

DOCONF/2021

FACING POST/SOCIALIST

URBAN HERITAGE

date /

8-9th October 2021, Budapest, Hungary

venue /

1111 Budapest, Műegyetem rkp. 3, 2nd floor, room 10

organised by /

Department of Urban Planning and Design

Faculty of Architecture / Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) / <https://urb.bme.hu/>

and

Foundation for Urban Design, Budapest

opening by /

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DOCONF2021 / FACING POST-SOCIALIST URBAN HERITAGE

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

8th OCT / FRIDAY

8:30-9:00 REGISTRATION

9:00am – 9:30am OPENING

Dr. Melinda BENKŐ
Chair of DOCONF / H

Prof. György ALFÖLDI
Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, BME / H

Prof. András FERKAI
Head of the Committee on Architecture, Hungarian Academy of Sciences / H

9:30am – 11:00am: THE FIFTIES

Chairs: Dr. Kornélia KISSFAZEKAS / Budapest BME H & Dr. Endre VÁNYOLÓS / Cluj Ro & Dr. Federica VISCONTI / Naples I

Ana BORANIEVA / Barcelona E / MK
In the Shadow of Skopje's Railway Artefact: The Interscalar Character Of The Artefact As A Condition For Constructing New Centrality. (pp84-95.)

Ekaterina GLADKOVA & Prof. Valerii KOZLOV / Irkutsk Ru
Urban planning concepts for the renovation of microdistricts in the 1950s-70s: the result of a workshop in Irkutsk (pp138-147.)

János KLANICZAY / Budapest BME H
Measuring the architectural experience: comparing the '50s and '70s during urban walking tours (pp194-205.)

Bárbara Mylena DELGADO da SILVA & Dr. Eszter KARLÓCAINÉ BAKAY / Budapest MATE H / Br
People's Park: An overview from examples of Post - Socialist urban parks in Europe (pp106-115.)

11:30am – 1:30pm: MASS HOUSING NEIGHBORHOODS

Chairs: Dr. Melinda BENKŐ / Budapest BME H & Prof. Richard KLEIN / Lille F
& Dr. David TICHY / Prague Cz

Maciej SWIDERSKI / Amsterdam NI / PI

Heritage-inspired local knowledge as a tool for planning the future of late-modernist housing estates (pp400-411.)

Réka MÁNDOKI & Dr. John ORR / Cambridge UK / H

Learning from the past - How to create sustainable mass produced buildings today? (pp264-273.)

Jitka MOLNÁROVÁ / Prague Cz

Bottom-up transformations of modernist housing estates (pp308-319.)

Sofia BORUSHKINA / Milano I / Ru

Top-Down Large-Scale Urban Interventions and Density Profile: the Housing Renovation program in Moscow (pp96-104.)

Nikola MITROVIĆ & Dr. Aleksandra DJUKIC / Belgrade Sr

Mapping informal changes - new meanings and new patterns of usage of mega blocks: case study New Belgrade (pp296-307.)

Munkh-Erdene TOGTOKHBAYAR & Dr. Tamás PERÉNYI / Budapest BME H / Mong
Post-socialist urban housing form: Changing ger districts in Ulaanbaatar (pp412-423.)

3:00pm – 5:00pm: SHRINKING CITIES

Chairs: Dr. Bálint KÁDÁR / Budapest BME H & Prof. Zorica NEDOVIĆ-BUDIĆ / Chicago IL USA, Dublin IE & Dr. Angelica STAN / Bucharest Ro

Dr. Branislav ANTONIĆ / Belgrade Sr

Reviving Socialist Shrinking Towns in the Lower Danube Region in Serbia by Embracing their Modernist Urban Heritage (pp30-39.)

Andreea Catalina POPA / Bucharest Ro

Shrinking cities on the Romanian side of the Danube river (pp366-377.)

Mattias MALK / Tallinn Est

With or Without You: The Local Significance of Rail Baltic in Pärnu (pp252-263.)

Anna Kornélia LOSONCZY / Budapest BME H

Rákospalota vs. Újpalota: changing centrality of District XV, Budapest (pp240-251.)

Ágnes BERTYÁK / Budapest BME H

Shrinking villages - Population retention and tourism development opportunities of the settlements of Órség (pp72-83.)

9th OCT / SATURDAY

9:00am – 10:00am: ONLINE PLUS

Chairs: Dr. Melinda BENKŐ & Dr. Domonkos WETTSTEIN / Budapest BME H

Antonio NEVESCANIN / Lodz Pl / Hr / from *mass housing* session
Urban Regeneration of The Socialist Modernist Housing Neighborhoods in Lodz, Poland and Zagreb, Croatia (pp320-331.)

Romana HAJDUKOVÁ & Alžbeta SOPIROVÁ / Bratislava Sk / from *shrinking cities* session
Brownfields and green infrastructure in the region of „triangle of death” (pp182-193.)

Lyudmila KOZLOVA & Dr. Anastasia MALKO / Irkutsk Ru / from *the fifties* session
The structural role of public spaces in 1950-80s mass housing: Experience and Prospects of the Akademgorodok district in Irkutsk (pp216-227.)

Andrea NÓBLEGA CARRIQUIRY & Amaia CELAYA ALVAREZ / Barcelona E / from *resilience* session
Urban Resilience in post-Soviet built environment renewal: the case study of Yakutsk (pp332-343.)

Olena LEMAK & Prof. Ľubica VITKOVÁ / Bratislava Sk / from *leisurescape* session / *Transformation of the Danube recreational areas (pp228-239.)*

10:00am – 12:00am: RE-COLLECTIVE (hybrid session)

Chairs: Dr. Julianna SZABÓ / Budapest BME H & Dr. Aleksandra DJUKIĆ / Belgrade Sr

Anica DRAGUTINOVIC & Prof. Uta POTTGIESSER / Delft NI / Sr - online
Regenerative Design and Co-Commitment as Decisive Factors in Mass Housing Revitalisation (pp116-125.)

Yulia BELOSLYUDTSEVA & Dr. Vitaly STADNIKOV / Moscow Ru
Problems of land division as an essential instrument of regulation and urban regeneration in Post-Soviet Russia (pp50-59.)

Diana GALOS / Cluj Ro
Urban housing in the countryside: community building and real estate policies (pp126-137.)

Zofia PIOTROWSKA / Warsaw Pl - online
Reimagining housing cooperatives in Poland: transformation strategies for the future. (pp356-365.)

Annamária BABOS / Budapest BME H
Key challenges of implementing the cohousing model in CEE countries Comparison Hungary and Poland (pp40-49.)

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Chairs: Dr. Árpád SZABÓ / Budapest BME H & Dr. Dániel KISS / Zürich-Basel Ch

Bence BENE / Budapest BME H

SPACE SYNTAX & OCOKA - Possibilities of Using Geospatial Technology for Military Analysis on Urban Terrain (pp60-71.)

Dominika GRABOWSKA-ROPEK & Maria JANKOWSKA / Warsaw PI Post-pandemic urban planning rules – future predictions (pp148-157.)

Rachel GYÖRFFY / Budapest MOME H

Towards a Potemkin City: Motifs and Consequences of Reconstructivism in Central- and Eastern Europe (pp158-169.)

Marcell HAJDU / Weimar D / H

Fragmenting Emptiness: The Democratic Resilience of Post-Socialist Public Spaces in Contemporary Budapest (pp170-181.)

Rania MATROUK & Shaha MAITEH / Budapest BME H / Syr

Urban Resilience to in Post-Socialist Cities: A Descriptive Comparative Study Between Courtyard Block and Panel Housing (pp284-295.)

Mariia TUMUREEVA & Dr. Valery KOZLOV / Irkutsk Ru

Novo-Lenino district in Irkutsk city as a post-socialist model of transformation (pp424-433.)

3:30pm – 5:30pm: LEISURESCAPE

Chairs: Dr. Domonkos WETTSTEIN / Budapest BME H & Prof. L'ubica VITKOVA / Bratislava Sk

Gabriel SILVA DANTAS & Dr. Ildikó Réka NAGY / Budapest MATE H / Br

Resilience of urban forms in context of Urban Green Infrastructure: Study case of Ferencváros, Budapest (pp390-399.)

Dr. Jelena MARIC / Belgrade Sr

Towards more resilient city: improving public health by increasing the usage of urban green open space - a case study of New Belgrade (pp274-283.)

Kinga SÁMSON / Budapest BME H

Hungarian amusement parks from the fifties to nowadays (pp378-389.)

David KLEPEJ / Ljubljana Slo

Planning Urban Tourism Infrastructure in Post-War Socialist Slovenia: the Case of City hotels (pp206-215.)

Flóra PERÉNYI / Budapest BME H

Experimental architecture: examining Hungarian campings through the examples of two different styles in the socialist era (pp344-355.)

Reviving Socialist Shrinking Towns in the Lower Danube Region in Serbia by Embracing Their Modernist Urban Heritage

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ABSTRACT

A socialist city was one of the most important spatial legacies of a socialist state in Eastern Europe, where its main tenets were adjusted to (re)form an urban environment for proletariat as a focal group. However, the implementation of a socialist-city agenda was confronted to the urban legacy of pre-socialist periods in many East European cities and towns with long history. Therefore, the 'purest' socialist cities were usually completely newly-formed urban settlements. The most notorious examples were usually bigger or middle-size cities with the large plants of heavy industry. They have been often exploited as a research theme last years, usually regarding their fast and uncontrolled urban shrinkage after the fall of socialism. This focus has left smaller socialist cities and towns somehow 'in shadow'. This research is dedicated for three examples of new socialist towns located in the Lower Danube Region in Serbia: Donji Milanovac, Tekija, and Brza Palanka. All of them are unique due to their formation; old towns were flooded by the formation of two artificial lakes in the Iron Gates System on the Danube River, so new towns were fast built in modernist manner to relocate the population from the former ones. Today, these towns are more known in Serbia by extreme urban shrinkage due to the overall isolation by the formation of both lakes. Nevertheless, the recent rise of cultural tourism on the Danube has given a new impulse for the towns' life. This paper aspires to revalorise their modernist urban heritage and to discuss if this element can be utilised for their further regeneration, driven by cultural tourism on the Danube.

KEYWORDS

Socialist city, new towns, modernist urban heritage, shrinking cities, the Danube, the Iron Gates, planned cities, heritage-led revitalisation



Figure 1. Donji Milanovac and the Danube in the Iron Gates Gorge (Author: B. AntoniĆ)

1. Introduction

A socialist city is one of the well-known urban constructs developed during and after socialism. It is based on the premise that a city has a very important role in a socialist system, because it was a place or a 'habitat' for proletariat as a focal group. This view was established even in the first years of socialism in the USSR (Kopp, 1970). However, the full development of a socialist city happened only after the World War II, where socialism spread across the eastern half of Europe.

Kopp (1970) noticed that a socialist city was the pure example of a modernist city by its physical side. In accordance to the principles of modernist urbanism, the socialist city had a strict urban zoning, with the accent on industry, basically linked with proletariat; urbanisation was even regarded as a side-product of industrialisation (Makhrova & Molodikova, 2007). Thus, it is not rare to find the former socialist cities with vast industrial zones, which even make 1/3 of the entire urban area (Stanilov 2007). On the other side, central functions and urban centres were neglected, as a reminiscence of pre-socialist, capitalist city (Djukić et al, 2018). Residential zones were somewhere in-between, but with an ideological support to multi-family housing in a 'super-block', a huge urban block with open structure and a lot of greenery, typical for modernist urbanism. Dwellings in such residential blocks and mass-housing estates are frequent in the European East – they make 20-40% of entire housing stock (Temelová et al 2011). Both industrial areas and mass-housing estates have been heavily affected by urban shrinkage process after the fall of socialism.

The explained model of socialist city was not, however, implemented in its full scope in many cities. Many Eastern European cities and towns had preserved their historic, pre-socialist cores and their radical transformation into a new, socialist urban ground in the postwar situation with limited finances and with a significant pressure from rural immigration were very costly and irrational thereof. Therefore, the tenets of a socialist city were used partially and with regional and local customisations in many cases. Additionally, the significance of the preservation of historic urban cores,

developed in the previous epochs, arose across Eastern Europe after the 1960s (Djukić et al 2018).

The only places where the implementation of a socialist city was straightforward were new cities, as a ‘tabula rasa’ for such experiments in modernist urbanism. These new cities were relatively frequent in the areas with previously sparse urban settlements, such as Siberia in the USSR/Russia. In the other countries with the already established network of urban settlements, the examples of these cities and towns were rarer – they were built in specific circumstances. For example, such cities and towns were built next to newly-open mines or as relocated settlements due to the formation of the artificial lakes created by damming rivers. The majority of them were formed as mono-structural cities, dependent on one economic/industrial branch or even one huge public industrial enterprise.

After the change of economic environment with the post-socialist transition in the 1990s, the new socialist cities with monostructural economy have lost their economic base and have become a showcase of extreme urban shrinkage. Their main concentration in the (former) socialist countries (Bernt, 2016). These cities actually merge two more problematic (“abnormal”) models of shrinking cities in a typology by their economic performance: monostructural shrinking cities due to its economic uniqueness and the “shock therapy” model of post-socialist shrinking cities, due to their regional uniqueness with fast political and economic transition (Bontje & Musterd, 2005). This situation has proven to be ‘perfect’ for sudden and uncontrolled urban shrinkage (Kühn & Liebmann, 2012). Russia has the highest number of “monotowns” (Rus. *Моногород*) in the World – 319 of them, with 10% of all Russians. They are mainly located in the country north and Siberia (Veryavkin, 2021).



Figure 2. The Iron Gates Gorge is the most scenic section of the Danube (Author: B. AntoniĆ)

This paper investigates three such cases in the Lower Danube Region in Eastern Serbia, the part of the former Socialist Yugoslavia. Three small towns – Donji Milanovac (See: *Figure 1.*), Tekija and Brza Palanka – were relocated due to the formation of two artificial lakes created by new hydro-plants on the Danube River in the Iron Gates Region during the 1970s and 1980s. After their relocation, their development was frozen, so the towns have entered the state of extreme urban shrinkage in the post-socialist times. The recent rise of cultural tourism in the Iron Gates Gorge, the most scenic section of the Danube (see *Figure 2*), has opened new perspectives for their regeneration, but this process still faces many limitations (Kadar & Gede, 2021). Interestingly, this challenging position – frozen urban development for decades – has left their legacy of modernist urbanism (and architecture) intact. These circumstances inspire this research – to revalorise their

heritage of modernist (macro-scale) urban planning and to discuss if this element can be utilised for their further regeneration, driven by cultural tourism on the Danube.

2. Methodology

This research is created as a multi-case study on three selected towns – Donji Milanovac, Tekija, and Brza Palanka (See Figure 3).

The multi-case study is chosen because small towns in Serbia are rarely examined independently last decades and up-to-date theoretical knowledge is scarce. In addition, literature for three selected towns is scarce and mainly limited to several books which are not basically from the field of urban studies. Many of them are even biased, i.e., laments and melancholy about the former towns and their urban life. Therefore, the main source for this paper is talks with experts from the main local institutions and their view on the mentioned books, as well as on-site research.



Figure 3. Location of three selected towns in the Lower Danube Region in Serbia (Author: B. Antonić)

In line with these limitations, it is important to use a comparative analysis in this research, to enable obtaining high-quality scientific data. The comparative analysis is done by two parallel lines: (1) through the comparison of the demographic statistical data of these towns, with the elements of historic context, and (2) through their urban morphology. This dual approach allows achieving the better understanding the development of these towns and their interdependence to the Danube.

3. Historic and Demographic Context

The modern history of three selected towns begins in the early 19th century, with the fast development of the central part of the present-day Serbia, which was then the nucleus of the current state – the Principality of Serbia. All towns got their rights of a market town (Serb. *Varošica*) in the late 19th century, which was crucially the result of an intensive transport on the Danube during the course of the century. The Lower Danube Region in Serbia is very specific, because its backbone is the longest gorge of the river, 120-km long Iron Gates. The position of the gorge within the broader Danube Area makes it more physically isolated by mountains, without sizable rural surroundings and more remote concerning inland connections (Antonić et al, 2018). This means that the Danube has played a significantly bigger role in the formation and development of these three towns than in the case of many other Danubian cities and towns, which have plains and valleys with a lot of other resources in their background.

Although all three towns have shared their historic development in two last centuries in general, they differ relating to the several important parameters of their urban characteristics (see *Table 1*):

Table 1. The main data of three selected towns in the Lower Danube Region (Author: B. Antonić)

Town	Declared as a town – Year	Current town status	Municipal seat	Type of initial town	Rural part
Donji Milanovac	1866.	Yes	Yes, before 1965	Planned	No
Tekija	1885.	No	No	Regulated	No
Brza Palanka	1885.	Yes	Yes, before 1965	Irregular / organic	Yes

Donji Milanovac is the most interesting case among three selected towns, because the town has been twice planned and developed in a planned manner in the last two centuries. The first plan was enacted in 1832, which transferred an initial organic settlement from an island, now submerged by the Danube, to the right side of the river (Kojić 1970). During the course of 19th and the most of 20th century, Donji Milanovac developed within this regulation and got an orthodonal matrix (see *Figure 3*). The other two towns – Tekija and Brza Palanka – had a less regulated genesis (Kojić 1970). In both cases, the urban morphology of their old matrix preserved the elements of unfinished regulation: irregular settlement form, fuzzy network of streets and blocks and physically unfinished centre. Nevertheless, Tekija was developed as a compact urban-rural settlement, whereas Brza Palanka was rather dispersed, with two different strata: a lower, town section along the Danube Road and next to the town port on the Danube and an upper, rural section close to more fertile land on the plateau above the riverside.

The demographic analysis of the period before the relocation of the towns (See *Table 2*) shows the period of the fast developed in 19th century due to the intensive trade and transport on the Danube, which changed after the rise of rail as a key mean of transport at the end of the century. In the next few decades in the early 20th century, the development of these three towns was more an urban stagnation. The only exception was Donji Milanovac, which grew in the 20th century due to significant mining activities (coper mines) in the mountains behind the town. In the case of Brza Palanka, the demographic increase was related to the rural part of the settlement.

Table 2. Demographic trends for three towns before relocation – 1815-1970 (Sources: Kojić, 1970; SORS, 2014)

Town	Population censuses							
	1834	1868	1884	1910	1931	1948	1961	1971
Donji Milanovac	705	1,207	1,211	1,634	2,160	2,274	2,669	2,595
Tekija	-	982	1,158	1,367	1,109	1,385	1,635	1,342
Brza Palanka	-	616	1,013	1,513	2,008	1,730	1,801	1,668

The construction of two hydroelectric dams – the Iron Gates I (1972) and the Iron Gates II (1984) – caused deep changes for three analysed towns and their inhabitants. The artificial lakes formed by the dams required the relocation of all of them; Donji Milanovac and Tekija were completely relocated, as well as the lower, town section of Brza Palanka (see *Figure 3*).

The official demographic data realised for the decades after the relocation of the towns has showed that this process was already the socio-economic failure at the

end of socialism (Orlović, 1994). Then, all towns have witnessed an extreme urban shrinkage after the start of the post-socialist transition, which can be easily exemplified through their fast depopulation (see *Table 3*). Actually, Brza Palanka and Donji Milanovac were among the fastest declining urban settlements in Serbia by the population census in 2011 (Antonić et al 2020). From economic perspective, the towns have lost their previous economy linked to the Danube (transport, services, and fishery). The problem is also that the towns have never transformed into industrial centres. Furthermore, their already weak rural surroundings have become demographically emptier with all these changes in the gorge. Hence, this position makes them unique for general urban development in post-socialist space, where a “normal” urban shrinkage is still considered as the consequence of the deindustrialisation of cities (Haase et al 2016). At local level, this unique challenge has ‘haunted’ local authorities – how to manage the future of these small towns without proper international examples?

Table 3. Demographic trends for three towns after relocation – from 1991 (SORS, 2014)

Town	Population censuses				Average age, 2011
	1991	2002	2011	1991-2011	
Donji Milanovac	3,338	3,132	2,410	-27.8%	43.4
Tekija	1,129	967	792	-29.8%	45.9
Brza Palanka	1,557	1,076	860	-44.8%	49.5

4. Morphological Analysis of three towns

Built in the late socialism, all three selected towns – Donji Milanovac, Tekija and Brza Palanka – present an ultimate modernist urbanism and architecture in the small format frozen in their initial state due to later shrinkage. For instance, these towns were planned without significant industrial zones and with just a few multi-family buildings in central locations.

However, these towns also differ between each other by the quality of their legacy of modernist urbanism (see *Figure 4*).

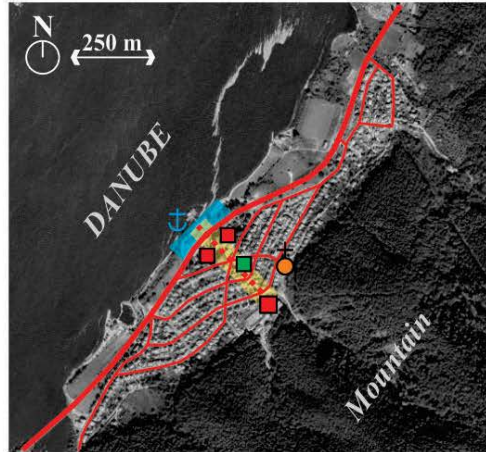
The most inventive case is the new urban matrix of Tekija (see *Figure 4a*). Initially, it was questionable if the town would be relocated as a new one or its population simply resettled to nearby settlements. Fortunately, new Tekija was built on a hill above the old settlement in the early 1970s. The new settlement was built on a hill above old Tekija. The position of the hill was successfully implemented in the new plan of a town. While almost all streets are winding as they follow terrain and isolines, the main street is oppositely straight and it connects the lowest and highest points in Tekija, a port and elementary school. Due to significant inclination, this is a pedestrian-only street, designed as a picturesque 250-m long cascade stairway. All public facilities, such as a local culture centre or administrative hall, are located along this street, making a clear form of a central axis. Hence, looking from above, Tekija resembles as a bird landing on the Danube, where the pedestrian street is its spine, while other/‘normal’ streets on both sides are the wings of this ‘bird’.

Donji Milanovac was built at the same time as Tekija, but its urban matrix did not bring similar ingenuity (see *Figure 4b*). First, the location of a new town was obviously an issue, because Donji Milanovac was relocated several km downstream from old settlement. Then, a chosen area for the new town lacked appropriate space, so the land of the present-day lower part of the town along the Danube Riverfront (centre) had to be consolidated.

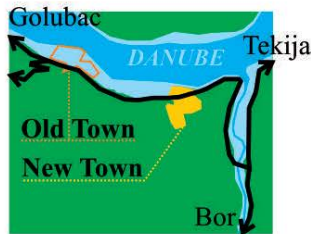
a. TEKIJA



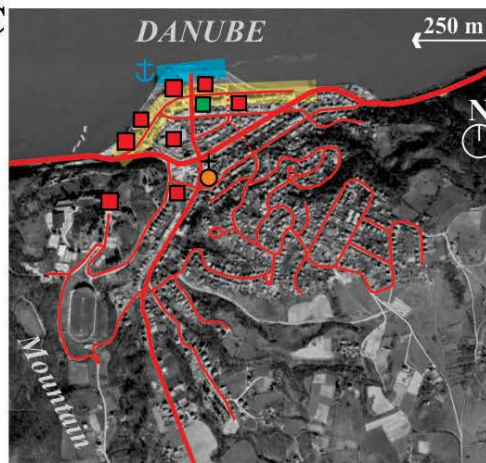
Upper:
Position of old and new town
Right:
Urban matrix of new town



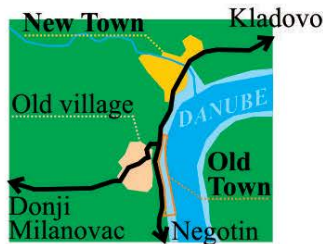
b. DONJI MILANOVAC



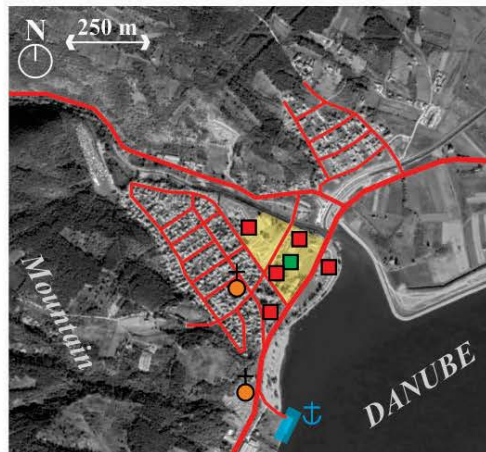
Upper:
Position of old and new town
Right:
Urban matrix of new town



c. BRZA PALANKA




Upper:
Position of old and new town
Right:
Urban matrix of new town



LEGEND	Left maps	Old Danube course	Right maps	Street
		New Danube course		Pedestrian street, quay
		Old town		Centre, central area
		New Town		Port-dock area
		Land		Town Hall
		Road		Church
				Public services (post office, school, culture centre)

Figure 3. Urban morphology of Tekija (a), Donji Milanovac (b) and Brza Palanka (c), as new modernist towns in Serbia (Author: B. Antonić)



The logic of the urban plan of the new town is also different than in Tekija, because the central axis of the town with the main public facilities is along the riverfront. This axis is somehow peripheral to the town morphological backbone – a transport 'cross' consists of east-west road as the main link to other settlements in the Iron Gates and north-south road, which is rather internal and connects a lower centre with a regular street matrix and upper tourist and residential areas with a curved and à la organic street matrix. This intentionally curved urban matrix of the upper, residential part of the town has been an inspiration for local jokes, such as "living in a kidney" for the inhabitants of its eastern part, where streets shape a kidney-looking urban block.

Both Donji Milanovac and Tekija were completely and smoothly relocated in the 1970s. Brza Palanka is not such case. The previous, combined urban-rural settlement is not completely relocated during the construction of the Iron Gates II Dam (see *Figure 4c*). Its upper rural part was preserved, whereas the lower urban part of Brza Palanka was relocated to the top of a hill 1.5 km north from previous location and next to the old riverside of the Danube. This approach has ultimately preserved the two-part structure of the settlement. This top of the new urban part of Brza Palanka is relatively flat, which allows a freedom in urban planning and design. However, Brza Palanka was developed in the early 1980s, when the first, economic signs of the crisis of Yugoslavian socialist system started. It seems that this timing was critical for the town planning – the town shows a simple form without any innovation or specificity. Its shape is rather orthogonal, with a further orthogonal organisation of blocks and streets. The blocks closer to the Danube on south-east are with public facilities and public greenery, while the other ones are only with single-family housing.

5. Instead of conclusion – Future prospects of three selected towns

Findings from the previous two-step analysis reveals that three analysed towns – Donji Milanovac, Tekija and Brza Palanka – were not planned to be urban settlements of greater importance. They do not have industrial zones, big central zones or multi-family neighbourhoods. However, their modernist urban morphology is significantly impacted by the Danube, especially in the cases of Donji Milanovac and Tekija.

The recent rise of (cultural) tourism on the Danube has made an impact on local life. Tourism sector is currently the most developed in Donji Milanovac. Aside that this town is the largest one in the research, it is also the only one where centre and the most of central activities are located next to the river, so town life is really on the Danube. However, modernist urban matrix and architecture is still an unused potential. In conversation with local experts in culture and tourism, they still do not see this element as an important feature for local development, but as a prospective 'niche' in the local offer of cultural tourism.

The biggest potential for the future tourism development is Tekija, which unique modernist urban matrix is not exploited enough, even though the central pedestrian axis can be utilised to open magnificent views on the gorge from its upper point. Local people are aware that the central pedestrian axis with central functions shaped in a modernist manner is a very specific local feature, but they are still without broader plans on how to utilise it. The only issue is they recommend the upper point of the axis as a beautiful viewpoint to the Danube and the town. This is, however, without proper tourist signalisation.

At the end, Brza Palanka has limited prospects due to the obviously unfinished urban matrix, which did not bring any innovation. The main advantage in this town is a lot of free space along the Danube, which can be used a plot for the further urban facilities, which can eventually upgrade local tourist offer, as well as the quality of local urban life.

In all three cases, as well as across the Serbian Iron Gates, local people, experts and government representatives underline the importance of the recent state-led flagship projects to facilitate local economy, especially in (cultural) tourism. There are many examples for this: the reconstruction of Golubac, Ram and Fetislam fortresses, the formation of the museum of “Lepenski Vir” Archaeological Site and the new headquarters building of “Đerdap” National Park with the museum of local flora and fauna. The recently promoted construction of modern Danube Magistral Road through the Iron Gates is the latest example of these projects. They are relatively expensive projects, but the development of local SMEs, such as new tourist accommodation, restaurants, retail, taxi companies, tourist and tour-guide agencies or small cultural facilities, prove that these projects have significantly triggered local level.

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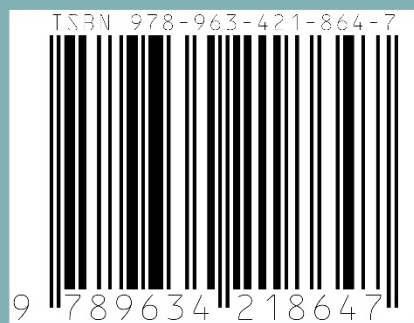
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