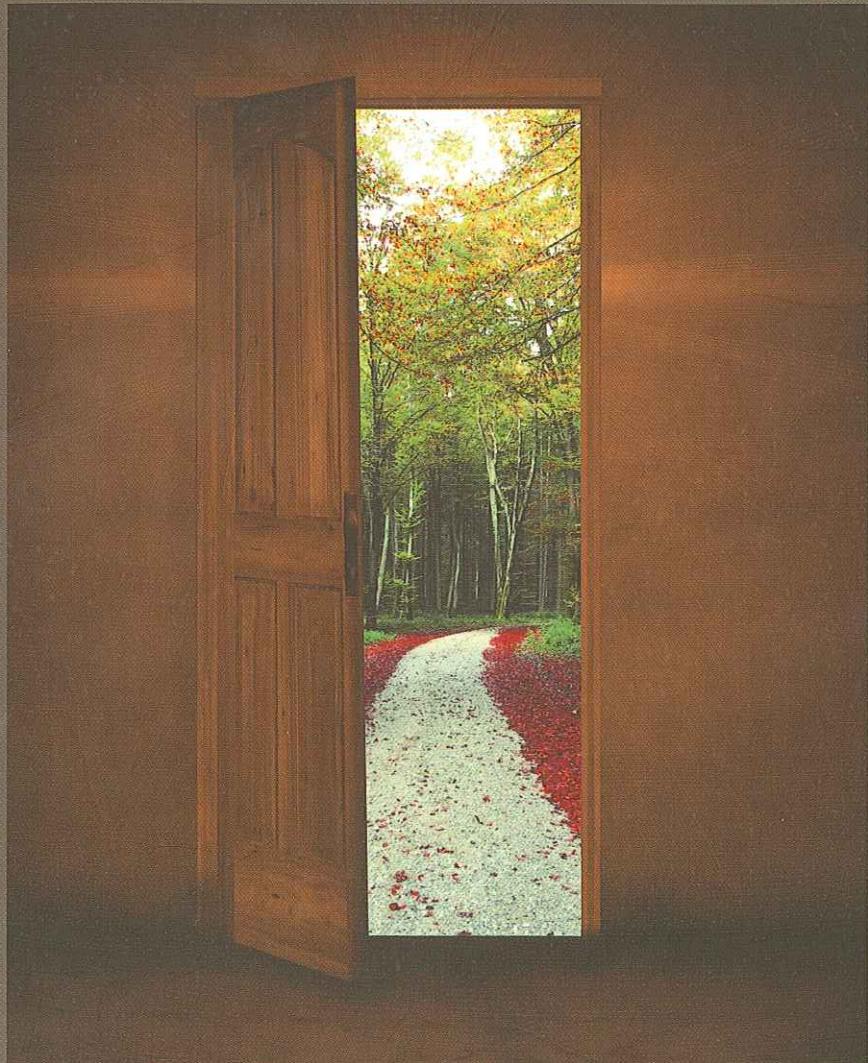


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October 2010

23



SCOPE AND AIMS

The review is concerned with a multi-disciplinary approach to spatial, regional and urban planning and architecture, as well as with various aspects of land use, including housing, environment and related themes and topics. It attempts to contribute to better theoretical understanding of a new spatial development processes and to improve the practice in the field.

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Here is the No. 23 of the International Journal „Spatium“. In accord with the previously announced plan, this is a thematic issue in the sequel. Mainly, it contains the already reviewed and accepted contributions to the spa-ce.net (Network of Spatial Research and Planning Institutes in Central and Eastern Europe) Network conference 2010 „Territorial cohesion in Central and South-Eastern Europe – Challenges ahead for strategic planning“. The Conference was held in Belgrade on 22-24th September 2010, organised by the Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia (IAUS), Faculty of Geography-Institute for Spatial Planning, University of Belgrade, and Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development Dresden (IOER), in cooperation with the Republic Spatial Planning Agency of the Republic of Serbia (RAPP), and Serbian Academy for Engineering Sciences, Belgrade. Some 20 academics and other professionals took part at the Conference.

Other contributions to this Conference may be published in the forthcoming issues of „Spatium“. This issue also contains a few reviewed articles covering miscellaneous topics of relevance.

Editor-in-Chief

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERIPHERAL REGIONS IN BULGARIA (THE CASE OF IVAYLOVGRAD MUNICIPALITY)

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The paper approaches territorial cohesion in SEE from the perspective of social equity with regard to the opportunity to choose to live in one's native place without compromising the quality of life. It is interested in border areas – both physical and virtual; in real life situations as meeting points of theories and policies influencing human lives; and in the emerging challenges there that often make us question once and again our concepts and actions as experts. Based on the Bulgarian case-study analysis, the authors discuss the effectiveness and current challenges of real-life implementation of EU and national policies aimed at sustainable development of peripheral regions. The rural peripheral municipality of Ivaylovgrad is an indicative case study for the ongoing processes in the peripheral regions of Bulgaria and the efforts to overcome a continuing loss of working places, services, markets and further isolation from the rest of the country since the early 1990s. The paper presents a critical view of initiatives and projects undertaken by interest and local groups in the period 2006–2010. Possible innovative approaches for regional revival are considered and conclusions are drawn about the importance of creating development strategies sensitive to the existing and emerging socio-cultural patterns.

Key words: SEE, EU cohesion policy, sustainable regional development, socio-spatial networks.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of an increasingly urbanized world with decreasing and scarce resources, a question inevitably emerges that has to be answered – whether we should consider peripheries a problem or an opportunity to find a better way for a balanced urban-rural relationship (RSA, 2009). The topic of rural regions in Europe is nowadays being researched with a growing awareness about the complexity of issues and interacting factors. Recent research studies are increasingly focused on process-oriented aspects: (a) rural development continuity (Vergunst et al, 2009); (b) co-operation between actors within rural

development projects and emerging power relations (Csurgó et al, 2008); (c) the role of knowledge in reconnecting social and natural systems and in the development of indicator systems capable of supporting joint learning by resource users (Parkins et al, 2001; Reed et al, 2006; Bruckmeier and Tovey, 2008); (d) multiple factors influencing the dynamics of sustaining activities (Pantic and Miljkovic, 2010); (f) potential effects and challenges of interaction by socio-spatial networks in remote rural regions (Mulder et al, 2006).

The paper discusses regional policy issues as traced in the particular context of a Bulgarian peripheral municipality, but also situated at the meeting point of several broader topics: sustainable regional development and its peculiar dimensions under the dynamic peripheral/border conditions in Europe, real-

life implementation and effectiveness of EU pre-accession and cohesion policies, as well as broader issues of the 'continuity-change' dichotomy in regional development and the challenge of developing as a rural region in an increasingly globalized and urbanized world. The paper provides arguments stating the need to formulate policies in a way more persistently sensitive to 'life on the ground' processes and in measuring and estimating policy success and failure in the long term and from multiple perspectives. In accordance with EU cohesion policy priorities (Davoudi, 2010), it is focused on *people and processes in space* as determined by a particular cultural context;

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The paper is partially based on analyses undertaken within a university research project (UACEG, contract BN 103/2009)

on *social equity* with respect to opportunities created in living places; and on the emergence of value-based identities and communities in peripheral regions as an important factor for enhancing *social capital* – mentioned in all official documents on sustainable development and territorial cohesion, but in many cases still strongly underestimated or misunderstood.

The case study discussed the municipality of Ivaylovgrad, located in a border region in the south-eastern periphery of Bulgaria. Varying regional policies applied from the mid-1980s to the present day at different levels of governance and under different political systems have attempted with no significant effect to stop and reverse the unfavourable and unsustainable trends of socio-economic decline and depopulation of the region. Based on an analysis of available scientific references about the region and personal experience gained through contacts with local authorities, educational and cultural institutions through academic research (1988–1989), NGO activity (2005–2010) and educational field trips (2008–2009), the paper discusses the need to re-conceptualize regional policy efforts with a stronger focus on bottom-up processes, local capacity-building and partnerships in long-term initiatives designed with the purpose of achieving a higher level of regional and local independence. The need for a new regional development policy is asserted, which should be based on integrated approaches, supported by deeper interdisciplinary research and evaluated through specific sets of indicators sensitive to the local and regional socio-cultural context. The role and potential of rural peripheries are finally discussed in the perspective of more global spatial interactions and environmental impacts.

BULGARIAN BORDER REGIONS: REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

Regional policy under socialism (1970–1989)

Regional policy came into focus of the Bulgarian national government in the 1970s, when the consequences of the broad industrialization processes undertaken in the country since the early 1960s became clearly visible – fast urbanization changing the ratio of urban-rural population in the country, population concentrated in large industrial centers, and – despite the approved subsidies for agriculture – diminishing and aging population, and settlements with fading functions in rural and peripheral regions. The Integral National Plan for Territorial Development was adopted in 1979, the

problems of the south-eastern peripheral region of the country being already clearly visible and addressed by state policy in the early 1980s. In 1981 the region was already strongly lagging behind the rest of the country in both industry and agriculture, with resulting serious demographic tendencies of depopulation. In the period 1965–1985 the Strandza-Sakar region lost about 45 000 inhabitants, while at the same time the population of large industrial centers in the region increased. There were also considerable inner migrations inside municipalities, from villages to municipal and secondary centres. The key political document providing policy measures for regenerating the Strandza-Sakar and Ivaylovgrad region² was adopted in 1982 (Statement No. 22/12.05.1982 of the Bulgarian Council of Ministers). The targeted region was later on communicated and known as *The Republic of Youth*. The Statement prescribed a set of strategic measures to slow down and reverse the negative tendencies: support for small and medium size enterprises, development of agri-industrial complexes to provide employment all year round, securing technical, transport and communication infrastructure, better housing and social services, upgrading social care and educational infrastructure, promotion of cultural heritage and tourism; and measures to stimulate people with secondary and higher education from all over the country to settle in the region.

A National Research Programme for the Strandza-Sakar Region was funded and a series of symposia were organized to discuss its findings and policy implementation results. Although the region saw general development tendencies of depopulation, in 1985 Ivaylovgrad was considered a region with comparatively favourable conditions, and the demographic structure was expected to be balanced by the year 2000 through measures that were to be implemented. Part of a field research, undertaken within the National Research Programme, focused on the effective operation of the educational network (primary and secondary schools) and tried to outline the opportunities provided by integrated facilities for education and culture in smaller settlements to increase investment efficiency in social infrastructure (Dragiev et al., 1989). However, no effective action was undertaken by state administration and a year later the overall

political changes brought additional challenges to the region and required completely different approaches to meet them.

Regional policy in the period 1990–2010

After the democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s, planning activities were generally abandoned and neglected for almost a decade – partly because of the extreme shifts in social and economic life and partly due to a general misunderstanding about the liberalization of society after the shift from a centralized economy. Planning practice was then restored thanks to both external and internal encouragements and was based on a decentralized approach (Regional Development Act, 1999). The need for harmonization between socio-economic and spatial planning at all levels was confirmed.

A National Regional Development Plan and district development plans were elaborated. According to the Spatial Planning Act (2001), a National Integrated Development Scheme is to be elaborated. Work has started by developing a Methodology for the elaboration of the National Scheme (to be bound with the National Regional Development Plan).

The Spatial Planning Act envisages the elaboration of regional development schemes, yet work in this field has hardly begun. A second generation of district development plans is in the implementation phase. It is recommended that they should be coordinated with district development schemes, but there has been no substantial evidence of such harmonization yet.

The elaboration of municipal master plans was continually hampered by financial deficit, however, in the period 1999–2000 a number of Municipal Development Strategies and relevant Action Plans were prepared in all Bulgarian municipalities, the updating of which should take into account future municipal master plans, to define a territorial basis for economic and social planning.

Rural multisectoral policies in support of agriculture were a typical approach in the 1990s, although actual subsidies were very low (due to budget limitations) compared to the levels agreed on with the WTO. There were also annual campaigns for targeted subsidizing of production costs. Later on, through the support of EU pre-accession instruments, an enhanced correspondence between the state, SAPARD and CAP measures was achieved. Nevertheless, the implementation of these measures was considered rather weak and

²Although not strictly belonging to the Strandza-Sakar geographic region, the municipality of Ivaylovgrad was included in the programme because of the similar problems the municipality is facing

ineffective because of the general low quality of projects, suspected/reported corruption and patronage of intermediaries (UNDP, 2004). The integrated rural development policy with a territorial emphasis on economic diversification, provision of infrastructure and services, and environmental protection was introduced through the National Plan for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Regions in the early 2000s, mostly supported by SAPARD programme.

Estimated policy results: impacts and shortcomings

The first policy steps were marked by rather contradictory practices. There were some good examples and satisfactory results, but also numerous common shortcomings due to misunderstanding the priorities, low quality of project concepts or their implementation, poor institutional capacity and a lack of experience. Although some municipalities prepared their own local sustainable development strategies (Local Agenda 21), supported by international and national NGOs and UNDP in particular, these did not develop as practical instruments beyond the provided time-limited grants, as observed elsewhere (Petrakos, 2001).

It is important to mention the GEF/UNDP ambitious and large-scale Rhodope Project (2004–2009), aimed at alternative livelihoods related to the protection of the globally important biodiversity in the Rhodope Mountains. Along with numerous positive results in many of the target settlements, the published project SWOT analysis outlined the shortcomings of the process (Stavreva, 2007). The main strengths mentioned comprise existing tourist traditions in some of the settlements, local enthusiasm and successful local initiatives at the beginning of the project. The list of weaknesses is, however, much longer and includes the uneven distribution of Tourist Information Centres (TIC) in the region, a lack of network approach and national co-ordination, poor motivation of TICs for collaboration with other institutions, strong reliance on outer funding. Recommendations were put forward to keep the initiative in the hands of local people, providing them with additional qualification and organisational capacity, diversification of services and building new partnerships.

The EU's PHARE pre-accession programme focused on various underdeveloped public services and assets in the country – it supported the inventory and access to tourist attractions, development of tourist products, etc. On-site observations confirm that once the

projects are completed, products are not effectively utilized and the constructed infrastructure is not properly maintained and used. Comparatively low interest by local producers is visible in the reported project submissions in the Rhodope Programme (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2005).

A general estimate of the regional policy implementation could be the following: that the process is slow and difficult, with insufficient coordination and lacking truly effective indicators to support policy decisions. The top-down initiatives lack flexibility and sensitivity to the particular local context and the bottom-up ones most often demonstrate a lack of capacity and continuity. This raises the crucial issue of enhancing social capital and inventing possible ways to carry it out in order to guarantee sustainability in the region.

THE CASE STUDY OF IVAYLOVGRAD MUNICIPALITY

Being one of the 263 municipalities in the country, with an area of 818 sq. km and the population of 6 800 in December 2009 (13000 in 1979), the municipality of Ivaylovgrad belongs to a region that can nowadays be classified as border, mountainous, underdeveloped and rural one – the proportion of agricultural to forest to urbanised land use in the municipality is 37:60:1 (compared to mean national values 59:34:5); population density is 9 inhabitants per sq km (70 for the country); and the ratio of population over 65 years old to the one under 14 years is 2 (1.3 for the country).

There are two main reasons for choosing this case study: (a) its location, natural and cultural characteristics, socio-economic development tendencies – both its current situation and long-term development could be considered indicative of the broader processes taking place in the new EU south-eastern border regions in the Balkans; and (b) a chance to gain continual personal research experience and establish contact with the changing local authorities over a longer period of time, and from different positions and points of view – research, NGO activities, an educational project – which provided an opportunity for a deeper insight into the continuities and discontinuities in local traditions and culture, the local authorities' estimates of implemented regional policies in different periods and the local people's attitude to life perspectives, governance and participation.

Location, natural characteristics and cultural heritage

The municipality of Ivaylovgrad is located in the transitional zone between the western part of the Thracian Valley and the easternmost parts of the Rhodope Mountains, in south-eastern Bulgaria, which is now a south-eastern border region of the EU. The municipality is at the Bulgarian-Greek border and close to the Bulgarian-Turkish one, although the main railways and roads, part of the pan-European Transport Corridors 4 and 9, are bypassing it.



Fig 1. Regional agricultural (a,b)& tourist potential (c,d)



Fig 2. Drought (a) & fires (b), flooding (c) & erosion (d), land abandonment (e) & succession (f)

The region has diverse natural features and resources. Various landscapes are spread among smooth weaving ridges, steep foots of the slopes and narrow river valleys in-between. Biodiversity is well preserved in its natural mosaic pattern, with some of the top concentrations for Europe, including plenty of endemic and rare species (BSPB, 2002). This variety has been enriched by pastoral and cultivation patterns, some of them maintained for several thousand years. The region is an important part of the *European Green Belt* with its high natural conservation value of preserved and regenerated habitats due to almost 50 years of political and military division along the *Iron Curtain*. There is good potential for diversified agricultural development due to the transitional temperate Mediterranean agro-climatic conditions. There are considerable possibilities for accommodating the demands of cultural, rural and ecological tourism (Fig. 1), provided by the unique cultural monuments from a historical span of three thousand years, various agricultural traditions and local celebrations and the preserved wilderness with its scenic setting. Along with these values and potential, there are new troubling processes challenging the present resource use practices and culture – the patterns of drought and fires, intensive rainfalls in combination with fast snow melting, soil erosion, accelerated succession of abandoned agricultural land, the spread of invasive species, etc. (Fig. 2).

Historical development context

The territory could be considered a typical example of a periphery artificially created through continual military confrontation and political decisions, as observed in many other places in Europe (Armstrong, 2004).

In the historical retrospective, despite the varying ethnic composition and conflicts appearing all around, the Ivaylovgrad region has been prosperous and engaged in active exchange with settlements downstream the Maritsa River (Hebros, Evros, Meric) for centuries. It has been bound with today's Edirne (Adrianopolis, Odrin), which has remained a very important urban centre in the south-eastern Balkans from antiquity until today. During the first half of the 20th century, after the Russian-Turkish War (1877–1878) which brought independence to Bulgaria, the region remained at the periphery of the Ottoman Empire. The area joined the Bulgarian state after the Balkan War (in 1912), while its neighbouring regions were assigned to Greece, and the town of Edirne remained in Turkey.

The ethnic map of the region is a complex result of the historical events from the early 20th century, generating waves of refugees – settling down and moving away. Today's mixed ethnic composition includes mostly Bulgarian Orthodox Christians and Muslims, the ancestors of whom have lived here since before the Balkan War, and the vast majority of whom came from Southern Thrace and Asia

Minor after the War. Some of these refugees came in place of Greek communities moving out at the same time. There are also Turkish, Roma and old Albanian communities.

With the establishment of the new political order in Europe after WWII (1945), the permeability of the border strongly decreased and the region practically remained a closed area at the periphery of the Eastern Bloc for over four decades. More than ten years of transition after the collapse of the 'Iron Curtain' in 1989 were marked by constraints in trans-border movements because of the EU's stricter regulations (on border safety, trade and other technical standards) and the Greek national policy, while the border regime with Turkey provided better mobility of people and goods.

The pre-accession process and Bulgaria's EU accession in 2007 gradually improved the trans-border movement of people and goods between Bulgaria and Greece; however, the restrictions were now relocated to the Bulgarian-Turkish border. During this period there was a growing number of active trans-border co-operation programmes and available funds with both neighbouring countries (EU pre-accession instruments and a regional development fund). The municipality of Ivaylovgrad participated in a number of joint initiatives, projects and actions mainly with Greek partner municipalities. In addition to the existing two border crossings between the two countries, five more were planned and a bilateral memorandum was signed in 1995

which was included in the agenda on several occasions. There was, however, a considerable time lag in the implementation of all projects due to underlying political inertia and mistrust, among other technical and financial reasons. Three new border crossings are now in use in the region, the first from 2005 and the other two from this year. The one between the towns of Ivaylovgrad and Kyprinos opened in September 2010.

Demographic, socio - economic and cultural processes

The demographic development in the region has a lot in common with other rural areas in Eastern Europe. It is defined by speedy transformation and migration patterns in less than 50 years from the agriculture-based, predominantly rural society before WWII into an industrialized and urbanized one, structured around the capital city of Sofia and 26 larger and medium-sized administrative and economic centres. The intensive depopulation in the Ivaylovgrad municipality, like in other border regions in South-eastern Bulgaria in the 1950s–1970s, took place alongside a natural population growth observed at the national level. There was an additional peak of outward migration in the 1990s, at the expense of small villages and neighbourhoods in the municipality. The population in the municipal centre diminished at a lower pace and the town still accommodates mechanical immigration from the adjacent parts of the region – well illustrated by the density map of the municipality (*Fig. 3*).

The political shift and the subsequent national

socio-economic crises of the 1990s, unfavourable geographic position, slow economic restructuring and low productivity, complicated land ownership issues and shrinking military presence in the region altogether resulted in the closure of major state enterprises and co-operative farms, loss of markets and income sources, long-term unemployment and further isolation of the municipality from the rest of the country. During the last five years, the municipality – especially its eastern part (including the municipal centre and a few more villages) – experienced increased inner and outer investment interest. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises appeared in traditional and new sectors and branches (building materials extraction, farming, winery, light industries, tourist services, photovoltaic energy parks, etc.). However, most of these were seriously affected by the global economic recession and positive expectations of stabilization were very soon replaced by anxiety over a possible next wave of labour and poverty-driven migration. Poor access to education (only one secondary school in the town and three primary schools on fifty villages) and health care (ongoing discussions for closing down small municipal hospitals in the whole of the country, the one in Ivaylovgrad being on top of the list), ineffective organization of utility services (waste collection available only in the municipal town and three nearby villages) and insufficient maintenance of infrastructure and the built environment are the result of a lack of a critical mass of users, inadequate state support and very limited local financial resources. A number of settlements have been

abandoned over the last 20 years, while one half of 48 villages in all are rapidly diminishing and are at the point of disappearing, with few elderly people left and no residents of reproductive age.

All of these factors have led to a lack of community spirit and cohesion, where fragmented individual efforts and separate livelihood strategies come in place. The strength and value of the regional cultural identity (various forms of heritage and relations, local knowledge and collective memory) are nowadays jeopardized because of the negative trends of depopulation, aging, intergenerational discontinuity, marginalization, poverty and social exclusion in vast parts of the region. At the beginning of the transition period there were certain optimistic expectations about the benefits of openness, but now there is only widespread mistrust and scepticism accumulated among citizens living in poverty and downcast entrepreneurs in the municipalities which suffer from the still ongoing isolation (results of an inquiry, interviews, discussions and content analysis of local published materials during an educational project will be discussed later on).

A Municipal Development Plan was adopted in 2006 and a number of measures and projects were undertaken – predominantly the ones representing fragmented physical rehabilitation of buildings and infrastructure. One of these is the local TIC, accommodated in a restored building (a listed heritage site) – unfortunately with no financial or organisational resource committed. The next challenge is the implementation of the Local Development

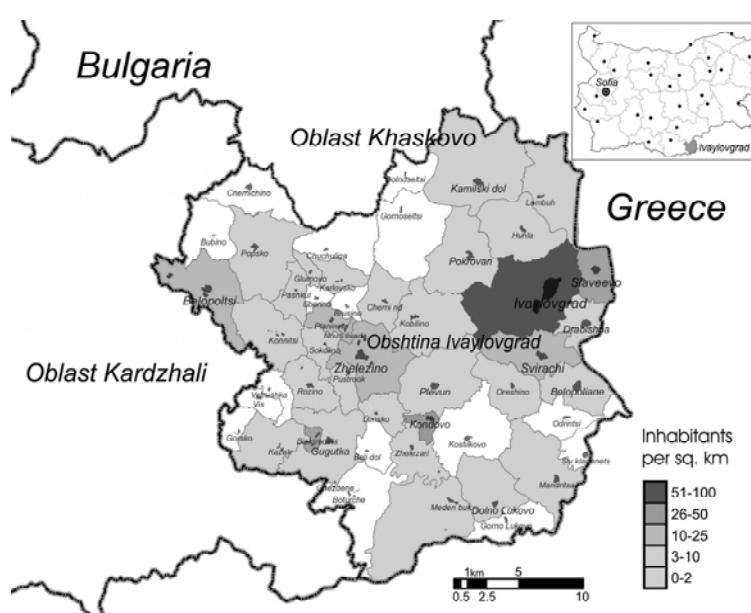


Fig 3. Population density of Ivaylovgrad municipality (based on data from 2009)



Fig 4. Depopulated villages in Ivaylovgrad

Strategy – to be prepared and managed by the Local Action Group "Zaedno", organized after the regulations of the Leader+ approach in co-operation with administration, the business and civil sectors in the three municipalities – Ivaylovgrad, Madzharovo and Stambolovo.

At this stage of development, the region is exposed to the utmost level of vulnerability. The future role and contribution of the recently opened and long awaited border crossing need to be observed. The challenges of the proper management of local resources need to be adequately met and the local potential well utilized. Therefore, urgent initiatives for revitalization have to include an ambitious enhancement of the local capacity for maintenance and development on the one hand, and on the other an encouragement for the colonization of disappearing settlements. (Fig. 4).

BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

The NGO sector–activities and concepts

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been emerging all over the country since the early 1990s with a lot of EU, international and national support. Recent regional policy documents have great expectations from them. The Ivaylovgrad region with its distinctive values is a suitable field for comprehensive exploration. Acquisition of proficiency in life 'on the edge' and entering into deeper interactions has stimulated a lot of NGOs with various scales of work and declared priorities. Some of them are active on the national scale; others are regionally based or focused. There are already numerous examples of organizations which undertook important first steps and innovations for the region, trying to reconnect the regional potential through networking and supplementing efforts – sometimes functioning in real synergy and continuity.

The *Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation* promotes the 'Green Belt' concept on a national scale and organizes events to raise awareness about conservation opportunities and challenges in the border regions of Bulgaria. It has conducted biodiversity investigations in the region within the Rhodope project and acts strategically by purchasing land of high natural value. Together with the BSPB it organizes the *Kartali* annual training in field investigations, monitoring and practical activities.

The *ARK Nature* and *Avalon Foundation* (Dutch organizations) initiated the region-focused *New Thracian Gold Project* with an accent on

education, consultation and project preparation related to natural grazing, organic agriculture and eco-tourism.

The *Bikearea Association* is on a mission to bring people closer to nature, continually developing responsible and sustainable tourism and recreation across the Rhodope Mountains, by organising education and consultation for local guides and small scale accommodation alongside the promotion of sustainable forest use (*Rhudopia* product).

The *Green School Village (GSV) Association* is a youth value-based community of people from different places, with varied experience and professional interests. The Association actively searches contacts with local communities, the municipality and the region. The GSV has focused on the revival of the shrinking Kostilovo village in the municipality, one of its main projects being the development of a *Non-formal Education Centre*, planned to be a multifunctional and self-sustaining centre which will become a local enterprise, a research and culture centre developing commercial and non-commercial services. Several youth exchange initiatives were organised with a special emphasis on spreading the knowledge about natural building and permaculture. A number of projects (some of which were supported by the Municipality and the Cultural Centre) were very beneficial in terms of valuable experience and networking.

Estimation of the NGO driven process

Despite often not fully reaching their genuine objectives while adapting to grant requirements and failing to attract additional resources, NGOs in the region have succeeded in initiating a truly innovative process of enhancing and integrating social capital to support a re-conceptualization of life in the border area. Several aspects of their activity can be considered as being of particular importance:

- The **enthusiasm of young people** involved in various value-based activities;
- The **synergy created** by linking different levels – from international through national and regional to local;
- The **active search for and initiation of partnerships** with a large variety of actors from both the public and private sectors;
- The **impressive variety of ideas, priorities and practices** coming into contact and mutually fertilizing each other;
- The **capacity to link into a truly holistic way all the aspects of life**

(natural to technological to cultural and agricultural) by placing the focus on life values and respect for nature, and searching for alternative ways of life.

NGOs have thus been acting as effective agents of change and, being sensitive to real life on the ground, they have initiated the development of micro communities and networks of a new identity and culture.



Fig 5. Communication, dialogue and co-operation with local communities (For one shared space Project, 2009)

The University as a partner in the process

A partnership officially established between the UACG and GSV Association on the occasion of the *For One Common Space and a Better Place for Living* Project provided a chance to explore the development opportunities for both actors, as well as for the capacity-building process at the local level in the municipality of Ivaylovgrad. In accordance with its educational concept (Dimitrova, 2009), the university team searched for a real-life case-study to focus on within the *Sustainable Development* teaching module of the BSc in Urbanism Programme (winter semester 2009/2010). The NGO was in need of potential allies and partners, but also methodological support to carry out a public dialogue with the local people on the issues of mobility, waste management and local cultural identity. Throughout the teaching process students were actively involved in analyses of local potential and best practices, in preparing questionnaires and carrying out a survey envisaged by the Project, in presenting both good practices and their own development ideas to the local community, and organizing a creative art workshop with local children.

The analysis of the outcome proved the existence of considerable benefits for all partners in the project. From an academic standpoint, the process was valuable with regard to creating an expert point of view sensitive to local processes and challenges and stimulating the students' personal and professional responsibilities to real-life people and institutions.

At the same time, the involvement of students and teachers in the process helped to introduce awareness about a broader scale of considerations and points of view in the local debate; situating the municipality within a regional and EU context of current dynamic changes and emerging challenges; stimulating the search for alternatives, questioning the status quo, looking for innovative solutions. It gave rise to an important impetus for opening an intergenerational dialogue with a broader horizon and a long-term perspective, linking past to present to future, respecting continuity (*Fig. 5*).

CONCLUSION: A NEED TO RE-CONCEPTUALIZE REGIONAL POLICY

Having in mind the complexity of the process and the context in SEE rural peripheries within a broader framework of upcoming challenges and regional development challenges (SEC,

2008), there is an obvious need for further professional debate on the strategies to provide and communicate at both the EU and national levels. There is also an urgency to counteract the negative tendencies of depopulation and marginalization in SEE peripheral regions, which requires innovative approaches sensitive to local institutional capacity, as well as to the peculiar needs and life-styles, priorities and culture of the people – those who have stayed and those who would be interested in inhabiting and reviving peripheries. Several considerations resulting from the analysis of real-life processes in the Ivaylovgrad municipality could be particularly relevant and helpful on the way:

Despite numerous reported results and many positive changes, a **general low effectiveness of current practices and activities** has been observed and communicated up to the present day. The major shortcoming clearly visible in many situations is the discontinuity of initiatives (due to a lack of financial support, adequate maintenance of products and results, training services), which results in the disappearance of public trust in the possibility to change the *status quo*.

A shift in the focus of capacity building seems necessary. Most of the efforts have been aimed at the administrative and expert project management capacity. Capacity is however equally needed in the real-life management of local and shared regional resources where local people have their stakes – seemingly small but very important in the long run. Capacity building should address a much broader variety of actors at a community level.

Creating flexible socio-spatial networks could be considered an effective way to attain long-term sustainability in peripheral regions. These are networks providing synergy at work between the outside and local groups, and the local administration; broader opportunities for interaction inside the Local Action Groups (LAG) and parallel initiatives based on coordination and cooperation between adherent actors with the help of voluntary activities. There are threats to take into consideration in this process (overlapping interests, personal conflicts), but it is a chance for balanced integration of these regions with a relative level of social and economic autonomy in the national economy and for the conservation and/or maintenance of natural and cultural resources. Synergies between the diverse actors could be built on common priorities and understanding of shared values and targets.

Developing process-based strategies should be strongly focused on in continuity. *The Strategic Choice Approach* could be particularly useful (Friend and Hickling, 2005). It is important within the process-oriented framework to provide monitoring and evaluation with a time scope beyond the framework of a particular project. Transparency of processes requires indicator systems that have to be scientifically based, but also transparently communicable and designed with all groups active at the local level. Comprehensible demonstrations and educational efforts explaining alternative approaches and their expected results could induce change in activities and practices, an intensified exchange and a common learning process. Stimulating measures should be clearly aimed at key actors and aspects of the processes.

A long list of **policy research issues** should surely include critical preconditions for setting into motion gradual social interaction, innovative entrepreneurship, balanced commodification and successful assessment methods of development and transformation provided by top-down and bottom-up approaches. Co-ordinated research will guarantee the effectiveness of efforts.

To conclude, it seems vital to a successful regional policy in a period of a dynamically evolving world and uncertainty of future development challenges to continually keep in mind that all people matter.

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DANUBE REGION STRATEGY - ARGUMENTS FOR A TERRITORIAL CAPITAL BASED MULTILEVEL APPROACH

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During the last months the discussion on a strategy for the Danube Region as a new approach for a European macro-region has been intensified, predominantly within the area of Central and South-Eastern Europe. Evidently the territory of the Danube Region is characterized by a divergent group of countries concerning the process of integration and the preconditions in geographic, economic, cultural and socio-demographic terms. Besides, the region's spatial development shows divergent trends causing increasing regional disparities. Therefore, territorial cohesion - understood as intensified functional interrelations and strategic cooperation - is jeopardized in manifold ways.

Hence, the main objective of this paper is to discuss the basic features of a strategy aiming at strengthening the polycentric development on different spatial levels. We start by assuming that the development of every city (as an element of the urban system) depends on its territorial capital and relevant assets providing location based advantages regarding its competitiveness on different spatial levels. Therefore we uncover what we understand as assets driving urban development. In this context the meaning of polycentric development and the importance of polycentric structures as an asset of a city's territorial capital is being revealed.

Based on these conceptual considerations we examine some relevant features of the urban polycentric system in the Danube region and finally argue that a multilevel and evidence based approach should be evolved facing the differences in the preconditions and already existing assets of spatial development.

INTRODUCTION

Based on an initiative of Romania and Austria the discussion about forming a Danube Region started some years ago, first on bilateral, then on European level. Over the last months the talk regarding a 'Strategy for the Danube Region' has been intensified due to an invitation of the European Council to the European Commission to prepare an EU Strategy for the Danube Region (see http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/danube/documents/council_conclusions.pdf). The strategy - expected to be presented by the EC before the end of 2010 - should consider the following aspects: meeting specific challenges facing in particular regions,

covering several policy areas and interlinking them and concentrating on main issues which concern the entire macro-region.

But countries within this large region are meeting new challenges like an increasing competitive situation through the EU-isation of national policy and through the process of globalization (Hamilton, et al., 2005). And the development on urban and regional level is characterized by even stronger divergent processes in economic, social and environmental terms (EC, 2001; or 2007). Despite the efforts of regional policy and funding over the last years territorial cohesion - in terms of functional interrelations and strategic cooperative initiatives - is still one of the most important challenges.

In front of these different conditions and divergent trends the paper has the objective to discuss the features of a strategy aiming at strengthening polycentric development on

different spatial levels as a precondition for territorial cohesion.

In order to elaborate these features we examine some relevant characteristics of the urban system due to their importance as the basis for polycentric development in the Danube Region. Based on this empirical evidence we elaborate the most important features of a multilevel and evidence based approach facing the differences in the spatial preconditions and already existing assets of development. We argue that the development of every city (as an element of the urban system) depends on its territorial capital and relevant assets providing location based advantages regarding its competitiveness on the interregional or European level. Finally we state that the development of the urban system should show polycentric features as a precondition and the outcome of the development of every city and at the same time for territorial cohesion in a

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normative sense. Correspondingly, we discuss the mutual relation between urban development (cities with different sizes) and polycentric development on different spatial levels in a cross-border perspective. Based on this discussion the meaning of competition and in particular of cooperation as basic principles of strategic efforts are being described and some specific features regarding a polycentric strategy are being elaborated in a multilevel perspective.

BASIC FEATURES OF THE URBAN SYSTEM IN THE DANUBE REGION

The Danube Region shows some important characteristics:

- It contains an area of about 800.000 km² which in huge parts is some sort of 'hinterland' of the river.
- 115 million citizens live in this area - a population strongly characterized by different identities in terms of language, traditions and religion.
- 14 countries (not all of them neighboring the river) are participating in the initiative. These countries experienced different processes in political, economic and socio-demographic terms and show different statuses of integration to the EU (see http://www.bka.gv.at/site/cob_38596/currentpage_0/6726/default.aspx).
- Very obvious, the Danube does not have the same meaning in economic and environmental terms or as a border across these countries.

Thus, discussing the spatial development of such a large region the urban system seems to be more important than the fluvial topography. Accordingly, two important aspects of spatial development should be considered: the respective urban system in regard to the territory of every country and of the whole region and the borders of nations in duality to potential cross-border polycentric relations.

Examining the urban system

The elaboration of characteristics of the urban system is important because it constitutes the basic structure for future demographic and economic development and potential driving forces for spatially differentiated trends of urbanization and settlement growth. The differences of urban systems of the respective territory are described as follows.

City sizes

The first approach tries to give an overview of the cities within the territory of the Danube region to identify the most important agglomerations and to establish a basis for

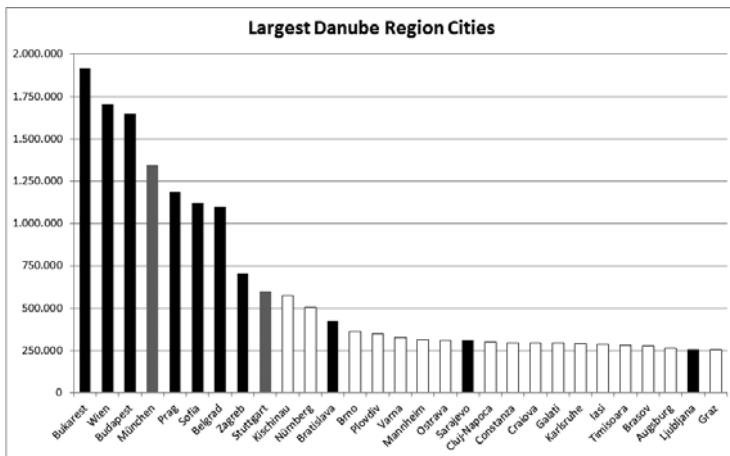


Fig.1: Largest Danube Region Cities (Data Source: <http://bevoelkerungsstatistik.de/>; Sep 21, 2010), own figure

further analysis within the Danube Region territory.

The result shows what was obvious to those already familiar with the region. No city within the territory has a population higher than 2 million people. Instead there are 7 cities with a population between 1 and 2 million people of which 6 are national capitals. This leads to the assumption that - at least on a national level - the Danube Region is characterized by a strongly centralized urban system.

To get a more detailed view on the urban system the degree of urbanization is then being examined. To find out about how national populations of the Danube Region countries are distributed between cities on a national level the Rank-Size-Distribution is afterwards being analyzed. This lets us conclude on

potential migration flows as well as on the preconditions for polycentric development.

Degree of urbanization

In comparison of countries this indicator gives first evidence about the potential of rural-urban migration as a driving factor of future trends of urbanization. The empirical distribution shows differences across different countries and at the same time any empirical distribution can be compared to the theoretically expected rank-size-distribution providing normative conclusions regarding a more polycentric system.

Here the degree of urbanization is calculated through a simple division of the population of the biggest cities of a country by the whole national population. To receive results that

Country	Pop. of biggest cities	National Pop.	Nr. of cities within calc.	Degree of Urbanization
Macedonia	257.385	627.775	5	0,41
Bulgaria	2.405.335	7.418.091	7	0,32
Croatia	1.180.665	4.449.966	5	0,27
Bosnia-H.	1.023.938	3.885.424	10	0,26
Moldova	912.021	3.477.920	4	0,26
Austria	2.150.432	8.397.949	3	0,26
Slovakia	1.326.668	5.396.753	12	0,25
Romania	4.610.945	21.430.643	11	0,22
Serbia	1.617.374	7.380.626	4	0,22
Slovenia	442.866	2.031.721	5	0,22
Czech Rep.	2.023.620	10.340.367	4	0,20
Hungary	2.023.516	10.042.311	3	0,20
Danube Region	19.652.432	118.489.147	37	0,17
Germany	3.820.055	23.269.234	9	0,16

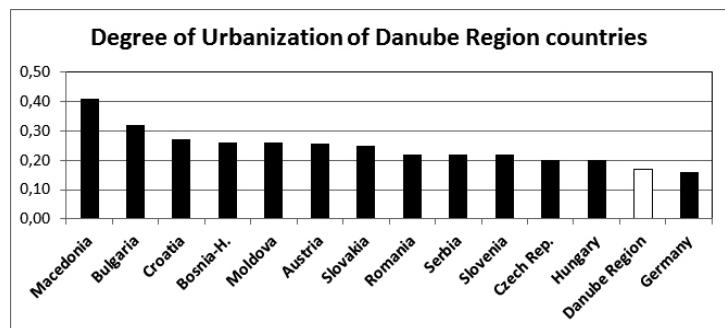


Fig.2. Degree of Urbanization of Danube Region cities (Data Source: <http://bevoelkerungsstatistik.de/>; Sep 21, 2010), own figure

better portray the tendency of urbanization in a country only those cities were considered that have at least 1/10th of the population of the largest city of a country. The territories of the countries which are part of the Danube Region show the following results:

These results indicate strong differences in the degree of urbanization and in the number of cities included. Facing this fact we can conclude that the further process of urbanization will vary across all national territories. Territories with a low degree of urbanization will be affected through outmigration and loss of population in rural areas the lower the economic standards will remain in the near future. Potential migration flows are not easy to predict but size, distance and attractiveness of cities as potential destination as well as specific resistance to movement will play a crucial role in the structure of migration flows. The weight of borders plays an important part as well. The stronger barriers are the more migration will take place within the territory leading to urbanization in the own country. The weaker they are and the more integrated territories are the stronger migration flows to cities in other territories might become. In this case European metropolises are likely to become even more predominant as destinations of migration.

Rank-Size-Distribution of cities within their respective territory

To get an idea of the current state of the polycentric structure of cities on a national level within the countries of the Danube Region the Rank-Size-Rule is being used. The rule says that the size of any city in a given territory is determined by the size of the largest city and its rank within all cities of the respective territory. This rule in logarithmic form corresponds to a linear functional relation. (Heineberg, 2006, p. 76 ff) The empirical and theoretically expected rank-size-distributions of the territories of all considered countries show the following characteristics.

The results show that three different groups of countries can be distinguished concerning the deviation between empirical city sizes and theoretically expected ones:

1) Dominant Primate City

The first group shows a strong primacy of the capital city against the observed distribution of medium- and/or small-sized cities. Austria is one of the countries showing a primacy of its capital city. Other countries belonging to this are Croatia, Moldova and Macedonia to a strong extent as well as Bulgaria and Hungary to a weak extent. In these countries the

distribution indicates a non-polycentric structure as a precondition of polycentric development.

2) Flat Distribution

The second group shows a flat distribution where medium sized cities show values larger than to be expected. Countries with a city-size-distribution of this type are Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovakia and partly German cities of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. In these countries the city-size-distribution already indicates a polycentric structure as a good precondition for further polycentric development.

3) Rank-Size-Equal

This group of countries shows an observed city-size-distribution which corresponds to the theoretically expected values. Countries with a city-size-distribution of this type are Czech Republic, Serbia and Slovenia. In these countries the city-size-distribution indicates an

urban system that is undecided regarding a polycentric structure.

To conclude, the analysis of the observed rank-size-distribution indicates from a normative point of view that the urban systems of most of the considered countries are not really balanced or do not show polycentric characteristics. Countries show the less adequate preconditions for polycentric development the more their city-size-distributions indicate a primacy distribution dominated by the size of the capital city.

On the other hand the rank-size-distribution for the whole Danube Region shows a rather interesting result. Here a clear non-primacy distribution can be seen. Medium-sized cities seem to be larger than expected theoretically. This indicates formally a well elaborated polycentric structure in the Danube Region - at least on the level of medium-sized cities.

However, there is still the risk that one city will

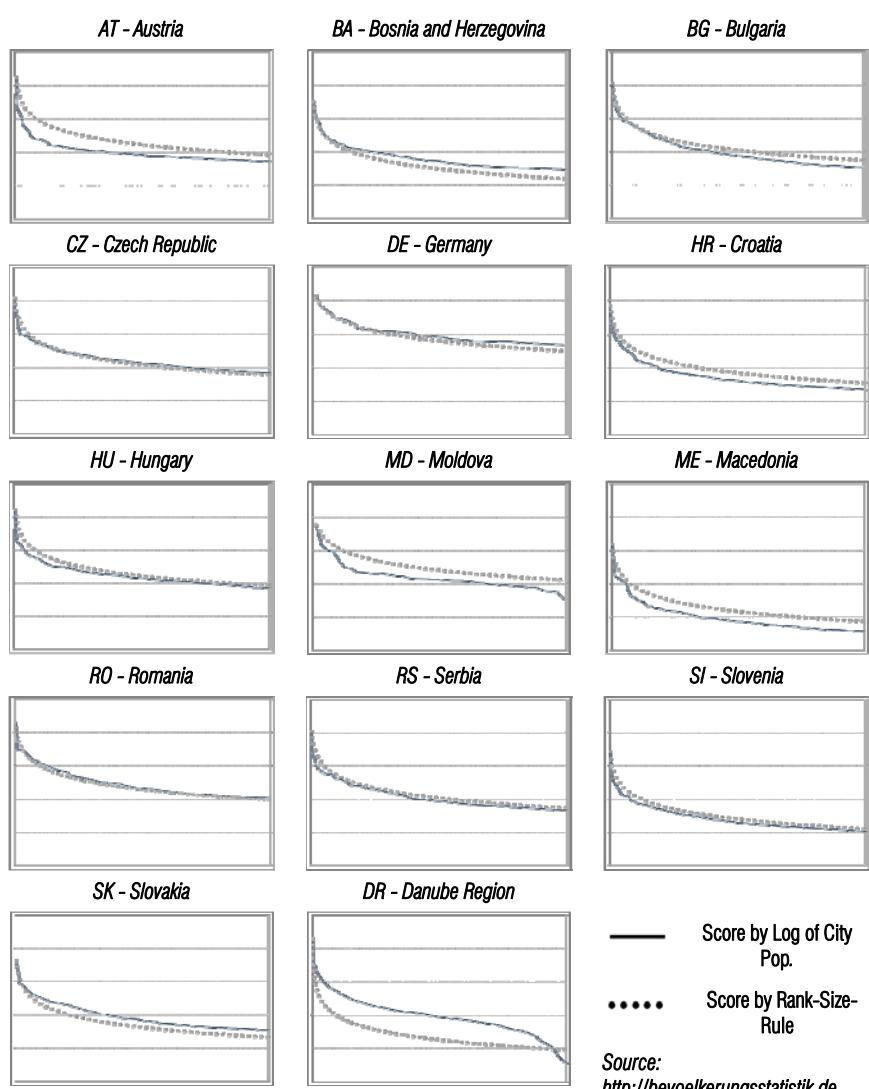


Fig.3: Rank-Size-Rule on national level (Data Source: <http://bevoelkerungsstatistik.de>; Sep 21, 2010), own figure

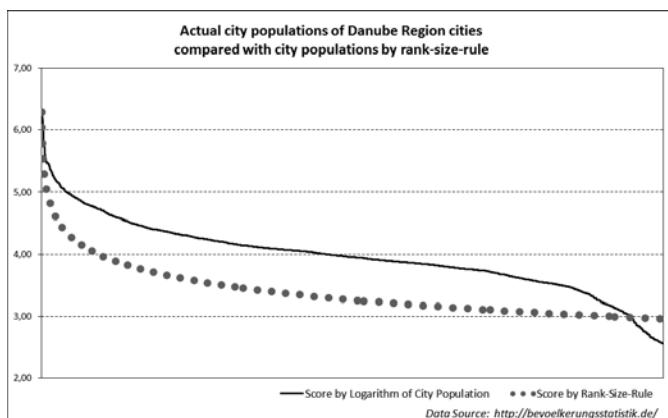


Fig.4. Rank-Size-Rule on macro-regional level (Data Source: <http://bevoelkerungsstatistik.de/>; Sep 21, 2010), own figure

establish as the most important one according to rank-size-rule if conditions for development are unequal across the metropolises. At the same time it becomes obvious that recently many medium-sized cities constitute a good base for polycentric development. But they are at the same time under an increasingly competitive situation the more integrated the Danube Region becomes.

Combining both information (Rank-Size-Distribution-type and Degree of Urbanization) further conclusions can be made: cities in territories with a low degree of urbanization show high potential immigration from their own hinterland. The risk of migration flows being directed to cities in other countries which show higher attraction increases as barriers between regions of origin and destination disappear and if socioeconomic disparities are still huge. Therefore, the more the Danube Region represents a territory with decreasing barriers the more the risk of population concentration in large metropolitan agglomerations with higher socio-economic standards will increase. Consequently, this development will jeopardize existing urban systems in less developed countries and regions.

Borders of nations in duality to potential cross-border relations

Borders of nations predominantly indicate the territorial hegemony in political and administrative terms. But such borders do not necessarily correspond with regions defined by cultural or ethnic criteria or by historic functional and social experiences. Facing the variations in the integration process, cross border situations can be distinguished basically along with Martinez (1994) as follows:

a) Borders strictly separate border regions because of strong political, economic,

religious or cultural differences and potential conflicts.

b) Borders separate border regions and guarantee independent spatial development but allow few and strictly controlled relations due to national interests.

c) Borders integrate border regions in a controlled way according to bilateral interests on the national level. Cooperative relations in the economic and social sphere are allowed.

d) Borders integrate border regions in a multifaceted and self-defined way through cross border partnerships and cooperative relations in all spheres according to regional objectives.

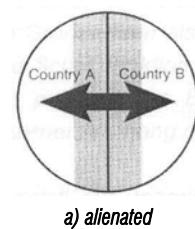
However, this classification emphasizes the differences in the dimension of separation – integration in a multidimensional perspective. It basically indicates that borders may have a different meaning on the local, regional and national level for the recent and future integration process in Europe.

Based on this perspective, future development of cities in border regions will strongly differ due to their geographic situation in relation to borders and their meaning as barriers. Hence, we will now discuss the urban system in its geographic distribution focusing in particular on the situation of cities in relation to borders. (see Fig.6) Doing this kind of research a completely different perspective will be discussed in comparison to ESPON 1.1.1 (2005) In these studies polycentricity is analyzed only within national territories. It does not consider any cross-border-situation of groups of cities explicitly. Two aspects are worked out under the aspect of borders:

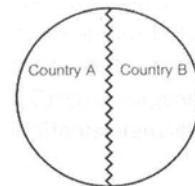
(1) Large cities or capital cities are regarded as potential metropolises with a metropolitan region which includes hinterland and neighboring cities in cross border situations.

Map 1 shows all potential metropolises with their potential 'hinterland' (defined by an approx. 100km radius). However, this group of cities differs in size. Considering their geographic position it becomes evident that

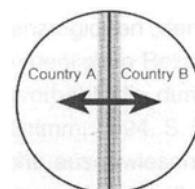
- ... some of these cities like Prague or Budapest figure as potential nodes in a European network which are not close to other cities or border regions.
- ... the most integrated triangle of large cities is Stuttgart, Nürnberg and Munich which belong to an integrated territory with characteristics of a polycentric structure.
- ... Vienna and Bratislava show rather good preconditions for integration as they are in a distance of less than 100 km, both at the river Danube because the meaning of borders decreases in importance as barrier through the integration process at least since 2005.
- ... capital cities of Ljubljana and Zagreb are relative close to each other providing new potentials of metropolitan growth. The meaning



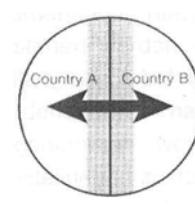
a) alienated



b) co-existing



c) cooperative



d) integrated

Fig.5. Cross-border situations (Source: Martinez (1994, p.3)); own modifications

of borders between both states still decrease with the integration of Croatia into the EU.

- ... other metropolises like Belgrade, Sofia, Bukarest and Kischnau show enhanced potentials if borders will disappear or decrease as barriers. However, these potential metropolitan areas the integration process if ever started is still weak.

Facing this geographic distribution it is obvious that this group of cities experiences different conditions of metropolitan polycentric development.

(2) In general cities are regarded as motors of regional development in a decreasing importance the smaller cities are. Consequently, border regions experience new disadvantages if there are no cities spreading out corresponding positive effects. New peripheries within the Danube region will emerge even if the meaning of borders as barriers is decreasing. However, this risk of new and inner peripheries will increase the stronger barriers remain and the smaller and less dense the groups of cities in border regions are.

Fig. 6 indicates such areas which potentially will become new inner peripheries because of the lack of urban impacts. According to the differences in the integration status regarding European Union and the lack of city influence we may distinguish following types of potentially new peripheries:

(a) New peripheral regions between old and new member states through a clear lack of large and medium sized cities: examples are border regions Bavaria and Czech Republik, South Burgenland and Southwest of Hungary.

(b) New inner periphery regions between newly integrated countries: examples are border regions between Hungary and Rumania or Rumania and Bulgaria.

(c) Border regions between new members of EU and neighboring non-EU-countries. Examples are border regions between Moldova and Romania or Hungary and Croatia.

(d) New inner periphery regions between non-EU-member states and countries of the Southwest Balkan.

Probably one may distinguish a group (e) describing such border situations where border regions are still in the influence of metropolises but lacking small and medium sized cities. Examples are regions between Slovenia and Carinthia or Slovenia and Croatia.

FEATURES OF A LEARNING BASED MULTILEVEL STRATEGIC APPROACH

Facing the differences in the preconditions and already existing assets of spatial development (urban system, borders) a multilevel and evidence based approach will be elaborated subsequently.

Territorial Capital: its implications for a strategic approach for the macro-region

Facing the strong variation in regional endowment and heterogeneous governance capacities (OECD, 2001) academic attention is directed towards supply related approaches since some years. Such approaches provide an adequate theoretical view on the fact of high differentiation of urban developments in front of globalization and economic restructuring as

global phenomenon. In this perspective the term 'territorial capital' was introduced by OECD (2001, p. 13) recognizing that "prosperity is increasingly a matter of how well each city, each region, can achieve its potential. It is a supply-side concept. Territorial capital refers to the stock of assets which form the basis for endogenous development in each city and region, as well as to the institutions, modes of decision-making and professional skills to make best use of those assets." Accordingly, specific features of territorial capital make the return of certain investments higher than in other regions and generate a higher return for certain kinds of investments than for others (OECD, 2001, p. 15). Evidently, same amount of investments or same external economic demand will lead to different effects on regional and urban development due to its specific 'territorial capital'.

Territorial capital and assets of urban competitiveness

Starting from this point of supply related view the question 'What do we understand by assets driving urban and regional development?' is answered in its basic arguments. For a detailed discussion see Camagni (2008; 2009) or Giffinger et al. (2009)

- *Basic endowment and functional related elements* are natural features, material and immaterial cultural, technical and social heritage. These are fixed assets as infrastructures and endowment related qualities of distinct places. *Basic relational elements* are 'untraded' interdependencies (like customs, informal rules, understanding) or specific environments (institutions, rules and practices, common strategies and policies). The second kind of elements becomes very important for competitiveness because they are necessary for the identification and activation of potentials.

- In a more taxonomic perspective, Camagni (2008, p. 123) identifies 9 different goods as elements which describe the character of a city's territorial capital and he differentiates them into tangible and intangible goods. They are providing respective relative and absolute comparative advantages.

Anyhow, spatial development at any spatial level (urban, regional, metropolitan, national) is finally driven through soft relational factors which in combination activate resources and mobilize perceived potentials and transform them to assets. In this perspective spatial development at any urban and regional level is the outcome or result of the activation of relevant potentials through competitive or

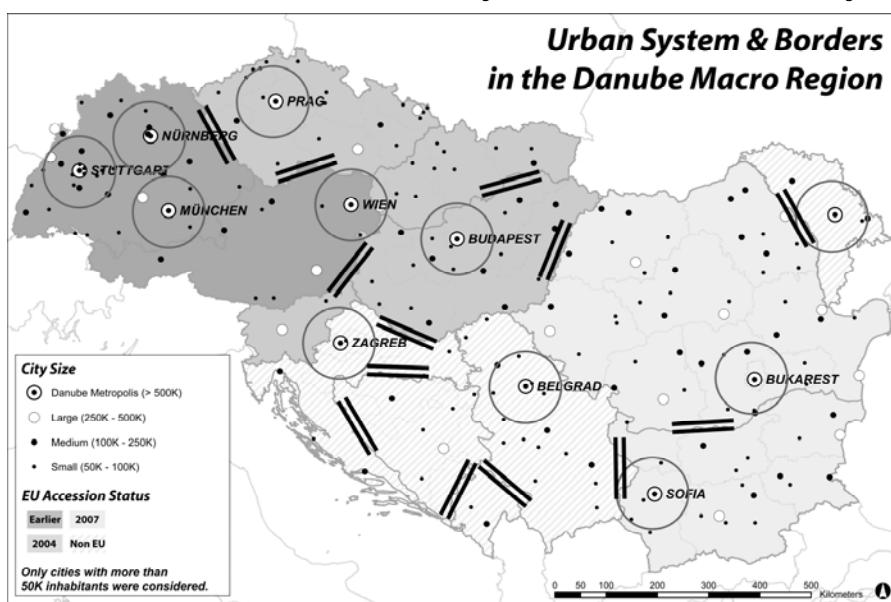


Fig. 6: Urban Systems and Borders

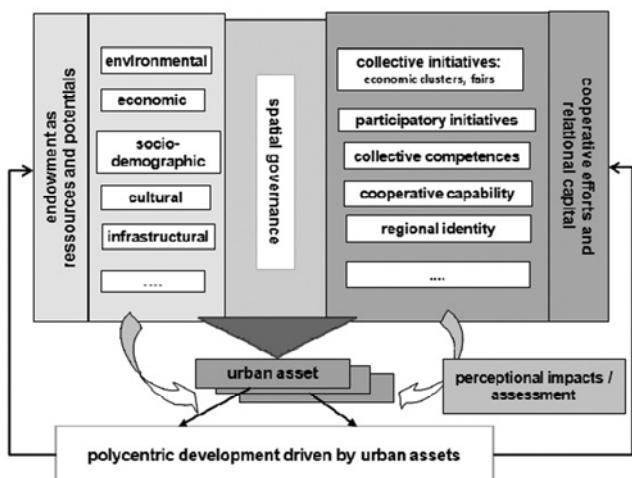


Fig.7. Hypothesis on Metropolitan Governance (Source: own figure)

cooperative forms of initiatives.

To conclude, a Danube strategy which is based on the territorial approach has preliminary to foster such governance efforts which try to identify, select and activate endowment related resources and potentials in a strategic way – both in form of competition providing predominantly tangible goods as well as in form of cooperation providing predominantly intangible goods. Thus, the Danube strategy mainly should focus on the different forms of relational capital and in particular encourage spatial governance in form of strategic efforts which have the capacity to translate endowment related resources and potentials into real assets for the respective territory (Giffinger et al., 2009).

Perceptional aspect: Identification, assessment and activation

The existence of endowment related resources and potentials are only important and contributing to spatial development if they are perceived, assessed and activated by corresponding stakeholders. Any form of initiative regarding urban development needs therefore the focus on actors' behaving and social relationships. Such initiatives finally will become important asset in urban and regional development only if this process of transformation is realized efficiently including the interests of different actors and in accordance to common goals. Thus, identification of stakeholders with the territory, their ability to cooperate and their capacity to behave creatively to common challenges are decisive preconditions for the creation of new assets.

Obviously, there is an important perceptional impact on urban - regional competitive development so far endowment factors are not

identified by relevant actors comprehensively and potentials are not transformed in a productive way. If these preconditions for the transformation process are not given, there are no impulses or activities likely to occur which may yield corresponding assets. This process therefore presumes common interests, more or less positive experiences and corresponding capacities of respective stakeholder who should be involved in cooperative initiatives.

In the Danube region this process of perception, assessment and activation of potentials becomes important under the following aspects:

- Despite the integration process and in front of several historical experiences in Central and Southeast Europe countries national borders are still a strong and important instrument regarding national interests and corresponding national political, administrative and planning systems. From a border's point of view border regions in the Danube region still have rather different status of integration, some are regarded as integrated since a long period of time, others are recently in process of integration and others still have the status of at least co-existing. Very obvious, in a historic dimension border regions in the Danube region experienced even alienated forms and moved over to more integrated forms. Of course, the perceptional challenge in the concept of territorial capital presumes integrated or at least cooperative border regions. Such perceptional challenges are likely to be more complicated the longer alienated forms of borders dominated the development in border regions.

- There is a wide range of historical, political and socioeconomic factors which influence the understanding of regional policy and spatial planning across countries, regions and cities.

Thus, there is no common approach in understanding as well as in planning practice in recent years. Although there is awareness against the problems of activating relevant potentials in cross-border situations, relevant planning approaches had been elaborated and implemented only since some years and experiences are rather inhomogenous.

Urban system and polycentricity as an asset

The existence and development of cities is based on different arguments: Besides traditional interpretations (as central places of a wide range of goods and services which are supplying population in the respective hinterland), urban agglomerations are regarded nowadays as the motors of urban and regional development in a globalized world and as important nodes with corresponding metropolitan functions. Cities differ from each other due to its centrality function in a traditional meaning and through its specialisation (driven through creativity, innovations and new metropolitan functions) in a more postmodern understanding.

In order to look at urban systems in a more comprehensive spatial perspective the term 'polycentrism' was introduced under the use of analytical as well as normative criteria. The term 'polycentrism' describes a system of cities which are interlinked and mutually encourage themselves (Schubert und Klein, 2006). In a spatial perspective it means a dynamic concept in which cities are not regarded only as centers of supply but also as motors of development. (Schindegger et al., 2002) Cities are not only elements in a system but more or less important nodes regarding different forms of interlinkages. „A polycentric urban system is a spatial organization of cities characterized by a functional division of labor, economic and institutional integration, and political co-operation“ (Tatzberger, 2004)

Under these perspectives polycentrism on the one hand side regards cities as competitors which are interlinked in a functional way through trade of goods or flows of commodities or information, resp. which are related to each other through migration or commuters. This we call functional or structural polycentrism which is based on complementarities and attractivity. On the other side a city is part of a polycentric system if there exist strategic relations of stakeholders between cities which are based on cooperation. Such cooperative efforts are necessary and are likely to exist in order to define and realize common goals which cannot be subject of single actions. This we call

strategic polycentrism based on cooperative efforts which may have a wide range of goals reaching from political commitments via institutional agreements until projects on common technical and social infrastructure. (ESPON 1.1.1, 2005, p.47)

Of course, the character of functional and strategic polycentricity varies with the spatial level. One distinguishes usually the micro, meso and macro level. On the European (macro) level polycentricity describes the urban system of metropolises which should provide the base for European integration zones from a normative point of view. Good connectivity on European or global level is necessary in order to open up the 'hinterworld' enhancing and improving the competitive conditions regarding metropolitan development. On the national or transnational (meso-) level polycentricity describes the urban system of a metropolitan region consisting of networks of smaller cities usually enhancing the attractivity of the metropolis through complementary economic specialisation. Very often such metropolitan regions are fragmented through national borders which hamper functional or strategic relations to other cities. On the national or even regional (micro-) level polycentricity describes the urban system with its characteristics of the 'hinterland' which provides larger potentials of demand and workforce, higher diversity in housing and living quality, different types of area bounded advantages regarding the allocation of new metropolitan functions.

Basically, competition between cities drives functional interrelations if cities try to specialise and position them into niches making flows of goods, persons and information necessary. Of course, metropolitan growth areas (MEGAs) (ESPON, 1.1.1, 2005) compete for metropolitan functions (Krätke, 2007) which drive metropolitan development. Competition on the meso or micro level concentrate even more on regional and local economic activities or even households as residents. Opposite to functional polycentricity, strategic polycentricity between metropolises focuses on different issues than on the meso or micro level and concerns different aspects of positioning, infrastructure and economic niches in a hierarchical way.

CONCLUSIONS: BASIC FEATURES OF A MULTILEVEL APPROACH

Taking territorial capital and assets into consideration a Danube strategy basically should show following features:

- Emphasis on enhancement of cultural, social and relational capital as intangible assets for urban and regional development;
- Strengthening of place-specific assets, that cannot be reproduced by moving people and goods, and stem from local culture, values, and norms;

- Empowerment of specific forms of cooperative efforts with strategic planning character which in combination yield competitive advantages for the attraction and realization of important economic functions according to city size and positioning;

In a perceptual perspective, the Danube strategy should obtain the following features regarding spatial governance in a perceptual perspective:

- In particular cross border cooperative initiatives should be enforced in border regions which are still less integrated or even fragmented. First and basic efforts should concentrate on provision of information, discussion of strengths and weaknesses and common learning processes how to meet challenges.

- Predominantly those cross border initiatives should be empowered which aim at the identification and assessment of regional potentials or which try to support and integrate regional identities as a base for future activities.

- An evidence based learning approach has to be implemented. It should predominantly support cooperative initiatives in a bottom-up way in order to learn from local experts about local and (inter-)regional potentials and it should provide information on European perspectives and support the activation and transformation of potentials into assets in a top-down manner.

- Support of corresponding capacity building is necessary in particular in small (and medium) sized cities in border regions.

Finally, taking the concept of polycentricity into consideration a Danube Region strategy should contain the following features:

- Initiatives of cities aiming at the improvement of its competitiveness should be empowered through the Danube strategy: corresponding instruments on the micro- and meso-level should empower cooperative efforts; on the meso- and macro-level they should improve competitive conditions inducing new economic relations.

- In particular strategic efforts for metropolises in border regions should be defined including a clear concept for infrastructure investments

and for those measures which help to jeopardize national interests hampering cross border developments. Strategic polycentricity should be enforced through the flow of information and production of knowledge regarding the positioning of other metropolises.

- Strategic efforts in form of cooperative initiatives should be enabled in those border regions where are only medium and small sized cities. These border regions in particular need specific capacity building measures.

- Along with the improvement of technical infrastructure which improves competitive conditions or standards of living a special focus of strategic polycentrism should concentrate on the creation and empowerment of social networks in different spheres of development and on different levels.

Considering the different spatial levels with respective challenges, effective measures improving its 'hinterland' on the micro and meso level or its 'hinterworld' on the macro level are necessary to be defined and to be implemented in this strategy. Cooperation and competition as two complementing governance approaches have to be enforced in an efficient way through the Danube strategy.

- The strategy has to guarantee the coordination of instruments and measures between the 3 levels: the multilevel approach has to consider the implications of competitive and cooperative efforts on the macro-meso-micro level.

- In particular, functional and strategic polycentricity easily is jeopardized through borders hampering interregional relations. A specific instrument aiming at this problem should be defined in order to improve network effects in form of spill-overs which strengthen competitiveness of distinct cities and steer territorial cohesion in an effective way.

To sum up, the degrees of urbanization and the rank-size-distributions vary remarkably across the countries of the Danube region. Very obviously, the respective urban systems in combination with the different meaning of borders provide rather strong differences and deficits in polycentric development conditions. Hence, polycentricity will only become an asset of respective cities and regions if strategic efforts will strengthen it in an effective way on the different spatial levels.

The concept of territorial capital emphasizes that urban-regional development is not only based on some endowment factors providing potentials in a functional sense but needs specific knowledge for the transformation of

potentials into assets. Thus, corresponding instruments on the European level are needed in order to support those efforts which strengthen relational elements. In a successful strategy knowledge about the potentials as well as about the meaning of assets is necessary and should be supported through corresponding initiatives. Thus, the main goal of governance in Danube region is to facilitate the coordination and steering of collective actions, in particular in border situations.

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SELECTED ASPECTS OF TERRITORIAL COHESION IN SLOVAKIA UNDER THE RECENT CRISIS

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Territorial cohesion has been one of the most prominent topics of discourse among spatial planners, urban sociologists, economists and experts from various other fields. Territorial systems with high degree of cohesion are better equipped to withstand the external pressures and situational imbalances. Recent global crisis exposed these imbalances and challenged the smooth and balanced spatial development of European countries. Major economic setbacks influenced entire society in Slovakia. Global financial crisis evaporated the ultimate growth of Slovak economics and exposed hidden imbalances of development policies solely related to GDP growth instead of creating the fundaments for sustainability in the transition economy. Spatial polarization on different levels of society weakened down the overall (mainly social) cohesion and highlighted the problems of marginalized regions and social groups. Social aspects of territorial and spatial processes are more visible than ever before and regional disparities are becoming more prominent issue in political and scientific discourse. Despite the deep profilation of regional identity and place attachment, there are still considerable distinctions and disparities between metropolitan/urban and rural communities in terms of values, consumption patterns, life style, sense of solidarity or wealth distribution. Selected aspects of territorial cohesion in Slovakia, mainly in the field of social cohesion are in the spotlight in this paper. Focus on integrative spatial development balancing the contradictions by effective mixture of general approach and reasonable and sensible differentiation is considered highly essential.

Key words: territorial cohesion, social cohesion, balanced spatial development, common values, social capital, place attachment.

"At the moment of evaporation of criminal ideology of collectivism, the new highly self-confident but helplessly lonely singularity was born. This singularis slowly and unattending liquidates the future society – it does not have the ancestors. Everybody is smoothly becoming homeless".

(Alexander Tomský on Demographic crisis in Europe)

INITIAL THOUGHTS

European spatial development and modification of its spatial patterns and structures is a complicated and multifocal process going beyond pure aggregation of national spatial structures (more e.g. in Zillmer, Boehme 2010). Almost every EU policy has its territorial impacts and reflections. Back in the 1990s, ESDP states that „sustainable development covers not only

environmentally sound economic development which preserves present resources for use by future generations but also includes a balanced spatial development“ (ESDP). Green paper on Territorial cohesion explicitly mentions that „concept of territorial cohesion builds bridges between economic effectiveness, social cohesion and ecological balance, putting sustainable development at the heart of policy design“ (Green paper on Territorial Cohesion, p.3). Thus, concept of sustainability is the philosophical and ideological background of this approach. Among the particular priorities we can find coordination of policies in large areas (such as Baltic states region), improving condition on the outermost border of EU, competitive and sustainable cities, fighting the social exclusion, improving the health care and education etc. Promoting territorial cohesion should be part of the effort to ensure that all Europe's territory has the opportunity to contribute to the growth and jobs agenda (Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion, 2006). On the other hand, there

are voices claiming that „political reality of EU characterized by weak position of comprehensive development policies and spatial planning at all is reflected in the official distance of the EC from the responsibility of spatial development“ (Finka, Jamečný 2010).

Territorial cohesion was in the spotlight of the European spatial policies even before the start of the crisis. In the times of growth and bright integration perspectives, it became one of the frequently used concepts when arguing the advantages of future spatial and societal development of the Europe (see e.g. Peyrony 2005). The crisis highlighted the importance of the coherent development, and even made it a fundamental precondition of the successful

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progress of the integrated Europe. Before we start to examine territorial cohesion in Slovakia under the pressure of current global financial and economic crisis, we should investigate the methodological backgrounds of territorial cohesion.

Territorial cohesion as an academic/research issue

Each type of cohesion might be characterized as an ability of the parts of the system to „stick together“ bringing synergy effect and enriching all the particular parts without harming any of them. Cohesive systems are better equipped to withstand the external pressures and situational imbalances. Cohesion secures the stability in time and space and makes systems more predictable and more legible both from external as well as from internal point of view. Concept of cohesive development brought on the territorial level should include balanced economic development, social cohesion of the entire society and particular communities living within the territory and preservation of the natural sources. This is reflected in the paradigm of sustainability, ideologically covering the concept of territorial cohesion. The unique and versatile combination of various systems (economic, social, ecological) interacting in the certain territory makes the research of territorial cohesion demanding and multidimensional issue. There are appearing the following haunting questions: How to achieve social and economic cohesion, preservation of natural and cultural diversity and territorial competitiveness at once? How to measure territorial cohesion? In which scale and which units? Is territorial cohesion a qualitative phenomena *per se*, or is it a continuous scale allowing basic benchmarking among the societies and territories? Duehr et al. (2010, In Zillmer, Boehme 2010, p.5) brought the concept of division onto:

- a) territorial quality – living standards, quality of life, social wellness
- b) territorial efficiency – different use of resources and territorial capital
- c) territorial identity – social capital, soft factors like regional identity, City Branding etc.

This concept tries to integrate measurable factors (effective allocation of sources) with unique, soft elements (identity).

Territorial cohesion as a political issue

Idea behind is to reduce the cost of non-coordinated national policies, contribute to goals set up in Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas and counterbalance the economic and social collateral effects of European single market.

Almost every policy and politic documents of EC is dealing with territorial cohesion (see e.g. Barroso, Verheugen 2005, Falludi 2005), starting with ESDP, Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, ESPON analyses (van Gestel and Falludi 2005), Territorial agenda and its action programme, Lisbon and Gothenburg agenda and even Lisbon treaty. Territorial cohesion became one of the strategic axes of many above mentioned documents and most of them consider this issue as a fundamental precondition for balanced spatial development of EU.

TERRITORIAL COHESION IN SLOVAKIA

Mainly during the 1990s, variety of overestimated expectation of the self-regulative mechanisms of the free market based on the neo-liberal paradigm had been vigorously arisen (more in Finka 2010). The underdeveloped market environment, protectionism, absence of natural control mechanisms like ethic principles in business, lack of political culture and of public sensitivity against political failures seem to be in their synergy behind the development problems. Experience from the centralised planning and politic decision making from the previous era imposed the distrust in any public driven planning (deeper analysis in e.g. Finka 2002, 2003, 2007). The overall situation in Slovakia during the previous decade might be characterized by following patterns (Gajdoš and Pašiak 2006):

- spatial polarization on different levels of society is weakening the overall (mainly social) cohesion
- social aspects of territorial and spatial processes are more visible than ever before (paradigm of new regionalism)
- the regional disparities are still growing from the 1990s and are one of the main scopes of the political and scientific discourse.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the following risk-portfolio is essential to be taken into the consideration (according to Gajdoš and Pašiak 2006):

- risk of deepening the regional disparities, mainly in the field of the quality of human resources
- risk of the social environment of marginalized regions break-down
- risk of the readiness to implement regional policies (mainly due to the lack of financial and human capital) break-down

Beside many great successes and achievements

related to the process of transformation (foreign investments in the lacking behind regions, refurbishments of the city centers, improvements of the living environment) of Slovakia, there have been still persisting many problems and challenges. We are still being witnesses of the rigorous duel between the proclaimative economically oriented regional policy and barrier-free neo-liberalism. Proclaimative social oriented regional policy is in the municipal practice confronted with post-socialist clientelism and corruption. The bureaucratic elements of decision-making are being multiplied by the bureaucracy in the EU funds and hegemony of ministerial bureaucrats. In addition, the implementation of the EU TA policies in real spatial development policy is further ignored. Despite the utter importance of balanced and cohesive development on the national level, it seems that the era of unprecedented economic growth (2002-2008) has not been fully utilized to diminish vigorous contradictions in spatial development in Slovakia. In opposite, the hidden imbalances became more prominent and social tensions have grown with the first contact with the global crisis.

SOCIAL COHESION IN SLOVAKIA

Concept of social cohesion got into the scientific/research spotlight in the beginning of 1990s. The very term of social cohesion was defined in many ways and under different point of view (more e.g. in Beauvais and Jenson 2002). Main scope of the most approaches was to determine how various social and economic variables are related in the process of social reality construction. Various concepts (or quasi-concepts) of social cohesion integrate the intangible issues of social capital (degree of trust and mutuality, values, perception of collective goal) with direct measurable outcomes (health, education, public participation) of cohesive society.

Social cohesion in developed European and Northern American countries has been put under vigorous challenges during the last decade. Cities and societies are becoming more fluid, fragmented and even chaotic, with unpredictable outcomes of parallel running social processes (see e.g. Bauman's concept of liquid modernity 2002). Decline of social cohesion has been attributed to several factors (see e.g. Bauman 2002 or Putnam 2001): time pressure, various distractive factors, residential mobility and suburbanization, "privatization" of societal goals.

If we define the social cohesion as an absence of conflict between societal goals and groups and absence of disruptive behavior (Kearns and

Forrest 2000, p.996) the overall social cohesion in Slovakia is low. If we define the social cohesion as the *societal niveau* where all the components are contributing to the fitness of the whole and are profiting from the advantage being a part of the whole, there have been some remarkable achievements during the recent years.

The comprehensible set of the criteria of social cohesion in territorial dimension have been introduced by Kearns and Forrest (2000):

Common Values and Civic Culture

Cohesive society within the field of common culture and civic values is one in which the members share values which enable them to identify and support common goals (Kearns and Forrest (2000, p.997). In more applied way, in such society there is a general support for the political systems and structures which are the pillars of the entire society. In addition, in cohesive society based on the commonly shared values, the individuals do display pro-active behavior in terms of participation in local and national policies, decision making and engagement. In contemporary Slovakia, there are still considerable distinctions and disparities between metropolitan/urban and rural communities in terms of values, consumption patterns, life style or political preferences. The level of participation is rather low, despite some considerable shifts in some behavioural patterns of certain actors of public life. Leadership, engagement and high motivation are present in certain cases, but the majority of the public remains still rather unattached and indifferent.

Social Order and Social Control

Social order and control refers to more mundane level of community life, mutually interlinked circle of daily routine and reciprocities. Social order is seen as the general framework in which the individuals are ready to cooperate, communicate and interact (Wrong 1994, Kearns and Forrest 2000). It is sometimes not easy to harmonize the diversity of urban milieu with the need for informal rules of social order and control (Giddens 1994, In Kearns and Forrest 2000). Incivility, crime and unpunished violent behaviour are the consequences of *horror vacui* in terms of informal social order and control. For example, unemployed people, loosing their „dull daily routines“ are prone to engage themselves in social interpersonal conflicts and territorial struggles (Kearns and Forrest 2000). Social control in territory of Slovakia, represented mainly by rural settlements and small sized cities had been rather strong and deeply profiled in the past. However, nowadays, even in the rural areas the social control was

weakened down by social and mindset gaps between autochthon population and newcomers. This is visible especially in prosperous suburban settlements, which completely adopted metropolitan/urban consumption, life-style and behavioural patterns.

Solidarity and Reduction of Wealth Disparities

Solidarity and reduction of wealth disparities are one of the basic pillars of social market economy. This dimension of social cohesion refers to “extending opportunities for income-generating activities; reduction of poverty; reduced disparities in incomes, employment and competitiveness; higher quality of life; and open access to services of general benefit and protection.” (Keats and Forrest 2000, p.999). If we analyse the tendencies of wealth distribution in Slovakia in absolute numbers, the disparities are not huge, but in relative measurement the distinctions are considerable (especially in certain private sectors). Solidarity is shown in extreme situations (floods), not as an everyday attitude (e.g. toward marginalised social groups). In 2007, 11% of the population qualified as living in poverty, with earnings of less than €198 per month. Those identified as living in material need (under €185) receive a subsidy that varies according to the individual's situation (www.euractiv.com). Poverty does affect predominantly the Roma population.

Social Networks and Social Capital

Cohesive community is based on the high degree of social interactions. The most important platform for developing social network and accumulating social capital is the local level (Kearns and Forrest 2000, p.999). Repeating mutual support mechanisms within the neighborhood keep the social networks alive and prevent isolation, stress and frustration. Voluntary participation and high degree of trust are essential for socially cohesive society. In terms of social capital, Slovak population had been always rather conservative, that means that social interlinkages are rather stable and are considered to be a subject of high esteem, but lower flexibility. However, there are obvious observable trends, similar to other countries, that social networks are transformed from territorial to virtual dimension.

Place Attachment and Regional Identity

It is generally supposed that highly profiled regional identity and strong ties of place attachment are of utter importance for social cohesion within the territory (Kearns and Forrest 2000). Place Attachment saturates many psychological needs: the need for security, the

need for self-realisation, the need for belonging and structuring the outer environment. Highly profiled regional identity contributes to the legibility of the place and space. The people are still generally territorial in their behavioural patterns. Slovak communities, mainly in smaller settlements (but even in urban milieu) always displayed rather strong and deep place attachment and deep identification with living place and environment. However, we can conclude from recent surveys (e.g. project Identity of River Basins, Jaššo 2005) that both these phenomena (place attachment and territorial identification) are saturated more by emotional and social identification patterns („I have grown up here“, „my family lives here for decades“) than by value based identification patterns („I am living here because I appreciated the value profile and behaviour of our municipality“). The territorial identification and sense of belonging is rather deep, but in many cases rather mono-dimensional.

SLOVAKIA IN THE RECENT CRISIS

Before the crisis, Slovak republic enjoyed relatively high economical growth. Foreign investments were the most prominent topics of economic discourse in late 1990s and first half of 2000s and 91% of GDP was made by 22 transnational corporations (more in Staněk 2010). Slovakia utilized its main competitive advantage: favorable geographical position, low salaries level with relatively high skilled workforce. The leader branches were the automotive cluster (Peugeot- Citroen, Volkswagen, Kia) and electronics (Samsung, Sony). Massive investments, improving the conditions within entrepreneurial and business landscape and business innovations brought dramatic decline of unemployment rates within 2002-2007. Even the social and job mobility, that has always been rather weak point of Slovak society, improved. In 2000-06 more than 200 000 people left the country for jobs abroad (80 000 came back in 2009-2010). First half of 2000s is the era when high share of economics (98%) became private, including strategic sectors (energy/water supply, telecommunication, utilities).

Contemporary global economic crisis exposed several hidden imbalances and structural weaknesses of Slovak economy. Specific situation of Slovakia results from the huge development intensity in the last decade (Slovakia's economy grew 8.7 percent in a 2007/2008 comparison) and synergy of different contradictory processes in the triangle social, economic and environmental policies. Global financial crisis stopped the rapid growth of Slovak economics and in the same time

deepened natural selective processes of economic and spatial development displaying the deformations brought by the development policies focused only on the rush GDP growth instead of creating the fundaments for sustainability in the transition economy.

Unilateral orientation on automotive industry, dependence on foreign markets, limited effects of state incentives have shaken the Slovak economy. Due to the limited ownership of state, the opportunities for state intervention and reactions on crisis are undermined. As a secondary effect, we are witnessing stagnation of volumes in real estate market and questionable future of overpriced highway building PPP projects. There are no new flagship projects (like Eurovea or Riverpark in the past) ahead and real estate stakeholders are confronted with new paradigm of consumer behaviour („no more debts“). Social consequences are obvious: dominance of certain branches (automotive cluster) with high volumes of production imposed prevailing „passive employee“ mentality over „entrepreneurial spirit“. Another drawback is a brain drain within the country (qualified workforce is moving from Eastern Slovakia toward the Bratislava and western parts) which aggravates regional disparities. Some moderate cultural clashes have occurred (rejection of Corporate Culture of Korean company KIA by Slovak employees, arising of concrete walls in the boundaries between the Roma population inhabited urban areas and majority). Lately, several municipalities are struggling with financial break-down.

The global financial crisis and overall economic decline determined increased competition not only for the enterprises but for the territorial subjects at the communal, regional and national level as well. Slovak municipalities and regions have to face new situation, in which they occur as actors at the global market competing for investments, working places, inhabitants. This brought the pressure on spatial planning to react quickly, to look for hidden potentials as the basis for competitive advantages and to offer efficient solutions lowering the dramatic effects of the crisis and stabilizing local and regional economies. The global crisis pressed them to focus on the development of integrated policies – complex, across economic sectors, spatially interpretable, concentrated on efficient solution of respective problems in respective contexts, often extra-communal or extra-regional.

Similarly to communal and regional subject in other new EU member states, there is the lack of experience in the international and transborder acting as well as in acting as the subjects of

economic competition. In addition, wrong experience from the centralised planning and politic decision from the previous era supported the distrust of public in any pubic driven planning and so the transformation processes in the post-socialist period have been connected with false expectations and overestimation of the self-regulative function of the market mechanism and with underdeveloped system of public control and public intervention instruments and mechanisms. The combination of this gap with protectionism, absence of natural control mechanisms like ethic principles in business, lack of political culture and of public sensitivity against political failures led to many errors in the spatial development, of which effects have been multiplied under the situation of global crisis.

Stronger limitations of available financial sources in public sector, higher vulnerability of transforming local and regional social and economic environment did not allow, particularly in the weak peripheral regions, to absorb the disturbances caused by the outer economic upheavals. The effects of crisis are brisant especially there, where the economic development is not based on efficient use of sustainable factors of the territorial capital and where the phase shifts of necessary structural transformation processes in economy and in the settlement systems structures is too long. Absence of clear expressions concerning the perspectives of spatial development in enlarged EU and position of particular spaces in those perspectives (see e.g. the E.S.D.P) in the combination with the protectionism in the EU and contradictory EU sector policies made the positioning of many regions in Slovakia and other new EU member states against the competing regions in the EU and around the World not easier. The vague definition of the target quality of territorial cohesion brings again the uncertainty and distrust on the site of the communes and regions and lead to the lost of interest on the European spatial development debates.

CONCLUSIONS

Territorial cohesion as an ability of territorial systems to stick together and bring synergy effects of territorial development even to the most peripheral or most handicapped parts of the whole has been fundamentally challenged during the recent crisis. Recent development in Slovakia has shown, that despite the considerable achievements in terms of economic development, the overall cohesion of the country remains very fragile issue. Global financial crisis exposed hidden imbalances, caused by the deformed development policies

focused only on the rush GDP growth in some regions instead of development sustainability in the transition countries (Finka 2010). The pressure on spatial planning in terms of quick reaction and lower/eliminated impacts of the crisis has considerably grown. Particular elements of the territorial cohesion: social cohesion based on the common values, solidarity and local feeling of togetherness, proper utilization of territorial capital as well as ethical aspects of planning got into the spotlight of the scientific discourse. Focus on integrated policies – complex (spatially, across economic sectors) and in the same time concentrated on efficient solution of respective problems in respective contexts is essential. Integrative spatial development balancing the contradictions and disparities is vitally important especially at times when the system is heavily challenged/shaken (complex transformation, global crisis). Regional disparities should be approached not only as weaknesses and failures of recent spatial development, but as well as the preconditions/opportunities for sustainability (e.g. Camagni (2005) for understanding territorial cohesion as the territorial dimension of sustainability, reflected in an ordered, resource-efficient and environmental-friendly spatial distribution of human activities) and versatile competitiveness (see e.g. Giffinger 2005). The balance between general approach and reasonable and sensible differentiation, based on the serious spatial analyses, is highly essential. New innovative spatial structures/categories are arising: (new spatial-temporal structures, virtual spaces, self-learning spatial structures, interactive spaces, intelligent cities and regions etc.). The actors in spatial development are due to learn new meta-skills (Saentti 2001): ability to learn and to forget, ability to interpret chaos, ability to tolerate distinctions, ability to work and communicate in virtual territories, ability to give vital feedback etc. Only if actively pursuing balanced development of territory, the concept of territorial cohesion has the potential to step ahead toward transformation into the political concept of the EU Territorial Agenda.

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COLLAPSE OF STRATEGIC THINKING, RESEARCH AND GOVERNANCE IN SERBIA AND POSSIBLE ROLE OF THE SPATIAL PLAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (2010) IN ITS RENEWAL

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Early reforms in Serbia (Yugoslavia) were announced immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. From the beginning of the 1990s few attempts of the kind announced have taken place, and, altogether, they still remain more or less uncompleted. To a large extent, this is a result of choices taken by the political and economic elites, in effect without any broader public dialogue undertaken about the strategic directions, contents and means for the implementation of such reforms. So far no overall societal consensus on the key strategic issues has been reached whatsoever, and, therefore, the choices in question have simply been imposed on the society at large by decree. The economic recovery from 2000 onwards, while fairly dynamic, has still been insufficient, and more or less assumes the form of "growth without development". Serbia still keeps one of the most dissipating and non-sustainable economies, social services and spatial development patterns in Europe. Its "postsocialist Argonautics" has been facing a number of difficulties, also exacerbated by a lack of adequate institutional and organizational adjustments, as well as by a lack of proper cognitive and heuristic support. The spatial and environmental planning practice represents a mixture of old habits and substandard approaches, with only some new initiatives. There have been few attempts to redirect the improper development path, however, which have so far either failed or been uncompleted, mostly reflecting the collapse an overall collapse of strategic thinking, research and governance in this country.

Key words: postsocialist Argonautics, institutional adjustments, collapse of strategic thinking, research and governance, planning in crisis, national spatial plan, territorial capital, Europeanization of Serbia outside the EU

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Following the institutional and economic crisis of the former Yugoslavia (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) in the 1980s, its dissolution at the beginning of 1990s and subsequent economic and social collapse during the international isolation and sanctions, Serbia (first within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, then as a part of Serbia and Montenegro, and as from recently as the Republic of Serbia) has been going through a number of ups and downs over two decades of the postsocialist transition. Especially, the course of adjustments after 2000 proved improper and only partly

successful, resulting in a number of negative developments, which have been pointed to by many independent commentators in the country and abroad much before the appearance of the global crisis towards the end of 2008. Now, Serbia is still in a deep economic, social and political crisis, and no appropriate "exit strategy" has been prepared so far to serve as a long term solution. To a large part, this crisis has resulted from the concomitant collapse of strategic thinking, research and governance, which has been manifested in many ways.

In this contribution, first a brief account of the score of institutional, economic, social and spatio-ecological (environmental) adjustments in recent decade or so is given, followed by a short presentation of planning

and governance system and practice. Then, the intentions and contents of the two strategic spatial plans, one from the mid-1990s, and another from this year (2010), have been discussed, respectively, and compared. The paper concludes with an estimate of the predictable outcomes and imminent development prospects of Serbia.

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THE SCORE OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT ADJUSTMENTS OF THE POSTSOCIALIST TRANSITION REFORMS IN SERBIA

Serbia has been through much turmoil over the last three decades. As a result, the country has now for quite time been in a deep social, political and economic crisis, also reflected in a number of spatio-ecological (environmental) problems. More than 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Serbia still finds itself in a post-socialist proto-democracy ("post-socialist proto-capitalist *laissez-faire*", "wild postsocialist capitalism", etc.,)¹⁾ yet with only rudimentary developed institutions of representative democracy, civil society and a market economy. On the one hand, the better parts of the former self-management system of the past ideological and political monopoly have been abandoned and almost forgotten, most prominently, for example, the practices of territorial and work participation. On the other, its bad parts, e.g., paternalism, manipulation, clientism, and so forth have been kept, due to the retrogressive and unfortunate events of the 1990s. Serbia has been developing as a "hybrid" society (for a more detailed discussion on this see Golubović, 2006). While one should not overlook the occasional traits of "enlightened political will" in some reform efforts (which is a prerequisite for political legitimacy), still, all of the reform steps that have been attempted from the beginning of 1990s have suffered from a lack of legitimacy.

In sum, three decades seem to have been lost after the ideological turmoil and socio-economic stagnation of 1980s, the auto-destruction and other miss-events of 1990s, and poor political legitimacy of the post-socialist reforms after 2000, mostly decreed upon the society at large, Serbia has now found itself in deep crisis. Now, after all, the emancipatory and modernizing potential of Serbia elites is questioned and dispute again, summarized in a dilemma: "Is there a third beginning for the Serbian society and its elites?"

Especially, the postsocialist transition reforms, which have been undertaken since 2000, are now found unfinished and at the same time carrying a number of negative outcomes. In **socio - political terms**, the key characteristics of the transformation in question read as follows (based on Vidojević, 2000, and Vujošević, Spasić, 2007a):

- The overall legitimacy of reforms is very low: instead of being discussed in the public at

large, and agreed upon by all key elements of society, the reform projects have been imposed by decree by the political and economic elites (this also applies to the steps undertaken from 2000 onwards) and basically supported by the key international actors.²⁾

- The entire reform project is basically non-equitable/unjust, as it has been directed and performed as a grand redistribution of assets, incomes, existential chances, etc., and often so through various forms of merciless robbery of deprived social groups.³⁾ For example, in Vujošević, Zeković, Maričić (2009: 23), the entire Serbian postsocialist *Argonautics* was depicted as "Post-socialist transition in Serbia: poor premises, great hopes, false promises, and bleak futures".
- There has been a dominance of new-old ideological and political mantras in this period, viz., liberalization, destitution, marketization, stabilization, etc., paralleled by a "growth without development", as an outcome of a hegemony of domicile neo-liberal gurus, seconded by mostly second- and third-grade foreign experts, and concomitantly poor role of independent expertise.
- Until recently, the new-old elites have been demonstrating mostly anti-development and anti-planning stance of, paralleled by an aversion to any form of societal constructivism, mobilization and learning other than Hayek's katalaxia (i.e., the free interplay of independent market agents/actors).

In **developmental terms**, the following trends of the mentioned "economic growth without development" are of most relevance here (for more details cf. Vujošević, 2007, and Vujošević and Spasić, 2007):

- Serbia has now been developing as a political, economic and financial (semi)colony, loosing its "territorial capital" and becoming a part of the "inner peripheries of Europe", with primitive forms of consumerism spreading and dominating the public scene, stimulated by the government and key economic actors. In sum, it is a weak, land-locked country with ill-defined boundaries.
- Serbia belongs to the group of the least developed European countries with regard to the GDP per capita, HDI, unemployment, living standard, poverty⁴⁾, demographic recession, enormous foreign debt, the highest rate of deindustrialization among all ex-socialist countries (ESCs), extremely poor technical infrastructure, poor competitiveness, disproportionately high pollution, as compared to the development level achieved, the lowest percentage of the GDP for R&D in Europe, the

largest social and regional disparities in Europe, paralleled by enormous social polarization, extreme spatial disorder and enormous illegal construction, extremely dissipative patterns of production, consumption and energy utilization, and so on, despite enormous foreign resources, all the pro-growth rhetoric, booster imagery, and various give-away packages of incentives for the business, financial and commercial sectors.⁵⁾

- Apart from that, there has been only a weak correspondence between the dominant European development trends (at least in the majority of the EU countries) and the development involution of Serbia (for more details on this important issues cf. Vujošević, 2007, and Vujošević, 2009).

In sum, entire **territorial capital of Serbia**, that is, social, institutional, economic, cultural, and so forth, has been endangered for some time now. In fact, this capital has been mostly utilized in a number of suboptimal ways, as compared to its potential, and, furthermore, there will predictably be even more difficulties in its activation in the future (for detailed discussion of this topic see Vujošević, Zeković, Maričić, 2010, and Vujošević, Zeković, Maričić, 2009).

In **cognitive and heuristic terms**, there has been a serious lack of proper expertise for controlling and carrying out the developmental and related matters in the era of postsocialist transition, this being with no earlier precedence in this and all other key aspects (for more details regarding this issue cf. Vujošević, 2004).

THE COLLAPSE OF PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AND PRACTICE

As in almost all ex-socialist countries, in Serbia a radical change has taken place in the formerly established balance within the state (power) - market - planning - privatization quadrangle as from the very beginning of the post-socialist transition. A new balance has therefore been searched for, thus influencing entire system and practice of development planning policy. However, such a balance has not been reached so far, due to a variety of reasons, both political and professional. In sum, the planning system and practice in Serbia suffers from the so-called "democratic deficit" syndrome, as well as from its inefficiency (for more details cf. Vujošević, N. Spasić, 2007a).

The planning system and practice has grossly

fallen behind the need to introduce a more strategic mode of development guidance and control and has been characterized by poor planning of legislation for sustainable development and poor institutional and organizational arrangements, by a new group of past and new "institutional Zombies", by the dominance of manipulation and "systematic and organized mobilization of interests and bias," by slowly emerging "coalitions for sustainable development," and by a poorly developed civil society with weak influence in planning matters. The current development policy is in essence composed of a number of large development projects and programmes, uncoordinated and non-harmonized, whereas a more consistent and coherent strategic framework resembling the German *Steuerung* is missing so far. Instead of strategic governance, chaotic decision-making predominates, encompassing a strange combination of elements of the so-called "crisis management", "planning-supporting-privatization-and-marketization" (which is especially visible in urban and environmental planning at the local-regulation level), and "project-led planning". In terms of their respective socio-political functions, the majority of spatial, urban and other development plans that have been elaborated over the recent period seem to have been following other purposes than those conventionally attached to the "true" plans, thereby more emanating from what was "beneath the surface", than through the declared (nominal) values, aims and objectives, viz. (after Sillince, 1986): 1) Creating confidence among the planning/development society. 2) Providing symbolic reassurance. 3) (Mere) countering of criticisms. 4) Simple monitoring of planning decisions implementation. 5) Instigating and generating commitment of others. 6) Back covering. 7) Bidding for resources at various governance levels and with some foreign actors. 8) "Making everything legal and above-board". 9) Establishing an arena for debate and broader development planning discourse; etc.

In sum, the role of planning has been reduced to a "junior partner of market" within the emerging institutional arrangements, and the entire planning profession to a "residual factor". So far planning has only occasionally served the causes of democratic pluralism and participative democracy.⁶⁾

Now, having been slowly departing from the initial neoliberal political and ideological mantras, paralleled by the mentioned anti-planning and anti-development stance, the political authorities and the "reformers" as

from recently embarked upon a hectic preparation of enormous number of development documents at various governance levels. This has brought us to somehow schizophrenic situation: some 80 strategies or similar documents,⁷⁾ which have been elaborated since 2000, did not contribute to the veritable socio-economic and spatio-ecological transformation and evolution of Serbian society. Instead, they "contributed" to its social, economic and ecological "involution", visible to a number of independent commentators and pointed much prior to the occurrence of global crisis in 2008. It is this "methodological void" that is particularly indicative of the collapse of strategic thinking, planning and governance in Serbia. Namely, it is indicative that not a single document of the kind predicted the global crisis, thereby still leaving Serbia without an "exit strategy".

Following such a "U-turn", most recently a new model has been produced and promulgated to cope with the crisis, sponsored by the Government of Serbia, and financed by the USAID (sic!), Belgrade Office, prepared by a group of the mainstream economists, among whom there have been some who have been servicing all political regimes as early as from the 1970s onwards in their concomitant development enthusiasm, optimism and "boosterism".⁸⁾ Consequently and unfortunately, the new document is but one new mathematico-statistical simulacrum, based on appropriate simulation and manipulation, and not veritably rooted in real economic and social life.⁹⁾ Once more, we have witnessed a set of "phantom" targets, defined by the economists in question, basically not rooted in the economic reality, but a newest feigned one.¹⁰⁾

In that respect, the new model keeps safe a methodological rule, that has been tried out by the mainstream economist on many occasions, that is, what we depict here as an "extrapolation of the non-existing, forecasting the impossible", viz.:¹¹⁾

- In ten years, an increase of 430,000 new jobs is expected.
- BDP per capita should reach 8,000 €, GDP 52.7 billion €, at assumed average annual growth rate of 5.8%.
- The share of investments in the GDP should increase to 25% (2015), and 28% (2020), from the current 15%.
- Decrease of consumption in the GDP is stipulated for, from 92.5% (2009), to 81% in 2020.
- The increase of the share of exports in the

BDP is expected, from 27.6% (2009) to 65% over the same period.

- The decrease of the share of current foreign deficit in the GDP is predicted, from 7.1% to 3.3%.
- Average annual growth rate of industry should reach 6.9%.
- The increase of gross investments is also expected, from 4.9 billion euros (2009) to 15 billion euros (2020), out of which 2.3 billion euros of FDI per year (from 800 million in 2009).

TWO ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A COMMON SPATIO-ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION OF VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Over the last two decades there have been two attempts to redirect unfavourable course of development from the spatio-ecological (environmental) perspective, with a view to establish a common strategic framework for the coordination and integration of various general and specific development policies, viz., *Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia* (1996, English version, 1997), and *Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2014-2021* (2010).

In 1996 *The Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia/Prostorni plan republike Srbije* was adopted, in which a large number of basic reference points and strategic commitments and general goals were set up, viz. (English version, 9-12):¹²⁾

- A higher degree of functional integration of Serbia's space.
- A considerably greater communication and economic links between Serbia and its neighbouring and other European countries.
- Lessening regional disproportions (a more balanced regional development), based on the development of a number of regional centres for pertinent functional (gravitational) areas, designed with the aim to rationalize management and organization of public services and efficient coordination of local community activities.
- Improvement of the quality of life in macro and regional centres, supported by the incentives for the development of small towns.
- Introducing in effective way the principle of polycentric development.
- The development of rural settlements and

areas as multifunctional production, social and cultural entities.

- Improvement of attractiveness of the zones with considerable development potential, in order to selectively relocate some economic activities and population.
- Priority development of insufficiently developed hilly, mountainous and border areas.
- Introducing rigorous locational, technical, techno-economic and environmental criteria in the investment-decision procedures.
- Careful management, rational use and protection of natural resources, and concomitant protection of natural and cultural heritage.
- Priority protection for the best-preserved ecological areas, as well as of those areas with best prospects for sustainable development.
- Providing the timely reservation of space in the corridors of technical infrastructure.
- Combating illegal construction and non-planned utilization of space, etc.¹³⁾

In more spatial ("physical") terms, a number of development axes of various ranks (I-III) have also been designated.

Also, a very elaborate system of implementation measures and support was stipulated at the very end of this document, to be elaborated in detail in the sequel via a particular implementation programme, which, however, did not happen.

Although there has been neither systematic monitoring nor *ex post* evaluation of the implementation of the *Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia* (1996/1997), even a fragmented evidence of the kind indicate that the majority of its provisions have not been implemented. An exception to this relates to the preparation of spatial plans at lower planning levels, which progressed fairly in recent years, albeit not at the pace stipulated by the *Plan*, as well as an indirect implementation of some of its propositions via spatial and urban plans at sub-national governance/planning levels, the key reason being a lack of effective political will to define workable implementation devices.¹⁴⁾ (for more details cf. Vujošević, Petovar, 2002; and Vujošević, Spasić, 2007).¹⁵⁾

Apart from the lack of effective political will to make it implemented (illustrated, e.g., by the missing of a programme for its implementation), a number of unfavourable miss-events also prevented its implementation, viz.: prolonged international sanctions and isolation

of the country, slow pace of transition reforms, the NATO bombardment of the country in the sprig 1999, etc. As a result, only few elements of the *Plan* have been realised, and even those more resulting from the non-coordinated activities of some individual actors, than as an outcome of some well organized, programmed and systematic efforts of key institutional actors. Furthermore, contrary to its intentions, the *Plan* has only occasionally served as the key strategic (referent) framework for integrating development documents that have been adopted in the sequel at various governance levels, which particularly applied to the period after 2000.¹⁶⁾

In many respects the new *Plan (Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2014-2021, Draft/Nacrt prostornog plana Republike Srbije 2010-2014-2021, februar 2010)*¹⁷⁾ has replicated the ambitions, approach and structure of the former *Plan* (1996/1997). In a way which is quite similar to that of the *Plan* from 1996, the new *Plan* (2010) has demonstrated an ambition to be "more than a mere spatial/physical plan" at the national/state level, that is, to instigate and introduce a number of measures targeted at broader reform of systems, approaches and practices in the sphere of sustainable spatial planning and governance, as well as in the system of regional planning, organisation and governance.¹⁸⁾ Also, both documents insist, at least intentionally, on proper implementation of the key sustainable spatial development propositions, via a particular implementation programme elaborated after the adoption of the *Plan*. Finally, analogously to the former *Plan*, this new document defines an enormous number of various propositions, belonging to different categories (altogether, many hundreds), which will most certainly prove unmanageable vis-à-vis the poorly developed planning culture and capacity – as was the case with the former *Plan*.¹⁹⁾ However, there has also been a number of differences between the two documents, out of which the most notable for our interest here are as follows:

- In the new *Plan* more room has been opened for rather more recent categories from the European planning discourse, viz., "territorial cohesion", "spatial banana" (here: "Serbian spatial banana", that is, the broader metropolitan area of Belgrade and Novi Sad), "social inclusion", "territorial capital" (here: of Serbia), "European gateway cities", "knowledge based economy and society", "the role of European Corridors" (here: particularly VII and X), "urban-rural cooperation", "territorial-regional decentralization", "spatial integration of the territory of Serbia", and so

forth. Particularly, much room has been devoted to the strategic planning control of the so-called "Serbian spatial banana", that is, the area of concentration and polarization of a large portion of population and economic and social activities in the relatively small metropolitan area of Belgrade and Novi Sad, a pendant of the European "blue banana".²⁰⁾

- Deterred in no way by the current miserable development conditions, or even worse development prospects of Serbia under the predictably prolonged international and national crisis, the authors of the new *Plan* (2010: 25) envisage the following "long term vision of the spatial development of Serbia", imbued with further "boosterism" of the kind – "...Serbia...defined in territorial terms, balanced in regional terms, comprising sustainable and competitive economic growth, socially coherent and stable, equipped in infrastructural terms of good transport accessibility, with conserved/preserved and protected natural and cultural heritage, and environment of high quality, and integrated in functional terms in the broader regional environment."

• As compared to the previous *Plan* (1996), the new document has more dwelled on the spatial development scenarios (at least nominally). Without any more detailed and substantiated corroboration (and analysis of the respective pros and cons either), two basic scenarios have been defined (31-32), i.e., "scenario of recessive growth with the elements of crisis management" ("predictably not to last more than 3-4 years"), and "scenario of sustainable spatial development", to emulate the above defined vision and subsumed key strategic goals in the sectors comprised by the *Plan*. Within the latter, a number of reform steps have been stipulated with regard to the following "frameworks": legal and institutional; market, economic and development; macro economic; demographic; social; ecological; and spatial-urban. This scenario contemplates four specific sub-scenarios ("variants"), viz.: "negative economic growth and disintegrated spatial system" (1); "negative economic growth and integrated and partially regulated spatial system" (2); "positive economic growth and disintegrated and partially regulated spatial system" (3); and "positive economic growth and integrated spatial system" (4), all under different assumptions regarding the pace of intensity of the integration of Serbia into the European Union.

- Already at this point of time, an elaborate list of indicators has been defined, for the monitoring and *ex post* evaluation of the key strategic propositions of the *Plan*.

• The key comparable aspect pertains to the broader contextual factors that influence the implementation of the new *Plan* (2010). They are in many respects different as compared to those pertaining to the implementation of the former *Plan* (1997). However, regarding the effective manoeuvring space of the planning authorities at various governance level, this has even narrowed in three key aspects: first, misbalances are worse, the macroeconomic situation is worse, and the foreign debt has reached a multi-ten billion of euros mark²¹⁾ – altogether crippling the effective capacity to introduce more redistributive policies, which are however an imperative (a must) vis-à-vis ever enlarging territorial misbalances and social differentiation and polarization... And this brings us to the concluding comments, which has in essence to do with the key issue, i.e., that of the real transformative and modernizing capacity of Serbian elites, which has been opened and disputed for a longer period now. This issue will be particularly reflected under the predictable circumstances of a prolonged “Europeanization of Serbia outside the European Union and with its limited assistance”. Also, the current and pending budget deficit management, dictated by the IMF, will certainly influence the implementation of the *Plan* in a negative way.

• Ultimately, there has been the utmost limit to the *Plan*'s implementation, namely, that stemming from a predominant compartmentalization of development policies in Serbia. The work of ministries is extremely competing and uncoordinated, as being mostly managed under the auspices of political parties as their “feuds”, under the circumstances of prevailing “partitocracy”,²²⁾ as the current state of political governance of Serbia is depicted by the majority of most authoritative commentators. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to expect that new *Plan* will act as strategic synthesis of particular frameworks and concepts, now integrated within a common strategic framework, i.e., combining both spatio-ecological (environmental) proper, and broader development concerns. This brings us to the concluding part of this paper, where the issue of the role of Serbian elites under the predictably bleak development prospects is briefly commented.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There have been only few attempts to redirect the wrong economic growth and development path that took place in Serbia since the end of 1980s/beginning of 1990s, most notable being two national/state spatial plans, the *Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia* (1996), and the

most recent *Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2014-2021*. Both have been very ambitious efforts to establish a common strategic development framework for various general and sectoral development and related policies, otherwise lacking (1), to renew the collapsed strategic thinking, research and governance (2), and to introduce new development policy approach (3). The former plan has been poorly implemented, for two key group of reasons: first, a number of miss-events as from mid-1990s which prevented its implementation, and second, a lack of appropriate political will to define proper implementation mechanism and devices. Albeit the latter plan has not been adopted so far, the prospects for its implementation are similarly open, now for the reasons that are somehow analogous to the earlier ones, and specific and new as well. On the one hand, general development prospects for Serbia are rather bleak, also encompassing ever narrower manoeuvring space for the planning authorities to introduce more redistributive policies (in economic, social and territorial terms). On the other, also on this occasion the effective political will to define and deploy appropriate implementation instruments is still to be demonstrated. To a large extent, this has to do with a necessity for political and economic elites of Serbia to radically change their credo which has been practiced for two decades now, namely, that of *pro domo sua*.²³⁾ In parallel, the elites should also demonstrate appropriate competence and modernizing and emancipatory capacity, which was basically lacking over the entire last period, vis-à-vis the development problems and challenges and conundrums the society has been facing, also since 2000. Namely, after 2000, Serbia experienced dynamic nominal economic growth of ca. 5% annually, but with slow recovery and the so-called “eco-eco” (economic and ecological) restructuring of its real economy. The general trend has been depicted as a “growth without development”, despite all the pro-growth rhetoric, booster imagery, and various give-away packages of incentives for the business, financial and commercial sectors. The nominal growth has been absorbed by the imports and supporting sectors (trade, finance, insurance, transport and freight servicing, etc.), thereby piling up enormous foreign debt. Now, Serbia has been developing as an economic and ecological (semi) colony, with primitive forms of consumerism spreading and dominating the public scene, basically stimulated by the government and key economic actors.

Consequently, this “third” beginning for the

elites, and for the entire society as well, in its post-socialist Argonautics (a “long voyage of Serbia to Europe”), paralleled by a “search for a new Kolchida”, encounters problems that even more complex than those from the 1990s. Once more time, the emancipatory and modernizing potential of Serbian elites has been questioned. The country is now facing a “Europeanization of Serbia outside the EU and with its limited support”, under predictably prolonged overall crisis, and a narrowed manoeuvring space for interventions of the public sector aimed at social, economic and territorial redistribution. There is no doubt that the prospects to be developing as a “civil society” via model of a complex social, economic and spatio-ecological (“environmental”) transformation are rather weak – which is at the very basis of the most recent national spatial plan – especially under the circumstances of pending bankruptcy. In that respect, in M. Vujošević (2007b), we depicted the existing situation and the imminent development prospects in the following way: ‘The Serbian elites are confused...In its “post-socialist Argonautics”, Serbia faces a number of crucial questions – Where is the new *Kolchida* to be found now and where to search for a new *Golden fleece* – prospecting for it in the West, or in the East, or somewhere in the ex-Third World, or within the “Club of Porto Allegro” or elsewhere? – still unanswered. The potential of its human capital, with its enormous illiteracy, “poor education for Europe”, and “poor education for sustainability”, is questionable. The “new Jasons” of the post-socialist Argonautics have been facing a different sort of conundrum, that is, how to “rebuild the ship at sea” while avoiding its sinking? Do they enjoy the ultimate support of the Gods? Do the activities taking place on the “boat” *Argo-Serbia* (e.g., diligently rowing, grumbling commons, the bad reputation of Karl Marx and his comrades, etc.) work in favour of positive outcomes?’²⁴⁾

There is a number of preconditions which are needed to depart from the existing substandard and inferior practices, towards a more enlightened political will that is needed now:

- The will to establish wide societal dialogue and to reach general consensus on the key development problems and prospects.
- The will to provide all necessary preconditions for preparing and passing of both democratic and relevant development decisions.
- The will to make sure that all needed implementation devices, policies and support are also provided. So far, in terms of spatial

and urban development planning at the national (state) level, the attempts of the professional planners to that end have grossly failed.

However, we also point to the necessity for a more constructive role of Brussels in supporting pro-European actors in the country. The critics of both the inadequate decisions of Serbian political and economic leaders, and those of the EU bureaucrats and political *apparatchiki* highlight a number of pertinent issues. Particularly, they point out the necessity to consult more actors on the key Serbian issues beyond the political interface between Brussels and Belgrade.²⁵⁾

There are, however, a number of imperatives that should be realized on the internal (Serbian) political and planning scene. In the first place, a radical departure is needed from the dominating partisanship and the so-called "systematic and organized mobilization of interests and bias" on the public scene at large, in order to better follow contemporary European practices. We still assume that key progress can be expected from engaging more independent and unbiased expertise during the preparation and passing of the key planning decisions. This implies that many new forms of professional and political communication and interaction should be established. Of the utmost importance is the establishment of firm professional rules against widespread intellectual and other corruption in spatial, urban and environmental planning, and the provision of better expertise in this field. Finally, radically better education is needed on sustainable development and related matters within the academia. In parallel, there has for a long time now been an imperative to establish a clear demarcation of responsibility among institutional actors, with a view to prevent various conflict of interests, especially of statal and parastatal institutions and organizations vis-à-vis professional organizations proper, which particularly applies to the strategic planning. Finally, radically better education is needed on sustainable development and related matters within the academia.

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1) Some authors, e.g., Vidojević (2010), emphasizes that the most proper definition of this era should read "postrealsocialism" (54). The same author especially points to the "...state of a degenerative crisis", as the most proper description of Serbian society (11).

2) According to Mihailović (2010), reporting on the perception of and average Serbian citizen on the score of transition reforms in Serbia in the last 20 years, the "image" of the so far implemented privatization model has particularly been non-favorable among in the public at large: 44% interviewed citizens find that the applied model has been a "mere robbery", another 27% understand it "necessary, but implemented in a wrong way", 26% still cannot estimate fully its relevance and results, and only 3% support it in the existing form. Many authoritative commentators depict the main course of reforms in the same way, e.g., Z. Vidojević (2010: 239): "...privatization...as legalized robbery of a major part of societal wealth", that has produced an enormous "human surplus/waste" (op. cit.: 249).

- 3) According to Lazić (2010), professor of sociology at the Faculty of Philosoph, University of Belgrade, the postsocialist transformation in Serbia (Yugoslavia), and formation of the (new) capitalist order, since the beginning of 1990s took place primarily as a redistribution of the existing wealth, instead of a generation of new wealth: "The capitalist class in postsocialism has been formed primarily as the result of the redistribution of the already existing societal wealth (that is, by its appropriation), and not by the generation and accumulation of new wealth." Thus we had a "capitalism without capitalists", in which the old-new capital was grabbed up through a number of social clashes, and a number of wars in some of the former Yugoslav republics. This is seen by the author as the key tenet of the so-called Milošević's era and its regime. Author also insists that, in parallel to the Serbian newly constituted political and economic elites (new-old "nomenclatura"), a number of influential actors played a decisive role in defining such a direction of events.
- 4) It should be emphasized here that official appraisals of poverty seem to have largely underestimated the depth and broadness of this phenomenon. By official presentation, in the first half of 2010. the number of citizens beyond the poverty line increased for another 100,000, thereby, measured by the official statistics, reached 8.8% of the total population, i.e., ca. 650,000 persons. This is sharp contrast to the equivalent estimate for the European Union, namely, marked at some 17% of its total population (average), ranking from the lowest 11% (Netherlands and Slovakia) to the highest 23% (Romania). In recent 10 or so years the threshold of absolute poverty oscillated between 8 and 10 euros per day per person ("per consumption unit"), i.e., up to 150 euros per month. In the Union, the understanding of poverty is somewhat different, as poverty is understood in relative terms, and not measured vis-à-vis some absolute threshold: those persons with the income less than 60% of the national average are treated poverty (this percentage varying by states from 40% to 70%), to reflect the concern for the principles of equity and social solidarity. If the absolute standards are applied in the Union, two are in question: first, five euros per person per day, to reflect the so-called absolute poverty line; and second, ten euros per person per day, to express the relative poverty. The first threshold gives some 150 euros per person monthly, that is, almost double the mark applied in Serbia. For a comparison, in the USA average annual income of a four-member family was some 50,000 US dollars, and ca 22,000 dollars (that is, ca. 1.700 dollars per month) has been defined as the poverty line for a family of that size in recent years. The absurdness, as well as the extent of political manipulation applied in defining such a miserable threshold ("African"), can only be understood vis-à-vis estimates of independent persons, appraising that for a decent material life to live, a four-member family (households) would necessitate some 600 euro per month to cover the basic minimum of a standard "consumer basket"! Also, this sharply contrasts the more reliable evidence from independent sources, according to which some 23% of the total population of Serbia lived (2005) on the household income per capita (that is, per household member) less than 35 euro per month, the other 25% with the per capita family income of 35-70 euro per month, some 25% with the per capita family income of 70-140 euro per month, 20% with 140-210 euro per month, while some 7% of total population spent more than 210 euro per household member monthly. Some 83% of the total populations of Serbia consider poverty and unemployment as the most important issues.
- 5) The development collapse took place as a "natural outcome" of some government decisions, viz: in a semi-official paper/programme (2002/2003) of the Government of Serbia, which was neither disclosed to the wider public, nor discussed in the public at large, for the coming period as the priority was defined the growth of services and supporting activites. In the real sector, only a part of technical infrastructure, and agriculture, were put to the front.
- 6) To note, in Yugoslavia first efforts to constitute spatial planning as a trans-engineering discipline took place in the second half of 1950s (which has now been neglected and almost nullified in Serbia, especially by the spatial and urban planning legislation of 2003 and 2009). In 1960s and 1970s this trend was strengthened by introducing new legislation and institutionalization of integral planning, with a view to harmonize social, spatial and economic development ("cohesion"). At the time, Yugoslavia was found among the "planned-most and the most-decentralized country in the world", however, with a highly hypertrophied planning system and planning, followed by the crisis of "socialist self-management planning" (1980s). As from the beginning of 1990s a sort of professional autism started to dominate the planning scene, viz.: economism (in economic planning), ecologism (in environmental protection policy), and physicalism (in spatial and urban planning), rendering planning as a junior partner of market. After 2000, there have been faint efforts to depart from "planning-as-crisis-management", "planning – as - supporting-privatization-and-marketization", "planning-led-by-projects", etc., so far mostly unsuccessful.
- 7) The development documents in question comprise both various sectoral conceptions (e.g., for tourism, agriculture, energy, transportation and communication, commerce, etc.), and a number of general strategies (viz., general economic development, information society, sustainable development, employment, foreign investment, regional development, exports, etc.). This also applies to ever growing number of development and related documents at various sub-national planning and governance levels, now already reaching many hundreds of the kind.
- 8) The mainstream economists, in their institutional zeal and loyalty to the political regime after 2000, which has been inducing both myopia and hypocrisy, would admit, at most, that the applied transition reforms model exhausted its potential, and never that it has been initially wrong. In order to not "rock the boat", i.e., to foreclose the unwanted conclusions about this, they would never admit that deep development crisis in Serbia took place as a result of a deep-slated systemic (structural) flaws in the postsocialist transition model. The global crisis has merely accelerated it and made its manifestations more readily vivid. Thus, the old-new model seems to be a mere rhetorical repackaging of the former, basically "market" ideas, now slightly redirected to what was some 10 years ago understood as heresy, e.g., the imperative to introduce a strategic development approach, re-industrialisation policy, and similar.
- 9) Cf. "Postkrizni model ekonomskog rasta i razvoja Srbije 2011-2020. godine"/"Postcrisis model of economic growth and development of Serbia 2011-2020", Vlada Republike Srbije, oktobar 2020. Serbia (former Yugoslavia) has now been living already a long history of various reforms. In recent 20 or so years, the most famous among them were two: first, led by the last prime minister of the SFRY Ante Marković (1989/1990), and second, designed by the governer of the National Bank of the FRJ Dragoslav Avramović (1994), both failed to be implemented.
- 10) To remind, according to Joseph Stiglitz, a good programme of the kind should comprise a set of measures, which (here reframed and slightly reformulated): 1) Will be instantly implemented, and have fast effectuation, both in the first period and over the long term. 2) Are focused on the key short term problems, with the view to solve long term (strategic) problems. 3) Are focused on the investment side of the implementation devices and support. 4) Remove the deficiencies in those sectors in which the largest number of jobs have been lost. 5) Is based on societal consensus, and carrying overall social and political responsibility.
- 11) It would also be interested here to point to a hypocrisy of the authors, who, instead of clearly explicating that the "transformation" after the model applied especially since 2000 has resulted in a destruction of economy and society, heading, according to some predictions, ultimate catastrophe, still keep to the formulation that "...the existing model exhausted its potential."
- 12) At the time, Serbia (then, a part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) was first among the postsocialist countries that have had a newly prepared and adopted national/state spatial plan. This author has presented it at the "Conference on the European Spatial Development Perspective/ESDP", held in Vienna on November 25-26th, 1998. At the same time, the Plan was also commented in one of the leading European journals for regional development planning (cf. Anker, 1998), when the problem of its implementation and coordination was already pointed to ("...there is a need for further coordination of the proposed concepts over the medium term with other policies and development measures").
- 13) According to Vujošević (2007), "...the Plan was a wordy document comprising some 300 various propositions, i.e. prospects/perspectives, forecasts/prognoses, goals, aims, objectives, targets, policy measures, implementation instruments, and so forth, for mid- and long-term planning period. The majority of those propositions have not been operationalized afterward, i.e., "brought down" to directly implementable stipulations; the gross of them have been expressed in rather glowing terms." In the meantime, especially its vague and malleable notions, viz., "development", "sustainability", "polycentric development", "territorial cohesion", and many other, have been left open to many different and often disparate interpretations, which by itself rendered the implementation process very complex and almost non-manageable. To note, the new Plan has also been elaborated as a voluminous and extensive document.
- 14) For a detailed discussion on this cf. Vujošević, Petovar (2002), and Vujošević, Spasić (2007).
- 15) The year 2010 was fixed as a long term horizon for the Plan, and even longer periods for conceived for some sectors, mostly those in the sphere of technical infrastructure.
- 16) As we wrote in Vujošević (2008), and Вујошевић,

Спасић (2008), for a strategic development to assume the proper societal (social and political) legitimacy, three kinds of political will is needed: first, the planning authorities should carry out a continuos ex post evaluation of previous decisions, followed by established broad societal dialogue – and, preferably, consensus – on the key development issues; second, they should provide that high professionalism and the so-called “nonmanipulative persuasion” rank high among the communicative techniques in the public discourse, as the key instruments by means of which to make a departure from the “systematic and organized mobilization of interest and bias”, that dominate the public scene; and third, to pass, after all, decisions for which implementation proper instruments will be appropriately designed.

- 17) Following the Strategy of Spatial Development of Serbia, which was prepared in 2009, and the broad public discussion on the first Draft version of the Plan (2010), this document has as from recently been put to the Parliamentary deliberation (and, hopefully, adoption), now, under way.
- 18) The implementation programme is stipulated to comprise a number of elements (273-274), in the first place those on: priority projects (with all necessary financial and other details regarding timing, responsible actors, etc.); the criteria and indicators for monitoring of spatial dynamics and changes; revision of the so far adopted development documents at varios governance level; legal adjustments (from the standpoint of the Plan's priorities); guidances for the implementation of the Plan via other development documents; guidances regarding strategic development and governance at regional level; spatio-ecological norms for the Plan's implementation; implementation of the Plan under the circumstances of a prolonged global crisis; priorities of research, institutional and organizational adjustments; priorities for the elaboration of spatial, urban and environmental plans/documents; and indicators for the monitoring and ex post evaluation of the Plan's implementation.
- 19) In terms of its scope, the new Plan has been much similar to the former one, within the format of a conventional spatial development strategy/plan at the state/national level, comprising almost a standard set of issues.
- 20) Not only malicious persons would depict this as a “part of the Archipelago of Balkan banana states”, as Miroslav Lazanski, commentator of the daily Politika did recently (October 2010).
- 21) It would be interesting to point to a curious fact how the key economists of the former Yugoslavia (Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia) were ominously predicting towards the end of 1980s that the ever enlarging foreign debt of the country might ultimately put it apart (which effectively happened at the end). To note, at that time total debt reached some 16 billion US dollars. Now (2010), total foreign debt of Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia has already exceeded 100 billion US dollars.
- 22) The preponderance of political parties in the political life in Serbia has been described in a number of ways, perhaps the most veritable being that of “the (terror) of partitocracy”. According to Slavujević (2010), reporting on the results of a research on the perception of citizens of Serbia on the credibility of post-socialist transition to capitalism, based on the representative sample of 1.800 persons, the citizens carry the lowest

confidence to political parties, out of the following institutional and legal institutions, ranked in descending/negative order: school system, military, police, President of Serbia, judiciary, Government of Serbia, trade unions, Parlament, and political parties.

- 23) Already as from the mid-seventieth century, a dictum was posted at the entrance of Dubrovnik City Hall, that is, Obliti privatorum, publica curatel, to always remind the local representatives and dignitaries of their public duties.
- 24) In parallel, while the galeati are ever more grumbling, the Brussels, and Washington, on their part, are devotedly following an old rule that “the powerful always prefer to work with a larger number of weak actors, than with a smaller number of strong actors,” and have been continually and systematically working to fragment the Balkan geopolitical space.
- 25) The process of consultations has for many years been somehow confined to these circles and kept grossly non-transparent to the public at large, both in political and professional terms.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SERBIA

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The paper presents an overview of the expected role of spatial and environmental planning in coordination and integration with strategic planning for sustainable spatial/territorial, landscape and tourism development. The application of an integrated approach to sustainable territorial development planning and management in the European Union is also analyzed in the context of problems associated with and possibilities to enhance the European Landscape Convention and Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism implementation. We have analyzed the contributions of reforms that have so far been implemented in current legislation and of planning bases to the establishment of coordinated sustainable territorial development planning and management in Serbia and to the procurement of support for the integration of sustainable tourism development and landscape planning and management into the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning. The approach to and problems of landscape protection and sustainable tourism development occurring in the practice in spatial planning are analyzed through examples of a new generation of spatial plans – the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia, and a spatial plan of the special-purpose area for the Nature Park and Tourism Region of Stara Planina Mountain. Through the example of Mt Stara Planina, the role of strategic environmental assessment in coordination with spatial and sectoral planning is analyzed, as well as potential contribution to landscape integration and sustainable tourism development in the process of planning. The possibilities for better coordination of Serbian strategic planning in achieving the sustainable spatial and tourism development, and possibilities to integrate landscapes into the planning process are indicated.

Key words: spatial, sectoral and environmental planning, landscape and sustainable tourism planning, legislation, coordination and integration of strategic plans, strategic environmental assessment.

INTRODUCTION

The main idea of this paper is to indicate the possibilities and problems of achieving sustainable spatial/territorial development by coordinating and integrating the process of strategic planning and development management. In this context, the key problems of the spatial, sectoral and environmental planning system and practice have been discussed, particularly for the areas with landscapes and attractive natural and cultural heritage, suitable for tourism development.

Along with the implementation of the sustainable development concept, tendencies to integrate spatial planning and planning of environmental quality into one form of planning and their singling out into a separate

institutional block, considered to have a coordinating and integrating role in planning and directing the development, have been manifested.

There is an ongoing transformation of the planning system in Serbia along with expectations in acquiring its legitimacy and establishing greater efficiency of practice in planning and managing the development. The planning system and the relevant legislation will be recognized on the basis of the EU strategic framework, regulations and instruments. These circumstances represent an advantage and convenience for the development of sustainable tourism and landscape planning, and their coordination with and integration into the planning system in Serbia.

The abovementioned standpoint is based on some of the numerous EU strategic frameworks and instruments (Maksin-Milijić et al, 2009), primarily the ESDP (European Spatial

Development Perspective, 1999), TAE (Territorial Agenda of the European Union, Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, 2007), EU SDS (A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2006), ELC (European Landscape Convention, 2000), European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (1995), ASCET (Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, 2007), etc.

The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) lists the conservation and wise management of natural and cultural heritage as one of the three fundamental objectives of the

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European spatial development policy. The proposed wise management allows for controlled development of environmentally friendly economic activities, primarily sustainable tourism, and gains the support for the protection and strengthening of regional and local identity and diversity. This document also sets out options for the policy of creative management of cultural landscapes: (i) inclusion of cultural landscape values in integrated space development strategies; (ii) improved coordination of development measures, particularly those having an impact on landscapes (European Spatial Development Perspective, 1999, p. 34). In the European Landscape Convention, which is undergoing the ratification procedure in Serbia, the most important responsibilities of countries when it comes to integrating landscapes into the system and process of planning are the following: (i) to recognize landscape by law as a dominant component of diversity of shared natural and cultural heritage and their identity basis; (ii) landscape integration into regional and urban planning, as well as sectoral and other policies having direct or indirect impact on landscape; (iii) to define and assess landscapes on the country's territory; and (iv) to establish procedures for the participation of the broader public, local and regional authorities, as well as other stakeholders with an interest in the definition and assessment of landscape, and the establishment and implementation of landscape policies. In the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, which has not yet been perceived in Serbia, the key to achieving sustainable tourism development is the following: (i) a holistic and integrated approach, taking all impacts of tourism into account in its planning and development, with tourism being well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment; (ii) long term planning, (iii) achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development that should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations (2007, p. 5–6).

Starting from regulations and measures set out by the European frameworks and regulations, as well as the need and directions for redefining strategic planning in Serbia, some possibilities for the coordination and integration of landscape and sustainable tourism development into strategic planning have been considered, particularly in terms of spatial planning. In the first part of this paper, the application of an integrated approach to sustainable territorial development planning

and management in the European Union has been analyzed and, in this context, problems associated with and possibilities for enhancing ASCET and ECL implementation were also contemplated. In the second part of the paper, we have analyzed the contributions of reforms that have so far been implemented in current legislation and of planning bases to the establishment of coordinated sustainable territorial development planning and management in Serbia and to the procurement of support for the integration of sustainable tourism development and landscape planning and management into the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning. The approach to and problems of landscape protection and sustainable tourism development occurring in practice in spatial planning are analyzed through examples of a new generation of spatial plans – the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia and a spatial plan for the special-purpose area of the Stara Planina Nature Park and Tourism Region. Through the example of Mt Stara Planina, the role of strategic environmental assessment in coordination with spatial and sectoral planning is analyzed, as well as its potential contribution to landscape integration and sustainable tourism development to the process of planning.

The possibilities for better coordination of Serbian strategic planning in achieving sustainable spatial and tourism development through a coordination of spatial, sectoral (tourism) and environmental planning and possibilities to integrate landscapes into the planning process are indicated.

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING OF SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT

Designing an Integrated Approach to Spatial, Environmental and Sectoral Planning in the European Union

The ambition to design a uniform, integrated approach to strategic planning is present today in all European countries and countries with developed planning systems. Along with the development of a sustainable development concept, there is an increasing number of pronounced tendencies to integrate spatial and environmental planning into a separate institutional block considered to have a coordinating and integrating role in planning and directing the development.

After almost three decades, spatial planning has assumed a European dimension, from a

local and national one. Spatial planning at the level of the EU and certain member states still does not have enough political and institutional support in relation to sectoral policies, primarily the agrarian and transportation ones. In spite of this, spatial planning has been growing in popularity during the last decade. Efforts invested in strengthening social, economic and territorial cohesion in the European Union on the one hand, and different, often unfavorable, effects of sectoral policies on the desired achievement of cohesion and competitiveness in the European continent on the other hand, have resulted in a need to seek the most suitable instruments for integration of various aspects and effects of general and sectoral policies, as well as for achieving sustainable territorial development (Maksin-Mišić et al, 2009).

Spatial planning is promoted as one of the instruments for sustainable development, able to offer an integral view of the future development of a territory. The assumed capacity of spatial planning is based on its spatial dimension and the capacity for coordination and integration of various policies, starting from economic development, transportation and environmental protection to cultural and landscape policies. The major goals of spatial planning are to plan sustainable territorial development as an overall strategic framework for general and sectoral policies. Thus, a controlling role of spatial planning is also achieved, because it enables decision makers to consider the results and efficiency of different policies in a specific space and landscape, as well as to anticipate their efficiency and the necessary harmonization in the future (Adams, Alden, Harris, 2006). This is also confirmed by the framework for action proposed in the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, where it has been stated that "sustainable destination management is critical for tourism development, especially through effective spatial and land use planning and control, and through investment decisions on infrastructure and services" (2007, p. 5).

Over the past ten decades, a series of development documents has been adopted by the European Union, as well as several pan-European initiatives representing a new generation of strategic documents. The greatest contribution to the promotion of the role of spatial planning in the European Union has been made by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP, 1999), which was followed by the Territorial Agenda of the European Union (2007) as its corrective. It is important to note that the Territorial Agenda

has introduced the obligation to apply integrated strategic territorial approach, i.e. the obligation to implement integral planning and management for all stakeholders in the EU, particularly local and regional ones, within the frameworks established at the pan-European and national levels. Designing an integrated approach to directing and managing the development of the European Union has also been supported by the revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006).

Implementation of strategic documents and establishment of sustainable territorial development framework has encountered difficulties, partially because spatial planning does not fall within the original EU competencies, but within the competencies of its member states. The major problem lies in the main EU policies, primarily in the Lisbon Strategy, in which macro-economic competitiveness was given priority over social and environmental objectives. According to some estimates, most of the basic European sectoral policies have been directed towards achieving economic competitiveness—from transportation to urban policies (Kunzmann, 2006).

Although the implementation of documents on EU territorial development is not binding, as they rather represent guidelines and a strategic framework for coordinating different policies, current experience in their implementation is positive, primarily in the application of new approaches and concepts. Implementation of these documents in EU countries is based on the subsidiary principle and development of horizontal (inter-sectoral at the level of governance) and vertical coordination (across governance levels – EU, transnational, national, regional and local levels).

Sustainability in Spatial, Landscape and Tourism Development Policy Principles

Can we assume that sustainable spatial, landscape and tourism development policies refer to similar principles?

In the UNECE (2008) researches, six fundamental principles of spatial planning have been identified: the principles of democracy, subsidiarity, participation, integration, proportionality, and prevention. For the sake of example, the principle of prevention refers to the implementation of an environmental impact assessment and risk assessment in defining and evaluating spatial planning policies and options. It also encompasses a commitment to limit the development in sensitive regions in order to minimize the anticipated effects of climate change and preserve biodiversity, landscape and natural resources (see more: Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009).

In the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, similar principles are outlined: (i) to minimise and manage risk (the precautionary principle), where there is uncertainty about outcomes, full evaluation and preventive actions should be undertaken to avoid damage to the environment and society; (ii) to reflect impacts and costs (user and polluter pays), meaning that the prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities; (iii) to set and respect limits, meaning to recognize the carrying capacity of sites and areas, with a readiness to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows; (iv) participation, meaning to involve all stakeholders by widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome; (vii) continuous monitoring of impacts, as sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made (2007, p. 6).

In a greater detail, this and other guiding principles have been brought up by the UNWTO and UNEP guidelines for policy makers in making tourism more sustainable (2005, p. 15–17). Some of these guidelines refer to policy areas that ought to be addressed in implementing sustainable tourism, some of which are (UNWTO, UNEP, 2005, p. 25–48): (i) economic viability (one of the policy areas is overall environmental quality in maintaining and projecting an attractive destination), (ii) local prosperity, (iii) social equity (some policy areas utilize income from tourism to support social programmes and pro-poor tourism), (iv) visitor fulfilment, (v) local control (some policy areas ensure appropriate engagement and empowerment of local communities, and improve the conditions for effective local decision making), (vi) community well-being (one of the policy areas is careful planning and management of tourism enterprises and infrastructure), (vii) cultural richness (some policy areas ensure effective management and the conservation of cultural and historic heritage sites, and work with communities on sensitive presentation and promotion of culture and traditions), (viii) physical integrity (some policy areas ensure that new tourism development complies with the local environmental conditions, and maintain high quality rural and urban landscapes as a tourism resource), (ix) biological diversity (some policy areas work with national parks and other protected areas, using tourism to encourage

landholders to practice sustainable land management, and raising support for conservation from visitors and enterprises), (x) resource efficiency (some policy areas take account of the supply of resources when planning tourism development, and ensure an efficient use of land and raw materials in tourism development), (xi) environmental purity (one of the policy areas is influence on the development of new tourism facilities). Another set of these guidelines refers to structures and sustainable strategies, focusing the coordination of multi-stakeholder structure at the national, regional and local level of governance, and at interrelated national strategies that have relevance to sustainable tourism. The relationship between the three types of strategies has been discussed – an overall tourism strategy embracing sustainability principles, other relevant government strategies recognizing or embracing sustainable tourism (such as biodiversity strategy), strategies for sub-sectors of tourism that can play a role in making all of tourism more sustainable. The recommendation is that a tourism strategy should fully embrace the concept of sustainable development. It is based on problems identified in the past when tourism strategies, and especially tourism master plans which tend to be more about physical and spatial issues, often treated sustainability as a separate section of a strategy or plan, being essentially a statement on possible impacts and proposals for their mitigation, which is not sufficient. Instead, the whole strategy should be based on the principles of sustainable development and it should emerge from a process that ensures stakeholder participation, promotes and respects planning for tourism at the local level, and reflects aims and principles for sustainable tourism. Another requirement is for governments to ensure that the sustainable development of tourism is fully recognized within other government strategies, based on an efficient coordination of government departments and agencies (*Ibid*, p. 50–70).

UNWTO methodology for the preparation of tourism strategies and master plans embraces environmental, socio-cultural and economic analyses and assessments. It is now widely implemented by governments and destinations in planning sustainable tourism development.

Many local destinations in different parts of the world have developed strategies and policies for tourism within the context of Local Agenda 21. Some destinations have pursued the Local Agenda 21 process, where tourism is seen as just one activity alongside many others. Ideally, it is good to take this holistic approach

first and then to develop a sustainable tourism strategy out of this process. In destinations and areas where tourism is a dominant activity, a Local Agenda 21 strategy may be tantamount to a sustainable tourism strategy (*Ibid*, p. 57).

EUROPARC (The Federation of National and Nature Parks of Europe) has established a Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (2000). So far 21 parks from the EU participate in the European "Charter Parks" network, none of them from Serbia (www.european-charter.org, 20.10.2010). The first requirement from the Charter is that there should be a permanent forum (or a similar arrangement) between the protected area authority, local municipalities, conservation and community organizations and representatives of the tourism industry involved in a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan preparation, approval and implementation for the protected area.

A key and the most difficult task in the planning process is to achieve sustainable development through directing general/framework spatial distribution of development and investment, coordination of infrastructure, housing, public services and economic activities development, environmental protection, and landscape and natural resources protection.

Options for tourism development and spatial distribution should be the subject of public debates and strategic environmental assessment (SEA). Strategic environmental assessment is an important control instrument for the integration of various policies and for support in achieving sustainable territorial development. By implementing strategic environmental assessment, it is possible to determine whether plans and policies are also mutually harmonized with sustainable territorial development objectives, provided that the SEA is integrated into the process of spatial and sectoral planning.

Screening and checking processes for the sustainability of policies are being introduced in some countries. In the European Union, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all public policies in certain sectors (which explicitly include tourism) is now a requirement.

How successful is the implementation of the concept of sustainable tourism development in European countries? What are the effects of the SEA process in achieving more sustainable tourism planning and development management? The answers and recommendations should be included in the first report on the implementation of the Agenda for a

sustainable and competitive European tourism, to be submitted in 2011.

How is the landscape integrated into the process of planning, i.e. how is the European Landscape Convention being implemented?

The European landscape diversity, continual landscape transformation, as well as the complexity of landscape functions, indicates that it may not be simple to meet the obligations set out in the European Landscape Convention (ELC), or a short-term activity at the national and other levels of landscape management.

Sublimating various experiences of European countries in landscape planning and management, as well as in integrating the landscape into a planning process, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has established the Recommendation CM/Rec (2008)3 on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention. General principles of the Guidelines are particularly focused on: (i) defining specific or sectoral landscape strategies at all levels of management and for all territorial units; (ii) integrating the landscape dimension in territorial and other relevant sectoral policies, as well as into their horizontal and vertical coordination; (iii) active participation of relevant stakeholders and the public in the process of landscape planning and management, etc. The Guidelines indicate different practices in landscape development policies and institutional arrangements in European countries, ranging from policies dominantly associated with the protection of particularly valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes to the policies which are part of environmental policies or spatial planning. The Guidelines also indicate the importance of incorporating landscape problems into mechanisms of coordination which should be strengthened by establishing the processes and procedures for permanent interdepartmental consultations at the national level, and from the national governance level with the regional governance level, as well as the mechanisms of cooperation with organizations and representatives of the private sector.

A section of the Guidelines dealing with the Criteria and Instruments for Landscape Policy Implementation indicates the stages in the process of landscape protection, planning and management, starting from landscape identification and assessment, through the establishment of objectives, actions and measures for landscape protection or improvement of landscape quality, medium-

term or short-term action implementation programme, to monitoring landscape change and effects of landscape and other policies. The landscape quality objectives should be designed by policies at all levels of governance and implemented in spatial, urban and sectoral planning. The implementation of landscape planning in other policies may be determined by legislation or developed on a voluntary basis. Determining the responsibilities for landscape policy implementation depends on the legislation of the country in question and on the expected effects, either by integrating the objectives and measures into spatial (and urban) plans, or by providing specific instruments for landscape integration into landscape or (sectoral) policies (landscape study, landscape impact study, reports on the status of landscapes and landscape policies, etc). Voluntary implementation is based on agreements, charters, contracts and quality labelling between public authorities and relevant stakeholders. As an alternative to the development of an autonomous landscape plan, it is recommended to introduce a landscape study in the process of spatial and sectoral planning (particularly for the power supply system, all infrastructure systems, agriculture, tourism, cultural heritage protection, river catchment areas) at all governance levels. It has been concluded that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are very useful instruments, but also that inadequate methods of analysis and evaluation of landscape dimension in the assessment process have been used, as they consider landscape quantitatively as merely one of environmental components, instead of taking into account a qualitative evaluation of the effects of the planned development on the landscape. It has been recommended to integrate the landscape dimension, primarily landscape quality objectives, into environmental impact assessment, particularly into strategic environmental assessment for spatial plans and programmes.

The similarities in guiding principles and stages in the process of spatial, sustainable tourism and landscape planning should be the starting point for managing their mutual coordination and integration, particularly for the areas with attractive landscapes, natural and cultural heritage, suitable for tourism development.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SERBIA

An Assessment of Legislative Support to Sustainable Spatial, Landscape and Tourism Strategic Planning in Serbia

Since the transition period began in Serbia, there have been frequent changes in legislation in all domains, the development of general and sectoral plans/strategies and programmes has been intensified, and the lack of their mutual coordination and insufficient coordination with spatial and environmental planning has been manifested.

The major changes in legislation in terms of spatial planning and development were made in 2003 and 2009. None of these changes in legal solutions took into account the issues crucial for the improvement of the process and efficiency of spatial planning in achieving sustainable spatial/territorial development, such as: principles and methodology of spatial planning, methods of plan elaboration; mechanisms and procedures for coordination in the elaboration of spatial and other (general and sectoral) plans and strategies, as well as their integration through the process of spatial and environmental planning; participation of relevant stakeholders in and support to the implementation of plan documents. The Law on Planning and Construction of the Republic of Serbia (2009) placed an emphasis on buildable land, i.e. the marketability of buildable land in state ownership, and on the construction of buildings, i.e. easier procedure for obtaining building permits. All other aspects of spatial planning and development were neglected, namely the coordination and integration role of spatial planning in achieving sustainable spatial development. The protection and improvement of landscape quality were not mentioned in spatial and urban plans. To some extent, this has been corrected by secondary legislation (in the Rulebook on Contents, Scope and Mode of Designing Plan Documents, 2010) for spatial plans, but not for urban plans. Designing the concepts, regulations and plan concepts for environmental, landscape, natural resources and cultural heritage protection has been included in spatial plans. At this level of planning system development, this could be considered a satisfactory, although an incomplete solution provided that it is feasible. And, is it actually feasible? Have we investigated, identified, evaluated and verified landscape types and their regional distribution in Serbia, as well as

specified objectives and established recommendations/guidelines for their preservation, development and management? Provided that the answer is negative, the implementation of landscape dimension of sustainable spatial development in spatial planning will be postponed.

The Law on Environmental Protection (2004, 2009), modelled on similar regulations of European countries, established an integral environmental protection system, as well as measures and instruments for sustainable management and the protection of natural resources and cultural heritage, while spatial planning is represented as a planning basis for integrated protection of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage. Landscape was only formally mentioned in environmental principles and within the principles of natural resources preservation. In other words, the notion of landscape was solely associated with natural heritage as one of the criteria for defining and proclaiming a natural heritage (national park, nature park, outstanding landscape). The Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment (2004) required this assessment to be carried out for spatial and sectoral plans, which explicitly includes tourism strategies and plans. This law did not envisage the obligation to assess the environmental impact of spatial and sectoral plans on the protection and improvement of landscape quality.

The problem also arose out of the fact that laws on spatial planning and development and environmental protection have failed to specify to a sufficient extent the obligation to coordinate spatial and environmental planning, or sectoral with spatial and environmental planning, thus also aggravating the integration of sustainable tourism and landscape into the planning process.

However, in the Law on Nature Protection (2009) it is clearly stipulated that sustainable spatial development is endorsed by spatial and sectoral plans delivered, approved and implemented in compliance with the conditions and measures of nature protection. What if this obligation is not supported by other laws, as is the case with the Law on Tourism? Neither nature and landscape protection, nor sustainable spatial and tourism development of destinations can be achieved until all relevant laws are harmonized. In the Law on Nature Protection, certain attention was paid to landscape and landscape diversity. The Law, in principle, established obligations on landscape protection and its characteristics within the nature protection measures. A

principled standpoint on the classification of landscape types was mentioned, but without prescribing any obligation and competency for their investigation, identification and assessment in compliance with the ELC and practice of European countries. These inconsistencies and indistinctness will perhaps be corrected by the adoption of the envisaged Strategy of Nature and Natural Resources Protection, which will contain guidelines for landscape diversity preservation, based on the Report on the State of the Environment of the Republic of Serbia which should also contain data on the status of landscape diversity and impacts on landscape diversity. The question arises as to how these inconsistencies and indistinctness can be overcome in the period prior to the adoption of the Strategy and the Report, so as to enable the implementation of the obligation, prescribed by the law, to set out requirements and measures for landscape protection and landscape diversity preservation through spatial, urban and sectoral planning (power supply, traffic, water resources management, agriculture, forestry, tourism, etc.). The Law on Nature Protection also defines a basis for landscape integration into environmental planning and management by setting out the obligation which states that the requirements for nature protection, including the preservation of landscape diversity, have to be an integral part of an environmental impact assessment.

In the Draft Law on Immovable Cultural Heritage (2008), the protection of immovable cultural heritage was not associated with (cultural) landscape protection and sustainable tourism development, or with the protected territories of immovable cultural heritage.

The Law on Tourism (2009) is also indicative, which, within the principles of tourism development, mentions sustainable development only declaratively, but leaves out any coordination with laws on spatial planning and environment protection. Therefore, the coordination of tourism planning with spatial and environmental planning is not even mentioned. Quite the opposite, the Law requires that spatial and urban plans must implement a tourism strategy or plan, without any adjustment to sustainable spatial development and conclusions of an environmental impact assessment. The obligation stated in the Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment for tourism sector is not confirmed by the Law on Tourism, and therefore it has not been carried out for tourism strategies and master plans. It has only been envisaged that the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia should

include an analysis of the impact on cultural heritage and natural resources, but not of the impact on the environment, or sustainable spatial/territorial and landscape development. The current Law on Tourism does not provide adequate support for sustainable spatial and tourism development, landscape and heritage protection.

We believe that environmental regulations are the most significant legal basis for defining sustainable sectoral development and environmental implications for sectoral planning. The same stands for landscape (landscape planning, design, development and management) and for setting out obligations for other forms of planning, in the same way in which the environmental protection and management are determined. Without this, it may not be expected that sustainable development and landscape will be adequately regulated in other sectors.

This brief analysis indicates that the issues associated with Serbia's sustainable spatial development, sustainable tourism and landscape have been sporadically, inadequately and inconsistently dealt with in legislation. The necessary support has not been provided for the integration of strategic planning, primarily spatial, environmental and sectoral planning in compliance with the analyzed European documents (agendas, conventions, etc), guidelines/recommendations and experiences in their implementation. In other words, voluminous work is still ahead of us in terms of preparation and harmonization of our legislation with *acquis communautaire*.

Problems Associated with Coordination and Integration of Strategic Spatial, Sectoral and Environmental Planning in Serbia

Coordination and integration of spatial, sectoral and environmental planning is established by legislation and carried out through institutional-organizational arrangements. The previous analysis has indicated that the Serbian legislation has not provided this precondition. In the Serbian planning practice, a coordination of a formal and informal type has been achieved in spatial and sectoral planning in the domain of agriculture, water resources management, forestry, and the protection of natural values. The informal type of coordination has also been achieved with some other sectors (transportation, energy and telecommunication infrastructure), but has been conducted with difficulty with certain sectoral plans, which are insufficiently situated in the planning system (tourism strategies and

master plans) or mainly reduced to short-term and medium-term development programmes.

In the first decade of the 21st century, a series of general strategies has been adopted in Serbia modelled on the EU practice, having a direct or indirect impact on sustainable development management, and thus also on space and landscape protection and development, and sustainable tourism development. This primarily refers to the National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (2008) and the National Environmental Protection Programme of the Republic of Serbia (2010). In the National Sustainable Development Strategy, the concept of sustainable development in Serbia is too general and without a spatial and landscape dimension. In the National Environmental Protection Programme, landscape is neglected, not being mentioned even in the segments referring to the protection of nature and biodiversity. In both documents tourism is identified as an emerging sector with a significant environmental impact, but left without any objective or priority action to make it more sustainable. This omission has been corrected by the Action plan for the Implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2009–2017 (2009), where the ratification of the European Landscape Convention and revitalization is mentioned, and a set of issues for tourism sector has been stipulated (on environment and cultural heritage protection, sewage treatment, renewable energy).

In the Serbian spatial planning practice, the concept and principles of sustainable spatial development have been implemented more or less successfully (see more: Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009). As for the concept of sustainable tourism development, its implementation started in spatial plans for special-purpose areas, primarily for protected areas with natural and cultural heritage. In the proposal of a new Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (2010), the main goal for tourism is to achieve sustainable development. As the national spatial plan has no power to change the regulations set by legislation, the abovementioned problems in the implementation of proposed sustainable tourism development remains unsolved. The problems in implementing the concept of sustainable tourism development already occurred in spatial plans for special-purpose areas, due to a lack of environmental impact assessment of tourism strategies/master plans and their insufficient coordination with spatial plans.

The approach to the preservation and improvement of landscape quality in spatial planning has been fragmented and limited to some landscape components or to outstanding landscapes. At almost all levels of spatial planning, landscape has been completely neglected in relation to its ecological, historical and cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, and other functions (Maksin-Mićić, 2003). Certain progress has been made in the proposal of the new Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (2010), which specifies problems, objectives, the concept and priorities in landscape protection and development. An elaboration of the Characterization of Landscapes of Serbia project has been included amongst priorities. The project should be a basis for developing landscape planning and management, as well as for landscape integration into spatial, sectoral and urban plans. Such a recommendation may be specified in the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia, but it must be determined by the legislation in the domain of environmental and nature protection. Although spatial plans for special-purpose areas are mainly drafted for areas with intensive spatial and socio-economic transformations, or protected and environmentally vulnerable areas, they, as a rule, do not include a landscape dimension. For this reason, it is worth mentioning the approach to landscape planning in the elaboration of the Spatial Plan for the Special-Purpose Area of the Golija Natural Park (2009), in which the Golija-Studenica Biosphere Reserve (MAB list) has been included. A step forward has been made with this plan, compared to earlier practice in spatial planning of protected areas. The Plan sets out objectives of cultural landscape protection and the preservation of landscape ambience, aesthetic and recreational values; a general identification of biotope types has been carried out and general measures for their protection have been established. However, differentiating the area into landscape units/elements and establishing guidelines and regulations for the preservation of the quality of these units has fallen through. In this case, as in others, except for formal demands, it is difficult to observe a real impact of plan concepts and solutions for the protection of cultural landscape and biotope on plan concepts in other plan segments (forests, forest and agricultural land, etc.), especially on the concept of tourism development and its spatial distribution (Maksin-Mićić, 2003).

The integration of strategic environmental assessment into spatial (and urban) plans in Serbia yields good results in the evaluation of

variant concepts of territorial development and contributes to the improvement of environmental quality and the quality of life. A limitation in achieving the coordinating and integrative role of strategic environmental assessment in the Serbian planning system is the fact that it does not observe the legal obligation to perform the SEA for sectoral plans. Thus, the realization of the integrative role of spatial and environmental planning in directing and managing sustainable development in Serbia is, at the same time, put in question (Maksin-Mišić et al, 2009). In order to include a landscape dimension in the SEA process, it would be most appropriate to extend its coverage and harmonize objectives and methods to include an assessment of plan solution impact on landscape.

The collision of spatial, environmental, landscape and sectoral objectives and interests in tourism development might grow in intensity with the implementation of the new Law on Tourism. In these circumstances, the implementation of strategic environmental assessment for spatial plans represents a controlling instrument enabling the coordination between the sectoral-oriented strategies and master plans for tourism development and spatial and environmental planning, as well as future landscape planning. The controlling role of strategic environmental assessment of sectoral strategies and plans is realized by indicating the adverse spatial, environmental and social effects that may be caused by their non-critical incorporation into spatial, urban and other plans and programmes.

The role of strategic environmental assessment may be explained through the example of spatial and sectoral plans for the Stara Planina Natural Park and Tourism Region. One of the objectives of strategic environmental impact assessment of the Spatial Plan for the Special-Purpose Areas of the Stara Planina Natural Park and Tourism Region (further: Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina) was the protection of cultural landscape, i.e. the preservation of landscape type diversity and the preservation and improvement of elements of landscape features. In the SEA Report, it has been concluded that significant positive effects of the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina will be particularly manifested within: the protection and improvement of the state of nature, environment and landscape; the preservation, presentation and adequate use of natural and cultural heritage; overall economic effects and uniform increase in local population employment, etc. It has been concluded that according to the concept of dispersive development, which has been applied to most

of the area covered by the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina (to about 88% of the area), none of the plan solutions will generate a significant long-term adverse environmental impact which cannot be kept under control (Fig. 1). In the SEA Report, due to solutions incorporated in the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina from the Master Plan for the Jabučko Ravnište-Leskovac Tourist Resort (Fig. 2), it has been concluded that, for a smaller part of the area (about 12%), where the concept of highly-concentrated development in the Jabučko Ravnište Tourist Resort has been applied, it will generate a significant long-term adverse environmental impact which will be difficult to control. The Jabučko Ravnište Tourist Resort will generate a particularly unfavorable long-term impact on nature and the environment, especially in terms of water supply, wastewater drainage system, access and internal roads, solid municipal waste disposal, power supply and

accommodation of the employed, the quality of life in local communities (due to non-uniform distribution of workplaces, dominant participation of the employed coming from distant surrounding areas, etc.). One of the conclusions in the SEA Report is that from the standpoint of the environment, nature heritage and landscape protection, the dispersive development concept is more appropriate for the protected area of Mt Stara Planina.

Strategic environmental assessment has provided recommendations for the reduction of the originally determined capacities in Jabučko Ravnište to the level which will not pose an environmental threat, and also defined measures for the reduction and neutralization of an adverse environmental impact which may occur in the implementation of sectoral plan solutions. By introducing strategic environmental assessment in resolving conflicts in planning, a certain degree of compromise has been achieved by which the sectoral plan concept has been reduced, as well as the planned development and its adverse environmental impact on the most sensitive area of the Natural Park, at least in the first stage of tourist resort development. The efficiency of this controlling instrument would have been even greater had the assessment of sectoral and spatial plan impact on landscape been also adequately included.

By introducing strategic environmental assessment in sectoral planning, as well as extending its coverage to include landscape, strategic environmental assessment would also assume the role of an instrument for the evaluation of various spatial and sectoral plan options and solutions related to the environment and landscape.

CONCLUSIONS

The reforms of the planning system implemented so far and the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning in Serbia do not provide their harmonization with the approach, policies, concepts and principles for planning and managing sustainable and competitive territorial development of the European Union. The process of elaboration and preparation of plans in Serbia is not adequate for directing and managing Serbia's sustainable spatial/territorial development in the process of EU integration. Due to poor coordination and absence of integration of strategic planning, the integrative role of spatial and environmental planning may not be achieved.

It is important to consider recommendations/guidelines and various experiences of

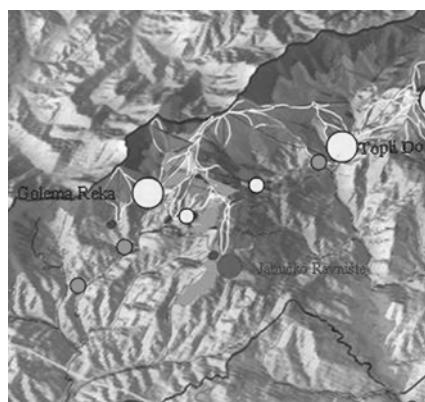


Fig. 1. The Golema Reka and Topli Do ski-resort sectors according to the Spatial Plan

Source: Spatial Plan for the Stara planina Natural Park and Tourism Region, 2008



Fig. 2. Solution for the Jabučko Ravnište ski and tourist resort according to the Master Plan

Source: Stara Planina Resort Area Master Plan, 2007

countries in the TAE (Territorial Agenda of the European Union, Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, 2007), ELC (European Landscape Convention, 2000), ASCET (Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, 2007) and, in line with realistic possibilities, to elaborate them in the Serbian national legislation. The similarities in guiding principles and stages in the process of spatial, sustainable tourism and landscape planning should be the starting point for managing their mutual coordination and integration, particularly for the areas with landscapes, natural and cultural heritage attractive for tourism development. One of the first steps to be taken in integrating strategic planning for sustainable spatial, tourism and landscape development is to establish the necessary principles, instruments and mechanisms for the coordination and integration of planning activities, as well as for the harmonization of conflicting interests in directing and managing the development, protection of natural resources and heritage, and spatial and landscape development. Stemming from this experience, and based on the necessary landscape investigations for the entire territory of Serbia, the first necessary step is to situate and define the notions of landscape, landscape planning and management in the legislation, in the remit of environmental protection, and afterwards in the domain of spatial planning and sectors having a direct or indirect impact on landscape planning (Maksin-Mišić, 2003).

The implementation of instruments of environmental protection policies may help to steer and control the coordination of strategic planning. A precondition for achieving a coordinating role is to initiate its implementation in sectoral planning, starting from experiences in strategic environmental assessment implementation and integration into spatial planning process. In the period before the completion of the necessary landscape research for the entire territory of Serbia, this instrument may enable an integration of the landscape dimension in the process of spatial and sectoral planning.

Another necessary precondition for raising efficiency in the implementation of legal and plan decisions on spatial and landscape protection and development is to adequately and continually keep key stakeholders and the public informed and include them both in the process of spatial and environmental planning, and in sectoral planning. Thus, it will be possible to achieve a controlling role of the public and diminish manipulations of public authorities and interested investors in adopting

and implementing sectoral plans, as well as enable the implementation of the Aarhus Convention and other conventions and agendas associated with environmental protection, the protection of landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage, and which have been, or will be, ratified by the Republic of Serbia.

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SPATIALIZATION OF SOCIAL PROCESS VS SINGULAR OBJECT OF ARCHITECTURE

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The fundamental subject of this research is spatialization of social process in the period of modernism manifested through transformation and/or change in meaning of space under a variety of social processes without changing the physical structure of space. These changes in meaning represent the specificity of development in space under the influence of the said social processes, which in this case is Yugoslav modernism, resulting in the creation of a singular object of architecture specific of a certain environment.

These processes have been researched in the residential complex of Block 19a in New Belgrade, designed by architects Milan Lojanica, Predrag Cagić, and Borivoje Jovanović, and constructed between 1975 and 1982.

The basic objective of this paper is to establish crucial causes for this complex to be considered the landmark in the designing practice of the time in Yugoslavia through research and critical analysis of the residential complex of Block 19a, and to try and determine the importance and potential influence in further architectural development in the period following its construction. In other words, the basic objective of this paper is to establish whether residential complex Block 19a represents a singular object of architecture in Yugoslavia/Serbia.

Key words: paradigm of modernism, singular object of architecture, discontinuity, intuition/anticipation, utopia, and an event.

INTRODUCTION

Residential construction in Belgrade after World War II until the early eighties of the last century is characterized by construction of huge, economical residential structures (buildings) within residential suburbs and suburban areas, and also in the territory of New Belgrade. This system of residential construction was put in place instead of the system of constructing individual buildings (Marić et al., 2009), within the framework of traditional block-structures in the old city core, that is, architecture of socialist modernism that had undergone several development stages in the three decades.

The subject of this research is the residential complex of Block 19a in New Belgrade, designed by architects Milan Lojanica, Predrag Cagić, and Borivoje Jovanović, and constructed between 1975 and 1982, in the final stage of socialist modernism in Yugoslavia.

Singularity of architectural structure that is the

subject of this paper originates from the fact that Block 19a, though one of the last in socialist modernism of Yugoslavia, due to some of its architectural features, represents the turning point or *terra incognita*, "the seed of possible anticipation of things to come" (Baudrillard and Nouvel, 2002), and can be simultaneously regarded as one of the first works in post-modern architecture in Yugoslavia.

Speaking of architectural principles executed in the residential complex Block 19a architect Milan Lojanica speaks (Lojanica, 2006) about changes in the paradigm of modern architecture and, at the same time, about the beginning of post-modern architecture in Yugoslavia. This stated indefiniteness or ambiguity of one of the authors indicates an insufficiently defined position of this residential complex in the development of modern architecture in Yugoslavia and additionally proves the statement that Block 19a represents the turning point in the development of modern architecture in Yugoslavia.

The underlying objective of this paper is to establish the crucial reasons which make this complex a landmark in the former architectural

practices in Yugoslavia through research and critical analysis of the residential complex Block 19a, and also to try and determine the significance and potential influence on further architectural development in the period following its construction.

Most writings dealing with residential complex Block 19a were written during the period immediately following the conclusion of the public competition (1975), that is, after the complex was constructed (1982) thus, due to the lack of necessary time distancing, these texts are mainly dedicated to the description and analyses of urban and eco characteristics, spatial and functional organization, and technical features of the structure, and will consequently be of secondary importance in this paper. Since this work has no aim at comprehensive research of Block 19a, the focus of the subject will be on three aspects rendering this residential complex the significance of a landmark in the then architectural practice in Yugoslavia. The three aspects, which are the subject of research, are: diagonal orientation of structures in an orthogonal city; vernacular architecture in a modern city; and, spatial pattern of a residential

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unit. Therefore, primary objectives of this residential complex Block 19a are to determine, within contemporary architectural theory, the following:

- If residential complex Block 19a represents the turning point in the former architectural practice;
- If residential complex Block 19a represents a unique structure of architecture;
- Significance of this architectural structure for the development of modern architecture in Yugoslavia/Serbia.

The theoretical starting points for the research of residential complex Block 19a are the two contemporary architectural theories: Theory of Singular Object and Event Theory. Creation of a singular object of architecture is one of the essential goals of architecture which Peter Zumthor defined as search for the uncatchable. The job of an architect means the search for what is necessary or for what constitutes a singular object of architecture, while theoretician insists that, at the same time, no intention or individual effort can guarantee the achievement of that singularity. Together, an architect and a theoretician will say that the search for singularity should go on.

Research is based on the analysis of primary sources, mainly original design documentation, and then design documentation obtained from the author, and published texts and papers on the subject of research, touring the site and the analysis of secondary sources.

This work consists of five parts: 1) Introduction stating the subject of the paper, objectives of the research, basic hypotheses, methods of research, and structure of paper; 2) second part stating basic theoretical assumptions, description of researched facts, as well as review and explanations of research results in regard to Singular object of architecture and Event; 3) third part which gives basic theoretical assumptions, descriptions of researched facts, review and explanations of research results in regard to residential complex Block 19a ; 4) fourth finishing part, presents proof for the hypotheses, review and explanations of results of the research, and derived conclusions which represent the sum and synthesis of results obtained during research; 5) conclusion, as an appendix to part four with comparative analysis of given hypotheses and research objectives, that is, definite and unambiguous confirmation of research results as presented in parts two, three, and four. Conclusion is followed by 6) Notes to the text; 7) Literature, list of sources structured alphabetically according to the significance.

Singular object of architecture - an event

The subject of research in this paper, which is residential complex Block 19a, after a time distance of more than two decades following the construction, will not be observed in a conventional or traditional way characteristic for the theory of architecture in the last decades of the 20th century.

During the eighties of the last century, at the time of post-structural thought, progressive thinkers advocated de-differentiation of disciplines, that is, uniting theory and practice into one discipline – theory of architecture. Two decades later at the beginning of 21st century de-differentiation of disciplines and intentional erasing of borders between specific cultural areas and practice tends to homogenize all distinctions and differences into one neutral and global way of thinking. The negative character of such approach is defined by terms 'global' and 'neutral', with term neutral as something indefinite that signifies the lack of quality thus becoming non-quality, and so, according to Jean Baudrillard: "neutral can not be loved." (Baudrillard and Nouvel, 2002), The latter term 'globalization' represents a conscious and intentional discrimination which forms a closed virtual space available only to those *connected*. In the globalized world there are those who are in the process of globalization or IT connectivity, while those who are not simply do not exist. Global unification, apart from excluding any possibility of social conflicts, creates absolute neutrality and as such represents the production of non-quality. Baudrillard regards a singular object of architecture as a declaration against these neutral global systems, aspiring to universal quality with the term *universal* designating the system of values.

Accepting the necessary individuality of disciplines and authors, this research done on the example of residential complex Block 19a represents a search for the singular object of architecture and theory.

According to Baudrillard the singular object of architecture is *an event*. The event exists between specific cultural practice and specific cultural context in real time. Duality of event is expressed in the need to be placed between two forms of reality: what was and what will be. Baudrillard claims that "future of architecture is not architectural" (Baudrillard and Nouvel, 2002), while it must be determined "what architecture is and where it is headed, that is, what culture is and where it is headed." (Baudrillard and Nouvel, 2002), Through the growth of domination of perspective, specific form of architecture and its practice will be seen

as production of concepts whose impact and significance will exceed the domain of architecture and enter socio-cultural field. This new activity of theory does not demand new ideas for objects but the invention of new techniques of thinking and analyzing the forms of representation, meaning that theory has transformed "that what used to be philosophy" (Baudrillard and Nouvel, 2002), into its subject of research – *architectural problem*.

Event is an unstable but adaptable open system whose essence is the production of novelty, that is, new political, social or cultural reality. It transforms non-current potential into a new state, in other words, produces a whole new series of potentials that will be effectuated or not. The event is unique and autonomous but there is a whole network of influences, intentions, borrowings, and exchanges in its background and they are the subject of this research. As authors we are not able to choose or determine the event, it appears or not independently of our intention leaving us with the opportunity to choose the concept. At one moment in time object becomes an event, namely object becomes something that is not easy to define sociologically, politically, spatially or esthetically. What is certain is that *singularity* is not an issue of esthetics, an object may be outstandingly beautiful but it does not necessarily become a singular object of architecture, and vice versa, singularity itself is a very complex socio-cultural system.

By researching the event in this paper, it is the change or mutation of space that is researched, change of Block 19a that went on in front of our eyes although not as a confirmation of change or a contemporary need for constant change but as change which represents *coming into being*, as change which aspires to a certain goal as a result of conscious or unconscious intention. The issue of coming into being is far more complex and more profound than the issue of change (Djokić and Nikežić, 2007). In this way it does not imply the existence of theory, just as this paper is not an analysis of strategy because strategy in this case does not exist, but there is a collection of single events which unconsciously reflect reality and anticipate future.

Residential complex Block 19a

In the period after World War II most designs for reconstruction of larger parts of cities or construction of new cities in the world (Blagojević, 2004) were executed by the urban concept of modern city as advocated by CIAM. Basic principles of urbanization by CIAM were given in the publication 'Athens Charter' which greatly reflected Le Corbusier concept of Radiant

City, as well as CIAM concept of Functional City.

The subject of this research residential complex Block 19a is situated in New Belgrade, part of Belgrade which was constructed in the period following World War II. New Belgrade was also planned and designed as a modern and functional city involving concept and principles of CIAM and Le Corbusier Athens Charter (Blagojević, 2004). Basic principles of Athens Charter, which were crucial in designing residential blocks in New Belgrade, as well as residential complex Block 19a, are besides the concept of strict functional zoning and also several significant principles relating to function of residing:

- Paragraph 14 – aired structures (pleasant apartments) occupy refined zones sheltered from hostile winds ... with abundant insulation (Le Corbusier, 1933).
- Paragraph 16 – structures rising along busy roads and at crossroads are damaging to living conditions: noise, dust, and harmful gases (Le Corbusier, 1933).
- Paragraph 27 – arranging residential buildings along highways should be prohibited (Le Corbusier, 1933).
- Paragraph 29 – high rising buildings arranged at distance from one another (Le Corbusier, 1933).
- Paragraph 62 – a pedestrian should be able to move on a path separated from the road (Le Corbusier, 1933).
- Paragraph 63 – streets should be distinct as to their purpose: residential streets, walking paths, transit roads, and main roads (Le Corbusier, 1933).

Competition

The planning framework for construction of residential complex Block 19a was General Plan for Urbanization of New Belgrade from 1958. This plan resolved the main issues of zoning and the purpose of areas, it defined the road and railway networks as well as planned river and other water-area regulation. Plan of New Belgrade is dominated by the residential function whose density of population was determined at 350 per hectare. Exact locations of individual objects were not defined by plan, they were only indicated. Definite locations and dimensions were to be defined during detailed design of individual blocks or by public urban tenders for more significant blocks and structures.

In accordance with such recommendation given by General Urbanization Plan, September 1,

1975 saw the beginning of public local limited urbanization-architectural competition for Ideological solution of residential complex Block 19a located in southern New Belgrade, Milentije Popović Street, to which five design teams were invited:

Team 1 - Aleksandar Stjepanović, Branislav Karadžić, and Božidar Janković;

Team 2 - Milan Lojanica, Predrag Cagić, Borivoje Jovanović, Radisav Marić, and Radmila Lojanica;

Team 3 - Darko Marušić, Milenija Marušić, and Nedeljko Borovica;

Team 4 - Slobodan Komadina, Dušanka Lalić, and Tamara Škulić;

Team 5 - Slobodan Drnjaković, Zoran Radosavljević, Ljubomir Zdravković, and Milan Pavković.

Competition being completed and the first prize awarded to team Milan Lojanica, Predrag Cagić, Borivoje Jovanović and Radmila Lojanica, it was pointed out that the *judging jury* selected the designs "evaluating the contribution to environmental improvement, attitude towards activities – the degree of functional aggregation, importance for social community – socializing component, contribution to relationships between visual forms, and the attitude towards technical and technological treatment" (Aleksić, 1977). The jury also emphasized their detailed analysis of all organizational levels of submitted designs by the following characteristics: features of proposed units and structures, and the way urban tissue is organized; the degree of development of individual and collective sphere; the way units get enclosed or included into urban tissue, or how the hierarchy of the complex is organized – from an apartment, neighbors next door, local community – content cooperation and physical connectivity; proposed standards or residing in the block; value of design in terms of development – according to international experience. Besides evaluating these characteristics, another complex model of appraising the apartments, structures and residential complexes was applied, which was made by Centre for studies of residences IMS, as well as the partial model of evaluating the inner organization of apartments with the aim of obtaining parameters for the complex model (Aleksić, 1977). Having completed evaluation of the submitted designs, the jury emphasized the following as significant results of the competition:

- opening the issue of methods of construction for residential complexes in New Belgrade and their applicability in Block 19a;

- affirmation of the issue of optimization of ecological conditions in residential entities;

- need to create a higher level of residential entities' identity.

According to these characteristics, we notice that Block 19a represents a practical realization of theoretical assumptions of CIAM. In accordance with the standing about unity of disciplines, theory or theoretical assumptions represent the framework or guidelines for architecture, not the definition. Theory is the chart of a singular object of architecture and as such it produces architecture as the subject of knowledge. Acceptance and transformation of dominant theoretical assumptions into architectural design from Block 19a produce primary cultural system for representation; that is, Block 19a becomes *an exclusive representative of the present*.

Location

Location of Block 19a is a spatial entity surrounded by very busy city roads, Bulevar Milentije Popović, two other streets and inter-city highway Belgrade-Nis. In the vicinity of the location, just by the Vladimir Popović Street, there is a railroad. City roads, spots of their intersections and the railroad represent significant sources of negative impacts in terms of air pollution and high levels of noise, while a certain favorable influence is observed in the closeness of green banks of the Sava River.

With these characteristics of the location in view, authors located residential objects in the center of the block, and positioned them diagonally to surrounding roads. Objects, which are diagonally positioned to the surrounding road network and to the usual position of objects in nearby blocks, stretch along the narrower side in the direction north-south, and by its wider side in the direction east-west. This abandonment of orthogonal system provides better use of natural characteristics of the location; in other words, better quality of apartment insulation is achieved as well as airing of the space between structures (Aleksić, 1977).

Discussing the competition for Block 19a and analyzing the awarded design, Branko Aleksić emphasizes three very significant conceptual characteristics of Block 19a in his text:

- positioning of objects in the center of the block due to the need for isolating *unpleasant sounds and fluids*; (Aleksić, 1977)
- diagonal orientation of objects due to more favorable position in regard to insulation and wind direction;
- importance of spatial context stated through



Fig. 1. A wider location - showing diagonal organization of Block 19a in comparison with surrounding buildings and traffic organization

connection with *vital spots* of Belgrade landscape. (Aleksić, 1977)

The first two features are the result of environmental needs, while their theoretical base is represented by Paragraphs 14, 16, and 27 of Athens Charter. Moreover, we notice that changes in “recipes applied in construction of New Belgrade blocks” (Aleksić, 1977) do not represent negation of paradigms of modernism or abandonment of modernism but the very opposite – they represent the return to its fundamental principles.

Diagonal spatial organization

“It was Mondrian who finally detached himself in 1925 from De Style and Van Duisburg due to Van Duisburg’s ‘arbitrary’ rotation of orthogonal format.

The third stage of de Style’s activities after 1925 is the period of post-neoplastic development...At the very beginning of the period there was a dramatic severance of relations between Mondrian and Van Duisburg caused by Van Duisburg’s introduction of diagonal into his work back in 1924. The conflict led to Mondrian’s detachment from the group.

...At his parting Mondrian wrote to Van Doesburg: “After your arrogant improvement (?) of neoplasticism any further cooperation is impossible for me...as for the rest sans rancune.” (Troj, 2000)

During the seventies and eighties of the last century Lojanica was researching the problem of form identity through the relationship of *full and empty, place and non-place*, (Lojanica,

2006) or as he explices himself, he is interested in spatial organization *based on the principle of island form* (Lojanica, 2006) which has a spatial point in the center and plasmatic bordering space. Such spatial concept was applied in the international competition for Goclaw, a town in Poland, then in residential suburb Julino Brdo in Belgrade, and also in the spatial solution for residential complex Block 19a in New Belgrade. The central space of Block 19a is a square or *an island in the negative* (Lojanica, 2006), to which outer structures with residential objects gravitate. The whole composition of Block 19a is spatially rotated in regard to surrounding streets and to orthogonal matrix of New Belgrade for environmental reasons as the author points out, and because of enabling better orientation to the sun and the wind. Lojanica respects the obligatory standardization and industrialization so he builds the complex form of object from a simple standardized particle with two same windows – the traditional *bifora*. Bifora on the structures in Block 19a originated from the transformation of double lancet windows of the traditional Morava

house by which the author consciously burdened an object of modern architecture with history, that is, constructional tradition. The author calls this act *an attack on the Modernism*, (Lojanica, 2006) which it certainly is in the context of late development of post-modernism in Yugoslavia, while in the context of development of post-modernism in the world it can be viewed only as a logical consequence of current courses. However, another act in Block 19a is much more of *an attack on the Modernism*, and that is the rotation of the whole block, namely introduction of (baroque) diagonal into a (renaissance) orthogonal city of Modernism, which initiated the process of post-modernization of the Modern city of New Belgrade.

The basic concept of spatial organization of Block 19a is “orientation of residential objects towards environmentally most valuable part – the center of the block in a way which renders it the character of coherent entity; visually connects it to vital spots of Belgrade landscape...which have the visual root and beginnings in the sketches and silhouettes of the city” (Aleksić, 1977). Later in the text he adds that ‘urban matrix of New Belgrade blocks, characterized by orthogonality and harmony with directions of main traffic flows, then enclosure – some sort of autonomy realized through enclosing space and directing it towards central parts of the block – is being cleverly and bravely transformed here” (Aleksić, 1977). Similar explanation was also presented by Milan Lojanica more than twenty years later at a lecture in the School of Architecture of Belgrade University, which suggests that signifying component of a diagonal in an orthogonal city represents an unknown, an unconscious discovery or intuitive risk.

We notice that only environmental reasons were given for conceptual explanation of withdrawing object to the central part of the block and for the rotation of the axis of objects and their diagonal positioning. Importance of orientation for the full quality of residential objects is great but the



Fig. 2. and 3. The diagonal organization of Block 19a in comparison with surrounding buildings

position of objects in Block 19a, according to the conceptual and the aspect of meaning overcomes environmental interests of a residential complex. With such concept authors do not accept the new *modern* context of orthogonal matrix of New Belgrade but associate the design of new residential block to the spatial context of location – its natural characteristics and position within city surroundings, where they tend to establish 'direct dialogue with the panorama of the (old) city' (Aleksić, 1977). Architecture of Modernism tended to form new spatial context criticizing and often negating the heritage of the traditional town so that urban matrix of New Belgrade developed independently from the matrix of traditional Belgrade on the right bank of the Sava River. Nonexistence of necessary historic context in the author's intention of connecting the two city parts, excludes this connection from the post-modernist question of *place spirit* and keeps it in the framework of modernist principles of spatial context and their re-examination. Connecting Block 19a to old Belgrade is a concept of illusion, an attempt to seek compromise between what authors set to cause and what they actually managed to control and perform. Conceptual connection between the two city parts exists exclusively as a mental extension of realistic view, that is, as virtual spatial connection.

Architectural object

Design of residential complex Block 19a has brought a certain degree of innovation in the traditional recipes which had already turned into practice in the last decade in Belgrade. These novelties are primarily concerned with dimensions and methods of organization of activities/functions in residential complex/block, with solutions for objects and space between structures, with outlook and functional organization of objects and structure of residential units. (Aleksić, 1977)

After performing the analysis of the realized novelties in spatial organization of residential complex Block 19a and their meaning, it is necessary to establish whether there are novelties in *appearance and functional organization of objects and structure of residential units* and if there are any, to establish their meaning.

The fundamental characteristic of the plan/base of the object is two-tract concept of interior organization. The corpus of the object consists of two tracts which are interconnected by the core of vertical communications (stairways and elevators), around which four apartments are grouped. Such organization of object unifies the

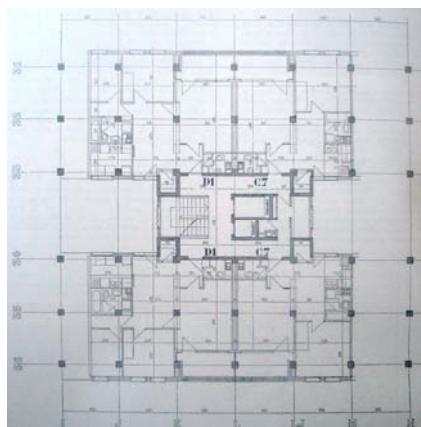


Fig. 4. Block 19a: The Double-tract-base

advantages of corridor concept with the central core, and with gallery concept of spatial organization.

The advantage of gallery system represents an opportunity to organize comfortable two-side-oriented, while the disadvantage is inefficiency in terms of spatial exploitation and maintaining gallery in the conditions of continental climate. Gallery system was often used in the period in between wars as comfortable apartments delivered better apartment exploitation through obtaining higher rents. In the post war period the private property of apartments was annulled so no property was built for renting, economy of building and maintenance of apartments was of primary significance, so during the period of socialist modernism no example of gallery system is known in the practice.

Dividing the object into two symmetrical tracts provided the possibility to organize comfortable apartments two-side-oriented, while organization of residential units around the central core instead of along the corridor/gallery, solved the problem of inefficiency and gallery system maintenance. By further connecting several objects to four residential units a larger entirety was formed on the principle of spatial concept of urban structure for the bordering city block, as concept of multi-storied houses in a row, where the whole or the row represented macro-form consisting of fragments in the form of individual multi-storied built-in objects.

Combination of advantages of corridor concept with central core and gallery concept of spatial organization created the scheme of object with short communication corridors while enabling two-side-orientation of apartments at the same time.

Spatial scheme of apartment

Industrialization and technological development which emerged after World War II enabled the

development and practical use of new skeletal constructive system, which during the fifties of the last century provoked the construction of first modern apartments in Belgrade. Spatial organization of modern apartments in Belgrade was characterized by the appearance of 'widened communication', (Baylon, 1979) the room which in economically limited conditions played the role of 'living room as a family gathering spot, around the dining table removed from the space of kitchen'. (Baylon, 1979)

During the fifties and sixties of the last century modern apartments developed fast going through several stages of development in short time, during which rooms in the apartment were completely differentiated functionally. The result of such development was the division of the apartment into two functional zones, daily zone where enlarged communications living room and dining room comprised separate rooms, and night zone bedrooms.

During the period of socialist modernism, evaluation of spatial organization of the apartment used to be determined through the achieved degree of apartment *utility*. The term utility was used to determine the total quality of residential units which meant, besides spatial organization of the apartment, its usable area, spatial and functional flexibility as well as inner connection among various groups of rooms and their relation to outer space.

However, in the mid-eighties of the last century, apartments began to be considered as part of spatial, purposeful-functional system which shapes it and affirms it by the selection of appropriate interior connections and relations among rooms. The result of such observation of the spatial scheme of the apartment required that the apartment, in order to be effective and modern, should have attributes of free and dynamic spatial concept besides great utilitarian value. Presenting the character of changes in the apartment organization Branko Aleksić points out 'powerlessness and subordination of one-sided static dispositions which are created by mechanical and technical coupling of parts with specific purposes, mono-functional in relation to those which are based on the concept that an apartment is the field onto which numerous various and changeable needs, interests, conditions, and processes linked to family life are projected and expressed' (Aleksić, 1977). The change of spatial organization of an apartment, which originated from the need for greater dynamics of apartment space, marked the change of typical model of modern apartments in Belgrade in early seventies of the last century. (Lujak, 2006)

Specific apartment scheme in the early



Fig. 5. The scheme of Blok 3 apartments, located in Novi Sad

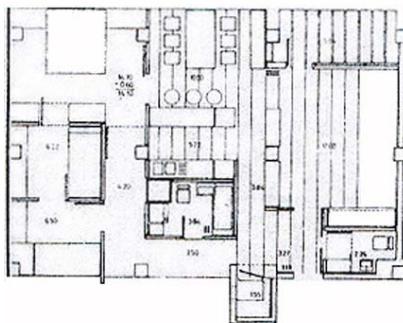


Fig. 6. The scheme of Blok 19a apartments

seventies of the last century was the scheme with entry space which was applied in residential objects in Bulevar Jurija Gagarina (Blocks 61 and 62) in New Belgrade from 1971 (designed by architects Milenija and Darko Marušić). Apartment scheme applied in Blocks 61 and 62 represents an example of stiff, static apartment organization with large communication space comprising entry space and a long hall around which mono-functional and clearly defined night and day zone rooms are grouped. These apartments were significantly less utilitarian as opposed to dynamic apartments with a quality of varied utility (Aleksić, 1977), as seen in apartments in Blocks 19a from 1975 (designed after the concept of apartment scheme developed for the competition in Novi Sad, 1971) or apartments in Cerak-Vinogradni suburb from 1978, designed by architects Milenija and Darko Marušić.

Taking part in competition by public invitation for the residential complex Block 3 in Novi Sad in 1970, team of authors Lojanica, Cagić, and Jovanović for the first time applied solutions which would later have a significant influence in development and formulation of spatial organization of apartments in Block 19a in New Belgrade.

Location for Block 3 in Novi Sad is similar in space to location of Block 19a, namely location is a free and large piece of land without any structures already built and bordered by roads. It does not have a formed context which enabled

the creation of new, modern context.

Competition for Block 3 in its program demanded complementary content of shopping mall, kindergarten, educational and social institutions, apart from residential function. Within the framework of urban scheme of spatial organization in the block objects are evenly distributed throughout the block area, while disposition of objects was executed in orthogonal system placed parallel to main roads. In accordance with urban principles of the time segregation of functions was strict so that supplementary functions were resolved as separate objects, or as annexes to residential objects. Free green area was located in the quiet inner zone of the block.

Such spatial organization of the complex was to be completely changed later in Block 19a.

Spatial-functional organization of Block 3 and solution for shapes of objects do not represent a significant characteristic of this design – it is the organizational scheme of residential units and the degree of prefabrication, that is, standardization of elements. Conceptual determination for maximum standardization was delivered through the use of singular constructional modular raster for all residential objects in the block; through standardization of all constructional elements: pillars, stairways, inter-floor ceilings, exterior and interior walls, windows and façade parapets, and central sanitary unit comprising kitchen and bathroom.

It is the spatial-functional apartment organization that is interesting for this research. It is developed around the standardized sanitary block formed by kitchen and bathroom. Positioning the sanitary block in the center created a simple division of the apartment where on one side rooms belonging to day zone are being developed, and on the other rooms belonging to night zone. Kitchen is façade oriented, while the bathroom is oriented to entry zone where the possibility of natural airing is lost. Dining room is positioned in the center of the apartment, into separate space which is integrated with living room space, and physically connected to the kitchen. Such disposition of apartment rooms enabled circular movement through the apartment which subsequently enabled better connectivity of the zones, and reduced the area of rooms intended for communication purposes only. On the one hand, the dining room is directly connected to entry space, and on the other with the kitchen and balcony. Utilitarian value and importance of mid area are reflected in its poly-functionality since, apart from the function of a kitchen, it can be used as an annex to the living room when organizing a big gathering, or as children's

playroom or a study.

High degree of element unification of objects in Block 3 in Novi Sad resulted in modest solution of shape on the one hand, but also in great speed of construction, extreme efficiency, and up-to-date scientific and technological solutions achieved through patent system for industrial manufacture of apartments NS-71.

Problem of visual monotony and modesty of shape solution, caused by element unification, authors would resolve in their design for Block 19a in New Belgrade.

Singular object of architecture – Block 19a

Post-modernism appeared in Europe and America in mid sixties of the last century in the social environment still feeling the consequences of World War II and communism, as the result of general disappointment and loss of faith in manifestations of modernism. The appearance of post-modernism meant the return to concept of architecture as art, where the value of architecture does not lie in its redemption of the social strength any longer, but in its transformation of productive process and communicational power as an object of culture. Pointing out the loss of political power of modern architecture Mary McLeod claims that at the time of modernist movement, political role of architecture was first conceived as an issue of process, and only secondary as issue of form, and also states that one of the most significant changes that post-modernism brought about was that meaning – not constitutional reform – became the objective (McLeod, 1998). Nevertheless, the new post-modernism movement was soon accepted and, at the time of financial recovery in the sixties of the last century, it became the new corporate style. McLeod points out that '*if there is any dialectic tension with dominant power of structure in post-modernist architecture, it dwells not in institutions but in the content of architectural form*' (McLeod, 1998).

During the seventies of the last century a significant characteristic in the development of post-modernism was re-discovery of history as duality of tradition and innovation, which led to post-modernism accepting decoration as a liberating gesture, after the formal monotony of modernism. Post-modernism was closely connected to regionalism while reacting to tendency of modernist movement to erase cultural differences, and during the eighties new duality of post-modernism appeared: '*how to become modern and return to sources*' (McLeod, 1998). However, during the eighties of the last century post-modernism changed

radically and from a remarkable movement criticizing esthetic and social parameters, it became the movement which confirms *status quo*. McLeod emphasizes this moment as the crucial one for the change in postmodernism and for the appearance of post-structuralism and de-constructivism as reactions to conservative postmodernism.

This moment was also of crucial importance on the territory of Yugoslavia. The death of Josip Broz Tito (in 1980) marked the beginning of fragmentation of Yugoslavia which would culminate in total collapse of social system of values and long-term war during the nineties of the last century. Modernism lasted in Yugoslavia till the beginning of the eighties when postmodernism appeared as a reaction to conservatism of modernism. The weakening of socialism in Yugoslavia after Tito's death marked the conquering of greater social freedom and creation of more significant cultural ties to Western Europe. Overcoming the economic crisis from the early eighties brought about the formation of economically strong middle class similar to European 'technocratic and bourgeois society', which accepted postmodernism. Robert Stern states in his definition of postmodernism that: 'Postmodernism is not revolutionary in the political or artistic sense; actually it strengthens the effect of technocratic and bourgeois society we live in' (McLeod, 1998), indicating the special relationship of postmodernism and economically strong society.

At the end of eighties, which was the beginning of postmodernism domination, German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, in defense to modernism, indicated that modern art was still an unfinished project and that the period to come, namely postmodernism, was a neo-conservative reaction to modernism (Šuvaković, 1995). English historian Paul Wood indirectly announced the possible guidelines for the period to follow postmodernism when effects of postmodernism had already been historically recapitulated in the mid nineties of the last century by saying that 'eclecticism and decadence of rhetorically constructed postmodernism can only be used to reopen the difficult issues of modernism itself' (Šuvaković, 1995).

By accepting vernacular architecture authors of residential complex Block 19a react to conservatism of modernism and open some difficult issues.

The moment of adopting the solution (Block 19a) which brought the elements of vernacular architecture into the modern architecture of New Belgrade was preceded by significant political

events in Yugoslavia. After winning social liberties after the students' protests in 1968, Yugoslavia of the seventies of the last century witnessed the strengthening of local nationalism in the republics which were its constituent members. By adopting the Constitution of SFRY in 1974, this reality was accepted and much greater autonomy was granted to republics. Simultaneously with these events modernism, which was the dominant architectural movement in Yugoslavia since World War II, expressed all the features of conservatism not accepting the

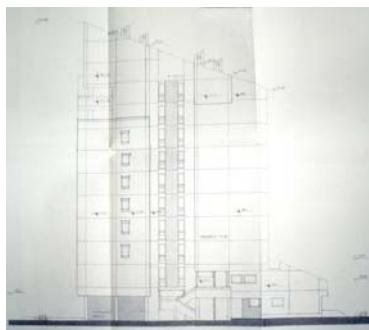


Fig. 7. The Lateral Façade (The Historical Archives of Belgrade)

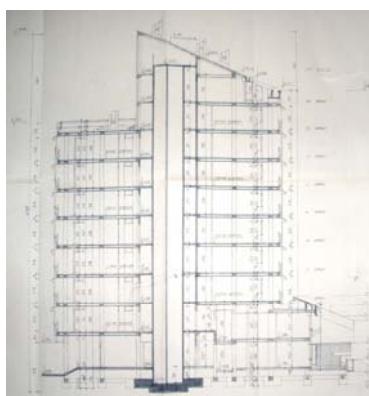


Fig. 8. The Cross section - original designs (The Historical Archives of Belgrade)



Fig. 9. The Lateral Façade -the photograph

appearance of postmodern art in Western Europe and America.

Bernard Tschumi questions if 'architects can reverse events and instead of serving conservative society which had affected our cities, could they make cities influence the society. In other words, can space become a peaceful tool of social transformation, the means of change of an individual's relation to society by generating new life style' (Tschumi, 1996). Architectural space by itself implies political neutrality, that is 'asymmetric space is no more or less revolutionary or progressive than symmetric one' (Tschumi, 1996). The thing that can give space a political role is not architectural form, be it contextual or modernist, but its purpose and meaning which was added to it.

In light of political events from early seventies of the last century in Yugoslavia, the use of vernacular architecture in Block 19a can be understood as adding political meaning to architectural space. However, the way vernacular architecture was used in Block 19a indicates that it had more of importance of style than politics. At the moment of reawakening of national identity in republics of Yugoslavia, Lojanica in an interview for magazine *Communications* in June issue of 1987, independently from Block 19a, stresses that during his career:

He tended to create dialogues with inherited closer and farther (above all) national constructional heritage. One line of that dialogue runs through affirmative relationship, and the second one through the negative relationship with models. Affirmative line repeatedly summarizes well compared patterns and reaffirms models through which elementary concepts about character and being are renewed. These are archetypal forms that act as firm places, strong landmarks, elementary things like, for instance, roof of the house, doors to the house, windows of the house...these are the things that turn out to be important only when there are not enough of them, with which you advocate an ontological level, the newness of the indispensable inherited being of the house. The better you interpret it, the greater the value of the work. At the same time, the other, negative



Fig. 10. The View of buildings of Block 19a

line is always fighting to overcome and conquer the model – the existing constructional experience, as you do not want to repeat yourself, you would like to improve and, bottom line, be different.' (Lojanica, 1987)

Introducing vernacular architecture into modern architecture and into space of new *modern* city resulted in significant changes in the existing architectural language and, within it, development of new formal language. These changes primarily represented the suspicion in the existing several-decades-dominant architectural values and did not tend to reject them or introduce new values, but only to reexamine them. Reexamination involves inner contradictions of modern architecture, namely two factors: space and its purpose, that is, concept of space and experience of space. (Tschumi, 1996)

Vernacular architecture of Block 19a does not emphasize local/national features originating from cultural differences in republics of Yugoslavia, but represents universal esthetics of the past. Its role is the change of paradigm of *conservative* modern architecture, in other words change of style. Not having socio-political role its significance becomes symbolic and iconographic, and it becomes the mark of tendency to communication. However, this communication is not metaphor based, which was specificity of postmodern architecture, but is exclusively of formal character. It is one-way directed, reduced to the *sign* of roof, chimney or window in the traditional house with the single goal to influence modernist esthetics of abstract forms.

The result of such work is that Block 19a represents critical practice of modernism, in other words, this residential complex is retained within the frame of modern architecture, not turning it into the work of postmodern architecture.

CONCLUSIONS

This research into Residential Complex Block 19a resolved the current uncertainty or ambiguity of the position of the said complex in the development of modern architecture in Yugoslavia, namely Serbia, which was the prime objective of this paper.

The research confirmed that Block 19a, though remaining within the framework of socialist modernism and not representing one of the first designs of post modern architecture in Serbia, represents *terra incognita*, that is, a turning point in modern Serbian architecture.

Fundamental features of Block 19a, diagonal spatial organization of the complex, then

application of vernacular architecture in modern architecture, and the lack of *any dialectic tension in the content of architectural form*, place Block 19a between what was and what is to come. In this way Block 19a becomes *utopian and destructive*, opposes the *hegemony of anti-utopia of the present*, tends to destroy the present and as such represents discontinuity. Inclined on ruining modern architecture, or rather what it had become, Block 19a tends to establish a new system of values anticipating near future.

The research proved that residential complex Block 19a in New Belgrade, simultaneously utopian and destructive, turned to future and exclusive representative of the present, and as such it is special/peculiar object, that is, it is more of an *event than object*, thus becoming a **singular object of architecture** in Serbia.

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MARC-ANTOINE LAUGIER'S AESTHETIC POSTULATES OF ARCHITECTURAL THEORY

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Views on architecture that hold a significant position in architectural theory are the ones by Marc-Antoine Laugier, a French theoretician from the 18th century. The research on his architectural theory that have been carried out so far are quite stereotypical and concern Laugier's concept of primitive hut as his only significant contribution to architectural theory. It is well-known that the concept of primitive hut plays an important role in Laugier's theory and it is what actually maintained his reputation up to now. However, by singling out this concept as an independent one, one actually neglects all the other aspects of Laugier's theory.

The aim of this paper is to present multidimensionality of Laugier's architectural aesthetics by crossing the borders of architecture and viewing Laugier's ideas in cultural, philosophical, religious and historical context, as well as applying the integrative process and considering the spiritual paths of the enlightenment movement in the mid-18th century.

A special attention is paid to considering the aesthetic aspect which represents the gist and an inevitable part of Laugier's architectural theory. His aesthetic theory is important in forming the classicist style, and despite its radical character, it influenced many architects in France and the rest of Europe. We may see Laugier as one of the first modernists considering his structuralist logic of the constructive circuit of architecture and aesthetic modesty of decoration. Laugier's functionalist attitude that the constructive circuit should at the same time represent a decorative element of architecture confirms the thesis that modernist approach has its roots in the 18th century.

Keywords: aesthetic rationalism, enlightenment, classicism, syntagma: truthfulness, simplicity and naturality.

CULTUROLOGICAL CONTEXT OF LAUGIER'S WORK

Marc-Antoine Laugier, also known as *l'Abbé Laugier*, lived and worked in France during the 18th century. As a Jesuit priest, Laugier fulfilled erudite education that surpassed theological frames. Furthermore, he was a highly gifted person, being eloquent, perspicacious and skillful orator, writer and translator, *homme de lettres* that produced significant works in music, architecture, painting, history, diplomacy and preaching. During his life, he was very respected by the highest cultural circles in France and other parts of the world, he was elected a member of the Academy of Science in Anger, Lion and Marsey, and his works were translated into the main world languages. When he wrote his first book *Essay on*

Architecture (1753), Laugier was already more than forty years old. Until the end of his life, during the next sixteen years, he published twelve books, as well as a significant number of articles, translations and short texts. Although he was interested in all other kinds of art, writing books on painting and music, architecture was actually his first love.

In the 18th century, Europe was marked by several revolutions that brought a complete change in social norms and beliefs. Along with the industrial revolution when it comes to manufacturing and the French bourgeois revolution in terms of social-political relations, religious enlightenment represents an intellectual and spiritual revolution in terms of philosophical, religious and scientific thinking, while Laugier represents one of the first minds that introduced the revolutionary ideas in the field of aesthetic viewing of architecture.

Enlightenment as a spiritual and philosophical movement was based on reason as the highest human value and included every single aspect

of human existence. Using reasonable and logical viewing, enlighteners initiated a revolution in traditional structures that were imposed by the Church and the absolute ruler. The theological metaphysical learnings were rejected, while the optimistic faith in human advancement through practicing science was acquired. The new democratic social relations based on the postulates of justice and equality of all the people were demanded. With these goals, enlighteners wanted to form a humanist society that aims at progress, which is a characteristic that is even now one of the main virtues of society (Cassirer, 1951).

Laugier's views on architecture examined the whole history and theory of architecture, starting from Vitruvius. The beliefs that were regarded as irrefutable for centuries were considered wrong and vague by Laugier. The architecture that was defined by the arranged cosmic order with numerous symbolic meanings was now deprived of its metaphysical character. Laugier was among

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Fig. 1. Marc-Antoine Laugier's concept of the "primitive hut". Frontispiece from second edition of the "Essai sur l'Architecture", engraved by Charles Eisen, 1755.

the first theoreticians that used constructive logic that was more powerful than the secret symbolic meaning of numbers and proportions in architecture. With his radical attitudes he succeeded in starting a reformation of architecture, stressing that renaissance models of thinking were long gone and confirming his modernist views that were led by reason as the main postulate of enlightenment.

SEARCHING FOR A PERFECT STYLE IN ARCHITECTURE

In the beginning of the 18th century, France was in a bad financial state since the golden age of the country's advancement under the Sun King ended. Colossal palaces were no longer built, as well as the pretentious state buildings and magnificent gardens. Architecture was limited to more modest projects that were fairly different than those in *Grand Siecle*. The architects became more of decorators than architectural designers. They started using cheaper techniques of imitating expensive materials, ceiling plastering was used quite often, as well as painting and colouring the walls into bright pastel colours. There was a frizzy and frivolous style that emerged between 1730 and 1755 called rococo, which was used by many architects, even some of the members of the French Academy of Architecture. The popularity of this style was caused quite a lot by the great demand of it by the newly-formed bourgeoisie class that strived to approach the aristocracy by owning the artistic manifestations of this extravagant style. On the other

hand, the lack of money and the accessibility of the content that rococo offered made even the king Louis XV and his nobles become the main protagonists of rococo. Rococo was a quick escape from the cruel reality into the world of imagination and fantasy. The decadence of art represented a reflection of the decadence of the political and social system, the demise of which could be made out under the bunch of little flowers, sparkle and floral and animal motives which were used in rococo.

While defending the long tradition of the French classicism and the view which claimed that architecture could be beautiful only if it was simple, symmetrical and harmonic, the academic architectural public harshly judged rococo as a source of deviation of the ideal of beautiful. The academists considered rococo a worthless trend that distorted all traditional values. Rococo was compared to barbarian elements of gothic style, since their mutual characteristics were heavy usage of ornaments and eccentricities.¹⁾

Although they rejected rococo in their theories, the academists of architecture accepted it in practice. Germain Boffrand, a great advocate of classicism, is the author of the interior decoration *Hôtel de Soubise* which is one of the most extreme examples of rococo in Paris. Jacques-François Blondel thought that, while decorating smaller spaces, an architect might surrender himself to his lively imagination and fantasy, claiming that interior design demanded less strictness than composition of exterior (Blondel, 1754). This being said, some of architectural theoreticians praised rococo due to its qualities of being picturesque, while, on the other hand, believed that it didn't contribute to advancement of architecture, since it was oriented to interior decoration and objects that were short-lasting, such as clothes, jewelry and furniture. Rococo was considered to be a fashion that wasn't long-lasting, so it was possible to tolerate its ornaments in small, intimate salons, and thus, when it threatened to be included in exterior composition of architecture, it caused a strong theoretical rebellion.

The architectural experts found themselves in a great fear, believing that architecture was threatened by neglecting the rules of good taste. These reasons caused a sensible and spiritual search for a new style that would save the architecture from decadence and decline. The search for a new style was in a close relationship with striving to reach the perfection in architecture.²⁾

A rapid discourse in French architecture began

in the mid-18th century, which confirmed the data that, between 1747 and 1753, over three hundred books, pamphlets and articles in magazines that dealt with architecture were published, which was more than during the fifty years before (Hautecœur, 1943-1957). There was a chaotic interlacing of the professional and layman thinking in which stable value criteria were completely lost. The notion of *bon goût* (good taste) became problematic, the values were replaced by anarchy, while anarchy, according to some critics, led to destruction. The spiritual atmosphere of the beginning of the 18th century was marked by the feeling of fear and believing that art was going in the wrong direction, distancing itself from the concept of perfection and regularity, thus moving towards demise and deviation.³⁾

France as a significant centre of enlightenment produced a constellation of prominent thinkers whose ideas influenced reforms of society, government, religion, science, culture and art. Architecture represented one of the pivots of the manifestation of social rebirth, so searching for a new style was the leading task in the second half of the 18th century. Voltaire,



Fig. 2. Germain Boffrand, *Hôtel de Soubise*, Paris, 1735-1740.

Diderot and Rousseau paved the way for the great social and political revolution with their ideas, while the architects and architectural theoreticians had difficulties adjusting their attitudes as far as further development of architecture was concerned. It was not easy to break the one hundred years old tradition of the French Academy of Architecture that was based on the Vitruvian theory and forming a style that was to end rococo's influence. In this atmosphere of hopelessness and searching for a firm basis of architecture, Laugier's views caused a big public attention. Based on the classicistic theory, Laugier's radical system of rules rejected all the elements of the "confusing and bizarre" (Laugier, 1753), an not only the ones belonging to rococo, but also the

elements that were used in architecture for centuries as parts of classical expression, like pilasters, niches and pedestals. Laugier criticized lots of baroque and renaissance elements, for example spiral columns and atticas. He completely rejected the Roman Toscan and Composite architectural order, but reformed the classic Greek Ionic, Doric and Corinthian order. Laugier paved the way for structural classicism (Trachtenberg and Hyman, 1986), seeing the column, the entablature and the pediment as the supreme elements of architecture and claimed that, except from their regular forming and distributing, nothing else was needed to add in order for a building to be perfect.

Laugier's *Essay on Architecture* was accepted with great enthusiasm and it caused wide reactions in public, it was thoroughly discussed by experienced architects, as well as all the other prominent intellectuals. This big response from the public was quite surprising for a book that dealt with the theory of architecture. One of the reasons for this success was the appearance of the interest of the wider public for art critic, while the simple style in which the book was written made the abstract theme of architectural theory understandable to the layman critics (Herrmann, 1962). *The Essay* made an excess in architectural theory (Blagojević, 2009). A great part of *The Essay*'s significance is found in Laugier's expressing a critical attitude towards the existing architecture. His views caused a series of discussions in public and directly influenced the forming of classicistic style in French architecture.⁴⁾

THE PRINCIPLES OF LAUGIER'S RATIONALIST AESTHETICS OF ARCHITECTURE

In his system of structuralist aesthetics, Laugier established the following elements in architecture: *les parties essentielles* (the essential elements), *les parties introduites par besoin* (the elements introduced out of need) and *les parties ajoutées par caprice* (the elements used out of caprice). Led by this division of architecture, Laugier established three levels of aesthetic categories: *beautés* (beauty), *licences* (necessity or justification) and *défauts* (errors), which were equivalents to good, bad and wrong.

The essential elements of architecture respected the principle of primitive hut and consisted of column, entablature and pediment – they were fundamental and no architectural building could be built without them. The elements introduced out of need were walls,

windows and doors. Laugier approved them only because they were necessary due to *commodité* (commodity), but believed that they undermined the basic principles of primitive hut.

The elements used out of caprice represent major errors in architecture. They were utterly useless and redundant and only undermined the beauty and simplicity of basic elements of architecture, that is, the fundamental principles of primitive hut.

By analyzing Laugier's rationalist aesthetics, we may perceive three significant tendencies that are everpresent in his aesthetic concept of architecture. These are *vérité* (truthfulness), *simplicité* (simplicity) and *naturalisme* (naturality).

We may conclude that these tendencies make an entire syntagma that represent the most important contribution of Laugier's architectural aesthetics.

Truthfulness

Laugier advocated *architecture vrai* which represented a true, real and sincere architecture. He opposed everything that was false about architecture. His aesthetics of valuing architecture established the column, the entablature and the pediment as the most important and main constructional elements by considering the constructive structure of a building. Believing that the parts of architectural order were, at the same time, parts of a building itself probably originated from aesthetic theoreticians Plato and Aristotelous. Laugier paraphrased Aristotelous' rule from poetry that claimed that "structural unity of parts should be constructed in a way in which, if one moved or removed any part, the unity would become distorted and disturbed" (Aristotelous, 1912).

The demand for complete integration of architectural parts into a unity belongs to the idea of classic. The idea of this connection can be traced back to Alberti's definition of beautiful that is basically connected to Vitruvius' views (Alberti, 1989). However, the renaissance view of integration was then viewed in an aesthetically abstract sense. This meant that a whole building was pervaded by decoration, from the smallest ornaments to architectural orders, and all of them together made a unique and coherent unity. During the age of renaissance there was no word on the constructive role of architectural orders. Architectural orders were considered the best way of illustrating the mutual connection between parts and unity (Kurtović-Folić, 1998). It was thought that the order reproduced processes that were present in nature and macrocosmos, according to some claims they were God-made entities, something specific which stood in contrast to a building's unity, which was added to it in order to make it pretty and adorned. Architectural orders were the most important elements in aesthetic classification of architecture when it came to *venustas* - beauty (Vitruvius, 2003). During renaissance, especially in France, this classification was automatically applied. In practise, the orders were often included in construction of a building, but Laugier was the first theoretician to express the view that the orders, most of all, had to be constructive, and then decorative elements. With this view, Laugier broke the concept of metaphysical role of the orders and pointed out that their main role was to be functional. This being said, Laugier may be seen as one of the pioneers of modernism.

Simplicity

The tendency of *simplicité* (simplicity) is one of the basic characteristics of French architecture and art. When compared to European trends, all the French styles fostered the tendencies towards classicistic tradition, the main characteristic of which was *simplicité*. It is well-known that the French baroque and rococo were marked by a dose of *simplicité* – the simplicity which was related to everything that was related to classicistic doctrine and opposite to gothic style.

Laugier was criticized for reducing architecture to utter basics, limiting an artist's freedom by leading him to the strict system of rules by which one should project in order to reach the ideal of simplicity. Laugier claimed that only untalented architect adorned his work excessively, since he was not able to reach simplicity. He did not underestimate the



Fig. 3. Jacques-Germain Soufflot, Sainte-Geneviève Church (Panthéon), Paris, 1755-1792.



Fig. 4. Jacques-Germain Soufflot, Interior of Sainte-Geneviève Church (Panthéon), Paris, 1755-1792.

importance of talent in creating a work of art. On the contrary, he believed that an architect should be talented and a genius, but, if these two were not supported by the rules, the artist would inevitably fall into *licence* (justification) and *caprice* (decadence).

Laugier mostly expressed his aesthetics of reforming in church architecture, which, according to him, did not yet acquire *vrai goût* (true taste) of building, and thus he viewed French gothic as a style that was most acceptable. General opinion that was present during the 17th and 18th century considered gothic a barbarian style of bad taste which was opposed to the beauty of classic architecture and its canons of symmetry, balanced proportions and coherent conception. Laugier agreed with this and criticized gothic for its grotesque ornaments, while he appreciated the awe, magnificence, lightness and sophistication that gothic cathedrals bore (Laugier, 1765).

Laugier wanted to adjoin the good characteristics of both gothic and classicism, primarily wanting to reach the gothic height and the classicist stability. He proclaimed his idea of a church an absolute *bon goût* of architecture and a building which was completely *naturel et vrai* (natural and true). The design of a church was very simple and based on the basic principles of Laugier's aesthetics with no arcades, pilasters, counterphores, pedestals, transverse ribs, statues and everything else which was considered kitschy and redundant, since a church as a sacral form of architecture was supposed to look elegant and supreme.

The author of the Sainte-Geneviève Church, the

greatest project of the 18th century France was Laugier's peer, the architect Jacques-Germain Soufflot. Led by Laugier's ideas, Soufflot applied peristyle that alluded to the simplicity of Greek temples, while he presented free-standing columns and flat entablature as the main construction elements, by which he succeeded in producing the lightness effect of gothic cathedrals, releasing the current sacral architecture of baroque weight. The Sainte-Geneviève Church marked the new way in which church architecture began to develop in terms of applying the new construction solutions and affirming the new style of classicism which reached its top level during the 37 years in which it was built.

Laugier's ideas strongly influenced the building of Madeleine Church, which is another superb work of art as far as architecture of classicism is concerned. Pierre Contant d'Ivry, the author of the church, literally applied Laugier's *vrais principes de l'architecture* that included columns, entablature and pediment as the fundamental principles of architectural composition.

Naturality

During the second half of the 18th century, the idea of nature played an important role in human interests. The age of enlightenment adopted the idea of nature as an expression of righteousness, sincerity, logic and kindness. The notion of "natural cognition" was not only related to the cognition of physical world and things that happened in it, but also the rights, religion, society, politics and art. Natural cognition was a search for the basic, fundamental truths in all areas of human existence. This kind of euphoria for the natural did not fail to affect architecture, while Laugier's ideas were based on viewing architecture through natural principles.

Laugier's radical and rationalist architectural aesthetics should be viewed in the context of religious dogmatism. Christianity was the main force of Western civilization for thousands of years, and then, when the age of enlightenment came, its influence significantly shranked (Hadživuković, 2005). Along with free development of rationalist philosophical and scientific thinking, a new view on the world was formed, which was based on reason and experience. What was especially prominent in the intellectual circles was deliverance from religious dogma and prejudice, but rarely did anyone give up Christianity in favour of Atheism. Most of the French intellectuals were deists. With the permission of the pope, Laugier left his Jesuit order, but it was not because he stopped believing in Christianity –

it was because he wanted to dedicate himself completely to science and art.

In the mid-18th century an empty space emerged, in which spirituality strived to be inspired by a new inspirational force, thus the enlighteners found this force in nature. They were assured that, in spite of difference, there was a mutual basis of the world and religion which was to be found in "natural religion" that was present in every man's heart.

It is important to acknowledge the greatness of spiritual advancement that the enlightenment movement achieved which was in contrast to the reformation and counter-reformation that marked the earlier epoch. The enlightenment was not exclusive in its work, it pointed out to the new perspectives of development based on humanity and religious and political tolerance. The faith in nature was shared by all people, no matter whether they were Christian, Atheists, French or English, while it represented an optimistic choice in search for happiness. Two prominent theoretician, each one in his area of interest, Rousseau and Laugier advocated similar principles that urged a man to go back to his roots, gist and nature as a pure source of life and creativity. Rousseau did not see the return to nature only as releasing a man from social rules and boundaries, but also stressed that, being raised, one becomes sensible, that is, natural (Rousseau, 1790). He did not rebel against the nobles, but against richness and social injustice (Rousseau, 1984). Deep inside he was assured that the source of new moral was not to be found in one's reason, but in one's heart and conscience. In analogy to these social views of Rousseau's, Laugier wanted to clear the architecture of everything that was redundant and non-functional, not only pointing out to excessive usage of ornaments that was developed during baroque and rococo, but also to the errors and fallacies that were everpresent in the centuries before.



Fig. 5. Pierre Contant D'Ivry, Madeleine Church, Paris, 1757-1842.

Just like Rousseau saw financial, political and social inequalities as unnatural deviations of the "natural state", Laugier saw pilasters, pedestals, niches and torsion columns as errors and deviations of the three fundamental principles of primitive hut which represented the embodiment of quality architecture. Rousseau's notion of *volonté générale* (the general will) is equivalent to Laugier's tendency to define general and universal principles of good architecture. According to Rousseau, an individual in a state was subordinate to general tendencies, while Laugier claimed that an architect was to adjust to the established principles of architecture, after which he could feel free to use his talent and imagination.

With the intention to purify, Laugier focused on architecture while Rousseau focused on moral and society. With the tendency of removing deviations, both of these theoreticians found the solutions in nature and primary states that were embedded into collective subconscious mind of an 18th century man, as well as the contemporary one. The ideas which makes Rousseau's and Laugier's views contemporary is even now related to the vision of progress that should be connected to one's moral emancipation. These thinkers went back to the roots of our civilization, Laugier with his primitive hut and Rousseau through his "noble savage". This was not a step backward that brought humanity back to tribe communities and primitive architecture – it was a search for new moral and architecture that were purified from civilization's dirt.

THE VALUE AND CONTRIBUTION OF LAUGIER'S ARCHITECTURAL AESTHETICS

Laugier's architectural aesthetics was extremely modern and progressive when compared to the processes that happened in the 18th century. Although considered to be among the pioneers of classicism, Laugier did not turn to ancient ideals in the same way that classicistic architectural style did. His major contribution was establishing the valorization of a complete work of architecture, on the basis of which he noticed some errors and drew conclusions and directions for bringing architecture to perfection. Although we may see some of his thoughts as absurd, we shall not judge their quality from the practical point of view. It is important to stress that Laugier made a progressive excess in architecture which was then between the periods of rococo and classicism. Laugier's ideas have inspired many architects, theoreticians and thinkers and

this is what actually gives him such meaning and merit.

The architecture back then might have been backward when compared to Diderot's and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédia*, Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* and Voltaire's *Name of Conscience and Reason*, but Laugier certainly managed to defend the philosophical view on architecture, breaking up with the stereotypical concept of debates that had been written since Vitruvius' age. Laugier brought out certain freshness of a rationalist approach in thinking into a discipline that had become tiresome and dull. He created the new ways and, due to this, he is significant as a theoretician of architectural aesthetics. He was the first to demand a radical change in architecture. Classicism that had just emerged back then had many sources, one of the most important ones being Laugier's thinking.

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- 1) Regarding French architectural theoreticians' struggle against rococo, to see: Hautecoeur, L. (1943-1957) *Histoire de l'Architecture classique en France, Vol. IV: Seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle: Le style Louis XVI, 1750-1792*, Paris: A. & J. Picard, p. 46; Blondel, J.F. (1737) *De la distribution des maisons de plaisir et de la décoration des édifices en général*. Paris: C.-A. Jombert, p. 67; Frézier, A. (1738) *Dissertation historique et critique sur les ordres d'architecture*. Paris: s.n., p.3; Soufflot, J.G. (1744) *Dans l'art de l'architecture, le goût est-il préférable à la science des règles ou celle-ci au goût?*. Paris: Nouvelles Archives historiques de Rhône: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, p. 114; Boffrand, G. (1745) *Livre d'architecture: Contenant les principes généraux de cet art, et les plans, elevations et profils de quelques-uns des bâtiments faits en France et dans les Pays Etrangers*. Paris: Apud Guillelmum Cavelier patrem, p.9; Blondel, J.F. (1754) *Discours sur la nécessité de l'étude de l'architecture*. Paris: C.-A. Jombert, p. 5.
- 2) The concept of bonne architecture (perfect architecture) in French architecture in the 18th century should be viewed as the tendency of reaching and overcoming the architecture of the 17th century golden age. This concept of bonne architecture establishes truthfulness and simplicity as the basic qualities, in contrast to deviant expressions of, so called, "barbarian" styles such as rococo and gothic.
- 3) On pessimism in architecture, to see: Blondel, J.F. (1727) *L'Architecture françoise*, III vol. Paris: s.n., p.14; Briseux, C.E. (1728) *Architecture moderne ou L'art de bien bâtrir: Pour toutes sortes de personnes, tant pour les maisons de particuliers que pour les palais...*, II vol. Paris: C. Jombert, pp. 5-8; Dubos, J.B. (1733) *Reflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*. Paris : J. Mariette, p. 221; Voltaire, F.M.A. (1752) *Siècle de Louis XIV*. Paris: Garnier, p. 522; D'Alamber, J.R (1955) *Uvodna rasprava u Enciklopediju*. Beograd: Kultura, p. 168; Helvétius, C. A. (1776) *De l'Esprit*, I vol. Londres: s.n., p. 162
- 4) Laugier's ideas directly influenced the architects of French classicism, among which the most prominent were Soufflot and Contant d'Ivry. Laugier was often quoted during the next decades, especially by English architects such as John Soane who appreciated him most. When romanticism became dominant in the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, Laugier's name was almost forgotten. In the beginning of the 20th century, Le Corbusier renewed Laugier's idea of primitive hut in which he recognised the supreme principle of the new modern style.

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