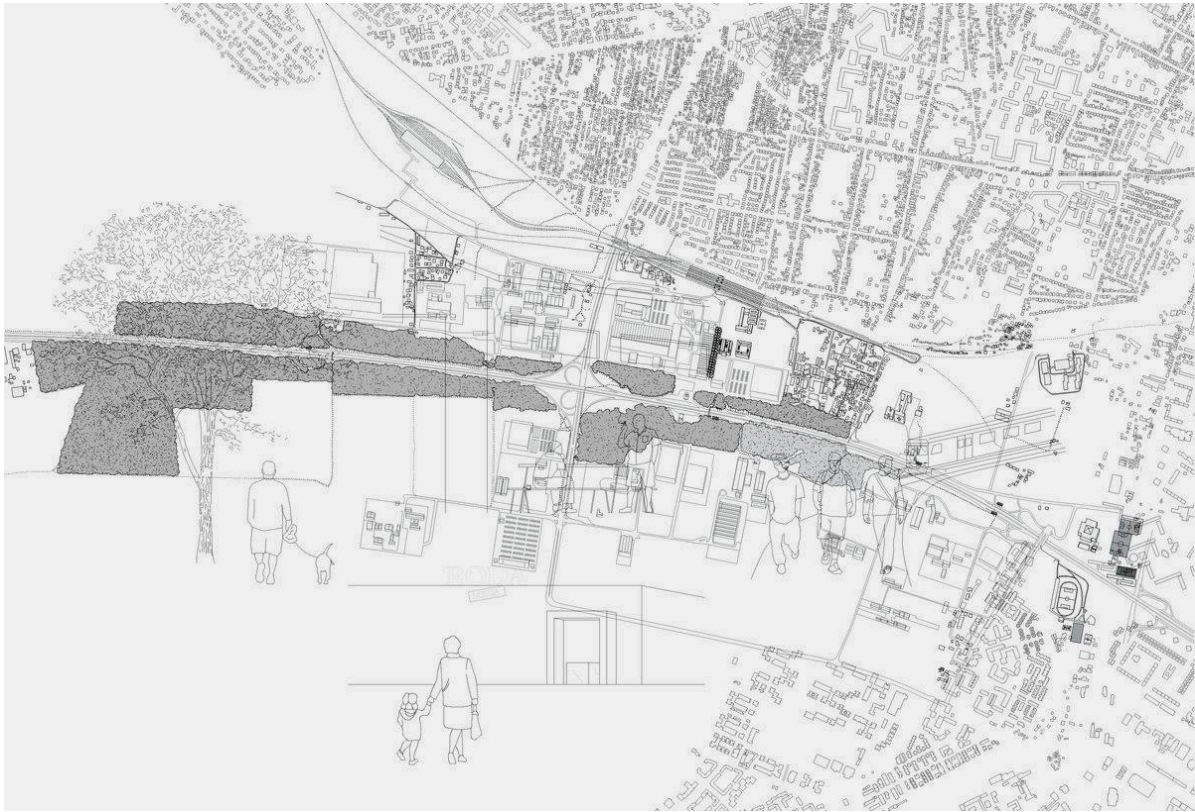


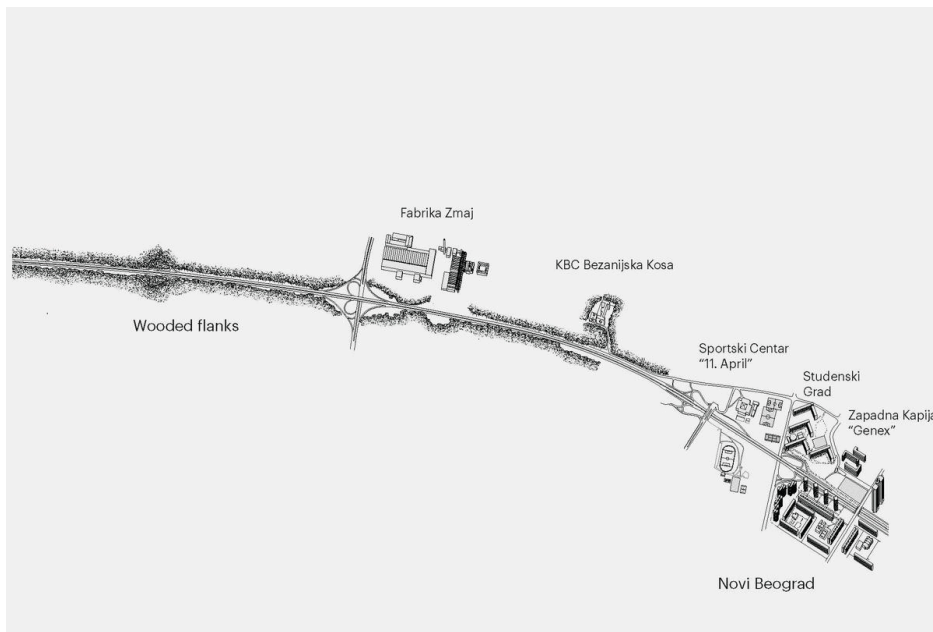
Kraj Kao Zmaj

Highway Neighbourhood: Mediating Public Encounters

Michiel Gieben and Katarina Savic



The “Highway of Brotherhood and Unity,” a gigantic socialist infrastructural project that stretched over 1,182 km across Yugoslavia, connecting its four constituent states, runs right through the centre of Belgrade. When the road was constructed under Josip Broz Tito in 1949, it was not merely a piece of infrastructure but a project charged with symbolic meaning and designed with aesthetic and monumental qualities. Bridging four fraternal nations, its course opened vistas of landmarks and cities, sometimes even lined with dedicated landscape elements. Where it passes the western outskirts of the metropolitan region of Belgrade, it is still flanked by a forested strip, forming a green gate to the city.



Conceived initially as a buffer zone along the highway, it is considered an economic area and houses several industrial activities in today's planning. The wholesale food market, an electricity plant and a large hospital are interwoven with the artificial vegetation. Although it is increasingly vital for the expanding housing neighbourhoods, the public land is hardly accessible, and its recreational value is only beginning to be recognised. The current development plan encompasses about 1000 ha with economic activities, public services and facilities, infrastructural connections and green areas for communal activities. The land intended for the construction of buildings is divided into distinct zones in relation to the position and typology of the building, the existing structure and special conditions of use.

ARCHITECTURE OF TERRITORY
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4 KRAJ KAO ZMAJ HIGHWAY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Mediating Public Encounters

BELGRADE UNBUILT (1/2)
Spring 2018

1950s
Highway as Monument of Yugoslavia

The 'Highway of Brotherhood and Unity' suggests socialist project, constructed under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito involving thousands of civil voluntary workers. As a central axis of the new socialist capital linking the four federal states of Yugoslavia.

1990s
Highway as European Artery

Belgrade has declined to become a 'city of infrastructure'. This trend could, we would hope, be new to areas where south of Belgrade is currently under construction and will play an important role in the redoubt transitory traffic.



2010
Highway as Gravitational Field

The new political climate, characterized by nationalist rhetoric, encouraged new developments to settle in the highway vicinity. The general urban plan for Belgrade 2020 further directs economic development areas outside of the city in peripheral areas.

New Highway Imaginaries

With the collapse of the Yugoslavian state and the following shift of political paradigm, the corridor for the highway of brotherhood and unity shifted to a more neutral context of pure infrastructure. Today the site allows industrial and commercial facilities which benefit from the strategic location—the current urban projects to handle logistic and commercial activities in particular areas away from the city and along the highway. Still, a concrete vision for more integrated development in the future seems missing.

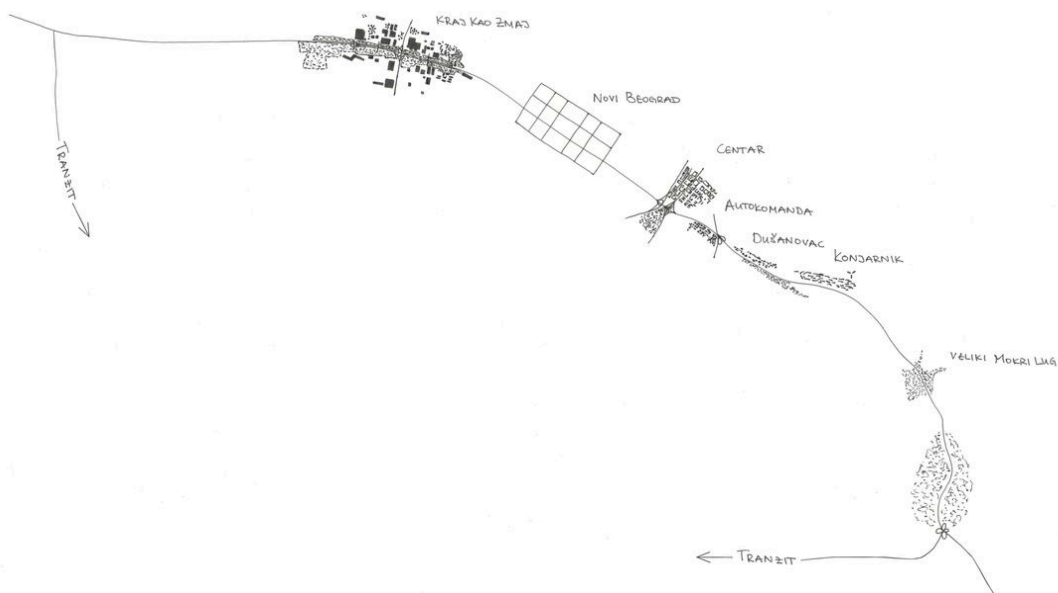


Urban Encounters

Local regions still about specific conditions and their distinct expression in space. These urban encounters are results of colliding forces in shared spaces on both sides (e.g. an old industrial bridge connecting the two highways, an old factory building housing a neo-tech firm or also more traditional phenomena such as the narrow lane that cross vegetation).



Kraj Kao Zmaj—Highway Neighbourhood.



Kraj Kao Zmaj—Highway Neighbourhood along Belgrade's central boulevard axes.

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