

## The Pyramidal Network of Settlements in Croatia\*

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**ABSTRACT** In the paper the author analyses the changes in Croatian society caused by socialist, transitional and neo-liberal periods. The main change is in the deregulation of the State's role and the introduction of the market economy as well as different actors into the game. The spatial changes concern structural rather than numerical content. Many small villages have become even smaller while big cities have grown, but more in their surroundings than in themselves. That is a feature of third and fore urbanizations. Croatia's settlement structure is "mildly" pyramidal with Zagreb at the top of the pyramid; it is the biggest, the best equipped in the technical and social sense, and has the most heterogeneous social structure. Yet those factors do not reduce its problems – largely the huge social inequalities between the very rich and the very poor, in this case in spatial terms.

Only fore macro regional centres have developmental capabilities, while middle and small towns and villages do not have them. That is mostly due to political and economic decisions which favour big settlements and not smaller ones. These conclusions have been reached on the basis of several IDIZ sociological research projects.

*Key words* Settlements network, globalization, transition, social and spatial inequalities

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## 1. Introduction

This introduction is connected with the *spatial question*. I am speaking about the settlements network in Croatia. Social and spatial changes go hand-in-hand, as do all special themes put into a social context. After socialism broke down in the cruellest possible way, through war, Croatia entered the phase of transition that leads it into neo-liberalism. Along with neo-liberalism, *globalisation* as a world process is also influential; their respective structures, manners of operating and consequences are alike. Global answers are not the same throughout the world since they depend on local circumstances and power actors, as well as on the interests of the world's great and small powers in the respective roles of the countries in question.

The socialist period after the Second World War was marked by the unfinished *modernization* planned as part of socialism in Yugoslavia, in the first place as *deruralization* (with the intention of the elimination of the villages and the peasantry), and *industrialization* (the growth of the towns and the transformation of former peasants into industrial workers), but without an adequate infrastructure: dwellings, schools, medical service, culture. After the break with the USSR, Yugoslavia's brand of socialism had a number of both positive and negative sides which, as in other communist / socialist countries, affected the composition of the society and its development. Despite its numerous minuses, that socialism was milder and more open than in the other countries of that type. And yet it was there that its end was worse than in any of the others: in fratricidal wars between mixed and merged peoples of Yugoslavia (chiefly Serbs, Croats, Bosniacs, Herzegovinians, Muslims, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Slovenes but also the Yugoslavs).

So, Croatia has also gone through the phase of the death of socialism and the period of transition, without a clear picture what it actually was, until the phase of initial, rough neo-liberalism was reached. The unfinished modernization continues in another way (broached by the post-modern processes as well) producing a "griffon-type" combination of the old, the new and the newest in social changes. Not even by means of common sense speculations, let alone scientifically, is it possible to answer whether the outcome for the small country of Croatia will be good, bad or unknown – Unfortunately, sociology is not mathematics nor are people figures, so it would be impossible and even immoral to proffer binding conclusions. There is no need to dwell on the analyses of globalization made by M. Castells, A. Giddens, E. Soja, S. Sassen, G. Ritzer (2004) and many other authors because they are known by heart. I would only like to point out that Croatia and its space is being affected by globalization in various ways – from those inevitable ones to those from which it is defending itself locally.

For the time being, the answers to globalization are unstructured, irregular, and defined by interests and vague in terms of outcome. The small actors have small power and the big ones have big power within the country. Outwardly, towards

the world, only the big actors from the country are acting on the level of the world, Europe and neighbouring countries (even the closest ones). However, their power is minor. Similarly to the case in earlier periods, Croatia has remained a “provincial subject” to greater masters, regardless of its pride. Yet, since the power relations in the world are changing rapidly and unpredictably (terrorism from the East, heightened self-awareness of the countries of Latin America, Africa and China, the weakening of the world’s greatest powers), there is a possibility for different kinds of obedience, self-defence and connections between countries in various combinations; from the value-related, economic, and political to spatial ones. All the resounding slogans about Croatia’s independence can only relate to the former Yugoslavia but not to other possible or imposed combinations within the society and the space of the entire world. Once networked in global society, Croatia can be free from Yugoslavia but not free from Europe and the world. Should it want to be, it wouldn’t be able to develop by its autochthonous forces. These introductory remarks were necessary to put the spatial situation and changes into the social context understood sociologically.

## 2. The spatial situation in Croatia

### 2.1. *Some data*

This text is largely based on several sociological research projects conducted at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb by the group for the sociology of space, village and city (*Village in transition; possibilities of development of rural areas*, in *Rural Sociology* 1/2, 2000, in the book *The village: the destiny or the choice*, 2002, Sociological aspects of settlements’ network in transitional context, in *Rural Sociology*, 169, 2005 and 171, 1, 2006, and on the proposal to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport: *The Actors of Social Changes in the Space*, 2006).<sup>1</sup>

Before the analysis of the structure of settlements in Croatia from the sociological point of view, it is necessary to state some unavoidable data. In the year 2001 (when the last census was conducted), there were 6,759 settlements in Croatia, which represented a slight growth compared with the year 1961 (6,743). The essential change in the structure of settlements is what is important.

“The portion of the smallest and the biggest settlements, those having 100 residents and those with more than 5,000 inhabitants, has significantly grown. This increase in the number of smallest settlements has occurred on the account of the settlements which had between 200 and 1,000 inhabitants, so that, under Croatia’s conditions, this represents a growth in the number of both smaller and bigger settlements” (Alija Hodžić; 2005, p. 518, also Milan Župančić, 2005.).

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It is obvious that the process of urbanization tended towards a decrease in the number of village inhabitants, but not in the number of small villages, while the population of towns grew as well as the number of towns (often administratively determined). The researchers are driven crazy by such administratively determined definitions and classifications of towns, since such changes make impossible coherent observing of the changes in space. The changes that started in socialism have continued. In short, in Croatia today there are still a great number of small / dwarfish villages, and only some 20 towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants. The picture is the following: many small villages without developmental possibilities and with the prognosis of dying out, a number of middle-sized towns of which only some are potential centres of development, three macro regional centres (Osijek, Rijeka, Split) which are bearers of development, and Zagreb at the top as the Croatian metropolis (Župančić, 2005; Svirčić Gotovac, 2006).

## **2.2. Urban Network of Settlements**

In the book “The town and urbanization” M. Vresk (2002) precisely analyses urbanization in Croatia from the geographic point of view. He used data from the year 1991, since when there has been a war. This changed the then-current picture of the settlements and the changes in them, but not essentially. In socialism the towns grew because of the policy of deruralization of the villages, and the industrialization of towns. That was the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> urbanization, that is, of the “paleo-industrial town” (I. Rogić in all his works). In the 3<sup>rd</sup> urbanization (M. Vresk, *ibid.*), polarization and decentralization has occurred simultaneously. The villages are getting smaller and vanishing, the towns are diminishing their growth while their surroundings are growing. In modal (hub) regions, circulation of people, goods and information is taking place, thus causing changes in the structure and meaning of the settlements network. Despite this networking, the settlements remain pyramidally structured by size, and their respective functions and relations.

Most authors (I. Rogić, M. Salaj, ed., 1999) consider the middle-sized town incapable of bearing any type of development whatsoever except, in some places, mono-functional ones, while the minority of authors consider them the potential bearers of development (*ibid.*). The latter attitude, but only the value-oriented stance, offers the possibility of decentralization of the settlements network more or less equal development of several settlements (such as, for instance, exists in Slovenia, but not in Serbia!). Croatia has a potentially good structure of settlements and, if politics wished it, it could develop a decentralized settlements network all over its territory, small territories where urbanization could bear the overall development of the country; from the large Slavonian villages to the numerous islands and potentially rich hinterland. This is just what the “Strategy of Spatial Development of Croatia” speaks about but, due to a range of contradictory influences, it is not being implemented! “The dead letter”! The political idea

of Zagreb as the metropolis annuls such possible organization so that the middle size towns are considered weak and only four macro regional centres are being singled out (with Zagreb at the top of the pyramid of politically determined roles!).

This is not Croatian particularity. In the news you can hear: Paris decided, London said, Washington ordered; it is similar with Prague, Budapest, Moscow, and Tokyo (S. Sassen, 2006). So, the capitals in networked society still have the top role in decision-making, regardless of the countries, the territories or the continents in question. On the one hand, territoriality loses importance in the global world; on the other, the classic cast remains. In Croatia, the role of Zagreb has grown since Yugoslavia fell apart and Belgrade ceased to be the centre. Not in Serbia, of course. The research of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (the last entitled “Sociological Aspects of the Network of Settlements in Croatia”, 2005) carried out on a sample of 154 settlements in Croatia and 2,220 individual respondents, proved the hierarchical network of settlements. By deregulation of the role of the State, the role of local self-government is growing, repeating the picture of the top role of main centres and the unimportance of smaller settlements. The national metropolis (thus, the politically determined role) and the three macro regional centres have the main roles in Croatia’s development. Everything is concentrated around them and everything depends on them. The data resulting from our research show their excellent technical and social equipment, in terms of conditions in Croatia, while other towns and villages are “precipitating” in the pyramid of settlements.

### 3. Sociological Aspects of the Settlements Network

“The other side of the coin” (Seferagić, 2005) shows the advantages and disadvantages of such a concept at the level of the country, and at respective levels of the regions, towns, their surroundings and social groups. The quality of life certifies the data on the technical and social equipment of settlements; “the bigger, the better”, because bigger towns have a range of problems different to those in smaller settlements. Living in a big city is not always an advantage, but can very often be a disadvantage. Nowhere does one find such a lack of and expensiveness of dwellings, unemployment, an enormous number of the poor, middle-class decay, long journeys through the town, etc. (Svirčić Gotovac, 2006).

So, on one side, the ideological concept of the metropolis as the “centre of the nation’s excellence” is true, while “on the other side of the coin” it is not true at all! It seems that the researcher’s (sociologist’s) value-related positions greatly influence the way the pyramidal network of towns is presented: as nationally excellent or as objectively poor! I agree with the latter attitude, *sine ira et studio* towards other attitudes! I share the view expressed by Zorislav Perković when he wrote: “If there is something the metropolis should be ashamed of, it isn’t the flea-markets but the persistent existence and production of the poor in the coun-

try. Zagreb is a middling town in a middling country and one shouldn't be ashamed of that. What one should be ashamed of is the denial of that fact" (Perković, 2002).

The same is true for the other three macro regional centres: Osijek, Rijeka and Split which, according to research findings, are excellently or very well equipped, while, at the same time, the life there is "swarming" with different problems, from smaller ones to those related to the darkest or even crime stories. Nevertheless, the bigger the town, the greater the amount of all kinds of criminal activity (the citizens of London as well as other big city citizens are familiar with these facts!).

#### 4. The New Urban Actors

In the text *The village between the traditional and the virtual community* 2002, in the book *The village: the choice or the destiny*, I have enumerated and analysed the old and the new actors who have contributed to changes of the village, whether for good or for bad. Some of them belong to "old" actors who have changed the life in the village through their activities, while the others are of the new sort, even urban ones, who have drastically changed the village according to their needs. Some of them come to the village because they love it, while those totally different ones occupy, transform and usurp the village as a place of cheap investments and high profits. Making the social structure in the village heterogeneous, they have introduced changes in the way of life that can be named "rurban". The issue is much more complex with the *new urban actors*, since they belong to the network of global actors. This makes them more differentiated, but also defined by the global system whether they belong to it, want to enter it, or are defending themselves from it. The new urban actors in the neo-liberal society are all those countries, strata of society, institutions, groups and individuals who use the social system mentioned for their own benefit. They range from "local elites" to "investors from abroad". The local situation, greatly defined by the global system, enables the *foreign actors* a profitable and interest-related inclusion in Croatia's neo-liberal situation. Ranging from countries, multinational corporations, and bigger companies to wealthy individuals, they can participate in the selling off of the properties of the small and poor country, Croatia. The interest is theirs, but the decisions are ours! The State is selling the land for low prices without ever asking anyone's opinion. The result can only be read as information in the newspaper. No citizen has ever taken part in the decision-making about some major undertaking, as used to be the case under "dark socialism"!

Let us, for instance, remember "Družba Adria" and the role of experts in the decision that Russian petroleum be brought to Omišalj and conducted through the whole "hose" of the Adriatic Sea. The consequences were explained in a way that could not be "scientifically" verified. For the time being, the project has been rejected. It isn't only a matter of this project, but of the way of decision-making about the undertakings that are crucial for the country, and to whom they bring

the benefit or the detriment. To me, the conclusion seems to be clear. The benefit goes to those who undertake certain actions, while we all suffer the detriment, albeit with possible minor compensation. Sapiienti sat! Yet, this is and will be the first principle of neo-liberalism! The country is being sold off to rich foreign and local people at low prices, and they are expected to rehabilitate and repair the factories, hotels, buildings, houses etc. "Until the last piece of sand and the last drop of water", the people would say! The foreign actors operate in accordance with their own interests while the State / society makes the offer that is far from being in the interest of the "entire population". Even now when it is struggling to achieve its own interests, Croatia will soon be a country with foreign proprietors of the best, the most beautiful and the most profitable parts of the country, as it always used to be.

#### **4.1. Domestic urban actors**

The breakdown of socialism, decay of Yugoslavia, domination of Croatian national interests, transition and neo-liberalism have all in one "package" enabled the emergence of the new urban actors, who have significantly influenced the changes in towns. Contrary to the socialist concept of the development of towns and the clear distinction of the roles of actors, political ones in the first place, numerous free-lance actors emerge in neo-liberalism, acting in accordance with their own interests, thanks to their power and money, and behaving far less in accordance with social regulations. "Deregulation" of the State is basic, followed by the neo-liberal freedom. Within this split, and simultaneous junction, a number of uncontrollable and uncontrolled things occur, which shape urban systems and define them in terms of their contents. There are numerous "disputes" among the sociologists who the actors are in fact: those who can act or those who are, willy-nilly, passive? It is my opinion that both groups are actors, regardless of the degree of their respective power, because both determine the destiny of the towns.

Such division is most often named "gentrification" or "pauperization", although both terms are questionable. In my opinion, "gentry" denotes high class in the economic, political and, in particular, in the cultural sense, and not by one criterion only. According to this, gentrification would be the conquering of fine, interesting or central parts of the town by groups of people who have – in the sense mentioned – the highest social quality.

#### **4.2. Gentrification**

In Croatia, the gentrification is taking place in such a way that the powerful and the rich set the rules of the game. Generally, they are not connected with the high class defined by knowledge and culture, but are a "high class" defined by power and money. Political changes in the 1990s made possible the power and

wealth of diverse immigrants (from America, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, etc.). They occupied and usurped the land. The same is true for the Croats from Croatia with similar characteristics, skilled in making money in all kinds of ways – even in the grey economy – and investing it in various schemes, thus generating additional wealth and living “good”. Living “good” is a particular value-related topic, but these actors certainly have enough money to live as they please. This is often manifested in material goods: houses, flats, weekend houses, cars, yachts, travels to exotic countries.

And besides, they are interconnected – since their connections always political and economic they buy cheaply parts of the land, institutions, organizations etc. and sell them expensively, thus multiplying their property. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Croatia has inherited the most valuable part: the coast, the islands and the sea. What has it done with them? It is increasingly selling them off to rich domestic and foreign persons. Yet, once bought, islands, hotels, houses, land, are not Croatian any more and the question remains of how this will all end. The purchasers, no matter where they come from or who they are, can obtain permits to build whatever they want, so the coast and the islands are being concreted, built up too densely, with the houses at the very seashore, with enclosures to restrict access of local residents, tourists, or any other visitors. The Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction sporadically orders the houses built without planning permission to be pulled down (as on the Island of Vir, in Rogoznica, etc.), but, generally speaking, it does not touch the richest and most powerful, since it collaborates with them and belongs to them.

The same is happening in the towns and their surroundings. One can get a permit to build an excessively large house, thus disturbing the existing public good and establishing the new spatial (dis)order. The relation between *public* and *private* property is totally disappearing as any private undertaking whatsoever can disturb either the public good or somebody else’s private property (by destroying gardens, views, blocking out sunlight, by sounds – noise, etc.). Such moves are becoming more and more frequent, and more and more aggressive and they definitely change the image and the quality of life of urban space. Along with urban space, they are “swallowing up” the protected natural environment as well, since the houses are getting ever bigger and the natural space is getting smaller (for example in Šestine, a satellite of Zagreb). Urbanization is encroaching upon nature but also making the urban structure “denser”. Over a ten-year period, Zagreb and other towns have changed so much that one can’t recognize them any more. And this change is not for the better, but for the worse. Spatial chaos is the consequence of social chaos. If a state with the rule of law be established one day, the order in that *space* should also be established.

But still, many changes already made in the space are irreparable, especially when they have been made in a poor society, so that it isn’t logical to expect them to be rectified any time soon (by pulling down poorly built apartment buildings, inadequate hospitals, re-building of routed up or poorly mended



roads, etc.). It is more logical to expect that self-appointed power-wielders will initiate certain undertakings (such as the Underground, tunnel, amusement arcade, or enclosed “elite” residential zones – all as ugly as possible) than that the public transport system, communal infrastructure, waste management, noise level regulations (especially in coastal settlements during the summer) be raised to the appropriate civilisation level.

It is interesting that due to the decrease, and not the increase of democracy, the role of the town’s *mayor* has grown. In the metropolis, but in particular in smaller towns, the people holding this position wield incredible power, make decisions by themselves and belittle not only their employees but all the citizens as well; the citizens are never asked about anything. The one-time “local communities”, which were weak but did have legal rights, were replaced by “district councils” which have neither the power of decision-making nor the standing of a legal entity. In the town he rules, the mayor (no matter to which political party he belongs) can make whatever decision he wants; most often these decisions are partly for his own benefit and partly to the disadvantage of the citizens. The possibility to protest, intervene or to make suggestions to the mayor is reduced to a telephone which nobody ever answers, but “he is always available”. This fact is shameful for every place and in particular for the metropolis with one million residents.

#### 4.3. *Pauperization*

The town of Zagreb, caught in a controversial gap between the rich and the increasing number of the poor, offers to the very poor two public soup-kitchens, one overnight shelter, free streets for beggars and miserable social and medical assistance. In comparison to the politicians, rich citizens, tycoons, Mafiosi etc., I find much more important the various types of *the poor*. They are this “other side of the shiny coin”. On this occasion I will leave out descriptions of the poor in the villages, whose situation is the worst since they have no choice (Župančić, 2005).

I will describe only some strata of the poor of the town, which are evidently growing in number every day. The neo-liberalism and termination of the Social State has resulted in total indifference to the existence of the poor. The free bean stew for the 1<sup>st</sup> of May offered by the SDP (Social-democratic Party) and free sausages served by the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) in the main squares on memorial days of important dates in the liberation from Yugoslavia, would pretty much cover their engagement in this respect. The ruling party’s (HDZ) pro-natal policy only minimally assists families in having more children, and particularly diminishes the role of working women who “by the way” have to be the mothers, housewives and bearers of the increase of the Croatian nation.

In the first place, the *middle class* is declining, so the academicians, professors, scientists, doctors and, along with them, the office workers, live much more poorly than their colleagues in Europe. As an example, due to their low wages,

overburdened doctors, nurses and orderlies live, as a rule, on bribes, on ill people's account. Only the rich can pay for health, while the poor depend on "God's help" – and here I don't mean the Church, the clergy, the priests and the nuns, as they live on clover and, at the same time, interfere in every possible way in State, social and private spheres. Concerning the space, new churches are being built and the old ones gold-plated, while at the same time the hospitals are falling apart, are infected, dirty and have to care for too many patients. The privatization of various services only makes the inequalities among the people greater. There are more and more services that have to be paid for, but at the same time the taxes deducted from salaries remain the same. One half of the gross salary goes for the payment of various services, so the concept of "solidarity" is maintained, but one still has to pay for these same services out of one's own pocket.

The second most endangered group are *pensioners*. Similarly to the case in developed countries, the population is getting older, so people who are employed are supporting more and more pensioners and the rate will pretty soon be 1:1. On the other hand, the pensioners who have invested in social activities, and also in their own pensions throughout their working lives, are poor today. The regulations are being constantly changed so, depending on the moment the person retires, he/she can become impoverished, even if he/she had had a high salary. This picture is reflected in the space: pensioners are digging through rubbish bins, they live in dilapidated and cold flats; they aren't capable to pay their overhead expenses, let alone to buy medicines. In socialism, things were different, the Social State did function. Yet, pensioners can now ride free of charge and warm themselves on the buses and trams, if they can only board them.

The third, even more endangered group are the *unemployed* (about 20% of the working-age population), all those who are looking for a job and cannot find one (mostly the young from non-lucrative branches, women – mothers), people who have been fired from failed, sold and other factories, institutions, and small private businesses, and "elderly" people (above 50 years) whom no one wants to employ anymore. The *part-time employees* or those employed for a limited period of time can be added to this number because, after the end of the period they were engaged for (a couple of months, one year) has expired, they are fired in order for the employer to avoid legal-economic obligations towards them, and they have to look for a new job. All *social cases* (from alcoholics to refugees, disabled persons, etc.) living on the social minimum, also fall in this group.

An unregistered, but identified group are the victims of the *grey economy* who work "illegally", without the employer's obligation to pay their social and pension insurance, and many other victims of the unregulated system who work regularly but are paid irregularly, receiving their salaries with months of delay. Strikes are their only means of defence since the trade unions are weak and often oriented towards their own interests in the unregulated State. A particular category of the poor are the *beggars*: miserable, often from rural areas, the workless, old, or ill, Roma (who do this as a profession), and others. Along with the "too

long dark blue coats and too small hats (the *nouveau riche*)”, they adorn the streets sitting, standing, crawling, singing surrounded by moulting dogs - the beggars. Under socialism, they were somehow taken off the streets, today they are their trademark. What kind of street is it if there are no beggars there? I have already said that in Zagreb, the metropolis of Croatia, there are only a few public soup-kitchens, shelters and public baths with very strict rules (the time when to come, the time when to leave...), and the data collected in our research of the settlements network show that such facilities in other places I are no better in this respect. The topic of this exposé is not the story of the poor, but that of their presence in the urban environment and how they influence it. But, this is a global fact, not endemic to transitional countries!

I personally consider important the issue of neglected and abandoned animals in towns, molested, taken by the dogcatchers, and euthanized. I wonder what the difference is between the poodles with their cropped hair and the ladies in fur coats, on the one hand, and the moulting animal wanderers and homeless beggars, on the other. “Luckily” for us, and unluckily for others, the towns in the West can’t be compared to those where the poor of Latin America live (favellas, ranchos...), of Africa (in Cairo, for instance, there is a neighbourhood where foreigners can not enter because the residents dispose of the rubbish from the rooftops and they have a tendency to rob and kill; in Kenya, the tourists dare not walk alone through towns because they are being attacked without much thought), or the whole East, where the children are being born to be killed in war conflicts. Being different, is the criminal in the USA and in other “developed countries” more benign? No, he isn’t!

I am not Noam Chomsky or George Ritzel and I do not *go along* with their one-sided conclusions that America is to blame for everything, but we sociologists, as well as collegial branches of scholarship, would need a sane, courageous and argumentative criticism of all the countries “in question”, both the general social one and the one related to urban areas, and to the space in general. I will say no more about the poor who deserve much more attention, nor about the rich. In a marvellous article entitled “Information-networked society, the society of extreme inequalities” (in print) Ljerka Jaeger Čaldarović shows such extreme inequalities between the owners of billions and those who only have one dollar a day that they can’t be justified by brains, knowledge, or luck, but largely by the social conditions of neo-liberalism, which makes possible all kinds of actions, without moral, human or control regulations in general. Her opinion finds support in the papers by Weber, Durkheim, Castells in particular, and others. Ljerka Jaeger Čaldarović leans chiefly on economic analyses, but she makes her analyses in terms of sociology. “Greed, losers – winners, uncertainty, consumerism, etc.” – that is the vocabulary she is offered by the press and literature.

So, the world is more and more *polarized* and *dually* arranged: “Winners – losers”. On the one side, there is the inconceivable wealth in the hands of a minority, while there is indescribable poverty on the other! And all this is being re-

flected in the space; from urban villas, huge houses, ownership of islands, the coast, land, to huts, crumbling buildings, bigger and smaller flats without communal facilities (or with the unpaid bills for them). So, we are entering the Western world in our own way, but in its way as well.

## 5. Conclusion

The problem of space, the settlements network, and villages and cities is an enduringly interesting topic and the situation is changing at an accelerated pace. While rural sociologists used to speak about very slow changes in the way of life in villages, or urban ones about petrified cities, today the situation is absolutely different. The space as such is quite different then it was. When it enters Europe one of these days in the future, Croatia will become subjugated and will pay a very high price for it. This will be manifested largely by the loss of the local characteristics that make it special. Within the space – and this is what is already happening – there will be more chaos, illegitimate actions, but maybe also some better solutions. The institutions and the people making decisions about that will by no means be the citizens, who will have a minor role for a prolonged time! I repeat, in terms of sociology, it is impossible to predict the future changes, both in society and in space.

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## **Piramidalna mreža naselja u Hrvatskoj**

### **Sažetak**

U tekstu autorica analizira promjene u društvu izazvane socijalističkim, tranzicijskim i neo-liberalnim periodima. Glavna promjena je u deregulaciji državne uloge i uvođenju tržišta i različitih slobodnih aktera. Kako u društvu tako i u prostoru. Prostorne promjene su više u strukturi naselja nego u promjeni njihova broja. Mnoga sela gube stanovništvo dok nekoliko gradova raste ali više u svojim okolicama nego u samim centrima. Struktura je naselja umjereno piramidalna s tim da je Zagreb najveći, najbolje opremljen tehničkom i društvenom infrastrukturom. Ta činjenica ne umanjuje njegove probleme, većinom ogromne socijalne i prostorne nejednakosti između vrlo bogatih i vrlo siromašnih stanovnika. Samo četiri makroregionalna centra pokazuju razvojne sposobnosti dok ih druga naselja nemaju ili ih imaju u najmanjoj mjeri. Iza toga stoji političko i ekonomsko odlučivanje koje preferira veće nad manjim. Ovi zaključci rezultat su nekoliko socioloških istraživanja u IDIZ-u.

*Ključne riječi:* mreža naselja, globalizacija, tranzicija, socijalne i prostorne nejednakosti.

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## **Pyramidal Network of Settlements in Croatia**

### **Résumé**

Dans son étude l'auteur analyse les changements dans la société, provoqués par les périodes socialiste, de transition et néolibérale. Le principal changement réside dans la dérégulation du rôle de l'État et dans l'introduction du marché et de différents acteurs libres. Aussi bien dans la société que dans l'espace. Les changements dans l'espace sont davantage dans la structure des localités que dans le changement de leur nombre. Beaucoup d'habitants quittent les villages, tandis que quelques villes s'accroissent, mais davantage dans leurs alentours que dans leur centre. La structure des localités est modérément pyramidale, étant entendu que Zagreb est la plus grande et la mieux équipée techniquement et en infrastructure sociale. Ce fait ne réduit pas ses problèmes, la plupart relatifs à une très grande inégalité sociale et en matière d'espace entre les habitants très riches et ceux très pauvres. Seulement quatre centres macrorégionaux présentent des capacités de développement alors que les autres localités n'en ont pas ou en ont dans la plus petite mesure. Il y a derrière cela la décision politique et économique, qui préfère les grandes localités aux petites. Ces conclusions sont le résultat de plusieurs recherches sociologiques à l'Institut de Recherche sociale à Zagreb.

*Mots-clés:* Réseau des localités, globalisation, inégalités sociales et en matière d'espace

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