

Project Book
ARB301 Thesis
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The Berlage Center for
Advanced Studies in Architecture
and Urban Design

Inn Gibraltar

Gallery of Palais Royal (1809, Louis Léopold Boilly)



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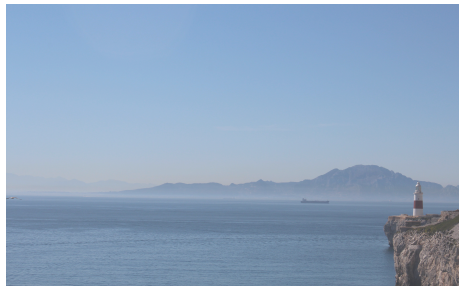
Introduction

The project deals with the architecture of hospitality. More specifically, it is an investigation of how architecture is used to provide a background to civil society and induce meanings through spatial and structural constructs whose realization is based on exchange value.

In the context of Gibraltar, where construction development boom runs the risk of encouraging local authorities to dispose of land and property assets to real estate developers, the project takes the form of a hotel, with its ability to provide the means through which the relationship between public and private space is negotiated. The *modus operandi* of this contribution within the grand scheme of things is twofold; The hotel comes in as a point of convergence whose sole purpose is based on continuous movement of people and capital, facilitating the predicted boom of the tourist industry and the increasing influx of people into the territory. More importantly, however, it presents itself as a private commercial venture offering an alternative ground for social and political participation, while capitalising on the capacity to produce different formats of social encounter.

It is the political charge of the hotel that this project uses as a means to articulate the civic potential of this particular building type. By introducing politics as a set of activities that take place on the spectrum between public and private, the project examines the hotel as a neutral ground that accommodates alternative spaces for social and political participation. In doing so, it challenges the hotel as an architectural artifact—with its programmatic, formal, and spatial presence—and its capacity to engender a register of meaning in its own right. To politicise a hotel then means to openly question its importance, not only as a city-forming element, but also as a relevant cultural edifice. To explicate what is often only implicit is to shed light on the forces that shape and will continue to shape not only Gibraltar's, but our urban condition at large.

As such the project's main intent is an interrogation of a particular form of



As Found Propositions

Photographs from authors during
fieldtrip in Gibraltar, June 2019

Beyond the Rock

Spatial interventions define and are defined by flux. Fluxes manifest in infrastructure, urban arrangements, buildings, and rooms, guiding, directing, and facilitating our movement. Simultaneously, the practice of movement defines our perception of space. On land we orientate through boundaries, borders, obstructions, and divisions between fields, regions, and states. At sea, our position is determined by intersecting lines of connections through distant objects, creating reference points and networks.

Gibraltar—a small peninsula on the southern tip of Europe—has been one of these reference points for many years. The stable presence of the Rock has been central to many stories, myths, and projects—from the Pillars of Hercules to the dream of Atlantropa. The 421-meter-high limestone formation has been a reference point for sailors, a strategic location for military garrisons, and a crucial stopover for migratory birds and insects. Gibraltar is therefore associated with being a stable, static, and steadfast small town, where one only ends up by virtue of circumstance.

However, Gibraltar is anything but stagnant. Surrounded by water, the territory is part of a global trading network characterized by the movement of cargo, passengers, and migrants. It lies in the midst of the Strait, to which the peninsula lends its name, which defines and unfolds the dynamic, fluctuating, and ever-changing condition of the territory.

As maritime choke points, continental straits determine the rhythm, capacity, and intensity of shipping patterns. Located between two polarities, they pose an inherent condition of tension, conflict, and imbalance. As such, straits channel and catalyze flux. Where there is difference, there is flux; where there is flux, there is dynamism. The Strait of Gibraltar, too, can be understood in such terms—strategically located between two continents, it separates the Atlantic Ocean from the Mediterranean Sea. On its edge lies Gibraltar—the entry point to the Mediterranean.

Gibraltar is a relatively unimportant yet historically significant entity; the peninsula is a mere 6.8 sqkm with 33,000 people living almost exclusively on the west side.

Around 250 Barbary macaques and many other species live or stopover in the Upper Rock Nature Reserve, covering 36% of the land. Gibraltar is still crucial in its wider context. Over the course of history, the seemingly insignificant territory has been fought over, conquered, isolated, and reconnected by many. Early Islamic settlers from 711 AD conceived of the city as a fortress; in the sixteenth century the old town started to extend from the Moorish Castle, and the following centuries saw Spanish and Anglo-Dutch troops taking hold of the Rock. Their defenses, moles, batteries, and bastions shaped its surface, while tunnels and excavations shaped the interior of the Rock.

When the end of Great Siege (1779–1783) temporarily stabilized tensions, Genoese, Portuguese, and Moroccan merchants made their way to Gibraltar to make their fortunes at this British trading outpost. In the nineteenth century this multicultural community expanded the city into reclaimed land and onto the Rock, leaving their architectural marks on the city. Today, Gibraltar remains a British Overseas Territory but with separate legal jurisdiction. It is said that as long as the monkeys stay, the British won't leave. But that, soon, might change. Could we reimagine Gibraltar as an autonomous territory?

Independence and Interdependence

Gibraltar is not an island, yet it is prone to isolation. Without any natural resources, the peninsular is highly dependent on its relationship with its surrounding context. This has put tremendous pressure on its border—a 1.2-km-long threshold beneath the Spanish town of La Linea. As Gibraltar is highly dependent on imports and cheap labor from Spain, obstructing this frontier can have a dramatic effect on Gibraltar's economy. As such, it forms an important bargaining tool for its neighbor.

Since the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht officially assigned Gibraltar to the British, Spain has tried to reclaim the strategic outpost by force and persuasion. Gibraltarians, however, want to stay British; in the 1967 sovereignty referendum, a massive majority of 99.6% of Gibraltarians expressed their eagerness to remain under British rule.

As a response, Spanish dictator Francisco Franco restricted all forms of trade and traffic across the border, leaving Gibraltar with no other option but to turn to northern Europe and Africa

for help. For 16 years, until the border fully reopened in 1985, the UK, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Morocco provided the territory with food, water, medical oxygen, and construction materials by sea and air. Franco's actions also forced Gibraltar to look inwards, identify its strengths, and make alliances to overcome its weaknesses.

Following the reopening of the border, the government of Gibraltar actively rebuilt its economy by accentuating its differences from its surrounding context. Over the past four decades, three major industries have emerged—in the 1990s tourism and ship refueling (bunkering) began to account for a significant daily in- and outflow of both people and ships. Financial services then emerged as another major industry after beneficial tax policies implemented in 2009 attracted foreign investors and online gambling enterprises. The boost to employment and general shift towards high-end residential development has brought a significant temporary population increase in recent years, mainly from the UK. These have negated some of Gibraltar's dependencies, but the built environment is still highly dependent on Spain.

Up to 12,000 tourists a month at the cruise terminal, peruse Main Street, and take the cable car for a quick visit on the Rock to illegally feed the monkeys, while 15,000 workers cross the border from the neighboring Spanish town of La Linea every day.

With limited options for urban expansion, the local construction market is highly competitive. Fast-paced developments arise on reclaimed land and former British military grounds, over which the local authorities have little to no control. Often initiated by Spanish contractors and private investors, building culture is characterized by a case-by-case system with little room for architectural innovation. In turn, Spanish urban planning culture restricts Gibraltarian architects to their familiar territory.

How can Gibraltar expand its architectural context and open new doors for its architects?

While the political situation of the European Union and the United Kingdom are destabilizing, Gibraltar finds itself in an ever-more vulnerable state.

However, opposite the Strait in Morocco and Algeria, solar and biomass energy sectors are rapidly evolving.

They are likely to result in large-scale urban and infrastructural expansion, creating major investment opportunities in northern Africa.

In this projection, Gibraltar aims to monetize these opportunities by shifting its gaze to Northern Africa, plugging into the energy circuit south of the Strait.

As such, Gibraltar's potential, importance, and territory are no longer defined by its administrative borders, but rather in relation to the networks it operates within.

What could be the repercussions on the local building culture of Gibraltar?

If Gibraltar wants to gain control over its precarious condition then one thing is inevitable—connection.

As new and improved infrastructural connections create opportunities for investment and expansion in and around Gibraltar, improved connection to Morocco enhances the capacity of energy, freight, and capital flows across the Strait. Gibraltar's beneficial tax policies make import through the territory appealing for both Europe and Africa, accelerating urban expansion and economic growth in nearby cities.

For Gibraltar specifically, the change means that the territory transforms from a geopolitically insignificant peninsula to a crucial node in the intercontinental trading network.

How can Gibraltar exploit this new nodal condition, and how can architecture assist that?

3) Gibraltar as Destination

A transport hub integrated within Gibraltar's urban tissue concentrates all traffic and freight, distributing the flows along and across the territory. By expanding its context to Africa, economic opportunities attract migration from its surrounding area, creating potential for Gibraltar to become more attractive to investors, tourists, and residents. Additionally, the optimization of ferry routes between Africa and Europe enhances the overseas connection for passengers. How can spatial strategies accommodate and optimize these new and intensified fluxes?

4) Population Growth & Urban Expansion

When financial opportunities open up, people from other countries arrive to reap the rewards. Improved maritime connections and accessibility strengthen the capacity, speed, and frequency of traffic across the Strait, and are thus projected to bring a substantial population increase—laborers from Northern Africa and investors from China are shifting their gaze from Africa up to Gibraltar. To accommodate this population increase, Gibraltar is projected to expand and densify into the sea as well as on land, following its existing strategies of long-term planning on the west side, and rapid reclamations on the east side. How could the peninsula deal with the contested changing coast lines, and how would these new communities express themselves in public space?

5) Climate Change

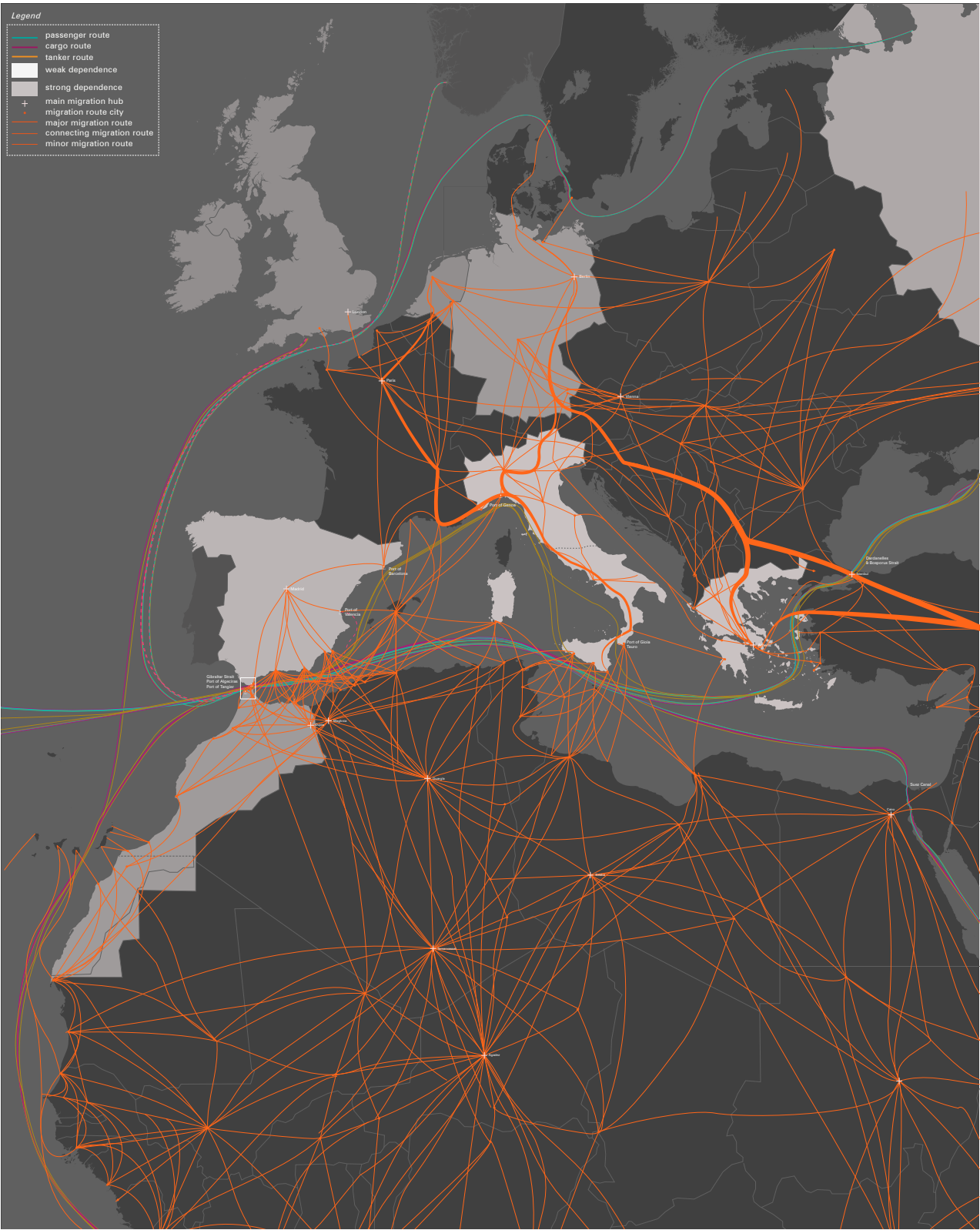
Gibraltar's natural water borders form not just a connection across the Strait, but also a threat to its expansion. While rising sea levels amplify the spatial pressure on the territory, rising temperatures, extreme weather events, pollution, and overfishing have resulted, and continue to result, in mass extinction and biodiversity loss to which the unique species in Gibraltar are especially vulnerable. How can we reconsider these crucial thresholds between the city and the water, and the city and the Upper Rock, accommodating both human and non-human populations?



Gibraltar: The Built Environment

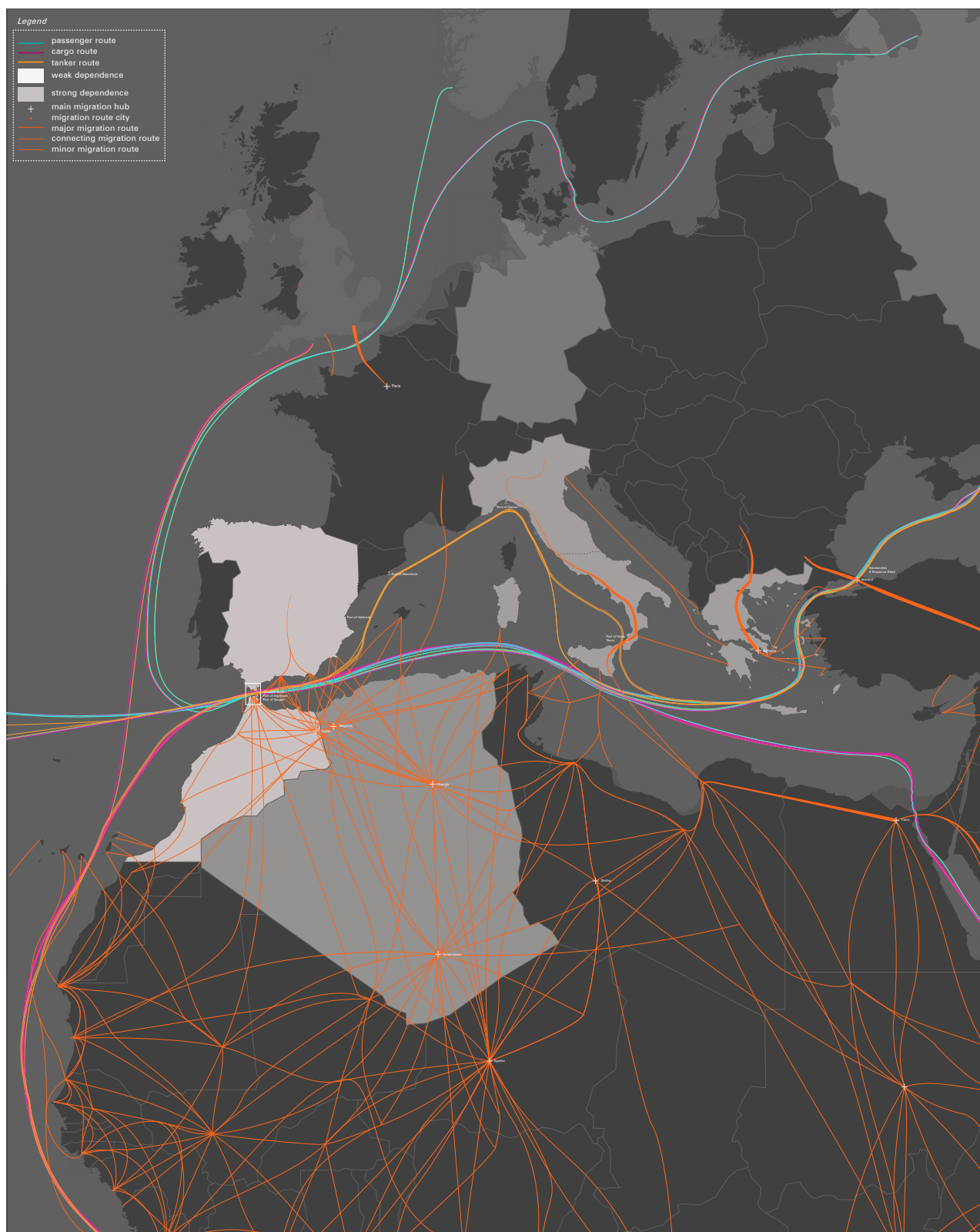


Site location of Gibraltar



2020

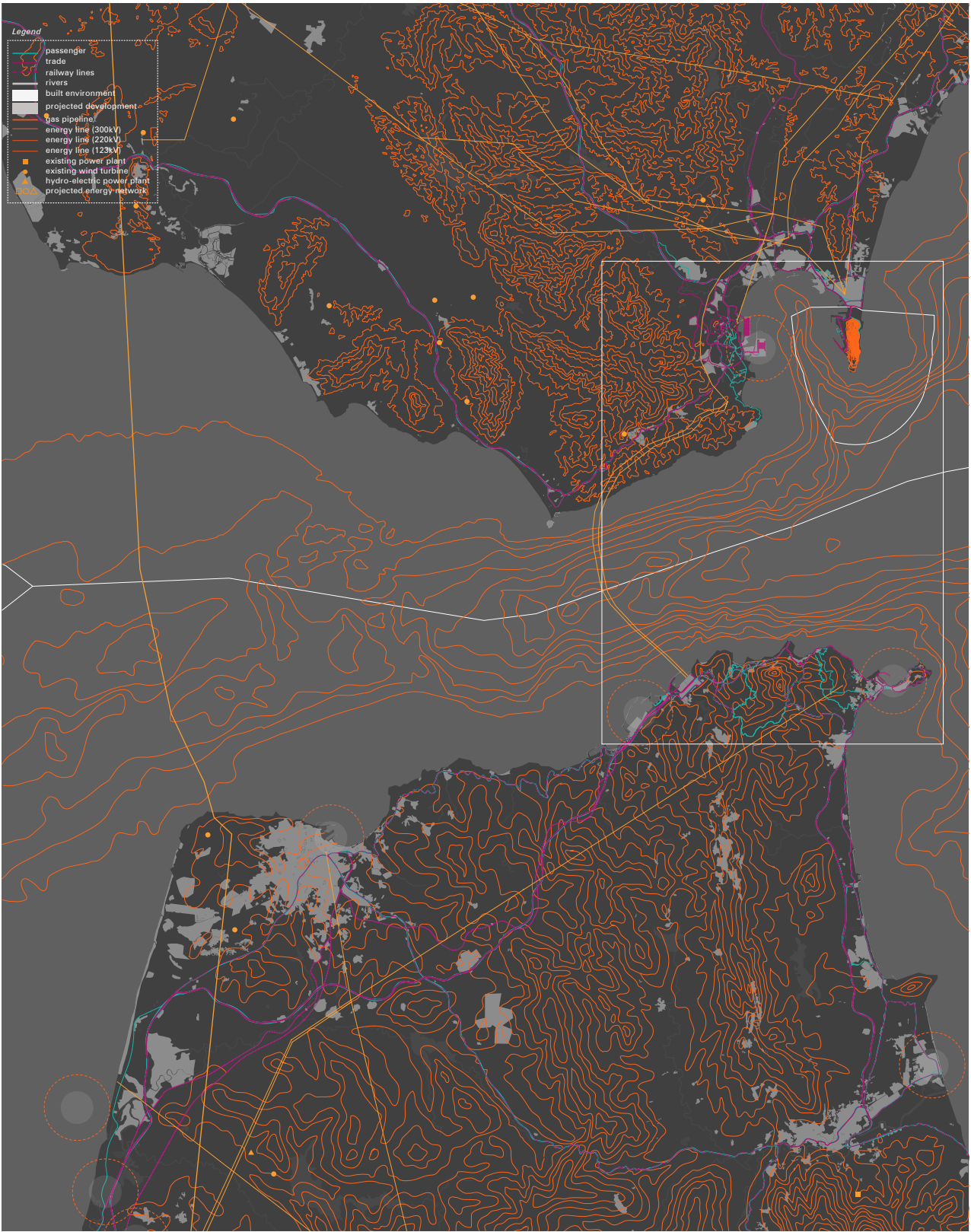
The Territory of Gibraltar: map with present dependencies and migratory routes



2050

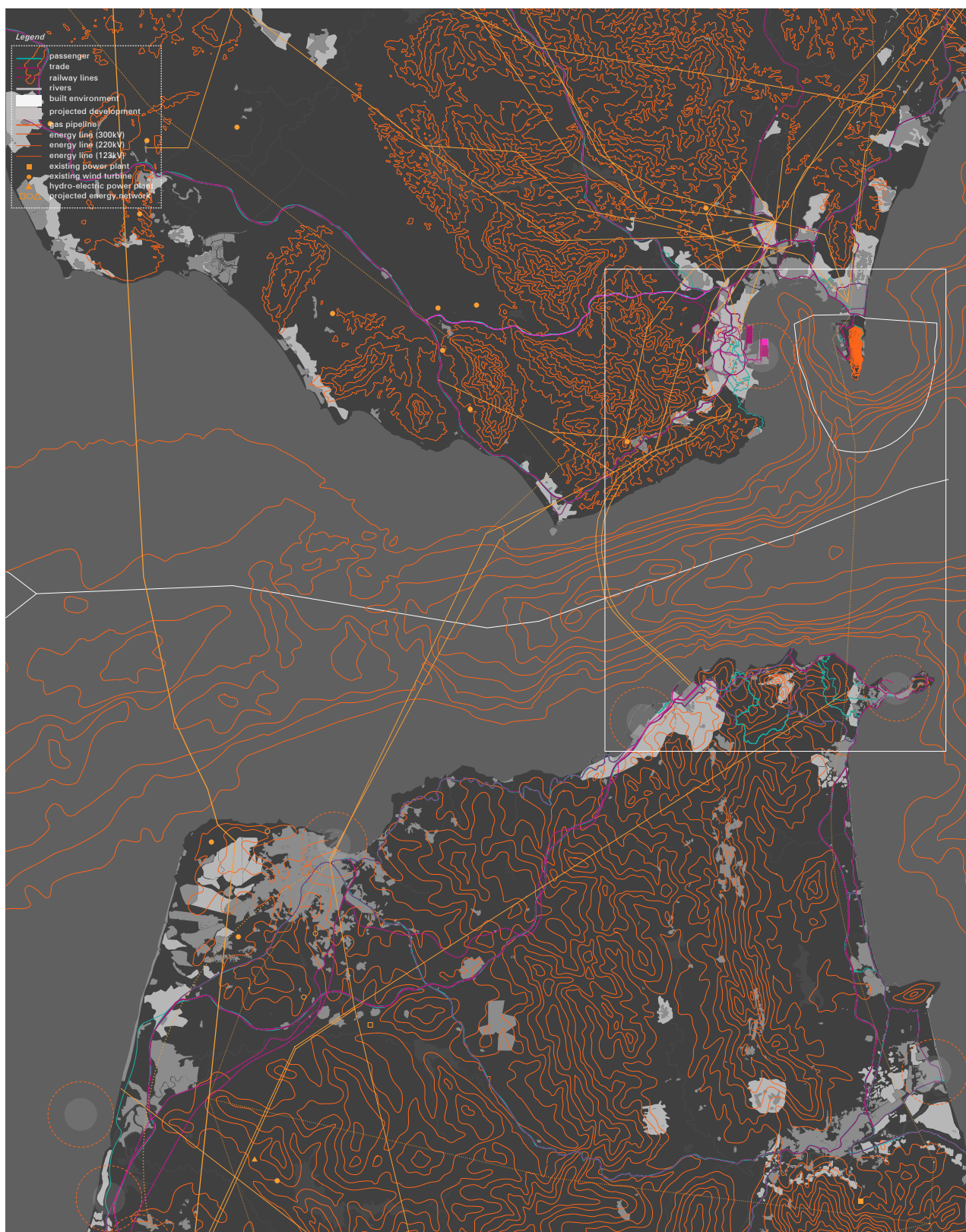
The Territory of Gibraltar: map with
future dependencies and the re-
orientation towards Africa

2) Infrastructural Connectivity



2020

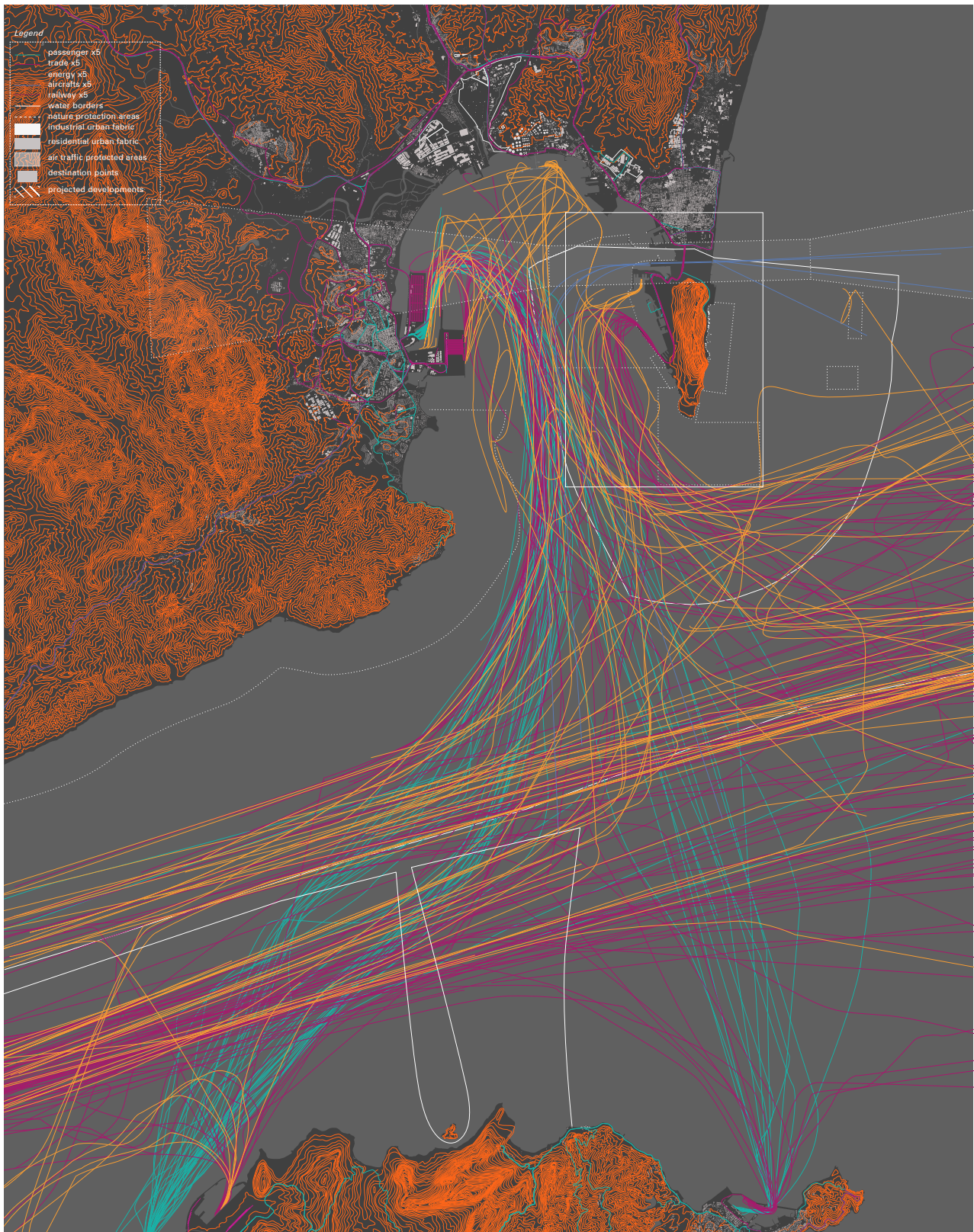
The Strait of Gibraltar: map with the existing economies and infrastructural developments



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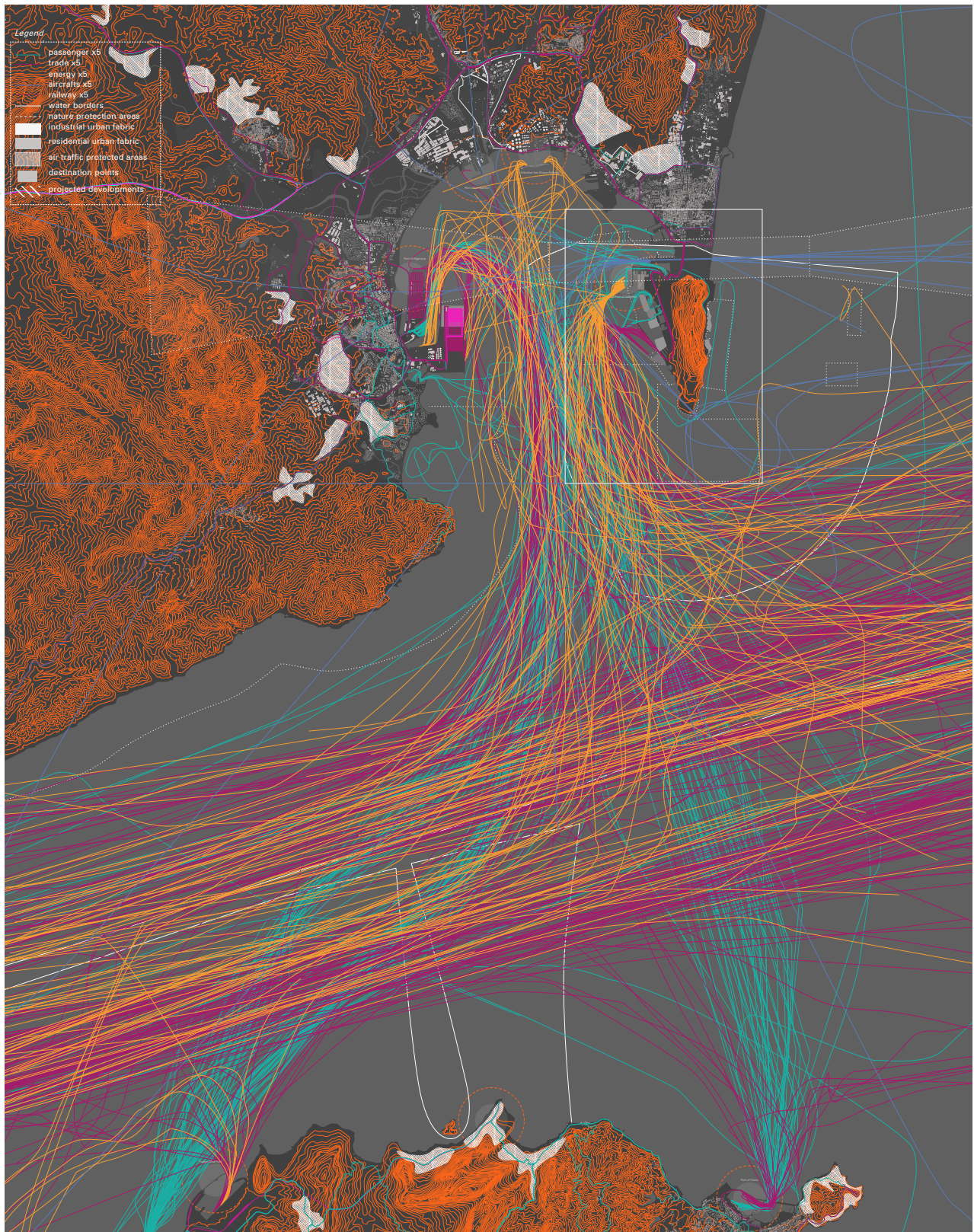
The Strait of Gibraltar: map with
the future growing economies and
infrastructural developments

3) Gibraltar as Attractor



2020

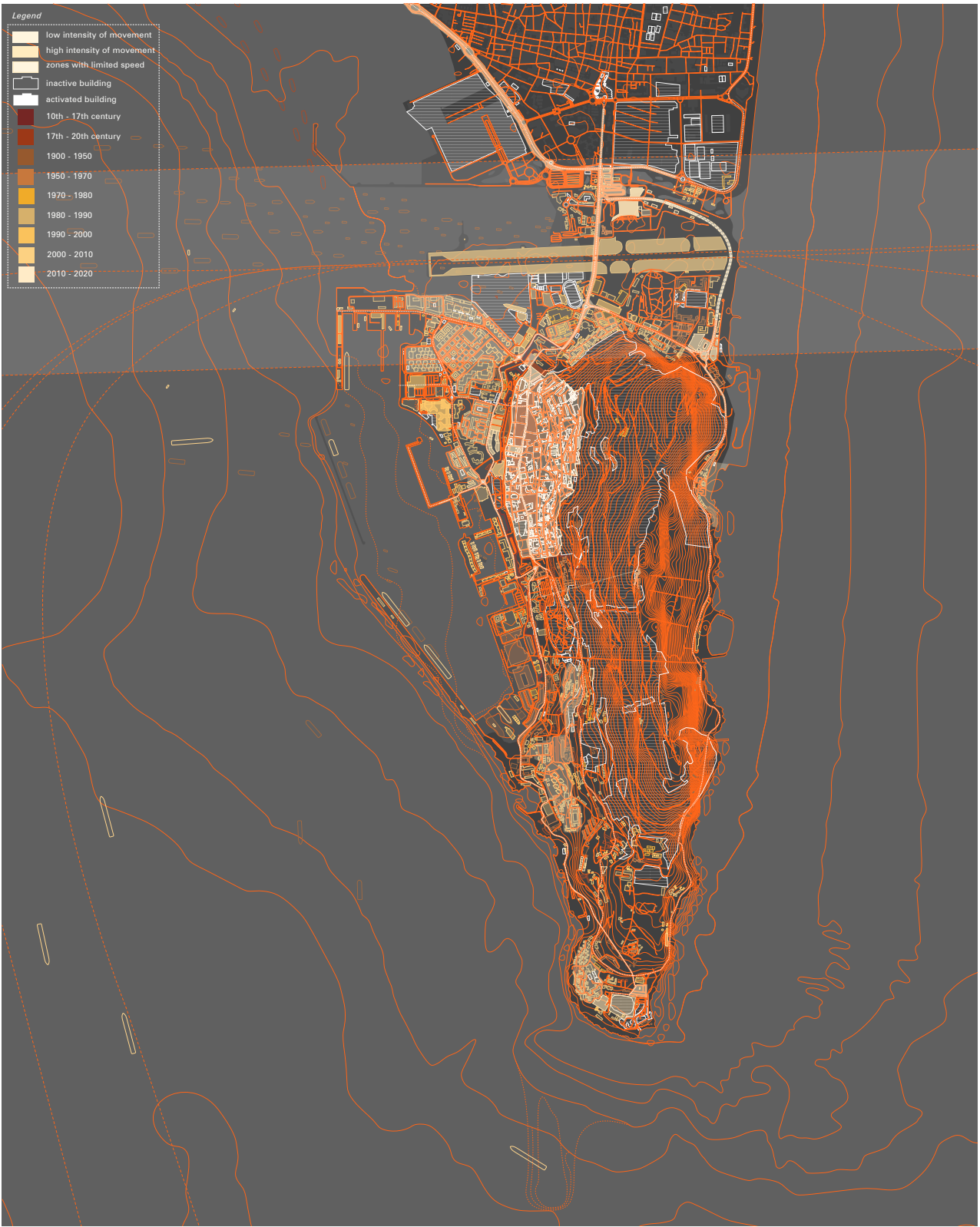
The Bay of Gibraltar: map with the existing weekly traffic through and across the Strait



2050

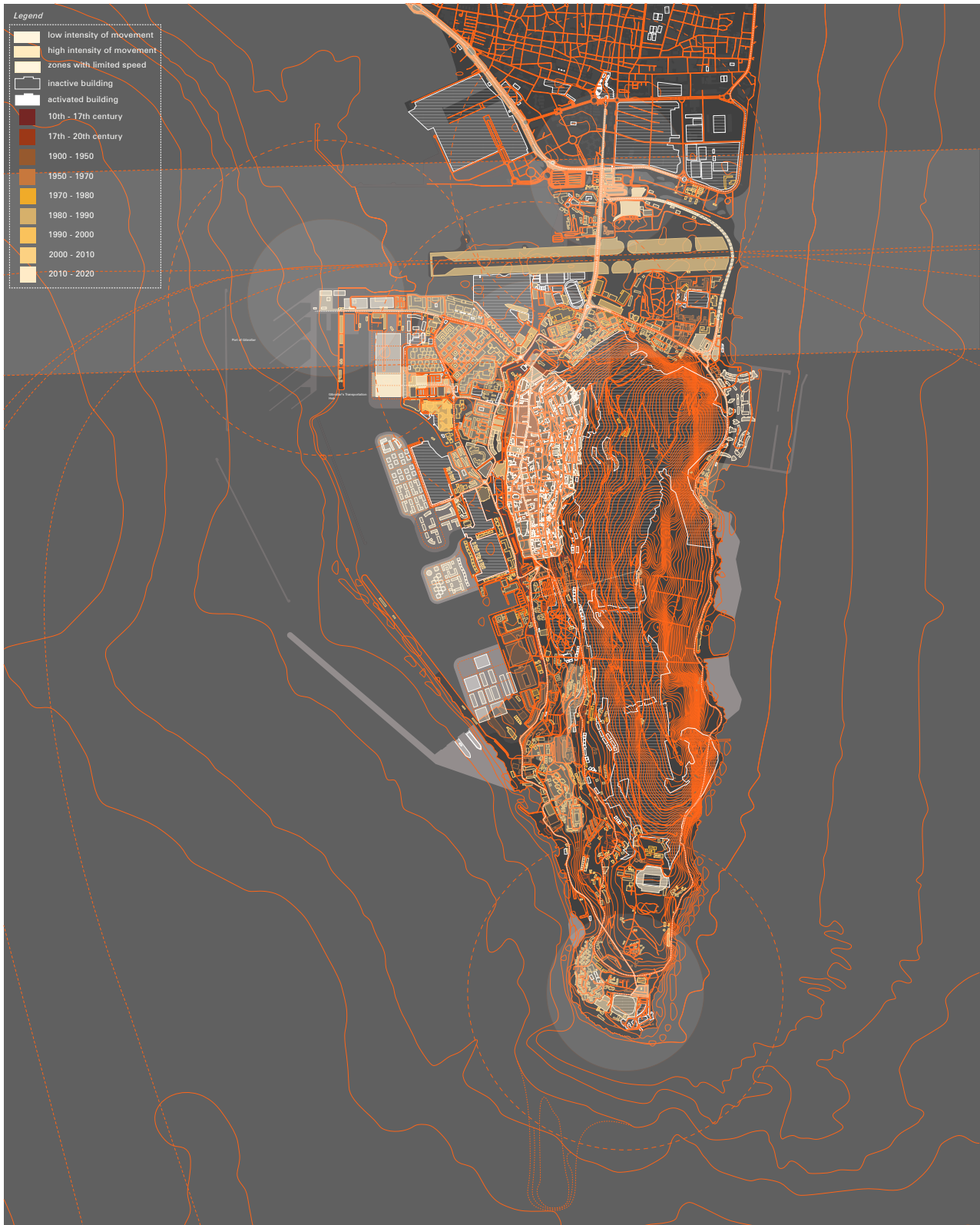
The Bay of Gibraltar: map with the future weekly traffic through and across the Strait

4) Population Growth & Urban Expansion



2020

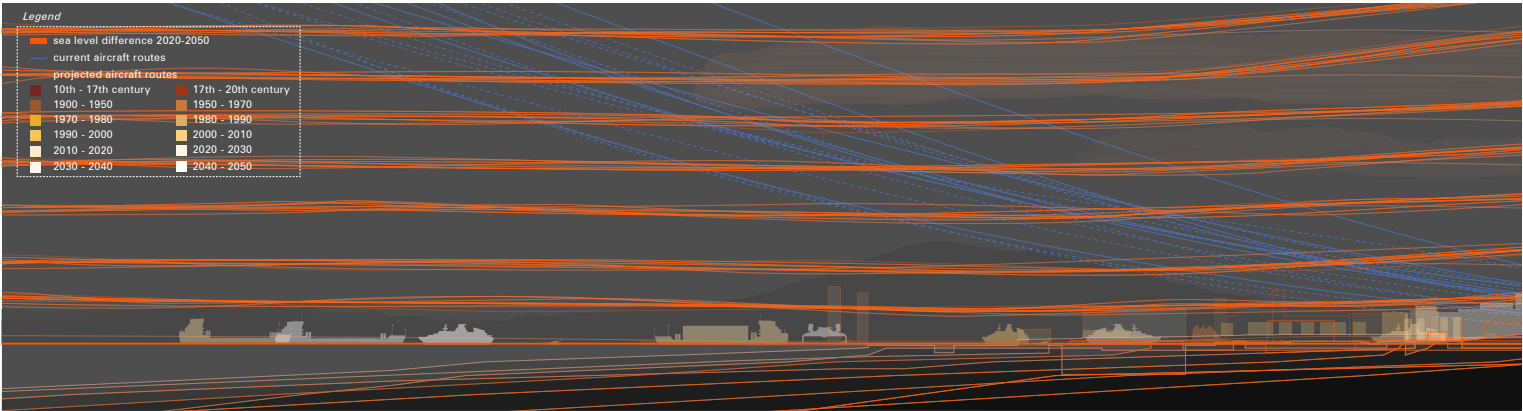
The Rock of Gibraltar: map with the existing built environment and the peninsula at its current state of flux

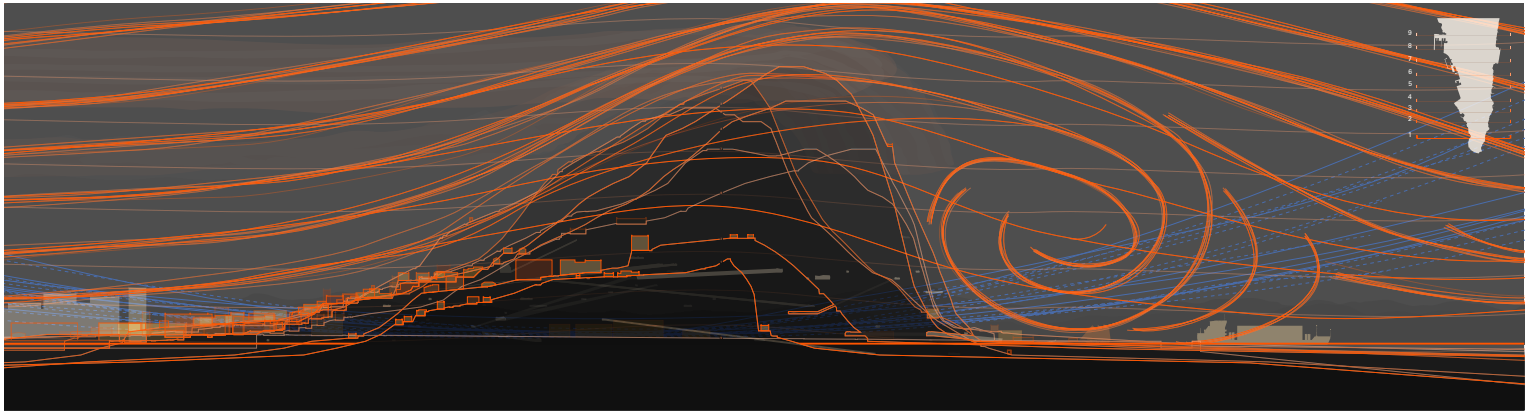


2050

The Rock of Gibraltar: map with the peak areas of the peninsula on the backdrop of future development

5) Climate Change





2020, 2050

The Rock of Gibraltar: section with external and climatic conditions



2050

Twelve Contributions



2020, 2050

Beyond The Rock: 1:1000 wax site
model



0 20 100 m

Site drawing

Data from Open Street Map, 2019

Author, map of Gibraltar business district



Site Photograph

Aerial photograph of Gibraltar



Caravân-Sérail-i-Châh, Casbin, 1840

Source: *Voyage en Perse, avec Flandin*,
éd. Gide et Baudry, 1851

Individual Propositions

The projected shift in geo-politics and influx of both tourists and professionals provide further imperatives for new real estate speculation in Gibraltar.

Such development boom runs the risk of encouraging the local government to dispose of its land and property assets.

With open free space, being under the attack of extensive privatization, the hotel offers an alternate stage for social and political interaction.

Hospitality serves as a mode in which the threshold between public and private space is negotiated.

To politicize a hotel means to explicate its civic importance, as a city-forming element and relevant cultural form.



C.I

Louis-Philippe d'Orléans leaving the
Palais-Royal to go to the city hall after
the July revolution in 1830, Paris, 1832

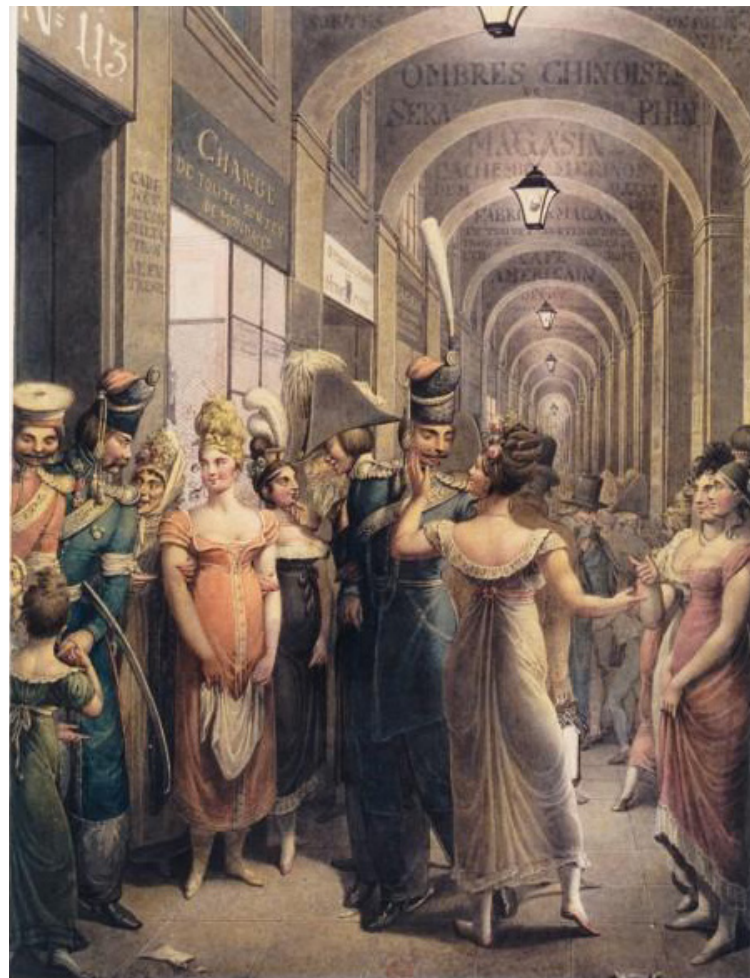
Painting by Horace Vernet
Source: Agence photographique de la
Réunion des musées nationaux



C.II

Trying to prevent eviction of the guests, protesters stand on the curb in front of the International-Hotel, San Francisco, 1977

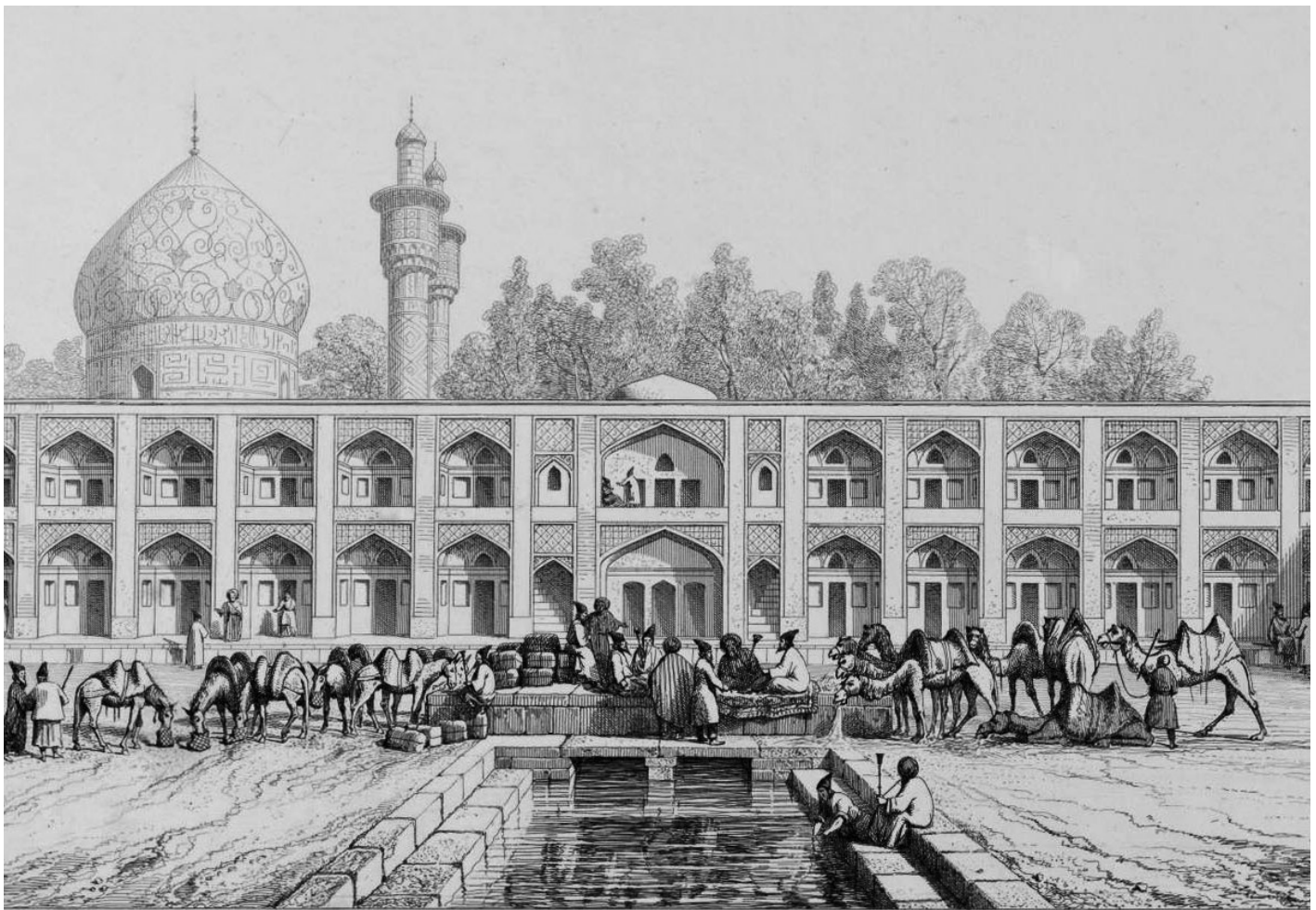
*Photo by Nancy Wong
Source: Wikimedia.org*



B.III

The Palais-Royal was a high place of culture including theaters, opera, booksellers, etc. It was also the citadel of nightlife and Parisian debauchery, 1815

Source: thesiecle.com



B.IV

Place of hospitality as a civic space
used for trading goods and gathering,
Caravanserai of mother of Shah Sultan
Hussein, Isfahan, 1840

Drawing by Pascal Coste
Source: Monuments modernes de la
Perse mesurés, dessinés et décrits, éd.
Morel, 1867



B.I

Adolf Hitler greeting the troops from
the balcony of the hotel Deutscher Hof,
Nuremberg, 1936

Source: Alamy Photos



B.II

Sir Winston Churchill gives speech
from the canopy above the entrance
of the Red Lion Hotel, High Wycombe,
1945

Source: Keystone Pictures



B.V

Martin Luther King Jr., A. Philip Randolph speak to the crowds prior to the March on Washington in front of the Hotel Theresa aka the Waldorf of Harlem, NYC, 1963

Source: thesiecle.com

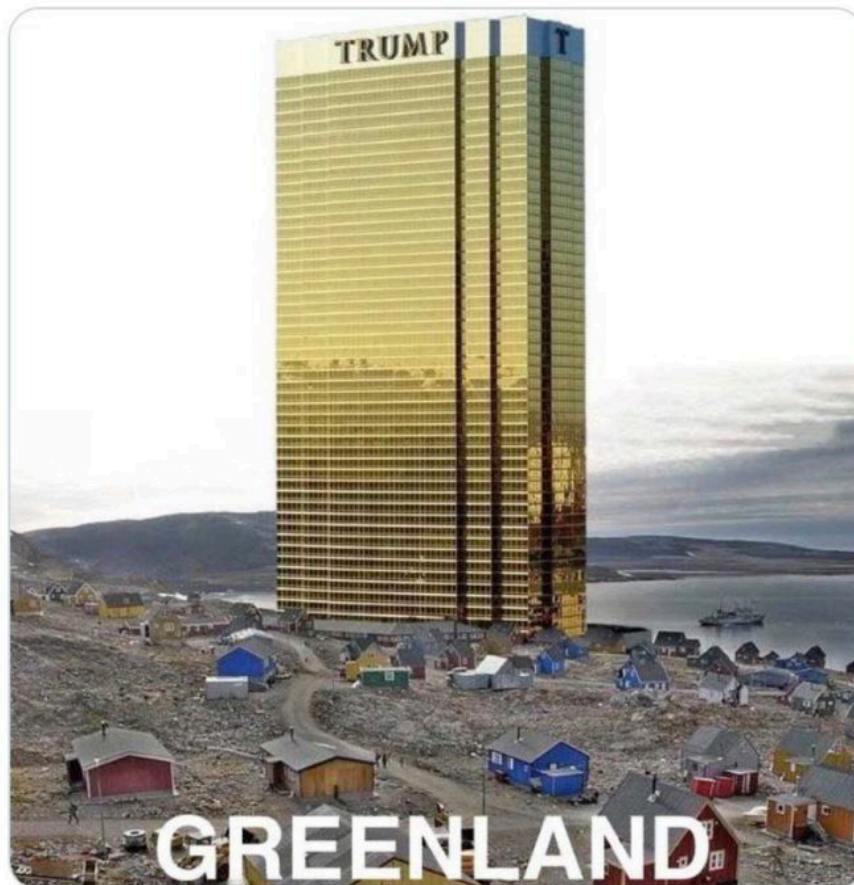
↻ Donald J. Trump Retweeted



Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump



I promise not to do this to Greenland!



8:07 PM · Aug 19, 2019 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

58.6K Retweets **254.1K** Likes

B.VI

Once a safe haven for the oppressed,
now a symbol of political repression.
Whether personally motivated or not,
the hotel here inevitably enters a space
of politics, Greenland, 2019

Source: *Twitter*
@realDonaldTrump



L.I

US Senate Committee hearings after the sinking of RMS Titanic held in the spaces of Waldorf Astoria, New York, 1912

Source: American Press Association



L.II

One of the G20's most important meeting may have happened in a hotel lobby, Antalya, 2015

Photo by Pete Souza
Source: AP



L.III

Employees protest in the lobby of the
Jumeirah Essex House, 2009

Photo by: Patrick Andrade
Source: New York Times



R.I

Preliminary Treaty of Paris being
drafted in Hotel d'York, Carl Seiler, 1782

Source: *history.com*



R.II

UN Informal meeting at Mr. Stettinius' apartment in the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, 1945

Source: *legal.un.org*



R.III

Barrack Obama and his advisers gathered around a video phone inside of a shielded tent, erected on a hotel's floral carpets, Rio de Janeiro, 2017

*Photo by Pete Souza
Source: White House Photos*



R.IV

President Barack Obama meets with
his senior staff in the rooms of the JW
Marriott Hotel, Lima, 2016

Photo by Pete Souza
Source: Official White House Photos



R.V

John Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono
on one of their "Bed-Ins for Peace"
in bedroom of the Hilton Hotel,
Amsterdam, 1969

Photo by Eric Koch / Anefo
Source: nationaalarchief.nl



R.IV

Hotel room as a place for the 'excluded ones.' Fidel Castro shares a laugh with Malcolm X at the Hotel Theresa in New York, 1960

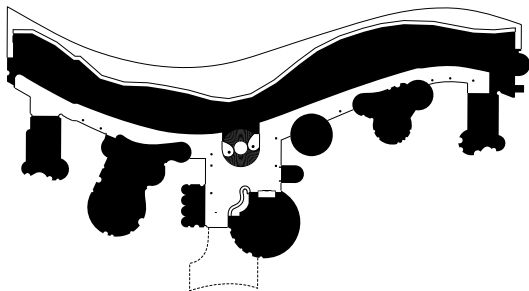
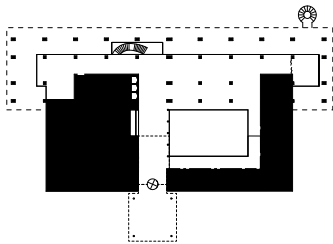
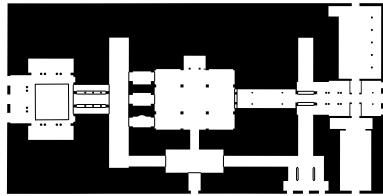
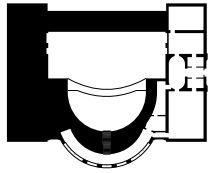
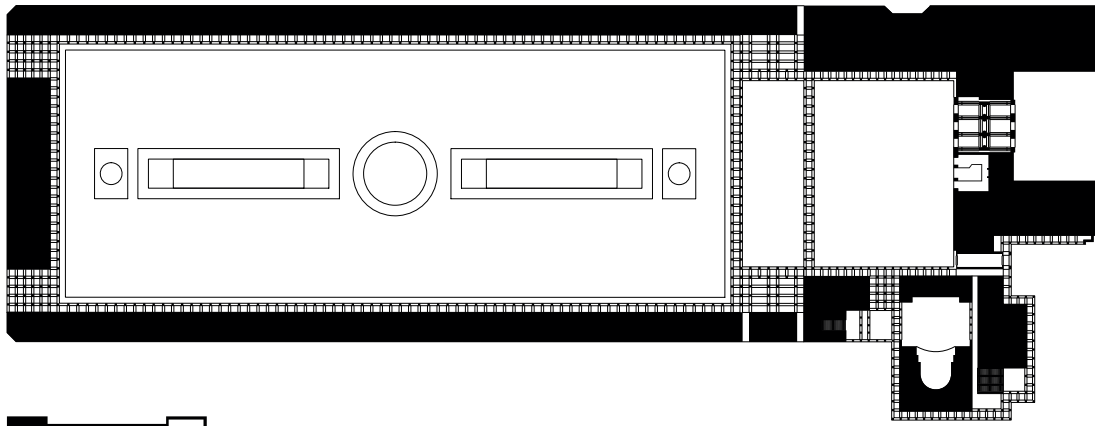
*Photo by Carl Nesfield
Source: Bunkhistory*



R.V

President Obama joins Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany for an informal dinner at the Hotel Adlon, Berlin, 2016

*Photo by Pete Souza
Source: Official White House Photos*



Hotels and politics

Case Studies

Palais Royal, Paris

Hotel in Richmond, Virginia,
Benjamin Henry Latrobe

Waldorf Astoria, NYC
Schultze & Weaver

Hilton Istanbul,
SOM

Hotel Praha,
Jaroslava Paroubek, Arnost
Navratil, Radek Cerny a Jan
Sedlacek

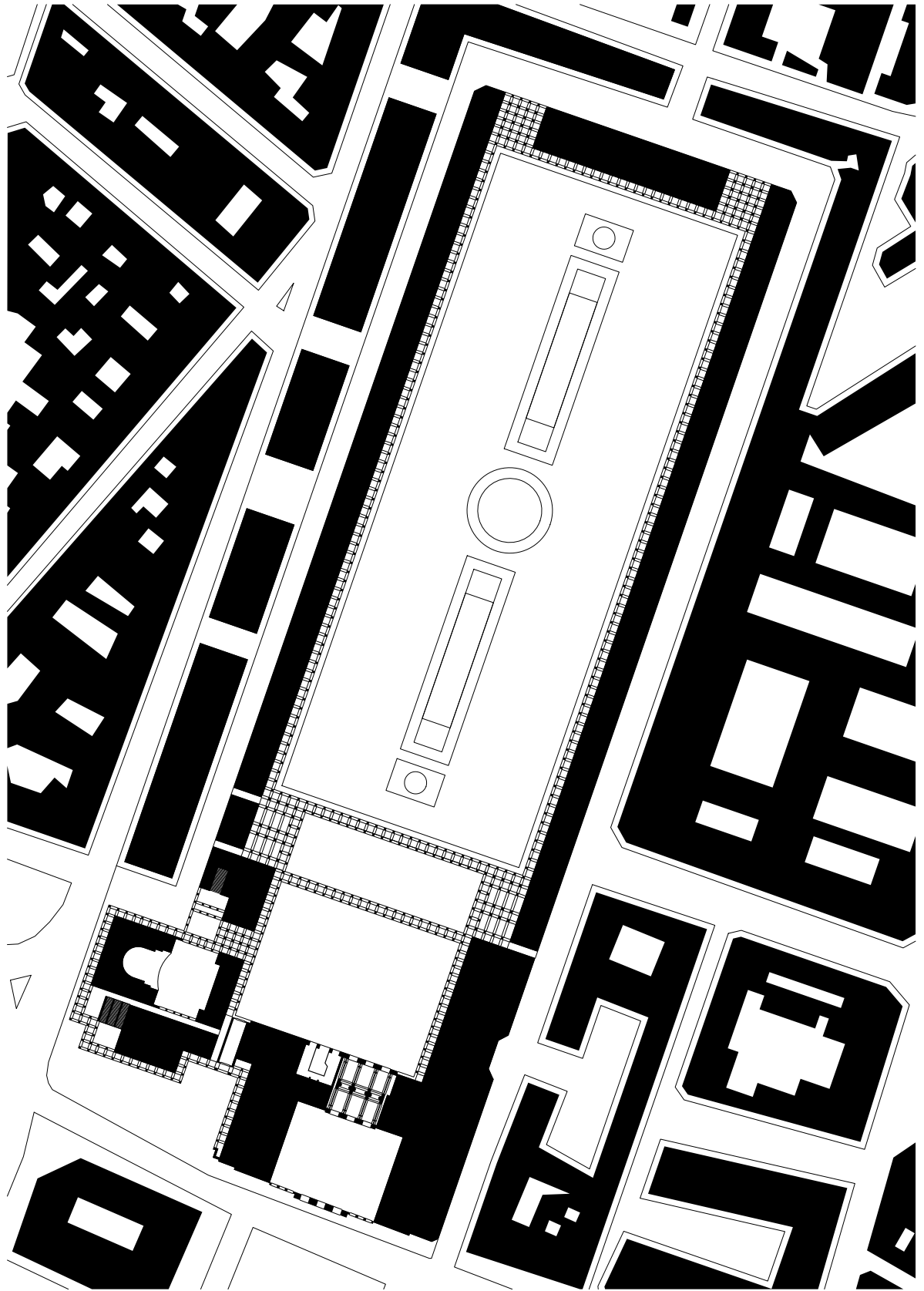
Holiday Inn, Gibraltar
GCA

The project tackles the issue of negotiation between public and private interests within different components of an architectural artifact and its larger context in which it operates. This context is the contested territory of Gibraltar—one of the most densely populated territories in the world, which defines a specific condition in which the project is developed. The architecture of a hotel in this regard can be defined as an intersection between two aspects: the need for a clear public institutional presence on one hand, and the often complex system of spaces that underpins the appropriate protocols of hospitality. “The front” and “the back.” The first aspect is substantiated by the hotel’s inherent reliance on architectural explicitness. From relation to the site, capacity to represent, or delimitation of public space. All of these have the ability to embed different meanings within the institution of the hotel, positioning it within the broader cultural context of the territory and beyond. The second aspect is the inscription of the specific protocols of hospitality into the inner layout of the hotel and its material reality. It consists of meticulous network of public, collective, and private areas such as lobbies, shops, theatres, restaurants, guest rooms, grounds, etc. that constitute the politics of hotel architecture. The project revolves specifically around three components of a hotel, which are elevated as particularly relevant in terms of articulating specific protocols of hospitality, i.e. the capacity to cater for different kinds of social encounters: the urban disposition, where the civic importance of a hotel can be symbolically and formally accentuated, the lobby as an interstitial public space, which provides for the interface between the city and the private domain of the hotel, and the guest room, where the intimacy of the domestic environment challenges different forms of sociability and vice versa.

The Palais Royal became the centre of 18th-century Parisian social, economic and social life. Louis Philippe II, who controlled the Palais-Royal from 1780 onward, expanded and redesigned the complex of buildings and the gardens of the palace between 1781 and 1784. In 1780, he decided to commercialise the residence by letting out the area under the colonnades to retailers and service-providers and in 1784, the gardens and surrounding structures of the Palais-Royal opened to the public as a shopping and entertainment complex.

From the 1780s to 1837, the palace was once again the centre of Parisian political and social intrigue and the site of the most popular cafés.

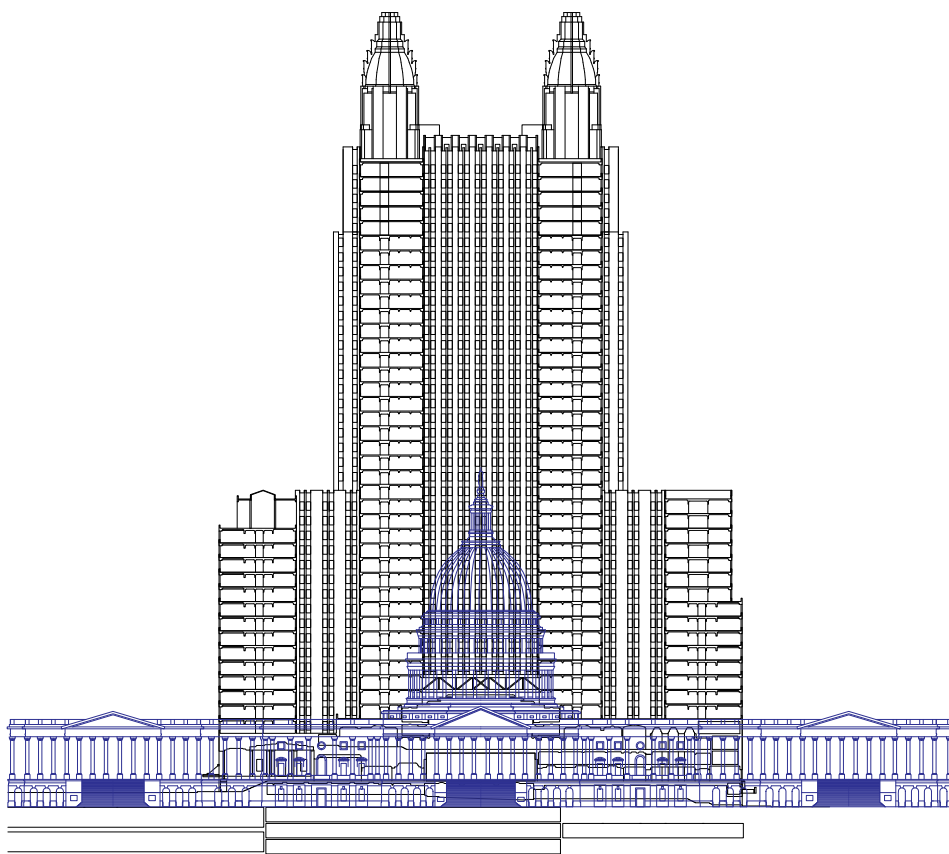


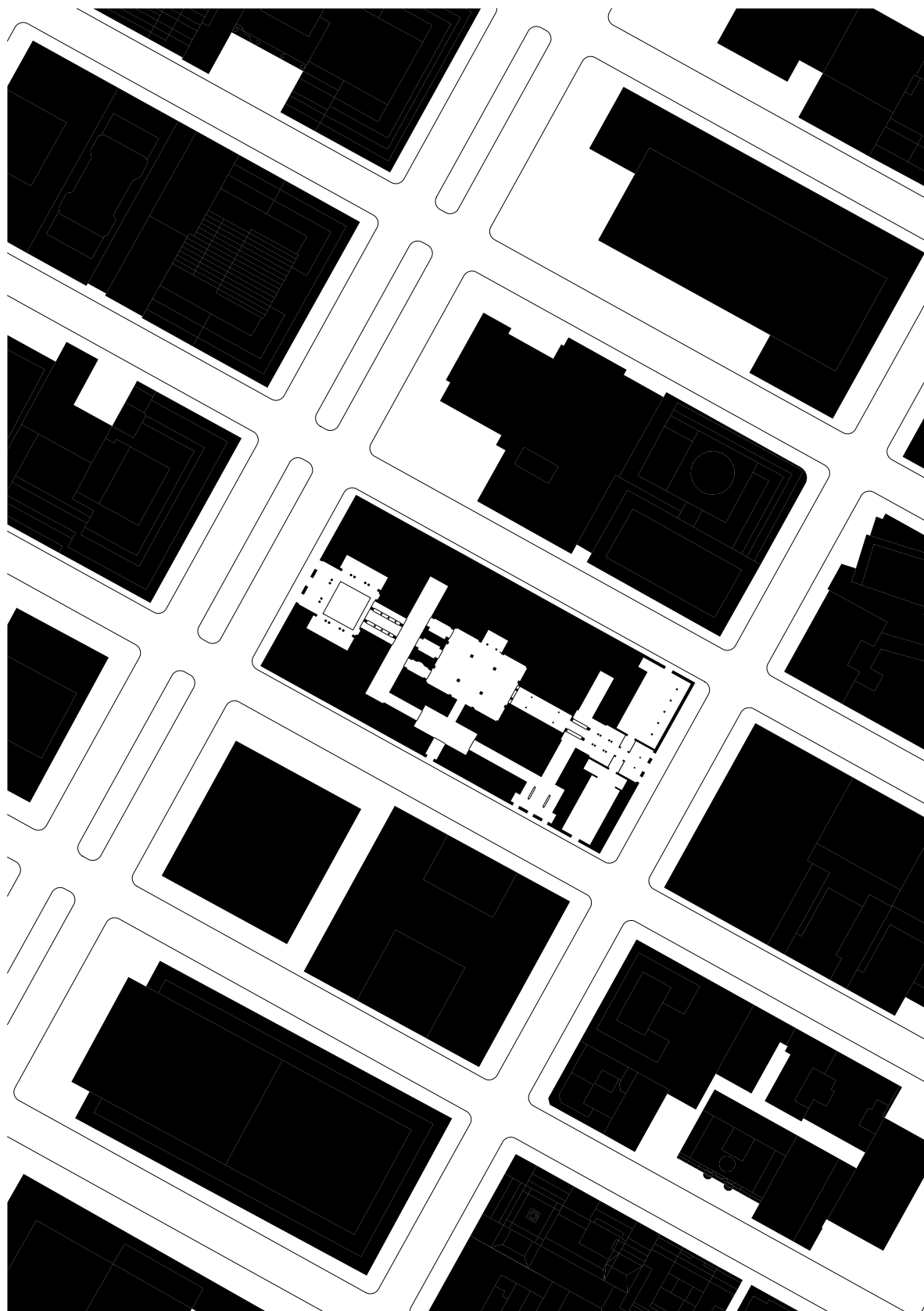


0 10 50 m

Palais Royal, Paris

With a telephone in every room and first-class room service, the hotel was designed specifically to cater to the needs of socially prominent “wealthy upper crust” of New York and distinguished foreign visitors to the city. The hotel became, according to author Sean Dennis Cashman, “a successful symbol of the opulence and achievement of the Astor family”.¹ More interestingly, the Waldorf gained significant renown internationally for its fundraising dinners and balls, regularly attracting notables of the day. Banquets were often held in the ballroom for esteemed figures and international royalty. The Waldorf Astoria was also influential in advancing the status of women, who were admitted singly without escorts. George Boldt’s wife, Louise Kehrler Boldt, was influential in evolving the idea of the grand urban hotel as a social center, particularly in making it appealing to women as a venue for social events.

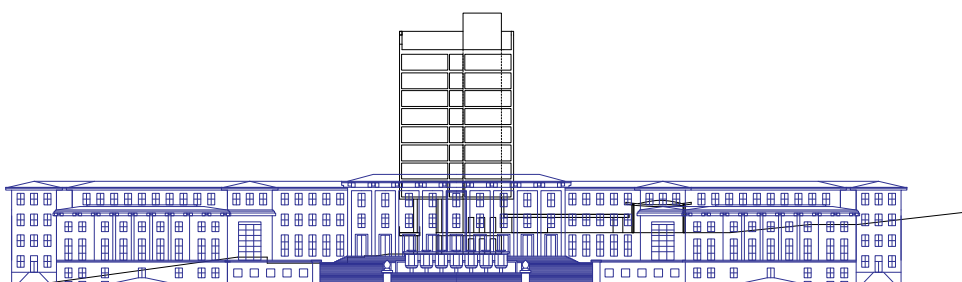


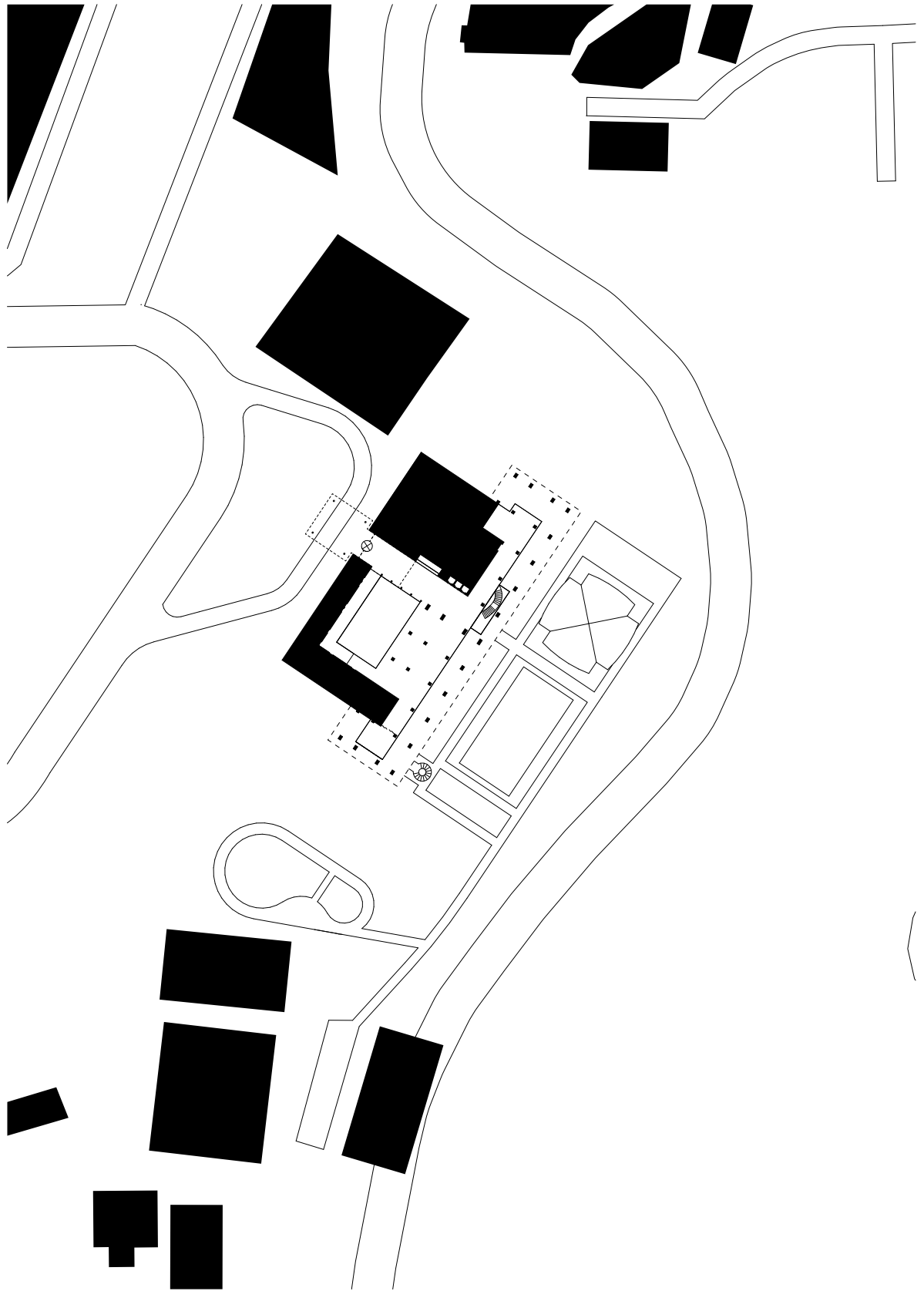


0 10 50 m

Waldorf Astoria, New York

Hotel Hilton in Istanbul, designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill and opened in 1955, is the first modern hotel in Europe built from the ground up in the aftermath of World War II. Not only it was the first of the Hilton's hotels exporting the Western values and lifestyle to the East, but even the critical construction materials were imported from the West. White Portland cement, glass and structural steel came from Germany, marble and ceramic fittings from Italy, and aluminum window castings, air-conditioning units and elevators from the United States. In addition, financed by the U.S. governmental agency Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), which administered the Marshall Plan, the hotel Hilton in Istanbul thus became first and foremost a political project, inevitably stirring waters in the Cold War US–Soviet rivalry.

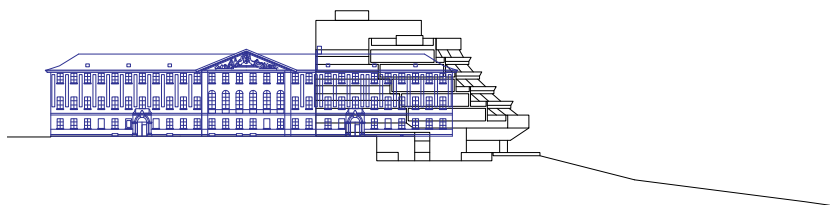




0 10 50 m

Hotel Hilton, Istanbul

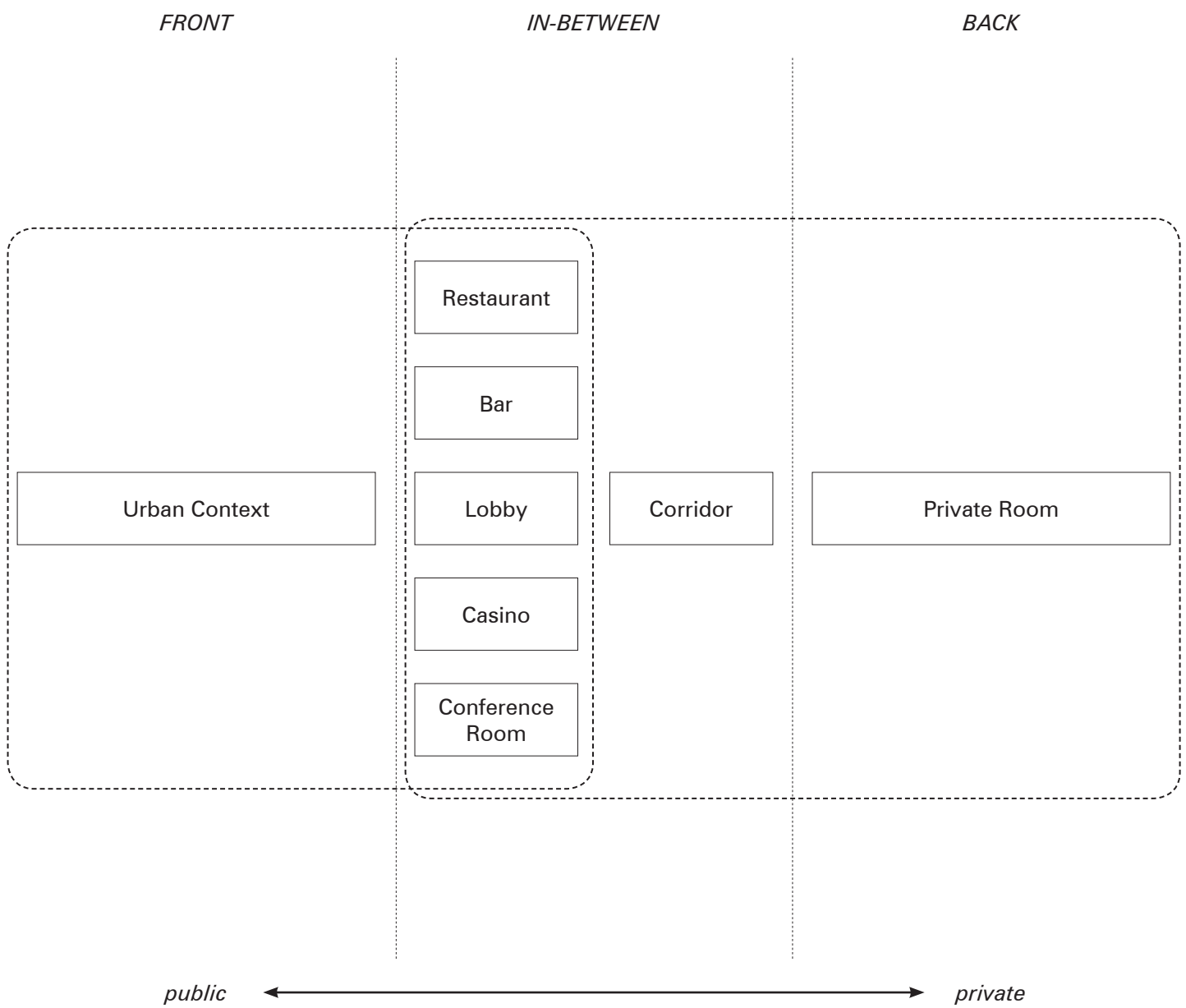
Designed by a team of architects
Jaroslav Paroubek Arnošt Navrátil,
Radek Černý and Jan Sedláček in 1971,
Hotel Praha was a modern Prague
hotel and one of the most luxurious
hotels in former Czechoslovakia, built
as a top accommodation facility for
the needs of the Communist Party of
Czechoslovakia and the Czechoslovak
government to accommodate foreign
official delegations.



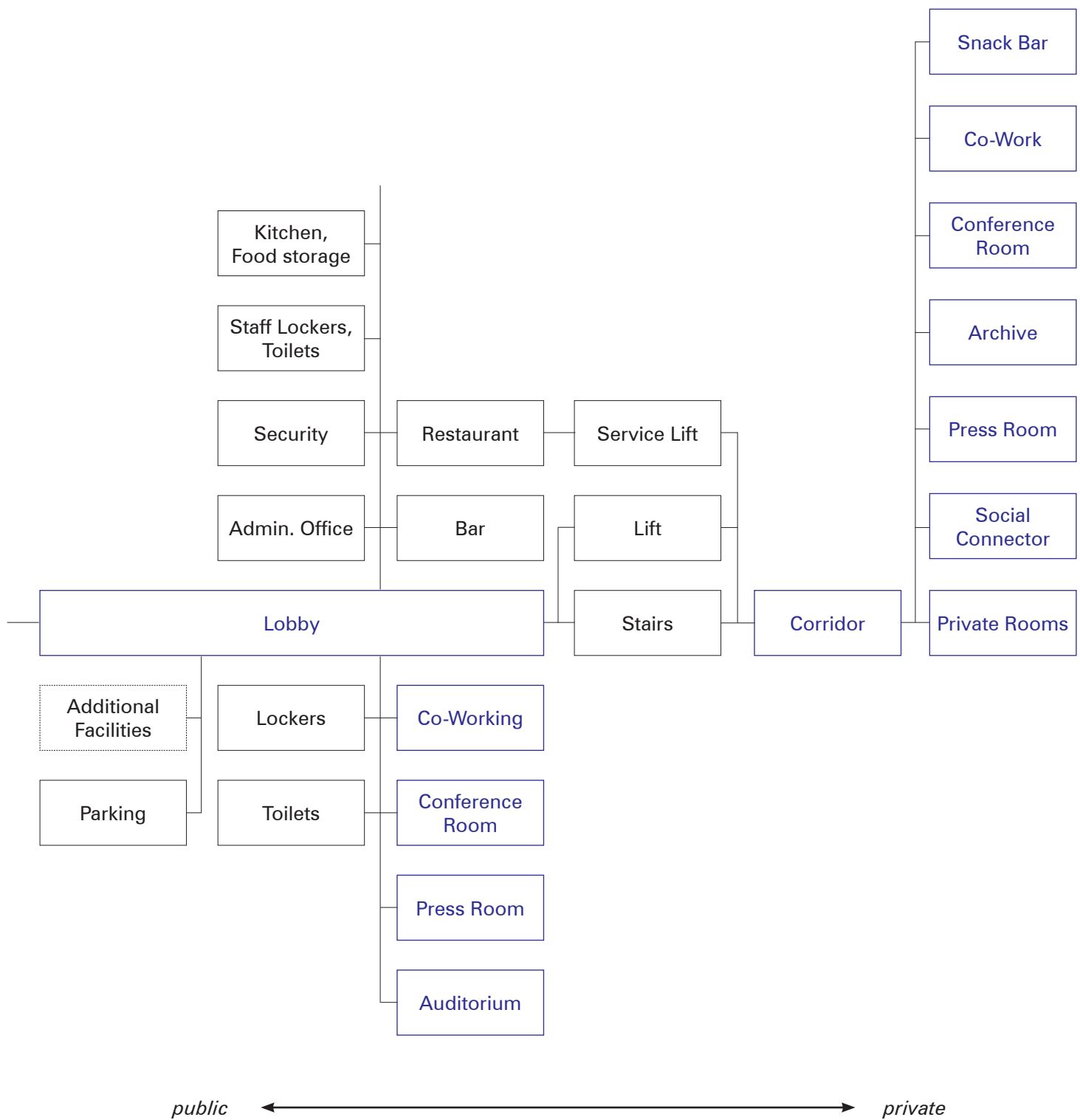


0 10 50 m

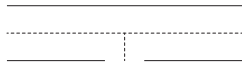
Hotel Praha, Prague



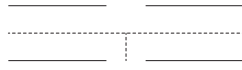
General structure of a hotel establishment



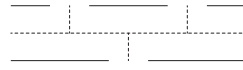
General flow diagram of a hotel filled with politics



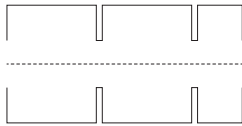
1. single-loaded corridor



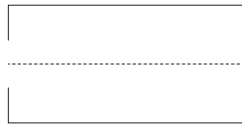
2. double-loaded corridor aligned



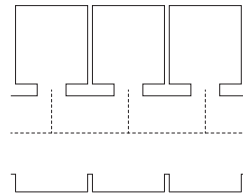
3. double-loaded corridor staggered



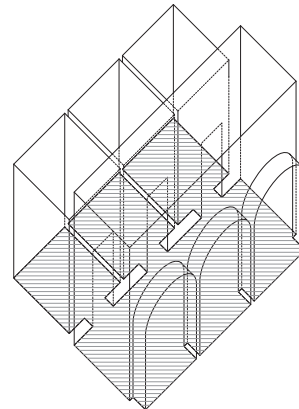
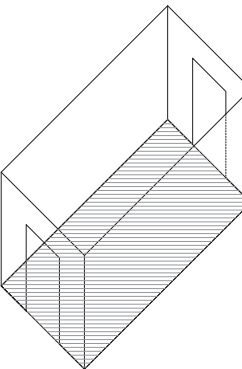
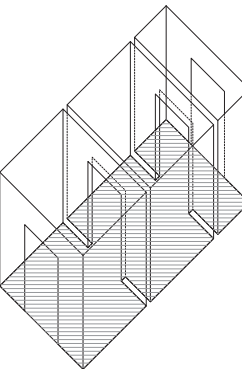
4. enfilade



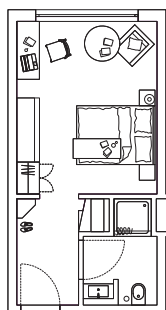
5. gallery



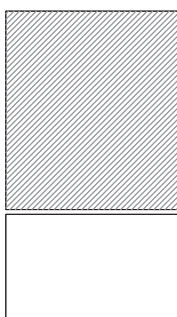
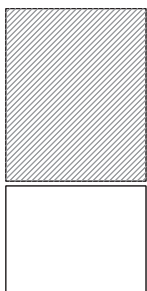
6. arcade



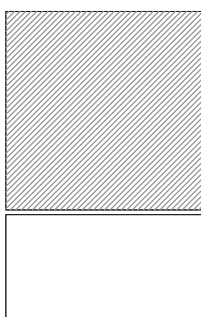
Corridor types



standard type room

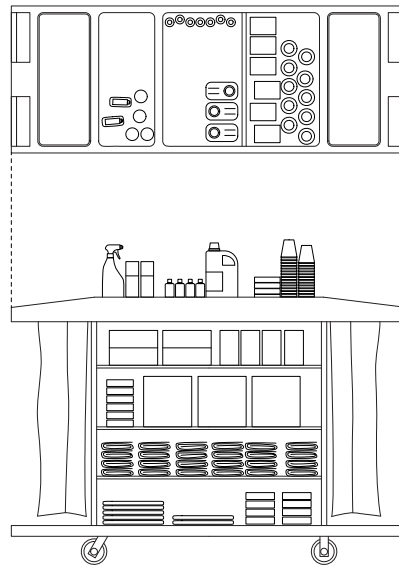
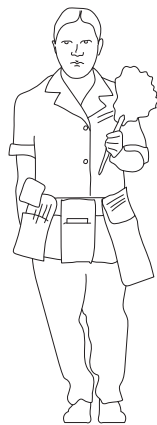


family type room

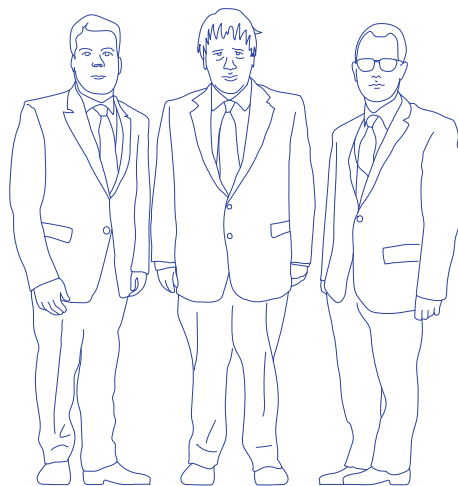
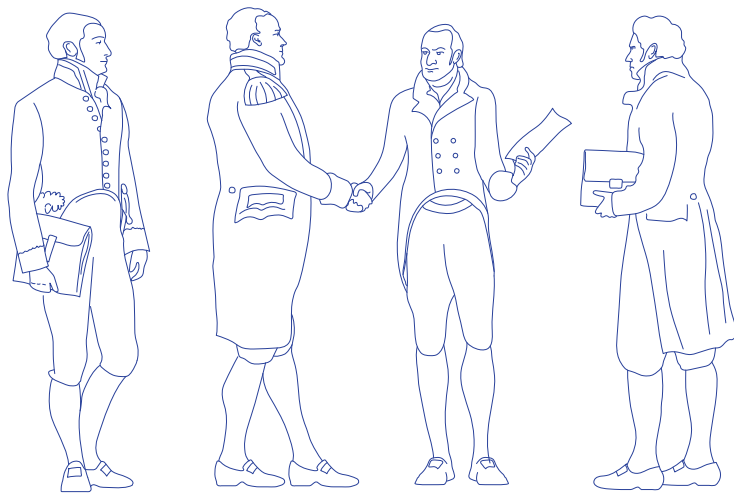


business type room

standard room types and their sizes



hotel environment and labour,
18th century and today



Diplomacy and politics,
18th century and today

Individual Position

Hotel as we know it is both real and symbolic nexus of human movement; A type originally born as a by-product of transportation and trade; Later an index of community vitality and economic robustness; Palace of the public for the radical social democracy of its inner spaces, foreshadowing the numerous contemporary privatized public spaces that have come to define urban modernity; Institution of politics and diplomacy, integral to effective governance because of the extreme need for travel accommodation across increasingly vast national landscapes. As such the hotel has always been a site of power and resistance, dominance and subversion. In an age of giant conglomerates, elaborate transit systems, and global communication networks, the hotel has been engineered as an alternative place, a rewarding site 'away from home'. This engineering feat has consequences.

The Inn Gibraltar calls attention to the powerful role of late capitalism in the life that the modern hotel enables. In recognition of the hotel's potential, we can reframe the hotel not only as a subject of criticality, but also as a means of critique.

As joint ventures between the government and real estate developers have become a predominant way of the Gibraltar's development, the possibility of the local authorities to engage with development of public space is often conditioned by provision of landownership to real estate developers and hotel chain operators. Being one of the most spatially constrained territories in the world, the possibility to offer an open space on terra firma is ever more subject to viability assessment studies and extensive financial models. One of the most recent reclamation projects—the Victoria Keys, is a prime example. A Government owned company provides substantial funds from institutional investment to cover

the costs of the reclamation, and once the process is complete, the Government owned company will be repaid with interest, and additionally also receive a site within the exclusive real estate development.

Amidst the political uncertainty, the future of Gibraltar and its development rests on its capacity to (re)negotiate the relationships with its potential political and business partners.

As the only way for Gibraltar to sustain itself and remain attractive is to expand further on the industries that contribute to the local economy the most, namely bunkering, tourism, banking and finance, it inevitably generates further pressure on its current real estate. The proposed connections, linking Gibraltar and north coasts of Morocco, come in as a major infrastructural project, on one hand turning Gibraltar into an important transportation node and potentially once again a point of geo-political significance, on the other, it presents the territory with a Faustian pact, contracting its future to substantial private interests.

The modus operandi of this contribution within the grand scheme is twofold; The hotel comes in as a point of convergence whose sole purpose is based on continuous movement of people and capital, facilitating the predicted boom of the tourist industry and the increasing influx of people into the territory. More importantly, however, it presents itself as a private commercial venture offering an alternative ground for social and political participation, while capitalising on the capacity to produce different formats of social encounter. Inevitably bound to political and economic governance of a territory, the hotel today operates at the intersection of public and private, constituting a microcosm that does not only respond to social needs and interests but also actively enables and shapes the public life.

Allowing to accommodate different protocols of hospitality—either formal or informal, the hotel contests the socio-spatial conditions of both public as well as domestic life.

These hotel's private and public spaces emerge as substitute for what we imagine to be the unsatisfactory domesticities of the home front and the dwindling public spaces of the traditional city scape.¹ As the true public space is being increasingly constrained or controlled, and alternate spaces have to be found and, by and large, contracted, the hotel reappears as a type with genuinely revolutionary potential. It is the political charge of the hotel that this project uses as a means to articulate the civic potential of this particular building type. For what is at play here is not just a counter-form to the current tourist industry and its future prospects, but the necessity of reflection on a more sustainable development of Gibraltar's territory and its communities.

To politicise a hotel then means to openly question its importance, not only as a city-forming element, but also as a relevant cultural edifice. To explicate what is often only implicit is to shed light on the forces that shape and will continue to shape not only Gibraltar's, but our urban condition at large.

Let us then look at politics through the hotel, and let us explore the hotel through politics. Perhaps, the consideration of the lived experience offered, frustrated, or enabled by such hotel might help to remap the bio politics of the modern space.

1. C. F. Levander M. P. Guterl, *Hotel Life; the Story of a Place Where Anything Can Happen* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

Site

The Inn Gibraltar is sited in the central business district of Gibraltar. The projected shift in geo-politics and influx of both tourists and professionals provide imperatives for new real estate speculation.

The Inn Gibraltar here is not a crusade for open free space, but an attempt to frame the socio-spatial condition of politics in a privatised city. The unrestricted space for negotiation and politics here is no longer a *poché* of resistance carved out of the city [Palais], nor is it a manifesto of uncontested political will. Instead, it is a result of negotiation between public and private interests within different components of a building and its larger context in which it operates.

This context is the contested territory of Gibraltar—one of the most densely populated territories in the world, which defines a specific condition in which the project is developed. The Inn Gibraltar addresses the territory by exaggerating and compressing into an architectural project its main characteristics: perpetual movement of people, and reliance on the transient advantage.

The architecture of a hotel in this regard is defined as an intersection between two aspects: the need for a clear public institutional presence on one hand, and the often complex system of spaces that underpins the specific protocols of hospitality. 'The front' and 'the back.'

The first aspect is substantiated by the hotel's inherent reliance on architectural explicitness. From program, relation to the site, capacity to represent, or delimitation of public space; all of these have the ability to embed different meanings within the institution of the hotel, positioning it within the broader cultural context of the territory and beyond.

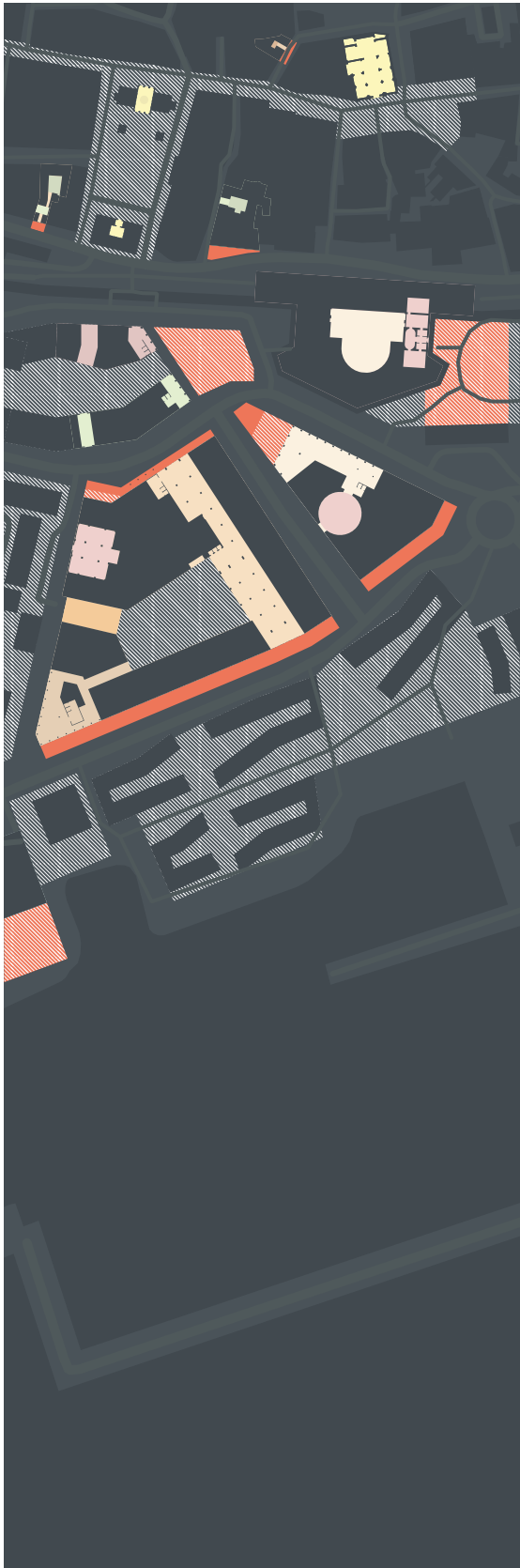
The second aspect is the inscription of the specific protocols of hospitality into the inner layout of the hotel and its material reality. It consists of meticulous network of public, collective, and private areas such as lobbies, shops, theatres, restaurants, guest rooms, grounds, etc. that constitute the politics of hotel architecture.

The project revolves specifically around three components of a hotel, which are elevated as particularly relevant in terms of articulating particular protocols of hospitality, i.e. the capacity to cater for different kinds of social encounters: the urban disposition, where the civic importance of a hotel can be symbolically and formally accentuated, the lobby as an interstitial public space, which provides for the interface between the city and the private domain of the hotel, and the guest room, where the intimacy of the domestic environment challenges different forms of sociability and vice versa.



Inn Gibraltar





Hotel as a project

The political and social intrigue has found its way on the grounds of private commercial venture early on in the modern history of architecture. One of the most profound examples of a hotel as an alternative place for political participation was the Palais Royal in Paris, which, as a breeding ground of the emancipatory thought under the French monarchy in the second half of the 18th century, could be seen as a deliberate attempt to reorganize the city of Paris as a civic and economic space.² The potential of the hotel as a place of politics was only exploited later on in the 20th century with the rise of global economy, and with that came also the renegotiation of the hotel's relationship with the city. Hotel Prague as an exclusive enterprise, built for local and visiting representatives of the communist party in former Czechoslovakia in the 1980s, was a modernist example which due to its highly political program elevated the hotel amongst one of the most significant buildings in the city.

Naturally, both aforementioned structures illustrate different urban strategies, which corresponded with the different contexts from which these ventures emerged. In many ways, the two can be considered as two opposites.

The neoclassical Palais Royal formed a commercialized public *poché* within the architectural status quo, protecting the insides from the rest of the city, while the modernist Hotel Prague was a grand gesture of the current regime in power, with the facility unapologetically built into a low-rise residential area in order to benefit from the views of Prague in the same way as the local bourgeois did in the past.³

2 Leonhard Clemens, *Exit Parliament*, Projective Cities (London: Architectural Association, 2016).

3 Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2011).

Where the former created a civic space in the heart of the city through reappropriation of existing structure, the latter—a manifesto of uncontested political will from its very onset, formed a secluded resort on the city's high grounds, making any idea of social or political participation impossible. Although both strongly politically charged as projects, one became a symbol of civic engagement, the other merely one of politics of seclusion and disempowerment. Needless to say, that while the Palais Royale remained a well preserved symbol of the French revolution, the latter was demolished after having fallen into disrepair.

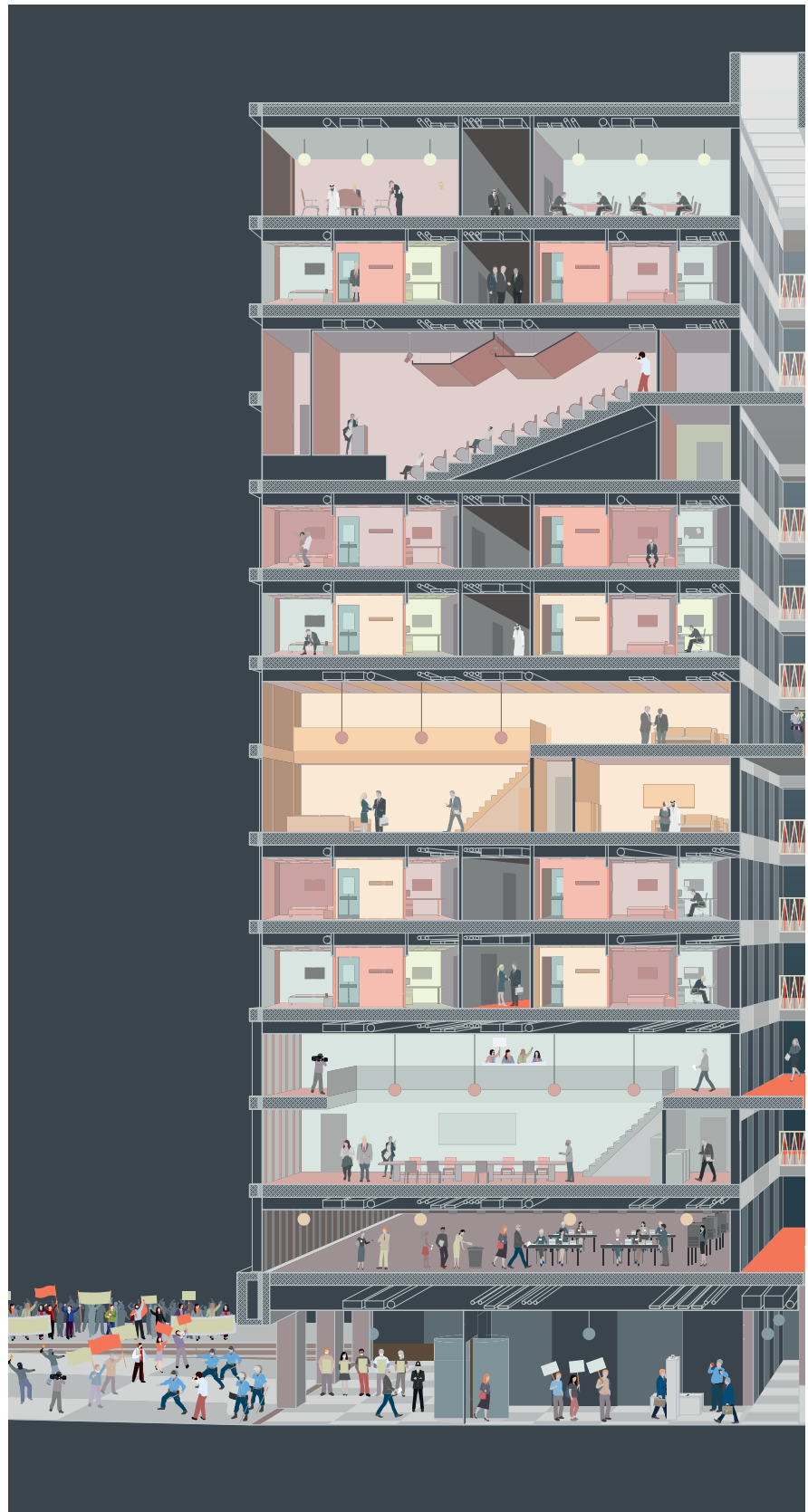
Historically, the city has always been, in one way or another, a reflection of its political and economic governance. With that in mind, not only we can look at the political charge of a hotel through the idea of public realm and its development, but we can also look at this charge from within the hotel's own logic—as a place of politics in its own right.

If hospitality is a mode in which the threshold between public and private space is negotiated, the hotel lobby can be described as an architectural means that articulates this very threshold within the grounds of the hotel. As an ambiguous space in-between, it forms an extension to the outside space, while serving the building by marking an entrance and therefore claiming the building's autonomy.

The most important meeting of the G20 Summit in 2015 held in Antalya, might have happened in a hotel lobby. With a Russian security standing aside, Barrack Obama sat with Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the official program along with his adviser and an interpreter. The hotel lobby formed a temporary meeting room where possibly matters of supranational interests could be discussed. Although in the presence of a screen of bodyguards, it still happened under the scrutiny of the public. In his famous essay Siegfried Kracauer describes the hotel lobby, in contrast to the communality of a church assembly. According to him the togetherness in the hotel lobby has no further meaning. While there, too, people certainly do become detached from their everyday lives as in the church, this detachment, however, does not require the community to assure itself of its existence as a congregation.⁴ 'Hospitality' and 'hostility' indeed come from the same etymological root. The hotel lobby is a collective space that has the capacity to bring together individuals that are allowed to remain strangers, in this case even two geostrategic rivals.

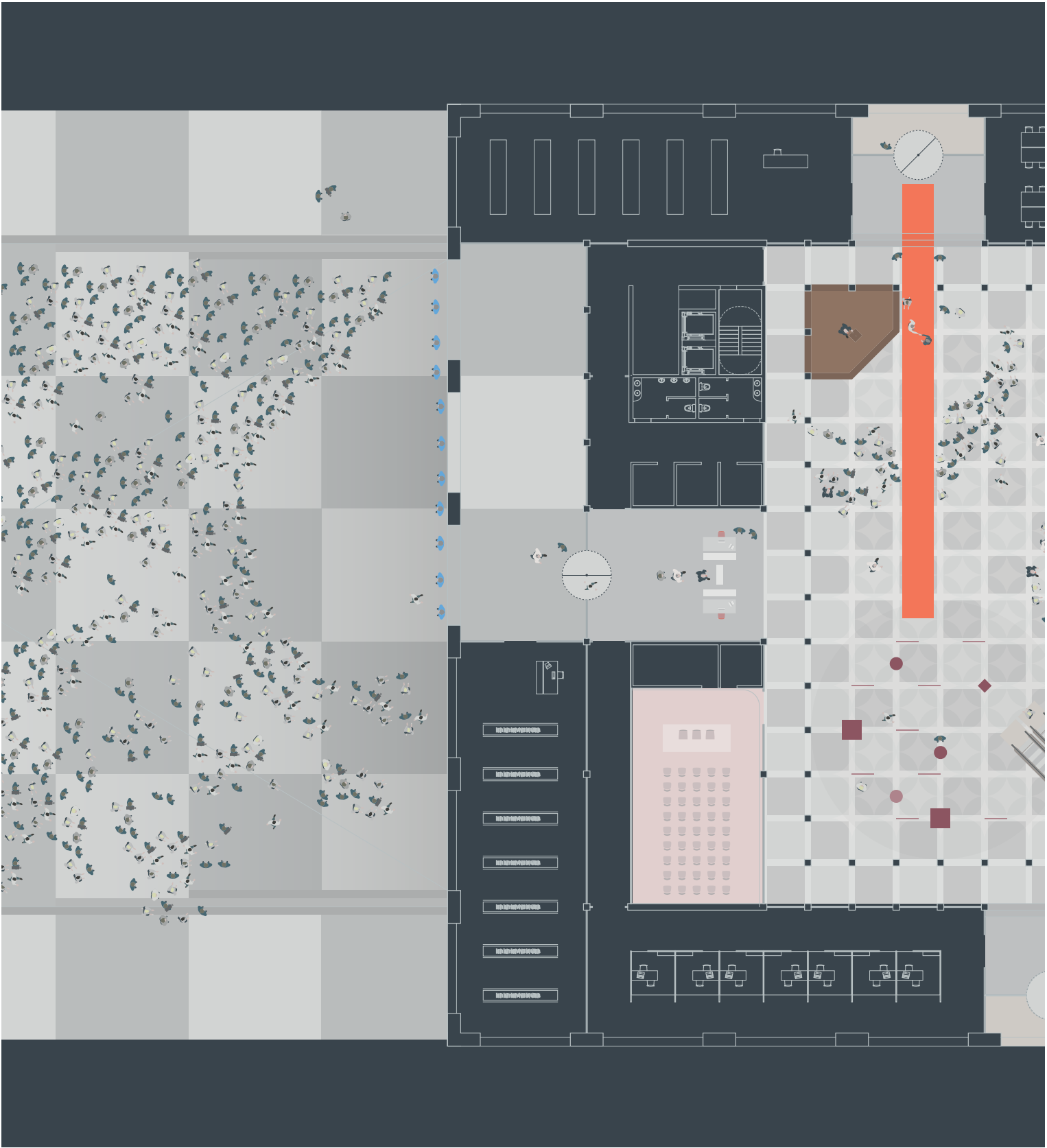
Both spatially and socially, the lobby operates as an interface—a condition where two systems, or subjects meet and interact, from pavement to reception desk, framing a domain where the public confronts the elites, where the speaker's corner meets the grand staircase of the institution.

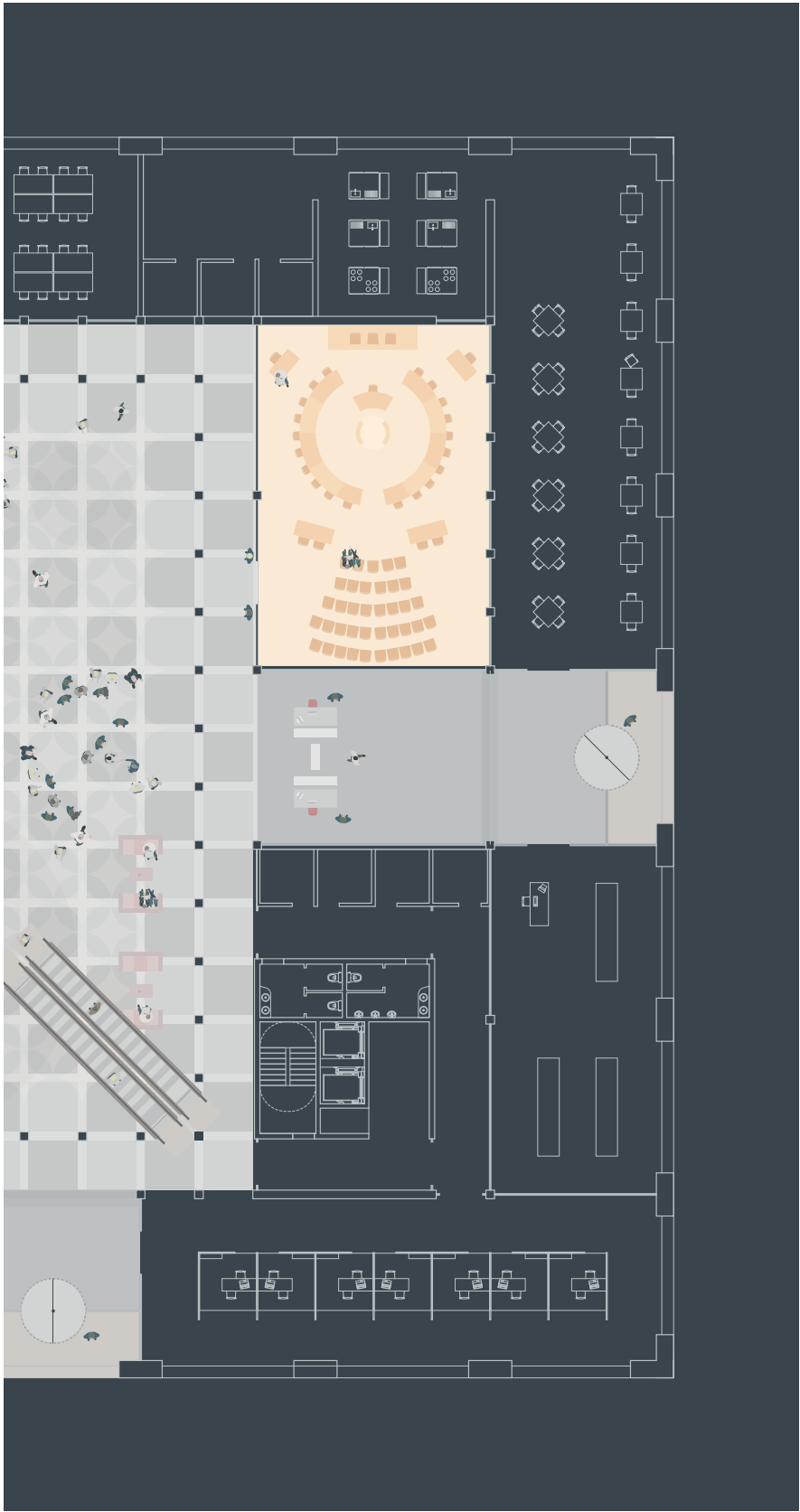
4 Siegfried Kracauer, *"The Hotel Lobby,"* in *The Mass Ornament*. 1927 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).



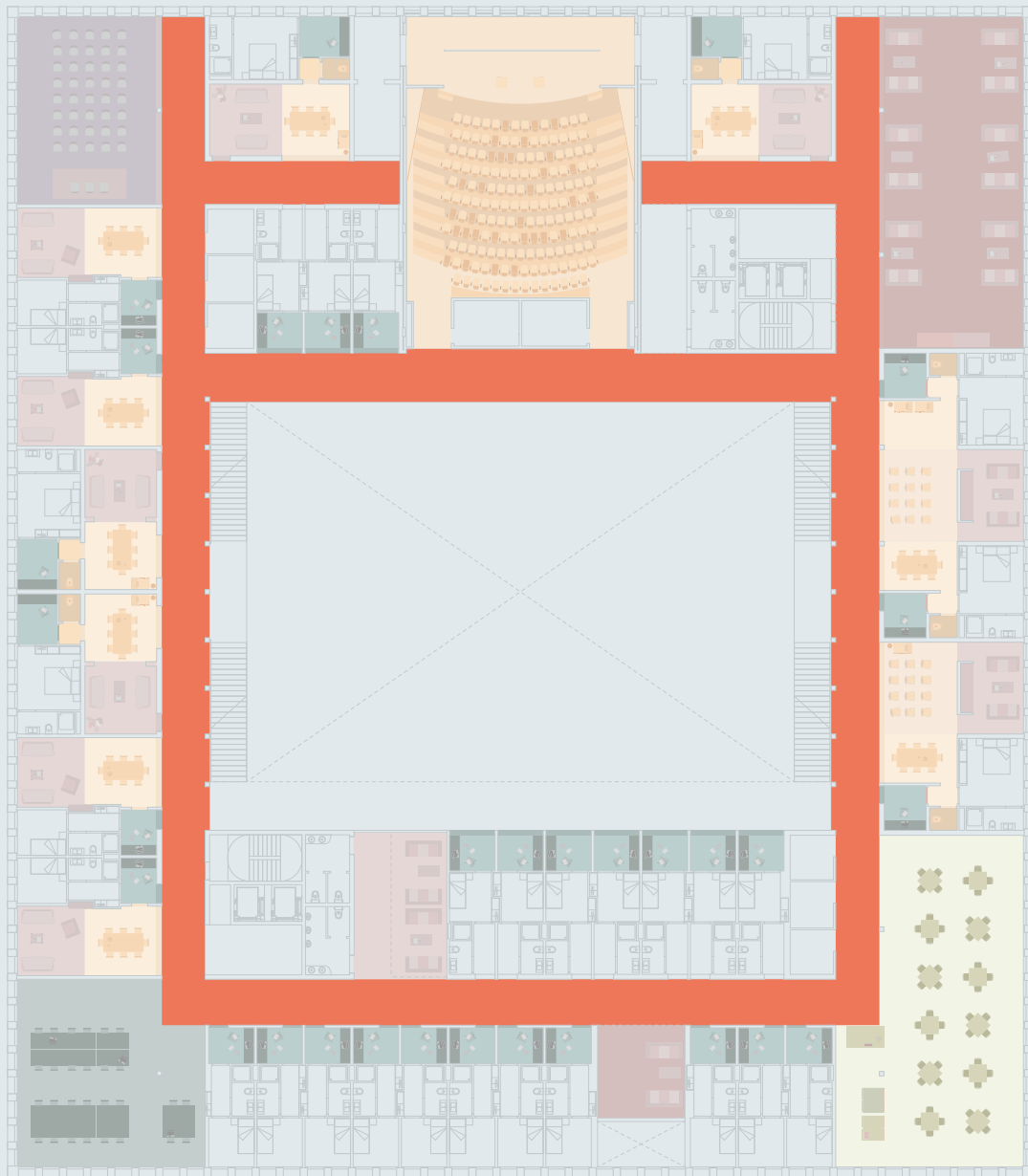


Hotel lobby

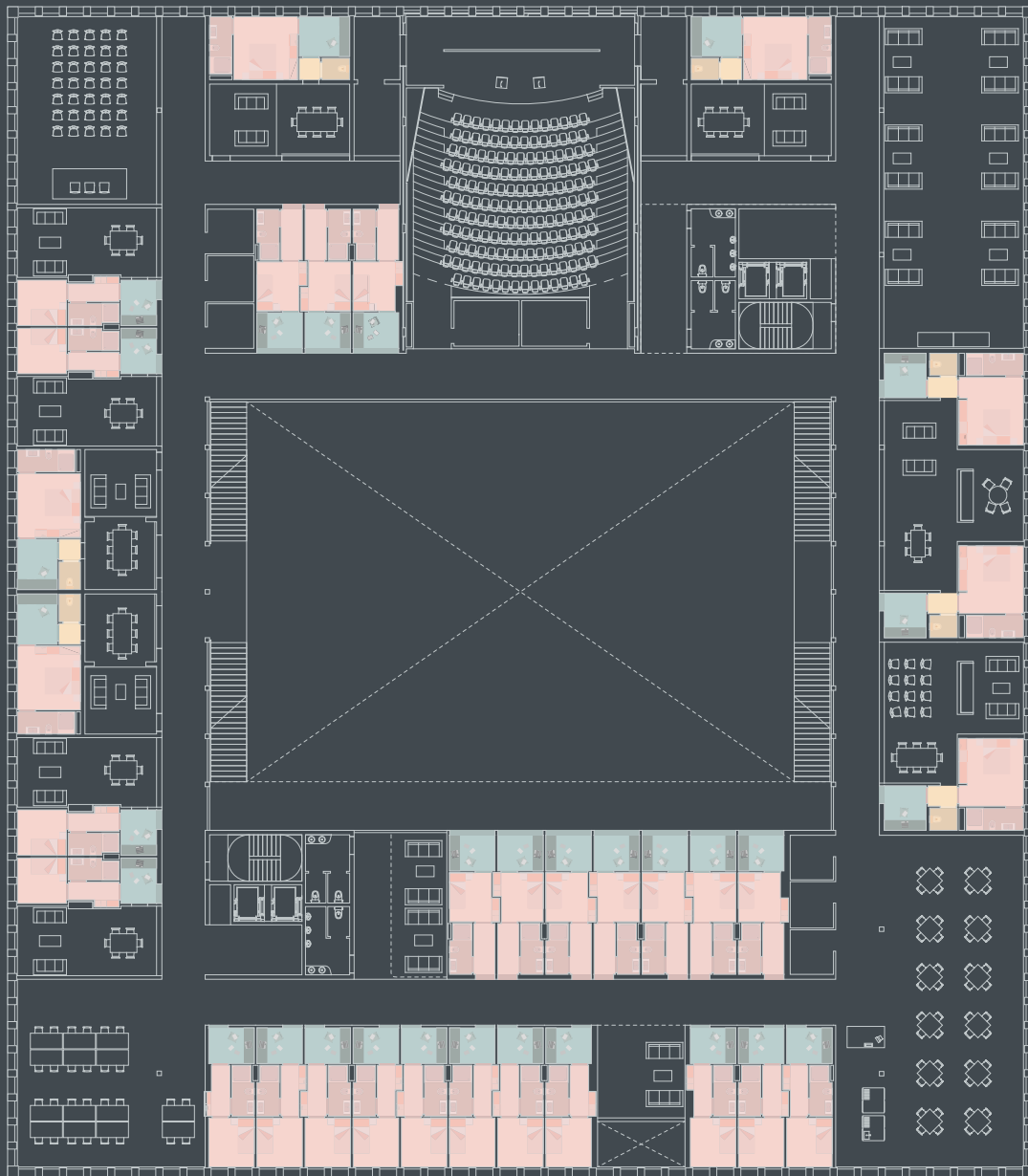




Hotel lobby



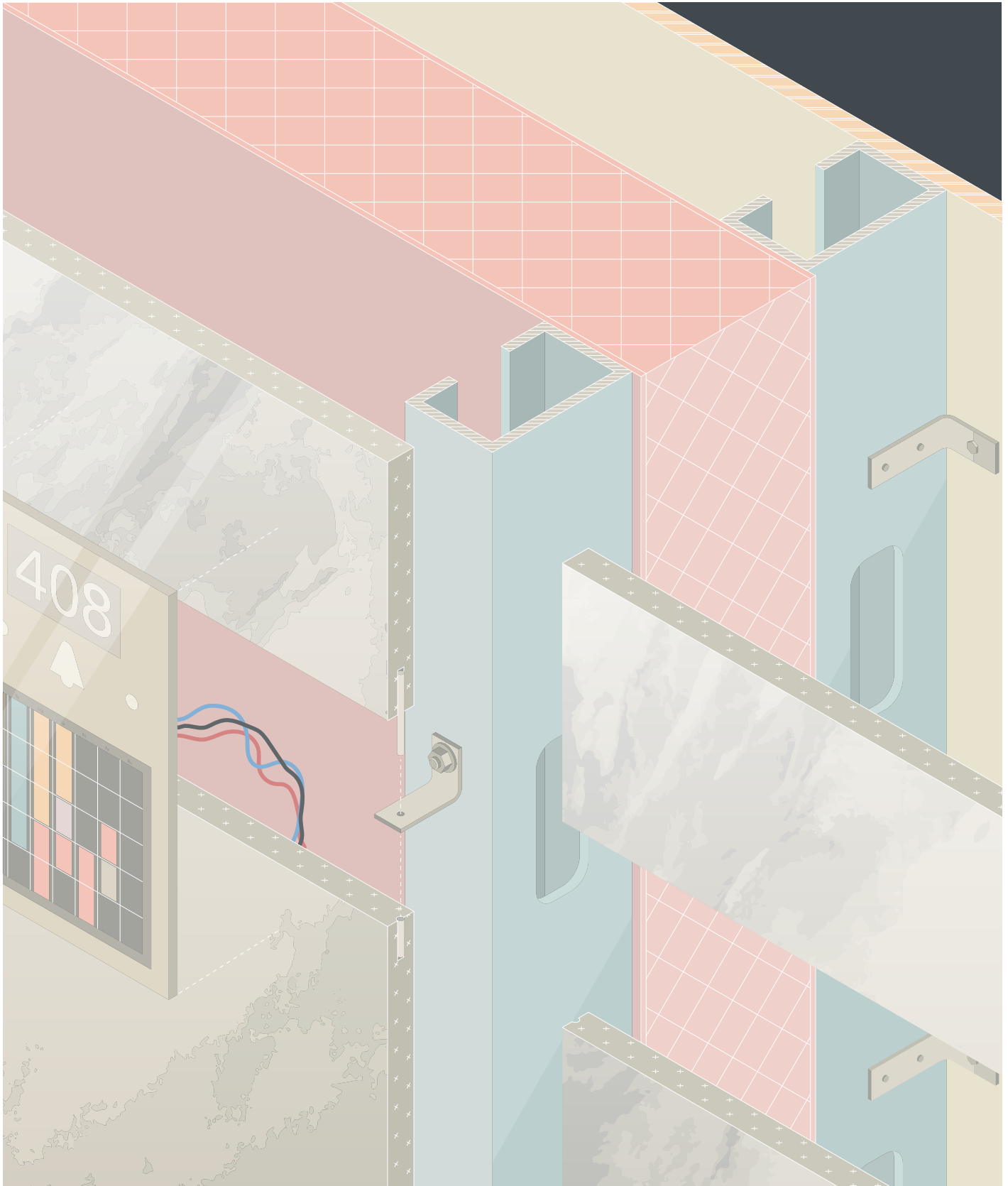
Typical floor. day time regime



Typical floor. night time regime



System. typology



System. partition wall

Room & Corridor

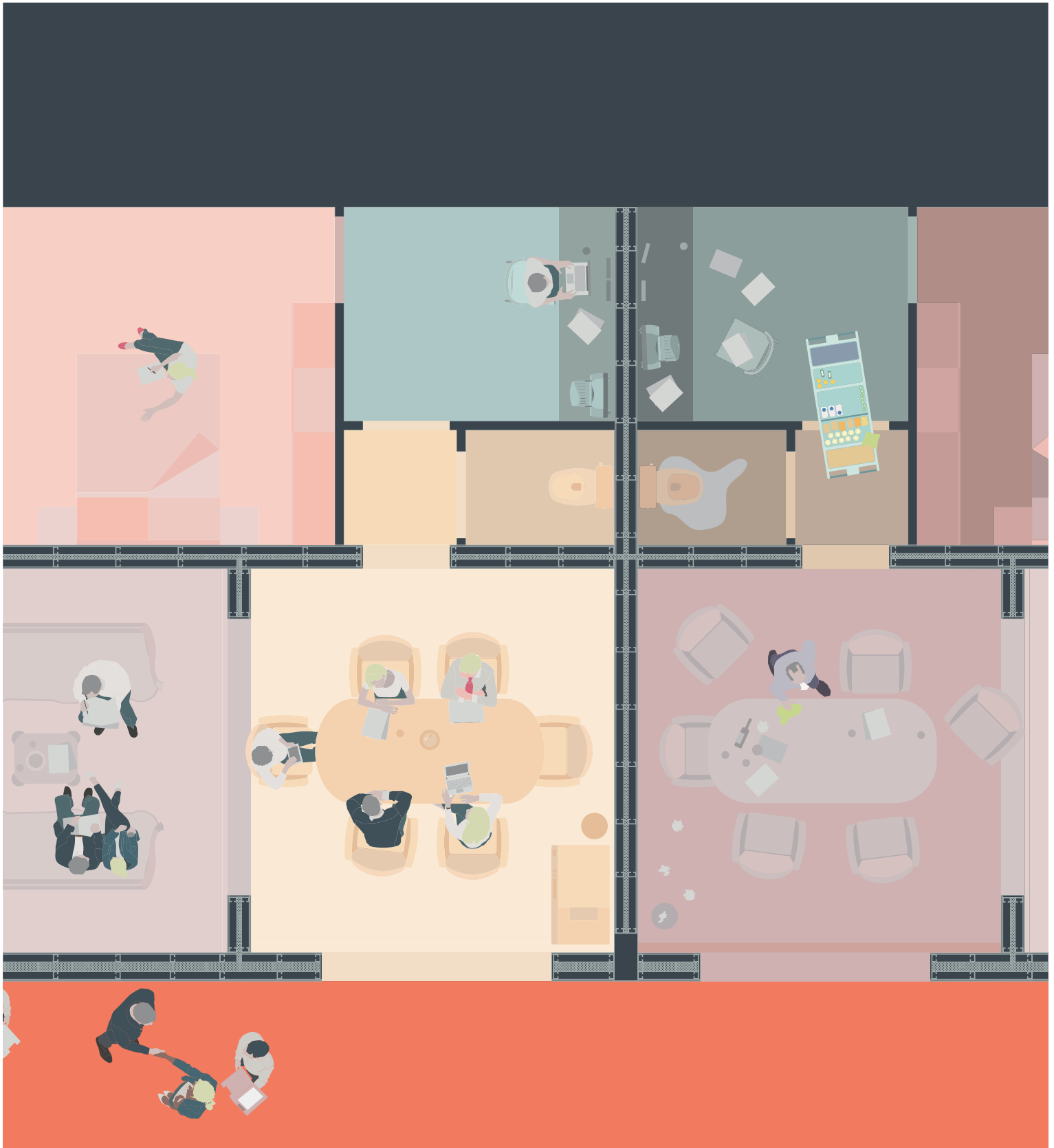
Where traditionally the guest room can be considered “the front” of a hotel, as that is where the institution meets the customer, the corridor belongs rather to “the back” category.

When looking at the genealogy of a corridor in his ‘Translation of Drawing to Building and Other Essays’, Robin Evans argues that the corridor came into use as a way of dealing with unrequited sociability inherent to the open plans of a thoroughfare layout, where both guests and servants were obliged to pass through a matrix of connected rooms.

The corridor indeed avoids any undesired encounter with the staff of the hotel and clearly separates the private and shared spaces. The thoroughfare layout, on the other hand, offers a gradient of collectiveness and sociability, where the movement through space is by filtration rather than canalization as in the case of a corridor.⁵ Thus, the first room in the sequence is naturally shared the most, while the one with most privacy is always at the end of the enfilade. This can be found fruitful in the world of (transient) political administrations, where rather than using secluded meeting rooms it is desirable to have personalized layout of discrete but thoroughly interconnected rooms that accommodates different modes of work or leisure, both collectively and individually.

⁵ Robin Evans, “*Figures, Doors, and Passages*,” in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997).





Hotel room. plan





Nonetheless, where the corridor becomes the backstage used for servicing other spaces rather than a space in its own right, in the world of diplomacy and politics, the corridor offers a great opportunity for informality—the real talk—before stepping back in front of the public eye, or into the conference room.⁶

It is only humorous that according to the lights of reason and the dictates of morality, as Evans suggests in his writings, such contact in the corridor was in the past considered '*at best incidental and distracting, at worst corrupting and malignant.*'⁷

6 AMO Rem Koolhaas, Harvard GSD, *Elements of Architecture; Corridor*, ed. Stephan Petermann James Westcott (Taschen, 2018).

7 Evans.

Expert Interview

Kate Mahon, reservation manager at The Rock Hotel, an iconic hotel at the foot of the Rock of Gibraltar built in 1932 by Marquis of Bute. The institution of The Rock Hotel is suitably reminiscent of a bygone era of genteel mannerisms and culture. The interview is an outcome of email correspondence with the manager, July 2019.

As a reservation manager of The Rock Hotel, I wonder if you could tell me a bit about the current market in Gibraltar. Would you describe the offer in the hotel industry as under or over saturated?

At present the market is buoyant, there are of course high and low seasons as in any other country, however, there is a good ratio of hotels to tourists here in Gibraltar.

Are you aware of any ongoing or planned hotel facilities or resorts on the peninsula of Gibraltar?

Gibraltar is always developing and I am sure there will be future plans for more hotels, especially with the rapidly growing demand.

I wonder if you could tell me a little bit about the different demographics that seek your services, as well as the general clientele of the local hotel enterprises.

Our demographics vary from corporate travellers, to groups and also leisure travellers, and this applies in general to most of the hotel facilities in Gibraltar.

Have you experienced any decrease in the number of guests with the growing popularity of Airbnb and other alternative modes of accommodation in Gibraltar over the last years?

Gibraltar's tourist industry is growing steadily over the years so the demand for extra accommodation has always been here, I think Airbnb, as you have mentioned has added an extra chance for more people to visit Gibraltar.

How has it informed or influenced the offered services of your hotel?

No, it has not changed in any way the services that we offer to our customers. What other events does The Rock Hotel cater for? (e.g. weddings, conferences, etc.)

We cater for weddings, conferences, and quite often sports groups as well.

Does your hotel currently host any public or civic uses or activities?
No.

Do your premises facilitate other commercial uses, that would not be exclusively for guests accommodated in the hotel? (e.g. restaurant, the hair&beauty salon, etc.)

We do offer the restaurant and bar to non-residents, also our conference spaces and different events rooms, there is also a hairdressers on site, however, this is independent.

If so, can you describe how and to which extent they contribute to the economic model of the hotel?

i.e. Are they run by the hotel itself, or does the hotel rent out spaces to other private operators?

We run all of our private events, only very occasionally do we rent out spaces to private operators.

Would you say that your hotel benefits from or lacks other facilities or services in its nearest surroundings?

Gibraltar is a very small place as I guess you witnessed, everywhere is on walking distance more or less so I would say we don't lack or benefit from any services in the surrounding area.

In the Town Planning Document from 2009, the local authorities outlined the ambition to further enhance the tourist industry in Gibraltar. Has there been any changes in your services in response to the evolving demand on the market since then? (e.g. expansion, or shift in offered services, etc.)

We refurbished a extra wing of the hotel so we are able to keep up with the growing demand.

How do you expect the services in the Gibraltar's hotel industry to develop in response to Brexit?

This is a question that nobody is available to answer correctly, Brexit is a very uncertain area, however, we are hoping that it will continue to enhance the tourist industry and also promote more business from our British clients.

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Aureli, Pier Vittorio. *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2011.

In his book, Pier Vittorio Aureli proposes that a sharpened formal consciousness in architecture is a precondition for political, cultural, and social engagement with the city. Aureli uses the term absolute not in the conventional sense of "pure," but to denote something that is resolutely itself after being separated from its other. In the pursuit of the possibility of an absolute architecture, the other is the space of the city, its extensive organization, and its government. Politics is agonism through separation and confrontation; the very condition of architectural form is to separate and be separated. Through its act of separation and being separated, architecture reveals at once the essence of the city and the essence of itself as political form: the city as the composition of (separate) parts. The work of the architects he looks at (Andrea Palladio, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Étienne Louis-Boullée, and Oswald Mathias Ungers), addressed the transformations of the modern city and its urban implications through the elaboration of specific and strategic architectural forms. The "project for the city" does not take the form of an overall plan but is expressed as an "archipelago" of site-specific interventions.

Kracauer, Siegfried. "The Hotel Lobby" in *The Mass Ornament*. 1927. trans. Levin, Thomas Y. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

In the Hotel Lobby, the author sees the lobby as an "inverted image" of the House of God – any house of worship. These spaces, he says, are both specifically equipped by their function to create equals of the people that inhabit them, despite their divergent functions. In a religious congregation, the differences between them disappear because of their united focus on god – they see their lives as serving the same destiny. Equality in the hotel lobby is instead established by a relationship to nothing. The sitters in a hotel lobby are, in the act of sitting in the lobby, focusing their energy on nothing at all, whereas in the church, the congregation's members focus their energy entirely on the same object. The House of God is a place where people congregate to encounter a certain unknown Someone, whereas the Hotel Lobby is a place where people congregate to become anonymous and encounter no one. He emphasizes the importance of Silence as it is observed in those places (example from Der Tod in Venedig), and the aims of those specific silences – in the lobby, it underscores the anonymity of the people occupying the space and acts almost as a barrier between the individuals, whereas in the house of god, silent prayer unites the anonymous worshipers in their attempt to find god. Both spaces also allow for a detachment from daily life – one with meaning in the case of the church and one entirely without meaning in the hotel lobby. Silence underlines the sense that the people in those spaces regard one another as equals.

Jennifer M. Volland, Bruce Grenville, ed. *Grand Hotel; Redesigning Modern Life*. Vancouver Art Gallery: Hantje Katz Verlag, 2013.

From the utilitarian inns that punctuated ancient trade routes to the worldwide network of Hilton and Hyatt, the hotel has transitioned from a marginal building type to a cultural phenomenon within the global economy. Terms like “boutique” and “lifestyle” have become ubiquitous buzzwords in the vocabulary of the hotel, and they engender a new vision of an affective and responsive spatial environment. Architecture and interior design have always played a crucial role in the development of hotels, but their purpose has become more and more decisive, transforming the building type into the advanced form of integrated design that it is today. The scope of the publication is global, an acknowledgment of the pervasive presence of a commercial network that is architecturally formed, geographically distributed, and socially defined.

Pimlott, Mark. *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*. Hejningen, Netherlands: Jap Sam Books, 2016.

Public Interior is no less ambitious. It looks closely at the development of a series of themes—the garden, the palace, the ruin, the shed, the machine and the network—all of which formed the subject of a series of lectures given to Masters Students in Architecture at the Delft University of Technology. Through these themes, Pimlott examines different types of interior spaces, which are considered public, not necessarily in terms of ownership, but in terms of their capacity to be taken as ‘public, even though they may be privately owned and operated’. Most of the chapters finish with a very recent built example of the theme explored, but only the last chapter—on the network as public interior—offers a conclusion. Pimlott observes how many ‘network’ spaces are under threat from creeping commercialisation and surveillance and offer little respite from the increasingly consumer-driven character of public life. He suggests that a public interior ‘might place us in profound contact with our own material culture, with what we have made in the world, with the natural world and with each other’. The network, which ‘enables or structures connections in cities’ and is ‘bound to its experience’ offers that potential.

Wharton, Annabel Jane. *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Annabel Wharton’s study of Hilton International hotels is one of the contributions to the growing body of work on cold-war architecture. Conrad Hilton envisioned each of his hotels as a ‘little America’ and wholeheartedly believed that each new Hilton made a “significant contribution to America’s struggle against communism.” While Hilton read his hotels as a “physical expression of an American assurance in truth and stability of America’s economic and moral values,” Wharton approaches them as palimpsests on which several architectural histories have been written.





Pictorial Narrative-Model Image

Afterword: Reflection of Project in Relation to Discourse

Gibraltar alludes to the impression of an island, especially from geo-political point of view. Looking at it from up close, however, one discovers it is much more a part of a network. It might not be at the centre of the network, but instead at the very margins of it. Over the years, it has built relationships with many centres and it needs to strategize around these centres, and that is what allows new ideas to emerge. In today's turbulent times, it requires, however, a level of openness, even bit of opportunism to turn them into reality.

Architecture has an inherent capacity to externalize values or events. The architecture of spaces of political congregation is not only an expression of a political culture, it also shapes this culture. Historically, hotel has many times become a canvas onto which different social utopias were projected; from Benjamin Henry Latrobe's design for a hotel and theatre complex in Richmond (1797) to OMA's Welfare Palace Hotel (1976). Despite the spatial and even mental construct of the hotel has changed radically over the past century, one thing remains the same. The hotel thrives in a culture of perpetual flux—maybe because it is itself elusive. It constantly adapts and responds to a fickle consumer market. Its opportunism feeds on instability and constant change.

Hotel now has an infinite capacity to serve as a rented replacement space for anything. That accounts for the values which are deeply coded into our public spaces through negotiation between different users, activities, or just simply different ideas about its usage. With open free space in our cities, being currently under the attack of extensive privatization, the hotel offers an alternate stage for social and political participation.

The Inn Gibraltar is a direct path to the expression of this political charge in architectural form. Not only facilitating but also engendering, and possibly redirecting flows of a political dialogue. The Inn Gibraltar addresses the spaces of a hotel as more than symbolic representations of politics, portraying them as actors in the shaping of a shared future. In the context of a territory of

transient population and its prospects, externalizing the values of civil society, traditionally held by institutions such as city halls, embassies, or parliaments, in a form of a hotel, is a testament to a condition of ambiguous or shortlived meanings and loyalties, stemming from the proliferation and relativization of opinions, values, and ultimately facts. Or perhaps as the now popular saying has it, where "all that is solid indeed melts into air."¹⁰

This project is not real, nor realistic. Its site, and more importantly its context in Gibraltar do not exist, at least not yet. The proposal does not try to render the existing spaces for civic engagement and its protocols, in the light of current development, as insufficient, or as no longer relevant. Nor is it a praise of a hotel as a vanguard retreat of universal hospitality beyond politics. The current and foreshadowed civic infrastructures both entail different motives and means of facilitating collective values and aspirations. This project is only full in a critical juxtaposition of the two, ultimately expressing that our shared values and cherished institutions are far more fragile than we realize.