a Stratified Urban Landscape

rituals within an ideal image
0  [ Postcard Metaphor ]
1  [ Context : Skopje ]
2  [ Mapping ]
3  [ choice of Site / Programme ]
4  [ fabricating land_form ]
5  [ 4 layers _ new terrain ]
6  [ materialisation _ atmosphere ]
“Postcard, like a story teller, records the myth of city and tells dubbly the reality of the past and the present. With the frontside and the backside, it not only records the collective image of the city, but also writes down the individual story. The text and photograph on each side work together, rather than one side explains and illustrates the other side. The photographs in frontside are official representation of the city itself and give a first impression to people. It is the ideal image that tries to include people within its ideal scope of vision and make them acquire the advantages of the city.”
[ postcard study_SKOJIE image_ mapping the frontside ]
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a City in Transformation
The natural disaster of 1963 earthquake almost demolished Skopje city centre into a tabula rasa. In 1965, Japanese architect Kenzo Tange was selected as the winner of an international competition to redesign, and rebuild the city centre. He built up a modern image with the imagination of someone's future. Nowadays it was treated as a treasure to Skopje.
From 2010, in the name of “Skopje 2014” project, countless sculptures, re-historicized building, fountains erect against the old city image, which forms the contrasted image from frontside to the backside. However, the new city fabric departs its cultural value from the correspondence to the stories of the natives, therefore it only dresses up a very expensive antiquity tag on the skin of cityscape.
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“Architecture can be observed both from a distance and internally (close-up); we can become internally ingested by it, become part of its interior. In stead of just being an outside observer or an outside spectator. We can become part of its very interior organism. We become physical-organic participators; we become enclosed. “

Jonh Hejduk
Attractive Node Trajectories and Junctions

- Tourist attractors
- Native attractors
- Main axis and junctions
park of Mother Theresa
memorial of 1963 earthquake
arrival at city gate
regulation and judgement
repetition of capitalism
building and artefacts
city of glory and scorn
city as "theme park"
city under transformation
entering the "old"
iconic: treasure of history
uncertain chaotic: confusing
end of the world of legibility

[ journey 01 _ SKOPJE image ]
[ journey 02 - SKOPJE image ]

confusion of location: paris? skopje?
arrival at city gate
machine of memory or branding?
past of future image
crossing the wall of city
sanctity of Macedonian
arrival at the backside world
endless movement towards tourist treasure
crossing the wall of city
reproduction of path
gods of outsiders?
depression of city public
infinite journey
entering the "old"

informal parking
intensity of human activity
pit pazar, the biggest bazaar of macedonia, located in the end of main axis
authenticity, exposing the 'real' people and 'real' city story
multiformity, a wonderful labyrinthine box
dynamic, change everyday, but the pattern of spatial narrative is frozen into the impressive spatial pattern
interstitial space, between the "old" town and the "new" infrastructure
street vendors, change through the day, people hawking, bargaining and arguing
backstreet, suddenly entering a mysterious place, mess but lively
space of vernacular, the language only known by the natives
entrance, transition from the modern city of Kenzo Tange to the memory of Turk history.

bridge, physical borderland connecting front and back, up and down.

stair, shifting in the vertical layer.

underground, concealing a backside world without notification.
opera house, the previous icon of skopje, the peak of after-earthquake reconstruction loss, from frontside to backside, public space is invaded by the institutional power reproduction, movement and new construction transform the enclosure of plaza trace, time and human activity drawing within the ground
ruin, memorial and recorder of city agony of 1963 earthquake

ruin behind ruin, a new ruin behind the old ruin, one is showed, one is folded

trace, clues of the demolished building

reoccupation, shelter and treasure for the vagrant
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FRONTSIDE

The frontside is an ideal image, which is constructed as a showplace to present the bourgeois ideology. The aesthetic of the landscape on the surface will be the strategy to unify the otherwise chaos caused by the construction of different periods. And build up an ideal cityscape.
BACKSIDE

Backside image shows a different scape that is defined by the calculated traces of the everyday rituals. Because of the authenticity of the backside image, it is a real and special treasure to the city. However, no matter the aesthetic value of old opera house or the programmatic value of traditional ritual is forgotten by more and more people. Like the rooftop of MOB, traditional turkish bath, folk dancing and annual epiphany.
FRONTSIDE

ideal image

interface

ritual

INSTITUTION

OPERA

BALLET

ORCHESTRA

surface

[ PARK ]

subterranean

PUBLIC BATH

ANNUAL EPIPHANY

BACKSIDE

OCCASIONAL CEREMONY

FOLK DANCE

CITY CENTER

PLAZA

PATHWAY

VIEW SPOTS

PERFORMANCE TERRACE

EXHIBITION

OPERA

RECEPTION

CHANGING

CAFE

MASSAGE

REST

THERMAL BATH POOL

OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL

PLUNGE PLATFORM

RIVER
1/// Extended Landscape

The rooftop landscape is extended from old opera house, which is becoming the new plaza for people gathering, playing, passing. The texture of the landscape like pathway will play a role on unifying the chaos of the context and revive the public space behind the institutional building.

2/// Urban Terrace

The urban Terrace is conducted as a connection with the city, including the south of city center and the riverbank. The terraces have different functions. Some is forming the performance space. Other is forming the outdoor small sunken square for sitting.

3/// Labyrinth

The parallel pathways are submerged into the underground by the bearing walls. With intertwining the parallel space. The underground bath space is like a labyrinth, keeping you wandering around.

4/// Submerged Waterbase

The walls are enclosed that are forming water pools. The stair-cases are forming the new terrain of the underground. The water covers the stairs. Only when submerged into the waterbase, one can experience the space. In the water, people no longer just walk on the plan. The movement is three dimension.
Language of Landscape

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Landscape architecture is a matter of surface. Pattern and texture are its working variables, and its traditional site is the extended horizontal field. It was around questions of surface and texture that architecture and landscape recently converged.

Stan Allen, Landform Building: Architecture’s New Terrain

Texture is the level on which abstract information and tangible sensation meet today. Images are based on textures. But texture is also a fundamental feature of materials. Texture seems to abolish the distinction between the abstract and concrete. In the field of architecture, the importance given to texture, to the play between grain and light, goes hand in hand with the desire to reconcile the immaterial and the material, the conceptual and the tangible.

Antoine Picon
0.1 / 0.2 preliminary reading of the site (collage of mappings) ////////// 0.3 abstract drawing finding out the consensus between new and old ////////// 0.4/0.5/0.6 2.5D transformation from 2D drawings (extrusion/folding/excavation) ////////// 0.7 combination of three gestures, forming first abstract model ////////// 0.8 reading from model, find out the dominant line and new topography
1970 masterplan of Skopje culture centre

original plan

horizontal spatial organization

vertical spatial organization

move and stop

abstract language (parallelism _ alternation)

abstract language (stratification)

dominant line

three grids from dominant lines

trim the grids based on constrains

parallel strips from grids

first image formed by parallel strips
[ IDEAL IMAGE _ parallelism and stratification _ experiment on sectional model ]
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an Ideal Extended Landscape
[ Extended Landscape ] // 5.0 m
[ Urban Terrace ] // 1.8 m
[ Labyrinth : Wall ] // -2.4 m
[ Submerged waterbase ] // -4.5 m
LEVEL -4.50 m

1. CHANGING ROOM
2. PATIO
3. LEISURE BATH POOL
4. SOUND POOL
5. OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL
6. DANCING POOL
7. SHOWER ROOM
8. REST SPACE
9. STONE POOL
10. THERMAL WATER TREATMENT
11. STUFF ROOM
12. WATER CONTROL ROOM
13. CAR PARKING
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Materialisation_layers of material
1 skylight triple frosted glazing
12 mm toughened glass + 16mm argon-filled cavity +
2x10 mm laminated safety glass with aluminium caps

2 separation wall with apertures
300 mm sandstone work with steel ties for stable, random length;
leave some gaps for apertures, glue together

3 walkable roof
30 mm concrete slab, finely sanded,
20 mm mortar; 130 mm thermal insulation sheathing;
600mm reinfroce concrete with water pipe;
summer with cold water from river for cooling
winter with hot water from thermal water for warming

4 special lighting for bath pool

5 bath pool wall
80mm and 100mm masonry by turns, 5mm mortar

6 overflow drainage
overflow and channels into the stone course layer
with built-in water pipe
1  vegetation roof
100 mm sand bed, 50 mm substrate layer
protective layer 8 mm root-inhibitor membrane
130 mm thermal insulation
300 mm reinforced concrete with water pipe

2  handrail
500 mm height, with 12 mm steel baluster
fixed on the 600 mm height concrete parapet

3  skylight double glazing with aluminium frame

4  stainless steel handrail

5  150 mm concrete slab with 30 mm stone brick on top
1. Double toughened frosted glazing with aluminium caps
2. L-shape steel flat for reflecting daylight
3. Aluminium caps
4. 130 mm thermal insulation
5. 30mm concrete slab, fine sanded
6. 150mm gravel layer
7. 200 mm drainage pipe
8. Compacted earth
9. Retaining wall construction:
   - 500 mm waterproof reinforced concrete
10. 300 mm T-shape steel beam for glazing load bearing

DETAIL C  1: 5
UNDERGROUND AND CANON LUMIERE FOR DAYLIGHTING
STAIR SLAB FOR DAYLIGHTING

1. Mortar laid to fall
2. Prefabricated reinforced concrete 400mm
3. Water pipes for thermal insulation
4. LED lighting for night landscape
5. Double toughened glazing with aluminium caps
6. Pre-casting concrete block connected with built-in steel flat

DETAIL D 1:5

VEGETATION ROOF

100 mm sand bed, 50 mm substrate layer
Protective layer 8mm root-inhibitor membrane
300 mm reinforced concrete with water pipe

HANDRAIL

500 mm height, with 12 mm steel baluster
Fixed on the 600 mm height concrete parapet

SKYLIGHT DOUBLE GLAZING WITH ALUMINIUM FRAME

Special lighting for bath pool

L-Shape steel lat for reflecting daylight
Aluminium caps
130 mm thermal insulation

150 mm concrete slab, finely sanded
150mm gravel layer
7. 200 mm drainage pipe
8. Compacted earth
9. Retaining wall construction:
   500 mm waterproof reinforced concrete
10. 300 mm T-shape steel beam for glazing load bearing

5. Bath pool wall
80mm and 100mm masonry by turns, 5mm mortar