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The Railway and Clandestine Migration along the Balkan Migratory Trail

SIEF 2023 16th Congress Brno, Czech Republic, 7-10 June 2023



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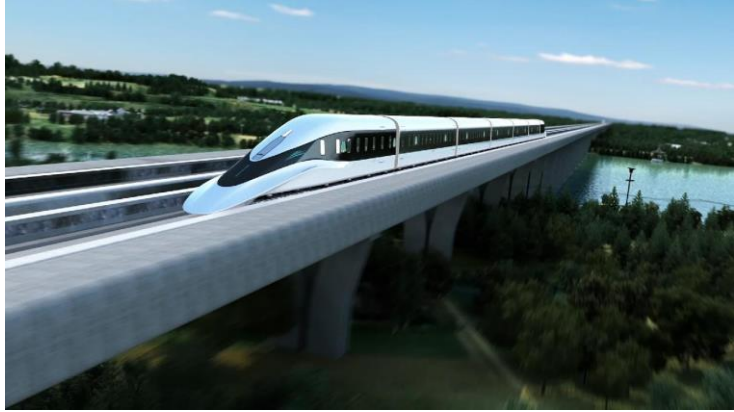


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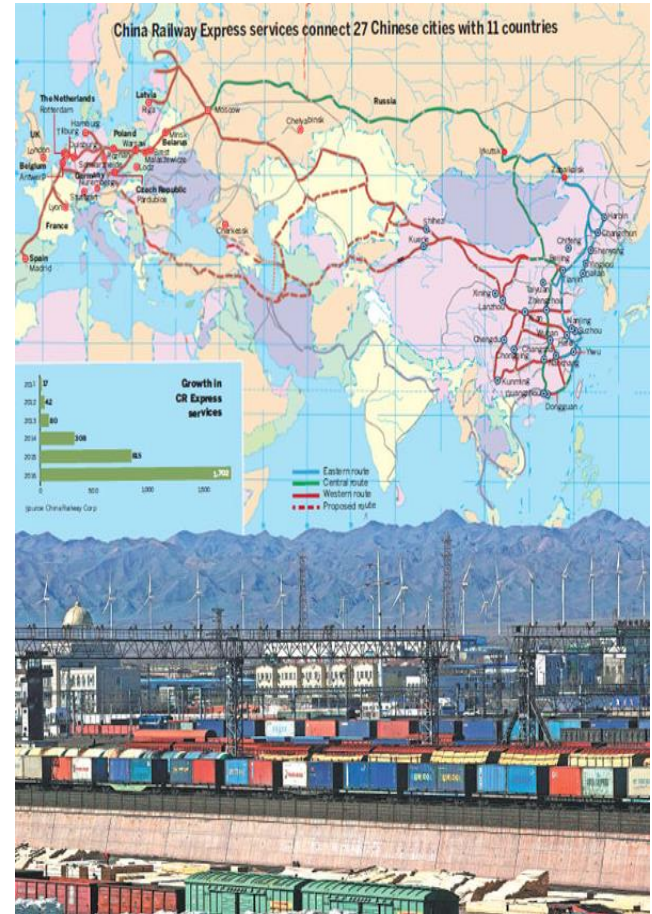


A maglev (online source)



Banja Koviljača Serbia near border with BiH, ex train station, 2022 (photo Marta Stojić Mitrović)

Imperialism and railways



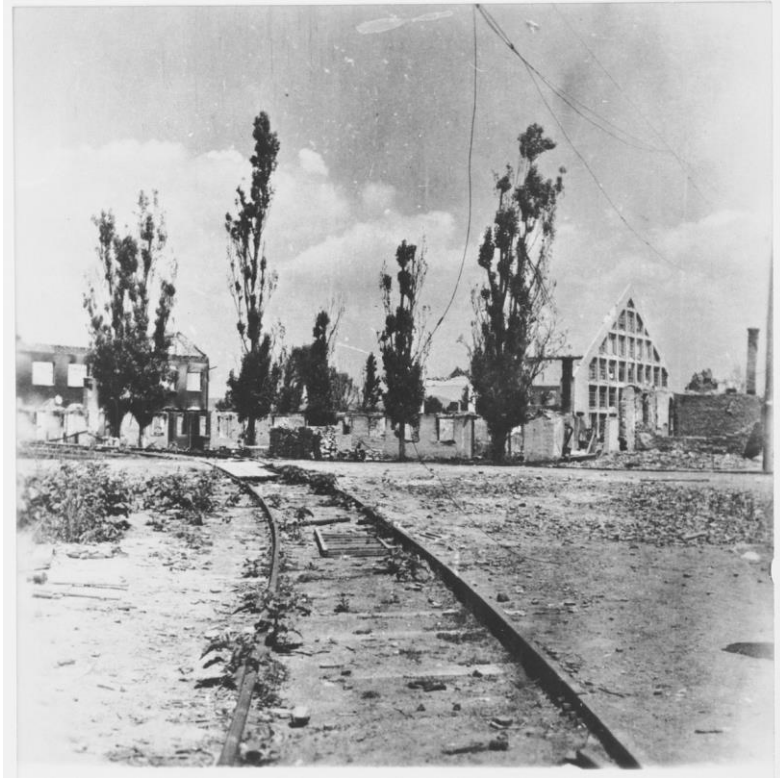


Youth brigades – building the railway, building the state (online source)

Sammelzüge – Yugoslav state organized workers „exodus” (online source)



Trains and deportation



Jasenovac concentration camp, Croatia WWII
(photo US Holocaust Memorial Museum)



Expulsion of Kosovar refugees to North Macedonia 1999
(UN Photo)

Navigating (un)certainty

- Where tracks meet route
- Where station meets camp
- Where tracks and stations meet pushbacks
- Where stations meet people and squats



Where tracks meet route



North Macedonia (online source)



The corridor

The “railway line” from Šid in Serbia to Croatian and Slovenian camps, the formalised and state governed corridor through Croatia “became an ideal-type of a channel connecting Šid and Dobova from the east to the west, a channel which was completely isolated from the surrounding territory it passed through and largely separated from its legal system, population, etc.” (Hameršak and Pleše 2018a: 20).





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Zvornik (BiH) – Mali Zvornik (Serbia) (online source)



Where stations meet camps



Transit camp in Slavonski Brod, Croatia 2016 (photo Marijana Hameršak)



Diagoli Thessaloniki railway station (online source)



Where tracks and stations meet pushbacks



Tovarnik-Šid railway, pushback from Croatia to Serbia, 2016
(Moving Europe)

Croatian police pushback (LHR
2022)



U 9,55 sati na želj. pruzi Šapjane-II. Bistrica
zatečeno 9 str. drž. Bangladeš i Pakistan!



Keleti station Budapest 2015



„We are humans!“



„We are Siawash!“



„We cannot go back!“

Šid, Croatian-Serbian border 2016 (online source)



Media presentation, *Jutarnji list*, Croatian newspaper

Where stations meet people and squats



Tuzla (BiH) and Belgrade (Serbia) main railway stations, 2016-2018 (online sources)

Sombor vagoni, Srbija 2021-2022 (photo
Marta Stojić Mitrović)



Subotica railway station, Serbia 2021-2022 (photo Marta Stojić Mitrović)



Belgrade “barracks”, 2017 (photo Marta Stojić Mitrović)



Conclusions

- The fixity of railway provides different maps, opportunities and routes, but also can direct surveillance and control over objects, people and places
- Railway infrastructures interact with migration policies, highlighting the acknowledgement and deprivation of rights or inclusion and exclusion from public space.
- Railways remain places of negotiation, counternarrative, autonomous practice and resistance

