

## Reflection Paper

Amin Ghaffarinejad (4743350), Borders and Territories Graduation Project

My graduation project deals with the topic of “architectural displacement” that proposes to read the built environment as the existence of multiple entities in each one of the entities. In the process of designing, it has been investigated to see how such an understanding could reveal new potentials in architecture and how such spaces would be experienced through. Initially inspired by the caravanserai typology (ancient silk road’s inns isolated among the desert landscape) as a metaphor, the research focuses on an abandoned isolated island near to the coast of Baku as a potent site to explore the notion of displacement in architecture in the context of the New Silk Road.

Following the studio’s methodology, my research started by mapping the spatial phenomena of a specific part of the visited urban environment and use of drawing besides mapping as generative tools of investigating in the architectural design. After the excursion to the Caucasia and visiting four cities along the New Silk Road, I chose the Baku Bay for further investigation. I analyzed and mapped the coast with respect to the nodes that provoke distinct feelings and different experiences within each one of them along the path that I took, and subsequently, their relation to the chosen site of my project has been explored. As a result of analyzing the coast of Baku, I made a table of drawings that contains twelve drawings that have been specified in the mapping process, which namely constitutes the Table of Experience. Besides that, I used the same method to draw specific atmospheric experiences that I had during the whole excursion, which result in six drawings that formed the Table of Time. In this exercise, the twelve drawings of the first table deal more with the spatial configuration of each experienced node, while the six drawings of the second table delineate different atmospheric experiences along the trip. At the primary stage of the next phase of research/design, story reading as an act of displacing from the physical world to a non-physical reality, an act that allow the coexistence of the two dimensional reality of the text within sensual non-physical world of imagination, was the base point for me in defining and reaching to the displacement.

Displacement in architecture could be considered as the coexistence of multiple entities within one entity, a characteristic that allows an architectural construct contains multiple realities at the same time. In this sense, I took the act of storytelling as the base point for investigating the notion of displacement in the three-dimensional world. For this matter after the site analysis, I drafted a short narrative inspired by the process of my traveling, investigating, and mapping the site. Based on the main narrative and two tables of drawing I formulated three sub-narratives that each of them used three drawings of Table of Experience and two drawings of the Table of Memory to describe a series of interconnected spatial constructs. In the next step, I translated each narrative to a set of drawings that delineate the different characteristics of each sub-narrative, and subsequently, the drawings had been translated to three-dimensional spatial elements. In the end, the spatial constructs of the three sub-narratives superimposed and formed a set of interconnected spaces that allow the coexistence of multiple experiences and realities within themselves.

The research process of the project started by analyzing and mapping the urban environment and continued by writing and drawing based on the experiences of the excursion to the site. In this

unconventional method of researching by using different mediums, new possibilities had been provided to understand architecture from different perspectives. Furthermore, the act of translating between different mediums provided a chance to enrich the spatial outcome of the project. The method that I used in reaching an architectural proposal is highly subjective and dependent on personal inspirations and associations, which makes it hard to explain the translation process in a specific way. However, it does have a potential to be developed further as a productive method that allows exploring architecture with a different lens, and enriching the understanding and doing the architecture in the phase of translating from a medium to another.

The primary result of my graduation project could be considered as using storytelling and act of translating between different mediums of creative thinking as a possible way of investigating in the architecture other than the conventional methods. My project mainly deals with exploring new possibilities in understanding architecture, rather than trying to solve a specific social issue or answer to a professional design problem. However, as a result of my investigation, the used methods in this project could be applied in the designing process in practice and be considered as tools that help to enrich the design's outcome.