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# MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

Construction and Governance of  
'Unhygienic Roma Settlements' in Belgrade.  
An Anthropological Investigation in  
Urban Citizenship Rights

Verfasserin

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Wien, 2013

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 066 810

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:

Masterstudium Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie

Betreuerin / Betreuer:

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In Belgrade 43% of the residential area is covered with informal housing, which is for 35% inhabited by young families with insufficient income to obtain formal housing, followed by refugees comprising 23 percent and Roma accounting for 18 percent (Ministry of Capital Investment of Serbia and Montenegro 2004). In Belgrade, as well as other Serbian cities, informal settlements strongly developed in the course of the post-World War II industrialization and immigration from rural areas to cities. As Macura describes (2009) in this first phase the local authorities did not stop the construction activities as the city was in need for the labour force and there were not enough housing units or infrastructure to accommodate these newcomers, especially those “poor and unskilled” (Macura 2009:5). In case of some informal settlements local authorities explicitly encouraged the illegal construction in territories zoned as industrial areas, or on land dedicated for street systems to be build, “in order to reduce demands for social housing” (Macura 2009:12). This was especially the case during the 1990s when about 160.000 IDPs and refugees came to Belgrade and only the smallest part found shelter in collective centres. However, some of these settlements became progressively formalised, like the suburban settlement of Kaludjerica, which is one prominent example from Belgrade. Located in the municipality of Grocka it is since the late 1980s one of the fastest growing settlements in Belgrade that accommodated especially the influx of the refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo. The settlement is completely built without building permit by its inhabitants. Nevertheless, most inhabitants obtained the land property and negotiated connections to urban infrastructure (streets, sewage, telephone etc.) (cf. Tsenkova 2007). Another example for formalisation in the 1990s is the then mostly Roma inhabited Orlovsko settlement that belongs to the municipality of Mirijevo in Belgrade. Being threatened by demolition for the sake of infrastructure projects between 1950 and 1995, in the beginning of the 90s its inhabitants started an initiative for the legalisation of the settlement. Its actual legalisation in a Belgrade City Assembly meeting in 1994, however, was strongly affected by the engagement of a designer team that had won the international Holcim Award for Sustainable Community Development for their regularization plan for the settlement. Orlovsko is one of the first (and still one of the only) legalized Roma settlements in Serbia.

With the new Law on Planning and Construction (2003) the *ex post facto* official acknowledgement of informal settlements became more an institutionalized procedure and upgrading has become the state's dominant strategy towards informal settlements, i.e. the transfer of property rights and their connection to urban infrastructure. However, in case of some settlements, especially those inhabited by Roma, the municipalities show reluctance in formalizing and upgrading (Petrovic 2011). Located in New Belgrade at the river Sava the three biggest of those settlements became obstacles to the great city development projects during the last five years. Under supervision of the two most important sponsors (European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Bank for Development and Reconstruction (EBDR)) and Amnesty International, the Secretary for Child and Social Protection of the City of Belgrade coordinated the resettlement of the whole Gazela settlement (app. 140 families) to subsidized containers on state owned land at six different locations in suburban areas of the city<sup>1</sup> and some were even completely expelled from Belgrade. After that resettlement a series of forced evictions occurred concerning a total of 2639 persons, respectively 625 families from 17 inner city locations<sup>2</sup>. Within these three years the City did not establish a model that regulates the provision of alternative accommodation for most of these evictions and people are arbitrarily provided with containers, or left homeless in Belgrade. In case they are IDPs they are brought to the remaining collective centers or if they have some connection to a place in southern Serbia (birth place, former residency) they are expelled to that place. On the other hand in case of the evictions with EIB involvement the provided containers are criticized as not adequate as permanent alternative accommodation and European Commission funds social housing that should replace five container settlements.

Both the Serbian Government and involved NGOs talk about the resettlement with biopolitical semantics (cf. Rose 2001), using them either to point out the need to dissolve the 'unhygienic settlements' in New Belgrade, or to criticize the poor living conditions in the new containers. The Roma and the question after adequate housing for them is being prominently discussed not only by Bank Watch, Amnesty International and the European Roma Rights Centre, but has also reached the Action Plan of the Serbian Government to Apply for EU Candidate Status (2011) – as the only issue on housing for poor at all.

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<sup>1</sup> Mladenovac (55 km from New Belgrade), Barajevo (33 km), Makiš (13 km), Rakovica (14 km), Krnjača (12 km) and Orlovsko Naselje in Mirijeva (12 km).

<sup>2</sup> Calculation by Praxis NGO, including evictions between April 2009 and April 2012.

In my thesis I treat two interrelated questions: first, *how ‘unhygienic settlements’ settlements in Belgrade are constructed in difference to other informal settlements* and *what do the politics of displacement and settling in containers tell about the way they are governed?* Secondly, *which subjectivities are formed in that and which chains for the urban poor to claim their right to the city arise?*

## 2. Theoretical Framework/ State of the Arts

According to Roy (2005) informal settlements are mainly discussed in two ways. First, they are regarded as an indicator of crisis: talking about slum-cities as characteristic of mega-cities in the ‘global south’ goes with an implicit opposition to global cities (cf. this critique in Robinson 2006, Varley N.N). On the other hand, informal settlements are romanticized as the creative, bottom-up part of the urbanization in the course globalization (cf. Neuwirth 2005, de Soto 1989). In both these traditions informal settlements are depicted as being emergent phenomena in zones where the state with its regulative policies is absent. In contrast to this assumption, I want to take into view, which sovereignties are involved in the production of spaces of informality in urban settlements to thus also understand chains for citizenship right claims of their inhabitants.

Roy (2005:147) describes informal settlements as zones of “exception from the formal order of urbanization” in that to emphasize their ambiguous relation to an imaginary formal legal order of urbanization. Whereas in times of neoliberal restructuring ‘formal’ urbanization becomes increasingly based on the uncertainties of entrepreneurial governance (cf. Hubbard/Hall 1998), urban policy makers seem to have clear vision what informal urbanization is about. As Roy (ibid.) summarizes **(a) informal settlements are regarded as homogeneous as they are defined only in terms of what they lack** (denial of social stratification and degrees of legality/illegality within), **(b) as informal settlements are supposed to be zones completely bereft of formal legislation**, as well as formal economy and legal system of property titles, those incrementally developed forms of rule and order, economic activity and systems for the regulation of property interests are ignored, **(c) ascribing the concentration of poor population in informal settlements to the settlements isolation from the formal and legal order ignores the fact that deprived populations are produced by this very order.** This description suggests to regard ‘informality’ as a tag for ‘abstract space’ (cf. Lefebvre 1974). **Abstract space** is homogeneous, and it denies internal differentiation and thus supports the imagination of sovereignty of a certain order (cf.

Brenner/ Elden 2009). This very imagination puts a sovereign in the position to execute its order. Abstract space has an enabling effect on the sovereign standing in the center of the order the abstract space indicates. In that 'informality' is not merely a representational practice, but it legitimates to govern certain zones of the city in a specific way.

In order to signify this specific way of governing, one could talk about a developmentalist governmentality through which informality, once established as a zone exterior to the order established by the state, becomes a field of bio-political intervention. The emergence of this governmentality is traced back by Varley (N.N.) in a Foucauldian way to the Victorian Britain where the term residuum "was used to describe both the faecal matter constituting the sanitary problem and members of the lowest social classes" (Varley N.N.:3) – a classificational association for which actually "[s]ocial reformers were responsible [...] converting the poor into 'slum-dwellers' [and] subject to sanitary intervention" (ibd.). Different to bio-politics, which crafts society as an organic whole, developmentalist governmentality establishes informality as field that has to be opened up to state intervention, respectively that has to be 'incorporated'. In that interventions are imbued with the 'will to improve' that supposes that its targets do have certain useful characteristics (like community life, or good sense of business) that become the basis for these subjects' socialization to mature citizens (cf. Li 2007).

Here, the question comes up which sovereignty/ies is/are involved in the construction of informality and governance of the populations labeled as inhabiting these zones? My research is theoretically framed by the current debate on the **fragmentation of state sovereignty** (both distributive and disciplining) by transnational migration, human rights regimes, neo-liberalisation and the different trans- and international agencies such as business corporations, NGOs or supra-national coalitions such as EU and UN. Different to Benhabib (2007) who considers how the neoliberal empire on the international scale could be fought back with the cosmopolitan norms of human rights, or Soysal (1998) who regards human rights regimes as supportive for those vulnerable populations that are not protected by a national state, I would not a priori regard some of the above listed sovereignties as enabling and others as dominating. As my research question concerns the construction and governing of informality, I am more cautious about the effects that these abstract regimes might have. Regarding such ambivalent actors such as World Bank<sup>3</sup> or in my case EIB and EBDR, who seemingly without conflict unite human rights and the neoliberal regime, it is hardly predictable what kind of

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<sup>3</sup> cf. Buchanan/Pahuja (2008) on the implementation of human rights in the funding policies of the World Bank.

regimes these agencies might establish in particular sites – empowering or working in the direction of more inequalities. Here Roy (2005) describes very vividly how in Mumbai the World Bank acts as an agency that first, initiated forceful resettlement in cooperation with the government, and, later on, was addressed by local activists (concerned by this very measure) in order to reach higher standards for the resettlement process. To understand processes such as these it is fruitful to regard state territory not as homogeneous legal space that is cut through by international regimes, but rather to look at the concrete arenas for political struggle that are established by a certain configuration of agencies in a particular site. This is to regard policies not as unambiguous tools invented by and dedicated to one strategy, but rather to see that policies, “once created [...] often migrate into new contexts and settings, and acquire a life of their own that has consequences that go beyond the original intention” (Shore/Wright 2011:3).

The new fragmentations of territories by multiple, overlapping and competing regimes and agencies bring about new grounds of citizenship right(s claims). Citizenships rights are no longer stably set, regulated by fixed legal status of belonging or not belonging, but rather citizenship as a category opens up to other than strictly legal definitions and becomes a more flexible basis for right claims (Holston/Appadurai 1996, Ong 1999, Brodie 2008). Holston in this context talks about insurgent citizenship: “political transformations that occur when the **conviction of having a right to the city** turns residents into active citizens [...] that confront entrenched national regimes of citizen inequality” (Holston 2011:3). These right claims are based not only on “knowing what rights adhere to a particular status. Above all, it means having to prove to the proper authorities that you possess the right status to deserve its rights” (Holston 2011:21).

However, this ‘proving to the proper authorities that you possess the right status’ becomes increasingly complicated. In my case international organizations do not only come in the picture through funds at the national scale, but through the funding of infrastructure projects, which leads to the emergence of project affected territories and populations which are objected to special rights and regulations. In this context juridification as described by Randeria/Grunder (2011) is also a fertile concept, which describes how different agencies come to work together in a particular site creating arenas for political struggle: “Juridification denotes the creation and interpretation of rules, regulations and soft laws instruments by a range of actors – public and private, national and international. Policies and procedures of international financial institutions, development agencies and humanitarian organisations

belong to an ill-defined domain at the intersection of international private law, public international law, technical norms and soft laws” (Randeria/Grunder 2011:187). This increasing juridification has not only emancipating effects for the right claiming processes, but also bring “greater legal uncertainty for citizens, who are forced to navigate a maze of unfamiliar institutions with unclear, overlapping jurisdiction” (Randeria/Grunder 2011:188). These processes dilute the power and accountability of elected representatives and make policies more and more replace politics (cf. ibd.).

However, this fragility of rights does not only concern the very act of right claims but the basis of belonging or not belonging to a political community, i.e. the ‘right to claim rights’. With her concept of graduated sovereignty Ong (2006) depicts how market based decisions of the state re-organize “technologies of governing and of disciplining, of inclusion and exclusion, of giving value or denying value to human conduct” and thus ultimately unsettle “the notion of citizenship as a legal status rooted in the nation-state, and in stark opposition to a condition of statelessness” (Ong 2006:5f.). In the case of Eastern Europe the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy has been the dominant reform instrument preceding social policy prescription by the European Union especially in the area of labor market services (cf. Deacon et al. 2007). Related to this reform package van Baar (2009) in a recent study showed how a low-threshold employment program that was meant to re-integrate those completely excluded from the (formal) labor market, enduringly entrapped an already marginalized Roma population in the position of a thus created cheap and exploitable labor force that the local companies willingly included as permanent supplement for regular staff.

In that the responsibility for social politics and the division of deserving and undeserving subject goes more to the level of municipalities:

“Other than the distribution of food on a daily, ongoing basis at municipal soup kitchens, municipal support to the poor does not have any permanence or reliability for the beneficiaries. This is in conformity with the nature of the resources available for poverty relief at the level of the municipality. [...] In fact, only a small fraction of the funding for social assistance comes from the municipal budget and the rest [...] is provided by charitable donations. This type of activity carried out by political authorities is not without problem, as it constitutes an area where negotiations of a dubious legality or legitimacy are carried out [...] with charity at least partially replacing bribery” (Bugra/Keyder 2005:32f.)

With regard to informal settlements of urban poor, Bugra/Keyder (2005) describe how municipalities gained power in the area of urban construction and land development activities. Market-oriented development strategies in this domain bring about special development-investment relations through which municipalities gain the necessary capital through the

marketing of land. However, in this process policies that were originally drafted for the squatter regularization become subverted to frameworks for middle class housing construction (Bugra 1998).

For my purpose it is now interesting to ask further, what kind of grounds for right claims do informal settlements provide under conditions of increasing fragility of the right to claim rights through the juridification of social policy and dependency of social assistance to municipalities' ability to attract charity funds and investors? According to Blomley (2008) to conceptualize the position of the urban poor in cities driven by neoliberalism we have to rethink our concepts of property. For him the selling off inner city spaces is too much conceptualized in terms of the liberal economic division between the 'public' authority of the state and the "sphere of formally voluntary relations between 'private' individuals" (Blomley 2008:321) that engage as legally equal partners in economic activity. For Blomley the position of the urban poor has to be understood in relation to a different concept of property; one based a common property interest: "This interest is a collective one [...] and also a clearly localized one ('the community'). This property interest [...], moreover, is not one of alienation or transfer. It cannot be monetarized but is, rather, predicated to use, occupation, domicile (see Radin, 1986) and inherent need" (Blomley 2008:316). Such an understanding positions the claims of the poor in opposition to the private property regimes with their exclusionary logic and ascribes to them the morality of those who enact property not in an instrumental way, but "through a language of rights and justice" (Blomley 2008:318).

However, regarding informal settlements it is important to note that the vast absence of formal property titles does not equal the absence of (exclusionary) market mechanisms (cf. Roy 2005, Razzaz 1997). Like Razzaz (1997) pointed out, „the absence of land titles does not prevent squatters from renting or selling their houses“. Thus it becomes important to investigate the informal organization of property interests and ask "how information about land and housing markets is provided, how risk is reduced, and how enforcement is made effective" (Razzaz 1997). I follow T. Mitchell here in that to understand property as a „set of rules and sanctions that determine an individual's power to dispose of an object in the act of exchange. The rules also establish his or her power to exclude or limit the claims that others may make upon that object" (Mitchell 2002:11). It becomes clear that a monolithic understanding of property, as the legal property that is secured by the state, could be regarded as means to establish a certain sovereignty. First if we open the concept and decentralize our

understanding of property, we can see **contesting property regimes with different degrees of legitimacy**.

Here Bugra/Keyder (2005) illustrate the multifarious modes in which different property regimes work together, complement or oppose each other, f.e. when property titles are transferred in exchange for votes in local or national elections, or when economic growth strategies tied to practices of subcontracting and outsourcing intertwine formal and informal economy and blur the separation between the two. Thus, they make clear that the different regimes of property interests have to be analyzed in their interdependency. As Bugra (1998) argues, such a perspective makes it possible to see how informal settlements are not just a void in the legal system of the state, or zone of exception, but show fundamental workings of the state:

“In developing countries in general, as in particular in the case of Turkey, formal redistributive measures are replaced by informal reciprocity networks mobilized in the development of irregular settlements – which had come to be accepted as the common way of providing shelter for the urban poor before international organizations acknowledged and endorsed them as such” (Bugra 1998:306).

This is to regard informality not just as a form of zoning or representative practice to integrate into state administration what has developed outside of its realm, but rather to understand it as part of how the state (in negotiation with other agencies) approaches basic social problems like poverty or shortage of affordable housing and enacts political power games and economic growth.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **UNHYGIENIC ROMA SETTLEMENTS IN BELGRADE: A SITE OF ENCOUNTER BETWEEN URBAN AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLITICS**

*„Why should they [the Roma] have any priority over the other poor people without housing who live much longer in Belgrade. I have no chance as a citizen of Serbia without flat, employed and with no criminal background to get a bank loan with the income I earn, at the same time I read every day about newcomers in Belgrade that will get containers with guarantees to receive housing for free. I even do not have the right to compete with them for these flats. To which NGO should I address?“*  
(Citizen of Belgrade, quote from Petrovic 2011)

In this chapter I would like to show how informal Roma settlements emerge both in transnational EU and urban politics as a site of deprivation, underdevelopment and stronghold of unwanted migrants (to Western Europe/ from South Serbia to Belgrade) and thus open the conceptual field that has to be considered when analyzing the politics towards Roma settlements in Belgrade. I begin with the production of Roma settlements as a site for social inclusion politics as it is promoted through EU funds and organizations like OSCE. Whereas some might see the rise of Roma inclusion from the domestic issue to one of international interest as empowering, based on Kovats (2003) I turn to critical aspects of the politicization of Roma deprivation and inner city slums that emerged from the beginnings of the 2000s. He gives a critical reflection on the ethnic mobilization of Roma on the supra-national level, which would fuel disintegration of Roma from their co-citizens and make it even more unpopular for national bodies to spend funds or simply integrate them in the regular social care system. I show how informal settlements developed in Belgrade and how Roma settlements were increasingly treated separately under the term ‘unhygienic settlements’. The term unhygienic settlement is representative for these settlements forming a contested site of encounter between urban politics (struggles about public land, social housing and provision of infrastructure) and supra-nationally formed ratios of Roma inclusion.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN BELGRADE AFTER WWII**

In Belgrade 43% of the residential area is covered with informal housing, which is for 35% inhabited by young families with insufficient income to obtain formal housing, followed by refugees comprising 23 percent and Roma accounting for 18 percent (Ministry of Capital

Investment of Serbia and Montenegro 2004). In Belgrade, as well as other Serbian cities, informal settlements strongly developed in the course of the post-World War II industrialization. In that time Yugoslavia like in other socialist countries, systematically encouraged rural-urban migration through the development of incentives like “employment opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled workers in cities, by pursuing urban centric housing policy and organization of public services, as well as by under-investment of public funding in rural settlements” (Petovar 2003:5). However, the only form of growth that was foreseen in the ambitious urban plans was multi-store housing as produced in New Belgrade. In that newcomers who were not able to enter the official housing distribution, started to build houses agricultural land. One of the biggest settlements of that kind is Kaludjerica:

“Kaludjerica would accommodate all those that cannot penetrate the system from various reasons- they were not members of the Party, or were unqualified, and so on, and were not able to get apartment through official housing provision. So Kaludjerica was unofficially made for those who couldn’t penetrate official barriers; because the country had an ideology. Ideology had to be preserved, and allowing informal construction was a kind of vent for those that were not able to fit into the system. Part of the ideology was that private property does not exist, so it was impossible to allow that individual houses to be built on private plots.” (Vladimir Macura, urban planner, quoted according to Zerjav 2009:48)

When Milosevic came to power in 1987 he introduced market reforms that aimed under support of IMF on the privatization of state-owned enterprises<sup>4</sup>. The sector most successfully privatized was arguably the housing sector<sup>5</sup>. In 1992 the Law on Housing introduced the privatization of the social housing fund and already one year later 95% of the formerly publicly owned housing stock was privatized (cf. Petrovic 2006). However, the revenues from privatization were not as promised used to finance a public system of housing provision for the most vulnerable. Quite on the contrary, from the 1990s onward there can be observed a continuous drop in the rate of legal housing production. Thus, most of those who could not afford to buy the apartment they inhabited, were literally excluded from the formal housing market (cf. Zerjav 2009:33). Moreover, the new law did not regulate the usage of common spaces in multi-store houses and thus some economically better positioned families used the

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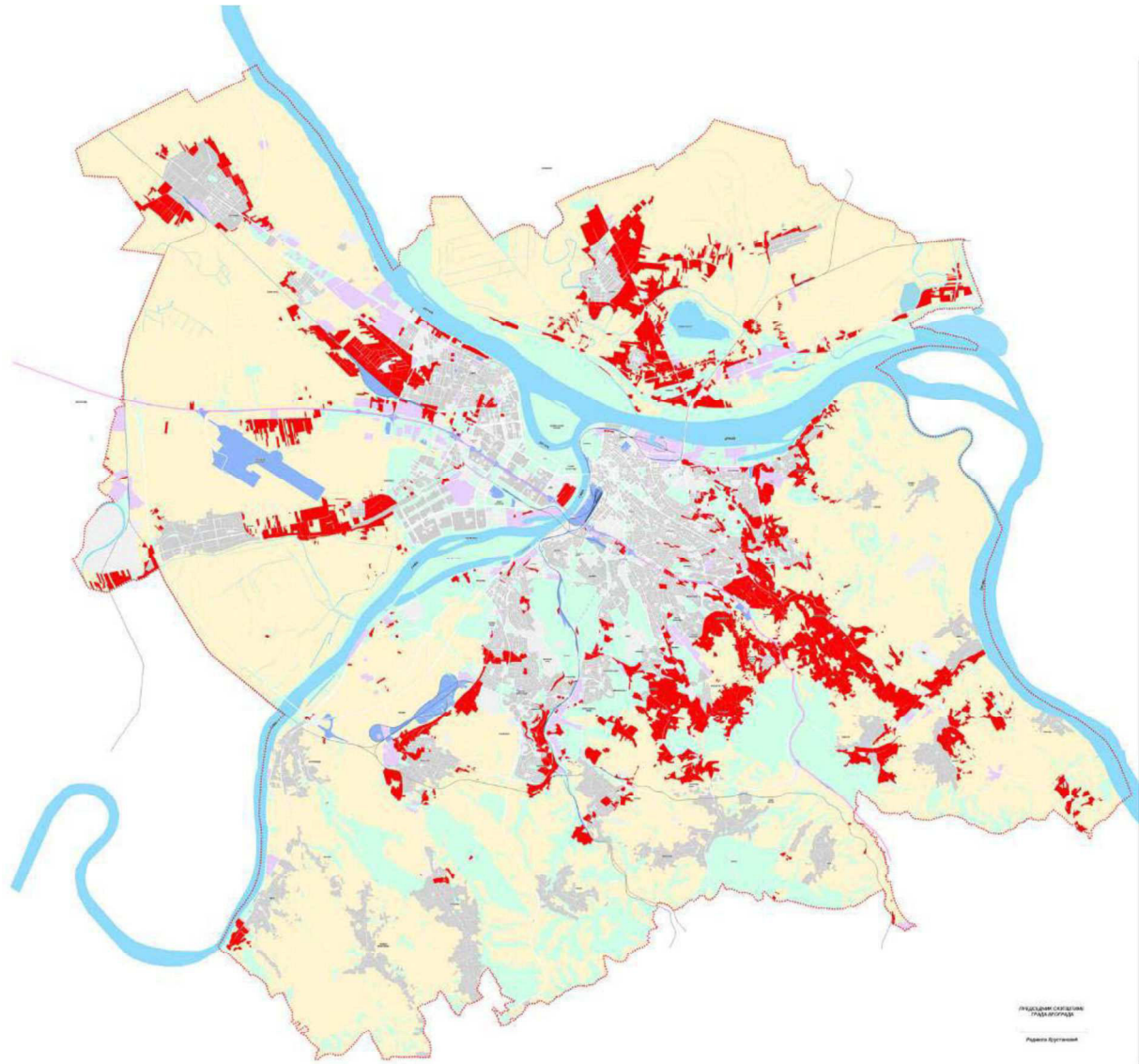
<sup>4</sup> Under Milosevic privatization did only partially take place as his power was based on “his absolute control over the centers of financial power, something that was possible in a system not governed by genuine private ownership of property. For this reason, Milosevic never carried out a genuine program of privatization of socially owned economic assets, because he did not wish to lose the power that he enjoyed thanks to his ability to appoint and control managers of state firms and banks” (Miljkovic/Attila Hoare 2005:196). However, the Financial Operation’s Act of 1989, which allowed the closing of bankrupt enterprises set free 89.400 workers from 248 companies that were then declared bankrupt (cf. World Bank 1991). So contrary to many accounts that talk about a the retarding of post-socialist reforms in Yugoslavia through the civic wars, we can see during the 1990s that first attempts by international actors to introduce market economy actually intermeshed with Milosevic’s authoritarian government (cf. Woodward 1995).

<sup>5</sup> The privatization of the housing sector is regarded by some authors as the main reform in Serbia after 1989, together with the (alleged) introduction of a multi-party system (cf. PALGO 2010).

privatization to informally extend their newly acquired property through rooftop houses and constructions that occupy the backyard of multi-store houses (cf. Petrovic/Vujovic 2007). Although these extensions sometimes pose a threat to the built structure, they are mostly legalized. This might be connected to them being regarded as a form of investment. As Ferencak (2006:20) points out, Serbian people who worked abroad transferred their savings “mostly to building materials and informal housing in Serbia, enabling an economically significant inflow of foreign currency into the economy”. This is also true for many of buildings in Kaludjerica and other settlements that appeared throughout the heavy urbanization after WWII.

In this context from the beginning of the 1990s on a total of 166.000 refugees came to Serbia (of which about 112.000 came to Belgrade), many of which were left without support by the state and satisfied their housing needs on the informal market. In 1995 the law on planning and construction changed in that way that informal construction was not anymore considered a criminal act – a move that is often interpreted as “social policy to allow people, at the first place refugees, to solve their housing needs themselves since the system was not able to do so” (Kucina in Zerjav 2009:34). Many neighborhoods at the urban periphery (Petovar 2003), but also some in the inner city grew from refugees and IDPs expelled from Kosovo in the end of the 1990s. Although many of the IDPs, especially Roma IDPs are not registered as such and thus also did not register residency in Belgrade, statistics say that in Belgrade almost every 10th person is a refugee or displaced person. The biggest number (14.4%) is said to live in Zemun municipality, which neighbors New Belgrade in North Eastern part (cf. Urbanistic Institute of Belgrade 2010). Due to a lack in assistance in the beginning of the 2000s also many repatriated refugees from EU countries went to these settlements (cf. Divjak 2008).

In terms of population growth rates, the 1950s and 60s were most intense as the population of Belgrade increased by almost 30% per decade. In the 70s and 80s the growth rates decreased and the immigration of refugees in the 1990s barely compensated emigration (cf. Vujovic/Petrovic 2007).



#### INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN BELGRADE (UN-Habitat 2006)

However, housing was not the only sector of social services that was chronically underfinanced under Milosevic, but also all other social services were increasingly indebted and paid, if at all, irregularly (cf. Vukovic/Persic 2011). Centers for Social Work that had a 50 years tradition in Yugoslavia as the main institution of public service system were re-furnished during the 1990s as “mere conduits for emergency aid and time-limited cash assistance programmes, serving to undermine further their legitimacy” (Deacon et al. 2007:234). Although poverty became quite visible in public space (homelessness, shanty houses, beggars), it was denied as an issue in politics: any survey on poverty was done in that time by the local NGO financed by international organizations and the results were denied by the government as attempts of sabotage (cf. Petovar 2005).

## ROMA (SETTLEMENTS) AS TARGET OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AGAINST HOUSING VULNERABILITY AFTER 2000

After the fall of the Milosevic government in October 2000, the new government first had to re-stabilize the existing social security system with funds by World Bank and IMF (cf. Vukovic/Persic 2011). The reforms they enforced in the area of social security were built on the ratios of “decentralization, development of alternative modes of assistance and involvement of non-governmental organizations” (Orlovic 2011:272). The massive privatization of public housing in the 1990s and the resulting withdrawal of the state was never counterbalanced through a systematic re-building of state capacities in that sector. Quite on the contrary, this tendency was furthered through the post-2000 liberalization and deregulation, so that every reform of that sector only further marginalized the responsibility of the state and the development of a central strategy in the housing sector (cf. PALGO 2010). Although OSCE staff for example told me in the interview that their goal is to support the Serbian state to re-build its own capacities, projects by international organizations do not seem to supporting the building of a coherent state system of social protection, as Bosnjak/Stubbs (2007:158) also remark critically:

“Whilst there has been, and continues to be, donor support for core social protection reform, including SIF [Social Innovation Fund] and the Social Welfare strategy, a **number of 'pilot projects'** in particular municipalities have had limited results, distorting priorities and mitigating against macro-level planning. In addition, donors have tended to emphasize one client group above others, also resulting in inefficiencies.”

As pointed out in the PALGO publication, besides the privatization of the 1990s and the decentralization of the housing sector in the 2000s (through involvement of NGOs) there could be hardly found a systematic approach in housing politics. However, they distinguish two groups of programs. The first group of programs mainly developed from solidarity housing that was established immediately after the privatization of housing and was originally meant as a program for low-income employees in public enterprises and the government. In 1999 there were two pilot projects by the state Agency for Land Development, one to provide housing for young families, police and army members, the other for university members, academics and artists (cf. Milic 2004). PALGO concludes that in this first group there is housing provided for families with “average or higher income” and that in this group, which is “dominant form of public housing in terms of budget, employees in the public sector and young families are the clientele” (PALGO 2010:49, own translation). The second group of

housing programs emerges from projects under the leadership of UNHCR that aim from 1997 on at the long-term integration of those refugees that were willing to stay and took over Serbian citizenship (cf. PALGO 2010:37). This group of programs, which offer besides housing also other social services like employment or education initiatives, addresses “refugees, internally displaced persons with low income, Roma and, in to some extent, socially vulnerable population, through which the social mix in the programs for integration of refugees is balanced” (PALGO 2010:49, own translation). What is interesting here is that some authors, like Petrovic regard the whole re-establishing of social housing activities as resulting from programs for the integration of refugees. Petrovic refers here to the UN Habitat Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme (SIRP), which did not only re-build housing agencies in 8 cities that should serve as the main institution, but served also as a basis for the new law on social housing that was adopted in 2009. Petrovic points out that “social housing activities, in rental housing in particular, have been developed as part of the integration of refugees, financed first from the national budget, but mostly donated by international donors, implemented through international agencies and NGOs” (Petrovic 2006:7).

I would argue that this dichotomy is also visible in the politics towards informal settlements. Whereas other informal settlements are regarded to be solvable by general law, for Roma settlements there are projects that conceptualize them as a complex problem of social exclusion that has to be tackled in integration projects. Within the frame of the integration of refugee programs there are also projects for the improvement of certain types of informal settlements. This became not only apparent in the SIRP program (cf. UN-Habitat 2008), which improved a Roma informal settlement in Kraljevo, but also in a project that OSCE started recently and which aims at the legalization of Roma settlements in 20 municipalities. As the coordinator Nikolas Duvnjak (Interview 12.12.2012) told me that this project will be funded through special funds for Roma housing that were allocated in the frame of IPA funds in the course of the recent debate on false asylum seekers in Western Europe. The Guidelines for the Improvement of Roma Informal Settlements (2006) that were produced by OSCE state that they don’t want to produce a ‘Roma Urbanism’, but find different reasons for focusing on Roma settlements:

“Many Roma settlements are the most miserable parts of our cities. Although they are not the only informal settlements, although they are by size smaller than other informal settlements, they are because of poverty and discrimination in the worst position, and living is the hardest in them;

The solution to the problems of the existing Roma settlements and to Roma housing is part of a unique national Action Plan for the general improvement of the position of the Roma which was adopted by the Government of Serbia;

Roma settlements are the most analyzed segment of informal settlements in Serbia. It provides a background of expertise for the development of the Guidelines. Without this basis of knowledge which has been created during the past decade and a half, it would be hard to imagine successful work on the improvement and legalization of Roma settlements.“ (OSCE 2006:2)

The guidelines further criticize the regular legalization procedure to be only paper work for the legalization of individual property and not to concern all the problems that are related to informal construction of housing as concerns the lacking provision of infrastructure by the municipalities:

“From a strictly legal point of view, however, the real issue is whether such a type of settlement could function. The answer is probably no, since the legalization process would not cover the numerous urban structures within such a settlement. These include the common and public areas such as streets, infrastructure, and so on, which cannot legally be used since they are not part of the legalization process and there is no appropriate permit for their being used in this way. A settlement is not simply a group of independent houses, but a number of public structures and facilities that form an integral part of a city.“ (OSCE 2006:2)

In line with that argument the spatial planner and former director of SIRP Djordje Mojovic (Urban Planner Interview 11.12.2012) told me the guidelines for the improvement and legalization of Roma settlements could be regarded as the most developed framework for the improvement of informal settlements that exists in Serbia until now and that they should be applied for non-Roma informal settlements as well. However, the categorical division of Roma and all other forms of informal settlements is very strong. This can be seen for example if one looks at the agencies, who produce the plans of detailed regulation. As the legalization of single houses does not automatically include the issuance of plans of detailed regulation, it is significant to look at where and by whom these plans are actually applied and for what reasons:

In case of Roma settlements it is international organizations like OSCE or UN-Habitat who in cooperation with municipalities produce plans of detailed regulation as part of a broader project of social rehabilitation of informal Roma settlements. One of the most prominent example of regularization of a Roma settlement is for example ‘Grdicka Kosa’ in Kraljevo that is the first project for the upgrading of a Roma settlement within the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Serbia (cf. UN-Habitat 2008). Whereas it started as an urbanistic project (plan of

detailed regulation, upgrading of infrastructure, improvement of housing conditions for a limited number of families), soon after the finalization of that project, “UN-Habitat and other United Nations organizations, including WHO, have signed a Framework of Cooperation on the further upgrading of the settlement, primarily in the area of health care and inclusion of Roma children” (UN-Habitat 2008:74). Here the plan of detailed regulation is the necessary prescription for international development agencies to provide secured ground for their ‘investment’ in humanitarian development. Another example is the project in Mladenovac where the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) started a project in cooperation with OSCE and gave money to municipalities to issue the plan of detailed regulation for one Roma settlement. This plan was then issued by the Institute of Urbanism of the municipality. The Roma organization of Mladenovac is at the moment looking for some donor who would fund for the improvement of the settlement, which is now theoretically possible, as the settlement is legalized.

In case of settlements that are not labeled as Roma settlement, like Kaludjerica or Jelezovac in Rakovica municipality that developed on agricultural land (cf. Macura-Vuksanovic in Zerjav 2009) it is in Belgrade the City Institute of Urbanism that develops these plans as part of a bigger politics that tried to deal with informal settlements already during socialism through the expansion of the residential area onto the agricultural periphery. The peri-urban is the classical form of informal settlements that was discovered in developing countries as a ‘hidden economic potential at the city outskirts’ during the 1970s. In that time the fear of ‘Third World Urban Unemployment’, which signified economic growth without creation of formal jobs, gave rise to informal economy as a keyword with which the bureaucrats and developmental economists tried to grasp the activities of allegedly unemployed urban citizens. The word ‘informal’ gave them the possibility not only to claim that they had understood the whole set of activities occurring in these areas, but more importantly their potential to be included in the formal economy (cf. Hart 2009). In that spirit Ferencak (2006:20) writes about peri-urban informal settlements that the “bulk of productive and commercial activities in informal settlements does not contribute to taxation and to the budget of the city and the state”. However, Belgrade like other cities goes in the direction of ‘peri-urban growth’, which means the development of industrial zones and rehabilitation in zones along the big highways connecting Belgrade to other cities and throughout Europe (cf. Serbia’s Strategy for Joining the EU 2005 acc. Zekovic/Maricic 2008). These zones along the big highways that are the target of Belgrade’s further economic growth are exactly the places where these informal

settlements mostly developed (cf. Zekovic/Maricic 2008). Arabindoo (2009:881) states that as “rural–urban linkages in most regions are being reshaped by the liberalization of trade and production [...] peri-urban areas [are] transforming from zones of survival to zones of investment”. In that the current strategy of the City to legalize at the peripheries in order to secure 200-300 votes of concerned inhabitants and generate income through penetration of the grey economy might change soon, when more powerful investors indicate their interest in that land.

When I asked one of the spatial planners from Mladenovac Institute for Urbanism, who was in charge of issuing the plan of detailed regulation for the Roma settlement, why Roma settlements are treated in projects with international donors, whilst the others are regarded as solvable by general law, he answered that it might be because the Roma would not be able to pay the costs of legalization. However, the legalization is substantially subsidized supporting especially poor families. On the other hand despite these subsidies the legalization is still too expensive for many of the families living for example in Kaludjerica. Thus some of the inhabitants of Kaludjerica even talk about a ‘threat of legalization’. They argue that once the plan of detailed regulation is issued all households are urged to pose a request for legalization, which threatens the legitimacy of all those households, which cannot afford the legalization procedure<sup>6</sup>.

Generally one can say that Roma settlements are through funds of international donors more likely to be treated in complex projects as a whole settlement, whereas non-Roma informal settlements are still mostly regulated through general Law on Legalization without issuance of a plan of detailed regulation. This had the effect that the question of right to adequate housing, although a problem concerning different societal groups, became closely tied to the social position of Roma. Most prominently figures here a report by Amnesty International (2011) which has the very title: “Roma are denied Adequate Housing in Serbia”. In that the housing situation, or more exactly deprivation in housing conditions, was most systematically researched among Roma (cf. Petovar 2005). Petovar here most probably refers to the study by the NGO Ethnicity Research Center who carried out in 2002 the first systematic enumeration

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<sup>6</sup> In a project by the artists Vahida Ramujkic and Aviv Kruglanski inhabitants of Kaludjerica were encouraged to describe their neighbourhood on the basis of keywords that were alphabetically ordered and depicted on a tapestry. In that they related to legalization as a “common threat from the government, with legalization notices hanging above Kaludjerica's households”. The advantages of legalization through plan of detailed regulation are often located in the provision of infrastructure. But in relation to this they said “Infrastructure in general is what the locals had to build together on their own, as there was no previous urban planning and the Government did not take charge of it.” ([http://bbva.irational.org/documentary\\_embroidery/kaludjerica/workshop/tapestry/](http://bbva.irational.org/documentary_embroidery/kaludjerica/workshop/tapestry/))

of Roma settlements (cf. Jaksic/Basic 2005 [2002]). This was “part of the government’s preparations to develop a national strategy to improve the Roma’s position” (Vuksanovic-Macura 2012:687). This Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Roma (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 27/09) included a special methodology for developing a ‘social map’ of the Roma community. Zerjav (2009:41) for example explains the reason for not treating them in his typology of informal construction from an urban planning point of view as follows:

“the overall problematic of Roma settlements *greatly exceeds the domain of urban planning and management*, but concerns overall exclusion from the society of this population (1); the number of objects in these settlements makes small percentage of total number of informally constructed objects, although the poorest in average – Roma population makes approximately 5% of total Belgrade population (2); Roma settlements have their own typology, and can be found in similar forms like Type 1 here (sprawl and urbanized villages), but also slums in the urbanized city areas, ‘unhygienic’ settlements, Roma ‘mahalas’, etc.” (own emphasis)

This shows how Roma settlements were extracted as a problem from the urbanistic field of knowledge and were produced as a complex social problem. The statistical evidence that should proof that Roma are the population most severely endangered by housing deprivation is in that often criticized. According to statistics in Serbia 70% of those that declare themselves as Roma live in Roma settlements, these settlements consist to 43% of slums (PALGO 2012:19). This statistical evidence, is criticized for example by Sikimic (2005), who says that people favor declaring themselves as Roma this makes it more easy for people in living in informal settlements to access humanitarian aid goods.

We see here that Roma settlements are colonized by the gaze of international development agencies who draft their own cartography of informal settlements on the basis of vulnerability. The underlying association of Roma settlements with deprivation was criticized prominently by Stewart (2002). He discusses different models that seek to capture deprivation: underclass, culture of poverty, and racial regimes/ghetto. These models suffer according to Stewart either from the conceptual separation of the deprived from class struggles that are located only between the middle and upper class and see the deprived, conceptualized as underclass, as living in a “pathological social space with its own rules and regulations” (Stewart 2002:138). Or, like in the case of culture of poverty, they assume altogether the erosion of social institutions and thus ignore the appearance of new strategies to cope with deprivation. The culture of poverty concept assumes a “coherent way of adapting to long-term deprivation” (ibid.:143) and thus seeks to explain poverty that is transmitted from

one generation to the next. His example to criticize this assumption is about Ozd, a city in Hungary which lived from steel industry. When the industry shrank and unemployment rate grew during the 90s with an over proportionally big number of Roma among the long-term unemployed, the city seemed to follow the fate of many small towns in Central Eastern Europe where the demise of industry left those low and unskilled workers in the city whereas those better qualified left to the new centers. However, as Stewart reports, many of those listed as (long-term) unemployed Roma actually work on a weekly basis as labor migrants in booming industry towns of the west. This is one of the examples he brings to show the flexibility of marginalized groups to develop coping strategies that might be regarded from the majority society as the practices “as akin to those of an underclass or mafia, but that is not how matters look from the bottom up” (idb.:145).

In order to see both existing forms of cooperation and the processes of labeling, through which certain (coping) practices appear as deviant, he suggests to **look at social exclusion as “political struggles** that determine who is defined as ‘in’ and ‘out’, rather than on ‘deviant behaviour’” (Stewart 2002:143). Explaining political struggles he gives the case of Irish in America who first inhabited a similar position in the American society as the blacks today, but through ‘electoral interests’ of the leading parties of that time their societal position was enhanced without “their ‘neighbourhood’ or ‘social milieu’ altering significantly” (Stewart 2002:143). In relation to Roma he gives the example mass migration from Hungary and Czech to Canada as a way to “challenge their treatment in the spotlight of international publicity” (Stewart 2002:146).

However, what Stewart describes here as empowering could be also regarded form of clientelism. Kovats (2003) gives a critical reflection on the emergence of the Roma on the political scene as a form ethnic mobilization that undermines civic mobilization on the basis of local social problems shared with non-Roma co-citizens. For him, issuing deprivation on an ethnic basis plays in the hands of right wing movements and further destabilizes ties Roma have as citizens in a nation state. Through Roma nationalism as institutionalized in the IRU (International Roma Union) or ERF (European Roma Forum) Roma are **discouraged to seek the loyalty of their fellow citizens**, or to **make their claims to state institutions**. "Roma nationalism [...] provides the basis for the ideological, political and institutional dislocation of 'Roma' minorities from 'majority' nations, thus freeing their governments from a costly and unproductive section of their current citizenry" (Kovats 2003:4). The institutionalization of organizations like the ERF on the European level "will further undermine the development of

a democratic, grassroots Roma politics by forcing activists to direct their activities toward Europe and other Roma, rather than on the far more difficult task of **establishing more effective relationships within national and local authorities**, as well as reliable support from fellow citizens on the basis of common interests" (ibid.:5).

Following Kovats' observations on how the emergence of Roma as a political target on the international stage actually legitimated the marginalization or exclusion of Roma in national politics, I would argue that the focus of international organizations on deprived Roma settlements made it easy for the City to externalize the problem. In the following chapter I will show the different techniques that the City deployed in order to make the inner city Roma settlements appear illegitimate and thus support their expulsion from inner city area foreseen for regeneration.

## UNHYGIENIC SETTLEMENTS IN BELGRADE'S DEVELOPMENT POLITICS

In order to understand the emergence of 'unhygienic settlements' in policy documents and the Master Plan, it is crucial to understand the way in which informal settlements were reframed during the restructuring of urban governance fostering own strategies of capital accumulation and economic development. Whereas market principals were gradually enforced in urban planning through the economic liberalization in the 80s, it was in the mid-1990s that political tensions between Belgrade and the state made informal construction a major source of income for the city. In the local elections of 1996 the regime Milosevic was undermined by opposition parties that won the local elections in Belgrade and all other major cities (cf. Jansen 2001). The political tensions between Belgrade and the state led to the reduction of financial resources directed from the state level and made "[t]he city government as well as the municipalities realize that an alternative way of funding, not only for the city but also their parties and themselves personally, was to sell the most profitable resource of the city building land. They did not block the illegal building, the profits from which were enormous" (Grubovic according to Zerjav 2009:34). With the new Law on Planning and Construction (1995) many of these constructions were legalized "so city is left without valuable land reserved for public services" (Zerjav 2009:34).

Owing to a peculiar system of land ownership inherited from the hasty post socialist transformation in Milosevic era, which is based on 'right of use', the state owns all the land and grants right of use to those who build on it. As the municipalities of Belgrade have use

right over 6% of the land and the city government over another 4% and the rest is divided among various other actors, there is only limited space for implementation of a state driven strategy. This stems from the Milosevic regime which in its last years, especially after opposition parties have won the local elections, produced a series of laws that sought to centralize resources and cement its power. In that, not only the Constitution of Serbia from 1990, but also the Law on Urban Land (1995) and the Law on State Property (1995) were “all making the case for state ownership of urban land as a strategy of safe-guarding public interest” (Petrovic/Vujovic 2007:365). However, this ‘guarding of public interest’ appears as an empty rhetoric device, as there is “**no law defining the rights and obligations of the state government with regard to urban development**. Land use planning and control is in the hands of the local governments, which also collect fees for the use of land” (Petrovic/Vujovic 2007:366). In that, as Petrovic/Vujovic (2007:369) remark sarcastically, the “**Ministry of Capital Investments [and Spatial Planning]** (the former Ministry of Construction and Housing), preoccupied with development of European corridors through Serbia and motorway networks in general, has not developed any relevant laws or strategic documents in the last five years”.

It is often said that the centralization and marketization largely undermined the tradition of **societal self-government** and decentralization followed in the period of 1965-1989. During the 80s Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia (SRYS) was acknowledged as having the most decentralized planning system with multiple mechanisms of participation<sup>7</sup> and with the principle of ‘cross-acceptance’ introduced more than a decade before conceived and practiced in certain Western countries (cf. Nedovic-Budic 2011, Bitter/Weber 2009). During the so called ‘authoritarian backflash’ in the 90s and ‘retarded transition’ of the 2000s, the planning system was re-booted on market mechanisms that circumvent public participation as established under socialism. Since the economic liberalization of the 80s the introduction of market rule has resulted in a vitalization of the grey economy. Vujovic/Petrovic (2007:368) see the reason for this especially in state ownership of land, which has led to “the development of a flourishing illegal commercial real estate market through transactions with ‘right of use’”. According to the different people they interviewed who are involved in spatial

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<sup>7</sup> Participation was organized at the level of local self-governments enabling mostly workers in the so-called ‘organisations of associated labour’; members of the so-called ‘socio-political organizations’ (comprising the ruling communist party and a number of other para-political organizations) “to take part in the decision who may acquire the right of use to the publicly (state-)owned land (Nedovic-Budic et al. 2011:443).

planning in Belgrade, “the state and the city have tolerated such kind of grey economy for the sake of political and social compromises” (Petrovic/Vujovic 2007:376)

The plans of detailed regulation are the only instrument through which the state is managing urban development, obliging investors to certain regulations. However, as Petrovic and Vujovic (2007:375) point out,

“the management of urban development is weakened by a practice of **changing the parameters of the master plan through area regulation plans**, thus, ‘leading to voluntarism that damages the urban identity and quality of certain locations, including the most valuable ones in the city center.’<sup>21</sup> Consequently, ‘normative **concerns about the public good** appear only in planning documents while they disappear in the leasing contracts on properties for construction as urban planning institutions have no mechanism to control plan implementation.’ In such circumstances, as one respondent expressed, the entrepreneurial private sector takes advantage by corrupting those who decide, leading to domination of ‘investor urbanism’.”

In that the biggest landholders in Belgrade are a few private Serbian companies that acquired an almost monopolistic position that the “city has no mechanisms to confront” (Vujovic/Petrovic 2007:376).

What they call ‘investor urbanism’ are classical forms of neoliberalism that go along with an increasing independence of cities from the state budgeting and centralization of the management of resources at the City level. This goes along with a “shift from the local provision of welfare and services to more outward-oriented policies designed to foster and encourage local growth and economic development” (Hubbard/Hall 1998:4). In that forced evictions could be regarded as following this new urban entrepreneurialism that open up

“political spaces for new ‘primary definers’, such as business leaders, ‘to articulate a strategy for urban, social, and political regeneration while simultaneously identifying those who pose a danger to that regeneration. It is within these spaces that notions of the ‘public interest’ are being recast around discourses of crime and insecurity” (MacLeod 2002:613).

In that homeless people and in my case inhabitants from ‘unhygienic settlements’ are becoming the anti-thesis to this consumerist type of citizenship, denying those people to be “free agents with sovereignty over their own actions. Anti-homelessness legislation helps to institutionalize this conviction by assuring the homeless in public no place to be sovereign” (MacLeod 2002:609). According to MacLeod all this is making the city a “dual and divided city of wealth and poverty [...] where the victors are increasingly defensive of their privilege” (Smith 1996 quoted acc. MacLeod 2002:608) and poverty is increasingly becoming an

indicator of the incommensurability of these people to the new virtues of ‘consumerist citizenship’.

In the following I will discuss the techniques through which certain settlements are rendered illegitimate and in the way of Belgrade’s economic development. In that I look at the way informal settlements are categorized in policy documents and show how certain type of settlement is stigmatized and deprived from access to social security system.

In 2003 the new Master Plan 2021 announced that it will regulate which kinds of settlements are allowed to stay and which not. Emphasis is put on “stopping wild construction and removal of unhygienic settlements”<sup>8</sup>. However, this new plan could be regarded in continuation with the laws of the 1990s in that sense as it does not define criteria for which settlements are illegal (cf. Petovar 2005). The only systematic overview that I found on this issue is the following table depicting basic programs depending on the type of settlement and its position in Belgrade.

|                                               | <b>Slums and Unhygienic Settlements</b>             | <b>Impoverished Parts of Old Suburban Villages</b>                                   | <b>Workers Colonies</b>                             | <b>Roma Settlement</b>                                                                                 | <b>Rare Lowland Settlements and Others</b>                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Central Zone and Zone of Area Highways</b> | Integrated improvement through resettlement         | -                                                                                    | don’t exist                                         | don’t exist                                                                                            | -                                                            |
| <b>Middle Ring</b>                            | Integrated improvement with or without resettlement | Recovery                                                                             | Integrated improvement with or without resettlement | Renewal in the course of changes in the density of the built structure, introduction of infrastructure | -                                                            |
| <b>Periphery</b>                              | Integrated improvement with or without resettlement | Renewal in the course of changes in the density of the built structure, introduction | Integrated improvement                              | Renewal in the course of changes in the density of the built structure,                                | Changing the density of the built structure, introduction of |

<sup>8</sup> Info Novi Beograd, 9.1.2003 <http://www.novibeograd.rs/srb/item/3763-dva-meseca-za-proveru-predlozenih-resenja>, own translation.

|                            |                                                                 |                      |                           |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                               |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                            |                                                                 | of<br>infrastructure |                           | introduction<br>of<br>infrastructure                                                                                           | infrastructure                                                                                |
| <b>Boundary<br/>Region</b> | Integrated<br>improvement<br>with or<br>without<br>resettlement | Recovery             | Integrated<br>improvement | Renewal in<br>the course of<br>changes in<br>the density of<br>the built<br>structure,<br>introduction<br>of<br>infrastructure | Changing the<br>density of the<br>built<br>structure,<br>introduction<br>of<br>infrastructure |

Categorization of Informal Settlements and their further treatment according to the Master Plan of Belgrade 2021 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27:32).

The Master Plan 2003 announces, “[a]gainst illegal buildings we will fight with regulation plans, which will be given on the basis of their resolution, and which should cover the whole territory of the city”<sup>9</sup>. However, in the interview at the Ministry for Spatial Planning and Capital Investment I was told, it is mostly the case that municipalities, who are in charge of producing these plans, only produce them in expectation of investments. So the illegalization of certain settlements is directly connected to investments and has thus to be discussed within the logics of urban regeneration.

In order to contextualize this categorization of informal settlements, it is worth to have a look at some central documents that paved the way for the formulation of the National Social Housing Strategy and that are also significant in the development of a politics towards informal settlements. One of these is called “Four Strategic Themes for the Housing Policy in Serbia” which is the output of a National Housing Conference held in Belgrade in 2006. This conference was organized in the scope of the UN-Habitat ‘Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme’. In the classification of Miodrag Ferencak (2006) we read:

“The word ‘informal’ is probably the most adequate one compared to other common definitions such as ‘Wild’, ‘Illegal’, ‘Unplanned’, because such individual houses almost always have some of the elements of legality – builders ownership, acceptable construction and functionality, even sometimes correct planning elements, so that ‘wild’ would not obviously an adequate description. On the other hand, they do not meet all the requirements of established building and planning regulations and procedures. Consequently, all of them are by definition illegal and supposed to be removed as such. At the same time, cases of law enforcement during the last 40 years have been extremely rare, implying a long record of official tolerance towards informal construction, thus weakening and softening the very meaning of the term ‘illegal’” (Ferencak 2006:12)

<sup>9</sup> Info Novi Beograd, 9.1.2003 <http://www.novibeograd.rs/srb/item/3763-dva-meseca-za-proveru-predlozenih-resenja>, own translation.

So we learn that illegality as a concept is meaningful only when it is enforced. Informality is introduced in this vagueness as middle ground on which things like ‘acceptable construction and functionality’ become legitimizing for and even let the author to put it as an element of ‘legality’. This seems to correspond to the widespread notion of informal settlements as functional substitute for lacking stock of affordable housing.

However, then Ferencak introduces “two different types of informal settlements in Serbia” which could seemingly be clearly differentiated and acquire different degrees of legitimacy. Whereas the first group is characterized as consisting of “individually built, durable and large houses on relatively regular plots, contiguous to the built-up urban areas” the second consists of “irregular and dense, temporary, improvised and substandard groups of slum-like shelters”. Whereas the first group is “the result of an unauthorized subdivision of agricultural or building land”, which “leads to irregularity in all the other elements that characterize this type of buildings and settlements”, the other group seems already in itself, quasi intrinsically irregular. What adds to this irregularity apparent from the build structure itself is that these groups of shelters are “mostly **occupying public land** inside the built city zones”. The last type of informal settlement is the one “mostly inhabited by Roma population” (Ferencak 2006:12).

The first group is explained on the basis of shortcomings in the law, respectively too ambitious planning systems introduced in cities during socialism. We learn that in state socialism in cities there were established a “sophisticated hierarchy of planning, design and building, and all the institutions established for that purpose” (Ferencak 2006:16). This planning system was exclusively established in urbanized centers<sup>10</sup>. The ‘substandard settlements’ are in contrast only explained in terms of inherent shortcomings. In the following he focusses on how to treat the ‘unauthorized subdivision of agricultural land’, whereas Roma settlements are treated in a separate chapter by Vladimir Macura – who also co-authored the Master Plan of Belgrade (2003), as he was then director of the Planning Directorate.

The whole duality constructed between inner-city slums occupying public land and illegally built houses on agricultural land is based on a stereotypization of the existing diversity of informal construction that seems to be formed on the basis of the practice of ‘development

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<sup>10</sup> In order to put this housing shortage in a larger context, Petrovic/Vujovic (2007:362) emphasize “Yugoslavia was marked by a system of socialist self-management, which placed greater importance on the development of market-type relations in the economy than any of the other socialist countries in Europe. This strategy was a significant factor in achieving a higher standard of living and a lower level of under-urbanization compared to the other members of the Eastern Block”.

based evictions' on the one hand and the development goal of decentralization on the other hand (Kaludjerica as an example for decentralization). In the following I'm going to discuss the usurpation of public land and the characterization of settlements as unhygienic as the two crucial moments in the illegalization of a certain settlement. I will show their ambiguity in the urban context of Belgrade.

### **Usurpation of Public Land**

When approaching the void under the Gazela bridge, from which three years ago there were about 200 Roma families resettled, by walking down the Sava from the Brankov Most more in the West, it becomes apparent that Gazela was built in direct continuity of an older informal settlement next to Gazela bridge called 'staro sajliste'. This settlement developed after the WWII on the terrain of a former concentration camp and starts in the West with some car workshops and houses that appear more like small summer residencies built on allotment gardens, leisure facilities like a sports ground and a beer garden frequented by people that made a biking tour at Sava. Next to the beer garden there are two towers and one barrack that remained from the time before the WWII, when the terrain was first used as building ground for the Belgrade fare in 1938. The towers were occupied during the 1970s by artists as both workshop and showrooms, whereas the barrack was used for housing youth brigades in the 50s that build new Belgrade and is still used for public housing (cf. Byford 2012:75). Since the 90s there are plans to transform the area in a memorial. For the purpose of a conference in 2012 on the future of the terrain, the City of Belgrade gave an analysis of the present types of land use on the terrain. The City differentiates the Western part with a "high level of purpose homogeneity – businesses and services in the area of industrial and individual transportation" from the Eastern part that "doesn't have a homogenous character, but usage for low standard housing (collective and individual) prevails. Aside from housing, land is used for education (School for Leather-Tanning), sport (football court), business (Spasic pavilion- "Poseidon .d.o.o"), services (tire repairman's service in the Hungarian pavilion), collection of secondary raw materials in the backyards of few objects, a bakery in a temporary object near the Central tower and catering (in the Turkish pavilion)" (in Byford 2012:78).

As the authors mention, the area is cut off from the rest of the city in terms of infrastructure and thus explains its appearance as a peripheral zone, though physically located in the middle of the city: "Although it is placed between two bridges connecting the Belgrade and Novi

Beograd bank, the Old Fairground is hardly approachable and poorly connected with the rest of the city. A particularly negative occurrence is that the area is in a significant depression in relation to the circular roads and bank revetment” (ibid.:82).

Staro Sajmiste itself is characterized by a lot of unresolved property issues: “A significant number of buildings is listed in the real estate cadastre as ‘buildings built without permit’. These buildings are not coherent with monumental characteristics of cultural goods and they should be removed if conditions for conducting technical protection of cultural monuments can be achieved” (ibid.:79). However, it is not just the buildings without permit that produce complexity of the terrain, but rather the parceling the land that led to a diversity of institutions and private individuals holding use right: “All terrain which is considered to be a cultural good is owned by the state and has the character of the city’s building plot. However, the parceling is very fragmented, and possessors and holders of the right of using are many (from the Republic of Serbia, City of Belgrade, Municipality of Novi Beograd to public communal firms, public and private companies, and even individuals)” (ibid.:80). The neighborhoods heterogeneity in terms of use right is regarded as hint “to the spontaneous character of the urban development and lack of existence of any kind of city’s strategy towards this area” (ibd.).

What is interesting is that one of the solutions is to stop the process of transformation of state into private property through inhibiting further legalization of individually build structures. The chapter written by the City in that does not mention that a big part of the terrain has been transformed into private property already in 2005 through acquisition of land through Delta Holding, which is the third biggest company in Serbia and with 7,200 employees the biggest non-governmental employer. This move was deemed legitimate as the terrain was then not considered important memorial space and Delta company put a memorial plaque in the newly build shopping center. But the transformation of public into private land is in a paradoxical way at the heart of the discussion: In the discussion around inner city slums this rhetoric of usurpation is activated through which these settlements are not only depicted as unlawfully occupying public land but standing in the way of Belgrade’s development<sup>11</sup>. However, ‘**uzurpacija**’ (usurpation) was originally a term that signified large scale occupation of public land through big investors from the mid-1990s on.

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<sup>11</sup> The mayor of Belgrade is quoted almost ritually in newspaper articles on the eviction of Roma settlements saying that he is not going to tolerate anyone standing in the way of the development of Belgrade.

Moreover, the very fact that investors are holding the land does not mean that informal settlements on that territory are displaced. The Master Plan of Belgrade 2021 (cf. Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27) reports that between 1997 and 2003 the City Agency for Construction Land and Development has leased to investors 4 million square meter construction land for housing and business development. However, until 2003 only 18% of the planned constructions were realized, whereas the rest of this land already assigned to investors remained fallow. The Master Plan states that counted in terms of flats, investors hold land on which one could build 50.000 flats – which would satisfy the bulk of housing needs foreseen until 2021 in Belgrade. They further argue that this is a serious argument for developing interior city areas instead of promoting further spread at the peripheries. The authors further report that, whereas some of the leased areas are not built-up at all, others are occupied by “different kind of objects that have to be destroyed in order to use the land”<sup>12</sup>. As reason for why investors did not start with the construction activities the authors allege financial inability of the investors to transform the land into parcels for new construction. And although there are regulations in the leasing contracts that oblige the investors to develop the land up to a certain deadline or re-assign it to the city, “this mostly does not happen for different reasons: building site is opened already, the investor fulfilled some of the obligations towards the city etc.” (ibd.). Petrovic/Vujovic (2007:366) in that clarify that a “break of the leasing contract would oblige the city to pay back all the collected fees and investments made by the user”.

As I will show in the following chapters on the evictions of inner city informal settlements, many of these settlers did not just built their houses on fallow land, but were de facto informal sub-contractors paying rent (f.e. in the case of occupants of land in New Belgrade owned by Delta company). In that I would argue that the emergence of impoverished settlements in inner city areas, which is depicted in the Master Plan (cf. 2003:10) as a phenomenon appearing only in the 1990s, should be regarded in its connection to the specific form of investor urbanism, that leaves the city without mechanisms to control the implementation of plans according to public interest. The changes in the informal construction sector after the end of socialism noted by Petrovic/Vujovic (2007) comprise the actors (under socialism self-help strategy of marginalized groups, in the phase of ‘wild capitalism’ these were joint by the affluent and powerful) and locations (under socialism appearing in the periphery and now also in the central city). However, these two phenomena are not connected by them.

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<sup>12</sup> Master Plan Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27:10, own translation.

## Lack of Infrastructure

What appeared in the resettlement in 2009 as a separate settlement and problem to be solved, was in the first attempts to resettle the Roma that settled under the bridge signified as settlers of the “unhygienic settlement Staro Sajmiste” (Minority Information Center Serbia 2005:6, own translation). Against that background of the above description of the complexity of the Eastern part of Staro Sajmiste that borders Gazela bridge in terms of unresolved property issues and also sources of income of the inhabitants (‘collections of secondary raw materials in the backyards’) it is not surprising that the differentiation of Gazela as a separate settlement from that of Staro Sajmiste was not that clear<sup>13</sup>. In a newspaper article on Staro Sajmiste from 1999 it is reported that the older inhabitants, some of them living there already since before WWII, complain about the disgrace coming over the whole settlement from those under the bridge and through the Roma settling there, they too would be labeled as unhygienic settlement<sup>14</sup>. It’s worth quoting at some length the narration by one inhabitant who lives according to the article with her four daughters in a house over one hundred years old:

“I have been here for my whole life and I don’t want that it will be ever destroyed. Until the war there were 20 houses that were built from the scratch. In the time of Tito we couldn’t do anything, but when Milosevic came to power, we succeeded to add the bathroom, for which we were fighting for two years with the municipality. I’m up for everything, only that we obtain normal living conditions.<sup>15</sup>”

She complains that those people living under the bridge

“they are polluting all of us, and so we are also called unhygienic. A few times I found a passerby relieving himself in my yard. At least we can’t complain about the removal of garbage as in the last two years they come three times a week to carry it away. Employees of the department for disinfection and pest control come about five times a year and sprinkle powder so that there are less insects”<sup>16</sup>.

But the adjective unhygienic is used not exclusively to signify the excluded Roma settlement, but is precariously present in the way inhabitants of Staro Sajmiste negotiate their legitimacy to be in that place. As these voices are framed by an article that reports on plans of the City to resettle Staro Sajmiste in order to build a memorial, the term ‘unhygienic’ is understood by the inhabitants as an attribute important to the question about their legitimacy of to be in that

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<sup>13</sup> The Master Plan of Belgrade (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27:32) specifies that “unhygienic parts of older suburban settlements” could be removed.

<sup>14</sup> Glas Javnosti, 13.4.1999, <http://www.glas-javnosti.rs/clanak/beograd/glas-javnosti-08-09-2008/slepo-crevo-na-dva-minuta-od-centra>, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

place. The older inhabitant is quoted with her proud statement that recently she even succeeded to build a toilet, which was after the strict policy under Tito now finally possible, and that the City regularly comes for pest control and removes garbage three times a week. She is one of those that want to stay in that place and emphasize the worth of the land. In contrast to that another person, described as newcomer to the settlement, is quoted with complaints about the lacking infrastructure and that she “votes for resettlement”:

“The advantage of this settlement is that it is factually in the center. But, on the other hand, nothing is invested in the settlement and it is not safe. The access to water and electricity is poor. Many people have problems because their cesspools in the yard burst<sup>17</sup>”.

She adds, “[w]hen I bought this plot in 1998 I paid 6.000 mark per ar [about 3.000 Euro per 100 sqm]. Now I heard from a neighbor that she wouldn’t sell her plot of 10ar not even for 400.000 Euro”<sup>18</sup>.

We see here that not only the legitimacy, to be in a certain place, but also the worth of the land (respectively the chance to be compensated in the case of resettlement) is discussed in terms of ‘hygiene’.

I would like to further discuss this issue in the context of territorial stigmatization and the Harper et al. (2009) discuss its relation to the association of Roma settlements and environmental harms. According to Harper et al. after the fall of socialism in Hungary over proportional unemployment rates in the impoverished east of the country, where two thirds of Roma settlements are located and emigration of those who could afford it, produced an increasing **ethno-spatial segregation** and concentration of unemployment rates up to 100% in single Roma shanty towns. The exposure of many of these segregated Roma communities to environmental harms (chemicals, floods, discriminatory waste management) and separation from infrastructure (sewerage, fresh water, electricity) is not only a result of them being dependent on settling on the least attractive land, but is according to the authors actively produced: through the selective extension of infrastructure in case of urban sprawl, or through building of dumping grounds next to their settlement. What is produced here are **spaces beyond the pale** – a term the authors borrow from the English colonization in Ireland: “English civilization stopped at the boundary of the pale, and beyond the pale, the unruly and uncivilized segments of society could be found” (Harper et al. 2009:9).

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

This form of selective association of Roma settlements with environmental harms took in Belgrade multiple forms. In 2009 WHO financed in cooperation with IOM and UNOPS the building of a recycling factory at Orlovsko naselje called SWIFT<sup>19</sup>. Orlovsko Naselje is the only legalized informal settlement in Belgrade that is categorized as Roma settlement. There are 13 people stably employed as staff of City Sanitation Services and then they have around 100 people collect for them without being permanently employed. This is but one example of where the City found it supportive and useful to arrange facilities for the collection of secondary raw material next to Roma settlements. However, this happened only quite selectively for those settlements at the periphery or, following the terminology used in the Master Plan, in the middle areas. On the other hand, settlements like Gazela were depicted as chaotic and unhygienic due to the collections of raw material that – as no facilities for their organization were provided – lay blank next to the settlement. A recent resettlement in Cukarica municipality carries these ambiguities to the extreme. Cukarica is one of the municipalities that in 2012 installed containers for the waste, so that people who collect raw material can sort out the non-valuable parts to these containers. However, these containers were only meant for the local Roma, living for decades on Cukarica landslide, who after their joint cleaning action with City Sanitation Services, “promised to keep their settlement clean”<sup>20</sup>. In a statement headed “Removing dump from the unhygienic settlement Cukarica landslide” the municipality proudly reports that in this way it “finally succeeded to tackle the multiannual problem of continually extending of rubbish heaps and spread of bad smells from the burning of gums, because of which citizens constantly faced big ecological harm”<sup>21</sup>. In the last three years in Cukarica a few other informal settlements developed, mostly in Cukarica wood, which is somewhat separated from the rest of the municipality and some of these containers for the dumping of waste by a main road. Many of these people are former inhabitants of the two big settlements of Belvil and Gazela. In the course of these evictions people without registered permanent residency in Belgrade were returned to their cities of origin the South of Serbia. The article on the removal of these settlements in April this year headlines “Communal Mess in Cukarica cleaned”<sup>22</sup> and legitimates the resettlement with the amassment of dump and a fire that broke out. Moreover, it argues that the location bears a lot

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ekapija, 21.9.2012, <http://www.ekapija.com/website/sr/page/633164>., own translation.

<sup>20</sup> Gradska Opština Cukarica, 17.09.2012,

[http://www.cukarica.rs/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1373%3A2012-09-17-14-06-49&catid=7%3AAkcije-projekti&Itemid=74&lang=lat](http://www.cukarica.rs/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1373%3A2012-09-17-14-06-49&catid=7%3AAkcije-projekti&Itemid=74&lang=lat), own translation.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Studio B, 22.4.2013, <http://www.studiob.rs/info/vest.php?id=87948>., own translation.

of risks for the inhabitants, who, crossing the main road with collected materials, fall victim to traffic accidents.

The Master Plan of Belgrade contains in many parts either an explicit association of Roma settlements with dumps or implies this association by writing about the problem of ‘wild dumps’ occurring all over the city together with ‘temporary objects’. Whereas the former are part of the above displayed table on which settlement should be treated in which way by resettlement or improvement, the temporary objects are just meant to be ‘removed’ in order to save ‘city greenery’, especially woods<sup>23</sup>. Although we can assume that these ‘temporary objects’ are indeed shelters as in the case of Cukarica wood, by depicting them as temporary objects or wild constructions they become part of the dumps that can be simply ‘removed’ (in contrast to ‘resettle’) and do not require consequential urbanistic measures in terms of housing. What is visible from this spectrum of four cases is that the collection of raw material does not automatically lead to the labeling of a settlement as unhygienic. Rather the label unhygienic seems to indicate these **settlers’ right to infrastructure**, which, as I will show in the next chapter, is tied to most of these settlements regarded as hotbed of unwanted labor migrants from the southern parts of Serbia.

### **Social Rights of Inhabitants of ‘Unhygienic Settlements’**

As I have shown in the chapter before, Roma settlements have become a site of EU agencies’ developmental assistance. In case of inner city Roma settlements displacements these international categories of vulnerability come into conflict with the social politics of the City of Belgrade. On the one hand the City does not acknowledge Roma as a special target group in its social housing politics. In that they implicitly and sometimes also explicitly criticize interventions by international and EU agencies in the local social politics. One politician from a municipality explicitly told me that in case the EU intends to give money for Roma integration projects, he is going to willingly ‘play that card’ to get the money, but then he is going to formulate the project in such a way that in the end all citizens will profit from it. However, most explicit got this conflict between EU agencies’ policy prescriptions and local social politics in case of the resettlement of Gazela. In relation to the resettlement of Blok 67 settlement (part of Belvil), which happened four months before Gazela resettlement, the Mayor used the occasion to make clear, which are the legal guidelines he follows:

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<sup>23</sup> Master Plan Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27:58, own translation.

“to follow the law, we are going to offer them tomorrow to go to these centers [reception center for homeless adults and children, elderly people’s home], and all those who are not registered in Belgrade are going to be returned to the place where they came from, and that will be paid by the City of Belgrade. We follow legal regulations and about that we neither negotiate with OSCE, nor UNHCR, nor any non-governmental organization. [...] There is not one big city in the world that does not have these settlements, but they are usually in the periphery. They cannot be in the center, which develops and where big infrastructure projects are realized. We are going to follow the law, protect the rights of our citizens regardless skin color, but this cannot be done [construction of settlements in the center]. Also we won’t acknowledge unrealistic suggestions of international organizations that returned tens of thousands of people from Europe without providing us any help to integrate them”<sup>24</sup>.

Here we see that the Mayor uses the occasion to express the sovereignty of the City vis-à-vis international organizations, but also vis-à-vis the state level, which adopted various strategies for the integration of repatriated refugees and thus willingly took over obligations, which the City now refuses to fulfill. I will discuss this quote in more depths later in this chapter.

First I’m going to show how ‘unhygienic settlements’ are conceptualized in the social politics of the City. In the interview with a social worker from the City who was involved in Gazela resettlement she criticized the EU agencies’ conceptualization of Roma settlements as site for integration and development politics. She argued that international NGOs and EU agencies with their politics indirectly give the impression that Roma have the right to settle everywhere in the City, because they are poor, but they would not understand the kind of problem this causes for the social security system. She further explained her perspective by stating that living unregistered in an informal settlement is opening space for manipulating the social security system. She bases that view on a description of Serbian local self-governments that react only situational on the occurrence of informal settlements. By that she means that the governments tolerate them tapping into local infrastructure without paying until some investor evinces interest in that land. She argues that the state in that indirectly supports these people to exploit the social security system through not being registered in one place with all the documents and thus are able enjoy social rights in different locations at the same time, without having obligations.

With space for manipulation, the social worker refers especially to child benefit, which could be obtained – if the child is not registered in one place and the parents are not married – by the father and the mother in two different towns. With obligations she refers to them working in the grey economy (thus not contributing to tax revenues) and not sending their kids to school. Alluding to a ‘culture of poverty’ theory she argue that in that way they would be

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<sup>24</sup> Beobuild, 6.4.2009, [http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com\\_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40](http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40), own translation.

actively reproducing their poverty and inheriting it to the next generation. Different to all other citizens, who would have to pay a fee for not sending their kids to school, people living in 'unhygienic settlements' would not be even sanctioned.

What the City social worker depicts as space for manipulation is shown by Praxis NGO as major hurdle for Roma in exercising their right to social protection. Based on over a hundred field visits in informal Roma settlements throughout the period 2008-2011, Praxis reports that in recent years it became more and more difficult for inhabitants of informal settlements to register temporary residence in the city they actually live in. Whereas it was a common practice until some years ago for people living in informal settlements to register in a permanent address in the same town, as Praxis NGO (2011) reports, this has now become impossible in Belgrade. Some years ago the Ministry of Interior has started to conduct check-ups to inquire whether the person that submitted the request for (permanent or temporary) residency truly lives in that address. But also for citizens who do have an address, Praxis (2011:21) observed since 2010 a "trend of refusing requests for registration of permanent residency".

Different to how the City social worker argues, informal settlements are not out of reach of control of state institutions. Especially in Belgrade they have become more and more policed throughout the last couple of years. Praxis (2011:21) in that also report about some municipalities that installed visits in informal settlements as part of "procedures to determine children's first names". Field visits were also proposed in the Poverty Reduction Strategy, in order to estimate the real level of poverty of people living in informal settlements based through assessing their involvement in grey economy (Praxis 2011). In 2012 a new "Law on Permanent and Temporary Residence of Citizens that allowed the residents of informal settlements to register their residence the addresses of social welfare centers" (Praxis 2012:11) seemed to challenge the exclusion of persons who cannot afford to live in a registered address. However, until now this law does not have by-laws and thus cannot be executed and just exists on the paper<sup>25</sup>. Whereas field visits in informal settlements are de facto applied for the purpose of policing, in relation of the new Law of Residency they are depicted as too costly. Based on this depiction of informal settlements as not includable in the territorial jurisdiction of local social welfare centers, people living in informal settlements remain excluded from the social security system.

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<sup>25</sup> Praxis Watch, 13.12.2012 <http://praxis.rs/index.php/sr/praxis-watch/item/510-donet-pravilnik-o-obrascu-prijave-prebivali%C5%A1ta-na-adresi-ustanove-odnosno-centra-za-socijalni-rad>

In my interview with Zivojin Mitrovic from the Coordination Center for Roma Inclusion that was established as permanent body in the City of Belgrade in 2005 with the start of the Decade of Roma Inclusion he told me that they pushed for the inclusion of informal settlements in the welfare system already in 2005. When they did a census of Gazela settlement they ventured a data base that includes pictures from the houses and GPS position, together with the family members and a system of house numbers. In that they tried to make these settlements graspable by the local government. However, as we see from the vast rejection of the new Law on Residency this system was obviously not adopted.

Against this background the new **Law on Social Housing** (2009) with its declaration of sub-standard housing as case of homelessness seems to go further in the direction of constraining the possibilities of these people to register in the place they want. In the interview at the Ministry for Spatial Planning the official responsible for Roma housing programs pointed out the advantages of the new law. According to her it finally introduced regulations on how to dissolve unhygienic settlements through resettlement to social housing. Thus, municipalities that refused to legalize a settlement (as they did not want to pass their land to Roma) and that thus remained only with the option to further tolerate these settlements (cf. Petrovic 2011), are now provided with the possibility of resettlement. However, building a resettlement model on equalizing inhabitation of sub-standards settlements with homelessness, seems to be a further deprivation of these people's possibility to register in the place they live and make it more easy to transfer them to their place of birth (in the South of Serbia).

I would argue that the mechanisms Belgrade uses to control the mobility of impoverished population are similar as those described by Varsanyi (2008) for US American cities, which become agents in regulating illegal immigration 'through the backdoor'. Belgrade – at least in the area I investigated – does not act by proxy for national immigration politics, but follows the ratio of enforcing its position as boom town through the externalization of existing forms of poverty in Serbia. The techniques are similar to what Varsanyi (2008) describes as control through land-use ordinance and public spaces, where the city can assume agglomeration of illegal immigrants. The City of Belgrade uses these very mechanisms but not to work as a proxy for state interests in controlling certain forms of immigration, but rather to enact its own rules in the sense of '**right of the city**' as formulated by Isin (2008). These rights emerge from belonging to a certain city and are the product of struggles within which the city defended special rights vis-à-vis the state. Even if the Serbian state did adopt the repatriation of IDPs with the EU, the City of Belgrade manages to displace these people from its territory

as inhabitants of ‘unhygienic settlements’, which are often described as ‘informal collective centers’. The venue through which this is put into practice is reducing the chains for people living in ‘unhygienic settlements’ to register residency in Belgrade. Then systematically displacing ‘unhygienic settlements’, which according to the Master Plan mostly developed in the 1990s and brought ‘before unknown levels of poverty to Belgrade’ the City invented strategies to externalize certain forms of poverty. Right of the city emerge from struggles between the city and the state in which the city defended its position vis-à-vis the state and thus creates special rights for those belonging to the city (Isin 2008:270). The Mayor expressed this position of Belgrade vis-à-vis treaties the state might have with EU, when he said that during the resettlements he is following going to bring all the people not registered in Belgrade back to the places where they came from and that he “won’t acknowledge unrealistic suggestions of international organizations that returned tens of thousands of people from Europe without providing us any help to integrate them”<sup>26</sup>. That this is a form of ‘right of the city’, which enacts Belgrade’s position as a boom town can be supported through the finding by Praxis that of the 936 individual eviction procedures that were conducted between 2010 and 2011, 89% occurred on the territory of the City of Belgrade, while the rest in other larger and economically more developed cities, while not a single eviction took place in the impoverished southern cities (Praxis 2013:68).

In my case it is not so much the question which influence the legal status in terms of citizenship has on right to the city, but more how territorial jurisdiction in terms of residency compromises the right to the city of those people who can neither enter the formal housing market, nor social housing as they are deemed to have possibilities for housing in their place of birth (these possibilities range from assumptions about unregistered ownership of comfortable houses, to a parcel of land that could be inherited from some relative and used to construct some kind of dwelling on it). This politics of the capital is the other side of the coin often depicted as ‘white flee’ from regions with high unemployment in the periphery (cf. Stewart 2002).

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<sup>26</sup> Beobuild, 6.4.2009, [http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com\\_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40](http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40), own translation.

## CONCLUSION

Roma settlements are conceptualized as in the way of the development of the city. Thus usurpation of public land and the chaotic development of the urban tissue – which is mainly a result of the sellout of public space to private investors ('wild capitalism'<sup>27</sup>) from the 1990s onward – is conceptualized as a problem that is solvable by the local politicians through resettlement of unhygienic settlements. In that, unhygienic settlements are framed as 'abstract space' that is clearly defined on the basis of its illegitimacy to be in that place. However, as I have insinuated already (and it will be more extensively covered in the chapter 4), the separation which is here assumed between 'formal' urbanization and 'informal' urbanization is not easily to uphold as the radical expulsion of 'unhygienic settlements' might suggest. Rather, the usurpation of public land by investors and the emergence of deprived squatter settlements in the city center are interconnected.

As the Master Plan reports in its analytic section big investors and squatters are tied through transactions with 'right of use'. This could be regarded as inherited from socialism, where the complicated procedures to acquire a parcel of land for individual housing construction produced an informal market on which big land users sold their right of use to different interested individuals and thus actively contributed to the informal development of buildings on these parcels. As the Master Plan (2003) reports, the subcontracting documents acquired legitimacy as restitute for property titles in case the destruction of an informally constructed house was issued in front of the court. Through this practice of subcontracting owners of individual houses were freed from the complicated and expensive procedure of officially obtaining building permits. As in many cases of resettlement of especially smaller Roma settlements there is not official procedure preceding the eviction, potentially existing contracts of this kind cannot acquire any relevancy.

With regard to how Roma settlements and investment are connected, I would like to put extra emphasis on the dimension of urban development and thus talk, based on Harper's et al. (2009) term of the externalization of environmental harms, about the externalization of underdevelopment. First, unhygienic Roma settlements are regarded as having emerged from the influx of refugees and other impoverished people from the South of Serbia. This is not

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<sup>27</sup> Here I do not only refer to the selling of public land to big investors, but also 'chaotic' forms of sprawl around and on multi-store houses (extension in the backyard and on the rooftop) that was pursued by mainly middle class residents after the huge privatization of the public housing stock during the 90s (cf. Petrovic/Vujovic 2007).

only alleged in the differentiation of inner-city slums vs. illegal sub-division of agricultural land that is promoted in the social housing policy documents. The Master Plan<sup>28</sup> in its analytic section on specific urban problems reports the problem of “sprawl of poor urban quarters and slums” which it depicts as “a relatively new process which was almost unknown to Belgrade in the 80s”. Imbued in that is the associations of **Roma as unhygienic**. Thus they are regarded as threat to the legitimacy of a neighborhood – a connotation that makes it hard for them to claim the improvement of infrastructure as they are regarded as the threat to the improvement of a certain neighborhood (like in the case of Staro Sajmiste). This connotation also became apparent in the protests that occurred in whichever site from Belgrade Roma should be resettled. Although Minority Information Center (2005) claims these to be racist mockeries, it is interesting that in almost all cases the protesters state the already overburdened local infrastructure as reason for rejecting these ‘newcomers’. However, from the City government’s point of view seemed to be easier to give floor in a populist manner to the racist overtone, and re-confirm the Eastern European anti-gypsism (cf. Stewart 2012) than to enter negotiations on the allocation of resources.

Secondly, **whereas other informal settlements are regarded as a problem of urban planning<sup>29</sup>, Roma settlements are regarded as a complex social problem** (cf. also Zerjav 2009) that emerges from programs for the integration of refugees and repatriated refugees from Western Europe. In that, Roma settlements become a **site of encounter**, where external development experts (NGOs, UN, EU, World Bank) and local authorities **negotiate social politics and right of the city**. I would argue that both urban development politics and international development politics could be regarded as jointly establishing a regime that categorize **inhabitants of unhygienic settlements as immature and incommensurable to processes of right claiming**. Whereas urban entrepreneurial governance works through the exclusion of urban poor via criminalisation and expulsion via illegalisation, international development politics are working more subtle through objecting the marginalized to certain measures lead by the idea of *enabling*.

<sup>28</sup> Master Plan Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia 2003/27:10, own translation.

<sup>29</sup> As an example of the way legalization of settlements at the urban periphery is discussed as a problem solved through planning by the Institute for Urbanism: „We were working recently on a detailed urban plan of a settlement that just started to appear informally on agricultural land at the edge of Belgrade, and Institute for Urbanism made plan with land reserved for school, hospital, parks, market, etc. But in the meantime, before Agency for Land Development expropriated land for public purposes, people constructed houses on it. It seems that they do not need public functions now, but when the whole area is filled with the houses, than they will complain to the city administration that they want services. But the problem is always where to put services in such settlements. It is happening all the time with the plans that Institute makes.” (Zlata Vuksanovic-Macura in Zerjav 2009:37).

As I will show in the following chapter, in contestation with EIB resettlement guidelines the City produced a resettlement model that is built on socialization politics. Although some authors critically comments the encounters between national and international development agencies as producing only temporary effects as they are always on the basis of projects (PALGO 2012), which is a common critique on international development project, there are also more structural effects (like the adoption of a new law on social housing), that will be analyzed in the following chapters.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **GAZELA AND THE QUEST FOR A RESETTLEMENT MODEL IN BELGRADE**

In order to understand the politics of displacement of the City of Belgrade, it is crucial to follow the case of Gazela resettlement. Because of its central position, Gazela settlement was much used as the symbol of poverty in Belgrade especially in foreign media<sup>30</sup>. However, Gazela is not only representative for the efforts of the entrepreneurial city to “erase the negative iconography” (Hubbard/Hall 1998:9), but also because its displacement was tied to an infrastructure project, which is the main source of foreign direct investment in Belgrade. The building of infrastructure is the only realm where public-private partnerships were established to date. The reason for that is often seen in the ‘chaotic’ spatial structure of the city which is characterized by a lot of unresolved requests for restitution that hinder the privatization of state land with the exemption of New Belgrade<sup>31</sup> (cf. Urbanistic Institute of Belgrade 2010).

Since 2003 the City undertook several attempts to build social housing for Gazela inhabitants, all of which failed because of protests by the local residents. In that Gazela became the most publicly scrutinized example of a larger politics towards ‘unhygienic settlements’ announced in the Master Plan 2021, which foresaw to resettle the 130 unhygienic settlements into 5,000 social housing units build for that purpose. When the resettlement became top priority in the frame of the Gazela bridge rehabilitation project financed by the EIB and EBRD in 2007, Gazela resettlement was expected to become a model resettlement. The IFIs were expected to use their financial means as leverage to enforce the City authorities to put into practice a viable model that would affect resettlement policies beyond Gazela. However, the political unpopularity of building social housing for people from unhygienic settlements brought the Mayor Djilas to resettle to peri-urban container settlements and thus turned Gazela resettlement in a shameful experience for the involved banks. For Djilas this resettlement increased his popularity as someone who finally made disappear this ‘hotbed of deprivation’ from the City’s face and in the following induced a whole trend of forced evictions from inner city area.

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<sup>30</sup> As one of the most remarkable examples one could mention the book ‘Beograd Gazela: Travel Guide to a Slum’, which declares Gazela as astonishing displacement of a type of poverty to Europe, normally only known from India or Africa.

<sup>31</sup> New Belgrade was built within the period of state socialism from 1947 on so that there are no private owners that have to be restituted.

Contrary to the popular depiction of Gazela resettlement as failed to produce a resettlement model, in this chapter I will show institutions and policies that were established bit by bit after Gazela resettlement. This is to get rid of this evaluation of the resettlement as failed or successful depending on whether international standards were fulfilled and a resettlement model established. Thus it becomes apparent that the EIB and the City, in an effort to jointly manage the fulfillment of credit conditionality, constructed a specific kind of governmentality over PAPs, which I'm going to describe in the section 'container socialization apparatus'. In that the containers were re-interpreted from a failed alternative accommodation to a necessary intermediary step that would socialize people from unhygienic settlements before they enter regular flats. In accordance with this newly claimed need to 'socialize' people from 'unhygienic settlements' before they qualify for social housing, the right to a container became tied to children's school attendance and diverse forms of good conduct. Container settlements thus became highly policed dwellings. I argue in this chapter that the resettlement did not lead to state capacity building in the classical sense, but it did alter the right to social housing for people from unhygienic settlements.

## GAZELA RESETTLEMENT

Gazela was already focus point of the resettlement politics since the City of Belgrade's 2003 decision about the solution of 'wild unhygienic settlements' in Belgrade. This plan set itself the ambitious aim to resolve these settlements within two years through the building of 5 thousand flats<sup>32</sup>. Until now there are 91 families from 'unhygienic settlements' who got social housing provided by the City of Belgrade and further 168 who are going to be provided social housing through means of the European commission.

Social housing was planned to be built in Kamendin, Zemun Polje, in 2003. The citizens of Zemun Polje organized a crisis committee and protested for several months as they feared a decrease in the value of their neighborhoods. They claimed in exchange infrastructure, however, the City did not respond to these requests. Rather, in its next attempt to resettle the first mention of containers occurs. This was in 2005 and concerned Gazela settlement. The German City Essen and Caritas donated containers that should be placed in New Belgrade, Dr. Ivan Ribar Street. However, heavy protests by the local residents prohibited the resettlement (Minority Information Center Serbia 2005). The protesters on the one hand side mentioned zoning plans according to which the area would not be legible to place containers.

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<sup>32</sup> cf. Info Novi Beograd, 9.1.2003 <http://www.novibeograd.rs/srb/item/3763-dva-meseca-za-proveru-predlozenih-resenja>, own translation.

On the other hand, they feared that the containers would be permanent. Also the Roma themselves feared to be resettled in locations far from the city center from where they couldn't pursue the collection of secondary raw material anymore (Minority Information Center Serbia 2006:19).

From 2006 on the resettlement was framed by a bigger project to reconstruct Gazela bridge as part of works on the Pan-European Corridor X. This corridor is part of a bigger endeavor to connect the entire Balkans economically with Western Europe and open an important trading route between Europe and the Middle East. The corridor shall expand Serbia's transportation capabilities that according to a World Bank report, "will enable Serbia to capitalize on its geographical position as a key transit country in the Pan-European network"<sup>33</sup>. Besides the rehabilitation of Gazela bridge, the project includes the rehabilitation of access roads and a ring road between Bubanj Potok and Železnik in the south of Belgrade. The project is co-financed by European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Agency for Reconstruction. Also the City of Belgrade contributed and the contractor Roads of Serbia, himself. Despite all the former attempts to resettle Roma to social housing, when it became credit conditionality, City authorities began to depict the conditions as unreasonable and pressurized the IFIs with the urgent need to reconstruct the bridge.

Right in the beginning of the Gazela bridge rehabilitation project the City of Belgrade made clear that it would only take over the responsibility and provide alternative solutions for those people registered in Belgrade and those who are IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija. For these people the City proposed the metal containers donated by the City of Essen and it was rejected by both EIB and EBRD "as violating the spirit of the respective resettlement process" (EIB 2010:13). In the years 2007-2008 the City then began planning pre-fabricated single-families. The project was drafted by Vladimir Macura and Zivojin Mitrovic, from the City Coordination Center for Roma Integration. In 2008 they received the Holcim Award for their draft solution, which included education, employment, health and social care. Next to 130 families from Gazela, this housing should have also provided 270 flats for other socially vulnerable people. However, when the City purchased a territory in Ovca for the realization of the project, heavy protests occurred among the citizens in Ovca. In 2009 the City decided that single-family houses would be too expensive. The alternative solution was then to purchase apartments, which was discussed in a joint meeting between the banks and the City in March

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<sup>33</sup>Global Research, 28.10.2009, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/devastating-free-market-reforms-imposed-on-serbia/15849>

2009. The costs for this option was estimated as about 8 million Euro. In May 2009 the City informed the banks that due to the financial crisis this option would be also too expensive and that they now plan to “propose another container solution” (EIB 2010:13). Bearing to the fact that the project proposed by Zivojin Mitrovic would have cost around 4 million Euros, we can guess that there were also political reasons for dropping the plans for building pre-fabricated houses and purchase instead apartments.

On August 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 the parliament adopted a resettlement action plan (RAP) and proceeded with the resettlement on August 31<sup>th</sup> 2009 accordingly. One month later the Serbian Center for Ecology and Sustainable Development (CEKOR) and the Bankwatch Network issued a complaint criticizing non-adherence to the EIB social standards and non-transparency of the resettlement procedure (cf. EIB 2010). The Complaint Office of the EIB (CO) in its reply emphasized that the RAP adopted by the parliament was not approved by the banks, as it did not “comply with their social policies” (EIB 2010:13). This is also the reason why they did not consider to disclose it for the public, although RAPs are according to EIB social standards documents for public disclosure, on the basis of which resettlements can become a consultative process in the first place. However, as the CO further points out, despite of the fact that the resettlement was not exercised according to a RAP approved by the banks, the resettlement procedure itself was positively evaluated by the United Nations’ Office of the Resident Coordinator in Serbia. They quote him saying in an official letter to the City that the “relocation of the families was orderly and professional and broadly in compliance with the UN’s relocation and resettlement guidelines” (ibd.).

After the resettlement City clarified according to the CO that

“it is not in the position to guarantee social housing specifically for the PAPs [project affected people] due to the legal and political considerations. Thus, the City only commits to providing to the PAPs the access to social housing similarly to other vulnerable people. The chances for PAPs households to receive social housing would be improved if the City provided further information and assistance in applying for social housing” (EIB 2010:15)

Despite ongoing investigations in the resettlement standards and pressure by the EIB to provide sustainable housing solutions for all PAPs and restore their livelihoods through employment, in March 2010 the EIB decided to provide a first disbursement of the credit. Bankwatch (2010) criticized that in that “the need to rehabilitate the bridge enabled the Belgrade authorities to put pressure on the IFIs rather than the other way round”.

The disbursement went along with the decision that further disbursements would only be authorized, in case that the outstanding resettlement issues would be solved. In a letter to the

EIB the mayor of Belgrade, Dragan Djilas expressed his “strong disappointment” (EIB 2010:18) with this decision and the new obligations and emphasized the achievements of the City in terms of improving the life of the PAPs, through

“social and medical care, treatment and hospitalization for all PAPs; daily meals from the national kitchen; enrollment of all PAPs’ children in local schools as well as provision of school bus transfer, books, clothes and food on regular basis” (EIB 2010:19)

In contrast to this list, the CO reports based on their investigations in February 2010 that “in general PAPs were very dissatisfied and considered their situation worse than under Gazela (mostly due to overcrowding and lack of livelihood opportunities)” (EIB 2010:18).

Against the background of these experiences, for the next resettlement with direct involvement of the EIB the City had to ensure: consultation with settlement inhabitants, international monitoring and disclosure of the RAP well before the resettlement. However, it is not so much a general improvement in resettlement procedures, but clearly the involvement of European Investment Bank that brought about close monitoring for Belvil resettlement and a fund by the European Commission to ensure permanent alternative accommodation for people from five container settlements with predominantly inhabitants from Belvil and Gazela. The critique of Gazela resettlement grew in the years after the resettlement, when it became clear that the City authorities would fail to provide long-term solutions. Therefore, in case of the next big project, which is the new bridge over Sava, the European Investment Bank forced the City to clarify their resettlement model before any loan was disbursed. This did not only concern the resettlement of those people living in the direct ‘corridor of impact’, i.e. the 93 families who are so called ‘project affected people’, for whom the provision of pre-fabricated houses is foreseen. As the responsible Human Rights Officer of the European Delegation pointed out, the fund of the European Commission for Belvil resettlement was also indirectly encouraged through the EIB:

“the European Investment Bank was quite quite concerned when it came to the issue of the loan for the construction of the other bridge [E: Sava] yes the bridge over the Sava which is connected with Belvil and for this they requested the City of Belgrade to provide assurances about how the process would take place and then the City of Belgrade asked for our support and we decided to provide this support”<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> HR Officer of the European Delegation, Interview 6.12.12:5.

From these funds social housing is going to be built by UNOPS, soft measures are going to be provided by OSCE and the City Secretariat. As the responsible Officer of the European Delegation in Belgrade explained these funds:

“the government doesn’t have any obligation to inform us about evictions or resettlements, so it’s mostly up to the government whether they wish our assistance, so in the case of Belvil the fact is that we informed the government that we were able to provide them with a financial assistance and this is what allowed us to step into the process”<sup>35</sup>.

With the financial means the European Commission provided UNOPS is going to build social housing for people from five container settlements. To resettle whole container settlements and not only inhabitants from Gazela and Belvil, is what European Commission prescribed when they gave the fund. When I asked the responsible Officer of the European Delegation about how the whole project fits the social housing politics of Belgrade which refuse to provide housing only for Roma families he explained: “we provide social housing for the families not who have been relocated from Belvil, but for the people who are **in** these container settlements where Belvil families are also located [...], the City basically doesn’t, have a limited saying in the sense that this is a solution which is going to be provided of our own funds”<sup>36</sup>.

In the following chapter I will tackle the question to what extend the resettlement under EIB monitoring did lead to capacity building in the sense often claimed for resettlements with involvement of International Financial Institutions. I will argue that beside a slight modification in the application system for social housing, the City maintained is exclusionary gaze on people from unhygienic settlements as undeserving (based on assumptions of manipulation). The resettlement guidelines were only put into practice through special regulations and demarcated project spaces that basically leave the project affected people in the ‘waiting room’, where their capabilities are monitored as to decide whether they qualify for regular social housing. At the same time the containers effected an “institutionalization of new quasi-judicial arenas of mediation, arbitration and inspection” (Randeria/Grunder 2011:188). Not only did the City establish a commission that is to monitor the container inhabitants and can decree evictions, but also international organizations regularly issue reports on living conditions in the containers. In the following I will discuss how these arenas marginalization of people from unhygienic settlements is contested.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

## **ONE INSTRUMENT – VARIOUS ROLES: 'MOBILE HOUSING UNITS' IN THE RESETTLEMENT PROCEDURE**

In order to decentralize the story of the resettlement of Gazela and show its effects from another angle, I will start this chapter with a short story of another bigger settlement in order to show problems of municipalities to deal with 'unhygienic settlements', when there is no international donor involved and the expectations such municipalities connected to Gazela resettlement.

In 2007 newspapers started to report about a new unhygienic settlement in the court of a hospital in Belgrade that during the last 20 years increased to 54 majorly Roma families. The settlement emerged in the 1980s when for a film a few prefabricated houses were built in the yard. After the recording was finished some Roma families moved in these houses and the settlement began to grow. The director of the hospital reports:

“Even the City inspectors are just indifferently observing when they build new houses and do not react, or they only write a report, which again does not have any effect. There is, in fact, a state of direct threat here. In Serbia does not exist a single hospital which has a Roma settlement in its yard”<sup>37</sup>.

Also the inhabitants themselves agree that a hospital court is not the right place for them to settle, but they don't know where else to go. The municipality of Savski Venac expresses its powerlessness in face of a resettlement of a settlement of this size and thus didn't take action besides issuing building permission violations that resulted from a total of three court decisions. The article ends expressing the hope that the Gazela resettlement will produce a model on how to deal with the problem. The municipality promises that straight after Gazela the settlement in the hospital will be the next to be resettled.

The next time media reports about the settlement is in 2011 – two years after Gazela resettlement – because of a fire that erupted in the settlement and led to the temporary evacuation of 120 persons to two community centers in the same municipality. These places were originally built in the 1950s to house workers that build a nearby stadium. In those places the people were sustained with aid packages and fed from the national kitchen. The municipality came up with two solutions for these people: to be resettled to Makis container settlement or to stay in the community center until March and being provided then with building material. The inhabitants finally claimed to get containers near to the community

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<sup>37</sup> B92, 10.08.2007,  
[http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=08&dd=10&nav\\_category=12&nav\\_id=258824](http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=08&dd=10&nav_category=12&nav_id=258824),  
own translation.

center in the same municipality, but the president of the municipality denied this as a bad solution due to lack of infrastructure<sup>38</sup>.

This introductory story is to show both the expectations connected to the Gazela resettlement, and the structural problems municipalities had to deal with informal settlements, though they were already in the Master Plan of 2003 dedicated for resettlement. The settlement in the hospital yard, despite the obvious untenability of the situation, was not resettled until an emergency case appeared. **Gazela resettlement didn't produce a resettlement model** but containers that function as an **asset for the City to housing needs that become public** (as in case of emergency (fire)).

Contrary to their depiction as mobile and temporary shelter and the City of Belgrade's Secretary for social affairs emphasis on 'mobilni stambeni zajednici' (mobile housing units) they do not seem to be mobile. Rather the rejection to build containers in the municipality shows that the containers once put in a certain location are **then treated as stable settlement**. This became also obvious when in 2005 first plans occurred to resettle Roma from under the Gazela bridge to containers (financed by the German city Essen and Caritas). The inhabitants of Dr. Ivan Ribar street, where the containers should be placed, protested against them as not fitting the urban plans for their area (cf. Minority Information Center 2005) and expressed strong doubts that when these containers are once placed in their neighborhood, whether they will ever be removed. And indeed to my knowledge not one of the container settlements has been removed since their first appearance in 2007. Rather, empty containers were used by the municipalities and the City as assets of the social housing politics in Belgrade.

Putting resettled people to containers instead of social housing is legitimated by the City as **politically and legally necessary** in a situation, where many other people (that lead a 'normal' life, in the words of the City social worker) cannot satisfy their housing needs. This corresponds to what Kovats (2003) critically remarks on the politicization of ethnic Roma deprivation by international agencies. He observes that ethnic funding schemes place into competition Roma and non-Roma. In that any state budget that seems to be spent on Roma, and I say 'seems' because in this case here it would be spend on Gazela settlement which is not exclusively Roma inhabited, is perceived by the majority society only as another fund withhold from them. However, the other (non-City) stakeholders involved in the resettlement like the former UN-Habitat spatial planner and EIB social impact officer point to the cost

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. Pressonline, 29.11.2011, <http://www.pressonline.rs/info/beograd/189611/stanarima-iz-zvecanske-smestaj-u-makisu.html>.

inefficiency of the container solution. Not only were the containers themselves expensive regarding the fact that they provide only temporary shelter (and thus force the City to spend more money to fulfill the EIB conditionality of permanent housing on the long run), but they are even not at all isolated, so that the energy costs – completely subsidized by the City – are horrendous. Thus, the containers are quite a populist response to the alleged illegitimacy to provide Roma with valuable state assets.

The consulting spatial planner, whom I interviewed explained that in Belgrade social assistance is not so much a problem of budget as of efficient management. He says

“Belgrade is full of money that is why they don’t need to reform their institutions, they don’t have a problem if something is wrongly managed, or they don’t care that much about the result because the budget is huge, that’s why”<sup>39</sup>.

As one social worker from the City told me, at the moment only every 10<sup>th</sup> request for social assistance could be satisfied<sup>40</sup>. Thus, the consulting spatial planner locates the reason for why the City did not provide social housing, i.e. its reluctance in fulfilling the criteria set by the EIB, in that He points out that now, as the City is pushed by the banks, they have to rebuild some of the institutions and a systemic solution to resettlement. This would mean that a lot more people than now would pose quests for social housing.

“probably that resettlement would have some framework of systemic solutions which would then be part of the wider policy, [E: ja] but it’s quite delicate you know delicate because [...] they have [i.e. the City has] majority of people in same situation that would probably need to be assisted in the same [way and that’s] why they are little bit reluctant in any systemic programmatic solution for that, although they would **have** to come up to them, because the social housing in Belgrade is classic public rental housing which is the least cost-effective it’s more the most expensive concept and finally if you want to solve much more case with poor people that are very poor you have to look for other solutions [E: ja] so this is what they are doing now, [...] they have been a little bit pushed by these banks”<sup>41</sup>.

We see that it is **not simply a lack of financial resources but their strategic allocation** that produced the container solution. The containers in a way open a new register within the contesting requests for housing. The characteristics of this ‘new register’ are going to be discussed in the following section.

There I’m going to discuss in which ways the containers did have systemic effects on the resettlement practice and right to social housing for people in ‘unhygienic settlements’. In that I’m relating to the assumption that the pressure of the banks exercised on the City finally

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<sup>39</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 17.10.2012:5.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Social worker of the City Commission for Gazela, Interview 11.12.12.

<sup>41</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 17.10.2012:5.

helped the City to establish institutions to deal with informal settlements. The urban planner who is consulting in the resettlement process said for example:

“I think it was very beneficial this pressure, because they really established some from my point of view for this stage quite a good, capacity to deal with these issues and this is now already becoming a standard office, the office for informal settlements in City Secretariat, for social welfare, so this is a good thing”<sup>42</sup>.

However, as I will show in this chapter, this office for informal settlements, which is actually an office to monitor and discipline a certain population coming solely from ‘unhygienic settlements’, serves to further constrain these people’s access to social welfare by introducing the dimension of capabilities. I would argue that this tendency was supported, when the City – under pressure of international stakeholders and human rights organizations – induced the containers with the ‘will to improve’ (cf. Li 2007).

### Container Socialization Apparatus

The container settlements were in the beginning mostly legitimated as permanent housing solution and it was emphasized that from a technical point of view they did provide better conditions than the shanties under Gazela bridge. However, short after the resettlement more and more criticism came up concerning the remote location of the settlements, the lack of employment opportunities and technical problems, like the lack of isolation and the failure of the government to build foundations so that some containers began sinking into the ground. Through this pressure (by Bankwatch Network, Amnesty International and Praxis NGO) the container settlements had to be declared as only temporary, however not completely waste solution. Quite on the contrary, the containers now acquired a meaning and role of their own as they were now depicted as serving a newly claimed need to socialize Roma prior to resettling them to social housing. The background narrative for this refers back to incidents in the 1990s, when Roma families got social housing in Obrenovac<sup>43</sup>. According to the story, Roma got a quality A flat and used all the wooden materials, door frames and parquet, for heating and sold all objects that were not nailed down. In that, an originally solely **technical solution (provide alternative housing)**, became induced with the ‘will to improve’ (cf. Li 2007). This introduced a mode of governance that separates society in various subgroups of more or less improvable people, and exclude the least improvable “from the exercise of rights granted to other citizens on the grounds that they were incapable – or not yet capable – of exercising the attendant responsibilities” (Li 2007:14). In this chapter I will show how the

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<sup>42</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 11.12.12:6.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Social Worker of the City Commission for the Resettlement of Gazela, Interview 11.12.12.

containers rise from a deficient housing solution to an adequate institutionalization of the need for socialization that is an “assemblage forms of practical knowledge, with modes of perception, practices of calculation, vocabularies, types of authority, forms of judgment, architectural forms, human capacities, non-human objects and devices, inscription techniques and so forth” (Rose 1999:52).

Now people from ‘unhygienic settlements’, not only those in containers, but also those few that got social flats through the regular competitions, were subjected to socialization programs, which are total in that their aim is to change ‘way of life’. As the Deputy Secretary for Social Security of the City explains:

“these families have been living totally secluded from civilization and the education they are offered in social housing literally reaches from washing hand and maintenance of bodily hygiene, to the maintenance of the living space, introduction to the topic family planning, for example, why a woman should not have 12 children, in case she has already five, that there is something like contraception”<sup>44</sup>.

Although these socialization measures are also offered in social housing, people from the City of Belgrade and the EIB involved in the care for container inhabitants all emphasize that people who go from containers to social housing have much higher likeability to handle life in a flat than those coming directly from ‘unhygienic settlements’.

“The quality of life and way of life [of those coming from containers] is very different from those who go directly from an unhygienic settlement in a flat, because those from the newly formed settlements [container settlements] went at least through this period of socialization and social integration which lasts since 2009, i.e. three and a half years now. And the results are really visible, and these people live totally normal in their flats, happy, satisfied... and I could say there is a big difference when you compare their life style, and relation to the flat, to the neighbors, to the City, to those who did not went through this period in the mobile housing units”<sup>45</sup>.

The reason for this is located in the close 'caring' relation established between container settlements and City officials. Almost on a daily basis an official from some secretary of the City is present in the settlement. The Secretary for Social Security even (claim to) know all the people personally.

“We care for them in that way, we know everything about every family, because that is the only way to direct them to what is actually good [way of life], and to how they should behave. Basically the relation of the Secretariat and the City towards the people in the newly formed settlements and those in social housing is approximately the same, only a bit more intensive. But as I say, it is more intensive [for those in containers], because there is a need for more intensive work with them”<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Deputy Secretary for Social Security of the City, Interview 13.12.12:3, own translation.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.:4.

<sup>46</sup> Social worker City Secretariat for Social Security, Interview 13.12.12:5, own translation.

The Deputy Secretary for Social Security told in the interview that they started to work with the resettled people already on the next day after the resettlement. However, the special sector that coordinates the work of different City secretariats with regard to care of container inhabitants was funded only one year after the Gazela resettlement, when socialization became the prime designation of the container settlements.

The institutions that emerged around the containers are depicted as a valuable asset of the social politics of the City. This view of containers is further supported by one of the social workers telling me that the City received in the first time of the installment almost on a weekly basis dozens of applications from other poor families, who were not part of the Gazela resettlement, but wanted to get a container.

However, all these socialization measures seem to take place in a vacuum, respectively they are only to enforce the vertical relation between citizen and state and do not work towards integration (which would mean strengthening of horizontal relations). In that they are the classical form of policing with which the state establishes a downward continuity “which transmits to individual behavior and the running of the family the same principles as the good governance of the state” (Foucault 1991:92). The venue through which this happens is as Foucault describes the ‘disposition of things’, that is, the provision of containers and granting of electricity and water by the City are the venues through which the City makes claims. This issue came up when I talked to the urban planner consulting in Belvil resettlement about the problem of animosities among the local population when the construction of Roma social housing is announced. In such cases he recommends to negotiate with the local community so that in the end:

“you will come up with the location that you wanted, and with some benefits, additional benefits for the local community, so that they know if they lose something, their comfortable life or I don’t know what their perception that they are losing on the other side they have something usually we were proposing for example some extension of some bus lines, so that they have direct bus line, or to pave the road, something that they will feel the benefit of having these people there, otherwise they think that they are only losing”<sup>47</sup>.

When I asked him about why the neighbors of container settlements didn’t get any benefits to trigger a more welcoming attitude towards the containers, he explained that the **containers are conceptually not really part of one neighborhood**, so there should be no problems: “they are fenced this is something else and they are quite remote and I don’t think that there was any problem with local communities there” (Urban Planner 11.12.12:2). Legally they

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<sup>47</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 11.12.12:2.

belong to the City of Belgrade. If the containers and the population inhabiting the containers are not considered part of a neighborhood stands in a certain contrast to their claim to serve the integration of Roma. One could argue that the socialization measures in the containers seem to take place in a vacuum in a way and do not serve the integration of the Roma in the neighborhood, but rather they are fenced off and put in remote positions. This shows that socialization is **not meant as integration, but rather in terms of policing**.

This issue was also pointed out by the Social Impact Officer of the EIB, whom I interviewed. She said the containers are negative because they give the City of Belgrade more time to accomplish the requirement of permanent alternative accommodation and thus keeping the EIB involved. On the other hand she argued that they are positive as they make people governable:

“the settlements **are** good because it puts them in one place, it provides, ehm, each settlement has a community center, with desks and chairs, so it’s easier for other agencies to come in and to work whereas under Gazela it would be very difficult to collect the children under one place and work with 20 children, it’s the same thing it’s very difficult to do the health checks, you know when the city organizes vaccinations they do in the community center, everybody brings their kids and it’s very easy and systematic, [...] in my opinion the settlements are good because it allows the system, it’s slowly that you put them into the system, whereas immediately from the settlement into the system it’s very difficult, but with the settlements it’s kind of like a buffer”<sup>48</sup>.

By emphasizing the spatial organization of the settlement as beneficial for the different agencies to come and enter, she alleges that these people are so remote from the city that do not use these services within the city but that they are separately provided for the container settlements under consideration of special needs of these people (more often sick than others, children get separate education etc.). Here a group defined as deviant is subjected disciplinary power: close surveillance in a confined space.

Secondly, the EIB social impact officer argues that they are socialized so that they fit an imagined community of co-citizen’s with a certain code of conduct once they get into social housing. To illustrate this she gives a comparison between Makis 1 container settlement, which has been in existence since 2009 and Makis 2, which was established in April 2012:

“if you would go to Makis 1 and Makis 2 [...] it’s a huge difference [...] Makis 1 is Gazela, Makis 2 is Belvil, you go to Makis 1 [...] there were no papers, the children were dressed, you go through the settlement, the children say hi, there was no drinking, people know order, you know, you would have little fences with plants, you go to Makis 2 it was a disaster, there was garbage, I guess they tie the garbage and then they leave it on the steps, the dogs come,

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<sup>48</sup> EIB Social Impact Officer, Interview 19.12.12:9.

they tear the bags, in Makis 1 they know from experiences you cannot leave garbage in front of your door, either take it to the container or don't take it out at all [...] there is a difference, you can tell the difference”<sup>49</sup>.

In summer 2012 Praxis NGO issued a complaint about the City of Belgrade Secretary for Social Protection to the Commissioner for Equality. The office of the Commissioner for Equality was established in 2010 and he is next to the Ombudsperson an independent body monitoring citizens' and human rights in Serbia. The bottom line of this complaint is that the sanctions that the City introduced to 'maintain the domestic order' in the containers and to socialize the inhabitants are so tough that there is no security of tenure guaranteed. In that they criticize the subordination of the right to housing under the purpose of socialization described above. Thus the containers do neither satisfy the conditions of EIB, nor of the ICESCR. Against the agenda of strict socialization of inhabitants of unhygienic settlements of the City, Praxis puts that the population evicted and thus foremostly concerned by this kind of strict policing are the most vulnerable citizens, like Roma, IDPs and among them many stateless persons. Moreover they refer to one resolution by the European Court on a case in Great Britain that says that the “marginalized positions (Roma) as minority means that their needs and different way of life has to be considered in any legal regulatory framework, as well as in resolutions on single cases”<sup>50</sup>.

The container code of conduct promotes a pro-active approach in the socialization of the inhabitants. In case a “user (full-aged family member) does not show an active attitude towards the activities of the City government aiming at the socialization of individuals and their families” then the City Secretary for Social Welfare has the right without any explanations cancel the contract with this person and expel her/him from the container without any further support<sup>51</sup>. An ‘active attitude’ is further defined as “children going to pre-school and educational institutions, education and employment of adults who are [physically] able to work, adoption of the rules of nice behavior towards representatives of the Secretary [for Social Security] and other responsible institutions and others”<sup>52</sup>. In the case of employment the sanction is put into practice in case “a user refuses three job offers for which he fulfills the criteria”<sup>53</sup>. Apart from the quest for ‘nice behavior’ these regulations **builds**

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Commissioner of Equality Statement, 16.10.2012, <http://www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs/sr/nacionalna-pripadnost/pritu%C5%BEba-organizacije-p-protiv-uprave-grada-beograda-zbog-diskriminacije-na-osnovu-nacionalne-pripadnosti>, own translation.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

**parallel legal structures for the container inhabitants**, as for all these ‘offences’ there exist already sanctions in the respective City bodies

“Article 32 of the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance provides that the unemployed person is obliged not to refuse a suitable employment offer or suitable education and training; Articles 162 and 163 of the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System prescribes penalties for a parent or guardian who intentionally or without a justified reason fails to enroll his or her child into a preschool institution or elementary school or if a child is absent from a preschool institution or elementary school without a valid reason.” (Praxis 2013:64)

Praxis NGO further criticizes that it is not legal standard to ask citizens to behave politely towards City officials and that under this cover a multiplicity of different reasons for expulsion could be hidden that make the ‘right to container’ very unsecure, vague and **dependent on City officials’ arbitrariness**. As these container regulations do not only build parallel structures to existing regulations regarding the duty of citizens to care about the education of their children and the obligation to accept one within three job offers (which has been established as part of the labor market service reform under Poverty Reduction Strategy), but also make the inhabitants dependent on City officials’ (arbitrary) decisions, Praxis calls these regulations “**quasi-norms**” which are not sufficiently clear and thus do not fulfill elementary conditions of security for the concerned population.

I would argue that here in a clearly demarcated space of the container settlement a zone of ambiguity was introduced, within which the abolishment of law and regulations is always there as a potentiality. Li (2007) has indicated this as a characteristic of colonial governmentality, which differentiates subjects and their right to become mature citizens with the ‘right to claim rights’ according to their improvability. As Stoler (1994:202) has shown this differentiation is highly fragile and is somatic for the dilemma of colonial rule “the tension between a form of domination simultaneously predicated on both incorporation and distancing”. Her example are metis who were as ascendants from mixed marriages not easily disqualifiable as citizens based on race alone. In that multiple techniques to redraw the line of the national political community vs. colony emerged introducing a moral politics of sexuality, but also childcare centers where metis children could be socialized in the ‘European way’ in order to reduce the defective influence of mixed blood. Whereas I do not want to go into the depths of this case, it is crucial to note that Stoler does not regard this as an exceptional case, where the line between right bearing citizens and colonial subjects was blurred. She argues:

“It is often assumed that agents of empire were intent only to clarify borders, establish ‘order,’ and reduce the zones of ambiguity. I hold that they were as frequently committed to the

opposite: agents of imperial rule have invested in, exploited, and demonstrated strong stakes in the proliferation of geopolitical ambiguities“ (Stoler 2006:139f.).

In that I would argue that the container settlements are zones of ambiguity, which incarnate the dilemma of simultaneous distancing and incorporating.

The distancing and degradation of container inhabitants is also visible from the container contracts of use, which contain paragraphs that clearly show the negative stereotypes upon which the City builds this strict socialization apparatus and which serve at the same time to legitimate the disciplinary rule over this group of population. One of the most demeaning rules says that users and their children are not allowed to relieve themselves outside next to their container. Praxis argues that the City here clearly fuels negative prejudices and that the rule is discriminating in that there is no similar paragraph in the housing rules in social housing or any other apartment building. Whereas the City argues that it is legally and politically not possible to favor any particular group in social housing politics, in the way the containers are policed it shows that it actually does produce a special treatment based on stereotypes about Romani way of life.

In September 2012 Praxis officially asked the Secretary of the City Parliament to release information on the number and reasons of evictions from container settlements that took already place<sup>54</sup>. In order to emphasize the finality of the container settlement to prepare Roma for social housing, the Secretary first informs Praxis that in concerned period “31 families, respectively 182 people from the newly formed settlements got social housing”<sup>55</sup>. Then they explain:

“Because of constant violation of the domestic [container] order, violent behavior, abuse and neglect of children and non-compliance with the contractually regulation on the use of containers, in the period from 2009 until today 11 families, respectively 44 persons lost their right to container on the territory of the City of Belgrade”<sup>56</sup>.

So the main reason for the evictions is connected to behavior – a feature that is not sanctioned in regulations concerning all citizens of Belgrade. In the attachment they also send a copy “of the decision on cancelling the contract”<sup>57</sup>. The decisions concerns a case in the settlement of Kijevo of the municipality of Rakovica, which is one of the most remote container settlements in Belgrade that was repeatedly object of fascist attacks. In the decision it is said that the concerned person was

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<sup>54</sup> City of Belgrade, unpublished letter, 11.9.2012.

<sup>55</sup> City of Belgrade, unpublished letter, 11.9.2012.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

“repeatedly warned because he did not maintain the hygiene of the sanitary units and the hygiene of the settlement. Also he was warned because of disruption of the order and peace of the settlement, because of which police intervened a few times”<sup>58</sup>.

From that it becomes apparent that the reasons for eviction from the container settlement are mainly connected to a kind of behavior that could be described as harmful for family life or the community of container inhabitants as a whole. In that, family relations respectively relations in the community become the venue to promote hygiene and order in the settlement and education of the children. This shows a certain paradox that Rose (1999) mentioned already when he talked about governing through community. On the one hand community among Roma is depicted in public discourse and by the social workers as something inherently bad. Roma are deemed ‘bad parents’<sup>59</sup> and “too much bonding and not enough linking” (Li 2007:244) would make their community fertile ground for criminal clans. On the other hand, despite this demonization the very existence of communal relations is obviously regarded as the venue through which people could be made governable.

The arbitrariness of the regulations and sanctions **produced certain subjectivities** among the container inhabitants vis-à-vis the state. This became clear when I visited one container settlement at Pancevacki highway that was established in 2009 with people evicted from the Old Town. The containers were put next to an existing informal settlement in the industrial area around Pancevacki highway which because of its peripheral position and structure (mostly brick houses) is regarded as permanent. I went there together with my language swap partner Visnja, who supported me during the interviews in Serbian. Our first interview partner refused to be recorded and told that she had problems with officials from ‘27<sup>th</sup> mart’ [the street where the Secretary for Social Security resides]. She reported that after some foreign reporters came and recorded her interview, she almost lost right to container. However, she didn’t know what exactly caused the problem, and how exactly these foreign people caused trouble with officials. For her only the impression remained that in order to keep the container she should not give interviews on her situation.

Our second interview partner was a woman with 6 children, five of which lived with her and her husband in two containers. She is direct neighbor and friend with our first interview partner. She complained a lot about the hygiene in the settlement in general and the sanitary units in specific and told us that the other inhabitants of the settlement always blame it on children. She told that when trash needed to be cleaned, nobody takes responsibility, and

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Social Worker of the City Commission for the Resettlement of Gazela, Interview 11.12.12.

nobody wants to do it. From her perspective it was cleaner in the informal settlement in Old Town where they lived before, because people were responsible for the trash individually. And now this is more 'collective'. She is critical about her other container neighbors and judges them for not talking enough when officials from the City come over, and only start complaining when they leave. She thinks they should open their mouth when they are here, not when they leave. So the collectivization of the responsibility for keeping up the hygiene makes the inhabitants stay silent. They feel as community responsible for keeping up hygiene and order, however, everyone seems to fear for oneself to be evicted from the settlement. In that there is apparently a culture of neighbors reporting each other. Our second interview partner told us that there are a lot of 'spies' in the settlement. They report each other on loud music, non-maintenance of hygiene. Our interview partner told that she has been reported when she left her container to live with her mother in Zemun for a while, because it was easier for her to work there (like to accompany her mother selling sun flower seams and balloons on markets). So the insecurity in terms of ones rights to hold the container combined with the sense to be judged as a community brought about that neighbors are monitoring each other. Thus, any sense of a shared fate is basically disrupted, making it impossible to articulate common claims when officials are visiting.

In the interview we had at Makis 1 container settlement, which is predominantly inhabited by people from Gazela resettlement, the discussion got very vivid when we asked about regulations concerning container inhabitants. Most people in the room claim that restrictions are too harsh. One woman told that she can't have her daughter in the container over night because she is not in the contract for container, and that that is not fair. This issue is brought up, because half a year before the interview stricter regulations with regard to the hosting of guests were introduced. This was initiated because of a brawl that broke out with guests in the newly installed Makis 2 container settlement (with people resettled from Belvil). She further said that she thinks it is not fair that they should all be blamed for individual mistakes, and that each person alone should be individual responsible for her/his container, electricity etc. We see here that the City essentializes certain incidents that are happening to definite rules about which things are allowed and which are forbidden. After the brawl in Makis 2 the ban to have guests for all container inhabitants seems to indicate that the City now generally regards hosting of guests as harmful for the community.

In October 2012 Praxis NGO initiated a meeting with the City in order to negotiate an amendment of the container regulations, which was also supported by the Commissioner for

Equality's assessment of these regulations as 'discriminating against Roma minority'<sup>60</sup>. However, a few days later the Mayor confirmed the unchanged maintenance of the tight regulations and emphasized that only those individuals who abide law, do not drink alcohol or beat their wife and children and send their children to school will be allowed to live on the costs of the City in container settlements<sup>61</sup>. So we see that the very fact that the City pays everything and takes responsibility from the container inhabitants for their dwelling is the entrance point that enables the City to police their life. In that the inhabitant who stated in the interview she would prefer to be responsible herself for the container instead of being subjected to collective regulations is pinpointing an important dynamic.

### Container Inhabitant's Right to Social Housing

Officials of the City of Belgrade mostly hold containers to be a permanent solution. This opinion is officially legitimized on the grounds that the containers would provide better living conditions than the barracks under Gazela bridge and that international standards, as claimed by EIB are not applicable in a country like Serbia, where the living standard is considerably below what is assumed as average living standard in these guidelines. For her resettling the dominantly Roma inhabitants directly to social housing would send the wrong signal in that it would suggest that Roma get access to social housing on the basis of being Roma. In that she gives the translation of the Mayor Djilas' statement "not everybody will get an apartment just because he lives along the route of one bridge or another"<sup>62</sup>, with which he obviously alluded to Roma people, but did not say it to be 'politically correct' (cf. Stewart 2012). To further legitimate her view the social workers says that in Belgrade there are so many non-Roma people who lead a totally 'normal' life, are registered, go working, send their kids to school, but anyway couldn't solve their housing needs. In that she links the **rightfulness of obtaining social housing to what she calls 'life style'**. Although she explicitly argues for a system of social housing rights regardless ethnic affiliation, through her argument on life style she suggests that certain, i.e. most deprived groups of the population do not qualify for social housing.

The standards questioned by the EIB are in her opinion unrealistic, because of this newly claimed need to socialize the people from unhygienic settlements prior to accommodating them in

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Commissioner of Equality Statement, 16.10.2012, <http://www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs/sr/nacionalna-pripadnost/pritu%C5%BEba-organizacije-p-protiv-uprave-grada-beograda-zbog-diskriminacije-na-osnovu-nacionalne-pripadnosti>.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Kurir, 9.11.12 <http://www.kurir-info.rs/dilas-zivot-u-romskim-naseljima-samo-uz-postovanje-zakona-clanak-502086>.

<sup>62</sup> B92, 22.6.2011, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2011&mm=06&dd=22&nav\\_id=75056](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2011&mm=06&dd=22&nav_id=75056).

regular flats. The close observation and socialization is according to the social worker much easier to perform in container settlements<sup>63</sup>. She poses into question all the critique and monitoring by EU during the resettlement, as EU member states themselves did not produce a sustainable model until now:

“different experts for the resettlement of unhygienic settlements from Europe came to us before the resettlement, I don’t want to name them now, but once I asked one of them: ‘Could you please tell me about a single example where you successfully resettled and socialized Roma in Europe?’. We [City of Belgrade] really tortured ourselves in finding a model for Gazela. And why should we torture ourselves so much if this model does not exist anywhere? And guess what he said: ‘It does not exist, there is no model’”<sup>64</sup>.

Against this background she states, “I really think that the City of Belgrade, and I’m not saying that because I was part of it, did create a pioneering venture, a model that is totally sustainable”<sup>65</sup>. For the City social worker the containers are not just good as temporary solution, but are a sustainable way to include Roma in territorial jurisdiction and thus prohibit them from ‘manipulating the social security system’. As role model for the container solution, for which she was part of the commission, she gives the example of Milano, where Roma are made sedentary through restrictive settlement policies<sup>66</sup>.

“I was in Italy, in Milano and Milano is a similar city as Belgrade. It has 2 million inhabitants and has a problem with Roma. And it solved its problem with Roma. As they were only a small group, maybe 5000 in whole Milano, they decided to put them in 11 camps and the job was completed. They have four different types of police there, that means first of all a communal police and in these settlements they are under permanent surveillance. I couldn’t just come as a guest to your place if the city government does not allow, everything is under control. Also they cannot live there without having documents and they have to prove that they are for 3 months looking for a job. When it turns out that they were not searching, they loose all entitlements to social support. Here these things are not regulated. That means, totally uncontrolled they can give birth to children, and thus reproduce all the deprivation and poverty. That means they have only rights but no obligations. That is the problem this state has with Roma”<sup>67</sup>.

Whereas the City officially hold the containers to be a good solution and EIB further pressurizes the City to fulfill the credit conditionality and provide shelter that could be regarded as permanent, the **containers did produce a certain status quo that has an influence on the way the conditions for resettlement are further negotiated** between the relevant stakeholders. Although one might argue that the containers did only stretch the process for the people to attain the permanent alternative accommodation, **the container settlements institutionalized the incapability of people from unhygienic settlements to go**

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<sup>63</sup> Cf. Social worker of the City Commission for Gazela Resettlement.

<sup>64</sup> Social worker of the City Commission for Gazela Resettlement 12.11.2012:6, own translation.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Social worker of the City Commission for Gazela Resettlement 11.12.12.

<sup>67</sup> Social worker of the City Commission for Gazela Resettlement, 11.12.12:2.

**directly to social housing.** Whereas other citizens can directly apply for social housing, for people from unhygienic settlements they established an intermediary step within which they are socialized or at least their capability of living in a flat is scrutinized. Once settled in containers the people are in a zone of ambiguity: they **ceased to be project affected people in that their right to permanent alternative accommodation became dependent on the City official's (arbitrary) judgment** on whether or not they did adhere to the socialization 'quasi norms'. In this it is interesting that the EIB social impact officer remarked that it is not very effective for the EIB to transferring their resettlement guidelines through making the borrowing party pay for the fulfillment. And indeed as we have seen the City has a strong argument to expel people from the containers on the grounds that 'they are living on the costs of the City'. As the institutions established for the care of container inhabitants will be transferred to the social housing it is likely that the socialization purpose will further be subordinate to these people's right to housing.

Part of this status quo is that in these containers there are only IDPs and people with registered residency in Belgrade. In that the most prominent and consequential convention of resettlements existing in Belgrade that has been maintained in Gazela resettlement is that all those **without 'prebivaliste' in Belgrade are evicted to the municipalities where they came from.** This convention is what the Mayor said in 2009 should be established at the **republican level**<sup>68</sup>. The EIB does not challenge this division and thus accepts that the 'rights of the city' dependent on registered residency. This practice is criticized a lot as de facto violates people's freedom of movement and is regarded as something particular about evictions in Serbia: Meghna Abraham from Amnesty International "highlighted a particularly disturbing phenomenon of forced evictions carried out in Belgrade: different treatment of informal settlement residents without permanent or temporary residence registered in Belgrade. These persons are "forcedly" moved to their places of birth or residence, although in these places they do not have an opportunity to survive." (Praxis 2012:42). In Gazela resettlement from 175 families 61 were evicted from Belgrade and in Belvil resettlement 124 families were resettled to containers and 133 to the South of Serbia.

When I asked the Social Impact Officer about the EIB involvement in the resettlement process she points out that EIB staff managed to establish a good relation with the City, which has finally "realized that this [resettlement] is a priority and this is to be sorted out and we

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<sup>68</sup> Beobuild, 6.4.2009, [http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com\\_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40](http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40), own translation.

need to somehow get these people into the city, otherwise in fifteen years it will be triple the number”<sup>69</sup>. However, to ‘to get these people into the city’ turned out to be pretty complicated and long-during if all the PAPs are to be integrated into social housing. In this process, EIB became involved in a longer process of finding alternative solutions to provide permanent accommodation for all resettled people. I would argue that **the EIB Social Impact Officer, who is officially in charge of monitoring the process** the resettlement of container inhabitants to permanent alternative accommodation, **actually became involved in and thus co-legitimizes different strategies of the City of Belgrade**. This stands in contrast to the expectations on the mechanisms an International Financial Institution would use to force (through financial leverage) the City from an external position to produce a resettlement model or at least enforce certain procedures with regard to the resettlement the IFI is involved in.

When I asked the EIB Social Impact Officer about the provision of permanent housing for the PAPs she first mentioned to possibility to apply for ‘regular’ social housing. What is surprising with view to the statements of City officials is that during Gazela resettlement social housing politics in Belgrade were de facto modified. Contrary to what City officials could make one believe, indeed the **point system for a housing was adapted during Gazela resettlement** in order to be more accessible for people with scarce or no records of formal employment.

“they won’t say, but the City has done a lot to make the program more eligible for them, because the first call for social housing which was I think in 2009 only one Roma family got an apartment and then the city cancelled that one and they restructured the criteria, so [...] in the next call eleven families got it”<sup>70</sup>.

She further explained that the restructuring was not explicit as favoring Roma, but implicitly through the balancing of criteria became more eligible for them:

“you don’t get points so much for being Roma but you get points for how many family members, you get points if you receive social welfare benefits, you only get one point per year of work, for registered work, so if somebody is working 15 years is gets only 15 points, whereas before they would get more, so it has changed the balance, they don’t say it but my opinion from the countries I worked in the way the social housing is structured **here it’s geared more to giving benefits to those who have informal employment**, who are not in the system”<sup>71</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> EIB Social Impact Officer , Interview 19.12.12:4.

<sup>70</sup> EIB Social Impact Officer, Interview 19.12.12:3.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

However, she clarified, this would be “too long of a process, so we figured out in which ways the city, because social housing is not a good option for every single Roma”<sup>72</sup>. She here connects shortage of social housing with the disposition of Roma for social housing: “some PAPs [...] for example they don’t want to live in an apartment, so that’s also something the city is trying to find a way to finance, so that because social apartments cannot be the answer for everybody, even of the Roma that go in social housing you have to expect that 50 % get thrown out of the apartments because the fact, they haven’t socialized enough they’re not used to live in apartments”<sup>73</sup>. What follows in the interview is a story about Roma that were settled into social housing shortly before the Romani holiday Djurdje Dan. The money they got to furniture the flat was spent instead on a sheep that was then slaughtered in the bath room.

People’s disposition as a variable in their possibility to access social housing is put into practice through consultations: “one good thing about the city is that they have understood that the consultation with the PAPs is of utmost importance”<sup>74</sup>. She clarifies that the consultation is not about what the families themselves want, but rather for her to **assess their capabilities to live in social housing**.

“it has been a learning experience [for us], not everybody is able, now f.e. I could tell you which families could eventually integrate into a social apartment, which families could not, I mean I know f.e. Muha Sani in Makis, he’s got nine children, there is no way he can live in an apartment, first of all the kids are running around, the neighbors would complain, you know he is not bad, he is hard working, he is working at the pijaca [market], he sells stuff, not an alcoholic, doesn’t beat his wife, most of his children go regularly to school, [...], it’s a very good family if you look at them they fit all the criteria but simply social apartment would not be a solution for them because there’s very little space, they are very loud so neighbors would probably complain, so for them rural housing would be an option”<sup>75</sup>.

So basically social housing is not discussed as a right, but in terms of capabilities of an individual to live in an apartment, and in the city more generally. Though officially the point system has been adapted to make social housing more accessible for Roma families, in practice of consultation ‘way of life’ becomes relevant to people’s right to social housing and to stay in the city. In this container socialization project one could observe a blurring of borders between an **official system of obtaining social rights** and the way **experts interacting with Roma on a daily basis make their knowledge about their lives part of their decisions** beyond the official system. In that consultation comes close to persuasion and coercion and capabilities, allegedly measured for the sake of improvement, become the basis

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.:4.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.:5.

for essentializing judgments about life style that is inadequate for an urban setting. The EIB Social Impact Officer criticizes NGOs who come from the outside and judge on the basis of allegedly universally applicable rights standards:

“when somebody new comes, they all come and they all tell you their problems and that’s it, standard and a lot of the NGOs they go in there once [E: and hear all the problems] and then they come to me and start complaining, and I say wait, do you know why she’s having problems with her ex-husband? And I say what a fiasco, because she slept with his brother and she has her children, that’s why she’s fighting with her husband and then she goes and tells the city is not doing anything to protect me, but how can I protect you from someone when you are sleeping with his brother and every day you walk by his container and tell him, look I’m having sex with your brother, you have to also take responsibility, it’s not always, the situation is never so clear with the Roma”<sup>76</sup>.

She subordinates here the general human rights agenda of NGOs to her specific context knowledge acquired through consultation. In that she participates in the functioning of the container settlement as a zone of ambiguity, where forms of incorporation and differentiation constantly “reshuffl[e] and attenuat[e] which populations and which social kinds [...] enjoy at any specific moment a ‘right to have rights’, to education, labor protection, health care and housing” (Stoler 2006:140). The technique she applies is to subordinate general rights to individual risk management, in the way described by Rose (2001). Rose (2001:5) argues that biopolitical policing of defective (or violent, or criminal) individuals ceases to be legitimated through the health (or safety) of the social body as whole:

“The ideal of an omniscient social state that would shape, coordinate and manage the affairs of all sectors of society has fallen into disrepute. [...] The idea of a ‘national culture’ has given way to that of ‘cultures’, national identity to a complex array of identity politics, ‘community’ to communities. In this new configuration, the political meaning and salience of health and disease have changed”.

Health or safety is not treated as health or safety of one society in comparison or contestation with other (nationally bound) societies. Rather “it is posed in economic terms – the costs of ill-health in terms of days lost from work or rising insurance contributions” (ibid.). In that biopolitical policing is legitimated through the very situated ethics of individual consultation and risk management that transfer of ethics and responsibility to the governed subjects. As Rose (2001:10) explains:

“The counseling encounters entail intense bi-directional affective entanglements between all the parties to the encounter, and indeed generate multiple ‘virtual’ entanglements with parties not present – distant relatives, absent siblings, potential offspring. In these entanglements, the ethical relations of all subjects to themselves and to one another are at stake – including the experts themselves. The consultation acts as an intensifier of ethicality. It mobilizes affects of

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.:7.

shame and guilt, and of the respective claims, scope and limits of freedoms for the self and obligations to others”.

Although Rose describes here the genetic consultation for people labeled as belonging to a risk group for certain illnesses, I would argue that the same logic is at stake in the consultation people in the containers receive upon what kind of housing they ‘prefer’. They are also encouraged to think about possibilities they might have at relatives, pieces of land they might inherit, to think of their children, whether it would be good for them to live in a small flat with neighbors complaining about the noise. In that a micro-ethic is constructed that calls for a certain kind of behavior that is regarded as responsible form of risk management. Only if the individual takes over this logic of responsibility, it is regarded as mature and right bearing citizen. Implicitly however, people are persuaded in the consultation to choose the option which makes them stay in their marginal position outside the city instead of claiming their right to get alternative housing in the city. In that the consultations could be regarded as a technique constitutive for containers as a zone of ambiguity in that they are crucial in “developing regulations for specific populations and in setting out special conditions for suspensions and reinvention of laws applied to them” (Stoler 2006:140).

Whereas experts like the EIB Social Impact Officer and social workers from the City draw on people’s capabilities, social housing is de facto not affordable for many poor families. It is a common problem that families, once settled in the apartments, cannot afford the maintenance cost and the monthly rent anymore and are expelled from the flats again. In 2012 the Serbian newspaper Politika reports that 73 families in Kamendin have not paid their monthly costs of totally 3,6 million dinar and that in 5 cases the renting contracts were cancelled and they are going to be expelled soon<sup>77</sup>.

For the families living in containers this is a well-known problem and some of my interview partners were well aware about the fact that with a job at the city communal services – that is typically offered to them in the frame of the container settlement employment initiatives – they won’t be able to pay even a subsidized flat. In a group discussion I had at Makis 1 container settlement with people who were resettled from Gazela the discussion became very vivid when it came to social housing. They all agree that the problem is, if you are receiving a certain salary, you don’t qualify for social housing. You need to be in a really bad condition to get social housing: invalid, really sick, unemployed, receiving a social welfare, etc. When you

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. Politika, 5.11.2012 <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Beograd/Socijalnom-kvadratu-u-Kamendinu-snizena-cena.lt.html> .

accept a job, you are not considered anymore to be such a deprived case as before, so you have less chances of getting a social housing. However, once you are in social housing, you can't afford it, and most likely you will lose right to that apartment in 5 years, when the contract should be resigned, because you didn't manage to pay for the basic bills. Later they also mentioned the problem that once you got social housing and were not able to stay there, you won't qualify for it again.

However, this problem is not issued by those who conceptualize social housing, including the Secretary for Social Security, the EIB official and the urban planner consulting in the resettlements. All of them rather emphasize that the success of social housing projects, including the one to be built by UNOPS, is dependent on the *willingness* of those living there to pay their bills:

“what will be the destiny of these houses that are going to be build, if they are not paying tomorrow anything there, that will be catastrophe, that will be another collective center, which can happen, which can happen and it's quite a risk [...] basically everybody should pay something”<sup>78</sup>.

### Variations in the Governance of Container Settlements and Inhabitants

Whereas the Deputy Secretary for Social Security maintained in the interview that the **containers are a coherently regulated element in the system of social care**, I found big differences in the way container inhabitants are provided with services respectively policed. As it became clear in several of my interviews, the responsibilities regarding the container inhabitants that are not constantly observed by EIB are not so clear. Actually, considerable differences between container settlements and among the inhabitants of one settlement can be observed.

Despite of the fact that the containers formally belong to the City of Belgrade, in interviews I had in Mladenovac it turned out that the municipality actually used the containers to give shelter to local refugee and IDP families. In my interview officials from the municipality explicitly reported that they use the containers that are empty (through resettlements to social housing or evictions) for their own social politics<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 11.12.2012:3.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Interview at Mladenovac Municipality 23.11.2012.

However, there are considerable differences in the way the inhabitants from this settlement are policed. As one of my interviewees from Mladenovac container settlement said, **“when Jelena [Petrovic most probably] from EIB comes she always says ‘my Gazelasi’** [nickname for people resettled from Gazela]”<sup>80</sup>. He went on telling that all people who come to the settlement give them the impression that the most important are the people from Gazela. He says: “the biggest problem is Gazela, Gazela has to be successful and the rest does not count”<sup>81</sup>. In the interview I met among others the former spokesperson of the settlement, who lost his position about one year ago, because he failed to organize documents for his children. Since then the settlement is increasingly dilapidating as there is no one who makes the link between settlement and City anymore. The people from the Mladenovac Roma organization, with whom I entered the settlement, were apparently there for the first time as they had to introduce themselves to all of the settlers. Sitting there for the interview the representatives from Roma organization began talking with the former spokesperson and advised him to organize and hand in a list (with what they need) to the municipality. He later explained us that they as Roma organization cannot do anything for these people as there are officials from the municipality who are responsible for them.

In the municipality of Zvezdara, where the container settlement was installed in direct proximity to the legalized Roma settlement Orlovsko, the situation was quite different in that the municipality on its own costs provided the necessary improvements of infrastructure for the container inhabitants and the recycling yard SWIFT build by WHO for Orlovsko settlement provided also the newcomers with employment. I would argue that this situation goes back to the co-inhabitants of Orlovsko refusing to accept that the containers are ‘conceptually not really part of the neighborhood’. When the inhabitants of Orlovsko got to know about the plans of the City government to place containers in their neighborhood, citizens organized a delegation. In their petition from July 2009 the inhabitants gave a list of claims upon which they were ready to accept containers in their neighborhood to the City government. With most of the claims the citizens ask the government to secure improvements of the settlement that were already planned. This expresses the fear of the inhabitants of Orlovsko settlement that the placement of containers would devalue their settlement as peripheral collection camp for people excluded from the city. In that manner they stated for example that they were ready to accept 11 families under the condition that this is the finite number of people. Among the 10 claims one is in bold letters: “We insist that the program to

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<sup>80</sup> Mladenovac Container Settlement 25.12.12:11.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

build social housing through which one part of the native inhabitants expect to solve their housing question will not be endangered”<sup>82</sup>. Also they ask the City government to build the recycling yard (SWIFT), which was apparently already planned by then, to employ both the ‘native inhabitants’ and the newcomers. By this, as they make clear in the following claim, they want to secure that the living standards they already reached:

“The citizens of Orlovsko settlement, besides all the problems that they have, succeeded to lift their living standards to a higher level: their children go to school on a regular basis, they live from their own work and are active citizens of Zvezdara municipality, respectively Belgrade. They do not want that these achievements are endangered through the arrival of new families who do not want to adapt to that life style”<sup>83</sup>.

Moreover, they use the occasion to prompt the mayor to systematically engage in solving the housing question for Roma, which also rejects the practice of occasional deportation of completely neglected settlements from the center. This point was also emphasized in the interview with an official from the municipality of Zvezdara, which I’m going to treat in the following. The last point I want to mention about the petition is that the inhabitants of Orlovsko make claims for those Roma ‘registered on the territory of the City of Belgrade’. This is symptomatic for a certain rivalry that became apparent in many of my interviews between those people who feel established in Belgrade through living in a legalized house (who call themselves ‘native inhabitants’) and the others, which were often depicted as ‘newcomers’ with less legitimacy to be in the city. This demarcation was drawn obviously despite of the fact that it is not necessary the duration of stay, which decides upon whether an inhabitant is registered or not, but more the financial means to enter to formal housing market.

In reaction to that petition the ‘Roma expert’ of the municipality of Zvezdara, Dragan Pajic told that his municipality provided infrastructure and hygiene packages to the container inhabitants. He put all the efforts of the municipality regarding the container settlements in relation to the more general attitude of the municipality regarding ‘its Roma’. He repeatedly pointed out that for his municipality the care for Roma is nothing which only occurs ‘shortly before the elections’ or for some ‘marketing’, but that they are continually supporting them as citizens of the municipality. He argued that because of this continual care the municipality did not have such problems as Gazela or Belvil settlement and his municipality did not have problems with Roma before the containers were resettled to Orlovsko. He criticized the City for cultivating such big settlements through complete neglect and then resettling out of a sudden in a way geared towards media, but actually only transferring the responsibility for

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<sup>82</sup> Unpublished Conclusions from the Meeting of Orlovsko Inhabitants 8.4.2009.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

these people to the municipalities. He gave me a letter that they wrote to the City Secretary for Social Security prompting them to take responsibility for these container inhabitants. In the attached he also sent the bill over the expenses the municipality had to bear related to the containers.

The case of Zvezdara municipality shows a characteristic of the entrepreneurial city I have not discussed yet: the centralization of resources at the city level. In emphasizing the investments the municipality financed for the container settlements, Dragan Pajic criticizes **Djilas' politics of centralization**. Critiques of his government argue that he has left the municipalities of the city underfinanced, whilst at the same time trying to bring into City responsibility facilities like highways and bridges that are normally in the responsibility of the Republic. Whereas containers were depicted as a solution dictated by meager financial resources due to the financial crisis, when it came to conflict with the EIB Djilas enforced his position by announcing that Belgrade would even finance the rehabilitation of Gazela bridge from the City budget.

However, similar to what became clear in Mladenovac, Pajic concluded that the municipality can act towards people in the container just as 'a **good neighbor**' how he expressed it – meaning: not systematically integrating the inhabitants as citizens of the municipality, but only supporting them with the most necessary from time to time. When I asked the Deputy Secretary for Social Security of the City in the interview about the role of the municipalities, whether they could use empty containers to settle impoverished families (as was the case in Mladenovac), she insisted on that they do not have the right to do so. She then explained that the containers, same as 'regular social housing' belong to the City and only the Mayor himself can decide upon whether a certain resettled family will be provided with a container or not. Also the much praised recycling yard SWIFT that was established in Zvezdara belongs to the City of Belgrade.

When City together with WHO build a recycling yard SWIFT in 2009 it was depicted as an initiative in order to fulfill the conditionality of restoring livelihoods through the provision of employment possibilities. However, as became clear from the petition from April 2009, the project was planned already before the City was prompted to restore the livelihoods of container inhabitants. However, because of this project the EBRD issued in July 2012 a blog entry on their homepage "EBRD support enabled Belgrade to become a role model for Roma

inclusion”<sup>84</sup>. This is even more astonishing as I have shown in the above that Orlovsko settlement provided quite exceptional conditions for the container inhabitants, not only through SWIFT initiative, but also through Orlovsko being one of the few legalized Roma settlements in Belgrade, where the municipality has a specific interest in upholding this status quo. Shortly after this Bankwatch issued a slating about this release and reminded the EBRD about its role to pressurize the City to fulfill the conditions instead of glorifying its attempts to fix the status quo with side-projects.

Interestingly, the most ‘welcoming’ attitudes towards containers, i.e. provision of infrastructure by the municipalities could be observed in those municipalities which have already had international publicity (and funds) through projects of Roma inclusion. Apart from Zvezdara, where Orlovsko settlement was legalized with a Holcim Award in the 1990s, the urban planner, whom I interviewed, also mentions Surcin as one of the municipalities that themselves took over a pro-active role in caring for the new inhabitants of the municipality. Surcin has won the DOSTA! award in 2011. On the website of the Poverty Reduction Unit their project ‘Uprising Humanity’ is mentioned as the only project within which a municipality in Serbia through partnership with local companies provides twice a year funds for its most deprived: persons with disabilities, elderly households, refugees and IDPs, Roma families, single mothers. In 2011 the municipality received an award for Roma inclusion by the DOSTA! campaign. Orlovsko and Surcin are also the first two locations where the WHO built its prestigious recycling yard SWIFT. In Mladenovac on the other hand there is a legalization project planned, but this is very limited and financial resources are only provided for the issuance of plans of detailed regulation, whereas the rest (provision of infrastructure, improvement of houses) is not funded. In the interview with an official from the Ministry of Capital Investment, which is coordinating this project, she emphasized that this is not a general project for the improvement of the position of Roma settlements in Mladenovac, but only for these two, clearly demarcated settlements (Mali Prolaz and Batasevo).

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<sup>84</sup> EBRD, 24.07.2012, <http://ebrd-stories.com/how-ebrd-support-enabled-belgrade-to-become-role-model-for-social-inclusion-of-roma-community/> .

## **SOCIAL HOUSING FOR CONTAINER INHABITANTS: A PROJECT FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

As became apparent from the resettlement procedure of Gazela the relation between European Investment Bank and the City is discursively formed as a pedagogical: the resettlement obligations the EIB has to fulfill are per contract transferred to the lending party. In that the EIB is put in the position of an International Financial Institution that should use its leverage to enforce international resettlement standards in the place of investment. In the case of EIB lending money to the City of Belgrade, this is further put in the wider frame of EU accession. As the resettlements for which the City is pushed to establish a resettlement model mostly concern unhygienic settlements, the EIB implicitly becomes a soft power in enforcing certain kind of social politics towards (unpleasantly mobile) vulnerable minorities through conditionality (direct power). According to the EIB (2010a) Social and Environmental Impacts Handbook vulnerable minority groups that should enjoy special treatment are: within the EU all minorities, outside the EU Roma and outside of Europe indigenous people. This focus on Roma complements the indirect power of EU projects facilitating the integration of Roma (cf. Pandolfi 2010). Throughout the big resettlements European agencies (including the Delegation and also the Banks) – despite their obvious involvement in the resettlements – adopted the attitude of an external, pedagogical authority towards the City. This became very clear when the EIB Social Impact Officer told me that she established a good relation with the City through which they finally learnt that they have to ‘somehow get these people into the city’, as the problem would grow bigger otherwise. In that she depicted the role of the EIB as an agency engaging in solving a problem of the City and not the donor who financed the project due to which the resettlement has to take place. More explicitly this pedagogical attitude was visible, when the responsible Officer of the European Delegation responsible for Roma questions told me:

“one year ago, when you would be speaking with the City of Belgrade the Roma was only a problem of which they wanted to get rid, and now they are building inside their own approach, understanding we are not talking of a problem, we are talking of human beings, we are talking of our own citizens, who are entitled to the same rights as all the other citizens”<sup>85</sup>.

However, both the claim that the City has ‘learnt’ that it has to integrate Roma from unhygienic settlements in the urban tissue and the acknowledgement of these people as citizens with equal rights is questionable against the background of my above analysis. There it became clear that the container settlements, where people are under the (financial) aegis of

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<sup>85</sup> HR Officer of the European Delegation, Interview 6.12.12:10.

the City monitored and disenfranchised from all their social rights if they seem to lack the will to improve, have to be regarded as zones of ambiguity within which the suspension of rule is permanently there as a potentiality (cf. Stoler 2006). In that sense the container settlements are productive in forming differences within a group of project affected people that should all enjoy the same rights.

The fact that project affected people were disenfranchised in the container settlements was not openly criticized by the EIB social impact officer. However, based on her experiences from working in container settlements, she took a critical stance on the share of responsibility in the resettlement. She told me that from her perspective “you cannot give money to party A [construction company] and expect party B [the City] to remedy the consequences of the project that the money has gotten for”<sup>86</sup>. She said that the City did take too big of a burden with the container settlements:

“there should be some money allocated in the loan to assist the City, that’s my opinion, I think it would have been much smoother, as this is a very big burden on the City, the containers the City pays for damages, the City pays their water which I also think is a mistake because if you don’t have to pay for anything, you use the electricity to nowhere”<sup>87</sup>.

Based on the before analysis I would argue that she might implicitly regret that through its financial responsibility for the container settlements, the City also acquired leverage to enforce its own social politics there. However, this critique is not explicitly expressed. Rather the EIB social impact officer criticizes that the financial aegis of the City would be counter-productive for the socialization of the Roma. Also the urban planner, who is consulting in the big resettlements criticized the financial aegis of the City. He made the success of the EC social housing project dependent on whether or not people from container settlements have ‘learnt’ to pay their bills. He remarked critically: “the idea is of course to push them out of this dependency, because in those container settlements, especially those that are already 3, 4 years, they have relaxed, they don’t pay for anything, they are only paying for their cell phones, food they get, which is bad for them, absolutely bad for them”<sup>88</sup>.

The conflict implicit to this debate is concerns the treatment of resettled people from Gazela and Belvil either as project affected people with right to permanent alternative accommodation and restoration of their livelihood, or as people from unhygienic settlements whose rights depend on their will to improve. With the resettlement from containers to EC

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<sup>86</sup> EIB Social Impact Officer, Interview 19.12.12:1.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 11.12.2012:3.

social housing the struggle is likely to go on. The sector that was established for the monitoring of container settlements is planned to be extended to the EC social housing project. When I asked the Deputy Secretary for Social Security responsible for the container settlements about OSCE providing soft measures for this social housing project, she insisted on the leading role and main responsibility for that project at her Secretary. Regarding this question her assisting social worker began to answer that she supposes that OSCE is there to observe the process (pedagogical), but then the Deputy Secretary interrupted her and clarified:

“OSCE is involved to make the survey and OSCE got financial means for some programs to work with the families before they are resettled to the flats. After the resettlements to these flats the City is going to take over the care again, that means we are going to work with them as we did until now. We’re further going to care for all those inhabitants, for all those people, about social care, employment, school, everything remains the same only that our responsibility is going to be extended to these flats. OSCE is only going to provide some additional education and their story comes to an end.”<sup>89</sup>

However, some of my interview partners, who shared the perspective that the practices and institutions that arose around the container settlements are valuable new element in social politics, were rather skeptical when I asked them about their expectations for a spillover effect on the management of social housing. As urban planner consulting in the resettlements points out: “I feel that the City will not have enough energy and [E: capacity] and mind and sense to continue with proper monitoring and then continue work with these people after they moved in these new settlements”<sup>90</sup>. He has concerns about this project as the construction company UNOPS is totally inexperienced in building social housing and the project finally stands and falls with the provision of soft measures:

“I really have big concerns how it will be provided, because this will be managed by totally not experienced institution, by UNOPS which simply came, well, [...] there were discussions that some specialized international NGOs will apply or will be in some kind of consortium, but no, this UNOPS appeared without any experience in that work [...] but you know this is how it works, it has nothing to do with the real goals, so this is why I had concerns that this will be done properly, this resettlement is not an engineering project, the engineering is the simplest part, I mean this construction of houses, the rest this soft parts and the gradual integration, education and then the crucial part this work with people afterwards and settling some capacities, institutional capacities to be in place after you move the people in, that will be crucial”<sup>91</sup>.

Already before the construction work started, Amnesty International issued a complaint that this social housing project does not follow European standards as it is exclusively for Roma population and thus supports segregation, as the locations are also going to be in remote

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<sup>89</sup> Deputy Secretary for Social Security, Interview 13.12.12:13f., own translation.

<sup>90</sup> Urban Planner, Interview 11.12.12:6.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 5.

places<sup>92</sup>. And indeed, as I was told informally, many of the locations foreseen for the construction of these pre-fabricated houses are locations where there are right now container settlements, like Dren and Jabucki Rit (Borka Vasic). Whereas the location in Dren has reportedly environmental problems (dumping of military trash and swampy ground), both locations have been already subject to fascist attacks. Although the responsible Human Rights Officer of the European Delegation told me that the City has only a limited saying in the completion of the project given the fact that it is funded through means of the European Commission, in choosing the locations for construction the City is still a powerful actor. It came already to some delay because the stakeholders could not agree with the City on locations:

“the main reason why this agreement has not yet been signed is because we are currently negotiating with the City about locations for these social housing, the locations which have been proposed by the City have been jointly assessed by us, by the most important local NGOs like Praxis, [...] by OSCE, by the OHCHR, so unfortunately they proposed us many locations which are absolutely not suitable for the purpose”<sup>93</sup>.

It became obvious that the struggles are not just about the fulfillment of credit conditionality, but the background for this is a bigger context within which European agencies try to promote Roma integration in Serbia. The venue through which this is happening are particular flagship projects like social housing for people from five container settlements. I would argue with Kovats (2003) that such projects disintegrate Roma from the regular workings of the social care system and make it rather incomprehensible on the basis of which rights they were provided with these flats. This does not only trigger the impression that Roma are privileged target of international foundations, which means that their housing problems are somewhat different both in characteristics and in solutions than the housing problems of their co-citizens (cf. Kovats 2003). The project-wise provision of flats like in this EC social housing project also seems to diffuse the legal basis on which the inhabitants will be able to stay in the flats. If the socialization apparatus of the container settlements is extended to the social flats, it is likely that in future not only open bills will be a reason for eviction from social flats, but also different types of ‘harmful’ conduct. In that it will be interesting to observe how the differentiation between right bearing subjects and defective subjects will be redrawn, that is how the tension between incorporation and distancing will be negotiated.

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<sup>92</sup> Cf. Amnesty International, 10.12.12 <http://www.amnesty.de/urgent-action/ua-352-2012/segregation-befuerchtet>

<sup>93</sup> HR Officer of the European Delegation, Interview 6.12.12:5.

## CONCLUSIONS

Despite several attempts to resettle people from ‘unhygienic settlements’ by the City of Belgrade before 2009, when the resettlement of Gazela to social housing became the requirement of the EIB, it was depicted as an offense to the domestic social political ratio to provide services regardless of ethnic affiliation. Whereas the EIB social impact officer carefully speaks about the rights of ‘project affected people’, the Mayor mobilizes ethnic stereotypes and alludes to Roma when he says that settling under one bridge or another does not automatically guarantee access to social housing. However, one has to bear in mind that *de facto* the criteria for accessing social housing were changed in the very course of Gazela resettlement. Although they did not include any ethnic category, the criteria were changed for the benefit of people without formal employment records.

The container settlements were depicted as politically necessary solution in a situation, where even people ‘who are employed and send their kids to school’ cannot satisfy their housing needs. In that the container solution expresses the simultaneous finality of incorporation and distancing in the sense of Stoler (1994, 2006). Introducing containers as extraordinary, exceptional element in social housing, the city renders itself unaccountable to its non-project affected citizens with housing needs. The extraordinary character of the container settlements is underlined by the fact that ordinary (non-project affected) citizens cannot apply for a container. Rather access is only possible under exceptional circumstances as a resettlement that gains international attention or by decree of the Mayor himself (in case of an unhygienic settlement catching fire *f.e.*). This exclusionary and arbitrary logic of distributing resources is furthered through the housing project carried on through the social housing project funded by the European Commission. By building these flats for all inhabitants of five selected container settlements, the project proceeds in a logic of resettlement which objects those residing in a certain area to special rights.

In putting people resettled from unhygienic settlements to containers they literally entered a zone of ambiguity, or to put use Chakrabarty’s (2000) expression: a ‘waiting room’, where immature natives have to be monitored and treated to become at some point mature right bearing citizens. The historicist argument upon which the term ‘waiting room’ is based could be transferred to the unhygienic settlements, which are conceptualized in the Master Plan (2003) among others as elements of underdevelopment within the developed city. The relation could be described as developmentalist governmentality that crafts various categories of natives based on their capabilities, and their improvability. The inherent tension between

distancing (as only immature subjects could be socialized) and incorporation (which is the finality of these interventions) is phrased by Li (2007) as a contradiction between sovereignty and governance. Whereas the sovereign overpowers a certain population on the basis of their essentialized difference, governance works on the basis of the essential improvability perceived in a population. In the case of the container settlements I have argued that this balance is constantly refunded. Especially from the above description of the consultation process, one could see that the dividing line between the two poles of governance and sovereign overpowering is negotiated for every case anew. The strategy to resettle Roma to houses in rural areas reminds a bit of what Li (2007) calls the strategy to restore natives to their 'authentic state' and live for example apart from the city in self-sufficient communities. As one employee of the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Capital Investment, who was responsible for Roma housing projects told me, there existed such a project that tried to find a rural Roma community, where NGOs could intervene to make them self-sufficient. The project was cancelled because they could not find a suitable community. Based on the environmental racism argument by Harper et al. (2009) one could assume that the reason for that was the circumstance that Roma settlements are mostly located in hazardous environments where International NGOs would have difficulties to perform their development programs and restore 'self-sufficiency'. In this case the venue through which Roma could become 'mature' is exactly prescribed and is based on them retreating to their position as ethnic minority with a special culture on the basis of which they could claim other social rights. If they do not live according to 'their culture' and come to the city, the government has every reason to disenfranchise them. This is a mechanism of incorporation via distancing.

The most blunt exercise of the overpowering sovereignty could obviously be observed in the case of evictions. People who are evicted from the container settlements lose the basis for any claim making in Belgrade. The incidents based on which evictions are mostly occurring are related to behavior that is perceived as harmful to community. This is interesting insofar as community is the chain through which container inhabitants are governed: families should control the school attendance of their children, neighbors should monitor the hygiene of the settlement, etc. In that container settlements could be regarded as a zone of ambiguity, where disenfranchisement is always present as a potentiality.

The founding narrative of the installment of containers about Roma destructing a social flat opens the analysis to a bigger picture on how difference is essentialized in the urban setting in Belgrade. It is but one story that exists in Belgrade about the way Roma destructed something

valuable to recycle the raw materials it consisted of. Another such story relates to the bronze statue of a small boy, which was a monument for the victims of the defense of the Turkish domination in 1862. Some days after the theft the statue was found on a dump, cut into pieces. In the press this incident was commented as proof that shows that Roma are absolutely disintegrated, when they see even a monument as secondary raw material. Secondary raw material was a term originally introduced to shape the informal collection of dump in a way convertible with formal economy. In the way Hart (2009) described it could be regarded as part of the vocabulary emerging from developmental economists' efforts to convert informal economic growth into formal job creation. However, in my example, the notion of 'raw material' is used to express the rawness or barbarity of relation Roma are supposed to have with the civilized rest of the society. In including Roma in formal recycling yard projects like SWIFT this relation is maintained but disciplined in that the recycling yard would most probably not buy parts of a bronze monument. As one of the social workers responsible for Orlovsko settlement, where SWIFT is located claimed, it is of utmost importance for the project that Roma learn that they cannot work whenever they wish and that they cannot sleep until eleven anymore. As it is obviously questionable why it should be important when the material is collected, one could understand the regulation of working hours as part of the disciplining.

The whole recycling yard project is built on a model of inclusion similar to what Isin (2008:272) described as the constitution of marginalized individuals not as right bearing subjects but as 'objects of nuisance':

"Squeegers for example are prompted into believing that they are entrepreneurs of the street and that their practices can be made legitimate, productive and legal only if they agree to certain rules and regulations in return for some money to set up their business. [...] In their everyday struggles, every marginalized, stigmatized and dominated social group is invited, interpellated, incited and cajoled into making such bargains to constitute themselves as active citizens under terms and conditions that they may not have articulated."

In the next chapter I'm going to discuss the question of how subjects that are caught in this tensional field of incorporation and distancing can incrementally create right at the margins of the state.

## CHAPTER 4

### INCREMENTAL CITIZENSHIP RIGHT CLAIMS VS. CLIENTELISM

In chapter 2 and 3 I described certain forms of territorial stigmatization through which impoverished parts of the urban population are constituted as a locus of underdevelopment that has to be erased in order to secure the course of the formal urbanization and economic development of the city. MacLeod (2002) has discussed the displacements emerging from this logic by focussing on homeless people as the anti-thesis to the new consumerist citizenship. In that the boundaries of the city as a political community are redrawn in those with and those without right to claim rights. Isin uses the term abject spaces to describe the zones where the disenfranchised live, most excluded from the City the refugee camp:

„These extraterritorial spaces keep the abject from accessing state and city spaces in which they have the opportunity to exercise social, political and economic rights, recognizing that the ability to do so is a first step in becoming political and claiming legal citizenship status. Paradoxically, however, this is done by appealing to a governmental logic of human rights, and more specifically that of protection. The claim is that by creating such abject spaces new rights are being extended to those who would otherwise remain rightless.“  
(Isin/Rygiel 2008:2)

However, in my case abject subjects and spaces are not a ‘prohibited inclusion’ as in case of the refugee camps, but an exclusion of people who were actual part of the city, and an illegalisation of zones that incrementally developed in the urbanisation process. In that they are not clearly abjects, but they have an ambiguous relation to the state as their capabilities and improvability ultimately decides on whether or not they are recognized as mature, right-bearing citizens. From this the question arises, what are the borders of the city and how do they matter in right claiming?

For Isin exclusion means to be excluded from the ‘configurational space’ of the city in the sense of organising and being organised as a community with certain claims. Isin conceptualizes the city as a condensation point for social relations is the site that enables „the social formation of citizens as rights-claimants“ (Isin 2009:266). Isin emphasizes that it is not *in* the city, but, in analogy to his dialectical conception of group formation and configurational space, *through* the city that citizens become right claimants. He argues that the city is not “a passive background of becoming political [...] [but] a fundamental strategic property by which groups, nations, societies, federations, empires, and kingdoms are constituted in the real world, and, through this constitution, structured as objective realities” (Isin 2002:49). At this, citizenship is regarded as dialectically shaping and being shaped by

processes of group formation and inter-group demarcation, as they are happening in the city: „Just what constitutes citizenship and its appropriate modes and forms of conduct are always objects of struggle amongst citizens, subjects and abjects with claims to citizenship as justice“ (Isin 2009:1).:

Though Isin is explicitly interested in the way orders of citizenship are refunded through these abjects, in my view he does not really theorize under which conditions, what are the assets for their right claiming. In my case the right claiming of abjects is constitutively based to the (semi-legal) practices in which the state engages to exclude them and thus construct and govern them as abjects.

In this chapter I'm going to show how the inhabitants of 'unhygienic' settlements are not simply deprived of their citizenship rights based on their exclusion from the formal order, but they do have a certain position vis-à-vis the state that was (until the first forced evictions occurred) on the consent I described above as 'soft social politics'. In that the state did not simply tolerate these settlements because there was no procedure for resettlement. Rather the allowance of semi-legal (survival) practices without legalizing them is according to Das (2011) a venue through which the state expresses its sovereignty to establish the exception in order to preserve life. Das gives the example of deprived squatters in India who use their food ration cards also as identity cards as they show both a picture of the holder and his name. On the one hand the state supports this practice by conducting surveys on the squatter population on the basis of ration cards. On the other hand the cards are officially only valid for three months so that most of the cards used are already expired, as it always costs a fee to issue a new one. In showing how the state apparatus itself occasionally deliberately abolishes the very order it constructs through formal law, Das challenges the sharp divisions between legal and illegal, which ascribes legal to the state as whole and illegal to certain (corrupt, criminal) individuals.

In that it makes sense to conceptualize these settlements as lying at the 'margins of the state': "sites of practice in which law and other state practices are colonized by other forms of regulation that emanate from the pressing needs of populations to secure political and economic survival" (Das/Poole 2004:9). This 'margins of the state' approach challenges a whole bunch of literature on clientel-patron relations between state officials and squatters that are mostly based on Castells (1983) study on squatter settlements in Latin America. In these studies clientelism is thought in opposition to active citizenship:

“Mexican clientelism channelled dissent and demand-making in state sanctioned venues, limiting alternative organizing and recreating state power by incorporating dissident groups and leaders [...] Clientelist community groups avoid protest, thinking that it could be both futile and harmful to relations with state and party patrons. Instead groups offered to pay for urban services, exerted indirect pressure by publicizing demands in the media, and reminded visiting officials of long-felt needs. The exercise of clientelist control contradicted the emergence of an ethos of citizenship, as Peter Wards writes ‘resources cannot be demanded or negotiated as of right: they must be exchanged for political support, for good behaviour, and compliance with those in authority’ (Ward 1986)” (Shefner 2012:41f.)

Regarding the situation in Serbia Vujovic/Petrovic (2007:379) assert the existence of vertical and a horizontal that secure illegal construction:

„In the case of the widespread illegal construction in Belgrade, two types of networks could be described – vertical and horizontal. One can speak of a **vertical interest alliance between the illegal actors and politicians who tolerate it to secure, among other things, electoral votes.** There are also **vertical clientelist links** running up and down inefficient and corrupt government institutions. This system could be described as “consensual chaos,” or “organized irresponsibility.” The horizontal networks are found in the gray zone of urban development in Belgrade, where a reactivation of solidarity micro-networks takes place, motivated by necessity more than sentiment. They could be described as familism, a kind of **social capital at the bottom level that aids survival strategies, but impedes efficient social and system integration.**“

In line with this description of clientelistic relations, it was also an accepted view among my interview partners that people from informal settlements, especially Roma, do not make right claims and engage in forms of engagement known as political. When I explained my research question most of my interview partners expressed their skepticism towards whether I would find something as ‘right claims’. In the case of Roma it is now often asserted that they profit from being declared as vulnerable population on the EU and international stage. I was told the right claims come top down from NGOs – as the historical result of bottom-up right claims in the West – and that the Roma population would rather act in a clientelistic way.

Based on the ‘margins of the state’ approach which sees the abolishment of order as constitutive for the workings of the state, one could challenge the division between formal legal state order and individual illegal practices of corruption or bribery. With Das (2011) I will rather look at the way the state established certain exceptions with the finality to preserve life and look at the way this established a certain consent on the basis of which right claims could be created incrementally. I will show that such right claims that are created out of a grey zone might not be that easily recognizable as such. But the sole reason for that is that they might appear hopeless in relation to the formal legal rights. This is understandable against the background of my above analysis, which showed how the stigmatization of inhabitants of ‘unhygienic settlements’ lead to the emergence of multiple mechanisms that

effectively excluded them from formal legal order. I will give two examples that show attempts to incrementally create rights on the basis of a certain state of exception that was established by the state. These right claims do not take the form of social movements or protest, but are made through two interrelated processes described by Das (2011:330) as the “labor of learning how to deal with legal spaces of courts and police precincts as well as the labor in securing objects on whose agency they can call on to establish incremental citizenship”.

First, I’m talking about attempts by the NGO Praxis to label the ‘unhygienic settlements’ as informal collective center for refugees and thus change these people’s access to social housing. Second, I will show the labor of an activist living in Belvil settlement, who challenged the very division of responsibilities between EIB and the City. She requested the EIB to actively participate in the resettlement procedure by issuance lists of project affected people. In that she openly subverted clientelist alliances connecting informal settlements, Roma National Council and the state through which Gazela and Belvil settlement have grown to their remarkable size for an informal settlement in the inner city area.

## INFORMAL COLLECTIVE CENTERS

Praxis NGO is one of the NGOs who are following forced evictions of informal settlements closely since 2009. They made a comprehensive survey of forced evictions in whole Serbia sending questionnaires to the municipalities and visiting themselves informal settlements to monitor the living circumstances and offer legal assistance for example in the issuance of documents. Despite of their monitoring, one of the legal field assistants of Praxis NGO says with regard to eviction procedures applied in Belgrade: *„never know what to expect, different procedures without any explanation“*<sup>94</sup>. For him the procedures are arbitrarily applied, which he illustrates with the example Blok 72 resettlement, which took place in March 2012, only one month before the big resettlement of Belvil (with latent EIB involvement). Blok 72 could be counted to the big resettlements with 33 families and 164 persons affected.

In the case of Blok 72 the City of Belgrade and the Commission for Human and Minority Rights said that there is no way that the IDPs from Kosovo stay in Belgrade and planned to resettle them to collective centers in the poorest provinces in the South of Serbia. In Belvil

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<sup>94</sup> Praxis NGO Legal Field Assistant, Interview 25.9.12:4.

eviction one month later the IDPs got containers at the outskirts of Belgrade: “Belvil settlement is like 2 km from Blok 72, basically it’s the same municipality, everything was the same but in this case all the IDPs got the accommodation in Belgrade”<sup>95</sup> For Praxis NGO this is an example showing the incoherency that characterizes the policies of the City of Belgrade towards IDPs in informal settlements. He concludes:

“that shows that the City of Belgrade is dealing with this without any system, they said it for Belvil they had alternative accommodations because they got money from donations or EU or someone else and for Blok 72 they didn’t have that so basically the City had to offer them collective centers”<sup>96</sup>.

The legal field assistant of Praxis NGO further clarifies that the status of these people as IDPs was completely denied as long as they lived in Blok 72 informal settlement and was only activated in the eviction in order to legitimate the collective centers as adequate alternative accommodation for these people:

“in Blok 72 they were living for 13 years without any assistance from the government so basically they were just registered as IDPs without any assistance from the government and in the moment of the eviction they said okay you’re going to be in a collective center because you’re an IDP”<sup>97</sup>.

Actually, to the lack of collective centers (CCs) and more recently their progressive dissolution lead to the growth of substandard informal Roma settlements. Whereas in Serbia in 1996 there were about 700 CCs, in January 2002 there were still 388, which accommodated about 26,863 persons. According to most recent statistics from November 2012 on the territory of Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija there were only 20 CCs left, accommodating 2,173 persons. One of the programs that provides housing for refugees is the ‘Social Housing in Supportive Environment Program’ funded by the US government, as well as by UNHCR, the City of Belgrade and the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation (who make big advertisements in Belgrade), in co-operation with the Commissariat for Refugees in Serbia. In 2011 they provided 20 flats in Mali Mokri Lug in Belgrade<sup>98</sup>. However, there is much too little provision of housing so that on a conference organized by OSCE it was pointed out that the “rapid decrease in the number of CCs is counterbalanced by an increase in informal or illegal settlements made up of displaced Roma” (OSCE 2010:7).

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.:5.

<sup>98</sup> [www.housingcenter.org](http://www.housingcenter.org)

According to OSCE the problem why many IDPs are not legible for support by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees is the fact that they live in informal settlements without possibility to register as IDPs.

“Therefore, a large number of Roma IDPs who for a variety of reasons are not registered as such, cannot claim SCR assistance. SCR representatives stressed that Serbia is host to some 4,000 registered displaced persons in forty-three collective centers (CCs) which the government intends to close down.” (OSCE 2010:7)

However, Praxis (2013:55) reports that the majority of Roma IDPs did not gain access to CCs even when they are registered as IDPs: “According to the Commissariat for Refugees and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, about 22,500 Roma IDPs have been registered in the Commissariat's database, but only 1,200 are accommodated in collective centers”. That means that 95% of registered Roma IDPs were left to their own devices. In case of Blok 72 settlement they found out that not one registered Roma IDP got any assistance from the SCR, like provision of building material or ‘economic empowerment’ programs envisioned for IDPs who do not live in CCs (cf. Praxis 2013).

In order to counter this selective activation of the IDP label by the City of Belgrade in the case of the eviction of Blok 72, Praxis NGO challenged the very separation of IDPs in collective centers and those in informal settlements: “we wanted the government consider this settlement as collective center which is going to be closed down so that they can offer them some solutions that are like long term solutions”<sup>99</sup>. He further explained that when a CC is closed the government is officially obliged to secure that no one of the former residents will be left homeless.

However, for many of the remaining CCs, which are especially in the poor southern provinces of Serbia, it's not clear still when they are going to be closed down. Therefore, Praxis tried to prevent the resettlement of the IDPs evicted from Blok 72 settlements to the CCs and rather transfer the procedure for the dissolution of CCs to the dissolution of informal (mostly IDP-inhabited) settlements. This makes sense against the background of the regulation for social housing, which foresees that only those persons can apply for a flat, who do have permanent residency in Serbia.

In his final report on Blok 72 forced eviction the Ombudsperson criticized the treatment of IDPs saying:

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

“after multiple years of temporary residency [boravak] in that settlement they are now left without any perspective for alternative accommodation. The Commissariat for Refugees now offered accommodation in the CCs Gamzigradska Banja and Kragujevacka Raka. [...] This was yet another confirmation that the closing down of CCs is conducted in an unsuitable way, based on an inadequate assessment of the overall situation”<sup>100</sup>.

He further emphasized that Belgrade as City is under the jurisdiction of the Serbian state which has adopted guidelines for the protection of human and minority rights, which foresee a central role of the local self-government in the realization of these guidelines. In that the Ombudsperson contests any special right of the City of Belgrade that the Mayor claimed when saying that he would not accept anyone standing in the way of Belgrade’s economic development and would not accept any proposals by OSCE, who enforced the strategies for integration of refugees, IDPs and repatriated refugees at the state level.

In arguing that it is unlawful to evict IDPs who had their temporary residence (boravak) in Belgrade for over ten years without any assistance of the state, the Ombudsperson and Praxis NGO contest the right of the city to evict these people (cf. Isin 2008). They try to incrementally create right to the city based on the fact that these people have lived there for over ten years and that they managed to restore their livelihood by themselves despite the fact that they were registered IDPs and thus entitled to state assistance. In that, the Ombudsperson and Praxis NGO do not address formal law, but “diffused notions about preserving life that bind residents and state together” (Das 2011:324). Considering the context within which informal settlements gained tolerance during the 1990s as ‘soft social policy’ in face of a lack of shelter for refugees and IDPs, we see that the right claims are not only based on a moral consent between state and citizens to preserve life. The right claims also build on a state of exception, where the City abolished its own construction law through tolerating (and even fueling, as I will show in the next chapter) illegal construction in inner city areas. In that the right claims appeal to a certain pragmatism that evolves in urban governance that does not meet its own aspirations (cf. Eckert 2006). However, looking at the series of forced evictions that was triggered after Gazela resettlement one could assume that through the infrastructure projects inner city space is now ‘cleaned up’ for investments and the informal settlements are not anymore regarded a result of pragmatism in dealing with a vulnerable population of refugees and IDPs. Instead squatters increasingly become criminalized as a population that

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<sup>100</sup> Serbian Ombudsperson, Statement no. 24882, 5.12.11:10.

deliberately occupies valuable land. In that also right claims that allude to this old consent were not successful and IDPs were expelled from Belgrade.

In the protocol of a meeting within which EIB discussed the possibilities of PAPs from Gazela resettlement to access regular social housing, it is noted: “IDPs cannot apply for these social housing units because their prebivalište [permanent residency] is in Kosovo (and it must stay Kosovo if they are to retain their IDP status)”<sup>101</sup>.

In the interview the EIB social impact officer pointed out that IDPs that got a container in Gazela and Belvil eviction, are not eligible for social housing any other kind of assistance before the eviction:

“so IDPs and Roma IDPs which are not in collective centers CCs have very little access to the funds and projects which are available for the IDPs in Serbia [...] which doesn’t make sense because you have a lot more IDPs who are not in collective centers than those who do live in collective centers, so many of our Roma f.e. cannot apply for social housing, they are not eligible for any planned projects that are made by various NGOs”<sup>102</sup>.

## PROJECT SPACES AND RIGHT CLAIMS

Whereas some authors give optimistic accounts on the fragmentation of state sovereignty and emphasize the emancipating effects of the pluralization of agencies and legal forums to which active citizens can make their right claims (cf. Holston/Appadurai 1996), Randeria/Grunder (2011:188) emphasize that the multiplication of forums and “quasi-judicial bodies can create greater legal uncertainty for citizens, who are forced to navigate a maze of unfamiliar institutions with unclear, overlapping jurisdictions”. This became clear in the case of the evictions from container settlements, where people ceased to be ‘project affected people’ in that they lost their right to permanent alternative accommodation when they did not adhere to the socialization ‘quasi norms’ introduced by the City.

The division of responsibilities between the City and the EIB is framed as a pedagogical one and is complemented by the facilitating power of the European Commission giving funds. Both forms aim in the spirit of a ‘help for self-help’. However, as I will show in this chapter, assigning the City with the task of resettlement also fueled existing corrupt alliances between City and self-appointed landlords of informal settlements. Through these alliances people

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<sup>101</sup> Gazela Bridge Rehabilitation, unpublished minutes of a meeting of EIB regarding the provision of permanent alternative housing for container inhabitants, 2012.

<sup>102</sup> EIB Social Impact Officer, Interview 19.12.12:5.

were incited to leave the area foreseen for resettlement in exchange of some cash and thus lost their rights as 'project affected person'. Within this setting I met one activist who tried to pull in the EIB in the resettlement process in order to disrupt these corrupt alliances. This was especially an issue in the forced eviction of Belvil settlement, which grew mainly from refugees and IDPs throughout the 1990s on the Eastern part of New Belgrade. Belvil consisted of informal settlements at Block 67, Block 70 and a settlement located at the banks of the river Sava, which was directly affected the EIB funded project New Bridge over Sava. However, as I have mentioned in the chapter above due to the shameful experience of Gazela resettlement the EIB was not only involved in the resettlement of the part directly affected by its project, but forced the City also to issue a resettlement action plan for the resettlements of the other parts of Belvil.

One of the inhabitants, who is working for the CSO Women in Black, gave me a long interview on the different phases of Belvil resettlement. Beginning with the first forced eviction of a part of Belvil settlement in 2009, she followed the evictions and began to work in her own words as an activist together with Amnesty International as well as Praxis NGO, who connected me with her. Through her activities against the evictions she also became acquainted with criminal activities around the organized shrinking or growth of Belvil. In the following I mainly draw from the interview with her.

In April 2009 one part of Belvil settlement, near Blok 67, was destroyed by the City to build a road for the international university sport festival 'Univerzijada'. 47 families respectively 128 persons were affected. Although one day before the eviction the inhabitants were told that they would get metal containers in Surcin municipality, protests by the local residents prevented the resettlement. In a letter to the Mayor of Belgrade and the Minister of Human and Minority Rights (Svetozar Ciplic) and the Minister of Labor and Social Policy (Rasim Ljajic), Human Rights Watch and the European Roma Rights Center point to the Serbian government being President of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2009 and the way the evictions of that year contradict the strategies they adopted to combat discrimination of Roma in the area of housing<sup>103</sup>. Two days after the resettlement protests were organized in front of the parliament. From the newspaper articles it does not get clear which CSOs participated, rather Srdjan Sajin is quoted, who is head of the Roma Party. In 2007 he was besides Rajko Djuric from Serbia's Roma Union the only representative of the Roma minority who entered the parliament. With the 2008 elections Sajin entered the parliament as candidate for the

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<sup>103</sup> HRW, 8.4.2009 <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/04/08/serbia-forced-evictions-romani-community-belgrade>

Serbian Progressive Party and maintained his seat with 2012 elections. He is still head of the Roma Party and is acknowledged as elected representative of Roma minority, although he is only elected for the Serbian Progressive Party<sup>104</sup>. His authority to speak about Roma questions is not only acknowledged by state bodies and the media, but also International Organizations like OSCE or European Delegation treat him as legitimate representative of the Roma minority. In relation to Block 67 eviction he speaks out against City officials who claim that Roma would now seek extra benefit from being on the terrain of the Univerzijada and wait for being resettled to more decent housing. He points out that most of these people have already been involuntarily evicted from Kosovo and fall now again victim to forced displacement. The only thing they claim is to get a place where they could stay permanently and this did not emerge first in the context of the resettlements for this international sport festival<sup>105</sup>. In that he points to the argument that I discussed above.

Following these protests a meeting between the Mayor, the Minister for Human and Minority Rights and the Minister of Labor and Social Policy with OSCE, UNHCR and some ‘Roma leaders’ (which are not specified in the press releases) took place. As a result, the Mayor announced – as mentioned in the quote of Djilas in the previous chapter – that only those who were registered in Belgrade would be offered accommodation in reception center for homeless adults and children, and elderly people’s home<sup>106</sup>. As a consequence at least 11 families, who were not from Belgrade, were left homeless.

Although in his announcement the Mayor was quite assertive about the plan to resettle all those who ‘are in the way of the development’ of the City, the City government decided not to further resettle another part of Belvil before Univerzijada sports festival and the international media attention it would bestow Belgrade. Instead, just before the beginning of the festival another bigger part of Belvil settlement (in direct proximity to the sportspersons’ residencies) was fenced off by the company in charge for the Univerzijada. As the activist from Belvil described the situation in the interview:

“they fenced off the settlement and put banners around the fence so that one could not look inside anymore – like in a camp. [...] The sportspersons moved in their voluptuous apartments around the settlement. But from the upper floors they could see the settlement, they could see

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<sup>104</sup> B92, Overview Elections 1990-2012 <http://www.b92.net/info/izbori2012/parlament.php?year=2007>

<sup>105</sup> Pressonline, 4.4.2009 <http://www.pressonline.rs/info/beograd/62191/protest-roma-ispred-skupstine-grada.html>, own translation

<sup>106</sup> cf. Beobuild, 6.4.2009, [http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com\\_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40](http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40), own translation.

that something strange is happening. People could not work, you know, they collect secondary raw materials, and they were not allowed to do that, not one foreigner should see their carts, that they are living from this”<sup>107</sup>.

In addition to the fence police forces patrolled the settlement and people were not only prohibited from working, but due to a total ban on leaving the settlement they could not even access water and electricity anymore<sup>108</sup>. My interlocutor from Belvil reported that she was the only person from Belvil settlement who dared to speak out against this and inform another Roma organization who had the ties to inform international human rights organizations. As an explanation for that fear she tells that in Belvil there are many people from Kosovo and Southern Serbia who have been infiltrated to that settlement by certain leaders that then act as landlords. In his announcement related to Block 67 eviction, Djilas also refers to these kinds of landlords:

“According to our information, the chief of that settlement rents these houses for about 50 Euro. He alone owns two mobile phones, a van and a flat in Cukarica, where he permanently lives and depicts himself as representative of these people. With such kind of people I as Mayor won’t talk, as in the same way I also won’t talk with representatives of some political party who supposedly represent Roma, but who don’t have any representatives in the parliament and try to use this situation for their interests”<sup>109</sup>.

However, according my interlocutor from Belvil big investors like Delta company and these landlords are actually closely tied in corrupt practices. She told that already before the resettlement she wondered from time to time why the settlement grew sometimes overnight with 50 new families and that she found out about the background of these incidents only when the very same families were also the first to disappear, when the resettlement of Belvil became public. In that time she found out that one landlord from Kosovo actually brought hundreds of people from the South of Serbia to Belgrade to occupy a parcel of land for which he got rent. More importantly when Delta company sought to build on that parcel of land this landlord was paid by Delta to resettle these people.

According to my interlocutor these alliances were also used when the City was assigned with the task to resettle the people directly affected through the project New Bridge over Sava funded by the EIB. After the first official survey of inhabitants in October 2010 families started disappearing from the settlement in exchange of some cash.

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<sup>107</sup> Belvil activist, Interview 14.11.12:2, own translation.

<sup>108</sup> SEECult, 7.10.2009 <http://www.seecult.org/vest/peticija-protiv-ogradivanja-romskog-naselja>, own translation.

<sup>109</sup> Beobuild, 6.4.2009, [http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com\\_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40](http://www.portal.build-razvoj.com/index.php?option=com_deeppockets&task=catContShow&cat=90&id=5655&Itemid=40), own translation.

In October 2010 my interlocutor managed together with Amnesty International to convince the EIB to do a survey of the inhabitants in order to stop the illegal expulsion of people from the settlement. However, by that time she states that since the declaration of the resettlement in 2009 already 57% of the inhabitants left respectively were forcefully resettled by the landlord of Belvil settlement. My interlocutor further told that in the period between October 2010 and March 2012 (one month before Belvil resettlement) permanently social workers from the City came to Belvil and revised the list of inhabitants. In one of the consultation meetings she questions this practice:

“when we had the first meeting, I said to Bovan, who is the right hand of [the Mayor] Djilas in this matter: ‘How comes that I’m number 20 in your list, when I know that I was number 6 on the list of the [European] Investment Bank? Their list is authoritative, not yours. And then I displayed my list, publicly, everybody saw it. I said: ‘This list was done by the Investment Bank. This woman here on the list got a flat. Why has her barrack not been demolished and who else is now listed [as inhabitant] there? Who will get pre-fabricated housing through this barrack?’”<sup>110</sup>

She explained that people who left the settlement prior to the eviction in exchange of cash were forced to sign that they got pre-fabricated housing. At most they got some spare construction material to build the next shanty. However, in leaving the barracks in place and the people on the list, my interlocutor claims that the City is able to sell or rent the flats to other people. As the pre-fabricated housing is part of the social housing project funded by the EC for people from forced evictions, my interlocutor argues that the City manipulates the lists of inhabitants in order to tap into these resources and capitalize on the flats. Although didn’t further investigate these processes, it is remarkable that the official RAP in prominent place talks about various procedures how to deal with people who disappeared prior to the resettlement. In the section about actions to be taken before the resettlement, the City is advised to do the following:

- “Verification and reconciliation of the list of affected households vis-à-vis that from the October 2010 census. This will include a re-count of the households in corridor of the impact.
- Where there are discrepancies relating to households who were part of the October 2010 list but who have since left the corridor of impact for any reason, the City of Belgrade will make all reasonable attempts to contact the head of household or other members as relevant and offer them, without prejudice and in a transparent and open manner, the same entitlements included in this RAP, subject to the same eligibility criteria. The decision to accept this offer should be made by the household without coercion; if the household decides not to accept this offer, it will waive its rights to these entitlements as part of the RAP” (RAP 2012:25)

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<sup>110</sup> Belvil activist, Interview 14.11.12:7, own translation.

This RAP was drafted after the consultation meetings in which my interlocutor openly criticized the conspicuous disappearing of inhabitants from the ‘corridor of impact’, whilst their names stay on the lists.

However, what is not mentioned in the RAP is that after this survey the constructing company PORR fenced off the area. Borka claimed to be included in the corridor of impact of new bridge over Sava, because she felt that being resettled by the City means not to have right for housing assured. However, she fears that the EIB will let the City come away with pre-fabricated houses at the periphery.

Borka here uses the knowledge about corrupt alliances between landlords and the City to pose into question the resettlement practice of the City. In calling the EIB to do the survey of inhabitants she tries to subvert one central instrument of this corrupt practice which leads to people disappearing from the settlement before they can realize any of the rights they enjoy as PAPs. I would argue that this is not simply clientelistic, but political in that she goes the way of claiming right to permanent alternative accommodation, although she is well aware of the problems related to social housing for deprived persons and that it might be more pragmatic to take the money. In that she engages in situated politics in the way articulated by Li (2008:115) as “scrutinizing unjust practices and processes from the perspective that they are socially formed and could be changed”.

In the interview Borka emphasized repeatedly that her neighbors from the settlement are mostly people ‘who don’t know their rights’. In that some of those originally from the South moved from the settlement when the resettlement was announced and did not wait to be resettled to a region where they could not sustain their livelihood or did not even have a place to go. Others willingly gave their data to City officials that came again and again to issue ever new lists on the inhabitants and only speculated about what might be done with this data. This was also the case in Gazela when the City did the first survey of inhabitants in 2007. In an article by the Serbian newspaper Vreme inhabitants of the settlement were quoted supposing that the census was done to see which of the families have an income and thus qualify for a flat. The then City Secretary for Social and Child Welfare denies this and states: “That is not a condition. The survey should only give a picture on the structure of inhabitants, because this data set will later be the basis to determine who will be cared for in which way”<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>111</sup> Vreme, 9.8.2007, <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=508275>, own translation.

In challenging the practice of survey, Borka actually tries to convert an instrument that is obviously perceived by most of these inhabitants as overpowering or that is passively condoned, to an instrument that could be empowering against the corrupt practices between the City and landlords. In using the language of rights, she opposes corrupt state practices not with the classical 'weapons of the weak' such as protest or subversion, but makes claims to formal law in order to combat corrupt structures of domination.

“While citizens might often not act according to state law themselves and also make strategic use of the extra-legal practices of state agents, they are at the same time engaged in a protest that uses legal terms against the transgressions of law by state agents and other bodies of governmental authority. This is evident in their efforts against a misuse of state powers and their fight against corruption. In this we see a shift towards state law as a means of resistance as well as a parameter of the ‘good order’.” (Eckert 2006:45)

Through using a language of rights and demonstrating her power through publicly offending state officials, she wants to show the other inhabitants what are their rights. In that she seeks to convince the other inhabitants of the settlement, who mostly preferred to take cash than to wait for social housing which they are going to lose again, to perceive themselves as deserving certain rights as project affected people.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

I began my thesis with Roy (2005) who showed the construction of informal settlements has to be regarded as 'abstract space', which emerges builds a negation not to what formal urbanization is actually about, but what should it be about. As I have shown, from the beginning of the economic liberalization in the 1990s on urbanization in Belgrade was characterized by a sellout (or more adequate 'lease-out') of public land and privatization of public housing, which was rarely rebalanced through central planning and systematic assistance to those who were thus excluded from the formal housing sector. In that informal practices of land leasing, housing construction occurred en masses. Complemented by corrupt practices of leasing public land to big investors it is hard to differentiate between 'chaotic' and 'planned', 'formal' and 'informal' urbanization. However, in ascribing the chaotic structure, lack of public space and infrastructure as characteristic to a certain group of stigmatized inner city Roma settlements, technical interventions on problems that actually concern both formal and informal zones became possible.

The container socialization apparatus emerged from the interplay of two regimes, which conceptualize the inhabitants of informal Roma settlements as incommensurable to right claims: (1) the entrepreneurial city which follows the motive to erase from its surface the negative iconography of its less glorious past. This became clear from the Master Plan which casted unhygienic settlements as a form of poverty that was unknown to Belgrade until the 1990s and thus externalizes underdevelopment to zones, which are (comparably) easily to erase. In its newly acquired function to attract investments, the City abolished that state of exception which granted impoverished inhabitants a right to be in that place as 'soft social policy'. In the efforts to resettle these people to social housing that occurred from 2003 on, one could even see the willingness of the City to 'translate' the soft social policy into hard facts. In the sake of investments, which brought about a heightened urgency to clean up the space, these people became unlawful occupants of valuable public land that tried to opportunistically use the appearance of the EIB as investor in order to improve their housing situation. (2) The developmentalist governmentality which could be partially ascribed to EU agencies like OSCE who try to make sedentary unpleasantly mobile vulnerable populations (unwanted migrants to EU) is imbued with the will to improve. As I have criticized with

Kovats (2003) such projects support their exception from regular social politics of the state, as Roma settlements are thus treated by other than state institutions.

However, it would be oversimplified to think of macro-forces zoning a certain territory and objecting its inhabitants as groups to certain development programs and depict individuals as opportunistically using this cartography, but basically without restructuring effects. One can resolve this picture by taking into focus the agency of groups in the way Isin does and regard space not in terms of zones of different legislation, but rather as intertwined with social practice, i.e. as a complex configuration. Talking about a configurational space means to look at how inter-group power relations are preserved or reconfigured through space in everyday practice: „space is a configuration that generates and modulates encounters among and between groups“ (Isin 2002:48). In that city space is not a passive background but becomes a ‘fundamentally strategic property’.

Under the slogan that he would not accept anyone who stands in the way of the economic development of Belgrade, I would argue that throughout the evictions the Mayor established a certain **right of the city** vis-à-vis strategies at the state level that work towards the integration of ‘vulnerable populations’ with regard to EU accession. I would further argue that the opposition between City and state does not show that the City positions itself in opposition to the EU integration process. It rather shows that due to the cooperation with EU agencies at the level of infrastructure projects, the EU integration process is at the City level more perceived as a process of economic cooperation and less as a process of adoption of certain social policy standards. From my perspective, this orientation towards economic cooperation rather than systematic building of social politics also becomes obvious from the social housing project funded by the European Commission. This project provides housing in a logic completely exterior to regular social politics and could be hardly regarded as ‘state capacity building’. It rather remedies a group of people that emerged from the specific processes of urban restructuring in Belgrade brought about through infrastructure projects. Thus it does not support existing social politics, but funds a group of people who were only created through economic processes at the City level. In that the EU agencies in this case do not act as external instance that restores the rights of resettled people to social housing. Rather it proceeds in the same logic, granting right to social housing to a population crafted at the City level.

The containers did not contribute to build capacities in social politics in order to be able to incorporate more people. Rather the containers introduced a **zone of ambiguity** in the social

security system that now does not simply assist citizens in need, but decides on the basis of the capabilities of these subjects about their right to citizenship rights. In that imperial forms of sovereignty that constantly refund the differentiations between citizens and non-citizens are not any more directed towards the colony that is separated from the national political community if not through the sea then at least through national boundaries. Rather they became integrated in the regular modes governance a state deploys towards its own citizens.

If the side-passing of law and the introduction of quasi-norms is part of this zone of ambiguity, then it seems fruitful to think of right claims as addressing increasingly formal law. In the way the activist from Belvil, who confronted state officials with their corrupt practices shows how resistance to state practices of domination do address the incoherencies in which the state itself acts. In that right claims could blossom on what Mitchell (1991:63) describes this as **fragmented state effect**: "the state is, ironically, often most tangible, and its meanings most worked out, at the places "where state authority is most unreliable, where the gap between the state's goals and their local realization is largest, and where reinterpretation of state policies is most extreme".

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## **Zusammenfassung**

In Belgrad ist ca. 43% der Wohnfläche mit sogenannten ‚informellen Bauten‘ besiedelt. 35% wird von jungen Familien mit geringem Einkommen bewohnt, gefolgt von Flüchtlingen, die ca. 23% der Bewohner ausmachen und Roma, die 18% dieser Stadtbewohner ausmachen. Wie auch in anderen serbischen Städten haben sich informelle Siedlungen in Belgrad vornehmlich nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg entwickelt. Industrialisierung brachte große Wellen von Migranten aus ländlichen Gebieten in größere Städte. In den 1990er Jahren kamen Flüchtlinge und IDPs hinzu, sowie Anfang der 2000er repatriierte Flüchtlinge aus den westlichen EU Mitgliedsstaaten.

In dieser Arbeit geht es um Umsiedlungen von informellen innerstädtischen Romasiedlungen, die im Zuge von durch die Europäische Investitionsbank finanzierten Infrastrukturprojekten in den letzten 4 Jahren stattfanden. Es wird die Frage behandelt, was für Institutionen und Prozeduren an der Schnittstelle zwischen Umsiedlungsrichtlinien der EIB und lokaler Sozialpolitik entstehen und wie somit das Feld rekonfiguriert wird, innerhalb dessen das Recht dieser Menschen auf Stadt und ihr Zugang zu sozialer Sicherung ausgehandelt wird.

## **Abstract**

In Belgrade 43% of the residential area is covered with informal housing, which is for 35% inhabited by young families with insufficient income to obtain formal housing, followed by refugees comprising 23 percent and Roma accounting for 18 percent (Ministry of Capital Investment of Serbia and Montenegro 2004). In Belgrade, as well as other Serbian cities, informal settlements strongly developed in the course of the post-World War II industrialization and immigration from rural areas to cities as well as waves of refugees and IDPs during the 1990s and later on repatriated refugees from EU countries.

With the new Law on Planning and Construction (2003) the *ex post facto* official acknowledgement of informal settlements became more an institutionalized procedure and upgrading has become the state's dominant strategy towards informal settlements, i.e. the transfer of property rights and their connection to urban infrastructure. However, in case of some settlements, especially those inhabited by Roma, the municipalities show reluctance in formalizing and upgrading. Located in New Belgrade at the river Sava the three biggest of those settlements became obstacles to the great city development projects during the last five years. Under supervision of the two most important sponsors (European Investment Bank

(EIB) and European Bank for Development and Reconstruction (EBDR)) and Amnesty International, the Secretary for Child and Social Protection of the City of Belgrade coordinated the resettlement of the whole Gazela settlement (app. 140 families) to subsidized containers on state owned land at six different locations in suburban areas of the city and some were even completely expelled from Belgrade. After that resettlement a series of forced evictions of similar settlements occurred in Belgrade.

In my thesis I argue that the neoliberal restructuring of the city directed towards the attraction of investments brought about a new stigmatization of informal settlements in inner city areas. These settlements were until then tolerated as a form of 'soft social policy'. In the sake of investments they became 'unhygienic settlements' which unlawfully occupy valuable public land and hotbeds of deprivation that hinder the economic development of the city. In contestation with state level integration politics towards the from this perspective 'vulnerable' population and EIB resettlement guidelines, the City established container settlements to accommodate project affected people. This container socialization apparatus differentiates subjects and their right to become mature citizens with the 'right to claim rights' according to their improvability. In that citizenship as the basis for right claims becomes dependent on continuous re-balancing of the tensional relation between distancing (as only immature subjects could be socialized) and incorporation (which is the finality of these interventions).

**Key Words:** urban informality, state of exception, governmentality, margins of the state.

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