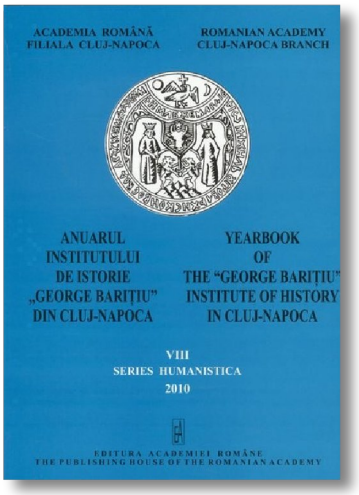

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SOCIOLOGIE ŞI ANTROPOLOGIE

SOCIO-SPATIAL RECONFIGURATIONS IN A TRANSFORMATIVE LANDSCAPE

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Abstract. *The socio-cultural experience of a particular place used to rule our Being, shape our worldviews and defined our existence. Nowadays when markets are global, state boundaries porous and people on the run, the uniqueness and embeddedness of the place tend to collapse. Our life is less and less spent within distinct boundaries – now here – as was in the before condition: before the flows of goods, information, finance, and labor washed over the globe. In the after condition – the nowhere – the free movement of the people and the plunge into the flows cause never ending processes of re-embeddedness through which the secluded world of the global players is locally re-scaled and re-adapted. This paper looks for such developments in a "double-post" context, namely the Transylvania's Cluj-Napoca city, one of the many CEECs cities aggressively involved in so-called urban reconfiguration (both socially and spatially). Here, in my hometown, pre-given relationships built-up around pre-made environment (i.e. communist's blocks) are competing against sociability based on choice, emergent from the newly design locales (in fact counter-locales). The following lines will give chance to local inhabitants to express their insights concerning the present features of the city.*

Key words: *city-as-a-text, "double-post" context, consumption, counter-developments, chaotic urbanization*.

Our reflections here are shaped by the empirical results of three socio-anthropological investigations done in Cluj-Napoca/Transylvania/Romania: R1) 1999, "The transformations of the housing market, mobility, and social segregation in the Romanian cities: case study of Cluj-Napoca, Romania"; R2) 2004, "Housing inequalities in post-socialist cities. Villas' Neighborhoods in Cluj-Napoca"; R3) "The production of the urban space. Social inequalities' visualization and representation with the help of digital and mental maps". All of them had quantitative dimensions, approached through sociological surveys based on

questionnaires about households, livelihood, sources of income etc., and also qualitative, tackle through socio-anthropological semi-structured or in-depth interviews (my task within the research teams). We interviewed respondents living in different neighborhoods of the city (*e.g.* Centru, Gheorgheni, Grigorescu, Mănăştur [Mənəʃtur], Mărăşti [Mərəʃti], Zorilor) and "local experts" – professionals from different fields related to urban issues (*e.g.* officials from local administration units, public and private companies, self-employed persons). We got more than one hundred interviews/social representations/worldviews regarding the city of Cluj-Napoca and its locales[1]. The "local experts" category was composed by two subgroups which are in a never-ending process of negotiation and re-negotiation for city's development: a) those who elaborate and implement developmental strategies for the municipality (*e.g.* local councilors, urban service representatives), b) counterbalanced in our researches by specialists who, by their profession, must serve the beneficiaries' interest and facilitate individual strategies (*e.g.* public notaries, advocates, architects). As member of the above mentioned research projects I was looking at the ways in which the *city-as-a-text*[2] is constructed by its "authors" in a particular way by various procedures and techniques[3].

The interviewees' texts portray[4] this milieu as "*double-post*" *context* underlying the fact that Cluj-Napoca city was "trapped" in socialism/communism almost a half of the century, being now ready to be "shifted" in the Information Age[5]. Although is tempting to call it post-communist and post-modern[6] (and that may be correct not only in relation to its temporality), cannot be done without restrictions since it shows some non-convergent features with the above concepts: economically pre-capitalist attitudes, politically neo-communist perceptions or culturally pseudo-modern actions. On the other hand the stage that we are passing by can be, at least partially, integrated in the late modernity[7], since we embrace a

[1] Lyn H. Lofland, *The Public Realm. Exploring the City's Quintessential Social Territory*, New York, Aldine de Gruyter, 1998.

[2] Mike Savage, Alan Warde, *Urban Sociology, Capitalism and Modernity*, Houndmills, Macmillan Press, 1993, p. 122.

[3] Karen Wells, *The Material and Visual Cultures of Cities*, "Space and Culture", vol. 10 (2), 2007.

[4] Andrea Brighenti, *Visibility: A Category for the Social Sciences*, "Current Sociology", International Sociological Association, Sage, Los Angeles, vol. 55 (3), 2007.

[5] Manuel Castells, *The Internet Galaxy. Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.

[6] "While modernism was the cultural expression of the post-war social order, post-modernism is the cultural expression of the intensified development of modernization over the past few decades, a modernization that has fundamentally redrawn the time-space co-ordinates of everyday life and re-articulated the local and the global to form a new geo-political and geo-economic ordering." (Erik Swyngedouw, Maria Kaïka, *The Making of 'Glocal' Urban Modernities. Exploring the Cracks in the Mirror*, "City: Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action", Carfax Publishing Ltd., vol. 7 (1), 2003, p. 6)

[7] Here are some related concepts (without being perfect synonyms), used as proxy by different scholars: second modernity, late modernity, post-modernity, postindustrial society, knowledge society, information society, liquid modernity, reflexive modernity etc.

common (occidental) mode of societal (more specifically, economic) organization (one between other *varieties of modernity*[8]) though built-up on the modernization brought in by socialism via industrialization.

> *"Socialist modernity, in both official discourse and popular sentiment, was identified with waged work for the state or the collective, and with mechanized production, ideally on a massive and even gigantic scale. Domestic production, on the other hand, was often invisible precisely because it was associated with a smallness of scale that was somehow antithetical to modernity, with a lack of monetization and with a rather timeless 'tradition'. In rather a different sense, rural domestic production was often intentionally made minuscule, hidden or disguised by rural people themselves because it bordered on the grey area between legal, waged labour for the state and illegal, highly lucrative, trade on the black market."*[9]

In the (early) modernity social class has defined the consumption. This state of facts allowed enormous possibility for exploration related to the issue of "distinction"[10]. Scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu have shown how social class tends to determine a person's likes and interests, and how distinctions based on social class get reinforced in daily life. Since then, alongside with the explosion of mass-production and consumption, followed by the interplay between Globalness and Localness[11], what we are eating, wearing, driving, watching etc. have begun to insistently create new categories which are re-defining our belongingness and identities. In the (today) late modernity, the consumption – our ability to buy[12] consumer goods and/or change things became responsible with the social classes' creation and with the changes of citizens into shoppers[13].

[8] Volker H. Schmidt, *Multiple Modernities or Varieties of Modernity?*, "Current Sociology", Sage, London, vol. 54 (1), 2006, p. 88.

[9] Frances Pine, *Dangerous Modernities? Innovative Technologies and the Unsettling of Agriculture in Rural Poland*, "Critique of Anthropology", Sage Publications, London, vol. 27 (2), 2007, p. 186.

[10] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, London, Routledge, 2000 [1979].

[11] Gil-Sung Park, Yong Suk Jang, Hang Young Lee, *The Interplay between Globalness and Localness: Korea's Globalization Revisited*, "International Journal of Comparative Sociology", Sage Publications, Los Angeles, vol. 48 (4), 2007, p. 337.

[12] Malcolm Voyce, *Shopping Malls in Australia: The End of Public Space and the Rise of 'Consumerist Citizenship'?*, "Journal of Sociology", The Australian Sociological Association, vol. 42 (3), 2006, p. 282.

[13] Frank Trentmann, *Citizenship and consumption*, "Journal of Consumer Culture", Sage Publications, London, vol. 7 (2), 2007, p. 148.

> *"Consumerism is assumed to mean greed for acquisition; the wish to accumulate things, to have more and more. Is this still true? It now seems that it is the rapidity, the promptness of disposing of things, which is the secret of contemporary consumerism: not accumulation, not acquisition, but change. Disposing of things which were there before, replacing them with other, newer things. You would have to search quite hard to find any advertisement for a product which recommends it for its durability. […] Today's useful and indispensable objects, with few and possibly no exceptions, are tomorrow's waste. Everything is disposable, nothing is truly necessary, nothing is irreplaceable. Everything is born engraved with the brand of death. Everything is offered with a use-by date attached. All things, born or made, human or not, are until further notice dispensable."*[14]

Distinctiveness (spatially and/or socially) has always been present in the history of humankind. What makes the difference between then and now are the governing rules which influence such phenomenon, currently more complex and sophisticated, but also global[15]. It is important to notice that scholars (at this time) being contemporary with the phenomenon (in the early stage itself), have not deeply emerged into it. What we have at best at hand is a good thin description, lacking an *extensive thick description*[16] of the ways in which the secluded world of the global players is (re)scaled and (re)adapted everywhere by everybody.

> *"Western elites are heavily influenced by a comprehensive type of globalism. Very often, they are global players in the strict sense of the word. As such, they are interested in molding local structures and conditions according to their economic interests. Their behavior is part of a global top-down strategy. […] In contrast, autochthonous elites keep approaching to globality from a local perspective. Their perception of the global is highly selective. Starting from everyday experience inside of post-socialist transformation, they try to make globalization fit to local structures."* [17]

From cosmopolitan managerial elites, to national developers and furthermore to autochthonous elites or regular local inhabitants everyone has a tendency to construct "second-order spatial communities that will also tend to isolate themselves from the rest of society, in a succession of hierarchical segregation

[14] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Arts*, "Theory, Culture & Society", Sage, London, vol. 24 (1), 2007, p. 123–124.

[15] Alan Smart, Josephine Smart, *Urbanization and the Global Perspective*, "Annual Review of Anthropology", vol. 32, 2003.

[16] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York, Basic Books, 1973.

[17] Hans-Joachim Bürkner, *Autochthonous and Western Professional Elites in East Central Europe: Socio-Cultural Convergence in the Process of Transformation?*, "Anuarul Institutului de istorie 'G. Barițiu' din Cluj-Napoca", series Humanistica, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Academy Publishing House, tom. I, 2003, p. 198.

process that, together, are tantamount to socio-spatial fragmentation"[18]. These new socio-spatial entities have multiple faces and the capability of uneven shifting[19].

In the core of the current changes seems to be the removal from historically prescribed social forms and commitments, norms and practical knowledge towards active construction of social bonds, decision making, preferences ordering. Moreover, a change from *Beziehungsvorgabe* to *Beziehungswahl* – a shift from pre-given relationships (such as the sociality generates by traditional communities) to choice (which are the products of personal decisions brought in by higher degree of mobility, trans-local communications and high amount of social contacts[20]), a low degree of personal links stability, an aggressive individualization, a rapid break and a very fast switch between intimacy and strangeness (and therefore blurred distinction relating to the "out of my skin" social and physical environment), characterize the liquid[21] and/or the second[22] modernity. The passage from the first modernity (the *nation-state centered* modernity) to the second (a *non-nation-state centered*[23]) modernity – transnational or cosmopolitan – has implications at all societal levels and from micro to macro. Beneath highly visible fields such as consumerism are hidden multiple transformative categories which are (re)shaping the world: what are inside and what outside, who are them and who us, where is neighborliness and where strangeness or near and far, have lost the clarity of distinction that they had before[24].

In a world ruled by time-space compression[25] it is crucial to have a dynamic understanding of socio-spatial categories and of their *shifting boundaries*. Before the flows of goods, information, finance, and labor washed over the globe[26] such problems were not of concern. Earlier, the socio-cultural experience of a particular place has ruled our Being, shaped our *Lebenswelt* and defined our existence; our

[18] Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed., Oxford, Blacwell Publishers, 2000, p. 447.

[19] Scott Lash, John Urry, *Economies of Signs & Space*, published in association with "Theory, Culture & Society", London, Sage, 1994.

[20] Gerhard Schulze, 1993, quoted by Andreas Wittel, *Toward a Network Sociality*, "Theory, Culture & Society", London, Sage, vol. 18 (6), 2001, p. 65.

[21] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000.

[22] Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity,* Sage Publications, 1996 [1992].

[23] Ulrich Beck, Johannes Willms, *Conversations with Ulrich Beck*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2003, p. 26.

[24] J. Dürrschmidt, *"They're worse off than us" – The Social Construction of European Space and Boundaries in the German/Polish Twin City Guben–Gubin*, "Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power", no. 9, Taylor & Francis, 2002.

[25] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Cambridge, Blackwell, 1990.

[26] Wendy Griswold, Nathan Wright, *Cowbirds, Locals, and the Dynamic Endurance of Regionalism*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 109 (6), 2004, p. 1412–1413, note 3.

life was spent within distinct boundaries[27] and almost entirely within the same territorial frame. Now, in the *after condition*, with global markets, people "on the move" ("being on the road has become the permanent way of life disembedded individuals"[28]), and porous state boundaries, the localized space embedded with sociality – the *now here* is replaced by the *nowhere* – the dis-embedded trans-local space, conventional and globalized. The "nowhere" type is not obeying to traditional divides such as centrality vs. marginality, core vs. periphery, North vs. South, East vs. West. It is the end result of an ongoing process in which created space replaces effective space as the overriding principle of geographical organization[29], the experienced space is translated into the perceived space, and the perceived into the imagined space[30]. Since the places themselves are melting, arises a new geography that ingravescence our feelings of no sense of place[31].

> *"[...] the places to which the individuals may gain access and in which they may wish to settle are melting fast and can hardly serve as targets for 'life projects'. This new restlessness and fragility of goals affects us all, unskilled and skilled, uneducated and educated, work-shy and hardworking alike. There is little or nothing we can do to 'bind the future' through following diligently the current standards."*[32]

During their lifetime men and women are constantly on the run; they live in places but their life is more and more placeless, spent into the space of flows[33] which alter the meaning and dynamic of places. The place for sleep and work are no longer in the same neighborhood and alike during the individual's lifetime. Almost each individual repeats in a great number of times this experience. Residential mobility is present everywhere, in the developed countries from Western Europe or into developing East.

In Romania, these processes have been intensified after the collapse of the former regime in the 90s when mobility prohibition was cancelled. Beginning with the '89 Revolution, a variety of people (different social classes, types of habits etc.), from all demographic structures have decided to change and/or multiply their

[27] The boundary's main mission was "defining, categorizing and otherwise affecting the *identities* of persons who are circumscribed and divided by borders" (Michael Kearney, *The Classifying and Value-Filtering Missions of Borders*, "Anthropological Theory", Sage Publications, vol. 4 (2), 2004, p. 133).

[28] Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity in the Globalizing World*, "Social Anthropology", Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, vol. 9 (2), 2001, p. 125.

[29] David Harvey (1988), quoted by Mike Savage, Alan Warde, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[30] H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991.

[31] Arthur S. Alderson, Jason Beckfield, *Power and Position in the World City System*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 109 (4), 2004, p. 811–812.

[32] Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity in the Globalizing World*, ...

[33] Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, …, p. 442.

residences. It was a continuing back and forth movement (either from urban or from rural areas) directly linked with the success, or more accurately with the failure, of people in their life-condition improvement. The neighboring rural areas of the city catch the attention of low-income urban people who had difficulties in maintaining a decent level of life condition within the city. At the opposite side, high-income persons have found rural landscapes of their neighboring cities ready for consumption. The "newcomers" are altering and redesigning the localities' social and physical space; changes are noticeable in the residents' composition and in the built environment. The newcomers bring social as well as material baggage, their taken-for-granted beliefs and practices alter the landscape and the social ties of the adopted community[34]. Inevitably, different groups of *old and new natives/newcomers* (members of various communities of interest) were entered in conflict for social and/or physical space. Some of them lost some other gain power over the local resources. The two-way internal migration process has changed the population structure, their *Weltanschauung*, and furthermore distorted the feeling of *pure city-ness*[35] or *village-ness*.

At the ambivalences induced by uneven distribution of late modernity, nevertheless globally spread, we must add those emerged from local contexts, here a post-communist East European one. The socio-economic and political transformations that took place in the Romanian society, after the 1989 Revolution, are covering institutions, groups, markets (*e.g.* the capital market, the housing market, the land market etc.), locations (urban, rural, rurban or periurban) etc. It becomes obvious that Revolution's influences transgresses particular and peculiar fields such as economic or politic field and continually recreates individual, collective and institutional typologies. The social changes have brought us transformations of the attitudes, behaviors, and socio-economic-politico-cultural praxis. Supplementary, the loss of control by the state in the first years of democracy made room for deregulation[36]. That goes hand in hand with the lack of political elites support for the state institutions, the lack of appropriate apportionment of power among state policy agencies and the weak internal cohesiveness or fragile rule-following bureaucracy[37].

Rebuilding organizations and institutions not *on the ruins* but *with the ruins* of the communism[38], has become the core of the Romanian *transformative*

[34] Sonya Salamon, *From Hometown to Nontown: Rural Community Effects of Suburbanization*, "Rural Sociology: Devoted to Scientific Study of Rural and Community Life", vol. 68 (1), 2003.

[35] George L. Cowgill, *Origins and Development of Urbanism: Archaeological Perspectives*, "Annual Review of Anthropology", vol. 33, 2004.

[36] Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in Age of Globalization*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995.

[37] Vivek Chibber, *Bureaucratic Rationality and the Developmental State*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 107 (4), 2002.

[38] David Stark, *Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 101 (4), 1996.

processes. (Alongside with other anthropologists, I reject the concept of *transition* because is ideologically built to highlight what it presumes to be the most significant common condition of post-socialist societies: "a status of being 'in between' a socialist past, a system from which 'transition societies' are moving away, and the capitalist future these societies are moving towards, even if there might be 'setbacks'"[39]. Transformation or transformative processes seem to describe with more accuracy what really happening since they are repetitive, never-ending and have no starting or finishing points.) After the fail of the communism, some vital years were lost with the political revolution setting up for the new ideological climate instauration (social and/or neo-liberal democracy). During that period and years after the *systemic revolution*[40] did not have the chance to be realized. That was maybe possible because our capacity of reflexivity and action was relatively fragile and we have lost them during the totalitarian regime; when people had no right and no need to think of their own problems, to make associations, to reach public forms of expression, to negotiate norms, values and rules[41].

After the breakdown of the old system (in which coordination and control of individuals' social life was omnipresent), each person was forced to confront with the recent reality's dynamics. They needed to look after new adaptive strategies[42] and to cope with the challenges of an insecure life, filled with risks and hard to perceive it, in opposition with the "security" of the past.

> *"Although it is probably not possible to determine how much of the current economic hardship is attributable to the former centralized economic structures, and how much is due to the transformation to market economies, economic security for the average citizen certainly has diminished since 1989."*[43]

For some the transformation of the old regime was indeed an opportunity, but it has the price to be paid. The newly arising entrepreneurial class quickly understood that capital and strong primary relations do not match: "they are angry and envy for my results, now, after the revolution", "since Ceauşescu died the

[39] Susanne Brandtstädter, *Transitional Spaces: Postsocialism as a Cultural Process*, "Critique of Anthropology", Sage Publications, London, vol. 27 (2), 2007, p. 131.

[40] Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity,* Routledge, London and New York, 1997 [1992].

[41] V. Pasti, M. Miroiu, C. Codiță, *România – starea de fapt,* Bucureşti, Edit. Nemira, vol. I (*Societatea*), 1997.

[42] Dumitru Sandu, Cosmin Radu, Monica Constantinescu, Oana Ciobanu, *A Country Report on Romanian Migration Abroad: Stocks and Flows After 1989*, Multicultural Center Prague, 2004, p. 1–2 – www.migrationonline.cz

[43] David L. Brown, Laszlo Kulcsar, *Household Economic Behavior in Post-Socialist Rural Hungary*, "Rural Sociology: Devoted to Scientific Study of Rural and Community Life", vol. 66 (2), 2001, p. 157.

relatives are fighting all the time for their share"[44]. For others the *transition* came along with a dramatically diminish of the individual expectations concerning social changes.

The post-communism brought us moral advantages, the hope of a better life, the freedom of thinking and doing, high chances for social and territorial mobility, for resources and information access, for capital growth (cultural, economic, social, politic etc.)[45]. These were counterbalanced by an impressive number of disadvantages or, as some subjects called them: chaos and disappointing, fear and despair that the ordinary man can not face it easily. Things like job insecurity and the failure of private initiatives, the impossibility of financial accumulation, the fall of living standards and of purchasing power, the deterioration of cultural capital, the dissolution of social relations, the fragmentation of the public interest in correlation with a very weak administration capacity of the local resources, the lack of prospects and consequently traumas and anxieties[46] are the most common.

The hopes for better life were accompanied by unprecedented devaluation of savings, galloping inflation, bankruptcies, closing of factories and mass layoffs, increasing unemployment, high poverty rates, land restitution lawsuits etc. (These court cases are the side effects of land restitution, housing privatization etc., events which in the beginning of 90s where received with great enthusiasm by almost all social categories. The 61/1990 Law and then the 85/1992 Law has regulated the *transfer of the apartments* from the state to the population. By buying those flats, the majority of the population turned from renters into owners. The 112/1995 Law and the 10/2001 Law reposition the house ownership from the state to the people. The 18/1991 Law has made the reform of the land and by the restitution of the land, an important percentage of the population became land owners. Nowadays the state has 10-15% from its former ownership.) Issues like prolong adaptability, transformation and permanent adjustments of the daily-life, the stress generated by the difficulty of necessary goods (for living) achievement, the insecurity of jobs and incomes etc., became the quintessence of our *existence*.

> *"Ultimately, shock became a trope in people's lives that bound together the experience of political economic decline, the belief that one was facing the end of a way of life, the loss of status, livelihood and dignity of everyone around one, and the emotional numbness that ultimately – after the initial surprise and sense of righteous anger – washed over people in the face of this destruction."*[47]

[44] Grigorescu neighborhood's inhabitant, in: *R1*.

[45] Emery N. Castle, *Social Capital: An Interdisciplinary Concept*, "Rural Sociology: Devoted to Scientific Study of Rural and Community Life", vol. 67 (3), 2002.

[46] These remarks were highly present in our respondents account, especially in the '99 (*R1*) research.

[47] Jack R. Friedman, *Shock and Subjectivity in the Age of Globalization: Marginalization, Exclusion, and the Problem of Resistance*, "Anthropological Theory", Sage Publications, London, vol. 7 (4), 2007, p. 422.

We wanted to see the features of these transformations in the context of Cluj-Napoca's urban environment, a heterogenic environment with multiple types of quarters and a huge range of neighborhoods. Cluj-Napoca city has a fragmented, mosaic-like appearance, composed by *separate but interdependent* cities – the cities of the city in Peter Marcuse's jargon[48] – within the residential city: 1) a dominating city (*e.g.* Europa or The New Andrei Mureşanu [Mureʃanu] quarter, analyzed in *R2*), 2) a gentrified city (*e.g.* Grigorescu quarter, examined in *R1*), 3) a suburban city (*e.g.* Mănăştur neighborhood, researched in *R3*), or 4) a tenement city (*e.g.* Mărăşti neighborhood, investigated in *R1*).

> *"[…] a dominating city, with its luxury housing, not really part of the city but enclaves or isolated buildings, occupied by the top of the economic, social, and political hierarchy; a gentrified city, occupied by the professional-managerial-technical groups, whether yuppie or muppie without children; a suburban city, sometimes single-family housing in the outer city, other times apartments near the center, occupied by skilled workers, mid-range professionals, upper civil servants; a tenement city, sometimes cheaper single-family areas, most often rentals, occupied by lower-paid workers, blue- and white-collar, and generally (although less in the United States) including substantial social housing; an abandoned city, the end result of trickle-down, left for the poor, the unemployed, the excluded, where in the United States homeless housing is most frequently located."*[49]

The common thinking has established tangible or intangible *walls* (physically effective or physically symbolic), social and economic barriers which define the quarters of the city (*i.e.* "the nature of the quarter and the position of its residents within the hierarchy of quarters, the hierarchy of cities within the city"[50]). These "borders" must be taking in account by any developmental plans, predisposed to look holistically at the city, since issues like homogeneity, uniformity, standardization etc., strong components of the former (socialist/communist) vocabulary of development, are not fitting with the contemporary realities. The accent today is on the *triple-"d"*: *diversity, differentiation and distinction*, which makes dramatic changes in the socio-spatial pattern of a socialist city[51] that experiences the dynamics of the capitalist world/market society and tends to grow quickly than in the centrally planned society.

[48] Peter Marcuse, *Not Chaos, but Walls: Postmodernism and the Partitioned City*, in: *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*, Sophie Watson, Katherine Gibson (eds.), Oxford, Blackwell, 1995.

[49] *Ibidem*, p. 245–246.

[50] *Ibidem*, p. 248.

[51] Luděk Sýkora, *Processes of Socio-Spatial Differentiation in Post-communist Prague*, "Housing Studies", vol. 14 (5), 1999, p. 679.

As supplementary complication, each quarter with its plurality of spatial enclaves *socially determinate*, has numerous social enclaves *physically indeterminate*, or at best with blurred boundaries. By lifting the lid on any so-called socially excluded neighborhoods we will see that they comprise a frantic mix of people who cut across spatial axes[52]. No wander that deep socially integrated neighborhoods become "over-night" deceitful neighborhoods ruled by the principle of unfocused interaction[53]. If these assumptions are accurate, what is left then as possible urban reconfiguration targets? Could fuzzy collectivities establish some kind of common agendas that will perceive the city in a convergent manner? Do we have in Cluj-Napoca something else than an urban archipelago were the particular/individual interests rules?

The last decades show an aggressive shift from the social optimum (*i.e.* the common good) to the individual one (*i.e.* the personal interest). One of our respondents call that as follows: «the man has locked himself in his apartment; outside of it has had no interest in cleaning, reshaping, and improving the environment, either in establishing way of communications with his/her neighbors or with the enlarged community»[54]. Day by day, a growing number of people make tremendous efforts to escape from the block-style living conditions (the communist housing model) and therefore to *(re)insulate* themselves within other types of environment. Big villas, individual houses or apartments in the new gated community buildings were considered the best alternatives. The individual home became the absolute expression of hanging back from a *worthless community* («I live in this sludge, which is here, but I do not enter in it, I live beside it»[55]); the community itself became a "strange collection of strangers", each of them being tempted to rather prejudices than improves the attachment/identity of their members.

The anti-urban socialist/communist logic[56] regards the localities thru the centralized regulation eyes, which, in developmental terms, means the growth of an *in-common but restricted* spaces for living. The localities were the subjects of corrective action (directed at conformity and control[57]) and their inhabitants doomed to be actively involved in a twisted sociality built on mistrust. That

[52] Paul J. Maginn, *Towards More Effective Community Participation in Urban Regeneration: The Potential of Collaborative Planning and Applied Ethnography*, "Qualitative Research", Sage Publications, London, vol. 7(1), 2007, p. 28.

[53] Goffman (1966), quoted by Kalle Toiskallio, *Navigation Styles of Social Agents in Urban Traffic,* "Cultural Studies: Space & Culture", vol. 5 (2), 2002, p. 171.

[54] Architect, in: *R2*.

[55] Engels neighborhood's inhabitant, in: *R3*.

[56] Forbes & Thrift (1987), quoted by Mike Savage, Alan Warde, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[57] Simon Marvin, Tim May, *City Futures. Views from the Centre*, "City: Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action", Carfax Publishing Ltd., vol. 7 (2), 2003, p. 216.

compulsory sociality («All the time problems exist because it supposes that we are living jointly/communally but in fact everybody is for itself.»[58]) brought in various negative experiences, created a deficient *collaborative control dialogue*[59] and permitted the development of an urban spatial organization diktat[60] based on *hidden agendas*[61] and iron-willed autocratic decision-making procedures[62].

> *"Today we cannot talk about a coherent urban strategy. Via National Agency for Housing are built flats for young families, which is a good thing, but those are made without taking in consideration a specific urban area where the infrastructure and the facilities are available. The main concern is the needs fulfillment and not having a housing policy which should be implemented adequately."*[63]

> *"Interests define when and if an urban plan is to be accomplished, and of course, the size of the constructible perimeter of the city […] in 1995 was 4069 ha, in 1996 6470 ha and in 2000 was 8815 ha. Neither the members of the Local Council nor other officials of the local administration did think that such enlargement will create a lot of problems for the municipality (i.e. the urgent need of infrastructure development, problem which even for 1995 situation is not solved). The main concern was to provide the legal framework for all those (with money!) which have started to construct in areas where was not allowed."*[64]

The *privatization of space*[65] and its *retailization* was the adopted strategy of Cluj-Napoca municipality (alongside other local/central authorities), which, in practice, means that they are "offering" property development opportunities for some rather than attempting to use the localities for the benefit of the whole

[58] Marasti neighborhood's inhabitant, in: *R1*. Mario L. Small, *Culture, Cohorts, and Social Organization Theory: Understanding Local Participation in a Latino Housing Project*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 108 (1), 2002.

[59] Mario L. Small, *Culture, Cohorts, and Social Organization Theory: Understanding Local Participation in a Latino Housing Project*, "American Journal of Sociology", University of Chicago Press, vol. 108 (1), 2002.

[60] Kevin Ward, *The Limits to Contemporary Urban Redevelopment. 'Doing' Entrepreneurial Urbanism in Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester*, "City: Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action", Carfax Publishing Ltd., vol. 7 (2), 2003.

[61] That means «to minimize the importance of collective goods and to maximize the personal achievements»., Interviewee in: *R1*.

[62] Francesca Cognetti, Paolo Cottino, *Developers of a Different City. New Forms of Community in Laissez-Faire Milan*, "City: Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action", Carfax Publishing Ltd., United Kingdom, vol. 7 (2), 2003.

[63] Architect, in: *R2*.

[64] Engineer from the City Hall Urbanism Department, in: *R2*.

[65] Boyer (1992), Davis (1992), quoted by Kevin Ward, *op. cit*.

community. The administration is focusing on the rapid development of the built environment instead of making the locality a collective asset. Old-style public spaces (inside and also outside the built environment) have been remade and civilized, transformed into gated areas, spaces for expensive designer clothes shops, corporate bars, cafés and pubs, and ridiculously overpriced residential developments[66]. "The central space of the city isn't function anymore according with the idea that was behind its creation – as a public space. It is not a public space as it should, it is a space fenced by a variation of perturbations developed by today civilization"[67]. What we got is a semi-public space owned by developers, controlled and policed by private corporations[68], which decreasingly erases the local history and meanings, and lose its capacity for social integration. That is one result of decades of "let them do as they want" policy, claimed by each individual who pushed for authorities noninterventionist attitudes (or selective interventions) concerning their ownership rights.

> *"There is one phenomenon which neither us – County Council nor them – City Council are able to control: those chaotic constructions inside and outside the city. We have our culpability in that, but also responsible are the Law's permissions, which gave the chances to build in unacceptable areas…, knowing that if two bricks are already one above the other, nobody will intervene, or try to pull down the construction. Consequently, houses are randomly placed in the territory, there are no alignments, systematizations or minimum respected urban conditions. Those who will live in such neighborhoods will have high discomforts… because everybody builds on his/her place everywhere he/she wants without taking into consideration the environment outside their propriety."*[69]

Just now the necessary critical mass was achieved; those who (until yesterday) where aware only of their personal interests/strategies are asking for local authority intervention and coherent development of the city. Must be said here that no longer than a few years back were completely against such kind of "state-behavior". The former promoters and/or beneficiaries of the *norm-free context* became suddenly interested by *whom, what and how* is built in their neighborhood. Possible socially and physically threats/risks that may come with the new inhabitants/neighbors, "forced" them to claim a strict implementation of rules. At these requests, the authorities react either in the: a) *passive way* by

[66] Kevin Ward, *op. cit*., p. 206–207.
[67] Unirii neighborhood's inhabitant, in: *R3*.
[68] Malcolm Voyce, *op. cit*.
[69] County councilor, in: *R2*.

"closing the eye", switching off the penalties of those who did not respect the urban regulations, and waiting for their personal recompenses from those; b) *active way* by changing the regulations according to the beneficiaries' interest, and of course, waiting to receive their share from them. For the long run, this abnormal way of doing urban development, this *chaotic urbanization* that misappropriate responds at the today dynamics by mistakenly using the principle "first came first served", it will not be able to convincingly deal with the downside effects that generates.