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Growth coalitions and the control of public space

Abstract

Public spaces are contested spaces; various groups compete for their control and to (re)present themselves there to the public. The political and economic changes and global competition transformed the mechanisms of production of spaces in post-socialist countries. New interests and new actors emerged in urban development with strong influence on the processes. They often form formal and informal alliances; growth coalitions to support their interests.

This study examines how growth coalitions are related to public spaces in Hungarian cities. These coalitions work differently then those in the US – usually, the state has a more significant role in the European growth coalitions. That is the case in Hungary as well; the state plays a significant role in the formation and operation of pro-growth regimes through legislation and national policies. Furthermore, the paper suggests that post-socialist social conditions are favourable to the emergence of growth coalitions mainly because of the weak civil sector. This means that the power relations between the actors of the local development are highly unbalanced. Global capital and local pro-growth actors are the most influential stakeholders in local policymaking. Local and state legislation and policies are not capable to compensate the ambitions of the investors – moreover, often they support them.

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INTRODUCTION

Public spaces are crucial elements of everyday life; not only they are the places of movement or leisure, but they are the spaces of social representation as well. Various social groups can (re)present themselves (their values, cultures, ideolgogies etc.) within public spaces. But these groups and their values are often conflicting: the presence of a group of people and their values, cultures considered as threat to other groups (MITCHELL 2003, BELINA 2007, BODNÁR 2015).

After the changes of regimes, due to the strengthening of the market processes and the effects of the globalisation a rapid transformation has started in the post-socialist societies. The political and economic changes were accompanied by the influence of globalisation, which led to the emergence of the so called New Urban Policy (NUP). This process is characterized by the decreasing importance of the collective consumption and the growing entrepreneurial role of the local authorities (DEFILIPPIS 1999). The reason beyond the spreading of the NUP is that the hypermobility of investments places local jobs and tax incomes at risk. Therefore, the localities have to compete against each other to attract investment and stimulate growth (COX 1993, 1999). Some researchers see this as the end of local decision making, while others argue that this makes the local state a more important actor in the development process (DEFILIPPIS 1999). The economic globalisation and the decreasing role of the national scale increased the chances of the local governments to define their development policies.

The post-social legacy and the process of globalisation created favourable environment to the informal alliances between various actors of urban development – this is a phenomenon which is called a "growth coalition" by Logan and Molotch (MOLOTCH 1976, LOGAN – MOLOTCH 1987). As a result, these coalitions often have a decisive role in post-socialist urban development and they dominate the public sphere and the social production of public space. The members and their role and importance in these coalitions are different than that of the Western cities – due to the different development path and political legacy.

The aim of this paper to present the role of growth coalitions in the regulation and control of public space. The paper is based on the analysis of legislative texts and the content analysis of local and national media.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

As I mentioned in the Introduction, public spaces have crucial role in society. They are arenas of social contacts and provide space for social represenatation (MITCHELL 2003). Public spaces are also related to the symbolic economy (ZUKIN 1991), thus they can help to create value – which highlights their economic significance. As several papers have demonstrated (see for example HARVEY 2005a, JÁMBOR – VEDRÉDI 2016, UDVARHELYI 2014), "real" public space is a utopia; public space is never neutral or accessible to everyone. Thus, the control and access of public spaces is a contested phenomenon. Commodification, policing, rehabilitation and renewal processes, zoning regulations all shape public spaces.

The paper uses the concept of the urban growth machines (MOLOTCH 1976, LOGAN – MOLOTCH 1987). This concept emphasises the role of the local policy – therefore differs the earlier neomarxist interpretations which were focusing mainly on the structural aspects

(COCHRANE 1999, ORUM – CHEN 2003). This theory is related to the elite theories inspired by MILLS (1972) who defines the elites as people who can make the most important decisions. LOGAN and MOLOTCH interpret the intra-urban power relations in a more dynamic way than the neomarxists do; therefore, their theory connects to the latter conflict theory approaches. The concept of the growth machines emphasises the path dependent development and the importance of the local interests and past. In a sense, the concept of growth coalitions is a Gramscian approach, since it emphasises the significance of shared goals and values – presenting them as universal and indisputable (HARVEY 2005b).

One of the basic statements in the concept is that local is a site from which change can started (COX 1993, WARD 1996). Furthermore, according to GIDDENS (1979) the "locale" plays a part in the construction of the agency and the structure as well. Because of its flexibility the concept of growth machines is often used – especially in the USA – to interpret the urban conflicts (DOMHOFF 2006). However, some of the critics state that this theory only fits to the American cities and is not suitable for the analysis of European urban development. Other critics such as COX (1993) or COCHRANE (1999) point out that the New Urban Policy oversimplifies the effects of globalisation and it concentrates mainly on the local scale and neglects the importance of the other scales – therefore falls to a "local trap" (COX 1993, 1999, PURCELL 2005).

LOGAN and MOLOTCH (1987) interpret the city as a "growth machine" which is a place for the capitalist accumulation and it is heavily influenced by the national and international economic processes. The certain places in the city are commodities with use and exchange values, too (in fact every place can be commodity, but conflicts related to the use and exchange values only evolve in certain cases). The collective consumption (CASTELLS 1983, DEFILIPPIS 1999) of the people living in the same neighbourhood creates collective interest between individuals; their aim is to keep or to increase that location's use value. This makes them important actors in the decisions regarding to the neighbourhood. But there are other actors with different purposes which can lead to conflicts over land use. In some cases, these conflicts can create anti-growth coalitions (COCHRANE 1999) or try to influence development through community benefits agreements (CAIN 2014). The neighbourhoods with great exchange value and with less powerful residents or weak social ties are the most vulnerable because they can be "sacrificed" to the growth goals (LOGAN – MOLOTCH 1987).

The aims of growth coalitions can be different due to local processes, opportunities, social and economic conditions. STONE (1993) claims that four types of urban regimes are possible in the United States: maintenance, developmental, middle-class and, and lower-class opportunity expansion. But the fourth one is mainly a hypothetical (because of the lacking resources in the lower classes) and the middle-class regimes are rare as well. There are specific factors to form these types of growth regimes. The middle-class regimes seek neighbourhood and environmental protection and amenities. For example, middle-class coalitions can be formed in small or middle-sized cities or university towns. In these cities environmentalists of leftists can be "injected" among city leaders. Maintenance regimes are basically failing growth machines because they carry out routine functions and are not headed to growth in any sense. The developmental regimes are formed in large metropolitan areas and need a large amount of resources to their activities (STONE 1993, 2006, DOMHOFF 2006).

The city is a growth machine to the elites: they accumulate the profit. The interest of profitability bonds them together no matter if their other interests are conflicting: they form a growth coalition. To make their own consensus into general one they try to discredit the other development purposes: *"...they unite behind a doctrine of value free development"* (Logan – Molotch 1987: 32.) In other words: they try to monopolise the public interest, thus create and control the Gramscian "common sense". The pluralism of the opinions and purposes is often an illusion: case studies showed that everyone agrees that the growth is good – at best they believed in different ways to achieve that.

The local authorities tend to emphasise the use value in their development policy – but it is mainly rhetoric: their decisions and development policies concentrate on the exchange value of the places; therefore, they serve the interests of the investors (Logan – Molotch 1987).

In addition to the politicians and investors, the local media can be an important actor in the growth coalition as well. The media is interested in the growth of the city and its economy because it increases the market. The local media is often owned or controlled by the local authority or investors and follows (and promotes) the owners' interests. The newspapers, local radio stations and television channels can create a territorial bond, a sense of community which is a prominent feature of the growth politics according to Molotch (1976). Additionally, the local cultural institutions, labour unions, great sport or cultural events can contribute to the growth machine. These actors play an increasing role in the urban governance; therefore, their co-operation is crucial (Raco 2003). This fragmentation can be favourable to the investors because it weakens the local decisionmaking.

The members of the pro-growth coalition usually emphasise the benefits of their activity, but the empirical evidence shows that the situation is not that simple: there can be negative externalities on the labour market, the city's budget or the environmental processes.

The growth machine theory (and the related urban regime theories) became popular in the urban research because the globalisation and the crisis of the western welfare state raise questions about the collective consumption in cities. The concept offers an opportunity to fit the local actors into analyses and at the same time it considers the broader structural factors as well. Although there are significant differences between different countries regarding their urban development processes, the urban deal making process described in NUP can be seen in different localities (Cochrane 1999). The "Europeanised" version of the theory sometimes moves further from the original statements, for example in regards the role of the state (e.g. Bassett – Harloe 1990, Cox – Mair 1991, Therhorst – Van De Ven 1995). Taking into consideration the previous researches, it seems that by using a more flexible approach (e.g. putting more emphasis on the role of national scale) the concept of growth machine can be a useful tool to interpret the European urban development processes – for example the transformation of public spaces.

According to this, I also made some alterations to the original theory. The concept of growth machines applies to the urban property market and the land use but I argue that it narrows down the analysis. Therefore, in this paper I use concept of the social production of space (Lefebvre 1991). If we accept that assumption that the production of space is determined by the power relations than the concept of growth machines can be used to analyse this process.

Under the term "production of space" I mean the Lefebvrian concept that space is a social construct determined by various values, meanings and interpretations. It is *"...a precondition and a result of social superstructures"* (Lefebvre 1991. 85.) Space influences the individual's everyday life and the way that he/she interprets the world. Therefore, space has ideological function.

LEFEBVRE in his "conceptual triad" defines the spatial practice, the representations of space and the representational spaces (in other words the perceived, the conceived, and the lived space) which are interrelated to each other. The changes in producing one of these spaces have effect on the others as well.

The social production of the urban space is fundamental to the social reproduction and to the existence of capitalism. Therefore, capitalism constantly reproduces itself: every regime has an own way of producing space to create a legitimating basis. The change of regimes in the former socialist countries obviously changed the practices related to the production of the spaces. Therefore, the production of the spaces of everyday life also occurs under specific conditions. Because of the growth and the scale of the changes it is important to analyse the process and the role of different actors in it.

To understand how growth coalitions can form and work in Hungary we must review some elements of the country's political culture and the role of different actors in the Hungarian society which can influence the urban policy. On global scale the most important processes are the globalisation and the flows of capital, therefore the most important actors are the transnational corporations. Following the relative isolation from the world economy during the socialist era, Hungary tried to re-integrate into the global economy as soon as possible after 1989. The global competition between localities appeared in the county and became more and more intense. Of course, the global consumption preferences influenced the society. Because of the growing competition and the economic downfall, the localities had to move towards the more efficient management and they used the neo-liberal agenda to achieve this. Hungary, which is a relatively small economy became one of the most open economies in the region. This led to a quick inflow of investments. The modernization and the economic growth became processes which should be managed by external actors. Therefore, the sudden and intense effect of the globalisation made the New Urban Policy maybe more important than in other countries.

In national scale the specific history and political culture both are significant factors. As other countries in the region, in Hungary there is a different relation between the state and the society than those in Western Europe. It means that there is a deep belief that the development should be conducted from "above" (BEREND T. 2003, KULCSÁR – DOMOKOS 2005). In Hungary even the change of regime was a process managed by the political elites. Although two rival elite groups formed in the political sphere, in a lot of cases their conflict is rhetorical or just about the ways of the growth. But both followed a pro-growth, neo-liberal policy.

The weakness of the civil society and the atomised social networks are important to the urban processes as well. These factors derive from the socialist power structure (KOVÁCH 2002); in the "actually existed socialism" the labour was not separated from the power therefore their conflict remained hidden. The individuals could only represent their interest in an informal way which led to an atomised model of goal attainment. This model rejected the possibility of the explicit and collective representation of interests but guaranteed a limited autonomy to the stakeholders. The members of the society were not concerned to create a model for representing the common interests (FERGE 2002, SZALAI 2004).

The rate of the high central redistribution rate is often mentioned as a proof that the state does not follow a neo-liberal agenda. But as HARVEY (2005b) presents, neoliberalism can have

different forms – with different role of the state. The high redistribution rate serves as the legitimating basis of the neoliberal policy. The post-socialist political elites are interested in the centralized financing because it helps to keep their power and they can access to the state-owned resources (Kovách 2002, Szalai 2006, Bozóki 2003).

After the change of regime, modernisation, raise the quality of life and the Western-like consumer society all became widely recognized goals in the society. These goals became interrelated and also became central issues in the political discourse (Kulcsár – Domokos 2005). This situation created an excellent opportunity to the elites to control and shape social process using the consumer demands. By raising and controlling these demands the elites dominate the economic sphere; the goals and the ways to achieve them as well.

The local processes are similar to those of the national level: the members of the former nomenclature also transformed their power in localities (Kulcsár – Domokos 2005), although the proportion of the newcomers is higher, and the local elites are often more diverse than the national ones. The most important element of the changes was the transformation of the local government, i.e. the establishment of the local authorities. The new authorities had their own properties and the right (in fact it is an obligation) to manage their own finances. At the same time, the state tried to limit the local autonomy by making the authorities financially dependent on the central subsidies – this is especially true to the processes after 2010, due to the centralisation policies of the national government. The situation seems to be similar to the state socialist era: there is an increasing competition for the redistribution of the resources. This process was accompanied with a growing deficit of the local authorities – therefore, they were forced to turn to the idea of the entrepreneurial local government.

The commodification of space and place was the most obvious on local level in the post-socialist countries. The rapid shift *"from minimal to maximal investment"* (Smith 1996. 173.) changed the land use in urban areas; the former homogenous zones disappeared and a more fragmented urban landscape evolved (Kovács 1999, Kovács – Enyedi 2006). The transformation of the city centres and historical districts are amongst the most intense changes – especially in the most populous cities (Sykora 1994 Buček 2006, Murzin 2006).

Real estate investors also became important actors in the shaping of the urban landscape. They influenced the transformation of the inner-city districts (e.g. gentrification) (Smith 1996, Timár – Nagy 2007, Czirfusz et al. 2015) and the suburbanisation (Timár 2001). Their activities caused conflicts related to the built environment, urban heritage, etc.

In local level the civil activities, NGOs are weak – just like in national level. The local elites adopted the same strategies as the national ones: they tried to influence – moreover to control – the urban social movements. They had the opportunity to do this because these movements are dependent from the financial support from the state or local authority. Therefore, those who are supported do not have the autonomy to freely oppose the local government's decisions. As a result, the local communities are weak in their self representation and even the solidarity movements, the institutional or spontaneous social actions are sporadic in the society. This is a result of the atomised society mentioned at national level.

The main actors of the urban development tried to utilise the common goals (modernization, raising the quality of life and the Western-like consumer society) presented earlier and tried to merge

with their own goals. The political and economic actors identified themselves as the only ones who can achieve those widely recognised goals. The local media played a significant role in the process promoting the growth goals and their – real or supposed – benefits. The monopolized public interest serves as a legitimating tool for the growth coalitions (CRINES 2013).

Due to the above-mentioned processes the economic (mainly the global) and political capital became the most important forces while the residents and civil movements are insignificant in the decision-making process. Therefore, civil society cannot control the elites, only a rival elite group could do this. The cultural elites could be competent, but their role decreased after the change of regime. The possibility of control remains to the economic elites and of course they emphasise the logic of the capitalist accumulation (SZIRMAI 1996, FERGE 2002, KOVÁCH 2002, SZALAI 2006). The interaction between the political and economic elites created a complicated system of dependence. This hierarchical power structure (with the political and economic elites on the top) determines the preferences of the development and social policies. With the political culture mentioned above (the development should be conducted from "above") and the financial centralization these factors create a paternalistic solidarity model which is a tool to preserve the actual power relations. The society accepts these relations and the pro-growth goals. Using HABERMAS' (1980) theoretical explanation it can be interpreted that the mechanisms maintaining the capitalist structures are working. These mechanisms charge the poorest and powerless with the expenses. The above introduced power relations determine the social production of space: it creates a regulation system in which the most important aspect is the profitability.

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND: THE HUNGARIAN GROWTH MACHINES

An earlier research (KULCSÁR – DOMOKOS 2005) analysed the Hungarian growth machines using the "classic" approach of the growth coalitions. Kulcsár and Domokos introduced the local elites' role in two cities ("Fur City" and "White City" as they call them): how they influence the creation of the Western-like urban landscape and the external investments. As I have mentioned earlier it is worth to analyse the growth machines in the context of the spaces of everyday life – i.e. urban public spaces.

As I mentioned earlier, the change of regime started various new processes and introduced new actors in the urban development. The rapid reshaping of the urban landscape heavily influenced the historical quarters of the cities. These areas have a specific ideological meaning in Europe as they are part of the local and national identity. Because of this, the regeneration was a key issue for the society (KOVÁCS – ENYEDI 2006). In the 1990s the production of representative urban spaces was characterised by aestheticisation and theintent to create spectacular environments for consumption. To create collective bonding the municipalities and investors often used the existing tradition or created traditions. The latter means that they created artificial landscapes using external (even global) samples, often ignoring local traditions – thus creating homogenous spaces without real local character (BOROS 2018).

Although local authorities and investors usually claimed that their developments were value free, there was a clear ideology behind that process; and it was consumerism. Therefore,

the process was accompanied by the production of the spaces of consumption: the city centres became valuable commodities as they became important centres of the consumption. The production of these spaces was characterised by urban rehabilitation, spectacular festivals and the growing importance of the urban design. Because of the low level of their resources the local governments drew investors into the projects. The neo-liberal urban policy influenced every city's decision-making (Boros – Hegedűs – Pál 2007, Hegedűs 2007).

The increasing role of the real estate developers resulted that in some cases the new developments privatised public space or damaged the built environment, the architectural heritage – especially in the case of the gated communities (Hegedűs 2007). During the production of the spaces of everyday life the local elites introduced regulations with relevance to the "appropriate" behaviour in public space (e.g. smoking, begging, sleeping on the streets etc.). The localities also tried to influence the use of space in indirect ways for example installing street furniture that is not suitable to sleep on it.

3. The growth machines and the production of public space

Neo-liberal policies are often "tested" at the peripheries as some kinds of pilot programmes. With the experiences from peripheral countries, regions and towns, the policies can be refined and spread over the more central areas (Harvey 2005b).

National legislation had a crucial role in the formation of conditions to growth coalitions – they created possibilities to control and regulate public space. In 2010 with the amendments of the Act on Built Environment [1] and the Act on Spatial Development and Planning [2] it became a misdemeanour to use the streets and squares 'improperly' – i.e. begging and sleeping there. The amendment of the Act on Misdemeanours [3] in 2012 provided possibility for municipalities to introduce statutory provisions against homeless people and beggars. In 2012 the Hungarian government made possible for local governments through the fourth amendment of Fundamental Law (the Hungarian Constitution) to forbid living in the streets, underpasses and other public spaces [4]. The aim of these regulations was to create safe, aesthetic urban spaces with the removal of disturbing behaviour.

4. Experiments at the periphery

The spatial exclusion is one of the most radical actions of the neoliberal urban policy. The practice spatial exclusion in the name of "quality of life" programs is a popular agenda for many local authorities (Mitchell 2003). The first ones of these policies were tested in 2004 and 2005 Kaposvár (Jámbor – Vedrédi 2016) and Szeged. In this paper I present the case of Szeged; in spring 2005 the city council of Szeged adopted a regulation [5] that forbids begging in the city centre (Picture 1). Those who violate the decree can be fined up to 25 000 Forints. The aim of the decree was to displace from the marketable spaces those who can threaten the profitability. The different surveys show that most of the residents agreed with this decision (Boros – Tóth 2007).

Photo 1 *The renewed city centre in Szeged (Source: the author)*

According to the surveys, the residents supported mainly the pro-growth investments and the social investments are less important to them (Boros 2007). Based on the responses, it became obvious, that the residents think that helping the poorest is not their task. It should be made by the state, but they would not pay more tax to support this. Theoretically, they sympathise with the poor, but this is not manifested in their actions. The residential location and the previous bad experiences of the respondents had no significant effect on their attitude towards the beggars according to the chi square tests. No matter that which part of the city does the individual live or have they had nasty experience with the beggars.

All the surveys show that the respondents would support the "deserving poor" – those who behave properly and deserve the financial aid. This attitude can be interpreted as solidarity is conditional therefore it is a tool for the social control. The elites can use this to achieve their goals. The undeserving poor can be a scapegoat for the social conflicts or problems. It makes them a legitimating element for the system and the political elites (Gans 1992). As the part of the growth coalition the local media also supported the spatial exclusion and tried to manipulate the public opinion:

> *"At Széchenyi Square, Kárász Street, Klauzál, Dugonics and Mars Squares, outside and inside the churches mainly fake and hired beggars bother the residents and visitors of the city. Majority of the beggars is extremely aggressive, and they often use the streets or even the churches as a toilet."* [6]

The article indicates that the beggars are hired by someone and they try to make money for a so called "beggars mafia". (See the phrases "fake" and "hired".) According to the phone-based survey this opinion is quite popular among the respondents as well. The author of the article emphasises that the beggars do not respect neither the sacred places ("they often use [...] the churches as a toilet"). In another article other activities were classified as begging and harassment – which show the real intention of the decree and the growth coalition:

"You arrived just in time – said Klára Sándor, Member of Parliament to whom a Krishna follower wanted to sell one of his books – a lot of people think that begging is a right and easy way of living. It is impossible to judge whether someone is really needs help or is forced to beg by the »beggar mafia«. It is a difficult situation: on one side our social sensitivity comes into play on the other there is a decree that forbids begging. That should be respected." [7]

The Krishna follower mentioned in this quote is clearly not a beggar; he/she is a member of a religion who tries to raise funds for religious and social activities. But this behaviour does not fit into the logic of consumption and to the aestheticised urban landscape. It represents problems which threat the consumption of the spectacular environment. Mentioning the visitors in the first quote suggests that the beggars jeopardise the tourism and the profit derived from it – consequently, they threat the economic development of the whole city. Furthermore, the beggars endanger one of the common goals; namely the raise of quality of life. Because of the representative function of the city centre most of the residents accepted or even felt necessary to displace the beggars and the homeless, too (Boros 2007). This policy intended to displace the people who represent the social problems and to banish them from the central areas – as one of the local policymakers admitted;

"...the regulation achieved its aim; Kárász street became as it should be: an asset for the town, wich should not be spoiled by begging. [...] the banned people respect the regulation by relocationg themselves by few hundred meters" [8]

5. THE GROWTH COALITION AND PUBLIC SPACE IN THE CENTRE

In Józsefváros (the 8th District of Budapest) similar processes took place. As many post-socialist inner-city areas, the District suffered from disinvestment in the decades of communism. Obviously, this affected the public spaces as well: the condition of local squares, parks and markets deteriorated. Because of its favourable location, Józsefváros became attractive to investments. Furthermore, extensive urban renewal processes have started using local, national and European funds. As a result, several urban rehabilitation programmes have been initiated by the local government and investors (Ladányi 2014, Szemző – Tosics 2005). These programmes aimed to enhance the quality of life of the locals and to attract young professionals, tourists, students and well-off foreigners (Czirfusz et al. 2015). The transformation, creation and maintenance of public spaces were important elements of these renewal programmes. One of the most important developments was the creation of Corvin Promenade (Picture 2), a market-led large-scale urban rehabilitation project with new apartment buildings, a shopping mall and new public spaces. This project was the latest and most significant modification to the previously evolved street structure. The Downtown of Europe Programme aimed to upgrade the inner parts of the district in the Palota Quarter, to reposition the area in tourism [9, 10]. The physical form of new public spaces was aestheticised, with street furniture not suitable for sleeping or staying too long on them (see photo 2).

With the physical transformation of public spaces new practices spatial regulations were also introduced on city and district level. The aim was to keep public spaces secure and to protect

PHOTO 2 *The Corvin Promenade (Source: the author)*

the spaces of consumption. A regulation in 1999 has banned consumption of alcohol in public space – except for certain occasions and events. Furthermore, bars, pubs and restaurants are also exceptions – they are the profit-oriented quasi-public spaces. The regulation was confirmed in 2012 [11]. The consecutive versions of the Integrated Urban Development Strategies (2008, 2012, 2015) of Józsefváros all aimed to create safe and clean public spaces, to handle the problems related to begging and homelessness, to create quality places for leisure and to expand the green areas [9, 10, 11]. But, the most often used tool the manage public spaces was regulation – for example the closure of Kék Pont to push out drug users from the District.

PHOTO 3 *Regulations at a renewed public space in Józsefváros (Source: the author)*

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New regulations were also extablished to protect the renovated playgrounds and parks; these defined the time periods of use as well as the appropriate behaviour (e.g. no eating in playgrounds, no sleeping or alcohol consumption in parks etc.) in these places (Photo 3). The renewed parks and playground are often fenced to keep away the unwanted users. In some cases, security guards were also hired to enforce the regulations. The local government of Józsefváros also banned eating the food waste from the trash cans in 2010 because 'it is unhealthy and dangerous' [9]. The local government also initiated a referendum in 2011 on begging and homelessness, trying to enforce the previously accepted anti-poor regulations. However, the referendum became unsuccessful, since the voter turnout did not exceed the validity limit – but most of the voters supported the regulation. Many of the local newspapers and webpages [e.g. 11] supported the action against beggars. But at the end, Constitunional Court decided that the regulation is against the Constitution thus it was withdrawn. However, other national and local regulations on the control of public space remained in force.

The most important actors in these processes were the local government and real estate developers. They formed an effective coalition to transform the degraded neighbourhoods, creating new public spaces or upgrading existing ones – and protecting them through local legislation. According to an interview-based research (BOROS et al. 2016), the entrepreneurs evaluate the regulations positively.

CONCLUSIONS

The key actors in the processes in the above-mentioned cases are the central government, local authority, the residents, entrepreneurs and local media. Among them, the central government and local authority seem to be the decisive actors, who served the capital interests related to the urban space. With the adopted regulations the economic actors (real estate developers, other entrepreneurs – e.g. in hospitality sector, etc.) could enforce their interests. The residents played a more active role in the second case study than in the first one: however, they did not take any actions, but majority supported the regulations and the market-led transformation of urban space. The local media represented and promoted the pro-growth attitude. The formal or informal social movements – according to the national trends – were missing in both cases.

As mentioned in the paper, the characteristics of the post-socialist society helps the forming and functioning of the growth coalitions. The weakness of the national and urban social movements causes that an important counterbalancing actor is missing from the society. The predominance of the external actors (state, TNCs) results that the residents have a legitimating role only – without an active role. But this does not cause a conflict because the society accepts this situation. The maintenance of the power relations is the interest of both the political and economic actors. Their task is to solve the problems but in exchange they have a very efficient tool for social control. Therefore, the power and market structures are strongly interrelated in the local communities and determine the social production of space.

The growth machines in Szeged or in the Józsefváros are developmental one by STONE's (1993) classification – just like the other Hungarian growth coalitions as well. These are extremely stable; therefore, there is a little chance to convert them to a lower-class opportunity or middle-class progressive one. The dominant neo-liberal agenda emphasises the role of competitiveness, financial efficiency and profitability and fights against the factors which can be threatening to these aims

(BRENNER – THEODORE 2002, PECK – TICKELL 2002) As LOGAN and MOLOTCH describe in their explanation of growth coalitions; the most vulnerable members of the society are excluded to achieve the growth goals.

The activities of the Hungarian urban growth machines incorporate the residents more than in Western Europe or the United States. Therefore, the growth coalitions have a very strong legitimation basis. It can be interpreted as an evidence to HABERMAS' (1980) theory; the powerless, marginalised and poorest suffer the most the effects of crises because their interest could be sacrificed in the sake of growth. It is an important national characteristic that these urban growth machines are heavily influenced by external actors: not only the investors but the state as well. As COCHRANE (1999) claims, urban policy in the 21st century will be a growth policy. The analyses regarding the growth coalitions can put the post-socialist urban governance and the relation of public and private in new light. Furthermore, the concept of growth coalitions can help to understand better the transformation of public spaces.

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