

PATCHWORK OR MATRIX?

TESTING THE CAPACITY OF THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

Aleksandra Stupar, Aleksandra Đukić

Being exposed to the multiple needs of their contemporary users, the cities from all over the world have been forced to activate all capacities in order to intensify their land use, adjust their urban structure and reinvent some forgotten segments (ex-industrial areas, traffic nodes, docks, waterfronts) as generators of multilayered transformations and mutations. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyze and compare different approaches of this practice, as well as to emphasize the relation between the applied global imperatives/trends/myths, local conditions and limitations, and the outcomes. Consequently, the first part will be structured around four key-words which often 'justify' and activate multifunctional and intensive land use - connectivity, profit, identity and sustainability.

The second part will be focused on the case of Serbia, describing a unique postmodern example of the fusion of local and global influences. The multifunctional land use in this case is a result of numerous political and economic problems, the plurality of values and (il)legal transformations of urban structure. This condition has finally affected the rising need for urban redesign, the re-organization and revitalization of city centers, fringe areas, devastated and degraded urban zones, as well as the development of existing transport and communication networks i.e. improvement of urban and regional connectivity. Additionally, the 'model of territorial values' will be explained as a planning tool which could be used in order to increase the level of urban attractiveness, define urban parameters and estimate land values.

INTRODUCTION

Influenced by the process of globalization, the city at the beginning of the third millennium is continuously excited by internal and external economical, political and social stimulations. Displaying the new role, technological infrastructure and evolving identities, it promotes a different set of values and objectives, reflects the space and time contraction and supports the augmentation of reality. Gradually, the city becomes an incomprehensible fusion of multiple levels, time sequences and spatial segments, while its authenticity is constantly challenged and provoked. Consequently, our everyday experience, limitations and growing importance of global-local nexus, create a restructured urban space which should be, above all,

visually and economically attractive and efficient.

These urban turbulences reveal the ambiguity of the globalization, emphasizing the tension between global trends, local limitations and questionable outcomes. Hidden behind eye-catching images of the preferable future, the contemporary cities combine various development strategies in order to strengthen four powerful pillars of global success - connectivity, profit, identity and sustainability. However, their real significance is often (un)intentionally mimicked, creating the numerous opportunities for manipulation and further degradation of the living environment.

The city of our epoch has obviously become an experimental tissue where all novelties could be tested, verified, accepted or rejected, but it

is quite uncertain what will happen if the urban endurance reaches its limits.

Alluring network society and tempting virtual reality - will they be sufficient to back up and protect our fragile material body?

RESTRUCTURING THE CITY

Under the influence of the new 'globalizing' economy and the information revolution, our urban world has begun its new incarnation. Accepting the post-modern logic of disjunction and numerous possibilities, forced fragmentation and negated wholeness it highlights its differences and individuality, instigates the uncertainty. At the same time, urban nodes, as the new centers of the contemporary community, form their internal and external networks, stepping into the unknown territory of immaterial flows.

Consequently, the genuine, multiple nature of the city and its new character(s) can be discovered through numerous terms describing it as:

- informational city (Castells, 1989);
- telematics city (Hepworth, 1990);
- network city (Batten, 1995);
- dual city (Castells, 1989; Mollenkopf, Castells, 1991);
- intelligent city (Graham, Marvin, 1996; Hepworth, 1990);
- divided city (Fainstein at al., 1992);
- city of collective memory (Boyer, 1995);
- city of spectacle (Short, Kim, 1999);
- entrepreneurial city (Short, Kim, 1999);
- diffuse/compact city ... etc.

The traditional urban centers, their metropolitan areas and different urban regions are functioning simultaneously creating the unique space-time continuum - without visible confines but with multiple centers (for ex. Ile de France region, London metropolitan area, Tokyo with Tsucuba and Yokohama, Flemish Diamond, Randstad Holland, Rhine Ruhr Area, Basque Country). Overlapping and coexisting in the new realm of interconnections, they introduce a different logic of activities and structures, shaping the ambivalent trans-urban systems readable on uncountable levels and perceptible in various scales.

However, in spite of these tremendous changes, the principle of agglomeration could still be recognized, even though it is now related to the production and processing of information. Furthermore, every urban transformation usually mirrors the aspirations of urban center/node - the urban changes will certainly be more radical and visible if the city has an important role in the world system or if it tends to increase the competitive advantages.

The urban structure is also changing. The small, multifunctional segments gradually disappear while the large monofunctional zones become significant constituents. Simultaneously, the monocentric form is substituted by polycentric one, composed of several dispersed points. The driving force(s) of these autonomous and usually self-sufficient cells are activities which support political, economical, cultural and media globalization, i.e. international/national command and

control, finance and business sector, culture, creativity and tourism. Nevertheless, these activities complement each other, generate numerous combinations and all together depend on highly advanced technologies and information systems.

Their position in the urban tissue is also influenced by information and communication logistic, which nowadays enables a more flexible approach. As a result, some specialized types of business, financial and command/control activities are relocated to the urban periphery and/or to smaller cities (for ex. Paris - St. Quentin-en-Yvelines, Tokyo - Omiya and Kawasaki). However, the historical urban cores are still playing their symbolical role - demonstrating the tradition and continuity, merging the traces of previous activities with the contemporary features and demands (City of London, Châtelet, Wall Street). At the same time, their development potential is directed towards the new set of activities, mainly based upon culture, tourism, entertainment and art.

The promising synergy between production and consumption, established on the more sophisticated level, is also applied in the former high-class residential areas (West End, Champs Elysées) or new sub-centers (Tokyo - Shinjuku, Berlin - Potsdamer Platz). Additionally, the central zones, with powerful symbolical connotations, become targets of 'Grand projects', raising the urban attractiveness and frequently causing the further spatial fragmentation and social segregation.

The ex-industrial areas, with their abandoned structures and unattractive scenery, are regenerated and/or recycled, while their strategic importance and value are emphasized. Usually they are synchronized with the guidelines of sustainability and adjusted to the demands of the techno-elite. They introduce the new types of spaces and activities, mainly oriented to the new technologies, design, information and fashion industry.

While the extensions of the traditional urban cores become prestigious business nodes, the urban periphery becomes a valuable spatial resource for media production, entertainment, science and specialized services. However, the

particular attention is also given to the important transportation axes, which connect airports, seaports and/or complementary urban nodes within the urban region. These transurban spines become a new magnet for business, information economy and some types of tourism (mainly business and congress), using the excellent connectivity as the main advantage (Amsterdam - Zuid, Paris - Roissy).

Evidently, the structure of the contemporary city, shaped by so-called 'flexible capitalism', ad-hoc strategies and 'facing-the-deadline' planning methodologies, reveals the logic of the confusing patchwork, upgraded by the virtual matrixes and simulated experiences. Therefore, the city land represents just one of the uncountable layers to be used by various activities, but still the only one which we can actually perceive by all our senses.

MULTIPLYING THE URBAN EXISTENCE

The world is definitely getting smaller and the new technologies facilitate our networking, confirming the Stanley Milgram's theses (from 1967) about six degrees of separation. Fortunately, tête-à-tête communication is still important, but the movement of flows has different configuration which connects new urban focuses: airport/highway/railway - parking place/subway station - office/apartment building. Evidently, the introduction of new urban/global infrastructure systems is a necessity, but their harmonization with the inherited urban context have to fulfill needs of all consumers, especially those who create the New World order.

Connectivity vs. profit

The high urban connectivity, which could be attained by numerous traffic and information systems, enables the communication in the wider scale and, as a result, the systems of public transportation, systems of business/tourist flows and systems for information interchange (telecommunication networks) open the numerous possibilities for urban integration. Obviously, the information infrastructure, as the most expanded mode of global communication, becomes the important

element of the global urban competitiveness intensifying the circulation of knowledge, symbols and tokens. Due to that, the sense and the perception of the city space are highly influenced by its transport infrastructure (Sudjic, 1993) and the mental maps of passengers are acquiring new dimensions. Although the result could sometimes be a monotonous and incomprehensible city image, the modern traffic networks with their nodes represent a new logic of urban existence, offering new urban landmarks and, above all, reflecting the technological development and urban culture.

Consequently, the first step of the global initiation is usually creation of new city gates (airports, railway buildings) and establishment of economic and information contact zones - the impressive business areas with the vertical accents of office towers. This physical and symbolical frame, as a necessary pre-condition of globally recognizable image, raises the city above its national context and shapes its structure into the monumental landscape.

New city gates become the main contact points between different kinds of communication and transform themselves into the complex mega-structures, as the most vital organs of global centers. These symbols of the global prestige transmit symbolical messages by their attractive architectural appearance, glorifying the power of modern technologies (Osaka, Paris-Roissy), expressing the national dignity (Jeddah, Oslo, Seoul) and/or reflecting the importance of a city in the world hierarchy (London, Tokyo, Hong Kong). At the same time, the railway and subway terminals, although mostly important for regional connectivity, have a twofold role. They could be interpreted as reinvented urban landmarks (Rotterdam-Blaak, Lyon-Satolas, Toyama-Takaoka) or they could be used as symbols of new urban regeneration (London, Bilbao, Seville, Lisbon etc.).

The connectors of capital, with their similar skylines, emphasize the global character of financial and information flows integrated into large business districts. However, even these oases of concentrated multinational corporations are based upon powerful urban infrastructure that should provide excellent

physical and electronic accessibility, as a guaranty of global sustainability and progress. The monumental geometry made of steel and glass is the expression of the global potential, but also represents the power of multinational or local corporations, state aspirations and the global 'landmark' which should channel the international financial flows.

Identity vs. sustainability

Today, it is very difficult to establish equilibrium between pro-globalization and anti-globalization flows creating the environment for the coordinated functioning of all identities which represent the unique treasure of the contemporary city. Therefore, the urban space, as a place of the most intense transformations, provides new modes of social interaction, (dis)continuity and multiple identities. Its infrastructure (physical and virtual) emphasizes its ethnical, cultural, social and professional diversity, creates completely homogenized fragments and promotes this unusual collection of local-global values, as a unifying force of the evolving global networks. At the same time, different civil initiatives tend to regenerate the civic life and public space in the alienated and dispersed cities, but their way out from the introverted and passive urban segments is usually hidden behind the computer screen.

However, the global economy has taken advantage of these processes as well, and its play with conscious and unconscious levels of our psychological being becomes a new generator of capital - clearly manifested in the city space as well. Entertainment, consumption and promotion on one side, and the genuine spiritual revelation on the other define a new image of uncountable desires which make our limited existence more fulfilled and justified. The effect, although brief and commercialized, provides a possibility to step aside and to outdistance from the global current which takes all of us in the same direction.

Therefore, the logic of rational-irrational urban animation, which varies between reality and illusion, symbol and simulacrum, has been applied in the 'sacred' and 'profane' nodes whose difference cannot be clearly distinguished. The shopping areas with their

'cathedrals' (for ex. Collezione - Tokyo, Galeries Lafayette - Berlin, Toronto Galleria), fairs and Expo-s, as well as numerous theme-parks which re-create past and future, science or entertainment, become the top-spots for modern pilgrims searching for the new sensations. Unfortunately, beside obvious urban benefits - improvement of infrastructure, activation of devastated urban areas and introduction of new technologies, these places could cause environmental misbalance and/or social segregation which cannot be annulled by (questionable) economical sustainability.

Similarly, the sports competitions (Olympic Games, Championships, World cups) influence the spreading of the globalization using the powerful global financial/commercial apparatus which transforms sport into the new, glamorous kind of industry. The contemporary sports arenas modify themselves into the tools of competition directed by famous world architects and corporations becoming a marketing resource and a display for regional, state and international aspirations and values. They should provide a positive, recognizable image of a city and multiple networking but they could be also seen an important impetus of urban and regional development (Barcelona, Seoul, Athens, Madrid, Atlanta etc.). At the same time, sports arenas could be comprehended as a specific modern theater with an extravagant appearance reflecting the nature and the structure of a society, revealing the tensions and hostility, staging the moment of public catharsis and - attracting the attention of world media.

In contrast to these terrestrial impulses, the global cities also contain 'oasis' dedicated to the spirituality. Various centers of religious gathering are oriented towards introspection, but it does not mean that they do not excite and inhibit the urban space and their users. However, a great number of 'sacred' nodes, besides their usual iconography inspired by accepted canons, adjust their form to the local surrounding and, above all, to the global demands of architectural virtuosity, scenic design, unexpected symbolic and - television broadcasting.

Furthermore, the city space and its activities create and modify collective memory while the

cultural and historical symbolisms are used as ideological messengers. Accordingly, it is not surprising that the humanity again focuses its attention on the urban waterfronts, while their almost mythical role of regeneration, purification and initiation becomes very important for the officially imposed imperative of sustainability. As a result, images of the recently regenerated ports and docks not only reflect the power of capital, but reanimate the role of water which 'opens' the city and connects it to the rest of the world. Consequently, the chance for the balanced and comprehensive development of these areas has been found in the coordinated strategic actions whose final output reveals amalgam of complex and complementary activities and preserved identity. This model, for example, has been applied by Helsinki and Hamburg, where the independent, ecologically acceptable zones were established, while the waterfronts in the lower Manhattan, Sidney, Le Havre, London, Glasgow and along the Pacific Rim (Tokyo, Osaka) have been occupied by global business which develops the new, powerful financial/commercial front of techno-capitalistic power.

In contrast, cities like Bristol, Buenos Aires, Genoa or Jakarta used their own urban heritage, emphasizing the importance of collective memory embodied in the old activities, their spaces and cultural uniqueness. However, the example of Puerto Madero in Buenos Aires is a reflection of global dichotomies which could be found even in a sustainable planning approach. From the beginning, the urban regeneration of this waterfront was oriented towards the promotion and preservation of the old port identity, rehabilitation of the docks and internal restructuring. New infrastructure, along with the whole set of global activities and famous architectural names, certainly has been attracting many investors but for the total success and its future sustainability few problems have to be solved. One of them is economic, social and spatial exclusiveness of this area which again underlines the huge social gaps, the second one is the lack of proclaimed city-river interaction and, finally, there is the question of further investments which is always sensitive, especially in the cases of unstable national economies.

Evidently, urban history could be recalled whenever a city needs new financial resources which would be helpful for further development. The successful renewal and transformation of polluted and abandoned river banks, seashores, ex-industrial areas and old city quarters enables important infusion of capital imposing a new (or rediscovered) urban identity. Molded to attract exclusive clientele, these urban changes have a significant symbolical value for the circle of sustainability because the overcrowded urban nodes are forced to recognize their own hidden potential which has been often neglected and misinterpreted. Consequently, the culture as an important resource of memories, images and events, the purification and regeneration as an opportunity for reanimation of neglected areas, and, finally, the national dignity and reconciliation as catalysts of numerous global and local tensions have been emphasized as the places of urban identity.

The list of activities and interventions, guided by contemporary 'mantras' - connectivity, profit, identity and sustainability, is longer every day. However, the main global aim - a total multi-purpose networking still has to be achieved. Are we ready to take this risk?

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Shifting from the dazzling images of the central urban nodes to the gloomy reality of the peripheral ones is almost as difficult as the actual application and implementation of the theoretical knowledge. However, the methodological and analytical support provided by exact data, mathematical models and scenarios could facilitate the planning process, especially in the environment full of contradictions and uncertainties. Therefore, each city can be perceived as a complex system of crossed network structures which are the result of physical transformations and functional matrices from the past centuries. Due to the increase of content within the urban systems (qualitatively and quantitatively), we have to address the issues of urban development through multiple layers and different aspects. (R)evolutionary changes of the cities (in continuity or discontinuity of development) make the system even more complex.

However, information technologies allow monitoring large numbers of urban components at the same time, increasing the pace of their changes and development. One of the benefits of this method is the possibility to monitor spatial components through layers and to anticipate different scenarios of their activities and development. The changes of urban structures are mostly influenced by markets, and therefore the monitoring of different aspects of development is an essential tool within the planning process.

The situation is even more sensitive in the economically unstable environments, which have to balance between limited financial resources, chaotic regulations and inherited practice, simultaneously adjusting to the new rules of the inevitable global competition. Therefore, it is necessary to stimulate implementation of the scientifically based planning methods and tools, keeping the professional distance but respecting the local conditions and sensing the everyday pulsations.

Urban systems networking – theoretical background

The basic principle, introduced by the method which will be described, is the equivalence of complexity between planning process and urban system itself, because every simplification of this process results in equivalent decrease of urban system's reliability to respond to planned effects.

The analysis of urban networking structures development, from the earliest human settlements up to a present day, leads to conclusion that the most primitive forms of these networks were central point based. More complex were linear (development of physical structures by the side of the road) or in the form of crossroads. Finally, as the number of the elements gradually increased, systems were formed (towns and settlements), eventually resulting in complex network structures (metropolis, regional centers).

Spatial-corridor structures emerged when at least two points and a road were formed. For example, some medieval cities in Europe developed according to this model - there were two nodes – *profane square* in front of the

castle, and *sacramental square* – in front of the church, connected by the main city street. In Serbia, this matrix of network development is mostly present in northern parts of the country, while in central and southern parts network structures developed through multiplication of nodes/points and corridors. In this case, the development of the network started with main crossroads, points where two main streets crossed. After that, number of crossroads was gradually increased, as well as the number of corridors, none of which dominated the others.

Functional networking is a result of spatial networking and they are closely related. Functional networking influenced the development of spatial networking, caused the changes of certain characteristics within spatial networks and *vice versa* - changes within spatial networking influenced the location of activities, based on the complex mutual relations.

Functional network of settlement structure can also be analyzed in number of layers in several different ways. Most commonly used one is the classification according to activities (housing, trade, enterprise, sport-recreational functions, commerce etc). Sometimes classification is conducted according to centrality (city core, city limits area, suburbs, or it can be numerically described). However, finding optimal location conditions for certain activities sometimes requires the network of attractiveness. In that case, specific segments or corridors are numerically described depending on the level of attractiveness.

Functional relations networking was the subject of theorists researching cities and regions (H. Ebenezer, C. Alexander). In his theoretical model of garden city, Ebenezer observed the system of networks connecting satellite garden settlements with the center of the city, while Alexander recognized the urban system as number of functional networks that are cross-related. Studying the courses of network functional development, he concluded that networks became more complex in term of functionality. In fact, due to large number of elements, classes of elements and relations, a great number of combinations emerge. Observed in specific spatial areas and combined with spatial-corridor structures, they

provide even larger number of complex structures. Diversity of phenomena within network structures is 'endless', so it is necessary to define different approaches for their identification. There are four basic approaches in defining their structure: formal, analytical, quantitatively-structural and value-measurable approach.

Consequently, the main reason for constructing network structures is identifying and anticipating development courses of urban structures. Establishing urban networks allow to perceive possible network strategies of urban development, to select directions of the activities adequately, as well as to implement them within the planning documentation.

Formalizing network systems – urban network structures

Basic elements of network structures are nodes (points on which relations cross between themselves), relations (defining the relation between elements inside the network) and flows (time-spatial corridors). As a basic networking module, point/node has several different visible forms. In terms of spatial recognition, it can be identified as line, matrix or zone. As a subject framework, it can relate to region, city, settlement, city zone, block, quarter, lot or open public city space. On the level of problem identification, it can consist of different layers: communication, organization, production, formalization. Relations also consist of types and shapes. According to the direction of development, they can be pointed in single/double/multiple directions and according to their characteristics they can be connected and dependent. Additionally, their content defines them as functional, physical, logical and visual.

Network structure directions could have different functions. They can present flows (of users, merchandise, vehicles, energy and information), time-spatial changes or frameworks through which we monitor inter-dependence between points and relations.

Model options for development of cities and settlements - trajectory principles

Model options for urban development according to the trajectory principles are urban

planning tools used to test suggested solutions and to make implementation of the plan easier. The advantage of network strategies provides great possibilities for development strategies by combining various relations between different numbers of layers and levels of urban components. During the formulation of development strategies, which are directed towards feasible planning solutions, we should start from the following presumptions – level of network content is changeable, spatial level is adoptable and physical forms must have a high level of diversity.

Development is possible through several types of activities by:

- activating all the resources and potentials at the same time (resulting in continual uniformed development of the area);
- activating single segments (most attractive locations or directions, resulting in sudden development of specific points which will have further effect on development of local areas);
- activating all the potentials but with different intensity (resulting in development which is continual but not uniformed and preventing the development of contact areas from previous case).

Therefore, we can recognize several possible development models for settlements and cities:

- activation of the most attractive points as the very core of the changes;
- activation of the specific nodes that have substantial spatial possibilities – others being activated only after previous are fully completed;
- alteration of the content within nodes according to the principles of previous state;
- relocation of content in order to concentrate on specific points and/or complex linear structures which should spread their influence across the neighborhood areas.

Application of network systems in city planning in Serbia

Network systems were applied within the framework of comprehensive and spatial planning on the territory of Serbia, facing the unpredictable demands of unstable political, social and economic environment. In order to respond to different requests of various users,

a realistic and implementation-friendly documentation was needed. Therefore, its flexibility and adjustability were underlined as much as possible.

Resources and potentials of the cities were measured on three different levels: regional level of development, city level and inter-city level (urban modules level). On each of these levels, the procedure of territorial resource development was conducted in three basic steps:

1. identification of the resources and their inclusion into the network system;
2. spatial-physical territorial analysis (identifying territorial resources and capacities);
3. definition of the resource-planning conditions based on their values and possible expenditure of capacities.

Territorial resource development was conducted for lines (mostly streets or infrastructural corridors), nodes/points (crossroads, open space, parks and squares) and areas (quarters and blocks).

The future course of development was planned considering:

- rental value networks - connecting elements of similar or same value levels, in order to maximize additional values in the present moment;
- balanced-effective networks - based on input/output review of certain elements/segments, keeping the network development in balance ('positive development');
- capacity networks - established for minimal, optimal and maximal capacities across points and lines.

Development was observed through benefits, segment related varying benefits and the change of pace between specific elements. This methodology has been applied on master plans and plans of regulation in a few cities, towns and villages in Serbia. The municipalities have used it as an advanced tool for the urbanization process in the uncertain period of transition. Each city was perceived as a complex system of crossed network structures (mainly as a result of physical and functional matrices), through multiple layers

EXAMPLE A. Kragujevac, Serbia (~ 150.000 inhabitants)



Fig. 1. Network of the regional development

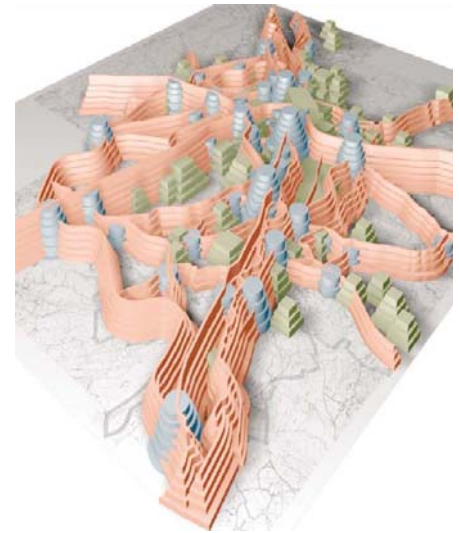


Fig. 3. Evaluation of lines/corridors and nodes/points



Fig. 2. Value hierarchy of urban nodes

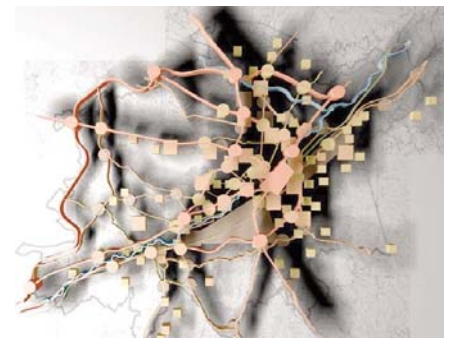


Fig. 4. Urban network - value trajectories



Figure 5. Land value - urban zones

EXAMPLE B. Kostolac, Serbia (~15.000 inhabitants)



Fig. 6. Directing the further development - evaluation of the main arteries/corridors (1st, 2nd and 3rd rank lines)

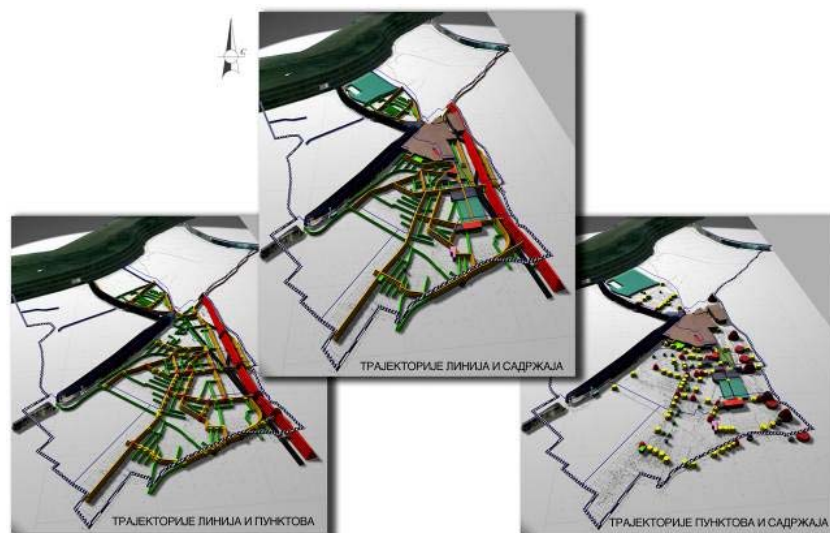


Fig. 7. The synthesis of selected lines, nodes and areas (physical and functional)

and different aspects. The transformation of the urban pattern was also considered and these matrices became the part of network structures. The most attractive parts of the city (main streets, open spaces, parks, main junctions, markets, commercial areas) were 'transposed' into the lines and nodes of the network. They were considered separately and/or combined with each other. At the intersections of these lines and nodes, we got the most attractive

places. The lots on these sites could be twice or triple expensive than on other sites in the city.

Planning based upon this method includes some additional variables and provides guidelines that are more precise. All of them could facilitate decision-making process as well as enhance the dynamic of implementation. However, so far mainly some

regional centers and smaller towns have used these models, while the development of Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, still presents a mixture of ambitious strategies, political rhetoric and precisely targeted actions.

Solving the urban puzzle?

Driven by the power of capital, guided by the global trends and limited by the inherited problems, Belgrade has started the imposed

competition - setting up the vital connections, filling the blanks caused by the years of negligence and promoting its forgotten identity. Simultaneously, our capital activated its own experimental tissue - New Belgrade - the part of the city which represents an icon of the Modern movement and a unique legacy of the post-war Yugoslav society.

Since 2001, the macro blocks of New Belgrade have suddenly become a place of accelerating economic bloom. Stimulated by the flows of globalization, this area has commenced its new building cycle and most of its major disadvantages suddenly turned out to be its new competitive advantages. Consequently, the low index of the built up areas has been recognized as a possibility for the future large

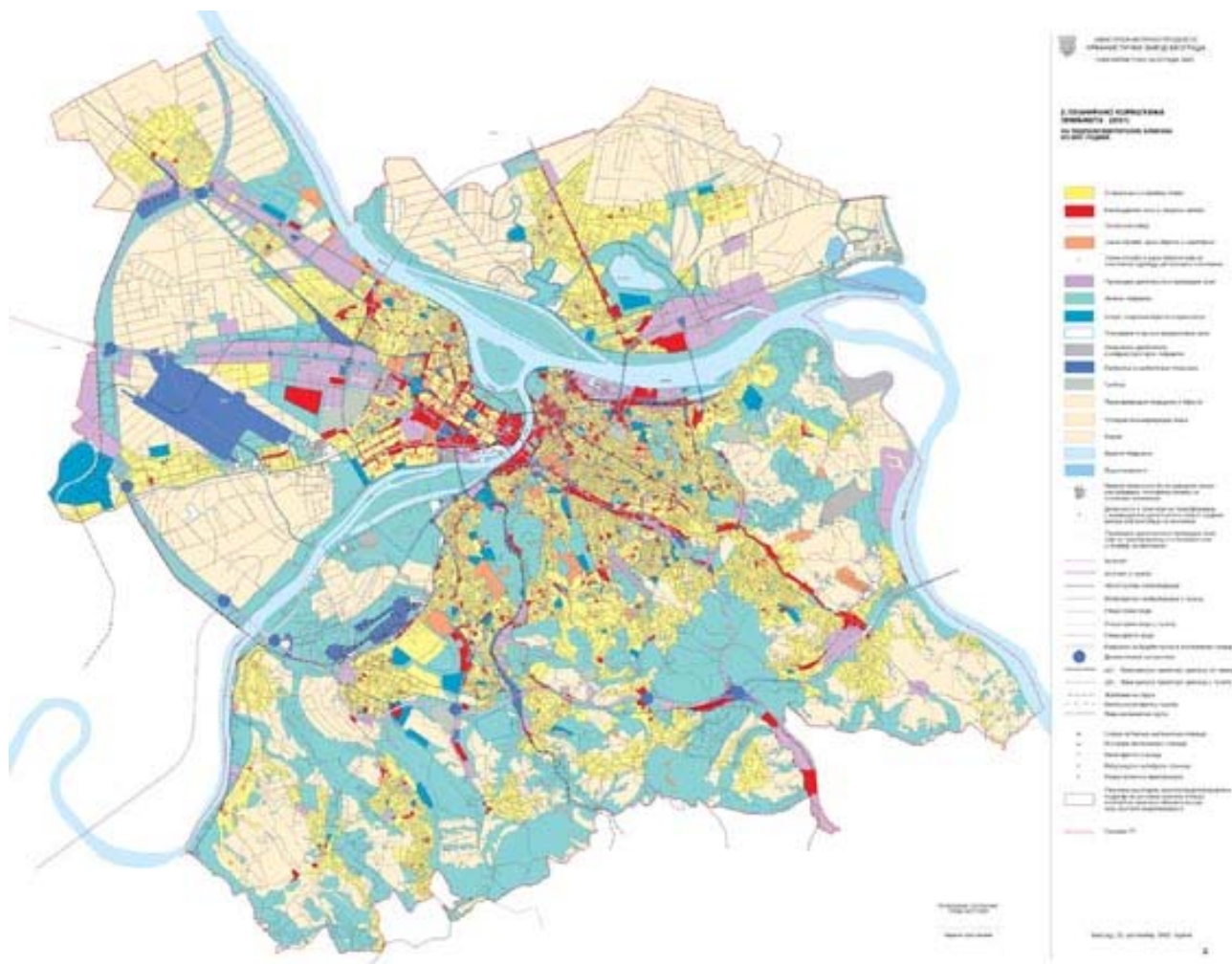
development projects, while the good traffic connections, accessibility and infrastructure have become a necessary backup for the new activities.

Following the importance of regional recognition, competition and urban needs of the contemporary users, the new Master plan of Belgrade (2003) also defined a more attractive role for New Belgrade, emphasizing its regional potential for the business activities and launching this area as a new hub, able to respond to the numerous requirements imposed by the process of global integration. According to the plan, the central zone of New Belgrade should be considered as an area with the highest potential for commercial activities, steadily evolving into the strong business,

administrative and cultural regional center. The blocks around the future railway station and the Belgrade Arena are planned to be exclusively commercial, without housing, which is the result of their attractive location.

The zone between the river Sava, the railway and the natural plateau of Bezanija, as an independent urban segment of New Belgrade, should also redefine its identity and utilize its connections with the central zone. Therefore, the main idea of the plan is to create a linear center along one of the main boulevards, which would stimulate a further development of this mainly residential area. Additionally, it is necessary to activate a number of micro-centers along the river Sava, remove the existing industrial complex and replace the old

Fig. 8. The master plan of Belgrade (2003) - position of New Belgrade and planned land use (http://www.beograd.org.yu/documents/plan2021/02_plan_namene.jpg)



shipyard with more attractive central activities - adjusted to the needs of future users and suitable for the preferred 'global image' of New Belgrade.

The special role should be given to the area of the old Expo pavilions. Although in close proximity to the central zone and river, it has to be transformed in accordance with its historical importance (it was used as a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War) and therefore protected as a cultural heritage, with appropriate cultural, commercial and public spaces.

Today, New Belgrade is a huge building site which attracts investors from all over the world. Companies from England, France, Austria, the Netherlands, Israel, Greece and Slovenia have been investing there, implementing the ideas of the Master plan which should bring more than a million square meters of new office space. Furthermore, New Belgrade, with more than 230.000 inhabitants, represents one of the most developed municipalities in Belgrade. The number of employed people has grown from 53.000 to 63.000, while the average salary is the highest in Belgrade and the second highest in Serbia.

The area around the Belgrade Arena gradually becomes the Serbian replica of the Wall Street, concentrating the famous European banks. At the same time, the monumental offices of international and local companies have been shaping the new urban scenery which is no longer an allegeable metaphor of socialism but an evolving picture of capitalism.

Recognized as the future business center of the South-eastern Europe, New Belgrade has been orientating itself towards new clientele, changing its 'urban menu' to the needs of the global techno-business elite. Currently, there are several sites under construction and their future purpose and shape reveal the logic, aesthetic and concept already applied in numerous cities which were preparing themselves for the global initiation and recognition. Therefore, Belgrade, as one of the announced European 'capitals of the future', is using all the benefits of New Belgrade area,

preparing the fertile ground for its further expansion.

All projects situated in the zone of New Belgrade are introducing new investments, promoting the growth and quality of the primary property market in Belgrade. At the same time, they are creating a new kind of space - from the western grade office buildings to the multipurpose leisure facilities, adjusted to local and international environmental, health and safety standards and requirements. Therefore, their presence is certainly raising the quality of life, offering various environmental opportunities and upgrading the micro and macro area. Simultaneously, the new activities are also playing a role of urban magnets, which should draw the elite consumers and create a fashionable image of this former socialist architectural monument. However, the numerous stimulations are still insufficient to transform the whole area - some parts of New Belgrade remained beyond the reach of globalization flows and they follow their own, almost suburban, rhythm.

Hopefully, there will be enough time for thorough analysis and corrections which will shape New Belgrade into a forward-looking modern city.

CONCLUSION

Living in the several coexisting realms is not a matter of imagination anymore. The conventional understanding of the city has been radically transformed and its topography nowadays represents a multidimensional image of limitless networks, ambiguous nodes and overlapping scales. The patterns of urban activities, as well as numerous functional relations have become pluralistic, complex and diverse, reflecting the contemporary society and its dynamic. Therefore, entangled spaces of the contemporary city could be perceived as vivid patchworks and/or unpredictable matrixes, revealing the collection of activities more or less autonomous from spatial units and traditional material structures.

Consequently, the reinforced symbioses between tangible scenery and invisible flows

channels the next phase of the urban (r)evolution - widening the urban horizon, upgrading the electronic interaction and creating the thrilling images of absolute utilization. Obviously, the future city could/should be an ever-changing chimera, the kaleidoscope of experiences and, finally, the powerful combination of various stimuli.

Are we prepared to face a new kind of reality?

Bibliography

- Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Batten, D. (1995) "Network cities: creative urban agglomerations for the 21st century", *Urban Studies*, No. 32(2), pp. 313-327
- Batty M. (1982) *Urban Modeling Algorithms, Calibrations, Predictions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Boyer, C. M. (1995) *The City of Collective Memory*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Castells, M. (1998) *The Rise of the Network Society*, Malden, MA: Blackwell
- Crecine J.P. (1986) *A Dynamic of Urban Structure*, St. Monica: The Rand Corporation
- Forrester J.W. (1976) *Urban Dynamics*, Cambridge: MIT Press
- Friedmann, J. (1986) The world city hypothesis. *Development and change*, No. 17, pp. 69-83
- Graham, S. and S. Marvin (1996), *Telecommunication and the City: Electronic Spaces, Urban Places*, London: Routledge
- Mollenkopf, J. (1993) *Urban Nodes in The Global System*, New York, NY: Social Science Research Council
- Ralevic M., ed. (2004) *Kragujevac – the Center of the Sumadia Region*, Beograd: Urbanologija AF (in Serbian)
- Sudjic, D. (1993) *The 100 Mile City*, San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace & Company
- Taylor, P. (2004) *World City Network: A Global Urban Analysis*. London: Routledge
- Thrift, Nigel (1997) "Cities without modernity, cities without magic", *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, No. 113, pp. 138-149
- <http://www.beograd.org.yu/documents/plan2021>