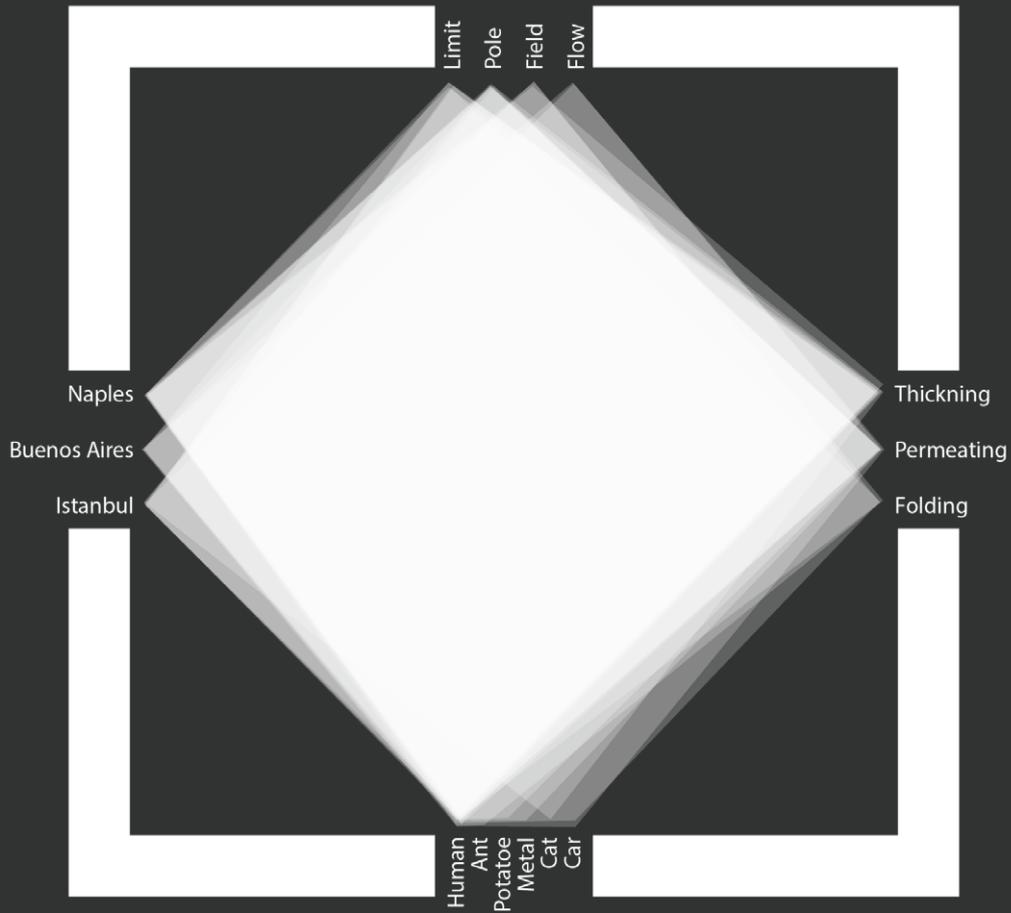


Imaging a Decolonial Architectural Praxis



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Prolegomenon

The present work is a result of an explorative process started (if it can ever be dated) 2 years ago when, in the context of my architectural studies, I started to wonder how decoloniality and decolonization processes interchange with the architectural discipline. A process that started with questions such as how can architecture decolonize; quickly encountered the need to look more fundamentally in the discipline of architecture.

In a literature study I first attempted this by theoretically exploring separately on one side to describe abstractly the colonial process and on the other side the capacities of the architectural discipline. Such a study, shed already light on the need for decolonial thinking to work in a relational manner. Decoloniality cannot be non-relational. With such idea I embarked on a photographic excursion to three cities, in three different contexts, in different moments for myself as a researcher: to explore intuitively the affordances of decoloniality. The photographic exploration was not

meant to answer the question of what is a decolonial affordance -which I first thought; but rather enhance my intuition, producing thoughts and reflections.

Putting together these phases of my process has been another phase on itself, worth to bring attention to it, as the reflection on the photography was intuitive: explorative and not descriptive. The comments on the photography shown in this book are not to be read below, above, before or after the photography but as another layer of it. Thereafter, as I was selecting some of the photographs -from the many, grouping them sometimes when that was fitting and intuitively exploring with different kinds of narratives independent -and at the same time dependent- of the photograph, I started to develop the diagram that encovers this book. This is a diagram worth to discuss in the detail of the dimensions that compose it, and I will delve into this in the methodologies section.

The emergence of the decolonial studies can be placed very recently in the 90s

in South America, when the Peruvian sociologist, Anibal Quijano, coins the term decoloniality (*decolonialidad*). The term is founded in the principle that today's modern world functions based on the root of European colonialism, and that the decolonial processes that lead to nation-state formations lack a proper decoloniality that disassociates current modes of knowledge and of being with the European cannons.

2 There is a wide scope of meaning that decolonial architecture can have. A lot of research for example points to a vernacular architecture approach, where old techniques are recognized and valued in contemporary architectural designs. Other topics of study refer to inclusivity in design with spaces that are more similar to what would be considered post-modernist, in a seeming attempt to represent people's variety with many colours or shapes. The aim of my study is first and foremost to understand the capacities of architecture as a discipline to be decolonial in and of itself, in a discursive theoretical study. The second

but contemporary photographic study, will aim to understand the how's -and in a latter hierarchy, the when's, the who's, the what ifs, of such question.

The following three groups of questions have been developed along and after the theoretical research that follows and are a guideline to my project. Not only they have and will continue guiding my theoretical speculations, but were also a guide for the other methodologies implied.

Can architecture be decolonial? How is decolonial architecture? How do we give space to this praxis of decoloniality?

How can different rationalities that people hold coexist sympoietically? How can architecture facilitate the practice of politics and the exchange?

How can we design for affordances, for people taking over architecture through their own perception?

The framed research in this book will never be read the same twice, its process of production and exploration has been intuitive and iterative, thus layered and

Prolegomenon

mutually affecting. It does not aim for objectivity but -contrasting the line of thought in universities, embraces subjectivity. Not only does the content call for this subjectification of research,

but also it has formatted it in a matrix of subjectivity, has been written by a subject (me) and will be read by, hopefully, different subjects.

Colonialism is colloquially understood as the settlement on foreign land to systematically exploit resources or people present in the land. Prominent examples include the Spanish Empire in the Americas, or the British, Portuguese, French, and Dutch empires. This conception of the word originates from the Latin “*colonia*,” which referred to ancient Roman settlements outside Italy, linked to “*colonus*,” meaning a farmer or settler cultivating land.¹ The Romans also used “*colonia*” to translate the ancient Greek word “*ἀποικία*,” which meant “home away from home” and referred to Greek colonies.² Thus, a colony inherently possesses an exogenous quality. The reasons for or methods of occupying land are less relevant to the definition of a colony than the fact of occupying foreign land itself.

The reference to a farmer indicates the sedentary and settling nature of a colony, marking colonialism a phenomenon specific to sedentary societies. In contrast, nomadic societies cannot be colonial because they adapt to conditions rather than altering them. A farmer changes land processes to maximize production, making the land exogenous through the act of farming previously unfarmed land. The farmer epitomizes the colonial act by altering the land to suit their needs.

The process that the farmer, as an example of a colonizer, carries out can be analysed through Deleuze’s and Guattari’s terminology. The term “territorialization,” as used by Deleuze and Guattari, involves organizing a territory through distributing and disposing of things or persons, emphasizing it as a process.³ Organized territories can be disorganized and

1 Douglas Harper, “Etymology of Colony,” Online Etymology Dictionary, October 13, 2021, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/colony>.

2 James Whitley, *The Archaeology of Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

3 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Continuum, 2008), 41–73.

Theoretical research

reorganized through deterritorialization and reterritorialization. First, existing relationships must be dismantled to allow reshuffling. These processes are evident in colonial acts, such as the Spanish colonization of the Aztecs, which involved dismantling Aztec symbols to impose Catholic ones. According to Deleuze and Guattari, a territory is a set of capacities and relationships of bodies in space. Deterritorialization decontextualizes these relationships, while reterritorialization recontextualizes them into new ones. The territory and its codes influence and rewrite each other, seeking equilibrium after an imbalance, akin to Newton's first law.

Colonization, therefore, involves the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of relationships of an exogenous territory. This concept can apply not only to land but also to ideas, beliefs, systems,

species, resources, and any form of ecology or body.

Elizabeth Grosz describes colonization as an interaction where one part takes over another's operations, establishing a hierarchical dominance.⁴ This aligns with Said's "Orientalism," where colonizers create an identity for the colonized to establish their control.⁵ The identification of the "other" creates an artificial hierarchy for possession and control and becomes crucial for the understanding to the colonial logic. An understanding of the other as a completely separate system -autopoietically- is akin to the colonial logic. Opposite, one can understand the "other" in a sympoietic way, as part of a same and shared ecology. A sympoietic system, like nomadic societies, does not see the point in colonizing, as Haraway suggests in her concept of being part of a holistic earth.⁶

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4 Elizabeth A Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art : Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* (New York, Ny: Columbia University Press, Cop, 2008), 62–101.

5 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; repr., London: Penguin, 2003), 206–7

6 Donna J Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Duke University Press, 2016), 58–98.

6 Colonial logic requires identifying and devaluing the “other.” It is not merely the identification but the hierarchical positioning that conforms colonialism. The other and the different can be viewed through Foucault’s perspective of the different rationalities. Foucault discusses that they co-exist, but cannot be fully agreed upon, leading to the divide of “what belongs to me and what does not.” When this divide becomes hierarchical, this forms the basis for colonial logic, contrasting with a sympoietic existence where multiple rationalities coexist without hierarchical dominance. So perhaps, or according to Foucault, different rationalities cannot be unified -this might even be closer to an authoritarian logic or homogenizing politics such as fascism. However, rationalities could perhaps coexist.

How can then architecture afford for a sympoietic existence?

Arranging materials in the world creates potentials and boundaries in our environment, shaping how we interact with space. This is the main capacity of architecture. Architect and journalist, specialized in writing about politics of space, Léopold Lambert, suggests that architecture is often aligned with settler colonialism by restricting movement and limiting capacities.⁷ Consider a simple room: if it lacks a door, it traps the inhabitant, creating an oppressive environment. It seems that architectural form can only restrict, and it is the lack of architecture that provides freedom of movement. Moreover, even when a door is placed, freedom is not guaranteed, as the host might choose not to use it, or might be forbidden to do so by external forces. This aligns with Foucault’s view on liberty, which must be exercised.⁸ In the room with a door or without a door, there can still be practices of liberty, such as breaking open the door, protesting, or perhaps even climbing or breaking

7 Léopold Lambert, “Teach-In: The Architecture of Settler Colonialism in Palestine,” *THE FUNAMBULIST MAGAZINE*, October 31, 2023, <https://thefunambulist.net/editorials/teach-in-palestine>.

8 Foucault, “Space, Knowledge, Power,” 349–64.

Theoretical research

the wall. This thought experiment and according to Foucault demonstrates that liberty is an active practice that must be exercised.

But architecture's role in society extends beyond its physical form. British architect Leach discusses how classical architecture can symbolize various political ideologies, such as Greek democracy or Italian fascism. This does not mean that the symbol will be reflected in the actions of a population, as a symbol only becomes such through association but not by coding practices. And Leach agrees, the intended meaning of a building does not guarantee its use or interpretation. For example, neoclassical buildings in Buenos Aires did not prevent a military coup or dictatorship operations. Architecture's significance is ultimately determined by its users, not its designers.⁹

British architect Leach does a good job in summarizing some of the theories of Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault to discuss

the possibility for a building to be -part of- an apparatus. "How can classical architecture symbolize both Greek democracy and Italian fascism?" he asks. This question brings up two important points on how architecture might be an apparatus. More often than not, a political meaning is given to architecture through metaphors and readings: such as making congress buildings in classical styles to symbolize democracy, or perhaps making a very monolithic and rational building to symbolize an equal division of power, resources and rights. However, this architecture means nothing: the neoclassical congress in Buenos Aires -even together with the neoclassical house of government and the neoclassical palace of justice!- did not stop the military coup in 1976 and it also did not do anything to prevent the operations of the dictatorship government in the years that followed. The second point to be mentioned is that the architecture is never used or interpreted by the architect but by

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⁹ Neil Leach, "Can a Building Be an Apparatus?," *Spool* 6, no. 1 (July 1, 2019): 5–16, <https://doi.org/10.7480/spool.2019.1.3889>.

everyone else. What might have been the intentions of the architect are not guaranteed by the architecture.

As I proposed before, based on the work I have cited, architecture sets the scope of capabilities for the user. These are, as we saw in the room without a door experiment, not limited to the capabilities that the architect thought there were, as the host was able to find new ones, and oppressors were also able to find alternatives. So, the sets of capabilities is something that the architect seems to have little control over. This is also what Foucault discusses when talking about Bentham's Panopticon. The form of it, designed by an architect, could be used as a prison, school, madhouse, or even as a dancing club as Leach suggests. The discussions or the diagram by both Foucault and Deleuze put forward a new idea: the panopticon is not exercising power, rather it is a diagram for that exercise of power, it is a "visual representation" of the exercise

of power itself. This relates much to the discussion of the codes and the territory -the territory being the diagram and the codes being what the diagram enacts.

Architecture as the territory, the form of the content, is thus not enacting in itself but projecting the codes of the episteme at play. The architecture as part of the apparatus is then an arrangement of materials that will change a territory setting different capacities for the bodies in space. Grosz writes in *Chaos, Territory, Art* that architecture is a containment of forces, framing the chaos of the earth according to the different ways of living. She states that every way of living territorializes the earth in a different manner: "each form of life, and each cultural form, undertakes its own modes of management of intractable problems that impose themselves on the living".¹⁰ Even though, this text might be hinting that there is one architecture that intrinsically represents one mode of inhabiting, we can illustrate that this

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10 Elizabeth A Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art : Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* (New York, Ny: Columbia University Press, Cop, 2008), 62–101.

is not what Grosz means. The Berlin wall was architecture to separate and now it is a canvas; there are countless examples of material that has been resignified in similar ways. Thus, the use to separate and segregate is not intrinsic to the wall.

Going back to Deleuze's diagram, this one is not only passive, but also a vision of what is to come: as I suggested before, capabilities that the architect themselves cannot even predict. A beautiful example story is told by Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw, used to explain the interactions of the deer in Vancouver Island with the settler in the area -children in a child care centre.¹¹ She talks about a fence that separates the garden of the childcare centre from the wild, the deer, the decolonial or unknown. She writes in three different moments:

"The fence is a childcare licensing requirement, ostensibly to restrain the children for their own safety; in reality, it restricts the deer more than it does the children..."-page 2-

"Fences, children, and deer form interesting assemblages. For example, the fence that separates the childcare centre from the deer becomes a material/ semiotic marker of hyperseparation between the "civilized" domesticated world of the child and educator on one hand and the "uncivilized" indigenous world of the deer on the other. ..."-page 8-

"The fence, as contested space, might enact shifting relations between native/ non-native, nature/culture" that are unknown (Instone, 2010, p. 98). The fence was constructed to prevent children's encounters with the "wild," the "outside." But as it stands there, it also presents a way to relate differently to the "wild" and the "native," and to the deer that inhabit the forest."-page 12-

Architecture as territory projects the codes of the episteme at play, setting capacities for bodies in space. Thus some architectures might hinder or facilitate political activity.

11 Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw, "Postcolonial Entanglements: Unruling Stories," *Child & Youth Services* 33, no. 3-4 (July 2012): 303-16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0145935x.2012.745790>

How is it then that some architecture might hinder or not the practice of politics and exchange?

10 The theory of affordances could be one to suggest the workings behind architecture hindering or not something. Gibson suggests that all surfaces afford something and that based upon the perception of the actor, the bodies affected by the architecture -in our case- there is an affordance to the surface. The surface in this description can be a rock, a floor, a hammer, a building. Gibson suggests that, because the perception of the observer indicates for the observer what they afford, then the composition sets the affordance and this would suggest values and meanings to be perceived in the objects, although observer dependant. Affordances however cannot be measured as physics is, because for every body in space the relation to the surface is different and does not afford the same¹² -similarly to the different but coexisting rationalities that Foucault refers to. An architecture

can be then many different things: a house can be a house but it can also be a hospital when needed, a bank or a place of value exchange, an office, a detention centre or a mini museum. A house can also be a place to sit next to, supporting your back to have lunch, a shadow, a meeting place or a bird nest.

Understanding how architecture hinders or supports colonial or decolonial ways of being requires examining the affordances it provides. The values and meanings perceived in architectural forms are observer-dependent, demonstrating the diverse potentials within any given space.

12 James J Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (Psychology Press, 2013), 127–43.

About imaging.

My understanding of images as an agent is based on the theories of Simondon. In this understanding, images are not as representational of something “real” but as something real and active on itself. Gilbert Simondon speaks of his take on images in *Imagination and Invention*¹ and combined with his theories of information and cybernetics forms a perspective framework of images as informing agents that are produced and produce subjective sensibilities. An image can be understood as an external, informing signal. They are affective because they produce a change in sensibility and a transduction process, term which Simondon uses to refer to an inflection point in the course of individuation. According to his image cycle, individuation is produced by transduction moments labelled as motor image, perception image, symbolic image, and object image (or motor image¹).

A motor image is a motoric predisposition of an experience. An old man sits on a

concrete bench where he has not sat before because he anticipates how this will be. His sitting is an inventive and imaginative take on relating to his *milieu*, informed by values and memories. It is an image of affordance. If decoloniality is relational and ecosystemic then motor images can be the object of study at first instance.

Perception image comes after the relation of the subject and its *milieu* are sensed. The studying of motor images implies a moment of transduction in which these images are perceived, and affordances are revealed. The man conceptualising his sitting and perhaps thinking it is comfortable, uncomfortable, changing his position, etc. It is a moment that is again filtered by value.

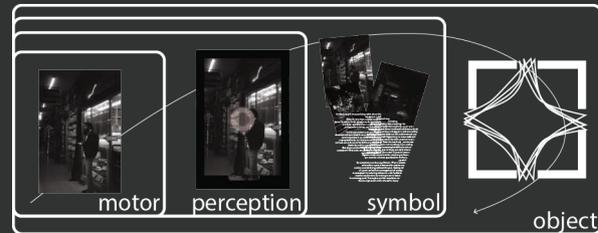
In the symbolic image time starts to appear. The any images of the past are collected and categorized in order to anticipate future potentials. Is a moment of deterritorialization of the experience in an abstract array of decontextualized experiences, they together create a

¹ Gilbert Simondon, *Imagination and Invention* (U of Minnesota Press, 2023).

symbol that can be reterritorialized in the future. The man sitting on the bench might think that all the concrete benches are cold, and he prefers wooden benches.

Finally, the object image comes as a last but first (of the new spiral-like cycle) stage. The tensions revealed in the symbolic image are resolved by the creation of a change or a movement that seeks to find a re-equilibrium, leading to a different symbolic meaning. New images are created, such as the man taking a blanket to cover the concrete bench and sit on it, feeling less cold.

Similarly to the imaging cycle, the methodologies implied in this research are growing in complexity and relationality from the intuitive act of seeing something occurring in the built ecosystem and taking a photography, to the synthesis of selecting them and putting them together with a text. The diagram as an object image is a result of the articulations of the text and the images; the three are in continuous recreational processes.



About the diagram.

The diagram is in itself part of the methodology and of the result of the research. It is the object image that arose from the synthesis of the studies. The word synthesis is to be highlighted here as opposed to analysis. The objective is not to abstract for example the values of the actors that appear in the images and then understand them separately as decolonially informed acts to be replicated in architecture as some kind of post-modernist toolbox -such as it would be in an analytical process. Instead, the research is synthetic, the layers are put together and understood as a whole, often expanding the question on different ways to understand the decoloniality of the architectural praxis instead of the dissection of the problem.

The diagram is composed by four quadrants that inform an ecology, each

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element of the axis is used as a pinpoint to form a net that deforms the main homogenizing frame. The components are the context, the perspectival frame, the element, and the operation. These ecological components have been rethought and rewritten as the images were collected and synthesised. Therefore, I believe it is crucial to the understanding of the process, and almost as a result of the research, to explain in detail the quadrants that conform the ecological arrangements.

The context: on environments.

Context changes everything, says Alicia Juarrero.² Modes of inhabitation and perspective frames are not the same here and there. An environment sets an interplay of compossibilities that are infinite in their finitude, like a set of numbers defined by a maximum and minimum value. Comparing two different environments, as assemblages of individuation processes that continue to affect and be affected by the operations to stage, is in this view impossible.

The choice of studying three cities comes from the will of representing more than one context. The aim is not to have a comparative study of the contexts but to be able to take the advantages that the three contexts chosen to offer due to their similarities and due to their differences.

The three contexts: Buenos Aires, Istanbul and Naples are all port cities, all three with material and immaterial flows that are more prominent in port cities than landlocked cities. The port itself, as an element of influx and outflux becomes a global tool that has been used for colonial processes extensively, in a chain of colonization and further colonization that consists in the first hand colonization of the port city -thus, the port city as a colonized- and then the use of the port to further colonize the inner land -thus, the port city as a colonizer.

Not only with the port as a colonial tool, the three cities are examples of colonialisms. Buenos Aires being one

² Alicia Juarrero, *Context Changes Everything* (MIT Press, 2023).

of the most important anchors of the Spanish empire from the late 1400s to the early 1800s. Istanbul as the centre of the Byzantine, Latin and Ottoman empires, receiving colonial flows but also being the centre point of outgoing colonial flows in the latter case, so much so that it lost the capital of Turkey status in favour of disassociating Turkey from its imperial connotations. Naples has been a predominantly a city of colonial control, established firstly as Parthenope by the Greek empire to control the sea traffic, later in history becoming the capital of all the kingdoms in current Southern Italy of which it formed part.

The uneasiness that I started feeling when moving to the Netherlands, the one that has worked as a motivation of this research, was largely catalysed by the observation of a perceivable socio-politico-economic difference between the first and third worlds. As I observed and speculated about a scheme of exploitation in a global scale, I got increasingly interested in studying processes and flows that in the

architecture scale make this possible. The three cities face a similar dependency situation in the economical chain as well as limited resources compared to counterparts in different scales. Naples as a city dependant on the industry and economy of Northern Italy, Istanbul as a representative of Türkiye on Europe and Buenos Aires as a representative of Argentina on the United States. In the three cases, migration can be seen going opposite to power forces, with the Southern Italians emigrating to Northern Italy, Argentinians to the United States and Europe and Turkish to Europe. How do these situations affect and afford change?

As a last similarity, the three cities tend to a more open interpretation of urban elements and spaces. Compared to, for example, northern European cities, Istanbul, Buenos Aires, and Naples have in common a seeming bendability of the purpose of things and afford individuals to interpret material arrangements, leading to what I expect to be a more intense use of the public material and

space for the practice of politics.

The different locations and temporalities of the three cities make them a good spectrum to be synthesised, not comparative or in opposition but as an array of cases. The different city locations, together with the associated milieu: cultures, neighbouring flows, geographical conditions, political systems, and hierarchical importance within their country, assure, I expect the coverage of diverse occurrences in what are diverse urban environments. On the other hand, the different temporalities that the cities embed in their history -colonial and non-colonial related, might affect the use and abuse of the city today, affording or hindering the practice of politics and of what could be the practice of the decolonial.

The perspectival frame: on non-scalability.

Starting my reflections on the images, I began by thinking from the human perspective but soon realized that I could pretend to think like an ant, like a fruit, or another agent. I could never fully

understand the perspectival frame of such an agent that is not human, or even the one of another human, but by doing this exercise I realized why. Changing the perspective frame from a human to an ant is not only changing the scale of perspective, not only things become bigger but, as a relational ecology, the values must change. The ecology of an ant is not the same as the ecology of a human, simply because the ant relates to its environment in a different way, affecting and being affected differently.

The architectural element: on compossibility.

The images create a perception of an architectural element as a modulator between fields. Starting the synthetic processes, I identified I was imaging the architectural elements of a floor, a roof, a wall. But actually, these elements are a later stage to what I refer as the modulators of fields. I took then a step backwards to rethink architecture not as the assemblages that we know as roof, floor or wall (or could be door, window, frame and a million other systems) but

as the elements of limit and pole that modulate and are modulated by the field and the flow. The perception of an element as a system or assemblage -such as a floor, depends both on the context and on the perspectival frame, which gift the element with a compossibility that is relational. The affordance projects in the element a value that is relational and thus relative to a single perspectival frame.

With this perspective, a wall, for example, is not only a wall. It is a limit -enclosing a field in the obvious and human manner to conceptualize it, a field in itself -as it folds and encloses not only the bigger field of a room but also the material field that composes it, a flow -as it codes the field, and a pole -as it polarises a field. But the element then depends on the perspectival frame and the operation in time that is being imaged.

The operation: on duration.

Relational aspects cannot be other than accounting for experience and this one is not only space-bounded but also time-bounded. Time boundedness

accepts that things (and relations) are in constant change. The biggest mistake of the architectural practice is the lack of accounting for time that is in general the *modus operandus*. Thus, as a decolonial praxis of architecture, operations -changes in time- and duration must be accounted for. The operations are carried out as a conjunction of changes to all the elements previously described. Moving a pole, for example, changes the fold of a limit. Thickening the limit, augments the stock of the flow in it.

This area of the research is one where experiments and observation paired with speculation and theorization could still complexify and clarify the dynamics. At the stage of this research, I have observed the following relational operations.

When the limit is thicker, it can stock a greater flow in it. This can be the result of the intensification of the pole strength and thus of a change in the extension of the field.

When instead the limit becomes thinner, it stocks a lesser flow in it, which results from the decrease in intensity of the

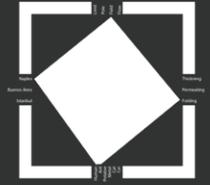
pole strength and, again, a change in the extension of the field.

Looking at the other operations, the limit folding depends on the location of the pole, forming the field and coding the

LIMIT	POLE	FIELD	FLOW
thickness	intensity	extension	stock
fold	location	form	code
permeability	value	homogeneity	direction

flow. The permeability of the limit can be the result of the value change of a pole, the level of homogeneity of the field thus changing and the direction of the flow thus changing.

The diagram thus also accounts for the operation in the image, adding a dimension of time and accounting for the need to speculate in a synthetic, intuitive and decolonial research project.



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Photo Essays

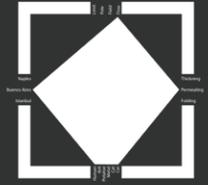
The inhabited void.

The architecture without a roof, only with some walls and a floor.

The walls do not meet each other but instead inflect out to semi enclose other voids. They are multi-coded -other than by the void, by the activities that lie behind them. Their textures, thus varying, paint the void's edges with a geometrical play that close to them strongly codifies their inhabitations. Like a gravitational field, every texture hangs on the mesh of the void, recoding them according to both the folding of their surface and to the inhabitants that perceive them,

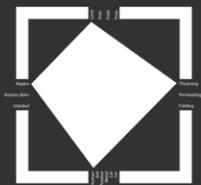
interiorize them and forever relate to them in an affective manner.

The floor is the protagonist, infinitely extending to the invisible. Coded by as infinitely many flows as the wall, it sets the ground -literally- for its inhabitation. The surface that never folds in the same scale than the walls, creates an urban fabric for the ants but a stage for the humans. Affected by time and technicities, the floor collects steps that march, dance and play; steps that control and steps that resist. It affords while it is affected by the commedia dell'arte of the Neapolitan population.



20







22



I once was working in a design project where I was asked to make collages of my design ideas. I included images of rotting fruits, rhizome-like root networks and spiraling shells. There were two or three iterations where I was asked to make the collages “more architectural”, and I would add an image representing something a bit more “material” until at a point the teacher said, “I want to see walls”.

Are walls what make architecture? Plans are the mode of representation and communication that is most diffused in the architectural praxis; parallel to the Earth, it is only able to show walls at one instance perpendicular to them, one height. Any surface parallel to the plan is lost, and any that is not parallel or perpendicular is unjustly represented. Naturally, this is quite limited for the pre-planned complexity that today's-built environment requires, thus are we filled with modelling tools that will surpass these limits for planning, building, budgeting, calculating and maybe even

designing purposes. But the plan persists to be the ruling mode of thought, the walls then remain the fundamental element -under this logic- for the emergence of architecture.

The walls, a surface most external to an inside and most internal to an outside, the limit between what is kept in and out, the thickness of that which seems to be nowhere, not enough in or enough out. The surfaces of the city speak, in the edge of what is public signs are pasted, images painted. These ones inflect in ways that shape any walking or doing and what is under the control of whom. They code per excellence and are heavily abused in the city of Buenos Aires coded to in turn convey something. But their inflections are not modulated by reinterpretations of them. When the floor affords, does the wall block?

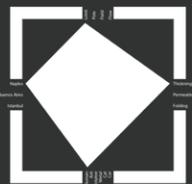
What if we would think with other surfaces? Or what if we would not distinguish between dimensions in the architectural praxis?



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Imaging a Decolonial Architectural Praxis





26



Photo Essays

One day I get out of my house and head downstreet to Karaköy. I need a couple of random things for my model. My classmates showed me the place in the beginning of the semester. They told me it is the place to go to find metal and that they walk around the messy streets often looking for model materials or for some other personal projects.

I am looking for metal scraps, so I enter by turning right before heading across the bridge towards the tourist hub. Immediately I know to be in the right place. The streets are smaller and much calmer than before turning, but there is much more life. The men that own the shops, work for the shops or frequent the shops gather outside, even with

bad weather. They smoke and chat; I have also seen them making a fire once. There is constant movement across the streets since there is almost no cars and shopping in the area often means needing to explore many shops.

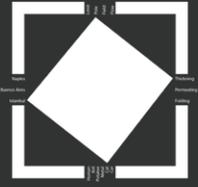
Sometimes turning can mean getting into even smaller streets that fold continuously into more and more inside, more spanned roofs, more lamps needed to illuminate the "street" and more emerging 5TL çay shops. The street is edged with rope, building material, paint buckets, metals and special equipment that I don't always fully understand. These surfaces all become a playground for cats, a place to sit, a paradise for moss.



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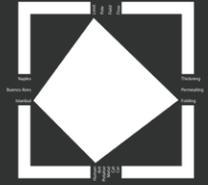


Photo Essays



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Sofia Ines Ghigliani



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What if I take from another body? If I deterritorialize a body, taking over its operations, and then reterritorialize it under my own ecosystematic values, can I label that a colonialism?

The encapsulation as an architecture decontextualizes a body from an ecosystem and recontextualizes it as

a fully enclosed and segregated body, out of place and time. The surfaces are architected for full formal control of the body and its operational flows.

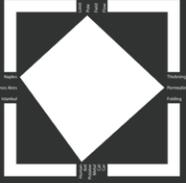
But where are the limits of a body? Of an ecosystem? What is the exogenous in a matter operated chaosmos?



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Photo Essays



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Photo Essays

*Scrutinize the limit, the closer you stand,
it increasingly thickens.*

The smaller units dissolve the line.

*Scrutinize the limit, the longer you stare,
it increasingly thickens.*

*Operations and motions flow beyond
the sign.*

35



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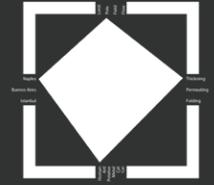


Photo Essays

Externalizing, excluding, deterritorializing. Like a birthing: the interior body that used to be a part gets externalized and deterritorialized to become a body. The happenings to happen in and around the ecology of the new body are still undetermined and extremely uncoded. Happenings to come code and recode the new body until a new territory is produced. Then the new body _not so new anymore_ that is territorialized, has a coding capacity; happenings increasingly stabilize in nature.

Buen día, disculpe ¿las verduras que están afuera son para llevar? ¿Sin costo? Sí, puede llevarse algunas verduras, pero no los canastos por favor, que esos los tenemos que devolver. Perfecto, ¡gracias!

An ecosystem searches equilibrium. When a system externalizes a part is because the system can continue metabolizing without this part. Getting rid of a part can facilitate management of energy consumption by reducing volume in a cell; facilitate internal organization by making room to better functioning parts. The surplus and the expulsion are thus an expression of the chaotic decay.



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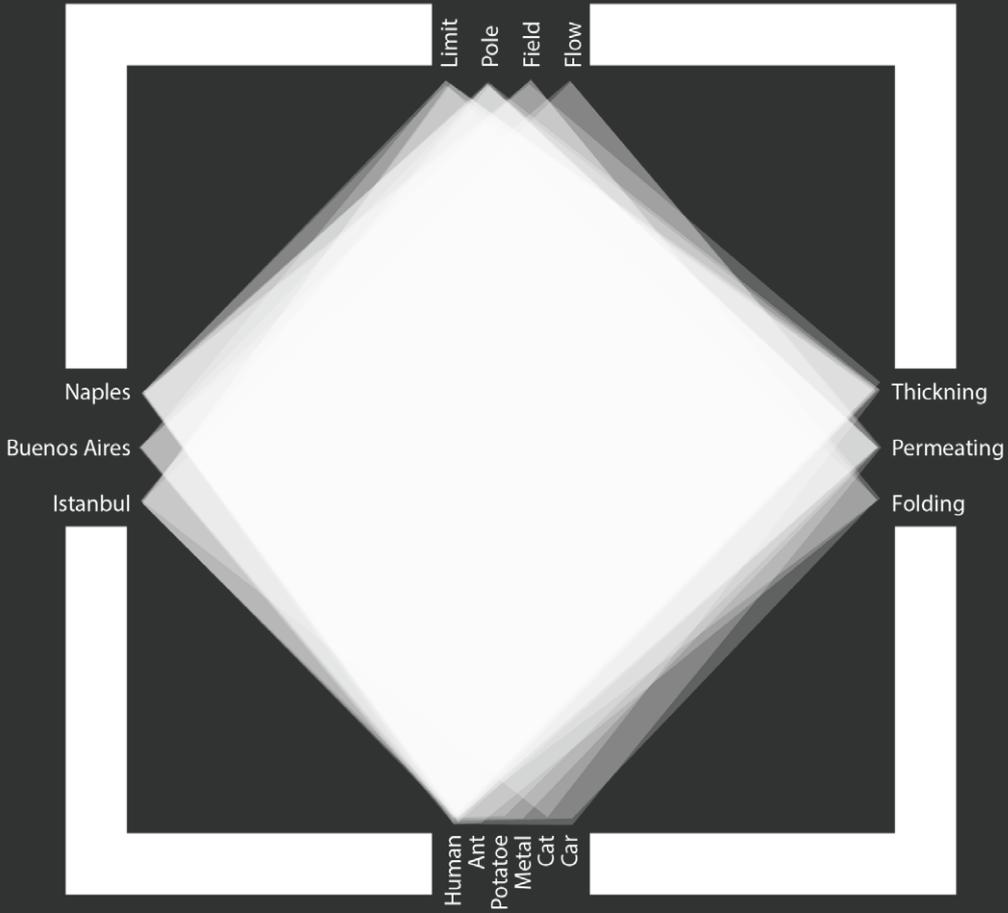


Imaging a Decolonial Architectural Praxis



Honours Programme Delft

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Imaging a Decolonial Architectural Praxis

The result of this research process is an object-diagram, a hybrid that emerges from an intuitive and dynamic approach to imaging. This object-image is not a static conclusion but an active call to engage with subjectivity, urging reframing and opening new possibilities for interpretation. Far from a definitive answer, it is a process that invites reflection, offering a space for inquiry rather than closure. It is a product of various iterative steps, influenced by diverse values, perspectives, and intuitions, making the object-image a vehicle for questioning. The object-diagram, in its very nature, serves as a decolonial architectural praxis, providing not only a more nuanced understanding of the problem of decoloniality within architectural practice but also a manifestation of that understanding.

Throughout this project, the construction of the object-diagram has been a process of continuous unfolding. The four openings of the frame, which have emerged during the journey of

this work, represent dimensions of an image and was not predetermined but emerged spontaneously as a reflection of the research itself. The very idea of constructing this diagram arose only in the process of compiling photographs with theory.

Working with images has provided a tangible means of exploring architectural form and its role within these processes. Images, in their fluidity, capture moments of transformation and reveal the interplay between space, culture, power and changes in these in time. The act of synthesizing these images has been intuitive, a process of weaving together fragmented understandings to create something greater than the sum of its parts. In this way, the object-diagram becomes a tool for actively engaging with these multiple layers of meaning. It doesn't simply illustrate theory—it embodies it, moving beyond representation to act as a catalyst for deeper reflection on the implications of decoloniality in architectural praxis.

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