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THE IMPACT OF A HYDROELECTRIC POWER STATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION OF THE BAJINA BAŠTA SETTLEMENT DURING THE SOCIALIST PERIOD

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During the process of socialist modernization, initiated after WWII, large development projects in Serbia were the main drivers of urban transformation. Electrification and industrialization resulted in the establishment of new production modes, which defined a new socio-economic background for the development of settlements and the modification of their functional and morphological structure. The construction of the Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station, in the middle section of the Drina River in western Serbia, was one of the development projects, and it triggered the transformation of the environment, upgrading the pre-war small town of Bajina Bašta into a new urban node, adjusted to the socialist imperatives and standards of progress.

Key words: **socialist modernization, hydroelectric power station, urban development, Bajina Bašta settlement.**

INTRODUCTION

Considering the influence of technological development on a society, the article studies the changes generated by the modernization of electricity production within the general process of modernization. In this context, electrification is considered as a basic element of modernity, which contributed the foundation of a new social(ist) order, based on new production relations. Consequently, modernization is based on industrialization, as a foundation of economic development, which also influences the process of urban growth and social change. The mechanization of production and the introduction of new jobs shifted the focus from agriculture to industry, causing increased migration from rural to urban areas, i.e. industrial centers. These changes triggered urban growth, causing modification of the existing urban structure and generating new urban areas adjusted to the increased number of inhabitants and activities. Consequently, the lifestyle was changed and the quality of life was improved.

The process of electrification includes the construction of production and distribution systems that increase the accessibility of electric power, expanding its use. Due to their complexity, these systems have a significant impact on the surrounding environment, changing its physical features and determining its further development (Loo, 2011). Electrification also affects the economic development and spatial organization of settlements as well as their social structure. Therefore, the article will focus on the development of Bajina Bašta during the process of organized electrification after WWII, as a specific period of socialist modernization that aimed at creating a modern socialist state. Its position on the right bank of the Drina river at the foothill of Mount Tara gives the basic feature of the physiognomy of the Bajina Bašta municipality and settlement, located in western Serbia, along the border with the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, separated by the Drina River. The agricultural land and forests, tourism, and especially the hydroelectric potential of the Drina, are the most important factors in the regional and urban development of this area (Figure 1).

The article will also consider the role played by the construction of the Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station in the development and modernization of the nearby town, as the first power station in Serbia that affected the local surroundings on a large scale. In order to provide a comprehensive insight into the development process, the study will present the period from the mid-19th century (when the settlement was established) to 1989, the peak of economic development, which was interrupted by the

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upcoming civil war conflict among the territories of the former Yugoslavia. The special emphasis will be on the period of socialist urbanization, which started in 1961 when the construction of the hydroelectric power station began. The article will analyze the relationship between urban development and the construction of an important hydroelectric facility in terms of the roles of electrification and industrialization in the process of urban renewal, as well as their contribution to the economic, spatial and social modernization of the town. The article will also show that the level of industrial development can be seen by comparing the income from industry and that of agriculture. It observes urban development in relation to the quality of the built environment and urban functions, and social development in relation to demographic changes in the number of inhabitants and the structure of employment by activity.

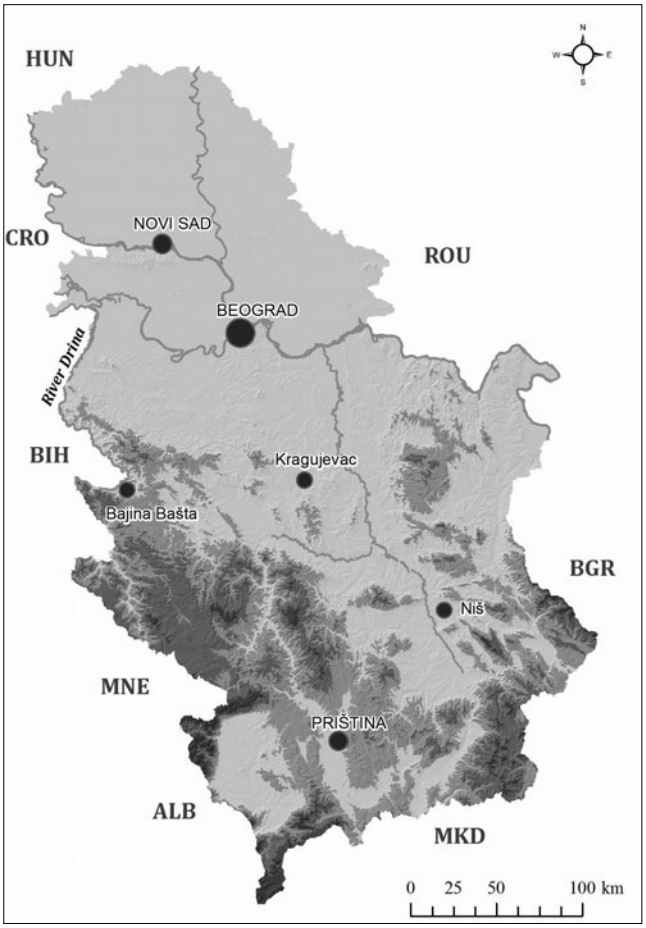

Figure 1. The position of Bajina Bašta in the region (Source: author)

THE BACKGROUND

Bearing in mind that modernism is the manifestation of the idea of modernity within a society, modernization can be interpreted as a number of different processes implementing the idea of modernity. After WWII, the idea of modernity considered a new way of life based on changed social values, which in states with undeveloped industry were related to the process of industrialization (Lefebvre, 1995). The significant transformation of East European societies, initiated after 1945, can be described as socialist modernization, based on industrialization, urbanization and social changes (Timotijević, 2012). In general, post-war societies embraced the importance of scientific knowledge and technology as a foundation of national development. The period was marked by mega-projects supported by urban planning or collectivization (Loo, 2004). Consequently, technology represented the basic driver of social change, influencing a wide range of activities 'from the material production, to culture and art' (Pokrajac, 2002). Technological changes include the innovative solutions and processes leading to general development and social transformations. The socialist regimes used technology as one of the main tools for implementing their new ideology and restructuring society. Industrial development, based on new technologies, was the main force of economic growth, and regional development was shaped by the structure of industrial production. In order to initiate industrialization it was necessary to conduct a number of actions that would support economic development, and producing energy was one of the main conditions (Timotijević, 2012). The concept of modernization in Yugoslavia, taken from the socialist ideology practiced in the USSR, was based on economic development (Gligorov, 1984). As a result, during the socialist modernization a number of large development projects were conducted in order to establish a strong system of industry, and each one of them relied on the technology of energy production and transmission.

Industrial development was closely linked to the process of urbanization, and its influence on urban transformation was especially noticeable during the period of industrial revolutions. Urban sprawl and urban development also followed industrial expansion because industrial nodes attracted the workforce. New infrastructure and services became a necessity, while urbanization started where resources, the workforce and roads were available. Industrialization also caused changes in the organization of production and consumption, influencing both the living and working environment. New urban activities imposed different spatial demands and architectural typologies, while cities became nodes of socio-technical change. If population growth is not managed, it causes urban sprawl from the free-developing and non-coordinated growth of cities (Gonzales, 2016). The incidence of informal development is present in the majority of South East European countries. It represents one of the main features of the process of urbanization from the second half of the 20th century onwards in Serbia, in which residential settlements of low or medium density emerged owing to the uncontrolled construction of single-family housing on mostly private agricultural land in suburban areas (Bajić, Petrić, Nikolić, 2016).

The effect of social values on urban development is linked with the manifestation of a certain ideology in urban space (Stupar, 2015). Industrialization in Yugoslavia started before WWII but developed after it ended. Consequently, the transformation of post-war cities began, providing a suitable setting for a new industrial society. The East European states, as well as Yugoslavia, used the model of urbanization applied in the USSR. During the first post-war years (1947-1960) the urban growth was totally subordinated to the process

of industrialization. Cities developed around industrial complexes, while factories, along with the residential areas for workers and accompanying services, became the main elements of new urban systems. The accelerating economic growth on the local level resulted in a higher living standard, especially in the domain of personal consumption and housing. Simultaneously, the capital accumulation enabled investments in other areas of national development, which established the foundation for systematic urban growth and an influx of foreign experiences in planning practice that began in the 1960s (Stupar, 2015).

BAJINA BAŠTA: FACING PROGRESS

The origins and development

The development of Bajina Bašta started in the mid-19th century, in the period marked by the liberation from the Ottomans and the establishment of an economic relationship with Western and Central Europe. These historical changes were seen in the construction sector, which was improved in the social, technical and aesthetic domains due to the development of trade and industry. The oriental influences were abandoned, and the regulation of settlements was implemented in accordance with European role models. The migration of the rural population brought the model of traditional family houses into small towns, while their residential function was gradually upgraded by public activities (Figure 2). At the end of the 19th century, collective housing was introduced, as well as new types of public buildings. The organization of the settlement was partly conducted according to plans based on two common elements – a town square and the modular system of residential quarters.

Figure 2. Historic center
(Photo credit: S. Kadijević)

In view of the historical and economic circumstance of this period, it is not surprising that the settlement of Bajina Bašta represented a mixture of different architectural influences and building methods, applied in a new urban concept (Figure 3). Private investors financed most of the urban progress, but under the framework of official plans, it was implemented by the local government. The first regulation plan (1882) defined the urban form of Bajina Bašta, establishing an orthogonal matrix with regular compact mixed-use blocks and a town square, a market and a promenade in the center. This area was the base for further urban development in a morphological sense. The complex urban tissue mostly consisted of residential and service activities, while the dominant occupation of residents was agriculture. The phase of intensive growth started between the two world wars, when economic development triggered a new influx of people. Due to infrastructural works, the town got its network of public and private lightning in 1926 (Ignjić, 1985). In 1939, the streets were paved with cobblestones and the water and sewage systems were established. WWII interrupted this development and all investments were on hold until the 1960s. The new phase of development started during the construction of Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station in 1961.

Figure 3. Historic center
(Source: private archive of G. Kadijević)

Socialist modernization

Before WWII Yugoslavia was a country with undeveloped industry and outdated agriculture and this general condition prevented economic development (Vukčević, 1983). Energy production in Serbia[2] started at the end of the 19th century and its basic role was related to new industrial facilities (Ivanković, 1993). Electrification and industrial production were the result of private initiatives and their scale and capacity were small. After the end of WWII, the situation remained unchanged, while problems of energy production worsened. Therefore, the period of socialist modernization was considered as a chance for radical change on all levels, and industrialization was proclaimed its basic element, representing not only a method but also a strategic aim of the complex socio-economic transformation. Simultaneously, electrification was a necessary condition for overall structural change of the society and its economy. One of development targets was the establishment of an energy system based upon large-scale production facilities, which would serve as a support for the development of the industrial system anticipated by economic reform. According to the First plan of national economic development for the period 1947 to 1951, Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station was the first one to be built. After the hydroelectric power station began production, the scale and accessibility of electric energy increased and its prices decreased, laying the foundation for the dynamic development of Yugoslav industry. In the following period, the consumption per inhabitant increased from 16 kWh in 1951 to 729 kWh in 1981 (Vukčević, 1983).

[2] In 1918 Serbia became part of The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia since 1945).

Electrification linked with rapid industrialization transformed both social relationships and the urban environment. During the first period of socialist renewal from 1947 until 1960 investments were mainly focused on developing the heavy industry sector (i.e. 'the enforced growth'), thus creating a strong industrial base. The economic foundation of cities was weak – there was only one type of production driving urban development, while other activities were not so established (Timotijević, 2012). The official planning and design of settlements marked the period of 'intensive socialist urbanization', which began in the 1960s, when the investments were gradually oriented toward the improvement of urban comfort and better living conditions. During this period, the development of urban settlements was usually the side-effect of mega-projects, as in the case of Bajina Bašta.

The outcomes

Economy

After WWII, the economic development of the Municipality of Bajina Bašta was insignificant, based on small-scale production and an exchange economy. 91.4% of the inhabitants focused on outdated agriculture, while other sectors did not develop (Bučevac, 1969). The period of preparation works for Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station marked significant economic progress for the municipality, based upon an increase in industrial production. The economic structure changed fast after the opening of the facility in 1966, which was the major driver of growth, and also an important actor in the economy and work ethics. As a result of these processes, some new production nodes were opened, focusing on industry based on wood, textile, construction materials, metal and electricity production. The intensification of production caused restructuring of the economy, i.e. industry's share of the national income increased to 40% in 1966. Meanwhile, the Bajina Bašta plant became a key factor in the social and economic development of the settlement. After the first year of its work, the gross domestic product and national income on a local level were significantly increased. The value of industrial production in 1967 increased by 130% compared to the previous year. Taking into consideration the share of Bajina Bašta plant, this value was even higher – 350%, indicating that the value of industrial production achieved in the hydroelectric power station was equal to the value produced by other sectors of industry. The local income was increased by 22%. According to data from 1968, increases in prices and living costs were moderate, the material base of the economy was stronger, investments were 20.25% higher than in 1965 and the employment rate was 35% higher, following the extension and opening of new industrial facilities (Ignjić, 1986). The data from 1989 also reveal that the industry in Bajina Bašta had a major share of the local economy (66%), which is extremely high compared to the Serbian level (47.5%) or global level (over 50%) (GRP, 2009). The share of trade was 12.7%, agriculture 7.9%, construction sector 5.1%, while other sectors did not have a significant impact on local income (GRP, 2010). The dynamic growth of industry and income, as well as the accumulation of resources, enabled more investments in activities contributing to a better quality of life.

Population

According to the 1848 census, there were 1,222 inhabitants in Bajina Bašta. The growth in investments after WWII triggered economic development, resulting in intensive migration flows from rural areas. Consequently, from 1958 until the beginning of construction in 1961, 1,707 people moved to the Bajina Bašta municipality, while the intensive urbanization that followed triggered an even higher influx (Ignjić, 1986). The number of inhabitants increased from 1,934 in 1961 to 10,000 in 1988 according to estimates (GRP, 1988). The spatial and economic development of Bajina Bašta caused a significant polarization. In this period, the area of the settlement was extended and the share of its population in the total number of municipality inhabitants increased from 4.09% to 20.36% (GRP, 1988). Furthermore, in 1988, an area covering 0.8% of the municipality was inhabited by 25.9% of the total population of the municipality, compared to 10.3% in 1961 (GRP, 2010).

Migration also influenced the working structure. New jobs were created by opening Bajina Bašta hydroelectric station and the introduction of complementary activities. During the construction of the Bajina Bašta plant, the number of employed people in the municipality was the highest – between 4,000 and 5,000 workers (Bučevac, 1969), while the first decade of its activity was marked by an increased number of people working in the industrial sector (from 335 in 1961 to 1,040 in 1971) (GRP, 2010). The share of agricultural workers significantly changed in the years to follow. During this period, the progress of industry and the economy was evident, triggering the growth of non-agricultural sectors. By 1988, the share of the agricultural population had dropped to 18.8% (GRP, 1988). In 1989, the total number of people in employment was 62% of the total number of inhabitants, 20% more than the average percentage in Serbia and almost 40% more than the average percentage in the municipality (Ignjić, 1986).

Urban structure

The settlement was transformed on two levels. The first one was the building of a new physical structure and the improvement of urban activities within the limits of the existing urban area, while the second one focused on urban expansion. Consequently, the scale of urbanization conducted during these three decades affected much more space than the processes over the previous hundered years (Figure 4). As a result, nowadays we can distinguish two urban areas – the town center, with concentrated urban activities, and the surrounding (sub)urban area, mostly residential and composed of family houses.

Town center

At the beginning of the socialist transformation, the town area consisted of the historical core with the main square and urban blocks, creating a compact space. The style of existing public and residential buildings was oriental and neoclassical**,** while contemporary buildings, mostly residential, were built in the nearby blocks. The buildings had a ground level and one more floor (usually with an attic). The matrix of the central urban area was generated from the regular orthogonal matrix of the historical core, following previous building regulations (Figure 5). The

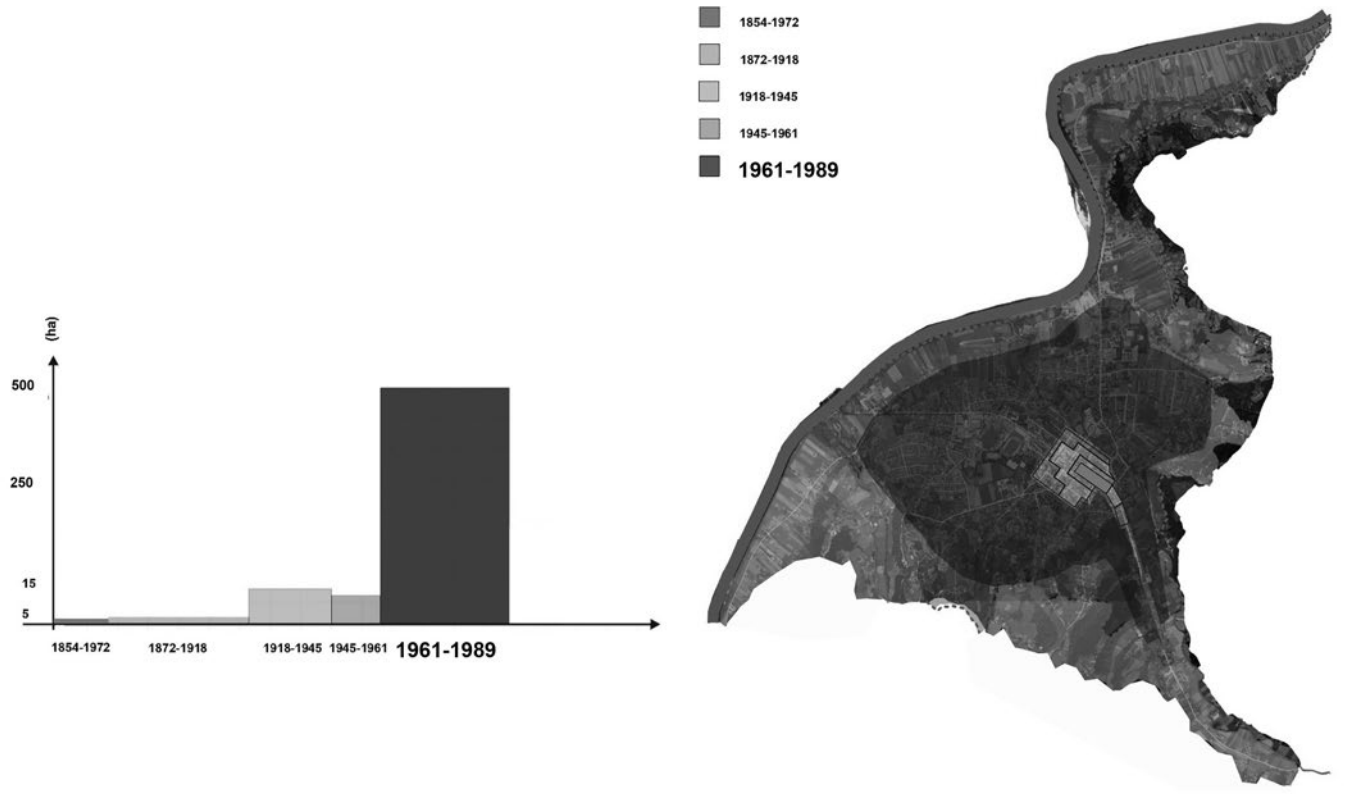

Figure 4. Spatial expansion
(Source: author)

perimeter blocks were high density. During the socialist period, the morphology of this area kept its urban features, but it was partially extended. However, the most significant change related to general urban development – new urban structures were based on the imperatives of socialist urbanization, while new activities followed the changes brought by industrialization (Figure 6). The intensive public construction of residential buildings started simultaneously with the construction works related to the hydroelectric power plant in 1961. Bajina Bašta plant financed the construction of approximately 300 flats for construction workers and professionals – future plant employees (Ostojić, 1982). The high-rise multifamily buildings included service activities (shopping, service and business facilities), which nowadays make up the central area of the residential zone (Figure 7). The extension of the central zone, initiated by this transformation, continued during the 1970s, when the Municipality of Bajina Bašta implemented the new urban development plans. For example, the development plan targeting the period from 1971 to 1975 directed the transformation of several urban elements – the renewal of parks, reconstruction of streets and public lighting and the construction of infrastructural networks and main roads. A new open green market was built, as well as a business center, new residential blocks, important public and business buildings, sports facilities (town stadium, sports hall, sport playground), a hospital and a bus station – all partially financed by Bajina Bašta hydroelectric station. Their construction defined the new central zone (consisting of the historical center, its extensions and new specialized centers), which influenced the development of the new urban tissue.

Figure 5. The matrix of the central urban area
(Source: GRP, 2010)

Figure 6. New department store.
(Photo credit: S. Kadijević)

Figure 7. New residential zone
(Source: Marković, Radović, Mijatović , 2005)

Functional urban area/ Larger urban area

Considering the planning approach, structure and the level of equipment achieved, the construction works in the larger urban zone did not have the same level as the transformation activities in the urban center. One of the main reasons was the inadequacy of the related planning documents, which were incapable of responding to a high flow of migrations to this area. The lack of appropriate planning legislation and regulation, as well as the high level of illegal (but tolerated) constructions, caused the uncontrolled growth of residential zones, due to increased demands for housing and complementary services. Consequently, new residential zones were created outside of the urban center, significantly extending the overall urban territory. Illegal housing (and its construction) also caused a lack of construction materials and the spontaneous occupation of construction land, which was especially visible in the irregular urban matrix of the areas of family housing, erected on previously agricultural land. The street profiles were narrow and incomplete due to the configuration of the surrounding area. Consequently, the street network was chaotic and inconsistent, while the houses did not follow any regulations, which is not surprising considering the fact that there were no planning documents applied in this case, but rather the construction activities simply followed the routes of main traffic corridors and roads (Figure 8).

The density of this zone was lower than in the town center. There were mostly freestanding family houses built in blocks, while the internal area of the blocks was used as agricultural land. The majority of houses had a ground floor, while some had an additional floor and attic. Spontaneously built, these houses combined elements of traditional architecture adjusted to contemporary needs and materials. They had a lower level of construction, functionality and architectural design than those in the town center (Figure 9, 10). Due to the lack of planning regulation, this zone consisted of different urban matrices, incomplete, sponateously created street networks, inadequate infrastructure (water supply systems and sewage), a lack of pedestrian routes and a high share of totally disorganized areas.

Figure 8. The matrix of the larger urban area
(Source: GRP, 2010)

Figure 9. Larger urban area
(Source: author)

Figure 10. Larger urban area
(Source: author)

Activities

The increased number of inhabitants caused numerous problems. The control of unplanned growth was difficult

and the imbalance of urban activities became obvious between the two parts of the urban structure – the central zone and the peripheral residential areas. In the town center, the dominant activities were urban services and commercial and public activities, while housing (single-family) dominated in the larger urban zone, but without sufficient service activities.

Town center

The town center represented a general gravitational node for all inhabitants. There are several sub-zones that could be distinguished – the urban core, with less housing and more service activities, and a surrounding central area, with a higher share of housing and specialized centers. The urban core was a highly concentrated zone of services, shopping, government, education, culture, religion and sports. The family and multifamily housing, combined with these activities, occupied mixed-use blocks. The larger area of the urban center had a nodal character and was situated next to the urban core, including the same set of activities. These two segments were the commercial and service center of Bajina Bašta. Due to a high share of housing, especially in the larger central area, the urban zone had the highest density of inhabitants. Family housing, combined with services and commercial activities, was more dominant in the historical part of the urban core, while multifamily houses were combined with single-family houses and services into compact urban blocks. The larger zone in the urban center was mostly composed of housing blocks (family houses), which represent a connective tissue with the larger urban area, and specialized secondary urban centers providing commercial and transportation activities, education, sports and healthcare. In general, the central area (urban core and larger central area) had a medium density of service activities, but very high social interaction conducted in both public buildings and open spaces (GRP, 2010).

Functional urban area/ Larger urban area

Family housing was the major function of the larger urban area, while most of the households had a mixed income that included agriculture. Housing was especially dominant in the zones around important traffic arteries, where it was complemented by commercial and service activities, as well as agriculture. In the border areas, housing was an additional function, combined with agriculture, small-scale production and commercial activities. The lack of planning, especially in the domain of housing, resulted in a misbalance between areas of family housing and multi-family housing. According to the 1987 census, multi-family housing represented 28% of all available types of housing. In 1988 on the metropolitan level, multi-family housing had only a small share (around 3.3%), and was situated mostly in the central zone (GRP, 1988).

Another problem between the urban center and larger urban zone was the unequal distribution of activities. The larger urban zone lacked services and according to the 1988 census, 98% of services were concentrated in the urban core (GRP, 2010). This monocentric organization of the settlement was not able to adequately respond to the growing needs of the inhabitants. Furthermore, due to the higher concentration of activities in the urban core, the spatial capacity of buildings became insufficient and service and commercial activities gradually occupied public spaces and pedestrian areas. The result of this process was a degraded urban structure, with decreased accessibility and permeability, an increased concentration of users, pedestrian and car traffic, and a lower general quality of space and activities.

CONCLUSION

During the period of socialist modernization, the development of the town Bajina Bašta was part of a significant development project focused on the improvement of the production process, as defined by the new socio-economic order. Simultaneously, the construction of Bajina Bašta hydroelectric power station had an important impact on both macro and micro levels. It indirectly influenced the development of industry, urbanization and social change, and directly contributed to investment into the town. New production nodes were opened and the income increased, as well as the number of workers and the level of investment. The number of inhabitants was also higher due to migrations, and this new condition generated new urban needs, which shaped the physical and functional structure of Bajina Bašta. As in the case of all mega projects, including the most recent ones, the planning process was focused on urban regulation, the establishment or reconstruction of infrastructural networks and the upgrading of public space (Molotch, 1976; Flyvbjerg, 2014; Dogan, Stupar, 2017). Consequently, the improvement of urban activities, building of new structures and electrification, contributed to the overall development of the social and living quality of Bajina Bašta, which transformed from being an undeveloped small town into an urban settlement based on the imperatives of socialist urbanization. However, the development itself was not strategically planned, and urban transformation did not adequatly respond to dynamic changes casued by intensive migration over a short period of time. This also caused several problems which occured in the organization of the physical and functional urban structure – e.g. a misbalance between the urban center and urban suburbs, a poor infrastructural base, a low level of urban services and the uneconomical use of spatial resources situated in the larger urban zone.

Considering the process of industrialization as the main premise of modernity promoted by socialist ideology, the transformation of Bajina Bašta, perceived on the level of urbanization and socio-technical change, was mostly focused on the urban center and its extension, i.e. the area which was already subordinated to urban regulation. Consequently, the existing urban structure was upgraded. In the other area (the larger urban zone), modernization did not result in a higher level of urbanization. Therefore, the new structure and its regulation typologically remained more rural than urban. One of the resons for this condition was the lack of planning documents and initiatives on the local level. The dychotomy within Bajina Bašta and its two urban entities was also visible on the level of urban activities, and the quality of the urban structure, living conditions and life style. It represents a testimony of a fast development, initially triggered by the construction of the hydroelectric power

station, as a symbol of socialist modernization. However, after the first phase of growth, fostered by general economic development and direct investment from the power station, the settlement became unable to absorb the increasing number of inhabitants and respond to their growing needs.

Since the settlement of Bajina Bašta is a part of the transboundary area within the Drina belt, in the future it will be the subject of new development projects and initiatives aimed at spatial and economic integration and sustainable urban development. This is confirmed by examples of projects that have been implemented in the EU and are related to trans-boundary river or mountain belts (Danube Regional Project, Regionalalp, ESDP, etc.), and which are the frameworks for formulating, harmonizing and implementing development goals. One of the basic tasks of the future development of the Bajina Bašta settlement will be to identify instruments for the integral guidance of spatial development, with indications of priorities and benefits for the development of activities. The Drina Belt should have an integrative role in the use of water, environmental protection, economic development, use and affirmation of tourist resources and traffic connections between Serbia and the Republic of Srpska, and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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