

HOUSING FOR THE NEW SOCIO-ECONOMIC ELITE – A CASE STUDY OF NOVI SAD

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Abstract. *This paper examines the spatial dimension of economic inequalities that occurred in Serbia over the last 2 decades. The paper presents a case study of a city of Novi Sad, which has undergone radical changes both within its social and spatial structure that even today remain unparalleled in the region in terms of their nature and rate. In the 1990s, the specific political and economic conditions have led to the great transformations in demographics and the overall social structure, since the city, formerly experiencing negative population growth rates, has been rapidly populated by refugees from the wars in former Yugoslavia. At the same time, a large gap between the poor and the wealthy was created as the result of changes that marked the transition to the post-communist society. This has caused great changes of the built form that previous master plans could not anticipate. The implications of this process for housing involved the spatial segregation of diverse socio-economic groups. The paper presents 2 urban fragments where the houses for the new economic elite were built, both of which represent inadequate models. Both cases represent monotonous environments that lack spatial complexity and not encourage community binding. Therefore the paper also includes a proposal of a new concept for the housing for the inhabitants with higher-incomes.*

Key words: *housing, spatial segregation, economic inequality, architectural typology*

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities of today, their authorities, professionals and citizens try to wrestle with the situation within considerable economic, social and environmental transformations. The issues that dominate the debate on urban change are often analyzed by researchers, practitioners and policy-makers as the consequences of social polarization, exclusion and spatial segregation. An important part in bringing about the effects of these processes is played by broad

forces of globalization, deindustrialization and economic restructuring. At the same time, their local outcomes vary significantly, depending on specific contextual factors [14]. Regardless of the status of their inhabitants, new city spaces thus created often lack coherence and identity and need to be restructured to meet the real needs of the local communities. In order to fully understand this problem and create more habitable places that would foster distinct identities, ensure community cohesion and social equity, the processes that lead to socio-spatial differentiation need to be contextualized. As the contribution to this idea, we propose a study of two urban fragments in Novi Sad, that reflect the spatial dimension of socio-economic inequalities which occurred in Serbia over the last two decades.

Since 1990s the city of Novi Sad – the second largest city in Serbia, has undergone radical changes both within its social and spatial structure that even today are unparalleled in the region in terms of their nature and rate. The process of social division between the rich and the poor is a significant part of the overall transformation that occurred as a consequence of various factors – some were caused by globalizing trends and the others came as the results of post-communist transition and the specific historical and political circumstances. Along with social polarization, there are clear signs of a spatial dimension to this process. In particular, in this paper we examine two suburban residential complexes where houses for the representatives of the new socio-economic elite were built. They are the only two elite enclaves built on the outskirts of the city, but greatly differ in terms of their legal status, urban morphology, architectural types and the quality of infrastructure. Both areas in focus illustrate spatial patterns that characterize many cities in the region – the illegally-built complexes (Tatarsko brdo) and suburban gated communities (Lipov gaj).

The detailed analysis of the selected areas is preceded by the theoretical overview and also by consideration of the specific regional and local processes that created social, economic and political embedding for their formation. The paper then tackles the question: How can these housing models facilitate future sustainable development in order to become a good starting point for social welfare gains? The general guidelines for organizing these urban fragments in socially and spatially coherent terms are proposed and then followed by the discussion on the main goal of the paper. Analysis of the chosen residential areas in wider and narrower context, as well as within the existing urban planning documentation, has a basic goal to determine whether or not these residential models for rich people should represent viewpoint of the townplanning authorities and local government in the future. In the following text recommendations for conceptualization of a new model are given taking into account available town locations, infrastructural expenses and residential preferences of elite groups. This section is followed by conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As put forward by many researches, social and spatial inequalities characterize the contemporary world and are valid at national levels, between rich and poor countries, and within each society and its social strata¹ [4]. The widening of the gap between the rich and

¹ The figures from the international organizations, including the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, show that disparities have grown strongly over the past decades, in spite of the steady rise of economic development indicators (Stern et al, 2002).

the poor can even be traced in smaller area units – at the neighbourhood and community level². There are many factors that give rise to an increasing territorial and social segregation. In urban environment it is partly the outcome of globalizing trends of deindustrialization and economic restructuring and, despite of the great differences in local history, housing markets and socio-economic contexts, certain common factors can be identified. However, there is a consensus among scholars that the processes of socio-spatial differentiation must be analyzed within national and regional framework conditions, since local cultures, traditions and mentalities, as well as specific historical circumstances may lead to different patterns of socio-spatial differentiation [16]. The different case studies indeed illustrate variations in models of socio-spatial segregations which can be traced back to the impact of national framework and regional and local factors.

The case studies of Central and Eastern European urban regions were of the greatest importance to the considerations we present in this paper. In the cities of the region questions pertaining to socio-spatial differentiation have greatly gained significance in the wake of the decline of centralized control and structural economic change due to the transformation processes in the 1990s [12]. All authors agree that the privatization of the housing stock, the gradual emergence of a housing market and increasing socio-economic differences in society have augmented socio-spatial differentiation among the residential population [13].

The poles of socio-spatial differentiation are in most cases defined by the exclusive residential locations favoured by the newly rich, on the one hand, and the illegal settlements of the marginalized groups, on the other [5]³. It is the living conditions of the poor segment of urban society in this region that particularly came into focus of the vast number of studies. The new urban poverty is interpreted as a consequence of the economic restructuring and the transition from the socialist planned economy to market economies. The spatial dimension to this problem involves the emergence of the areas that lack basic social services (e.g. education, health and police centres, etc.), household services (e.g. domiciliary provision of water, sewage, electricity, etc.) and infrastructure (e.g. road networks, public transportation, water, sewage, electric networks, etc.). At the same time, fairly homogenous communities of residents of the higher socio-economic status have been extensively built in the cities of the region. The typology includes inner-city areas with exclusive dwellings as well as different forms of secluded or gated complexes in the suburban zones that are also considered as manifestations of privatization and fragmentation [10].⁴ Studies on this type of housing can be considered as a counterpart to current research on poverty in the context of the debate on polarization [5]. This paper contributes to this idea by examining two suburban residential areas for the new economic elite in Novi Sad, firstly analyzed within the framework of the specific historical, social, economic and physical conditions that coincided in their formation.

² The concept of "the dual city" illustrates the division of cities into areas of included and excluded citizens, which is so common within the global context (Castells and Mollenkopf, 1991).

³ This particular study involved five Central and Eastern European urban regions: St. Petersburg, Budapest, Sofia, Vilnius and Leipzig. The results of the study showed some common features in selected cities, but also many specific socio-spatial patterns (Brade et al, 2009).

⁴ Gated housing complexes have increasingly emerged in recent years in Central and Eastern Europe, exhibiting considerable differences in terms of type, location, and the degree of closure (Brade et al, 2009).

3. THE CITY OF NOVI SAD – THE LOCAL CONTEXT

According to the most recent official census from 2002, Novi Sad is Serbia's second largest city, after Belgrade [15]. With its municipal population of around 371,000 inhabitants⁵ Novi Sad is the medium sized city and the capital of predominantly rural Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Besides the urban part of the city, there are 12 more settlements and 1 town in the municipal area. Some of the suburbs have grown over the years and physically merged with the city and most of them have a strong rural character and are highly dependent on the city of Novi Sad and its functions.

Novi Sad grew out of the small settlement of civilians that was built in 1694 around a rampart opposite the Petrovaradin Fortress. The settlement officially gained the present name Novi Sad (Neoplanta in Latin) in 1748 when it became a "free royal city". Very soon afterwards the city has become a prominent regional centre of different activities, especially those related to economy, culture and politics. As a consequence of the process of becoming a regional centre, the city has undergone the major changes in its urban structure. The traditional city-character representing a mixture of different architectural styles (gothic, baroque, secession, neoclassicism and modern architecture) remained in some of the oldest and centrally located areas of the city. Following the World War II new neighbourhoods with high-rise residential buildings emerged from the fields and forests surrounding the city, to foster the huge influx of people from the countryside. Urbanization of this kind, characterized by rationalization and industrialization, has been the main objective of modernization for the former Republic of Yugoslavia and a priority of the socialist state. There were no signs of social polarization during the socialist era and the coexistence of residents with different socio-economic status is still typical of the communist-era housing districts in Novi Sad.

The dramatic change of demographic, social and economic structure as well as the vast transformation of the urban landscape occurred in the 1990s following the wars on the territory of former Yugoslavia. Large complexes comprised of individual houses were built illegally on arable land on the outskirts of the city in order to accommodate war and post-war immigrants from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The pressure of new residents has not been accompanied by new economic activities, which has resulted in low growth rates of investment and employment. This has provided the context for the creation of the large gap between the low-income and high-income groups that was additionally widened by the post-communist transitional process and transformation from planned to market economy at the beginning of the 21st century.

The spatial dimension to the process of socio-economic differentiation could not be anticipated by previous master plans. Urban planning and its mechanisms could not rise up to the challenges of the new demographic status of the city. As Vockler remarked, the "informalisation of the cityscape" is a by-product of the large-scale deregulation that characterized all aspects of society at the time [19]. The illegally built areas still dominate the fringe of the city. They are characterized by loss of identity and continuity, disorganization of trafficking networks and modes, lack of infrastructure and public buildings/spaces, as well as lack of working places and many other necessary services. These suburban neighbourhoods are mainly homogenous communities of residents with lower

⁵ The estimation of the city registry dated January 2010.

social and economic status. All of that has contributed to the fact that the suburban region lost its significance as a favoured residential location for higher-income households. Contrary to many cities in the region, living in the city centre is a desirable form of housing for the city-dwellers with high income. Thus in wider town centre area locations preferred by residents with higher economic status are standing out. These areas differ in size – from one street (streets Pavle Simić and Vasa Stajić), to several urban blocks (area surrounding Jodna banja and area Mali Liman), with different residential typologies – from family row houses and detached houses, to multiple family buildings. These town parts are considered to be completed and consist of many elements of cultural and built heritage. There is no new building planned for these areas, so investments are related to revitalization of non built spaces and reconstruction of buildings with possible building extension.

Traditionally good image of the centre, infrastructural equipment, different functions and the attractiveness of urban living are still the factors that contribute to the appreciation of the inner-city home among the higher-status population in Novi Sad. However this paper examines two urban fragments that illustrate the fairly new city-to-suburb migration by the rich with an aim to establish whether their formation can be interpreted as a sign of the process that will mark the city-periphery in the future. The study of the urban fragments will include analysis, critical evaluation and systematization of existing conditions, as well as the comparison of their elements and characteristics conducted towards a better understanding of the complex relations between socio-economic and urban structure. The following suburban neighbourhoods are analyzed:

- The illegally-built settlement informally called **Tatarsko brdo** – a development built without an urban plan, unfinished and failing technical and social infrastructure, composed predominantly of exclusive houses and villas;
- Privately built gated community **Lipov gaj** – the completely new type of secluded suburban living in the city of Novi Sad.

4. THE CASE STUDY AREAS - TATARSKO BRDO AND LIPOVGA

The examination and analysis of the selected elite enclaves that represent new social and urban patterns in the local context are based on the following criteria: 1. position in the city, 2. natural assets of the site, 3. scale and regulations, 4. architectural typology, 5. street system, 6. urban morphology, 7. open public spaces for socialization, 8. public activities, 9. public buildings and services, 10. urban equipment, 11. elements of identity, 12. socio-economic status of inhabitants.

Urban fragment **Tatarsko brdo** is located in one of Novi Sad's most interesting and valuable sites. The settlement is placed on the side of Fruska Gora Mountain that overlooks the city, revealing the most beautiful vistas on the river Danube and Novi Sad. In the vicinity of Tatarsko brdo is the settlement called Sremska Kamenica and the regional hospital with a beautiful park that creates a very pleasant microclimate. Two sides of the fragment are bordered with the roads, one that connects Novi Sad via Fruska Gora Mountain with Ruma, and other is the main street that leads to the hospital.



Fig. 1 and 2 Position of Tatarsko brdo in the broader context

Tatarsko brdo occupies approximately 28 ha of the fertile land that is considered one of the most expensive and exclusive sites in the city. It was built in the beginning of the 1990s without a proper urban plan and without any infrastructure, which is partly evident even today, almost twenty years from the beginning of its construction. Urban structure of this illegally-built part of the city lacks any regulations and systematizations, which adequately represents national and local conditions after the civil war in former Yugoslavia. In the context of the sudden demographic boom, the poor illegally built their homes on less attractive sites, while at the same time the rich occupied more exclusive areas.

Tatarsko brdo consists of exclusive and expensive houses and villas. Individual houses and huge villas, as the only architectural type, were built on lots according to the wishes and needs of the owners, regardless of any urban planning regulations related to building development, number of stories, height regulation, position on the lot, etc. Architectural vocabulary is diverse and forms an ensemble with very dissimilar architectural characteristics, which can be interpreted as a result of the building process conducted by the inhabitants who arrived from different parts of the former Yugoslavia. This improvised architecture, usually created without the participation of an architect, has developed its own style that testifies to the increasing social status of the inhabitants. As Vockler remarks, this new "turbo architecture" can be found throughout the western Balkans as "a hodgepodge of styles" with the elements of "Victorian/neo-classical/oriental/American freestyle architecture" [19]. Some references to traditional and regional architecture can be found but they do not create a coherent architectural system. The majority of the houses built in this neighbourhood turned out to be too big for their actual owners and they remained unfinished until today, which is very common in similar illegally built urban areas in all the republic of former Yugoslavia.



Fig. 3 and 4 Aerial views of the parts of the fragment

Contrary to the exclusive character of the houses, streets are unfinished, without asphalt coating, infrastructure and lightening, which causes great problems during bad weather conditions. The street system is almost informal, since there is only one main direction which spreads through the whole settlement, and which is connected to dead-end streets. This kind of street system greatly complicates communication and traffic, since the dead-end streets are often greatly inclined.



Fig. 5 and 6 Single family homes

Regarding urban morphology there are no clearly defined concepts of block, square or any other urban element, apart from street. This situation greatly reduces possibilities for socialization of its residents, and due to a high density of buildings there is no chance of changing that situation. The typology of public spaces is very poor and does not include squares or any other type of urban space for socialization and integration of inhabitants. The whole public life is conducted in streets, which are of poor quality, and mostly inclined, blocking even children playing.

Due to lack of public spaces for socialization, it is clear that no public programs could have been developed in such a community. Socialization is exclusively conducted on private lots among neighbors.

The fragment also lacks public buildings, including basic social services such as nurseries and schools. There are only few shops for basic supplies and several smaller services in the vicinity.

There are no public areas with vegetation, and green areas are found only in private yards. Since the fragment was illegal for years, it is clear that there are no elements of urban equipment or mobile items.



Fig. 7 and 8 Streets without regulations and pavement.

The fragment is today mainly inhabited by the residents who gained higher socio-economic status in the 1990s mostly by developing private business firms. The fragment identity is almost exclusively related to social status of its residents. However, although huge houses and villas are preferred residential type, connotations related to this area are mainly negative due to the lack of basic infrastructural and public elements. Since the majority of the houses in Tatarsko brdo was built without the proper documentation based on the laws and regulations, nowadays owners start to legalize their properties. Along with this process city public service institutions and enterprises start to invest in building the infrastructure and other facilities, which could, at least partially, improve the position that "Tatarsko brdo" have within town as a functional system.

Lipov gaj is an exclusive gated residential area built by private investors. Its construction begun in September 2001 and has been finished in December 2002. It is built on north-south oriented elongated plot (460×112 meters) along the main access road connecting the inner city with the rural suburb of Veternik. The distance from the central area of the city and its facilities is approximately 6 kilometers and owing a private car is a necessity for the inhabitants.

The gated community is placed on the plain terrain and occupies 5.1 ha. It has only one entrance that is guarded and located on the north side leading to the main road. From the south and east it is surrounded by illegally built housing complexes inhabited by marginalized groups of the post-war immigrants, while from the west side community borders a sport centre with a football field.

Lipov gaj was built according to the formal plan which was developed after the architectural competition. The community contains 152 dwelling units in total – 78 row houses and 74 apartments in multi-family edifices. The houses range from ground floor- to three-story structures. The neighborhood contains five urban blocks – three with row houses and two comprised of detached urban villas with only 4 apartments per house. This type could be analyzed as a transitional from the individual house to a multi-family structure. The row houses have private yards of different sizes.



Fig. 9 and 10 Position of Lipov gaj in a broader context and urban organization of the fragment

The street system of this urban area is completely orthogonal, and it consists of two parallel directions along the complex edge, which are connected by short streets vertical to them. This kind of concept enables direct approach to the road of this residential unit, since every individual house has garage. The community is absolutely car-oriented, since there are no urban services or working places in the vicinity. Road connection to Novi Sad is enabled with public buses which connect suburb areas Veternik and Futog, but residents with high social status rarely use public transportation.



Fig. 11 and 12 Aerial Views of Lipov gaj

In the sense of quantity and quality of public spaces, this suburban residential complex is very poor. Because of the character of the enclave as a completely isolated and closed community, there is no form of a social activity in open spaces. However since in most cases there are no fences between the individual structures, socialization is conducted on the private lots where vegetation, children playgrounds, swimming pools and other elements are planned to enable communication and integration of residents.



Fig. 13 and 14 Open space inside the block and connection of the homes with yards.
Urban villas – transitional architectural type.

There is no form of public program structure in the enclave, and the residents fulfill all their needs in the centre of the Novi Sad. Nearby there is a big football field which is rarely used. In this way exclusive residential mono-functionality is the biggest drawbacks of the planned urban entity.

Protection of the community is high, as well as the maintenance service. Lipov gaj is equipped with all necessary modern infrastructures. Urban equipment is present in the form of public lighting and all necessary elements which should enable adequate functioning of a public space. Public vegetation in the enclave is very well cared for, since there is a service responsible for it. Each family is obliged to pay for that kind of services, as well as for the services of physical protection of the enclave.

Lipov gaj is populated by the inhabitants of higher-status, some of whom are famous politicians, businessman and public persons attracted by the fact that residential area is exclusive, guarded and well-secured. The connotations related to the residents are mainly

positive, since they live in planned, maintained and quality urban environment. The negative aspect is related to monofunctionality and position of this community, since it is almost completely isolated and dependent on the center of Novi Sad and its public, social and cultural activities.

5. POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE SELECTED AREAS : GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PLANNING DOCUMENTS

In much of the new literature on neighbourhood improvements, a principal item is how to increase the social capital of the area in focus [1]. All the possible actions should therefore be based on the principles of sustainable development and social equity with an aim of fighting exclusion and promoting community cohesion. In that sense future actions for improving the selected areas could consist of following processes:

- Transformation of the illegally built development to adequate and complete urban communities, with all necessary services;
- Introducing different programs and urban services to the residential complexes, as the way of improving the social and cultural life of inhabitants;
- Search for the possibilities of creating the spaces for social integration and urban communication in areas with single family homes;
- Search for equalization mechanisms that would transform future development into social development for all (housing, infrastructure and services), by improving urban communities with single family homes into areas with greater social and territorial equity;
- Verification of relevance, suitability and feasibility of combating inequality via reduction of urban residential segregation.

Certain number of suggested general guidelines is possible to identify in planning documents created for analyzed residential areas, although they are not explicitly stated within the plans. Future planning activities related to the enclave of Tatarsko brdo are determined by Detailed Regulation Plan of Mišeluk II in Novi Sad adopted in October 2008, which stipulates retaining of most illegally built buildings and traffic network. As the most important part of the new concept in the plan are emphasized residential complexes of individual and multiple family living, which would make groups of at least three buildings and arranged communal unbuilt areas. The possibility of fencing with transparent fences is stipulated, which would make this model closer according to its characteristics to residential area Lipov gaj.

New contents are planned as well: multi-family living of medium density with three story buildings, two children institutions, elementary school, retirement home, business (tertiary activities), cultural and administrative center, Orthodox church, market place, green market, etc. Capacity of non residential facilities is planned in accordance with the planned number of residents, which are approximately 6000. This strategy is in compliance with the vision for enlargement of Novi Sad in the areas on the right bank of River Danube, which was a part of the General Urban Plans since 1950s. This idea, however, so far has not been significantly realized especially not based on planning documents. The illegal family residential buildings have been built, but new non residential facilities have not been realized, and thus the investment in the development of infrastructural systems

has been minimal. Therefore further development of residential area Mišeluk on the basis of aforementioned principles would demand significant investments primarily for maintaining roads and building communal infrastructure, and also building of public buildings and quality public areas. At the time planning activities are reduced to legalization of illegal buildings, which is stipulated by the Law on Planning and Construction from September 2009. Judging from the previous rhythm of development of this area and estimated amount of investments, it is hard to expect that the planned activities would be realized in the following period with the intensity to attract new inhabitation.

Construction of gated-complex Lipov gaj was realized on the basis of General Regulation Plan for Veternik, adopted in February 2001, and amended in March 2003. Residential buildings were constructed on the basis of plan gained on architectural-urban planning competition, which also included the design of the public areas. Apart from houses, building process was reduced only to green areas, while possibility of building of architecturally coordinated supplying public structures within the block, stipulated by the plan, was not realized. In that way Lipov gaj was deprived of quality communal areas and non residential facilities. Nearby this residential unit, outside the gated area, children institution was planned, as well as two secondary shopping and handicraft and services centers. Since none of these facilities has been built so far, it is almost certain that Lipov gaj will remain gated enclave for residents of new socio-economic elite, without non residential facilities, located on the outskirts of the town.

6. PROPOSAL OF A NEW CONCEPT OF HOUSING FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ELITE

Possible direction for developing of the residential model for residents of higher socio-economic groups is presented here with consideration of residential preferences and necessary urban qualities of the area. At the same time this problem is considered in the context of possible solution of current problems that were created in the town organism as a consequence of transitional period. We specifically refer to the densification of the city-core area that was carried out without the proper housing policy. In the traditional neighbourhood of Grbavica, in just a couple of years high-rise multi-family structures replaced the whole blocks of individual houses built in the 19th century, while the urban matrix stayed the same. As a consequence, urban conditions decreased significantly especially in the sense of lack of open spaces, since the multi-family structures replaced the individual houses on many properties, leaving the same area of unbuilt space on the individual lot. This process has changed the traditional image of the city irreversibly. Although the individual houses were not protected by the institutions in charge as built heritage, they possessed markings of the civic architecture as a mixture of different architectural styles (mostly with elements of secession and neoclassicism) that formed recognizable character of the city. This kind of development could be interpreted as a result of overall economical, social and political crisis in the country, so all the issues can not be attributed to the failures of planning institutions, local management and government alone. Nowadays, local government faces a new challenge: whether to apply the same planning model for the transformation of the other traditional neighbourhood named Almaški kraj. Since Almaški kraj is a place of urban memory for majority of inhabitants of Novi Sad, the issue of its transformation gained significance and is, at the moment, one of the major concerns of the city government, planning institutions and public alike.



Fig. 15, 16 and 17 Plan of the urban fragment, streets and houses in Almaški area.

Almaški kraj is one of the oldest city-parts with its 19th century houses and narrow streets. Many famous citizens were born there and the number of cultural institutions is located in the neighbourhood. The oldest part was settled in 1718 by Serb families from the village of Almaš, who thus named this part of the city Almaški kraj. The Almaš Orthodox church was built in 1797 and is the largest Orthodox church in Novi Sad. The oldest cultural-scientific institution of Serbia, Matica srpska, is also located in Almaški kraj.

While many of the old city neighbourhoods experienced fundamental changes of urban structure, Almaški kraj is the only remaining larger urban fragment that is still, in general, resisting transitional urban scenario. Unfortunately, signs of building practice of 1990s and 2000s can also be found in this area – some of them are results of previous master plans and some of illegal building process. This incoherent structure is nowadays facing many challenges in every day urban life, as well as in a means of future urban strategies.

According to previous master plans for the city of Novi Sad from 1950 and 1963, Almaški kraj was foreseen as a multi-family neighbourhood with all accompanying programs [11]. During that period, the socialist state was embracing modern ethos in order to create "new and better society" [3], often with no respect to existing urban structures from 19th or early 20th century. But, even then, the prerequisite for any construction was the adoption of the detailed urban plan, which in this case never happened. Therefore, the only possibility for development was the maintenance of the existing housing fund that had to be done by the owners, most of whom are of lower social and economic status.

Master plan for the city of Novi Sad from 1974, as well as the following ones (1994, 2000), are offering different kinds of solution [11]. In this period law legislative has changed as well as the attitudes towards the structures of historic meaning. These plans, with minor variations, planned the area as urban fragment protected as an ambiance of significant value. The planned actions involved protection of the urban matrix, but not of the original individual residential houses. Instead, the plans have foreseen this neighbourhood as an area with multi-family low-rise houses. After the dramatic changes of urban form in Novi Sad over the past 20 years, public opinion of cultural and built heritage is quite determined. Citizens of Almaški kraj think negatively of the way their neighbourhood functions today, but their opinions on how this problem should be solved are very heterogenic [11]. The views are greatly influenced by the economic status of the respondents, as well as the quality of their own residence. The residents with middle and higher economic status are in favour of preservation of the neighbourhood. On the other hand, the poor segment of the local community in Almaški kraj represents the majority that has no financial capacity to reconstruct their houses and is therefore motivated to negotiate with private investors about the new developments.

Planning strategies that could fit the local situation of this kind must involve actions that address the population directly and take into account all different opinions. Therefore we propose strategies that would combine total protection of Almaški kraj and the possibility of reconstruction in some parts of the neighbourhood. This kind of systematic plan would have to include new public investments in infrastructure and public spaces in the area of Almaški kraj, in order to achieve higher value of real estates on the market. This could be the way for some of the interested citizens to resolve their economic issues. The areas planned for reconstruction should be the ones where the infill development has already started in the previous period. The "area-in-between" should also be planned, possibly marked with public and green spaces and non-housing programs (culture and small scale commercial structures), in order to raise the attractiveness of the neighbourhood both for the local community as well as for all the citizens of Novi Sad. These improvements could also attract citizens with higher economic status to move in to some of the original houses and reconstruct them which could help protecting Almaški kraj as an area of architectural and cultural significance. However, the improvements should serve all locals rather than only those with financial means, to avoid possible gentrification and segregation of elite groups. In that sense the main goal should be maintaining the mixed socio-economic structure of the residents and minimize friction between different socio-economic groups. The financial plan should involve implementation in phases and public-private partnerships.

7. CONCLUSION

Urban spaces are the most visible representatives of the location-specific conditions as well as of increasingly fluent and variegated forms of the globalized society. In particular, this paper addressed the problem of socio-spatial differentiation, polarization of incomes and exclusion in urban context.

These presuppositions were examined in the case-study of the city of Novi Sad, the city that was transformed by two decades of rapid change and still copes with major refiguring of urban landscape. Two analyzed residential complexes for new economic elite in the city of Novi Sad have completely different features, but are similar in socio-economic status of its inhabitants. This paper examined their origins, composition and spatial characteristics, that were explained within the specific global, national and local framework conditions.

Urban fragment Tatarsko brdo is a common type of illegally built residential areas located in the suburban zones of the cities in the region of former Yugoslavia. High socio-economic status of their citizens is matched only with the exclusive position of this urban structure within the city and the scale and expensiveness of their houses, but is not accompanied by the necessary urban services, or by high quality public space. Therefore it is obvious that such type of urban structure could not represent a desirable model of living for any social class and therefore should not make a mark on future urban life in the city of Novi Sad.

Lipov gaj, on the other hand, is the first gated community in Novi Sad and the Province of Vojvodina. Since gated housing complexes have increasingly emerged in recent years in Central and Eastern Europe, they can obviously represent a desirable residential model for inhabitants with high socio-economic status in Novi Sad. The main deficiencies of this neighbourhood involve the lack of basic services and working places. Additionally,

the emergence of this residential type marks the desire, suppressed in the socialist era, to express social status by place of residence and could widen the existing gap between the rich and the poor [5].

Important weak points of the two analyzed and valued concepts of elite housing show that none of them could form a model which should be developed in other areas and parts of Novi Sad as well. The drawbacks mainly relate to monofunctionality of the area, as well as to the lack of real urban qualities which should accompany this form of housing. Therefore one of significant research tasks boils down to the suggestion of a model which could in the context of Novi Sad create a concept of elite housing with all necessary attributes and qualities which this urban type requires.

Valid direction of development of housing for higher social groups could definitely include transformation of areas of individual living in Almaški kraj, urban fragment which is in direct contact with the town core of Novi Sad. Spatial transformation process is present for decades, but it is based on drastic change of housing topology from individual into collective. Specific densification carried out in many traditional parts of town has shown that this kind of intervention in most cases is not in accordance with possibilities of urban structure, which deteriorated the living conditions in the city center. Because of that reconstruction of Almaški kraj, as one of the oldest town parts and the only part which has not undergone radical transformation should be carried out with retaining the existing amount of built structures and open urban areas, which would definitely increase quality of all urban elements and levels. The basic problem of this part of the town is that the residents, in most cases, are not capable to preserve and improve their family houses for a long period of time. Very often this leads to the situations when individual houses dilapidate, and even start to break down due to weather factors, which significantly worsens the overall atmosphere of this important urban fragment.

By reconstruction, revitalization, reutilization and restructuring of old households positioned in typically narrow streets and long lots, it would become possible to form high quality locations for housing, but also other public urban functions, in direct contact with town core area. Promoting and presenting of this type of transformation should attract investments by residents with higher-incomes who would invest in preservation process and protection of original houses and traditional urban structure. This approach would lead to increase of quality not only of the individual elements of the area but also of the atmosphere in general, with the condition of retaining mixed inhabitants structure.

In this sense, we can conclude that all future actions towards the improvement of both suburban areas that were analysed and city-core area should be conducted with an aim to transform them into legitimate parts of the city that has a strong economic, physical, and social structure.

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STANOVANJE ZA NOVU SOCIJALNO – EKONOMSKU ELITU STUDIJA SLUČAJA NOVI SAD

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Rad se bavi istraživanjem prostorne dimenzije ekonomske nejednakosti stanovnika koja se pojavila u poslednjih nekoliko decenija. U radu je analiziran Novi Sad, u čijoj urbanoj formi su se desile velike promene prostorne i socijalne prirode, što veoma utiče i na stanje u kom se grad danas nalazi. Devedesetih godina dvadesetog veka specifični ekonomski i socijalni uslovi vodili su do značajnih transformacija u socijalnom i demografskom pogledu, pošto je grad, koji je prethodno dugi niz godina imao negativan prirodni priraštaj, bio rapidno naseljen izbeglicama iz bivših republika Jugoslavije. U isto vreme, velika razlika između siromašnih i bogatih nastala je i kao posledica promena, koje su na gotovo istovetan način zahvatile i druga post-komunistička društva. Ovakav splet faktora izazvao je velike promene u urbanoj formi koje prethodni urbanistički planovi nisu mogli da predvide, a kao jedna od posledica javila se i prostorna segregacija po ekonomskom principu. U radu su prezentovana dva urbana fragmenta u kojima žive pripadnici nove socijalne elite. Oba slučaja obrazuju neadekvatne modele i monotone urbane sredine, u kojima nedostaju ambijentalni kvaliteti i elementi koji bi mogli da obezbede socijalnu integraciju. U radu je, takođe, predloženo moguće rešenje integracije socijalne elite u urbane prostore u širem centru grada.

Ključne reči: *stanovanje, socijalna segregacija, ekonomska nejednakost, arhitektonska tipologija*