Delft University of Technology

**Temporal Transgressions
Architecture in Time, Time in Architecture**

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reflections

Choosing to graduate within the studio of Explorelab appeared to be the best way how to pursue my own interests within the areas of architectural theory and practice. Undoubtedly, not knowing exactly what to expect has made it a bit of a step into uncertainty. Nevertheless, I was happy to find out that the amount of freedom and the necessity to rely solely on myself did not discourage me. Quite the opposite, I consider it one of the most relevant contributions to my work and morals.

Temporal Transgressions
Architecture in Time, Time in Architecture

aims to develop a critical position on architecture and the urban conditions, that derive from the absence of absolute systems and the omnipresence of uncertainties in our build environment

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uses a method of critical cross reading of Juhani Pallasmaa and Ignasi de Sola Morales through the ideas introduced by Bernard Tschumi in his essay *The Pleasure of Architecture*

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further tries to recognize the process of ruination as a tool, an essential mediator that helps to describe the role of history and memory within the realm of an architectural incentive

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critically assesses the relation between the ruin as a departure point and its projection towards an abstract concept through a historical survey of precedents.

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ultimately derives from the ruinous condition a set of concepts together with their very capacity to be seen as stepping stones of a strategy, and thus of a project

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essentially challenges the idea of monumentality as a new form of resilience and social and cultural sustainability

I.
Morales and Pallasmaa
Architecture in Time, Time in Architecture

The project develops the main line of argumentation and theoretical framework through a cross-reading of two scholars: Juhanni Pallasmaa and Ignasi de Sola Morales.
As argued, the polarity that crystallizes from the perspectives of these two scholars renders a difference between the direct and rather abstract experience of time and history, between the sensory and conceptual, accident and intention, consequence and cause, and ultimately between the realities of the past and visions of the future.
This sets the discussed ideas in between two different levels, deliberately, the project aims to be the very point of friction between the two; between the abstract and tangible, the vision and the memory. All of the introduced notions or concepts try to discuss both of these aspects; the very tangible histories and eventually the abstract idea leading toward an incentive for a strategy.
All of the introduced ideas are supported by a collection of case studies illustrating both histories as well as visions across the field of architecture and beyond.
The selected method develops a theoretical position through a historical survey.
Further on, the project tries to address this duality through a series of case studies which spanning across variety of scales serve as a backbone for development the subsequent project. The case studies include the OMA's project from 1972; *The City of the Captive Globe*, The Alison and Peter Smithson's project for the London *Economist* from the late 1950s, and for least but not last the very recent practice of the Belgian office *DVVT*. Although all arising from totally different conditions they all operate to a certain extent within the margins introduced in the research.

II.
Monumentality of the Ruinous
Monument as an Intersection

In architecture, monumentality has always been a very ambivalent notion whose definitions were changing constantly together with new circumstances and understandings nourished within given periods. Aiming to provide fresh perspectives on architecture that arises within a certain historical footprint, *the project essentially challenges the idea of monumentality as a new form of resilience and social and cultural sustainability.*
In order to define individual characteristics firstly the definition of monumentality needs to be given in the very core of the project. It is not the monumentality that is represented through ever present symbols, nor it is a monumentality that accounts to the form of architecture. Through the body of

the ruin, the project tries to present the monumentality as an ambivalent notion where the idea of permanent and ephemeral intersect so fatally, it often confuses the reality.

The selected site in the city of Copenhagen brings together precisely the issues the research aims to discuss and explore. It is a site where a historical development meets the effort for its reformation. In this sense, the research and eventually the project develops a strategy enabling to preserve the continuity in time, and mediate our relation with its frighteningly ephemeral dimension. In other words, a strategy that reassesses, adapts, and (re)forms the connections between the interpretation of the past, understanding of the present, and expectations of the future.

The monumentality understood as a moment of intersection enables their simultaneous existence. Existing structures of the former tin iron factory, which can be currently understood as fragments of the past, not yet rooted in their new context, can thus become a part of the neighborhood's vision that was supposed to transform this industrial part of Copenhagen into a residential area.

To better understand the meaning of intersection between the vision of future and the histories of the past, it was necessary to establish relations between *the undesirable and the prerequisite*.

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III.
Temporal Transgressions
The Undesirable and The Prerequisite

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Trying to recognize the process of ruination as a critical tool, in other words, an essential mediator that helps to describe the role of history and memory within the realm of an architectural incentive, this part appears to be the most important as it forms the very breeding ground of the critical apparatus. Going back to the Tschumi and his Advertisements for Architecture, where he challenges the limits of architecture in relation to the course of history. Just as Pallasmaa understands decay as a decomposition of matter, Morales, on the other hand, acknowledges this asymptotic stage as a possible departure point from which new opportunities arise.

The imperfection of the ruinous, as a temporal transgression, becomes a projective strategy that aims to develop a system of exceptions and irregularities; a vision of the future that allows the existence of histories within and vice versa.

Following the backbone introduced in the first part of the reflection, the project traces the temporal transgressions through three different scales;

The Axis which discusses such system on the level managerial order of the urban layout, the neo-classical plan of Frederiksberg developed at the beginning of the 20th century and its ability to integrate the traces of the past.

The Block which investigates the system of a fundamental urban unit; a housing block. Ultimately, the housing block was meant to be the result of the factory's transformation in the 1930s. Taking this failed vision for the factory as its nemesis, the project tries to define conditions where the sup-

posedly scrapped structures of the factory can inform the idea of such housing block without being demolished. The undesirable past thus becomes a prerequisite for the future.

IV.
Collisions and Conflicts
Thresholds between temporalities

Obviously, such an interplay between the two brings to the fore a lots of conflicts, both in concepts and eventually in the experience of space.

Collision and conflict are notions of indisputably strong relations, nevertheless in its meaning, collision is a moment when two or more bodies meet. It is often an act of violence, it always involves a certain interruption, and thus renders itself as a difference between two distinct entities. *(image c1.)*

Unlike collision, however, conflict has much more mental dimension.

The conflict from which the very project departs finds its fullest form of expression at the scale of the city, building, and element. As it was mentioned before, the design discusses the relation between mental concept, in this case conflict, and its very formal articulations in the built environment.

It further argues the capacity of such conflict, which in the case of temporal transgression, is much more than just informative.

The collisions are the very moments engaged in a dialogue between the past, present, and future, providing a necessary condition to the ability to acknowledge difference, and thence address identity. Moreover, often the more ruthless and violent the conflicts, the more stronger the identity of the place. Essentially, collisions work as thresholds, and without a threshold there cannot be a will to discover. As a transition between different temporalities, the conflict becomes a trigger of memory and recollection.

V.
Fragments and Collection
Potentials of eclectic future

The process of fragmentation is often considered as a result of isolation and violent disintegration. It is no coincidence then it is commonly recognized as a symptom of chaos and disorder.

In many areas, however, fragments contribute to the formation of meaning and sense of wholeness. For instance, surrealism, cubism, or collage often use fragments in order to shape an overall sense and offer a deeper understanding of the whole.

Through the theorems of collage, the project builds on the ambivalent meanings of fragments. Trying to integrate the existing structures of the factory into a new whole, it suspends the structures between two sets of references. One which is the original context of the structures and the second

one, that is the context newly introduced.

The extent and nature of the intervention on the selected site try to align with the with the concept of fragment. The intervention never is a whole; autonomous and isolated in its own universe. It merely uses the potential of the fragment refer to it in a rather latent form.

Through the of *John Soane*, the project once again traces the idea across different scales arguing the concept of collection not only as an instrument having the capacity to accommodate multiplicity, but also a means that introduces new narratives, dialogues, and juxtapositions emerging from the double life of the fragments, suspended between their originary essences and the new roles assigned to them by the new ensemble.

VI.
Dissected body and Common ground
Temporal and Spatial simultaneities

There can hardly be a body without a common ground, the idea of the body is the common ground. But let no one be mistaken, there might be a common ground without the presence of the body as the common ground, designating merely a sign shared between different entities, does not have to be a guarantee of the sense of wholeness.

Definition of the common ground between the historicity of the existing structures and the vision of their future was the main objective of the project. This has been done by a development of an architectural language that takes on the previously discussed issues. Nevertheless, the aim was to address this common ground not only within the logic of the language, used in a variety of scales, but also in terms of the very social and cultural conditions from which this project emerges.

Shaping a program that combines a small scale housing eligible for young ones as well as elderly brings to the fore the most recent models of shared housing. This of course involves definitions of common through shared spaces designed for the interaction between the two different groups. So, the social level of the common ground reflects in the specifics of the program as the urban unit aims to conjoin various different functions into one single organism.

The main (public) courtyard, which is ultimately always the common ground of any housing block, aiming to guarantee the equality of the collective, becomes the link of the individual buildings as fragments.

The cultural level of the common ground is to be encountered mainly through the means of architectural articulation. Departing from the language of the existing buildings, the newly developed language eclectically takes over forms of expressions in order to create a feeling of the common ground and thence a sense of wholeness.

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