“It’s my city and I’m not going to move away!”

Shaping a sense of being-at-home-in-the-world and seeking balance between acting and being acted upon in developing Bratislava.

By Robert Repka
Supervisor: Ulrika Trovalla

2019

MASTERUPPSATSER I KULTURANTROPOLOGI
Nr 94
Abstract

Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, is undergoing a significant change of its built environment due to a massive process of development since the mid-2000s. This series of construction, destruction, transformation and modernising processes has radically transformed a central industrial locality of the city into a wholly new business-administrative district. My ethnography is dedicated to unravelling the development's impact on people's living conditions, experiences, and everyday making-sense practices and actions. I am drawing on Michael Jackson, who claims that humans desire to act in the social world which is acting upon them in order to shape a sense being-at-home-in-the-world. Hence, the central focus of this ethnography is to find out how my informants make sense of the city’s transformation, shape their sense of at-home-ness and how they seek a balance between acting and being acted upon in changing social world. In order to do so, I analysed data gathered from more than twenty semi-structured qualitative interviews and two walk-alongs. Based on that, I claim that informants share a common condition of uncertainty which is experienced as insecurity or hope. In order to shape a sense of home-ness, certainty, belonging and recognition, they create and employ two specific practices. They either retreat to the notion of the city of past and detach themselves from the new developing Bratislava, or they reach to the city of future and feel belonging with the development narratives of future utopias. Hence, I conclude that the sense and experience of home are not being lost but rather dislocated and disintegrated within collective engagements with the transforming city and at the same time in the process of re-shaping in new temporalities and spatialities.

Key words

place and space, urban, home, past, future, development, Slovakia, modernisation, uncertainty, insecurity, hope, acting
Acknowledgments

I want to thank all of my informants whom accounts, perspectives, stories, imaginations, fears and hopes this thesis draws upon. I am enormously grateful for their time and openness in sharing their lives with me.

I dedicate my gratitude to my supervisor Ulrika Trovalla not only for the guiding recommendations, contributions, assistance, and feedback but most importantly for her understanding, time, energy and patience with me. I would not have found enough motivation and passion for finishing this thesis, had it not been for her endless support, encouragement, and cheerful comments.

I thank all my friends who have been of great support in time of conducting my fieldwork.
## Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. 3
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. 4
Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. 5
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 6
  Research Aim, Question, and the Guiding Argument of the Thesis ............................. 11
  Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................................... 14
  Outline of the Thesis .......................................................................................................... 18
Bratislava, a City of Transformations .................................................................................. 20
  Winners and Losers of the Post-socialist Transition ....................................................... 20
  Recent Manifestations of Capitalist Urbanism ................................................................. 24
Methodological and Ethical Considerations ......................................................................... 27
  Defining the Field-site ....................................................................................................... 27
  Approaching the Field ......................................................................................................... 28
1. Retreat from the Uncertain and Fearsome Future ......................................................... 35
  Uncertainty as Contingency and Insecurity ................................................................. 38
  From the Sense of Alienation to Anchoring in the Romantic City of Past .............. 44
  An Attack on the Past City is an Attack on Past Identities .......................................... 54
2. Many Visions of Modern Futures ................................................................................... 60
  Backward Pasts and Modern Utopias of the Future ....................................................... 65
  We Belong to the Future ................................................................................................. 73
  Internalising the Development’s Narrative and Expectations ....................................... 80
3. The Shifting Experience and Sense of Being-At-Home-In-The-World ....................... 84
  Vis-à-vis the Power of Development, One Has to Adapt .............................................. 85
  Embracing the Development of the City and the Self ............................................... 90
  Concluding Remarks: Reshaping the Sense of Being-At-Home-In-The-World ........... 93
List of Figures ...................................................................................................................... 97
Bibliography .......................................................................................................................... 98
We are sitting at a terrace of a former pumping station, now a house for four families, drinking coffee, and observing the sun setting down beyond the horizon of the slowly flowing Danube in front of us. The late March afternoon breeze does not make us uncomfortable as much as the pervading noise and turmoil of the urban infrastructure from less than ten meters distanced Apollo Bridge over the river which has been constructed as a part of a new development of a locality. At the same time, I feel safe, enclosed, almost as in a different spatiality where the surrounding modern landscape of Bratislava cannot reach. The house of the pumping station was built at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, subsequently, the surrounding Winter Harbour was constructed around it. Two-floor house of a secession architecture creates an interesting tension with the brute industrial architecture of the harbour’s warehouses, garages, or several tall cargo cranes which resemble horses. The evening is calm, the entire space is tranquil, dark-yellow, and blurred, intervened by passing ships in front of us. I and Miroslav, one of the
houses’ residents, are sharing an evening in one of the most serene places in Bratislava. It feels almost untouched, pristine, and easy to romanticise.

Miroslav, whom I am sitting with, tells me about his teenage years, about his beginnings in canoeing and how he has developed a strong affection not only to sport but also for the locality of the Danube and its riverbank. He identifies himself as a true Bratislavan, somebody who was born and raised in the city. During the conversation, we proceed from the locality of the harbour further into the city, specifically, into the area which forms the site of my fieldwork. It is located north from the Danube River, almost in the very centre of Bratislava. Until the early 1990s, for about one hundred years, it had constituted a former industrial centre of Bratislava. Now, the entire locality is under massive, radical, and continuous development to a new and modern administrative and business city district. When I ask Miroslav on this locality, the entire feeling from the conversation changes.

I seldom go to that area but when I’m there, I only see a huge hole in the ground. Then I always remember what used to be there before. Nevertheless, my relationship with that place hasn’t changed. It’s still positive. It’s my city! And I’m not going to move away.

The city Miroslav appropriates, is undergoing a significant process of transformation of its built environment. This transformation is primarily caused by the process of development which results not only in enlargement of Bratislava’s peripheral areas but also in changes of its central parts. As Slovak human geographer Pavol Šuška states, it is particularly one district which accumulates most of the construction projects in the city (2012: 170), and that is the one which Miroslav refers to as “that area”. This district is a representative case of a development in Bratislava. It has completely changed in form, shape, content and function and redefined the urban landscape and urban life. Formerly the centre of industrial production of Bratislava in the city has changed into a centre of business, commerce, and administration. Old and small brick industrial factories, garages and warehouses have been replaced with a generic glass-steel architecture, glass skyscrapers, residential towers, administrative centres, offices and shopping malls.

Winter Harbour (no. 1 at figure 2) with the pumping station (no. 6 at figure 2) is the last remaining and coherent industrial area which is not yet under processes of construction and transformation. It contrasts the all-encompassing and surrounding processes of destruction, construction, building, modernising, developing and changing. When I leave the harbour, I always feel how my experience of time changes, how the tempo quickness, my perception is
pervaded by the influx of visual stimulations, flow of people, cars, materials, shapes and symbols.

Paradoxically, the stillest feature is the always-flowing Danube River which is accessible from the promenade next to the Eurovea project (no. 2 at figure 2). Formerly industrial locality is now a thriving green promenade, highly visited and acclaimed, with the central building of a shopping mall (Kráková 2006). It is one of the centres of commercial and social life in Bratislava since it does not consist only of a mall but also of open green space. Proceeding further to the north, there lies the central brownfield area (no. 3 at figure 2), now in the very process of destruction and construction. In the past, it concentrated the most important factories of the entire locality, for instance, Gumon, Kablo, Dynamit, or Yarn factory.

![Map 1](image.png)

Map 1. The map of Bratislava delineating my field site. Google Maps

When I enter the locality, it is like being at a construction site surrounded by a few dominant modern glass-steel buildings. There are workers, heavy mechanisms and convoluting pathways and barriers everywhere making it difficult to make sense of the locality. This experience might shed a bit of light to why Miroslav perceives the locality only as “a huge hole” and rather relies on his memory of what it used to be before. The locality is dominated by Panorama City residential project (no. 4 at figure 2) and administrative-office centre Twin City (no. 5 at figure 2). Two towers of Panorama City now dominate the locality’s landscape not only with their height but also with their triangular shape, white colour and the contrast they create. On the other hand, Twin City with its façade and height resembles the factory-like brick architecture,
although, in the frontal area another skyscraper has been recently constructed. It is primarily caused by the municipality politics promoting market-oriented solutions, little control, and few regulative and controlling mechanism resulting in construction of several residential and business, corporate and administrative mega-projects. There are yet no signs yet that the activity is about the stop, on the contrary, it seems to be expanding and accelerating.

Since I had lived in Bratislava from 2010 until 2016, I remember how drastic and radical the transformation was. I also remember how I and my friends visited the industrial locality because of its atmosphere or because of the cultural, music or art venues located there. Since the locality was being demolished even before I moved to Bratislava, I recall the heated discussion about industrial genius loci versus the benefits of development and investments and fights for preserving few remaining Bratislava factories as well as many proposals for their new functionality. What I cannot recall is the discussion on the impact of this transformation on local communities and individuals, neither people’s experiences, attitudes and identifications.

When I once ask Miroslav on his perception of the development and the city, he says: “It doesn’t matter how it might have been reconstructed, I just want the face of old Bratislava to remain.” The city he appropriates, the city which he returns to in memories and does not want to leave, is located in the past. At the same time, there are many people who identify with the future face of Bratislava, who visit Eurovea shopping mall, buy apartments in Panorama Towers or take pictures in front of Twin City. What connects all these people is some specific sense of belonging and identification with a particular notion of the city. Anthropologist Michael Jackson argues that humans desire to identify with the social world, they want to be recognised and have a sense of belonging (2013: 14). Hence, if I relate this argument with a question, why Miroslav desire to hold on to a particular notion of a city, the answer would be, in order to find a sense of belonging and recognition.

What my informants also hold in common are the very conditions of transforming and developing urban landscape and the desire to act vis-à-vis this process of development. They all share one social world which is being pervaded and modified by a series of demolitions and constructions, however, their experiences of that differ. In general, the experience of the development’s narrative and impact is framed through the notion of uncertainty. As Dewey says, uncertainty is an inherent condition for humans, a collectively shared experience where all the social and individual action is accompanied with (1930: 10). For my informants, this experience of uncertainty has a double nature, it is either positive or negative. If they identify with the process and narrative that the development brings, the notion of uncertainty is framed
within this narrative and accompanied with hope. On the other hand, if my informants feel they
do not belong to this framework of development, uncertainty is negative, experienced as
pervading insecurity and lack of control. They either place themselves within the narrative of
development, see themselves being part of it and feel confident in the new city; or they feel
alienated and detached to the newly-development locality.

In resonance with Jackson, he further states that humans intend to transform the social world
they are thrown into, to a world they can actively shape and call their own via active collective
engagement (Jackson 2013: 191; 1995: 123). Therefore, Miroslav imagines this “past face” of
Bratislava because he understands it and can identify with. He retreats to a particular
temporality and spatiality where he seeks belonging, control and recognition. At the same time,
there are informants who employ this mechanism on the other temporal end. They reach to the
future and form and shape their sense of belonging within the future promises and expectations
of the development narrative. As Barbara Bender writes, landscapes “are always in the process
of being shaped and reshaped. Being in a moment and in the process, they are always temporal,
they are not a record but a recording (…) polyvalent and multivocal,” (2002: 103).

Every individual desires to have an active role in shaping the social world. For Jackson, the
balance between acting and being acted upon is the determining process in shaping a sense of
being-at-home-in-the-world (Jackson 1995: 123). Therefore, in the conditions pervaded by
development, the retreat to the past or reaching to the future are forms of acting on the social
world which is acting upon them in order to shape a sense of at-home-ness in. As Jacksons
further states, they want to transform “givenness into choice so that the world into which they
are thrown becomes a world they can call their own” (Jackson 1995: 123). It does not matter
whether the conditions of uncertainty is experienced as negative or position, my informants’
and humans’ goal is the same. Hence, thesis’ grounding assumption and a theoretical point of
departure is that human beings share a fundamental and defining desire to be actors in the social
world which they might call home.
Research Aim, Question, and the Guiding Argument of the Thesis

This thesis is dedicated to exploring people’s sense of being-in-the-world, their experiences and imaginations, as well as their sense of acting in the social world which is being radically transformed by the neoliberal capitalist urban development. The urban transformation is rapid, quick, extending, monumental, and large-scale. The transformation does not only concern the material urban landscape but more importantly, it has an influence on informants’ being-in-the-world, relations, place attachments, and experience of living conditions. The goal is to unravel the many ways of how my informants make sense of the development and its impact. Resonating with Pink, I am not interested in how the city is being represented in economic, academic or sociological terms but my focus lies in the understanding of the city’s mediation through the many ways of how city’s transformation is being experienced (Pink 2008: 18).

First and foremost, I want to emphasise that there were various research questions leading my fieldwork. Eventually, the final and central research question is a result of the ethnographic data analysis and is as follows:

*How my informants make sense of the city’s transformation, shape their sense of being-at-home-in-the-world and act towards the changing social world which is acting upon them?*

Therefore, I am asking what ways, mechanism and practices my informants use in order to make sense of the changing city and in finding and constituting their sense of being-at-home-in-the-world. I wonder how they position themselves towards these processes of transformation and how they act towards them. I wonder what their experiences and positioning tell about their sense of belonging, recognition, and identification with the changing urban landscape and social relations.

The central argument of the thesis is the following: *My informants shape their sense of being-at-home-in-the-world via constructing and anchoring in different narratives of past and future temporalities and spatialities where they can engage with the social world. Hence, they either retreat to the past or reach towards the future in order to find a sense of belonging, control, identification and recognition. These practices are determined by their desire to seek a balance between acting and being acted upon the social world. Informants employ these practices to decipher what kind of city is being produced by the development, whom for and with what demands. They either 1) retreat to authentic, genuine past where they feel rooted in and at home while detaching and isolating themselves from the narrative of development; or 2) they seek a*
sense of at-home-ness and belonging by placing their visions into not-yet-realised promises of future utopia and narratives of development and modernisation while detaching from the backward and obsolete past. Surely, these two positions are not representing a clear-cut and bounded categories but rather two opposing edges of one spectrum of informants’ positions, experiences and practices. This spectrum represents often a contradicting, intertwining and overlapping continuum of processes of my informants' re-making and re-shaping their attitudes and positions in the social world. As Unni Wikan writes, ambiguities, inconsistencies and confusions are fundamental for people’s lives. By unravelling this mixture of overlapping positions, these accounts have become data not as imperfection “but as true aspects of people’s humdrum lives” (Wikan 1990: 33-4).

The social and academic relevance of the thesis

Anthropological perspective was very much helpful in grasping, understanding, theorising and analysing the subject matter of this thesis. It helped me to steer my view from analysing the structural forces to the very level of the subject’s being-in-the-world. Understanding the emic perspective and experience of the changing world is further crucial for understanding these global process in their local variations, effects and impacts. The social relevance of the thesis lies in mediating those voices which are not heard in the public or academic discussion in regard to the topic of the urban development of Bratislava. The public discussion generally concerns issues of losing industrial heritage due to the construction project or the social and economic gains of the city because of these processes. What is missing is the voice of those who are primarily subjected the urban transformation and lack any platform to be heard. Hence, I see the relevance of this thesis in giving a chance to these people to channel their views, experiences, expectation and perspectives of the changing social world.

The academic research about the urban development of Bratislava is primarily focused on its institutional, economic and political dimensions rather than on people’s living experience of it. Hence, my aim, however, is to contribute not only to the public discussion by offering the absent views and voices but also to promote an area of academic interest which might be of interest for local researchers and academics not only from the discipline of anthropology. The current academic research in Slovakia is focused on two main topics, first is the heritage value of industrial architecture and second is the socio-economic dynamics of current development processes in Bratislava. Starting with the first, it is, for instance, a publication by Nina Bartošová and Katarina Haberlandová (2016), Pavol Šuška and his focus on industrial heritage
as a new agenda for city authorities (2008), or the magazine Projekt: Slovak Architecture review (Dropová 2016). The second topic is again covered by Pavol Šuška, who is also focused on a Marxist analysis of the changes in Bratislava’s built urban landscape in the context of the post-socialistic transformation of the city (2012, 2014). Post-socialist transition and its effects on urban governance and urban planning are also in the centre of interest of Ján Buček (2014, 2015).

Specific anthropological research which would be focused on the effects of the development process is almost non-existing at Slovakia. There are few publications following the rise of civic activism and public discussion, both reacting on the devastation of industrial heritage in Bratislava. An ethnography which is probably the closest to my thesis is conducted by Daniel Luther from the Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology at Slovak Academy of Sciences. In his contribution Citizens, Developers and a Globalising City (2011), he elaborates on Bratislava as a city impacted by globalisation via an influx of foreign, goods, services, capital, people, brands and architecture. He focuses on the subject of developers who became the new driving force in shaping the built environment of the city. This short ethnography follows a group of informants and their reactions on the development and the city’s transformation. It proposes a rather negative outlook on the destructive role of developers as they are framed as destroying the local memory and urban identity (Luther 2011: 35-42).

In another research, Daniel Luther again studies the rise of local civic activism using specific cases of demolitions in Bratislava, however, obtaining his material primarily from internet discussions under media articles (Luther 2015a, 2015b). Luther also analyses the transformation of urban memory of Bratislava from the early 20th century by focusing on the changes of urban lifestyles and activities. Collective memory is not analysed via informants’ narratives but through activities of civic organisations which address significant urban localities places or through media articles (2009). Other anthropological research with some resonance to my topic, concerns addressing cases of transformation of industrial localities in Slovakia, however, without proper fieldwork (Darulová 2015). Another important anthropologist is Alexandra Bitušíková who stands beyond the volumes Cultural and Social diversity in Slovakia II and III. However, her focus is rather on the question of migration (2009) or, again, urban activism (2015).
Theoretical Framework

*Humans desire to seek and shape the sense of being-at-home-in-the world*

This thesis’ central theoretical point of departure is that human beings share a fundamental and defining desire to be actors in and shape social space in order to shape their sense of being-at-home-in-the-world. According to Michael Jackson, this desire also determines people’s interaction and relations with places (Jackson 2013: 14). His central argument is that the experience of being-at-home is based on “an elusive balance which people try to strike between being acted upon and acting” (1995: 123). The idea of home is not rooted and defined in a bounded, spatial, physical and static form but rather in a dynamic process of active experience, interaction and engaging with several places over one’s existence. For Jackson, “human beings need to have a hand in choosing their lives, and to be recognised as having an active part to play in the shaping of their social worlds” (2013: 191). Eventually, all of my informants, seek the feeling of having an active part and voice in shaping the world.

This assumption comes from Jackson’s ethnography on Warlpiri people (1995) in which he argues that the balance between being acted upon and acting that every each individual tries to reach is the determining process for a sense and experience of being-at-home (Jackson 1995: 123). Thus, Jackson helps me to unravel how my informants re-form and re-shape their sense of being-at-home in the changing living conditions. Having a similar project as Jackson, in this thesis I wonder how my informants “work—in reality and through illusion, alone and in concert with others—to shape the course of their own lives”. Hence, how they shape their “being-at-home-in-the-world.” (ibid.: 123). He argues this sense of being-at-home-in-the-world is based on processes of active interaction between the self and the world. Home is a lived relationship one creates within one’s existence, consisting of place where they put down roots (1995: 122). The world is not given but it is made and re-made by everything that humans do. “Sense of home is grounded less in a place per se than in the activity that goes on in a place,” writes Jackson (1995: 148). Hence, the sense of belonging and identification with the urban environment comes from “interactions with others, as well as our relationships to the everyday environments” (Jackson 2013: 24). This process of putting down roots and further identification, recognition and belonging to certain space is particularly significant for the sense of being-at-home.

Despite the thesis is spatially and temporally bounded, I want informants’ accounts to be perceived as experiences without time and space, overflowing “the boundaries of any one
concept, any one person, or any one society”. They bring us to “a dialectical view of life which emphasizes the interplay rather than the identity of things” (Jackson 1989: 2). This interplay consists of negotiation between subjects as subjects and as objects, between “acting upon and being acted upon by the world, of living with and without certainty, of belonging and being estranged, yet resists arresting any one of these modes of experience” (ibid). This constant interaction and reshaping of subjective and social worlds of my informants best illustrates their lived experience in the condition of urban development.

The uncertain human condition

Informants seek a balance between acting in and being acted upon by the transforming social world. This nature of this social world, the shape of the urban landscape is being decided by forces that none of my informants has control over. As Martin Heidegger notes, they have been thrown into this maelstrom, into the world made by others (Heidegger cited in Jackson 1989: 14). This experience of ‘thrown-ness’ is a shared experience of my informants, they all have been thrown into a changing world that they have to react to. As mentioned, in this condition of ‘being-thrown-into-the-world”, my informants share an experience of uncertainty. Defining uncertainty is rather difficult due to its extensive amount of connotations it associates, for instance, “indeterminacy, risk, ambiguity, ambivalence, obscurity, opaqueness, invisibility, mystery, confusion, doubtfulness, scepticism, chance, possibility, subjunctivity, and hope,” (Cooper and Pratten 2015: 1). In anthropology, uncertainty often implies unpredictable outcomes which are of a negative nature and thus make life precarious (Haram and Yamba 2009: 13). “Anthropologists (…) have generally treated uncertainty as a concept denoting non-recurrent and unpredictable phenomena that are intrinsically difficult to counteract” (ibid: 13). Nevertheless, for all of the informants, uncertainty is a common and determining condition shaping the ways how the make sense of being-in-the-world.

Therefore, I am drawing on John Dewey and treat uncertainty as the omnipresent condition of my informants with variations in its experiences. As stated in the introduction, it has a double nature, it is experienced in a positive or negative way. For John Dewey, this unpredictability is not contingent but rather almost an inherent feature of every practical activity, a universal condition of human existence (1930: 10-1). He argues that “the distinctive characteristic of practical activity (…) is the uncertainty which attends it. Of it we are compelled to say: Act, but act at your peril,” (ibid: 10). Hence, he implies that the informants’ uncertainty should not only be viewed as ‘inherent and natural’ but also as a universal condition of being a human.
being and thus unsurprising and always anticipated. Therefore, the process of development is perceived as an uncontrolled and decisive force shaping the living experience of my informants. As Cooper and Pratten claim, in such conditions, “uncertainty has become a dominant trope, an ‘inevitable force’” (Cooper and Pratten 2015:1). Moreover, I frame uncertainty also as a position from which my informants approach their everyday actions, as a determining everyday force and I wonder, how my informants deal with such conditions (Haram and Yamba 2009: 13). My concern is how people make sense of their lives and gain control and shape responses in existence where uncertainty is certain (ibid. 16).

Following Jackson’s argument, in shaping and interacting with the social world, people seek a sense of control and balance over their environment and over their own fate. They desire to have a voice in making decisions (Jackson 1995: 154). In the general condition of uncertainty and shaken grounds, it is “the sense of control, connectedness, and balance,” which are difficult to reach and maintain for my informants (ibid.). Framing development as an uncontrolled external force, my informants can only rely on social and economic contingencies, rumours, speculations and hopes. As Dewey says, it is “fortune rather than our own intent and act determines eventual success and failure,” (1930: 11). However, I do not intend to strip my informants of their agency, rather, drawing on Bernstein, contingency and chance are “inerradical and pervasive features of the universe” and not “signs of human ignorance” (Bernstein 1989: 10). Therefore, even in the pervasive uncertain condition, my informants seek ways how to act in the uncontrolled social world.

Insecurities and Rumours; Hopes and Contingencies

For some, this uncertainty is being experienced as social and economic insecurity, contingency and fear of the unknown future. When coping with this uncertainty and fear, many informants chose to refrain and isolate themselves from the development narrative. Others experience this uncertainty in the framework of the development narrative and see it as an inherent part of the urban and overall transformation. For them, it is important to focus on everyday intense work on the desired future that they hope will eventually be realised. For both categories of experiences and making-sense practices, I strongly rely on a compendium of essays on place attachment edited by Setha M. Low and Irwin Altman (1992).

When theorising informants’ experience of not belonging to the development narrative and insecurity, I draw on Hasselberg who says that when dealing with insecurity, people usually
refrain themselves and seek isolation and absence (Hasselberg 2016: 108). Drawing on David Hummon, who contributed to Low and Altman’s volume with an essay on community attachment and detachment, I theorise informants’ sense of alienation from the city and a sense of detachment (Hummon 1992). I also borrow from Barbara B. Brown and Douglas D. Perkins who analyses variations in place attachment, dislocation and isolation after a moment of radical disruption of place (Brown and Perkins 1992). In their case, the disruption is caused by natural disaster, in this essay’s case by the uncontrolled power of developers. When dealing with informants’ sense of powerlessness and isolation, I draw on Karlyn Geis and Catherine Ross’ work on causes and effects on alienation in neighbourhood communities (1998) and a rather theoretical work on alienation(s) by Melvin Seeman (1983).

On the other hand, when trying to understand why other informants feel to be part of the development and place their visions into its narrative, I rely on City of the Future by Mateusz Laszczkowski (2016). Resonating with my thesis, he analyses the transformation of post-soviet Astana into a modern metropolis, how it is being experienced and imagined by the city’s inhabitants and what is being transformed in their lives. This ethnography helps me to theorise these informants’ practices as relying upon not-yet-materialised promises of future utopias. I further borrow from Marshal Berman (2010) to assess informants’ understanding of the destruction and construction processes in the city. I employ the term “creative destruction” and argue that development process inherently brings costs but they are overweighed by the benefits and gains. Lastly, it is important to mention the notion of hope which is crucial determining force for these people. Drawing on Jens Zinn’s work on coping strategies with risk and uncertainty, hope can be seen as an everyday motivation which keeps them going (Zinn 2008). However, according to Hirokazu Miyazaki’s ethnography on Fijian knowledge and hope as a productive force generating knowledge, hope can work as a method for apprehending knowledge in uncertainty (Miyazaki 2004). Hope also works as shape people positive outlook towards the future (Coyle and Atkinson 2018).
Outline of the Thesis

The first two ethnographic chapters are focused on exploring the impact of urban transformation on informants’ sense of being-at-home, attachments to the city and practices they employ to react. The first one is dedicated to those informants whom the development brings insecurity and fear of the future. I start by mediating their experiences of disruption, pervasion, and shock and argue that with the destruction of urban landscape comes the disintegration of social relations as place attachments. Bringing Michal Jacksons in, I argue that the sense of being-at-home, sense of control, belonging, and identification, is being pervaded and disrupted. Therefore, the chapter’s central point is that when the sense of recognition, belonging and control is replaced with detachment and alienation, they retreat to the imagined past temporalities and spatialities to re-gain the certainty, control and sense of home. I show how instead of the narrative of development they rather attach and anchor themselves to the idealisations and romantisations of the city of past.

Focusing on the different group of informants, the second chapter creates a comparative tension with the first. I elaborate on the experience of those, who are able to place themselves into the development narrative, make sense of it as coherent, natural, functional and matching any western metropolis. For them, the narrative is experienced and perceived as a framework of not-yet-materialised utopia where they place their subjective visions and expectations. Contrary to the first group, they feel at-home and in-balance with the narrative of development, even though it also produces a sense of uncertainty. However, not only this uncertainty is placed within the dominant development narrative but also accompanied with hope which motivate their everyday activities and future expectations.

The last ethnographic chapter accounts on the determining aspect of shaping the sense of being-at-home-in-the-world, and that is the desire to seek a balance between acting and being acted upon the social world. I re-narrate the contrasting tension between the two groups of my informants while focusing on their sense of belonging or not belonging to the processes and narratives of development. One group of informants place themselves into a powerless position vis-à-vis the dominant force of private development while the other feels in balance with it and embrace it. As a result, my informants either place themselves out of these processes or within them. Concluding remarks are dedicated to the central theoretical assumption of the thesis and I come back to main Jackson’s theses and I discuss how the sense of being-at-home is being dislocated and disrupted but at the same time re-shaped and found in the collective activities in retreating to past or reaching to the future. I argue that home is not a bounded physical space
but can be formed and identified on collective action and placed in different temporalities and spatialities. Hence, the sense of at-home-ness is not disrupted, vanished and lost, rather it transitions from one central place to liquid and disintegrated imaginations, experiences, collective processes and practices.
Bratislava, a City of Transformations

The very subject of this thesis, must be perceived in the context of recent historical developments as well as in the framework of larger structural forces shaping them. With a focus on a particular locality of a city, it is necessary to account on the very transformation of the locality starting with the development boom in the early 2000s leading to the gradual change of Bratislava’s built environment. Nevertheless, this transformation must be seen as a part of a larger socio-political and economic changes at the national level. That concerns the country’s transformation from the central-planned economy and subsequent adaptation to the global system of capitalist neoliberal economy. I begin with the historical overview of the country’s and the city’s transformations and transitions and then proceed to the recent and contemporary dynamics of the studied locality.

Winners and Losers of the Post-socialist Transition

Slovakia belongs among young republics which emerged after the collapse of the Soviet bloc. It has declared its independence from Czechs in 1993, whom with we had formed Czech and Slovak Federative Republic for three years. These formations followed a rather more important event and that of the Velvet revolution in 1989. On November 17, thousands of people, mostly students, led by a civic platform Public Against Violence, gathered on main squares in Czechia and Slovakia and demanded freedom and break up from the USSR. Preceded by demonstrations in other satellite countries of the union as well as by its gradual economic downfall, the demand for change was met. Until then, both countries united under the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic were governed by the one-party totalitarian system. The party dictatorship gained its legitimacy from massive party membership and manipulating elections, it promoted full employment, central-planned economy, and uniformity of lifestyles. It also persecuted dissidents, staged fake lawsuits and sentenced many people to death.

After the Velvet revolution, Soviet political officials handed over their power to the representatives of Public Against Violence. However, having no political, governance and managerial skills, the platform declared an open call for executive and ministerial positions which were eventually occupied back by former Soviet officials. In 1994 the so-called “struggle
for democracy” begun (Šuška 2014: 33f). The struggle lasted until 1998 when the nationalistic and corrupted government was replaced by a centre-right party coalition promoting orientation towards the west, neoliberalisation, privatisation, and market-based solution. Slovakia has opened up to the free global flow of goods, people, services and capital and eventually has become a member of NATO and of the European Union. Economic effectiveness outweighed social cohesion (Šuška 2012: 160f).

In academic literature, this process is referred to as ‘post-socialist transition’ and in general it means “integration to the global political and economic system which recent dynamics has been defined by neoliberalisation” (Peck and Tickel in Šuška 2012: 157). Slovakia started implementing and executing such policies to converge with the global economic and political system. Having a market economy as a dominant dogma, Slovakia turned into a so-called neoliberal state in transition (Šuška 2014: 39). The central logic of social, economic and political model followed two major goals, the financialisation of the economy and implementing market principles via a so-called “shock therapy.” This, in many post-soviet countries and also in Slovakia led to a transformation depression, a radical downfall of salaries and increase in prices of goods and services (Šuška 2012: 160). Moreover, the process of neoliberalisation has touched upon other spheres than the economy. Implementing neoliberal policies led not only to removing market barriers but also privatisation of social services, pension systems or healthcare as well as privatisation of formerly state-owned strategic enterprises and factories, equal taxation, and tax holidays and subsidies for multinational corporations. Urban planning and development were no longer in the hands of public authorities but the responsibility was handed over to private investors (Šuška 2012 161f; 2014: 39f). The current trend of post-socialist transformation reduces the state to a managing role facilitating the interconnection between local, national and global flows of capital via market competition (ibid.: 161).

When speaking about the transformative processes of the country’s capital, Bratislava, I have to reach further back to history, specifically into the late 19th century. In the mid-1850, Bratislava, or Pressburg as it was called at that time, was one of the most important urban centres of the Austria-Hungary monarchy. It gained its prominence due to its strategic location at the trade crossroad between Vienna, Budapest or Prague as well as due to its access to the river which also served as a trade route in the monarchy (Holčík 2010, Bartošová and Haberlandová 2016: 72-4). Pressburg’s dominance became even higher with the gradual industrialisation of the region. “The industrial revolution began to manifest itself in Bratislava
with the construction of large industrial complexes in the final three decades of the 19th century,” writes Bartošová and Haberlandová (2016: 73). At the turn of 19th and 20th century, Pressburg was the third most important industrial city of the monarchy and few years before the IWW it was the second most important urban centre of Austria-Hungary. Its chemical, electro-technical, engineering, food-processing, and textile industries were among the most modern in central Europe (Husák 2012). The majority of these industrial complexes and the industrial production was concentrated in the studied locality. Many of them are mentioned throughout the thesis, for instance, Gumon factory, Kablo factory, Yarn factory, Jurkovič heating plant, Warehouse no. 17 or the old pumping station located in the Winter Harbour.

Their importance, as well as the importance of the entire locality, was contributing to the further development of city after 1919 when Pressburg was renamed to Bratislava. After the IWW and after the socialist revolution in 1948, the entire country has become a satellite of USSR. It has meant a radical social and physical transformation of the city. First, all the members of intelligentsia and bourgeoisie were evicted and replaced by the members of the working class or party’s officials and elites. In regard to the urban development of the city, it had experienced a massive construction boom following the modernistic and functionalistic dogmas (Bartošová and Haberlandová 2016: 76). Tens of neighbourhoods, residential areas and entire districts were constructed, all typical for its uniform panel architecture. On top of that, Bratislava had also undergone further industrialisation through state-planned and exercised investments into industrial production and modernisation (Holčík 2010). The industry became the most dominant economic sector of the city as well as of the entire region and the country and reached its peak in the 1960s and the 1970s (Bartošová and Haberlandová 2016: 75f). Since all the industrial production was concentrated in the studied locality, it has become known not only among the public but also among the academia and researcher as the industrial district (ibid.: 77).

The break-up with USSR and transformation to capitalism. Representative democracy and the market-based solution has had a significant impact on Bratislava. First of all, it marked the prioritisation of different sectors of the economy over the industrial production which has experienced a radical downfall. The industry has been privatised which led to the gradual decline of the production until all the factories of the industrial locality were closed in the early 2000s. In the meantime, the industry is being slowly replaced with the knowledge-based economy, financial and business services and administrative sectors (ibid.: 79f). Hence, if prior 1989, the Bratislava’s employment and production was concentrated in factories, after the mid-
1990s, it is so-called shared services centres like Amazon, Johnson Controls, Henkel or big multinational corporations as Dell or IBM. Analogously to the country’s post-socialist transition, Bratislava’s economy must have adapted to and converged with the needs of the neoliberal capitalist economy and thus transforming its urban landscape (Šuška 2014: 27f). It leads not only to the emergence of administrative-business and residential megaprojects but also to changes in the social structure of the city and the creation of a “capitalist-class”. It consists of many local investors, businessman and financiers who invest into real-estate via multinational corporations into real estate not only in Bratislava (ibid.: 40).

Owning many areas of the industrial locality, investor’s inactivity led to factories enclosure slow decay and during several years since the mid-2000s onward, to their demolition. The locality turned into an inaccessible neglected brownfield. These demolitions were often suspicious and in some cases they were illegal. For instance, developers did not announce the demolitions to the necessary offices or demolished a factory which was under examination as a potential national cultural heritage site. Developers argued with the poor statics of buildings, contamination or fire (Kráková 2008, Tkáčiková 2010). For many researchers, it means a loss of one of the most valuable localities of the city which they consider a representation of industrial heritage which historical, urban, architectonical and sentimental values as well as having specific genius loci. When referring to the destruction of this locality, which might have made Bratislava a unique and specific, they speak about “devastation” or “liquidation” (Husák 2012, Dropová 2016, Bartošová and Haberlandová 2016). It has been from the late 2000s when industrial architecture is being viewed as having a certain heritage value worth academic scrutiny as well as worth protection (Husák 2012, Bartošová and Haberlandová 2016: 94).

The dominance of private investments in urban development and following the market principles is also seen in the overall increase of private constructions over public ones. The construction of housing projects is on a decline while commercial and administrative projects are rising as they are more likely to generate profit (Šuška 2012: 164f). With regard to the number of private investments into the built environment and commercial real-estate segment as well as in regard to accumulating most capital, compared with other regions, Bratislava is the winner of post-socialist transition (Šuška, 2012: 173-4, 2014: 41). If in the past it was the industrial locality concentrating the entire industrial production, nowadays this locality concentrates the majority of private commercial investments of Bratislava. In the city district Ružinov, which the industrial locality is part of, there have been realised almost half of the all construction projects of Bratislava from 2002 until 2008. It is no surprise, that Šuška speaks
about this transformation as a radical due to its impact on the material landscape of the city (2012: 170; 2014: 52f). He says, that it is the only representation in urban morphology of a Bratislava as a result of economic transformation (Šuška 2014: 58).

Recent Manifestations of Capitalist Urbanism

To better understand the context of the locality, I want to present brief statistical account on the city and the industrial district drawing on the information from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (due to 2017). Bratislava region is one of the eight regions of Slovakia, consisting of other eight separate municipal districts, together at the territory of over two thousand square metres with almost 650 thousand inhabitants. Five of eight municipal districts together constitute the Municipality of Bratislava which contains even smaller units, city boroughs. The studied locality lies within a municipal district Bratislava II (over 92 km² and over 114 thousand inhabitants), and a self-governed city borough Ružinov (almost 40 km² and over 82 thousand residents). However, the studied locality also exposes to the borough of the Old Town (almost 10 km² and over 40 thousand inhabitants) which informants often refer to. Considering the territory of Ružinov and the Old Town together, the studied locality takes about less than one-third of it, east from the Old Town.

It is also necessary to introduce the context of the specific places, areas and territories which the industrial locality consists of and which I particularly selected for my fieldwork. I start with the Eurovea centre, which is hailed as the most successful and visited development project of the city (Kráková 2006). The commercial, residential, and administrative project, which is located on the Danube riverbank, was constructed on ruins of former Winter Harbour’s storehouses and warehouses in 2006. The only building that was preserved is called Warehouse no. 7, now serving primarily as a venue for private events. The entire Eurovea project consists of a large commercial shopping mall Galleria Eurovea, luxury Hotel Sheraton, four apartment buildings Eurovea Apartments, and three administrative buildings Eurovea Central. Opened in 2010, the entire area of 230 thousand square metres is connected with a frequently-visited promenade at the Danube riverbank. It presents itself as a public space, however, it falls into a category of semi-private hybrid spaces. Therefore, the regulations are imposed and exercised by the private owner of the locality and the hired security. At the same time, the promenade

---

resembles a public space without any obvious exclusive barriers. In the media, the project was announced as site-changing development, transforming the riverbank into a space of luxury, one of the most luxurious in Central Europe (Kráková 2006). The project also won The Building of the Year 2010 award according to experts as well as in the category of public vote (TASR 2010). Therefore, the exclusion is rather implemented through these class-based and economic mechanisms rather than through means of direct regulations of the investor. Nowadays, the entire Eurovea project is about to extend further to the east towards the area of Winter Harbour under the name Eurovea 2. It will prolong the promenade, bring another skyscraper, shopping mall, residential towers and offices. It is planned to be finished in 2021 and with the already existing project, it should form a so-called Eurovea City (TASR 2019).

Moving further from the Danube to the north of the city, there lies the centre of the industrial locality, now changing into modern corporate-administrative and residential district. Two of its former factories with surrounding areas, Kablo and Gumon, were considered culturally and historically important, therefore worth preserving (Šlachta 2012). In 2008, new owners demolished both factories under peculiar circumstances and proposed plans for the site’s development. As a result, it is not the industrial urbanism and architecture dominating the area but it is two over 100 metres high residential Panorama Towers’ skyscrapers with surrounding administrative buildings and lower Twin City administrative complex with another high tower already constructed. The residential project Sky Park including five more skyscrapers is also being constructed in the area between these two projects. Only two industrial buildings remained. One has been successfully transformed into a cultural centre Design factory. Paradoxically, it hosts primarily private and commercial events. The second one is Jurkovič heating plant, named after famous Slovak architect Dušan Jurkovič (Suchý 2018). This brownfield locality is the central area of Bratislava’s development. The most recent developments concern the proposal of two major developers in the area, J&T RE and HB Reavis, to obtain concessions from the city government. These concessions, which have been rejected, would have enabled them to construct more freely, with fewer administrative obligations and with an easier process of expropriation. The situation is even more interesting after a recent investigation which found out that ground of the industrial zones is toxic from the previous industrial production but also the construction boom is polluting the underground

---

2 They did not inform the city district’s Construction Office. One of the investors was eventually fined for demolishing Gumon factory which was at the time of demolition subjected to negotiation for being declared a technical cultural heritage site (Ryník, et.al. 2008).

3 The most telling example was a press conference of a developer Penta Investments, presenting the Sky Park residential project. I attended this press conference when I worked in a press agency.
waters. Despite these investigation’s findings, nothing has been done in the case (Dugovič 2017).

The last studied place is an old cargo harbour known as Winter Harbour which is still functioning as protective pools for ships in winter and as a transfer place for different materials, goods, and substances. Built at the end of the 19th century, it had soon become one of the most important and biggest ports in central Europe and eventually reaching its productive peak in the 1970s. It had also significantly contributed to the importance of Bratislava by connecting it with water trade routes as well as with other port cities of Europe. Not only was it in the centre of Bratislava trade but also of its social life. It hosted many trade shows, ceremonies, markets, and social gathering where people from different countries met and mixed (Haberlandová 2016).

The overall decrease in the significance of industrial production and naval transportation led to the decrease of the harbour’s importance and productive activity as well as to cuts in numbers of its employees (Dropová 2016). Currently, many of its warehouses remained empty or were demolished due to the construction of the Eurovea. With the increasing dominance of private investments and dislocation of the industry to the urban periphery, its future is unclear and uncertain. Despite that, the harbour is still one of the most important industrial centres of Bratislava and still largely contributing to the overall economic production and growth. It is one of the central harbours on a trade route Rhyne – Mohan – Danube. Moreover, it transfers two million tons of goods and substances annually (Vaníček 2018). Nevertheless, there are rumours and speculations circulating about its translocation and re-development into a residential-commercial zone or entire destruction. These speculations are strengthened by ridiculous visualisation of its possible form or by or by media article downplaying its economic importance (Liptáková 2016). However, the presence of contaminated and unstable soil and undeniable economic importance of the harbour make any development activities if not unlikely then very expensive indeed. Moreover, it dwells five technical heritage cultural sites which are protected by law. One of them is the former Pumping station, now a resided house with four families. It was constructed at the turn of the 19th and 20th century (Húšková 2016). For Slovak architects and researchers, the harbour is considered to have an important social, economic, urban, historical and cultural significance (Dropová 2016; Mokošová 2018, Haberlandová 2016).
Methodological and Ethical Considerations

Defining the Field-site

The process of development, in its narrower sense, leading into a material change of an urban built environment, has begun with the destruction of old industrial areas already owned by private investors. Later, these wastelands and brownfields have been gradually transformed into new administrative-business, commercial and residential districts. In order to grasp the temporal aspects of this transformation, my intention was to locate spaces which are not yet subjected to construction, spaces in the process of development and already transformed and recognized localities in use. Such an approach enables me to identify and juxtapose informants’ perceptions, experiences and imaginations of the development in its representation over time. Moreover, it makes the research topic “virtually the same” with the site of my fieldwork (Aull Davies 2008: 39).

The most distinguishing and representative area where such transformative processes take place is located east of the Bratislava’s old town. In relation to the central area of the city, this locality takes about one-fourth of it. Formerly a peripheral district, it was one of the largest and most significant economic and industrial centres of Bratislava or Pressburg in times of Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. 'Industrial Bratislava' and 'Austrian-Hungarian Manchester' are some of Bratislava’s denominations drawing upon of its industrial prominence in the region at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Now, only a few objects remember this industrial past (Husáč 2012).

At the south of the city, the industrial locality’s natural border is the Danube River with one of the most visited riverbank promenades. That is due to the Eurovea development project which consists of a revitalised and highly visited promenade connected to the Eurovea Gallery shopping mall and surrounding commercial, residential and administrative centres as well as reconstructed former Warehouse no. 7. The entire area is a hybrid semi-private space which is neither a private commercial centre nor a public promenade for everybody but acting in such a manner.

The riverbank promenade ends at the eastern border of the studied locality where, under the Apollo Bridge, there is an entrance to the old Winter Harbour. It is one of last remains of industrial Bratislava, still functioning as a protective and cargo harbour, although being
subjected to constant pressures of destruction and construction interests. It dwells five national heritage technical sites, one of which is an old but inhabited house of the former Pumping station. Moving north, to the central brownfield area and the northern border of the studied locality, this central area which until very recently was a fenced, inaccessible and neglected brownfield, is now subjected to one of the most massive development transformations in the city. This locality, where the plan is to create a wholly new district, is being referred to as a new business centre of Bratislava. It should accumulate several administrative, business, commercial, residential, services’ and financial centres. Hence, it is no longer industrial architecture dominating the area but two over-100 metres high residential Panorama City skyscrapers with surrounding administrative buildings. Then there is a Twin City administrative complex with another high tower being constructed. In the future, there will also be five residential towers of Sky Park development project. This central-north area is connected/divided with the Eurovea by the main road (Pristavná road) and a residential neighbourhood area of small brick buildings from the 1960s.

Approaching the Field

Since I had lived in close proximity to the field site, I had the possibility to observe the dynamics of the transformation as well as people’s movements in the field. I also closely followed the speed and radicalism of the development which I realised even stronger when I returned back to the city several months after the fieldwork. I felt alienated, estranged and detached to the city. I spent in the field seven weeks from February to March 2017. Since I had lived in Bratislava before, from 2010 until 2016, I knew the city and the area well.

Primary and Secondary Sources

In this thesis, there are accounts, quotations and longer statements from 23 recorded and two unrecorded interviews and two go-alongs, on average one hour long. Sometimes framed as an “ethnographic interviews”, they were usually conducted only with one person (Aull Davies 2008: 107), although there are three interviews with two persons but always with one dominant interlocutor. I also conducted one group interview with Greek IBM employees, with two dominant persons speaking. “Interviews are formally bracketed, and set off in time and space
as something different from usual social interaction between ethnographer and informant, in contrast to unstructured interviews which often just happen,” states Aull Davies (ibid. 106). Therefore, I interviewed my informants during scheduled meetings in cafés located in the studied locality, at their homes, studios, and workplaces. Except for two interviews in the English language, the rest of them was conducted in Slovak language and the translations were made by the author.

Moreover, in line with Russel Bernard’s definition, interviews were scheduled, open-ended but covering a list of topics, or what he calls an interview guide (2006: 210, 212). Hence, I never followed specific questions but rather a set of topics what gave me quite a lot of control over the interview but at the same time I was always flexible and prepared to steer the interview either a new direction or returning to the topic. In general, I inquired on the locality history, past experiences and perceptions, informants’ attitudes and experiences of the development process and the contemporary Bratislava and if and how they identify with the results of the city’s transformation and their future expectations, prospects, wants and desires. I was open to “introduce new topics and supplementary questions not included on the list” and also to encourage respondents “to expand on a response, or digress, or even go off the particular topic and introduce their own concerns” (Aull Davies 2008: 106). Such an approach brought some new topics and phenomena, for instance, the many levels of experiencing uncertainty, which would not have otherwise emerged. I conducted two informal unrecorded interviews which I did not plan when I spoke with persons I did not expect to meet. As a result, in these cases, I only rely upon what I remembered and noted down in my field diary.

Two of the interviews were conducted during walks in the studied locality and in its residential surroundings. They turned to be the most informative, thick and experiential sources of data for this thesis. Go-alongs “generate understandings of both how people constitute urban environments through embodied and imaginative practices and how researchers become attuned to and constitute ethnographic places” (Pink 2008: 176). The choice was determined by my research goal which is not to understand particular spaces but rather informants’ ’being in the world’ under the conditions of development by uncovering the collective spatial experiences. I was able “to observe their informants' spatial practices in situ while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time” (Kusenbach 2003: 463). Go-alongs enhance the limitations of participant observations where people do not usually comment on the concurrent experience and interpretations of the very moment of acting in natural environments (ibid. 459). As a hybrid method between participant observation and interviewing
it is more suitable for exploring the role of place in everyday lived experience, its constitutive role and the meaning of the physical environment (ibid. 458-463). Despite the boundaries of the locality were given, I let the informants select the meeting point as well as the route of the walk, because, as Pink says, selecting a route is part of place-making and imposing knowledge (Pink 2008: 179-80).

Go-alongs also generated one key informant of this thesis. Bernard says “key informants are people who know a lot about their culture and are, for reasons of their own, willing to share all their knowledge with you” (2006: 196). Being trained in urbanism and architecture and remembering the locality's transformation from the 1960s, Juraj Mojžiš not only provided me with insights to his subjective experiences but also with objective critical remarks which helped me to shape the focus of my thesis.

Two interviews were unrecorded due to the unwillingness of informants to speak and therefore I suspected that using a recorder might compromise my interviews. In these cases, I only rely on the written notes which constitute a part of the fieldwork diary. Even though the diary was useful during the fieldwork, I realised it does not involve supportive, interesting and worth mentioning ethnographic material for the thesis. The secondary sources are also several articles, blogs, and interviews in Slovak media, which are dedicated to either the destruction of industrial heritage or the issues connected to the progress of development in the city. This research was conducted prior to the fieldwork and only a few media articles are referred in the thesis.

Doing Anthropology at Home and reflexivity

Because I had known the locality well and I am familiar with it and it constitutes ‘my culture and society’, I consider this ethnography to be anthropology at home. As a result, it is necessary to account not only on the notion of ‘doing anthropology at home’ but also on what it means for the data collection and interpretation. Charlotte Aull Davies writes in the first chapter of her book that “all researchers are to some degree connected to, or part of, the object of their research” (2008: 3). This is very much the case for this thesis, provided that not only that I consider Bratislava a home but also the motivation from writing this thesis comes from the impact of the development process on my living experience with the city. When I lived in Bratislava from 2010 to 2016, the studied locality constituted and shaped my cultural life as well as social interactions and relations. When the place was destructed with the new
development projects, not only my social and cultural life was influenced but also the overall experience and identification with the city.

Being motivated by sentiments, I cannot claim I am neutral to the object of this study. However, “it is not at all straightforward to decide who is at home or when,” says Aull Davies (ibid. 41). I have been asking myself questions, to what extent Bratislava is really home because of the experience of isolation and separation during the fieldwork but also after it. Those sentimental motivations for conducting the ethnography had been very much present while doing it, however, during my last visit of the city, when I have experienced it as strange, disconnected, alienated and totally different, I realised that I can no longer identify with it and my relation to it is vanishing.

In the mentioned context of doing ethnography at home and my relation with the field, “where the relationship between researcher and researched is typically even more intimate, long-term and multi-stranded,” reflexivity is particularly important (Aull Davies 2008: 3-4). “Reflexivity expresses researchers’ awareness of their necessary connection to the research situation and hence their effects upon it,” she continues (ibid. 7). As a result, my every ethnographic interaction with the field and informants was preceded by stating for myself that I must not shape my questions and approach with the sentiments I have for the locality neither with critical and opposing attitudes I share for the development processes. I used this regular introspection as “[an] individualist and hence partially reflexive activity” to avoid creating the object of my study which I would use only to support my preconceived positions to the object of my study (ibid. 7, 15).

There are two major kinds of fieldwork limitations. The first is a methodological limitation and the second is of ethnographic nature. Speaking of the former, the limitation lies in the discrepancy between intended and conducted methods of data collection and hence, in the problem of what might be missing in the ethnography. Prior to entering the field, in the initial research design, I had considered cognitive maps to be one of the three major methods of discerning the informants’ perceptions and experiences together with walk-alongs and non-structured interviews. I believed that since doing and ethnography on space and place, cognitive maps would give me deep and thick insights on what are the visible and the neglected spaces in my informants’ mental construction of their living environment. Lacking mental maps, I am strongly convinced I gathered only fragmentary data on the overall informants’ mental constructions of the locality’s spaces. In relation to the general unwillingness of the informants to participate in the research, I was only able to conduct three go-alongs from which two are
relevant for the thesis. Being aware of the strength of the walk along I also understand how much data have been lost in the field by not having conducted more of them.

However, one of the biggest challenges of the thesis was meeting the informants and their general unwillingness to participate in the research. It was problematic not only for the quantity and quality of the collected data but also for keeping my motivations and my spirit high during the fieldwork. I met my first informants by a coincidence. I was walking to the neighbourhood area located between the new district and Eurovea, where I leaned my bike to a fence and all of a sudden I heard “You better lock it well so it doesn’t get stolen”. I turned around and see an elderly gentleman with a jovial smile. Knowing this is a great opportunity, we started talking and he introduced himself as Ján Antal. He contacted me with an elderly woman, Alžbeta, living across the hall of the same house. However, my luck ended there and eventually, as it sometimes comes with the ethnography, which turned out to be the best method for meeting new informants were the already established relations in the city. Moreover, I called many organisations, offices, and organisations with an inquiry to meet and talk and I conducted tens of calls, sent hundreds of emails and having friends in Bratislava, and regularly visiting the locality.

I had particular problems with seeking informants in the locality of Panorama City and Twin City centre where their residents and employees did not have the time or did not want to engage in any conversation with me. Moreover, I had difficulties entering the space of Winter Harbour. When I called to Slovak Shipping and Ports and asked on the possibilities to conduct interviews, I was told by the person who was some kind of manager that “A labourer is not there to make comments on the situation you are inquiring on”. Then they forbid me to speak to the employees of the harbour. Fortunately, I was able to conduct one interview with one of the Slovak Shipping and Ports’ employees and a person who wanted to remain anonymous but asked me to refer to them as ’former employees of the harbour’. Lastly, it was the surrounding neighbourhoods and residential apartments where I could not engage with enough informants. First, I contacted several housing companies which manage the apartments, asking them if they could distribute information about my research. There was not a single successful outcome of this method.
What (where) is home? Multi-sided ethnography

Following the discipline’s endeavour and shifts in the last thirty years, this thesis is focused on the nuances of the everyday experience of “my own society” being shaped by forces and capitalist urbanism, globalisation and neoliberalisation (Aull Davies 2008: 40-1). These global forces are not homogenous or homogenising forces but always experienced in their local variations, hence they exercised and shaped by local specifics (ibid. 41, 45). As a result, the field and subject of my study operate within a "global ethnoscape’, whose boundaries are permeable to people and ideas” (ibid. 45). That is, for instance, very much obvious in informants’ accounts welcoming and appraising the processes of development and modernisation which represent the current standard of the urbanised and international West. On top of that, the influence of global forces of neoliberalisation, modernisation and development with their local variations make it difficult to speak about home as about a bounded temporal and spatial unit (Marcus 1995: 96). At the same time, these global forces are being expressed as dissolving, liquid, fragmented under post-modern processes of specialisation, compression of space and time, flexibility, globalisation, transnationalism (ibid. 98). Local-global borders are getting blurred so it is up to an anthropologist to find and navigate their research in these fragmented and dissolved spatial and temporal configurations (ibid. 99). For Marcus, the proposed mode of construction of such multi-sited ethnography is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions or juxtapositions which the studied objects are associated with (ibid. 105-6).

The field was constructed not as a single bounded locality but rather as a temporal and spatial representation of the heterogeneous global forces affecting it. In order to unravel the effects of these forces on informants’ living experiences, my fieldwork leans to the modes of ‘following the plot’ and 'following the conflict'. By following the plot, I aim to unravel and collect informants’ narratives, memories, associations and stories they collectively related to the studied locality (ibid. 109). Moreover, such spatial transformation of the city generates particular conflicts around the ambivalent perception on the vanishing experience of the ‘old’ Bratislava being replaced with the new modern vision of the future city. The conflict is characterised by the feeling and experience of ‘loss’ vs. ‘gain’ of certainty, stability, future prospects, identification with space or a city as well as having a connection and relation with the city. Following this conflict helped me to identify informants’ experiences, perceptions and positions vis-a-vis these global forces which are transforming the city (ibid. 110).
Ethical considerations: Informed consent

Following the fundamental ethical principles of ethnographic research, every interaction between me and the research participant was grounded in the informed consent of the informant. Particularly in the areas where informants expressed uncertainty or were concerned that what they say might resonate in the media or result in eviction, the confidentiality of the research and research participants was my primary concern (Aull Davies 2008: 54). Hence, every interview started by asking whether the informant is comfortable with using their name and statements in my thesis. I always explained I am a student of anthropology doing research on the experience of urban transformation in Bratislava. Except for two persons, I am using real names and surnames of my informants. These two persons wanted to remain anonymous thus in one case I am using a different name and in the second case I am referring to the person as they wished me to.
1. Retreat from the Uncertain and Fearsome Future

I am standing in front of the Eurovea centre, a manifestation of successful development in Bratislava. A massive egg-like construction from glass-steel-concrete beyond me is swallowing and spitting out a never-ending flow of people. I can observe lots of young families, teenagers or fresh couples spending their time shopping, browsing or just wandering around. I will soon realise that this is rather an unusual place to be waiting for Juraj Mojžiš, an architect and urbanist who has been a resident of the opposing neighbourhood for more than forty years. I start this chapter with his narratives because they best illustrate and illuminate some informants’ collective experiences and perceptions of the changing city. During our two interviews and one walk in the locality, I am able to reveal and understand his sentiments about the locality, dissatisfaction with Slovak architecture and bitterness stemming from the nature of Slovak society and culture.

After a couple of minutes waiting, I spot a seventy-year-old good-looking, elegant, slim, and agile gentleman with a retro steel-frame bike he is pushing near him. It is Juraj Mojžiš, urbanist and architect living in neighbourhood near Eurovea. Even though he is very precise with his comments and accounts, he often gets incoherent and mixes up too many things together which makes it difficult to quote him. He is a wise, educated, and critical person who at the same time shares some kind of sour, disappointment and even a resentment with the society and the direction it is heading. After a short small talk, I ask him about the city, its urbanism and development. He immediately starts criticising Slovak architecture, saying it does not create coherent, comprehendible urbanistic units which would communicate with the social sphere.

This entire district is just getting worse and worse. I think it only consists of solitaires. If you consider other cities, they are homogenous and such architecture makes one feel calm. On the other hand, here we make solitaire architecture with perplexed angles, spaces and that make one confused.

Juraj argues that new construction projects lack any connecting urban features, such as traffic veins, alleys, trees paths, parks and narrow streets. On the contrary, urban spaces are disconnected and cut by spatial barriers, roads, cars, parking lots and other detaching features. As a result, people struggle in navigating themselves in public space, identifying with it and such a public space does not invite for its collective use. In a couple of moments, we have immediate experience of it. We walk along the Eurovea mall towards the Panorama City, when Juraj stops and tells me:
Look at this! It’s what makes me nervous. That mixture of material confuses my mind and my eyes. This absolute discrepancy, disharmony also characterises these times we are in. When you look at it, you ask, ‘what is it’? Does it leave any traces in you? I’m not able to define it. It doesn’t have a beginning and an end. I don’t think it will ever be an oasis of serenity. It contains too much glass, a lot of different and unrelated materials. I don’t even want to look there.

We then proceed to the inner area between the two towers of Panorama Towers (Figure 3) where Juraj comments on the place which is supposed to be a future park for the residents:

Do you really think they will ever go here? They would go mad! I feel anxious and sick when I’m here. It’s a bad environment with a bad architecture. Look at it! What does it want to be? What does it give to people?

I respond that maybe it will fulfil its purpose and the towers’ residents will be meeting down there and make a community. He immediately objects, “We had such places but we demolished them all.” He thinks such a place will never create any social connections and relations. “The basic unit of your social background is your family and your household. Although, when you take this place, you just cannot identify with it.” Hence, it is not only the place per se which is important for Juraj but also the social relations it associates. As Low and Altman write, attachment to a place can actually mean that social relations the place associates are even more important for identifying with a place (1992: 7). “Places are, therefore, repositories and contexts within which interpersonal, community, and cultural relationships occur, and it is to those social relationships, not just the place qua place, to which people are attached,” they summarize (Low and Altman 1992: 7). When leaving the Panorama City, we both have troubles navigating ourselves out of the area. All of a sudden a motorbike shows up out of nowhere, almost hitting us both. When I later listen to the field-recording, I hear how our conversation lags due to constant attempts to find physical stability in the space. The record is distorted with a noise of cars and surrounding construction. I remember how unstable and threatened I felt, unable to relate to one certain tangible and solid point or path. “There is no alley, no pathway, only masses of arid concrete. What direction it is oriented towards?” Juraj remarks. After finally leaving the locality, I constantly hear him swearing, “…so many barriers, visual barriers…” Continuing further to the brownfield location, his inability to identify with the place emerges again. He speaks of that area in the past, comprising small houses, warehouses and storehouses but in the present, it makes no sense to him. “Should I identify with this? How should I identify with this? With what exactly? I don’t know where the true connection – visual or spiritual, with the old town is. The connection doesn’t exist.” It shows how the link with the place he considered home has been lost. Feeling convoluted in a disintegrating environment, Juraj is lacking any tangible
and solid feature to rely upon. Juraj’s experience of the walk-along demonstrates how many of my informants perceive and experience the radical urban transformation. Jackson says that “If home is where a person is at peace with himself, where he can honestly say there is nowhere else he would rather be,” (1995: 51). Accepting such notion of a home, the following informants are gradually losing the sense of it. Contrary to ‘being at peace with oneself’, when confronted with the transforming urban environment, they feel disrupted, shocked, divorced from reality.

Juraj has introduced me to one of my other informants who had a similar experience with the locality. Jana Oravcová is a forty-year-old woman employed in culture, art and design sector living in the same neighbourhood as Juraj. She is the second and the last to participate in a walk-along with me. After a short small talk, we are slowly leaving the Eurovea promenade and reaching the Panorama City Towers. Jana suddenly stops with, I see in her facial expression that she is overwhelmed and astonished:

I’m surprised. I thought they are constructing garages but I didn’t know they are building these two dreadful towers. Jesus Christ! I would never think so! Well, I would never like to live here. I don’t even know what it is exactly. You know, when it was being constructed, I observed it from behind the window but I never paid much attention to it. And then, all of a sudden, I noticed there are several floors already constructed.

We do not take the route across the Panorama Towers as with Juraj but we continue further under the Apollo Bridge towards the brownfield area. Along the way, Jana points at “some building” which she does not know the purpose of. It happens to be a Pumping station and I
neither suspect there might be people living inside at that period of the fieldwork. We pass a congested road, enter the brownfield locality and walk towards the Twin City centre. Jana slows down again, amazed by the speed of the locality’s destruction. She seems confused again, looking around, observing, making sense of the area by remembering places, buildings, art & design studios which used to be there only a few years ago. “And now, it’s all gone.” She starts speaking for herself, commenting on everything she sees. I hear her asking, “And this? What is this? Is this a showroom?” Then she turns back to me and says:

This is a dead zone. A nicely done dead zone. You have nowhere to go, nowhere to sit. That’s all that it is. It’s nothing. I was here last year … What has happened since then? Wow! I must take a picture of it. Jesus Christ!

We both share an intense present moment of being deprived of some memories associated with buildings that are already gone. It is becoming more and more difficult to visually navigate ourselves in the memories of the place. We start guessing exact locations of already destroyed objects, spaces, pubs, venues that we both remember (Figure 4.). According to Brown and Perkins, this moment of shock from the places’ disruption demonstrate how fundamental they are to the experience and meaning of everyday life (1992: 279). It feels like being in the midst of mental deconstruction of spatial imagination caused by the process of physical destruction. In our minds, we are both in the past but seeing the locality in its present form, as a destroyed “moonscape”, the image is suddenly and slowly disintegrating and dissolving.

Uncertainty as Contingency and Insecurity

What these experiences of shock, disruptions and unexpected changes bring, is the ubiquitous experience of uncertainty determining the overall informants’ living experience of the changing urban environment. For the following informants, the experience of uncertainty is framed as contingency and insecurity. Both these experiences of uncertainty are accompanied with the lack of information about the development and individual future prospects. According to Susan R. Whyte and Godfrey E. Siu, contingency best frames the social conditions where situations are dependent upon each other but occur in uncertain i/regularity (2015: 19). Both these experiences of uncertainty are accompanied with the lack of information about the development and individual future prospects. This notion emerges at the very beginning of my fieldwork
during the first conducted interview with Ján Antal, a 70-years old pensioner living in the neighbourhood built in the late 19th century located opposite to Eurovea. “You better lock that bike so it doesn’t get stolen,” he shouts at me when I am in the neighbourhood looking for informants. I know it is my chance and after getting to know each other we meet a few days later. In a local café, I ask him on his attachments to the locality, the development and the prospects of the future. He replies he can no longer imagine and speak about the future of the city. He argues that future conditions of the city are unknown and subject to contingent processes that he cannot influence. Moreover, he further complains there is a decreasing amount of information about the development of the city. This resonates with Whyte and Siu’s claim that uncertainty – as a state of mind, is about being “unable to predict the outcome of events or to know with assurance about something that matters to us,” (2015: 19).

Ján helps me to find a fieldwork’s second informant, Alžbeta who is his neighbour living just across the hall. She is an almost ninety years old lady who agrees to host me in her nice and tastefully furnished and decorated apartment where she lives alone. At the beginning of the interview, I suspect I will need to gain her trust, fortunately, after over two hours of a pleasant conversation, I am leaving with a piece of chocolate and best wishes. During the interview, she complains she cannot find enough relevant information about the construction projects in her

Picture 3. The built remains in the brownfield locality with Jurkovičová heating plant in front and twin city in the back. Photo: Author
surroundings. She says she is completely unsure what might happen because “every year they say something different.” She has stumbled upon diverse and contradicting news of what the locality is supposed to be. “Nobody knows what will be there. I don’t know what that rich millionaire is doing there …” This lack of information does not concern only developers’ plans and the shape and form of the Bratislava’s visual landscape but also the very future itself. In that regard, some of my informants are forced to rely on rumours and speculations which help them to make sense of the contingent futures. Rumours and speculations do not only work as a source of information informants can rely upon but also as a making-sense practice to interpret the new-built locality. Hence, rumour is serving to fill the gap where the knowledge of what is going on in the city is missing. Rumours and speculations are collective attempts to understand the changes in the social world and make sense of them. They help my informants to mentally navigate themselves in the new socio-spatial space which they have troubles understanding (Fine 2007: 5f).

As Fine writes, “rumor is a form of mnemonic practice, a way of conceiving how the world is structured” (2007: 5). Speculations also help them to conceptualise the social groups which have moved to the city and occupy new residential zones. For instance, Alžbeta guesses that Panorama City is only for the rich elites and people who have no relation to the historical background of the locality. “A true Bratislavan would never go there. Maybe it is only for those from abroad who don’t realise they are actually in the industrial area.” She agrees that these new apartments are not primarily meant for housing but for renting and investing which a current trend among young rich people. “They don’t know where to put their money to. So they buy apartments but never move in. They have tenants who pay them the invested money back.”

It does not matter if Alžbeta’s rumours are true or false, their power lies in their ability to provide informants with a mechanism to shape the social world, and to cope with ambiguities of the uncertain present (ibid. 6f). Some informants also say they consider real-estate speculations and investments to be the reason why residential projects are sold out. They do not believe that the investor eventually managed to sell all the rooms, they think they are abandoned and serve only profit-generating purposes. When on the walk with Jana, she shouts on me: “There are no lights! I don’t see people living there! I don’t see anything that would indicate people living there. It is either bought for real-estate speculations or people invest money there.” Despite the claims that the apartments are all sold out, she thinks it is not true and it is used either as a marketing strategy or there is a difference between sold and resided apartments. Neither Juraj Mojžiš believes that the apartments are fully inhabited because of the very same
reasons. Hence, certainly, there are very few people living in the building and such claims are
only tactics of a developer to attract more potential buyers. In any case, it does not matter
whether rumours are true or false, they are a making sense practice, about the social world and
about the past, present and close future (Fine 2007:6-8).

The second way of experiencing uncertainty which stems from the disruptions and shocks
brought by development is the sense of insecurity. The experience of insecurity is also
accompanied with a lack of information, however, with more pervading impacts. This is
particularly significant for the residents of the Pumping station in the Winter Harbour who had
experienced before a neglectful approach from the side of public authorities as well as
developers. It all started in between 2002 and 2005 when a new Apollo Bridge (Figure 5) over
the Danube was constructed and opened. This event made the development in Bratislava visible
and experienced also for the so long isolated residents of the Pumping station. It marks a
moment when they realised that development can have an impact on their lives too, how
unexpected it might be and what kind of uncertainties it can bring. Since the residents do not
own the house but the Bratislava Water Company, they were not asked to declare approval for
the bridge construction thus they collectively state nobody had informed them about the planned
construction. One of the first Pumping station’s residents I speak with is Dagmar, Miroslav’s
girlfriend, about a forty-year-old employee of Bratislava Water Company. We speak at the
house’s courtyard, where she uses to sit at a bench, smoke cigarettes and observe the Danube
or wandering cats. She recalls that in 2002, nobody informed them about the construction plans:

I still say that they must have forgotten that there are people living here. Nobody can prove me wrong in
this! Originally, the bridge was supposed to be fifty metres further from the house but then somebody
decided to move it closer. At that time, nobody knew this house was inhibited. Well, I think they didn’t
know, forgot, or didn’t care.

Later I speak to their neighbour and friend, Mrs Pekaríková from a floor above. Even though
she lives alone in a single apartment, having a lot of friends and family which often visit her as
well as being dedicated to a lot of activities, she does not feel lonely. “That is something I didn’t
like, that nobody told us anything. At that time, we only heard rumours, for instance, that we
will have to move or that we will have to live under a bridge and so on.” In the present, when
the development proceeds, they feel the situation is repeating. Again, they say, it is difficult and
almost impossible to find any relevant information about developers’ future plans and projects.
Miroslav, who joins the conversation with Dagmar, comments:
I don’t want to lie to you but I read it somewhere, there are rumours that the entire harbour will be demolished because of the ongoing development. However, we will see what will happen.

Since the Pumping station is a heritage site, its residents are not afraid they will be evicted because of the development since that would be illegal. However, new constructions might increase the properties’ values and thus increase their rents. Gabriela, one of the neighbours says:

Yes, we are worried about the impact on us. I mean, finance-wise. However, we haven’t had any specific reason to discuss this issue further yet. Nevertheless, you are always aware of it and at the same time afraid of it. We are ordinary people. If the rent increases, it would be a significant problem for us. There are many rumours out there about some construction plans in the harbour. Although, I haven’t seen anyone walking in the harbour and observing, calculating, measuring … but if it is true, I don’t know what’s going to happen to us … if they count with us or not.

These accounts how the experience of uncertainty is expressed in the threat of possible eviction from certain places or in forced moving out because of the increase in rent. Cooper and Pratten say uncertainty as insecurity is “the lived experience of a pervasive sense of vulnerability, anxiety, hope, and possibility” (2015: 1). According to Dein, uncertainty, as a structural force, is even more present with the supremacy of the neoliberal capitalist state, which exacerbates social contingency and uncertainty (2016: 3). Hence, dealing with uncertainty is, in this case,
more about securing and mobilising more resources and control over informants’ lives (Dein 2016: 19).

This fear of the future is also well embodied in an intense dialogue between Dagmar and her boyfriend Miroslav. Dagmar is saying she is worried that the development will have a radical impact on the current form and structure of the harbour when she gets interrupted by Miroslav:

Dagmar, there are two reasons why the Winter Harbour will remain as it is. First, it is a transition place for international trade. Second, it is a floodplain. Once every ten years, the water gets very high. Simply, there is nothing to be constructed here. On the contrary, they will rather be demolishing …

At that moment, Dagmar catches up and agrees with Miroslav:

Well, yeah, that’s what I was trying to say … destructing. We all have information that some developers are interested in certain estates of the harbour. In such a case, if the lands surrounding this building are sold, the new owner could demand higher rents and that would be a great financial burden for us.

What becomes obvious here, is how insecurity is closely linked with the importance of having control over one’s world. These residents are losing this control over the forces bringing insecurity and uncertainty, they lose control over the social world they inhabit. “Contingency denotes uncertainty about what may or may not occur (…) it is to lack control and be subjected to uncertainty,” Whyte and Siu claim (2015. 20). For instance, Mrs Pekaríková claims, that if they want, developers would make them leave the house. She says:

One begins to speculate that they either start doing problems to you and you decide to leave by your own or they offer you something, like part of an apartment, and then kick you away. You either take the offer or they give you money and you have to find an apartment by yourself. Of course, you sometimes have these ideas. You know, this is a lucrative locality, it’s nice, close to the city centre and with a lot of parking opportunities. It’s obvious to everybody, particularly J&T or Penta Groups which want to privatise it.

She explicitly expresses her doubts about what might happen in the future:

I have always thought that this house will be here forever but now I am not that certain. Moreover, I always have to repair things here but at the same time, I ask myself, ‘why? What is the point of doing so?’ I don’t know what happens in five or ten years’ time. What can I do if I don’t know what will happen in the future that nobody tells you anything about? Nobody informs you about future plans.

“Uncertainty implies recognition of change and awareness that states of affairs are not static; they can alter drastically, for better or for worse,” writes Åsa Boholm (2010: 167). With the possibility of rent increase, losing workplace or simply the inability to address one’s living conditions, dealing with uncertainty is more about securing and mobilising more resources and control, seeking information and trying to anticipate the future. It is clear that uncertainty is inherently linked with insecurity, the lack of support “when adversity strikes” (Whyte and Siu
2015: 19). Returning back to central points of this thesis which draw upon Jackson, it is clear that with the loss of control and sense of acting towards the world, they also lose a sense of belonging, identification and feeling of at-home-ness. However, if humans desire to have a say in the social world, these informants seek ways and mechanism how to gain back the control and belonging.

From the Sense of Alienation to Anchoring in the Romantic City of Past

What these pervading effects of development, uncertainty, contingency and insecurity bring in regard to the relation with the new city and place is a sense of alienation and detachment. Many informants intentionally isolate themselves from the area because they perceive as inaccessible or as it is not being built for them. They are not able to find a sense of belonging with the new city and they do not feel to have part in the development. This is the very case of Alžbeta, who refer to the new buildings in the locality as to “monsters and spectres“, throughout our interview. She does not have a single reason to visit the new city because she does not consider it to be built for her:

I would never go there. This new place doesn’t correspond with what Bratislava used to be. Absolutely not. I would rather welcome a park being constructed there but residential buildings? I don’t know, I wouldn’t feel well there. When I walk nearby those buildings I only swear, I am horrified. It is a waste of words to even comment on how they have disfigured Bratislava.

Miroslav’s inability to access the locality is best illustrated in a short story he tells me. It concerns the reconstruction of the Warehouse no. 7 near Eurovea, a former industrial building which was reconstructed by the developer who has built the Eurovea project. For Miroslav, the building has remained inaccessible and he himself is confused what its purpose is:

I don’t understand it, I don’t know what is going on there. Is it used? I think it’s empty. Once, I was nearby and I decided to go there and have a look. I saw it had a doorbell, some buttons but … well, there were some cars, two or three … maybe security. That was all. I rather decided to run away. There is nothing going on in there. It appears unused.

For Mrs Pekaríková, when the locality was inaccessible, closed, and fenced, she used to go for long walks there with her kids. Now, when the area implies access and use, she has lost every reason to go there. He says:
I remember how it was enclosed and fenced during the construction. Later then, I just become indifferent to the entire locality. For me, it was more interesting in the past. I mean, I like modern, clean things but that place was something that I lived within it in the past. Now, I’m not impressed by it. Buildings are of low quality and the surroundings are totally inaccessible.

The accounts demonstrate the sense of refraining and detachment my informants are experiencing in the new district. Ågård and Harder (2007) found out, that when confronted with uncertainty, the three main coping strategies of relatives of patients in an intensive care, are enduring uncertainty, putting self aside and forming personal cues (170, 173-5). Refraining from the processes and results of the development and the studied new locality is a recurrent experience and practice among these informants. However, they do not only detach from its built environment but also from the social classes and groups they think began to occupy the new city. For instance, Alžbeta says:

We don’t go there and we're not interested in people who bought it. We’ve never been in touch with those elites of the society. They see us as scum. These people, they never walk, they only leave their places in cars. Hence we aren’t able to know them.

---

You know, they think that when they construct a twenty-floor high building, they will change a city into The City. However, it’s the people who make the city, and we don’t have such people in here. On Friday, it’s empty here because everybody returns back to the east. Half of the employees are easterners. It is only rich people buying those apartments, not Bratislavans.

When I told Miroslav that Panorama City won the Building of the Year 2016 award\(^4\), not only he gets annoyed but also makes a remark that it will only be for the upper and rich classes anyway:

I wouldn’t live there even for free. I can’t imagine how expensive those apartments are there. It’s absurdly expensive and only such apartments will be constructed. Oh, and imagine the strong wind there. I think people even don’t know about it.

As a result, these informants feel alienated to the new urban environment as well as to the people who inhabit it. Either the new people are only temporary inhabitants without a real connection to Bratislava or abstract rich elites. In both cases, they contribute to their feelings of not being part of the city anymore. They do not feel that the city of future is being built for them, they do not place herself to this city, among its people, neither to the process which brought them. As Brown and Perkins says, terms alienated or detached “describe instances

\(^4\) The Building of the Year 2016 award is organised by an independent Association for the Development of Slovak Architecture and Construction - ABF Slovakia (JTRE 2017)
when positive bonds have not been developed or maintained” with a place (Brown and Perkins 1992: 283). These informants lack belonging and recognition with the new city, they neither feel they can be part of the development.

It might be argued that the experience of detachment is understandable in localities which are not yet completed, fully recognised and working. However, this sense of alienation is very much visible also in the Eurovea project which is the symbol of successful and functional development in Bratislava. For example, Dagmar confesses she suffers phobia of crowds thus she cannot spend a long time there. “I like the riverside but I feel it is a bit isolated. Moreover, it’s too modern for me,” she comments. Gabriela also dislikes the place and visit it when necessary:

I don’t go there to walk, to browse, to spend my free time, to talk to a friend, or to have a coffee. I don’t like that. I don’t like those many families who go there for a walk. I find it stupid. I go there only when I need something.

Mrs Pekaríková thinks that Eurova divides the city into two counterparts, the old, historical and the new, modern. Despite she appreciates the project and its qualities, she finds it “too exposed, too big and too much for such a locality.” The most critical person is Juraj Mojžiš who said he intentionally avoids the place. He appreciates the area’s transformation as a lesser evil of all the bad scenarios that might have been realised.

I don’t see Eurovea as an adornment of the locality. We (he and his family) barely visit it. Well, ok, the promenade is nice, that’s fine but you have to understand all these malls are generic from the inside. You can’t distinguish them from one another. Moreover, I don’t see any wider social and spatial relations here.

As a trained urbanist and architect, he shows me all the defects and technical problems of the place during our stroll. He says the public areas are highly inaccessible with a lot of barriers for bikes or mother with strollers, handicapped people or running kids. In resonance with some accounts on the social structure of the locality, Juraj says it is “a posh parade for snob people who go here only to be seen.” Even though he thinks the place is not inherently exclusive, its visitors “aren’t ordinary people. They live in cafés, they are dressed like that.” For him, these are not people he feels any sense of attachment with.

This is also the reason why he no longer feels at home in this locality which he was born and raised in. Juraj struggles to identify with the physical cityscape as well as the people who occupy it. It is the very transformation of the locality which makes him not only to cut all ties and relations with it the environment but also to be sceptical, bitter and refrained in all his narratives.
It’s impossible to return back to the past. In terms of people identifying with a place, a lot of have been already lost, destroyed. You can’t return history back. All these places have been dehumanised and I don’t want to walk at those streets anymore. It has all diversified and I don’t want to come back there.

He is aware that any attempt to bring the locality back to its previous shape and form would be meaningless, even ridiculous. As Hummon writes, the sense of alienation to the place is “is often associated with constrained mobility, but it also may arise, over time, from the transformation of a place,” (1992: 269). Juraj has decided to withdraw from his living environment which no longer makes sense to him. “There is no point in insisting upon strict continuity over time,” writes Jackson (1995: 35). Juraj’s experience resembles a state of being in exile, where the urban change has forced "an unhealable rift" between Juraj’s native place and he himself, “between a self and its true home” (Jackson 1995: 2). For Juraj, the last place of refuge, the last place where he feels a sense of belonging is Winter Harbour (Figure 6) which he very often visits to observe and to contemplate.

It is one of the nicest urban features of Bratislava. Sometimes I walk at the railway bridge, observe the pools and take photos of them. I like that and I do it often. I either go there from the side of the Apollo bridge and observe the ducks or take the opposite side and look at Eurovea and imagine what it could have been instead (…) I love that place.

Juraj says the development in Bratislava does not create collective social relationships within an urban community. I ask him whether it is possible to reconstruct the harbour and other past places into a modern condition that would make sense to him and the community. He replies it is not possible because “we have lost continuity with the life itself,” and continues:

The harbour can still be considered ‘a historical Bratislava’. In a sense, it can have a modern form but it must be based on its ‘historical roots’. In such a case, I think the harbour can still participate in our lives. This place well represents our relationship to ourselves and our history. Although, the rest, it has all been demolished. We have destroyed everything.

He dreams of its reconstruction into students’ loft apartments which would be part of a larger district. He delivers me an image where past and future meet while both are relevant. His sense of belonging to the world is equalled to places which he identifies with Jackson says that “people objectify their sense of being and belonging in images of a place,” (1995: 19). Although, at the same time, this sense of belonging is vanishing, disrupted and pervaded together with the places which are being demolished or transformed. These accounts further resonate with social and spatial alienation of some of my informants with the city which is being built. As Hummon, argues, eventually it can generate an overall alienation from the community which the person resides. “Such alienation from community expresses itself in both a person's
perspective on the community and their feelings about that community,” Hummon adds (1992: 269). My informants claim they do not feel a sense of attachment that the community of people inhabiting and using the new district of the city. They are people who have never lived in the city, who come from other parts of the country and work enough or are rich enough to be able to afford the expensive new locality.

Bringing these accounts into the light of Jackson’s theory, I argue that they demonstrate that for them the sense of home is vanishing. They feel confused, perplexed, unrecognised and alienated from the city and its people. “Home is a lived relationship one creates within one’s existence by interaction with the living environment. The sense of home consists of places

where one puts down their roots” (1995: 122). Jackson recalls Heidegger’s notion that to be a human being means to dwell (1995: 86). However, under spatial transition, uncertainty, losing grounds and volatility, the notion of dwelling is threatened and disintegrating (ibid. 87). Hence, when the solid grounds are disintegrating, the sense of home and belonging is being lost, many of these informants are seeking these certainties somewhere else. As Boholm argues, uncertainty is often politically and socially charged and because it has an impact over people’s livelihoods and their wellbeing, they are always finding ways how to address it, alleviate it or adapt to it (Boholm 2010: 167-8). In order to address this uncertainty but also to make sense of the changing social world, many of these informants create an image of “the city of past” which

Picture 5. One of the pools in the Winter Harbour. Photo: Author
serves as a different temporality and spatiality they retreat to. Reaching to the past is a way how to make sense of the conditions where they feel not-at-home, alienated, and uncertain. Hence, it serves as temporality and spatiality which dwells collective experiences which they can relate to and rely upon.

As Jackson writes, specifically in the conditions when the sense of home is disintegrating, my informants are active, they desire to be actors in social space which they identify with, are recognised in and belong to (Jackson 2013: 14). The city of past is the city they understand and make sense to them, it is a city they anchor themselves in the conditions of the urban environment being disintegrated because of the process of development. Although, on my surprise, when they speak about the locality in its past condition, they frame it as isolated, inaccessible, fenced, neglected and decaying brownfield. For instance, Jana recalls:

At that time, it was an industrial district without anything existing there and without any access to the Danube. It was a dead area. There were some small storehouses and private garages. The entire locality was fenced and dead.

Ján Antal says that after the factories closed down, the entire industrial zone turned into a “horrible place” which he rarely visited. It was “a null space, a neglected, not visited, non-functioning and sometimes dangerous”. He ascribes the locality, where Eurovea is constructed now, with similar features of “horrible, neglected, and scary, without life, no-place, and savage.” He remembers that these localities were often visited by “insidious elements”. Despite, he frames the locality as “scary” and had never recommended anyone going there, he claims he had always found a feeling of serenity there. This serenity is, however, long gone with the development.

Alžbeta proves me wrong when I assume that the locality was more visited when the factories were in full operation. She claims that the industrial areas were exclusive for workers and inaccessible for the general public. “We did not visit this place often, it was for factories’ employees,” she says. However, in her narrative, it was an integral part of the city, a feature which had made the city. At that moment I understand that even inaccessible, decaying and neglected places can create this past spatiality for my informants. It is the image of past time and space that they understand and they feel rooted in. They share “a strong, local sense of home and are emotionally attached to their local area” (Hummon 1992: 263). This can be seen in how they ascribe the past with particular romanticised features of genuineness, authenticity and originality. When I speak to Alžbeta, all her narratives and accounts are told through the framework of the past times. Moreover, when referring to factories, streets, localities and
various social categories, she uses local and archaic names which makes it sometimes difficult to understand what she refers to. She recalls her childhood and teenage memories and frames these times as pristine, idealised, without any problems, troubles, more authentic and calmer. For instance, she tells me stories about her trips to nature. “Everything on feet. Wells were the wells, you could drink from it. You know, people nowadays do not value nature.” She continues about the city saying how she misses “the old Bratislava” with small family houses. “You could feel family and familiar people everywhere. People were friendlier.” When I ask her on her current relations among neighbours, she says they no longer exist. She then returns to the past:

Owners of these small shops would always greet you. When a mother went to buy her a coat, her children were always given some remains of garments to knit for their dolls. Nowadays, nobody knits for their dolls. In the past, we knew how to appreciate things, we were raised in different manners. Even if we met our neighbours ten times a day, we would always greet them. We said ‘kissing your hands’. When I meet somebody now it is as if they forgot how to say hello or hi.

For her, Bratislava is perceived as one whole, one connected urban unit where the industrial features are not seen as distinguishing but integral parts of the everyday urban experience.

Once a week, there was a horrible smell around the entire factory. First, they were cooking the bile. Then they mixed it with something, moulded it and finally sold to people. They put it on their tables for example.

She then stands up and brings me some remains of the items and materials which were produced in Gumon factory. I realise that the inaccessibility of the area does not mean that it must have remained without collective experience. Alžbeta’s accounts together with other informants’ narratives show that the locality was part of their everyday experience despite it was inaccessible. It was felt, smelled, seen and walked by on an everyday basis. “Idealized places served as refuges from adolescent political or social alienation,” writes Chawla (1992: 75). Hence, it does not matter these people were forbidden to access the locality, the factories were experienced via different senses. Alžbeta with other informants reach to the city of past where they find genuine and authentic memories and romanticised narratives she understands and feel belonging and attachment to.

Informants’ retreat to the past is more obvious in the locality of the Winter Harbour, among its warehouses, garages, old vessels and especially in the house of the pumping station. The station’s surroundings, courtyard and view on the Danube is so romantic and even naïve as the

---

5 This is an old traditional greeting which she translates into the German language.
stories and memories of its residents (Figure 7). It seems even surreal to imagine raising children between the harbour’s warehouses, piles of ore or heavy mechanisms and industrial cranes. For Tilley, places are “intimately connected to history, the past, and hold out the promise of a desired future” (Tilley 2006: 21). Harbour’s residents frame the past times as pristine, perfect, ideal and unspoiled with the urban turmoil and dynamics. They best demonstrate the collective retreat to the past to defend themselves from the turmoil, uncertainty and volatility the development brings. For instance, Dagmar recalls the times of raising children as the most intense and pleasant memories she has. She describes how serene those time were, mentioning playing with pets that were wandering around the house’s courtyard, children games they use to play, dancing on the old cargo train platforms, all in a harmonious and safe environment. She gets very sentimental, looking at the Danube, exhaling from a cigarette, she smiles, and her speech slows down, she is quiet and very calm:

![View on the Winter Harbour. Photo: Author](image)

Those were nice and happy moments (because we were) living in an enclosed environment. I have some many nice memories of it. In this place, I feel like in the countryside, isolated but still only a few metres from the city centre.

When I ask Mrs Pekaríková, who seems to have the most sentimental relationship with the harbour, to tell me how she remembers living there, she smiles and bursts with stories:
When I came here for the first time, it was beautiful. There were trees and snow everywhere. I felt like in a fairy-tale. I could not believe my eyes. It was amazing. We all had little kids and we were raising them here. It was almost like in a forest, we were able to camp outside at the courtyard. Moreover, it has a strong community atmosphere because we were meeting each other all the time, taking care of the courtyard, maintaining it.

She remembers many games they used to play with her and her neighbours’ kids at the courtyard and further in the harbour:

We organised a pyjama party with the children. I invited my kids’ classmates from school and we were walking in the harbour in pyjamas. They all had an amazing time. Imagine seven, eight, nine years old kids being outside and all of a sudden they see a ship which honks. It is something they would have otherwise never experienced.

If the past is seen as pristine, clean and unspoiled, it also comes with a desire for isolation, separation, protection and closure. On the one hand, they appreciate the collective and communal spirit resulting from good neighbourly relations, openness, and help, but on the other hand, they desire all the features I associate with a gated community. They want to be protected, isolated and avoid themselves from all the spoils, dangers and dynamics of the urban turmoil which exists beyond the gates of their home. They were willing to trade off the connection with the city dynamics for safety and stability, those solid grounds they often miss now. Dagmar says that since the pumping station was built prior to the harbour was constructed, it makes the house “an isolated unit” in the already isolated and protected harbour. She continues explaining the benefits of being protected:

We are like a separate entity within the already isolated subject. Practically, every single hour later at the evening and during the night, there were security patrols walking from the main gate controlling if there isn’t somebody who is not supposed to be here. Seeing it from the perspective of a family with small kids, it was great even in the daytime since nobody had access to the area. We could have our kids outside, playing but at the same time being protected and we were not afraid that something could happen to them.

Mrs Pekariková also appreciates the safety because in such an environment her kids learned to be self-sufficient, responsible for themselves, and raised their own moral and ethical standards which have never been influenced by other people.

We all avoided things like cigarettes, drugs and alcohol. They have never been members of any teenage group. They learned to be satisfied with each other. On top of that, everything was too far away from this place. Of course, in their teenage years, they brought some friends in and were smoking or drinking something. But we always knew where they are. Until they had reached fifteen, sixteen, they didn’t have any need to go out to the city, they didn’t have other friends to hang out with. Here, they always had something to do. For instance, it took them so much time to explore the entire harbour.
That is also the reason why she wants her granddaughter to be raised in the harbour:

Since my kids have grown up here, now I want my granddaughter to be raised here too. It has a courtyard, it is clean, and it is different. Pure. Even though we are in the centre of Bratislava, this place is unspoiled. Unspoiled by urban directions, orders and rules. The only limitation here is that you have your own an entrance card.

Gabriela, remembers the times of moving to the house in a similar fashion:

Kids were growing up together, playing outside, sunbathing or camping with their friends. It was like living in a large family house. One doesn’t have to stay inside all the time. Their childhood was very good I think. It was a total wilderness. Far and wide, there was nothing around. No bridge, no Eurovea, it was all empty.

Contrary to Dagmar, Gabriela also mentions problems with maintenance, infrastructure, costly repairs or ignorance from public authorities. She complains about the harbour’s management and her dependency upon it. Despite that, the benefits of being isolated and romanticism of the place overweight these perils and convince her to stay:

There are moments when I swear. Sometimes, I want to pack all my things and move away. On the other hand, there are moments, for instance in the summer, when I can go out at the courtyard in a swimsuit, lye on a deck chair, take out a book and read and people on the bridge stop and comment ´ooh look, what a place they live at?´

This is a similar experience for Mrs Pekaríková who for instance says that “the small villa” appearance is only from the outside but after a closer inspection, it requires a lot of investments. “The main staircase is continuously serviced,” she says. Despite that, not only the Pumping station but the entire harbour is her living environment. “I would never change it,” she declares.

Resonating with Hummon, home is associated with rootedness where informants’ “sense of home and attachment are embedded in a perspective that is relatively simple, taken-for-granted, and largely composed of biographical and local images of community life,” (Hummon 1992: 265). Informants seek belonging and attachment in the city and among social relations where people were closer towards each other, better, more human, humble, with more honest and sincere relationships. In this city of past they reach the sense of home-ness, conditions which they can identify with, feel belonging and recognition. This opposes the experience of alienation, detachment and isolation they have with the new city and new inhabitants. As I say at the beginning of this section, it does not matter whether the locality is inaccessible, decaying and neglected. What matters is their everyday experience of place and each other which results in everyday rootedness (ibid. 1992: 264).
An Attack on the Past City is an Attack on Past Identities

It is apparent that these retreats to the past help my informants to reach a narrative they understand and feel safe in, identified with, stable and recognised. As Tilley says, “this almost inevitably results in nostalgic imaginings of how these landscapes and places should appear and conservation and heritage projects, (…) to preserve such a romanticized identity” (Tilley 2006: 13). As shown, they speak about how the studied locality dwells collective history, the history of labour, as well as cultural activities, smells, or individual activities, strolls, walks or certain atmosphere when there were fewer problems and more tranquility. Tilley argues these forces of neoliberalisation, globalisation and modernisation, which Bratislava’s development is a representation of, dissolve the traditional and rooted ways for creating subjective and collective identities (Tilley 2006: 19). Therefore, informants reach to the traditional past which is framed as authentic, original, genuine and overall better than the current age.

These romanticised memories and past experiences are very much rooted in particular urban environments and localities. This architectonical form of Bratislava that these informants can identify with is most often framed as “the old Bratislava”. It is imagined as a city of smaller scale and height, consisting of the former industrial locality which is refurbished and revitalised but regardless of its new function. This is the cityscape which generates and associates the narrative of the city of past – the authentic and original face of Bratislava and its social relations. Dagmar associates this identity of the city with “cosy narrow streets and small niches” and continues:

Some people characterised Bratislava as a provincial metropolis but that is the very genius loci of this city. I am not against modernisation but I am not sure whether this is the extent that Bratislava needs. At least the old town has been preserved.

She says these industrial zones and factories should have been refurbished and utilised for the future because they “remember” the history of old Bratislava. When I wonder why she replies:

You may call it nostalgia but I have a certain age and I remember the old Bratislava. Well, practically, the old Bratislava has shrunk to that very small area of the old town. I don’t think that it is good to be trying to be ’global’ but rather it is better to keep something that is our own.

Miroslav retreats to this concept of the old city only through memories, only in memories he can identify with a certain urban landscape. For Miroslav, this “face of the old Bratislava” is a material representation of the anchoring narrative he identifies with and relies upon. His relationship with the almost gone old city is maintained through memories. This perfectly resonates with Jackson, who says that “home was a central place to which you or your thoughts
constantly return,” (1995: 66). Miroslav’s identification with the city of past also determines his position towards all of its remains. For instance, when I ask about Eurovea mall, he is immediately triggered:

They might have put it to a building which represents the old Bratislava. Look, do you see the building over there? (He points at the Warehouse no. 7) It might have been like that. The architecture might be in the old style and inside there might be a shopping mall.

I wonder whether he has the same attitude even towards the less important areas or buildings. In a similar fashion he replies:

I can’t really understand whether it was necessary to demolish those buildings. Would it be more costly to refurbish it then to destroy it and build something new? Well, it is often said that it is cheaper to demolish something than to repair it … Anyway, many of those buildings should have been preserved. It doesn’t matter what is it reconstructed into but let it remain the face of the old Bratislava.

I am curious about “the face of the old Bratislava” and asking him again why he thinks old buildings should be preserved. He repeats, “…in order for the original face of Bratislava to remain,” he continues. Industrial constructions and old buildings create the “traditional” and specific look and identity of Bratislava where the new, modern and high new constructions “just don’t fit”. When I speak with Mrs Pekaríková about the old city, I identify she also uses these idealised memories as a counter-narrative towards the dominance of development and transformation and its outcomes:

It was like being in a different Bratislava. Those buildings were older and you could walk freely in the streets without the need to avoid cars. When the kids were small, we went for a walk there, it was calm and quiet. It was great. It was decaying but it had its charm. It was something I grew up with.

She juxtaposes the idleness of the old city to the presupposed dynamics, chaos and convolution that the new city brings. She says that the development brings the destruction of this new city and “its identity” which is being characterised with “serenity” and “harmony”. She continues remembering the Bratislava of the past and her lived experience with it:

At least they might have preserved those factories, give them new function so the nature of the city would remain. I am in favour of keeping the character of the city. There is this former building of Press Centre and underneath it, there used to be a mall car repair. That is something that will never be here again. It’s

---

6 It is the only and the largest preserved warehouse of the locality where Eurovea centre was constructed. For many informants, it was a gesture from the developer that it cares for and appreciate the value of the industrial heritage. Nevertheless, it is privately owned with an unknown purpose and program.

7 It was one of the first vertical buildings in Bratislava, formerly the headquarters of the News Agency of the Slovak Republic. Later renamed to Tower 115, it now contains office spaces and it is a residence for IBM Company or estate investment corporation J&T.
a pity that developers didn’t refurbish it and give it its original form. All those buildings were well-functioning. Developers only know to demolish it and build, demolish and build, demolish and build.

She soon starts to associate the transformation brought by the development with the disruption of social relations and her memories. She connects the destruction of the physical urban landscape with the destruction of personal memories which are rooted in the environment and places:

Any intervention to the harbour would be an intervention to my memories. I’m am not patriotic but I would miss it all. They should have preserved at least something! Honestly, now I don’t know what I should associate Bratislava with. If they destroy the harbour, then what? Like … there would be nothing here?! I even like the piles of red ore here. It reminds me of all the cats that were red because of it. Or the duty-free shop which used to be here. It all reminds me of the past. We used to go there to buy cigarettes when a husband of mine had been smoking. You don’t forget such things.

It is obvious that the effects of development do not only concern the demolition of urban landscape but the very narratives, associations and memories of these informants. Development pervades and interferes with their sense of belonging and attachment, their notion of at-home-ness and identification. Their local identities are anchored in specific places and social relationships. When these places are under attack, so are social relations and personal bonds. Therefore, it is the city of past which dwells the last remaining spatialities and temporalities my informants can retreat, make sense of them and identify with. Reaching to the past helps my informants to maintain a certain subjective identity they formed during those times. “Places are generative of social relations. Power and a sense of community regeneration arise from the place,” writes Tilley (2006: 21). For these informants, the process of development is destroying the mental and lived grounds, grounds they rely upon and shape their sense of home. This is most obvious on the short account of Mrs Pekaríková:

We will fight! Surely! It would be a pity if this house is demolished. It is part of Bratislava for god’s sake. Everything old has been demolished. For Christ sake, nothing has remained! I would be among the first to complain. Imagine you have a family house and all of the sudden a certain someone comes and tells you ’look, we will demolish this because we have decided to build a multi-functional object here but we give you another place to go’. I have lived here for twenty years and I want to stay here! I have made a relationship with this house!

Juraj Možiš also perceives development and transformation as some kind of attack on his solid grounds, social relations, memories and certainties which have been generated in his lived experience with the urban environment. When we walk near the Eurovea mall, he says, “It was my habitat. I knew everybody here,” and recalls his childhood and teenage years:
Over there, there was a cinder pitch where I played football and next to it, there was a Warburg repair service with a gas station and there was a storage locality. One street further, there was the industrial zone. I used to run there.

He does not distinguish between the industrial zone and the rest of the city. For him, it is one connected urban environment. We continue walking and he keeps pointing on various places, remembering aesthetically pleasing warehouses and garages with “a nice brick architecture which is gone now” because developers turned it into “a modern architecture.” “There was an open space, greengroceries, police station, many things,” he recalls. Then we stumble upon a bridge across the Danube and he recalls, “When I went there with my mother, I used to give her my things and I swam to the other side of the river.” Then he points on the other side of the river and mentions the most popular and visited but no longer existing social space, the Lido Beach⁸. However, the most important place for Juraj was a Stoka theatre and pub which he was actively engaged in. “I had many friends there. My daughter had been performing there. It was a cultural place. My kind of people used to go there, a certain community. It was a legendary place.” When we are in the centre of the brownfield area, close to the Twin City, he remembers factories and the industrial urban ecosystem they formed. He explains the disposition of streets, lines, angles, heights and remembers another short-lived cultural centre. “Well, despite it was storage and industrial area, I consider it my ecosystem. It is part of my home. To put it simply, it was nice,” he says. Juraj is deeply rooted in his home environment, he shares an experience of “the strong, local sense of home and (being) emotionally attached to their local area,” (Hummon 1992: 263).

These narratives also show the overall experience of these informants who seek balance “between controlling their own fate” and “accepting that which cannot be decided by human will” (Jackson 2005: 127). They try to find a sense of certain grounds, space they can identify with and actively interact with. For instance, when I am on a stroll with Jana and we navigate ourselves through the industrial locality (Figure 8), she immediately recalls Gumon and Kablo factories. She suggests they might not have been demolished but incorporated into surrounding development projects.

I think they might have been preserved. It’s a pity to destroy an entire historical building. It certainly had some value, for example for people who might relate to history through those buildings. At least

---

⁸ Lido was established in 1928 and since then it had undergone various transformations. It became popular in the mid-1930s, during the IIWW it was damaged by the US bombers. After the IIWW it had gain popularity again as a recreational place. Plans for its reconstruction in the 1990s have never been implemented until recent years when few developers in collaboration with architectonical studios have proposed a new plan for the entire area redevelopment called New Lido (Gehrérova 2017; TASR 2014).
something could have been preserved and connected with the new architecture. That is what bothers me. You see this trend abroad. It’s possible to incorporate old buildings to the new architecture, construct loft apartments and so on.

She then adds that every part of the history is important, “for instances, all the socialist monuments. We are not going to praise those people but it is important to remember it, even the bad history. She thinks the developers might have preserved “at least as some traces of the industrial past in this locality. The industry was important for Bratislava. At least something for the next generation.” To give an example which shows how people value industrial heritage she mentions Tate Gallery in London and then adds:

(…) but here, you see, they don’t do anything with it. It is necessary to work with the place, to understand what kind of place it is and what it means for the city. Now, nobody knows what used to be here.

Reaching to the past memories, advocating for preserving old Bratislava and industrial heritage, serve my informants as a tool to regain a sense of having a say in the changing world, a sense of control. All of their accounts on past buildings of authentic and original shapes and features help them to navigate themselves in the city which is being changed. As Tilley argues, they are “making material reference to the past that identification with place occurs through the medium of ‘traditional’ material culture and representations of lifestyles, urban and rural that no longer exist” (Tilley 2006. 14). Identifying with the city of past also serves as a making sense practise. These informants make sense of the development by looking at it through the framework of the old city not only with a genuine and original physical landscape but more importantly, with authentic social relations. All these reminiscences and remembrances help them to understand the development which is intervening to their lived experiences, memories, imaginations and identities. Hence, it is no surprise they do not feel to belong to its narrative and they refrain from the locality as well as from the new people. They do not feel they fit the new city which is seen as taking over the city of past as well as their past experiences and memories. In such conditions, they seek to belong somewhere else, at places they feel they belong to.

On top of that, many of these informants are in favour of preserving the remains of the old industrial locality via heritage projects. By re-creating the original and authentic past landscapes, their goal is to “root and maintain that identity in the land as a counterpoint to the flux of modernity, to arrest time and change and provide something traditionally ‘authentic’” (Tilley 2006: 19). In this regard, heritage projects and attempts can be seen as “a symbolic return to the past often acts as a retreat from the uncertainties of the present” (Tilley 2006: 14). My informants feel the development is disrupting and intervening into the city they feel home
at – the city of past. However, they did not choose this development, they feel the world is acting on them and they do not want to remain passive hence they re-create the world they feel home. As Michael Jackson writes “human beings need to have a hand in choosing their lives, and to be recognised as having an active part to play in the shaping of their social worlds” (Jackson 2005: 127). Therefore, their retreat to the past must also be seen as a way of regaining control and sense of having a voice in the social world pervaded and shaped by the development. They seek grounds and practices which they can interfere with the social world that is being changed dramatically without them.

Picture 7. Construction area of the brownfield locality with missing buildings. Photo: Author
2. Many Visions of Modern Futures

“Skylines are rising in the East, projecting urban gestures of the moment that claim to characterize an emerging age”, writes Ong (2011: 24). She further claims that recently, there has been a tendency of renovating neglected urban zones in non-Western countries which have given rise to the circulation of specific urban models, desired and achievable (ibid.: 14). Searching for those who identify and welcome the new skylines emerging in Bratislava, I intuitively head towards the building which seems to be the prototype of such generic reconstruction, Panorama Towers (Figure 9). During my fieldwork, the locality’s name was Panorama Towers but in time of writing this I found out it has changed its name to Panorama Towers (JTRE 2019). I am overwhelmed by the two over one hundred metres tall white triangular buildings with cars staring at me beyond the glass of the parking lot reaching up to the third floor. I step in through automatic door but suddenly being stopped by two women at the reception. They tell me I cannot enter the building further if I am not a resident or I have not been invited. Fortunately, they provide me with a landlord’s number whom I am immediately calling. He rejects all my proposals to contact and approach the residents. I am forbidden to post notes, send emails nor stand outside of the buildings and approach the residents. If any of them start complaining, “the security will take care of me”. He also refuses to send out emails about my research, because he does not want to interrupt the residents with “issues they do not find important”. He describes the residents as people who pay large amounts of money for privacy which they find very valuable hence they do not like being approached by random people.

Picture 8. Panorama towers from the back perspective. Photo: Author
The second time I enter Panorama Towers, I am allowed to go further inside. This time, I am invited by Silvia, a mid-thirty years’ old employee of a shared services centre who has been living in two towers for almost a year. When leaving the reception, I am taking an elevator to the twelfth floor. The hallway resembles a hotel. It is sterile, grey, its triangular shape is illuminated with LED light. I see no windows, no flowers, posters or any signs of human interaction with the place. I am knocking at Silvia’s door. She greets me and let me in. I slightly feel she is proud of the apartment which she is making me a tour of. It is not a big one but definitely a new and modern one. But that is not what she is most proud of. That is the view she has from the balcony. We step outside and she tells me how amazing she feels every morning when she can observe the city from such a high position. Panorama Towers are among the first residential skyscrapers in Bratislava and that is where their name comes from as well as what its promotion was built upon. I begin our conversation by asking on the general experience of the locality and Silvia speaks about how it fits the city as well as her expectation of the development:

If the industry employed the majority of the Bratislava’s population in the past, now it is economic services. So, in terms of significance, this is the very same and important centre. These services don’t belong outside of the urban centre. If such services are in inside, people will be more satisfied.

---

In Socialism, nobody invested in factory workers’ working conditions but now it is all different. People spend more time in their work. The finance sector and services shouldn’t be at the periphery. Let’s put them to the centre. We have 80% of the population working in this economy, services, and finances. Majority of them spend half of their active time at work, why shouldn’t they be in the centre, in a good location?

Silvia welcomes the development as it is a natural representation of the overall socio-economic transition. She continues explaining it is an inherent outcome of larger processes:

There are firms everywhere. If this is supposed to be a business centre I want it to continue and expand. I don’t think there should be any polarisation among people caused by that. The reconstruction of the former industrial buildings would have been nice but in that case, we wouldn’t have such a business centre as we have now. Overall, I think it will one coherent and united district. I take it as it is meant to be – a new business centre of Bratislava. I don’t see it as a residential district. In the future, this is for people working and using services, eating, walking in the park or relaxing in the greener after work.

---

9 “The highest in Slovakia”, is the title of the promotion article at the investor’s website (JTRE 2019)
For Silvia, the urban transformation is an expected outcome of the development and something she can relate to. She is able to identify with this “coherent vision” of the new city which has been constructed. For her, the new district is an expected part of a developing modern city:

If the city authorities have not been doing anything for a long period of time, and people have the feeling that there is nothing going on, they become frustrated from the passivity and from these places looking horrible. Hence I believe that the majority of citizens favours the development. They appreciate that at least something is being done compared to the idleness of the authorities. The city doesn’t have enough finances to do something. Now I think that people’s frustrations have shifted to a positive feeling that at least something has been done and it that it looks good.

---

Since there was nobody who would propose any vision of the brownfield area’s transformation, it seems to me the development is the only solution. I don’t like those activists who are saying they are against everything but at the same time cannot propose any alternatives.

In her opinion, this coherent plan contributes to the quality of common social conditions after times of decay. Although, such conceptualisation of modernisation and development inherently bears its own tragedy. Once a developer creates a wholly modern world, a totally modern society, on the ruins of the pre-modern one, a developer loses its reason for being in the world (Berman: 2010: 70). Together with some other informants, Silvia is thankful for the locality’s transformation because in the past it was, as she says: “left to be neglected, dysfunctional and abandoned (...) only to be waiting for the change”. The time of neglect and decay is seen as inefficient and unused time. As Khosravi Shahram writes, in the West, we conceptualise time from a utilitarian perspective. “Time is associated with success and money. (...) Hence waiting symbolizes waste, emptiness and uselessness.” (Shahram 2014). Therefore, this transformation is experienced in very technical and pragmatic terms of effectiveness and extent of economic and social contribution. The urban transformation does not only change the city, but it also provides for the well-being of its citizens, it shapes and contributes to their living environments.

Since I’m living here, I experience it as a positive thing, something nice, functional and contributing to the city. I don’t see it as some dysfunctional and scattered locality. On the contrary, it’s one united whole. I believe that developers communicated with each other and cooperated. Finally, it works well! The new district is something solid, coherent, and pleasant. It’s something we should be happy for.

Therefore, she associates the material development with the development of common social conditions and as a contribution towards common wellbeing. It transforms the city to a thriving economy, investments, generating profit, employment and housing, an economically growing and developing centre which she can associate and identify with. As Mateusz Laszczkowski
argues, through progress and innovation, citizens’ future visions can be materialised in new forms, shapes and architectures which are so unusual for Bratislava. "Seeing and touching steel and glass architecture, modern citizens directly experienced the fantastic artificial world – thus aesthetics lent reality to modern utopias,” he writes (Laszczkowski 2016: 44). Hence, Silvia, among many other informants, is attaching her expectations to the future promises of development (Low and Altman 1992: 6). Therefore, Silvia and other informants place their personal visions and expectations to the promises, effects and impacts of the development narrative. They appreciate and value the locality because of its good proximity to the city centre, good overall connections and infrastructure, the range of services provided in the locality, security, the quality of public spaces and novelty. For instance, those are the crucial characteristics of the new district for Martin whom I meet after he replies positively on my post at the Panorama Towers’ Facebook page. He is a young student of business and economics whose parents bought him an apartment in Panorama City. I meet him below the building in a generic urban café where he confidently speaks about his visions of what a modern and progressive city should look like. He mentions the reasons for buying the apartment:

It’s perfectly connected with the highway. Moreover, it is ten or fifteen minutes by feet from the city centre, from the old town. Moreover, the buildings’ height was also decisive. I wanted to have a nice view. It is a modern locality, functional and with necessary civic amenities.

Hence, the new district is associated with features of functionality, effectiveness, modernity and newness. For Róbert, the current employee of Slovak Shipping and Ports whom I officially contacted, the new city is representing economic growth and shifts in social needs and demands.

You know, the world itself has become more commercial. There are malls everywhere and citizens want them. You can’t stop this trend. People want to own nice apartments close to the city centre. It’s for the first time something like this is being constructed in Bratislava.

Moreover, in his opinion, the development has decreased vandalism and contributed to the overall attractiveness of the city. The other representative built structure of such framed locality is Twin City (Figure 10), an administrative and business centre lying opposite to the Panorama Towers. Outside I accidentally meet Ján when on his smoke break. He takes me to his office where he works as an IT developer for CRIF Company. In his opinion, development presents a new vision for the city and urban life and thus he welcomes and expects the transition to continue in the future and expand further to the Bratislava peripheral areas. He says:
I think this entire locality here has its logic, it’s well-thought. Some high buildings are randomly placed in Bratislava but here they are accumulated together. I really appreciate the development of this new commercial district with skyscrapers. I think I have a relationship with architecture and mostly with skyscrapers. I am fascinated by them. It’s a pity that the wind conditions are as they are.

All these informants speak about the situation in Bratislava as something expected, natural and rational. The process of development has been anticipated hence they can associate and identify with it, moreover, they can experience a sense of belonging and attachment to it. In making sense of the development and also placing themselves within its framework, some of them compare it with the generic vision of developing Western international metropolis. For instance, Jana thinks the entire area “will be like smaller Manhattan”. She then continues:

I think it’s good because it will have the impression of completeness, all the vertical buildings will be concentrated in one place. Everything new will be in one part of the city, it will have this appearance of newness. The district is very practical, people finally have a place to go.

According to Ong, such comparisons, or as she calls it “inter-references”, presuppose the global competitive condition among cities. “The practice of citing a “more successful city” – itself an unstable category – seems to stir urban aspirations and sentiments of inter-city rivalry as well as standing as a legitimation for particular enterprises at home,” (Ong 2011: 17). This also resonates with Ali’s perspective using comparison with the West. He, a former resident of Panorama Towers, whom I got to know on Silvia’s recommendations, he tells me he appreciates
the locality’s novelty. “It’s a new building, well-constructed, very modern.” In his opinion, it can be well combined with the historical town.

I could imagine this part to be a nice modern area of the city contrasting the old historic town. If you connect it well together it could be fine. Just take for instance Berlin. It’s a good combination of old and new.

Hence, these accounts show that many informants share a positive outlook on the locality and its future and they can place themselves within this vision. However, it must be noted all these comparisons exist in a certain temporal vacuum. The informants are comparing a not-yet-fully-materialised vision with already existing generic optimal model. Such comparison is based on a linear model of temporality which these informants presuppose (Low and Altamn 1992: 7). It is apparent that what these informants value the most is not the very present form of the place but the vision it represents. The new city is a not-yet-materialised vision of future utopia. The new locality is perceived to contain a specific form which represents modernity which my informants are actively engaged with and place within. By active engagement, they “claim a place for themselves in the local social environment as well as in an imagined world at large,” (Laszczkowski 2016: 13). The locality helps these people to place their vision into a particular urban environment and materialise them, make them almost real. This materialisation of personal modern and utopic visions is further obvious on informants’ conceptualisation of development and linear time. They “pin their hopes on future events (…) or on future possessions (…) (Belk 1992: 47). However, as the next section shows, they “displace our hopes and ideals to another time or another place” when “dissatisfied with our life at the present moment” (Belk 1992: 48). Hence, their expectations from the development stem from long-term disappointment form the locality’s conditions and the attitude of public authorities.

Backward Pasts and Modern Utopias of the Future

The present state of informants’ dissatisfaction stems from the locality’s long term neglect and urban decay. As Silvia already said, the entire locality has been for a long time perceived as a decaying and inaccessible place which should have been addressed by city authorities. Laszczkowski writes that the period linked to the post-1990s is generally referred to as a “time of decay, atrophy, and deprivation,” (2016: 35). For my informants, such framing of the locality in the past also determines if and what value and relevance they ascribe to it. This attitude is
also shared with a couple Ján and Vanda. She is in her mid-thirties, he in his early forties. I
interview them in their small apartment, heavily decorated various ethno/home-made/hippie
items, paintings and sculptures, and located in the neighbourhood area opposite to Eurovea.
With an eccentric and rather odd appearance, the older Ján in his mid-forties is an entrepreneur
who indulges himself in coffee, vegan cakes, and decorative aesthetics. Living in the nearby
neighbourhood, they say they had always been disgusted by everything that belongs to the past.
For instance, Ján comments on the locality of the Winter Harbour:

When we walked along the promenade we’ve seen it, the small buildings with fibreboard walls, full of
dirt and dust, cockroaches. There are disgusting old floors, those old nasty steel windows, and coloured.
Now, when you see it from outside, those appalling windows, dirty, neglected, you realised there hasn’t
been invested a single penny in the area.

Hence, it is not surprising they see the industrial locality as an area which does not dwell any
value and thus should be removed:

What is to be lost? A factory? Does it really have any value? Don’t you think Eurovea is more valuable
than some old piece of useless crap? Let’s not pretend it is a heritage. It’s no heritage. That’s totally
ridiculous, those buildings are horrendous.

Having a similar view, Martin sees the industrial past as old ruins, as something peripheral,
backward, non-modern, and not contemporary. When he speaks about Eurovea, promenade, the
only negative feature he can identify there, is the presence of Winter Harbour.

The only thing that spoils and disrupts its atmosphere is the Winter Harbour with its old decaying ships.
Well, what can I do about it? I think it’s a horrible locality and it needs to be moved further to the periphery
and replaced with another modern district. Surely, from an economic perspective, it makes no sense to
move it away, but from the aesthetical or design perspective, it’s disgusting.

This framing of past and future is based on a linear understanding of temporality, on expansion,
accumulation and progress without any particular end goal. Modernisation and development
are rationalised and justified by the restless continuous and never-ending activity (Berman
2010: 50). The past, which is represented in through the industrial locality, only present a barrier
for the continuous development and progress. Hence, the notion of heritage is obsolete and
unnecessary. As Martin continues:

There had been some old industrial buildings which were later demolished. Many of them are being
demolished even now. There is this heating plant with some other buildings which have remained. These
places were almost inexessible. The only place worth visiting has been Alza shopping centre.

Similarly, Ján’s colleague in CRIF Petra, a receptionist who might be in her early twenties, has
a similar perspective on the past and its importance and the fact the previously built
environment has been demolished. “Maybe there was something historical but if there were buildings which weren’t supposed to fulfil any purpose, I think it is ok they were demolished,” she says. When I tell her more about the factories and their importance, she reacts: “This place did not have any special importance for me that would make me regret it.” Using the examples from Bratislava’s old town, she further argues that only “historical buildings” are worth preserving. For her, the notion of “old” and “historical” is only relevant as a feature of the overall pleasant urban atmosphere, a touristic commodity.

Seeing these accounts from the perspective of linear temporality, it is clear my informants place themselves to the future promises and visions. On top of that, the past is seen as something they run away from, as a condition which is obsolete, backward, non-functioning and without any contribution or value worth preserving. While they detach themselves from the past, they also create a vision where they seek a sense of belonging and identification and this vision is strictly pinned in the future (Belk 1992: 48). Placing informant’ perspectives on a range of different temporalities and values they associate, I can frame these perspectives under the following dichotomy: the unmodern/non-functioning past <-> modern/functional future. In the words of my informants, ‘unmodern’ is associated with “old, backward, obsolete, non-serving” and modern with “cultivated, cultural, modern, nice, functional, and serving the public.” Drawing on James Ferguson (2006: 177f), this notion resonates well with understanding history as a natural and linear process and progress towards one all-encompassing universal end goal. Such understanding of progress, modernisation and development is teleological and it presupposes a temporalized hierarchy. For instance, Petra speaks about the future as something which is already happening in the present:

I will tell my kids about the construction of Twin City. Even now, when I am at the terrace and look at how they are destroying that old building painted with graffiti and with broken windows and thus not serving anyone anymore, I don’t regret it.

What Róbert values the most about the newly built projects is their coherence and overall “compatibility with the city”. For him, the entire locality is seen to be representing “the new era”. As a result, industry which originally used to be in the centre, now it is pushed and framed as a periphery. “It has always been like that and obviously, the centre is expanding.” The new centre, when completed, will be a part of what Bratislava is. “Bratislava is so small and compact that it surely can be a new centre,” says Robert. These informants perspective presupposes that the status of things depends on linear time and things change toward the ultimate telos – modernity (ibid.: 177-80). A more explicit demonstration of this not-yet-realised-future of
Bratislava can be observed through Martins´ engagement with the locality. From the interview with him, I can discern the following features that the locality is representing, and that is contemporaneity, internationality, cultivation, innovation and appealing aesthetics. He continues:

Now, it’s a modern locality with civic amenities and not a periphery. Everything is available walking distance. Moreover, aesthetically-speaking, I’m impressed. Architects have chosen a modern approach with a lot of innovations. I like it.

Martin’s perceptions and experiences of living in Panorama Towers correspond with his overall attitude towards the development of Bratislava.

Twin City will be a nice project and I cannot wait when it is completed. I think that these projects revitalise the city. They make the city nicer. I feel like being in some kind of a new city. I think this will be the nicest part of Bratislava, the most modern part. The old city is also nice, but such a modern district doesn't exist anywhere in Slovakia.

Seeing these accounts in the light of a linear temporal model, informants frame the locality’s development and the experience of it as a not-yet-materialised vision of collective modern utopia. They see the future of Bratislava to reflect their hidden dreams, visions and prospects about the future. Such framing of time and space contributes to and strengthens “the myths of modernism and modernization as teleological collective utopias” (Laszczkowski 2016: 5). Informant’s sense of at-home-ness, belonging, and recognition is being formed within this narrative of a successful development story of a modern city raising from its obsolete and backward past. They place themselves to this development narrative, it makes sense to them and they understand it.

Moreover, framing the locality as new and modern also touches upon the desire to see Bratislava on a map of international modern Western urban centres. As already mentioned, when they refer to Bratislava, these informants highlight universal features which they associate with vague notions of the West, Europe, and the international. Such understanding inherently downplays any local specifics. Martin says that “I begin to see Bratislava as a modern city walking alongside western countries. And this district surely contributes to it.” For him, the 'international-ness' of the place is also represented by the structure of its residents. Martin tells me that he appreciates the international composition of the Panorama Towers’ residents that he had not had the chance to encounter before. “There are some more affluent residents but also, many foreigners. I often hear English or other languages and that is something I have never
noticed in different parts of the city.” He is also explicit in stating in his desires to see Bratislava to catch up with other international modern cities:

I welcome it. For instance, when tourists come to visit Bratislava, they will no longer say to themselves that we are a backward people and country. On the contrary, they will appreciate we have skyscrapers here. They make a completely different impression of the city.

Such understanding of development is also representative of other informants, for instance, Silvia thinks it will bring Bratislava among contemporary western European cities:

I think that every developed and modern city should have these glass-concrete buildings. I like when they are next to the city centre. I like the combination of the so-called traditional with the modern. Every such modern urban district has skyscrapers. If we want to be like and catch-up with European cities, such buildings must be here. Such a district is a distinguishing feature of a developed, modern, and European city.

These accounts show how my informants desire the Bratislava to catch up upon the global metropolitan standard and to represent the global modernity. For them, the word “modern” is being used by referring to the contemporary, or in literal translation, to the “co-temporal”. The “co-temporality”, which is occurring in many of the accounts, represents the desire for Bratislava to become a part of the global modern condition, to “co-operate” in one common time and to share a common space. Bratislava is desired to become “‘modern’ by catching up (becoming ‘coeval’) with an imaginary world abroad.” (Laszczkowski 2016: 47). In the current ‘globalised world’, Ong argues the developing countries employ various mechanisms to participate “in a global game of claiming the world’s attention”, for instance “through the staging of showy architecture, cutting-edge industry, and home-grown urban aesthetics (Ong 2011: 23). As a result, we see Bratislava to borrowing urban forms and juxtapositioning itself toward the harmonising and homogenous vision of the international. The goal is to catch up with the leading global urban hierarchies of progress, what she calls ‘wordling’ (Ong in Laszczkowski 2016: 42). According to Ong, this catching up with the fast is particularly demonstrated in “impressive urban structures and the imagination of a city’s global future” such as the new administrative-business and residential projects in Bratislava. Bratislava is building structures which relate and invoke the desirable icons of the “world class”, or as my informants say, the international, or Europe-like. They are all “symbols of desirable urban attributes”. The “discourse and building of business zones link the cities together in a system of urban-corporate inter-referentiality” (Ong 2011: 18-19f). The discourses that sustain this inter-referentiality shape an intense inter-city consciousness of contrast, comparison, and rivalry, as a well as an idiom that initiates and legitimizes the extravagant claims of the urban makeover (ibid.: 23).
shown, informants perceive change, modification and progress are natural and inevitable features of urban development and economic growth. None of them was able to provide an authentic or collectively defined vision of the future utopia. Rather, they all referred to the vague urban models and future prospects associated with the global west. As Tilley argues, the global identities, related to something international, the West and Europe, are “abstracted, mediated, generalized and involves multiple points or reference subsuming the specific and the unique” (Tilley 2006: 18).

Informants see the development as bringing and materialising a particular modern vision of the future by destroying and transforming the obsolete past. To make sense of this perception, Marshal Berman proposes the term ‘creative destruction’. He sees the creativity – destruction dialectics as being inherently in the centre of the modernisation process (2010). According to the couple Ján with Vanda, this development, consisting of inevitable forces of destruction and reconstruction, “cannot be stopped”. They continue:

The world moves forward. Therefore, we cannot copy the old town’s historical buildings from the 19th century and construct small narrow streets. It’s impossible. Every city in the world has its old town and every city also has a new town which is modern. It’s the young people who want to go there, not the elderly.

Therefore, they think the new district “must” be a separated location representing this new vision of progress and modernisation in order to attract the contemporary citizen. “You have people from the old city complaining about anything modern all the time. Old city cannot expand further,” they claim. The district also represents the overall social shifts and tendencies, for instance, the influx of people from the east of the country to Bratislava to seek employment opportunities. Both state that, “then, the people are coming here, they work, they earn money and spend it here. It’s benefiting the city economy.” That is seen as a negative in densification of the city but also as a contribution because it stimulates economic growth and well-being. “It’s positive. There are people and where people are, there is money,” they continue. Destruction of the old, traditional, romantic, or industrial as in the case of Bratislava, is the inevitable “evil” for further progress, creation and growth of a modern individual, city, state, society or economy (Berman 2010: 48). This view is also shared by Ján, a CRIF’s employee, who welcomes the demolition of the dysfunctional factories as it has opened space for the development of new and high buildings. “Personally, I have always favoured the demolition of the entire locality as soon as possible. I remember a fence which was enclosing the area. It is in the city centre, you know. It is like … well ...old.” At first, I thought it is only the locality’s
abandonment, dysfunctionality, state of decay that he sees as reasons for its demolition. However, as he then continues speaking about the locality, it becomes clear it is also because of its old atmosphere, aesthetics and visual features that he finds. For instance, despite the Winter Harbour is still functioning, for Ján “its use is not enough. I would rather welcome it to become part of all this, Eurovea, the entire riverbank promenade.” He then adds:

Industrial buildings don’t belong to the city centre. Take for instance the heating plant which has been protected. Well, that’s horrible! I don’t understand the deal about it. What is the matter for the preservationists? It’s an old and appalling building which should have been demolished and replaced with something new.

Drawing on Lefebvre, he sees this process of continuous urban change, transformation and modification as the new fundamental pillars of modern society. However, in the condition of perpetual change, the society “has no idea where it is going”, it lacks a vision (Lefebvre 1971. 81). During my fieldwork I also stumbled upon some former employees of the Winter Harbour, however, as mentioned, they wanted to stay anonymous. When I ask them on the positive and negative impact of the development they struggle in providing clear and coherent accounts on this issue and sometimes they counter-argued themselves. On the one hand, they claim how the public disrespect to the industrial heritage is impoverishing the city but at the same time they welcomed the transformation, construction and development and framed it as of contribution and benefit to the city. In either case, development, its creative and destructive force are seen as inherent and unavoidable.

When something new is about to come, ‘the old’ always have to move away and free some space for ‘the new’. That’s how it works, the development can’t be stopped. In regard to the buildings which surround the harbour, well, we have no right to comment it. It is not that bad. We knew that some modern constructions will appear. For instance, Panorama City\textsuperscript{10}, that is a magnificent construction and we think it will increase the significance and value of this entire district. It’s a nice architecture.

Destruction of the old ruins and former factories is the necessary cost of the development. As Ferguson states, poorer and less developed structures must advance and converge with the modern world (Ferguson 2006: 177). They think the demolition of the former factories and the transformation of the entire locality was the best possible scenario that might have happened.

By constructing new things, the city has gained on its aesthetics. Surely, the newer is more aesthetical than the old. It’s a pity when the old buildings vanished but it’s no tragedy. Reconstruction is too difficult. Now, it has a different value. There is some nostalgia but I keep it within myself.

\textsuperscript{10} As mentioned, at the time of the fieldwork, the name was Panorama City but it has been renamed recently.
Therefore, the costs of destruction are rationalised as a necessary feature of something better. In their case, it is also an impact of the surrounding development on the value and attractiveness of the harbour itself. When I speak with Martin, I see he is taking the ‘creative destruction’ concept to its extreme:

Last year, I found out that there were some heritage sites or technical constructions which were forbidden to be demolished. Well, I cannot say I agree with such a decision. If I were to decide, I would rather tear them down because every development in the city brings sacrifices.

In this statement, he implies the very logic of the creative destruction and the necessary costs it brings. Martin states that every larger transformation and progress inherently sacrifices something for the higher good and in the name of progress and development.

If a new urban district is being constructed in Bratislava, well, then I want it to be absolutely new. We mentioned Design factory building. I would tear it down. If something new is constructed, then it should be entirely new. You can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs. I don’t want to sound as to oppose history, I like it, but I want to emphasise that this will be a new area and such old buildings just disrupt it.

The ‘inevitable cost’ mentioned several times by my informants is according to Berman a determining feature of the development and creative destruction. Development is always accompanied by devastation, ruin and human costs, the destruction is highly impersonal, indirect and mediated (Berman 2010: 57, 67-8). Including human costs and creating ruins of the “old world”, they must inherently be lacking care, guilt and responsibility (ibid.: 84). Ending this monologue with another Slovak idiom, which closest translation would be ’the end justifies the means’, he then continues commenting on the value of industrial buildings and historical heritage in general.

Communists built some functionalistic buildings which are ugly. Although now, twenty-thirty years later, we are supposed to preserve these buildings because it has been publicly agreed that they became part of history so we cannot destroy them because they represent the political system or regime we had. I think it is necessary to protect the history but at the same time, it is necessary to move forward and built something modern and to say goodbye to old things.

Moreover, Martin’s statements bring back the linear development model where time has a progressive nature and is the only condition between the backward (not-yet-developed) and the modern (already developed) (Ferguson 1999: 178). With the time axis now unhinged from questions of status, history is not a teleological unfolding or a gradual rise through a hierarchical

---

11 He uses a Slovak variation of this idiom. It literal translation would be, “scobs flow around when you cut down a forest”.

72
progression but simply a movement through time (no longer passage through various ‘‘stages of development’’) (ibid.: 188). For Martin and other informants, there is no particular goal in the future, the goal is subsumed under the very process of progress.

We Belong to the Future

These informants make sense of the locality using the very dominant paradigm which frames the process of development and transformation. They imagine and reach to the new city of future which is expected to bring extending growth, economic progress, spatial expansion, ongoing construction, modernisation, cultivation of the city and socio-economic conditions. This dominant development narrative contains the expectation of future promises, self-growth and urban/economic growths, possibilities, and modernisation. They do not want to be placed in the past, it is seen as a burden without possibilities and opportunities. Since they have anticipated and now identify with this dominant narrative, they have no problems to understand and use the new city as a place of opportunities, access, leisure, services to be utilised. In interacting with the new city, and all the narratives it dwells, they reach to the future visions of not-yet-materialised-utopias where they place their expectations, dreams, visions and visions. As Mateusz Laszczkowski writes building boom and development offers its residents “possibilities for employment, a career and personal improvement – in short, the realization of the desired future in the present” (2016: 35). The city is becoming a utopian object which contains the not-yet attained collective futures but already materialises them. It is already improving socio-economic relations among some of its citizens and they believe and trust the development will continue (ibid.: 46).

There are different ways of how my informants place themselves to the future and shape their engagement with the social world. In the first chapter, I account on informants’ experience of the social world which is marked with insecurity and uncertainty. For the following informants, uncertainty and insecurity are present too but only as a transitory and temporary experience on the way to the desired outcome of the development narrative. Development and transformation encompass many informants’ experience of uncertainty but at the same time serve as a solution. This is clearly demonstrated among the former employees of the harbour. First of all, it must be noted that the harbour’s current socio-economic situation is unclear, unstable and volatile. There are rumours and media articles circulating about its destruction or transformation (Sedláček
The lack of knowledge and inability to seek information have a direct impact on the former harbour employees as well as on the public debate. I first contacted the employees via telephone where they seem excited and enthusiastic that somebody is interested in the place. Despite they are not working for the harbour anymore, they still place themselves within its environment, and hence they are not excluded from the harbour's dynamics. The former harbour employees’ experience of the transformation is shaped by two variables, the overall economic productivity of the harbour and the state of relationships among the harbour staff. These two variables have been dramatically influenced by the country’s transformation from the central-planned economy to market capitalism which is perceived with a disappointment. The transformation has caused a gradual decrease in the importance of shipping, decline of productivity and effectivity. They tell me:

There were more social interactions in the past but now there are so few people to interact with. Everybody is watching their own duties. It is sadder, emptier here now. Shipping has decreased, demand is lower so the number of employees decreased as well. All of a sudden, it has all become sad. People were sad. A sailor is happy when the vessels sail, when they find some money in their wallets and when there are things to be done. Because, for a sailor, standing still and waiting in the harbour mean idleness thus zero profits.

It is clear there is a crucial correlation between such economic shift and the shift in social relations, friendships and atmosphere among harbour’s workers. As they often stated, “a sailor is happy when they see movement in the harbour”. Nowadays, there are significantly fewer employees than before and these are only focused on their work. According to Fergusson, this is a classic example of a ‘development failure’ case, when the narratives of modernisation, growth and globalisation fail to meet the expectations and promises. Rather, these narratives are followed with a continuous decline, stagnation, and idleness (Fergusson 1999). Despite the overall recession and future uncertainties, employees share a general hope that shipping and navigation will be socio-economically important again. “Take whatever historical sources, there is an old Latin saying that has just been confirmed over time, 'navigare necesse est'\textsuperscript{12}. Navigation is necessary, inevitable. It is the oldest mean of transport.” According to Zinn, hope, together with belief and faith “enable individuals to act in situations which appear too hopeless or impossible to comprehend” (2008: 442).

Hope is employed mostly by those informants who had experienced a disappointment where promises of development have not been met (Fergusson 1999). This disappointment is very

\textsuperscript{12} The full saying goes, “Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse” and means “sailing is necessary, living is not necessary”.

much the case of the economic transformation in the 1990s onward, and its impact on the harbour. Employees mention that all the disappointment has become visible the most after Slovakia’s accession to the European Union in 2003 which was marked and promoted by many promises, expectation and desires in overall socio-economic conditions. The pillars of free-market capitalism – neoliberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, were about to be strengthened and should have resulted in the promised economic growth, progress and profit. However, former employees remember how these economic promises did not meet the economic reality and eventually led to overall decline and stagnation:

Nowadays, it has all broken down. They convinced us that with entering the European Union, the shipping would flourish but no such thing has happened. Everything stagnates. The transformation was so fast, and so progressive. However, we still believe and hope for the validity of the motto ‘navigation has been, is, and will be’.

Hence, even in the conditions of the ongoing development and intense surrounding construction, they do not loose hopes for the future. They believe and envision the harbour to become incorporated in these economic changes, profit and progress.

Shipping just cannot vanish and that is historically determined. We believe that there must come a re-discovery and re-appreciation of shipping. And it’s not only us who believe in that.

Even if sometimes controversially deemed as “non-rational strategies” (Zinn 2008: 439-40) for harbour former employees employ hope and faith to cope with uncertainty and contingency. “Beliefs, faith, and hope enable individuals to act in situations which appear too hopeless or impossible to comprehend,” writes Zinn (2008: 442). Therefore, even if uncertainty accompanies their everydayness, they are not afraid of the future. The narrative of the future of shipping help them to cope with the recent disappointments, moreover, the narrative of development and power of hope determine their dedication for the present. This can be seen in their systematic and voluntary work on repairing and refurbishing the old tugboat Šturec (Figure 11) from the former Czechoslovak Danube Fleet, now a technical heritage, with a goal to make it a museum. In present, they are working on securing a place for the future. Drawing on Coyle and Atkinson, such a notion of hope can be understood as a driving force for my informants to ’keep on going’ (Coyle and Atkinson 2018: 58). They have been already working on it for a couple of years despite they claim the struggle to organise, find time and money for the reconstruction.
So far, they have successfully cleaned the vessel, painted its main parts to their original colour, reconstructed the deck and the captain’s cabin and found some original items, mechanism, or clothes. They have done it all without any support from the harbour nor from the Museum of Transport which officially owns the ship as a cultural heritage site. Hence, in this light, the tugboat’s reconstruction can be understood as a way of experiencing their everydayness in the framework of future outcomes and prospects. The former employees act upon the social world by shaping a piece of collective future for themselves. They want to act on the world which, as they say, failed them and made them disappointed. Hope is experienced as “a positive outlook contributes to getting on in life and to managing adversity” (ibid.: 53). According to Zigon, such notion of hope works as a way of maintaining a normal life, control and stability (Zigon 2009: 253). Repairing the Tugboat Šturec is also a way how to have a say in a social world which is out of their control. They reclaim their environment and themselves as social actors of this place, seeking attachment and belonging. According to Laszczkowski, when a certain community loses a past control they over its environment, it can strive towards regaining this control by acting on different urban features or by acting in smaller scale urban units (Laszczkowski 2016: 27). The notion of control is crucial here as it is being lost by the impact of the economic transformation. The social world is acting on the harbour employees and they
lost their tools to act back. Resonating with Jackson, they are acting back by seeking the sense of home when the world “uncontrollably act upon you” (1995: 123).

Other informants also place themselves into these narratives of the functional future city even though they perceive development as a contingent process. They often say that future urban scenarios are unknown and contingent but the ultimate end-goal should be a thriving modern city. Therefore, they hope the processes will continue and will expand the city according to their desired form – a modern global metropolis. They hope and expect that the current development will continue in its already established form. As said, this hope is interwoven with the contingent and uncertain prospects of development. For instance, Silvia says that the future specific construction plans and the final form of particular urban zones are surely unknown because they are not subjected to public consultation but to “developers´ freewill”. As an example, she speaks about the tower which is being constructed in front of the Twin City that should have originally been a park. As a result, one of the firms based in the administrative centre wanted to terminate the contract with HB Reavis, the investor which owns it.13 Despite that, as I already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Silvia trusts the development and sees it as an inherent and inevitable and unavoidable of the economic transformation.

Seeing this transformation as natural, it is no surprise that she places her certainties and visions into the future. These certainties and expectations of the development and economic growth are being materialised in investing in real-estate in order to secure her futures. Her intention is to sub-rent the apartment in the future and thus to have a secure and regular future income. “I want to stay here for as long as possible. I maybe want to have a family or kids. Although, later, I want to leave and rent it.” In her opinion it is not only her case. She tells me that the residential project was primarily aimed at people who see it as a potential investment. “The first owner bought three apartments. One was for him, a second one for his mother, and the third for investment.” She says the majority of owners bought it for investment purposes and now sub-rent the apartments. Similarly, in a follow-up interview with Panorama Towers´ landlord, he tells me how surprisingly high demand there was for the apartments even before it had been constructed. He mentions me a case when someone sold one’s cottage in nature in order to be able to buy an apartment in Panorama Towers. He adds there were many examples of such “unconventional ways” of financing the purchases. Hence, Investments to real-estate

13 The company Swiss Re decided to withdraw from the contract with Twin City Centre developer HB Reavis after the developer had information that the plan for building a park in the front of the centre would eventually be a skyscraper (Mistrík 2016).
become an economically efficient mechanism for generating profit and securing one’s future. This is exactly why Martin’s parents bought him an apartment there.

Well, it was an investment. I purchased it as an investment for the future. For instance, you can monetize this apartment in the future by selling it. If your money should decrease in value through inflation, it is always better to have them stocked in real estate assets. Hence, it is not only a space of living but also space for saving money.

The developer’s (J&T Real Estate) website highlight information about high demand for the towers’ apartments. In eight weeks, after the sale had been declared, four hundred out of six hundred apartments had been sold. I remember one unexpected conversation I had at the end of 2018 with a woman who was administering J&T bank loans for their real estate projects. She told me the demand is significantly manipulated by private investors, businessmen and rich elites who invest to and buy real estates for market speculations. She continued claiming that these investments make the demand to appear high and the market offer to be insufficient. The manipulation and increase of demand gradually contribute to the rising prices of apartments and eventually to market bubbles and crises.

Hope in the future of development, growth and stability is also accompanied with trust in the developers continuing investments in the city and urban environment. Many informants trust and believe private investors that they will continue constructing the city. Ján and Vanda say that since the city authorities fail in addressing the urban problems, it is automatically developers who take the responsibility. They say that “at those places (brownfield locality), there was nothing there. But they have constructed something at that place. So, we have no objections against it.” Petra says she trusts the developers because they know what they do and what fits the city. She thinks they “make the city beautiful and more pleasant for living.” She wants the city to be expanding in the already set tendency where there is no place for industry. “It should be at the periphery,” she says. Moreover, harbour’s current employee Róbert trusts the private investors too. He supports his statement by giving me a comparison of the city prior to the developers came and after it:

When I remember Bratislava in the 1990s, I recall a grey centre with a lot of graffiti. I know the city authorities want to restrict it. Nevertheless, I see these new areas as a contribution to urban life because they are controlled and maintained and there isn’t so much vandalism. I think vandalism is also decreasing in the centre because of these development projects.

Hope and expectations are related to both, the future modern conditions as well as the modern subject – citizen. As Ong argues, it is a hope for the refurbishment and reconstruction to create urban conditions where a new type of citizen can emerge. It is a citizen who forms a new
creative and managerial core in the process of economic transformation towards a globally oriented knowledge economy. “What is being emulated goes beyond concrete, glass, and steel; urban modelling also involves the mimicry of the neoliberal packaging of international glamour, talent, and entrepreneurialism that promises to animate a moribund metropolis,” (Ong 2011: 16). These hopes can be subsumed under the larger belief based on a myth of modernity which encompasses my informants' experiences and engagements with the new locality. These narratives frame the city as to provide its citizens with materially satisfying life as well as for careers’ improvement. “Individuals strive to constitute themselves through relationships with their social and material environment. That ongoing effort entails taking advantage of opportunities as well as dealing with constrains,” writes Laszczkowski (2016: 45).

However, it is not a single way how the urban transformation is acting on my informants and their means of reaching to the past. I show that if some act to secure their future by intense everyday work, others do it by ‘buying it’. As Laszczkowski continues, built environment does not produce individuals according to a single template but enables individuals to “engage in mutually constitutive ways, constrained by the skills and resources at hand” (ibid. 45). As Lefebvre says, what is happening with such cities of change, modernisation and development is, that “more or less derelict and decaying centres of centres of large cities are restored and occupied by well-to-do, educated middle-class citizens (...) the city is being turned into the most precious and valued possession of the privileged classes and the greatest asset of consumption, to which it confers a specific significance” (1971: 76). Such a city is creating inhabitants who are individually responsible for securing their personal wellbeing and their individual futures through the benefits of development. In this regard, they believe in certain capitalisation of investments throughout progressive time. This is demonstrated in seeing real estate, not as places of living but rather a place for investments. At the same time, in such an environment, informants can shape their sense of acting and belonging via creating future according to their prospects.
Internalising the Development’s Narrative and Expectations

These informants are regaining a sense of control over the changing social world via perceiving the development to be providing them with future possibilities and opportunities. Actively working on, investing to and hoping for the future, all work as ways of securing some sense of stability and control. The future represents a framework where they can place their visions and certainties into. As a result, they can navigate within the new city and see it as providing opportunities, growth and contribution to the social and economic conditions. They experience a sense of belonging, recognition and hence they can internalise the entire narrative of development in a framework of self-development and progress by shaping a piece of future for themselves. Hence, for them, developers are not only cultivating the city as well as the possibilities for individual futures and wellbeing.

They wait until the new city is constructed according to their not-yet-materialised vision of future utopias. They say these new localities manifest such content, symbolism and representations that they can identify with, they can navigate within and internalise their demands and expectations. Hence, this sense of belonging, understanding and identifying with

14 https://www.cas.sk/clanok/161680/v-bratislave-sa-otvorila-nova-mestska-cast-eurovea/
the new development is also represented in the way they act and navigate themselves in the newly developed locality. This is most visible in case of the Eurovea project which represents this vision of successful contemporary development. For instance, when I speak to Jana, she tells Eurovea’s promenade (Figure 12 and Figure 13) in one of the very few spaces in Bratislava where she can sit freely in the summer and do not suffer from the heat. “It’s because of the river why the locality feels fresh and breathing,” says Jana and compares the locality with other western cities where they utilised a river for a similar purpose. “It is very practical, people have finally a place to sit, lie down, have a picnic, and have their kids playing on their own. It has become a city promenade. It has a human scale.” She frames the locality as “an extended private space. “Since we live in a flat and don’t have a garden so this place is kind of replacing it. We sometimes sit here for five hours.” She internalises the place to have these intimate and personal aspects associating it with garden or a living room. She experiences this locality through intimacy and cosiness that she can identify with.

A rather different way of identifying with the new city represents Petra who says that she seldom visits cafés, bars and restaurants in Eurovea but when she does, she considers it an event, an occasion that she enjoys. “I always dress well and make some styling and then I can go there and feel well here,” she remarks. Understanding the place, its requirements, representations and symbolism, she always has to make herself fitting. She adapts, changes and transforms according to the locality’s character and needs. These requirements of the place have class and income-level dimensions. “People will think twice where they will buy their mojito,” she says and then continues:

Eurovea is a place where you meet people who have money. They are supercilious and pretentious people. It is a place which represents a certain standard. I can tell it by how these people are dressed, how they behave and what kind of cars they ride.

Eurovea thus represents an exclusive place distinguishing people according to their income level on those who can visit the place and those who decide for a cheaper alternative. Petra’s case shows how the class and economic divisions become clear and visible in spaces like Eurovea and transform this public space to a place of polarisation and wealth manifestation. Hence, Eurovea also represents a place where your presence demonstrates your class and income level as well as certain socio-economic capital, a certain social status. As a result, many people ‘use’ Eurovea to intentionally and ostentatiously show their social status, wealth, and income. It is those informants who understand the place and understand its purpose. As Laszczkowski says, “belonging is not a passive state, but rather a performative activity that
takes effort,” (Laszczkowski 2016: 80). Hence, some informants, intentionally visit the locality and act to belong there, seek recognition and membership in a certain social class. They alter their behaviour and physical appearance to fit the locality and the narrative it represents. This dimension is also mentioned by Ján and Vanda who tells me many stories about the place demonstrating their attachment with it. Spending a lot of time in the locality and observing behavioural patterns, Ján tells me how he keeps seeing kids and teenagers just meaninglessly running and wandering within the mall, hanging out but never visiting shops or buying something they do not have money for that. Then they continue about the class-dimension of Eurovea, although they speak about it in urban-rural terms. Being stereotyping and vulgar, they say it is mostly “peasants and villagers” who visit Eurovea, to spend the entire day there and to show off. They say Eurovea is internally divided according to income-level groups. “It is divided according to floors. At the basement level, you have the cheapest shops, in the mid-level, you have some sort of standard and on the highest floor, well, that one is empty.” Vanda tries to explain why people visit the place in such massive numbers:

The majority of people who visit Eurovea do so because they just feel noble there. I think they are astonished by the monumentality of Eurovea and that makes them feel superior. They want to feel at home among all the luxury but at the same time, they cannot afford it. However, by being there, they want to show to others that they might be able to afford it.

![The miniature of Eurovea project in the Eurovea mall. Photo. Author](image)

Picture 12.
Again, these accounts show that there exists a desire for people to fit into the new city, to seek a sense belonging to what it represents. Many people would like to feel at-home in Eurovea but they know they do not belong there, socially and economically. The development’s central “drive that seems to be endemic to modernisation: [is] the drive to create a homogenous environment” which succeed in attracting a certain class of people with certain income (Berman 2010: 68-9). These new homogenous systems, are oriented towards free activity, and free realisation of a class of free and enterprising workers. Informants seek to belong with the locality and believe in realising themselves there according to what it represents. In these new modern environments, citizens want to develop themselves, become new persons and become adequately modern (Laszczkowski 2016: 45). They seek belonging to this narrative and want to internalise it, want to be part of it. Resonating with Jackson, they seek to create a sense of at-home-ness which lies in the knowing “that we are shaped by a world which seems largely outside our grasp” but at the same time having the ability to “in some small measure, shape it” (Jackson 1995: 123). It is through understanding and adapting to the expectations and socio-economic requirements of the new place brought by the development that these informants seek belonging and control in the fast-changing social world. They feel the place has been built for them hence they want and at the same time are able to make themselves fit the new locality.
3. The Shifting Experience and Sense of Being-At-Home-In-The-World

These multiple ways of how people engage in changing the social world can be subsumed under two central strategies that I identified, 1) reaching to the past or 2) reaching to the future. What these both mechanisms have in common is their root cause, and that is the undeniability of development. The radical transformation of the Bratislava’s cityscape is an inevitable process which cannot be altered nor do my informants have an impact on it. Accepting Jackson’s definition that “we feel at home in the world when what we do has some effect and what we say carries some weight,” they seek any possibility to engage with the social world and seek a sense of belonging (Jackson 1995: 123). Each group of informants perceives this process of transformation in a certain way depending on its vision of what Bratislava should represent, their living experience with the city, the way they act in social world and visions and expectations they have from the city and future. Nevertheless, the process of development is an inevitable fact, a process which cannot be avoided or opposed. In this maelstrom which is caused by the dominant force of development, my informants either feel to belong to the process of development or they place themselves away from it. For my informants, the urban transformation has appeared without anticipation, radically and powerfully. Returning to Heidegger, they have been thrown to the maelstrom of powerful changes, “‘thrown’ (geworfen) into a world which has been made by others at other times and will outlast us” (Heidegger cited in Jackson 1989: 14). It is this sense of throwness which shapes informants practices of engaging with the developers’ transformation forces. It is this omnipresent force of private development which all my informants perceive to be acting on them either in a destructive or cultivating way.
Vis-à-vis the Power of Development, One Has to Adapt

For many informants, developers are seen as the new responsible authority and the driving force beyond the radical urban transformation. Because private corporations are highly anonymous, represented via acronyms, logos, or symbols, my informants mostly refer to them as “they”. Since the corporation or the people are to a large extent unknown or invisible to the public, informants speak about this transformative force of investors as about “a power”, “the power of capital”, or “financial power”. It is this power of capital which many of my informants perceive to be acting on them and thus they have to encounter. According to Marián, the owner of one of the oldest butchery located in the brownfield area, the urban and political future is to a large extent shaped by the private motivations of an anonymous private developer.

It’s the money and private development that are shaping the city. The development is motivated solely by profit although I think it is normal even though I wouldn't say I’m enthusiastic about it. Nevertheless, I think that everybody follows profit. In this case, the role of the city is minimalised. Moreover, the roles of the municipality and the state are always downplayed when they are confronted with big money. On top of that, private development disregards aesthetical, social and public interests and it only follows commercial needs. I think that is the main problem.

The gradual domination of the private sector in shaping the city makes my informants perceive private developers to be the ultimate shapers and makers of the city’s material and social conditions. A private investor is not only the ultimate urban decision-maker but also the ultimate beneficiary of the development via constructing primarily profit-generating projects. As Miroslav says, generating profit is the development’s ultimate motivation. He continues:

When something new is being constructed in the city, they usually start with building a bank. Then the developers construct a savings’ fund, then maybe some groceries shop, offices and lastly some apartments. I cannot even imagine how expensive these apartments must be. I tell you, it’s the finance sharks who decide over the architecture of the city. They have power through money. It’s all about the money.

Hence, the responsibility for shaping the material landscape of Bratislava and its social relations is taken over by private developers. For some informants, the subject of a developer is seen as not taking any regard for the public interests and needs. On the contrary, they are motivated only by for-profit goals. On top of that, some see the financial power to directly influence the public affairs. For instance, the current employee of Slovak Shipping and Ports, Robert says that there exists an activity of private interests but never directly visible or identifiable. He tells me about the many private proposals of harbour’s transformation but at the same time, he mentions that nobody has ever directly contacted them in such regard. He and the company
only know about these visions and proposals from the media. Together with the former employees of the harbour, they think that the harbour’s future is absolutely subjected to the interest of private development. As the former employees once said, “it is all subjected to power machinations among developers.” In their opinion, it is money which decides about the city’s future, the development of particular places and people’s lives.

For these informants, the pervasive effects of development cause a sense of alienation, detachment from living environments as well as an experience of uncertainty, insecurity and loss of control. Development is seen as a destructive force which is highly anonymous and contingent, changing subjective attachments and sense of at-home-ness. These impacts are most obvious in the case of Juraj Mojžiš whose living everyday experience has changed radically. Hence, he now struggles to find the sense of stability, home, certainty in a place that he could attach again to as his former living environment has been transformed. When I speak with him, he tells me the nature of urban setting always depends on an existence of particular urban community. He argues that a city is not made of places but people who make the space, communities, activities, and neighbourhoods through collective lived experiences.

We will demolish these new buildings in twenty years but you know, as a society, you should be able to say you are proud of your cities. We don’t construct an architecture which would leave any traces in our children, grandchildren. Practically, we don’t have any historical messages, no heritage, nothing to maintain. You have to know what existed before to be able to say what should exist in the future. I, as an architect, should show you horizons and then we can say, what we are, who we are and where do we come from.

Hence, for Juraj, with the material destruction of the old Bratislava, the entire urban community is being disintegrated and lost. Juraj tells me a losing continuity with the collective living experience of the urban environment and life in general. He sees development as a rupture, a disruption in social life which cannot be addressed or tackled. He says he has lost connection with place and people of his former living environment and many times he remarks how he would like to leave the city and move abroad since there is nothing that would tie him with Bratislava anymore. As Brown and Perkins say, “physical settings and artefacts both reflect and shape people's understanding of who they are as individuals and as members of groups” (1992: 280). This experience is common for many other informants who also feed the process of urban transformation is taking their sense of lived belonging and sense of being-at-home in the city. They feel disrupted, disoriented, shocked, uncertain an insecure. “When our familiar

---

15 The most publicly discussed project was a proposal of Ján Revaj architectonical studio for the harbour reconstruction. The studio has not yet disclosed what investor had ordered this design (Liptáková 2016).
environment is suddenly disrupted we feel uprooted, we lose our footing, we are thrown, we collapse, we fall,” Jackson says (1989: 122). Jackson continues that the shock from the loss of a home is “a shock and disorientation which occurs simultaneously in body and mind” (ibid: 122). Juraj, together with many other informants, does not feel to belong to the development process nor to have any sense of control over or say in it. Development causes them a loss of the attachment to their living environment but also disables them to imagine and seek any future prospect to identify with, hope for and rely upon.

Many informants cannot place themselves to the promises and contributions of the development narrative. They feel it is not meant for them neither the new city it produces nor the new social relations it brings. Hence, if the presence is marked with alienation, loss, detachment and hopelessness, where future does not exist, they reorient to the images and reminiscences of the past city. Being exposes to such power dynamics, economic and political changes and the sense of throw-ness, many of them speak about themselves as powerless and passive. They render themselves as having no power and capability to act against the development and its impacts, nor society as a whole. For instance, Alžbeta says that when confronted with such power of developers, people are losing their ability to confront it:

We, the old Pressburers, we might not be here tomorrow. Nowadays, it’s all up to young people to fight these forces. They have to show their goal is not to become millionaires and that they cannot be bought. They have to form a relationship with the city, however, many incomers often don’t have a relationship with it. If they had, we wouldn't have these new buildings here. I think people are afraid to raise their voice about what they dislike because they always stumble upon someone who is more powerful and profits from all this.

She frames herself and the society as powerless vis-a-vis the private financial power. In her and other informants’ understanding, money is associated with power and an individual and society with powerlessness. As Juraj says, everything works in the “maelstrom of power and capital” and that is what makes the society passive, ignorant, powerless and frustrated. He continues:

People are not able to oppose the development because of the modus operandi of what we are living in here and now. Every subversive action, every opposition would be immediately hijacked by people with money because of their profit-seeking motivations. If the financial power decides to destroy something, they do it. They don't ask questions. They have their mechanism. They negotiate with lawyers and public authorities and make a deal. The public has never a say in these processes.

Being exposes to such power dynamics, economic and political changes and the sense of throw-ness, it is not surprising my informants feel they do not have any power and capability to act against the development. In resonance with Seeman’s research, alienation as an urban problem
is related to “the sense of "lost control" (i.e., powerlessness), (Seeman 1971: 140). On top of that, for some the feeling of powerlessness is so pervasive, they internalise it to an extent that they claim that their only option is to adapt and get used to it. They say there are no options, possibilities and even meaning to oppose the power of a developer. According to Geiss and Ross, powerlessness occurs when expectations of particular outcomes are determined by forces that are external to a subject. “The individual believes that he or she is powerless to achieve desired ends,” they write (1998: 233). However, the sense of powerlessness is not only present at the individual level but also on the social one. For instance, according to the former employees of the harbour, “the public doesn’t have any effective means to intervene and say ‘no, we don’t want this here so please, don’t build it’. Developers can build whatever they want.” They mention a case of public activism and petition campaign against the increase of the height of the building which is being constructed in the protected zone near the Bratislava YMCA heritage site. Despite public activism and thousands of signed petition sheets, investors have been able to increase the height of the building and to continue with construction. It demonstrates how the power of capital suppresses any public opinion and demand. “Of course, you then hear people saying that everything is meaningless.” Therefore, the only solution for people is to accept the change and the fact that there are other entities deciding over their living environment and collective futures.

Even when there is a possibility to make public comments on some construction projects, it’s only formal. The formal procedures are met but the results always follow the private interests. Hence, the public is forced to accept the developers’ activity. Well, at the end of the day, it’s all about getting used to it. It’s all about the habit. Even those who are now against it will eventually adapt and take it as it is.

All the active citizens or grassroots organisations are always suppressed and silenced by the ultimate finance-capital power of developers. For instance, Miroslav, claims he can only adapt to the material changes brought to the city by the power of capital. “It is already constructed, what I am supposed to do. There is nothing I can do about it,” he laments. Therefore, he can only get used to the newly developed locality while the areas and places he previously identified with are existing in his memories. “You have to take it as it is. I don’t know what is going on in these new places. You just have to get used to them and that’s the only thing you can do about the current situation.” His girlfriend Dagmar also feels that the only way she can engage with the transformation of the built environment is by adapting to it:

One always have to adapt. With this new era which has come, I cannot look back with nostalgia about the good old times. I always say, you have to take it as it comes. There are things I can influence and those I
cannot, it is just a matter of how I am concerned with them. Maybe, I can express my objection to some things but eventually, I always have to accept some sort of things.

In these radically and suddenly disturbed conditions, “all balance between self and world is lost. We feel thrown. The ground gives way under our feet. We lose our footing and fall. Since we do not feel at home in the world we come to think of home as a place of retreat. We take refuge in the imagination,” says Jackson (1995: 123). As Herzfeld presupposes, built environments impose habitual practices over its subjects. People are forced to withdraw from the present social world into imaginations and constructed narratives. However, that does not mean that the subject is necessarily docile and complaisant since that would lead to ignoring the subject’s agency (Herzfeld 2006: 130). Therefore, I do not want to frame my informants’ decision as a loss of agency or as passivity and irresponsibility but rather as an active and conscious decision to not to act. As Jackson says, “this is not to imply that one’s fate is wholly predetermined by the world into which one is born or thrown; it simply means that subjection must be placed on a par with agency as a human coping strategy” (2013: 19). They are decided not to participate in the development story. As Hasselberg says, they do not refrain from the self, from the subjective concern about one’s social world (Hasselberg 2016: 107). They are very much aware of their selves and they decided to put them away from the narrative of development which they understand but do not want to be part. They cannot place themselves to the promises and contributions of the development narrative, they feel it is not mean for them neither the new city it produces nor the new social relations it brings. Hence, if the presence is marked with alienation, loss, detachment and hopelessness, where future does not exist, the reorient to the images and reminiscences of the past city. As Dewey argues constructing these narratives is following a desire to “seek security and stability in the face of the world's hazards” (Dewey cited in Jackson 1989: 15).
Embracing the Development of the City and the Self

On the other hand, there are informants who feel a perfect balance and belonging with the process of development and the new city it has brought. They see this process as an unavoidable fact that must have come as a result of the economic and social transition of the country. The process of development is expected to generate a long-awaited social and economic change in the city. It expects to bring growth, prosperity, modern urban landscape as well as possibilities and opportunities of living and workings. All these promises and expectations of the future should be soon materialised in the physical urban landscape and all these promises and expectations also correspond with informants’ individual visions of future utopias. Hence I claim the development is perceived as representing vision of not-yet-materialised vision of future utopia with which my informants experience balance. To the future they place their dreams, expectations and hopes. This sense of control over their future lives base on identification and balance with the development narrative’s promises help them also to shape a sense of at-home-ness in the new city. It is exactly the new city which represents this dominant discourse the place themselves within.

On top of that, such experience and perspective presupposes a linear model of temporality where the development is seen as a process from obsolete dysfunctional past to coherent functional and modern futures. Hence, many of these informants do not experience any regrets or attachment to the old representation of Bratislava. It all fits the image of the natural linear development. Hence, these informants perceive past as something backward and obsolete, decaying and meaningless and thus suitable and waiting for a change which is to be brought with the development. For instance, Petra says she has no regrets for the industrial locality being demolished because it was something she expected and awaited:

> When I am thinking about this locality we are at now, I must say I had no relationship with it at all. For the past fifteen years, I have perceived it as an inaccessible and fenced place, overgrown, neglected and abandoned but at the same time close to the city centre. It has bothered me a lot but that is why I welcome this ongoing revitalisation.

Therefore, the process of development was expected and awaited as a natural process which is necessary for the urban environment and society to progress. The clear example of this is Ali, another person living in Panorama Towers. Again, he associates the future with the private investments to the urban environment and compares it with the past which was neglected and ruined. For him, the dominant force of the future is a developer who have the power, means and money to contribute to the city and cultivate it.
Leaving the locality up to the city authorities would be like leaving it to fall down piece by piece. Eventually, it would attract drug-addicted people or someone who would spray it with graffiti and there would be a lot of crap, dirt and everything... I don’t want that and you don’t want that in the city centre. If you look at the Eurovea riverside, it’s much better now. It shows that a private developer has this financial power to invest into something positive.

Hence, despite developers’ profit-seeking motivations he implies, they represent a necessary and awaited change which contributes to the overall socio-economic urban conditions. The developer is seen as cultivating the city and contributing to the overall wellbeing. Hence, he says he can easily identify with these processes and perceive himself as the beneficiary of this development. This is a case for many other informants who feel themselves to be part of this development and place their visions and future projects within it. Not only they think they belong to the new locality and everything it represents but they also remark positively about the private investments and expects their continuation and expansion. For instance, as Ali further says, he embraces the activity of private real-estate-investment groups with the financial power to invest, particularly in profitable neglected areas and shape the urban landscape. He is, however, aware of the profit-based motivation but at the same time remarks it is not something negative that should be avoided. He continues:

You could have noticed that developers are more interested in building residential areas because, most probably, they have a bigger profit out of it when compared to investing in a museum or to culture. Moreover, I don’t think the city has money to invest because ... well, it’s just a city. So it’s developers who invest and you cannot keep them out of the construction processes. You only have to find a common point of interest because you need developers to finance it. They have the financial power.

Ali, among many other informants, believes that developers constitute the change and transformation according to the collectively accepted vision of modern future. This future of a modern metropolis is often corresponded with and inspired by an image of a generic urban metropolis of the international west. They make sense of the urban landscape by projecting their future visions of life in a modern city to the not-yet-realised built environment. They wait and expect the international metropolis to unfold around them. They sense of being-at-home is shaped within this framework of contributing development and the promises it holds. Since these narratives have been anticipated and expected as natural and inherently associated processes of the transition, these informants are in balance, can identify with and experience belonging with them. As Caroline Melly says, “belonging is a process that is rooted in both present circumstances and future possibilities (Melly 2010: 62). It is exactly these future possibilities where many informants shape their experience of being-at-home, recognition and
belonging. Hence, they see no problem with destructing the material representations of the old city because something new is yet to come. The destruction is only an inevitable cost of development. The future is brighter, more functional and with possibilities to materialise and make use of. These representations of future visions are a framework that my informants place their prospects and expectations within. On top of that, for many of them, it is a narrative they can internalise as a guiding force for their own selves.

The most representative case of those informants internalising the development as a framework for their everyday life is Martin from Panorama Towers. He equals his living experience with Panorama Towers with the stage of his life and personality. “As a young person, I like to be in something that is new. And I am young, the building is new, I’m the first person living in the apartment, well, it feels nice,” he tells me. The vision of modern utopia is internalised to reflect the personal effort to develop oneself, to shape a vision of better self. “It is through living in this material utopia – a place of the future today and the abroad at home – that many individuals have hoped to transform themselves as persons,” (Laszczkowski 2016: 42). In Marshal Berman’s words, in the shifting condition of modernity, everyone must become a developer of oneself in the shifting conditions, in the maelstrom of social and material transformation. “…the process of economic and social development generates new modes of self-development; ideal for men and women who can grow into the emerging new world,” (Berman 2010: 66f).

Being self-developers in a developing world, again, help my informants to work on securing their futures, to seek future control and stability in contingent and uncertain present. The example of such future in a developed city can be found within the Eurovea which is generally acclaimed as successful and significant. Among many informants, the riverbank reconstruction is hailed as one of the most successful projects in Bratislava. Overall, the promenade and the mall are often visited, for some only because of the promenade, while others enjoy shopping, its atmosphere or services it provides. For instance, Martin says he is a frequent visitor of the mall. He feels well there and it is easy to navigate himself there. He goes there primarily because of consumption, buying groceries or enjoy leisure activities it offers. For him, Eurovea is a place where he indulges himself by spending money, enjoy food, cinema, and buying things. When I ask him on his perceptions and feeling of the locality, he replies laughing: “Well, the only feeling I have from the place is an empty wallet.” In this account, the locality is reduced to its consumerist function and Martin is an ultimate consumer who has found his place and role in the new city.
The paradox of such framing and experiencing the impacts of development lies in the fact that many of these informants also experience uncertainty and contingency. However, it is not only the very process of development and its outcomes but also the future narratives and imaginations. If I say that this uncertainty is shared among all my informants, however, what differs is the experience of this uncertainty. For these informants, uncertainty is not understood as insecurity, it does not produce a fear of the future but on the contrary, it produces hope which not only motivates their everyday intense passion but also help shaping the future desires, expectations and prospects and means of taking control in the changing social world.

Uncertainty is only a temporary state of being but if you work enough and believe in better futures the development will bring, you can be a developer yourself and secure yourself a piece of this future. Again, such understanding bring my informants a sense of control over the contingent social world and a sense of having a say in it.

Concluding Remarks: Reshaping the Sense of Being-At-Home-In-The-World

My informants identify and shape their sense of at-home-ness and place themselves within or out of the development narrative. Accordingly, they employ two general mechanisms in order to make sense of the changing social world where the power to act is being pervaded. Seeking narratives of rootedness and belonging in the past or placing hopes to the future promises are two mechanisms leading my informants to construct their sense of being-at-home-in-the-world. According to Jackson, to be at-home means to be rooted in place (Jackson 1995: 2). Hence, for them the notion and sense of at-home-ness are not rooted in a bounded spatial physical and present temporality. Rather, it re-emerges in a collective encounter vis-à-vis the financial power of development. Further drawing on Jackson’s central assumption, my informants employ these two mechanisms in order to shape their sense of home-ness in changing world by finding the balance between acting the social world and being acted by it. This experience is not only determining for the sense of being-at-home in the transforming world and the sense of being shapers and initiators in it, but also for seeking stability, identity and certainty (Jackson 1995: 123). The experience of uncertainty is the underpinning and determining for all of my informants however, the experience of it is different. If for some it is lived as contingency and insecurity, for others through hope and expectations.
In these conditions, they have to seek the balance between their activity and the social world acting on them. The continuously seek a desire to have a say and shape their closest living spaces and their prospects of life. Therefore, the sense-of-home is not lost, it exists in the process of seeking, redefining, finding and shaping through many ways of informants’ engaging with the changing world. As Jackson writes, “even if we go along with what is given, accepting our contingency and denying our freedom, we contribute to the way the world will be for those who follow us into it.” (1989: 14). This process of re-taking their stance towards the development also depends on the extent of understanding of the development narrative, the extent of identification with it and also the perceived pervasiveness of development. Therefore, the many ways my informants act towards and engage with the social world are following informants’ desire to seek the sense and experience of home-ness as well as the sense of control in the changing environments shaped by forces external to them.

Therefore, in this essay, I argue that my informants shape the sense of being at home via constructing different narratives which are located in past and future temporalities. They retreat to the past or reach towards the future in order to make sense of the changing world and to find belonging, control, identification and recognition. Moreover, some of them desire to seek a balance between being acted upon and acting in the social world. Therefore, further borrowing from Jackson, I argue that my informants seek the balance between acting and being acted upon the social world by either actively positioning themselves as powerless and rejecting the development or, on the other hand, accepting its narrative, impacts and ethos of self-development. In this essay, I illustrate how identities and places are re-shaped in mutual interaction. “Person and place coalesce. Whatever happens to the one, happens to the other,” Jackson remind us (1995: 125). Hence, when the cityscape is changing so do the people. When the sense of belonging, recognition control, and identification is being dislocated to the past or future and the power of acting towards the world is being under attack, the very sense of at-home-ness is disintegrating and dislocated. Therefore, As Jackson argues, a sense of home does not equal to intrinsic qualities of particular space. “Sense of home is grounded less in a place per se than in the activity that goes on in a place,” he writes (Jackson 1995: 148). Hence, the sense of home cannot be seen is some bounded and isolated space, rather it is being formed in the process of reshaping via many collective activities and engagements with the world.

However, the sense of being-at-home-in-the-world (Jackson 1995: 123) is not lost or destroyed but it is being formed in different temporalities and spatialities, shaped and re-shaped via collective activities of seeking a sense of at-home-ness in the past or in the future or through
active engagement of internalisation and rejection. The sense of home can be found in all these activates I elaborate upon in this thesis, in the collective imaginations of authentic and romantic pasts or in the images of future utopias. These processes demonstrate informants’ the ability “to pursue future goals that make the difference between merely ‘residing’ and truly ‘living’ in a place (Laszczkowski 2016: 80). Home is not being lost, or vanishing, rather, it is formed in space and time of transformation. Home “conveys a notion of all that is already given—the sedimented lives of those who have gone before— but it also conveys a notion of what is chosen—the open horizons of a person’s own life,” writes Jackson (1995: 122). The notion, perception and experience of home are dislocating, transforming and becoming fluid and liquid. Home no longer has one central space, it “had become everywhere and nowhere” (Jackson 1995: 49, 84). It is no longer the enclosed space of a house which my informants feel at home in, it is no longer associated with a dwelling. Rather it is determined by the series of activities when informants act in order to seek and reclaim a sense of control, certainty, security and collective belonging in the social world. Collective engagements create collective experiences, or what Jackson calls experiential truths. They emerge when we “break the momentum of the discursive mind or throw ourselves into some collective activity in which we each find our own meaning yet at the same time sustain the impression of having a common cause and giving common consent.” (Jackson 1989: 133).

The concentration of collective activities is imprinted in and activates spaces. Therefore, we must see informants’ being in the world as an encounter between the identities they construct and the urban environment they seek engagement with. The rootedness and a sense of at-home-ness in a place are “carried out in concert with others, generation after generation, and depending upon complex relationships of complementarity between men and women as well as between paired subsections, these activities unite the living with the living (..). It is in this way that a place becomes charged with the energy and vitality of those who live and labor there.” (Jackson 1995: 148). Therefore, it is only through collective engagement with the world where a collective sense of being-at-home can emerge. The experience of home is not much about the experience of place but rather an experience of the collective activities and engagements with a place. The engagement of person and place via labour transforms to collective narratives, atmosphere and history. Those places where a community engage itself, embody people’s identities and lives (Jackson 1995: 148). Therefore, "whatever the generative activity of my informants is, it is what gives value to a particular site" (ibid. 153). Home “is to experience a complete consonance between one’s own body and the body of the earth. Between self and
other. It little matters whether the other is a landscape, a loved one, a house, or an action. Things flow (Jackson 1995: 110). It does not matter whether they reject or accept the development or escape to the past or future. In a sense, they all escape in order to find a sense of being-at-home-in-the-world.
List of Illustrations

Picture 1. View on the developing locality. Photo: Author ............................................. 6
Map 1. The map of Bratislava delineating my field site. Google Maps ......................... 8
Picture 2. The inner courtyard within Panorama Towers. Photo: Author ..................... 37
Picture 3. The built remains in the brownfield locality. Photo: Author ....................... 39
Picture 4. Apollo Bridge next to the pumping stations. Photo: Author ..................... 42
Picture 5. One of the pools in the Winter Harbour. Photo: Author ........................... 48
Picture 6. View on the Winter Harbour. Photo: Author ............................................. 51
Picture 7. Construction area of the brownfield locality. Photo: Author ...................... 59
Picture 8. Panorama towers from the back perspective. Photo: Author ...................... 60
Picture 9. Twin city, view from the side. Photo: Author .......................................... 64
Picture 10. Side view from the Šturec tugboat. Photo: Author ................................... 76
Picture 12. The miniature of Eurovea project in the Eurovea mall. Photo. Author........ 82
Bibliography


https://www.tyzden.sk/casopis/10911/zamotane-nitky-genia-loci/


Boholm, Åsa. 2003. The cultural nature of risk: Can there be an anthropology of uncertainty?, Ethnos, 68:2, pp. 159-178
https://www.bratislava.sk/sk/historia


Dugovič, Matej. 2017. “The developers of Bratislava are constructing on oil, the toxic substances are spreading further underground form Apollo factory.” In Denník N website. December 10. Accessed [March 20, 2019].


https://doi.org/10.1177/1359183506063016

https://www.bratislavskokenoviny.sk/aktualita/bratislava/22317-strucna-historia-mesta


SITA 2018. “Public ports sees and opportunity to negotiate a deal with the harbour’s infrastructure owne”. In SITA website. May 1 Accessed [November 12, 2018]. https://nasadoprava.sk/verejne-pristavy-vidia-moznost-na-dohodu-s-vlastnikom-infrastruktury-v-pristavocho/


