"Urban Feudalism" of New Belgrade: The Case of Belville Housing Block

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Failure of the socialist city

In 1986, Henri Lefebvre, together with two French architects, Serge Renaudie and Pierre Guilbaud, submitted a proposal to the "International Competition for the New Belgrade Urban Structure Improvement."[1] In the accompanying text, Lefebvre argued that New Belgrade failed to realize the idea of the "Socialist City," in spite of his high expectations and earlier hopes that Yugoslavia was one of the few countries able to concretely pose the problem of a "New Urban" due to its social system of workers' self-management. The main argument Lefebvre found for such failure in New Belgrade's zoning was that it was based on conceptual and morphological schemes that were bound to be unsuccessful, both in social and urban terms. He stated that the decision to "authoritatively separate, disjoint, and disarticulate" the parts of a city would eventually kill it, as could be expected with any other "complex living organism."[2] New Belgrade thus never truly became a structurally complex, functional, modern city, in spite of its attempts to grow, even whilst acknowledging and adapting its specific socialist context to the guidelines laid down by CIAM and Le Corbusier's *La Charte d'Athènes*.

After World War II, Yugoslavia needed to build a new capital without any symbolic or physical connection to the previous monarchic regime and its hegemony. The initial concept behind the building of the capital city on the completely unpopulated space on the left river-bank of the Sava, which was actually a swamp, was therefore a logical choice. The space was ideal for the inscription of new social projections and ideological constructs, as well as for the homogenization of all layers of society that volunteered in the huge enterprise of building New Belgrade; and all in an atmosphere of brotherhood and unity that was the first constitutive concept of the Socialist Yugoslavia. The idea of a new society had to be materialized in the form of new urban structures, with the architectural shapes of the socialist city thus constituting a new administrative, economic, and cultural capital for the new country.[3]

The first post-World War II public competition, announced in late 1946, had as its main goal the development of the administrative axis of the capital city in the form of two main buildings: the Palace of Federation and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Moreover, the competition requested an accompanying urban plan for New Belgrade. The given "blueprint" that had to be considered, was the so-called "Sketch for the regulation of Belgrade on the left bank of the river Sava," already designed by modernist architect Nikola Dobrović in 1946, and grounded on a radial plan for the administrative part of the capital city. Many of the competing architects, however, rejected the radial plan, and so an orthogonal urban structure, the so-called "Cross of Belgrade," was adopted. Forty years later, in 1986, the architect Bogdan Bogdanović, as a member of the jury of another international competition, was asked whether the choice of adopting an orthogonal structure in New Belgrade had been the right one considering its huge influence on Belgrade's development as a whole, perhaps leading to the failure in urban complexity noted by Lefebvre. For Bogdanović, the one important argument in favor of the radial scheme was that "the town would open itself to the water far more by the potential riverside boulevards."[4]

Yet even by the 1950s, for both political and economic reasons, the entire concept of constructing an administrative center for the socialist country was abandoned, and in the next two decades housing blocks, or the architecture of the "existential minimum" prevailed.[5] The "Socialist City," as exemplified in the case of New Belgrade, did not necessarily imply social housing, though most cities that could be designated as such eventually developed into big (suburban) settlements, with blocks

1   The competition was announced by the Assembly of the City of Belgrade and the Commune of New Belgrade in cooperation with the Association of Belgrade Architects (DAB) and sponsored by the International Union of Architects (UIA).
2   Serge Renaudie, Pierre Guilbaud and Henri Lefebvre, "International Competition for the New Belgrade Urban Structure Improvement, Competition Report," (1986) in *Autogestion, or Henri Lefebvre in New Belgrade,* ed. Urban Subjects (Sabine Bitter, Jeff Derksen and Helmut Weber) (Berlin: Sternberg Press), 4.

3   This concept was best elaborated by architecture theorist Ljiljana Blagojević. See Ljiljana Blagojević, *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam* (Belgrade: Zavod za udzbenike, 2007).
4   Bogdan Bogdanović, "The Future of New Belgrade," *Arhitektura Urbanizam* (Architecture Urbanism), (1986), 3–4.
5   Ljiljana Blagojević's term. See Blagojević, *op. cit.*

of skyscrapers that were often perceived similarly to dormitories, and suffering from a lack of public space and facilities where local communities and neighbors could congregate. One aspect of the failure of New Belgrade to develop into a complex multifunctional urban structure, was the fact that a key central space in the capital city—the fully developed, and then deserted, administrative center—remained an economic, social, and, ultimately, a spatial void. Once the city structure became mono-functional, with the sole function being that of housing, it was inevitable that "the separation and isolation of normally linked activities engenders a sclerosis of each element, and the functionalism of the whole."[6] New Belgrade thus never managed to fulfil either the physical or the symbolic space envisioned by the "socialist society of workers' self-management."

Bogdan Bogdanović had also warned in 1986 that the problem of conquering the spatial voids in New Belgrade should be carefully and methodically addressed, arguing that "further extensive abuse of unbuilt spaces would be not only wrong but also socially immoral."[7] In fact, New Belgrade, if not the whole social space of Yugoslavia, was soon enough to be drastically changed by Slobodan Milošević's series of public rallies, called "gatherings of people," that marked the process of his so-called "anti-bureaucratic revolution." The largest of these, called "The Meeting of Brotherhood and Unity," was held on November 19, 1988 in Ušće Park in New Belgrade where almost one million people gathered to express support for Milošević's leadership and his overtly nationalistic politics. Symbolically, this put an end to the very constitutive concept of the brotherhood and unity that Tito had cherished and also, in the eyes of many Serbs, symbolically put Milošević in Tito's place.

The change of the social system in housing policy

Let us now consider how the social system of workers' self-management functioned in the area of social housing, in order to better understand the drastic changes that were about to happen with the process of specific "privatization" that Milošević introduced.

The housing policy implemented by the new socialist regime when the building of New Belgrade started in 1948, differed from both the private model of Western countries and the state model of the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc, as it reflected the social conditions of the specific type of "social ownership" of the means of production. The basic premise of the social system of workers self-management was that the apartment is held in common public good, as with all other infrastructure, and it should be subject to distributive justice according to the needs of workers. The specificity of the housing function followed the ideological premise that a place of residence in socialism is not only a commodity, but that it is defined by its use value. In theory, the right for such common good in social ownership, and therefore a right to have a residence, was universal and basic for all subjects within the social system.[8] Legally, it meant that the right to residence was a basic right that provided working people with one of the elementary conditions of living. The distribution of socially owned
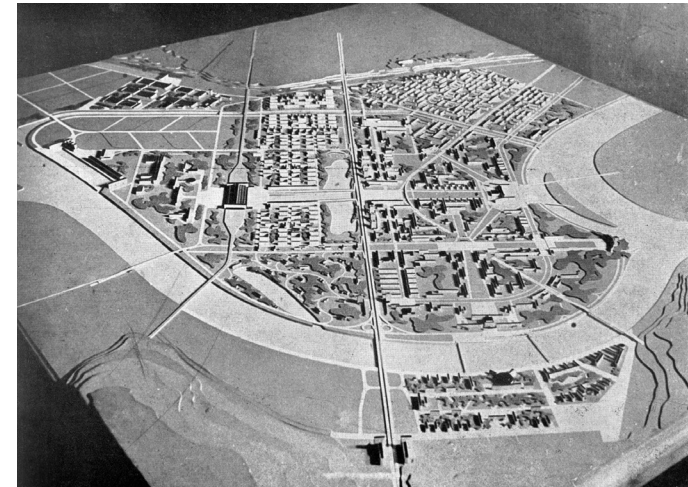
Edvard Ravnikar, *Plan for New Belgrade*, competition entry, 1947.

8   The term "subject" refers to the social group called "working people" that were part of the self-management system in Yugoslavia, "citizen" was the term used for the "remaining" social groups almost out of the system of self-management. But in today's language it is clear that "subject" means "citizen."

6   Renaudie et al, *op. cit.*, 4.
7   Bogdanović, *op. cit.*, 3-4.

apartments would thus serve the ideal of free accommodation for all, organized within the basic socio-spatial administrative units of the self-management system in relation to the place of work of the socialist subjects. The state therefore had a primary role in providing housing for citizens—a difficult task after the destruction and displacement wrought by World War II. The principle of distribution was, in theory, following the ideal of social justice, based on the needs of workers in different spheres of society; in practice, however, it was often abused and corrupted.[9]

Across Yugoslavia in the period after Tito's death in 1980, the position of the working person as a basic pillar of the socialist system was slowly transformed through the classification of workers based on ethnicity. The culmination of this transformation could be seen in the large-scale protests and strikes by factory workers in the Rakovica area of Belgrade on October 4, 1988; strikes that only ended when Milošević convinced them that ethnicity comes first, with the effect that the rebellious workers suddenly became obedient Serbs. This transformation was followed, through the introduction of the Law on Housing in 1992, by the privatization of socially-owned residences in Serbia, leading to the privatization of approximately 95% of public-owned housing stock in Belgrade by 1993. The price of such privatized units was rather symbolic: twenty-five to fifty Euros per square metre. The severe economic crisis, along with negligible transformations across policy sectors, plus the withdrawal of the state from providing housing and the lack of a housing policy under Milošević's regime, led to a considerable fall in overall housing investment and production as compared with the socialist period. With no possibility of solving the housing issue for almost 90% of those in need, forms of self-help, such as illegal construction, were both developed and adopted.[10]

9   Ljiljana Blagojević, "Strategije modernizma u planiranju I projek-tovanju urbane strukutre I arhitekture Novog Beograda: period konceptualne faze od 1922 do 1962," PhD diss (Belgrade: University of Belgrade, 2004), 93–95.
10   Gorana Stjepanovic, "Sustainability of artificially created social mix in capitals of Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina," (paper presented at ENHR 09 PRAGUE: Changing Housing Markets: Integration and Segmentation, 28.6.–1.7.2009). www.soc.cas.cz/download/912/paper_stjepanovic_W16.pdf Accessed March 15, 2012.
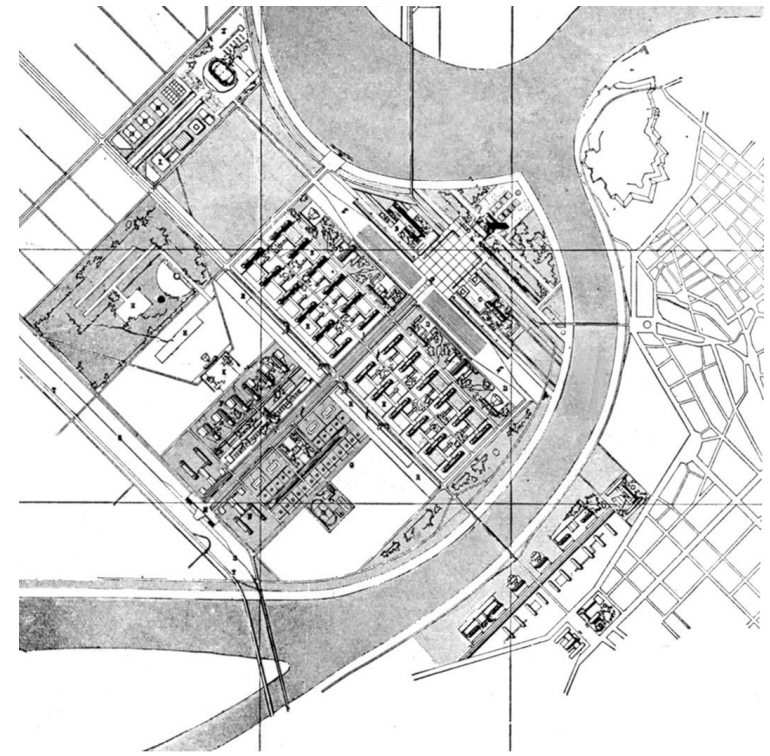
Nikola Dobrovic, *Model plan for New Belgrade*, 1948.

Throughout the 1990s, the master plan for urbanizing Belgrade, which had survived from the socialist era, was ignored, and urban change was characterized by illegal building, negligence, and destruction. The main attribute of the authoritarian system was the uncontrolled "grey economy," starting at the top of the state hierarchy and ending with "smuggling" and the sale of basic goods on the streets.

Mlađan Dinkić has described the entire system of economic flows in Serbia in the 1990s with the very precise term: "economy of destruction."[11] The first step was the "robbery of the people," perpetrated by several "projects" such as the "Loan for the Serbian Industrial Renaissance" in 1989, the induced hyperinflation of 1993, and flourishing ponzi schemes in the form of "wild banks" which offered citizens monthly

11   See Mladjan Dinkić, *Ekonomija destrukcije, velika pljacka naroda* (*The Economics of Destruction, The Great Plundering of the People*) (Belgrade: Stubovi kulture, 1996).

interest rates as high as 30%. The dramatic hyperinflation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was inevitable in view of the specific social circumstances. The most important precondition for its occurrence was the complete monopoly over political and economic power exercised by a small oligarchy led by an authoritarian ruler, whose acts were beyond the control of the state or its institutions. This is the period in which most of the billionaires in the Serbia of today acquired their capital while doing business under the patronage and support of Milošević.

Political and socio-spatial changes after 2000

After the political changes of 2000 that ended the reign of Slobodan Milošević, the earlier failure to realize the concept of full urbanization in New Belgrade made the city newly inscribable in terms of both urban structures and social paradigms. In this new context of rapid social and urban transformations, the main driving forces that started to shape both the social and physical space of New Belgrade were neo-liberal "predatory" capitalism and aggressive Orthodox Christianity. What we have witnessed is the particular socio-spatial development that could be termed "urban feudalism," in that two major companies and the two personalities behind them are privatizing and shaping most of the space in the municipality of New Belgrade, each according to their needs. Serbian social space is thus being produced in a particular symbiosis of business and politics, where politics is, more and more, a mere tool in the service of profit for big "urban feudalists" in which "unofficial" support is provided for the setting up of monopoly companies and controlled media.

Summing up the whole process of social transformation (or "transition" as it has often been called in post-socialist countries), we could argue that the whole social system in Serbia still remains proto-democratic. The authoritarian basis of the system has remained, and building democracy, with only a vague idea of what this term really means, is not working. The features of such a system, or the lack of a system, are seen in the use of old authoritarian power-mechanisms such as non-transparency in the sphere of decision making, solely top-down communication of political power structures, the exclusion of citizens in decision-making processes, the abuse of state and public functions for financial gain, and corruption in all spheres of society—

particularly in privatization processes with its accompanying "money laundry."[12]

There are two main effects of such drastic productions of social space, and they are clearly evident in New Belgrade, as it faces rapid urban restructuring. On one side, there is a problem of a loss of public space: space that was never fully developed in New Belgrade in the first place, where all the empty lots are now quickly filled by big supermarkets, shopping malls, business spaces, or Orthodox churches. On the other side, the new segregation—both in terms of gentrification and ghettoization, which is driven mostly by economic, social, and even racial distinctions—has created new luxurious blocks for yuppies, but also new shanty-towns. Particularly important are the difficult questions facing urban areas with marginalized social groups including refugees, Roma people, or the Chinese community that are now not accepted in certain blocks in New Belgrade.

Regarding the issue of social housing, the official policy is also reflected in the apologetic texts of certain urban scholars. A particularly good example is a paper by Professor Vladimir Macura and Zlata Vuksanović of the Town Planning Institute of Belgrade, on the "New Approach to Social and Functional Mix in Housing of Belgrade After 2000," in which they claim that after the political changes in 2000, social housing issues were present for the first time in certain city documents.[13] All the mentioned legislations, according to Macura and Vuksanović, are setting new standards and providing better conditions for future building work in what they call "Stage One of the Project," as if the whole system in this area has to be conceived from scratch and didn't

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12   See the analysis of Zagorka Golubović in *Pouke i dileme minulog veka: filozofsko-antropoloska razmisljanja o glavnim idejama nasegvremena* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić, 2006), 239.

13   They give examples of The New Master Plan of Belgrade until 2021 (2003), the Program Concept for Building 5,000 Units (2003), the Guideline on Design of Social Housing (2004), the Planning Documents for the First Four Sites for about 800 Units (2003/2004), and the Architectural Competition for Social Housing (2003). Vladimir Macura and Zlata Vuksanovic, "New approach to social and functional mix in housing of Belgrade after 2000," (paper presented at UNECE—Conference Vienna, 28-30 November 2004). http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/prgm/hmm/social%20housing/UNECE_Report_FIN.pdf Accessed March 15, 2012.

exist in the socialist period. These documents, according to the authors, give clear definitions regarding who the disadvantaged groups of persons are, and explain that social housing is a type of housing owned and funded by local authorities exactly to meet the needs of such social groups.[14] Finally, they give evidence of the "comprehensive programs" designed to ensure inclusion of these groups in society, matters also developed in legislation. This programmatic text appears as if it was commissioned by authorities to prove the statement that "social and functional mix in Belgrade housing areas provides social cohesion, integration, and de-ghettoization."[15] In the social practice we are witnessing in Serbia, exactly the opposite is happening!

New ways of "rebuilding" New Belgrade

A good case study for the analysis of the way new social space in New Belgrade is being produced through homogenization and segregation is the housing block called Belville that was built by the Delta Holding Company on the occasion of the World University Games in 2009 and the adjacent new settlement of Roma people who were partly removed by city officials. The company is owned by one of the two leading "urban feudalists," Miroslav Mišković, who first appeared on Forbes list of The World's Billionaires in 2007, ranking 891st place.[16] For this project, one of the branches of the Delta Holding Company, Delta Real Estate, together with HypoAlpe Adria Bank, formed a new company, Blok 67 Associates d.o.o. which was put in charge of building the Olympic village for the students.

When the Games were finished, the apartments were polished a bit and prepared for sales that started on July 2, 2008 when the price was set at €1998 per square meter. The wave of the global economic crisis that started spreading around this time had a drastic effect on the real estate market in Serbia. On July 6, 2010, according to the newspaper *Blic*, there were still 380 unsold apartments in Belville and the prices were not dropping in spite of the fact that the real estate market had collapsed and the selling

ratio of apartments decreased by 50% or more.[17] Corporations like Delta didn't want to reduce the prices of apartments as this was "house policy," so the Belville settlement prices were among the most expensive in New Belgrade not including the luxurious blocks around the sport hall to which the yuppies were moving. Finally, in 2011, when the real estate market had collapsed, the prices of apartments in Belville were reduced to €1800 in a PR campaign of "promotional actions."

Such housing is worth comparing with similar schemes elsewhere. Describing the Olympic Village built for the 2012 Olympic Games in London, Jeremy Hunt, the British Culture Secretary, stated the following: "The Olympic Village looks fantastic and you can just imagine the energy it will have when 17,000 athletes and staff move in here next summer for the Olympic Games. But what is most important is that it will be a real legacy from London's Games, by providing affordable and private housing after 2012."[18] The Serbian political counterparts don't even bother to state such propaganda, they just follow the "instructions" of the Delta Company and their "house policy" to preserve the stable real estate business in a period of crisis which is affecting the personal interests of them all.

Politics in action

"No one can stand in the way of the development of Belgrade" said Vladan Đukić, secretary of the Belgrade Secretariat for Social Welfare, in charge of the removal of the Gazela settlement of Roma; thus clearly showing how the officials will implement the "plan" of social cohesion, integration and de-ghettoization previously mentioned.[19] Amnesty International has duly recorded and documented the process that started on the eve of the World University Games in Belgrade when, on April 3, 2009, more than 250 Roma from Block 67 in New Belgrade were removed by force with the obvious aim of the "embellishment" of

14   *Ibid.*
15   *Ibid.*
16   www.forbes.com/lists/2007/10/07billionaires_Miroslav-Miskovic_
      CVDZ.html Accessed March 15, 2012.

17   www.blic.rs/Vesti/Beograd/197037/Kvadrat-drzi-cenu-iako
      -nema-kupaca Accessed March 15, 2012.
18   Laurie Hanna, "London 2012: 2,000 Olympic Village flats completed,"
      The Daily Mirror, November 25, 2011.
19   Amnesty International, Serbia, "Stop the forced evictions of Roma
      Settlement," June 2010. www.amnesty.org/en/library/info
      /EUR70/003/2010/en Accessed March 15, 2012.

the environment for the student athletes of the world. The families were relocated to containers in suburbs of Belgrade where hostile neighbors wanted to burn down their new homes. The reason for such aggression was not solely seen in the racist attitude of the "old" inhabitants of these settlements, but moreover in their fear that the market value of their own property might drop with the placement of undesired "neighbors." The city officials stormed the Roma settlement without warning, as this "action plan" was not even presented to their community beforehand.[20]

The next action took place on August 31, 2009, under the Gazela Bridge, where the police started moving another Roma settlement by force. They used trucks and bulldozers to demolish 200 Roma family homes. The Roma had no time to protect their belongings, which were mostly destroyed without any compensation. 114 families were taken by bus to six different locations on the outskirts of Belgrade. The remaining sixty-four families were taken to the south of Serbia. The settlement was destroyed before the work on repairing the worn out bridge, one of the capital infrastructure investments for Belgrade, had started.[21]

The Secretary, Đukić, claimed in February 2010 that there would be no removal of Belville settlement, arguing that the inspectors just needed to check if the dwellers were paying for electricity and water, like all other Belgrade citizens. In a separate contract with Belgrade in March 2010, the EBRD (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) provided a budget to build a new bridge over the river Sava, to be financed together with EIB (European Investment Bank) support. The final consequence was that the Deputy Mayor had to announce that 300 families living in Belville, alongside a few other Roma settlements in vicinity, would be removed by April-May 2010.[22]

The time-frame in which all these "political actions" were taking place was exactly overlapping with Serbia's presidency (that started on July 1, 2008) of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-15. The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self-Government claimed that

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20   *Ibid.*
21   *Ibid.*
22   *Ibid.*

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solving housing problems was one of the top four priorities for the government and promised legalization and improvement of Roma settlements. While the government was working on this agenda, the Belgrade authorities removed, by force, the families in Gazela and Belville settlements and ghettoized them in the new "container cities" as the "epitome" of the "new policy in social housing." The government didn't react at all.[23]

Initiative for spatial justice

Just before the beginning of the World University Games, the city authorities decided to put a fence around the Roma settlement in Block 67. This action triggered a series of protests and an online petition by Other Scene—a platform of Belgrade's independent artists, activists, and cultural producers—that pointed towards the ruthless demolition of forty Roma houses in the area a few months before the Games had started. The public protest had resulted in a newly-developed strategy by officials: to put a wire fence around the remaining Roma settlements, to limit the movement of inhabitants and to cover the area up and hide it behind the huge billboards of the Games. The petition was clearly revealing the policy of corruption on the one hand, and racism and ghettoization of citizens on the other.

The protests led to joint actions of solidarity in support of the Roma communities of Block 67 across New Belgrade. A major artist-activist action was organized on May 27, 2009 under the name "Right to have a home" by various NGOs such as Women in Black, the Democratic Association of Roma, the Roma Association Oasis, Biro Beograd and Kontekst Collective. The organizers appealed to all citizens to "join this solidarity action and show their willingness to state that the human rights of all people are equally important and that the defence of these rights is our responsibility as citizens."[24]

The following statement triggered a strong reaction:

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23   See the analysis of Vladan Jeremić and Rena Rädle, "Antiziganism and Class Racism in Europe" www.octogon.hu/in+english+1/antiziganism+and+class+racism+in+europe+by+vladan+jeremic+and+rena+r%C3%A4dle+1.html Accessed March 15, 2012.
24   Petition against fencing Roma settlements in Block 67 in Belgrade, November 7, 2009. www.petitiononline.com/01101102/petition.html Accessed March 15, 2012.

What we have in common is that we do care about each other—it is our human, cultural and political choice—in contrast to the government of Belgrade and Serbia that takes care exclusively about themselves, their interests and the interests of the big capital. We promote a positive image of Serbia showing the anti-racist, anti-fascist and intercultural face of Serbia.[25]

The response of the Mayor of Belgrade to these accusations was very typical of the neo-liberal governmental policy. He claimed that the support coming from NGOs to the Roma was just on paper and that "clapping them on their shoulders and pointing out what their rights are" would not help the Roma community. What he suggested was Roma integration through education that should start at the elementary school.[26] The city formed a working group consisting of representatives of the OSCE (the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), UNHCR, and different Ministries in charge of this question, and together they are looking for solutions. The Mayor's proposal is that NGOs should better help these people in applying for social housing as they are not aware of it and are not literate to do it themselves.[27]

These examples show the "dialectics" of interactions and "negotiations" between the repressive political apparatus and its neo-liberal rhetoric in politics, and the fragile civil society initiatives that are slowly carving a path for the more active participation of citizens in the political public sphere.

Self-management revisited in the form of self-organization?

In the turmoil of the rapid and wild urban transformations of New Belgrade, the issues that Henri Lefebvre raised when he reflected upon the idea of "new citizenship" still linger on. The main dilemma is seen in the question of how

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25 *Ibid.*
26 The irony of this political demagogy is that the Serbian educational system is at the very bottom of European lists.
27 Marija Vidić, "Bez mirne Luke u gradu na Uscu" (Interview with Dragan Dilas, Mayor of Belgrade), *Vreme*, issue 955, April 23, 2009. www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=862138 Accessed March 15, 2012.

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to find new relations between the individual, society, and the State. Lefebvre's plea for new citizenship itself relied strongly on the right to difference and self-management. He was seeking new rights for the citizen that included rights to information, free expression, culture, identity within difference (equality), self-management, city-space, and its services, among others. So what would be the answer in the system of "authoritarian democracy" in which these basic rights are difficult to exercise by "democratically invisible" people?

In the globalized twenty-first century, with its compression of temporality and spatiality, it is actually difficult to fully articulate any localism when the effects of neo-liberal capitalism and the political economy of debt and consumption are being felt in every corner of the world. Slavoj Žižek has analysed the introduction of brutal predatory capitalism in former "Eastern" communist countries after the collapse of socialism. He has argued that the hope that the social antagonisms so inherent in this system will be resolved by further development of the capitalist economy—and its political counterpart in multicultural liberal democracy—is leading us in the wrong direction. He therefore doesn't see the potential of the politics of more consistent multicultural tolerance as the way of "subverting" the "new" capitalist order. The metaphors of the "scoundrel"—or the neo-conservative proponent of the free market that rejects all forms of social solidarity as counter-productive sentimentalism—on one side, and the "fool"—or the multi-culturalist "radical" social critic that with his acts tries to undermine the state of affairs—are actually, according to Žižek, two sides of the same coin where the latter is just serving to complement the former.[28]

The question of what other strategies are left to the citizens therefore remains, and whether, for example, mass disobedience could disrupt such a constellation, as some theorists, like Costas Douzinas, would claim? He suggests that democratic resistance is the way of transforming subjects into citizens and that democratically-invisible people must perform their existence

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28 Slavoj Žižek, "Tranzicija iz Gulaga u potrosacki idiotizam," *Republika* issue 342-343, 2004. www.republika.co.rs/342-343/22.html Accessed March 15, 2012.

through resisting oppression in order to be able to resurface on the political map.[29]

Still, the strategies of "resistance" could vary in each sub-variant of the social system. One of the crucial aspects for facing economic, ethnic, or racial socio-spatial segregations, fostered by predatory capitalism or urban feudalism in today's Serbia, could be therefore seen in the potential for new types of self-organization of different social groups of citizens. In spite of the fact that New Belgrade could be seen as already "sold out" ground and partly transformed into a new consumerist and commercial image, there are still some remains of the old modernist ideas and also of the infrastructure from the socialist period such as administrative spatial units called local communities. What is required is a new understanding of the notion and the legacy of self-management and the potential of its spatial structures that remain in each block in New Belgrade, but also the exploration of "in-between spaces" and their use in the actions for achieving spatial justice. Various social groups might thus be able to form platforms that would slowly start influencing, if not changing, the harshly produced socio-spatial reality.

29   See Costas Douzinas, *Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (London: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007).

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