





# **The Open House The Open Archive**

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Unfolding the domestic archive  
of Gojka Vukovića 11



## On this thesis

The body is an unfolding archive, containing material layers, fossilized remnants of past memories, skin lesions of still visible trauma. The body is a daily carrying agent of intersections, between the outside-inside and inside-inside, in which there is a radicality in considering the ongoing daily or domestic for the institutional. The archive could be an unfolding institution, where fluid embodiments are archived, bodies collide onto Others, objects transfer knowledge, and events are mapped. The body and the archive are both subject to time; time as carrier of events, time as agent in the impermanence or transience of material, narrative, and memory. Time as challenger of the techniques and stability of knowledge. Transitioning the fossilized narratives in trauma is to disrupt the notion of archiving, through movement in its collection, transferring the knowledge from the fixed object.

**‘in which way  
can we use  
transitioning  
as a concept  
to disrupt  
territories of  
trauma, them  
being material  
assemblages,  
and thereby  
question fixed  
narratives?’**



## Preface

*"I think architects themselves need to take up the task of writing theory and not wait for rescue from the quarters of academe. [...] They place their work in the context of ideas, not just opportunities.<sup>1</sup>"*

The Open House. A project situated in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Opposite of the Stari Most and the Neretva River. These are a few of the certainties in my project.

From the beginning onward, I have tried to seek out the deeper aspects of the narratives encountered while doing research. In the early stages, it has been quite difficult to pierce through the dense cloud of fixed histories, the almost propaganda-like tales of reconciliation and happiness, noted as fictitious by our tutors. Yet, when we arrived in Mostar, it has been almost natural to move through the environment and engage with its inhabitants; especially while unearthing stories and recollecting embodiments. There the seed started to grow. The seed of the importance of materials within a location of trauma, signifying layers, physicalizing memories, and allowing for continued, daily, domestic, everyday embodiments. For me, now, the body of trauma is made out of these materials, the skin, muscle, and bone of a site and its continued interventions. A body which inhabits the space between earth and the sky.

This book is composed out of several parts, interlacing and interlock-

**1 Woods, Slow Manifesto: Lebbeus Woods Blog.,  
p. 6**

ing, creating the layered approach I have been pursuing throughout this project. Bound together as one, the main book consists out of the practical site overviews coupled with theories that have informed design decisions made during the project, the explanation of methodologies and mediums worked with throughout, and a lexicon, elucidating the concepts I use, and have modified, time and time again.

By nature, this book will not capture all the modifications, nor all the concepts once found and let go (because they became too heavy on me). However, I attempt to intersect the process with figures, photos, pieces of intimate texts, as layers within my layers. As disruptions of this linearity and as bearers of my belief that such a process is never straightforward.

Thanking all the beings that have given me insight. Thanking the bodies to show me the gravity needed for this project.





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# Introduction

The thought of the body as being more than human, questioning the container of human-ness, becoming un-human, is a practice rooted in (performance) art and especially its queering trajectories. As the fixity of institutional hierarchies became unstable, the rate at which the body deconstructed sped up; as the body is often a mirroring of dominant systems. This essay reflects on the notion of transitioning a space in constant transition and the usage of the archive as one of the rapidly changing typologies to possibly embody and rethink these (ephemeral) changes into physical forms. More precisely attuned to the location in question, this writing regards the interlacing of smaller, everyday stories and bigger historical parallels within multiple timelines as paramount for the constitution of the archive of a place.

The essay draws a theoretical framework for and around the MSc graduation project 'Neretva Recollection' within Methods and Analysis. It places the strategy of the unfolding of archives and transitioning disruptive traumas of war next to related historical and contemporary methods in ecological and assemblage thinking and the acts of disrupting and transforming spatial narratives through speculative narratives in architecture. It outlines the need for a productive storytelling in the archive to transition trauma, grounding the theoretical framework and subsequent strategy in architectural expression. It is a writing, not only meant to reflect on the transitional force of ecologies within architecture, but also to serve as a reflection on a case study, a springboard for action, and a mode to enable testing on site. It attempts to subvert, hijack, disrupt the containers of human bodies and melt associated milieus to create intensities that elucidate traumatic events, often localized physically onto our collective bodies.

More personally, this project is aiding me into integrating personal unfoldings and the deep grafts of diasporic trauma into a territory of worldly storylines weaving into each other. Not to seek the median in the chaos, but to reflect and enrich. Aiming to both physically and theoretically intuit the possible transformation of the traumatic narrative through embodied experience.

In this theoretical examination of possible architectures within the Embodied Archive, we will knead several understandings within Deleuze and Guattari's writings, such as radioactivity, assemblages, and germs into the possibility of architectures and embodiment and embodied archives, to disrupt and transition fixed narratives. We intersect Bernard Cache's concepts on territory and framing with Pallasmaa, Manning, Massumi, and Mol on embodiment and experiencing, attempting to move away from a strict, crystallized, fossilized, phenomenological route. The valuing of intense bodily or mental experiences, the becoming, as creator of knowledge disrupts the generalized making of knowledge in the form of text or items stored away in an archive. In addition to the mapping of knowledge from and onto our bodily containers, we will have Beatriz Colomina and Laura Marks' concepts on fluidity, plasticity, fossilizing, and bodies, melt into theories of technics and technicity as stipulated by Simondon. Creating new practical tools to encounter and translate our experiences in the institution (of trauma) we create with each other is an important aspect to develop into the programme of this project.

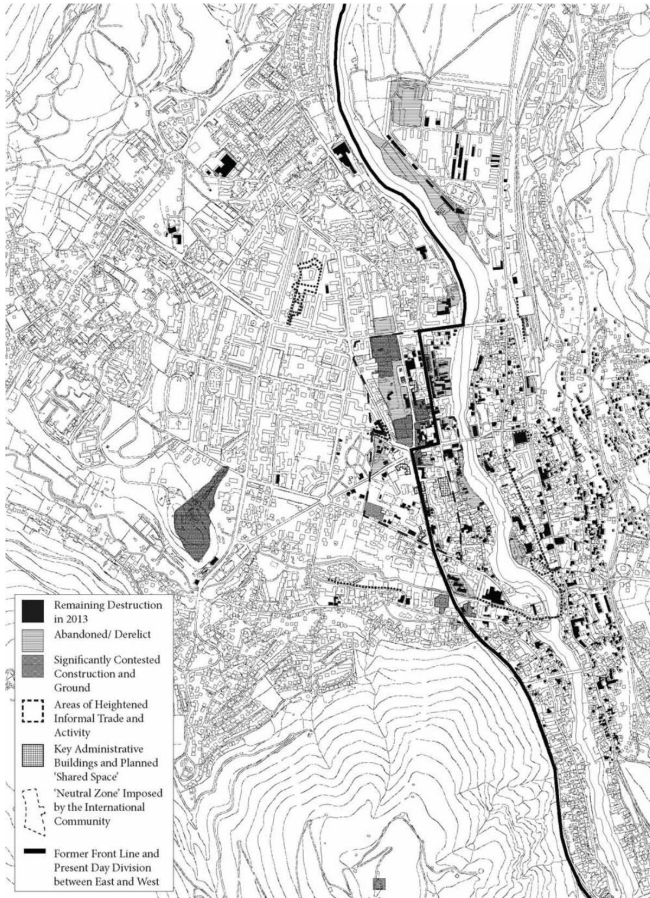
# Location

## 1. A brief overview of layers

The way a body relates to a new space is often aided by the residues of past spaces, building a complex and multi-layered archive of associations. We can mirror this physical population of layers, or material assemblage, to our conception of memory and creation of narratives, as both are manifold; where the recalling and reproducing of memories out the material assemblage happens in often ambiguous ways. This described memory is essentially an embodied one, it can relate to other material layers, but finds meaning in affect to its own environment. The entering of a new space, such as the project location in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the positioning of the body in various sections herein has led to a personal fascination of the interchanging of layers and the recalling of events in this location.

In contrast to investigation done in Delft before the field research, I witnessed while being in Mostar that these intersections are much more complicated. First the political narrative of the border became a foregrounding object of confusion during my stay (fig. 1). The ongoing territorial dispute between the three major ethnicities in Mostar, the Bosniaks, the Bosnian Croats, and the Bosnian Serbs has most certainly not been resolved, not after the Dayton Peace agreement<sup>2</sup>. Yet, it seemed not to be this acute inflammation, which I surmised out of the history books and many articles. There were no barbed wires that prevented movement between people. Rather, the traumas of

**2 Accord putting to end the Bosnian war, setting up the bureaucratic and territorial framework in which Bosnia currently operates**



**Fig. 1** The division of Mostar with Neutral Zone instated after the Dayton Agreement (Sophie Mitchell, 2013)

daily life during and after the war were to be read from more subtle

material layers in the environment, which are still being performed, such as Arna Mačkić hints in the excerpt below.

*“There was a big celebration; trained divers dove off the bridge with torches. The bridge became a national and international showpiece that needed to show it had succeeded in once again unifying the two different ethnic groups of Mostar.”<sup>3</sup>*

These material layers, explicitly present yet unspoken, became known to all who set foot in Mostar, even unaware of its exact (war)history. You could tell the division from empty spaces, written slogans, littered trash, and unused pathways (fig. 2). Around these layers, life seemed to have sought an equilibrium and stories and opinions have been buried in favor of a main narrative of peace. While placing my body in the unknown environment of Mostar, I moved around and tried to touch as many layers to evoke these buried narratives. As my secondary medium, I used my old Canon analog camera, which I consider an extension of my body, a lens behind which I can hide and think. My encounters were intimate and intertwined with my body, perceived as female and colored. People have told me things, about their jobs, their childhoods, the best places in town, but where they placed their silences turned out to be as meaningful. I have tried to interact

**3 Mačkić, “Mortal Cities: The Irreversible Disappearance of Mostar.”**



**Fig. 2 Example of littered trash floating in Neretva (own image)**

with the earth, the solid rock, the name scratched in with a key, the greenbluewhite cold waters of Neretva, the plastic bag floating to elsewhere as if they are all narrators and evidences of this ongoing trauma (fig. 3). Having accumulated these intense encounters, I had proceeded to make sense of the place and sense of the particular moment I had visited it through the dissection of material layers. Below I give an outline of these material layers tied to areas within the project location to be able to further reflect on their importance in the creation of histories or memories through their (disrupted) materiality. In the appendix intersecting this chapter, these layers are illustrated in photo and drawing, two tactile mediums.



**Fig. 3: Greenbluewhite Neretva (own image)**

### *Stari Most*

The Stari Most is one of the bridges crossing the Neretva (fig. 4). It is one of the most recognizable and, after the Croat-Bosniak war and its destruction, the most discussed restoration in Bosnia. The original Ottoman bridge was constructed out of stone along with two fortified towers several hundred years ago. From these towers the bridge keepers, or Mostari, would guard the crossing. The intention of the Stari Most was to showcase the magnitude of this Ottoman Empire by proxy, and thus has remained an essentially Bosniak symbol to which a wider range of ethnicities could identify themselves with. The case of ethnicity, or rather said the blurring of distinctions between them, was pre-war characterized through the acts of mutual tolerance, the



Fig. 4: Stari Most, seen in the distance (own image)

crossing of both sides.

Before the Bosnian war, the main layers of meaning were crossing the bridge to trade or to pass to the other side of the city, to gather in the café *Çardak*<sup>4</sup>, to swim underneath or to jump off the arch of the bridge. The war however introduced an irreversible change in the use and appearance of the bridge (and the relationship between both). As the missiles tore piece by piece off the construction, the ruinosity

<sup>4</sup> As told by Mustafa, the current host in *Çardak*

<sup>5</sup> Mačkić, "Mortal Cities: The Irreversible Disappearance of Mostar."

<sup>6</sup> Mačkić.

of the environment increased. The mental resistance<sup>5</sup> to see the city, streets, alleys, and bridges undergo this transformation have become significant scars in the memories of the inhabitants. At some point, “they stopped caring, as long as the Old Bridge would remain. [...] The city was the bridge, and the bridge was the city.”<sup>6</sup> During the war, the bridge was used to carry victims and goods to safety. The appearance of the bridge changed several times during the war due to impact of the shelling, but also due to the safety needs of the citizens. Citizens placed a cover over the bridge or wrapped car tires around the arch. The bridge became physically layered, aside from its mental layers. Divers have kept on diving off one of the shelled buildings next to the Halabija tower<sup>7</sup>.

The Stari Most was ultimately destroyed in 1993 but resurrected in the 2000s with foreign aid and interest (fig. 5). The bridge was restored in its original state and is now being pushed as the restored (tourist) icon of the city and at the same time the icon of peace and reconciliation. Although what could not be replaced through rebuilding was the initial erasure of memory and the onset of amnesia linked to the practices of the bridge, the Old Town, and the Neretva River. Specifically, for the Stari Most, the physical layer of connection was reinstated yet the mental specificity of connecting became tainted by the ethnic separation, which became part of the city’s mental archive. The sole representation of the bridge as the restored crossing

**7 As told by Johnny, one of the divers**



**Fig. 5: Plaque on Stari Most commemorating the rebuild**

between two ethnicities is reason for the lack of physical expression of the mental layers. It essentially set in stone a perpetual equilibrium, or fossilization of meaning. This fossilization also has a root in the economy given to our urban environment, where the capitalization on singular narratives has grown out of “claims that we have arrived at a posthistorical era where modern culture has passed into a crystalline state.”<sup>8</sup> This narrative of bridge thus built further on the account that it was the border, the crossing of ethnicities, the mark of (high) cul-

ture of Mostar and that, with its destruction, the citizens were on their furthest point from reconciliation.

### *Neretva and Radobolja*

Neretva is the main river flowing through the Bosnian city Mostar, which played an important role, before and during the Croat-Bosniak war, in the daily lives of Mostar citizens. The river was both backdrop to and main agent in many domestic activities. Personal accounts of citizens have mentioned that the river was used for several leisurely activities before the war, like swimming, picnicking, and fishing. The river had a clear greenblue appearance, due to it containing a species of *Nitella* algae. Specific for the project site, we have the interlocking of the Neretva river with the Radobolja stream; another important artery within the city. The connecting Radobolja River was historically used for drinking and sanitation, here too the water was known to be clean and fresh.

During the war, the Neretva and Radobolja became both a “military tool”<sup>9</sup> as well as an intensified site providing basic, domestic, human needs. The military for example used “reduced water flow to city [...] to “smoke out” Bosnians” in the case of the siege of Sarajevo. In Mostar, the river formed additional dangerous boundaries to cross for both military and civilian. For civilians, the usage of the Neretva

**9** Gleick, “Water, Globalization, and Global Security.”, p. 11

partially shifted to the Radobolja function of sanitation and drinking water. Yet, pictures show that people still used the spots near the Stari Most for leisure. The caves were used as hiding spots from the shelling from the direction of the surrounding mountains. The coasts and dams were used by armies to defend the city.

After the war, Neretva became increasingly touched by the growing reluctance to care for the environment in times of disruption while a new privatization of Bosnia appeared due to shifting post-war, even global, politics<sup>10 11</sup> (fig. 6). One major actor is the promised accession to the EU, inciting many EU and UN backed investigations and reports into Bosnia's opportunities for industry and tourism<sup>12</sup>. Bosnia is a country rich in natural resources, a realization which has caused a run on the country's land and nature. Yet, these resources are nationwide unevenly distributed. Especially its water system "due to various geological characteristics, topography and climate, the total quantity of water is not equally distributed either spatially or temporally"<sup>13</sup>. This has caused ongoing "subnational violence over shared water resources"<sup>14</sup>.

On the local scale of Mostar, this speculation has resulted into pollution of the river by human waste and disuse of the shores. Neretva now has a reputation to be unfavored for the previous activities, such as swimming, also because of a lack of regulations protecting swimming areas against pollution. The river's contamination by post-war

10 Spiric, "Environmental Justice Atlas - Bosnia and Herzegovina."

11 UNESCO-IHE, "Annual Report 2004."

12 Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "State of the Environment Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012."

13 Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, p. 127.

14 Gleick, "Water, Globalization, and Global Security.", p. 2

“urban waste water”<sup>15</sup>, coming from factories like Norfish<sup>16</sup>, illegal constructions, landfills, malls, and their lack of appropriate waste systems harmed the populations of nonhuman species present in the river. Nowadays, Neretva around Mostar is in dire need of “the construction of adequate sewage system and wastewater treatment plant in Mostar”<sup>17</sup>, as well as new methods of awareness and prevention of further escalation of the pollution.

The change in tides and water speed, through construction of hydro dams for renewable energy, has caused a favorable milieu for plants and trees growing on the rocky sides, yet have erased former possibilities to reside and relax there. Another newer layer of trauma to the river, is the interest from foreign powers in its possibility to generate energy through the placement of these dams, again due to the globalization of energy and natural resources. The controversial dams are now interfering with the river’s natural tides, causing a chain of problems for the species inhabiting the water.

Still, the mental image of the river has been one of pure natural strength and beauty interlocked with reminiscence of former everyday activities, albeit incongruous with its physical state.

15 Riđanović, Djonlagić, and Riđanović, “Evaluation of Neretva River Water Quality Using Neretva Water Quality Index (NWQI).”, p. 1

16 Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, “State of the Environment Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012.”, p. 75

17 Riđanović, Djonlagić, and Riđanović, p. 1.

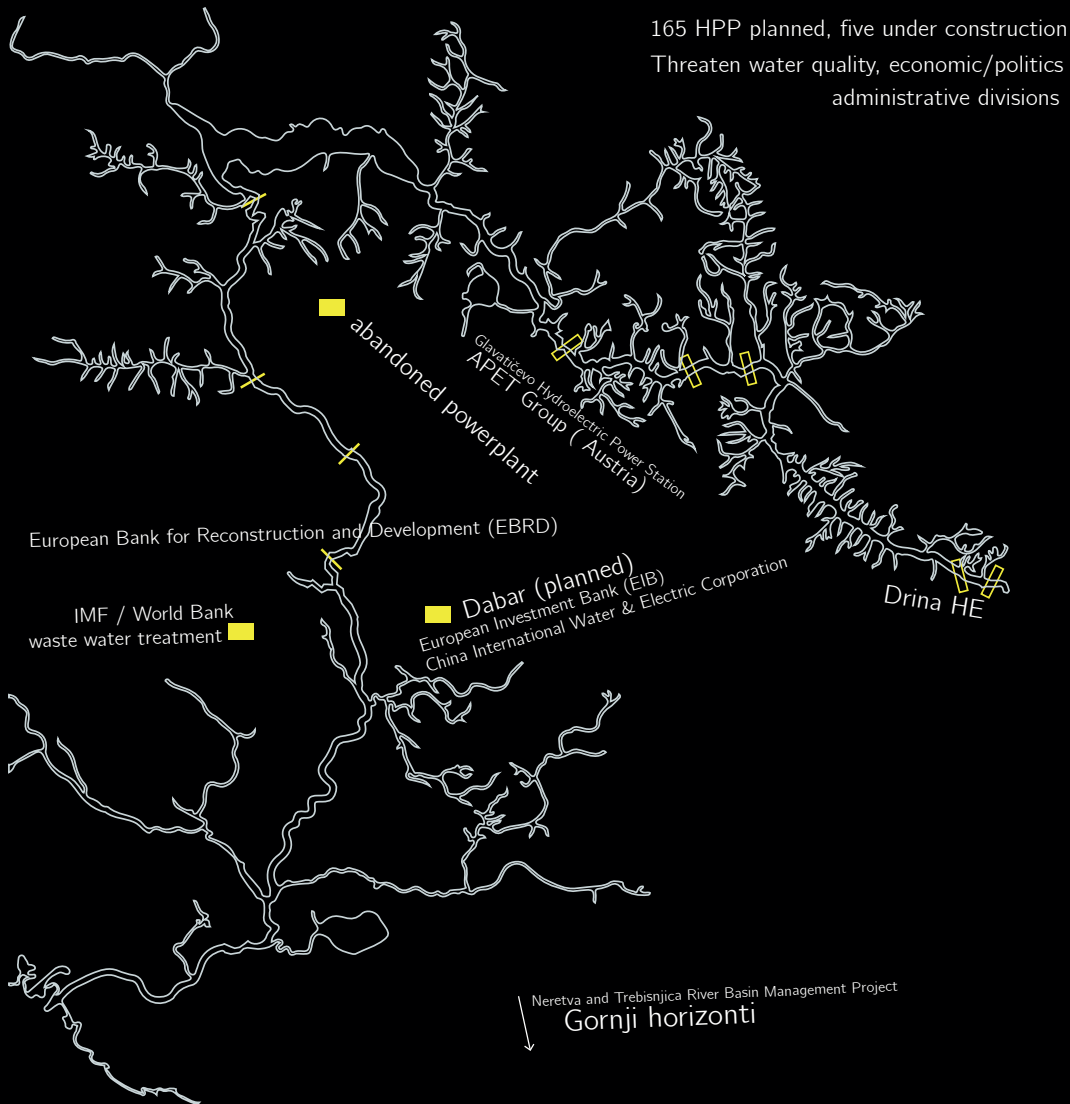


Fig. 6: Overview of current politics around hydroelectrical dams in Bosnia

## *The Terraces*

The terraces seem to dominate the landscape between Neretva, the old town, Stari Most, and the adjacent neighborhood Ograda. A post-war intervention, these terraces stem from a more naturally formed, barren coast on which roughly the same activities of leisure and spectating were performed by visitors.

Quite interesting are the residents and visitors, indistinguishable from each other, staying until late on the steps; talking, laughing, partying with loud music. The terraces topographically mediate the height difference between the river and the upper located Ograda. This means that the terraces remain unflooded during higher tides, while the Radobolja bank with its small informal bridge sinks below the water. Along the separate levels, about 1.5m high, one can find natural borders of green patches, trees, and the water of the Neretva and Radobolja seeping in. Small stone steps intervene between each ascending level of the terrace until a paved road is reached, going up to the debris of the Gojka Vukovića settlement. Littered on several places one can find material evidences of its daily visitors, mainly trash from food packaging and cigarette buds, sometimes some lost items of clothing.

A special quality of the terraces is the transitioning of the space during the mentioned higher tides of the Neretva, usually after heavy rainfall. Cache mentions that “topography is a primary concern in the establishment of cities” leading to “shifting relations between a city and its territory”<sup>18</sup>. In the case of the topography of Lausanne, which

**18** Cache, *Earth Moves*, p.6.

Cache uses to elaborate his theory on, “the collective memory [...] is structured by this plane that creates a sort of split”<sup>19</sup>. We find the terraces in several, separate modes of accessibility and visibility, creating new spaces when submerged and therefor additional characters of site with their own narrative capabilities. Drawing again a parallel to Lausanne’s description, “the surface of the territory is mobile and fluid as it is given to the continual distortions of memory”<sup>20</sup>.

### *The Ruin of Gojka Vukovića 11*

The ruin of the settlement Gojka Vukovića 11 is the assembly of former buildings, constituting the main architectural location of this project. The ruin is accessible from the main road Gojka Vukovića and from the terraces if not flooded. The ruin is a space literally and figuratively opposing Stari Most in its contained degrees of domesticity. The settlement has evolved from traditional housing, where the Ottoman typology created a semi-public hospitality within the courtyard and platforms, to an ultra-public intensity during the Bosnian war. In this period, whole lives and how these bodies congregated were contained within the safe spaces of a home<sup>21</sup>. The additional tension of the former (semi-)domestic environment and the ultra-public site of the bridge is accentuated by an unclear urban surrounding, littered with hostels, hotels, and other temporary residences of domestic

19 Cache, p. 10.

20 Cache, p.11.

21 Pilav, “Sarajevo: Material Mediation and Survival.”

behavior (fig. 7).

The settlement originally was an arrangement of houses, owned by two to three families. The few houses, facing each other, around a small inner courtyard formed a constellation<sup>22</sup>. A constellation where one "house.... [is] a real cosmos in every sense of the word"<sup>23</sup>, carrying cultural and political transformations in their histories. The typological past of the settlement as housing proves to be quite interesting in the light of (ongoing) disruption of the daily, or domestic, due to the Bosnian war. Physically, the debris hailing from this war is evident, few walls of the originally grand assemblage of complexes are still present. Going inside, the inhabitation of the location is taken over by several bodies, human and nonhuman, each leaving their marks of having been there. We consider examples of these marks the graffiti, the trash (mainly from food and drink packaging, cigarettes, and household objects), the growing of trees, bushes, and weeds, and the excrements and footprints of animals.

**22 A constellation in Deleuzian terminology is an assemblage, or grouping, or heterogeneous elements**

**23 Riley, *The Un-Private House*, p. 6.**

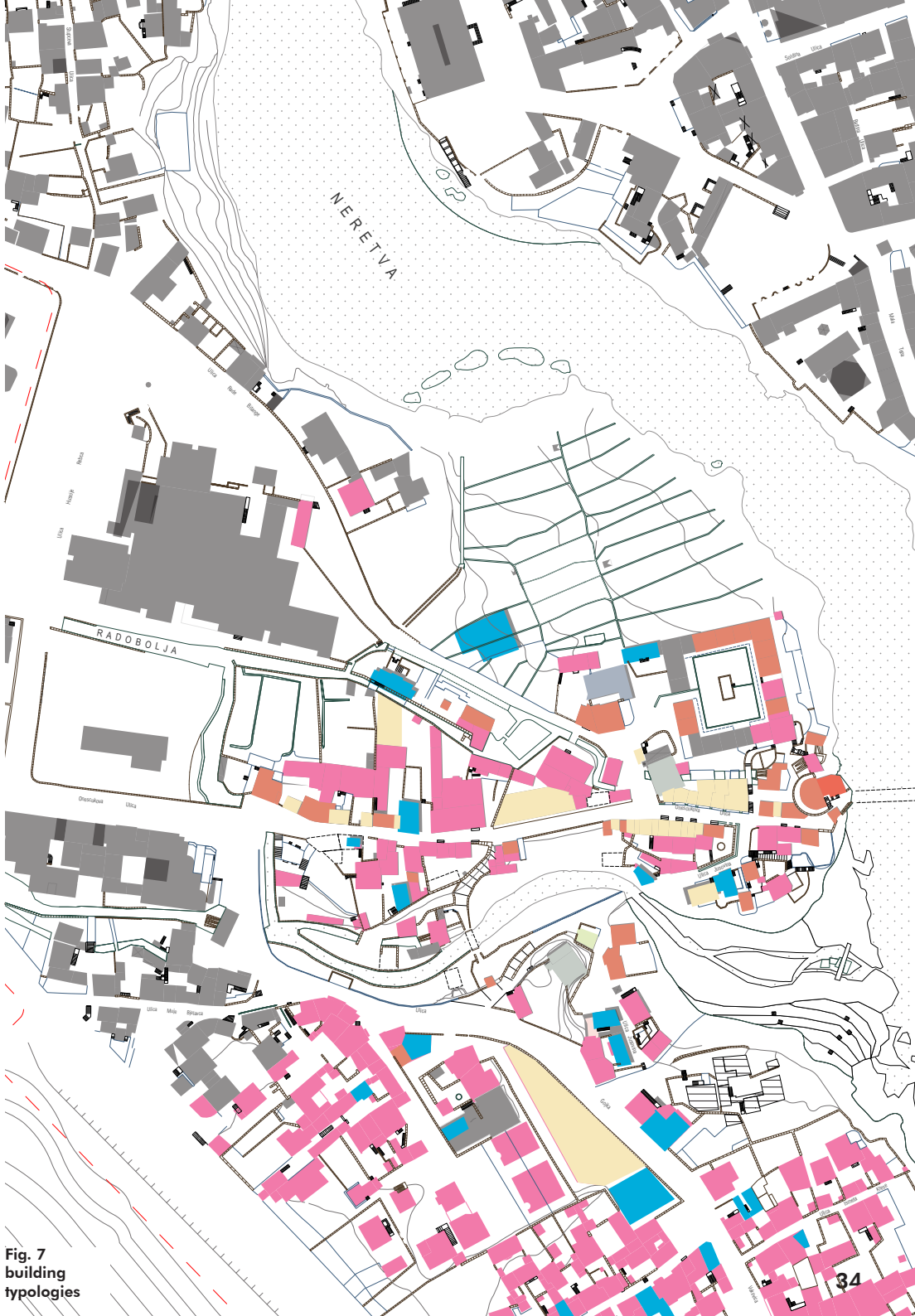
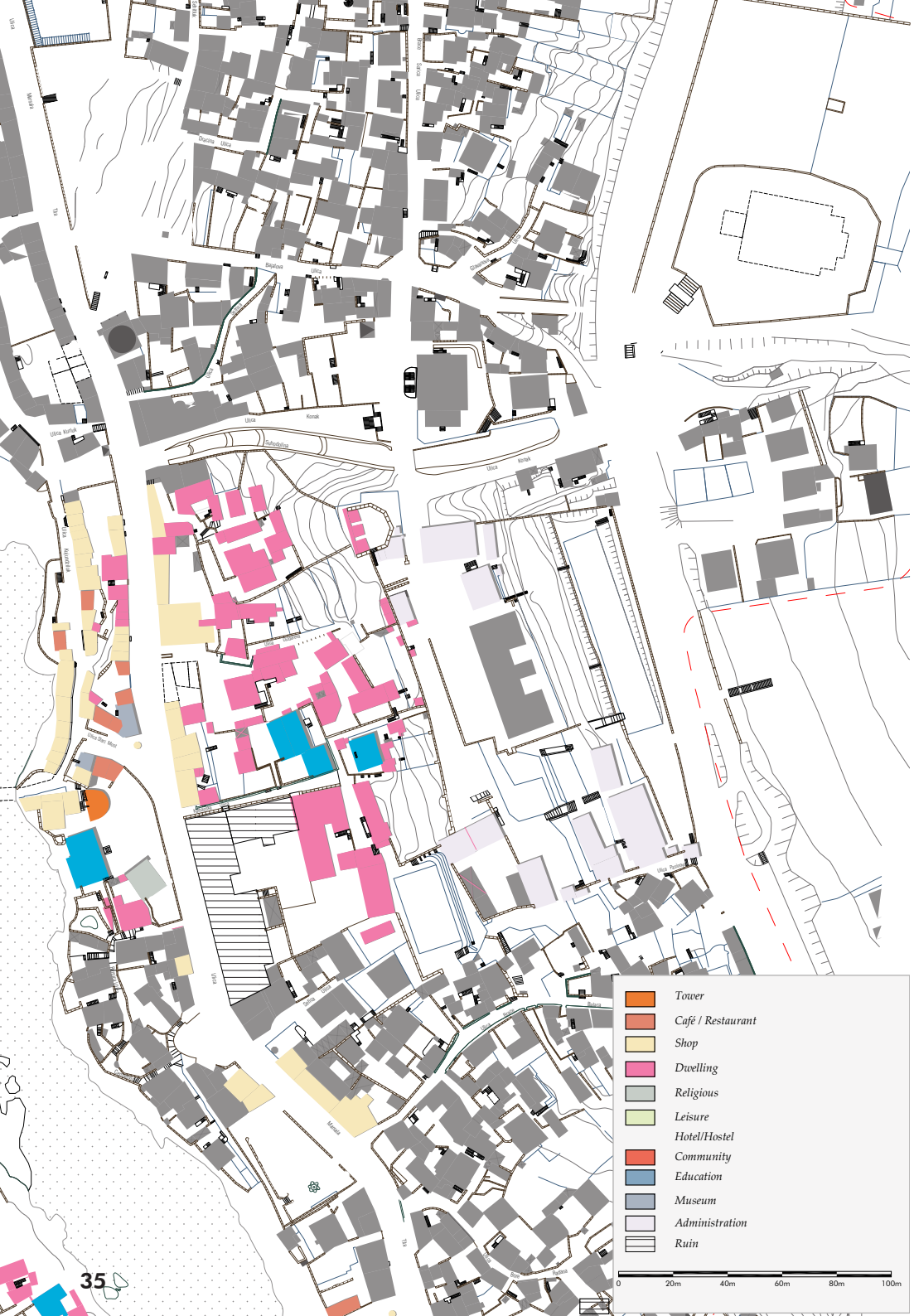














Fig. 7  
building  
typologies



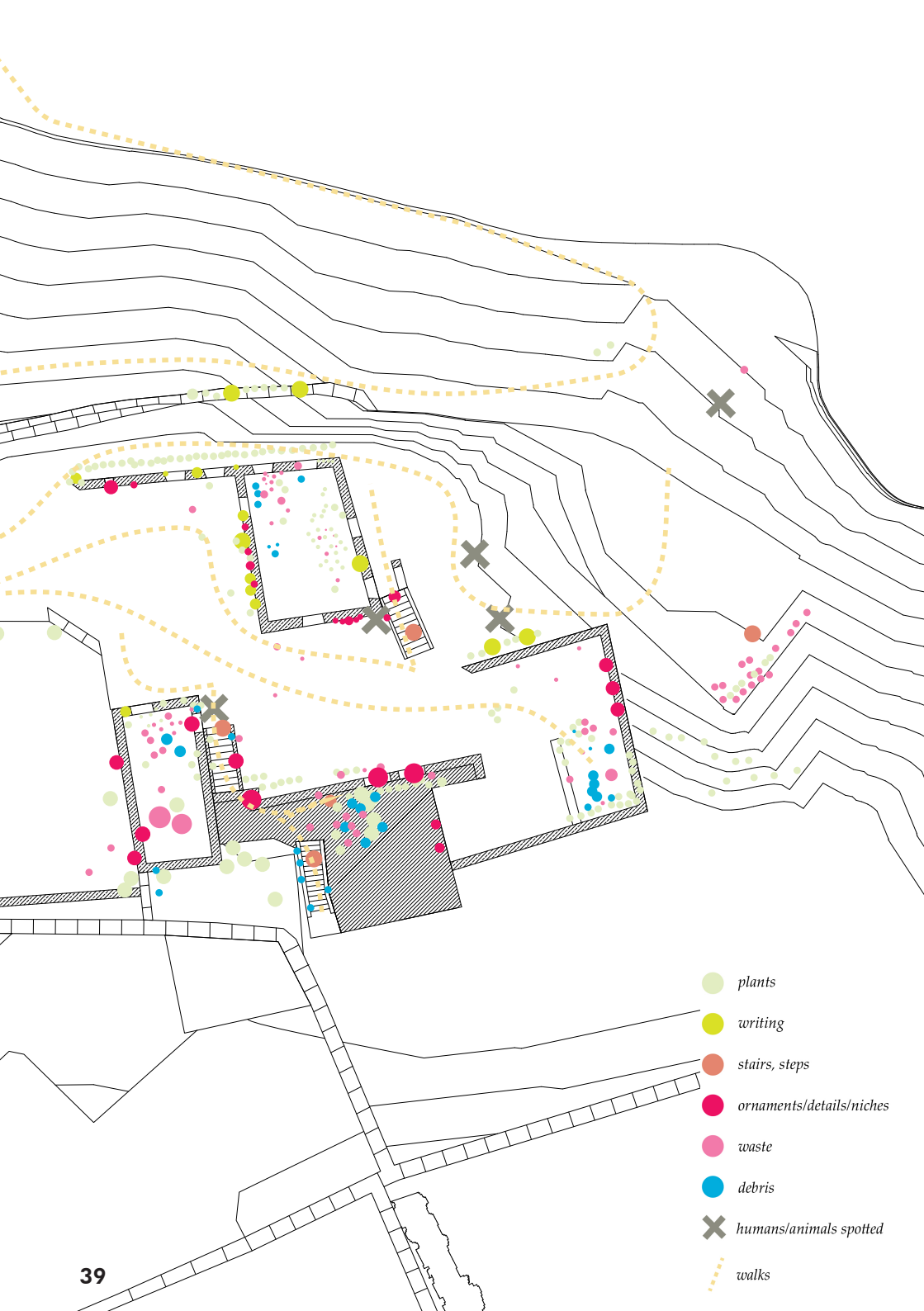
	Tower
	Café / Restaurant
	Shop
	Dwelling
	Religious
	Leisure
	Hotel/Hostel
	Community
	Education
	Museum
	Administration
	Ruin

0 20m 40m 60m 80m 100m









- plants
- writing
- stairs, steps
- ornaments/details/niches
- waste
- debris
- humans/animals spotted
- walks



Plants



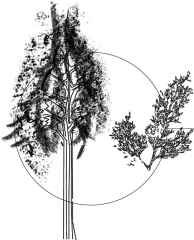
Birch



White Bryony



Common Nettle



Cypress



Poison Ivy



Yarrow



Ash



Blackberry



Prostate knotweed



Fig



Greater Burdock



Creeping bentgrass



Pokeweed



Elderberry



Beard grass

Writings

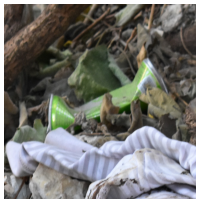




# Food and drink waste



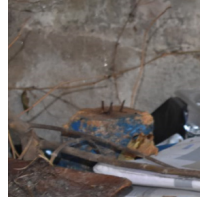
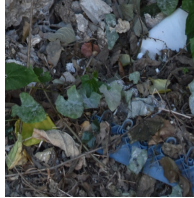
Food and drink waste



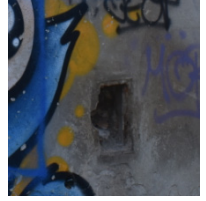
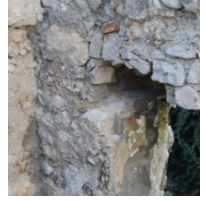
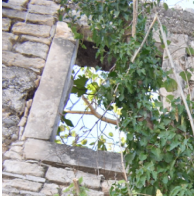
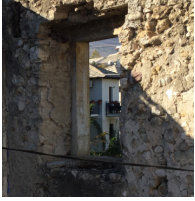
Construction waste



Other domestic waste



Ornaments / Details / Niches



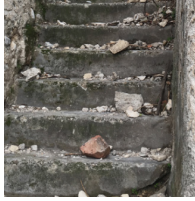
Ornaments / Details / Niches



Stairs / Steps



Debris











**Fig. 8 Neretva high tide over terrace (own image)**

In the Stari Most, the terraces, the ruin, and the Neretva River, we can find subtleties of various subject-object dichotomies, scattered by the disruptions made: fixed-fluid, human-nature, conscious-unconscious, and “actively knowing-subjects and passive objects-that-are-known”<sup>24</sup>. These have to do with our earlier thoughts on the intersections of bodies within layers and the affects creating material deposited in the archive of a place. The innate questioning of the sta-

**24 Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice*, p.33.**

bility of a territory, or fixed-fluid, relates to one of Cache's main topics in his seminal work *Earth Moves*. There the predicament explored is "how to show or create the kind of movement that is prior to the representation of stable objects, and so to introduce a new dynamic conception of both image and architecture"<sup>25</sup>. This movement in territories, otherwise perceived as stable, proposes additional "possibilities of seeing"<sup>26</sup> and understanding of a complex location. Where the Stari Most carries the image of stability, eternity, and elevation, the proximity of the Neretva and Radobolja, or waters as material, paradoxes this connection by signifying elements of fluidity, carrying information, embodiment of transitioning as a natural process.

**24** Boyman, "Translator's Preface." In *Earth Moves*, p. IX

**25** Boyman, In *Earth Moves*, p. IX.

## 2. A location in transit: the fixed-fluid dichotomy and traumas of past, present, and future

*Finally all creative action is determined by the fate of the landscape [...] the work being personal and localized<sup>27</sup>*

Exactly this significance of transitioning, briefly captured in the former paragraph, is something valuable to be explored within the context of a post-war location; moving between metastable states. The passing of time in matters of trauma (and trauma as matter), the movement of an object and transforming of surroundings within their ecology or the (non-)healing of some scars always includes several states of being. These states of being evolve from certain points in time, they unfold capacities, they transition. It is valuable in the reasoning of this thesis to shed light on the meanings of instability, the power of transitioning, and what an unstable context can unfold within a location. In transitioning, the case of visibility is an urgent one, with the initial scar as the most acute. Of these the physical remembrance, the early imprint, in turn might be shorter lived than the mental resonance of the mark. The hand might want to touch the limb that is not present anymore, the body might revisit the house, now a shadow, over and over. The relevance of a caring sensibility for the smaller narratives in the history of a place can help to consider a different importance for the traumatic object beyond the initial scar.

**27 Möller and Leik, The Co-Op Principle - Hannes Meyer and the Concept of Collective Design., p. 15**

The Gojka Vukovića settlement and surrounding site is quite particular in its form-matter. It is both fluid in regard to the passing of time, the passersby, the flowing of the river, and fixed, in its gravity, the hard karst rock, the terrace, the ruinous walls, the markings made on them, and the stony bridge opposite of it. The site unites both aspects and invites us to a dually grounded and metaphysical understanding of transitioning in respect to the body of trauma living there and the constant flux of bodies within the location, changing the connotations of its history by addition; even removal of a material layer is an addition in its sense. A thorough dissection was to be made first, in the form of a material catalog of the Ruin and the precedent study (Catalog of a Space) to understand the material archive embodying the mental layers, fixed narratives, and written histories. Here we have seen that “it is the small, the frivolous, the wasted objects – the rubbish of western culture – that witness a history that is silent in dominant discourses”<sup>28</sup>. In an almost archeological attempt, the layers of war history and their exposed artifacts resemble an investigation of material layers and the disclosure of fossils as remnants of times passed. The debris found for example and depicted in the Catalogs “was a medium used by civilians who individually or collectively formed a protective power in contrast to the military’s destructive power”<sup>29</sup>.

As Laura U. Marks says, there are “inexplicable factoids” connecting

<sup>28</sup> Everett here cites Walter Benjamin in “Swallowed Words: Bringing up an Aboriginal Past in the City.”, p. 114

<sup>29</sup> Pilav, “Sarajevo: Material Mediation and Survival.”, p. 6

these layers and the fossils, “cutting between private recollection and official discourse”<sup>30</sup>. This private-public face of the site is one parallel to the historical narratives and the change in gradient of domesticity; before, during, and after the war. The latter will be fleshed out in the third paragraph of this chapter, on the specific trauma of disrupted domesticity.

The bleak dissociation caused by the fossils Marks describes is also theorized by Deleuze as the radioactive imagery, or fossils, which are inexplicable in the present where they surface.

The fossils thus act as active reminders, uncanny valleys for its current spectators, where in many cases the actual anguish is subliminal. The fixed artifact weaves a thread between the now, the past, and possible futures to come, where it can halt or aid transitioning. In the case of halting the process:

*“The function of transitional objects is decidedly not to aid assimilation. For they do not simply bring an aspect of their place of origin to a new site; they also make strange the place into which they arrive.”<sup>31</sup>*

Here the fossilization serves as a limit to affordances, “possibilities for action provided to an animal by the environment—by the substances, surfaces, objects, and other living creatures that surround it”<sup>32</sup>; a term coined by the environmental psychologist James J. Gibson.

**30** Marks, “Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentary and Materiality.”, p. 225  
**31** Marks, “Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentary and Materiality.”, p. 240.

**32** Rietveld et al., “A Rich Landscape of Affordances A Rich Landscape of Affordances.”, p. 325

The targeted walls on the site of a ruin remain skeletons in the closet. It reserves possibilities in an act of jealous preservation leading to stagnation, or in a knowledge of desperate dormancy. The fossilized object halts time and perpetuates forced history. As in the example of Aboriginal histories, researched by Kristina Everett, "some of these once 'swallowed' stories are now being regurgitated, re-emerging into a world that does not always recognize them as true"<sup>33</sup>. The whole being of the ruins in a city like Mostar, driven to forget, is one of unbelief; although they have always lain in the open. On the other side of the comparison, we have the intimate possibility for the fossil to aid transitioning. The fossil can make place for wonder, beyond the initial repulsion or anxiety, if the cracks are discovered in which new life can nest itself. One has to follow the shape of the fossil to discover new turns in its history, new paths to walk on, curved or jagged. Pondering on the life, or lives, within the fossil, the possibilities for it to be reused and transformed into tecnics appropriate for the present, or range of presents. Here the interest of the fossil is

*"in that of change, the idea of flow, constant progress and transience. An interaction with the elements to achieve their intrinsic understanding. The materials such as ice didn't serve as tools or media, but constituted the works themselves."*<sup>34</sup>

In many cases, like the Gwalan walks Kristin Everett describes, this

**33** Everett, "Swallowed Words: Bringing up an Aboriginal Past in the City.", p. 112

**34** Technologie und das Unheimliche, p. 15.

transformation is a physical act;

*“Gwalan kicked the earth turning up shards of glass, pieces of rock, fragments of tin using these pieces of ‘rubbish’ to tell stories of their life, their families and their ancestors”<sup>35</sup>*

Which can be mirrored to the walks I had undertaken in Mostar. During these I have both wondered on my place in this history and the impression it made. I have met and engaged with many, such as Jasminka, inviting me in for coffee in her home, recounting stories of war and displacement, and in the end gifting me an object from her home, which she could no longer use: a book written by her nephew on histories in Mostar. Important in this relationship is the establishment of a listening ear, not only toward the humans, but also a care or sensitivity toward the surroundings and the object, often personal and domestic.

Flow, change, transitioning is already an implicit ongoing procedure, as mentioned before in the fixed-fluid duality. In this making fluid of fossils “not all of [the] objects are successfully connected to memory, however, and somethings remain illegible – a trace or mark of forgotten or illegible histories.”<sup>36</sup> Leaving room for both the legible in the moment and the possibilities of all the different futures the object could entail, even if unrecognizable at first, is the power of transition. In Mostar it is worth acknowledging these processes explicitly and to

**35** Everett, “Swallowed Words: Bringing up an Aboriginal Past in the City.”, p. 115

**36** Everett., p. 114

investigate them in design, challenging the static wall by introducing it to an embodied space and letting the movement unearth meaning.

### **3. The layers of domestic trauma in the location: an open house**

Where the fossils of Gojka Vukovića 11 are the material remnants of the original buildings, the typological meaning, or current amnesia thereof, also presents a trauma to work with. To be read by observers as a typical ruin, the settlement actually was a group of homes. This realization, briefly mentioned in the overview of layers, is one which changes perspectives on the trauma of the location, including the landscape around it and the icon of the Stari Most opposite. It creates tensions between the fixed post-war environments of the Stari Most. It views differently the everlasting flow of the Neretva river. It places an importance on the found, familiar, intimate objects; like the dress shirt disposed between the rubble of the ruin (fig. 9). Domesticity has in parallel to the radioactive objects a layered meaning. In a wider, global context one of continuous capitalist renewal and its publicizing of the private, and more intimately, locally, the various stages of evolving the domestic; before, during, and after the war.

The homes situated at Gojka Vukovića stem from various time periods, however the area used to be one of the first to be inhabited by the Ottomans. Knowing this, laying it parallel to archival research to find pre-war photos, and judging from the other surrounding contexts along the river, the ruins dated back from this Ottoman period. The



**Fig. 9 Intimate object in between the ruins**

private Ottoman homes were characterized by their gendered separations, view-framing balconies and windows, and enclosed courtyards, where a contrasting public life took place. The relationships between the outside and the inside were intriguing, one which made space for imagination in the courtyards of contemplation and relief. As the ideologies shifted along political allegiances, many of the older Ottoman homes have become 'historic' touristic objects, where the newer examples have been largely eradicated by time or the recent war.

ARCHITECT ZORAN DORŠNER, JULY 1994

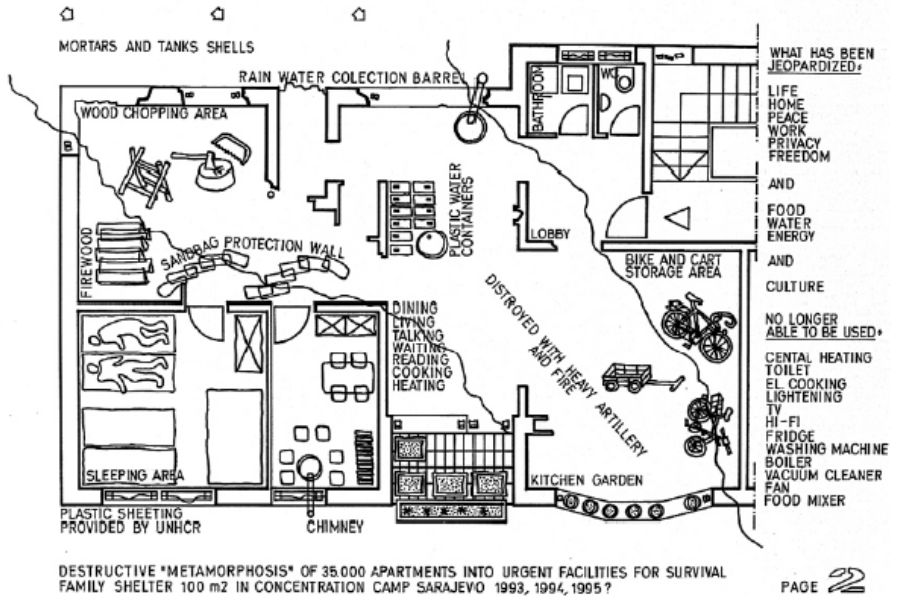


Fig. 10 Floor plan of a residential unit transformed during the war by the self-organization of space. / Drawing by architect Zoran Doršner (1994). (Pilav, "Sarajevo: Material Mediation and Survival.", p. 8)

The homes, which were present during the war, transformed into manifestations of the public through a jeopardized public life. During wartime the inhabitants are suddenly separated in soldiers and civilians, both making use of the geography and the houses within in a different way. Public life had been nearly impossible or at least highly dangerous by soldiers patrolling the streets, fights shrinking the movement spaces of the civilians, and the occupation of buildings. Daily life had been focused on survival and homes were transformed

to contain every aspect of the daily; public and domestic. In the case of Sarajevo, Bosnia's capital,

*“everyday life was limited to a network of underground, semi underground, and above-ground urban spaces. Peoples' movements were reduced to a minimum, and even then were only conducted to satisfy essential needs like acquiring food. The entire daily life of civilians began sinking to the underground or semi-underground level: sleeping, eating, playing, cooking, creating culture, and so forth”.<sup>37</sup>*

Parts of this non-violent, domestic, public life was about repurposing debris that came to be into something other than scars, transitioning it to reactions, movements, activities, and useful objects (fig. 10). The home was thus a space of ongoing transitioning, the fluid out of a fixed situation. We can mirror this act of transformation and reconsidering once again to the fossils found in and around the location, not only of the shifting purpose in the past stories they contain, but also of the futures they can inform or develop into. To give perspective on the current post-war shifts of the domestic and public in Mostar, we have to relink it to two threads in the making of the Modern home, which are firstly the Modern assimilation of the home and family as weapons in the capitalist society alienating social praxis; something also addressed by Deleuze and Guattari<sup>38</sup>. Secondly, we can look

**37 Pilav, “Sarajevo: Material Mediation and Survival.”, p. 5**

**38 Guattari, Le Tre Ecologie.**

at the change in tools and configurations within the Modern home, mirroring changes in gender dynamics within the home to the urban sphere where the masculine dominated<sup>39</sup>. This meant the rise of manliness, efficiency, and ... at home and the diminishing of the home as a "private shelter"<sup>40</sup>.

To begin, one can make a short imaginative leap to the earlier explained importance of Bosnia's resources like the Neretva River in a global context, the interwovenness of local and global post-war politics, and the disuse of its territories for social activities. Similarly, the present fossil of the Stari Most has been resurrected and the act of reconciliation perpetuated to conform with the domesticizing of the public for global economic purposes. Beatriz Colomina comments on the role of Modern architecture and war infrastructure within the city in her book *Domesticity at War*. Modern architecture has been supporting a framework of war, pushing an agenda of hegemonic narratives of Good Living<sup>41</sup>. Or as Heynen says in her essay on Modernity and domesticity, "the usual depictions of modernity present it as a heroic pursuit of a better life and a better society, which is basically at odds with stability, tradition, and continuity."<sup>42</sup> Conceptions of public and private shifted in a Western, Modern, surge of exhibitionism, starting with the International Style. The Good Life was an artifact of observation, a spectacle, first encountered in the opening of the private house<sup>43</sup>. These glimpses into new terrains for living aligned with the rethinking of family compositions and building technologies,

39 Heynen, "Modernity and Domesticity.", p. 3

40 Heynen., p. 6.

41 Colomina, *Domesticity At War*.

42 Heynen., p. 1

43 Riley, *The Un-Private House*.

consumed subconsciously as the postwar line between soldier and civilian technologies began to blur. At some point, the architecture became the referee in aspects of “Good Design”<sup>44</sup>, going hand in hand with the mode of living prescribed and dictating our visual taste. This visual taste was regarded highly hygienic, clean, and see-through; thus, devoid of any remnant of the past in its scarred state. This period is characterized by the restorations or demolishing of buildings and infrastructure all over Europe, erasing the ruined state of the architecture and bringing it back to an unfamiliar past. Though,

*Both of these concepts reflect the desires of most city inhabitants to ‘get back to normal,’ and forget the trauma they suffered as a result of the violence and destruction. Yet, both concepts ignore the effects of the war and destruction on the people who suffered through them, not only the personal psychological effects, but also those forcing changes to people’s social, political, and economic relationships.*<sup>45</sup>

Lebbeus Woods, in his book *War and Architecture* and the artworks, articles, and interviews stemming from these, delivers a critique on these practices of post-war remediation by offering “guiding principles” for the city of Sarajevo, based on “the history of modern cities attacked in the Second World War”. From the third principle he offers, building from the “damaged old”<sup>46</sup>, we can reconsider the value

44 Colomina, *Domesticity At War*, p. 51

45 Woods, “WAR AND ARCHITECTURE: Three Principles.”

46 Woods.

again of the fossils, the objects, the architecture, and the public-domestic histories. In the case of Mostar, the public turned domestic expresses the practice of the Good in Reconciled Living after the technical reconstruction of the Stari Most and parts of the historic inner city. The fixed image of Reconciled Living provided a reinstatement of fossilized layers, created at different moments in time, adding to the weighted archive of a place. They also forgot their radical public activity, out of necessity, in stark contrast to the vicinity of the private during war.

Houses at the same time lost their prewar nuance in public hearths and private rooms; here we arrive at the second thread. As Heynen says

*Domesticity can [...] be discussed in terms of legal arrangements, spatial settings, behavioral patterns, social effects, and power constellations [...]*<sup>47</sup>

This thought above can be connected to another form of domestic trauma, namely the actual physical objects, configurations of these objects, and the spaces they contain and are contained in. This is a notion which is directly to be found at the location of the ruin, informing strongly the material archive of the location. A great deal of the objects found are either waste coming from basic daily practices like

<sup>47</sup> Heynen, "Modernity and Domesticity.", p. 7

eating and drinking or from domestic appliances. The latter have, in the respect of objects mitigating actions during and after war, a big meaning. This meaning can be found in the sense of objects being part of affective arrangements, or contexts, within a wider thought of social praxis and patterns. These influence behavior within the space, becoming engrained in memory, ending up as embodied knowledge related to the object and its context.

Where “appliances topped the list of the most desirable objects in the postwar years”<sup>48</sup>, these tools have become more and more disposable. This agency of time in the usage of a domestic object is quite interesting, making fossils while they still are present within the home. These examples of the disrupted domesticity and its artifacts is one that can be interjected with awareness if transiting from an embodied experience and awareness of the (lost) knowledges within the object. This embodied experience within a location, engagement with the layer, and moving fossils are all key intersections, or intensities<sup>49</sup>, to be explored in the next chapter.

**48 Colomina, *Domesticity At War*, p. 135**

**49 Foucault and Leibniz first started to work with the fold, afterwards expanded by Deleuze. Deleuze links folding to forces of the outside, (self-)domination, subjectivity, and individuation as topologies of these folds.**

## Archiving the daily trauma: Interlacing the institutional and the domestic

Continuing the developed thought in Chapter I on the importance of cataloguing layers and their contained material and immaterial objects, we can address the task to archive this specific domestic trauma we found in the location Gojka Vukovića 11. Working through these layers, we encounter the tension between archivist, artist, and architect as curator and collector, almost working as an archeologist at a certain point. We encounter tensions between Western and Other theories on archiving or considering objects and their agency, for example illustrated by the quote on the Gwalan by Kristina Everett<sup>50</sup>. Questions arise on the importance of each layer, wall, block, drawing; they could all be an archive in themselves. On the ideological plane, notions of privacy, intimacy, comfort, the observing eye, possession, past and present in one's house are evidences relatable to knowledges transcending the artifact, flowing through the interior, into the room, the body, the courtyard, and the public. To link both house and archive, we have to consider the specific act of archiving within this context in relation to these mentioned notions more precisely as well as the historical notion of archiving and archives, being "initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded"<sup>51</sup>. The latter elaborates on the power constructions found within an institution, be it a home – keeping a home – or the physical home of an organization, both being places of secrecy, privacy, but the institution being disguised as a public sphere.

**50 Everett, "Swallowed Words: Bringing up an Aboriginal Past in the City."**

**51 Derrida and Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.", p. 10**

In this project of 'Open House / Open Archive', the challenge is to seek ways, processes, tools, masses in which we can disrupt and mobilize objects, object-assemblages, and the traditional weight of the archival concept. This means pulling the archival concepts away from the patriarchal home, under a set of rules, the classified, the private, the erasure, or as Derrida does, deconstructing the embedded limits of the archive. Contrasting to the destructuralist dissemination of Derrida into further semiotic categories, as significations, it is an interesting thought experiment to not relate to type classifications but affectuous assemblages. Rather we can take Deleuze's constellations, being representative of "contextual, messy information"<sup>52</sup> of unstable contexts. In this war, we can begin to unfold and give a space for the objects in Gojka Vukovića 11 to act.

Late May 2019, I had the great opportunity to discuss this project in the presence of a varied group; architects, archivists, linguists, sociologists, artists, and historians in the context of the third Artists and Archivists meetup<sup>53</sup> (fig. 11). This roundtable discussion paid attention to some important aspects of this project in terms of body, object, and archive, with the main questions being: how do objects transfer knowledge and how can events be mapped in an unstable, conflicted context? It proved to be a nice challenge to align understandings on archiving and the processes happening within the archive, where relationships with the body existed, and the agencies of the more

52 Darms, "Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration.", p. 148

53 <https://arias.amsterdam/artists-archivists-3/>



Fig. 11 Poster of the artists and archivists meetup, via <https://www.facebook.com/events/2206454376115772/>

traditional actors within this space. Therefore, I will take a moment to define my personal position a bit closer in relationship to these traditional considerations.

## 1. The archive as considered in this project

In order to develop a clearer position on the archive within this specific project, there has to be a context of archival notions and archi-

val practices to surround ourselves with. These notions can loop into physical affordances related to an archive as both artistic and architectural object. The latter in the light of this graduation project is the making of an aesthetically pleasing, functional ensemble of, again, objects.

Simply seen, we could start from a dictionary definition, as done by Armina Pilav in her Un-Making Image Session #7, where

*On the page of Oxford learner's dictionary: [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/archive\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/archive_1), the archives [plural] is defined as "a collection of historical documents or records of a government, a family, a place or an organization; the place where these records are stored".<sup>54</sup>*

Continuing in a slightly different direction, I would like to highlight the words *collection*, *historical*, *government*, *place*, and *stored* as access points of the previously mentioned tensions, especially in relation to objects and object-assemblages stored within such an institution. Looking back to the definition Derrida and Prenowitz gave us we can see that the archive is an institution with historical weight, stacking the same practices, tools, and spaces over the course of a few thousand years. Within these forms, the archive "could neither do without substrate nor without residence. It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place"<sup>55</sup>. From the perspective of

**54 Pilav, "Un-Making Image Session #7: Transitional Archives of War: The Body-the River-Architectures-..."**, p. 2

**55 Derrida and Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression."**

an onlooker gazing back on this period, it might seem as the institutional practices of collecting always have been happening in stable contexts, dealing with erasure in similar manners. However, three-dimensional objects within a collection always have had an uncertain status, reflecting on the practice of archival studies rooted in modes of classification and the search of values<sup>56</sup>.

In respect to the highlighted words, we can pose questions on

- the curation or collecting of objects or layers for an archive in respect to meaning, authenticity, and 'truth', also in relation to time,
- the representation and gaze of the curated, neutrality,
- the self or body in relation to the archived object, the spaces or context an object creates and carries,
- the capacity of an object to be limited or unfolded within a collection, relating physically to tools and surfaces,

Asking these questions destabilizes from an early stage onward the conception of the archive within this project, as it interrogates the making of history, or narrative, and its relationship with the material contained in this archival space and the bodies encountering. It draws an unusual connection between the point an archive starts to form, the place in which this formation happens, and the point a narrative starts to fixate itself. It is interesting to think about how an unstable environment can sabotage this process<sup>57</sup>. Additionally, the

**56 Darms, "Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration."**

**57 Such as the principle of water as communicator of events used in the debris atlas submission for Architecture of Shame, Matera 2019.**

instability of a context changes the perspectives of the object related context, obscuring or unfolding certain narratives. In contrast, archival practices are more focused on solidifying a certain context for a long period of time, ignoring in large variabilities of meaning. We can relate this to the earlier mentioned contexts around domestic objects, often obscured by the passing of time. Architecturally speaking, such an endeavor finds itself on the border of artistic and architectural spatial perception, where we can transgress the formation, collection, archiving of objects and their contexts to buildings or even cities. Here “objects are conceptualized as both autonomous works, and as units within the larger collections on which their value and identity depend”<sup>58</sup>, giving importance to the placement of each unit and the timelines in which they resided and continue to reside. These timelines are embedded and embodied within the physical environment, transmitting textures which can be read and interpreted.

In all the above questions power constellations, especially subject-object relationships, play a great role: the consideration of documentary value of an object in these interpretations. In the thought experiment of missing ‘curation’, be it an archivist, an architect, or urbanist, how would a collection of objects form? What importance would be given in relation to zeitgeist and its truths? Would this be an organic process in the hivemind of its contemporary? Relating to the position of architects as curators of the built environment, Lebbeus Woods notes

**58 Darms, “Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration.”, p. 144**

that

*Architects, often the handmaidens of politics, today seem more eager than ever to play the main game of liberal democracy, which is the pursuit of clients and their commissions. And who are the clients?<sup>59</sup>*

Objects in various forms, being aesthetical thoughts in large, are remnants of influences of our societies, patterns, and environments. In turn they also feed into our consciousness as concepts and eventually philosophical thoughts to understand our society<sup>60</sup>. When such a filter of those curating the built masses or found objects is minimized, the curiosity lies to observe the newly formed power dynamics. Another related thought is which relationship authenticity or value has with the author of an object being known. In Darms' paper on the value of archival objects, she gives the example of the Fales Library and Special Collections housing a "collection [, which] documents the SoHo and Lower East Side downtown arts scene from the 1970s through the early 1990s"<sup>61</sup>. This is a collection largely consisting of artworks of various mediums and formats, "[challenging] attempts at classification and institutional preservation"<sup>62</sup>. Special attention is given to the Magic Box of David Wojnarowicz, containing various objects; soft, rough, large, fragile, small in various assemblages within a wooden box. This box was left to the archive, but posed difficulties in curation, organization, and attaching meaning to largely any-

59 Woods, *Slow Manifesto: Lebbeus Woods Blog.*, p. 5

60 Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technological Objects.*

61 Darms, "Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration.", p. 145

62 Darms., p. 145



ASCORBING TRAUMAS  
UNFOLDING TRAUMAS  
FOSSILIZING IN BODY.



mous objects within a box found under Wojnarowicz' bed. Additionally, these objects were deteriorating at different speeds, affecting the environment of other objects as well, introducing the necessity to remove objects from their assigned context. When such a limit is presented one is inclined to bend at the burden or will to preserve the continuity of the collection. In this position the neutrality of the curator is disputed as it is limited by the tools and processes, relegating it to old flows of understanding. Yet, it would be interesting to allow for such deterioration with minimal measures, seeing the new context introduced by the ecology of the Magic Box as acceptable to affect the collection. This is where the aspect of tools, surfaces, processes intersect with limits. A certain flexibility must be built in for the masses missing in the constitution of a new situation.

The notion I am using, the Open Archive, would disrupt these fixed methodologies of archiving by intersecting it with an architectural understanding of tool and surface creation, seeing them as enabling democratic or social processes. The full effect of such processes cannot be anticipated ahead of time and it is exactly this insecurity which mirrors the way information flows through time and material; with us being unaware of what will be regarded as valuable in the future.

## 2. Disrupting the notion of collecting and curating

*Let us not begin at the beginning, nor even at the archive. But rather at the word "archive"-and with the archive of so familiar a word. Arkhe we recall, names at once the commencement and the commandment. This name apparently coordinates two principles in one: the principle according to nature or history, there where things commence-physical, historical, or ontological principle-but also the principle according to the law, there where men and gods command, there where authority, social order are exercised, in this place from which order is given-nomological principle. There, we said, and in this place. How are we to think of there? And this taking place or this having a place, this taking the place one has of the arkhe?<sup>63</sup>*

The archive of embodiments, or the body as archive, addresses certain subversions of the types archive and museum by intersecting it with the domestic and daily. As for any project, it is important to situate it into the closest typological references, especially when the ambition is to disrupt the given notions. A thought introduced in the textual deconstruction by Derrida and Prenowitz is the archival capacity of the archive as word and symbol. Traditionally, museums firstly physically satisfy "the need to engage with the authentic object"<sup>64</sup>, doing this in a multitude of ready to consume understandings on specific topics. "The current trend is shifting from the former sublime

**63 Derrida and Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.", p. 9**

**64 Hoffmann, Construction and Design Manual: Museums, p.9.**

temple of learning towards a dazzling world of experiences"<sup>65</sup>, accessible for all ages, but not yet all knowledges. Museums and archives are self-sustaining in their obsession to conserve and collect their own activities. These products are displayed in attached exhibitions, visually appealing, and nowadays also entertaining the body through movement. In this sense, these typologies are constantly becoming and self-reflecting. However, in this ambition, they pose an incoherence physically embodied in the storage spaces of the artifacts used for exhibits. Storage spaces have been part of the architectural vocabulary of the temple, as main powerful institute, ever since the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia, China, Egypt, and Greece. The storage spaces were vital for the economy as they often safeguarded loots from expeditions and wars<sup>66</sup>. The collecting of goods, which brought the city or reign power, intersected with the supernatural power of the gods in the temples, making the objects therein act as fetishes, and the virtue of knowledge, making the objects important for future generations' upbringing. Studies and treasures sit side by side. The institutionalization of power, acquired through violence, in transferrers of knowledge carries on being a tradition; its height during the colonial expeditions of Western Europe.

Intersecting this function of the storage as 'bank' is the storage in the domestic context, as a space for safeguarding daily items enabling survival or 'living'. Similar to the archival storage or bank safes, the

**65 Hoffmann, Construction and Design Manual: Museums, p.9.**

**66 Hoffmann**

construction is mainly closed, compact, and heavy. Safety and privacy often go hand in hand, whereas the public function of museums and archives as knowledge institutes is contesting this ancient culture of private storing. Thus, we have the first axis of disruption: the possibility of displaying the underbelly, not only publicly but also equally. This can be a twofold enterprise: equal representation in an individual sense and representation in a post-colonial sense. The individual representation relates to the questions of a museum or archive what to consider worth collecting and keeping. Personal objects or objects sourced from the public are able to be considered of worth, the numerous examples on display and in storages being the testimony of this. An example where personal objects and testimonies constitute the majority of a museum's collection is the Museum of War Childhood in Sarajevo<sup>67</sup>. Here children's objects are displayed outside of their contextual timeline, being a post-war museum, and without their original user. Testimonies and stories help identifying the importance of the objects in the museum. Yet, beyond the personal testimonies the objects and the arrangements themselves evoke memories and narratives of visitors, regardless of their origin and social class. Interesting is thus this transgression, affect, and unfolding of narrative objects can cause and at the same time, the difficulty comes in when the importance of the objects, related to origin, context, or authenticity, is unclear at first sight. Disputes around the collectible worth of an object came to light during the Artists and Archivists roundtable

<sup>67</sup> "War Childhood Museum.", <https://www.warchildhood.org/>





meetup. Trained archivists raised interest in the uncertainty around authenticity when dealing with an archive.

Secondly, we mention the later functions of museums and archives to “underpin the supremacy of the home country”<sup>68</sup>, founded on the possessions acquired from their colonies and fought countries. Colonial relationships with archives and institutes of ‘collections’ are in the current day and age increasingly exposed, not only in the light of the mentioned conquests, but also in the ethical question of accumulation of goods. The possibility of letting go what is guarded jealously is in itself the absolving of the trauma of safeguarding power to an elite group. This links intimately to the observation of knowledge institutions sprouting from an unequal balance in power and accessibility to resources. Simultaneously, the horizontalization of power by interjecting it with movement from all types of Other bodies, leads to the opening up to other types of knowledge. As explained before, the consideration and acceptance of embodied knowledge as fundamental knowledge is paramount for the consideration of a future for any institution. Especially in times where the homogeneity of nations is contested and disrupted by the transnational effects of neoliberalism, modern warfare and interlinked humanitarian crises.

The prospect of equity in displaying goods, connecting to the example of the War Childhood Museum, leads to another question of colonialism: through bringing personal objects into a different context

**68 Hoffmann, Construction and Design Manual: Museums, p.16.**

the physical displacement of goods might lead to biased representations of certain contexts, obscuring original, or native, histories.

Collecting and displaying, the what seems to matter as much as the how. Traditional relations between the subject-object fossils within an archive or museum are travelled through, understood, and transitioned through the spatial sequences. Experience is not only a spectacle aiding the absorption of content and context, it should be a technique to relay new information generated from one's body to the anonymous, displayed artifact. The sequence of horizontal and vertical movements and the activities allowed for in the spaces are important to consider in (literally) changing perspectives and reflecting on matters (fig. 12). In the context of the Gojka Vukovića 11 ruins, the atrophied remnants of war and disrupted normalcy are made contemporary by the ongoing acts of domestication by human, plant, animal, and Other beings. This brings us to challenges on the containment and appearance of the ensemble, explored in the next paragraphs.

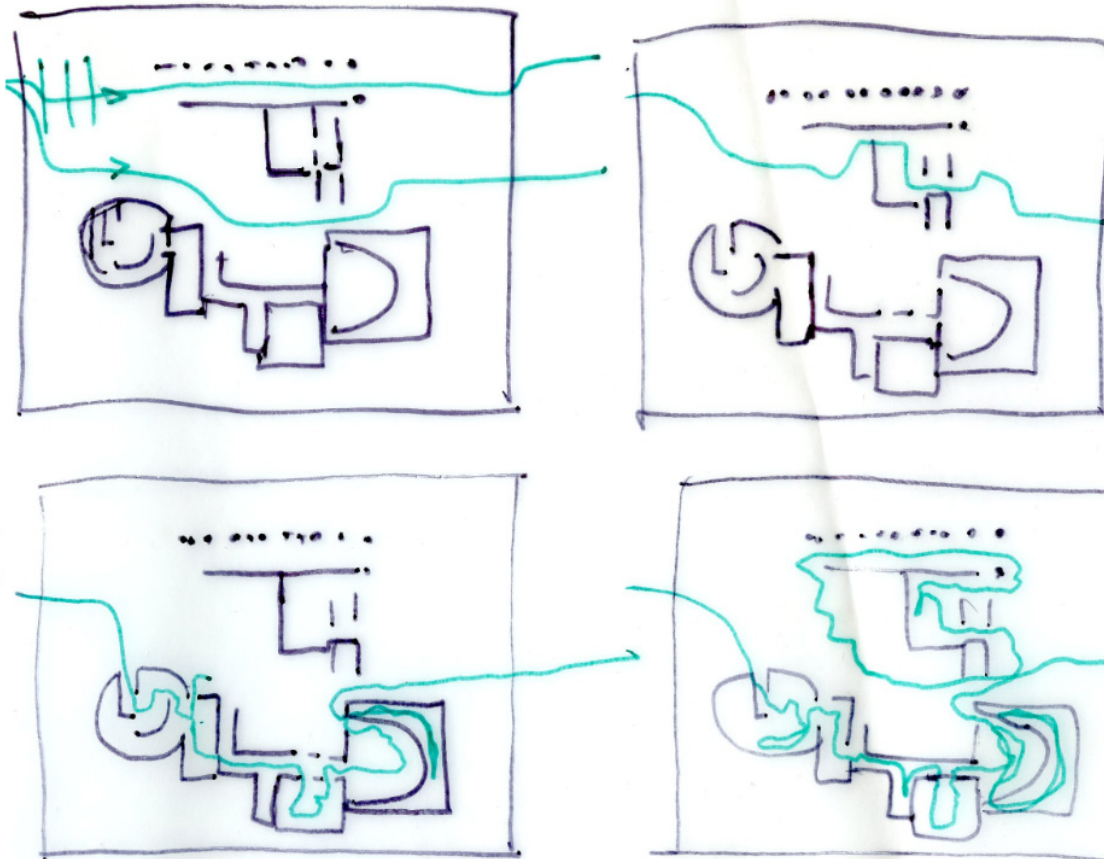
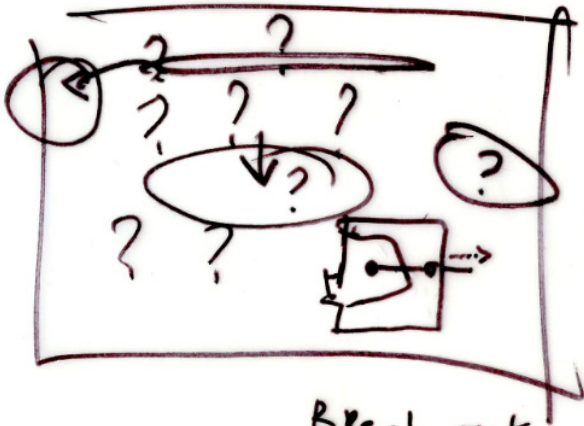
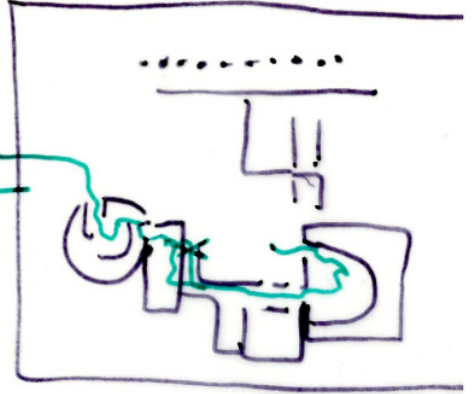
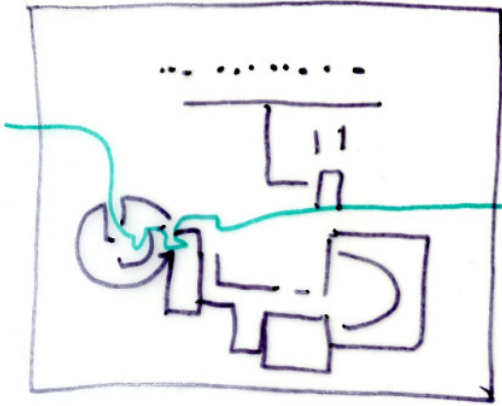


Fig.12 Early movement concepts



Break out  
inside-outside  
movement  
definitions

### 3. Disrupting the notions of spectacle and possession

*“Hegemonic (visual) narratives reiterate. They simplify. They agitate. They create the illusion of consensus”<sup>69</sup>*

A challenge mentioned above is the need to distinguish between the spectacle of viewing, or the display and that which is displayed, and the importance to elucidate structures fossilized in narratives, histories, or archives. The former is an ongoing argument of modern and Modernist tendencies to display, produce, and consume the private, in an endless cycle. This cycle at the same time is hollowing out the private by publicizing it, disturbing it, until particular histories carry the full meaning of that which is forcefully displayed. The display in turn silences all critique, inherent to the consideration of Other stories. Similar to the display of objects in museums behind a looking glass, or archives in closed boxes, they do not engage with any context. They are allowed to float freely in a white-based context or to be stored under dust. “The idea of the “afterlife of archives”<sup>70</sup> provides an interesting amalgam with the accelerating temporary of the private, domestic interior; once inhabited with goods inherited and kept within a family, allowing access into tales of joy and shame.

Seeing and not engaging, putting behind glass, storing under dust, connects to the possessive and obsessive aspect of collecting. During

**69 J. Krameritsch From Commission to Commission in Milevska, On Productive Shame, Reconciliation, and Agency., p. 104  
70 Looiersgracht 60, “Shelf Life – Archive Event II.”**

the Shelf Life performance at Looiersgracht 60, artists Elena Khurtova and Marie Ilse Bourlanges engaged publicly with the intimate archive of the latter's grandfather. In an obsession to understand his unstable place in the world; the traumatic links between the ongoing Second World War and the disappearance of his German spouse, he made maps of the surroundings, linking the patterns seen in the starry skies to the cities in Southern France. All the documents he accumulated and produced were stored away in countless boxes, a secret family history, until chosen to be engaged with again by Khurtova and Bourlanges<sup>71</sup>. Their performance was coupled with an exhibition of broken replicas of the storage boxes, made out of clay, along with maps and other documents that were initially contained inside those boxes. These shards of clay were disintegrated, broken, most were stored behind a vitrine. Some were stacked on the transparent glass, on the level of eager hands. I could not contain my curiosity and broke a piece off, contemplating my action as now part of their performance and archival practice. When I asked the exhibition assistant if the shards of clay were meant to be touched, she seemed to look in slight horror and said "No". Now, this specific event makes clear certain tensions of displaying something of value outside of its context, a traditional protection surface or structure. It is now up for debate whether this object is still considered an element of the archive, exposed to the public. The displaying, making public, going outside of the private domestic possession Derrida described is apparently

71 Looiersgracht 60, "Shelf Life – Archive Event II."

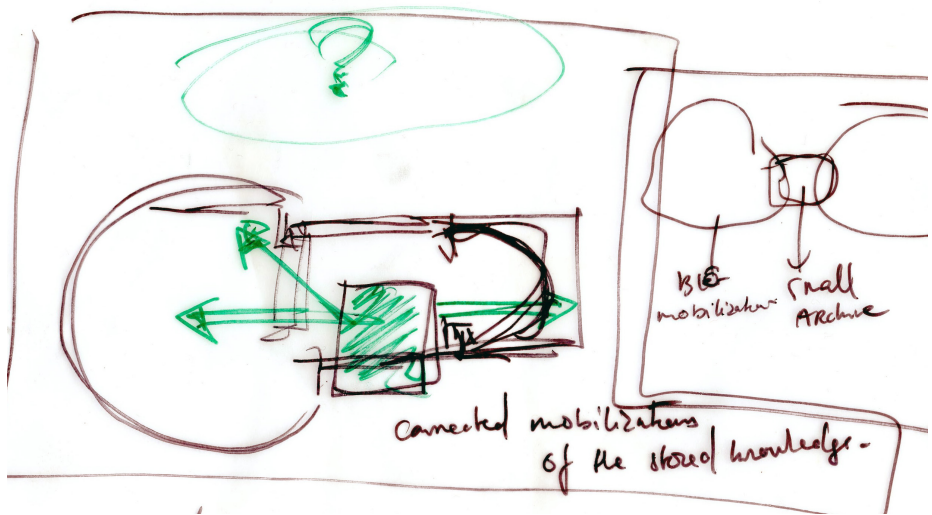


Fig. 13 Inside and outside, unfolding and mobilizing of the archive into an Open Archive

at odds with the meaning or value of an object, desecrating its originality. At the same time, the visual order in the example given above: placing the sacred on top of the vitrine with objects of similar value inside the glass is incoherent with usual visual language and proposes another classification system, or order, within the exhibition. A new distinction has been made between outside and inside, following the limits of private and public or life and afterlife within the archive, as Derrida says "there is no archive [...] without a certain exteriority. No archive without outside"<sup>72</sup>.

72 Derrida and Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.", p. 14

## Embodiment: on the agency of the body and encounter in the location

First impressions matter; in the topics of body memory, body knowledge, and the building of an archive encountered through and with the body. When moving through a certain environment, be it walking, flying, swimming, driving, a body encounters an environment as if it were the first time. This environment consists out of diverse, different layers; histories interject, suppress each other, in a space where the superficial trauma posits itself as a graft in the landscape, a memorial, or a fence in front of a building. First impressions impress our memories in infinitely different ways, where its expression in turn is channeled through mediations. Into our body, onto our body, outside our body. The non-human within the human body and vice versa. Moving through a certain environment ourselves transfers our bodies from being an observer to the observed observing; in for example the act of picking up a stone and carrying it elsewhere. From muscle and skin to the brain, then pen, paper, and screen. To be understood, to condense the complexity into singular knowledge. This opening statement on first impressions contains several musings that will be fleshed out relating to the inhabiting of a body, the movement of a body in the encounter of an environment, the agency given to the body in this encounter, and finally the relationship between body and the unstable environment, resulting in the non-stability of a body, or *unfolding*<sup>73</sup>.

Unfolding has been a major theme in my personal researches, resulting in the statement that deconstructing the expected behavioral pat-

**73 Foucault and Leibniz first started to work with the fold, afterwards expanded by Deleuze. Deleuze links folding to forces of the outside, (self-)domination, subjectivity, and individuation as topologies of these folds.**

tern within a given space is unfolding. This un-stability is the following topic to slowly approach and tackle within this writing, to expose the volatility of human-ness, the strength of accepting and taking position with a body, and allowing for Others to unfold as well within the space you create. We have already mentioned the fluidity of transitioning; by intersecting this possibility of the fossil to unfix and unfold we foray into a precarious position of un-stability, which is inherently political.

From an individual body one encounters the environment during a series of events, moments in time, that start an understanding, which is never fully understood. It is an understanding of the environment which is constantly becoming. These singular events are dependent on and affecting the body it inhabits, constantly reforming it. During my first visit to Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, I chose to mindfully let my body do the encountering, to let it produce and accumulate the knowledge needed in the process of designing. Mostar has been subject-object to the ongoing traumas of war, the “spatial hate”<sup>74</sup> and ongoing erasure it has catalyzed. This ongoing erasure of the past is in open conflict with the constant and particular references to the (distant) past in the form of fixed, larger, historical and cultural narratives. This willfulness of body-encountering has shaped my methodology of embodiment, expanded in the last chapter of this thesis, and exploration in disruptions. These express themselves in relating the

**74 Pilav and De Wit, “Neretva Recollection: Materiality of War, Flowing Memories and Living Archive, Joint Research and Graduation Lab.”**



**Fig. 14** Intersecting my body with the material of the location

intensity of experiences back to moments in time, immortalized or fossilized in the maps I drew of my movements, the writing of stories told to me, or photos taken of various material evidences. This relating and the expression of it is also constantly forming as I re-encounter the moment over and over, in my mind's eye, as a memory, trying to undo and unfold my personal archive of the places visited (fig. 14).

By encountering, the momentary present has once again been made unstable. By moving through and in material environments, my body mediated between the transitional processes evident in nature. My foreign body intersected the traumatic body of the site, walking on its earth. It intersected the debris, the waste, and other found fossils as

they spoke to me. It intersected and collided with inhabitants, seeing the scar where their navel had supposed to be clear, round; instead cut in the basement of a house. As Marks says, my body encountered “sites where cultural difference is fixed but in their very fixity reveal the instability of the encounter”<sup>75</sup>. Movements are the unearthers of meaning, when an item is intensively dislocated, the meaning stretches. The muscle stretches, the skin folds. When the material-item is encountered, the meaning changes. As the encounter-event stretches, material assemblages are created as evidences of the embodied experience. In my further thinking I take these events as part of the embodied archive of a place, where the archive is constantly feeding into itself, becoming as if the encounter is repeated and the site is revisited over and over (and over). This constant becoming in time is important, referred to earlier as a musing, because however I speak about my (first) encounters with the site in Mostar, these moments are not the final definition of the site of item at hand. They are certain events picked out from the historical nexus, observed from a particular point of view. Yet, the danger is to abduct and infer too much, as designers tend to do with their designerly ways of knowing. Essentialism is often paired with phenomenological perceptions and unlinking from one’s own body, tending to repeat the same violent systems of classifications that we aim to deconstruct. Essentialism and losing context are also dangers in the constitution of archives. The aspect of time and grounding in location is crucial to take note of in these

**75** Marks, “Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentary and Materiality.”, p. 227

cases. As suggested in the precedent study essay, there are two forms of time playing a role in moving and mutually interacting through material space: the horizontal and vertical time. The physical movement, placing a body physically elsewhere, through space is guarded by horizontal time, whereas the movement between material layers and events are considered happening in vertical time.

## **1. The body of trauma: some musings on trauma, archiving, and domesticity**

Relating to the spatial conditions to which the body is relegated, like grounds of movement, limits, barriers, and social conditions we can distinguish forms of the body of trauma, important to consider within this project. These are

- the understanding of the body as subject,
- the body as disregarded in knowledge production
- the body in a position of spatial instability, more precisely war,
- And the body as a finite form, mortality, dead bodies, and returning back to life or back to meaning instead of forgetting,

On the first connection, as spoken about the trauma of domesticity specific to the location, we can weave a thread to the violences of the daily, the new forms of the domestic onto our body, curtailing our abilities to embody our environment and unfold into Other objects. This trauma of the body dates back to the impact of regarding the visual as the primary aesthetic and equating the other senses as unstable in providing data, unscientific, and thus dangerous. The intersection of art and science in architecture reflects this issue onto the

spatialization of our designs, where “the dominance of vision and intellectualization of designs [are] manifested in the phenomenon of a disembodied architectural observer”<sup>76</sup>. The visual medium was actively sought throughout my research as a way of documenting from a personal, Other perspective, seeking a contrast with the normal provability of visual information by forming material connections.

In the foreword on architectural exploration through photography in Werner Blaser’s work, Wend Fischer mentions that “his [Blaser’s] eye becomes an organ of inner understanding and its vision, perpetuated in the photograph, can be forcefully mediated to other persons”<sup>77</sup>. This is meant in the way that the artifact of the photograph is transferring the essence of the event embodied. Blaser was an architect who thought in structures and skins through the lens of his eye, seeking frames and formal expression of what he had experienced before. Connecting this to the material method of analogue photography I have been using, the act of photographing has not been a made to convey formal essences, yet fleeting moments of events, or first impressions of material layers encountered. As Marks notes, I have used “photography as an imprint of the world, a trace of material presence”<sup>78</sup>, making my photography more explicit than imprinting visual imagery on film and subsequently, paper.

These events, intersections of my particular body in the unknown

**76** Tieri, Matteis, and Babiloni, “The Enactive Approach to Architectural Experience : A Neurophysiological Perspective on Embodiment , Motivation , and Affordances.”, p. 3

**77** Blaser, *Objective Architecture: Example Skin and Skeleton*, p. 10.

**78** Marks, “Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentary and Materiality.”, p. 228

environment, have resulted in topological experiences and are, until now, inevitably translated onto Cartesian outputs, which are destined for knowledge reproduction in classical sense. With this I mean formats like the earlier shown photographs of encountered objects, interviews with Others, or maps of my routes. This relates to the intention to deepen the statement on changing the roles of visual knowledge and body knowledges, attained from other senses. Where the eye and its sight knowledge has been regarded the most trustworthy agent of our body, since the constitution of the philosophical foundations of our institutions in Ancient Greece, the notion of sight being most important has persisted up until this age. This leads to the harmful pigeonholing of embodiments in the frigid classification of phenomenology. Embodiment in architecture is still relegated to the realms of "late-nineteenth century empathy theories"<sup>79</sup>, connected to archetypical understandings of consciousness and self-consciousness in space. Unfortunately, these archetypes are Man based, gazing upon bodies with a dominant, possessive intent. As Pallasmaa says:

*in our culture, intelligence, emotions and embodied intuitions continue to be seen as separate categories. The body is regarded as a medium of identity as well as social and sexual appeal, but neglected as the ground of embodied existence and silent knowledge, or the full understanding of the human condition<sup>80</sup>.*

**79** Tieri, Matteis, and Babiloni, "The Enactive Approach to Architectural Experience : A Neurophysiological Perspective on Embodiment , Motivation , and Affordances.", p. 3

**80** Pallasmaa, "Embodied and Existential Wisdom in Architecture : The Thinking Hand.", p.1

Smell, hearing, taste, or touch transmitted by various organs are fetishized and surpassed by the eye; where beauty is in the eye of its beholder. At the same time, the eye is jailing us in a hygienic pan-opticon, accelerated by the push for the domestic to become public and the public domestic in modern architecture. Colomina explains in *Domesticity at War* that the fully glazed facades replacing timber and brick opened up the gaze from the outside turning the skin into trauma, where debris and clutter, evidences of daily life, are not visually appetite and thus erased. This trauma of (architectural) bone and muscle not being allowed to be shown through skin links back to the denial of sensory knowledge, or body knowledge. By considering the sensory information as valid proof and one of the most important starting points of this research, along the actuality of layers present, we tread on unstable territory. As Marks says:

*Nonvisual, or nonaudiovisual, sensory knowledge has tended to be dismissed by major world philosophies, and feminist thought is one area that has defended the importance of these senses as sources of knowledge and identity*<sup>81</sup>.

Then going beyond the consideration of the feminine body in the equation of my investigation, it is too the agency given to all bodies observed and interacted with, by the meaning of touch and other sensation. Again, we quote Marks when paralleling the scientifically

**81** Marks, "Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentarity and Materiality.", p. 224

unnatural importance given to the material in this precedent research to the instating of 'fetishism', as "the sort of practice that invested lifelike powers in objects themselves, powers attained through physical contact"<sup>82</sup>. The objects store knowledge from engagement and transfer knowledge by engagement, unearthed by movement.

*"A person enters into new, sometimes unexpected relationships with other objects, organisms and ecosystems that are filled with their earlier histories. The knowledge generated by these encounters is both an activity and a process, a constant agreement to and negotiation of happenings"<sup>83</sup>.*

The various senses and pre-individual, or pre-natal, memories of the body inevitably feed into our multitude of consciousnesses, going against the persistence of erasure through newly formed bonds. Relating to the point of the body of trauma in a context of war and death, the pre-individual<sup>84</sup> muscle or skin memory carry along traumatic events from generation to generation, its memory lasting longer than the initial grafts. The skin is too the largest human organ, transmitting a variety of senses by affording a surface, or topology, for these. This topology is subject to change, process, and following certain processes, mortality. Objects and bodies are mortal, suffocating under the weight of time, on the verge of being forgotten; the "pathos of decontextualized objects"<sup>85</sup>. Connecting the power an

82 Marks, "Fetishes and Fossils: Notes on Documentary and Materiality.", p. 225

83 Majewski, *How to Talk with Birds, Trees, Fish, Snakes, Bulls and Lions.*, p. 6 the individual and the fold.

84 As used by the French philosopher Gilbert Simondon in relation to individuation, which again can be connected to Deleuze's notion of the individual and the fold.

85 Darms, "Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration.", p. 148

object can contain to become alive or even immortal to the object as revived or immortal body, we have the following example:

*A jacket at a flea market is like a “dead person,” because it has no story; by buying and wearing that jacket – and thus by “loving it” – Boltanski believes he brings that jacket back to life<sup>86</sup>.*

The importance of (archival) context, story, narrative, meaning is once again highlighted, but made fuzzy by the connection to emotional affective relationships between bodies and objects; something which is not easy to convey within an institutional setting. Bringing back to life is indeed a heavy burden to carry in terms of limits to the space such an object might take when reclaiming position of life. Immortality in addition breaks the bond with the temporary, the natural cause of life and death, the place given to us all, and has the danger of becoming exactly this fossilized narrative. The (design) question is thus how to allow for such affective connections to happen, to give an object and its context or interpretation slightly more screen time, without violating the natural course of time. We can connect this realization to the unfolding, disruption, and subversion of institutional or visual knowledge by introducing these knowledges into our static, built environment. In the theory adjoining the precedent study earlier done, and the previous chapter on archiving the daily trauma, this specific unfolding power of the domestic object in static environments

**86 Darms, “Study in Documents The Archival Object : A Memoir of Disintegration.”, p. 148**

like archives is fleshed out. This static environment is in the following paragraph connected to the physical realm of architecture in the reality that it is too one dictating a container, which could be unfixed through sense and imagination hidden in the fossil.

## **2. Unfixing bodies, intersections, and architectural containments**

*“To limit our thinking of the future of the human to its current form is limiting, and rooted in traditionalism<sup>87</sup>.”*

This quote from researcher and artist Miriam Simun on her project *I want to Become a Cephalopod* immediately exposes the ethical question and intention of assuming a form as container on embodiment. A question that I ask myself repeatedly as my intention in this architectural project develops; and again, what kind of architecture can imagine itself beyond stability of its container, without floating out of its context? To question one's stability is to question one's essence at any given time. As the topography changes, the way one moves or is contained is interrupted, broken through. New paths have to be learned, earthed in the material layers of the surroundings. Architecture has a difficulty in allowing for instability or disruption. During war this instability is a negative, in times of forced stability this affordance

**87** Simun, *“I Want to Become a Cephalopod.”*

to be unstable is only raising the architecture's resilience. Many disruptions have happened during wartime in Mostar, where instability of the body has been a violent interruption of the daily rather than an act of freedom. The choice of bodies to inhabit or to target was one that differed from the position within the sieged city; civilian or soldier. This forced perspective turned the body into a container of trauma itself, reverting back to immobilizing, primitive reactions.

Seeking stability postwar has resulted, like Lebbeus Woods described, in erasure and an urge to forget. However, one should be careful about the disguised stability of transparent, modular architecture used often as hybrid war machines, eradicating vernacular ways on the go. To be able to adjust to unfolding uncertainty is to be able to account for life, lifetimes, pasts, presents, futures, and all its events. And the radicality is to see architecture as a tool to question seemingly definite containers or answers to the question of the human relationship to the world or outer world. As Beatriz Colomina says, "if the human is a question mark, design is the way that question is engaged"<sup>88</sup>. On site, the mode of architectural fixity is already questioned, as explained previously, due to the fact that the settlement is in a state of ruin, more fluid than fixed. This leaves us a natural topology to be speculated upon along the openness whether it is truly either an architectural project, a domestic site of safety, or rather an archive, a collection of objects. Choosing from the personal observations made,

88 Colomina and Wigley, *Are We Human?*, p. 5

the architecture is rather a shelter, an archive, allowing for objects to transfer knowledge in movement, storage, and the intensities between these two fluid-fixed states.

### **3. The agency of the body in an unstable context: archive, recorder, or receiver?**

*I take my body as an archive in conversation with other bodies that lived and survived the war (or not). I am not assuming or pretending to know what other bodies have been living and archiving, but I am trying to listen and observe their traumatic experiences relying on live conversations, photos from the war, documentary films archives and other information<sup>89</sup>.*

*I see my body as a recorder<sup>90</sup>.*

Both quotes above carry a quality of observing, softness, even submission in their acts of immersion in ecologies, or encounters. How can we explore this tension between relaying information, carrying information, and remaining unassuming, not pretending? Especially when the environment is affecting the body in such a way that it remains hard to not spill own trauma over to the location and vice versa. These spillages, blurring of zones, dichotomies, intersections of frames – which we have explored through Bernard Cache and Gilles

**89** Pilav, "Un-Making Image Session #7: Transitional Archives of War: The Body-the River-Architectures-...", p. 3

**90** Noorani, "Unfolding Conflicted Heritage – Embodiment as Archival Practice.", said during the roundtable discussion

Deleuze – are explained by Manuel De Landa as

*[...] zones of intensity [...] not bounded by spatio-temporal frontiers but by intensive borderlines, [...] points which define abrupt transitions in the state of the creatures inhabiting those zones*<sup>91</sup>

By deconstructing an affective environment as a series of intense encounters, as attempted in the beginning of this chapter, we can theorize that the intensities can be captured as singular, “tangible, indeed graphic, entities”<sup>92</sup> through the body, or embodiment. In these encounters, interaction between mediums is what constitutes the agency of the body as receiving not imposing matter; the greater the difference between two points of interaction, the greater the attributed value it seems.

Within these intense encounters, the actualization or individuation of a certain moment within the physical matter is enabled, as were it an imprint in time itself. As De Landa says “the role of the philosopher and the artist is precisely to reveal this other world, these intensive noumena [existing outside of human perception] behind the extensive phenomena”<sup>93</sup>. I might add that this is also the role of the architect up until a certain point, especially within such a project as this in Mo-star; in the form of recording and displaying through the built.

91 De Landa, “Extensive Borderlines and Intensive Borderlines.”, p. 10

92 De Landa., p. 10

93 De Landa., p. 10

## Conclusion - Translating the matter: tools and spaces in between the unstable context of trauma

*"We start from the premise that architecture can be described as a designed interaction between life and form"<sup>94</sup>.*

Below I wrap up the thoughts entertained before, which originated in the theory accompanying the precedent studies. The theories on archiving in unstable contexts like post-war Mostar, using catalogs as a method to encounter a new location, and the first affirmation of the value to explore physically the interaction of bodies, objects, and object assemblages within the spaces of the housing settlement. As outlined in the previous chapter, when materializing the theories and strategies as masses, tools, and spaces, we connect the tense position of the archivist in relationship to the object and context more intimately with the possible positions of the architect, artist, or even visitor and user.

The concepts discussed in the previous chapters are some the architecture conceptualized on paper for this project strives to embody, translating them into form and matter, tools and objects to engage with. These musings turned statements are political in the sense that it takes position in considering Other histories as valuable in teaching us possible futures, regardless whether these lead to reconciliation or remembrance. In some cases, the fossils are unable to speak anymore, where imagination has the task to offer space for this silence. In all cases, I am proposing a less invasive and exploitative attitude

**94 Tieri, Matteis, and Babiloni, "The Enactive Approach to Architectural Experience : A Neurophysiological Perspective on Embodiment , Motivation , and Affordances.", p. 3**





towards the material our environment has to offer; bodies, objects, fossils, architecture, and the space mediating them. This thought on architecture can be linked to Woods' critical drawings and his blog entries, where mirroring an archive, he documented his thoughts into the space of the electronic<sup>95</sup>. He thought about his architecture criticism as proposing an outsider architecture as he tried to break with the canonical, relating back to the post-war narratives I encountered in Mostar. In relation to making such principles physical, Woods notes that

*Intention is important, even at the smallest scale, and the intention in Sarajevo was to consciously reshape its world, turning ruins and battered remnants into a new kind of architecture [...] <sup>96</sup>.*

The sentiment Woods gives us, along with his earlier quotes within this thesis, is that of construction as deconstruction outside reconstruction. It is one of consideration of each battered object, not just an assemblage of debris, but a conscious curation; an archival practice.

The thoughts on bodies and objects have been leading us to ground our unfolded perspectives on the objects we normally consider Others and the narratives they can give, gift, to us to disrupt and understand deeper. These objects are in the theories described above part

**95 Jacobsen, "Preface" in Woods, Slow Manifesto: Lebbeus Woods Blog.**

**96 Woods, WAR AND ARCHITECTURE: The Sarajevo window in Woods, Slow Manifesto: Lebbeus Woods Blog..**

of a material, physical archive, embodied in its nature, and highly specific to the site. The architectural space which mediates this transferred knowledge from the layers is correlated, in the case of Gojka Vukovića 11, with the trauma of interrupted domesticity throughout the years. The interior-exterior space relationships have changed often and greatly, becoming a more complicated layering as time passed. These layers of jeopardized private through the observed, patrolled public are woven together with the individualized, capitalized public. The violence of the visual the architecture presents could be countered by offering the value of tools and surfaces; storages, niches, interiors; an example given in Pilav's material mediations. The architect's responsibility in creating the *missing masses*<sup>97</sup> is important to consider in every architectural project interacting between the boundary of the social and the individual, introducing new (technological) interfaces to interact with.

The interior and exterior comprising the missing masses should thus to not only point to the intended transformation, but also to qualities of production, reflection, preservation, and acceleration. At the same time this value of the interior of a domicile or a city can be speculated upon from the perspective of the interior life of an archive or private life within a domicile<sup>98</sup>, keeping in mind the questions engaged on the unstable context of the object or archive. What happens on the shelves, in the boxes as remnants of pasts contained? What can

**97 Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts."**

**98 Derrida and Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression."**

we do to make these interiors accessible, open, fluid, for movement to take place and the object to work its embodied, embedded, knowledge?

To let the space mediate these nuances is partially to give enough openness, flexibility, and areas of friction. These are intended to be spaces for intensity, either storing or moving objects, or spaces for contemplation, relief, and intimate reflection. Offering these two components and all the shades in between is to mirror the shades of public and private offered at the site. As Lebbeus Woods said “‘conceptualists’ can make a contribution to reconstruction on the level of principle”<sup>99</sup>, so to abstract and guide these dueling principles space and the components within is needed. The beginning of this research led to the discerning of material layers, in which fossils played a role, unearthed by movements. These layers, or the movement within them, is to be made possible by disruptions, such as cutting or shuffling – addressed in the theory accompanying the precedent studies. This shuffling of layers is a continuous, ongoing, process, where only moments can be captured, to be fed back into the archive of the place. Not only unfixed objects are part of the material layers, also interior spaces, ornaments and niches, or fixed, fossilized walls and debris are part of it.. Inhabitation should be offered for past, current, and future bodies; as remediation of a complex site should not be violent and exclusive to the fossils remaining. The user base of the

**99 Woods, “WAR AND ARCHITECTURE: Three Principles.”**

intervention surrounding the site, is one conflicted between the touristic character of the neighborhood and the domestic one, of people living there or more ambiguously, renting out rooms to the tourist. The notion of the home is again underlined, as such that the programme should offer a low barrier, homely sense of space, sheltering and safeguarding and while doing this, offering the space for transitioning perceptions.

The programme is thus divided in outside spaces working together with the in-between wall and niche spaces as continuations of each other's interiors, interacting with each other. Within these interiors, niches or direct contexts are offered for the objects to speak their Other perspectives, being sourced from the catalog and again abstracted to possibilities which they can inhabit. Inhabitation on this site should be free, unconstrained, countering the strict institutional need to categorize and catalog every movement an object or a body makes within its perimeter. The programme also offers a direct confrontation with the lack of communal, domestic space in the public neighborhood, only to be found in cafes here and there such as Çardak. Architecturally, the concepts of openness and sheltering, or mobilizing and keeping, is translated into transparent and enclosed materials.

In order to let the objects narrate, the offered programme accelerates the mobilizing of these objects through movement and working with, instead of working around or any other unequal exploitation; spatialized in a continuous ground floor, staircases used for the vertical movements, and a dedicated workshop, where stories are activated by transformation, but also this precarious position of the object is

again highlighted. This transformation is rooted in the techniques offered, explored, and hopefully created as tools and techniques are developed to engage further with the narratives embodied. The new-found relationship with objects and the initial technologies embodied in them, is resurrected by the act of working with and through the material. As Simondon said:

*Culture [...] has two contradictory attitudes toward technical objects: on the one hand, it treats them as pure devoid of true signification, and assemblages of matter, merely presenting a utility. On the other hand, it supposes that these objects are also robots and that they are animated by hostile toward man, or that intentions they represent a permanent danger of aggression and insurrection against him<sup>100</sup>.*

The workshop is small and relatively low in technologies offered, reverting back to the basic methods of apprenticeship, or the human as tool bearer, working with the materials offered in the surrounding. It also leaves room to transform the objects into new bearers of histories, to be kept in the intervention or taken back to the respective origin. This relaxedness of production is also a countering of the economic value given to produced goods, to be possessions, irrespective of their material histories. The second aspect of the domestic to be archived and archive to be domesticized is the living room area, furnished as the elevated, intermediate level between open archive and

**100 Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technological Objects.*, p.17**

enclosed study or storing archive outlined below. This intermediate level is on the one hand accessible via stairs and a lift, but also continuously visible on the site and the road side (southwest direction), reaching its gaze outward through large windows to the street. This is a provocation of the sheltered character of the site seen from the topography and housing on the road side. The living room is however not visible from the terrace side, still retaining an exclusive character from that direction. Finally, the intervention is characterized by the storing, the archiving, and the disruptions of the notions connected with archiving, binding these with the domestic perspective of keeping and possessing objects. The archive is when directly confronted open, throughout the premise there is space for movement, storage, taking out and putting in, following the path the object directs us. Some niches are too small, others too big, thus the form or body of the object plays a large role in contemplating the material space. At the heart, but also sheltered away deeper into the intervention, we find the vault-like archetype of archive, yet fashioned with a rich and lively, domestic interior space. Here the goods kept are not of monetary value, but of narrating value, offering a contrast between the actual shelf life of home appliances, souvenirs, disposed trinkets and the life offered in the intervention.

The above interpretations form an ongoing reflection on the physicalizing of the ideas fleshed out; theory and design have gone hand in hand in my approach in Mostar. The chapters before this momentary conclusion have dealt with the questions what kind of life and what kind of form we could address in the matters of transitioning trauma and fixed narratives. The chapter after this brief conclusion

dives deeper into the phasing and methods used within these specific phases as working packages, where I conclude with two appendixes of the reflection on this process of writing and designing and small handful of sketches elaborating some ideas in forms, programme, and technique which are present in my design as of now.









## Methodology

This final chapter serves as an elaboration of the *research approach* part in the reflection on design and theoretical process (see: Appendix I). Here I attempt to elucidate my working methodologies that have led to observations, statements, design options, and conclusions. Of course these methods are often inspired by references; where applicable sources are mentioned.

### **Before P1: Research methods, Primary Research (Precedent Study research**

#### *Desktop Research*

This search online began with the sourcing of existing maps of location and terrain. The maps of the location ranged from topographical to get a grip on the specific demands of the location, such as the flow of the river and the varying heights, to maps highlighting the boundaries and conflict in the context. Next to the sourcing of maps, I looked for news articles or any other writing detailing the events during and after war. Here I saw that most articles retold stories of intense rupture, focused around the collapse of the Stari Most, reconciliation during peace time, and the continuation of the 'daily'. This initiated immediately the first ethical issue of what narrative to tell, or even how to consider these precarious topics of narrative and identity within the fractured character of Mostar. Images were sought to visualize these dynamics. Few self-organized archives were found online with photos of daily life before, after, and during war.

## *Collage*

From the photos found in archives I made collages to understand the binaries in the context better. It also helped me to visualize the actors, or bodies, I wanted to engage with. At this point, I also wanted to steer my precedent research to one involving photo as narrating medium.

## *Mapping*

From the data acquired in the Secondary Research, we within the studio worked together to make some basic maps. These maps were useful for the field research.

## *Literature Study*

This method helped me to shape my fascination to an initial focus to an individual research question and aim tailored to my areas of theoretical interest. In the beginning, my interest was heavily focused on the notions of frame and topography as mediation between points in the landscape, derived from Bernard Cache<sup>1</sup>. This I translated to the framing of narrative, correlating with certain aspects within the landscape, such as violent disruptions. The notions of frame extended also in the usage of photography, framing objects and views, turning them into subjects. Frames could collide, transfigure, and objects within hybridize. I was especially interested in the dynamic aspects of such a frame within a specific time. Other literature consulted were mostly on the topics of post-war remediation, such as Arna Mačkić's

**1** Cache, *Earth Moves*.

Mortal Cities and Esther Charlesworth's *Divided Cities: Belfast, Beirut, Jerusalem, Mostar, and Nicosia (The City in the Twenty-First Century)* with a foreword by Lebbeus Woods, who proved important a bit later in my research.

## **Before P1: Field research**

### Mapping

This method was inspired by the lecture on walking and mapping before the field trip, as a way to relate to a new context without relying on too much research. This I found very interesting and outside of the walks with the group, I decided to use this as a research method of my own. The first few walks were done without map, or *Andare a Zonzo*, to let myself immerse in Mostar. What I noticed was the shift in mood when walking East to West, in the built environment, and details like monuments and shops. Walking was essential to know the surroundings, the pattern of the streets, and to investigate the embodiments as pace, accessibility, and encountered bodies. It was also a tool to navigate through the surroundings within the explicit form of my own body, allowing me to transgress from the Other to a part of the ecology.

The walks later on were tracked, just to be sure, on both mobile tracking apps and drawn maps with notes. At points of interest, I have taken photos. Together, these notes, photos, and maps would fuel the *Catalog of a Space* along with the found literature and interviews.

## Photography

Another medium used was photography on film with my analog camera. Taking pictures on a format like film allows me to focus more on the subject in the lens, which can serve as explicit question towards the context or form of resistance. The style I used laid somewhere in between documentary photography of the everyday and deadpan shots of 'things-to-be-known'<sup>2</sup>.

## Desktop Research

Mostly used in Mostar to search and explain seen phenomena and objects, such as plants, the tides of the river, certain moments in history that needed more detail. The latter I did every time after walking with our local tutors Damir and Matija, or also when going into these strange, specific 'war experiences' like the Museum Of War And Genocide Victims. It also helped in translating the literature in Bosnian, to also extract written experiences from those.

## Literature Study

During my first coffee in café Djet-Set, somewhere halfway in the first week, I encountered a monograph on Mostar seen through works of art and poetry from Bosnian artists and those who are now part of the Bosnian diaspora. These dreamlike, vivid insights in additional narratives triggered an Aha-moment and caused me to depart from a slightly different angle, which is the relationship of my body (and other encountered bodies), the landscape/site, and the contained

**2 Manning and Massumi, A Thought in The Act.**

narratives in the depicted material of the environment.

Additional literature was found in the Centar Za Mir, the Peace Archive, an independent institute in Mostar. Here among the various war photos, recordings of the Yugoslavia Tribunal, and books on Bosnian history and archeology, I found poetry and prose collections. This indicated even stronger that the parts of important culture transcended the fixed war narratives and flowed into the realms of personal storytelling. The conditions in and around Centar Za Mir also inspired me to look further into archiving practices and the ephemeral aspects of containing and translating the past for the future.

### Writing/Interviewing

In my research, there is a blur between the casual conversations I have been part of and more steered interviews. This has often been due to the domestic settings these conversations have been taking place in, allowing for intense expressions of happiness, sadness, and anger.

One of the customs of hospitality I had encountered was the readiness of inviting people over to drink coffee, or another drink, along with some food. This helped me to ease better into my environment and have a more domestic, intimate setting for some interviews I had done. Places included, but not limited to, café Çardak, café Djet-Set, café Book, Sadrvan, Kajtaz, an orchard near Baščine, and Jasminka's House on ulica Hadžajlića (named after her great grandfather).

Inspired by the found poetry, I had attempted to extract the key words used to define certain aspects in the landscape with embodiments,

such as the description of the Neretva river as a greenblue emerald. These keywords in turn I attempted to use in poems I would write while walking or sitting in places to rest. At the same time, I started to write bits of theory into what would become my precedent study essay.

## **P1: Condensing information and P1 presentation**

### Desktop Research

Complementing the information sourced during the field trip. Sometimes additional data was needed to make graphs.

### Collage

Following the previous round of collages, I tried to mesh the photos I had made with archival images found in the Centar Za Mir. Here I implicitly started looking deeper into the encountered embodiments and intensities.

### Mapping

The basic maps made before the field trip were now elaborated and grouped into scales and themes. Worked with Jonas on maps of accessibility of the river and pre-war, wartime, and postwar programme along the Neretva, as these were the most important topics for us concerning the perception of the river. Adding to this, I made a map with the poetry key words sourced from the field research.

## Literature Study

Reading further into Cache, I picked up Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, where the notion of assemblage became interesting to me. My points of view became intensely interwoven with the used literature and my search to understand the encounters made and physical or mental absence of elements through war/post-war erasure. At this point, I connected the archival practice (of Centar Za Mir) to assemblages of objects into material assemblages. These materials were evidences and could perhaps be used for other storytelling. The concept of framing became sequencing, as ways to move through an environment and experience or embody. For these keywords, I read into supporting literature.

## Writing

Ongoing writing of concept outlines, theory essay, and extracting the main points in these for my P1 presentation.

## Atlas

The atlas medium was taken on by our studio to contemplate ways of seeing the location, after the P1 presentation and the produced maps. Here we were still figuring out entry points.

## **Between P1 and P2: Finalizing precedent studies, making the Catalog, ideas on transforming, mobilizing, and unfolding, and P2**

### Desktop Research

This research focused in high tempo on the retrieval of additional archival material to support my conclusions, as well as short search into Ottoman housing plans, as I tried to put the typological history of the Gojka Vukovića settlement into perspective. Additional to these studies I did a study into typologies of museums and the routing within to connect to the ideas I had on mobilization.

### Catalog

To conclude the precedent study, I was still looking for a coherent format that would tell about my fascination of the encountered materials from the site, my interest in archival practices, and the need I felt of disrupting by inserting bodies. Here the second dilemma came at hand, how to represent information of a place in a coherent manner, without exclusion. The aspect of inclusion in institutes, like an archive, was an ethical dilemma, paralleling discussions I had outside studio with working groups in the university or at my job. I tried thinking in archive boxes, with files and folders, and I tried several versions of the Catalog.

These versions tried to seek out the importance of the keyword in the positioning of subject in the archive. Again, parallel to my research in

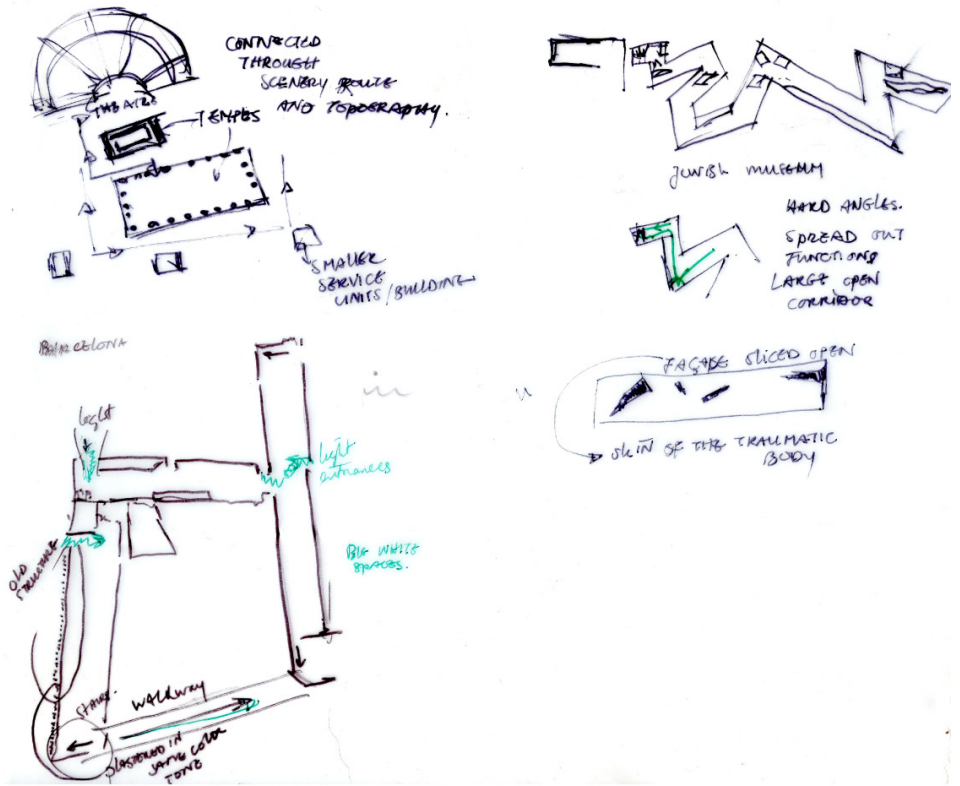


Fig.13 Typological studies

MSc 2, the naming system proved an important third dilemma connecting to the question of inclusion. In the beginning, it was a rather rigid representation going from A-Z, in later stages going to more

ambiguous keywords, and eventually to the coupling of data as naming system and shuffling of subjects/objects in the document.

This Catalog made me realize the importance of intersections of various media in encountering the archive of a place. The action of shuffling the contents was a movement destabilizing and ultimately transitioning the content. This was an important realization, which I fed back into the design.

### Mapping

I reworked the maps Jonas and I made into digital forms I could use for the precedent study Catalog. Here I also included the word maps. However, now we also had to work towards a project proposal, which meant we needed to represent the chosen site on several scales ranging from urban to architectural. Here the urban scale was also analyzed in different themes, such as building height, material, building age, and typology.

### Cutting

A new method I explored briefly in this form, was cutting. After I started reading on queering topologies, transitioning, and the advice was given to break through the narratives of borders, I decided to literally cut. Cutting the collages I made, cutting the maps I had printed. At some point, I felt stuck in the consideration of cutting as a method

to intervene, mainly because it was unclear to me which connections I would draw. Later, the act of cutting would find its way to sections and to the act of speculative storylines, connecting materials through which was cut into spaces.

The sections were important to give a sense of the varying heights within the site, as my project is one of the few with such erratic changes in topography. While drawing, it was clear that the section would be an important medium to understand my project; the hill and terrace in elevations obscure the smaller spots that I wanted to show. Another type of cut was the drawing of axonometric diagrams. Axo's in particular was important to show the movements possible within the site, through the territory, within the ruins. Movement became an important mediator and act of transitioning through the findings in the Catalog.

### Photography

Photography at this stage, as well as after P2, served as a constant reflection and analyzation tool of the materials in the location. It helps to act as a reminder of the initial questions asked when shooting the film and as a tool to rediscover elements for design; such as the location and the niches present in the walls. In the P2 presentation, photos acted as visual support to the elements I was considering for the design and as representation of the material archive that I was proposing.

### Writing

The research essay for the precedent studies was finalized. Here eventually ethical dilemmas within the process of archiving and narrating found a place of reflection, as well as the introduction of keywords as transitioning. These keywords were transferred to the Lexicon, created to give definition on the go. The lexicon expanded with embodiment as a keyword to give sense and place to the encounters and importance I had given to them. The archive now was an embodied one, deriving from material interaction, rooting it further in the location. The research essay became an important basis for my Main Book, with theories to depart from, sharpen, discard, and reflect upon.

### Literature Study

Started to expand from the assembling in Deleuze and Guattari to notions of transitioning, or material transformations. Here, I drew back on some literature on queering architecture, which I used for the Research Methods course<sup>3</sup>. The feedback given during this process was to account for the agency of the words I was choosing for my Lexicon. If transitioning or disrupting or considering Others, which and what?

I was also reading on archives, the process of archiving, and the act of art to disrupt archives. In Mostar, performance art seemed to be quite prevalent, however the performances were mostly staged in reaction to the separation and presence of the Stari Most.

**3 Gorny and Van den Heuvel, "Trans-Bodies / Queering Spaces."**

## Atlas

Developing my theme for atlas, I specifically wanted to connect it to my personal research. After a seminar on rivers, the concept of river dynamics inspired me; washload, flows, and possible stories of objects while crossing boundaries and expanding ecologies . The Atlas focused itself more around ruin and debris, allowing for an intense material approach.

## Solo Excursions

To understand the mediation between art and archives better, I decided to attend the Artists+Archives meetup 2 at ARIAS, Amsterdam, as well as the Speculative Design Archive debate *Performing the Data Drive*, at the Nieuwe Instituut. In Amsterdam one particular project was quite inspiring, of artist Elise 't Hart and her Instituut voor huisgeluid, or Institute of Domestic Sounds, because of the clarity of the scope and the importance of such seemingly insignificant sensations, like a clock ticking, in the perception of a space. Contrasting, the archivists presented a willingness to engage with artistic explorations, but also signified archives as the deposits of papers produced by persons or organizations.

In Rotterdam, Bethany Nowviskie's talk on the necessity to disrupt archives was right up my alley of interest. Her mentioning of Afrofuturism was very clarifying and pushed me into a direction of considering material elements of the past informing the present and future even more<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Nowviskie, "Performing The Data Drive."

## **Between P2 and P3: Focusing the concept more on site specificity, elaboration on movements, reconsidering the body of trauma, and P3**

### Catalog

Drawing back to the catalog made first, the photos taken, and the drawn axonometries, I started to compile a catalog of materials, or possibilities for intervention to back up certain decisions.

### Model Making

In this period, I made a few form studies, to determine the validity of the interventions through my statement that interventions should not erase the material archive, but add to it. Proportion and sight lines were important, as well as first ideas on materialization and its contrast between existing and new intervention.

I was invited to investigate the body of trauma further, which I did through diagrams paralleling the body to the building, and later on the archive. This body was concludingly made up out of bone, muscle, and skin, as fossil and its mobilizations. From this theory an abstract model was made, where I would cut up various anatomical drawings (of various species) and overlay them spatially to define core areas for programme. Cutting, as done before P2, now recycled itself in a different form.

### Writing

Used as ongoing process of reflection, this time more focused on em-

bodiment and notion of body in architectural design. Now, the writing has become more lucid, exploring the disruption of body knowledge in academic writing. This appeared in the cutting and weaving of different narratives into the main booklet. Physically, the formats of Beatriz Colomina's *Domesticity at War* and Annemarie Mol *The Body Multiple* were explored.

Within the design, writing as method to focus embodiments, as often done in literature was also researched. This ended up in a freeform collage poem, attributing various sensations from domestic disruption to physical spaces. The two main groups were discomfort/comfort or relief/hiding. In terms of Building Technology, Lebbeus Woods provided an inspiring take on post-war restoration.

## Atlas

Physical places of encounter became important in my contribution for the Atlas, as I was also grounding the embodiments in my studio design. Interactions of different weight represented in the intensity of a comic panel, unfolding timelines and diving into another understanding of the scale continuum.

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## On this appendix

Every project, every idea, has its becoming. Ups and downs, back and forth, revisiting concepts suggested in the very beginning, leading their way back to the design. Especially this one-year long project has been one of many backs and forth, where I had to push and pitch my concept; mainly to myself, reminding myself how important this embodiment of relationships could be. It is thus interesting to reflect upon and revisit the many homes of thought and practice I called my own in this period. This appendix, a light version of a logbook, a linear guide of non-linearity, invites to read on a process of encounters with a multitude of bodies and thoughts. It mediates the needed reflections and statements to qualify within an institutional, academic framework with the aims and goals envisioned for this project; between architecture, theory, and encompassing intuition. This reflection on the process connecting to my graduation topic gives insight to the:

*Why of the chosen research topic;*

*Why of the working methods I have used, and the envisioned relevance in various fields of practice;*

*Which methods have helped me so far;*

*Which ethical issues and dilemmas of designing for the body of trauma;*

*Which feedback was given by my tutors and the immersion of these in the project;*

*How they are represented in the stage I am at currently;*

*What the next steps are within the final graduation period.*

This reflection is positioned within the constellation of personal and societal urgencies, such as the need to push boundaries on the understanding of institutions, the immersion of different knowledges within academia, and the growing necessity to mediate (war) trauma in more caring and open ways. These urgencies reflect upon the Architecture practiced or positioned within. They form interesting intersections, leading to reconsiderations of scientific frameworks rather than adopting set standards. At the same time, this progress of engaging with boundaries and traumas on different levels have presented ethical issues in various moments.

In this appendix, we thus depart from the necessity behind the themes I explored in theory and design, to the methodologies explored forming themselves into working packages, towards the design and inclusion of feedback and revisions in different stages.

## Relation of graduation topic with programme and personal urgencies

There is currently a pressing urgency in the field of Architecture to emphasize Other ways of thinking, beyond given binaries and exclusions, engaging with rapidly changing societal dynamics; typically picked up later by academic institutions. Symptoms of neoliberal and discriminative agendas seep through every aspect of our work as architects, such as displacement of communities through violence on different scales, the rising land prices through speculation and imposed tourism, the inaccessibility of resources through designed discriminations, and the forceful adaptation of cultures to an overpowering cultural and built erasure. Tracking these wider social problematics to threads acknowledged on a professional, academic, and scientific scale is not only a bare necessity, it is expected from our privileged positions as those able to act on our freedom<sup>1</sup>.

Parallel to these urgencies on a wider scale, I draw my personal urgencies of narrating non-normative bodies, transitioning traumas, disrupting binary conditions, and unfolding when navigating my position as an architecture student. Especially valid is thus the choice for this studio, viewing the multitude of complexities of the post-war situation in Mostar within the Neretva Recollection graduation lab. The lab places these complexities within the master track of Architecture as an opportunity for students and aspiring professionals to engage and embody this topology of relationships.

**1 Here I draw upon the thought of Arendt's natality of freedom in the Human Condition, explored during my previous years in the MSc Architecture.**

The Neretva Recollection studio has as full title Neretva Recollection: Materiality of War, Flowing Memories and Living Archive, with the intention to:

*"[...] look at the transitional spaces between the military, violent destruction and un-war - inhabitants' non-violent spatial reactions to it, and what the material and immaterial residuals of these spaces are today, and within the landscape system of the city and the river. In the inhabitants' everyday life, river and the city are not only formations of geography, nature and different architectures, but the city is perceived as is Neretva herself or this strong and cold river as Mostar, as the city of fast and calm flows"<sup>2</sup>*

Insightful in the working method of the studio has also been the coupling of the Architecture track with a graduation lab in Landscape Architecture. It proved itself valuable when approaching other methods in ecological and sustainable thinking. The concepts 'nature' or 'river' for example have become points of interesting and valuable discussions with landscape architects/graduating students. I took the mission of the studio topic very close to heart and decided to investigate other understandings of processing trauma through unfixed

**2 Pilav and De Wit, "Neretva Recollection: Materiality of War, Flowing Memories and Living Archive, Joint Research and Graduation Lab.", p. 6**

mediums and unstable knowledge. This especially while using body knowledges, and the methodologies of narrating these knowledges in space and throughout fixed institutions.

My personal graduation topic named *The Open House*: unfolding the domestic archive draws the personal urgencies to the needs found within the context of the studio, being a closer investigation to spatial intensities and body knowledge, or embodiments, and their translation into the specific trauma of the chosen site *Gojka Vukovića 11*, which is trauma of disrupted domesticity, and its material remnants.

These intensities are navigated with the transferal of knowledge through objects and the body of trauma, crossing the binary of known-objects to be known. Anticipated in this project is a constant flowing and mediating through unstable notions of past, present, and possible futures. Body knowledge, moving through, touching, engaging with all senses, can be used as an active scheme to rethink the concept of memory and its interchanging with narratives and histories, a topic many of us are engaging with within their graduation. The physical objects engaged with, carried with us, have the force to shock in their fixation, but also the power to translate knowledges to be mobilized. Body knowledge is unstable, it unfixes, and forms mechanisms to disrupt and subvert the machinery of institutionalized knowledge, rooted in extortion and aggression.

My interest in this project has been to catch something ephemeral, a slight evidence rooted in the normal, suppressed by the heavy machinery of constituted war and post-war narrative. To write and think

about ways in which our bodies remember trauma and face ongoing violence; followed by the urgent question – *which body?* To tell the stories of fossils and crumbling objects in various timelines. To give (architectural) sense to trauma through literary spacemaking.

The results of this project will add to the various ways of unwar, as proposed by Armina Pilav in her research<sup>3</sup>, as well as adding to the understanding of the Neretva river as body of memory. Within Methods and Analysis, this project will explore new methods to analyze and constitute an architectural project within a post-war situation. The social and spatial relevance of this project would lay in the processing of war trauma and post-war reconciliation as a big part of day to day life and narrative of the citizens of Mostar. Giving insight into these processes through theory and design perspective will also aid similar contexts in divided cities abroad. Other than that, I am giving options for the processing of trauma through insight in how the citizens of Mostar have dealt with this in narrative, action, and material proposing tools or archives for this process of transitioning.

In terms of scientific and theoretical relevance, there are few studies on material assemblages and their specificities within architecture especially within post-war context. The connection between landscape and architecture is explored through the non-anthropocentric view of seeing territory not only as a backdrop but as architecture itself. The

**3 Pilav and De Wit, "Neretva Recollection: Materiality of War, Flowing Memories and Living Archive, Joint Research and Graduation Lab."**

acts of disruption described in the methodological essay are specifically thought through for this graduation lab. The interdisciplinary methods of writing and photographing are also quite interesting as specific methodological approach. Furthermore, this project will respond on the ongoing exploration of ecologies within architecture (as presented within the chair of Architecture Theory).

## **Research Methods and Approach**

The condensing of the personal concept and urgencies drawn above has been a road with some turns. It went from personal interests, to an initial intuition after the first few weeks, eventual direction and ongoing sharpening of the concept. These turns are also visible in the submitted graduation plans, but in larger lines they do contain the methods and argumentations I continued to use and prove their worth throughout this process.

Breaking down the working methods I have used in the graduation process for concept, theory, and design, we encounter both writing as reflective method and active design methods as form studies and drawing. The studio would encourage unorthodox modes of inquiry, such as walking practices to lead to design input. Observational methods and literature research were coupled to feed into design decisions. Usually the academic validity of such methods is disputed, but through the explicit call to disrupt static scientific methodologies and the supporting literature this specific angle was backed up. Of course this also meant that I had to find my way in applying uncom-

mon strategies in my thinking and designing. In between these methods, the given feedback by tutors mediates the two grounds or theory and practice, causing sharpening of concept on all scales.

The methods used throughout the process can be seen as (derivatives of) the following: *Desktop Research and Secondary Research, Collage, Cutting, Cataloguing, Mapping, Photographing, Writing, Atlas, Model Making, and Literature Study*. These *reflective and design methods* can be grouped in working packages seen over the course of the graduation process until now. In these methods, I have had to step back a few times from the theoretical manoeuvre I had figured out - such as in the case of the Cut - and simplify it further to be applicable for the design. A more elaborate overview of methods per stadium within this academic year is found as a separate methodology chapter in the main thesis. There, I found it useful to group similar methodologies and reflect on them as cohesive actors. In between methods there are several iterations to be found, giving feedback to the design as it became more concrete.

### **Before P1: Research methods, Primary Research (Precedent Study research)**

In the previous semester, I already had finished the compulsory course Research Methods. The topic was on Narrating Non-Normative Bodies, and looked closer into the MSc 2 Complex Projects studio A Listening Ear. Here my fictitious interviews with plants investigates the parallels between the knowledges conveyed by these Others and

academic or artistic knowledge. The essence of that paper is this investigation of the blurring between academic knowledge and Other knowledge, which I had taken with me as fascination starting the Methods and Analysis graduation studio. During the summer before starting the studio, I had begun to read Bernard Cache and became interested in the perception of time, territories, frames, and materials in his work *Earth Moves*.

At this stage, it was important for me to grasp a large amount of relevant topics in the project area, which had to help steer my interests to something historical and site specific. A dilemma I had found there were the told histories, often sharing only one perspective, and whether the sources were aligned with a particular political or ethnical sentiment. As time passed and the site visit also took place, we all became more sensitive in picking up alliances or sentiments of sources. I tried to rework the found material by making collages or writing additional texts. This material for example came from online archives. Reworking them brought me new perspectives, which I could make my own by actively engaging with the object. Looking back, this was an early form of expressing fascination with the object in the archive and the narratives contained.

Used methods: *Desktop Research, Collage, Mapping, Literature Study*

Together they have helped me narrow the scope of interest to the area around the Stari Most. My main tutor Armina Pilav had warned the studio during the introduction of the precedents of the existing body of research on the Stari Most and the Bosnian war. That is why I chose to investigate not the bridge but the direct surrounding; the

river, terrace, towers, and the portions of cityscape around. The other warning was from Saskia de Wit, who pointed out that Cache might be not entirely comprehensible if applied as it was on the project situation. Only much later, I could understand some theories well enough to adapt and incorporate them and had I figured out that the most powerful element is the personal fascination leading the theory. The full immersion of Cache's thought did thus not work as I intended to, but it led me on other paths.

### **Before P1: Field Research**

The preparations for the field research led to maps, rolls of film, notebooks with pens, and a laptop taken with me to Mostar. In this way, I could continue the initial probing of narratives and bodies through the mediums of film and writing. It also seemed important to me to interview citizens to get as much access as possible to the stories behind the bold news articles. An important realization was that Mostar was smaller than I (we) had thought. Used methods during this stage were *Mapping, Photography, Desktop Research, Literature Study, and Writing/Interviewing*.

### **P1: Condensing information and P1 presentation**

After about 2.5 weeks in Mostar, I had overloaded myself with information and ideas. Especially enriching were all the smaller stories encountered and captured. It would turn out to be a challenge to

focus this. This moment in the process was dedicated to defining the research question, the aim, and condensing information. For P1 we also would have to fill in the first graduation plan. At this point the project title was Hybrid objects: Exploring the (mental) sub/merging of the image, form, and the frame throughout time. This theoretical angle did not work because of my unclear understanding of Cache at that moment and the adding of own lexicon unto an unclear framework. I had to abstract this theory more in order to make it useful in the given context.

The feedback during P1 was directed at both the group presentation, as well as the individual ones. For the group, we had to focus more on leaving the dominant perspectives, or the main narratives from our initial desktop researches. This was something I had to think about in general within my personal research. My presentation was criticized on the theory presented; it was noticeable that I couldn't exactly make clear what the hybrids were that I was trying to present. I had to look closer to the material I had collected and describe what actually was happening there. This would later on form the smaller narratives, objects, and disruptions of the daily, which I explore. Also, the concept of the archive had to be fleshed out more; if used, in which form?

## **Between P1 and P2: Finalizing precedent studies, making the Catalog, ideas on transforming, mobilizing, and unfolding, and P2**

At this stage it was important to lock down a site for the intervention, coherent with the precedent studies and theories at interest. This would also help me to process the critique I got, to make theory and application grounded. It took me some moving around, from below the Stari Most, to the Centar Za Mir, a more urban plan with different locations, to eventually a ruin opposite of the Stari Most; Gojka Vukovića 11. This rediscovery was made possible by the reflection on the photographs, as suggested during the feedback, and through the compilation of material for the catalog I was making.

Preparing for P2 was tough, I had difficulty bringing structure in my presentation or thoughts and had the feeling that I was missing some important clues to make sense of my choice to investigate embodiments in archive of a location. or P2 I had decided to meet the requirements in the manual stating that there should be a concept design. This led me to design something that looked too fixed at this stage, which raised questions. I was invited to focus more on the context of the interventions, to what the archive was related, and to think of more universal forms of embodiment and narrative, that are still site specific. The theory did not fully connect to the concept design. My BT mentor Ferry Adema noted that I was “turning a former home to a public space”; it would forebode the direction I would take in a later stage.

### **Between P2 and P3: Focusing the concept more on site specificity, elaboration on movements, reconsidering the body of trauma, and P3**

Inspired by the feedback from P2, I decided to again go back to my research and look closer into the content that would make my programme as specific and personal as the research I had done. I tried to focus on the aspects of embodiment, investigating sensory reactions in the body of trauma I was designing for. This again went from an almost literal translation, which did not work due to its rigidity, to a more universal approach on trauma of the disrupted daily and the creation of a sequence of spaces or embodiments within the space.

The P3 feedback noted the need for simplification of the embodiments, where they now could overwhelm visitors, there is merit to be found in smaller situations and how the composition acts in unison. These could connect to a sequence of experiences on a finer scale than imagined in the presentation. This would also help ground my theory better in the practice, if people saw the spatial implications almost immediately. The title at this point did not fit the project anymore.

### **Towards P4: Simplifying, condensing, coherence**

More than before, the need to simplify grew as all elements from concept to theory and the built proposal had to be in unison. I took the advice to go for a clear typology, which would act as an archive, and made my title The Open House. This would allow me to specu

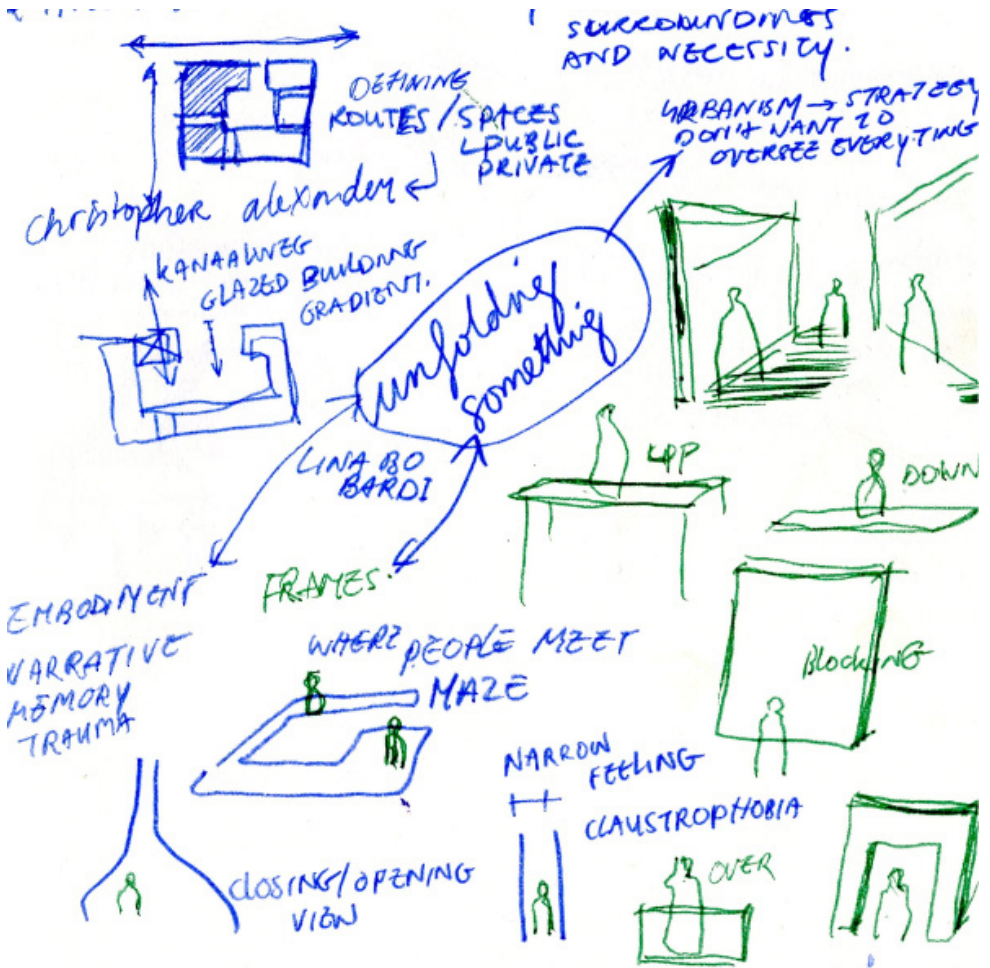


Fig.1 Thoughts on embodied experiences connected to the site

late further on the aspects of domesticity in the urban context and in diagrams for the site. It would help me to focus the scope of the archive, and give direction to the materials used for the intervention. In this period, the designing immersed itself fully in the research done.

## Relationship between Research and Design

Post P3, the communication of the project in architectural sense became paramount. The embodiments needed grounding in programme, the research approach itself gave me ample fuel to imagine spaces, where the body concept found its way in ambiance and materiality. I could use sensations, topographies, existing materials, existing parts of the ruin, derived from the made catalogs. The following statements became important concepts in the architecture:

- Domesticity

The typological specificity of the site as formerly being housing, and now home to all kinds of semi-private practices, has been researched in an ongoing manner. This aspect of domesticity, being contained, feeling secured, being disrupted during wartime, called for a reflection in architectural language, materiality, and process of the archive/ what was to be contained in the archive. Domesticity also placed boundaries in the usage of unnecessary bold expressions or large volumes, the simple gestures were encouraged. This caused many design iterations, stripping away to the bare necessities.

- Sequence of embodiments in spaces

These intensities experienced by the body of trauma are transferred through material space and the objects contained within.

The feelings of unsettlement/uncomfort and relief and comfort,

found in the disruption of the daily, reached in the application of the archive, splitting the closed, protected archive core from the open archive, unfolding itself into the site. At the same time, the garden spaces also form a sequence of intensities, in dealing with the subject matters, as well as exposure to the older remnants.

- Degrees of intimacy

Throughout the location, topography mediates levels of exposure, from the anonymous street side to the spotlights toward Stari Most. These degrees of intimacy are also apparent in the tension between public and private in both surrounding (the ultra-public bridge, ambivalent hotels and hostels, and private houses) and typology of housing historically. The Ottoman housing typology before the war knew generosity and openness in their courtyards. The housing typologies during war time in turn became public dominions of congregation, where culture was as present in the programme as basic household activities. Here privacy was nearly eradicated and the daily disrupted. Now in the Gojka Vukovića settlement we can mediate the public and the private by taking a close look to the remains, and what they indicate in degrees of intimacy. The programme is derived from the wartime usage of the house and garden, meaning open spaces, spaces for working, a living room with hearth (kitchen), and storage or enclosures for safety (the archive).

- Enveloping and exposing

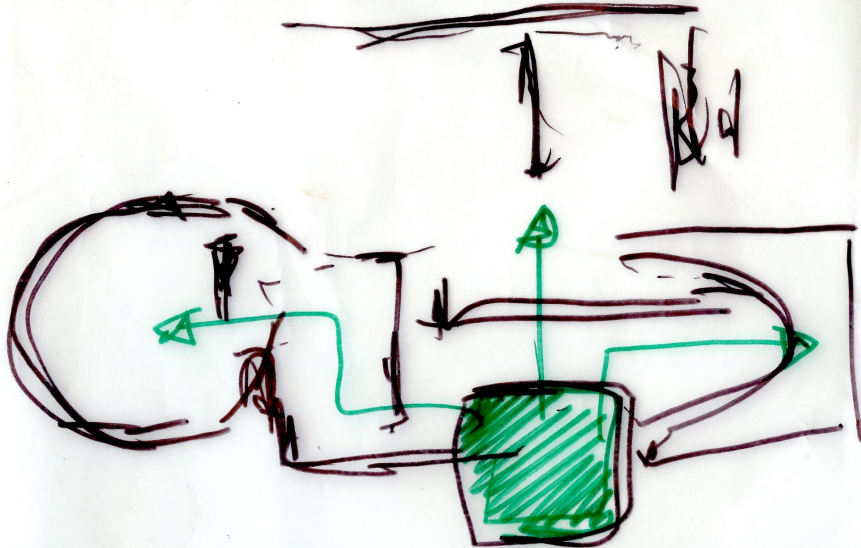
This is a translation of the fossil and skin model, where cuts were placed into the body, some healed, some exposed. Here the ruin is exposed in places to enhance qualities and storytelling of the place, and translucent envelopes are placed around the programs of mobilization.

However, this is contrasted by the closed characters of the archive and the living room, needing protection. The envelopes, either translucent or enclosed, invited to think about harmonies and the introduction of a façade grid where no initial grid was apparent.

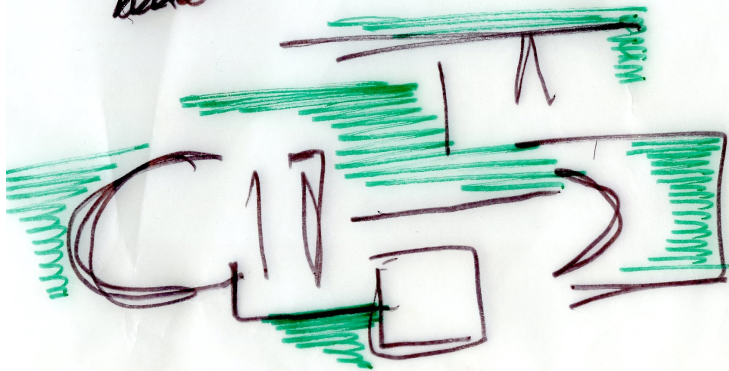
- Mobilizing and transitioning

The mobilizing and transitioning of the archive are done with the public programme of the workshop, activating the static archive contained, and the open archive spaces/elements spread throughout the site.

The earlier movement studies and written sections of disrupting and transitioning, found their way into the necessity of opening up the ground floors, and connecting these together through services as passages, stairs, ramp, and elevator. Not only horizontal movement was considered, but also vertical, and the experience of these spaces of transition.



mobilizing/unfolding the archive of  
 the place through accessibility  
 data

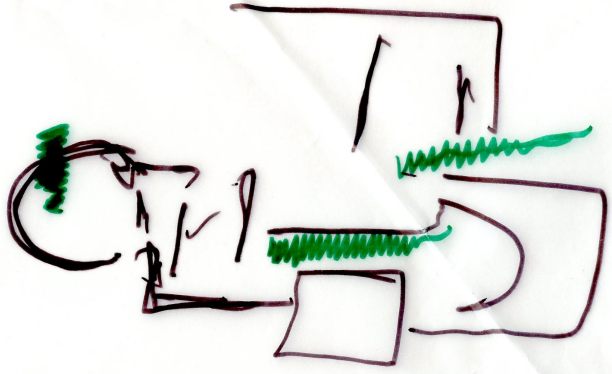


Relief versus width



Fig.2 Diagrams on the leading spatial concepts

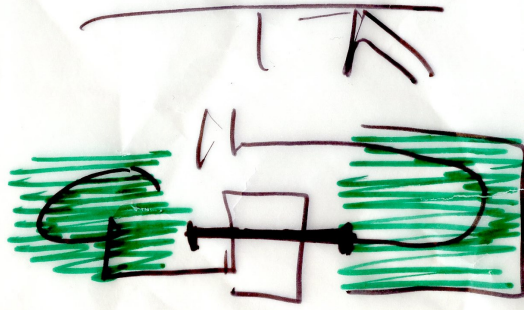
3)



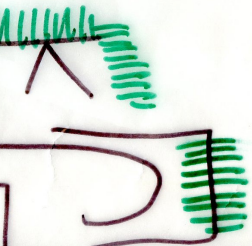
Activity through embodiment  
 related to ~~body~~ disrupted domestic

shy

5)



URBAN  
 "HALTER"



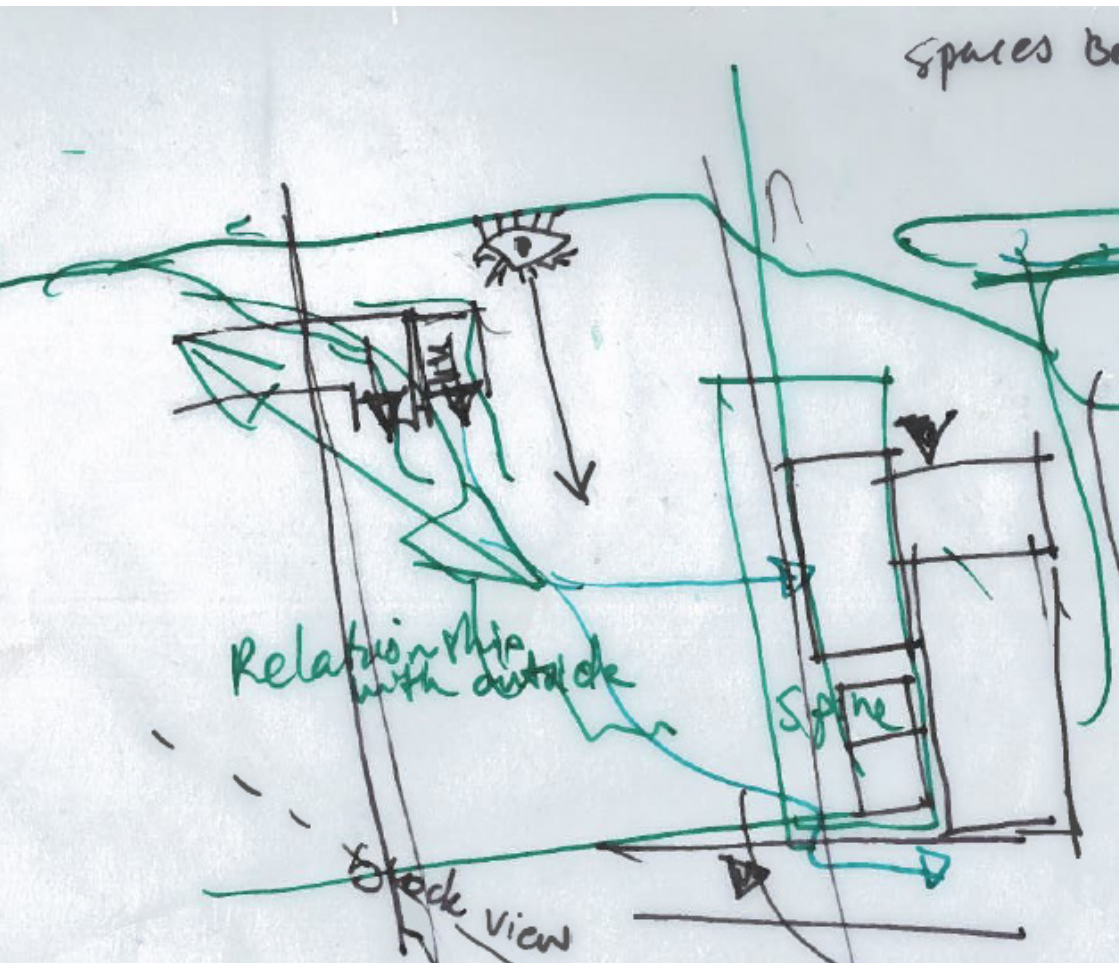
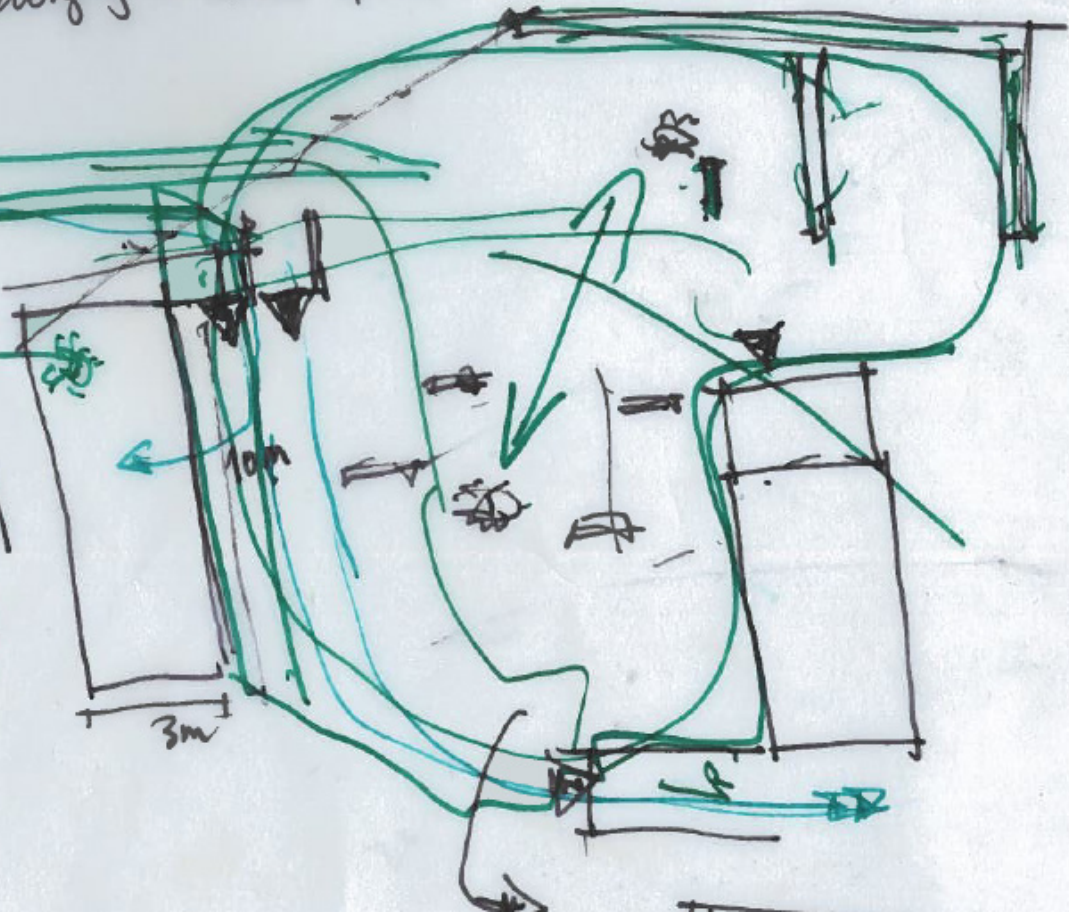


Fig.3 Diagrams on the leading spatial concepts

longing to other spaces?



Looking ahead to the final part of the graduation, I will be seeking the elaboration of the design into details and sections that show the imagined processes within the proposal. Time management hasn't always been my strongest suit, as well as the studio having difficulties to transition from the research phase to the design phase. The period after P4, I would like to take on to craft everything as I have envisioned, so that design, theory, and the packaging of these are in harmony. Luckily, I had already accounted for this in my previously submitted graduation plans.

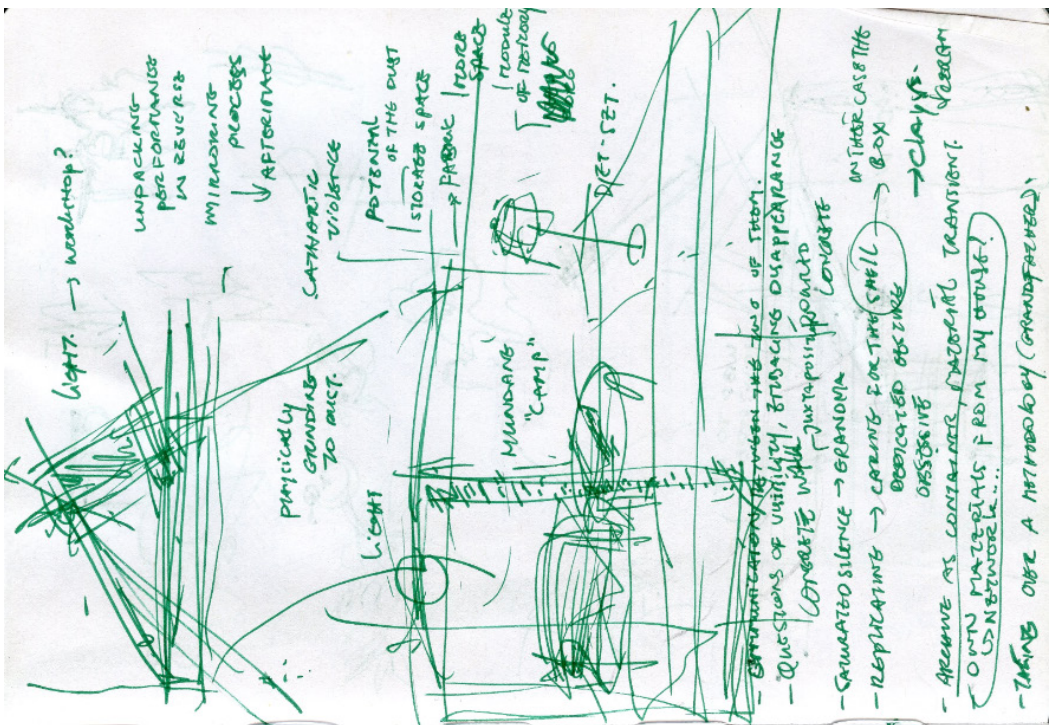
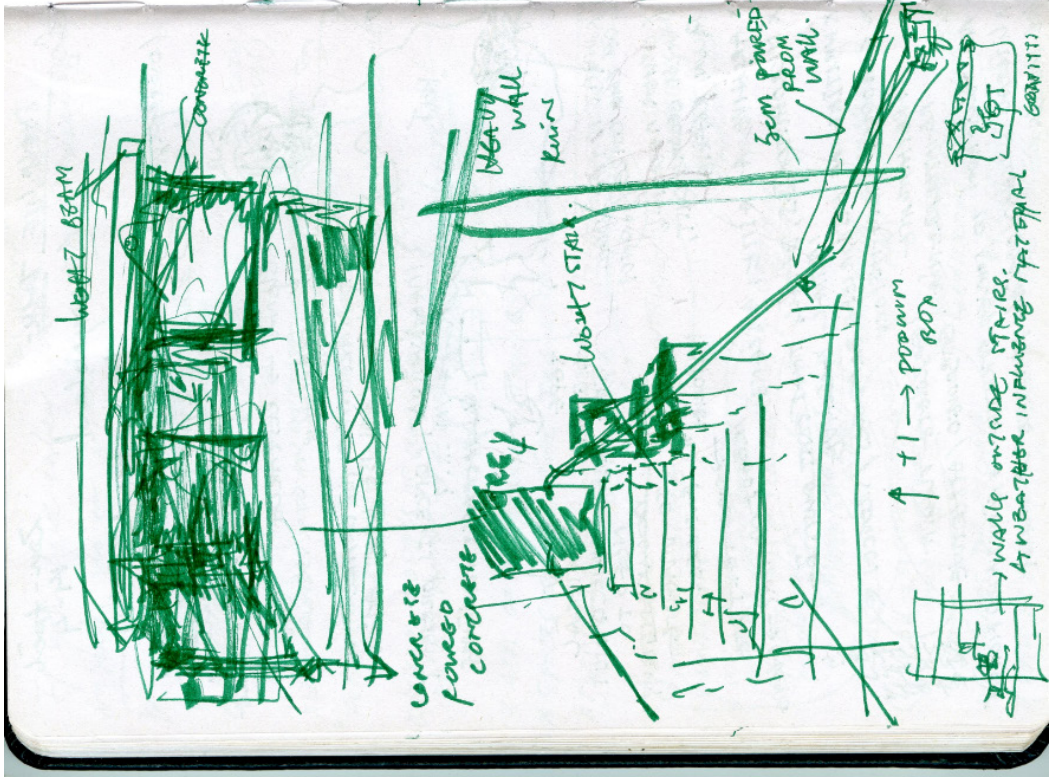
One of the ways I will be doing this, is by crafting several printed matters. I have often gone from written theory to researches in book forms; a medium which covers both essence of the subject, combining word with image, and a high level of personality. The books or essays complementing design products and precedent studies within this project are all thought about from the angle of disruption of the fixed. Insofar, they might be unusual reads (and/or sights), accounting for a blend between personal expression and expression of the theoretical/design matter. Below a summary of these products, to be produced or reprinted in the final graduation period:

**Main Book** – *The Open House: Unfolding the domestic archive.*

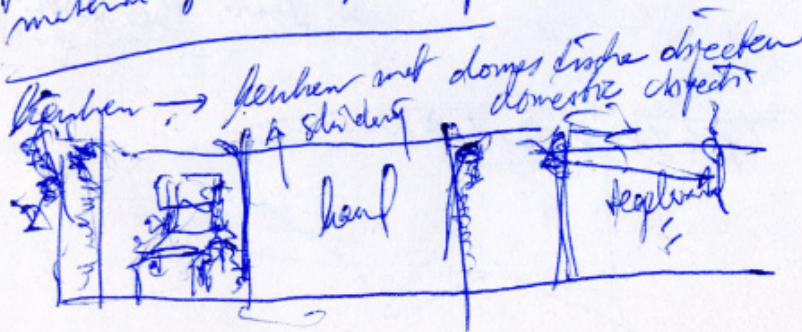
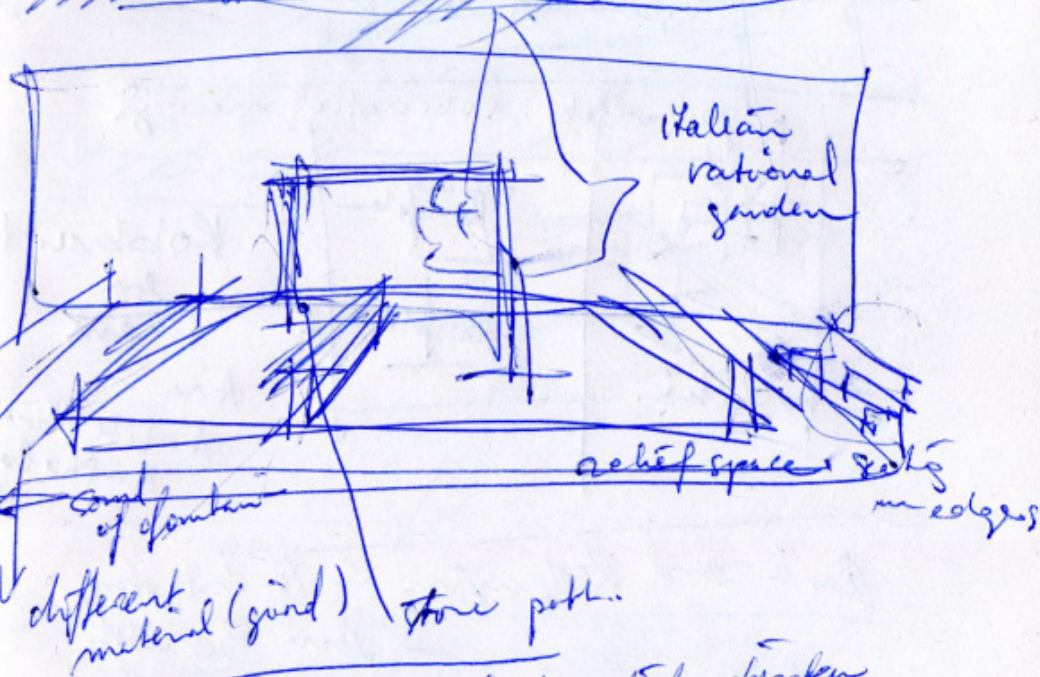
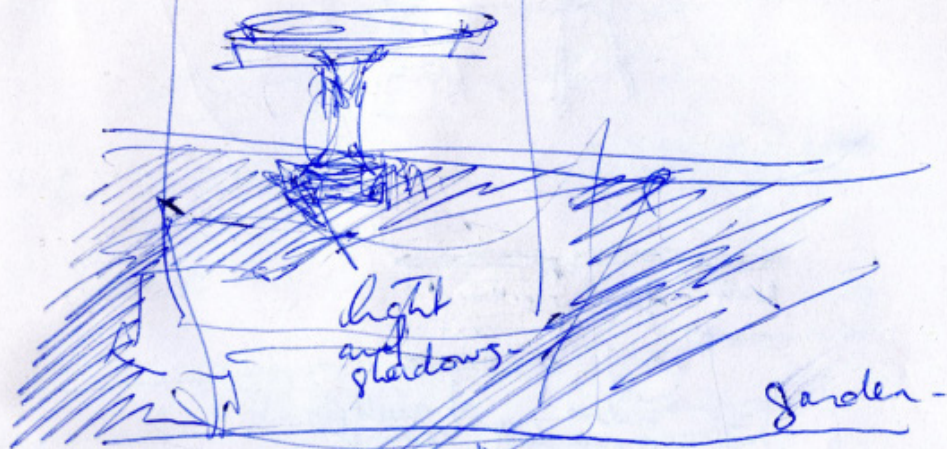
Here, the main theories are laid out, investigating the body of trauma and surrounding ecologies through the material residues of the site and embodiment through the found objects. The residues are highlighted in a Catalog of a Space chapter, showing the material remnants in the site and the elements I have chosen to work with. The theories in the Main Book are supported by a framework of epistemes



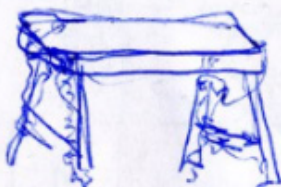




massive object. Rubenshuis 1964

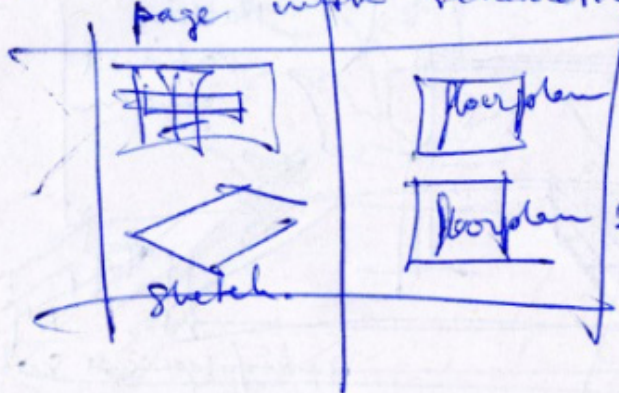


Chenhamer → sethauerz.com



small  
and  
star-in-loop  
Vidrich  
mimicry.

page with schematic drawings



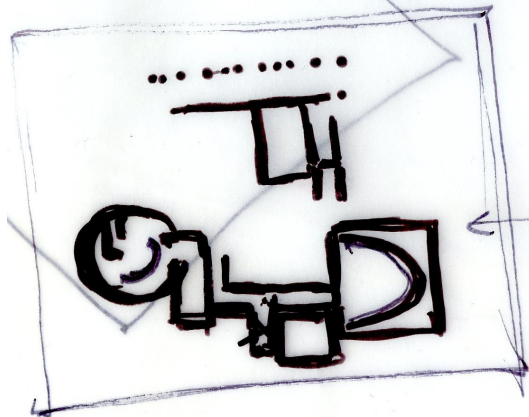
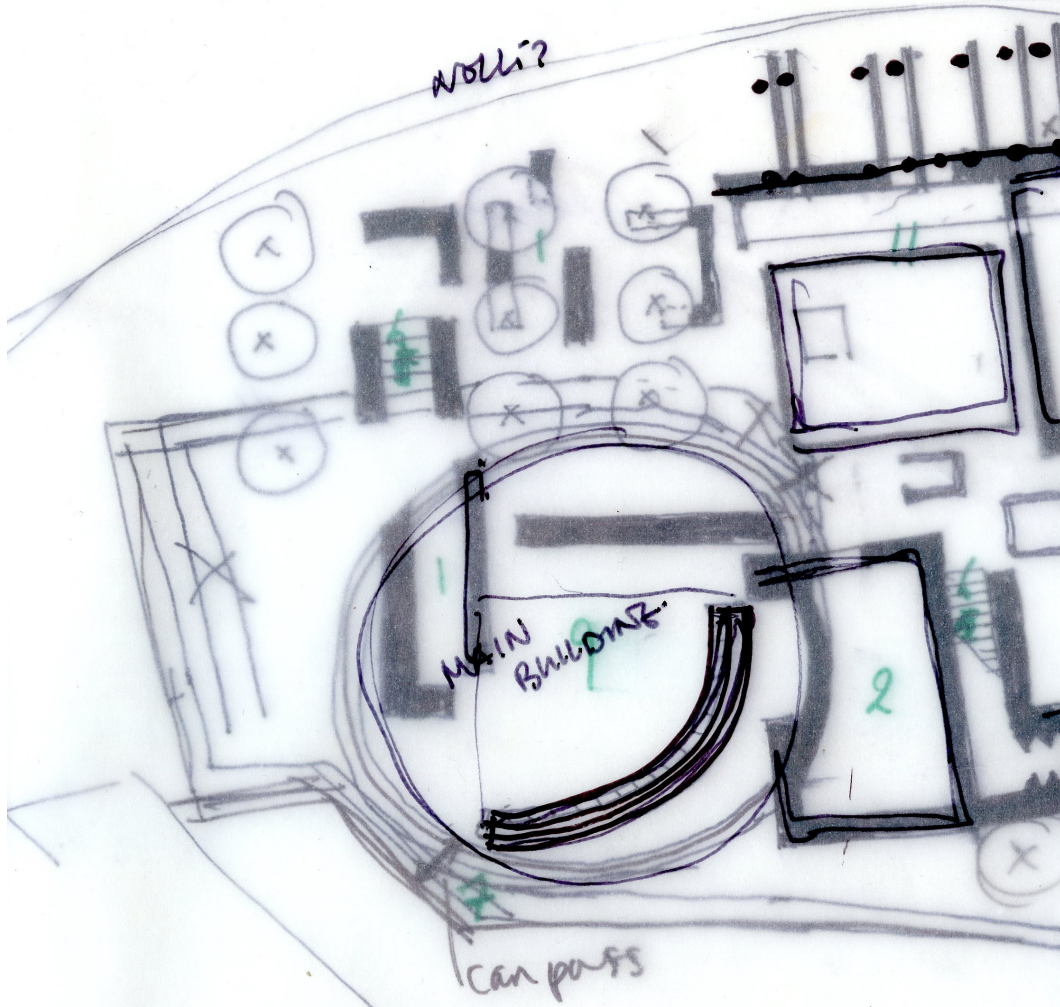
Robb  
in  
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Anthology

Ruin and Redemption in Architecture  
— Alan Borsari.

ARTEL Architecture

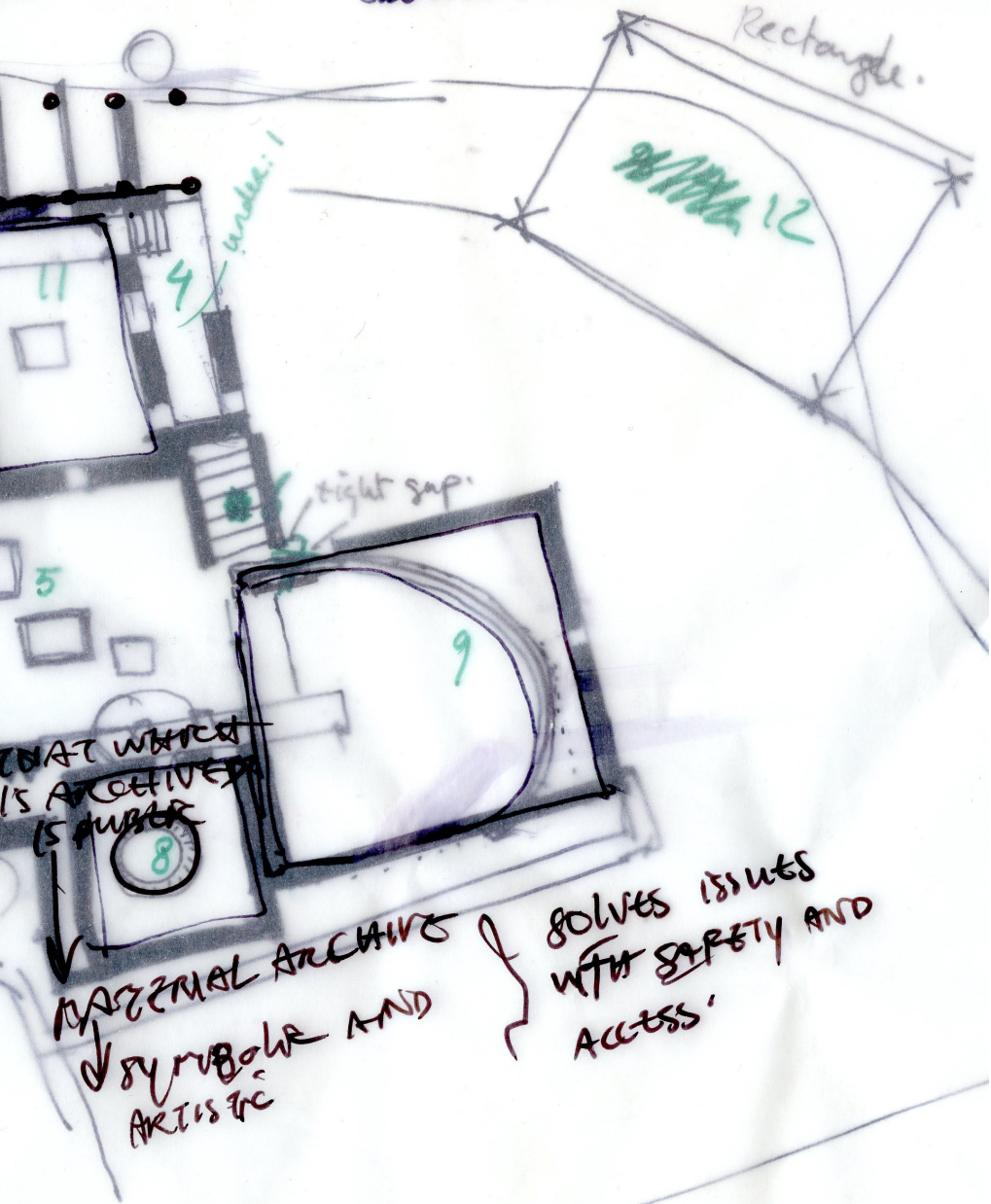
DIRECTIONAL SPATIAL SEQUENCE → EQU...

WOLLI?



pink BACKGROUND

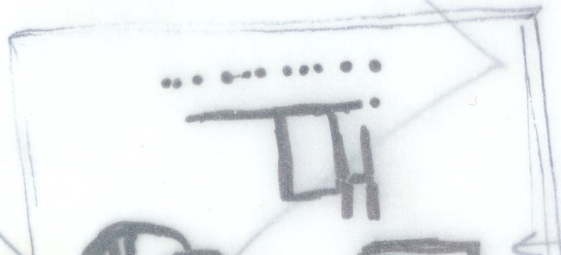
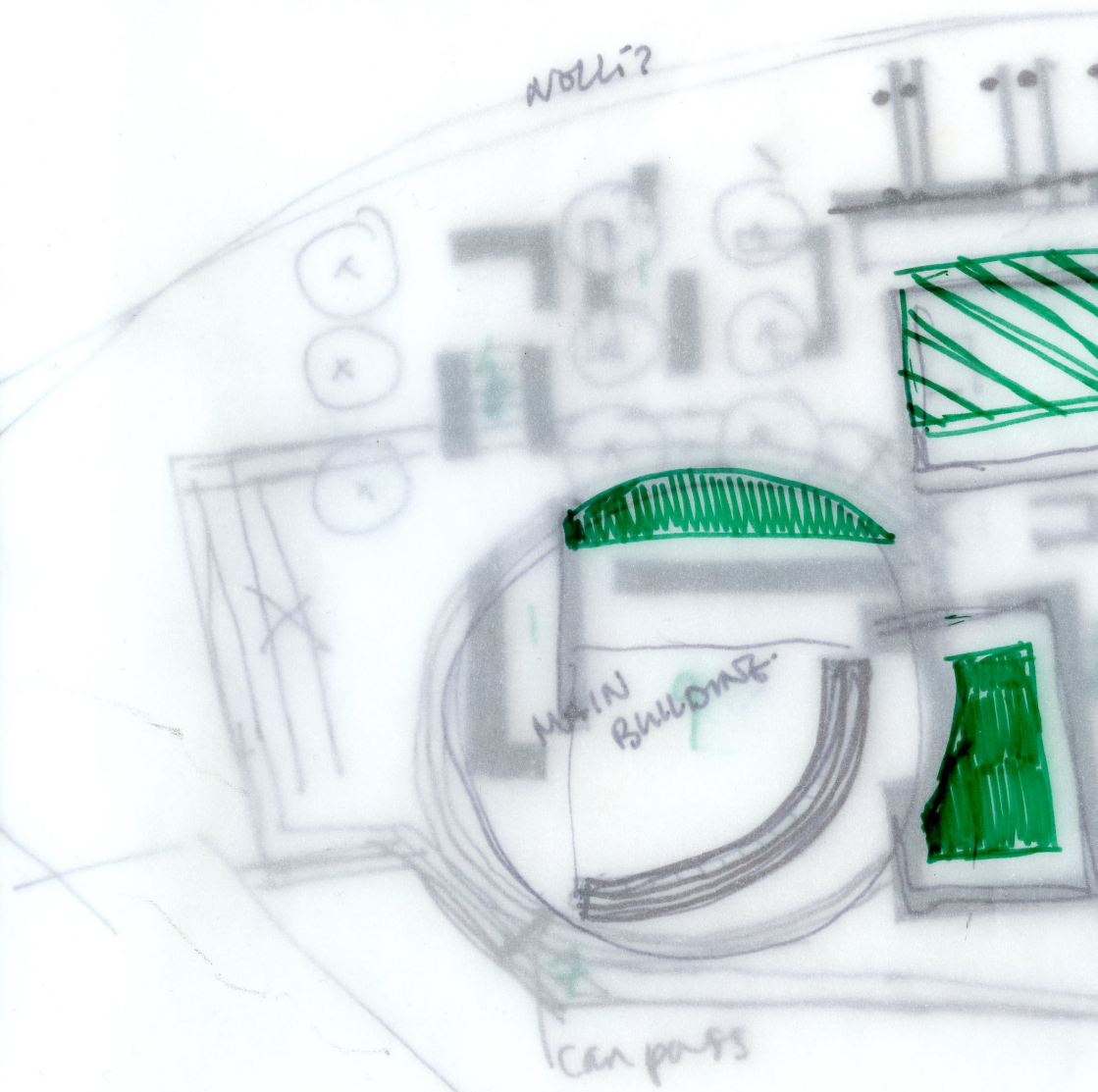
↑ DOORS/WINDOWS. → ANTI-



PANTRY OF THE CITY -

CONSTRUCTING  
ADDITIONAL SPATIAL SEQUENCES → EQUAL IMPOR

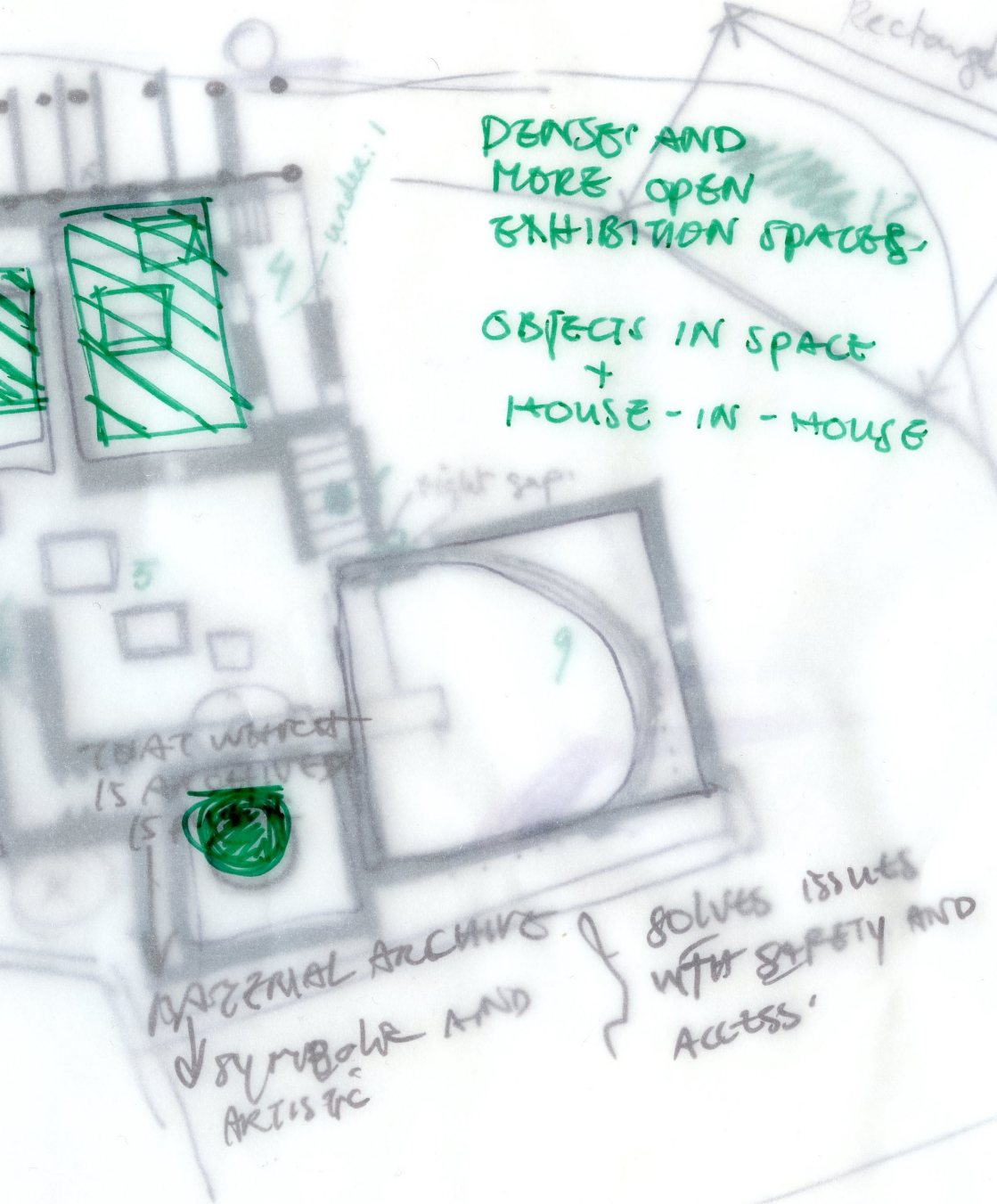
NOI?!



← pink

RANGES

B/W OPEN PLAN  
GROUND FLOOR.



DENSE AND  
MORE OPEN  
EXHIBITION SPACES.

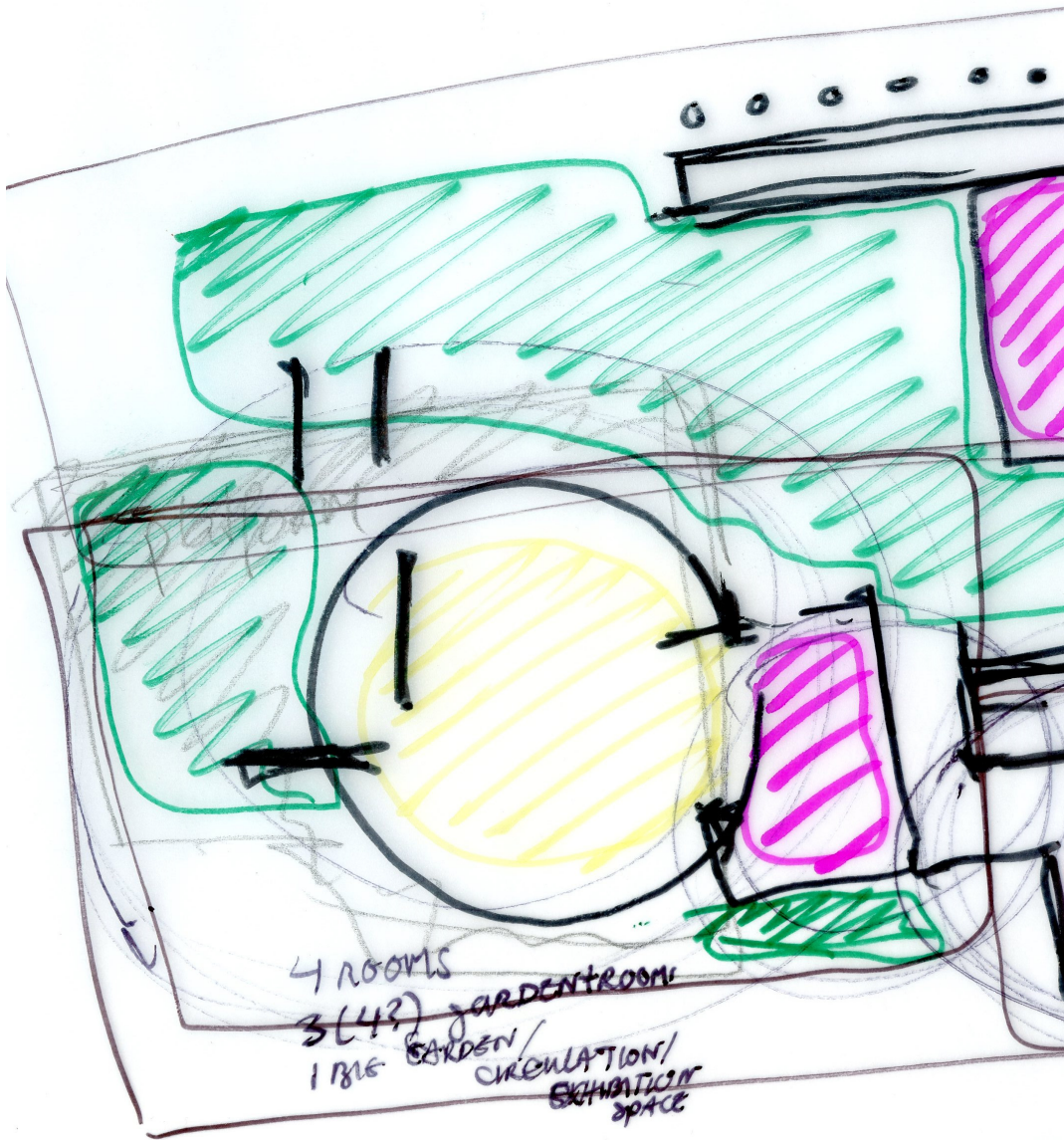
OBJECTS IN SPACE  
+  
HOUSE-IN-HOUSE

THAT WHICH  
IS ARCHIVED

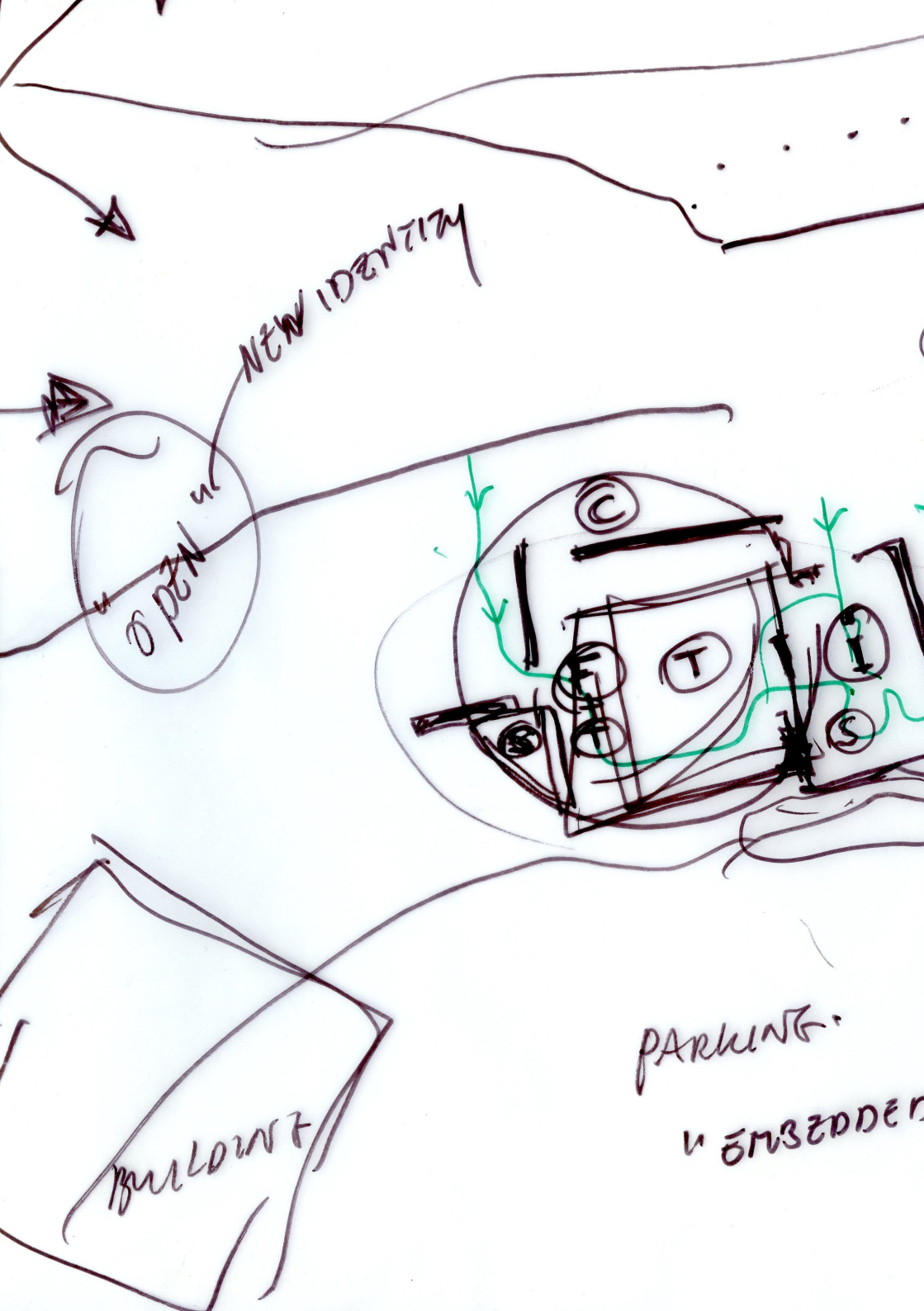
INTERNAL ARCHIVE  
↓  
SYMBOLIC AND  
ARTISTIC

SOLVES ISSUES  
WITH SAFETY AND  
ACCESS.

+ VIEWS  
CONNECTING GROUND FLOOR → MOBILITY  
FUNCTIONS, PART-PRESENT-FUTURE  
⑥ HALTER/CORE — NEIGHBORHOOD

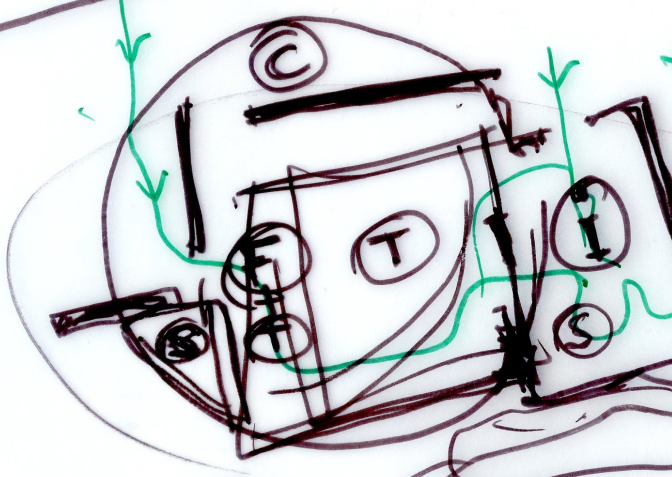






NEW IDENTITY

OPEN

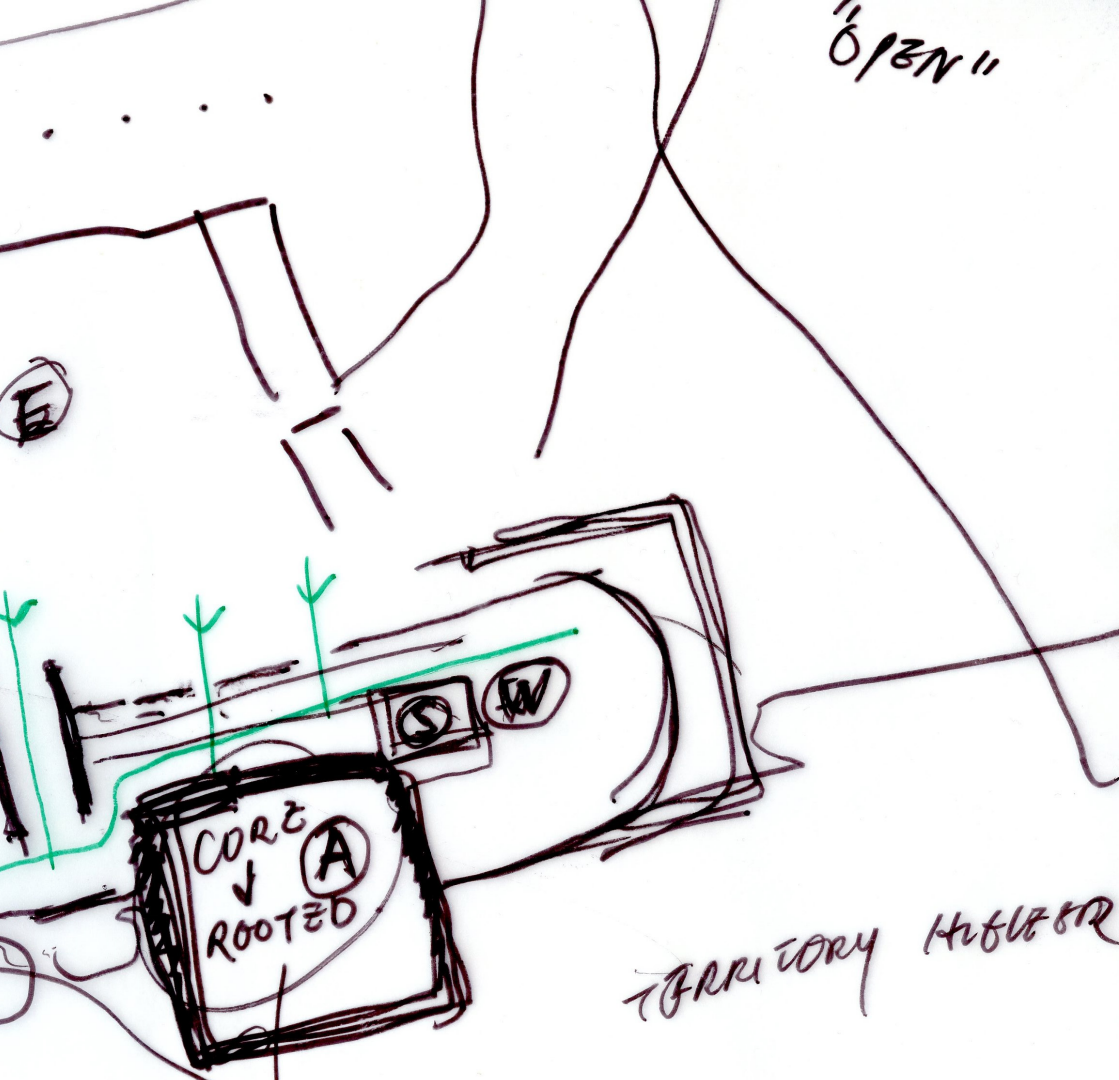


PARKING

UMZUG

BULLDOZER

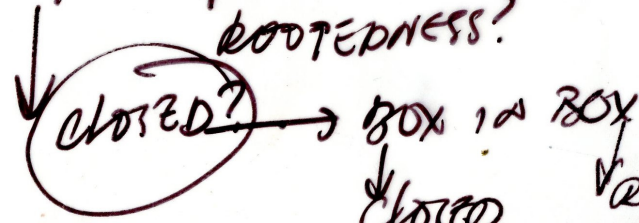
"OPEN"



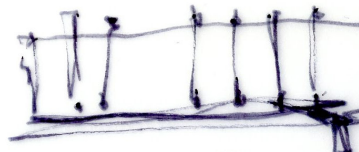
TERRITORY HUB

"EMBEDDED"

HOW TO PHYSICALLY EXPRESS THE ROOTEDNESS?

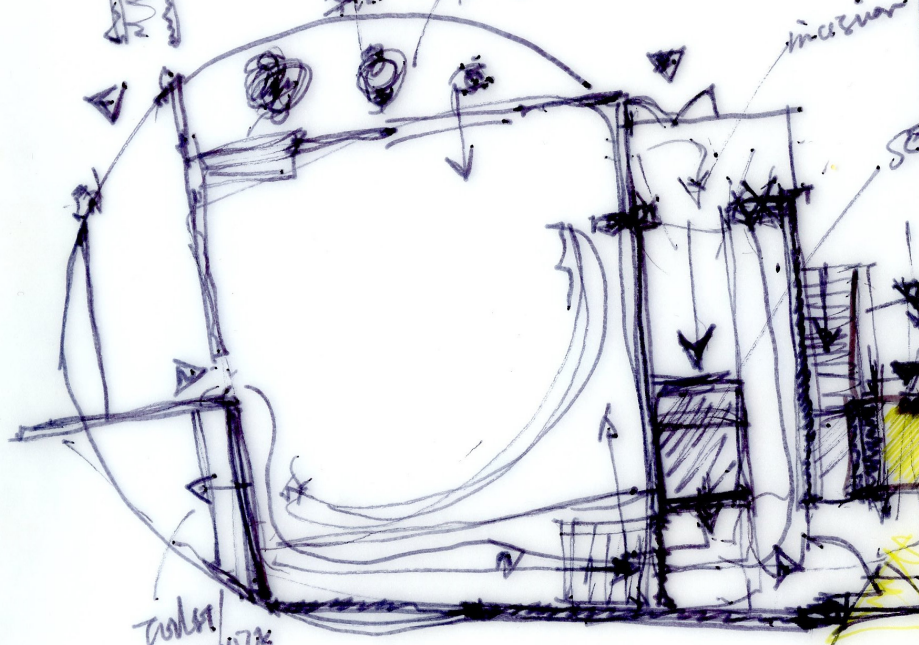


Closed  
Planted  
Garden Open...



? living room

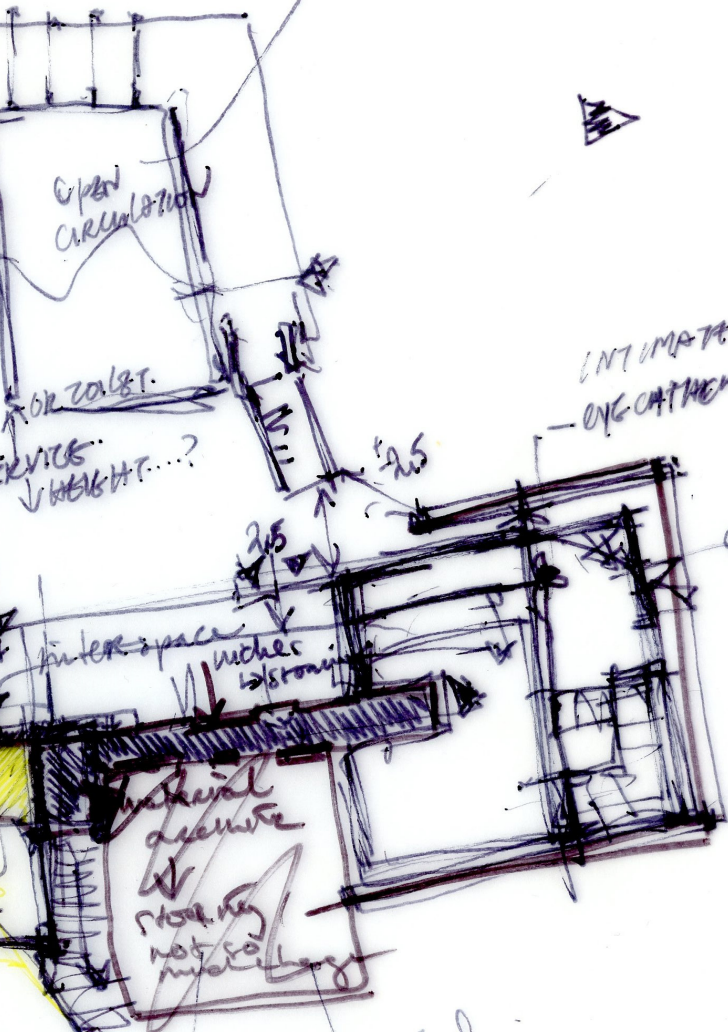
incision



toilet/  
service

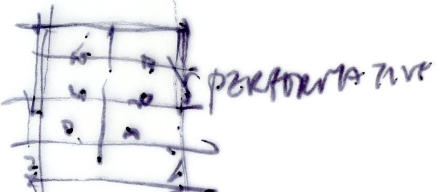
SE

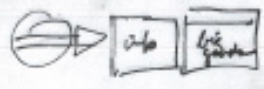
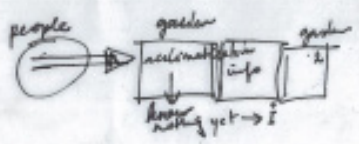
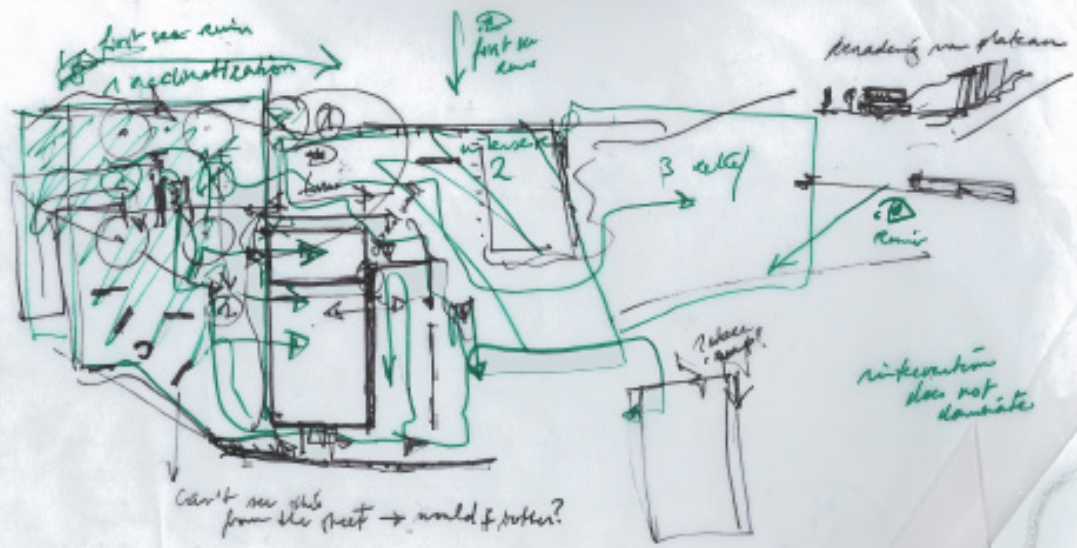
DISRUPTED / OPEN  
CONCRETE PLATE  
ROOF, GARDEN



Grand floor break out space

literally stacked  
minimal domestic modern aesthetic

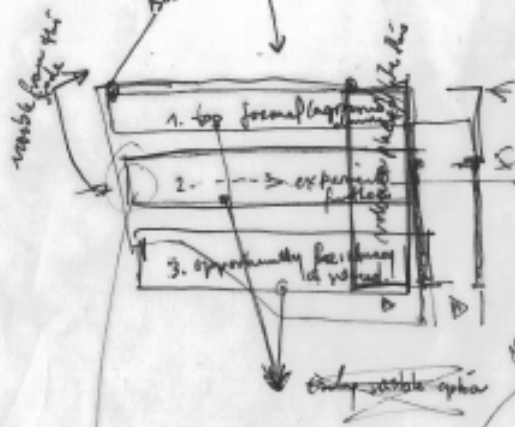




volume options.

enclosed space - down to  
to barrier -> entry space -> parking

no difference



entry visible option

directly view!  
↳ to woods outside

working here or  
bring it

- build up to living room  
↳ move to living room

visible

looks like 3 different  
conditions  
- active  
- inactive  
- neutral

maximizing appreciated space.

connections with  
compositions

very visible

quite dominant

condition  
but the  
space  
is lost

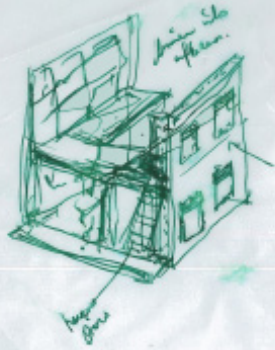
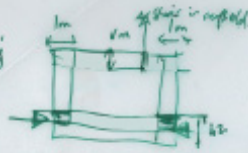
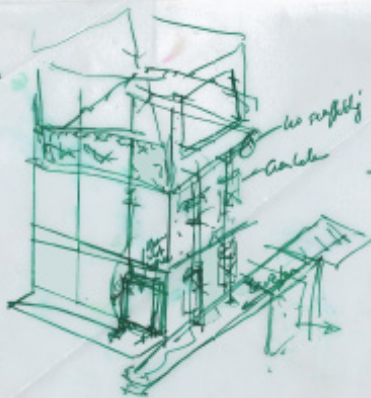
can't  
see this  
from the  
terrace

not  
visible  
upper

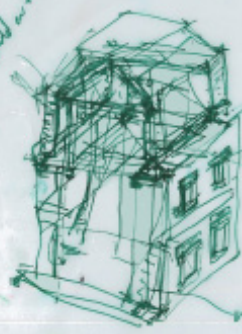
visible

very above back entrance  
table...

Nico:  
 - level platform  
 - 2000 open  
 - hdy in platform  
 - extra part platform



hall on this?



archive feels not compromising the existing structure

independent rafter  
 deck up hold on the  
 also from in

bottom not free  
 floor

main floor

Architectural Language  
 Glass / Stone -  
 only height -  
 by peripheral  
 enclosure

