

PKB

Agricultural Kombinat Belgrade: Agriculture as Agent

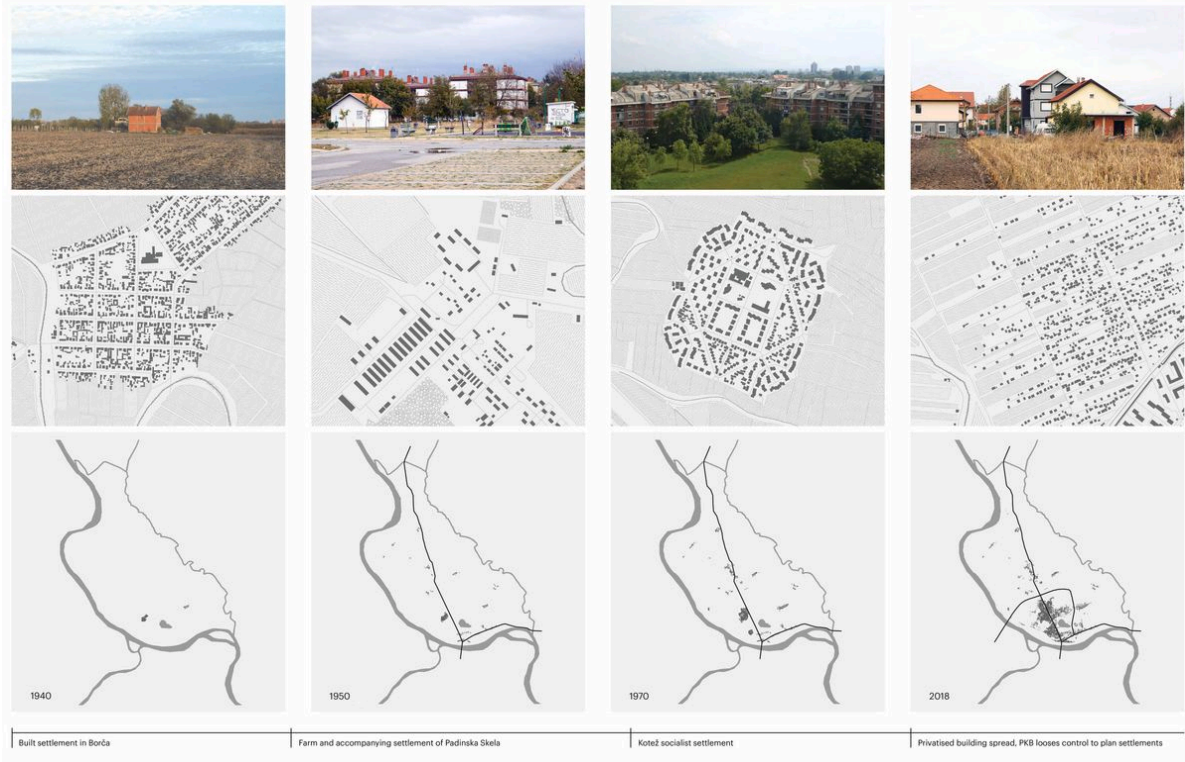
Maëlle Odermatt and Kerstin Spiekermann



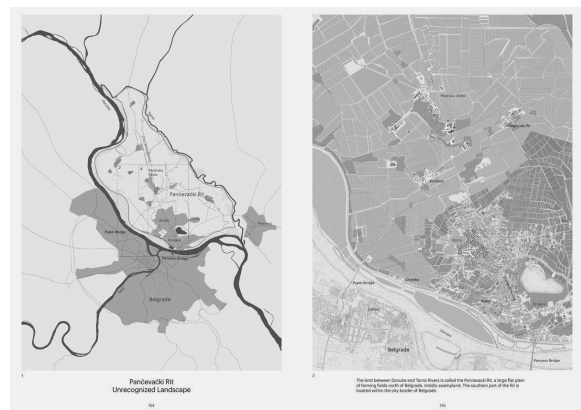
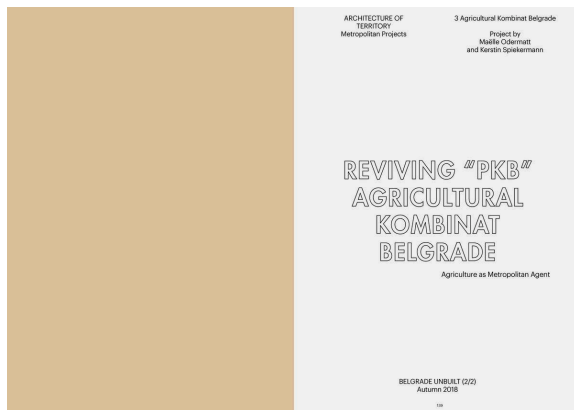
North of the Danube lies a 400-km-long wetland that was formed by the retreat of the Pannonian Sea after the prehistoric Pliocene Epoch. Throughout history, great effort has gone into re-engineering this vast landscape with canals, dykes, and farmland as the “granary” of Belgrade and the neighbouring town of Pancevo. Eventually fully drained under King Alexander in the early 20th century, this large agricultural basin was under the monarchy’s control and initially only sporadically populated with farming villages. During the socialist era, the fertile lands remained the property of the state. Construction of a bridge and more regional roads brought the agricultural settlements within reach of the city and fuelled their growth in the 1950s. Since the collapse of the socialist regime waves of informal settlement have occurred and the more recent completion of a second bridge and highway has brought the population of this area to 180,000. As the only municipality of Belgrade that extends beyond the Danube to the north, Palilula seeks to claim its municipal autonomy as the third major urban extension of Belgrade after the historic centre and the modernist New Belgrade.

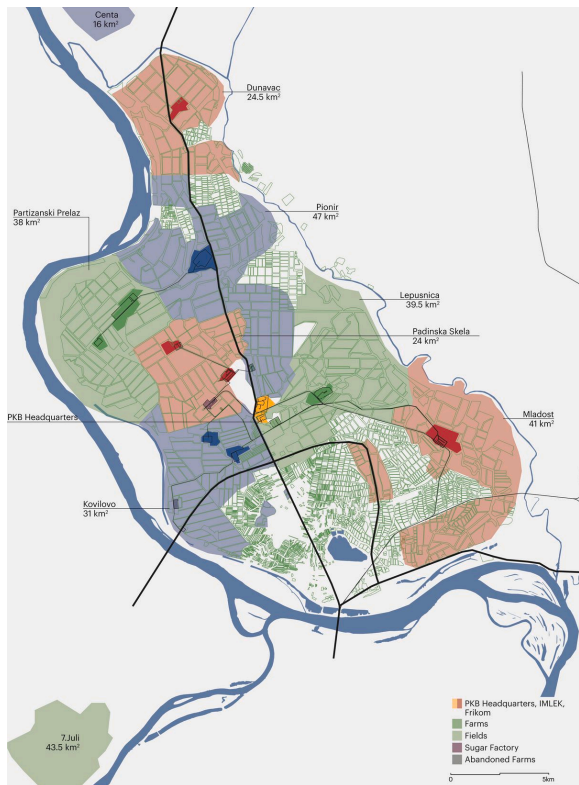


PKB Belgrade, Serbia's largest agricultural company, still manages the land which is the property of the City of Belgrade. It primarily grows food staples for two million residents in the greater Belgrade area. Stock breeding, fishery, and hunting are also intensively practiced. Industrial agricultural complexes owned by the PKB, as well as international companies like Nestlé, line the single road through the fields. A few suburbs of newer single-family houses have been built between the old socialist workers' housing and the bogs and marshes. Three tendencies overlap here: the regional transport and adjacent industry, a flat landscape of waterways and fields, and pockets of informal housing.

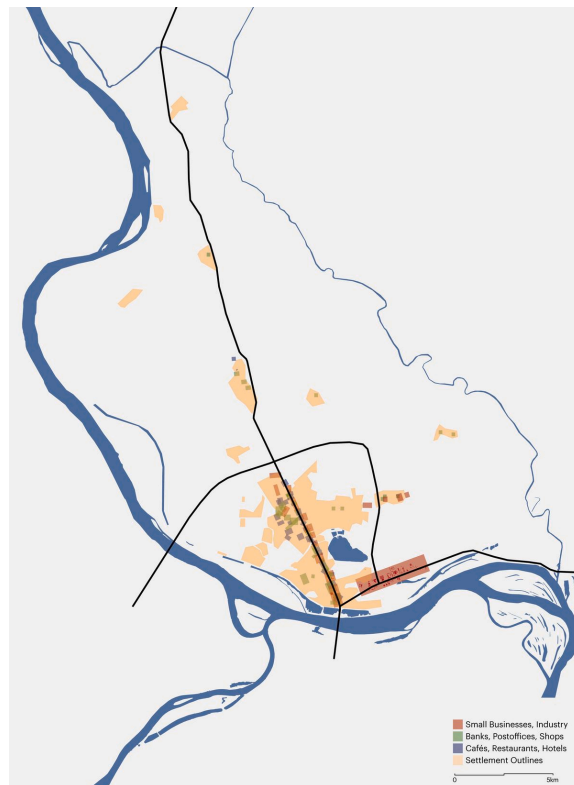


PKB's loss of agency: Pančevački Rit after privatization. The abandonment of PKB and its privatisation today is a catalyst for uncontrolled growth with an insufficient infrastructure of public, social, and technical services.

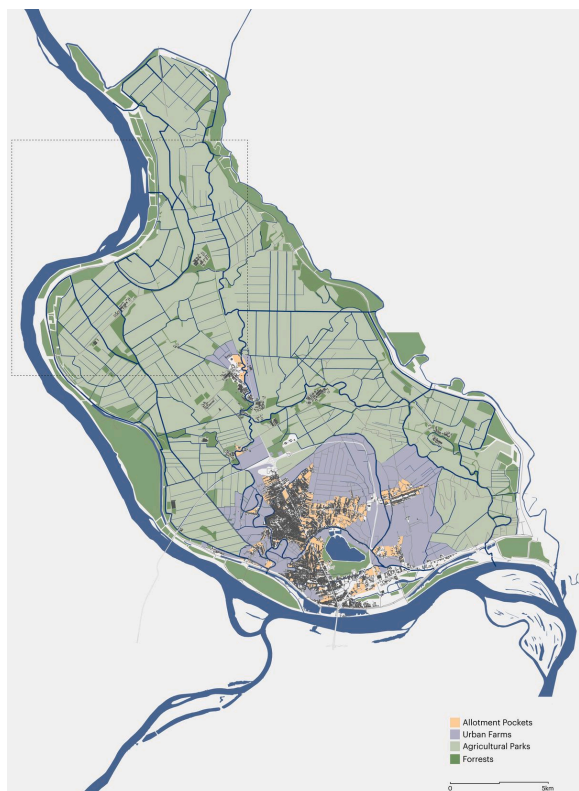




PKB as territorial machine.



PKB as society.



Agriculture as metropolitan agent.



The productive PKB land recognised as Metropolitan Agriculture Park.



Canoe routes along the canals and paths on the dykes enable access to the production landscape.

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