

# Catalogue of Balcony Appropriations

An Analytical Extention of  
Learning From Amateurs

Mary Elizabeth Perez

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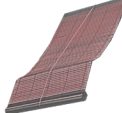
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# Catalogue of Balcony Appropriations

## An Analytical Extension of *Learning From Amateurs*

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# Introduction

*About the Catalogue,  
the Seven Spatial Qualities, and  
the Analytical Organization*

# About the Catalogue

## *The catalogue's content, intent, and process*

An analysis of Madrid's balconies using photography, drawings, and other methods to understand spatial appropriations. The research in *Learning From Amateurs* suggests that these 'amateur' spatial interactions reveal fundamental principles for creating authentic, personal, yet universally applicable housing.

## *What is The Catalogue of Balcony Appropriations?*

The catalogue supplements the research paper, *Learning From Amateurs: How Madrid Balcony Appropriations Can Instruct Architects*. This investigative and analytical document is an amalgam of photographs taken during my Madrid site visit in November 2023. I captured approximately 350 balconies and selected 62 for detailed examination. The curated images represent the most unique and common examples of Madrid balcony usage. Each photograph is categorized and assessed for its built condition and user approach to uncover trends revealing the user's motives. This analysis identified common themes and techniques, resulting in seven spatial qualities that drive Madrid residents, particularly in Lavapiés, to appropriate their balconies.

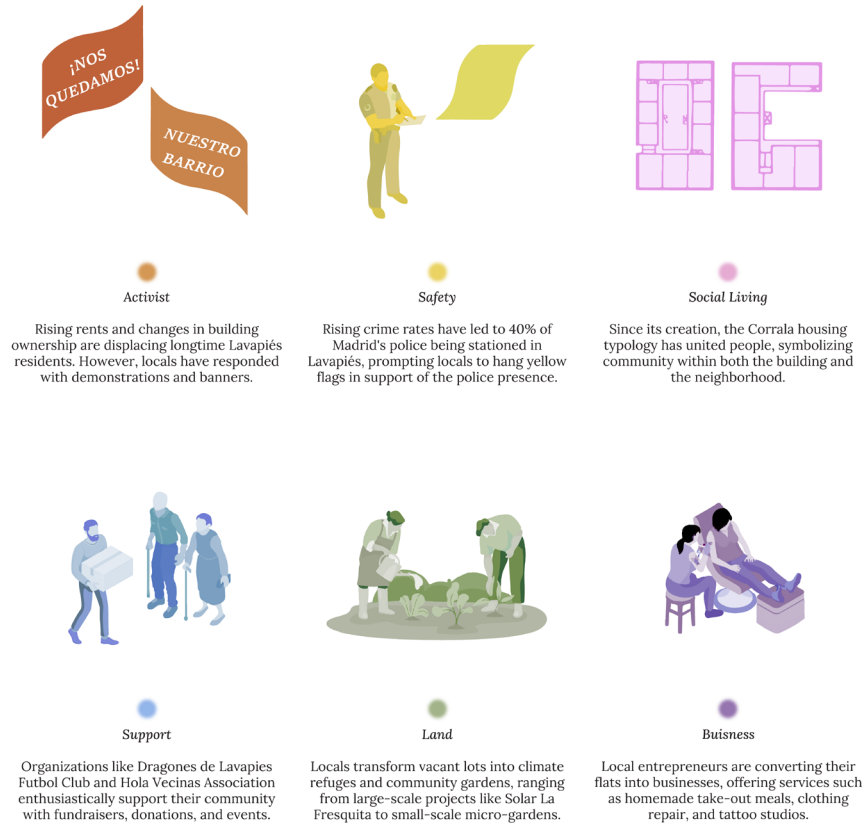
## *What are spatial appropriations?*

The informal adjustments users apply to their surroundings to meet their needs or preferences. These acts are the essence of humans inhabiting the built and natural environment, creating a strong bond between site and user. These playful and resourceful acts enhance the city's vitality and charm, offering glimpses into our ideal living conditions.

## *Why study spatial appropriations on balconies?*

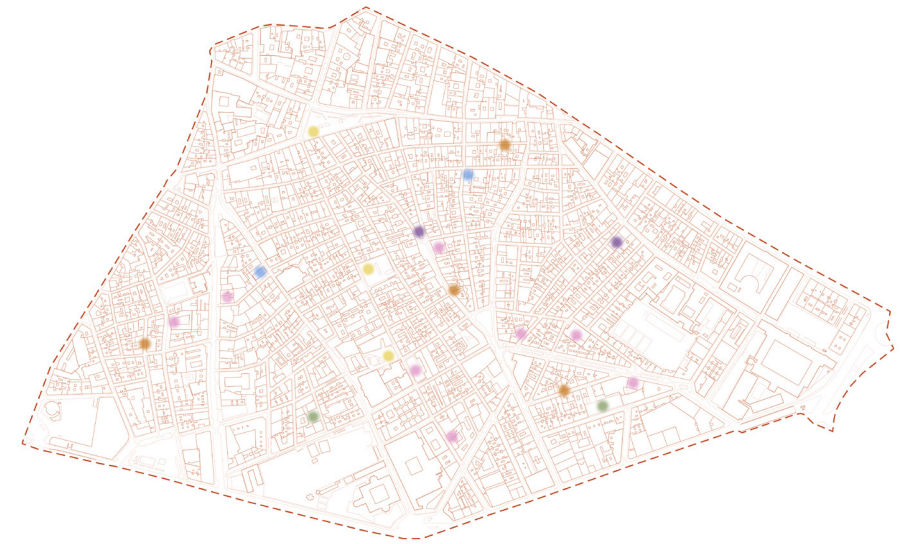
Though all acts of appropriation are responses to existing architectural conditions, those done on balconies are especially intriguing considering the diversity and uniqueness of individual approaches despite the homogeneous and standardized Spanish balcony. Balconies and galleries provide occupants with the opportunity to balance and explore their desires for both private and public aspects of apartment living. Moreover, the Madrileño lifestyle and the historical significance of outdoor spaces in Spain, balconies, and galleries serve as the ideal learning grounds to understand the residents and their desired living conditions.

The balcony in Madrid isn't merely an exterior extension of the home or a defining aesthetic—it's a form of self-expression. The way an individual appropriates their balcony reflects how they want to live, how they wish to be perceived, their views on others, and their perspective on the city.

Figure 1: Perez, Mary. *Lavapiés Neighborhood Site Analysis Demographic Descriptions*. 2024.

## Why choose the Lavapiés neighborhood in Madrid as the site of interest?

Lavapiés is abundant with makeshift additions and the research presented in *Learning From Amateurs* proves that its appropriative evolution is directly linked to the changing dynamics of its public and private spheres. The anthropological lens confirms that such appropriations are shaped by cultural and social factors – emphasizing the need to understand

Figure 2: Perez, Mary. *Lavapiés Neighborhood Site Analysis Demographic Locations*. 2024.

local dynamics to uncover underlying motives. Lavapiés is a densely populated and culturally diverse area that boasts a vibrant community life. Despite challenges like rising tourism, rents, gentrification, crime rates, and evictions, the locals' resilience and participation through organizations and small businesses unite the community.

The neighborhood's eagerness to contribute and find new areas for expression is evident in how residents appropriate their surroundings whether that be via sidewalks, buildings, or balconies. This context provides the foundational understanding needed to perform an analysis of the area's balcony appropriations.

## How was the research conducted?

The primary research methods during the site visit included photographing balconies, interviewing locals, sketching and taking notes on balcony usage, and marking the locations of appropriations. After returning, I curated and analyzed the balcony photographs and arranged video calls with additional Lavapiés residents to learn more about how they modify their spaces, particularly their balconies and shared outdoor areas like galleries and courtyards. The research provided in *Learning From Amateurs*, combined with these interviews and site observations, forms a comprehensive framework for analysis and substantiated conclusions.

The following is a list of locals interviewed, each accompanied by a brief description.

a. Maria Jose  
Resident of La Ribera de Curtidores Corrala  
for more than 60 years

c. Ana  
Curator at the Museum of Popular Art and  
Traditions

e. Dani  
Tattoo artist operating from their living  
room in Lavapiés

b. Paul  
Resident of La Ribera de Curtidores Corrala  
for more than 4 years

d. Shira  
Expat living in a Lavapiés flat for more  
than 5 years

f. Pablo  
Resident at the Entrepatrios Cooperative,  
located just south of Lavapiés

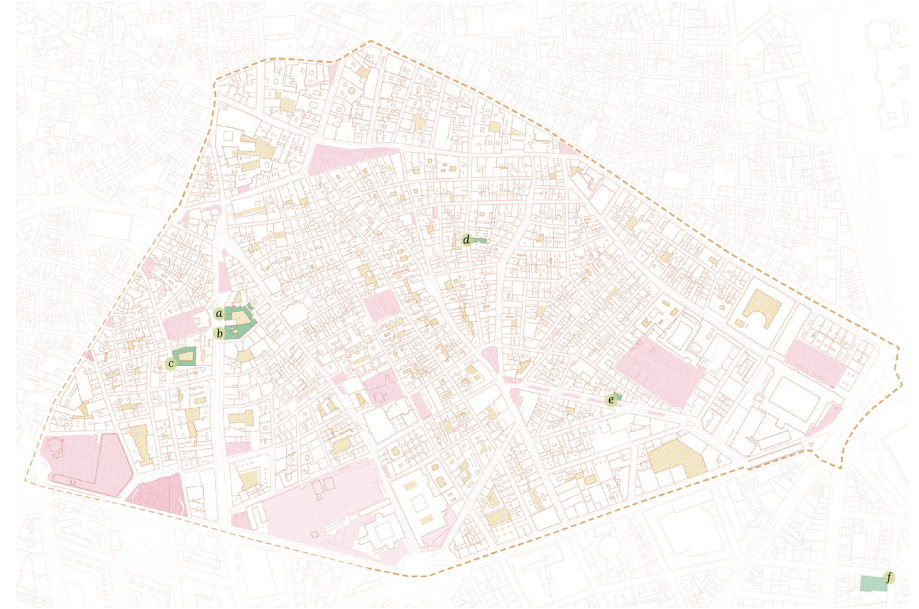


Figure 3: Perez, Mary. Map of the Embajadores Neighborhood with Highlighted Interview Locations at scale 1:5,000. 2024.

# Seven Spatial Qualities

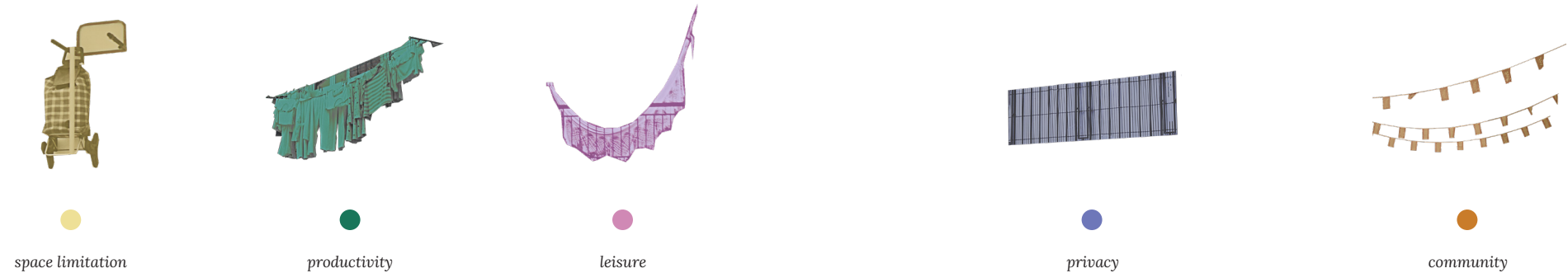


Figure 4: Perez, Mary. *Colors Associated with Each of the Seven Spatial Appropriations*. 2024.

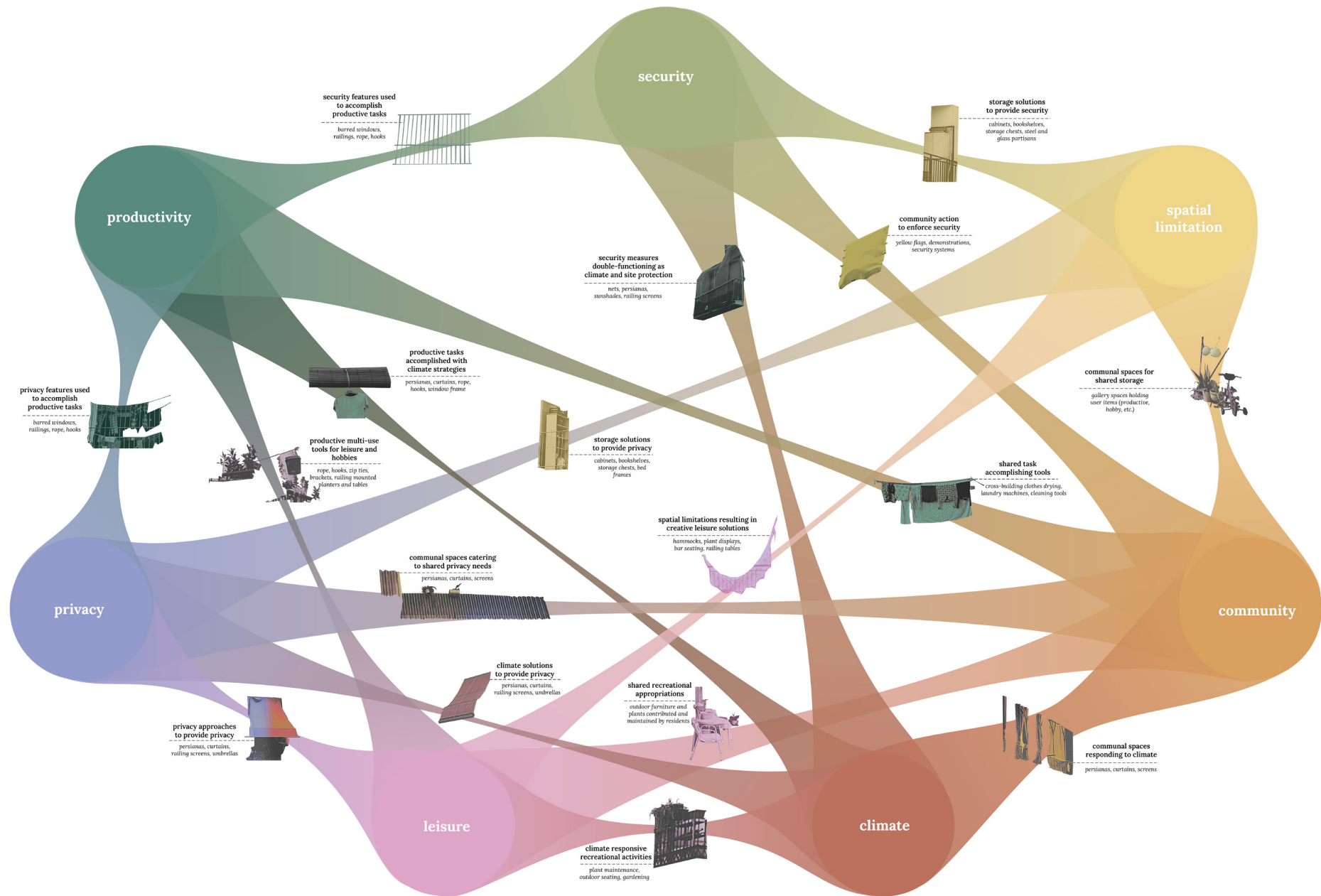
## What are the Seven Spatial Qualities?

Learning from the ‘amateurs’ in Lavapiés has revealed the *seven spatial qualities* that residents most commonly seek and appropriate in their balconies and gallery spaces. These qualities—space limitation, productivity, leisure, climate, privacy, security, and community—are each assigned a specific color. The process of

assigning colors and identifying these qualities has also highlighted the overlap of spatial needs, showcasing the similarities in appropriative solutions. Appropriations that address multiple needs are represented with a color gradient incorporating all relevant qualities. For instance, these needs

often intersect, merging indoor and outdoor services in shared public or private settings. In such cases, gradient colors, as seen in figure 6, represent the multifunctional nature of the appropriation.



Figure 5: Perez, Mary. *Diagram of the Overlapping Seven Spatial Qualities*. 2024

# Analytical Organization

## Mapping Observations

During the site visit, I marked the approximate locations of the photographed balcony appropriations on Google maps. This revealed that certain appropriative strategies, such as community and security, are more prevalent in specific areas, alluding a heightened need due to site conditions. These locations are marked on the Embajadores map in Figure 7 using the appropriation's colors and gradients. Examples of a “gradient” appropriation can be seen in Figure 6. To locate an appropriation on the map (fig. 7), refer to the location's coordinate found under the “appropriation identity” section of the analysis. This letter and number coordinate indicates its position on the gridded map.

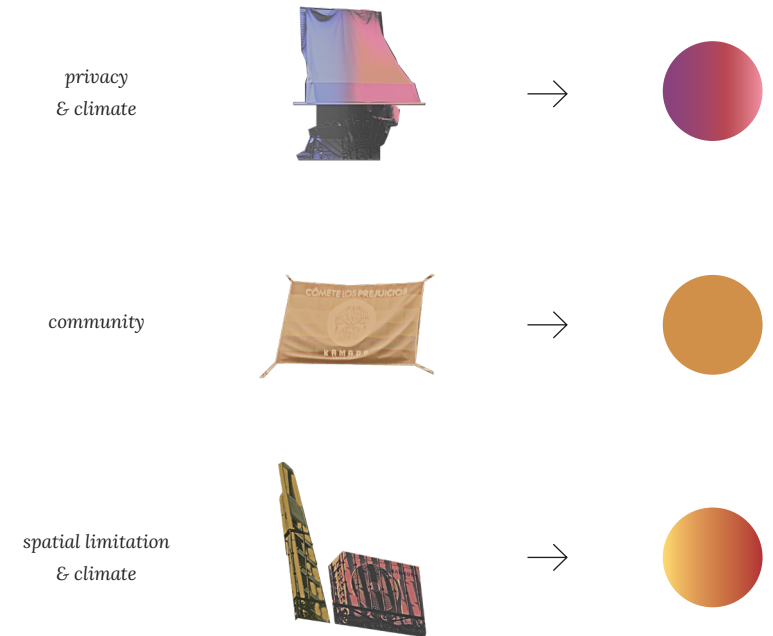


Figure 6: Perez, Mary. *Appropriation Colors in Coordination with its Map Location*. 2024





Figure 7: Perez, Mary. Locations of Photographed Appropriations. 2024

## Catalogue identification and analysis system

The catalogue analyzes each photograph by highlighting the appropriation(s) and assigning which of the seven spatial qualities it addresses: space limitation, productivity, leisure, climate, privacy, security, and community. Each photograph is then assessed in four categories: appropriation identity, existing condition, approach, and analysis. These subsections provide a detailed analysis of the spatial appropriation, offering a quantitative research that underpins the conclusions presented in *Learning From Amateurs*.

Figure 8 is an explanatory “appropriation analysis” that details how this information is presented, organized, and assessed.



Figure 8: Perez, Mary. *Explanation of Information Category and Input*. 2024

# Catalogue of Balcony Appropriations

*Analysis of 62 balcony appropriations*

**appropriation identity**

number	01	strategy	<i>productivity, leisure</i>
location	<i>u,24</i>	title	<i>laundry and lounging</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with vernacular spanish detailing and extends between three floor-to-ceiling windows and a french door.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the occupant utilizes wide balcony space for drying clothes and placing fold-up furniture. user places the planter on the exterior of the steel railing and uses the poles to secure the planter.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>user modifies balcony width fold-up chair and table. this appropriation origin is most likely cultural (outdoor socializing), economical (drying clothes and railing suspended planter), and environmental (planter).</i>
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	02	strategy	<i>productivity, climate, privacy</i>
location	<i>r,26</i>	title	<i>display and conceal</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balconies feature iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extend from a floor-to-ceiling french door and protrude roughly one meter.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>below occupant tapers parisiana over railing and covers rails with similar material, while the above utilizes outdoor space to dry clothes.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>below user utilizes balcony railing to rest the persiana and create a wider opening for airflow and not sacrificing privacy. this appropriation's origin is most likely location-based (high public exposure), cultural (maintaining privacy), economical (user-installed solution), and environmental (strong sun).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	03	strategy	leisure
location	o,25	title	midday coffee

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a floor-to-ceiling french door.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant places outdoor furniture and plants on the floor space for her and her dog to enjoy.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	the outdoor furniture signifies that she frequents this outdoor space for primarily leisure. this appropriation's origin is most likely cultural (outdoor socializing) and location-based (frequent sun exposure).
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	04	strategy	productivity
location	l,5	title	(extreme) laundry tightrope

**existing condition**

balcony type	apartment window with sliding doors
architectural condition	building occupant utilizes brick facade to attach suspended clothesline.

**approach**

user interaction	building occupant most likely does not have balcony space and is utilizing the facade to accomplish productivity goals with steel attachments and ropes to hang and dry laundry.
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	user modifies the facade to perform a typical balcony task. though mainly for productive means, it's interesting to speculate its potential for other uses. this appropriation origin is most likely cultural (outdoor socializing), economical (air dry clothes), and environmental (planter).
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**appropriation identity**

number	05	strategy	<i>spatial limitation, climate</i>
location	<i>u,19</i>	title	<i>heights and heat</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a floor-to-ceiling french door.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant utilizes outdoor space to store items that don't need to be indoors. many madrileños have air conditioning units on their balconies since hvac is not accounted for in many buildings.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>balcony is used for the storage and placement of climatic solutions. this appropriation origin is cultural (a common practice), economical (air unit placement is a quick and affordable climate solution), and environmental (rising temperatures).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	06	strategy	<i>privacy</i>
location	<i>v,20</i>	title	<i>"natural" privacy</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a floor-to-ceiling french door that has wooden shutters.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident placed a patch of artificial grass along the railing for a quick and affordable user-installed privacy alternative.</i>
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this material is a common choice for users when selecting a material to block the street view. they most likely seek a more natural feel to their urban apartment. this appropriation origin is most likely location-based (high public exposure), cultural (maintaining privacy), economical (user-installed solution), and environmental (desire for nature).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	07	strategy	leisure, privacy
location	u,20	title	seats and seeds

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing with typical Spanish detailing and protrudes from a floor-to-ceiling french door.

**approach**

user interaction	these balconies feature items that do not need to be indoors, such as gardening tools, plants, and seating. the right balcony attached a mesh screen for privacy.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	both balconies use items as a way to block the street view into their space - providing a double purpose to their storage. this appropriation origin is cultural (common practice), expressive (self-expressive of hobbies), and economical (affordable privacy solution).
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	08	strategy	privacy, leisure
location	v,16	title	hanging-out and hiding-out

**existing condition**

balcony type	private balcony along the residential gallery, neighbors on both sides
architectural condition	balcony gallery space is a part of a corrala and features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment building level and extrudes roughly two meters from the building.

**approach**

user interaction	the user attached a hammock from the brick facade to the sunshade's steel structure. the other user placed bamboo shading along the railing for an affordable and quick privacy alternative.
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	bamboo is a common material choice to block the street view into the balcony. this balcony hammock is especially interesting since it looks onto the bustling city square notorious for police activity. this appropriation origin is likely location based (high public exposure), cultural (maintaining privacy), and economical (user-installed solution).
---------------------------------------	---

**appropriation identity**

number	09	strategy	community, climate
location	w,16	title	corridor curtains

**existing condition**

balcony type	corrala's shared gallery corridor, street-facing
architectural condition	balcony is a part of a coralla and features an iron railing extending across the entire apartment building corridor.

**approach**

user interaction	corrala corridors are shared spaces and are used by all residents; therefore, it is the residents' responsibility to close or open the curtains.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	corrala corridors are shared transition spaces that are constantly in use. the occupants feel comfortable modifying this shared space, hanging items, and adjusting curtains. this appropriation origin is cultural (a common practice), environmental (sun presence), and location-specific (building type).
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**appropriation identity**

number	10	strategy	productivity, privacy
location	z,15	title	hang, attach, and hold

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and protrudes from a floor-to-ceiling french door.

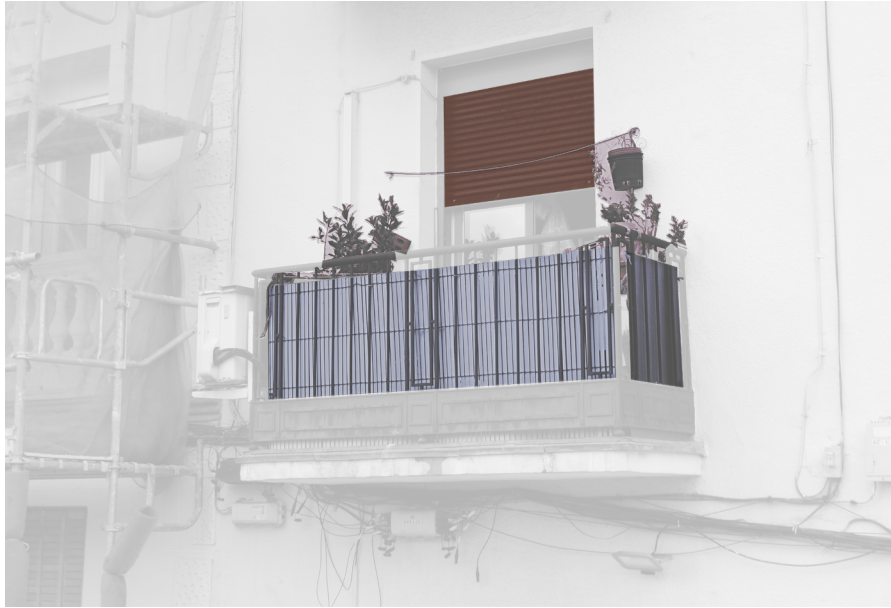
**approach**

user interaction	the resident attached a hanger from their rolled parisiana, placed a wooden decorative desk on their balcony, and attached bamboo sheets to the iron railing to shield the street view.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	utilizing the existing structural aspects of other items to fulfill other arising needs. this user is taking advantage of all aspects to have the space serve them. this appropriation origin is likely economic (user-installed solution) and location-specific (high-traffic area).
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**appropriation identity**

number	11	strategy	<i>climate, privacy, leisure</i>
location	<i>o,4</i>	title	<i>hide and hang</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony features an iron railing the protrudes from a floor-to-ceiling french door covered by a metal shutter.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident attached a rope from the building facade to hang plants and clothes. attached bamboo sheets to the iron railing to shield the view from the street.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>utilizing the existing architecture, railing, and stucco facade, to suit their rising needs and desires. this appropriation's origin is likely economic (user-installed) and location-specific (high-traffic area).</i>
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	12	strategy	<i>productivity, privacy</i>
location	<i>k,5</i>	title	<i>block and hang</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided with one shared side</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony features an iron railing and extends from a single unit in an apartment building</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the above occupant utilizes existing structure to hang clothes while the below resident utilizes the railing to add a secondary structure: a make-shift privacy barrier.</i>
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the need for privacy in this high-traffic area was so dire to the resident that they created this stark architectural intervention. this appropriation origin is location-specific (high foot traffic) and economical (quick and cheap climate solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	13	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>aa,13</i>	title	<i>outdoor closet</i>

**existing condition**

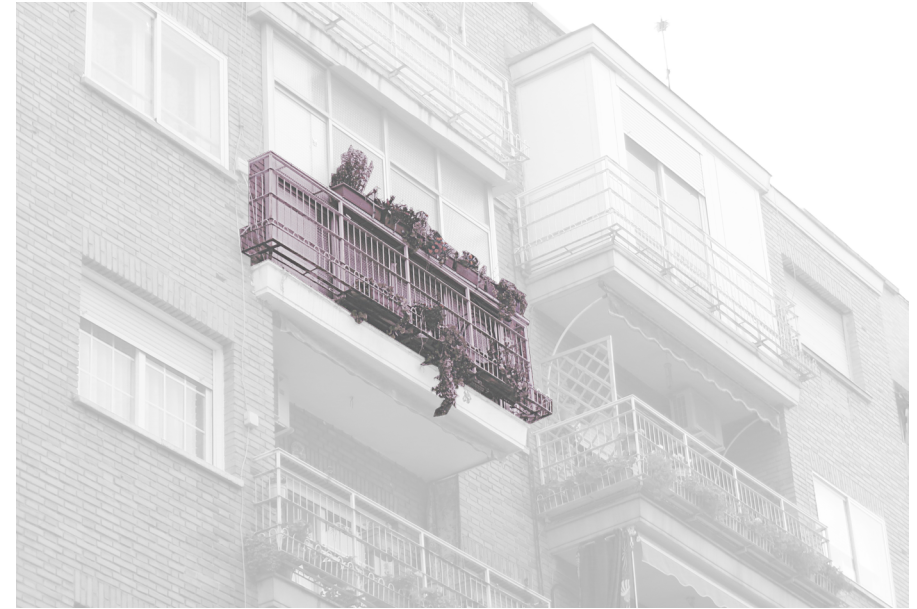
balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided with one side shared with mirador</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant places a wooden closet and ladder on their balcony.</i>
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it's common for residents to place indoor storage items on their balconies, which may be a result of limited indoor space. they most likely already owned the item and are repurposing it for their outdoor storage needs. this appropriation origin is most likely economic (affordable storage solution).</i>
---------------------------------------	--

**adappropriation identity**

number	14	strategy	<i>leisure</i>
location	<i>aa,12</i>	title	<i>plants on the ledge</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony converted into a mirador</i>
architectural condition	<i>renovated balcony with added glass enclosure. features existing iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the unit has an enclosed balcony with added windows and utilizes the existing railing to hang and place plants.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the user has an affinity for plants and uses the limited balcony ledge for plants; also noting that the plants are more visible to the street than from the interior - meaning the user has aesthetic value in the plants. this appropriation origin is passion-driven, social (foot traffic), and environmental (plants impact on surroundings).</i>
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	15	strategy	<i>productivity</i>
location	<i>aa,15</i>	title	<i>bed frame clothing rack</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the resident placed a wooden bed frame on their balcony, most likely for storage reasons, but attached a rope to make it double-function as a clothes-drying tool.</i>
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the bed frame demonstrates the user's resourcefulness - especially when utilizing its metal frame to tie rope and the horizontal slats to hang clothes. this appropriation origin is likely economic (affordable storage) and program-matic (balcony as a storage and productive space).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	16	strategy	<i>community, climate</i>
location	<i>bb,17</i>	title	<i>d.i.y. rooftop terrace</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>accessible rooftop with two sides viewing the street</i>
architectural condition	<i>rooftop space that appears to be accessible and modified by its residents.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>residents modify accessible rooftops with steel tubing, fabrics, and rope to create a shaded and protected space for residents to occupy.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the placement of plants indicates trust between residents considering that it is one's property left in a shared space. this appropriation origin is climate (sun protection), social (shared space), and economic (affordable).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	17	strategy	climate
location	v,12	title	blocking sun, allowing wind

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	these balconies feature iron railings with typical spanish detailing and extend from double french doors.

**approach**

user interaction	habitant (left) utilizes the balcony as a nursery and the air conditioning unit as a plant stand. habitant (right) uses curtains to mitigate sun all the while permitting maximal wind.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	though curtains are primarily privacy mitigators, this situation optimizes curtain material (mesh) to mitigate wind and block harsh sun rays. this appropriation origin is most likely economic (affordable solution) and environmental (protect against sun).
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	18	strategy	climate
location	s,14	title	sun curtains

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	the balcony features an iron railing extending from a single unit with two sets of french doors.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant attaches curtain rods to the brick building facade and selects thermal curtains to drape over the railing.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	thermal curtains are used to mitigate hot air from entering the home during high-temperature periods. this appropriation origin is location-specific (high sun impact) and economical (a quick and affordable solution).
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**appropriation identity**

number	19	strategy	<i>productivity, climate, space limit</i>
location	t,9	title	<i>open-air closet</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>apartment building private balcony, two-sided corner condition</i>
architectural condition	<i>corner balconies that have iron railings and extend from two units.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant (above) utilizes the balcony as storage space. occupant (below) utilizes the sunshade for protection. both occupants utilize existing structures to hang clothes for productive means.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>both occupants utilize the facade to attach, hang, and connect items to satisfy their needs. residents had to make additional changes to the facade. this appropriation origin is economical (affordable solution) and social (common solution many results to).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	20	strategy	<i>community, productivity, privacy</i>
location	q,13	title	<i>caged clothes</i>

**existing condition**

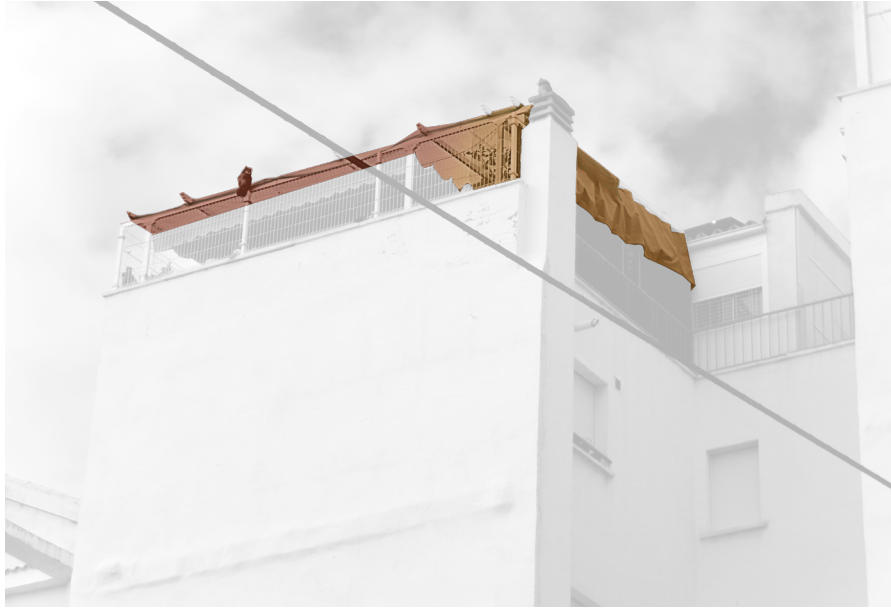
balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, one-sided street view</i>
architectural condition	<i>the inset balconies on ground-level apartments feature iron bars, while those on higher levels are enclosed with iron railings.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident (bottom) uses their private outdoor space to dry clothes while resident (above) uses a balcony for leisure and hangs a flag to share with the community.</i>
------------------	--

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it's common for ground-floor residents to have barred windows due to common break-ins. unfortunately, they must have barred windows for insurance purposes while above-floor residents are less threatened by this issue. this appropriation origin is likely social (safety precautions) and location-based (ground floor residents).</i>
---------------------------------------	---

**appropriation identity**

number	21	strategy	community, climate
location	o,13	title	rooftop shade

**existing condition**

balcony type	accessible rooftop with a three-sided street view
architectural condition	rooftop features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and is a space for all occupants to occupy.

**approach**

user interaction	apartment occupants utilize the shared rooftop for individual needs, from drying clothes to a plant nursery. since this is shared, all residents can leave items and use the space.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	occupants need extra space for their personal needs. shared outdoor spaces cultivate a thriving apartment culture and foster community, trust, and climatic relief. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable solution).
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**appropriation identity**

number	22	strategy	space limitation, productivity
location	t,13	title	string, steel, pipes, and wood

**existing condition**

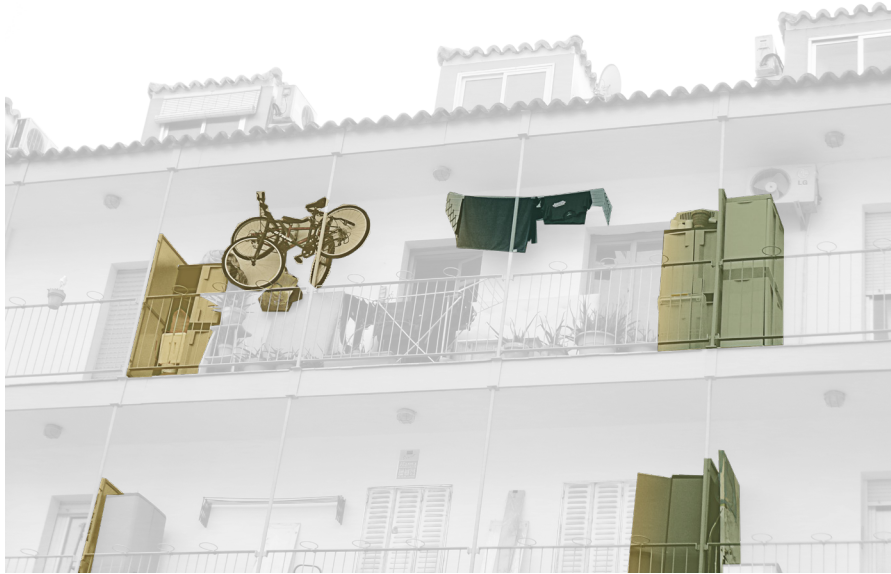
balcony type	corrala's shared gallery corridor, street-facing
architectural condition	the balcony features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.

**approach**

user interaction	the occupants place a variety of items varying from wooden closets to laundry racks. residents also utilize the existing structural elements and integrate numerous attachment mediums such as ropes and hooks.
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	it's common for people to utilize accessible attachment means, such as rope and hooks, since these are pliable tools that can accustom to any site condition. this appropriation origin is likely economic (affordable storage solution) and site-specific (unique existing conditions).
---------------------------------------	--

**appropriation identity**

number	23	strategy	<i>space limitation, security</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>gallery of items pt.1</i>

**existing condition**

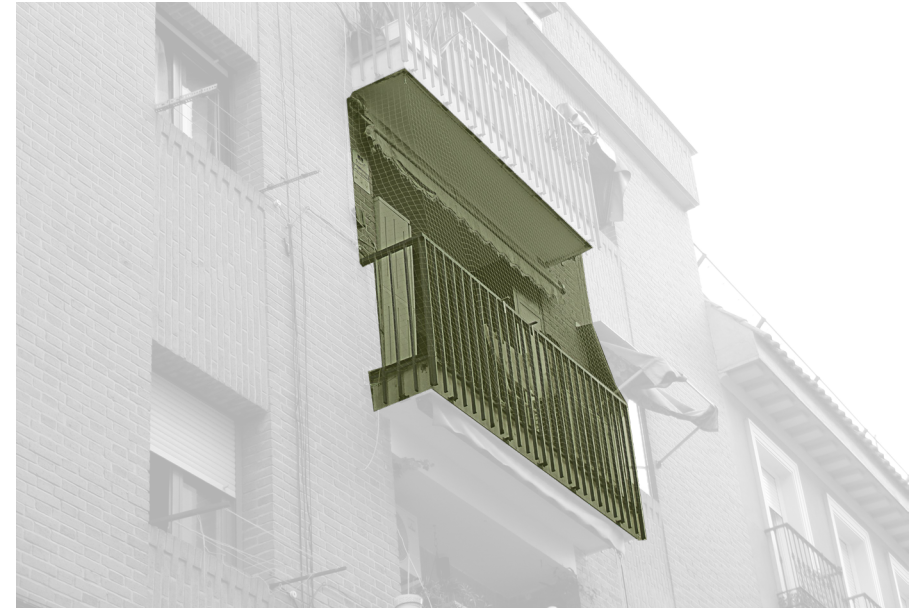
balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, interior courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant (above) utilizes the existing structure to hang the bike and clothing rack. both occupants (above and below) utilize storage solutions, like closets, to create a make-shift privacy block.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>an interview with a corrala resident revealed that residents place heavy storage solutions here to ensure no trespassers - making this appropriation cater to space limitations and privacy needs. this appropriation's origin is economic (quick and cheap) and site-specific (touristic and frequented corrala).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	24	strategy	<i>security</i>
location	<i>w,17</i>	title	<i>anti-bird balcony</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony features an iron railing extending from a single unit with french doors.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant drapes a mesh sheet over the balcony and railings to prevent birds from entering the space.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it's common for residents to keep doors open for air ventilation, unfortunately making it easy for birds to enter. mesh solutions allow residents to optimize airflow and prevent bird entry. this appropriation origin is likely economic (affordable) and site-specific (many birds).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	25	strategy	<i>leisure</i>
location	<i>z,18</i>	title	<i>shared plant shelf</i>

**existing condition**

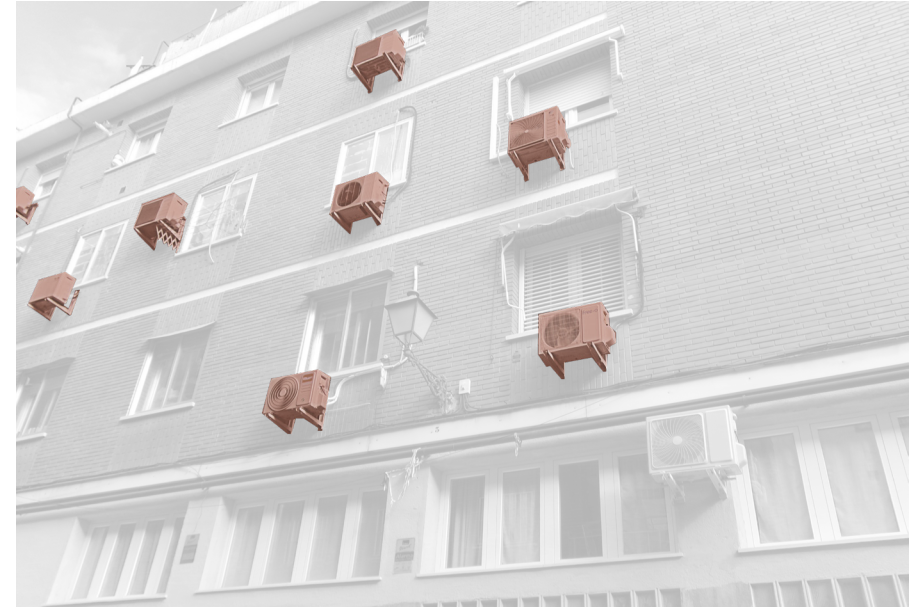
balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant utilizes the space dividing two balconies to create a make-shift plant shelf.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the resident's affinity for plants can be seen through their makeshift addition. this also demonstrates the user's value of floorspace and crafter this shelf to optimize space. this appropriation origin is likely economic (quick and cheap) and environmental (benefits for plants).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	26	strategy	<i>climate</i>
location	<i>o,15</i>	title	<i>ornamental a.c.'s</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>apartment building with street-facing windows</i>
architectural condition	<i>this apartment complex has no visible exterior facing balconies, resulting in occupants attaching air conditioning units to the building facade.</i>

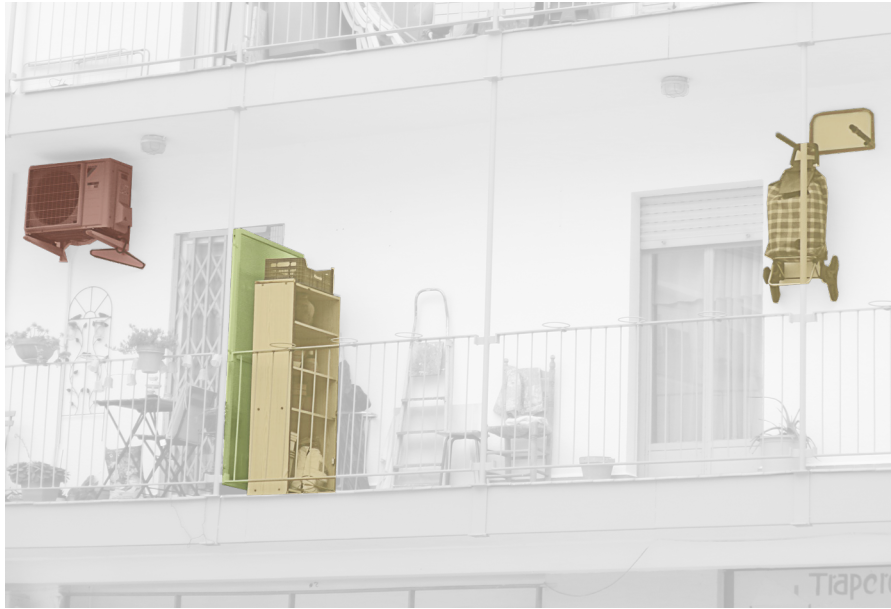
**approach**

user interaction	<i>residents attach sturdy brick connections to hold air conditioning units.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it is common for madrid residents to have air conditioning units attached to the building facade or on balconies since many buildings do not have this feature. this appropriation origin is most likely economic (affordable climate solution) and cultural (common solution for area).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	27	strategy	<i>space limitation, privacy, climate</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>gallery of things</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>gallery facing the inner courtyard and two blocked side access.</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant inserts attachment methods into the existing structure to hold items such as a trolley cart and air conditioning unit. the occupant also places heavy storage solution against the plastic partition.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>heavy storage solutions, such as closets, cater to space limitations and privacy needs. this appropriation's origin is economic (quick and cheap) and site-specific (touristic and frequented corrala).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	28	strategy	<i>climate</i>
location	<i>n,16</i>	title	<i>outdoor is indoor</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony converted into a mirador, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>renovated balcony with added glass enclosure. features existing iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the unit has an enclosed balcony with added windows and utilizes the existing railing to enclose space.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the user favors the climatic refugee that indoor spaces provide and this is evident through this intervention. this appropriation origin is environmental (coping with climate), cultural (typical solution for the area), and programmatic (extension of indoor space).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	29	strategy	<i>privacy</i>
location	<i>t,16</i>	title	<i>clothes pinned privacy</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant attaches a plastic sheet using clothes pins to connect it to the steel railing.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it is common for residents to attach privacy screens to the railing. this example highlights user ingenuity and resourcefulness - using common household items. the appropriation origin is likely location-specific (common solution) and economic (quick and affordable solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	30	strategy	<i>space limitation, productivity</i>
location	<i>v,17</i>	title	<i>bikes and clothes</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant uses their wider-than-average balcony space to store bikes and dry laundry.</i>
------------------	---

**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it's common for people to use balconies as bike storage due to the inaccessibility of secure storage spaces and high robbery crime rates. this appropriation origin is likely social (safety precaution) and cultural (common solution).</i>
---------------------------------------	---

**appropriation identity**

number	31	strategy	community
location	o,16	title	cross-street flags pt.1

**existing condition**

balcony type	cross-street and apartment connection
architectural condition	flags are attached to the brick building facade's steel connection to the balcony railing

**approach**

user interaction	residents of both apartments collaborated to unite flags to the building.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	the community presence is especially prevalent in the embajadores neighborhood and is abundant with flags sharing everything from political affiliation to lgbtq+ pride flags. this appropriation origin is cultural (common and expressive) and social (unites locals).
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**appropriation identity**

number	32	strategy	community
location	t,17	title	cross-street flags pt.2

**existing condition**

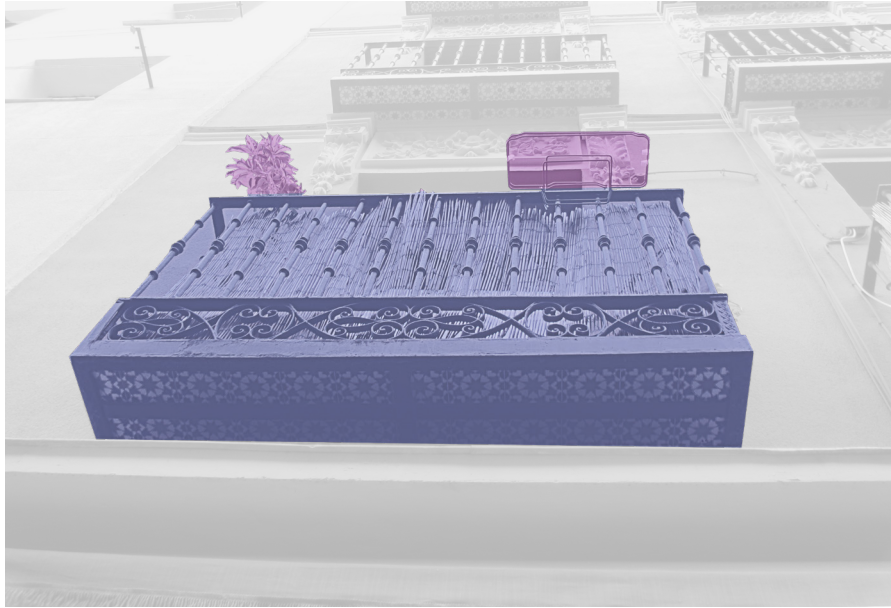
balcony type	cross-street and apartment connection
architectural condition	flags are attached to the building facade's lattice detail to the balcony railing.

**approach**

user interaction	apartment residents and building owners collaborated to unite flags to the surrounding architecture.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	the community presence and country pride is prevalent in the embajadores neighborhood. this appropriation origin is cultural (common and expressive) and social (unites locals).
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**appropriation identity**

number	33	strategy	<i>privacy, leisure</i>
location	y,16	title	<i>bamboo, metal, plant</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the occupant has attached a bamboo screen, using zip ties, to the railing, as well as a metal railing clamp to hold the planter.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this balcony exemplifies how many store-bought ready-to-use appropriative solutions make appropriation easier. also, the zip-tie attachment showcases clever use of common household items. this appropriation origin is likely economic (affordable solution) and cultural (common solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	34	strategy	<i>leisure, space limitation</i>
location	z,11	title	<i>trash, plants, and a.c.'s</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>all residents in this apartment complex utilize the balcony as storage for their air conditioning unit, garbage, or leisurely activities such as plant tending.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>it is common for madrileños to have air conditioning units on their balconies and this example captures the resident's creativity to apply other functions to the object's flat surface. this appropriation origin is likely economic (affordable solution) and cultural (common approach).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	35	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>m,17</i>	title	<i>outdoor living room</i>

**existing condition**

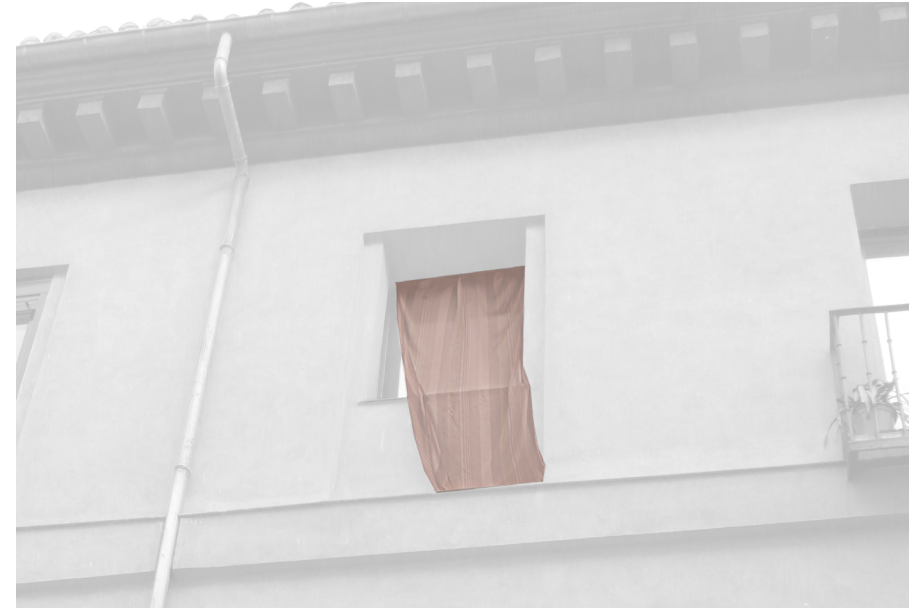
balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>a resident uses the balcony as an extension of their living room. they place personal items, such as a skateboard, and leisure aesthetic items, such as a side table and plants.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>though social research on madrileños highlights how they prefer socializing in outdoor public spaces, many enjoy the mediterranean climate from their private spaces. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (common solution) and social (need for private outdoor access).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	36	strategy	<i>community</i>
location	<i>m,17</i>	title	<i>flag curtain</i>

**existing condition**

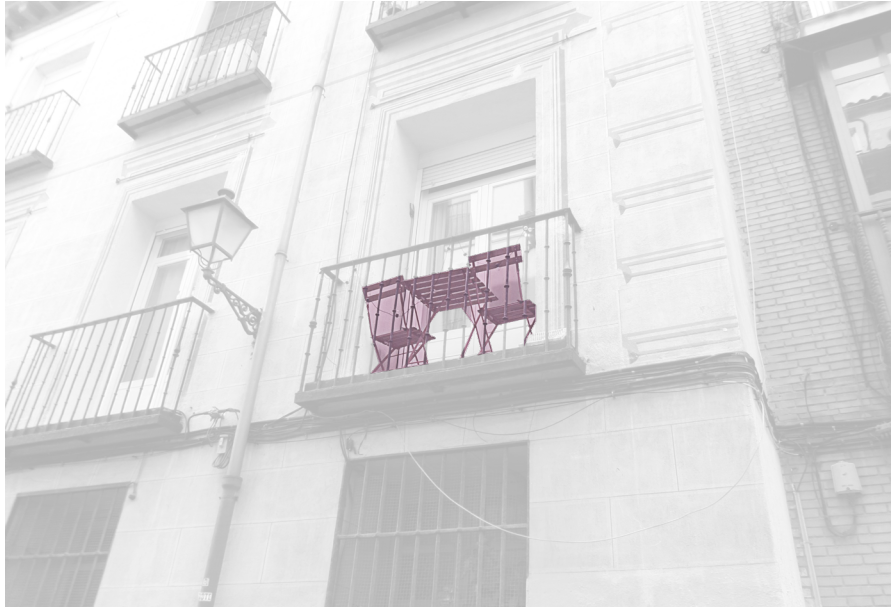
balcony type	<i>inset window in apartment building</i>
architectural condition	<i>residents utilize semi-transparent lgbtq+ flag as a curtain.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident attached a flag via a store-bought pole intervention that temporarily suspends between two walls.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the resident combined self-expression with climate needs to make their sun protection a community expressive tool. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (common solution) and social (need for private outdoor access).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	37	strategy	leisure
location	q,17	title	balcony cafe

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.

**approach**

user interaction	the resident uses the balcony as an extension of their living room through the fold-up wooden seating and table.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	many enjoy the mediterranean climate from their private spaces - highlighting the importance of having outdoor moments in solitude. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (common solution) and social (need for private outdoor access).
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**appropriation identity**

number	38	strategy	space limitation
location	q,17	title	bike balcony

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, three-sided
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant stores two bikes on their balcony.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	using balconies as bike storage is a common safety precaution for bike theft. it is also notable how this user prioritizes the safety of their bikes over a nice view or over natural light. this appropriation origin is likely social (safety precaution) and cultural (common solution).
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**appropriation identity**

number	39	strategy	<i>climate, community</i>
location	<i>r,17</i>	title	<i>residential rooftops</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>accessible rooftop with a three-sided street view</i>
architectural condition	<i>rooftop features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and is a space for all occupants to occupy.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>apartment occupants utilize the shared rooftop for individual needs, ranging from climate refuge to a plant nursery. all residents can leave items and use this shared space.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>limited apartments make this additional shared outdoor space pivotal for satisfying personal needs. shared outdoor spaces cultivate a thriving apartment community, trust, and climatic relief. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	40	strategy	<i>leisure, privacy, climate</i>
location	<i>t,18</i>	title	<i>sun tent</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident creates a makeshift sun shade device, similar to the one featured in the store below, and attaches it to the top of the existing steel shutter and places a plastic rod to weigh it down.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this instance captures resident ingenuity and clever usage of common items. moments like this showcase the comfort that users find in their informal appropriative solutions. this appropriation origin is climatic (climate refuge) and economic (affordable).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	41	strategy	space limitation
location	y,20	title	railing bikes

**existing condition**

balcony type	private residential balcony, street facing and shared sides
architectural condition	balcony features an iron railing that spans across the entire apartment floor.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant places two bikes on the street-facing gallery balcony.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	using balconies as bike storage is a common safety precaution for bike theft. it is also notable that this user has a wider balcony, making it possible to apply other appropriations. this appropriation origin is likely social (safety precaution) and cultural (common solution).
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**appropriation identity**

number	42	strategy	space limitation, privacy
location	ee,6	title	shared privacy, shared plants

**existing condition**

balcony type	apartment complex shared inner-courtyard with one side facing the street.
architectural condition	the balcony gallery space features an iron railing that expands across all "in-between" spaces.

**approach**

user interaction	the occupant utilizes railing screens and large plants to create a sense of privacy and provide a natural climate relief.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	despite these "in-between" spaces being for all residents, some residents feel more inclined than others to personalize communal areas. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable).
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**appropriation identity**

number	43	strategy	<i>space limitation, privacy</i>
location	<i>ee,6</i>	title	<i>shared privacy</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>apartment complex shared inner-courtyard with one side facing the street.</i>
architectural condition	<i>the balcony gallery space features an iron railing that expands across all "in-between" spaces.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>the occupants on the top and bottom floors share a similar goal to privatize the area and as a result, have applied railing screens and large plants to achieve it.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>despite these "in-between" spaces being for all residents, some residents feel more inclined than others to personalize communal areas. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	44	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>y,9</i>	title	<i>fifth-floor treadmill</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>inset private residential balcony, with one side facing the street.</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with glass panels and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident places treadmill on the covered balcony.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the covered balcony provides weather protection for the treadmill and emphasizes the integration of leisure and hobbies into balcony spaces. this appropriation origin is likely social (hobby integration in the home).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	45	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>y,9</i>	title	<i>racks, tables, chairs</i>

**existing condition**

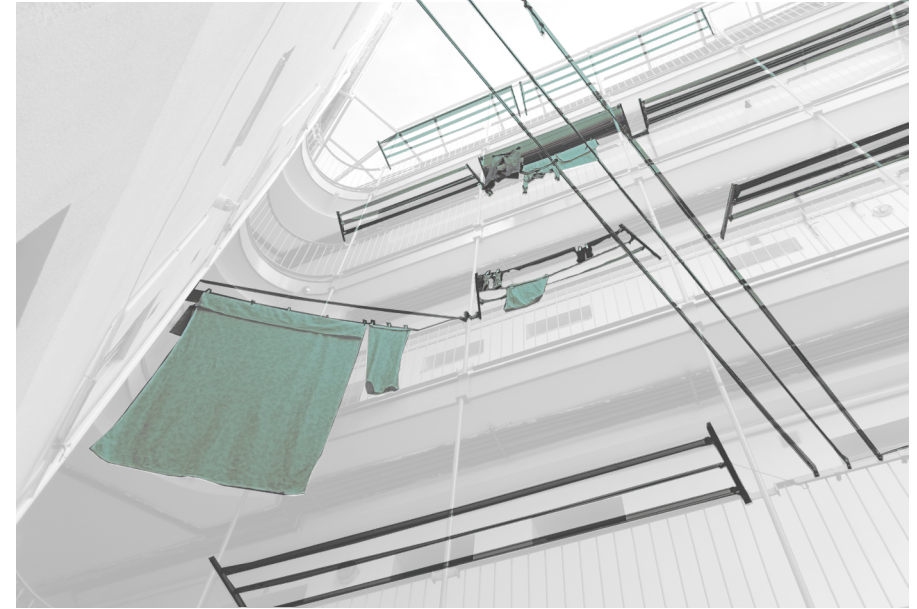
balcony type	<i>inset private residential balcony, with one side facing street</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with glass panels and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>user places leisure items like outdoor furniture and productive tools like laundry drying racks.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the inset balcony provides weather protection for the space making it more climate-comfortable. this appropriation origin is likely social (hobby integration in the home) and cultural (common solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	46	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>cross-corridor clothing</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-corridor facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>inner corrala corridor is used as a communal space for drying clothing.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>residents use this shared space as an additional laundry drying area. users typically attach cables and attachable racks to the railings.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>these communal spaces are pivotal to forming a thriving apartment community. this appropriation origin is social (shared space) and economic (affordable).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	47	strategy	<i>productivity, privacy, climate</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>block and hang</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>corridor space features an iron railing that extends across the entire level and is covered by a wood-framed structure.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>all occupants utilize the existing structure to hang clothes, for productivity reasons, or sheets, for privacy and climate reasons.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>an interview revealed that the hanging bed sheets serve both private and climate needs. the semi-transparent material allows soft light to enter for natural, not harsh, daylight and provides full privacy for the residents.</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	48	strategy	<i>privacy</i>
location	<i>q,16</i>	title	<i>facade of screens</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, with one side facing street</i>
architectural condition	<i>balconies and rooftops feature an iron railing that extends from a single unit and protects the rooftop perimeter.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>all cases utilize a type of railing screen, such as bamboo or dense mesh, as privacy mitigators.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>privacy is a prevalent need sought after in the lavapiés area and railing screens are an affordable and easy-to-apply solution that complies with standard building contracts and fulfills self-expressive needs. this appropriation origin is location-specific (high foot traffic) and economic (quick and cheap solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	49	strategy	<i>privacy and climate</i>
location	<i>u,16</i>	title	<i>mini-balconies</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>inset windows in an apartment building.</i>
architectural condition	<i>inset windows with metal shutters.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>inset windows allow occupants to use depth as a limited private outdoor space to implement scaled-down versions of the main seven needs.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>if balconies are unavailable, residents will seek alternative means to create private outdoor spaces. these inset windows, despite being just ledges, enable inhabitants to express themselves, access natural sunlight, and preserve privacy. this appropriation likely stems from programmatic faults (absence of balconies).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	50	strategy	<i>privacy, space limitation</i>
location	<i>cc,16</i>	title	<i>split dwelling</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>it's apparent that there is a partition added to the center apartment, which inevitably affects how the balcony is split.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this instance showcases how future architectural and construction interventions affect appropriations and vice-versa. this appropriation likely stems from programmatic faults (need for a flexible space).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	51	strategy	leisure, space limitation
location	z,17	title	residential rooftop oasis

**existing condition**

balcony type	accessible rooftop with a three-sided street view
architectural condition	rooftop features an iron railing that spans the entire roof and is a communal space.

**approach**

user interaction	apartment occupants utilize the shared rooftop for individual needs, ranging from climate refuge to a plant nursery. all residents can leave items and use this shared space.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	as urban apartments continue to shrink, additional shared outdoor spaces are pivotal to satisfy personal needs. shared outdoor spaces cultivate an apartment community and provide necessary climate relief. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable).
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**appropriation identity**

number	52	strategy	space limitation, climate
location	w,20	title	residential rooftop: private shade

**existing condition**

balcony type	accessible rooftop with a two-sided street view
architectural condition	rooftop features a brick ledge that spans the entire roof and has metal framing and a corrugated plastic roof.

**approach**

user interaction	it's evident that this rooftop space was erected after the building's construction and utilizes affordable and quick assembly methods.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	the construction of these spaces also supplies the community aspect of the building and fuels the sense of community and building unity. this appropriation origin is social (shared space), climatic (climate refuge), and economic (affordable).
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**appropriation identity**

number	53	strategy	leisure
location	r,15	title	gallery: pipe plant

**existing condition**

balcony type	corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing
architectural condition	the gallery features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant utilizes steel hooks to attach the terracotta pot to the existing exposed water pipe on the building facade.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	besides railings, other building features like pipes and exposed structures can provide appropriation grounds for residents. considering their durability, it makes them dependable for future interventions. this appropriation is likely economic (affordable) and aesthetic (enhances quality).
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**appropriation identity**

number	54	strategy	leisure
location	r,15	title	gallery: corridor seating

**existing condition**

balcony type	corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing
architectural condition	the gallery features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.

**approach**

user interaction	occupant places outdoor furniture and plants in this shared space, utilizing it as an extension of their living room.
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	this moment highlights how much locals value leisure spaces, so much so that the home or balcony is not supplying what they need they extend onto the gallery space. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (local solution) and social (need for more outdoor access).
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**appropriation identity**

number	55	strategy	<i>productivity, leisure</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>gallery: storage and planters</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the gallery features a wood-frame rail that borders the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>residents place various items in the corridor, ranging from plants and cleaning supplies to an extra pillow.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>madrileños can place such a range of items in the outdoor corridor space mainly due to the mediterranean climate. moreover, an overall sense of trust in apartment buildings contributes to their comfort in placing unlocked items. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (local solution), environmental (local climate), and social (trust).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	56	strategy	<i>space limitation</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>gallery: a child's playground</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the gallery features a wood-frame rail that borders the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident stores an unlocked children's bike in the hallway.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>an interview with corrala residents revealed that many young families live in corralas and the children play in the gallery spaces and large central courtyard. this appropriation origin is likely cultural (common) and social (common child's upbringing).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	57	strategy	<i>productivity, leisure</i>
location	<i>r,15</i>	title	<i>gallery: drying and watering</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the gallery features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident uses outdoor space for productive means, like drying laundry, and as a plant nursery.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>the residents' affinity for plants is evident, and their solution of attaching storebought plant holders to even the barred windows is a testament to their creativity and the extent to which these attachments can be applied. this appropriation origin is self-expressive (hobby) and aesthetic (plant abundance).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	58	strategy	<i>leisure</i>
location	<i>y,13</i>	title	<i>wide frame, slim planters</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>inset window in an apartment building</i>
architectural condition	<i>inset windows allow occupants to use depth as a limited private outdoor space to implement scaled-down versions of the main seven needs.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant places flower pots on the window frame</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>inset windows allow occupants to use depth as a limited private outdoor space to implement scaled-down versions of the main seven needs. the occupant places the plants for mainly aesthetic reasons, considering that it is only visible from the street side. this appropriation is common in madrid and is most likely cultural (common) and self-expressive (hobby and aesthetic)</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	59	strategy	<i>leisure, climate</i>
location	w,15	title	<i>air conditioning seat</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>resident modifies the air conditioning unit to double function as a comfortable stool.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>given that many have air conditioning units on their already small balconies, this solution maximizes the space occupied by the item and leverages its size to their benefit. this appropriation is economical (affordable), self-expressive (creative), and programmatic (not provided previously).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	60	strategy	<i>climate, privacy</i>
location	w,15	title	<i>outdoor a.c. closet</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>private residential balcony, three-sided</i>
architectural condition	<i>balcony features an iron railing with typical spanish detailing and extends from a single unit.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>occupant places the air conditioning unit above a small storage container as well as a wood lattice railing screen.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this solution maximizes the space occupied by the a.c. unit and leverages its size to their benefit, by placing a sturdy storage solution below. this appropriation is economical (affordable), self-expressive (creative), and programmatic (not provided previously).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	61	strategy	<i>productivity, privacy</i>
location	y,14	title	<i>gallery of items</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, inner-courtyard and street facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the gallery features a wood-frame rail that borders the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>this side of the corrala receives strong morning sun, making it a great place to dry laundry and place plants.</i>
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**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this corrala's gallery is street-facing meaning that persianas are essential for privacy and mitigating sun. the sun is taken advantage of and is also an effective place to dry laundry. this appropriation is economical (affordable) and communal (common and shared solution).</i>
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**appropriation identity**

number	62	strategy	<i>space limitation, privacy, leisure</i>
location	v,16	title	<i>residents on display</i>

**existing condition**

balcony type	<i>corrala's shared gallery corridor, public courtyard facing</i>
architectural condition	<i>the gallery features an iron railing that extends across the entire apartment level.</i>

**approach**

user interaction	<i>corrala residents place an array of items varying from storage solutions, laundry drying systems, privacy and security dividers, and spaces for leisurely activities.</i>
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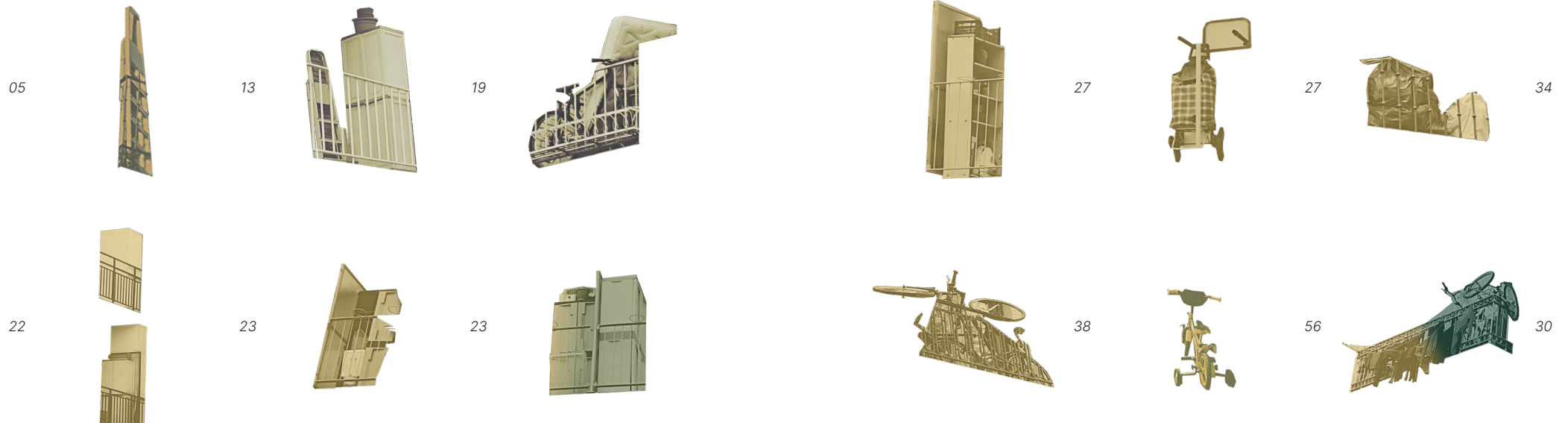
**analysis**

user intention & appropriation origin	<i>this corrala faces a vibrant city square, and the resident's adjusted spaces exhibit how pivotal the balcony is in being a transition space between public and private life. these interventions reflect the balcony's shape-shifting nature that is curated to the individual. these appropriations are economical, social, programmatic, and cultural.</i>
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# Analysis of The Seven Spatial Qualities

*Analysis of the overarching  
themes for each spatial quality*

# Space Limitation



Spatial limitation is defined when residents utilize balcony spaces as extensions of their indoor storage. Residents also use gallery spaces and interact with the building facades by adding hooks, strings, or other interactive appropriative means. Many residents also leave their items in the communal gallery spaces, forming trust between residents. Common examples of items include dressers, bed frames, bikes, cabinets, bookshelves, and ladders. Our need for more storage space is directly linked to our society's exponential demand and value of material goods. Despite its increase, apartment sizes are decreasing due

to a rise in city densification making it harder for residents to have dedicated spaces to store items. This relates to the aforementioned concept of items possessing sentimental value and holding productive functional use that makes it essential for the owner to easily access; thus, this makes the balcony and gallery an accessible solution satisfying self-fulfillment and security needs.

# Productivity

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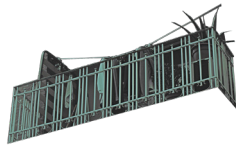
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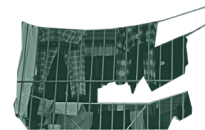
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Productivity is defined by the use of balcony spaces for daily tasks, most notably laundry. Drying laundry is the most prevalent appropriation in Madrid, with methods ranging from lines and suspended drying racks to carousels and more. Whether store-bought or makeshift solutions, all approaches utilize existing architectural or structural features to accomplish the task. These photographs capture how spatial conditions are optimized to meet users' productivity goals. In my interview with Dani, a Lavapiés apartment resident, he mentioned how it's common for residents to share tools like drying racks, vacuums,

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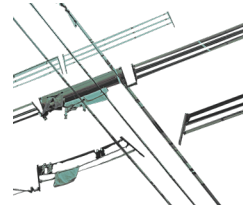
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and mops, often leaving them in shared areas such as gallery corridors so both residents can access. Productivity emerges as a predominant need, which can be explained by understanding Spanish culture. Spanish architect Cristina Acha explains that Spain's social scene thrives in public spaces, separating homes from more sociable activities, making homes a place for domestic chores. Accomplishing tasks satisfies growth needs for personal achievement and confidence, making balconies and galleries valuable for esteem and cognitive needs.



# Leisure

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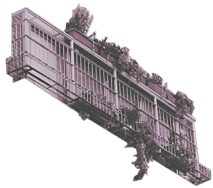


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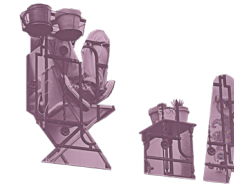
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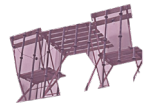
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Though Madrileños prefer to spend time outdoors in public spaces like plazas and parks, many enjoy using their balconies for hobbies such as tending plants or having a morning coffee. These photographs showcase how locals creatively transform these limited spaces into personal escapes. They often use the balcony's existing structural and architectural elements, such as hanging a hammock or converting air conditioning units into seating.

This creative use of space ties into the balcony's history as an escape from city life, with its elevated position providing both a private outdoor area and a publicly visible space for self-expression. As a result, leisure appropriations on balconies offer an accessible solution that satisfies cognitive and self-actualizing needs.

# Climate



One of the balcony's most crucial and beneficial functions is its role in climate mitigation. Balconies enable residents to fully open their floor-to-ceiling French doors, allowing optimal airflow for natural cooling and ventilation. However, Spain's high heat necessitates the use of blinds, known as Persianas, for comfortable living. Originally made of thin wood slats, Persianas shield the interior from the sun's rays while permitting a cool breeze. Typically installed on the exterior side of the door swing, they allow doors to be fully opened for air passage.

During my observations, I noticed a popular trend of people resting Persianas or curtains on the balcony railing to further optimize airflow. Rising temperatures in Spain make natural cooling techniques more essential than ever. As the climate evolves, so do residents and their makeshift solutions, enabling them to comfortably occupy private or shared outdoor spaces. These moments illustrate how people value their balconies as climate refugees and create accessible solutions to meet their physiological needs.

# Privacy

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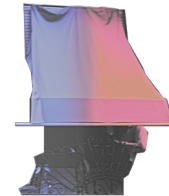
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Privacy is defined by how users adapt balcony spaces to prevent outside visibility. Railing screens are the most common solution, available in various materials such as bamboo, mesh, plastic, and faux plants. While many of these are store-bought, their application is unique due to the different railing conditions. Historically, balconies have evolved from public display platforms to private spaces, originally serving as mediums for activism and opinion expression.



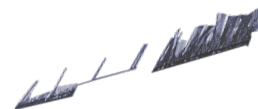
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Interviews with locals revealed that persianas are also used to enhance privacy. Shira, a Lavapiés resident, noted that apartments facing inner courtyards often keep their persianas down to prevent neighbors from looking directly into their homes, even though this limits natural sunlight. Observations indicate that Lavapiés residents highly value privacy, and their limiting conditions often lead them to compromise or combine needs. As a result, privacy becomes a multifunctional solution that addresses security and self-actualization needs, allowing for self-expression in solitude.

# Security

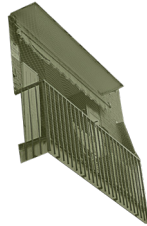
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Safety is a pressing issue in the neighborhood, with 40% of Madrid's police force stationed in Lavapiés to address common crimes such as pickpocketing, break-ins, and vandalism. Safety appropriations on balconies often take the form of barred windows. According to a local property agency, insurance companies typically cover theft only if the home has security bars installed, making this a practical measure for insurance purposes. In an interview, Paul, a corrala resident, highlighted that security often overlaps with storage solutions. Photographs display instances where residents use heavy and large storage organizers to prevent trespassers from accessing their gallery balconies.

Maria-Jesus, another corrala resident, explained that robberies typically occur in entrance hallways, or portals, where residents are cornered and forced to hand over valuables. The contrast between the feelings of safety, privacy, and community inside and outside the building is striking. Inside, residents trust one another and openly share spaces and belongings. While modern dwellings meet basic physiological needs, safety is often inadequately addressed, leading to various appropriations in Lavapiés despite its importance as a fundamental need.

# Community



The previous conclusions and analysis share a common theme: sensitivity to community. Community is cultivated through appropriations in shared spaces, such as galleries and courtyards, and often utilize features such as railings and columns to attach community-oriented items such as laundry drying racks and rope. Interviews with locals revealed an additional communal space outside the gallery and balcony: semi-private courtyards. Neighbors share these semi-private courtyards and find ways to divide or coexist within them. These shared private courtyards are situational and are a result of remodeling, property division, and wall placement.

When Maria Jesus invited me into her home, she demonstrated how she and her friend, who lives in the unit below, invented a pulley system using a bag and rope to pass items between their apartments. These observations demonstrate that architecture can create responsive and conscious spaces for sub-communities, providing accessible solutions that satisfy human needs for belonging and aesthetics, uniting people through common interests.



