Trakiya
Redicovering. Generating. Integrating

Strategy for the urban development of a prefabricated housing neighbourhood in Plovdiv, Bulgaria

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TRAKIYA
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Abstract

Trakiya is a prefabricated residential district in Bulgaria which emerged in the socialistic period and experiences a positive development in the years after the fall of the regime. As a part of the global attention towards citizen participation and sociologically pursuant urban design, the district is a subject of debate in the architecture and urbanism fields in Bulgaria. The focus of this master thesis is the meeting point between the administratively conducted planning and the very typical for this district informal and unofficial development through its dwellers. The derivative project consists of three interconnected steps. It proposes a method of restauration of the embedded green system with regard to the spatial qualities around *Trakiya*. Regeneration of the monotonous and fragmented public space by embracing the variety of bottom-up activities originating in the private areas of the microregion. Integration of an underdeveloped microregion by attaching it to the aforementioned interventions.

Kurzbeschreibung

Trakiya ist eine Plattenbausiedlung in Bulgarien. Diese ist in der Periode des Sozialismus erschienen und erlebt eine positive Entwicklung in den Jahren nach dem Untergang des Regimes. Als Teil der globalen Aufmerksamkeit Richtung Bürgerbeteiligung und soziologisch bedingten Stadtentwicklung, der Bezirk fällt im Mittelpunkt der Debatte in den Architektur- und Urbanismus Feldern in Bulgarien. Schwerpunkt der vorliegenden Diplomarbeit ist der Treffpunkt zwischen der administrativ durchgeführten Planung und der für diesen Bezirk typischen, ungeahnten und inoffiziellen Entwicklung seitens seiner Bewohnerinnen. Das Derivatprojekt besteht aus drei zusammenhän- genden Schritten. Es schlägt eine Methode zur Wiederherstellung des eingebetteten grünen Systems in Bezug auf die räumlichen Qualitäten in Trakiya vor. Regeneration des monotonen und fragmentierten öffentli- chen Raumes durch die Ergreifung der vielfältigen bottom-up Aktivitäten aus den privaten Bereichen der Mikroregionen. Integration einer unter- entwickelten Mikroregion durch deren Miteinbezug in den oben genann- ten Interventionen.

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Introduction

For the visitor expecting to see a typical eastern European prefabricated residential district, *Trakiya* would be an unexpected surprise. A curvy street network streams through unregularly compositions of panel blocks. The grey prefab concrete facades alternate with colourful patchwork of thermal insulation, self-made balcony glazing and stylized parapets. The landscape's vertical development varies from small chaotically distributed sheds, through low school buildings with spacious yards, to 12 storey height residential blocks. The eclectic view is supplemented by a variety of self-made constructions, kailyards, playgrounds etc. *Trakiya* is one of the biggest residential districts in Bulgaria from socialist time and as such is generally regarded with scepticism. Uncovering the history of its creation, analysing its structure and observing its development, the potential of *Trakiya* starts showing its depth.

During my primary analysis of the neighbourhood and the research in which I was constantly looking for problems that can be solved with the tools of architecture and urban planning, I stumbled across many such problems. Considering the future development and the threat of uncontrolled overbuilding, the amount of cars that are overtaking most of the free space, that is originally meant for the people. Other issues regarding some social themes, such as the unacceptance and underestimation of the neighbourhood from outside citizens (typical for most prefab districts in Bulgaria), the lack of cultural facilities, etc. The list goes on - many problems in many aspects, which is only natural considering the scale of the project. However, none of this will correspond and represent what *Trakiya* really is.

Trakiya's emphasis lies in its incompleteness. Due to the turning point of history in 1989 the initial purpose for the district was never finished. Tabula rasa, exploited by its inhabitants through different self-made add-on constructions and functions. A possibility for the people to shape their habitat (inside and out) their own way. This created a patchwork of self-made formations (terraces, additions, community spaces, etc.), uncontrolled and uncoordinated. Although the intention of the project, created in the 1970s, is to inhabit the neighbourhood with people from different cultural and ethnic origin and transform every one of them into the same ideal *socialist men*, the freedom of expression dominates the post-socialistic period.

The dynamic transformation in the last 26-year transition to democracy turned the district from a bedroom neighbourhood to a complex urban space. Since the economic progress in 2007 the district starts been build up by a rather chaotic and uncoordinated contemporary, commercial architecture which is devoid from strategic, or philosophical thought- an emanation of the consumer society.

Choosing some of the main points where *Trakiya's* bandwidth of public interpretation and functionality manifest, I am drafting a proposal for a versatile development. It includes two planning dimensions. The first far-reaching measure is the creation of a green network that underlines the rustic background of the terrain. This part of the proposal also aims to strengthen the human scale connections between the green areas and to set clear boundaries for the densification potentials of *Trakiya*. The second part this work proposes multiple small scale interventions, distributed in key positions between the different micro regions and along the most vital street in *Trakiya - Saedinenie*. This kind of approach is also applied as a measure for the integration of the irritably developed micro-region A13 *Skobeleva Maika*.

Methodology

As a former inhabitant of *Trakiya* it is an interesting experience to rediscover the space that once was a setting for my first exploration of the urban environment. Both a challenge to disregard my romantic childhood perception of it, and a possibility to re-evaluate the milieu.

My initial approach to this work was to look at the until then unknown to me side of *Trakiya* and do a library research before the district came to be. This included the exploration of the political regime in which *Trakiya* emerged and the sociological processes that took place before and after *die Wende*.

Using the methods of graphical analysis I explored the urban structure of *Trakiya* and the evolution it experienced through its 40 years of existence. Multiple visits for the on-site research followed, as well as my participation in the research for *One Architecture Week* 2016, an annual architectural festival which in this edition focuses on the bottom up development of the district, with the name *ACTION! Towards a neighbourhood practice*.

Context

1 Bulgaria

To understand the logic behind the concept of *Trakiya* beyond the architectural articles and description, an overview of the chronological development of the region and its population is a needed prerequisite. Although *Trakiya* is built on a plane ground, the unfolding of the palimpsest of the area it belongs to would give a better understanding to some particularities.

1.1 Location and historical overview

Bulgaria has a rich historical background mainly due to its geographical location. Being a crossing point on the Balkans, this land was and still is a home of different ethnic groups - from Thracians, then Slavs and proto-Bulgarians, to Jews, Armenians, Turks, etc. These folks lived through the centuries together sharing both troublesome and peaceful times. Although the country's name - Bulgaria coming from the invasive proto-Bulgarian folk dates from the year 681 AD[1] , the cultural differences between the groups never completely mixed what makes today's Bulgarian ethnographic picture very complex and colourful.

After gaining its independence[2] and before becoming a part of the Soviet sphere of influence[3] , Bulgaria was in a state of major economic, political and cultural rise. For half a century the newly established European monarchy was shaping a future of a modern European country taking reference mostly to Austrian architecture. The industrialisation period, just like in most European countries, leads to an internal migration movement and urbanisation of the population. This process causes an acute housing crisis and remains unsolved until after The Second World War.

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1 The establishment of the First Bulgarian Empire, which dominated most of the Balkans and functioned as a cultural hub for Slavs during the Middle Ages
2 The Preliminary Treaty of San Stefano was a treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire signed at San Stefano on 3 March 1878. The treaty ended the Russo-Turkish War, 1877–78.
3 According to a secret protocol attached to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 (revealed only after Germany's defeat in 1945), Northern and Eastern Europe were divided into Nazi and Soviet spheres of influence. The Soviet sphere of influence includes The Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries.

1.2 Bulgarian Socialism

Being part of the Axis[4] in the summer of 1944 the Kingdom of Bulgaria finds itself in the unpleasant position of a losing country. The 9th of September 1944 marks the beginning of a new regime. [5] Along with losing large territory both in the south and in the west parts of the country, Bulgaria also loses a lot of its intellectuals of that time in a purge that continues over the years. The changes in the political scene in eastern Europe at that time, lead to another shift in Bulgaria's demographics.

The nationalisation process[6] boosts the development of the heavy industry in Bulgaria. Part of this economical branch is the housing industry. The occurrence of the prefabrication and the plattenbau[7] is a key event in the history of industrialisation, more so in the socialist countries.

In the beginning of socialism and especially between 1960s and 1970s the massive residential construction is at its peak. There are a lot of different models for the new districts, multi-storey buildings consisting of apartments that need to solve the living problem of many newly arrived citizens. Such processes and respectively districts are not unique for Bulgaria. These are part of the urbanisation process in many regions of the world. What is specific in the Bulgarian case is the aim of mixing of a heterogenic population. The main postulate of the ideology from this time is that the differences in the way of living of the people from the city and people from the villages need to be dissolved, so that the population is homogenised. (self-translation from Bulgarian) [8]

Typical characteristics for the dominant style of this era - socialist realism are solidity, stylisation, pathetism and most of all monumentality. Another very important element of this style is the lack of expressionism and the strong presence of control. Respectively in the architectural field - urban development and public and representative building are leading elements. Their design, in which the public buildings are used as accents for the urban planning, is always coherent. The 1970s mark the strongest period for planned economy in socialist Bulgaria. This influences the urban planning, which happens on an even bigger than the territorial scale. There is a concept, mission and character for every town in the country. These parameters are not only planned, but also purposefully directed and controlled. The urban planning functions not as an isolated process, but as an organic part of a bigger territorially-economic system.

All inhabited areas in the *People's Republic of Bulgaria* are treated as one system, mutually bound, hierarchically graded and specialized. [9] Architecture, as most of the marks for standard in a society is used as an important instrument in the hands of the authority. The residential architecture on the other side is a required norm for the gestalt of the socialistic society. Therefore, there is no aesthetics or style prescribed for its design, just pure functionalism. This topic is closely observed in chapter 3.3 *Panelka*[10] districts in Bulgaria.

1 The National Palace of culture and the Monument "1300 years Bulgaria", Sofia, Bulgaria
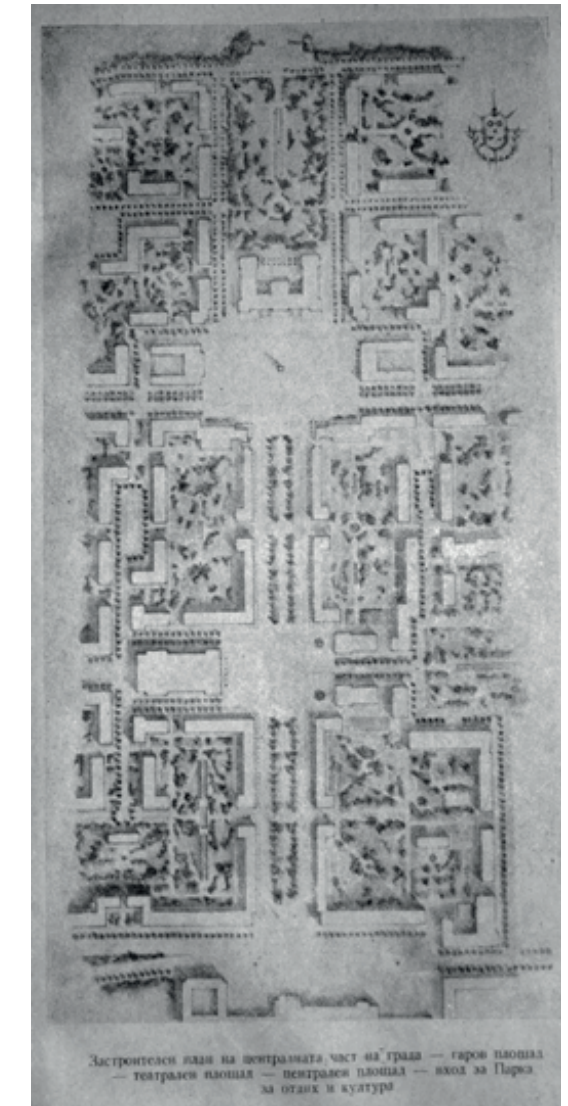
2 Plan for the creation of the new town- Dimitrovgrad

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4 The Axis Powers were the nations that fought in World War II against the Allied forces. Germany, Italy, Japan, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Thailand.
5 The Bulgarian coup d'état of 1944 was a change in the Kingdom of Bulgaria's administration and government carried out on the eve of 9 September 1944. Following that date, large-scale political, economic and social changes were introduced to the country, with Bulgaria quitting the Axis and coming into the Soviet sphere of influence.
6 On December 23, 1947 the Law on nationalization of private industrial and mining enterprises is approved.
7 Plattenbau is a building whose structure is constructed of large, prefabricated concrete slabs.
8 Zlatkova 2012: 127

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9 see Kaleva, 2015
10 The Bulgarian word for Prefabricated residential building

1.3 Post-socialist period

Although a period of crisis and decay precedes the events of the autumn in 1989, the revulsion is shocking for the whole population of Bulgaria. The new system inherits a ruined economy and therefore the country falls in a period of transition, which according to many continues still (2017). The situation of stupor influences almost every aspect of the country's identity. The period between the years 1990 and 2000 is a dynamic time in which the leading values are personal independence and survival. The public propaganda is total denial of the socialist achievements.

Before 1989 the character of urban development is directly connected to the socialistic system (one political party and centralized economy) and is more or less "unified" (the main investor is the state itself), after 1989 it becomes "pluralistic" (private investors order architecture with a diverse scale and typology). [11]

All of this chaotic changes reflect in the architectural development and the urban image. The development is limited to small local interventions. There is no concept or common aesthetics.

3 The demolition of Georgi Dimitrov Mausoleum in August 1999

4 the Monument "1300 years Bulgaria" after the democratic changes in 1989, Sofia, Bulgaria

11 Kaleva, 2015

Rumania

Serbia

Black Sea

Plovdiv

Macedonia

Turkey

Greece

5 The crest of Plovdiv in 1932

2 Plovdiv

History speaks of Plovdiv as a time-resilient settlement. Since Plovdiv came into being, its development is interrupted multiple times through the centuries. Despite the vicissitudes, the space around Maritza river and the Seven Hills does not become barren for a moment. Without any ambition for glamor, Plovdiv continuous existing and changes constantly. For me, as a former indweller, this place exudes a strange simultaneous feeling of helplessness and hope. An unending sequence of ruin and new life that can be seen in various places around the city. In order to represent the picture of Plovdiv as complete as possible I look at it through the vantage point of four different spaces- the historical, the artistic and the physical one.

### 2.1 Historical overview

Antique period
The city of Plovdiv is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Situated in the middle of south Bulgaria, the place is an international cross point and in the years lies in the way of famous routes like *Via Militaris*[12] and the Orient Express [13]. Some of the oldest remains that are found in the area of Trakiya district are from the Neolithic era from some 4000 years ago.

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12 Via Militaris or Via Diagonalis was an ancient Roman road and an important military Axis starting from Singidunum and reaching Constantinople
13 The Orient Express was the name of a long-distance passenger train service created in 1883 between Paris and Istanbul

Changing its ethnical majority through the years, the city also changes its names. The oldest known Name is Evmolipia thought to be Thracian, then Pulpudeva, Philipopolis (after Philip II, ruler of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon and Predecessor of Alexander the Great), Filibe, Puldin. The city is a regional centre of the Macedon, Roman, Byzantium and the Ottoman empires through the centuries. The roman name- Trimontium describes the so called *Trihalmie*[14] that forms the core of the city. Together with the other four hills inside the city proper they form the symbol of Plovdiv – the seven hills. Today only six remain, since one of them was destroyed in the beginning of the 20th century for building material. Most of the city's streets today are paved with this material. Although the oldest remains found from the Neolithic era are not in today's centre of the city, the later bronze and iron age settlements are situated on and around it. Later on, the setting of Plovdiv's development is the Trihalmie. Depending on the threat level, the city's borders shrink or expand around the topology of the region. A period of expansion is the time during which Plovdiv was a regional Thracian centre in the Roman empire.

It evolved to the South, South-west and South-east of the Three Hills. The city layout is based on the famous Hippodamian plan (orthogonal directions of the street infrastructure) which the Romans inherited and further developed. [15]

Map key
- revealed archeology
- unrevealed archeology
- buildings
- green areas
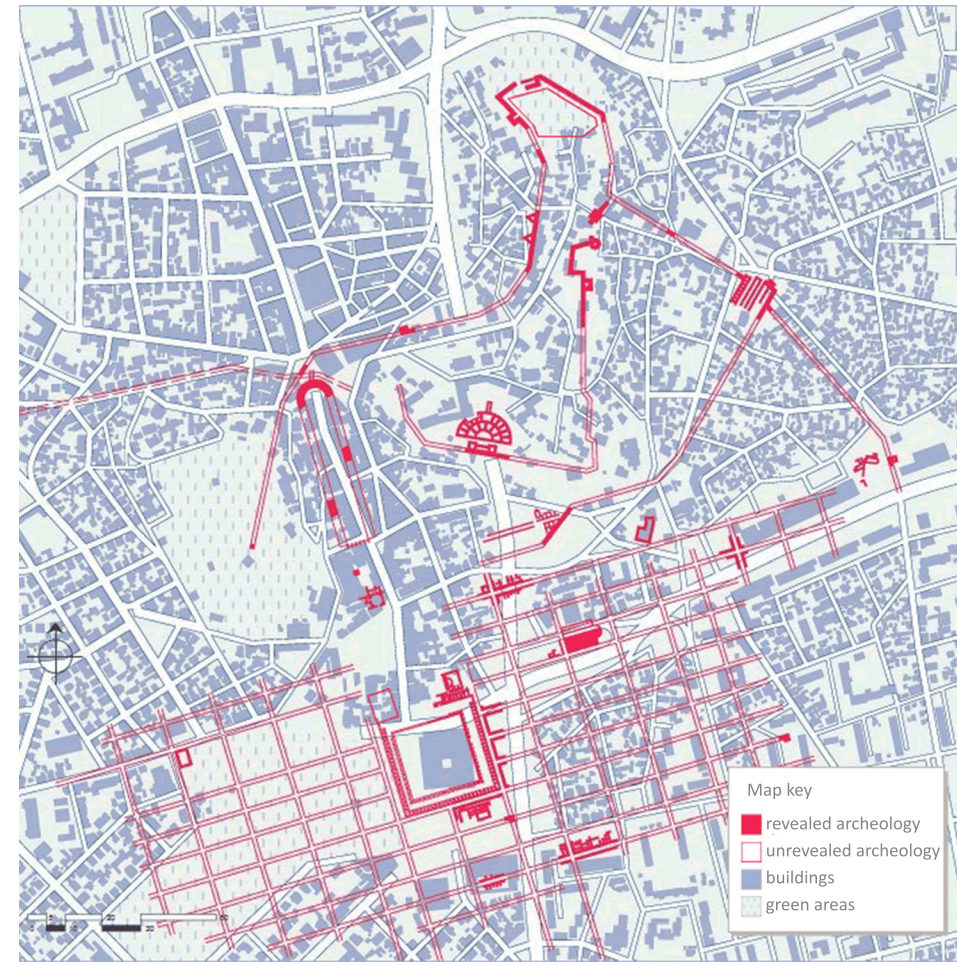
6 Map of ancient Philippopolis overlap the contemporary map of Plovdiv

7 The wall on Atanas Krastev square in 2014

Bulgarian revival period and industrialisation at the beginning of the 20th century

The Trihalmie is used as a protection site and the traces of fortresses can be seen today all over the old town. This part of the city is in the UNESCO's wold cultural heritage list since 2004[16] . The structure of this district is amorphous like most of Bulgarian cities influenced by the Bulgarian national revival period (Bulgarian renaissance)[17] . The narrow steep cobblestone street twist around small strongly densified quartiers, forming a protean and multidimensional milieu. A wall on Atanas Krastev Square gives the best overview of the historical layers of Plovdiv. The lowest quadratic wall is the roman construction and upon it stands an early-medieval boulder, and on top of them Revival Period houses are build.
The ethnic diversity of Bulgaria is strongly present in Plovdiv. In the end of the 19th century Plovdiv's inhabitants live in harmony, despite their ethnic differences. The population of Plovdiv in 1884 is 33 442, where 16 752 define themselves as Bulgarians, 7 144 as Turks, 2 168 as Jews, 5 497 as Greeks, 979 as Armenians and 902 as others. All of them share their habitat, work and life together and their districts form a kind of *communal cartography*[18].   The movie *After the End of the World* (1998)[19] is a Bulgarian/German/Greek production that tells the story of the colourful life in the district shortly after the coup in September 1944. This period marks the beginning of a brutal oppression of ethnic and religious differences that are so typical for Plovdiv and its society.

14 Three Hills (bulgarian: трихълмието), is the name of the ensemble of the hills Nebet, Djambas and Taksim on which the old town of Plovdiv is situated today.
15 The history of Philippopolis http://ancient-stadium-plovdiv.eu/?p=21&l=2

16 http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1948/
17 The Bulgarian national revival marks the period of social and cultural awakening between the 18th century and the Liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman rule at the end of the 19th century.
18 See Zlatkova 2012, 133
19 http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0206303/?ref_=ttpl_pl_tt
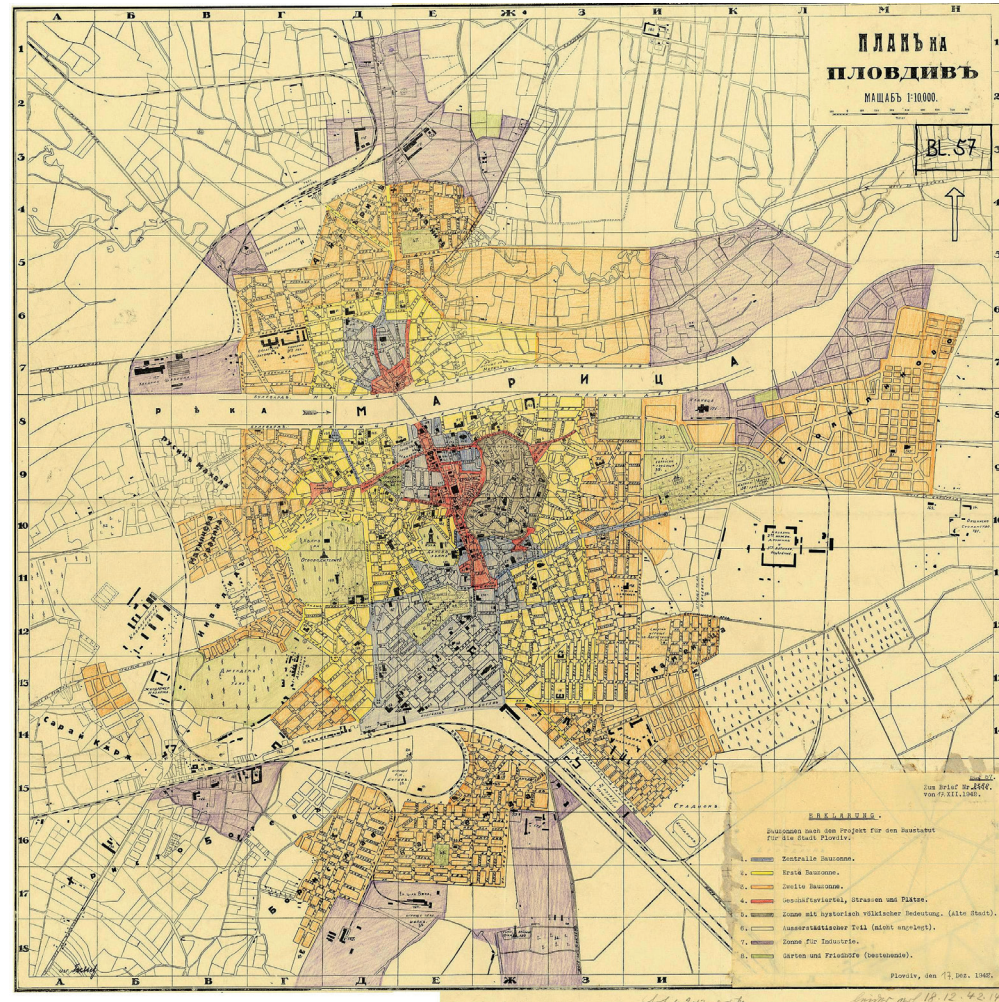
By becoming the capital of Eastern Rumelia[20] , after its liberation in January 1878, Plovdiv turns its vision towards Europe and starts shaping the contemporary look of a fast developing and diverse urban centre. In this period the city is known as a crafts, business and cultural centre. In 1986 Plovdiv is the first Bulgarian city to have a master urban plan. The Czech architect Josef Schnitter focuses on the project of designing the main street, making it from a small regional merchant street, a bright, modern and multifunctional public space. At this time the city has a horizontal and harmonious density with a lot of green spaces and almost no big scale squares. In his book "Chronicles of Plovdiv", Nicola Alvadzhiev describes the city with original atmosphere.

The liberation found the city the same way as all the major cities in the country were - with poky, small houses, almost no public buildings, narrow crooked streets, among which the dust dances in the summer and in winter become pathless, covered with mud, steep squares and dead end streets, people in worn up jackets, with plucked caps or faded fezzes and absence of any basic hygiene inside at home, or at the street. Attractive to the eye were only the hills, the bleached with silver haze shores of Maritza, the endless range of the plane, that is stuck between the ever thoughtful Balkan and the violet blue Rhodope... Although uncomely, Plovdiv was dear to our grandfathers and grandmothers and after them, our fathers started being proud with him because underneath the lumber, a cheerful image of a new and tidy town was already peeking. (self-translation from Bulgarian)[21]

Except for the Tobacco city from the 1920s and several other buildings and factories, at the time Plovdiv consist mostly of medium scale houses and workshops shaping an urban character of an easeful and small, but at the same time a multifarious Balkan city.[22]

8 Plan of Plovdiv from 1942

9 Plovdiv's Main Street 1940

10 Plovdiv's Main Street 1940

Green zones
Public space
Architectural and historical reserve
Old Town

0   100 m   300 m   500 m
Figure ground plan of Plovdiv's centre in 2017

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20 Eastern Rumelia is an autonomous territory in the Ottoman Empire between in 1878 by and until 1908, when Bulgaria declared independence.
21 Alvadzhiev 2015: 11
22 An industrial quartier near the city centre that consists of multiple massive buildings for the sorting and storage of tobacco. It was the inspiration for one of Bulgarians most significant Bulgarian novels "Tobacco" (1946) by Dimitar Dimov

11 Union house 1970

12 Plovdiv's main square and Post in 1970

13 *Komsomol* cinema 1970

Socialism

The new politic system bears new ideals, and aesthetics and as mentioned in Chapter 1.2 Bulgarian Socialism, sets the architectural focus on the urban design. It relies on monumentality, scale and grandeur, and Plovdiv's compact and dense form until the 1940's opposes it sharply. Just like in Roman time, in which spacious forums and lavish theatres are priority, the city starts to expand beyond the Three hills and to reformulate the urban fabric according to its needs. The main street serves as an attractional axis leading the urban stream to the specious square at its end. The same place where in ancient times the roman forum lies. Until the 1970s when it is destroyed a landmark building is one of the last on the row of Neo-Renaissance buildings along the main street. *The House of Charities and Public Health* donated to the city by the merchant and charity activist Dimitar Kudoglu in 1928 as a public health facility for free treatment of the poor of socially important diseases is nationalized and later demolished[23]. On its place - a massive orthogonal and representative post office building emerges, putting a strong three dimensional accent to the space. Next to this ensemble lies the city garden. Beyond it, another monumental socialist building rises - the national library on *Ivan Vazov* street. North of it, the Union House (today city's cultural house *Boris Hristov*) and cinema *Komsomol* (now *Kosmos*)[24] concludes the central urban complex.

23 See http://www.visitplovdiv.com/en/node/634
24 Currently the building of the cinema is a scene of intense public discussion since it was almost demolished by the municipality for the building of a parking house. "To give new life to Cosmos Cinema" is a project that results from several consequent civil actions with the purpose of saving the cinema – in the first place as an architectural valuable building and in the second as a centre of culture. http://kinokosmos.eu/en/the-initiative

Except intervening the city's centre, the socialistic regime aims to distribute the residential and industrial functions outside the representative core of Plovdiv. This is achieved through huge expansions in almost every direction. The new districts are publically described as constellation with urban character, serving their population with the whole variety of public functions. Satellite settlements that aim to teach the population *"how to become an urban citizen and a citizen of the new modern country" ... A homogenisation process that aims to overcome the cultural, social and ethnical specificity of every individual.* (self-translation from Bulgarian) [25]

One of this transformational districts is *Trakiya.*
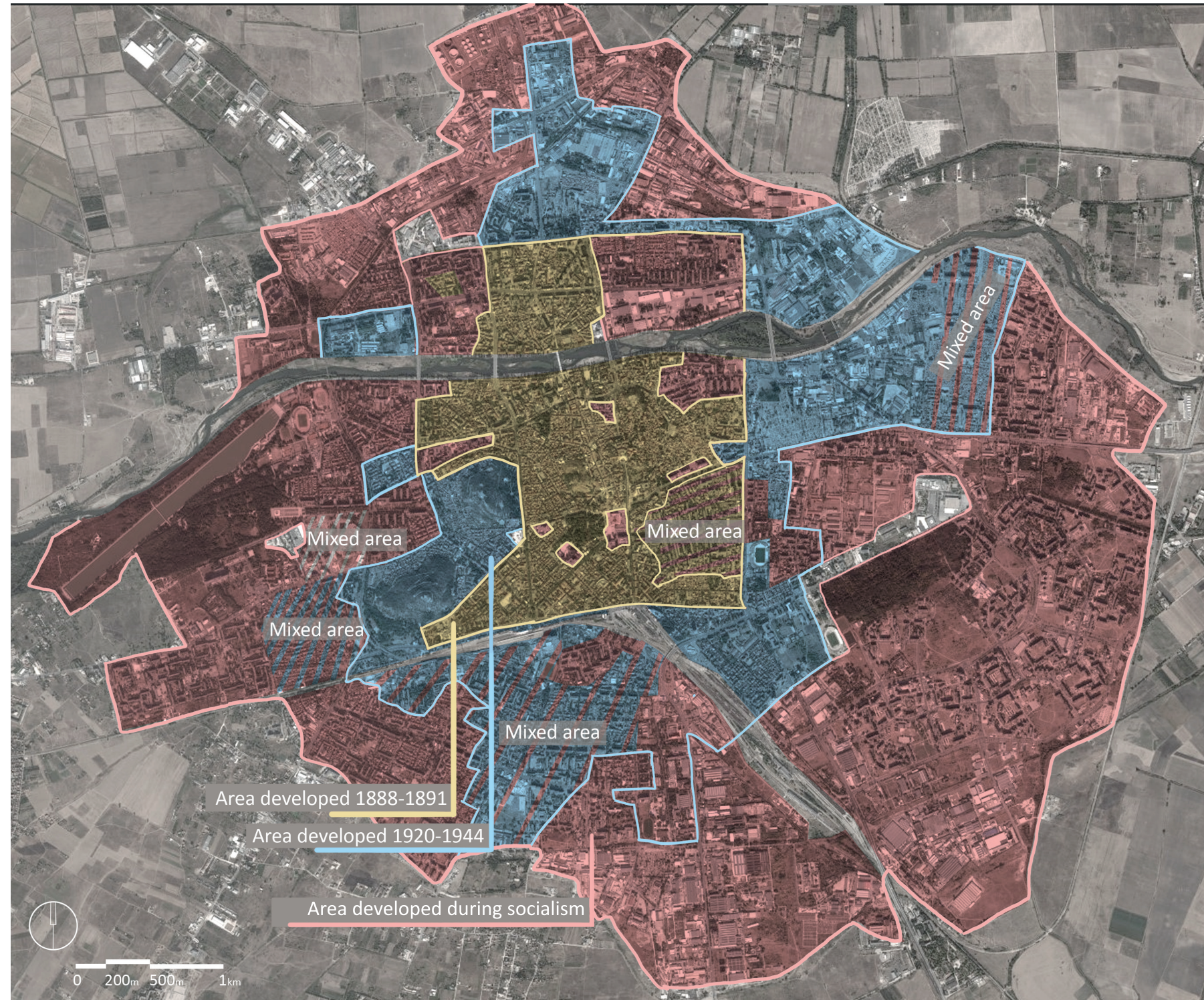
25 See Zlatkova 2012: 128

**Development of Plovdiv
after 1988**

Mixed area

Mixed area

Mixed area

Mixed area

Mixed area

Mixed area

Area developed 1888-1891

Area developed 1920-1944

Area developed during socialism

0   200 m 500 m   1 km

Period after *die Wende* in 1989

Like every other big Bulgarian city, the change finds Plovdiv's population unprepared. In the following ten years Bulgaria's economy suffers from recession and failure.

Concerning the residential districts among which is *Trakiya*, there is a total stagnation in terms of general development. This is a furtive period for local transformation within the existing structure. Due to the high rate of private property and lack of state control, the people are able to utilize every suitable space in the environment and create small businesses.

The anti-socialistic mood accumulates negative attitude towards the prefab districts. The process of restitution triggers some displacement of population in the towns. Materially and emotionally harmed during the privatization period, many people yearn to regain their private property. Some of them succeed, but the majority, whose buildings are destroyed during the socialist period and which do not have enough capital to build up the plane parcels they got back, have no other choice, but to remain in their prefab homes. The inhabitants of these districts are considered poor and lower class people.

This negative attitude towards prefab districts changes in time. After the year 2000 and the adaptation to the new system, the building sector prospers. Accentuating on the residential sector, the new buildings are springing up like mushrooms after the rain. Without any quality control or coordination with the masterplan, there are many districts without street infrastructure, official canalisation or electrification. The buildings itself are of poor quality.

16 People waiting in line to buy bread during the crisis in 1990

18

2.2 Plovdiv in the 21st century

In the last two decades Plovdiv proves itself as the cultural and economic centre of south Bulgaria. Its urban structure retains its overall appearance from the beginning of the democratic period. Regular horizontal densification takes place all over the city with mostly small scale residential and office buildings of diverse typologies. The boom of the shopping centre construction around the year 2010 all over Bulgaria doesn't skip Plovdiv.[26] This becomes a painful topic to Plovdiv's citizens, who are witnessing indelicate interventions on city's landmarks motivated only by commercial interest and no public discussion.[27]
As a positive development some recent actions of Plovdiv's municipality toward rehabilitation of the parks and recreational zones can be observed. The free-of-cars public space also starts being a priority and in the summer of 2016 the recently renovated *Kapana*[28] district becomes an attractive public space.

17 Kapana district in 2015

18 Mariza's shore during OAW 2015

Even though Plovdiv's development underwent major positive changes towards economic growth and revitalisation of its most culturally loaded places, the city still suffers from the greedy mafia's appetite for very important to Plovdiv building sites, the corrupted administration and the absence of adequate judiciary. For the time period between February and September 2016 all of the buildings in the complex *Tobacco Town*-one of the central projects for the program of Plovdiv as a European Capital of Culture in 2019 were irreversibly destroyed. Most of Plovdiv's society struggles to fight this process of demolition while rediscovering more and more of its city's forgotten fortunes.[29] The *Kapana* district and Maritza's shore are among the places that the festival *One Architecture Week*[30] focused on in the past three years using tactical urbanism as a method for their revitalisation. *Trakiya* and especially its bottom up development are the topic of this year's *One Architecture Week* festival.

19 *InFormal's* Project „Urban Chat" for OAW 2016

ONE ARCHITECTURE WEEK

30.09 – 09.10.2016

20 Logo for OAW 2016

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26 The unsuccessful development of one of them, which situated near Trakiya leads to its closing due to reconstruction measures as by official information.
27 This is the case with the shopping centre built on the remains of the natural sight Markovo tepe , the demolishment of the warehouses in the so-called "Tobacco Town" etc.
28 Kapana (from Bulgarian: капана, trap) is a central plovdivian district with a very complex street network that most likely inspired its name.

29 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b0f5665c-69e0-11e6-a0b1-d87a9fea034f.html#axzz4JDVThzXD
30 One Architecture Week is an annual festival observing diverse subject from the architectural and urban planning field in Bulgaria http://onearchitectureweek.com/

3 Panelki

Entering the area part of the former soviet sphere of influence the prefabricated housing estates, or panelki are a typical landscape view. Although there are a lot of similarities between the western and eastern European plattenbau districts, observed here is only the case of post-socialist countries. The ideological and sociological context, which is a main subject in my analysis, differs greatly in western areas.
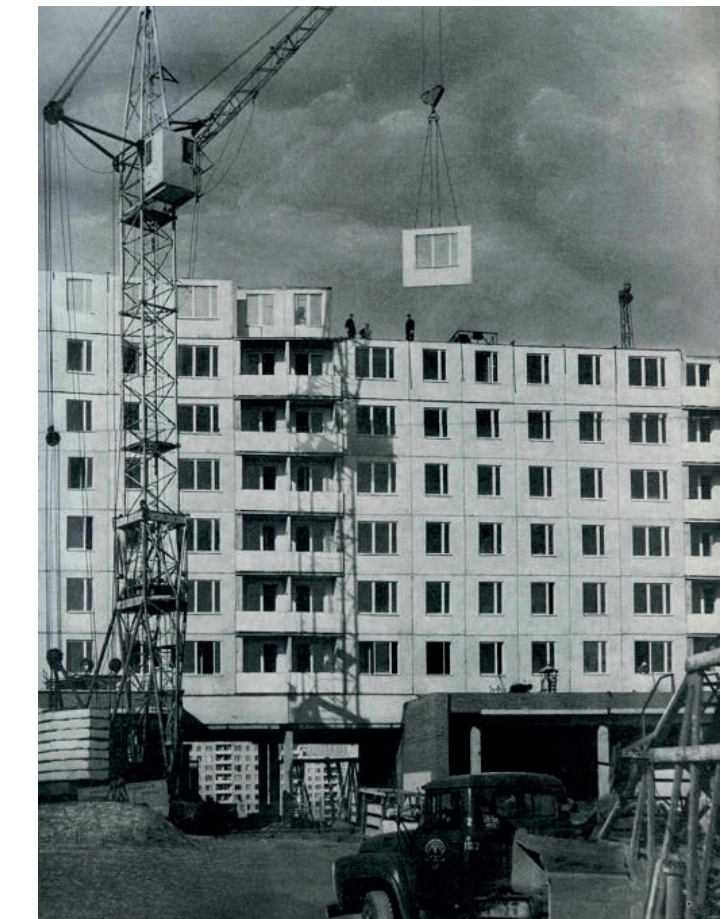
3.1 Origins and implementation
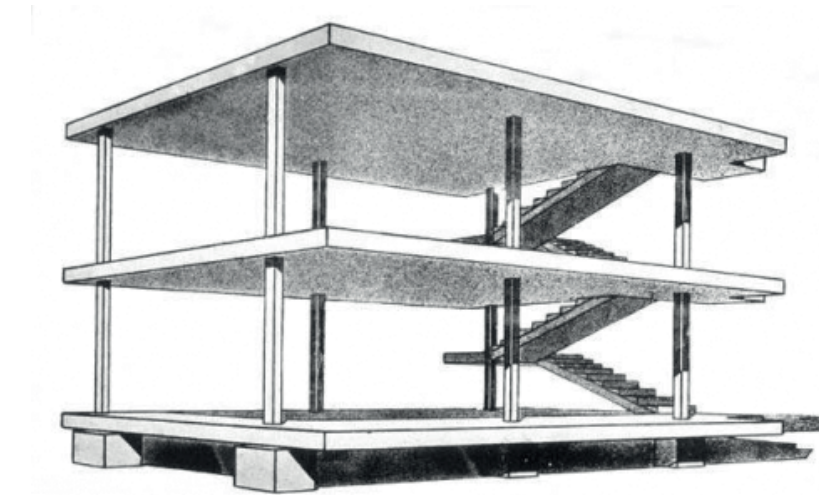
21 Dom-Ino House, Le Corbusier, 1914

A list of events at the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th century precede the development of prefabricated housing. At the beginning is the technical development after the industrial revolution, after that the emerging of Taylorism and Fordism. Later on, another technical achievement- the invention of reinforced concrete together with global architectural and urban planning events and movements like the Chicago School and the Garden City movement, Bauhaus and the CIAM. The new material and technology becomes an aesthetic element serving not only as a pragmatic solution to the post-war housing crisis, but also as materialistic implementation aimed at characterizing the conditional state of the rough life after war.[31] In a book published for the first international exhibition of Modern Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York International Style is described as following:

There is now a single body of discipline, fixed enough to integrate contemporary style as a reality and yet elastic enough to permit individual interpretation and to encourage natural growth.[32]

Communists embrace these ideas and take the opportunity of transforming it as a movement of their own.

Two factors in the time of formation of the socialist realism are crucial for the emergence of plattenbau districts. The need for resolution of the housing crisis and the need of a method for the homogenisation of the population. Both of these tasks need to be solved promptly and in a lucrative way. Le Corbusier's idea for the house as a *machine for living in* is literary interpreted by the communistic political regime. They favour the concept of a simplified residential architecture leaving out the idea for freedom of variety and flexibility. Neither functional, nor aesthetic the typology of the plattenbau living blocks corresponds to the idea of a Le Corbusier's and Frank Lyod Wright's ideologies for architecture as a spatial experience. To transform the society sowing fear and restriction not only by the power of totalitarianism, but also through architecture.

22 Construction of panel housing on Ulitsa Mitlukho-Maklaya, Moscow

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31 Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation in Marseille, France, 1946

32 Nuttgens 1997: 266

23 Plans of Havanna(Budapest), Grünau WK7(Leipzig) and Nitra-Chrenová(Nitra)

3.2 Prefab districts in CEE countries

As derivatives of a movement called the International style, seemingly prefabricated housing districts in different countries look alike, more so in communist countries in Europe. Their differences appear after the fall of socialism. The sociological contexts started showing when the people gained back the freedom to express themselves.

The process of creation of a prefab housing estate starts when the task is given to an architectural collective through formal contest[33] . Despite similar criteria, factors like professional perspective and personal opinion give some room for interpretation to the architects that design the project. Therefore, when looking at figure ground plans of different districts diversity in the order, density proportions or urban composition can be observed.

Significant similarity are the large open-air spaces among the blocks (either as greenery or parking) and the well organised public service infrastructure including kindergartens, schools, healthcare centres etc., which until today are one of the big advantages of the plattenbau districts.

Roeleveld Sikkes architects comment the conditions and potentials of a large housing estates in Budapest in a case study for sustainable development:

As a result of a rushed large-scale privatisation of the housing sector, private ownership rates of CEE countries (sometimes as high as 80-90%) are among the highest in Europe... As there were no clear cut responsibilities for management and maintenance set at the time of privatization, many areas of the residential environment (especially common spaces such as staircases, basement rooms, roofs, surrounding open areas) are now deteriorating and no-one has the legal responsibility for repairing the damaged elements. [34]

This is also the case in prefab districts in Bulgaria. In recent years due to self-initiative from the inhabitants and some rule changes considering common living spaces, there is a positive development towards this problematic area of the housing districts. However, a concrete and comprehensive urban strategy is absent.

24 Havanna, Budapest 2006

3.3 Prefab districts in Bulgaria

Prefabricated residential districts, or *panelki* can be found all over Bulgaria. A curtain wall of prefab concrete panel buildings is the first think to see when approaching some Bulgarian cities - like Sofia and Burgas. The first panekli district is Sofia's *Tolstoi* emerges in 1962 followed by *Mladost*. Nearly 11 128 panel building with 787 096 apartments accommodating around 2 000 000 people, or 25% of Bulgaria's population.[35] This districts are landmarks of the Bulgarian suburban space, an antonym of nature, symbol of captivity and lack of aesthetics. Due to the bad maintenance of the buildings in the years after the democratic changes in 1989, the common image of this areas is of tumble-down, largescale and extrinsic milieus. The lack of functional variety in this districts along with the absence of adequate public spaces, shape a monotonous view and soon enough *planelki* gain the description – bedroom districts. The original intention for most of these neighbourhoods is for a multifunctional city-like structures. Add-ons in the periphery of the city connected through big automobile thoroughfares and adjoining industrial zones. Their image promoted by the communistic propaganda is of self-sufficient complexes, offering the whole range of functions with urban-wide designation. The main priority of these districts however - the residential service, dominates. At the end of socialism, apart from some service buildings like educational facilities and hospitals, the functional variety in these areas are exhausted.

Today's image of prefab residential districts in Bulgaria is colourful. Depending on the region the grade of their deformation from their initial forms varies, mostly in connection with the development grade of the region they are situated in. In bigger cities the creation of new residential buildings, due to the upswing of economy, favours the densification process. More rarely buildings with recreational purposes like cultural houses, sport stadiums etc. are emerging among the *panelki*. In underdeveloped regions of the country the stagnation process of the post-socialist period becomes chronic and the initial small scale deformations are undergoing a retrograding process. Several are the regions where the ethnological interventions from socialist period failed greatly and left over highly problematic panel slums.

In this common front *Trakiya* takes place among one of the wealthiest developing prefab residential districts in Bulgaria. The 50 years old neighbourhood with an *avant garde*[36] plan is one of the preferred regions for young families in Plovdiv today.
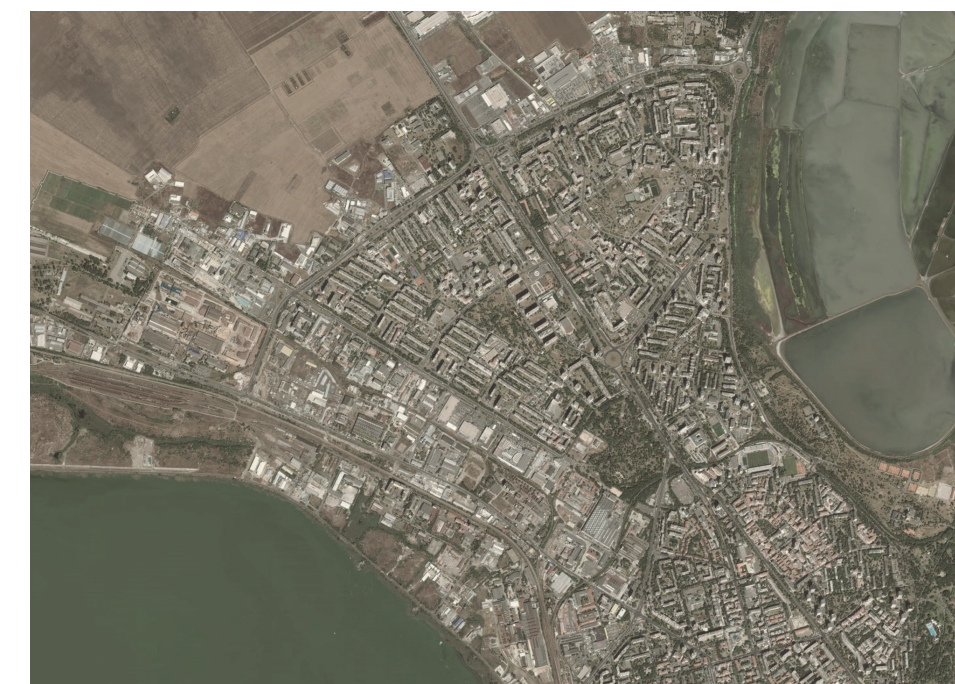
Burgas, Bulgaria 2012

Sofia, Bulgaria 2012

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33 Competition as a form of screening for quality was not practiced in socialist countries.

34 Csaba 2006, 47

35 Luenberg 2016, 25
36 The unusual urban structure of the socialistic district is further discussed in chapter 4.2 The fractal structure of Trakiya

Site

1 Trakiya

1.1 Location and organisation

Trakiya is a satellite district attached to the southeast end of Plovdiv. It marks the border between the inner town and an industrial zone. It is visible that the district is completely estranged from the rest of the city. The original intention of the political doctrine is to create a city within the city that serves every aspect of the political plan and ideology to cultivate a new kind of homogenised society.

The relation of the district to the city of Plovdiv is poor. The infrastructural connection consists of large scale automobile roads, there is also a sharp transition between the dense typology of the neighbouring district and the large settlement of *Trakiya*. The *Lauta park* – a huge green area with dense vertical vegetation is another spatial barrier that blocks the connection between the district and the city.

Trakiya is organised in 13 microregions, which are formed by 18 nest-like building ensembles oriented around a centre each of which is marked by an educational facility.[37]

Every three micro regions form a group with a common centre. The only exception is the district - A13 *Skobeleva Maika*[38] . This fractal organisation is surrounded by two big boulevards - *Osvobozhdenie* and *Tsar Simeon*. A third smaller, but also important street is *Saedinenie*, which stretches between nine of the microregions.

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37 Not all of the educational facilities in this centres are yet build, but the area is designated for kindergartens in the current development plan and they are being gradually build
38 The case of this district is further explained in chapter 5.2 Integration of A13

1.2 Analysis

The investors of *Trakiya- Bulgarian Communist Party*, aim to forcibly mix part of the diverse population of Plovdiv with dwellers from the surrounding villages and by agglomerating this diversity of ethnic and social layers, to create the *ideal*, homogenised socialistic society.

In 1965 the team of architect Ivan Popov wins the competition for the new residential district that is part of a bigger masterplan for the expansion of Plovdiv. In two of the official articles from the 1970s about this project, the architects emphasise their idea of the main street as a place for social exchange. A communication beam that is later crucial for the successful integration of the district to the new democratic system.

Although *Trakiya's* initial plan includes a proportional amount of public functions, they remain unrealised within the construction period. Until the beginning of the 21st century the district is entirely residential where supplementary functions whether planned or not, find their place inside the residential buildings. With the exception of schools, kindergartens and a healthcare centre. The high rate of private ownership is one of the main factors that prevent a bad turn in *Trakiya's* development after the main conductor of the establishment bankrupts. Today, around 65% of the apartments are privately owned and a big part of the public area, as well as the in between buildings area is owned by the municipality.

A strongly objective picture of contemporary *Trakiya* is shaped in the book *Almanac of pre-fab Trakiya*. This book represents a multidisciplinary research on the district led by the architect Nina Toleva. The study covers a broth variety of elements including dwelling, sociology, culture, transport infrastructure, economic microclimate and green systems.

The sociological data indicates a strong interest towards the district. Almost 1/6 of the city's population live in Trakiya, which makes it the third biggest district along with region East. Over 1/3 of the interviewee are renters, for in the past twenty years the ownership ratio is increasing.[39]
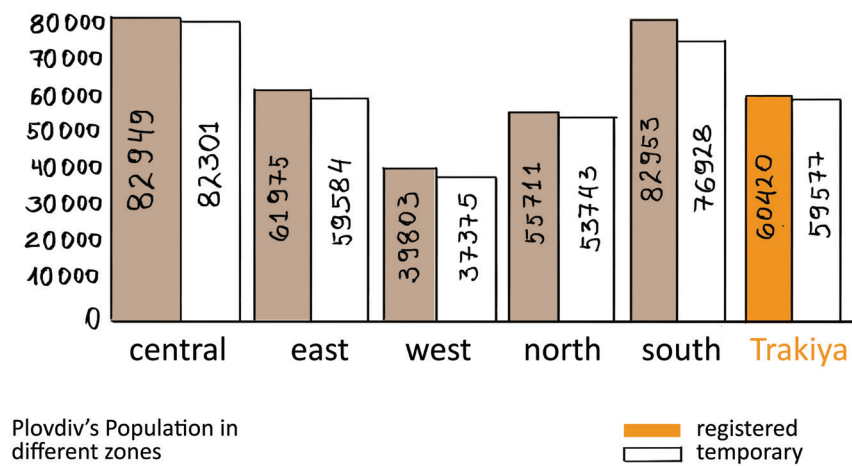
Plovdiv's Population in different zones

■ registered
□ temporary

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39 Toleva 2016, 31-35

age   family type

Ownership ratio

■ private owners
□ renters
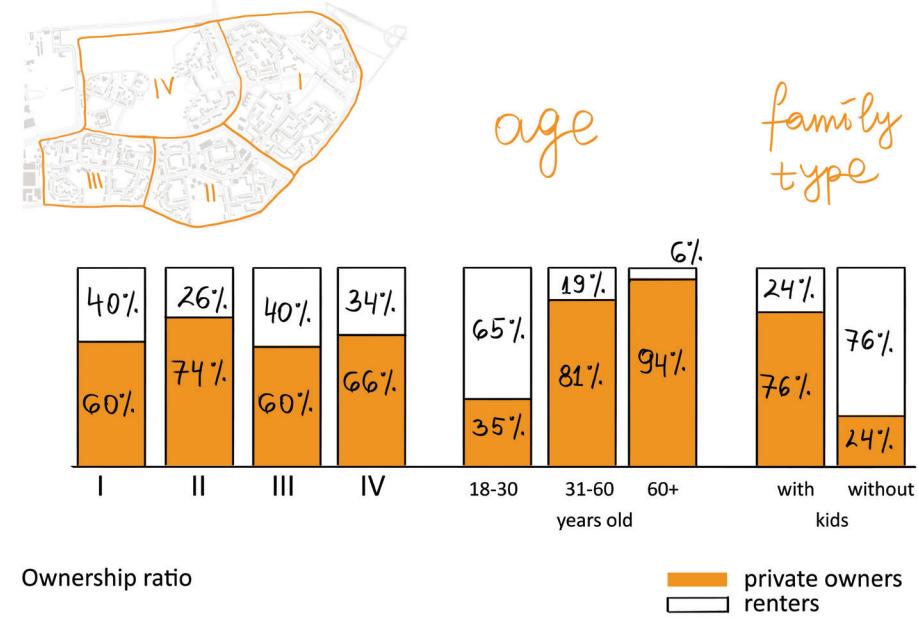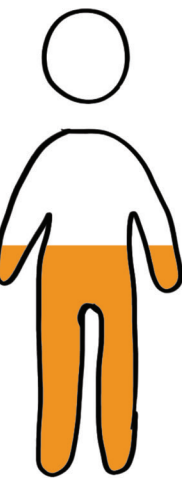
52%   48%

Sex ratio
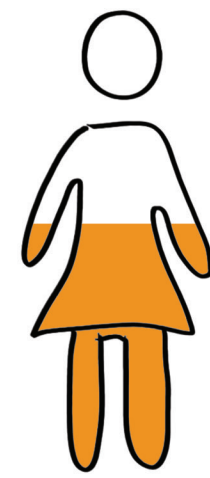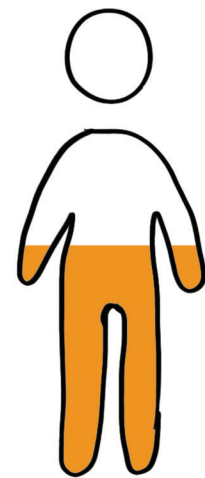
Timeline

The chronological map of Trakiya comprehends the period between 1945-2015. It is a method of graphical research of the neighbourhood. This plan follows the processes of development which indicates the areas and structures that predispose to new development. It is visible from the plan that the area around boulevard *Osvobozhdenie* is the most preferred in recent years. On the other side right after 1989 many small scaled buildings emerged along *Saedinenie* street. Almost entirely the area around the microregion *Skobeleva Maika* A13 as well as some parts of A1 *Lulacite* are inactive.

A comparison between this map and the concept plan from 1974 indicates that the areas dedicated to public functions (in red) are the same ones being developed the most in recent years (yellow to pink). However, the new buildings shelter mainly residential and commercial functions and there is still an absence of cultural facilities in the neighbourhood.
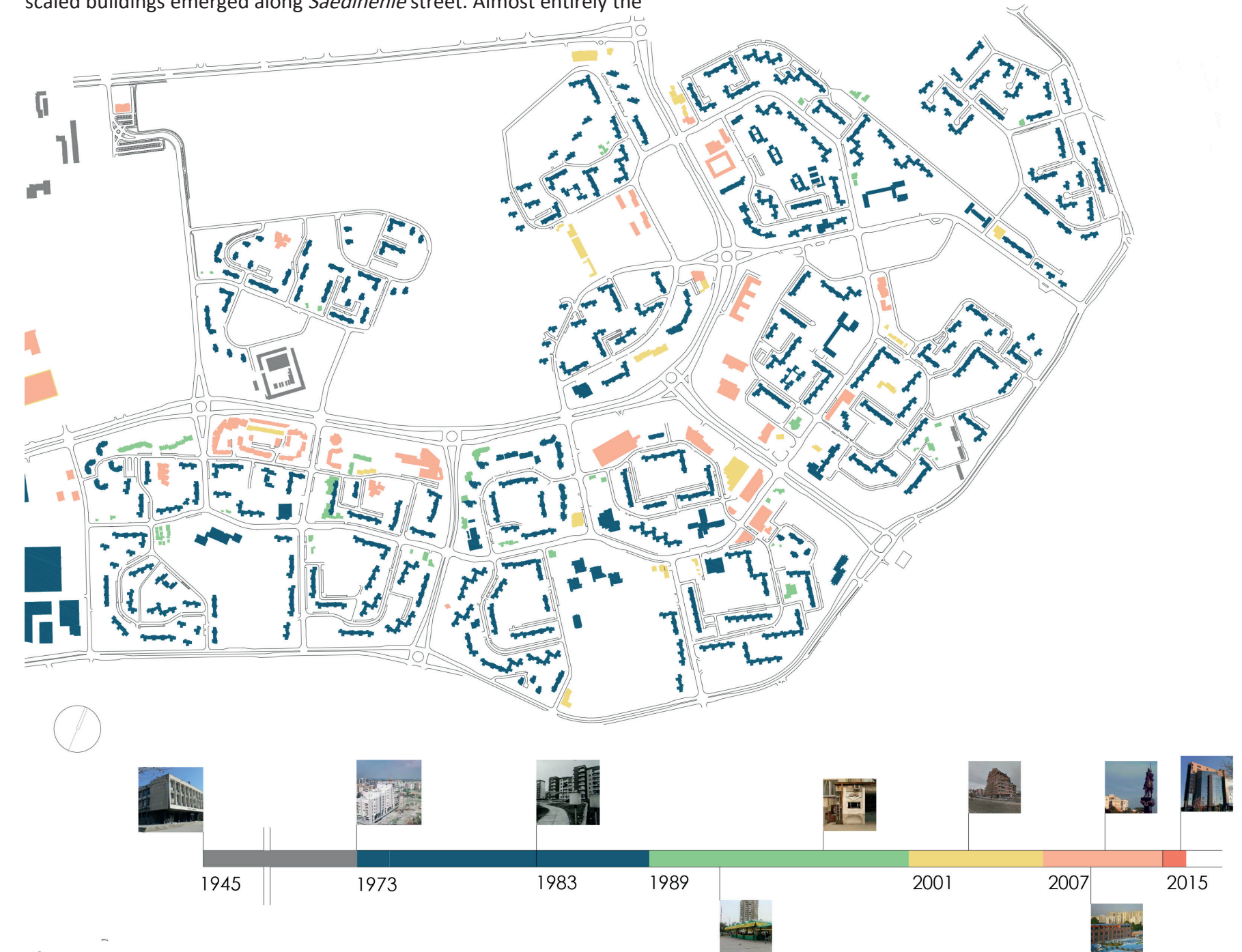
1945   1973   1983   1989   2001   2007   2015

Typologies

Another important factor for the positive perception of the neighbourhood and its atmosphere considering its spatial impact is the specially developed design for *Trakiya's* prefab panel buildings- *razchupena panelka* (broken prefab building). Although some disadvantages in terms of thermal efficiency, privacy and organisation of the surrounding space is caused, this design enables the formation of a variety of compositions between the modules.[40]

This plan classifies four different typologies of residential buildings originally designed for the general plan of *Trakiya* (coloured in purple, blue, orange and red nuance). Each of them varies in its inner structure, offers different functional and compositional qualities and is flexible in terms of combination possibilities with other, or with the same type of prefab buildings.

No typological process[41] is being observed, since the typologies have not been adopted by planners in the post-socialist period. In order to distinguish them, the residential buildings built after 1989 are coloured in grey.

Five different colours are used for buildings with no residential function such as schools, hospitals, the police station etc. The colours used for them are yellow, green, blue, dark and light brown.

The typologies designed by the architects in the original plan of Trakiya provide flexibility not only on architectural scale, but also on urban scale.

The polyaxial plan of the small plattenbau blocks influences the space around it, forming different qualities of free space that is being diversely interpreted and used by the inhabitants.

These buildings consist of two typologies. Group A (purple) are small blocks with straight urban structure and they do not offer more than two sides of their longitudinal axe for combination possibilities. They consist of no more than three apartments per floor witch do not offer much flexibility interior wise. The staircase is a central distributor with an elevator and natural illumination. Group B (blue) are cross like plattenbau buildings which can consist of three or four apartments. The staircase is again situated in the centre and offers a bright, well illuminated room with an elevator. This typology can be combined in all four directions with other buildings without confronting the light exposure of the apartments.

The diversity that this two groups of typologies offer makes them suitable for the formation of specific urban compositions of the microregions which resembles nest like tribal structures. It is noticeable that there are no new buildings inside these formations, but a lot of capillary mutations.[42]

_____
40 See Luenberg (2016) , 23-30
41 The typological process is the process of evolution of certain typology
42 Unofficial individual interventions inside the existing buildings done by the inhabitants in periods of stagnation. See Raith 2000, 19

The large formwork buildings (red) represent a substantial system of different apartments connected through a corridor along the mid-axis of the building. Offering public space and commercial functions on the lower levels, they are always situated on the main street between the microregions and are also functioning as connecting elements. The interruptions on the ground floor are forming passages between the public and the semi-public area.

Combinations with other structures are only possible as extensions of the building 's body on the sides or in 90 degree turns. Their concept is to offer multifunctional inner structure, with constructional raster of 6mx6m.[43] Considering the buildings infrastructure, there are long, dark corridors interrupted by transversely or longitudinally positioned staircase. The possible count of apartments is indefinite. This type of building is also found as long terraced or as single high rise building with one staircase.

Orientation

Since their volume is very complex and adaptable to different positions, the plattenbau buildings differ between five different positions in correlation with the North side and the Rhodope mountain on the south. The compositions which this type of blocks form, offer a diversity of views for the apartments. It should be noted that the entry is never situated on the south side of the building, since this side is reserved for the apartment's windows and terraces. The plattenbau blocks of Group B are mostly North-west to South-east oriented. Group A blocks, from which the entire A12 microregion is composed are mostly either North to South, or West to East oriented.

In the large area formwork blocks, there are only three position of orientation present, since their reference point is the main street - *Osvobozhdenie*. They serve as building blocks for *the spine*, as the architects of *Trakiya* call the main street.   Most of the new residential buildings, built in the period after the year 2000 are also located along *Osvobozhdenie* street.

_____
43 See „Architektura" 1979, 20-21

1a   1b

2a   2b
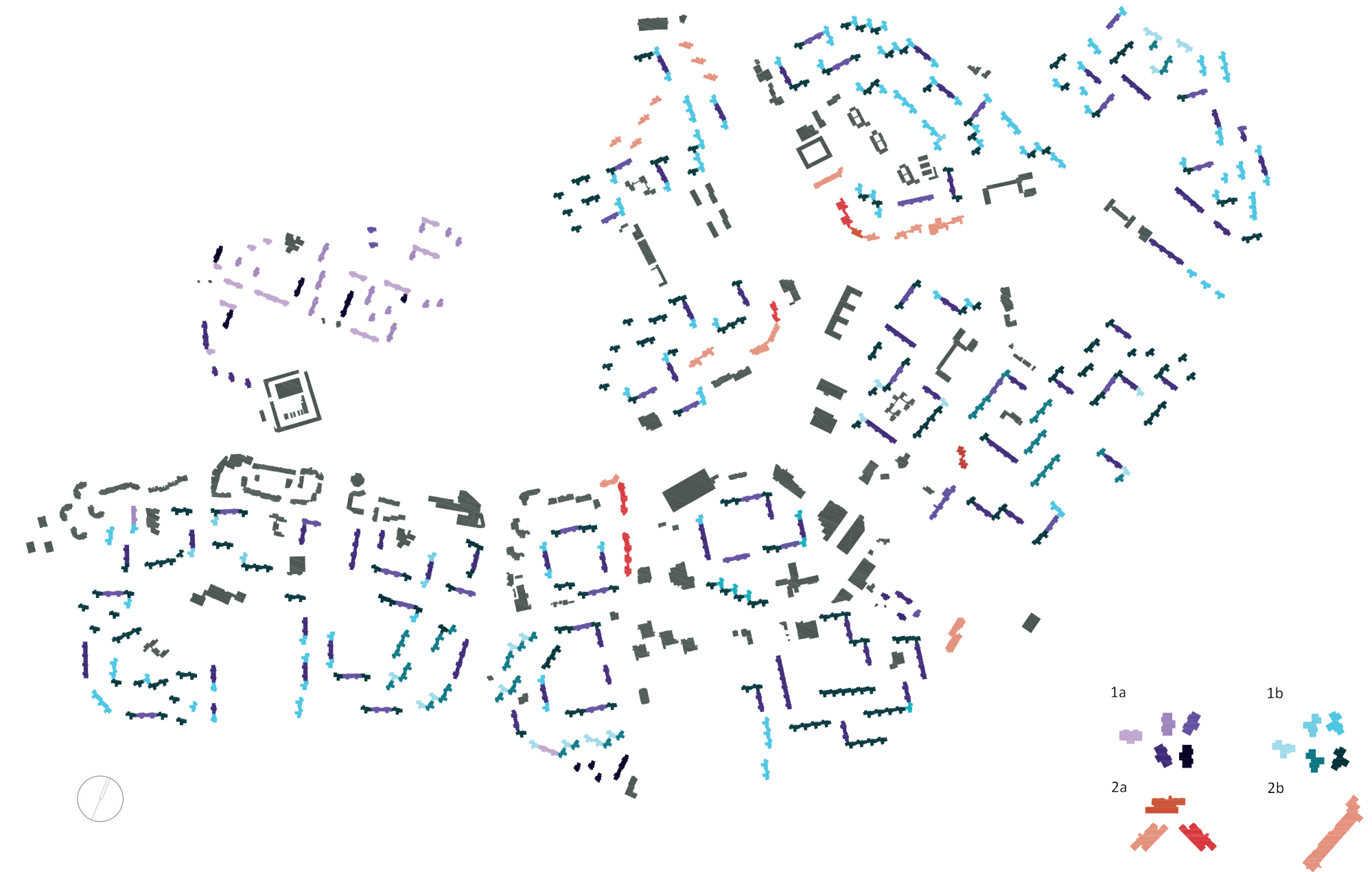
Weaknesses

Strengths

Urban realm

- Alien to the city fabric
  Badly incorporated into
  the street raster of Plovdiv

  Increased fringe area character
  due to the presense of
  barrier elements

**- Tangible fragmentation of
  public functions**

- Fractal structure

**- Conditions for further development
  of a coherent green system**

Social realm

**- Worsen image among the non
  inhabitants of Trakiya**

**- Lack of communication
  betweem administration and
  inhabitants**

**- Established and sytematic distribution
  of bottom-up developed social and
  commercial functions**

1.3 Weaknesses and strengths

The following table compares both the urban and social aspects of *Tra-kiya*. Considering their potentials and disadvantages I want to indicate three prepositions that play an important role further in the project. The autonomy of the district in relation to the city of Plovdiv, the dynamic social environment and the well preserved original urban structure from the project's concept.

Alien to the city farbric

Two formational aspects differentiate the district from the rest of the city. Its non-orthogonal street nets and the partitioning function of the thoroughfares that represent the only infrastructural connection between Plovdiv and *Trakiya*. This is further discussed in 1.4 The fractal structure of *Trakiya*.

Tangible fragmentation of public functions

Although the district does not lack complementary functions, many of which are product of the bottom up development that occurred after 1989, they are not reflected on the current zoning plan[44]. This creates a notion of fragmentation of the areas with public functions.

Residential low density
Residential medium density
Education, healthcare and other insitutions
Commercial medium density
Parks
Leisure activities
Transportation

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Worsen image among the non-inhabitants of *Trakiya*

One of the main factors for the negative attitude towards panelki districts in Bulgaria is the anti-socialistic mood that resulted from the polydimensional harms that the regime brought upon the people. Another factor is the segregation of social layers that followed after the second migration process after 1989.
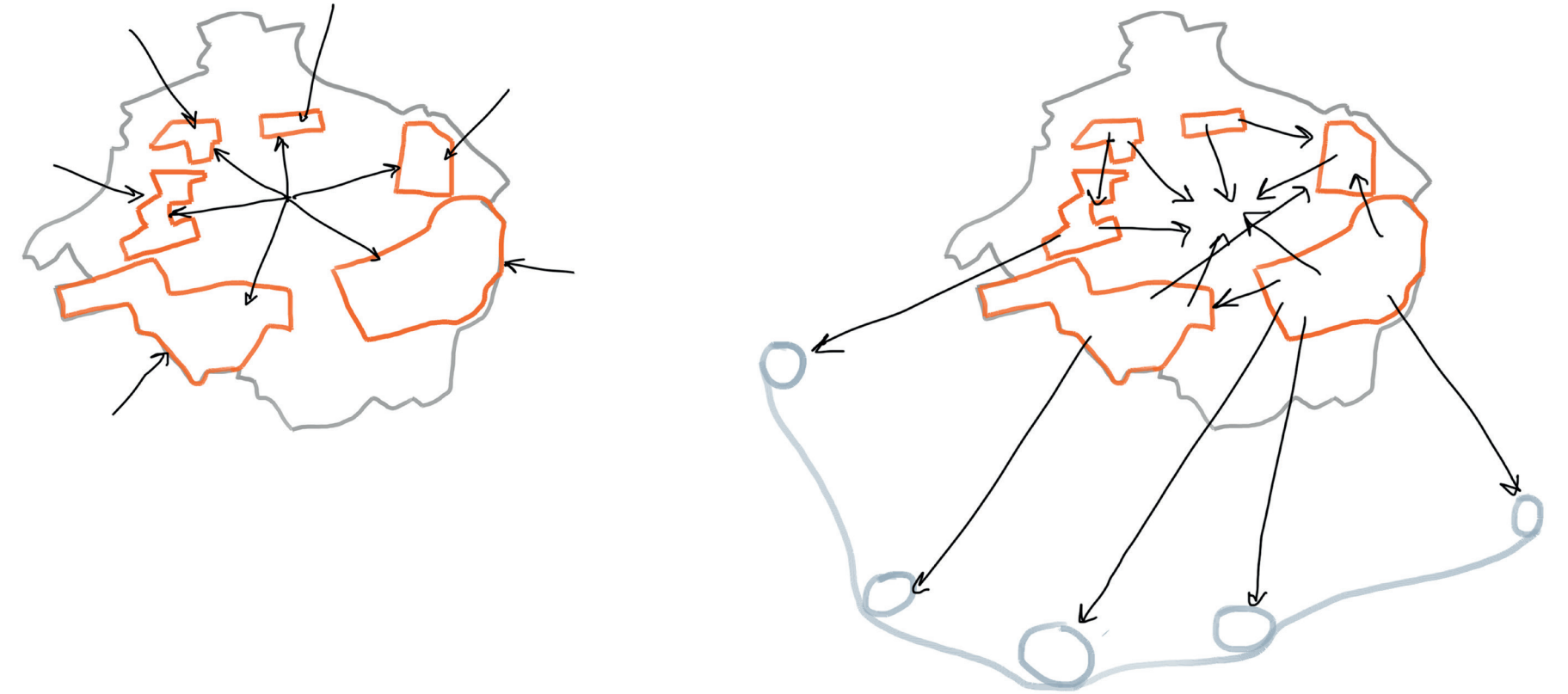
Socialism

In the 1960s a new master plan of Plovdiv foresees an expansion that aims to meet the needs for new homes of ca. 450 000 people both immigrants from nearby villages and displaced plovdivians that are forced to leave their homes in the old districts of the city due to the privatisation process.

Wende

After 1989 many inhabitants living in the panelka districts originating from the older parts of Plovdiv move back into their resituated homes. In the second part of 1990s a process of settlement of families with higher income into single-family detached homes in the nearby villages is observed. As a result of this - a chain of prestige living districts outside of the city is formed.[45] Strong segregation of different social layers can be seen not only in Plovdiv. Due to the economic crises and the migration, the people living in *panelka* districts are regarded as poor and lower class. The negative reputation of this areas is still present in the Bulgarian society.

44 General Plan of Plovdiv, 2007-2020

45 Zlatkova 2012, 128

Transition period

There are only small periods of lull after the immediate change in 1989 and the following economic and social crisis. Not until the beginning of the new century there is a tendency towards stabilisation of the economy. This is also the time where population growth as a result of emigration and high birth rate are observed.

years spent in the current appartment
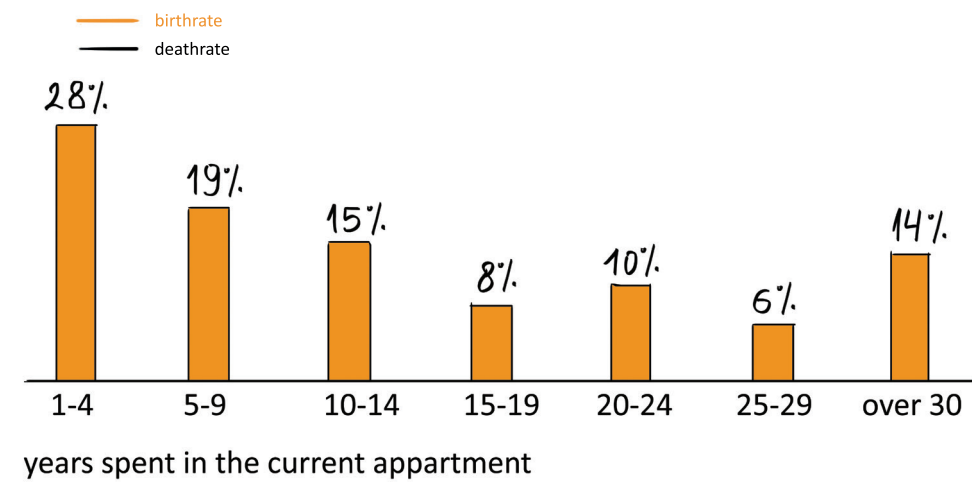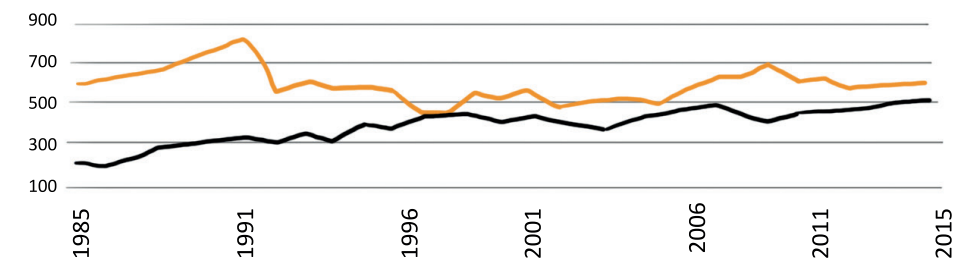
Lack of communication betweem administration and inhabitants

When asked the question if they have a problem communicating with the municipality, the participators in the survey answer in the following ratio.
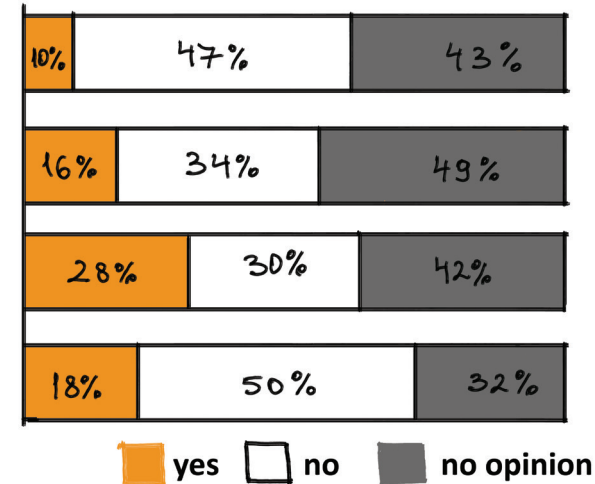
The high percentage of people without opinion on the matter indicates that there is a gap between institutional and social spheres.

1.4 The fractal structure of Trakiya

The purpose of this chapter is to study how the harmonious fractal pattern of *Trakiya* influence its development on various scales and to explore these scales. The planners create a plattenbau district much different than many examples across the soviet countries. Their plan manages to conquer the monotony and abstraction from human scale and thereby to contribute for the successful post socialist development of the district. There are three aspects that are being reviewed – the integration of the districts into the city of Plovdiv, the structure of the district at the bigger planning scale and at the micro level - the typologies of the plattenbau buildings designed in the original project for *Trakiya*. How these aspects influence each other and what this means for the inhabitants of heterogenic background initially subjected to the process of unification by the political regime is also subject of the paper.

The creation of a modernist district in a centuries old city

The idea of creating a new district for around 100 000 inhabitants in one of the oldest cities in Europe is a very ambitious one. The political context of the 1960s enables the bold endeavour and soon enough the new masterplan for Plovdiv foresees three directions in which the city will grow.[46] Situated in the southeast, the plane fields of the Thracian Valley, once a training base for the Agricultural University of Plovdiv are now site for the new construction process of the homonymous residential district *Trakiya*. The aim of this projects just like many others across the socialist countries it is to create the perfect habitat for the cultivation of the new *socialistic man*. An architectural approach to a political ideal.

Plovdiv is a city that has been inhabited for almost 4000 years. Some of the historical layers can be seen in various places around the hills and on them. Through the centuries the city's borders shrank if it was endangered and extended in peaceful times. A kind of pulsating movement with a centre the*Trihalmie*. The orthogonal street system dating from the roman times lies underneath the surroundings of the main square under which the remains of the ancient roman forum can be found. An urban morphological process in this area is observed through the years.[47]

Looking at the space syntax analysis of the city[48], organic-like development with dominance of a long central street that functions as a strip like core can be found in the city in two central districts where vernacular urban development has taken place - the old town and the *Kapana[49]* district. Both inhabiting a diverse mixture of people with different ethnic and religious origin. A similar pattern is observed in *Trakiya*. The adoption of this model is mentioned by the architects as a reference to the traditional Bulgarian architecture in the area of the main street *Osvobozh-denie ... using contemporary structures to achieve the effect of the old*

46 See „Architektura"1976, 32
47 See *The map of ancient Philippopolis overlap the contemporary map of Plovdiv on* page 11
48 Space Syntax Analysys, Integration and centrality, R7 by Gergana Marks, 2016
49 Kapana (from Bulgarian: капан - trap) is a central plovdivian district with a very complex street network that most likely inspired its name

bazaar *[50], and inside the micro regions ... create an interesting new residential district in which, along with the new contemporary architecture, one can feel the influence of the old plovdivian renaissance building traditions.*(self-translation from Bulgarian)[51]

Kapana and the old town

25 Plovdiv, Space Syntax Analysys, Integration and centrality, R7
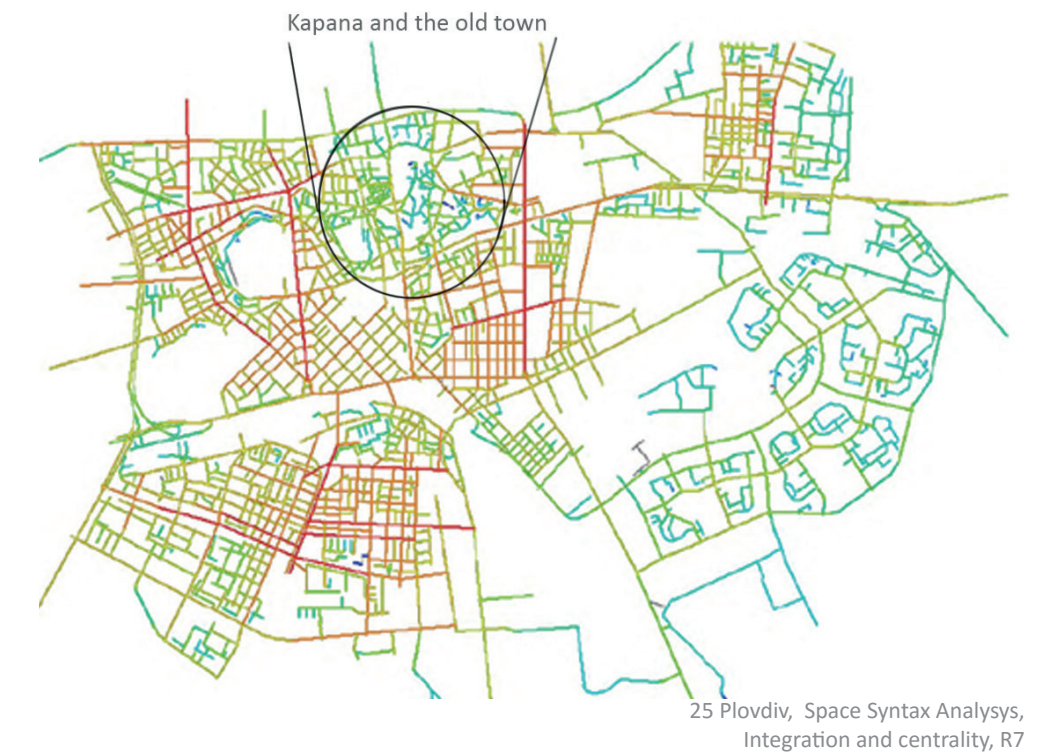
Integrating into an existing organism

The district of *Trakiya* shows fractal properties on macro territorial scale not in terms of similarity, but in its correlation to Plovdiv. The district can be perceived as both part of the city and an autonomous settlement on itself. Considering its connection, *Trakiya* has rather an introverted relation to the city. The two tangent boulevards are the only used infrastructural elements in direction Plovdiv and the centre, the absence of a linking urban structure is tangible. Although there is no pedestrian human scale connection to the city, like in most of the districts in Plovdiv a prerequisite for such an element is present. The *Lauta* park serves as both a distributor and a barrier.

Designed in the years 1977-1978 the park Lauta is one of the biggest links among the green systems of the city. It is a main compositional core of the green system in the district itself. (self-translation from Bulgarian) [52]

The park, like most of the area along the main street *Osvobozhdenie* and the public buildings are left unfinished and its concept is still unfulfilled.

50 See „Architektura "1979, 16
51 See „Architektura "1979, 16
52 See „Architektura "1976, 18

Fractal logic can be noticed on the social level as well. Unlike most of the other districts, *Trakiya* is perceived as autonomous by plovdivians. The inhabitants of the plattenbau district call themselves *trakiici* (meaning from *Trakiya*) and are called like this by the rest of Plovdiv's citizens. Despite that there is no lack of affiliation by the districts inhabitants, they feel as much part of the hall, as they feel *trakiici*. In her book *Ethnosociology of the city, the case of Plovdiv* the ethno sociologist Meglena Zlatkova applies several interviews with inhabitants, which proudly identify themselves both as plovdivians and as *trakiici*.

The urban fabric of *Trakiya*

The self-similarity of the structure of *Trakiya* is clearly visible. Each sub-district has an autonomous structure consisting of radially composed housing blocks organized around a centre where an educational facility is built. At the crossing points between the different micro regions, bigger streets are creating a gradual transition which then analogically transports on the bigger scale between groups of micro regions. *Saedinenie* street plays an important binding role for the district. The other big street - *Osvobozhdenie* has similar unifying qualities. The architects of Trakiya call it the *spine*[53]. Its full potential is not yet realized, since the collapse of the regime stopped the development.

From historical point of view, the interplay of harmonic transitions from period of growth(top-down) to doldrums (bottom up) in the city of Plovdiv that proved its functionality through the centuries looks like to work for *Trakiya* as well. The district already went through the process of economic crisis which subjected it to the test of proving whether its structure possess the quality of functional flexibility. If the adaptivity of the district is due to its structure and not only the initiative of the inhabitants, can be examined by looking at an example inside the district. *Skobeleva Maika* is the residential micro region A13 situated on the northeast side of *Trakiya*. The original purpose of this site was to build a health centre integrated in a park that will eventually be connected to Lauta . In the course of time, due to the collapse of the socialist system in Bulgaria, this endeavour failed and like most of the public buildings projects was not realized. Instead, the city community decided to build residential buildings in cooperation with some of the heavy industry factories in the region and in this way to share out the expenses on the construction. This micro region has neither similarity to the structures of the rest of the micro regions, nor the correlation to the district the way the rest of it is composed. The blocks are not forming the homogenic nest-like structures like the rest of the sub-districts. Place for educational facility is provided on the edge of the micro region where its border lies. The dried water canal bed on the southwest side of *Skobeleva Maika* works as a barrier that separates the micro region from the neighbouring A9.

Boulevard *Tsar Simeon* draws the southeast border of *Trakiya*. Due to its proportions the boulevard offers a smooth transition from the habitable zone to the industrial. In the area of *Skobeleva Maika* this boulevard shrinks in half, dissolving the boundary of the neighbourhood. Unlike the other micro regions, the blocks in A13 have a minimal distance from this boulevard putting them closer not only to the extensive traffic, but to the nearby industrial zone and the highway. This district is also famous for its criminal environment. The absence of *capillary mutations* around the micro region is noticeable which is another sign of its poor functionality and detachment to the rest of the neighbourhood.

**A special design for a special district**

Determent to create a distinctive plattenbau district, the architects of *Trakiya* engaged in the mission of creating diverse and flexible residential blocks in terms of their urban and architectural functions.[54] There are three typologies designed by the architects in the original plan of *Trakiya*. Two variations of the small plattenbau blocks with an elevation between 5 and 8 stories and offering from 1 to 4 room apartments. These apartments do not offer much flexibility interior wise, since their prevailing constructional raster is 3,6mx3,6m, but their volume is very complex and adaptable to different positions. The plattenbau buildings are forming convenient semi-public spaces on the ground level around them. Their proportions are adequate to the human scale and due to the bigger distances between the different ensembles, they offer spacious room for interpretation by the inhabitants.

In a field study of the sub-district A11 I observed aggregation of *capillary mutations* around the plattenbau buildings – self-made pavilions, shops, flower and vegetable gardens, playgrounds etc. Many of the local shops situated either in the entries of the blocks, or on the first floors were the last resort for the inhabitants in the years of political and economic timelessness when most of the big factories shut down and many people were left unemployed. Some of these shops are still resisting the pressure of the big supermarkets and continue operating not only as suppliers, but also as social generators. In this case self-similarity can be found between the different social dimensions- the macro level of the society and the micro scale of the neighbour community. Absence of such interventions, as well as formations of problematic zones, such as build ups of junk are present only around the large formwork buildings and the newer buildings, built after the year 2000.

Conclusion

The project *Trakiya* develops successfully surviving a political coup and an economic crisis without being completely finished. The findings of this paper demonstrate that the interdependence between the different levels of organisation is important for the functioning of the district. Once embedded in the structure of the neighbourhood, fractal pattern stimulates bottom-up activity and allows the residents to build and interpret the space they inhabit. *Trakiya* is an example that the coherent implementation of bottom-up and top-down approaches is important when the planning process occurs on multiple scales.

53 See „Architektura"1976, 34

54 See „Architektura"1979, 18-21
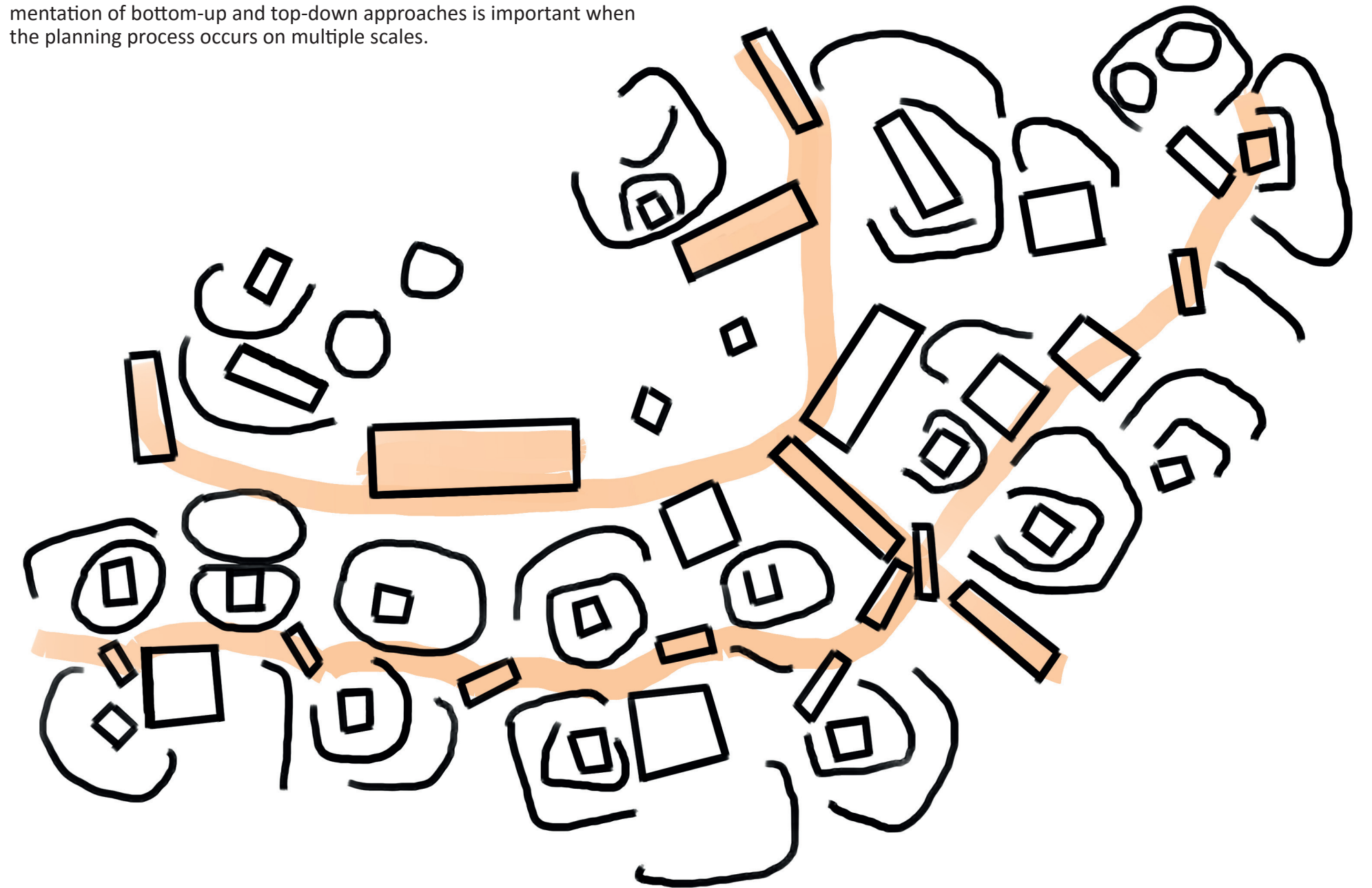
Conditions for further development of a coherent green system

As mentioned in 3.2 Prefab districts in different CEE countries, the large open-air spaces are one of the biggest advanteges of *planelka* districts. *Trakiya* is not an exeption. The following plan illustrates the different green zones and their current condition. It shows that there is a big potential toward development of a big scaled green system.
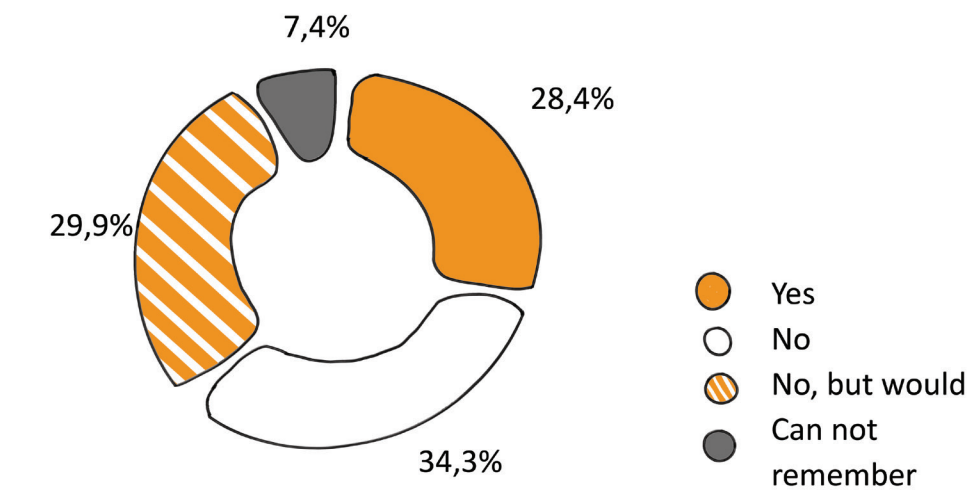

Greenery - Residential
Worsen quality
Highly worsen quality
Parks

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Established and sytematic distribution of bottom-up developed social and commercial functions

One of the main reasons for the positive development of *Trakiya* in the years of the transition period is the high rate of privately owned apartments. (p. 29) This plays a role not only in the inhabitant 's positive attitude towards their environment, but also created the possibility for dozens of bottom up interventions inside and around the residential buildings. Mostly situated on the first floors as easily accessible, the small businesses such as hair salons, food shops, workshops etc. are the only source of supplemental service in the years after 1989 to around 2000. The lack of communal spaces inside the residential buildings is compensated by the creation of gathering gazebos or *besedki*. Together with the open air markets, school yards and parks, these areas represent the social attractors in the district.

Another form of social activity is represented by the *rantcho*[55]. A kind of urban farming that is initiated by the inhabitants and takes place on isolated areas of the district, due to the fact that it is illegal.[56]

The study conducted by Nina Toleva indicates further potential for such development. The initiative of the inhabitants in such activities is not fully unfold.

Have you participated in initiatives for the improvment of public space?

7,4%
28,4%
29,9%
34,3%

Yes
No
No, but would
Can not remember

Related to the festival ONE ARCHITECTURE WEEK in 2016 and as one of the results of the research, is an interactive online map, which represents the current condition of the neighbourhood of Trakiya. The map is publically accessible and one can see (and activate) different layers of Trakiya's reality: from the sewage network through the location of the small family businesses, to the position of the locally built besedkas and the cowpaths cutting through the green spaces. The data, reflected in this map has been collected in the course of the first 6 months of 2016 from various sources. It was collected by university students, NGO representatives, many volunteers and the festival's team. The online map itself was created by Angel Bondov from IN-Formal.[57]

The information on the following plan is based on the interactive map of *Trakiya*.

55 The word is adopted from the English word for the practice of raising grazing livestock such as cattle or sheep for meat or wool – ranching. Unlike the original meaning, the Bulgarian interpretation concerns a form of urban gardening and has a lot in common with the English kailyards.
56 see Pickard 2016, 61-70

57 http://onearchitectureweek.com/program/?lang=en#1766

Social Attractors

Top-down

🔔 - School

⛪ - Church

🏪 - Open air market

🛒 - Shop/Mall

🍴 - Restaurant

Bottom-up

🔵 - Adapted groundfloor buisness

🧍 - Rantcho

🏛 - Gathering gazebo

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Cities are for the meeting of people

Lord Richard Rogers

Strategy

A comparison between the original development plan of *Trakiya* from 1970s and the current zoning plan indicates a few, but essential differences.

- Disconnection between the green zones

- Fragmentation of the public functions

- Drastic change in the northeast part of the district

Proceeding from these three points I propose a strategy for the development of the district that has a goal of combining the top down and bottom up process in Trakiya by placing the vantage point on a coherent and contextual public space.

The initial measures in this projects seize the road infrastructure of the district. Detours of *Sankt Peterburg* boulevard and its connection with *Trakiya* highway. This way the residential buildings verge on the green space that separates them from the busy thoroughfare. On the other hand and the inside street Saedinenie with direction the northeast end of *Trakiya – Skobeleva Mayka* A13.

Further I propose three more far-reaching and gradual steps that concern the green system, the newly developed public zone along *Saedinenie* street and reorganization of the connection seam between microregion *Skobeleva Mayka* A13 and the rest of *Trakiya*.

Car road
Proposal
Change

Original zoning plan

Current zoning plan
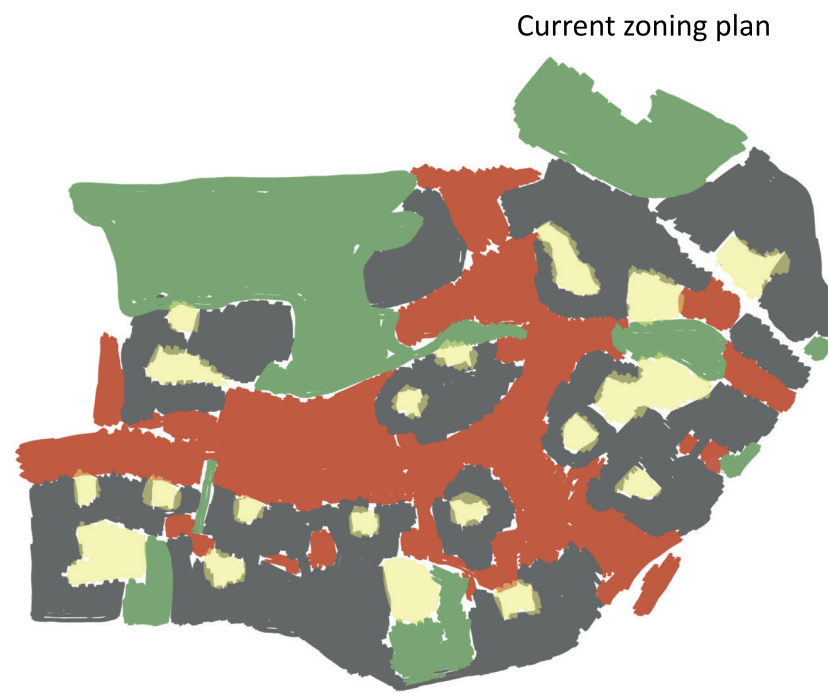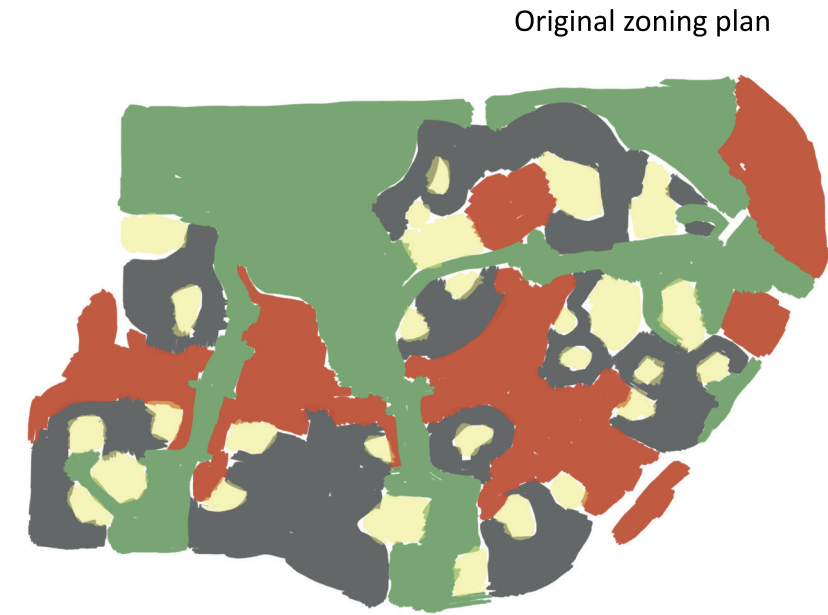
Residential
Public
Green
Educational

III Integrating
the underdeveloped A13

II Generating
the Public Space

I Rediscovering
the Green system
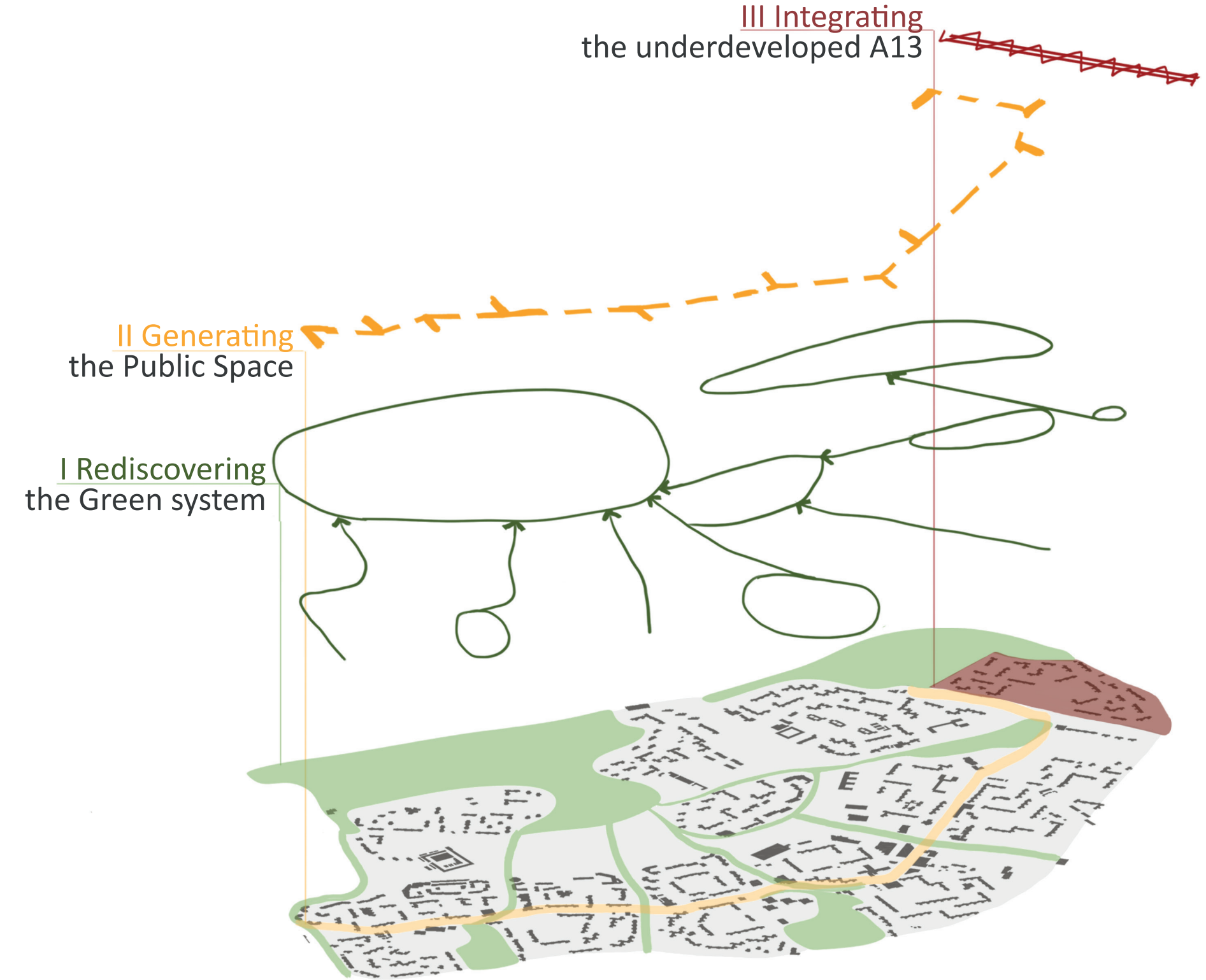
1 Rediscovering the Green system

The good connection between the green areas in *Trakiya* is one of the advantages of the original project.

As a vital part of the human habitat it is important that the green system is not only present, but preserved and well maintained. Taking a reference to the original design this work proposes a strategy for the contemporary development of the green areas of Trakiya. The proposal consists of a map, marking some of the areas that need regeneration of the vegetation in order to restore the links between the different smaller parks around *Trakiya* and *Lauta* park. These areas are differentiated in three functional categories according to their existing morphology and performative potential.

Residential

Mixed functions

Existing green

New green

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Green area Classification

Forest

Park

Promenade

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Parks

Along with the classical function of an urban park with recreational functions, this category considers a specific activity for *Trakiya*- the *rantcho*. Until 2007 park Lauta, as well as many other public green spaces are abandoned. Some of them overrun and turn into a hardly accessible and danger zones. Others are deserted, or used as playgrounds, but are poorly maintained. Some parts of the deserted areas, originally though as park areas are adopted by the inhabitants and turned into small vegetable gardens. This bottom up development is currently endangered of destruction. According to the development plan, simultaneously *rantchos* correspond conceptually to the executed urban actions and violate the local law which forbids any agricultural activity on the territory of the green areas in the city. [58] Just as Dr Dona Pickard describes in her article, the *rantcho* *is an emanation of the civil relation to the green space in the city*. Therefore, it is a main element of this project that proposes its distribution among the green areas of the district.

Forests

The forest of *Lauta* park is an important accent for the urban structure of Trakiya. This project proposes its extension toward the north-east end of the district. In combination with the divergence of the boulevard, this measure would shield the neighbouring microregions A9 and A13 from the intensive traffic and restores the original plan of *Trakiya*.

Promenades

Altghout the morphology of a promenade is common to a number of areas around the neighbourhood, they are not defined as a leisure zone in *Trakiya*. The long rays tensioned between the outside border of the district and the centrally located dense green areas, are a convinient prerequisite for this typology. In advanse, the vertical section of these areas presents convenient propotions to the human scale. Bright spacious lanes with existing, vertical vegetation balance the height of the building blocks. The topography of the whole district is flat which facilitates convenience for walks in long distances. Three types can be distinguished in terms of the proportions and the placement of the elements.

Promenade Types

Type I

car road 13m / walkway 6m / vegetation 33m / 19m

Type II

walkway 7,5m / car road 13m / isle 11m / car road 13m / walkway 8m / vegetation 18m / 22m

Type III

semiprivate space 7,5m / street 7m / garage boxes with workshops 10m / dry canal bed 25m / deserted area 60m / 22m

58 Pickard 2016, 63
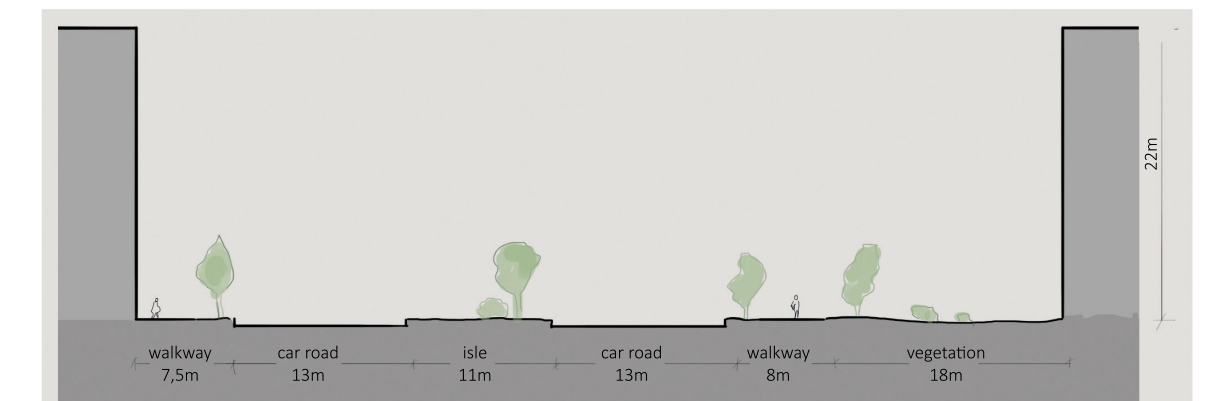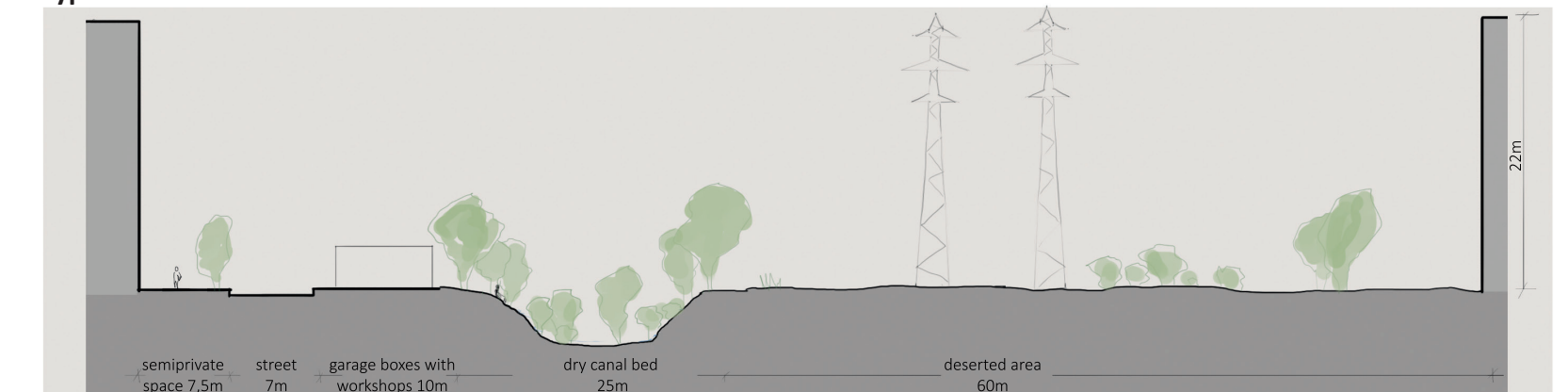
Visual connection

Desire Path

Car road

Meeting point

Conflict zone

Attractor

Solid border
(building, wall)

Transparent fence
(school yard)

Nominal border
between zones
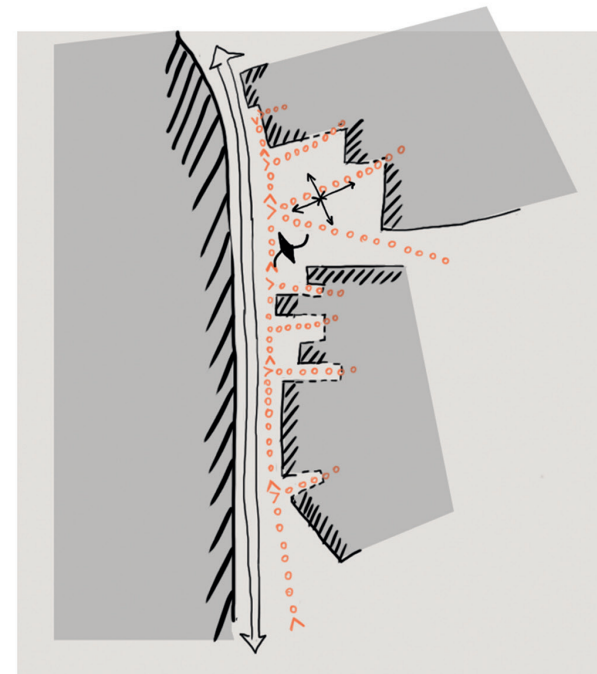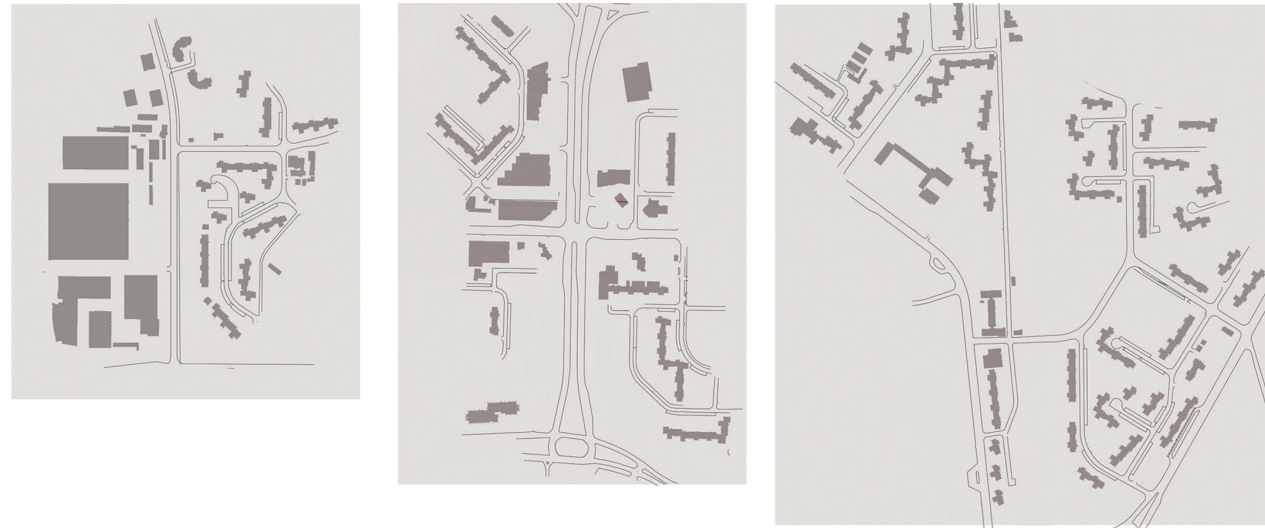
Type I Narrow space surrounded by one or two tracery borders, allowing the actor to experience diverse spatial development.
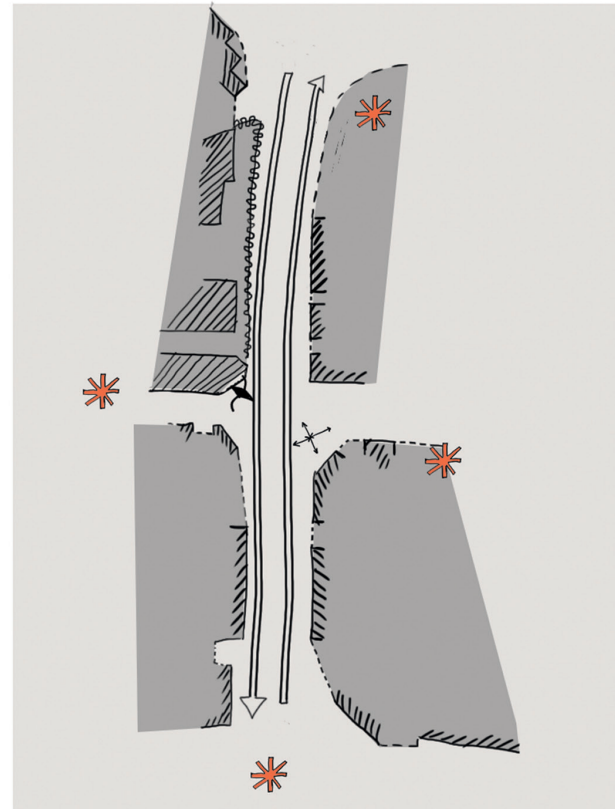
Type II Long straight roadway with a bright middle green isle. Stretched between public function attractor points.
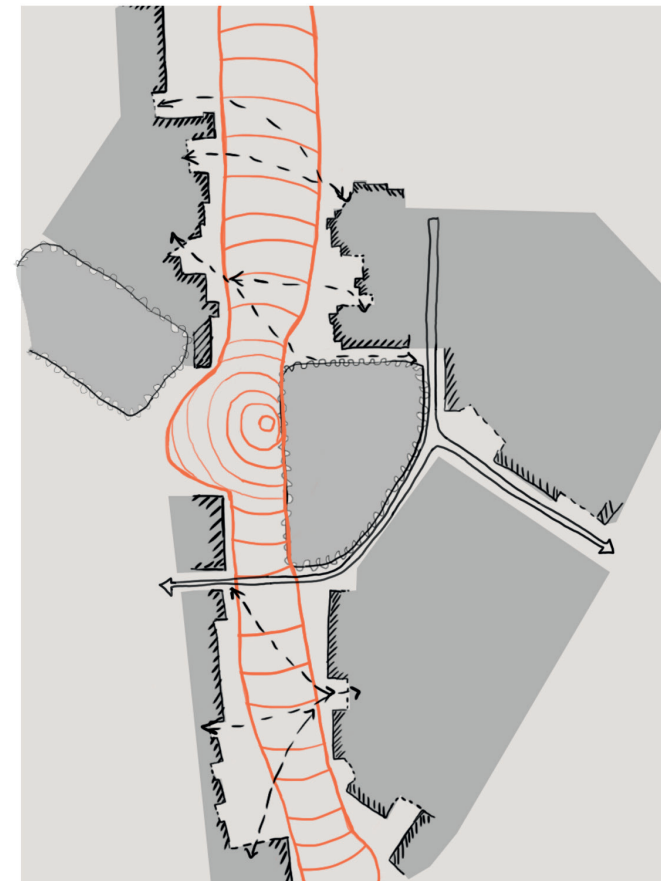
Type III Spacious longitudinal space crossed by many desire paths. Surrounded by various functional spaces.

Interventions

In order to create the green passes and make them suitable for functioning as promenades, few measures need to take place. They concern the car roads and would also work towards reducing the traffic inside the neighbourhood.

Slowing down car traffic

Implementing the shared space concept on places that function as nodes. This intervention is suitable for *Saedinenie* street, since its purpose is of a distributor for the microregions and not a cross through road with intense traffic.

Lifting the promenade

Boulevard *Osvobozhdenie* functions as a barrier between the green centre of *Trakiya* – the *Lauta* park and the rest of the green spots. It consists of three car lanes in each direction and has the characteristics of a freeway. By building ramps above it, this barrier can be overcome.

Pushing down the traffic

At a few crossing nodes the big roadways that connect the outlying arc of *Trakiya* with its centre are intersecting the smaller *Saedinenie* street. The intense traffic and big scale interrupts the pedestrian movement and opposes to the softer proportions of this part of the district. By leading these big scale roads underground, the area above is freed for slower movement and does not interrupt the passing of promenades.
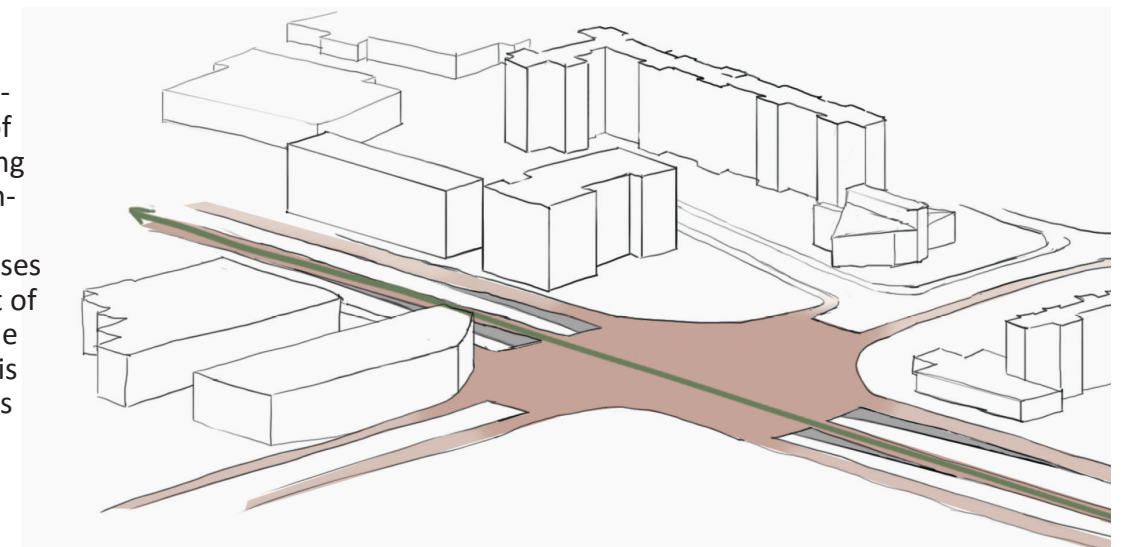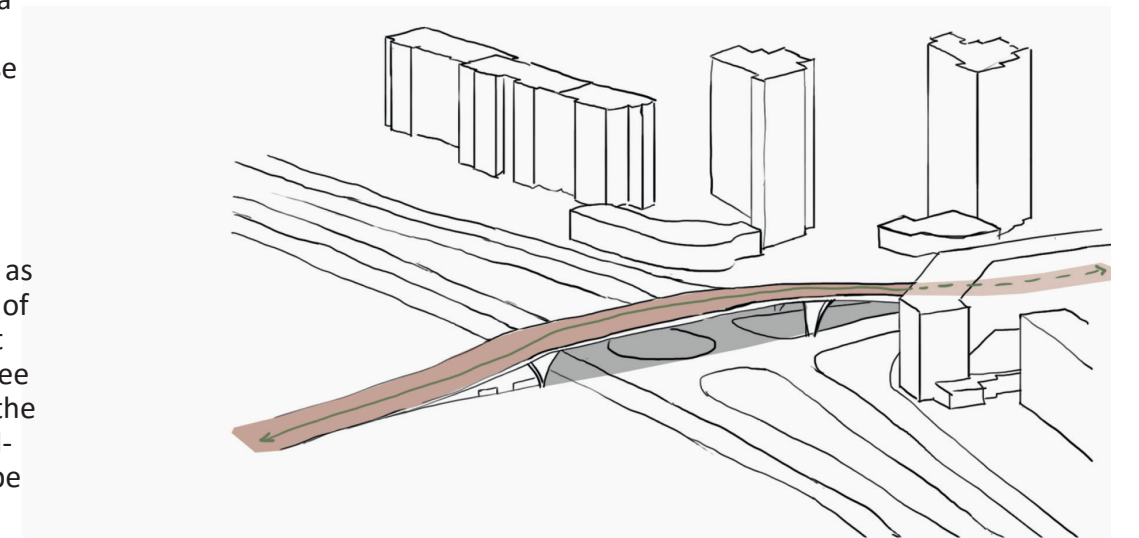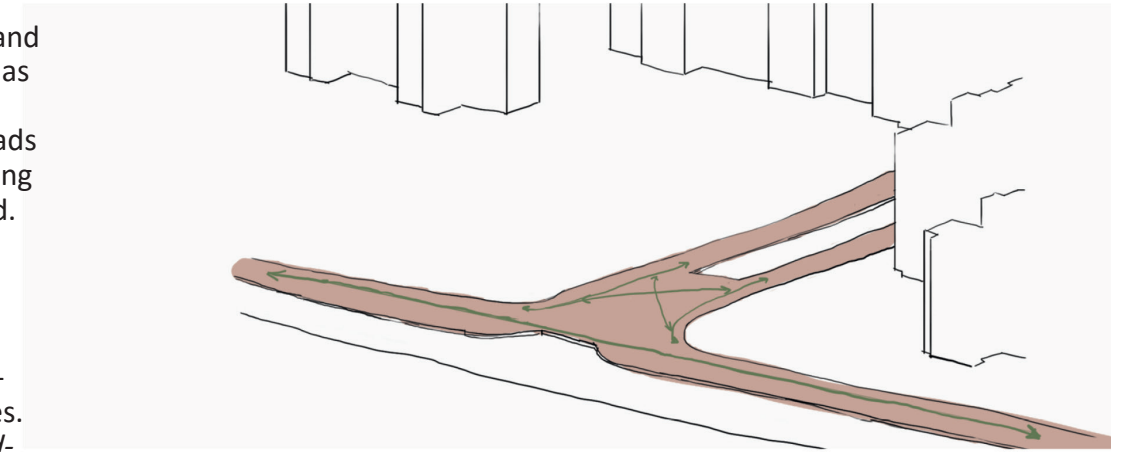
2 Generation of the public space: *The Zip*

In my initial research of *Trakiya* finding an approach for the analysis of such a low dense urban plan was challenging. While the building density is low, the zoning order is strictly defined. I speculate that the reason for that is the empty space within which the build environment is so well positioned. In the years after 1989 the inhabitants succeed in using the incompleteness of the neighbourhood by humanizing and changing the empty space into private, or semiprivate(small gardens, gathering gaze-bos, workshops, etc). In *Trakiya* there is a potential for the development of the rhythmic structure of its zones. The approach I choose is a project that represents the possibility of this kind of development through the differentiation of empty, but functionally defined spaces on key positions in the neighbourhood.

Saedinenie and *Osvobozhdenie* – the two parallel streets intersecting the neighbourhood are bearers of this unbuilt zones. Originally and accord-ing to the contemporary zoning plan the saturation of complementary and public functions is on *Osvobozhdenie* street. However, in reality this street is a big scaled boulevard, with no predisposition to public space activities and bottom up development, as seen on the *Social Attractors map*. (p.43)

Osvobozhdenie

Saedinenie
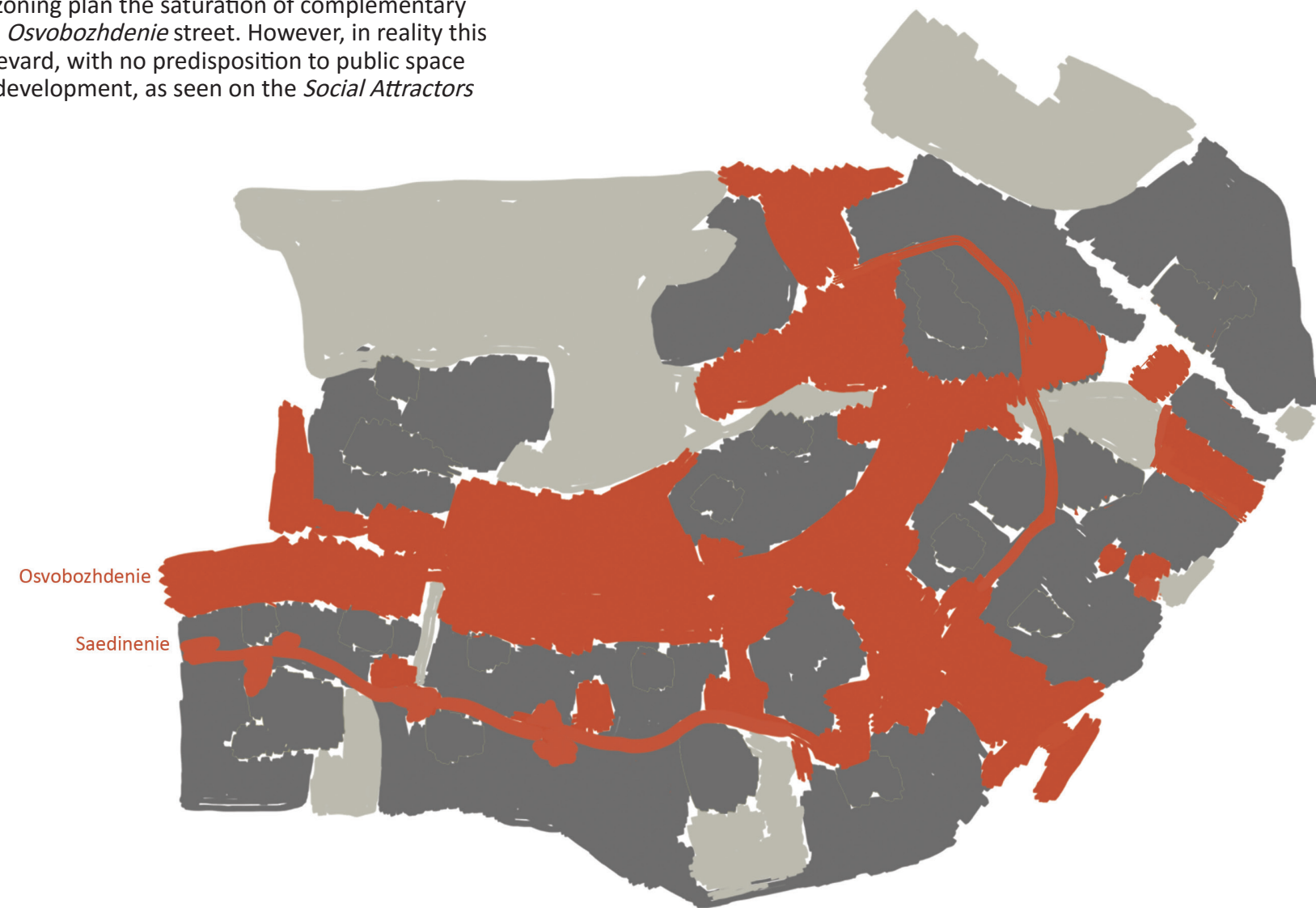
In the years after 1989 *Saedinenie* street developed into a vital space that attracts social activities. The ground floor area[59] of the blocks is occupied by different small businesses like hairdressing salons, bookstores, grocery stores, reading rooms etc. These functions emerged as self-initiatives from the owners of the apartments they are situated in. Inside the resi-dential zone is the realm of self-made gathering spots. Their type varies from lone benches to gathering gazebos.

Although cars play crucial factor in the initial development of the dis-trict, considering its unbuilt space and infrastructure, the morphology of *Saedinenie* street resembles much more a public realm, than a car road. It changes its curve and size according to the surrounding context. It is rather perceived as a spatial than as a linear element, because of the diversity of its surroundings. The dweller experience constant change in the boundary and the form of the environment. It is the preferred street for strolling and meeting.
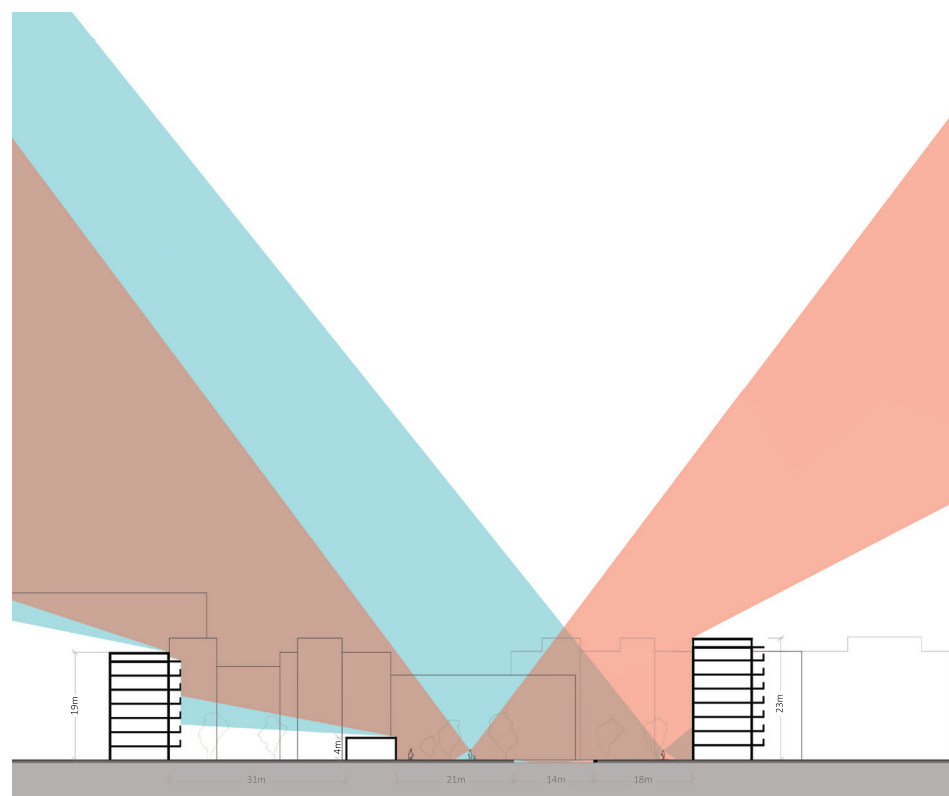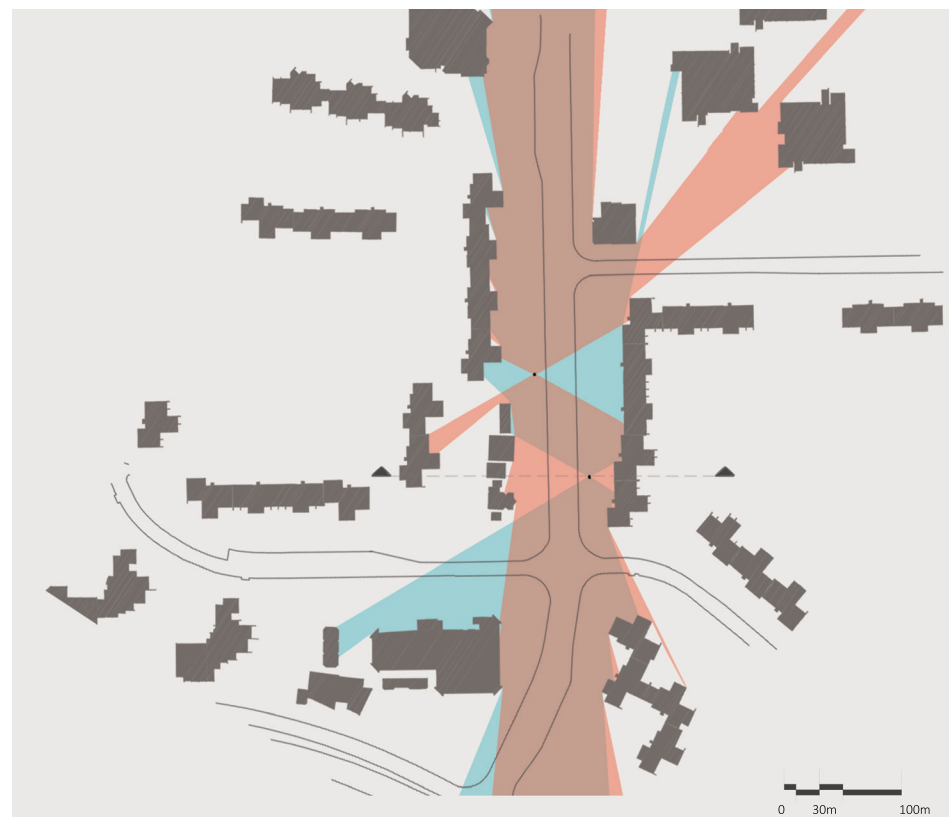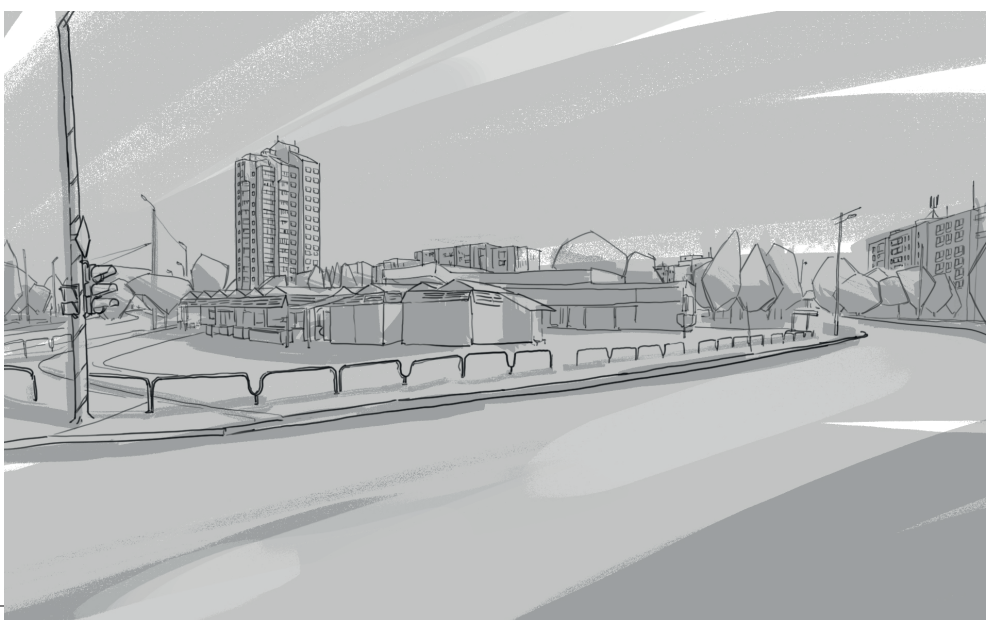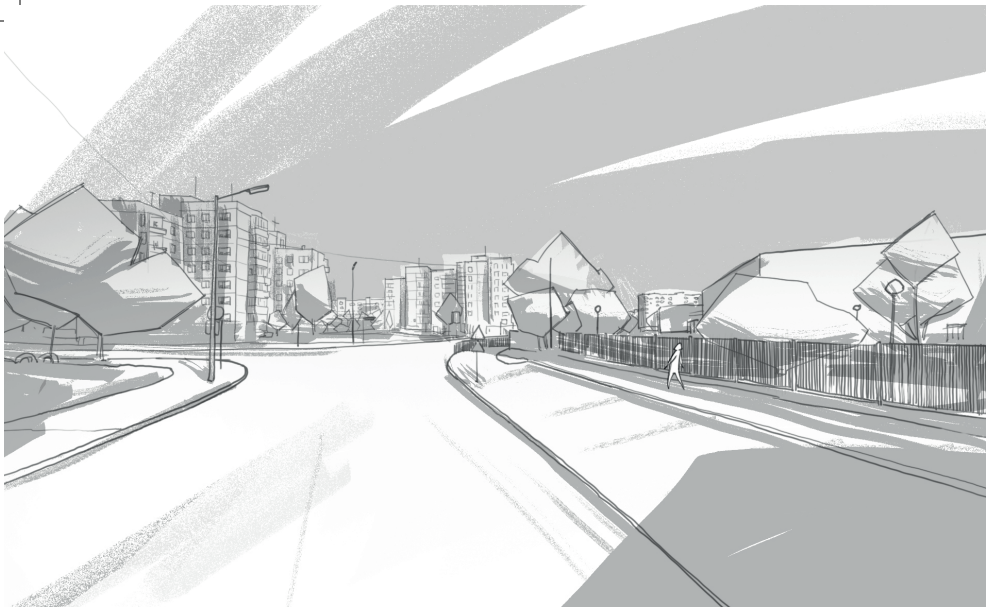
The following table gives a comparison between the properties of a street as a car road and as space with qualities of the public realm.

Car road	Public realm
Regulated	Culturally defined
Impersonal	Personal
Linear	Spatial
Single purpose	Multi-purpose
Consistent	Constantly changing
Predictable	Unpredictable
Systematic	Contextual
State controlled	Cultural/ social rules
Sings and markings	Eye contact

[60]

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59 In fact, this is the first floor that is additionally adjusted with stairs, so that the space is acces-sible from the sidewalk.
60 The highway and The public realm from the video presentation on Shared Space

Zoning and fragmentation of social and public functions along *Saedinenie* street

Zoning character
Residential
Semi-Public
Public

Distribution of Socializing functions
Commercial
Bottom-up business
Gathering gazebo

In order to improve the quality of *Saedinenie* street as a public space I propose the limitation of the car traffic by:

a.   Making it a one-way street with direction from west to east

b.   Create shared space areas

Drawing a zig-zag line that follows a sequel of connection knots with an average distance of 500 meters *the Zip* is formed. The knots are situated on places between the existing social attractors. Some of them are currently functioning as public spaces, for example near schoolyards or open air markets, but are monotonous in character. These knots aim to balance the fragmentation of the localised social attractors and diversify the pattern of public spaces. They are classified in four groups according to their form and three according to their function, which is influenced by the existing social activities in the district.

Connection lines
socializing functions

Connection lines
knotting points

Knots
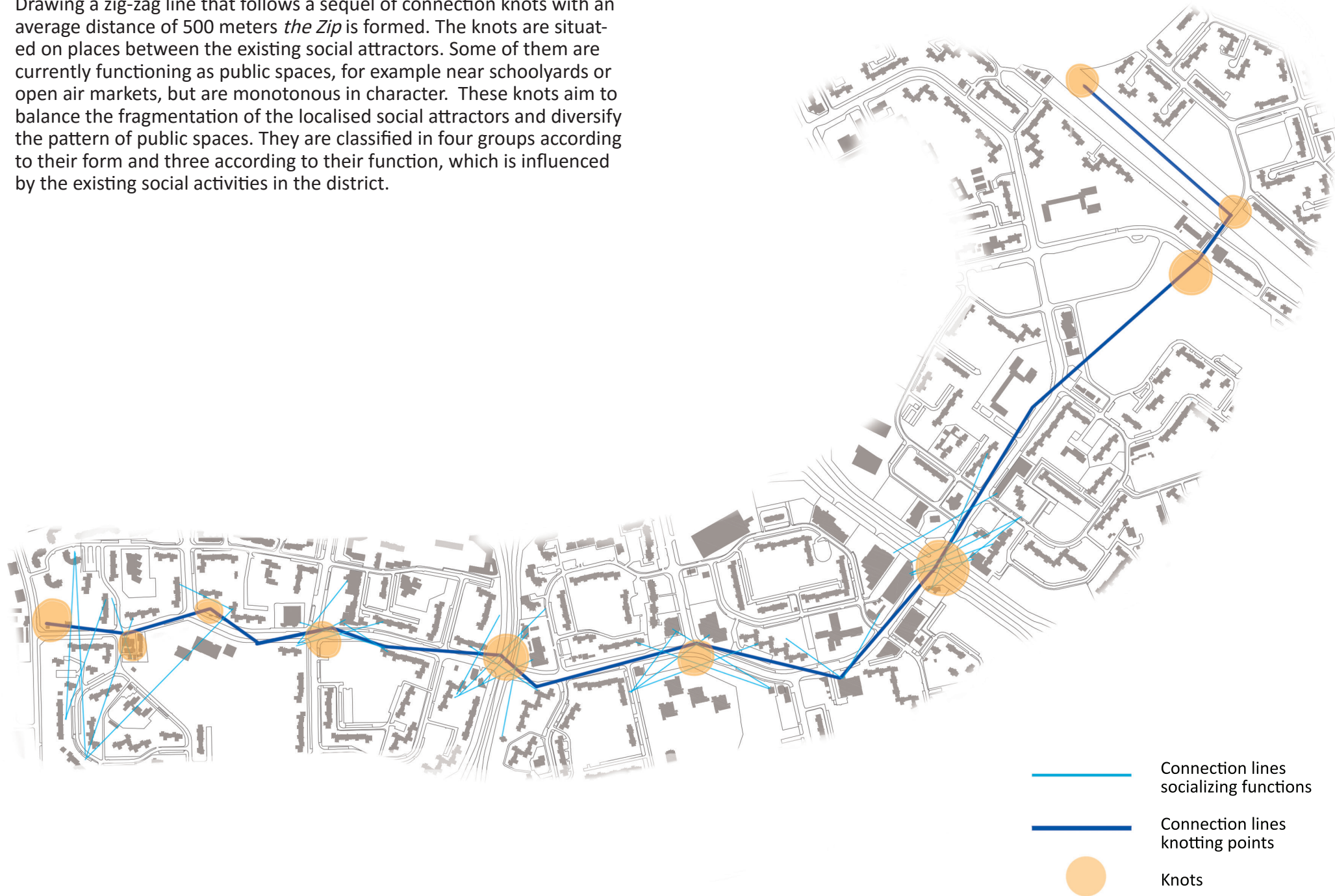
Type I Situated along a straight road this type of space provides far reaching visual connections and a feeling of dynamics.
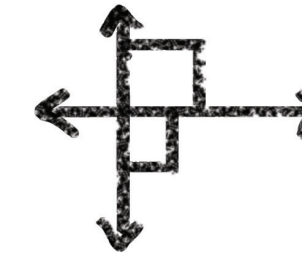
Type II Small areas that are enclosed by a group of residential buildings with active ground floor zone (small businesses and workshops). The street in this areas is narrowed and the traffic is quiet.

Type III Currently the big scaled public spaces around the crossroads are divided due to intense traffic happening on these streets. Having the potential of their proportions and urban functions, they could become valuable areas with useful public function.
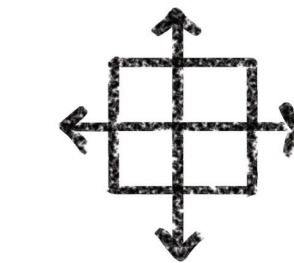
Type IV This type is represented only by Space 6 *Ruma* that is also the only designed public square in *Trakiya*. It benefits from the functional diversity in the surrounding buildings including school, cinema, a shopping centre and restaurants. The space is a crossing point between two different morphological systems with its south edge developing into a park and its north edge into residential area.
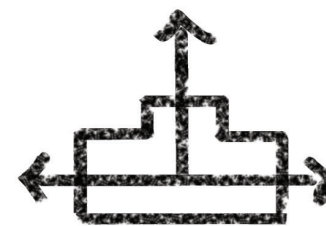
The following functions describe three ways the inhabitants of *Trakiya* interpret perceived and conceived space, or according to the *Spatial Triad* of Lefebvre[61] - lived space[62].

Perceived   Conceived

Lived
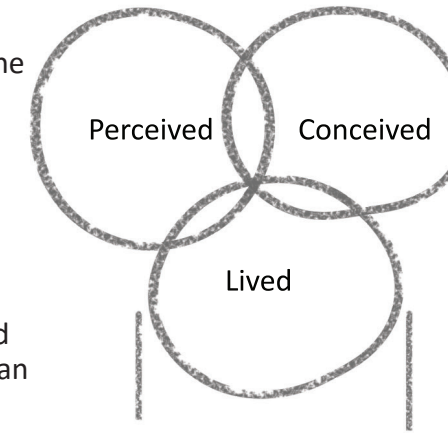
Communication

As a prototype for this function are considered the places that generate social activity. Such can be found in the form of bottom up and small scale gathering places like groups of benches or gathering gazebos. Representative of the top-down development of public space in the district is the space around the *Khan Krum* monument.

Communication
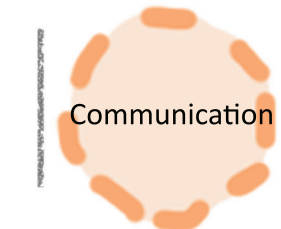
Activity

The appetency of the inhabitants for work and domestic activities outside their homes, can be spotted inside the residential zones. Spontaneous workshops such as making pickles or repairing the car. Beating the carpet or painting the furniture. Sometimes these workshops are long lasting, such as the specific form of urban farming - *rantcho*.

Activity
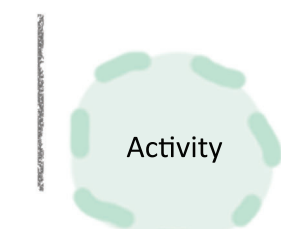
Trade

A big percentage of the commercial functions are situated on the ground floor are of the living blocks and adjusted to the needs of the service. Stairs connecting the public space with the elevated first floor are a characteristic view all around *Trakiya* and a vitalasing element of the surrounding space.

Trade
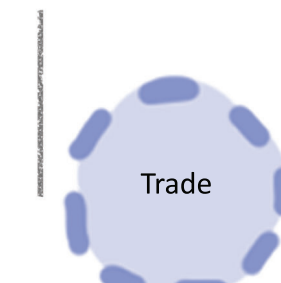
61 The spatial Triad is a model that provides a framework to recognize the three elements of producing space. These three elements of the Spatial Triad are ‚representation of space‘, ‚representational space‘ and ‚spatial practices‘ (Goonewardena et al., 2008). The formation of space occurs through these three elements of the model.
62 http://geography.ruhosting.nl/geography/index.php?title=Lived_space
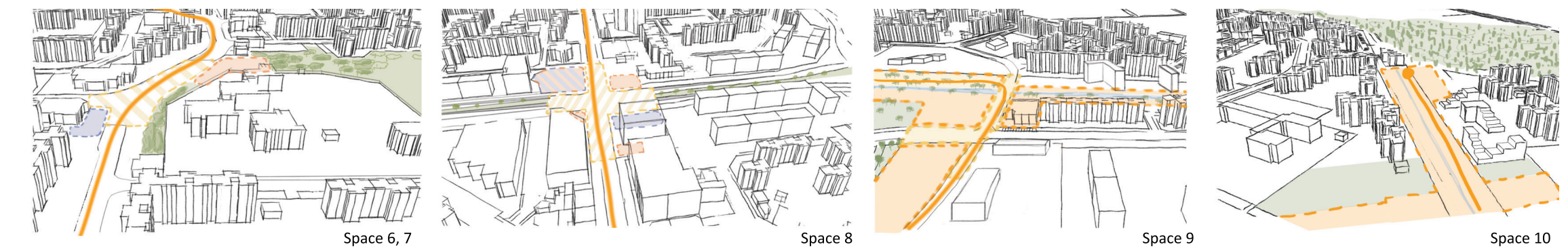
31

32

33

34

The streets location – stretching across the entire district in combination with the regularly distributed spaces resemble a zipper that binds both parts of the district.

The following plan illustrates the distribution of the different types of spaces along *the Zip*.

In order to give character to the spaces and associate them with the orientation system of *Trakiya*, described in *Almanac of pre-fab Trakiya*. I named them at my discretion, according to their location, specific element or function present in the surrounding environment.

The address system of Trakiya is rather unusual – instead of street name and number, to name an address the number of the residential block is used. Therefore, it is a challenge to find your way in Trakiya, considering the amount of monotonous buildings, chaotically scattered around the district. In the process of the onsite survey something else was brought to our attention – the specific practice of orientation that works on micro level. When requesting help in order to get to a certain location, the dwellers described the directions not only through the usual reference points (public spaces, public buildings, numbers of residential buildings), but also using the nicknames of different buildings. We highlighted some of them The Lost, The Widowed, The Roma, The Lilac, The Three Fools, The Spanish Houses, The Wealthy one, etc. (self-translation from Bulgarian) [63]

63 Studio NOTO 2016, 134-135

Walk through *the Zip*

Space 6, 7   Space 8   Space 9   Space 10

10 Kanala
(the water canal)
Type II
5000 m²
social-
commercial-

2 Sedmochislenitzi
(Sedmochislenitzi)*
Type II
3000 m²
commercial-

5 Hlebozavoda
(the bakery)
Type III
11 000 m²
market -
social -

6 Ruma*
Type IV
18 000 m²
- social
- commercial
- festive

7 Kamilite
*(the camels***)*
Type II
1800 m2
- social

9 Novia
(the new one)
Type I
20 000 m²
- social
-urban farming

1 Rabotilnitsa
(workshop)
Type I
11 000 m²
social hub -
urban farming-
workshop -

3 Gumadzhiite
(vulcanizers)
Type II
1500 m²
workshop -

4 Detski Svyat
*(kid's realm**)*
Type I
6000 m²
- social
- commercial

8 Forum*
Type III
16 000 m²
- market
- social
- commercial

* The name of the nearby school
** The name of a famous shopping centre
*** The fountains there resemble camel humps

Social
Workshop
Commercial
Shared space

0   100 m   300 m   500 m

Space 1,2,3   Space 4   Space 5

In order to illustrate possibilities for development, I choose to elaborate three locations on *The Zip*. The third one of these proposals is also a method of integration of the underdeveloped microregion A13. It is described in detail in chapter 3 Integration of A13.

Current condition

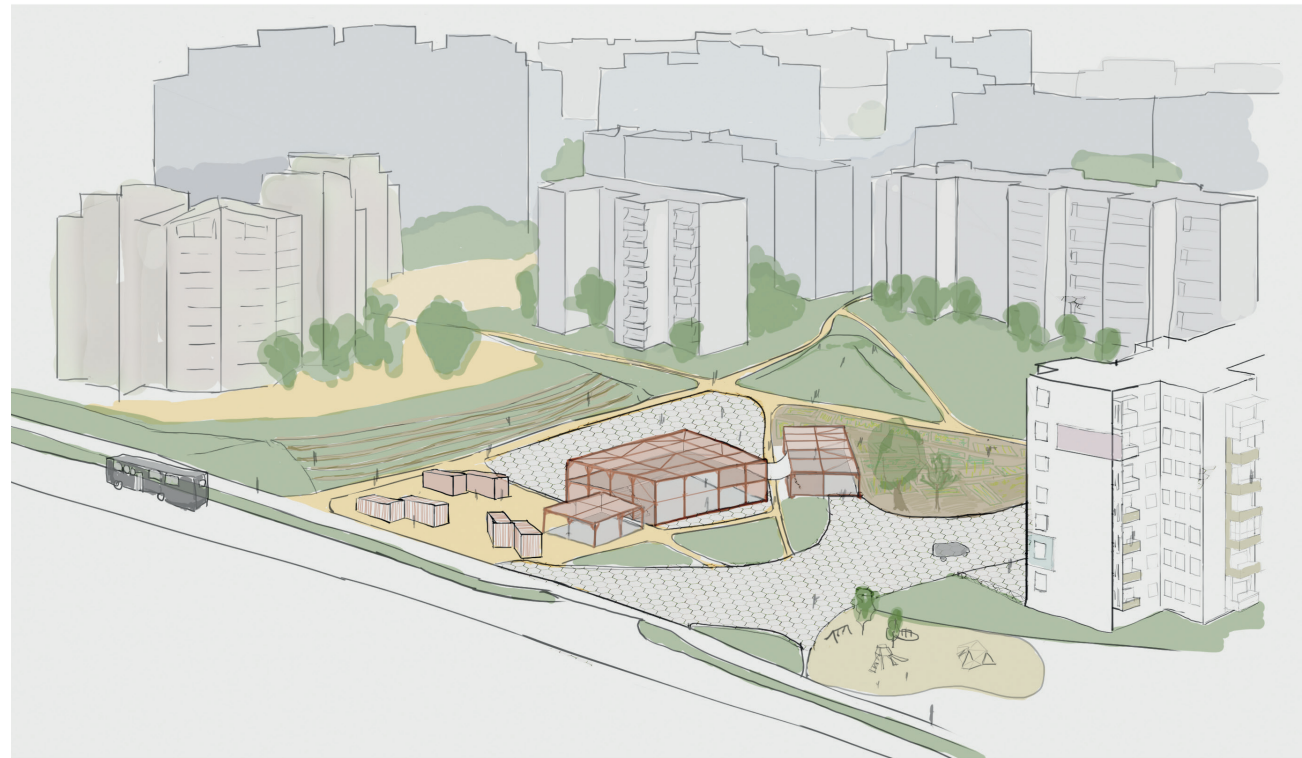Space 1
Rabotilnitsa

Space 8
Forum

Space 10
Kanala

Rabotilnitsa

The first space of the sequel shares similar character with the semi-private areas inside the residential districts. Its aim is to officialize functions and activities initiated by the inhabitants. Organizing these functions and activities on an area situated between two microregions and including them within the logic of *the Zip*, they are directed towards socialization and exchange on a public level. The method for its creation is mutual to the Placemaking approach.[64]

The elements used on this site could be developed in a chronological way as follows:

Rantcho - As an uncommon activity for this part of *Trakiya*. This is the first intervention the importation of should be controlled by the municipality, which parcels out small pieces of land for those interested in the activity.

Workshop boxes - Replacement and reorganization of the existing concrete garage boxes that currently serve not only as parking space, but also as repair centers from the inhabitants. In the following proposal they are replaced with mobile shipping containers, that should be distributed by the municipality for rent to interested inhabitants. They should no longer shelter cars, but various workshops at the inhabitant's discretion.

The third step is the construction of a social hub with attachments complementing the *Rantchos* and Workshop boxes. The main section of the social hub should be planned as a functionally flexible and adaptable element that shelters different social and cultural activities. Its construction should include equal portions municipality and citizen participation in order to familiarize the inhabitants with the element.

The last step of this process should be the landscape design. Intervention conducted manly by the citizen's desires and exploitation of the space and according to the development of the aforementioned functions.

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64 Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. It capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and wellbeing. It is political due to the nature of place identity. Placemaking is both a process and a philosophy.

Space 1
Rabotilnitsa
Strategy

Site

-11 000 m²

- crossroad
  - zones border/district
  - street
- desire paths
- level difference

Social activities

- urban farming
- gathering spot
- ground floor business
- domestic activity (garage boxes)

Stepwise development

1 Rancho   2 Workshop boxes   3 Social hub   4 Landscape design

Introduction to new, but familiar activitiy | Reorganization of existing social activity | Construction of supplementary functions | Implementing the results of a participatory process

top-down/bottom-up
ratio

Zone border

Poor vegetation

Vegetation

Car service

Bus stop

Ground floor business

Desire Path

Gathering Spot

Garage box

Residential building

Rabotilnitsa
Proposal

1

2

3

4
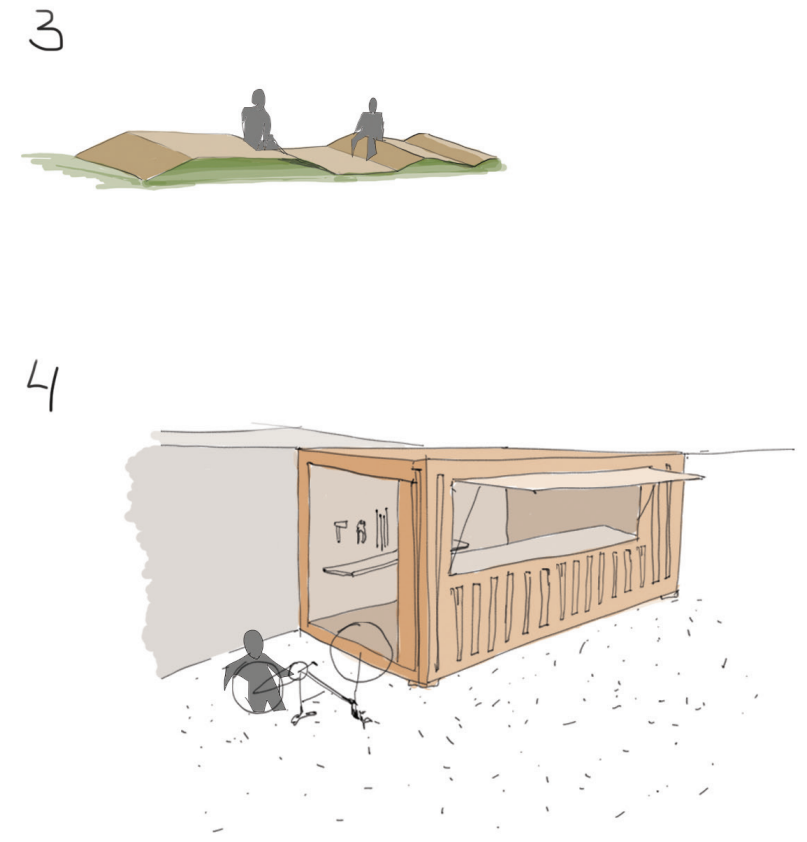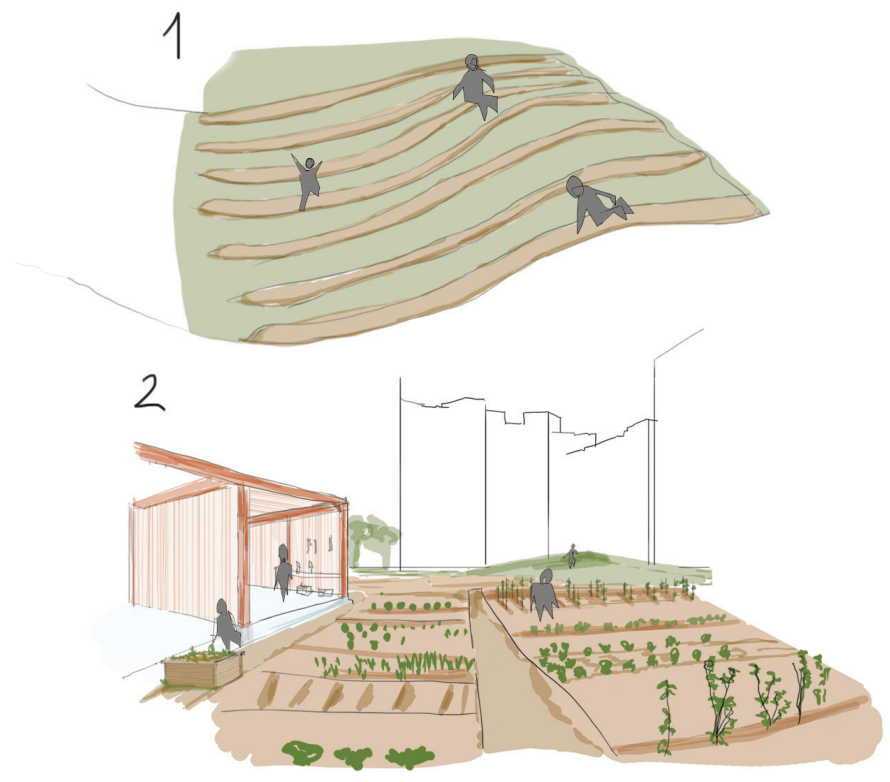
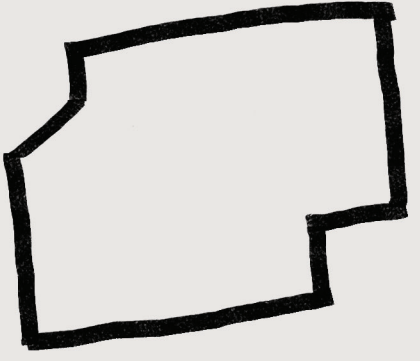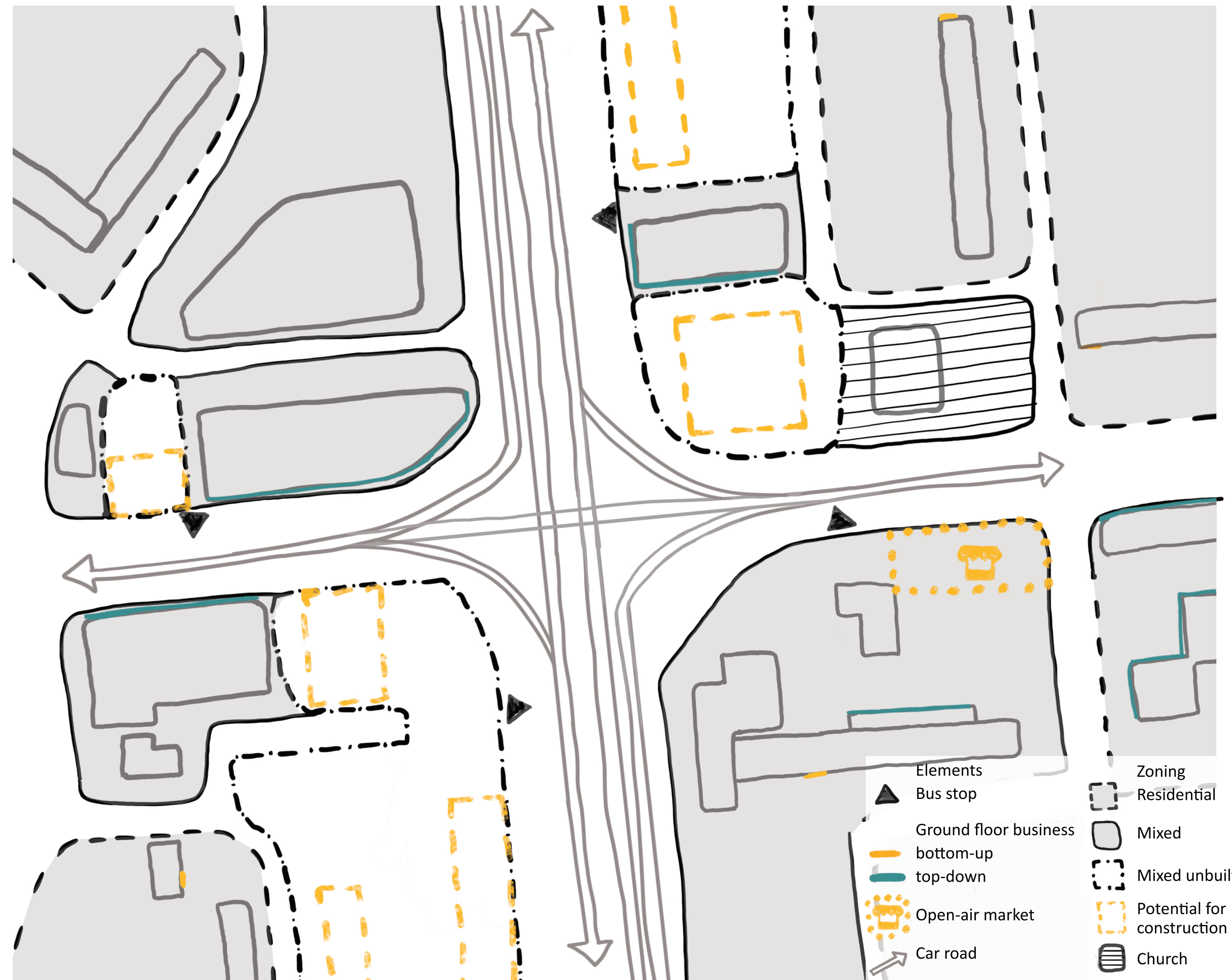0   20 m   50 m   100 m   200 m

0   20 m   50 m   100 m   200 m

The Forum is part of an area that went through the most intensive development in recent years. Highly frequented crossroad with a plethora of public functions such as open air market, a church, restaurants, shops, etc. This space is urban in nature and the following proposal aims to underline it. Said proposal includes a modification of the current zoning plan. The north corner dedicated to a mixed residential building switches location with the open air market, which in turn takes its place. On the south corner – mixed residential building, whose volume composition corresponds to the context of an active ground floor zone, forming a forecourt, sheltered by an alcove. This way the new vast shared space is complemented on all four corners by areas predisposing public functions. Another element of the space is the crossing promenade, flowing from the railway station to the core of Trakiya.

Since the bottom up activity in the surrounding areas is rather low, this location should be a subject of development only to the municipality.
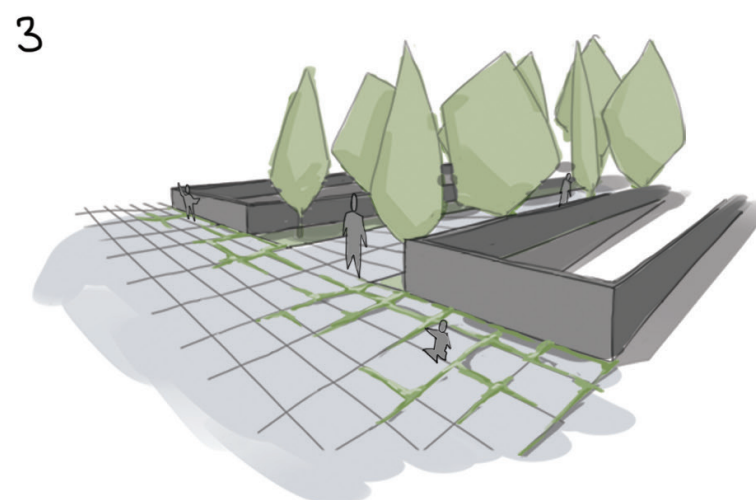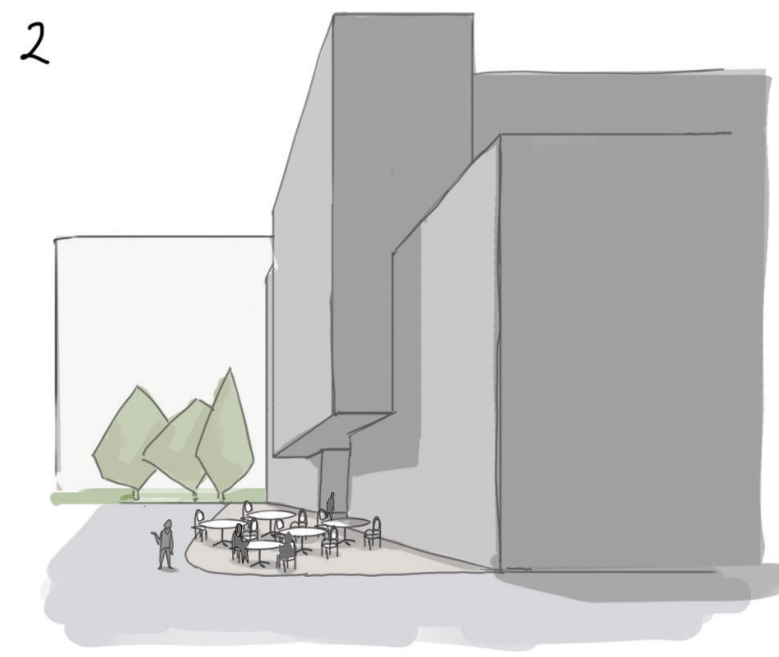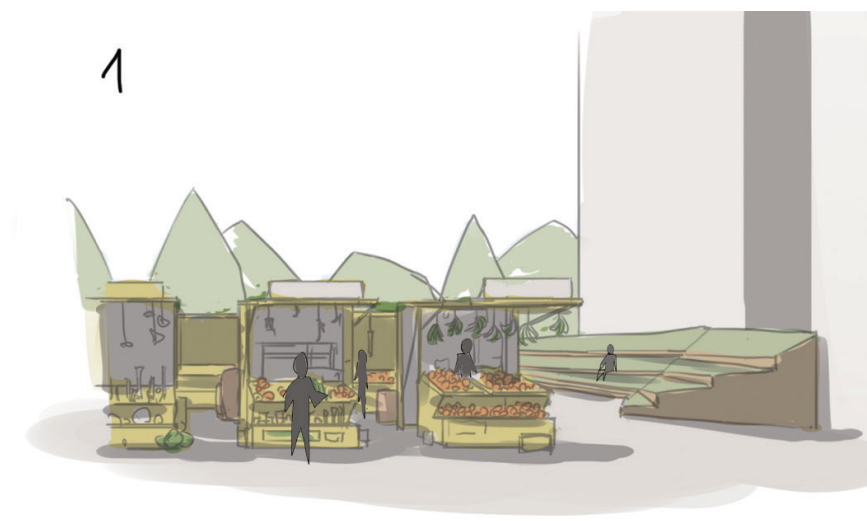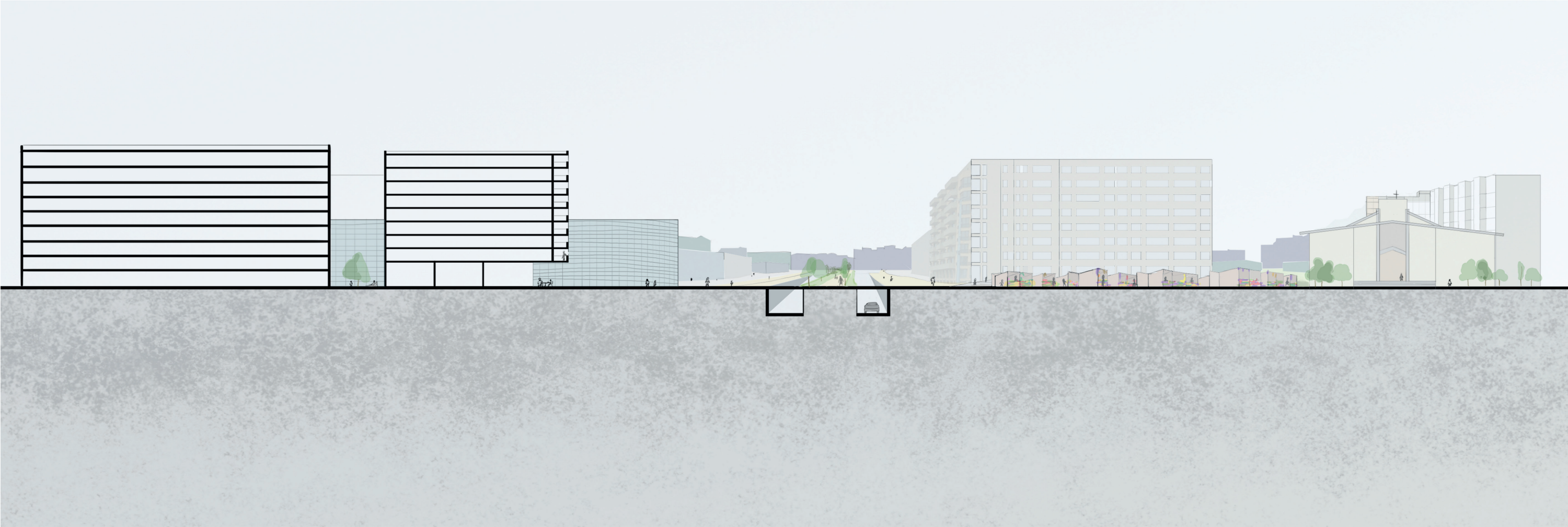
Space 8
Forum
Strategy

Site

-16 000 m²
- frequenting space
- urban character
- functional diversity

Social activities

- leisure
- meeting spot
- ground floor business
- open-air market

Interventions

1   Reorganization of zoning plan

2   Reducing car traffic

Elements
Bus stop

Ground floor business
bottom-up
top-down

Open-air market

Car road

Zoning
Residential

Mixed

Mixed unbuilt

Potential for construction

Church

Forum
Proposal

1

2

3

85

0   20 m   50 m   100 m   200 m
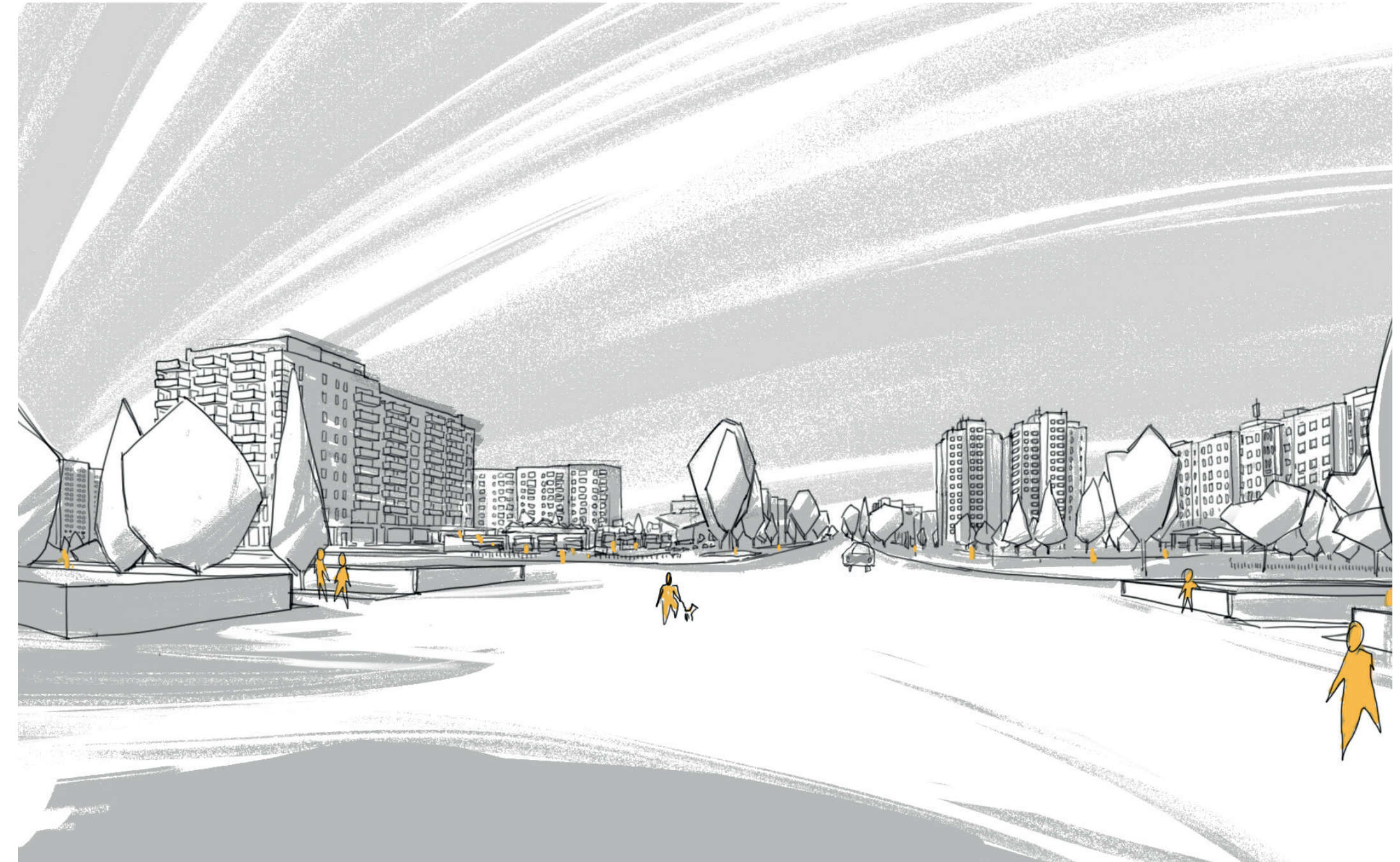
0   20 m   50 m   100 m   200 m

3 Integration of A13

Rivers always played an important role in urban development. It is a multifunctional topographic element. According to the state of development of the society a river can be cultivated, controlled and integrated benefiting the people and in this way it manipulates the settlement that belongs to it. Almost all bigger European cities share their development through the centuries alongside rivers. Whether it is part of the city fabric or is situated peripherally, rivers always inspire the people that profit from it. The first known inhabitants of the area around todays *Trakiya* settled by the already non-existing *Belashtenska river*[65]. The main role of *Maritza* river (one of Bulgarias biggest rivers) in the region of Plovdiv is the irrigation of the fertile Thracian lands. It is used by the people that create multiple artificial water canals. One of these canals crosses *Trakiya* and separates the not agglomerated microregion A13 – *Skobeleva Mayka* from the rest of the district. This chapter analyses the possibility of using the already unnecessary irrigation canal as a revival element for the underdeveloped part of *Trakiya*.

As a part of a large scale urban project for the expansion of Plovdiv in 1965, *Trakiya* is a district developed exclusively by the working collective of architect Ivan Popov. Considering its size and the complexity of the task, it is not a surprise that the planning process takes about six years. For this time period the architects design a complex residential district with urban and urban wide functions for approximately 70 000 inhabitants. The district is planned to function as a well calculated mechanism where every microregion and functional zone are situated so that they serve their functions on the inside, as well as on the outside. Despite its extraneous relation to the city the fractal structure is another sign for the interdependence between the different district parts from the smallest to the biggest scale. The precise way it is planned is actually flexible considering readjustments or changes in the functions, as its development through the years shows. The project is open for interpretation on urban level when they are well thought out and coordinated with the context. This correlation is visible, while observing the pre-project models and plans from 1976 to 1979 and comparing them to the current plan of *Trakiya*. One of the differences is the replacement of the park with hospital on the north end of the district that serves as a buffering zone between the nearby highway and the residential buildings. Today, this green spot is occupied by a residential microregion, that is absent in the original plan. It is built at the end of the socialist period when the economy of the main investor – the country is already in a bad condition and is unable to fund further the construction of the neighbourhood. Teodora Balezdrova lives in *Trakiya* between 1985 and 2009. She explains her memories from the period when A13 emerges:

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36

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65 Detev, http://archeologybg.weebly.com/107110891072-1090107710871077-2.html
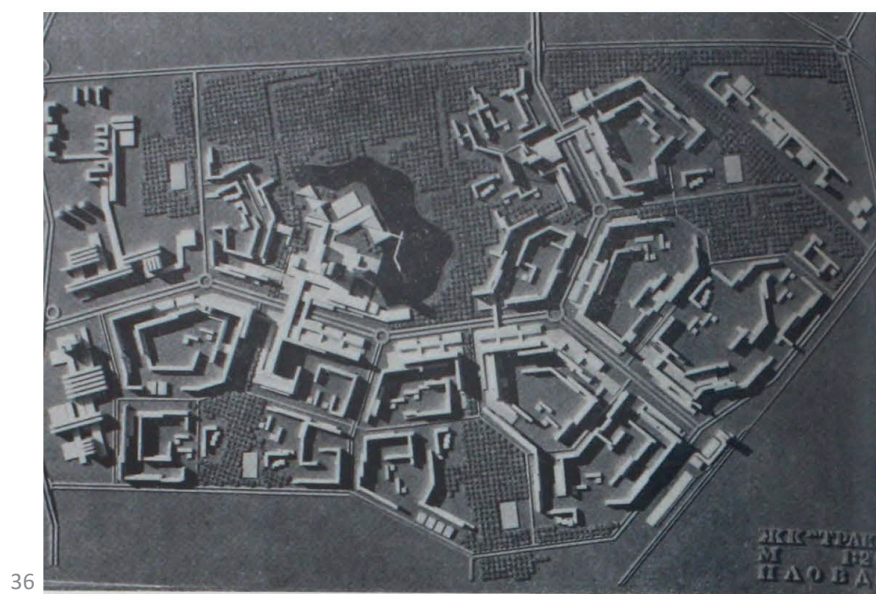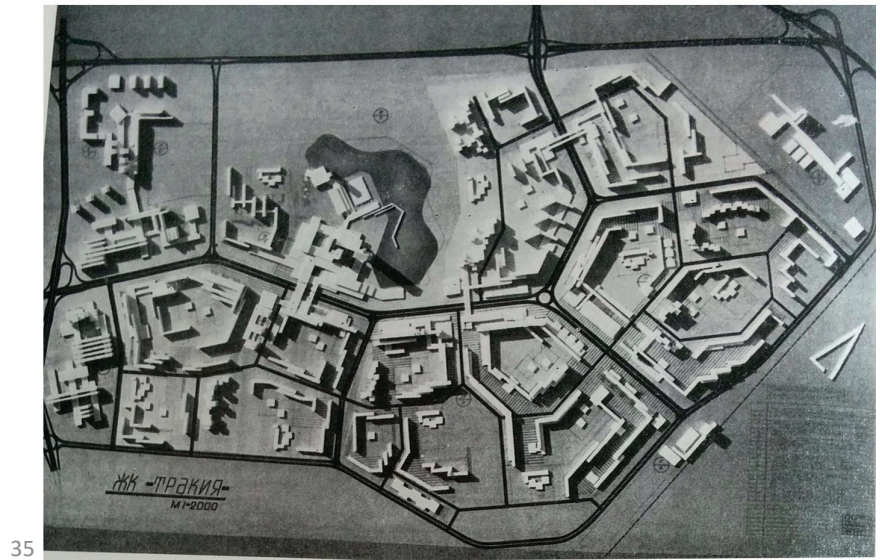
The project started around 1985. A lot of the buildings are built in a private manner by young families, or at least were finished by them. These buildings were provided from the state to different departments and other public trusts. They, in turn handed them to state factories in Plovdiv that assigned them to young specialists that would finish the apartments themselves. Some of these families participated in the landscape development around the blocks.

This process is described in a decree from January 27th, 1978.[66]

In order to propose a method for integration of microregion A13, I will first present its problematic zones. The analysis consists of three parts, each of which comprehends different aspect of the microregion 's structure and the life of its inhabitants.

Context

Microregion A13 consists of 6 to 8 storey height prefab panel buildings from both original typologies created for *Trakiya*. Considering the combinations, the building's ensembles of A13 do not differ from the rest of the district. Intriguing is the change in rhythm of rotation of the building's groups. In A13 it is much sharper. If in other parts of *Trakiya* the rotation happens around a common centre, in *Skobeleva Mayka* such common centre is absent.[67] The buildings form small autonomous clusters and in this way the principle of unity around a core is lost. From the Land Use plan is visible that the south part of the microregion is assigned for the construction of kindergartens (1). These zone is peripheral for A13. A similar structure can be found in microregion A12 *Lauta* which structure also differs from the rest of the district. In this case, the nearby *Lauta* park, the central location and the infrastructural connection are factors that contribute to the better integration of A12. It can be concluded that one of the reasons for the bad integration of A13 is its isomorphic structure to the neighbourhood.

Street network

The radial structure is a main characteristic of Trakiya. In order to fulfil the cohesion effect between the different buildings, the street network should correspond to this principle. In the graphical analysis of Gergana Marks (page 38) the repeatability of the model of a ring street is visible. As an enlarged projection of the core and a kind of envelope for the inner part of the microregions. This street model is not applied to A13. A clear hierarchy is absent and the arrangement is uneven. There are two main streets that connect the buildings through long dead end crossings. This disturbs the circulation inside the microregion and increases the isolation between the buildings.
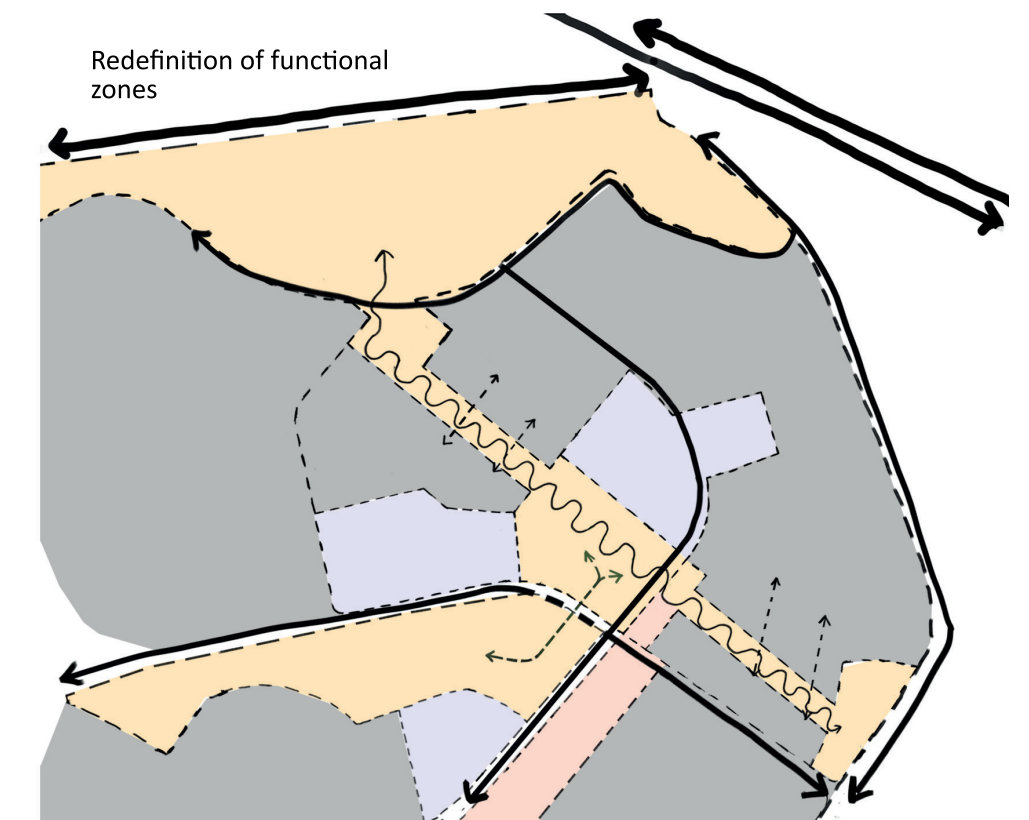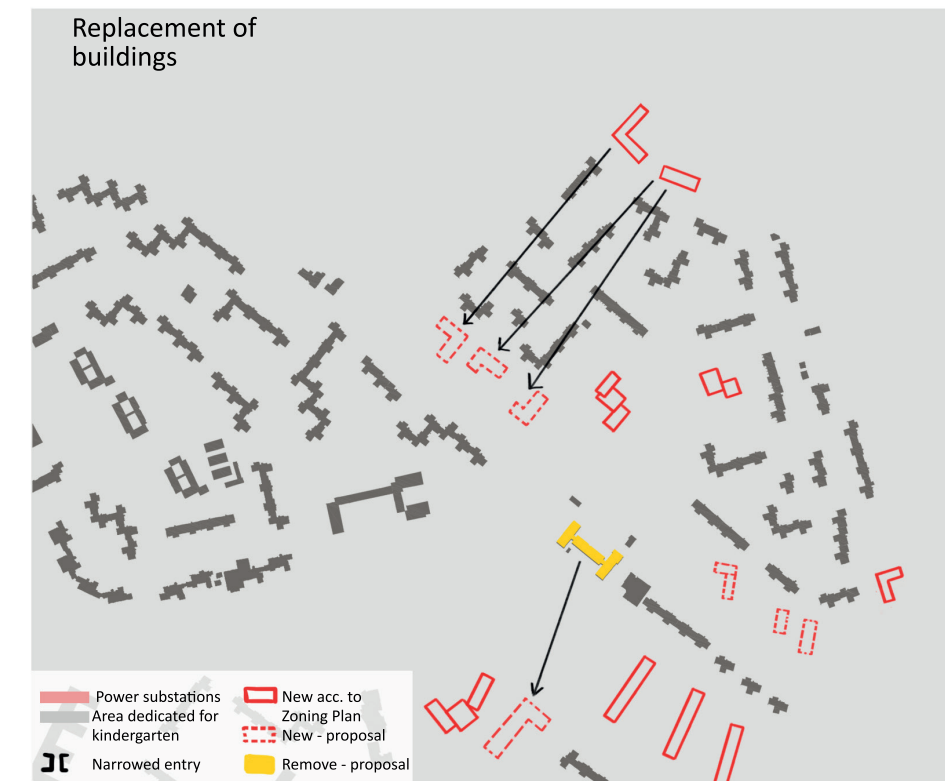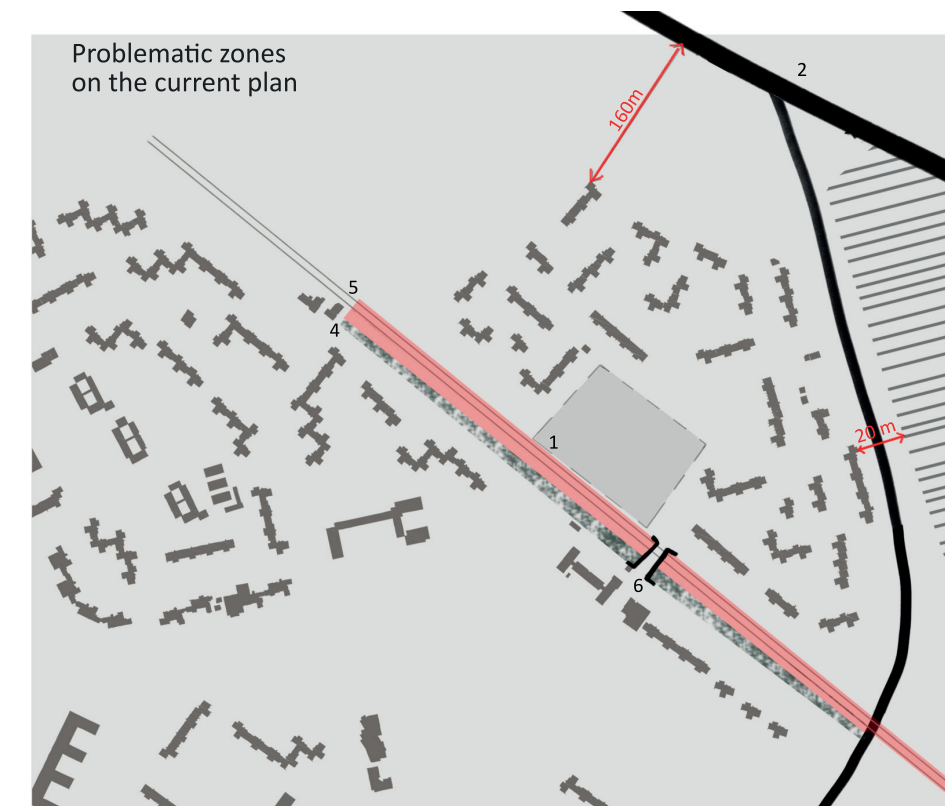
Belonging

Unlike the vastness of the other microregions, their green landscape and calm atmosphere, A13 doesn't possess these qualities. In addition to this it lies very near to a highway (2). The distance between the last building and the highly busy road is only 160 meters. The nearby industrial zone (3) is separated with a 20 meters' bright boulevard *Tsar Simeon* that turns into a one lane street in this area. In addition to that there is a high percentage of criminal activity in the microregion.

Another visible difference is the absence of bottom up development in the space around the buildings and in front of the entrances. [68]
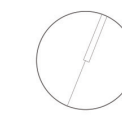
The fluent transition from one microregion to another is typical for the rest of *Trakiya*. Signs for the bad integration of A13 can be observed in its neighbouring microregion A9. Along the dried water canal bed is a row of garage boxes and the terrain is embanked (4). Both the pedestrian and the visual connection to A13 is interrupted. The dried water canal bed and the power substations are situated along the same intercept, contributing to the blockade of the microregion. (5)

The conclusion of the analysis is that all of these deficiencies contribute to the bad image of microregion *Skobeleva Maika* before the inhabitants and against the development of bottom up activities. The heterogeneity of *Trakiya* is a main ground that protects it from the negative development that followed in many *panelka* districts. [69]

66 The decree can be found in the online archives of the State Gazette, issue 52 of 3.VII http://www.ciela.net/svobodna-zona-darjaven-vestnik/document/-555208192/issue/1783
67 As seen in the illustration Structural urban rhythm

68 As seen in the Social Attractors plan
69 Zlatkova 2012, 131-132

Problematic zones
on the current plan

Replacement of
buildings

Power substations
Area dedicated for kindergarten
Narrowed entry
New acc. to Zoning Plan
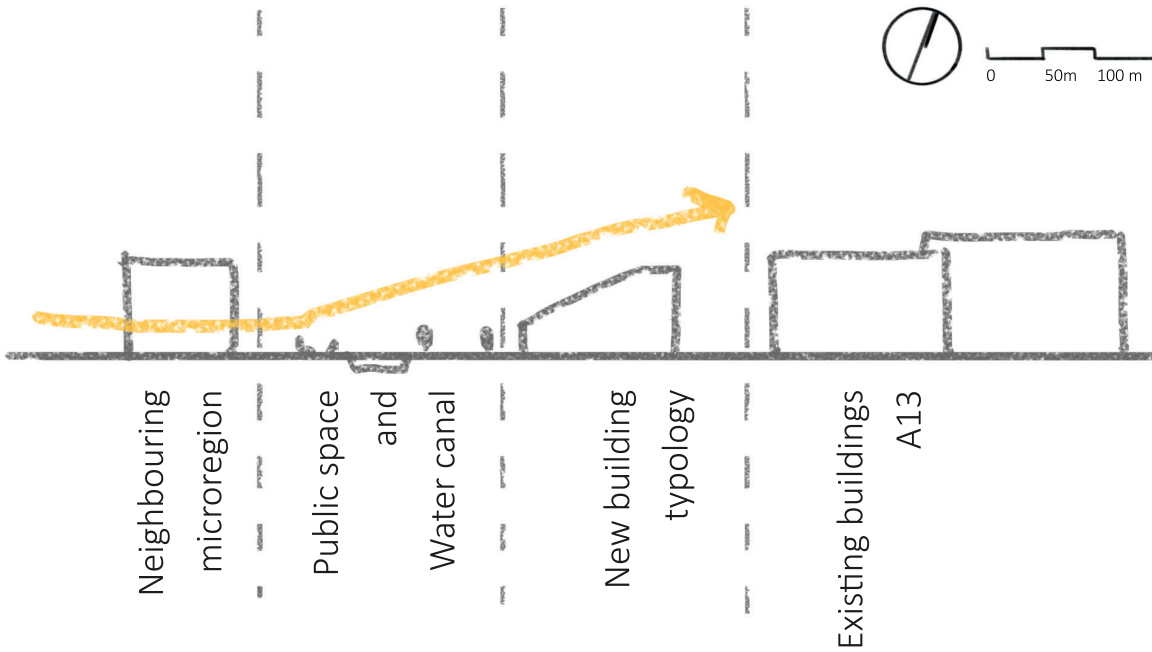New - proposal
Remove - proposal

Redefinition of functional zones

Green zone/Public space
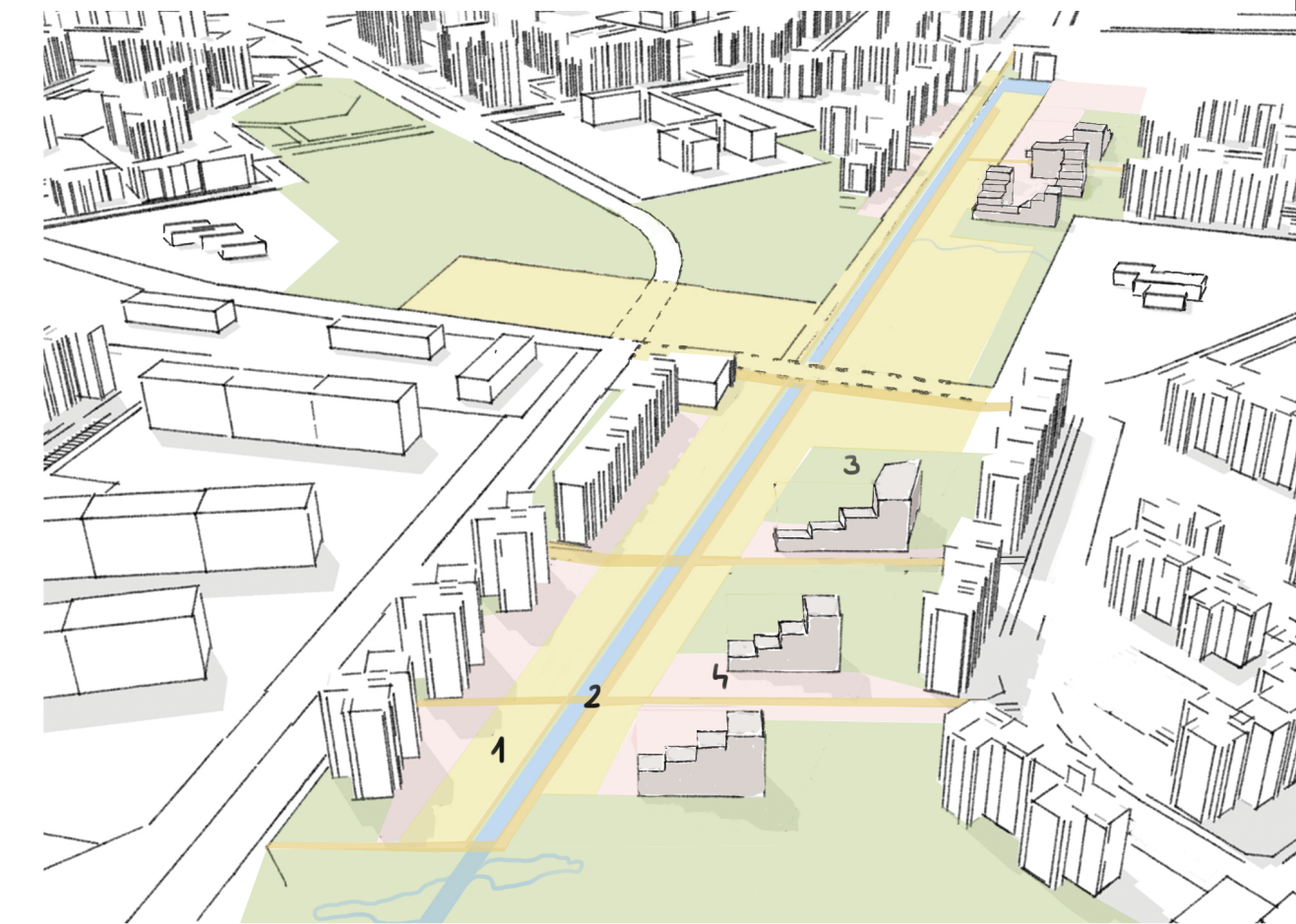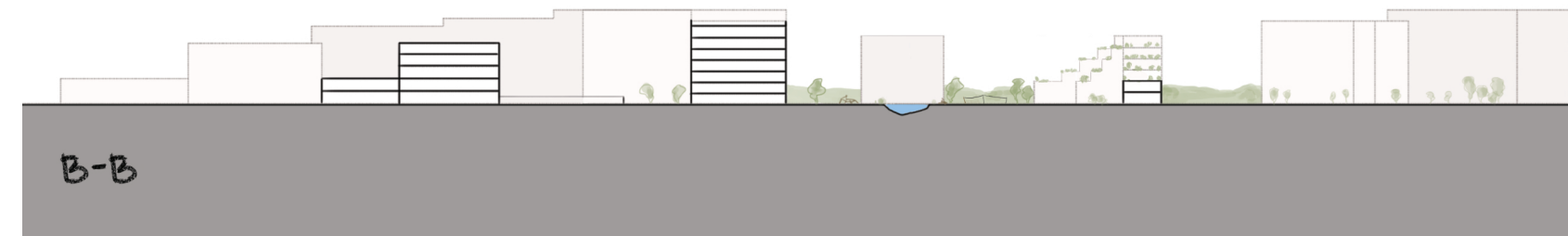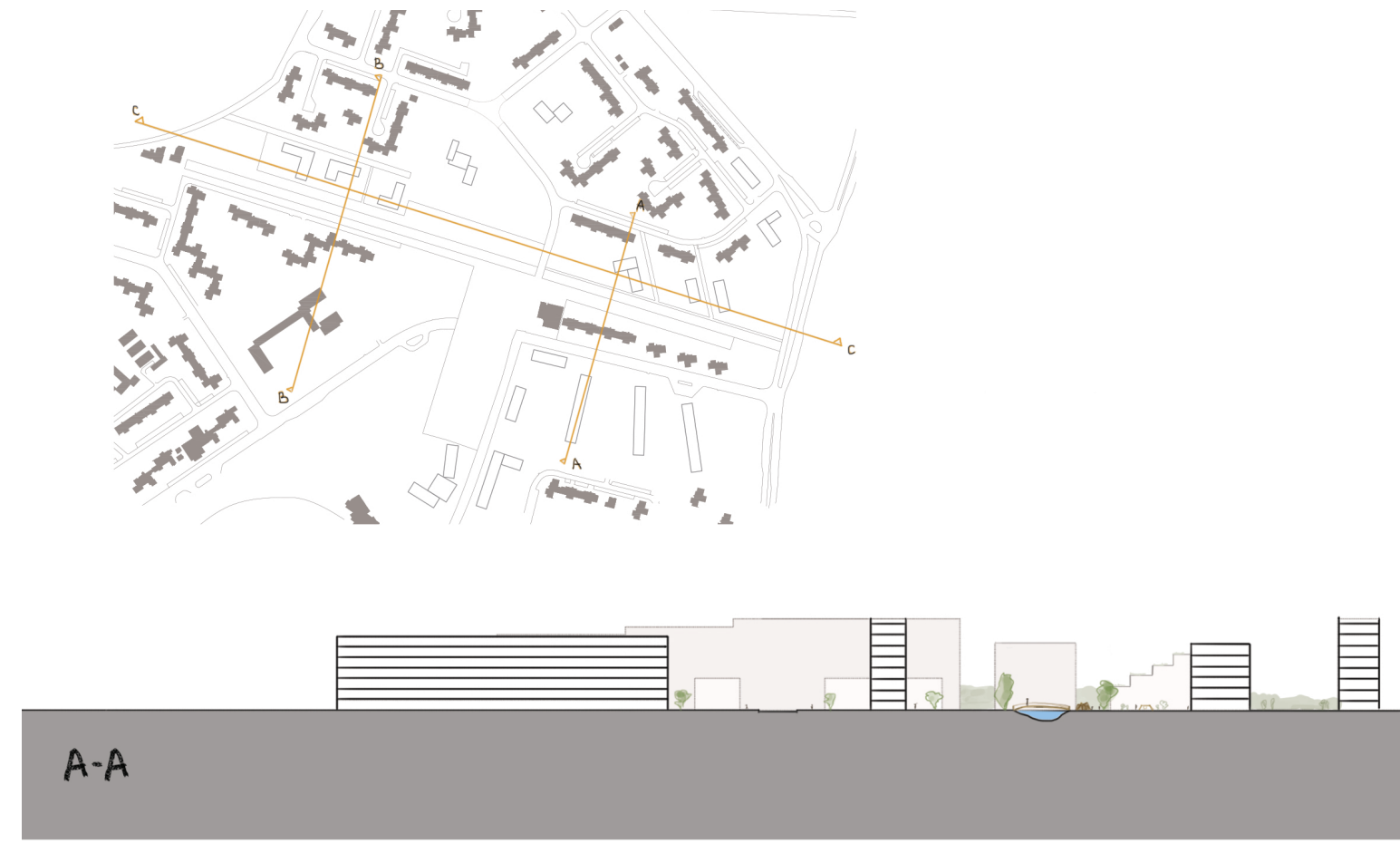Educational
Mixed use
Residential

Proposal

Intervention on several levels are required in order to integrate the underdeveloped district A13. A main accent in this proposal is the public space that is boosted through the revival of the water canal. Following the concept of *the Zip* for diverse and vital sequence of public spaces and using the typology of the promenade, the area along the seam between A9 and A13 can function as a binder and attractor. In addition to this I propose the further densification of the area trough context adequate typology, such as terraced buildings.

Public space
Educational
Mixed used
Green space
Residential Existing
Residential New

0 50m 100 m 200 m 300 m

Neighbouring microregion
Public space and Water canal
New building typology
Existing buildings A13

A-A

B-B

C-C

0   50m   100 m   200 m   300 m

1 Leisure   **2** Promenade   **3** Urban farming   **4** Ground floor public functions

Conclusion

It is remarkable how a project designed with the perception of a func-
tionally defined settlement, develops successfully within its unfinished
and unilateral structure. The complex and enduring variety of unplanned
functions is a virtue that indicates the strengths of the urban fabric.

The process of preserving and developing the established values of Tra-
kiya is a multidimensional one. It should concern both the physical and
sociological realm consistently.

The presented development plan in this work could be an incentive for
further projects and strategies that aim to accumulate fertile environ-
ment, adequate to the context of its background.

1 Sustainable structure   2 Coherent public space   3 Collaboration

Glossary. Table of figures. Bibliography

Glossary

Cpillary mutation. (from German: Kapillarmutationen) Unofficial individual interventions inside the existing buildings done by the inhabitants in periods of stagnation. Used by Erich Raith in his work Stadtmorphologie: Annäherungen, Umsetzungen, Aussichten, 2000

Die Wende. (German pronunciation: [diːˈvɛndə], "The Turn" or "The Turnaround") is a German term that has come to signify the complete process of change from the rule of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and a centrally planned economy to the revival of parliamentary democracy and market economy in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) around the years 1989 and 1990. Also used to describe the processes considering the former socialist countries after the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989.

Kailyard. Small vegetable garden

Kapana. (from Bulgarian: капан - trap) is a central plovdivian district with a very complex street network that most likely inspired its name

Panelka. (Bulgarian: панелка) used for Prefabricated residential buildings

Placemaking. A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. It capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and wellbeing. It is political due to the nature of place identity. Placemaking is both a process and a philosophy. https://www.pps.org/reference/what_is_placemaking/

Rantcho. (from Bulgarian: ранчо) The word is adopted from the English word for the practice of raising grazing livestock such as cattle or sheep for meat or wool – ranching. Unlike the original meaning, the Bulgarian interpretation concerns a form of urban gardening and has a lot in common with the English kailyards.

Saedinenie. (Bulgarian: съединение) meaning unification

Socialist men. The New Soviet man or New Soviet person (Russian: новый советский человек novy sovetsky chelovek), as postulated by the ideologists of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was an archetype of a person with certain qualities that were said to be emerging as dominant among all citizens of the Soviet Union, irrespective of the country's cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, creating a single Soviet people, Soviet nation.

The spatial Triad. A model that provides a framework to recognize the three elements of producing space. These three elements of the Spatial Triad are ,representation of space ', ,representational space 'and ,spatial practices '(Goonewardena et al., 2008). The formation of space occurs through these three elements of the model. http://geography.ruhosting.nl/geography/index.php?title=Spatial_Triad

Trakiya. The name of the district resembles from the geographical and historical area in southeast Europe, now spilt between Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey. English-language translation Thrace comes from the Thracians, an ancient Indo-European people inhabiting South-eastern Europe. All pictures and illustrations without indications of sources are provided by the author.

Trihalmie. Three Hills (bulgarian: трихълмието), is the name of the ensemble of the hills Nebet, Djambas and Taksim on which the old town of Plovdiv is situated today.

Via Militaris. Or Via Diagonalis was an ancient Roman road and an important military Axis starting from Singidunum and reaching Constantinople

Table of Figures

All pictures and illustrations without indications of sources are provided by the author.

All data on the statistical graphics originates from Toleva Nina, *Almanac of prefab Trakiya*, Plovdiv: Janet 45

Fig. 1 The National Palace of culture and the Monument "1300 years Bulgaria", Sofia, Bulgaria http://kab-so.com/archives/8211

Fig. 2 Plan for the creation of the new town – Dimitrovgrad http://whata.org/images/1184.jpg

Fig. 3 The demolition of Georgi Dimitrov Mausoleum in August 1999, Sofia, Bulgaria http://www.dnevnik.bg/photos/2014/08/21/2365308_fotogaleriia_strannata_istoriia_na_edin_mavzolei/?pic=16#picture

Fig. 4 the Monument "1300 years Bulgaria" after the democratic changes in 1989, http://www.archives.government.bg/tda/docs/pld_2.jpg

Fig. 5 The old crest of Plovdiv https://get.google.com/albumarchive/106730766904645415197/album/AF1QipOhPl7jmq7TXNOrtg5i4tCpktFT-PnM8hcI2nbOg/AF1QipOi1_2aX_QSqHle4Np8pQf7xs2YRYqyGsjcuQsj

Fig. 6 Ancient Philippopolis Map by The Project BG 0041 „Ancient Stadium of Philippopolis – Preservation, Rehabilitation and Urban Renewal" http://ancient-stadium-plovdiv.eu/

Fig. 7 The Small Basilica is Restavracia EAD. © Anthony Georgieff, photography http://www.romanplovdiv.org/uploads/gallery/original/245d85cf9f824c06a07a-46228f704037a98634d0.jpg

Fig. 8 Plan of Plovdiv from 1942 http://eria-bg.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/653408.jpg

Fig. 9 Plovdiv's Main Street 1940 http://i96.photobucket.com/albums/l173/Mephistophelous/Mephistophelous/1-1.jpg

Fig. 10 Plovdiv's Main Street 1940' https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e2/Plovdiv_1940.jpg

Fig. 11,12,13 Union House, Plovdiv's main square, Komsomol cinema

CSO for the preservation of KOSMOS cinema http://daspasimkinokosmos.blogspot.co.at/p/blog-page_18.html

Fig.14 Plovdiv 's general plan from 1966. Architektura Magazine 1976

Fig. 15 Trakiya in 1984. Everyday Trakiya https://www.facebook.com/vsekidentrakia/

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Fig. 16 People waiting in line to buy bread during the crisis in 1990

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Fig. 17 Kapana district 2016, Bedros Halvadjian

Fig. 18 Mariza's shore during OAW 2015, Lina Krivoshieva, http://lina.im/

Fig. 19 InFormal's Project „Urban Chat" for OAW 2016, , Lina Krivoshieva,

http://lina.im/

Fig. 20 Logo for OAW 2016 by Studio PUNKT

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Fig. 21 Dom-Ino House, Le Corbusier, 1914

Fig. 22 Construction of panel housing on Ulitsa Mitlukho-Maklaya, Moscow

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Fig. 23 Plans of Havanna(Budapest), Grünau WK7(Leipzig) and

Nitra-Chrenová(Nitra), Tomas Egedy in *Großwohnsiedlungen in Deutschland und*

 Ungarn

Fig. 24 Havanna, Budapest 2006, Roeleveld Sikkes architects

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Fig. 25 http://songailo.net/_-_-_-_/bank-street/

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Fig. 27 http://thetouristinparis.com/paris/en/

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Fig. 28 http://www.artribune.com/report/2012/02/cicli-e-ricicli/

Fig. 29 http://www.news-cmt.com/watch-a-park-being-constructed-over-a-highway/

Fig. 30 http://homeandgardenphotos.photoshelter.com/image/I0000GXR2tXnr5OI

Fig. 31 Simeon Malinov for OAW 2016

Fig. 32 Nina Toleva for OAW 2016

Fig. 33, 34 Teodora Balezdrova

Fig. 35, 36, 37 *Architektura Magazine* March 1976, March 1979

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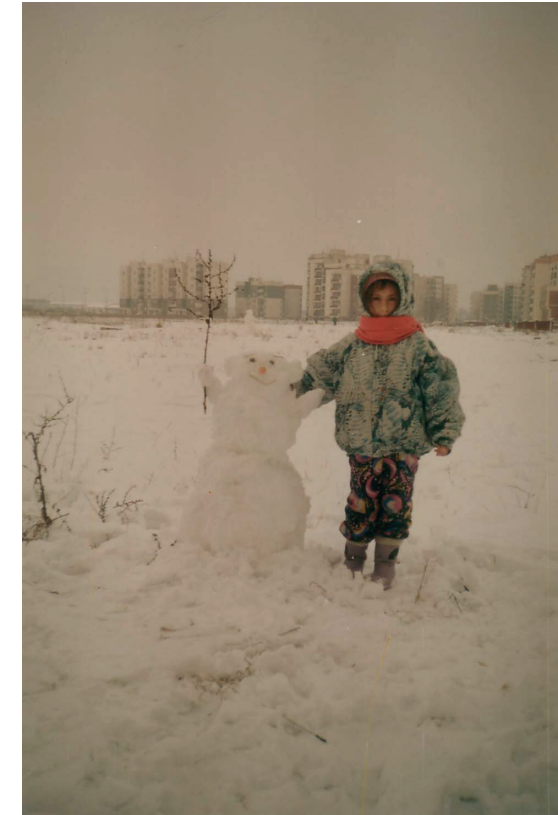Nuttgens Patrick (1997): *The Story of architecture*. New York: Phaidon Press Inc.

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