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**BUFFER**

**A Place of Becoming**

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**1. “Buffer Zone”**
- the concept of buffer zone
- the city: Skopje_multi-culture
- location for investigation

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**2. Mapping**
- mapping 01
- mapping 02
- ......

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**3. Strategy & Design**
- concept evolution
- site (location, the fighting....)
- design strategy (grid | ....)

**Design**
- masterplan (basement)
- plans (-3.000 | ±0.000~+1.000 | +2.500~4.300)
- sections (AA | BB | CC) | Elevation (01 | 02)
- details (1:50 | 1:20 | 1:5)
- ......

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**4. Spatial Experience**

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**keywords:** occupation | unstable....)
- diagrams of space organization
- models (1:100/200, 1:15 pivot door, 1:50 fragment)
- renderings
1. "Buffer Zone"
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2. Mapping
3. Strategy & Design
4. Spatial Experience

A Place of Becoming

UN Buffer Zone in Cyprus

The Korean Delimitarized Buffer Zone

The Kosovo Delimitarized Zone

Definition of “Buffer Zone”

Theoretical Understanding of "Buffer"
Multi-Culture: The City of Skopje

Skopje

Physical, Cultural & Social Segregation

Muslims

Christians

Kosovo

Bulgaria

Macedonia

Albania

Greece
Location for Investigation

1. "Buffer Zone"
2. Mapping
3. Strategy & Design
4. Spatial Experience

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City Center
Christian Zone
Muslim Zone
The religious conflict between Christians and Muslims is reflected from constant occupation of physical territory in order to construct identities. The actions of occupation particularly occurs in-between and next to the edges of buffer zone.

The map illustrates a process of physical territory occupation from both two religions in attempt to reveal the generation of the buffer zone and its unstable status.
- Mapping 02: Visual Field Occupation -

**Clue 1 & 2**

Along the Static/Physical Edges

Positions for observation are located at each crossing along the two static edges, in order to experience the thresholds of entering the buffer zone, try to find out how do those religious buildings participate the action of crossing and to locate the real thresholds according to the visual experience.
- Mapping 03: Reflections on Mapping Clue 1 & 2 -

The observation positions are a series of static thresholds defined by the bridges on Vardar River and the crossing along the Car municipality border.

Yet due to the occupation of the religious buildings in-between these two edges, the visual experience of crossing makes the real position of the thresholds offset to a certain distance.

From the mapping of Clue 1 & 2, there're three findings:

1 - Real thresholds are already entering the other side of buffer zone, and create a transition space.

2 - Real thresholds from the two sides are at the same position, no buffer zone in-between.

3 - The Thresholds are invalid.
Clue 3
Cross the Central Path
(Transition Space defined by Clue 1 & 2)
The walking started from the south to the north, walking speed 1.2 m/s; eye positions are defined every 1.5 min along the walking.
- Mapping 05: Process of the Transition -

Clue 3

The timeline reveals a process of the participation and visual field occupation by religious buildings along the path.

The transition experience can be seen from the change of the distance of buildings and sculptures, occupation proportion, the emergence of new buildings and the disappearance of the passed buildings.
Mapping 06: Visual Field Occupation

Clue 3
Calculation & Visual Transition on Religious Buildings

Static/Physical Edge: Vadar River
May 11th, 2012: Macedonia Albanians Protest Against Police

Macedonian police are on alert in the capital, Skopje, in anticipation of protests. Several hundred people have gathered near the town mosque and are supposed to soon move towards the town square. Protesters have been seen shouting and throwing stones, and police in riot gear are present at the scene. The protests are expected to start at 13:30.

Flyers distributed at the scene say: "We share the pain of the members of the victims families and we demand the killers are brought to justice." As some are trying to break through the fence in front of the building others, also from the crowd, are trying to calm down the situation.

More and more people are joining the protesters in Skopje, now near Bitpazar Mosque. Police in riot gear are present at the scene. The protests are expected to start at 13:30.

13:40 Flyers distributed at the scene say: "We share the pain of the members of the victims families and we demand the killers are brought to justice." The crowd of demonstrators is growing in size as the protests in Skopje start. The crowd of demonstrators is growing in size as the protests in Skopje start.

14:05 Protesters move from Skopje court, where several hundred people are in and around the court, without a ticket, towards the police station. 14:05 Protesters move from Skopje court, where several hundred people are in and around the court, without a ticket, towards the police station.

3. Strategy & Design
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**Buffer Zone**: A zone with its own territory that separates two identities, and offers possibilities for neutralization and integration.

**Fragmented Space & Uncertain / Unstable Space**: that are always in a status of changing and becoming something due to the desire of the two groups people to construct their identities through occupation.

**Occupation**: The meaning of Occupation
- "Come - Give Own Rules - Construct - Change It"

**Space**
- Transition space before entering from landscape;
- Roof gardens: in order to remain the whole site as a natural green place especially for the view from the high fortress.
- Underground floor with natural materials such as rough stones (same as Kale Fortress) and natural colored wood pivot walls.
- Upper floors with neat and clean concrete as a contrast to the lower level, with gray colored wood pivot walls.

**Other Aspects**

**Research Topic**

**Mapping of Physical Territory Occupation**

**Principle of 3 Grids:**
- **Enclose Space (Occupation)**: Grid 01 & 02: Shape building volumes and circulation, pedestrians in landscape, etc.
- **Release Space (Neutrality Effects)**: Grid 03: Open the building volumes, blur the boundary between interior and exterior, and integrate the building with landscape.

**Flexibility**
- Pivoting walls positioned on intersect points of grids offers opportunities to keep the building shifting and reshaping its space between different spacial conditions.

**Spacial Quality:**
- Multiple views of rooms, terraces, corridors and courtyards...
- Different directions of entrances
- Change the properties of rooms: interior/exterior, fragmented/unified, size and number...

**Concept Evolution Process**

**Essential Conclusion of Research**

**Grids Use grids to represent 3 different rules and offer 3 different possibilities in spacialization.**

**Architectural Language**
- Principle of 3 Grids:

**Other Aspects:**

- Reseach Topic
- Mapping of Physical Territory Occupation
- Principle of 3 Grids:
- Grids: Use grids to represent 3 different rules and offer 3 different possibilities in spacialization.
- Flexibility: Pivoting walls positioned on intersect points of grids offers opportunities to keep the building shifting and reshaping its space between different spacial conditions.
- Spacial Quality:
  - Multiple views of rooms, terraces, corridors and courtyards...
  - Different directions of entrances
  - Change the properties of rooms: interior/exterior, fragmented/unified, size and number...

- Concept Evolution Process
1. Non-Place: with no one’s interests since the Kale Fortress is closed;

2. Isolated: from the most activated and integrated place - Old Bazaar;

3. Ignored: The city is constructing a future through project “Skopje 2014” in an attempt to find itself an identity, yet ignored its existing treasures and history, such as the old opera and Kale Fortress - one of the most valuable historical and cultural heritages.

- Program -

In responding to integration and gathering people, the programme will be similar with Turkish inn with bars, restaurants and party area on the ground level, and guest room on the above.

- Flight -

In 2010, there was an intention to build a new Orthodox church in Kale Fortress, but it was suspended because of a violent resistance from a group of Albanians, which turned the site and fortress into an uncertain condition when both religious groups wanted to occupy this significant place in city center.
Kale Fortress

Grid 01
Represents the rules of the Church

Grid 02
Represents the rules of the Mosque

Grid 03
Represents the rules of Neutrality

Masterplan
As a representation and invention when three grids are combined and effect with each other

- From Grid to Building -

Front View
Back View

Grid

- Shape volumes and circulation
- Shape volumes and circulation
- Recontour the landscape
  - Shape externa & internal courtyards

Buffer
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Plan Fragment 1: 1:50
Level +2.500 (Guest Rooms)


Flexibility of Space (Enlarged Plan)

- Cancel the enclosures of all rooms;
- Blur the boundaries between external and internal space;
- Transform the rooms to shelters that are integrated with roof garden...
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Drawings - Master Plan
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