The subversion of order

Reflection form P4; L. Groenendijk
Master architecture
Graduation studio: Public Building

Introduction
The challenge offered within the construction of the present and future of public territory and places of change in an urbanized society are widely broached in the studio public building. In this studio we focus on how to conceive and develop models, typologies, programs and theories in order to meet public needs.

This time the graduation master of the public building studio focusses on the issue of totality, related to topic of the biennale of Venice; ‘Palazzo Enciclopedico’, combined with the city of Istanbul, which is ‘attempting to re-establish a leading role within a territory of transit’.

Since the beginning of my master architecture am I highly interested in the fundamental codes for the built environment. The combination with the public realm made me realize that these fundamental codes, as we perceive and use them as architects, in some assets are a subversion of the regular, the routine, the standard or the structure. The theories described by Bernard Tschumi and John Cage helped me in developing a position within architecture that, together with the graduation assignment, resulted in the proposal of a public building on the quay of the Golden Horn in Istanbul.

Research
The problem addressed in my research during the MsC 3 is the ignorance of the active voice of space appropriation, within the design concept of the public realm in Istanbul. I encountered that the unintended higher degree of freedom present within the clash between public and private space in this city, harvest an intriguing condition within the presence of architecture. The recognition was that the characteristics of this phenomena, ‘the space appropriation’ are qualified, in the world created by architects, as being not determined, unintended and unplanned.

During the research I started realizing that the easiness born of routine, standards, procedures, structures (...), which we live in, are adopted as the fundamental codes for the culture of human life. These fundamental codes together with scientific theories and philosophical interpretations are the convention for our existing order. The curiosity that arises from this clarification is the urge to understand if there exist, below the level of its spontaneous orders, things that are in themselves capable of being ordered, that belong to a certain unspoken order, or the discovery that these orders are in fact the existing evidence that our systems of classification (and of truth and knowledge) in reality consist of artificial constructions.

My interest, amazement and in some way anger that derived after reading Foucault, a French philosopher, comes from the realization that we humans accept the fundamental codes and defend them in our everyday life. These fundamental codes are created in a scientific discourse, which during time possessed certain underlying epistemological assumptions that determined what is acceptable nowadays and eventually are embraced as the truth. During the research I got introduced to John Cage, a pioneer of indeterminacy in experimental music. For Cage the problematic of repetition and order in serial music and that of harmonic structure was the fact that serialism replaced counterpoint, and both presumed an underlying model to which they implicitly referred.

The realm of art in contrary to hard sciences, mathematics, physics, etc. is capable of transforming society and has a revolutionary character, which is shown in the appropriation of space. Because, everything that falls outside the box of planned, intended, or formal use of space can be qualified as space appropriation. This appropriation is cultural depended and differs within each part of the world. The most important factor of this diversification is the tightness in the line between the public and the private. In my opinion this beautiful given shows the way citizens like to use the space differently as obligated by the developers and this should be used within the development of city space. This space appropriation has to do with subverting and changing the regular order within architecture and tells us that this regular order does no longer fit within the mega growth of the today cities.
In my opinion, this kind of architecture will always belong to the experimental, similar to the research of John Cage, which means that no result can be predicted. Even tough we handle correctly during the design process and take all the results from my research into consideration; the aspect of the space appropriation will always be that it is unpredictable. This does not mean that we cannot learn from previous cases, like the one in Istanbul, and use it to bring the needs of the citizens closer to the needs of the developers.

**Design**

The focus of my research and design are centred on the Camialti shipyard next to the Golden Horn in Istanbul. This abandoned shipyard consist of 11 old buildings. The idea for this area is to preserve most of the elements, considering the cultural and historical value and high quality. The concept that is used within some in the ‘out of order’ harbour related buildings in the Netherlands will be used as a guideline within the area of the Camialti shipyard.

The information presented on the website of the ‘central library’ of Istanbul tells me that Turkey is one of the leading countries in the world in terms of archives sources. Due to the huge amount of documents preserved in the naval history archives are some of the documents classified as ‘rough classification’. The goal was to preserve a part of the naval history archive in Istanbul but due to bad logistics, transportation and proper location are most of the documents still kept in the archive of Ankara. The goal of my proposal will be to bring back the important memory of The Imperial Arsenal to its former location and store it in a Naval archive.

The research in Istanbul clearly showed, how in a matter of years the public space transforms from the straight cut lines and orders of the urban planner into a growing organism within the city. The space appropriation that caused this growing organism is an expansion that is vast and indeterminate. I want my Naval Archive to be a representation of this indeterminate growing organism. The reason that the archive is interesting and will work as a metaphor for my previous findings within the space appropriation and the work of John Cage is the indeterminate expansion that is one the aspects of an archive in general. The unexpected growth of the documents will be used as an aspect within the design concept of my building. The idea is of having a shelf that consist of a number of bins that might develop differently within the next couple of years without any expectation.

Besides this, the definition that I used for space appropriation in my previous research is that it is a subversion of order. The fascination that I have for this subject will be represented within the archive building. In this case I want to subvert the order used within other archive buildings: such as categorization and alphabetical orders. My Naval archive does not use categorization and is ordered indeterminate, with the help of a Robotic System.

**Reflection**

The space appropriation, being defined as unplanned, unstructured, unintended and informal, means that the moment you develop a space like this, it instantly looses this definition by being planned, intended and formal. This results in the conclusion that we will never be able to design an event with its additional space appropriation. These kinds of research results help me to understand the public realm more and are a development within my own architectural career. Starting from the events as described by Tschumi, going towards the intriguing thoughts of the master John Cage, leading towards a concept of subversion of order and result in a Naval archive is a process that brought me a lot of knowledge, joyfulness and made me realize how much I have an ambition for architecture.

The knowledge gained in this studio will help me understand the intriguing level between the public and private realm. The importance of this space being proper designed to meet public needs will challenges me as an architect and contribute confidently and positively to my portfolio.

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