

New Life of Modern Cities: Transformation and Renewal of Public Spaces in New Belgrade

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1 NOTE

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2 ABSTRACT

Built after Second World War, on the empty land between two historical parts Zemun and Belgrade, New Belgrade represented promising post-war state and new society. It was planned in a new manner and ideology – CIAM and Modern movement. Its urban pattern reflected the machine age – designed for the automobile, not the man. Nevertheless, for several decades it became a *blind spot* of denying and neglecting. Today, New Belgrade is in struggle with itself, trying to preserve old structures, but getting the new ones that reject them. Modern city is becoming contemporary city: closer to the man, not the car. New built structures represent traditional style, which creates *hybrid*: overlapping two different urban matrixes in one space.

Caused by political, economical and social change, these transformations produced existence of several built types: informal/illegal, legal, preserved old structure and totally new blocks. New Belgrade became a contemporary experiment. The aim of this paper is to identify, analyse and map this phenomenon and give recommendations for its successful and planned renewal in the domain of public open spaces.

Having in mind the assumption that the quality of open public spaces is proportional to number of its users, this study will explore those spatial elements which stimulate pedestrian movement. The focus is on level of activity and ground floor physical characteristics along the observed streets – one transformed in the informal manner, and one legally changed and built (distribution of activities, their density along these streets, level of transparency in their ground floor, sidewalk width, etc).

Although built for automobiles, Modern city evolves the transformation of public open spaces according to human scale. The main indicator of this transformation is appearance of planned and non planned public spaces and buildings which stimulates pedestrian movement. The results are local centres setting up as well as increasing of social interaction among New Belgrade's inhabitants.

The question is, whether it will manage to deal with contemporary issues of urban life and regeneration or it will remain the blind spot of spontaneous transformation and unplanned renewal?

3 INTRODUCTION

Built more than half century ago, modern cities are becoming the focal point in contemporary debates about their role and reviving in global network of cities. Several questions are being examined now again regarding this cities, such as protecting modern heritage, reconsidering its urban form in light of the projected massive demand for new housing and redesigning its open public spaces in order to adjust them to human scale.

New Belgrade is planned as a modern, functional city which consistent realization had the crucial impact on the integration of historical centres of Zemun and Belgrade into greater Belgrade, as a contemporary city of significant metropolitan potential. Thus, it is not the satellite settlement at the city periphery, but the central territory foreseen for increasing of area in its midpoint. However, for long period of time New Belgrade' central core remained an empty field of disjunction (Blagojevic, 2005). Today, the Municipality of New Belgrade covers an area of around 4,000 hectares and is inhabited by some 250,000 people. It is not only an idea of 'new state' spatial representation or a housing project. It is a contemporary experiment, which is being rapidly filled by new built structures: traditional (internal open space and outside streets) and modern (external open space and inside streets) urban patterns are overlapping in one plot. From the dominant residential function, it suddenly exploded in its spectar of offer: shopping malls, restaurants, churches, services, commercial and bussines centers. It seems like the first well planned concept of the city of cars is transformed in more or less spontaneously developed structures that attempt to boost pedestrian friendly environment.

In the first part of this paper the transformation processes of New Belgrade's urban spaces are identified and mapped in order to explain their political, social and economical background. As this is not the main goal of this paper, it is just a general overview of these changes continuity. The second part is typology of existing structures in New Belgrade, which is done according to morphological patterns of different characteristics that represents two styles: modern and traditional urban block, and their combinations. Exactly these combinations are emphasized in the third part of the research, as case studies specific for this urban area as well as examples where pedestrian movement and its quality can be investigated. The aim is to determine the level of *human-scale* design in exact space. Direct indicators are distribution of activities, density along the paths, transparency of the openings and the width of footpaths. At the end, concluding remarks are presented and some recommendations for its further development in contemporary manner of renewal and sustainability are proposed.

4 TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES OF NEW BELGRADE'S URBAN SPACES

Being set in the crucial historical period of the 1940s, New Belgrade was one of the most significant urban developments in Yugoslavia of that time, in which the principles of the modern movement in city planning and architecture have been consistently applied. Although ideas, ideology and concepts of the modern movement were dominant in the conceiving, planning, designing and realizing the modern city of New Belgrade, they were constantly and significantly transformed and adapted following the changes of the historical, socio-political and economical conditions (Blagojevic, 2004). Having in mind this contention, New Belgrade's urban transformations can be put generally in several phases.

4.1 Representation

Initial ideas and plans regarding territory of New Belgrade were the erection of the new (part of the) city on the left bank of the river Sava, between the historical centres of Belgrade and Zemun. The goal was to represent adequate political, economical and cultural center of a rising state Yugoslavia. Following principles of the *CIAM* and Le Corbusier *Athens charter*, new city was planned as a city of cars (Fig. 1, part 1). Thus, its urban structure has been defined with orthogonal grid, open large plots with built structures in greenery and clear demarkation of functions and traffic. Its open spaces are strictly divided into those for pedestrians and motor vehicles. At the same time, that was a conceptual phase, a period which ends in 1962 (Blagojevic, 2004).

4.2 Rationalisation

Regarding the area of the site (around 4.000 ha), the fathers of New Belgrade were faced with massive constructions that should be built in a very short time. That was the main reason why they started to look for an alternative solution. Industrialisation of construction had enabled short periods of building and its less costs, as well as opening new fabrics and labour jobs (Fig. 1, part 2). It was an era of socialism, in which these concepts have been perfectly fitted.

4.3 Stagnation

Due to the political, social and economical quakes during 70s and first half of the 80s arising as a consequence from the break-up of Yugoslavia with the Soviet Union and the Eastern block, the process of planning and construction of New Belgrade has abruptly stopped (Fig. 1, part 3). Although the main morphological contours were built by this time, maybe this is the reason why the central core, which was the vital and most important part in debates and planning of New Belgrade, has stayed an empty land as a symbol of some passed time and unfinished project. In new Master plan from 1972 leading urban planners were persistent in applying modern principles in New Belgrade's urban tissue. Having in mind the advantages over other parts of Belgrade, the result was huge block plots, monotonous appearance and extensive open spaces without human scale. The citizens considered this part as a transit zone between two historical cores, which indicates that the triumph of Modernism became the total opposite of its original idea – it was no longer the place of connection and progress, but rather the 'hibernation' and 'disconnection' zone (Stupar, 2006).



4.4 Permutation

Having in mind all above written, in 1986 an international competition was announced under the name “The Future of New Belgrade”. As a result, most of proposed designs denied that the main axis was the one that appeared in initial plans, between new planned railway station and administrative state building in central part of New Belgrade, as a parallel line to old parts of the city. They offered solutions with the main boulevard connecting the old core of Belgrade and Zemun, which is actually a tangent line to this central area (Fig. 1, part 4). It can be said that this was a turning point in modern city planning of New Belgrade, as this was the last time when it was reconsidered in a whole. Everything after that was only designing one plot or a building in it.

4.5 Isolation

After 1989, when Berlin wall fell down and Europe started to union its members, Yugoslavia disintegrated. Thus, during 90s Serbia was under strong embargo. Once again, political, social and economical context had influenced the space of New Belgrade, which reflected in inevitable isolation and foreran new strong transformations of society as well as morphology of its open spaces (fig. 1, part 5). It can be said for certain that competition from 1986 and this new general situation influenced paradigm shift in New Belgrade: here we can find first attempts to transform the city of cars in pedestrian friendly environment. The new postmodern streams that emerged in the proffession set off an imperative of ‘thickening’ the urban structure of New Belgrade: make streets to be more human in scale with contents easy accessible to pedestrians, reconsider scale of the megablocks and return to traditional ones, introduce polifunctionality through new activities such as cultural, commercial, bussines, etc.

4.6 Transition

At the turn of centuries, political and economical condition slowly started to stabilize the country. The society is in strong transition towards democracy, which more or less produced massive changes in planning practice. Stimulated by international trends, this area has commenced its new lifecycle and its disadvantages turned out to be potentials: the low index of built areas has been recognized as spaces for large development projects, while infrastructure and connectivity provides good backup. Most of the projects designed and constructed then were based on the Master plan from 1962, but two significant points should be emphasized here. The first one is that this new structures respects only the horizontal plan not the vertical as well. The second is its direct consequence: New Belgrade’open spaces takes on the contours of traditional concepts (Fig. 1, part 6). It gets facades along the streets, which interferes with original urban scheme. In this *hybrid* spaces now is clear distinction between physical structures that represents two different epochs: the modern and traditional.

4.7 Corporation

Although in good starting position again, this is the point when it can be said that New Belgrade’open spaces has no clear development strategy or urban pattern to succeed in its path to contemporary city. Open spaces, observed as no-ones land, are being sold to big corporations to build there (Fig. 1, part 7). Companies from Europe, Asia and North America have been investing millions in construction their office space. Percieved *monotony* in New Belgrade was ‘overcome’with several shoping malls as new attractors. It is finally becoming the bussines center of Belgrade, but still the attempts to closer the city to pedestrians are on low level of individual cases (buildings). The new Master plan form 2003 succeeded in zoning and mixing the functions and activities, but failed to apply some of the principles considering pedestrian friendly environment.

4.8 Reactuelization of debates

In past few years the public and proffessional eyes are focusing on New Belgrade. Many debates, workshops, round tables are organized to reconsider issues of existing/future transformations and possibilities for its renewal. Many competitions were announced, such as the one that reconsider the central core and its original axis from initial plans (Fig. 1, part 8).

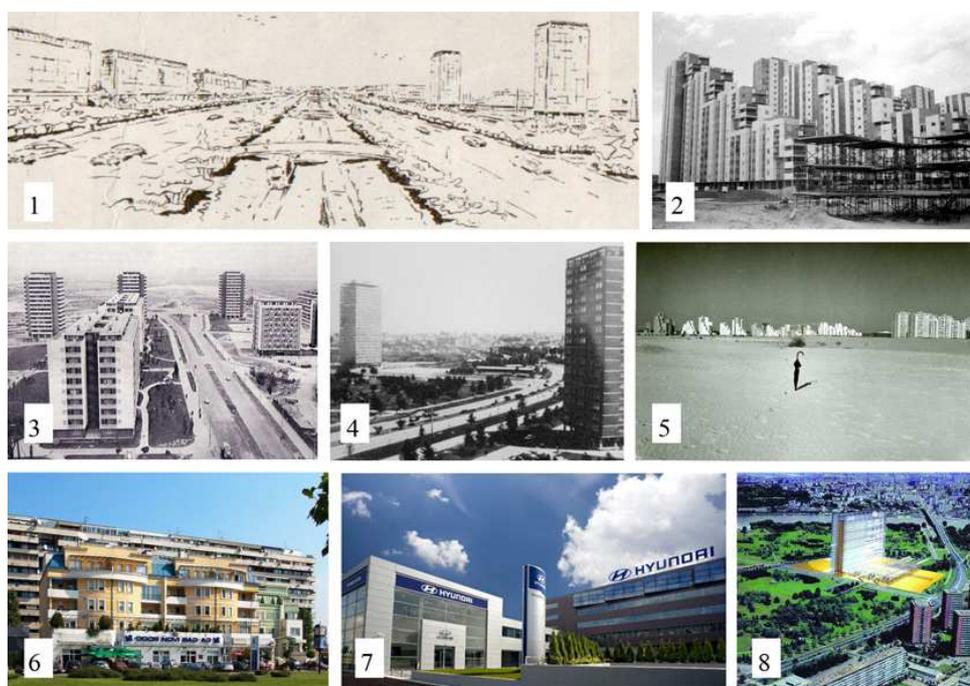


Fig. 1: Phases of New Belgrade's transformations: 1- representation, 2 – racionalization, 3 – stagnation, 4 – permutation, 5 – isolation, 6 – transition, 7 – corporation, 8 – reactuelizatin of debates.

In spite of all written above, these phases cannot be precisely divided into periods. They are here distinguished in general for the purpose of explaining the research and history background of this particular area. Finally, like in every changing process of the city, they are overlapping in many ways, in historical as well as in political, economical, and morphological.

5 TYPOLOGY OF EXISTING URBAN STRUCTURE

Having in mind present constellation, we are witnessing 'the crisis of non-concept'. The new development can be seen persistently street by street and block by block. The open spaces of housing blocks are rapidly being occupied by the commercial drive of the private capital expanding its boundaries into the public areas. Demarcation lines are being set between the physical structures that represents two epochs. Consequently, New Belgrade is today a place full of contradictions, which coexist and overlap, creating a surreal environment (Stupar, 2006).

New Belgrade' urban structure is facing with changes in its density, function and overall narrative that had for almost half a century. In search for continuity, its empty land is filling with buildings which are facades for traditional urban streets. However, without any pattern or organised scheme, continuity is hard to achieve. Thus, there are several types of urban blocks that can be selected (Table 1):

Type A - original block – blocks built according to original plan from the 60s in pattern independent of the road layout, with free-standing buildings of residential accommodation in 'sun, space and greenery' without any new interventions in open public places.

Type B - hybrid 1 – blocks built according to original plan from the 60s, but with informal new built structures without considering existing urban pattern, density, function etc.

Type C1 and C2 – hybrid 2 - blocks built according to original plan from the 60s (as previous) with new built structures in 'traditional manner' in places provided with original plan for services.

For type C1, horizontal regulation of new structures is in coordination with the plan, but its height is not. Original plan propose ground and first floor, new buildings have even six stories. Function is also in disbalance with the original plan.

For type C2, new structures belong to the original block, but with entirely new morphological scheme and function.

Type D - new built blocks - built in last two decades in New Belgrade' empty spaces with characteristics of traditional urban street, internal courtyards etc. combining residential, commercial and service activities.



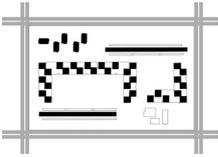
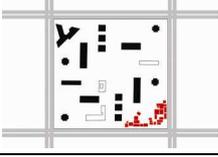
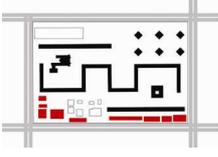
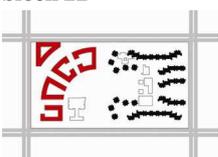
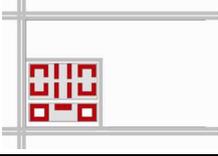
block types		modern tissue	new built structure
type A / original block / block 30 	streets	inherited hierarchy of the street network; pedestrian street inside the block on plateau above terrain, garage and car traffic on ground	/
	open space	external and in view (under the pillotis); inherited problem of the public space in sense of inadequately maintenance	/
	activities	dominantly housing , minor activities are on the upper floor in a gallery	/
type B / hybrid 1 / block 1 	streets	pedestrian paths inside the block; car traffic outside	outside the block, along two dominant traffic streets
	open space	external and in view with low maintenance and mostly occupied for car parking	internal and hidden, created inside the new built structure in form of courtyard
	activities	dominantly housing with focal node in one corner in sense of local community center	dominantly commercial and services in ground floor
type C1 / hybrid 2 / block 21 	streets	block is surrounded with wide streets of high traffic flow; there are some secondary streets inside the block together with parking	outside the block, longitudinally positioned along frequent traffic streets
	open space	external and in view, mostly with low maintenance	still external as anomaly due to the hybrid morphological characteristic, in form of pedestrian sidewalk
	activities	dominantly housing with few examples of commercial and services in ground floor, and two schools inside the block	mix-use (housing, commercial, shopping, services, business etc.) mostly in ground floor
type C2 / hybrid 2 / block 22 	streets	block is surrounded with wide streets of high traffic flow (highway on one side); there are some secondary streets inside the block together with parking	outside the block (the original big block plot is divided into smaller ones that are formed by new buildings in traditional urban pattern)
	open space	external , with attempt of 'humanizing' the space with internal pedestrian promenade	internal and hidden, created inside the new built structure in form of courtyards
	activities	dominantly housing with focal node inside the block in terms of local community center	mix-use (housing, commercial, services, business etc.) mostly in ground floor
type D / new built block / block 12 	streets	/	outside the block
	open space	empty	internal and hidden (the courtyards)
	activities	/	mix-use mostly on ground floor

Table 1: Typology of existing urban structures in New Belgrade according to their morphological elements and activities.

Having in mind its historical background and its built structure today, it can be said that New Belgrade has continuity in transforming its urban space. Although conceived as city of cars, from the beginning of existence it has been slowly changing into city for pedestrians. Nevertheless, there are only several examples (that will be shown here) in which it actually succeeded in getting the 'human scale'.

6 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR SPATIAL ELEMENTS – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Having in mind the assumption that the quality of open public spaces is proportional to the number of its users, further research will focus on the presentation of spatial elements which encourage pedestrian movement. In this way, emphasis is placed on the analysis of activity levels and physical characteristics of new built structure's ground floor. The research is based on theoretical framework within the domain of urban design, in which the works of several authors are important.

Arguing the affirmation of spontaneous urban development, Jane Jacobs presented the idea of organic city development, which would drastically reduce and destimulate the need of using cars in favour of walking and public transport (Jacobs, 1977). She believes this can be achieved by installing the principle of diversity

in the form of various urban facilities, structures built in different periods of time, increasement of density and reducement of apartment block's size.

Bill Hillier in his book *The Social Logic of Space* and *Space is the Machine* presents a general theory of relations between people and space in urban areas and discusses various aspects of space and its usage.

Similar views were presented by Jan Gehl (Gehl, and others, 2006). They established a list of features (function, transparency, scale, etc.) that are relevant for pedestrians moving at a speed of 5km/h. In this case, as the ground is more interesting and diverse, urban environment is more attractive. In addition, the focus here is on the text *Close encounters between buildings*, in which he relies on the characteristics of human perceptual apparatus. In relation to the context, Gehl observed frame of perception - urban scene - which is defined by the following elements: scale and rhythm, transparency, appeal to multiple senses, texture, diversity of activities and vertical rhythm of facades (Gehl, Johansen Kaefer / Reigstad, 2006).

The intention of international COST Actions 358 framework: *Pedestrian Quality Needs* and C6: *Town and Infrastructure Planning for Urban Safety and Quality for Pedestrians*, as well as the Interreg III Project *Spatial metro*, was to determine approaches which aimed to promote pedestrian movement as a sustainable transport mode and to identify measures which improve the quality of pedestrian movement and its direct environment. The basic principle of these projects is based on the established green hierarchy of traffic participants, where the pedestrian movement is at the top (Fig. 2).

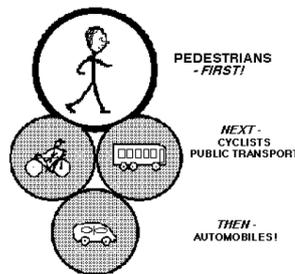


Fig. 2: Green hierarchy of traffic participants (taken from the front page of the project COST Action C6).

Research results in the COST Action 358 suggest that the basic measure, relating the functional requirements for pedestrian movement to the physical environment, is qualitative space aimed to motivate people walking (Methorts and others, 2010). Pikora systematized the conclusions and identified the key factors of physical environment: facilities, security, aesthetics and destination (table 2). (Pikora and others, 2003)

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS			
FUNCTIONAL Direct route Gradient Intersection design Intersection distance Kerb type Other access point Path continuity Path design Path location Path maintenance Path surface Path width Street design Street type Street width Traffic control devices Traffic speed Traffic volume Type of path Vehicle parking	SAFETY Crossing aids Crossing Lighting Verge width Surveillance	AESTHETIC Cleanliness Sights Garden maintenance Parks Pollution Trees Architecture Street maintenance	DESTINATION Local facilities Parks Public transport Services Shops Vehicle parking facilities Bike parking facilities
↓ WALKING/CYCLING IN LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD			

Table 2: Physical environment factors (adjusted from Pikora, T., Giles-Corti, B., Bull, F., Jamrozik, K., & Donovan, R. (2003).

In addition to this, the visions of these projects are the following: the pedestrian is the measure of the city and its traffic, people can walk freely and safely in a beautiful and clean city, the number of injured or killed pedestrians must be kept to a minimum and that pedestrians are not in a subordinate position in relation to vehicles (Gunnarsson 2001).



It can be said that these authors share opinions regarding the characteristics of the physical aspects of pedestrian environment and the effect it has on the choice of walking as a form of movement in the cities. Based on this, a study has been conducted about ground floor character in some parts of the Boulevard Zoran Djindjic in New Belgrade. The main objective of this research is to show the transformation taking place within the urban fabric of New Belgrade in public open spaces, which' measure is a man, not the car.

7 CASE STUDY: BLOCKS 1 AND 21 ALONG THE ZORAN DJINDJIC STREET

In his study of New Belgrade urban structure, Perovic analyzed the relationship between the block dimension and the built density in historical Belgrade core and New Belgrade, through implementation of the historical Belgrade structure in New Belgrade and vice versa (Fig. 10). *The result is a tedious, rambling space with completely lost human scale, the space that looks more like a scheme, or a sketch that has been built, then as part of the city in which people should live. (Perovic, 1985)*



Figure 3: Loosing the human scale (Perović, 1985).

Case study includes some parts of Zoran Djindjic Street, which is one of the main traffic arteries of New Belgrade. The particular importance for this research was parts within block 1 and block 21. The analyzed part of the block 1 is characterized by spontaneously informal created physical structure, while the structure along the axis which belongs to block 21 shows some (but not all) characteristics according to the Plan from 1962.

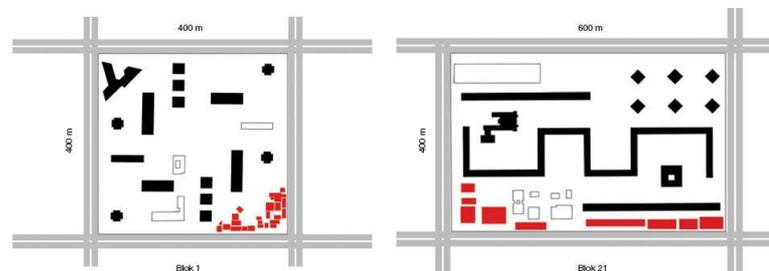


Figure 4: Diagram of built structures in blocks 1 and 21: red marked parts are the subjects of this research.

The aim of this research is to determine the characteristics of the existing physical structure that emerged according to the human scale. The focus is on monitoring the activities and physical characteristics of ground floors, with special reference to Gehl's criteria of function and scale (Gehl, Johansen Kaefer / Reigstad, 2006). Within the criteria of functions, facilities and specifics of the border areas are observed, while the scale is analysed through the number of units (vertical division in ground floors) and rhythm.

Results of the case studies were compared with the categories of scale and function evaluation in the ground floor facades along the pedestrian flows. By clasifying them, the five categories were noticed following next characteristics: the number of content units at a 100m distance, the diversity of content and openness of belonging ground floor facade toward the public space. According to this categorization, the most attractive and most lively streets have content of 15-20 units each 100m, a variety of contents in the ground and transparency of ground floor facade which exceeds 60% of its area. In such environments, the scene observed by the pedestrian changes every 5 seconds during a walk.

7.1 Block 1

Designed in 1958-1959 and realized until 1963, residential block 1 is one of the first blocks in New Belgrade constructed according to the adopted Master plan. Block 1 is basically a quadrant, sizes 400x400m. Residential buildings can be classified in two basic types: towers – as vertical dominants, and longitudinal

buildings, as the main visual element. Facilities height is low (ground and first floor), placed in one corner of a block. Built structures freely stand in open space created as greenery

According to the original urban design, the dominant function is housing, while the second content is manifested in the form of the local community centre (for gathering and social interaction of local population). It is significant to note that the ground floor of these buildings is not active.



Figure 5: Comparison between block 1 original plan (1958-59) and existing situation (2010).

According to valid regulations, block 1 is a heritage site under the *full protection*, which means the preservation of the created fund in a whole, without any intervention. The possibility of function change within the individual buildings is not excluded, under the condition of preserving the authenticity and architectural quality of buildings (Master plan of Belgrade, 2003). Nevertheless, in the last decade of the 20th century, informal physical structures have occurred in form of low-storey buildings (ground and first floor) in which there are commercial and service facilities.



Figure 6: Part of longitudinal façade along Zoran Djindjic Street in block 1.

The length of analyzed part along the Zoran Djindjic Street in block 1 (Fig. 13) is 120m. Analysis of content units number in ground floors of buildings has shown that 7 content units are on this route, which would correspond to the rhythm of 6 units of 100 m long street fronts. Dominant function in ground floors is service facilities including: 4 restaurants, 2 offices (dental and medical) and a video shop. Based on these indicators, it was concluded that the activities in ground floor along this route have the character of modest variations. Finally, the analysis of transparency, openness of these units, and the size of the openings on the ground floor facade, determined that this part of the route is largely passive (about 30% are openings in relation to the ground floor facades surface). Under the passive unit are considered to be units with less than 50% of the openings of total corresponding facade surface on the buildings ground floor.

7.2 Block 21

Housing block 21 is the first implemented in the central core of New Belgrade, according to the Master plan for New Belgrade in 1962. This block is the only one of nine blocks that were realized totally by the plan, while the other 8 were transformed their implementation. Block 21 is rectangular in shape, in dimension of 600x400m.

Residential buildings in Block 21 present three compositional types: 16-story skyscrapers at the beginning of the block as the main physical dominant, 10-story longitudinal buildings along the main boulevards and 4-story building - meander in the middle of the block, in combination with low school buildings. Although in a central part of New Belgrade, block 21 remained for a long period of time without any seriously developed central city function.



Figure 7: Comparative photographs of planned (1962) and existing (2010) situation in block 21.

As a whole, block 21 is under the partial protection, which means *preservation and promotion of the authentic values of urban planning and modern architecture* (Master plan of Belgrade, 2003). However, during 90s and after, there have been built structures which respects horizontal regulation of the original plan, but not the vertical as well. Instead of 2-story buildings of commercial and service activities, there were constructed structures of even 6 stories. The newly emerging structures are residential and business, while the ground floors are commercial and service.



Figure 8: Longitudinal section of analyzed part along Zoran Djindjic Street in block 21.

The length of the analyzed part along the Zoran Djindjic Street is 240 m (Fig. 15). Based on the analysis of content units in the ground floors of buildings, it was determined that there are 37 units in length, which corresponds to the rhythm of 15 content units in 100m long route. By analyzing the content in the ground floors, it was found that commercial and service activities of different character dominates (coffee shops, pharmacies, optics, shop for car parts, supermarkets, fast foods, tobacco shops, shoe store, etc.). Having in mind this, the conclusion is that there is great variation in ground activities. Analysis of the units openness, which is determined by the size of the opening in the building's ground floor, has shown that this part of the route can be considered active, since it has about 75% of the openings in the ground floor facade.

Research results presented in the table 3 show a comparative review of block 1 and block 21 characteristics mentioned above.

Criteria/Characteristic	Part of the route that belongs to block 1	Part of the route that belongs to block 21
The level of protection according the Belgrade Master Plan 2012	Under the regime of full protection	Under the partial protection
Level of respecting regulation law	Spontaneously and informal built physical structure	Physical structure partially respects regulations according to the Master plan from 1962 (in horizontal sense)
Length of the analyzed route	120 m	240 m
Rhythm of content units in building ground floors	6 units in 100 m	15 units in 100m
Characteristics of activities in ground floors	Modest variation in activity	Large variation in activity
Ground floor openness to a public space	30% surface area in comparison with total ground floor façade surface	75% surface area in comparison with total ground floor façade surface
Ground floor activity in comparison to the openness	passive	active

Table 3: Comparative review of analyzed elements in block 1 and block 21.

Although at first sight the characteristics of the path fits the pedestrian environment, research has shown that new built part of block 1 is unsuitable in terms of pedestrian movement. The reasons are inadequate rhythm of content units on the ground and their monofunctional character. This means that it attracts fewer users, mainly restaurants and office visitors. In addition to this, this type of construction has the character of land acquisition in open public spaces by private investors (owners). Having in mind that today there is a new Detailed regulation plan for this part of the block (which propose a housing and office building), a recommendation would be more content units in ground floors (15-20 units in 100m), with open windows to the street and large variety of facilities.

On the other hand, analyzed path and its characteristics in block 21 fit in the category A, the pedestrian environment by Gehl. However, more attention should be paid to details and enhancement of the area.

The above interventions would have resulted in stimulation of pedestrian movement in the observed area. Thus, the social interaction between New Belgrade inhabitants would increase, which allows the creation of local centres in the area. Eventually, it would result in improvement of life quality in this part of town.

8 CONCLUSION

Following this research, some guidelines for qualitative urban design which can make this place more livable, pedestrian-friendly and, thus, in human scale, are:

- morphological compability – new built structures in coordination with the existing ones (coordination in style, proportion, horizontal and vertical regulation, relation to each other etc.),
- variations in activities – more diverse and attractive urban functions,
- stimulation of pedestrian-friendly environment – following the basic principles and elements of 5km/h theory,
- creation of local centers – improvement of life quality by enabling interactions between blocks that are initially not connected.

Although it has already become a place of numerous paradoxes, transformations and mutations, New Belgrade is still unfinished project, which lacks strategic consideration of sensitive reconstruction issues, notwithstanding its references to the values of particular modernist buildings, sites and open block character of its urban structure. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide thorough analysis of socio-economic and environmental factors, instead of considering its space as an empty land without any heritage.

Bearing in mind they are not subject of this research, general guidelines that can be used in creating development strategy could be:

- prevention of illegal land usurpation by private investors,
- thus, establishing partnership between authorities and other profit and non-profit organizations (owners, heritage protection institutions, developers and the most important – host cities' communities),
- encourage creating 'cultural landscape' in accordance with the european conventions,
- strengthen the connections with old parts of the city (for example, boosting construction along the main boulevards that connect Belgrade and Zemun, and keeping internal block spaces in original scheme as a heritage site; creating cultural, infrastructure, community or 'green' networks on the city level).

It is of great importance to finally 'deal' with the existing situation of New Belgrade's urban structure in order to achieve stability and new round of lifecycles in sustainable manner of renewal. Otherwise, it will remain the *blind spot* of denial and, at the end, unsuccessful finished project.

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