in the monument from the Synagogue which is almost absent in the Stones. If we consider the memorial park

as a *lieu de memoire* we can see that this place participates in the reproduction of the representation of the Jewish community as collective, impersonal, and undifferentiated victims, while the Stones value the specificity and uniqueness of human existence. However, while our research shows that the Synagogue can be seen more as a *lieu de memoire* and the Stones rather as a *milieu de memoire*, our findings also imply that this is only an analytical distinction. When analyzing actual social memory sites these two are the limits of a broad range and the monuments can be distributed in between them.

While the monuments at the Synagogue are constituted through political acts (the inscription on the willow monument even mentions the name of the Hungarian president in office at the time of the inauguration), the project on Raday Utca is the result of a series of personal acts. The project is open to people who want to add stones and the artist works at request. This implies a personal decision and effort. There are individuals who decide to add a stone and they need to collect information and to choose a person to be remembered. The implication into the project is active and the act itself involves multiple decisions, not a single political act. Therefore, the Stones are constituted through a more direct relation to an organic type of memory. Claiming that Stolpersteine is closer to a *milieu de memoire* we show that there is an active and alive community of memory around it. Almost nobody who works or lives on Raday Utca knew about the Stones when we ask them and the representatives of the Jewish community were not even present at the inauguration of the Stones so the community is formed neither by the people who are physically close to the Stones nor by the Jewish community, but by people at great distance from one another, sharing the act of adding a stone to the memory of a single person. The special form of community formed around the Stolpersteine can be interpreted in the same time as a form of empowering through an act of resistance to the dominant politics of memory. This feeling of empowerment was captured by one of our informants who emphasized how the Stones embody a personal and not a political act of remembrance. For him the Stones were "alive" while the more classical monuments of collective memory were "empty and dirty".

Historical dramas represent strong links of the community. But in order to function in this sense, they have to be selected through an act of will, which is always a political act, in the broadest sense. Correspondingly, the politics of memory have the function to create an identification for the entire community. Following this understanding, the Holocaust can be seen as a historical possibility (Benjamin 1986), which constitutes the 20th century Jewish identity. Choosing a role for the community, as the role of victim in this case, means collapsing a multiplicity of individual experiences and sometimes contradictory understandings of the past into an inevitable reductionist representation. In this sense the postsocialist period gains a new significance in that it allows for the emergence of alternative narratives able to restructure the memory of specific communities, thus showing that there is no exclusive "proper" way to remember the Holocaust.

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE DIGITAL ART GALLERY 115

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ABSTRACT. The present article investigates the local relations of power established among the social actors that interact within the social space, the creators of digital art and the curator of the only digital art gallery from Eastern Europe, 115. Such inquiry occasions a reflection on the gallery as a place that stabilizes, gives durability and structures the relations that come about in the physical space between social categories while opening a new empirical space to explore the incentives that determine the producers of digital art to move their creations inside the gallery 115. Despite being recognized in the virtual space, characterized by Internet pages or loggings as members in virtual communities dedicated to digital art, the newly formed cultural expression becomes real the moment it is exhibited, as it is assimilated, recognized, identified by a wider range of individuals as a legitimate means of creation. Hence, by exhibiting digital art in a gallery, by being printed and mechanically reproduced, an upgrading from a deviant one, a construction of behavior and appearances take place. The analysis suggests that the creators of digital art engaged in an exchange process of social memories, interpretations and representations are a mixture of these different spaces - physical and virtual. The issue of social space is tackled, throughout the paper, as a means of production, control, and domination (Lefebvre, 1991), as a facilitator of network creation (Gieryn, 2000) or as a social construction (Low, 1996). Finally, understanding the links between the symbolic experience of the social space and the cultural meanings ascribed to 115, will help specify the curator as one that possesses the ability of encompassing the features of a legitimised force of power.

Keywords: digital art gallery; social construction and social production of space; legitimization; need of physicality

It is the time for a crossover in contemporary art

The present research paper aims at spatialising human experience, that is the process of locating, from a physical and conceptual point of view, social relations and social practices within the social space (Low, 1996). To be more precise, I analyse the influence of the digital art gallery upon the career-track

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of the creators of digital art, and the relations established between the social actors that interact in this social space, the producers of digital art and the curator, the liaison between these social forces.

Much of the work done so far has been centred on the analysis of the curator as being instrumental in the projection of the museum perception focused on conservation and scholarship, and not on education, public outreach, exhibitions (DiMaggio, 1991; Zolberg 1981); or as being a social actor interested in the artistic styles of the work of art itself rather than in the core idea of an exhibition (Thompson, 1967); on the study of the virtual space as a mean of affecting the use of communication media by social relationships, organizational structures, local norms (Finholt and Sproull, 1990; Lea et all, 1995; Zack and McKenney, 1995); as an exchange of social support, a provider of a sense of belonging, despite the fact that the individuals met in a virtual room is hardly known (Walther, 1996; Wellman&Gulia, 1996). Little attention has been given however, to the need of digital art to become legitimate by "moving inside a gallery", to the relations of power that raise within the interaction between the producers of digital art and the gallery, but also to the relations that come about between the creators of digital art in the virtual space.

The reasons that lie behind my choice are the attention given lately to this cultural alternative by the traditional art, but most of all the controversies born as a result of this new wave of contemporary art. New art forms or new artistic applications have always been looked upon with suspicion bringing uneasiness and confusion. Digital art undergoes the same fate.

Digital art is defined as an art created or altered through a computational process. It can either be purely computer-generated (fractals and algorithmic art), taken from another source (scanned photograph) or an image drawn directly in vector graphics based software such as Adobe Illustrator, that is the images drawn with the help of a mouse or graphics tablet. Despite the fact that from a technical point of view, the term may be applied to art done using other media or processes, it is usually reserved for art that has been non-trivially modified by a computing process. By computer process one has to understand a computer program, micro controller or any electronic system capable of interpreting an input to create an output. Digital art does not refer to digitised text data and raw audio and video recordings taken as them but rather as a part of a larger project. The photograph manipulation software by their availability and popularity has spawned a vast and creative library of highly modified images, many bearing little or no hint of the original image. 3D Graphics is the result of creating complex images out of the geometrical forms, polygons and curves. Digital artists may manipulate scanned drawings, paintings, collages or lithographs, as well as using electronic versions of brushes, filters combination. Artists also use many other sources of information and programs such as Cinema 4D, 3D Max or Maya to create their work.

Digital art thrives on the Internet. This feature of the virtual space, the ability to come about and facilitate the interactions between the creators of digital art, which facilitates the process of headhunting. The curator of the digital art has the possibility of transforming the virtual space into an advertising agency. The global market of digital art is one characterized by an exchange of the digital art as a commodity between the producers of digital art and the consumers (the gallery). This network of commodity chains is one characterized by a linkage of input stage as a local combination of commodities and together the phases form a finished good sold in the global marketplace (McMichael, 2003). Applying this to our case, the gallery "consumes" the final product of digital art in a commodity chain, participating in a global process that links it to a variety of places, people, and resources. The chain is one characterized by the common effort of numerous creators of digital art, by the exchange of information, advice in the virtual space through the virtual galleries and the art forum. A development in a variety of artists and techniques is a result of direct competition on forums, on-line galleries and invitations for a friendly challenge sent to everyone. What some consider a major leak of information and resources, others regard as vital data flow and digital blessing.

The virtual space can be defined as well as the physical one by the social construction. The producers of digital art invest with meaning the actions of exhibiting or logging on. They create a mental map based on which they latter on develop networks. Only the best are chosen, only those artists who come up with something that breaks through all boundaries or makes a statement are worth observing a potential evolution. The virtual space becomes a space where information, impressions are changed. When comparing the relations that emerge in a physical space with the one from a virtual one, the number of interactions overpasses the one of face-to-face, as one of the most important characteristics of the latter is the unlimited access.

As virtual space cannot be defined in terms of geographic location or physicality, it needs a means through which the economic, social factors create a material setting. This is accomplished through the birth of a gallery of digital art. It allows, in other words, the combination of spatial production and social construction to happen. Furthermore, without the physical location of such a place, the interaction between the producers and the consumers would be a more restricted one. Nevertheless, a feeling of close-unit group might appear. The interaction takes place only among those who possess the proper background for an understanding of digital art. It excludes all those who do not engage in the same activities. In order to address a wider public, to express the digital creations in a more accessible way, the gallery was created. It is a tool of communication between the well and the less endowed.

The digital art gallery 115 is the only one from the East-Central Europe and is situated in the Romanian capital, Bucharest. It defines its purpose as having a double challenge: to offer digital artists from around the world the chance to be acknowledged for their art and talent while bringing digital art to the public. It describes its attempts to achieve its goals by organizing and continuing to organize workshops, meetings and events, exhibitions in unconventional places, live digital performances and "a lot of personal, thematic and group exhibitions"(SB). Its most important goal is to get the digital art creations out of their virtual world and exhibit them in the finalized form of canvas art prints.

Due to the concerns related to the labour amount that lies behind the digital works of art, the purpose of this paper is to contradict the apparent reason for not taking digital art seriously because of its strict association with the computer, "a kind of magical box that does it by itself on your behalf" (Tiron, 2008). The computer simply enabled some to skip the usual academic education in the field and acquire skills without the patronizing environment of the education, skills that are not passed on from one person to another but rather from computer to computer. The effort is extremely laborious even though it does not show. Digital art does not mean, in other words, a creation of the computer solely but rather a composition made with the help of the computer. The technological improvements are the means through which traditional art as we all know and perceive it, has evolved, redefined it. This newly formed cultural expression did not intend to replace or declare itself as being superior to the traditional art, at no moment in time in spite of the controversies, which have come about. Hence the objects of the research are related to the need of such form of art to become legitimate by "moving inside a gallery", to the relations of power that rise within the interaction between the producers of digital art and the gallery.

The interrogations of the present paper can be summed up as: what incentives the producers of digital art to move their work inside a gallery of digital art when they have already attainted fame in the virtual space? To be more precise, what causes the need of physicality of the virtual space? In addition, what are the relations that come about during the interactions between the gallery 115 and the producers of digital art? From the interrogations, one can formulate the thesis of the research: the need of becoming a legitimate art determines the creators of digital art to exhibit in a gallery; the relations between the gallery 115 and the creators of digital art are mediated by power.

Due to the desire of obtaining valid and viable results, I have opted for semi-structured interviews with a variety of producers of digital art and the curator of the digital art gallery 115, 1 focus group with 7 creators of digital art and un-structured observation at the digital art Gallery 115. The sample was selected based on those who have being offered the possibility of exhibiting

their digital creations at the 115 Gallery, the only gallery of digital art from Eastern Europe. Hence, their status as producers of digital art must be reckoned with. First of all, I am going to tackle the issue of social space from various perspectives: as a means of production, control, and domination (Lefebvre, 1991), as a facilitator of network creation (Gieryn, 2000) or as a social construction (Low, 1996). Secondly, the creators of digital art are going to be analysed as a mixture of two different spaces: the physical one and the virtual one, keeping in mind the uniqueness of a digital picture and the implications that lead to this quality. Lastly, attention will be given to the symbolic experience of the social space of the gallery as one defined either by control and power on behalf of the curator or as an exchange of social memories from the creators of digital art.

Theoretical framing of digital art

Turning our attention towards the theoretical part of the paper, an essential feature must be underlined: the aim of the research, the locating of human experience cannot be understood without several concepts such as social construction of space and social production of space. They must not be perceived as contradictory but rather as complementary terms. By integrating these perspectives, one conceptualises the forces that produce it, while ascribing the social agents as their own creators of realities and meanings (Low, 1996). Essential for the understanding of the two concepts mentioned above, is the distinction between space and place, distinction underlined by Gieryn (2000). Space is properly conceived of abstract geometries (distance, direction, site, shape, volume) detached from the cultural interpretation (Gieryn, 2000). Contrary, place is invested with a unique gathering of things, meanings and values, it is filled out by people, practices, objects, representations (Gieryn, 2000). It facilitates the face-to-face interaction between producers of digital art, which lead to the creation of networks, and eases the possibility of collective actions. Most of all, the place of the digital art gallery by routinising the activities of the digital art creators in a manner that exclude and segregate other individuals who do not possess the knowledge and talent of creating digital art and embodies, at the same time, in visible and tangible ways the cultural meanings ascribed to them. Place stabilizes and gives durability to social structural categories, differences and hierarchies, arranges patterns of face to face interaction that constitute network formation and collective action, embodies and secures otherwise intangible cultural norms, identities, memories, values (Gieryn, 2000). Also, place sustains difference and hierarchy both by routinising daily rounds in ways that exclude or segregate categories of people and by embodying in visible and tangible ways the cultural meanings ascribed to them (Gieryn, 2000).

A particular attention must be given to the perspective of Lefebvre (1991) on social space. He states that social space incorporates social actions as the behaviour of the space is one within which they develop, give expression to themselves, encounter prohibitions. Social process (exchange, conflict, control) mediate the phenomenological and symbolic experience of space, which are defined by the social construction of space (Low, 1996). The space produced serves as a tool of thought and of action; in addition of being a means of production, it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power (Lefebvre, 1991). The same idea of stability found in Gieryn's work on production of space is to be met here, also. It is stated that spatial practice embraces production and reproduction of the space and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation; it ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion (Levebvre, 1991). An important fact is the perception of the space as an element of the productive forces in society. Alongside of technology, human knowledge, and labour power it is perceived as contributing to our productive potential (Levebvre, 1991). "Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations" (Lefebvre, 1991: 286).

Central to our understanding of the power relations between the producers of digital art and the gallery, the means through which the art becomes legitimate is the perception of a power dependence relation whose core lies on Emerson's theory on social relations (1972a, 1972b). Starting from this theory that revolves around power, power use and power balancing operations, resting at the same time on the central concept of dependence, Molm (2001) took it further and stated that the relations of dependence bring people together, creating at the same time inequalities in power that can lead to conflict and social change . The dependence of an actor on another is valued by the extent to which outcomes valued by the actor are contingent on exchange with the other (Molm, 2001). Applying this to our case, the creators' dependence on the gallery represented by the curator increases with the value of the resources (the ability to evaluate a piece) controlled by the curator and decreases with their alternative sources of those resources (Molm, 2001). In other words, the curator decides upon the outcome, the piece, by being the one that can define it as being true art or a mere attempt. The curator and the gallery are described as being in a mutual dependence as the gallery's power derives from it and is equal to the creators' dependence on the curator and vice versa (Molm, 2001). However, this perception described in the above lines is a rationalist one, failing to take into account the concept of culture, to be more precise the manner in which the producers of digital art define the space of the gallery, relate to it, construct around it the meanings and values of digital art, interpret, represent and identify the social space. This is exactly

what the present paper tries to emphasise through the use of the concept defined by Low, of social construction of space understood as being mediated by social processes such as conflict, control (Low, 1996).

The dimension fitted for the present paper is the one of imbalance cohesion as the creator is more dependent on the curator, the latter having a power advantage in the relation as it possesses the institutionalised cultural capital as well as the social status for passing a judgement on what is truly art. The greater the mutual dependence of the two actors on each other the greater their cohesion is. According to this formulation, the more dependent the creators are on the curator for rewards (in this case on the recognition of their creation as art and implicitly on the possibility of exhibiting in a gallery, legitimising in this manner digital art) the higher the potential cost that curator can impose on the producers of digital art by not providing those rewards (offering the possibility of exhibiting a digital picture).

The producers of digital art and their digital creations

The creators of digital art organize themselves in the virtual space into networks, which are expected to interact with the networks of perceptions. Furthermore, they are dependent upon the gallery's aesthetical perception of their creations while being constantly under the supervision of their colleagues or other digital art galleries. They are a mixture of two different spaces: the physical one (their exhibiting in the gallery) and the virtual one (their Internet pages or loggings in as members in virtual communities dedicated to virtual art). The social networks formed in both types of spaces mediate to a certain extend the implication of the creator of a digital art. The social group can either show interest, offer the support needed in order to help the evolution of a digital artist through signs of appreciation or it can simply choose not to react condemning in this way, the artist to anonymity. One of the most consequences of the interaction between similar creators of digital art are the opportunities of knowing as a result of a continuous competition and the possibility of receiving feedbacks, learning tricks, discovering tips, in one word, learning in an unconventional manner.

A digital picture is invested with symbolic meaning the moment other producers of digital art recognize it. Hence, by identifying it, latter on with the producer, a statement is made. It is essential the impact it has on the viewer and the way it be conceived. The more innovative the technique, the more out of the ordinary the messages are, the higher is the investment with value and meaning. The virtual space is transformed through the interaction between digital pictures and individuals. Moreover, the producers of digital art create networks in the virtual space as the technology can enable collaboration, helping the creators to come up with a single digital picture.

In order to better understand a digital creation, one must analyse the manner in which Benjamin (1968[1955]) used the word "aura" in relation to the concept of uniqueness. For him “aura” refers to the sense of awe and reverence a person presumably experiences in the presence of unique works of art. This aura inheres not in the object itself but rather in the external attributes such as its known line of ownership, its restricted exhibition, its publicized authenticity, or its cultural value. When it comes to the uniqueness of a creation, Benjamin underlines this value as being related to tradition, its base is to be found in ritual. However, the appearance of new forms of art (in our case, the digital art) and the possibility of mechanical reproducibility meant that the experience of art could be freed from place and ritual and instead brought under the gaze and control of a mass audience. This is exactly what the gallery attempts to do: bring digital art to the public by printing it on canvas, reproducing it mechanically. The direct, intimate fusion of visual and emotional enjoyment with the orientation of the expert (the curator, the holder of an institutionalised cultural capital is the main feature of a progressive reaction. A withering of the aura takes place making the cultural objects accessible to everyone, exhibiting them in the gallery, allowing at the same time a development of a critical attitude toward them. The moment an artistic creation is evaluated according to a criterion of authenticity, the function of art is reversed becoming one based on politics (Benjamin, 1968 [1955]). In this case the accent is put on the exhibition value of the artwork, the artistic function.

The 115 Gallery in Bucharest

Defined as a room or a set of rooms where pieces of art are exhibited, the 115 Digital Art Gallery is situated in the Romanian capital, Bucharest, near a central square, Romana, at the crossroads of important streets, Magheru and Dacia. However, the access to the digital art gallery is not as easy as it may seem. Situated on a little street, its importance given only by its name, Mihai Eminescu, the gallery is hidden to the public and unknown to the inhabitants' eyes. An antagonism is, nevertheless, observed the moment one approaches the gallery. Even though it intends to make itself known only to the “qualified eye”, the display area betrays a purpose of commercial. With large windows opening in the street, the gallery invites any person to take a look, to spy the pieces of art. A welcoming soft music and a black and white pavement welcomes the visitor. The gallery occupies the lower floor of an old mansion. It spreads itself on two large rooms, the area of display of the digital art, one smaller room, the office and a backyard shared with other companies. The ceilings are high stimulating the consumer of digital art to observe and enjoy the exposed pieces of art on the vertical, encouraging at the same time a sense of freedom,

a freer, more abstract thinking, (Meyers-Levy, 2007) One can find at each step printed information regarding the present and actual exposition, not to mention the permanent help of the curator or the PR manager regarding any inquiries one might have when entering the gallery. One of the most unique things one can find in the gallery is the sitting area where one is invited to have a chat on any topic related to the current displayed pieces of art or to the artist betraying and underlining a desire to understand and get to know on a personal level the consumer of digital art or the a future buyer. An important element whose presence cannot be denied is the Mac accompanied by a graphical tablet, a means of encouraging any wanna-be digital artist to satisfy his/her curiosity.

Another attempt to facilitate the interaction between the consumer and the producer or the gallery and the buyer is the name itself of the gallery. Simple, without making any attempts to generalize and draw the boundaries between an eager for knowledge public and digital art, the name makes no reference to the purpose of the gallery. Naming itself according to the number of the house, 115, it creates a sense of availability, of opportunity to allow you to become a discoverer of the digital art.

The digital art gallery is the result of the bold choice of four young people with roots in the visual art sector (digital art, directing, painting), more or less related to the innovative art of digital painting. They have chosen the Romanian capital as the "place for innovative thoughts" (SB) out of subjective reasons: all are from Bucharest and all have studied here. They do not regret choosing this city, their only regret is linked to the geographical position of Romania and their loneliness on the market of Eastern Europe. "The beginning is always hard, one must position itself, explain what digital art is, making sure that you are perceived as a valuable force in the field of digital art" (SB). Nevertheless, they regard the disadvantage of being alone as a chance to educate a future audience, to make them understand the advantages of being able to affirm: "In Romania, there is the single digital art gallery from all the Eastern Europe".

115 Gallery offers limited editions of selected original artworks from artists around the world. Each print is carefully checked, numbered, approved by the curator, Silvana Bratu (SB) before being hand-furnished and framed. In the end, every single piece comes with a signed and numbered certificate attesting its authenticity. Furthermore, 115 Gallery underlines a prominent quality of an artwork and that is the ability to raise the quality of everyday life and sent direct messages to visitors by being displayed in personal spaces. Having this in mind, the staff of the digital gallery is "always ready to go over the size, decor and lighting of your space with you, so we can help you find the artworks you are looking for" (SB). Nevertheless, active defender of the artist's perspective, SB underlines the fact that one must not understand that the buyer is ordering

something, he has no say when it comes to the features of the picture, he can only decide, with the artist, upon the style, dimensions. "The creation is in the end 90% input of the artist. Even though, he expresses his choice, the buyer is still surprised in the end. We are not an advertising agency" (SB).

Analyzing 115 in terms of social construction of space, one can observe that the symbolic experience of the social space of the gallery is mediated by control on behalf of the curator and of exchange understood as a transformation of space with the help of the consumers' and producers' social memories, definitions of what digital art stands for, actions that convey symbolic meaning. Social construction of gallery's public space refers to the impact the forces engaged in the interactions have on the place itself. Those who exhibit or acquire new sources of objectified cultural capital invest the gallery with meaning and value. It is a result of the interpretations, representations and identification of the human practices of exploiting the digital art from an esthetical point of view or from a material, financial perspective. Moreover, the gallery's place stabilizes and gives durability to the social structural categories of producers and consumers of digital art. One of the most important implications of the materialization of digital art is the ability to differentiate and to hierarch the implication of agents according to their skills, interests, and amount of objectified cultural capital possessed, number of pieces of art bought. Furthermore, the gallery sustains this gap by daily rounds in ways that exclude or segregate categories of people (the limited access to the workshops organized by the gallery of digital art due to the lack of public promotion) and by embodying in visible and tangible ways the cultural meanings ascribed to them. As it has been previously mentioned, the place of the gallery arranges patterns of face-to-face interaction between the possible art producers and the already formed and socially recognized creators of digital art or between the curator and the consumer. One important thing must be mentioned and that is the quality of being socially and artistically recognized. An artist comes to possess this value after having acquired recognition in the virtual space of digital art sites and exhibiting in a gallery. In other words, he possess the excellence of being valued by the peers, the individuals who share the same interest in digital art and by a higher power, legitimate force or a possessor of institutionalised cultural capital.

Nevertheless, the attempts of the gallery to adjoin individuals with similar interests, passions for the digital art through workshops within the social space of the gallery, can lead to a felling of estrangement or a sense of engagement. Encouraging the sense of diversity, of tolerance integration, by encouraging public participation, personal network-formation and collective action are facilitated, creativity and freedom encouraged. The creators of digital art have the opportunity to establish connections, to secure the cultural norms of the digital art, intangible in other circumstances, to form the identity of

creator of digital art and the values associated with this distinction. Nonetheless, it can lead to a state of anonymity, loneliness for those who are unable to adapt or do no possess the necessary means to integrate them. As underlined in the above lines, according to Gieryn, the interaction between the producers of digital art and the consumers or the buyers and the digital art gallery, depends mostly on the number of people and their classification according to criteria such as class, taste, and lifestyle.

The social construction of the digital art gallery defines the symbolic experience of the creators and producers of digital art as being mediated by social processes such as conflict between the former and the gallery 115, exchange between the consumers and producers of digital art, control over the digital prints as the gallery is the one that decides in accordance to aesthetic norms what is art and what is not. Moreover, the place of the digital art gallery is one built, transformed through the interpretations, representations of the consumers of digital art as well as with the help of the producers' identification (it is the means through which their creations are noticed by a larger audience, hence a higher number of potential buyers and, at the same time, a manner through which their pieces are stabilized, receive durability). The gallery through the curator possesses the possibility of encompassing the features of a legitimised force of power. She is the one that takes the decision whether the creator of digital art truly creates, decides the originality of the digital picture based on talent, intuition, and the degree of knowledge of the techniques learned by the individual and finally accepts or denies the exhibition in the gallery. One of the most important consequences of the social construction of the gallery space, hence a crucial function of the gallery, is to differentiate and to hierarch the agents according to their skills, interests, and amount of objectified cultural capital possessed, number of pieces of art bought. The gallery transforms through the selection process a group with no structure into one that shares a common behaviour, goals. This is done through the regulation of activities of the potential or already famous digital artists through workshops and seminars, the facilitation of interaction for those who share the same passions, the providence of material resources (high-tech printers, canvas). In terms of financial relations, it is all a matter of investment and profit, of gains or loses. As the digital art makes an investment into the artist my printing the pieces, putting together a presentation catalogue, it expects to receive a profit either in terms of social recognition on the European market or in economical terms.

The gallery 115 stands foremost for a legitimate digital art. Despite being recognized in the virtual world, it only becomes real the moment is exhibited. It is not enough that individuals know it. In order to be assimilated by a wider population, it must be recognized, identified by a wider range of individuals as a legitimate means of creation. The gallery aims at contradicting

the erroneous impression that "the computer does it for you", the apparent reason for not taking digital art seriously because of its strict association with the computer, “a kind of magical box that does it by itself on your behalf” (Tiron, 2008). The computer simply enabled some to skip the usual academic education in the field and acquire skills without the patronizing environment of the education, skills that are not passed on from one person to another but rather form computer to computer. Digital art does not mean, in other words, a creation of the computer solely but rather a composition made with the help of the computer. The technological improvements are the means through which traditional art as we all know and perceive it, has evolved, redefined itself. The newly formed cultural expression, at no moment, intended to replace or declare itself as being superior to the traditional art, despite the controversies formulated around the topic of digital art. Another issue the appearance of the digital art gallery might solve is that of uniqueness as a digital picture can be over and over reprinted. The Gallery 115 underlines that the presence of a source folder does not diminish the quality or the legitimacy of the picture. Once a picture is printed on the canvas, the next one will be as authentic as the first one due to their mutual origin (the source folder). Hence one cannot talk about copies. Even though, one can talk about mechanical reproduction in the sense used by Benjamin (1968[1955]), it is a matter of reproductions as being able possess the ability to “substitute a plurality for a unique existence” (Benjamin (1968[1955]). In other words, the reprinting of a digital picture does not mean a copying of a digital creation but rather a re-enactment of its uniqueness.

Concluding discussion

The relation between the virtual space and the physical one is made through the existence of the gallery. It is not enough that a digital piece of art is known in the virtual space, recognized by other creators of digital art. In order to be assimilated by a wider population, it must be recognized, identified by a wider range of individuals as a legitimate means of creation. A legitimate art means an upgrading from a deviant one, a construction of behaviour and appearances that are later on accepted by the society. By exhibiting digital art in a gallery, hence by being printed and mechanically reproduced, the acceptance is gained by the mass audience and it starts being perceived as a "serious" art form such as sculpture, painting and drawing. Furthermore, the workshops and seminars besides aiming at informing the audience, they also target a desire of contradicting the erroneous perception that “the computer does it for you”.

The producers of digital art are what unite the virtual space to the physical one. By posting on the virtual space, the digital pieces, the creators do not target a specific audience as anyone can log on and write a commentary or

simply take a look at the digital pieces. The best are chosen; the artists who come up with something that breaks through all boundaries or makes a statement are worth observing a potential evolution. The virtual space becomes a space where information, impressions are changed. The social group can either show interest, offer the support needed in order to help the evolution of a digital artist through signs of appreciation or it can simply choose not to react condemning in this way, the artist to anonymity. One of the most important consequences of the interaction between similar creators of digital art are the opportunities of knowing as a result of a continuous competition and the possibility of receiving feedbacks, learning tricks, discovering tips, in one word, learning in an unconventional manner. Hence, the implications of the presence of virtual space in the life and the carrier-track of a digital art producer are huge.

Despite the higher number of relations that emerge in a physical space compared with the one from a virtual one, hence the possibility of investing a digital picture with meaning augments itself, the digital art lacks a legitimating answer which can be found only as a result of art printing. The interactions between the consumers of digital art and the gallery are those who attribute meaning and value to the digital art creations. The curator by choosing a digital art creator to exhibit in the gallery attributes the sense of meaning and importance to the pieces. The creator possesses the qualities needed (talent, ability to mixture technological or manual techniques), while the curator possesses the means to promote him nationally or even worldwide. It is a relation of acceptance and mutual reliance. While the creator is helped in the process of artistic exposure, gaining in this manner social and aesthetical recognition, the gallery with his help is accepted by other galleries around the world. The legitimisation of the digital art gained by the exposure within the gallery works as a double arrow for both actors engaged in the interaction. In the sense that the gallery leads to the legitimisation of the digital art while the legitimisation, on its turn, leads to the institutionalisation of its aims (to bring the digital art from its virtual space to a physical one). For the creators of digital, the same rule can be applied. While choosing to exhibit in a gallery, recognizing in this manner its authority and possession of artistic expertise, the digital artists legitimise their creations through art printing. The legitimisation opens the career-path, facilitating at the same time the accumulation of financial capital. The society starts to perceive it as not being a deviant art, it is assimilated by a wider population, hence it has the possibility of being recognized, identified by a wider range of individuals as a legitimate means of creation. As the possibilities of being assimilated by a wider population increase, so do the chances of augmenting the number of potential buyers.

The social construction of the digital art gallery defines the symbolic experience of the creators and producers of digital art as being mediated by social processes such as conflict between the former and the gallery 115, exchange

between the consumers and producers of digital art, control over the digital prints as the gallery is the one that decides in accordance to aesthetic norms what is art and what is not. Moreover, the place of the digital art gallery is one built, transformed through the interpretations, representations of the consumers of digital art as well as with the help of the producers' identification (it is the means through which their creations are noticed by a larger audience, hence a higher number of potential buyers and, at the same time, a manner through which their pieces are stabilized, receive durability). The gallery through the curator possesses the possibility of encompassing the features of a legitimised force of authority. She is the one that takes the decision whether the creator of digital art truly creates, decides the originality of the digital picture based on talent, intuition, the degree of knowledge of the techniques learned by the individual and finally accepts or denies the exhibition in the gallery. Besides the already mentioned criteria used as well in the case of the traditional art (techniques, mixture of colours), when choosing the exhibiting artist, the curator also takes into account factors such as theme of the exhibition (if the intention is to deliver the message of various artists, a common idea), the possibility to sustain an exhibition on their own (this is the case of those artists who have already attained fame and are able to even put the basis of a "best").

The final remarks are dedicated to the strong points as well as to shortcomings, limitations of the present paper. Due to the fact that the interviews conducted aimed only at the producers of digital art and the curator of the gallery, the results were not conclusive in regards to the relation between the producers and creators of digital art as well as to the personal or objective reasons that lead them into choosing an artist over the other. Nevertheless, the fact that the paper succeeded in tackling the relations between the digital art gallery and the consumers from the perspective of a need of physicality of the virtual space must be noticed. Making use of qualitative methods, its results are important when it comes to issues such as the need of a gallery when digital art develops and exhibits itself primarily in the virtual space, as well as the factors that determine the creators of digital art to renounce to the freedom and simplicity of the virtual networks given by the lack of a written contract, the responsibility of taking decisions with the curator, of asserting its power.

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CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES IN SOCIAL VALUES IN POSTCOMMUNIST ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT. The paper assesses the dynamics of social values in postcommunist Romania. The perspective is comparative, aiming to see which might be the differences when comparing to Mediterranean countries and, to a less extend, to Southern Europe. Data from the value studies are used to show how Romanians changed since 1990 their value orientations in domains such as religion, family, gender, democracy, work or tolerance. The *neo*-modernization process combined until now the negative impact of economic recession with the openness given by renouncing to a totalitarian regime. Romanian knew a slight increase of the orientations towards modern values, which is expected to be much higher in next few years. Mediterranean countries may experience similar processes in the future.

Keywords: social value; postcommunist countries; Mediterranean countries; modernity; social change

Introduction

This paper tries to describe the dynamics of the social values in post-communist Romania, in the context of the value changes that occurred in the last to decades in Europe, with a focus on the Mediterranean Area[1]. We use in our approach data provided by the values surveys: European Values Survey (EVS), respectively World Values Survey (WVS)[2], through the 1990-1993, 1999-2001 and 2005-2007 waves.

There are a few conceptual schools in the cross-cultural study of social values. Schwartz (1994, 2004), Hofstede (1980, 2001) and Inglehart (1971, 1990, 1997) developed influential theoretical approaches, empirically tested on various cultures and groups. Inglehart's approach, of the gradual and "silent" change towards the postmaterialist values which accompany the increasing economic security, is by far the most known (Vinken et al., 2004; Jagodzinski, 2004; Arts

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[2] See Halman (2001) and Inglehart et al. (2004) for details about the value surveys.

et al., 2003; Ester et al., 2006; etc.). Even if we do not necessary agree with the economic determinism embedded in Inglehart's theory, we follow the same logic of considering value change as related to material security, relying mainly on the modernization theories. From this perspective we discuss changes that occurred in value orientations from various fields (environment protection, family, religion, orientations towards authoritarian/democratic rule etc.).

The paper is structured in three parts: The first chapter offers a short presentation of the main ideas of the modernization theories. Then we analyze the dynamics of values related to several life domains. In the end, a short discussion assesses the possibility that Romania, the poorest country in the EU, may act as a cultural bridge between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean countries.

On cultural modernization and postmodernization

Modernization and postmodernization theories are important sources for explaining the dynamics of the nowadays societies. An impressive literature presents their facades (Sztompka 1993; Kumar, 1995, 1999; Inglehart, 1997, 2000; Hapfercamp and Smelser, 1992; Hall et al., 1996; Giddens 1990; Beck, 1992; Lash, 1990; Beck, Giddens, and Lash, 1992).

Modernization, in the common language, designs a complex process which happens in the recent past and continues in the present days, involving recent techniques, methods, or ideas. It is strongly related to industrialization, urbanization and adopting a rational organization of the society. The process also involves a deeper change of the traditional society, which affects its moral bases. This value change is the transformation of interest for this paper.

Building on the works of Weber (1978 [1922], 1995 [1920]), Parsons (1964, 1971) and Inkeles (1996 [1968], 1974), converged to relatively consensual image of the core of the cultural modernization. Modern societies differ from the traditional ones through the prevalence of the rational approach in explaining and organizing life, as contrasting to the religious-hierarchical principles which where at the basis of the traditional society. The modern human being tries to keep control on his fate, to rationally know the environment (both the natural and the social environment), and his one person, is more open to new experiences, to new ways of doing, to changing the habits, is ready to cope with more risks, plans the actions on longer run, is more and more autonomous.

Risk is the key for the whole process. The traditional society is confronted with high levels of material uncertainty, basic needs are hard to secure, while the daily efforts are directly to fulfilling the necessary food, housing and personal security. People and collectivities can hardly afford to raise questions about the meaning of life, have few time for personal development. Openness is a risky endeavor when resources are scarce and the knowledge accumulation is slow. The material uncertainty requires a high level of axiological security.

Only one truth can exist, and this is the one based on religious explanations and strong hierarchies, where leadership is rather inherited then achieved, and the leaders are always right and everyone should obey them.

Once the material security is fulfilled, there is more freedom to try to find better ways outside the safety of always following the well-known paths. Alternative explanations, openness for new ways of doing, incomplete explanations, which leave room for research and imagination are accepted. The belief in such approaches, in science and rationality become stronger than the traditional religious-hierarchical explanation, and support the technological progress, which, at its turn, supports even higher material security, and leaves room for more and more axiological uncertainty.

Rural-urban migration, development of transportation and tourism, international movement of the labour force put individuals in a new type of environment, where the face-to-face encounters gives the opportunity to interact with people which are not similar, which are different. Diversity becomes higher and further decreases, in the first stage, the predictability of the social environment, and, implicitly, the axiological uncertainty (B. Voicu, 2001, 2007). The rational approach of the world is used by individual and collectivities to control this uncertainty. At societal level, bureaucracy acts now as a manifestation of the rational approach in organizing collective life.

Later on, the process has different shape. Scientific rationality is questioned. Multiple paradigms are accepted as possible and replace the normativeness of only one (but rational) explanation even in the exact sciences, such as medicine or physics, where probabilities and statistics base the creation of new knowledge. Alternative explanations for the apparition of life on earth, for the evolution of species, for the causes and treatment of certain diseases, for the evolution of planets etc. represent nowadays a common place in most of the magazines for popularizing science.

Socially accepting the multi-paradigmatic-ness of the scientific explanation is part of a broader process of accepting diversity as social norm, but also of a reflexive approach, of permanently questioning any single truth or knowledge, including the scientific one and the consequences of the technological progress. Today, political correctness implies generalized tolerance, a completely different approach as compared with middle age or with no farther than thirty-forty years ago. On the other hand, the debates around the consequences of development for the natural environment would not have been possible without the interest for long term planning, renouncing to normative approaches, and a substantial increase of tolerance not only for different persons (such as people of different race or sexual orientation), but also for different life styles.

All these are part of a new social equilibrium, known under various labels: late modernity, postmodernity, postmaterialist society, reflexive modernity, risk society, postindustrial society etc. The new society includes people freed

from the load of the material uncertainty, with more free time, which live longer than in any known period of the past. Their motivation is more and more related to self-expressing, enhancing their knowledge, hedonism, experimenting new roles and situations.

All the above presentation of modernization and postmodernization is nevertheless simplistic. There are many variations, and the above-sketched processes are far more complex. However, the purposes of this paper imposed reducing everything to what we think that is essential.

One should carefully note that the evolution is not linear and the modernization-postmodernization is a process which never occurred as such, in any society. Parts of the process missed, some societies modernized faster, other did it incompletely. Periods of social instability, or economic recession usually generated turnings back of the value orientation towards more traditional ones (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart and Baker, 2000): when hazards happen, the material security decrease and the natural tendency is to reduce the axiological uncertainty.

However, as a general trend, the change from traditional values to modern and later to postmodern ones represents the pattern followed mainly by the Western European societies, but also by the Eastern European ones. In the case of the late ones, there are a few specificities that are interesting in the context of the present paper. Communism was an incomplete version of modernization, which many claim that led to a fake modernity, a pseudo-modern society (Sztompka, 1993; B. Voicu, 2001, 2005; Kochanowicz, 2004). Sztompka (1993) describes the respective society as the product of a top-down modernization process, realized only in some aspects of the social life, accommodating many traditional relicts, some of them (authoritarianism, lack of individual autonomy, dependency) being imposed by the modernization power and decorated with symbols which imitate the western version of modernity (such as formal voting for the Parliament). The transition period is defined by Sztompka as a *neo*-modernization process, targeting rather the late modernity, in an effort for convergence.

Countries located around Mediterranean Sea represent a heterogeneous from the point of view of social and economic development. Those located in Northern region of Mediterranean space are more wealthy societies, their citizens sharing more modern values orientation as compared to those living on African coast. The Arab societies located on Mediterranean coast are characterized by lower level of development (Welzel, Inglehart and Klingemann, 2003) as compared to their European neighbors. The Muslim societies emphasize the traditional family model, encouraging gender inequality (Inglehart and Norris, 2003; Rizzo, Abdel-Latif, and Meyer, 2007), are highly religious (Inglehart and Norris, 2004) and less inclined to support democracy (Huntington, 1993).

On the other side, European societies located on Mediterranean coast have some particularities as compared to other European countries. Italy and Greece have higher religious practices and beliefs (Halman and Draulans, 2004), while all around the region the traditional pattern of gender relation prevails, people supporting the idea of different social role for women and men.

Taking into account the level of social and humane development we expect that Romania is located, with respect to values orientation, in between highly modernized countries from Western Europe and the Mediterranean countries, especially between long established Western democracies and societies located on the Southern Mediterranean coast.

The following sections approach various parts of the social life and describe the differences that exist among the European societies. The focus is always on Romania and on the European Mediterranean. When data availability allowed, some other Mediterranean countries[3] are present in the comparisons. For the analysis we use the 1990-1993, 1999-2001 and 2005-2006 waves of the EVS/WVS. The indexes that we are using are developed by B. Voicu (2007). They are just roughly described in this paper and include items from the values survey selected such as to make possible comparing various societies in the three available moments of time (early 90s, late 90s, and around 2005).

Family and gender

In every European society, more than 80% of the population claim that family is "very important" or at least "important" (the other choices were "not so important" and "not important at all"). Graph 1 describes the variability across the continent and in four Mediterranean countries[4]. One may easily notice that starting 1990, more and more people declared that family is very important, in all analyzed societies. Two polarizations are visible: the catholic and the Muslim countries tend to give more importance to family as compared to the protestant ones; former communist societies are on the opposite. Romania is positioned around the European average, with a slight tendency noticed between 1990 and 2005 to increase the importance given to the family. All the four Mediterranean countries, as well as Turkey, tend to be more "family oriented" than the rest of the analyzed European societies.

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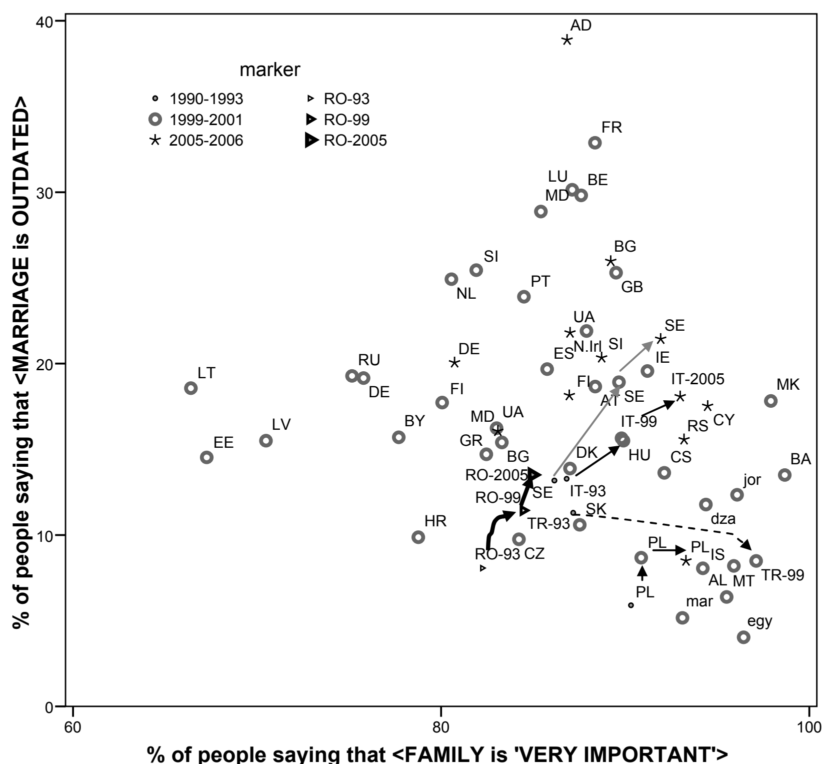
[3] Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, and Jordan. For most considered dimensions, there is at least one of the five mentioned societies which lacks data.

[4] Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan. Turkey, another country involved in the European-Mediterranean partnership is treated in this paper as European. For both MEDA and European examples, we have used in all the graphs all the countries for which data are available in EVS/WVS 1999-2001 and 2005-2006. For Romania and selected European countries used as relevant comparison, we have also described the dynamics starting with the 1990-1993 wave (in Figure 1, the respective dynamics is described for Italy, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey).

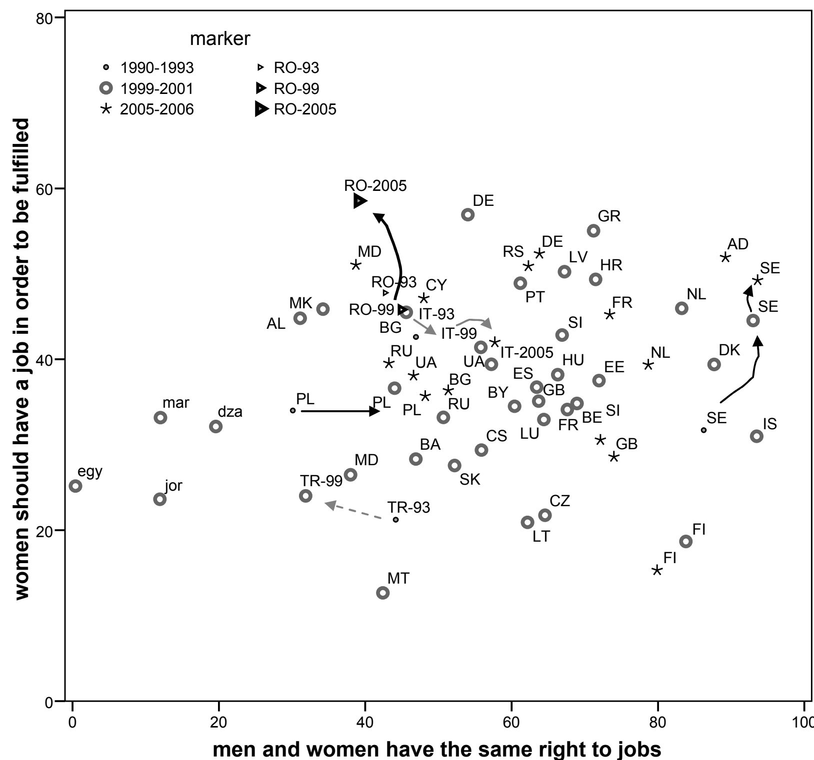


Graph 1. The importance of the family and opinions about marriage across Europe and the Mediterranean countries

Source: Own computation based on EVS/WVS 1990-1993, 1999-2001, 2005-2006. The graph displays all values available for the last two waves, and only a few selected countries for 1990-1993. The countries are coded according to the ISO 3166 standard. For the non-european societies the code is composed by three non-capital letters (dza=Algeria; mar=Morocco; jor=Jordan; egy=Egypt). For the European countries not included in the graph (the three Caucasian societies, Norway, Switzerland etc.) the data sets do not provide relevant data.

At the same time, most of the Europeans reject the idea that marriage is outdated. However, there is a tendency of decreasing the support for the traditional family, with an increasing option for a post-modern one, where marriage is not mandatory. This also happens in countries for which the usual stereotype says that family should be the in the center of the society, such as Italy or Romania. However, countries like Poland or Turkey are among the highly conservative societies from this point of view. Probably, the MEDA countries – for which we have no data which may allow assessing the dynamic – present little or almost no change singe 1990, maintaining their conservative view on family and marriage.

For the most European societies, family maintains its very important role in the organization of society. However, there is a clear tendency to relax the need to formalize it through marriage. Romania follows the same trend, but the changes are slower than in Bulgaria, Ukraine, or Sweden, for instance. One may also note that the more liberal a society used to be in the early 1990s with regard to marriage, the faster it became more liberal during the past two decades. This means that one may expect that, at least up to a certain level, the pace of renouncing to marriage as a formal confirmation for the family will increase in those European societies which remained more conservative and maybe in the MEDA countries too.



Graph 2. Gender values and the labor market

Source: Own computation based on EVS/WVS 1990-1993, 1999-2001, 2005-2006. The graph displays all values available for the last two waves, and only a few selected countries for 1990-1993. The countries are coded according to the ISO 3166 standard. For the non-european societies the code is composed by three non-capital letters (examples: dza=Algeria; mar=Morocco; jor=Jordan; etc.). On the X ax, the figures indicate the percentages of those who disagree with the statement: "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women". ON the vertical ax, the figures describe the percentages of those who disagree with the statement: "Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay".

Gender roles are closely related to family. Previous studies (M. Voicu et al., 2006; B. Voicu et. al., 2007) showed up that Romanian households are more equalitarian in sharing domestic chores, others than childcare, than most of the European societies. The Southern societies are less likely to develop such an equalitarian approach. Moreover, almost all ex-communist societies, including Romania display higher levels of support for the presence of women on the labor market (M. Voicu, 2004), but not in leading positions[5].

The data that we use for illustration (Graph 2) display the same reality. The former communist countries support the presence of women on the labor market, but agree less with the equality of rights, which had to suffer during the economic recession in the 90s. The Nordic countries are the champions in supporting the gender equality. During the past decades, most of the Southern European societies knew a process of increasing the support for equality. The four MEDA countries are more conservative with respect to equality, but their support for having women working is similar to many European societies.

For Romania, the relative support for a traditional family, officially formalized finds its roots in the traditionalism that survived and it was even stimulated in certain respects during communism. The official discouraging of divorce during the totalitarian regime came together with a high risk associated to adultery: the rulers used sometimes extramarital relations to reduce to silence those who did not conformed to the official norms, particularly those who contested any decisions of the Communist Party. The shortage of housing[6] led to perpetuating the existence of the extended family, some 10% of the households being nowadays in this situation. The top-down communist rules imposed everyone to have a job. Women were forced to have a job, and on long run, this leaded to the support for the two-wages family. However, male continued to be considered as the main breadwinner.

Religion

Religion is important nowadays mainly in the most traditional countries. At the level of formal practice, Romanians score about the European average, attending the religious service, less frequently than the people from catholic countries, for instance. However, the private practice is quite high: many people do fasten, pray, decorate their houses and offices with religious symbols. Some 98-99% of the total population declares to belong to a religious denomination (80% Orthodox), which makes a higher percentage than everywhere else in Europe, except for Malta, Turkey, Poland and Moldova. However, the figures

[5] Kideckel (2006: 65-66) notices that this was the case during communism too.
[6] Romania continues to have one of the lowest housing stocks in Europe (Voicu, 2005).

for all considered MEDA countries are higher. For comparison, let note that in Italy the respective figure is 88%, being 84% in Bulgaria, 75% in Germany, and 49% in the Netherlands[7].

Under these circumstances, for Romania the frequency for attending religious service may seem very low. However, there are few other things that should be considered. The ambiguity of the state-church relation during communism is one of them. The state paid the salaries of the Orthodox priests, while the Orthodox Church received most of the goods and the properties of the Greek-Catholic Church, forbidden to exist by the communist rulers. Also, the nationalistic Romanian communism, used the Christian heritage and Latinity to justify its position, as continuator of the Roman heritage, opposed to the neighboring countries, created after successive migration waves. The official propaganda was atheistic, but explicit positions against the church were very infrequent in the official discourses and documents. Only attending the religious services might provide some disadvantages, particularly for the Communist Party members[8].

On the other hand, returning to the present days, considering other activities which imply the presence of the individuals in the public space, one may notice that they are less frequent than in other European societies. Romanians do not have the habit to have lunch or dinner together, outside the family, the meet their friends less frequently, do not participate in associative and voluntary organizations etc. Under these conditions, the frequency of the public religious practice (attending the religious service) is relatively high. After 1989, religion became mandatory in schools[9], religious leaders were promoted in the media, but they were forbidden to participate in the political process. The number of believers increased from 90% to the today 98-99%, as well as the religious belief (M. Voicu, 2007).

In the present paper the religiosity indicator is built as a factorial score from the answers to the items: *How important is God in your life* (ten point scale, the higher values indicating the higher importance of God), *How important is religion in your life* (four point scale, the higher values indicating higher importance of religion), *Do you think that your church is giving in your country adequate answers to the moral problems and needs of the individual; the problems of family life; People's spiritual needs; The social problems facing our country today* (dummy variables, answer 1 if person accept the statement). The variables included in the religiosity indicator are not related with the religion content or with the religious practices and therefore they are not influenced by the differences between religious traditions.

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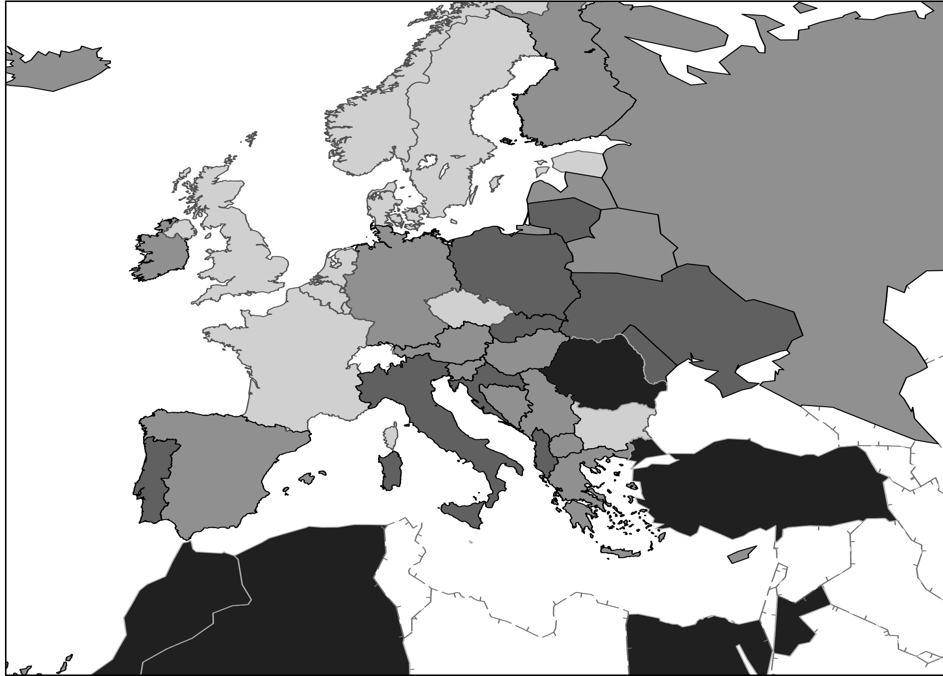
[7] Data from WVS 2005-2006, respectively from WVS 1999-2001 for the MEDA countries.
[8] They were about 4 millions, i.e. about a quarter of the adult population.
[9] Formally, each pupil should opt for studying religion or not, but, when every body opt for doing it, choosing the contrary may lead to social exclusion.



Note: The darker the color of a country, the higher the religious belief is. The index of religious belief is the one described in B. Voicu (2007). The countries where automatically clustered in four categories, according to the "natural break" criteria. For the countries colored in white no data where available.

Graph 3. Religious belief across Europe and the Mediterranean societies

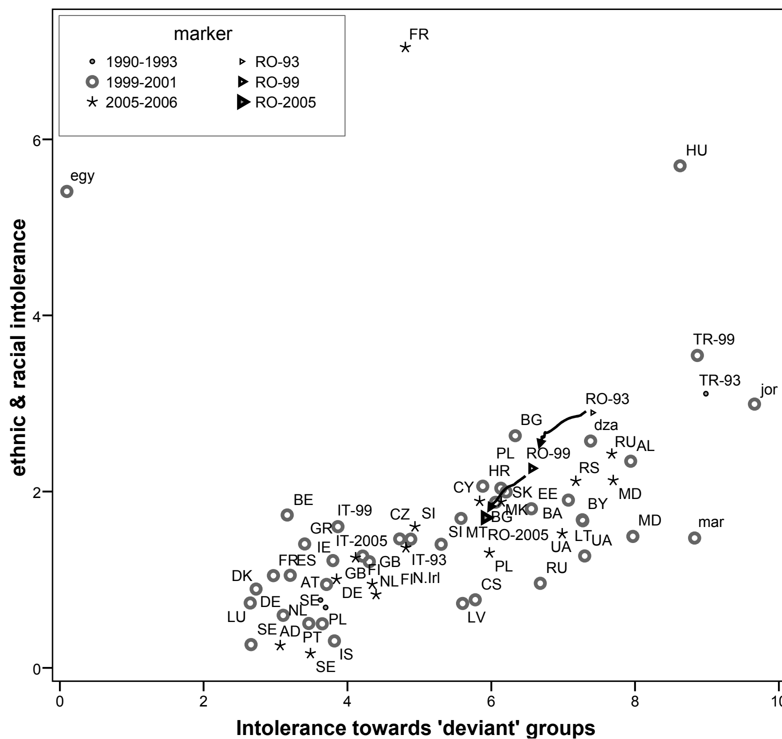
Data sources: EVS/WVS 1999-2001; exceptions: Norway (EVS/WVS 1990-1993) and Andorra (WVS 2005).

The nowadays strength of the religious belief (Graph 3) places Romania among the most religious European countries, as other studies show too (M. Voicu, 2007; Halman and Draunlans, 2004). The Mediterranean countries have various degrees of religious belief but the MEDA countries join Romania in the cluster of the most religious societies. This confirms existing theories of modernization, which relate high religiosity to poor economic performance. On the other hand, the religious belief in Romania is different from the one in the Muslim countries. Romanians are religious, but they mistrust the religious clerk, and do not search in religion the basis of organizing their society. As the next section shows, intolerance towards other religious, including Jews and Muslims is constantly decreasing since 1990.

Tolerance

Being tolerant, accepting as such people of different races, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, affected by rare maladies, implies a certain detachment from everyday problem, capacity to be reflexive, predictive knowledge, openness. At the dawns of modernization, tolerance is rather low. The entire history of the Second World War and of the preceding decades is an excellent example in this sense. Late modernity, however, provides abundant examples, including international and national legislation, which constitute as manifestation of tolerant, non-discriminative behavior.

In the beginning of the 90s, Romania was one of the most intolerant European societies. The communist heritage and isolation contributed to the deep belief that everything is different is evil, which was in many ways concordant with the pre-war feelings. Meanwhile, under the impact of intensive contagion with the western values, with many press campaigns, Romanians changed, as Graph 4 shows.



Note: The two indexes, described in B. Voicu (2007), vary from 0 to 10. The 'deviant' groups include heavy drinkers, homosexuals, drug addicts, people who have AIDS.

Graph 4. Two types of intolerance

Source: EVS/WVS 1990-1993, 1999-2001, 2005-2006.

This was mainly a product of better knowing what the differences mean, and understanding how to deal with. Both the ethnic tensions (Romanians against Hungarians, Gypsies against both, all against Jews) and the rejection of those with "strange, deviant" maladies (homosexuality, drug and alcohol addiction, AIDA) decreased. However, as compared with the levels of tolerance in Western Europe, Romanians, as well as almost all the former communist societies, are still rather intolerant. Southern Mediterranean countries provide a broad range of attitudes with regard to the 'deviant' groups, but they tend to maintain a rather traditional position with regard to other ethnic or racial groups.

Work

For the communist regimes, work was one of the central declarative values. In Romania, people had not only the right, but also the duty to work. The right to work is a rather modern construct, while in the traditional societies, work is a necessity: not working may mean to jeopardize the security of the household. The traditionally household do not clearly distinguish between work and other activities, except for specific and rare holidays. Work is continuous, there is no such thing as retirement, childhood, or leisure. The postmodern approach to work is more relaxed: one needs work in order to be considered a man, but work looses its top importance. High productivity and the search for self-expressing tend to reduce the weigh of working in the overall balance of life. The continuous decreasing number of days and hours of the working-week testify the process.

Table 1.

Attitudes towards work

% of respondent who agree with ...	**Romania**	**France**	**Italy**	**Malta**	**Sweden**	**Turkey**	**Morocco**	**Israel**
To develop talents you need to have a job	71%	77%	72%	49%	50%	88%	94%	87%
Humiliating to receive money without having to work for it	63%	44%	66%	64%	39%	88%	94%	59%
People who do not work turn lazy	78%	54%	74%	73%	36%	89%	88%	74%
Work is a duty towards society	74%	56%	66%	87%	58%	89%	91%	69%
Work should come first even if it means less spare time	77%	34%	49%	45%	29%	70%	93%	66%

Source: EVS/WVS 1999-2001.

In many of the today European societies, work is still regarded as a compulsory element for individual development. However, for most of them, the idea that work should come first, before leisure, for instance, is relatively rejected (Table 1). This is not the case in Romania, as well as in other Central and

Eastern European societies. Comparing the answers on this type of question in 1999 and in 2005, one may note that most of the countries maintain similar levels for the latent variable[10] which describe the value orientation towards work.

In 1999, in Europe, only Turkey displayed a more traditional orientation towards work than the Eastern European societies which included Romania. Considering the two other MEDA countries for which data is available, they are also traditional, at least when comparing to the European average: Israel is similar to Romania, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia ad Poland, while Morocco is even more traditional than Turkey.

Authoritarianism and democracy

No matter where in Europe, democracy is viewed as the best way to organize society. However, the hidden meanings of democracy may, in some countries, give a more authoritarian or a more libertarian way to organize the society. Again, the traditional ways of organizing the state were hierarchic and non participative. In its modern version, democracy comes with a more participative approach, based on controlling the political leaders through voting. More, the increasing individual autonomy meant less control from the state, rejecting dictatorship and military rule. The utopia of expert governments, produced by the early modernity and resisting as an alternative in the late modernity, is also non-democratic in its essence: the experts should be also elected somehow, otherwise how one can control that they are real experts?

Table 2.

Opinions about democratic and authoritarian ways of governing

% of people saying that it would be "fairy good" or "very good" for the country ...	**Romania**	**France**	**Italy**	**Malta**	**Sweden**	**Turkey**	**Morocco**	**Algeria**	**Jordan**
Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections	57%	33%	15%	19%	21%	63%	12%	35%	38%
Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country	74%	46%	46%	33%	39%	66%	44%	69%	79%
Having the army rule	23%	4%	4%	4%	7%	26%	11%	17%	51%
Having a democratic political system	75%	82%	92%	90%	95%	83%	64%	82%	83%

Source: EVS/WVS 1999-2001.

[10] Factor score for the five items from Table 1. See B.Voicu (2007) for details.

Most of the Europeans clearly reject the army rule and the strong leaders, who do not care about Parliament and elections (Table 2). The technocratic governing is less strongly rejected, particularly in the former communist societies, where it is quite popular. Considering all four alternatives presented in Table 2, Romanians were in 1999 the most authoritarian-oriented[11] Europeans, except for Moldova, Macedonia and Turkey, which where similar in this respect. Orientation towards democracy is stronger in the West and North, but weaker in the South and in the East, following the differences noticed in case of most of the other domains that we have analyzed.

Two out of the three MEDA countries for which data is available Algeria, Jordan displayed in 1999 significantly higher levels of authoritarianism than the European average. However, both countries are similar in this respect to some European societies (Jordan with Romania and Turkey, Algeria with several countries, among which Bulgaria and Latvia). Morocco scores close to the European average.

Conclusion

Several studies, using aggregate indexes of value orientations (Hagenaars et al., 2003; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; B. Voicu, 2007) showed that Romania is one of the most traditional societies in Europe. Albania, Moldova, Macedonia, Moldova, Malta and Poland are among the societies that on most the dimensions that we have analyzed[12] are similar to Romania. In some regards, Romania is close to the southern European pattern, but the country shares similar traits with the other former communist societies.

The past two decades provided a slow increase of the modern and postmodern orientations (B. Voicu, 2007). The economic recession and the perceived anomy acted as obstacles. The neo-modernizing transition was therefore confronted with certain recoil towards traditional values. From here the anti-modernization processes that occurred in some domain (such as religious belief). On the other hand, the postcommunist openness, social mobility, and contagion with the western values had a contrary effect. The changes in levels of tolerance illustrate this impact. Overall, with the current political stability and economic growth[13], it is likely that in the next few years the pace of cultural modernization and post-modernization will highly increase.

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[11] Again, the four items are explained by a latent variable. The One Way ANOVA analyses run on the resulting factor score base the following conclusions. In the whole paper, the considered significance threshold is 0.05.

[12] There are other domains that were considered, even if this paper did not present the respective results: orientation towards autonomy or obedience, attitudes towards environment protection, materialism and postmaterialism, nationalism, importance of leisure etc.

[13] Between 2004 and 2008, the GDP growth rate for Romania constantly exceeded 5%.

Turkey and the other five MEDA countries for which data is available are close on some dimensions to the ex-communist group which shares similar value orientations to Romanian ones. However, considering the instability in the eastern part of the area, due to the Middle-East wars, and totalitarian rule in some neighboring countries, it is likely that for the respective societies the distance will increase. Probably the Magrebian countries, strongly related through permanent and circulatory migrants to Southern Europe, may experience in the near future similar neo-modernization process as the ones from the Eastern Europe.

It is unlikely that Romania will represent a bridge between the non-European MEDA countries and Europe, but rather a part of a bridge. There are several other European societies which, in many respects, continue to be more traditional: this is the case of the most of the former communist countries which are outside of the EU, as well as of Turkey. They may constitute the necessary link between North and South. Experiences like the ones in the post-communist societies, particularly like the post-war Bosnia, or Caucasus, may be relevant for the MEDA countries.

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