ABSTRACT

THE CHANGING EVERYDAY GEOGRAPHIES OF CONSUMPTION RELATED MOBILITY IN THE POST-SOCIALIST BULGARIAN CITY

by Grant Jude Garstka

This thesis aims to study urban transition in the post-socialist context of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). I explore the urban morphology of post-socialist cities through the dialectic relationship between social processes and the changing built environment. I show how post-socialist cities are produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984) via the changes in the everyday social geographies, framed as consumption related mobility, in the retail landscape of the case study city of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria. This thesis argues that everyday geographies of city residents are growing in spatial extent with the rise of de-centralized formal retail, while at the same time, everyday geographies are becoming more localized as consumption activates increase in concentration at the micro-level of the neighborhood. Meanwhile, both of these changes to everyday geographies indicate a decrease in consumption related mobility, urban consumption and retail consumption in the city center, in turn, putting the city center at risk for decline.
THE CHANGING EVERYDAY GEOGRAPHIES OF CONSUMPTION RELATED MOBILITY IN THE POST-SOCIALIST BULGARIAN CITY

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Chapter 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

On May 31st, 2003, on the outskirts of Prague, Czech Republic thousands of people stood in a car park eagerly awaiting the grand opening of a new hypermarket store. Czech Dream, the name of the soon to open store, put forth the hopes of low prices and a new type of shopping experience via a citywide advertising campaign of billboards, handbills, radio and TV commercials. In short, it was to be the dawning of a new way of life – one that would fulfill the long awaited Czech Dream in the post-socialist era of transition. This new way of life was to be the marking point of the end of the period of transition from the previous socialist period to one they imagined would at least bring them the material lifestyle of Western Europe if not the affluence. With the Czech Republic’s integration into the EU on the horizon, the Czech Dream was to be a tangible piece of evidence of the end of transition. However, the Czech Dream never came to be.

Despite a parking lot full of Prague residents desperately anticipating a mad dash to low prices, new appliances and a new lifestyle, the hypermarket did not exist. The Czech Dream store turned out to be a stunt organized by two Czech film students who only built the façade of a store and the idea of the Czech Dream – they did not fill nor fulfill the Czech Dream. The two filmmakers, acting as store managers, cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony and the people rushed through a field to the store. However, the shoppers quickly realized that the Czech Dream did not exist, at least it did not exist how they imagined and hoped it to be. Instead, they found only an empty field behind the façade of the store.

The film, Czech Dream (Cermak et al. 2005) – titled the same as the fictional hypermarket – documents the making of the store, the idea and the reactions of the duped Prague citizens. Many of the patrons at the new store became violently upset and physically enraged over the fact that the store did not exist and that they were made the fool. The on-scene film crew documented foul words and middle fingers. Others laughed it off, while some laughed at each other. Meanwhile, others lost all faith in any sort of Czech Dream.

Transition, the period of change after the fall of communism, in the post-socialist environment of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is changing the lives of people who reside in the cities of this region. This film illustrates how consumerism is changing in post-socialist cities throughout the region because new forms and places of consumption manifest themselves in the
built environment. These new spaces have a strong influence on the city form, the everyday social geographies and social process of the way people live their lives. The 4,000 patrons present on the opening day of the Czech Dream and their intense reactions to a nonexistent store demonstrates the real connection between the changing built environment, consumption habits and society. If a new hypermarket did not mean anything, thousands of people would not have shown up early on a Saturday morning eager to shop and they would not have grown upset, even violent, at the scenario they encountered. Although transition is described in various ways as the institutional changes to political and economic systems, the expectations and effects of transition for citizens are clearly built around more everyday experiences such as quality of goods available and the politics of the retail landscape.

1.2 Aim of Study

This thesis aims to study urban transition in the post-socialist context of Central and Eastern Europe. I illustrate the urban morphology of post-socialist cities through a dialectic relationship between social processes and the changing built environment. I establish this relationship by utilizing concepts of individual consumption experiences to link social process with urban form (Miles and Paddison 1998) and apply time-space geography theory (Hagerstrand 1970) to illuminate and more completely understand the dialectic relationship. I show how post-socialist cities are produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984) via the changes in the everyday social geographies in the context of consumption related mobility in the case study city of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria. Studying the mundane and everyday task of shopping illustrates changing social-spatial processes within the urban landscape.

Ideas of consumption and consumption related mobility allows a point of entry into understanding how transition in the post-socialist environment changes the lives of people who reside in these cities. I draw upon three main components of literature for this research project: the post-socialist city, consumption and mobility in the framework of time-space geography. The literature on post-socialist cities in transition provides a background that illustrates changing places of consumption and new urban forms. Concepts of urban consumption help to conceptually link the changing urban form of the city with changing social processes (Miles and Paddison 1998). Meanwhile, theories of mobility and everyday geographies help to operationalize how to approach consumption related mobility within cities of transition to
ultimately show how changes to the built environment influence socio-spatial patterns of consumers within the city and to show how consumers produce, reproduce and transform the city (Pred 1984).

This project aims to contribute directly to several emerging conceptual frameworks on cities and, more specifically, on the post-socialist city. Past works on the post-socialist city tend to take quantitative and modernist approaches to the city that fail to provide much insight on social and cultural practices within the urban fabric. Šykora (2000) argues that the agenda for urban research on the post-socialist city needs a more dynamic approach that incorporates issues of socio-spatial processes at work within the urban fabric of the city in order to enrich our understanding of the city. This new research approach to post-socialist cities is a break away from quantitative statistical descriptions and models of socialist and post-socialist cities that are mostly present thus far in the urban literature of the area (examples include: Hamilton and French 1979; Medvedkov 1990; Dingsdale 1999). This new agenda for the post-socialist city continues to be quite limited in the literature. Therefore, this project aims to contribute to this new research agenda for the post-socialist city by addressing the urban morphology of the built environment, but also continuing beyond the physical form to understand the social consequences of urban change. Further, this project draws from conceptual ideas about post-socialist urban morphology and brings it together with empirical fieldwork data to support and illustrate the realities of post-socialist urban change on the ground in both the built environment and socio-spatial processes. The combination of theory and empirics helps to create a more dynamic understanding of the city.

Time-space theory plays an integral part of this project. Historically, time-space geography and ideas developed by Hagerstrand (1970) play a role in many western research projects. However, only recently has time-space become present in works on the post-socialist city. This project intends to be in direct dialogue with the few other works on time-space geography in the post-socialist city to help increase our understanding of how time-space can be used to understand the urban morphology and, more importantly, changes to social processes in the post-socialist city (as well as all cities). These works frame time-space as mobility, often related to consumption, in an everyday urban context. I frame ideas of time-space in a similar fashion by using time-space to address consumption related mobility and its change overtime. The works present in the literature are mostly from capital cities or cities highest in the urban
hierarchy in the countries of Poland and the Czech Republic (Stenning 2005; Garb and Dybcz 2006; Novak and Sýkora 2007). I join in this debate by supplying a time-space view of everyday consumption related mobility for a post-socialist Bulgarian city. My contribution to this discussion argues that everyday time-space geographies for the lower tiered CEE cities, more specifically for the case of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, contrasts with the literature on higher tiered cities and capital cities. Comparatively, these cities have similar trends of decentralization and localization of retail consumption activities. These urban processes are recognizable through changes in consumption related mobility and everyday time-space geographies. However, my project contrasts with other works because it highlights and points to the process of urban decline for lower tiered cities. While, like high end cities, the process of localization is occurring in lower tiered cities, yet, it is occurring in urban spaces outside of the CBD, which is different from what is happening in higher end cities. Overall, I contribute to the post-socialist city by breaking away from an over attention to cities highest in the urban hierarchy. By doing this, I have also identified a different set of urban processes for lower tiered post-socialist cities. Yet, more comparative research needs to be conducted on cities of this scale to fully understand these processes.

Theories of consumption are another vein of theoretical concepts that is project enhances. Miller et al. (1998) state that “ironically, shopping itself has only rarely been the focus of work in consumption” (7). This project addresses issues of urban consumption largely through the scope of retail shopping and changes to shopping patterns, habits and consumption related mobility. It does not intend to replace consumption with retail shopping, but uses shopping and data on retail consumption as a way of understanding urban consumption. In turn, this project serves as a successful project that illustrates how a study on urban consumption can use the scope of retail shopping to understand the urban morphology of the city and to highlight changing social networks within the city. Despite the fact that this project is in the post-socialist context, it still tells us some new things about consumption because shopping provides a well grounded approach to understanding the city. It helps to empirically highlight where people shop and even why people shop. More recently, consumption theory and shopping stresses the importance of understanding the experience of shopping. This project addresses several different consumption regimes in the retail landscape. The idea of different consumption regimes is a new way of thinking about the different powers, push and pull factors that are exerted upon the
consumer by different consumption places at different times of the day. This understanding shows that places of consumption are not static, but they are dynamic and multi-faceted places in the urban environment, but understood through the lens of retail shopping. All the while, shopping also maintains a focus on the utility and necessity that is involved with shopping. Both the experience and the utility of shopping are culturally and socially significant and, therefore, relevant for the urban researcher.

While theories of regional political and economic transition form the overarching context for this study, concepts of time-space geography, mobility and consumption practically help rescale ideas of transition to the scale of the city. These sets of ideas allow one to address the urban morphology of post-socialist cities. Together, these theories work hand in hand to move beyond the physical form of the city because they emphasize the lived and everyday world of the post-socialist city. In other words, they provide a way of doing research that makes both the physical environment and social worlds of the city visible and in dialogue with each other. They offer a new and emerging approach to the city and the post-socialist city in particular. This project exemplifies how these emerging conceptual frontiers can be pragmatically accomplished and enriches our understanding of urban theory, urban spaces and urban lives.

1.3.1 Research Questions

Drawing from concepts of the post-socialist city, consumption and mobility, this project aims to answer the following main research question:

How is consumption related mobility changing the everyday geographies in the post-socialist Bulgarian city?

The following sub-questions help to pragmatically answer the larger research question stated above. These four sub-questions connect to the literature outlined above and draw upon specific research methods to answer each question. This project examines a case study post-socialist city, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, which I discuss in greater detail in the next chapter. This city was the site of my fieldwork for June, July and August 2007 to study the urban morphology and social-spatial changes of post-socialist transition in a lower tiered Bulgarian city. I mainly used a questionnaire survey and participant observation methods to examine both the changing built environment visible through the changing retail landscape of this city and the way people re-adjust their lifestyles to urban transition.
1.3.2 Retail Types

A) What are the different types of retail consumption in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria and where are they located?

This question connects to the literature on the post-socialist city in transition and the method of mapping. The literature outlines that there are various types of retail consumption in the post-socialist city. This question serves to verify the plurality of different places of retail in Stara Zagora and classifies them into the major types addressed in the literature on the post-socialist city in transition. It helps to establish the necessary context for the city of Stara Zagora and builds a practical understanding of the built environment of the city so that I may ask other questions. In addition, it allows me to also address the urban morphology of the built landscape from a socialist city to a post-socialist city through the physical changes in the retail landscape of the city.

1.3.3 Modes and Paths of Consumption Related Mobility

B) How are the modes and paths of consumption related mobility changing in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria?

These two sub-questions connect to both the literature on consumption and mobility in a time-space framework. Drawing from the concept that consumption links social process with urban form (Miles and Paddison 1998), these questions seek to address how the means of mobility and paths to places of consumption change over time, again from socialist to post-socialist. The method of a questionnaire survey was the primary means of answering these two questions. Participant observation of consumers, their habits and patterns also informs the research by looking at the actual ways people travel around the city and for what reasons. Finally, statistical data on retail consumption and mobility is utilized to answering these two questions.

1.3.4 Changing Habits and Patterns

C) How may new places of consumption change people’s shopping habits and patterns?

This question connects all three themes of literature by returning to the built form of the city in relation with data obtained in answering sub-questions B and C and how changes occur over time, in the context of this project, from socialist to post-socialist eras. Therefore, it will
operate closely with the questionnaire method. In addition, statistical data will provide contextual data about overall consumer trends for different types of retail.

1.4 Contents of Study

In the follow section, I provide an overview of the urban geography of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria – the case study city this thesis uses and the site of my fieldwork for this project. Stara Zagora is a lower tiered Bulgaria city located in the middle of Bulgaria. Depending on data sources, it is the fifth or sixth largest city in Bulgaria. Therefore, despite not being a capital city or a city highest in the urban hierarchy of Bulgaria, it is still a city of regional and national importance and rich with many of the urbanization processes of a post-socialist city.

In the following chapter, Chapter 2, I introduce the theoretical framework and outline the major concepts of the post-socialist city, consumption and mobility in the framework of time-space geography as used in this thesis by means of a literature review of each topic. Further, I connect and contextualize each topic to the post-socialist urban context to help demonstrate how I intend to deploy them for this research project and to show their relevance to the topic of urban morphology and social change. The literature on post-socialist cities in transition provides a background to the spatial structure of cities in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region in order to illustrate the urban morphology of the built environment of the city in a post-socialist era. Next, my discussion of urban consumption theory outlines the shift in consumption theory from quantitative location analysis to a theory that fosters the idea that consumption is both a public and private event and is a meaningful social process. These latter ideas of urban consumption, placed in a post-modern urban context, are extremely helpful because they allow us to relate individual consumption experiences to a greater mass consumption society. In addition, it stresses social process and frames urban consumption as a meaningful social activity despite its appearance as a simple everyday task. Furthermore, the idea of consumption is useful because it brings together social process, via the collection of individual shopping experiences, and urban form, observable through the scope of the changing typology of retail spaces. An analysis of shopping activities and the retail landscape is one way to pragmatically understand a link between individual experience and the urban environment (Miles and Paddison 1998) and the changes to urban and social systems. If consumption links social process with the urban form, then time-space geography and changes in mobility patterns for individuals allows us to
understand the relationship between the two and how it changes over time. I draw upon Hagerstand’s (1970) notions of time-space geography, the mapping of *paths* and *projects* in both time and space, to illustrate how an analysis of patterns in circulation mobility within a city provides a means to understand how urban places are produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984).

The focus of Chapter 3 is on the methodologies I use to answer the stated research questions. I use a ‘mixed-methods’ approach to help establish the dialectic between social process and the built environment. The interaction between quantitative methods and qualitative methods provides a more complete understanding of the city because different methods complement one another and allow for multiple perspectives and ways of seeing the city. The methods that I utilize for this thesis are mapping, questionnaire surveys, participant observation and official statistics.

Chapter 4 explores the data results captured by the questionnaire survey, participant observation and official data in-depth by analyzing the project data in relation to the questions I ask and seek to answer in this thesis. This chapter argues that post-socialist cities experience the dual process of decentralization and increased urban density growth, which is visible by introduction of two new forms of retail spaces—hypermarkets and independent local stores. It also suggests that the vitality of post-socialist city centers may be a risk of decline due to various push and pull factors on the consumption landscape. This chapter also discusses the social consequences of this urban change, such as, the growing everyday geographies for city residents and socio-spatial segregation of consumption activities.

I guide the presentation of data in Chapter 4 around the framework of time-space geography theory that I develop in Chapter 2. First, I use the concept of time-space projects to discuss new and changing places of consumption in the post-socialist city, mainly through the scope of the retail landscape via big-box hypermarkets, local shops and services and places of consumption in the center of the city. The discussion of these various projects allows me to effectively answer my first sub-question on the different types of consumption spaces in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria and in post-socialist cities. Second, I use the concept of time-space paths to show how modes, paths and patterns of consumption related mobility are changing in post-socialist Stara Zagora. This aids in answering the second and third sub-questions. From this position, I answer the last sub-question by bringing all of the data together showing how modes
and paths of consumption related mobility are changing in relation to new consumption projects in post-socialist Stara Zagora, thus changing shopping patterns, habits and socio-spatial processes of their everyday geographies. In addition, I also discuss the data results by discussing how individual attitudes actively support the production, reproduction and transformation (Pred 1984) of post-socialist cities through a dialectic relationship between places of consumption and changing consumption habits and patterns and how contemporary urbanization processes diversify the types of consumers in the city. The findings of this research project conclude that various push and pull factors in the built environment, such as the legacy of old city forms and the inception of new urban forms, force humans to transform their daily lives, social networks and everyday socio-spatial geographies, which all affect how urban residents live their lives. These changes to the everyday geographies are apparent in changing modes and paths of consumption related mobility. Modes of consumption related mobility are increasingly dependent on the private automobile, which diminishes the use and importance of public transportation in the city. Paths of consumption related mobility are growing in spatial extent, as shoppers access new retail forms on the urban fringe, and they are also localizing, as shoppers access their neighborhood “magazine.” The paths of consumption related mobility parallel the urbanization processes of decentralization and localization evident in the built environment of the city. Overall, these changes to urban and social processes occurring with transition point to a decline in the reliance of the city center as a place of consumption. Meanwhile, urban residents are not solely victims of these urbanization processes, but play an active voice in the dialectic relationship between the built environment and social process. As I show through individual comments of research participants and different shopper profiles, social processes and urban residents play an active role in producing and reproducing the built environment.

The final chapter, Chapter 5, is a discussion and conclusion of the findings of this thesis. It answers the main research question by demonstrating that consumption related mobility is changing the everyday geographies of the post-socialist Bulgarian city by increasing the spatial extent of everyday geographies, while at the same time, increasingly localizing everyday geographies at the micro-local neighborhood scale. Meanwhile, both of these changes to everyday geographies via the context of consumption related mobility indicates a decrease in the reliance and mobility to and from the city center, in turn, making the city center at risk to decline. These urban changes also have affects on the socio-spatial make up of the city and the
way that people live their lives in an ever changing urban fabric. Changes in consumption practices in the post-socialist city demonstrate that this society is becoming increasingly diversified and creating new and different types of people, class segregation and socio-spatial differentiation. This project discusses these socio-spatial issues present in Stara Zagora today, but it also points to new issues. Chapter 5 ends by discussing new questions that this project recognizes and raises that would be beneficial to understanding the urban morphology and social processes of post-socialist cities in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of urban planning policy and public space.

1.5 Stara Zagora, Bulgaria: A Post-Socialist City in Context

Overall, on the theme of post-socialist urban change this thesis operates in a comparative manner by drawing from relevant works from geographers and other social scientists who study cities in transition in the CEE. However, more specifically, I draw upon the city of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria as a case study for a post-socialist city in transition. I chose this city to research because of the fact it is not a capital city in the CEE. On the topic of post-socialist cities in transition, an overwhelming amount of attention revolves around capital cities in this region (examples include: Nedovic-Budic et al. 2006; Dingsdale 1999; Grime 1999; Hirt 2006; Keivani et al. 2002; Kreja 2004; Rudolph and Brade 2005; Sýkora 1999; Tosics 2005b; Vesselinov and Logan 2005). A capital city is often the exception to the rule due to the unbalanced presence of centralized or national administrative, commercial and transportation functions. Capital cities are also usually the first places to experiences transition within the nation and this is why a majority of the literature focuses on these cities (Hamilton and Carter 2005; Kiss 2004; Tosics 2005b). These reasons can affect the city’s urban structure and how or who interacts within the city. Therefore, the choice of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria as a research site addresses the need for a better understanding of non-capital post-socialist cities. Further, many works of relevant literature on post-socialist transition in the CEE discuss various theories and concepts of urban change that I draw upon for this project. However, most fail to move beyond the conceptual framework and lack ample supporting evidence or strong empirical support to specifically illuminate the theories. This project draws from conceptual ideas about post-socialist urban morphology, yet, it also provides empirical fieldwork data to support and illustrate the realities of these changes on the ground.
In addition, I selected the city of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria as a research city for several pragmatic reasons. First, the city is of manageable size for the scope of this project in terms of fieldwork, time available in the field and data analysis. Yet, the city is large enough that it exhibits, albeit only recently, new forms of consumption evident in the form of the large-scale hypermarket retail chain type and contains many, if not all, of the characteristics of the socialist city legacy. In addition, my working knowledge of the Bulgarian language and the practical fact that I obtained free boarding, which also secured my ability to register with local authorities, through Green Balkans, a Bulgarian environmental non-government organization, for the research period of the summer months of 2007 are additional factors for selecting Stara Zagora as a research site.

1.5.2 Demographics

Stara Zagora is the fifth or sixth largest city in the Republic of Bulgaria. In addition to the role of the city government (obshtina), Stara Zagora is also the seat of the regional municipal government (oblast), which reinforces its importance in both regional and national hierarchy. It is centrally located in country of Bulgaria and is at the foothills of the Sredna Gora Mountains and has an estimated population of 145,000. Estimates of the city population for 2007 are 142,827 (Table 1.1; Map 1.1)

Despite rapid urbanization and growth during the communist era, Stara Zagora, like most Bulgarian cities (with the large exception of Sofia) and many other non-capital cites throughout the CEE, is currently experiencing a population decline (Table 2.1). Stara Zagora’s average rate of decline is -4.9% annually (Van Herzle et al. 2004). With Sofia being the sole Bulgarian city experiencing a long-term increase in its’ urban population, it is important to recognize and reflect on how a declining population affects the urban morphology of cities lower in the urban hierarchy. For example, the increase in population in Sofia causes the city to sprawl into the

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1 The Bulgarian government requires that all foreigners (at the present time, only non EU foreigners) register with the local immigration office or police department with a Bulgarian citizen within 48 hours of arrival to a new town or city. This is another example of legacy from the socialist era present in Bulgarian cities.

2 Data sources list Stara Zagora’s population varying 170,000 to 140,000 depending on the data source, method of data collection and date of publication. Therefore, depending of the population size, it changes Stara Zagora’s rank in the national hierarchy.

3 Again, depending on the data source referenced.

4 -4.9% is representative of the Stara Zagora municipal region. The average rate of population decline is -5.1% for the national average.
hinterland and creates new communities in the Sofia region (Hirt 2006; Hirt and Stanilov 2007). On the other hand, in Bulgarian cities experiencing a declining population, there are very little signs of residential suburbanization. The case of Stara Zagora illustrates only one primary example of residential suburbanization, which a private high end development. Other types of suburbanization might be occurring such as the out-migration to outlying villages beyond the suburban zone of the city or the scenario of out-migration where residents move to the capital city. To a limited extent, a declining population also creates the mechanism for intra-city migration – not necessarily suburbanization. This process is mostly the result of the privatization of the housing stock since 1989 which allows city residents to seek out higher quality housing, in either infrastructure or location, in the same city and it is the result of the growing availability of urban housing stock that arises with population decline.

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<th>City Name (Latin)</th>
<th>City Name (Cyrillic)</th>
<th>1989*</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2003**</th>
<th>2007**</th>
<th>Population Change (%)^</th>
<th>Recent Population change (%)^^</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
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<td>1,136,875</td>
<td>1,114,925</td>
<td>1,096,389</td>
<td>1,121,741</td>
<td>1,179,350</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
<td>5.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plovdiv</td>
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<td>364,162</td>
<td>341,058</td>
<td>340,638</td>
<td>340,475</td>
<td>340,279</td>
<td>-6.56%</td>
<td>-0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>308,432</td>
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<td>313,400</td>
<td>312,044</td>
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<td>195,686</td>
<td>193,316</td>
<td>194,316</td>
<td>196,914</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruse</td>
<td>Русе</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>170,038</td>
<td>162,128</td>
<td>160,006</td>
<td>153,017</td>
<td>-10.01%</td>
<td>-4.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stara Zagora</td>
<td>Стара Загора</td>
<td>158,151</td>
<td>150,518</td>
<td>143,989</td>
<td>143,871</td>
<td>142,827</td>
<td>-9.69%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleven</td>
<td>Плевен</td>
<td>136,287</td>
<td>130,812</td>
<td>122,149</td>
<td>120,796</td>
<td>116,437</td>
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<td>-3.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobric</td>
<td>Добрич</td>
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<td>104,494</td>
<td>100,319</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-5.10%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Bulgaria: largest cities and towns and statistics of their population” from world-gazetteer.com
Notes:
* estimates via non-official data
** official estimates or calculations
^ % population change from 1989 or 1992 to 2007
^^ % population change from 2003 to 2007
1.5.3 Spatial Structure

The city of Stara Zagora is based around two main transportation corridors. One corridor runs North to South and the other runs East to West. Each corridor bisects the city in their respective directions. The location where the two roads meet forms the center of the city, with the main high shopping street and CBD located to the immediate West of this intersection. The general concentric model of the city is elongated in the East to West direction. This is due to the inability of the city to grown in a northerly direction because of the authority constraint of the Sredna Gora Mountains, which form the northern boundary of the city. To the south, a large industrial quarter deters other urban functions from moving in a southern direction. Therefore, the city takes its structure by binding to the main East-West transportation corridor of the city.

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5 In a more recent context, the industrial quarter is playing the host to large-scale retail.
Stara Zagora has an urban form similar to the generic model of the socialist city established by Hamilton (1979; see Map 2.1). This serves as only a rough model of Stara Zagora’s spatial structure and, like Sofia, different districts and land types “are neither quite concentric, nor contiguously defined… rather [they are] closely intertwined with historic and new neighborhoods forming an intricate patchwork intermixed with industrial zones and open spaces” (Hirt and Stanilov 2007). Yet, the city has several distinct zones that are useful to outline for understanding the spatial structure of Stara Zagora: 1) the Central Business District (CBD) comprised of both the pre-communist capitalist city center and the communist city center with a range of uses; 2) The Compact City – a mix of historic housing and communist bloc housing along with a small-scale retail; 3) Housing Estates (Photo 2.1) – communist era modern bloc housing estates and micro-districts; 4) Low-density residential – mostly single family homes on the edges of the city; 5) Industrial quarter (Map 1.2).

1.5.4 History

The history of Stara Zagora extends back 8,000 years ago to the Neolithic era. The city claims to be one of the oldest settlements in all of Europe. Originally called, Beroe, Thracian tribes established the original settlement in 6th century B.C. Since this time, the city fell under Roman and Turkish rule and various names each time it was conquered, Augusta Trayana and Eski Zagra, respectively. In 1871, an ecclesiastic council in Istanbul gave the city its’ Bulgarian name of Stara Zagora. The following year, the area of Stara Zagora was a major battle site in the Russian-Turkish Liberation War, which resulted in the complete destruction of the city, with the exception of the city mosque. However, one year later in 1878, Bulgaria won the war, which resulted in the formation of an independent Bulgarian state and Stara Zagora, keeping this name, under autonomous rule (T.I.C.S.Z. 2007).
The Spatial Structure of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

Map 1.2
Source: Base data obtained from DATECS GIS Center
Following this period, the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century was a time of prosperity for Stara Zagora. It grew during the capitalist era of the time, along with much of Bulgaria. The main activity for the region was agricultural production and the trade and export of agricultural products such as meats, dairy and vegetables. In 1879, Stara Zagora became formally designed and planned with a regular linear street grid pattern, still present today, and planned by the Czech architect Ljuber Bayer (T.I.C.S.Z. 2007). This was part of the rebuilding efforts after the Russian-Turkish Liberation War that destroyed the city and it also saw the emergence of neoclassical and art-Nouveau architecture and building design in the city center, showing the success of the city.

Starting in 1944, at the end of World War II, the socialist government took control over Bulgaria and Stara Zagora, which had dramatic physical and social effects on the city. Bulgaria, along with other nations of Eastern Europe, although somewhat independent were under the strong sphere of influence of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR), also known as, the Soviet Union. The socialist era of the city experienced rapid urbanization and industrialization. This is most evident by the widespread communist style pre-fabricated bloc apartments that comprise the overwhelming majority of Stara Zagora’s housing stock, much of which is reaching
the end of its intended lifespan and is falling into a state of disrepair and obsolescence. Another mark of this era is the large industrial quarter in the southern portion of Stara Zagora.

1.5.5 Industry

The industrial sector makes up 60% - 70% of the income of Stara Zagora (Van Herzle et al. 2002; Lalev 2008). Energy production is a large portion of the industrial production in Stara Zagora. The Maritsa Iztok Complex makes a large segment of this income, which contains 3 thermal power plants, coal mining and ancillary production activates. The complex produces 38% of the power for Bulgaria (Van Herzle et al. 2002) and is presently the biggest power producer in Bulgaria since the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant located on the Danube River was forced to decommission when Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007.6 At the present time, The Maritsa Iztok Complex is continuing to increase its operations7 and the complex is now receiving investment through contracts with U.S., German, Italian and Japanese based firms (“Maritsa Iztok 3 launched” April 17th, 2003; “Clash on Maritsa Iztok 2” April 10, 2005).

In addition to the Maritsa Iztok Complex, Stara Zagora’s industry is also comprised of agriculture, which has always been apart of the regions economy. More recently, Stara Zagora’s agricultural economy has established a successful beer and wine sector evident by the success of the Domaine Menada winery, founded in 1991 under French ownership, and the Zagorka Brewery, one of two nationally available Bulgarian beers and presently owned by Heineken. Meanwhile, the manufacturing of construction material and textiles, much produced for export, are also major players in Stara Zagora’s industrial success.

Clothing and textile manufacturing is a growing industry in Stara Zagora. Since transition helped to open the nation’s borders, the Stara Zagora region is now home to several clothing and textile producers. Textile producers in Stara Zagora are mostly contracted or out-sourced by larger trademarks and designers for their production needs and nearly all of this production is geared for export (Lalev 2008).

6 Kozloduy’s decommission is the result of fears of a Chernobyl type incident because the International Atomic Energy Agency declared Kozloduy unsafe (“Energy Generation” November 3, 2007).
7 Data obtain through personal sources established while conducting fieldwork in Stara Zagora. June, July and August 2007.
1.5.6 Transport

The city of Stara Zagora is well connected in terms of transportation linkages. It lies at a central axis between east-west and north-south transportation routes. The east-west transportation route of both road and rail provide a transportation link on a national scale because they connect the capital of Sofia with the ports on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, which provide international access beyond these respective locals. While the north-south links, again both by road and rail, provide international access between Bucharest, Romania and Istanbul, Turkey or nearby Greece. Additionally, they provide links at a national scale by connecting Stara Zagora to Veleiko Turnavo, the historic capital of Bulgaria, and Plovdiv, the disputed cultural capital of Bulgaria.

The public transportation system of Stara Zagora provides good coverage throughout most of the city (Map 1.3). This system was built during the socialist era and during the soviet period of time it was the primary means of transportation. However, comparing historical maps with the present coverage of public transportation routes, the city’s public transportation system is declining. Public transportation in Stara Zagora exists on two main scales: Regional/National or Local. The Regional/National public transportation is served by the main rail station and bus station that provide transportation linkages beyond the city of Stara Zagora. Stara Zagora’s local public transportation is in four main forms: Trolley Bus, City Bus, “Marshutka,” and Automobile. The trolley bus is an electric city bus powered by an overhead power line and this infrastructure is a legacy of the socialist city (Photo 2.2). Due to the infrastructure involved, the trolley bus is bound by where it can travel by the overhead electric lines, much in the same capacity as an electric tram is bound by a power source and fixed tracks; however, the trolley bus operates on rubber wheels and not on a fixed track. Due to the overhead power lines involved with a trolley bus, routes are usually fixed and inflexible in changing routes based on changing urban needs. For this reason, trolley buses are only present on the most obvious major transportation routes and these routes overlap with city bus routes in the compact city. City buses provide a greater coverage for city residents because of their flexibility to travel down any city street. Therefore, city bus routes penetrate into places away from the major transportation routes. In Stara Zagora, these buses are often second-hand buses Western Europe or severely aged Soviet buses. One bus in Stara Zagora still displays the public transportation map of Rotterdam inside the bus and the bus’s marquee shows a word in Dutch (most likely the name of the bus’s
old route in Rotterdam). The aged and second-hand nature of the city’s rolling stock demonstrates the decline of this system due to lack of investment. The “Marshutka” is a less popular form of public transit and is a hybrid between a city bus and a taxi. A “Marshutka” is a micro-bus operated by an entrepreneur that usually follows a fixed route, but unlike a city bus that has designated stops, a “Marshutka” can be flagged down or requested to stop anywhere along the route. The automobile, both as a Taxi or as a private car, make up the final class of public transportation in Stara Zagora. Due to the decline of public transport, the automobile as a means of transportation is increasingly becoming the norm.

Photo 1.2
Caption: A trolley bus in Stara Zagora driving past the construction site of BauMaxx, an Austrian owned hypermarket. Note the overhead wires that confine the trolley bus to this route. Source: Garstka 2007
Map 1.3

Source: Base data obtained from DATECS GIS Center
Chapter 2.0 Theoretical Framework and Concepts

2.1 Introduction of Theoretical Framework and Concepts

This chapter outlines and contextualizes the three main theoretical components of this thesis: the post-socialist city, urban consumption and mobility in the context of everyday time-space geographies. Together, these three pools of literature demonstrate how the study of consumption related mobility in an everyday context can assist in understanding how post-socialist cities are continually produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984), in terms of their built form, their social geographies and the dialectic relationship between humans and the urban environment.

The literature on post-socialist cities in transition provides a background to the spatial structure of cities in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region in order to illustrate the urban morphology of the built environment of the city in a post-socialist era. I discuss the geographic transformations of the post-socialist city via internal and external influences that affect the spatial form of the city. I frame the idea of internal influences on the post-socialist city as the socialist legacy of the communist era from 1945 to 1989. To understand the internal influences on the city I problematize the notion of the socialist city of the communist era to identify what the post-socialist might be and how one can recognize it. Thus, allowing one to approach it for social and spatial research. Once I situate the post-socialist city as an open question as a type of city, I turn to discuss external influences on the city form. This portion of the discussion illustrates how transition, both political and economic, affects the spatial form of the city by decentralizing and decreasing the compact form of the cities, but also, increasing the physical density of the built environment. The spatial changes of these cities are largely the result of push and pull factors created with transition, which has facilitated the development of the retail and tertiary sectors of the economy, the diversification of the economy, permitted incoming foreign investment (FDI), and the commoditization of land. However, I also aim to show that these spatial effects would not be possible without transition because it allowed for the inception of neoliberal urban planning policy, often within newly established local level governments rather than centrally organized governments, and the commoditization of urban space. The commoditization of urban land was a product of the regions entrance into the free-market which made land a commodity based on capitalist notions of supply and demand rather than government priority planning, regulation and allocation by the communist system.
I then provide a literature review of urban consumption theory. I do this to provide an outline of the shift in consumption theory that moves approaches to consumption from quantitative location analysis to a theory that fosters the idea that consumption is both a public and private event and is a meaningful social process. These latter ideas of urban consumption, placed in a post-modern urban context, are extremely helpful because they allow us to relate individual consumption experiences to a greater mass consumption society. In addition, it stresses social process and frames urban consumption as a meaningful social activity despite its appearance as a simple everyday task. Furthermore, the idea of consumption is useful because it brings together social process, via the collection of individual shopping experiences, and urban form, observable through the scope of the changing typology of retail spaces. Therefore, consumption links individual experience with the urban environment (Miles and Paddison 1998). An analysis of shopping activities and the retail landscape is one way to pragmatically understand this link and changes to urban and social systems.

If consumption links social process with the urban form, then time-space geography and changes in mobility patterns for individuals allows us to understand the relationship between the two and how it changes overtime. In the case of this study, I frame ‘changes overtime’ as the changes from the socialist period to the post-socialist era. Theories of circulation mobility and time-space geography aid to operationalize the dialectic between social processes and the built environment of cities. I draw upon Hagerstrand’s (1970) theories of time-space geography, the mapping of paths and projects in both time and space, to illustrate how an analysis of patterns in circulation mobility within a city provides a means to understand how urban places are produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984). I then illustrate how the everyday time-space geographies are changing in relation to urban consumption in a post-socialist context in CEE cities to make clear the benefit of time-space geography for social research in urban geography.

2.2.1 Post-Socialist Cities in Central and Eastern Europe

Cities in CEE have experienced many changes since the fall of communism in 1989. In general, these changes are a result of the dual transition of both political, from communist to democratic, and economic, from planned to market, changes. Both occurred at a radical and rapid rate of change when compared to political and economic transition and its spatial affects on urban spaces elsewhere in the world (Tsenkova 2006). The dual transition allowed for internal
and external pressures upon the spatial form of urban environments within the CEE and post-socialist cities in transition. The framework of internal and external influences on the urban system helps to contextualize transition at the national and global scale and ground it in the internal everyday social and spatial changes experienced at the scale of the city. This local-global nexus helps to apply larger theories of transition in the political economy and re-scale them to the city to understand the social and spatial affects of the dual transition on the urban residents and urban form.

The idea of the socialist city is an important issue to address before discussing the post-socialist city because it provides an understanding of internal influences affecting the post-socialist city. The central authority of the communist system and socialist urban planning polices based on ideology rather than market value developed a socialist city structure unique from other cities in the world (Tosics 2005a). The socialist city, in general, has four major characteristics that make it different from other cities. First, it is usually of a compact urban form. Second, it developed through a period of socialist and centrally planned ideology that allocated land use based on priorities of Marxist ideology and not on monetary value. In other words, land was not a commodity based on supply and demand, but allocated according to the priorities of the socialist state and this spatially affected its urban form. Third, often but not always, socialist cities have dual centers, one of the historic (usually medieval) core and another socialist core that developed as the central location for socialist administration, surrounded by governmental buildings and large parade/gathering spaces. Finally, socialist cities have many neighborhood districts, recognizable as large bloc housing estates, which were built with the idea of a micro-region or micro-district, a self-serving neighborhood unit with high residential density and access to daily goods, services and entertainment either within the city or based around individual neighborhood units (Smith 1996). Although the micro-region meant to achieve a certain socialist goal of equality for all city residents, it is obvious that the goal was not achieved because some neighborhoods were prioritized to receive superior goods and services while others received only inferior goods and services (if any at all).

More specifically, the urban morphology of socialist cities is recognizable via Burgess-esque concentric ring development. Urban geographers in the western world or in capitalist cities use the Burgess model as an entry point for discussing the evolution of the urban form of cities that develop under capitalist economic and political influences. For post-socialist urban
geographers, the Hamilton (1979) model of the socialist city provides the starting point for discussing the spatial structure of cities in the CEE that developed under socialist economic and political control from 1945 to 1989 (Map 2.1). A majority of these cities developed well before 1945, but the socialist era had an extreme influence on their urban form and entirely reshaped these cities and their trajectory of future development. At the core is the historical city center comprised of the pre-communist capitalist era infrastructure. Surrounding the historic core of the city is the zone of transition that served as the central business district of the socialist era administration and consists of Party and state offices, the main areas of shopping and limited housing stock – it is the second of the dual cores. The next zone out of the socialist city is the widespread area of large, modern and socialist-era bloc apartment housing of the 1960’s and 1970’s. Finally, the peripheral zone around the city contains agricultural land, gardens and a few smaller housing settlements or satellite communities (French and Hamilton 1979; Smith 1996).

Just as the Burgess model is adapted to the Hoyt model or the multiple nuclei model, the characteristics of the socialist city outlined may develop into adjustable models that consider the local context, such as physical landscape or local infrastructure, such as, major transportation routes, morphing the model of the socialist city.

Despite this unique form of the socialist city, some argue that the urbanization processes of the socialist city do not represent a new model of urbanization because all cities develop in a similar linear fashion of modern urbanization – capitalist or otherwise. The case of the socialist city is only one of belated modernization (Enyedi 1992). However, the majority of the urban researchers in the CEE agree that there is a unique city form called the socialist city because of the distinct zones of the city outlined above. Moreover, the post-socialist city and city in transition must develop within the legacy of the built environment of the socialist city (Musil 2005; Gentile and Sjoberg 2006). Further, Smith and Pickles speak to the same issues of legacy: “the attempt to construct a form of capitalism on and with the ruins of the communist system” (1998: 2). While they frame concepts of transition and socialist legacy by addressing the changes to the situation of the region’s political economy, the concept is the same as the role of legacy of the communist built urban environment and it demonstrates the tensions between historical patterns and new patterns as well as the struggle to navigate between the two. Again, this might be in the physical form, as buildings, roads and infrastructure, or as less tangible
A model of the growth of an East European socialist city

Map 2.1

items, such as policies, government structures and social networks, yet the city is lived and experienced in everyday ways that are different larger structures of urban planning policy, models and political theories. An author recalling accounts of communist life writes, “Every mother in Bulgaria can point to where communism failed…The banality of everyday life is where it has really failed, rather than on the level of ideology” (Drakulić 1991: 18). All the while, this understanding helps to ground the dialect relationship between people and environment, as people produce, reproduce and transform the environment around them and the environment simultaneously shapes people and their identities.

Cities in transition in the CEE start from a common denominator which is the socialist city (recognizable by the issues outlined above), but it is not clear what type of cities they are becoming (Tosics 2005a, Harloe 1996) and cities of this region are urbanizing in increasingly divergent manners due to slightly different initial political and economic conditions at the inception of transition (Tsenkova 2006). Tosics (2005a) outlines the major characteristics of different types and characteristics of post-socialist cities such as the East-German city, the Hungarian city, the Russian city, the Ex-Yugoslav city or the Baltic city. He describes the general characteristics of the Bulgarian and Romanian type of post-socialist city as:

Slow transition from the socialist towards capitalist city-model. Very limited capital investment in the office and commercial market, stagnation but differentiating population incomes. Dissolution of previous type of public control, quick and total privatization of housing to sitting tenants, very slow establishment of new type of public control over land market, planning and building process. The outcome might be the unregulated capitalist city, with some elements of the “third world” type of city development (Tosics 2005a: 72).

While cities of the CEE divergently develop, the momentum of the legacy of the socialist built environment forms the central starting point of transition for most of the cities in this region and unites them under the context of post-socialism. It is clear that CEE cities in transition are not becoming the same as capitalist cities present in The United States or in Western Europe. Rather, they are becoming something else - hybrid cities that mix aspects of western capitalist cities with other types of city development that might be characterized by highly developed public transport infrastructure or compactness, along with the socialist legacy of the built environment or socialist style policies. How they move from socialist cities to another or new type of city, which is
unknown at this time, and the socio-spatial consequences of this change justifies the need for further inquiry into cities of the CEE.

In addition to internal influences that affect urban morphology in this region, various external influences affect the post-socialist city. During the socialist era, most of the CEE did not take part in the global economy. The global economy refers to the network of nations with market economies in The Americas, Western Europe and South Asia and those not part of the COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) countries -- a trade agreement among Warsaw Pact countries and other countries with ties to the Soviet world. However, the CEE region rapidly integrated into the global economy during the era of transition (Hamilton 2005). Political and economic restructuring throughout the CEE developed policies toward the open market and neoliberalism (Nedovic-Budic and Tsenkova with Marcuse 2006) which increased their connection to the global economy. As a result of the changing policies, FDI from western capital (Kiss 2004; Keivani et al. 2002; Tosics 2005b) and privatization (Grime 1999) are commonplace in the CEE. Data shows that the economic success of nations, regions or cities in transition are tied to places that were most politically, economically or geographically suitable for integration with the global economy. The data the supports this argument are the amount of FDI received and changes to international trade patterns (Hamilton 2005; Hamilton and Carter 2005). In the case of the CEE, countries with close proximity to the EU and with stable political and economic situations readily and quickly integrated. Other countries, such as Bulgaria, due to their more distant location from the EU and political or economic instability of the 1990’s, were slower to develop links with the global economy and they retained trade patterns with the former Soviet Bloc. Since transition began in Bulgaria the “almost annual changes of government, electoral reversals from communist to democrats to reformed communists and back again to democrats” (Smith and Pickles 1998: 2) illustrates the political volatility of this country during the early years of transition, which prevented it from easily joining the global economy. In addition, during the first few years of transition, Bulgarian industrial and agriculture trade maintained strong connections to previous COMECON countries rather than establishing trade with the EU (Paskaleva et al. 1998). Since 1998, trade in the region shifted towards Western Europe, evident by the EU expansion into Eastern Europe, and with strong global linkages not as heavily reliant on old COMECON nations and the EU is now Bulgaria’s largest trade partner (EIU 2007b).
The dual transition of political and economic transition in the CEE allows for new yet diverse planning policies in most post-socialist cities. The diversity of policies is dependent on the range of political and economic starting scenarios for different cities, nations and regions. However, overall, these policies tend to develop towards neoliberal planning principles (Tsenkova 2006; Hamilton 2005). Neoliberal planning trends during transition allow for 1) the recognition and incorporation of the market economy into planning policy, meaning they succumb to global pressures of market competition and no longer operate as a non-competitive command economy 2) the privatization, deregulation and market liberalization of government services and 3) the decentralization of government structure from central authorities to local authorities. These ideas and trends of transition as outlined are largely the result of external influence, either political or economic (or both) on post-socialist cities, all of which have direct consequences for the spatial form of the city.

2.2.2 Emerging Urban Geographies in the Post-Socialist City

The restructuring and increasing interconnectedness of the global economy in the last few decades results in the creation of distinct new urban spaces (Knox 1991). In a similar manner, and strongly tied to the global economy, there are many new urban geographies emerging in the post-socialist city that are developing with the transition of the region into the free-market. These geographies have profound spatial changes and marks on the urban landscape. While they come in many forms, this project addresses emerging geographies in the post-socialist city through two readily visible urban processes tied to the retail landscape of the city. First, new urban planning policies tend to cause cities to decentralize and grow outwards, in the context of this study, with the development of formal large-scale retail. Second, despite the trend of decentralization, they physical geography or urban spaces are becoming denser due to market competitions over the newfound commodity (in a capitalist economic framework) of land.

Often, large-scale formal retail locates in the urban fringe of post-socialist cities, which causes decentralization of the city. This occurs for a multitude of reasons that stem from various push and pull factors. The establishment of the free market in the Eastern Bloc in 1989 opened up a whole new market for companies from Western Europe who were seeking a new market and were successful due to the pragmatic proximity of the new CEE market (Garb 2006). Cases document how cities of former East Germany experience retail and commercial space moving to
the fringe areas of cities, which consequently starts the process of suburbanization because housing development soon follows behind the commercial development. This notion of suburbanization is different from more western contexts where retail and commercial space usually follows new housing development (Nuissl and Rink 2005). Further, space in the urban fringe usually becomes the home to large retail stores because land is cheaper (Hamilton and Carter 2005), larger areas of land are available on the greenfields and brownfields of the urban fringe due to the legacy of the socialist built environment which clogs other city spaces and blocks incoming large scale retail (Kotus 2006; Garb 2006) and land closer to the urban core is often tied up in legal matters of land ownership and restitution that have manifested in a post-socialist era (Marcuse 1996; Kim 2006) or it is incorrectly zoned and delayed by new government procedures (Garb 2006). Therefore, due to the difficulties associated with the legacy of the socialist city, capital from abroad is likely to build large-scale retail on available land around the perimeter of the city.

Transportation links play a role in the decentralization of cities in relation to the retail landscape. Dingsdale (1999), via the case of Budapest, shows that new places of large scale consumption will locate on major ring roads so it can be supported by transportation links both within and beyond the city. This de-centralized development is supported by the rise of the automobile in the CEE. Generally, CEE cities across the region are experiencing a decline in public transportation investment, infrastructure and service. Combine the deterioration in service with the raising cost of an individual fair and the result is a decline in ridership. Public transportation systems in the CEE historically carried riders to and from the center of the city, helping to maintain the functionality of the city center as a place of consumption, and a large portion of the population depended on the extensive transportation networks established by the communist governments. However, the trend away from public transit and the rise of the automobile creates a synergy for private transit and de-central transit to become an increasing norm in CEE cities (Bertaud 2006; Garb and Dybicz 2006; Grava 2007).

Despite planning troubles elsewhere in the city, local planning authorities were receptive to helping facilitate the process of de-centralized urban growth to the best of their abilities. The cities’ new urban planners were eager to create popular support for these policies by luring FDI into their cities. In their new role and starry-eyed by the idea of FDI investment coming into their communities as a successful markers and symbols of transition and modernization, planners
allowed for the construction of hypermarkets on the periphery of cities (Stanilov 2007). Kok (2007) states a similar stance on the decentralization of governments in the region:

“decentralization of decision-making from the central (i.e., national) level to the local (i.e., municipal) level. Municipal authorities were in charge of decision-making on planning and development as well as issuing construction permits...the impact was substantial at the time of rapid development of shopping centers and hypermarkets. Because of ambition, the prestige, as well as the limited experience and vision with respect to retail markets and development, the municipal authorities were lenient when it came to granting permits. They approved the applications without taking into account either the wider developments in the nearby area or the existence of competing projects” (Kok 2007: 112)

This is more likely in a country’s lower-tiered cities because local governments present fewer bureaucratic obstacles to zoning changes on open fringe land (Garb 2006) yet they have less power to make such changes in city centers, unlike larger and capital cities. This illustrates that lower tiered cities exhibit greater tendencies to decentralize because larger cities have the ability to incorporate centrally located activities. Not all large retail is moving to the urban fringe, there is documentation of foreign big-box stores locating in both the city center (Kreja (2006) illustrates this point for Warsaw, while Garb and Dybicz (2006) show the case of Prague and Warsaw). However, this scenario is primarily occurring in capital or cities high in the urban hierarchy.

While cities become decentralized, the built environment of the city is also becoming spatially more dense. The development of denser urban centers is best understood under A) the framework of privatization, meaning, since transition land is now a commodity in the capitalist sense based on supply and demand and not on allocation of priorities as deemed by the state and B) the decentralization of the previous top-down centrally planned government to local authorities. Kotus (2006), via the case of Poznan, Poland, demonstrates that cities are increasing in density due to large amounts of infill building occurring in places previously set aside as open land deemed by socialist ideology. In addition, he argues that with transition governments have become less central (on a national scale) and more local; allowing, incoming capital, supply and demand and a capitalist land grab to work faster than the pace of newly established local governments, who are still trying to understand their role and how to operate and regulate new trends toward neoliberal urban policy, resulting in a more ‘chaotic’ development of inner urban areas.
The in-migration of the tertiary sector into the city center creates a push factor for the residential housing stock. In Prague, Czech Republic, illustrates how the newly formed and incoming tertiary sector of the economy pushes out residential land use in the city center into suburban areas (Sýkora 1999). Prior to transition, the tertiary sector of the socialist economy was of a very limited size and controlled by the state – most of the states priorities went towards the primary and secondary sectors of the economy. However, thanks to entrepreneurial attitudes and lack of state services since transition, the tertiary and service sectors of the economy exhibited widespread growth in the region. Their extensive rise plays a major role in re-shaping the spatial form of the urban fabric in inner parts of CEE cities, while this processes pushes out some residential land use it also diversifies urban land use.

Meanwhile, Riley (1997), using the case of another Polish city Łódź, shows how land uses in the urban center become blurred and more diverse. With transition, spaces re-invent themselves, mostly in the context of old industrial spaces (Łódź is often referred to as the Manchester of the east). Small retail, commercial space and newfound businesses of the developing tertiary sector of the economy (all of which are usually small scale and don’t have the capital to build new spaces) locate in previous industrial spaces, relocate into old first floor apartments with street frontage and into courtyard spaces, historically used as residential spaces. This case not only illustrates how urban cores become more dense, as several stores might now occupy what was a single factory space, but also shows how land uses become more diverse, as there might be various types of retail and service space in what used to be a single-factory space. Meanwhile, industrial production might be forced to move to higher floors in the industrial building or outside the city altogether, both increasing the internal city density or decentralizing the city, respectively.

Therefore, the creation of new spaces of commercial consumption, largely facilitated by the retail and the tertiary sector of the economy, provides a prime example of how political and economic changes in the CEE alter the built environment of the post-socialist city. This change creates a new urban context which everyday geographies must adjust to. This information provides an understanding of the physical urban morphology of socialist and post-socialist cities and also begins to provide the situation of how the changing urban environment affects social networks and time-space geographies in the city. However, I now turn to discuss how theories of consumption help to better ground how everyday social processes, in the context of consumption
and shopping, and the changing urban form of the city, via the scope of the retail landscape, come together to aid in understanding urban change.

2.3.1 Consumption

While the city changes in many ways, this project only intends to view urban change via consumption spaces and the changing consumption practices to and from these places to better understand the wider situation of post-socialist urban change. Consumption in its most common form is the acquisition and use of goods. More specifically, consumption is “the selection, purchase, use, maintenance, repair and disposal of any product or service” (Campbell 1995 in Miles and Paddison 1998: 815). In the past, consumption was considered a ‘by-product’ of production and consumption took a collective form that all of society mechanically participated in which is referred to as public consumption. This is largely a thread of Marxist social theory and modernism (Clarke and Bradford 1998). Most of the spatial research of this era consisted of quantitative studies of location analysis. Since this understanding of consumption as a mechanical public act, approaches to consumption have undergone a number of paradigm shifts.

With the cultural turn in the social sciences, notions of consumption shifted to be considered a cultural and social act based on private consumption habits of the individual and viewed consumption as a social experience and social process. Consumption during this stage was seen as something independent of production (Miller et al. 1998, Jackson and Thrift 1995). However, the present academic debate in urban consumption states that the distinctions between public and private notions of consumption are now blurred and porous, as are the relationships between producer and consumer. This implies that consumption is a private act with cultural and social meaning and it is an essential duty or public act that connects individual people, their private experiences, individual needs and wants to a greater mass consumer society (Miller et al. 1998; Jayne 2006a; Clarke and Bradford 1998). This understanding of consumption means that we need to re-work Campbell’s definition of consumption. Carlstein (1982 in Jackson and Thrift 1995) provides insight into what a new definition of consumption might look like:

Conventional wisdom has it that consumption is the use (or acquisition through purchase) of goods or services for want satisfaction, but we consume many other things which do not fit very neatly into the crude categories of ‘goods and services,’ such as various composite socio-environmental situations. We not only consume the food at dinner but in many respects we also consume the whole dining situation by participating in it. (Carlstein 1982 in Jackson and Thrift 1995: 213)
This passage breaks away from Campbell’s definition by establishing an understanding of consumption that incorporates notions of social meaning and the experience of consumption.

Overall, the coming together of public and private consumption in a fluid relationship helps us conceptually understand how researchers can approach urban consumption (Clarke and Bradford 1998) because the analysis of consumption uncovers active human processes in urban environments (Jayne 2006a; Miller 1995). Thinking of consumption as a process no longer means that consumption only exists at the point of purchase as it once did with modern approaches that framed consumption as a mechanical public activity of the masses. Instead, it allows us to think of consumption as how we shop, why we shop, the experience of places of consumption themselves, the objects we consume and what we do with the objects after the point of purchase (Jayne 2006a; Miller et al. 1998; Jackson and Thrift 1995). For example, if we focus on how people shop, the idea of process allows us to incorporate ideas of mobility to and from places of consumption. Furthermore, placing these processes on a time-line allows us to study changes in consumption related mobility over time. It also moves us beyond the location of individual sites of consumption to the production, reproduction and experiences of places of consumption and beyond. Analysis of consumption solely at the point of purchase would leave us blind to these events in society. This shift places the emphasis of consumption on the consumer, but maintains the idea that they are not divorced from a greater consumer society.

Post-modernism, as a model of consumption, exacerbates notions of consumption as a porous relationship and intensifies the links between private consumption, mass consumption (public consumption) and emerging spaces of consumption that are centered on both the utility of consumption (public) as well as the experience of consumption (private). The post-modern perspective in the field of geography must be contextualized as an approach to understanding spatial and social processes occurring in the advanced stages of capitalism. In addition, this approach must also be understood in an era of global economic restructuring characterized by the increasing interconnectedness of places by the increased international competition and flexibility of global capital. Urban spaces, in a post-modern perspective, shift from being places of production to places of consumption and are consumable by the experience of the ‘spectacle’ of urban space (Zukin 1991). Thus, consumption activities are a fundamental aspect of cities, urban life and aids in the creation of an overall mass consumer society (McCraken 1988) and emerging
consumption spaces create various enabling or constraining opportunities (Miles 1998; Jayne 2006b). Further, when the ‘hypermobility of capital’ in a post-modern era touches down in cities it spatially re-organizes urban space and it spatially re-organizes urban social and cultural practices (Knox 1996) into new everyday geographies. The spatial re-organization and the close relationship of this ‘hyper-capital’ to mass consumption, “results in a sort of ‘global metropolitanism’ this is rooted in the materialistic culture-ideology of consumerism” (ibid: 116). This is significant because post-modernism creates a ‘post-modern consumer’ that is recognizable by growing variety of social classes evident by the “spending power and patterns of consumption” of diversifying consumer sub-groups (Knox 1991: 184; see also Smith 1987) and is associated with the emerging pluralism in different types of places of consumption in the post-modern city.

Consumption links individual experience with the urban environment (Miles and Paddison 1998) helping to form the dialect relationship between the built environment and social processes in the city. Although a seemingly ordinary activity, analyzing individual consumption patterns provides a useful method for understanding the relationship and influences between the individual actors of urban society and the urban form of the city. While the city changes in many ways, this project only intends to view urban change via consumption spaces and the changing consumption practices to and from these places to better understand the wider situation of post-socialist urban change. Jayne (2006b) argues that consumption shapes the contemporary city and will continue to shape the city in its future growth. Further, I argue changes in individual consumption patterns are one way that we can analyze a city’s morphology and urban change. In the case of this project, it provides a means of understanding a city in transition: “If social distinction is traceable in terms of consumption patterns so too cities, and their reinvention during the contemporary processes of restructure, are being redefined through the deliberate employment of consumption as a mechanism of change” (Miles and Paddison 1998: 821). One way to view the urban morphology of cities is through the meaningful changes in consumption processes and patterns and their relationship with social networks.

To narrow this concept, we do not simply reproduce our existence by the utility of consuming. Rather, consumption is a meaningful activity in urban environments that helps to construct individual identities. Consumers must negotiate with, between and against different economic, legal, social and spatial restrictions and norms that create a myriad of meaningful
scales, spaces and identities that can be viewed through the lens of consumption (Jayne 2006b). For example, we do not shop solely to purchase food for the utility of gaining nutrients so that we may survive another day, but we produce culturally significant and meaningful ways of life through everyday consumption patterns and habits through where we shop, how we shop and what we eat (Jayne 2006a; Jackson and Thrift 1995; Miller 1995): “To say that consumption is rooted in everyday life does not mean that it is devoid of any wider moral or political significance” (Jackson 2002: 285). Everyday meanings of urban consumption are derived from the types of items purchased; experiences where they are purchased; how, what and why items are used; how, with what and why places are accessed; or the combination of all these factors. Meaning in everyday consumption is also produced with the understanding that consumption is both enabling and constraining (Jayne 2006b).

For this project, I draw upon these ideas of the post-modern consumption to address urban and social change in the post-socialist city. This approach allows me the ability to use interconnected ideas of public and private notions of consumption by focusing on retail consumption patterns, practices and consumption related mobility. It allows me the capability to understand the dynamics of emerging places of consumption on the urban landscape as they relate to both post-socialist transition and global restructure and as they relate to different ‘post-modern consumers.’ For this project, I use the retail landscape of the post-socialist city, specifically the retail landscape of Stara Zagora, as a point of entry into understanding post-socialist urban transition through ideas of urban consumption.

In addition, urban consumption in the more fluid public-private framework intensified by post-modernism is conceptually useful for the context of post-socialist urban change. However, Nagy (2001) states that for the post-socialist urban context the period of transition after 1989, as the region integration in the global economy, was a major catalyst for the restructure of retail and urban space in CEE cities. Political and economic transition in the region shifted concepts of consumption from public – a state sanctioned activity of the masses – to private – based on consumerism, individual choice, personal preference, increased range of goods and behaviors and the experience of shopping. However, in the context of transition in the CEE, Nagy argues that it is only a ‘rough’ form of private consumerism because private consumption is highly dependent on the consumer’s ability to access various locations of consumption and the ability to access is uneven among different social groups in society. This understanding of consumption
for the CEE urban context, when combined with an understanding the porous relationship
between public-private forms of consumption and the flows of global capital, illustrates that
while people still consume out of necessity and utility, emerging urban spaces associated with
the post-modern city work to enable and constrain consumers and diversifies the types of ‘post-
modern consumers’ in the city (Jayne 2006b; Knox 1991).

All the while, I do not intend to oversimplify these concepts nor intend to suggest that
private and public consumption are the same thing. As Jayne (2006b: 17-18) writes “What is
vital to grasp from theoretical definitions of the increasing importance of the relationship
between consumption and urban change is that both are mediated via a complex interaction of
political, economic, social, cultural and spatial practices and processes,” which allows for the
intersection of both public and private notions of consumption. Therefore, as I demonstrate
below, I aim to mediate this relationship by using time-space theory in the framework of
consumption related mobility as a meaningful social activity grounded in the political and
economic context of the post-socialist city to understand both the changes of the built
environment and the social processes within it. This project draws from the porous public-
private framework of consumption to question individuals about their changing private
consumption habits, patterns and processes to answer questions about larger societal trends of
public collective mass consumption and social change through the means of a questionnaire
survey. In turn, this allows for an understanding of change in the city because it brings together
the dialectic of the built environment based around new or changing places of consumption and
social processes of the city, in this case, viewed through consumption related mobility. It also
provides a lens of inquiry with regards to new and changing social networks and cultural norms.

While theories of urban consumption form the over-arching theoretical framework of this
study, I must pause and define terms for how I deploy these ideas of post-modern consumption
to explore the local politics of everyday consumption in Stara Zagora. I do not consider urban
consumption a neutral activity. Rather, the task of everyday consumption activities represents a
meaningful social activity and processes evident by changing modes, paths and patterns of
consumption related mobility as well as changing consumption habits in relation to the
introduction or departure of different types of places of consumption. Knox states (1991: 184),
the everyday activity of consumption is “among the most powerful and pervasive processes
within the socio-spatial dialectic” between the changing built environment and changing social
processes that produce, reproduce and transform the built environment. In this regard, I use the everyday activity of consumption to understand urban transition in the post-socialist city.

I ground and embed theories of consumption and urban change for this project pragmatically through the retail landscape, retail activities and mobility related to retail stores in the post-socialist city. This approach can be thought of in relation to the more colloquial term ‘shopping.’ Miller et al. (1998) state that “ironically, shopping itself has only rarely been the focus of work in consumption” (7). I approach consumption at the scope of shopping because, like Miller et al. state, it provides several advantageous views. Shopping acts as a measurable index of consumption where fluctuations of consumption processes can be measured. The next advantage of using the scale of shopping is that “shopping is also about the commercial sphere and commercial capitalism” (ibid: 9). This is valuable because it helps to reveal the diversity of consumption places and experiences of consumption as “it attends to the diversity of forms of capitalism” (ibid: 9) that are occurring in a post-modern era. In other words, it helps to address the increasing pluralism of scales and powers of various consumption regimes in the urban landscape of the post-modern city. This is beneficial because it legitimizes the need for the outlining diversifying types of consumption places. I accomplish this task in this project by outlining the different types of retail spaces in Stara Zagora and I discuss the different powers that exist between these places of consumption and on the shopping consumer. In turn, ‘the diversity of forms of capitalism’ also aids in revealing various ‘post-modern consumers’ and shoppers recognizable by diverging consumption patterns present in the retail consumption landscape, which structures our notions of increasing socio-spatial segregation and the re-structure of social and cultural practices in cities. Further, shopping is centered on the formation of individual identities and everyday social processes. Although a simple everyday task, “shopping, though in its ordinariness it is still complex and full of meaning and conflict, pleasure and duty” (Jayne 2006a: 38). Finally, Miller et al. claim that shopping helps to pragmatically establish the relationship between producer and consumer as well as private and public notions of consumption.

Therefore, I use ‘shopping’ and the everyday retail landscape of Stara Zagora as a means of getting at larger ideas of urban consumption in the city by looking at actual retail stores as places of consumption both in their utilitarian role of providing consumable goods and services, but also in moving beyond the points of purchase of goods and services to the dynamic diversity
of experiences at each of these various places of consumption and the powers they exert on the mobility patterns of consumers. More importantly for this thesis, I center on the issues of (im)mobility to and from these retail stores as a social process termed throughout this project as ‘consumption related mobility,’ as a way of seeing and knowing the urban morphology of the city. I use the retail landscape to discuss urban consumption for several practical reasons. First, various places of retail consumption provide clear-cut urban spaces where consumption takes place, again, either as a real purchase of a good or service, or in the experience of the place or in the experience of accessing the place by different patterns and modes of mobility. Second, retail activity and (im)mobility to and from retail places are readily observed in the city and data on retail activity can be produced through fieldwork or are available from various sources. Data on retail activities help support and illustrate my discussion of urban consumption and urban change in the post-socialist city.

In short, the terms retail and consumption are not synonymous words. Retail and shopping are types of consumption activities that are readily evident, visible, accessible and understandable in cities through research methods and complemented with empirical data from the retail sector of the economy. Retail consumption and shopping as a consumption activity are not meant to be absorbed into a greater thing we call consumption, but they serve as stand alone activities that aid in the understanding of larger consumption processes in the built environment and social networks of the city.

2.3.2 Post-Socialist Urban Consumption and Retail Landscape

Recent trends in post-socialist urbanization, such as neoliberalism and the processes of privatization, serve to place consumption at the center of urban social life (Miles and Paddison 1998). This is the result of general trends over the last 20 years in economic and political restructure and the re-organization of global capital paralleled with the political and economic transition of the CEE region. In other words, it asserts the notion that urban space, in a post-modern perspective, shifted from places of production to places of consumption (Zukin 1991). Neoliberal urban planning policy and privatization are both recently apparent on the landscape of CEE cities (Dingsdale 1999). A prime example on the landscape of this change is in the urban form of large-scale private retail. These new urban forms of retail and locales of consumption exhibit the strongest spatial expression of transition on the urban landscape in the CEE (Kreja
Therefore, the presence of these new retail spaces reveals how political and economic transition and the incorporation of global capital in the CEE (only allowable by the transition of the region into the free-market) alters the spatial form of the post-socialist city. As urban planning policy becomes less top-down and more local and neoliberal, large-scale hypermarkets began to fill a demand of retail goods that the state system no longer supports (Kostinksiy 2001).

Retail shopping during the socialist era was of a low priority compared to more productive sectors of the centrally planned economy, such as industry and housing. Therefore, retail had limited space in the urban fabric of the socialist city. Three main forms of retail shopping existed, all state or cooperative owned: State department store, in-company stores and a limited number of less central retail stores in or near micro-district areas. The state department store was usually located in the city center and contained the highest level of goods. Meanwhile, in-company stores provided the highest turnover of retail. All the while, retail outlets elsewhere in the urban landscape, such as in select housing estates or transit nodes, where few in number and contained limited and inferior goods. Due to the low priority of retail during the socialist era, retail outlets in housing estates were not constructed until the final phase or they were completely neglected (Kok 2007).

Transition, starting in 1989, brought about immediate changes to the retail landscape of the CEE. There is a general lineage of three major forms of retail that developed after transition, culminating in the present situation of foreign hypermarket stores as places of consumption for both retail goods and leisure time (Kreja 2006; Rudolph and Brade 2005). Shortly after the fall of communism in the CEE, informal small-scale retail developed in the form of street vendors, with items displayed on the ground, table or foldout bed, and kiosk vendors to provide basic goods that were in demand but no longer supplied by the state system. These vendor types located on sidewalks, streets and paths throughout the city; selling whatever goods they could sell wherever they could sell them. With time, small scale vending began to organize into formal shopping areas (although still similar to informal kiosks) as agglomerations of kiosks with more permanent infrastructure – such as indoor markets (Kreja 2006). Similarly, small-scale retail moved into the first floors of apartment blocs or old industrial spaces in the city (Riley 1997). Finally, the present stage is the introduction of large scale formal retail, that are usually enterprises from abroad that locate on the urban fringe or as large projects in the CBD of the largest cities in the CEE (Kreja 2006; Garb and Dybicz 2006; Novak and Sýkora 2007; Kok 2007). This section
provides an understanding of historical retail landscape of post-socialist cities. In Chapter 4, I outline the more recent changes the retail landscape in more detail using the case of Stara Zagora.

2.4.1 Mobility and Time-Space Geographies

An understanding of spatial changes of individual consumption patterns illustrates urban change by allowing one to trace out how the city changes over time via these changing patterns, both in terms of the built environment and altering human consumption patterns in relation to these changing places of consumption. It is of relevance to study the changing consumption patterns of city residents because changes in the spatial patterns of consumption demonstrate social change, process and changes in the way people live their lives and their social identities (Keliyan 2006). The theories of mobility and time-space geography aid to operationalize the dialectic between the built environment of cities and the social processes, such as consumption patterns, within them. In this section I argue that the study and analysis of circulation patterns illuminate how urban environments change in post-socialist cities. There are many different ways of seeing and knowing urban change but this thesis utilizes the context of retail consumption and shopping to understand how change occurs in a city in transition by addressing how modes and paths of consumption related mobility are changing in a post-socialist urban context.

In general, mobility involves displacement or the act of moving in time and space between location A to location B. In theory, the distance between A and B can be a small distance of a few centimeters or it can span between cities and nations. Various push and pull factors would be in place in both location A and location B to initiate mobility and bring meaning to the concept of mobility. All the while, in classic migration theory, mobility is only understood as what goes on at the points of location A and/or location B in either pushing or pulling mobility. However, critiques of classic migration theory allow for the investigation of the line that connects A and B. This is a dynamic spatial line compared to the more static locations of A and B. The concepts that this line is empirically observable and it is an embodied, practiced and experienced act that helps us reach the conclusion that mobility is a socially produced motion and a meaningful social event (Cresswell 2006).
There are two different and more nuanced ways to approach the concept of mobility that help move us from the general understanding of mobility to a more meaningful understanding of mobility. The first concept of mobility is *territorial mobility*. This idea of mobility focuses on the movement of people that requires a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence, again, largely due to various push and pull factors at the origin and destination. This type of mobility can be in the form of neighborhood-to-neighborhood, city-to-city or nation-to-nation mobility (Zelinsky 1971). In general, the concept of territorial mobility reflects ideas of permanent or semi-permanent migration and is of little value for the scope of this project. However, the second concept of mobility, *circulation*, provides a better understanding of mobility for this project. Circulation focuses on the “great variety of movements, usually short term, repetitive or cyclical in character, but all having in common the lack of any declared intention of permanent or long-standing change in residence” (Zelinsky 1971). This approach to mobility is of practical use because it focuses on the social activity of short-cyclical paths of urban residents. The idea of circulation is similar to Lefebvre’s Rhythmanalysis of a city that combines the cyclical patterns of people in the city on a linear axis to demonstrate the succession of events in space. Understanding the way people move through time and space creates a rhythm with identifiable characteristics (Lefebvre 1996). The concept of circulation mobility and the mapping of the short-term cycles of movement in the city create a legible text of the city that one can study (de Certeau 1984; Pred 1977).

The concept of circulation helps to operationalize the useful geographical theory of time-space geography developed by Hagerstrand (1970). Time-space geography examines the mobility of individual’s activities in time and space (Kwan 1998). The idea of time-space geography has three main points – *path*, *project* and *dioramas*. First, *path* is the situation that events occur in sequence and in space. As people make decisions about how they move and where they go in the city they cannot avoid drawing paths as they move, creating a time-space geography. This is the dynamic line between locations A and B that Cresswell (2006) opens up for meaningful investigation as part of the socially produced process of mobility. Due to the free choice people have, people are not the paths, but they inevitably create them as they move around the city (Hagerstrand 1996). These paths are of importance to the idea of time-space geography because they make movement and mobility visible in the city. It provides a theoretical way of seeing the city that is not available by any other means. Through the analysis of rhythms,
loops and recursive movements of time-space paths one can see different processes and changes in these processes over time (de Certeau 1984; Crang 2003; Hagerstrand 1970; Pred 1981).

*Project*, in time-space geography, is the notion that paths come together for different types of activities. Also called “activity bundles,” projects bring about meaning to the landscape, as people are not aimlessly wandering around the city. Rather, they are moving and navigating to specific activities, events or projects, that have meaning for people (Hagerstrand 1996). The coming together of people for shopping and consumption is one example of a project in society. This example also illustrates that pre-meditated nature of projects that makes them organized and meaningful activities in society. Consumers do not just wander into stores and find goods on the shelf by chance. Rather, shopping is an intentional activity in society in multiple ways because goods are transported and arranged in the stores, employees show up for work and patrons come to shop. The combinations of these various intentional acts also serve as activities in which both material and symbolic meaning take place.

While individuals have free choice to move around the city, time-space geography outlines three main *constraints* that individuals face in their daily life paths (Pred 1977). Constraints in mobility also force us to think about the privilege of movement for some and the immobility of the less privileged (Crang 2002). First, *capability constraints* demonstrates that people have biological needs, such as food and sleep, that limit the distance one can travel or influences the type of places one may visit. For example, people can only travel so far in a given period before they must stop to sleep, eat or use restroom facilities. In a more general sense, this capability constraint is a time-budget that determines mobility for biological reasons and the efficiency of the transportation technology (Pred 1977). The understanding of this type of constraint is useful for this project on the post-socialist city because it helps to place circulation mobility within a daily time-budget. Not only does this help narrow the context to the everyday situation, but it also stresses the fact that changing modes of transportation technology can greatly affect the paths people take for different activities. Changing modes of transportation in relation to destinations (ie: places of consumption) also affects access to these places for some groups of people, which reminds us that access to places based on forms of mobility is a privilege for some portions of society (Crang 2002).

Second, *coupling constraints* occur at the nodes of *projects* and activity bundles. In short, no two people can occupy the same time and space. This affects how one can move in
time and space. Using an example from retail consumption activity, the bottleneck at the check-out line illustrates a coupling constraint because not everyone can check-out at the same time. This makes people at this node move through space at a slower pace or it may influence the time of day people shop (Pred 1977). Therefore, it limits social interaction in some instances, but in other instances, it demonstrates the social interaction of people as they come together for different activities. This reinforces places of meaningful social activity. In the case of the post-socialist city, changing coupling constraints identified by different projects and their locations (retail consumption for the scope of this project) can help to identify changing processes of meaningful social change such as the constraints due to the increase in traffic congestion and the rise of the automobile in CEE cities or the introduction of new types of consumption spaces on the urban fringe that create new nodes, projects and activity bundles, thus new coupling constraints.

The final constraint is authority constraint. This constraint recognizes that people are not permitted to go to some places by law or regulation. Places of high security may be off limits to the average person requiring them to circumvent or avoid the area. Other places may have a capacity limit or hours of operation that excludes or prevents access at certain times. Further, limitations imposed by the physical geography of the landscape can prevent mobility (Pred 1977). In the case of the post-socialist city, often the right to access a place of consumption is due to the ability to patron by means of mobility to and from the location, financial means or hours of operation available to you; however, accessibility is also more discretely determined due to social authority constraints such as class or ethnicity.

Dioramas are the graphical representations of time-space paths -- showing intersects and/or clashes with projects and constraints. In short, a diorama is the drawing of time on one axis and space on the other axes, thus allowing us to graphically and visually map out time-space. Time-geography uses many time scales. However, the scale of the day is the most used time-scale to understand the relationship between society and the individual (Pred 1981; Kwan 1998). In other words, it uses the scale of the everyday geography of individuals to understand social process. The everyday geography is the “sum total of a person’s first hand involvements with the geographical world in which he or she lives” (Seamon 1979). More simply, it is the typical daily path or the spatial context of ones active daily life (Rollinson 1998). The mapping of spatial mobility of everyday geographies illustrates the lived experiences of on-going
transformation (Stenning 2005). In addition, the focus on certain activities of the daily life, such as consumption related mobility, helps to narrow the cumulative time-space geography of a whole day to a specific context, which may occur at any point in time during the day (Kwan 1998).

The concepts of *path, project, constraints* and *dioramas* help to visualize how humans actively produce, reproduce, transform and become part of the urban landscape in transition. Therefore, there is no boundary between the landscape of the city and society, which allows the study of *paths* in time-space to reveal change in society and the city (Hagerstrand 1996; Pred 1977): this “framework should uncover ‘structural patterns and outcomes of processes ’” (Pred 1977: 641). Analyzing and asking questions about the paths that people take and how they change over time will expose transformations of society and the city if combined with ideas of time-space theory such as paths, mobility and recursivity. In the following section, I deploy theories of time-space geography and circulation mobility to empirically illustrate how cities are produced, reproduced and transformed through the local politics of everyday consumption practices and places that are both enabling and constraining (Miles 1998, Jayne 2006b) in the post-socialist urban context.

### 2.4.2 Consumption Related Mobility and Everyday Geographies in the Post-Socialist City

The decentralization and increased density of the built environment of post-socialist cities has spatial consequences for the everyday geographies of urban residents. In other words, the introduction or decline in urban spaces readjusts the ways citizens move, use and navigate within their cities and their social identities. In turn, affecting the way they live their lives within the urban fabric, their social networks and creating urban social change. For the post-socialist city, one way the everyday geographies are changing is in relation to the places of retail consumption in the urban landscape. The changes to the everyday geographies are visible by the (im)mobility patterns to and from new and old places of retail consumption, or *projects*, because they create enabling or constraining opportunities on the daily time-space budget of city residents and shopping consumers.

Stenning (2005), uses the case of Nova Huta, a steel mill industrial town neighboring Krakow, Poland to illustrate that with transition, the spatial extent of the everyday geographies of citizens on Nova Huta are larger than they use to be because they are developing a greater
reliance on places of consumption, a combination of retail locations and leisure experiences, within the city limits of Krakow. The reason for a greater reliance on Krakow is because the old socialist system no longer provides consumption opportunities for this community area. Since transition, residents have been voided of consumption opportunities, projects and support offered by the state, such as entertainment or state operated retail stores. In addition, their ability to access Krakow is decreasing due to a greater dependence on the automobile as a means and path of consumption related mobility, an expensive commodity for the average Nova Hutan, and failing public transportation infrastructure complicated by the increasing cost of an individual fare since the commoditization of the transit system. Therefore, the need for the greater dependence on Krakow’s consumption spaces is enlarging the time-space geography of residents from Nova Huta, yet, they experience greater capability constraints and authority constraints as their ability to access places of consumption in Krakow is decreasing or limited by transportation technology, distance and cost. Stenning’s argument on post-socialist social change is accomplished by looking at the everyday geographies of Nova Hutans visible through the lens of consumption related mobility.

New projects of consumption along the urban fringe of Prague change the paths of consumption related mobility patterns in a time-space framework for those who live and shop in the Prague metropolitan area (Novak and Sýkora 2007). Novak and Sýkora apply the use of time-space theory and (im)mobility in relation to places of retail consumption to illustrate the changes to the spatial organization of Prague. In another example from the context of the Prague region, Garb and Dybicz (2006) argue that new projects of retail consumption in the peri-urban areas change one’s everyday consumption related mobility patterns in time and space to be less frequent, yet more long distance and time consuming, along with a greater reliance on the automobile. This changes the consumption related time-space rhythms, paths and geographies of citizens in both frequency and spatial extent. Further, the growing dependency on an automobile as a new mode and path of transportation may also limit access and (im)mobility of other residents in the city who are unable to afford the amenity of a car. Kotus (2006), returning to the case of new retail places in Poznan, address issues of accessibility of new places of consumption based on access to an automobile and the physical geography – increasing distance from the home – as a physical barrier to access these places. In this framework, de-centralized places of retail consumption act as authority constraints that prevents one from consuming this place or
practicing consumption there because of their lack of ability to access this space without a car. Here Kotus also reminds us that ability to patron based on personal finances, both a capability constraints and authority constraints, might also affect ones ability to access such new urban spaces.

Through the tensions of (im)mobility, enabling and constraining possibilities offered by various consumption regimes (projects) and changes to both the retail consumption and transportation landscapes allows for a better understanding of how the mundane social activity of everyday shopping is full of social meaning because “individuals use consumption practices to construct their identities, and negotiate and experience the world around them” (Jayne 2006b: 104). As the consumption landscape changes through the introduction or decline in projects, new means of negotiating the landscape are necessary which, in turn, reconstruct urban, social and individual identities, norms and networks. The renegotiation of the landscape is visible through changes to the everyday paths of consumption related mobility people take in the urban landscape. Overall, the understanding and approach that everyday geographies are visible by time-space geographies and consumption related mobility patterns allow for a concrete and well grounded understanding of urban change, both it terms of the physical morphology of the built environment of the city and the changes to social processes in the city. For this project, I bring together ideas of consumption and time-space mobility and place them in the context of the post-socialist city as a way of seeing and knowing urban and social change in the post-socialist city.
Chapter 3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction to Methodology

This project asks: How may consumption related mobility be changing the everyday geography in the post-socialist Bulgarian city? In order to answer this research question, I ask several practical sub-questions about consumption spaces, modes and patterns of mobility as well as shopping habits. Using a combination of different methods to answer each sub-question, I am able to more pragmatically answer this larger research question. A ‘mixed method’ approach to urban geography complements different parts of a research project. Kitchin and Tate (2000) suggest that one’s research goals, questions and epistemological approaches shape the methodology one chooses for conducting social research. However, they also state, “there is no law that states that qualitative and quantitative methods have to be used in isolation from each other” (Kitchin and Tate 2000: 40-41). Philip (1998) supports the idea that a social researcher can utilize a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods. This approach allows quantitative and qualitative data to complement one another, ultimately, with the goal of enriching the research. The ‘realist’ perspective in geography recognizes the complementary aspect of quantitative and qualitative data, as both methods investigate different levels of depth and breadth in research (Sayer 1984: 221-224). Finley and Li state that a mixed-methods approach is a highly desired research approach and not a superficial approach that one tacks on to a research agenda as an “anything goes,” approach (1999: 51). Even though this approach comes under many names - mixed-methods, multiple methods (Philip 1998; McKendrick 1999; Punch 2005), “methodological pluralism,” (Roth 1987: 82) or “a multiplicity of perspectives” (Dear 2005: 251) - it seeks to use a mixture of methodologies to better understand the diversity of the world and provides different ways to see the city.

In the case of research in a post-socialist environment, a ‘mixed method’ approach has many advantages. First, it helps to balance the research project and it alleviates practical issues that may arise while working in a post-socialist environment, where issues of data accessibility, data limitations and language barriers are a concern. Second, there is a recent need for research of post-socialist cities to incorporate various views of the city including inquiry into the built spatial form, its description and explanation of these urban processes but, as Sýkora (2000) argues, it should also include description, insight and explanation of social spatial processes undergoing changes in the urban spatial structure. Examples of these social processes include gentrification,
commercialization, ghettoization and suburbanization. A mix-method approach to understanding processes at work within cities of transition is one way that various approaches to the city can be accomplished. This new research approach to post-socialist cities is a break away from quantitative statistical descriptions and models of socialist and post-socialist cites that are mostly present thus far in the urban literature of the area (examples include: Hamilton and French 1979; Medvedkov 1990; Dingsdale 1999). While they provide a context of the urban form, these studies do not directly address social spatial processes that are important to understanding the dynamics of post-communist cities (Sýkora 2000), yet a mixed-methods approach in combination with well informed research questions can address both the changing spatial structures of the built environment and social processes.

I place my research in-between the spatial structure of the city and urban/social processes by looking at the interrelation and dialogue between the two. I accomplish this by using “a multiplicity of perspectives” (Dear 2005) attainable by using a mixed-methods approach to look at the “relation of introjections and projections [that] involves a complex feedback relationship” (Grosz 2005: 297) between the changing urban form and individual bodies within the transforming urban fabric. The methods I use for my research are questionnaire surveys, participant observation, official statistics and GIS mapping. This chapter comments on each method I use for this project, how I used them and why I use them in my research on post-socialist urban change.

3.2 Mapping

Mapping via a Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to map physical features of the city, to map data obtained through the questionnaire surveys and various official statistics. The primary goal of this is method is to answer my first research sub-question: What are the different types of retail consumption in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria and where are they located? Mostly, the mapping of the physical form of the city aids in establishing the context of the city for my field cite. It allows me to identity different types of places of consumption within the city. Secondly, the mapping helps in illustrating the corroborated data obtained via other methods. The scale of the mapping analysis maintains anonymity of all survey participants and their exact locations.
No publicly available sources of GIS data are accessible. Therefore, I obtained GIS data from the private vendor, DATECS GIS Center, a Bulgarian firm that produces GIS data for various cities in Bulgaria. The title of the data layer I purchased is “Stara Zagora- Info” (Стара Загора – ИНФО). This data has a scale of 1:5,000 and is in UTM Zone 34/35 N coordinate system. This dataset contain the following information: streets, building areas, green areas, blocks and public buildings. This data set provides a good basis for the GIS work portion of my research. However, it is not complete and I had to create new GIS data layers via digitizing. I digitized my field work sites such as case study stores, location of hypermarkets and major transportation routes in Stara Zagora. Additional data creation can enrich the use of GIS data as a tool in social research. Pavlovskaya (2002) claims that GIS can “produce alternative knowledge if used with data sets specifically created for a particular research project instead of using standard or commercially available data” (283). Her work on urban transition in Moscow demonstrates that many obtainable GIS data sets, either public or private, do not contain all the necessary data needed to meet specific research goals. Therefore, additional data collection and creation are necessary to complete the project. Consequently, I digitized additional layers, such as a public transportation layer, large-scale retail layer, case study stores and a neighborhoods layer with the purchased layers as the overall reference. In addition, this method allows for the mapping of relevant questionnaire survey and statistical data to illustratively address my research questions.

3.3 Questionnaire Survey

One form of obtaining primary data in research is through the method of a questionnaire survey. The fact that my fieldwork was in Bulgaria made the language barrier an inevitable obstacle in my research. The use of a questionnaire that was translated into the Bulgarian language practically allowed me to navigate around the issue of a language barrier and provided me the ability to generate primary research data relevant to my research questions (Questionnaire Survey: Appendix A and B). The main goal and purpose of the questionnaire survey was to directly answer sub-questions B, C and D of this project:

B) How are the modes and paths of consumption related mobility changing in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria?
C) How may new places of consumption change people’s shopping habits and patterns?
The questionnaire survey accomplished this task by asking people about the *paths* that they take in the context of changing consumption mobility patterns and everyday shopping habits in the post-socialist Bulgarian city. The question: “How often do you shop” in each of the three main typologies of retail consumption in Stara Zagora addresses the frequency of how often people interact with different places of retail consumption in the city. This is done with the understanding that the greater the frequency in consumption habits the more *paths* they travel to access these places. The inverse is also true, the lower the frequency means a decline in the *paths* they travel to access these places. In connect to the different consumption types, this data can also provide information about the spatial extent of the *paths* for everyday geographies and it illustrates emerging or declining consumption spaces in the city based on the frequency of visits to each location.

To address modes of mobility, the questionnaire survey asks “How do you get to” each of the three main typologies of retail consumption in Stara Zagora. This question highlights the primary modes of consumption related mobility for each retail type. This helps to address what might be happening along different *paths* to understand why frequencies of consumption related mobility might be changing.

Further, the survey asks questions about change over time – socialist to post-socialist. Questions such as “How has your mode of transportation changed compared to 10 years ago?” and “How would you describe your shopping pattern today versus 10 years ago?” address changes to consumption related over time. The time-span of 10 years was used in this survey for two main reasons. First, in 1989, after the fall of communism, Bulgaria elected a socialist government back into power⁸ and it experienced an economic crisis in 1996 and 1997. Therefore, Bulgaria did not strongly experience the forces of transition until 1998, roughly 10 years ago. Second, the infiltration of hypermarkets did not exist in Stara Zagora prior to 2002. Therefore, the retail consumption landscape of Stara Zagora prior to 1989 and up to the year 2000 was very similar. Dramatic changes did not begin to occur until after Bulgaria recovered from the economic crisis in the 1996 and 1997. Thus, asking questions about consumption habits only 10 years ago still address a similar retail landscape of the socialist era but is easier to recall in cognitive memory than asking about consumption habits 20 years ago. I acknowledge that the retail landscape of the city in the 1990’s was different from the retail landscape of the more

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⁸ Bulgaria was the only country in Central and Eastern Europe to elect a communist government back into power.
Soviet era of the 1980’s and earlier. However, these two landscapes were also very similar, especially in the context of the larger forces of transition this project addresses.

Finally, the questionnaire survey also asked more general demographic questions to establish data such location, employment status, sex and age. This information is used to better understand the diversity of different groups of people, shoppers and consumers. In other words, when this data is combined with data provided elsewhere on the survey it helps to illuminate what types of people shop where, why or where they live in the spatial structure of the city to provide context into specific issues of (im)mobility in relation to the consumption landscape of the city.

The design of the questionnaire was informed by concepts of time-space theories in geography (Hagerstrand 1970, Pred 1977). However, it does not intend to be a complete time-space journal of daily activities (see: Latham 2003; Novak and Sýkora 2007) nor does it graphically map-out the time-space geographies of each individual surveyed via new GIS technologies as used by other geographers employing time-space in the field of geography and urban studies (see Kwan and Lee 2004). These methods have been critiqued for being “annoyingly abstracted from the embodied experience of mobility or anything else” (Cresswell 2006: 30). Instead, I use time-space theory to aid in conceptually designing the questionnaire and to ask questions about the changes in an individual’s time-space geography at several discrete points in time and to yield data results in regards to their consumption paths, patterns, habits, frequencies and mode of transit. In addition, the focus on specific activity of daily life helps to narrow a 24 hour time-space geography down to a definite context (Kwan 1998). The questionnaire’s structure is limited to the specific context of consumption, which means it does not fully take into account other factors that might form an individual’s complete 24 hour time-space geography, such as work or other social activities. Studies show that the consumption patterns in transitional economies of the CEE are less likely to be linked or chained together with other daily activities, which is much different when compared to North American consumption travel and patterns (Newmark and Plaut 2005). For example, Garb’s (2006) study of consumption patterns in Prague “reveal[s] that shopping trips are overwhelmingly special-purpose trips from home and back,” (14) for both weekdays and weekends and unchained to other activities. Therefore, I rely on the assumption that consumption patterns in the CEE are usually unlinked to other daily activities, thus allowing me to only address the daily activity of
consumption related mobility, as a path, in a post-socialist context for the scope of this project. It also allows me to narrow and contextualize the types of constraints most likely to affect this particular type of daily path.

I entered the field with a questionnaire template and a general outline of the types questions that I needed to ask on the survey. I then spent the first three weeks in the field fine tuning the questions and responses in order to ensure that all questions and response were relevant to the case of Stara Zagora. This task included adding or eliminating questions as needed, identifying the main typologies of consumption places, identifying and locating the specific names of stores in Stara Zagora (i.e. Billa, Metro and Mr. Bricolage) and identifying the main modes of transportation in the city. It was also a goal for the survey to take no more than 5 minutes for a participant to fill out. After this step, the questionnaire survey was translated into Bulgarian by a hired translator who lived in Stara Zagora. I met with the translator prior to the giving her the survey to discuss the aims and goals of the project. We were also in contact via email and various meetings during the translation processes to ensure the correct translation and understanding of terms by translator, local citizens and myself. An example of on such issues was the word “carpool,” which I had listed as a mode of consumption related mobility. The translator was unsure of this term and a literal translation from English to Bulgarian would obviously not suffice. Of course Bulgarians “carpool,” but we had to work through the meaning of the word to be sure all survey participants would understand it. This processes also served as an operational pilot study because the translator helped to address problems with the survey, either in its form, wording or issues of relevance to the case of consumption and mobility in Stara Zagora.

Finally, the questionnaire survey was administered in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria during June, July and August of 2007. All the questions were voluntary and participants only had to answer the questions they chose to answer or felt comfortable answering. Completion of the survey provided implied consent for the use of the data provided by the participant. I presented each participant an outlined statement, in Bulgarian, of their rights as a research participant and it declared that completion of the survey provided implied consent for the use of the data. All questionnaire survey data and data obtained through participant observation are anonymous to ensure the personal safety of all involved subjects. In addition, I have changed the names of participants in this thesis to maintain their anonymity.
I distributed the questionnaire on the street at various locations throughout the city of Stara Zagora with a sample size of 180 surveys. A majority of the surveys were distributed in the center of the city. This was done because it was in close proximity to various consumption types (the central market, the main department store and boutiques), but more pragmatically, because there are two large urban parks in the center of Stara Zagora where people were often willing to complete a survey and had the time to complete the survey. People on their feet were less likely to stop and complete the survey. Surveys were also distributed in places not in the city center to reflect different paths to places of consumption, different demographics, less central places of residence and different local contexts of those who are less likely to be in the city center.

The fact that surveys were not systemically distributed and that the sample size is only 180 means the surveys and their results should not be considered as representative of the whole city of Stara Zagora. Rather, the data obtained via the questionnaire surveys should be viewed to yield more qualitative and explanatory results that begin to illuminate how a city in transition changes socio-spatial structures and how the urban morphology of the city reshapes the lives of those who live within the city.

3.4 Participant Observation

Participant observation of consumption habits, practices, patterns and of modes of mobility aids in understanding how consumption related mobility is changing in post-socialist cities. This method also intendeds to answer the sub-questions B and C. However, rather than collecting data via a survey, I use participant observations to complement and triangulate data obtained in the questionnaire survey. In short, the same questions that form my questionnaire survey inform and drive the questions I am asking while observing, helping me to be an active observed tuned into specific issues of consumption related mobility.

I conducted my observations during the summer of 2007 while I lived in the city of Stara Zagora as a researcher and volunteer for a local environmental NGO. I used this time to experience the city, but more specifically to this project, I accomplished the task of participant observation by observing people’s shopping habits and activities at different places of consumption in the city, such as, local shops, the central market and places of formal large-scale retail. I observed their methods of transportation (foot, automobile, public transportation) in relation to places of consumption or consumption activities. I kept field observations recorded in
field journal. All participant identities’ are completely anonymous. I used pseudonyms or codes for recording observations in the field journal when needed. Otherwise, observations were anonymous because there was no need to identify specific individuals. I also use the data to qualitatively and generally observe different consumer groups, places, habits, patterns and mobility and to record thoughts on my whole experience of the city.

Qualitative methods in geography have been critiqued for their lack of rigour. Baxter and Eyles (1997) suggest guiding principles for qualitative method of interviews in social geography to aid in infusing a greater sense of rigour. As a means of establishing rigour in the qualitative method of participant observation, I developed a routine in my methodology of conducting observations. I selected nine different places of consumption in Stara Zagora from a variety of consumption types to use as “Case Study” stores (Map 3.1). I selected two neighborhood grocers, the main department store, the central market, a boutique in the center of town, a local non-chain electronics store in town (but not in the CBD) and three large-scale hypermarket stores (a grocery store, an electronics store and a Do-It-Yourself store). I went to each site six different times and gathered data for ten minutes at a time. I corroborated all the observed data together for each site to get an average understanding of consumption practices at each of these sites and retail types. I would locate myself in a place where I could observe, count and record the total number of people entering and leaving a site to determine a total population for that time, whether or not a purchase was made or the type of purchase and the mode of transportation. This data and methodology provides local vignettes of the local context that are useful for understanding what is, on average, the “typical” scenario in general, on certain days, at certain times or overall for each for each site. In addition, utilizing this more rigorous methodology of

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9 Names of specific non-chain stores are kept ambiguous or changed to protect retailers.
10 Each site was visited during a mixture of morning, afternoon and evening time slots, as well as, both weekdays and weekend days.
11 People were only counted if they appeared to be of 18 years of age or older, as this project does not intend to conduct research on minors and it was decided that patrons 18 years of age or older have real purchasing power.
12 For larger hypermarket stores the total population was calculated by counting cars in the car park at the start of the ten minute period and updated the population based on the observed arrival and departure of cars during the ten minutes. It was determined through field calculations that the average number of purchasing adults per car was 2. Therefore, the population was determined by the total number of cars, plus or minus arriving or departing cars, times 2. Even if a car with a single passenger or with more than two passengers was observed arriving or departing, it was given the value of 2 adults for consistency in the methodology. However, a person arriving or departing by other means of transportation (bus, taxi or foot) would receive the count of 1 or however many individuals arrived or departed. Data for the market was doubled to account for multiple entrances and to more accurately reflect the total population of the whole market.
active participant observations allows for data between different consumption sites to be better compared and contrasted.

My positionality of researcher and observer is important to consider in relation to me actions of conducting participant observation. For the most part, I was an outside observer of this community. However, given the fact that I resided and worked in Stara Zagora for over two months meant that I shopped in many different places (for investigative reasons in connection to this project, but also as a necessary chore), attended various social and cultural activities, went to restaurants, bars and clubs. Therefore, I cannot position myself completely outside of the Stara Zagora population and my positionality was fluid between the binaries of resident/non-resident while I was in the field. In addition, I use the method of observation to triangulate data results

Map 3.1
*Source: Base data obtained from DATECS GIS Center*
obtained through the questionnaire surveys and official data. Observation methods check and triangulate data obtained in other methods because statements can be checked against actual behaviors (Bodgdewic 1992; Fyfe 1992). Triangulation is a good research practice to verify research data and participant observation is one method for accomplishing this task.

3.5 Official Statistics

Using secondary data in research provides for more efficient use of time and resources than collecting primary data that would be redundant (Kitchin and Tate 2002). There is no reason to attempt to recreate trusted data that are already present and available through both public and private statistical organizations. Secondary data are obtainable from various sources and provide general characteristics, data and trends about the study population of Stara Zagora at large, urban tendencies throughout Bulgaria and about comparative data of the transformation of spaces in post-socialist cities of the CEE.

Data obtained from official sources complements empirical data that I created in the field. This means that official data also serves to answer sub-questions B and D. Information on consumer spending, transportation and the retail sector of the economy provide supporting data from another perspective to help show how modes, paths and patterns of consumption are changing in the post-socialist city.

Relevant data for this project are those that reflect the changing urban environment, consumption and mobility. Therefore, I use demographic data of urban residents to contextualize urban growth or decline and changing residential patterns. More specifically for the perspective of consumption, I draw on data that show different places of retail consumption by sales, as well as consumer-shopping patterns and expenditure. In addition, I use data on the topic of mobility to illustrate changing modes of transportation, such as, private automobile sales or ancillary automobile data. Data from private sources (non-government data) are a strong source for this type of complimentary data. Companies that do market research analysis, such as Euromonitor and Collier’s International, publish data on consumer spending, various sectors of the economy, such as transport and retail sectors, and economic indicators.

Access to government data can be a problem when working in foreign environments. One needs to exercise caution when considering the validity and credibility of all sources of data. In addition, there can be a distrust of official data, and data presented in a translated language can
cause problems (Seltzer 1996). Many countries have statistical archival data available via the internet. However, this data are limited in terms of both scope and accessibility. The Republic of Bulgaria’s National Statistics Institute (NSI) and the Bulgarian National Bank (NBB) provide various types of statistical digital data via their websites. The data available are not comprehensive and are limited in scope and theme. I also approach all data prior to 1989 with caution. Yet, it provides relevant context to my research project. Other data sources that I utilized, at times from less reliable web based sources, fills in the gaps of data not adequately supplied by the NSI, NBB or private economic analyst companies.

The ‘mixed-methods’ approach, comprised of the methods discussed above, provided different ways of seeing and knowing the city of Stara Zagora. These different perspectives complemented one another well for a more complete understanding of urban change in this city. Some methods, such as mapping and official data, better captured quantitative changes in the city and provided insight in transition on a region and national scale, while other methods, such as the questionnaire survey and participant observation, captured qualitative data at the local level helping to form a rich empirical data set for the context of Stara Zagora. Together, the different perspectives provided by each method help to fully illuminate the various dynamics of the post-socialist city on both the urban form and social processes.
Chapter 4.0 Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Introduction to Data Analysis and Results

In this section, I seek to answer the four sub-questions of this thesis by analyzing the data obtained in this project. First, I discuss in detail the different types of retail and consumption spaces in Stara Zagora to answer the first sub-question: What are the different types of retail consumption in Stara Zagora and where are they located? This task also provides the context for the three remaining questions. I draw upon the concepts of Hagerstrand’s (1970) time-space geography to answer these questions, as a scheme to organize the analysis of empirical data and as a means to discuss the data. Next, using time-space theory via the framework of projects, paths and constraints, I answer the thesis’ sub-questions by showing how modes and paths of consumption related mobility change in relation to new retail consumption projects in post-socialist Stara Zagora. Finally, I discuss the data results by discussing how individual attitudes and opinions actively support the production, reproduction and transformation (Pred 1984) of post-socialist cities through a dialectic relationship between new and old consumption regimes in the built environment and changing social processes visible through diversifying consumption habits, patterns and everyday consumption geographies.

4.2.1 Projects: The Changing Consumption Typology of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

Literature on the post-socialist city in the CEE states that they are undergoing the dual process of decentralization, evident by the manifestation of large-scale retail and tertiary services on the urban fringe (Sýkora 1999; Andrews 2005; Hamilton and Carter 2005; Nuissl and Rink 2005; Garb and Dybich 2006; Novak and Sýkora 2007), and increased density due to ‘chaotic’ infill building (Riley 1997; Pichler-Milanovic 2005; Kutos 2006; Hirt 2006; Kok 2007). At first glance, this statement is a paradox. However, through the lens of the changing typology of places of retail consumption, it illuminates how both of these processes co-exist. An understanding of these two processes highlights that their affect puts consumption at the center of the city at risk of decline.

In a time-space framework, “social transformation and altered structural relations can only occur through the introduction, disappearance or modification of institutional projects” (Pred 1981). The appearance of hypermarkets and flexible small-scale stores demonstrates two new projects introduced and never before experienced in the urban fabric of Bulgaria. Therefore,
despite the recent appearance of these forms on the retail urban landscape of CEE cities, their introduction serves to change the urban form, social processes within it and the socio-spatial dialectic between the two. In turn, their introduction reshapes the everyday geographies urban residents in Stara Zagora.

Prior to 1989, such forms of shopping did not exist in Bulgaria or most cities throughout the eastern bloc of Soviet influenced Europe. The structure of a central government administration based on socialist values and the nationalization of most enterprises meant that a majority of the shopping conducted prior to transition occurred at state run central department stores, in-company stores (again, state operated) or in state owned retail outlets at nodal points throughout the compact city (Kok 2007). The overall scenario meant that “almost all higher-order retail was located in the centers of the main [CEE] cities…Other locations…only had very basic shops” (Garb 2006: 2). Generally, this retail profile was the retail landscape for most of socialist Central and Eastern countries between 1945 and 1989. Different countries and regions had slightly different retail profiles due to somewhat different styles of socialist governments or their varying rates of incorporation of capitalist ideas during the socialist era, especially during the 1980’s. However, this outline serves as the overall starting position of the retail landscape during transition from the socialist era to the post-socialist era in CEE cities and in Stara Zagora. In addition, the strict Soviet style of government in Bulgaria meant that the state administrated system structured the retail landscape.

Below, I outline three different types of retail consumption related projects in post-socialist Bulgaria on a national scale and link them to the local context of consumption in Stara Zagora. I provide a discussion of these different types of consumption spaces to escape “the tyranny of the single site,” that haunts many geographic studies on places of consumption and to illustrate the diversity of consumption spaces, all with different experiences, social powers and regimes, within the urban landscape of Stara Zagora (Jackson and Thrift 1995: 211). Various places of consumption present various enabling and constraining forces on the urban landscape (Miles 1998; Jayne 2006b). First, I outline the situation of hypermarket retail to illustrate their role in the decentralization of post-socialist cities and Stara Zagora. Second, I discuss the condition of widespread small-scale places of consumption that aid in increasing the density of post-socialist cities due to their flexibility and adaptability. Finally, I discuss the situation of retail consumption in the city center and central business district (CBD) as a project in order to
argue that it is in a perilous position subject to decline because of the introduction of the new retail types located elsewhere in the urban fabric.

4.2.2 Hypermarkets

Hypermarkets, supermarkets and big-box forms of retail are the newest forms of retail consumption in post-socialist Bulgaria (Photo 4.1). Hypermarket stores have the most dramatic affects on the city form since the brought about by the socialist era and they are the most noticeable mark of transition on the urban landscape despite being limited in number when compared to other forms of retail. In addition to their low number and recent appearance on the landscape, an overwhelming characteristic of this store type is that they are constructed with investment-capital from outside of Bulgaria (FDI), which is in much contrast to the state owned nature of the socialist retail landscape that existed prior to transition (Table 4.1). However, despite the new arrival of this retail type, they are the main catalyst for the decentralization of post-socialist cities.

Photo 4.1 Hypermarkets and Stara Zagora Mall

Caption: Mr. Bricolage is a newly opened French owned hypermarket on the outskirts of Stara Zagora. The cranes in the background of this image are constructing the soon to be Stara Zagora Mall. Source: Garstka 2007
## FDI Investment in Bulgaria (Table 4.1)

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<td>581.9</td>
<td>636.3</td>
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<td>1266.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2965.6</td>
<td>3342.1</td>
<td>3926.6</td>
<td>5044.6</td>
<td>7420.7</td>
<td>10734.1</td>
<td>15939.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Wholesale and Retail of Total FDI</td>
<td>9.94%</td>
<td>14.90%</td>
<td>17.41%</td>
<td>16.29%</td>
<td>17.17%</td>
<td>17.05%</td>
<td>16.62%</td>
<td>14.31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

**Notes:**

Subtotal of Wholesale and Retail Trade: “repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods”

*Preliminary Data
On a national scale, Bulgarian retail data illustrates the rapid growth of big-box stores in recent years. Data on the Bulgarian retail states that hypermarkets and supermarkets experienced an awesome total unit growth rate from 2000 to 2005. Hypermarkets experienced a growth rate of 500% and supermarkets experienced a growth rate of 224%. In comparison, independent grocers experienced a slightly negative unit growth rate of -1.6% from 2000 to 2005 (Euromonitor 2007).

Stara Zagora, as a case city, contains all of the major hypermarket chains in Bulgaria. Some of these chains appeared in Bulgaria in late the 1990s, yet not a single one of them appeared in Stara Zagora’s landscape prior to 2001 and they are all outside of Stara Zagora’s CBD (Table 4.2). This is most likely due to the process of such stores and capital-investment first appearing in capital cities of countries of transition (Hamilton and Carter 2005; Kiss 2004; Tosics 2005b) before moving to cities lower in the urban hierarchy. Again, this helps to illustrate the importance of understanding how urbanization processes differ between capital cities or cities higher in the urban hierarchy and lower tiered cities. The urbanization processes of lower tier cities are not completely unlike urbanization processes of capital cites, but these processes do operate differently and it is important to research their affects on urban and socio-spatial patterns for the contexts of cities of these lower scales and ranks. In the context of the retail landscape, Garb (2006) states that due to market saturation of large-scale retail in capital cities, CEE towns “with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants, [are] the new target of the large retail chains” (1). Thus, cities of this class lay at the forefront of new urban processes in the context of consumption in the region.
### Hypermarkets in Bulgaria (Table 4.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year of Introduction in Bulgaria</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Total no. of outlets in Bulgaria</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Number/ Status in Stara Zagora</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billa</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technomarket</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technopolis</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bricolage</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>DIY</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praktis</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>DIY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praktikar</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>DIY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagira</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>DIY/ Hardware</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>2 (1 hypermarket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BauMax</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>DIY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Under Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zora</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Under Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stara Zagora Mall</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Under Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galleria Stara Zagora</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Under Construction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: DIY = Do-It-Yourself, Home Improvement
Source: Collier's International, Corporate Websites
Stara Zagora contains eight retail outlets that I classify as hypermarket, supermarket or big-box retail chains (Map 4.1). They are all located on the urban fringe of Stara Zagora with the one exception of Billa, which is more centrally located in the compact city near several housing estates (not necessarily the city center). None of the stores appear in the Stara Zagora’s CBD. Depending on the store, they sell a variety of goods ranging from groceries, electronics or Do-It-Yourself (DIY) hardware and home improvement items. Metro, the largest store, attempts to cater to all of these market sectors under one roof. In contrast to other retail types, these stores sell high-end or specialty goods such as large appliances, electronics or a more diverse selection of ‘western’ or ‘foreign’ imported goods that are not readily found in smaller stores nor historically available in state stores.

Map 4.1
*Source: Base data obtained from DATECS GIS Center*
Conversely, big-box grocery stores and food retailers offer products similar to products found in smaller grocers elsewhere in the city. While some newer, specialty or foreign items may only be available at these hypermarkets, most of the items are not that different from the types of goods found at the local shops. However, these stores do provide a large variety of goods (meat, produce and dry goods) with a wider selection and range of goods with the convenience of being all in one place. Most of these retailers advertise cheaper goods and products, yet the actual value of savings is arguable and not known.

This thesis takes a more intense look at three of the eight hypermarkets in Stara Zagora through the combination of participant observation and survey data to better understand the reality of the urban and socio-spatial affects of these places of consumption. The three stores are: Billa, an Austrian owned grocer; Technopolis, an electronic store; and Mr. Bricolage, a French owned DIY store. I explore them in more detail in relation to changing consumption related mobility and paths below.

The present situation in Stara Zagora illustrates the continued trend in hypermarketization and decentralization in post-socialist cities. Stara Zagora is undergoing the development of its big-box retail sector with the current construction of BauMax, Zora, Galleria Stara Zagora (a mall) and Stara Zagora Mall (Photo 4.2), all locating themselves on the urban fringe of the city. The case of the two malls illustrates how certain projects may go unchecked by market forces and local planners “because of ambition, the prestige, as well as the limited experience and vision with respect to retail markets and development, [and] municipal authorities [are] lenient when it [comes] to granting permits without taking into account either the wider developments in the nearby area or the existence of competing projects” (Kok 2007). All in all, this creates a scenario that increases the density of urban fabric on peri-urban areas, changes consumption spaces and practices and takes away from retail sales in the city center. It also creates a flood in the market where competing projects could potentially lead to diminishing returns and market saturation. The declining population of Stara Zagora of 150,000 does not seem like it can successfully sustain two mall construction projects of this scale – an estimated 56,000 square meters of combined new retail space (Collier’s International 2007; Global Trade Center 2008).

Nuissl and Rink (2005) and Garb (2006) state that suburbanization in the CEE region develops differently from western suburbanization processes, where housing developments attract commercial development out of the city. The authors show that in the CEE context
suburban housing follows commercial development out of the city. Due to the situation of Stara Zagora having a declining population, suburbanization is minimal and big-box retail is not pulling suburban housing out of the city, contrary to the case presented by Nuissl and Rink. This point reemphasizes the importance of studying the urbanization processes in non-capital cities and cities lower in the urban hierarchy. There is only one suburban housing district in Stara Zagora presently under construction and it is not tied to any big-box retail. Rather, it is a gated community designed and planned by a private development group and completely outside of the Stara Zagora city limits (Aturen 2007). The city population can not support much residential suburbanization, unlike the capital of Sofia, which is increasing in population. While this study does not aim to specifically address the residential sector or residential mobility in Stara Zagora, the city’s declining population is not rapidly suburbanizing and there is available housing stock within Stara Zagora.

Photo 4.2 Stara Zagora Mall

Caption: Image of the new mall coming to Stara Zagora posted at construction site. Source: Garstka 2007
4.2.3 Local shops and “magazines”

If hypermarkets demonstrate the overall decentralization of cities, independent local shops demonstrate the rapid increase in the urban density of post-socialist cities. Neoliberal urban planning policy, the movement from central to local planning authority and the commoditization of land in a free-market system allows for infill building and an increase in the density of the urban fabric of post-socialist cities (Kotus 2006; Hirt 2006; Riley 1997; Kok 2007). Small local shops and tertiary services flourished in the years after transition as entrepreneurs opened independent stores to fill the demand in goods and services no longer supplied by a collapsed state system. At the time of their initial inception into the landscape, these types of retail and service spaces were very informal, potentially illegal or active in the ‘grey’ market, but with time they developed into more formal forms. Nagy (2001) states the period of rapid transition after 1989 was the major catalyst for the restructure of retail and urban space in CEE cities. Due to the flexible and adaptive nature of small stores, they increase the density and diversity of urban space throughout the compact city.

Due to the low levels of capital available to shop owners and service sector entrepreneurs, these stores located in small spaces as infill construction -- formal or informal -- or re-invented industrial and residential spaces, basements, entrance-ways and garages into places of consumption (Photo 4.3). Drawing from comparative data in Sofia, the average rental rates of local small shops in a residential area have a lower overall price compared to locations along the high shopping street in the CBD or in vending stalls in more formal retail outlets. Due to this lower price, it is easier for entrepreneurs to situate themselves in such locations and not in the city center (Table 4.3). These rental rates are from Sofia, which means, overall, they are probably higher than rental rates in Stara Zagora, yet, the similar typology of store types reflects an ordinal ranking in rental rates for other Bulgarian cites. Many of these stores are less formal and landlords are eager to accept rent for otherwise unused spaces by bringing in independent shops and services.

67
Photo 4.3 Re-invented Retail Spaces
Caption: Former automobile garages converted into retail established on a street in the compact city area of Stara Zagora. This image includes clothing stores, a copy shop and a pair of garages in the middle. Source: Garstka 2007

### Retail Rental Rates in Sofia (Table 4.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Rent Levels (€/m²/month)</th>
<th>Average Rent (€/m²/month)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Centers and Malls</td>
<td>30 - 55</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>20 - 125</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Area Street Retail</td>
<td>3 - 35</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Warehousing (i.e. Hypermarket)</td>
<td>8 - 20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Collier’s International 2007

Independent local shops are one of the most abundant forms of retail in Bulgaria. This is because of their small size, flexible and adaptive nature and unimpeded development during the years after transition. This era experienced little government regulation as governments decentralized from central to local authorities (Stanilov 2007) and supply and demand became
the main determinant of land/space allocation. The bulk of Bulgarian independent stores (referred to as “magazines” in Bulgarian) sell food items, dry goods and personal items. In the context of food vendors, data shows that 28,920 independent grocers existed in Bulgaria in 2001. In comparison, failing state co-operatives accounted for only 2,230 outlets nationwide and newly established supermarkets and hypermarkets accounted for a combined number of only 417 stores in the whole nation (Euromonitor 2005). This data emphasizes the dominant role of small-scale retail in the retail landscape of Bulgaria, yet, it is also important to remember that this retail type, along with much of the private tertiary sector and other retail types, did not appear until after the collapse of the socialist state system. Therefore, their rate of growth was quite rapid.

Dollar per dollar (actually, Lev per Lev), independent grocers comprise the largest share of Bulgarian customer expenditure, yet the rise of the large big-box store is increasingly taking on a greater share of the consumer expenditure. Graph 4.1 illustrates the widespread growth of the less formal independent retailers during the years of transition. More recently, independent grocers are a stabilizing section of the retail economy. Since 2001 to 2005, independent grocers received 3.1 billion Lev annually (roughly $2.3 billion), making it the largest retailer type in the food vendor sector of the Bulgarian economy. Further, this data also shows the injection and increasing role of big-box stores in Bulgaria.

Stara Zagora was not immune to the outbreak of local small-shops with transition. These retail stores along with small outlets of the tertiary service sector continue to be present throughout the landscape of the compact city and micro-districts of housing estates. Due to the competitive nature of the free-market and the learning curve of entrepreneurs on how to navigate free-market forces, these forms of retail are in constant flux evident by the continuous opening and closing of stores, rampant range in the types and quality of goods being sold in various outlets and changing locations and spaces.

This thesis takes a more in-depth look at three local neighborhood stores in Stara Zagora. Two of these stores are local grocers (“magazines”) called “ABC Grocery” and Hranitelni Stoki.13 Both of these stores are located in the first floor of housing blocs and they are located

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13 Translates to the generic term “Foodstuffs / Groceries.” There are many of these stores distributed throughout Stara Zagora. According to Euromonitor (1998), “Hranitelni Stoki is the chain of food supermarkets and shops, formerly entirely owned by the state. It has experienced major transformations in recent years as some of the outlets have been privatised, and some still function under state control awaiting privatization.” The exact status of this store is unknown. Regardless, it is assumed in due time it will be a private outlet. In addition, its close proximity to
within half a block (100 meters) of one another, which illustrates the abundant supply of this store type in the urban fabric and the increase in free-market competition among all scales of retail. The third case store is an independent electronic store located in the first floor of an office building just beyond the edge of the central business district.

Graph 4.1
Source: Euromonitor 2005 and 2007

4.2.4 City Center

Small boutiques, the former GUM (“Grad Universal Magazine” or City Department Store) and the central market are the primary components of the retail landscape in the central business district of Stara Zagora. The center of the city also contains places of consumption in the form of cafes, restaurants and bars. While not a form of retail consumption, this project considers them as a form of consumption in order to better understand the consumption and alteration of non-residential space in the central part of the post-socialist city.

the newer established independent “ABC Grocery” and other like stores illustrates the uncontrolled development of local shops and increased competition among local grocers and

\footnote{Data calculations, classification and methodologies changed between the 2005 and 2007 editions of Euromonitor. Therefore, a fluid comparison between 1996 to 2001 and 2000 to 2005 data sets is not possible. This graph charts both data sets as published. The classification of “Co-Operative” is no longer used in the 2007 data set.}
Small boutiques are located along the main high street and feeder streets in the CBD. The main high shopping street, generally the primary place retail activity in the CBD, of Stara Zagora – Czar Simeon Weliki – is closed to automobile traffic traveling East and West (the direction of the street). Automobiles are permitted to cross the high street North to South. Therefore, car transport and parking is limited in the city center. Travel by foot, being dropped off or public transportation are the easiest ways to access the city center. This street also contains two large central parks, government buildings (city and regional), the former GUM and an abundance of cafes, restaurants and bars.

Boutiques along the high shopping street are comparable to local neighborhood shops in several ways. Many of them are independent, yet several of the stores are outlets of small clothing, electronic or bookstore chains and suppliers. They also re-invent urban spaces, exemplified by their location in the first floor of bloc housing buildings in the city center, pushing out residential space or other urban land uses from the city center. However, in contrast, these stores often fill many of the spaces offered by the legacy of capitalist era that preceded the communist era. The biggest distinction of the two retail types is the variety of goods sold. Boutiques in the center of the city usually sell specialty items or specific goods, such as cloths, electronics, shoes, jewelry and cell phones. Small shops outside of the city center mainly sell grocery items. Boutique shops in the city center also pay higher rent (Table 4.2).

The former GUM is located in the heart of Stara Zagora (photo 4.4). Once state owned and operated, the GUM is now divided into small individual privatized vending stalls. Each stall varies in size, but they are roughly 15m². The stalls in the store are very similar to boutiques found on the high street. They sell a similar range of items. Parking is only available on nearby side streets. Historically, the GUM was the central (if not the only) place for higher end retail shopping in the city. However, during the harsh economic conditions in Bulgaria during the later periods of socialism it was questionable if one could actually consume anything at these stores. A traveler recounts his journey to a Bulgarian State run department store during this period of socialism:

Whole departments were stripped bare…the premier department store in the country couldn’t offer its customers a single television, radio or other electric item. In some departments three salespersons stood by a till with nothing to sell but perhaps a single small stack of tea towels, but elsewhere there would be a lone desperate salesgirl trying to deal with throngs of people because a shipment of something desirable had just come in. At one counter on the third floor, a big cardboard box full of socks had just arrived –
hundreds and hundreds of socks, all an identical mustard brown color, all in thin cotton in the same size, and all in bundles of a dozen – and people were buying double armloads of them…On the top two floors were whole departments full of boxes of unidentifiable odds and ends…The busiest department was on the ground floor in what I suppose could be called the notions department. It resembled a crowd scene in a Godzilla movie after the news has got out that a monster is on his way to town. All that seemed to be for sale was buttons, wristwatch straps, and ribbons, but than I saw that what everyone was lining up for was a freshly arrived consignment of alarm clocks…This department was run by two of the most disagreeable-looking women I ever hope to see” (Bryson 1992: 232-233)

This description is synonymous of the shortage economy associated with the failures of communism the practice of queuing that was an everyday activity for most urban residents during this period of time. On the other hand, this wasn’t always the case for shopping in Bulgaria. This same traveler recalls an earlier trip to Bulgaria in 1973 where “then shops had been full of goods, but no one appeared to have money to buy. Now everyone was clutching fistfuls of money, but there was nothing to spend it on” (Bryson 1992: 231).

Photo 4.4 The Former GUM
Caption: Located in the heart of Stara Zagora and built in the style of Socialist Realism, the former state operated department store is now how to many specialty shops. Source: Garstka 2007
Meanwhile, returning to Graph 4.1, the data illustrates the decline of the state owned co-operatives. In the 2007 edition of the data (Euromonitor 2007), co-operatives are not listed as a classification of food retailer, suggesting their demise or privatization into the independent retailer classification. These data are inclusive of both state stores in the center of the city and outlets throughout the compact city. Regardless, these data illustrate the decline of state stores in the retail typology of post-socialist cities. If retail consumption habits during the socialist era organized around the state stores, either in the city center or central nodes, their decline suggests that consumption is either becoming decentralized, more local, more private or more diverse in terms of products sold.

The central market is located just off the main high street in the center part of the city. It is not readily accessible by car and parking is only located on crowded side streets. It sells all produce in season. Other retailers selling low-end or food related items surround the market (Photo 4.5).

This thesis takes a more in-depth look at three local places in the center of Stara Zagora. The first is a high end shoe boutique located on the main high street. Second, the former state department store. Third, the central produce market located one block off the high street. I discuss each site in more detail below.

Thus far, I outlined the three major types of retail and consumption spaces in the urban fabric of post-socialist cities, specifically for the context of Stara Zagora. This discussion of the retail typology of Stara Zagora serves to answer the first sub-question of this thesis: What are the different types of retail consumption in Stara Zagora and where are they located? These places of retail are a visible means of understanding the urban morphology of cities in the CEE since transition. Cities in transition obviously change in many ways, but the changes in the retail landscape are one way to identify the spatial implications of transition on cities. With the scenario of the post-socialist retail landscape of the built environment in place, I now turn to address the other sub-questions of this thesis that inquire about the social affects and consequences of a new retail landscape on social processes noticeable via everyday geographies.
4.3.1 Paths

This subset of questions asks how may the modes and paths of consumption related mobility be changing in Stara Zagora and how may new places of retail consumption change the shopping habits and patterns of city residents? Modes and paths of consumption related mobility are changing in several ways in relation to new retail consumption projects in post-socialist Stara Zagora. First, the mode of transportation is changing to more private means exemplified by the rise of the automobile in the post-socialist city. Second, everyday geographies and paths are experiencing a dual process of change because the spatial extent of consumption paths are increasing due to the decentralization of large scale retail, yet at the same time, paths are becoming more local at the micro-level of the neighborhood due to small scale entrepreneurial retail and services. This is in concurrence with new consumption projects establishing a socio-spatial dialogue between urban spaces and social processes. Overall, both of these processes illustrate a change in consumption mobility paths that decreases the reliance on the city center as a place of consumption.
4.3.2 Changing modes of paths

Modes of consumption related mobility are increasingly retreating from the use of public transportation or foot travel and shifting towards a growing dependency of the private automobile. Changing transportation technologies, in this case the rise of the automobile, readjusts capability constraints (Pred 1977), which effects both time-space paths and projects. Similarly, Sheller and Urry (2000) argue that when urban time-spaces become ‘automobilized,’ it reconfigures and reshapes the whole of urban and social life. The changing modes of consumption related transportation restructure the everyday geographies of city residents, in turn affecting social processes across the city. Yet, Pred writes appears to write with the understanding that changes to transportation technologies will alleviate the constraints of mobility by opening more efficient means of transportation, faster travel and greater freedom of mobility which can free up ones daily time-budget. However, the rise of the automobile in CEE cities, which should ease capability constraints, points to a new set of coupling constraint evident by traffic congestion that hinders mobility and circulation in the city.

Newmark, Plaut and Garb (2004) concluded in a study of retail consumption habits and patterns in the city of Prague that in a post-socialist retail landscape shoppers are less likely to walk when compared to the period prior to transition. Garb and Dybich (2006), through their study of retail consumption habits in Warsaw and Prague, state that “car ownership strongly determines the modal choice for shopping” (242). The probability of a person without a car shopping at a hypermarket, but arriving by car (ie: carpool) is only 16%, yet if one owns a car their probability of shopping at a hypermarket increases to 79%. In my own data collection of retail consumption habits in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, (while I do not have data on car ownership), the majority of the population that shops at hypermarkets arrives by car. Out of 180 people surveyed, 168 said that they shop at a hypermarket. Out of this subset population of hypermarket shoppers 52.4% of the people said they travel with their personal car, while only 3.5% the people carpool. Meanwhile, travel by city bus and walking is 14.3% and 21.4% respectively.

However, these data include information regarding the Billa hypermarket which is more centrally located in the city, has strong public transportation linkages and is highly accessible by foot due to its location in the middle of several bloc housing estates. At Billa, I observed, on average, that 26.32% of the people who shop at this establishment travel either by public bus, taxi or foot and 73.69% of the people travel by private automobile. Meanwhile, at Mr. Bricolage
and Technopolis, which are both located on the extremes of the urban fringe (less central, more distance from housing estates and less linkages by public transit) I observed, on average, only 4.85% of shoppers travel without means of an automobile, meaning roughly 95.15% of the shopping population travels by private automobile to and from hypermarkets located on the urban fringe.

![Bulgarian Transportation Expenditure 1995-2004](image)

**Graph 4.2**  
Source: Euromonitor 2005

On a national scale, car purchases, expenditure on transport and vehicle maintenance is increasing in Bulgaria (Graph 4.2). This data shows the growing reliance on the automobile throughout Bulgaria. Further, it shows the growing cost of transportation, including public transportation, which may push people toward purchasing their own private means of transport, which in turn also leads to more limited investment in public transit infrastructure. Stanilov (2007) argues that an increase in automobile ownership and a decrease in public transit service creates higher levels of congestion and pollution in cities. While at the same time, it serves to choke off easy access to the core of cities, similar to a *coupling constraint* because mobility
becomes more limited or hindered with the increase in the number of automobiles on the road that bottleneck into traffic jam. Projections of the number of cars in Bulgaria predict that they will double from the 1993 numbers by 2011 (Table 4.4). Altogether, while the automobile increases the ability to decentralize, the car also creates push factors for urban sprawl because of the growing desire to shop on the urban fringe where this is less traffic congestion than in the city center which decreases the importance of city centers for retail consumption.

**Automotive Forecast Bulgaria August 2007 (Table 4.4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New passenger car registrations ('000)</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock of passenger cars (per 1,000 population)</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail sales of petrol ('000 tonnes)</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit 2007a

This data on the increasing reliance on the private automobile, both for Stara Zagora and for other cities in the CEE, illustrates that places of large-scale retail have the ability to discriminate against those that do not readily have access to an automobile, whether the retail stores mean to or not. Therefore, location has the ability to discriminate and, in relation to (im)mobility and socio-economic status of different consuming classes, “the location of shopping becomes a marker of social status even in the case of daily consumption goods” (Nagy 2001: 347). Thus, the stores are defining their cliental to be mostly of a certain automobile owning class. Cresswell (2006) states that “the production of some kinds of mobility often effectively immobilize others” (260). The rise of the automobile in the Bulgarian urban context and retail landscape effectively marginalizes and immobilizes those that cannot access a private automobile. Similarly, Hall (2003) argues that the increasing role of the automobile is responsible for the loss of public space in the city, impacts the urban form, facilitates social exclusion and it also leads to various negative impacts that are unevenly felt by different groups, largely those who do not have the financial means to own a car and, are therefore, less mobile.

Other authors write on how places of large-scale retail in the CEE are also places of consumption of leisure and are a new form of public space (albeit under private control) (Argebright 1999; Kotus 2006). In turn, if those accessing these places of consumption are of a
select class (an automobile owning class in this context), ‘the public’ of these places is moving towards a more homogenous population. However, some retail establishments in CEE cities (Tesco, Auchan, Hypernova and Ikea) navigate around these issues of accessibility and immobility by sponsoring free buses to facilitate the movement of non-car owning citizens to their stores (Kotus 2006). Yet, no studies are present that show how stores spatially decide these routes or on the communities they serve or do not serve, but they potentially exist to serve a limited demographic of the total urban population.

The rise of the automobile is the primary way that modes of consumption related mobility change in CEE cities. The city of Stara Zagora is vulnerable to this same process. However, the growing rate of dependence on the automobile may not be increasing as rapidly as cities elsewhere in the CEE. This is because the development of hypermarkets and large-scale shops are in close proximity to Stara Zagora’s public transportation routes. In fact, during the course of my fieldwork, I visited each of these sites via the means of public transportation and foot. For the more centrally located stores, such as Billa, this made practical sense. On the other hand, more decentralized stores, such as Metro, through the combination of bus travel and walking, it is accessible but not practical – especially if making larger purchases. Therefore, the process of an increase use in the automobile might be slower because the city transit system does provide an adequate level of service for many of the hypermarket stores. Yet, the triangulation of both field observation and survey data support the idea that one will not shop or make a purchase at a decentralized hypermarket without the use of an automobile.

4.3.3 Changing Paths

Paths of consumption related mobility are experiencing a dual process of change. On a citywide scale, the spatial extent of everyday geographies are increasing in distance, yet at the same time, everyday geographies are becoming more localized at the micro-level of the neighborhood. The changes in consumption related mobility are in direct dialogue with the new urban forms of hypermarkets on the urban fringe and the rise of flexible small-scale shops in local neighborhoods. The change in paths due to the dual change of decentralization and

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15 I did not have access to an automobile. Therefore, I utilized the municipal transit system or foot for all my transportation in the field.
localization in a post-socialist environment also suggests that the center of the city is at risk of decline because the city center receives fewer trips for retail consumption.

4.3.3.2 Increasing the spatial extent of paths

The growing spatial extent of retail consumption paths is increasingly evident by the fact people are now shopping at hypermarkets on the urban fringe. Prior to 1989 -- and for the case of Stara Zagora, prior to 2001 -- this area of the city was not utilized for retail consumption purposes. Presently, accessing these places of consumption means city residents must cover a larger surface area to reach these new destinations. Since shopping trips in the CEE are usually not chained with other activities (Newmark and Plaut 2005), hypermarkets have the ability to generate travel (Garb 2006) and they act as a pull factor to move people out of the city. In a time-space framework, the paths that people take for retail consumption are slowly growing outwards and the visible lines that people inevitably map-out with their mobility are being drawn farther and farther outside of the compact legacy of the socialist city. This creates a capability constraint for urban residents because accessing these new projects of consumption reduces their daily time-budget available for accessing other retail, consumption experiences or social activities.

While paths of consumption related mobility may be growing in spatial extent, trips to big-box stores in the urban periphery are low in frequency and of a low rate of access. From empirical findings in post-socialist Warsaw and Prague, Garb and Dybicz (2006) argue that people “significantly reduce the number of trips made [to hypermarkets], but convert them into motorized and longer distance trips” (249). From a precursor study, Newmark, Plaut and Garb (2004) conclude that for the Prague metro region, retail consumption patterns in a post-socialist era have shifted to be less often and for a longer period of time. For the case of Stara Zagora, this also appears to be the case. 168 people out of 180 people surveyed for this study said they shopped at a hypermarket, yet, only 3.3% shopped at a hypermarket on a daily basis. Most, 44% said that they “rarely” shop at a hypermarket, while 36.9% stated that they shop at a hypermarket once a month.

The low shopping frequency is likely due to changing trends in consumption habits that come with these new store types: “‘Mapping’ new shops and goods means learning new shopping techniques” (Nagy 2001: 347).16 While some of the hypermarkets sell high-end or

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16 “new shopping techniques” may also include the experience of shopping.
specialty goods such as large appliances, electronics or a more diverse selection of goods seen as 'western' or 'foreign' goods not readily found in smaller stores or not historically available in state stores, most of the items that people are purchasing – i.e. basic foodstuffs and daily need items -- are available at smaller stores in the city. However, despite fewer trips, shoppers purchase items in larger quantities, which sustain them for a longer period of time and eliminates the need for more frequent trips. This style of shopping or ‘new shopping technique’ suggests that shoppers are spending more time at the store, similar to the conclusion reached by Newmark, Plaut and Garb (2004) on the changing retail consumption habits in the Prague area.

Metro, a membership only hypermarket, is the most decentralized hypermarket store in Stara Zagora (only realistically accessible by private automobile or taxi). Despite this fact, according to survey data, it is the most popular hypermarket in Stara Zagora and sells mostly food and household items in bulk.  

According to the survey data that I collected, when people do shop at a hypermarket, overall, they are more likely to buy goods that do not require more frequent access to a hypermarket as their ‘new shopping technique.’ In other words, they are more likely to purchase dry goods and staple groceries, hard items such as appliances and house wares, clothes and personal items. While fresh produce purchases does comprise one of the primary purchases at hypermarkets, the number is less than the percentage of fresh produce purchased in other locations in the city and it is also illustrative of the rising role of hypermarkets in residential shopping habits (Table 4.5).

The price of goods also drives consumers to decentralize their shopping paths and patterns. Out of the surveyed population, 27.8% stated that their shopping habits have most changed over the past 10 years because they are seeking lower prices. This was also the most popular response. Therefore, there is an amount of desire by shoppers to actively seek out lower prices and new places to shop, while the stores provide the location. This is a prime illustration of the dialectic relationship of humans-environment interaction where the city changes in ways that affect the daily lives of people, but people play an active role in fostering and supporting the

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17 According to survey responses, when asked “what hypermarket do you shop at the most?” 30% of my survey population stated they shopped at Metro. Billa closely followed with 27.9% of the population. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Therefore, a single respondent may shop at both Metro and Billa and many do. Further, their popularity is probably due to the fact majority of the merchandise are groceries, an everyday need, compared to other hypermarkets that specialize in electronics or house wares.

18 Billa plays a part in this higher number because its inner city location blends its role between hypermarket and local store.
changing built environment. While some changes in shopping patterns is due to a change in residential mobility (24.5%), meaning they now live in a new place and this most effects their daily shopping routine, the next most popular response (15.7%) declares that shopping patterns have most changed because they are now shopping in a new type of store.

### Primary Purchases By Store Type (Table 4.5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase Type</th>
<th>City Center % of Total Purchases</th>
<th>Local Store % of Total Purchases</th>
<th>Hypermarket % of Total Purchases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Produce</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>Fresh Produce 32.7%</td>
<td>Dry Goods 19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>Dry Goods 32.4%</td>
<td>Fresh Produce 18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Items</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>Personal Items 9.3%</td>
<td>Large Appliances 14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant or Bar</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>Other 6.9%</td>
<td>Personal Items 12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>Restaurant or Bar 5.1%</td>
<td>Small Appliances 11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Goods</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>Clothes 4.5%</td>
<td>Furniture 8.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Top six purchases per location
Source: Survey Data/Fieldwork 2007

### 4.3.3.3 Localization of paths

Additionally, the rapid creation of small-scale flexible private shops near the home fills the gap for the need of small items in demand between larger trips to the hypermarket. Local shops are accessible from the home in a matter of seconds in places such as the first floor of housing blocs or in a neighboring bloc. As observed in the field, these places are almost always accessed by foot. Their convenience and widespread abundance of shops eliminates the need to use a car or bus to reach them. One will not walk very far without passing one when in the legacy of the socialist compact city or near large housing estates. They are more likely to be frequented on a daily basis, on foot and, on average, they have observed purchase rates near 88%. In terms of frequency, 46.1% of the population surveyed stated that they shop at a local store “everyday,” with an additional 22.8% of the population stating that they shop at a weekly frequency. These two frequencies account for 68.9% of the surveyed population shopping at...
local shops on a regular basis – once a week or more. In contrast, at the frequency of once a week or more, only 17.8% of the surveyed population claims to shop at a hypermarket.

The local shop dominates shopping on an everyday basis (Graph 4.3). Put in a comparative manner, out of the 180 people surveyed, 124 of them shop once a week or more at their local “magazine” or neighborhood shop. Of this same group of 180 people, only 95 of them will visit the city center during a given week. All the while, only 32 of them will visit a hypermarket. This illustrates that people continue to shop in the city center and at hypermarkets, but they do so at a frequency that is lower than trips to their local shop. For the hypermarket, this means trips are rare or infrequent. For the city center, this means that trips are more spread out over the course of a month or greater.

Therefore, both the infiltration of small scale “magazine” shopping at the local level and the decentralization of shopping by large scale retail on the urban fringe is greatly impacting shopping in the center of the city in a daily time-space context by creating new capability constraints which, overall, putting consumption at the center of the city at risk.

![Shopping Frequency by Location and Store Type](image)

* Combined data for responses "Everyday" and "Weekly" for frequency of "once a week or more." Highlights the role of local shops for everyday shopping.
4.3.3.4 City Center Decline

Both of the processes of decentralization and localization illustrate a change in consumption paths that decreases the reliance on the city center as a place of retail consumption and urban consumption. Graph 4.3 shows that on an everyday basis shopping frequencies in the center of city are of lower frequencies than localized shopping. For the case of Stara Zagora, there are two main exceptions that maintain shopping consumption in the city center. One is the main central market that sells fresh produce. The second is shopping for occasional higher end products such as new clothes or personal items. Yet, the frequency of such shopping consumption is low and increasingly subject to decline due to the construction of decentralized retail projects and local neighborhood shops.

The central market receives a high count of patrons everyday who make trips especially for the produce or who visit the market on their way home from other activities in the city center, such as work or social activities. The central market is the main reason why the center of the city maintains a relevant role in retail consumption landscape of Stara Zagora. This is observable by the abundant bags of produce visible on the bus in the late-afternoon hours on weekdays. In more quantitative numbers, according to field data collect, fresh groceries and produce are the most purchased items in the center of the city. For the population surveyed, 28.9% and 23.9% either shop everyday or on a weekly basis in the city center, respectively. This is a total of 52.8% for the combination of these two frequencies. If the central market was taken out of the city center or if shopping for fresh produce shifted to a new location or retail type, the numbers of the frequency of shopping trips to the city center would most likely dramatically decline and consumption would be based around the occasional purchase of specialty items or leisure activities such as various forms of entertainment or the restaurant, café and bar industry.¹⁹

Meanwhile, other forms of retail consumption in the city center, such as the department store and various boutiques do play a role in the shopping typology of Stara Zagora, however only a minor one. The occasional purchase of higher end or specialty items by city residents in the center of city helps support retail shopping in the CBD. However, despite minor role of specialty stores in terms of retail sales, their presence in the CBD also acts as a push factor for many other consumption practices in a post-socialist transitional period:

¹⁹ According to survey data (Table 4.4)
Such trends resulted in a consumption cleavage in social and spatial terms: the city centre, the traditional focus for residents’ daily/weekly shopping trips, increasingly became a setting for highly specialized services (for example, specialist shops) that expanded at the expense of lower order services providing for ‘local’ people. This particularly affected the residents of the city centre and inner city districts, and low-income households in the outer districts (Nagy 2001: 343).

This type of retail, in spite of its location in the city center, is decreasing the frequency of shopping in the CBD compared to shopping patterns prior to transition. Therefore, other types of retail move to new urban spaces. It also affects those who reside in the city center, as well as the movement of people who live farther out of the city. Overall, it highlights the potential threat of urban decline in lower tiered post-socialist city centers because consumption practices show the process of the CBD becoming less and less a primary place of retail shopping, as the frequency of visits decreases and the types of goods available change to less necessary goods, as is the case of Stara Zagora.

The city center of Stara Zagora is home to the main department store, specialized boutiques and leisure services such as cafes, bars and restaurants. However, on average, the amount of purchases made at these places is not of a high rate. Observation data collected shows that, on average, only 19.77% of shoppers make a purchase in the city center. If we take a closer look at one of the boutique shops located in the city center that sells higher end footwear, only 2.56% of people who enter the store make a purchase. The average number of 19.77% includes the observed purchase rate at the market (estimated to be 30.15%). Therefore, shopping in the center of the city outside of the central market is not very prevalent. Estimated observed rates of purchases at the main department are at 26.6%. However, due to the methodology, this number is known to be higher than reality. The department store does maintain a large turnover of consumers, but the number of true purchases in the department store is probably lower than 26.6% and closer to the reality of 2.56% of the individual boutique located on the street. At the same time, the critical mass and agglomeration of stores in the department store may help to increase the number of purchases and customer turnover.

Data results from the questionnaire survey also point to the trend that retail consumption in the center of the city is on the decline (Table 4.6).\(^{20}\) When asked “How would you describe

\(^{20}\) Data incorporates multiple responses. Respondents could mark more than one response for this question. However, this only further illuminates changes in consumption patterns. For example, a person stating they shop less
your shopping patterns today versus 10 years ago,” the results show that a large portion of residents in the center of the city shop less in the center of the city. These results are critical to my argument because it shows that people who live within the central region of the city have the ability to easily access retail in the center of the city, but they are increasingly shopping less in the city center. This data illustrates the push factors of specialty stores in the CBD and the pull factors of neighborhood stores and de-central hypermarkets. According to the survey results for the Northwest region of the compact city, 53% of the people who live in this neighborhood and participated in the survey feel that shopping less in the center of the city describes their new shopping patterns. Only those that live in the very center of the city show a continued reliance for shopping in the center of the city. Data for the Southeastern neighborhood of the compact city shows that 40% of the surveyed population for this neighborhood shops less in the city center, yet, 40% shop more in the city center. I largely approach these results as an outlier; I would not argue that the two datasets cancel each other out, but I would argue that this suggests lower values and less dynamic change for these two responses. Outside of the city center, low-density neighborhoods also report a high amount of change away from the reliance of the center of the city. Spatially, these neighborhoods are located on the edges of the city, therefore, spatially distant from the city center. Low density neighborhoods also have higher densities of automobiles, which means that people in this area are might be seeking out new consumption types more conducive to automobile transportation, where as the center of the city in less facilitating to shopping with an automobile. In addition, the data in Table 4.6 shows that an overwhelming majority of the surveyed population for most areas of the city responded that they shop more in a de-central hypermarket. Again, these results show pull factors away from the center of the city by new consumption projects elsewhere in the city. To a lesser extant, the results also show an increase in shopping at local neighborhoods, but not as dramatic a level as hypermarket shopping. However, this also illustrates a shift away city center shopping for daily need items.

This section has argued that post-socialist city centers may be at risk of decline, at least as evident in the context of retail shopping and retail consumption practices of city residents, but this may point to the overall decline of the city center as a place of consumption. For the time in the city center might also state that they shop more at a hypermarket. Thus, it further highlights this process out of the city center.
being, the CBD of Stara Zagora is still a very vibrant place. While people continue to use the center of the city for socializing, entertainment and evening promenades, data collected in this project shows that people are shopping less in the city center. I do not offer the actual rate of decline or to what extent this decline will reach. In addition, this statement is largely supported by data only on retail consumption. Therefore, further investigation needs to address what other types of consumption take place in the city center to better understand the true affect of urban decline in the city center. The potential risk of CBD decline is due to pull factors from other retail types, such as, new de-central retail types and micro-local retail types. Yet, this section also illustrates that specialty retail spaces presently locating in the CBD actively push away and discourage a greater reliance on centralized consumption practices, all the while encouraging the growth of both retail shopping and urban consumption practices elsewhere in the urban fabric.
### Data Results from Question 6 of Field Survey

(Table 4.6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Center NW</th>
<th>Center NE</th>
<th>Center SW</th>
<th>Center SE</th>
<th>City Center</th>
<th>Low Density</th>
<th>Bloc Estates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q6.1: I shop less in the city center</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.2: I shop more in the city center</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.3: I shop less in a hypermarket or supermarket</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.4: I shop more in a hypermarket or supermarket</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.5: I shop less in a neighborhood shop</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.6: I shop more in a neighborhood shop</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.7: I shop the same</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6.8/9: Did Not Answer/Other</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Multiple Response Question, therefore data is not out of 1 for each neighborhood area for all questions, but out of 1 for each response by neighborhood area.
All data normalized by total number of survey respondents for each neighborhood area.
4.4.1 Attitudes of Changing Consumption Regimes and Shopper Profiles

It is hard to deny the fact that hypermarkets have a profound morphological affect on the post-socialist city and they are making widespread changes to the retail shopping practices and to the overall urban consumption habits of city residents. Using empirical data collected in the field, I illustrate above how consumption related mobility patterns are changing in frequency, location, purchase habits and mode of transportation (exemplified by the rise of the private automobile) to show how the pluralism of new places of consumption and retail shopping are changing the way people use and shop in the city, and consequently, changing the everyday geographies of people who live in CEE cities. Further, it shows the dialectic between the built urban form and social process, as well as, political and economic transition. The everyday politics of retail consumption and the negotiation of new and old urban spaces is a socio-spatial practice visible through the consumption related (im)mobility practices and retail consumption patterns of city residents. However, our understanding of urban morphology and the production, reproduction and transformation of cities (Pred 1984) is also reinforced by individual attitudes, opinions and actions that actively work to produce, reproduce and transform the city. This section shows how individual attitudes, opinions and actions in relation to new and old places of retail consumption and changing modes of transportation along with ‘new shopping techniques’ (Nagy 2001) to illustrate how they actively work to support, sustain, produce and reproduce changes in the built urban environment of CEE cities, specifically for the context of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria.

This section presents individual attitudes of Stara Zagora residents about their changes to their retail consumption habits in their city from the socialist era to the post-socialist shopping scenario of the present time. I discuss different individual attitudes, opinions and actions in relation to different consumption regimes located in the city. By the term consumption regime, I principally mean the typology of different urban retail spaces outlined above (i.e. hypermarkets, city center and local “magazine” shops). However, this term also reflects the pluralism of urban consumption spaces in a post-modern city that have different meanings and operate in different ways for one’s various daily consumption habits and needs. Time of day, perceptions of the quality and price of goods, cultural norms and the experience of consumption all influence urban consumption practices and consumption (im)mobility in the city. An illustration of two consumption regimes in the CBD is one) the movement of people during the day who access the
city center to purchase produce at the central market and two) the evening consumption regime more characteristic of the social Balkan tradition of the promenade in the city center where very few market or retail purchases are made, but makes the center of the city attractive for consumption nonetheless. This example of various city center consumption regimes also demonstrates that, at times, they can be formal, such as the purchase of produce, or informal, the social consumption of the city. These different consumption regimes in combination with the specific attitudes of consumers toward them shapes the way people produce the city and it affects their (im)mobility of consumption related mobility in the city which actively produce, reproduce and transform the city.

I collected the data presented here via a section in the questionnaire survey that asked for research participants to provide written comments about relevant issues they would like to openly address. I present the written comments with other data provided by each individual elsewhere in the survey. This approach allows for a more qualitative and dynamic understanding of the spatial changes present in the city and the individual attitudes that actively support this change urban change. This method also provides a means of collecting relevant data unattainable by an otherwise restrictive questionnaire survey. Additionally, in this section, participants were able to express themselves however they felt appropriate. Most of the people the 180 people surveyed opted not to leave comments. A hired translator translated all comments given from Bulgarian into English after I completed my fieldwork. Of the handful of participants that did write comments, their comments were all generally positive about the changes in their consumption habits. This may mean that this method did not prove conducive for capturing negative attitudes and it is unknown if no comment means a negative comment. Collecting these specific comments in combination with the data provide elsewhere on the survey and in relation to various consumption regimes, I am able to outline various social profiles and time-space dioramas illustrating the pluralism of urban ‘post-modern consumers’ manifesting themselves in the post-socialist urban context (Table 4.7). Transition created winners, the Urban Victor and losers, the Urban Loser, as well as other types of assorted urban shoppers that illustrate the increasing social diversity and the socio-spatial segregation of the post-socialist city.

In this section, I present several consumer profiles as well as several time-space dioramas to help illustrate the diverging consumption and mobility patterns in the post-socialist city. The basic diorama places time on the y-axis and space (either home or various places of
consumption) on the x-axis and z-axis (Figure 4.1). These dioramas are general models of time-space patterns for various social profiles. Time is not specific. Rather, time represents a rough period of time covering several weeks or typical shopping patterns over the course of a month. Space illustrates the ideas of each of the various consumption regimes. It is important to remember that various consumption regimes exert different push and pull factors on consumers at different times and in different ways, such as the case of the City Center which hosts both high end specialty stores and the central produce market. The paths presented in each diorama are also general models of time-space paths. They are not calculated aggregates of field data that quantitatively illustrate time-space paths for the studied population of Stara Zagora. Rather, they are qualitative paths that represent findings from field observations and field data collection. Therefore, they may exaggerate certain patterns to highlight the changes and the diversity in consumption time-space paths among different consumer groups in the post-socialist city. While these models serve to outline the major consumption patterns, they fail to illustrate necessary meta-data of time-space paths, such as the typical demographic data for each group or the mode of access to each location. However, this background data is discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

As a starting point for understanding the changes of consumption patterns with transition, I return to the situation of shopping in the socialist era. Shopping was highly centralized both in terms of store locations and store administration. Shopping in this time was largely conducted in state operated stores in the GUM in the city center, the central market, company stores or some nodal stores with inferior goods closer to the neighborhood scale (Map 4.2). Consumption during this era was considered an utilitarian and public event only necessary to support the worker so they could be productive in other sectors of the economy. Travel to places of consumption was conducted either on foot or via public transportation. Since the collapse of the state system in 1989 in Bulgaria, consumption patterns have began to take several new forms. Below are several scenarios and profiles these new forms taking shape in the post-socialist city.
4.4.2 The Urban Victor

A small subset of the urban residents in the post-socialist city is the Urban Victor. This group of urban residents is middle class or higher. In the economic turmoil of the early years of transition, these residents managed to succeed and are classified as the economic winners of transition. Research shows that those who held higher positions during the socialist era readily transitioned into higher economic positions (Gerber 2000; Atkinson and Micklewright 1992), but some entrepreneurs also made it through the early years of transition successfully. Like the Urban Driver (see below), the Urban Victor is able to shop at all three major scales of retail consumption. Yet, they are most likely to shop at specialty stores in the CBD on regular basis and they also drive to de-central places of retail consumption such as hypermarkets for much of their shopping (Map 4.3) Unlike the Urban Driver and Urban Loser, there is less of a need for
them to walk to local “magazine” shops further out from the CBD. In other types of urban literature, this type of consumption profile is often framed as an urban gentrifier, or one who is able to access higher end consumption spaces and marginalizes or pushes out other groups in the area. In contrast, the Urban Driver, at times, has the ability to shop in places of specialized retail, but struggles to do so because they are of a lower class.

4.4.3 The Urban Loser

The Urban Loser is a prime illustration of post-socialist urban processes that points toward the general trend of the CBD decline in CEE cities (Map 4.4). The increase in the number of specialty and high end shops in the center of city greatly influence the consumption and shopping patterns of many center city residents, especially the elderly and those with lower-incomes (Nagy 2001). The rise of specialty shops pushes out “lower order services providing for ‘local’ people” (ibid: 343). While the center of the city was once the main area of consumption

Map 4.3
and retail activity for the urban resident during the socialist era, the center of the city no longer serves the daily needs for many urban residents who live in the center of the city.

Georgie, a 68 year male who lives in the center of Stara Zagora and who accesses most of his places of consumption via walking, states that “there have been more opportunities for shopping over the last years.” When asked why his shopping patterns have changed the most in the last 10 years, he responded that he is mostly shopping in new types of stores. He also says that since transition away from the socialist system he walks more and uses public transportation less. Although he is not using a private automobile, this case shows that city transportation infrastructure is declining in its role in facilitating mobility, shopping is more accessible at the local level or that aging populations have more disposable time that affects their time-space patterns. However, because Georgie lives in the center of the city, the reason he is shopping in new types of stores and walking more may be because stores in the CBD are now of a specialized sort and no longer support the daily needs or everyday consumption habits.

As Nagy (2001) argues, those in the city center and elderly whom are greatly affected by specialized retail in the city center and are one of the biggest losers of the changes to the retail landscape in post-socialist cites. Georgie must adapt with a ‘new shopping technique’ by seeking out micro-level “magazine” shops that support his daily consumption needs. However, since Georgie lives in the CBD, these local shops are not necessarily in his neighborhood city center (the local shops in his neighborhood are all specialty stores). Therefore, as Georgie stated, there have been more opportunities for shopping in the last ten years, but some of these places Georgie can not actually make purchases in and the types of places he can make purchases in he must walk more and in a de-central direction to access “magazines” further away from the city center.

The Urban Loser appears elsewhere in the urban fabric, not just in the city center. One example is Malina, a pensioner who lives in the Kazanski neighborhood of Stara Zagora (refer to Map 2.1). She states that she is “a retired person now, so [she] shops less.” This speaks to the fact that she is on a very fixed income around 130 Leva per month ($105 USD). Compared to her shopping patterns prior to transition, Malina use to shop more in the city center, but now she can no longer afford to shop there is she rarely shops in the CBD. On the other hand, she walks on a daily basis to her local “magazine” for both staple and fresh food items and occasionally visits a hypermarket, again, mostly to purchase necessary food items. Malina, although not living in the city center, is an Urban Loser, like Georgie, because she can no longer afford to
shop in the specialty stores of the CBD and these types of stores no longer support their daily needs due to the types of goods sold in these stores.

4.4.4 The Urban Driver

Like the Urban Loser, the Urban Driver is being pushed out of central places of consumption because the types of stores present no longer fit their daily consumption needs (Map 4.5). However, the Urban Driver is not as destitute as the Urban Loser. They are less likely to be pensioners or on the lowest social rungs, but are more likely to be part of a burgeoning middle class strata which allows them the privilege of a private automobile, which in turn allows them the privilege of accessing de-central places of consumption such as hypermarkets on the urban fringe. Yet, they are also advantaged enough to also afford occasional specialty or higher end items in the CBD. Therefore, the Urban Driver is able to access all three
major typologies of retail consumption. But unlike the Urban Victor, the Urban Driver is not fully able to participate in central city consumption of retail goods because they are of a lower class.

Desislava, a female pensioner between the ages of 56 and 65 who also lives in the city center and often walks to more local places of consumption proclaims “I am satisfied with the improved level of service.” Desislava is also primarily shopping in new types of stores, which is a combination of local “magazines” further out of the CBD and specialty stores in the CBD. However, the main aspect classifying her as an Urban Driver is the fact that she uses her own car to make low frequency trips to the hypermarket on the urban fringe. The local shops sustain her everyday needs between less frequent trips to the hypermarket. Desislava’s comment about the improved level of service speaks to consumption practices at all scales of shopping in a capitalist era, which is in contrast to the socialist style of retail consumption practices where customer service was a lower priority for store operators. Improved service, daily needs, quality and price of goods all act as a factors influencing various consumption regimes that pull Desislava to one of the three main consumption regimes for her daily shopping. Overall, her mode of transportation to places of shopping has most changed because she uses a car more, therefore she uses a bus less, which further stresses the decline of city transport and the increase in the role of the private automobile and de-central places of consumption in CEE cities.
4.4.5 The New Post-Socialist Shopper

The New Shopper comprises the largest profile of post-socialist consumers (Map 4.2). They form the majority of the urban population and mostly live in the large bloc housing estates and surrounding neighborhoods that make up most of the urban space of post-socialist cities outside of the CBD. Generally of a working class or low to middle class, some may, but most likely do not have access to their own automobile or only have one car in their household limiting their ability to use it. According to the New Shopper, various places of consumption have strong and different consumption regimes with different meanings that operate differently for different aspects of one's daily consumption habits. In a post-socialist era, the New Shopper must develop ‘new shopping techniques’ to navigate a morphing urban landscape, which is largely divided between different consumption spaces for different types of consumption and by different modes of mobility to access these various spaces.
Sneshanka, a 56-65 year old female from the neighborhood of Kazanski, states “I like the many ways we do shopping now better than when did 10 years ago [sic].” It appears that Sneshanka does not have an automobile of her own, as she walks to Billa on a weekly basis from her flat in a nearby housing bloc. She utilizes a city bus when she shops for produce at the market in the city center almost everyday, but she does not visit the specialty shops. Here comments show how attitudes and opinions actively change consumption practices in the urban landscape because she shops at a hypermarket more and more expresses her happiness for this style of shopping. Yet, she still negotiates between two main consumption regimes – the central market for fresh produce only and the hypermarket for other goods. If in the near future the hypermarket is able to provide comparable prices or quality of produce as the central market, that the reliance on city center consumption will decline.

Similar to Sneshanka, Kamelia, a 36-45 year old female government employee from the Zhelznik neighborhood negotiates between different consumption regimes split between the central market in the city center and new places of consumption outside of the CBD. Kamelia declares “shopping in the center is mainly for vegetables – they are fresher, cheaper [and of a] greater variety.” She travels by city bus to the city center on a monthly basis to access said produce in the central market; however she visits her local “magazine” on a daily basis. Meanwhile, Kamelia accesses the hypermarket on a monthly basis via her personal car to acquire merchandise other than fresh produce. These two shoppers only use the CBD for produce. These two cases show how the center of the city operates as a consumption regime for produce shopping and that it maintains its dominance for this portion of retail consumption practices, but they also illustrate how the center of the city is declining outside the context of produce consumption.

At the same time, Riana from the Kazanski neighborhood says “Billa and Evropa, outside town, is very positive and people welcome it. Saves time and money to younger generations [sic].” This statement illustrates how city residents welcome the consumption regime of the hypermarkets outside of the city center and how hypermarkets actively pull to increase the spatial extent of everyday geographies. While at the same time, the comments show how city residents positively view these establishments which actively aid in producing, reproducing and transforming the city in a de-central manner. However, this process is not finished, as one
resident wrote “I hope our goods will soon reach EU standards,” demonstrating that the post-socialist city, in urban form and socio-spatial processes, is still undergoing transition.

These comments help to qualitatively understand individual attitudes of changing consumption habits and patterns in the urban landscape of post-socialist cities and the role of individual shoppers in actively producing, reproducing and transforming the city. Presenting comments in combination with other data from the survey provided by each individual helps to contextualize the situation for each person to better understand how various consumption regimes (old and new) relate to each individual and how they actively produce new spaces of consumption in the city or transform older spaces of consumption. The retail landscape allows a point of entry into understanding these changes in urban consumption. These individuals then help to form general profiles of different types of shoppers that point to larger urban and social processes in the post-socialist city and the diversity of post-socialist urban consumers.
## Shopper Profiles Table 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Where they Live</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Where they shop now</th>
<th>Changes in Consumption Related Mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Loser</strong></td>
<td>City Center</td>
<td>Pensioner</td>
<td>Not in the City Center</td>
<td>- Walking More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compact City</td>
<td>Lower-Income</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Public Transit Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Little to no use of automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Victor</strong></td>
<td>City Center</td>
<td>Young to Middle Age</td>
<td>Mostly City Center</td>
<td>- Walking in CBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compact City</td>
<td>Middle to High Income</td>
<td>All three retail typologies</td>
<td>- More use of Automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Driver</strong></td>
<td>City Center</td>
<td>Young to Middle Age</td>
<td>Largely at Hypermarkets and Local Shops</td>
<td>- More use of Automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compact City</td>
<td>Middle to High Income</td>
<td>Some Shopping in City Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Post-Socialist Shopper</strong></td>
<td>Socialist Era Bloc Housing</td>
<td>Young to Middle Age</td>
<td>Hypermarkets and Local Shops</td>
<td>- More use of Automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low-Density Housing</td>
<td>Low to Middle Income</td>
<td>Produce in City Center</td>
<td>- Public Transit use to City Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Conclusion of Data Results

This section answers the sub-questions of the thesis that pragmatically aid to address the central question of how consumption related mobility is changing the everyday social geographies in the post-socialist Bulgarian city. An outline of the present urban retail landscape for Stara Zagora, Bulgaria provides the context for understanding the social processes discussed in the other sub-questions. This typology also forms tangible evidence of the urban morphology of the built environment of the post-socialist city that demonstrates that these CEE cities are decentralizing and that the urban fabric is physically growing denser. Hypermarkets and entrepreneurial “magazines” are two new consumption projects that are visible markers of transition and of these urbanization processes on the urban landscape.

Various push and pull factors in the built environment, such as the legacy of old city forms and the inception of new urban forms, force humans to transform their daily lives, social networks and everyday socio-spatial geographies, which all affect how urban residents live their lives. These changes to the everyday geographies are apparent in changing modes and paths of consumption related mobility. Modes of consumption related mobility are increasingly dependent on the private automobile, which diminishes the use and importance of public transportation in the city. Paths of consumption related mobility are growing in spatial extent, as shoppers access new retail forms on the urban fringe, and they are also localizing, as shoppers access their neighborhood “magazine.” The paths of consumption related mobility parallel the urbanization processes of decentralization and localization evident in the built environment of the city. Overall, these changes to urban and social processes occurring with transition point to a decline in the reliance of the city center as a place of consumption. Meanwhile, urban residents are not solely victims of these urbanization processes, but play an active voice in the dialectic relationship between the built environment and social process. As I show through individual comments of research participants and different shopper profiles, social processes and urban residents play an active role in producing and reproducing the built environment. Actors in the city allow hypermarkets to establish through new urban policies or lack there of and they develop diversifying ‘new shopping techniques’ as a means of navigating the changing urban morphology of the city from a socialist to a post-socialist and new type of city.
Chapter 5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

This thesis studies the general processes of urban transition in the post-socialist context of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). More specifically, it accomplishes this task through an analysis of the changes in the everyday social geographies in the framework of consumption related mobility for the case study of the post-socialist city of Stara Zagora, Bulgarìa. This is largely accomplished via the scope of shopping and the retail landscape in Strara Zagora. The literature on the urban morphology of cities in transition in the CEE shows that they are decentralizing due to new retail and commercial activities on the urban fringe (Sýkora 1999; Andrews 2005; Hamilton and Carter 2005; Nuissl and Rink 2005; Garb and Dybich 2006; Novak and Sýkora 2007), yet simultaneously they are growing denser due to infill building, commercial diversification and the re-invention of urban spaces for commercial purposes associated with the rise in the retail and tertiary sectors of the economy (Kotus 2006; Hirt 2006; Riley 1997; Kok 2007). These changes in places of consumption and retail consumption in the urban fabric affect the socio-spatial everyday geographies of city residents. Large-scale retail stores tend to locate on the urban fringe due to cheaper land, larger amounts of available space and little government restriction from urban planning policy. Meanwhile, the ‘sporadic’ and ‘chaotic’ internal development that is increasing physical urban density is due to the commoditization of land and the rise in small scale retail, service and tertiary sectors of the economy that flourished with the small amount of fixed capital required to establish such ventures as well as low levels of government intervention at the initial stages of transition.

In a time-space framework, “social transformation and altered structural relations can only occur through the introduction, disappearance or modification of institutional projects” (Pred 1981). Consequently, the appearance of both the new phenomenon of formal hypermarkets and localized flexible small-scale stores and services since the initial stages of transition serves to change the urban form, social processes within it and the socio-spatial dialectic between the two. Further, the disappearance and privatization of state operated retail and services sectors serves as another force altering the time-space paths of post-socialist everyday geographies.

Therefore, consumption related mobility in post-socialist Bulgarian cities is changing everyday geographies twofold. First, everyday geographies of city residents are growing in spatial extent with the rise of de-central formal retail, while at the same, everyday geographies
are becoming more localized as consumption activates increase in concentration at the micro-level of the neighborhood. Meanwhile, both of these changes to everyday geographies indicate a decrease in the urban consumption and retail consumption reliance and mobility to and from the city center, in turn, making the city center at risk for decline. The potential for city center decline is the result of both pull factors from new types of retail consumption spaces elsewhere in the urban fabric, but also partially due to push factors of specialized retail consumption spaces presently locating in the city center.

More specifically, as discussed in the previous chapter, the changes to everyday geographies are visible through changing modes and paths of consumption related mobility and through changing retail consumption patterns. This project shows that:

- Modes of consumption related mobility are increasingly retreating from the use of public transportation or foot travel and shifting towards a growing dependency of the private automobile
- Paths of consumption related mobility are increasingly de-central and local, while decreasingly reliant on the central business district
- Retail consumption habits and patterns are changing because of the following:
  - The growth of long trips to de-central stores
  - New places mean ‘new shopping techniques’ such as bulk shopping that sustains consumers for longer periods of time, decreasing the frequency a shopping trips for most items, but increasing the frequency of local shopping trips for small necessities that arise between large shopping trips.
  - Shopping in the city center has shifted from a high frequency to lower frequency only supported by fresh produce from the central market or occasional specialty and high end items.

Overall, these socio-spatial changes that are visible through the lens of retail consumption activities and time-space mobility help to better understand the urban morphology of post-socialist cities. Concepts of consumption help to link individual and private shopping habits and patterns with the urban environment and emphasize consumption as a process. In addition, these concepts also theoretically establish a fluid relationship between private and public forms of urban consumption that allow for the questioning of individuals about their changing private consumption habits, patterns and processes to answers questions about societal trends of collective consumption and social change. Meanwhile, ideas of time-space geography, everyday geographies and mobility help operationalize how to study consumption practices and their change over time. Time-space theory, through the framework of projects and paths, also provides a link between the built environment and social processes which helps to
establish a dialectic relationship between the two. Thus, showing how the city gets produced, reproduced and transformed (Pred 1984).

While this study points to some specific changes in the consumption landscape of post-socialist cities, it is important to take a step back to understand what this means for the whole spatial structure and, more importantly, what it means for people in the city. Shifting trends in consumption patterns are not universal, but plural. This means that many new social groups are manifesting themselves in the post-socialist city and one way to identify these groups is by consumption habits and patterns. While consumption patterns provides the point of entry (by its ability to recognizing the diversity of ‘consumers’), the more important aspect to recognize is that post-socialist urban society is growing into diverging groups. The increasing social diversity of ‘consumers’ illustrates the socio-spatial segregation and social differentiation of the post-socialist city.

In comparison to post-socialist capital cities and cities highest in the urban hierarchy, Stara Zagora, as a non-capital city and lower tiered city, experiences transition in different ways. Drawing from the literature, capital cities and high ranked cities in the CEE experience de-central growth, local growth and the CBD is able maintain a strong role in the city. Stara Zagora, on the other hand, experiences de-central growth and in-fill building at the local level, but data presented in this study shows that growth in the CBD is select and is slowly moving out of the center of the city. Capital cities and high ranked cities point towards de-central growth and urban revitalization in the CBD, while Stara Zagora suggests that lower tiered post-socialist cities point towards de-central growth and urban decline. Although, localized development at the scale of the neighborhood or micro-local level outside of the CBD may be pointing to a new post-socialist urban structure based around the creation of nodal centers or a multi-nucleated city, illustrating the point that post-socialist cities are still in a process of becoming.

While all cities go through transition to some degree, post-socialist cities are still adjusting to the political and economic changes of 1989. This study shows that post-socialist cities have not yet reached an end in transition; they are still becoming new types of cities. Tosics (2005a) suggested that Bulgarian cities are becoming hybrid cities of the capitalist and third worlds. Stara Zagora illustrates this urban form. Hypermarkets on the urban fringe of the city, many of which are foreign enterprises, illustrate the city’s connection to the global
economy. These urban forms resemble retail spaces in western capitalist cities. The rise of the automobile and de-central growth are other examples from Stara Zagora that resemble urbanization processes in western capitalist cities. At the same time, the ‘chaotic’ and ‘infill’ development of Stara Zagora and other Bulgarian cities bear a resemblance to organic growth in third world or developing countries. This form of urban development and growth is largely a result of unregulated, uncontrolled, rapid and rampant transition into capitalism, especially during the early years of transition, yet it is still a process in the city today. This is important to note because it is in contrast to third world urban form because it is the city’s introduction into the capitalist world that stimulated the unregulated and rampant growth of this urban form, which may suggest that post-socialist cities are becoming a new type of capitalist city. All the while, it is also important not to forget the socialist legacy that forms the overwhelming majority of the physical environment of post-socialist cities in the CEE. A capitalist city and a third world city must exist within these structures, at least for the time being. How far these cities will travel down a trajectory of capitalist, new capitalist, socialist, third world, mixed, or hybrid styles of urban development is still unknown, but does raise new questions about the future of these cities.

5.2 New Questions

This project studies the urbanization in post-socialist cities via the case city of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria. The results of this project illuminate many issues present in post-socialist cities. While this project largely looks at the retail landscape and urban mobility in the city, this project also points to new research questions about the urban morphology and socio-spatial changes in the post-socialist cities. While these new questions are best answered with new theoretical grounding and new case study examples, new research agendas must continue to operate in a comparative manner building upon studies of other cities in Central and Eastern Europe, in transition, in socialist/post-socialist environments and in a global context. I offer two new sets of research questions in regards to the future of the CBD and public space in the post-socialist city.
5.2.2 The Future of the City Center and Urban Planning Policy

The development of de-central stores appears to be the future path of retail and shopping expansion in post-socialist cities. However, there is still a large concern about what these types of retail outlets mean for cities and the people who reside within them. On April 15th, 2008 in Sofia, Bulgaria, Emanuil Santev, a participant at the Second Balkan Real Estate Conference, stated that “In terms of shopping malls one could say that a crises is approaching because almost every big city in the country has a shopping mall or is in the process of getting one” (Kostadinov 2008). By 2010, Santev predicts a full crisis in the shopping mall sector of the Bulgarian economy. While Santev is largely making this comment from the perspective of a land and construction developer, it is still important to ask about the effect these projects on the city. Many urban planners in Bulgarian cities see the development of malls as economic stimuli and markers of a successful transition for their cities; yet, could these developments actually turn out to be detrimental for cities? At the present time, Stara Zagora has two mall development projects under construction. Their doors should be opening for business just prior to crisis that Santev projects, will this allow them to succeed? Or is the fact that Stara Zagora currently has two competing projects already a sign of crisis for the city? Regardless, this project shows that consumption patterns are changing in the post-socialist city. Consumption patterns and time-space paths also show diverging social groups which further highlights increasing social segregation in the post-socialist city. All the while, there are still many unknowns and additional questions to ask about what these urban trends mean for the future of the post-socialist city.

The argument I present shows that time-space geographies are increasing overall, but also concentrating at the micro-local level, both at the threat to the vitality and functionality of the city center. This conclusion raises new questions for the future of CBDs of lower tiered post-socialist cities. How will an increase in the amount of time away from the city center change the role of the city center and movement throughout the whole city? An understanding of these changes can help to save the city center from a state of total disrepair. In comparison, many cities in a western context have already lost this battle. However, it will be a challenge for urban planners and policy makers to figure out how to balance economic success and urban expansion with the maintenance of lively urban centers. It is also important not to forget that most cities in this region, including Stara Zagora, are experiencing a decline in population, which may further stress the liveliness of city centers. Studies from larger cities in the CEE illustrate that the CBD
is able to maintain a strong role in retail consumption with the development of large centrally located projects (Kreja 2006; Garb and Dybicz 2006). But is this type of centralized retail development in the future for smaller cities? As this project shows, this does not seem to be the case because large-scale retail can more readily locate in areas outside of the CBD – such as in the urban fringe or the old industrial quarter.

Since transition, new planning policy and decentralized governments are unable to handle the speed of development (Kotus 2006) while at the same time, “local governments, which have been eagerly embracing any kind of foreign investment, have committed significant municipal resources for serving these developments” (Stanilov 2007: 79) without taking the time to decide if any investment is the same as a good or right investment for their cities. Many of these situations are still being played out and lessons, good or bad, or still being learned. While CEE cities are in the position to learn the lessons from western cities that have already experienced such as decentralization, urban decline and the consequences that relate to the rise of the automobile, CEE cities are going through these changes at a much more rapid pace and have to face other widespread issues such as population decline, high levels of unemployment and high levels of poverty, along with the trajectory of the legacy of the socialist built environment.

5.2.3 Public space

The dual process of hypermarketization and infill construction of cities has major consequences for public space in the post-socialist city, which raises new questions for this topic that need to be addressed for the post-socialist context of cities in the CEE. It is important to consider this research approach, but this project highlights increasing social segregation and diversification in the post-socialist city. The rise of hypermarkets in these cities creates new places for the consumption of leisure time and consumer wants, needs and desires. There needs to be more investigation on how these places affect public life and civil society by being less central, under private control and, as I have suggested elsewhere in this thesis, more homogenous by their ability to limit everyday social interaction between different classes and social groups. In other words, these places play a role in segregating society, while at the same time, are also a venue for experience civil and democratic society.

Public space is also being broken apart in relation to transportation and mobility. The rise of the automobile is moving people from the streets and city buses to their own private
mobile units, which reshapes the nature of private and public space throughout the city. Meanwhile, little is known about the socio-spatial consequences of the manifestation of private buses in some CEE cities that allow private retailers to facilitate the movement of patrons to places of retail consumption not supported by public transportation. These private buses are an expression of mobile units of public-private space unique to Central and Eastern Europe and their presence is uneven throughout the region, as I did not experience these private busses in Stara Zagora, but I have experienced them in other cities in the region. No studies are present in the literature that show how stores decide on these bus routes or the communities they serve (or do not serve). Potentially, these private bus routes exist to serve only a limited demographic of the total urban population. Store sponsored buses are another example socio-spatial segregation in the urban landscape of post-socialist cities.

These questions about public space are especially vital while the foundations of democracy or still being laid for a whole generation. Argenbright (1999) writes that places of private capital like McDonald’s in Moscow played a significant role in creating a new public scene, but also provided a space for people to witness this scene and formed new public places altogether. The privatization of public space in the post-socialist context suggests that this process aids in creating spaces that meet a more democratic criteria than the public spaces prior to transition, which were highly regulated by the communist system despite ideologically being a public space (Andrusz 2006; Argenbright 1999). But what does capitalist regulation, privatization and control mean for these newfound public places? At the same time, what is happening to old socialist spaces of the city?

Further, if the introduction of the hypermarket and private places for the consumption of leisure time are creating social change, we must ask additional questions about how are they changing society? What is being gained and what is being lost? Do less frequent trips to a hypermarket for bulk goods of higher quality free up time and space for other activities in society and the city? Or does more time spent in stores, in traffic and in checkout lines clog the chances for other social activities?

The ‘chaotic’ infill building is deteriorating the amount of open and public spaces in the city, often created as a result of Marxist ideology that deemed these spaces open to all people. These effects are more profoundly and quantifiably visible in the urban fabric than the porous relationship between public-private spaces. Walls are going up and ground is being broken at the
expense of open space in an already compact city. Yet, little is known about whom this process is affecting, how they are affected by it and what sorts of urban and community conflicts arise from the contestation of urban space. In addition, we don’t really see this process happening to such an extreme or rapid rate in cities of other contexts, thus the cities of CEE provide the prime case study of understanding these urban processes.
References:


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Appendix A

Research Questionnaire Survey: Stara Zagora

Dear City Resident,

You are invited to participate in study on urban change and mobility in Bulgarian cities. This research project will use other data sources, such as changing consumer and transportation trends in Bulgaria, in collaboration with data you provide in this survey. Your choice to participate in this survey is voluntary and you are not obligated to answer all or any of the questions. It should take less than five minutes to complete. All data obtained in this survey will be anonymous. Completing this survey provides implied consent for the use the data. This study is being conducted by Grant Garstka, Department of Geography, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio - USA.

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have any further questions, you may contact me by e-mail, garstkgj@muohio.edu, or phone 001-513-529-5015. You may also contact my research advisor, Carl Dahlman via e-mail, dahlmac@muohio.edu, or phone 001-513 529-5010.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant in this research study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please contact the Office of Advancement of Research and Scholarship at Miami University by e-mail, humansubjects@muohio.edu or phone 001-513-529-3734.

Thank You!!
City Center

How often do you shop in the center of the city?

- Everyday
- Several times per week
- Several times per month
- Rarely
- Never

How do you get to the center of the city for shopping?

- Bus - Public
- Bus - Private
- Taxi
- Walk
- Personal Car
- Carpool
- Other

What day(s) of the week do you mostly shop in the city center? (Circle all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MON</th>
<th>TUE</th>
<th>WED</th>
<th>THU</th>
<th>FRI</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>SUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What are you most likely to spend money on in the city center? (Check all that apply)

- Groceries (Dry goods)
- Groceries (Fresh)
- Personal items
- Clothes
- Furniture/Housewares
- Small Electric appliances
- Large Electric appliances
- Entertainment
- Restaurant or Bar
- Other

Magazine, Kiosk or Small Local Shop

How often do you shop at a magazine, kiosk or small shop?

- Everyday
- Several times per week
- Several times per month
- Rarely
- Never

How do you get to the magazine, kiosk or small shop?

- Bus - Public
- Bus - Private
- Taxi
- Walk
- Personal Car
- Carpool
- Other

What day(s) of the week do you mostly shop at a magazine, kiosk or small shop? (Circle all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MON</th>
<th>TUE</th>
<th>WED</th>
<th>THU</th>
<th>FRI</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>SUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What are you most likely to spend money on at a magazine, kiosk or small shop? (Check all that apply)

- Groceries (Dry goods)
- Groceries (Fresh)
- Personal items
- Clothes
- Furniture/Housewares
- Small Electric appliances
- Large Electric appliances
- Entertainment
- Restaurant or Bar
- Other

Hypermarket

Hypermarket means the following: Mr. Bricolage, Technopolis, TechnoMarket, Billa, Metro, Evropa, Bagira and Praktik.

How often do you shop at a Hypermarket?

- Everyday
- Several times per week
- Several times per month
- Rarely
- Never

How do you get to the hypermarket?

- Bus - Public
- Bus - Private
- Taxi
- Walk
- Personal Car
- Carpool
- Other

What day of the week do you mostly shop in a hypermarket? (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MON</th>
<th>TUE</th>
<th>WED</th>
<th>THU</th>
<th>FRI</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>SUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What are you most likely to spend money on at a hypermarket? (Check all that apply)

- Groceries (Dry goods)
- Groceries (Fresh)
- Personal items
- Clothes
- Furniture/Housewares
- Small Electric appliances
- Large Electric appliances
- Entertainment
- Restaurant or Bar
- Other
If you shop in a hypermarket, which store do you shop at the most?

- Mrs. Briceljage
- Billa
- Praktic
- Bulgara
- Technopolis
- Technomark
- Evaspa
- Metro

Changes in Consumption

How would you describe your shopping patterns today versus 10 years ago?

- I shop less in the city center
- I shop more in the city center
- I shop less in a hypermarket or shopping complex
- I shop more in a hypermarket/shopping complex
- I shop more at a kiosk
- I shop less at a kiosk
- I shop the same
- Other

10 years ago, what day did you do most of your shopping?

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday
- Any weekday
- Any weekend

Today, how long does it take you to reach the place you do most of your shopping?

- under 5 minutes
- 6-15 minutes
- 16-30 minutes
- over 30 minutes
- over 1 hour

How has your mode of transportation changed compared to 10 years ago?

- I walk more
- I walk less
- I use public transportation more
- I use public transportation less
- I use of an automobile more, so I use public transport less
- I use of an automobile less, so I use public transport more
- I use a taxi less
- I use a taxi more

Today, where do you shop the most?

- Mrs. Briceljage
- Billa
- Praktic
- Bulgara
- Technopolis
- Technomark
- Evaspa
- Metro
- Shops in the City Center
- Shops near my home
- Department Store
- Other

Why has your shopping pattern changed compared to 10 years ago?

- I live in a new location
- I use a different mode of transport
- I am shopping in a new type of store
- I am looking for new types of goods in the city center
- I am looking for new types of goods NOT found in the city center
- I am looking for lower prices
- Other

General

Where do you live?

- Tri chochants – Sever
- Tri chochants
- Tri chochants – Yuz
- Katanziki
- Zhelezniy
- Samara 1
- Samara 2
- Samara 3
- Zora
- Other

What is your job?

- Government/Public employee
- Management – Private Sector
- Management – Public Sector
- Retail and Service
- Agricultural
- Other

Sex?

- Female
- Male

How old are you?

- 17 and younger
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 66+

Additional Comments

Please share any additional comments you have.
С цел научноизследователско проучване: Стара Загора

Уважаеми гражданино,

Обръщам се към Вас с молба да участвате в изследователското проучване по проблемите на градските промени и мобилността в градовете в България. В този изследователски проект ще използваме данни от различни други източници, като например такива отразяващи променящите се тенденции по отношение на потребителите и транспорта, както и данните, които Вие бихте предоставили чрез тази анкета.

Вие сами решавате дали да участвате в това проучване и не сте задължени да отговаряте на всички или на някои от въпросите. Попълването на анкетата ще отнеме около 5 минути. Всички данни събрани чрез тази анкета са анонимни. Ако попълните анкетата, Вие завсяте съгласието си да използваме данните за изследователската ни работа. Това изследване се извършва от Грант Гарстка от Катедрата по География към Университета Майами в Охъроу, щата Охъроу, САЩ. Този проект е одобрен и отговаря на всички стандарти за международни изследвания на Университета Майами.

Сега можете да ми зададете всякакви въпроси, свързани с това проучване. Ако имате други въпроси, бихте могли да се свържете с мен на имейл ми garstka@muohio.edu, или да ми се обадите на телефон 001-513-529-5015. Можете също така да се свържете и с моя научен ръководител Карл Далман на имейл, dahlman@muohio.edu, или да се обадите на телефон 001-513 529-5010.

Ако имате въпроси свързани с правата Ви на участване в това анкетно проучване и бихте искали да разговаряте с хора, различни от тези, които извършват изследването, моля свържете се с отдела "Развитие на Изследователската Работа и Стипенди" на Университета Майами на имейл, humansubjects@muohio.edu, или на телефон 001-513-529-3734.

Благодаря Ви!!