

Shady Heritage

from



Research Plan

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toward

an architecture of
Frictional-Empathy.

Abstract

This research plan provides an overview of the research design for my graduation project in the context of my Master of Architecture at the TU Delft. It outlines the problem statement, research and design questions, and relevance. An overview of the research process structured in three Acts is provided. Key theoretical references and methodologies are indicated. Finally, a self-assessment based on feedback and lecture content is provided.

Word count: 5000 words.

Contents

2	<u>Problem Statement</u>
	<u>Graduation Framework</u>
4	3 Acts
5	Research & Design Questions
6	Framework Overview
8	<u>Relevance</u>
10	<u>Theoretical Framework</u>
	<u>Research & Design Methods</u>
12	Act I Literary review & synthesis
18	Act II Subversive Mapping
22	Act II Counter-Design
24	Act III Design Proposal
28	<u>Self-Assessment</u>
34	References
36	Appendix 1. Glossary
38	Appendix 2. Timeplan

Problem Statement

In English, ‘historical’ refers to something that happened in the past, whereas ‘historic’ pertains to something momentous or important in history. This begs the question: how does one determine whether something is merely of the past (historical) or worthy of specific attention (historic)? This simple terminology question highlights the partisan intention of writing history.¹ The observation that history is a concept and process that yields power has given rise to the field of historiography which studies the processes of historical narration. Historiography can make out the societal, political and economic values at play and thus can work backwards, trying to unearth facts that may be viewed in a new light, turning disregarded pasts into historic milestones in need of further study.

Interestingly for architects, this distinction between ‘historical’ and ‘historic’ is materialised in the built environment through processes of heritagisation. The designation and preservation of heritage building reinforces hegemonic historic narratives, while the (un)intentional erasure of old buildings -who do not ‘merit’ heritage value according to prevailing heritage practice- throws shade on alternative readings of the pasts. This is made all the more important by the feedback loop between the historical realm and the built environment: the immortalisation and labelling of locations as ‘important’ to the past increases the perceived importance of certain past events.

Heritagisation processes presents the same caveats as history writings, both leading to the loss of certain memories which required built or archival evidence to endure the test of time. Given social identity is partially reliant on a common understanding of the past,² the loss of heritage evidence prevents diverging social groups from empathising with each other, and they lose the ability to understand the origin of their differences. This leads to social polarisation that worsens as more physical evidence of these narratives is lost. However, none withstanding the

significant impact of built histories, the architectural discipline lacks historiographic awareness.

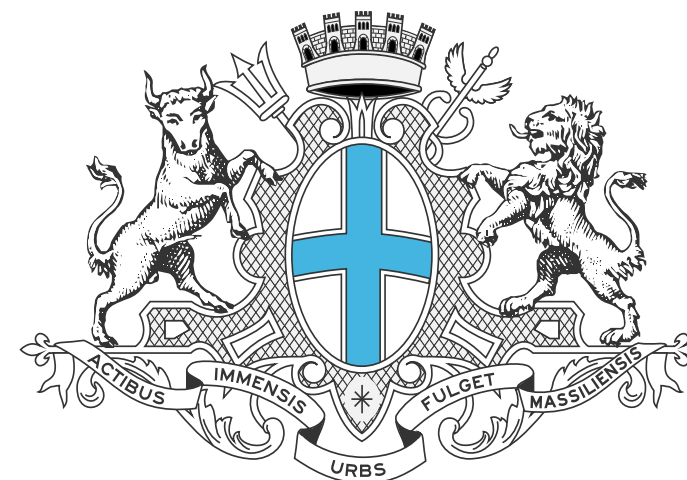
Given this mutual influence between urban fabric and history, the architectural profession needs to acknowledge its privileged position to further democratic values, namely equality and justice. Indeed, thanks to their agency in the built environment, architects can shape the future and act as value multipliers.³ There is an ethical duty to acknowledge the historical ‘greyscale’ and find ways of portraying co-existing readings of the past in the built environment. The best place to start from as architects is to comprehend the sites at the heart of historical contestation and clashing value systems, named in this research ‘Shady Heritage Sites’. Until citizens and leadership alike come to terms with the underlying, contested histories, society at large will remain unable to remedy the lingering negative impacts of repressed historic(al) narratives. This will require both community involvement, archive work, and field-work, and intervention in the built environment enabling these narratives to become visible once again.

Port-cities and specifically the liminal spaces between urban and industrial-maritime land provide an interesting context within which to test the architect’s agency in architectural historiographies and refine the concept of Shady Heritage. Indeed, the transport of goods, people and ideas brought about the good, the bad and the Shady, all of which played a role in socio-economic development as well as local identity.⁴ However, in the second half of the 20th century containerisation led to significant changes in port infrastructure and economy. New ports shifted far from the urban nuclei while historic port facilities needed to ‘totally reform themselves’⁵ and were subsequently revamped to re-establish the link between the historic centers and the sea, leading to an increasingly tenuous relation between port and city. Morretti writes that it had become common understanding

that ‘it was essential to replace and/or remove the port’ to transform urban spaces near the port, with the identity of the former ‘betraying’ itself as the industrious nature of the space disappeared.⁶ The significant urban readjustment of the port provided infinite opportunities for the industrious past to be reshaped in the lens of a de-industrial city and its service-based economy, however this transformation came at the loss port city of identity.⁷ Indeed, this process poses a significant threat of urban – and, given the feedback loop, social- amnesia relating not only to port activity but also to everything that entered the city through the port.

Founded over 2600 years ago, Marseille presents itself as an exemplary case of such processes. Indeed, the port city has changed significantly since its founding, as its land was built over in a constant process of adaptation. This led Marseille to be called a ‘city of paper,’ as its identity is today only visible in written and drawn records.⁸ Projects such as the 313 hectares

‘Euroméditerranée’ project which began in 1995 aimed to orchestrate the post-industrial shift, pose new threats associated with the *tabula rasa* approach.⁹ This is troublesome given that on the one hand the disappearance of built heritage impact’s society’s ability to reflect on the past, and on the other hand that Marseille’s long-held status as France’s biggest port-city and the gateway to the Mediterranean has yielded heritage that is today regarded with ambivalence. Marseille namely hosted France’s first colonial exhibition which exhibited humans in enclosures, and in harbors today, petroleum refineries are responsible for doubling the local risk of cancer, or a growing tourism sector which is leading to gentrification. Recent initiatives such as Archives Invisibles¹⁰ and Hôtel du Nord: Fabrique d’Histoires¹¹ are attempting to bring into the light alternative readings of Marseillais history. However, so long as the research coming out of these initiatives remains in art exhibitions, their reach is limited. More can and should be done in Marseille to help a wider audience in coming to terms with clashing readings of the past.



Top: Marseille’s motto translated from Latin: ‘The city of Marseille shines for its great deeds.’

“Le blason de la ville de Marseille.” n.d. www.marseille.fr. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://decouvrir-marseille/histoire-de-marseille/blason>

1 Ricoeur, Paul. *La Mémoire, l’Histoire, l’Oubli*. Paris: Seuil, 2000.

2 *ibid*.

3 Hein, Carola. “History: Creating the past to design the future,” *Lecture series* AR3A010, TU Delft. (17 September 2020).

4 Moretti, Beatrice. *Beyond the Port City: The Condition of Portuality and the Threshold Concept*. Jovis Verlag GmbH. 2020: 29.

5 *ibid*, 34.

6 *ibid*, 37.

7 *ibid*, 149.

8 Pécout, Thierry. “Marseille au Moyen Âge, entre Provence et Méditerranée. Les horizons d’une ville portuaire”. *Cahier de recherches Médiévales Humanistes*. 2009.

9 Jourdan, Silvière. 2008. “Un cas aporétique de gentrification: la ville de Marseille.”

Revue géographique des pays méditerranéens 111 (2008): 85-90

<https://doi.org/10.4000/mediterrance.2788>.

Graduation Framework

3 Acts

The project’s three Acts reflect my interest in informing architectural practice within a personal theoretical reflection, both of which inform each other. The project framework ensures that the understanding of Marseille’s character is informed by an overarching conceptual lens, and the concept is refined through its testing on Marseille. This mutual relationship is vital to the project’s relevance, transferability and pertinence. Each act depends on the previous one(s) to be pertinent and relies on the following one(s) to become productive.

Research & Design Questions

Question 1 (Q1) will enable the defining of the concept of Shady Heritage within wider academic discourse and current events, and state its relevance, Question 2 (Q2) will on the one hand demonstrate the insidiousness of Shadyness in Marseille and reveal the map’s role in filtering the past, and on the other hand develop a design language suitable to reflect the project’s values. Finally, Question 3 (Q3) will suggest how an architectural intervention can reframe Shady Heritage as urban catalyst for empathy and communal reflection. No distinction is made between research and design questions as both processes are inter-related and should not be viewed as separate. All questions relate both to an overarching conceptual dimension as well as a to Marseille’s specificity, ensuring the testing each Act’s overarching findings.

	Research & Design Questions	Terminology	Sub Questions
act I: INVESTIGATION	Q1 What is Shady Heritage?	<i>Shady</i> adj.: out of sight, suspect, of doubtful honesty or legality. <i>Heritage</i> n.: debts and riches inherited from past generations, can be both tangible and intangible.	What is the modus operandi of the historicographic process in the city? What is the responsibility and agency of the architect within heritagisation? What is Marseille’s Shady Heritage?
act II: TRANSLATION	Q2 How can Shady Heritage be manifested to become generative?	<i>Manifest</i> v.: to reveal something that was previously ignored and/or hidden, making it a quasi-political action of protest. <i>Generative</i> adj.: said of something able to nurture the production of something new.	How can maps and narratives aid/hinder the study and spatialisation of Shadiness? Can a map make the historical filtration visible? What design gestures enable Shady Heritage to become legible?
act III: GENERATION	Q3 What is an Architecture of Frictional Empathy?	<i>Friction</i> n.: potentially conflictual interaction between diverging social groups. <i>Empathy</i> n.: ability to understand and care about another.	What design processes allow for diverging historical readings to manifest in the built environment?

Above: Graduation Framework I, original drawing by author, 2020.

Graduation Framework

Framework Overview

	Research & Design Questions	Primary Methods	Secondary Methods	Output	Timeline
act I: INVESTIGATION	What is Shady Heritage?	Literature Review & Synthesis	> Academic literature (Fields of Social Geography, Architecture, History, Philosophy) > Policy (UNESCO, France, Marseille) > Current Affairs (French and internation press)	Essay Anthology Pasts, Heritagisation & the City	P 2
act II: TRANSLATION	How can Shady Heritage be manifested to become generative?	Subversive Mapping & Counter Project	> Digital Archival content >Tourism guides books and websites for Marseille > GIS mapping > Virtual fieldwork and photography (Google Maps Streetview)	Manifesting Marseille(s) Marseille’s good, bad and shady	P 2
act III: GENERATION	What is an Architecture of Frictional Empathy?	Design	> Architectural theory > Precedent Studies > Adaptive Re-use toolkits > Fieldwork & Photography (COVID allowing)	Design proposals Redesign of a Shady Heritage Site	P 4

Above: Graduation Framework II, original drawing by author, 2020.

Relevance

Churchill famously said, ‘we shape our building and thereafter they shape us.’ Once this reciprocal relationship is acknowledged, the social responsibility of the architect can be viewed in a new light. Indeed, architectural practice is inherently future-facing, operating between present reality and imagined futures. The temporal aspect of architecture, coupled with the ethical obligation towards socially-just practice, calls for a high degree of professional responsibility as we take on a substantial role in future-shaping. As architects, we must consider what histories we build upon, to ensure a (socially) sustainable future. In the case of Marseille, the awareness of the impact of shady narratives can help us rethink both the status quo and encourage us to actively engage in socially sustainable future shaping.

There is a need to broaden our understanding that buildings and redevelopment can either amplify or muzzle values, and architects are the agents of this process. Currently, development models and the processes of hegemonic heritagisation facilitates the erasure of key heritage sites, and architects should consider their potential role as tacit accomplices of this. Processes of heritagisation are not clear-cut issues as there are many conflicting interests, and this is even more of a reason for heritagisation processes to be transparent and just. Social sustainability has attracted less attention in public discourse than its economic and environmental counterparts. However, in light of the threat polarisation and cancel culture pose to Western democracies, I believe that the social agenda should

be further considered in architecture. While we remain in our echo chambers on social media, part of the solution may lie in creating some physical common ground.

From an environmental point of view, changing value systems and functional requirements have left a legacy of obsolete buildings. Le Corbusier famously wrote in 1927 that ‘our world is strewn with the detritus of dead epochs.’¹⁰ While many disagree that the remains of the past consist of ‘detritus,’ centuries of construction have supplied us with on the one hand many (redundant) structures and, on the other hand, land scarcity. Given the significant carbon footprint of the construction industry and the significant amount of carbon sequestered in the existing built fabric, tactful building reuse often presents itself as the most sustainable practice in the face of both fiscal, environmental and social imperatives.¹¹

To conclude, this research enables the reframing of heritage as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. In doing so, it invites architects to reflect on how value-loaded the concept of heritage is. This research attempts to reconcile the past and future through heritage, paying particular attention to the Shady Heritage society struggles to relate to yet which has an insidious effect on our present. My contribution to the field therefore lies in the development of an alternative urban-historiographic process following which Shady Heritage Sites can be re-framed as an urban asset and be instrumentalised to serve current and future needs, bridging past and future.

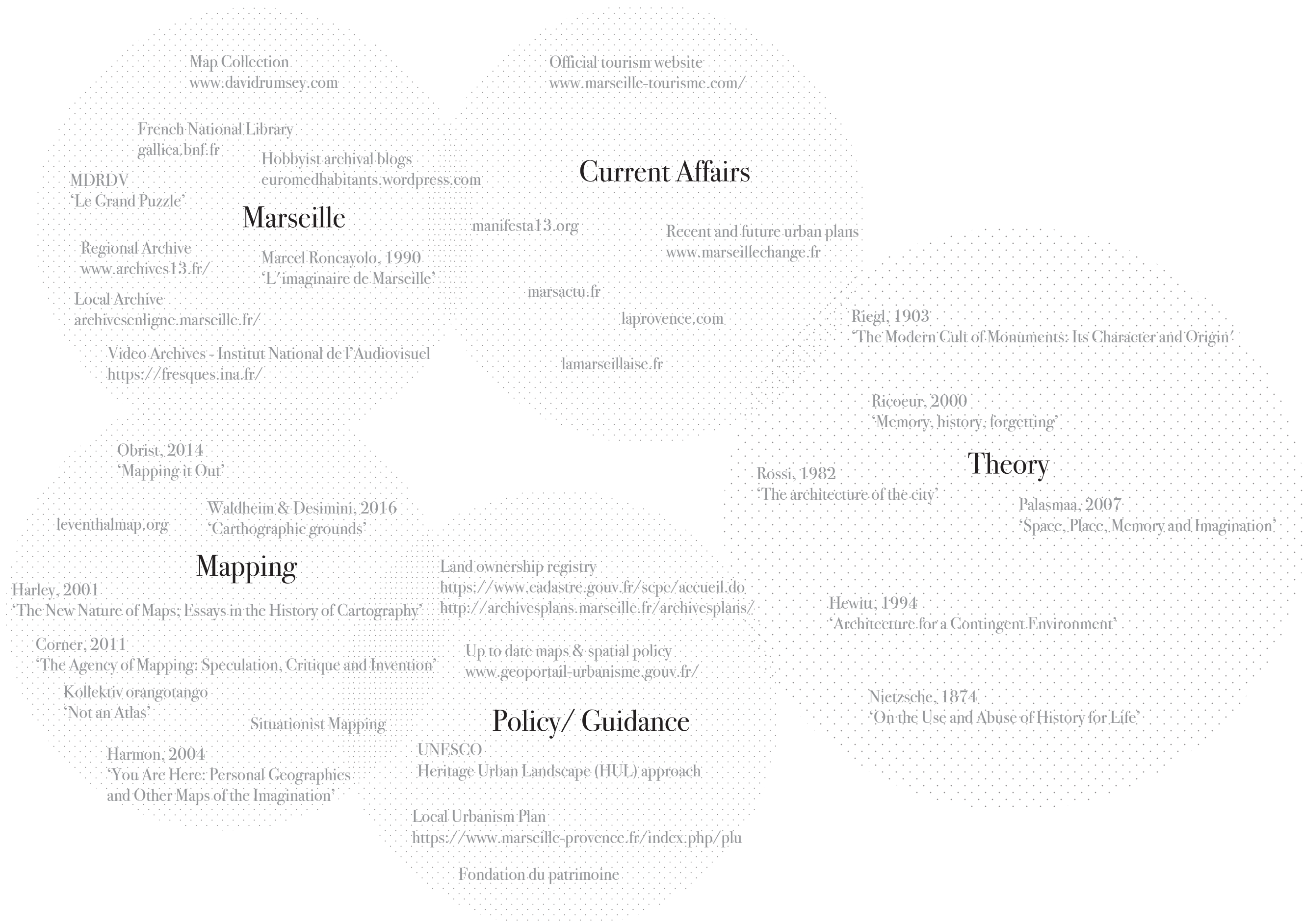
¹⁰ Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*. New York: Dover Publications, INC. (1927)

¹¹ Foster, Gilian. “Circular economy strategies for adaptive reuse of cultural heritage buildings to reduce environmental impacts.” *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 152, no. 152 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2019.104507>

Right: ‘The artists’ ability to highlight an invisible presence. Whiteroad, Rachel. House Study (Grove Road). 1992. www.artspace.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/book_report/rachel-whiteroad-55186.



Theoretical framework



Research & Design Methods

Act I. Literature review & Synthesis

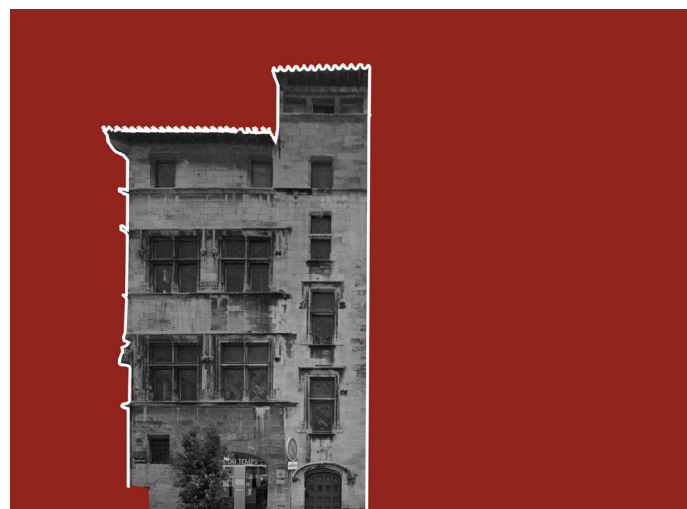
Act 1 provides the theoretical framework of my thesis, conceptualising Shady Heritage and stating its relevance. This will be carried out with a literary study relating academic discourse on historiography and architecture to the current politico-social context, resulting in an anthology of essays. These essays will discuss the selective memory of the city, memory and forgetfulness as a form of power, the instrumentalisation of heritage within tourism industries and cultural renewal, the conception of Shady Heritage, and a reflection on ethical practice and the agency of the architect in the historiographic process. A final Anthology entry on an

Architecture of Frictional-Empathy enables the project to come full circle: the lessons learned from studying the big picture and applying them to a specific context, are ultimately generalized again, ensuring my findings are tried, tested and transferable.

The tone seeks to be argumentative while using metaphors that invite the reader's empathy. The writing will be complemented with graphics which further explain concepts, outlining the atmosphere of the project. A glossary, also provided as an appendix to the research plan, intends to clarify the meaning and nuance given to key terminology.

Bottom: L'Hotel de Cabre from Marseille's Vieux Port provides an example of the role of heritagisation and erasure in the unfolding of the historiographic process in the city. Collage drawing by author, source image by Google Maps Street View (2019). [www.google.com. Accessed October 15, 2020. <https://www.google.com/maps/@43.2977467,5.3714093,3a,90y,168.14h,113.75t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sRtQIUkGTNDGhGSn5AjHoNA!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?hl=en>](https://www.google.com/maps/@43.2977467,5.3714093,3a,90y,168.14h,113.75t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sRtQIUkGTNDGhGSn5AjHoNA!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?hl=en)

Right: Contents list of the Essay Anthology, original photo by author, 2020.



Contents

Hierarchy of Histories

Urban Memory & Amnesia

Smoothing Gritty Cities

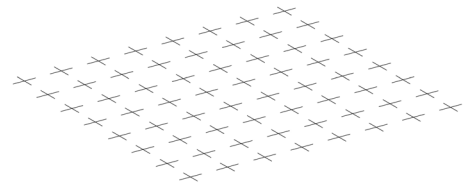
Conceptualising Shady Heritage

The Architect's Historiographic Agency

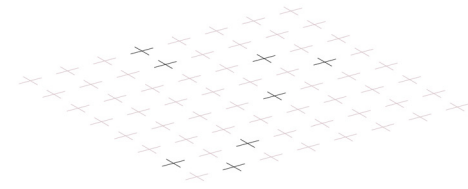
Manifesting Shady Heritage

An Architecture of Frictional-Empathy

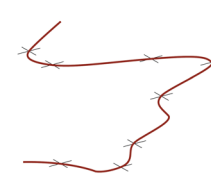
Below: Animated graphic representation of the historiographical process at work in the built environment (read from left to right, top to bottom), original drawing by author, 2020.



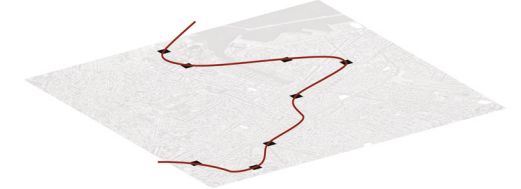
The datum points shown here are the happenings that make up the many pasts that preceded us. These are people, events, locations that resulted in individual and/or collective memories.



Certain data points within the past (in black) conform with the desired image of the past, while others (in beige) do not conform with this desired vision.



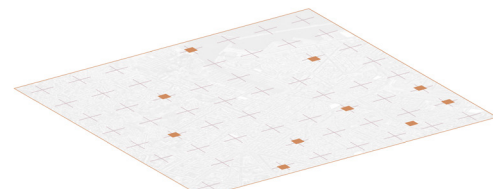
The desired points provide anchors to the curation of the hegemonic historical narrative. The historical narrative provides us with a specific, goal-oriented lens to reflect on and use the past.



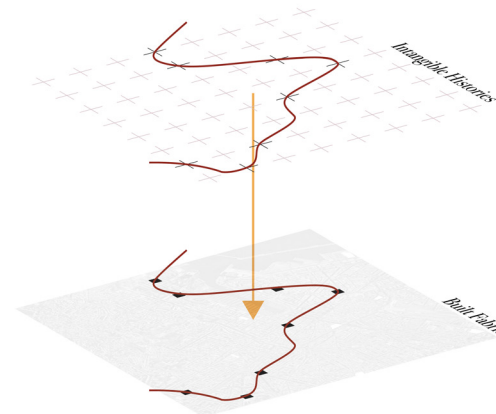
This initially immaterial narrative is translated into urban terms: some data points of the past materialise into plaques, monuments, memorials as well as buildings whose perceived importance has legitimised their claim to heritage value.



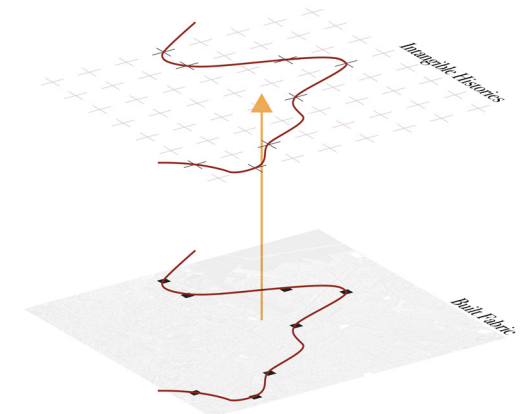
The non-normative data points in the past which were not immortalised into the hegemonic History are recounted neither in history books, nor the city.



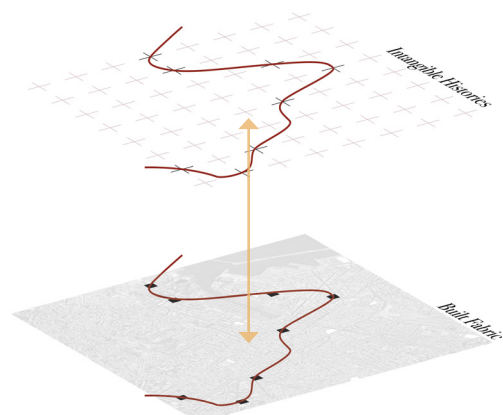
Shady Heritage Sites get overwritten due to their lacking legitimacy when claiming to historical value. Their contested nature condemns them to disappear.



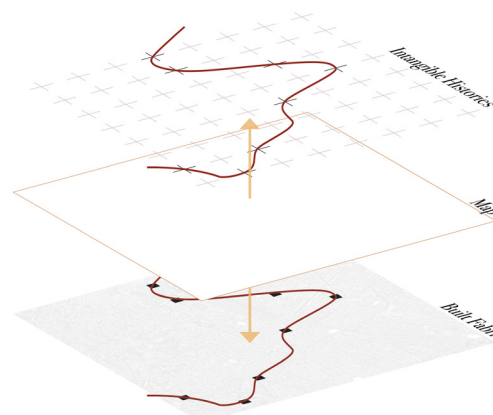
Historical narratives are inscribed into the built environment.



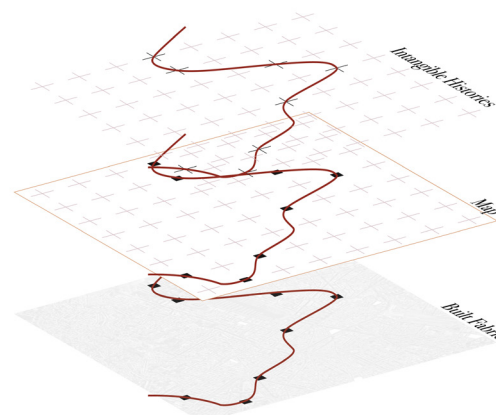
However, the reverse is also possible: the built environment can affect how we relate to the past.



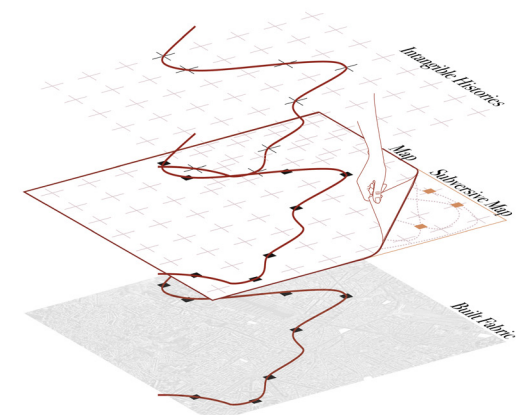
Therefore, there is a feedback loop between the built environment and the intangible historiographic realm. As Churchill said, 'we shape our building and thereafter they shape us.'



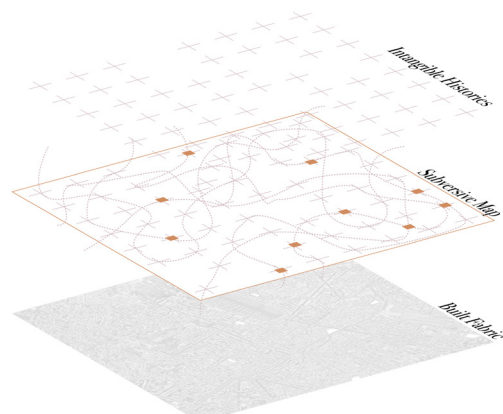
The map is a translating intermediary, situated between the intangible realm of history and the built environment.



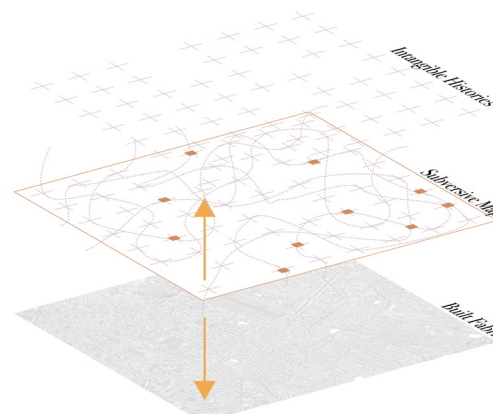
As such, most maps reflect hegemonic reading of the past.



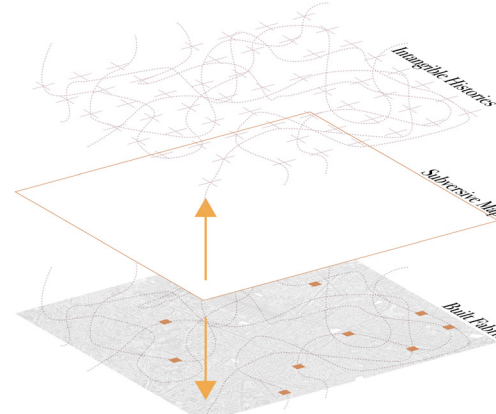
However, what if we were to use the map as a tool to push another, subversive, agenda? Instead of the historiographic process dictating the map in turn dictating the built fabric, mapping could become a discursive tool.



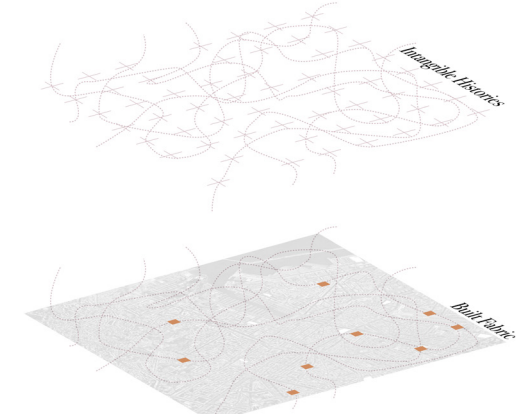
Mapping would enable one to read between the lines of the hegemonic reading of history, and uncover Shady traces within the built environment.



The map could then reintroduce shunned narratives into both the historical sphere and the built environment.



Subversive mapping reveals itself as a tool enabling the depiction of an alternative reading of space, and therefore time.



The weaving of a historical narrative based on Shady memories, spaces and stories enables a change in point of view: what was previously viewed as incidental, or ignored reveals itself as the symptom of a systemic historical slight and can be brought into the light.

Research Methods & Outputs

Act II. Subversive Mapping

Act 2 identifies and tests methods able to ‘manifest’ shadiness, becoming the indispensable bridge between conceptualisation (Act I) and contextual application (Act III). I chose the methods of mapping and counter design; mapping for its ability to show the spatial implementation of historical hierarchies, and counter-design for its ability to make a speculative jump from present facts to future possibilities and begin to develop a design language.

The aim of the map is twofold. On the one hand, the map pins down locations related to ‘Colonial Marseille,’ ‘Petroleum Marseille’ and ‘Tourism Marseille’ narratives. These three narratives were chosen for their significant and ongoing social, environmental and economic repercussion and the challenge they pose to the near future. This map’s content is informed by GIS data sources, archival research and current news. Importantly, the map does not seek to provide a comprehensive spatial representation

of all three narratives, but rather illustrate the omnipresence of Shady Heritage. On the other hand, the map intends to reveal the thickness of Marseille’s palimpsest and temporal filtration made of historical urban fabric. This is achieved by borrowing from various GIS and artistic references, enabling it to break cartographic codes. (See following spread) The map’s unconventionality prevents it from being read as a mere 2D representation, turning it into an object subjected to continuous intervention and human biases, provoking a wider reflection on similar processes of heritagisation and erasure applying to the territory at large. The inherent biases of mapping are further discussed in the Act II booklet. This format will stress the importance of acknowledging the map’s role as a representation of chosen data, and not a mirror image of a territory. The presentation of multiple competing-yet-related readings of the city present themselves as a discursive tool of reflection which will provide a nuanced understanding of Marseille(s).

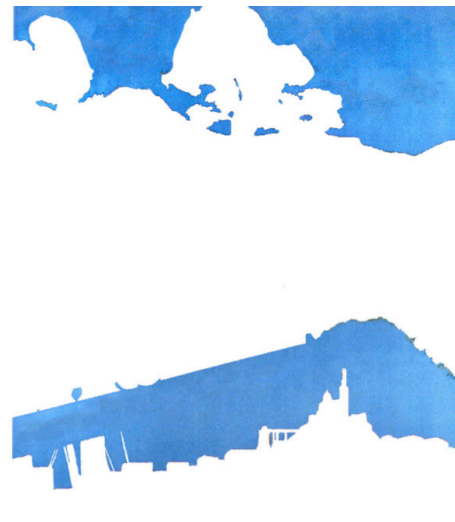
Left: Highlighting the role of the maritime mindsets in the three chosen shady narrative through the decomposition of following archival posters:
 Dellepiane, David. “Exposition nationale coloniale.” 1922. wikipedia.org. Accessed October 15, 2020. <https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Dellepiane-exposition-nationale-coloniale-1922.jpg>.
 d’Alési, H. “Port marchand. Marseille.” 1901. gallica.bnf.fr. Accessed October 15, 2020. https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9009144m_item.
 Cezanne, T. “Marseille, porte de la cote d’Azur.” 1950. issuu.com. Accessed October 15, 2020. <https://issuu.com/afficherie.moraglia/docs/affichage>.



Colonial Marseille



Petroleum Marseille

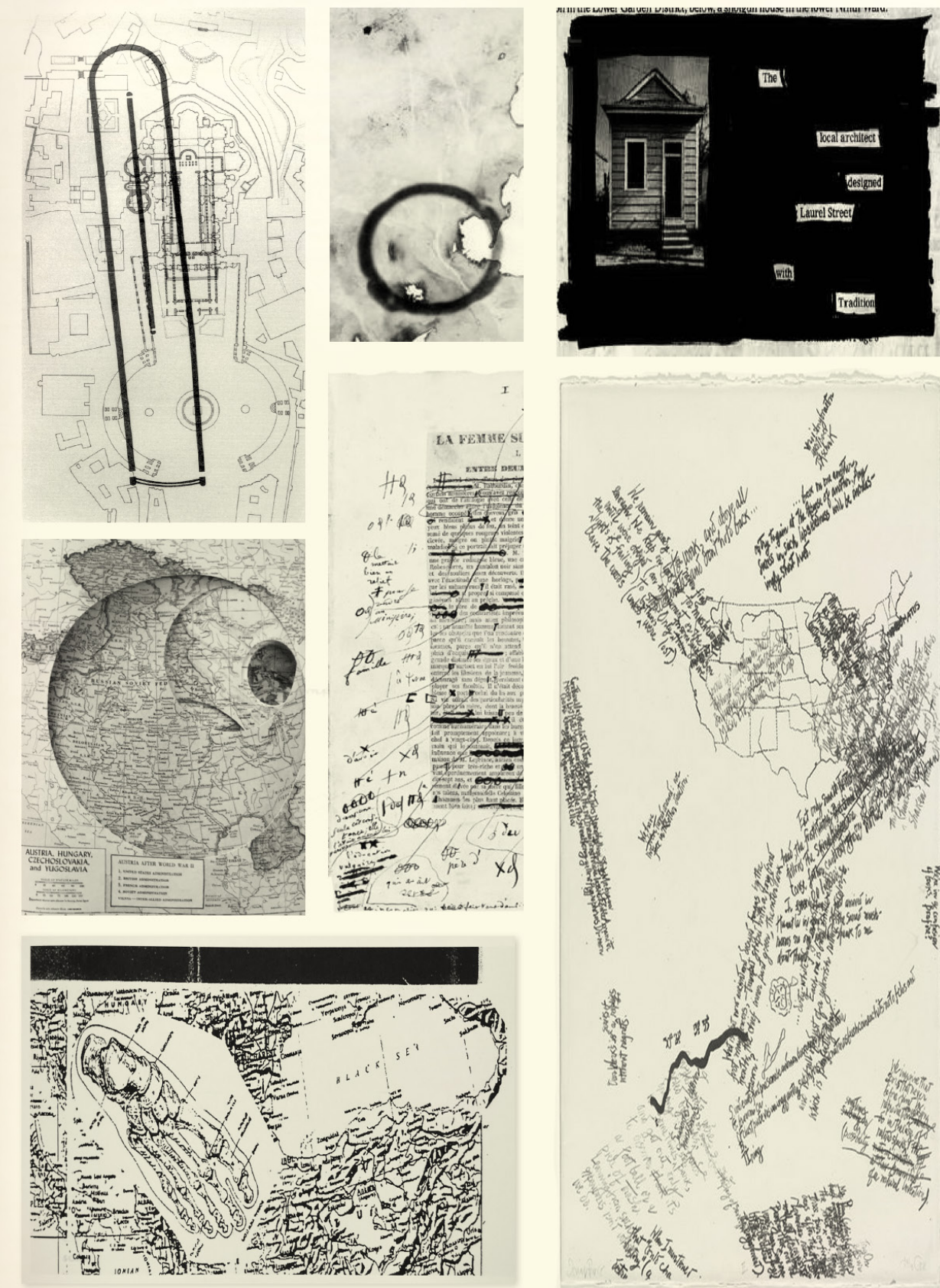
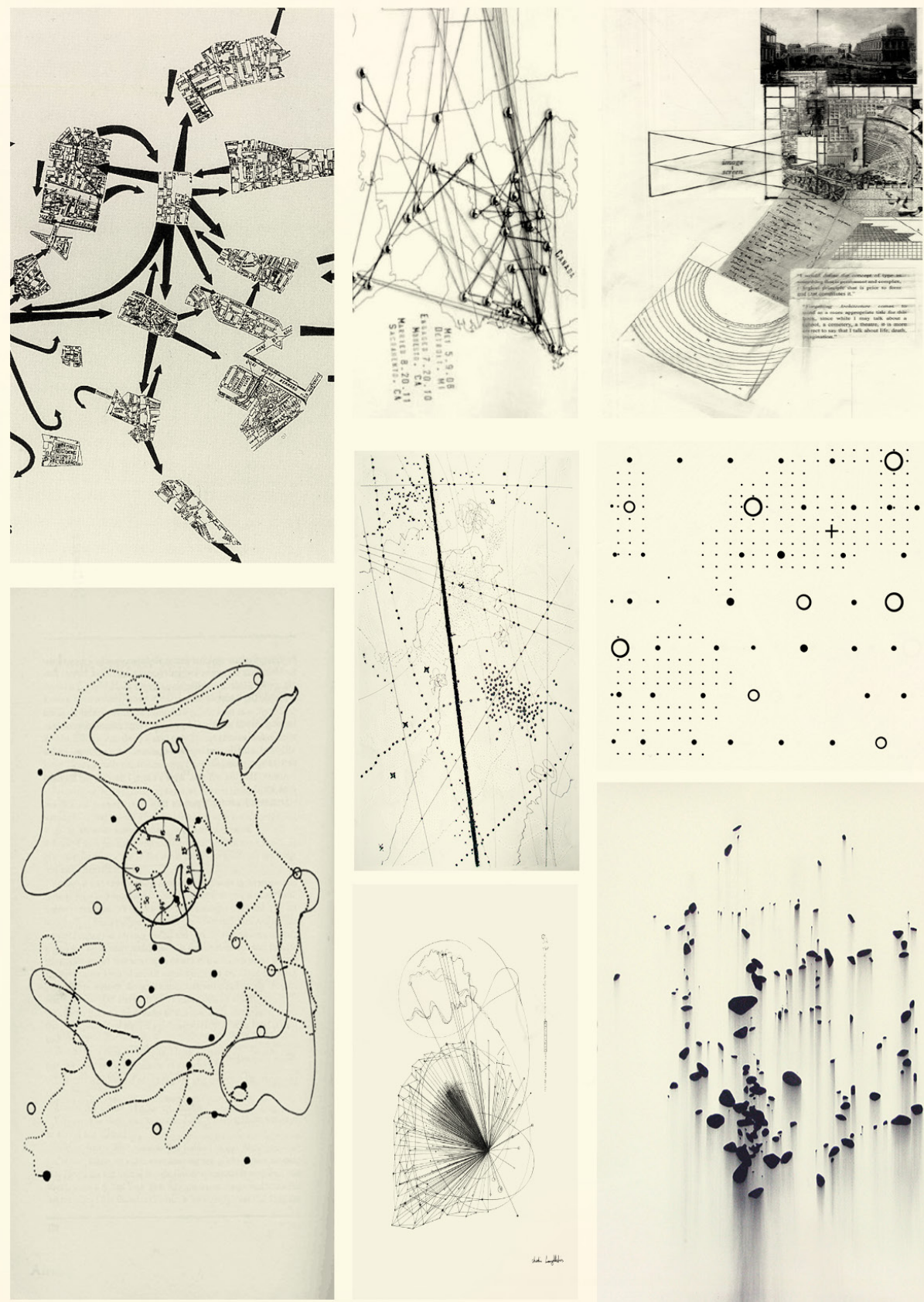


Tourism Marseille



Right: Marseille’s Palimpsest- collage of historic maps, collage drawing by author, 2020. Original maps by
 U.S. Army. “Town plan of Marseille.” 1943. earthworks.stanford.edu. Accessed October 15, <https://earthworks.stanford.edu/catalog/princeton-4t64p71j>
 Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. “Marseille.” 1840. www.davidrumsey.com. Accessed October 15, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/maps3866.html>
 Bellin, J. N. “Plan de Marseille et ses environs.” 1764. www.davidrumsey.com. Accessed October 15, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~233846~5510085:Plan-de-Marseille-et-ses-environs->
 Campen, L. “Plan Routier de la ville.” 1792. gallica.bnf.fr. Accessed October 15, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53099684g>
 Razaud, J. “Plan geometral de la ville ciadelles port et arceaux de Marseille.” 1743. gallica.bnf.fr. Accessed October 15, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53053097n>
 Fer, N. “Marseille, France.” 1702. www.davidrumsey.com. Accessed October 15, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~292633~90064224:Marseille-France->

Below: Artistic precedence ahead of map production, collage drawing by author, 2020. Source material references provided in next spread.



Mapping lookbook: cartographic codes of Shady mapping

Rangel Studio, North Palisade and Startlight Peak. n.d. www.rangelstudio.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://www.rangelstudio.com/images/north-palisade-and-starlight-peak-source>

Cage, John. Cartridge Music. 1960. [petergena.com](http://www.petergena.com). Accessed December 10, 2020. <http://www.petergena.com/frxpmus.html>

Push-pins and string on a world map, photo by author, 2020.

Cusick, Matthew. "Katy's Wave." 2007. www.mattcusick.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://www.mattcusick.com/portfolio/map-works/view/4005121/1/4005155>

Fusinato, Marco. *Mass Black Implosion*. marcofusinato.com. 2008. Accessed December 10, 2020. http://marcofusinato.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Fusinato_Mass-Black-Implosion-Katalysator-Anestis-Logothetis.jpg

McEwan, Cameron. "School-Cemetery." 2013. cameronmcewan.wordpress.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://cameronmcewan.wordpress.com/category/phd/>

Rose, Fred W. "Serio-Comic War Map." 1877. mapsandthecity.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://mapsandthecity.com/2016/09/map-room-treasures-from-oxford/>

Crnjak, Dragana. "House # 1." 2006. www.draganacrnjak.com. Accessed December 10, 2020. <http://www.draganacrnjak.com/WebSiteFiles/drawings.html>

"Palimpsest map showing circus of Nero in relation to subsequent building campaigns" in "Architecture for a Contingent Environment" by Hewitt, Alan. *Journal of Architectural Education* 47, no. 4, (1994):202

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Research Methods & Outputs

Act II. Counter Design

The design experiment consists of a small-scale counter-project which questions Marseille's existing situation by formulating a spatial alternative. The counter project methodology pioneered by the Radical Architecture Collectives of the 60s and 70s - namely Superstudio, Archigram and Ant Studio - sought to illustrate critical thought experiments able to question the status quo. As such, counter projects, much like the growing trend of design fictions, are a form of discursive design whose 'wow factor' is instrumental in provoking a reflection or conversation to test or shift belief systems. As such, discursive design methods 'help us identify the values that are meaningful for the future.'¹²

What is more, the process and product of counter projects provides opportunities for the designer to reflect on his/her practice. The ability to subvert expectation was for instance priceless to the Situationist movement where estrangement

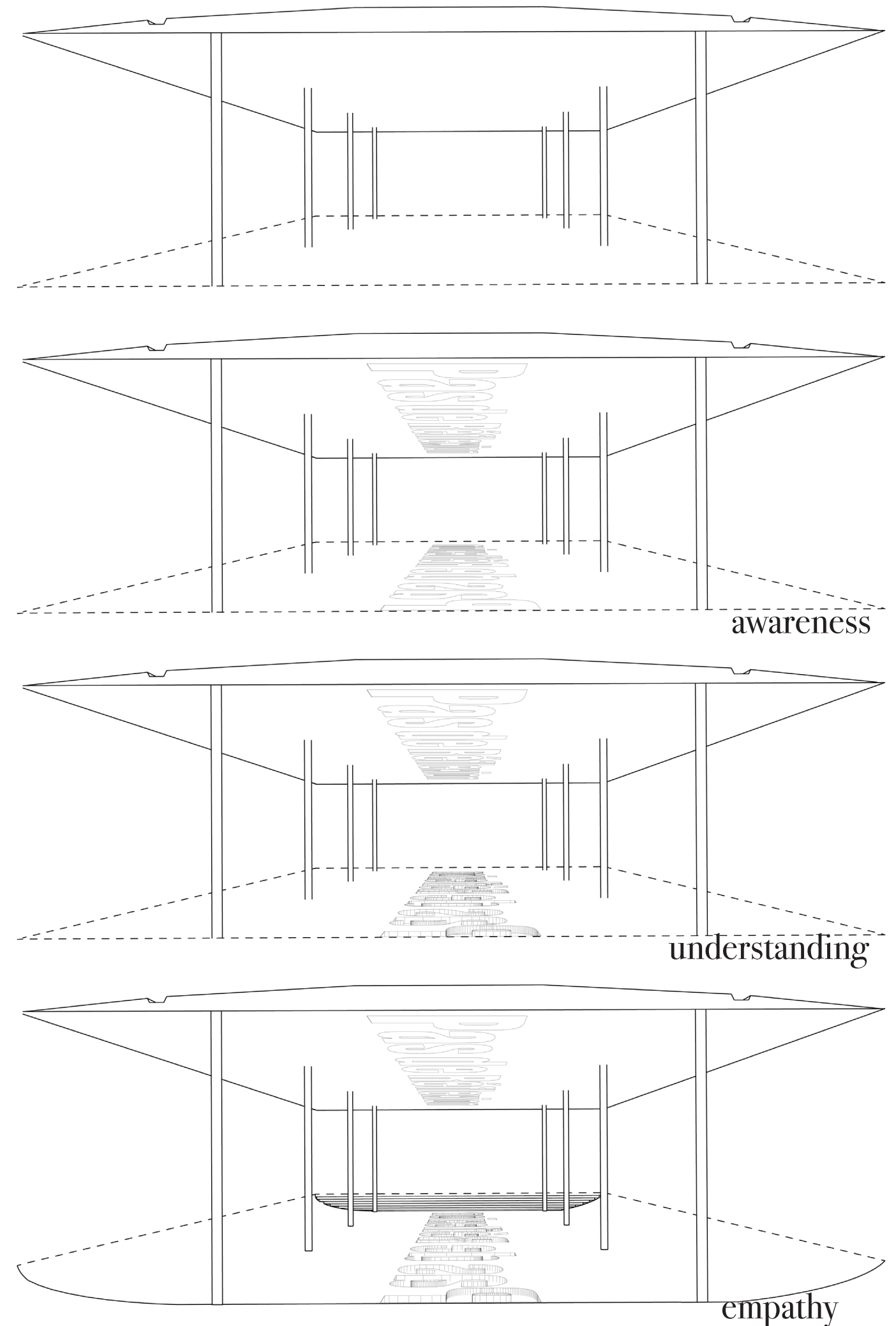
was key to enable contestation and emancipate the spectator into becoming an actor of social reform. In light of this, design fiction can be framed as a 'form of estrangement that liberates users from inflicted ideologies and unchallenged values.'¹³ Similarly, scenario planning - a methodology developed initially in the context of the USA's Military in the 1950s and later applied to spatial planning - operates following the intent of experiment possible alternative futures in the aim of designing the future.

My initial design aim consists of identifying key design qualities responding to Shadiness and developing a design language able to convey concepts of temporality, genius loci, inclusivity, memory, and legibility. Given the often radical and unfeasible aspects of such project, counter-projects do not suffice in nurturing direct action, with more achievable, nuanced proposals warranting more consideration.

¹² Hein, Carola. The Shifting Values of Port Cities: Towards "what if histories" and "design fiction"? portcityfutures.nl. (2020). Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/the-shifting-values-of-port-cities-towards-what-if-histories-and-design-fiction>

¹³ Knutz, E., Markussen, T. and Christensen, P. "The Role of Fiction in Experiments within Design, Art & Architecture." *Artifact* 3, no. 2 (2014):8.

Right: Early stage process diagrams identifying possible design gestures to chance the meaning of Marseille's Ombrière building, original drawing by author, 2020.



awareness

understanding

empathy

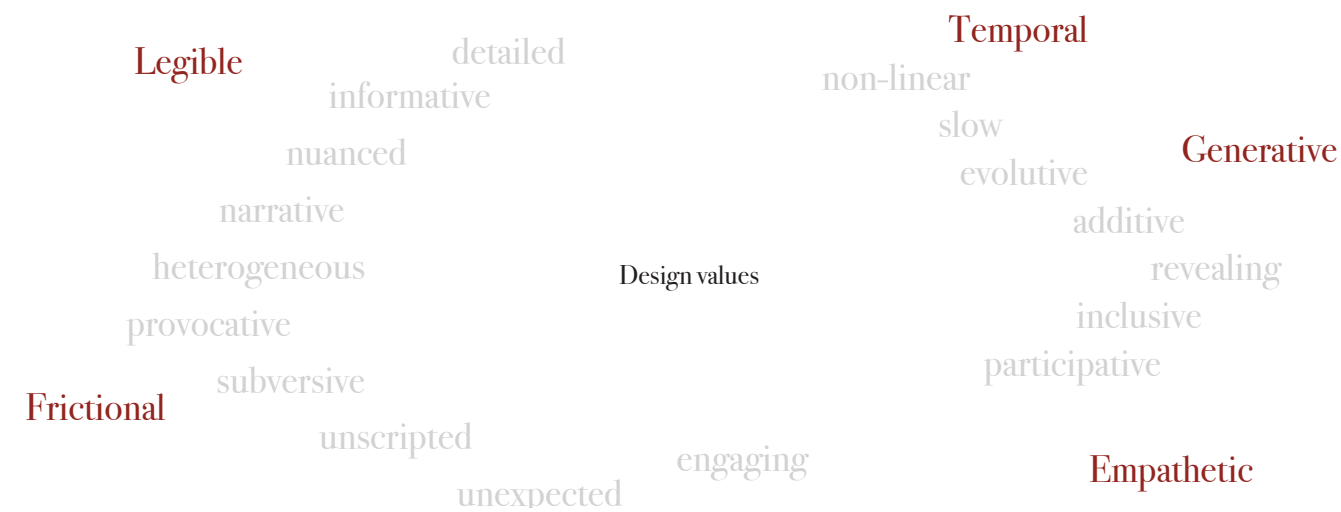
Research Methods & Outputs

Act III. Design proposal

The final stage of the project consists of the contextual application of general findings by using design as a goal-directed problem-solving activity. Act III reframes Shady Heritage Sites as urban assets fostering empathy and social reconciliation. The aim is to move beyond provocation to make the conceptual reflection productive and propose a desirable and implementable Shady Heritage reuse model. The process will be informed by drawing, observation, speculation, and reading on concepts of temporality, memory, legibility, and social identity, friction and empathy. Later stage writing will assist me to crystallise my thoughts and highlight the dilemmas intrinsic to the adaptive reuse of a value-loaded site. Indeed, reflecting on the economic, social, policy and political feasibility of my proposal may reveal troublesome hypocrisies and idealisation student paper-projects are prone towards and, oppositely, the limitation of ‘real world’ architectural practice. Initial thoughts of building program relate to public and social spaces, creating opportunities for

encounters, namely commons, however, it is expected that the architecture produced will not abide by an existing typology. Given the emphasis given to language, the design may materialise some key metaphors outlined in earlier research. The design proposal is an invitation to re-evaluate how (Shady) Heritage sites are valued and used, and an invitation to use the concept of Shady Heritage as a tool of inquiry.

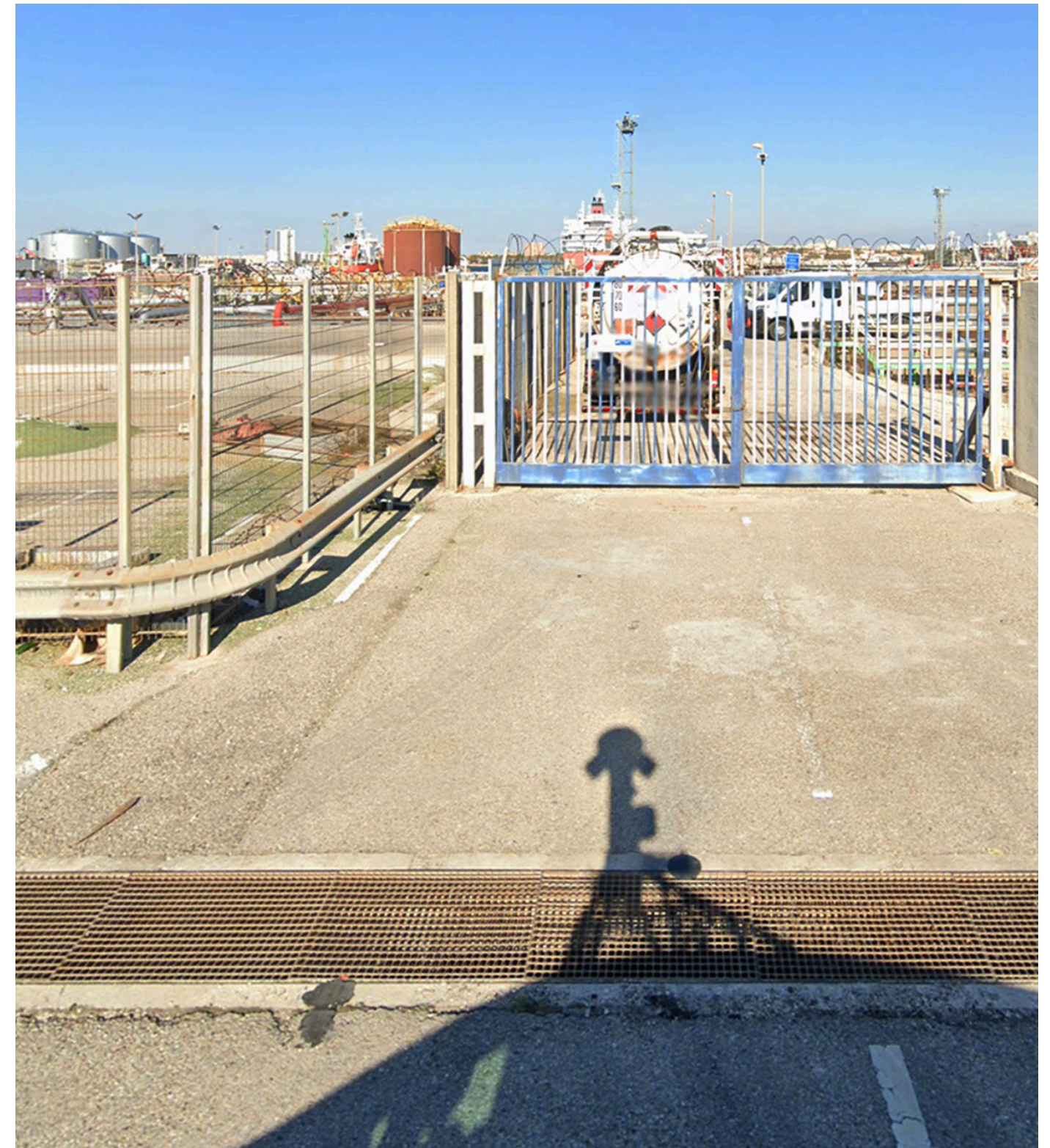
COVID travel restrictions have not allowed me to travel to Marseille, which has forced me to fall back on a desktop site study. The result of this is a less personal involvement, limited information resources and the inability to discuss with locals. However, alternative digital fieldwork methods- such as Google Street View- remedy to certain shortcomings. Furthermore, while I was initially wary of the digital filtration, I realised that the screen and Google interface can be viewed merely as an additional filter, on top of others – perhaps less obvious - historiographic filters.



Left: Initial characteristics identified as key for the design process and output, original drawing by author, 2020.

Top: Travelling virtually to Lavéra, Martigues and its petroleum refineries, in the company of a Google car's shadow. Adapted from ©2020 Google. Google Maps street-view photo of Victoria Park. Imagery ©2020 Google. Accessed December 10, 2020 <https://www.google.com/maps/@43.3930787,4.9981952,3a,75y,318.58h,84.09t/data=!3m9!1e1!3m7!1sMZWyGa9CPCQY0-3yWTSZA!2e0!7i16384!8i8192!9m2!1b1!2i30>

Following spread: Act II's translation, enabling the concept to become productive, original drawing by author, 2020.



From

polarisation and cancel culture in

Shady Heritage Sites...



...toward an

Architecture of Frictional Empathy



Self Assessment

Here follow the introspective reflections which accompanied the research design of my graduation project. They were informed by the Research Plan course lectures and readings, tutorials with my supervisors, conversations with students and members of staff within and beyond the TU Delft, as well as readings of my own choosing.

A first reflection constitutes of the insidious bias present in archival sources. This bias influences what has been put into paper in the first place, what can still be found, what point of view sources are written with and so on.¹⁴ This echoed what Hannoum wrote regarding colonial memory in France whose ‘latest and most crucial parts are subject to the 60 years law, during which there can be no access to these archived memories. The reason for this repression is to allow the official version, which is forced, to reign supreme.’¹⁵ This observation, which goes hand in hand with my problem statement relating to the hierarchies made within past happenings, is something I should remain aware of throughout my research.

However, the biggest potential flaw in my research was highlighted by Stavros Kousoulas,¹⁶ whereby the validity of historic research methods and findings are weakened by confirmation bias whereby a researcher quotes sources selectively in the aim of strengthening the chosen narrative without reflecting the nuance of the past as a whole. Indeed, ‘the historian [...] does not come to the archives innocently, but with an agenda, with a set of questions, that necessarily affects the constitution of the “evidence” upon which historical knowledge is based. Again, this is to say that the matrix of historical knowledge is memory, but this is also to say that memory, either repressed, manipulated or forced, becomes institutionalized, goes through channels of power and the intricacies of the making of historical knowledge.’¹⁷

One could conject that ‘reading against the grain’ can become a grain in itself, blinding one to facts that may contradict a dichotomised reading of the past that may be favoured by subversive research agendas. Similarly, I must remain aware of the (subconscious) influence that other contexts I have studied which may contribute to narrowing my observational and critical lens.

The practitioner has built up a repertoire of examples, images, understandings, and actions... When a practitioner makes sense of a situation he [or she] perceives to be unique, he [or she] sees it as something already present in his [or her] repertoire.¹⁸ Indeed, while Marseille may share certain aspects with other port cities, it remains a entity of its own, and warrants attentiveness.

To prevent myself from getting caught in a circular reading, I have lengthily reflected on my own agency of the project. Indeed, one could draw a parallel between the archives that are necessarily partial and value structured and any research project. I discussed with peers to understand where I stand personally to remaining aware of the influence of my personal position and motivations, observing for instance that the ability to view ‘social friction’ positively is personal, given certain cultures are much less confrontational than French.¹⁹ This is an ongoing and never concluding process whose worth was confirmed upon reading Boelen and Kaethler book *Social Design, Social Matter*, which talks of the need for design to begin with

“the place of annunciation’ which focuses on identifying oneself in relation to a specific issue through ethico-politic, economic, ontological-spiritual and epistemological dimensions.”²⁰

I have come to understand that, as an agent of change in the built environment, my role is not to moralise the past but to take constructive action: no to suggest a counter-historiography, but perhaps an alternative heritagisation process. Indeed, I am opposed to pushing a given narrative. Though using the first person in my research design breaks with academic writing



Left: Countering hegemonic histories by writing anew.

Manifesta 13, Invisible archives. aurelienmeimaris.com. 2020. Accessed December 10, 2020.

<https://www.aurelienmeimaris.com/manifesta-workshop-archives-invisibles-studio-cookies-esadmm-ici-marseille#9>

Right: The limited reach of alternative histories when confined to cultural events.

Sadik, Sara. *Cremailliere le 12.06 Archive Invisible 4*. manifesta13.org. 2020. Accessed December 10, 2020.

<https://manifesta13.org/2020/11/23/highlights-from-le-tiers-programme/>



¹⁴ Lee, Rachel, “Research design/ How to design historical research,” *Lecture series* AR3A010, TU Delft (24 September 2020).

¹⁵ Hannoum, A, “Paul Ricoeur On Memory,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 22 no. 6 (2005): 123–137. DOI: 10.1177/0263276405059418.

¹⁶ Kousoulas, Stavros, “Theory: Modes of Thinking & Problematization,” *Lecture series* AR3A010, TU Delft (1st October 2020).

¹⁷ Hannoum, “Paul Ricoeur On Memory.”

¹⁸ Schön, Donald. *Reflective practitioner - how professionals think in action*. Basic Books, 1983. 138.

¹⁹ Meyer, Ering. “Getting to Si, Ja, Oui, Hai, and Da.” hbr-org. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2015/12/getting-to-si-ja-oui-hai-and-da>

²⁰ Boelen, Jan and Kaethler, Michael. *Social Design, Social Matter*. Eindhoven: Valiz, 2020.

codes, I found it important; writing for instance ‘I chose these three narratives’ rather than the passive ‘these three narratives were chosen’ contributes to acknowledging my role as the author of this research. A fellow student pointed out that legitimising shadiness is an act of power and dominance, however I believe that identifying the condition of such sites as the result of a shared process is more beneficial than damaging. Indeed, identifying a trend prevents the dismissal of issues on the grounds that they are incidental, and therefore minor and unimportant.

Indeed, looking back I wonder whether my initial aim may have been to build upon one of my subversive readings of the past –for instance by designing a museum or memorial to (de) colonialism, perhaps trying to shock users into strengthening their anti-colonial stance. However, I quickly realised that there is more value in engaging in architectural discourse that relates to wider concepts of empathy, inclusion and productive debate. Indeed, Farthing points out in the suggested reading Research Design in Urban Planning that in some case research in the built environment should be partisan

‘to recognise the diversity of perspectives, and to conduct research which “gives voice” to those whose views have been marginalised in policy debates.’²¹

Indeed, not only do such anti-hegemonic museums exist, but someone could also argue that all museums would equally try to rewrite history following chosen values – which are inherently biased and subjective. I have therefore stepped away from thinking of typologies that pertain to memories as, by normalising a given reading of the past, they script behaviour and therefore exclude those who dissent.

I endeavour to remain sceptical through the project, meaning that all my ideas must be tested and scrutinised. The notion of ‘research scepticism’, taught to me in the Chair of Methods (MSc2 – Transdisciplinary Encounters) is something I hope

to achieve by sharing interim stages of my research to a wide and varied audience, namely non-architect individuals of different ages, political convictions, nationalities. Within academia, I have exchanged with fellow students and tutors from different TUD chairs (History, Borders and Territories, Methods & Analysis, Why Factory). The feedback I received has inspired me to form a nuanced point of view, strengthen my argumentation and sharpen my research aim.

For instance, when presenting to PortCityFutures, a collaborative research group, I struggled to respond to questions related to my use of narratives, which led me to question my position as an architectural designer among other disciplines. Later research and reflection aided me in identifying that narrative-making is key to enabling individuals to regroup as a community sharing a common reading of the past. The manufactured neatness of the narrative enables it to present real events in a coherent way providing closure and nurturing empathy: it provides a wider context within which one can perceive the ramifications of an event that would otherwise be considered incidental or ignored. By creating new narratives for Marseille, I propose a new layer of reflection, offering a different reading of the city’s heritage.

A PortCityFutures member insisted I respond to the issues that much like mapping whose selection implies human -and therefore biased- intervention, narratives require a narrator, bringing up issues of post-hoc moralisation. My response to this is that my additive process seeks to suggest rather than enforce a reading. The multiplicity of my narratives, make up together a matrix of entanglement in the city, thus reducing the pretence to authority. I wrote in the methodological section on mapping: ‘the presentation of multiple competing-yet-related readings of the city present themselves as a discursive tool of reflection which will provide a nuanced understanding of Marseille(s)’.



Top: Creating coherence from disparate data points

Fusinato, Marco. *Mass Black Implosion*. marcofusinato.com. 2008. Accessed December 10, 2020.

http://marcofusinato.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Fusinato_Mass-Black-Implosion-Katalysator-Anestis-Logothetis.jpg

21 Farthing, Stuart. Research Design in Urban Planning. *SAGE Publications Ltd* (2016): 21.

Therefore, I have come to understand my narration of Marseille is not benign, however some form of narration is necessary to the design process. While maps stage the appearance of the conditions of a design, narratives outline design intention, determining what a project is and is not, with some going so far as proclaiming ‘buildings aren’t shaped by mortar and concrete [...] the most important ingredient is narrative.’^{22, 23} It is perhaps the ‘grey’-ness and inherent biases of both mediums that make them instrumental to architectural practice, as they are formidable tools to situate a built intervention within social, political, economic, and environmental conditions and observe the moral authority and social reality within which it operates.²⁴ To conclude on narration, while I need to be careful in my portrayal of disenfranchised inhabitants, narratives are an indispensable component of design thinking. Their informed creation and application to perhaps overlooked contexts have transformative power on our interpretation of a location, and therefore on architectural practice.

Carola Hein’s lecture on the role of the architect as a value multiplier, coupled with Klaske Havik’s work on outlining the future-facing-ness of the profession have led to me to engage with the wider theme of social polarisation.^{25, 26} Division – between social groups determined by race, gender, sexual orientation, wealth – poses a genuine threat to western democracies. A conversation with Jorge Mejia further encouraged me to reflect on architecture’s ability to foster empathy and be generous to all – even those we profoundly disagree with. I believe this is indeed what democratic architecture’s values should be: nuanced, unscripted, inclusive and appropriable.

In conversations with my tutor Stefano Milani, we discussed the notion of atmosphere in my project, aiming to bring an emotional component, alongside a reasoned academic argumentation. This coincided with a time when the emotional weight of my archival research was considerable. I realised that it would be meaningless to delve into my narratives without taking on the

emotion attached to it. As such, empathy became a big part of both my research method and output goal. Empathy, as a research method, presents itself as a means of understanding the perspectives and experiences of others, especially in cross-cultural contexts,²⁷ and empathy as a research goal manifested in my intention to design an Architecture of Frictional Empathy. Empathetic research does have its limitations; Bloom points out for instance that thinking one can imagine what others feel can be immensely misguided and empathy cannot be a moral guide.²⁸ However, the mere consideration of empathy and compassionate research implies the researcher’s self-reflection on what we may (not) be feeling creates opportunities for new forms of interpersonal understanding.²⁹ As such, empathy opposes itself to apathy.

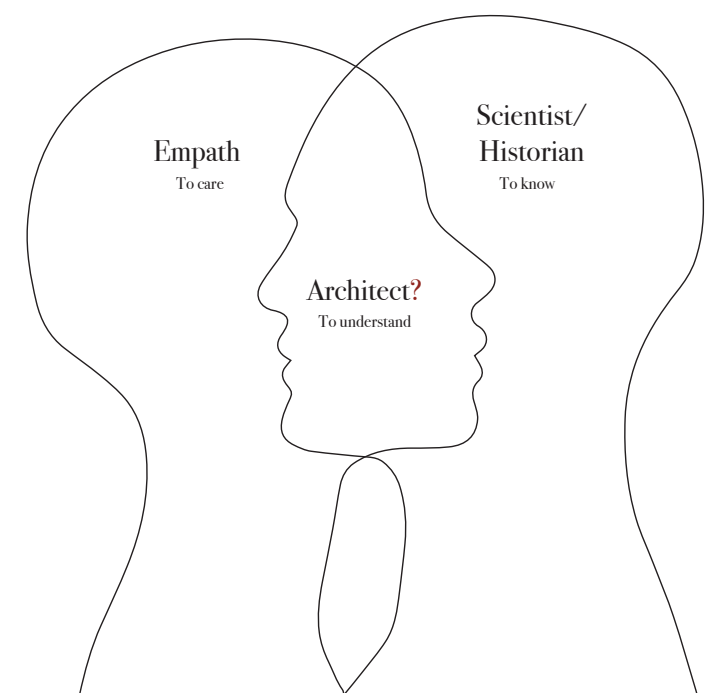
Regarding my output, the concept of empathy led me to refine the overall goal of my research as well as the scope of the design project. On the one hand, as explained earlier, the aim of the design is not to push a historical narrative at the detriment of another, but rather facilitate discussion. On the other hand, the wider aim of my graduation project (research and design combined) is to trigger a reflection on how we conceive heritage and the past, query the historic hegemonic narrative and seek to unearth nuanced, omnipresent Shadyness. Indeed, this is made evident by the Act I and II which do not set out to identify all the Shady Heritage Narratives of Marseille, but rather suggest the concept and method for architects to actively consider their role in mediating between past and future in an empathetic and inclusive manner. While it may not be necessary to take position within history, I believe that there is an ethical obligation to acknowledge the historical ‘greyscale’ that is overshadowed by the dominant narratives and, if required, ‘agree to disagree’.

I now stand firmly in favour of an actively political architecture practice. Indeed, politics are always latent within architecture as Farthing writes ‘knowledge is socially constructed rather than

given by the facts of observation; that planning [and] planning research is political.’³⁰ He goes on to explain that researchers involved in planning wish to change the situation they study and have ‘political views not just on the ends but also the means that might be pursued to achieve those ends.’³¹ Given the latent political nature of any research, I believe that a bolder, quasi-activist architectural stance may be more constructive. While some advocate for a practice of science and academia that is untainted from politics, it is naive to turn a blind eye to the political implication of research funding and application which are inherently political facets of research for instance. I believe such an absolute position limits the agency of architecture, and this has led me to recognise my dual roles in the research. On the one hand, I must try to research objectively and refrain from (historical) judgment, making my research decisions as transparent as possible, while on the other hand I endeavour to bring in a human, sentient component ahead of designing. This duality is reflected in the anthology for instance, where I construct an argumentation based on academic references, while bringing in more abstract metaphors and graphical references which appeal to subconscious understanding and emotion.

To conclude, I view my project and position as an architecture student and researcher amidst various academic field, making sense of sometimes contradictory discourses ahead of architectural action. Looking back at the Philosophes des Lumières, who practised at the interface between science and humanities, and recalling my obtention of a Bachelor of Art taught in a faculty of Humanities and current study of a Master of Science, in a Technical University, I hope to reconcile the notions of ‘empath’ and ‘scientist’ together and reduce the perceived binary between emotion and rationality – much like the heritagisation binaries I tackle in my research itself. As Poincaré, a famous polymath, wrote,

‘It is by logic that we prove, but by intuition that we discover. To know how to criticize is good, to know how to create is better.’³²



Top: Interrogating the position of the architect among diverging disciplinary approaches, original drawing by author, 2020.

22 Corner, James. “The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention” in *The Map Reader: Theories of Mapping Practice and Cartographic Representation*. Edited by Martin Dodge, Rob Kitchin and Chris Perkins. (2011). John Wiley & Sons. Accessed December 10, 2020. http://n.fonty.free.fr/PhD/Corner-The%20Agency%20of%20Mapping_ch12.pdf

23 “Building Narratives” (n.d.) futurearchitectureplatform.org. Accessed December 10, 2020. <https://futurearchitectureplatform.org/programme/94/building-narratives/>

24 Tanadi, Jesen. “A word of introduction” in *The Draftery: fig.02: Narrative Exhortations*. Edited by Tanadi, Jesen. (2012).

25 Hein, Carola. “History: Creating the past to design the future,” *Lecture series AR3A010*, TU Delft. (17 September 2020).

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27 Leake, Eric, “Empathy as Research Methodology,” *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences* (2019): 237-252. DOI: 10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_65

28 Bloom, Paul. *Against empathy: The case for rational compassion*. London: Vintage (2016)

29 Kukar, Polina. “Against empathy: The case for rational compassion,” *Philosophical Psychology* 31, no. 3 (2018): 479-482. DOI: 10.1080/09515089.2018.1442923

30 Farthing. *Research Design in Urban Planning*. 18.

31 *ibid.* 19.

32 Poincaré, Henri. *Mathematical Definitions and Education*. (1904):129.

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Appendix 1. Glossary

Subversive Mapping v.:

Use of the map as a discursive tool enabling the reintroduction of subversive narratives into both the historical sphere and the built environment. Also 'counter-mapping'.

Map n.:

Graphic medium enabling the (spatial) representation of intangible and tangible data.

Narrative n.:

Product of the linear narration of fact into a rationalised story.

Historiography n.:

Selective process of recording and recounting the past in the writing of historical narratives.

History n.:

Dominant and singular narrative which overshadows alternative readings of the past.

Urban Palimpsest n.:

Concept enabling one to read the city as the result of long-term processes involving multiple transformations, some intended, some accidental.

Urban Amnesia n.:

Loss of the city's memory due to erasure

Heritagisation n.:

Process of designation, re-interpretation and rejection of heritage enabling the perpetuation of a chosen historical narrative. Architectural heritagisation enables the historiographic operation to materialise in the built environment.

Value(s) n.:

Basic and fundamental beliefs that guide attitudes or actions, thus dictating social conduct and norms.

Heritage n.:

Debts and riches inherited from past generations, can be both tangible and intangible.

Erasure n.:

Deliberate or accidental removal of something, making it invisible.

Sanitisation n.:

Simplification of heritage sites and narratives to appeal to a wide audience and experience economies, thus removing all potential controversial aspects and reducing nuance. Associated with gentrification.

Shady adj. & n.:

Out of sight, sneaky, suspect, of doubtful honesty or legality.

Shady heritage site n.:

Physical location where an absence or presence manifests shady heritage.

Shady heritage n.:

Non-normative, shunned, contested heritage that stands as witness to a subversive historiography.

Social Friction n.:

Potentially conflictual interaction between diverging social groups.

Empathy n.:

Ability to understand and care about another.

Historical Injury n.:

Past happening or way of life that does not abide by current values and whose negative impact on the present requires historiographic re-appraisal (inherently subjective).

Appendix 2. Time plan

