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SCROOPE

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SCROOPE

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Manifesto

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Head of Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge 2020

Like it or loathe it, the architectural manifesto is here to stay. With its loud overt political rhetoric, the manifesto is a call to arms and a shouty reminder that architecture is inescapably a political act. As architects we seek to change the world. We believe that change is necessary and that change is good. And to change the world we must persuade others to join us in our struggle, to believe in our vision of the direction that change should take.

This new edition of Scroope could not be more timely, and of its time. Scroope has over the last three decades consistently reflected the concerns of its times. This last year, dominated by Extinction Rebellion, strike action, Black Lives Matter and the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a year yearning for political change and change to the way we run society and how we live.

Scroope comes out of an architecture school, but as this issue forcefully expresses, architectural schools do not just produce architects (whatever they are meant to be) but people who want to go out and change the world. That often means not following the traditional route into architectural practice but becoming agents of change in all their various guises, quietly changing from within or loudly shouting from the barricades.

Scroope not only reflects the interests of the Cambridge school but also those outside it. This volume is no different with most of the voices being from outside the school. Yet of course if reflects the interests of the editors who have put it together and these have been exceptionally difficult times to assemble a journal.

If you call for manifestos you cannot be surprised that when you get very divergent submissions and it is the richness of the current volume that it shows the diversity of interests that intersect with architectural thinking, whether it is spatial provocations, geo-political mappings, reflections on pedagogy, tracings

of historical building types in the Caucasus or proposals to re-energise a culture of maintenance in Egypt. All these point to a very different question: what is architectural research? How should it manifest itself? Do we need it? Is it possible to distinguish it from other types of research?

It is often said that architects are “jacks of trades, but masters of none”. It is true that there is a danger when straying into other territories that one does so superficially, but in an academic world that increasingly calls for interdisciplinarity, architectural research, which has always criss-crossed and intersected academic boundaries, seems ever more relevant. Architectural research is at its best when it takes different approaches and binds them together in new ways but does so rigorously, not just imaginatively.

Truly transformative research reveals something new, perhaps something counter-intuitive, but critically something which enables us to look at the world in a new way. This it shares in common with truly great artistic creations which open our eyes anew to the world. But research differs from design in that it is not enough to simply think you are doing something original - you must show that what you are doing is both original and true (demonstrably the best or correct solution to whatever problem it is seeking to solve).

Is the manifesto then research? The answer is: rarely. Vers Une Architecture is definitely an architectural manifesto, a valiant call to arms, but most of its statements do not stand up to scrutiny, are just plain nonsense, or were considered right at the time and now seem ridiculously wrong. It is a product of its time and its self-promoting author. Manifestos do not I think necessarily have to be that way. They open our eyes and challenge us to think. In this time, where technology is in danger of making us increasingly ego-centric and narcissistic, they are a necessary call to think of others and to change the world.

BLACK LIVES MATTER - THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING - INEQUALITY IS ALL AROUND US.

It is time for change. We need more manifestos.

Editorial

“Pulling the Emergency Brake”

10 M. Wesam Al Asali
Nadi Abusaada

Editors in Chief

The idea of editing this issue sprung as the two of us were undertaking doctoral research in November 2018, one in Cuba, the other in Palestine. After a transatlantic call in a long day spent in archives miles apart, and despite the distance, it seemed to us that we were orbiting around the same ideas.

The two archives were similar in their serenity, and it seemed clear to us that the materials and findings we were coming across were also closely knit. Both of us were investigating the transitions in architectural practice along with moments of social and political transition and distress. We were raising the same question: what were the trajectories of architecture as a concept and practice in those moments of ultimate change? We found that these materialisations were visible on both architecture and its products, from the details of a vault structure in a residential district in Havana to a village development scheme in the Jordan Valley.

Bringing these questions and realisations from the field back to our own department of architecture at Cambridge, we wanted to address the conditions of the production of architectural knowledge and training in lieu of the pressing global challenges of our times. Though similar conversations were already taking place organically in the spaces of our department, we wanted to utilise this journal as a platform to broaden these discussions and systematically address them.

Why “Manifesto”? Perhaps there is an unannounced consensus that manifestos within architectural thought and practice belong to a foreign past. A time when architecture was thought of as a tool of absolution in the face of global problems. Though we empathise with the critical stance from the positivism of architectural manifestos, we see the possibility of rethinking their meanings and forms. Thus, our issue both engages with and questions them.

Today, there are several questions that entangle architectural practice with the seemingly extraordinary events we are living. Yet many of these questions are reductionist in their view of the architect as merely a mediator between the problem and its solution. Questions are thus raised in search for the role of architects in the rise of neoliberalism, in the environmental crisis, or the ongoing global pandemic. Notwithstanding the importance of these problems, their framing of the architectural profession in a prophetic and heroic light overlooks its elitist and exclusionary reality. We are increasingly witnessing a dichotomy between an approach architecture as a creative profession that promises a path to salvation and another that accuses it of being inherently complicit in maintaining the status quo.

This dichotomy emerged in our collaboration in this issue. As editors, though we belong to the same institution, we work in two separate realms of architecture: the technical and the theoretical. One builds structures, the other builds arguments. Though several attempts have been made to conjoin the two, they remain structurally distinct. One is over-optimistic, resolves problems with technical solutions, employs reassuring superlatives (more efficient, more sustainable, more resilient, etc.), and undertakes its activities in insular and isolated laboratories. The other, meanwhile, is over-pessimistic, hesitant, rejects assuredness, and its readings are more concerned with what should have happened than what had actually taken place. One is too entitled, the other is too detached.
This dichotomy presented us with the issue of the architect’s dealings

with these two realms. The main question we raise is regarding architecture's position in this dichotomy: is it the limited space between these two realms or their reconciliation?

We realised early on that the best way to address this question is through a collective effort. Realising this journal's importance as an experimental publication, we saw in its editing and reviewing processes an opportunity to carve an inclusive space of discussion along with the team of editors on the issue's form and content. Not only the outcome but also the making of this issue was part of the process of imagining and reimagining what an architectural journal should be.

The constellation of contributions in this issue echo the same question. In our attempt to broaden the sphere and tools of our thinking, our call invited textual and visual contributions to address a range of interrelated modes of architectural research, including architectural education, history, and building practices. The contributions we received were put together by both individuals and collective teams.

In examining the meanings and applications in architectural practice, architectural education is the core subject of Liana Psarologaki's contrubition. Psarologaki investigates the space of the studio as a site for situated learning, calling for an architectural pedagogy that transcends technical preparation for architectural practice.

Moving towards architectural practice itself, both Ian Erickson and MK Harb focus on the manifestos of established individual architects. Erickson examines the work of architect Ernst Lhose within the practice of Scandinavian postmodernism, painting it as a manifesto within a manifesto. MK Harb also approaches the practice and the "persona" of an architect, but in the context of Beirut and specifically in the "escapist" work of Bernard Khoury.

In Will Fu, Hunguta, and Nina Stener Jørgensen's visual contributions, not only the architect but the architect's tools are also brought to question: with Will Fu drawing on the unambitious nature of

architecture's tools of representation in an ever so ambitious world of digital imagery, Hunguta calling for rethinking the entire notion of representation in architectural tools calling for a Kaleidoscopic approach to understanding the profession to replace the standard one-directional perception of architectural agents and processes, and Stener Jørgensen's visual critique of 'employing retired modes of action' as 'vernacular fetishisation'.
These critiques, however, take place not only in abstract terms but have serious ramifications on cityscapes. Both Marwa Sheikhon and The Urban Research Frontier (TURF) take their conversations to the streets of the city to trace how counter processes of urban inhabitation can challenge accepted understandings of power holders in the urban sphere. While Sheikhon traces the functioning of the entire informal regime of urban maintenance in Cairo, in Lahore, TURF documents how urban residents recreate spaces of state surveillance and power into sites of contestation and everyday reoccupation.

Whereas these accounts offer a crucial vignette of architectural processes at the scale of the city, some architectural processes take form through broader geographies of territory. Both Dima Meiqari, in her dynamic history of circassian architecture and its modifications through in time and space, and Marilena Mela, in her reading of architectural practice through the Meditteranean geography of Frenand Braudel, convincingly demonstrate the need to approach architectural questions and processes through multiscalar lenses.

Through this constellation of contributions, the manifestos we present are somewhat distinct from the classical form, content, and ethos of scripts that demand revolutionary change. Rather, our position is in line with Walter Benjamin's assessment of revolutions not as 'the locomotive of world history', as Marx had said before him, but as 'the act by which the human race traveling in the train pulls the emergency brake.'

Collective Statement

14 Jasmine Armaly, Beyza Celebi, Anwyn Hocking, Khensani de Klerk and Natcha Ruamsanitwong

Editorial team

We never thought the theme of the 'manifesto' would become as urgent and relevant as it is, given the COVID-19 global pandemic, supposed height of capitalism and consumerism, conflated with the confrontation of diversity issues in the mix of globalisation. Brexit, Extinction Rebellion, the University and College Union (UCU) strikes, the continued protests in Hong Kong, and the Black Lives Matter movement have optimistically presented an opportunity to capture a collectiven energy for the long term momentum in agendas and social activity, all housed and facilitated by digital and physical landscapes. The built environment, traditionallyoften seen as an objective and practical provider of space, is increasingly being recognised as hyper subjective, being heavily anchored in histories of oppression, dominance and hegemony. More importantly, the canonical approach to architectural academia and the resulting production of buildings is finally being questioned. The first response to the manifesto is the very same energy that drives its creation: catalyst.

As a collective, established within an institution, we are being increasingly reminded of how our agency, production, and position are resultant not solely from the institution, but more so from our impetus to spearhead and contribute to the transformation in the kaleidoscopic built environment praxis and knowledge. Our aim and our action, in the case of this 'manifesto' issue, isare to urge a reimagining of one's architectural thoughts. We internally and externally question as processes within our multifaceted ideas of architectural agency. We hope our publication is one that hones into the longevity and reputability of its placement in the institution, positioning us in a short term (a few years we think) opportune moment to reach global

audiences that transcend constantly curated social media and professional bubbles, and include diverse viewers and generations. We hope that the contributions in this issue, and our treatment of them will have an effect on readers—whether small or significant.

The contributions that constitute this publication each take different, but complementary, perspectives on the theme of 'manifesto'. When you revisit this publication, which we hope you do, lest we forget the context in which it was created; that is, in a time where there has never been a better time for manifestoes, and for optimistic and committed collectives to stand up. By bringing together diverse understandings of manifesto into one body of work, we veer away from the totalitising trap of centralised media, but rather hope to create a thematically connected series of contributions that when ordered, read and reread may inspire, provoke and most of all, catalyse.

Our editorial team is diverse—in culture, discipline, expertise and personal interests—and we only hope that the future is one that embraces such an engaged diversity. An extension of peripheral visions in academic discourse can reveal extremely rich histories and ideas overlooked. These ideas which may, and some already are, only now slowly begin to reshape an architectural understanding reflective of the diverse world in which we live and connect. We see 'manifesto' as in flux, malleable and critical of itself in questioning the agendas surrounding it. It is here that we believe progressive discourse does not only simply exist, but flourish.

Dr. Liana Psarologaki

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Making Architects in Agile Studios

A Manifesto for Situated Architectural Education

We miss the point! is perhaps the most pertinent exclamation for or against the zeitgeist of our contemporary architectural educations in times of advanced and complex capitalism systems. It is a common practice led by the habits of contemporary life – which we cannot afford to demonise – that we become selectively and voluntarily oblivious and distracted. 'Today, we are stuck in the present as it reproduces itself without leading to any future'[1] Boris Groys notes. This is perhaps too close to home when we discuss practiced architecture and architectural education. At this point I must make the first axiomatic statement; that the latter does not preclude and/or postulate the first. The practice for making architecture, and most pertinently the vocation of being architect in practice is intrinsically divergent from the practice of training architects. The academic practice of teaching architecture (the architecture pedagogy) can be and must be situated beyond an industrialised model of producing qualified employees for particular business models. It is imperative that learning (a subject) is and must be different from practising (a profession). This is where the divergence stems from. Architecture is in fact one of the (prime) subjects of academia that form watertight portfolios. In the UK, it does not at all exist in oblivion to professional frameworks – in fact it is constructed in inadvertent reliance to those, yet at the same time ought to be independent to the market that may rarely challenge the intellectual, cultural and experimental aspect of the subject. It is also important to promote Architecture as an academic subject that shapes the future profession by trusting it being an academic subject of study as such, and therefore not necessarily constitute a profession by default for a student. The work of [an] architect in practice opens up to a plethora of roles that change and progressively shape the individual beyond the structured, credit based HE study. These normally would have to do with building designs. Study and practice are never however exclusive to one another. This is not explicitly obvious to many, who remain obligatory to their waiting-for-panacea chiasm summarised in the archetype: "education does not prepare for practice" without interrogating (that's the first thing to do as a learner) if it actually must do so (and how) as its solely aim. By wondering whether architectural education must do so, we – once again – keep missing the point ever so proficiently.

1. Boris Groys, 'Comrades of Time', in Going Public, p. 90

The problem – and one must start becoming comfortable with the despicable "p" word i.e. "problem" – lies in situating educational practice as related to experiencing architecture and architects in the making, and to address the latter as an emergent and situated humanity: architecture for the person and for the people. I will now borrow key references from nature and philosophy to present a non-philosophical manifesto, for it will not be based on new concepts but thought, streamed and channelled like rhizomes do in non-hierarchical avenues and agendas, starting with a story. On the first ever university lesson of Architecture at the University of Suffolk where I teach, I asked the first-year undergraduate class how they thought humans understood and appreciated and felt architecture at the start of the Anthropocene. A student brightly, immediately and intuitively replied: "by survival", when I expected a response that highlighted architecture as tectonic matter. The response given was sharp, honest and mature answer and made me think where we are today when we celebrate praxis and practice in diverse contexts, while still talking about currency in the same subject; architecture. We have the luxury to appreciate the architectural qualities of Foster's Bloomberg London as 'one of the world's highest BREEAM-rated major office buildings'[2] as an intricate example of sustainability intelligence. At the same time, we praise the flexibility and empathy of open platform system Wiki House as architecture against disaster and climate emergency. We are indeed where – as Alastair Parvin, the maker of the Wiki-House, notes – architecture serves the 1% of the people[3] (instead of the 99%). To question this, we must revisit the very essence of architecture as experience and how it is learnt and taught in practice.

2. BREEAM, 'Bloomberg London: One of the world's highest BREEAM-rated major office buildings'

3. Alastair Parvin, Architecture for the People by the People, TED, (online video recording)

A good 4019 years ago, Cretans constructed and occupied the first and only oval hut of the Mesominoan era in Chamaizi (2000 BC); an open area on a conical hill very close to Sitia Bay. It was thought to be one of the earliest of its kind in Europe and stirred great interest among archaeologists and historians after its excavation in 1903. The very particular shape was first understood to be a mere response to the landscape contouring by purpose a fortification – later it was believed to have been made in principle coincidentally – as its curves were thought confidently steep. Today, it still remains the subject of scientific treatise and later studies attached further legacy to the oval structure and shape. It was made as a dwelling and was built to host multiple domestic spaces, and contained a cistern, water drainage; even an enclosed space for worship and a tomb.

In 2011 Valeria Lenuzza published on the oval house of Chamaizi and its spatial configuration. She claims that its shape and order is connected to the social and political disruption that affected Crete at the time and that it could have been the attempt of an elite family in a moment when the existing 'social structure was in flux, to guarantee its high status by means of a substantial building well suited for defence '.[4]

4.
Valeria Lenuzza, '"The Whole is a Freak": A Reassessment of the Spatial Organization of the Oval House at Chamaizi, Siteia', p. 69

Whether that was architecture of concept or context – the question remains, and it does not matter as much and the reason I am bringing this up is not necessarily because of the significance of the structure – I could have chosen any world-renowned historical building. The architecture of the oval house is inscribed in a site of rough beauty; masculine and raw of many layers of history and with many traces of battle; critical decisions over critical modes of life. It's architecture of culture; architecture of survival. This has of course its archaeological and historical intricacies and most importantly affirms a key pedagogical stance with remarkably current ramifications. The space-maker and most probably space-consumer of the oval house learnt and un-learnt architecture in a Sisyphean-like battle to establish a mode of life that responded to new needs, affordances and site-specific conditions and which was based on tectonics however carried a mystified yet-to-be-known vocabulary: it was created for the there-and-then; for the people and the relationalities between people, communities and idiosyncrasies of place. As with natural topos so with human-made topos, all topoi are uneven, diverse and non-homogenous. There, lies the second fundamental axiom for a new manifesto of architectural education. Architecture must be learnt and taught as practice of survival and therefore address architecture as a more-than discipline. Architecture must be learnt as climate intelligence and anthropological empathy in the built and natural environment and this requires ingenuity. It is much more than vocational practice and business to accommodate building. It aims to create and negotiate the terms for new-becoming-relevant modalities of life. The latter is divergent, uneven and demands demystification. Architecture -as in the making and deciphering of the Chamaizi oval house- must be un-learnt, re-mastered, practiced and lived within with care.

Life as related to the ontological standing of architecture – that of built environment – is to do with experience and making sense in the wider sense (pun intended), for, experience marks the lived condition: life. For us, humans, experience of the lived condition does not primarily concern

physiological sense through responses with environment as observed in other organisms ('plant intelligent behaviour')[5] and is not a matter of quorum sensing in principle. It is a matter of neural activity using a brain: perceptive sense; aesthesis. This is a complex matter that we forget, missing once again, the point to focus on the triviality of what experience (and therefore) life accounts for. We experience by 'spacing'[6] and 'tempering'[7] and this constitutes the spine of the third axiomatic statement for the new architectural education. Spacing is a term frequently used by Olafur Eliasson in discussions on experience and experiencing others while they experience. In the context of architecture 'spacing' is the neural activity of a living subject who is simultaneously within the micro world of the specific spatial experience and the macro world of everyday reality and the cosmos. This condition manifests as 'tempering'. Peter Zumthor in his book Atmospheres uses 'to temper' to describe the sentimental embodiment in experience of architecture. This is interesting because first of all Zumthor consciously uses a verb, which implies involvement; action; motion and emotion. It is a word that refers to the most important organ in the aesthesis of architecture; the skin. It is through the skin that the body addresses light as warmth, air as the carrier of vibration (sound) and texture at the end of the fingertips. Tactility is after all the mother sense for many of us who do not follow the pentagon of the Aristotelian senses, including the great Juhani Pallaasma in his Eyes of the Skin. And it is through the skin that we understand the cosmos from the first interior (the womb) to the domestic and the public life: survival. It is the tempering that leads back to spacing and which centralises experience as life. By experience, we understand the material and the physical, but also the implied boundaries, the social thresholds and the cultural intensities we are surrounded by. All this is architecture and must be learnt and taught as such. We must note however that what we call life has become a matter of polarised realities manifested in two modes: The first mode regards intelligent non-human matter and the second is our superfluous consumption and commodification of goods, quantities of information and negotiable options[8], which leads to our aesthetic hibernation through distraction: a coma. As we experience and live this bipolar state by habit, we (humans; anthropoi) have become accustomed to virtually being and bodily firmly placed. The latter implies less of a sense of place and more of a situated condition of life, which architectural pedagogy and architecture itself do not escape.

5. Rob DeSalle, Our Senses: An Immersive Experience, p.13

6. Olafur Eliasson, Spaces of Transformation: Continuity/ Infinity: Artist Olafur Eliasson In Conversation with Bruno Latour And Peter Weibel, Tate Modern, 3 March 2012

7. Peter Zumthor, Atmospheres: Architectural Environments, Surrounding Objects

8. Rosie Braidotti, The Posthuman, p. 58.

Here lies a paradox. In such complex status, we are able to sense so broadly and deeply via and because of architecture yet at the same time we lose empathy and concentration. As our senses cling together to produce extraordinary results of memory, perception and emotion, we physically and orderly hang to our impairment aids called mobile phone, tablet, GPS, through which we not only document and communicate information but we also draw and design and build. We most primarily use those as perception mediators, to experience others experiencing and when losing them we search hopelessly for the phantom limb - an addition that we sense as self. Doing so we get distracted and idle; we forget to contemplate, and we transform into 'autistic performance machines'[9] eager to level up. In that state of distraction, we experience cities, streets, buildings, spaces. In an autopilot mode, we drive or cycle or walk from home to work and back, by habit. We are in a state of 'a topographical amnesia' as Paul Virilio notes in his Vision Machine[10] to describe a pathological condition of positioning oneself in relation to the personal and cosmic axis mundi after trauma: a posthuman self-situating that shows absence of embodied aesthesis. In such, each moment is a slice in a fast forward moving image, but we are still 'spacing' and 'tempering'. In the same state, we draw and design and build, teach and learn, for, the maker is also a consumer of experience and will always experience to imagine (what to create).

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Byung-Chul Han, The Burnout Society, p. 23.

10.
Paul Virilio, Vision Machine, p. 1.

Educators of architecture experience this mode of life themselves being after all human, but also may either habitually perpetuate it without consciously appreciating its ramifications and status quo. We may also at times demonise it by consuming archaic and stagnant curricula and pedagogical principles. As such, we become even more so oblivious to the needs of contemporary education and the future of the profession. We have to realise that the technology infused life we condemn, is the same life we are called to design for and therefore our best shot is to extrapolate its qualities, potentialities and possibilities and move forward. The next axiom of the manifesto for a new architecture education therefore must affirm that the makers of the future – bred in architectural education – challenge this amnesia and comatisation and most importantly that this mode of life critically informs the constitutional agendas and syllabi for future schools of architecture. The answer lies in enabling living and the lived experience and affirming a situated life and education. The infant steps of experiencing for an architect in the making or more precisely a

learner of architecture become marked and nurtured in the environments (and I use the term broadly) described by perhaps the most common word in architectural education: the studios.

Having received variations in title and scope as well as structure, physical capacity – from the silo to the open platform – the studio has been the pumping heart of architectural education for more than two centuries. Linguistically and because architecture and its education operate on the most infamous jargons (perhaps beaten by medicine only) the word studio has become a constitutional (and less critical) term having accomplished the extraordinary: to mean something that we all understand, in so many different ways and carrying even more different connotations. The latter rely on the specifics of the country, school, academic leadership, and student body and although it is becoming a term that means so many things it means nothing, architecture education collapses without it. It is now reaching a momentum of critique and speculation on many levels from new curriculum writing (academic practice) to publication on pedagogy (academic research), most notably with the book Studio Futures: Changing Trajectories in Architectural Education edited by Donal Bates, Vivian Mitsogianni and Diego Ramìrez-Lovering[11] for Australia. Although a lot of the thought in the book concerns what we would describe in the UK as postgraduate taught provision (a Master's or Graduate Diploma in Architecture usually equivalent to Part II), one can excavate some key principles critical for and relevant to undergraduate study also. My note here has two purposes. The first is to highlight the little intelligence as case study on the undergraduate studio or undergraduate studios and propose the shift of this agenda towards the earliest stages in learning architecture at University. The second purpose is the attempt to fill in the gap noted, using the existing data and my own perceptions and studies grown in undergraduate studios.

11. Studio Futures: Changing Trajectories in Architectural Education ed. by Donald Bates, Vivian Mitsogianni, and Diego Ramirez-Lovering (Melbourne, AU: URO Publications, 2015).

A baseline assumption and (another) axiomatic statement must be that the studio is not necessarily and must not be regarded solely as a classroom where architecture is taught and that there is no singular studio. There are multiple studios, and this is an approach of culture and collective commitment. Vivian Mitsogianni in her essay 'Failure Can Be Cathartic!' also insists that we get away from directly associating studios with units and modules, which is not always possible from the educator's perspective

at least. An educator will innately seek for the curriculum link to anchor and define their academic decisions, particularly when the latter is a product of conscious interdisciplinary design and therefore carrying the anxiety of speculation. Mitsogianni however has a point describing studios as 'dynamic agents that pull together the culture of a school through their capacity to congregate'[12]. She also adds that studios have the responsibility to allow learners to develop ideas and skills not necessarily to solve a problem (of a brief) there and then but certainly to act as 'catalysts for future, lifelong investigations'[13] and to drive tutors to discover new methods of practice beyond their own knowledge. This is important because it justifies our first axiomatic statement: the autonomy and purpose of architecture education in relation to practice and the vocational profession, and the inadvertent reliance of the latter to the first.

12. Vivian Mitsogianni, 'Failure Can Be Cathartic!' in Studio Futures, ed. by Bates, Mitsogianni, and Ramirez- Lovering, p. 31

13. Mitsogianni, 'Failure Can Be Cathartic!', p. 25.

Anthony Bruke in the same book notes that contemporary schools of architecture can take an advocacy role and 'the responsibility for a role as cultural creator within any public context'.[14] It is important as such to once again highlight the role of architecture as subject becoming linked to the concept of culture, which makes architecture a humanity, beyond the imperative merging of science and arts in the making of such. For the school of architecture to become a driving force of culture, a certain degree of autonomy and distinctiveness must emerge out of two fundamental facets, the first being an empathetic and strongly supportive institutional link. This may associate the school with an established institute or graduate centre, a dominant HE provider (University) or luckily both. In any case, the institutional link facilitates formal reassurance of the School's educational value. It manifests as professional accreditation assurance, credibility of the title and opportunity for further (and sometimes funded) graduate study and/or academic career arrays. At the same time, such link creates affordances for the School's academic peculiarities and extraordinary features that may deviate from the Institution's norm. A School of Architecture will always be a people in campus: "the ones that pin up, the ones that live in the studio, the ones with the many external visits" as some working outside of the subject would say. The second facet is the encapsulation of the school itself.

14. Anthony Burke, 'Curating School Cultures: Studios in the Context of School Agendas' in Studio Futures, ed. by Bates, Mitsogianni, and Ramirez-Lovering, p. 13

Architectural education – during these times of controversy and intellectual abnegation – in its nascency and to imbue change must be founded on a well-knit and robust mechanism of academic coming togetherness not to

ensure but inherently because of its studio(s) cultures. There seems to be a consensus on the risks and weakness the studio manifestations entail. To admit and face these means to effectively reinstate the importance of architectural education in the making of the future architecture(s) and confront the architectural solipsism that comes from hegemonic visions. It is no coincidence that a Facebook post by Patrik Schumacher on the crisis of architectural education is received as polemic statement against the School, which is accused of being (when in fact is no longer) the Academy (of Fine Arts) with 'too many teachers without professional work or experience use design studios in schools of architecture as vehicles for their own, largely isolated, pursuits'.[15] The studio as a secluded bubble where the master instructs, and the pawns draw is a problem that is brought up by many. Christopher Jarrett talks about blind spots in studio-based pedagogy highlighting that studio-ing means being insulated from the world where the 'act of design can thus come to be seen as a precious, uncontaminated activity'.[16] As with Schumacher's views the problem here concerns less the studios and their culture and more the views of those who do not engage professionally, widely and substantially with architectural pedagogy to sustain an educated perspective. As Sean Griffiths Professor of Architecture at University of Westminster points out in a reflective response to Patrik Schumacher on Dezeen[17], such views present a "narrow world" that does not represent architectural education the job of which is not to mimic or be replaced by practice. After all, the model seen as problematic is one that lacks pedagogy, which is a separate subject of practice for an educator. Instead of creating taxonomies over the types of studios found in schools like Marcus White[18] and Ashraf Salama[19] do. The first distinguishes the traditional studio from the digital studio and concludes in the benefits of a hybrid and inclusive model. The second offers a thorough analysis of and systematic analysis of case studies, which remains remotely impenetrable so as to apply in (academic) practice. While studying the education of architecture we must not overtheorize and allow for studios to remorselessly deviate from formal curricula and the demonised master-instructor role of the studio leader (singular being used lightly and with extra caution).

15. Tom Ravenscroft 'Architecture education is in crisis and detached from the profession, says Schumacher', DEZEEN, (9 July 2019)

16. Christopher Jarrett, 'Social Practice: Design Education and everyday Life' in Changing Architectural Education: Towards a New Professionalism, p58–70

17. Sean Griffiths, 'It Is Emphatically Not The Job Of Architecture Education To Mimic Practice', DEZEEN, (2 August 2019)

18. Marcus White, 'Exploring Urban Form Dynamics with a Hybrid Design Studio Model' in Studio Futures, p9–13

19. Ashraf M. Salama, Spatial Design Education: New Directions for Pedagogy in Architecture and Beyond, (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

The nascent school of architecture must be founded on principles of agility and togetherness, nurtured in its undergraduate infantries. Agile studios have to accommodate actions of pacing and tempering. As such to be in "the studio" means to practice architecture by designed learning, to be

educated in architecture and not necessarily been trained as an architect. For the latter one will be immersed in professional practice in other parts (pun intended) of their trajectory; prescribed or not and will be able to learn as well as to influence and teach others. This alleviates the learner from the anxiety of approaching undergraduate architecture education as part one out of three and therefore their professional itinerary as singular; one-way street. Architecture will continue to be prime subject, yet it will not disadvantage its learners lacking predestination. This does not necessarily present a risk to the main requirements and terms of accreditation because "to studio" means to acknowledge the terms and meet the criteria innately and also by pedagogical design. Agile studios are cultures of synergy among academic coordinators and leaders, practising professionals and attentive learners. Academics curate the condition of learning. They belong to the education sector having trained in the subject. Practitioners inoculate the studio with currency, vocational links and practice-led methodologies and the studio allow studios and schools to live.

Agile studio-ing also accomplishes to nurture perhaps the most promising learning persona of the future: what Owen Hopkins calls 'maverick'[20]: the one who shapes change and creates influence beyond conforming. It does so because it demolishes the idiosyncratic mastery of the unit or project conveyor. The silo-unit model of studio teaching and learning that trained educators despise, and teaching practitioners condemn, dies under the pencil lead and mouse cursor of the maverick learner and the culture of agile studio-ing. Such profile of learner is one that students, graduates, and tutors recognise not as a caricature but as a memorable feature of studio life: an accelerating agent of education and architecture: treasured, admired, feared. Mavericks are identified by their intellectual contingency, individually driven independency and their appraisal for not following a controlled orientation. It rather does not take one to know one in this occasion and if the reader finds it difficult to associate to one, they must ask themselves: who have I been jealous of in the studio?

Sociocultural educator Fernand Deligny in his book The Arachnean and Other Texts builds a school of thought around the creation of networks (which he calls a "vital necessity"[21] for life) underpinned by wanting and mentions the term 'entour' : an acting of surrounding incorporated within a people; the species itself. Unlike around, 'entour'[22] implies non-hierarchical

20. Owen Hopkins, Mavericks: Breaking the Mould of British Architecture, p. 7

21. Fernand Deligny, The Arachnean and Other Texts (L'Arachnéen et autres textes), p. 47

22. Deligny, The Arachnean and Other Texts, p. 69

constellation and aggregation: a symbiosis of discord. This brings us to the last axiomatic principle for the new school of architecture and agile studio-ing: togetherness. A school is like Steven Rose's human brain: an uncertain system[23] – it lives out of plastic, synaptic connections. I would like to call this mode of being a synthesis after Christopher Alexander's work[24] . Studio-ing means synthesising. The agile studios may be centred in architectural education and its primacy is 'de droit' justified because this is where architecture is learnt yet their primacy becomes flawed if their pedagogical boundaries are non-osmotic. It is crucial that agile studio-ing is practiced beyond the unit yet through the units/modules/courses of study and that the latter form the network of 'entourage' as innate mode of being. Agility then can be transferred and practiced in parallel organically facilitated yet systematically designed as pedagogy across the network (within the school).

A school is a people and if one principle in architecture education must change to meet practice expectations is the aim to create resilient graduates by decentring the student from their role in a design project. The solitude by which a learner in studios takes the sole responsibility to respond to the brief is detached from the reality of any kind of brief. It rather creates idiosyncrasy and agency turning the studio into the learner's atelier deprived of a master's glory. In such, the network (and therefore the mode of being for the school) collapses and the learner becomes secluded and fearful to take yet another responsibility and the lead to own learning. The expectation that each project or coursework embeds the 'signature' of the singleton student as monad is emphatically inconsistent to the mode of works in practice. The architect is taught to work alone and then gets a slap in the face to realise no such thing exists in practice – whatever vocational pathway that may be. This is beyond Schumaher's note of academia-detaching-from-industry problem. It presents a rather serious discrepancy, which the school can rectify by agility and togetherness and by cross-unit and cross-level synthesis of curricula. Architectural education must become founded in principles of diagonal agile studio. Such network and mode of being for a school inscribe the learner in a flexible and rich in pedagogical content mechanism of rotation through roles and duties in broad briefs that the school launches across units and levels of study.

23.
Steven Rose, The Conscious Brain (New York: Vintage Books, 1976).

24.
Christopher Alexander, Notes on the Synthesis of Form (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964).

It is imperative that such studio ontology operates successfully under a strong and empathetic organisational regime. There, leaders, external contributors, assistants and learners immerse and commit to come together in mood of concentration and collegiality. Strong communications, reciprocal understanding and complementary competences are key. The School in its counterparts (all staff and students involved; the academic body – the people) must stand on giant's shoulders; on principles of critical thinking, collaborative poesis and holistic praxis. These must manifest through strong values: a sense of wonder and curiosity, reward of risk taking and learning from failure. As such, studios become platforms for debate, open exploration of ideas, and conscientious engagement with practice; a condition of agency and contingency. Studios must encapsulate verticality and agility. The studio is the oval house, projected 4019 years ahead. It is exposed to the real world, yet it is fortified in its sense of belonging – an architecture; a mode of life for survival. To be in the studio means to temper. Learning architecture then becomes risk taking, learning from oneself and from people and therefore a profoundly anthropological act; one that is becoming rare and precious. In times of distraction and amnesia we must invest in the studios of the future that do not have to look like classrooms or offices, in the same way someone at some point invested in ours. I realise only now that my learning studio was often an atrium, a mezzanine, a cupboard and desk with a thousand knife marks from previous occupiers, and the cold marble of the Parthenon. My studio was also the sea opening before the temple of Poseidon, the melancholic view of the modernist Athens on a Saturday, neoclassical ruins in old town of Havana, the Nagakin Tower in Tokyo, the tower steps of Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, and the oval house in Chamaizi. By experience and by legacy, these and many more will now become studios for the future learners who will feel that all places of culture are their studio because this is where architecture is taught and learnt; by embodied presence and experience, in concentration and in memory. As studios multiply and populate the architects in the making become nomads, carriers of cultures they wear as they draw and design and construct, and like Macintosh, Soane, Stirling and FAT were identified by Owen Hopkins[25], they will be mavericks of their time: pioneers, humanists, artists and engineers, polymaths and curious; never settling. They may become leaders, facilitators of culture or humble space makers.

25. Hopkins, Mavericks, p. 7

Beyond and amidst times of ethical and political turmoil – they (in their own merit) will foster cultural euphoria. To quote on radical pedagogy[26] by Cany Ash and Robert Sakula 'good architecture comes about through a mix of daring and obstinacy' – it is in essence eclectic pedagogy. In response to and in praise of, the School of Architecture is presented in this manifesto as a nest and powerhouse that nurtures and fosters experimentation, speculation and initiative for a social drive, where:

- Architecture is lived in concentration and memory and in places of culture;
- Architectural education is a matrix of synergy, synapsis and symbiosis;
- The architectural studio is a tempered network of agility, verticality and openness;
- Architecture is situated and learnt by experience and risk taking;
- Architecture academic leadership is driven by collective vision, mission, principles and values of its counterparts;
- Architectural pedagogy is eclectic yet holistic and selectively broad, beyond discipline;
- Architecture education of the future is beyond the stagnated patriarchy of the past; nurturing and shaping its offspring;
- The architect of the future is resilient, daring and polymath;
- Architectural education fosters agency and contingency allowing things to happen; [27]
- Architectural legacy is driven by charismatic leadership, reflective practitioners and maverick students.

26. Cany Ash, and Robert Sakula, 'Eclectic Pedagogy' in Radical Pedagogies: Architectural Education and the British Tradition, p. 31

27. Nick Dunn, 'Hybrid Modes of Enquiry: [Re]Mapping the Nature of Design Studio in Architectural Education', p39–45

To conclude, I would like to return to the opening phrase of this article and reiterate that in order for any change to take place, we must start making sense. It is a matter of changing ourselves as humans in a post-human world rather than attempting to lead change that is exoteric to us and only affects others, simply because such a thing cannot be. To use a manifesto now means to affirm our situatedness and our multifaceted life as bios (experienced) first. It means becoming able to disassociate from past and irrelevant practices yet at the same time appreciate the diachronic evolution of academic and architectural practice towards forging relevant, at times radical and rigorous pedagogies. Manifesta and axiomatics may only be applicable and therefore carrying merit, when they wade through stiff bureaucratic systems carrying the power of places and people, which must come as a priority for architectural education to then infuse future architecture as practice – and this (empowering places and people) must remain a tangent no matter how divergent the two facets of architecture (pedagogy and vocation) become.

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Will Fu

32

A Modest Cabinet Documented

A cabinet hollowed out, no more no less. It is architecture at its bare minimum capacity to host the necessary space for production. What is inside could perhaps simply be described as a laboring collaboration of the human and the computer in service of architectural image production.

Architecture and the image of technology were once celebrated as a continued union of the post-war society. Now, modernist disenchantment pervades as people are getting visually literate and conscious of the ideological role of images.

The introduction of new digital programs has problematized the status of representation. Rather than an active investigation over the alternative productions made available by these new tools, the architect submits to tactics of communication that depict past versions of utopia or a retrospective excavation of historical discourse.

The logic of software has invaded the working process of offices and schools alike, however representational exploration is subordinated to the task of sustaining a comfortable and familiar past. A penchant desire of line weights, orthographic formats, standardized scales, plotting, and poche shading, serve as a coping mechanism in face of the reality of new tools.

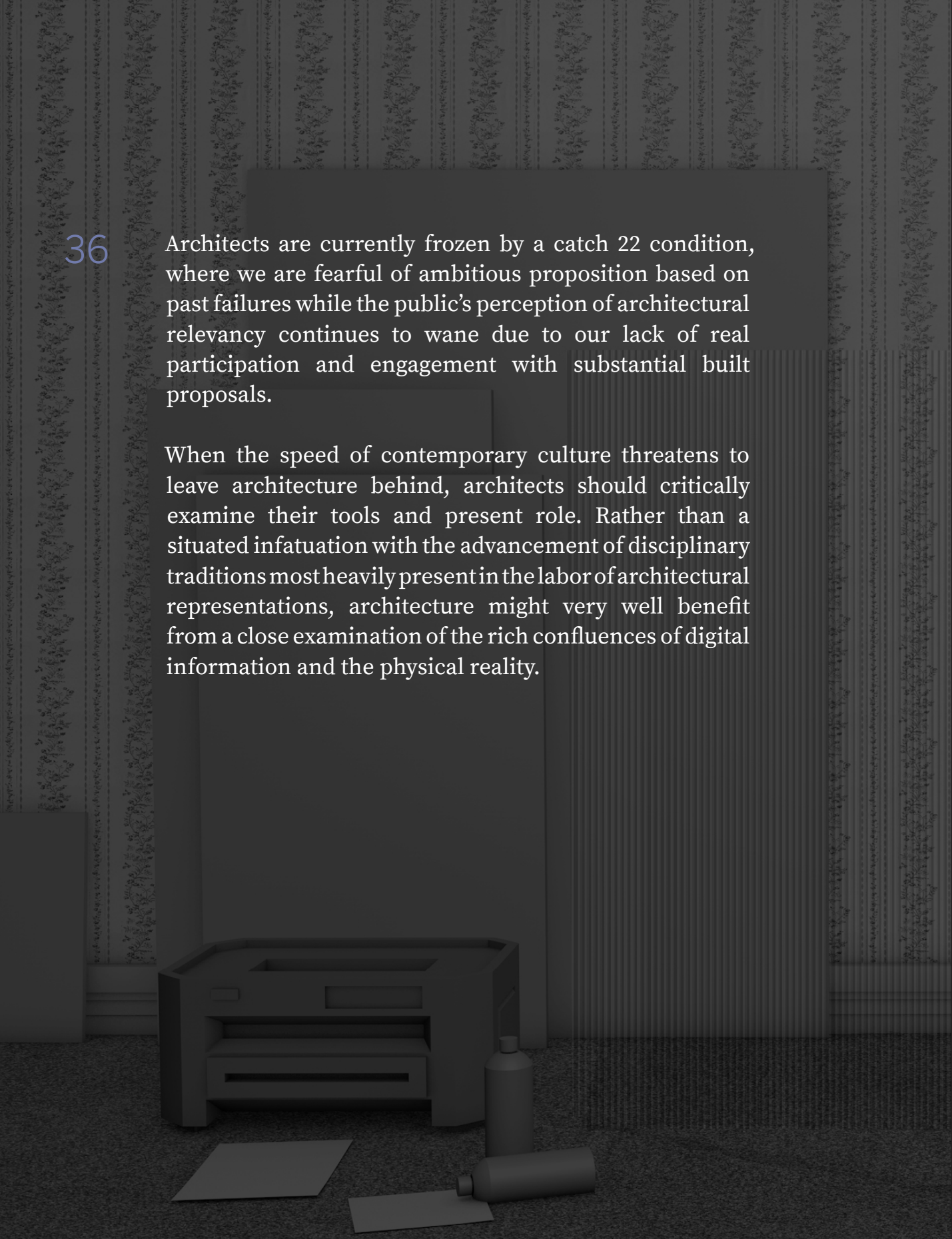
Ex. Toon rendering, (where an editable contour is applied as a material to rendered geometry to make it look like a drawing) undermine the fluid scalable quality of vector lines through output resolution.

Ex. Rudimentary photoshop techniques make collages that replicate actions done by hand in digital space, trading overlaid rough cut-outs for a fluid digital layer structure that automatically blur edges.

Projects are rendered canonical and monumental while the built work are themselves modestly conservative in scale, program, and ownership. Images only serve to bolster internal discourse and sustain disciplinary lineages. Corporate renders on the other hand train vision dominant consumption, while cheap metaphoric analogies reduce architecture to formal iconic clichés.

Architects are currently frozen by a catch 22 condition, where we are fearful of ambitious proposition based on past failures while the public's perception of architectural relevancy continues to wane due to our lack of real participation and engagement with substantial built proposals.

When the speed of contemporary culture threatens to leave architecture behind, architects should critically examine their tools and present role. Rather than a situated infatuation with the advancement of disciplinary traditions most heavily present in the labor of architectural representations, architecture might very well benefit from a close examination of the rich confluences of digital information and the physical reality.



Marilena Mela

38

Borrowing from Braudel

Total historiography of the 16th century, or a design manifesto for the post-Anthropocene?*

Design, as a set of tools that transform physical reality, is necessarily political. It requires an interpretation of this reality that goes beyond the immediate context of the designed artefact, and engages with perceptual, social, and geopolitical processes. This article suggests that architects, planners, and designers cannot ignore these seemingly intangible dimensions of contemporary interconnected space. Instead, it proposes a design that engages with the production of space at a large scale, and imagines interconnectedness as an opportunity for grassroot collaborations. To do so, it builds on the work of Fernand Braudel on the history of the Mediterranean.[1] The scope of Braudel's seminal work is historical; however, its focus on geographical interactions and material networks makes it relevant to future-oriented spatial insights of critical geography, urban studies, and design theory. My aim is to revisit these encounters from a contemporary standpoint, to explore them through mappings and visualizations, and to reveal their use-value towards a new understanding of spatial transformations. The densely interconnected space of the Mediterranean remains the milieu of this experiment.

1. Fernand Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II

The first two sections explore the interactions between geopolitical processes and architectural imaginations in the Mediterranean, and introduce the idea of large-scale design. The third one engages with the Braudelian understanding of geo-historical space, and visualizes in diagrammatic maps some patterns and networks of the 16th century sea. The fourth and fifth sections map similar patterns in the contemporary Mediterranean space, and discuss their potential relevance to processes of collective design. Mappings and diagrams are integral parts of the article: they include connections and relationships that might be overlooked in the linearity of the text.

This is a manifesto for a design that focuses on the material challenges of physical space, and not on the alleged mythopoetic qualities of place. One that transcends the limits of discipline, time and space. One that regards all human and non-human trajectories as equally important threads within systems of superimposed networks, challenges imagined geographies, and instead proposes collaborations among multiple interconnected actors.

Mythological space: the construction of the Mediterranean

How do geopolitics interrelate with spatial imaginations, and what is the role of architects in reproducing long-standing imagined geographies? In the following paragraphs, I interrogate the interrelations between the geopolitical landscape of the Mediterranean, its representations, and the actors that co-create it.

Within both the academic and public discourses, the Mediterranean probes with meaning conflicted concepts of East and West, North and South, centre and periphery, border and freedom, image and experience. The Sea is the border between the developed West (and North), and the 'under-developed' East (and South)[2]; Mediterranean countries are often described as peripheral or semi-peripheral within the global power systems.[3] The sea is a geopolitical landscape of massive commercial movements: the lands of its Eastern and Southern shores serve as energy providers for the megacities of the West. Resulting from the same economic hierarchies, human groups attempt dangerous crossings of the sea in the same direction: from East to West and from South to North. Seasonally, tourist waves overflow the Western and Northern shores of the Sea, in search for ancient civilizations, picturesque traditions, and relaxing beaches.

Modernity brought the gradual attribution of symbolic, mythical qualities to the Mediterranean Sea. The constitution of the grand tour[4], the travelogues and the scientific missions of the 18th century[5], are all early steps of the process. In the 20th century, this symbolic dimension was enhanced by novel art movements, new archaeological discoveries, technological innovations in the travel industry and the diffusion of information. Soon, the Mediterranean became the "cradle of Western civilization", and, at the same time, the home of an "exotic vernacular"[6]. These themes, combined with the famous Mediterranean sunlight render the Sea an ideal destination for artists, writers, and architects, who perceive its landscape as the material expression of ancient myths. Unavoidably, these surrounding mythologies intervenes with our perception of place. As Pedrag Metvejevic beautifully describes, the Mediterranean is a sea of representations:

2
For an interesting critique of the narrative of under-development in the globalized world, as created by the West, see: Doreen Massey, For Space, p.5

3.
For the notions of periphery and semi-periphery, see: Lila Leontidou, The Mediterranean City in Transition: Social Change and Urban Development

4.
For an account of the Grand Tour geographical actors, see: Deborah Harlan, 'Travel, Pictures and a Victorian Gentleman in Greece', Hesperia, p. 421–53

5.
For a critical examination of the 18 th century scientific missions in the Mediterranean see: Christopher D. Armstrong, 'Travel and Experience in the Mediterranean of Louis XV', p. 268–90

6.
This bizarre coexistence is already evident in tourist handbooks of the late 19 th century Mediterranean. See: Marilena Mela, "The milieu of the picturesque: Early Modern Media and Imagined Geographies in the Mediterranean", p. 545-555.

We do not discover the Sea ourselves, nor do we see it exclusively through our own eyes. We see it as others have seen it- in the pictures they draw, the stories they tell. We cognize it and recognize it simultaneously. We are familiar with seas we have never laid eyes on or bathed in. No view of the Mediterranean is completely autonomous.[7]

This mythological construction of the Mediterranean is not irrelevant to the scope of Orientalism, as illustrated by Edward Said. For Said, the relationship between East and West is based on an "imagined geography"[8], which presupposes the division of the world in two halves, and was created through a collective European fantasy for the East: "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony"[9]. Said describes how this image was initially created through travel narrations. It was subsequently widely reproduced and transformed into stereotypes that acquired the status of objective reality. Finally, it ended up forming the basis for Western policymaking in the colonized Eastern world.[10]
However, this dual model is not enough to capture the complexity of the relationship between 'The West' and the countries of the Mediterranean. Michael Herzfeld uses the term "Mediterraneanism" to describe exactly how a series of stereotypes on Mediterranean places and people contributes to the reproduction of the peripheral position of the sea within the global economic hierarchies.[11] The economically marginalized Mediterranean symbolizes also the roots of Western civilization, materialized in the omnipresent Greek and Roman ruins. The West recognizes the Mediterranean not only as the other, but also as its own image. The tension between those two diverging narratives outlines the position of the Mediterranean within the Western imagination.

In architectural history, the Mediterranean has often functioned as a source of inspiration for new formal paradigms. Lejeune and Sabbatino observe how successive waves of Mediterraneanism dominated modern architecture, each new one vanishing its predecessors: Schinkel's neoclassicism, Le Corbusier's explorations with light and shadow, Semper's polychromy, the Team 10s's discovery of the vernacular, are all products of architects' interactions with the historic landscape of the sea.[12] Built and unbuilt architectural projects testify on the dominant Mediterranean myth, as inscribed to the wider epistemological paradigm of their time.

7. Predrag Matvejevi, Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape, trans. by Michael Henry Heim, p. 95

8. E.W Said, Orientalism, Modern Classics (Penguin, 2003).

9. Said, p. 12.

10. Said, p.17

11. Michael Herzfeld, 'Practical Mediterraneanism: Excuses for Everything, from Epistemology to Eating', p. 45–63.

12. Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino, Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities, p.1-12.

Benedetto Gravagnuolo describes how successive myths have always informed architectural explorations, often deliberately overlooking the intrinsic multiplicity of the Mediterranean landscape:

This plurality of cultures, languages, and ethnicities – woven into tight and complex knots – can then be disentangled in a historical setting. But in the field of design, mediterraneità can only be reproposed – or, at least, it has always been re-proposed that way – through a mythopoetic transfiguration and an acknowledged invention.[13]

I argue that this acceptance of a mythopoetic mediterraneità as a necessary invention in the field of design fails to address the complex challenges of Mediterranean space. The sea today is an amalgamation of many things: it is a historic landscape of constant human interactions; it is the milieu of mythologies that thoroughly intervene in the experience of space; it is a social and environmental battlefield between global centers and peripheries. Iain Chambers insists that we should abandon the modern narrative of the Mediterranean as a consistent unit; instead, we should perceive the sea as a "fluid archive" of multiple, tiny, heterogeneous stories.[14]

13. Benedetto Gravagnuolo, 'From Shinkel to Lecorbusier', in Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities, p. 39

14. Iain Chambers, "A Fluid archive", (Barcelona: CIBOD, 2014)

Plural space: the dimensions of total design

This tension between central narrative and plurality manifests significant challenges for design disciplines, at the architectural, urban, or planetary scale. Architectural theory, in reproducing the paradigm of a unique identity for a geographical area, risks overlooking alternative myths and understandings. At an urban scale, it seems almost impossible for the architect or designer to exercise any agency: planning, under the cloak of scientific rationality, follows and materializes geopolitical tendencies.[15] At an even broader scale, spatial complexity is so increased, that design appears insufficient: the physical landscape, the underlying infrastructure, the long-distance circulation of people, merchandise and capital, the gigantic shifts of urbanization, and the digital transformations of our global society, all interweave. Is it possible for design to engage with these processes, while embracing the intrinsic plurality of space? Can we see geographical space, in all its extent and complexity, as a potential design project, and its multiple actors as the recipients of design?

Such questions are not new in the history of architecture. Design visionaries have often attempted to reconceptualize the geographical scale.

15. For Francesco Bandarin, our era brings the end of urban design, "now essentially a socioeconomic discipline".

Francesco Bandarin 'Introduction: Urban conservation and the end of planning', in Reconnecting the City, p. 1–16.

For Buckminster Fuller, through new ways of visualizing the territory, "we humans will be better equipped to address challenges as we face our common future aboard Spaceship Earth". His 1943 Dymaxion Map uses an icosahedron to achieve a flat projection that preserves shapes and sizes, so that "the world may be fitted together and rearranged to illuminate special aspects of its geography"[16]. In the field of urban planning, around the 1960's, the increased interconnectedness of the globalized world encouraged the first ideas of planetary urbanization, now a popular concept in design theory.[17] The most prominent example is Constantinos Doxiadis' 'Ecumenopolis in 2100 AD'. Doxiadis imagines the future global territory as an expansive planetwide city, controlled by a rationalizing technocratic federate government, and making use of systems theory and cybernetics (Fig. 1).[18]

In a contemporary approach which reminds the principles of the "Ecumenopolis", design theorist Benjamin Bratton urges to abandon human-centered design, and perceive the global field as an accidental mega-structure of a planetary scale, which can only be managed through computational tools. The new design is a geopolitical architecture, which is made possible through planetary-scale computation, the "successor to all modes of geographic governance—land, sea, air". [19] An alternative but similarly large-scale approach comes from the area of landscape urbanism: with an emphasis on superimposed mappings, landscape urbanists address all spatial processes as social or environmental flows, which can be easily mapped, illustrated and communicated. James Corner states that maps acquire a specific agency, which reveal hidden relationships and future directions.[20]

Without denying their importance, concepts of planetary urbanization or landscape urbanism often fail to incorporate narratives and perceptual processes that are integral in the design process. The temporal depth of the landscape, the specific characteristics of place, and the plural understandings of the territory have to be taken into account. It is within the interdisciplinary field of spatial humanities that such questions are increasingly being elaborated. The spatial turn in humanities research is closely linked to the work of Fernand Braudel, the first historian to combine history and geography, attempting a total geohistory of the Mediterranean world. A revisiting of Braudel can bring together the challenges of geographical design and the insights of spatial humanities. At the same time, a holistic, structural understanding of the historical

16. Richard Buckminster Fuller, "Life Presents R. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion World", p. 41-55

17. Marc Wigley talks about a network fever in architecture, which in part originates from the interrelated works of thinkers like Constantinos Doxiadis, Buchminster Fuller, and Marshall McLuhan in the 60s. Marc Wigley, "Network Fever" p.82–122

18. Constantinos Doxiadis, "Ecumenopolis: Tomorrow's city". Brittanica Book of the year (Encyclopedia Brittanica inc: 1968).

19. Bratton, p. 15-18

20. James Corner 'The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention', in The Map Reader, ed. by Martin Dodge, Rob Kitchin, and Chris Perkins, p. 89–101

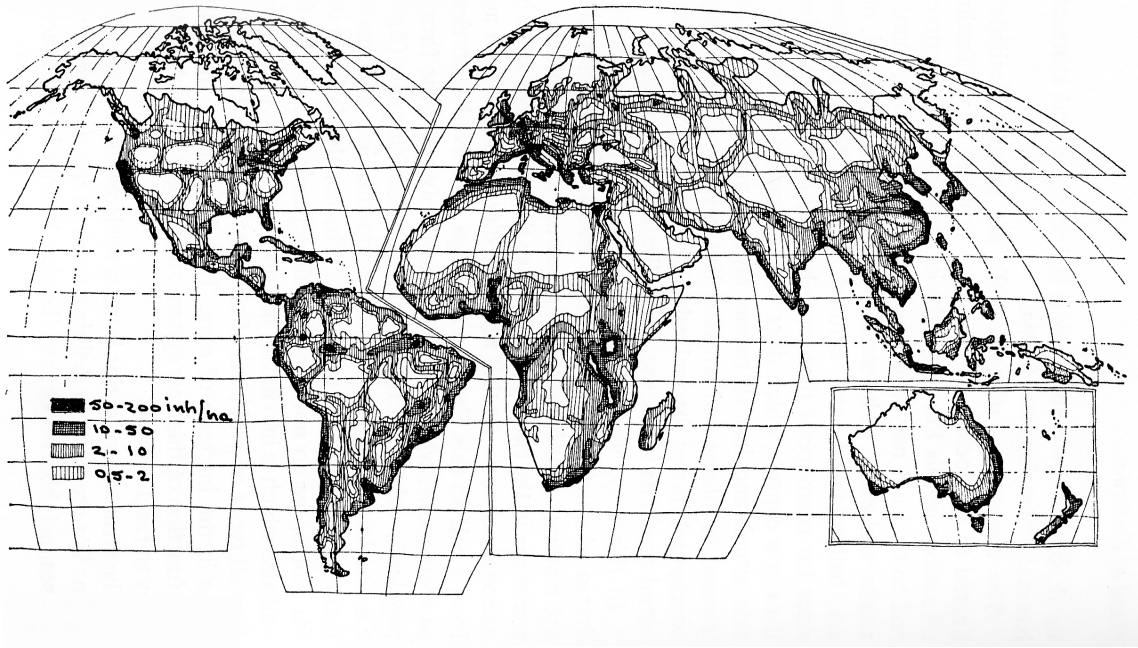


Figure 1.
Doxiadis, "Ecumenopolis in 2100AD". Source: Constantinos A. Doxiadis Archives. © Constantinos and Emma Doxiadis Foundation

Mediterranean space can counterbalance imagined geographies and established stereotypes.

Braudelian space: Structures, networks, and human agency.

In this section I describe my rereading of Braudel's The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, visualizing his historical patterns into diagrammatic mappings. I elaborate the following questions: How can we perceive global space in its immense temporal depth? What is the role and responsibility of humans in reshaping our environment? In what ways can we map spatial complexity at a very large scale? What future-oriented insights can we gain through new ways of visualizing old stories?

Braudel's Mediterranean, the foundational work of the Annales School, was first published in 1949. It proposes a radically different historiography; abandoning the traditional, "superficial history" of events and glorious men. Braudel aims to unravel and narrate the slow, almost imperceptible movements that compose the eternal face of the Sea.[21] These include the configuration of naval routes, the paths of transhumance and nomadism,

21.
"Like thousands of others, I taught a superficial history of events". Fernand Braudel 'Personal Testimony', The Journal of Modern History, p448–67

the shifts in agricultural production, and the busy function of cities. The main focus is on the history of the sea during the 16th century; however, it ends up covering many centuries of the history of the Mediterranean, in a narration that becomes possible through a constant discovery of patterns. His most influential methodological invention is the division of historic time in three levels: the Longue Durée, the Moyenne Durée, and the history of events. Initially, Braudel explores The role of the environment: the importance of geography in the formation of the long and repetitive life of the Sea. His architecture of the Mediterranean world, as illustrated in Figure 2, seems extremely simple: it consists of pieces of Land and pieces of Sea. Land consists of mountains, plateaus, hills, and plains. Sea consists of "sea-deserts", vast and dangerous areas, and the narrow seas, "the homes of history", a succession of seas communicating with each other through narrow passages. The interfaces between Land and Sea are the coasts -consisting of villages and cosmopolitan ports- and the islands –isolated worlds and networked hubs at the same time. The structural composition of the sea includes its imposing neighbors: the Sahara desert in the south, the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and the continental mass of Europe in the north.[22]

In this innovative, structural configuration of history, humans lose their protagonist role as the subjects of history. "No longer self- or even collectively- determining, the human individual shrinks and fades away in Braudel's pages before the grandeur of the environment" writes Samuel Kinser.[23] Similarly, Hexter observes that "Braudel populates his longue durée with non-people, persons-geographical entities, features of the terrain".[24] However, for Lucien Febvre, this is exactly the strength of the work: the death of the historical personage, and "the decomposition of Man in his abstract unity, into a 'cortege of personages'". [25] Under a present light, this dethronement of man as the king of history, the focus on material interactions, and the construction of patterns to address successive complexities, emerge as extremely fresh. Braudel proves a true ecologist, foreshadowing the necessary paradigm shift towards the post-Anthropocene[26]. Humans are perceived as flows, participating in the transformations of the landscape, and not as potent individuals with the ability to change the route of history.

The focus is on the interactions between the landscape, the production of goods and artefacts, and the commercial exchanges between distant communities. Flows and networks are often employed as tools to explain

22.
Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1, p. 53- 275

23.
Samuel Kinser, "Braudel: History and Patterns" p.63

24.
J. H. Hexter, "Fernand Braudel and the Monde Braudellien." p.518

25.
Hans Kellner, "Disorderly Conduct: Braudel's Mediterranean Satire" p.198

26.
For Delanty and Mota, the Anthropocene "has become a way in which the human world is reimagined culturally and politically in terms of its relation with the Earth." Gerard Delanty and Aurea Mota, "Governing the Anthropocene: Agency, governance, knowledge. European Journal of Social Theory" p.9
The post-Anthropocene can be defined as the end of this self-understanding of humans as the most important agents in the transformations of Earth.

the spatial configuration of the Mediterranean world. Flows are the liquid material that glues the Mediterranean construction together: "The Mediterranean has no unity but that created from human movements, the relationships they imply and the routes they follow".[27] The ways people cross mountains, exchange products, and anchor in islands create dense networks. These consist mainly of roads –sea routes, rivers, and land passages- and cities, the strategic organizational nodes of the system. Deleuze and Guattari beautifully capture this dynamic relationship in their essay City/State:

The town is the correlate of the road. The town exists only as a function of circulation and of circuits; it is a singular point on the circuits which create it and which it creates. It is defined by entries and exits: something must enter it and exit from it. It imposes a frequency [...] It is a phenomenon of transconsistency, a network, because it is fundamentally in contact with other towns.[28]

Braudel's contributions to urban theory is illustrated in Figure 3: the birth, survival, and death of a city is seen as an immediate result of the transformations in the routes that connect it to other cities. Constellations of cities are distinguished in two classes: the systems that cities create with the surrounding countryside and neighboring towns; and the systems of cities at national or international levels, namely the world-systems.[29] Types of city constellations differ per political system, e.g. among territorial empires, such as the Ottoman State, and banking empires, such as the one of Genoa: in the first case, Istanbul, the capital city, survived as a parasitic monster, fed from the countryside; in the second one, Genoa took advantage of the weaknesses of the territorial states, creating an international zone of influence.[30]

After formulating a complete set of rules on the function of early modern urban systems, Braudel focuses on the 16th century Mediterranean, when cities of the sea still prosper economically and exert control over large parts of the world. Four material transport networks are then geographically explained, as illustrated in Figure 4: the routes of gold, silver, pepper, and grain. This way, Braudel showcases how the changes in the geographic configuration of sea and land communications brought prosperity in alternating constellations of cities. A quick look on these four networks can inform us on the ways economy, material culture, and social history interweave in a specific historical conjuncture.

27. Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1, p. 276.

28. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "City/State" p. 296-299

29. Fernand Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800

30. Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1, pp. 341-351.

In the case of gold trade (Fig 4.1)[31], the demand for Sudanese gold brought the rise of a constellation of cities in North Africa: Ceuta, Oran, Tangiers, Fes, Tunis, Constantine, became the gates between the Mediterranean and the Sahara. However, Seville and Lisbon soon mastered the transatlantic crossing, and became the gates of the newly found American gold, thus rising in power and antagonizing the North African cities. Silver also started arriving from American mines, replacing the German ones and weakening central European routes (Fig 4.2).[32]

31. Ibid, p. 462-493.

32. Ibid, p. 543-569.

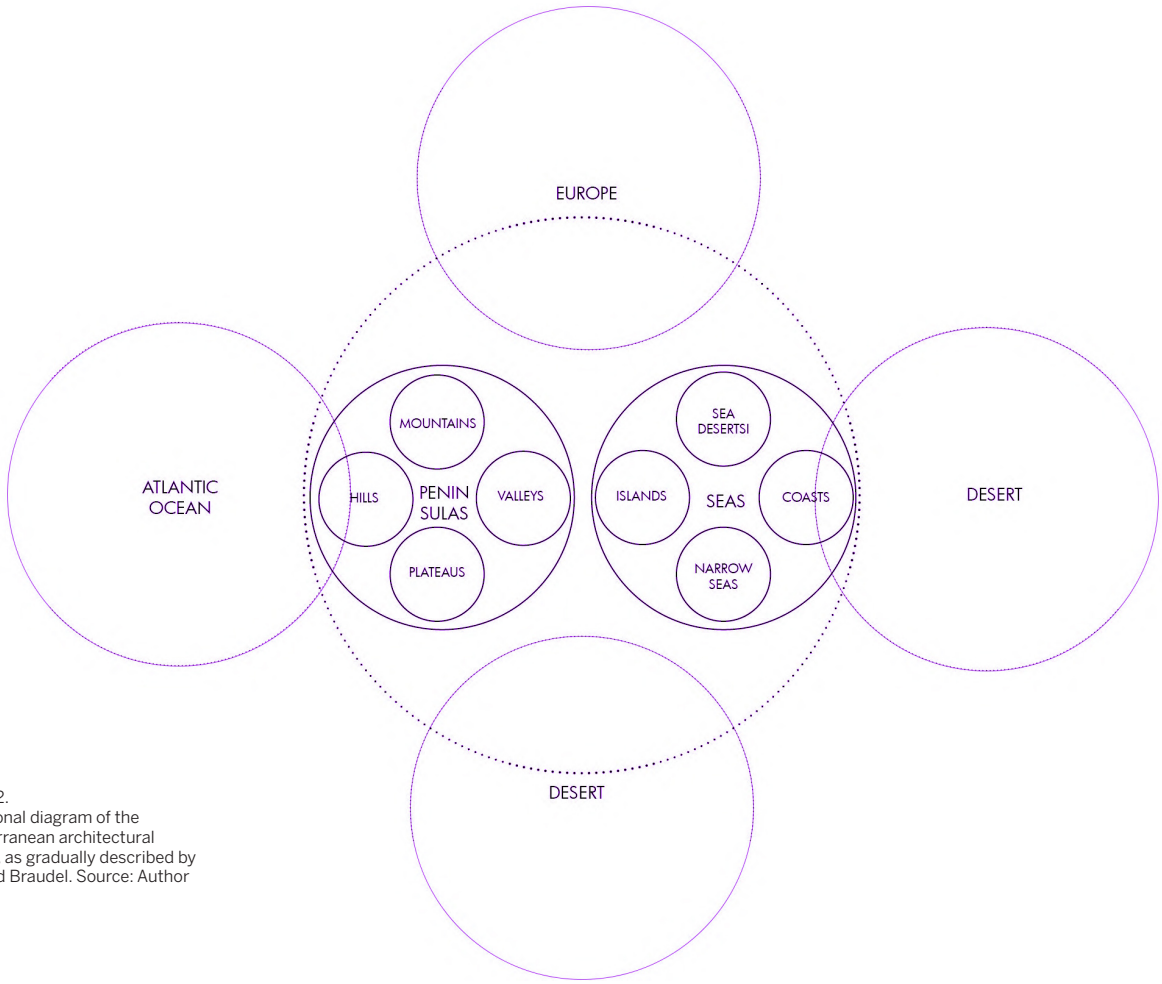


Figure 2.
Functional diagram of the Mediterranean architectural project, as gradually described by Fernand Braudel. Source: Author

Another characteristic example is the case of pepper, cargoes of which arrived through the Silk Road, and brought extreme prosperity to Venice, the gateway to the East. Depending on the domination of the road from the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf, two pairs of cities flourished accordingly: Aleppo and Tripoli in the Syrian coast, or Cairo and Alexandria in the Egyptian cost (Fig. 4.3). Finally, grain trade was a unique network with a huge volume of commercial activity, as it made use of secondary roads to arrive to the most remote areas (Fig 4.4). Grain trade usually covered short distances; however, in cases of famine or drought, it immediately turned into a useful political tool, creating complex hierarchies and levels of dependency between areas in opposing shores of the sea.[33]

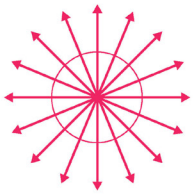
33. Ibid, p. 570-604.

The superimposition of these four material geographies permits the emergence of basic geo-economical patterns (Fig 4.5). For example, it becomes evident that in the course of the 16th century, luxury goods continuously flow from East to West, while, at the same time, valuable metals flow from West to East. In other words, these simplified examples allow us to easily perceive complex economic problems of the 16th century in their geographic dimension, and to evaluate their spatial expressions. Beyond their historical importance, these simplified patterns result from a structural mechanism that goes beyond space and time. I argue that Braudel's manifesto, expanded to include the transformations of contemporary globalization and the digital world, can prove useful to map today's global spatial complexity.

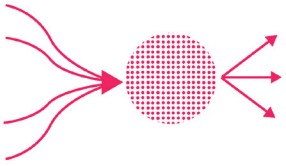
Contemporary space: a Mediterranean experiment

In this section, I test the above tools by in a contemporary setting. I use spatial information from a variety of sources to construct 'Braudelian' maps for the contemporary Mediterranean. My hypothesis is that an emphasis on material flows, on the paths they follow and the hubs they create, can uncover an image of the physical milieu, beyond the geopolitical aesthetics that have historically interfered with our perception of the landscape. This is also an urge for architects to approach negative, accidental spaces as materialized results of global flows and processes.

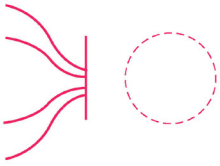
Flows in the 21st century are not only the sea and land routes to which Braudel attributed a major significance. Flows are now an inextricable part of the landscape, or rather, of the land itself; on its surface, roads and railways cross plateaus and mountains; in its depths, tunnels and



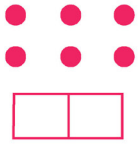
'Cties owed their existence to the control over physical space they exercised through the networks of communications emanating the meeting of different transport routes."



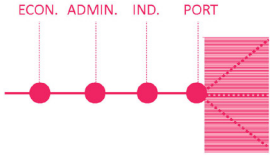
"Every town is founded on movements which it absorbs, uses for its own purposes, and then retransmits."



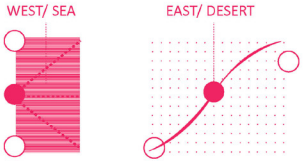
"Interruptions in its communications might lead to a town's stagnation or death"



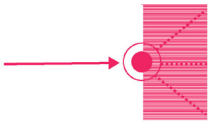
"A map of the cities closely corresponds to a map of the roads."



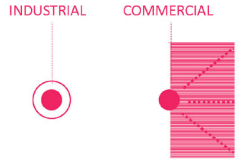
"The road passes through (the cities) as an assembly line, distributing tasks."



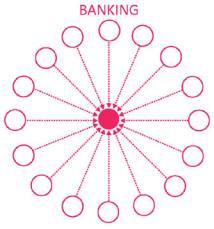
"In the Western Mediterranean the great cities were all near the sea. . . But in the south and east of the Mediterranean, the great inland cities of Islam are a clear response to the demands of the roads through the desert"



"All ports, by definition, stand where land and water meet. Every one stands at the end of a road or inland waterway."



"Industry flourished most in cities far from the sea, cities that were prevented by their position from fulfilling all the functions of communication centers."



"The imperatives of large-scale, long-distance commerce, its accumulation of capital, acted as driving forcs. Genoa became the leading financial cities in the world."

Figure 3.
Rules and functions of urban systems in the proto-modern world, as formulated by Fernand Braudel in 1949. Source: Author

pipelines trespass seas and oceans; bridges defy insular geography, and flying machines alter concepts of distance and time; information travels fast as light, through ever-expanding cables. Networks, as Benjamin Bratton puts it, "make space and take space."[34] Our global village, the Mediterranean being a small neighborhood in it, is a gigantic, complex infrastructure, comprising oil refineries, data storage centers, automated production sites, but also immigration camps and seasonal tourist resorts. Cities remain important organizational nodes, depending as much as ever on their relationship to communication flows; however, unlike the 16th-century model, they do not exercise absolute control over these communications. The invisible players of the neoliberal economy seem to determine the function of the connected city and to enjoy the benefits of its dense networking.

34. B.H. Bratton, The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty, p.63

I assume that general tendencies, directions and structures can only be uncovered through the abstraction of information in a diagrammatic manner. My experiment maps the routes of six material and human flows in the Mediterranean: oil, natural gas, digital information, illegal drugs, immigrants and tourists (Figure 5). The data comes from a wide range of recently published research, combining governmental, journalistic, and academic sources. The six diagrams comprise the following information: the main sources of origin; the primary routes- roads, passages, pipelines, cables, etc.; the destinations; and finally, the important nodes- towns, ports, and stations.

The first three networks, of crude oil, natural gas, and optical fiber cable, refer to material, 'infrastructural' flows, which follow specific routes in land and sea, requiring extensive works which permanently transform the landscape. Oil travels through large-scale pipelines in land, but it crosses the Sea mainly in tankers; the Mediterranean remains thus a significant passage for the supply of Europe and the US from the reserves of Russia, Africa and the Middle East (Fig 5.1). For gas, instead, the construction of submarine natural pipelines permits to defy the limitations of sea travel, strategically linking places in opposing shores of the Mediterranean (Fig 5.2). The third map illustrates the configuration of submarine and subterranean optical fiber cable; it draws the attention on the importance of the oceans for the transmission of information. As expected, in the European coast the infrastructure is significantly more advanced, compared to the African or Middle-Eastern ones (Fig 5.3). The next three

maps concern the human geography of the Mediterranean world: routes of immigration, illicit trade and tourist flows are diagrammatically illustrated. For the post-2015 huge immigration waves from Africa and the Middle East routes alternate, and extensive, semi-permanent camps emerge in their crossroads (Fig 5.4). The trade of illegal drugs follows equally uncertain roads, with steady flows from Morocco, Afghanistan, Latin America to the Westernized world (Fig 5.5). For these two, non-institutional flows, the rules of the 16th-century sea-travel as presented by Braudel still apply: the increased risk and extremely varying times of travel create a fragmented, non-isotropic area.[35] The last diagram illustrates the seasonal tourist flows, mainly towards the northern shores and islands of the Mediterranean (Fig 5.6).

35. Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the Age of Philip II, Vol. 1, p. 370

What I seek through this method is not a total historiography of the 21st century, but a mapping and design system that can visually explain the complex creation of space. Many more flows can be mapped, in a holistic system which remains open to additions and interpretations by multiple subjects. The above maps can be creatively superimposed in various combinations: for example, by combining the maps of oil or natural gas to the map of immigration routes, we can easily observe that both routes structurally flow from South to North and from East to West. In other words, and in a Braudelian fashion, the various combinations of the maps can transform complex geopolitics into a space where patterns can be easily discovered.

Digital space: grassrooting the map

Let us now return to the question of plural design, and ask ourselves: What opportunities does this contemporary re-enactment of Braudelian mappings entail for design disciplines? The answer might lie on the emergence of digital networks. As Bratton observes, information is "the new element which re-problematizes the spatial".[36] In his planetary computation model, design is perceived as the search for proper tools to interrelate digital with physical processes, topology with geography, and citizenship with land governability; the aim is to create a multi-user system, with the potential to manage spatial processes on a geographical scale.

36. Bratton, p.59.

However, important as the big picture might be, it is in place where design materializes, where its transformative qualities become evident, where all

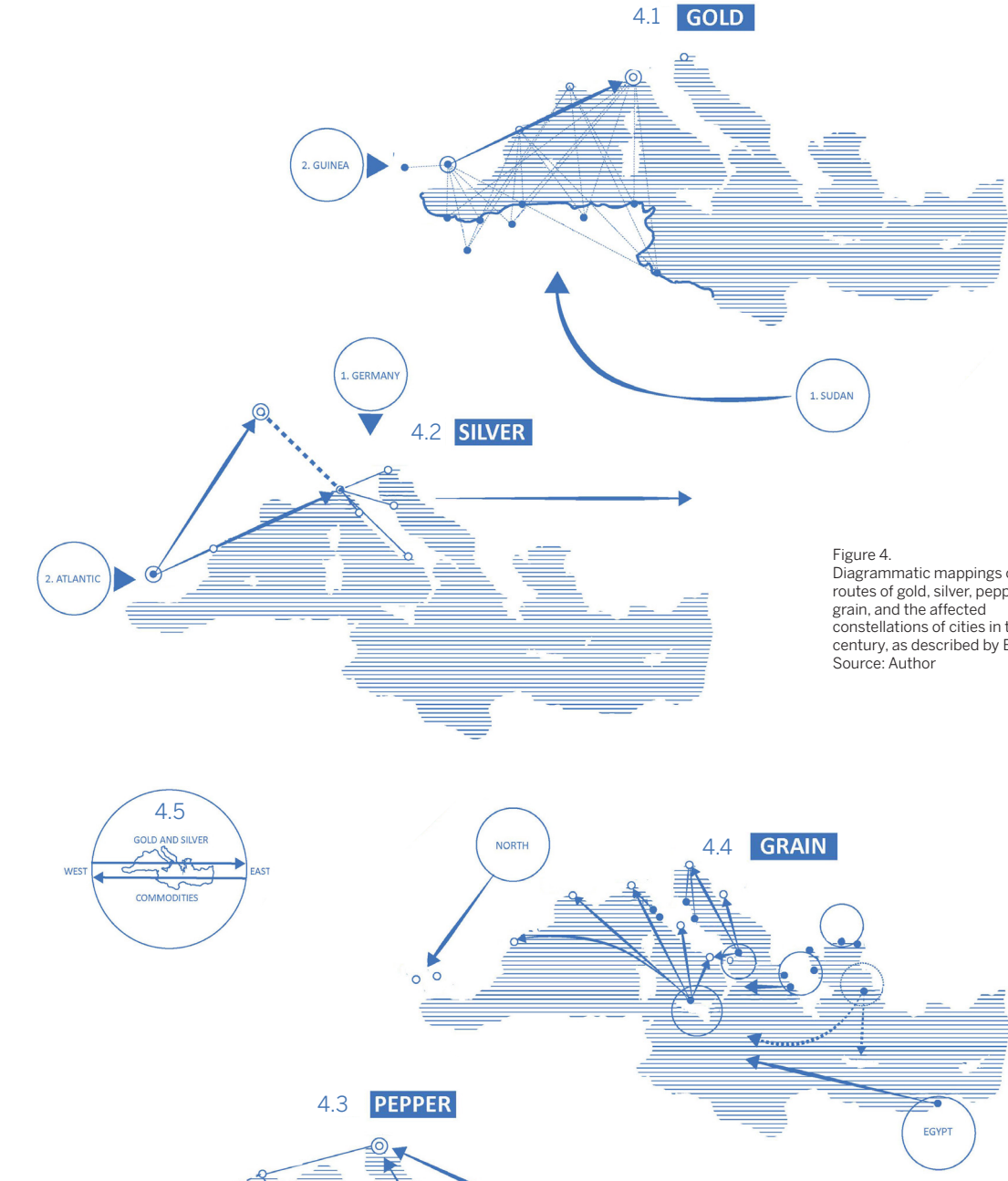


Figure 4.
Diagrammatic mappings of the routes of gold, silver, pepper and grain, and the affected constellations of cities in the 16th century, as described by Braudel.
Source: Author

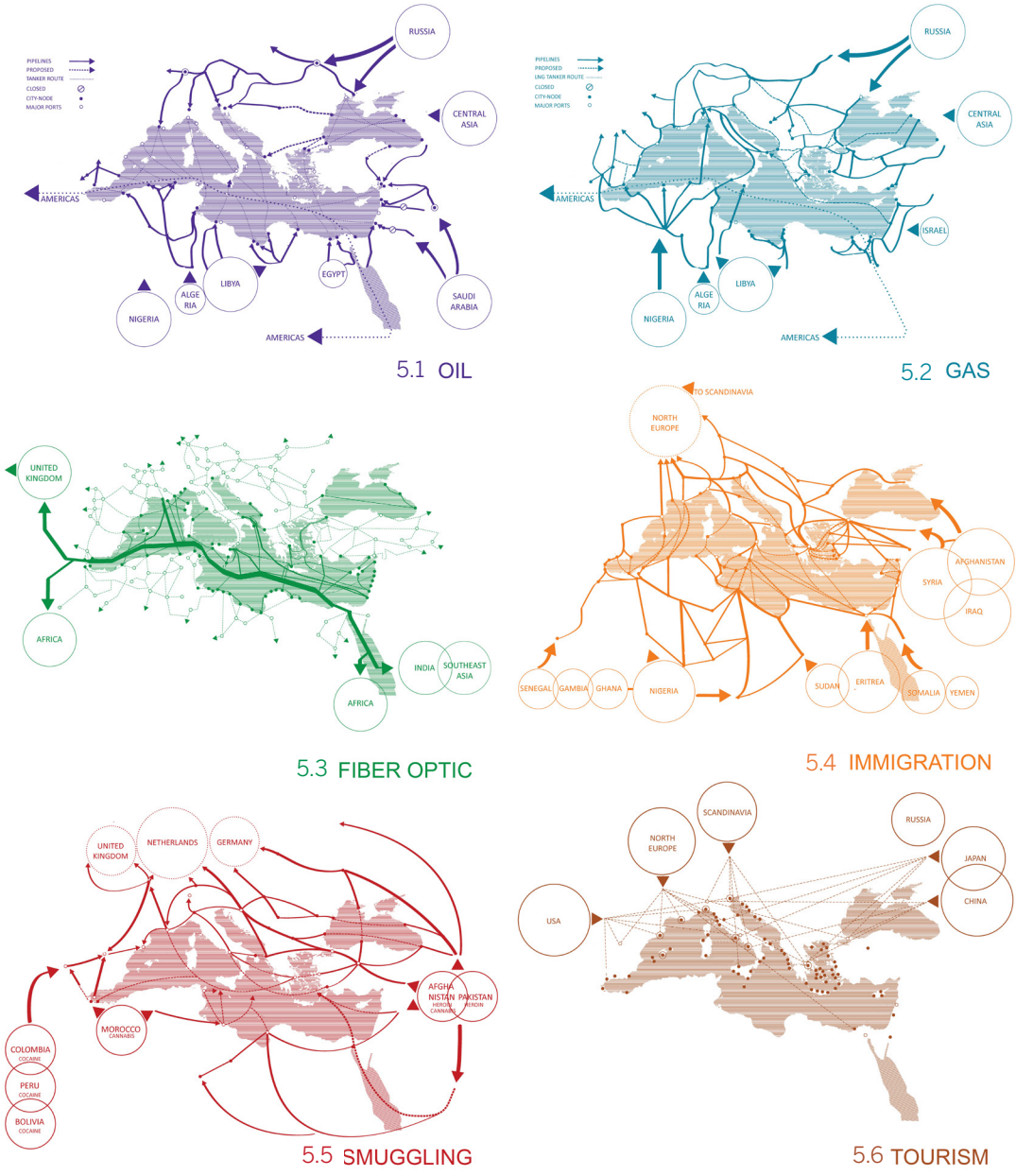


Figure 5.
Diagrammatic mappings of the routes of oil, natural gas, optical fiber, imigration, illegal drugs and tourism, and the affected constellations of settlements, in the 21st century. Source: Author

affected actors come together and have a say. Manuel Castells, the advocator of the term 'space of flows' contrasts the abstract quality of digital networks to the socially contested 'space of places'. He suggests that the geography of the new history will be characterized by the interpenetration of flows and places, "of uniformity and autonomy, of domination and resistance".[37] Similarly, Saskia Sassen proposes to take advantage of global networks in order to 'recover place':

Recovering place means recovering the multiplicity of presences in this landscape. The large city of today [. . .] is one of the nexi where the formation of new claims, by both the powerful and the disadvantaged, materializes and assumes concrete forms.[38]

37. Manuel Castells 'Grassrooting the space of flows', p294–302

38. Saskia Sassen, 'The Global City: Introducing a Concept', p. 40

In the attempt to interrelate flows and social claims, our Braudelian mappings can illustrate unexpected vicinities between seemingly unrelated places. The superimposition of the maps reveals how places communicate with each other in many different, material ways, thus sharing interests and challenges. But a place can be densely connected in a material level, and isolated at the human or social level. Within the contemporary digitally interconnected condition, open, diagrammatic maps can be loaded in a multi-user digital space. There, new threads of communication can emerge, aiming to collectively address shared challenges and goals. Places can thus be connected in a digital structure which perceives them as unique islands, functioning in systems of elective collaborations. Through the use of digital and material networks, actors in different places can collectively achieve desired transformations.

In other words, our networked society can be seen as the infrastructure for bottom-up resistance, aiming to the recovery of place, in a claim formulated not only by the powerful but also by the most disadvantaged subjects. This new geographical design does not see space as divided in pre-imagined areas, but as a sum of places, each one with its own complexity and multiplicity, bound together in nets of material and immaterial transfers. Flows, yes, but from a humanist and not from a merely technical point of view. Such mapping systems can then function as methods of geographical design: The graspable abstractions of the complex physical and geopolitical territory, and, at the same time, the new connections at the human level, can transform geographical space into a manageable project.

Human knowledge revisited

During our travel in time, space and discipline, the Mediterranean was successively illustrated as an environmental architecture, a geopolitical battlefield, an 'accidental megastructure', an urban network, a complex infrastructure, a 'fluid archive', a collective work of multiple agents. The problem of how to redesign such a multilevel space remains necessarily open; however, these seemingly conflicting narratives can co-function within wide, ambitious systems of total understanding and interrelation.

Braudel's Mediterranean is undoubtedly a manifesto for the discipline of history: in its pages, he introduced new methods, objects of research, and scientific scopes; he incorporated tools and results from geography, economics, anthropology; he invented new structures to address the role of humans in shaping the earth, and the role of the earth in shaping human life; he did all that without losing his passionate love for the alive and ancient sea, that still moves before our eyes.

All created human knowledge, when studied under the light of different eras and disciplines, can produce brand-new tools that match the needs of their context. In this sense, this work is clearly also a powerful design manifesto: one that invites to attempt new, total understandings of space; to address the complexities of the economy and the global society as intrinsic elements of any architecture; to map the numerous diversities and continuities between places, proposing potentialities of collaboration; to both challenge and embrace inter-subjective mythologies; to reconcile imagination with automated, scientific tools of research; to perceive design as a collective, transformative process of the world around us.

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Nina Stener Jørgensen

58

Employing retired models of action

will always be vernacular fetischising

Dima Meiqari

60

Indigenous Architecture in motion: narratives of circassian architecture

The popular conceptualisation of vernacular architecture is based on contextualising traditional architecture, built for a given time, in a particular country or a regional/geographical area.[1] Consequently, the existence of a building form can be described as the direct and primary result of specific local influences (e.g., materials and environment).[2] When exploring the vernacular architecture of the Circassian ethnicity in the Middle East, it is not enough to investigate this contextualisation in one area. There is a need to go beyond patterns at one location and to trace the migration flow of the architectural patterns back to their domestic origins at the Caucasus.

(From previous page)

1.
Kingston Heath, Vernacular Architecture and Regional Design (Oxford and Burlington: Routledge, 2009).

2.
Ibid.

Historically, generations of Circassians were subject to various types and forces of movements, including forced migration and colonisation. Their original homeland is in the Caucasus. Since the start of the 1700s, their land possessed colonial interest to many great powers of those times, mainly the British and Russian empires. After the end of the Russo-Circassian War (1763 – 1864), many surviving Circassians were forced to flee their homeland in the Caucasus. By the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, they reached the Middle East, building settlements in Transjordan, the Golan Heights and Palestine.

This context of mobility and motion during the 18th, 19th and early 20th century have challenged the Circassian culture, and by extension their vernacular architecture which could not become a static heritage of a past that was handed down from one generation to another. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how the Circassian vernacular architecture time-tested adaptation during its migration and resettlement. This paper aims to investigate the aspects of motion that affected the transfer of the vernacular Circassian typologies from the Caucasus Mountains to the Middle East with focus on the role of intangible building techniques in adapting to landscape, climate, and available natural resources.

Tracing back the impact of migration and environmental change on space building challenges the traditional definition of vernacular architecture. In other words, investigating the role of intangible heritage as a driving force in shaping the vernacular practices help expanding the nowadays boundaries of vernacular architectural interventions beyond the boundaries of the context to a specific location. It could also contribute to the potential applications of vernacular architecture in the face of the 21st century challenges such as climate change related migration.

Documentation in Motion

The Circassian vernacular architecture, like many postcolonial cultures, is a fading heritage in both modern-day Russia and the Middle East. Circassian houses have been disappearing due to several reasons, such as war and rapid urbanisation. In my quest to draw a connection between the Caucasus and the Middle East, it was not possible to depend solely on the search for existing Circassian houses that are still standing.

To document vernacular Circassian architecture, first I had to look for its

footprint in historical documentation of the regions where Circassians have lived, and some still are living; such documentation of the construction process and the building techniques required a trans-disciplinary search and knowledge exchange with history, anthropology, literature and art. As a consequence, this search has highlighted the role of media in exploring, archiving and conserving the intangible heritage as a dynamic and living practice. Secondly, given that many buildings outlast builders, personal testimony about buildings served as a way of obtaining limited cultural context and historical depth of the oral history about the skills utilised and passed on from the original builders to users when they were still alive.

Tangibly, Circassian dwellings fell into two categories: 1) dwellings that had been destroyed over time due to several reasons, such as the systematic destruction of the 1930s in the Soviet Union (USSR) and the 1967 war in the Golan Heights of Syria, 2) dwellings that had been obliterated by rapid urbanisation including several locations in Jordan and the only two towns that still exist in Israel today.

Intangibly, the Circassian culture benefited from several visual notation and communication across several historical contexts and geographical locations. Given the geopolitical importance of the lands where Circassians lived, the evolutionary development of the Circassian society has been of interest to western researchers and politicians who passed through the Caucasus and the Middle East. Many artists, journalists, anthropologists, archaeologists and travelogues documented the Circassian way of life, economy, and material culture; their work had much emphasis on the clothes, daily culture, and portraits for people and dwellings. Visual and literary arts on the Circassian ways of life remained preserved and documented in archives and museums; however, digital archiving converted the content of documentation into "intangible cultural heritage" by making them accessible online. This accessibility was boosted by the arrival of social media with its broad connectivity and online participation and observation, which created repositories of cultural heritage for the Circassian communities. Consequently, Circassians in the diaspora were given a clearer view of how the life of their ancestors was like in the Caucuses, and the Circassians in Russia were more informed of the cultural production of the Circassians in the diaspora.

To pursue the objective of my research, I could use this visual documentation to connect the motion of the Circassian people to the movement of the Circassian culture, and by extension, their vernacular practice in space.

I found this link through a historiographical literature review, during which I have identified and collected around 1,200 media objects about the life of Circassians. Examples of these are the artwork of Scottish artist William Simpson who travelled through 'Circassia' in the autumn of 1855 with Henry Pelham-Clinton, 5th Duke of Newcastle (Figure 1), in addition to the photographic collection of George and Agnes Horsfield, Gottlieb Schumacher, and Gertrude Bell of the Middle East between 1890 – 1920 (Figure 2).

Figure 1.
A sketch by William Simpson. it illustrates one of the guesthouses where the artist stayed in during his tour among several Circassian villages in the west Caucasus [Provenance: Victoria and Albert Museum, United Kingdom]

Given that such documentations were mainly produced by foreign scholars, they were defined by a deep-rooted orientalist and archaeological approach. Furthermore, these documentations are situated within diverse fabrics of historical and political events, motives, memories, stories and sites. Therefore, chronological analyses of those documents were necessary to investigate the accuracy of historical and political context of each source. Also, the content of the objects should be verified by the Circassian oral history of their culture. As such, I combined my literature research with

interviews of members of the Circassian community and researchers in Jordan. The outcome of this process presented documentation of habits, skills, ideologies, impressions, feelings, emotions and individual/collective memory in connection with the tangible and the intangible Circassian culture.

Finally, I conducted a historical-comparative analysis to feature the evolution of the daily life and morals of Circassian society in the Caucasus and the diaspora at the Middle East; this resulted in the identification of key elements of the Circassian architecture as an insight into what had changed and what had not in the traditions of architecture in each period and each location.

Figure 2.
Circassian house in Amman
1890s – Gertrude Bell [Source: U. S. Library of Congress]

Typologies in Motion

The key elements of the Circassian village "Aul" and the Circassian dwelling "Adyghe Wuna" were influenced by human developmental and historical events. Therefore, the analysis of Circassian settlements must carefully consider the context in which they were built. Through this process, it was possible to identify the unique features in the dwellings and to detect chronological changes in the settlements and dwellings linked to the cultural context, climate, war and displacement, as explained below.

As a start, in the Caucasus, the Circassians did not develop a stable way of life. The historian Walter Richmond clarified two main reasons that prevented the Circassians from developing stability.[3] Firstly, the harsh climate of the Caucasus was associated with a relatively short growing season; therefore, frequent famines occurred with any late spring or early fall. As a result, the Circassians lived a semi-nomadic life, raising herds of sheep and cattle. Secondly, the Circassian land's strategic location along the Black Sea coast has exposed them to raids by their neighbours, so often that they had to abandon their homes when attacked, and rebuild somewhere else once the danger had passed. The main goal of those attacks was to captive humans and sold them as slaves in markets in the Middle East and Europe. This transport of people in addition to the spread of the plagues constantly exhausted the Circassian population and paralysed their ability to establish stable settlements or cities. In light of the lack of a stable central authority, the Circassian livelihood revolved around the smaller community of the "Aul" (village). Even politically, these villages were utterly independent; this decentralisation took a literal form in the east part of the Caucasus.

Circassian villages were described by French merchant Jean Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689) who drew sketches of plans and a general view of unusual settlements taking a round shape that belonged to the Circassians. Tavernier's notes also indicated a high level of technical knowledge among the inhabitants of these settlements (Figure 3). The settlements will stretch to be half the size of a football field. The houses were built next to each other, wall to wall in a circle. In the centre, an inner circle of small buildings was used for animal husbandry (e.g. horses, dogs); storage for water was located at the main entrance on this inner circle. The door of each house faced the outside of the main round wall, and each house had a fireplace to be used for cooking and as a heating source.[4] The Institute of

3. Walter Richmond, The Circassian Genocide (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013).

4. Murat Mukhamedovich Orquasov, Materials of the Circassians Homes' Architecture (Nalchik, 2011).

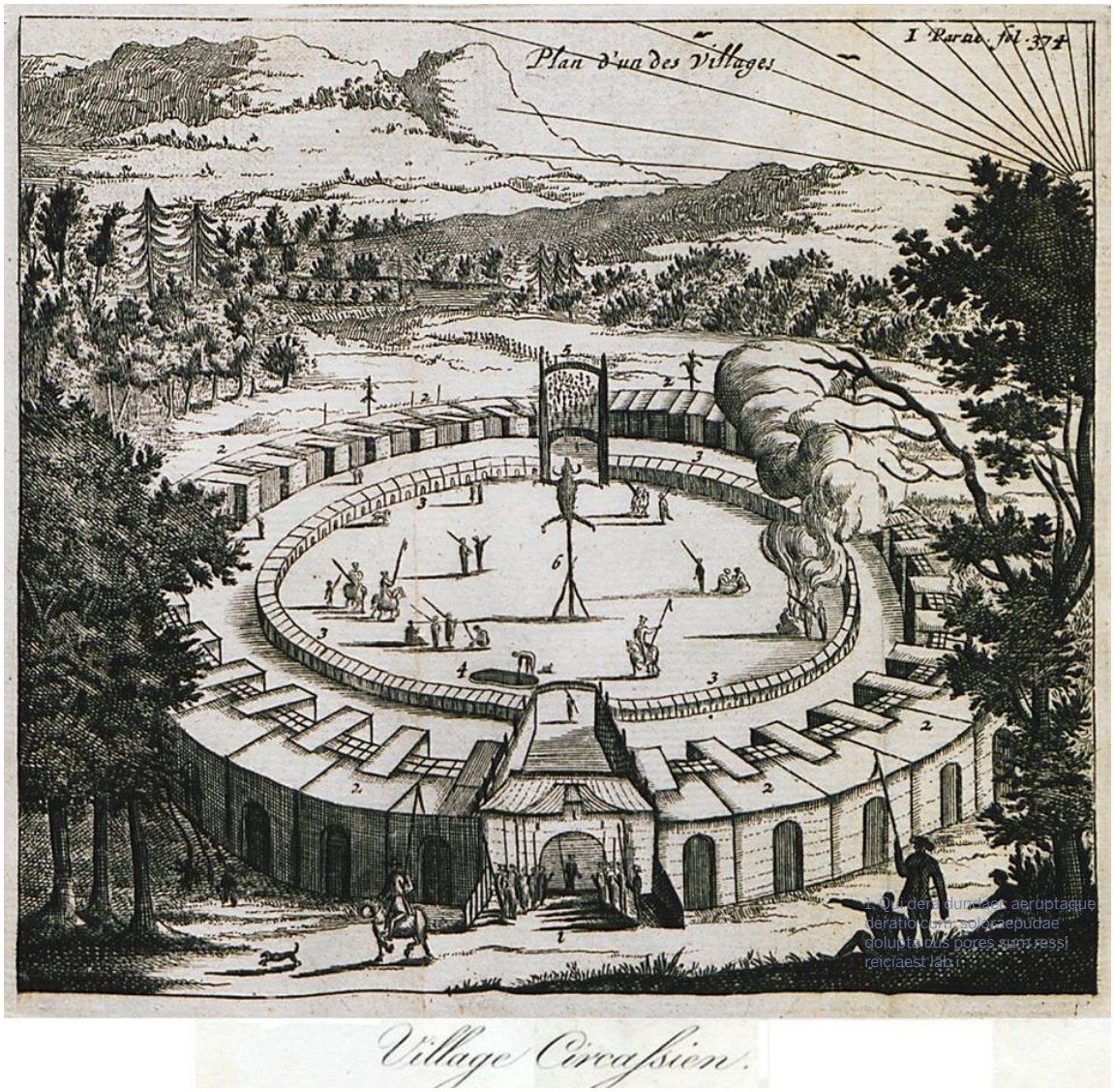


Figure 3.
Illustrations of a round Circassian village drawn by 'Jean Baptiste Tavernier'
(French traveller), 1632 [Source: Fontana, 2017]

Archaeology at Russian Academy of Sciences analysed aerial photographs and found about 200 ancient settlements built on a single architectural plan, expectedly before the 17th century.[5] The Turkish traveller Evliya Chelebi (1611-1682) also described these round settlements during the first half of the 17th century and wrote:

"Circassians organised their settlements in the treeless terrain as a camp, or a circle; building houses made of combining wattle of reed branches, hazel and other light- weight materials and walls of clay."[6]

However, this circular settlement was a rare form of the Circassian commune, and was only familiar to the eastern tribe "the Kabardians". This limited use might be a result of the predominance of animal husbandry over agriculture at the end of the 13th century, and the political situation

5.
ibid.

6.
Evliya Çelebi and Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall, Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa, in the 17th Century.

which allowed the Kabardians only to build their communes in open fields, as reported by the French traveller Jean de Luc: [7]

"Most of the Circassian settlements were located in the woods. Only the eastern of the Adyghe tribes – the Kabardians – dared to settle in the open areas, building their settlements in the form of a circle or a quadrangle".

A Circassian village was built for several hundred people as a single project, on a single foundation. Everyone farmed. The main economic activities were pastoral and agricultural in nature. The land and livestock ownership remained collective. Forests were rich and widely spread; therefore, they provided more than enough wood for fuel and construction. The Circassians rarely built in stone, but preferred wood and thatch. The forests also provided means of isolation for the farmsteads keeping them surrounded by groves of walnut trees.[8] Evliya Chelebi described the Circassian settlements as a group of ten houses which is surrounded by hedges of wattle as a fence of a castle.[9] According to Tavernier and Chelebi, the formula of the life in those Circassian settlements could be described as the following:[10]

"It is a small municipality of several houses (20 to 50). The appearance of each house should imply the ability of the owner to co-exist in a large society and not standing out in front of the neighbours financially. The principles of justice and strength were reflected in the construction of settlements, cohabitation, and total material equality. This led to the fact that issues relating to the development of the social order laid on the shoulders of men, who all together provided leadership and military associations. This in turn led to the martial way of life for all those living in the community".

Furthermore, the motion of people had a significant influence on the nature of the village's structure. For safety reasons, Circassian settlements were unstable and needed to be transferred from one place to another. This semi-nomadic way of life and preparedness for immediate move both limited the building of permanent and more developed circular communes. The Circassians needed to build less developed Circassian Houses "Wuna" that can be disassembled and taken away when necessary. Therefore, walls are not connected tightly to the roof corners, and joints are only coated with clay from outside. This necessary building skill is indirectly mentioned in a modern ironic Kabarda saying: "Who does not know what to do [that]? It is like disassembling and reassembling the house". [11]

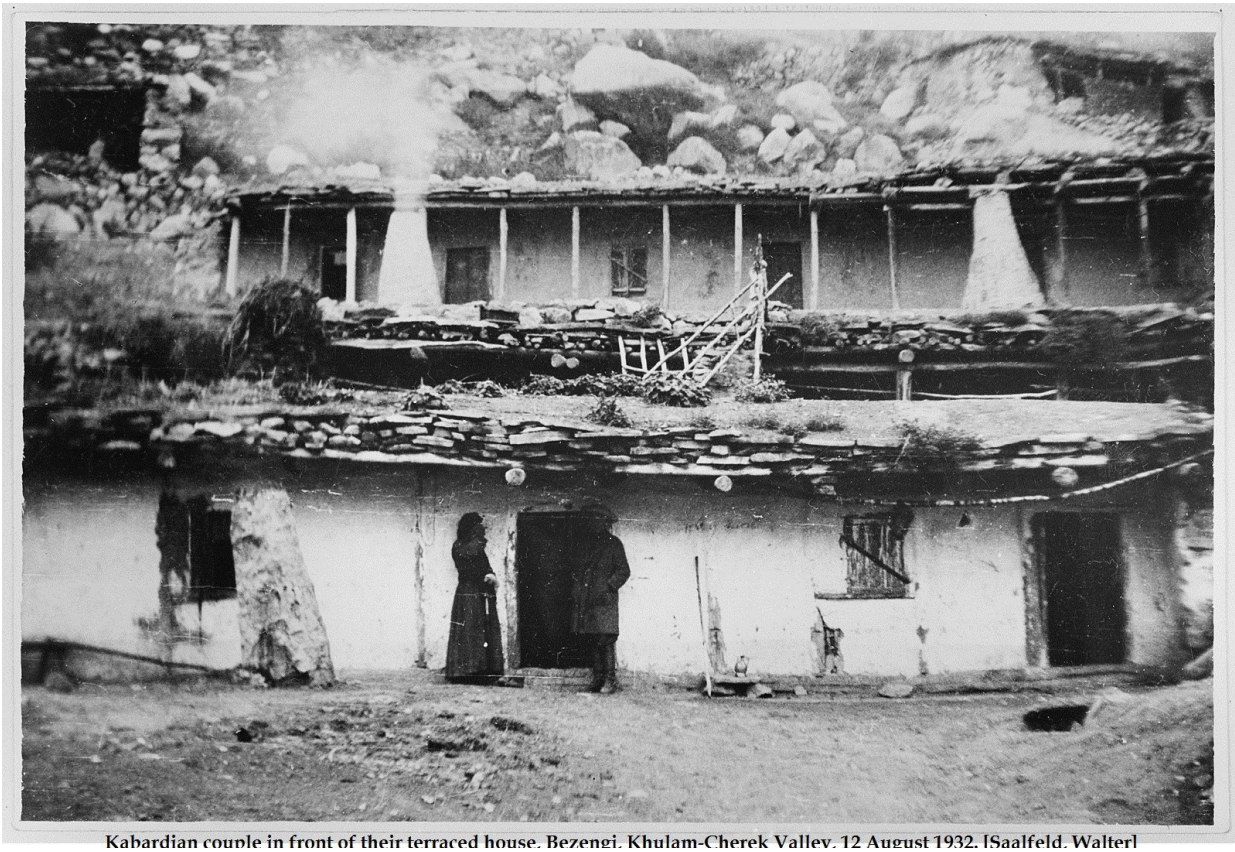
7. Orquasov, Materials of the Circassians Homes' Architecture.

8. Paul B. Henze, The North Caucasus: Russia's Long Struggle to Subdue the Circassians (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1990).

9. Kadir I. Natho. Circassian History (Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation, 2009).

10. Veniamin Kubishev, Dwellings and Villages of the Caucasus Nations (Moscow: Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, 1982).

11. Natho, Circassian History.



Kabardian couple in front of their terraced house. Bezengi, Khulam-Cherek Valley. 12 August 1932. [Saalfeld, Walter]

Figure 4.
Photos of the Kabardian inhabitants of the village of Bezengi, Khulam-Cherek Valley Kabarda. Captured by 'Walter Saalfeld' on August 12, 932 (German Alpine Expedition; 30 July-7 October 1932)

Similarly, the shape of the Circassian traditional house, the "Wuna", had evolved through time considering changes in the construction process and materials (Figure 4). In general, the Circassian family lived in an estate consisting of three separate courtyards and a number of dwellings enclosed by a wattle fence. The number of dwellings inside one fence could be up to 15, depending on the number of married adults living with the family. The complex included three separate courtyards: 1) clean or residential which contains the dwellings, 2) a farmyard which produces grains, and 3) a vegetable garden behind the house which would contain outbuildings for livestock, stables and food storage. The courtyard close to the main family building would have a guest house to show respect for the guest. Given that, culturally the host is responsible for the safety of the guest. James Stanislaus Bell (1797-1858) was part of the British "delegates" that toured the Circassian land in the 1830s wrote in his book "The Diaries of Stay in Circassia": [12]

"Half-way up one of these hills, about a mile and a half from the beach, stands the cot I now occupy. I have an exquisite view from the green plateau in front, of the hills on either side, a part of the valley and the

12.
James Stanislaus Bell. Journal of a Residence in Circassia During the Years 1837, 1838, and 1839 – Vol. 2 (London: E. Moxon, 1840).

delta of the Subesh, and the sea beyond. The cottage itself, like all in this neighbourhood, has a thatched roof, resting upon walls of strong stakes, hurdled and plastered, inside and out, with clay washed with a white, or rather pale green colour. The floor, too, is of clay and is carefully swept, and repeatedly watered during the course of the day. At one end of the room (the house consists of but one room, with a stable adjoining) is the fireplace, —a circular inde tuee in the floor, over which is placed a semi-circular funnel, of about five feet diameter at the base, through which the smoke escapes. At one side of this fir-place is a small raised divan, well-cushioned, for my accommodation; and the fire is constantly heaped with great billets of oak, which at present is very agreeable, as this is the rainy month, and, for the last two days, we have had torrents of rain, accompanied with a high cold wind. This accounts for my writing so much.....”

The walls of the dwellings were built of clay. However, there had been some cases of stone construction in the late 19th century by the surviving villagers after the genocide. Bell described the clay walls of the dwellings: “The clay walls of my house are still quite damp, and I think that the construction of it may have been the occupation which prevented my noble host from waiting upon me sooner”. [13]

13.
ibid.

While the traditional Circassian dwelling with the long rectangle layout is the most common form built by the Circassians in the Caucasus and the villages in the Middle East, they still showed several variations and elements. The rectangle dwelling could be either a single chamber or a one-roll of multi-chambers. Similar to the circular communes, the entrance of the dwelling would be open to the outside; this quality of easy access is believed to be a sign of hospitality and openness. Each dwelling was to have at least one chamber for women. [14]

14.
Kubishev, Dwellings and Villages of the Caucasus Nations.

The shape and materials of the roof were connected to natural and climatic conditions of the area rather than the materials of the walls. In the areas of heavy rainfall, the roof was made steeper; while, in the areas of less rain, the roof would be flat or sloping. Both peaked roof and flat roof were made of reed and straw. The roof rested on special strong beams that were connected, but not so tightly, to the walls, to provide possible detachment in the future when disassembling the house. The peaked roof had a truss construction, with a hook at the top end of the branches connecting the beams with the columns they support.

Most dwellings would have a porch extending along its front, which was

considered an indispensable part of the dwelling, just like its walls and roof. The porch and the dwelling were designed as one single entity. The front porch underlined the entrances of the chambers. It was connected to both the roof and the floor which would be elevated with several stair steps on edge. The ending of the columns holding the porch would have a decorative ending of the shape of the letter "T" (Figure 5).
The fire in the home, especially in the wintertime, had to be maintained around the clock; therefore, the fireplaces were constructed with the dwelling units. The fireplaces were located at one end of each chamber.[15] The roof above the fireplace was arranged with an exhaust opening: a "semi-circular funnel" located above the floor at a distance of about 1.5 metres to drain the smoke and went up to end high with a cone-shaped pipe on the roof. The kitchen and the eating area also contained a fireplace.

15. Kubishev, Dwellings and Villages of the Caucasus Nations.

The fireplace, the wood construction of the roof, the rectangular layout and the general structure of the village are ethnically defining elements of the Circassian vernacular architecture. These elements are present in the collected work of artists and media. The above-discussed elements of the Circassian architecture represent a tangible form of culture that was created through intangible skills and traditions and was, passed on from one generation to the other. They had also emigrated with Circassians from the Caucasus to the Middle East. Despite the evolvement of the Circassian dwellings based on local context and political forms, many unique elements of the Circassian architecture remained present across times (Figure 6).

After the end of the Circassian-Russian Wars, the remaining Circassians built several villages in the Caucasus. The houses remained populated from the end of the 19th century until the 1930s. The dwellings in those villages took a steadier form with the ceasing of the constant movement for safety. The formulation of the house represented patriarchal family life as it had the possibility for expansion. The earthling flat roof became more common than before. However, the conical flew over the hearth, and the porch extending along its front remained present in many dwellings.[16] Tsarist Russia had a policy of eliminating the traditional Circassian "Aul". This policy was taken to the extreme by the Soviets during a collectivisation campaign in the 1930s. Nearly all "Aul" were abolished; their inhabitants moved to large villages where they were integrated with other ethnic groups like the Ossetians. [17] In the Soviet Union, Circassians built houses

16. Kubishev, Dwellings and Villages of the Caucasus Nations.

17. Richmond, The Circassian Genocide.

(Previous page)

Figure 5 & 6.
Photos of the documentation work by architect and professor Kamal Jalouqa in Jordan [Source: Private Files of Professor Kamal Jalouqa]

with some similarities to the "Wuna". However, living in extended family compounds and multi-story dwelling started to emerge.
Circassian refugees in the Middle East have built villages in Jordan, Syria, and Palestine. The architecture of those villages was affected by the local context. In Jordan, for example, when first arrived, Circassians took shelter inside the caves of the old Roman ruins of Amman and Jerash. After feeling safe to settle, they started building villages on the land distributed to them by the Ottomans authorities. During the construction process, they used some of the stones from Roman ruins to layout their settlements. The village layout was influenced by the use of the land in agriculture, and the division process by the Ottomans. The ownership of the land was given to each household (i.e. it was not collective as it used to be in the Caucasus).

Additionally, land-separations (i.e. fences) were used to divide the land into plots and on each plot a house was built. As a result, the Circassian settlement did stand out in the landscape of the region, because their organisations were different from the Arab settlements. The Arab village had a centralised quarter for houses in a compact form and an expansion of the agricultural land outside the village. While the Circassian settlement was divided as a house-plot next to another; each plot included an individual house and the agricultural farm attached to it. Besides, using carts to transport their goods affected the spatial layout of their villages. The roads between the houses were wider than in the other Arab settlements in the region.

As for the formation of the dwelling "Wuna", the rectangular dwelling with a roll of several rooms open to the outside was the main layout of the Circassian houses in all areas. The roofs of the houses built in both Syria and Palestine were steeper; while the roofs of the houses built in the desert of Jordan were mostly flat. The building materials remained to be mud and clay in Jordan; however, stone dwellings started to appear in Syria and Palestine using local stones available in the areas they settled in. Further influences of local construction can be seen through the details of windows and the use of brick materials in roofs. Moreover, the wattle fencing and the "T" decoration were present in many photos of Circassian houses in those various locations.
As identified, the key elements of the Circassian dwelling "Adyghe Wuna" gave an insight into what had and had not changed in the building traditions in each period and each location. Generally, similar trends in the building traditions can be seen in the Circassian houses in Syria, Palestine

and Jordan. Building traditions of the Circassians remained expressive of the Circassian culture, despite the immigration of the Circassians into a different environmental and cultural context in the diaspora. The unique traditional characteristics of the Circassian architecture remained present. The ethnographically defined elements of the "Adyghe Wuna", such as the fireplace, the wood construction of the roof, the rectangular layout and the general structure of the village, were present in Circassian villages in the Middle East. In summary, it is possible to say that the origins of the building forms and construction methods of the Circassian settlements in the Middle East lay in the Caucasus (Figure 7).

Figure 7.
Photos of the ruins of Circassian houses in Bereka, the only remaining Circassian village in the Golan Heights of Syria [Source: Private Files of Architect Amjad Alkoud]

Knowledge in Motion

As mentioned in the introduction, it is assumed that the different forms of vernacular architecture are direct correspondence to their local environments.[18] Therefore, understanding the design means analysing the location. However, the Circassian vernacular architecture had presented a sense of out of place adaptivity. In order to understand the vernacular architecture by the Circassian, another approach has to be taken. I tried to combine both tangible architectural space and intangible elements of culture and history with the aims of demonstrating contextualised information and capturing details that are hard to determine through the traditional process of analysis. In the context of migration, the Circassians did not have a collective vision to preserve their architectural heritage.

18. Heath. Vernacular Architecture and Regional Design.

The Circassian architecture was a distinguished cultural practice that evolved organically from everyday human practices and interactions with the surrounding environment. The Circassian vernacular architecture (i.e. "Wuna") was found in a different context from its original terrain due to what was passed on from one generation to the next in relation to collective technical know-how, high construction skills, social culture of collaboration in the building process, and collective culture of space ownership (Figure 8). These results show that the adaptation of intangible knowledge was a key component of the Circassian vernacular architecture. This case study shows the importance of drawing a better representation of the vernacular architecture based on the knowledge of what is culturally generative and dynamic rather than environmentally determined only; such an approach would have a positive impact on how architects understand the vernacular production of space today. While the challenges of migration and cultural or climate change will further transform the architectural spaces into spaces of physical and social exchange between different parts of the world, this will encourage architects to consider how to exchange knowledge between various locations and various cultures. The transformation of the Circassian vernacular architecture proves that vernacular knowledge can be borrowed and appropriated from one location to another. When adopted in new contexts, old techniques can merge and mutate to generate new ones that break out of the narrative of locality and identity.

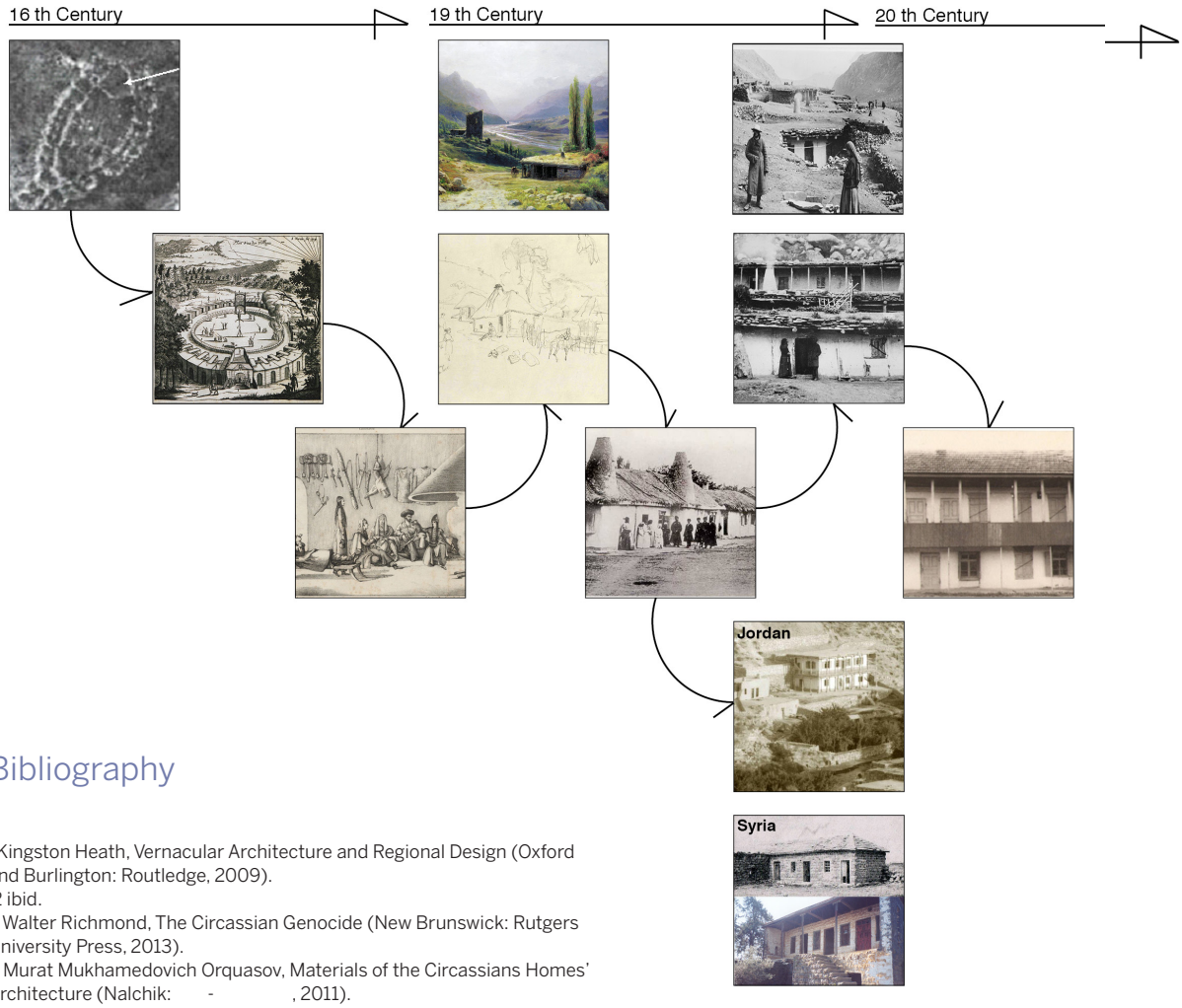


Figure 8.
Illustrative timeline of the progression of the Circassian Architecture

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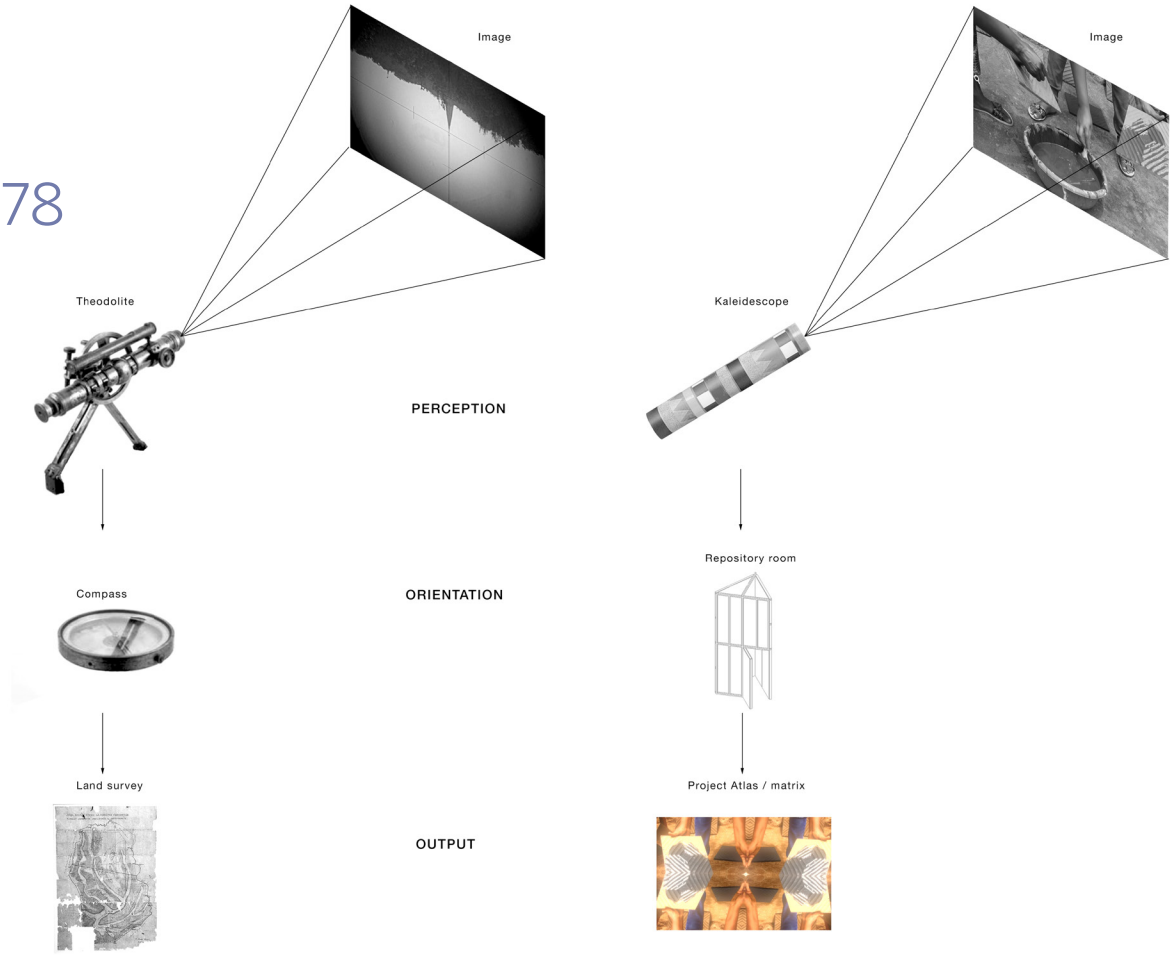


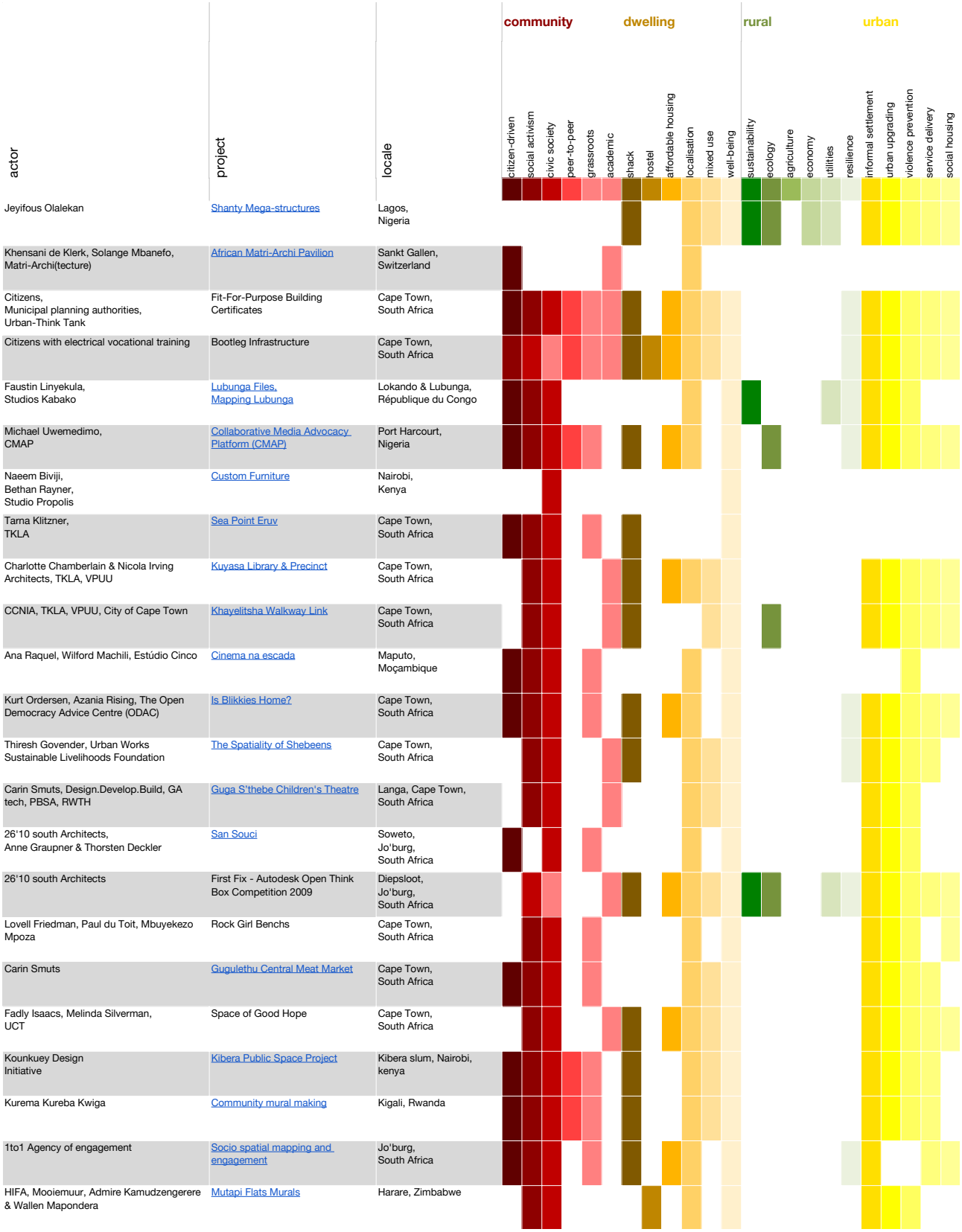
Project by Hunguta Collective

(Maxwell Mutanda, Khensani de Klerk, Tomà Berlanda, Nerea Amorós Elorduy, Scott Lloyd, Sunniva Viking, Tao Klitzner) originally displayed at the 2019 Oslo Triennale

A disruptive (de)growth repository of spatial practices across sub-Saharan Africa

By challenging the reading of the South – established through the current divisive lens of the colonial theodolite – the project presents a living atlas, an immersive learning tool that subverts established modes of conceiving degrowth as an easily transported, translated or imposed paradigm. A manifesto for sustainability: The inherent flux and malleability of the Global South needs new perspectives and new mediums to advance the dynamic archive of spatial knowledge and truly express the transferable values of its emerging practices.

Is (de)growth an absolute term?


community
dwelling
rural
urban
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locale
citizen-driven
social activism
civic society
peer-to-peer
grassroots
academic
shack
hostel
affordable housing
localisation
mixed use
well-being
sustainability
ecology
agriculture
economy
utilities
resilience
informal settlement
urban upgrading
violence prevention
service delivery
social housing
Jeyifous Olalekan
Shanty Mega-structures
Lagos, Nigeria
Khensani de Klerk, Solange Mbanefo, Matri-Archi(tecture)
African Matri-Archi Pavilion
Sankt Gallen, Switzerland
Citizens, Municipal planning authorities, Urban-Think Tank
Fit-For-Purpose Building Certificates
Cape Town, South Africa
Citizens with electrical vocational training
Bootleg Infrastructure
Cape Town, South Africa
Faustin Linyekula, Studios Kabako
Lubunga Files, Mapping Lubunga
Lokando & Lubunga, République du Congo
Michael Uwemedimo, CMAP
Collaborative Media Advocacy Platform (CMAP)
Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Naeem Biviji, Bethan Rayner, Studio Propolis
Custom Furniture
Nairobi, Kenya
Tarna Klitzner, TKLA
Sea Point Eruv
Cape Town, South Africa
Charlotte Chamberlain & Nicola Irving Architects, TKLA, VPUU
Kuyasa Library & Precinct
Cape Town, South Africa
CCNIA, TKLA, VPUU, City of Cape Town
Khayelitsha Walkway Link
Cape Town, South Africa
Ana Raquel, Wilford Machili, Estúdio Cinco
Cinema na escada
Maputo, Moçambique
Kurt Ordersen, Azania Rising, The Open Democracy Advice Centre (ODAC)
Is Blikkies Home?
Cape Town, South Africa
Thiresh Govender, Urban Works Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation
The Spatiality of Shebeens
Cape Town, South Africa
Carin Smuts, Design.Develop.Build, GA tech, PBSA, RWTH
Guga S'thebe Children's Theatre
Langa, Cape Town, South Africa
26'10 south Architects, Anne Graupner & Thorsten Deckler
San Souci
Soweto, Jo'burg, South Africa
26'10 south Architects
First Fix - Autodesk Open Think Box Competition 2009
Diepsloot, Jo'burg, South Africa
Lovell Friedman, Paul du Toit, Mbuyekezo Mpoza
Rock Girl Benchs
Cape Town, South Africa
Carin Smuts
Gugulethu Central Meat Market
Cape Town, South Africa
Fadly Isaacs, Melinda Silverman, UCT
Space of Good Hope
Cape Town, South Africa
Kounkuey Design Initiative
Kibera Public Space Project
Kibera slum, Nairobi, kenya
Kurema Kureba Kwiga
Community mural making
Kigali, Rwanda
1to1 Agency of engagement
Socio spatial mapping and engagement
Jo'burg, South Africa
HIFA, Mooiemuur, Admire Kamudzengerere & Wallen Mapondera
Mutapi Flats Murals
Harare, Zimbabwe

land
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technology
environment
migration
education
art
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land value capture
public
local authority
world heritage site
land rights
development rights
land apportionment
informal trading
building regulations
ustainable development goals
participatory
network
informal
speculative
flexible
information
mobile
indigenous
hacking
documentation
adaptive reuse
practical engagement
open source
climate
inequality
gender equality
feasibility
apartheid
refugee
long-term
interstitial
human rights
temporary
rehabilitation
advocacy
learning environment
craftsmanship
on-site training
research
pedagogy
artisanship
street art
performance
facilities
innovation
transformation

society

Space conditions, and is in turn conditioned by, society and culture (...) architecture can create the potential for social action and activity. (Peter Barber Architects)

community

The Anthropocene – human activity's dominant influence on climate and the environment – echoes in the innovative spatial practices of Sub-Saharan Africa through the dominance of community activity and engagement. Activist, civic and private interventions all navigate the complexities of community networks defined more by citizenry than regulatory authorities.

citizen-driven
Spatial practices that represent the full and/or direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by any intervention.

social activism
Socio-spatial practices that advocate intentional action with the goal of bringing about inclusionary, participatory social change.

civic society
The aggregate of individuals and organizations that voluntarily or systemically work with the aim to represent the needs of a local community independent of governmental or corporate agencies.

peer-to-peer
The social process of networking shared skills and knowledge that are distributed in a community.

grassroots
The participatory actions by members of the group(s) within specific districts, region, or community to collectively effect change from the local level.

academic
Any community-based spatial practice that is influenced by theoretical interest and/or relating to education and research.

dwelling

The Sub-Saharan African dwelling traditionally described the social hierarchy and cultural norms in communities. The built environment is not only the venue for private desire but also for public expression and innovation. The promise and challenges of the twenty-first century highlight the conflicts presented by the inherited structures of colonialism, post-independence aspirations and indigenous values.

shack
A small dwelling often built using reclaimed, repurposed or refuse material that is endemic to poor urban settlements.

hostel
A relic of colonialism, common in major African cities, that was designed as single occupancy, single-sex lodgings for male migrant workers.

affordable housing
A formal dwelling that is priced to meet an adequate household expenditure allocation.

localisation
Emphasis on adapting practices to harness local materials, social capital and community members to develop socially engaged built environments.

mixed use
Spatial practices that provide residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and/or entertainment uses in a community. This variety of flexible types of land uses incorporates multi-family, mixed-use as well as mixed-income housing development.

well-being
A holistic approach to the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy in the built environment taking into consideration physica or ecological conditions, such as access to healthy food, as well as other social and psychologica factors.

settlement

Africa's urban population has been growing at a very high rate, i.e. from about 27% in 1950 to 40% in 2015 and projected to reach 60% by 2050. (UNDESA)

rural

Rural communities are particularly underserved in regards to service alloaction and infrastructural investment. The socio-economic needs of rural communities require developing sustainable communities that take into consideration local materials, environmental impact and accessibility into design, planning, and building. Spatial practices therefore are defined by lack of infrastructure, remoteness and a reliance on autonomous systems.

sustainability
Rural sustainability is the constant development, maintenance and improvement of robust built environments that respond to the long-term economic, social, cultural, political and environmental requirements of rural communities.

ecology
Managed conservation defined by the symbiotic relationship between natural resources, rural spatial practices and community members.

small-scale agriculture
Strategies against the exploitation of land-intensive agricultural or natural resource based development.

economy
Spatial practices in a rural community have the potential to contribute significantly to sustainable development and economic growth.

utilities
Rural distributed utilities that consider decentralized power generation or autonomous off-grid systems that produce and consume electric energy or water without any connection to external systems.

resilience
Resilience, as defined by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) is the ability of communities to absorb, recover and prepare for future shocks (economic, environmental, social institutional).

urban

Urban centres generate economic mobility and social opportunties. The demise of rural subsistence and urban ambitions in the later half of the C20, have resulted in Sub-Saharan cities growing at an unprecedented rate. Globally, more people live in urban than rural areas. In 2018, about 55 per cent of the world's population was urban, compared with only 30 per cent in 1950.

informal settlement
Informal, spontaneous improvised/ low-income communities lacking in adequate basic social and civil services that usually develops on the periphery of urban settlements.

urban upgrading
Improvement to the physyical structures, public spaces, and basic services in low-income urban communities that includes but is not limited to responses to the challenges of providing health, nutrition, education and economic opportunities to the community.

violence prevention
A comprehensive social intervention designed to improve the spatial quality and experience of members of the group(s) in a community by developing safe, sustainable and integrated strategies.

service delivery
Addressing the inadequate distribution and maintenance of basic resources like water, electricity, sanitation infrastructure, land, and housing within a community.

social housing
Government allocated housing. Every day 40,000 people move to a city in Africa, adding to the existing deficit for new and affordable urban housing.

gentrification
Increased commodity value of urban environments due to direct investment in urban develoment. Generally resulting in the rise of rental and sales prices, and financially destabilising remaining communites.

land tenure

The indigenous African concept of land conflicted sharply with the Eurocentric view (...) Not a commodity that can be sold or exchanged on the market. (Carlos Nunes Silva)

land

Africa, all 30,221 million km2 of its land, is greater in size than the entire continental United States, China, the Indian sub-continent, Japan and most of Europe combined. In spite of this, economic and environmental factors have concentrated populations in large urban agglomerations. The battle for land is hard-fought both in highly densified urban areas and isolated rural settlements.

mapping
Mapping is the use of cartographic based methods to visualise data on human settlements. These practices include community driven demographic enumeration and settlement mapping using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to survey community data.

access
An easement is a non-possessory right-of-way onto the real property of another without ownership. This use and/or passage of land is the basis of the right to access of communities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

land value capture (LVC)
Land Value Capture is a policy approach that enables communities to recover and reinvest land value increases that result from public investment and other government actions. Also known as "value sharing," it's rooted in the notion that public action should generate public benefit (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy).

public
The use and access to public land is exacerbated by the history of colonialism, in particular the dispossession of communal land rights. In this regard, communities in Sub-Saharan Africa are in conflict with state as well as private organisations.

local authority
A formal local authority is a governmental organization responsible for the good of the population in regards to public services and infrastructure.

world heritage site
A landmark or area deemed as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific ar Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is legally protected by internation treaties and recognised as having cultural, historical, scientific or other form of significance.

legality

Land ownership in Sub-Saharan Africa is defined by many official and informal systems. Beyond just ordinary leasehold or freehold tenure, most countries have a legacy of indigenous communal land rights that have been amalgamated into colonial land appropriation misdeeds as well as continuing post-colonial land related displacement, discrimination and containment of communities. Today many work to develop access to basic services, land, tenure rights and affordable housing though various spatial practices and restorative justice.

land rights
The rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to land, either individually or collectively provides land and resource-related rights that are fundamental in securing land with cultural or religious significance as well as self-determination, identity, and economic benefits.

development rights
Commercial development rights are a legal mechanism for managing land-use planning and zoning for a more pre-defined urban growth and land conservation model used by local authorities, that often come into conflict with the needs and desires of local communities. Dev. rights can also be awarded to registered occupiers of land.

land apportionment
Colonial Land Acts were segregationist measures that governed land allocation and acquisition prior to independence in African states. These laws discriminated against indigenous communities in urban settlements, by designated towns as white areas and delegated the majority black citizens to faraway townships.

informal trading
Small-scale traders utilising markets, public spaces and streets to trade. Municipal by-laws in progressive cites recognise that such trade practices promote social and economic development.

building regulations
Building Regulations are a set of legal guidelines that determine the form and standards of the built environment. However, such regulations are unreachable to the vast majority of populations in Sub-Saharan Africa, causing a rethink as to how more appropriate regulations could be developed to serve the lived experience.

sustainable development goa
In 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development officially came into force. The SDGs universally appl to all countries to mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that "no one is left behind."

connectivity

No [human] is an island entire of itself; every [human] is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. (John Donne)

network

By definition an ecosystem is a network of interconnecting and interacting parts. Spatial practices on the continent are therefore usually a sequence of (in)-voluntary aggregations of responses to the challenges of providing shelter, health, nutrition, education and economic opportunities to the community. The apparently causal relationship between parts, results in the intense exploration and limits of the built environment.

participatory
Community-based participatory spatial practices emphasize co-production, communal learning, collaborative inquiry, and experimentation through design.

network
Network interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa disrupt the built environment using inter-connected socio-spatial practices to accelerate change or improve conditions in a community.

informal
Informal networks of vernacular spatial practices, that develop in an unregulated environment, present the embedded knowledge of appropriate built structures within a community.

speculative
Speculative interventions are the basis for experimentation in community-oriented design practices.

flexible
Disruptive spatial practices are often defined by their ability to interact and adapt quickly and often to change.

information
Community-led qualitative and quantitative information gathering networks enables communities to leverage their own resources, to develop appropriate solutions and also to better position themselves to solicit institutional engagement from local municipal authorities.

technology

Modernisation – in particular, the advent of mobile telephony – as apposed to traditional indigenous technologiesis redefinig "spatiality" in Sub-Saharan Africa. Whetherin isolated rural areas or low-income urban centres, technology is shaping the built environment thorugh new relational possibilities.

mobile
Advances in mobile technology enables consistent, standardised data collection in surveying, mapping & GIS fieldwork, as well as quick and effective communication of ideas with social media.

indigenous
Local and indigenous knowledge refers to the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings (UNESCO).

urban hacking
Disruptive spatial practices that utilise vernacular technology to adapt prevalent standards through ad hoc techniques that are better suited to the incremental development of low-income urban settlements.

documentation
Information gathered either for academic research, broadcast or digital media or construction documentation that becomes the principle form of evidence to advocate for participatory spatial justice.

adaptive reuse
Adaptive reuse refers to the process of reusing an existing built structure for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for.

practical engagement
Participatory action in communitie whereby residents work together to map their assets, identify needs, mobilize resources and set in motion a community-based development process (Global Communities).

demography

Sub-Saharan Africa hosts more than 26 per cent of the world's refugee population, over 18 million people. (UNHCR)

environment

The socio-political context has a direct influence on the development of the built environment. Political power is increasingly consolidated in the urban centres causing new ecologies. Demographically, Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with a youthful population – 77% of Africans are younger than thirty-five years old – which corresponds with the need for healthcare and education facilities.

open source
Project or system developed to intentionally produce open content and forms of open collaboration within a community.

climate
The consequences of climate change, such as environmental migration, soil eroision, disaster displacement and droughts, have a direct impact on human settlement.

inequality
Participatory spatial practices can target the uneven distribution and access of resources due to social, economic and wealth inequality in a community.

gender equality
Disruptive spatial practices can promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and address the physical and emotional consequences of gender-based violence (GBV).

feasibility
The socio-economic realities of Sub-Saharan Africa determine that long-term and financial feasibility is the objective of proposed projects or systems.

apartheid
The history of forced displacemer and spatial segregation in South Africa is not in question – apartheid, after all, is the Afrikaans word for separateness.

migration

The built environment is essential to improving the lives of nearly a quarter of the world's displaced population living in Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly in isolated containment in so-called temporary environments. On the continent disruptive spatial practices are influenced and defined by migration.

refugee
The refugee population reflects the global changes in urbanisation, both in terms of the regions from which refugees originate and the areas to which they move in countries of asylum. Most refugees are now based in urban areas (UNHCR).

long-term
It is currently estimated that approximately 40% of refugees displaced by conflict worldwide have been living in exile for more than 20 years (www.mappingrefugeespaces.com).

interstitial
The intermediate open spaces situated between built structures in a settlement.

human rights
The UN define human rights as the rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.

temporary
Refugee camps in Eastern Africa are rarely dismantled, with the majority of the planned 'temporary' solutions resulting in permanent settlements (www.mappingrefugeespaces.com).

rehabilitation
Rehabilitation is the spatial practi of enhancing community through the repair, alteration, and additior to the built environment while selectively preserving original features that convey historical, cultural, or architectural values.

culture

Learning from the existing landscape is a way of being revolutionary for an architect (...) in a more tolerant way; that is, to question how we look at things. (Venturi Scott Brown)

education

Participatory action in institutionalised learning environments, or informal peer-to-peer skills exchange and casual community-based knowledge production influence the spatial practices and development of Sub-Saharan Africa. Education is a non-western, non-stereotypical communal combination of indigenous knowledge systems, experimental regulatory frameworks and innovative international practices.

advocacy
Participatory projects and systems that work together with communities to end the injustice of poverty through their public support for and/or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

learning environment
A humanitarian-led or NGO-managed formal/informal early childhood development centre (ECDC) or pre-primary school in a refugee community.

craftsmanship
The skills and knowledge of traditional craftsmanship that can be passed onto others, particularly within a community is impacted by competition from large multinational corporations or environmental and climatic pressures.

on-site training
On-site training maximises participatory community engagement in a development project to increase up-skilliing, community acceptance, and local salary distribution.

research
Design research methodology applies intellectual ideas – drawings, models and analysis – with community-engaged cultural insights to develop new spatial practices.

pedagogy
Spatial practices in Sub-Saharan Africa challenge conventional knowledge systems with reflective teaching practices as well as community-based critical thinking and design methods.

art

Art and cultural practices in Sub-Saharan Africa based in contemporary and indigenous traditions determine community driven spatial practices that emphasis development through creative enterprise and cultural capital. Often these transformative public interventions in low-income, under-resourced communities present the first steps towards improvements to the built environment.

artisanship
The cultural heritage of traditional artisanship can be used to produce projects or systems and develop into an economically viable cottage industry.

street art
Visual art created and displayed in public locations in a community is artwork that fosters social change in urban settlements.

performance
Physical artistic practices, such as dance or music, promote well-being and security by engaging the community and activating spaces.

facilities
Public spaces designated to accommodate the creative economy promote gender equality, youth engagement and safe spaces in a community.

innovation
New media can become unconventional assets to drive innovative spatial practices.

transformation
Visual art is an accessible, cost effective strategy to engender change, participatory action or aesthetics transformation in a community's built environment.

southern eco systems

References

1. Kaleidoscope drawing: “Disruptive (De)Growth Repository Of Southern Ecosystems”, Hunguta, Matthew Dalziel, Interrobang, 2019
2. Kaleidoscope photograph: “Disruptive (De)Growth Repository Of Southern Ecosystems”, Hunguta, The Library, The National Museum. Photo: OAT / Istvan Virag, 2019


more than 3 floors?
segregated disposal for recycling
bin bags.
timber metal.
concrete tile
Paving brick
5kg
access to entrance
to be spaced every 120m
1524
Soil & pebbles

Manifesto of Maintenance

Marwa Shykhon

Following the resignation of president Mubarak after the 2011 revolution, Egyptians famously gathered to clean up the mess of the revolt.[1] The occupation of the streets and subsequent acts of maintenance signified a care for the communal, expressive of a new sense of citizenship and ownership. As the government regained control, the state also used acts of maintenance and urban beautification to assert and visually legitimise its ownership and rule.[2] Predominantly in downtown Cairo, the epicentre of the revolution, pavements were frequently swept, paved and repaved, building facades repainted, vehicular traffic organised, important buildings securitised and street-vendors repeatedly relocated. Tahrir square and its surroundings remained a battleground for conflicting claims to power long after the fall of Mubarak, not so much due to a lingering moment of revolutionary fervour as due to the ongoing condition of Cairene streets caught between overwhelming informality and an increasingly controlling state urban presence. Within this context, acts of urban repair and maintenance, at different scales, are repeatedly expressive of politico-urban contestation.

Maintenance, often juxtaposed against an over-celebrated discourse of 'innovation' that is associated with over-consumption and eco-deterioration, has received renewed attention as a theoretical framework through which our world could be understood. Within the disciplines of technoscience and urban studies, maintenance is proposed as a possible 'ethos, methodology, and a political cause,' offering practical routes towards widespread human-betterment in an increasingly cynical, vulnerable and threatening world.[3] In Rethinking Repair, Stephen Jackson establishes a clear relationship between actions of repair (in technological work) and a morality or an 'ethic of care,' engaging a feminist political tradition seminally expressed in Joan Tronto's Moral Boundaries. For Jackson, the concept of care 'brings the worlds of action and meaning back together and reconnects the necessary work of maintenance with the forms of attachment that so often [...] sustain it.'[4] Thinking through care allows us to perceive and examine the human relationships that underpin the very practical and physical actions of maintenance and repair so essential to sustaining human life. We can then imagine how a renewed focus on maintenance may have wider socio-political implications.

However, care also carries altruistic connotations, in the actions themselves or their surrounding discourses, that enable actions viewed within its scope, such as maintenance, to be uncritically perceived as beneficial or well-intentioned. Jackson's 'we care because we care' is an example for this.

1. The Guardian, 'Tahrir Square Cleanup', Feb 2011

2. Omar Nagati and Beth Stryker, Archiving the City in Flux: Cairo's Shifting Landscape since the January 25th Revolution (Cairo: Cluster, 2013); Omar Nagati and Beth Stryker, Street Vendors and the Contestation of Public Space (CLUSTER, 2019)

3. Nigel Thrift, 'But Malice Aforethought: Cities and the Natural History of Hatred', Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 30.2 (2005), pp. 133–50

Tom Hall and Robin James Smith, 'Care and Repair and the Politics of Urban Kindness', Sociology, 49.1 (2015)

4. Steven J. Jackson, 'Rethinking Repair', in Media Technologies, p. 232

Similarly, on urban care, Nigel Thrift, Stephen Graham, Tom Hall and Robin Smith celebrate actions of city-maintenance as a potential 'infrastructure of kindness' that could constitute 'the good city.'[5] Necessarily, several researchers have called for a more critical examination of both care and maintenance.[6] In the management, distribution and enactment of urban care, the responsibility to care affords the care-giver decision-making powers to which the care-receiver is subject. Uma Narayan exemplifies this in colonial care discourses that 'function ideologically, to justify or conceal relationships of power and domination.' [7] Together these researchers ask: who is caring for whom? Is the care wanted? And what is the relationship between the care-givers and care-receivers? In urban maintenance, I ask: What is being repaired? Why is this wall repainted but not that one? Where is not maintained? And, who benefits from the good condition of certain parts of the urban fabric?

Taking seriously the proposition that urban care may be politically significant, whilst accounting for embedded 'asymmetrical power relations,' this article will use the concept of care to examine actions of urban maintenance in Cairo.[8] I draw on data collected from June to December 2018, through field research, photographic documentation, and participant observation in Cairo. I first focus on the maintenance practice of the Egyptian government, in whose jurisdiction and responsibility urban maintenance supposedly lies. The article will present a snapshot of such maintenance activity and resulting conditions in Cairo, showing it to be severely differentiated depending on where in the city you are. The severity of the maintenance disparity, disproportionate expenditure and the manner in which excessive maintenance is carried out in certain locations suggests that maintenance is consistently enacted in one place at the expense of another according to a specific logic. As such, where the city is well-maintained may not simply represent an innocuously successful instance of state urban care. Both a wider contextual understanding of government's urban development trends and a specific interrogation of maintenance actions are required to understand their politico-urban effects. An examination of government's urban mega projects, predominantly large-scale new constructions, and their role in performing legitimate statehood is then used to contextualise government's urban maintenance. Through its distribution and pursued aesthetics that appeal to state wealth and strength, government's urban maintenance is shown to exhibit mega-project qualities, suggesting a similarly performative role.

5. Hall and Smith, p. 3-18

6. Uma Narayan, 'Colonialism and Its Others: Considerations on Rights and Care Discourses', Hypatia, 10.2 (1995), pp. 133–40;

Aryn Martin, Natasha Myers, and Ana Viseu, 'The Politics of Care in Technoscience', Social Studies of Science, 45.5 (2015), pp. 625–41;

Michelle Murphy, 'Unsettling Care: Troubling Transnational Itineraries of Care in Feminist Health Practices', Social Studies of Science, 45.5 (2015), pp. 717–37;

Jessica Barnes, 'States of Maintenance: Power, Politics, and Egypt's Irrigation Infrastructure', Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 35.1 (2017), pp. 146–64

7. Narayan, p.13

8. Martin et al., p.627

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Figure 1.
Routine maintenance at Salah Salem: Sweeping. Authors own.

Altogether, this article attempts to unravel the politics embedded in the everyday actions of state urban maintenance in Cairo. It argues that urban maintenance, beyond being a form of care that can be successful to varying degrees, is a powerful form of urban intervention. In a more speculative turn, this article proposes tapping into the power of urban maintenance, exploring a shift in where its responsibility lies as a tool of negotiation for those typically marginalised from the city's development narratives. Besides the government, urban maintenance is also practiced daily by a variety of actors, from individuals to community collectives, in order to compensate for the government's shortcomings. It is this popular urban maintenance that more closely resembles the forms of successful urban care that answers to the needs of urban dwellers. A reflective conclusion imagines the possible emancipatory urban politics that a critical and sensitive focus on maintenance may point to, beyond either its celebration as an indispensable sustainer of urban life, or a romantic allusion to a political 'ethic of care' or an 'infrastructure of kindness.' [9]

9.
Tronto, Joan C., Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care (New York: Routledge, 1993); Thrift, pp. 133–50; Hall and Smith, pp. 3-18

Maintenance, Neglect and Care?

On my daily route to work, between 7:30am and 9:30am, I would take the Salah Salem highway into the historic quarters of Cairo. The eastern portion of this road, between Cairo International Airport and the Citadel, was immaculately well-kept.[10] Without fail, men in blue uniforms meticulously swept dust, moving comfortably alongside speeding traffic (Fig.1). The gardeners, in green uniform, worked the islands between lanes. They seemed to always be there – even if it was only one, sleeping on the grass. And finally, there were garbage-men in orange. Often found pushing green, wheeled bins, or sitting on the back of garbage trucks, they routinely picked up stray litter from one of Cairo's cleanest streets. Alongside these daily efforts of taming dust, waste and weed, was a continual painting and repainting, operating at longer temporal cycles. Cairo's curbs are often painted in monochromatic stripes, whilst metal railings that enclose public space or border flyovers are often green. Across the city, it does not take long for dust and sand to mute the colours into a dull distinction between black and white stripe, and a green that is normally chipped, incomplete, or verging on grey. At Salah Salem, however, these colours were always vivid and freshly painted (Fig.2). When travelling particularly early, I would spot the painters crouched along the curb or at the edge of a flyover.

10.
The portion of the study-area farthest east is called el-Orouba. I will refer to the whole road as Salah Salem for simplicity.

One day, I found the curb adjacent to the Military College newly enhanced. A new, secondary curbing now ran directly in front of the original, and was composed of alternately coloured, LED-lit plastic 'curb stones.' I witnessed the testing of different coloured light combinations along a 10-20 metre stretch, before a combination of red, yellow and blue was settled upon, followed by a 20-metre gap, then another portion of special curbing in red and white. I could continue describing the extent of diligent attention this road has received. Traffic markings were always clear; the asphalt was even; the pavements were evenly tiled; the bus stops were freshly painted; and the signage and street lamps were in good condition.

Such complete urban maintenance is almost comical when juxtaposed with the typical condition of Cairene public space. On my journey from Salah Salem into the historic quarters a gradual decline in maintenance was visible, culminating in starkly different conditions at my destination,

Figure 2:
Routine maintenance at Salah Salem: Painting. Authors own

al-Khalifah, in the heart of historic Cairo. The municipal servicemen operated here too. However, whilst a highway, significantly less exposed to wear-and-tear than the vibrant popular quarter, had a serviceman every thirty metres, only one or two could be seen completing a token job in al-Khalifah, with far from enough manpower, consistency or real investment to maintain a safe and well-kept environment. Rubbish piled up frequently and fallen buildings and debris caused obstructions. Poor, uneven paving posed safety hazards for vehicle users and pedestrians, and resulted in significant inaccessibility for the elderly. Traffic was unregulated and there was certainly no regular painting of curbs and other urban elements. Many of these conditions have been highlighted in technical reports by independent international agencies, such as UNESCO, who frequently describe the critical need for upgrading open spaces, solid-waste management and infrastructure in the historic quarters.[11] The described condition of al-Khalifah is far closer to the norm of Cairo. The Planning [in] Justice report by TADAMUN concluded that 'spending on local development programs in Cairo is insufficient to meet the city's needs [...for] road maintenance, lighting, environmental needs, and other municipal duties.' [12]

11. AKTC, Cairo: Urban Regeneration in the Darb Al-Ahmar District, 2005; UNESCO, Urban Regeneration Project for Historic Cairo: Final Report on the Activities, November 2014

12. TADAMUN, Planning [in] Justice: Spatial Analysis for Urban Cairo, 2018, p.29

However, perhaps more characteristic of Cairo is precisely the condition of contrast between Salah Salem and al-Khalifa. Constantly varying degrees of policing, building-violation regulation, service provision and urban maintenance can be witnessed across the city. Such discrepancy is reflected in the allocation of local budgets for 'urban development' by the Ministry of Finance. TADAMUN's report showed higher expenditures in Cairo's more affluent neighbourhoods, paying 'little attention to [...] the needs of inhabitants.' [13] For example, al-Nozha, one of the wealthier and better serviced neighbourhoods, received 42.1 EGP per capita funding for urban development, almost 10 times as much as the significantly poorer Ain Shams, which received a mere 4.7 EGP despite comparable built-up areas.[14] The condition of contrast is not only between different neighbourhoods but is often experienced across short distances; exemplified in Historic Cairo, whose levels of governmental neglect compares to that of informal settlements[15], whilst its UNESCO world heritage status attracts significant government and international interest in specific sites. A repeating oscillation between freshly renovated monuments and tourist paths to piles of garbage, ruins or dilapidated housing, is thus the norm.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. David Sims, Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City out of Control, p.46

Whilst appearing to fulfil state responsibilities of care for public space, the relatively extreme maintenance at Salah Salem alongside such proximate discrepancy in urban conditions, suggests a process at work that is very far from the 'under-observed infrastructure of kindness that cities cannot do without.'[16] Attempting to afford them the 'systematic and sustained attention that they surely deserve,' Graham and Thrift almost romanticise processes of repair and maintenance by suggesting that they are 'the means by which the constant decay of the world is held off' and 'a vital source of variation, improvisation and innovation.'[17] Whilst it is true in an abstract sense, a more critical understanding of these actions is essential if we are to imagine 'an affirmative micropolitics [...that] inject[s] more kindness and compassion into everyday interaction.'[18] Although they do acknowledge the ways in which urban care and repair are rendered 'less efficacious' by politics[19], Hall and Smith rightly posit that, rather than being 'a kindness, a resource, a good,' it 'might be a political activity in itself,' reiterating a feminist political tradition.[20] In this sense, urban maintenance is not necessarily an inherent kindness, compassion or care. In fact, it may be selfish as 'no one cares for the street in quite that sense. The street doesn't want to be clean.' [21] In this respect, Joan Tronto's seminal argument for a political, feminist 'ethics of care,' upon which recent discourse relating maintenance to care is based, offers some clarity on what we may then consider care. She describes care as a practice comprised of four stages: caring about, taking care of, caring-giving, and care-receiving.[22] Altogether these stages should work towards a care defined as 'a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible.'[23] What is essential here is that the 'caring about' is ultimately directed towards a bettering of collective life in response to 'the existence of a need,' and that the 'care-received' addresses the identified need.[24]

Maintenance at Salah Salem could be considered 'a care' for the physical road, but detached from how this care relates to people, its real value and indeed potential to underpin a politics of care, becomes contested. Through Tronto's understanding, actions of urban repair and maintenance may only be considered a form of care worthy of attention and political cause when they actually serve people, which is a condition Graham and Thrift often assume to be the case. The exceptional concentration and consistency of routine maintenance along Salah Salem, however, is excessive compared to what is needed, particularly within a context

16. Thrift, p. 133–50; Hall and Smith, p.6

17. Stephen Graham, and Nigel Thrift, 'Out of Order: Understanding Repair and Maintenance', p. 1, 6

18. Ibid, p.144

19. Ibid, p.17

20. Hall and Smith, p. 12, 13

21. Ibid.

22. Tronto, Moral Boundaries

23. Tronto, p.103, my emphasis

24. Tronto, p.106

of predominant neglect and when need is assessed at city-scale. In fact, even at Salah Salem the users' needs remain unmet. Whilst the described maintenance does prevent deterioration into inoperability, other aspects of the necessary function of the highway are neglected compared to the over-fulfilment of physical maintenance. For example, real solutions for safe pedestrian passage across the highway, and safe vehicular parking stops are inadequate. Its potential as a crucial public transportation artery is 'forgotten,' and it has not been equipped with solutions to evade the traffic congestion, bottlenecks and confusing routes that plague Cairo's roads.[25] The concentration of maintenance activity along the highway does not translate into relative improvement in service-provision, and key user-difficulties remain unaddressed. Whilst Salah Salem presents a tremendous display of actions that seem like state urban care, which may superficially be considered Tronto's third stage of 'care-giving,' these actions lack the essential stage of 'care-receiving,' where real urban needs are ameliorated through the actions of care. The extent of discrepancy between what is needed and what is practiced seems to signify more than simply a misplaced or insufficient effort of government to fulfil urban care; it seems that an entirely different logic is operating the distribution of urban maintenance. Through contextualising urban maintenance within the wider politico-urban condition, the following sections will begin to examine this logic and its function.

25. El-Khateeb, Mohamed, 'Cairo's Forgotten Arterial Roads: The Case of Salah Salem Street', 2018

Contextualising Urban Maintenance: Performative Mega-Projects

Taking a broader look at formal state urbanism, it becomes clear that it is overwhelmingly unconcerned with maintenance. Spending half of the national Built Environment budget for the fiscal year 2015/16 on New Cities alone, the government predominantly focuses on new constructions.[26] In Cairo, this proportion increases to a massive 70%, despite only 6% of Cairo's population residing in New Cities.[27] Such disproportionate investment corresponds with a longstanding, systematic prioritisation of heavily advertised 'mega-projects.' The New Administrative Capital, the al-Alamein Resort and the New Suez Canal are today's generation of massive new constructions whose predecessors were the likes of 'Nasser's high dam, Sadat's new desert cities or land reclamation[s] [that] have been self-

26. Yehia Shawkat, and Amira Khalil, The Built Environment Budget, FY 2015/16: An Analysis of Spatial Justice in Egypt, June 2016

27. Shawkat and Khalil, pp. 24, 27

contained projects and failed to provide the larger society with needed modernization, investment and reform.' [28] These projects often directly benefit regime personnel through lucrative land sales and construction contracts, relying on and further promoting a network of clientelist politics.[29] The scathing critique of new cities for their poor quality and failure to reach population quotas and ameliorate high population densities in Cairo, or the dubious economic benefits of the New Suez Canal, go unmentioned, doing little to deter their pursuit.[30]

Instead, in a clear preoccupation with what they can offer by way of advertising state-productivity, the most impressive projects are pursued and heavily advertised. The New Administrative Capital, alone receiving 5% of the national built environment budget,[31] will supposedly house, 'the country's largest mosque,' 'tallest minaret and church steeple,' 'a presidential palace eight times bigger than the Whitehouse,' and 'Africa's tallest tower.'[32] These massive projects are to be achieved at phenomenal, impressive speeds. The New Suez Canal was famously completed in 'lightning speed,' delivering a three-year project in just one.[33] Highlighting such preoccupation with expressing powerful state-productivity rather than real provision, a montage of birds-eye film footage of construction sites at the al-Alamein development was aired on national television by the Ministry of Housing (MoH), accompanied by melodramatic music.[34] Furthermore, an obsession with hyper nationalist-modernist aesthetics or displays of wealth characterise these projects. Government websites display photographs of newly-constructed American-dream-esque housing stacked around manicured greenery, referencing an urban planning style of low densities, modern materiality and strict land-zoning deemed by officials more civilised and conducive of 'an ideal, sophisticated society.'[35] Similarly, an overtly ornamented, finished interior of the new 'mega-mosque' was used as a backdrop for a 'president-hard-at-work' photoshoot, in contrast to the surrounding desert construction-sites.[36] Regardless of real benefits, these projects are highly advertised on national television and social media, often physically display state propaganda, and are publicly celebrated as 'national triumph[s]', 'achiev[ing] dignity, justice and stability [for] the Egyptian people.' [37] More than simply feigning state-provision, they channel national resources towards projects that 'speak for themselves,'[38] through an impressive scale, speed and aesthetic that disseminate the image of a powerfully productive, modern and, ultimately, legitimate state.

28. W.J.Dorman, 'The Politics of Neglect: The Egyptian State in Cairo, 1974-98', p.262

29. Ibrahim, Arwa, 'State Power and the Modes of Everyday Resistance: A Comparative Study of Urban Renewal in Historic Marketplaces in Cairo and Istanbul'; Nicholas Simcik Arese, 'Urbanism as Craft: Practicing Informality and Property in Cairo's Gated Suburbs, from Theft to Virtue', p. 620–37

30. Sims, Understanding Cairo; TADAMUN, 'Hidden Cost of Displacement', 2015; BBC, 'Egypt Launches Suez Canal Expansion', 6 August 2015

31. Shawkat and Khalil, p.7

32. The National, 'Egypt's El-Sisi to Open New Mega Mosque and Cathedral on Sunday', The National, 5 January 2019; Bennett, Oliver, 'Why Egypt Is Building a Brand New Mega Capital City', The Independent, 10 September 2018

33. Hanan Mohamed, 'Q&A about the New Suez Canal after 3 Years of Inauguration', Egypt Today, 9 August 2018; Jared Malsin, 'Egypt to Open New Improved Suez Canal', Time Magazine, 31 July 2015

34. Ministry of Housing (MoH), Al-Alamein Television Advertisement (Dream Television Channel, 2018)

35. NUCA, Undated, "New Urban Communities Authority."; ISDF, Developing Informal Settlements and Developing Humans

36. Ahram Online, 2018, "Egypt's SisiVisits New Projects at New Administrative Capital."

37. BBC, 'Egypt Launches Suez Canal Expansion', 6 August 2015

38. Manar Nour, 2019, "El-Sisi and the TenYear Challenge."

Performative Urban Maintenance

Urban maintenance in Cairo is thus crucially positioned within a wider context of fetishised, sensationalised urbanism used overtly as a language for state legitimacy, and it too, in the manner it is performed, takes on this role. With extreme maintenance differentiation being Cairo's status quo, it is clear that concerns independent of urban needs or rights steer maintenance distribution. So much, that the local urban development budget is described as being allocated according to 'political capital and bargaining power.' [39] Within this context, Salah Salem can be understood as a natural target for over-maintenance. The eastern half of the highway is a prominent route that connects Cairo International Airport to downtown Cairo, the city's political heart and location of key ministries, Abdeen Palace and the Supreme Court. It is thus a frequent travel route for state politicians and foreign diplomats. It is this portion of the road that receives the above-mentioned over-maintenance, whilst the other half is noticeably less-maintained. The exceptional maintenance of eastern Salah Salem extends to adjacent buildings, the majority of which are state-owned, belonging to various ministries and administrations (Fig.3).

39. TADAMUN, Planning [in] Justice

Indeed, across Cairo, state-affiliated areas are carefully taken care of, including government buildings, municipal headquarters, the presidential palace and even the private property of important state-officials.[40] At a most basic level, enacting maintenance is a form of spatial intervention that testifies to the actor's ability and right to intervene in a property, signifying a degree of control and ownership. A fresh coat of paint on Salah Salem's curbs, applied by uniformed servicemen, publicly exhibits heightened state interest that itself signifies state presence and control, within a condition of predominant neglect. Jessica Barnes describes a similar process in the government's inconsistent handling of informal outtakes during irrigation-canal maintenance, which not only 'mak[es] the infrastructure function smoothly but mak[es] it function a certain way.'[41] Government's ability to enforce its decision and control through maintenance renders the practice itself a 'restating [of] their control over the system.' [42] Indeed, this highway is remarkably free from the informal activity notoriously described by state officials as 'uncivilised,' yet otherwise characterises Cairo (Fig.4). Over-maintenance at Salah Salem thus exemplifies a distribution of maintenance that prioritises the needs

40. Sarah Ben Nefissa, 'The Crisis of Local Administration and the Refusal of Urban Citizenship', in Cairo Contested: Governance, Urban Space, and Global Modernity, ed. by Diane Singerman, p.177-198

41. Barnes, p.154

42. Ibid.

Figure 3.
Maintenance extending to adjacent buildings. Authors own

of politically powerful individuals and the areas of the city they use and associate with, whilst expressing and enacting the power of government to successfully care for its property.

Over-maintenance at Salah Salem does more than simply fulfil maintenance excessively at a particular site of interest, but also pursues an aesthetic of state power and wealth akin to the grandiosity of the mega-projects, at a road that is particularly dense with state-affiliated properties. The very image of extreme cleanliness, relative to most of the city, resonates with a cultural perception of cleanliness as civilised, moral and modern.[43] The buildings lining the highway are dressed in ostentatious façade treatments

43.
Philip Jamie Furniss, 'Metaphors of Waste: Several Ways of Seeing "Development" and Cairo's Garbage Collectors'

of gold ornamentation and elaborate detailing, or spans of modern glass and metal-cladding; and always freshly painted or cleaned. These aesthetics collaborate with the image of power in securitisation, which may itself be seen as a form of preventative maintenance, underpinned by a real power to exert violence. The buildings are protected from public penetration through a multitude of physical gestures: concrete walls and barbed wire, security kiosks and watchtowers housing armed officers, freestanding barricades, concrete blocks and guarded stretches of empty pavement.

Figure 4:
Informal Cairo, vilified as uncivilised. Authors own.

Furthermore, a plethora of visual state-propaganda explicitly visually claims and associates the road's image of cleanliness, wealth and power in securitisation with the nation-state. The national flag, the president's face, and murals of the armed forces protecting the country, accompanied by slogans such as 'Egypt first,' are plastered on walls and massive billboards (Fig.5). These billboards are quickly lucratively leased for private advertisement. Most commonly, images of luxurious architectural renders advertise a better life to be found in unbuilt real-estate, in the new desert cities that are themselves an agent of state-propaganda. A particular private-developer campaign displays the slogan 'we don't sleep on our promises, we build them overnight' on a background of scaffolding and concrete formwork (Fig.6)— a rhetoric which, idealising claims of fast and massive new constructions, eerily echoes that of the state. The real-estate billboards, which densify at Salah Salem, visually reinforce the image of state productivity, construction prowess, and legitimacy pursued through the mega-project propaganda, embedding it throughout the city. Over-maintenance deployed at Salah Salem, thus seems to be intertwined with a care for the 'state' and a stage through which it is performed, working within a logic of urbanism oriented towards the same goal. At such a prominent route, this image works its way into the daily lives of thousands.

Whilst government's urban maintenance appears to be a fulfilment of state responsibilities, it exhibits many of the mega-project qualities in its specific shape, speed, and aesthetics, which appeal to state strength and wealth. Urban care in Cairo becomes itself performative, making the city a stage through which legitimate statehood may be performed and perceived. Whilst the mega-projects are larger, more expensive, and perhaps more successful urban propaganda tools, the distribution of maintenance according to this logic is perhaps more powerful in shaping the existing fabric and displaying the statehood advertised in discursive propaganda to the masses in the everyday life of the city. Occurring in place of real statehood and governance, it is perhaps an inevitable and essential part of the urban work of regime-maintenance.

(Opposite top)

Figure 5.
Billboards bearing the national slogan: 'Egypt First'. Authors own.

(Opposite bottom)

Figure 6.
Private real-estate advertising echoing state rhetoric. Authors own

Manifesto Maintenance: Concluding Thoughts

I return here to the recent manifesto-like calls that frame urban maintenance as a care or kindness, demanding it receives renewed attention. To remedy the extreme differentiation in urban conditions across Cairo, such that it could perhaps constitute an 'infrastructure of kindness,' one could suggest that 'caring about' should be better-directed, through improved mechanisms to communicate local needs upwards. Or that 'care-receiving' should be better-monitored, such that care-receivers can hold care-givers accountable. Or perhaps I could argue that urban maintenance should not be viewed as care at all. We could focus on the rights of citizens to urban maintenance, rendering maintenance a matter of justice. However, these options demand fundamental shifts in the government: to decentralise decision-making, to allow local government real political authority, genuine political accountability, and to uphold citizenship-based rights. In a post failed-revolutionary context, where rights-demanding discourses of nation-state democracies have become largely futile, this seems unlikely. It is perhaps sufficient to recognise the political significance of overlooked urban maintenance practices, and, through the lens of an architect-activist, explore the possibilities such a realisation may point to. My postulation is, taking the power of urban maintenance and its transformative potential seriously, that a shift in the responsibility of urban care could stimulate political transformation, rather than waiting for political transformation to improve urban care. Beyond seeking to improve urban care as an end in itself, Manifesto Maintenance is a speculative design project that taps into the power dynamics that care is embedded in, seeking to disrupt them.

What if people, the everyday residents of the city, wholly take on the responsibility of urban maintenance? In a city where 'informality rules supreme,' the makings of such a popular capacity already exist.[44] For example, the informal construction of al-Mu'tamidiya Ring Road exit ramp, testifies to a technical, financial and organisational capacity of city-residents when presented with an urgent collective need. [45] All over the city people collaborate to regularly sweep streets and replace lightbulbs that they do not own. And the Zabaleen (the city's informal waste collectors) testify to the larger-scale ability of a community to take on urban responsibility far beyond its own needs, far more efficiently than government, and developing from it a complex and thriving economy.[46]

44.
Sims, Understanding Cairo, p.4

45.
Nagati and Stryker, Archiving the City in Flux, p.56;
Beth Stryker, Omar Nagati, Magda Mostafa, and American University in Cairo, eds., Learning from Cairo: global perspectives and future visions, p.84

46.
Wael Salah Fahmi, 'The Impact of Privatization of Solid Waste Management on the Zabaleen Garbage Collectors of Cairo',p. 155–70;
Furniss, 'Metaphors of Waste'


WE BUILD FIRST
DORRA
ADDRESS EAST
Fully Finished Apartments,
From 121 up to 210 sqm
120 Al Thawra St. Heliopolis
Capital Business Park - Sheikh Zayed City
WE DON'T SLEEP ON PROMISES. WE BUILD THEM OVERNIGHT
16077
DORRA
EGYPT GATE EXPO
للعقار .. معرض واحد
Apartments,
to 210 sqm
120 Al Thawra St. Heliopolis
Capital Business Park - Sheikh Zayed City


WAITING WITH PLEASURE YOUR VISIT IN NEXT MOVE EXHIBITION
18 - 20 OCTOBER 2018
مصر
تحيا
15102

However, whilst informal activity does provide for many urban needs, it is ultimately a communal mechanism to pursue individual interests, and it too is riddled with inequalities.[47] A survival of the fittest condition arises where a reliance on constant negotiation lacks 'even the most basic of controls for the public good,' and individuals are left continually fighting for 'maximum private gain,' at the expense of others.[48] These positive examples, whilst testifying to possibility, do not represent informality's predominant present outcomes. Communal mobilisation tends to occur either in response to the most extreme needs (mobility in the case of al-Mu'tamidiya), or is limited to relatively small-scale routine efforts.

Manifesto Maintenance imagines however a more serious proliferation of self-governed city-maintenance that more self-consciously takes on this responsibility as a form of politics, rather than the more ad-hoc and reactive activities that sustain the city today (Fig.7). The project taps into the power dynamics of urban care, aiming to carve room for local leverage in issues of urban development, from which the masses are so disenfranchised (Fig.8). Where the project's extension of popular maintenance efforts spatially overlap with areas of state interest, such as at prominent highways or heritage buildings, real contestation may appear wherein people may develop new negotiation power (Fig.9). Indeed, the Zabaleen previously withstood eviction attempts by striking from the important role they had taken responsibility for. Cairo 'stank' within a matter of days, and they were able to force the government to temporarily accede to their needs by leveraging the negotiation power of their productivity.[49] Whilst the Zabaleen's capacity to leverage the political power of their own productivity is circumscribed by their financial reliance on it[50], manifesto maintenance explores the possibility of a maintenance economy and culture where urban maintenance is a consistent and secondary responsibility of life for any citizen. It generates its own funds, allowing it to become a political tool for negotiation where it overlaps with state interests. In a slow erosion of government's administrative, organisational and financial means to take on urban maintenance themselves, perhaps people will have carved out a stake for themselves in a city whose development has been solely propelled by the financial and political interests of the elites.

Beyond seeking to improve certain specific conditions and instances of maintenance, such as is often pursued by external actors and foreign development bodies through micro-intervention and upgrading projects, Manifesto Maintenance seeks to position city residents at the very core of urban development propositions. It speculates on the spatio-political

47.
Sims, Understanding Cairo, p.121; Omar Nagati, 'From Multiple Publics To Just Public: Tactical Art And Design Interventions in Post-Revolution Cairene Public Space.' British Council Publication

48.
Sims, Understanding Cairo, p.121

49.
Elena Volpi, and Doaa Abdel Motaal, 'The Zabbalin Community of Muqattam', Cairo Papers in Social Science, 19.4 (1996), p.39; Built Environment Collective (BEC), 2018, Study of the Conditions and the Masterplan for Al- Hattaba, in Al-Khalifah District

50.
Furniss, 'Metaphors of Waste', p.193

outcomes of rooting citizens and citizenship in the very physical processes that sustain the city. In such a proposition, our cities may dramatically change. Cycles of neglect, deterioration, reconstruction and renovation could become more organic, responding to real needs and capacities, rather than a logic of speculative, neo-liberal government. Pockets of deterioration would be natural and unproblematic, simply because no-one needs them enough to continually maintain them (Fig. 10). Muhammed Khalifah, a resident of an area listed for demolition due to perceived levels of deterioration, sings of an intertwined social and physical ecology that is comfortable with the negative, 'in al-Hattaba there is good character, love, forgiveness, and dispute […] a water fountain, a tree and ruins […] every area has it all.' Thrift suggests that such a city that can 'face [its] misanthropy square on,' may be more capable of real care.[51] On the other hand, perhaps over-maintenance continues to occur, where certain spaces are monumentalised in response to practical or felt significance to the communities using the city.

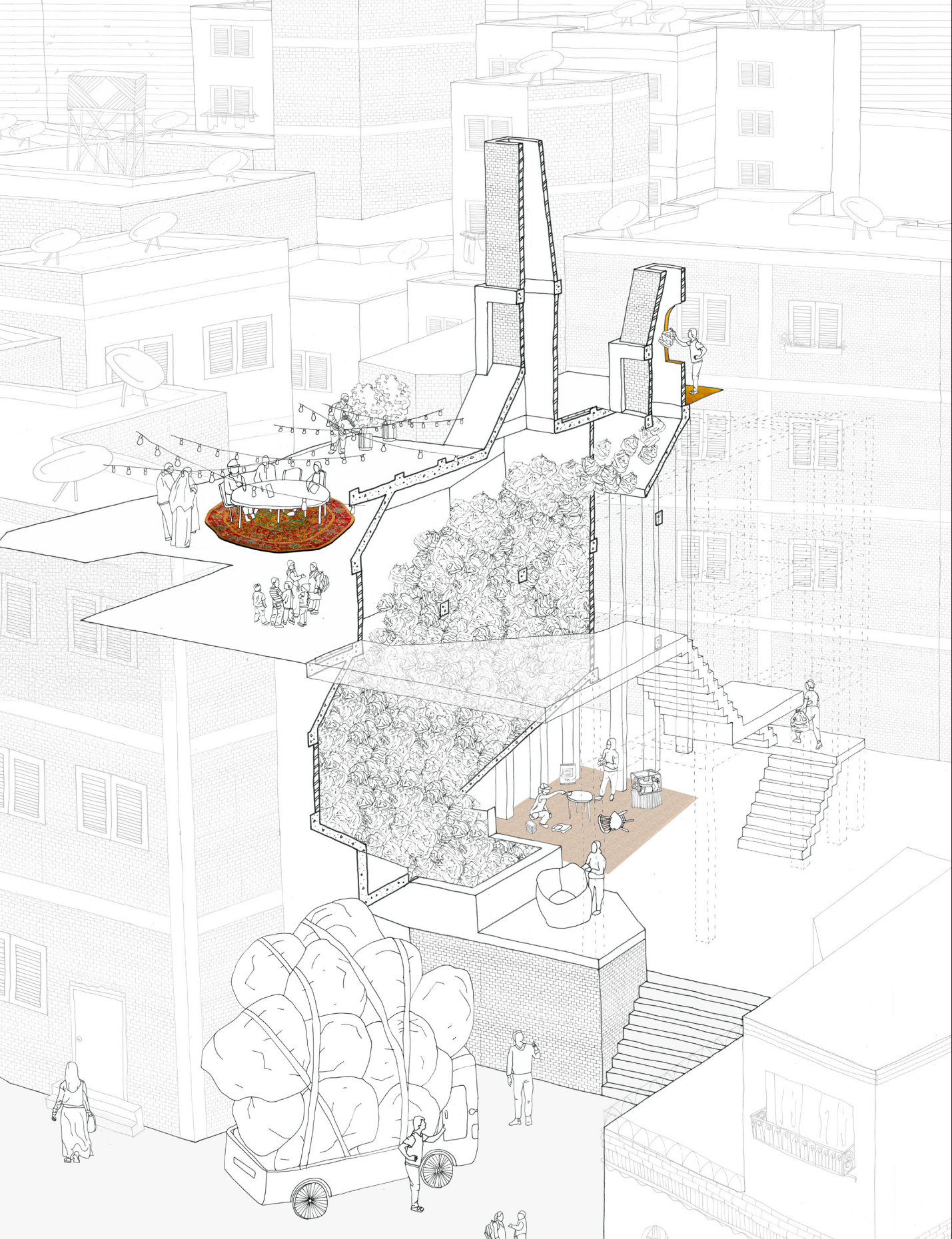
51.
Thrift, p.134

Conceived as a slow encroaching shift in urban responsibilities, developing over decades, the project allows new operative urban norms to develop, ultimately questioning existing urban governance norms (Fig.11). Perhaps a conscious shift in urban responsibilities will alter how we conceive of state duties, and its highly centralised control over urban life, such that needs may be better met. This may fundamentally alter the arrangement of individuals, communities, and society within the nation-state, setting up new relationships between individual citizens, their neighbours and supposedly private and public property. Legal notions of 'private' and 'public' may develop, where varying degrees of ownership may result from the contingent and dynamic relationships of maintaining-citizens, based on their location, use and need of certain urban areas. Within the context of the modern nation-state, such a change would contest the theoretical, undifferentiated body of national citizens as well as the role of the state to which these citizens are affiliated. Indeed, perhaps informal activity's immediacy and closeness to urban needs better positions it to effectively fulfil urban maintenance, and even larger-scale interventions, suggesting a future state whose role is perhaps to support, enable and adjudicate self-provision.

(Next pages)

Figure 7.
The power of maintenance.
Authors own.

Figure 8.
Neighbourhood-scale maintenance infrastructure.
Authors own.



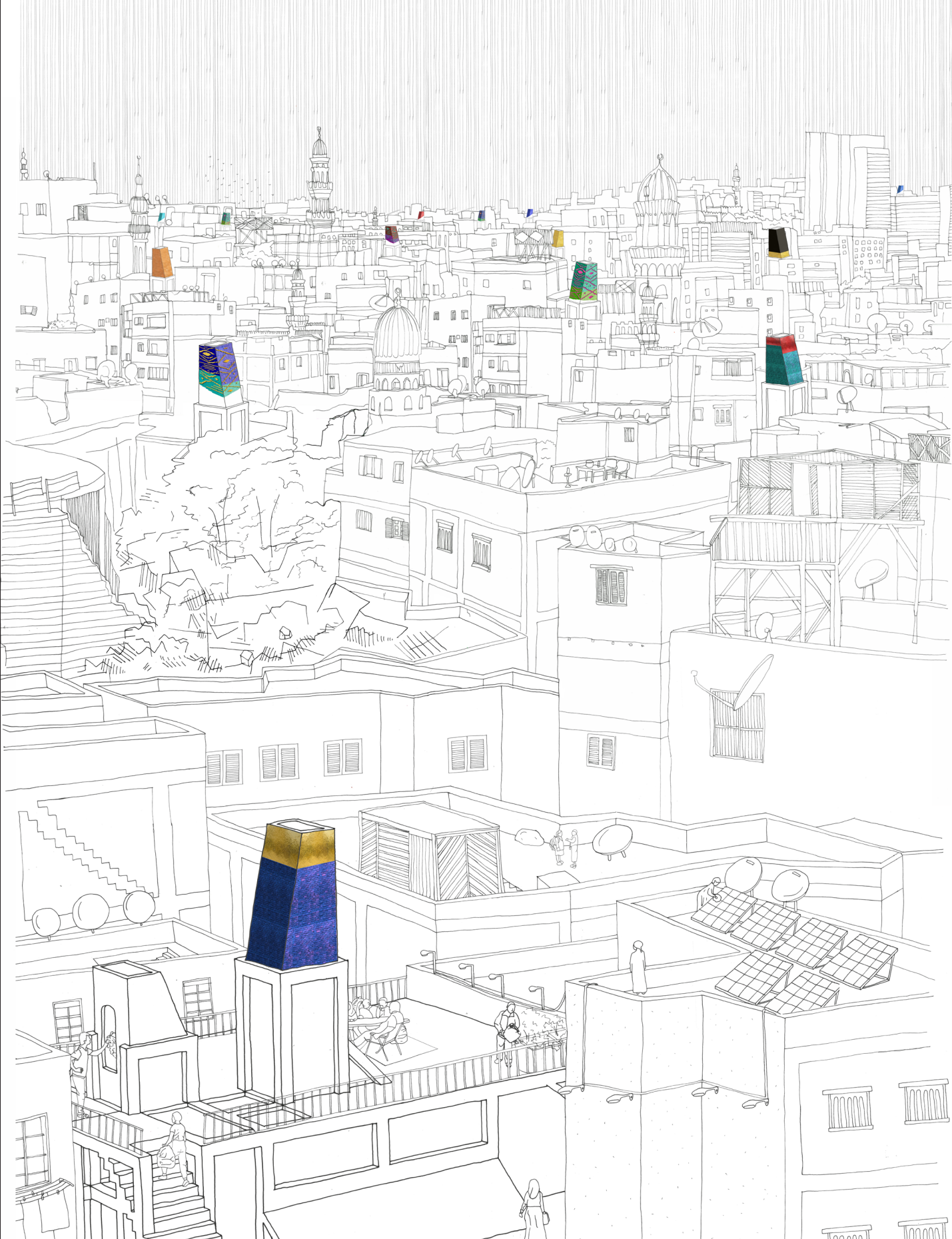


Figure 10.
Proliferation across the city: What does the city become?. Authors own

Figure 11.
Slow encroachment: A long term socio-economic strategy. Authors own.

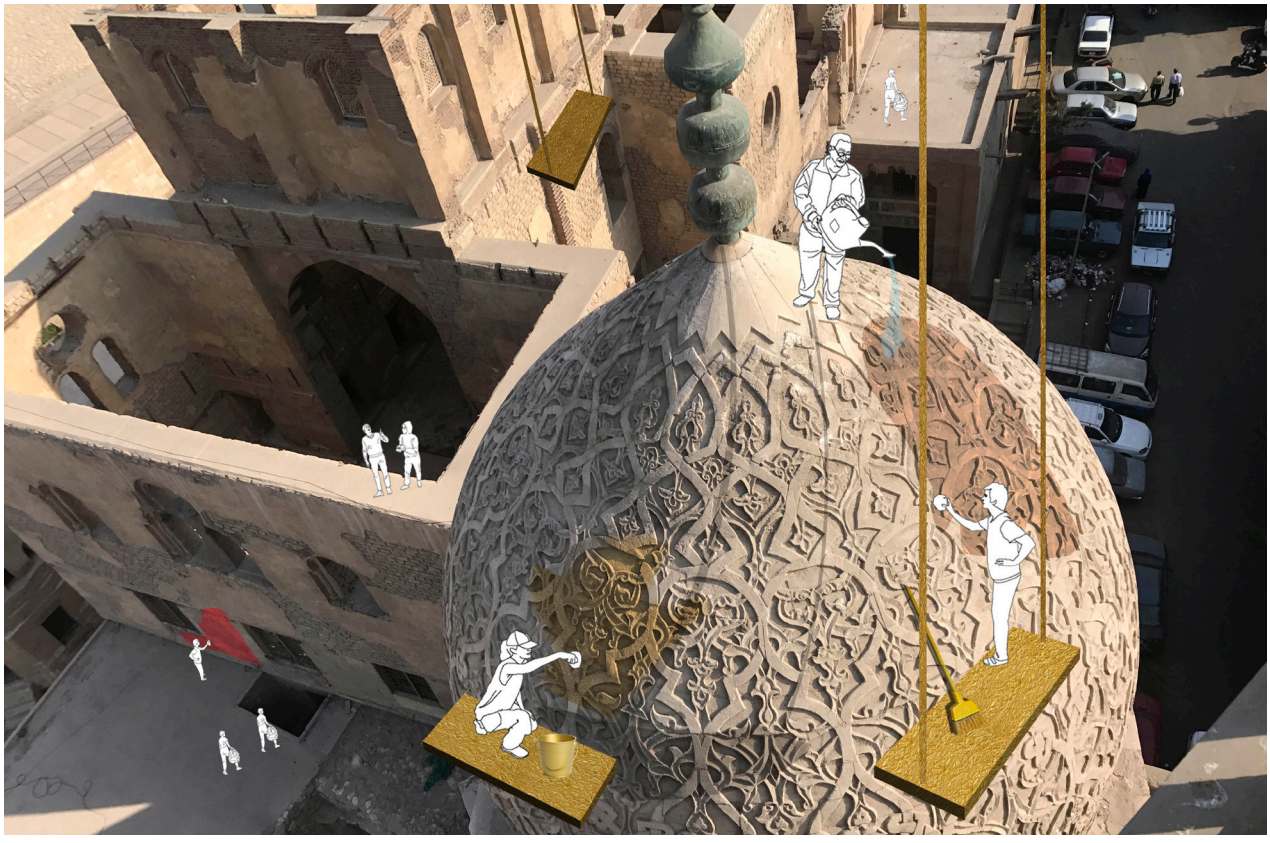
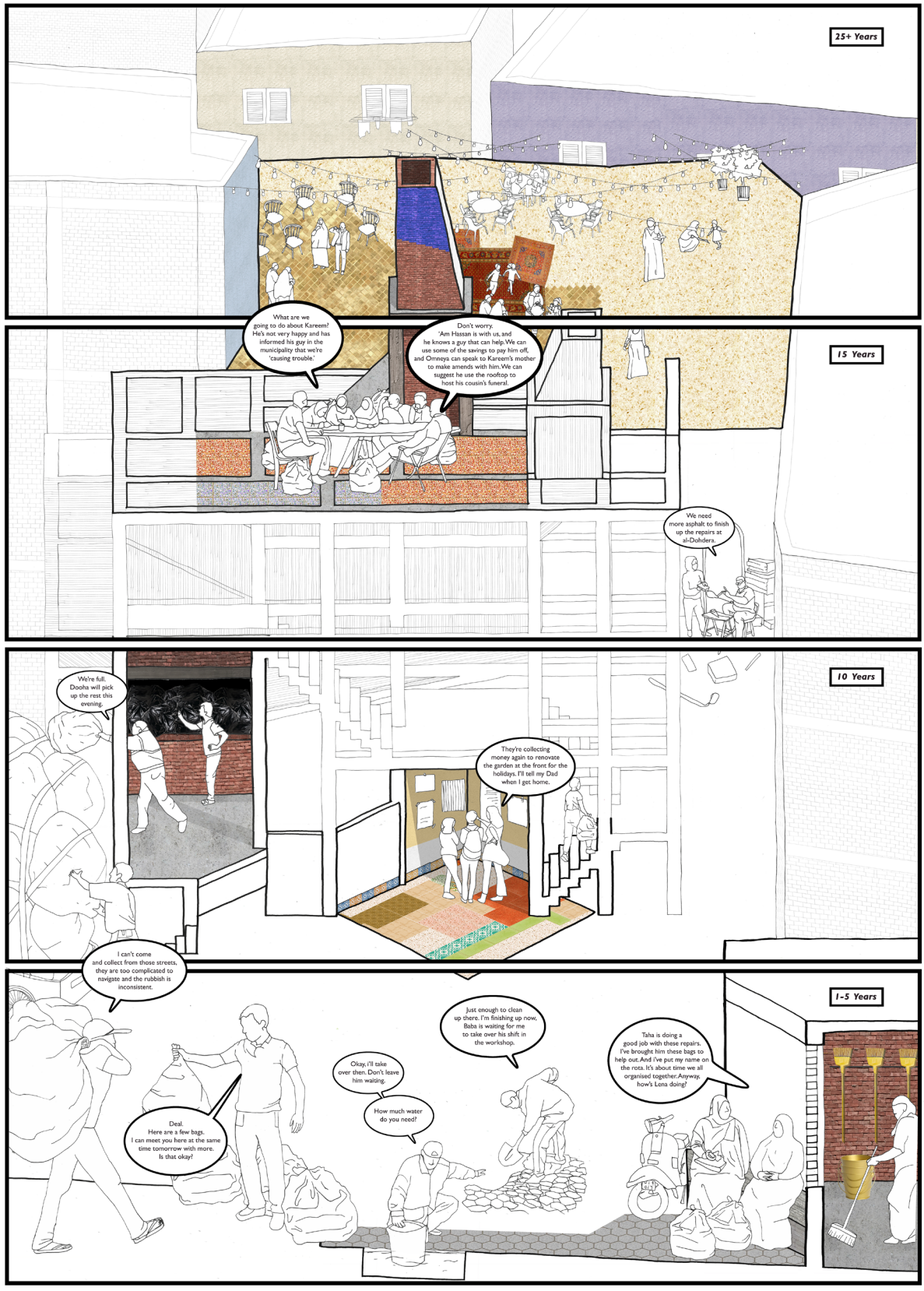


Figure 9.
Overlapping with state interests: heritage buildings. Authors own.


25+ Years
What are we going to do about Kareem? He's not very happy and has informed his guy in the municipality that we're 'causing trouble.'
Don't worry. 'Am Hassan is with us, and he knows a guy that can help. We can use some of the savings to pay him off, and Omneya can speak to Kareem's mother to make amends with him. We can suggest he use the rooftop to host his cousin's funeral.
15 Years
We need more asphalt to finish up the repairs at al-Dohdera.
10 Years
We're full. Dooha will pick up the rest this evening.
They're collecting money again to renovate the garden at the front for the holidays. I'll tell my Dad when I get home.
I can't come and collect from those streets, they are too complicated to navigate and the rubbish is inconsistent.
1-5 Years
Deal. Here are a few bags. I can meet you here at the same time tomorrow with more. Is that okay?
Okay, i'll take over then. Don't leave him waiting.
How much water do you need?
Just enough to clean up there. I'm finishing up now, Baba is waiting for me to take over his shift in the workshop.
Taha is doing a good job with these repairs. I've brought him these bags to help out. And i've put my name on the rota. It's about time we all organised together. Anyway, how's Lena doing?

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The Urban Research Frontier (TURF)

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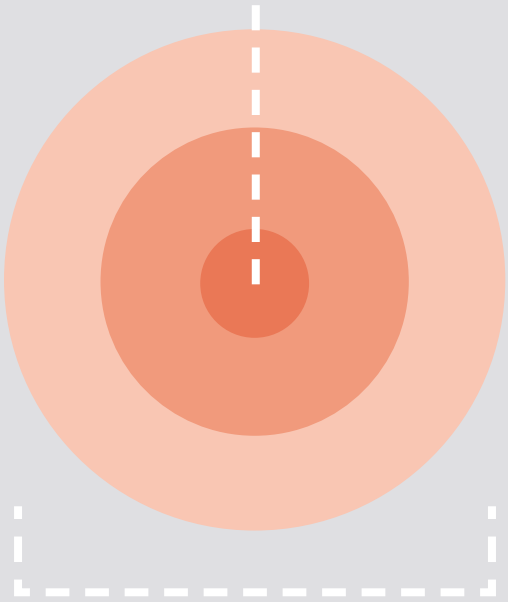
Co-authored by

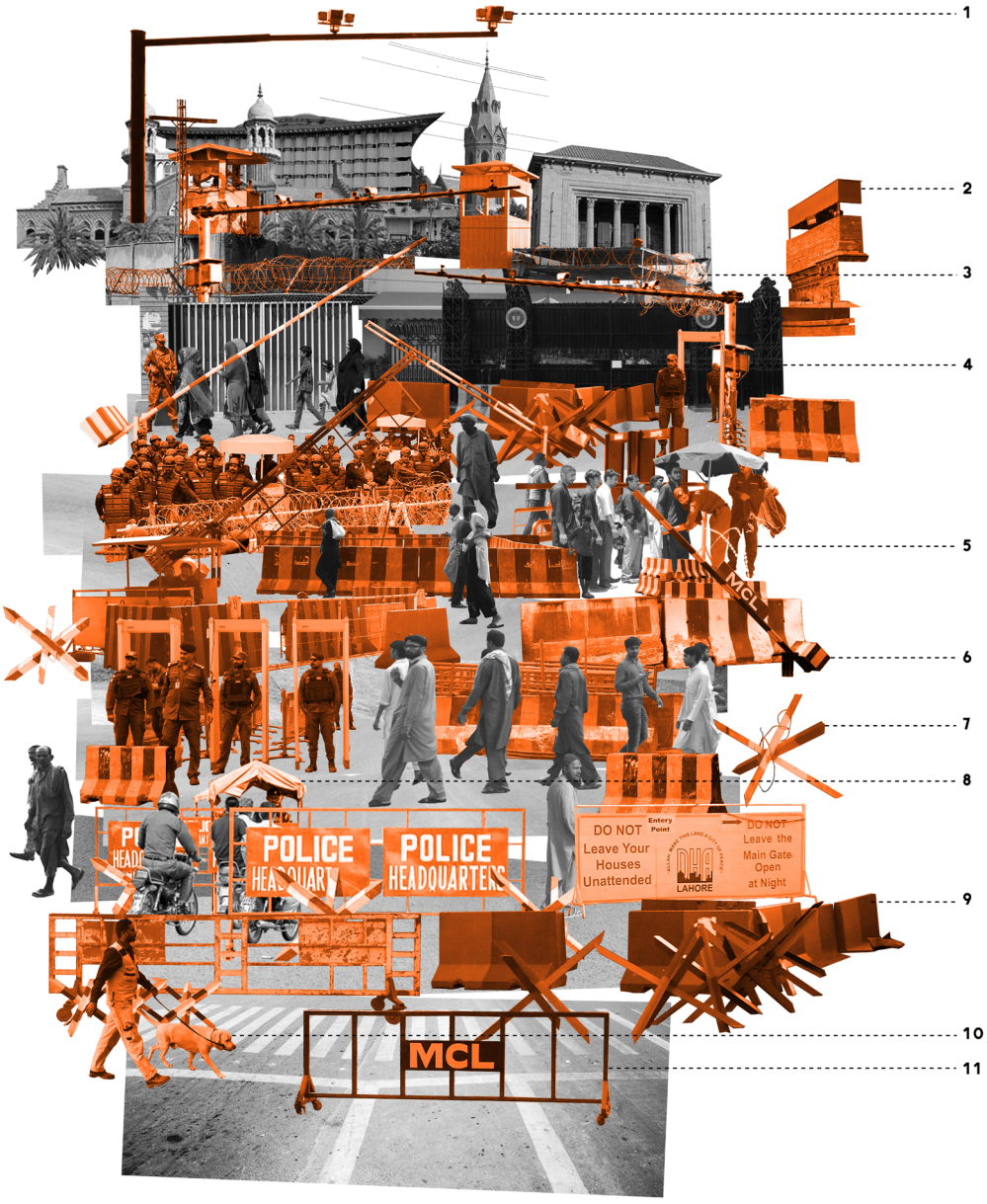
Arsalan Rafique and Ayesha Sarfraz



(Re)Occupying Extralegal Infrastructures Of Fear And Control

Security Landscapes of Pakistan

OCCUPATION



CCTV CAMERAS	1
ARMED GUARD TOWERS	2
BARBED WIRE	3
METAL DETECTOR	4
PHYSICAL BODY SEARCH	5
RAISED ARM BARRIERS	6
STAR BARRIERS	7
ARMED GUARD POST	8
CONCRETE BARRIERS	9
PARAMILITARISED FORCES	10
MOVABLE STEEL BLOCKADES	11

LAYERS OF OCCUPATION

Fig 1: Counter Occupation - Micro Resistances
A speculative collage of citizens using 'interstitial spaces' in Lahore for public activities that reveal instances of micro resistances which can be juxtaposed over a broader environment.

Our cities have been occupied, and we watched it happen.

We have surrendered our turf, along with our freedoms as citizens, to the fear of spectacular violence. Not many streets have been left unguarded, not many spaces are hidden from the eye of the unseen cameras. To congregate and to reach consensus is out of the question for a broken society in this fragmented landscape. Boundaries divide and decide who gets to be 'secure'; indeed we have been conquered, gripped by the fear of violence.

Our movements are monitored, the cities we adore and claim belonging to are not cities anymore; they are dividual territories - a series of disconnected precarious spaces where identity is defined through biometric data, not culture, art or languages we hold dear. We fear being excluded from 'safe zones': what if the electronic gate does not open, what if the guard turns us back towards the 'danger'?

At yet another turn we are warned of the consequences of frivolous meanderings and aimless wanderings: STOP or you will be shot! If there is no excitement of discovery, no impromptu exchange, no chance meeting - can we even call these open-air prisons cities anymore?

We are content and perhaps even complicit in this occupation. Whom among us is bothered by armed men standing at every corner, our every movement monitored through cameras and GPS systems, every street barricaded with concrete barriers and barbed wire. Do these cocked guns and hardened faces make us feel welcome? Do the rising walls around our houses and schools make us feel safe? Who are we trying to keep out? Or are we imprisoning ourselves voluntarily, within the growing walls fantasizing about a long-gone city that exists only as a myth or a memory? The gated communities and private security companies have commodified safety as a luxury for a select few, these are nothing more than gilded cages calling attention to greater fissures in society.

The new era of barricade urbanism has taken over our cities. Every building is adorned with soaring concrete walls, razor-sharp wire, metal detectors, snipers and anti-explosive mechanisms. This is the new architecture of cities in a perpetual state of (fictitious?) emergency.

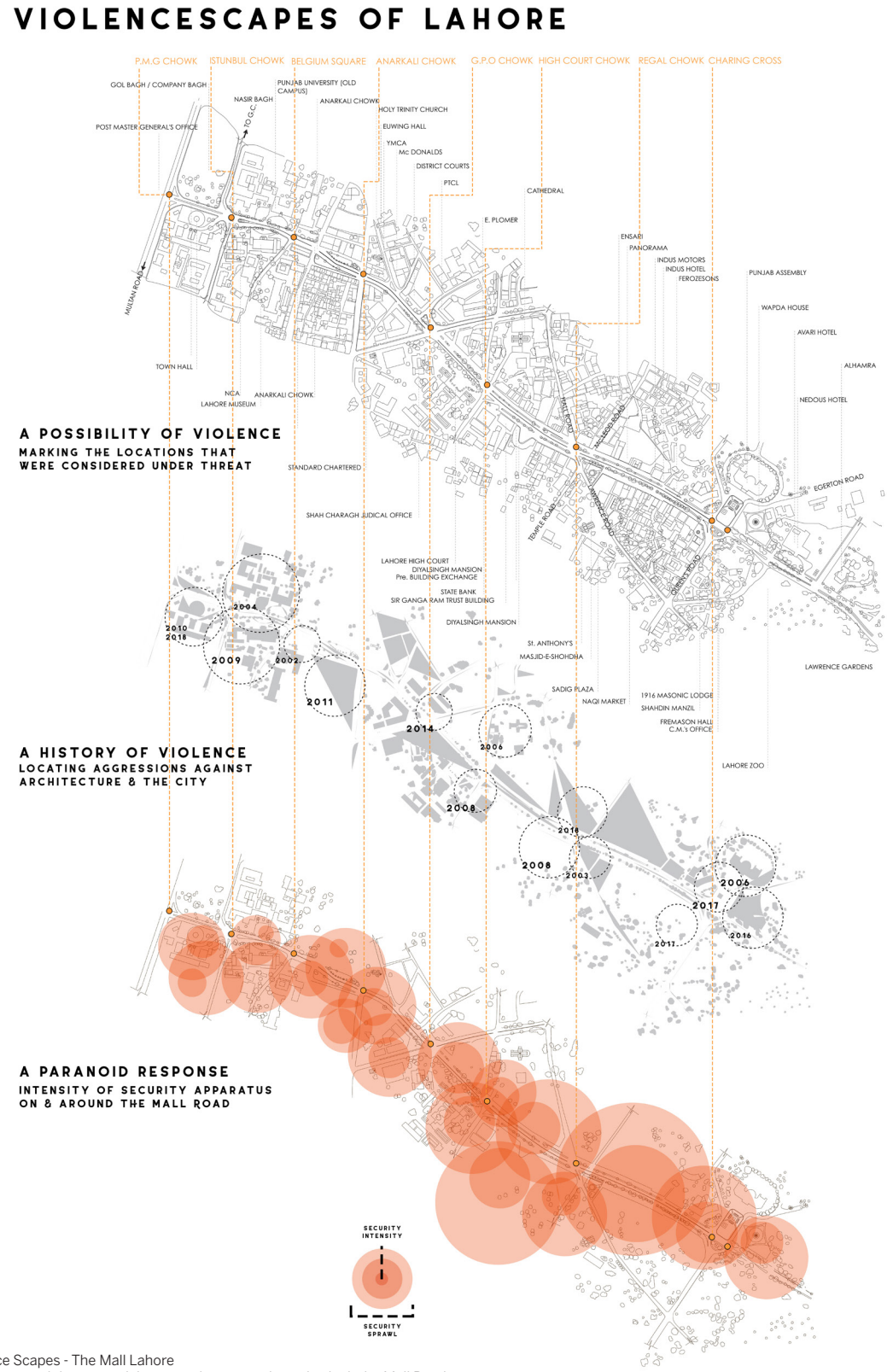
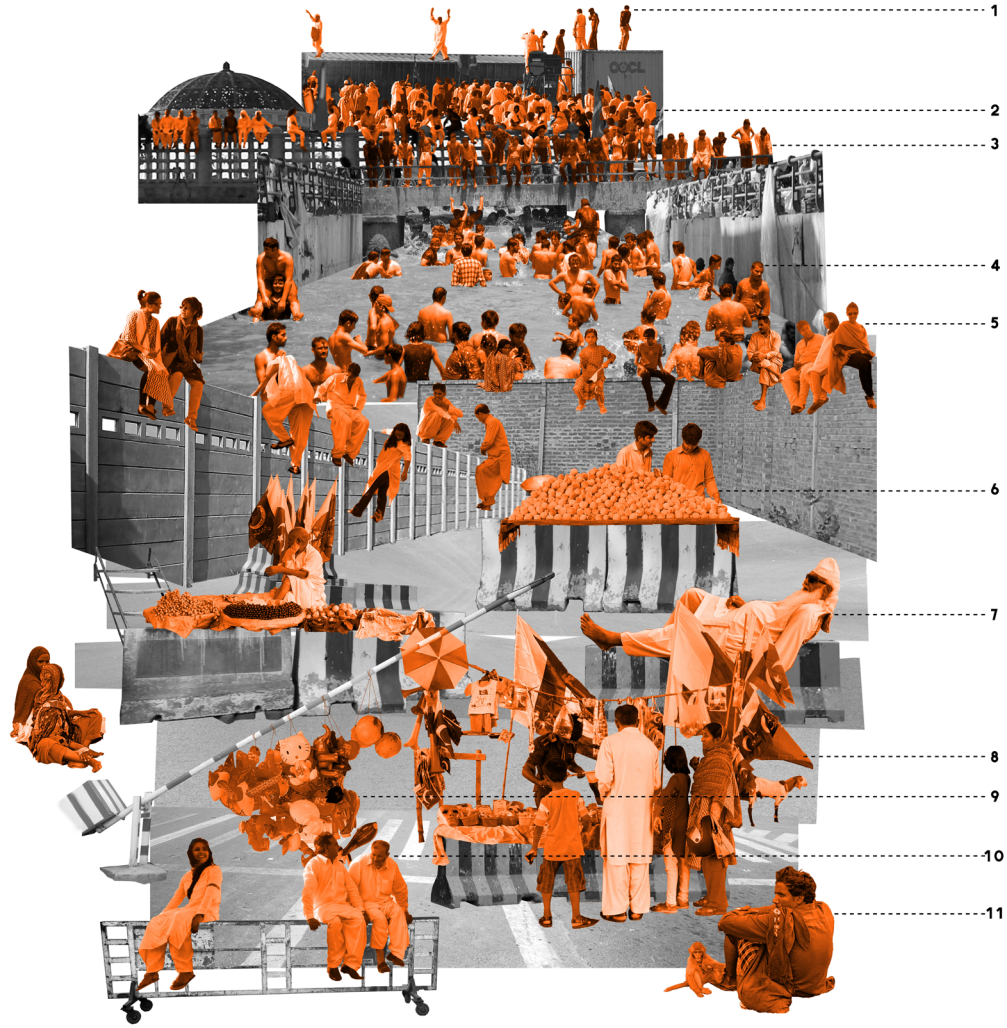


Fig 3: Violence Scapes - The Mall Lahore
A series of maps and diagrams elaborating the stages through which the Mall Road in Lahore was securitised, starting 2001 till present. The Mall has been the site of concentrated violence ranging from suicide bombings, armed attacks and protests gone wrong.

We seek a grand revolution that may never come. Why wait for a saviour when we can turn our everyday interactions into acts of micro resistances. There are still spaces that evoke joy and spontaneity, existing in overlooked parts of the city - the underbellies of bridges, green belts and traffic roundabouts to list a few. We must discover them before they too are locked down behind barriers and barbed wire. We must re-occupy militarized spaces. Reinterpret the wall as a congregational space or a bollard as a bench. Reappropriate the city to rebuild fractured communities. Restore individual autonomies and freedoms whilst enabling interactions with the 'others'. Rediscover and unveil opportunities emerging from this landscape.

Our cities will be re-occupied,
and we will make it happen.

COUNTER OCCUPATION



CELEBRATE FREEDOM 1
GATHER IN NUMBERS 2
LOITER 3
MAKE A SPLASH 4
MEANDER 5
REPROGRAM 6
SPREAD OVER 7
REOPEN FOR PUBLIC 8
BRING BACK THE FUN 9
INITIATE DIALOGUE 10
ENGAGE WITH YOUR CITY 11

MODES OF COUNTER OCCUPATION

Fig 2: Occupation - Security Landscapes
Collaged images of security infrastructure from Lahore, considered one of the most policed cities of Pakistan.

MK Harb

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Between Architectural Fiction and Market Realities

Bernard Khoury and Beruit's Nightclub Manifesto

"*We had grown accustomed to the sight of maimed facades and collapsed buildings, walls and roofs agape. It did not seem so crucial to hurry up and fix whatever could be fixed, for long now, these markers of destruction—and hurt—were not soring to the eyes anymore. They were our lot, they cohered with everything else the civil war had left us with. They articulated their own kind of aesthetic; much ink was spilled on their being 'modern ruins' or 'ruins of modernity', and much bromide diluted to capture their poetry— 'poetics in fancier art talk--, or some other deeper meaning locked within.*"[1]

In Beirut Bereft, artists Rasha Salti and Ziad Antar go on an ephemeral journey to explore the ruins of Civil War Beirut and their emotional and spatial meaning in everyday life. In it, they visually and textually document the infrastructural damage left by the war both physically and metaphorically. From shelled out cinemas and many bullet-holed buildings, the aesthetic markers of a post-war city are omnipresent. In this setting of wreckage, both visually experienced through the sight of infrastructural collapse and mentally heightened through past and future anticipation of violence, the Beirut post-war nightclub emerges. For most of its post-colonial history, Beirut has been fetishized as an urban chimera in the Middle East, and it is not uncommon to hear reporters from GQ and CNN throw around tired claims that the "Lebanese just love to live." [2] Post-Civil-War Beirut, in particular, became synonymous with "nightclub city" with intellectuals and commentators alike seeing the nightclub experience as a catharsis for a city that lacks any real way of dealing with its war memories. In what follows, I will be analyzing Beirut's post-civil war nightclub phenomenon through the prism of a manifesto. While manifestos are increasingly rare in the present world of architecture due to the unevenness of the neoliberal market demand, they were once a staple of the 20th century. In his manifesto, Towards a New Architecture, Le Corbusier states that "the architect, by his arrangement of forms, realizes an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree and provokes plastic emotions…" [3] Le Corbusier touches on the emotional and tactile aspect of architecture, qualities that are able to produce atmospheric spaces. Qualities that are also relevant to architect, Bernard Khoury, often dubbed the prodigal son of Lebanese architecture. Khoury, celebrated for his interventionist and radically militaristic designs and critiqued for the gentrifying effects of his projects, wrote his own manifesto, Local Heroes. In what follows, I will perform a textual and discursive analysis of an interview I had with Khoury,

1. Rash Sal, Ziad Antar and Mohammed Talaat Khedr, Beirut Bereft, Bayr Al-thaklá: Bin Majf wah Wa-jughr fiy Al-ihtir (Sharjah: Sharjah Biennial, 2009), p. 37.

2. Marino, Nick, "How to Party in Beirut Like It's Your Last Night on Earth", GQ, 8 May, 2017

3. Le Corbusier and Frederick Etchells, Towards a new architecture, p.1.

in which he outlines his manifestos for architecture and visions for Beirut. Situating it in the context of his infamous nightclub, B018, I will comment on the schism between the fictions and ambitions of his manifesto and the lived-experience of his architecture, which responds more directly to market-demand. In particular, I argue that Khoury designs and benefits from gentrifying spaces of escapism that cater to an elite that inhabit Beirut, but want to insulate themselves from a variety of its spatial realities.

Manifest Pleasure:

After months of being in touch with Bernard Khoury's office, I landed an interview on a hot summer afternoon in June. Getting to his area was slightly difficult and humorous. The taxi driver I had taken was baffled on why I was headed towards the Karantina, an Arabized pronunciation of the word "quarantine," as he kept telling me "ma fee be hal mant'a 'ela lahameen" (there are only butchers in this area).[4] He was not mistaken, the Karantina is mostly an uninhabited urban enclave of Beirut, with the area smelling like dead cattle and the ground mixed with reddish sand and shattered glass from the factories.

4. The name, Karantina comes from the French mandate era as it was a quarantine zone for sickly soldiers.

After circling around the area for about 15 minutes, we finally found Khoury's office. I entered the building, Tanous Tower, went upstairs and opened a huge steel door to go in. Two glass fixtures on each side surrounded the entrance, and inside of them were detailed architectural models of Khoury's projects all over the world. Khoury was sitting at a dark circular table with his sunglasses on and a bar behind him full of cognac and whiskey bottles. In front of him were two office spaces shared by eight architects each, with their eyes frozen to their computers. On his left side, there was a parked Porsche Cayenne and two Harley Davidson motorbikes. I had used the visitor entrance, but Khoury uses his car-elevator to go inside the building. The office, with its automotive masculinity and voyeurism, was the first signifier that I was going to be interviewing a performative architect. In his Anthropology of Architecture, Victor Buchli builds on Claude Levi-Strauss's analysis of ethnography in relation to architecture and the domestic house, commenting that the "house reckons memory, which is essentially, the memory of lineage."[5] Buchli's analysis relates to Khoury's performativity and his architectural work, which find remarkability in the experimental. Choosing to locate hiss office in the

5. Victor Buchli, An Anthropology of Architecture, p 74.

Karantina and situating himself in a building that is uncanny from the outside, Khoury uses geography and aesthetics to invoke a new narrative of himself and his work. He disrupts his association with his father Khalil Khoury, a renowned modernist architect and uses the Karantina as an urban fringe to dissociate from memories of an older pre-war Beirut.

The Fiction of Manifestos:

Before discussing the interview, I propose to analyze Khoury through the label of "mythos." With mythos coming from the Greek to refer to a set of stories and mythical tales that convey a certain "truths," I find it appropriate for the case of Khoury. Khoury is both a celebrated architect and a ridiculed one, often attacked for his projects that are gentrifying Beirut. Hence, he is aware of himself of being part of a brand and part of the myth of Bernard Khoury. From his voyeuristic office, full of showy cars and his location to hide his office in an unusual part of Beirut, he invests in creating a larger narrative of himself. When he talks, nightclubs turn to temples and he charges sentences with emotions and bravado. Throughout the conversation, I was reminded of the cultural theorist, Stuart Hall's work in *Cultural Representation* and *Signifying Practices*. It was Hall who walked us through the use of language in constructing a larger system of belief and being loaded with various forms of meaning.[6] In the case of Khoury, his use of language is didactic and reactionary. Mixed with a distrust of the press and a nonchalance towards the nitty-gritty details of architecture, he personifies his mode of work, blurring the line between architect and architecture. Returning to Buchli, he discusses the importance of viewing architectural forms through a registry of images and symbolism and not simply through their immediate material form. Khoury clearly comes to architecture from a strong understanding of viewing it beyond functionalism and imbuing it with a symbolic narrative, which often hovers on the controversial. He himself lives in the penthouse of the DW5 building, which has two canons shooting from its roof, an allegorical signifier to war-torn Beirut. Such designs follow his common trope of reveling in carnality and dystopia. In the interview, he discussed his love of inverting social structures in the home giving an example of elevators that take the residents up and into the home through the balcony. Khoury's rejects outdated and clichéd modes and that rejection takes on a strong material form in his architecture. Having once visited a loft in his

6. Stuart Hall, Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices, p. 42

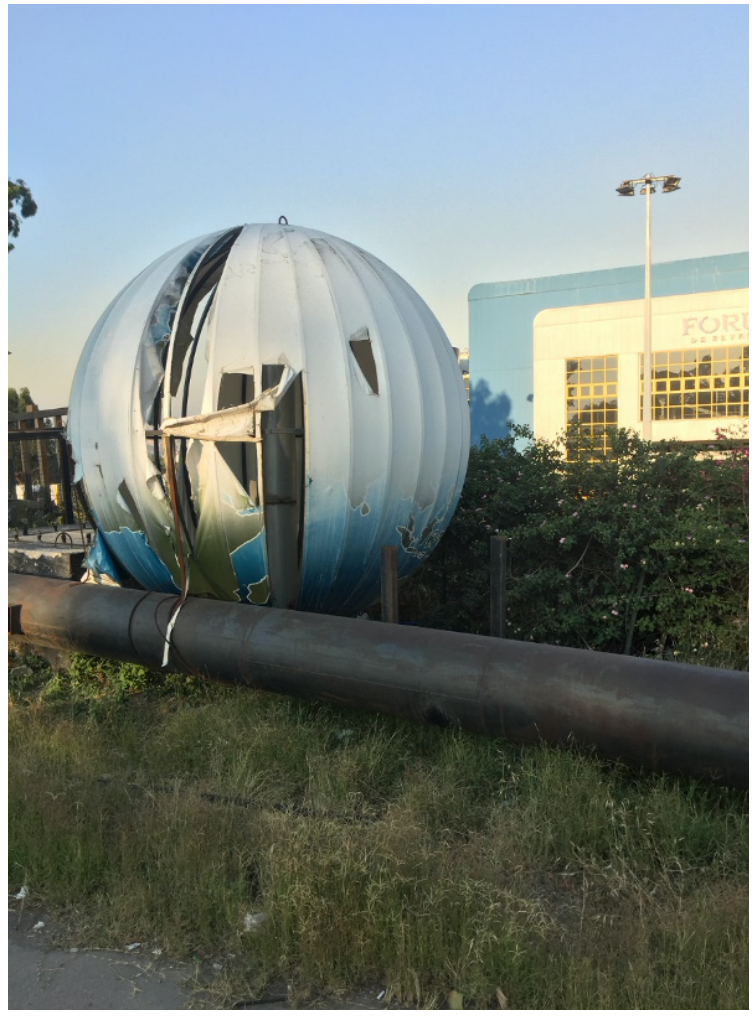

Figure 1.
Globe, Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

#4371 building, which he shaped like a grenade, I was struck by the size and shape of the elevator, resembling that of a warehouse garage. Entering the apartment in such a manner had a strong unfamiliarity to it and one cannot help but reflect on the strong element of designed difference. The elevator might seem like a futile infrastructural element device to focus on, yet it is part of Khoury's obsession with entrances. Throughout the interview Khoury reference entry points into places and this is most evident in his work on the B018. Entrances are one of his strongest symbolic marker of difference and escaping Beirut into an alterity. Khoury is invested in symbolizing, reifying and reinventing the entrance. Yet this fetishized difference and heightened symbolism cannot escape its class dynamic and returns to the issue of commodifying escapism. Browsing on the market, you will find that a Khoury apartment that is 233 square meters usually sells for a million dollar. The project of #4371 is itself branded on non-typical living and this atypical yet temporal inversion of domesticity is for those who can afford it.

Figure 2.
Entrance to B018, Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

The Infrastructure of Capital:

Khoury began the interview by exclaiming, "Architecture for me is not about infrastructure or aesthetics; it is about the players." Every single project I ever did was the result of a relationship with a player." [7] In his Towards an Architecture of Enjoyment, Henri Lefebvre states that the "will to power, normal and profound, which shares with sadism and the pathological solely the ability to provoke them, provides enjoyment." [8] This statement is profoundly reflected in the work of Khoury, with his designs relishing in the power of militaristic structures and his discourse fetishizing dystopia and sadism. During my time with Khoury, I observed that he is completely uninterested in talking about narrow and specific forms of infrastructure from metal to ceiling and tiling. Alternatively, he exclaimed to me that "players" are his infrastructure. Players for Khoury are the individuals

7.
Bernard Khoury. Interview by author. Beirut, June 15th, 2017.

8.
Henri Lefebvre, Toward an architecture of enjoyment, p. 25.

that established his "masochistic" relationship to the city, ranging from millionaires to club owners, and corporate moguls. They come to him with ideas and with their significant capital, he gets to play around with building designs, from certain ones taking on the form of a grenade to others shaped like a war tanker. While celebrity architects tend to steer conversations away from the client, focusing it on the designed space, especially if the client is controversial, Khoury does the opposite. Part of this is obviously reactionary and a way for Khoury to subvert critiques rallied against him for working with powerful developers. However, it is also personal. It is proof of the subjective meaning of architecture for Khoury.

I asked him who are these players and he replied, "I can't reveal information about too many of them, as you can figure it out and it is not safe."[9] However, he told me to revisit his book Local Heroes, in which he outlines the framework for his projects, which range over 150. The book matching his personality, only speaks about the ideas behind projects and the players without a mention of infrastructure or modes of design. Looking at these "players," there is the corporate mogul that commissioned a villa in the Saifi village and the "entertainer" that planted the idea of the B018 nightclub. They are all anonymous and they are all part of the post-war financial elite. In the forward of Local Heroes, architect, and critic, Luca Molinari discusses the rise of Bernard Khoury in the 90s describing the sheer precision, detail and cutting-edge designs of his buildings that unfolded in the backdrop of a landscape of "devastating war." Molinari focuses on the B018 and calls it a club that takes on the form of "lucid madness" with "hidden and disappointed sadness."[10] Hence, a strong component of Khoury's relationship to architecture is based on performing a form of vivid and iconic madness in Beirut. His emphasis on "players" on the other hand is a way of demonstrating that his architecture was an escape from the conventional and the normative practices of the past in Beirut. Yet his discourse also speaks to his actual detachment from a spatial and social understanding of Beirut. While Khoury sees his relationship to the players as his own manifesto of architecture, in fiscal reality he is star-architect who works with capital. His relationship to Beirut is not with its spaces, it is with the individuals who can fund the development of spaces. Hence, Khoury expands our understanding of infrastructure to an immaterial realm, underlying the importance of fiction in it. It is not solely about the light fixtures, bricks or marble flooring, it is also about the narrative which is inseparable from the financiers.

9. Bernard Khoury. Interview by author. Beirut, June 15th, 2017.

10. Bernard Khoury, Local Heroes, p. 5.

Operating within Beirut's Chaos:

Throughout the conversation, particularly when discussing the urban planning of Beirut, Khoury would use the Arabic word fawda, which means chaos. He saw both the urban planning of Beirut and the ways its citizens navigate it as schizophrenic. Speaking with a sense of frustration, Khoury talked about Beirut never having a fully-fledged "national project" or a strong bourgeois class of architects such as Lluís Domènech I Montaner in Barcelona who would redevelop the city. In her book, The Insecure City, anthropologist Kristine Monroe, researches how urban chaos in Beirut becomes a form of asserting agency and a spatial practice stratified among different class levels. Monroe tells us that Beirutis engage in a form of zigzag mobility and their disordered and often changing forms of navigating the city relates to asserting a vernacular "Lebaneseness."[11] Through Khoury, we see how this notion of chaos permeates into architecture and the ways in which it he turned it into a profitable phenomenon. Chaos in this sense is not an ephemeral phenomenon, rather, a profitable experience. Khoury sees the chaos of Beirut as both a means to a greater economic end, but also as a defining aesthetic marker of the city. Situating his projects from nightclubs to high-rise towers in infamously busy and densely populated areas such as Mar Mikhael and Karantina, Khoury creates escapist spaces that zone out the chaos and exist within it. He is not interested in working on development projects that could partially remedy the lack of urban planning he laments. Rather, he is interested in using the city's infrastructural collapse as a theme in his work. A theme that is profitable. Now it is important to keep in mind that Khoury's understanding of chaos transcends architecture and materiality and relates to the lived experience of individuals. This brings us back to the "players," and the relationship between profit and architecture. In his polemical talk on chaos and urban planning, Khoury explained to me that Beirut grew informally through feudal family settlements and donations of acres of land that would become highways. He contends that after the war these dominant families were replaced with the "players." In this manner, he is alluding to the growth of the post-war real estate sector through dealers, politicians, bankers, and other hegemons. Hence, in a way, Khoury acknowledges benefiting from this chaos and from the lack of a fully-fledged urban control of the city of Beirut. Since the 1960s, the Lebanese state has followed an aggressive laissez-faire model of governance, which in the

11. Kristin V. Monroe, The Insecure City: Space, Power, and Mobility in Beirut, p. 113.

past twenty years transformed into an aggressive late capitalist model of development aimed at attracting foreign direct investment, mainly from the Gulf States. This has led to extreme privatization, inequitable division of land, receding public space and arbitrary evictions. It is common to hear of eviction and gentrification stories with many of Beirut's residents forced into the suburbs or into neighboring towns. This was most recently evident in the work of Public Works Studio, an activist research studio, which conducted a series aimed at visualizing Beirut through the stories of its tenants. The visual narrative that came out was that of urban disorder, severe housing inequality and a derelict socioeconomic fabric. Therefore, it is important to situate this chaos in its class dynamic.[12] For a sizable segment of the population, chaos manifests in lack of housing subsidies, social housing and overall precarity. For Khoury, chaos exists in the spectrum of profiteering due to his relations with individuals who have access to the investments, real estate development and privatization, which the Lebanese state promotes. The relationship between architecture and networked interests is not new and cultural critic, Fredric Jameson, comments on this capitalist entrenchment in his seminal Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. In his succinct and ethnographic analysis of the Bonaventure Hotel, which John C Portman designed in Los Angeles in 1974, Jameson highlights the gentrification the hotel caused and underscores the importance of understanding Porter as not just an architect, but also as a businessperson, artist and a "capitalist in his own right."[13] It is important to extend this understanding to Khoury as well with his encroachment on chaos and fetishizing urban disorder coming from a desire to create profitable business as much as it is coming from a practice of architecture. This means that when we are viewing a new plot of land that Khoury redeveloped, we are also viewing a gentrification that is lurking in the background.

12. "Mapping Beirut through its Tenants; Stories - Part 2 Mseitbe and Tarik Jdideh" Public Works Studio

13. Fredrick Jameson, Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, p. 47.

The Myth of B018:

"An added benefit to this office is its proximity to B018, I work here late at night and I hear the club music vibrating the land at 2 am and it puts me at ease,"[14] Khoury tells me as I sit in his office. While Khoury has done many projects, I had mainly come here to talk about this nightclub, B018, often labeled as the vanguard of post-war Beirut architecture. I asked Khoury if it was true that this nightclub was his way of commemorating the Civil

14. Bernard Khoury. Interview by author. Beirut, June 15th, 2017.

Figure 3.
B018, Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

Fig 4.
Rooftop of B018,
Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

War. He lighted another cigarette and calmly said, "That is all bullshit and fabricated by the media."[15] This statement was the first indicator that Khoury had departed from the narrative of the nightclub as a form of "escape from war" space. For him, that was a tired myth of media and pop culture. He walked me through the history of building it, which relates to his previous argument on "players" as a form of infrastructure. He told me that after the end of the war, he often partied with his best friend, a man known for starting an underground electro music group that worked as a post-war trauma therapy commune. An escape into music for those who could afford it. His friend was looking for a new venue, a nightclub, to play this music at, but he had encountered a problem. Khoury then shared a personal story entangled with class politics of Beirut, personal feuds and real-estate realities that accidentally led him and his friend to the Karantina, a "ditch."[16] Hence, a nightclub fantasized as an intentional commemoration of war was an architectural project born out of a feud between Beirut's post-war elite. Now, of course, Khoury might have exaggerated certain parts of the story he shared, but the sentiment and the focus on it indicate the importance he places on architectural fiction and the story of how B018 came about. His book also provides a similar narrative to the one relayed by him. In the chapter on the B018, Khoury calls the construction a "story" and then proceeds to talk about the "entertainer," a musical guru who started music therapy session in Beirut and was looking to move them to a permanent club.[17] However, despite his sentimental emphasis on the alternative story to the rise of B018, Khoury's website still promotes the club as a purposeful commemoration of Lebanon's Civil War:

The B018 project is, first of all, a reaction to difficult and explosive conditions that are inherent to the history of its location and the contradictions that are implied by the implementation of an entertainment program on such a site. B018 refuses to participate in the naïve amnesia that governs the post-war reconstruction efforts.[18]

Hence, the commercial narrative focuses on amnesia and the naiveté of post-war reconstruction, positioning the club as a space in which these issues are rectified. B018 becomes the physical embodiment of Khoury's manifesto of a nightclub that serves as an alternative space of healing and memorialization for post-war Beirut. I proceeded to ask him how he acquired the land and he told me he had to get permission from a former militia leader who fought against the Palestinians during the Lebanese Civil war. He had met a man, described as a painfully disturbing individual,

15. Khoury. Interview by author.

16. Khoury. Interview by author.

17. Bernard Khoury, Local Heroes, p. 95.

18. Bernard Khoury, www.bernardkhoury.com, accessed March 12, 2018

who upon greeting told him "I know this area very well, I cleansed it inch by inch," referencing the Palestinian massacre that had occurred at the site of the club in 1976. Khoury attempted to embody and enact the man's disturbing behavior while saying those comments to me. He proudly discussed the baldness of his decision to place the B018 there, as he was not only providing a catharsis for himself, but also for the residents of Beirut. Scholar Laleh Khalili, in her research on commemoration, discusses how "Khoury uses the Palestinian place of memory and mourning as the backdrop for his own critical commentary on the political amnesia that has beset Lebanon."[19] For Bernard, B018 is not just a nightclub; it is an alternative space of memory and an interactive memorial where visitors enter a spatial temporality as they dance between memories and amnesia. Khoury then proceeds to tell me how the man took him to a bunker, formerly used to store weapons and a hideout for militias. Khoury found it to be perfect in terms of size and "darkness" and agreed to begin the project of redeveloping it and leasing it. The bunker for him invoked precarity and Beirut's war-torn past and would set the scene for his design. Through this discussion, we understand why Khoury saw the development of the B018 as a monumental manifesto. Its location in the space of sectarian strife and violent bloodshed and its scifi-like design invokes a disturbed futurity to Beirut that is only imaginable when experienced within the club.

19. Laleh Khalili, Places of Memory and Mourning: Palestinian Commemoration in the Refugee Camps of Lebanon, p. 3

BO18 by Design: Aesthetics of Escapism

Most individuals, especially researchers and journalists, who come with the "war architecture" mentality upon the first encounter with the B018 immediately, label it as a coffin. While the motif of the coffin is strong in the design of Khoury, more so in the interior, the exterior of the club is better imagined as a circular spaceship that had landed in Beirut and was unable to take off (see Fig 2). In what follows, I will convey an ethnographic walk of the nightclub and discuss the designs that make the escapism of the B018 an architectural manifestation of Khoury's vision.

A. Black, Tarmac and Masochistic Architecture:

In my conversation with Khoury, I understood that militarism, death, and sexuality were central ideas governing the design of the B018.

Moreover, a big factor in this design is its overwhelmingly black hues that Khoury asserted were intentionally chosen to differentiate the place from the rest of Beirut. In Paradoxes of Green, scholar Gareth Doherty discusses the anthropology of color using the example of how green is deployed in Bahrain. From a color that symbolizes environmental activism to a color that promises green luxury landscapes in otherwise dull and beige surroundings.[20] This is also witnessed in Beirut, with luxury real estate developers promising an urban oasis inside an apartment and nightclubs such as "Iris" investing in urban rooftop gardens. Khoury, on the other hand, deploys the color black in a different manner and in a specific Beirut context. Pre-civil-war Beirut is often imagined to be a landscape of multilayered and vibrant colors from the blue of the Mediterranean to the red of the many sexualized and advertised women in bikinis to the greenery of the cedars; those colors were a necessary selling point of the manufactured imaginary of the city. After the war, Solidere, the redevelopment company in charge of downtown Beirut redeveloped the city in a "sea of beige buildings." The residential luxury landscape was bland and the nightclub leisure that they ushered focused on colors that evoked "shimmer" and "glitter." From Swarovski armchairs to bedazzled walls and beige Buddha statues in clubs, the downtown catered its nightclub to a certain stratum of tourists from the Gulf Cooperation Council. In the reverse of this, Khoury presents black in an almost radical manner. Black becomes the new taste of an urban generation identifying with the music and atmosphere of post-war cities such as Berlin. Lastly, black also becomes part of the mythos of escapism that Khoury sets to create. Khoury is promising his clients an escape into privileged anonymity and into a place, which is not a place.

For Khoury, the most important structure of the underground interior was the bar itself. He indicated to me how it is alleviated and is an "escape within the escapism itself." The bar is situated on a higher pedestal, intentionally positioned with mirrors to look like it is about to fall down and with alcohol bottles that shoot out of it like rockets. Khoury said this part of his infrastructure is personal to him and it is built for clients who like to engage in a certain "voyeurism" and escape from the crowd. Mainly because the bar is the only place at B018, where you are able to see the entirety of the club by virtue of being alleviated five steps above ground. A personal whim that he defined in infrastructural concrete. Lastly, one of the club's most defining structures is its retractable roof that opens up and gives the audience a glimpse into nighttime stars and sunrise to indicate the end of the experience at 7:00. A.M. For Khoury, a person heavily involved

20. Gareth Doherty, Paradoxes of Green: Landscapes of a City-state (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017), p. 57

Fig 5.
Architecture Model, Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

with the experience of music and darkness, he was not concerned with discussing the roof and its significance to the club. While the roof is one of the main ways the clients re-interact with the city, giving them a sense of time and place and reminders of an experience being over, it played no strong aesthetic value to him.

B. The Manifesto is marketed on Sex

"*Clubbers in Beirut don't go out at night because they're worried about ISIS or an Israeli invasion. They go out because it has become part of their identity. Clubbing is no longer just an industry that caters to wealthy foreigners.*"[21]

21.
Raidy, Gino, How the Private Party Scene Is Democratizing the Dancefloor in Beirut, Vice, 29 June 2016

The above quote with its intense statement attempting to fuse clubbing to a certain sense of contemporary Lebanese identity comes to us from Gino Raidy. Raidy, a famous "clubbing connoisseur," represents the quintessential and liberal client who frequents the B018. In the article in which the quote appears, Raidy attempts to dispel myths that the Lebanese use clubbing to escape from a sense of danger and impending violence. Instead, he credits the rise of new venues such as B018 that promise an escape to better music and hedonistic places similar to those of "Berlin

and London." Raidy's emphasis on the sexuality and debauchery of the B018 is a theme shared with Khoury. Khoury's main emphasis was that the B018 infrastructure was invested in creating a "debauched and sexy place" that wakes up at night and promises its guests "unique and ephemeral moments." Hence, an essential component of Khoury's vision for the B018 and the mission it will serve relies on familiar tropes on the marketing of sex.

Khoury emphasized that the sealed-up design and music of the club ensure that the patrons are situated outside a real geography. They become inside what he labels as "an instrument of pleasure" a place where you come after taking a mixture of substances to experience some form of emancipatory and sensual liberation. Anthropologist Debra Curtis in "Commodities and Sexual Subjects: A Look at Capitalism and Its Desires" argues that sexual desire should be dislodged from the private, biological and familial domain and should be interpreted as a part of the marketplace.[22] Curtis reasons that the marketplace itself produces desire making it central to the understanding of capitalism. Hence, a significant part of the B018's ephemera and escapism is the promise of sex and the marketing of desire. The anonymity, the darkness, and the underground design invite patrons to anticipate sexual tension and the experience of debauchery unfolding in space. It becomes like a phallus that was designed by Khoury or a space that is supposed to embody the moment before sexual release. The city outside and its visibility becomes associated with a form of morality and policing of bodies. Hence, the invitation to a sensual and luxurious underground means an invitation to engage in a new form of spatial activity that is more sexual.

22.
Debra Curtis, 'Commodities and Sexual Subjectivities: A Look at Capitalism and Its Desires', p. 99

In terms of infrastructure, two elements guarantee this, the volume and the size of the speakers and the physical size of the club. Being a former bunker, the B018 cannot handle more than 80 to 100 people at once and coupled with the powerful sound shooting out of the eight speakers surrounding it, the audible experience is intense. While Beirut's nightclubs are rarely concerned with going over capacity or violating fire hazards, the club's exclusivity means that the bouncers maintain the quota inside, deciding who gets to go in from the regulars to those who look like "they belong." Hence, when the club is full it becomes intense, sexual and crowded. The design when at full capacity is done to make it reminiscent of a massive hedonistic orgy. From drunk patrons to ones sweating from the heat and

the loud music preventing any form of conversation beyond ordering a drink from the bartender, the experience of the body is heightened. Khoury here is selling a form of sexual and musical catharsis as an almost cliché out of body experience.

However, Beirut is not Berlin and the B018 cannot turn into a fully-fledged sexual nightclub such as the notorious, Berghain, where patrons can engage in sex in dark rooms or even on dance floors. Hence, what Khoury is marketing is a Beirut-specific experience of sexual escapism. I argue that this audiovisual design of the club constantly promises the potentiality of sex unfolding while keeping the consumer pre-occupied with the immediacy of the space either through further demand for alcohol or through certain upbeat tempos of music that bring back the attention to the DJ. Professor Feona Attwood, in "Sex and the Citizens: Erotic Play and the New Leisure Culture" discusses the emergence of a new culture of sex as a form of play and the commercialization of personal promiscuity after deregulation in many Western societies. Attwood follows in the work of Chris Rojek looking at the increased commodification of sex work and pleasure service with a decline of moral discourse. She also follows in the works of eminent French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, in looking at middle class 'fun ethic' an increased opening to attitudes that incorporate hedonism and some forms of 'liberated' sexuality.[23] Attwood looks at the ways in which technologies and the commodification of sex have led to the expansion of the "pornosphere" from gay nightclubs putting large screens that play explicit porn over the bars to other nightclubs engaging in a form of more technologically advance striptease that involves elaborate light schemes. The B018, on the other hand, uses design to invite patrons to a potential pornosphere without relying on tired tropes of explicit porn, striptease and sex workers. Khoury's design emphasizes the ritualism of entering the pornosphere. The club is a circular almost spaceship-like metallic sphere off a highway that one can pass by many times without noticing. The circular design invoking a form of ironic biblical hell as if one is descending down to a satanic party or a large space of sacrifice. Guarded by a bouncer who looks at the attitude and way of dress of the patron and before the patron eventually descends the empty stairs to a small room to pay the cover charge. It is a regulated and ritualistic manner of entering a sexualized club. An important aspect of the different use of sexual motifs in the B018 is the form of dancing. The music that ranges from deep house to techno does not invite patrons to engage in sensual dancing

23. Feona Attwood, 'Sex and the Citizens: Erotic Play and the New Leisure Culture,' p. 95

or dancing that requires intimate physical contact with one another. On the contrary, despite the previously described intensity of light, sound and compact design, there is a differentiation of the bodies. The patrons usually face the alleviated DJ booth and dance in a form of communion. As the beat increases and the moment of awaiting the "drop" intensifies, they usually lift their right hand together to indicate satisfaction with the DJ's music and occasionally some couples will kiss or act in a more intimate way. However, it is an intense and sexually charged experience without explicitly engaging in sex.

Conclusions:

Concluding, I would like to revisit Khoury's relationship to the built environment and material culture in Beirut. In the aforementioned analysis of the B018, we understand it as both a product of architecture and allegorical narrative. In designing the club, Khoury was not solely invested in architecture, but also in registering new social relations to be embodied in this leisure-space time capsule. His aspirational drive drew him to alleviate the B018 into a symbol that can take on multiple meanings. For some, it embodies a certain resilience embodied in the form of clubbing, and anarchism. For others, it holds a geographic duplicity in both commemorating and disregarding Beirut's war-torn past. In this regards, one must acknowledge in the B018's success in holding multiple meanings and being able to transcend the limiting definition of the "Beirut nightclub." Its placelesness and radically different design invites the viewer to perceive the built environment particularly that of leisure spaces in Beirut, in a very new manner. Masked as a discreet underground bunker, it challenges the architecture of spectacle that riddled Beirut and its downtown. In the analysis of the aesthetics, we also saw the degree to which Khoury's personal take on Beirut is embodied in his architecture. This led the B018 to become a place that does not trigger memories and does not engage in nostalgia or kitsch as an experience. However, it is also limiting to accept the narrative that the B018 promotes a new mode of "living under collapse." It is also limiting to see it as an architecture that paves the way towards a new form of social life. From the interview with Khoury, we realize the strong relation that exists between consumption and the experience of the B018. The B018 does not invite people into a new

form of dwelling and does challenge their predispositions; rather it invites them to indulge in difference. The experience of the B018 is temporal and escapist and as such reproduces the contradictions of material culture. This brings us back to Jameson's point on architecture and the "allegorical devices," and the importance of viewing the B018 in the immediateness of the allegory it is providing instead of a perpetual understanding. While the clubbing might take on a narrative and the dancing aggrandized, the return to the city is imminent. As such, the B018 falls into the trapping it tries to escape, which is benefiting and thriving of Beirut's chaos without actually confronting its past. It is not calling for rejecting the exterior space of the city and the dilemmas that run aloof in it; instead, it calls for not engaging with it.

Leaving Khoury's office after the interview concluded, I walked through the B018 and saw a number of taxis parked outside of it. The drivers had opened all their doors and were napping in the backseat of the car. It was daytime and the drivers, removed from the narrative understanding of the B018, treated it as a parking space to take a break. Their spatial experience was radically different from the narrative vision of the B018 and retained a certain geographic relationship to Beirut and its microeconomics. This brings us back to the topic of fiction in architecture and the use of narrative in the construction of manifestos. Khoury's discourse on architecture, Beirut and his place within the city was heavily invested in the creation of narratives of grandeur and contemporary urban myths. Instead of verbalizing angst and anxiousness that he deals with while being in Beirut, he couches the disappointment in the form of a struggle. Not a heroic one, but more of an anti-hero rebel. He justifies his use of architecture that services hegemons, capitalist executives and discreet moguls as a manifesto for post-war Beirut. Yet this manifesto retains a stronger relation to real estate development than it does to Beirut's social structure. This begs ask us to ask, can we imagine an architectural manifesto for a city such as Beirut with alarming privatization of land? Alternatively, has neoliberalism eviscerated the understanding of public good and transformative architecture? In his discussion of the Bonaventure Hotel and Portman's relationship to corporate real estate development, Jameson professes the dilemma of our minds being unable "at least at present, to map the great global multinational and decentered communicational network in which we find ourselves caught as individual subjects."[24]

24. Jameson, p43

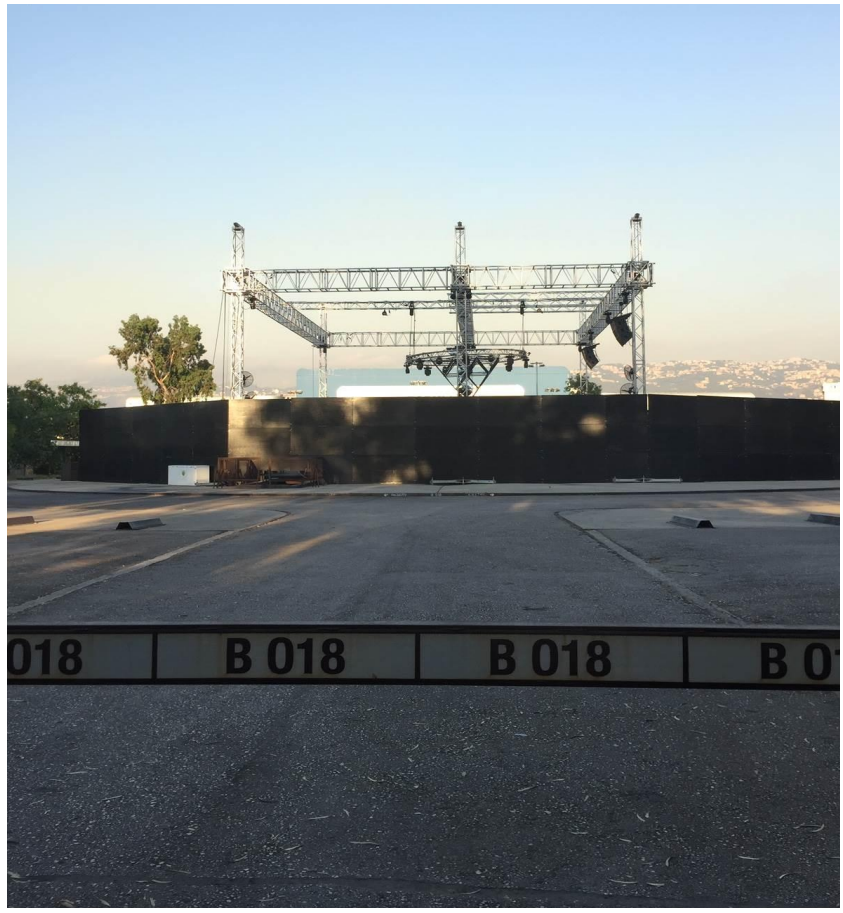

Figure 6.
Parking Lot, Beirut, 2017.
Photo by author.

Figure 7.
Interior of Bernard Khoury Office,
Beirut, 2017. Photo by author.

Figure 8,
Taxi Driver Sleeps in the Parking Lot of B018, Beirut, 2017. Photo by author.

Therefore, when we view the B018, we are looking at an embodiment of networked interests and capital inflows more than we are looking at a post-war monument. Its architecture commodifies and sells the experience of post-war Beirut, yet it does not steer the conversation beyond commercial consumerism. However, this is not solely an issue related to Bernard Khoury, it is a large dilemma that relates to post-war Beirut as a "brand," and a leisure "concept," that was sold to both investors and inhabitants. As Lebanon reels into the worst financial crisis in its contemporary history, and with investment from the Gulf States drying, it is clear that Beirut, as a city can no longer rely on being branded as a leisure destination. In order for Beirut to witness radical change in its built environment, it does not need more spaces such as B018, which recreate ennui and upper class escapism; it needs architecture that will re-establish the inhabitant's relationship with the city. For many residents of Beirut this relationship has become hostile and built on abject poverty, further destroying the social fabric and issuing alarmist memories of the city's violent past. The B018 represents the larger dilemma of escapism in Beirut and of locales with architectonics that become constant iterations of each other. If escapism was a mode of living that sheltered the residents of Beirut from the daily onslaught of the civil war, it has now become an entrenched commercial gimmick. Lastly, the B018 and Local Heroes represents the class trouble with an architectural manifesto for Beirut and the urgent need to frame such manifestos in a transformative public good instead of temporal locales built on private consumption and opaque symbolism. If we were to imagine a manifesto for Beirut, in the conundrum of the "post-war" label, the need is to imagine a manifesto for which space is envisioned as a place of dwelling and engagement and not a place of escape.

Figure 9,
View from Bernard Khoury Office, Beirut, 2017. Photo by author.

Figure 10,
Karantina Neighborhood, Beirut, 2017. Photo by author.

Ian Erickson

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An Obscure Manifesto

Ernst Lohse on Scandinavian Postmodernism

Architectural Postmodernism has largely been theorized as a British, American, and Italian phenomena ever since its initial diagnosis by Charles Jencks in The Language of Postmodern Architecture in 1977 and cultural popularization by Paolo Portoghesi in the first Venice Biennale of Architecture, The Presence of the Past in 1980. Nevertheless, there was a dynamic Postmodern movement in Scandinavian architecture from around 1975 to 1990 that remains largely overlooked.[1] The movement is dually obscured by the commodification of Scandinavian Modernism as the region's foremost architectural contribution and the lack of English language resources on the Postmodern period.[2] While the design work of Scandinavian Postmodernism challenged Modernism's puritanical aesthetics with graphic colours and historical motifs similarly to other Postmodern movements, it was unique in that it was also highly political. Scandinavian Postmodern architecture became politicized through its aesthetic association with radical social groups challenging the Modernist socio-economic regime of a functionalist welfare state for universal subjects as per "The Nordic Model". [3] The movement of Scandinavian Postmodern architecture coincided with regional political shifts such as the centrist Swedish "Third Way"—a government structure based on concepts like personal freedom that was supported by radicals on the left and right of the political spectrum.

1.
The movement is so obscure that Scandinavian Postmodernism is left out of rigorous global surveys of Postmodern architecture. See Terry Farrell and Adam Nathaniel Furman, Revisiting Postmodernism, (London: RIBA Publishing, 2018).

2.
Terms like "Scandinavian simplicity" are used to market and brand the region's design sensibility as an inherent affinity for Modernist minimalism and academic surveys of Scandinavian architecture stress Modernism's continued importance, ignoring Postmodern or otherwise avant-garde work. See William C. Miller, Nordic Modernism: Scandinavian Architecture 1890–2015 (London: Crowood Press, 2015).

The design and architecture cultures of Scandinavian countries have been condensed and commercialized by Britain and the United States since the 1950s, primarily due to the Design in Scandinavia exhibit in New York City which made them synonymous with the modernism of the time. See Kjetil Fallan, "Introduction," in Scandinavian Design: Alternative Histories (New York: Bloomsbury, 2012).

3. The Nordic Model is the set of social and economic practices common to the Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and Finland), which, since World War II, continue to successfully champion the Modernist ideals of a technologically advanced welfare state for universal subjects.

In this way, Postmodern architecture in Scandinavia has been begun to be described by scholars such as Helena Mattson as a site where "emancipatory movements like feminists, environmentalists and radical left-wing movements, overlapped (unintentionally) with conservative forces struggling towards a more liberal society." [4] This paper seeks to help better describe this contested space by analysing the first English translation of the Danish Postmodern architect and writer Ernst Lohse's 1986 manifesto Our Construction Should be Based in the Irrational—an obscure manifesto for an obscured movement.[5]

The political contention and overlap in Scandinavian Postmodern discourse is well described by Lohse's manifesto where, despite his own sympathy for environmentalism (his design practice with was named The Green Studio), Lohse adopts familiar conservative rhetoric, bemoaning the loss of mythologized Western culture and the limitations of the welfare state. Lohse's reactionary critique of Modernism casts a wide net, characterizing the diverse phenomenon of "the welfare state's fantastic propaganda of happiness, [a] driving interest in therapy, and new religious movements" as symptoms of the disease of soulless Modern architecture that plagues Scandinavia.[6] He presents Postmodernism as the only alternative to this regime, precisely for its lack of rationality that privileges individualism and symbolism. Lohse's manifesto was written as part of a series of predictive think pieces called "Our Culture Pointed Towards the 90s" for the Danish newspaper Kristeligt Dagblad, and is broken up into three sections: Modernism's denial, rediscovering our cultural heritage, and the myth of Saint Sebastian. Lohse's decision to publish a piece which was to predict the future of Scandinavian architecture in a newspaper, particularly a centrist one like Kristeligt Dagblad (The Danish Christian Newspaper), was significant, as it marked a departure from his earlier efforts in writing both in terms of the piece's audience and approach. While he had previously written less polemical texts for academic outlets, and had built some installations with aspirations to scale up to buildings, by 1986 only his drawings had gained any notoriety.

Modernism's denial begins with a comparison between the aesthetic sensibilities of the 1980s and the Romanticism of the 1800s, borrowing the term "New Romantics" from the 1980s British music scene—a subgenre that included Boy George, Classix Nouveaux, Duran Duran, and Flock of Seagulls—as a way to characterize the aesthetic preoccupations of the

4.
Helena Mattsson, "Revisiting Swedish Postmodernism: Gendered Architecture and Other Stories," Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Journal of Art History 85, no. 1 (2016).

5.
The manifestio was translated into the English language for the first time by Henry Weikel, an Mst. Candidate in English Literature at the University of Oxford. Ernst Lohse, "Our Construction Must Be Based in the Irrational," Kristeligt Dagblad, July 26, 1986.

6.
Ibid.

decade: sensuousness, theatricality, and symbolism. This affinity between the 1980s and the 1800s is "proven" in Lohse's estimation by the large 1986 renovation of the Musée d'Orsay in Paris to house paintings from the 1800s. Lohse argues that the 1800s are so attractive to the minds of the 1980s precisely because twentieth century Modernism denied the preceding century so consistently, enforcing a tabula rasa approach to history. This is well covered ground. However, Lohse simultaneously constructs a more novel argument and explicates the title of his manifesto when he links these "New Romantic" tendencies to "the worship of the irrational—both in poetry and decadence". Here, Lohse's obsession with the romantic and the irrational is conflated with religious devotion. Lohse sets up a binary between his own spiritually charged, irrational "New Romanticism" and the dominant regime of "soulless" modern technology as mutually exclusive spheres. Boldly, (and I would argue ahistorically)[7] he asserts that architecture and technology are similarly opposed, claiming that in the modern technologized age "architecture can no longer be called architecture" because concrete construction is "perverted".
Rationalist Modernism is therefore merely a fetish while the irrational and romantic Postmodernism is true architecture.

Lohse extends his critique of technologized Modern architecture by touching upon class relations, writing, "Who wants to live in the common modern concrete building? Nobody, except those who can in some way afford to escape it." Here, Lohse's claims intersect with larger economic and social forces changing the landscape of the building industry in Scandinavia, which, in the 1980s, was moving away from Modern models like the Swedish "One Million Program" where one million new units of suburban social housing were built between 1964–1974, to a more neoliberal model, with most new construction being significant renovations of existing inner city Modern building stock into single family residences for the wealthy and middle class.[8] These renovations were an "elaboration of Modernistic form through the use of historical motifs" to mark one's individuality against the backdrop of universalist Modern architecture; they existed in a grey zone between Lohse's binaries, at once Modernist in their substrate and Postmodernist in their augmentation. The manipulation of Modern form through the application of historical motifs in single family residences was described by Bo Bergman in the first issue of the journal Arkitektur (a key site of Postmodern discourse in

7.
Technology has always defined the frontier of possibilities for a work of architecture, though Lohse seems to be drawing a line between capital A and lowercase a architecture—the latter being, in Lohse's conception, the product of a technologically determined process and the former being some sort of amalgamated product of aesthetics, soul, and regional history.

8.
See Mattsson, "Revisiting Swedish Postmodernism"

Scandinavia) as "a subversive act against capitalistic consumer oriented architecture, expendable in its repeated form, in the suburbs"—a seemingly self-defeating claim, as the renovations were nevertheless in service of wealthy consumers and not of the proletariat, who actually lived in the "repeated form" of the Modern suburbs.[9] Despite this nuanced discourse, Lohse clings to binaries and roughly defines Modernism as a painfully reductive technological environment that only the wealthy can escape, and importantly, can maintain, as even in the 1980s Modern architecture was beginning to age and decay in the face of insufficient maintenance regimens which only the wealthy could afford to undertake or augment—a phenomenon that is now well documented and theorized.[10]

9. Bo Bergman, "The City's Dissolved Rooms," Arkitektur 1, p3–5.

The next section of Lohse's manifesto, rediscovering our cultural heritage, continues to engage with history asking, "Can we dream of a new, thrilling architecture of the future with roots in tradition, architectural language, cohabitation, and human expression that represents our cultural tradition and specificity?" Despite the call for specificity, Lohse's engagement with Scandinavian history and tradition both in his writing and his work, is quite nonspecific—not once in his essay does he refer to a specific element or tenet of Scandinavian architecture he values nor does he further explain what he means by the Scandinavian "tradition". Lohse's relationship to history is mediated by a lens of fantasy and reinterpretation that characterizes the larger movement of Scandinavian Postmodernism, uniquely appealing to the conservative imaginary through its myth-making. Reactionary thought, as a particular tradition of right-wing politics, has been described in Mark Lilla's 2016 study of nostalgia's effects on politics, The Shipwrecked Mind: On Political Reaction, as precisely about recapturing a vague and idealized past in just the way Lohse is proposing.[11]

10. See Mark Wigley, White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001); and Hilary Sample, Maintenance Architecture (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016).

11. See Lilla, Mark. "Introduction" in The Shipwrecked Mind: on Political Reaction, pp. xii.

Lohse also engages with more concrete disciplinary concerns, casting phenomenology as an immediate populist vehicle, while coding abstraction as an intellectual, elitist pursuit that is too delayed in its decoding: "Art today no longer deals with abstract thought but is immediately concrete and sensual." Lohse addresses materiality, defining the white walls and grey concrete as symptoms of, "Modernism's ensnaring morality". He proposes instead that "We bring colour back into our houses and onto our walls", in order to "rediscover the entirety of our formidable culture heritage".

Motifs from Scandinavia's regional cultural heritage rendered in vivid colour are to be the source of liberation from Modernism's insidious morality: "We shall break free!" While Lohse began his manifesto with a well-trod critique of functionalism he marches forward into less familiar territory by introducing a kind of soft nationalism that conflates color and architectural effects with civic freedom and pride for a mythic cultural past.

The final subsection, the myth of Saint Sebastian, is accompanied by one of Lohse's own drawings which bears the same title (Fig. 1). He describes the work:

I interpret the myth of Saint Sebastian as a picture of resignation: the most exalted resignation. The martyr accepts his fate and thinks of it impassively. Saint Sebastian is moved by the divine spirit so that he no longer feels the terrible physical pain afflicting him. Not only the arrows but also the divine spirit pierce his fragile flesh. This idea resurfaces in my drawing: architecture penetrating mere physical function, symbolized by the ruined concrete building. Simultaneously, there is a resignation present: a recognition that not all architectural visions are realized but must instead exist side by side with the uninspired.

There is an ambiguity present in this work and its description. Lohse himself seems to want to assume the mantle of the martyr of avant-garde Postmodernism, and his spectacular architectural intervention adopts the splayed posture of the martyr in many Saint Sebastian paintings (Fig. 2), yet it is the Modernist concrete building that is actually pierced by Lohse's intervening "divine spirit" in the same manner as Saint Sebastian. It is as if, like in Peter Eisenman's diagram of the Jewish Museum by Daniel Libeskind that unfolds the "zigzag" against the initial penetrating void to reveal a figure that is almost identical to the original composition. These two subjects are also inextricable and symmetrical in their inversion: the martyr and its piercer endlessly reversing.[12] For Lohse, the martyr is an unstable and double subject. Lohse acknowledge the importance of the dialectical nature of the motif Saint Sebastian more generally, citing its functional doubling in art historical discourse, where it simultaneously performed religious and homoerotic roles. For Lohse, the martyr is an unstable and double subject: both his own mantle (regional Postmodernism) and that of his opposition (functionalist Modernism). In

12.
See Peter Eisenman, Ten Canonical Buildings, 1950–2000 (New York: Rizzoli, 2008).

Fig 1. Ernst Lohse, The Myth of Saint Sebastian, photocopy of drawing (Copenhagen, Kristeligt Dagblad, 1986).

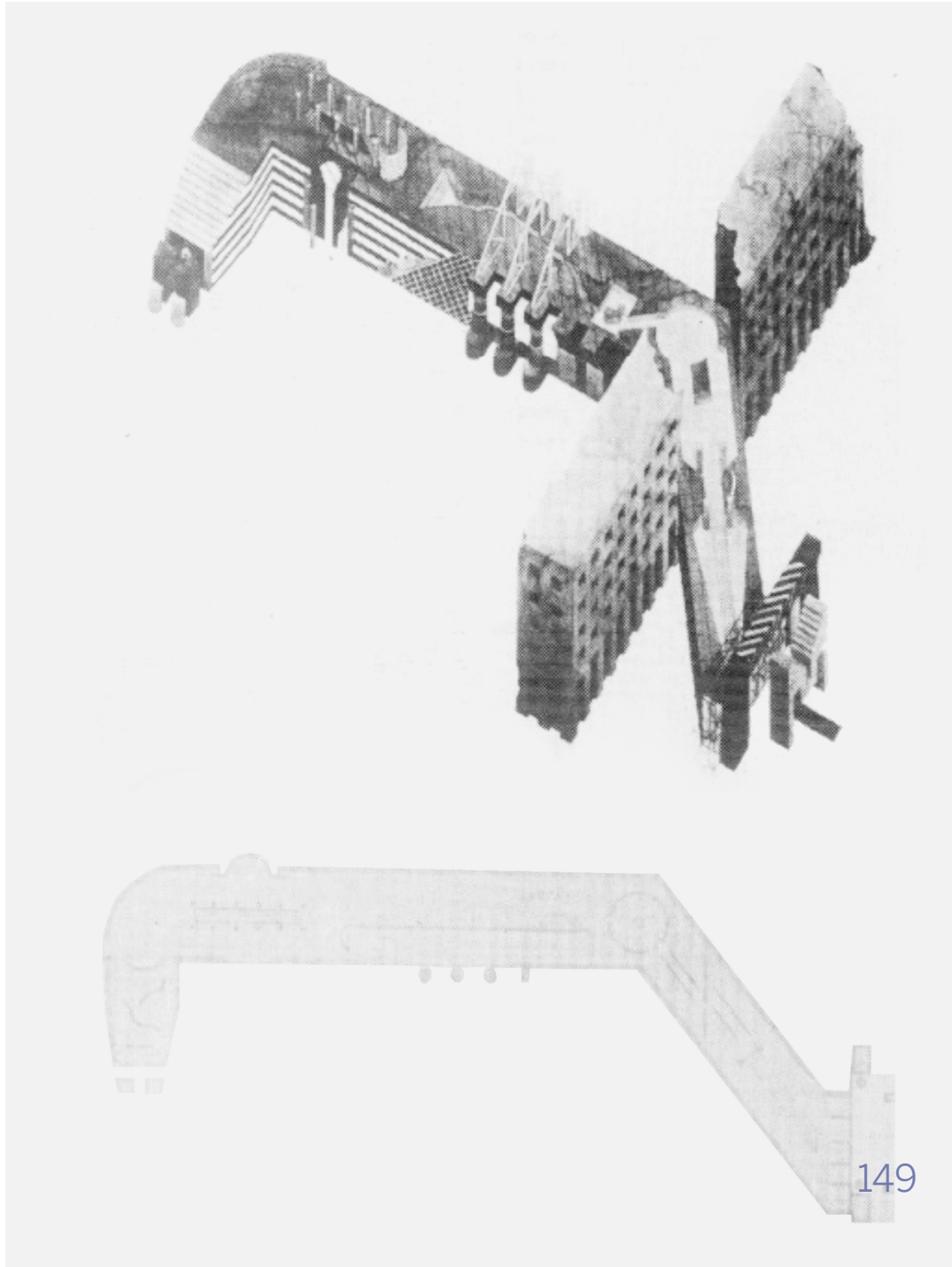


Fig 2. Giovanni Battista Caracciolo, The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, c. 1625, oil on canvas, 112 x 202 cm, Harvard Art Museum

all this he seems to be partially resigning himself to feeling the "pain" of a practice of paper architecture despite his aspirations to move beyond the page, the object, and the installation—all mediums he had previously worked in—and build at full scale in order to shape the built environment of Scandinavia according to his visions. He attempts to imbue the buildings he drew with a kind of vivid perceptual physicality, able to feel pain and commiserate with their author.

In the final sentence of his manifesto, Lohse predicts that "A strong symbolism will strike through the architecture of the century's last decade, it will be a time when we will again learn to refer to our thousand-year-old [Scandinavian] myths after sixty years of architectural puritanism."

Lohse's prediction for Scandinavian architecture in the 1990s proved only partially true; while there was a reactionary turn towards Scandinavian history, it took a very different form than Lohse heralded. Instead of graphic Postmodern versions of historical motifs, the architectural images that characterized Scandinavia in the popular imagination during the 1990s was twelfth-century stave churches set on fire in spectacular, violent citations of Scandinavian myth and architectural symbolism (fig. 4). Before 1992, an average of one stave church burned a year, but between 1992 and 1996 there were fifty stave church arsons that were largely attributed to, and claimed by, youth in the Scandinavian Black Metal Scene, itself a community plagued by contention and overlap between the right and the left of the political spectrum.[13]

13.
Satan rir media [Satan Rides the Media], dir. Torstein Grude (Kari Gjerde, 1998).

Lohse's imprecise yet nevertheless prescient predictions for the architectural culture of Scandinavia in the 1990s likely stem from his hope for the momentum building in his own work. His first built project, a temporary gate leading to Strøget in Copenhagen (the longest pedestrian-only shopping street in the world) was constructed in 1985, a year before he wrote Our Construction Should be Based in the Irrational (Fig. 5). The gate was controversial; despite Lohse's own self-professed quasi-religious affinity for Scandinavian history and symbolism, many claimed it was not Scandinavian enough. This sentiment was echoed in other critiques

Fig 3. Fantoft Stave Church Arson, built 1150, photograph (1992).

of Postmodern architecture in Scandinavia, a result of the movement designing avant-garde reinterpretations of historical structures rather than earnest reproductions.[14] The original review of the gate in the May 7, 1986 issue of Kristeligt Dagblad, titled And so Copenhagen Got a Gate Again, cast Lohse as a kind of architectural necromancer, a reanimator of long-dead historical structures: "The last time Copenhagen had a gate at this entrance was under the initiative of Frederik III, but that has fallen to the teeth of time and can today only be seen in The Danish Vitruvius". (Fig. 6) The original design was built as its own kind of architectural curiosity, with cannon barrels used as columns supporting the main cornice, which were later removed during the 1772 renovation by Frederik IV pictured in the etching in The Danish Vitruvius. [15] Lohse's multiple iterations of the gate design seem to reference both the original and its renovation in a careful negotiation of historic fidelity and Postmodern aesthetics—the final result hauntingly recalls images of the Fantoft Stave Church post-arson: both are husks of architectural history, deconstructed and symbolically potent.

However, once the temporary structure approached the date of its scheduled demise, the focus of discourse around the gate changed, becoming "no longer about art, but about politics"; a follow-up article in the July 17, 1986 issue of Kristeligt Dagblad read, "The gateway to Strøget has become the gateway to conflict", as opposing political and social groups fought over its demolition or preservation.[16] Tellingly, when the State Art Fund declined to support the preservation of the resurrected historical gate, it was members of one of the more conservative parties, characterized by its neoliberal Third Way politics, that campaigned for state funding of this public art piece writing, "It is pathetic and contemptuous for historical art like 'the Gateway' not to be preserved for the future".[17] In the end, the gate was destroyed, an ironic confirmation of Lohse's claim that "Culture lives where conformity is burned down". Lohse's only other built work, his first and final building,[18] the Visitors' Centre at Dybbol Banke (1990), was completed four years before his own premature death at the age of fifty. Lohse died too young to realize his spectacular architectural visions for his country and region, limiting his influence on both local and global architectural culture. The only existing English language media on Lohse is a short review of his drawings by Peter Cook in a 1984 issue of Architectural Review.[19]

14.
See Mats Tormod, "Venturi in Manhattan," Arkitektur, No , (1980): 30–31.

15
Lohse, "And so Copenhagen Got a Gate Again."

16.
Lohse, "Gate to Conflict."

17.
Ibid.

18.
Most of Lohse's work was either two-dimensional and graphic or below the scale of architecture, taking the form of stage/theater sets, furniture, etc.

19.
Peter Cook, "The Drawings of Ernst Lohse," Architectural Review 175, no. 1054 (March 1984): 22–25.

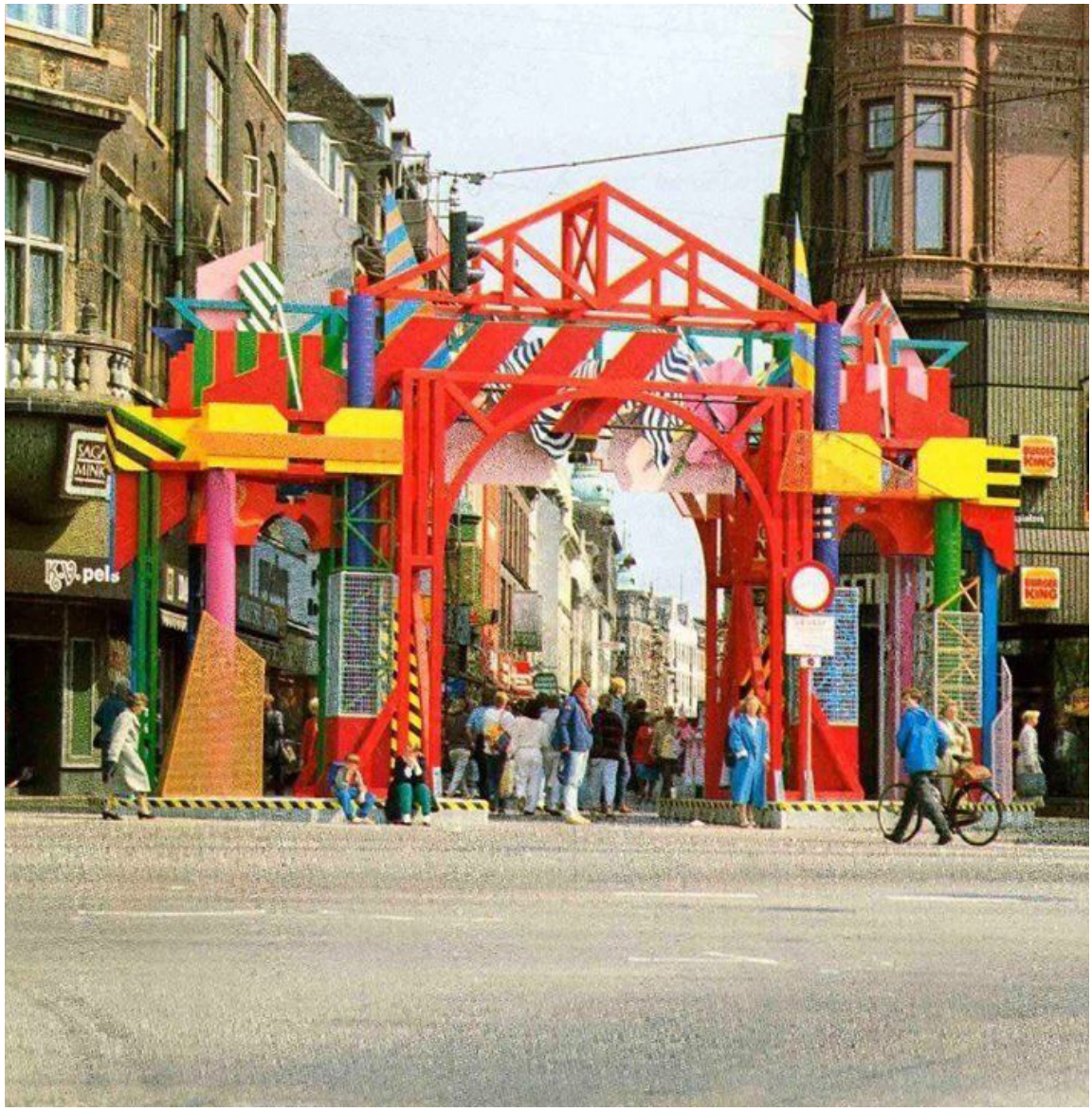
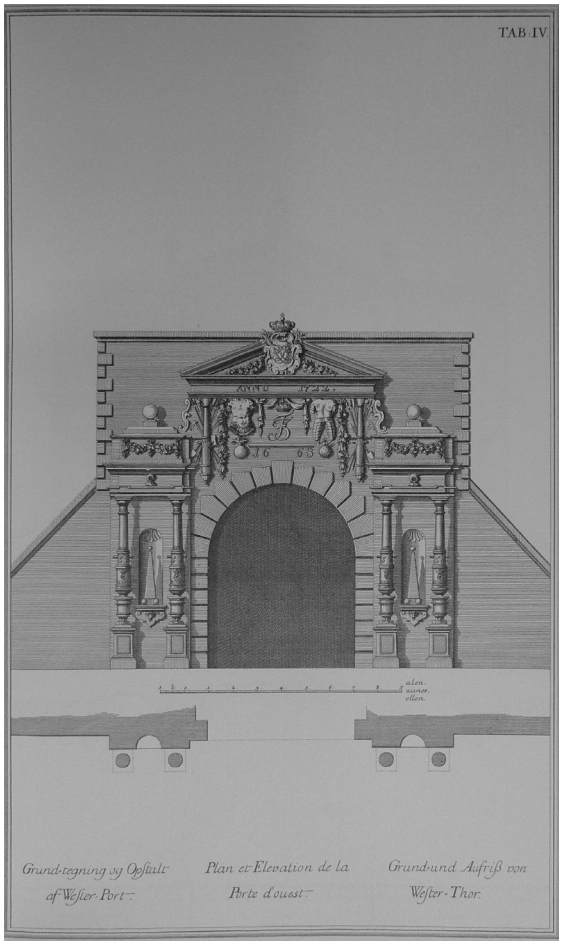


Fig 4. Ernst Iohse. Western Gate of Copenhagen, photograph (1985).

However, Lohse's contemporary relevance lies not in his built work and installations, nor reviews of his drawings, but rather is best encapsulated by the spirit of his manifesto, which prefigures contemporary debates around Postmodernism as a site of contention for diverging political ideologies though its seductive qualities of fantasy, myth-making, and historical symbolism. Today, reactionary critiques of Modernism that echo Lohse's sentiments are being rehabilitated by both the right and left of the political spectrum.[20]

20.
See Mathieson, Joe, and Tim Verlaan. "The Far Right's Obsession With Modern Architecture." Failed Architecture, September 11, 2019.

See Brianna Rennix and Nathan J. Robinson, "Why You Hate Contemporary Architecture," Current Affairs, October 31, 2017,



Lauritz de Thurah, Elevation of the Western Gate of Copenhagen: Built in 1668 by Frederik III and renovated in 1722 by Frederik IV, etching, from Den Danske Vitruvius (Copenhagen, 1745).

Postmodern aesthetic tactics of pastiche and facadism are being used to prop up right-wing regimes in Europe as Modernist concrete Yugoslavian government buildings are covered with skeletons of faux-traditional ornament in what Marco Icev has called a "plan for the destruction of Modern monuments through Postmodernism".[21] Scandinavia itself has become a hotbed for debates around architecture along the themes of heritage, symbolism, and cultural identity in the face of mass refugee asylum—a small but growing right-wing faction challenges the region's longtime liberalism. In our disciplinary context, Jimenez Lai recently periodized a decade of Postmodern revivalism in the American Academy in Log 46 and in the same issue David Gissen observed that a more general return to classical motifs is occurring globally.[22] A whole generation of students have been educated in this (neo)Postmodern regime and now move forward into practice, begging the question of what this tradition teaches and what baggage it comes with.

21. See Marco Icev, "The Archive Is Burnin," UCLA Urban Humanities Salon Exhibition and Symposium, June 2019, p46.

22. Jimenez Lai argues that this period of contemporary Postmodern revival began in 2008—coinciding with the global financial crisis and the release of the first iPhone—and continues to the present day. See Jimenez Lai, "Between Irony and Sincerity," Log 46 (August 2019). See David Gissen, "Wake New History," Log 46 (August 2019).

Given this contemporary milieu, this paper's attempt at beginning to reconstruct the historical discourse of a little-known regional Postmodernism that is uniquely obscured by its own region's dominant narratives might help give broader context to these phenomena. The translated manifesto is a particularly useful tool to undertake this historiographic reconstruction as it is a manifesto's role to describe a movement's aspirations and positioning concisely and sharply. Reading Postmodernism through the specific regional artefact of Lohse's manifesto pushes back against Postmodernism's generalized historiography, such as Beatriz Colomina's assertion that Postmodernism is fundamentally an American academic product of "graduates of elite universities" who sought to "restore the architect to a position of centrality" in the post-war era.[23] Instead, in Scandinavia, Postmodernism was a site of legitimate social, economic, and cultural contention that stoked conflict and debate around history, symbolism, and politics that literally ignited architecture itself—it seems we again await an impending ignition.

23. Beatriz Colomina, "Forward," Neo-Avant-Garde and Postmodern Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond, p2–3.

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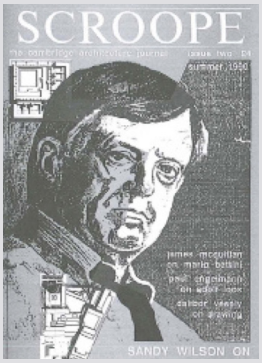

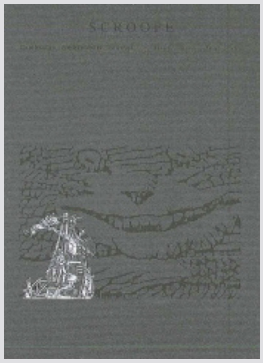

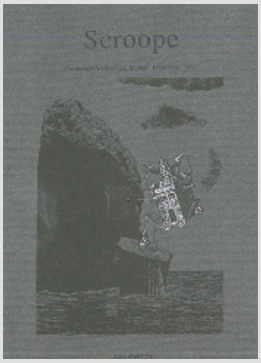

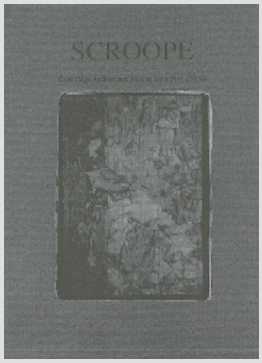

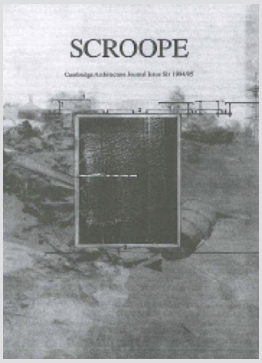

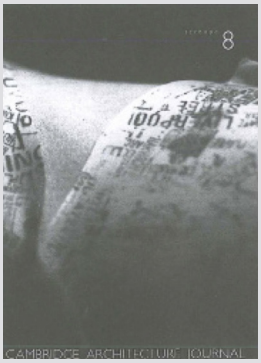

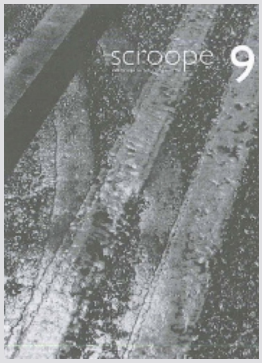

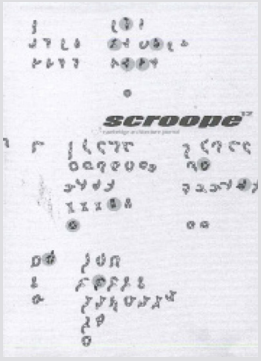

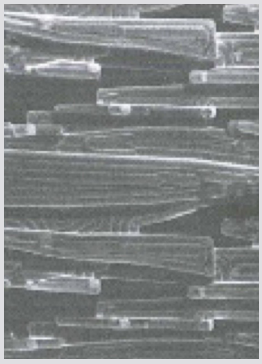

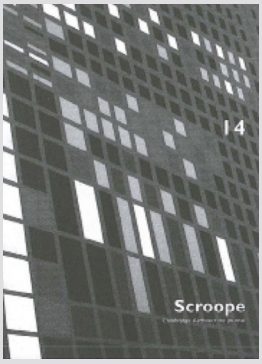

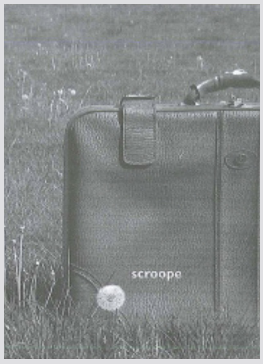

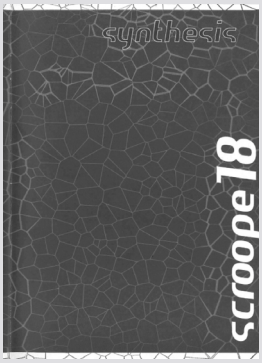

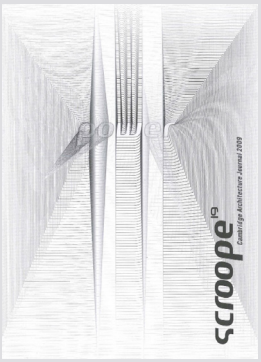

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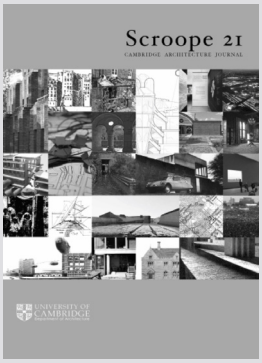

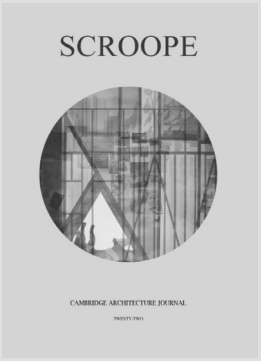

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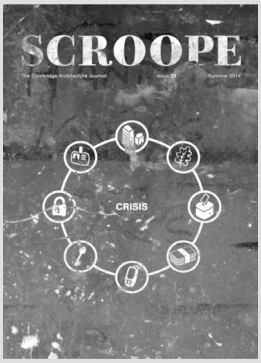

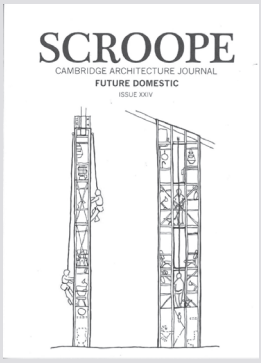

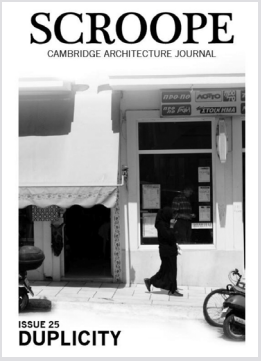

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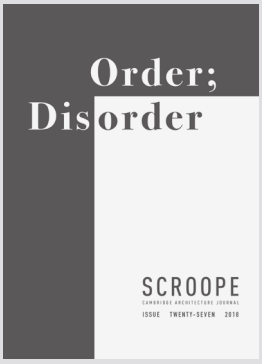

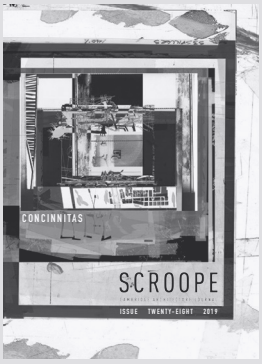

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