Ana Dzokic

Ivan Kucina

Marc Neelen

Milica Topalovic

Belgrade:
Fragments for
Wild City

In this research, neither the civil assumptions nor the architect assumptions are followed. There are no judgments in simple terms as good or bad, and no one is assigned a role. The vocabulary of 'scientific' objectivity, which lingers through the project, reflects an attempt of making connections, establishing regularities within what appeared as, or was commonly described as chaos. Even an architect does not necessarily assume his/her traditional stance, but can take a viewpoint of a software engineer or an ecologist. People and institutions here can become actors and agents, and the urban environment is for instance put in parallel with a digital one, to gain new viewpoints. Further on, the context in which the transformations take place is considered more generic and less incidental — not a bizarre, hallucinating condition of a collapsing society, but rather a fallback of the global movements. Wildness is approached as a laboratory condition; a primitive experiment in liberal capitalism and civil emancipation that has very sharp messages for the future, opening too at present towards liberalisation and 'market democracy'. The following text is fragmented; the fragments stand for layers of logics (rules, regularities, patterns of behaviour) of the Wild City. Its layers are multiple, pervasive through every urban scale and function; they point to significance of processes, an unfolding of events in time, rather than to particular physical instances.

1. **'For the International Day of Labour, the first of May, many of Belgrade's inhabitants won't engage in festivities but will remain at their working places. However, these will not be factories, or construction sites, but it will be the work that parts of our fellow citizens without employment in their own professions do, in order to survive. Smiljka Kovacevic (28), cosmetician, is selling Hungarian cheese and deodorants on the Boulevard.'** (Daily Danas, Belgrade, 29/04 – 2/05/2000)
'Soon, nobody will be able to pass through the streets, because of all the stands, cardboard boxes, shades. It all looks very thrilling. Bars, hangars, music, people. We built our shop out of whatever we could find. (...) We put in few of these halogen lights and presto — a shop!' (Interview with Pera Lozac, Belgrade, 10/2000)

EMERGENCE: 'In plain terms, (dispersed systems) solve problems by drawing on masses of relatively simple elements, rather than a single, intelligent executive branch. They are bottom-up systems, not top-down. They get their smarts from below. In a more technical language, they are complex adaptive systems that display emergent behaviour. In these systems, agents residing on one scale start producing behaviour that lies one scale above them: ants create colonies; urbanities

'Wild City' *(Divlji grad)*, one of the most exhausted newspaper headlines in Belgrade, paradoxically became a rare, if not the only genuine topic of public debate and public interest related to the city and urbanity in general. From the perspective of an architect, it is quite interesting that there is such amount of emotions about a city and about urbanism. The impression is even stronger when compared to the context of Western Europe, where the debate is much more fragmented and where urban issues are negotiated among very sharply profiled interest groups. A prominent Belgrade columnist framed it like this: 'Strangely enough, the cataclysmic reality of Belgrade (it seems that the future of this city is not worth discussing at all) represents the only point of conciliation between the local independent press and its regime foster-sister.' (B. Tirnanic, *Weekly NIN*, Belgrade, 27 July 2000) In a unison condemnation throughout society, 'wildness' was rarely explicitly linked with the performance of state, the economic embargo or the war. In the criticism given by the press, the dominantly present overtone was set by an expectation of general civil awareness, a feeling of how people should conduct themselves in a city. This civil condemnation mirrored into architectural practice. Architects, as a result, for the most part turned a blind eye on the wild building. This attitude was strengthened by a prevailing traditional-academic climate in which 'wild building' is simply not considered an act of architecture, but quite the opposite, the destruction of it.

create neighbourhoods; simple pattern-recognition software learns how to recommend new books. The movement from low-level rules to higher-level sophistication is what we call emergence.' (Book *Emergence*, S. Johnson, 2001)

Replacing primary systems: 'Amidst the disintegration of former Yugoslavia, war, media obsession and the politicisation of everyday life, the crucial point for a complete turn over of the city was the UN embargo of 1992. During a decade of instability, the governmental grip on the society weakened dramatically by economic, demographic and social crisis. (...) Lacking the necessary functions of institutional systems in society and in the city, personal initiative appeared as the only possibility for fulfilling demands and became the fuel for the move from the previous, centralised systems to disperse, a-legal, chaotic stage.'
During this period, nearly 20 emergent phenomena and processes have replaced the city's primary systems, in a range from 'street commerce', 'wild housing' to 'public transport' or 'petrol selling'. In the year 2000, still they constituted major segments of the sales of everyday goods, of transport and of any construction activity in the city. ——— **Adaptability:** Newly established distributed systems have a tendency for finding modes of interaction and influence towards each other as well as in relation to centralised system. Each part starts to influence the other and ultimately to change the organisation of the total. A complex system keeps adapting its relations while it progresses. A new logic appears: abandon what does not work any longer, and switch to an alternative. Emerging phenomena are not pre-determined — when the conventional apparatus of a city is paralysed — only entirely different kinds of systems are capable of reviving the cities functioning.

2. **'The concept of the GUP (General Urban Plan, 1972) was based upon the Corbusian model of a city with distinct housing and office zones and with an accent on strengthening the public transport. At that time, there was a firm believe that the spontaneous spreading of the city (descriptively said: like an oil stain on the water) can be redirected towards a linear system (...). The period from 1972 to 1982 showed that the realisation of the Plan has been confronted with many difficulties and that the idea about the creation of 'archipelagos of houses in the sea of greenery' turned into archipelagos of green in a sea of houses. Through amendments to the plan in 1985, a radial-concentric spatial model was introduced, with integration of different functions (...) based on more realistic estimates of the needs and possibilities for the city development. However, at that moment it was unforeseeable what would happen in just a few years,**

with the arrival of our enduring omnipresent crisis; its most devastating influence on urbanism was the invasion of wild building, not just in Belgrade but also throughout Serbia.' (K. Kostic, architect, Weekly NIN, Belgrade, 17/10/2002)
'The unconscious abuse of the city is a process in which nearly all who live in Belgrade participate equally today. The abandonment of former models of labour division within various tasks that create city's face and transition into the do-it-yourself model, have turned Belgrade into a battlefield of tastelessness and kitsch. Pressured by poverty on the one hand and by the need for at least some construction work and maintenance in the city and its buildings on the other, people primarily relied on their own construction abilities. Instead of the coordinated building procedure of former times — with participation of an investor, an urban planner, architect-designer, banker, city department, user and developer — during the nineties a simplified scheme had formed, in which there was no room for regulations, for design, for credits, for professional construction.' (General plan of Belgrade 2021, Preliminary document by the City Planning Organisation, 2001)
In the mid nineties, the so-called 'Wilde Wonen' (Wild Housing) movement gains major popularity in the Netherlands; a popularity that remains to date. Stated as 'the abandonment of state-planning in architecture', this new housing ideal was the consequence of an ongoing liberalisation of the housing market and pleas for deregulation — less rules and more individual freedom: 'It may sound a bit dramatic but the campaign started by Carel Weeber can be described the best like this. It is an important, integral and drastic proposal for the future of housing production in the Netherlands. It says: We should just not worry anymore about the visual appearance of our cities, (instead, ed.) we let people themselves compose or build their own houses.' (W. Vanstiphout in Het Wilde Wonen, Rotterdam, 1998)

PROGRESSION: Statistics underline the trend of increasing wildness. In the year 1975, 17.903 Belgrade; in 1995, the number nearly doubled, reaching 33.594. In 2001, 95.419 wild buildings were 'registered', while unofficial estimations reached 200.000 illegal constructions. In a growing dispersion of urban functions over a multitude of individuals, 1 out of every 8 citizens of Belgrade's central zone has built 'wild' in the past 10 years. 'Belgrade even now, like during its best times, builds 10.000 apartments. Though, pay attention: 95 percent of the apartments is built individually, and from that 95% without legal permission.' (B. Bojovic, architect, weekly Vreme, Belgrade, 7 December 2000)

Ana
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Mutating urban layer: Unlike some previous stages of growth in Belgrade, in which the city 'widened' by addition of new parts, the wild paradigm has been much about implosion, growth of the city on top of itself. A multitude of atom-sized changes covered the city and began to transform. In the resulting reconfiguration of the city tissue much of Belgrade's urban activities are displaced from their initial locations. New urban densities occupied open and void spaces, and infrastructure lines. Nearly every program, every urban type and organisation in Belgrade has been altered and tested anew, offering a precise reading of the city's contemporary potentials and needs.

3. **A well-known research into evolution can be found in a computer-based ecosphere called Tierra. It's creator, digital biologist Tom Ray, breeds viruses. He has set out and observed an incredible evolution of these self-reproducing program strings, into something unexpected — high quality software. 'In Tierra organisms evolved according to criteria that they themselves created collectively, constrained only by the natural criteria to reward the thriftiest use of existing resources. (...) In a few cases, evolution seemed to have attained a level of tight-wound optimisation difficult for even the most wizardly of human software engineers to achieve, and Ray could not help wondering if there was a way to yoke this inhuman skill to the development of practical applications.' His ambition is to release the viruses into the vast unused space of the global computer network. The WWW would act, due to its size, as an ultimate jungle. In Ray's idea, the software engineer of the future is like a hunter in the jungle — the one who hunts for new species and cultivates them.** (See also Wired magazine, 'Viruses Are Good for You', February 1995)

CITY AS A JUNGLE: In a continuing process of change, the urban wilderness entirely counters the conventional planning approaches. From this perspective city can be seen as a condition of permanent urban innovation; one that permits and encourages the formation and development of new 'urban species'. New Belgrade, once an internationalist showcase, abandons functional zoning and repetitive structure; the 18th and 19th century compact city changed most of its programs and the sprawling city perimeter begins to define structure. The successful 'species' have their own pervasive logics of mutations:

Every form can be altered: Any building changes by extension and any typology changes by hybridisation; rural houses pop-up on top of skyscrapers. ———— **Architecture is a camouflage:** When the size of an extension is to be boosted over the permission limit, ghost floors feature mushroom-shaped roof envelope as

Mutating urban layer

Every form can be altered

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Crossroads shall be centres

An entry for exotic agencies

Edges are attractors

Function follows trade-off

Solidification in steps

a formal synonym. Construction remains construction, while the architectural envelope becomes a cover-up. ——— **Crossroads shall be centres:** A piece of nomans land in New Belgrade, located on a major traffic junction, was the targeted location for street trade. In just 5 years time, the Flea Market has become the largest trading centre in the country that continues to grow through perpetual waves of legislation and informal invasion. ——— **An entry for exotic agencies:** In an unanticipated scenario, the Chinese forerunners came to Belgrade in the mid nineties. Their arrival echoed the confused liaison between the Chinese and Yugoslav governments at that time. 'For the majority of 10.000 Chinese that are at the moment in Belgrade, Yugoslavia is not the final destination. It is a springboard towards the El Dorado countries of the Western Europe. (...) And a very small number of Chinese, came here with the idea to stay.' In a swift infiltration manoeuvre they targeted a large vacant shopping centre in Block 70 and turned it into their economic anchor point. 'The expanding Chinese community of the Block 70 follows the law of strict silence. When they are not selling goods in New Belgrade, Chinese are almost invisible: they don't go to cafes or cinemas, don't walk in the parks and don't speak Serbian language, except for a few words. (...) An estimated 80.000 Chinese have passed through Yugoslavia during last ten years, in their transit towards the West.' (*Figaro Newspaper*, 'Belgrade main springboard for Chinese entering Europe', Paris, June, 2000) ——— **Edges are attractors:** Along kilometres of riverbanks, uncontrolled or deliberately overlooked developments in the leisure sector reach their peaks. The popular rafts are not only in linear disposition, but also spread from the edges on into a floating fabric. ——— **Function follows trade-off:** With a minimum of intervention, buildings explore the borderlines of their functionality: as long as economically attractive, a public swimming pool functions as a private tennis court. ——— **Solidification in steps:** On a sidewalk of the Boulevard, a plastic kiosk was provisionally placed. Over 2 years it extended with a wood-framed cafe space, grew a concrete basement and added a roof shade while hiding a living space into it. Linear repetition of this adaptive type, along the pavement of frequent streets, produces commercial strips.

Mutant: 'Its good that everything looks a bit bureaucratic, like a health card or a tax-form. This administrating brings in a bit of irony to the story, it is ironic that mutants can also be classified and processed.' (*Internal correspondence on database of transformations*, 07/03/2000) ——— **Aesthetics:** 'These processes have been inventive in changing structure, in changing system, in new ways to organise, but they didn't invent anything new in architectural terms. Kiosk still looks like a small house; the Flea Market is not different than any other market. You could even state that they look rather ugly and uninventive.' (*Correspondence*, 02/06/2000)

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Ground floor is a commercial asset

No organisation is stable

Efficient locations are found, ground-up

Plan equals infrastructure

Fixed typologies are useless

Ground floor is a commercial asset: The spaces that are being converted range from common rooms, garbage depots and entrances of housing blocks in the internationalist tissue of New Belgrade to flats and homes in older parts of the city. Newly introduced programs have a wide range too: from ever present mini-markets to video and software clubs, gyms, beauty salons, repair shops, medical and dental practices etc. ——— **No organisation is stable:** A critical shortage of gasoline and spare parts was an incentive for the transformation of the city's public transport. The alternative model is not fixed, but fluctuates between the core of the old public company and numerous new 'one man-one vehicle' enterprises. ——— **Efficient locations are found, ground-up:** It started with individual salesman, selling smuggled petrol in plastic containers and Coca-Cola bottles, without any supporting physical structure and leaving no physical traces. A network of mobile petrol traders quickly consolidated, resulting in new private petrol stations. They were constructed at sites tested-out by mobile. ——— **Plan equals infrastructure:** One of the new wild housing areas in Belgrade's outskirts consists of over 1000 houses. It is built on city land, in the process of de-nationalisation. Fearing that their constructions could be demolished, wild-builders have obtained an official plan for the area and together, mimicked the same street pattern. ——— **Fixed typologies are useless:** On a wide belt of public land in the surrounding the city, wild houses range from modest, provisional ones, to 'dreamland' villas. In a habitual playing with an individual house type, the owner of a private transport company merges his house with his bus-garage.

4. **The spreading of the 'kiosk economy' was a natural response to the devastation of economic production and the decrease in employment possibilities during the nineties. Part of those who for different reasons remained out of work, found their new workplaces in modest, usually temporary, commercial, service and club or catering facilities. Dismountable facilities (up to 30m²) and kiosks (up to 9m²) are placed on a pavement of the most frequent streets of the centre of Belgrade, creating chaotic and congested ambient entirely inadequate to the streets location capacities. An estimated 4.000 kiosks and other like spaces are located in 10 city municipalities, 75% of which — in the central city zone. (...) The public space, mainly the occupied pavement, is 23 kilometres long, and its surface is around 8 ha. Some 50% of them, about 10km of length, are erected or assembled without permits.** (General plan of Belgrade 2021, Preliminary document; 2001)

mobility
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mobility
© Ana Carapic, Mia Jovanovic

lightness

occupation
© Bas Princen

legislation

solidification
© Bas Princen

STREET TRADE: The process of street trade began early in the nineties with individual salesmen, trading smuggled goods on the streets along pedestrian routes, from cardboard boxes and car hoods. The network of involved parties grew quickly to include everyone from the traders and their suppliers, to city authorities, administration, financial inspection, police up to mafia and informers. (phase **01** mobility)

Soon after, traders began to place their own stands on the sidewalk. With the usual tax and bureaucracy avoided and established smuggle-channels, new trade was able to quickly offer desired goods, often in a 24-hour rhythm. To regulate the use of public space and the appearance of stands, the City Government had introduced standardised and lined-up stands at certain locations. Some traders had started paying tax. (phase **02** lightness)

Without an alternative, all available public and void space of the city turned into a testing ground for new commerce. Profitable trading spots were getting ever more compressed, becoming new public centres. (phase **03** occupation)

Officials sought participation in the process with so called 'temporary permits' that effectively legalised further construction of stands, kiosks and other facilities. This action was claimed one of a social value as well as relating to the unemployment problem. 'You could also rent, buy or borrow parking places from the traffic authority. Each of these administrations was finding ways to earn a bit of money.' (Interview with Z. Gligorijevic, Belgrade, January 2001) (phase **04** legislation)

Subverting institutional intentions, the legislation gave further momentum to solid, physical definition of the space of street commerce. (phase **05** solidification) ———
Positive feedback: 'Known also as a snowball effect. System increases production of itself by increasing returns.' (K. Kelly, *Out of Control*, 1995).

In the beginning, kiosks were placed individually, but in time, groups and concentrations shaped up, predominantly at crossings and bus stops. Stretches of solidified commercial strips appeared along important arteries leading to the periphery. (phase **06** new forms) ——— **Evolution:** Continuous progress from the homogenous to the heterogeneous in structure and from the single and simple to the diverse and manifold in quality and function.

5. **'We came up with the idea to create a three-dimensional drawing of a process of transformation of space, organisation and typology, where information about changes and actors is stored (carried) in characteristic time sections. We started with a few examples of Belgrade, thinking that they could become very interesting abstract models.'** (Internal correspondence, 17/02/2000)

EVOLUTIVE PROCESS

subdivison

attractor

loosing boundary

double skin

1. Inertia
Department store still at its original state in the beginning of 1993.

2. Shrinking
In mid 1993, as a result of the embargo, the store remains out of goods.
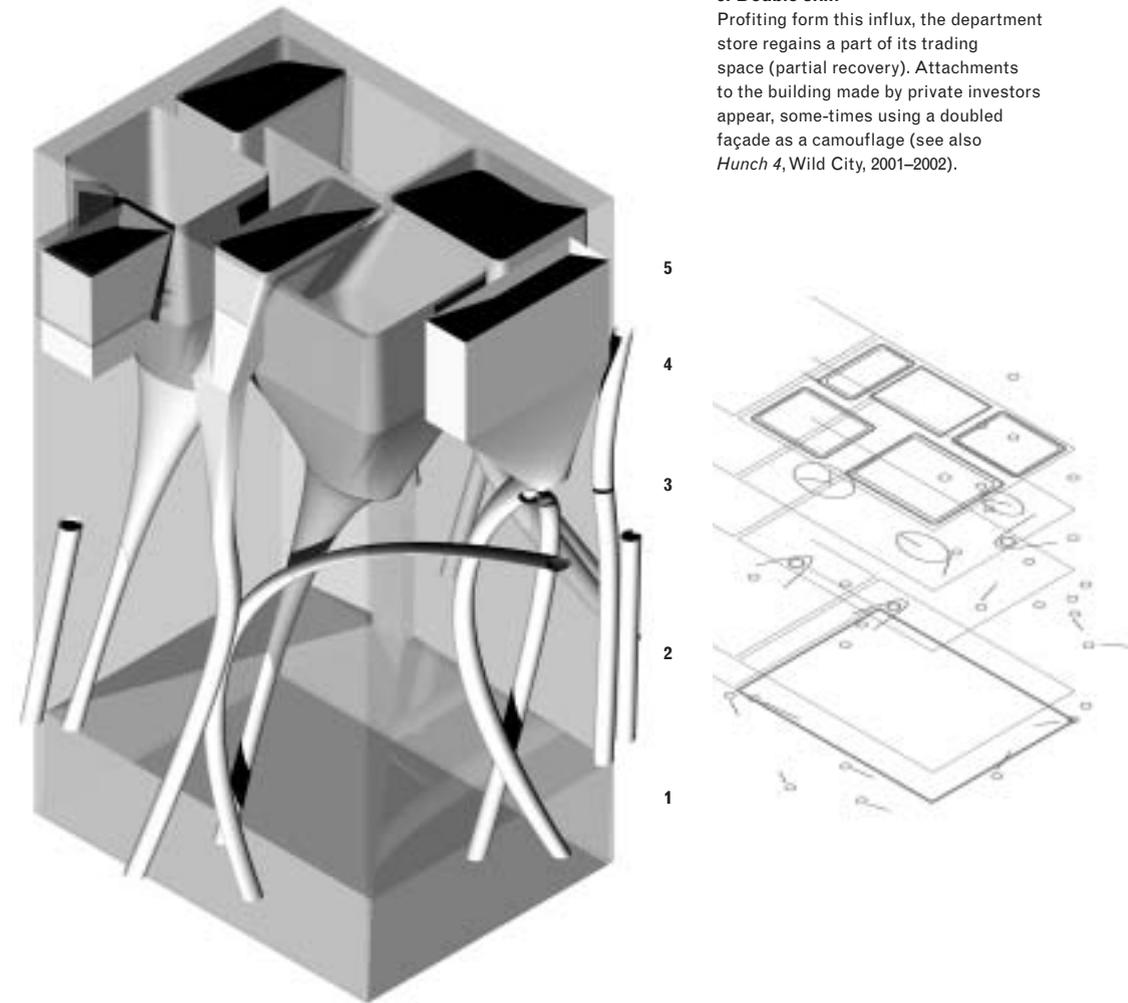
3. Loosening boundary
In the autumn of the same year, the street salesmen occupy the public space around it (attractor). The state-owned store starts partially renting its space to small private shops.

4. Subdivision
Once open in plan, space becomes separated.

5. Double skin
Profiting form this influx, the department store regains a part of its trading space (partial recovery). Attachments to the building made by private investors appear, some-times using a doubled façade as a camouflage (see also *Hunch 4*, Wild City, 2001–2002).

Department store: For the period of one year, the majority of department stores in the city were left without supplies, having only few products to sell. This example shows the inversion of Belgrade's largest department store into a management organisation that rents its spaces and shares it with smaller private traders. ———
Beneficial virus: 'The general public usually associates the term computer virus with a small, nasty program, which aims to destroy the information on their machines. As usual, general public's understanding of the term is incorrect. (...) Yet some well-known researchers keep insisting that it is possible to use the replication mechanism of the viral programs for some useful and beneficial purposes.' (V. Boncev, 1994)

6. 'Something is self-organising if, left to itself, it tends to become more organised. This is an unusual, indeed quite counter-intuitive property: we expect that, left to themselves, things get messy, and that when we encounter a very high degree of order, or an increase in order, something, someone, or at least some peculiar thing, is responsible. (...) But we now know of many instances where this expectation is simply wrong; of things, which can start in a highly random state and, without being shaped from the outside, become more and more organised. Thus self-organisation, which I find to be one of the most interesting concepts in modern science — is also one of the most nebulous, because the ideas of organisation, pattern, order and so forth are, as used normally, quite vague.'
(Statement by Cosma Rohilla Shalizi, at www.santafe.edu/~shalizi/notebooks/self-organisation.html)

Urban genetics: The practice of discovering the inherent scripts of unforeseen processes of urban transformations, under a hypothesis that their outcomes are more sophisticated than the designed ones. ———— **Public transport:** From the beginning of the nineties the quality of public transport in Belgrade was in severe decline, until the moment when privately owned vehicles started to penetrate the system. From one public transport company owned by the city, the system transformed into a symbiotic model consisting of the old company joined by numerous 'one man-one bus' ventures. Further consolidation of individual drivers took place when the 'stronger' among them started overtaking the 'weaker ones', in the 'one bus line-one company' model. It led to the establishment of dozens of private companies side by side with the public one.

GENETIC CODES: An attempt at extracting the mechanics of a transformation processes. In nearly all of them, from street trade to city transport, pulsating organisations are achieved, through conflict and negotiation between institutions and individuals. They resemble symbiotic natural forms and systems, in which the small elements (individuals-orange) are in charge of producing newness and flexibility, while the big core (institution-grey) maintains the minimum of stability.

Script: So, is this a sort of script demonstrating how capitalist economy works? Commonly asked question. ———— **(Quasi)scientific method:** The scientific method is the process by which scientists, collectively and over time, endeavour to construct an accurate (that is, reliable, consistent and non-arbitrary) representation of the world. Many contemporary philosophers of science would argue that there is
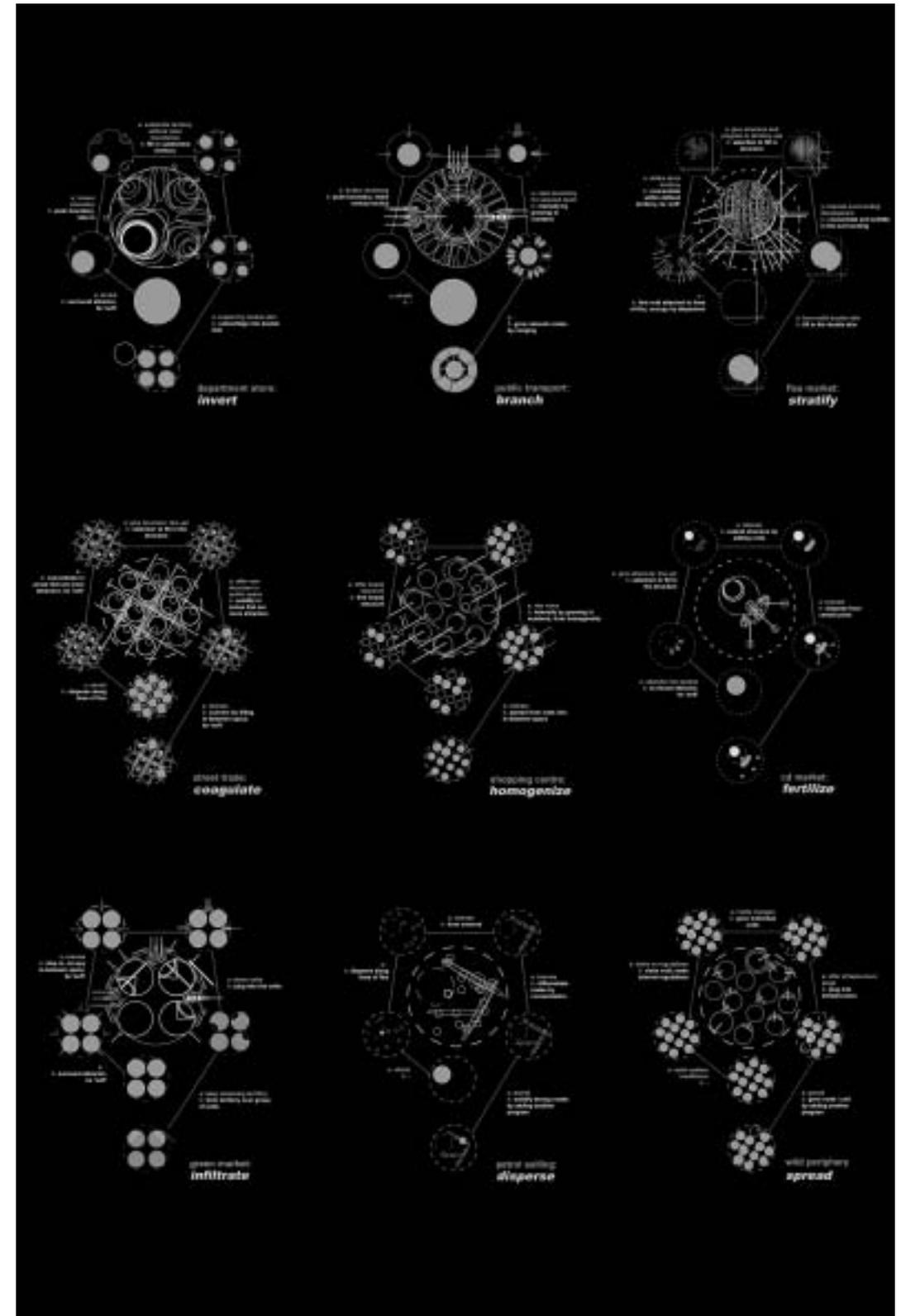
Belgrade roof extension

Belgrade roof extension

Rotterdam roof extension
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no such thing as a scientific method. Quasi-science is like pseudo-science in being an imitation of science, but unlike it, not claiming to be true. It treats ideas as if they were scientific. (Various sources) ——— **Navigation:** The search for codes of changes is necessary as it is an attempt to detect some regularity in mutations and to understand a process without stopping it (since it would be a waste of time). Until now, the way was to plan order, which always ended up in entropy and was giving everyone the creeps. This way is different; some kind of navigation of chaos, where codes are sails for catching the wind in order to sail further and not to get lost. In that way chaos is not subordinate to some imaginary order but by understanding its logic we learn to function in it. (*Internal correspondence*, 07/03/2000)

7. **'So that is what Belgrade looks like these days? Will the kiosks survive democratic changes? Or, even better, would, for example, you want them to survive? This wilderness was not developed here to that extent but since the government has changed there were quite some surgical demolition operations. Quite unpopular among people. There were even suicides of wild developers. I wonder what will happen in Belgrade.'** (e-mail Hrvoje Hrabak, architect, Zagreb, 22/11/2000 15:08 +0100, kiosks)

Belgrade roof extension: houses for two brothers: 'You could say that the urban phenomenon of Belgrade is a house on a house; on a tall building next to Branco's bridge two little houses stand, a kind of miracle of rural architecture!' (*Weekly Vreme*, Belgrade, 7/12/2000) The story goes that when building their houses some years ago, right in the city centre, the brothers didnot even realise they were visible. Soon, they came into focus of public attention and became the city's symbol for ignorance of urban. Recently, the 'famous twins' decided to transform on their own, with an undisputable building permission. Aggravated by the constant media exposure, they started to rotate the sloping roof ninety degrees toward a new attic wall that will hide them from views. (Various sources) ——— **Rotterdam roof extension: the Parasite:** 'The Parasite is a unique project and a statement in its own right because of how it deals with, its temporary status, a scarcity of space and the reuse of materials. (...) The Parasite stands on roof of the Las Palmas building in the Kop van Zuid district but can be attached to another host building in the future. The great flexibility demanded by the scheme, its clear image and identity, the elegant design despite a limited budget have earned the Parasite a nomination for the Netherlands Architecture Institute Prize.' (NAi press release for the exhibition *FRESH FACTS: The Young Dutch Architecture*, 08/07/2002)

YU – NL: a brief comparison of recent urban glories and traumas:

In the story of Wild Belgrade, the liberalisation or 'wildness' could perhaps come across as a kind of healthy 'loosening up' after socialistic decades long mass-scale planning and execution, monumental cuts into the city fabric. And, to the socialist policy often dedicated to the representation of itself, rather than to social facts. On the trajectory of a continuous decline of planning ability, the seventies were still successful and easy, idyllic almost — there were 'no cars, no advertising, no foreign workers (or refugees, or Chinese), no youth culture, no junkies.' … In the mid eighties corrosion of the internationalist/physical and social dimension was well underway. Early predicaments of the things to come were the numerous energetic interventions in New Belgrade, for instance. It could be stated that they were tuned primarily into a kind of verbal negation of the internationalist context. Echoing over the public green of New Belgrade, *Messages of Las Vegas* have brought liberalisation on the form of shopping, private business, billboards and brought sloping roofs. Brick has replaced reinforced concrete, and old-fashioned masonry came instead mass-prefabrication, in the most official and planned way, and well before the explosion of wild building. The nineties have rounded off a notion of planning as 'a process that lasts too long, with too many papers and fewer results. The present opinion is that the purpose of planning is the making of plans, not their realisation'. (From *an concept towards reality*, Preliminary Realisation of General Plan GUP, Belgrade, 2001)

Is it worth or possible to engage into a speculation: where would Belgrade have been now as a city and where would the planning be, if there were not for the large crisis in the nineties? It might sound as a paradox, but one guess is — in a place very much resembling the present one: planning institutions of the financially exhausted state in transition are given a task to restore some social agendas and discover public interests in a sprawling city, after a decade of privatisation, commercialisation, following the market and the European examples. In short, even without the crisis, the city as a planned entity would have probably ended up in crisis. In much the same way, in the Netherlands in the early nineties, the upcoming liberalisation was awaited as a breath of fresh air on the ashes of the patronising modernism of the welfare state (Hertzberger, Van Eijck). A society, where the dictates of safety, cosiness, appropriate scale, programmatic decency, etc slowly and steadily had turned into their opposites.

Citizens started moving out of the cities, into newly erected neighbourhoods, hoping to be returned to their dreams of a safe living — but now separated from the dangerous city. Later in the nineties, more and more projects and researches (remember the 'Wilde Wonen', for example) have revealed also the flip side of the high expectations — the decentralisation of cities along infrastructure networks, impact of 'new economy', highway developments, immigrant urbanisation… and in the end the power of a developer, growing against the shaken state. 'Private public partnerships became possible; a whole new world seemed to open up.'

'The Hague 1989. The Dutch government retreated from its financial engagement with social housing, leaving the formerly subsidised housing corporations to compete on the market. The traffic controllers, the housing corporations, the police, and the public greenery department have all become corporations jealously defending their turf. What has been sacrificed is the power to dream up and build new urban realities in the way it had been done since the beginning of the century. Urban planning and architecture were given the task to disguise the post-civic, multi nodal-city as a coherent urban(e) community.' (Crimson, Mart Stam's Trousers: *Stories from behind the Scenes of Dutch Moral Modernism*, 1999)

About the article:

This text is based on an ongoing research *The Wild City, genetics of uncontrolled urban processes*; a collaborative project by Ana Dzokic, Milica Topalovic, Marc Neelen and Ivan Kucina. It has been developed both through research at the Berlage Institute, a postgraduate laboratory of architecture (published in *Hunch 4*, the Berlage Institute), and within the framework of STEALTH group. It included work of students from the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. The project formed part of USE (Uncertain States of Europe), and has been presented at Urban Drift in Berlin, and at the 7th Doors of Perception conference on Flow. Currently, its findings are being used for conceiving (computational) algorithms based on the concept of urban genetics.

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