
Editorial: Urban Dynamics and Neighbourhood Change in Cities after Transition

The transition from a centrally planned to a market economy and from a totalitarian to a democratic political system has brought significant changes to the physical and social environment in Central and Eastern European (CEE) cities and neighbourhoods. While in some respects CEE cities have experienced similar developments as Western cities, in others we have witnessed changes specific to the post-socialist urban contexts. However, the main approaches used to explain contemporary urban processes in CEE cities have largely been based on concepts imported from Western urban studies. Consequently, the developmental approach [Ferenčuhová 2012; Ouředníček 2016], which expects the physical and social environments of CEE cities to converge step by step with the processes and spatial patterns already observed in the West, is in our view the main, or indeed paradigmatic, direction in which urban research in CEE countries has moved in the past two decades. Now, in the era which we call 'after transition', we can fully investigate and assess the consequences of the transformation period for CEE cities. It is increasingly clear that the post-socialist paradigm is an oversimplification of the development of CEE cities when it accentuates the perspective of transformation from socialist to capitalist city and overlooks the long-term path dependency of contemporary urban processes on the one hand and the specificity of CEE cities and parts of cities on the other. Inspired also by discussions at the Prague CATference (see below), we would like to share here several observations on the contemporary evolution of CEE urban studies, which are also reflected in the selection of articles in this thematic issue of the *Czech Sociological Review*.

First, it is useful to step beyond the post-socialist paradigm for several reasons. The post-socialist label was well suited to the era of large transformation processes and systematic changes in the legislative, administrative, and other norms formed under the socialist regimes. These post-socialist changes—including restitution, privatisation, rent regulation, administrative and legislative changes—varied considerably across the region, but for the most part they can be regarded as completed in all CEE countries. Although the urban changes resulting from these transformations may seem permanent, contemporary (globalisation) processes are common to the whole of (undivided) Europe and it is neither necessary nor advantageous to mark these processes as post-socialist. Moreover, contemporary urban processes and socio-spatial patterns in CEE cities are certainly the result of a longer trajectory of development (over several centuries) than the 'socialist to post-socialist' shift and the differentiated development in various parts of cities is highly dependent on more than just forty years of so-

cialist policies. For example, in the article on long-term development in Prague, Špačková et al. [2016] confirm the path-dependency of physical structure (housing stock, symbolic value) and socio-economic status persisting from the pre-socialist era. A final argument for doing away with the concept and rhetoric of post-socialism is rather a practical one: the more general focus of CEE urban studies beyond the post-socialism framework can attract, as Ferenčuhová [2016] rightly notes, a wider readership than the relatively closed community of post-socialist scholars. The full integration of CEE urban studies into worldwide debates could be easier without the post-socialist label. Recent comparative research confirms that CEE cities can be studied together with other European cities as commensurable case studies [cf. Tammaru et al. 2016].

Second, a shift in the discussion from a focus on economic transformation to an emphasis on the 25-year process of societal transformation is characteristic for current urban research in CEE countries. A key result of this process is the 'new socio-spatial differentiation' [Oučedníček and Temelová 2011]. The geographic but also the socio-economic position of CEE countries 'in between' West and East, or maybe within the European semi-periphery, puts CEE cities in a rather specific situation with respect to the position of newly immigrated ethnic groups. Unlike in western European cities, the social distance between foreign nationals or minority nationalities (Russians in Baltic cities, Ukrainians and Vietnamese and also western Europeans in Central European cities) and the majority population is relatively small in CEE cities. The small social and cultural distance, which also sometimes benefits from similar (socialist) past experiences, leads to a greater willingness of the majority and minorities to live in the same residential areas and gives rise to patterns of segregation in which social mixing and diversity is typical (see also the article on segregation in Lithuania in this issue, Burneika and Ubarevičienė [2016]).

Third, the spatial perspective, that is, examinations of the spatial differentiation of physical and social structures in cities, has been gaining strength in CEE urban studies. This is a feature common to all the articles in this thematic issue. There are at least two different perspectives (geographical levels) of this spatial differentiation. From the macro perspective, it is clear, even from just the six articles presented here, that CEE cities in no sense form a homogeneous group of urban environments; they differ considerably owing to their specific location, size, or economic and political context. Moreover, from a more detailed (micro) perspective, the internal structure of all the cities studied here is very heterogeneous and in many respects unlike western European cities. It appears that CEE cities were influenced by socialism and the transformation processes differently and very unevenly in the space of metropolitan regions. For instance, while it is indeed possible to identify such processes as gentrification, commercialisation, and revitalisation in the inner parts of CEE cities, there are extensive areas that were built under socialism—housing estates and industrial areas (mostly located on the outskirts of CEE cities)—that live a rather different life than what is ob-

served in Western cities. Inner cities, if we can generalise, have much more potential to rectify their social and physical environment according to pre-socialist or western models than do areas heavily influenced by socialist policies. In this respect, applying a spatial perspective to the study of CEE cities provides deeper insight into the consequences of pre-socialist, socialist, transformation, and current globalisation processes on the development of these cities.

These observations are confirmed and elaborated on by the empirical results of the six articles in this issue of the *Czech Sociological Review*. The articles were originally papers presented at the International Urban Geographies of Post-communist States Conference: 25 Years of Urban Change, held in Prague on 23–26 September 2015—the 6th conference of the Cities after Transition (CAT) network established at the Inaugural Nordic Geographers Meeting in Lund, Sweden, in 2005. As such, this issue ties in with the series of other thematic issues produced by international journals that resulted from the previous bi-annual International Urban Geographies of Post-communist States conferences (known as ‘CAT-ferences’) [Borén and Gentile 2007; Gentile, Tammaru and van Kempen 2012; Bernt, Gentile and Marcińczak 2015], as well as the several edited volumes on various urban topics that have been published [Sýkora Stanilov 2014; Tammaru et al. 2016].

This thematic issue seeks to offer an exploration of the changes and processes that have had the most dynamic effects on urban areas in cities after transition and a look at the new socio-spatial and spatio-temporal patterns evolving in their environments. While the selected articles do not represent the full diversity of CEE urban research, they take advantage of 25-years of (statistical) data collection and together capture a quarter century of demographic and socio-economic changes and changes in migration behaviour, while they also draw on recently published results of the population censuses held around 2011 to provide up-to-date insight into the outcomes of CEE urban transition. This thematic issue also benefits from the plurality of methodological approaches to the study of cities after transition that developed in this period. This valuable collection of articles combines various quantitative and qualitative methods (descriptive statistics, cluster analysis, logistic regression, multiple linear regression analysis, correlation analysis, Theil index, indices of segregation, typologies, qualitative case studies) to evaluate urban dynamics and neighbourhood changes in CEE countries in the broader context of historical development.

The six articles in this issue are arranged according to the geographic scales used in the analyses, proceeding from a comparison of several metropolitan regions, to a focus on urban internal structures, to case studies of particular localities within the city. A wide range of cities after transition are analysed here. In addition to capitals (Prague, Vilnius, Tallinn, and Bratislava), which have been the main focus of studies on post-socialist cities, there are also studies of other regional centres or even smaller cities (Brno, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Poznań, Kraków, Tarnów, Dzierżoniów, and Żyrardów). These cities have attracted less attention

and have remained on the margins of post-socialist urban research [Borén and Gentile 2007], even though their social-spatial structures are also undergoing significant changes and understanding them can broaden the knowledge on post-socialist transition and its impact in urban environments.

The first article, 'Socio-ethnic Segregation in the Metropolitan Areas of Lithuania', by Donatas Burneika and Rūta Ubarevičienė, builds a connection between social and ethnic segregation in three Lithuanian metropolitan regions and shows how the ethnic structure inherited from the Soviet period may change in the new conditions of the post-Soviet transition in cities with a different historical development, location, and social structure. The study fills a gap in post-socialist research that is more focused, though for obvious reasons, on socio-economic segregation [Marcinićzak et al. 2012; Tammaru et al. 2016]. The authors use various cartographic and statistical methods to process census data from 2001 and 2011 at the individual and census-tract level and confirm the relationship between ethnicity, social status, and spatial distribution, though the strength of the relationship differs between capital and second-tier metropolitan areas. While the growing social inequalities in Vilnius have resulted in ethnic segregation and the Lithuanian capital has come to resemble Western countries in this regard, the social differences between ethnic groups in second-tier cities are less pronounced and social inequalities do not lead to ethnic segregation. The authors even expect a reduction of ethnic segregation in the future.

Petra Špačková, Lucie Pospíšilová, and Martin Ouředníček offer a similar methodological approach in the article 'The Long-term Development of Socio-spatial Differentiation in Socialist and Post-socialist Prague', which follows in the tradition of socio-ecological studies of the inner differentiation of Prague that were published in the *Czech Sociological Review* during the socialist era. Jiří Musil's articles based on census data from 1930, 1950, and 1961 occupy a prominent place in this research. The authors extend Musil's work [1968] to the period of 1970–2011 using unique statistical data on the level of basic settlement units in order to make a long-term evaluation of the demographic, socio-economic, and ethnic statuses of the Prague population. More intensive housing construction and migration within the city contributed to unexpected results within the spatial patterns of post-socialist Prague, which are characterised by a fine-grained structure and social mixing. It is indeed surprising that much new housing development occurred in inner-city areas that previously had a low-status population, in working-class residential areas in the outer city, and in underdeveloped suburbs. On the other hand a strengthening of socio-economic status was observed in traditionally strong quarters of the city centre and in the west end of Prague, where ethnic concentration and gentrification are among the most important differentiating processes.

The construction of (large) housing estates in the socialist period significantly influenced the fabric of CEE cities. Since their construction and especially since the collapse of the communist regime, the social structure and migration

behaviour of housing-estate inhabitants have been shaping the socio-spatial differentiation of CEE cities. Consequently, the development of housing estates has been in the forefront of post-socialist urban research. Although in the early 1990s it was expected that these estates would experience social decline, this has not been confirmed to any great extent so far; on the contrary, housing estates have remained socially differentiated and favourable places for living [Kährlik and Tammaru 2010; Temelová et al. 2011]. In 'The Social Transformation of Large Housing Estates in Poland at the Turn of the 21st Century', Katarzyna Gorczyca comes to similar conclusions. She combines data from several sources (censuses, a population database, and her own survey) to reveal the main trends of social development in large housing estates in five Polish cities or towns and confirms their as yet continued resistance to social deprivation processes. The growing share of estate residents with secondary or tertiary education, the diverse occupational structure of residents and their close attachment to the area and low residential mobility have counteracted these processes. However, the question of future development is raised by the process of demographic ageing accompanied by population decrease, which can be expected to occur in those housing estates that were built later. Unfortunately, the author of the article does not have a positive answer to this question, and she talks about the possible exodus of younger residents from housing estates built after the 1980s and the potential risk of social degradation.

While the construction of housing estates significantly changed the socialist city, the suburbanisation and transformation of rural landscapes have been the main processes influencing the post-socialist city. The fourth article in this thematic issue, 'Behind the Differentiation of Suburban Development in the Hinterland of Bratislava, Slovakia', by Martin Šveda, Michala Madajová, and Peter Podolák, presents a hybrid typology of Bratislava's suburban municipalities based on the study of their social and physical environments (the characteristics of immigrants, housing construction, property prices, and land use). Like in previous studies of the suburbanisation process in Estonia [Leetmaa and Tammaru 2007] and the Czech Republic [Ouředníček 2007], differential suburban development was confirmed as an important feature of post-socialist cities. The authors note the sectorial arrangement of Bratislava's suburban types, which is determined not just by the relief, settlement structure, and transport network of the city, but also by the behaviour of newcomers. While some types of suburban development in Bratislava have been identified in other CEE cities, for instance second home development, others seem to be specific to Bratislava, such as development in vineyards or the development of neighbourhoods with disproportionately large shares of ethnic Hungarian residents. The typology can serve as a useful tool for future analysis of suburban development.

The article by Robert Osman, Daniel Seidenglanz, and Ondřej Mulíček, 'Urban Place as a Heterochronotopia: A Case Study of a Brno Locality', brings us to the part of this issue with a qualitative focus and returns us to the Czech

Republic and specifically the edge of Brno's historical core. However, in this case study the particular locality is not important, as the authors' aim is to provide empirical evidence of a new approach to the study of (urban) place. Inspired by Foucault's discussions on heterotopia, they present a heterochronotopic place as a spatio-temporal entity, or, in the authors' words, as 'an ensemble of various locations in various times which are interlinked via specific relationships'. Thus the present-day urban locality can be seen as connected to other locations situated elsewhere in the world in other time periods, both in history and in the future, through particular linkages. Discussing the several heterochronotopias that integrate the studied locality into ensembles of spatially and temporally discontinuous locations (the heterochronotopia of the municipal baths building, transport, and waste), the authors confirm the importance that long-term historical development and the geographical context created by the given spatio-temporal linkages between localities within a city or country have for the study of urban structures and processes.

The final article, titled 'The Impacts of Culture-led Flagship Projects on Local Communities in the Context of Post-socialist Tallinn', focuses on a relatively new topic in CEE countries—the effects of three culture-led regeneration projects carried out in the inner city of Tallinn on the socio-economic conditions and communities in the impacted neighbourhoods. Based on interviews with local residents and the main stakeholders, Ingmar Pastak and Anneli Kährik reach some interesting conclusions that reveal both similarities with development in Western countries and specifics determined by the particular context of Tallinn as a city after transition. Even though the three projects they studied were chosen with a view to representing the different types of initiators (municipality, state, or private subject), functions, and degrees of public involvement such projects may involve, all of them were economically motivated and all of them led to the physical upgrading of a former industrial site located within a neighbourhood experiencing gentrification. While projects that had an inward focus and engaged local groups were able to create a community-friendly environment, those with an outward focus had a neutral or even negative impact on the local social environment. However, the benefits to local communities can be considered as selective, as the target groups are often representatives of the creative class. Drawing on Putnam's concepts, the authors aptly conclude: 'the projects tend to "bond" rather than "bridge", i.e. the (local) project-specific target groups tend to interact with each other and do not extend their networks to the wider, diverse population groups living in the area'. Although culture-led flagship projects can generally be considered to benefit urban social and physical environments, the actual results are context-dependent and sometimes ambiguous with respect to whether they strengthen community.

We present here these six empirically oriented articles despite the criticism levelled at CEE urban studies for researching post-socialist cities as isolated case studies and for a focus on empiricism without any genuine theoretical contri-

bution [Wiest 2012; Sjöberg 2014]. In our view, the six CAT-fereferences and many publications that have resulted therefrom do not represent isolated case studies but rather a cumulative body of knowledge based on valuable empirical materials that enable comparative research and can also serve as a platform for the formulation of new inductive theories, as witnessed in the cases of 'shrinking cities' [Grossmann et al. 2013] and 'transitory urbanites' [Haase et al. 2012]. This issue marks the continuation of this kind of comparative research in CEE cities. To conclude, we would like to share the perspective of Jiří Musil, who argued that CEE cities are becoming 'an important part of forward looking European urban research, especially in our efforts to detect the general features of the urban' [Musil 2005: 2]. Once we acknowledge that comparative research on CEE cities forms an important part of international urban research, the readership of such research should expand beyond the island of post-socialist urban scholars and could lead to new directions of theoretical discussion in urban studies. As Robinson [2014] notes, from the perspective of comparative urbanism, all cities can serve as starting points for theorising. Thus, as the editors we would like to thank all the authors of the articles published in this issue and the reviewers and the Editorial Board for their cooperation, but we also hope that a creative multi-disciplinary readership will take this project further.

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