MATERIAL PRACTICES: Positionality, Methodology and Ethics

Meike Schalk, Karin Reisinger, Elena Markus Kossovskaja, Uta Leconte

Practice-oriented research frequently starts from a **'material'** and develops its theoretical concepts and frameworks along the way or as outcomes. Several architectural practices, often in collaboration with other disciplines, and in relation to various geographies, have already begun to radically reconceptualize knowledge production in sustainable processes from the perspective of the material.

Current discussions of **materialisms** have attempted to go beyond discursive processes, based on unveiling social and cultural constructions to reconsider the organization and compositions of **materiality** and their socio-ecological and political effects. Over the last two decades, matter, objects, 'things' and artifacts have received increasing scientific attention and become reconceptualized. These emerging theoretical and **methodological** directions criticize the imagination of the natural world and technical artifacts as mere resources for technical progress and economic growth.

The expansion of concepts of agency and self-organization to non-human entities, as well as the questioning of traditional notions of life and death has become critical (Barad, 2007; Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2016; Latour, 2021).[1] Karen Barad, in particular, has taught us that the relationship between ontology ('what is'), epistemology (how we know about it) and ethics has to be rethought[2] — which we understand, in this publication, as a task of creatively re-thinking processes of knowledge development in architectures based on recent shifts in the world.[3] This includes an awareness that specific material entanglements and embodied knowledges relate to various inequalities caused by racism, sexism and ableism (Truman, 2019; Yusoff, 2019).[4]

In this complex scope, thinking materialisms together with **ethics** has been crucial for many contributors in this publication. This collection is the culmination of a one-year long research education programme at Technical University of Munich's Department of Architecture and KTH School of Architecture at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm for the BauHow5 Alliance and the Swedish research school ResArc.[5] In regular gatherings starting with the international workshop for doctoral researchers, 'Approaching Research Practice in Architecture 2021' (ARPA), followed by five further modules, participants explored the matter of their research projects through open lectures by invited guests, literature seminars, workshops, peer reviews and writing sessions. The group included participants from fifteen different global universities who contributed their knowledge and experiences to the debates, all with an interest in developing their research practices in architecture.[6]

This research education programme intended to go beyond the predominant Eurocentric discourse in architectural research. We asked the following questions:

How do you work with your material and **position** yourself?

What are the sources of knowledge in architecture that you are aware of, what voices are included/excluded in a canon? How can we as architectural researchers contribute to a development of knowledge that results in more diverse canons? What are specific relations in your complex cartographies of knowledge?

1 Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge/ Malden: Polity Press, 2013); Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC/ London: Duke University Press, 2016); Bruno Latour, *After Lockdown: A Metamorphosis* (London: Wiley, 2021).

2 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*; Iris van der Tuin and Rick Dolphijn (eds), *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012).

3 See Rosi Braidotti, 'What is Necessary is a Radical Transformation, Following the Bases of Feminism, Anti-racism and Anti-fascism', https://lab.cccb.org/en/rosi-braidotti-what-is-necessary-is-a-radical-transformation-following-the-bases-of-feminism-anti-racism-and-anti-fascism/, accessed: 5 May 2023.

4 Sarah E. Truman, 'Feminist New Materialisms', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Research Methods*, eds P. A. Atkinson, S. Delamont, M. A. Hardy and M. Williams (London: SAGE, 2019); Kathryn Yusoff, *A Million Black Anthropocenes or None* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).

5 BauHow5 includes The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment of the University College London (UCL), Chalmers University of Technology, Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering (CUT), the Department of Architecture of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH), the Department of Architecture of the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and BK Bouwkunde of Delft University of Technology (DUT). The Swedish research school ResArc includes besides CUT also Lund Institute of Technology (LTH), and KTH School of Architecture at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH).

6 The programme was taught by Torsten Lange, Elena Markus, Andreas Putz at TUM, Meike Schalk at KTH and Anna Boyksen Fellow at TUM-Institute for Advanced Study, and Karin Reisinger, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, who engaged especially with the writing practices of architectural PhD education. ARPA 2021-2022 followed ARPA 2020-2021. See the publication of the first doctoral programme, Meike Schalk, Torsten Lange, Andreas Putz, Tijana Stevanović, Elena Markus (eds), 'Species of Theses and Other Pieces', *Dimensions. Journal of Architectural Knowledge*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2022.

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Technical University of Munich
Arcisstr. 21, 80333 München
www.ed.tum.de
kommunikation@ed.tum.de

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Elena Markus, Uta Leconte

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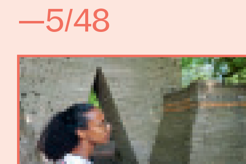

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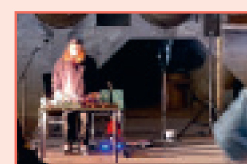

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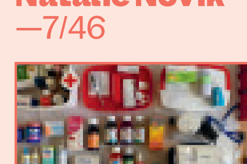

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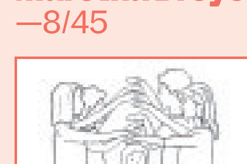

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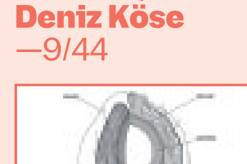

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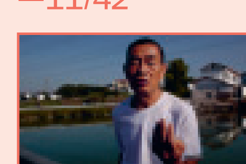

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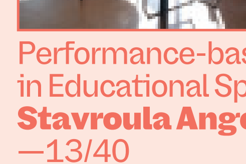

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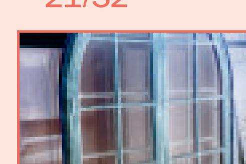

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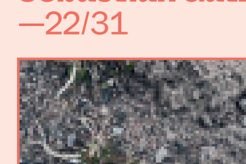

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BIOS

Stavroula Angelaki is a doctoral student at KTH, Royal Institute of Technology. Her research focuses on lighting design in educational spaces. She holds a bachelor's degree in interior architecture and design from the Technological Educational Institute of Athens and a master's degree in lighting design from Aalborg University in Copenhagen.

Estefania Mompean Botias is an architect and urban planner currently pursues her Ph.D. at ALICE laboratory at EPFL (2021–2025). Her research explores the Emergency conditions, the study of their ambivalences, examining the new connotations of regulation that the Emergency States are acquiring, and identifying how architecture and urban studies respond to these situations.

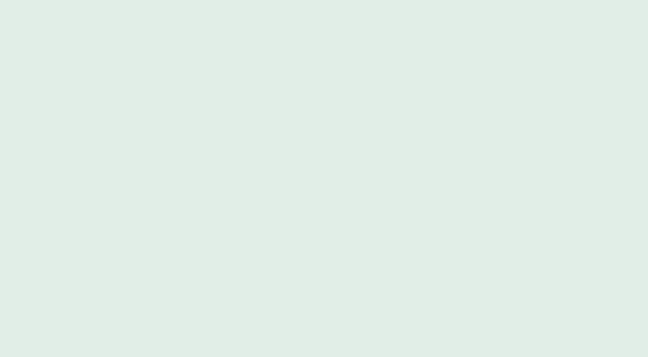
Adrià Carbonell is a Stockholm-based architect and urbanist. He is a lecturer in architecture and a PhD candidate in urban design at KTH Royal Institute of Technology. He is cofounder of the research collaborative Aside, where he writes on the interplay between architecture, territory, politics and the environment.

Helka Dzsacsovszki is an architectural historian from Hungary. She studied architectural history and conservation at the University of Edinburgh and is currently a doctoral candidate at the Technical University of Munich, where she is researching the developing theories on contemporary modern architecture in historic urban contexts during the Cold War from a Hungarian perspective.

Chero Eliassi is a doctoral student in theory and the history of architecture at the Royal Institute of Technology, KTH. Her work focuses on researching how the outdoor environments of the Swedish Million-Program neighbourhoods have—through a social, ecological and spatial perspective—been transformed and used after their construction.

Sonia Cohan is currently completing her PhD on representational imagery in architecture at the Royal Danish Academy in Copenhagen. She has a background in both architecture and photography, and holds a master of architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and her bachelor of fine arts in photography from the University of Washington, Seattle.

Maretha Dreyer is an architect and lecturer at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (South Africa). She holds an MA in gender studies from University College Dublin (Ireland) and is currently a doctoral student at Hasselt University (Belgium). Her research focuses on the intersection of architecture, gender and mobility studies.



Sebastian Gatz is an architect, artist and trained car mechanic who works at the intersection of art, architecture and technology. He is currently undertaking a PhD in fine arts at Konstfack—University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm. His research combines ficto-critical and posthuman methods to explore human-nature-technology relationships. He has previously worked and taught at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts for the Centre for Information Technology and Architecture (CITA).

Sreeprada Gogulapati is a PhD candidate in the Department of Design at the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, India. She is a Prime Minister Research Fellowship candidate. Her current research is concerned with practice-based design research. This research aims to explore the sculptural properties of Jaalis [perforated spatial screens that are common in vernacular architecture] in creating experiences.

Anne Gross is an architect and filmmaker from Berlin, based in Tokyo. She is co-founder of Studio GROSS, with projects published in Japanese and the international media, such as a video series for the CCA. Anne is also pursuing her PhD in systemic thought in the urban realm at the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

Matilde Kautsky is a Stockholm-based architect and PhD candidate in applied urban design at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, where she also teaches. She is especially interested in just cities, equal living conditions and social sustainability. Her research focuses on public spaces, like schoolyards and their architectural morphology, usage and how they are distributed in the city.

Neelakantan Keshavan is a faculty member of the Department of Design at the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, India. He is keenly interested in design as the cultivation, preservation and proliferation of difference and heterogeneity. His research areas are visual and spatial culture, the agency of the architect, design as a discourse of visions and architecture as an active search for being at home.

Ekaterina Kochetkova is a PhD candidate in the Department of Architecture at Seoul National University of Science and Technology. She graduated with honours from the Faculty of Design at Vladivostok State University and since 2015 has been exploring the intersection of urban life, culture and architecture from the perspective of a foreigner in Korea where she relocated under the Korean Government Scholarship Programme.

Deniz Köse studied architecture at TU Darmstadt and is now a PhD candidate at the Technical University of Munich. Her research in Urban Design focuses on the democratization of urban public space in human and non-human contexts. She also works as a freelancer with projects that involve games in the context of design and architecture.

Torsten Lange is Lecturer in Cultural and Architectural History at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland. His work focuses on questions of labour and production in architecture, gendered bodies and the spatialities of care from a queer perspective. He recently co-edited the special issue of gta papers, "CARE", with Gabrielle Schaad.

Uta Lecomte is a researcher in architecture and cultural theory. Her work focuses on architecture as a cultural practice in the processes of globalization, transformation and instability since the 1970s, as well as on equity, diversity and inclusion in architectural pedagogy and practice.

Elena Markus Kossovskaja has been teaching architecture theory at the TUM Technical University of Munich since 2014. In her PhD entitled (Dirty) Realism. Analogue Architecture 1983–1987, she investigated the social and political significance of an alternative architecture production with regard to the dirty realism discourse in the art and architecture of the 1980s.

Michelle Mlati is an independent curator and PhD researcher in the project Green Participation; a joint initiative between the KULeuven and Chalmers University of Technology focusing upon the history and theory of inclusive ecological landscape design in the development of green infrastructure in the Low Countries (NL) and elsewhere from the 1960s to present-day ongoing projects at the nexus of climate, ecology, design and politics. She is also a 2023 ICI Curatorial Research Fellow under the Marian Goodman Gallery Initiative in honour of the late Okuwi Enwezor researching The Forest and Desert School emerging from Sudan in the 1960s.

Soscha Monteiro de Jesus is a PhD researcher at Delft University of Technology where she investigates histories of sustainability in urban design from the 1970s until the turn of the century. She is a Steering Group member of the Architectural Humanities Research Association (AHRA) and cofounder of a housing cooperative in Amsterdam.

Natalie Novik is a spatial practitioner, researcher and educator. Her interests include the notion of shared spaces and self-organization, especially in the field of cultural initiatives, commoning, collective care and low-impact ways of living. She holds a master's degree in architecture and urban planning from Chalmers, and she is currently enrolled in a doctoral artistic research programme at HDK-Valand Academy of Art and Design in Gothenburg.

Hongxia Pu is a PhD student researching the 'desakota urbanity in hilly regions in southwest China' at the University of Copenhagen. In 2019 she graduated in urbanism and strategic spatial planning from KU Leuven, Belgium. During her postgraduate studies she completed five international projects and her group works have been exhibited at the 2018 Venice Biennale and the 10th International Biennale of Landscape Architecture in Barcelona.

Karin Reisinger is an architect with a PhD in Visual Culture. She teaches writing seminars at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Institute for Education in the Arts where she also leads the Austrian Science Fund research projects 'Two Ore Mountains' and 'Stories of Post-extractive Feminist Futures'. Her research foregrounds feminist perspectives from within extractive areas.

Meike Schalk is Associate Professor in Urban Design and Urban Theory and Docent in Architecture at KTH School of Architecture. Her research combines critical inquiry into discourses of social justice and democracy, and collaboration in planning and design with practice-oriented research methods. She currently holds an Anna Boyksen fellowship at the Technical University of Munich-Institute of Advanced Study.

Khaoula Stiti is an architect and a PhD candidate at Université libre de Bruxelles in Belgium. She is also an active member of Edifices & Mémoires, a non-governmental organization dedicated to preserving endangered Tunisian heritage. Her research revolves around the convergence of participatory praxis, digital mediums, and heritage awareness. Specifically, her work focuses on the colonial heritage of downtown Tunis, which serves as an example of heritage that is both endangered and contested. In addition to her doctoral studies, Khaoula explores topics related to coloniality, migration, and autoethnography.

Asha Sumra is an Architectural Designer, PhD fellow at Aarhus School of Architecture, Denmark and Visiting Faculty at Bengal Institute, Bangladesh. After studying Architecture at the University of Cambridge, UK and the Catholic University of Valparaíso, Chile, she is currently investigating how ecologies of production, exchange and residue of materials impact building culture.

Zuzana Tabačková is a founding member of the interdisciplinary collective Spolka which is active in the field of urban design in Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2017, she has also been working as a research associate in the Department for Urban Design and Development at the Institute of Urban and Regional Planning at the TU Berlin. Her work combines spatial practice, research and education.

Afua Wilcox is a professional architect and PhD researcher at TU Delft. She has extensive experience in the research and practical design implementation of affordable housing and informal settlement upgraded projects in South Africa. She has also administered a number of housing-related courses at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. Afua is currently pursuing her PhD in the faculty of architecture and the built environment, with her subject matter based on informal settlement upgrades in South Africa.

Postscript

Know-ledge Carto-graphies

Karin Reisinger

The ARPA course included continuous writing sessions on the topics of intersectionality, thick descriptions, situated knowledges and positionality.[1] For a writing session in April, we invited the participants to temporarily escape the linear structures of text and engage in mapping the various sources and materials that each of us worked with. What are the references or sources of information for the knowledge production in process? Which people, writings, materials and concepts are important (and often neglected in a thesis)? Thus, during the course that provided the context for writing the contributions to this textbook, we took some time to reflect upon our learning processes and to reconsider from which human and more-than-human sources we have gathered knowledge, and to illustrate those sources. Our chosen format was a map that contained text, images, connective lines and arrows. The mappings that were produced contained an impressive variety of elements: texts; concepts; visualizations of people and further lively creatures, as well as materials; fields; architectures; sites; spaces and places; tools and building elements; videos; annual figures; sound recordings; people; photography; written stories and experiences. Related carefully, the maps showed interdependencies and complexities whilst they transgressed disciplinary attempts at categorization.

As much of this course was inspired, and deeply influenced by, feminist critiques of knowledge production, we need to express our gratitude to Rosi Braidotti for her constant reminders about the importance of critical cartographies that connect peripheries and centres, create awareness of old and new 'Masters' Narratives' and look at the 'micro-geographies of power relations' that rely on local and global connections.[2] When we discussed the produced micro-geographies, specific ways of addressing intersectionalities emerged during the reflections about the sources of our knowledge. Mapping, and thus not taking connections between locations and concepts, materialities and architectures for granted, turned out to be productive. It helped to overcome, or at least generate awareness of, the duality of sites and architectures to be studied on the one hand, and the places where knowledge and power relations are discussed and reproduced on the other (in academia for example).[3] Uniting the skills of architectural illustration with the feminist tool of drawing cartographies based on situating, locating and connecting interdependencies, the method of mapping knowledge production, which is always in a state of flux, was a further step to access a series of questions.

How does the material show diversity and interaction (connections, relations)?
Which complexities could be observed and how is material/architecture a part of these complexities?
How is the personal experience related to further sources? Are there contradictions?
Who are the experts anyway?
Which questions remain open? Is this openness (or silence) productive or indebted to exclusionary knowledge traditions?

When mapping feminist new materialisms, Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin used cartographies to move from classificatory and linear engagements to cartographical engagements with the ability to overcome various binary oppositions. In conversation with Braidotti, Dolphijn and Van der Tuin return to the importance of not only drawing cartographies but also traversing them.[4] Using her 'feminist-materialist check-list', Sarah E. Truman suggests some starting points for qualitative research to outline a feminist contribution to materialist approaches. Truman demands that a couple of points be included; a wariness of exclusion, the inclusion of situated knowledges and intersectional concerns and the deconstruc-tion of assumptions, as well as a responsibility towards newly created networks and genealogies. Returning once more to her list, it became more obvious who and what is affirmed but also excluded by the use of specific sources being cited and collaborations chosen. It also showed the connection between situating knowledges and intersectional concerns 'being recognized alongside of a *turn to matter* and *decentering of Humanism*,'[5] concerns that were broadly shared by the participants in the course.

> 'Practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated. We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world.'
> — Karen Barad, 2007[6]

As the architectural researchers and practitioners who came together for this course, we are deeply enmeshed in the daily material practices of building and researching. We are very well equipped with spatial understanding and are able to draw or otherwise visualize connections that we have analyzed in specific places and spaces, and therefore, taking on the materialist implications and mapping them according to the inclusionary tactics of intersectional feminisims. As such, many of the texts in this contribution can be understood as generous but always situated and embodied knowledge cartographies of certain fields, architectures or problems. Giving the last word of this postscript to the cartographies of knowledge means foregrounding the challenging but productive complexity of relations and dependencies during the process of writing an architectural PhD thesis.

1 Some of the writing exercises and methodologies were inspired by Nina Lykke (ed.), *Writing Academic Texts Differently: Intersectional Feminist Methodologies and the Playful Art of Writing* (London: Routledge, 2016). For details on the course, see the "EDITORIAL" in this issue.
2 Rosi Braidotti, 'A Critical Cartography of Feminist Post-postmodernism', *Australian Feminist Studies 20*, no. 47 (July 2005): 169–108, especially page 176.
3 See also M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis' in *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*, eds Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010), 23–45.
4 Rosi Braidotti, Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin, 'Interview with Rosi Braidotti' in *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*, eds Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012), 19–37, here 14. See also Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).
5 Truman, Sarah E., 'Feminist New Materialisms' in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Research Methods*, eds P.A. Atkinson et al. (London: SAGE, 2019), 10.
6 Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC/London: Duke University Press, 2007).

Some Words on Positionality

Karin Reisinger

03

In Central European postgraduate architectural education, as well as in curricula based on Western traditions of architectural education, the question of subjectivity versus objectivity is persistent. Students learn that in a scientific text, writing from the first person, from the 'dirty self', should be avoided in order to comply with the requirements of objectivity. This research tradition, with its basis in the European Enlightenment, was problematized by a variety of thinkers of feminist materialisms and feminist posthumanisms, and led to regular discussions during our gatherings: How does this influence practices of writing and knowing? In a writing workshop on situated knowledges, we addressed the matter of positionality in architectural research.

By 1988, the feminist thinker Donna Haraway had already questioned the epistemological directive of objectivity that relies on disembodied knowing subjects who do not speak from the middle of things but instead from a disembodied distance that is supposed to strengthen objectivity, body-less knowledge and produce or strengthen the hierarchies of knowledge production in science.[1] Based on these insights and concerns, we asked questions such as:

How to see? Where to see from? What limits to vision exist in your work? Who to see with? Who gets to have more than one point of view?
What do you see from a specific location? How is your vision limited?
Who holds the camera? Where is the camera? What kind of camera is it?
Who gets blinded? Who wears blinders? Who interprets the visual field? What other sensory powers do you wish to cultivate besides vision?
How do you position yourself to see in situations of tensions, resonances, transformations, resistances and complicities?
How and where were you born? How did that affect your work?
How do you (not) communicate your position?
Whose language is made the standard for translation and conversions in science?

The second important feminist thinker to provide useful knowledge about these complex but often decisive questions is Judith Butler. She complicates the practice of giving an account of oneself.[2] There is only a partial account of the self and the 'I' does not come into being by itself, it is already constructed and always already connected. Jane Rendell built on these relations, not least in material connections, when she gave an account of the 'self' (as immersed in the institution) architecturally and materially by looking at the funding conditions of knowledge production at UCL London. The university was about to accept funding from a large multinational mining concern.[3] This rigorous investigation into her institution is based on feminist lines of thought and on situated knowledges that address knowing and the knowing subject as embodied and located.

Working with these complex knowledge connections often led us to look at biographies and even autobiographies that could overcome the intersectional exclusions of the objectivity doctrine of Central European knowledge traditions and revive the margins of knowledge.[4] Reflecting positionality as an epistemological practice in which we consider our relation to the field that we study[5], from insider positions to outsider positions, as well as the field's multiple nuances and subsequent methodologies, compounds architectural histories, situated practices of mapping, planning and organizing, and fosters autoethnographic elements of architectural knowledge.

Khaoula Stiti contributed 'An Essay from Tunis, About Tunis.' In her multiple roles as a local architect, researcher and member of Edifices & Mémoires, a non-governmental organization dealing with endangered heritage, she describes the colonial downtown of Tunis from within. Based on the urban visibility and presence of colonization, she introduces a complex discussion about the non/preservation of a colonial downtown.

Helka Dzsacsovszki explores European tensions in architectural histories written during the Cold War era. Bridging the separate historiographies of the Eastern and Western blocs, the author reintroduces underrepresented voices and focuses on connections and exchanges in the international debates of that period. Dzsacsovszki is motivated by the lack of references to Hungary's architectures within international architectural discourses after learning about them in her early education in that country.

Michelle Mlati employs Le Roy's green materialism to revisit the Kennedylaan in the town of Heerenveen, the Netherlands. She thus resituates biodiversity with the help of posthuman feminist philosophy and intersectional readings of the specific public space. Her contribution carefully outlines the complex entanglement of monocultures, modern planning and exclusion in various details of the open space.

Natalie Novik maps events and critical spatial practices of self-organization. Her research practice of mapping is an important tool in highlighting the otherwise elusive nomadic and inclusive function of spaces that are constructed without the involvement of architects. She narrates them based on her own experiences.

Maretha Dreyer generously offers autoethnographic explorations of her home during early motherhood. Her introspection is preparation for the task of conducting research as a partial outsider. She develops a 'rich biographical narrative' by following suggestions from the feminist researcher Kathy Davis.

Deniz Köse proposes the concept of 'liminality' as a device to rethink the resources that architecture consumes. Based on the built environment of her childhood in Istanbul, she re-stories the local architectural practice. This approach is underlined by the urgent need for reinterpretations of the world by reconnecting to more-than-human ways.

Asha Sumra uses the coconut metaphor to share her own migratory experiences, along with the mobile geologies of clay and the geographies of labour that surround the material of the special mangalore tile. She urges us to think about what language the material speaks.

1 Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies* 14, no.3 (Autumn 1988): 575–603. See also Peta Hinton, '"Situated Knowledges" and New Materialism(s): Rethinking a Politics of Location', *Women: A Cultural Review* 25, no.1 (2014): 99–113. The course section on positionality was also supported by the lectures of Behzad Khosravi Noori, 'A Monument to the Unknown Citizen' and Dubravka Sekulic, 'Constructing Non-Alignment', both held on 1 December 2021.

2 Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005). See also Torsten Lange's introduction on ethics in this volume.

3 Jane Rendell, 'Giving an Account of Oneself: Architecturally', *Journal of Visual Culture* 15, no.3 (2016): 334–48.

4 Karin Reisinger, 'Struggles at the "Peripheries": Situated Knowledge Production and Feminist Visions for Post-extractive Environments', *Cidades* 45 (October 2022). URL: http://journals.openedition.org/cidades/6197 (accessed 20 December 2022).

5 W. E. Rowe, 'Positionality'. In *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research*, edited by D. Coghlan and M. Brydon-Miller, 627–28 (Los Angeles/London: SAGE Publications, 2014).

POSITIO-
NALITY

To Appreciate (Or Not) the Colonial Downtowns in Tunisia An Essay from Tunis, About Tunis

Khaoula Stiti

Based on seven years' worth of discussion alongside her architectural practice, the writer exposes the potential reasons why people do not appreciate the architectural and urban landscape of the French colonization period. The purpose of this article is not to answer the question in the title, but rather to create an opportunity to reflect on the reasons to (not) appreciate the architectural and urban heritage of Tunis's colonial downtown.

Introduction

I moved to Tunis in September 2010, three months before the protests started at the end of the year. In January 2011, the revolution[1] was in almost every corner of Tunisia. Downtowns,[2] especially the Tunisian downtown, made it to the international news. Journalists and reporters from all over the world were sharing photos and videos of protests by thousands of people. While millions around the world were following the protests on the television screen, I was paying attention to the buildings.

Tunisia is home to five terrestrial ecoregions,[3] which makes the processes of cities' creation and expansion significantly different from one ecoregion to another. While traces of the prehistoric era were more defined as human settlements or agglomeration (such as Cafsa region in the southwest), cities were designed and built during the classical era by the Punic, Carthaginian, and Roman rulers. The oldest cities that remain inhabited were built in the Middle Ages after the Islamic conquests in North Africa.[4] Although the French intervention in Tunis started way before the French protectorate in 1881,[5] European downtowns multiplied all over the Tunisian territories. Several downtowns were built next to medinas,[6] such as Bizerte, Tunis and Sfax. In fact, in the Arabic language, medina means nothing other than 'the city'. With European colonization and the creation of 'new towns' which came to be juxtaposed with the medinas, the meaning of the term was restricted to the notion of 'historic towns', 'traditional towns or even 'indigenous towns'. Furthermore, other downtowns were built from scratch based on their ideal geographical position, as in the case of Jendouba, and natural resources like mines, like Jerissa. The downtowns built from scratch are more common in the west of the country where the population was (and still is) more rural.

In this article, I expose the potential reasons why inhabitants do not appreciate the architectural and urban landscape of Tunis from the French colonization period. The choice of the site of Tunis, among other Tunisian cities built during the French colonization of parts of Africa, was made for two main reasons: First, because of the role played by the city of Tunis in materializing the revolution in the city[7] and second, because an important part of Tunis's colonial downtown is supposed to be a protection zone known as the 'buffer zone' for The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) site of the medina. Unfortunately, under the current management tools, this buffer zone has never been approved in the management of the territory and all the districts designated as buffer zones in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are not equipped with regulations that respect the heritage character of this landscape. This article is the result of discussions during seven years of architectural practice as an architect, a project manager for nongovernmental organizations and a researcher. My discussions were with members of civil society organizations, such as Edifices & Mémoires and *Association de la Sauvegarde de la Medina*, members of elected municipal councils, coworkers in the National Federation of Tunisian Cities, colleagues at the Council of Architects of Tunisia, and colleagues in the PAE3C research unit at the National School of Architecture of Tunisia. It is also influenced by random interactions with inhabitants, shopkeepers and even children playing in the streets while walking. These potential reasons can be explored together, or separately, in more elaborated qualitative and quantitative research methods. These emotions towards the cultural heritage, which is a leftover from the so-called French protectorate, are worth exploring in a larger study involving systematic qualitative and quantitative research methods. My article tentatively seeks to provide a first impression of the atmosphere in which these difficult heritage debates are led (or not).

Shaping the National Identity

Since the end of the French occupation, the Tunisian state made a huge effort to build a national identity after the French example and obsession with *l'État Nation*. The built environment therefore acted as a political tool and provided symbolic expressions for the population to look up to. At the institutional level, this has had repercussions until the present day. Tunisia's ten UNESCO sites include three medinas (Islamic cities built in the Middle Ages), one Punic site and three Roman sites. The medina of Tunis has been over-exposed and is very visible in state-owned television productions. The focus of creating one national culture is also expressed in the erasure of languages. While Arabic was imposed as the state's only official language, other native North African languages have been systemically oppressed by the official administration to disappear almost totally by the beginning of the twenty-first century. Amazigh languages and dialects have been facing linguistic genocide in Tunisia.[8] On the heritage level, nothing but Arabic Islamic or Roman[9] was chosen to represent the new nation state. Meanwhile, the heritage of many downtowns built by the European settlers was disappearing one after the other, leaving places to be 're-occupied' by Tunisians, who had different emotional responses to the leftover places and spaces.

Colonial Trauma that No One Talks About

As in many former French colonies in Africa, buildings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are reminders of European settler presence. While the French colonization of Tunisia lasted from 1881 to 1956, it is not defined as a political and historical colonization, but as a protectorate. As the atrocities were as heavy as they were in other French colonies, the use of the word 'protectorate' makes the past seem less dark than that of other African territories colonized by France. Therefore, I abandon the use of the word 'protectorate' and use 'colonization' instead. The colonization of Tunisia lasted more than eighty years and the segregation of communities according to wealth and religion during it[10] was visible on the urban level. The war for independence was fought,[11] but not properly acknowledged and celebrated after the independence.

While some older people still remember what the city looked like under colonization, generations born after the 1960s, who did not live during colonization, have their own opinions about the architectural and urban heritage of those years: it reminds them of the colonizers, although they were born in the free country. While I cannot be precise about the percentage of people against the presence of the colonial heritage in their downtowns (whether they are a majority or a minority), I also met voices that appreciated the buildings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as emblems of *'la belle époque'* (the beautiful era) when art and the joy of living were more obvious in public spaces in the form of theatres, restaurants and bar terraces.

It is important to take these voices into account. They speak less from a perspective of architectural appreciation, but what they value is an expression of the past these buildings carry. Although the buildings are deteriorating, they evoke memories and images of the downtown as it was. They also value these spaces for their main function: being their homes. For them, as for the Burra Charter,[12] the significance of heritage is 'embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects'.

You are Not Here Forever, the Temporary Occupation Dilemma

After the Tunisian independence, European settlers, mainly French and Italian, started to leave Tunisia and to go back to Europe. This left an important number of apartments, buildings, villas and farms under the control of managers, usually a Tunisian family member or a hired manager. While a lot of properties were sold to Tunisian citizenship holders, some of the owners decided to rent their houses to Tunisians. Rent prices were reasonable at that time and affordable for middle-class Tunisians. After a few decades, the rent prices were not updated and a large number of renters took the opportunity to save money. Maintaining the properties has been a challenge; the owners and managers did not want to spend money on renovating the properties, and neither did the renters. Time passed and the quality of life in these remotely managed buildings deteriorated. Renters who decided to leave for better housing usually found other tenants to replace them; usually a friend or family member. Landlords were sometimes informed of this change and sometimes not, and properties were transferred to children and grandchildren when owners died. A lot of these beneficiaries have no link to Tunisia since they were born in Europe, and all that they know about Tunisia comes from the memories of their parents and grandparents. They then lose contact with owners and many buildings end up with windows left open, exposed to rain and sun, and waiting to be classified as a threat to the population and thus demolished by the authorities.

Ghosting, Demolishing and Making Profit

As the buildings whose managers 'ghosted' them for known or unknown reasons were demolished one after another, new post-independence architectural and urban forms started appearing in downtowns.[13] Buildings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did not allow much freedom to redesign the interior spaces and façades. Most of the downtown buildings follow the programme of the *immeuble de rapport*,[14] a type of apartment building of three to five floors, mainly for residential use with the ground floor usually, depending upon the situation, occupied by shops, which did not allow designers the flexibility to convert the secluded residential apartments into offices and publicly accessible spaces. Thus, destroying buildings (following the method previously described) has been a more profitable way to maximize the use of land, especially in big cities where horizontal expansion is impossible.

On a legislative level, a legal project to 'ease' the procedure of destroying old buildings 'representing threat' to the population was protested by civil society organizations. In 2018, the legal project was suggested in the Assembly of the People's Representatives to allow municipal councils to destroy buildings that represented a danger of collapsing, without giving these councils the technical expertise and the budget required to evaluate the shape of buildings. An online petition was published to block this and an event gathering nongovernmental organizations from all over the country to protest the law was organized at the National School of Architecture. For now, there are no updates on this case, as the Assembly of the People's Representatives was suspended in July 2021 and dissolved in March 2022.

To (Not) Take Away

Historic urban landscapes should be understood as layered, dynamic and cultural constructs of urban resources that echo cultural identity and create cultural value.[15] The question that I have reflected on since I started being interested in the potential reasons for the rupture between people and specific built environments is: to what extent could heritage practices include more people in their decisions and become democratic? What if the people want to change the way their cities look, with or without 'valid' (technical) reasons? Would we proceed to massive destruction of the traces of colonial settlements, especially in Africa and Asia? Or should we act to protect historical landscapes 'against people's will'?

This article did not intend to answer the question in its title, but rather it has created a temporary opportunity to reflect on the reasons to (not) appreciate Tunisian colonial downtowns. I acknowledge that what is missing in this short article is a broader presentation of the voices who either despise the colonial buildings for different reasons or the voices of those who are working hard to raise collective awareness of this heritage. Maybe by understanding these reasons, whether they are in favour of this heritage or not, we can get closer to the voices concerned, and by using more participatory practices we can begin to repair the future.

Fig. 1: An abandoned building which belonged to French settlers in the Kroumiria Mountains. Photo by Khaoula Stiti, 2017.

Fig. 2: An inhabited building which belonged to French settlers on Avenue of Paris, Tunis. Photo by Khaoula Stiti, 2018.

1 What I call the revolution of 2011 is what Western media call the Arab Spring. As a matter of fact, I think readers should be aware that (1) in Tunisia, not all of the population is Arabic, yet the term Arab Spring excludes all of the non-Arab people who participated in the revolution, such as Amazigh people and (2), in the Middle East and North Africa, the use of the term 'spring' is considered inappropriate, since most of the social protests were put down and millions of people have been displaced and thousands killed.

2 *Downtown* is a term primarily used in North America by English speakers to refer to a city's sometimes commercial, cultural and often historical, political and geographic heart. Although the geographical context of this article is not North America, I use 'downtown' as it is more than a city centre; it refers to city centres built during specific eras, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by colonial European settlers (especially from North America and Australia).

3 Mediterranean conifer and mixed forests, Saharan halophytics, Mediterranean dry woodlands and steppe, Mediterranean woodlands and forests, and North Saharan steppe and woodlands, according to the classification of Eric Dinerstein et al., 'An Ecoregion-Based Approach to Protecting Half the Terrestrial Realm', *Bioscience*, 2017, 67(6), 534–545.

4 Also referred to as the medina (which in Arabic literally means city or old city). A medina is a distinct historical section of the city found in several North African cities and in Malta. A medina is typically walled, with many narrow and maze-like streets. The word 'medina' itself simply means 'city' or 'town' in modern Arabic. Medinas were built in North Africa after the Muslim conquest of North Africa and the southern part of Iberia. The medina of Tunis was founded in 689 CE and it developed its urban fabric throughout the Middle Ages.

5 Athar Chabchoub, Safa Achour Younsi and Kharrat Fakher, 'Colonial Heritage, an Alternative for a Better Thermal Comfort,' *Sustainable Mediterranean Construction*, 2019.

6 Abdelala Bounouh, 'Les enjeux du réaménagement et la revalorisation d'un espace majeur du centre de Tunis: La ville européenne,' *Insaniyat* 22 (2003): 59–72, accessed October 15 2022, https://doi.org/10.4000/insaniyat.6913

7 Dena Quaddumi, 'Post-Arab Spring Tunis: Materializing Revolution in the City' (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2020).

8 Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu, 'Africa on the Verge of a Linguistic Genocide: The Need For Action', *European Scientific Journal ESJ* 15, no. 23 (2019): doi:10.19044/esj.2019.v15n23p57

9 In the Tunisian/North African research communities, the term 'Roman' refers to the heritage from the era of the Roman Empire. We use the term 'Roman Tunisia' to describe the territory of the actual Tunisia under the rule of the Roman Empire and 'Roman Africa' to describe the territory of North Africa under the rule of Roman Empire.

10 Charlotte Jelidi, 'Introduction: Les villes, les acteurs de leur production et leurs archives (XIXe-XXe siècles),' in *Villes maghrébines en situations coloniales* ed. Charlotte Jelidi (Paris : Éditions Karthala, 2014), 11–38. https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01132004/document

11 This is a contested point that many people may not agree on. The biggest losses were in the western and southern part of the country where armed resistance to independence was present. In the cities, people tended to believe that independence was obtained thanks to the high-quality diplomatic negotiation led by the Tunisian leaders and not thanks to the armed resistance.

12 The Burra Charter, Australia ICOMOS, 2013, accessed October 15, 2022, http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf

13 Leila Ammar, 'Les Enjeux Du Patrimoine Ancien Et Récent À Tunis Aux XIXe Et XXe Siècles Entre Volontés De Sauvegarde Et Périls,' *Al-Sabîl: Revue d'Histoire, d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Maghrébines* 3 (September 2017), accessed October 15 2022, http://www.al-sabil.tn/?p=2877

14 Leila Ammar, 'Mâitres d'œuvre italiens et immeubles de rapport à Tunis, à la fin du XIXe siècle et au début du XXe siècle (1895-1935),' Al-Sabîl: Revue d'Histoire, d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Maghrébines 2 (Mai 2017), accessed October 15 2022, http://www.al-sabil.tn/?p=2364)

15 Arno van der Hoeven, 'Valuing Urban Heritage through Participatory Heritage Websites: Citizen Perceptions Of Historic Urban Landscapes', *Space And Culture* 23, no. 2 (2018): 129–48, accessed October 15 2022, doi:10.1177/1206331218797038

Cooperation in Architectural Conservation Challenges: Hungarian Perspectives in Cold War International Exchanges

Helka Dzsacsovszki

The Cold War is often associated with a geopolitical divide between the countries of the socialist Eastern Bloc and the West. Despite the political tension, however several architects could travel and participate in international professional debates. Monument protection and conservation, provided opportunities for cooperation and the exchange of ideas. Hungarian architects were part of these discussions, but their role and perspective have been underrepresented in Anglophone academic studies. This article aims to show the value of researching Hungarian perspectives in international architectural exchanges during the Cold War and demonstrates the variety of the available but little-known contemporary source materials.

But What about Hungary?

I was born and raised in Budapest, Hungary. Following the national curriculum, I spent most of my time at primary and secondary school learning about various aspects of Hungarian history, along with what was universally described as 'world history.' Naturally, every country is biased towards the importance of its own history, and I was aware that other countries would not dedicate the same amount of time to Hungary. Yet nothing prepared me for the surprise I felt when only a handful of my lecturers briefly mentioned some aspects of Hungarian architecture during my five-year studies at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. I was also struggling to find English-language references about Hungarian architecture in the university libraries. Hungarian examples were even missing from a course on the architectural history of state-socialist countries. I understood that Hungary was certainly not the most characteristic example of all periods of architectural history, but as Hungary was part of the Eastern Bloc, I expected to see some familiar references during that course. I remember discussing this relative absence with one of my professors. He noted that the Hungarian language limits the possibilities for non-Hungarian scholars to research the archives and write studies about Hungarian architecture. On the other hand, Hungarian scholars mainly tend to publish about Hungarian architecture under socialism in Hungarian, which reinforces their academic isolation. However, the relative absence of Hungarian examples in current discourses is not representative of the contribution of Hungarian architects to international debates during the Cold War, and their perspective is still largely excluded from Anglophone academic studies.

I was born after the change of regime in the 1990s, in the so-called 'post-socialist era.' Even though I have no direct experience of the Cold War period I am researching, it has impacted me through its cultural embeddedness. For a while, I considered my close relationship to the research topic a threat to my objectivity. But all knowledge is constructed from a certain place, and I decided to make these aspects transparent rather than trying to distance myself from them to achieve credibility for my knowledge production.

Cold War Divide?

The research project 'East West Central: Re-building Europe' and the associated edited trilogy of books by Ákos Moravánszky, Judith Hopfengärtner, Karl R. Kegler and Torsten Lange calls for a rethinking of the historiography of post-war European architecture.[1] Mutual perception, knowledge transfer and cooperation opened avenues across national borders, even during a period of deep geopolitical division. This is the framework the editors suggest as an adequate alternative to the East-West dichotomy for investigating the dynamic architectural conditions of the mid-to-late twentieth century in Europe. Building upon this framework, I intend to map the spectrum of Hungarian architects' engagement with monument protection debates and thereby integrate their perspective into the existing architectural historical discourses.

The twentieth century brought about unprecedented destruction caused by modern warfare and shifts in global architectural paradigms. This shared experience of destruction provided an incentive for international cooperation between architects in post-war rebuilding and restoration challenges. While professionals acknowledged the national and regional specificities of architecture, they also recognized the need for international guidelines to manage the historic built environment and forums where experiences could be exchanged. Despite the heightened political climate of the Cold War, professionals from the Eastern Bloc were actively participating in international theoretical debates with their colleagues from the West and the Global South. International monument-protection conferences were sites of collaboration and knowledge-sharing between architects globally, and I will look at these events through the eyes of Hungarian participants to show the positions that they took in debates and thus introduce a little-known facet of the twentieth-century architecture scene.

Tracing National Positions

While the terms 'national' and 'international' are widely used in architectural history to describe trends and debates, delineating the boundaries of these terms in the context of various discourses at multinational conferences is not straightforward. Resolutions and charters are often the most renowned materials from the conferences, but their polished wording provides hardly any insight into the participants' stances and the possible contrasts of opinion between them. Representatives of various nations made up the scientific committees at international conferences during the twentieth century, so the international consensus they reached was, in fact, the synthesis of several different national positions. My work uses conference proceedings[2] (Fig. 1) and the reports written by Hungarian architects after the events as source materials to see the positions architects took in their statements, along with their evaluation of the debates.

Smaller Actors and the Canon

The top-down approach to researching international cooperation in architectural conservation would start with organizational and/or political centres, such as Paris and Moscow, and then describe the peripheries within their realm of influence based on the framework of these centres. In contrast, I will construct my narrative from the perspective of Hungarian architects and let their perspective be the window into international theoretical developments. Mapping Hungarian contributions promotes a more inclusive architectural knowledge by making hitherto lesser-known perspectives visible in Anglophone academic research. It also challenges dominant narratives and critically re-examines Hungarian architects' role in the development of architectural conservation theories. Thus, it highlights that while historiographic neglect has made certain actors be considered 'small', this stance is not necessarily indicative of their past agency. Although my approach references canonical events and people to pinpoint the key moments from Hungarian perspectives, this is only done to situate my research in existing academic knowledge. I intend to question established historical periods and boundaries such as, 'interwar' and 'post-1945 years', and create alternative parallel timelines to show other ways of writing history by emphasizing the continuity and interconnection of ideas.

The Third ICOMOS General Assembly and Symposium

Dezső Dercsényi and Miklós Horler were both regular participants in international conservation conferences and fostered strong professional relationships with the Italian Piero Cazzola and the Belgian Raymond Lemaire. Dercsényi was a member of the executive committee of the UNESCO-affiliated International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), with Cazzola serving as its President and Lemaire as its Secretary General. The Hungarian National Committee hosted the Third ICOMOS General Assembly and Symposium in Budapest in 1972 (Fig. 2 and 3), which was attended by some five hundred participants from thirty-eight countries, including Ghana, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and the United States. Hungarian architects therefore had an important role in facilitating international professional encounters which questions their current historical obscurity.

Hungarian Architectural History in Foreign Languages

Hungarian architects and art historians considered the publication of Hungarian restoration approaches in foreign languages an essential task and a starting point for international cooperation. The History of Art Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences started publishing the journal *Acta Historiae Artium* in 1953. The journal's articles, mostly about topics related to Hungarian art, were written solely in foreign languages (English, French, German, Italian and Russian) by both Hungarian and non-Hungarian authors to introduce them to international audiences. The Hungarian National Committee also financed the publication of the first issue of the *ICOMOS Bulletin*, a French- and English-language publication introducing national restoration practices, which was dedicated to Hungary.[3] Moreover, the archives of the National Monument Inspectorate (Országos Műemléki Felügyelőség (OMF)) hold piles of official correspondence with foreign colleagues in French, German, Italian and Russian, and the directorial reports show that foreign language skills were considered significant factors in selecting delegates for international conferences.[4] The Hungarian chosen participants not only presented in French, Italian and German but also spoke these languages fluently and could thus form strong professional connections with other conference delegates. Dercsényi wrote an article for *Acta Historiae Artium* in Italian about the achievements of Hungarian monument protection after the Second World War titled 'Tutela dei monumenti in Ungheria dopo la liberazione'.[5] When he attended the International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in Paris in 1957, he presented a copy of the journal containing his article to Guglielmo De Angelis d'Ossat, who was the general director of the Administration of Antiquities and Fine Arts in Rome at the time. According to Dercsényi's recollections, De Angelis d'Ossat was taken not so much by the topic of the article but by the fact that it was written in Italian and that Dercsényi spoke to him in Italian.[6]

These examples show the potential of architectural monument conservation to facilitate conversation between people, even in a period when their countries were politically opposed. Architects made the most of the institutional frameworks, even went against the political current in many respects to establish international connections and worked on maintaining the exchange of knowledge through conferences and foreign language publications. Using these sources, my work seeks to demonstrate that national perspectives and illuminating actors obscured by historiography need not be inward-looking and nationalistic but can be a way to emphasize previous international cooperative endeavours, which may carry lessons for our present practices.

1 Ákos Moravánszky and Judith Hopfengärtner eds., *Re-Humanizing Architecture: New Forms of Community, 1950-1970*, (East, West, Central: Re-Building Europe, 1950-1990, vol. 1) (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2017); Ákos Moravánszky and Karl R. Kegler eds., *Re-Scaling the Environment: New Landscapes of Design, 1960-1980*, (East, West, Central: Re-Building Europe, 1950-1990, vol. 2) (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2016), Ákos Moravánszky and Torsten Lange eds., *Re-Framing Identities: Architecture's Turn to History, 1970-1990*, (East, West, Central: Re-Building Europe, 1950-1990, vol. 3) (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2016).

2 See for example: *The Monument for the Man: Records of the II International Congress of Restoration* (ICOMOS and Marsilio Editori, 1971).

3 'Hungary / Hongrie', ICOMOS Bulletin 1, 1971, accessed: 9 October 2022, https://www.icomos.org/en/resources/publicationall/icomos-bookshop/116-english-categories/resources/publications/328-icomos-bulletin-1-hungary.

4 József Cólya, 'Velencei Müemléki Kongresszus', 15 November 1963, OMF II. sorozat 1963-72-1, Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Center / Magyar Építészeti Múzeum és Műemlékvédelmi Dokumentációs Központ (MÉM MDK).

5 Dezső Dercsényi, 'La Tutela Dei Monumenti in Ungheria Dopo La Liberazione', *Acta Historiae Artium* 2, no. 1–2 (1954): 99–134.

6 Dezső Dercsényi, 'Műemlékvédelmünk Nemzetközi Helyzetének Alakulása', *Műemlékvédelem* 22, no. 4 (1978): 289.

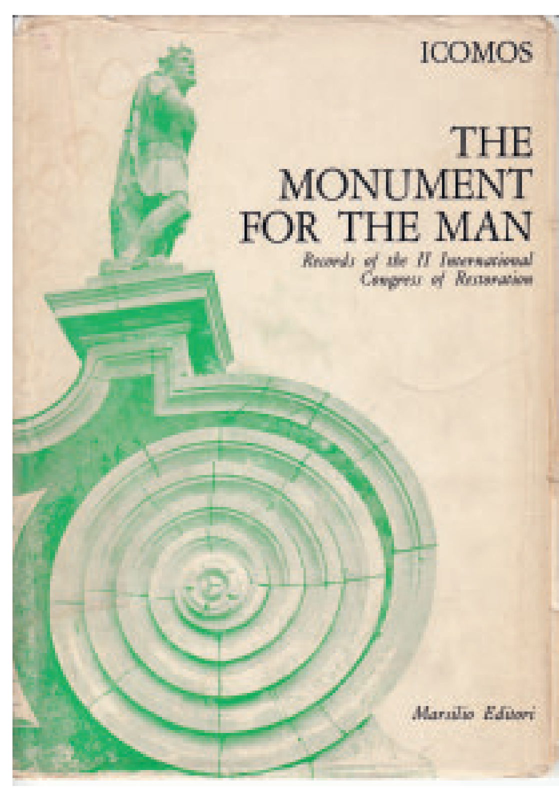


Fig. 1: Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments held in Venice on 25-31 May 1964. Reproduction by the author

Fig. 3: (From left): Stanisław Lorentz, Raymond Lemaire, Piero Cazzola, Dezső Dercsényi and Miklós Horler giving an interview to Hungarian television at the Fehér Galamb [White Dove] restaurant during the Third ICOMOS General Assembly and Symposium in Budapest, June 1972. Courtesy of MÉM MDK, Tudományos Irattár, Lymbus K 1899.

Fig. 2: Maija Kairamo presents the proposal of the nominations committee on the second day of the Third ICOMOS General Assembly. Session chairs on the podium (from left): Joyce Aryee, Robert Hotke, Jacques Dalibard, Raymond Lemaire, Dezső Dercsényi and Stanisław Lorentz. Courtesy of Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Center/Magyar Építészeti Múzeum és Műemlékvédelmi Dokumentációs Központ (MÉM MDK), Tudományos Irattár, Lymbus K 1899.

‘Renewing’ Green Materialism: Louis Le Roy’s countercultural positions of biodiversity in The Netherlands’ Ecological Landscape

Michelle Mlati

This visual essay explores Louis Le Roy’s green materialism and situates his work within posthuman feminist philosophy and intersectional environmentalist literature to understand countercultural formulations of biodiversity. It uncovers and reconnects his struggle against monocultures produced by post-war technocratic modes of planning as a critique of capitalist modes of spatial production in the development of green infrastructure. Le Roy’s ‘‘countercultures’ or ‘double culture,’ including citizens’ involvement and responses initiated by the agency of multiple human and nonhuman actors overtime aligns their nature-culture continuum against homogenous materials through heterogenous formations establishing a ‘renewed’ materialism. This analysis of Le Roy’s legacy conceptualizes and recovers counter historical positions of participation through the theories, design and implementation processes in The Netherlands’ ecological landscape.

Ecology has been defined as ‘man and his interrelationship with his biological and physical environment’.[1] As it relates to discussions on posthumanism, it can be situated in the philosopher Rosi Braidotti’s discussion of the Vitruvian Man,[2] which I situate here as the central protagonist in the destruction of ecological systems as well as ‘man’ as the standard metric of the human in the analysis of these relationships in reconstructive approaches to landscape restoration. Consequently, this continues to fail to depict other actors instrumental in building these green networks. This makes apparent a lack of diverse perspectives of not only women, Black, indigenous and people of colour communities in the Western context, as much as the perspective of nonhumans within the understanding of ecology above. Therefore, a more inclusive analysis of the materialist dynamics that have shaped the development of green infrastructure warrant attention. The new materialist perspective of posthuman feminism will be used throughout my embodied and embedded engagements with the different archives and sites I study mobilized by multiple actors. ‘Posthuman feminism also adopts intersectional axes of analysis such as race, ethnicity, age, able-bodiedness and class. ... Bodies are posthuman in that they are heterogenous genetic and bacterial assemblages modulated by social and technological infrastructures. In this respect, materialism is the robust epistemology that makes posthuman feminism into a reconstructive, rather than deconstructive philosophy of heterogenous living systems’.[3]

The artist and teacher from Heerenveen, Louis C. Le Roy (1924-2012) developed socio-ecological experiments in the 1960s that continued a long-term participatory approach amongst humans, plants and animals.

In Le Roy’s work, the question of negligence as a material approach is significant. He often used recycled pavement tiles, dumped in agreement with various local municipalities, which were reassembled with residents to create ecological structures that encouraged plant growth. This created microclimates and biodiversity hotspots for insects to flourish in-between the gaps. Through Le Roy’s acquisition of land in Mildam, a village in Heerenveen in the Friesland province of The Netherlands, he established Ecocathedral. Le Roy did however displace grazing animals as he argued that overgrazing damaged landscape diversity and prevented climax vegetation formation.[4] As a result, this established a hierarchy between animal species in which a variety of insects and birds became more dominant.

The contrast in landscape management regimes today at Kennedylaan, also situated in Heerenveen, is apparent by the sudden transitional zone between the varied and vigorous grassland whilst mowed lawn is maintained monotonously to the right. This results in a static form and is more susceptible to scorching which decreases the variety of species. Le Roy affirms that ‘the consequence of a static approach is that we are forced to dig, hoe, rake, spray, cut, chop and whatever else, just to make things look orderly and healthy’.[5]

Le Roy’s approach to monocultures was to respect their existing patterns but he proposed their integration into ‘networks of artificial ecosystems’ through artificially raised embankments containing allotments and organic farms, separating existent monocultures through dense planting. This duality was referred to as ’counterculture’ and later on as ‘double culture’.[6]

The integration of monocultures and the idea of dense planting is continued by a local resident, Peter Wouda, who worked with Le Roy at Kennedylaan in continuous dialogue with inhabitants. In the present, Wouda continues to participate and guide the maintenance of the landscape. For example, he asked the woman trimming the hedge in the background (fig. 4) whether the offcuts could be dumped onto the composting heap on the Kennedylaan which she agreed to. However, Le Roy disagreed with the action of trimming hedges which he argued was a waste of time and a loss of energy because gardens are better enclosed by a wall and that ‘hedges are always incorrect’ from the perspective of the plant because the microclimate is better created by the former.[7]

However, it can be argued that the energy loss is minimal in that; instead of using vehicular garbage collection and disposal, the two local residents make a compromise to use the offcut for the Kennedylaan. It affirms Le Roy’s principles that dead leaves should not be removed because they help to build new ground[8] overtime and enrich the soil nutrients. Therefore, voluntary human labour mediates a circular economy in the flows of organic matter that enables the maintenance of private gardens to people’s own aesthetic tastes. This continues to operate as a counterculture in that the monotonous hedge offcuts become compost in the dumping process and form a biodiverse space against capitalist servicing from within a democratic model of participation.

Because monocultures involve the farming of a single crop and result in reduced biodiversity, Le Roy’s work raises important questions in regard to species variety that underpin notions of diversity. He worked with both native and exotic plants stating that ‘nature does not distinguish’,[9] thereby flattening species hierarchy in favour of spontaneous natural communities. Although we can question whether the pine garden namely, Pinetum Quatrebras, that was initiated in 2009 by a couple of residents in Le Roy Tuin in Lewenborg, Groningen, which contains about fifty-two[10] species of conifers from across the world can still be considered biodiverse when variety within a species of the same genus is spatially configured within the same perimeter or within proximity to each other, necessitating further research. However, we can appreciate Le Roy’s approach to the appreciation of temporary landscapes as always changing by emphasizing their vitality and variation, and contributing to the discussion of biodiversity through a nature-culture continuum.

When considering questions of biodiversity, forms of inclusion and exclusion are apparent in how plants are selected through natural selection processes that are within and beyond human control. The way in which plants are configured on the landscape through hegemonic formations can be telling to constructions of socioeconomic systems in which they are embedded. When we assess Le Roy’s engagement with hegemonic forms through vegetation, his selection process mobilizes plants that seem at odds with the state-centric symbolism conferred on them. This is based on their economic and spatial configuration within the Dutch landscape.

For example, the tulip is the national flower of the Netherlands and is often planted as monocultures. However, it originates from the Ottoman Empire and was introduced to the Netherlands in the sixteenth century by a Flemish doctor of French descent and the botanist Carolus Clusius who was Chair of Botany at the University of Leiden in 1593 and whose work laid the foundations for Dutch tulip breeding and the national bulb industry.[11] It was imported as a sought-after commodity exemplified by the tulip mania,[12] therefore, it can be argued it existed in a capitalist framework considering that during the Dutch Golden Age it was worth more than gold.[13] Although today that is not the case, tulip fields constituted part of the agricultural land in The Netherlands which made up 65.5 per cent as a whole in 1969,[14] during the period when Le Roy initiated a number of projects. In 2018, agricultural land was reduced to 54.1 per cent, therefore this land use continued to account for the majority of the land area in the early twenty-first century.

We can then argue that Le Roy does not uphold state-centric ideas of economic botany in his botanical choices when creating landscapes given the capitalist system in which the flower is embedded. His critique of this is apparent when he states: ‘The sense for unnatural beauty, orderliness and neatness seems to be in the blood of our tulip field-loving people’.[15] For example, Le Roy has framed monocultures as ‘alien monocultures’.[16] Is it so that Le Roy is suggesting monotony as something that has created alien identification with landscape as an undesirable trait in both society and in nature? Does the state-centric symbolism conferred upon the tulip in its economic and spatial configuration in the landscape of The Netherlands situate it as ‘native’ or ‘exotic’ or has it become so ‘naturalized’ into the Dutch landscape that it can’t therefore be considered ‘unnatural’ as Le Roy suggests? More fundamentally, if Le Roy considers the state-centric symbolism mobilized by plants and people through monocultures as ‘unnatural’ through their material composition, even if he does not distinguish between ‘native’ or ‘exotic’ species, his characterization of it as ‘unnatural’ can be understood in the monotonous form in which they are embedded in the landscape, rather than the species itself premised on his theories on monocultures. By highlighting this ‘unnaturalness’ I argue that he exposes the artificiality of the construction of the Dutch landscape through a socioecological lens, as characterized through homogenous forms where tulip monocultures are mobilized by ‘tulip field-loving people’ manifesting in a dominant aesthetic, economic and spatial model. This forms a homogenous material that may vary in hues but is lacking in species and genetic diversity.

By recognizing this homogeneity, Le Roy creates an awareness of the high degree of human agency that controls tulip populations. Therefore, he makes apparent the reduced agency of nonhumans in monocultural landscapes due to the dominance of one species mobilized by state-centric symbolism and commercialization in the relationship between people and plants. Although he advocated for climax vegetation formation with minimal human interference by introducing a diverse gene pool of green vegetation into the landscape, rather than decoupling people and plants, he emphasized human agency in planting rather than harvesting in gardening practices. This gives vegetation a chance to grow as the means with which to ‘renew’ green landscapes with its sheer materiality and the opportunity for multiple genes to interact, as opposed to the extractive-centred approach of the flower breeding industry that potentially contributes a suppressive trait to genetic variation in composing diverse green spaces.

Figs 1.1 and 1.2: Ecokathedral process at Kennedylaan;
Fig 1.3 Newer Ecokathedral process in Mildam. Photos: Michelle Mlati

Fig. 2: ‘Counter culture’ or ‘double culture’ emergent at ecotone of Kennedylaan around monocultural grassland. Photo: Michelle Mlati

Fig. 3: Le Roy’s visionary diagram for cities illustrating how existing patterns of monocultures, as well as cities, can be respected but proposed that they should be surrounded by integrated networks of artificial systems. The Eco-cathedral serves as an example of these artificial ecosystems as ‘a centre for our urban society’. Source: Louis C. Le Roy, Natuur uitschakelen: natuur inschakelen (Deventer: Ankh Hermes), 1973, 184–85.

Fig. 4: ‘Double Culture’ side view. Photo: Michelle Mlati

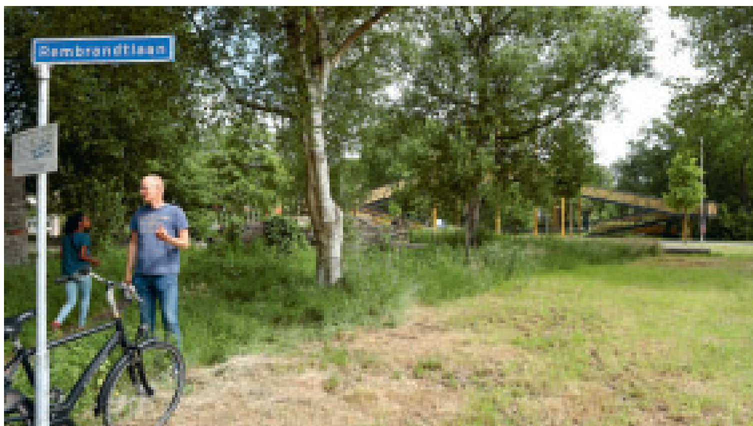


Fig. 6: Dead leaves forming a compost heap. Photo: Michelle Mlati

Fig. 5: Kennedylaan’s relationship to residential areas. Photo: Michelle Mlati

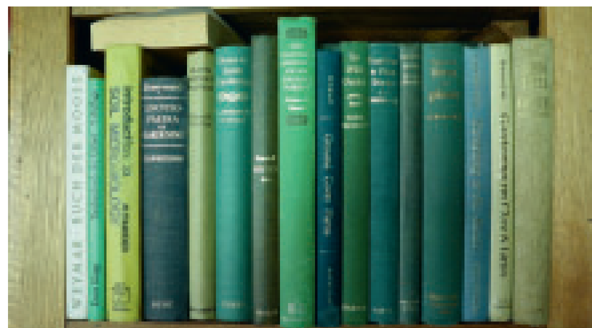


Fig. 8: Books on Various Aspects of Vegetation in Le Roy’s Home Library. Photo: Michelle Mlati.

Fig. 7: Pinetum at Le Roy Tuin, Lewenborg, Groningen. Photo: Michelle Mlati.

1 Allan Ruff, *Holland and the Ecological Landscapes 1973-1987* (Delft: Delft University Press, 1987), 10.
2 The Vitruvian Man is understood through Rosi Braidotti’s discussion of it as a universal model representing the human in which the classical ideal of ‘Man’ formulated by Protagora is ‘the measure of all things’. This was later renewed in the Italian Renaissance as a universal model for the human as represented by Leonardo Da Vinci’s *Vitruvian Man*. See Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 13.
3 Rosi Braidotti, *Posthuman Feminism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022), 113.
4 Louis Le Roy, *Natuur uitschakelen natuur inschakelen (Turn Off Nature Turn On Nature)*, (Deventer: Ankh-Hermes, 1973), 149.
5 Louis Le Roy, *Natuur*, 20.
6 Allan Ruff, *Holland and the Ecological Landscapes 1973-1987*, 17–18.
7 Louis Le Roy, *Natuur*, 182.
8 On building new ground, Le Roy states ‘But please leave that log. It returns to the soil through the natural rotting process. This is how new ground is formed. We are removing too many trees and leaves. Thus the earth is exhausted’, Le Roy, *Natuur*, 182.
9 Le Roy, *Natuur*, 149.
10 Pinetum Quatebras, ‘Home’, accessed 16 October 2022, https://www.pinetum-quatrebras.nl/home/
11 Hans Walter Lack, *Ein Carten Eden: Meisterwerke der botanischen illustration* (Cologne: Taschen, 2001).
12 Mike Dash, *Tulipomania: The Story of the World’s Most Coveted Flower & the Extraordinary Passions it Aroused* (London: Orion Publishing Co, 1999); Anne Goldgar, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Colden Age* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).
13 Tara Carlson, ‘A History of Tulips in Holland and the Dutch Trade’, accessed 20 August 20 2022, https://www.1800flowers.com/blog/flower-facts/holland-tulips-history-dutch-trade/.
14 ‘Netherlands: Agricultural Land as Share of Land Area,’ Knoema, accessed 26 September 2022, https://knoema.com/atlas/Netherlands/Agricultural-land-as-a-share-of-land-area#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20agricultural%20land%20as,1969%20to%2054.1%20%25%20in%202018.
15 Le Roy, *Natuur*, 73.
16 Le Roy, *Natuur*, 73.

Michelle Mlati

Collective Matters: Self-organization As Nomadic Practice Of Making

07 Natalie Novik

Fig.2: Concert by Elin Piel at Not Quite.
Photo by Natalie Novik

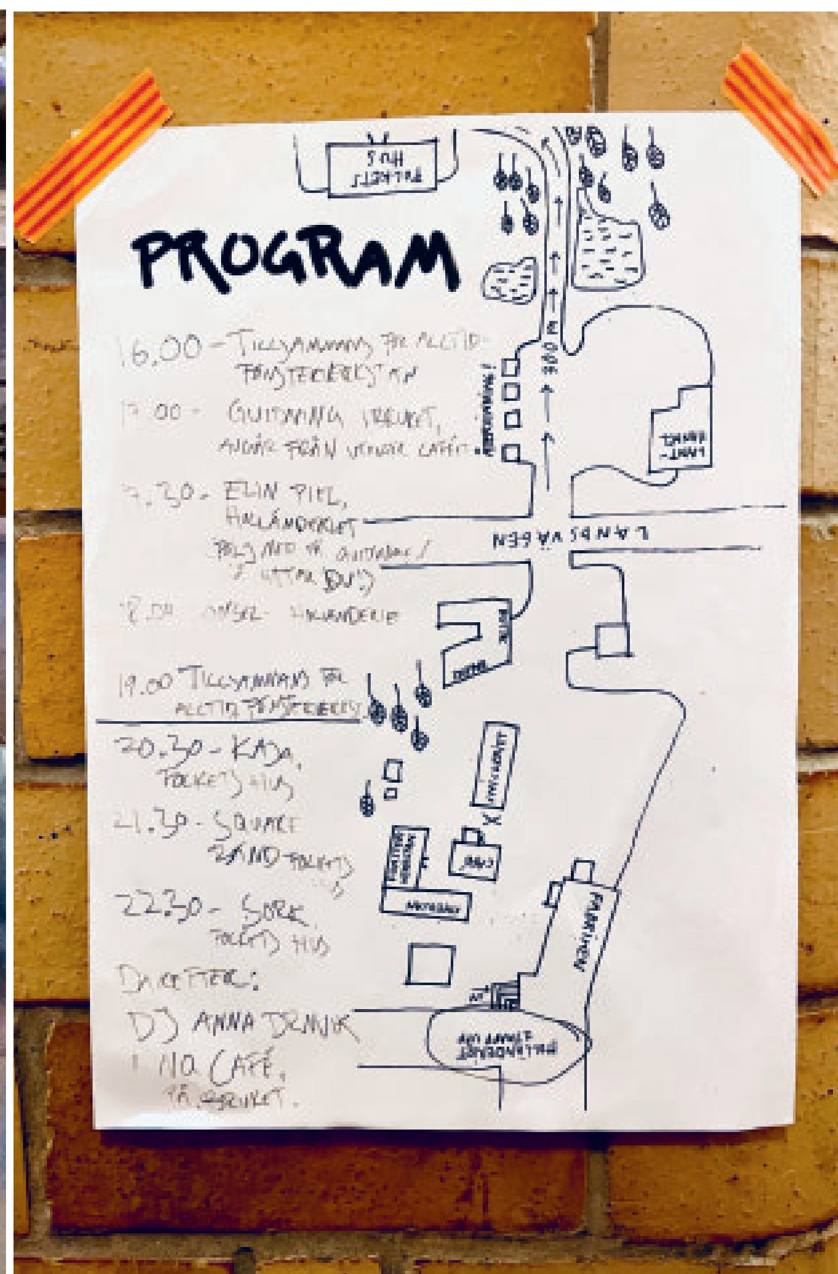


Fig.3: Hand-drawn map from the Koloni GBG event at Not Quite.
Photo by Natalie Novik

This article explores the nomadic practice of self-organized cultural initiatives in relation to critical spatial practice. It further investigates the relationship between two particular self-organized initiatives connected in one case study, by taking a close look at the spatio-temporal events they create and the traces they leave in the physical environment. Environments created by non-architects as a device of subverting normative design practice are a particular focus of this article.

Introduction

My design practice focuses on developing tools, in the form of games, for citizen dialogues within city development projects. When working within participatory design projects, I have noticed that participation is often welcomed but only in the 'right way', while decisions about who is included are driven from the top-down. My interest in self-organization comes from the intention to explore how architecture is created by non-professionals and how this practice can expand understanding of the built environment from within the architectural profession. While built environments are usually carefully planned and designed by a homogenous group of city planners, my curiosity is in how 'making' can be performed as a nomadic temporary act and how it impacts the physical environment. Self-organized cultural initiatives, which are the focus of this study, I regard as makers of the spaces, subverting normative design practice, or in the words of architectural historian and critic Jane Rendell, *'undoing architecture'*.[1]

This article explores my experience during field-work at *Not Quite*,[2] an artists' collective and cultural venue, and my encounter with an object I have found during my journey — a hand-drawn map, that caught my attention because of its clumsy handwriting, an inscription of aesthetic form that is often associated with independent cultural initiatives. My intention here is to explore what those inscriptions can mean for subverting normative design; and how understanding material traces left in space can contribute to critical spatial practice.[3]

Journey

I arrive when the event has already started. Turning off from the highway, the venue is quite easy to find. There are signs at the crossroads pointing out the directions. From a small country road leading to *Not Quite*, I can mostly see a forest and very few buildings. The parking lot is completely full despite *Not Quite* being situated in such a secluded place. I get out of the car and look around, trying to figure out where the concert is. On the side of the building I see a programme, an A4 sheet of plain paper, a simply drawn map of the area with marking of the name of each building. On the side of the map there is a gig's schedule written in clumsy handwriting:

17.30 Elin Piel.

I guess I have missed this one. That's a shame. She is good. Who is next… I will try to catch the last part of the concert. I go inside the main building and look for the room marked 'Oceanhall' on the map, that's where the gig is. I hear the music, but I can't understand where it is coming from. I go around inside this partly ruined industrial venue, concrete floor, concrete walls, it looks abandoned at times, it's impressive that one can see cultural events in this unusual interior setting. A group of people come down the stairs, one of them says to me: 'If you are looking for the concert it's in the other direction'. I go in the opposite direction, up the stairs that do not exactly look safe to walk on. Just one storey up, and here we are. In a huge room it's dark and hard to see the details of the space. There are perhaps 30 to 40 people inside. Everyone stands quietly and listens to the music. The lights are dim and cosy, kilometres of cables and hundreds of buttons. Elin plays minimalistic electronic noise, it is atmospheric and droney. One needs to be attentive and try to let the music in, feel it through your body. I am glad I've managed to catch this gig. A few minutes more and she is done.

Later, concerts are in the other venue, a local *folkets hus*, which is a Swedish concept of the 'people's house' or a cultural house, simply, a space for gathering. It is situated right across the road from *Not Quite*. Using my found object, the hand-drawn map, I find my way to the *folkets hus* for the next gig.

Map As An Object Of Fieldwork Enquiry

Not Quite is an artist collective situated in an old paper mill. It occupies several beautiful old brick buildings in the middle of the woods in Swedish Dalsland. It was repurposed for cultural activities in the early 2000's and its large scale allows for a variety of events. The map I have found at *Not Quite* has been made for a particular event organized by Koloni GBG,[4] another local cultural initiative based in Gothenburg, a nomadic production run by Christian Pallin. Each event organized by Christian is a one-of-a-kind performative experience, from undefinable electronic noise to world music with unique instruments. Being a nomadic production, Koloni GBG does not have any fixed location and therefore travels around from space to space, mostly small-scale independent cultural venues, both in the city and in the countryside.

My intuition is that the combination of those two initiatives, *Not Quite* and Koloni GBG, creates and materializes thought-provoking collaborations. Nomadic practice of the event by activating the space in a non-permanent way, creates a sense of place through self-organized participatory practices. In this case, *Not Quite* serves as a territory for the temporary practice becoming nomadic through its engagement with Koloni GBG. My understanding of the word 'nomadic' comes from Rosi Braidotti,[5] where nomadic subjectivity is a subversive action of critical relocation and becoming situated.

Organizational scholar Barbara Czarniawska suggests that following objects helps to diminish the risk of neglecting important actants in a study.[6] The hand drawn map in the form of a programme represents an artefact that connects the aspects of space design to the question of space use. It is tangible, structured and detailed; a map in the form of a simple drawing is difficult to judge. It may represent a path, a pattern, a movement or a blueprint, it can embody a note, an organizer, an exact spot where one will meet another, an exact time when the meeting will happen, on occasion even the exact knowledge of what will happen. I wonder if this is a human obsession with patterns and a desire to categorize, collect and explain that pushes us to create maps? Or is the contrary true, is a map simply the plainest visualization tool, which can often be read rather as a suggestion?

Of course, maps are controversial and historically, they have functioned as an established mechanism for creating boundaries that represent the distribution of control, not at least colonial control, through land ownership. For an architect or city planner, a map or a plan does represent quite obvious structure, and in this case, it does become an unambiguous object. The map as an architectural object; a detailed plan can be one example, carries the baggage of institutional norms, which through cartographic practices are constantly reproduced. The legend of the map represents the boundaries of the relationships of ownership, where usually only certain actors have the power to decide where the boundary is placed. An architectural map/blueprint has a specific way of reproducing itself through the repetition of operations within the field where the norms of land use, the division between public and private is constantly repeated and manufactured, and often, public space is dictated by the private actors such as property developers. It means that the way we approach space is defined by those who create the norms. This view is so embedded in the architectural profession that seeing otherwise is outlandish.

If a map is an object inscribing[7] and producing[8] space, it is important to understand the debate around the notion of space to draw a distinction between map and territory. According to the anthropologist and geographer David Harvey,[9] the notion of space is undoubtedly socially constructed, while geographer Tim Cresswell elaborates on Harvey's statement saying that two things, particularly important for the discussion around space, are materiality and meaning.[10] He further points out that *'to say that the space is socially constructed is also to say that the materiality — the very fabric of the scape — is a product of society too'*.[11] Ian Cook et al.[12] claim that there has never been any coherent approach towards materiality in geography and state that we become aware of place through embodied encounters by being present in the space and further elaborate that *'our engagements with land and materials are shaped ontologically, through various knowledge, memories, histories, and discourses that come before such encounters'*. In her book *On Space*, geographer Doreen Massey states that places are collections of the stories and articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. She talks about spatio-temporal events, as an integration of space and time, pointing out: *'I weave the stories which make this "here and now" for me'*[13], emphasizing the notion of presence in conversation about space. Katarina Bonnevier[14] through the queer analysis of homes and contextualizing the notion of salon, states that events are activating the space in order to bring out the qualities invisible to the naked eye and in this way subvert the meanings that are inscribed in places. Material traces left in space, the hand-drawn map is a clear example of such a trace, often speak louder than designs; in this way, the event I have attended in *Not Quite* can represent both the spatio-temporal and subversive happening of the event, as well as encounters with the notion of presence in the space that can be read through signs and traces[15] of bodies moving within the unfamiliar space. In this case nomadic presence challenges the very idea of ownership, seeing the space as constantly moving and changing.

Gamifying Maps As Collective Storytelling

In my practice I use games as tools for dialogue processes, where I deconstruct a challenge in question into a set of fragments, which become elements of the game. The map as a field of a board game becomes an undetermined space. The boundaries get blurred and the lines on the 'map' distorted. Games, as a tool, have often been a rendering of 'reality', but they have also been used as a visualization tool to discuss certain stories. Monopoly, perhaps one of the most well-known games, has been developed by Lizzie Magie to describe the single-taxation principle with the original name 'The Landlord's Game', which aimed to explain the main principle of capitalism based on rewards gained from initial capital and by this means visualizing the development of monopolies.

When we look at the map through the lens of board games, the map becomes an object, an artefact consisting of a variety of elements, all of which can be assembled, disassembled, put together, taken apart and adjusted, creating a variety of narratives. What stories do the maps tell us? Obviously very diverse ones. An architectural blueprint tells the story of regulations and norms, carefully created and preserved by institutions, a structural mechanism of creating boundaries. A hand-drawn map, in its turn, tells us the story of a self-organized initiative in order to guide us through temporarily activated space, challenging the idea of boundaries. Both stories are collective, but their meaning is different. Maps and collectivity are directly related through the way that they are produced by means of collective storytelling. By telling another story through the objects present in the field, there is the possibility to incorporate more narratives other than the normative ones in the conversation about critical spatial practice, and by stretching the map into elements which embody pieces of the landscape we can possibly alter our gaze on the production of spatiality and commons.

1 Jane Rendell, '(Un)doing It Yourself: Rhetorics Of Architectural Abuse', *The Journal of Architecture* 4 (Spring 1999), 101–110
2 'Not Quite' (accessed: 23 September 2022), https://www.notquite.se/
3 Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (London: IB Tauris, 2006).
4 'Koloni'(accessed: 23 September 2022), https://www.kolonigbg.com/.
5 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist TheoryTheory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).
6 Barbara Czarniawska, *Social Science Research: From Field to Desk* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2014).
7 Bruno Latour (text), Emilie Hermant (photo), *Paris: Invisible City.* Online project. Translated from the French by Liz Carey-Libbrecht, 2006, (accessed: 23 September 2022), http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/downloads/PARIS-INVISIBLE-GB.pdf
8 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 1996).
9 David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and Geography of Difference* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996).
10 Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2015).
11 Ibid., p. 47
12 Ian Cook, Divya P. Tolia-Kelly, 'Material Geographies', in *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture*, edited by Dan Hicks, Mary C. Beaudry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1–23.
13 Doreeen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005).
14 Katarina Bonnevier, *'Behind Straight Curtains'* (PhD diss. Stockholm: Kungliga tekniska högskolan, 2007).
15 Bruno Latour and Emily Hermant, P*aris: Invisible City*.

Fig.1: Not Quite. Photo by Natalie Novik

Natalie Novik

A Mother's Place

Maretha Dreyer

This article is an autoethnographic exploration of my own spatial experiences of early motherhood. It is intended as an introductory phase at the beginning of my PhD project that focuses on cross-border displaced mothers' endeavours to make homes. Grappling with ethical concerns regarding power dynamics, representation and othering in the main research project, the aim of this initial self-study is to critically reflect upon my own intersectional experience, with the intention of revealing my personal embeddedness within the larger research project. With this intent, I experiment with architectural drawing techniques to analyze photos of the material traces of my personal experiences of early motherhood.

Background

In order to understand how a diverse group of women in situations of cross-border displacement can be supported more effectively, my PhD research aims to identify how motherhood and gender influence asylum seekers' spatial experiences of making homes. A combination of participatory feminist and architectural design research methods will be employed in a qualitative study with cross-border displaced mothers. The aim of the project as a whole is ultimately to suggest ways in which architectural design processes can be employed to better support mothers in situations of forced displacement.

Despite increasing numbers of women migrating to South Africa, both forced and electively, there is a lack of reliable data on the topic. Women are more vulnerable to violence, exploitation, human trafficking and homelessness during migration and resettling, and face more challenges in accessing available services. In South Africa, refugees and asylum seekers are allowed to settle and work wherever they choose. Although this might seem progressive, in practice, individuals in circumstances of forced displacement are inadequately supported and face many challenges in finding housing and employment.[1] Available research suggests that many women in situations of forced cross-border displacement in South Africa find employment in unskilled, low-paid, informal and poorly regulated work, including informal trading, domestic work, care, sex[2] or agricultural work that is often temporary, part-time or seasonal. Poor living conditions, including: shacks, overcrowded apartment and a lack of access to washing facilities and toilets, are reported in the existing literature. Women seeking refuge in South Africa also have to navigate xenophobia and high crime rates.[3] Motherhood further heightens the challenges and vulnerabilities of migrating women in general, as mothers often have more difficulty entering the labour market and earn lower wages due to their childcare responsibilities.[4]

Methodology

This research draws on feminist theory to find more ethically sound and appropriate ways to conduct research with displaced people as an outsider. In previous research[5], I identified several limitations and shortcomings that arise when carrying out such research. For me, the most pressing of these concerns are:

- The authority that an external researcher has to speak on behalf of—and specialize in the lived experiences of—others.
- Ethical considerations regarding consent and the power imbalances in the relationship between the researcher and subject.
- Most problematically, the creation of knowledge about others that, as Sara Ahmed[6] explains, inevitably reproduces colonial inequalities by setting them up as 'strangers'.

To navigate the complexities of conducting research as an outsider, I embarked on my research journey with an autoethnography of my own experience of home-making during early motherhood. Firstly, my intention is to obtain a better understanding of how I navigated the cultural constraints in finding my own way as a mother by doing what Xue and Desmet[7] refer to as 'researcher introspection'. This will be followed by practising 'interactive introspection' where research participants and the researcher co-create knowledge by shared empathic introspection. In response to Hilde Heynen's[8] call for multidisciplinary research to achieve a more holistic understanding of the interaction between space and social behaviour, I experiment with architectural drawing techniques to read the interior geography of 'spatial, social, psychological and emotive'[9] meaning that constructs a home.

The images and drawings generated during this initial phase will be used later on in the research process to start conversations with cross-border displaced mothers, about our respective spatial experiences of motherhood. It is also envisioned that these visual methods could be adapted to create knowledge about participants' experiences. Conceivably, the end result will establish an intersectional dialogue between myself as the embodied researcher and the lived experiences of participants.

Researcher Introspection

This part of the article takes on the form of a critical reflection on my own positionality as a researcher. The purpose of this section is to foreground the assumptions and biases I hold towards my research topic at the project's outset. The intent is for this initial reflexive exercise to form the basis for continuous reassessment of my positionality throughout the PhD project:

As a South African national, I am an outsider to the research. I am privileged: a white, able-bodied, cisgender, married, middle-class, first-time mother. Our daughter was born in a private hospital during strict Covid-19 lockdown. At the time, we were living in an eighty square meter, two-bedroom apartment in Cape Town. For several reasons mostly related to becoming parents, we have since moved to a three-bedroom, suburban house with a double garage and garden.

Kathy Davis[10] suggests that intersectional analysis can be a useful framework for acknowledging the situatedness of all knowledge[11] by critically reflecting on the role that a researcher's own identity can play throughout the entire research process. More specific to my own research topic, I previously suggested using an intersectional lens to explain asylum seekers' unique experiences of displacement.[12] However, according to Davis[13], a non-exhaustive list declaring a researcher's identity markers (as I included in the first paragraph of this section) is not an effective way to situate a researcher within the research. She suggests developing a rich biographical narrative of everyday interactions between the researcher and the people the research will focus on. This should reveal how the researcher's own identity shapes the research in specific ways. What follows is an attempt to critically reflect on my pre-conceived ideas, biases and blind spots regarding two of the themes in this research, namely cross-border displacement and motherhood.

My Current Understanding of Cross-border Displacement

I am in no way a specialist on the topic of migration or seeking refuge. My experience working with asylum seekers is very limited: while on a research mobility in Ireland, I volunteered for a while at a weekly skillshare event in an institutional setting where asylum seekers were housed. I took part alongside the asylum seekers in activities set up by the organisers. Also being from the African continent, my informal conversations with asylum seekers mostly covered our shared love for the African sun and our families. I presented my experience at an academic conference and published a chapter in an international edited and peer-reviewed book on the topic.

In my day-to-day life in South Africa, I probably encounter refugees: perhaps as someone I pass in the street, maybe a parking attendant or someone who collects my shopping trolley and helps me pack my groceries into my car or perhaps some of the people living in the village of tents that has recently popped up opposite the local police station. For a while, we had a weekly domestic worker who came from Zimbabwe. She would annoy me slightly by asking: 'Is Maretha still sleeping?', every time she arrived before 07:00 in the morning and my husband opened the door in his pyjamas while I was still drinking my tea in bed. When I asked her about her family's safety during a time when there was a rise in xenophobic attacks in Cape Town, she told me that she was worried because her oldest daughter, who was twelve at the time, was alone with the little ones in the morning after she herself had left for work with her husband at 05:30am. The oldest daughter had to get the little ones ready, walk the youngest to the creche and then get a lift with the other sibling to school. There was also a man who regularly slept on the pavement in front of our apartment block. He would wake us up at night sometimes when he screamed in his sleep. Now that we are renting our apartment out, our tenants have complained about him and said that they have called the police numerous times to 'have him removed.' I also recall gardeners, builders, an electrician who renovated our apartment and some of the students in my class who were from Malawi, Somalia, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some of these people could have been forcibly displaced, others voluntary migrants. I never asked. In fact, I suspect that—like what is very often the case in the general media—I conflated terms such as 'refugee', 'asylum seeker' and 'forced economic migrant' by assuming that anyone I met from another African country could be a refugee. I hope that through this research, my knowledge and understanding of this topic will expand.

Fig.1: Collections of some of our essential baby items: a) toys we took with us when we went away for three nights with a ten-month-old baby; b) most of the nursing and feeding equipment we have used for our baby from newborn to seventeen-month-old; c) some of the medicine and equipment we keep in our medicine cabinet, some used, some 'just in case'. Photos by the author.

Fig. 3: 'Then and Now': Photos showing how we set up a sleep space for our baby in preparation for her arrival (3a) and how we ended up sleeping (3b).

Transitioning into Motherhood: A Visual Reflection Process

For me, early motherhood felt like a constant negotiation between finding my own way around the acceptable norms and expectations of society. The way we mother, what we do and what we find acceptable, is culturally produced.[14] Yet, it is often difficult to evaluate our own actions as such. Moreover, the Western conventions in which I was brought up is often seen as neutral or 'cultureless'. In an attempt to uncover how my own engagement with space during motherhood was guided by cultural norms, I started by taking photographs of collections of 'things' we use on a daily basis to transform space into a home. This includes several assemblages constructed around themes: the 'essential' toys we took with us when we went away with our daughter when she was ten months old (fig.1a); the multitude of equipment and cutlery we simply 'had to have' to feed her since birth (some still waiting to be used) (fig.1b); the array of medicine and medical equipment we keep in our medicine cabinet, some used, some kept 'just in case' (fig.1c)—in a nutshell, the 'profusion of stuff that can go along with early parenting' as Boyer[15] describes it.

As I suspected that the visual analysis and drawing techniques I often use as an architect could encourage deep thinking, I then traced these photographs, making use of basic architectural drawing conventions such as a limited colour palette, line weight, notes and annotations and scale. Through the process of drawing and slowly thinking through each of the different elements in the photographs, I came to new insights regarding not only the 'things' we kept, but also about myself as a new mother. One of these 'contemplations' are included here (Fig 2):

However, the intention behind focusing on myself as a research subject was partly to try and negotiate the power relations intrinsic to my main study: to in the very least, open up the private sphere of my day-to-day life for critique in the same way that I am planning to ask of my research participants. It struck me that the assemblages I had been photographing were so stylized and controlled that once juxtaposed with similar information from displaced mothers as my research participants, these images would perhaps illustrate the power imbalances that exist between myself and the participants, but will do little to neutralize them. If I want participants to let me into their raw, unfiltered, un-stylized home-places, I must certainly be willing to do the same. I therefore started taking photographs of the places in my house where 'things' seemed to be taking on a life of their own, where the clutter was piling up. I noticed that these photographs started telling a story of what was happening in our lives by leaving traces in the form of clutter on every possible horizontal surface in the house. The larger pieces of furniture also contributed to this narrative. We now regularly found new places and uses for items of furniture to ease our interactions with the baby: we moved the cot further away from our bed so she could sleep better, we moved the cot away from the window because it was getting colder, we moved the rocking chair to the opposite side of the room to make more space to rock her to sleep, we started sleeping on a mattress on the floor because she was becoming more mobile and we were worried she would fall off the bed (Fig.3). What struck me was the continuous process of making and remaking place in reaction to either the changing needs of our baby or to external factors such as temperature, light and noise. Home had become a process that was taking up a large amount of mental space and physical effort.

The most recent stage of my investigation involves sieving through the photographs on my phone that document the traces of these spatial memories by unintentionally showing positions of furniture and other items as a background to family photographs (Fig. 4). Through this exercise, I could identify several themes that were directing our daily placemaking efforts: soothing, sleeping, nursing, eating/feeding, dressing and bathing, and getting mobile. These themes will be used to create links with the existing body of knowledge on the topic and will be suggested as starting points when reflecting on the spatial experience of motherhood with research participants.

Fig. 2: Initial stages of a drawing of Fig.1a, making use of architectural-drawing techniques. Drawing by the author.

Conclusion

This research project is currently still in the early stages. I am in the process of communicating with social workers at several non-profit organizations that work with asylum seekers in Cape Town in order to explore the most suitable ways for me to engage with mothers in situations of displacement. My plan is to start with fieldwork soon with the aim of collaboratively creating knowledge about the experiences of mothers making homes in situations of displacement. This text contains an excerpt of the process of researcher introspection, intending to uncover some of the power imbalances and complexities that are inherent in this research.

Acknowledgements

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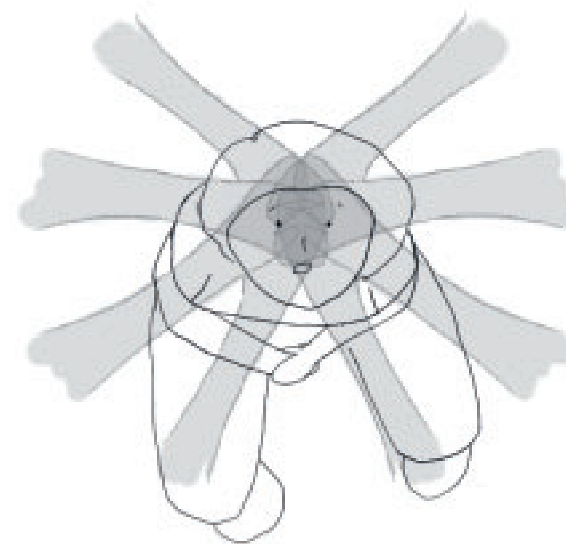
Maretha Dreyer

Architecture and the liminal space

Deniz Köse

Architecture and construction are among the leading industries that cause climate change, but the question of whether or how mainstream construction can be changed, remains uncertain. Rooted in the densely built megacity of Istanbul, this text invites us architects to evaluate our involvement in the building industry's shortcomings and to stand up for change, as a response to the uncertainty of our futures, facing climate catastrophes. For this, it offers the concept of liminal space to rethink mainstream architectural practice. The text aims to inspire us to think about the resources that architecture consumes and to rethink the traditional roles of architects, questioning the conventional ways of construction, and exploring alternative approaches that are more responsible and reconnect to our world as a more-than-human endeavour.



By the end of the 1980s, Istanbul had almost seven million residents and became more crowded every day.[1] Our family became part of the latest migration wave when my father began a new job in Istanbul. We moved to a brand new ten-storey building with a shining white facade that was really tall to my four-year-old self, my eyes burnt from the sun as I tried to see the top floor. The building's big, gated and somewhat ostentatious front yard had two rectangle-shaped green areas bordered with green bushes. Inside, the meticulously landscaped big round flower arrangements and roses were accompanied by a few trees. Between the rectangles, a stone and marble pathway spanned the street to the building's front door where it would meet a wide stairway.

It was forbidden for us children to play inside the landscaped garden, so we played on the stone pathway and on the steps of the stairway, as well as on the unpaved ground inside the gates that we shared with parked cars. Even with the exclusion of the landscaped garden and the area occupied by the cars, we still had more than enough room to play, run or hide, in contrast to many of the neighbours' children who had to play either in narrow concrete spaces around their buildings or on the street.

The lack of yards in Istanbul buildings was no coincidence: the pervasive building practice was to lend the land to a contractor who would design the building, buy the construction supply, organize the workers and supervise the construction. As payment, the constructor demanded a 'fair amount' of flats in the building which they would then sell for a profit. Istanbul's rapid growth and this business model provided many opportunities for contractors.

Our building's landowner was one of the last survivors of urban transformation in our neighbourhood, with a single-storey house and a big garden. After becoming surrounded by five-storey buildings and due to old age, he decided to lend most of his garden to a contractor, who built in accordance with the new residential zoning that allowed up to ten storeys. Since our street was already full of buildings that were built during the previous zoning laws, our ten-storey building stood out amongst these five-storey buildings. Traces of our landowner's former life remained next to our gates, with his old house (now used as his hardware store) and a garden like a jungle juxtaposed with our building's neatly landscaped garden.

The constructor of our building lived on the top floor with his family, demonstrating his trust in his own construction quality, which translated to lay people like us as the gold standard. When the massive earthquake of 1999 hit we were happy to witness this quality as our building survived it with only a few small cracks. Unfortunately, many buildings in and around Istanbul collapsed, killing around 18,000 people. Through these demolished concrete structures, the unsettling truth that everyone already knew became undeniably visible: the ubiquitous unethical construction practices of many constructors. Many materials, especially expensive ones like steel, were rationed by the builders to reduce costs. This pervasive method of construction practice even got its own phrase in Turkish, 'stealing materials'. The mainstream construction practice led to the catastrophe everyone knew was coming but were too inert or too ignorant to change. And we now understand, after the most recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria in February 2023, that not much has changed in the building industry since the 1999 catastrophe.

The architecture and construction industries are currently the major industries leading us into another catastrophe by exhausting our planet's vital resources. The environmental impact of cement, deforestation, damaged topsoil and depleting water resources are some of the reasons the construction industry ought to take responsibility for the climate catastrophe we face today. This time, our world may not collapse on us because materials are not applied but because of their excessive application. Isabelle Doucet writes: 'Architects can offer possibilities and interpretations, stories (real and imagined) of how we can connect differently, how we can resist collaboratively, and how we can challenge the promises of growth, progress, and development that are otherwise considered part and parcel of any architectural brief'.[2] Based on this, I claim that a planetary-thought architecture that pays attention to the resources it consumes, is accountable to future generations and stays attentive to more-than-human worlds might offer a different interpretation to connect to our world. In moving towards this architecture, we architects may need to face our roles as the constructors of futures and ask ourselves what materials and from whom we are 'stealing' them?

I suggest that facing our responsibilities would mean moving architecture (mentally and maybe even physically) to a liminal space.[3] Such liminal space would consist of in-between situations, dislocation of established structures, the reversal of hierarchies, and uncertainty regarding future outcomes, which could feel irritating.[4] A way to navigate liminal space employs the rituals of learning, sharing, and thinking. Architecture's collective shift could be achieved through the ritualistic practice of expressing concerns, and hopes and exchanging knowledges within the liminal space. It is vital that these learning, thinking, and sharing practices are valued as much as architecture's physical manifestations. In line with Isabelle Doucet, we need stories of architecture in the liminal space, wonderful carrier- bag stories[5] which we tell our futures with,[6] full of mesmerizing images of '"speculative fabulations and science facts and speculative feminisms"'.[7]

By virtue of their expertise in space creation, architects have the capacity to establish this 'liminal space' that serves as an indispensable facet of architectural practice, nurturing an environment that cultivates the sharing and transformation of ideas. There was a game we used to play in our front yard in Istanbul. It required a chair or anything to sit on and five people. The implied rules of the game dictated complete silence. In case of any laughter or giggles, we would start the rigorous movements of the game again. First, one of us would sit. We would use the metal casing of the water pump that was on the threshold of the garden where we could partially be on the forbidden grass area. Two of us would position themselves to the left and two to the right of the sitting person. Then, we would place our index fingers under their armpits and kneepits and try to lift the sitting person. No matter how hard we tried, we could not lift them. Then, in complete silence and with full concentration we would each hover our hands over the sitting person's head, one by one. Each hand would be placed just above where we could feel the corporeal heat of the other one, but not touching each other. When everyone put their hands up, we would reverse the cycle and put our hands away, one by one.

When we again tried to lift our friend by only using our index fingers, it suddenly felt as if our friend was as light as a feather. We could swing them in the air with no strain! Every time we played it, we were mesmerized by the result. As we set our focus on a collective goal and stayed alert, what once proved to be impossible was turned into a possible physical reality.

An architecture of the liminal space might seem impossible now but magical things can happen if we collectively aim for changing the established structures. An architecture that adopts an attentive approach, towards humans and non-humans, and architects who internalize a practice of sharing, thinking and learning would change industries, even if it might seem as impossible as lifting a heavy weight with only our index fingers.

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3 Sociologically, the term defines the middle phase of any ritual process that can be divided into three analytically distinct phases and during which an individual undergoes a transition from one status to another. This phase entails 'no longer' being something and simultaneously 'not yet' being something else.

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5 Ursula K. Le Guin, 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction', 1986, Source: Dancing at the Edge of the World, Transcribed by Cody Jones, accessed 28 May2022, https://otherfutures.nl/uploads/documents/le-guin-the-carrier-bag-theory-of-fiction.pdf.

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Deniz Köse

Of Coconuts and Clay

Asha Sumra

This article traces the connection between a personal story and the conceptual and material implications of coconuts and clay, enquiring how qualities of anonymity, ambiguity and impressionability might help in understanding the migrations of materials and practices through the specific example of the Mangalore tile. Marrying an intended insult with the robust, rebellious coconut described in Giovanna Borasi (ed.), *Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas and Buildings Rearrange Our Environment* (2010) and a physical and cultural understanding of clay, this piece aims to establish a foundational framework for unravelling the interconnected relationships of the tile.

Where to put the Coconut?

When I was about seven years old my warm, well-intentioned London primary school decided to stage an event to highlight the multiculturalism of its pupils. Teachers were asked to pick out class members who represented different cultures. However, the criteria were not clear: *What defined difference? How do we define multicultural? Were they seeking children who spoke languages other than English? Those beyond the borders of England or Britain? Did the mixed race amongst us count?* Whilst most children and teachers seemed happy to engage in this exotic parade, for me it triggered an existential anxiety that I could not express. My mum was a Dorset-born, part-Scottish, English woman and my dad was a Northern Irish Indian from Londonderry whose wholehearted Britishness signified his rejection of his parents' Punjabi culture. My exotic name, brown complexion and thick dark hair were multicultural clues, but were they enough to be 'chosen'? The lead up to the event created further confusion. During rehearsals, some days I was picked and some days I was not. Conflicted, I did not know where I fit but somehow I felt it came down to finding the least fraudulent option: *to include myself when I had next to no knowledge of my paternal family's Indian culture or to exclude myself when I was conspicuously not a pure home breed?* In my confusion, I lacked the conviction to make a decisive, unprovoked statement either way. It was beyond me to position myself, especially as I was not asked. Instead, I left it to the teachers to decide where to put me. In the final run, I was included. Whilst this felt like a positive acknowledgement, I feared that my inauthenticity would somehow be exposed. In front of an audience in the Victorian assembly hall, each child was asked in turn to say something in the language that they spoke at home. At last the criteria was clear! The game was up, but it was too late to escape an imminent fall. My turn came.

'I speak English' was all I could manage.

In the deflated silence that followed the pride at being lauded for difference gave way to the shame and confusion of having no evidence to support that difference. Just as many today might fail citizenship tests on the basis of lack of knowledge of the language and culture of their adopted land, I had failed the multicultural test on the basis of lack of knowledge of the language and culture of a place I had never seen. This was a cultural blank of one side of family: present in ethnicity but not praxis, in blood but not language.

As a teenager I found out that this deficiency gave me a name. Behind my back I was called a coconut: an unsubtle reference to being brown on the outside and white on the inside. I was torn between insult and intrigue: it was intended as a derogatory label, but it was also a potential framework through which to unravel the complexity of my own identity. I laughed off the insult as witty and buried the coconut, but somehow I carried it with me as a way of understanding the constructive ambiguity of things.

The coconut is a potential tool to understand movement, meaning and diversity beyond obvious appearances. In *Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas and Buildings Rearrange Our Environment* (2010), Curtis C. Ebbesmeyer writes about drift:

The wild coconut evolved to be an efficient global traveler: its tough fibrous husk and air-filled seed allow it to float over great distances and remain generally viable if it reaches suitable land within four months [adding that its] ability to ride upon ocean currents means that it drifts outside the bounds of human laws and restrictions, and suggests an alternative path of movement around the world; a system whose scale and complexity remains beyond the control of abstract human decisions, yet continues to shape the environment we inhabit.[1]

Perhaps it was not so bad to be a coconut after all. Ebbesmeyer showed the promise of the buoyant, robust, rebellious coconut which moves, exists and creates relationships between distant places; a living vehicle that traces cartographies of knowledge and being. The coconut is not my subject, but thanks to the intended insult, it helps in understanding the migrations of materials and practices. Just as the coconut is a knowledge vessel, I now follow the transfer of materials, processes, ideas and meaning through clay.

The Ambiguity of Clay

One might not think of this warm, malleable material as charged cultural content, but its migration and ambiguity is comparable to the coconut. Over vast periods of time the feldspar in igneous rocks breaks down into fine-particle clay: a workable mineral stew resulting from the erosion of the earth's crust.[2] Geological movement contributes to the mixing of materials resulting in increased plasticity and workability. Grainy residual clays remain at, or near, the site of the parent material and lack plasticity.[3] Sedimentary clays which have been transported by water, wind and ice, and deposited far from the source material contain smaller particles, are more likely to be mixed with other materials and subsequently, more plastic.[4] Material movement, mixing and the subsequent workability of materials is an apt metaphor for cultural encounter and its consequent impact on building cultures. Therefore, extracting and forming clay is a reworking of the stew from the earth's crust: analogous to cooking and a geological re-articulation of the ground.[5] From its formation from layers of the ground; through to its processing as pottery, brick, tile, drainage ware, lamps, stoves and beyond; in its exchange, use, assembly and appropriation, clay holds a convenient position within both industry and craft.[6] We form and cast our perceptions onto clay at will. Its impressionability: openness to imprints and forming, the very thing that makes it malleable, is also what renders it susceptible to manipulation: physical, social, theological and cultural.

The Mangalore tile (1865) is a case of transfer and of manipulation; formed from local clay, but also through a migration of values that defined its production. Holding both the tangible and intangible, the tile consists of the physical material of landscapes and seascapes, the clay, timber, steel, lime, tools and equipment that make up the industry and the intangible knowledge of processes of extraction, production, exchange and building that emerged as a result. Terracotta is part of the overwhelming redness of the Malabar Coast: the clay and laterite stone of the ground, rippling red roofscapes, dusk skies and the masalas of various food preparations. If the coconut is a tool to understand the impurity of identity, clay is a vehicle to excavate the meaning of the material interactions of specific places.

Despite its strong association with the local red clay of the Netravati River, the Mangalore tile has its origins in a mechanical tile patented by the Italian Gilardoni brothers in Alsace, eastern France (1841). Technology and patterns[7] were carried along with the Pietistic ideology of the Basel Mission from France, Germany and Switzerland to found a roof tile industry that became embedded within South Indian building culture. Tile-making technology was brought to the Malabar Coast by the German missionary engineer George Plebst to develop the first Basel Mission tile in 1865. Further patterns developed in Marseille informed the dye developed for the Mangalore tile. In Alsace, Provence and Mangalore alike, the tile employed local clay and mechanized technology: a mixture of regional resources and industrial processes. The result was a product which was widely used but viewed with suspicion. Mechanical production and diverse origins meant that the tile was perceived not as local but as invasive: a material misfit or migrant which threatened local practices.

New relations created through these foreign encounters between processes and resources could be understood as networks in which participants assume a role based on the linear connections between things. Instead, a more meaningful framework is found in the 'network-without-voids' ecology articulated by Star and de la Bellacasa.[8] Instead of merely defining a connection between participants, this framework makes the processes that occur between places, people and resources active. Consequently, the spaces between participants assume a role within a set of interdependent relationships. From this ecology emerges another kind of a coconut: a tile with a local name, made from nearby riverbed deposits using a pattern and technology from a distant land. If dirt is 'matter out of place',[9] perhaps the Mangalore tile is a consequence of 'process out of place' or, in the language of Reiser + Umemoto, 'a migration of practice'.[10] Such perceptions imply that materials, processes and practices have a clear, fixed origin: a starting point of practical and cultural use from which they are displaced. The interactions between coconuts and clay undermine this implication, indicating instead that movements create multiplicity: an accumulation of layers of meaning through encounters between materials, places, people and processes. This multiplicity rejects attempts to define a singular origin, reinforcing the need to use the 'network-without-voids' ecology to understand the meaning of diverse encounters.

A Coconut following Clay

These movements or migrations are in themselves a form of translation,[11] which refers to a move from one place or condition to another.[12] The actions that extract, process, form, exchange, build and appropriate the tile are all a form of micro-translation. The material is a synthesis: simultaneously physical and social; geological and archival; architectural and religious, to some extent inseparable in form and meaning. As the tile is formed from clay it accumulates meaning. As the tile is in turn traded and exchanged, and formed into structures, whether spontaneous or intentional, it assumes uses and further meaning. When the tile or the structures it forms are taken apart, through demolition or analysis, its use and meaning is transformed and interpreted. In each state, the material and its assemblages carry material histories and suggest a system of building and ideas beyond their immediate role as an artifact. What is left over from these processes is a form of residue, but also encompasses what is left out, whether that is material, knowledge, people, labour, stories, language or voice.

I have tried to tell the coconut tale many times, but without being told as the story of a well-established figure it felt flat—too personal, trivial, or jump-on-the-bandwagon-of-the-zeitgeist to carry its embedded meaning, but perhaps the anonymity of the coconut and the ambiguity of clay communicate empathy beyond the story of an individual.

I am now a coconut following clay. Instead of asking people where they are from, I ask them what languages they speak. This leads to openness and insight that might not otherwise be revealed. To avoid similar prejudice with materials, perhaps we need a way of asking the same of buildings, environments and things: *What languages do they speak?*

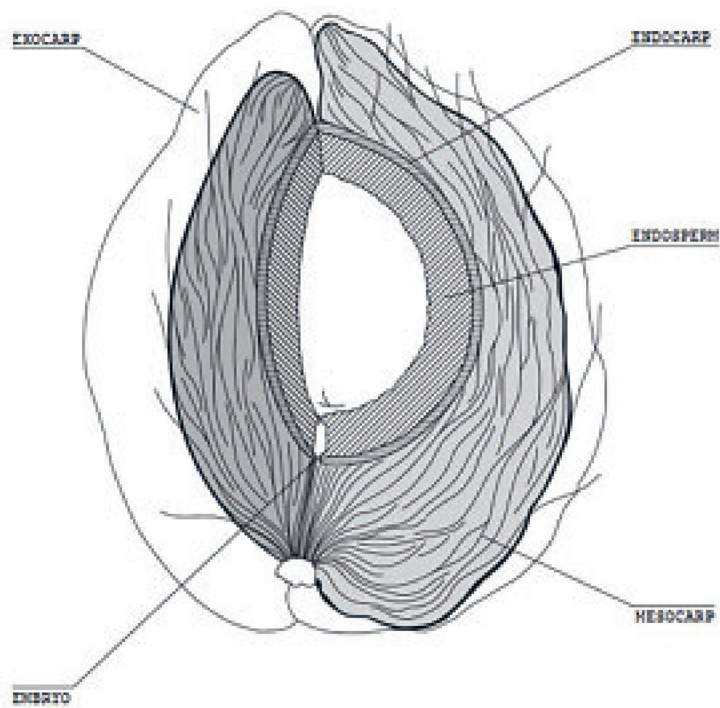

Fig. 1: Cross-section of a coconut, 2010 (Drawing by Matthew Fellows from Giovanna Borasi, ed. *Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas and Buildings Rearrange Our Environment* (Montréal: Centre Canadien d'Architecture & Actar, 2010), 84–85. Reproduced with permission from the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

Fig. 3: Mechanical tiles still in production at Tuilerie de Niderviller, France. Including flat tile, Gilardoni tile and Marseille tile (Asha Sumra and Arijit Chatterjee, June 2022)

Fig. 2: Knowledge Cartography of Clay (Asha Sumra, May 2022)

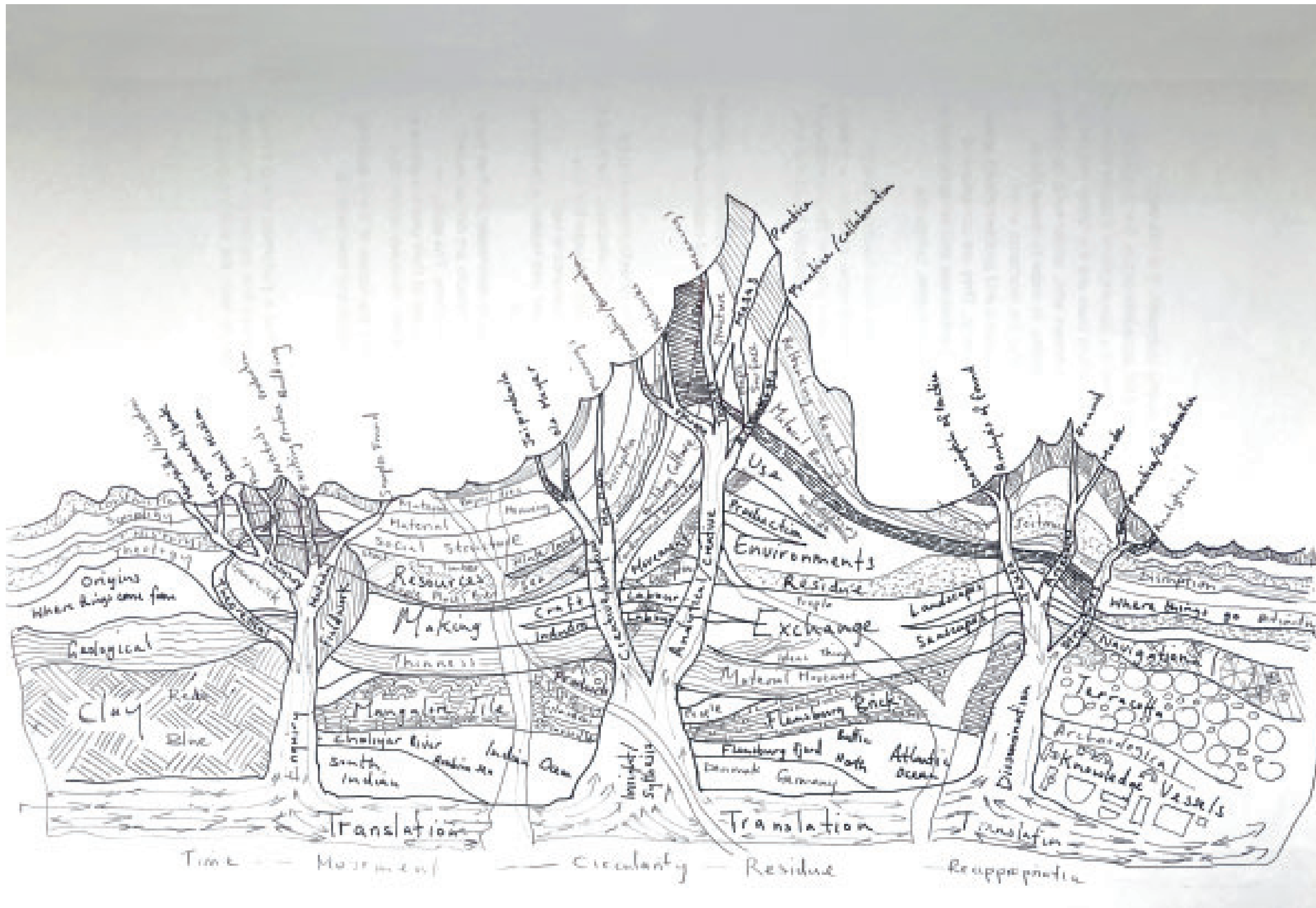

Fig. 4: Moulds and tools for terracotta production, Lilleskov Teglværk, Denmark (Asha Sumra and Arijit Chatterjee, June 2022)

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2 'Clay Types, Geology, Properties and Color Chart', Glendale College Ceramics, Accessed 12 January 2022, https://sites.google.com/site/meeneecat/educational-materials/clay-types-geological-origins-working-properties-gccceramics.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid. 'Under the microscope, clay particles resemble playing cards … flat, hexagonal, and thin, like cards. When wet, the particles can "slip" across each other, as in a deck of cards. This ability to "slip" is what gives a clay its workability, called plasticity'.

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7 *tuile à emboîtement* (interlocking tile) was patented by the Gilardoni brothers from Altkirch on 25 March 1841.

8 Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, 'Ecological Thinking, Material Spirituality and the Poetics of Infrastructure' in *Boundary Objects and Beyond: Working with Leigh Star*, ed. Geoffrey C. Bowker, Stefan Timmermans, Adele E. Clarke, and Ellen Balka. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2016), 47–68.

9 The idea of dirt as 'matter out of place' is often attributed to the anthropologist Mary Douglas (Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969) but can arguably be traced back to an address to the Royal Agricultural Society by Lord Palmerston, 'The Royal Agricultural Society', *The Times*, 21169, 16 July 1852, 8.

10 Reiser + Umemoto (Studio di Architettura), *Atlas of Novel Tectonics* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), 236.

11 Esra Akcan, *Architecture in Translation: Germany, Turkey, and the Modern House* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2012).

12 Translate: Origin Middle English: from Latin *translat-* 'carried across', past participle of *transferre* (see transfer), Oxford English Dictionary online, accessed 20 April 2022.

METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS: An annotated bibliography

The PhD course Approaching Research Practice in Architecture dealt partly with methodological questions in practice-oriented research that focused on interactions between theory, practice and modes of knowledge development.[1] It considered research as a craft, a form of skilled practice that ranges from scholarly and experimental writing to ethnographic studies, visual work and other forms of performative research activities. Methodologies were hereby treated as frames of analysis or situated approaches, whilst methods were seen as toolboxes or concepts in the context of the course, acknowledging that some artistic research rejects "method" as an approach altogether. In group work, participants discussed methodological approaches in relation to their own research questions: What do we want to know and how do we go about it?

Problematization
Celia Lury, a sociologist and scholar in interdisciplinary studies of culture, explores methodology through the trope of *problem spaces* that help to 'compose' problems.[2] She states that a research 'problem' is not given, it only becomes one when it is recognized as such and is investigated as part of a methodology. This involves its construction and questions it from many angles. 'Composing' hereby reflects on the formation and transformation of the questions and problem spaces at hand. Lury sees this activity as a crucial part of problematization.

Situatedness
Overall, Lury criticizes the Western-centric nature of methodological debates and points to the often unrecognized 'geo-politics' of methodology. In line with the feminist philosopher of science Donna Haraway's lens of 'situated knowledges',[3] and the sociologists' John Law and John Urry's thoughts on the performative nature of methods that enact the world,[4] she foregrounds the connection between the observer and the observed, and the performative effects of methods which are 'of and in the world'. Hence, she stresses the epistemic infrastructure and the culture of knowledge within which the composition of problems and questions take place as formative conditions of research. As we have learned from Haraway, these can be addressed in writing through the authors' conscious positioning.

Both Lury and Law point to the significance of how to approach a research project that shapes the outcomes and the answers to our questions. They emphasize the need to develop an awareness of the fact that we are constructing worlds or world views through the methods we choose, compose, form and transform by making and using them.

Devices
The earlier anthology, *Inventive Methods*, that Lury edited with the artist Nina Wakeford,[5] emphasizes that increasing research across disciplines, as well as a growing field of research subjects calls for the reconsideration of research methods. The book introduces twenty different methodological approaches or what the editors prefer to call here 'devices' by researchers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. However, they state that the anthology is not meant to be a manual of 'how to' approaches, but rather a collection of inexhaustive and heterogeneous examples of research to be cross-read by researchers for an understanding of how their own methods impacted their work as depending not only on the specificity of its purpose, but also its context.

According to Lury and Wakeford, a research method can be an instrument, a device or a practice. It can be material or immaterial. They show that research often involves multiple devices, such as images, texts, cameras, recording devices, drawings, sketches and diagrams, etc. Therefore, they suggest using 'device' instead of method as a richer term that has multiple everyday meanings that act more like tangible objects with material-semiotic properties and argue that its use could expand our understandings of the relationships between the sensible and the knowable which is crucial in practice-oriented research. For Wakeford and Lury, the notion of the device hereby assumes the role of a hinge between concepts and practices. The object and its use belong together, they cannot be neutrally applied; they become part of a given context and the researchers' situated practice.

Inventiveness
The introduction of methods leads to a change or an inventiveness in the research process. Lury and Wakeford point out that their use of the concept of 'inventiveness' does not focus on the production of new and never-before-seen methods. Rather, it approaches that what appears, depending on how methods are put to use in a given situation. Their proposal then, is that 'the inventiveness of methods is to be found in the relation between two moments: the addressing of a method—an anecdote, a probe, a category — to a specific problem, and the capacity of what emerges in the use of that method to change the problem.' A 'method must be made specific and relevant to the problem. In short, inventive methods are ways to introduce answerability into a problem.'[6] The listing of methods-devices is a call to readers to consider their own methods more critically in relation to their purposes.

Project and strategy
Linda Tuhiwai Smith, a scholar in indigenous education, formulates 'a decolonizing research methodology' for both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies*.[7] In this context, she uses the terms 'project' and 'strategy'. She states that her book is a contribution to learning how to undertake research that employs methods that are culturally sensitive and appropriate, instead of those which assume that research and research methods are culture-free and that 'researchers occupy some kind of moral high ground from which they can observe their subjects and make judgements about them.'[8]

From Tuhiwai Smith's specific location and context, she explains that methods are about the survival of peoples, cultures and languages; the struggle to become self-determining and the need to take back control of their own destinies. In that sense, methods become acts of reclaiming, reformulating and reconstituting indigenous cultures and languages and require very strategic actions for its purpose and pursuit of social justice.

The projects she discusses use a variety of methods from different contexts and indigenous practices and have emerged from methodological issues raised by research with various oppressed groups. The mixture of strategies and projects she lists reflect both academic training and the common-sense understandings of research which govern how indigenous communities and researchers define their activities.

Tuhiwai Smith emphasizes the differences between methodology and method, citing Sandra Harding: 'A research methodology is a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed…' and, 'A research method is a technique for (or way of proceeding in) gathering evidence'.[9] Methodology is important because it frames the questions being asked, determines the set of instruments and methods to be employed and shapes the analyses.

World-making
Linda Tuhiwai Smith's decolonizing research methodology highlights the urgency of developing awareness of our own positions in the world, as well as taking responsibility for the effects of and impact our research may have. As researchers, we are called to engage in the complex issues we are currently confronted by, such as climate change and social injustice.

There is no easy way out. The organization studies scholars, Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg,[10] state that what researchers do includes continually creating images for themselves and for others; images which selectively highlight certain claims as to how conditions and processes, experiences, situations and relations can be understood, thus supressing alternative interpretations. As such, they see research as a fundamentally interpretative activity in which method is linked to theory, assumptions and notions that determine interpretation and representation of the objects being studied. Thus, interpretations and their theoretical assumptions are never neutral. They always either support or challenge existing social conditions.

Contributions
Approaches in this collection include a combination of methods, as in **Hongxia Pu**'s work which uses drone filming and on-the-ground filming as an innovative methodology to capture the shifting perspectives of two different social groups, elderly and migrant workers in a *desakota area* in China. **Stavroula Angelaki** discusses methods that integrate users in the analysis of lighting design in different stages of the design process that are otherwise often based primarily on models and standards excluding the human perspective. **Afua Wilcox** reflects her own experiences of power and powerlessness as a designer of low-income housing in South Africa through the method of collaging imagery. The collages communicate the architects' disconnection from the residents they are designing for and consequently their lack of understanding inhabitants' lives and knowledge of mass-housing.

Estefania Mompean Botias captures the methodological process of a composition of different narrative accounts in an atlas with the intention to 'reassemble meanings' and articulate 'methodologies of recomposition'. The atlas foregrounds embodied practices of emergency in emergency-management processes which are currently driven by rational expert planning and large-scale interventions. **Soscha Monteiro de Jesus** interlaces microhistories of Amsterdam's former harbour *Kadijken* with archival photographs from the 1970s to the 1990s to show the city's different interpretations of sustainability thinking in its urban planning history. **Sonia Cohan** explores the photographic image as a generative method for spatial and architectural representation and combines this with various modes of writing in her research-through-design driven approach.

Sreeprada Gogulapati and **Neelakantan Keshavan** study vernacular structures such as *Jaali*-perforated spatial screens in a practice-based design approach. By the reflective making of modular Jaalis, their research explores how design is influenced by various constraints, including time, and attempts to understand the design process in depth. **Anne Gross**' contribution uses 'strollogy' as a strategy to form new vantage points of the built environment of Tokyo and to investigate the materiality of socioeconomic and political 'constructs' around the single-family house. **Zuzana Tabačková** explores collective learnings through practice in participatory processes that she conducted in Slovakia and Czechia as part of the group Spolka. Her contribution is structured in a reflective flow that collects insights on how to support local agency. Selecting, combining and developing methods as devices, strategies or concepts, the contributions explore different processes, perspectives and interrelations, and thus create novel research trajectories.

1 The online course ARPA was given for the second time between 2021-2022 at TU Munich and KTH-A in Stockholm. For more information see the "EDITORIAL" of this issue.
2 Celia Lury, *Problem Spaces: How and Why Methodology Matters* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2021).
3 Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1988), 575–99.
4 John Law and John Urry, 'Enacting the Social', *Economy and Society* 33, no. 3 (2005), 390–410.
5 Celia Lury and Nina Wakeford (eds), 'Introduction', *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–24.
6 Lury and Wakeford, 2012, 2–3.
7 Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 'Twenty-five Indigenous Projects', *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London/New York: Zed Books, 1999), 142–55.
8 Tuhiwai Smith, 1999.
9 Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 143, citing Sandra Harding, *Feminism and Methodology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 2–3.
10 Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg, 'Introduction', *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (London: SAGE Publications, 2013), 1–14.

METHODO-LOGIES

Understanding the Unseen: Caring About/ For the Elderly Peasants and Migrant Workers in Desakota Landscapes in Rural China

Hongxia Pu

The phenomenon known as 'desakota' recognizes the increasingly blurred distinctions between the rural and the urban in Asian countries. The unprecedented increase in the mobility of the rural population and the influx of migrants have created two types of vulnerable groups in desakota areas at the same time: elderly people who have lost their livelihood and live alone without care, and migrant workers who work in rural enterprises far from their homes. Both groups face the pressures of changing social and spatial structures. Most studies in China only focus on the social justice and care for one group, while ignoring that these two marginalized groups are intensively intermingled and even live in the same physical space. This interconnectedness and complexity requires innovative approaches that enfold dynamic understanding of these two social groups which pose challenges to traditional one-dimensional urban planning approaches. By using both drone filming and on-ground filming as an innovative methodology, this article reinterprets these two marginalized groups in desakota landscapes by shifting perspective between the vast landscape of the desakota and the intimate scale of local lives. Through the lens of a care process, this article emphasizes the need for new relationships between elderly peasants and migrant workers, and between urbanization and rurality in China.

Introduction to the Desakota Landscape and Care Practices

Due to China's unique urban—rural dichotomy, 'desakota'[1] landscapes are often marginalized and ignored. Under the pressure of urban tension and industrial development in small towns, the unprecedented increase in the mobility of the rural population and the influx of migrants have created two types of vulnerable groups in desakota areas at the same time: elderly people who have lost their abilities to work and live alone without care, and migrant workers who live far from their homes and work in rural enterprises.

The ethics of care originated from the questioning of traditional moral theories by feminist scholars in the 1970s. More recently, feminist and care theorist Joan Claire Tronto[2] has argued for the need for a 'new way of seeing the relationships among the built environment, nature and humans'[3] in the field of architecture and urban planning. Using care as the sensory approach, shifts our perspective from the 'object' (building, park, city zone etc.) to the processes and relationships that are involved in this space. Care is not a derivative of the individual; it can be unfolded in the interrelationship between different social groups. Most studies in China only focus on the social justice and care for one group, for example, papers about the care needs of Chinese empty nesters[4] and about migrant workers in rural China,[5] while ignoring that these two groups are intensively intermingled.

As Tronto (2019) stated, beyond the definition of care, care itself is not only a social practice, but also a spatial practice in the built environment. Tronto elaborates upon the nature of care practices by describing five instances of care: *caring about; caring for; care giving; care receiving and caring with*.[6] In this paper I will use some of these processes of care as a tool to rethink marginalized groups in the planning of rural China through filming. Based on the theoretical background of caring ethics, this article intends to deconstruct the complex and intertwined relationship between these two vulnerable groups in marginalized desakota areas.

Filming Methodology through the Care Process

Rapid growth and urbanization in China have changed the sharp boundary between the urban and the rural into a blurred mess, where the heterogeneous, and incoherent landscapes and settlements can be captured by a continuous moving camera in both drone film and a camera on the ground, I argue. Therefore, this article will present these combined views, both from the near-ground drone (large-scale bird's view), alongside 'bottom-up' on-ground footage (human perspective) to stir the practices of *caring about* and *caring for* in the site investigation and care giving in the editing and design process. First, the drone filming as a new 'near-ground' tool is not only a quantitative tool to collect data, but also a way of *caring about* and *caring for* during the fieldwork.[7] Flying a drone while situated in the desakota landscape, watching the real-time video transmission with FPV (First Person View), can start to stimulate landscape architects and urban designers' sensations and emotions. This is what I define as *caring about* issues based on emotions, then by *caring for* the landscape while filming, the editing process (selecting, sequencing, editing and cutting the footage) becomes the process of *caregiving* (design process), thus the resulting film invites locals, stakeholders and professionals to build on their own narratives and start transforming the desakota landscape. The on-ground filming with video interviews in my fieldtrip to Chongqing's desakota area from June to October 2021 provides a breadth of understanding of the spatial, temporal, cultural and ecological perspectives of the unfolding site.

In his essay 'Field Conditions', American architect Stan Allen demonstrated that field conditions are bottom-up phenomena, defined not by overarching geometrical schemas but by intricate local connections.[8] The filming not only collected on-site data (besides historical maps, geographical information, on-site interviews etc.), but also approached a layered narrative of the site and interpreted the constant process of transformation between the view from above and the bottom-up experience, time and space, outsider and insider. Thus, through four stages in the fieldwork (***reading** the site, **entering** the site, **living** in the site, **telling** the site*), the bird's-eye view from the drone with the on-ground filming and video interviews I attempt to show a caring process for the social-ecological interconnections of the marginalized groups.

Hollow Village and 'Empty Nest' in Desakota Landscapes

The accelerated rural urbanization has irreversibly changed the structure of thousands of rural families. Most villages in desakota areas have formed 'hollow villages' due to the loss of a large number of young workers.

According to data released by the National Office on Ageing in 2012, the proportion of 'empty-nest families' among the elderly in China has reached 49.7 percent.[9] It is clear that there are large numbers of elderly empty nesters living apart from their children in rural areas across the country. The absence of a younger generation to take care of them, and the lack of a welfare system in rural areas make caring for the elderly a difficult problem.

First, the economic situation of the left-behind elderly is unstable. The younger generation's migration to the city has indeed brought about an improvement in the family's economic condition, but it cannot provide sufficient financial support to their parents. In addition, many young couples leave their children at home to be taken care of by the elderly, which also increases the burden on the latter.

Second, the medical care available to the left-behind elderly has degraded. During my fieldtrip investigation in Chongqing's desakota area, there is a widespread saying among the elderly that they have 'three fears', one fear of getting sick, another fear of being unattended and the third fear of costing money.

Third, most of the left-behind elderly lack spiritual comfort. During the fieldtrip, a lot of left-behind elderly empty nesters expressed their understanding of, and support for, their children going out to work, and they usually rely on the telephone to keep in touch with their children. In order to save call charges, the phone is only used for answering, and rarely for outgoing calls. Loneliness is the biggest mental-health problem faced by the elderly left behind.

Social Segregation between Two Groups

Following the liberation of China in 1949, the central government 'confiscated the land from former landlords and redistributed [it] to landless peasants and owners of small plots'.[10] The productive rural workers were liberated which increased the productivity of agriculture. But, it was estimated that there were about 240 million surplus workers in rural China in the 1980s.[11] To solve this increasingly challenging problem, township and village enterprises (TVEs) were launched to absorb the rural workers. In the early 2000s, most of these migrant workers were seeking jobs in the more developed eastern regions of China. As industrialization and urbanization spread across the whole country, rural migrants tended to go back to the central and western region, for example to the city of Chongqing, where my study focused on the dramatic increase of rural migrant workers coming from other poor regions. The economic inequalities between local and migrant workers led to the fragmentation of the social network structure. According to my fieldwork in Chongqing's desakota area, most of the migrant population rent rural houses from local farmers, work in local enterprises and consume food and vegetables provided by local elderly people. But, except for a few original 'villages' who have sources of income and considerable personal rental income, for most of the locals, the migration of foreign populations has intensified competition in the lower end of the labour market. The difference in lifestyle, cultural disparities and public awareness etc. between locals and migrants has led to separation of locals and migrants. Outsiders coming from the same place of origin tend to stay in groups and form self-serving economic connections and social interactions. In daily life, they do not participate in the management of the village's public affairs.

Defamiliarization of Neighbour Relations and Flexible Rural Housing

The migration flows have resulted in the defamiliarization and uncertainty of neighbour relations. Some of the young peasants go to the city and leave the house to the elderly. The elderly then rent out parts of their houses. Many of the traditional two-floor rural houses were renovated into mixed living places by extending the old houses. However, most of the tenants are short-term renters who view the rented houses as just places to sleep and so have little contact with their neighbours. The original acquaintance-like neighbour relationship is replaced by a temporary neighbour or stranger relationship with strong mobility. The relationship between foreign tenants and elderly peasants in the village has thus become a dominant in this extremely mixed and diverse territory.

Dissolution of the Relations of Agriculture-based Labour

The established social relations based on agriculture-based labour production have been dissolved. With large-scale land acquisition and demolition for urbanization, the land used for agricultural production in desakota villages has been greatly reduced. This has led to migration flows and the departure of mutual assistance and cooperation between the residents of the villages which were previously based on farming labour. At the same time, due to the diversification, temporality and uncertainty of employment, the social connections between new migrants and local people, often the left-behind elderly people in the desakota areas, are not formulated yet.

Conclusions: Reflections on the Future of Desakota Areas

In desakota areas, the remarkably rapid urban development has attracted most of the young rural workers to the cities. At the same time, due to the development of township and village enterprises, these areas have accommodated many temporary migrant workers from other parts of China, creating a phenomenon of elderly local peasants, and migrant workers and renters. Rural industrialization has given rise to this dispersed pattern of non-agricultural development, forming a hybrid settlement system in which migrant workers, peasants and urban residents live in close proximity. Thus, the relationship structure within the old village community has dissolved. Considering the poor care of the two groups of migrant workers and elderly peasants, I regard the practice of care (*caring about, caring for*) as a dynamic process that stimulates my practice of filming and editing (*care giving*) which reflects on interactive spatial and social relationships. By constantly shifting perspective between the large-scale desakota landscape (drone filming) and the intimate scale of local lives (on-ground filming), the readaptation of the vernacular rural landscape and the newly extended urban landscape would be the next steps in understanding and caring for the unseen elderly peasants and migrant workers — in other words, the re-creation of (his)stories.

Fig. 1: Still from drone film and still of video interviewing local people: the hollow village in the desakota landscape (Hongxia Pu, July 2021).

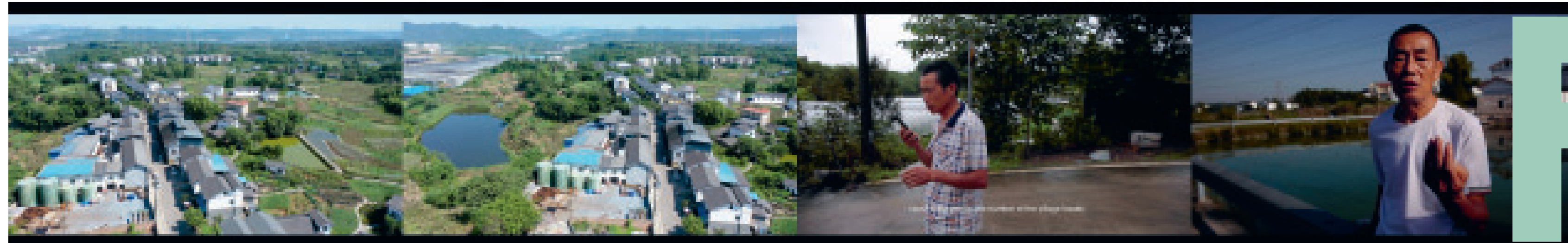


Fig. 2: Drone film still and on-ground film still: living in the urban village (Hongxia Pu, August 2021).

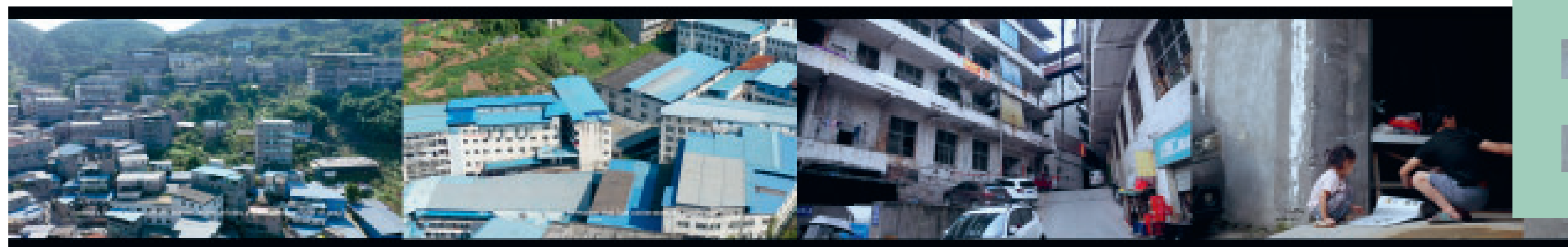


Fig. 3: Film still of on-ground interview: the marginalized empty nester in the village (Hongxia Pu, July 2021).

Fig. 4: Drone film still and on-ground film still: new urbanization and rural settlements (Hongxia Pu, September 2021).

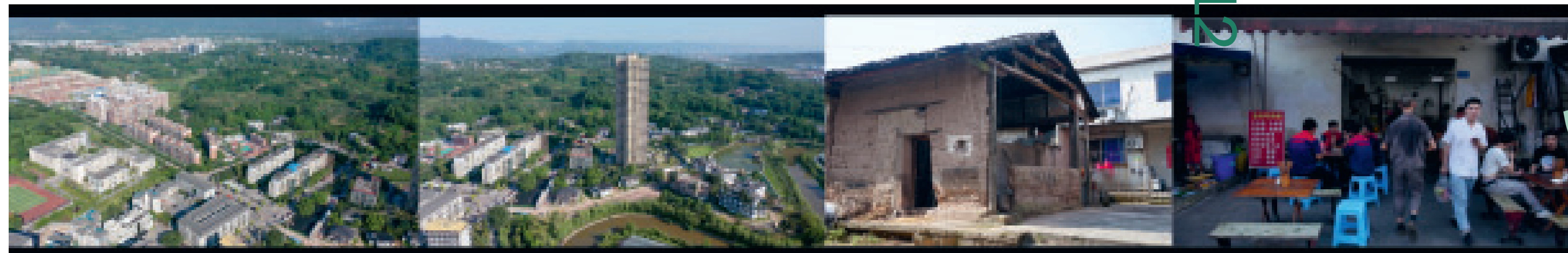
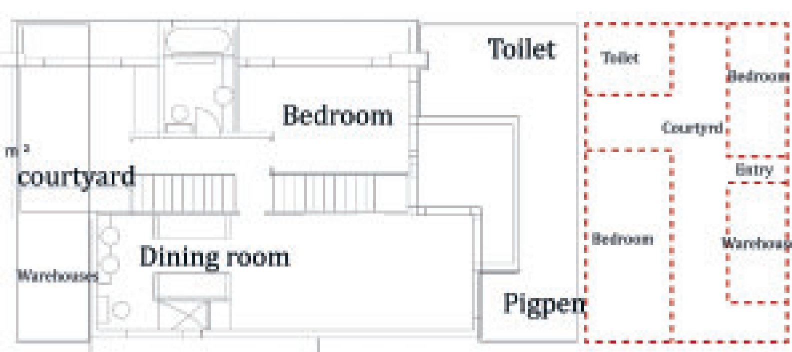


Fig. 5: Mixed-living housing renovated by local people (farmers' housing with new extension in red dotted area for migrant renters) (Hongxia Pu, July 2021).



1 In the late 1980s, Terry McGee recognized the in-situ transformation of 'the extended metropolis' and emphasized the increasingly important role of non-agricultural activities in rural areas termed 'desakota' (from Indonesian desa 'village' and kota 'city') in Asian mega-cities (McGee 1991). The desakota in Asian cities, as defined by McGee, is characterized by high-density populations and intensive rice cultivation operations. The demand for labour for rice cultivation varies with the seasons, therefore a large amount of surplus labour needs to find non-agricultural jobs. The land use forms in desakota areas are mixed with agriculture, cottage crafts, industrial areas and other types of land.

2 Joan C. Tronto is a professor of political science at the University of Minnesota, and Professor Emerita of political science at the City University of New York. Her publications include over forty articles and several books, of which the most prominent are *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993) and *Caring Democracy* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

3 Joan C. Tronto, "Caring Architecture" in *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet* eds Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019), 26.

4 Dan Su, Xian-Ning Wu, Ying-Xin Zhang, Hui-Ping Li, Wei-Li Wang, Jing-Ping Zhang, Le-Shan Zhou, 'Depression and Social Support between China's Rural and Urban Empty-nest Elderly, *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* 55, Issue 3 (2012), 569; Jun-E Liu, Jun-Ye Tian, Peng Yue, Yong-Li Wang, Xue-Ping Du, Shuang-Qin Chen, 'Living Experience and Care Needs of Chinese Empty-nest Elderly People in Urban Communities in Beijing, China: A Qualitative Study,' *International Journal of Nursing Sciences* 2, no.1 (2015), 15–22; Hafiz T.A. Khan, 'Population Ageing in a Globalized World: Risks and Dilemmas?,' *Journal of Evaluation in Critical Practice* 25, no.5 (2019), 754–60.

5 Yaohui Zhao, 'Labor Migration and Earnings Differences: The Case of Rural China', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 47, no.4 (July 1999), 767–82; Li Zhang; Rhonda Vonshay Sharpe, Shi Li; William A. Darity Jr., 'Wage Differentials between Urban and Rural-urban Migrant Workers in China,' *China Economic Review* 41 (December 2016), 222–33; Huamin Chai, Rui Fu, Peter C. Coyte, 'Unpaid Caregiving and Labour Force Participation among Chinese Middle-Aged Adults', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no.2 (2021), 641–90.

6 For influential work on care see also Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, 'Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things,' *Social Studies of Science* 41, no.1 (2011), 86–106; Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, Matters of Care (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017); Angelika Fitz, Elke Krasny (eds), *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2019).

7 Rikke Munck Petersen 'The dispatched drone and affective distance in fieldwork,' *Senses and Society* 15 (2020): 328.

8 Allen, Stan, 'Field Conditions', in *Points and Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999).

9 National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, 'Sixth National Population Census of the People's Republic of China', accessed: 21 August 2022, http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/CensusData/

10 China.org.cn, '1950: The Land Reform', 15 September 2009, http://www.china.org.cn/features/60years/2009-09/15/content_18530605.htm#:~:text=The%20law%20abrogated%20ownership%20of,land%20to%20earn%20a%20living. accessed: 21 August 2022.

11 Cheng Wang, 'Employment Transition in China: From Hidden Unemployment and Underemployment to Efficiency-oriented Employment,' *Economic Research* (in Chinese), no.5 (1996), 38–46.

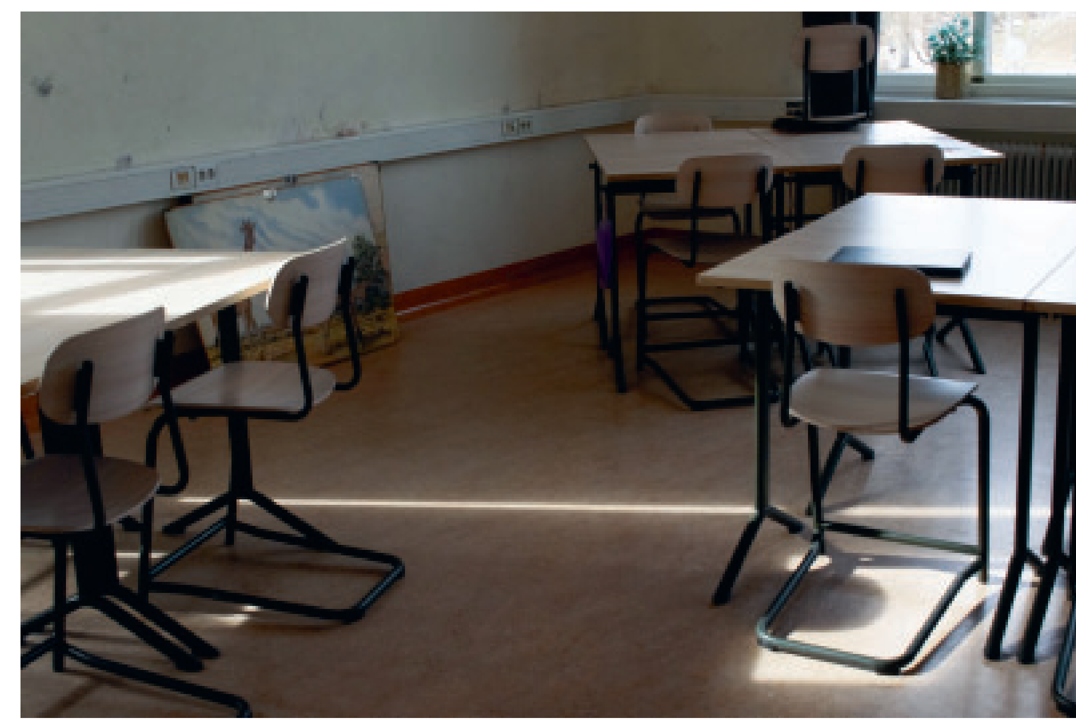
Performance-based Lighting in Educational Spaces

Stavroula Angelaki

13

This article discusses the relationship between lighting design, students' performance and energy efficiency in school environments.[1] The topic of 'performance' and how it is bound to lighting is briefly presented to analyse and reflect upon the similarities in the processes, when discussing performance-based research related to students and educational spaces. The limitations of evaluating and proposing lighting solutions based on models and standards without also considering the human perspective are questioned. The article will discuss potential suggestions and methods of, integrating the users in different stages of the design process.

Figures 1-3: Classroom photos under direct sunlight conditions. (Personal archive).



Dilemma

Why is Electric Light Present Both in Cases of Presence and Absence of Daylight?

Daylight and electric lighting in educational spaces have been explored as topics throughout recent years concerning, primarily, energy efficiency. Studies related to students' performance and well-being underline the importance of the presence of daylight in school classrooms.[2] The term 'well-being' is explored in relation to children's development, their absences from school or dental records. In the past decade however, this data has mainly been linked to health aspects that go beyond the term 'well-being', which is a wider term.

In some studies, the element of the view towards the exterior is mentioned as a positive and desired element and is primarily handled by architects in terms of openings that allow the daylight intake. When daylight is not enough, electric lighting is used to complement and reach the sufficient levels of light necessary for performing visual tasks during the day. These tasks are defined based on the courses and overall schedule of the day. The additional use of electric lighting depends on a variety of factors. The orientation of the building and the available openings are the parameters related to architecture. The location, longitude and latitude of the area is also essential since it defines the amount of daylight throughout the year. Electric lighting is one of the main expenses that an educational facility needs to cover throughout the academic year; therefore, an increasing interest in reducing lighting-related costs is at stake.

The need for more daylight in classrooms and educational environments is increasing, primarily because it ensures less electric lighting is used, it reduces electricity costs and results in energy-efficient solutions. On the other hand, though, excessive daylight, or direct sunlight can cause glare, resulting in high contrast ratios and eye discomfort.[3] It is during the spring or summer that direct sunlight is also responsible for many cases of overheating indoor spaces. Along with lighting, temperature is also an environmental factor used to define user comfort when assessing a space. Daylight and indoor temperature are therefore, aspects of the building's overall performance. In cases where excessive daylight is responsible for overheating, the most common approach is to block out sunlight by using blinds or curtains to prevent the temperature from increasing. In this case, although the desired temperature might be achieved, electric lighting still needs to be used for performing essential tasks during the light seasons (spring and summer). This situation results in a paradox where even though daylight is available, electric lighting is used instead. In cases where daylight is missing from school classrooms, the main argument is the importance of access to daylight. However, there are numerous examples of classrooms where daylight is present but not handled properly, resulting in glare issues or classrooms overheating. The result in both examples is the same since electric lighting is used instead.

It is essential to mention that electric lighting is linked to energy efficiency, which is expressed through the comparison of fluorescent lights with light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures since the latter require less energy and have a higher life expectancy.[4] Apart from the energy aspect, lighting is also linked to students' performance in the classroom. Both daylight and electric lighting studies have focused on assessing lighting interventions at schools based on performance tests given to pupils. Performance tests are the main tools used for assessing lighting for educational tasks. It is the primary approach in which the users can participate more actively in the research.

While researching lighting aspects, both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used in past projects. The shift from more qualitative-based approaches, such as questionnaires, photo registration and interviews, to quantitative-based research is becoming more apparent in recent years. Quantitative research is primarily based on using equipment to measure luminance, illuminance or spectrum of light, and in the past two decades the use of software to simulate and analyse the lighting has become quite common.

How can the focus on performance and efficiency in lighting-related research in educational spaces consider the human perspective more effectively? How can spaces primarily designed and evaluated for children better consider the children's perspective?

State of Research

Lighting-based research in educational facilities is still very 'performance' oriented, whether that explores pupils' performance or the building's performance in terms of energy costs. Even though that is a respected aspect that cannot be overlooked, it is not the only way to perform or register lighting evaluations. The development of software to evaluate and perform daylight analysis has been a valuable benefit, primarily because of the limited amount of time it requires. However, the mere use of software leaves out equally essential processes in evaluating a space that is based on users and their needs. In most energy efficiency studies performed in school environments, the evaluation process did not include teachers or pupils. It was based either on lighting-related measurements or software-based evaluations.[5] The digital evaluation is mainly based on lighting standards that were developed based on adults' perception, scale and visual acuity. Once more, pupils are not part of the evaluation equation.

Even when one moves on to explore how performance is evaluated they will face a situation where tests are handed out and pupils' scores are used to evaluate or propose a lighting scheme. Since research about educational facilities needs to create a better environment for learning and teaching activities, performance-based tasks seem appropriate. They are a necessary form of evaluation, but they should not be the only tool used to assess a space or a lighting situation. Tests facilitate data collection and, in many cases, minimize bias on behalf of the participants, but the spatial perception and light perception can be evaluated through users' feedback. Discussion sessions, interviews and working groups are some of the available tools that can be implemented in the design process to enhance users' participation. The performance of certain tasks under a lighting situation is not necessarily in accordance with the way one experiences a space. Functionality and task performance might require a specific type of lighting that is not perceived as particularly engaging for longer periods of time.

Dialogue

How Can a Dialogue be Initiated between Existing Research Methods and User Participation?

Equipment and software have facilitated evaluation processes to make them faster and, in many cases, more time efficient. Since calculation processes can be automated up to a point, that should leave both time and space for participatory-based methods, such as workshops, discussions or interviews. It should not be interpreted as an alternative to participatory methods and practices but as a complementary method to the existing ones.

User inclusion in design practices and processes is needed to ensure consistency and connection between the proposed solution and the users' needs. Classrooms and educational spaces should not be an exception to these practices.[6] Even though performance-based techniques include pupils' feedback on the effect of environmental factors (light, noise or temperature) on their attention, memory and performance rates, these practices remain passive forms of participation. Pupils can, and should, actively participate in the design processes since various digital tools can be used to illustrate, propose or form spatial elements, such as VR models and game engines. The use of digital tools can facilitate and explain the suggested changes more efficiently, while at the same time allowing direct feedback on behalf of the users. Besides digital solutions, designing student workshops to inform design processes or generate concepts and ideas can also be an inclusion method. The combination of various methods also minimizes each method's bias when used separately. Measurements are necessary for the designer to comprehend the existing situation, test different solutions and adhere to the recommended standards. Participation on behalf of the users, though, can reveal the needs and uses of the space that a designer might not think of, since it is not a space that is used daily. Initiating this dialogue between existing design solutions and the users of a space does not mean that existing methods are considered out-of-date, but rather that a combination of various tools results in more holistic and inclusive designs in a practice where the users are also participants in the design process.

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The Power and Powerlessness of Designing Low-Income Housing Architectures in South Africa

Afua Wilcox

Spatial planning in South Africa has historically been used as a tool to either connect or divide the population. The new democratic South Africa brought the promise of fully-subsidized housing for low-income households.[1] The right to adequate housing was highly charged because of the country's political history and complexity. This excerpt is a contribution towards the perspective of an architect when they are faced with the complexities of designing for mass low-income housing. It reveals the privilege, tensions and considerations in the author's personal experience and her experience with these issues through visual explorations.

Excerpt

My name is Afua Wilcox and I am a middle-income architect of colour who designs state-funded housing for low-income groups in South Africa. I do not consult my client, my client has no name, no face, I am merely given a sheet of numbers from a faceless marketing company and I am meant to create a masterpiece, hundreds of homes for hundreds of families I do not know. I am disconnected. I am told that knowing my developer and their systems is all I need to know, that it is not important to know the residents who will live in these houses. I am told that allocation processes are tricky and that I should just focus my energies on designing these houses. And my site? There are no people here, but I am told that one day, people who need houses will live here. I believe the work I do is important because I have the opportunity to help people in low-income households, build a new narrative for a new South Africa and for people from disadvantaged backgrounds who bore the brunt of the apartheid system, people who would otherwise live in inadequate housing. I believe my work has meaning; there is good design here, good design principles. I try my best but I will never know how my work is actually received by my client. I will never know how to improve my work, to create better houses for people who need them because I will never meet the people staying in these developments or see how they have interacted with the space and whether the spaces are successful or not.

South Africa has a turbulent history of discrimination and inequality.[2] South African cities were built to segregate people by race and class, and to this day they still perpetuate this format.[3] State-funded fully-subsidized housing issuing from the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing built from 1994 was aimed at trying to close this gap by giving previously disadvantaged residents physical assets that were aimed at elevating their socio-economic experience.[4] It has been claimed that these policies have improved the lives of many South Africans, but fully-subsidized housing is difficult to scale and there is a severe backlog of houses while many South Africans still live in informal settlements with inadequate services and housing.

South Africa has a complicated history with many things, and housing is one of them. During the apartheid era, housing was used as a tool for segregation but in a new democratic era, it also became a symbol of hope and of a life that people began to envision for themselves with the promise of a new democratic South Africa which never lived up to its potential. This dream was bigger than just a house, a house meant security (financial and physical), it meant safety, it meant dignity and it meant a better life for future generations.[5] Housing in South Africa is fully-subsidized for people in the lowest income bracket,[6] a gift that many countries in Africa could only dream of, but many people are still waiting for this dream. Expectations were created that could not be met and some people are still waiting for land they were promised, for a house they were promised or for the promise of a better life that they deserved because of what previously disadvantaged groups had to endure. Since the introduction of the democratic government, the promise of housing, whether or not it has been realized has been used by politicians to encourage votes from low-income households.[7]

After some residents are finally given the opportunity to live the long-awaited dream, literally being upgraded from slum conditions to a brand new home made of brick, is this dream realized? Does the physical manifestation of a formally built home mean that they are satisfied, and what is it that makes them satisfied? Does the design of their home satisfy them and can the architect actually influence these aspects of satisfaction? Or is it the intangibility of the promise of a better life that leaves residents with unfulfilled expectations?

Housing policy in South Africa seldom considers the perspective of those on low-incomes, including those of informal settlement residents.[8] Not enough pre-design consultation or post-occupancy evaluation is used in order to understand the user experience of state- funded housing in the country. This is not only an issue for the future development of state-funded housing, but it also exposes the lack of participation by low-income residents in housing decisions. This issue therefore transcends the physical built environment and moves into a more political realm as researchers and practitioners of the built environment ask: are residents satisfied with their informal settlement upgraded housing? What processes are put in place to ensure that built form and socio-economic opportunities are being created to the residents' satisfaction?

The following illustrations explore, through collaging imagery related to housing in South Africa the architect's disconnection from the residents she was designing for as well as designers' lack of knowledge about, and understanding of, mass-housing projects. They are also a commentary on the 'matchbox house' which was originally built in the apartheid era with the house types NE51/6 or 51/9 (NE was short for Non-European).[9] A similar mass housing typology has been repeated in a number of fully-subsidized mass housing in South Africa for low-income residents.[10] It explores the powerlessness and power of an architectural designer during these projects through a cathartic visual exploration of projects that Afua has engaged with as an architect or researcher.

The projects included in the exploration are the Westgate RDP development in Princess Plots, the Devland social housing development in Soweto (she had worked as part of the Michael Hart Architects team that designed these units) and the K206 RDP housing project where she researched the relationship between original typologies and the resultant K206 housing; the site she is currently researching for her PhD dissertation through post-occupancy spatial mappings and interviews.

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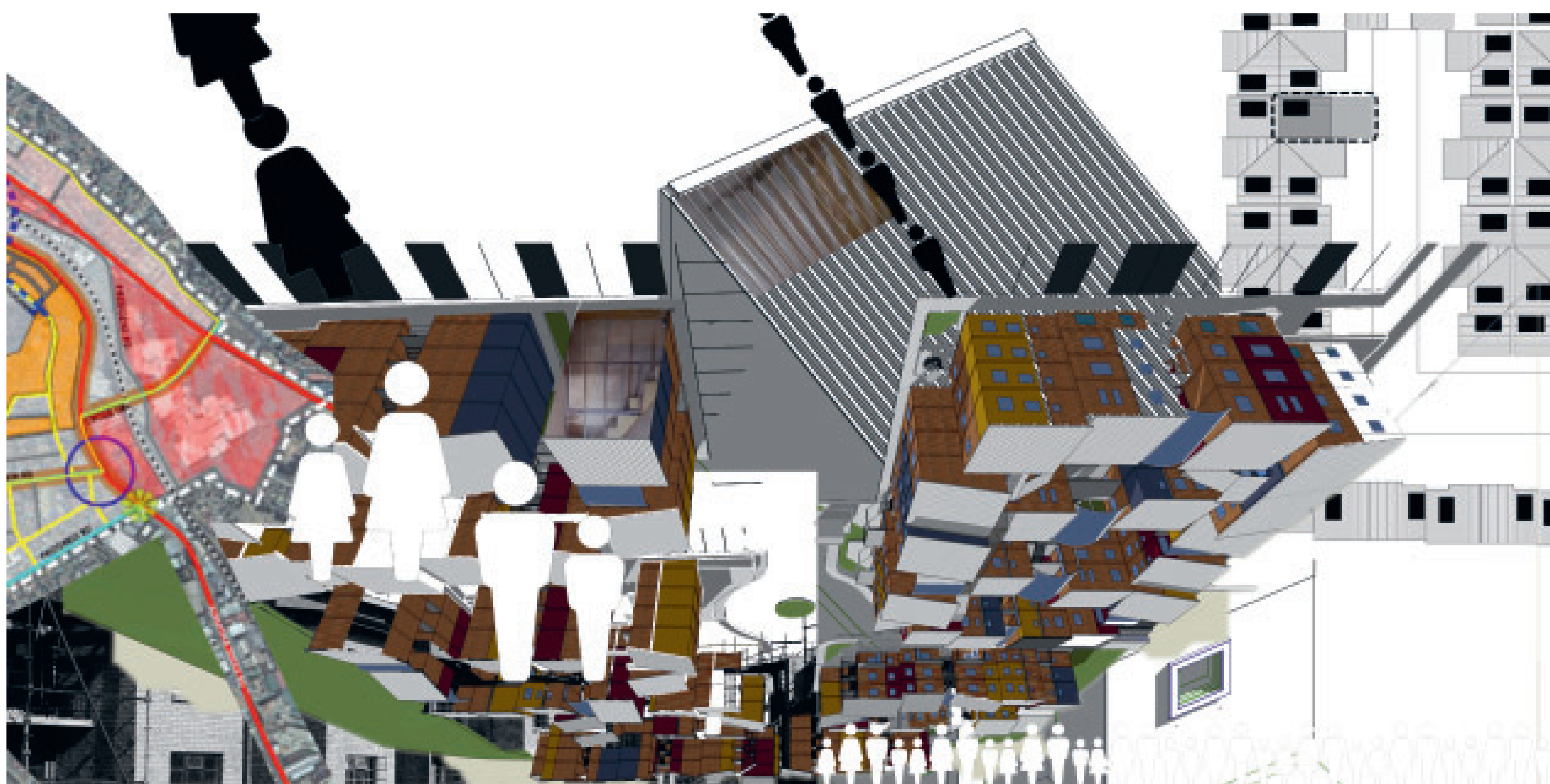

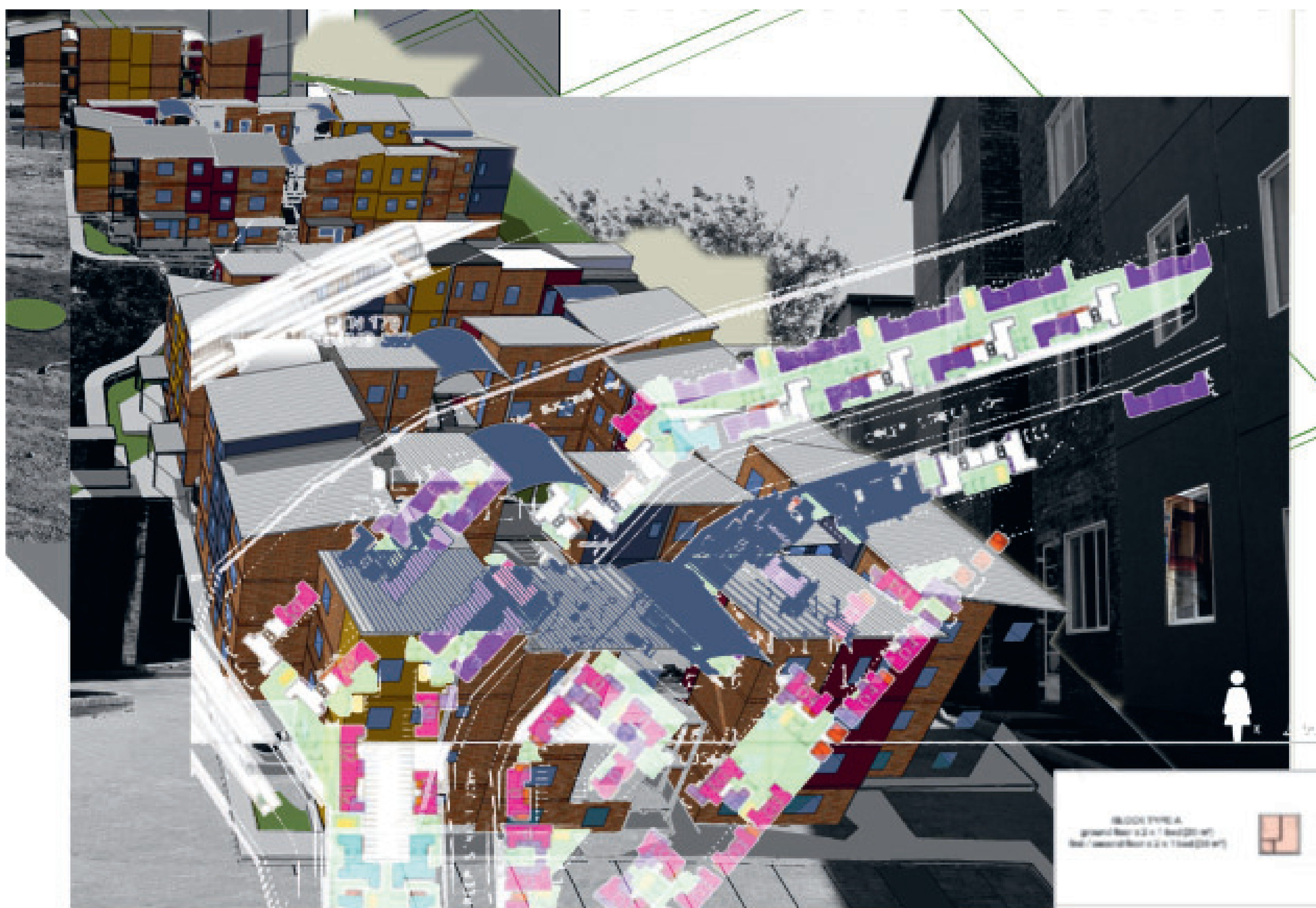

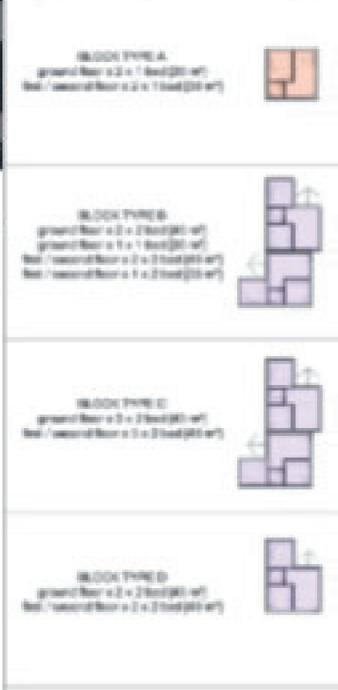

Emergency Architectures. Approaching Methodologies for a Rapidly Changing Environment

Estefania Mompean Botias

Over the last decade, the practices of architecture and urbanism have witnessed an increase in the subfields of emergency management processes: from risk mitigation, adaptation frameworks, resilience, and recovery planning. These processes impose rational planning with large-scale interventions driven by environmental urgency, delineated by global networks of experts deploying promotional forms of economic development.[1] This reflection intends to re-signify the emergency from the embodied experiences of the disruptive events we are living through. This brief text attempts to explain the methodological process focused on the composition through narratives of an atlas to reassemble meanings articulating "methodologies of recomposition". The document is exemplified through experiences and narratives collected from secondary sources from the need to recompose embodied practices of emergency.

In recent years, the state of emergency has found a place in our daily lives. In a world increasingly interdependent and marked by planetary disturbances, emergencies are increasing and becoming a sort of an 'emergency condition' punctuated by a series of events often described as catastrophic. As a consequence, architecture and urban planning practices are witnessing the flourishing of fields focused on emergency management, risk mitigation, and recovery planning. We can even perceive that major trends in language, such as sustainability or transition are mutating towards programmes focused on climate urbanism[2] with the imperatives of safety, survival, adaptation, and resilience stripped from an essential critical approach.

The declaration of an emergency is a political and performative act that occurs when an imminent threat to human life is perceived and has a series of protocols that mark the limits of security.[3] 'The emergency' starts from the uncertainty operating under exceptional laws in a 'lawless' legal framework.[4] However, from a Western viewpoint, these operations are controlled with the modulation of risk from the hidden forces of previous events giving rise to an expanded past or the abduction of the present in simulations of possible future events.[5] For example, on the coasts of Indonesia, rising tides flood the city for several days and generate daily practices in everyday repair from a socio-ecology of the event itself. However, the Dutch-Indonesian Antiflooding Project offers a totalizing reading of these situations, describing them as crises and invoking processes from the state's control of the emergency.[6] These infrastructures imply spatial reading codes and a new language of territory in the process of generating ecological and political relations. In this way, the current operationalization of the emergency in the territory reduces reality to events that are packaged in a series of technical responses and instrumental plans that strip them of any sensitivity, culturally specific approaches, attention, or even intuition.[7]

However, the tides, cracks, disturbances, and ruptures generate openings that are formed when the movements of affected communities push against, and beyond planning, to produce 'fragile spaces' that make another kind of life possible. In these critical moments, models of indeterminacy, flexibility, iteration, and collaborations are mobilized.[8] These transformations have repercussions for actions and means that integrate spatial navigation codes within the operational socio-ecologies of care for social support infrastructures. These procedures are designed from a spatial 'emergency embodiment', which are defined here as collective operations based on responsibility towards, and care for, an inhabited environment.

It appears necessary to find a methodology to relate and compose these codes of spatial navigation from the emergency. What kind of definitions and methodologies will be necessary for the collective representation of the emergency? What examples can we start from? What are their imaginaries and what architectures do they generate?

Towards a Diffractive Methodology

In this text, the emergency processes are understood as the repertoire of survival actions assembled through affective spaces and times that have been subtracted and impoverished.[9] In the process of subtraction, current approaches to emergency are stripped through distinct disciplines, analytically disintegrated scales and highly fragmented temporalities. In order to reaffirm the relationships promoted by the symbolism of the emergent and its integration into spatial practices, the methodological question becomes a complex weft with a combination of theory and practice that needs constant feedback.

In this way I seek methodologies that can recompose narratives collected on examples where processes of emergency are co-constructed, which generates the potential for the development of more radical and transformative agendas that open up opportunities for political voices, resistance, challenges to power structures and accepted ways of thinking and practicing architecture and urbanism.

To this end, I begin to configure a method that is flexible and can be adapted to changing dynamic realities through the processes of diffraction and recomposition inspired by Karen Barad. She proposes methodologies of 'iterative (re)configuration of patterns of differentiation-entangling'[10] 'to make evident the always-already entanglement of specific ideas in their materiality'[11]. In this way, I venture into the search for patterns and arrangements that unify the disposition that reveals the entangled realities in which we live.

Starting with these approaches and looking for the recomposition of the imaginaries of emergency, the first approach led me to start building the *Atlas of Emergency*. The atlas can be defined as the document that supports and organizes the knowledge concerning the studied phenomena being studied. By applying it to this research, the atlas attempts to relate the simultaneities or patterns as processes of the recomposition of the phenomena of emergency.

In the process of drawing and organizing the atlas, the map is composed of typhoon passage lines, rainfall intensities, coastlines vulnerable to tsunamis, floods and drought episodes, among others. The different layers are superposed to generate readings and narratives of events that modify our experience with the territory, and form vectors of action and relationship. From these traces and lines of contact, platforms emerge (yellow flags on the map), places where other imaginaries of emergency are designed from the collective representation of a community (Fig. 1).

To begin the mapping of these initiatives, the atlas is the translation of a database organized by the conditions of emergency: temporalities; spatialities; activated agents; urban concepts and meanings; types of governance; regulations; economic models; infrastructures; emerging platforms; typologies; materialities; drawings and imaginaries; representations; actions; and gestures. However, in the process of diffraction and the recomposition of different experiences and materials, new categories start emerging.

Experience and Material Recomposition

My experience with emergency processes began in 2010, with a visit to Dujiangyan, outside Chengdu in China, after the great Wenchuan earthquake of 2008.[12] After two years, the official emergency camps were still at maximum capacity and the inhabitants had adapted them to achieve production efficiency (farming) and hygiene systems. Between each housing module they had established common spaces, markets, and kitchens, among others. I later learned that in Mianyang — another area affected by the earthquake — the reconstruction was organized by the inhabitants themselves and activist organizations kept in touch and organized meetings from a teahouse. The teahouse allowed the group to occupy a space in which to share information about projects, opportunities and funding, resources and training. It also became the place to propose ideas and discuss possible collaborations.[13]

This led me, on the one hand, to question the emergency protocols developed from international approaches. On the other hand, to focus on the potential of 'fragile spaces' such as the teahouse and their importance within local capacities activation. It is through the recompositional drawing of the atlas that the set of phenomena, materialities, voices, and spatialities that intra-act and mutually influence each other, while representing the emergency from an environmental scaffolding that generates action, are able to be reconstructed.

It was in 2018 when I moved to Brooklyn that I began to frequent the Interference Archive,[14] near the Gowanus Canal, a highly toxic environment aggravated by cyclical flooding that is in a process of rezoning. The archive space focuses on social movements and simultaneously generates a place for mobilization and community care in the face of environmental degradation and transformative events.

From these relationships, subjective memories, affect and survival emotions, the concept of *sentinel* appears. This concept is defined as the relationship between living beings and the technical devices that provide the first signs of a catastrophe. *Sentinel modes of care* have been developing for millennia, such as the alpine sensitivity to earthquakes or, in recent years, the communities that decided to organize community laboratories to measure toxicity in Houston after Hurricane Harvey and provide evidence of the city's habitability threshold.

The need to recompose an *Atlas of Emergency* occurs not only because of the need to generate a critical position, but also because it enables architectural gestures, practices and actions that can interfere in macro-scale modes to engage in a collective responsibility.

Returning to the example of the tides in Indonesia, a whole network of repair communities has emerged around the Ciliwung river. The so-called Ciliwung Komunitas has been formed around a network of *sangpar* (open houses). These river-care communities (*sentinel* communities) are responsible for monitoring river-water levels, organizing the cleaning of the sewage system, and documenting and transmitting the state of the river through social networks.[15] These practices, based on pumping water and *collectors'* wisdom, resonate with my childhood experiences in Murcia, living on the banks of the agricultural zones traced by the irrigation ditches, which are now piped or destroyed and engendering new flooding cycles.

These subjectivities from disruptive events, rooted in culture and with active spatial practices, can also be read in the reconstruction of evacuation routes in Shizugawa in Japan where camellia trees became a sign reading. Even this summer, *sentinel* stones have re-emerged on the banks of the Elbe River due to the long dry season.[16] Here, we can add the case of Dagupan, in the Philippines where after collective consultation alarm codes have been agreed upon and now form part of the urban landscape by releasing signals at times of flooding.[17]

Using these different examples, the atlas itself becomes an invocation of the different overlapping events, where past, present, and future coincide to recompose an event in its affective complexity. Where spaces are activated to build relationships and care practices, reconstructions are negotiated and practices of recovery and response are co-constructed.

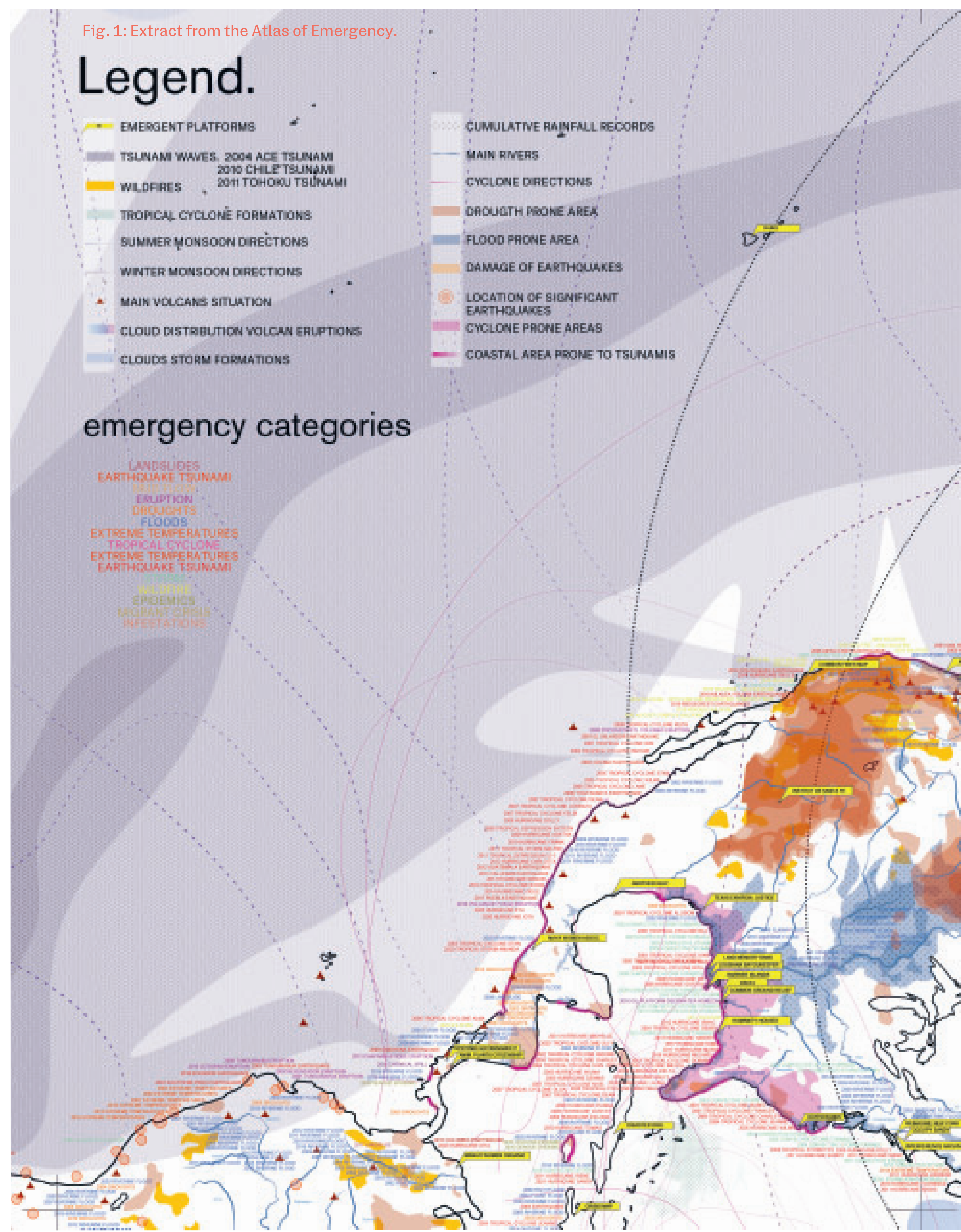

Fig. 1: Extract from the Atlas of Emergency.

Fig. 2: Zoom in on the Atlas of Emergency.

Thus, feminist philosophy from *intra-actions*[18] and *thick time*[19] help me to generate transcorporeal imaginaries. The atlas proposes to generate overlapping readings by reimagining the bodies, materials, contact surfaces, and devices, that affect the bio-physical system of our habitat, as spatial enablers, climate archives, and facilitators of diverse future environments.

In a second stage, the atlas demonstrates its potential to become a platform for mapping and exchanging experiences. In this way, the atlas becomes a platform for virtual conversations where cases can be added and archived in a collaborative way, and which can serve as a basis for connection, negotiation, discussion, and even, collective drawing (Fig. 2).

To conclude, in a moment where environmental changes are accelerating and where uncertainty seems to force taking drastic measures, it seems important to develop methodologies that give rise to thinking about architecture and urbanism from collective processes for the prefiguration of methods and meanings. Plural methods of material assembly of the recomposition of emergencies offer ways to consider each action of constant environmental reassembly within its simultaneities. The approach taken from emergency can consist of replacing the emptiness of a simulated linear future with a future of diverse possibilities.[20] Moreover, these processes reveal the multiplicity of actors involved in the production of knowledge, the mobility of resources, and the more-than-human collaborations in a rapidly changing landscape.

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Imagining a Liveable Amster-dam

Sоscha Monteiro de Jesus

This article investigates how sustainability thinking influenced urban development in the city of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s by narrating microhistories of the *Kadijken*, a former harbour area in the eastern inner city. First, the site and researcher are introduced through a short story that is used as a springboard from which to further explore the rich histories of the site. The following three microhistories are interlaced with archival photographs.

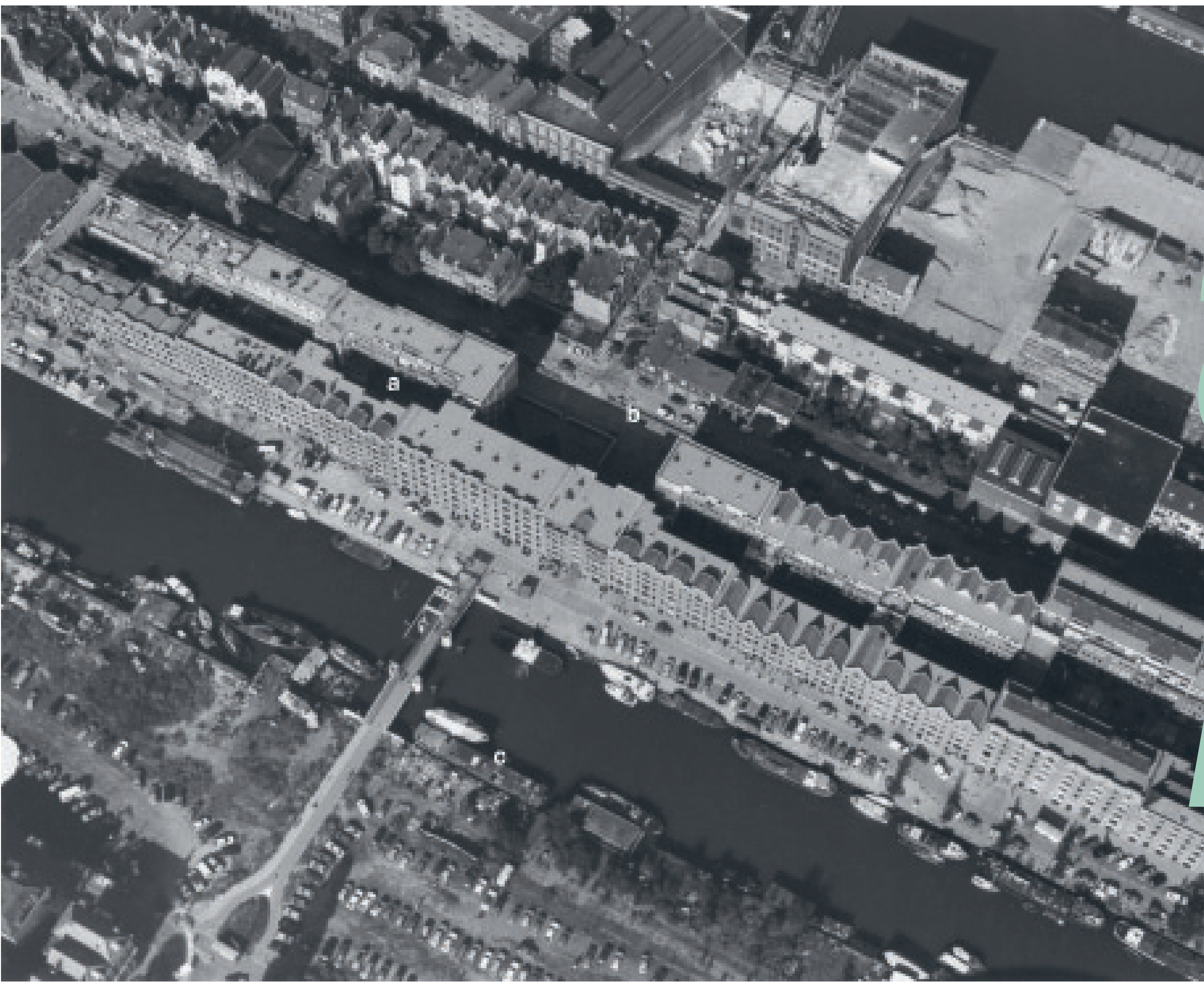


Fig. 1: Aerial photograph of the *Kadijken*, September 1987 (Amsterdam City Archives). For this article, the letters a, b and c were added to the photograph, indicating the places discussed in the article, namely: a. one of the courtyards in the *Entrepôtdok*; b. Laagte Kadijk; c. some of the houseboats and the overgrown quay.

Before Sustainability: *Leefbaarheid*

Since the 1990s the term *sustainability* has become part of global politics and public debate, and numerous policies have been formulated to regulate and shape urban transformations through sustainability thinking. By the 1970s however, a range of approaches to sustainability thinking, such as urban preservation, participatory planning, banning the car and forms of organic farming, had emerged in many European cities. Many of these urban design approaches were propelled by civic-society actors who challenged the status quo and spurred governments into action. This was certainly the case in Amsterdam where, during the 1970s and 1980s, civic society challenged municipal urban policies and strategies by advocating for a more sustainable agenda that interwove concerns for energy conservation with the preservation and rehabilitation of neighbourhoods, environmental stewardship, participation, equity and the right to housing. Rather than using the term *sustainability*, these concerns were often referred to as contributing to the *leefbaarheid* (liveability) of the city. This article highlights some of the approaches to sustainability thinking in urban design in Amsterdam during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s by describing three microhistories of one specific location, in the eastern inner city, called the *Kadijken*. The microhistories are approached through the specific position of its narrator, who grew up in this neighbourhood. To convey this positionality, the introductory description of the *Kadijken* is given through the lens of the researcher's experiences and memories.

Revisiting the *Kadijken*

A yellow and red drawbridge stands out against a long brick building. As I cross the bridge, the familiar shouts of gibbons reach me from the adjacent zoo over the water. The long building, called the *Entrepotdok*, has many entrances directly onto the street, decorated with plant pots and bushes. Before it was converted into dwellings by the architecture office of J. van Stigt, the building housed seventeenth- and eighteenth-century warehouses where imported goods were stored. After the area lost its function as a place of transit, the building became a place where many have made their home. During the renovation, a few tunnels that led directly through the building were added; a short-cut to reach my old home. The tunnels are still dark but the weird odour that used to linger here is gone. I guess someone must have done something about that over the last twenty-five years. It smells fine now, and the walk is not as long as I remember. I have that slightly dizzying feeling of when your body does not realize it is bigger but imagines that the environment has shrunk instead. Before I know it, I have reached the end of the tunnel. I cross the one-way street with parked cars, a low brick wall and bike racks, the pavement sloping slightly upwards under my feet. Soon, I reach a wide sidewalk and stand in front of the house where I used to live back in the 1990s, a postmodern tenement. The sidewalk is vast, sunny, airy and quiet. It is a free space, with many possibilities for movement, and plants, weeds and furniture scattered around. It is as if the pavement speaks to me from under my feet. Welcome back — it seems to say — go, explore, run around, crawl even, stretch out. Take up as much space as you need. You are safe — my muscles relax. I look around. The street is radiant, full of detail, memory and sun. Its contours made of new and old buildings, standing side by side, similar to many other inner-city neighbourhoods in Amsterdam. Then a gap, which is now a playground, originally designed by architect Aldo van Eyck. In some ways it has changed, in other ways it has not. The reddish-brown pavement, the bushes, the snails that you can find there, the large yellow tap on the exposed side of the house, the shining roofs of parked cars you can see just above the low brick wall, the seesaw, the steel play-structure. Everything I have seen, touched, smelled — incredibly close — and far away, countless times. But as I look around I realize that a darkness surrounds it too, places that forever remained in the shadows, because I was not allowed there, because I did not want to go there or because I simply did not. Places my feet never took me, places my eyes never wandered, always skipping over; each time unknown or overlooked, deepening their shadows; an odd feeling of excitement as I step into the darkness, by walking, through conservations, by studying literature and leafing through archival documents. Stories previously unknown to me take shape: of the unwanted visitors and *Entrepotdok* courtyards, the 'war of bollards' in the *Laagte Kadijk* street and the *Plantage Doklaan*, once taken over by freebooters and nature.

Unwanted Visitors, Fumes and Weeds

In the 1970s a group of citizens forming the *Kadijkenkomitee* were the first to put forward the idea of rehabilitating the five-hundred-metre-long warehouses of the *Entrepotdok*, which were listed monuments in dire need of renovation; an idea that was finally adopted by the municipality by the end of the decade.[1] To make the warehouse suitable for habitation, one of the ideas explored by the architecture office of J. van Stigt was creating publicly accessible inner courtyards that would increase the amount of daylight let into the social-housing apartments.[2] During the participative design process, discussions arose around safety and unwanted visitors in the courtyards, such as homeless people, people involved in criminal activities and those addicted to heroin; a drug that was causing many issues in Amsterdam at this time. To address these safety concerns, the courtyards were raised by one level to make them appear more private and discourage people from entering.[3] These considerations would contribute to making the *Entrepotdok* more liveable *(leefbaar)* for its new inhabitants. This was a considerable force behind many of the urban renewal schemes of the mid-1970s and 1980s that dealt with the dilapidated and neglected inner city. Liveability was often tied to questions of preservation, not just buildings and streets, but communities too. In the *Kadijken*, as in many parts of Amsterdam, even squatters were offered housing in new or renovated buildings after renewal. However, the discussions around the courtyards of the *Entrepotdok* show that those in power excluded certain uses and that not all communities were welcome in the area; by becoming liveable for certain inhabitants, the *Kadijken* became more difficult to use for others.

Another use of the *Kadijken* that resulted in many discussions centred around traffic. The current *Laagte Kadijk* street, which is lined on one side by the *Entrepotdok*, is largely free of cars. In the summer of 1985 however, in the so-called 'war of bollards' *(paaltjesoorlog)*, a group of inhabitants attempted to make the street completely free of cars and pollution, and safe for neighbourhood children.[4] Each night they would place a small bollard on the street — in Dutch called *Amsterdammertje* — which would obstruct cars from passing unless they were local business owners and in possession of a key to remove the bollard. Each morning, the municipality would remove the bollard.[5] This was not an isolated incident and many inhabitants have advocated for largely banning cars from the city since the 1960s. This issue still remains part of political debate in Amsterdam today.

A group that also moved away from the *Kadijken*, although they were only living on its borders, were some houseboat owners, urban nomads and several plants, trees and animals. The houseboat owners and urban nomads occupied part of the quay through informal gardening.[6] On the dockside, the *Entrepotdok* inhabitants looked out upon a canal and those informally occupied quays. Today, many houseboats and urban nomad wagons have disappeared, together with their socio-ecological spatial experiments. They range from being legalized to being cleaned up and even criminalized through policy. Conflicts between the rich diversity of the city's uses by various groups and the preferences of the most powerful actors remain part of many discussions surrounding urban development today.

Imagining a Liveable Amsterdam

The history of redevelopment in Amsterdam is rife with conflicts that concern different approaches to sustainability thinking in urban design. A short description through the lens of the narrator's experiences and memories functioned as both an introduction to the location and to the researcher to convey how knowledge presented in this article is situated. From this position three microhistories were introduced: the first on unwanted visitors, tapping into questions on what and who to preserve; the second on traffic, car fumes and safety; and the third on the socio-ecological spatial experiments of weedy houseboats and free-states. These stories tie into wider discussions involving sustainability thinking in Amsterdam during this period, especially concerning liveability *(leefbaarheid)*, that continue to the present day. Further research into these discussions and the history of redevelopment is part of this researcher's doctoral project.

1 Stukken betreffende het voorlopig ontwerp Entrepôtdok [Documents regarding the preliminary design of Entrepôtdok], 1982, 1509-47, 2.3.1.3.3, Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok, Archief van het Wijkcentrum Oostelijke Binnenstad, Amsterdam City Archives, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (hereafter cited as Voorlopig ontwerp [Preliminary design], Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok).

2 Eisse Kalk, *Bouwmeesters met draagvlak: Architectenbureau Van Stigt* (Amsterdam: Stichting Agora Europa, 2006).

3 Voorlopig ontwerp [Preliminary design], Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok; Notulen bijeenkomsten, met bijlagen [Meeting minutes, with attachments], 1986-89, 1509-312, 2.3.1.3.4. Bewonerskomitee Entrepôtdok, Archief van het Wijkcentrum Oostelijke Binnenstad, Amsterdam City Archives, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (hereafter cited as Notulen bijeenkomsten [Meeting minutes], Bewonerskomitee Entrepôtdok).

4 Notulen bijeenkomsten [Meeting minutes], Bewonerskomitee *Entrepôtdok*; Correspondentie betreffende Stedebouwkundige ontwikkelingen Entrepôt Dok panden 3 tot en met 51 [Correspondence regarding the urban development Entrepôtdok buildings 3 to 51], 1983-1984, 1509-102, 2.3.1.3.3, Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok, Archief van het Wijkcentrum Oostelijke Binnenstad, Amsterdam City Archives, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (hereafter cited as Correspondentie [Correspondence], Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok).

5 Notulen bijeenkomsten [Meeting minutes], Bewonerskomitee Entrepôtdok; Correspondentie [Correspondence], Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok.

6 Verslagen bewonersoverleg *Entrepôtdok* B [Reports of resident meeting Entrepôtdok B], 1984-1985, 1509-113, 2.3.1.3.3, Ontwerpteam voor het Entrepôtdok, Archief van het Wijkcentrum Oostelijke Binnenstad, Amsterdam City Archives, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Sоscha Monteiro de Jesus

Fig. 2: *Entrepôtdok* 1978–84. In the background is the *Entrepôtdoksluis* and *Oranje Nassau Kazerne*, May 1984 (Amsterdam City Archives/Dorians Kransberg.)

Fig. 3: *Plantage Doklaan*, taken over by *vrijbuiters* (freebooters) and nature, 1984–85. (Amsterdam City Archives/Doriann Kransberg.)

Ceiling as Space: Light, Colour, Corner at Ordrup-gaard

The following text and images offer a view into the research-through-design project *Ceiling as Space: Light, Colour, Corner at Ordrupgaard*. Undertaken during February of 2022, the project explores the photographic image as a generative method for spatial and architectural representation. Engaging the photographic image's specific ability to simultaneously imply affiliation with a physical reality and to be easily and radically transformed, the project examines how these qualities might be used to critique, subvert and motivate spatial ideation through the manipulation and perception of the image's subject matter and presentation. Using various modes of writing and photographic images, the project presents a collection of material that operates in tandem, allowing knowledge and insight to develop through their interaction.

Introduction

In 1942, Danish architect and furniture designer, Finn Juhl designed and decorated a house for himself and his family in Ordrup Denmark, twelve kilometres north of Copenhagen.[1] During his time there, Juhl populated the house with his own sculptural furniture which he constantly scrutinized and adjusted. Altering the dynamic and experience of the house with each new arrangement, he swapped items between rooms and replaced chairs and sofas in favour of his latest designs.

In constant dialogue with this changing coterie of furnishings were the rooms of the house themselves—their volume, sequence and significantly; the various forms, materials and colours that characterized the room's ceilings. Though perhaps not as formally sensuous as Juhl's furniture, the rooms are no less sculptural, with ceilings that pitch and slant, and colour and material cladding that act as compositional and atmospheric tools which set a tone, define rooms and thresholds, indicate division, and provoke flow and the feeling of seamlessness.

It is with these distinctive, shaped ceilings that this photo experiment is situated—regarding them collectively as a site for spatial and architectural exploration through photographic imaging. The ambition of this experiment is to activate the photographic image as a generative tool to critique, inspire and motivate architectural ideation—to think spatially and creatively through images. The experiment takes the form of an inductive process that aims to discover pattern, order and knowledge through the act of imaging. It is a process of finding and inventing, rather than imposing—a practice of making, studying and working through images with the objective of discovery, awareness and insight.

Visit to Ordrupgaard

On a bright winter morning in February 2022, I took the short train ride from Copenhagen to Ordrup to visit the art museum, Ordrupgaard and Finn Juhl's family home; now maintained and open to the public and located adjacent to the museum. Having freely wandered through Ordrupgaard's galleries, including new wings designed by Zaha Hadid and Snøhetta, I made my way across the wet and muddy grounds to the Juhl residence. Knowing little of the house in advance, I arrived with the ambition to fully and bodily experience the mid-century home of one of Denmark's most celebrated designers—I also intended to photograph it.

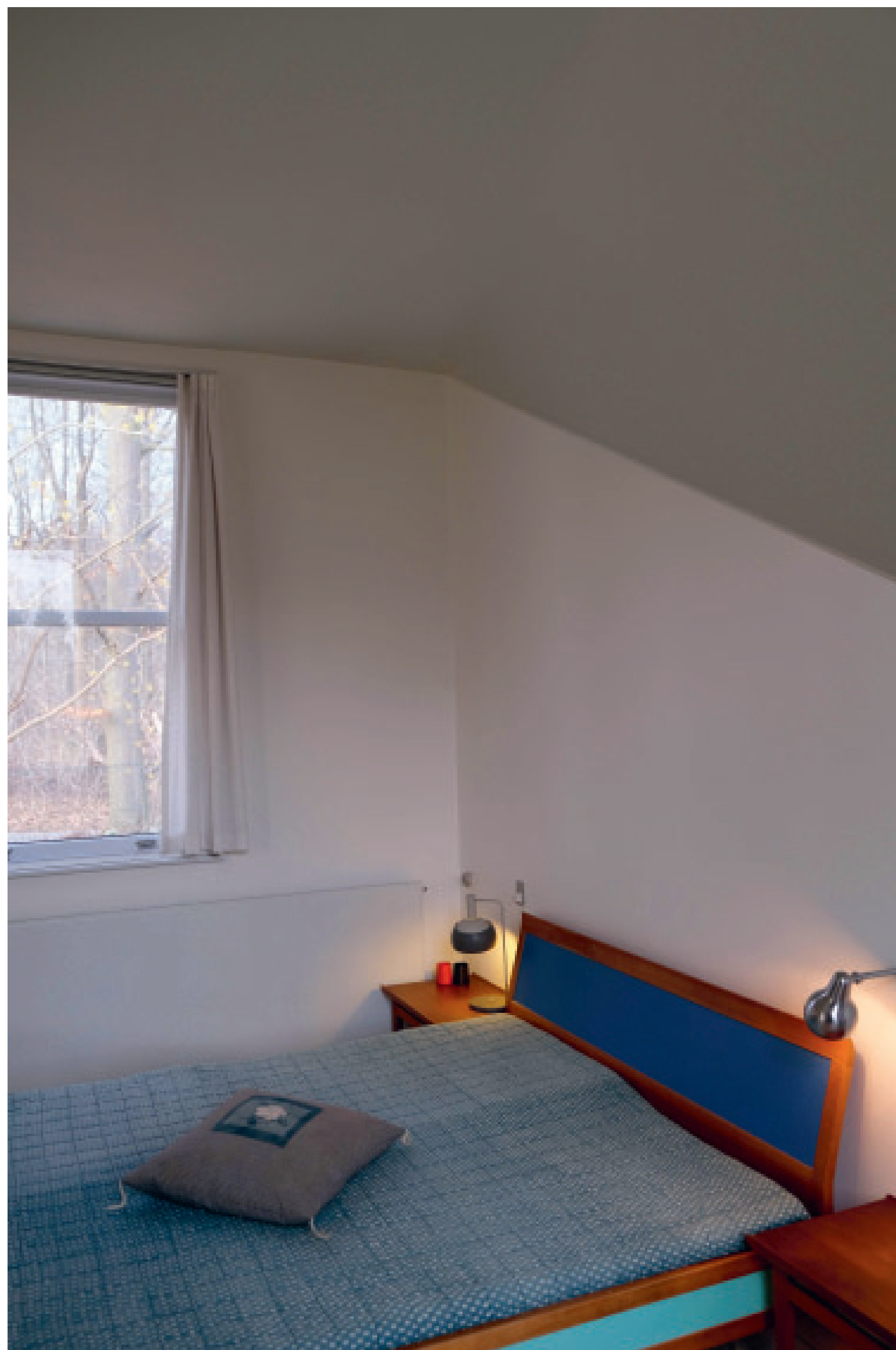
My task was intentionally open ended. I did not aim to focus on a specific condition or analyze a predetermined quality. Instead, I simply planned to first experience the house through a physical encounter and then through photographic images, allowing impressions to form freely and candidly. Photographing as I moved through the house, I allowed myself to be drawn to colour and light, texture and material without laboured deliberation. I photographed the things that I found compelling, discerning and beautiful, and came away with a set of images that I did not know how my future self would interpret.

Days later, I sat at my desk at home and uploaded the photographs to my computer. As I flipped through the images, I began a second visit to Juhl's house, this time separated by space and time, moderated by a computer screen and overlaid by new noises, light and smells. The experience of the images was fragmented, not smooth and interconnected as the house had been. Some images seemed remarkably accurate to my memory of the space, while others revealed themselves to be revelatory—new shapes and adjacencies emerged that either went unnoticed in the original experience—or were simply not there.

I selected a group of images to work with further, drawn to the ceilings, walls and corners. During my visit to the house, the articulated ceilings were one of several elements that garnered attention. In the images however, they became significant. They demanded consideration in image after image and expanded my thinking about their spatial potential. I began to wonder what would happen if these sites were allowed to push back—to transform based on my physical and photographic experience. What might they evoke then?

I worked with the images one at a time, allowing each to be autonomous—not dependent on the others. Ruminating on the images, I worked with and through them, modifying them in minor and major ways. At times, these acts were informed by memories of being in the house and at other times detached, singularly engaged with the composition and the objects' colour, shape and texture caught within the frame. Alternate rooms appeared, providing unique views distinct from those originally captured. And something else emerged through the images, something that allowed them to go beyond simple illustration. The images engage with the uncanny, a tension that provokes a curiosity and an opening up—motivating a reorientation or a different interpretation of the scene. The images are allowed to suggest without defining and to juggle multiple readings at once, thus urging the viewer to linger in contemplation.

To those who know the Finn Juhl house well, the images produced are indisputably recognizable as being of this place, but they are simultaneously enigmatic and speculative. They speak for themselves, presenting a knowledge that cannot be fully articulated or translated into words. Just as the image is not the building, descriptive words are not the image. However, describing the image through words can act as a critical epistemological tool that can be both enlightening and destructive.



What do you see?

A bedroom: domestic and every day. The room is white except for the ceiling and an angled body of grey paint that slides along the wall towards the blue headboard. The grey contrasts the surrounding white with a sharp edge that is reminiscent of the painted interior of the halls of an American high school—with school colours of white and grey.

This field of grey occupies the upper part of the wall and extends upwards until it is no longer the wall—it is the ceiling. No geometric transition has taken place, it is neither ceiling nor wall, it is both/and, and it is more. At the top of the frame the grey flattens and hugs the surface of the image. It now appears flat, a two-dimensional graphic that exists in the world of the material page on which it is printed.

Returning to the room—which once felt calm and effortlessly recognizable, a tension now creeps. There is an ambivalence towards what can be gleaned from the image, what might be there, or might not. Returning repeatedly to the top of the image, the grey pushes forwards out of the frame and then recedes to sit beyond the white walls of the room, as though a backdrop for a studio photograph of a scale model of a bedroom.

Discussion

The experiment at Ordrupgaard revealed itself to be a practice of play between restraint and freedom. Parameters are set, a site and an objective are given but the outcome is open—it is neither negative or positive, up or down, zero or one. It is not a problem to be positively solved but rather a gathering of knowledge that contributes to an ongoing process of design thinking. The resulting images in this process might be seen as a vessel resembling Ursula K. Le Guin's understanding of narrative. In her 'carrier bag theory of fiction', '[C]onflict, competition, stress, struggle, etc., within the narrative conceived as carrier bag/ belly/ box/ house/ medicine bundle, may be seen as necessary elements of a whole which itself cannot be characterized either as conflict or as harmony, since its purpose is neither resolution nor stasis but continuing process'.[2] If the photographic image is conceived of in this way—as a collection and composition (as opposed to 'truth' or 'record') in which ambiguity is unabashedly accepted, new avenues are opened for the accumulation of knowledge.

Intrinsically linked to the building, the image is not the building (why should it be?), it is not equal to the building, (it exists and operates externally) nor is it an instruction manual for the construction of the building (too limiting). It is instead a plenitude. No matter what you see or say about it, there is more. It has a life that forms and reforms as a sort of conceptual parallax. It moves and changes with every new set of eyes, with every crop, distortion, or positioning.

1 Per H. Hansen, *Finn Juhl and His House*, trans. Mark Mussari (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2014).
2 Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction (1986)," in *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places* (New York: Grove Press, 1989).

Developing Spatial Patterend Products for Buildings

Sreeprada Cogulapati and Neelakantan Keshavan

This research follows a practice-based design approach to create ambient spaces through the design and use of *Jaali*-perforated spatial screens common in vernacular architecture. By the reflective making of modular *Jaalis*, our research explores how design is influenced by various constraints, including time and attempts to understand the design process in depth. Taking an example of a design, the process of making iterations is explained by identifying the roles of people and technology in design. Many people, like approving authorities, clients, masons/carpenters/workers and other parameters like emerging needs, technologies, production methods and aesthetics, directly impact how the design emerges.

Vernacular architecture is a traditional way of building that is passed through generations. Over time, these building elements became part of the culture and tradition of a place. Even today, vernacular elements are praised for sustainability and aesthetics and their role in the intangible part of the culture.[1] Spatial screens are an excellent example of vernacular designs (fig. 1). These lattice structures are present in various cultures. They have names like Mashrabiya in Saudi Arabia,[2] *Jaalis* in India, *Brise-soleil* in France[3] and *Machiya-Coshi* in Japan.[4] All of these structures are combinations of solid and void and are usually used as covers for openings and façades. These sun shades help to reflect or limit direct sunlight and add an aesthetic quality to the space.

A *Jaali* is an interlace of solid and void. It facilitates continuity yet divides the space. It enables visibility on one side and blocks it on the other. It is colourful on one side but is just a silhouette on the other. Besides their sustainable qualities like ventilation and shade, *Jaalis* can add texture and cultural quality to the space.

Our research explores how design changes over time. It also investigates the role of various people and constraints that can influence the design. I expect to understand the design process in depth by making and reflecting on the process employed while making the products.

Practice-based research is an apt method for understanding a product's design development by taking the design of *Jaalis* as an example. Practice-based research is a fusion between research and design in which, typically, researchers in action are practitioners who bring collective and self-reflective enquiry into their practices. Here 'making' is not seen as an after-production technique but rather as an integral part of the research from the start. My research model employs auto-ethnography, which allows me to delve into my experience as a starting point for inquiry.

Example: The initial module pattern emerged from a standard pattern, the 'flower of life'. A triangular module is preferred because of its possibility for different combinations and capacity to form a rectangle, square, hexagon, etc. Iterations are based on:

1. The shape of a triangle
2. Cutting the void shape in the triangle
3. Changing the triangles' void to change their stability
4. Finding a groove and slot that fit each other in the next iteration.

While scaling up for the final iteration, the triangles are made in various scales that can be randomly assembled or stacked. The iterations performed are

1. Making triangles in various sizes
2. Working out extension joinery
3. Adding metal strips as reinforcements and fillers (fig. 2)

There are different stakeholders involved in the process (fig. 3). Inspiration is drawn from certain things, and a concept is developed. The concept is then discussed with the co-advisor and architect Santosh Thorat, and together we evaluate the ideas and discuss them in terms of meaning, scale and possibilities. Based on our discussion, new iterations are conceived, and the idea moves to the drafting stage. I draft the design, and we make an initial model in the workshop. Technician Vivekananda Chary helps me to realise the model. Critical decisions regarding time, material and thickness are decided at this stage. The initial model is modified based on the challenges identified, and the final product is made. It is analyzed, and the points are considered in the next set of iterations.

We see that the design emerges from iteration to iteration (fig. 4), and the approving authorities, such as the client, mason/carpenter/worker, all play a role in how the final design turns out. Design is never a process that is done alone. During this production period, patterns emerge relating to emerging needs, technologies, production methods and aesthetics. The final design changes owing to constraints like machines, and the cost evolves owing to the people involved, matures with time and changes between iterations.

1 Shweta Srivastav and Phil Jones, 'Use of Traditional Passive Strategies to Reduce the Energy Use and Carbon Emissions in Modern Dwellings', *International Journal of Low-Carbon Technologies* 4, no. 3 (2009), 141–149.
2 Ayman Fathy Ashour, 'Islamic Architectural Heritage: Mashrabiya.' *WIT Transactions on the Built Environment* 177 (2018), 245–253.
3 Brise-Soleil, 2022, 'Encyclopedia Britannica.' *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed 18 June 2022. https://www.britannica.com/technology/brise-soleil.
4 Nermine Abdel Gelil, 'A New Mashrabiya for Contemporary Cairo: Integrating Traditional Latticework from Islamic and Japanese Cultures', *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering* 5, no. 1 (2006), 37–44.

Fig. 1

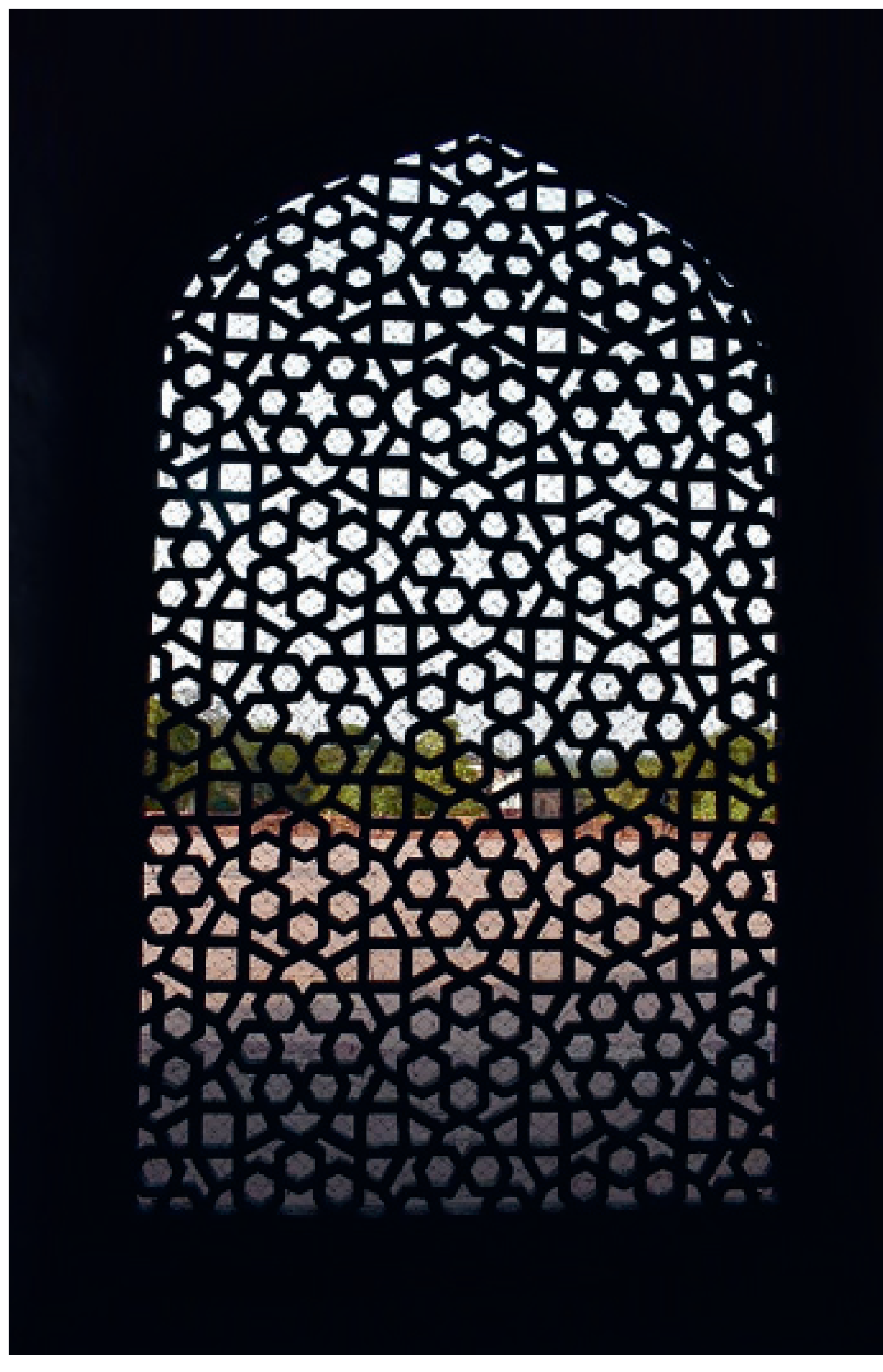


Fig. 2

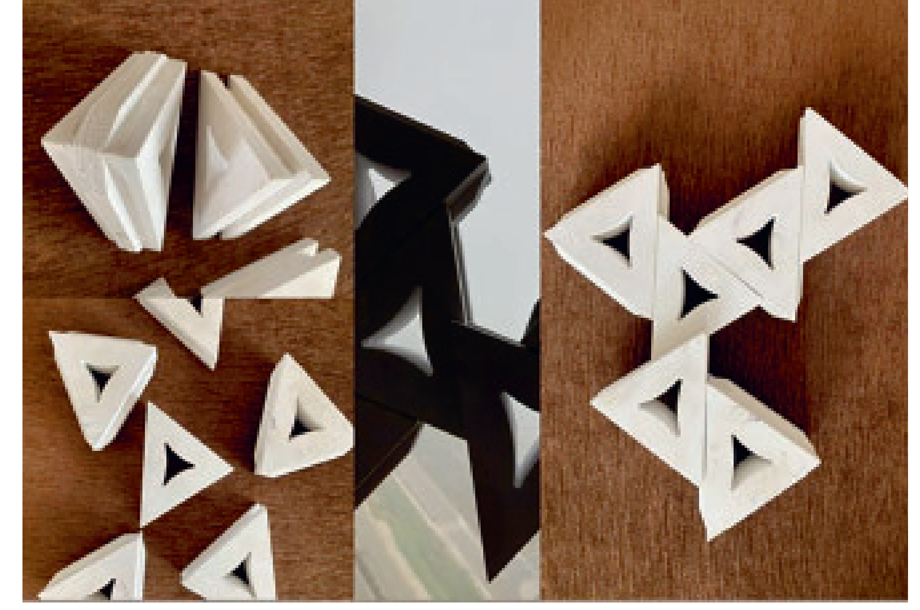


Fig. 3

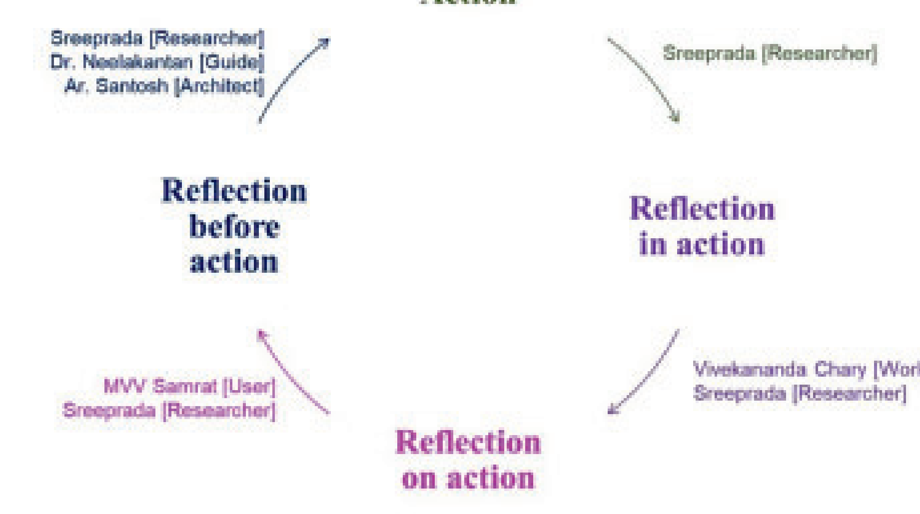
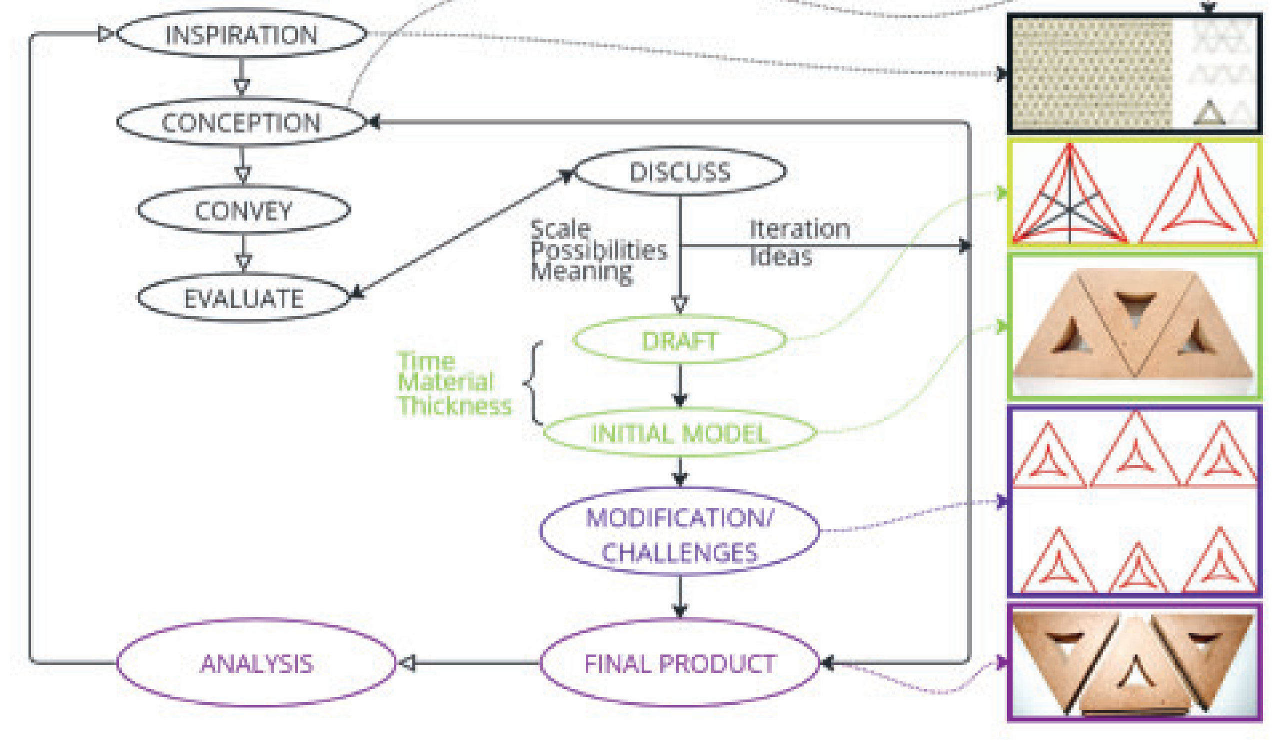


Fig. 4



Sreeprada Cogulapati and Neelakantan Keshavan

The Story around a House

Anne Cross

This study tells 'The Story around a House'—as one in a million in the urban fabric of Tokyo. It positions an urban investigation at a trifold juncture: empirically, it starts an in-depth survey of Tokyo as a case study; methodologically, it occupies a field between architecture, urban studies and sociology; theoretically, it introduces 'Strollology'—the 'Science of Walking' as a strategy to form new vantage points towards our built environment. The aim is to investigate the materiality of socioeconomic and political 'constructs' around single-family houses (SFH).

'The first lesson the coronavirus has taught us is also the most astounding: we have actually proven that it is possible, in a few weeks, to put an economic system on hold everywhere in the world and at the same time, a system that we were told it was impossible to slow down or redirect.' [1]

In the above quote, published amidst a global lockdown in March 2020, French philosopher Bruno Latour calls for a societal reset and argues that if everything can be stopped, everything can be questioned, sorted out or interrupted for good. By citing this quote during a lecture at the 'Berlin Questions—Conference for the Immediate Present' in August 2021, the architect and architectural researcher Charlotte Malterre-Barthes questions: Why did construction not stop? Malterre-Barthes states that construction sites worldwide have continued with 'some adjustments' but never halted to re-think as Latour advocated.[2] With a steady course of nearly 40 percent of the global share of final energy consumption and emissions in the buildings and extraction industry,[3] we can guess the force of that system. However, do we understand the system?—a complex industry that needs to sustain itself or otherwise leaves entire economy chains without work? System analysis requires a holistic understanding of the processes, dependencies and interdependencies within the desired field.

When considering systems in the planning field, this article would like to draw attention to the work and mindset of Swiss artist and politician Annemarie Burckhardt and her husband, the sociologist and socio-economist, Lucius Burckhardt [the Burckhardts].[4] Studies in sociology and economics, a dissertation in political science and the close relationship between art and politics gave the Burckhardts an unorthodox approach to architectural discourse.[5] They persistently questioned their world, identifying how the entanglements of invisible economic and political systems would affect architecture, urban form or materialized landscape. Both criticized planning and municipal policy decisions for being oriented towards manifesting urban development problems rather than the causes of these phenomena.[6] This raises the question of whether the Burckhardts' method could contribute to the halting, critiquing and re-thinking of the system of building and construction?

Early on, Annemarie and Lucius requested the participation of citizens in planning processes, not only as a right but as a democratic obligation, and they constantly sought the correlation between 'Urban Planning and Democracy' (1957). This early text outlines their view of the city as an articulation of social relationships and asks whom we should blame for the present circumstances:

> *'Is it not actually rather strange, how little concern the public [...] per se has for the cityscape? For the city is the most public manifestation of our shared life, the most visible representation of human activity. [...] The individual is as helpless with regard to housing programs as he is with regard to development of the cityscape.'* [7]

In the 1970s with 'Why is Landscape Beautiful?' (1978) they identified why we, the citizens, are unable to perceive our environment: While teaching 'Socio-Economy of Urban Systems' at the University of Kassel in Germany (1973-1996), they introduced their students to hidden systems by looking at the landscape. In jointly planned and evaluated walks, mainly outside the urban realm, students reflected on the scenery. Their discussions showed that the students' perception of the landscape seemed uniformly shaped—by visual or literal factors and revealed that the 'typical landscape' imagery is more relevant to urban dwellers rather than rural communities. Concluding that the perception of the landscape is a human-made composition—a 'construct'—influenced by something else other than its appearance; namely language, poetry, literature, art, media or advertising. Through the discovery of the invisible social and cultural 'construct', Annemarie and Lucius found a new material that started an unconventional philosophical enquiry by conducting various performative walks and excursions with students, and later the public, making the invisible influences visible with walking their most valuable tool. It led them to their core theorem 'Design is Invisible' (1980),[8] a systems theory and powerful position within the emergence of planning theory that culminated in 'The Science of Strollology' (1995):

> *'We are introducing a new science: Promenadology or Strollology. Its thesis: The environment is not perceptible. If it is, it refers to pictorial ideas, formed in the mind of the observer or already implemented.'* [9]

'Strollology', a design theory that discusses 'systems' and 'constructs' as the basis for critical planning, is not well known outside the German-speaking world. I consider it a valuable opportunity to identify, sort out and re-think the built environment, as Latour demands. Looking through Malterre-Barthes' argument, it made sense to introduce a study on the largest mega-city in the world, Tokyo in Japan, in search of its 'constructs' and invisible mechanisms to be halted and questioned. I have been in Tokyo for several years and am interested in its housing system and urban morphology: Detached wooden single-family houses characterize the city's fabric. In other words, the Tokyo metropolitan complex, with over 30 million inhabitants, is a conglomerate where buildings under individual initiatives occupy numerous land fragments, and city ownership widely disperses.[10] Theoretically, top-down legislative processes cannot proceed without a single resident participating and 'Tokyo can be seen as an urban landscape of democracy.'[11] However, this imported process of individualization became the country's economic growth engine by offering low home-loan interest rates. This had severe consequences and resulted in the 'bubble economy' of the 1980s which unleashed relentlessly exorbitant land prices, followed by a loss of spatial and material quality.[12] These economic forces continue and profoundly influence this 'democratic state' as immense construction costs leave the individual 'no choice', and fuel an over-efficient prefabricated housing industry (Fig. 1). How does this 'construct' between socio-economy and advertisement articulate itself as an urban landscape? Through the means of walking and the lens of the Burckhardts' arguments I try to break this question down to its constituent parts.

Before I start walking, let me give you some context to walking as a method in Japan and its difference from the Burckhardts' arguments: Interestingly, street observations of the everyday built environment or 'design surveys' have a long tradition in Tokyo. First and foremost, we find the discipline of 'Modernology', invented by architect Wajiro Kon, who documented the behaviour of the rapidly modernizing society of Tokyo after the great Kanto earthquake in 1923.[13] He created drawings of the changes in everyday items, such as clothes that moved from traditional Japanese to Western style, and carefully counted and documented their numbers and appearance. His concept inspired many people to do similar work over the following decades. From the late 1960s to the early 1970s artist Genpei Akasegawa used the opportunity to revive 'Modernology' and engaged his students in studies of all kinds of trivia, such as urban objects that were useless but expensive to maintain. He called their findings 'Super Art Thomasson'.[14] Together with architecture historian Terunobu Fujimori and friends from other fields, they formed 'Rojo—The Street Observation Society' that has conducted fieldwork on urban curiosities in Tokyo to this day. So, members of Rojo would look and name their finds but not touch them to collate a vast collection of aspects of the city that tend to be unnoticed and ephemeral. What makes the 'street observers' different from the idea of 'Strollology' is the lineage of pure observation with no deeper purpose or message than being a hobby of some curious individuals. Instead, 'Strollology' consists of a theoretical and systemic approach that directly addresses the planning field and its interdependencies. Although in the past, 'Strollology' often articulated its actions through urban interventions related to art: 'We call such research, for lack of a better term, art.' [15]*, our generation now faces the challenge of articulating and translating such correlations as a matter of concern.*

Fig. 1: The 'construct' SFH
Photograph of a postbox advertisement from a real estate company in the neighbourhood. Original size: A4. Photo by Anne Cross.

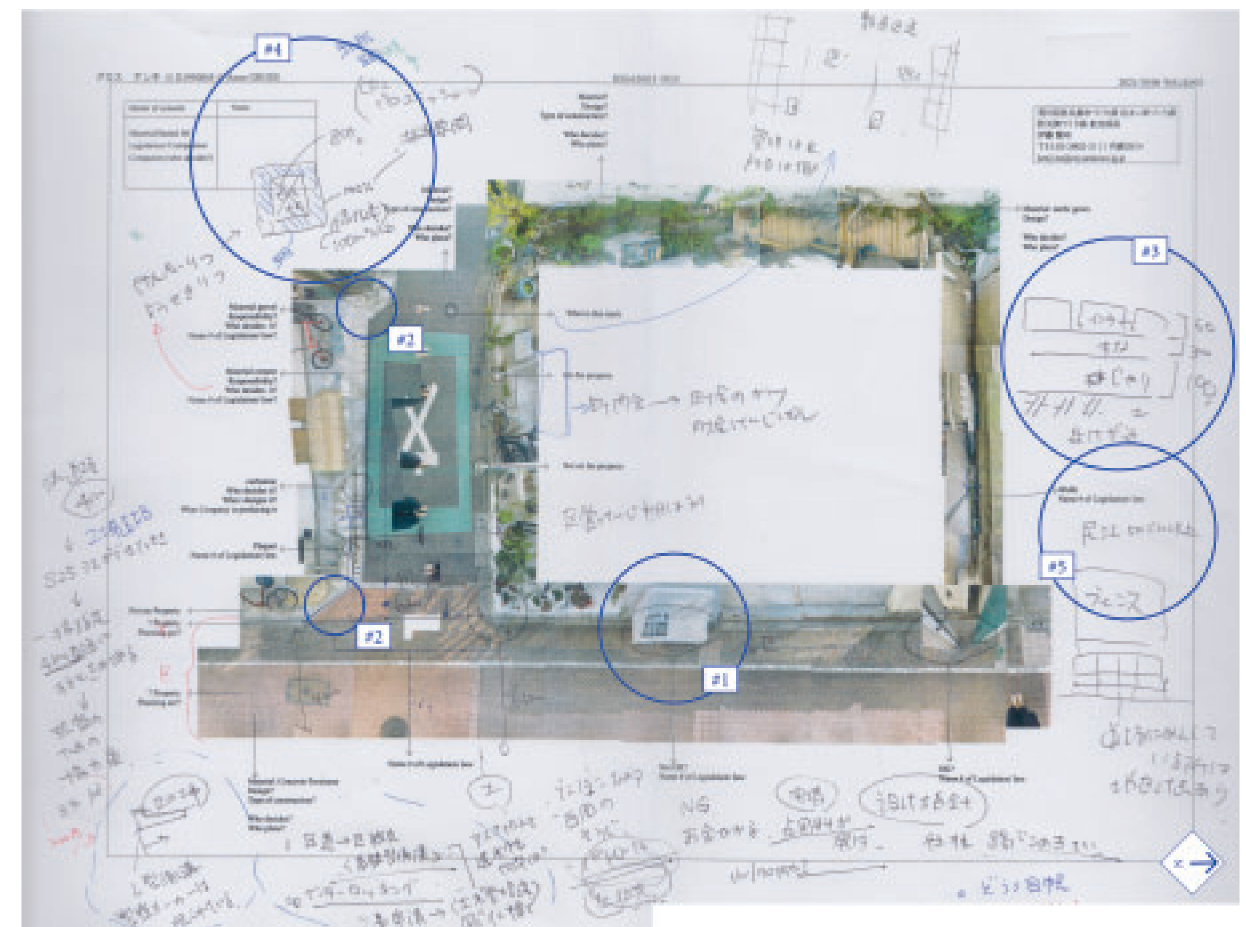


Fig. 2: MATERIAL + CODE
20211006—Walk around a House with Local Authorities
Handwritten text on printed photo-collage, used for note-taking on the material and legislation principles around the house. Original size: A3. Collage by Anne Cross.

With 'The Story around a House', the first analysis of a SFH in Tokyo will narrow the Tokyo Metropolitan Complex down to its smallest component. This house, my house, is located in Arakawa, one of twenty-three central districts. For a walk around my house, I invited two local town-planning department representatives. We gathered information to clarify the conditions the house sits in. I prepared a photo collage that became the canvas for our conversation (Fig. 2). Supplementary analogue and digital material brought by the representatives helped to extend our knowledge. Here are some insights:

If one wants to place a bench or another object in front of a house on public property permanently, one needs to announce it at the ward office and pay 70 JPY[16] per hour (#1). The fee is waived if one assures the relocation of the object overnight and any time necessary.

If one builds a new house adjacent to a street less than four metres wide, a setback of the new house is required; a setback of the property is voluntary. In the case of our neighbour (#2), the street expanded and the front corner diminished. He received compensation of 30,000 JPY per square metre of the property setback, and a plaque praising his contribution to ward-city planning. Steel badges on the asphalt remind us of the original border and that the land still belongs to him.

One finds a shopping street to one side of our house in red concrete brick material. If an administration decides on brick pavement, it is compelled to follow structural details given by the ward (#3): 60 mm pavement, 30 mm sand, 100 mm gravel and soil. Administrations are free to handle expenses concerning their budget which results in more decisions to use asphalt, as advantages prevail: maintenance is easier, detail specifications are omitted what is cost-effective.

To ensure spacing for evacuation during fires or after a collapse caused by earthquakes, one can cover a plot of land by 80 percent, with a residential building (#4) leaving a gap all around of at least 50cm (#5)—a legal requirement known as 'Kenpeiritsu' or 'building-to-land ratio.' The quality of the remaining 20 percent is not determined as only properties above 100 sqm are requested to spare one sqm for greenery, but this rule barely applies to plot sizes of private houses. With about two hundred thousand inhabitants in Arakawa Ward, 60 percent of the district's built mass are freestanding buildings consisting of one or two floors, and 30 percent are three-floor detached houses, most less than 100 sqm plot size. With the majority of the district covered by this rule, one could say that 20 percent of its entire surface management is out of control and outside official statistics but in the hands of individual owners.

With an understanding of the legislative situation around houses, a subsequent walk collects photographs of at least one hundred houses around my house to determine individual surface expressions. In (Fig. 3), each house is represented by a pair of photographs depicting its threshold—the space between the private and public realm—through its elevation and ground. What stands out? Most thresholds are sealed, meaning impermeable materials, such as concrete, asphalt or brick material in the mortar bed. I walked one more time and took a look around all the cardinal directions of gap spaces around each house—north, east, south and west; assigning values between 1 (permeable) and 0 (sealed) to the material conditions of the threshold. Data collection resulted in almost 60 percent of sealed surfaces. Materials declared as 'permeable' range from gravel to ruderal vegetation and, in most cases, appeared unmaintained. A binary heat-map of material focusing on the 'sealed' or 'permeable' will visualize the actual urban constellation.

With 'The Story around a House', we understand the existence of that free space of 20 percent plot size without codes and rules to be freely shaped. However, its materiality consists of sealed surfaces that only allow the owner to place objects. Appropriations like potted plants, parked bicycles and makeshift fixings, rather than gardens reflect the advertisement of housing companies and the lack of graphical representations of individual expression. A 'construct' that, according to the Burckhardts' theory, is responsible for that we have 'unlearned' to perceive our daily environment.

If we could bring about a pause in the system as Latour urges, the city might look different. If, according to Malterre-Barthes, it does not allow this industry to be shaken by a global crisis, it might be time for the individual to pause and move consciously around their houses. Making walking a method could contribute to stopping, halting, critiquing and re-thinking. Following this path, we might be able to (re)claim not only the materiality of socio-economic and political 'constructs' around SFH but the production of architecture.

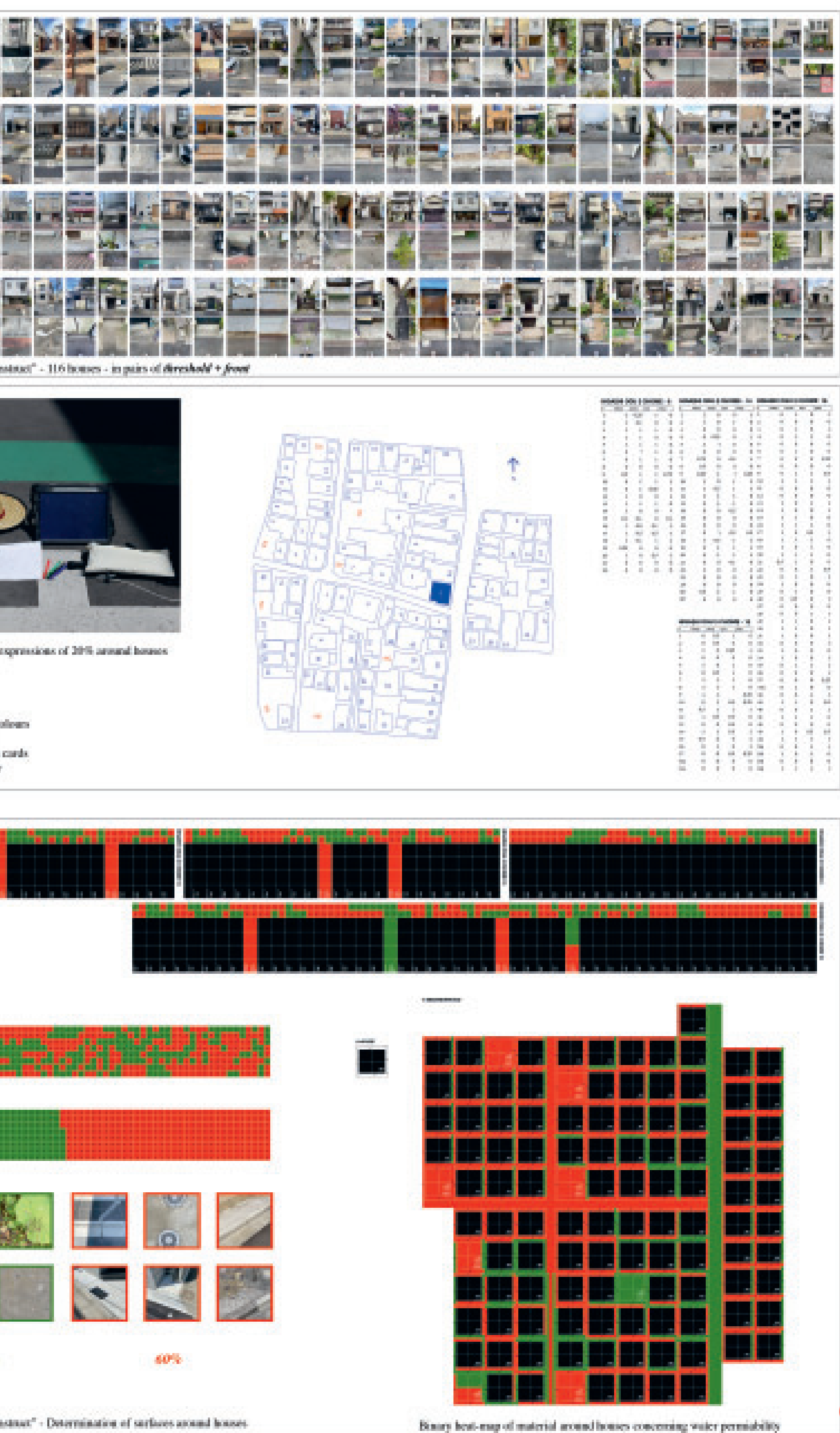


Fig. 3: MATERIAL OF A 'CONSTRUCT'
20220727-28—Walk around a Neighbourhood
Evaluation of the material conditions of 108 houses and 8 empty properties around the initial house with a primary focus on water permeability. Original size: A3. Data Sheet by Anne Cross.

1 'What protective measures can you think of so we don't go back to the pre-crisis production model?', accessed 25 August 2022, http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/downloads/P-202-AOC-ENGLISH_1.pdf.
2 Berlin, Q. 2021. 'Berlin Questions 2021 - METROPOLIS:THE NEW NOW Live@ewerk.' YouTube. 11 August 2021, starting at 6:45:40, accessed 19 August 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhxtVg8KMFU.
3 Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, '2021 GLOBAL STATUS REPORT FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION Towards a Zero-Emissions, Efficient and Resilient Buildings and Construction Sector', accessed 25 August 2022, https://globalabc.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/GABC_Buildings-GSR-2021_BOOK.pdf.
4 Note: Annemarie Burckhardt (b. Wackernagel) (1930-2012) was married to Lucius Burkhardt (1925-2003). This study attempts to identify Annemarie and Lucius as a creative unit in the practice of sharing work and intellectual existence in partnership. Both are the creators of 'Strollology'—the 'Science of Walking' and the texts mentioned.
5 cf. Martin Josephy, 'Critical Practice between Science and Art: Lucius Burckhardt and the Emergence of Planning Theory,' in *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research*, ed. Reto Geiser (Basel: Birkhauser Verlag AG, 2008), 78–79.
6 cf. Jens S. Dangschat, 'Macht und Herrschaft, aber auch Werte und institutionelle Settings — sie bestimmen die Raumplanung: Kommentar zu Lucius Burckhardts 'Wer plant die Planung?', ['Power and Dominion, but also Values and Institutional Settings - They Determine Spatial Planning: Commentary on Lucius Burckhardt's "Who Plans the Planning?"'], *sub|urban zeitschrift für kritische stadtforschungband* 5, no. 1–2 (2017), Schwerpunkt, 'Planung als politische Praxis,' [Focus on 'Planning as Political Practice'] 131–36, accessed 2 August 2023, https://zeitschrift-suburban.de/sys/index.php/suburban/article/view/287.
7 Lucius Burckhardt, *Wer plant die Planung? Architektur, Politik und Mensch [Who Plans the Planning?: Architecture, Politics, and Mankind]*, eds Jesko Fezer and Martin Schmitz (Berlin: Schmitz, Martin, 2004), 19–25.
Lucius Burckhardt, Lucius Burckhardt Writings. *Rethinking Man-Made Environments: Politics, Landscape & Design*, eds Jesko Fezer and Martin Schmitz (Vienna, Austria: Springer, 2012), 27–30.
8 Lucius Burckhardt, *Design ist unsichtbar: Entwurf, Gesellschaft und Pädagogik* [Design Is Invisible: Planning, Education, and Society], eds Silvan Blumenthal and Martin Schmitz (Berlin, Germany: Schmitz, Martin, 2012), 13–25.
9 Lucius Burckhardt, *Landschaftstheoretische Aquarelle und Spaziergangswissenschaft [Landscape Theoretical Watercolours and Strollology]*, eds Noah Regenass, Markus Ritter and Martin Schmitz (Berlin: Schmitz, Martin, 2017), 349.
10 cf. Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, Masamichi Tamura, Fumiya Nonaka, 'Spaces for plants in void metabolism', in *Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture.* 56(3), 2021, 181–199.
11 Koh Kitayama, Ryue Nishizawa, Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, *Tokyo Metabolizing* (Tokyo: Toto, 2010), 29.
12 Ibid., 35–42.
13 AA School of Architecture. 2020, 'Lecture by Thomas Daniell—AA School London—Diploma 16—Bêka, Lemoine, Merin.',YouTube. 19 November 2020, accessed 19 August 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbZOYiyilHg.
14 Note: "Super Art Thomasson" was named after the American baseball player Gary Thomasson who played for the 'Tokyo Giants' and had a huge salary but never played; a homage to the exceedingly costly nonsense.
15 Burckhardt, *Landschaftstheoretische Aquarelle und Spaziergangswissenschaft [Landscape Theoretical Watercolours and Strollology]*, 3.
16 Note: current exchange rate: 1 EUR = 144 JPY, accessed 2 August 2023, https://www.google.com/finance/quote/EUR-JPY.

Anne Cross

Participation as Agency Building: Reflecting Practices of the Project *Corso pro nás* by Spolka Collective

Zuzana Tabačková

This text is a reflection on how to support and build local agency through the spatial practice of participation. To answer that question, I collate collective partial findings accumulated during six years through/in the many participatory processes designed and constructed by the collective Spolka of which I am a founding member. Each project builds on the findings of the previous one; integrating and reflecting the collective learnings through practice. This article's central question is itself an angle on participation which reoccurs during our work with municipalities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Slovakia and Czechia. The text is a reflection on our most recent project in which I was involved—*Corso pro nás* [Corso for us] situated in Ústí nad Labem in Czechia. The reflection draws upon my observations and my informal conversations with the local members of the core project team[1] and my colleagues Viktória Mravčáková and Lýdia Crešáková, who were also involved in the project.

Corso is a multifunctional object built at the centre of the unfinished 1980s modernist housing estate Krásne Březno in Ústí to provide services for the neighbourhood and beyond. Its many original functions like a cinema, shops, restaurants and diverse spaces for leisure activities have been slowly leaving the building since the change of regime in the 1990s. Decreased use and thus little incentive to care led to the slow deterioration of the built infrastructure. The city owns one quarter of the object which they have recently decided to renovate. The renovation project sparked the project described here. According to Aleš, a local from Krásne Březno, the renovation did not consider the needs of the locals. Aleš assembled with others from Ústí to voice their concerns and invited Spolka to help them define their vision for *Corso* that would consider local needs while identifying ways to achieve these visions. The desire to realize and imagine alternative futures for *Corso* helped to centre the project in the topic of agency. We grasped this abstract concept through the metaphor of building a civic space—a concept introduced to the project by the exhibition 'Common Grounding'[2] at Callery Hraničář where parts of the project were exhibited later that year.

In order to achieve the project's aims, we had to determine what agency and civic spaces are in practical terms, how to grasp them in the context of architecture/urbanism and what spatial practices could support them. This text outlines the findings we gained through practice.

In Anthony Ciddens's words, agency is 'the capability of acting otherwise'.[3] Borrowing from Awan, Schneider and Till who build on Ciddens: 'Agency is described as the ability of the individual to act independently of the constraining structures of society; structure is seen as the way that society is organized'.[4] In the context of the built environment this structure is defined by two interconnected aspects: Plans by planning authorities or investors envisioning various physical interventions like buildings, neighbourhoods, parks or transport infrastructure that will shape our future built environment; culture, processes and procedures, also mostly defined by the planning authorities, through which these plans are created and realized. To act otherwise then, is to imagine a future that differs from the one proposed by the status quo and to influence and shape one's built environment accordingly. *Corso pro nás* was born precisely out of the desire to act otherwise in both of these senses.

Civic spaces are intrinsically linked to local agency, as it is here that actors can act 'independently of the constraining structures of society'.[5] While in the public spaces it is the government/public institutions/ municipalities, and in the private spaces businesses/ companies who decide about the space, in civic spaces it is members of the third sector/civil society (non-governmental, non-profit organizations and institutions)[6] who are able to establish the norms, rules, principles and thus construct the spaces according to their needs and desires, which also shapes their wider environment. The following draws on aspects of civic spaces which helped us to design and construct a participatory process that would support and build agency.

Spatial Practices to Build Agency

The complementary formats of diagram and text are used to describe, analyze and reflect upon the spatial practice vis-à-vis the building of agency/civic space. While the diagram shows individual formats/spaces of the participatory process and their relations, the text below articulates three crucial aspects of the spatial practice that are present throughout the whole process:

1) ASSEMBLING AROUND A COMMON VISION
Foremostly, civic spaces provide the necessary space for the activities of people with shared interests. This space can be physical like a room, garden or building, but also digital, hybrid or temporal; materializing during its members' meetings in cafés, public institutions or private homes, and otherwise existing as an intangible platform for exchange. What brings people to the space, and thus creates it, is therefore primarily their shared interest, although the materiality of the space also plays an important role.

Our key tool to assemble people and thus create a civic space/space of participation is to invite people to collectively create their vision of the built environment. This builds their shared interest and is the 'something' the participants/members of the civic space should gain the capability to achieve. The common vision frames local agency by establishing the collective aim and direction. We always develop the vision collaboratively through diverse formats like focus groups, workshops, spatial interventions and interviews (shown on the diagram). They are tailored to all kinds of groups so that the vision brings a wide range of people and their often contradictory needs and desires together.

2) KNOWLEDGES AS CAPACITY BUILDING
Active participation in civic spaces also builds the actors' ability to make decisions, solve problems and other context-specific skills. Through the participatory process, people should gain the capability to envision and change their built environment according to their desires. In the projects we design, such capabilities are knowledges that touch upon two areas elaborated below. It is crucial to gain and explore these knowledges collectively so that they stay with the participants and can contribute to the building of agency.

Knowledge about Spatial Topics Connected to the Project: Defined collectively through discussions and workshops, *Corso's* key topics were: reusing modernist megastructures from technical perspectives, as well as their function in today's urban and social context; the role of culture and community spaces in the activation of neighbourhoods and the bridging of class and racial segregation, especially in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods; the benefits and challenges of community- and municipality-driven renovations and their collaborations. Context-relevant aspects of these topics then informed the vision as we became familiar with the many possibilities, as well as the challenges of *Corso*.

Knowledge about Social and Material Aspects of the Urban Context: Through discussions and workshops we gradually explored the history of the neighbourhood and of *Corso*; the present use of *Corso*, its functions, actors and owners; reconstruction plans for the city; the state of *Corso's* physical infrastructure; the locals relationships with *Corso* and their views on what is needed in the neighbourhood; key stakeholders connected to *Corso* and the neighbourhood, as well as their views on the situation; and the capacities of local people and other stakeholders. These knowledges about the urban context influenced and situated the vision, as well as outlining the available capacity for taking the next steps, such as the importance and lack of actors at the local or municipal level who would carry on with the project.

In the team, tasks and responsibilities were collectively discussed and were distributed according to individual capabilities. As architects we brought capabilities in the form of expertise on the spatial knowledges described above and construction knowledge of the various socio-material temporal spaces/participatory formats that the civic/participatory space consisted of (focus groups, workshop, public interventions, meetings). However, in order to support local capabilities, it was important to leave enough space for others in the core team to be involved in these matters. Hence, we invited them to co-construct the spaces by collectively conceptualizing the content of the individual formats and entrusting them with the production of the events, i.e. the material construction of the spaces according to their capabilities and values. In this way they could develop and explore their capabilities, which provided important insights into their/local agency.

At the same time, we did not abandon our outside position, which brings new perspectives on issues—methodological, disciplinary and value-related. The task was therefore to keep balancing an inside—outside position by shaping the space as needed, while leaving enough space for others, a position that situates us in context, but where we don't fall into the 'local trap'[7] and can maintain a critical capacity.

2) VALUES OF SPATIAL PRACTITIONERS
Positioning ourselves in the civic space also means that our role is not that of neutral service providers.

Just like other actors that co-create the civic space, we also bring our views, values and principles into the space and shape it, as well as the collective vision according to our image of another/better society/ world.

In *Corso pro nás's* spaces of participation, we were striving to nurture important values and principles like care for other humans and nonhumans, plurality and different sensibilities and abilities, equity, equality and openness. These are not only values of a world we strive towards, but they are also important features of the participatory/civic space that builds local agency. Through openness and plurality, we created diverse spaces for all kinds of actors and their perspectives which shaped the vision and invited them to join the collective effort of achieving it. Paying attention to the different skills, abilities and sensitivities of the core team contributed to their empowerment.

3) EXPERIENCING THE ENVISIONED WORLD
The socio-material dimension of the civic/ participatory space also played an important role. In civic spaces, the norms and principles of the civil society are often performed and lived to create the desired world. In queer spaces for instance, gender-sensitive language is used, and leftist spaces are often structured by flat hierarchies. Participatory spaces can do the same and materialise, even if just for a short time, the future neighbourhood/city or planning culture as if it was already there.

For two afternoons, we brought cultural activities to the unused terrace of *Corso* and created a playful focus group and workshop where actors from the municipality, core team and Krásne Březno met in a productive dialogue. Through facilitation we encouraged everyone to voice their opinions during all meetings. This enabled all participants to briefly experience, explore and consequently better reflect, not only on the envisioned futures for *Corso*, but also on more democratic planning. While spatial interventions that test near futures function more as quick-wins and motivate people to continue working towards their vision, experiencing collective planning is of great importance in supporting agency, as it moves the key capabilities of working well together beyond the framework of the project. Actors from the private, public and civic sector rarely come together in a productive co-creation. A positive experience of working to achieve their vision and overcoming issues and obstacles together can motivate them to continue to do so in the future.

Positionality of the Spatial Practitioners

Two further aspects appeared to be crucial for the construction of participatory spaces as civic spaces. They concern the positionality and thus the role of the spatial practitioners—in our case the architects, urbanists and sociologists of Spolka:

1) BALANCING THE INSIDE— OUTSIDE POSITION
Civic spaces are not orchestrated from the outside but are co-created by those around whose needs they emerge. Hence, we situated ourselves inside the space of participation and became equal members of the team who invited us.

1 Members of the gradually expanding Corso pro nás core project team are: Aleš Bárta, Krásné sousedění; Martina Johnová, PPUKK, Callery Hrančář ; Karolína Žižková, PPUK; Ladislav Zářecký, PPUKK; Hana Kokšalová, PPUKK; Václav Pata, TMEL; Karolína Hruboňová, TMEL; Marika Volfová, TMEL, Krásné sousedění; Mikuláš Černík, TMEL, Krásné sousedění; Barbora Tomová, Čarokrásno; Nikola Iljučoková, Čarokrásno; Luboš Syrovátka, Čarokrásno; Kristýna Marková, Čarokrásno; Viktória Mravčáková, Spolka; Lýdia Crešáková, Spolka; Zuzana Tabačková, Spolka, TU Berlin; Hannah Klug, TU Berlin; Megha Tyagi, TU Berlin.

2 'Fotograf Festival #12, Common Grounding', https://2022.fotografestival.cz/en/event/common-grounding/, accessed 8 September 2022

3 Anthony Ciddens, *Social Theory and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1987), 216.

4 N. Awan, T. Schneider and J. Till, *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture* (Oxon/New York: Routledge, 2011), 30.

5 Ibid

6 The terms 'third sector' and 'civic society' are used as synonyms in some literature, while elsewhere the latter is seen as a category of the former.

7 The local trap is 'the tendency to assume that the local scale is preferable to other scales'. In M. Purcell, 'Urban Democracy and the Local Trap', *Urban Studies*, 43 no.1111 (2006): 1921-1941, 1921.

Zuzana Tabačková

Ethics: doing with, thinking with, being accountable

Torsten Lange

Because practice-oriented research, in contrast to more traditional forms of desktop study, often directly intervenes into the sites that it investigates and frequently entails working with others, it is crucial to develop a framework for an ethical research practice. This should allow built environment scholars and practitioners to evaluate the impact(s) that their research practices might have on communities within and beyond the academy. At the heart of such an ethical research and design practice lies the ability to reflect on the potential harms and benefits of one's work and to consider one's responsibilities as a researcher-practitioner situated in institutional, as well as larger social and material, assemblages.

'Doing with', 'thinking with' and 'being accountable to' all call for an understanding of ethics that de-centres the self and instead emerges out of our active engagement and relation to 'an other', as outlined in the work of thinkers such as Emmanuel Lévinas, Adriana Caravero or Judith Butler.[1] This kind of relational ethics embraces interdependence, vulnerability and response-abilities to care. Central to Butler's understanding of ethics is the insight that ethical obligations derive less from pre-existing moral laws — these can even lead to 'ethical violence' — than from our relationships with others.[2] Instead of abstract rules and principles, her ethics are concerned with concrete interactions that unfold in social and cultural contexts shaped by real power relations. Another essential point is recognizing vulnerability — both one's own and that of others — as the basis of any ethical action, the break with the modern notion of independence and sovereignty in favour of interdependence.

Butler's work is especially relevant when considering questions of ethical responsibility that derive from spatial practices aimed at (meaningful) participation, collaboration or even co-creation. What is the role of the different participants in each case? To what extent are they aware not only of these roles but also of the specific privileges, power imbalances and responsibilities that come with them? Whilst ethical debates in the architectural profession remain closely linked to a set of historical ethical principles, laid down in professional codes of conduct, the collaborative nature of contemporary built environment research and practice, including knowledge co-production, co-design, co-authorship, crowdsourcing, practices of citation and open-access publishing, calls for such a new ethics.

Examples include: crowdsourced, collectively authored and openly shared reading lists and syllabi such as 'Space/Race', 'Space/Gender' and 'Space/Body' initiated by Ana María León or the 'Race, Space & Architecture' open-access curriculum by Huda Tayob, Suzanne Hall and Thandi Loewensen;[3] modes of practice that engage spaces outside or on the margins of the profession, giving voice to communities frequently rendered invisible or that are excluded from established institutional settings, such as the Department of the Ongoing at the Chair of Affective Architecture/ETH Zurich; forms of practice geared towards the creation of 'extitutions' such as the project 'Climate Care' curated by Rosario Talevi and Cilly Karjevsky at Floating University Berlin, and work such as that by Ramia Mazé and Jane Rendell that, building on Sara Ahmed's thought, critically engages with citation as a form of knowledge (re-)production.[4]

Sebastian Gatz considers the ethics of material reuse in architectural practice by directing our attention towards the more-than-material values that are embedded in recycled building components. Arguing that acts of building have been connected to the occult and irrational for a long time, he appeals for a greater sensibility towards the cultural memories, as well as stories of making and use contained within material objects. In his own practice, for instance, reclaimed church windows offer a lens through which to envision alternative, posthuman forms of world-making. With circular construction coming to supersede architecture's extractivist legacy, the project raises the question of how the extensive stock of far more mundane, industrially produced modern building materials available for repurpose might be imbued with a sense of magic.

An interest in practices of storytelling that also include non-human agents guides Chero Eliassi's contribution too. She offers a story narrated from the sandpit of the public park and playground at the heart of the welfare-state-era neighbourhood of Norrliden, near Kalmar in Sweden. Using sand as 'witness', she aims to work through the site's historical layers by employing an ethnographic method that brings the granular dimension of intimate and personal recollections into conversation with various archival materials, such as large-scale geological surveys. The ethical challenge of this undertaking lies in positioning herself in the story without centring herself.

Ekaterina Kochetkova deliberately takes the self and her own subjective experience as the starting point of her autoethnographic research into how burnout might be related to various parameters of workspace design, including (the lack of) privacy, lighting and soundproofing, etc. Problematizing her own position as both insider and outsider simultaneously — she works as a foreign professional in South Korea — Kochetkova seeks to understand the intersection between specific cultural values and the highly standardized construction of the office workstation that is grounded in normative conceptions of the user in the modernist science of ergonomics.

The need to position oneself as a researcher is also crucial to the work of Matilde Kautsky, who investigates the planning history of schools and the distribution of schoolyards in particular. Kautsky is interested in tracing the changing societal values at the heart of the norms for schoolyard design and their entanglement with other socio-economic and cultural factors. Moreover, she seeks to make visible the ways in which these norms materialize in built forms and how the resulting spaces have shaped, and continue to shape, the social behaviours of children and educators.

Adrià Carbonell's work equally builds on the notion of entanglement to theorize, and ultimately put into practice, strategies for spatial redistribution under the contemporary regime of planetary urbanization. He argues that spatial redistribution must start by recognizing that today's cities are deeply enmeshed with sites beyond their boundaries. Consequently, to foreground socio-ecological relations, he proposes to substitute territory, process and agents for the historically established (and strictly bounded) concepts of site, programme and user in urban design.

1 Adriana Cavarero et al., *Toward a Feminist Ethics of Nonviolence*, eds Timothy J. Huzar and Clare Woodford (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2021), online edn, Fordham Scholarship Online, 23 Sept 2021, https://doi.org/10.5422/fordham/9780823290086.001.0001, accessed: 5 May 2023.

2 Judith Butler, Giving an Account of Oneself. 1st ed (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2009); Judith Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence: An Ethico-Political Bind* (London: Verso, 2020).

3 'An Open Access Curriculum', Race, Space & Architecture, accessed 5 May 2023, https://racespacearchitecture.org.

4 Jane Rendell, 'From, In and With Anne Tallentire', *field* 7, no.1 (2017): 13–38.

Architectural Organs: More than Human Memories

Sebastian Catz

What is an architectural object, taken from one place to another for the purpose of reuse, from a point of memory? Can it be seen as an object which connects humans through nonhuman memory, 'sympathetic magic' or matter's own agency? This text explores some fragments of ideas, follows intuitive hunches and illustrates the concept of 'architectural organs' by using the architectural typology/archetype of the window—here specifically from a church – and its human use for contemplation.

1.

We are living in the age of the Anthropocene or better, Capitalocene.[1] The building industry is one of the biggest material extractors on the planet.[2] Architects, artists and scholars search for new methods to think and to construct architecture. The 2019 Oslo Architecture Triennial with the name 'Enough: The Architecture of Degrowth' tried to find answers to current sustainability issues in the profession using a non-capitalist logic. How can architecture be constructed outside of the current hegemonic logic of continuous growth?[3] The recent publication *Non-Extractive Architecture:* On Designing without Depletion does not just look at new material but also new social practices of making architecture which are not based on (capitalist) extractivism.[4] The art and architecture studio Norell/Rhode explores—from more of an artistic than architectural point of view—what an architecture made from continuously reused materials could look like. Their speculations focus on the permanently rebuilt city and showcase sculptural conglomerates that oppose a modernist logic of aesthetics.[5]

A degrowth aesthetic based on material cultural leftovers, it seems, is closer to the aesthetic of the makeshift shelter, the squatter and those produced by 'outsider architects' than the high-gloss images and renderings of architectural offices that are firmly embedded within contemporary capitalism. An aesthetic previously often grown out of necessity rather than choice.[6] This possible (new) form of degrowth aesthetic also reminds one of practices of the past: spolia. Spolia were commonly used in the Middle Ages and before, in order to save materials and human labour for new constructions, but also as magical acts. Ornaments and objects from other times, places and beliefs were believed to inherit some of their maker's qualities and sustain a magical connection to their commissioners.[7]

This kind of thinking can be seen as a form of sympathetic magic where the object or talisman is believed to hold certain non-rational qualities and is connected to the original owner or maker.[8] Our contemporary 'rational' society is not devoid of this form of 'superstitious' thinking either.

In the world of architecture, Western society still practices symbolic acts of magic during the construction process. Such builders' rites include: placing special ceremonial corner stones into constructions; topping-out ceremonies; cutting ribbons when building works are completed; time capsuling and signing concrete patches with names and handprints. Degrowth practices which are based on the collaging of materials do not just collage physical matter, but also memories and potentially magical connections to previous owners. William S. Burroughs's and Brion Cysin's 'cut-up technique' are essentially textual and visual collages which are created to carefully generate new meanings, magical connections and synchronicities.[9,10] What exactly happens in architectural cut-ups outside of the profane repurposing of matter?

How can contemporary architects develop a new sensibility towards the collaging of reused materials from a memorial point of view? How are contemporary ideologies, from the material context, amplified or subverted through the use of culturally charged spolia? For example, would reused materials from capitalist structures and monuments increase or decrease the anti-growth message of degrowth architectures when constructed with them? If one considers architectural materials as nonhuman others with their own agency, what does it mean that they are the carriers of memories and meaning? Can memories themselves be seen as nonhuman entities with their own agency? How does one design (ethically) with non-physical attributes of matter, such as memory, ideology and potentially magical links to others and the past?

2.

I am currently designing an art studio which doubles as a place in which to spiritually contemplate the universe. I am trying to spatialize concepts related to, and derived from, posthumanism, degrowth practices and occulture—theoretical fields which, for me, point towards a holistically sustainable way of seeing, and making, worlds and buildings. For the building I am using old windows which came from a church and a Christian holiday camp near to the new construction site. I treat those windows as 'architectural organs' in order to overcome a purely objective apprehension of architectural materials. The term implies that buildings have a lifelike body which works as a conglomerate of nonhuman organs and that those organs' history and agency matters as much as their external shapes. Re-, up- and down- cycling has entered a central place in architectural discourse but this is often still approached from a point of human dominance. Our shared Western and capitalist worldview has a tendency to see these kinds of materials/matters as objects devoid of any meaning, life or soul. But how do we engage with 'architectural organs', matter transplanted from one place to another, if we want to leave this exploitative and human-centric practice and worldview behind in order to think of a (better/fairer) post-Anthropocene world? And what does the conceptual idea of architectural organs allow us to say about architectural organ transplants and possible black markets?

Do those architectural organs transfer more than matter, as is often claimed by human organ recipients,[11] from one (architectural) body to another?

Similar to the medical uncertainty about where to locate human memory,[12] it is unclear whether a potential nonhuman memory is activated through human narration or existent without any external cognition. But this question is presumably similar to the Buddhist question of whether a falling tree makes a sound if no one is there to hear it. And, at the end of the day, whoever reads this is probably a human anyway (or a technological man-made nonhuman, such as an artificial intelligence).

3.

Another way to look at it, or more accurately, through it, is to take the windows themselves as a probe to test occultural and posthuman thinking in relationship to memory:

I am looking out of the window and I am staring into the barren landscape. It is a gaze into physical space, 'the outside', but also a mental view into temporal space, 'the past'. The view takes place in two insides —the mind and the building. It is this thin little piece of glass which separates my body and mind from the outside but also from the past and its humans.

Looking out of a window and staring into 'nature' can almost be considered to be a Jungian archetype.[13] It can be imagined that the feeling of being in one's shelter—from the simplest to the most luxurious—and staring contemplatively into the void of the outside world (and into one's own mental space) is a feeling which is shared by all humans alike: Sheltered—to different degrees—from nature's energy flows. A silent unconscious acceptance that what is happening outside is also outside of our control: rain, snow, drought, war, pandemic. Being inside gives the illusion of being outside of whatever happens outside. At least it will give you some time before the outside creeps in.

Today—like everything—windows are meaningless devices for human control. Triple and quadruple glazing promise increased power over what comes in, without losing any agency over what goes out.

While the contemporary window is just a profane piece of consumerist matter, the ancient one connected not just to the inside and outside, but also to this world and the world after—the visible realm with the invisible.[14] Our windows lost their metaphysical qualities, or at least they are almost forgotten. Today's windows are mainly physical in their descriptions and a low U-value always trumps a metaphysical conceptualization; the window is not accountable for this, but the society who made it is.

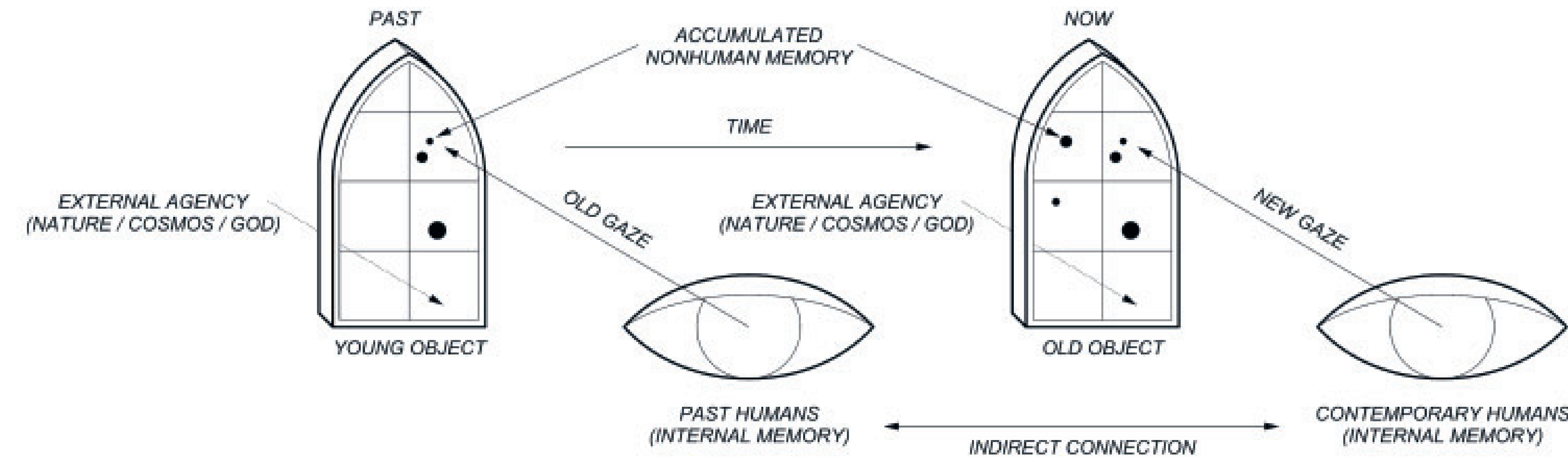
The world outside a window can be seen as an—ironically—invisible double of the visible inside. Similar to the mirror plane in horror movies, which is a gate to a parallel world, the window can be constructed as an opening to the past and our subconscious. It is a scrying device[15] to access subconscious material, memories and information from the other/outer world and the past, and it implies a form of divination. How would looking through windows, as those kind of metaphysical devices, be impacted by the window's own history? Does a church window, with its long memory of spiritual light coming in and the gazes of bored churchgoers projecting out, influence what I see when I look out of them in a new context? Do I have a subtle connection to everyone who has ever looked out of this window? Is there such a thing as architectural synchronicity? Whoever visited an allegedly haunted house or a place with a strong and cruel history knows the 'irrational' feeling one has to overcome in such spaces. This kind of thinking is also embedded in phrases such as: 'if these walls could talk'. Architectural production is partially rational and objective, and partially subjective and irrational. We like something, something reminds us of something else which we have seen before, or something makes us feel good or bad based on our memories of the past and other places. This is even used in design to make accepting new products easier for customers (or manipulate them into accepting them). It is called 'skeuomorphism'—a form of sympathetic magic itself—and is used to distract a new observer of design with older collective memories.[16] One such example is the apps on our phones which visually try to match with objects in the physical world in order to increase acceptance of them. How entangled is architectural design and human and nonhuman memory? Can the accumulated nonhuman memory be seen as material to work with and an architectural time machine?

4.

Is the idea that an old window which captured the gazes of others as a form of nonhuman memory—accessible to us now in the window's new context—part of ludicrous imagination or factual reality, and is it part of the architect's vocabulary? Is designing with old objects—so essential to the degrowth movement in architecture—just the movement of matter from one place to another, or does it deserve more consideration and respect because of how it accumulates nonhuman memories and related human stories?

Fig. 1: Old church window, accumulated memories unknown. Image by Sebastian Catz

Fig. 2: Accumulation of nonhuman memory in architectural objects as an indirect time-spanning connection between human actors. Diagram by Sebastian Catz



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Sebastian Catz

The Vitality of Sand: Microhistories of a Material's Impact and Witness in a 1970s Million-Program

Chero Eliasssi

This article explores the material value of sand in the welfare neighbourhood park Norrlidsparken, in Kalmar, Sweden. Beginning with a microhistory of the sand in the park and what it has registered and witnessed since the park was constructed, it connects the material to the park's transformations—in the form of physical, spatial, and social changes since the early 1970s. With this article, I aim to uncover the values and histories of the playground, and the park both on a micro-scale and on a larger scale.

Touching sand is like digging fingers into the soil when it is cultivated. It is the feeling of filling your fists with the fluidity of the mass as it runs through your fingers and, when you let go, all you have left are the solid grains glued to your hands. Sand connects us to earth, life, nature and presence in the present. Deceptively simple and plain, sand can awaken many feelings. How interesting it is that when you look at this material, you see a generalization of what the mass consists of, and not its diversity. Upon viewing sand in a sandbox, this 'mundane' material does not immediately seem to be filled with life. Studying the geological matter, it is composed of granular rock, mineral and biogenic particles of particular sizes. Observing sand from a human eye-level, the sand is recognized as a plain surface with a uniform colour. In my case, I visualize a pale, light-brown shade, which is the result of the sand having higher representations of the mineral quartz and oxidized iron.

On a microscopic level, the diversity of micro-organisms, shapes and materials that can be seen in everyday sand is striking. The diversity of the sand particles shows different characters, materials and colours. Even microorganisms can be found growing on these sand particles, revealing another spectrum of life. It is quite fascinating that microorganisms are found in this material that is so often read as 'dead' material. On the contrary, sand can be described, following Jane Bennett, as 'vibrant matter' that is alive and fulfils a function in ecological, social and physical structures in our surrounding.[1] With vibrant matter, we cannot completely control the vitality of materials, objects and other organisms, but are instead affected by their existence.

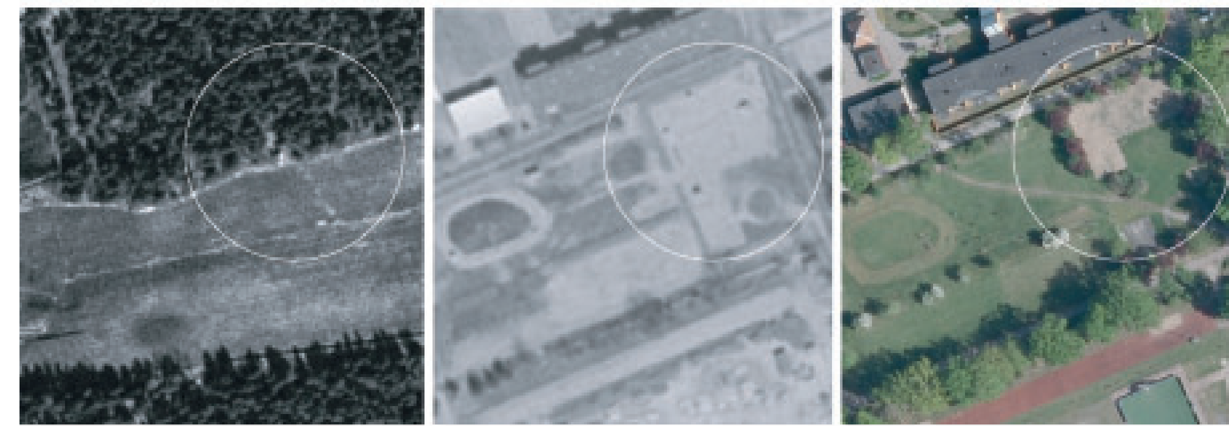
Fig. 1: Patches of grass growing on the playground sand in Norrlidsparken. Image taken by the author, 5 April 2022.

The 'Modern' History of Norrlidsparken

In Norrlidsparken—a Million-Program neighbourhood park in Kalmar, Sweden—one of the playgrounds was designed as a space dedicated to children's play in the early 1970s.[2] Similar to other playgrounds built during this period, the play equipment consisted of a sandbox, a swing, a slide and a merry-go-cycle. The paths, the vegetation and the play equipment were modest and low in maintenance, and often times showed a lack of connection to surrounding large-scale outdoor environments.[3] As these spaces have continuously transformed and are in transformation, neither the history of the sandbox or the sand can be traced in the park today (see fig. 3). What has remained from the original design of the welfare playground is the border surrounding the park and the zone with overgrown grass, which is where there had once been sand on the surface where children would play in (and) with the living, diverse, multifaceted matter that it would represent.

Why sand? I noticed that the sand I am studying was *added* to this playground built during the Swedish welfare state's extensive building projects of the early 1970s. I wonder what this sand has witnessed in its surrounding, from the time it was formed, to when it was physically transported to cover the soil that used to be agricultural land. The sand that would then turn into a sandbox where children would come to play. What history did it bring with itself? And, what has it witnessed? I also find it fascinating how sand was chosen to fill this space and not a meadow, a forest, or kept as a space for cultivation? What made designers choose sand as the primary material for these spaces? No wonder I feel connected to nature when I touch the sand. There is life and history tied to it and it affects all of us—both humans and non-humans.

Fig. 2: Three satellite images of the development of the neighbourhood park from circa 1960, 1975 and 2022, show the physical transformations of the studied areas of Norrlidsparken. The white circles on the satellite images mark the location of the sand and the playground. ©*Lantmäteriet, Satellite images of Norrlidsparken 1965, 1975, 2022.* Lantmäteriet. 'Norrlidsparken circa 1960' [aerial photography]. URL: https://minkarta.lantmateriet.se/, Lantmäteriet. 'Norrlidsparken circa 1975' [aerial photography]. URL: https://minkarta.lantmateriet.se/, Lantmäteriet. Norrlidsparken 2022' [aerial photography]. URL: https://minkarta.lantmateriet.se/ (accessed: 28 February 2022).



Approaching Norrlidsparken

Focusing on ethnographic, physical and spatial studies of Norrlidsparken, the collection of empirical material for this study began during the spring of 2021, but the personal memories I have attached to this site of study are based on ten years of childhood recollections beginning from the middle of the 1990s.

I began collecting data by searching for the studied area on satellite images from different periods in time. When I discovered how the neighbourhood and the park had changed from being forest and agricultural land in the late 1960s to its completion in the mid-1970s, I continued searching for more documentation of the changes. In the National Land Survey of Sweden's digital archive, I found two historical, aerial photographs of Norrliden from circa 1960 and 1975, and satellite images from the National Geologic Map Database (Geolex from 2012, 2016, 2018 and from the present time (2022)) to observe the large-scale changes to the playground that can be traced.

I did site visits to document and observe changes that had materialized in Norrlidsparken. The site visits occurred after I had written down my personal memories of the park and the playground as a precaution to not 'disturb' my personal memories of the studied area. The site visits took place during the spring and summer of 2022. I chose to initially focus on this period of a year to increase the possibility of meeting more people while I did my site visits, as I was aware of the changes in how the park was used depending on the weather and the season. These various methodological approaches complement each other by looking at both the smaller detailed scale, different narratives and stories connected to the material of sand, while also connecting it to larger transformations that are visible on the satellite images.

Fig. 3. The modest playground where there used to be a sandbox, sand, swings and a merry-go-cycle was reduced to only having benches, grass and a selection of fruit trees. The border between the grass and the overgrown grass on top of the sand can be seen in this image. Image taken by author, 5 April 2022.

Concluding Words

The eastern part of Norrlidsparken has undergone several social, physical and spatial transformations—from when it was constructed until today. What once was agricultural land, is today a low maintained overgrown lawn with vegetation creating borders within the park. Play equipment has been removed, bushes and fruit trees with sensory attachments for locals have been cut down, but the smallest traces of sand have remained, for now at least. With these different periods of development, I aimed to study the transformations that had taken place in a Million-Program park and how the history of a space can be easily hidden and forgotten if not cared for. With this aim, I intend to present an awareness both of municipal officials, designers and the locals that are affected by physical development in the areas in which they live or work.

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Work/ Space/ Architec-ture: Burnout and the Story of a Work-station

Ekaterina Kochetkova

South Korea has rapidly become one of the world's leading economies thanks to its innovation and strong work culture. This transformation has come at a cost, as today the country is the leader in reports of burnout, stress and neurological afflictions, especially among the younger generation. This article thematizes this phenomenon in its relation to the architectural environment with the example of one of the basic units of office space—a workstation. By analysing its spatial characteristics and its effect on burnout in a South Korean context, it sheds light on interconnections of work, space and architecture.

Situating Myself: An Introduction to the Korean Burnout Era

As a designer from the Russian Far East who moved to South Korea to continue her education in architecture and design in 2014, I was quick to notice the hyper-active culture that ruled the daily life of workers. Yet, as the Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han has argued, the local interpretation of 'being busy/ productive' and extended work hours have changed. Modern society no longer resembles Foucault's disciplinary world of hospitals, prisons and factories inhabited by 'obedience-subjects' that produced the madmen and criminals so frequently described during the second half of the twentieth century, but is instead a society of fitness studios, office towers and shopping malls that encourages the proliferation of 'achievement-subjects' under a scheme in which they become their own disciplinary authority which exploits itself in order to maximize productivity and push for constant improvement.[1] This new set of values is fuelled by an excess of positivity emerging from the ubiquitous 'yes you can' motto and the promise of freedom offered by new hybrid models of labour that include working anywhere and anytime.[2] This excess working culture does not represent a solely Korean condition, but a common element of the global late capitalist society that we all inhabit.[3] It has ultimately contributed to the establishment of an exhausting cycle that has serious effects on mental health and neurological afflictions.[4]

South Korea is currently considered among the leaders in the number of reported depression, neurological issues and even suicide, to the extent that it has been popularly described as 'Hell Joseon',[5] a satirical term which originated in the 2010s online and was adopted by the mass media to mean that South Korea is stuck in its feudal kingdom (Joseon), where one is enslaved by a highly regulated and unjust system that dictates an entire course of life. This summarizes the negative effects of the excessive working hours, burnout and unreachable standards that are related to this phenomenon throughout the country, especially among the younger population.[6]

While some researchers have stated that burnout is not a new phenomenon, since there are some epochs in history in which comparably extreme demands were placed on the subjective capacities of individuals and led to exhaustion and anxiety,[7] new definitions of burnout in relation to workplace stress are emerging today. As the debate grows increasingly contentious, the most recent announcement by the World Health Organization (WHO) included burnout in its index of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as a 'syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed'.

On the other hand, researchers such as Beatriz Colomina have explored the relationship between architecture and health through historical references, even by considering Byung-Chul Han's argument that 'every century has its signature affliction'. Colomina has argued that, 'therefore, each affliction has its architecture'.[8]

But if burnout is considered one of the most significant afflictions of the early twenty-first century especially in work environments, is the issue of burnout truly related to architectural design? Studies that research the link between burnout and architectural environment in a non-service industry address the concept as a continuum between the negative state of burnout and the positive state of work engagement.[9] This approach addresses the issue from the point of productivity and efficiency, and raises the question of how the work environment can support employee engagement and thus improve the work outcome. Do spatial configurations in, and characteristics of, the work environment play any role in the burnout-engagement continuum (BEC) levels of workers or is this mostly an issue related to work culture and other social variables?[10] And even in this case, can architects and designers actually have a positive influence on the BEC through the way that contemporary workspaces are planned? This article reconsiders these questions, but proposes a new discussion of the role of architecture in the context of Korean work environment and addresses the impact of burnout.

The Workstation as an Object of Study

Through a selected case study, this research proposes a descriptive analysis of the basic unit of work environments; the workstation and the characteristics that contribute to the burnout experienced in these spaces. The selected case study is part of a design office located in Seongdong-gu District in the centre of Seoul, representing a standard small-to middle-size business office in a standard office building. It contains nine employees developing plans, specifications and doing other technical creative work five days a week from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., staying overtime is widely normalized.[11]

The specific workstation analysed in detail is located in the bottom-right corner of the plan (see figure 1). The workstation contains the following items: a standard working table, a computer chair, a computer with two monitors and a telephone. The office has a small sink and a fridge with a water/ice dispenser and a coffee machine that are available for common use. The overall office space is divided into smaller rooms with tanned glass walls which provide privacy but also create a space without daylight. The room in which the designated workstation is located does not have access to windows. A printer is located right next to the selected workstation, making it a very active transit zone for other office workers. Music from the radio, chosen by one of the managers and at a low volume, is played throughout the day.

A brief personal description of the workstation by an employee (myself):

I am quite satisfied with my workspace overall, however there are still some things that add a lot of negative feelings to my day. I really enjoy the relative privacy of my workstation but the presence of the printer right next to my table makes it a point of attraction for the rest of the office, thus creating a flow of people around me, especially on busy days. The absence of windows also makes it quite frustrating when I can't relax my eyes from the monitor and look outside the enclosed office space. Another big distraction to me is music that is constantly playing in the background. It makes it especially irritating when music is interrupted by commercials that are quite loud so my only rescue is headphones. The office mystery for me is the air conditioner as one could never expect if it is going to be too hot, too cold or normal, as it has a centralized control system for the entire building. If it was up to me I would add a small recreational space that is good for having a coffee break and a snack while socializing as usually everyone keeps to their desks and sometimes my day can pass by while I say only "good morning" and "good bye".

Research on the effects of the architectural environment on burnout levels is still very new. Existing research tends to use questionnaires that consist of two parts: the first part measures the level of burnout; the most common tool used is a Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI is self-administered with no specific qualifications required; the answer keys are provided along with an MBI test kit from the official website. The second part of the questionnaire covers the office environment, where participants are asked to evaluate some key spatial factors like the office plan, layout, natural and artificial lighting, space, noise, privacy, temperature and air quality. In the end, the statistical assessment of the questionnaire results enables the assessor to see the points of connection between the environment and levels of burnout. Some existing research results identify factors such as noise as one of the characteristics that can have an effect on the level of burnout through distraction.[12]

During the research for this article, I took the MBI-General survey (for jobs outside of human services) as an experiment with the following results: Emotional exhaustion: moderate level, cynicism: high level, professional efficacy: low level.

Fig. 1: Plan of a researched office space 8*9 m². Drawing by by Ekaterina Kochetkova.

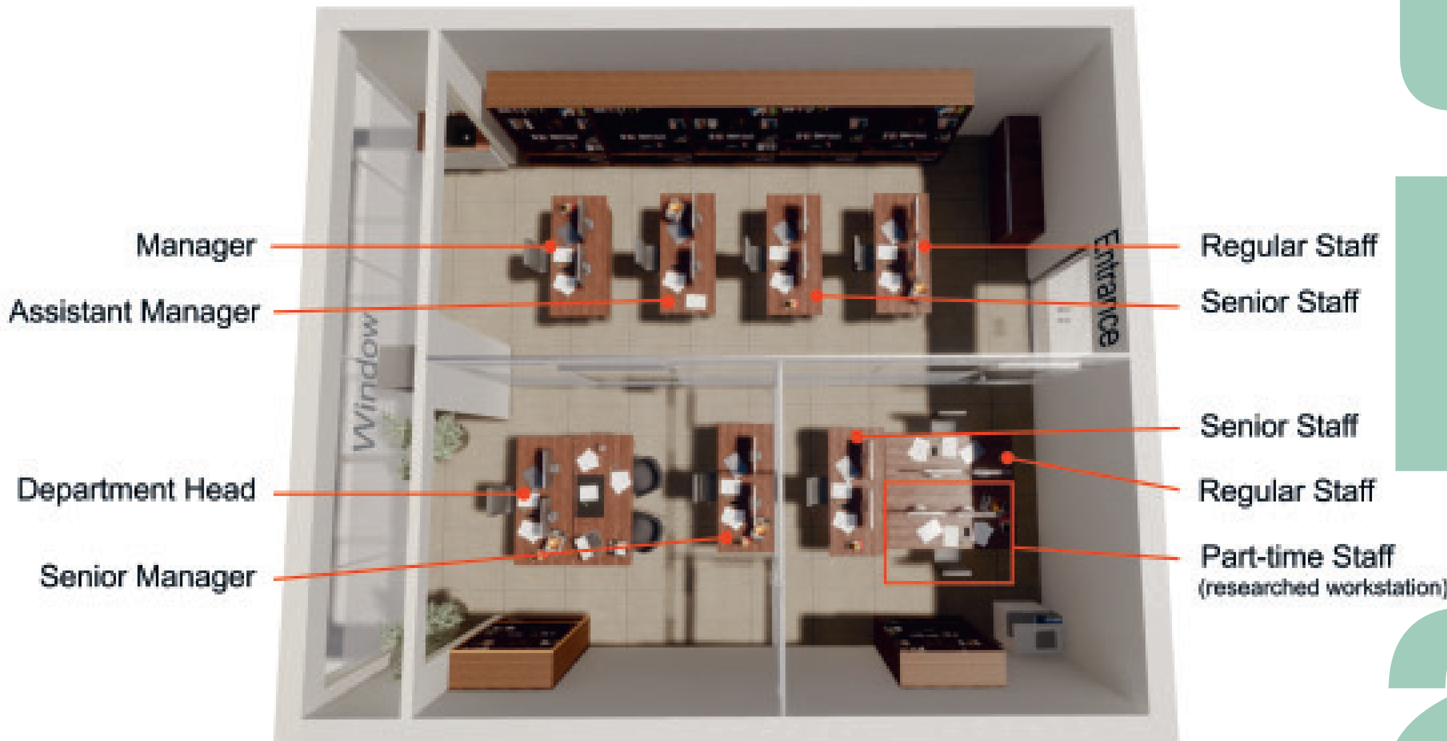

Fig. 2: Workstation. Photo by Ekaterina Kochetkova.

Based on my description of my workstation, (conducted as part of this article instead of a questionnaire as an example of office architectural environment) some assumptions can be made regarding factors like excessive noise and lack of thermal comfort that could contribute to burnout levels. Workstation ergonomics like shape and design, thermal comfort, light and noise are found to add up to stress and thus to burnout, resulting in reduced productivity and general dissatisfaction with work.[13]

It is important to mention that even when Korean offices appear to follow Western design standards, there are some important differences that are rooted in Korean cultural codes. In terms of the planning and overall organization, a typical Korean office carries a strong sense of the hierarchical relationship between employees.[14] The more senior employees usually have more privacy and are located deeper in the office, having an overview of the other staff at the same time.

Conclusions and Further Steps for the Research

This article serves as an introduction to the ongoing 'Spaces of Burnout' research, whose main goal it is to determine the relation of workspaces and their spatial characteristics to burnout. The next step is to conduct a questionnaire among office employees that could trace the levels of burnout among them and determine which spatial characteristics, such as office layout, noise pollution or poor ventilation contribute to the state of burnout. Similar research has been conducted in Europe, however the case of Korea is appealing, as the country has lower levels of life satisfaction in general, and longer average working hours than other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries,[15] probably resulting in higher levels of burnout. Cultural codes embedded in the working environment also play a different role than those in other countries. This will provide a common pattern for understanding the hidden attributes that shape spaces of burnout in Korea.

Being a foreigner or 'alien' as included on an identity card does not imply changing things but gives a unique perspective on factors that are normalized in the local context. From the point of descriptive and analytical research, this is an important asset for the purpose of this research, especially considering the current global situation in which burnout and the emergence of neurological afflictions begin to be discussed in a more serious manner. At the same time, the lack of extensive knowledge of the Korean language does not fully allow the subtle meanings of the text to be reached, which represents a limitation of this research.

Studying burnout can help to eliminate the misconception that it is 'nothing serious' and can remove the assumption that those who have it do not need support. This can help to lift the stigma surrounding burnout and other mental health related issues, since openly discussing one's emotional problems is considered taboo in Korea,[16] drawing attention to how common burnout is and rethinking the architectural design applied to work spaces and promoting engagement with work and productivity.

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Swedish School-yard Types Studied through the Lens of the History of Norms

Matilde Kautsky

This article aims to tell a history of the national norms and recommendations concerning schoolyards in Sweden. How the norms take shape and inform design is tested in five types of public primary schools, all located within the Stockholm municipality. These types enable a discussion on how the norms and regulations inform the design of schoolyards. Through the history of the norms, the meaning that schoolyards are ascribed in society becomes clearer. This article is set in a Swedish and Stockholm context. Similar situations can be found in other contexts, describing how school organization has changed over time and developed into its current forms. The starting point for this article is the history of the norms, which is then exemplified through five school types in Stockholm. Together, these two parts describe how the perception of schoolyards and their design has changed over time. The article ends by widening its perspective to include societal processes and power relations.

The Norms and History as a Process

Skolhushandboken,[1] published in 1979, is the last manual on erecting schools from when school-building regulations were the responsibility of the state. Since then deregulations and political shifts have changed the organization of authorities and moved power and responsibility for schools from the state to the municipalities.[2] In 1987, the Planning and Building Act (PBL) replaced previous building regulations, shifting the way the regulations work from regulations based on norms and requirements to a framework law, where goals and visions are accentuated.[3] An example of this concerns outdoor areas, where the norms shifted from prescribing minimum distances and areas to prescribing enough space for certain activities,[4] and leaving the interpretation open of what size of space is enough to the designers and building admission clerks. The norms shifted from quantitative regulations to qualitative or function-based regulations.

As an answer to this, the state authority National Board of Housing, Building and Planning released a report and general advice clarifying the regulations concerning schoolyards in 2015.[5] Before this, there were six norms concerned with school buildings and schoolyards. All of them are from the state and to different degrees are connected to state funding. The first three (named *Standards*) in 1865, 1878 and 1920 were loosely connected to state funding and can be seen as a collection of drawings and descriptions depicting how a school should look and what rooms it needs. These were not obligatory.[6] The 1944 and 1955 (officially named *Instructions* and *Prescriptions*) versions were more connected to state funding, have fewer pictures or drawings of entire schools and focus more on details around specific rooms or modules that are part of the school. The 1979 version (officially named *Manual*) has more sketches and a rather descriptive text on how to design a school and a schoolyard.[7] However, the recommendations for the size of the schoolyard are not obligatory, they are instead to be seen as suggestions in the first sketching phase, and the 1979 manual is less tied to state funding than the previous ones. In the 2015 version (officially named *Guidance*), the focus is wider. The guide starts by explaining the benefits of schoolyards for children, to then go through the regulations and responsibilities around them and how the planning process works. The recommended sizes for schoolyards are mentioned briefly in a footnote.[8]

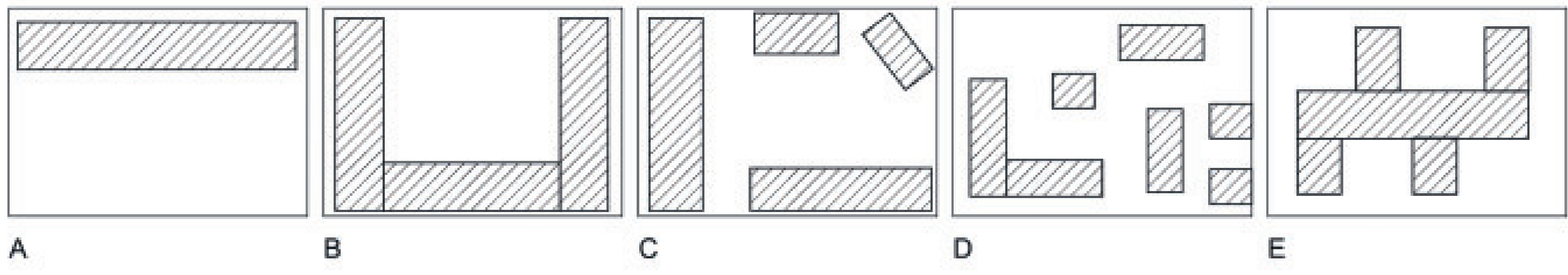
Lindholm points out what happened in society in the years between the changes in these norms is interesting to look at. She describes the political changes from 1920–1944 (welfare state and functionalism) and from 1955–1979 (continued welfare state, public childcare and ABC-city).[9] Here, I want to add the changes in society between 1979 and 2015. These are: deregulation; neoliberalism; economic crisis; terrorism; densification and the planning paradigm of the walkable city.

In the time between the release of the 1920 norms and the 1944 norms, the perspective on schoolyards changed. From the yard being a garden with play areas, it grew to include play areas and sports fields in 1944. The idea of gardening faded away. In both the 1944 and 1955 norms, sports fields are important. A big change between these two norms is the parking spaces mentioned in the 1955 version. These parking spaces, for cars and bikes, should be divided from the play areas through greenery. Another new idea brought forward in the 1955 norms is co-use; something that is seen as positive for the local community if other services are close to the schools. In *Skolhushandboken*, co-use is continuously brought forward, and several examples of other organizations (e.g. preschools and sports organizations) with whom the schoolyard could share space are mentioned. A semi-new perspective in the 1979 norms is the children. The norms describe how the yard should be designed for them and contain a diversity of spaces for the children. The norms suggest that the schoolyard should be designed with spaces for fast paced activities, as well as spaces for private and calmer activities, hence the norms suggest a variety of sizes of spaces at the schoolyard. It is also suggested that children could be part of designing the yard, but this has to be seen as a rather symbolic contribution since they are included at the end of the process when the schoolyard has already been constructed. The child-centric perspective was partly mentioned in the 1920 norms concerning the design of the school building — the building has to appeal to the children.[10] The child's perspective is strengthened, and the 2015 report begins with the UN convention on children´s rights and the importance of schoolyards for children.[11] In comparison to the 1979 manual, children´s development is mentioned in one sentence and the rest of the introduction on schoolyards is concerned about how this is a resource for the local neighbourhood and one of many societal services.[12] This is one of the major differences between 1979 and 2015; moving from the schoolyard as a neighbourhood resource to the schoolyard as an exclusive space. Other changes are, for example, in pedagogy, moving from more authoritarian models to those more child-focused. It is also a shift in the perceived function of the schoolyard from an open space where the pupils can escape the strictness of the classroom to a social space in which to develop social relationships, play and have physical activities. Through these changes, the importance of schoolyards increased for adults, and they were more frequently discussed in the 1970s, leading to greater emphasis on schoolyards, since they were seen to be important for children's wellbeing and education.[13] The changing perception of the schoolyard can be seen in the five types described below, going from one open space (Fig. 1, A–C) in the early twentieth century to many spaces (Fig. 1, D–E) later in the twentieth century. However today, many schoolyards are back to one open space.

To understand more about how, and if, the norms have influenced the actual built form of schools, the schoolyards are distilled into five types (Figure 1); describing the relation between the school building and the yard. This was done with a selection of 150 municipal primary schoolyards that were visually inspected through contemporary aerial photographs. The original design of the school building and yard is hence not known, but the presumption is made that the original layout has not changed to the degree that the type would change.

At this level of abstraction, neither the shape nor size of the plot, nor the size of the building, is taken into consideration. When briefly described, from A to E, they are:

Fig. 1: Types of schools. Drawing by Matilde Kautsky



A. School at one part of the plot, with the yard either in front of the building or on the backside. Main road either next to the building or the yard.
B. U-shaped schools where the building encloses the yard on three sides and where the fourth side opens up to greenery, other buildings or a road.
C. Buildings at the plot perimeter, one or several school buildings make the perimeter towards the street. In many cases, the entrances to the building are from the yard.
D. Plots with school buildings scattered around. The yard is in the spaces between the buildings.
E. School buildings in the plot, with the yard making the boundary to the surroundings. In these cases, the school building spreads out like legs.

Looking at the Norms and the Types Together

In types D and E (mostly built from 1960–1980), the spatial configuration divides the yard into multiple smaller spaces which are in line with *Skolhushandboken's* aim to make space for both fast-moving activities as well as more secluded spaces. This might be seen as a design more concerned with the children's perception of scale and space. In types B and C (mostly built from 1900–1950, but both are still being built) the open space between the buildings is in many cases a flat surface of asphalt or gravel, making it possible to play ball games and other kinds of sports there, which is in line with the norms from the early twentieth century. Type A (mostly built from 1860–1900) is not obviously in line with any norms, probably because the norms from that time were less specific about yards, except for the gardens, and the urban fabric has undergone several changes and densifications since then.

The relationship between the yard and the main road is not covered by the norms. Most schoolyards appear to be protected by the school building. Either the building encloses the yard or the building is directly adjacent to the street, making a barrier between the yard and the street. In the cases where the buildings are within the plot (D and E), many of them are accessed by pedestrian or bike routes, the main traffic not being close to the school. Here undoubtedly, other processes and societal ideas are influential, such as how to protect children from the dangers of car traffic.[14] Others can be architectural discourses on where to place the building on the plot and the relationship between the building and the local context. Other societal ideas that have made a big impact on the design of schools are ideas about pedagogy and education, including classrooms or open-learning environments. These educational ideas have an impact on the buildings since many schools are designed during a specific educational regime.

Discussion and Conclusion

To conclude, the norms tell us about the view of authorities on how children should be nurtured and what spaces they consider necessary for them, as well as about the role of education in society. The spatial configuration, as described through the five types of schoolyards, responds to the perceived function of the schoolyard, as well as shifts in norms and regulations.

As previously mentioned, apart from the norms directly concerned with schools, other societal processes, like pedagogy, architectural context and economic and cultural processes are deeply involved in the making (the decision, organization and construction) of schools. Westberg, an educational historian, sees it as an 'entanglement of social, economic and cultural processes'.[15] The entanglements come from local workers to pedagogical thinkers, from state norms to available local land and building materials. These do not necessarily agree with each other, or are of the same kind. The process is rather full of conflicts and feelings.[16]

In the process, power relations are both built into the structures of the buildings, as well as power relations between the actors in the process. As Markus writes: 'buildings are more than passive containers for relations',[17] they are 'formative, as much through the things that happen in them, their functional programme, as by their spatial relations and their form'.[18] Brenner, adding to this from the perspective of critical theory, writes that in historical processes, there are 'specific relations of societal power'[19] and according to Markus, we can understand societal power relations through studying the built environment.[20] As Legeby, Koch and Miranda Carranza argue, the shifting location, spatial configuration and architecture of school buildings is a way to express their function and importance in society.[21] A question to investigate further is if, and how, it is possible to adapt this thinking to the schoolyards, in connection to the recommendation of the norms.

Fig. 2: Example of type B school. Picture of *Skarparbyskolans* yard. To the right is the bottom of the U, one side behind the photographer's back and the other in the front. To the left, the yard opens up to a park. Photo by Matilde Kautsky.

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7 Here I want to make the reader aware of the change in terminology — from standards, to instructions and prescriptions, then to manual, and the latest is a report released with general recommendations. This implies a shift in the role of the state in relation to the design of schools because the intention of the texts is the same — to help planners and architects design schools. However, the consigner within the state changes, from building departments (1865, 1878) to education departments (1920, 1944, 1955 and 1979) and then to the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning.
8 Boverket, 2015a, 42.
9 Gunilla Lindholm, '*Skolgården*: vuxnas bilder, barnets miljö' [The Schoolyard: Adults' Pictures and the Environment of Children] (PhD diss., Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet Alnarp, 1995).
10 The entire section above is based on several references. They are Lindholm, *'Skolgården'* [The Schoolyard], K. G. Lindqvist, 'Den moderna skolbyggnaden tar form'[The Modern School Building Takes Shape] in *Ett folk börjar skolan: Folkskolan 150 år 1842-1992*, ed. Gunnar Richardsson (Allmänna förlaget, 1992); Anna Larsson, 'Sources and Interpretations: A Children´s Place? The School Playground Debate in Postwar Sweden', *History of Education* 42, no. 1 (2013): 115–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2012.697921; Hjördis Kristenson, *Skolhuset — idé och form* [The School Building: Idea and Form] (Lund: Signum, 2005) and Anna Larsson, Björn Norlin and Maria Rönnlund, *Den svenska skolgårdens historia: Skolans utemiljö som pedagogiskt och socialt rum* [The History of the Swedish Schoolyard: The Outdoor Environment as Pedagogical and Social Space] (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2017).
11 Boverket, 2015a, 9.
12 Skolöverstyrelsen, 73.
13 Larsson, Norlin and Rönnlund, *Den svenska skolgårdens historia*. [The History of the Swedish Schoolyard]
14 According to Susan Paget and Petter Åkerblom, *'Från rastyta till pedagogiskt rum'* [From Schoolyard to Learning Environment] in Kobran, Majjen och Nallen, ed. Staffan Selander (Stockholm: Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2003), 250–251, there was a shift in the 1960s from educating children in traffic behaviour to traffic planning with the aim of separating pedestrians from car traffic.
15 Westberg, *Att bygga ett skolväsende*, [To Build a School System], 292 (translated by author).
16 Westberg, *Att bygga ett skolväsende*.
17 Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types* (London: Routledge, 1993), 11.
18 Ibid.
19 Neil Brenner, *Critique of Urbanisation: Selected Essays* (Berlin/Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 2017), 18.
20 Markus, *Buildings and Power*.
21 Ann Legeby, Daniel Koch and Pablo Miranda Carranza, 'Schools at ´Front Row´: Public Buildings in Relation to Societal Presence and Social Exclusion', Proceedings 12th International Space Syntax Symposium, Beijing 2019: 287–2:1-19

Matilde Kautsky

Redistribution as a Spatial Question: From the Valley Section to the Global Hinterland

Adrià Carbonell

As the saturated planet we inhabit reaches an increasing number of environmental tipping points, as human action continues to push beyond the capacity of earth systems and to cross planetary boundaries, the need to reasonably distribute wealth and resources is promptly becoming a need for redistribution: not only an economic one, but a spatial and material redistribution. In this short article I want to reframe the idea of economic redistribution into a spatial question; a change of spatial paradigm that questions current planetary urbanization processes and focuses on the readjustment of existing distribution patterns and the reallocation of available resources, services, networks and infrastructures.

If redistribution has commonly been thought of in economic terms, addressing the spatial dimension of redistributive claims can cast new light on the study of pervasive urban asymmetries, social inequalities and environmental conflicts. The multi-layered and multi-scalar nature of the current urban asymmetries and the advent of new forms of dispossession—from urban to planetary, from economic to environmental—demand a revision of the concept of redistribution that expands across multiple layers and territories. What I propose is the transgression of disciplinary boundaries and scales in spatial disciplines in order to respond to key challenges in contemporary cities and thus mitigate the enormous pressure that high-density urban agglomerations exert on near and far hinterlands. Finally, I argue that a readjustment of contemporary urbanization is needed to counter socio-ecological imbalances across the urban hierarchy, from city-regions to global circuits.

The Global Valley

The huge impact that human activity exerts on the environment has also raised awareness of the deep implications that the practice of architecture and urbanism has beyond its traditional matters of concern. Nowadays, some of the major challenges faced by global urbanization do not lie in the consolidated hearts of our cities, but in their surrounding regions and hinterlands. Pressing urban issues have to do with uneven development and structural socio-economic asymmetries, but also with the growing imbalances between cities and their hinterlands, and the drastic perturbations that cities provoke in the much larger territories in which they sit. To respond to these large-scale implications, spatial practices must reassess their sites, programmes and scales of operation, and critically revise the relations between urban agglomerations and their so-called externalities.

A valuable precedent concerning city-region relations can be found in the work of the Scottish biologist and urban planner Patrick Geddes. 'How shall we set about the interpretation of town in relation to country?' asked Geddes in the catalogue of his 'Cities Exhibition' of 1910.[1] This question lay at the core of the several versions of the Valley Section he developed, where Geddes aimed to define a 'geographical unit' that was characteristic of the evolution of cities. The 'essential region' was both the spatial dimension and category necessary to understand the relations between natural resources and social practices that had crystallized in the formation of human settlements throughout history. Geddes put forward a principle of 'Geographical Control' which he considered vital to analyse the historical development of cities, but also to put forward new ones.[2]

The principle of 'Geographical Control' aimed to establish a close bond between city growth and the limits of the region, where economic cycles and activities had a correlation with the natural resources available. Regrettably, the balance between city and country imagined by Geddes has been overrun by rampant urbanization throughout the twentieth century. Indeed, the vast social, economic and technological transformations of the last decades have radically changed our urban habitats. Modern urban developments, particularly in the last few decades, have exceeded the limits of city-regions by far in their search for new resources. Globalization has fostered the scaling up of supply chains spanning across global patterns of extraction, production, consumption and ultimately, waste. Moreover, urban concentrations are not only embedded in a geographical space, as Geddes envisioned, they have deep implications for the geological structure of the earth. The metaphor of modern downtowns as inverted 'minescapes' used by Cray Brechin powerfully represents the dual process of digging and dumping that underpins urban density patterns.[3] Accordingly, the city skyline is pictured as the technological mirror of far distant sites of extraction. The urban lifestyle is highly dependent on the continuous influx of energy and matter, and thus deeply entangled with other forms of life regardless of their proximity to city centres. In this regard, to keep pursuing high-density agglomerations without, at the same time, scrutinizing their material and energy demands, neglects the deep implications that the so-called 'urban age' has for its increasingly globalized hinterlands.[4]

The globalization of the hinterlands has brought the city-region model idealized by Geddes to a dead end. The delocalization and fragmentation of extraction-production-distribution processes of all kinds of goods and services has rendered the traditional fields of urban planning and design incapable of addressing their effects. In this short article, I would like to propose the inclusion of aspects beyond the socio-economic as the basis for a new spatial-political project; one that considers ecological and environmental claims as objects of spatial redistribution. If Geddes considered the 'distribution of well-being' part of the 'survey necessary for the adequate preparation of a Town Planning scheme',[5] in our saturated and uneven planet it is now the time for an urgent redistribution. Besides the traditional concern for the built fabric of the city, a different way of measuring urbanity should incorporate life forms other than human and pay attention to biotopes, water cycles, air quality, soil remediation, energy production and waste management as central urban elements. Drawing inspiration from María Puig de la Bellacasa, architecture and urbanism must engage with an 'ethical reorganization of human-nonhuman relations' that can 'enact nonexploitative forms of togetherness'.[6]

Spatial Redistribution

The notion of redistribution has largely been used in politics and economics, being mostly associated with redistributive policies and incremental tax systems. Essential to modern political economy throughout the twentieth century, the problem of economic redistribution has been, in the last couple of decades, paired with that of social recognition.[7] The critique of power structures and institutional forms of control promoted by post-structuralism, together with the emergence of social movements and grassroots organizations, have confronted structural asymmetries and endemic inequalities in a struggle over difference and identity. Race, gender, sexuality, as well as indigenous claims and the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, as well as other struggles over forms of misrecognition and oppression, have brought claims for recognition to the fore. At the same time, the diversity of these claims and bottom-up movements have indeed brought about an array of life forms that can multiply and expand established architectural imaginaries: different forms of social organization, of access to land, of property regimes, of resource appropriation and of coexistence with ecological systems. In sum, alternative forms of understanding city-territory relations.

Nonetheless, neither redistribution nor recognition can be practised without a frame of reference. They can hardly be approached, be it theoretically or in practice, unless the issue of the social body and the territory in which they are applied are clearly defined. A theory of redistribution cannot skip the question of its beneficiaries: who is entitled, who has the right to claim for fair access to limited resources? Neither can it avoid the issues of its material and spatial demarcation: what is to be redistributed, how and where. Here is where architecture and urbanism can contribute to moving beyond the socio-economic. What if spatial practices are incorporated into an expanded politics of redistribution? What if, alongside public services like healthcare and education, a range of socio-ecological resources take a leading role in urban design programmes? What if, next to major urban functions like housing, workspaces and transport, a new redistributive urban agenda includes questions such as decentralizing energy and food production, guaranteed access to water and land, the preservation of biodiversity, of clean air and healthy soils?

Doreen Massey has made an important point regarding the above: 'redistribution does not necessarily have to be *post hoc* (first, economic growth and then redistribution). The form of economic growth can itself influence distribution in the first place.'[8] Indeed, the capitalist imperative for economic growth has taken, blatantly in the last several decades, the form of an extractive, expansive, globalized urbanization. In this context, as Massey argues further, '[A] strategy for greater regional equality must be concerned not only with some post hoc redistribution but with countering the production of inequality in the first place.'[9] This would mean moving from fixing unequal patterns to shaping new structures that anticipate inequalities, or as Mariana Mazzucato puts it, to pivot from repairing to preparing, from redistribution to pre-distribution.[10]

The obvious follow-up question is: how to make these economic principles operative in spatial disciplines? In what sense does redistribution differ whether it is looked at as an economic or spatial concept? What is being redistributed or pre-distributed when talking from an urban perspective? Before sketching an answer, the frame of reference needs to be drawn. Rather than following Geddes' regional valley as the geographical entity demarcating the limits and possibilities of socio-ecological relations, I suggest that territory is a more helpful notion to address the complexities of contemporary urbanization. If Geddes' valley and region may be seen as naturally given, the territory is always socially constructed. Understood as the (human) transformation of the biophysical matrix, territory as a spatial category is never fixed. It entails fluctuations, transformations and reappropriations. Instead of an idealized primordial natural state, it embodies the possibilities for change. Hence, it can be continuously reimagined.

Stretching the Wedge

In the academic project 'Stretching the Wedge', an urban design studio at KTH School of Architecture, we have addressed issues such as the above. We have mapped and measured the impact that processes of urbanisation have on the natural environment, including in the analysis of urban fabrics and urban metabolic flows encompassing issues of waste, energy consumption or the pollution of air, soils and waters. By placing a particular emphasis on social—ecological interrelations, urban space is studied as the entanglement of social and natural processes. Accordingly, we have drawn on an understanding of the city that overcomes its limits as a finite structure; that situates the city—as an artefact, as a social body and as a type of space—in a much broader frame of analysis that operates at a territorial level.

While studying the system of green wedges in the Stockholm region, we have applied methods of mapping and inventorying that foreground non-traditional urban elements. By following the material flows in each of the studied sites, we have been able to trace the links, effects and dependencies that these functions have in much larger territories, thus placing them in a multi-scalar web of regional, national and global circuits. We have worked with the recognition of *territories, processes* and *agents*. These three terms are always relational and supersede the more traditional site, programme and user in order to situate them in a broader context and thus, understand their entanglements and interrelations. *Territories* expand the physicality of the site; any intervention in the city is enmeshed in a spatial system which must be read through its material expression as much as through its normative frameworks and institutional structures. *Territories* are always constructed; they bring together the material and the legal, the physicality of a given terrain with questions of power, sovereignty and jurisdiction. *Processes* expand the notion of programme beyond its functionality and use. The recognition of social processes aims to understand a programme as it unfolds over time, what the prior necessities are and what the later effects are. *Agents* can be very diverse; they introduce the direct user to other forms of participation. They may include not just individuals and human activity, but also non-human actors enmeshed in a particular site, from material flows to biotopes, from administrative bodies to communities and social groups.

Redistribution implies a two-step action: first, collect and later, distribute. Whether the collected substance is people, money, data, matter, energy or any other quantifiable element does not change the nature of the concept, which indeed consists in first assembling and then delivering back a reconfigured form. Working with this logic, different projects have been proposed to redistribute a variety of elements that have become drivers for urban transformation. The project shown in Fig. 1 creates a system of water management that deals with water and soil pollution. The detailed mapping of the underground results in the rearrangement of the functions above ground. The new system makes water a visible urban element that redefines access to and use of the wedge. The project shown in Figs 2 and 3 redistributes the flows and functions of an industrial site. It uses waste material such as sand and aggregates to construct a hybrid habitat where humans and beavers coexist. With the aim of minimizing circulation, leftover material is used to construct a new topography that houses various species of insects and mediates between the different habitats. Redistribution, in this case, deals with matter, biotopes and productive activities.

In conclusion, a redistributive principle acknowledges the necessity of thinking and acting *transversally, transdisciplinarily* and *transscalarly*. It opens a field of possibilities to collaboratively shape alternative modes of urbanization that can help to restore city—country relations. By placing ecological systems alongside traditional 'urban' elements, we have aimed to expand the practice of architecture and urbanism, not only in its multi-scalar dimension, but most importantly, in the inclusion of natural cycles, cultivated lands and functions typically associated with non-urban spaces into a reframed notion of urbanity. Instead of subordinating hinterlands to urban demands, territories are seen as co-producers of urban environments invested in material and spatial redistribution.

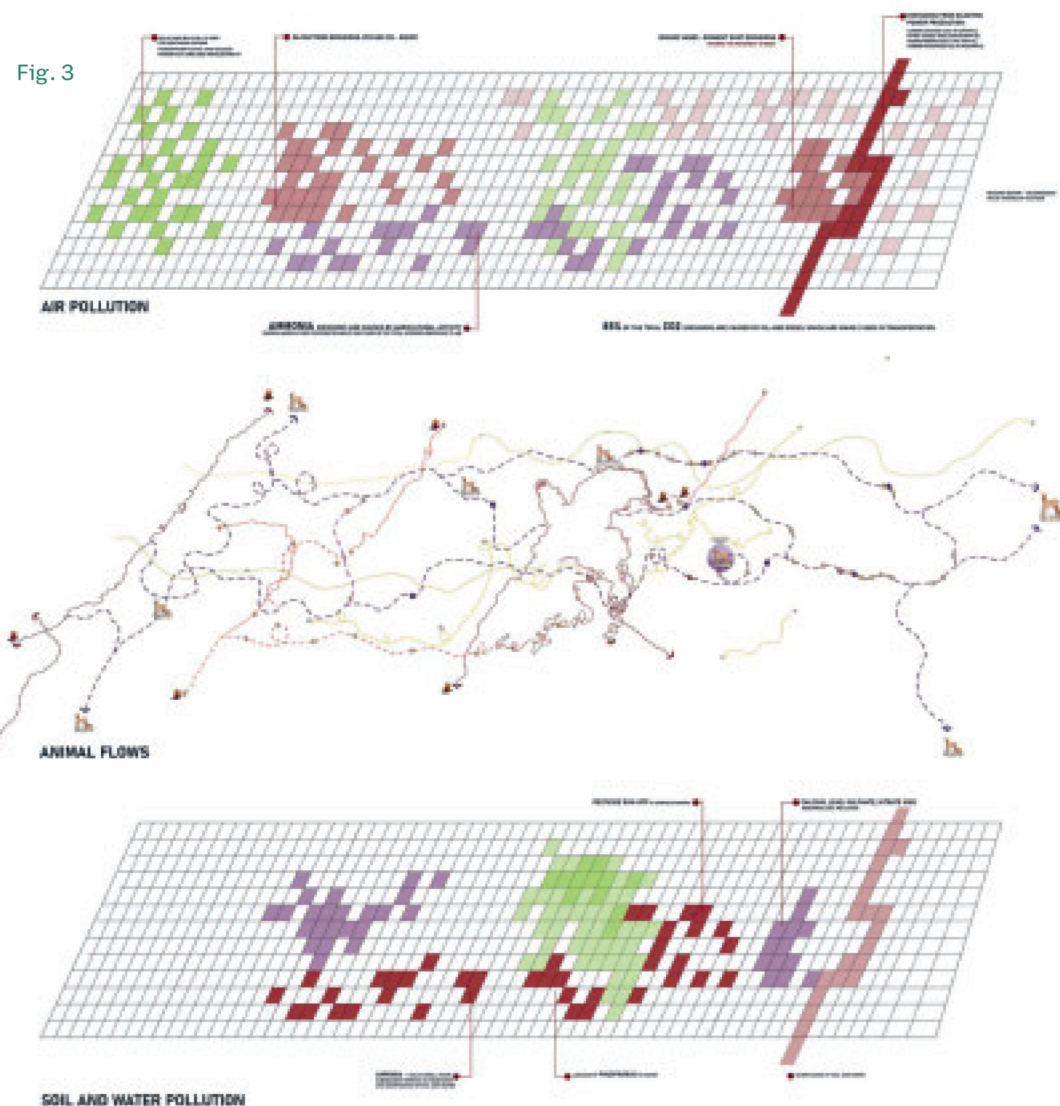
Fig. 1

Figs 1: Redistribution of the water system in Järvafältet, Stockholm. Instead of the division between built and unbuilt, the project looks at the water cycles in relation to soil and water pollution patterns, thus proposing a series of interventions that redistribute the "green wedge"-neighbourhood relation through water systems. Project developed in the Urban Ecologies design studio in autumn 2021, KTH School of Architecture. Authors: Gloria Annunziata, Sofia Lichvarova and Sophie Spanlang. Tutors: Adrià Carbonell and Jaime Montes.

Fig. 2

Figs 2 and 3: Mapping the disturbance that air, soil and water pollution, caused by the concrete industry, create in the habitats and movements of reindeers, beavers and bees. The project proposes a redistribution of land-exploitative activities and matter flows to generate new habitats where multiple species can coexist. Project developed in the Urban Ecologies design studio in autumn 2021, KTH School of Architecture. Authors: Vlad Capitanu, Mahum Ahmad and Eleni Ntouni. Tutors: Adrià Carbonell and Jaime Montes.

Fig. 3



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2 Patrick Geddes, *Cities in Evolution: An Introduction to the Town Planning Movement and to the Study of Civics* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1915), 280.
3 Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthy Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).
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