

# FRAMING PROTEST

Architecture & Public Building Graduation Studio  
Ground, Things and Representation: Strasbourg

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## REFLECTION

### RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

In my research, I investigated protest movements in modern France, observing their spatial manifestations in Strasbourg and looking at them from the power-relations point of view. Most importantly, the research allowed me to come up with the basic vocabulary, which later proved crucial at defining the tackled problem (e.g. public space, protest, attractor). Protest was approached as an inherent element of political activity of a democratic society, allowing to express the opinion of the society on the government endeavours (Habermas, Arendt). Hence I took up two definitions of public space: “space as a contained for activity” and “space as socially produced”<sup>1</sup>. Activity and social production of space became crucial for me to approach protest, which is basically a bottom-up activity sustained by people themselves. As a result, it was possible to devise a valid and to-point research question, which helped to formulate the design objective which would directly stem from the research phase. Due to the comprehensive approach to scales offered by the studio, it was also possible to investigate spatial manifestations of the discussed problematique on a multi-scale level. As a result, it gave me the understanding of how certain ideas are reified within space and gave me spatial measures to operate with and develop as my own design.

### STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

Survey /Site It led to the choice of localisation of my final intervention. In this part, I analysed the network of protest in Strasbourg on a city scale. As a result, the final intervention reinforces the system and creates links between important spots for the city, which do not seem connected at this point, i.e. the European Quarter with the city (Place de la Republique, the University Library).

Systems /Parts – This part of the research enhanced the understanding of crowd distribution, movement and dynamics, especially characteristic of Strasbourg, e.g. distances between important spots, capacities of spaces, access to infrastructure, institutions involved in manifestations, etc. It also influenced the choice of the localisation.

Things / Difficult whole – It analyses relations between abstract and hands-on solutions. For example, the role of the visible vs. invisible spaces during protest (and basically all anti-movements) and how they reflect two types of activities. Visible spaces reinforce the representational aspect of the crowd, which during protest needs to be accurately displayed and exposed. Invisible spaces can be used for back room activities, such as organisation prior to the event. Varied topography may serve as a tool for changing the viewing perspective, e.g. creating the feeling of being fully immersed in the crowd (lowering) or being above the crowd, observing it (raised topography).

The development of the things part was most needed in order to establish the link between the theory and the practice. Perhaps, the things drawing that I did in Q1 was interesting at the point of the research (the astronomical clock), but did not provide much understanding of spatial measures used during protest, hence then I had to make up for that element during the weeks following P2.

### STRUCTURE OF THE DESIGN

The final project is developed on a multi-scalar level as well. However, it does not follow the structure of survey-systems-things that closely. While the structure provided

<sup>1</sup> Lucas, Ray, Research Methods for Architecture (London: King, 2016), p. 29

ed by the studio organised the research part in a logical way, it was difficult to apply in the later stages. Mostly because each project needs different kinds of elaborations and works on different scales. However, I sustained the idea of developing the project throughout varied scales (1:1000, 1:200, 1:20) simultaneously. Such non-linearity allowed for constant reflection on the project and the constant feedback of one scale on the other two.

The choice of location is aimed to enhance the protest network on the city scale. A several hundred meter long street in its entirety is reconceptualised, reorganised – so the plot scale becomes an assignment in urban design (1:1000). Approached as a piece of urban infrastructure (1:200), the project assumes the creation of 3 types of modules (underground, above ground and facade), which in combination allow to mediate the regularity of the infrastructural grid and the irregularity of the existing context. The detailing creates common language of 3 types of structures, which facilitates the recognition of various elements (paving, lights, columns, beams etc.) as belonging to the designed structure, regardless of its location along the elongated plot.

## STUDIO TOPIC, MASTER TRACK AND MASTER PROGRAMME

The studio “Ground, things and representation” is the last of the cycle of three studios dealing corporate European cities (following Luxembourg and Brussels), whose public space is shaped by the existence of EU institutions. Strasbourg, the Franco-German border city and the symbol of the united Europe, is a fruitful ground to investigate the relationship between democracy and a public space, which is the main focus of Architecture and Public Building studio. Being home to the Council of Europe and European Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg’s position as a symbol of democracy and human rights needs to be revisited and investigated.

The project analyses the situation of protesters in the context of the city, which – being the symbol of European democracy - is supposed to give them freedom of expression. Such impression is symbolically reinforced by the existence of the institutions, which issue the laws defining the rules of assemblies. The project seeks to express the democratic access to public spaces and civic commons (shared facilities) understood as a basic human right in a democratic European country. The designed section of the street, enhanced by underground spaces and adjacent niches in surrounding plots, aims at introducing publicness beyond the traditional boundary of the facade and the pavement.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE FEEDBACK

The biggest obstacle, postponing the process of designing, was the difficulty of translating the research, which was sociological and theoretical, hence too abstract and immaterial to be directly applied in the design. The fact that the research lacked clear architectural aspect was my mentors’ main concern.

In order to create that bridge, I analysed projects which took certain positions towards the society and commented upon what its members were (not) allowed to do in the public space, such as, the submission to the Phase 1 of the Palace of Soviets Competition in Moscow in 1931 by an avant-garde Soviet group – Union of Architects and Planners (ARU), Haussmann’s renovation of Paris, public spaces in Tehran, Iran. Neither of them was treated as a straight-forward precedent.

The next step was to conceive the set of principles (the manifesto) that my street section had to fulfil. From that on, I could proceed to apply solutions used in the analysed projects (if they were created in order to reinforce the democratic aspect of the space) or, the opposite, finding countermeasures to avoid effects obtained in those. For example, I applied the idea of varied topography and sloping used to enhance the feeling of the crowd, as designed in the Palace of Soviets. In contrast, the overwhelming, out-scaled section of Haussmannian Paris worked as something I needed to counteract and avoid.

## ETHICAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS

Despite the fact that a peaceful protest is legitimised as a lawful way of expressing one’s political opinions in the public realm, it may still cause controversies and concerns regarding the safety of its participants and bears a high possibility of transforming into riots. The law talks about a peaceful protest, which requires certain type of behaviour from its participants, but also keeps the definition of “peaceful” fluid and not clearly defined. As a result, counteractions, such as kettling, may be overused against protesters. On the other hand, the emotional load of such actions may cause overreactions on the protesters’ side. Hence, the most vulnerable aspect of the topic becomes the balance of power given to the society as well as limits imposed on the society by the government. When is the moment in which the society may be trusted and when does it need to be controlled?

Another important issue is the balance between private and public ownership. In the case of protests, public spaces are easily accessible, but can also become the place of the abuse of power. On the contrary, private spaces may be perceived as a “safe zone” with no immediate police access (the example of Zuccotti Park in NYC), but at the same time require owner’s consent to enter, otherwise it is perceived as invasion of privacy. The interesting balance of power may be found in semi-public/semi-private spaces (private ownership, but public service), such as schools, universities, churches, which have been previously been used during protests. Such places not only escape municipal jurisdiction, but also create intellectual ferment, which is the driving force of dissent and protest activities.

## SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE OF THE WORK

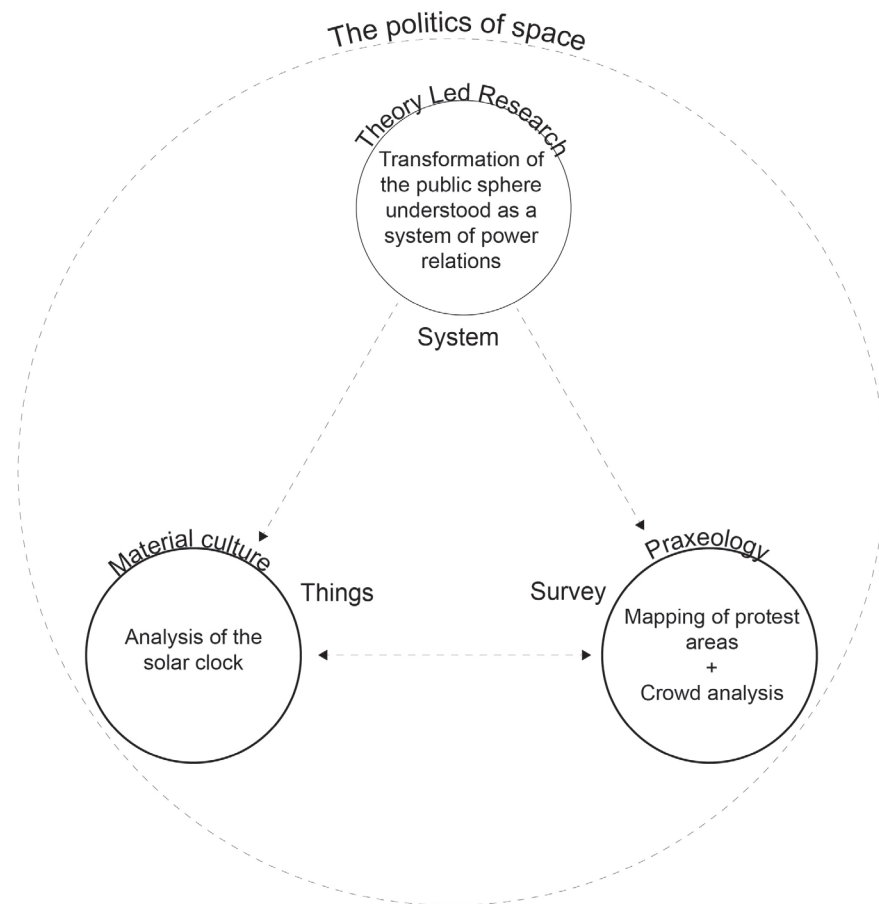
The project creates infrastructure for protest, which in its universality may prove replicable in various contexts and is not bound exclusively to the chosen location. The section of the street as a design task is reworked multiple times within each different political period and is a basic, constitutive unit of every city. The street design needs to be updated in order to host its citizens’ activities most appropriately, otherwise it may turn out restrictive. The plot for my intervention was designed by the German authorities at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The society of the 21st century looks different than it used to, the authorities changed, technological solutions evolved and, hence, the surrounding urban tissue needs to be updated. Remodelling the street in the spirit of democratic expression, whether it means agreeing or disagreeing, became the main premise of the project.

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I.. Lucas, Ray, Research Methods for Architecture (London: King, 2016), 59-68.



RESEARCH



## RESEARCH METHOD DESCRIPTION

## I INTRODUCTION

### The relevance of research-methodological awareness

During the first lecture, Jorge Mejia introduced three notions: ontology, understood as what we know about things, epistemology, asking how we know about things, and methodology - the means for the improvement of knowledge. The third definition, despite being seemingly obvious, framed the notion of research for me. What has to be said further about methodology is that it is “a systematic inquiry directed toward the creation of knowledge”<sup>1</sup>. Being aware of methodologies is one of the keys to conducting a successful, systematic inquiry and broadening our ontological awareness. In order to stimulate progress, we have to develop our knowledge. Nothing is conceived in a vacuum. We build our world on precedents, either by negating them or embracing them, but this continuity is always there. Hence, a critical approach to precedents, a deep understanding of its time and context is important when taking up a certain methodology.

### The course

First and foremost, the course helped me to give name to all the methods I had either knew or used before, but could never categorise. Moreover, it also provided a brief introduction facilitating the understanding of the evolution of certain methodologies and the changing attitudes towards their application (e.g. Moneo’s article “On Typology”). I also took the opportunity of tracing back methodologies, which were used prior to designing (e.g. Tschumi’s “Manhattan Transcripts”).

What was also of great importance, was Buchanan’s<sup>2</sup> remark regarding the unavoidable process of specialisation of research within liberal arts, which influences design practice as well. As a result, the need for understanding and communication between these distant endeavours is growing in order to make this knowledge applicable and beneficial for use outside the academy, hence the necessary focus on interdisciplinarity discussed by Lucas<sup>3</sup>.

Finally, what also facilitated constructing my own argument, was the realisation of the fact that all research is to some extent reductionist<sup>4,5</sup>. It reminded me of the need for specificity in asking research questions, which, in the end, may lead to more universal conclusions.

### Thesis topic introduction

In my thesis, I investigate protest movements in modern France, observing their spatial manifestations in Strasbourg and looking at them from the power-relations point of view. Protest is approached as an inherent element of political activity of a democratic society, allowing to express the opinion of the society on the government endeavours (Habermas, Arendt). Hence I take up two definitions of public space: “space as a contained for activity” and “space as socially produced”. Activity and social production of space is crucial for me to approach protest, which is basically a bottom-up activity sustained by people themselves.

Another interesting aspect of a protest is the way it temporarily territorialises public spaces, turning streets and squares into stages and arenas. Also, the choice of arenas is not arbitrary, most often it is related to institutions and government buildings. As a result, all protest activity can be perceived as a interplay between the protesters and

- 1 Snyder in Groat, Linda N. and Wang, David, *Architectural Research Methods* (John Wiley&Sons, 2013), 8.
- 2 Buchanan, Richard, *Wicked Problems in Design Thinking*. (Design issues 8, no. 2, 92), 2
- 3 Lucas, Ray, *Research Methods for Architecture* (London: King, 2016), 59-68.
- 4 Ibidem, p. 7.
- 5 Groat & Wang, op. cit., 8
- 6 Lucas, op.cit., 29.

the government, based on power relations and their spatial manifestations. According to Lucas, politically engaged research rather than sticking to one methodology, makes use of numerous different approaches. It is an umbrella term, which refers to the studies of the “effects of the control that that governance, finance and commerce have on the city”<sup>7</sup>. In following chapters, I will provide an explanation on how I reflect upon the structure provided by my studio and how I incorporate it in my research in order to make it informative for myself.

## II RESEARCH-METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

### Poststructuralist School of Thought - organising principle for methodologies

There is a certain interest in specificity underlying the studio’s approach. Quoting the brief: “Rather than pretending to resolve anything, the project is seen as an opportunity to give form to these contradictions. Rather than musing on the significance of the city in general, the studio is interested in the specificity of a particular urban-territorial condition informing design”. As a result, my studio suggested the tripartite division of the research:

Survey - based on a geographical representation of Strasbourg, aimed to discover the spatial realisation of our interests and create a drawing of a territory which sublimates the aspect of the city we discovered. The first and the most tangible step, still based on the topography of the city.

System - Abstract “diagram of relationships” providing lenses through which we observe the territory.

Things - focuses of things, understood as reifications of bigger events which happened on the territory.

I interpreted this as an exercise through which we were supposed to work out the relations between three very specific parts. Thus this brought forth the research method based not on a hierarchical, linear process (e.g. from XL to S). Instead, we were faced with the challenge of reestablishing links between these entities, often on different scales. This way of resolving complexities, rather than attempting to establish one formula defining the complexity, favours focus on particular, fragmented entities. Instead of focusing of emphasising coherence of the whole system, the research favours the analysis of relations. In this sense, I would claim that the main approach realised by our studio was poststructuralist. Not a methodology itself, but a school of thought<sup>8</sup>, it provides organising principles which may be used as a way of combining various methodologies.

In my understanding, system is a theoretical, abstract and even ideal notion, while survey and things are material manifestations of a system, revealing discontinuities, irregularities and frictions between the ideality of the system and the reality. In this sense, there is a certain asymmetry between these three parts, system being most theoretical of them all. As a result, for each part I applied a different methodology, which was adjusted to the area of expertise

### System: Setting the lenses

The part regarding the system triggered my interest in historical developments of

public space, provided me with necessary vocabulary to be precise in my thoughts and set the ground for the contemporary analysis. Following Lucas<sup>9</sup>, "the priority in theoretically focused studies is the critical nature of the engagement, where the methodology is descriptive. Theoretically led studies are most often cross-disciplinary, borrowing their theory from fields such as philosophy, social sciences or politics.”. In order to be more precise in the choice of methodology, it is necessary to establish the theoretical position in advance.

The example of a theory-driven research, would be Tschumi’s “The Manhattan Transcripts”, inspired by Bergson’s theories on time and duration in creative acts<sup>10</sup>, as well as the deconstructivist discussion about the signified-signifier relation, realised in exploding existing relations and rearranging its component parts<sup>11</sup>. Eisenman and Derrida’s collaboration over the design of the Parc de la Villette in Paris, described in their joint publication “Chora L Works”, would be an analogous endeavour.

In my case, Hannah Arendt’s theory of power depicting it as a virtual concept, which requires constant authorisation to sustain it. According to Hannah Arendt<sup>12</sup>, power needs spaces of appearance, understood as public spaces arising out of the actions (praxis) and speeches (lexis) of individuals, sustained due to the plurality of agents. Another theory, was Jurgen Habermas<sup>13</sup> definition of public sphere as a mediatory zone between the state and the society. Political control is mostly sustained by the assemblies of private individuals in public space.

### Survey and Things: Methodology and Methods

#### Survey

Inspired by the concepts of “praxis” and “lexis”, I chose praxeology as a methodology to research territorial traces of the protest activities in the city. Understood as the study of human action and conduct, it analyses how the built environment is practiced, emphasising exactly what Arendt and Habermas describe - creating spaces through action.

#### Things

Things and material culture. Things understood as physical reifications of contextual circumstances in one physical item. The focus was an astronomic clock in Strasbourg, juxtaposed with the timeline of the cathedral (S), historical events happening in the city (M) and important dates for French history (L).

The two methodologies - praxeology and the analysis of things - allow to detect traces of power relations in the public space on two different scales. They make my research make sensitive towards manifestations of power struggle in public space, of territorialisation, etc. I rendered this method suitable for the context I am dealing with, because it allows to find spatiality of history, which in the case of Strasbourg, as a border city is very complex (the free city, the invention of printing press, Protestantism, French Kingdom, German Empire, Border city > EU Parliament headquarters).

For the needs of this paper, I will discuss praxeology in more detail. My position towards the analysis of material things is included in the last chapter, being a response to the issues touched upon during lectures.

9  
Lucas, op.cit., 14.10  
10  
Ibid., 14.  
11  
Tschumi, Bernard, The  
Manhattan Transcripts  
(London: Academy Editions,  
1994), 7-12.  
12  
Arendt, Hannah, The Human  
Condition (University of  
Chicago Press, 1998).  
13  
Habermas, Jurgen. et al,  
“The Public Sphere: An  
Encyclopedia Article”, New  
German Critique, (No. 3,  
Autumn, 1974), 49-55.  
Accessed 30 October 2017,  
via [http://www.jstor.org/  
stable/487737](http://www.jstor.org/stable/487737).

Current positions in praxeology

The modern approach to praxeology aims to understand people’s movements in order to customise design solutions to the needs of future users. The difference between standardisation and customisation lies in the fact that the first one dwells upon the average and typical, while the latter is able to respond to the complexity of human behaviour without simplifications.

The example of the qualitative approach would be the focus on “desire paths”. The term describes traces that people leave while crossing through natural, unpaved areas. Before, architecture had been mostly about directing and devising people's movements, but the creation of these paths shows how people actually walk and how they break the rules. Apart from tracing desire paths, in his book “How To Study Public Space”, Jan Gehl<sup>14</sup> lists possible methods for detecting activities in public space: counting, mapping, tracing, tracking, photographing, keeping a diary and test walks. Such methods allow for both qualitative and quantitative analyses of how people use the space, where they walk, etc.

Quantitative aspect of praxeology is used in more practical applications, e.g. in the design of safety measures, in order to predict paths people would take and the safe density required. One of these studies is prof. Keith Still’s Crowd Safety and Risk Analysis<sup>15</sup>. This method allows to assess efficiency of crowd movement, capacities of spaces to host certain amount of people - both in standing and moving crowd, depending on the density, type of the crowd, the event, etc. Similarly, Jacob’s Method - used in crowd counting, is based on dividing crowds into sections of equal areas (m2), estimating expected density and then multiplying it by the amount of sections. This method can be used not only during life observations, but also on satellite photography, TV footage, etc.

Despite still being valid and applied, the above methods are still “analogue”. Praxeological methods have undergone substantial changes since the advent of computers. Modern methods (software, such as MassMotion and CrowdSight) allow for very accurate quantitative predictions regarding crowd behaviour. Nowadays, it has mainly become the question of dealing with complexity of human behaviour. Michael Batty<sup>16</sup> is one of the most prominent scientists researching the possibility of applying mathematical algorithms and computer technologies into design. To bring up the most recent example, Kees Kaan’s latest winning design proposal for the Terminal at Schiphol was analysed with advanced software and designed according to the predicted crowd movements.

III RESEARCH-METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Historical development of praxeology

At the early stages, praxeological methods were employed in function of rationalisation. The modernist researchers used praxeological methods to examine how certain places were used in order to design highly optimised spaces. Bruno Taut’s book “Die neue Wohnung - Die Frau als Schopferin” featured the reprint of “Steps Taken in the Preparation of a Meal” by Christine Frederick<sup>17</sup>, which served as an input for Taut’s research on the built environment, understood as the area for actions. The aim was to devise the most ergonomic and functional kitchen. The similar method (with similar, very practical objective) was applied by Margarete Schutte-Lihotzky in her optimisation of the kitchen environment expressed through the Frankfurter Küche. Another

quantitative and very extensive research was carried out by Ernst Neufert in “Architect’s Data” - the almost encyclopedic compendium of “the average” measurements. Up to this day, it is still used as a guide for architects who want to optimise their design dimension-wise. Modernist approach to praxeology was purely functional, with the ultimate aim of optimisation of function. Thus, such approach assumed that praxeology was a research method used to develop standardisation.

According to Tom Avermaete<sup>18</sup>, the 1950s marked an epistemological breakthrough. During the 9th CIAM congress, two architects groups of architects - GAMMA and CIAM-Alger - despite being required to follow CIAM’s Grille (a grid construed according to CIAM categories, implying standardisation and the possibility of finding universal solutions), focused their research on everyday life of the population, with series of sketches, photographs, collages and tracings. Their interest shifted towards the observations of everyday living, which were thought to be the most formative force in architecture. Crude human deeds - praxis - became a interest for architects, not just as an input to provide the world with the most ergonomic designs. They strongly opposed standardisation and blamed it for being the root of all evil in French problematic districts - banlieues. Later on, Candilis - Josic - Woods - went on to design Berlin Free University in 1963, with the most important focus of it being a building for the masses. Building was understood as a frame for practices to be filled in by users - realised as the patterns on streets and sequences of open spaces. Prefabricated structural solutions enabled flexibility.

The importance of human action on space formation was also underlined by Marc Augé in “Non-Places, introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity”<sup>19</sup>, where he juxtaposed non-places - areas which hold no function of sufficient importance for public life, e.g. circulation or communication, to “anthropological spaces”, which are built through collaboration.

Reflections on the choice of methods

To get a more complete picture, I attempted at trying out both qualitative and quantitative measures. The quantitative measures included monitoring Strasbourg’s towards its capacity for protest, most frequently used “protest spaces”, crowd formation, relations between those spaces (distance, spatial proximity). Using Jacob’s Method, I overlaid the grid and estimated the attendance during different protests. Applying different crowd densities provided by Still, I calculated the spatial capacity of the most popular squares in relation to the type of an event.

Regarding qualitative measures, when I was in Strasbourg, I managed to take part in two protests as an observer, moreover, I looked for websites, press releases, especially for photos showing crowds during protests, including archival, early 20th century pictures.. Based on that, I made drawings depicting crowds’ shape and density.

The unexpected discovery turned up as a result of the auto-reflection on my method, which revealed another important aspect of protest movement, which I overlooked before - the amount to which protest is set as a spectacle, how it is conceived as an event to be broadcastable. After all, how the media captured these moments was mostly the base on which I built my argument.

The application of the research method enabled to push my theoretical argument forward. It led me to such books as McLuhan’s “The Gutenberg Galaxy”, which discusses the great influence of the printing press (which was invented in Strasbourg) and,

14 Gehl, Jan and Svarre, Birgitte, How To Study Public Life (Washington: Island Press: 2013), 24-30.  
15 Still, Keith, Crowd Safety and Risk Analysis. Accessed 10 November 2017, via <http://www.gkstill.com/Support/crowd-density/CrowdDensity-1.html>.  
16 Batty, Michael, “Cities as Complex Systems: Scaling, Interactions, Networks, Dynamics and Urban Morphologies”, Working Papers Series (UCL Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, Paper 131, Feb 08).  
17 Avermaete, Tom, Architecture and Its Epistemes: Lecture Notes for Students, 6.

18 Ibid., 6.  
19 Lucas, op.cit., 29.  
20 Wise, M. Norton and Wise, Elaine M., “Staging an Empire”, Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science, edited by Lorraine Daston (Zone Books, 2004), 100-145.  
21 Ibid., 144.  
22 Grosz, Elizabeth, “Notes on the Things”, Perspecta 33 (2002), 78.

consequently, all the media, onto people’s possibilities of political expression. Also, Guy Debord’s “The Society of Spectacle” touches upon the topic of representation and how nowadays our perception is always filtered through media, through a spectacle.

IV POSITIONING

Feedback to Week 3: Things

As discussed before, my interest lied in researching spatial manifestations of power relations in the city, especially in the periods of protests. Praxeology was one of the methods I applied, the second was the analysis on an artifact, focusing on how changes in the society shaped its materiality. The method was inspired by the text by M. Norton and Elaine M. Wise, “Staging an Empire”<sup>20</sup>, which analyses the Pfaueninsel near Berlin, whose landscape was formed by successive world views which dominated in the Empire. Such approach to seeing things as palimpsests, scraping off consecutive layers seemed to be an insightful, almost archeological method of looking at material things.

The thing of my interest was a solar clock located in the Strasbourg Cathedral since the XIV century. As proposed by Wise, the method of juxtaposing a thing and events revealed interesting dependencies. Above all, the analysis revealed the clock and time as another power-imposing device, which introduced another level of power relations to my analysis. First, it was a device which unitised time for everyone in the city. Before the printing press, it was also a story-teller, the conveyor of history and worldviews. With the development of technology and invention of more democratic time-measuring devices (e.g. personal watches), its centralising power deteriorated. With time, it became merely a tourist attraction. But the clock can still speak. The portrait of Copernicus painted on one of the plates of the clock and the ecclesiastical computus tell a story of Strasbourg’s cultural and technological progressiveness at the time.

Wise writes: “The Island spoke (...) through the ways in which its components and their interrelationships spoke of a larger world in which they acquired their meaning”<sup>21</sup>. Things can speak and we need methods to be able to decode this information. According to Elizabeth Grosz,s definitions: “The Thing is a cutting out of the real, the solidification of what exists in the flux of the real. It is an outline imposed on the real by our purposes and needs”<sup>22</sup>. In this sense, things are reifications of certain, specific situations. Like archeological artifacts, they contain history. A new view on a thing assumes looking at it through the sets of relationship of maintains outside itself. In the analysis of Velázquez’s Las Meninas<sup>23</sup>, Foucault replaces the object-based order with the relationship-based order. Treating things as an assemblage implies the change of a worldview.

V CONCLUSIONS

As I also mentioned in previous chapters, our studio brief refrains from the formulation of all-encompassing, totality-driven, Hegelian conclusions and rather aims to obtain specificity through fragmentation. This way of resolving complexities, rather than attempting to establish one formula defining the complexity, favours focus on particular, fragmented entities. Instead of focusing of emphasising coherence of the whole system, the research favours the analysis of relations. In the old paradigm, the structure is established by relations of interiority – i.e. focus on keeping elements

together to ensure one coherent whole. The introduction of the notion of an assemblage, in contrast, may be characterised by relations of exteriority – signifying openness to external relationships, seen more as a symbiosis of organisms.<sup>24</sup> Conducting a multidisciplinary research means questioning the conventional, well-established relations between things.

Findings

Reflecting back on the methodology, it feels that the primary disorientation caused by the seemingly unrelated episodes we had to follow, also contributed to being able to ask more provocative questions and get more insightful conclusions and findings. Still, the idea of acting in a subversive way and undermining settled beliefs was difficult, since it required leaving my comfort zone.

The first conclusion I drew was that our view on protest activity is still heavily influenced by historical events, e.g. French revolution or 68s revolts, in the sense that the first imagery which comes to our mind is a barricade and people throwing cobblestones. However, nowadays, there are multiple ways of protesting: apart from gathering in public spaces, people can support strikes virtually, by sending petitions, expressing support via social networks, boycotting institutions, etc.

Nowadays, since the protest is the part of a political system, we can talk about institutionalised protest. A modern, democratic Strasbourg provides a multitude of spaces for protest, which became clearly visible through my survey. Dissent as an inherent part of the system is the symbol of democracy and the basic law of the citizens, but does it not weaken the influence and power of disagreeing? Should not protest remain a subversive activity?

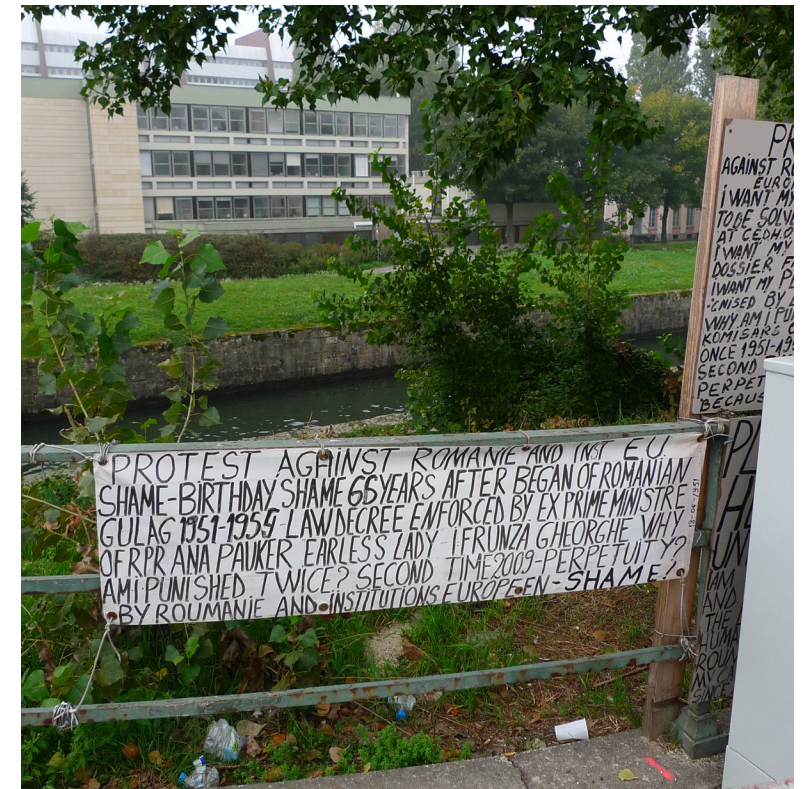
Traditionally, protest was the last resort for people who could not find the ways of expressing their disagreement or influencing governmental strategies in a formal way, such as minorities or precarious workers. In modern France, the order has been reversed. Protest becomes more of a spectacle, the first thing to do, even before talking to the representatives.

Considering all the above observations, the power of crowd in the modern world should be put into question. Is the protest still enrooted in reality? Maybe it is just a spectacle, which is directed by the government? I do not know the answers to these questions yet. In my following steps, I will attempt to further sublimate my area of research and look at protest as a spectacle (through Debord’s eyes), or even as a carnival (through Bakhtin’s eyes).

20  
Wise, M. Norton and Wise,  
Elaine M., “Staging an Empire”,  
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edited by Lorraine Daston  
(Zone Books, 2004), 100-145.  
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Ibid., 144.  
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Space, edited by Ian Buchanan,  
Gregg Lambert (Edinburgh:  
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1. Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition* (University of Chicago Press, 1998)
2. Avermaete, Tom, *Another Modern, The Postwar Architecture and Urbanism of Candilis-Josic-Woods* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2005)
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4. Avermaete, Tom, "The Architect and the Public", *Hunch* (14, 2010)
5. Buchanan, Richard, *Wicked Problems in Design Thinking*. (*Design issues* 8, no. 2, 1992), 5-21.
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« ^ Protest posters hung  
on the railings around the  
European Quarter (mainly the  
European Court of Human  
Rights)

< Poster found on one of the  
street lamps around the city.

## PROTEST ACTIVITY

During my one-week stay in Stras-  
bourg, I took up the quest of track-  
ing down any bottom-up activity  
by its citizens which leaves at least  
a temporary trace on the urban en-  
vironment. Starting from protest  
activities, the search then extended

to all demonstrations of activities  
which aimed at expressing one's  
opinion, such as, posters, leaflets,  
graffiti, writings on walls, vandal-  
ism, temporary events, happenings.  
occupation of space.



Anti-GCO protest at Place de  
la Republique, 30th Sep 2017



«<sup>^</sup>»  
Graffiti on deserted buildings  
across the Strasbourg port  
area

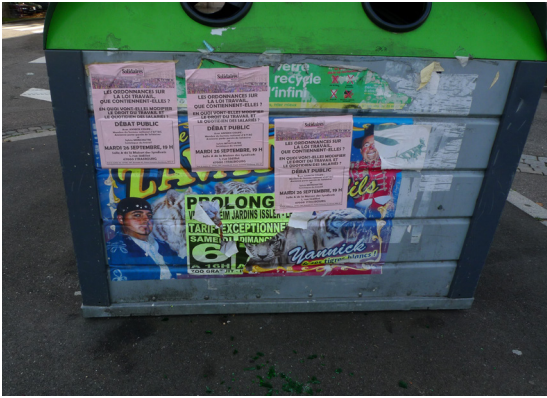
«  
Adverts and leaflets are  
occasionally glued to  
lampposts, installation boxes,  
rubbish containers.

## EXPRESSION OF IDEAS THROUGH SPATIAL APPROPRIATION

In Strasbourg, any attempt of finding signs of bottom-up activity in the city center turned out futile. The only leaflets could be seen on street lamps and the only graffiti was found in more deserted, less

populated areas of the city, such as the port area or the surroundings of the old train tracks. Similarly, public space of Grande Ensemble estates turned out to be equally devoid of individual expression. Strasbourg

did not make an impression of a city appropriated by its citizens, rather the opposite: it seemed very clean and appropriate, as if every demonstration of disagreement had to be washed away immediately.



Relations between main squares and their capacities

Important places

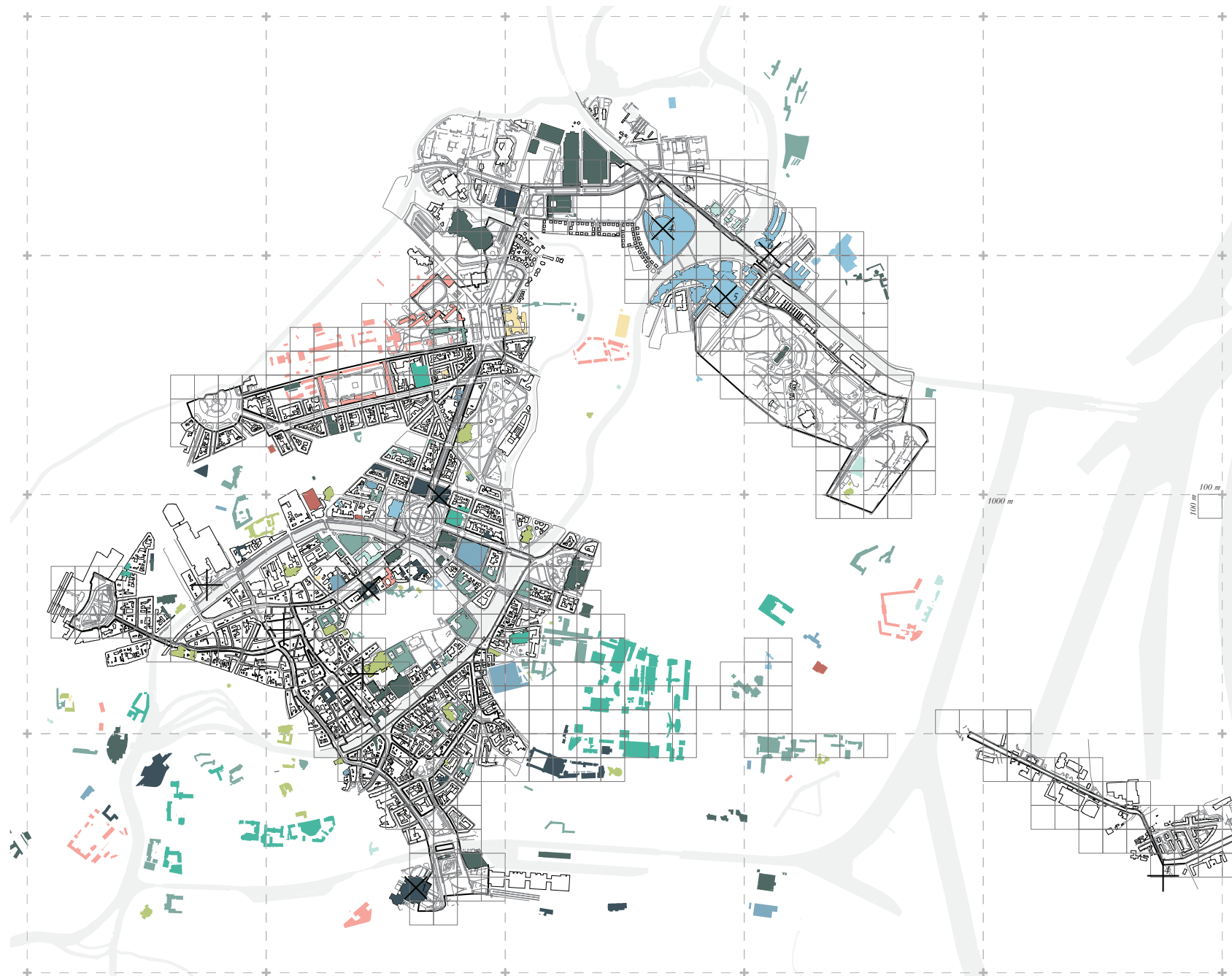
Ancienne Synagogue - a place of memory - the beginning point of the anti-FN protest in 1997 (50.000 participants)

The monument of Kléber  
Cathedral Square - the place of liberation manifestations in 1918

Anti-NATO riots in 2009  
(Hotel Ibis and the border control building)

Institutions

Strasbourg Eurométropole  
Préfecture administrative d'Alsace et du Bas-Rhin  
Town Hall  
European Parliament  
Council of Europe  
European Court of Human Rights



Public building types

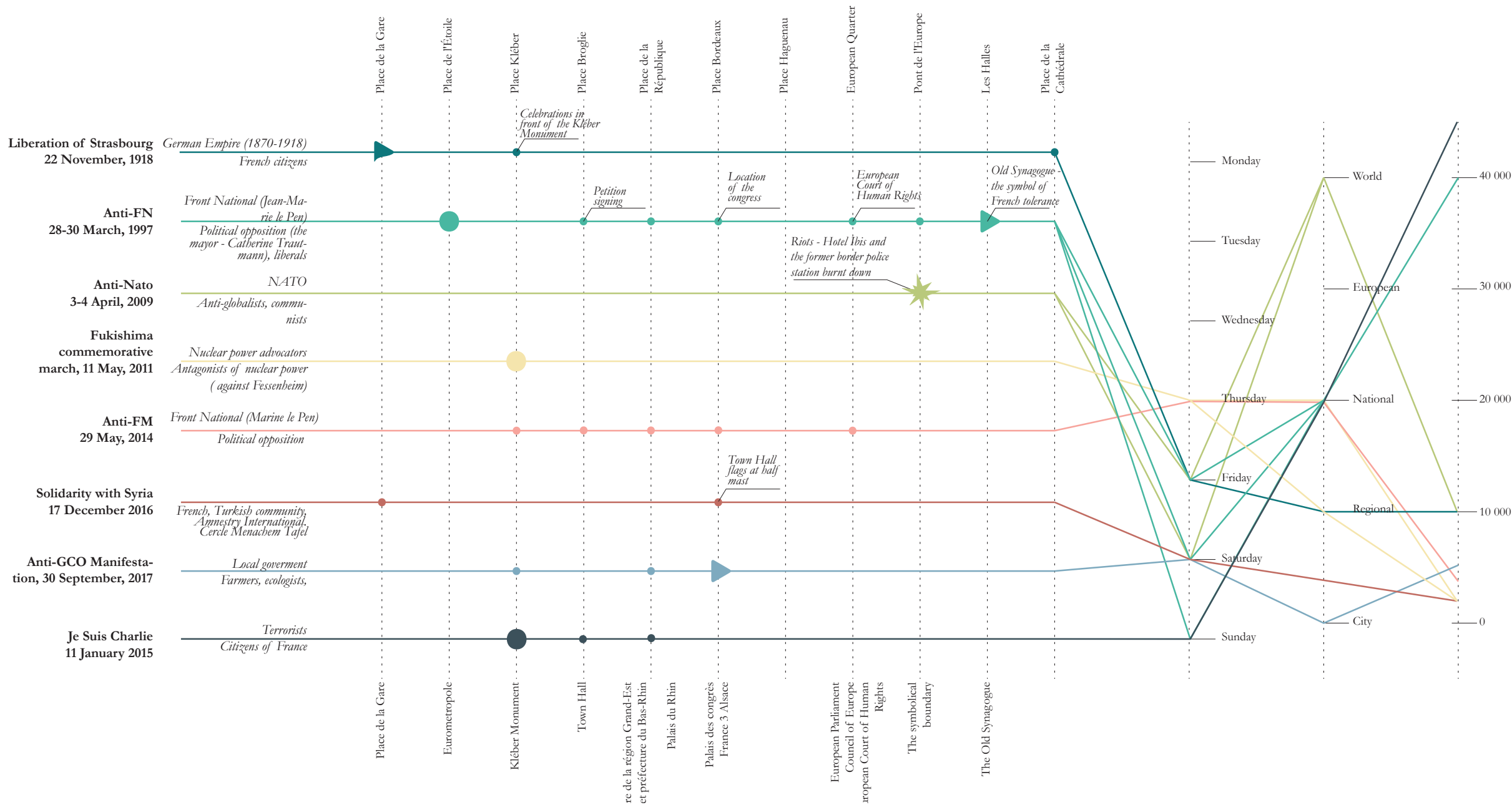
- Organisation
- Education
- University
- Culture
- Church
- Media
- Military
- Law
- European Union
- Administration
- Government

## CAPACITY FOR PROTEST

The selection of public spaces used by local citizens for protesting was based on observation, articles, short movies, media reports and historical photographs. The mapping of types of public buildings allows to highlight the relations between public spaces and adjacent institutions.

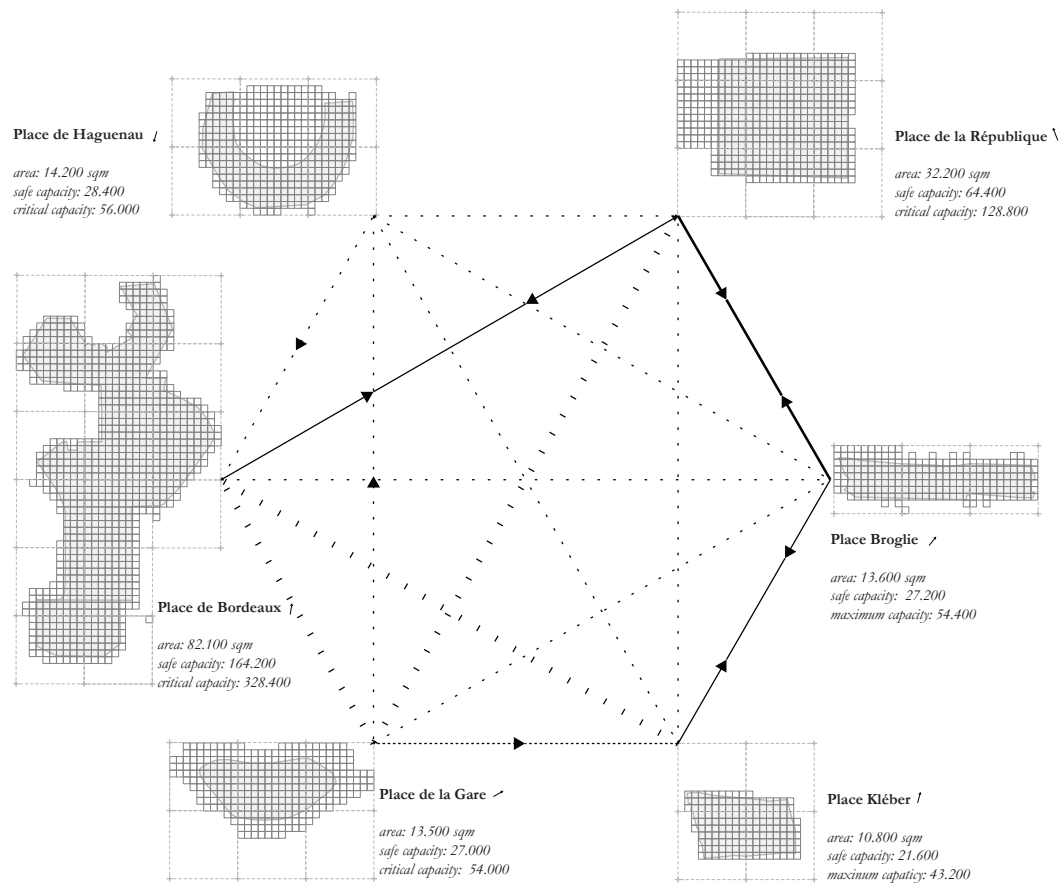
The quantitative survey aims to measure Strasbourg capacities for hosting mass protests. The map is divided into the grid, easily translatable into the amount of people who could potentially fit within, according to a chosen multiplier. The safe capacity level is estimated to be at 2

people / sqm, a walking crowd starts losing its fluency at 2.7 people / sqm, a dense protest is usually characterised by the amount of 4 people / sqm. A very dense standing crowd reaches 4.7 people / sqm. Above that, the maximum density becomes critical.

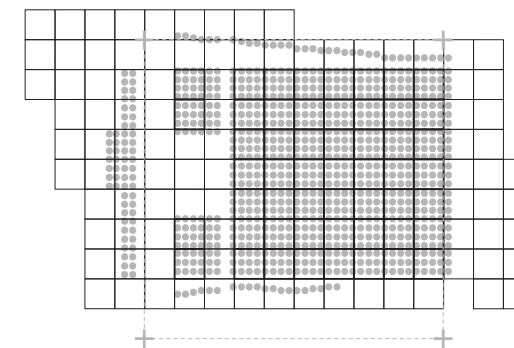
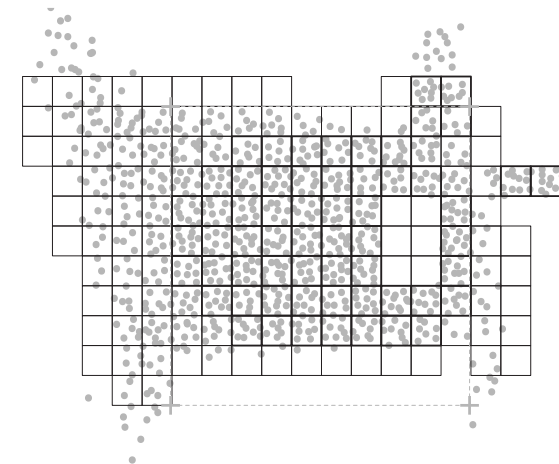
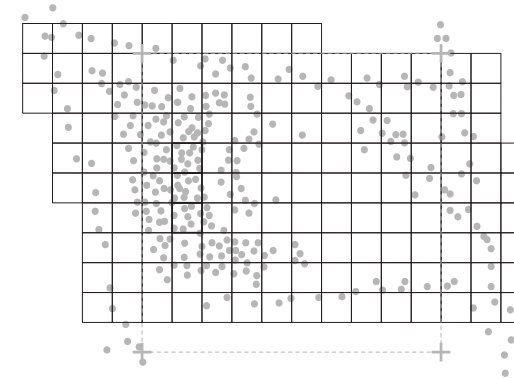
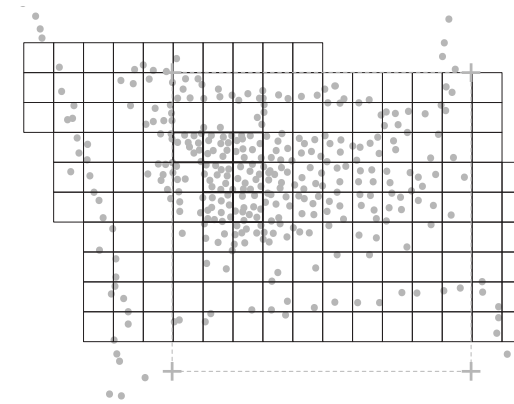


The graph analyses the relations between squares in Strasbourg (time-distance) and depicts preferable sequences of public squares used during public manifestations and marches.

## Relations between main squares and their capacities



## PROTEST SEQUENCING



Left  
 Relations between main  
 squares and their capacities

Right  
 Crowd shapes at Place Kleber  
 during various gatherings

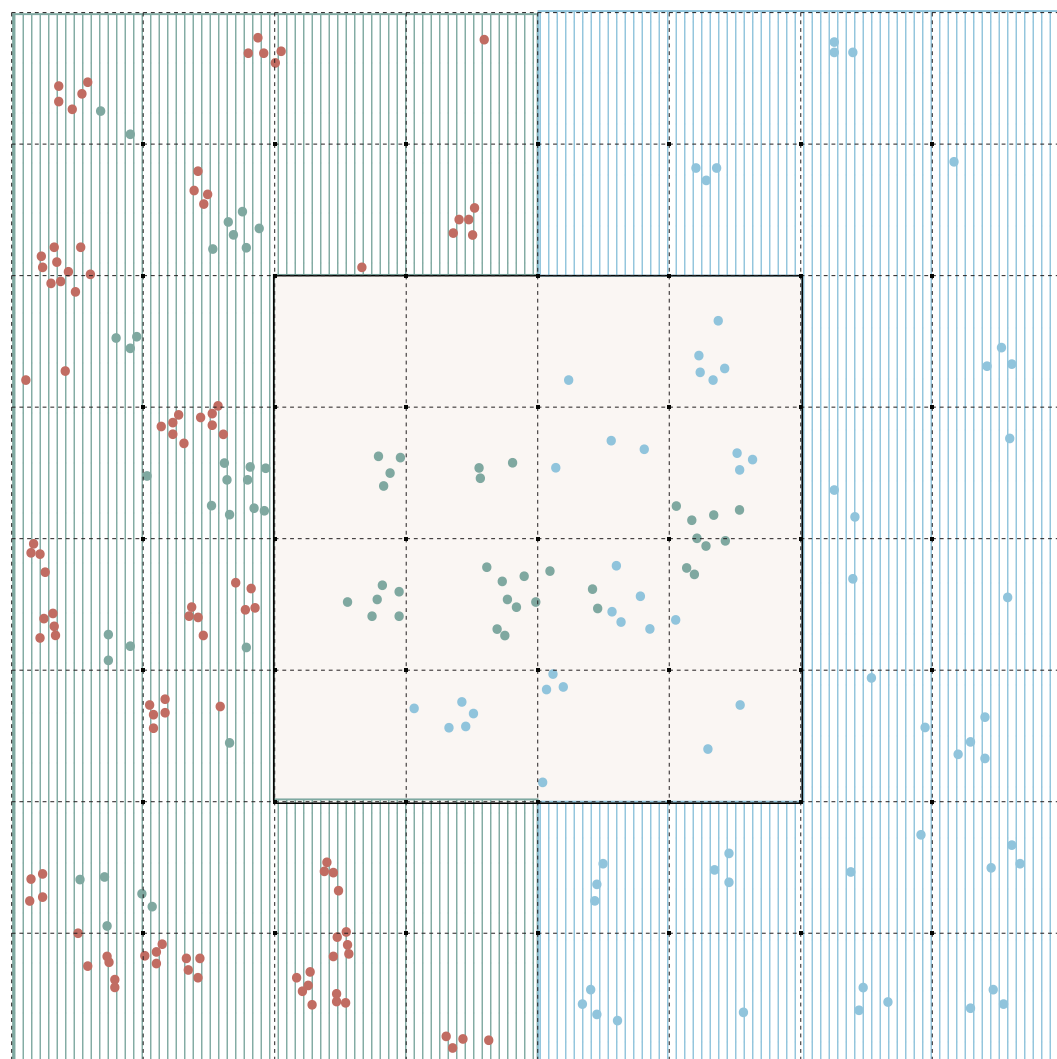
- Below 100 people / 100 sqm  
(safe)
- 100-300 people / 100 sqm  
(dense walking)
- 300+ people / 100 sqm  
(dense standing)

Left top Anti-Erdogan manifestation, 10  
 October 2015

Right top Anti-GCO manifestation, 30  
 September 2017

Left bottom Nazi assembly, 1944

Right bottom Je Suis Charlie, 11 January  
 2015

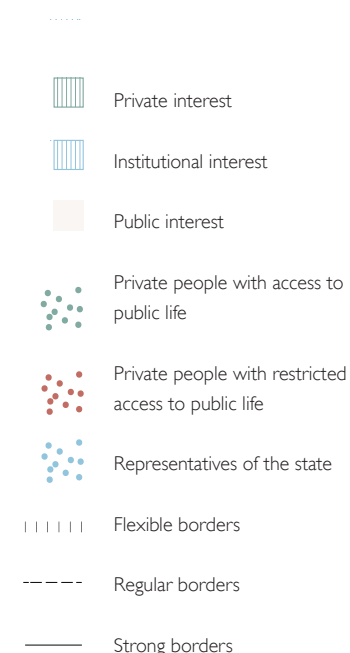


## PUBLIC SPACE AND CONTROL

In accordance with Habermas' theory, public space can be understood as an arena of mutual control between a society (understood as private people entering the public space) and any organisation holding power (may it be a state, an organisation, a public person, etc.). Public space is the area of constant control. In a perfect world, private interest is constrained to the private realm, as well as a state interest in only expressed within state realm. Ideally, public space is regulated by the government only to such extent that it does not constrain expression, free speech, freedom of assembly, etc. On the other hand, citizens are expected to comply with imposed rules. As a result, public space is an area of constant struggle over the territory, which allows for recognition of a certain group in public space.

Two variables influence the inclusiveness of space: the level of territorialisation (openness or closeness of a border) and the level of coding (the intelligibility of signs existent in the public sphere). By making the public space too territorialised and coded, the state may limit the scope of people capable of participating. Similarly, aggressive territorialisation by any group excludes other citizens from joining.

The qualitative analyses of manifestations in Strasbourg are aimed to establish links between the expression advocated by protesters and the choice of certain public spaces (along with its symbolism) to host this endeavour, as well correlated with the time of a protest, the extent of participation and the scale of the subject matter.



### Campagne des banquets

The governmental restriction on political gatherings and demonstrations was circumvented by the idea of private political meetings, which served as a way to provide the regime with a popular criticism and sustain the plurality of voices.

### Greek oligarchy

A greek polis was divided into common and private realms. Agora was constituted by common lexis and praxis. The access was only restricted to the the most acclaimed citizens, whose status was constituted based on personal wealth (private realm).

### Absolute monarchy

Public sphere, understood as a separate realm distinguished from a prive realm, is non-existent in the feudal society. The superior creates a public representation, which is elevated to the public status, yet is not inclusive to other members of the society.

### Modern democracy

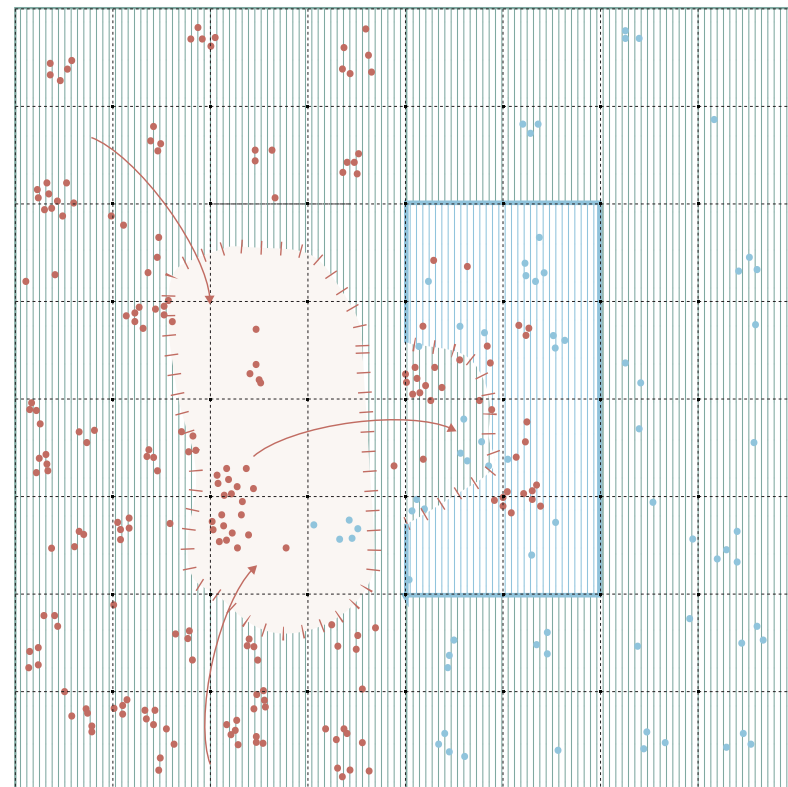
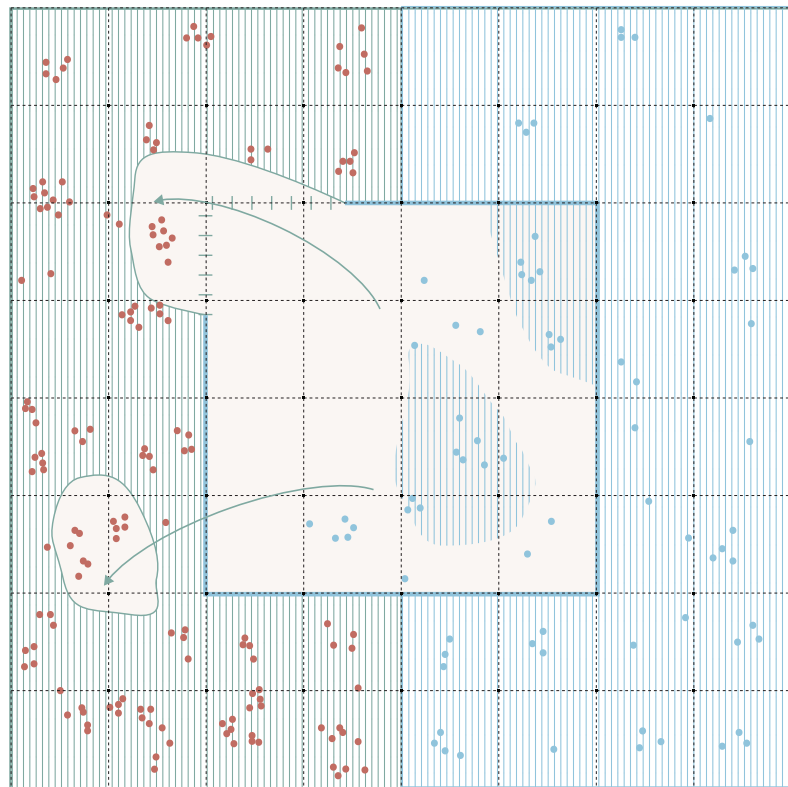
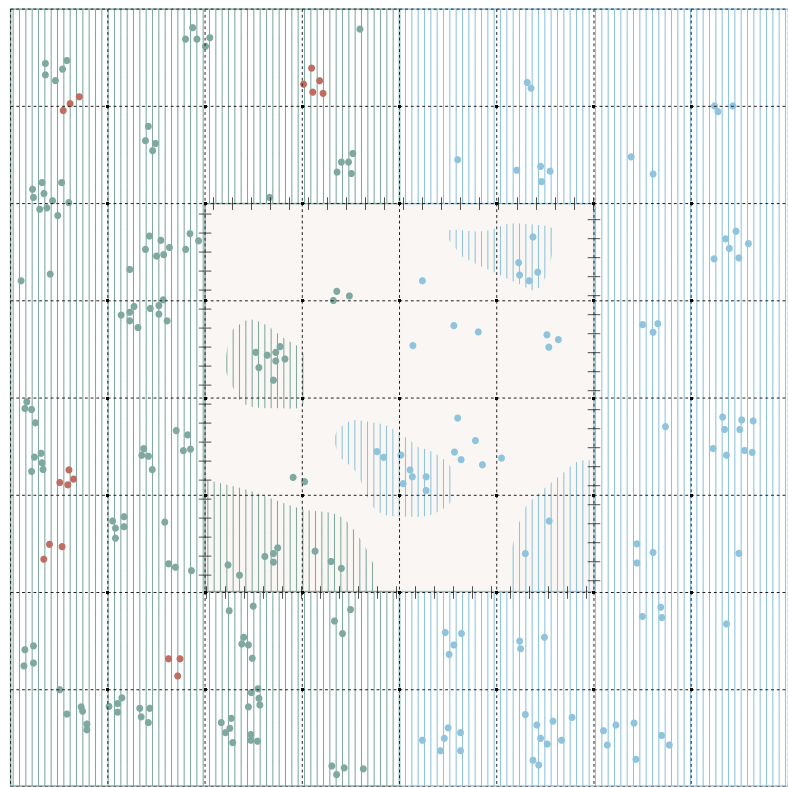
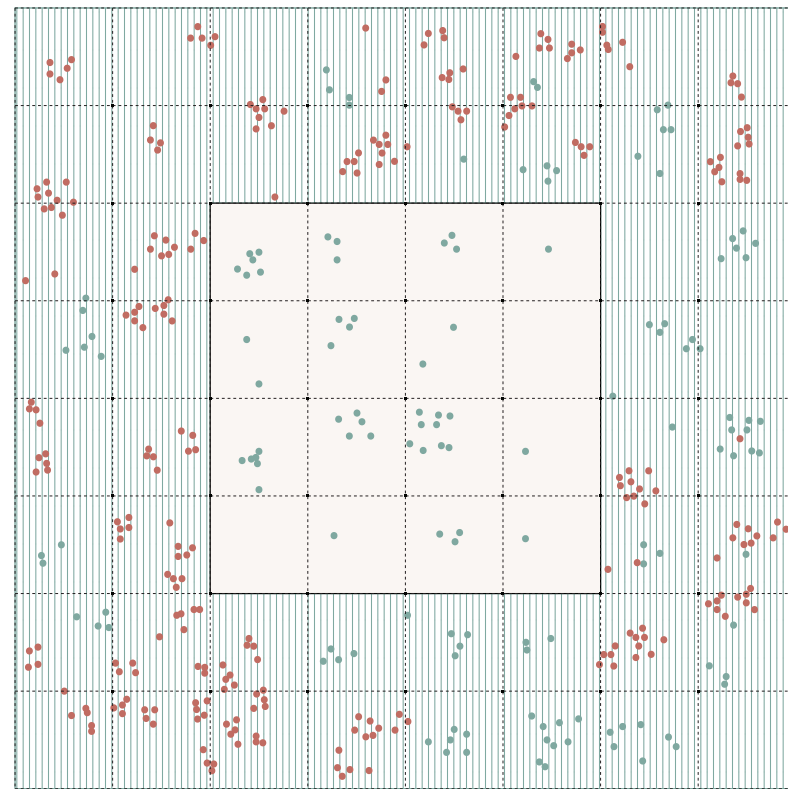
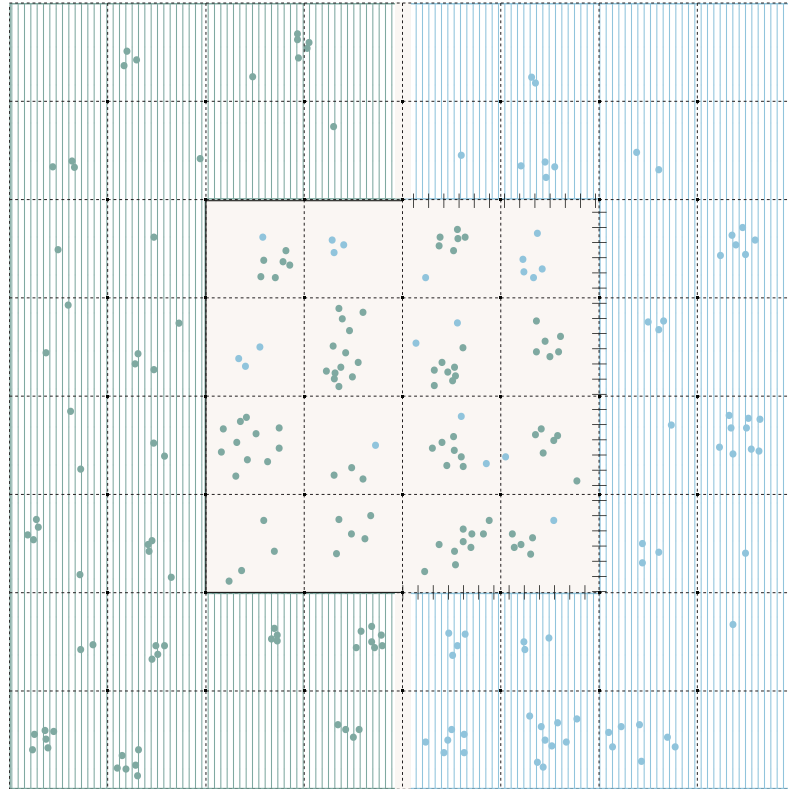
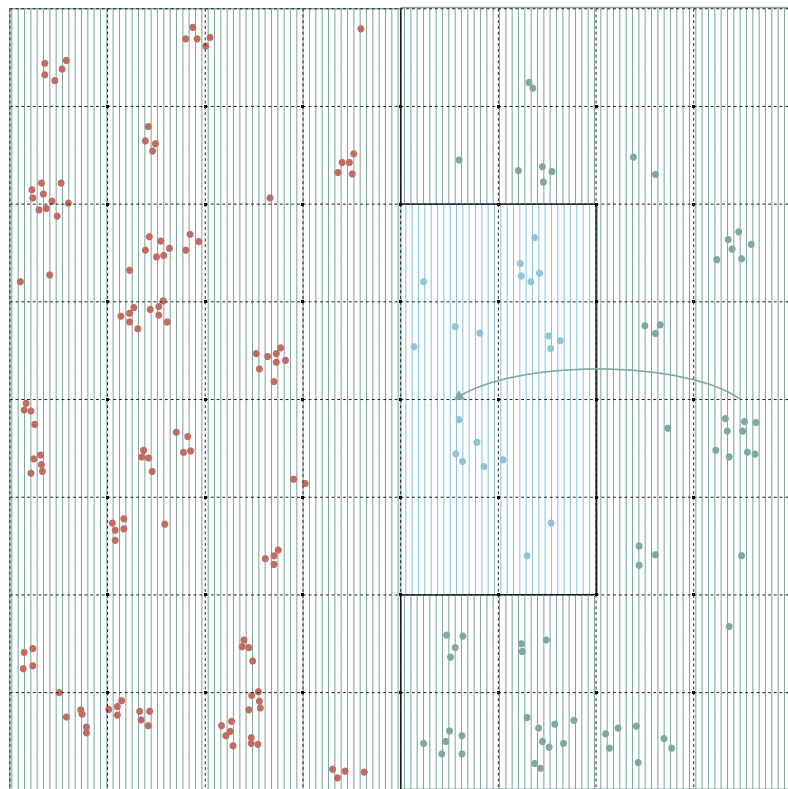
The access to public life is granted to the majority of citizens. Conflicts restricted to the private sphere enter public sphere, as well as the institutional interest influences public interest.

### Bourgeois democracy

Public sphere was constituted by discussions between social institutions and educated representatives of the bourgeoisie. The public interest was clearly distinguished from the private interest.

### French revolution - 1789

The governmental restriction on political gatherings and demonstrations was circumvented by the idea of private political meetings, which served as a way to still provide the regime with a popular criticism.



1.  
At noon it presented the parade of the Three Kings before the Holy Family, with rooster singing simultaneously.

2.  
Astrolabe indicated the position of the stars in the geocentric systems in function of time. Needles marked the movements of the sun and the moon, the hours and their subdivisions. A Ptolemaic astrolabe indicated the position of the planets. The Heliocentric model of Copernicus had been known since 1543, but was not yet unanimously adopted. The order of planets in this system is: Moon, Venus, Mercury, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn.

Dasypodius Clock

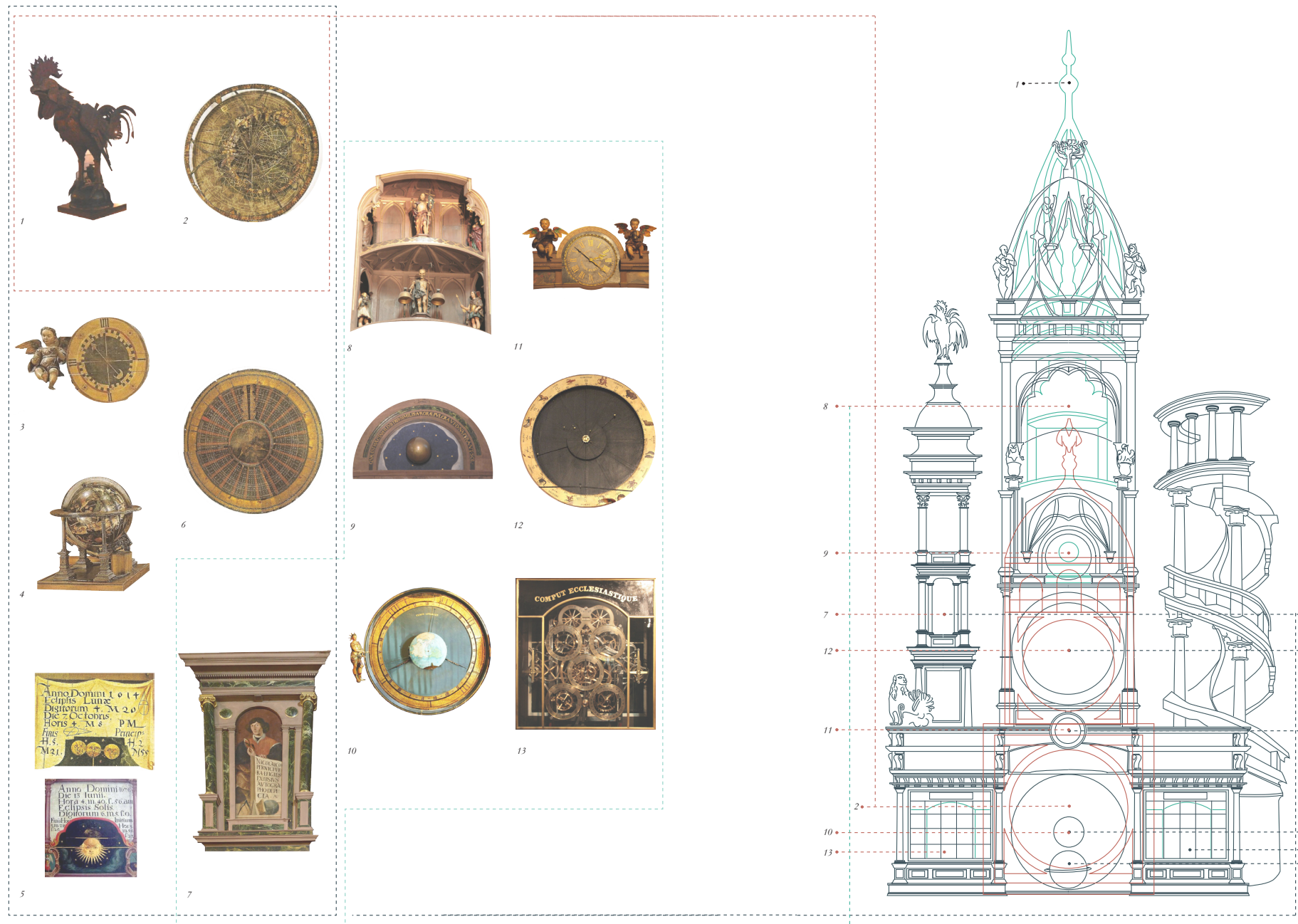
3  
A chronometer, next to the cherub, whose needle points the current time (with quarter of an hour accuracy).

4  
A celestial globe demonstrating 48 constellations and 1022 fixed stars described by Ptolemy.

5  
Charts of lunar and solar eclipses for the following 36 years.

6  
A calendar, divided into 366 sectors, each denoting a day of the year. The dates of the mobile holidays and times of the spring equinox are painted on the plate, which turns by 1/100 each year; hence require repainting every century.

7  
To bring the city to the new level of knowledge, the creators used the modern computations of Nicolas Copernicus. He offered to send one of his pupils, Conrad



## THE CLOCK OF THREE KINGS

Dasypodius, to Strasbourg, with instructions. The portrait functions as a certificate of cooperation with the great man. 'Copernici vera effigies' - 'Real image of Copernicus' Jean-Baptiste Schwilgué Clock 8

The upper figures depict 12 apostles, while the bottom procession symbolises 4 stages of life: childhood, adolescence, middle age and old age.

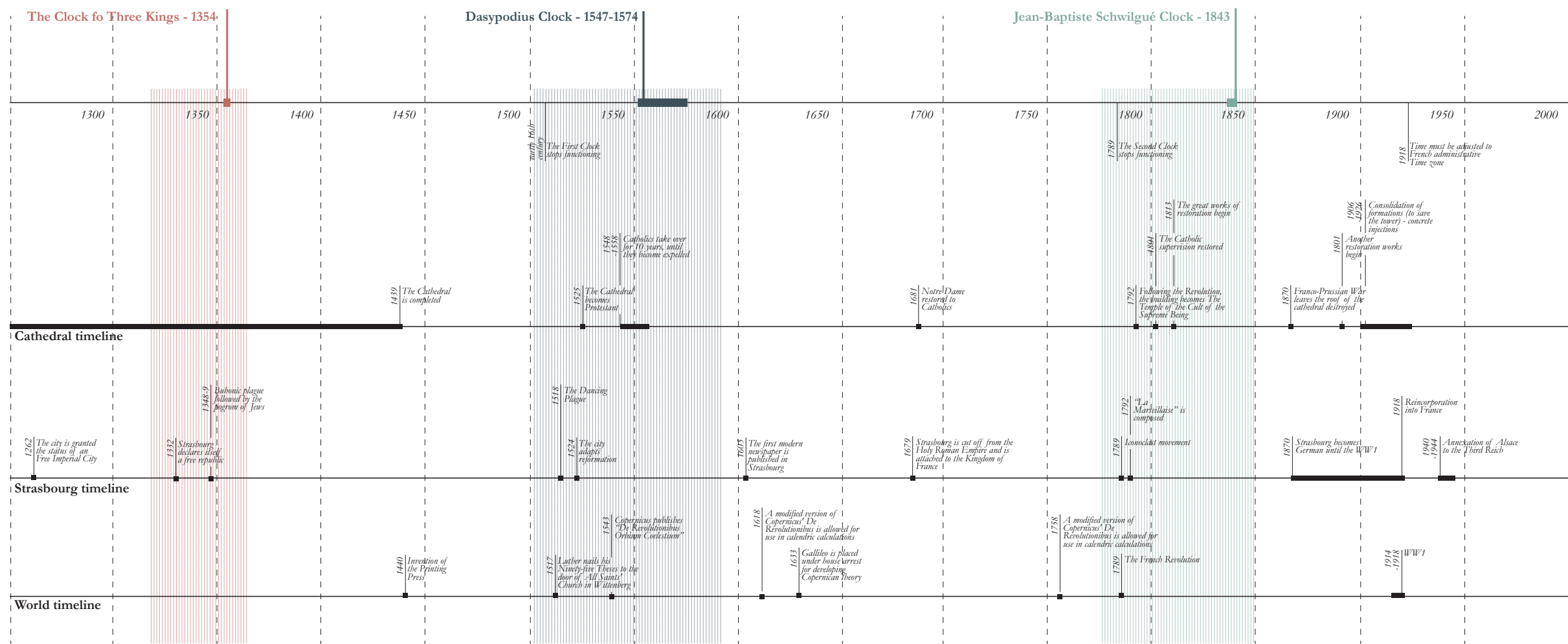
9  
This globe shows the phases of the Moon, day after day. It must be looked facing the clock, otherwise it may give imprecise reading. These phases are carried out by a hemispherical cap painted half black, half golden.

10  
The perpetual calendar places the Earth at the center and represents the actual positions of the Sun and the Moon around the Earth.

11  
The clock with double needles. The silver, showing Strasbourg's mean sun time and the additional golden needles, delayed by 31 minutes to adjust to the mean administrative time.

12  
Heliocentric planetary arrangement

13  
The perpetual calendar places the Earth at the center and represents the actual (not the average) positions of the Sun and the Moon around the Earth. Contrary to what is often said, this mechanism is not a computer; although "comput" is the root of computer (computer). The "ecclesiastical computation" is in fact the "calculation of the Church".



The clock is located in the Cathédrale Notre-Dame. The current clock is the third one on that spot. The history of the clock demonstrates the importance of time as a regulating measure in the medieval society and shows how it lost its indispensability towards modernity, with the growing emancipation of the society.

Similar to Wise's analysis of Pfaueninsel, the analysis of the clock's timeline, juxtaposed to the timeline of the Cathedral itself, Strasbourg, and the World, demonstrates how certain events get reified in things and how the course of history is fossilised within material realm.



## EMBODIED PROTEST: AN ANTIDOTE TO MEDIATED PRESENCE

## INTRODUCTION

The tradition of dissent is exceptionally rich in France. Starting with the French Revolution in 1789, then Spring of Nations in 1848, or even student protests of 1968, countermovement was a strong way of marking the advent of the new. Riots and revolutions may be less common nowadays, yet the tradition of being in the street, expressing beliefs, being heard is a big part of the French political culture. Sometimes protest in France, instead of being the last resort, becomes a primary step to take, a manifestation of disagreement, before even entering a discussion.<sup>1</sup>

The development of the idea of public space as conceived specifically to enable group contestation against the authority is certainly not a linear process, however, we can distinguish a few events highly advancing the process. In “The Gutenberg’s Galaxy” McLuhan explains the far-reaching consequences of the invention of printing press by Gutenberg in 1440, which triggered the process of evolution from the manuscript culture towards the electronic age. It initiated the process of the development of technology leading to equalising access to information, enabling independence and emancipation of an individual. The rising amount of people being able to read and write, triggered the formation of individual awareness based on the ability of critical assessment of information. The first and most influential event which was possible because of the invention of print was the Reformation. Luther’s movement was able to access the wider group of recipients due to the use of the brand new communication technology allowing faster than ever ways of replicating written material.

Following Alec Ryrie’s analysis<sup>2</sup>, the legacy of protestantism contributed to the development of society towards democracy. It was the first movement that showed the possibility of insurgence and the right to challenge the rules. It also demanded the government’s limited involvement into people’s lives, which much later became a cornerstone in the development of a modern political system. It could be said that the fact that Luther nailed the printed statements to the door was the first act of protest and the preview of what was to come later as democracy - creation the public space as a place of contestation.

Strasbourg found itself in the centre of this revolutionary whirlwind. Being the place of Gutenberg’s biggest invention, it proceeded to be one of the first cities to convert to protestantism. Moreover, thanks to that situation, it was the recipient of all the new scientific developments at the time, including Copernican revolution. Nowadays, the existence of European Union institutions - the Council of Europe and European Court of Human Rights - sustains its symbolic role of the European’s keeper of democracy.

## CROWD AS A NEW PROTAGONIST

It is not given to every man to take a bath of multitude; enjoying a crowd is an art; and only he can relish a debauch of vitality at the expense of the human species, on whom, in his cradle, a fairy has bestowed the love of masks and masquerading, the hate of home, and the passion for roaming.<sup>3</sup>

The early 19th century brings about the unprecedentedly fast development of urban culture. Growing density of human settlements and urbanisation creates a new collective protagonist - the crowd. The new concept enters the awareness of city dwellers

<sup>1</sup> Dehesdin, Slate.

<sup>2</sup> Ryrie, CNN

<sup>3</sup> Baudelaire, Ch., Crowds  
Debord, Thesis 4.

- being in the crowd, experiencing the constant presence of other people around. Baudelaire's poem "Crowds" calls enjoying a crowd an art, "a bath of multitude", "a debauch of vitality at the expense of the human species". Losing oneself in a crowd



Figure 1

is the 19th century equivalent of Wordsworthian "sublime" - the uncanny power of nature. Urban landscape shaped by a collective force of people becomes a new human habitat.

Traditional depiction of a crowd uses panoramic top-view projection. Abraham Bosse's depiction of Thomas Hobbes's "Leviathan" (fig. 1) compares a crowd to the legendary sea creature<sup>4</sup>. The juxtaposition of Leviathan - the symbol of all evil and a humanity - in

Hobbes's understanding maintaining peace only due to social contract - depicts a crowd almost as a force of nature. Similarly, the same tradition of crowd depiction was used in picturing Nazi assemblies in the 1930s, aimed at emphasising the force of the crowd as one, homogeneous entity. However, growing individualisation shifted the representation towards more immersive depictions, using first person perspective. For example, in the post-revolutionary Russia, the crowd gained human traits. Posters would show zoomed in human parts (fig. 2), e.g. faces, hands, torsos, introducing human body in more detail. Thus a crowd becomes more heterogeneous, obtains emotional value, apart from being this shapeless mass of similar entities. Its substance, a human body, is brought to the fore.

Such transformation results in the creation of spaces in the city which are occupied by crowds - a public sphere. The moment when the crowd ceases to be just an indifferent mass of people and gains causative power is when relations between individuals are formed and it starts to exercise a collective aim. One of these moments appears during protest as the moment of collective contestation.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The novelty of publicness as it was conceived in the 19th century lies in the opportunities of participation and direct influence on the space, which was not within reach of previous city dwellers. In order to impose the specific gaze of the public space, Jurgen Habermas's definition will be treated as a starting point for the enquiry. It defines public sphere as a mediatory zone between the state and the society<sup>5</sup>. Political control is subordinated to the democratic demand. Public activities can be understood as constant struggle of influence over public realm between the authorities, understood as rule imposing agents and the society - private people undertaking endeavours in public space.

<sup>4</sup> Ziada, To See (Like) a Crowd  
<sup>5</sup> Habermas, An Encyclopedia Article, p.50

Such conception of public space is a very novel attitude. During monarchic times, crowd cheering the king did not have the same power it has now. A crowd cheering a king was not a powerful public gathering, but rather a collection of extras with no real influence on king's proceedings<sup>6</sup>. Similarly, famously democratic Athenian Agora was in fact an oligarchic public sphere - inaccessible to women or slaves. Habermas suggests to see the 18th century French liberal bourgeois sphere as the ideal realisation of publicness, where inequalities are temporarily put aside in order for everyone to be engaged in a rational, non-exclusive and disinterested debate about the public good<sup>7</sup>. However, subsequent inclusion of the society members who might have been more disadvantaged than the others and would require public sphere to seek for the realisation of their own private needs, put an end to the liberal public sphere.<sup>8</sup> What is more, the emergence of media led to diffusion of press and propaganda.

Instead of talking about the Habermasian destruction of the public sphere or Sennettian "fall of public man" and applying outworn and outdated definitions to a modern society, Margaret Crawford<sup>9</sup> claims it would be more productive to broaden the definition of public and make a shift from its understanding as a unitary, internally-coherent entity towards the explanation as a polyphony of voices, which does not exclude conflicting interests. The term she advocates, introduced by Nancy Fraser - counterpublics - describes spaces formed as a response to restricted access to publicness imposed by a dominant social layer. Depending on the historical situation, the excluded group would be different, e.g. heathens, women, children, slaves, the poor, immigrants, etc. In fact, Fraser argues, there was not a single point in history when there was one united public.<sup>10</sup> Public has always been constructed out of multiplicity of smaller agents, constantly rearranged and reinterpreted. Counterpublics are "often sites of struggle and contestation, help to overturn it [the normative space]"<sup>11</sup>. Insurgence, protests, countermovements, riots, public struggles over important issues are the inherent element of the public, if we adopt the new, more heterogeneous definition, which accepts the existence of contradictory opinions as the essence of the new public space.

James Jasper, discussing the sociology of protest, defines the term arena which refers to spaces where strategic actions occur. While they are governed by rules imposed top-down in order to define the limits of possible actions, protest is mostly aimed at changing them and expanding the restrictions.<sup>12</sup> It seems that what Jasper discusses, is the exact definition of the transformation of the public space into counterpublic.

## FLATTENING OF EXPERIENCES

One of the results of the development of media, written language, photography, video, etc. is the primacy of visual culture that we are facing right now. As McLuhan argues in "The Gutenberg's Galaxy" the focus on the visual causes the neglect other senses: auditory, tactile, olfactory. As a result, the experiences become two-dimensional. For Lefebvre<sup>13</sup>, progressing mediatisation is double reductionist. First, it implies



Figure 2

<sup>6</sup> Habermas, p. 50.  
<sup>7</sup>  
<sup>8</sup> Habermas, p. 53.  
<sup>9</sup> Habermas, The Structural Transformation, p. xii.  
<sup>10</sup> Crawford, Contesting the Public Realm, p. 5  
<sup>11</sup> Crawford, p. 4.  
<sup>12</sup> Crawford, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Jasper, Protest, p. 24.  
<sup>13</sup> Lefebvre, The Production of Space, p. 285.

movement of real space into abstract 3D, Euclidean space - losing its multidimensionality, heterogeneity and immediacy of experience. Abstract space produces, imposes and reinforces social homogeneity. Next, it undergoes another reduction to the illusory space of two dimensional representations. It causes the state in which space is no longer to be experienced - it is something abstract to be looked at. Space becomes more an image of space, a text to be read, a message with no traces of either state power or human bodies and their actions.

Starting with parietal art, through perspective painting, photography, video, VR, there is an evident tendency towards higher level of representational realism. And paradoxically, such tendency does not liberate from perceptual constraints, but rather confuses and blurs the ability of clear assessment and distinguishing between the reality and the spectacle. In Debord's words, spectacle introduced predominance of the visual, "capital accumulated to the point that it becomes an image"<sup>14</sup>, spectacle is one of the moments or aspects of visualisation.

In "The Society of the Spectacle", Debord goes on to offer a more philosophical angle to understanding of a spectacle. For him, the issue goes beyond the problem of an interface, and refers to "a social relation among people, mediated by images"<sup>15</sup>. The fact of constant mediation leads to the creation of a fourth wall which constantly blurs the real vision. This leads Debord to the Platonic conclusion that what we are experiencing is not directly the reality, but the fake reality. People are subjected to take part in a spectacle that is created as a capitalistic instrument for pacifying the masses. By fabricating pseudo needs and fake cravings the society is subjected to manipulation and incapacitated.

## BODY IN PROTEST

According to Lefebvre, one of the ways of freeing ourselves from the spectacle, is the defamiliarisation of perception, which has to be realised through erasing any mediation from our cognition. Experiencing space through body and body through space - acknowledging the body's constant relation with the surrounding becomes "the key to a revolt against modernity's straightjacket."<sup>16</sup> Lefebvre states that "the whole of (social) space proceeds from the body"<sup>17</sup>. It ceases to be an abstract idea, but a very corporeal, material entity. It is a body that perceives the space first (through senses), and through our bodies we become social. While a body provides connection, any mediation leads to disconnection.<sup>18</sup>

By interacting with each other, the members of the crowd generate power which allows them to temporarily take over public space. When talking about uprising, mobilisation and disagreeing, the major strength of every movement comes from the collective effort. In the case of protest, the main protagonist is plural - a crowd, a group of people consisting of individuals, who decide on collective action. Power is a virtual concept, which requires constant authorisation to sustain it. According to Hannah Arendt power needs spaces of appearance, understood as public spaces arising out of actions (praxis) and speeches (lexis) of individuals<sup>19</sup>, sustained due to the plurality of agents. Action sustains the power. By the action of the individuals, the potential of power is actualised. At the same time, on the state side, political institutions serve as manifestation and materialisation of power. This understanding requires constant actualisation and highlights the fragility of public space understood as a construct supported by the participation of people.

According to Jasper, all actions are physical<sup>20</sup>, which means that we can talk not only about the surrounding, but also about what a human body is capable of doing. Employing a particular "body gaze" allows to look at through how it can be manipulated by human body and how it can influence human body through all its senses.

All these deliberations validate the discussion about the use of body in protest. During the French Revolution in 1789, body was still used as a shield. At that point, the society was still fighting for the right for the actual, corporeal attendance in public life. Barricades would be built not only as a territorial mark, but also to protect the vulnerable body, which was put in life-threatening danger. Almost two hundred years later, 1968 protests brought about a subversive use of body. In the shadow of a post-war trauma, it could also be seen as a society healing process, attempting to blur the memory of disintegrated, bleeding bodies. Following Debord's call for arms asserting that through body one can escape the spectacle and be free from the imposed schemata, the body was understood as a means of liberating the society (fig. 3). Sensory cognition supposedly would break the fourth wall and provide access to "reality". Hence, 1968 brought almost the carnivalesque use of the body. Almost literally applying the notion of liberation from imposed limitations and restrictions of a society, young people would engage publicly in very physical actions, eating, drinking, kissing, making love - which are intrinsically human, but became marginalised by the society. That was the way of being extremely physical, but without being hurt.

In "Rabelais and His World", Bakhtin discusses the carnival as a special period which brings body to the fore by making it the main way of experiencing the events. However, there is also a special collective dimension to this experience, as a carnivalistic self is transgressed in a communal performance and incorporated into a collective body of people. Such communal performance, which Hannah Arendt would call a collective action, leads to creation of the Fraser's counterpublic. Carnival creates an alternative space, which disregards the official rules and deconstructs a dominant culture, imposing its own time and space. In such an alternative spatio-temporal realm the inequalities between people are abolished. In contrast to the carnival, the protest dwells on the reality, commenting upon the existing state and aiming to bring about changes in the reality. Protest is not conceived as a temporary event which serves just as an escape from the reality, but it seeks to leave the mark on the reality.

Therefore, also the body during a protest does not reach the same level of carelessness as during a carnival. Protest is designed as an event, which in itself expresses as an objection to reality, which results in the intrinsic existence of conflict. As a result, it puts a body in a constant peril of damage. It is a very specific and unique state. The hazard of being hurt, or being ostracised by taking the wrong side in the discussion makes people unwilling to join counterpublics. People's objection to participate constrains the action.

THE TRADITION OF DISSENT IS EXCEPTIONALLY RICH IN FRANCE. STARTING WITH THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN 1789, THEN SPRING OF NATIONS IN 1848, OR EVEN STUDENT PROTESTS OF 1968, COUNTERMOVEMENT WAS A STRONG WAY OF MARKING THE ADVENT OF THE NEW.

<sup>20</sup> "That sounds silly, but we need to look at the ways in which action is embodied: how it feels to someone, how it looks to others, the limits of what a body can do, and how two individual do the same things in slightly different ways." Jasper, Protest, p.41.

<sup>14</sup> Debord, The Society of Spectacle, Thesis 34.  
<sup>15</sup> Debord, Thesis 4.  
<sup>16</sup> Weinert, Making Sense.  
<sup>17</sup> Lefebvre, The Production of Space, p.405.  
<sup>18</sup> Friedman and van Ingen, Bodies in Space, p.94.  
<sup>19</sup> Arendt, The Human Condition, p.198.

## DISCONNECTION

*The sun arose while we proceeded, and, when we had once again reached that most thronged mart of the populous town, the street of the D-- Hotel, it presented an appearance of human bustle and activity scarcely inferior to what I had seen on the evening before. And here, long, amid the momentarily increasing confusion, did I persist in my pursuit of the stranger. But, as usual, he walked to and fro, and during the day did not pass from out the turmoil of that street.<sup>21</sup>*

In Edgar Allan Poe's proto-detective short story "The Man of the Crowd", the main protagonist follows one man whom he chooses from the crowd, like a detective would follow his suspect, through the streets of London. To his surprise, the followed man never leaves the crowd, he spends hours roaming through the city, but always through the crowd. The text captures a unique possibility which arises from living in a densely populated city - being able to hide in a crowd, making use of its collective power, without really interacting with anyone. A Baudelairean stroll through the crowd - being surrounded, yet alone, may be a modern danger to the notion of collectivity.

21 In Antonioni's "Blow Up" David Hemmings's character attends a Yardbird's concert. Before he looks at the stage, he navigates through what seems to be a crowd of mannequins (fig. 4). The guitarist, in order break through this spectacle of indifference, decides to destroy a guitar (very fashionable back then) and throws the disassembled neck at the crowd. And only when the fourth wall is broken, this is the moment when the crowd becomes animated and jumps panically to catch the item.



These two situations describe a modern condition of a crowd, which is characterised by a certain degree of numbness and indifference. Despite being together, people may be a part of the congregation without actually actively participating in common praxis. Moreover, the potential of action and collectivity in constructing counterpublics can be numbed with certain political decisions blocking the freedom of interactions. Urban solutions are applied in order influence the social stability, as they may be a very powerful "disconnecting" tool.

A temporary measure might be present during protests in the actions of the police, whose function is to disconnect different groups from each other in order to impede participation. The most famous, long-lasting and brutal spatial intervention of a kind would probably be Haussmann's urban remodelling of Paris<sup>22</sup>, which was conceived in such a way that it could block possibility of barricading and facilitated the possibility of military surveillance. On the other side, it also introduced a new urban way of life, based on consumption, reflecting the power structure of capitalism. The poor inhabiting the centre were dispersed across the city, mostly in the outskirts. This created a temporary disconnection between the less privileged, but finally outsourced the problem to somewhere else. Another example might be how

American politics of suburbanisation introduced ownership as an element of social stability, which at the same time diffuses the density of habitation, thus weakening the possibility of interactions between people.

## CONCLUSION

In the opening scene of the movie "Pride", telling the story of a group of LGBT activists raising money for families affected by British miners' strikes, the main protagonist approaches the protesting crowd from the inside of the building. Carefully, he steps into the street, hoping to stay neutral and invisible. However, an item thrown at him by the opposing side of the protest, drags him out of his comfort zone and puts him in danger. Thus he is forced to make a decision whether to join or escape (he joins). This may be an extreme example, however, it quite aptly describes how the fourth wall of indifference between the individual and the crowd can be overcome.



By turning an event from the one that does not require participation towards the one which requires some reaction, it may turn out possible to abolish the problem of indifference and impotence of the crowd. Despite the widespread use of interfaces, i.e. TV, internet, mobile devices, there seems to be a lot of potential in talking just about the crowd. The analogous and physical crowd, consisting of people's bodies.

This leads to the conclusion, which states the necessity of developing spatial measures, enhancing the feeling of the crowd. In order to do that, it is necessary to depart from the body, taking into account all the senses and bodily capabilities. The spatial measures reinforcing the public space in the city and sustaining the vitality of crowds can be divided into two scales of spatial interventions. Firstly, big scale spatial measures may be used to reinforce the movement in a bigger, urban scale. George Baird points at such figures which may develop the opportunities of awareness<sup>23</sup>, aimed at shifting the distracted perception (Walter Benjamin) towards idea of action (Arendt). Heterogeneous visibility enables the appearance of even contradictory objects in the space and is a prerequisite of publicness. Spatial propinquity puts people close to each other instead of dividing. Continuity grants the possibility of non-stop, unlimited strolling, providing as diverse network as possible. On the other hand, we may talk about small scale interventions, which instead of fueling the crowd as a congregation, influence particular agents of the crowd, influencing their feeling of being a part of the crowd, such as framing the vision or manipulating the sensory input. Such measures, both on urban and architectural scale, will become a subject of my further design investigations.

23  
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Conditions of Publicness, p. 7.

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2015, <https://blog.ethnologie.uni-halle.de/2015/08/%E2%80%A8the-production-of-space/>, (accessed 19 December 2017).

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Cover Figure. Slogan of the 1968's student revolution. It was conceived after students had found out that the cobblestones they used for barricades were placed on sand bed and while removed created sandy patches in the city.

Figure 1. Abraham Bosse's depiction of Thomas Hobbes's "Leviathan", 1651. <https://nomoi.hypotheses.org/files/2015/12/19-500x272.jpeg>, (accessed 25 January 2018).

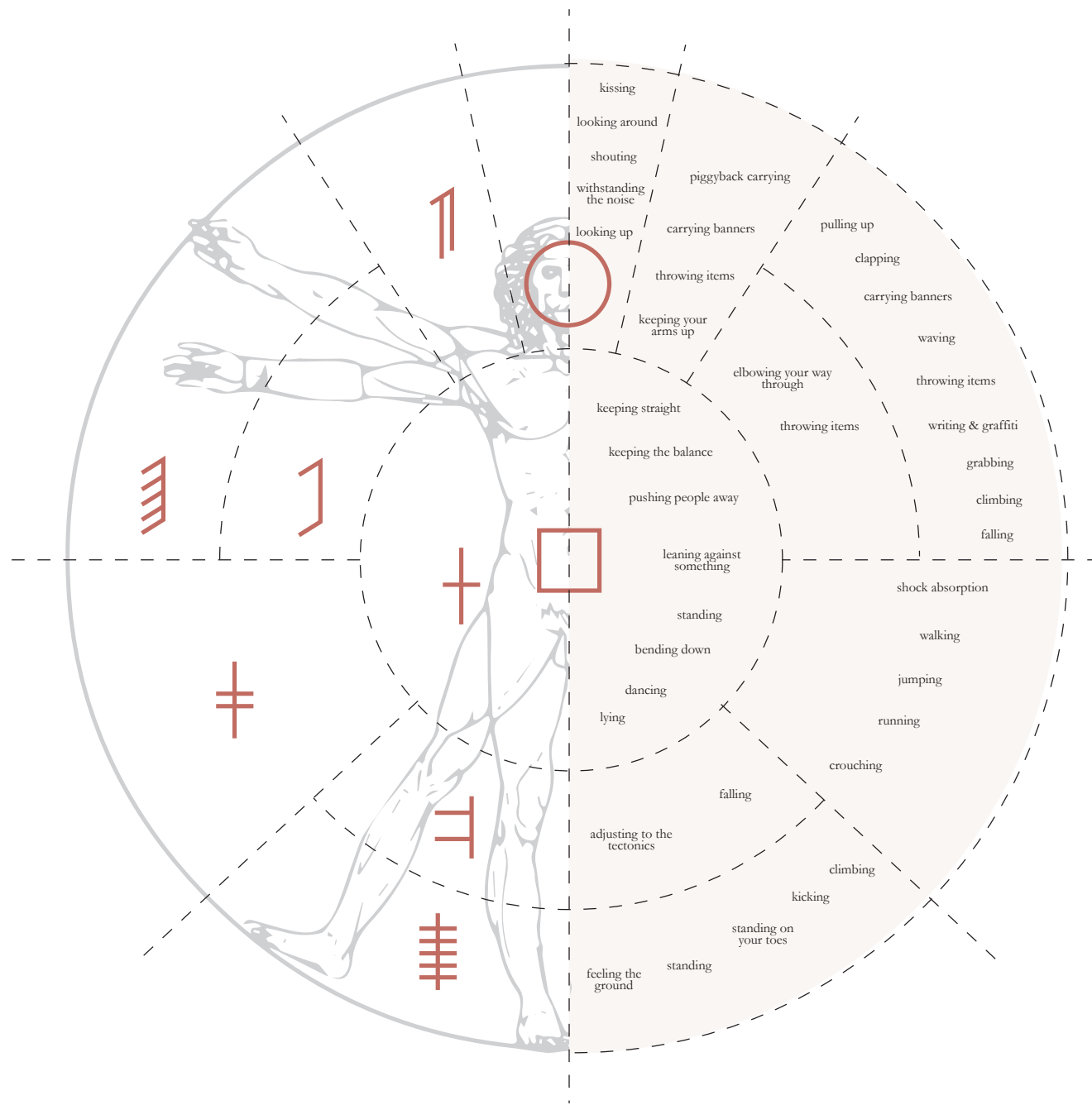
Figure 2. Gustav Klutis, propaganda poster, 'We'll Fulfil the Plan of Heavy Tasks', 1930, <https://journal.eahn.org/articles/10.5334/ah.co/>, (accessed 20 December 2017).

Figure 3. Mini skirts worn during Paris protests in 1968 as a sign of sexual revolution and liberation of the body, <http://savetheflower-1967.tumblr.com/image/65330322606>, (accessed 20 January 2018).

Figure 4. The still from Michelangelo Antonioni's "Blowup", 1966.

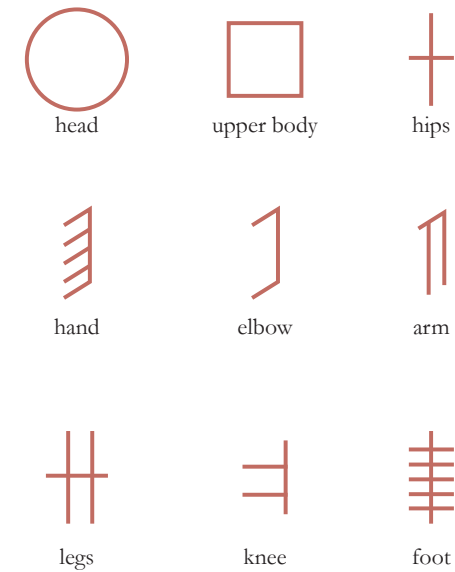


SPECULATION



## BODY IN PROTEST

According to Lefebvre, one of the ways of freeing ourselves from the spectacle, is the defamiliarisation of perception, which has to be realised through erasing any mediation from our cognition. Experiencing space through body and body through space - acknowledging the body's



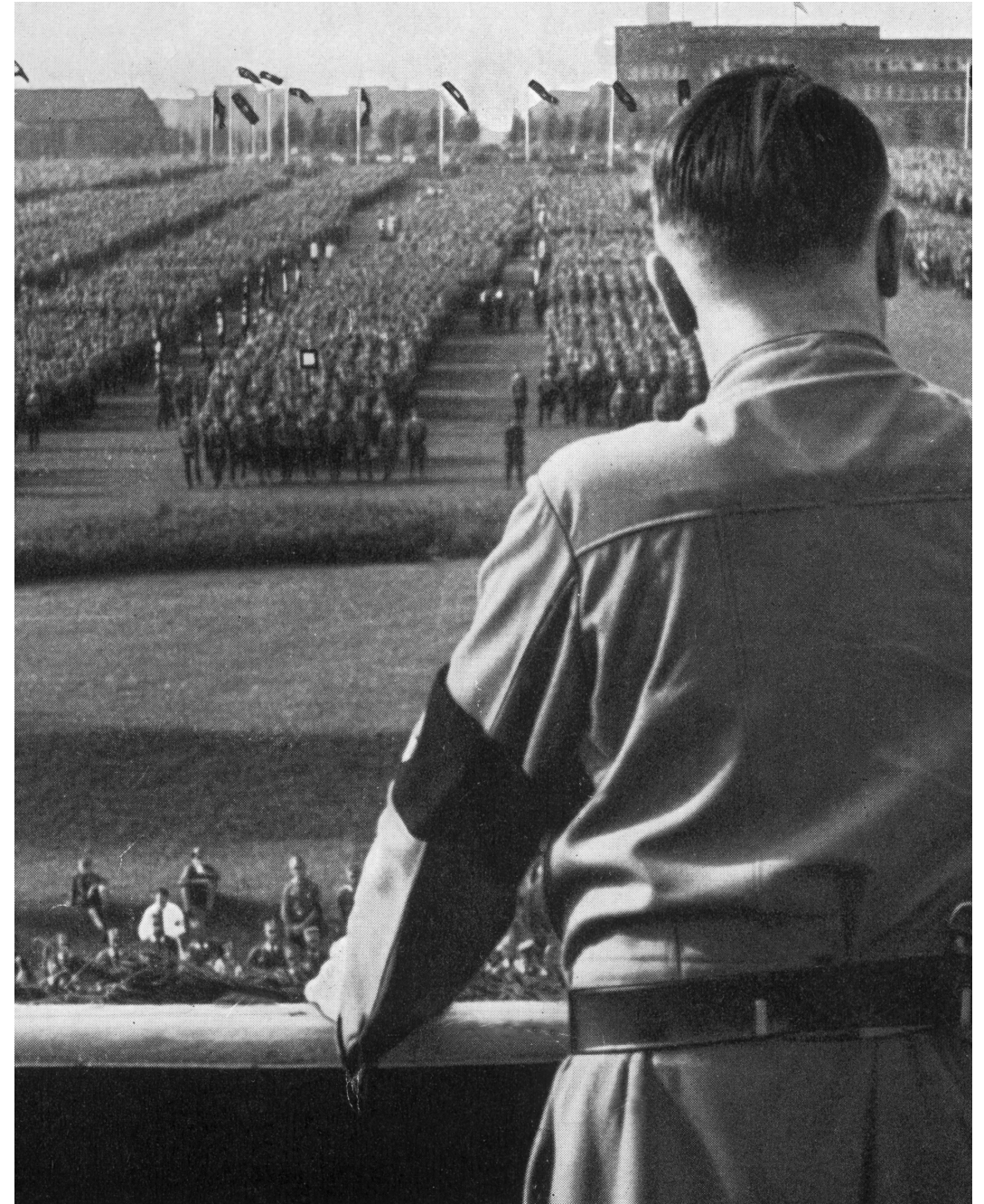
constant relation with the surrounding becomes "the key to a revolt against modernity's straightjacket." Lefebvre states that "the whole of (social) space proceeds from the body" (p.405). It ceases to be an abstract idea, but a very corporeal, material entity. It is a body that perceives the space first (through senses), and through our bodies we become social. While a body provides connection, any mediation leads to disconnection (Friedman and van Ingen, p. 94)

During the French Revolution in 1789, body was still used as a shield. At that point, the society was still fighting for the right for the actual, corporeal attendance in public life. Barricades would be built not only as a territorial mark, but also to protect the vulnerable body, which was put in life-threatening danger. Almost two hundred years later, 1968 protests brought about a sub-

versive use of body. In the shadow of a post-war trauma, it could also be seen as a society healing process, attempting to blur the memory of disintegrated, bleeding bodies. Following Debord's call for arms asserting that through body one can escape the spectacle and be free from the imposed schemata, the body was understood as a means of liberating the society. Sensory cognition supposedly would break the fourth wall and provide access to "reality". Hence, 1968 brought almost the carnivalesque use of the body. Almost literally applying the notion of liberation from imposed limitations and restrictions of a society, young people would engage publicly in very physical actions, eating, drinking, kissing, making love - which are intrinsically human, but became marginalised by the society. That was the way of being extremely physical, but without being hurt.



## CROWD AS WORDSWORTHIAN SUBLIME

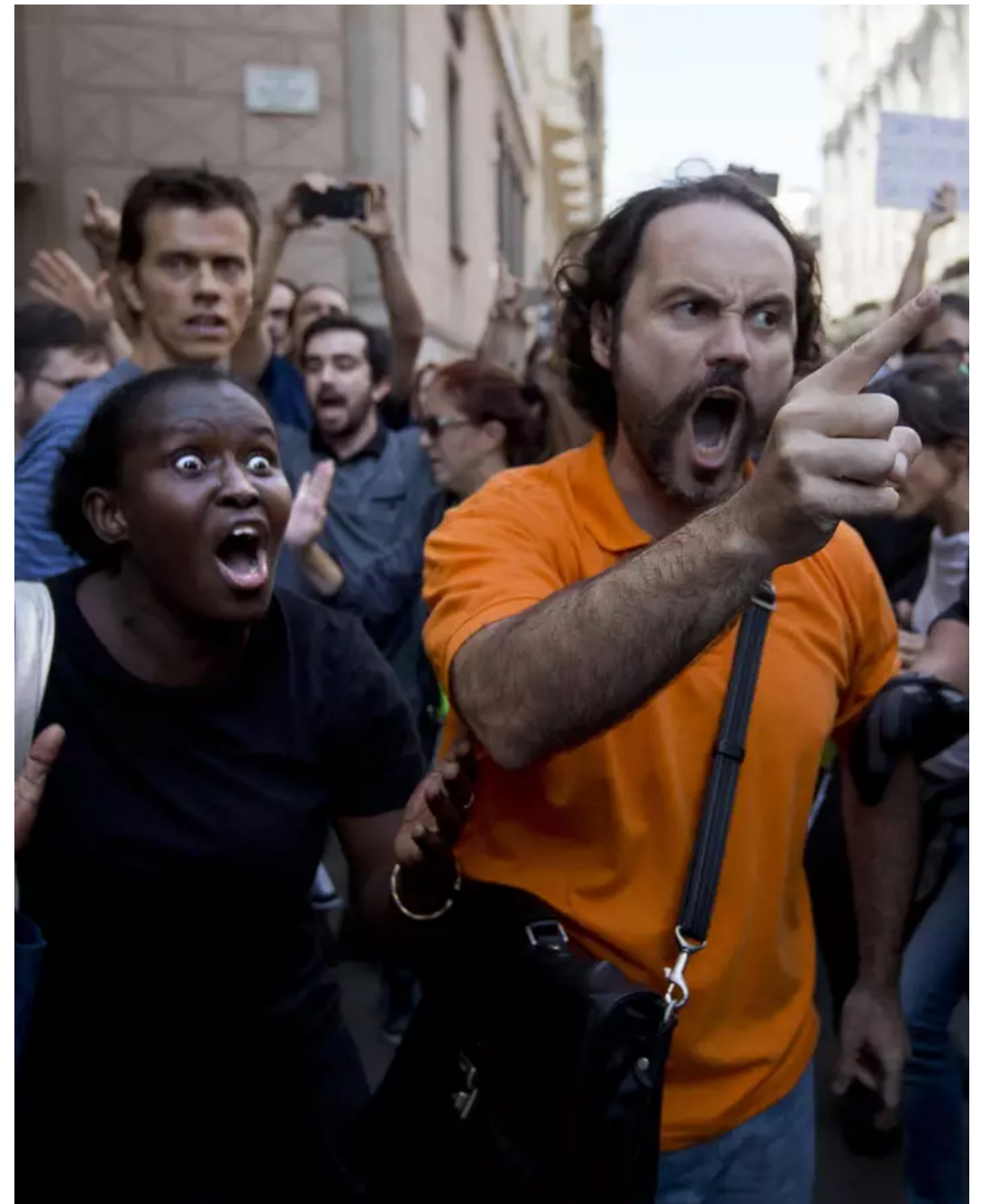


Caspar David Friedrich - "Wanderer  
Above the Sea of Fog", 1818

Hitler overlooking his troops, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hitler-quote-makes-it-into-maine-yearbook/>

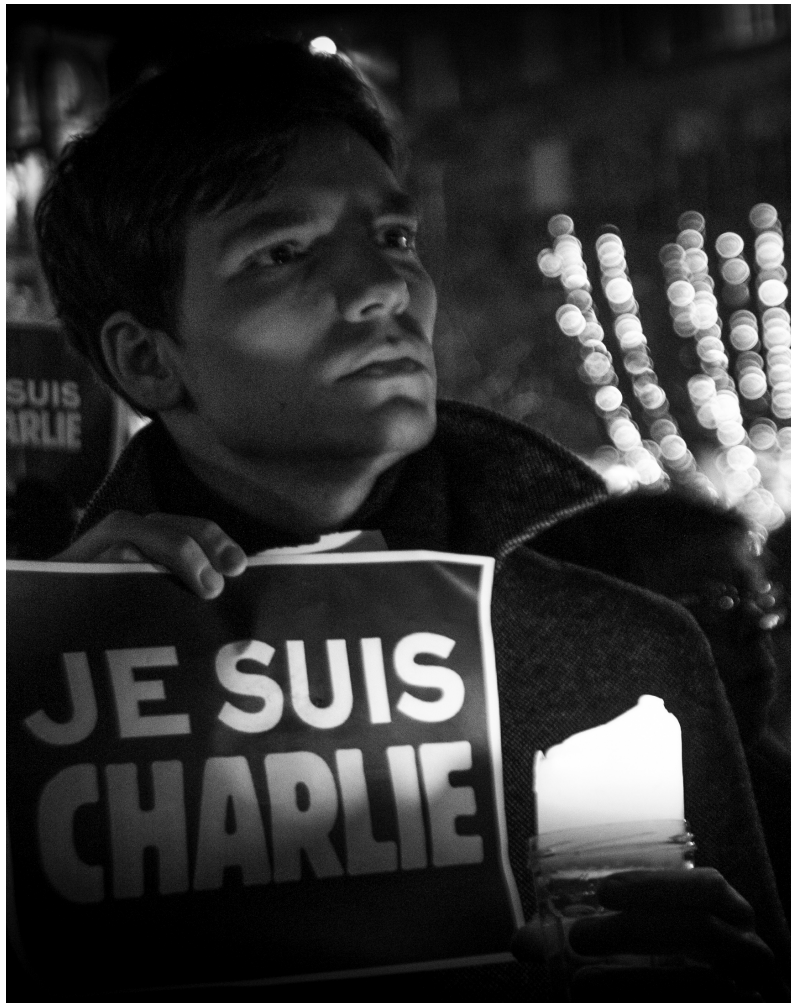


## IMMERSIVE DEPICTIONS OF A CROWD



< Gustav Klutis, Everyone Vote, 1930

^ Catalan independence supporters protesting in Barcelona, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/catalonia-independence-referendum-catalan-police-storm-ministries-arrested-josep-maria-jov-a7956581.html>

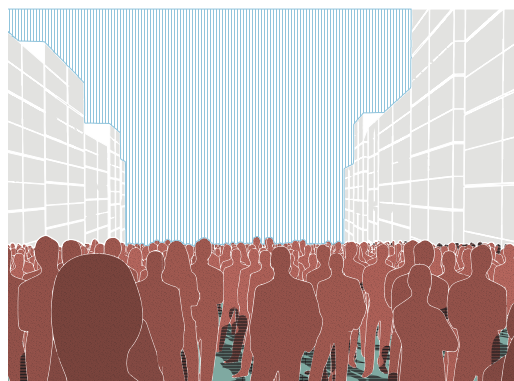
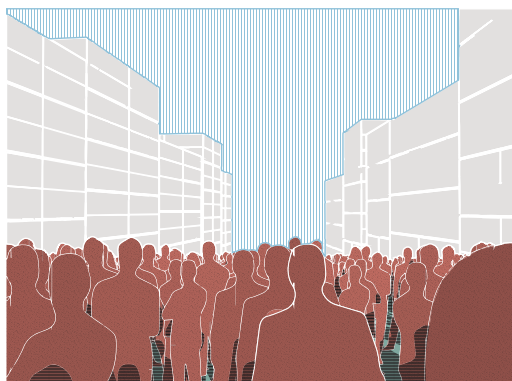
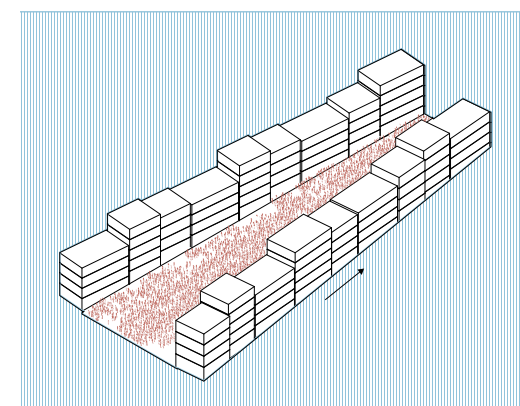
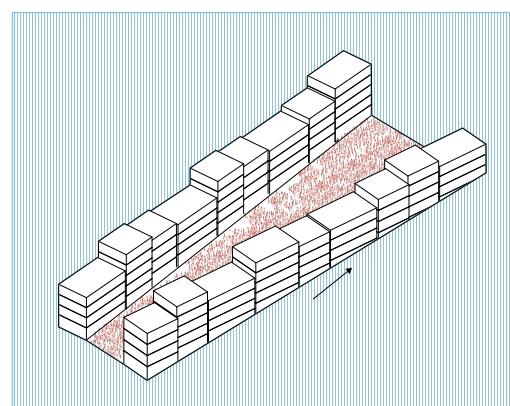
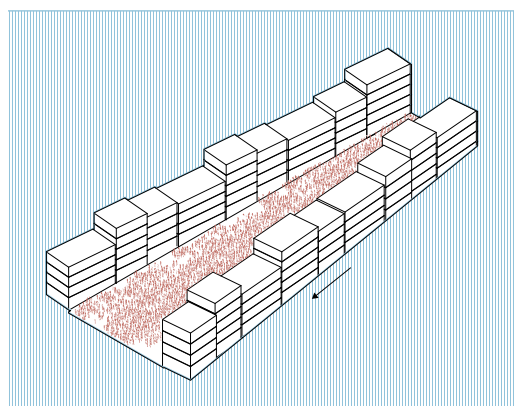
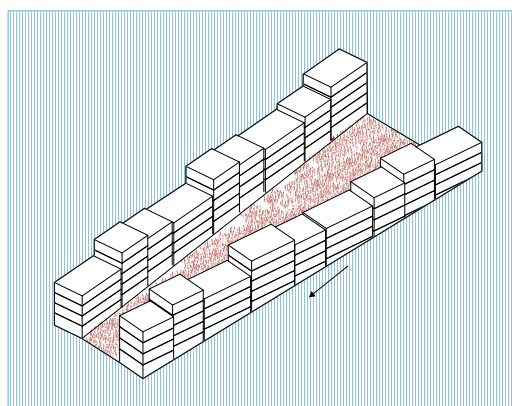
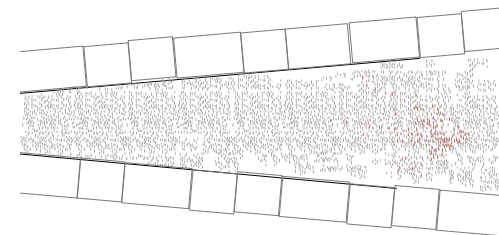
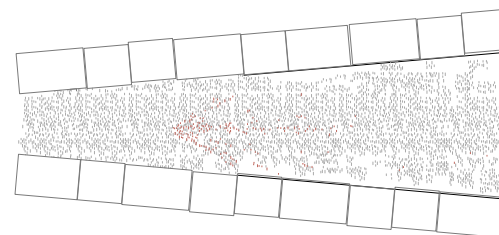
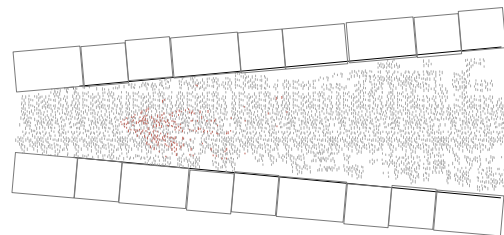
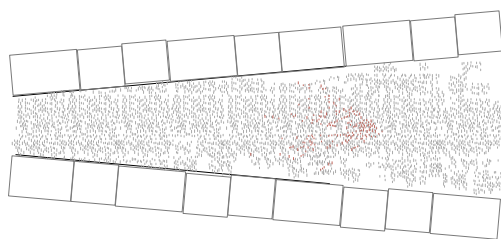


## IMMERSIVE VS. SUBLIME DURING JE SUIS CHARLIE IN STRASBOURG

< Individual perception of protest during Je suis  
Charlie in Strasbourg, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/  
wiki/File:Je\\_suis\\_Charlie\\_Strasbourg\\_7\\_janvier\\_2015.  
jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Je_suis_Charlie_Strasbourg_7_janvier_2015.jpg)  
^ Panoramic view of Je suis Charlie in Strasbourg,

IT IS NOT GIVEN TO EVERY MAN TO TAKE A BATH OF  
MULTITUDE; ENJOYING A CROWD IS AN ART; AND  
ONLY HE CAN RELISH A DEBAUCH OF VITALITY AT THE  
EXPENSE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES, ON WHOM, IN HIS  
CRADLE, A FAIRY HAS BESTOWED THE LOVE OF MASKS  
AND MASQUERADING, THE HATE OF HOME, AND THE  
PASSION FOR ROAMING.

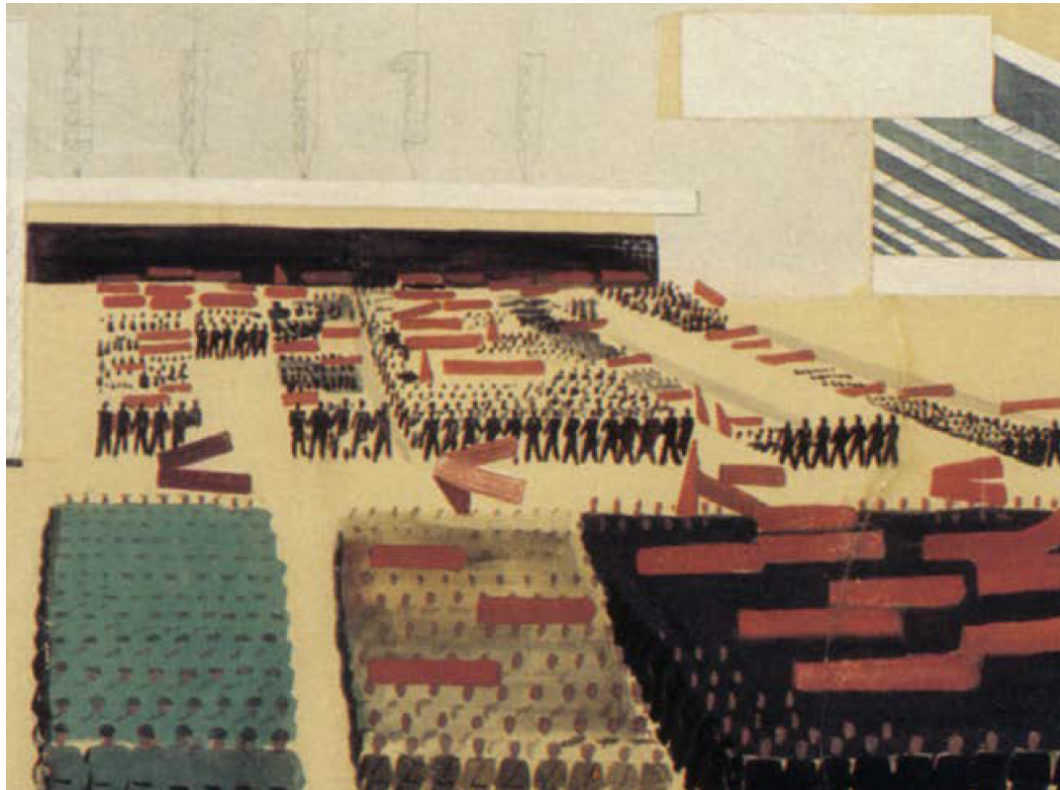
Baudelaire, Ch., Crowds



## SEEING THE CROWD

These are the early attempts at visualising crowd's perception, according to immersive and sublime depictions. They depict how the feeling of being in the crowd

changes according to two urban variables: topography of the terrain (rising and lowering slope) and shape of the street (narrowing and widening).



## POSITIONING TOWARDS ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENTS

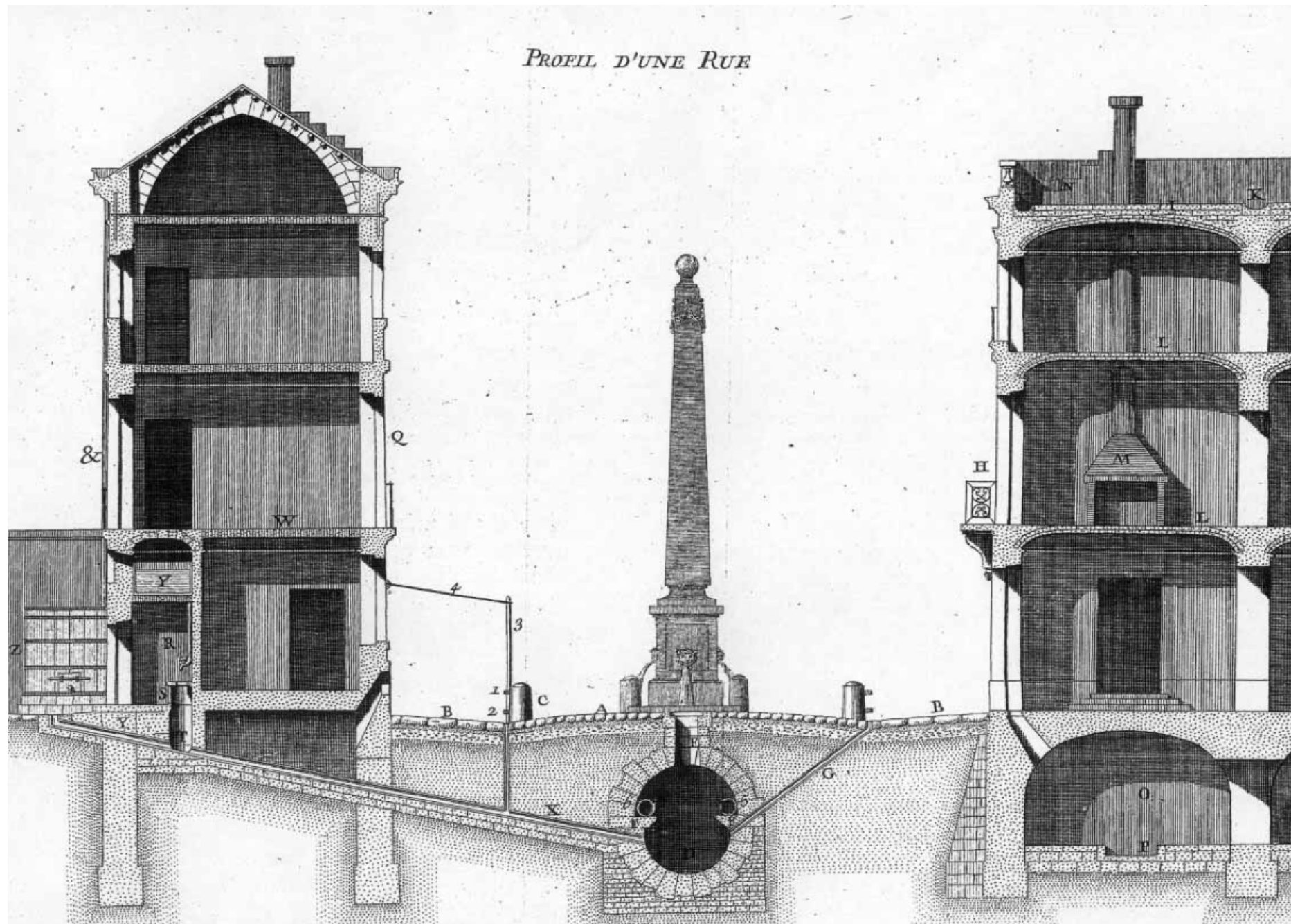


I analysed projects which took certain positions towards the society and commented upon what its members were (not) allowed to do in the public space, such as, the submission to the Phase 1 of the Palace of Soviets Competition in Moscow in 1931 by an avant-garde Soviet group – Union of Architects and Planners (ARU), Haussmann's renovation of Paris, public spaces in

Tehran, Iran. Neither of them was treated as a straight-forward precedent. In my later design, I applied the idea of varied topography and sloping used to enhance the feeling of the crowd, as designed in the Palace of Soviets. In contrast, the overwhelming, out-scaled section of Haussmannian Paris worked as something I needed to counteract and avoid.

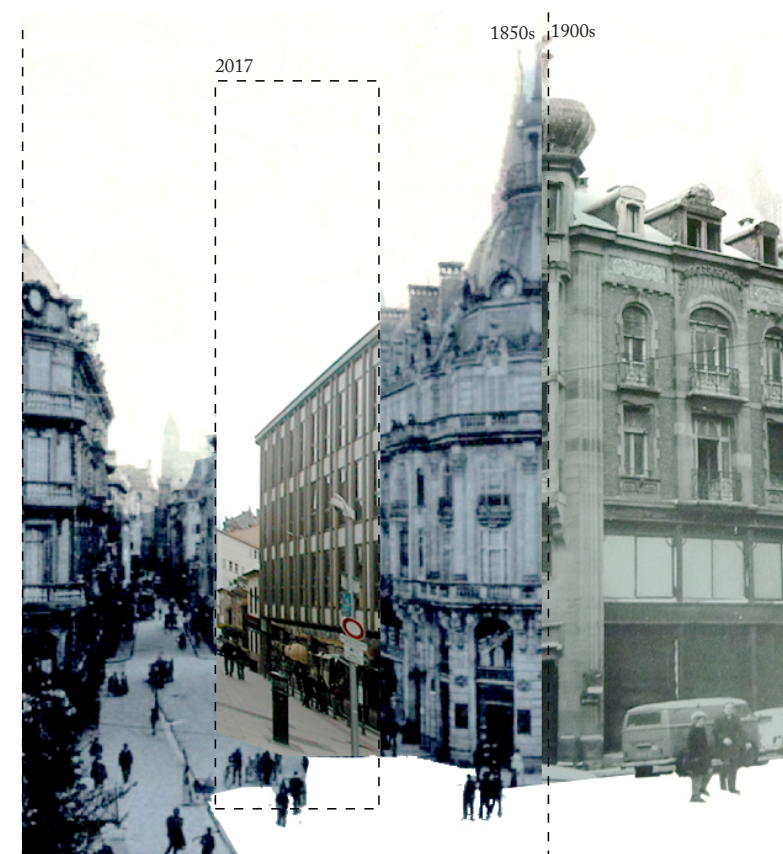
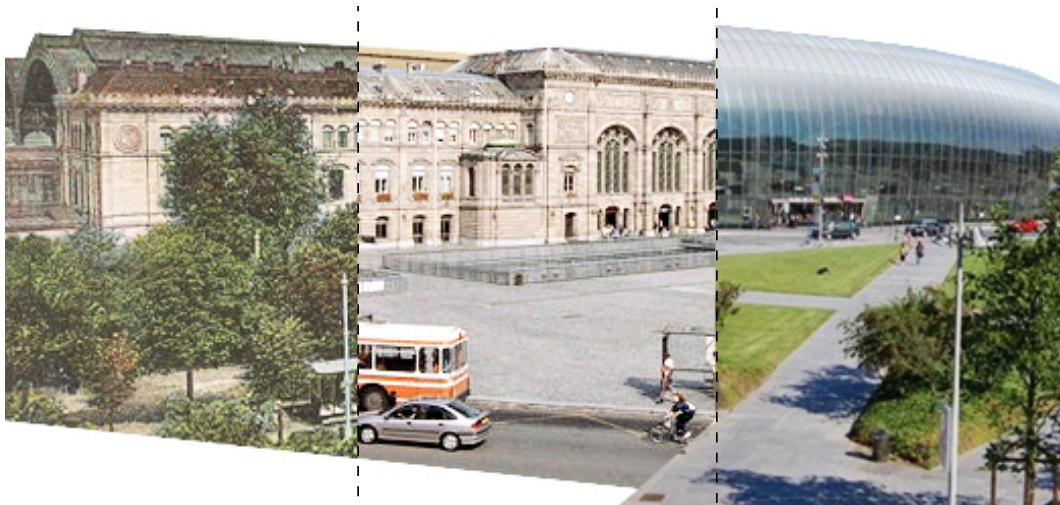
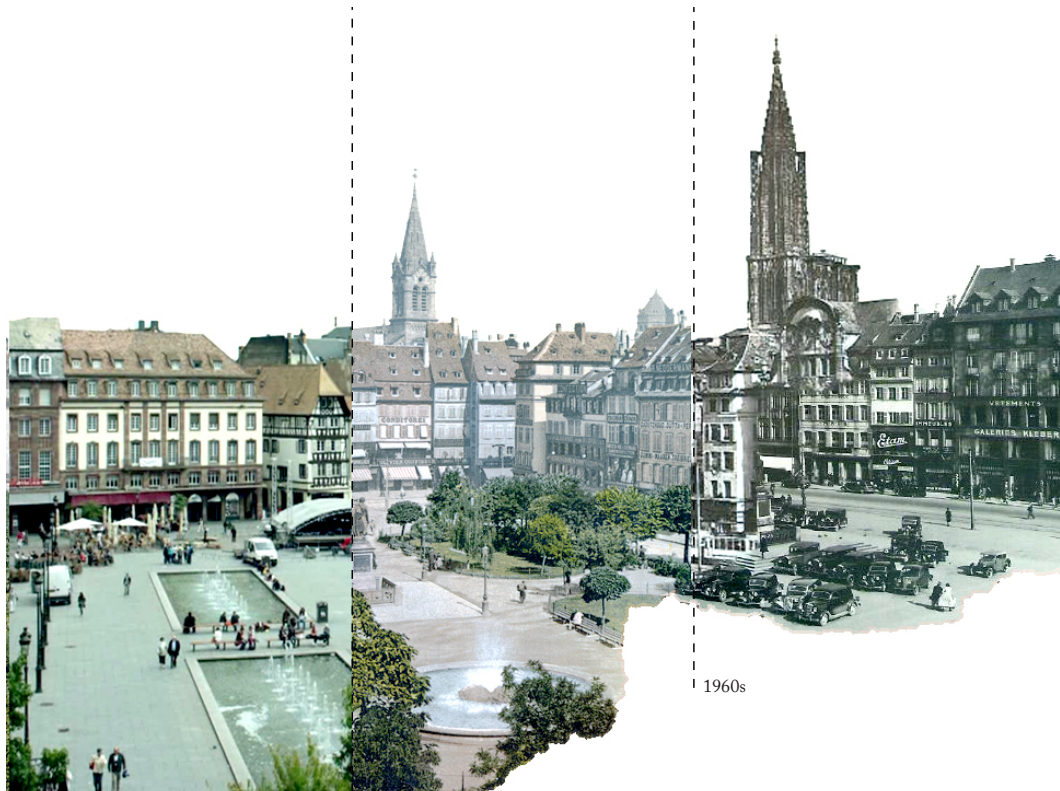
< Sectional reconstruction of movement through the system of ramps and platforms. ARU, Palace of Soviets Competition Entry, Phase I, 1931. From Ziada (2013, 593, Fig. 1b).

^ Top view from Arc de Triomphe in Paris, <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/ca/ed/88/>



Pierre Patte  
Section of a street

## SECTION OF THE STREET AS A DESIGN TOOL



Left top  
Place Kleber 2017 - 1900s -  
1960s

Left bottom  
Place de la Gare 1900s -  
1970s - 2017

Right top  
Rue du Dôme 1850s - 2017  
- 1900s

Right bottom  
Place de l'Homme-de-Fer  
1930s - 2017 - 1970s

## PUBLIC SPACE TRANSFORMATIONS

## AIM OF THE PROJECT

EXPRESSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC  
ACCESS TO PUBLIC SPACES AND  
CIVIC COMMONS UNDERSTOOD  
AS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT IN  
A DEMOCRATIC EUROPEAN  
COUNTRY

CREATION OF PROTEST  
INFRASTRUCTURE

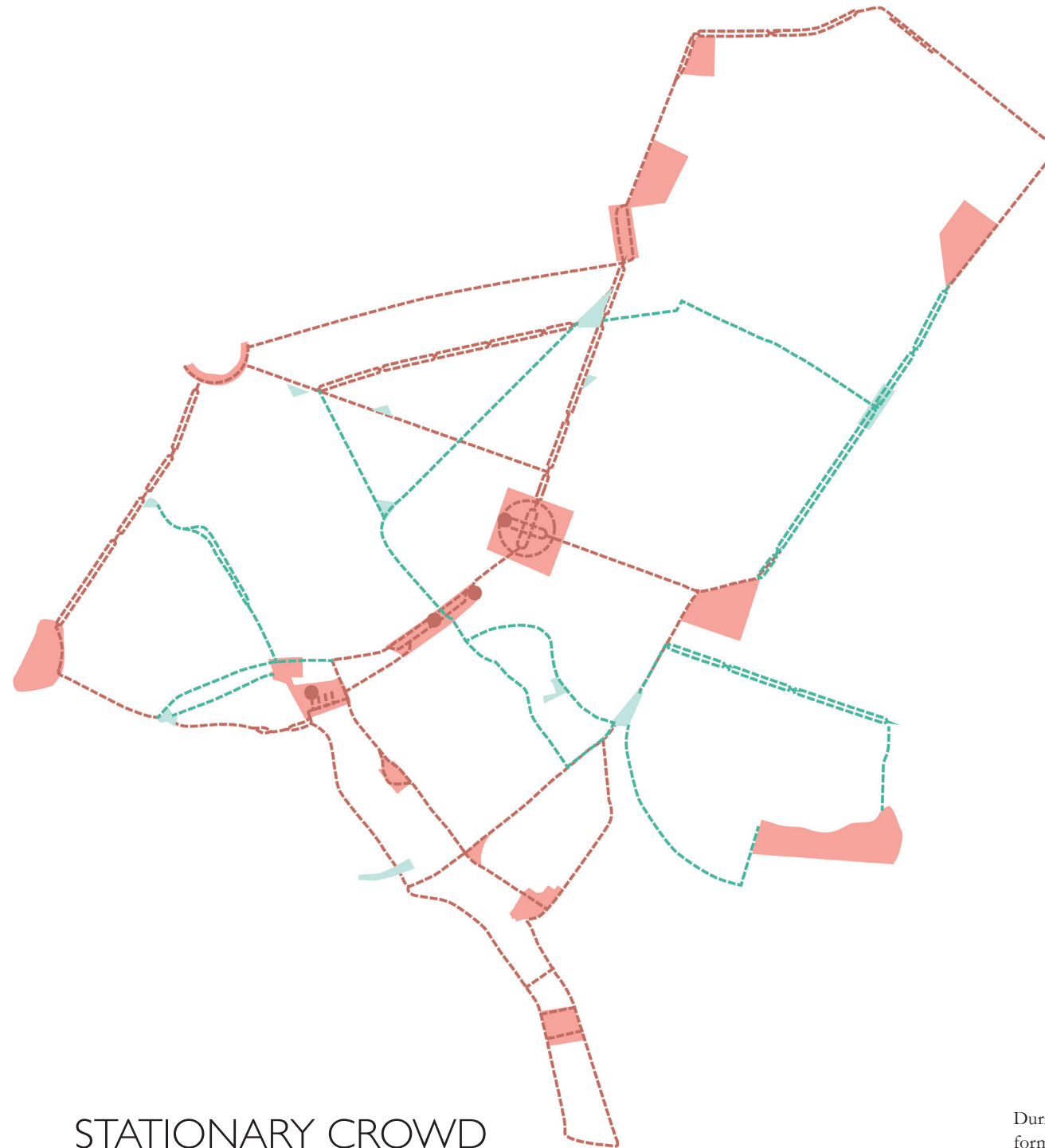
DEVELOPMENT OF SPATIAL  
MEASURES ENHANCING THE  
FEELING OF THE CROWD

INTRODUCTION OF TOPOGRAPHY,  
DEPTH AND THICKNESS INTO THE  
DESIGN

Silent Protest at Place Kleber 30th September 2017



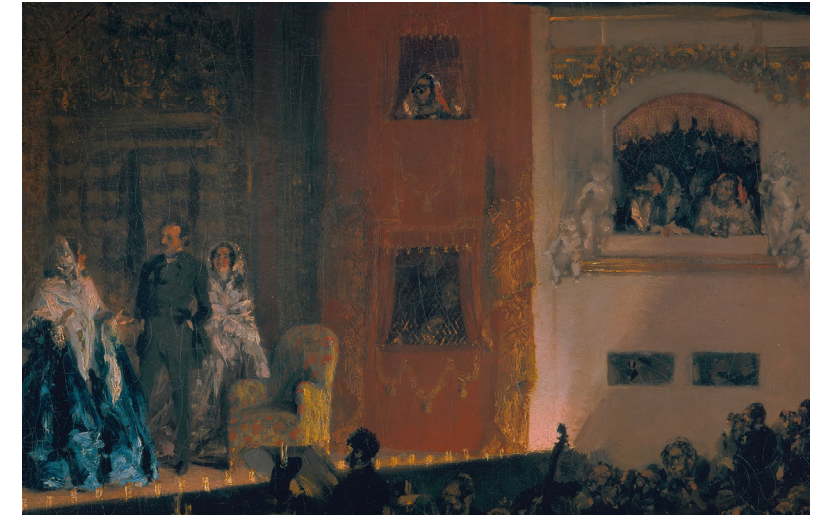
DESIGN



## STATIONARY CROWD VS MOVING CROWD

During protest, crowd takes up two forms. A stationary crowd occupies spaces for a longer time, while a mobile crowd moves around the city, changing its position. Hence, depending on the type of protest, different types of space fulfill diverse needs.

There's also an interplay of the spectator and the audience, in which a crowd can play both roles. In my project, I am focusing on the street as a playground for a mobile crowd, which becomes a spectacle in itself. It is something to be looked at.



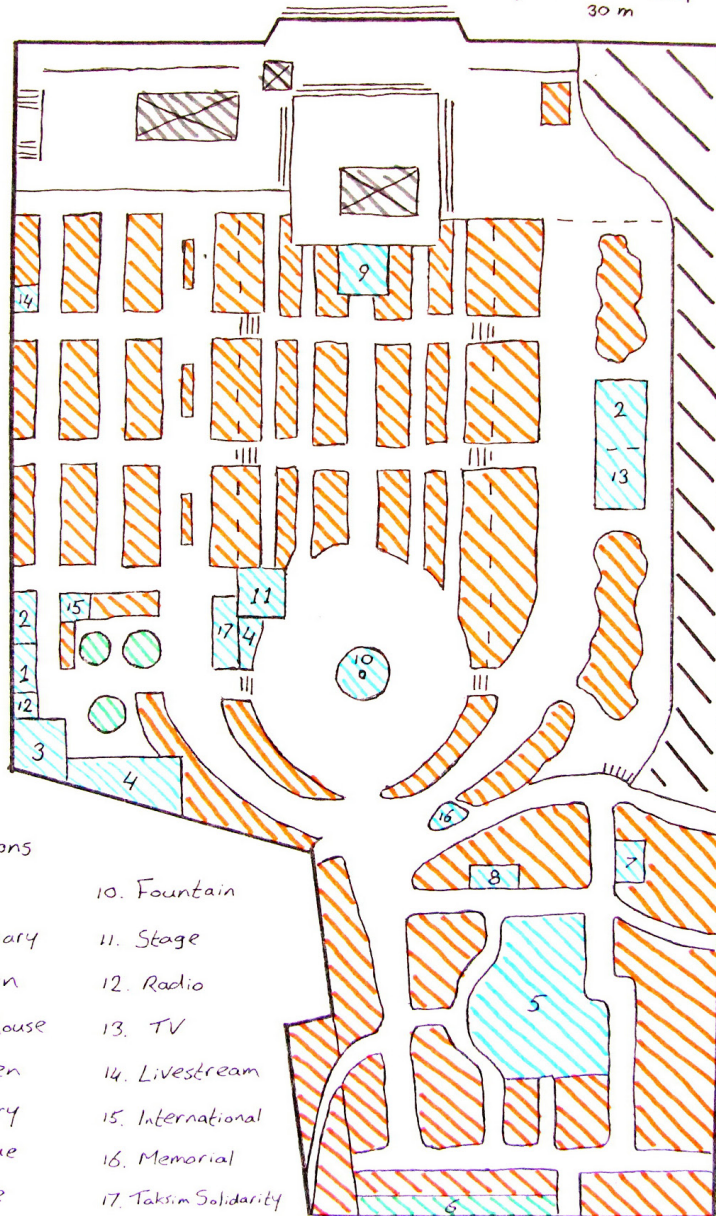
^The Théâtre du Gymnase -  
Adolph Menzel

< Right bottom  
City of Shadows - Alexey  
Titarenko

# GEZI REPUBLIC

June 2013

30 m



- |              |                       |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Commons    | 10. Fountain          |
| 2. Café      | 11. Stage             |
| 3. Infirmary | 12. Radio             |
| 4. Kitchen   | 13. TV                |
| 5. Warehouse | 14. Livestream        |
| 6. Garden    | 15. International     |
| 7. Library   | 16. Memorial          |
| 8. Mosque    | 17. Taksim Solidarity |
| 9. Castle    |                       |

## GEZI REPUBLIC - FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS



warehouse

library

café



commons

café

infirmary

kitchen

garden

mosque

memorial



fountain

stage

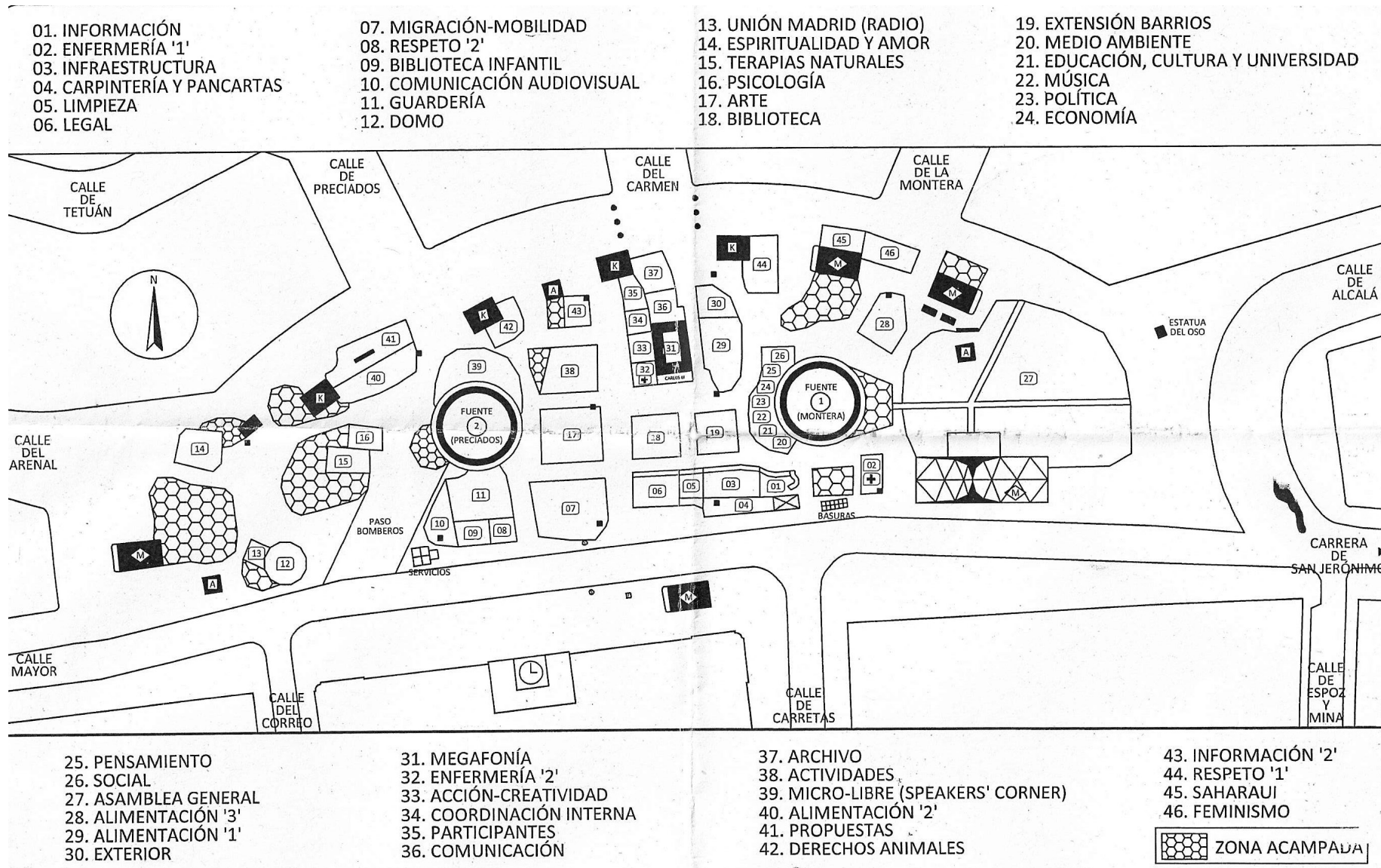
radio

TV

livestream

international

memorial



## ACAMPADA SOL - FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS



strasbourg astronomical clock

carpentry and posters

library

art



infirmary

kindergarden

gathering spaces

conversation spaces

commons and food



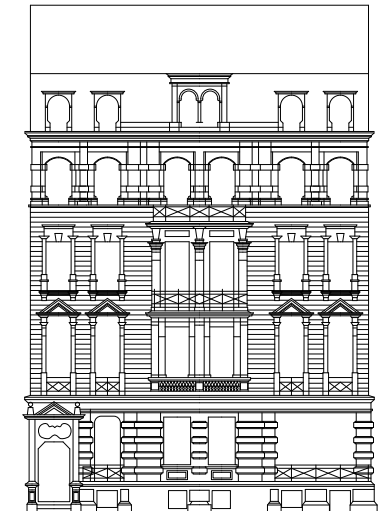
information

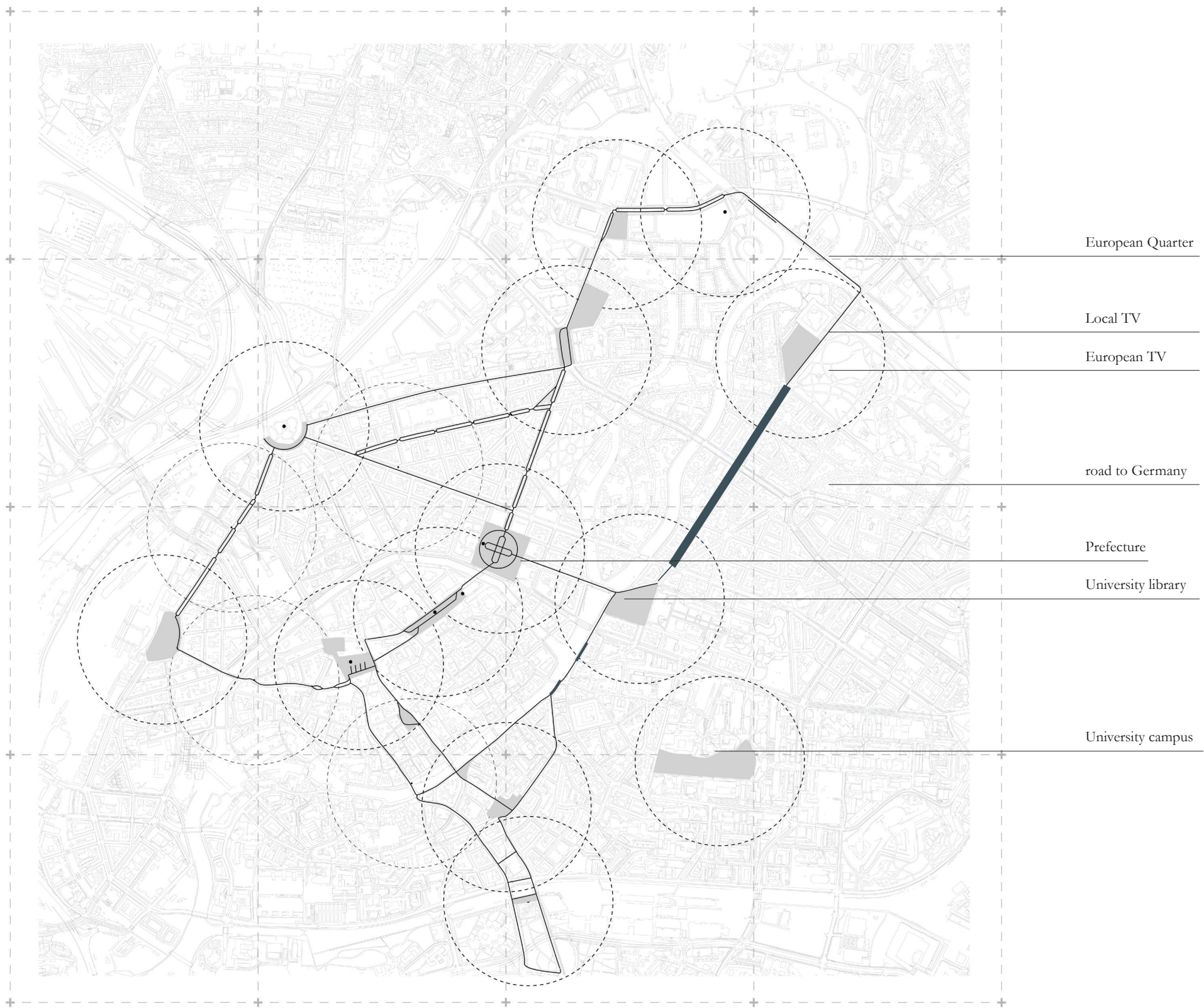
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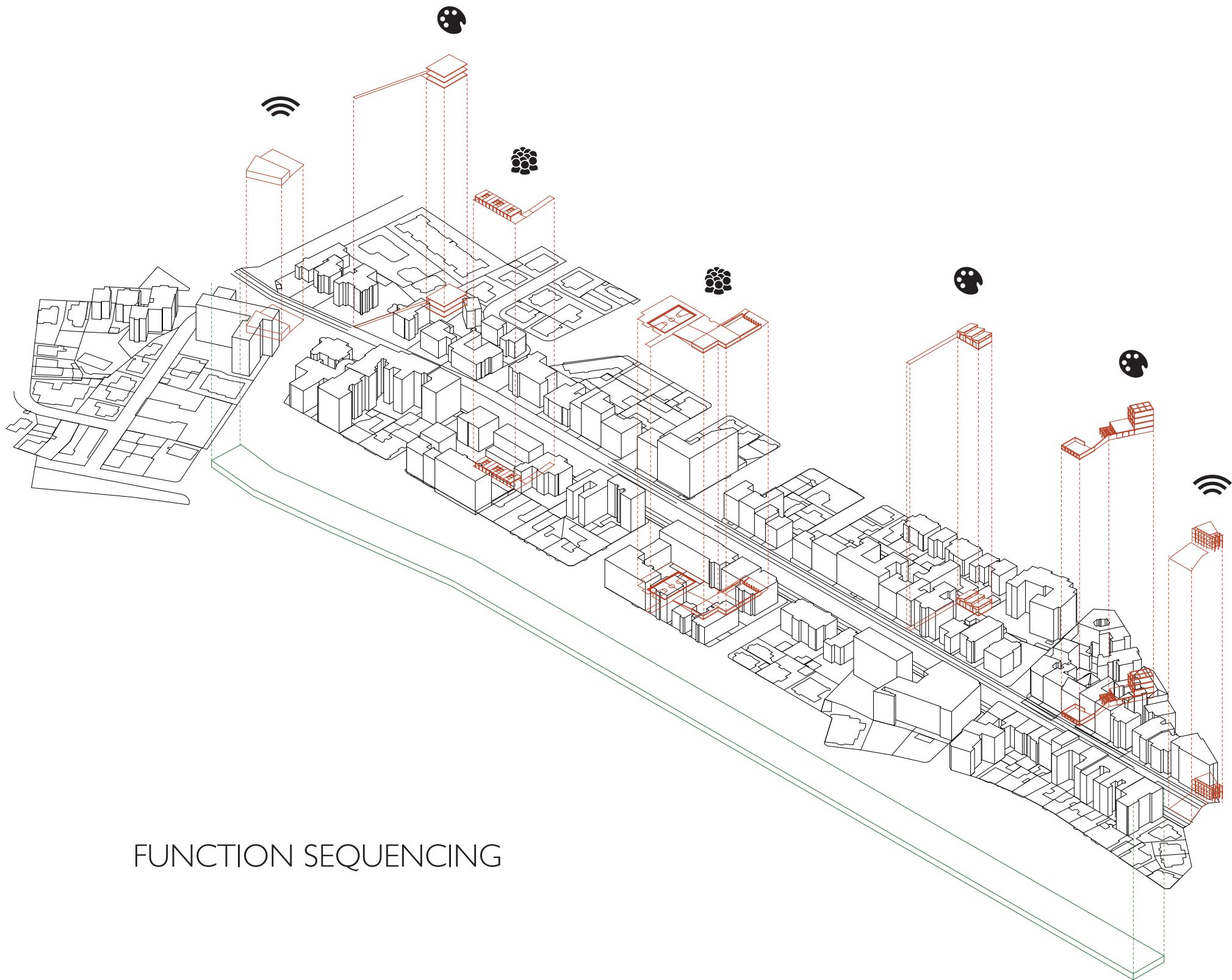
stage



ALLEE DE LA ROBERTSAU





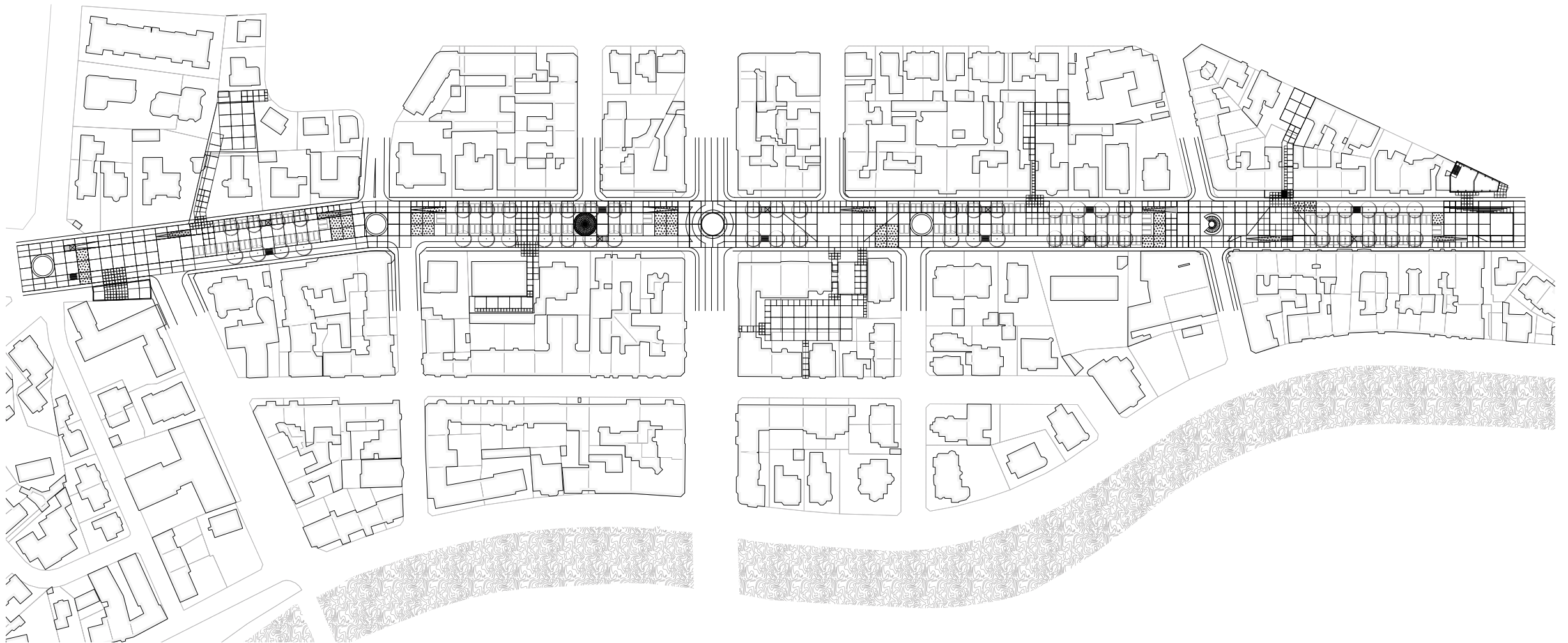


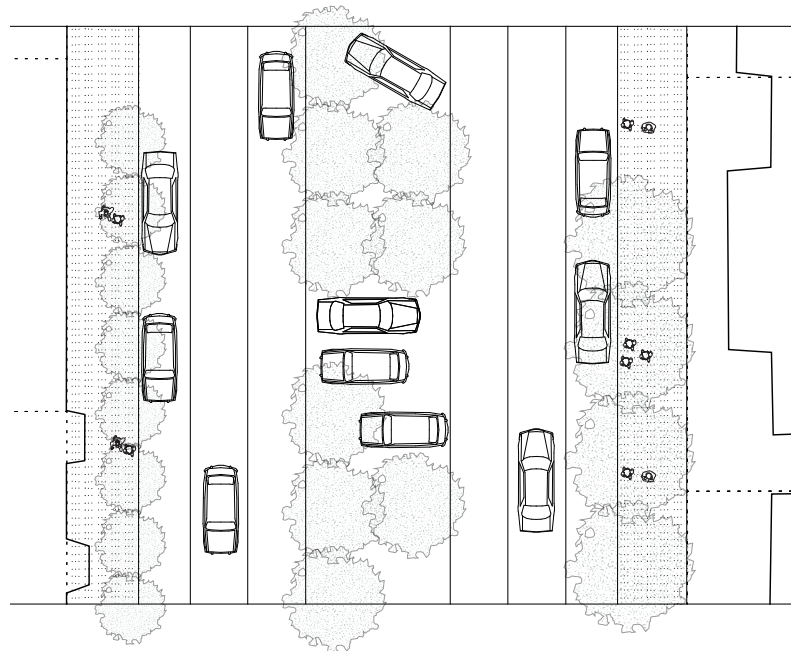
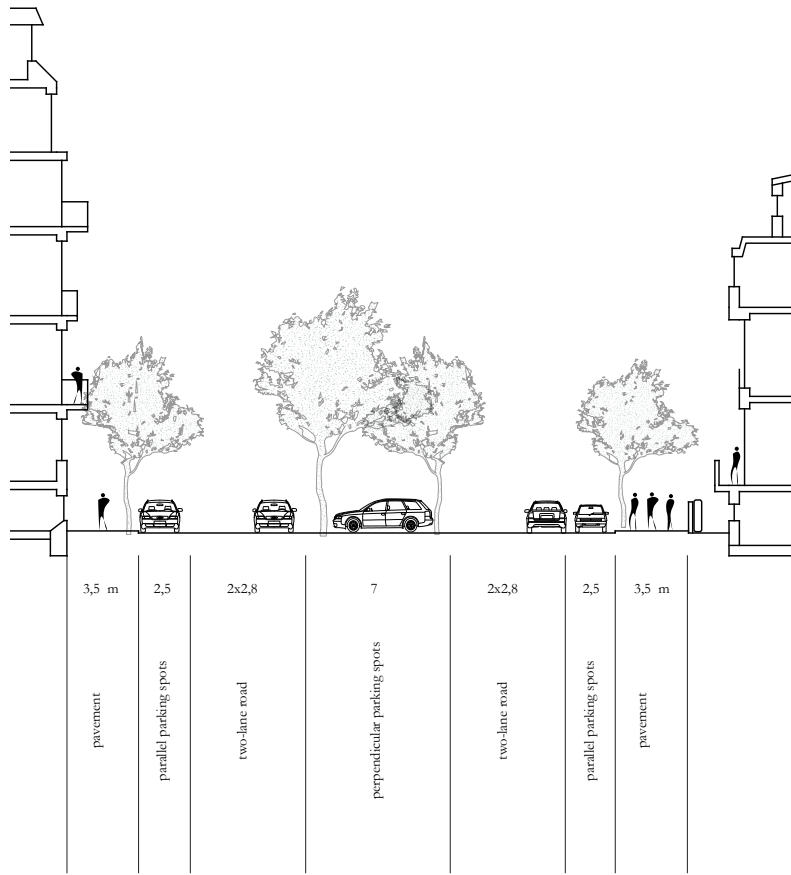
## FUNCTION SEQUENCING

PLOT 3

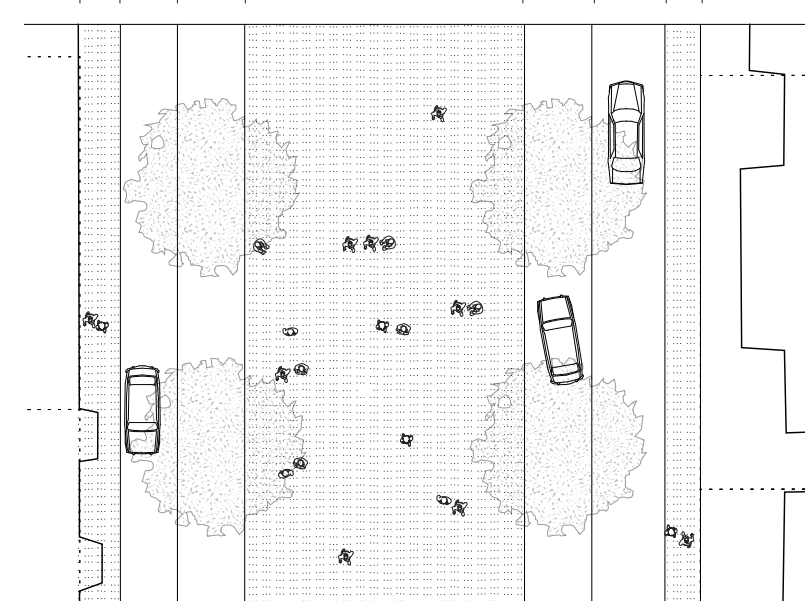
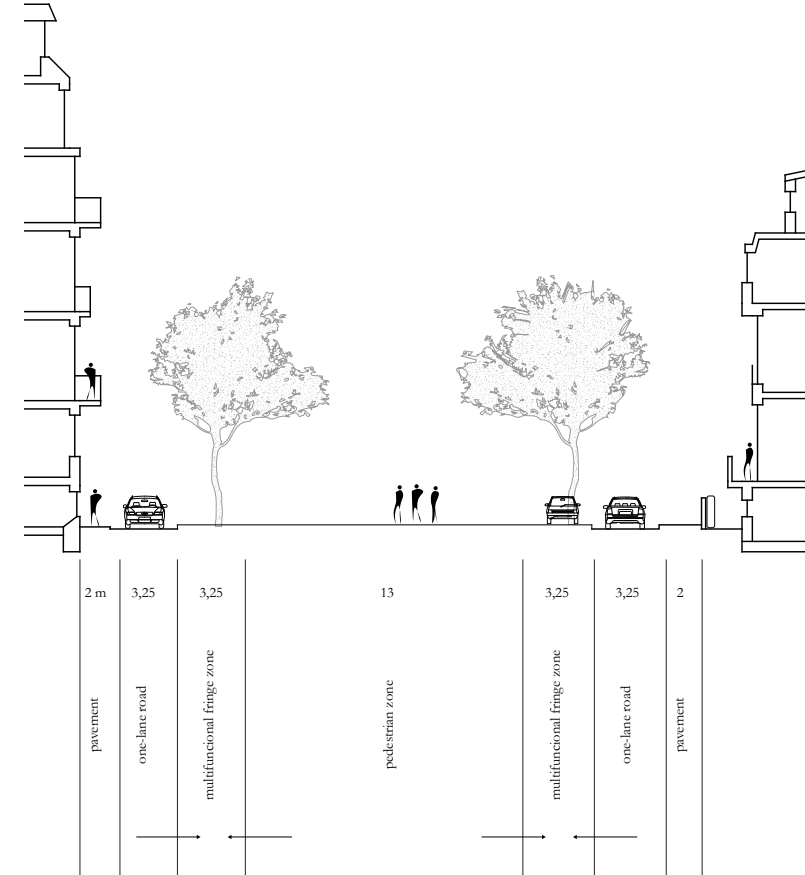
PLOT 2

PLOT 1

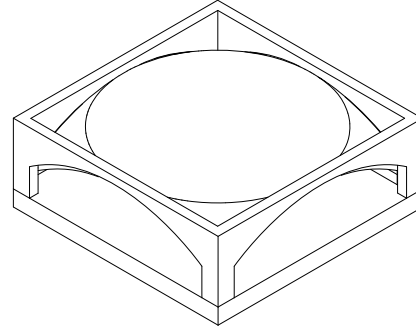
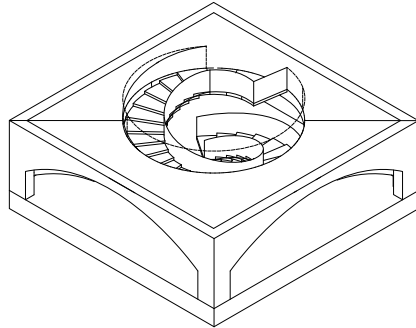
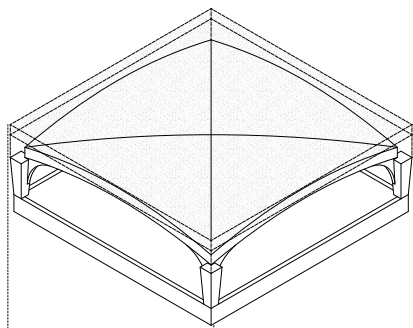




existing section

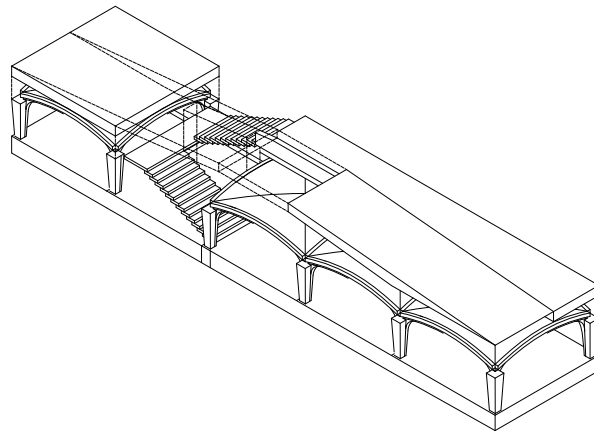
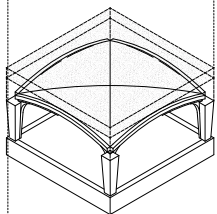


new section



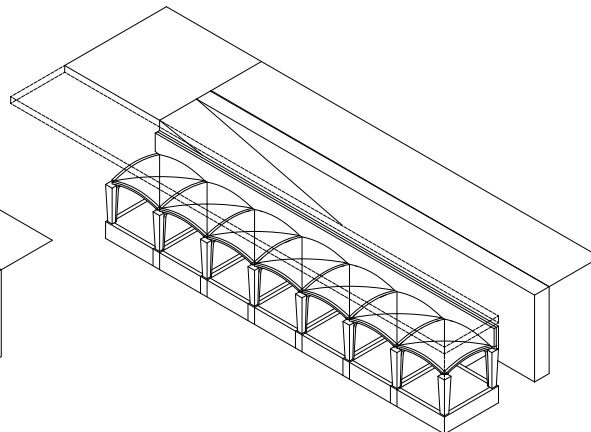
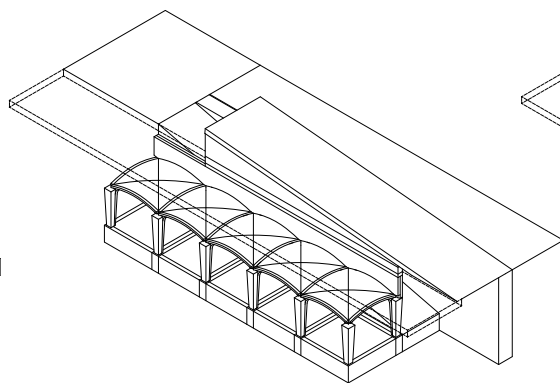
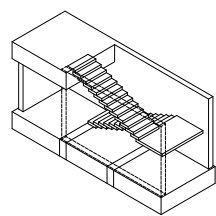
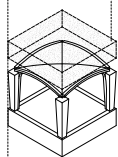
[13X13]

a module indicating zones beneath road crossings; crucial zone for underground orientation; exceptions, special functions;



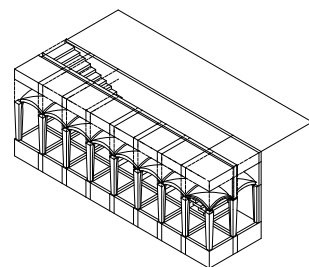
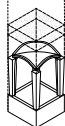
[6,5X6,5]

basic module; regular parking module



[3,25X3,25]

a module indicating exceptions, niches, links to other buildings, due to smaller vault thickness - more space for vegetation above



[1,63X1,63]

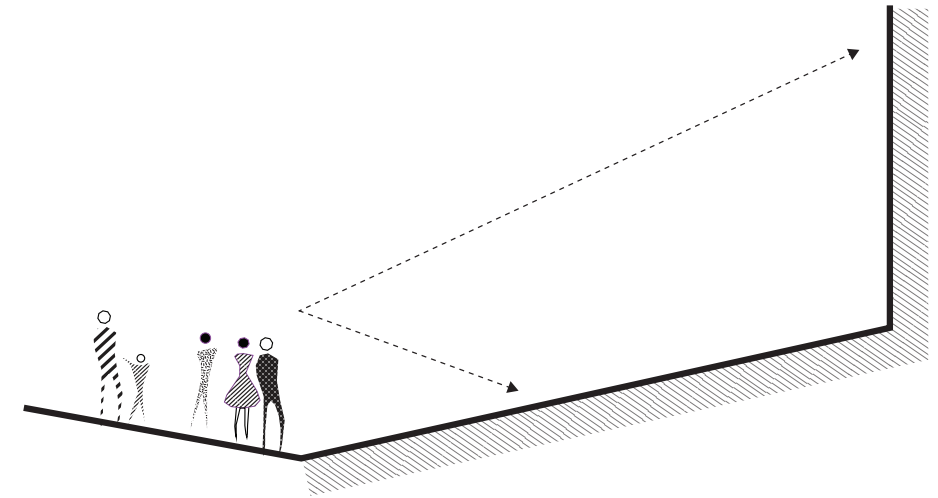
a transition module indicating the vicinity of a connection to another building or another zone, segregating and dividing people into smaller streams



## CREATE

create and display

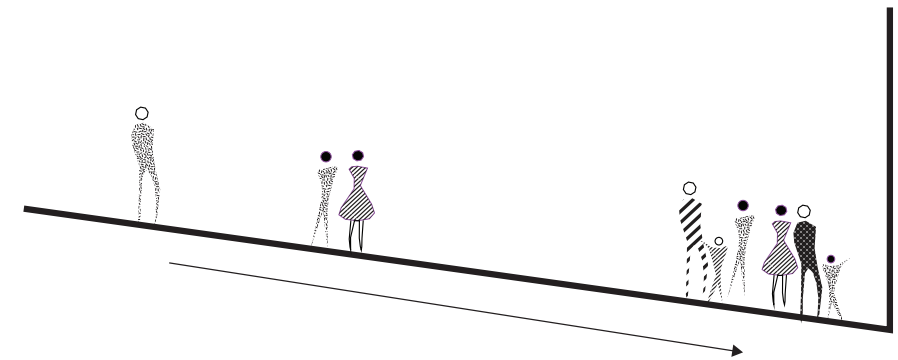
atelier spaces, workshops, printing houses, exhibition spaces, museum



## CONGREGATE

meet and discuss

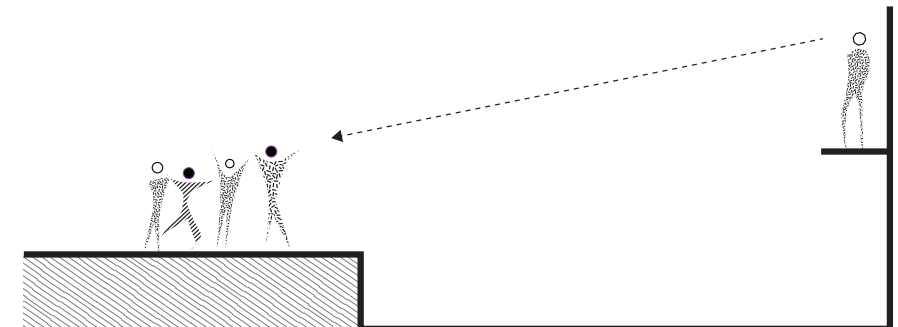
sports fields, courtyards, gyms, discussion clubs, cafes, galleries, restaurants



## COMMUNICATE

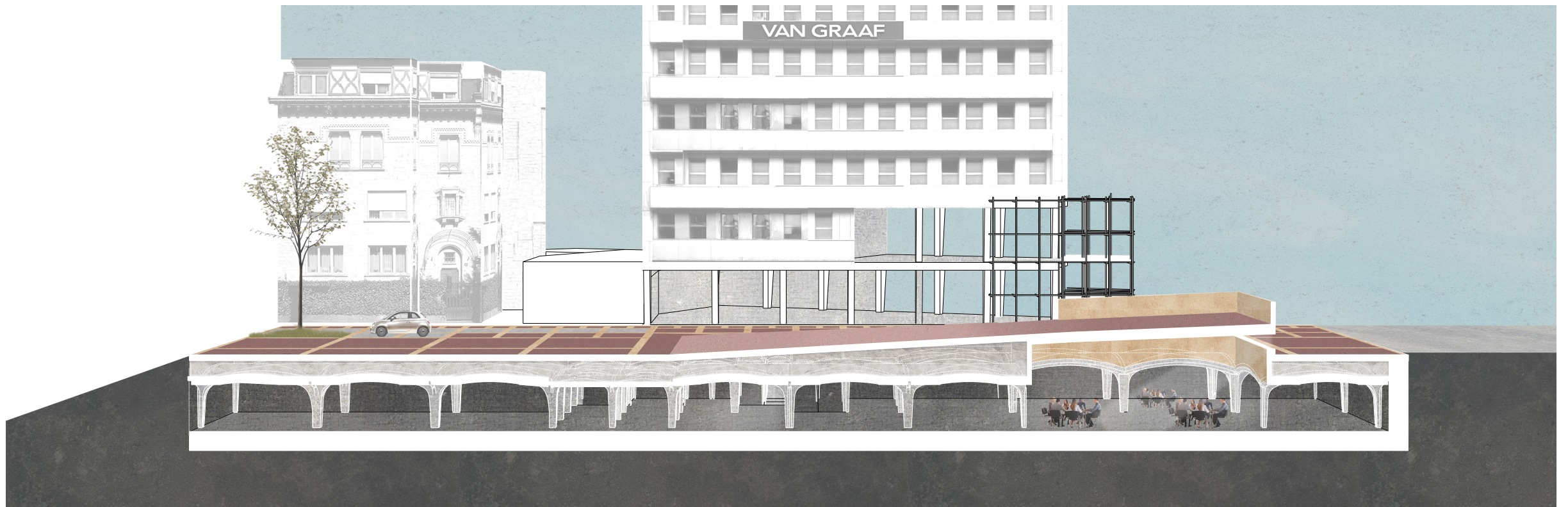
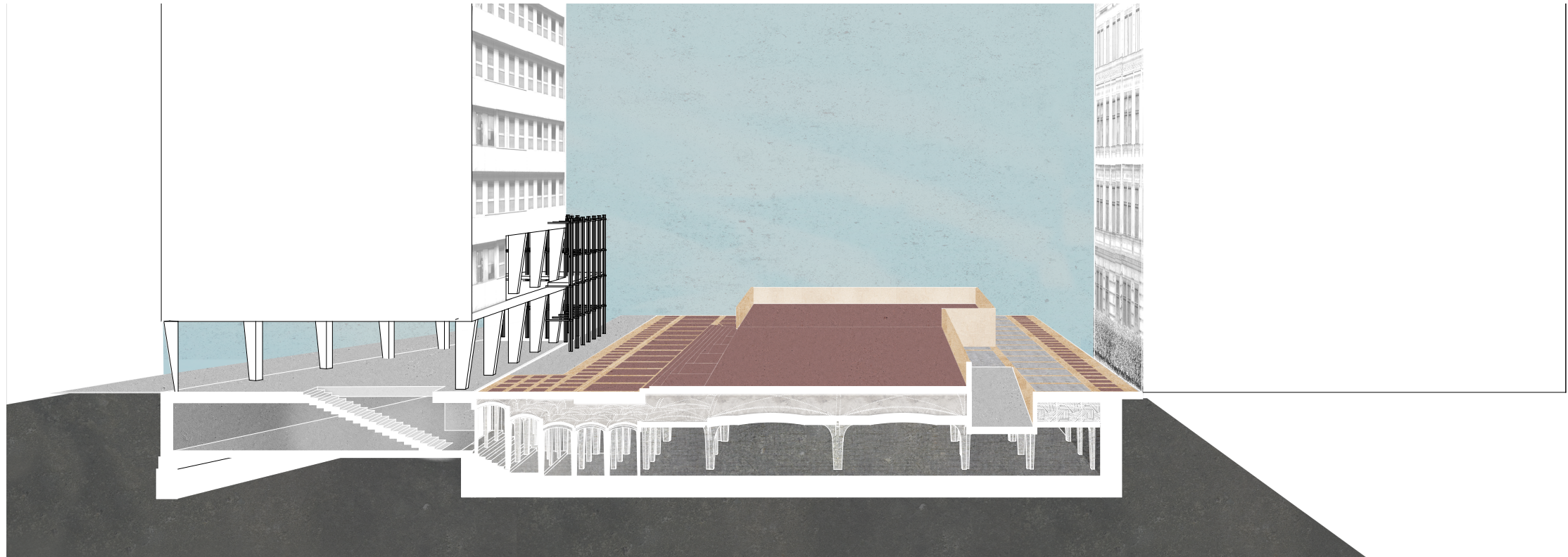
see and be seen

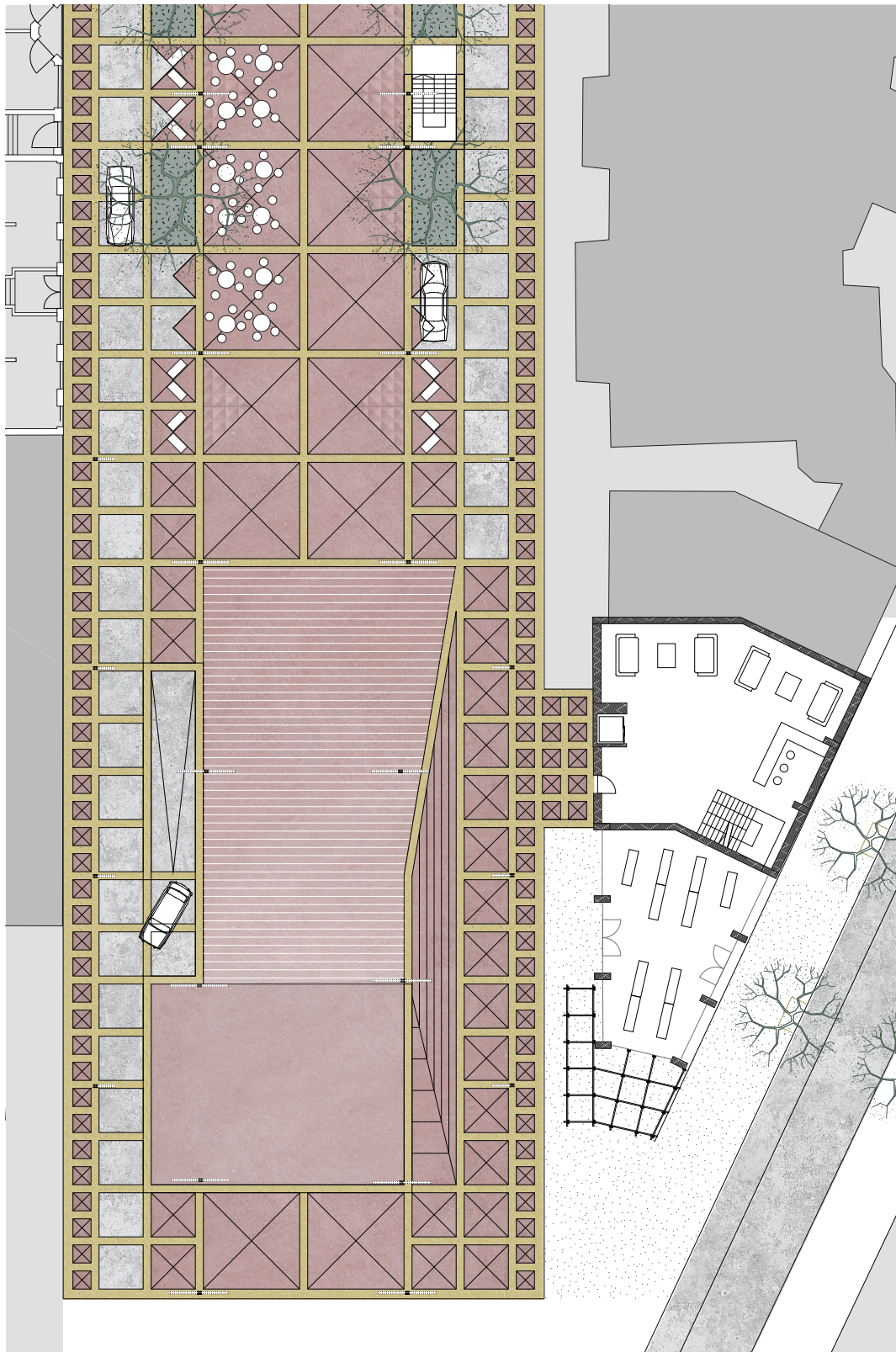
radio, TV, media facilities, monuments, characteristic points, loggias





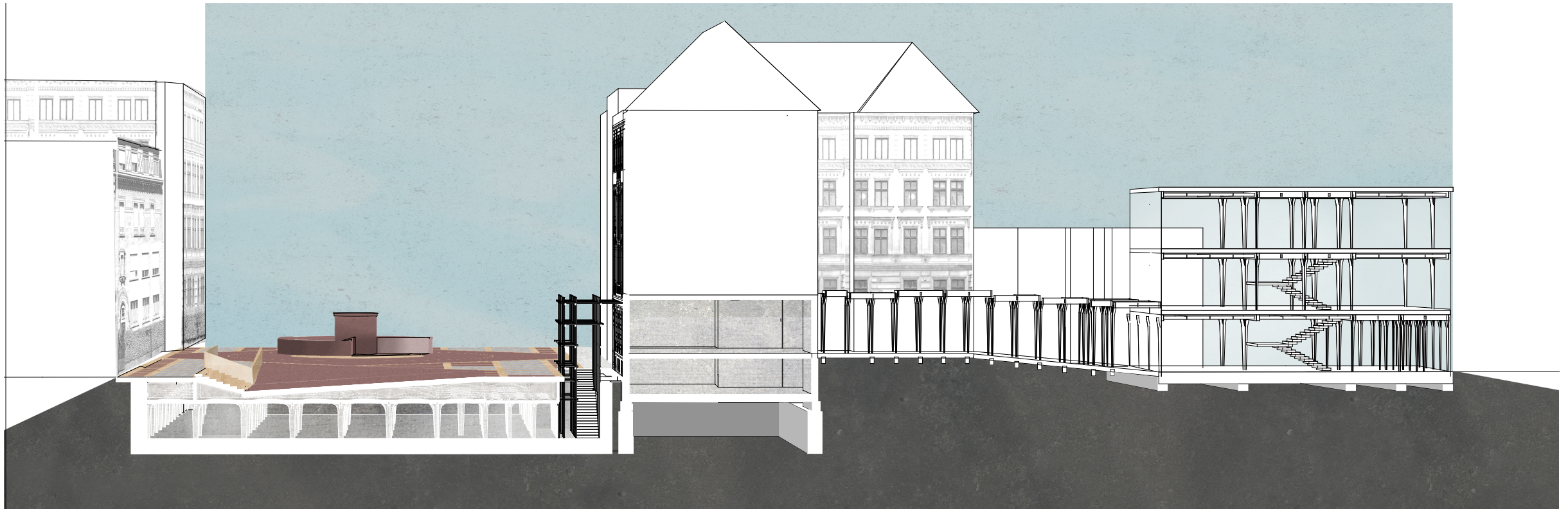
## PLOT I: OBSERVATION

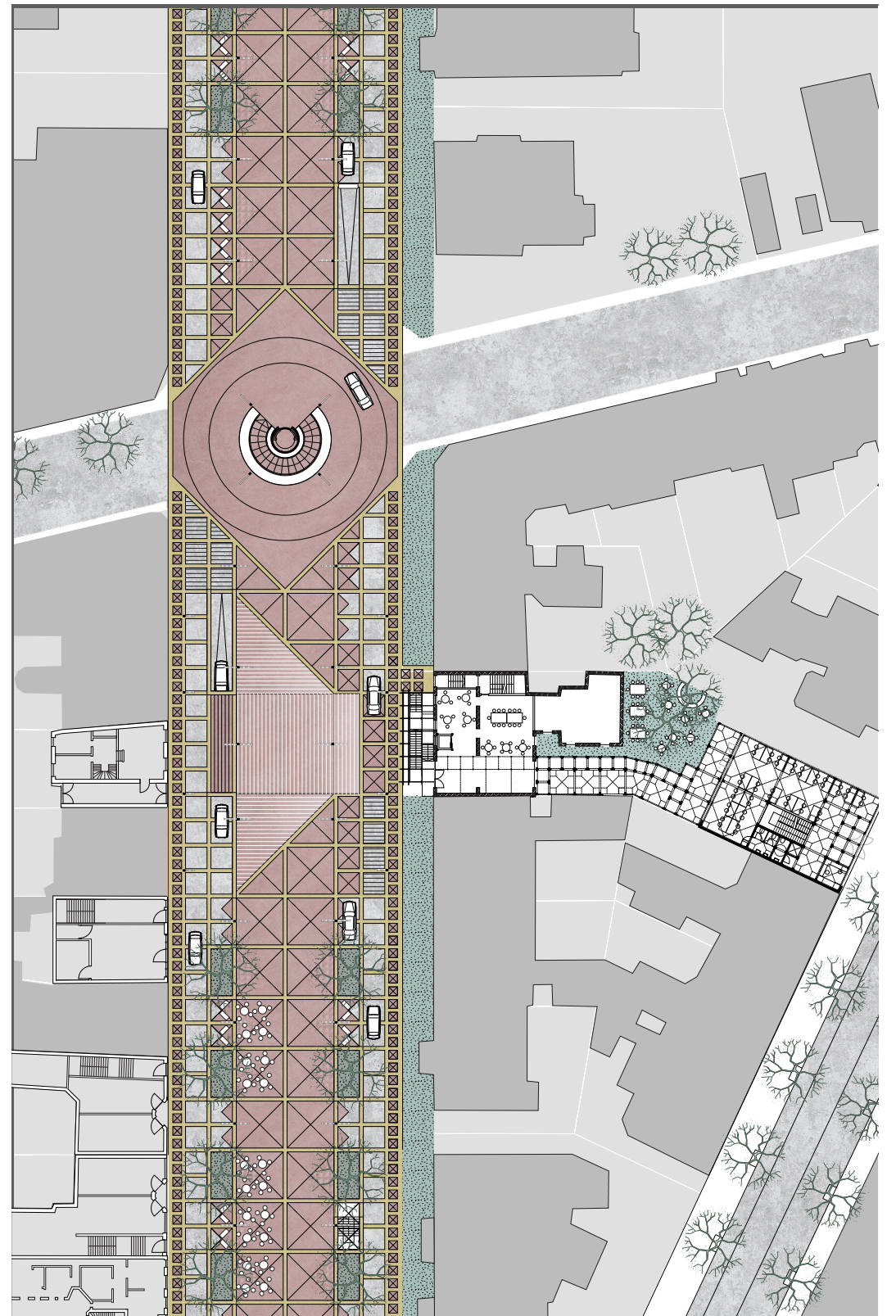
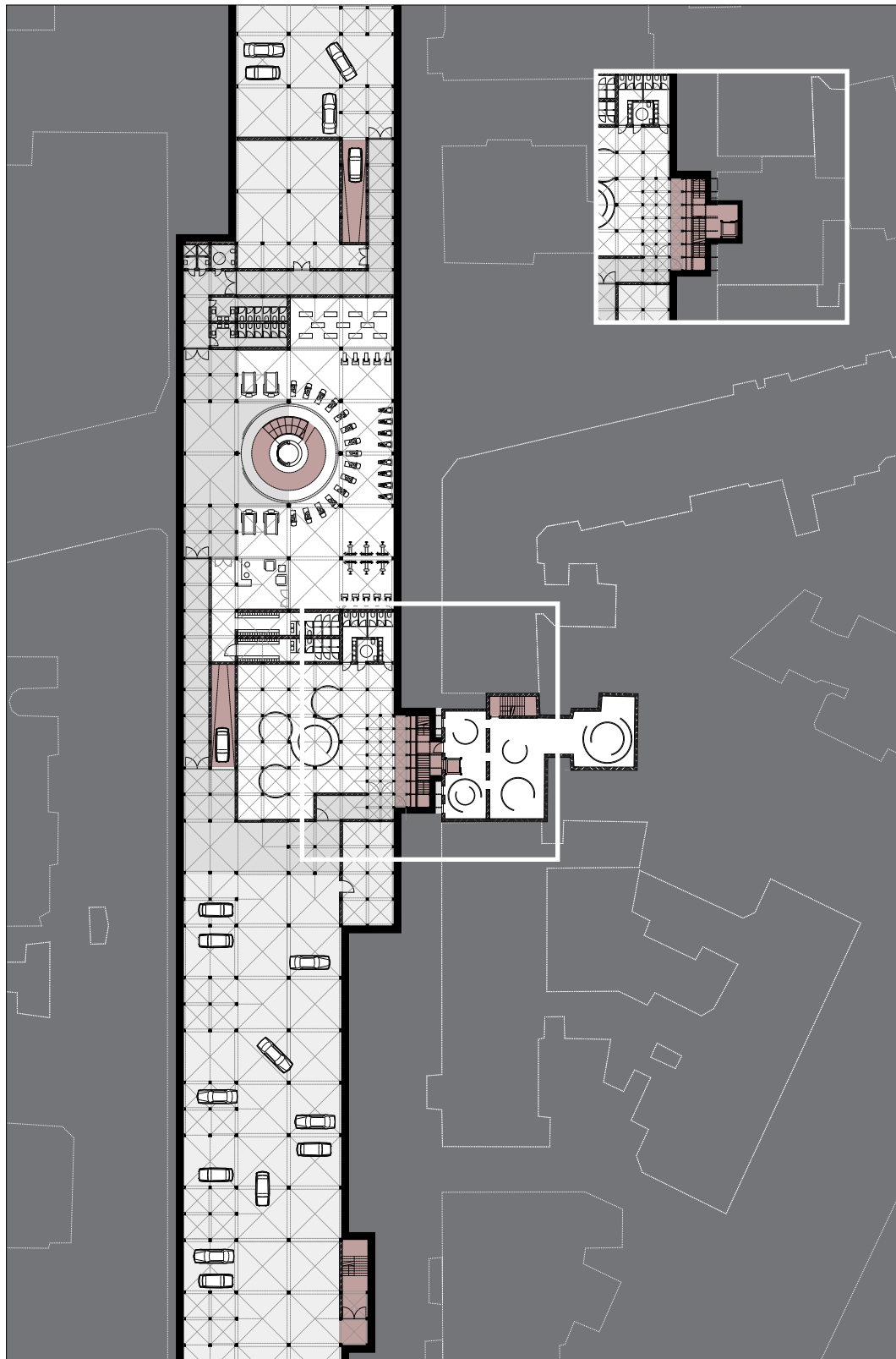




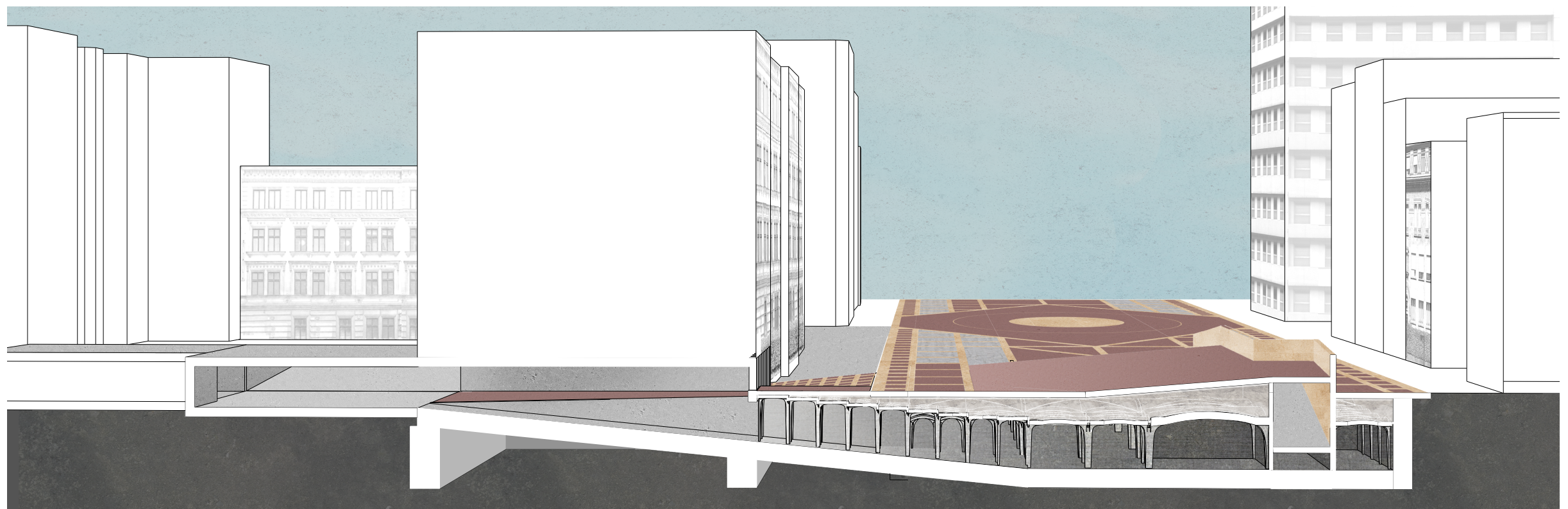


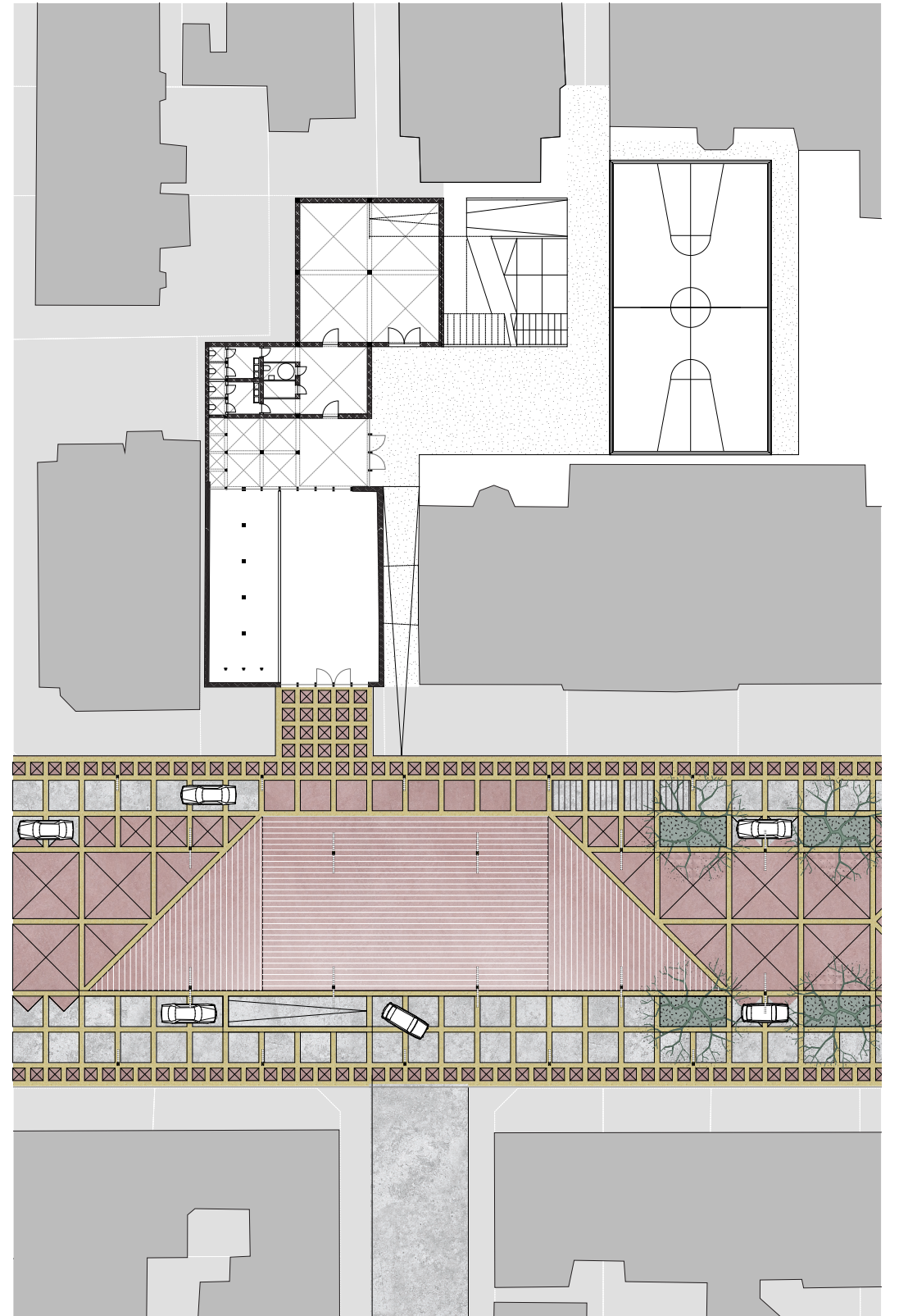
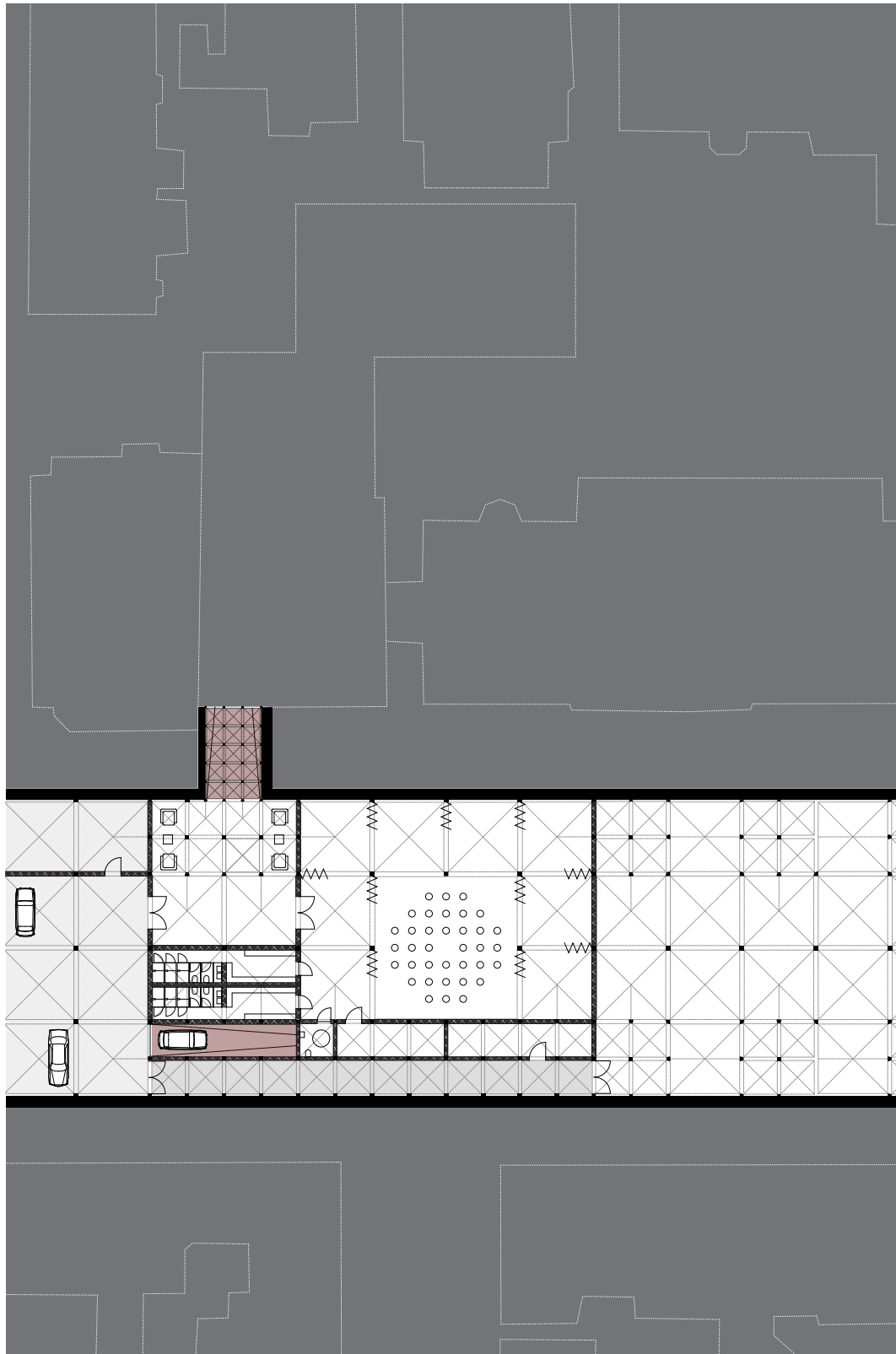
## PLOT 2: CREATION

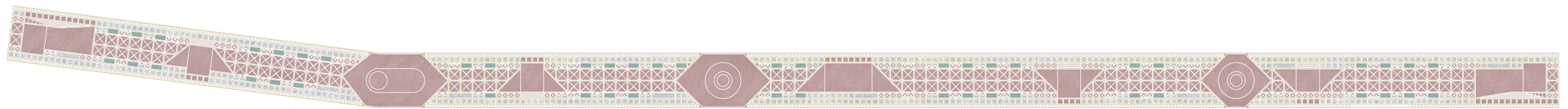




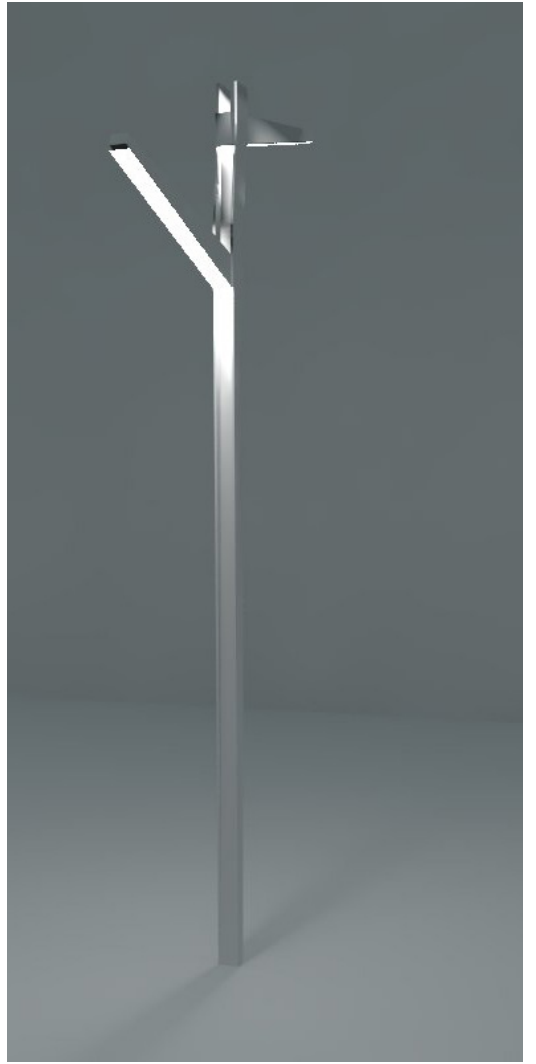
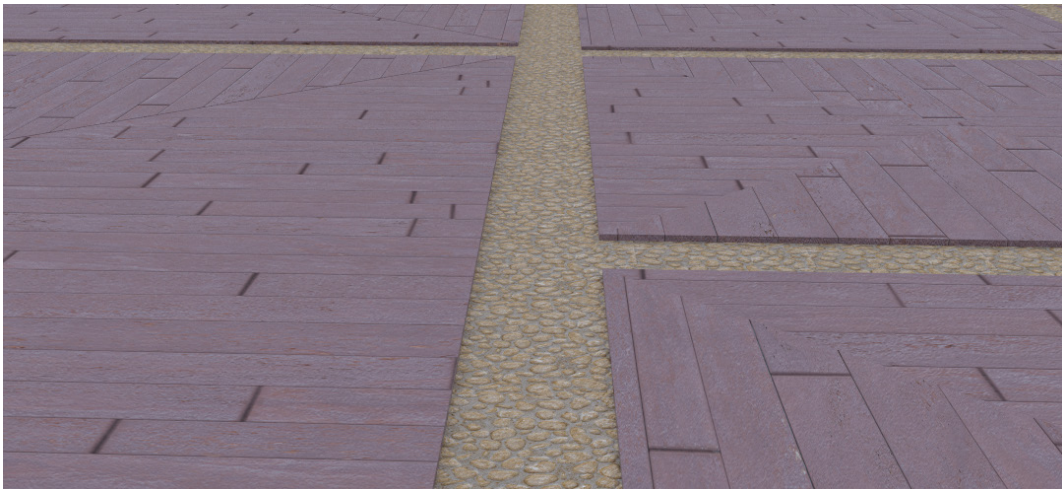
## PLOT 3: GATHERING

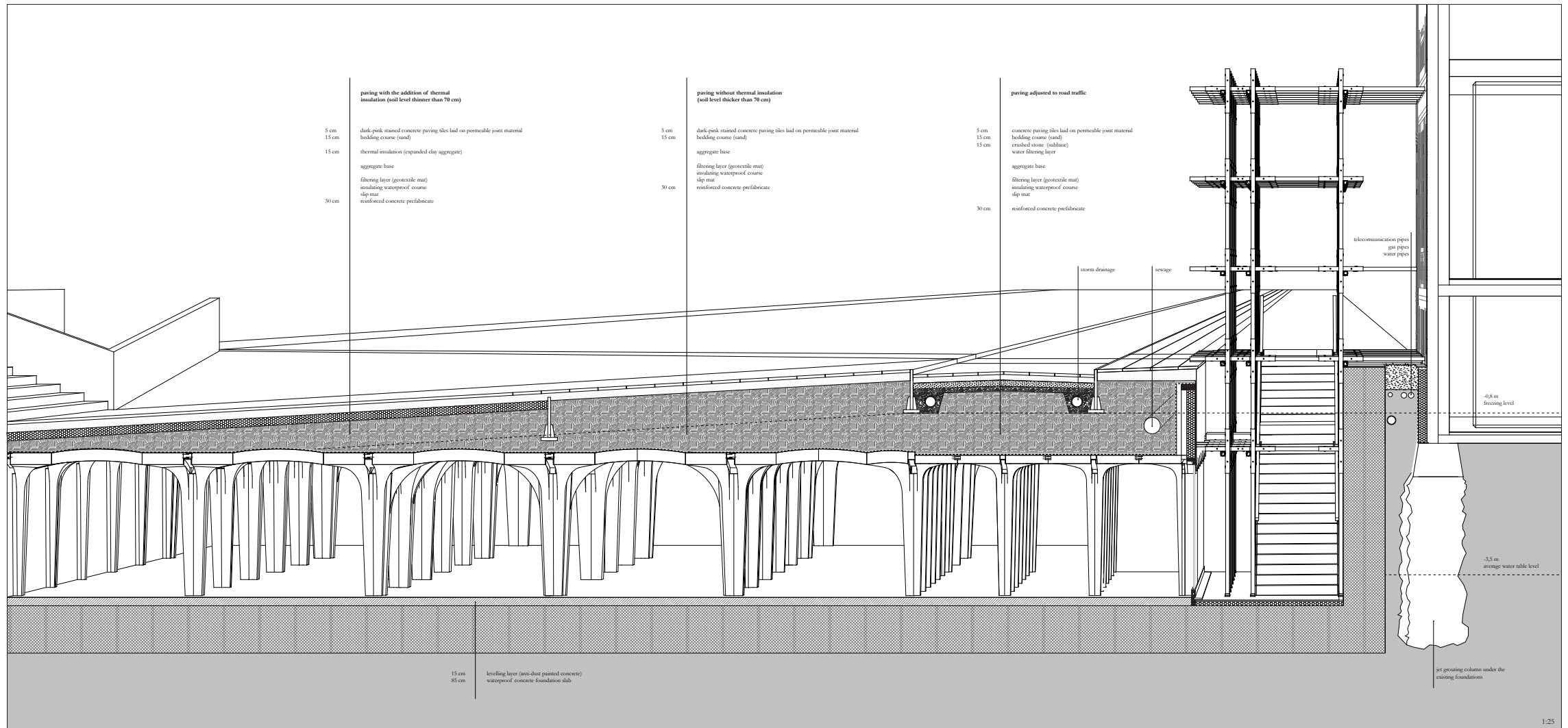




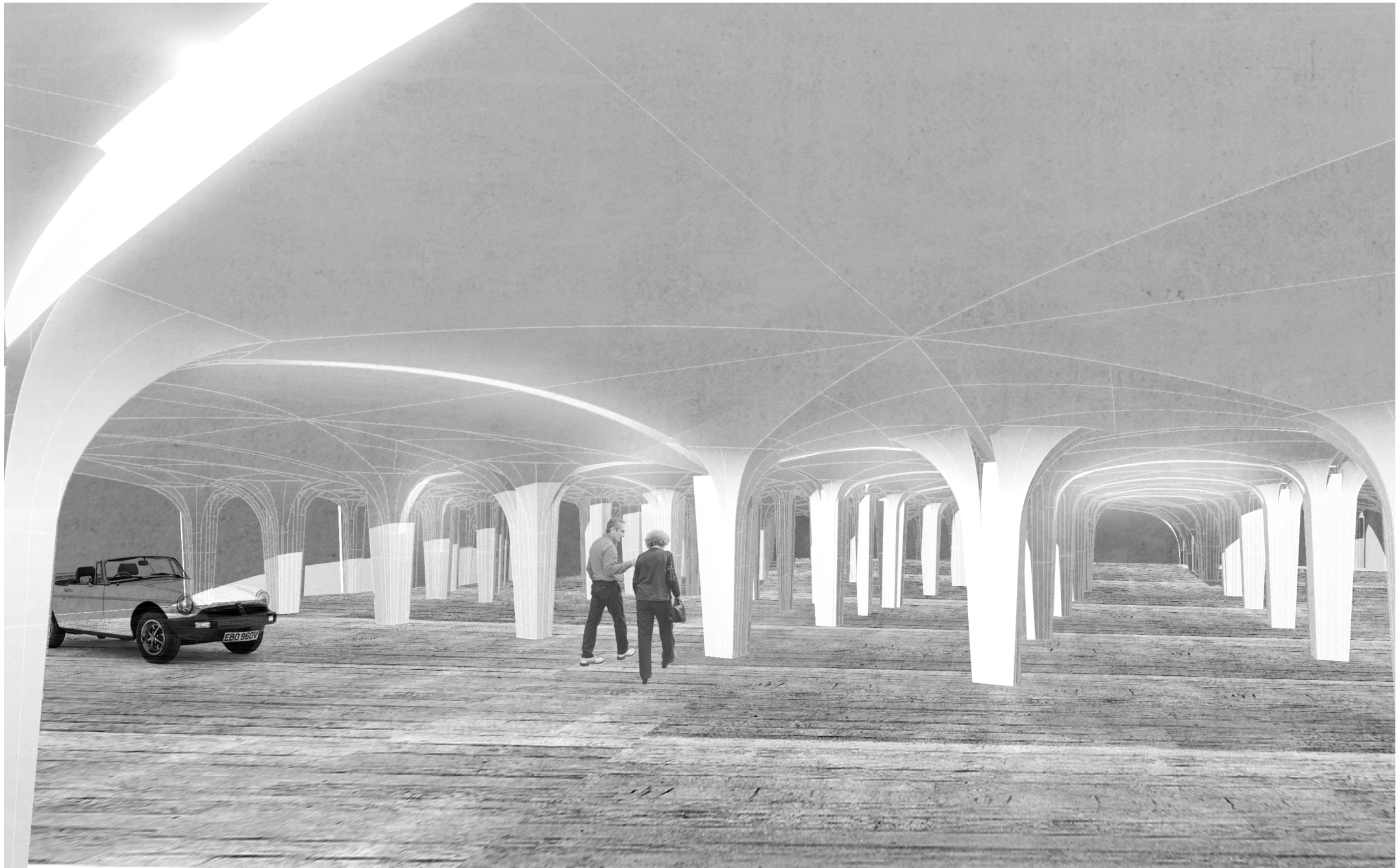


## THE STREET

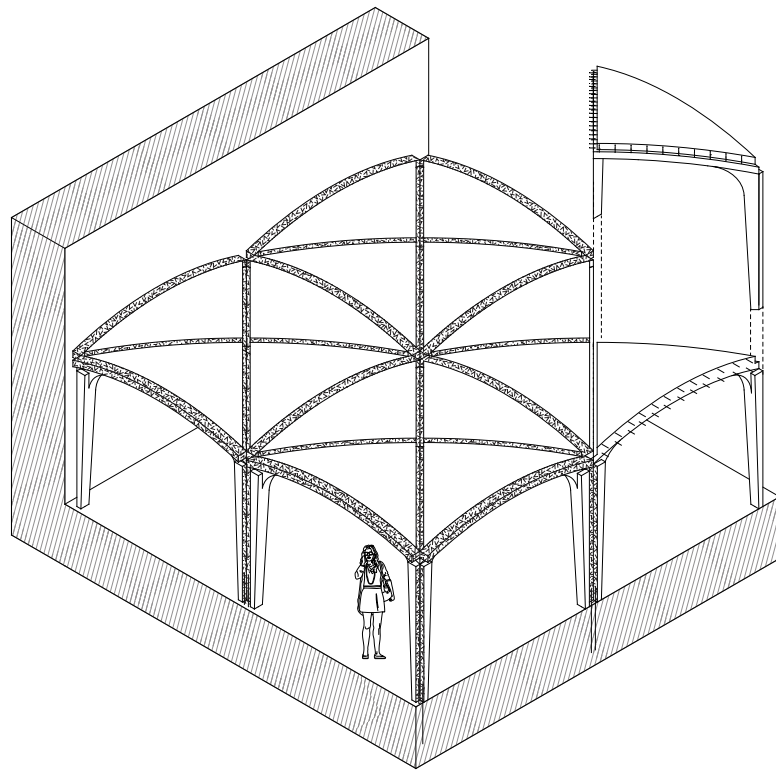




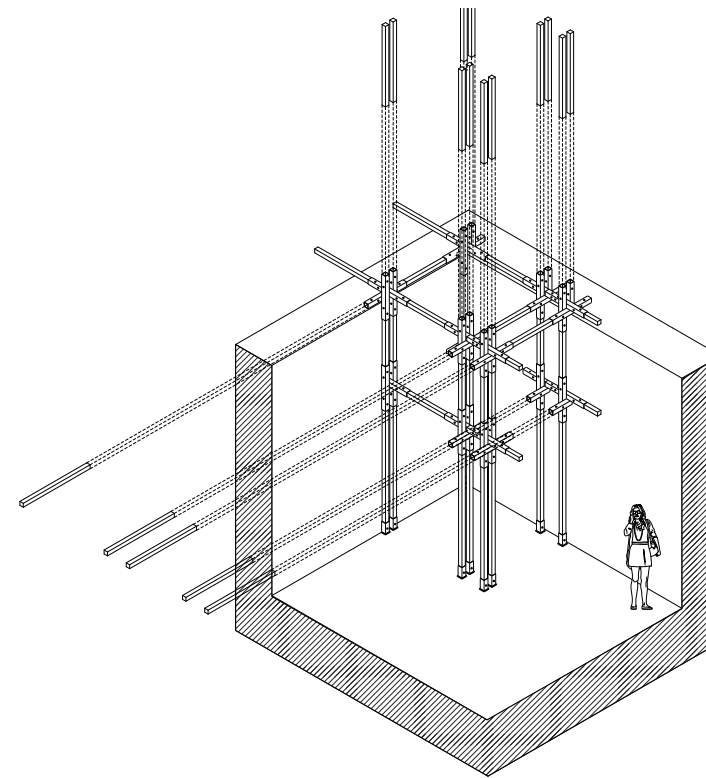
## STREET SECTION



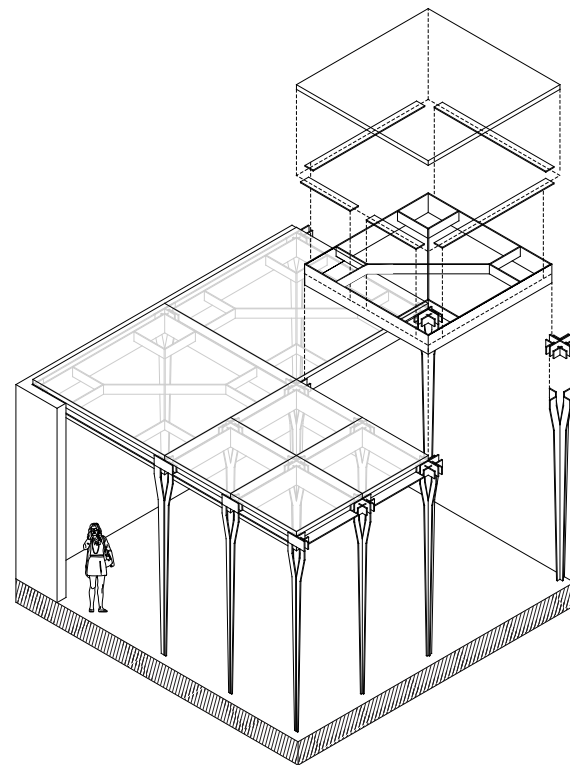
## STRUCTURE



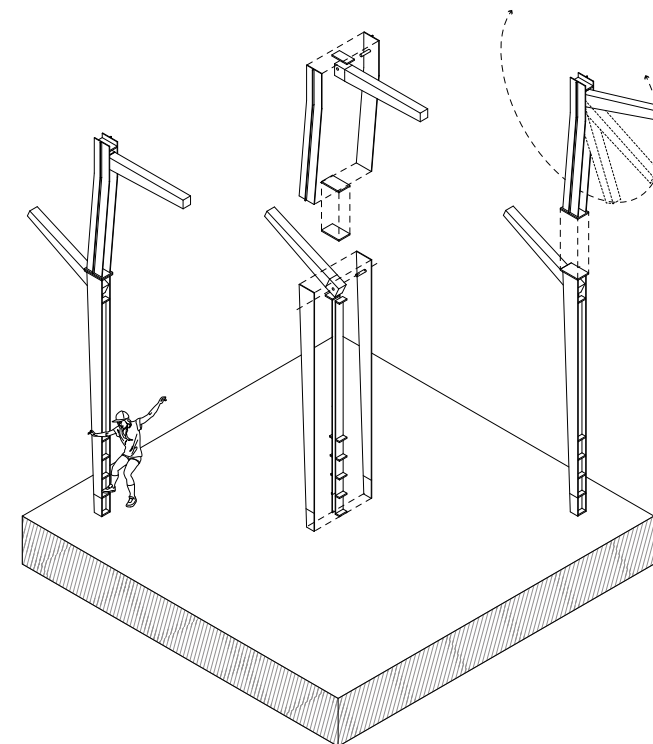
underground structure:  
prefabricated concrete  
modules



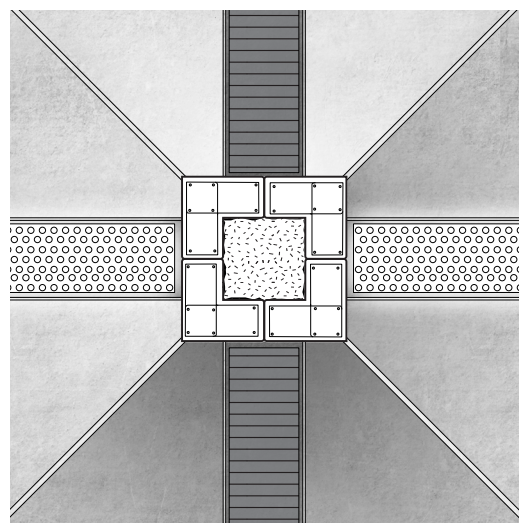
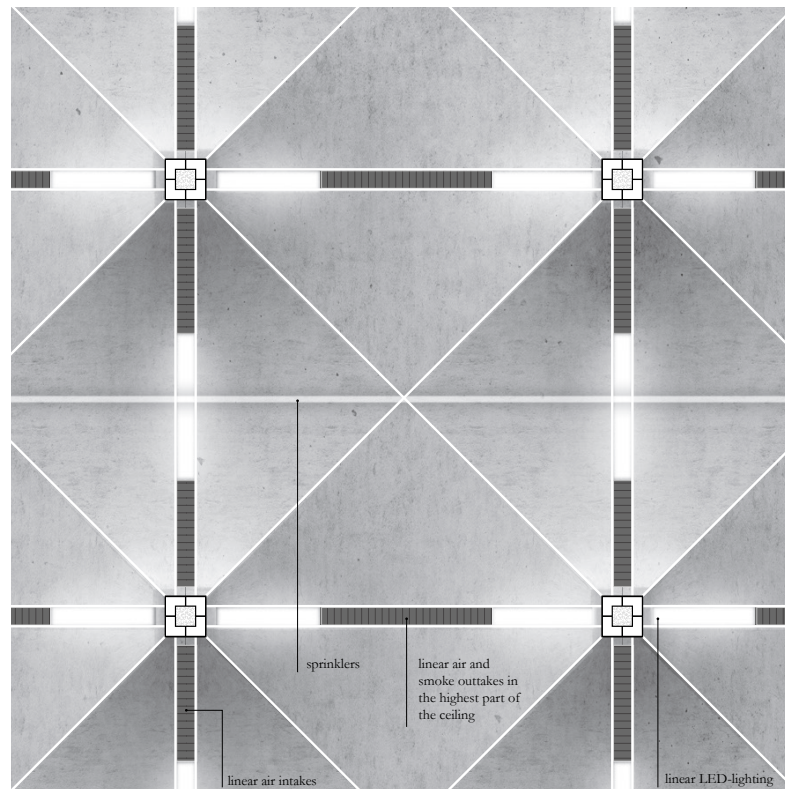
intermediary structure: steel  
tubes



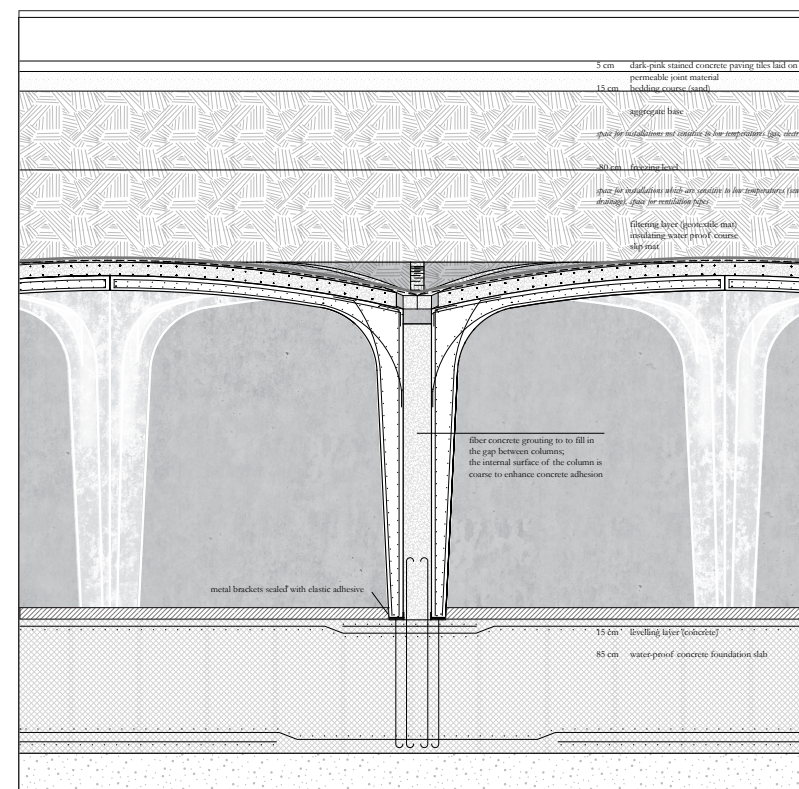
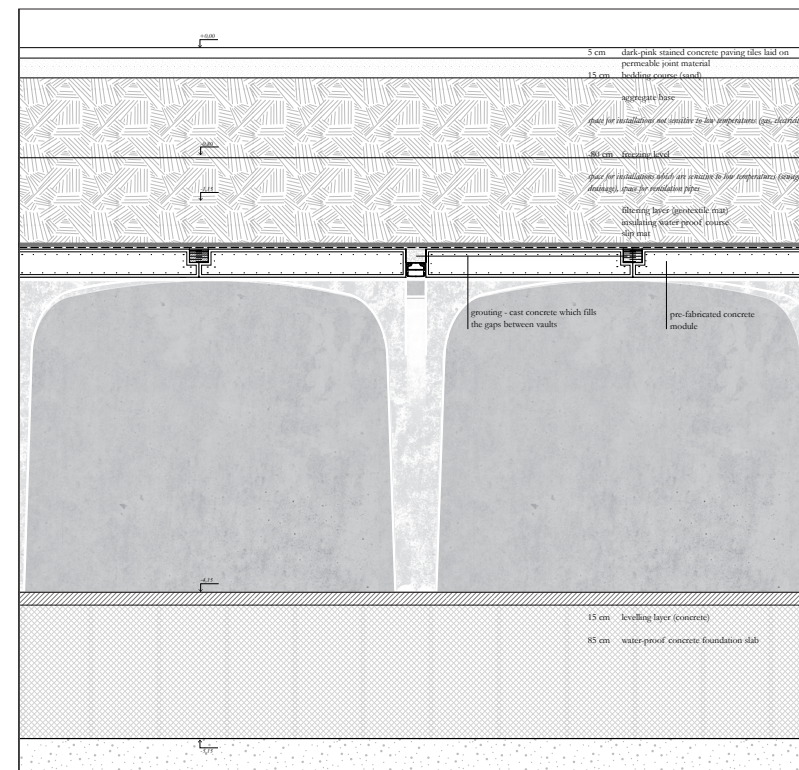
above ground structure:  
columns made of welded  
laser-cut plates of steel

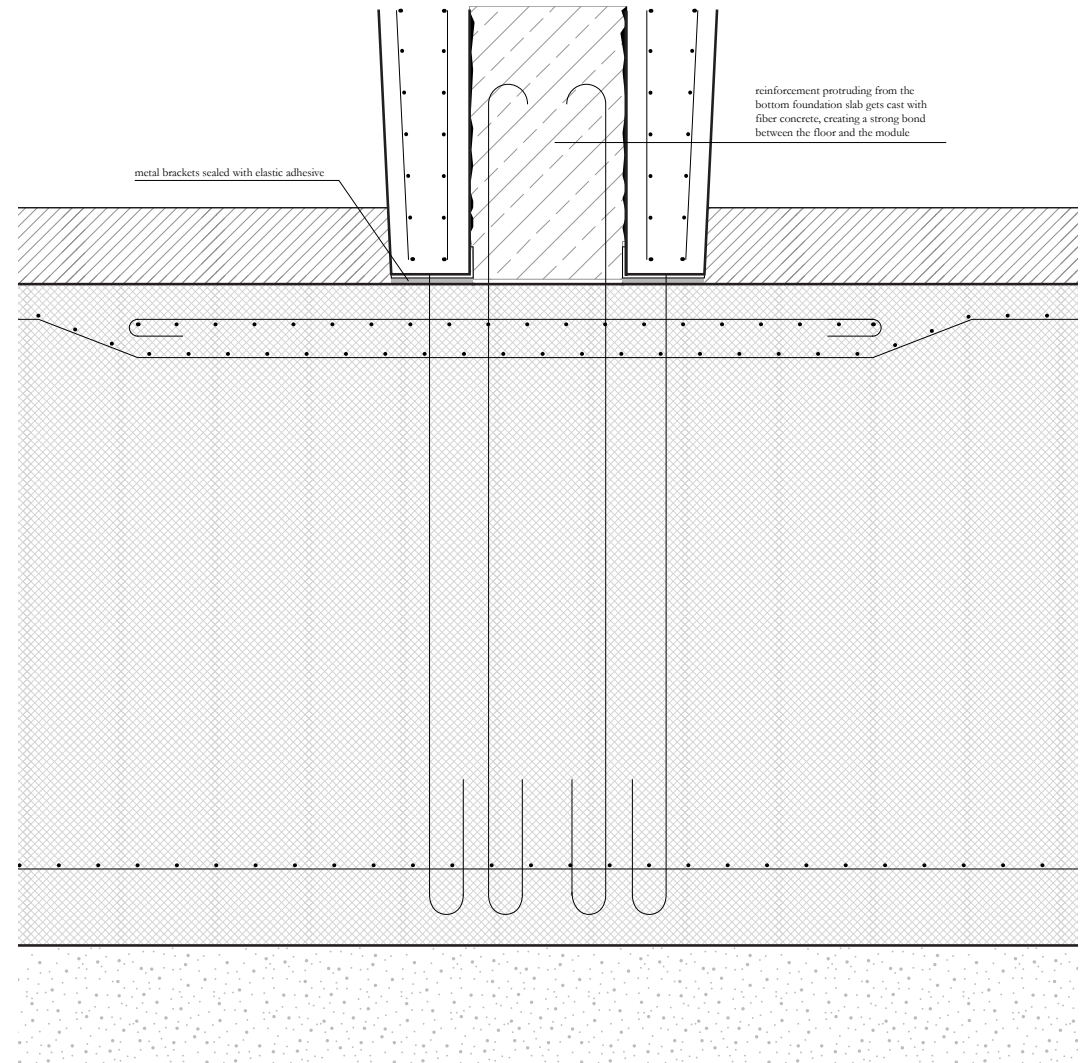
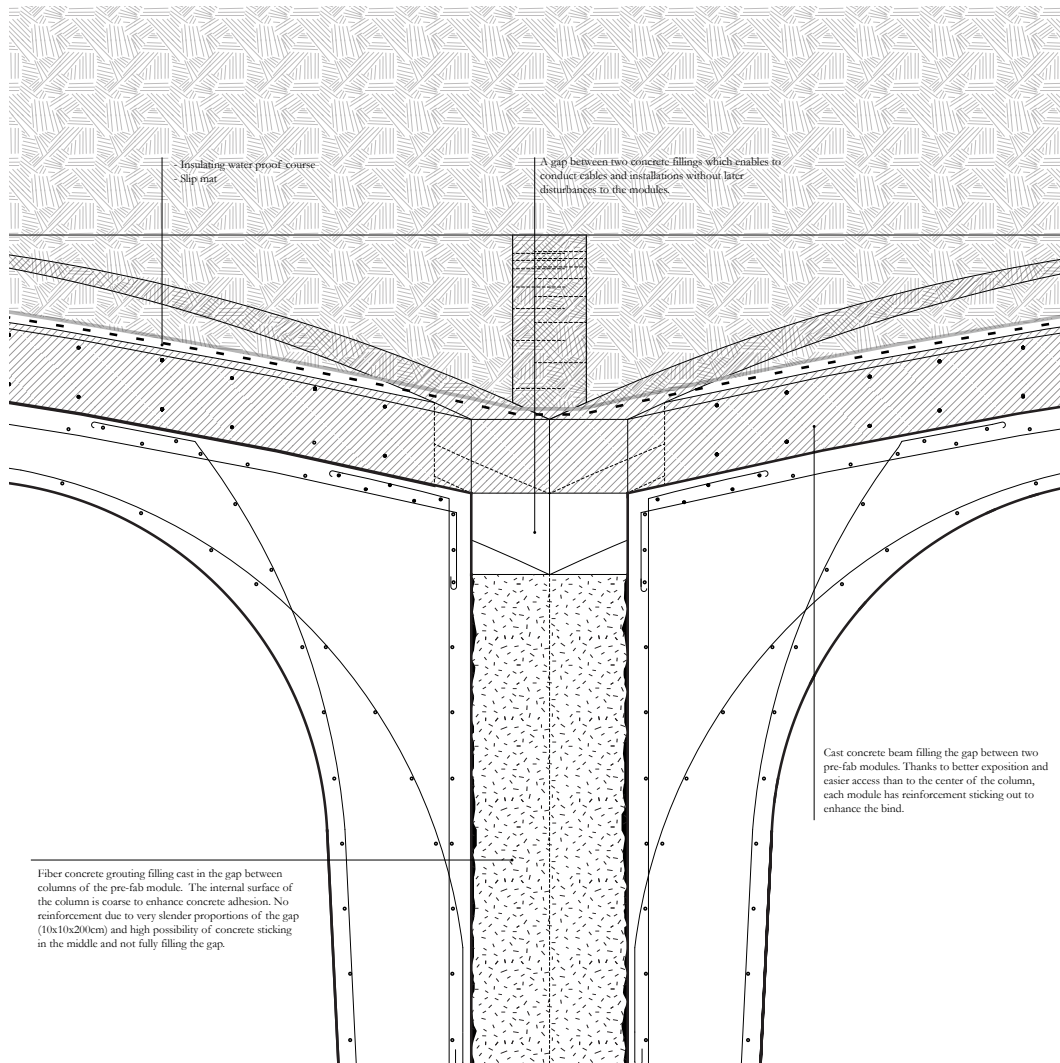
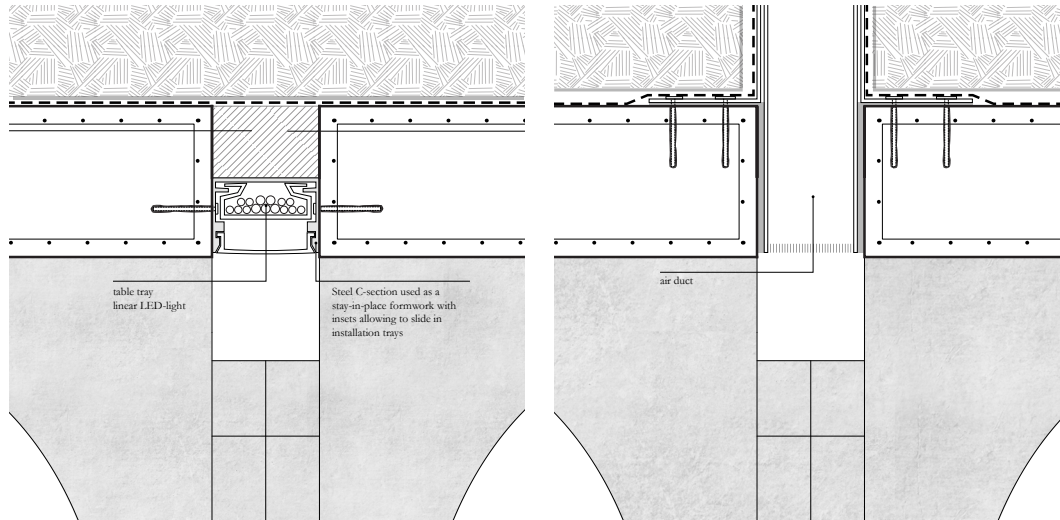


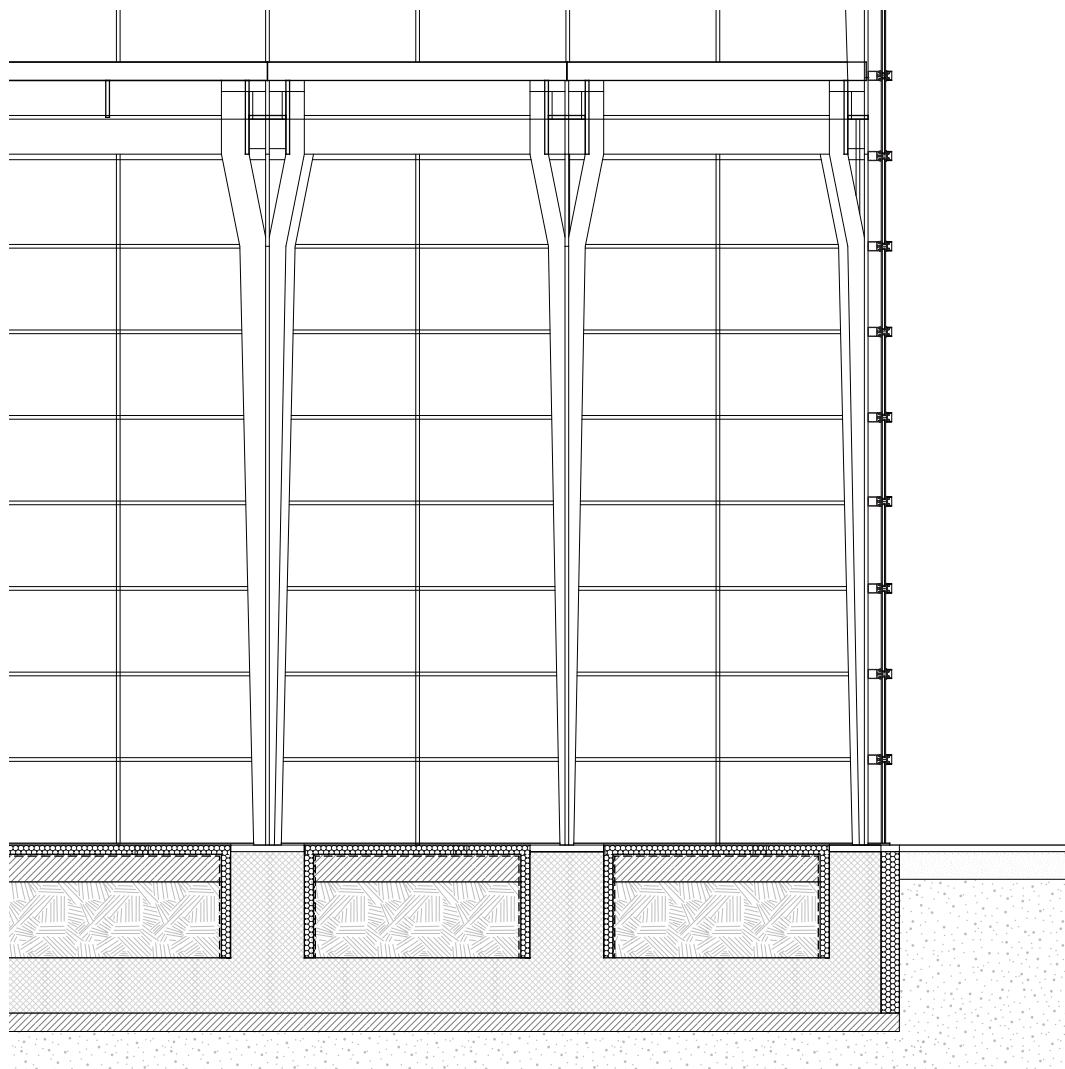
street lamps: welded laser-cut  
plates of steel



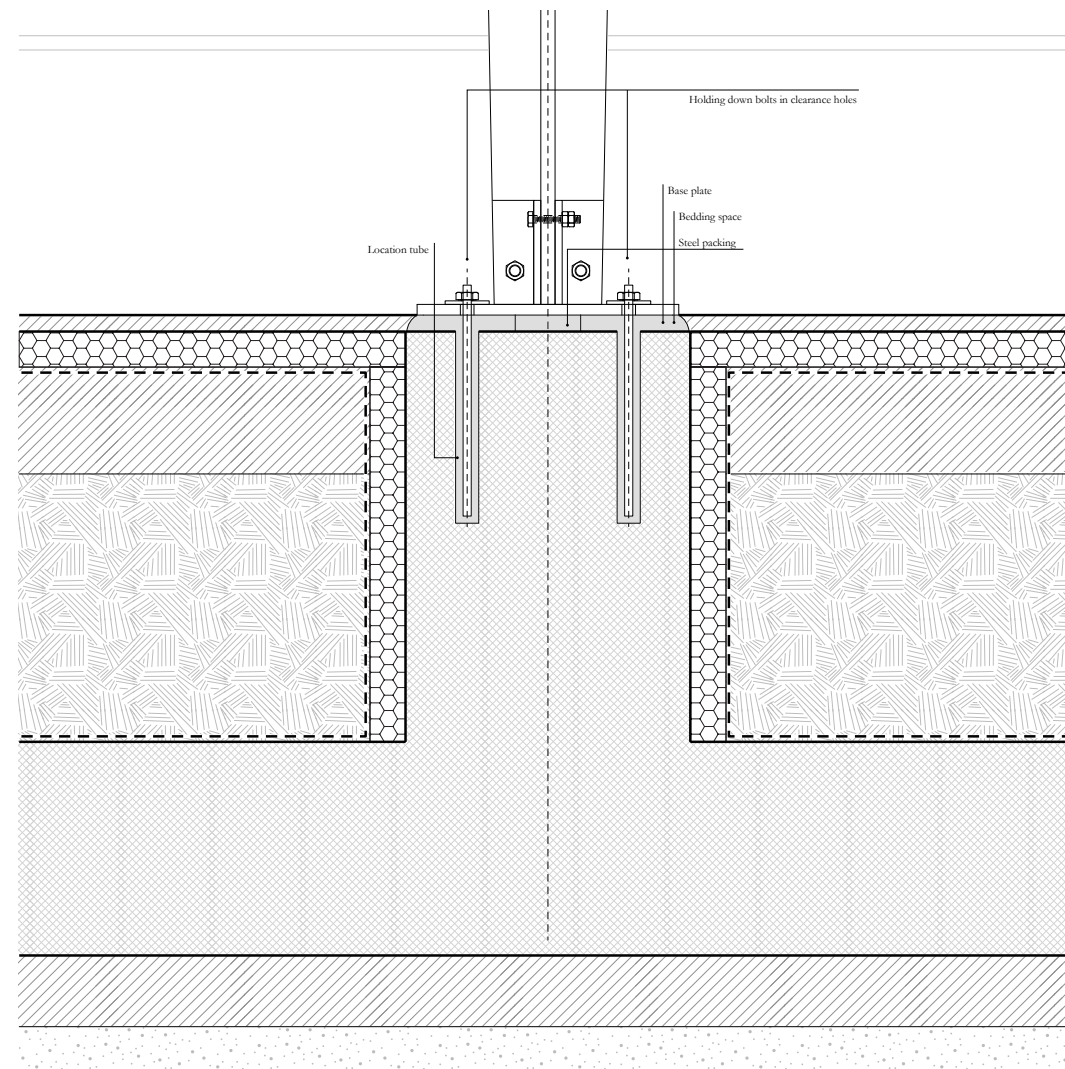
## UNDERGROUND PREFAB CONCRETE MODULES

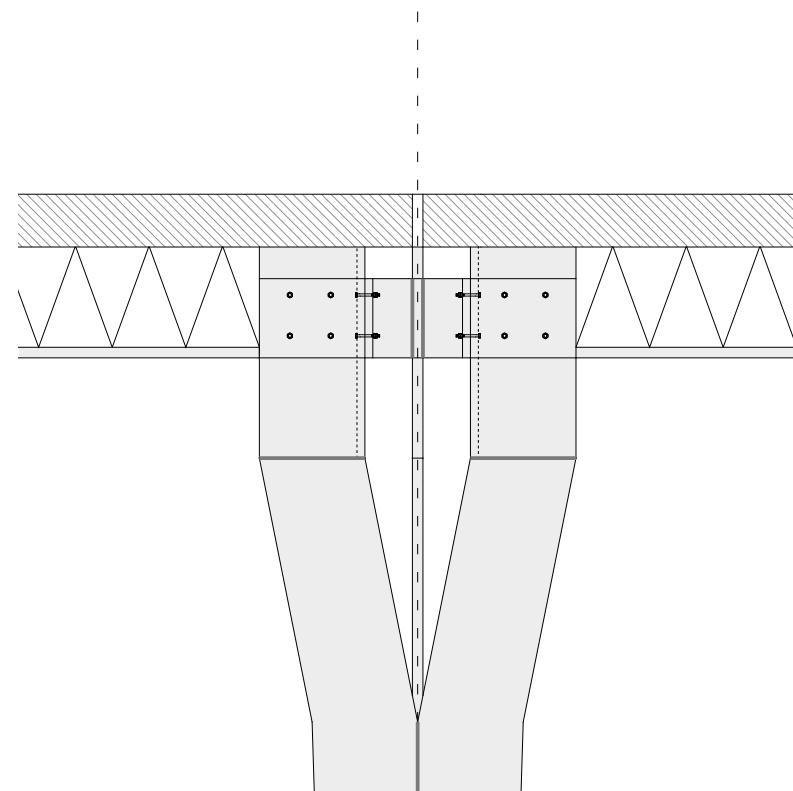
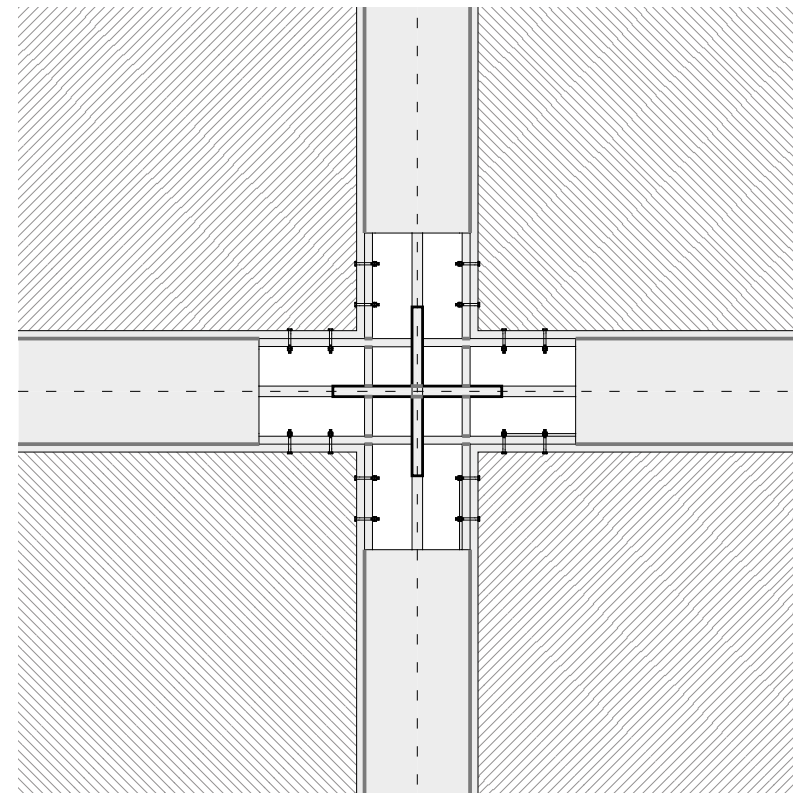
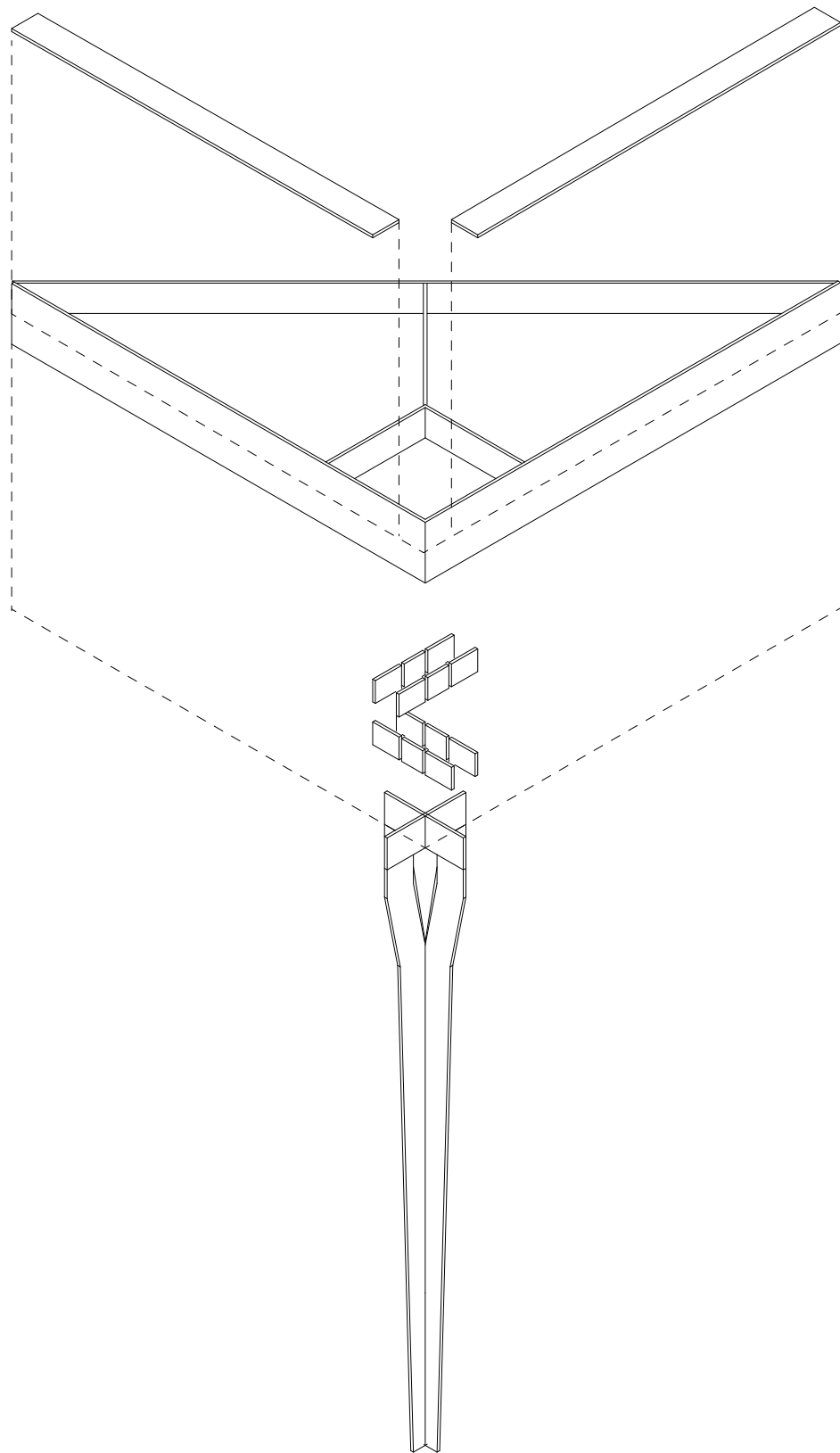


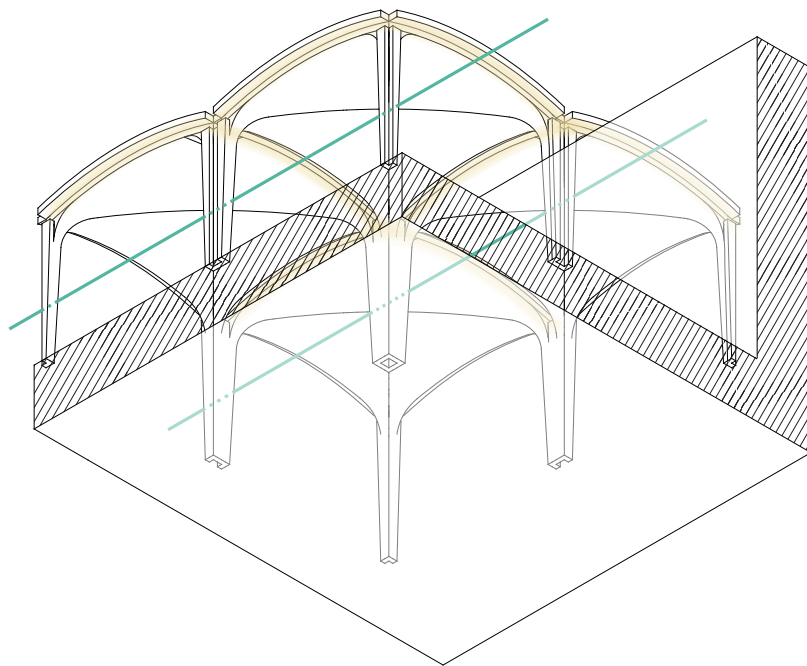




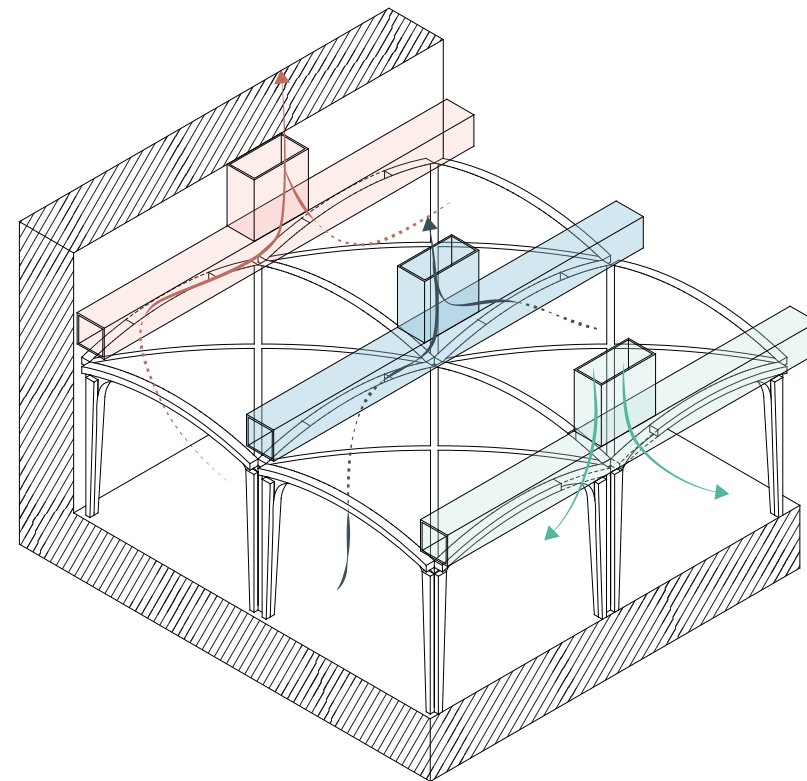
ABOVE GROUND STEEL  
STRUCTURE



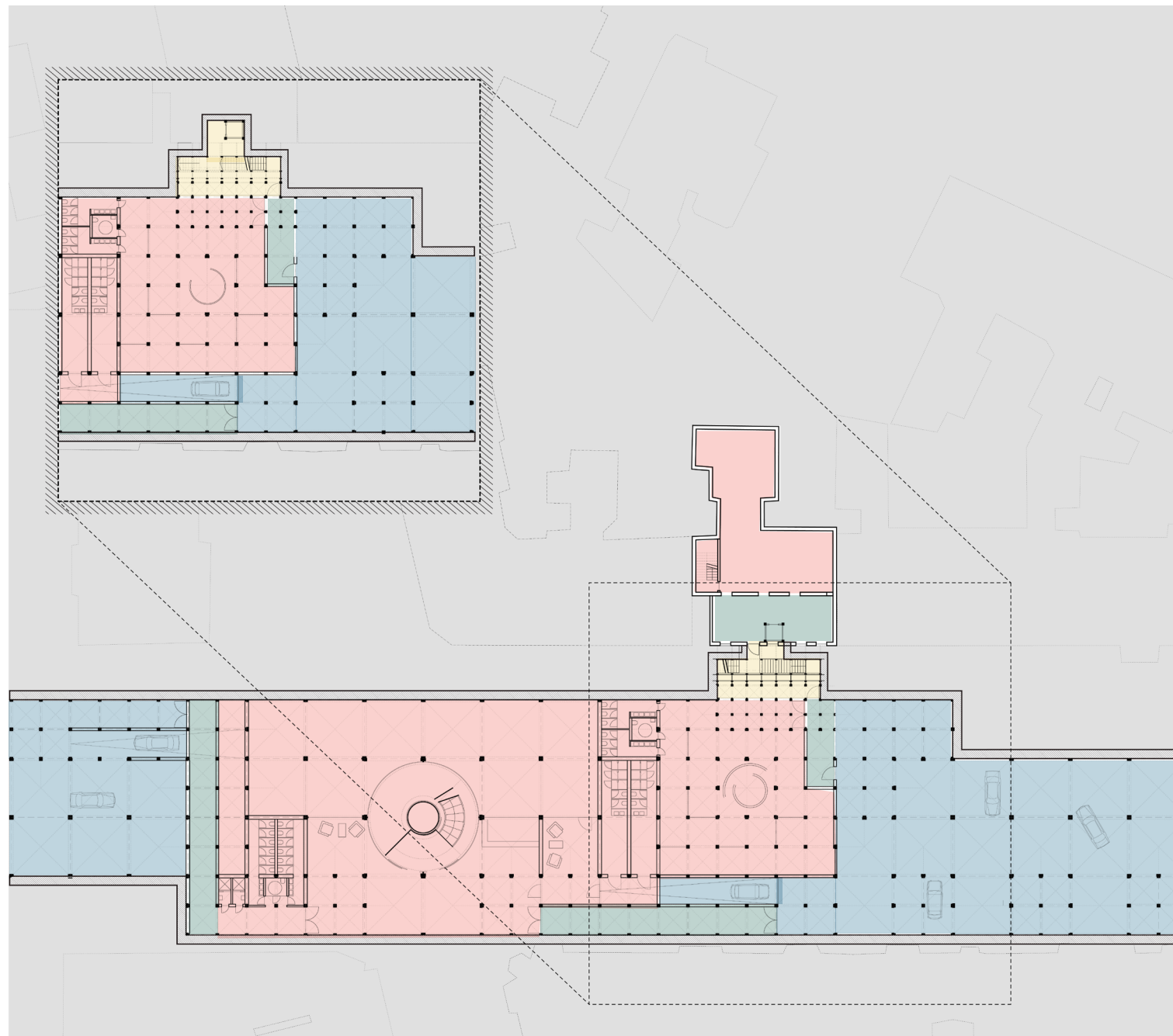




electricity ducts ■  
 sprinklers ■

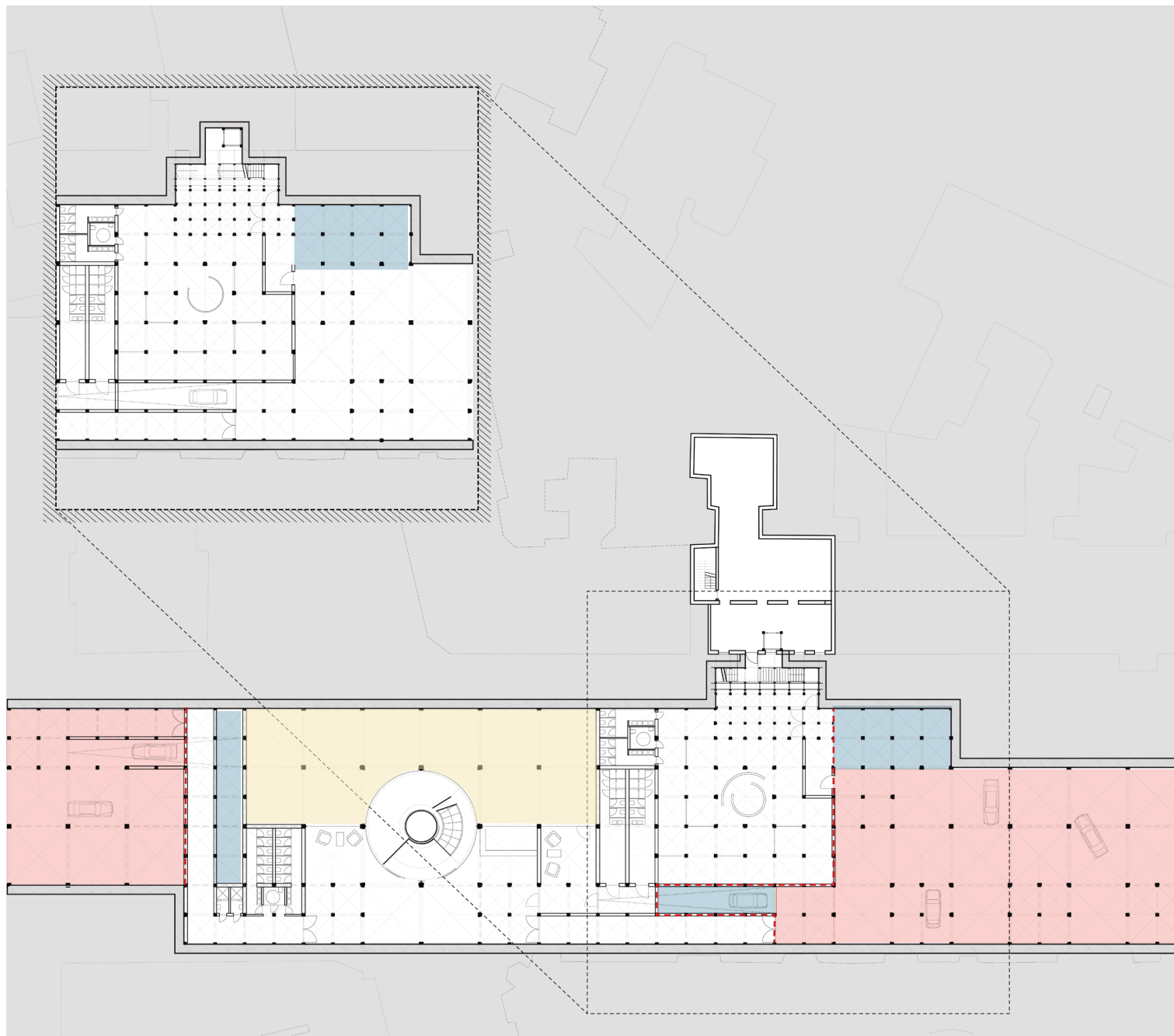


■ air intake  
■ air extraction  
■ smoke extraction



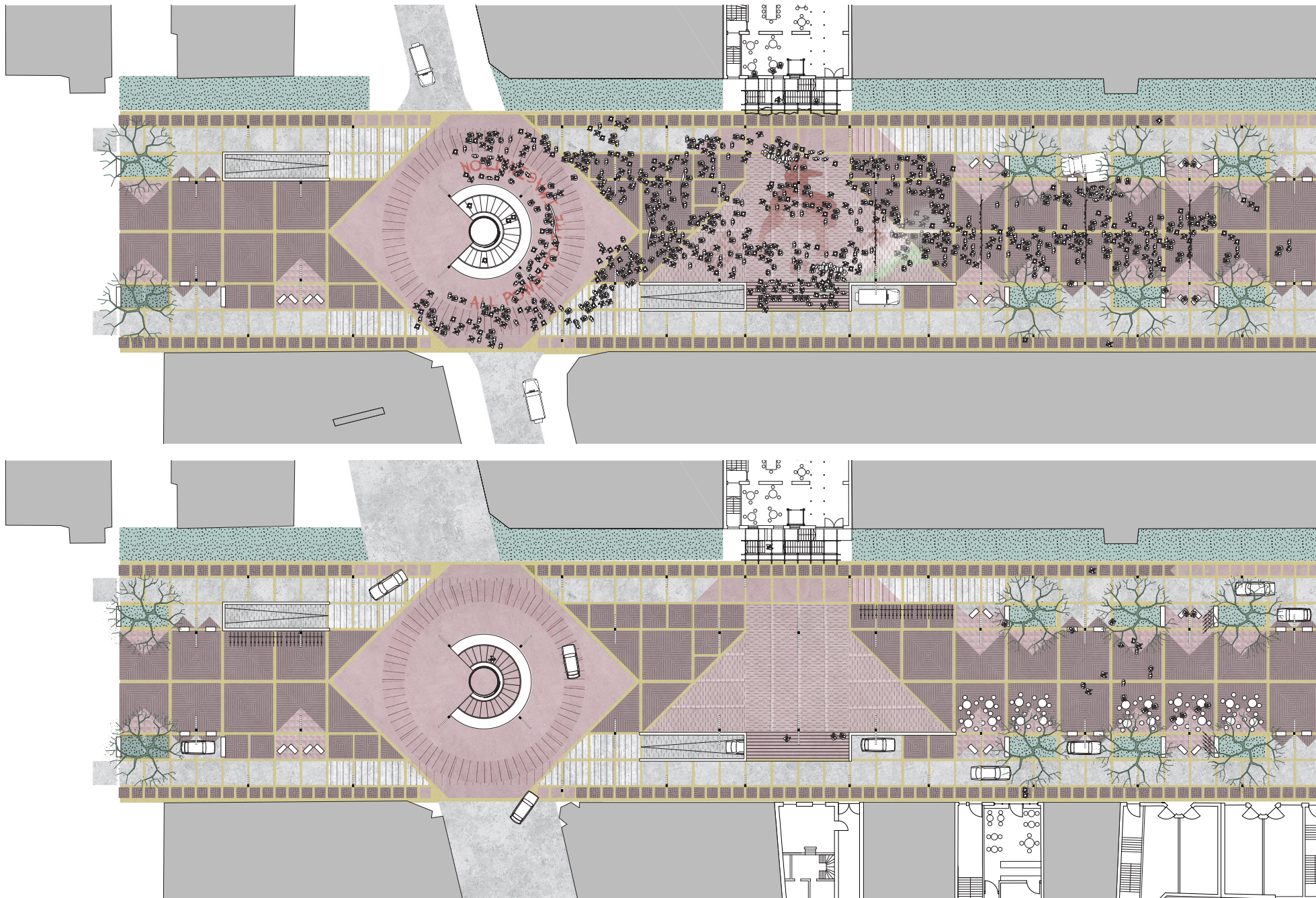
- external
- parking
- warm (permanent stay rooms)
- intermediary zones

## THERMAL ZONES



- technical rooms
- fire-proof walls
- fire extractions system +  
sprinklers
- zones with higher ventilation  
requirements (5x V/h)

## VENTILATION



## SPACE APPROPRIATION













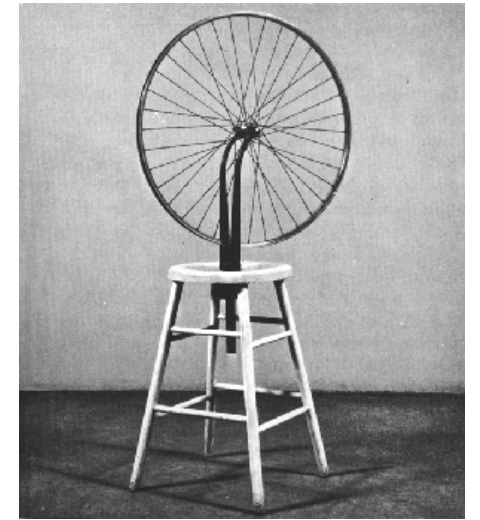


1  
Kids with Anti-War Signs, October 1969, [https://aadl.org/N003\\_0433\\_006](https://aadl.org/N003_0433_006)  
2.  
Wall of kindness around Trump Tower in NYC 2017, <https://12kindsofkindness.com/the-steps/dive-deep/story/>  
3  
Protesters throwing cobble stone during 1968 protests in Paris, <https://polfoto.wordpress.com/2014/06/01/opowiesc-o-dwoch-miastach/>  
4  
Iconic picture of a man protesting on a street lamp, <http://ilblogdichiaraoscura.blogspot.com/2016/06/canzoni-la-canzone-del-maggio-in-italia.html>

5  
Paris 1968 poster, [http://www.puretrend.com/media/affiche-de-mai-68-la-beaute-dans\\_m517775](http://www.puretrend.com/media/affiche-de-mai-68-la-beaute-dans_m517775)  
6  
Marketa Martiskova. Ensemble, Protest 2012, <https://www.nyttrom.no/utopian-bodies-in-stockholm/>  
7  
Andreas Kronthaler for Vivienne Westwood, 2013, <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-2013-ready-to-wear/andreas-kronthaler-for-vivienne-westwood>  
8  
Viktor & Rolf protest fashion, <http://www.anothermag.com/fashion-beauty/8904/>

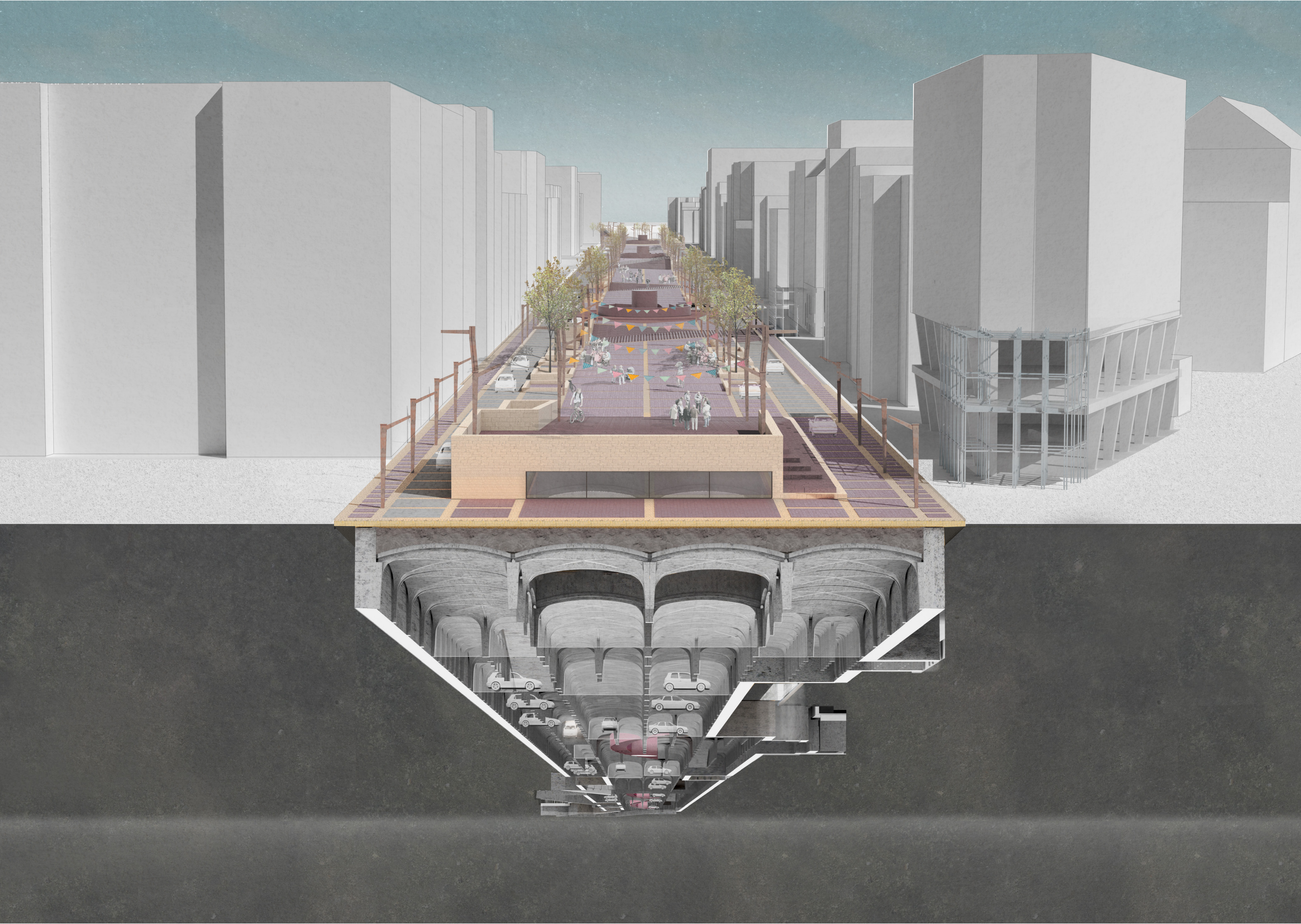
when-viktor-rolf-fashioned-a-statement-of-intent  
9  
Untitled protest - Simone Steenberg <http://www.pigeonsandpeacocks.com/2014/11/1/untitled-protest-simone-steenberg/>  
10  
Activists of the Ukrainian feminist protest group 'Femen' disturb the Nina Ricci Paris Fashion Show, <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/gallery/activists-ukrainian-feminist-protest-group-2309717>

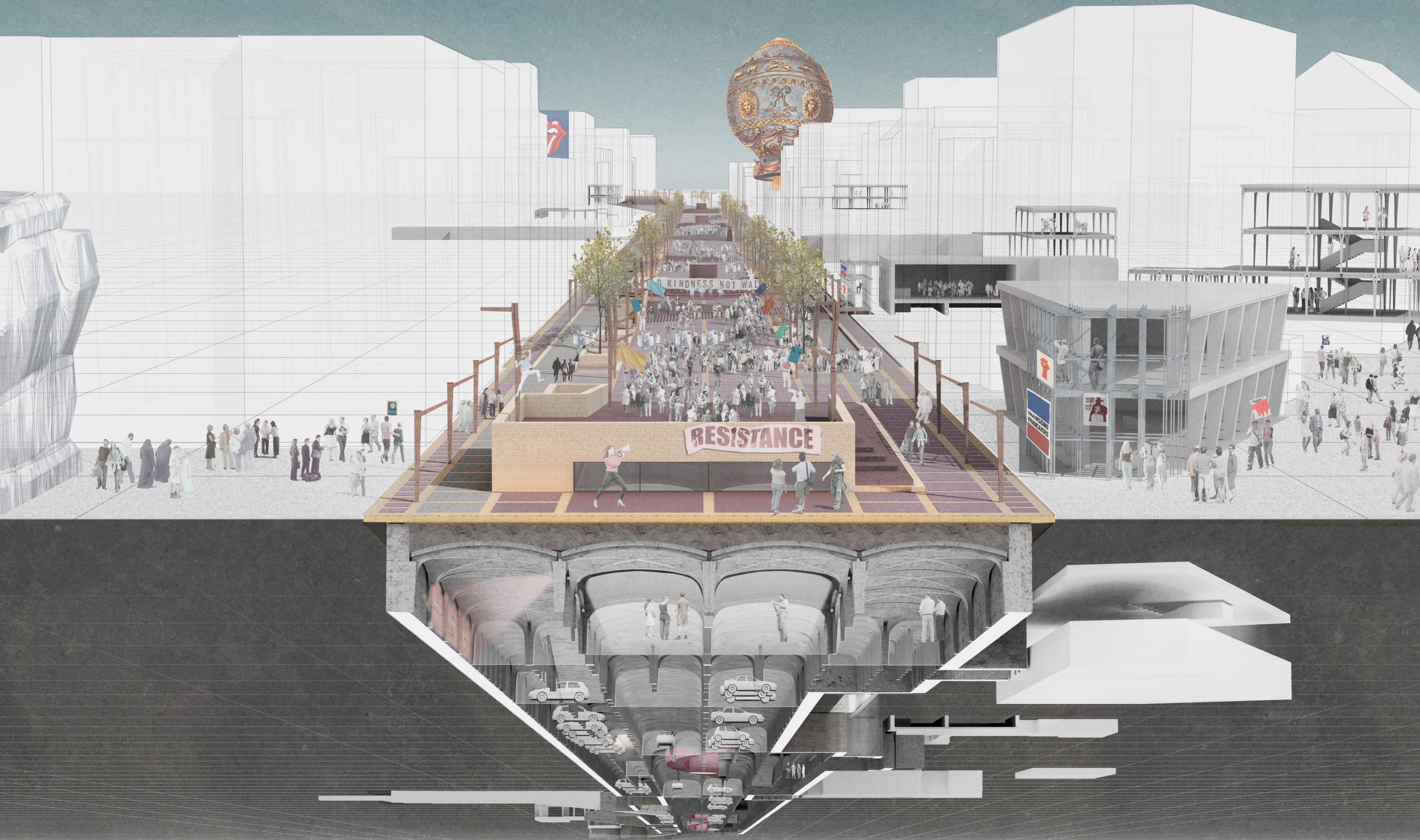




- 1 Ferdinand Pauwels, Luther - 95 Theses  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Luther95theses.jpg>
- 2 Picasso, Guernica
- 3 Marcel Duchamp, Bicycle wheel
- 4 "Be young and shut up" 1968 Paris protest poster
- 5

- 6 Rainbow stairs in Istanbul, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/10/turkey-rainbow-stairs\\_n\\_3895082.html?guccounter=1](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/10/turkey-rainbow-stairs_n_3895082.html?guccounter=1)
- 7 Atelier Populaire, Print Workshop, 1968, <http://spinsandneedles.com/stuff/2012/03/01/atelier-populaire-renegade-print-workshop/>
- 8 Atelier Populaire, 1968, <https://www.are.na/malissa-canez-sabus/atelier-populaire>





## FRAMING PROTEST

Architecture & Public Building Graduation Studio  
Ground, Things and Representation: Strasbourg

student: Ada Jaśkowiec

tutors: Filip Geerts, Sien van Dam, Mauro Parravicini

