The 'dead zone' and the architecture of transgression

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DISSERTATION

THE 'DEAD ZONE'

AND

THE ARCHITECTURE OF TRANSGRESSION

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Dissertation
for the purpose of obtaining the degree of doctor
at Delft University of Technology
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Chair of the Board for Doctorates
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by

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PROPOSITIONS

01.

The 'dead zone', as an empty or disorderly space, has never been a concrete 'place' or 'site' but a concept that throughout history has been enforced on particular places for economic, political and social reasons that are mostly related to colonialism and gentrification.

This proposition pertains to this dissertation.

02.

The language that is used to describe 'dead zones' in professional and academic texts obscures the complexities of these spaces. New modes of writing (about) these spaces should include narratives, anecdotes, interviews as well as self-reflection of the position of the researcher/author.

This proposition pertains to this dissertation.

03.

The 'dead zone' - as the 'other' space of the capitalist city - offers a model for a radical democratic public space. Stripped from hegemonic conceptions of 'public space', it allows marginalised communities to create their own spaces by tactics that are unknown, unacceptable or excluded from planning and architectural practices.

This proposition pertains to this dissertation.

04.

Any intervention in 'dead zones' that considers the preservation of these spaces' uniqueness and the rights of their inhabitants cannot use the core rational and strategies of planning and architecture (i.e. restructuring, ordering, building) but should use those of ephemeral tactics and micro art interventions instead.

This proposition pertains to this dissertation.

05.

Representational tools, the creation of certain imaginaries, the use of particular language (in a wider sense) are always affecting urban planning and design of spaces,

sometimes even more than the 'hard facts' upon which decisions about urban development are supposed to be based on.

06.
The research of urban space must include field research, engaged methodologies and even interventionist practices.

07.
IT technologies, which affect many aspects of urban spaces (i.e. retail and entertainment), both contribute to the marginalisation of previously dominant urban space and further affect, and sometimes even empty, spaces that were marginalised already before.

08.
While until the end of the 20th century the power of imagining and creating certain places (from urban sites to entire continents) as 'dead zones' was haled mostly by the West, in the 21st century these tendencies started to occur even in the heart of western capitals and were instead driven by multi-national corporations and emerging economic eastern powers (i.e. China, the Golf states).

09.
While the art production seems to have been fully absorbed in the late 20th century into the capitalist system, certain art practices, much inspired by critical readings of the city under global capitalism, or the role of the art industry in gentrification can offer resistance and provide alternatives to capitalist urban planning.

10.
An incidental interest sometimes generates a whole doctorate thesis and incidents, occurring while the research is already underway, sometimes may shift a thesis in totally different directions.

These propositions are regarded as opposable and defendable, and have been approved as such by the promotor, prof.ir. M. Riedijk, and (co)promotors, dr.ir. K.M. Havik and dr.ir. M.G.H. Schoonderbeek.

Table of Contents

Part B: The Architecture of Transgression – Site Research and Analysis

NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

Het proefschrift "The 'Dead Zone' and the Architecture of Transgression" onderzoekt het gebruik van begrippen als 'leegtes', 'braakland', 'niemandsland' (etcetera) binnen het discours van de architectuur en aanverwante vakgebieden, voortbordurend op het gebruik van deze begrippen in de klassieke oudheid tot vandaag de dag. De studie begint met het specifieke geval van een inmiddels vernietigd Palestijns dorp aan de rand van Tel Aviv. In de vorm van een kort verhaal over deze plek, geeft de proloog van de dissertatie een uiteenzetting van het onderwerp. Ik introduceer het belangrijkste argument van het onderzoek: dat deze ruimte, de zogenaamde 'dode zone', het product is van het discours, en dat tussen de realiteit van de ruimte zelf en het gebruik van de term een onoverbrugbare kloof ligt. Ik pleit tegen de kortzichtigheid van planningspraktijken en presenteer het belang van locatie-specifiek onderzoek voor het onderwerp in kwestie.

In het eerste deel van het proefschrift beargumenteer ik dat het gebruik van de term 'dode zone' de realiteit van de ruimten waarnaar de term verwijst niet kan overbrengen, en dat deze plekken als zodanig worden betiteld vanuit een hegemoniaal perspectief, met koloniale, economische en culturele motieven. De term 'dode zone' (en een reeks synoniemen zoals 'woestenij', 'post-industriële leegte' of 'liminale ruimte' die telkens een stedelijk gebied definiëren dat wordt beschouwd als afval, leeg, vervallen, enz.) staat voor een bijzondere stedelijke ruimte die veelal samenhangt met de post-industriële en post-moderne stedelijke omstandigheden. Het proefschrift schetst de gemeenschappelijke kwaliteiten van dergelijke plekken, en toont de vaagheid die de genoemde definities kenmerkt- een vaagheid die doet vermoeden dat dergelijke plekken eigenlijk niet bestaan. Ik toon hoe dominant deze beeldtaal is in het hedendaagse stedelijke discours. Hoewel de 'dode zone' bijna uitsluitend wordt geassocieerd met post-industriële en post-moderne condities, betoog ik dat het concept, evenals het bestaan van een 'andere' ruimte kan worden getraceerd tot de oudheid, in de vorm van de Griekse *chora*. De *chora* omvat enkele van de kenmerken van de hedendaagse 'dode zone': het is een denkbeeldige ruimte, en tegelijkertijd een echte, een schijnbare woestenij, maar ook het fundament van nieuwe sociale en nieuwe religieuze praktijken, die buiten rationaliteit en patriarchale controle vallen. Een ruimte die lastig te definiëren is, een nomadische plek en een plek van nomaden.

Op basis van drie historische precedenten, in Tel Aviv, Londen en Parijs, betoog ik dat beelden van de 'dode zone', van een ruimte leeg en/of gevaarlijk is, gebaseerd is op koloniale percepties, en blijkt geeft van een ideologie gericht op naturaliseren of rechtvaardigen van kolonisatie. Het proefschrift verduidelijkt hoe deze beeldtaal naar het 'moederland' werd gebracht, en hoe via deze beeldtaal plekken en mensen als 'anders' werden aangeduid - als overbodig, met andere woorden, als afval binnen het kapitalistische systeem.

In het geval van Tel Aviv, beschrijf ik hoe 19e-eeuwse christelijke en 20e-eeuwse zionistische percepties van Palestina als woestenij of als woestijn een rol hebben gespeeld bij de totstandkoming van Israël en Tel Aviv, en hoe deze perceptie nog steeds een rol speelt bij de huidige uitwissing van de Palestijnse sporen in de stad. In het geval van Londen laat ik zien hoe de armen in de stad werden gelijkgesteld aan de gekoloniseerden in de overzeese gebieden in het oosten en zuiden, en hoe de plekken waar ze woonden werden vergeleken met de 'donkere' landen. Het laatste voorbeeld toont hoe de stedelijke en economische transformatie van Parijs in de 19e eeuw zorgde voor een 'dode zone' en hoe de beeldtaal van deze zone nog steeds blijft hangen in het Parijs van vandaag, bijna een eeuw nadat de 'zone' zelf werd uitgewist.

In deel A van het onderzoek probeer ik dus de verborgen geschiedenissen op te graven van plaatsen die, vanuit een hegemonische blik, gemarkeerd zijn als 'dode zones'. In deel B van het proefschrift kijk ik naar eigentijdse ruimtes die zijn gemarkeerd met deze beeldtaal, en probeer ik deze benaming te weerleggen. Om dit te doen, is het noodzakelijk om alternatieve methoden te ontwikkelen om deze verschijnselen te onderzoeken en om het perspectief van de hegemonische blik te veranderen in een meer betrokken perspectief, waarbij rekening wordt gehouden met de gemarginaliseerde gemeenschappen die deze plekken bewonen.

Het tweede deel van het proefschrift gaat dus nader in op de behoefte aan alternatieve onderzoeksmethoden. Aan de hand van mijn betoog dat de etikettering van bepaalde stedelijke gebieden als een 'dode zone' een misvatting is, te wijten aan de normatieve methoden die worden gebruikt in de planning en architectuur, pleit ik voor meer betrokken locatie-specifiek onderzoek. Dergelijk betrokken onderzoek betoogt dat kennis niet zonder ervaring kan zijn, de ervaring van het ter plekke zijn.

Omdat fotografie een grote invloed heeft gehad op het discours en zelfs op de productie van de 'dode zone', bespreek ik de grenzen van dit medium alsmede de manieren waarop fotografie effectiever kan worden gebruikt. Een tweede onderzoeksmethode die dit

werk verkent, is het wandelen. Ik bespreek verschillende wandelstrategieën en de soorten informatie en inzicht over de bestudeerde plekken die hieruit kunnen voortvloeien. Ten slotte schets ik de schrijfmethoden die ik gebruikte binnen dit onderzoek. Ik beargumenteer dat het onderwerp van dit proefschrift en mijn betrokkenheid erbij niet alleen in formeel academisch schrijven kunnen worden vervat. Daarom zijn sommige delen van het schrijven zowel experimenteel als subjectief.

Na deze methodologische verkenning, bevat dit deel van het proefschrift een uitgebreide veldstudie. Door het gebruik van bovengenoemde alternatieve, betrokken onderzoeksmethoden presenteert dit locatie-onderzoek andere perspectieven op de 'dode zones'. Voor het veldwerk heb ik mij ondergedompeld in het dagelijks leven in deze 'zones', door middel van interacties met de gemeenschappen die erin leven, door middel van verschillende manieren van lopen en door middel van 'betrokken' fotografie. Omdat, zoals ik betoogde, de louter descriptieve beschrijving niet afdoende is om dit soort onderzoek te representeren, heb ik gebruik gemaakt van meer experimentele schrijfwijzen, die gebaseerd zijn op subjectieve ervaring. Een dergelijke vorm van representatie brengt niet alleen een accurate kennis aan het licht over deze gebieden, maar toont ook het gebrek aan kennis dat door de afwezigheid van zo'n directe lokale ervaring wordt veroorzaakt.

Voortbouwend op de kennis uit de historische studies en de veldstudies, bespreekt het derde deel van het proefschrift hoe deze ruimtes als 'dood' worden gemarkeerd, niet omdat ze zo zijn, maar vanwege transgressieve activiteiten die er plaatsvinden of gemeenschappen die er verblijven. De 'dode zone' als een beeld en een plaats is een plek van verdrijving: dingen, zowel menselijk als niet-menselijk, zowel werkelijk als ingebeeld, worden er verdreven.

In de oudheid was de *chora* de plaats waarheen vrouwelijkheid, verlangen en bepaalde sociale praktijken werden verdreven. In de koloniale tijd was het gebied de lege ruimte die op het punt stond te worden gekoloniseerd. Koloniale beeldspraak toonde de plekken als leeg en verwijderde vervolgens de mensen, gemeenschappen en naties die er waren. In postkoloniale tijden en plaatsen werd de verbeelding van het 'donkere land', de afgrond en leegte gebruikt om bepaalde mensen uit de stad buiten te sluiten.

Ik beargumenteer dat deze ruimtes plaatsen van dissensus zijn. De zones van dissensus bieden verschillende visies op inclusieve, maar agonistische publieke ruimte. Deze ruimtes en de activiteiten die daarin plaatsvinden, of beter gezegd, de activiteiten die deze ruimtes produceren, bieden een spiegel op de beroepen van architectuur, stedenbouw en design. De

ruimtes en praktijken van dissensus zouden richting kunnen geven aan transgressieve praktijken die architecten, stedenbouwers en ontwerpers zouden kunnen gebruiken, als zij geïnteresseerd zijn om de machtsstructuren waar zij zelf deel van uitmaken en die zij zelf mede in stand houden, om te draaien.

De epiloog van het proefschrift presenteert twee stedelijke interventies, als voorbeelden van zo'n transgressieve kunst- en architectuurpraktijk. Deze twee projecten worden gepresenteerd via twee manieren van schrijven: de eerste is meer descriptieve weergave, terwijl de tweede een narratief is dat, zoals de lezer zal merken, een ruimte opent waarin het persoonlijke en het publieke, het feitelijke en het ingebeelde, het verleden en het heden samenvallen.

ENGLISH SUMMARY

The thesis "The 'Dead Zone' and the Architecture of Transgression" investigates the imagery of 'emptiness', 'voids', 'no-man's Land' (etcetera) in architectural and other discourses, drawing on imagery from antiquity until today. The study begins with the particular case of a now obliterated Palestinian village at the edge of Tel Aviv. The prologue of the thesis gives, in the form of a short story, an exposition of the subject. It introduces the main argument, that this space is a product of the discourse, and that between the two lies an unbridgeable gap. I argue against the short sightedness of planning practices and present the importance of site-research for the subject at hand.

In the first part of the thesis, I argue that the 'dead zone' imagery fails to convey the reality of the spaces it refers to, and that this imagery is based on a hegemonic perspective that has been enforced on places for colonial, economic, and cultural reasons. The term 'dead zone' (and an array of synonyms such as 'wasteland', 'post industrial void' or 'liminal space' that all define an urban area which is considered as waste, empty, derelict, etc.) stands for a particular urban space that colours the post-industrial and post-modern urban conditions. The thesis outlines the common qualities of the spaces these terms refer to, and the vagueness that exists in all of these definitions, to the extent that a suspicion arises that these spaces might be unreal. I show the pervasiveness of the 'dead zone' imagery in the contemporary urban discourse. Even though the 'dead zone' is almost exclusively associated with post-industrial and postmodern conditions, I argue that the concept, as well as the existence of an 'other' space can be traced back as far as antiquity, to the Greek *chora*. The *chora* encompasses some of the characteristics of the contemporary 'dead zone': it is simultaneously an imagined space and a real one, a seeming wasteland and the bedrock of new social and religious practices, that lie outside rationality and patriarchal control. A space which defies definition, a nomadic place and a place of the nomads.

Based on three historical cases, in Tel Aviv, London, and Paris, I argue that the imagery of the 'dead zone', of a space which is empty and/or dangerous, is based on colonial perceptions and ideology aiming to naturalise or justify colonisation. The thesis clarifies how this imagery was transferred to the motherlands and used in making 'otherness' - otherness of

spaces and people who are marked as a surplus, in other words, as waste, within the capitalist system.

In the case of Tel Aviv, I discuss how 19th century Christian and 20th century Zionist perceptions of Palestine as wilderness or desert played a role in establishing Israel and Tel Aviv, and how this perception still plays a role in the current obliteration of Palestinian traces in the city. In the case of London, I show how the city poor were equated to the colonised people of the East and South, and how the spaces they resided in were compared to 'dark' lands. The last example depicts how the urban and economic transformation of Paris in the 19th century produced a 'dead zone' and how the zone's imagery still lingers in today's Paris almost hundred years after the 'zone' itself was erased.

In part A of the research, I thus try to excavate the buried histories of places that the hegemony has marked as 'dead zones'. In part B of the thesis, I look at contemporary spaces that have been marked with this imagery and try to refute it. To do so, it is necessary to develop alternative methods to investigate these spaces and to shift the perspective from the hegemonic gaze to a more engaged one that incorporates the marginalised communities that inhabit these zones.

The second part of the thesis therefore elaborates on the need for alternative research methods. Arguing that the misconception of the labelling of certain urban areas as a 'dead zone', is due to insufficient or misguided site-research methodologies, I describe the normative ways that are used in planning and architecture practice for site research, and I propose alternative methods for more engaged site research. Engaged research is based upon the idea that knowledge cannot be without experience, the experience of being.

As photography has had a great influence on the discourse, and even on the production of the 'dead zone', I discuss the limits of this medium and ways it can be used less casually and in more adequate ways. A second research method that this work explores is walking. I examine various walking strategies and the data and insights into spaces that can result from them. Lastly, I outline the methods of writing that I used to write this thesis. I argue that the subject matter of this thesis and my engagement with it cannot be contained in formal academic writing alone. Therefore, some parts of the writing are explicitly experimental and subjective.

Following this methodological exploration, this part of the thesis also includes an extensive field study. This site research presents other perspectives on the 'dead zones' by means of these engaged methods. I have immersed in the everyday life in these 'zones'

through interactions with the communities who inhabit it, through various modes of walking, and through engaged photography. Lastly, as I argue that the findings of this research could not have been represented by merely descriptive text, I chose more experimental and experiential ways of writing. Such representation not only brings about an accurate knowledge but also reveals the void in knowledge that was caused by the lack of direct experience.

Building upon the knowledge from the historical cases and the field studies, the third part of the thesis discusses how these spaces are marked as 'dead' not because they are such, but because of transgressive activities or communities that reside in/produce them. The 'Dead Zone' as an imagery and a place is a site of expulsion: things, human and non-human, real as well as imagined, have been expelled from it. In antiquity, the *chora* was the place to which femininity, desire and new social practices were expelled. In colonial times, the zone was the empty spaces that were about to be colonised. Colonial imagery depicted space as empty – erasing out of existence the people, communities, and nations that were there, and then through various practices expelled the people out of these places. In post-colonial times and places, the imagery of the 'dark land', abyss and void was used to exclude certain people from the city.

In conclusion, I argue that these spaces are places of dissensus. The zones of dissensus offer different visions of inclusive, yet agonistic public space. These spaces and the activities that take place in them, or rather, shape them, offer a looking glass into the professions of architecture, urban planning and design. Dissensus spaces and practices might hint at transgressive practices that architects, planners and designers might adopt if and when they become interested in subverting the power structures they inhabit and sustain.

The epilogue of the thesis presents two urban interventions, as examples of such a transgressive art and architecture practice. These two works are presented in two manners of writing: the first descriptive and the second as a narrative which, as can be seen, opens up a space where the personal and the public, the factual and the imagined, the past and the present co-exist.

Prologue

"Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise."

<div style="text-align: right">Rancière 1999, p.30</div>

"Writing places a population of the dead on stage…"

<div style="text-align: right">De Certeau 1984, p.99</div>

"Somewhere every culture has an imaginary zone for what it excludes, and it is that zone, we must try to remember today."

<div style="text-align: right">Cixous & Clément 1986, p.4</div>

"Where are we exactly – are we near the island?"
"The 'island' – is that what you call it?"
"The traffic island. The patch of waste ground below the motorway. Are we near there?"
"We're near the motorway, yes. You're quite safe, Mr. Maitland"

<div style="text-align: right">Ballard 2008, p.32</div>

The Concrete Island, by J.G. Ballard, tells the story of Robert Maitland, a 35-year-old architect, who after a car accident finds himself stranded on a traffic island – a patch of

wasteland not far from the heart of the city. He is being rescued by the 'indigenous' population of what he assumed to be a 'dead zone'[1] or 'urban void' – a homeless young woman and her mentally ill brother. For Maitland this place was a dead zone, but for Jane and her brother, this was home. This thesis begins in a place which is much more illusory yet real. The roots of this research spring from a particular site in Tel Aviv, Israel, which was, in 1996, labelled by the city's urban planners a 'dead zone'– or in other words a wasteland, no man's land, urban void, undetermined space and terrain vague. At the time, this 'zone' harboured the remnants of a Palestinian village (which was still inhabited) and various activities that existed, for various reasons, only there and not in any other public space in the city.

Illustration 1: The remnants of a Palestinian village, Tel Aviv.

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1   'Dead Zone' is a colloquial term used by architects, planners, and students in these professions as a term to describe areas, which are, officially or not, brown land or derelict sites.

On discovering that the naming of that site as a 'dead zone' was either a mistake or a deceit, I was interested to know how and why this faulty or deceptive perception occurred, and whether the space-concept of the 'dead zone' existed outside the Israeli planning discourse. Were there other spaces like that elsewhere? Did this space-concept have a history beyond its current pervasiveness in architecture and planning discourse? Stepping away from this particular case, my first aim was to map, within architecture and the planning discourse and in other disciplines, references, terms and synonyms for 'dead zones' and to investigate what kind of spaces this nomenclature referred to.

In the first part of the thesis, in which I review the genealogy of the discourse of the 'dead zone', I show how this discourse is confounded, flawed and at times deceptive. Here I will discuss, for example, the terms 'vacant and derelict land', 'terrain vague' (De Solà-Morales 1995), "The 'dead zone' as a nomadic space" (Koolhaas 1995), "spaces of uncertainty" (Cupers & Miessen 2002), "drosscape" (Berger 2007) and more. This argument has two strands: firstly, on a terminological level, I demonstrate the impossibility of defining what 'waste' of land is or what 'urban void' means. Secondly, through studying historical and contemporary sites which bear the imagery of the 'dead zone', I show how this imagery is flawed or deceptive. In fact, two constants run through the discourse of the 'dead zone' – firstly, the inability to clearly 'read' the spaces the discourse refers to, and secondly, that all these spaces, which can be very diverse in terms of their location, spatiality and material conditions, are marked as 'Other' to the hegemonic or normative public space. Through a survey of the spaces marked as 'dead zones', I find that this discourse is rooted in, and is produced by, colonial perspectives and practices. I illustrate this connection in my discussion of the Greek *chora*, and the studies of the history of London, Paris and Tel Aviv. I argue that if, in the present, naming spaces 'dead zone' is the first step in gentrification, in the past this practice was the first step to colonisation, and/or justified colonisation.

In the second part of the thesis I set out to prove my initial argument that the 'dead zone' is a concept that does not relate to particular spatial and geographical conditions, but to places inhabited by certain excluded communities. The hegemony marks spaces as 'dead zones' because of these communities themselves transgress the imagery of the space that is supposedly 'dead'. To support this argument, I have looked into the history of places marked as 'dead zones' and have undertaken extensive site research into spaces that are marked as such. The methodologies I have used in both cases can be described as 'engaged methodologies'. In historical cases I have tried to excavate the genealogy of the zones through miscellaneous sources, including literature, oral history and philosophical texts – which are not in common use when the perspective is purely utilitarian – creating a text which at times is meandering and excessive. This approach is also echoed in the many field studies I have conducted and in the way they have been conducted. The field trips included online research, on site interviews, guided tours by local people who either inhabited these zones or were very familiar with them, participation in some of the practices that exist in these spaces, utilising photography not only as a documentation tool but also as a tool for engagement, and tracking the evolution of some of these zones for several years. Such an approach was characterised by a shift from the non-mediated, distant, and neutral observations and documentation techniques, which are common in architectural and planning practice.

The third part of this research re-considers how these spaces are represented. As the main argument of this research is that the discourse's representation of these spaces is partial, flawed or deceitful, I have tried to find different ways to represent them. Ways that not only 'represent' these spaces but also reflect the engaged research practices. Ways that not only inscribe knowledge but also reflect my (subjective) experience of being in these places. To achieve this, I have used narratives, anecdotes, non-linear (spatial or chronological) structure, fragments, dialogues and lengthy quotations, disparate textual sources, a multiplicity of

voices including my own as well as extensive visual material. These methodologies of research and representation refute the hegemonic perception that particular spaces can be marked as 'dead zones'. They also show that many of the conditions for which some spaces are marked as 'dead' exist also elsewhere or in any place since this marking has little to do with spatial conditions. These conditions are the effect of, on the one hand, hegemonic strategies, and on the other hand everyday practices by marginalised communities. These everyday practices, and the sites where they take place, are deemed transgressive because, once they were excluded, they transgress (Bataille 1962; Foucault 2008; Kristeva 1984; Douglas 2002) the boundaries of the place from which they were excluded by the hegemony.[2] The 'dead zone', in fact, is an exclusionary space – a zone to which certain things, communities and practices have been expelled to and a zone in which the excluded try to either display their exclusion, gain control or escape. The manifestation of the expelled makes these zones a 'dissensus space' (Rancière 2010), where the overlooked and excluded become urban subjects (Sassen 2015).

By critically examining the discourse and practices that produces the imagery of the 'dead zone', and by using alternative methods of research which produce a new perspective on the space, this thesis points to the complacency and servitude of architecture in planning to colonial and neo-colonial, neoliberal, capitalist and even racist ideologies. Short of offering a strategy through which the discourse of architecture and planning can end the production (of the imagery) of the 'dead zone', I argue that acknowledging the ways in which this space is constructed is a first and important step. Secondly, by acknowledging the ways in which marginalised communities inhabit this space, the 'dead zone' can be recognised as an alternative public space.

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2   I use the term 'hegemony' to refer to the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimizing norms and ideas that inhibit the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas. I will clarify this notion more extensively in chapter one, see page 26.

Part A: Reading the Discourse of the 'Dead Zone'

CHAPTER 1:

The Nomenclature of the 'Dead Zone'

"[…] every power is toponymical and initiates its order of places by naming them…"

<div align="right">De Certeau 1984, p.130</div>

"Language does not exist independently of the play of taboo and transgression. […] Where would we be without language? It has made us what we are. It alone can show us the sovereign moment at the farthest point of being where it can no longer act as currency."

<div align="right">Bataille 1962, p.276</div>

…Abyss, bad lands, blank space, border vacuums, brown fields, conceptual Nevada, Dead Zones, derelict areas, ellipsis spaces, empty places, free space liminal spaces, nameless spaces, no-man's Lands, polite spaces, post architectural zones, spaces of indeterminacy, spaces of uncertainty, smooth spaces, Tabula Rasa, Temporary Autonomous Zones, terrain vague, urban deserts, vacant lands, voids, white areas, Wasteland, SLOAPs …

The thesis *The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression* can be read as a 'rough guide' to the dead zones, but what it truly does is to produce a hiatus, a disruption, an intervention in the smooth operation of the discourse about these spaces. My research aims to expose the rhetorical foundation of the discourse about the *Dead Zone* and find ways to change the discourse about the 'dead zones'. The texts that are the building blocks of the

discourse of the void -some of which will be discussed in this thesis- all have common characteristics which contribute to the imagery of the 'dead zone'. This is not unique, of course, to this particular discourse, although it is evident in it to an extreme.

The synonyms and related terms mentioned above are mostly taken from architecture and planning discourse. They form a nomenclature, if not a discourse. Taking into consideration that planning and architecture practices are seemingly all about matter and space, the choice to start with a discussion about the name 'The Dead Zone', a name which is not even an official term but is taken from the jargon, might seem peculiar. However, much of the communication of urban planning, urban design, and even architecture, is done through or is supported extensively by words. As Mark Wigley insists: "[A]rchitects are first and foremost intellectuals. Architects are not builders. They are talkers. They don't make solid objects. They make discourse about both objects and space" (Wigley 2002, p.122). And when it comes to planning and architectural discourse about space, this discourse has legal, social, economic, spatial and material implications. Therefore I would argue that the naming of spaces, the categorisation of space, is as important as spatial design. The action of naming gives the space an identity and in turn influences its design. As Berg and Voulteenaho asserted, "hegemonic acts of naming transform polymorphous and uncontrollable 'space' into a finite system of neatly isolatable, stabilized and interconnected places" (Berg & Vuolteenaho 2009, p.10). Naming a place 'dead zone' however acts in a somewhat different way. It robs the place of its identity. It creates a tabula rasa that opens the discursive ground for any design allowing it to disregard the place, its history and its existing qualities, as I will show later in the case of Tel Aviv's Ha'Yarkon Estuary. The action of naming space as 'dead zone' therefore is not a mere description, or representation but also a projection. It produces the space it supposedly describes. It is a violent act of (non) place-making.

Naming, more than classifying, something as 'out' there, symbolises something that comes from the one who names it (Tesone 2011). It is to exclude something from within and re-creating it as identifiable Other. The naming of spaces as 'dead zone' is the ultimate Othering – it is both designation of a space as Other, and the marking of this Other. In the case of the Dead Zone as a void, as something that has no content and can be filled up with any fantasy. This toponymy is not an innocent construct but power-charged semiotic dynamos for making meaning about places (Berg & Vuolteenaho 2009). Not only to convey the meaning of the Other place, but as a way to protect the territory of the self from that the thing that was Other*ed*. This is crucial to the argument I am making here which is that the 'dead zone' and it synonyms, from antiquity to today, tell us more about the hegemonial discourse than about the named spaces. This double signification is discussed by De Certeau (1984), one of few theorists who relates the power of naming to space making. De Certeau asserts that naming orders, if not constructs, reality – in particular, the reality of the Other. This critique is illustrated by De Certeau's reading of Robinson Crusoe (Defoe 1719a). In the story, the Dead Zone appears in the "print of a man's naked foot on the shore". This revelation of the unknown affects Crusoe deeply: "The conquering bourgeois is transformed into a man 'beside himself', made wild himself by this (wild) clue that reveals nothing" (De Certeau 1984). I will show later the same unsettling effect when I discuss Plato's experience of the 'dead zone' outside the Athenian rational city. In both cases, the 'readable' space is marked by the unknown. This unknown, a mere footprint on the beach, is named by Crusoe "wild". Later on, the naming of the owner of this footprint, Friday, has something to do with reality, though only of the colonial white Englishman. However, previous to that designation, through designating the word "wild" simply to the unknown, "[n]aming is not here the 'painting' of a reality […], it is a performative act organising what it enunciates" (De Certeau 1984, p.155). The "wild" is merely what Crusoe does not associate with and rejects of himself. The designation of a space as "wild" is part of the imagery of the 'dead zones'.

The idioms mentioned above have nothing specific in common with the particular spaces, and are used, as I will show later on, just for other ends rather than describing adequately the space they refer to.

I will reiterate: the term 'dead zone' and many of its synonyms act in a completely opposite way. Since they are not 'proper names' – they are void of historical connection, of place identity, of narrative, even of definition, their meaning or rather function is to become proper. As I hinted already and will explain later, naming a space as a 'dead zone', i.e. outlawed space (space outside the law), functions as an apparatus to colonise space. For colonisation, the practice of naming was a way of bringing the landscape into textual presence, of bringing it within the compass of a European rationality that makes it at once familiar to its colonisers and alien to its native inhabitants (Bærenholdt & Kirsten 2004; Gregory 1994). I would argue that the Dead Zone and its toponyms are a prime example of Abstract Space. Abstract Space, a term coined by Henri Lefebvre (1974), is how space is perceived and produced by the hegemony – the state, the capitalist agenda, or utilitarian system such as urban planning. I use the term 'hegemony' to refer to the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimising norms and ideas that inhibit the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas. This concept was key to Antonio Gramsci's work (Bates, 1975) and was used to signify the economic, political and moral domination of a particular group over another. For Lefebvre (1991), "Representations of space" are one manifestation of hegemonic power. My use of the term 'hegemony' also refers to Rancière's (1999) concept of the 'police'. He defines 'police' as the order, system or power that "defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and way of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as disclosure and another as noise" (Rancière 1999, p.29). Rancière's concept is important to my discussion of the imagery of the 'dead zone' as a naturalisation of

the idea that 'empty' spaces do exist. It also what enables the concealment and obscuration of the histories of these spaces, the communities that inhabit them and most importantly the practices that produce (the imagery) of space as a 'dead zone'.

Whilst these systems present it as neutral and real, it is an illusion created for particular ends. Abstract Space is:

> "[…] a product of violence and war, it is political; instituted by the state, it is institutional. On first inspection it appears homogeneous; and indeed it serves those forces which make a *tabula rasa* of whatever stands in their way, of whatever threatens them – in short, of differences. These forces seem to grind down and crush everything before them, with space performing the function of a plane, a bulldozer or a tank. The notion of the instrumental homogeneity of space, however, is illusory – though empirical description of space reinforces the illusion – because it uncritically takes the instrumental as a given." Lefebvre 1991, p.287.

The imagery, or in Lefebvre's term, the illusion of Abstract Space is created through three apparatuses: the portrayal of spaces as homogeneous, prioritising the optical perception of space or the "logic of visualisation" over other means of perception, and conceiving space as absolute and complete rather than relational and ephemeral. Abstract Space is created by "redaction of the 'real', on one hand, to a 'plan' existing in a void and endowed with no other qualities, and, on the other hand, to the flatness of a mirror, of an image, of pure spectacle under an absolutely cold gaze" (Lefebvre 1991, p.287). Similarly, Michel de Certeau (1984) portrayed abstract space as 'geometrical' or 'geographical', it is the space of the visual, panoptic; it is a theoretical construct (1984, p.93).

I argue in this thesis that the 'dead zone' imagery of a void is produced to achieve certain goals. The imagery of the void, or the "semantic void" is created to abolish former meanings (Lefebvre 1991, p.317). Reading Lefebvre, Mieke Bal (2001) contended that this

semantic void has no less a specific semantic content: "from Lefebvre's comment we realise that the idea of transparent or empty space has been a tool at the service of nation-states interested in expansion as well as city planners in that it was prompted to naturalise occupation as settling in. Hence, we can connect the notion of abstract space with colonising gestures" (Bal 2001, p.133). What I am putting forward here is that the term 'Dead Zone' acts in a similar way, it delimits, or makes clear, something which is indefinable, and at the same time empties these spaces from their qualities.

1.a.   Terminology as Designerly Act

My main argument here is that these terms are not descriptive but constitutive, meaning they do not describe a space which is a 'dead zone', but they produce it. Labelling a space with these terms opens the possibility to colonise, sanitise, homogenise and gentrify them. The act of labelling a space with these terms is to create a void where once there was a place. However, as with any given naming in other times and other contexts, they show an "emptying-out and wearing-away of their primary role. They become liberated space that can be occupied...[and] by emptying themselves from their classifying power, they acquire that of 'permitting' something else" (De Certeau 1984, p.105). Therefore, what I have attempted to do in this research is not only to understand what these terms mean, but what they set out to do, what their effects are, and how we can utilise them for different ends. In other words, to imagine a living space beyond the deadening effects of these terms.

It is not even a question of this or that term but of *the act of naming itself*. And the act of naming itself, or terming, is what enables the discourse of the 'dead zone' to exist. The words 'term' and 'terminology' originate from 'terminus' which means "goal, end, final point". It comes directly from the Latin 'terminus' (plural termini) which means "end, boundary line". In contrast, its Sanskrit origins ('*tarati*') mean to pass or cross over. No

wonder that the definition of the derelict area falls apart. Even before the terminology given to these spaces faced by the realities of the spaces, the terms that were given to them echoed everything that the action of naming tried to exclude from them. Therefore every term is in fact a space of transgression. This is what was celebrated in one of the most important Roman festivals, *Terminalia*, at the end of the old Roman year, when the year is terminated. It was celebrated in honour of *Terminus* - the deity who presided over boundaries and landmarks (Woodard, 2006, p.96). The celebration of the end of space at the end of the year. These festivals were celebrated at the *Terminus* – stones that marked the borders between two private properties or between private and public property. While this deity resides literally all over the place, it was also at the heart of the holiest of Roman spaces – *Temple of Jupiter*. And while it is the mark of the Border, a two-dimensional entity, it was at the same time a space for communal transgressive celebration: a space that is created by the meeting and mingling of two separate camps. At the *Temple of Jupiter*, where such common celebrations could not take place, a hole in the ceiling directly above the *Terminus* statue was made to enable the god of the boundary to cross its own border (Gargola 2009). Naming a place, any place, is to mark the place's boundaries. It is to assign it an identity. In doing so, a zone is opened outside this space where the designated space is introduced to the Other space and to the potentiality of transgression. This is clearly illustrated by the *Terminalia* festival, and by the architecture of the *Temple of Jupiter*. This transgressive potential exists even in the term 'dead zone', or even more, a void that introduces to the discourse of architecture the Other space per excellence.

To transgress the discourse of the 'dead zone', I first needed to mark its boundaries. This was carried out by the meticulous gathering and reading of numerous texts where the term 'dead zone' and its synonyms appear. Yet, as with the subject of this research, the spaces it refers to could not clearly be defined, since the term 'dead zone' is hardly ever used in writing. It is, as far as I could trace, an argot used informally by planners and architects.

Therefore, the research expanded, looking into any possible synonyms that attempt to portray these spaces. As the research expanded both historically and geographically, it became clear that these attempts go far beyond architecture and planning discourse and far beyond our times. There was little surprise in that, since the act of portraying spaces as 'dead zones' has been done for social, economic and political ends. This search took me back, for example, to Plato's discussion about a vague and empty space he named *chora*, and to imageries of the 'abyss' and the 'wilderness' in London's East End in the nineteenth century.

In fact, it was the case of the Palestinian fisherman village, in the Ha'Yarkon Estuary in Tel Aviv, that pointed the way outside architecture and planning discourse. This research indeed began on hearing the city's planner referring to the Ha'Yarkon Estuary as a "dead zone" that was "crying out for redevelopment". This terminology was synonymous with the marking of Palestine as a whole as wilderness by Western explorers, writers, religious pilgrims, business people and colonialists in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The correlation between past and present nomenclature, and nomenclature that originated in architecture and planning discourse and ones that can be found outside these discourses is only one reason why I decided to expand the research into other discourses and periods. Planning and architecture are part of culture, and they are inseparable from the social, economic and political spheres. Moreover, and in particular relevance to the issue of the 'dead zone', planning and architecture practices play a major role in colonial and capitalist apparatuses (Bauman 2003; Bauman 2013; Harvey 2009; Bhabha 1994). Only by tracing the nomenclature of the 'dead zone' to as many different times and places as possible, I have been able to identify a discourse – the discourse of the 'dead zone'.

1.b.   Definitions of Undefined Land

I would like to now examine two terms of definition that stand at opposite sides of planning discourse and practice: Dead Zone and Derelict Land. The first one is taken from planning and architecture jargon, and the other is a legal definition of land categorisation in the UK.

I will start with the 'dead zone'. What does it mean? Curiously, outside planning and architecture discourse the term 'dead zone' has a different, if not opposite meaning to that which is used in these discourses. As I will show later, when planners and architects label a space as a 'dead zone', it means that the space is considered dead, there is no activity there, it might be empty and/or dangerous, etcetera. The subject in this relationship is intact and the object of the observation is lacking something, something is lacking there. The term 'dead zone' is not a statutory term, and as such is difficult to tackle. This illusive term marks a whole set of terms which I introduced in the list mentioned before. However, I not only heard it from the Tel Aviv's municipal planner but from other architects and planners during casual talks about places as well, and in the descriptions of "empty sites" by students of architecture who were sent to conjure new projects there. The term 'dead zone' outside architecture and planning discourse means the blind spot in a car's rear mirror, or in the driver's visual field. Similarly, in English it is used to describe the blind spot in a fortification's visual field. While in both cases the meaning of the term shows a subjective perspective, i.e. it is the subject who is lacking the ability to see, and the death is in his perception, the meaning in architecture and planning jargon is the opposite of this. It is not the subject who experiences a certain death or blindness, but it is the space, the observed object, which is portrayed as 'dead'. I could not claim to know for sure why this very evocative term became part of the jargon (maybe I heard it too many times in student presentations) but it could be that it was its metaphoric qualities and its haunting effect indicating, unintentionally, that it does not represent the realities of the space it refers to.

The other examples, Derelict and Vacant Land, require a longer discussion. These categories, one might assume, must be crystal clear since they are legal planning definitions, upon which grants are given to recover such zones, and on which regeneration schemes are drawn (Rogers 1999). I chose to concentrate on one planning system for various reasons, mainly practical, to confine the otherwise very large scope of this research. The British system was chosen both because the research started in England, but also because the discourse of the 'dead zone', as I will show later, was formed to a great extent in and by Great Britain.

Derelict Land, according to the English planning definition, is a "land which has been relinquished or abandoned by its owner" (Barr 1969, p.38). However, land or structures without some kind of ownership is almost unthinkable (Ibid.). Rather than lacking ownership, derelict land is described as "land so damaged by previous industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment" (Ibid., p.38; Harrison 2007). It is important to note that the word 'derelict' is not free of moralistic associations and it implies intention – i.e. an active decision to leave something behind. It is a word that is charged with guilt. One of the other uses of the word is to indicate a homeless or destitute and delinquent individual. It is left to speculate why words such as 'dilapidated' or 'desolate' were not found to be more appropriate, but one reason could be that land defined as 'derelict' could be used in more lucrative ways, and it seems to have further, more lucrative development potential. Types of derelict land could be spoilt heaps, excavations and pits, derelict railway land, ex-military sites, mining subsidence and general industrial dereliction. However, prior to 2000, derelict land, according to the UK's National Land Use Database, excluded contaminated land: "land which represents an actual or potential hazard to health or the environment as a result of current or previous use". Since then, contaminated land is included in the categories of Vacant or Derelict land.

Derelict land is, therefore, not necessarily abandoned by its owner and not empty because it contains more than traces of the past activity: it also contains certain activity and uses. Land which is with no use at all and can be used with no treatment is defined as 'vacant land'. This split is somewhat equivalent to two other terms used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. One is 'brown fields', which is described as "sites in which real or perceived environmental contamination impedes redevelopment" and to *TOADS* - Temporarily Obsolete, Abandoned, or Derelict Sites (U.S. General Accounting Office 1997, in: Bowman & Pagano 2004).

Vacant land in the UK's National Land Use Database (NLUD) is defined as land "which is now vacant and could be redeveloped without treatment, where treatment includes any of the following: demolition, clearing of fixed structures or foundations and levelling" (Harrison 2007, p.8). Vacant land, as with derelict land, does not mean that it is empty. It includes vacant buildings that are structurally sound but excludes land previously used for mineral extraction or waste disposal which has been or is being restored to agriculture, forestry, woodland or other open countryside use. The vacancy is neither physical nor occupational, but temporal – it is vacant from the activity. As such, like the definition of derelict land, vacant land terminology is "both broad and imprecise" (Bowman & Pagano 2004, p.4). What makes this definition even more vague is the fact that 'vacant land' does not have to be vacant – it can include, for example, structurally sound buildings (Harrison 2007). Vacant land is de facto never empty, but is sometimes empty of human presence. A similar argument was made by the Civic Trust: "Vacant land, in general, is seen to be a problem when vacancy is prolonged, when it is an eyesore, or when it is an obvious social and economic waste of a scarce resource" (Joseph 1988, p.2). But even given this argument, the law does not define a timescale after which land can be declared vacant or derelict. This issue was recognised by Thames Television's *The Wasteland Report* which stated: "A precise definition is virtually impossible: whether a site is in partial use or a building, unused in a

given amount of time is 'derelict' remains to some extent a matter of subjective judgement" (Nabarro et al. 1980, p.11).

Attempting then to broaden the definition of derelict and vacant land to include as much land and as many sites as possible, weakens the category of derelict and vacant land further. Looking at the issue from an historical perspective, it seems that whilst the amount of this space has decreased in the past few years (Harrison 2007), the amount of land that is perceived as or could be identified as vacant and derelict has increased. Until the 1960s, the term derelict and vacant land were usually used to single out areas sucked dry of their natural resources by mining concerns and only since the 1970s has it been applied broadly to urban situations (Nabarro et al. 1980). From 2000, the NLUD has started to include under the definition of previously-developed land by type ('brownfield land'), sites which are currently in use with permission, or allocation, for redevelopment in addition to derelict and vacant land. This has caused some confusion since other agencies such as the Urban Task Force (Rogers 1999) have included in their audits all the types of land that were previously developed, even those which had permission for future redevelopment and therefore not considered by the NLUD to be vacant and derelict. Furthermore, CABE's 2003 campaign *Wasted Space?* included in its definition of wastelands formal public spaces such as parks and squares that, due to "anti-social activities", but mainly due to their appearance, were perceived as derelict. Maybe the most potent expression of the impossibility of definition, and the desperate clinging to aesthetics when the discourse defines these sites, is Nabarro and Richards' axiom: "Ultimately, dereliction is a question of degree. Like the elephant, it may be hard to describe, but it is relatively easy to recognise" (Nabarro et al. 1980, p.11).

Leaving the legal definitions, and looking to a more general observation of urban wastelands, the Italian architect Bernardo Secchi was one of the first to argue that the wasteland is a common condition of the postmodern city. Secchi portrayed two types of "urban voids": the first kind of void was generated by disused and abandoned nineteenth

century urban infrastructure such as factories, slaughterhouses, barracks, rail yards and docks. The second type of void was created by urban sprawl and morphology of "immense collections of objects tactically placed next to one another, mute" (Secchi in: Borret 1999, p.238). While the British planning system portrayed the 'dead zones' in negative terms, Secchi's tone is fairly neutral (Ibid.). His critique actually targets the ways in which these voids are viewed and treated by planners and architects, and goes against "design projects that ignore the void by trying to fill it in accordance with an anachronistic view of the city" (Ibid.).

In the more general urban discourse, beyond the strict legal definitions, the judgement of places as derelict or vacant is based a lot on these spaces' *appearance*. For example, the Civic Trust Report (Joseph 1988) declared simply that land becomes derelict "when it is an eyesore". Other agencies also attempted to define such land based on its look. For example, in *Derelict Britain*, Barr (1969) argued that the government's definition for derelict land was "narrow and exclude[d] so much that an average observer would consider derelict. […] To most of us 'derelict land' means virtually any land which is ugly or unattractive in appearance" (Ibid., p.14). Relying on the appearance of places as a key to identifying wastelands was also used by CABE (2003) and Groundwork (Handley 1996) in their surveys, and earlier by the author of 'Reclaiming derelict land' (Oxenham 1966). For example, in the Groundwork's survey (Handley 1996), derelict land was interpreted broadly as "urban and industrial waste land. It may be vacant, unused or ineffectively used, or land which is neglected or unsightly. It can also mean land, which is likely to become any of these things".

The association of a certain appearance with wasteland, I would argue, reduces the whole debate about these spaces into indeterminacy because aesthetic value is subjective and what for one seems a blight is to others, as I will show shortly, captivating (Nabarro et al. 1980). But contrary to the subjective perspective that such depictions entail, which opens the door to debunking the view that such spaces are 'unsightly' (Edensor 2005; Trigg 2006), the

discourse frames the argument on essentialist qualities of the space itself. Discussions which limit the analysis of these zones to aesthetics fail to consider other elements that produce and maintains such places (Harvey 1989; Sennett 1992; Massey 1994; Sassen 2011). In a detailed study of vacant land and urban strategies, Bowman and Pagano (2004) give examples of the reasons why "city officials intentionally neglect certain areas of the city". They argue that neglect is not the right word, since keeping, if not generating, vacancy and dereliction is an urban strategy. One reason for it is that such zones not only "separate and segregate, they also protect. In the case of vacant land, property values are protected…" (Ibid., p.42). As with parks and transportation corridors, vacant and derelict land play a role in "protecting the property values of certain areas and, intentionally or not, clustering groups and individuals by class and income. These vacant spaces, in effect, function as fences or walls and, as such, influence the city's social landscape" (Ibid., p.43). At the same time, such 'vacant spaces' are one of the most potent sites for development and gentrification. However, since 'vacant space' is a concept rather than tangible reality, as I will show in this research, it is the imagery of vacancy and waste that prepares that ground for (re)development (Lynch 1990; Bauman 2003).

On this shaky yet essentialist aesthetic ground, most of the ills of derelict land are marked as 'dead zones'. For example, the Civic Trust's report (Joseph 1988) described the wastelands thus:

> "[…] grim desolation dulls the spirit - as their dust and fumes defile the fabric - of the human settlements that straggle along them. Smouldering pit heaps foul the air, poisonous chemicals pollute the waterways and treacherous pits endanger the lives of adventurous children. Neglected wastes breed vermin and disease. Their very existence fosters slovenliness and vandalism, invites the squatters' shack, and engenders a 'derelict land mentality' that can never be eradicated until the mess itself has been cleared up. Dereliction,

indeed, breeds a brutish insensibility, bordering on positive antagonism, to the life and loveliness of the natural landscape it has supplanted. It debases as well as disgraces our civilisation." Joseph 1988, p.7.

In this description and the one that follows the derelict and vacant place, the discourse tells us, triggers a whole set of ills from nuisance, to economic decline to psychological malaise, and most of all these spaces send the wrong image: "The mental image of a city that is described as 'depressed', 'in decline', or 'unsafe' is of an urban wasteland and shuttered factories. […] The visual image of vacant land sends messages about the city" (Bowman & Pagano 2004, pp.41–42).

As with the Civic Trust, Groundwork's study (Handley 1996) puts the distress caused by the wasteland down to its appearance: "[…] it is the blighting effect of damaged and neglected land on the landscape that affronts people most". Apparently, it is the wasteland's appearance which is "followed by rubbish dumping and, at lower intensity, a range of health concerns; especially safety of children" (Ibid.). This blight also causes:

"[…] a psychological problem too, destroying the attraction and confidence of whole communities. […] Vacant land, especially that which has been unused for many years creates serious adverse effects for surrounding properties. This reduces the incentive to maintain properties in good condition, businesses may be driven to close because the number of customers is inadequate, and residents may quit, driven out by vandalism and intimidation. The blight of vacant land therefore spreads, corrupting the social and economic well-being, if not of the whole city, at least of large tracts." Chisholm and Kivell, 1987, in: Handley 1996, p.12

Similar concerns were put forward in 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' (Rogers 1999) which declared that derelict areas detracted from the quality of the rest of the urban environment,

and dented confidence in the future of the area. Similarly, CABE (CABE 2003), in its campaign against wastelands, declared that these sites "become highly vulnerable to fly-tipping, car dumping and other anti-social activities associated".

These views of the derelict and vacant place are of a place without a past, and with a deterministic, never changing present. Such a view not only overlooks the histories of such sites, it also greatly misses the ephemeral nature of them. More fundamentally, this discourse is based on an essentialist perception of these places, i.e. it is made disregarding broader economic, social, political aspects which are not located in the place itself, but which constitute these places from the start. Massey observed such a problematic perspective in relation to theoretical and political discourse about the nature of any place (Massey 1994). Yet, because of the discourse's strong vested interests in relation to derelict and vacant places, and because such places seem to be outside any notion of community, I believe her critique is particularly relevant here. Such a critique will start by asking, for example, some of the following: was it the vacant and derelict site that produced contamination or was the toxic land the result of avaricious capitalist industries that dumped toxins without proper treatment to maximise profit? Was it the vacant or derelict place which attracted fly-tipping or was it the lack of bins or accessible waste sites in the vicinity? Does the appearance of such sites engender vandalism, which has a bad effect on business, or is vandalism engendered by other factors, most obviously lack of anything else to do? Were derelict or vacant sites 'denting confidence' or causing 'psychological problems' among communities? These I believe should be the questions to ask when we try to analyse spaces that we portray as 'dead zones'.

What I have shown here is that the term 'dead zone' and its synonyms 'derelict and vacant land' in planning discourse is rather vague. If at all, the main attribute for which certain spaces defined as derelict or vacant share is the non-normative look of these spaces. While these definitions are supposed to be clear and objective, the fact that they, to a large

extent, depend on the aesthetic preferences of decision makers negates that assumption and the possibility of a non-biased reading of these spaces. In light of this analysis, and the case of the Palestinian fisherman's village (which I will discuss at length in Chapter Three), a question must be raised: is the 'dead zone' a 'real' space? Can dereliction ever be used as a criterion to define space? Can we talk about 'vacant land'? As I will show in Chapter Two, these terms, and more generally the imagery of the 'dead zone', haunt architecture and planning discourse. Or to be more precise, it is architecture and planning practice that haunts these spaces with these terms.

CHAPTER 2:

The Wasteland or the Genealogy of an Imagined Space

"Every time the meaning of a discussion depends on the fundamental value of the word useful – in other words, every time the essential question touching on the life of human societies is raised, no matter who intervenes and what opinions are expressed – it is possible to affirm that the debate is necessarily warped and that the fundamental question is eluded."

Bataille 1985, p.116

"Of all the arts, architecture is the closest constitutively to the economic, with which, in the form of commissions and land values, it has a virtually unmediated relationship."

Jameson 1991, p.5

In Chapter One, I argued that the 'dead zone' nomenclature is constitutive rather than descriptive. As such, the definitions it produces do not adequately address the realities on the ground, as I showed in the case of Tel Aviv. Moreover, I showed that definitions such as derelict and vacant land disintegrate when examined closely. I will continue to show the discrepancy between the imagery of the 'dead zone' and the spaces it addresses in Chapter Three. In this chapter, I would like to substantiate my argument that the imagery of the 'dead zone' forms a discourse whose visibility in post-modernity is clear, and this discourse can be traced back to antiquity. In fact, I would argue that the discourse about the 'dead zone' goes hand in hand with the discourse about 'public space'. Since there is no recognised corpus of

texts that can be easily identified as forming the 'dead zone' discourse, to create such, I had to carry out a genealogical research.

Genealogy, as formulated by Michael Foucault, is an investigation into those elements which "we tend to feel [are] without history" (Foucault 1977, p.139), for example sexuality and other elements of everyday life. While genealogy, like archaeology, looks at the past, it also "offers an intrinsic critique of the present" (Crowley 2014, p.2). Genealogy sprang from the understanding of the limits of representation that archaeology and history traditionally cancelled or were blind to. This practice has been created on the understanding that there cannot be a separation between subject and object, the world and I, and that the two are entangled in power relations, constructing and deconstructing each other. Therefore, genealogy does not pretend to take a neutral, disinterested perspective, but, like stories (Certeau 1984, p.44), admits the political and polemical interests motivating the writing of the history (Hoy 2005). Genealogy seeks to show the plural and sometimes contradictory pasts that reveal traces of the influence that power has had in truth. Even more radically, it recognises that the past is always constructed from the present moment, and the past, as the present, is always in a state of flux (Foucault 1977; Foucault 2002). As such the subject of the 'dead zone' is particularly relevant to genealogical research since it abounds in contemporary architectural discourse.

Genealogy is created through bringing forward theories that have been marginalised and everyday knowledge and experiences that have been ignored by the hegemony that constitutes history: "Let us give the term 'genealogy' to the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (Foucault 1994, p.42). I am using genealogy and not other practices because, first and foremost, it enables us to constitute an object or a discourse that seemingly does not exist or at least has not existed before the post-industrial city. Genealogical research will show how these terms are taken from miscellaneous texts, and can

be considered a discourse, and as I will argue in Chapter Three and Four, an apparatus. Genealogical research enables me to mark a set of diverse and ostensibly unrelated imageries, documents, stories, memories, expressions, attitudes and practices from antiquity to today, which, I argue, constitute the discourse of the void. This discourse spatialises and localises Otherness – through marginalisation it gives place to everything that the hegemony has conceived as Other. While generally speaking this space is always seen as a demarcated void or wasteland, it is also considered to be the place of desire, of disobedience and of uncertainty.

As I will argue later, these depictions, maybe the entire discourse, are an apparatus for appropriation, colonisation and gentrification. And, as I will discuss at the end of this chapter, the marking of other spaces as Other also secures the identity, if not supremacy, of normative public space. I would argue that it is not the house (*oikos*) which is the Other to public space, but it is the 'dead zone' or *chora* that plays this role. In this chapter, I will trace these place-concept spaces chronologically from the Middle Ages to today.

2.a.   Middle Ages – Wastelands and the Commons

"Commons space admits no criteria; it is open to all in the same way. It is not owned or controlled. What makes it common is that all can go there to extract from it what is there."

Hénaff 2001, p.4

Common land, or commons, is a space-concept, which appeared in the Middle Ages in Europe and more so in England, where it was used to describe wastelands that were in use by landless poor. Through their use by the destitute, and through years of political and legal battles, these wastelands became recognised and protected as a kind of public space. In the past few years there have been calls to recognise abandoned post-industrial landscape as common (Waldheim 2006; Singh 2013; Ferguson 2015).

In Europe, the commons were lands that were communally owned or were 'no man's land' (*terra nullius*). They were not agricultural and rarely woodland, but mostly wastelands. In England these lands were similar in kind and, although privately owned, still gave rights for others to use them. It is important to mention that 'common' meant not only a certain space but, even before that, it meant the "right which one or more persons have to take or use some portion of that which another's site produces" (Gonner 1912, p.7). More specifically, it is the right to use someone else's land for various activities (Ibid.). Since the Middle Ages, the commons started to gain a distinctive legal identity and at the same time it was subjected to multiple and potentially conflicting land uses. It has never been 'free land' and it is not without conflict (Rodgers 2011). The legal framework of the commons can be traced back to the states of Merton (1235) and Westminster II (1285), which confirmed the lord of the manor's rights to the soil of the manorial waste (described by Merton as the 'residue' of the manor), but also required lords to respect the usage rights of free tenants within the manor (Ibid.).

From the Middle Ages until the sixteenth century, it was accepted that destitute people could build shelters on the commons if they could erect the beams and roof, and put in a fire, in one night. This belief led to many cottages being built on the commons until it was stopped by the passing of the *Erection of Cottages Act 1588*, an act that forbade anyone to build a small house on the common land. This act, while excluding certain usages, solidified the rights to use the space by the commoners. Since then until the mid-nineteenth century, the commons were permitted to be used for various activities. In Europe these lands were often used for pasturing, cutting peat and turf, digging loam, and gathering branches (Gonner 1912; Anon n.d.; Moor 2015). In England, these rights were extended to cattle grazing, fishing, collecting wood for fires and other undefined uses (Gonner 1912).

The commons were recognised legally as a public space by the *1866 Metropolitan Commons Act*. This act freed a piece of land from the uses of private ownership and

development. The law did not specify any programme or use for the land. A subsequent law protecting the openness of the commons was the *Metropolitan Commons Supplemental Act, 1877*, which stated that commons were an "unenclosed space for ever', i.e. in sharp contrast to the celebrated other public spaces – the Squares Gardens that were developed in London around that time. While the commons were associated with the countryside landscape, the law did not mention any obligation to use it for agriculture or grazing. On the contrary, according to a later law, the *Open Spaces Act 1906*, the commons should be used for recreation or else it just "lies waste and unoccupied" (Ibid., p.11).

In early modern times, the commons started to disappear. In France and parts of southern Netherlands that was annexed to it, common land was appropriated from the nobility and was given to the municipalities (Moor 2015). In England, more than 21 percent of the land, about 2.75 million hectares, was common land before the eighteenth century. By 1900, only a fraction of it, about five hundred thousand hectares, had survived enclosure and total privatisation. Moreover, in the US, Europe and England even the commons that still existed as a public space, became something that resembled, pretty much, the hegemonic and normative public space. I will return to the commons in Chapter Seven, where I will look again at their importance for this discussion.

2.b. Modernity – Space Left Over and Border Vacuums

During the age of Modernism, the 'dead zones' were the space of dirt and disorder – left-over spaces that escaped the ordering grid. These zones were the waste of modernist urban restructuring. The waste-space, which is most associated with modernist urban planning, is the Space Left Over After Planning (SLOAP)[3]. The SLOAP is the un-designed open space,

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3   The term 'Space Left Over After Planning' (SLOAP) was coined by Prof. Leslie Ginsburg of the Architectural Association in London during the 1960's (Walker 1992; Albert 2015).

usually public or semi-public, which has not been designated with a programme and has not been managed or maintained (Rogers 1999, p.97). It can be found around residential developments, between defined zones (e.g. between industrial parks and housing estates), around shopping malls, edges of highways etcetera. The British government's Urban Task Force described the SLOAPs as: "soulless, undefined, and poorly landscaped, with no relationship to surrounding buildings..." and considered it to be in excess - it is "too public space" (Ibid.). The SLOAPs disorder both the modernist grid and zoning since they do not fit into these urban divisions. They create within the city, in an unsystematic way, spaces of indeterminacy, by generating informal uses and permitting nature to reclaim these spaces.

An interesting contemplation on and approach to SLOAPs was taken by Gordon Matta-Clark's work *Reality Properties: Fake Estates* (1973). It was based on the purchase of a number of such spaces in New York, Queens and Staten Island. In the U.S., these spaces are also termed 'surplus land', 'gutter-space' or 'curb property' that was owned by the local authorities. These spaces sprung up from the division of land into lots (Bois & Krauss 1997; Lee 2000). They had become city property after they had been confiscated from their owners who had failed to pay taxes and were sold for around $35 a-piece. Matta-Clark's work was a collage describing in detail the dimension and location of the property, and included the property and the area plan, a black and white photograph of it, and the actual rights for the property. The art collector who bought the artwork also became the land-owner. What Matta-Clark exhibited was the disconnection between land value and land use. His artwork can be seen as a reflection on land speculation – sites which seem to be wasteland but are in fact profitable and through a process which is detached from what is actually happening on the ground, increase in value (as would be the case for a Matta-Clark work of art).

'Border Vacuum' was another 'waste space' that resulted from modern urban planning, chiefly form its zoning practices. The urban critic Jane Jacobs, in 'The Curse of Border Vacuums' (1992, p.257) defined a border as the perimeter of a large single-use

territory or corridor that reduces both the amount of people who go through the area or into it. Single land-use zones on a large scale, for example railways, university campuses, factories, parks at night, and even housing estates, become a kind of bordered space, which "the general public" is less keen to cross. These 'border vacuums' turn their surroundings into a kind of no-man's land, where seemingly no one goes to and nothing takes place. Jacobs: "The root trouble with borders is that they are apt to form dead ends for most users of city streets. Consequently, the streets that [go to] a border are bound to be deadened places. They fail to get a by-the-way circulation of people going beyond them in the direction of the border because few are going to that Beyond. A kind of running-down process is set in motion" (Ibid., p.272). However, Jacobs admitted that these border vacuums also occur for reasons that she could not account for: "In most cases, there is nothing dramatic in any way about a border vacuum. Rather, vitality just appears absent and the conditions apt to be taken for granted" (Ibid.). Moreover, Jacobs asserts that some of the facilities that create the border vacuum are necessary and useful.

The SLOAPs emerged out of land division and zoning. They were spaces which were left over after these divisions and could not be sold or utilised because of their small size or because they were needed as a buffer space between two major land uses which could not sit next to each other, for example an industrial area and a residential neighbourhood. Border vacuums were created by zoning as well as by some unclear conditions, and were on a neighbourhood scale. 'Lost spaces', a term coined by Roger Trancik (1986), became almost the epitome of the modern and postmodern city:

> "Lost space is the leftover unstructured landscape at the base of
> high-rise towers or the unused sunken plaza away from the flow of
> pedestrian activity in the city. Lost spaces are the surface parking
> lots that ring the urban core of almost all American cities and sever
> the connection between the commercial centre and the residential

areas. They are the no-man's-land along the edges of freeways that nobody cares about maintaining, much less using. Lost spaces are also the abandoned waterfronts, train yards, vacated military sites, and industrial complexes that have moved out to the suburbs for easier access and perhaps lower taxes. They are the vacant blight-clearance sites remnants of the urban renewal days – that were, for a multitude of reasons, never developed. They are the residual areas between districts and loosely composed commercial strips that emerge without any one realizing it. Lost spaces are deteriorated parks and marginal public housing projects that have to be rebuilt because they do not serve their intended purpose. Generally speaking, lost spaces are the undesirable urban areas that are in need of redesign – anti-spaces, making no positive contribution to the surroundings or users. They are ill-defined, without measurable boundaries, and fail to connect elements in a coherent way." Trancik 1986, pp.3–4.

Trancik's sense of loss, anger and fear is not only related to spatial conditions but to social ones – it is a space that lacks a communal identity that is associated with, for example, a notion of a neighbourhood: "With the loss of a collective sense of the meaning of public space, we have also lost the sense that there are rules for connecting parts through the design of outdoor space. In the traditional city, rules were clear. […] One of the challenges of urban design in our times is to redevelop a sense for rules and, in doing so, to bring back some richness and variety to public life – important ingredients in cities of the past" (Trancik 1986, p.11). Trancik, in fact, associated not only particular places but the whole Modern City with 'lost spaces', because it lacked historical continuity and as such it lacked an identity. This identity is lost not only because it lacks any references to the past in the city layout and its architecture, but also because the Modern City, unbounded by the city walls, expands and being "without measurable boundaries" (Ibid.), it seems to be disintegrating. Nonetheless, Tranick also sees in this lost space a potential, as it offers "tremendous opportunities to the

designer for urban redevelopment and creative infill and for rediscovering the many hidden resources in our cities" (Ibid., p.4).

What I have depicted here in the succession of these terms is how parts of the urban landscape are being marked as the emblem of a large range of problems, from actual land which is left unused because of planning regulations and ownership law, up to the breakdown of social cohesion. What is in fact common to the SLOAPs, the Border Vacuums and Lost Spaces is not their lack of usefulness, emptiness or disorder but that they are the product of planning, and that they create a system and order which does not sit well with the capitalist planning system (ruled by maximisation of use and profit) and models of this, or with the model of the 'ideal city'. But the cases of the Border Vacuums, Lost Spaces, and SLOAPs represent an even more fundamental fact. They show that the act of planning and design, and any system of ordering, always entails an act of exclusion (De Certeau 1984; Marchar 2004). As Mark Wigley argued "[t]he exclusion and subordination of space produces an orderly façade, or rather, the façade of order, to mask an internal disorder" (Wigley 1995, p.71).

2.c.   Postmodernism – the City of Voids, Dereliction and Nameless Spaces

Post-modern and contemporary urban discourse is saturated with the imagery of the 'dead zone'. The main spaces, which have been referred to in post-modernity as 'dead zones' are post-industrial spaces urban areas that have become de-populated, under-invested in and driven by poverty and crime, spaces that have been generated by seemingly unplanned and out-of-control city expansion; the space created by the disappearance of the city centre but also the breakup of the modern grid system and areas ravaged by war (urban wars or other). It is from this array of spaces and the depiction of them as 'dead zones' that I could hint at the formation of a discourse and could argue that this discourse is a fraud insofar as it misrepresents the spaces that it refers to.

The postmodern city has been described as 'centre-less' (Soja 1989), or 'diffused' (Boeri 1999; Boeri 1993), lacking the core of the historical city with its historical centre, the town square, the market place and so on. It is dissimilar to the modern city, which was planned around different zones of particular use: housing, industrial, entertainment, etcetera. While the dead zone is often tied to post-industrial sites, and thus to the processes of decay and decline, they have also been related to this diffusion, uncontrolled expansion or chaotic growth that creates 'nameless spaces' (Ibid.). These spaces are the legacy of diminished centralised urban and regional planning. The nameless space exists in "cities that no longer have edges that look today like nebulas dotted with a swarm of buildings standing in isolation or heaped together incongruously" (Boeri 1999, p.20). In his *Postmodern Geographies*, Soja argues that this diffused conglomeration differs markedly from the process of post-war suburbanisation. It is best described as "an amorphous regional complex that confounds traditional definition of both city and suburb" (Soja 1989, p.212). This condition, he stresses, "defines any simple, characterisation as 'post-industrial'. The centre-less outer city is, after all as much the product of industrialisation as the urban agglomerations of the nineteenth century" (Ibid.).

A brilliant analysis of the postmodern city, which also sheds light on important reasons for the creation of the 'dead zone', was carried out by Albert Pope, in the book *Ladders* (1996). Pope analysed how the modern open grid, which enabled free circulation, was replaced by infrastructures and buildings that created a new morphology of closed and autonomous structure or places surrounded by open, but less accessible, formless spaces, devoid of any (formal) programmes.

While Soja (1989) and Pope (1996) do not explicitly research or discuss the everyday life in these spaces, Boeri gives them more attention. These spaces, he argued, are equally important to the closed and built space: they are not "the peripheries of the closed", but spaces that are often characterised by "openness and multiple uses" (Boeri 1993, p.124).

Although he called these spaces 'nameless' and stated that in contrast to civic public space, spectacle or consumer space, these spaces have "no inherent nature or meaning" (Ibid.), he also maintained that "they have meaning but these meanings cannot be understood from an external position, or viewed as a landscape, detached from the intimate type of perception inextricably connected to ways of living" (Ibid.). As I will show in the site research, spaces, which for the passer-by might be generic and meaningless, are important places for marginalised communities and activities that inhabit these spaces with both actions and meanings.

The post-industrial landscape forms a great part of the discourse of the 'dead zone' (De Solà-Morales 1995; Bowman & Pagano 2004; Gallagher 2010; Edensor 2005; Handley 1996). This post-industrial landscape sprung from the abandonment of many nineteenth-century sites of production, storage and transportation such as factories, slaughterhouses, warehouses, old harbours and train yards, train lines, quarries and mines. This type of 'dead zone' can be on a scale of a single building up to that of an entire city such as in the case of Detroit and some East European cities (Oswalt et al. 2006; Moore 2010; Watson & Gibson 1995; Austin & Doerr 2010; Gallagher 2010). Due to the changes in production, means of transportation, and social and economic policies, smaller scale spaces and places have also been made obsolete, i.e. train stations, cinemas, public toilets and even sidewalks. A key factor in these spaces becoming 'dead zones' is the prolonged period that they have been without formal uses or have been boarded up and empty. The reasons for this vary: the process of land speculation, a weak economy, local or national conflicts and war, changes in urban zoning, indecisiveness of the entrepreneur or the local planning authorities, and more. Also the scale, location and duration of these sites vary greatly and this has a lot of influence on what occurs in them. Any off-site quantitative study of such spaces therefore is bound to fail. What is common to all these sites is that they all have lost their original function or the original public they were created for. However, these spaces only became 'dead zones', i.e.

were marked and acquired real or imagined attributes, when they were about to be completely transformed, as many of them have been from the late 1980s because of land pressure, economic growth and the 'Back to the City' movement (Smith 1996; Caves 2005; Harvey 2008). Both the excess in derelict or wasteland sites and the rapid development of them has led to greater attention being placed on them, with their qualities being acknowledged. With the further commercialisation of the city and it sanitisation, these 'dead zones' have been reimagined as a welcome oasis in the desert of the real (estate).

Another critical factor in the change in perception of these spaces, and to their redefinition, has been the shift in research methodologies from quantitative data (i.e. using air photography, data based on economic transactions such as land purchases, relaying on land value and the official usage of land) or detached and general observations (i.e. commenting on how modern city planning leaves gaps between different usage zones) to qualitative research, on-foot observations, engaging with communities that inhabit these space and personal accounts of being in these zones (Thompson & Tonts 2008; De Certeau 1984; Crawford 1999). These investigations, as I will show in Part Two of the thesis, reveal the richness and complexity of these spaces, and how they are neither empty nor a waste.

2.d.   The Post-Modernist Void

During the 1960s and 1970s, leftover spaces, devoid of programme and form, started to gain more positive attention. The critique on Modernist urban planning, together with the critique on the ties between architecture and planning, looked for alternative spaces and urban configurations. For example, the Situationists, a group of writers, artists, political activists, which constituted one of the most vocal voices against the modern city, standardisation and commercialisation of everyday life, attempted to construct practices to escape these agendas that ruled all aspects of the city and modern life. One manifest attempt was the re-drawing of

the city map of Paris. In their collage, *The Naked City* map[4] (1957), Debord and Jorn cut out of the map parts which were considered to be most associated with commercialism, tourism, and other manifestations of power, leaving the neighbourhoods and spaces which were considered to resist the hegemonic agenda. On the cut-out areas, now left as blank spaces, they drew arrows that gave directions both to their desired spaces but also to heighten the possibility of getting lost (the ultimate resistance strategy in a city and life marked by a utilitarian agenda).

The empty spaces of the Situationist map depict contradiction between the capitalist and touristic view of the city – a city that is reduced to a set of attractions, and everyday life. They constitute a subversion of Lefebvre's Abstract Space (Lefebvre 1991) and of the cartographic project of total knowledge. These spaces re-produced the unknown and its infinite possibilities through cartography, planning jargon and regulations and capitalistic entrepreneurial practices. The map's empty spaces, or better, the act of spacing, suggested "space as an element of social practice" (McDonough 2004, p.252). The desire for the empty space can be seen clearly in the Situationist architect Constant's *New Babylon* (Wigley 1998). Not only was the project mostly imagined as a series of empty corridors, but it was completely detached from the ground, leaving it as a true free place for drifting. There is no doubt that this desire for empty space is also the desire for freedom, free play, negations to restriction of the planned and utilitarian. However, in contrast to the 'dead zone' imagery, the empty space in Constant's drawings is not imagined as a blank space or tabula rasa but as a wasteland dotted with indecipherable remnants, as can be clearly seen in his painting *Terrain Vague II* (1973): "This white surface [was] no longer a neutral ground for a drawing. It [was] the drawn ground itself" (Zegher & Wigley 2001, p.45). Similarly, 'protected' wilderness is the ground for Archigram's *Walking Cities*, the void in Libeskind's *Between the Lines*, and

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4   The map was named after the film by the same name (directed by Jules Dassin, 1948), which depicted the 'dark side' of New York, and shot in a documentary style on site.

the unbuilt spaces in Superstudio, post-1968, zero degree architecture (Lang & Menking 2003; Blundell & Canniffe 2012).

Since the late 1970s, the desire for the empty place, the space 'outside' architecture, has been emerging in Paper Architecture - a medium and practice that in itself can be considered a waste (Kaminer 2011), since it does not end with construction of the planned vision and simultaneously holds many ideas that were thrown out or were not yet tested. Some of the works of Paper Architecture give the most striking statements concerning urban 'voids', for example Cedric Price's *Potteries Thinkbelt* in Staffordshire – a university which was spread across, but did not colonise an industrial wasteland; Arata Isozaki's *Re-Ruined Hiroshima* which placed 'a new ruin' in a nuclear no-man's land; and Ettore Sottass' *The Planet as Festival: Design of a Roof to Discuss Under*, where the legendary Archigram's *Walking City* and other monuments such as the *Empire State Building* are lying dilapidated and reclaimed by nature. A more concrete proposal that incorporates the void and the ruin can be found in much of Lebbeus Wood's work and more recently in the THINK team's proposal for the *World Trade Centre*. This last example, I would say, is the architectural design that comes closest to embodying the notion of the 'dead zone': on probably the most lucrative site on the globe, the THINK team suggested a structure that would capture the state of the almost ruined and not yet built; they suggested a completely non-commercial project, in which fifty percent had no programme and was used as a public space.
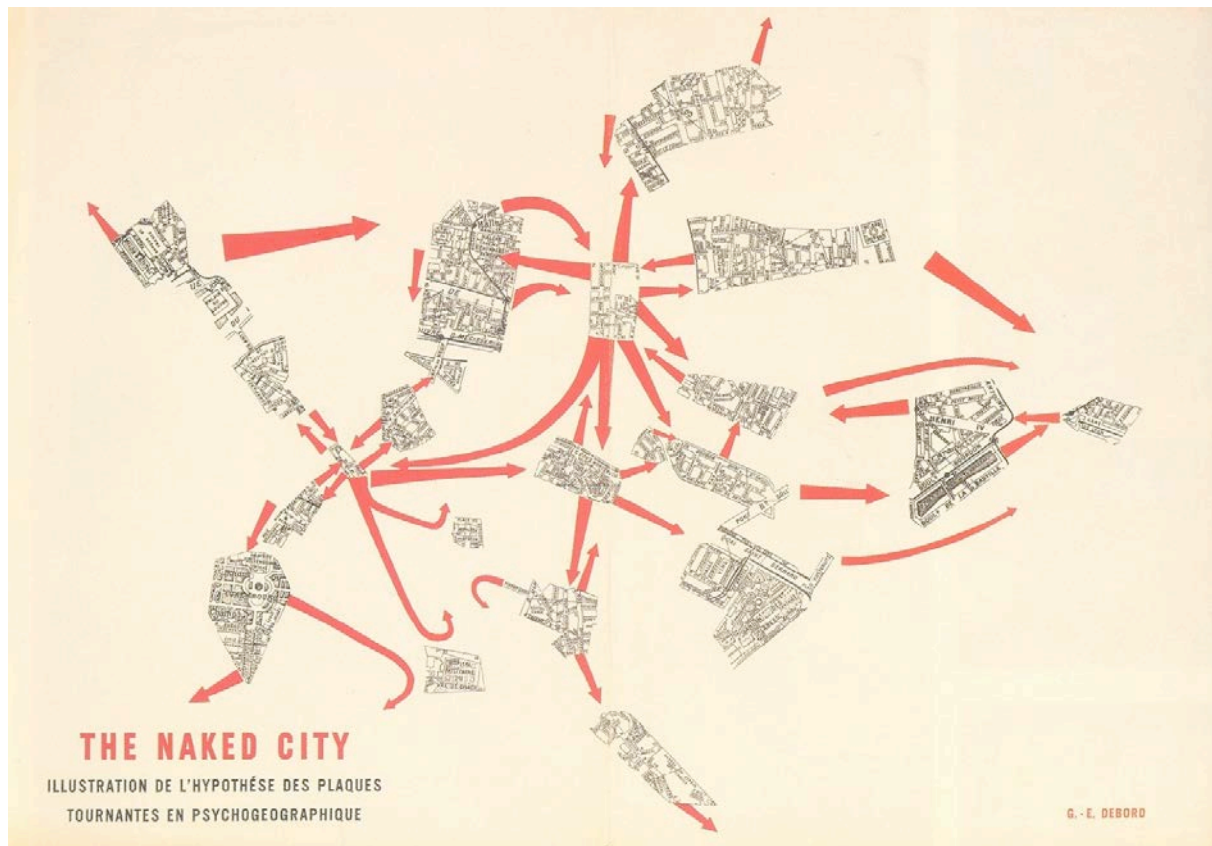
Illustration 2: *The Naked City* Map

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Surprisingly, it is the architecture of the Megaform that has some characteristics of the 'dead zones'. These characteristics combine the hegemonic perspective on these zones as well as characteristics that I drew up from my site-research and which I will discuss later. Whilst the Megaform has a strong form, this form envelops a weak programme. Take for example Super Studio's *Continuous Monument*, an imaginary project that covers the earth with a colossal mega-structure pierced with untouched zones for free play and 'nature' (Lang & Menking 2003). Another built example is the *Bonaventure Hotel* that was taken by Frederic Jameson as the epitome of post-modern architecture: "most of the interesting newer buildings that one might be tempted to call postmodern in one way or another (obviously that

could mean almost anything), most of these projects seem to have turned around enclaves, such as museum complexes or dwelling complexes; and though not a third term between an isolated building and a planned city environment, they do offer an escape from the problems that these both face now" (Jameson 1991, p.23). Such gigantic structures, while treating the city around them as a 'dead zone', potentially create 'dead zones' inside them. This is due to their complexity and size that potentially creates situations that are beyond control. As Jameson put it, in the mega-structure "one cannot but feel that here too something of a 'return of the repressed' is involved" (Ibid.). Another example Jameson gives for these conditions is the work of Rem Koolhaas, which he portrays as "dirty realism" or a kind of 'no-man's land' condition created in the architectural object itself (Jameson 1991). He sees Koolhaas' work as a reflection and acceptance, if not celebration, of these conditions, where the messy conditions of the outside are replicated in the inside: "[M]icrocosm replicates the macrocosm – but, at the same time, there is a will toward totality, toward all-inclusiveness. And this is a form of 'dirty realism', it seems to me, which wants to include all of this 'cultural of congestion' within itself" (Jameson & Buchanan 2007, p.131).[5]

Maybe the most radical approach to the 'dead zone' is the one of Kevin Lynch (1990). Lynch refuted the view of them as 'dead' or 'empty' spaces. He also objected to the more optimistic approach that did not shun and reject these spaces but instead saw them as a 'potential' space for development. He argued that these spaces, as they are, already present some qualities that should be taken into consideration and should even protected. Similarly, the Dutch Group *Crimson*, in its analysis of such spaces, argued that they "naturally reject urban design. [...] they are always physically contradictory to the idea of a good city and they perform a necessary function as a hiding place for all the bad things that are irreconcilable with the good idea of the city…" (Speaks 1999, p.2). Taking this argument maybe to its natural and most radical conclusion, some suggested zero intervention in such sites. Lynch

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5   For a discussion about the concept of 'dirty realism' in architecture see: Toom 1997.

suggested that we should let parts of the city that have been emptied of their residents be left abandoned, to be used for marginal activities and a slow process of reclamation (Lynch & Southworth 1990). This suggestion is echoed in Vergera's (1995) proposal to transform large parts of Detroit into an urban ruins park. Needless to say, this approach is problematic, as it remains blind to those who have yet survived in this urban catastrophe, but it does indicate a certain desire to experience and accommodate spaces, which are radically different socio-economically, and aesthetically from any other typical cityscape. This approach might render the architects, designers and planners obsolete, leaving them without any role to play in possible reconstruction of the ruined city

Alongside the idea of letting these spaces be, some architects have attempted to introduce the 'void', 'informality', vagueness and liminality into their designs. These terms describe the conditions of the postmodern city, which, unlike the modern city, has seemingly grown almost organically, but in fact has grown through unrestrained capitalism and the impoverishment of the state (or local authorities). In "The 'void' as a Productive Concept for Urban Public Space', Kristiaan Borret (1999) discusses two architectural practices which try to introduce spatial and/or programmatic 'voids' into their work – OMA/Rem Koolhaas and West 8 Architects/Adriaan Geuze. The void in their works is devoid of connotations of fragmentation, marginality and dirt but have a kind of visual and programmatic emptiness. The 'void' in these works is not only an empty space but it is used as a generative design tool. It is manifested in buildings or public spaces in two manners: one is minimal 'design' input, including a visual detachment or indifference to the surroundings and the second is the absence of a strict and/or clear programme. However, as I am arguing in this thesis, voids, at least in urban settings, do not exist and even when they are produced artificially, they are filled, very quickly, with non-formal activities and communities. Voids, or anything that tries to pretend to be an open, free, 'unplanned' space, can be established and maintained only by force – and thus betraying their raison d'être. The High Line in New York is a case in point.

2.e.   Contemporary Urban Discourse: The High Line – a Failed Attempt at Preserving the 'Wasteland'.

The High Line is considered to be one of the most successful stories about turning a 'wasteland' into a public space (McGeehan 2011; Anon 2012; Madanipour et al. 2013; Rowsdower 2011; Grodach & Ehrenfeucht 2015; Morenas 2013), while preserving, as its designer James Corner mused, the "sad, melancholic, silence that permeates the place" (Fehrenbacher 2014). The *High Line Project* was designed in a collaboration between James Corner Field Operations (Project Lead), Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Piet Oudolf (Friends of the High Line n.d.; Dimendberg 2013). Its economic model however, and I would argue, its impact on the design, and the park operation, is more controversial (Harvey 2012; Grodach & Ehrenfeucht 2015; Morenas 2013).

I personally visited the High Line by chance when I travelled to New York in 1999, as part of my research. Then, the concept of a park had not even been aired. On my way to the West Side Piers, which were in the process of being transformed, I noticed some vegetation on an elevated railway line. Having no knowledge whatsoever about the place, I asked a woman who stopped next to me at the traffic light what the space was. She explained and ended by saying, "They should turn it into a park so I have a place to walk with my Chubby", pointing at the Chihuahua she was holding. I got curious and looked for a building from which I could see the line. At the edge of it, there was a five storey building owned by some printing company. They let me onto the roof so I could take some pictures. The reputation of New Yorkers as not so friendly urbanites seemed to be false. I was not prepared for what I saw. It was 1999, the centre of Manhattan, and there was about 2.5 kilometres of yellow savannah suspended in mid-air. Just the derelict rail lines disrupted the wilderness, and some fencing of corrugated iron decorated with graffiti. A bit further away, I noticed a strange thing. In the midst of the yellowing grass, there was a rectangle of green grass and a

semi matured tree. Concentrating my eyes, I saw that from a building next to it, somebody had extended a large wooden plank, maybe a door, out of his or her window over the abyss and onto the derelict space, and she or he was probably the one that transformed this bit of it into their little haven. I went down quickly, located the building, and started guessing which flat the Guerrilla Gardener lived in. After a few attempts, one of the neighbours opened the door. I asked and he said that the 'lonely pioneer' lived next to him but he was not at home. 'Lonely?' I asked. He said yes because he and his flatmates asked permission from the planning authorities to create a similar garden but were denied. For the time being, he said they had given up the idea.

I read about the *High Line Initiative* only a few years later. Apparently, the idea to preserve the lines was conceived about a month after my visit. I do not know if the guy next door was Josh David or Robert Hammond, the co-founders of *Friends of the High Line*, who successfully campaigned, through political and legal means, to preserve the space. But like that Guerrilla Gardener, they saw something that maybe only few others saw, and they had the courage, ability and persistence to pursue their dream. Unlike the Guerrilla Gardener, they chose a less direct action approach and formed a pressure group. Both means of action can be described as communing, but I believe that a design, which was less top down could have strengthened the community around the High Line, and maybe have slowed down the extensive gentrification it entailed (Harvey 2012; Green 2012). This gentrification especially affected the gay community, which had been living along the line. While the *Friends of The High Line* co-founders were openly gay, and while the project was supported by pillars of the West Side gay community, many voices of poor, non-whites and queers within the gay community criticised it. As Darren Patrick noted: "the redevelopment of the High Line and subsequent influx of millions of tourists to the neighbourhood has commercialised, securitised, and all but destroyed one of the last zones of public sexuality in Manhattan in the name of good, gay, and green development" (Patrick 2013, p.6). The 'green' itself also has

been a cause for debate. While the High Line gained much appreciation in professional circles and became one of the most popular tourist attractions, much of the wilderness and wild nature that many of the supporters of the project had wanted to preserve (Green 2012) has disappeared and with it the unique ecology and some radical practices it enabled.

On top of the reckless gentrification and displacement, and the 'polite' and pleasant design, the High Line presents tougher restrictions on how and who can use it. The High Line gets far more security than other parks, that not only is a drain on the dwindling resources of New York's Park Department but also gives the High Line a certain feel – some may feel more secure, others intimidated. The park is gated and closed at night. It has a long list of restrictions that go beyond activities that are illegal; for example, dogs, bicycles, skateboards, skates and scooters are prohibited. Performances or amplified sound are prohibited except by permit. Feeding birds or squirrels is prohibited. Drinking alcohol is prohibited, except in designated concession areas. Artists, who after a court ruling in the case of Lederman et al. vs. Giuliani in 2001, had been allowed to sell their art in public parks, were chased out from the High Line, until Lederman[6] filed a law suit against the Park's Department and the Friends of The High Line (Anderson 2009).

In his critique of the project, Leon Morenas ((2013) argued that with all the good intentions of the architects, and especially Corner's anti-capitalist views, the High Line resembled another 'New Urbanism' scheme that aimed to fulfil the bourgeoisie's boutique lifestyle dream. While it sits on public assets, the High Line was built and is managed by a private company. The design of it had to fulfil the promise of the financial targets that showed a high return on the investment both to the city and especially to the property owners around it. I am not saying here that the High Line is devoid of gains to the environment and to the 'general public', but if a public space, in this case, a park, needs from the start to conform to a capitalist agenda, the architects are left with few options. Anything that does

6   The president of A.R.T.I.S.T.: 'Artists' Response to Illegal State Tactics'.

not conform to this agenda, and anything that might threaten these economic gains will be omitted. Whilst the High Line project is considered by some a new kind of successful model of private-public ownership, it is, argues Kohn (2014), probably "[t]he most striking illustration of severe economic inequality in America." She describes the High Line as a project in which public money and public land are given to a project from which only the super rich that can afford buying flats in the luxury housing that the High Line generated around it benefit from.

This affair is not new. It takes us back to the short history of the Welfare State, when there was public money for public parks. It is a return to the nineteenth century development of *Square Parks* in which 'public spaces' were developed as land speculation aiming to attract the middle class to live in the housing that was built around them. However, if that was private land that was given to the public for capital gains, here it is public land given to private hands for these gains. Or to assess at it as an outsider: here was a public asset that was turned into a wasteland, a 'dead zone'. This wasteland then was threatened with annihilation. The private sector was called to step in by some residents and entrepreneurs, to save the day. In return the private hands not only gained building rights and gentrified the area but also got to control how this public asset was designed, so it would attract the affluent population to these projects. The creation of this kind of 'public space' is the reverse of Commoning, but unfortunately, this process is rather common.

In this chapter I have tried to draw a genealogy of the 'dead zone' and weave together many spaces or space-concepts that I believe form a discourse, namely *the discourse of the 'dead zone'*. I have shown how through time the 'wastelands' have moved from the country to the edge of cities and into their heart, and how the attitudes towards these spaces have changed. From a complete rejection of such spaces in early modernity, I have shown that in the contemporary city these spaces are incorporated into the system. There are two common threads that I have tried to stress; firstly, that these spaces were never really 'leftover' - they

were always discussed and were objects of concern, resentment or admiration. Secondly, these spaces were never 'outside' the capitalist system. They always generated, in this or that way, capital. In the case of the commons, it took long legal and public fights to obtain the right to use the rich's wastelands – in the case of the contemporary city, the public's or state 'wastelands' are used, amongst other things, to benefit the rich. On another level, if in the past the wasteland was transformed into 'commons' to protect the poor's use of it, now, in cases such as the High Line, the Palestinian fisherman's village and others I will show in Part 2, the wastelands have been cleansed of much of these communities and activities.

CHAPTER 3:

The 'Dead Zone' of Antiquity: The *Chora* and its Aptitude in Helping to Understand the Indefinable Space

"The anchoring of the narrative conveys everywhere a tacit relation to something which cannot have a place in history – an originary non-place – without which, however, there would be no historiography. Writing disperses through its chronological staging the reference of the entire narrative to something unspoken that is its postulate…"

<div align="right">De Certeau 1988, p.91</div>

In this chapter, I will trace the concept of the 'dead zone' to antiquity. While I attempted to order the various, miscellaneous concepts and spaces in historical order, this order is disrupted at times when some older concepts echo more recent ones. In this case, I abandon the chronological order and discuss these connections. This attempt is not to find the origins of the 'dead zone' and I do not argue here that the concept and the space of the *chora* have informed later 'dead zone' space-concepts. I first arrived at the *chora* because in ancient Greek the word is a synonym for 'no-man's land' – the area between rival cities or army camps. Secondly, many contemporary attributes of the 'dead zone' can be found in Plato's construction of this space-concept. In a similar way to the 'dead zone', this space is portrayed as "empty", "without qualities", "vague" but also with a potential and as something that can generate change. Moreover, the *chora*, like many other 'dead zone' synonyms, is both real

and unreal. This chapter will also present, through the discussion of the *chora*, other assertions that will be discussed in a later chapter, i.e. that the 'dead zone' imagery is tied if not constructed by a colonial perspective, that it is a space that belongs to the Other, and to which the Other is assigned to, and that this space gained attention and a discourse because it is formed by various transgressions.

I would like to consider the *chora* as the epitome of the 'dead zone' and the oldest reference to a space that is hard to define. Like the 'dead zone', it is an in-between space (Grosz 2001) – between the city and the countryside or nature. Like derelict spaces, it seems to be without attributes and useless. But similarly to derelict spaces, the *chora* both as a real space and as concept/imagery (Plato c. 360 BC) embodied great potential and generative powers. Like the void, it is formless and hard to locate, and yet it is everywhere. Like the no-man's land, it is in-between space. Like waste-space, it is the place for everything that is marginalised. It is a space which is formless and hard to define. It is both a mere conceptual space and a real one. As with many other 'dead zones', 'terrains vague', 'architectural voids', the term *chora* and what it stands for, has contradictory meanings. *Chora* might be considered the space of contradictions.

Chora, like the 'dead zone', means in Greek "bounded space", meaning it is a site. It is not the same as *topos*, the Greek/Platonic definition of natural place. At the same time, *chora* marks a more radical opening than *topos*. The *chora* is a feminine derivative of 'chasma/chasm' (a gap, the abyss), and embodies the idea of empty expanse. Therefore, it is not a place with defined physical or conceptual boundaries. Already here we encounter the contradiction in the meanings of the name: bounded space versus an expanse. To expand is to grow and to move, to open a space. And indeed a derivative of *chora* is *choreo* (cwrew), which means 'to be in', or 'to give', 'space', i.e. (intransitively) to pass, enter, or (transitively) to hold, admit (literally or figuratively) (Strong 2016). Therefore, *chora* maintains the notion of a boundary even if it is shifting and not easy to determine. This

interpretation of the *chora* as a space in-between is also based on the use of the verb *chōreō* to describe giving ground before the enemy (McEwen 1993), i.e. 'no-man's land'. Moreover, *chora*, linked etymologically to the Indo-European *chasho*, chaos, is understood as a primordial gap or abyss as well as a primordial substance (Pérez-Gómez 2006). I will show in the next chapter how the 'dead zone' is perceived in early modernity as a space of the abyss, but more importantly for now, it is the dual conditions of chaotic nothingness and a generative place that marks both the *chora* and the 'dead zone'.

As a concrete geographical site, the *chora* was the name for the space beyond the Polis walls: it was part agricultural land, part nature, part militarised no man's land between the city-state and its often-rival neighbours (Bintliff 2006). Therefore, like the 'dead zone', its uses were undefined or ephemeral and changing. Often it was the territory between the city and its exurb sanctuaries (McEwen 1993), and "the place where new institutions set it off from ancient types, found a home" (Mumford 1961, p.144). The space of the *chora* often enabled the expansion of the city and in particular the implementation of the grid layout (Paden 2001; McEwen 1993). We see here that the *chora* was a place with potential for extension of what there is, or a space for radical change. In fact, it was the space of the *chora*, common in the cities of Asia Minor and other Greek colonies, that enabled the transformation of these cities from organic form into the grid system invented by Hippodamus (Paden 2001). The *chora* was the space beyond the Greek city walls but it also referred to the space of the Mycenaean city that, from a Greek perspective, was chaotic, growing out organically, disordered. It was replaced by the Greek city, which was planned according to Hippodamus' zoning rules, ordered and regulated. If the contemporary 'dead zone' has been seen as the Other to the city on any level, these agonistic relations were even clearer in the case of the *chora* and the Greek city.

3.a.   The *Chora* versus the City, Democracy and Reason

In addition to being a terrestrial, physical and geographical place, the *chora*, like many of the 'dead zone' idioms, was a conceptual place that was introduced by Plato in the *Timaeus*, and was alluded to in *Phaedrus*.

Khôra was the word designated by Plato in the *Timaeus* to one of the three dimensions of the world/reality. Alongside forms and their imitations, the *chora* is a category of the 'third kind'. Not matter but a kind of space, the *chora* was a receptacle or "vessel of generation" in which things were formed (Plato 2000, p.53). In passing, it should be noted that in the mystical branch of Judaism, Kabbalah, the world is compared to a kind of vessel (*kelim*) which has no qualities but contains the light of the infinite (or *Ein-sof*), i.e. God. The *khôra*, as a kind of void, also relates to the Buddhist concept of *sunnata* (from Sanskrit: Śūnyatā, 'Emptiness'), which is compared to "an unfilled container, a space that contains nothing, i.e. empty only of qualities. Therefore emphasising the potential to house something in the future" (Wenman 1998). This space indicates a state in which nothing is permanent or essential, thus a thing holds nothing, or in other words nothing is intrinsic (Reid 1983). These attributes - third-ness, a space in-between, a place for regeneration, can all, as I showed before and will again later, be seen as marks of the 'dead zone'.

As a generative space, Plato identified the *chora* as a female space, or the space of the womb – an 'empty' space that gives life. This idea echoes in a mosaic of Mary with a Jesus image in her womb, and marked with the phrase "Container of the Uncontainable". Built in the fifth century outside Istanbul's city walls, i.e. in the *chora* space, the church's name, *Chora*, reflects both the mosaic theme and its location. This example is important for the genealogy of the 'dead zone'. It clearly illustrates how concepts of space unite geographical locations with abstract ideas. It also shows how Plato's abstract concept of the *chora* was taken, preserved and reinterpreted, through millennia, in a real body of a mother (Mary). Common to the *chora* as a no-man's land outside the city that was colonised – Plato's

concept of the *chora* as a generative place and as a womb, and Mary's particular womb, is that they are both perceived as empty, pure, uncontaminated – no sweat, no blood and no tears. This desire for purity, and the marking of the 'dead zone' as pure or as requiring purification, can be seen from Plato's concept, through early modernity and through to today. Reading the *Timaeus*, Derrida considers the *khôra* to be a space that engenders the "incapacity for naming" (1995, p.89). A space where the referent cannot be contained by the reference: "We would never claim to propose the exact word, the mot juste, for khôra, nor to name it, itself, over and above all the turns and detours of rhetoric, nor finally to approach it, itself, for what it will have been, outside of any point of view, outside of any anachronistic perspective. […] Khôra is not reduced to its name" (Derrida 1995, p.93). Here, Derrida follows Bataille's argument that in defining words, one (the dictionary) should begin "as of the moment when it no longer provides the meaning of words but their tasks". He actively takes the work of base materialism, "the job of de-class(ify)ing" ending with *khôra* that "resembles nothing, especially not what it should be [according to Plato, G.D.], refusing to let [khôra] be assimilated to any concept whatever, to any abstraction whatever" (Bataille 1995, p.53). Declaring that the word *khôra* has no essence and no reference and is therefore without definition, Derrida (1995:94) examined the *khôra* through its affect and its place.

Khôra is the space "you open to 'give' place to things, or when you open something for things to take place" (Derrida et al. 1997, p.9). *Chora* is spacing "which is the condition for everything to take place, for everything to be inscribed" (Derrida 1995, p.56). As can be seen, this is a contradictory state: the *khôra* is opening and closure, spacing and taking place, i.e. enclosure. This description resonates with the etymology of the word *khôra*; it is related to the word *Choros* or *Khoros* – a circular dance. It is likely to be the root of the word *hora* that in Hebrew, Romanian and Turkish means "a circular folk dance". *Khoros*, *Hora* and *Girdle* (a round belt, corset) originate from the Indo-European root *gher*, which means to grasp, enclose; with derivatives meaning 'enclosure'. Despite the linguistic association

between *khoros* and *khôra*, the closed circle from which the notion of recycling comes from is most alien to the *khôra*. This is because, as mentioned before, the things that are created in the *Khôra* are not related to the *Khôra* itself. These things will always stay foreign, Other, to the 'body' of the *khôra* and are therefore excess. Similarly, the *khôra* itself is of excess since it "exceeds the polarity, no doubt analogous, of the mythos and the logos" (Ibid., p.92). As excess, the *khôra* operates in what Bataille (1985) articulated as the "general economy" – an economy that is based on consumption and expenditure. This economy embodies another kind of dance: the erotic dance which stands in opposition to the folk dance of circular enclosure (Harding 1993). The erotic dance has historical and mythical connections to the *khôra* through its semantic/linguistic association, which I will discuss later.

To the contradictions of closure and opening that the *khôra* embodies, we can also add the pairing of suspension and change. One of the constitutive elements of the 'dead zone', at least in its form as post-industrial landscape, is the (real or imagined) duration of the "lack of activity" in certain urban space. Imagined 'dead time' is also a characteristic of colonial 'dead zones' which I will discuss in the next chapter. In several places, Derrida states that *khôra* can be seen as an interval or "dead time within the presence of the living present" (1998, p.68). In Greek, the *hora*, which, as mentioned, has a semantic relationship to *khôra*, means 'segment of time', and it is the origin of the word 'hour'. 'Segment of time' of course is composed of movement, change, and a break, an interval that marks the boundary of the segment, or more precisely, creates the segment. Thus, the *khôra* is the non-place of the interval that is always momentary, ephemeral, transitory and nomadic. The nomadic dis-position of *khôra* is marked already in Plato's text, by his inability to define what the *khôra* is, and his resolve to produce a chain of metaphors – which construct the text as "structure of an overprinting without a base" (Derrida 1995, p.104).

The constant transgression of boundaries (both social and spatial) is one of the characteristics of the 'dead zone' and it can be traced back to the imagery of the *chora* and

the communities that are associated with it. It is embedded in the names: *chora*, wastelands, no-man's land, and it is also reflected by the nature of these spaces on the ground. The *khôra* or *khôraic* condition is also the non-place of the class of nomadic Sophists and Poets who were "wanderers from one city to another" and having never had habitations of their own "were deemed not fit to engage with the politics of the polis, as the class of politicians and philosopher do" (Ibid.). As wanderers, "they exclude themselves by themselves, or pretend to do so, also, because they quite simply have no room [pas de place]. There is no room for them in the political place [lieu] where affairs are spoken of and dealt with, the agora" (Derrida 1995, pp.108–109). Nomadism, as I will show later, marks the 'dead zone' from early modernity to today: it is the place for those who do not have place in society and/or no place at all – the gay cruisers, the runaways, the vagabonds.[7] This is not only a question of having or not having property, but of crossing certain boundaries. Politically, the *chora* can be seen as the Other to the democratic space of the city – a democratic space that was bounded by the distance man could walk from his place to the *agora*, the heart of the political system (Mumford 1961; Derrida 1995). As such, the *chora* can also be seen as outside the discursive space, and according to Socrates - outside knowledge. This is the place Socrates takes himself when he discusses the *chora*. He admits to be similar to the Sophist and crafty imitators. By this, he transgresses the boundaries of himself as a philosopher, and of his text as a philosophy, rather than another form of poetry.

Knowledge, as Socrates argued, can be found only in the polis, in the dialogue with other man. As "a lover of knowledge", he admitted, Socrates hardly ever left the city's walls (Plato 2000). When he once did, it was under the spell of Phaedrus, with whom he shared intimate moments, even falling into a state of erotic frenzy, on the banks of the Ilissus (Plato 2002; Dubois 1982). The erotic situation Plato describes in *Phaedrus* is beyond mere sexual

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7   For the connection between destitute, marginalised communities and space(s), see: Cuyvers 2006.

desire, it is falling in love or insanity. Such homo-erotic interaction could only take place outside the polis, in the *chora* (Plato 2002; Derrida & Caputo 1996). The *chora* is more than erotic space, as argued by Pérez-Gómez (2006), it is a place where the erotic gaze, produced by distance or a gap, disappears, where perspective, vision, *thea* and *Theoria* is made impossible. Socrates here, in the *Timaeus* and in *Pheadrus* shows us "the experience of the philosopher who finds, not outside his language (the results of an external accident or imaginary exercise), but at the inner core of its possibilities, the transgression of his philosophical being; and thus, the non-dialectical language of the limit which only arises in transgressing the one who speaks" (Foucault 1977, p.44).

3.a.i. The *Khôra* in Phocion the Good, Antigone and Rahab

"History is written by the victors."

Benjamin, 2011

As a marginalised space, the *chora*, like any of the 'dead zones', is not part of history. Unlike more prestigious spaces such as the *agora*, there is little written about it. Nonetheless, we can trace the importance of this space in social life in Greek mythologies such as Phocion the Good (Poussin 1648; Plutarch & Tritle 2014), and Antigone (Sophocles 497 BC – 406 BC), and in the Biblical story of Rahab the Whore. The *chora* in these mythologies is the space and the site of the Other, the rebel, the outcast, or the whore. Through these stories, we can start to see the connection between marginalised space and marginalised people. A connection which will be repeated throughout the genealogy of the imagery of the 'dead zone', as I will show later. These narratives tell stories that were left outside history and they are the only source that shed light on them. These stories mark the place of the *chora* as a transgressive space – a place of the Other and from which the Other breaks out to the rest of the urban/socio-political space. Similarly, the 'dead zone' - from 'vacant' places, to the space

of the 'broken window', and the activities that take place there – from squatting and community gardening to graffiti making and fly-tipping - also transgress the boundary of the (imagined) (dead) zone, and affect other parts of the city and normative socio-spatial trends as well as architectural and urban design practices, as I will show in Part Two.

In the case of Phocion the Good, a (wrongly) condemned Athenian hero is denied proper burial and his ashes are left untended in the choraic space outside the city walls. Similarly, the body of Antigone's brother, Polynices, is left to rot outside the city walls. In both cases the *chora* becomes the space of the alleged traitors. But not only that: in both stories, the *chora* becomes the space of the (female) rebels, Phocion's wife and Antigone, who perform, against the law, a proper burial for their loved ones. So, from the hegemonic perspective this is the place to which the living and the condemned are expelled. For the marginalised, this space is for love that transgresses social and spatial boundaries. The choraic space in both stories is continuous. The change that the *chora* enables outside the city's walls does not stop at the gates but generates a change in entire society. After performing the ceremony, Phocion's wife gathers up the bones in her lap, brings them home by night, and digs a place for them by the fireside in her house. The transgressive act that takes place in the *chora* is continued inside the domestic place and thus politicises the home. This action brings about a change of heart in the Athenians who recognise their mistake.

In *Antigone* (Sophocles 2001), the dispersal of the *khôra* and the change it brings is even more radical. Whilst Phocion's wife brings the exterior, or what has become exterior - her dead husband, back into the house, Antigone dismisses of the house all together, in favour of the great otherness – insanity and death. And again, the transgressive action of suicide, which Antigone carries out outside the city, vibrates back and leads to further deaths at the heart of the city. Another example of a marginal site that houses a marginalised person, is the story of Rahab the Whore. Here as well, we can see a woman, Rahab, who is an outcast because of her occupation, and then after helping the Hebrew spies, is marked as a traitor.

She literally occupies the space of the boundary, or the margins. The Bible emphasises this position as, in describing her, it is mentioned that "her house is in the wall, and she occupies the space of the wall (or boundary)". Her house sits literally inside the city walls. In a space which is nor here nor there – in-between – which is one of the characteristics of the 'dead zone' – neither city nor nature (or countryside), not productive but cultivatable, and in a state of suspension between the past and future.

3.a.ii.   The *Chora* as a 'Dead Zone'

To summarise, I would say that the *chora* as space-concept has many of the traits of the 'dead zone'. It is a real geographic space and it is also an abstract concept that was constructed to generate particular views of reality and socio-political structure. Before giving any attribute to spaces, and to enable it, we see that the *chora* (and the 'dead zone') is first constructed by the action of division. And at least in the case of the *chora* – the division of land occurs simultaneously with the division of people into classes. As Aristotle mentions in *Politics*, Hippodamos divided the *chora* into the sacred, the public and private by using the grid system. Similarly, he viewed society as divided through a utilitarian perspective – the populace is made up of three different occupations - artisans, farmers and soldiers (Paden 2001). As in any system of classification, something is always left out, expelled. The *chora*, as a non-utilitarian space, is left out.

It is the unclassified or unclassifiable populace (which I will later identify with colonised communities, immigrants, the underclass, cruisers, homeless people and others) and unclassified sites that are the marks of the *chora* and the 'dead zone'. The "incomprehensible" (Plato 2000, p.51) *chora* is the space outside the ordered Athenian city, outside classification and so are the communities that occupy it. The question of whether the space that has been marked as unclassified, ambiguous, empty, dangerous, irrational and

disordered has received these attributes because it has these physical, material, environmental qualities, remains an open one, but I would suggest here that spaces are marked as such not because of these factors but because of the marginalised communities who occupy them and who were often marked with similar attributes.

I have used the example of the *chora*, first to show that the 'dead zone', this 'other place' that seemingly does not obey the logic of the hegemony, is not a unique phenomenon of post-modernity, or the post-industrial space – which much of architecture and urban discourse connects these spaces to. The ancient notion of the choraic space is already marked by the same characteristics of the 'dead zone', voids, and indeterminate space of post-modernity. Moreover, I showed that the *chora*, as the 'dead zone', is both real space and an imaginary one. It is a space which cannot necessarily be pinned to a particular location. And through contrasting perspectives, this space seems to represent two different natures: empty, useless, without any qualities from the hegemonic perspective and a sanctuary, generative and creative from the marginalised perspective. The *chora*, as the dead zone', has been seen as the opposite to the city and in particular the antithesis of 'public space' (Jacobs 1992; De Solà-Morales 1995). As I have traced the 'dead zone' back to antiquity, and hinted that this space is an alternative to the hegemonic 'public space', I have to trace the origins of the hegemonic public space to be able to contrast the two – so as to see their similarities and differences. While both spaces, 'dead zone' and 'public space', are constructed by the hegemony, the 'dead zone' imagery is created to mask the realities of a space which has been appropriated by the communities that were expelled to it. Contrary to this, the 'public space' imagery that is created by the hegemony is to mask the fact that the 'public-ness' of such spaces is often very limited, and is often built on a series of exclusions. This analysis will prepare the ground for an important argument that I will make – namely that the 'dead zone' can be considered as another kind of, and a more inclusive, public space.

3.b.   From Paradise to the 'Outdoor Room': Public Space as the Space of Enclosure

'Public space', as a concept and as a place, not unlike the 'dead zone', is constructed and maintained by the hegemony. In the book *Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*, Don Mitchell argues that "Public space has long been a place of exclusion, no matter how much democratic ideology would like to argue otherwise" (Mitchell 2003, p.51). Public space has been idealised as open, democratic and free, but in reality it has never been so (Fraser 1990). This is true for almost any example we can think of for the concept of public space and this exclusion was created by laws, norms and by design. The Greek *Agora* is still seen as the origin of public space (Mitchell 2003). As Hartley (1992) and Young (2011) describe it, the *Agora* was not only a political space, but also "a marketplace, a place of pleasurable jostling where citizen's bodies, words, actions and produce were all on mutual display, and where judgements, decisions, and bargains were made" (Hartley 1992, p.30). However, the *Agora* was a site of privilege based on essential identity (white, male) and economic status (house owners), from which slaves, women and foreigners were excluded, if not bodily, then at least politically (Hartley 1992; Sennett 1996; Wigley 2002; Mitchell 2003). Whilst we cannot underestimate the vision or sight in the constitution of this social political space, the voice (in making decisions) was granted only to those privileged citizens (Hénaff 2001).

Other examples of public space that have little to do with freedom, openness and inclusiveness can be easily spotted - from antiquity to today. The Roman forum was governed by state and religious symbolism, surrounded by state buildings and dotted with monuments and statues; public spaces in the Middle Ages were mostly owned and controlled by the church or the monarchy. Modern public space is as exclusive: Paris' Boulevards and Manhattan's Central Park, the English Garden Square, and the post-civic, corporate public spaces are all examples of a space that was constructed primarily for the middle class, cleansing it from the presences of the lower classes that inhabited it before (Mitchell 2003;

Sennett 1996). In all these spaces, the enclosure is not only legal or normative, but also spatial, and created by various design elements.

Most fundamental to the design of 'public spaces' of enclosure has been the Persian Garden (Chen 2011, p.84). As a representation of an ideal world, this Garden of *Paradise* (the Persian word for 'garden'), is rooted in the Zoroastrian religion, dated to the 1200-1400 BC (Conklin 1998). It is the first known religion in which the world was conceived as a set of dichotomies such as good and evil, order and chaos, desert and cultivation. In a culture that was still dominated by nomadism, the Zoroastrians were unique also in their cultivation of the desert, which had led to permanent settlement. This state of affairs was entrenched in the life story of the founder of Zoroastrianism, and can be seen as adding a symbolic layer to the real need for enclosures. Zoroaster was born into a modestly situated family of knights, who lived in a suburb of Rhages, where the economy was based on animal husbandry and pastoral occupations. Zoroaster viewed nomads, who frequently raided those farmers, as aggressive violators of order, and he called them followers of the Lie or in the Pahlavi language of ancient Persia, *Druj* (Ibid.). *Druj* not only means a 'lie', 'unreal', but also 'disorder', 'contamination' and 'darkness' (Conklin 1998, p.16). The troublesome times such as those experienced at the time of Zoroaster have been recognised as conducive to the birth of salvation faiths, with hopes of peace and justice shifting from this world to the next; and Zoroastrianism is in fact the oldest of such faiths (Boyce 2001). This concept of a better world elsewhere gave birth to the concept of *Paradise*, an idyllic garden that exists somewhere else, and that will be re-created on earth after Judgement Day, where the righteous will enter and live forever in the presence of God (Ibid.).

This theme, as well as much of the Zoroastrian doctrine, is fundamental to Judaism in general and in particular to the biblical story of the Garden of Eden and the imagery of an enclosed oasis. This idea was translated into the creation of an outdoor green, enclosed and protected space. The oldest known Persian garden was laid out some 2500 years ago on the

Iranian plateau, a bowl-shaped desert about 1400 meters above sea level in an inhospitable climate. The garden was walled and geometric in plan; it consisted of a formal rectangle of water, and with a raised platform to view it from (Aben & Wit 1999, p.32). The name of the Persian garden was *Pairidaeza*. The word means literally 'enclosure', and is composed of the word *pairi-*, 'around', and *daēza*, 'wall'. The Persian garden was always far from being either public or open. It was a section of land that was zoned, segregated, and given an identity in order to prevent non-specific uses, and thus exclude certain public groups and/or activities.

For Foucault, the Persian garden was a prime example of a heterotopia - an ideal representation of the world 'superimposed' on an arid terrain (Foucault in: Dehaene & De Cauter 2008, p.20). In the Persian garden, the desert and the chaotic world did not have a place: "In reaction to the drought and heat and unavoidable sun outside, it has water, coolness and shade; in reaction to the hostile vastness of the near-desert, it has order and tranquillity" (Thacker 1985, p.27). All of these attributes come at the price of various exclusions. Moreover, the creation of this lush and secure paradise was likely to exacerbate the harsh conditions by collecting the water from the area, for example, and by creating a no-man's land between the walled space and the vast outside. Based on the idea of *Paradise*, the Persian garden, in fact, could have been conceived only through exclusion and by enclosure. Furthermore, *Paradise*, the idea of a better, secure and safe place, was triggered by the 'security crisis' that the Zoroastrians felt, and it stood as a space of compensation – to use Foucault's concept of heterotopian space (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008). The Arabs who conquered the Persian Empire, exported its principles from Ersia, further east than India, and west of Turkey, North Africa and Spain (Thacker 1985).

3.c.   The English Garden Square as a Heterotopia

The concept of the garden as *Paradise*, i.e. as enclosed space, has been highly influential on English garden design; the Old English word, *geard*, meaning 'fence', produced the word 'garden' and 'yard'. The *Paradise* is not only the model for gardens, but as Aben and Wit (1999) argued, it was the model for the city itself: the city as paradise as opposed to the wretched landscape, with the church as central point, its spire an *axis mundi* making the connection with the heavens. The Dutch word *tuin* (garden) and the English word *town* are related etymologically (Aben & Wit 1999, p.32). Modern suburbs and towns, built by utopian, philanthropic, and socially conscious factory owners for their workers, were designed to resemble *Eden* (Schulz 1985, p.5). Some argued that the reference to the biblical Garden of *Eden* has been put aside, from the Renaissance and modernity, in favour of utilitarian, and technological visions. However, Schulz (1985) argued that the "Nostalgia for Paradise" still played an important role in shaping the garden, if not the city as a whole (Ibid., p.9).

With the increase in urbanisation, this nostalgia just grew stronger. If the Persian garden was a place that constituted paradise in a harsh environment, the English Garden Square was a haven in what was perceived to be a chaotic urban environment. It was represented as a sanctuary, a protected enclave harbouring natural truth and virtue, and a haven in which to wash away the stains and the temptations of the city. As green oases, they have been imagined as "islands of spirituality in a sea of worldliness, sin luxury and excess" (Ibid., p.211). They offered "an experience unhinged from time and dislocated in space, a way to cope with urban disease" (Williams 2001, p.207). This theme of innocence that explicitly or otherwise persists in the comparison between the garden and paradise is an important one, not only in the use of the garden itself, but also in the ways it covers up the traces of violence, land grabs, social cleansing and gentrification that it entailed. The garden square was founded to accompany (as a generator for) the speculative building boom that met

the demands of wealthy Londoners' flight outside walled London after the great plague of 1665 and the Great Fire (Ackroyd 2000; Olsen 1976). The expansion of the urban fabric, increasingly congested through infill, fuelled the desire to find solace in open and airy green space (Williams 2001). The squares' open space was primarily a device to make these developments more lucrative and attractive to the middle/upper classes. They did so by introducing green open space which was thought to be essential for health and well-being and symbolised social order (Olsen 1976; Laporte 2000; Williams 2001). They also simulated a 'little town', or a village, which in theory was no different from the independent Sokes of Anglo-Saxon London, controlled by one great Lord, and were derived "from the example of old monastery courtyards or convent gardens with which London was once familiar" (Ackroyd 2000, p.234). Echoing traditional forms of settlements, maintaining views of the open countryside and having large lawns to attract the middle and upper class to these new developments is a classic example of using symbolic capital to generate economic and social capital (Bourdieu 1984; Zukin 1995; Dovey 2009).

Humphrey Repton, one of the first English landscape architects and the designer of important London Garden Squares and gardens of stately homes, defined a garden as "a piece of ground fenced off from cattle, and appropriated to the use and pleasure of man; it is, or ought to be, cultivated" (Turner 2005, p.1). Repton's definition entails not only the initial act of enclosure, but also that the act of design is always a maintenance of the enclosure. This enclosure was not made just for aesthetic or utilitarian proposes, but also for socio-economic and moral reasons. The aesthetic choices made in the design of garden squares referenced the landscape of stately homes, and offered a sense of security. Water features were also common, symbolising flow and therefore health and serving as an antithesis to the city's congestion, which was associated with illness. The wide paths criss-crossing the lawns encouraged visitors to keep in motion and walking was a defining characteristic of these open-air sites (Williams 2001).

However, the design of these spaces was not enough to maintain a pastoral suburban environment: the squares quickly became populated by homeless people and squatters, some of whom had been living and working in and around the fields on which these new developments were built (Ackroyd 2000). Some of the squares "had become choked with rubbish and the focus of crime and anti-social behaviour. Most were poorly maintained and open to abuse by both the public and the squares' own residents" (London Garden Trust 2016). It was reported that the squares' residents were often victims of robbery and violence (Ibid.). It was feared that the square would also be used as an arena for riots, as happened in Bloomsbury Square in the Gordon riots (Haywood & Seed 2012). Furthermore, the presence of unescorted females in such surroundings was also cause for concern, and the squares were depicted in popular culture as places of improper behaviour and vice (Ackroyd 2000).

Henceforth, by the mid-seventeenth century, squares such as St. James's and Bloomsbury, which were initially built as open spaces with no obvious use, were fenced off and transformed into residents-only leisure gardens. It should be mentioned that the ground was already prepared for such a move. Many of the squares were initially designed in such a way that they were detached from the surrounding buildings by a circular broad pavement or a road and then enclosed by a low brick wall or timber palisades. Later, these were replaced by tall iron rails, which, more than anything else, symbolised an area of prosperity and distinction (London Garden Trust 2016). During the Second World War, many of the squares were stripped of their gates and rails to be used as scrap iron for the war effort. They were later reinstalled, not without controversy. The following lengthy quotation, taken from Orwell's column in the Tribune in 1944 is an important example, and his argument is still relevant today:

> "When the railings round the parks and squares were removed, the
> object was partly to accumulate scrap-iron, but the removal was also
> felt to be a democratic gesture. Many more green spaces were now

open to the public, and you could stay in the parks till all hours instead of being hauled out at closing times by grim-faced keepers. It was also discovered that these railings were not only unnecessary but hideously ugly. The parks were improved out of recognition by being laid open, acquiring a friendly, almost rural look that they had never had before." Orwell 1944.

A few days after publishing this comment, and having been accused by a Tribune reader of advocating the theft of these private squares and handing them to the public, Orwell replied: "If giving the land of England back to the people of England is theft, I am quite happy to call it theft. In his zeal to defend private property, my correspondent does not stop to consider how the so-called owners of the land got hold of it. They simply seized it by force, afterwards hiring lawyers to provide them with title-deeds" (Ibid.). Elsewhere he described what took place in these now open public spaces: "For three years or so the squares lay open, and their sacred turf was trodden by the feet of working-class children, a sight to make dividend-drawers gnash their false teeth. If that is theft, all I can say is, so much the better for theft" (Orwell 1944). In his argument, Orwell advocated the use of the square by diverse communities and activities. Such activities were prohibited by various laws and regulation, but also were prevented by design.

Long before the invention of 'defensive design' (Davis 1990; Ellin 1997), the garden square architecture aimed to survey, regulate and modify the middle class who used it. The square railings, which became the trademark for this space, were a crucial design element but not the only one. Many of the squares, before and after their enclosures, were sparsely planted to enable open views and eliminate some intimate and hidden places. This design not only allowed for lower maintenance costs, but also increased the sense of security, and enforced conformity of the ways these squares were used. Many of the squares later on were

re-designed and planted with trees and flowerbeds so to give them the appeal of health, refinement and harmonious order. The new and more lush design aimed to "established a stark contrast between leisured and pointedly non-productive gardens" (Williams 2001) and the Common lands that were used by lower class people to play sport, trade, graze animals, collect firewood and so on. The re-design of the squares was accompanied by new laws, created especially for these spaces, that banned various uses such as leafleting, giving speeches, or any other political action (The Open Spaces Act 1906).

Another tier of 'defence' had been the local authority's by-laws. Take, for example, the London Borough of Camden's by-laws in respect of Pleasure Grounds, Garden and Open Spaces (1977), which are still in place. These by-laws forbid entering these spaces outside their opening hours. They forbid climbing on any architectural feature as well as on trees; they segregate age groups, i.e. by restricting persons over the age of 14 from entering playgrounds which are dedicated to a younger age group unless accompanying a person of that age or younger. No male is allowed to enter spaces designated for females and children only. Persons over the age of 14 are not allowed to use roller-skates unless there is a designated area for them. The following are also not allowed: wading, bathing, or washing in any ornamental lake, pond, stream or other water; selling, offering for sale, exhibiting for sale or distributing any book, pamphlet, leaflet, card, bill, advertisement or literature of any kind whatsoever; playing ball games; using the ground to deliver, utter or read any public speech, lecture, prayer, scripture, sermon or address of any kind or description whatsoever.

These laws and subsequent by-laws are only part of the legal umbrella that 'protect' the middle class public space and are an addition to various other laws, such as anti-vagrancy, laws relating to sexual conduct, certain leisure activities, and commercial activities. Many of these laws and by-laws have not changed even after some of these squares were leased or sold to the local authorities in the mid-twentieth century, and became either public, de-facto, or with public access. Therefore, the codes and norms of behaviour that

were established in these squares by a minority of middle and upper class residents have continued to shape these spaces until today.

In the twentieth century, the model of the Garden Square has lingered in corporate public space (Davis 1990; Jameson 1991; Zukin 1995). For example, what seems to be, on the face of it, a public space in the entire area of Canary Wharf in London, or even the space around London Assembly, is privately owned and controlled. In these cases, public land is sold to a private developer and in return for subsidies, tax relief and various planning permits that make the project more lucrative, the private developer 'gives back' to the public access to the open space within the development, thus adding open spaces to the city inventory of public spaces (Flusty 1997). However, these spaces with 'public access' are a far cry from a truly public space (Deutsche 1998; Deutsche 1994) and resemble less a democratic space than the Persian garden under the monarchic regime.

In the past few decades, with the domination of the neo-liberal agenda, the globalisation of cities, the middle class', usually white, "back to the city movement" and security threats, have all caused to the re-configuration of the public space (Bauman 2003; Mitchell 2003; Smith 1996; Davis 1990; Harvey 2009). The new public spaces of the Renaissance City "conceal a brutalizing demarcation of winners and losers, included and excluded. […] the new initiatives appear to be 'reclaiming' public spaces for those groups who possess economic value as producers or consumers to the virtual exclusion of the less well-heeled" (Amin & Graham in: Macleod 2002, p.605). As a result of this, the public space has become more homogeneous, controlled and restricted (Davis 1990; Smith 1996; Sassen 2015). It has been taken over by Urban Entertainment Destinations (UED), Business Improvement Districts (BID), 'Lifestyle Centres', also known as malls without walls (Blackely & Snyder 1997; Graham & Marvin 2001; Kern 2008). The little everyday spaces that were left have been subjected to renewal through 'Defensive Architecture' - an urban design that puts security and commerce above all other aspects. For example, by removing

physical features which hinder surveillance (e.g. dense vegetation in a park) and by adding features that control the use of the space (e.g. benches that can be used just for sitting and not sleeping, adding spikes and studs to areas where homeless people might lay down). This design changes the look and restricts the ways in which public space can be used, and who can use it (Newman 1973; Davis 1990). The imagery, critically given to these spaces, was the opposite of the modernist void, and indicates closure and segregation. This is already evident in the association of the public space with a 'Theme Park' (Sorkin 1992), 'capsules', (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008; Ellin 1997), or 'roomlike' spaces (Ibid.; Ibid.; Doron 2005; Doron 2002). This theme park banishes from the public space the marginalised minorities whose mere presence there bring them from obscurity into the public sphere (Zukin 1995; Mitchell 2003; Doron 2001).

3.d.   The Genealogy of the 'Outdoor Room'

I would like now to concentrate on a particular manifestation of this new 'public space', as it was configured in the United Kingdom in the idiom *outdoor room*. The concept of a public space, as a protected, semi-enclosed space, which creates inferiority in the exteriority, can be traced back to the Persian garden (Daneshdoust 1973). As such, the 'outdoor room' is yet another development of the basic logic of the garden, and it can be seen as a successor to the eighteenth century English Garden Square which was invented and used by the middle class. In modern times the concept of the outdoor room as a public space has been elaborated mostly by Maki, one of the founders of Metabolism, who has been promoting organic and cohesive urban environment either by creating a megastructure or by means of 'group form' (Maki 1964). In the latter, it is the outdoor room, or "protected exterior public space" which mediates between the various buildings and unifies the space. Maki took his inspiration from the urban form of traditional Japanese villages. The Japanese villages were built along major

country roads, with the front of each house facing the road, its sides connected to the neighbouring house, creating a unified façade. At the back of each building was a utility courtyard, with a barn at its end. Behind the barn were the fields (Ibid.). The only communal (rather than familial) open space in such a settlement was the road itself - a highly functional and very restricted 'public space'.

The other inspiration for the idea of outdoor room, which came from the Dutch houses of the sixteenth century, was the semi-public space in front of them, known as the *Stoep*. The *Stoep* was "partly pavement and partly a sort of threshold of the house" (Steen, 1969). The *Stoep*, Maki explains: "is actually part of the house, and the owner takes immense pride in maintaining it. It is also a social place where neighbours exchange gossip and children play" (Maki 1997, p.212). Both these types of space are, according to Maki, the "essence of collectivity, a unifying force, functionally, socially and spatially". Nonetheless, such space is not entirely public. In both cases, the exterior space is designed into the built form. The public space Maki promotes is a very domesticated one, whilst he declared in the theory: "The architect does not concern himself with the way city corridors and rooms will be used" (Maki 1964).

The concept of the outdoor room has also direct roots in European design that go back at least to ancient Greek and Roman cities. This historical form of public space is often evoked as a rejection of modernist urban design and planning. A clear example can be seen in Trancik's book *Finding Lost Space*, in which he argued that: "The history of city design shows that exterior urban space, if conceived as figural volume rather than structureless void. […] People's image of and reaction to a space is largely determined by the way it is enclosed. People like rooms. They relate to them daily in their homes and at work" (Trancik 1986, p.68). Trancik does not substantiate this claim with any research, and one could argue, of course, the exact opposite. People go to public spaces to escape from walled space, the confinement of workspace and domesticity. As I showed earlier, even spatially and

programmatically extreme open spaces, such as wastelands, have communities that savour and/or need them.

A similar sentiment of 'lost space' was also central to the UK's Urban Task Force, chaired by Lord Richard Rogers (1999) and which laid out the vision for urban planning and design under the Labour government of Tony Blair and of the City of London under Ken Livingstone. In the report, the UTF argues that "[s]ome urban areas have too much public space" and characterising the SLOAP as an "undefined" space, "soulless" and "poorly landscaped" that should be "re-configured" and assimilated to what the UTF described as a "high quality environment" (Rogers 1999, p.97). In contrast to this "undefined" public space, the UFT proposes the concept *The Outdoor Room*, or, more precisely, the "outdoor room within a neighbourhood" (Ibid.). This Outdoor Room is defined by the UTF both spatially and programmatically: "Public space should be conceived as an outdoor room within a neighbourhood, somewhere to relax and enjoy the urban experience, a venue for a range of different activities, from outdoor eating to street entertainment; from sport and play areas to a venue for civic or political functions: and most important of all as a place for walking or sitting-out" (Ibid., p.23).

Necessarily, the term outdoor room is a tautology. Outdoor, as an open space, is the opposite of a room as an enclosed interior space. An additional sense of confinement is expressed in the position of public space within a neighbourhood. A neighbourhood is a space that is confined, cohesive, and often socially, economically and even morally homogeneous (Knox & Pinch 2014). It can be argued that the neighbourhood is a just a classifying category, which goes just as far as it helps to manage the city, by planners, designers, and managers (Madanipour et al. 2013), but at least since the *New Urbanism* movement and the campaigns of "quality of life" (Deutsche 1998), the concept has been used to clean urban space from non-normative communities and activities. As Madanipour (Ibid.) noted, it is also a spatial unit, which is immersed in nostalgia for pre-modern urban forms and

in the sense of closed cohesive communities. Berlant and Warner argued that the concept of neighbourhood is anti-urban, since it is based on residency and property ownership whilst neighbourhoods, especially in city centres, and in the city as a whole are not only formed by those who (can afford) to live there: "[…] The local character of a neighbourhood depends on the daily presence of thousands of non-residents. […] we should not make the mistake of confusing the class of citizens with the class of property owners. […] Urban space is always a host space. The right to the city extends to those who use the city. It is not limited to property owners" (Berlant & Warner 2012, p.174).

In relation to this argument, and to the cleansing of New York neighbourhoods from the presence of homeless people and LGBT venues during the 1980s, Rosalind Deutsche (1998) argued that:

> "In current circumstances, there is reason to believe that the discourse of neighbourhood jeopardizes urban life, if by this we mean the interaction of heterogeneous people from widely scattered locations. There is even reason to suspect that, in the context of today's moral crusades, the discourse of neighbourhood has become unneighbourly. Moral crusaders presuppose the existence of an absolute ground of the norms they seek to enforce. They portray those who deviate from these norms as representatives of society's 'outside'." Deutsche 1998, p.6.

The term *Outdoor Room* alone, I would argue, domesticates urban open space, with all the gender, political and social exclusions that the mechanism of domestication entails (Wigley 1995). This domestication is not only indicated by the word room, but also by the list of functions that regulate the space. The UTF's prescribed set of activities constructs 'the public' as a fairly homogeneous entity, with the same needs and desires that are contained in

the prescribed uses for the public space, most of which are leisure activities, overlooking, if not banning, other uses such as survival strategies, identity performances, unofficial economic transactions, and protest. In listing a specific set of functions that supposedly reflect the needs of 'the public', the UTF presumed to know who the public were and claimed to represent it in its entirety. Moreover, prescribing a definite set of uses, the UTF assumed that the public is stable, fixed and unchanging. It also ignored probable conflict between various uses of the space, and thus assumes that the public and the space are harmonious entities. The unspoken exclusion of certain communities or activities is not confined to the public space, but colours the entire report (Doron 2002; Doron-Mualem 2001). Amin, Massey and Thrift remark on this, in *Cities For The Many Not The Few*: "a whole side of cities seems to be missing here. […] In part there is an absence of what we might call the underground or unseen city: not just the illegality, but the car-boot sale, the huge networks of hobby groups, the myriad of everyday activities…" (Amin, Massey and Thrift 2000, p.4). Similarly, Iain Borden argued that the city Rogers and the Urban Task Force convey is: "the city of public squares, gentle wanderings, spoken conversations and square-side cafés. It is the city of mocha, big Sunday papers, designer lamps, fresh pasta and tactile fabrics. It is not, however, the city of all the disparate activities that people do in cities. It is not the city of sex, shouting, loud music, running, pure contemplation, demonstrations, subterranean subterfuges" (Borden 2004, p.114).

Nonetheless, the UTF's mistake was not only in providing a partial list of activities or acknowledging only one social group. Its mistake lay firstly in the idea that a definitive list could be set. A 'definitive' that implies (social) space being timeless and unchanged. This a-historical perspective misunderstands the ways in which democratic space evolves, and shows blindness to the fact that democratic space is by nature non-homogeneous. As Rosalind Deutsche, in her discussion about democratic public spaces, argued: "it is precisely the abandonment of the idea that there is a pregiven or proper meaning of public space that

necessitates debate. […] We must take seriously the idea that public space is a question…" (Deutsche 1998, p.1). By not acknowledging this, the UTF assumed that the public space should always be harmonious, that it does not by its very nature contain confrontation and conflict. Such utopian space might only be achieved in a totalitarian state (Ibid.) or the state of fascism (Bataille 1985). What the model of the *Outdoor Room* presents and executes is the annihilation of the Outside or alteriority as a tangible possibility. The complex relations of outside and inside, of repulsion and desire, of the constitution of the I and the Other is annulled. And, while the Outside is not out there anymore, the inside constitutes itself, not in relation to the Other, but only in relation to a void, which, as a void, can accommodate the most monstrous fabrications of the collective imagination.

The fear of "too much space", and the reaction to it by the promotion of the *Outdoor Room*, can be seen as an agoraphobic reaction to the 'dead zone'. In her illuminating book, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics*, Rosalyn Deutsche (1994) argued that much of the criticism that has been made about postmodern public space, with its over-regulation, strict design and confinement, can be also directed towards previous models of public spaces, which some writers have been sentimentally alluding to (Sorkin 1992). Deutsche reminded us that in these older models of public space, it were women, sexual and ethnic minorities, the poor, the disabled who were excluded or heavily controlled. Then, as now, groups such as homeless people, panhandlers, prostitutes, squeegee cleaners, street artists, sex cruisers and others, have been described as "enemies within" (Smith 1996, p.3).

As with the concept of *Paradise*, the English Garden Square was partially constructed in response to a crisis: one was the extra free time available to non-working lower and middle class people and the fear of how it might be used. The second crisis, for which the garden acts as a form of compensation, was the loss of open spaces in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century densification and expansion of the city. This is true also when we look at post-modern and corporate public space (the return of the enclave), with the 'Back to the City'

movement and especially after 9/11. All these spaces juxtaposed an imagined ideal space with a real, complex and uncertain place. Whilst these or any other hegemonic and normative models of public space were the product of democracy, they have never been truly democratic, nor open. Design-wise, it has always borne the mark of separation and exclusion, and the laws that govern these spaces originate in religious concepts, in middle class fears and moral codes, and in economic models. This reality is contradictory to Lefort's democratic Public Space, which is "the social space where, in the absence of a foundation, the meaning and unity of the society is negotiated, constituted and put at risk. What is recognised in public space is the legitimacy of contest about what is legitimate and what is illegitimate" (Deutsche 1998, p.7). When the identity of public space is so fossilised it loses its democratic (agonistic) nature. If, according to Lefort "to be democratic, society and public space must remain a question" (Ibid.), the normative public space is an exclamation mark.

In the upcoming Part Two, I will show how the so-called 'dead zones' are in fact akin to a different kind of public space, one that threatens the assumed harmony of 'the public' and the hegemonic and normative configuration of public space. The moment that this happens, as I will show in the three historical cases I will present in the next chapter, is the moment in which the transgressive space is portrayed as a 'dead zone', namely as a zone that required attention and change. I will show how this happened in colonial times and how colonial perspectives and practices have continued to play a role in the production of these 'zones' also in western cities.

CHAPTER 4:

The 'Dead Zone' as a Colonial Practice

"Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all looked like that) I would put my finger on it and say, `When I grow up I will go there.'… I have been in some of them, and... well, we won't talk about that. But there was one yet—the biggest, the most blank, so to speak— that I had a hankering after... True, by this time it was not a blank space any more. It had got filled since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness."

<div align="right">Conrad 1899, p.3</div>

"The voids have a meaning: they cry out loud and clear the glory and power of the State which plans them, the violence which could occur. Later transfers towards other finalities take place which justify in another way these gashes into urban life."

<div align="right">Lefebvre 1996, p.76, in: Millington 2011</div>

In the previous chapters, I have framed the *discourse of the dead zone*, presented the spaces that the discourse considers as 'dead zones', and the various labels the discourse chooses to designate to these spaces. These chapters answered the question about what the 'dead zone' is, and how it has been produced by the discourse. In this

chapter, I will postulate the reasons for which certain spaces were marked as 'waste', 'void', or 'dead'. Based on three historical cases, in Tel Aviv, London and Paris, I will argue that the imagery of the 'dead zone', of a space which is empty and/or dangerous, is based on colonial and capitalist perspectives, and often with the aim of colonising or gentrifying the 'empty' or surplus space (Bhabha 1994; Marriott 2003; Bauman 2003; Carter 2010).

In the discourse of architecture, the connection between the discourse of the void and colonialism was made explicit by Van Dijk in the Dutch Pavilion's catalogue at the 1996 Venice Biennial of Architecture:

> "As far as I am aware, no one has ever written a cultural history of the void. But it would coincide to a large extent with that of colonialism. Colonists were attracted by the 'empty' spots still to be found a hundred year ago on globes and maps. When these utopian empty places were colonized, they turned out to be less empty than the European adventurers thought and subsequently had to be cleared. […] The dream of the void to be occupied was so strong that reality was roughly altered to suit it." Van Dijk 1996, p.43.

As I argued before, it will be hard if not impossible to write the history of the 'void' (rather than contemplate on the history of the concept), because we have little documentation of what these spaces were and what occurred in them. However, the following examples might shed more light on the spaces that were marked as 'dead zones'.

Tel Aviv, in particular, and Palestine/Israel more generally, are good examples of how a space outside the city (Jaffa) and a space outside the European continent is marked first as empty and when the natives are 'discovered' as derelict, and as a wasteland that is waiting for revival and utilisation. This doubleness – a space which is at once empty or without qualities but with much potential – is seen in Plato's *chora*, and in some interpretations of contemporary urban derelict land, and is reflected here again. The case of Tel Aviv is presented in great length as it provides strong evidence for the colonial origins of the 'dead zone' and shows the present re-emergence of the (neo)colonial perspective. It also provides the wider context for the story of the Palestinian fisherman's village. This writing strategy is more than informative. It is ethical. It attempts to bring some justice and counter the erasure of the village both from the land and from history. In doing so, I have not only placed the village within the larger context of the colonisation of Palestine but also included oral history via interviews with the descendants of those who were expelled.

In my analysis of the urban discourse of London of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, I will examine how writers, 'social explorers' and the media portrayed part of the city and its populace in terms that were taken from colonial imageries. No one could have claimed that East London was empty but it was compared to the abyss and the dark land, terms taken directly from the colonial imagery of Africa. All this happened around the time that the middle classes in the heart of the city needed more space to expand and when white English identity was being put at risk through colonial expansions. Here, the 'dead zone' is no longer something far away, but a space which contaminates the heart of the Empire.

The last case, the Zone of Paris of the nineteenth century, gives us a clear example of how a 'dead zone' is constructed, not only through discourse but also through urban planning practices, and how, when there is no need for it any more, it is dismantled. At the same time, the Zone will start to give us glimpses of the communities who inhabit the 'dead zones' – an issue I will expand on in Part Two as well.

4.a. Wilderness: The Case of Palestine and Tel Aviv – from an Empty Space to the Wasteland

"[…] in the aftermath of the 1948 War and the mass exodus of the Arabs from their towns and villages, the country had become a blank slate upon which the committee could inscribe names as it wishes…"

<div align="right">Benvenisti 2002, p.33</div>

4.a.i. Desolate Land: The Holy Land through Western Eyes

Palestine/Israel is a clear example of the enforcement of certain imagery onto a place, ignoring, deliberately or not, the present realities of it. Palestine, in comparison to other colonised spaces such as America, Africa or Australia, has never been perceived as *terra incognita*. However, in the eyes of many of its Western, and then Zionist visitors, it seemed to be a place that had fallen out of grace as a wasteland or wilderness. As part of the Orient, especially under Ottoman rule, it seems to have been suspended out of time, and lacking a present and presence (Troen 2003). For example, visiting Palestine in 1869, Mark Twain described the place as a desolate country: "desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action. We reached Tabor safely. […] We never saw a

human being on the whole route" (Twain 1869, p.386) and "There is not a solitary village throughout its whole extent – not for thirty miles in either direction. […] One may ride ten miles hereabouts and not see ten human beings" (Ibid., p.485). Needless to say, Twain was not used to the arid region, especially in the summer, and could neither read nor value the region's landscape. Most of his journey was to Biblical places and not an exploration of the populated villages and cities. Moreover, considering Twain's Christian perspective, believing that the land had been "cursed" by God (Ibid., p.608), one may suspect that these beliefs might have shadowed his observations. It has been argued that Twain chose to overlook the Arab population of Palestine, whom he despised. When Arabs were mentioned it seemed that their mere appearance spoiled the 'dream land' that he considered Palestine to be (Ibid.). Twain's blind and/or biased perspective is grounded in bald xenophobia, Euro-centricity and sometimes racism (Obenzinger 1999; Christison 2000).

Another remarkable example of how the local population can be overlooked is Alphonse de Lamartine's (1838) diary *A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*, from his visit to Palestine in 1835. In this book, on the one hand he described Palestine as an empty land awaiting colonisation, but on the other he testified to the existence of agriculture and commerce. Visiting Jerusalem, he wrote: "we saw, indeed, no living object, heard no living sound; we found the same void, the same silence, at the entrance of a city containing thirty thousand souls" (Ibid., p.315). But then, almost in passing, he mentioned that on that particular visit, the city was undergoing a severe plague (Ibid., p.271). Despite Twain's and Lamartine's descriptions, around the time of their visits the population of Palestine was about 350,000 (McCarthy 1990, p.80) and the population of Jerusalem area alone was about 250,000 people (Scholch 2006, p.38). Catherwood's map of 1835, the year of Lamartine's

visit, shows much of the lands around Jerusalem was cultivated and covered with olive and

vineyard plantations (Wood et aL 2010)

PLAN or JERUSAL!M

www.bible.ca
the Holy Land, 1844, vol. III.)
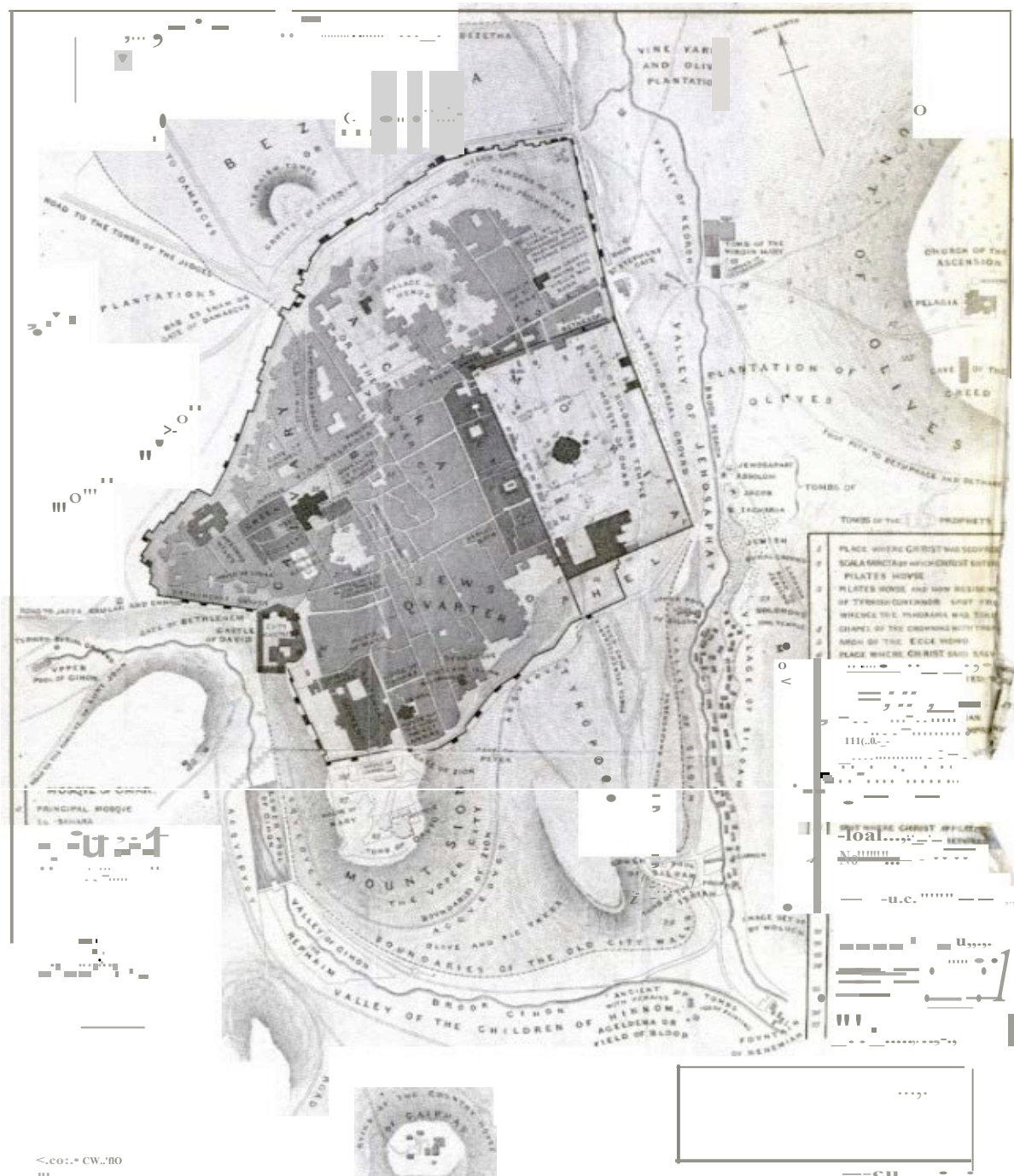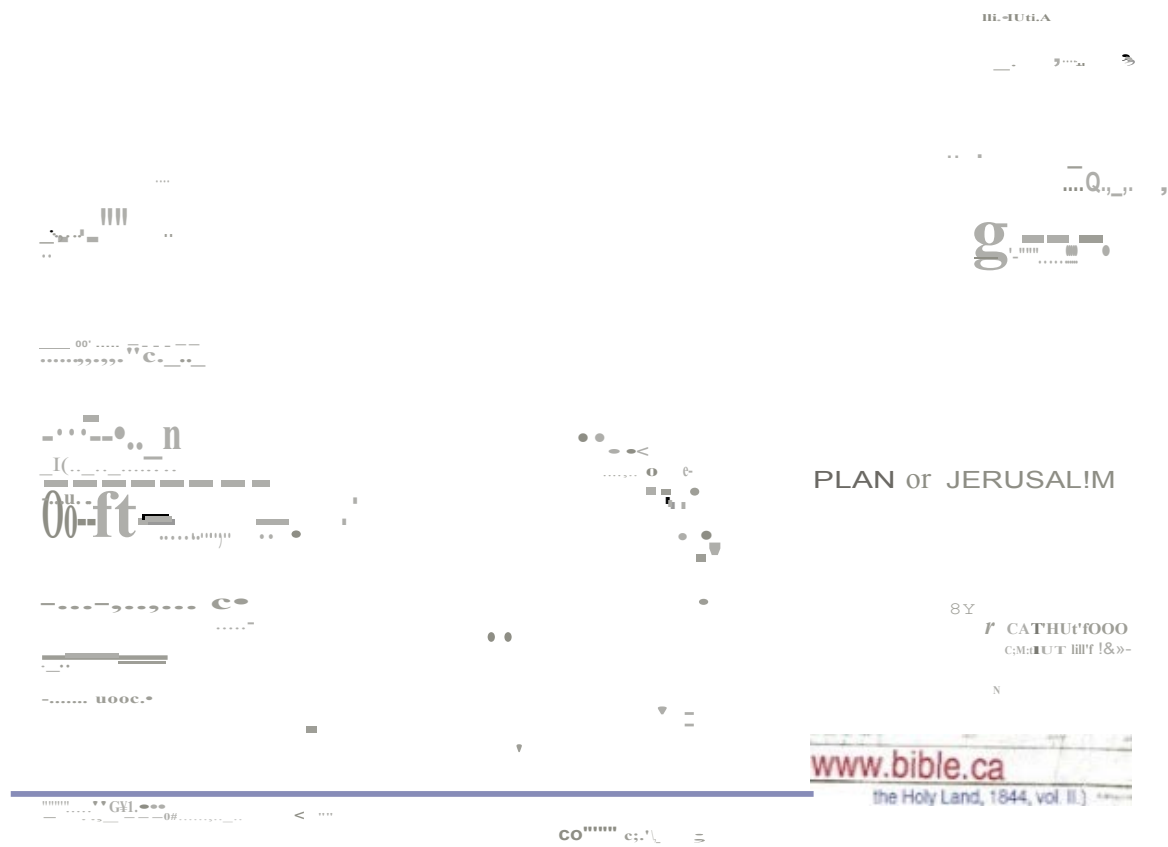
Plan ol Jerusalem. 1835 AD (Owl, Steohen Tr..., lo r Egypt. A la"" Penea and

Illustration 3: Catherwood Map, 1835

According to the Ottoman census records from the late sixteenth century, at that time there were 516 permanent villages in the territory that later became Mandatory Palestine. By the end of the nineteenth century, their number had reached approximately seven hundred in addition to eighteen cities and towns (McCarthy 1990, pp.81–82). Reading Twain (1869), and Alphonse de Lamartine (1838), Edward Said (1979) argued that Palestine is shown "not for its present realities and inhabitants but for its glorious, portentous past and the seemingly limitless potential of its (possibly) just as glorious future, Palestine is always seen as a place to be possessed anew and reconstructed. […] by a more deserving power" (Ibid., p.9). This "empty present", the colonial imagery of the void, dominated the Zionist movement and was used as a justification for the constitution of the state of Israel in Palestine (Said 1979; Benvenisti 2002; Gerber 2003). In a short but fascinating article 'Radical Discontent', Eyal Danon (2009) analyses the wilful blindness of Protestant Westerners and later the Zionists to the Palestinian people and culture in the nineteenth and twentieth century. A blindness that was caused by overlooking the present and towards an (imagined) past. The 'dead zone' here is real – but it is not the geographical place but the space that blinds it. A 'dead zone' that is created by a "vision which prefers the imagination to reality, the past to the present, since reality is no more than a guise hiding the sacred essence of the land…" (Ibid., p.210). It is a vision that "cancels reality, creating before the viewer's eyes a reconstruction of the sacred Biblical past" (Ibid., p.210). The perception of the Holy land as a desolate space shows that seeing is not a natural, unbiased operation. Vision is always and already has been filtered by preconceptions and beliefs.

4.a.ii Wilderness: The Zionist View of Eretz Israel or Variations of Emptiness

"For a people without a land, a land without a people" is the most emblematic phrase that depicts Palestine as an empty space (demographic void, *terra nihillum*), or as a space that does not have a coherent population that can be defined as a nation (socio-political void, *teritorium nihilum*). The phrase appeared in 1901 in an article by Israel Zangwill (Garfinkle 1991), but it was previously coined in the mid nineteenth century by Lord Shaftesbury who was a millenarian Christian who believed that the rapidly approaching second coming of Jesus had to be preceded by the gathering together of the Jews in the Holy Land. His actual version, of the term was 'a country without a nation for a nation without a country."

<div align="right">Garfinkle 1991, p.543</div>

By replacing the word 'nation' with 'people', the expression becomes charged with his subsequent description of the country as "comparatively empty". However, in his later writings, he describes only becoming aware in 1904 of the reality that the Zionist movement had "not come to grips with…" and "rarely like[d] to face it [that] Palestine proper has already its inhabitants" (Zangwill 1921, p.92). These ambiguities as to whether the early Zionists were unaware of the Palestinian population, and to what degree, are embodied in the writings of Herzl, the 'father' of Zionism. In *Altneuland* (*Old New Land*) (Herzl 2015), originally published in 1902, his visionary description of the Jewish state almost completely ignored the Arab Palestinian population. This book can be seen not only as the blueprint for the utopian vision for the Jewish state, but also as a literary product that constitutes the Zionist and colonial myth of Palestine as a demographic void (Benvenisti 2002; Said 2002; Kalmar & Penslar 2005).

While Herzl was reluctant to acknowledge the native population, other early Zionists were aware and voiced their opinion in that matter. Asher Ginsberg (Ha'Am 1946), one of the Zionists who visited Palestine as early as 1881, (writing under the pseudonym Ahad

Ha'Am which means 'one of the people') gave testimony about the local population, and negated the imagery of Palestine as a desolated land:

> "Abroad, we are used to believing that Eretz-Israel is today semi-desert, desert without cultivation. And that whoever wants to acquire land can come here and get as much as his heart desires. But the truth is nothing like this. In any part of the country it is difficult to find uncultivated fields. The only uncultivated places are expanses of sand and stony mountains where only fruit trees can grow, and, even then, only after a lot of heavy preparatory labour." Ha'Am 1946, p.xx.

Similarly in 1905, during the Sixth Zionist Congress convention in Bessel, Switzerland, a Palestinian Jew, Yitzhak Epstein (1862-1943), delivered a lecture about the 'Arab question' arguing that: "One trivial thing we have overlooked: In our lovely country there exists an entire people who have held it for centuries and to whom it would never occur to leave" (Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz 1995, p.558).

After acknowledging the existence of the natives, Zangwill defended the colonization by arguing that the local population was not tied to the land because it was nomadic and/or because it did not utilise the land to a degree that it could be considered their own:

> "[i]f the Lord Shaftesbury was literally inexact in describing Palestine as a country without a people, he was essentially correct, for there is no Arab people living in intimate fusion with the country, utilizing its resources and stamping it with a characteristic impress: there is at best an Arab encampment." Zangwill 1921, p.109.
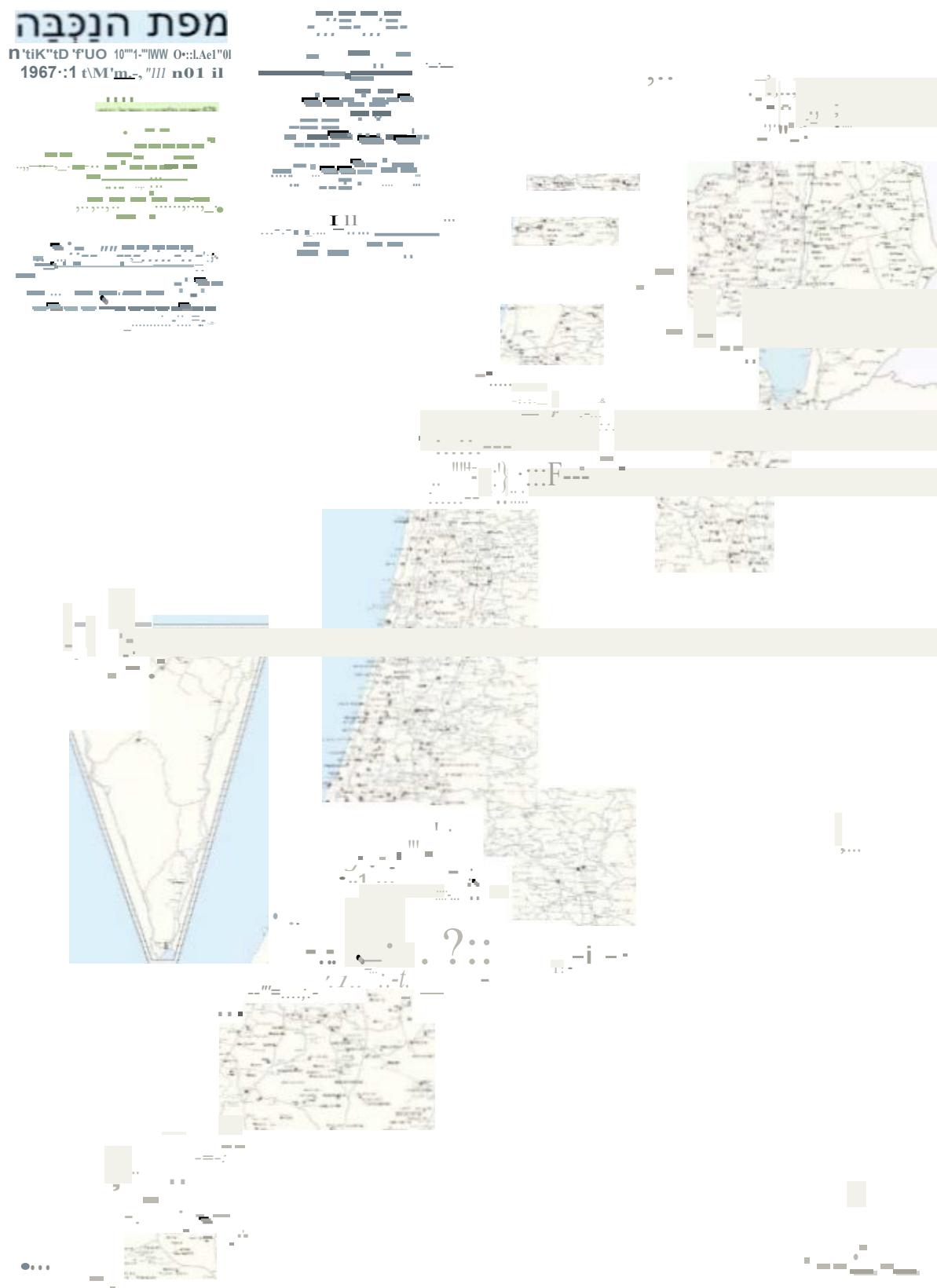
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Olust:ration 4: Map of the destroyed Palestinian villages in IsraeL

Zangwill is adopting here the colonial view that associated property and sovereign rights with the industrious aggregation of agricultural production. Moreover, to strengthen his argument he described the local Palestinian population as nomads who had no real tie with the land: 'Palestine is not much occupied by the Arabs as over-run by them. They are nomads, who have created in Palestine neither material nor spiritual values' (Ibid., p. 97).

Zangwill adopted the colonial perception of the colonised land as, if not empty (*terra nihillum*) than devoid of ownership – *terra nullius* – land belonging to nobody. The concept of terra nullius originated in the Roman legal principle that empty or wasteland, can be settled without conquest. In modern times this legal concept was expanded to include any unattended or cultivated land and became one of the most effective tools to justified colonisation (Benton 2009). The view of Palestine as non-cultivated land, and of the Arab Palestinians as nomads became one of the pillars for the Zionist justification for the Jewish State, at times even more than the biblical claim (Benvenisti 2002).

What I have shown here is the procession of imagery that starts with depicting Palestine as an empty space, and ending in depicting it as a wasteland. This socio-political-spatial colonial approach we see here is not unlike the contemporary attitude towards marginal urban space which does not meet the "standards" of sufficiency. From squatter colonies and buildings, to patches of "wastelands" that are used by dog owners and children for free play, they are deemed as unproductive or unlucrative, marked as derelict, evicted of their populous, and re-developed.
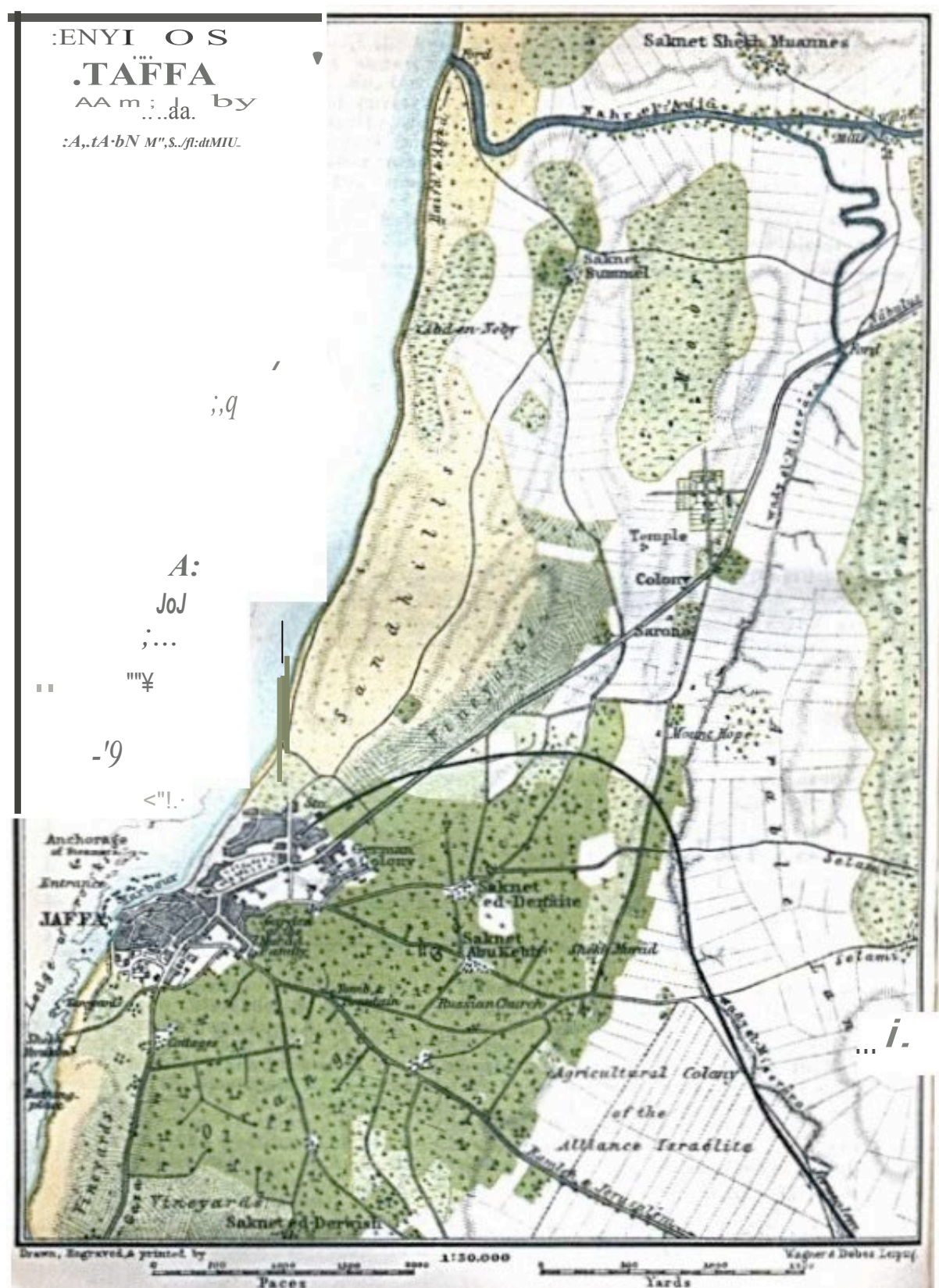
Illustration 5: Jaffa Environs map from 1912 (260K). From Palem and Syria, Handbook.

4.a.iii The Construction of Wilderness as a *Tabula Rasa* for the White City

Tel Aviv represents the sharpest example of Zionists' depiction of Palestine as a wilderness (*shmamain* in Hebrew), empty both demographically and culturally. The city that, according to the Zionist myth, "grew out of the sands" north of Jaffa. This myth has been propagated by and manifested in declarations and writings of the founding fathers of the city, history books, paintings, scholarly writings, official Zionist historical documents, and even travel guides. Two of the books that have meticulously undermined the myth of "the city that grew out of the sands" are Mark LeVine's *Overthrowing Geography: Jaffa, Tel Aviv, and the Struggle for Palestine 1880-1949* (2005), and Sharon Rotbard's *White City, Black City* (2005). The main themes of each book correspond to the imagery of the 'dead zone' both in the urban discourse and in the colonial one. LeVine mainly deals with the imagery of the void, nothingness, wilderness, as the foundation of Tel Aviv. Rotbard places more emphasis on the imagery of dereliction, dirt and ruins. These two imageries can be seen in a chronology both in the global case of colonialism and in the particular case of Palestine. The *terra incognita* or the *tabula rasa* was imagery constructed of empty land, pure and utopian. When this void was found to be not empty, this utopia was stained with black marks. The utopian void was transformed into the 'bad lands' through the native bodies that were seen as blots on the white map, as disorder in the working of the utopia. Back to the metropolis, the underclass poor were compared to the colonised natives, and the imagery that represented them coloured the area they occupied.

Since this area has been covered by the literature referred to, I will here only briefly touch on the lengthy issue of the cultural, social, political and significantly architectural factors that constituted the imagery of Tel Aviv growing out of the sand from a void. The undermining of this myth is important both historically and politically. Although much has been written about it, the battle is not yet over. For example, in its education and city section, the Jewish Agency for Israel website still describes the area of Tel Aviv pre-Jewish

settlement as "the empty expanse north of Jaffa" (JAFI 2018/2008a, JAFI 2008b). But the city of Tel Aviv did not grow out of the sands. On the land which Tel Aviv city occupies today, there existed eight Palestinian villages: Irshid, Salama, Abu Kabir, al-Mas'udiyya (Summayl), al-Jammasin al-Gharbi, Jarisha and the small fishing village in Ha'Yarkon Estuary, which might have been an extension of the village of Jarisha about five kilometres up the river. These villages were evacuated, or their population ran away, in the Israeli War of Independence in 1948. A few remains of some of these villages still dot the city today. You see them when you walk. They do not exist on the city's map but some stand as empty ruins, some are covered by car parks, and some are occupied by residents, mostly Eastern Jews (or Arab-Jews) who in turn are being evicted so the ground can be levelled into *tabula rasa*, from which affluent towers will grow and bury the last remains of the Palestinian existence in this land.

4.a.iv. Tel Aviv as a Villa in the Desert

Ahuzat Bayit, one of the first neighbourhoods of Tel Aviv that serves as the source of the myth of the city that grew out of sand, occupies one percent of the total size of Tel Aviv today, and was established in 1909 on an area known as Karm al-Jabali (the vineyard of the al-Jabali family). Although relatively isolated, bordering with the site of Ahuzat Bayit were farm-lands, train tracks, the German Templar colony, the mixed Jewish Arab neighbourhood of al-Manshyyah and the Jewish neighbourhoods Neve Tzedek and Neveh Shalom (today Kerem HaTimanim), established in the 1880s. The remaining Palestinian villages, with their cultivated lands, occupied more than two thirds of Tel Aviv area of today (Kadman 2015; Zochrot n.d.).

It is important to remember that Ahuzat Bayit was developed as a suburb of Jaffa, or as its first mayor Meir Dizengoff recalled it "a night shelter" (Shchori 1990, p.32), detached

both physically and culturally from the 'Arab City'. The suburb can be considered the opposite of the 'dead zone'. While both spaces are a sort of enclave, the suburb is an example of a complete planned and regulated space and the 'dead zone' represents the failure of planning and a disordered space. Jaffa, with its pre-modern design, crowdedness and seeming disorderliness has some characteristics of the 'dead zone'.

Some of the remarks by the founders of Tel Aviv about Jaffa echo the discourse about the 'dead zone' in the city or the inner city as a dead zone, which I mentioned earlier and which I will show in the case of London and Paris in the nineteenth century. In his memoirs, Yizhak Hayutman (1967 in: Shchori 1990, p.21), another founding father of the city, portrays Jaffa as both environmentally and morally polluted and contagious. He writes that one of the aims of the new suburban neighbourhood outside Jaffa was "to escape the moral degradation which was much greater than the real stench [of Jaffa]. The real closeness of our children to the children of our [Arab] neighbours, the latter whom from early age were swearing and using immoral expressions in any sense of the word, damaged our children's education, which was harmful no less than the damage to their health" (Shchori 1990, p.21).

Illustration 6: Map of the Palestinian villages in what now is Tel-Aviv, by Zochrot 2010. The map negates the Zionist's myth of Tel Aviv "growing out of the sand" and bring to light the villages that hardly any trace of them remained by the end of the 20th century.

To ensure as much separation from Jaffa and its populous as possible, Tel Aviv was created with strict social, architectural and urban rules. The first rule in Tel Aviv's constitution enshrines the city as a Jewish neighbourhood, separated not only on a religious basis but also physically and socially/culturally from the Arab city of Jaffa, from the older Jewish neighbourhoods of Neve Shalom (*Oasis of Peace*) which consisted of mixed ethnic and religious groups, and from Neve Tzedek (*Oasis of Justice*) which was compared to a European Jewish Ghetto. Secondly, the constitution determined that the neighbourhood would be residential only, banning the opening of any shop, house, workshop or factory, hotel or bar. This rule was linked to the suburban building typology of semi-detached buildings, restricted by size, and obliged to have a front garden of at least two metres. Lastly, the constitution set up a code of personal behaviour that the neighbourhood citizens had to adhere to. Much was written about the separatism and elitism of the suburban social form, but in this context it is worth mentioning Bhabha's (1994) depiction of the suburb as directly linked to nationalism and colonialism, as a construct which is founded on the fear of difference. As I stated before, the suburb can be seen as the opposite of the 'dead zone', which in our case is represented by Jaffa Old City and its villages. In fact the suburb comes to replace these older forms of settlement and by doing so depicts them as 'dead zones'.

As I will show in the next section in the case of London, the nineteenth century urban discourse was dominated by anti-urban sentiments, the fear of the underclasses and contaminated with colonial views. All of these can be clearly seen in twentieth century modern movements as disparate as 'City Beautiful', Garden Suburbs and, especially through the work of Corbusier, the International Style. All these movements aimed to build alternative cities or settlements (the Garden Suburbs), or replace the existing ones with City Beautiful (from Haussmann to Speer), the Bauhaus and the International Style. As Hall (2002) shows through his narrative of modern planning, any of these styles, and at times a

mix of them, had their place in the colonial project. Ahuzat Bayit was an example of such a mix.

4.a.v   The Fisherman's Village – Second death

The case of the Palestinian fisherman's village in Tel Aviv is where the imagery of the void, which is fundamental to the creation of Tel Aviv, is used again. One reason for the neo-colonial drive to eradicate any remains of Palestinian villages is to obliterate any sign of historical Palestine. The second reason is to do with the modernist urban planning drive for clarity and unity. The remnants of the village set on the estuary were where the planners wanted to put a footpath connecting the park, south of the village, to the sea promenade, to its north. The third was to utilise and capitalise on the land of this seeming 'dead zone'.

Ha'Yarkon Estuary, including Tel-Aviv old harbour, and the area the Palestinian fisherman's village had been marked on the planning maps as a 'white zone' for more than thirty years. A *white zone* in the Israeli planning code system means an area that has been earmarked for "future planning". It is an area where the city's authorities would like to make changes, but at the present time do not know into what. In the meantime, zoning an area in white means that no change whatsoever is allowed to take place there. It entails a complete disinvestment in infrastructure, and no planning permission is granted to private owners to make changes, including repairs to their property. It is a distinct example of the capitalist practise of 'creative destruction' (Harvey, 1989, Schumpeter 2013). Creative destruction is the devaluation of land through disinvestment and the "freezing" of any development and even up-keep of activities in the 'white area', causing it to become dilapidated and derelict. It also becomes, as Lynch and others have noticed, a haven for marginalised communities and activities. Therefore, on the face of it, such spaces seem to be 'free spaces' and this view is common among those who have a positive outlook on these zones. However, this sense of

freedom is somewhat misleading. The existence of the 'zone', if not enables, then at least grants the exclusion of less prescribed activities from the rest of the city by designating them officially or unofficially to this area. The second problem is that this 'free space' is never secure and can at any given time be marked for redevelopment which leads to the termination of this 'free space'.

Illustration 7: A night club at Ha'Yarkon Estuary and Riding Power Station in the background, 1996.

Illustration 8: Children bathing in the warm water
coming out of Riding Power Station.

Illustration 9: Mural on a wall of one of the serving buildings of the Orient Fair, 1996.

In May 1996, Tel Aviv Municipality held an international competition for the redevelopment of the area. The scope included both the south side of the river and the north side. The north side was comprised of Tel Aviv's small port, an open sports arena and dilapidated warehouses and other smaller structures, all built around the 1930s. Previously, the area was occupied, if not actually owned, by the Abu Jabra Bedouin family, who lived on the riverbanks (Aaron and Ha'Ir). According to official documents, during the British Mandate the status of the area was considered *Mahlul* land, meaning lands belonging to the state which might be cultivated. This area was given by the British to various Jewish organisations for building the sports arena in which the first Jewish Olympics (*Hamacabia*) took place in 1932 and 1935, and the Orient Fair in 1934 and 1936. The Orient Fair buildings were some of the most innovative structures built at the time, in the International and Constructivist style. The fair, as declared by Tel Aviv's first mayor, Meir Dizengoff, aimed to position Tel Aviv, "the most European City in the East", on the world map, acting as the bridge between the Near East and Europe (Regve and Raz 1996). It is not clear what happened to the Abu-Jabra family at that stage, although several large tents can be seen in aerial photographs taken at the end of the 1930s. During the 1990s, the area saw an underground rave scene emerge, with a few clubs and bars opening in the dilapidated buildings. The area was also used as a scenic film location, for example for the film *Blues for the Great Holiday*. Because of warm water flowing from the cooling system of the Riding Power Station, which sits on the North side of the estuary, a local ecosystem was created that attracted fish and a regular group of fisherman. Together with the desolation of the area, the warm water made the estuary attractive for nude bathers and night swimmers. Kids also used the area for bonfires, which were not permitted in nearby Ha'Yarkon Park.

The document outlining the competition for Ha'Yarkon Estuary mentioned neither the present uses nor the history of the place. In the short description of the history of Tel Aviv, the Palestinian villages were not mentioned at all. The past and present of the site itself was summed up in a few lines: "Most of the site is virtually vacant due to its past use as exhibition grounds, Tel Aviv port facilities, no longer used, and the Old Maccabia stadium and playgrounds" (Ibid., p.5). The competition did not include the North bank of Ha'Yarkon River, for which at the time there was a plan for a lucrative hotel and development. The Palestinian village was to be buried under an extension of Ha'Yarkon park which was supposed to lead to a marina for six hundred yachts, three high-rise luxury hotels, residential buildings, shops, and entertainment venues. Whilst this plan of 140,000 square meters, one of the biggest projects ever planned for Tel Aviv, was shelved, mainly due to environmental concerns (Doron-Mualem 1996), the extension of Ha'Yarkon Estuary is still planned to go ahead and the future of the fisherman village is unclear.

With no historical depiction of the area, nor any indication of its living present, no wonder the winner of the competition of Ha'Yarkon Estuary, the Israeli architect Moshe Zur and the Dutch architect Herman Hertzberger, saw the site as a tabula rasa. Astonishingly, the city municipality chose the proposals from both these offices and asked them to work on a single plan, even though Zur presented a series of high skyscraper conglomerations of hotels, offices and residences à la Manhattan, while Hertzberger presented a housing programme that copied the typology of the three storey residential buildings of Tel Aviv's Bauhaus style. When these plans were presented to the local council for approval, Ha'Yarkon Estuary was depicted by the city's chief planner as a 'dead zone' and therefore available for any kind of development. Such a depiction of the site and the total overlooking of the past and present repeated again the myth of the tabula rasa.

The plan for Ha'Yarkon Estuary was opposed at the time, mainly by a few environmental NGOs, chiefly the powerful Society for Protecting Nature and the Society for

Protection of Buildings and Settlements. These bodies produced a booklet that told the story of the site, concentrating on the Jewish development of it in the 1930s and the importance of its history to Tel Aviv. Changes in the city government in 2000, and the extension of environmental protection for coasts and river-beds, caused the plan to be cancelled. Instead, recognising the entertainment activities in the area, which from their underground base had grown up and turned the area into one with a most vibrant nightlife, the city municipality decided to consolidate it as such. Some of the buildings were designated for preservation and the area was declared a commercial and entertainment zone. As Tel Aviv celebrated its one hundred years anniversary, the area had become a success story. It now has fancy restaurants, recording studios, a centre for architecture and families tread in the area safely with Ikea bags.

Most of the vast open areas have stayed open, and have just got undulating elegant surfaces, simulating the sand dunes that are long gone. A few of the Orient Fair buildings were renovated, and a monument commemorating the event stands proudly at the edge of the zone. It only remains for a tent or a dummy camel to be placed on the wooden dunes to commemorate the Bedouin tribe that was there long before. Opposite this development, Aaron the fisherman was watching with mixed feelings. The boost for the area will give a boost to the café he built a few years ago, if and when the city municipality gives him a license, and stops or loses their continuous battle against him. This legal fight started more than ten years ago. While the various plans for Ha'Yarkon Estuary were promoted in the area, and the local planners, as mentioned before, portrayed the site as a dead zone, the city municipality tried the evict Aaron and destroy the hut, refusing to recognise his right to the place and the past of the place as a Palestinian fisherman's village. The city lost the trial when Aaron proved, using aerial photography of the area taken in 1917, that the hut had been situated in the place already.

Illustration 9: Tel Aviv Harbour after its re-development, 2006.

Illustration 10: Tel Aviv Harbour after its re-development, 2006.

The hut still remains a thorn in the plan to extend Ha'Yarkon Park that runs, more or less, from what used to be another Palestinian village, Jarisha, a few kilometres up the river. It is not the first park that was built on the top of Palestinian villages. Charles Clore Park, between Tel Aviv and Jaffa, was built on the mostly Arab populated new neighbourhood of Manshyya (Rotbard 2005). Unlike some other sites of Palestinian villages, which were bigger and were comprised of stone buildings, the fisherman's village in Ha'Yarkon was a very small one. It consisted of one stone house and huts used by Aaron's family and during spring and summer by a few fishermen from Jaffa. Some of the residents of the village still live in Jaffa and their testimonies, together with Aaron's, give a fairly clear image of the origins and the life in the fisherman's village (Doron-Mualem 1996; Doron-Mualem 2009).

The settlement started when one of the sons of a well-known Jaffan family, Gorge Shibli (Abu Mossa), was sent to work as the operator of the lighthouse in the Estuary at the beginning of the twentieth century.[8] He lived with his family in the lighthouse, and soon other fishermen from Jaffa joined him, among them Aaron's father Mustafa Katuan. Aaron and Abu-Gorge Shibli, the son of Abu Mossa, recalled that the village attracted both Jewish and Arab visitors who came to chill-out and drink coffee on the riverbanks. And Mussa Shibli, another son, depicted the symbiosis between the Abu-Jabbra Bedouins and his family: "Our father also worked as the manager of the canteen in the Sede-Dov (the military airbase near by). He used to collect the food from there, bring it to the village and give it away to the Bedouins and shepherds who were around here". Although the village earned its main livelihood from fishing, Aaron remembered that it had also some sheep, goats, and cows, and that the lands to the north east of the village were listed to a few Jewish people who worked the land. In an aerial photograph from 1917, it seemed clear that a fairly large area was

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8   The information about the village was taken through interviews with Aaron Mizrahi and Abu-Gorge, the son of the founder of the village, George Shibli.

covered with some sort of vegetation with demarcated boundaries, which indicates agricultural cultivation.

In the winter of 1948, rumours spread in the village that the war with the Jews had begun. Abu-Gorge recalled that all the families from the village ran away because some murders had taken place around the village, and also because the area was a target for Egyptian planes that tried to hit Riding Power Station and the military airport. These families are scattered these days in refugee camps in Lebanon, and some live in Egypt and Jordan. Abu Mussa's family, who had a good relationship with the Jews working at the power station decided to stay. However, sometime after the war began, security personnel from the station, who, together with a few soldiers, had dressed in British uniforms and armed themselves, told Abu Moss that the area was too dangerous for them to remain, that it was a war zone and made them leave the house. Abu-Gorge:

> "The officer asked us to move for a week or two to Seven Milles (which was part of the village of Jarisha) but this situation continued for more than a month. We slept under trees and when we needed things from the house, my dad went there but soldiers tried to kill him. We asked two of our (Jewish) friends, Hana and Yosef, to escort us back to the village but when our parents got to the house they found it all empty. Somebody had taken everything and locked the doors. The officer then told them not to come back because it had become a military zone and he told them, 'You have nothing to do here, go to Kefar Shalem' (the area of Salame, a large Palestinian village in between Jaffa and Tel Aviv)."

Abu Gorge recalled that,

> "In 1946, when Holocaust survivors ran away from the British, my dad hid them in the lighthouse where we lived. I remember the British lighting up the sea with projectors and they found one of the

Po'al boats (the organisation that helped smuggle European Jews into Palestine) and the people from the boats ran towards us. Our Jewish friends told the officer about this and asked him if he was not ashamed to evict us but it didn't help. He didn't like us long before."

Salame, to which the family moved, was a very strange place, said Abu Gorge:

"We moved into the house of another (Palestinian) family that had been evicted, everything was still there, the furniture, photographs and other equipment that the former family didn't take with them. For me, the village itself was strange because it was filled with Jews from Egypt, Persia, Yemen and everybody spoke Arabic, so we became friends. However, my mum was afraid that we would be converted so we moved to Jaffa."

Referring to the current gentrification of the poorest but also most lucrative of their locations in Jaffa, he added: "We are threaded with another disaster, in our street. This is the Israeli plan of action – to evict us from strategic areas."

Aaron and his family had a somewhat different fate. At least until the city municipality attempted to evict them in 1996. Aaron's father, Mustafa Katuan, met a Jewish Yemeni woman who came to visit the village in 1947. To get married, Mustafa converted to Judaism, and changed his name to Shemuel Mizrahi. The couple bought a flat in another part of Tel Aviv, but Shemuel continue to live and work in what was left of the village after 1948. He let some Jewish friends stay in the few huts or rebuilt others. In 1957, his son, Benni, opened a restaurant, *The Fisherman's Oasis*, which became a kind of a shelter for disaffected youth, and attracted fishermen and bohemian types who held music nights there. In1971, on a stormy night, Benni was killed at the sea while fishing. Aaron continued the restaurant but in 1992 the City Municipality opened a court case in opposition to it, because it did not have a

licence and in 1996 tried to evict Aaron. Meanwhile Aaron, denied a licence to re-open the restaurant, started renting jet skis. One of the difficulties Aaron faces is that he has never had the deeds to the place. His grandfather, who was strongly against the conversion of Aaron's dad, had disowned him. The grandfather died in Jaffa, where he decided to stay during the war. Other members of the family ran away and lived in Jarka (Jordan) as refugees. They have visited Aaron and are keeping in touch hoping, someday, to come back. In 2010, after a settlement with Tel Aviv municipality, Aaron and his family left the remains of the village. Bulldozers arrived the day after and erased any memory of it. A carpet of grass and a few trees were planted and a paved way covers the place where one of the huts stood. No remnant, dilapidating building, ruin, or even derelict ground is there to hint that something else was there.

Illustration 11: Aaron in his oasis at Ha'Yarkon Estuary

Illustration 12: Abu Gorge facing the closed lighthouse that his father built, at Ha'Yarkon Estuary after renovation, 2015. While there is a concrete documentation of the history of the building and original owners the Israeli laws prevents his return to the house. From 2016 the building has been rented for a cafe and a gallery.
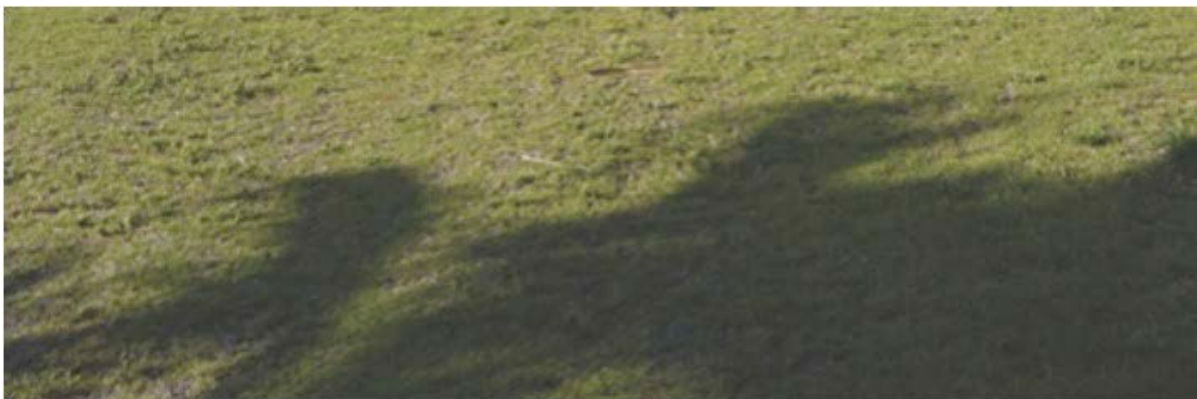
Illustration 13: The site where the Palestinian fisherman's village used to stand, and the lighthouse in the background.

4.b. The Abyss: London's Dark Land and the City Arabs – Marking the Poor's Urban Space with the Colonial Imagery of the 'Bad Lands'

Tel Aviv and its Palestinian villages are good examples of how colonialism and capitalism are interlinked in the past and present and in the colonised space and in the metropolis. This example shows how the imagery of the 'dead zone' has played an important role in realising the objectives of capitalism and colonialism. The imagery of the 'dead zone' and its production of colonial space and of the metropolis has been an essential mechanism of the capitalist system. This imagery played a role in both defining the populace as well as the speciality of these zones (Bhabha 1994; McLaughlin 2000; Marriott 2003). The common imagery of the colonial and metropolitan space held not only linguistic or cultural similarities, but had a constitutive role. The production of an excess of people and goods in the metropolis was vaulted into the 'empty zones' outside Europe. This production of surplus and the need to absorb or dispose of it without the devaluation or destruction of both capital and labour force is at the foundation of capitalism (Harvey 1989). As Bauman (2003) argued, this surplus needed new empty ground upon which to be dumped and this called for the construction of imagery of certain places both within the city and around the globe as voids that could be utilised for this purpose. Likewise, the 'void'/ 'dead zone' (death is excess per excellence) was produced (through imageries and other more 'hard' methods), not only as the grounds for excess but as surplus in itself for the purpose of increasing the value of the motherland (in the case of colonialism) and certain parts of the metropolis (in the case of the capitalist city).

I would like here to present here two more examples that demonstrate the link between the two in a Western urban setting. These examples are taken from London and Paris in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. In these cities at that time, the imagery of the 'blank spaces' and 'black land', which constituted the colonial space, started to be used in relation to the cities of the motherland. For example, George Sims described the

population of East London as "savage tribes of outcast Blackamoors" (Marriott 2003, p.241). This populace, wrote Masterman (1902), like the 'primitives' across the sea, "never reach the level of ordered articulate utterance; never attain a language that the world beyond can hear" (in Keating 1976, p.249). Others compared the underclass to 'Home Heathens' who "have a code of morals of their own – the very reverse of the code prevalent among Christians…" and who represent a "scandal of our civilisation" (Hill 1853, p.1). William Booth (1890) described the 'pygmies' on the streets of London, and again especially those in East London who had "lost their foothold in Society" (in Keating 1976, p.152) and whose children roamed the metropolis like "street Arabs" (Ibid., p.114). The description of street communities as Arabs also captured the media. In 'The Illustrated London News', an article discussing the poor's young population, named them 'City Arabs' (Hill 1853, p.1). Like the 'Arabs', the 'City Arab':

> "has in truth, all the vices, and some of the virtues, of the savage: he is indolent; averse from any settled or steady employment; averse from restraint of any kind. On the other hand, he is patient of hunger and thirst, and cold; and as to dirt, he rather delights in it than otherwise – it is by no means an evil in his estimation; and he would much rather be permitted to roam about at large, even suffering at times great privation, than he would be at school, or at work, under the restraints which belong to civilised society." Hill 1853, p.1.

Similar to the Orientalist imaginary of the Arab, these communities were seen as "wandering tribes" or a "nomadic race" (Mayhew 1986, p.5,212,321,322). Repeating images had two effects: firstly, they established the Occidental identity as contrasting with both the colonial subject and European 'human waste', and established the Occident as the modern subject (Said 1995, p.352).

As I indicated before, colonial imagery not only referred to the population of perpetually shifting zones, but also to particular places where they were most common, i.e. the East End and its nineteenth century post-industrial landscape. The imagery of these metropolitan zones originated in the colonial discourse and, in both cases, this imagery was significant in the transformation of these spaces. Maybe before the 'wasteland', this zone was the Tabula Rasa, and "the template of this 'non-place' becomes the colonial space" (Bhabha 1994, p.356). It constituted the ground from which modernity, productivity and progress could start (Marriott 2003).

While still strongly connected to colonial discourse, the imagery of the void could be traced as far back as to the Aristotelian law of nature or the Natural Law that was concerned with the *Terra Nullius*, which means 'no-man's land' or empty land. This law established that if a land belongs to nobody, i.e. if it is not cultivated, it can be taken. The European colonial project saw the lands that would be colonised as *Terra Nullius*, empty or waste spaces and as such free for colonisation (Fitzmaurice 2007). As Lord Canarvon put it: "the mission of England [invoked] a spirit of adventure to fill up waste spaces" (Hyam 2002, p.210). Yet, as Fitzmaurice (2007) demonstrated, the natural law understanding of property was used not only to justify dispossession but was initially developed and then used by opponents of colonisation who declared that indigenous peoples had established property and could not be dispossessed. This claim was undermined by the expansion of the "right to colonise" to areas and people where there was, apparently, an absence of sovereignty (*Territorium nullius*). It was argued that the natives (in the discourse the argument was used in relation to the indigenous Americans), Australia and Africa were not eligible for sovereignty because of their assumed inferiority on the anthropological development ladder (Hobson & Sharman 2005; Fitzmaurice 2007).

This imagery, of non-culture, non-political substance and no religion, was taken from a similar discourse that concerned the Orient. A key example can be seen in Montesquieu's

discussion of the Orient as being ruled by despots (Montesquieu 1748), a kind of regime that is actually devoid of any notion of law and government. Montesquieu claimed that despotism described the government of the Turks, of the Persians, of Japan, of China and of most Asian countries. A despotic regime is a regime in which "a single person directs everything by his own will and caprice…", while monarchy is a regime in which "a single person governs by fixed and established laws…" (Ibid., p.8); the despotic regime "is directed by no rule, and its own caprices are subversive of all others" (Ibid., p.26). Therefore, Montesquieu portrayed the despotic regime as lacking in structure, be it legally, politically or socially.

In his critique of Montesquieu, Althusser observed that:

"This disposition gives a strange pace to the life of this regime. This government which reigns over vast spaces in some sense lacks any social space. This regime, which has lasted for millennia in the Chinese example, is somehow stripped of all duration. Its social space and its political time are neutral and uniform. Space without places, time without duration." Althusser 2007, p.78.

The spatial quality of this space was of the void, or what was made a void by dint of the regime. The void imagery in this description of the Orient's political and social space is not only a result of the 'primitive' population, but it is actively produced by this regime as a way of protecting the empire. Reading Montesquieu, Althusser notes:

"Kings, says Montesquieu, know the differences there are between provinces, and respect them. Despots not only do not know such differences, they destroy them. They reign only over empty uniformity, over the void constituted by the uncertainty of tomorrow, abandoned lands and a commerce that expires at its birth: over deserts. And it is the desert itself that despotism establishes at its frontiers, burning lands, even its own, to isolate itself from the

world, to protect itself from the contagions and invasions from which nothing else can save it." Althusser 2007, p.78.

In fact, there is nothing that resists in the void: "let a foreign army penetrate into the empire and nothing will stop it, neither strongpoint nor force, since there are none; it is thus necessary to weaken it before it ever reaches the frontier by opposing it with a first desert in which it will perish. The space of despotism is no more than the void..." (Ibid., p.79). Here was a convincing case for colonialism and here we see a shift from the depiction of colonised land as a void, or *tabula rasa*, to a 'place of darkness', to a wasteland which the European powers were not only permitted to but obligated to colonise and re-develop. Such (imagined) opportunity, for social imperialists such as Booth, was linked to the possibility of solving the problem of the metropolis' 'human waste' that was created by the collapse and/or displacement of traditional industries in London. As Bauman noted:

> "The disposal of human waste produced in the 'modernized' and still 'modernizing' part of the globe was the deepest meaning of colonization and imperialist conquests – both made possible, and in fact inevitable, by the power differential continuously reproduced by the stark inequality of 'development'. That inequality allowed the modern part of the globe to seek, and find, global solutions to locally produced 'overpopulation' problems." Bauman 2003, p.5.

This is true also in the case of Zionism which initially aimed to find a solution to the Jews that were pogromed in Russia. Booth, for example in 'In Darkest England and the Way Out' laid out the master plan for the work of the Salvation Army. The basic idea of this plan

was to send 'the submerged tenth' into city colonies and from there to farm colonies. Booth summarised the basic idea of the scheme thus:

> "Forward them from the City to the Country, and there continuing the process of regeneration, and then pouring them forth onto the virgin soils that await their coming in other lands keeping hold of them with a strong government, and yet making them free men and women and so laying the foundation per chance, of another Empire to sell to vast proportions in later times. Why not?" Booth 2002, p.93.

Although none of the social imperialist plans materialised, they reinforced the colonialist perception that the lands outside Europe were 'no-man's land' territories fit to be defined and/or treated as void of human habitation as well as devoid of sovereign administration – and thus open to (and clamouring for!) colonisation and settlement (Bauman 2003, p.5). The result of the imagery of physical, demographic, political and cultural void in both the urban and colonial practice was the annihilation, displacement or enforced culturalisation of the native population (Jones 2013; Sibley 1995; Bauman 2003).

4.c.   The Badlands: Paris's *La Zone* and the *Zonières* – Example of the Construction of the 'Dead Zone' and its Gentrification

"[C]lean the scum off the streets with a high-pressure hose."

> Nicolas Sarkozy, 20/06/2005 in: McDougall n.d., p.178

"I understand under 'Haussmann' the now general practice of turning the worker's districts into rubble, particularly those at the centre of our great cities. […] The result is everywhere the same, […] their disappearance with the great self-congratulations of the bourgeoisie […], but they spring up again at once somewhere else."   Engles 1887, p.69

La Zone in Paris is an even clearer example of where an area is marked as a 'dead zone' because of its population. Just outside Paris' fortifications in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, *La Zone* can be seen as the historical epitome of the 'dead zone'. The zone was created by default as the area behind the fortifications, built in 1840 around Paris by Adolphe Thiers, in which no buildings were permitted (Spierenburg & Roodenburg 2004; Horne 2002). The building of the fortifications was controversial from the start. César Daly, the editor of the important architectural journal *La Revue Générale de l'Architecture*, considered the thirty-six-kilometre wall a colossally unproductive expenditure (Papayanis 2004). Several opponents as well as supporters of the construction of the wall saw it as a means to control Parisians in case of revolt. The irony of history was that the fortifications, indirectly, gave breeding space for the most disaffected and marginalised Parisian, and also contributed to the communist 'red-belt' around Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century (Goodman 1999).

It took one hundred and twenty years to finally dispose of the wall even though, on several occasions, the fortifications proved quite ineffectual as a defence for the city, and even though discussions about its demolition had begun less than four decades after its completion (Walker 2002). *La Zone* was the embodiment of the 'dead zone' by virtue of this temporal suspension in the decision-making process, the ban on construction within it, and its status as a literal 'no-man's land'. While in London, the 'abyss' or the undefined areas and their populace were created by the expansion of the city, industrialisation and 'post-industrialisation', *La Zone* was created by a fervent separation. Yet this separation created the same conditions that sprung from the nineteenth century diffused city, which created similar in-betweens. The ambiguity was not just that the physical, geographical and statutory condition of the zone was reflected by the ambivalent descriptions of this space.

Illustration 14: Cité Zone, Terrain Vagues, ca. 1920.

This in-between-ness, in the discourse and in the reality of *La Zone*, is depicted in Victor Hugo's Les Miserables:

> "There is hardly anybody but knows those singular places… the Banlieue of Paris. […] The place where an open plain adjoins a city always bears the impress of some indescribable, penetrating melancholy. There, nature and humanity address you at one and the same moment. There, the originalities of place appear. He who, like ourselves, has rambled through these solitudes contiguous to our suburbs, which one might term the limbo of Paris, has noticed dotted about, here and there, always in the most deserted spot and the most unexpected moment, beside some straggling hedge or in the corner

of some dismal wall, little helter-skelter groups of children, filthy, muddy, dusty, uncombed, disheveled, playing mumble-peg crowned with violets. These are all the runaway children of poor families. The outer boulevard is their breathing medium, and the banlieue belongs to them." Hugo 1862/1994, p.392.

Yet, *La Zone* also had a very real and concrete and sometimes harsh reality that had nothing to do with the external gaze of the dreamy passer-by. This 'no-man's land', as some named it (Walker 2002, p.119) became populated with thousands of people whose homes had been demolished by Haussmann's neoclassical restructuring of Paris and by farmers who were drawn to the possibility of employment in the redeveloping city but could not afford to live inside it (Nesbit 1994).

In the last decade of *La Zone* it was estimated that its population reached 125,000 inhabitants, and the number of dwellings reached about 15,000. The residents of *La Zone*, living in makeshift huts and wagons, were known as *Zoniers* or *Zonards*. They were variously characterised as the *chiffonier* (rag picker), *Apache* (petty criminal or gang member), *Poucier* (flea market merchant), *Prostituée* (prostitute), or proprietor of a *jardin potager* (small informal vegetable garden) (Cannon 2016; Horne 2002). The area with the lowest of the city's lower classes (Morton 2003, p.157). It was a space for marginal activities, such as rag picking and prostitution, and marginal people like gypsies and homeless workers (Ibid., p.12). The marginalised communities created *La Zone* as their home.[9]

In addition to its inhabitants, *La Zone* functioned as an (informal) public space for the city's working class. This "ring of ragged wasteland […] was the working class's nature, their trysting ground, their countryside, their park" (Nesbit 1994, p.190). As travelling to the

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[9]   A more recent example of similar uncontrolled inhabitation is the Kowloon neighborhood in Hong Kong. However, by the time I visited there in 2000, some of the buildings were demolished and heavily regulated parks replaced them. See also: Girard,Lambot 1993, *City of Darkness: Life in Kowloon Walled City.*

zone amounted to nothing in comparison to more remote nature spots or the countryside (Marriott 2003), and because the fortifications "created the illusion of being far from Paris" (Horne 2002, p.251) it was a favourite spot for taking *nature à bon marché* ('nature on the cheap'): "On any given sunny Sunday, there were food stands, street musicians, strolling singers, games, balloon sellers, and some 10,000 Parisiana eating, drinking, and promenading" (Morton 2003, p.161).

In a similar way to the indecisive, almost contradictory imagery of derelict land, or more generally to the 'dead zone' in contemporary discourse, the image of *La Zone* was ambiguous. The hegemonic discourse, both of city planners and the bourgeoisie, as well as the popular media, depicted La Zone and its inhabitants as desolate and/or dangerous (Nesbit 1994; Morton 2003; Dikec 2007; Kalifa 2004) yet somewhat enthralling and exotic. This depiction can be seen in the ethnographer Michel Leiris' description of *La Zone* as "a sort of bush-country, a no man's land" and his characterisation of *La Zone* as "one of taboo – supernatural, sexual, and sacred – and of contrast between the bourgeois city and the savage bush" (Morton 2003, p.12).

Artists, especially surrealists, and photographers, notably Marc Atget, Robert Doisneau and Germaine Krull, saw *La Zone* as exciting and challenging from an aesthetic point of view (Nesbit 1994; Walker 2002). Atget depicted the ambiguity of both the space and the discourse around it. He portrayed *La Zone* in two separate series of photographs: the first series was *The Zoniers*, an album of photographs of the communities who had resided inside Paris, in Butte-aux-Cailles, and between 1900 and 1910 had been made to move to the zone, does not give much information about their daily life. Only one picture depicts *chiffoniers* recycling junk, and no picture depicts any of the other trades of the *Zoniers*. They are photographed often in family groups, standing and sitting with dignity in front of their dwelling, not unlike bourgeois family portraits. In the second series, *The Fortification of Paris*, Atget concentrated on the physical, atmospheric (symbolical) and desolate qualities of

the space, without its populace. But there is always something lurking in these photos. Many of them have disturbing ambiguity – open vistas in which the eye is led by a road, meandering path, a stream, or the wall itself, yet in almost every picture, a 'dead zone' exists.

This zone is created at times by using high contrast to obscure part of the image or by blocking part of the view with a physical object, a hill, bushes, trees, or the wall. These are often taken from a very close range, sometimes taking up half the frame, and at other times, at more of a distance but still blocking the uninterrupted linear gaze. Almost all the photos were taken from close to ground level, or from waist height, contributing to the "obtuse, thick, blank" (Nesbit 1994, p.194) materiality that grabs the attention, not letting the eye escape into the horizon. Atget could have easily climbed up one of the hills he depicted in the photograph, or onto the fortification wall to give a much clearer image of the area. But knowledge was not the aim of the series, nor was sentimentality. As Nesbit argued, Atget resisted the bourgeoisie's appropriation of the zone, and hinted silently at the impossibility of such appropriation: "The point of the document here was not to stop time, to close off discourse. The document had become the no-man's-land of knowledge" (Ibid., p.194). I would argue that this position, although political, is as problematic as the other depictions of the zone and its inhabitants, since it could have been easily incorporated into the discourse of the 'dead zone' as a void. And indeed, as Nesbit described, the album was mistakenly catalogued by librarians as landscape photography (Ibid.). However, as can be seen in the photographs below, *La Zone* was not easy to be catalogued. It was a contested zone which accommodated various, even contrasting needs.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, discussion about the demolishing of the fortifications and declassification of the land away from its military use had started, and *La Zone* was being portrayed as the biggest piece of municipal real estate of the twentieth century (Cannon 2016). This instigated the *Zoniers* in 1894 to form a union (*La Ligue de Défense des Zoniers de Paris*) to protect their rights, although the state did not recognise any

of their demands (Morton 2003; Cannon 2016). In 1919 a law declassifying the fortifications as a military installation passed the land to Paris municipality. However, the massive evictions from the zone, much inspired by Haussmann's work, took place only in the early forties under the Vichy government's proposal for the abolition of the zone to be replaced by a circular ring road, several parks, and speculative development. The ring road, Boulevard Périphérique à la Haussmann's great boulevards, which was laid on top of the razed fortifications, was promoted as the way in which the city would be opened up to the health benefits of open space and the countryside (Wakeman 2004, p.133). These ideas were consistent with discourse that started with Haussmann who saw the city as a "sick organism" (Ellin 1997) that could be cured by hygiene, aesthetics, and circulation. If the city had any chance of being revived, *La Zone*, as a dead part of it, could only be buried.

Illustration 15: Album of Fortifications: Porte de Sevres. Paris, 1857.
Photographs by Eugene Atget (1857)

Illustration 16: Refugee encampment at the heart of Paris, 2016. The contemporary 'zones' are often at the heart of the city and not in geographical margins.

However, the imagery of *La Zone* has continued to surface since then until today, both in the French planning and policy discourse and in the media. Designated yet again to the margin of Paris and other cities, it is now the Banlieue (suburbs) and their often poor, disaffected, mainly North African immigrants (Dikec 2007). This term, however, is also used by some of the inhabitants of the Banlieue, and as Silverstein (2004) notes, following De Certeau (1984), the term is also used by the inhabitants of these 'zones' as "appropriation of self-designations" reflecting "a willingness to transform negative characteristics into positive attributes of social differentiation" (2004, pp.20–21). But in this case, things are more complicated. The Zone is often known as "Little Morocco" (Downs 2002, p.122) and its inhabitants are tainted with the colonial imagery of the Orient. The inhabitants of the new Zone, the Banlieue, many of whom or whose ancestors arrived from the former colonies, have been tainted now with the derogatory imagery, not of the Orient itself, as such a discourse would be obscure if not racist, but by the imagery of the old zone and its *lumpenproletariat*[10], at times exotic, at times non-existing, and often seen as a threat, and always outside any socio-political context, outside politics (Quadrelli 2007).

4.d.   Summary

Portraying parts of cities as sites of physical and/or moral decay, of economic and/or social disorganisation, as places to avoid, has intended or implicit policy consequences – clearance, clean-up, redevelopment. Portraying certain groups in the city as people to be feared, blacks, gays, youths, the homeless, immigrant youths, Aborigines, Jews, and so on, also has intended policy consequences, from police sweeps, to increasing the hardware of surveillance, to

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10   The people who forms the ragged proletariat or the underclass according to Karl Marx (Marx & Engels 2005, p.xxvi)

defensive architectural then design practices. (Sandercock & Lyssiotis 2003, pp.123–124). As Sandercock and Lyssiotis noted above, and as I described through the genealogy of the 'dead zone' and the cases presented in this chapter, the 'dead zone', rather than denoting a particular space with its own spatial, geographical, aesthetic or historical traits, is a term that is enforced on spaces inhabited by marginalised people. It is used both in colonial and gentrification frameworks, often for the justification for such agendas.

In this part of the research I have tried to excavate the buried histories of places that the hegemony has marked as 'dead zones'. In part B of the thesis, I will try to look at contemporary spaces that have been marked with this imagery and try to refute it. To do so, I will have to develop alternative methods to investigate these spaces and I will have to shift the perspective from the hegemonic gaze to a more engaged ways that incorporates the marginalised communities that inhabit these zones.

Part B: The Architecture of Transgression – Site Research and Analysis

Architects seem to have established and dogmatized an ensemble of significations, as such poorly developed and variously labelled as 'function', 'form', 'structure' or rather, functionalism, formalism, and structuralism. They elaborate them not from the significations perceived and lived by those who inhabit, but from their interpretation of inhabiting. It is graphic and visual, tending towards metalanguage. It is graphism (sic.) and visualization. Given that these architects form a social body, they attach themselves to institutions, their system to end to close itself off, impose itself and elude all criticism. There is a cause to formulate this system, often put forward without any other procedure or precaution, as *planning* by extrapolation.

<div align="right">Lefebvre 1996, p.152</div>

Extrapolation is maybe the best word to describe a genealogical practice. It is to conjure various places from different times, through various perspectives (architectural, planning, political, social, economic and so on), and it is through this that I wove the story of the 'dead zone'. No doubt, there was a risk in such an endeavour since I knew where the story began but I had no idea where it would end. I also applied this risky methodology in my site research, which I will present in this chapter. The site research was planned literally as a *dérive* – a term I will discuss later on. Referring to Lefebvre's argument above, I would say that this risky un-methodological methodology was an attempt to escape the closed off

system and the metalanguage. As such, and for other reasons that will be detailed further, the methodologies used here can be defined as engaged research, which "is about the mediation of language and pluralism in means – ways to make sense of social history and efforts to transform it" (Chevalier, Buckles 2013, p.7). Engaged research argues that knowledge cannot be without experience, the experience of being. As such engaged research methods "support thinking grounded in the will to live, an exercise in curiosity that shows care and compassion for other people, forms of life and things that exist and populate the universe" (Ibid., p. 66). Such research acknowledges the multiple constructions of reality and seeks a framework to acknowledge and promote this multiplicity (Ibid.). The approach to the research is also informing the writing methodology of this thesis.

In the site research I will present here, I have attempted to present other perspectives on the 'dead zones', or more accurately, as I before through genealogy, to refute the mere existence of such zones as real sites, rather than an imagery conjured by the hegemony. To do that I have immersed in the everyday life in this 'zones' through interactions with the communities who inhabit it, through various modes of walking, and through engaged photography. Lastly I argue that the finding of this research could not have been represented by descriptive text that gives, literally, an overview of the findings. I choose to use narrativity, fragmentation through excessive quotations and leaping to different sites in different cities, interviews, personal accounts, and extensive photography produced in the form of collages. As I show in the last chapter of this part of the thesis, such representation not only bring about a accurate knowledge but also reveals, the void in knowledge that was caused by the lack of direct experience. Therefore the written and visual documentation of my experiences in such spaces have been crucial to this thesis.

CHAPTER 5:

Sight Apparatuses: Photographic practices - From Ruin Porn to Engaged Photography

"… despite the presumption of veracity that gives all photographs authority, interest, seductiveness, the work that photographers do is no generic exception to the usually shady commerce between art and truth. Even when photographers are most concerned with mirroring reality, they are still haunted by tacit imperatives of taste and conscience."

Sontag 1979, pp.3–4

I have shown earlier how the myth of Tel Aviv as a city that grew out of the sand was constructed through the erasure of the Palestinian past. Above all, it was a photograph, taken on 11 April 1909, by Avraham Soskin, depicting the parcelling out and designation of the land to the future families of the Hazuat Bit – which considered as the foundation of Tel-Aviv. This photograph, as I will discuss here, shows the subject and non-neutral nature, of photography. The area on which Ahuzat Bayit was built was known as Karm al-Jabali (the vineyard of the al-Jabali family). Karm al-Jabali was perhaps, at the time, not cultivated, and maybe covered partially by sand dunes, but in a picture from 1909 that appeared in Shchori's book (1990) *The Dream Turned to a Metropolitan*, under the caption "the levelling of Ahuzat Bayit area by a group of Jewish construction workers," vine plants can be seen clearly.

This evidence might explain the reason why, despite the legal purchase of the land by a few Jewish families from Jaffa from the heirs of the landowner, a group of local Bedouins protested. Moreover, there were already several other neighbourhoods which had already been detached from the Palestinian city of Jaffa and bordered the site of Ahuzat Bayit, including farm-lands, train tracks, the German Templar colony, the mixed Jewish Arab neighbourhood of Manshiyyeh and the Jewish neighbourhoods, established in the 1880s, Neve Tzedek and Neveh Shalom (today Kerem HaTimanim). Despite all that, it was this photograph that established the myth. The image shows the group of the future inhabitants standing huddled together in what seems to be an endless expanse of sands dunes. This image was explicitly and implicitly burned into the collective consciousness of the city, cementing the idea that, despite the name of the site, the vineyard of al-Jabali was indeed just sand (LeVine 2005; Rotbard 2005). This image of sand had to be staged carefully, considering the other image where the vines could be clearly seen, as well as the nearby Palestinian villages, the older Jewish neighbourhoods, the agricultural land and the train station terminal, all just a few hundred metres away. The photo must have been taken from a south-easterly position pointing towards the northwest in the direction of the sea. Any slight change in position would have captured either Manshiyyeh neighbourhood in the south-west, Neve Tzedek and Jaffa in the south, or agricultural land in the east and north. Moreover, the span of the image both from top to bottom and from left and right is small; the horizon line is set on the tightly packed group, with hardly anything to the left or right of the group. It could be, as Rotbred (2005) argued, that this image alone established Hazuat Bit, rather than the older Jewish neighbourhood outside Jaffa, as the origin of Tel Aviv, and in turn, established also the myth of the city that grew out of the sand, in an empty and desolated space.

Illustration 17: Lot 21: Avraham Soskin (1909). Grapevine shrubs behind a group of construction workers in Ahuzat Bayi, Musée Eretz Israel, Tel Aviv.

If language is what sets the boundaries of the (discourse of the) 'dead zone', vision is what sets the discourse's basis. The dead zone as Abstract Space (Lefebvre 1974/1991) is based on an imagery taken out of any historical context and produced as complete, neutral and real. The apparatuses of the optical, as he described "robs reality of meaning by dressing it in an ideological garb that does not appear as such, but instead gives the impression of

Illustration 18: Avraham Soskin, depicting the parcelling out and designation of the land to the future families of the Hazuat Bit.

being non-ideological (or else 'beyond ideology')" (Lefebvre 1991, p.317).

Even before and above the intentions of using vision for political ends, vision has more fundamental effects. The fundamental operation of vision, as a mental construct and as the product of mechanical apparatus, is to create a distance between the subject and the object, which in turn portrays the object as a constant, a whole and as Other. According to Michel de Certeau (1984), vision constitutes not only the object but also the subject: "It

constructs an incorporeal subject, turning it into a God or a 'pure viewpoint and nothing more'. The voyeur-god created by this fiction […] disentangle(s) himself from the murky intertwining daily behaviours and make himself alien to them" (Ibid., p.93). In turn, the object (the city and its populace) becomes "a representation, an optical artefact. […] It is the analogue of the facsimile produced, through a projection that is a way of keeping aloof, by the space planner urbanist, city planner or cartographer. The panorama-city is a 'theoretical' (that is, visual) Simulacrum, in short a picture, whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and misunderstanding of practices" (Ibid.).

5.a.   The Blind Spot of Photography

For a long time, photography has ceased to be understood as an objective means for gaining knowledge. However, in architecture research, photography is still used simply as a means for, supposedly, objective documentation (Borden 2007), even when photography, as an apparatus that is dependent on a willing subject, both for its undertaking and its reading, could never be conceived as objective or as a tool for gaining objective knowledge. Contemplating the possibility of capturing everyday life in photographs, advertisements and films, in order to negate the misconception of space by philosophy, Lefebvre argues that the image is more likely to reinforce misconceptions rather than to reveal them because they are fragmented and they are subjected to photographers' pre-misconceptions:

> "[…] images fragment; they are themselves fragments of space. Cutting things up and rearranging them, decoupage and montage — these are the alpha and omega of the art of image-making. As for error and illusion, they reside already in the artist's eye and gaze, in the photographer's lens, in the draftsman's pencil and on his blank sheet of paper. Error insinuates itself into the very objects that the artist discerns, as into the sets of objects that he selects. Wherever

there is illusion, the optical and visual world plays an integral and integrative, active and passive part in it. It fetishizes abstraction and imposes it as the norm. It detaches the pure form from its impure content — from lived time, everyday time, and from bodies with their opacity and solidity, their warmth, their life and their death. After its fashion, the image kills. In this it is like all signs." Lefebvre 1991, pp.96–97.

The problematic relation of photography to reality has been raised since the first days of photography (Baudrillard 2000; Buck-Morss 1989; Giblett & Tolonen 2012; Pallasmaa 2005). Using images as a source of reading space is problematic due to numerous reasons: the fact that the photo captures a small fragment of space and time, that it is subjective and selective. As a source for research it is almost always mediated by caption, or on the contrary, it lacks any; the photo which we 'find' is usually already framed by a curator, editor, archivist, in a specific context and has received some interpretation. Therefore photographs of 'Dead Zones' cannot be seen as a mare documentation but as part of the construction of such 'zones'.

The interest of photographers in ruins is as old as the invention of the camera. Photography, of course, was not the first medium to put ruins on stage but photographic mass production has made the image of the ruin more accessible and even popular (Yablon 2010). Since the 1970s, post-industrial zones, inner city decay, urban fringes have been a recurrent theme and have become increasingly so since then (Dillon 2011; Giblett & Tolonen 2012; Huyssen 2006; De Solà-Morales 1995). I would argue that ruins and wastelands are particularly interesting to photographers since they are the only places where they can capture a glimpse of the past and the materialisation of time. At the same time, the ruin displays the present and the future of our present. The ruin takes us out of time, and the photograph of the ruin does even more so. Another paradox that bonds photography and the

ruin is that they both present absence. The authenticity of the ruin – "this is how it was" - is embedded in what is not there anymore, and the authenticity of the photograph is formed by the eradication of everything (the historical context, the reasons for photographing the ruin, etc.) apart from subjected object (Baudrillard 2000).

This process, both in the viewing of the ruins and of the photograph, puts us in a place where we are the agent who imagines the missing pieces. Another aspect that mirrors photography and ruin is fragmentation: the ruin and photography are both fragments that produce a new order and it is photography that freezes this process and enables us to recognise the new order produced by the ruin. Lastly, both photography and ruin wiggle between 'function' and 'dysfunction', between purpose – usefulness, i.e. architecture and non-use or just aesthetic, i.e. art. As photography always depicts what is *not* there anymore, and it always captures a fragment of reality, it might be argued that the photograph is always and only of ruins. To be able to see beyond the photograph, photography needs to act differently. I will come back to this shortly, but before, I would like to consider one important example of the important role of photography in the 'discourse of the dead zone'.

'Terrain Vague' has been maybe the most evocative and popular term to describe what seemingly are abandoned, empty, often derelict, spaces. The term was the title of a paper, given by the architect and theoretician, Ignasi de Solà-Morales (1995) at the *Anyspace* conference in 1994. In this paper, he discusses seemingly new types of vague urban spaces that he analyses through the representation of them by several photographers in the 1970s. De Solà-Morales is aware of the problematic nature of analysing urban spaces from photographs, stating that although photography is constructed by "[t]he manipulation of the objects captured by the camera – framing, composition, and detail…," nonetheless the photographic image is a medium "through which we form value judgments about these seen or imagined places" (De Solà-Morales 1995, p.119). De Solà-Morales justifies the use of images in research on urban spaces by arguing that it is simply not possible in many cases to

achieve non-mediated experience of architecture and of the city, because we cannot always visit these places, and, even if we can, our impression is 'constructed' by the circulation of images of them in the media. Therefore, he states "[…] the imprint of the photographic […] continues to be primordial for our visual experience of the city" (Ibid., p.118). While I agree that photography can teach us some things about the city, and the photographer's perception of it, photography, or any other visual apparatus, cannot be the sole source from which we study urban space. Secondly, if we do use photography as a referent, we need to know how to read those images carefully.

It is hard to understand therefore how an article that was based on a sketchy visual analysis of photos has become so popular and a base for many other claims about the vagueness of urban spaces, and that the term 'Terrain Vague', which he coined for these urban spaces, has become one of the most known and influential synonyms of the 'dead zone' in postmodern discourse (Jansson & Lagerkvist 2009; Barron & Mariani 2013; Sassen 2006). De Solà-Morales depicts 'Terrain Vague' as "void, absence, yet also promise, the space of the possible, of expectation" (1995, p.120). But the vague statements he ascribes to them wear thin as he continues to define them. They are seemingly "internal to the city yet external to its everyday use" and they are "industrial areas, railway station, ports, unsafe residential neighbourhoods, and contaminated places […] [and] Unincorporated margins, interior islands void of activity, oversights, these are simply un-inhabited un-safe, un-productive" (Ibid., p.120). What is being made clear by this list is that the inclusion of so many different spaces, and again, the contradiction within their description, creates a vague definition rather than indicating a specific space, which is vague. The vagueness originates in the external and detached photographic perspective of these spaces but also elsewhere. As he confesses: "Strangers in our own land, strangers in our city, we inhabitants of the metropolis feel the spaces not dominated by architecture are reflections of our own insecurity, of our vague wanderings through limitless spaces that, in our position external to the urban system,

to power, to activity, constitute both a physical expression of our fear and insecurity and our expectation of the other, the alternative, the utopian, the future" (Ibid., p.121). While admitting that this position leads to his awareness "of the need to live with other, with the other" he escapes, if only through photographic representation, to the seemingly "Empty, abandoned space" (Ibid., p.119).

I would like to interpret this passage not as a confession of some "inhabitant of the metropolis" but as the view of an architect, after the collapse of modernism, whose position has become external to that of the mainstream view and has found himself marginalised. The anxiety he feels (but projects onto the photographers who are attracted to these zones), he relates rather to his comfortable position (professional, white, middle class, male), this is "[…] anxiety regarding all that protects him from anxiety, the need to assimilate the negativity whose eradication is seemingly the social objective of political activity…". Contemplating the marginal space from a prevailing and safe position he admits that "safety summons up the life or risk" (Ibid., p.121) and this is what drives him to these 'Terrains Vague'. I would argue that this is also what drives him to portray these spaces as 'dangerous' and 'empty'. This is not a new theme of course. Another confession of a 'middle class' man who repents for defying his parents, then leaves the comfort and stable well-off family home to travel the seas comes to mind – i.e. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

When De Solà-Morales ends his anxious detour across the postmodern self, he concludes that the photographs, rather than representing certain urban spaces, are representing the condition of strangeness (1995, p.122), viewing them as an act of looking at the mirror. Reading or looking at something, we always, more than anything else, see our reflection in it. But something terrifying happened when the architect looks at 'transgressive zones'. He cannot see his own reflection in that space. De Solà-Morales is aware of this and even protested against the effect of this position, which leads to the "violent transformations" by architects. Even before any design proposals, the marking of a space as empty and dead is

already causing some transformation. It is part of the design apparatus of clearing spaces in preparation for design that discards anything that was there before. As was shown elsewhere, rhetorical incisions come before any action is taken, and actions cannot take place without them (Carter 2010). The demarcation of space, even just by naming it, kills any possibility for a true alternative. And that is what photography usually does. It frames, delimits and organises space. Can photography do otherwise? To be fair, it must be stated that none of the photographs that accompany De Solà-Morales' article are empty. In some of them, one can also see clearly caravans and train wagons in which, at that time, houseless people used to live.

Leaving aside the partial and inattentive reading of the photographs, the more fundamental problem with De Solà-Morales' assertions is that they are based on an uncritical and 'naturalist' reading of photography. He remarks that the photograph always harbours some manipulation and he still treats photography as documentation, and construes from photographs about the city. With this in mind, I would like to consider what photographs can teach us about the city in general and about these particular spaces in particular. Also, how should researchers who use the camera undertaking fieldwork take photos or use photography? I will start with a discussion of critical positions regarding the contemporary photography of the 'dead zones' and the perception of much of the work as porn.

5.b.   Ruin Porn: from Vagueness to Overexposure in Photographic Depiction of the 'No-Man's Lands'

As mentioned by De Solà-Morales (1995), photographers from the 1970s have been attracted to the subject of the 'dead zone'. However, recently the documentation of such spaces has gained much criticism and has been doubted, exemplified well in the provocative term "Ruin Porn" (Morton 2009). Ruin Porn refers to certain modes of photography of and writing about

contemporary ruins. Ruin Porn essentially refers to photographs and reportage that have some of the conventions of mainstream pornography: it is single-minded and geared towards a particular end, and whilst it often zooms in, it stays distant - emotionally, socially and politically; it is not 'real' or 'realistic' but it pretends to be; it ascribes a specific use to specific body parts, it fragments (the body) and privileges certain parts; it portrays the (female) body as lacking (a phallus), as seductive and as such 'calling' for its completion (Kaite 1995; Hoogland et al. 2014).

The term was coined, in particular, for modes of documentation of Detroit's devastated built environment – a result of local and global capitalism, suburbanisation, poor and at times corrupt city management, modernist urban planning, faulty micro-economic management and "white flight" as a result of racism. Ruin Porn was first mentioned in 2009, in an article by Thomas Morton (2009) in *Vice* magazine. In the article, he interviewed a local journalist, James Griffioen, who was escorting many outsiders who had come to see "the poster child of urban decay" (Gallagher 2010). Lamenting the influx of ruin seekers, Griffioen stated: "The photographers are the worst. Basically, the only thing they're interested in shooting is ruin porn" (Morton 2009). Photography which can be described as Ruin Porn could be of a journalistic/documentary nature or art photography that does not clearly take responsibility for what it is creating and what effects the results have. It is photography that concentrates on a narrow visualisation of dilapidating structures, often in spectacular ways without portraying the underlying currents that brought about situation about. As with porn production, the image and what the photographer would like to gain from the image is set in advance and the scenery is set or manipulated to reflect those desires and needs, for example of producing uncanny and/or dramatic effect. It does so by various means (dramatic angles, high contrast, manipulation of colours etc.) and other aesthetic conventions of beautification, which are usually used in, for example, commercial/advertising photography. All this is done for commercialisation, disregarding

any other purposes photography in such an environment might have. Needless to say, ruin porn lacks interest in the population that lives among these ruins, and the parts that are not in ruins at all. Lastly, others, not the ones who reside in the place, make ruin porn for consumption. It is important to acknowledge that some of the features assigned to 'ruin porn' are not at all unique to it and are fundamental to the medium of photography, yet these attributes are intensified.

In the article named: 'Something, Something, Something Detroit: Lazy journalists love pictures of abandoned stuff', Morton describes some of the tactics used in producing the "right image" of Detroit:

> "There's a total gold-rush mentality about [Detroit] right now, and all the excitement has led to some real lapses in basic journalistic ethics and judgment. Like the French filmmaker who came to Detroit to shoot a documentary about all the deer and pheasants and other wildlife that have been returning to the city. After several days without seeing a wild one he had to be talked out of renting a trained fox to run through the streets for the camera…"

Other methods used by photographers have been less extreme but no less problematic, for example popularising the image of the outstanding derelict Central Station that was shut down in the 1980s because of its owner's bankruptcy which has nothing to do with the conditions that deteriorated Detroit which had begun much earlier. Moreover, being so spectacular, the derelict building, Griffioen mentioned, was hardly ever empty:

> "For a derelict structure, it's kind of a happening spot. Each time I passed by I saw another group of kids with camera bags scoping out the gate. When I finally ducked in to check it out for myself, I had to wait for a lady artist from Buffalo, New York, whose shtick is taking

> nude portraits of herself in abandoned buildings, to put her clothes back on. Afterward I was interrupted by a musician named Deity who was making a video on the roof."

The people, from the homeless to artists and others, who use these spaces are hardly ever included in these pictures, nor are the rest of the residents of the city (Morton 2009). When people who reside in these spaces are acknowledged, it is usually because of their isolated but evocative acts of resistance, overlooking the vast political and social forces that created these spaces and work against a real transformation of them (Leary 2011). Sometimes, like in porn, the tactics of erasure are much simpler. Morton (2009) gives another example of a photographic tactic to produce the desirable effect, which suggests the tactic used in the photography of the foundation of Tel Aviv that I mentioned before. Showing his own photograph of a large expanse of wasteland, Griffioen explains: "Climbing a hillock for a better view of the grassy wastes surrounding Jane Cooper Elementary School. If you move the camera just a few inches to the left you'll get a bustling, well-maintained food-packaging plant in frame, so be careful to crop that shit out" (Ibid.).

The writers mentioned above and others seem to refer the term Ruin Porn to photo-journalistic and documentary photography (Hoogland et al. 2014). They consider these photos sensational, misleading and exploitative, and the photographers detached and cynical. Art photography, even if it makes clear that is it is not aiming to represent the reality of/in these places, is still susceptible to many of the pitfalls mentioned above. Leary (2011), in his critique of Ruin Porn, mentions in particular the photography work of Andrew Moore and the French photographers Marchand and Meffre (2010). What unites them, apart from the fact that they are collaborative works, is their depiction of Detroit as an allegory for the uncanny and over-dramatisation: the angles are sharp, the lighting seems almost staged, the chosen indoor spaces are large and theatrical (bell rooms, churches, lobbies of office buildings). As

such, and lacking any substantial textual information, they do not deliver much knowledge. The dramatisation also robs them of the everyday life in and around them. When people are caught in the camera lens, which is rare, they are almost always shown from a distance, emotionally and physically.

Spaces empty of people is not unique to Ruin Porn. Take for example Eugene Atget's photographs of Paris in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Nesbit 1994). His empty spaces, as Benjamin noted (2008, pp.29&295; Buck-Morss 1989) are like evidence for a crime - as with most evidence, they are mundane, boring, unexceptional and they "begin to be evidence in historical trial. This constitutes their hidden political significance" (Benjamin 1936/2008, p.27). As such they demand a specific kind of reception and "[f]ree-floating contemplation is no longer appropriate to them. […] As such they lose their cult value and with that their Aura" (Ibid., p.27). In contrast, it can be said that these photographs of Detroit bring back the aura. Firstly because of the way in which they represent these places, and secondly because of their artistic intentions and their circulation in the art market. The only thing that they deliver is the sense of near natural disaster.

And this is what photographs like the *The Ruins of Detroit* (Marchand & Meffre 2010) do – they normalise, and by that eliminate, the processes that brought the ruination of Detroit. This obliteration leads to the feeling that these photographs lack any narrative: "This comes partly from the awkwardness of the photographers' aestheticism and postmodern detachment which jars with the social violence of the history being depicted, and it's partly down to their lack of interest in the human inhabitants of the city" (John Patrick Leary 2011). When you read the short explanation on the project website it does not get better: "Detroit presents all archetypal buildings of an American city in a state of mummification. Its splendid decaying monuments are no less than the Pyramids of Egypt, the Coliseum of Rome, or the Acropolis in Athens, remnants of the passing of a great Empire" (Marchand &

Meffre 2010). Mummies? Pyramids? The Acropolis? "Splendid decaying"? I do not even know where to start scrutinising these fraudulent comparisons.

But maybe in the face of the ruins of modernity and the devastating effects of global rancid capitalism, that is the only possible reaction – escapism. Escapism disguised as art. Benjamin, in 'A Short History of Photography', remarks that

> "When photography takes itself out of context […] when it frees itself from physiognomic, political, and scientific interest, it becomes creative. [...] The more far-reaching the crisis of the present social order, and the more rigidly its individual components are locked together in their death struggle, the more the creative…becomes a fetish, whose lineaments live only in the fitful illumination of changing fashion… The world is beautiful—that is its watchword."
> Benjamin 2005, p.526.

Ruin Porn can tell us more about artistic conventions, about (mis)representation, about the fundamental complexities of documentation, about the art market and so forth, but it does not tell us about the social and everyday life of the subject it pretends to expose and bring to light. I would like to discuss now other modes of photography, some of which I used in my research, that enable us to engage in a more complex way with the subject, which might be more constructive when researching spaces.

5.c   Socially Engaged Photography

The critique above comes from the understanding that photography is a complex process and not a straightforward manufacture of images. As Palmer (2013) noted: "[…] photographic images are produced not solely by the lonely eye, or the black box of the camera (or now an interaction with software) but through an engagement with worlds that are collectively

produced and experienced. While it is now widely understood that a photograph's meaning is shaped by its social context of reception, we still seem to repress thinking about its context of production" (Ibid., p.124). Bearing in mind the drawbacks mentioned before regarding the use of photography as a research tool in general and especially when researching 'transgressive space', photography still offers us a way to capture elements which are more difficult or sometimes impossible to notice or remember in a comprehensive way when on-site. Whilst it cannot be used to document reality, it can be used to retain our memories relating to it. But what kind of memories do we gain? As already mentioned, photography and architecture/planning are dominated by the disembodied position of vision (Pallasmaa 2005). The fundamental relationship we need to consider, I would argue, is not the division between photography and unmediated observation, but between vision and engagement, which is more complex. I believe that this complexity can be found in the practices of engaged photography.

'Socially engaged photography' is not a new concept, and it can be traced to the work of some of the earliest photographers, for example; Atget's documentation of Paris' rag pickers and of the Zoners, Jacob Riis documentation of the tenements of the impoverished in New York, Lewis Hine's photography of child labour, and later, the USA Farm Security Administration photography group (Marien 2006). While these projects can be seen as straightforward documentation, the level of engagement with the photographed subject put these in another category (Giblett & Tolonen 2012; Bogre 2012; Palmer 2013). In the past decade or so, taking a cue from changes in art practices, 'Socially Engaged Photography' has taken different meaning. Socially Engaged Art, or Socially Engaged Practices are art practices in which the traditional dichotomy between the artist and the viewer is erased. It includes active participation in or collaboration in the creation or the realisation of the work with non-artists. In such art, the process of collaborative creation and the dynamics are as important as the end results. By definition, Socially Engaged Art takes into consideration,

critically, wider aspects – economic, social, and political and the power relations between the various agents in the process of artistic production. Socially Engaged Photography as a term is loosely connected to photographers who have taken interest in social and political conditions since the 1950s and particularly in the late 1970s in England (Tormey 2013a). However, the term, in contemporary use, is also related to the practice of photography – by an individual or collaboratively, where the collaboration is with the subject – often non-photographers, and marginalised communities (Davies 2014).

What I refer to as engaged photography is directly associated with Bell Hooks' term 'engaged pedagogy' (Hooks 1994). In an educational context, the term means a practice that changes the detached and disembodied position of the teacher to a more tangible and vulnerable one, a position of a whole person who, in the classroom as a teacher, is "present in mind, body and spirit" (1994, p.21). This position transgresses many of the traditional boundaries between the teacher and the students. Consequently, 'Engaged Photography' will conflate the relationship of the photographer to the space of photography, the photographer and her objects, and the spaces in which the photographs will be exhibited (or archived) and usually marketed. As if "socially engaged photography can be viewed as a sort of archaeological endeavour that strives to piece together forgotten histories. It is an act of digging between established space in order to uncover unseen, forgotten ones" (Nair 2012, pp.182–3). Engaged photography, then, is a sort of archaeology of the present. It photographs the apparatus of forgetfulness. Considering and complicating these relationships opens a space that is much wider than the space-moment of the snapshot and its results – the photograph (Cagan 1995). At once, it can release the photo from the controlling and subjective gaze of the photographer and the hegemony (Azoulay 2008). Engaged photography "facilitates a collaborative process of meaning making" through photographic practices (Palmer 2013, p.120).

5.d.   Catalogue of Traces

The photographer I refer to here is a researcher that uses photography as a research tool and for demonstration. Bearing in mind that photography is not and cannot be an objective endeavour, and that my thesis aims to refute the credibility of discourse of the 'dead zone', my camera lends its aim to capturing 'signs of life' or even just 'traces of life' and to understand what kind of life is in the 'zone'. To find these traces and to document them, I had to go through at times lengthy and/or repetitive meandering in the sites of research. Yes, vision is still at work here, but it is a very attentive one. The photographic procedure many times includes zooming in to show the detail and zooming out to show it in context. Once, trying to zoom in on a duck nest, just at the edge of the IJ pier, in the 'deserted' port of Amsterdam, I fell into the water. The nest was not disturbed but as there was about a meter and a half drop from the pier to the water, which I could not climb up.

In New York, to get a full view of the High Line, a few years before its re-development, I had to climb to the top of an office building. To take a close shot of the community garden that was created on the High Line, I had to, with pleasure, drink afternoon tea with the neighbours. I noticed a squatter colony in Kuala Lumpur whilst taking birds-eye view photos from the observatory tower. Going down and into the urban village, a few minutes' walk from Petronas Towers, I zoomed into the gaps between the ground and the floor of the beautiful huts and learned that the gaps were created to prevent water and snakes from entering. No architects were involved in the building of these huts or the village.
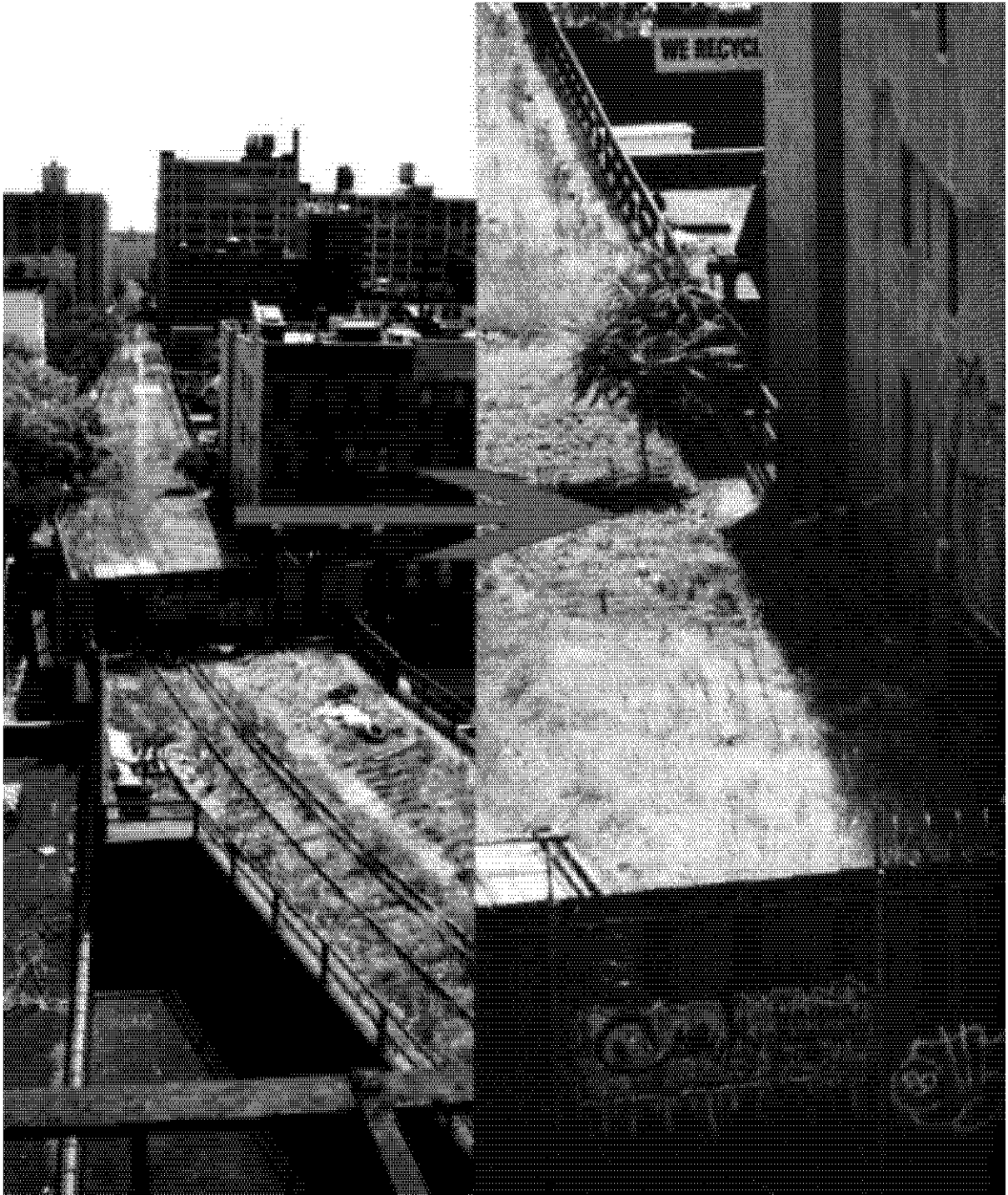
Illustration 19: The High Line, New York, before renovations.

And now, looking at the place in my photos that were taken about 14 years ago, I did an internet search for the place (Kampung Cendana was its unofficial name), wedged between a highway, a cemetery and the 'New World Hotel' on 128 Jalan Ampang. I zoomed in, from the height of the satellite, to discover that the village was no longer there. A big shadow of a newly built tower covered most of the area, which is now covered with green and dotted with some parked cars. I kept looking. In 2003, another photograph showed that the area of camp had already been halved and about twenty huts had been removed. In 2005 there is a photograph that shows a fire in the camp, and the caption says that about eighty huts were burned down. After that the only images and information about Cendana relates to the luxury residential tower that was built on the area of the camp. In any case, I cannot find any photos on the web of the village itself. And I promise to upload these images to a Facebook page that is dedicated to this vanished place. What started this stream of broken narrative pieces was the simple act of zooming out and in, and while this act started as the guiding star, it long ago disintegrated and became a background light. What drives this photography is the desire to engage. The camera becomes just incidental but, as I will show now, also the apparatus for engagement.

Illustration 20: Kampung Cendana viewed from the Observatory Tower, Kuala Lumpur, 2000. The photo shows how the informal village occupies a site which is at once on the margins (of a high way and cemetery) and yet at the heart of the city.

Illustration 21: Kampung Cendana, 2000. While the residents considered to be squatters and the houses looks provisory, the new cars indicates that the villagers are relatively well off.

Illustration 22: The village site, 2013 about 5 years after the village's demolition and the redevelopment of the site.

5.e.   Paraphotography: Photography as Performance

Paraphotography designates the space-time in which engaged photography transgresses other photographic methods and holds its distinctiveness. The term 'paraphotography' refers to alternative developing processes which do not involve the use of silver-halide. It marks the attempts, in the early days of photography, to broaden the spectrum of artistic photographic practices. Here, I use 'paraphotography' to indicate a range of photographic practices that place emphasis not on the final image but on the process – on new ways of 'taking photos'. Ideally the realisation of such ways will be evident in the photographs, and will suggest that another kind of engagement took place around the time the photos were taken, that sometimes a series of photographs rather than just one, or a caption or a text will complete the picture. The engagement is an event and it always involves some kind of performance. The act of photography usually involves some degree of performativity from the fashion photographer who entices certain expression and moods from the model, to a 'selfie' in which we are acting for our 'friends' on Facebook. As stated by Haldrup & Larsen (2009) in relation to tourist's photography: "[…] photographs are rarely the outcome of a quick shutter release. For instance, bodies of photographers that stand erect, kneel, bend sideways, forwards and backwards, lean on ruins, and lie on the ground are constantly visible at tourist attractions" (Ibid., p.126).

Whilst the ones who take photos for non-professional purposes might or might not be aware of their performative acts and how they influence the image taken, it is essential that researchers who use photography gain this awareness in order to understand the part the performance plays in the production of the photograph and the influence this performance and engagement have on the subject, and to be able to utilise performativity and the engagement with the subject (be it human, non-human or any kind of scenery) that it engenders. Whilst this is true in any kind of photography, digital photography has even more performative potential since, as it often done, it engenders a kind of participatory process: the

photographer shows the photograph that was just taken to the subject which often leads to a discussion of the quality of representation, and sometimes a request to delete the photo and take another (Haldrup & Larsen 2009).

While it is clear that performance takes place in any photographic processes, paraphotography is photography in which the photographer is consciously utilising performance for various ends. Take, for example, the use of the camera by activists. Holding cameras up in the face of the police and other state agencies is used not only as a way to document brutalities but also as a way to prevent such acts in the first place. This common practice shifts the photographer's position from an observer to a participant and sometime initiator of the photographed event, and vice versa. The activist who uses the camera positions her/himself as a photographer (and as such, to some degree, is considered, even subconsciously, to have some degree of immunity). In other instances, the camera acts in completely the other way, not as a pacifier, but as an antagonistic tool that, nonetheless, enables communication. Paraphotography is the space in which non-verbal communication occurs at the time of taking the photograph. Paraphotography not only lengthens the time before the 'click', but also broadens the depicted space and subjects, i.e. showing the space behind the camera and/or the photographer him/herself. The term paraphotography is used because of its verbal connotations with *paraliterature* – Rosalind Krauss (1986) uses it for texts that border theory and literature: "The paraliterary space is the space of debate, question, partisanship, betrayal, reconciliation; but it is not the space of unity, coherence, or solution that we think of as constituting the work of literature. […] [Paraliterature] is 'about' its own strategies of construction…" (Ibid., p. 292).

Paraphotography invests in and exposes the apparatus that represents and produces the photographed subject. It is often 'activist photography', with a clear set of political agendas (perhaps including, but definitely not limited to, internal criticism of fields of art and media). For example, the Israel-Palestinian photography collective, ActiveStills, exhibits

much of its work, informally, in public spaces, in a similar way to the *Docklands Community Poster Project* by Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson in the 1980s in London. Such photography is part of "a framework provided by political activities, campaigns or organizations" (Cagan 1995, p.82). The photographs in this case are "judged primarily in terms of their contribution to these movements" (Ibid.). To a great extent, this kind of photography rejects the 'art industry' and even the notion of photography as art. Not because it cannot be artistic, but because exhibiting the photographs in art institutes changes their meaning and effects (Ibid., p.82).

Whilst this point is less relevant to photographs that are used for research, it should be considered also in the context of how photographs are used and published. Examples of most of the characteristics I relate to paraphotography can be found in my photography in the 'dead zones'. On one of the days spent in Beijing, my translator could not join me in an area, near the Third Ring Road, in which he told me there were remnants of a village that had recently been evacuated. Arriving there, I started to rush through the ruins taking photos like a madman trying to hold on to the reality before it was obliterated by the approaching bulldozers. Suddenly I heard shouts behind me. I turned around and saw a middle-aged man, and an elderly couple approaching with angry looks on their face. I was not sure what to do. They waved their hands to indicate something that obviously looked like "photography forbidden". I thought it was unlikely that they thought that I was a Chinese official who had come to document what else needed to be razed to the ground, but on second thoughts, when they were a few metres away, I remembered that China was already part of the global economy and that these people had already met other members of the free market who have been searching *tabula rasa*. I put down the camera, opened my backpack and took out Blueprint, or another architectural review, which had published an article illustrated with photos of squats and community gardens in Amsterdam, Berlin, New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Images that depict communities striving to survive in face of new developments

and gentrification. The trio looked carefully at the photos. I put my hand on my heart and pointed at the community gardens. They immediately understood and called me to come with them…. The camera here, visibly held in my hand and which had led to consternation, now promoted here a communicative space that only later was filled up with images.

But sometimes this led to none, as happened in Shenzhen. Crossing the border and into this "vitrine[s] for the policy of openness" (Koolhaas 1995, p.312), I asked a taxi driver to take me to places where I could take photos of homeless people. He seemed puzzled and I was not sure if it was my poor English or his, or something more sinister that prompted his subsequent reaction but he nodded and I got in. Driving and stopping, driving and stopping, he was very painstaking in his attempts to stop and ask people if they could understand. Repeatedly, I had to produce my camera and make signs of somebody sleeping in the streets. My poor acting skills caught a lot of attention and finally somebody understood what I was up to. A short sharp order to the taxi driver in Mandarin and the taxi driver was on his way, to the police station. I shouted "no money", he ignored my shaky voice, and after ten minutes stopped in a square with a very tall tower, and said 'Diwang Tower', pointing up to an observatory at the top of what I later found out was the highest tower in the city, and its number one tourist attraction.

Illustration 23: Maxwell Street community gardens, in the background downtown Chicago, 2000.

Illustration 24: Berlin, Wagon Dwellers in the No-Man's Land where the wall used to stand, 2000.

Illustration 25: New York Lower East Side, a squat and community garden, 2000.

Illustration 26: The torn down village in Beijing and its community gardens, 2000.

In Singapore, my camera again opened a very contentious non-verbal communicative space. On a back street in the Indian quarter, I was talking photos of prostitutes who were soliciting outside their unmarked, dull looking brothel. As they noticed me, they called me to approach and while I was doing so, they started to act more flamboyantly. The street started to resemble an underground fashion shoot in downtown L.A. This led, in the end, to me being seized for a lengthy hour, in the brothel itself… In Persidio, San Francisco, at a cruising ground, and at a Reclaim the Street demo in Los Angeles in 2000, and in London, the camera led me to a much-compromised position as a researcher and photographer. There, the camera was the starting-point which extinguished any division between myself, the subject and the scene. In all of these encounters the camera's role as a documentary device that produces representations was negligible or even non-existent. The camera and photography were performatory apparatuses that led to encounters. These encounters opened a hiatus in the photographic act.

Time is a crucial factor, in that paraphotography brings time back into the timeless photograph. This is also how Benjamin described the casting of the aura: "While resting on a summer's noon, to trace a range of mountains on the horizon, or a branch that throws its shadow on the observer, until the moment or the hour becomes part of their appearance – that is what it means to breathe the aura of those mountains, that branch" (Benjamin 1979, p.250). To breathe "the aura" is to bring back time, and temporality, to the photograph. In many of the photos and texts about ruins and industrial ruins, there is a perception that these are capsules of frozen time, where time does not exist. Indeed, that is what ruin porn photography does, and because many, like De Solà-Morales, experience them through photography, frozen time becomes part of their perception. But there is nothing further from the truth. Walking in ruins, something is changing every minute because of the degrading materials; every step echoing in the space causes dry paint to peel off. Stepping in a pool of rainwater caused by the broken window and ceiling, sends ripples that disturb the

cockroaches who fly away, doors which barely hang on their hinges open and close with the slightest wind… rats, cats, bats and other animals disturb the stillness of the place, and the light, because of the broken windows and holes, is forever shifting.

The film *Stalker* by Andrei Tarkovsky (1979) is a seminal description of a 'dead zone' (Dyer 2012). To capture this in photography is hard, almost as hard as capturing the bustling city as an empty space, which Atget did, and as politically motivated (Benjamin 2005; 1994). In her book *Cities and Photography*, Jane Tormey correlates De Certeau's division between observing and walking with two distinct modes of photography: "distant observation or invested engagement; authorial expression or political commentary" (Tormey 2013, p.92). I believe that walking (i.e. physical immersion in these spaces and their communities) and political commitment are the only options for breaking the cycle created by the representation of such spaces in the media in artistic productions as 'dead zones'.
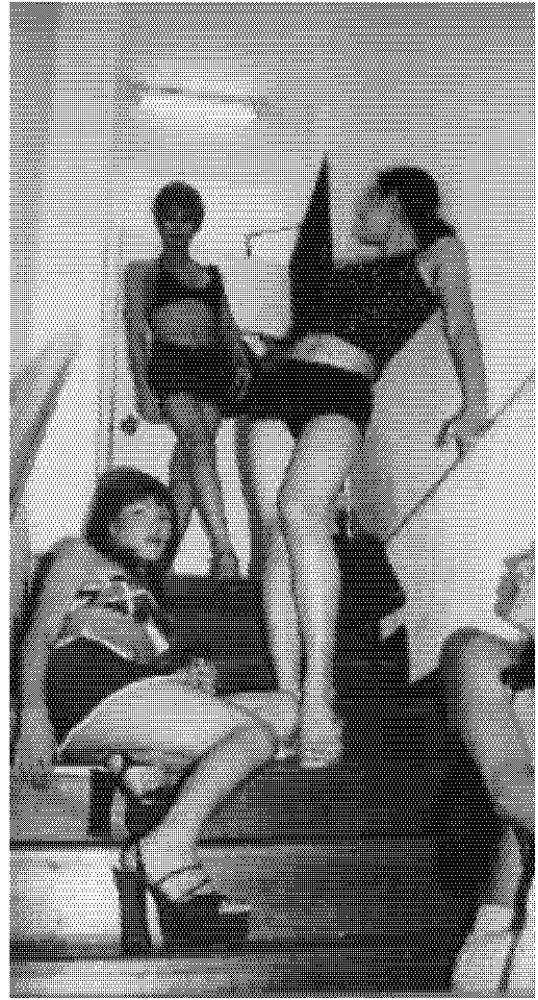
Illustration 27: Singapore, a brothel in the Indian Quarter, 2000.

Illustration 28: Reclaim the Street intervention in Parliament Sq. London, 2000: activists blocking the roads around the square for a street party.

Illustration 29: Reclaim the Street 'Guerrilla Gardening' intervention in Parliament Sq. London, 1999: Activist replacing the turf with fruits and trees and vegetable.

Illustration 30: Detroit: nature claiming back a deserted factory, 2000.

Illustration 32: Ruins in Detroit's inner city neighbourhood, 2000.

Illustration 31: Detroit's Old Train Station, 2000.

Illustration 33: Naples, ruins in the city's east industrial area reclaimed by nature, 2006.

Illustration 34: Interior of one of the floors in Amerika Warehouse, Old Port of Amsterdam, 2000.

CHAPTER 6:

Field Walk: Walking Methodologies - from Observation to an Intervention and to Participation

"I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand. I stood like one thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition. I listened, I looked round me, but I could hear nothing, nor see anything; I went up to a rising ground to look farther; I went up the shore and down the shore, but it was all one; I could see no other impression but that one. I went to it again to see if there were any more…"   Defoe 1719a, pp.137–138.

"The body with the energies at its disposal, the living body, creates or produces its own space; conversely, the laws of space, which is to say the laws of discrimination in space, also govern the living body and the deployment of its energies. […] Bodies - deployments of energy – produce space and produce themselves, along with their motions, according to the laws of space. […] Here then we have a route from abstract to concrete which has the great virtue of demonstrating their reciprocal inherence."   Lefebvre 1991, p.170.

"There is a rhetoric of walking. The art of 'turning' phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path (*tourner un parcours*)…" De Certeau 1984, p.100.

Taking a cue from the example of Ha'Yarkon Estuary, I embarked on a global search to find these zones and travelled to more than 20 cities in the Americas, Europe and Asia (Doron 2001). The method of finding these places was similar to the Situationists' *dérive*: vaguely planned and altered along the way by chance and encounters. I started by looking for

spaces that in some ways resembled Ha'Yarkon Estuary, places where the original use had been abandoned and replaced by various informal activities. These zones would also be somehow suspended from the city physically or temporally. They would shelter marginalised communities.

To trace these spaces, I presented the vague definitions given by the planners to various people, from city planners to people in chat rooms, university students from the cities I visited, writers on similar subjects and people I met in cafes, squats, hostels, and cruising grounds. I was also looking for places where marginalised groups, such as the ones who inhabited Ha'Yarkon Estuary, were living. These spaces seemed to exist in post-modern cities like Los Angeles, Detroit and Mexico, as well as in modern cities like Tel Aviv, and historical ones like London, Rome and Copenhagen. They resided in areas that had previously been residential neighbourhoods (Chicago and Detroit), in military camps (Copenhagen, Beit Dagan), in industrial zones (Rome, Naples and Los Angeles), in harbours (Tel Aviv, Amsterdam, and San Francisco) and in areas of mixed uses (London and Mexico) (Ibid.). As the research progressed, the spatial location and timing of these zones became easier to track, but as with Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979), sometimes the only way to find them was by casting a stone in a random direction and following it on foot…

Walking, even before naming, is fundamental to architecture. Historically, it predates the creation of an architectural space – before architectural construction, inhabitation took place in a cave or a tree or a secure bush, all of which were found through walking. Moreover, walking is an instrument to mark a space, to create a territory, similarly to what plans do on paper and construction on the ground. Even nowadays, it is hard to think about a design practice (from architecture to urban design) that does not commence with an on-foot site-visit. On-foot investigation is usually also a requirement for projects carried out in design studios within schools of architecture. On-foot investigation has a long history which has been described extensively (Coverley 2012; Ewing et al. 2010; Nicholson 2010). Two forms

of walking which also have historical points of reference were used in the site research: one more 'neutral' and observational and the other more engaged and at times performative.

Observational walks can be traced back to the eighteenth century Grand Tour Walking as an apparatus for social observation which began at London and other cities in England (P.J. Keating 1976; Coffey Amanda 2000). Engaged walking, which has more socio-political connotations, can be traced back to the *flâneur* (Benjamin 1940; Frisby 1994) and the *dérive* (Costa et al. 1996; Debord & Knabb 2006; Plant 1992). A walking that is more performative, or walking as an intervention in space has a great place in late modern and contemporary art (Bassett 2004; Evans 2013; O'Rourke 2013). This very sketchy description of walking practices shows that walking is not a singular and fixed practice but is a general term for various ways of travelling, and that peripatetic practice is always involved in inquiry, discovery, intervention, and production of knowledge (Ingold 2004; Ingold 2011).

Another important aspect in this categorisation is to advance understanding of what walking entails: from looking at objects and spaces (aesthetic appreciation) – to the observation of people and social relations in space – to the understanding of how space is constructed by intangible social, economic and political systems and in relation to the self. This later understanding of place, that can be found in the writing of Foucault, Lefebvre, De Certeau and, latterly, Soja, Massey and Harvey and others was prompted by the step away from the binary oppositions of Cartesian dualism – subject and object, mind and body, and concrete and abstract (Prieto 2013). This understanding of space is crucial for my argument that the 'dead zone' is a construct of a discourse and at the same time a real place created both by hegemonic forces and marginalised communities. This understanding of space also has important implications for how places are researched and the position of the researcher in the interpretation of places – all of which I took into consideration in the research methodologies described here.

As a result of this understanding of the complexities of space and place, one would expect an appropriate response in the development of site research methodologies and, chiefly, of walking. Nonetheless, browsing schools of architecture curricula, as part of my *Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Architecture* (University of East London) and as a preparation for this thesis, I could not find any seminar or textbook entitled 'Walking Methodologies' or even, more generally, 'Methodologies for Site-Research'. Nor could I find any textbook on this subject within architectural research and practice. The exception is Careri's Walkscapes (2002), which gives a fascinating history of walking within art and architecture practices. More recently, and much anticipated was the important compilation 'Architecture and Field/Work' (Ewing et al. 2010). However, in both cases, the practice of walking and what it can achieve were discussed only sporadically. This surprising gap in practical knowledge of something that is so basic and important for site-research might be linked to the predominance of vision over corporal experience and to the predominance of the architectural object over the site and the environment in which it is inserted (Ghirardo & Frampton 1991; Pallasmaa 2005; Stevens 2002). A more mundane but related reason might be the frequently limited time and resources given to the development of in depth site-research and to the affiliation of architecture to either art or science & technology (Stevens 2002; Till 2009) and less to human science disciplines such as anthropology and human geography, in which site-research is a central practice. However, if we want to take site-research seriously and even more so, fieldwork, the practice of walking needs more careful attention.

6.a.   First Steps… Don't Forget to Take a Bottle of Water…

The examination of and suggestions for walking methodologies that I will put forward here are based on my own fieldwork that was carried out in a multiplicity of sites in America,

Asia and Europe; on the work with students of *Transgressive Architecture Studio*, and the *Studio for Community Architecture* which I headed for six years in London and Israel, and upon my art practice. While some of the tactics or methodologies of walking presented here seem to be more significant than others, it is important to mention that there are no rules which dictate which mode of walking is better or in which context to use one or another. The decisions I took as to which mode of walking to use, depended on many factors, such as the knowledge I wanted to gain (and/or distribute), the site's spatial configuration (its geography, size, materiality etc.), the expected or unexpected inhabitants and passers-by on the site, my own confidence and feeling of safety (or lack of it) in the site, whether I was walking with a camera or not, on the weather, on what I was wearing and whether I had remembered to take a bottle of water and something to eat.

Common to all the various modes of walking were a few procedures that were useful to follow. Some of them were learned the hard way and in the field. Others were taken from the few texts, mainly from anthropology and ethnography, that offer some guidelines (Russell 2011; Ingold 2008; Plowman 2004). Some of these guides are mundane and practical and others are more general and theoretical. I mention here only the guides for walking itself and not, for example, the preparation and the planning of the fieldwork, which I will discuss later on. First and foremost, it is important to remember that walking, as with many other observational techniques, is an intrusive act. It always involves some power relations and verbal or nonverbal negotiations. One should be prepared for this and sometimes alter one's walk accordingly. This is even truer if we are talking about a group of researchers. For these reasons, it is advisable to take on the walk documentation of the research, publications and letters from the institute. Similarly, other ways to communicate why one is walking in the site, or engaging with other research-related activities are important, for example photographs and videos from other places that relate to the site. In a few instances when I did not have such documentation, it was deemed unsatisfactory or when

I was not given the opportunity to explain, I found myself compromising the research, my safety and once even my life.

Another key factor in gathering knowledge and experience is to try to spend as much time as possible in the site during different times of the day, the week and if possible the year. It is valuable to try different modes of walking and engaging with the site: from passive and observant to interactive and interventionist, alone or in a group. Whilst engaging with people on the site, it is important to be clear of one's intentions, and for what and how the material will be used later one. It should be remembered that whilst the people one meets and talks to, can be sincere and accommodating, they are also entangled in a game of self-representation. This is why, as I will soon discuss, a more interventionist approach to site research, such as going beyond verbal exchange and into mutual experience is often more constructive. Even just walking with others, sharing their step, style and rhythm already creates an affinity, empathy or sense of belonging that is important in the framework of the fieldwork (Pink 2012, p.76).

And when it comes to engagement, this should include attentiveness to the feeling, emotions and desires that one gains, has and expresses in the field - walking reminds us of the subjectivity in our conceptualisation of space and of others: "[…] fieldwork is personal, emotional and identity work. The construction and production of self and identity occurs both during and after fieldwork. In writing, remembering and representing our fieldwork experiences we are involved in processes of self-presentation and identity construction" (Coffey Amanda 2000 in: Ewing et al. 2010, p.1). Therefore, it is not only the field that is the subject of research but also oneself (Plowman 2004). This will enable us to see that while we are affected by being in the field, the field is also affected by us. Hence, the 'site' that initially was a zone out there, becomes liminal. When you leave it, it might not be as it was before, and you might not be the same you as when you entered it (Ingold 2011).

6.b.   Descriptive: History of Walking in Literature and Anthropology

Descriptive walking has as its main aim the production of a text that describes the site of walking or a text that is influenced by the walk. In this category, I will include, for example, literary works by Daniel Defoe (1719), Thomas De Quincy (1821), Charles Baudelaire (1857), Walter Benjamin (2002), W.G. Sebald (2002), Iain Sinclair (Sinclair 2003b), as well as early ethnographies such as by Henry Mayhew, Charles Booth and William Booth, Jack London (Keating, 1976). In fiction as well as in documentation, walking drives the narrative, it helps to advance the plot or engender the data from which texts are sprung. But writing and walking have a much more fundamental relationship. Writing and walking, as design, are spatial practices. They construct space through progression and hiatuses, through inclusion and exclusion, and through constant negotiations with what was before, what they envisage will come after, and with their surroundings: "Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together […] they are not localized; it is rather they that specialize" (De Certeau 1984, p.97).

The speciality of walking is "foreign to the 'geometrical' or 'geographical' space of the visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions" (Ibid., p.93). Walking creates "another spatiality ('anthropological', poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an *opaque and blind* mobility characteristic of the bustling city" (Ibid.). The *migrational, or metaphorical,* space that walking engenders "slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city" (Ibid.). Transported into writing, this 'migrational city' takes its shape often from the mode of walking itself (Coverley 2012; Fischer 2009; Nicholson 2010). This can be seen in the work of the writers mentioned above, in the short narrative-essays that are based on my fieldwork and that accompany this research, and maybe even in the format of this entire thesis – the meandering between real and imaginary spaces, between theoretical and narratives, between the present to the distance past – creating a hazardous landscape where the reader might get lost.

Again, this correlation goes beyond the description or narratives of the walks that were taken on this or that site but it colours the writing itself which can be detached or engaged, fast moving or slow, fragmented, meandering or even lost. For example, my text takes a different detached form when written from a static observation of Kuala Lumpur's Kampung Cendana squatter colony and more meandering, engaging and detailed after walking in the squatters' village alleyways… There was a significant disparity between descriptions engendered by driving through San Francisco's deserted harbour area, and walking there with Steve, a homeless person who made the place his home. Walking generated knowledge that I simply could not have gained otherwise as driving requires much attention on the road and not on its edges. From the car, my gaze was attracted by the savannah-like empty fields and to a huge billboard with an advert of a Tarzan film that generated a connection to other literary depictions of 'dead zones'.

From the car, there was no way that I could have seen the 'alien' camp that was created in a dip in the huge empty lot that nature had reclaimed. From a driving car on the highway that bordered the harbour I could never see the homeless colony that was clinging to the cliff above that highway. Also inaccessible by car was a Thai village, set in the middle of Bangkok, alongside a railway that cut across the village less than a meter from the makeshift houses. The village's gym had to be taken apart and away from the rail tracks about every two hours to let the train pass…

Following in the footsteps of others can also be critical. Following Rem Koolhaas (1995) to Singapore, I found that he had probably never walked there, or at least he had never gotten lost. Overwhelmed by excessive window shopping (another mode of walking mentioned by De Certeau (De Certeau 1984, p.97), I took a wrong turn and found myself in a dead-end alley that had turned into a 'gay cruising' area in a city-state where you can find yourself in jail even if you act on your sexual orientation in a private home. Elsewhere in Singapore, underneath a highway bridge, someone had even opened a 'Fun-Club' and next to

it somebody had installed a small shrine. There are practices that even *tabula rasa* methods of urban planning (Koolhaas 1995; 2010) could not erase. These practices do not need pre-planned space and can take place in the most unlikely spaces. Similarly, some ways of expression, of writing, require their own space, and they construct it even in what is supposed to be the most restrictive space, as a dissertation is. I will walk you through such a text a bit later.

Illustration 35: San Francisco harbour area – signs of border crossing by the nature of the transgressors was obtained only through conversation with a local homeless person.

Illustration 36: San Francisco Highway cliff where Alex created the homeless colony, 2000. Only through conversation with a local homeless person could I have gained this knowledge.

Illustration 37: Singapore 'Fun Club', 2000.

Illustration 38: Bangkok's "Railway Village", 2000. While the peculiar site can be observed from a distant high-rise, the nature of this settlement was gained by conversations.

6.c.   Critical Walk

"*Where* I am makes a difference to *who* I can be and *what* I can know." Jane Randell, 2005.

Walking in a sandy desert, in which the traces of the previous walkers are erased every day, is very different from an urban walk in which it is harder, but not impossible, to stray from regulated paths. Doing *parkour*[11] is different (methodologically) and similar (intentionally) to taking a turtle for a walk in the arcades, a practice that was a fad around the mid-nineteenth century (Benjamin 1999, p.116).

Cruising is the opposite of going to work. There is a difference between a peace march and a military one. Walking on the catwalk is unlike walking in the gallery. Apparently, there is an appropriate mode of walking for every place. Each of the modes mentioned above has its own 'rhetoric': rhythm, pace, body gestures, eye contact, clothing, gear, average time and length, time of the day or the year and the kind and level of interaction with the surroundings. All these modes of walking can be appropriated for research purposes. Certain modes of walking seem to be appropriate to certain spaces or events, and the researcher can acquire knowledge by practising them in the places in which they usually occur. However, using different modes of walking in that place might yield no less interesting results: you can vogue on the way to the supermarket, you can march when you are crossing traffic light, you can *parkour* in a peace march, you can jog in a cruising ground. The change you engender in the site by doing so and what you learn from it are valuable for the research. It is hard to think of a way, if there is one, in which we can know, in advance, which mode of walking is 'better'.

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11   The term 'parkour' was first introduced by David Belle in 1998. *Parkour* derives from the French word *parcours* meaning 'route' or 'course'. It is an activity, or sport, in which one attempts to walk or run regardless or in defiance to any planned routs (walkways, sidewalks, roads etc.). This practice has taken place in urban spaces. *Parkour* involves seeing one's environment in a new way, and imagining the potential for navigating it by movement around, across, through, over and under its features.

The only way I could appraise the material collected on a walk was after the walk and in the analysis of the collected data. The collected data in this case was not only about the site but also about how I felt there and what my reaction to these spaces was. This mode of walking, that is at the same time investigative and experimental (and at times a critique), is linked to the Situationists' theory of *Psychogeography* and the practice of the *dérive*. *Psychogeography*, as defined by Guy Debord is "the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals" (in: Costa et al. 1996, p.22). The importance of *Psychogeography* is mainly formed by its shift from the somewhat disinterested and outward gaze of the *flâneur* to something more inward looking, i.e. paying attention to the ways the environment influences the walkers themselves. In a way, this inquiry can already be found in Thomas de Quincy's (2005) drug fuelled walks, but if De Quincy's aim was to find how the (altered) psyche changes the perception of urban space, the Situationists wanted to find how various spaces affect the psyche. The aim in doing so was in part to find new modes of urbanity, inhabitation and socialisation. *Psychogeography*, in fact, was a critique both on the methods of producing the rational, sterile and regulated city as well as an active rejection of the space that was the result of such production.

While *pyschogeography* was the theoretical framework for this, the *dérive* was the actual method for doing so (Plant 1992, p.58). The *dérive* has its roots in the aimless meandering of the *flâneur*, in the Futurist's public street performances and interventions (Neuberger 1993), and in the Dada and the surrealists' walks to places that "really have no reason for existing" (Ribemont-Dessaignes 1931 in: Pinder 2006, p.54), a kind of automated writing on foot, governed by chance and the subconscious. Inspired by these, the *dérive* was also a critique of these practices. In 'Theory of Dérive' this link to these "unproductive", aimless, and "self-contained" practices is stated clearly by Debord: "In a dérive one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all

their other usual motives for movement and action, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" (in: Costa et al. 1996, p.22). This free meandering itself, however, has a political subtext. Aimless meandering, for example, could not be seen anymore as purposeless because it had become a socio-political statement in an era under utilitarianism and capitalism. The Situationist socio-political stance on urban issues also led them to be, as far as I know, the first group that consciously walked in a 'dead zone'. Their zone was Les Halles, an old market area in the centre of Paris, a disinvested area that was earmarked by Paris' planning authorities for erasure and re-building – a plan that the Situationists opposed fiercely.

Illustration 39: Sammer Hazzan, Parkourist, Acar Israel 2016. *Parkour* is a walking or running practice that negates the planned routes of the city. See footnote 11.

Debord's methods of observation mix research with clear social and political objectives that can be seen in the examples he gives: "slipping by night into houses undergoing demolition, hitchhiking nonstop and without destination through Paris during a transportation strike in the name of adding to the confusion, wandering in subterranean catacombs forbidden to the public, etc." (Ibid., p.24). As it seems, the *dérive* originates in a range of different, if not contrasting practices: aimless strolls, urban research, political and artistic modes of interventions, psychological techniques. The *dérive* has one leg in the planned and constructed journey and the other in fortuitous and seemingly aimless meandering. As a research methodology, it transgresses the boundaries between the objective and the subjective, the political and the personal, between the individual and the city. In doing so, it has the potential to bring diverse and rich knowledge. And again, this knowledge, as in any system of knowledge, is not free of politics. If *psychogeography* is a critique of the supremacy of 'vision' and the discourses and practices that it generates, *dérive* is a critique of urban planning and an attempt to find methods of excavating knowledge about the city that will show the faults in rationalist, capitalist and utilitarian city planning.

As I used *dérive* in my fieldwork, I will first mention a few factors that make the *dérive* a viable method for site-research. These factors might become clearer through a reading of the research narratives that will be presented later as well as in other publications (Doron 2001; 2006; 2008; 2010), but here I would like to summarise them, as they are beneficial to the understanding of the various walking methodologies. The dérive politicises the seemingly neutral and objective walk; it shifts the perspective from optical/visual to haptic and corporeal; it puts emphasis on the surreal, unconscious, and psychological experiences in places. It injects spontaneity or rather the ability to diverge from the 'planned' walk to a reaction to something in the field; as such it is a discursive walk. Most importantly, it does this with the detached and allegedly disinterested gaze of the *flâneur*, and with the

view of the city and of space as a natural, free and fixed. Finally, it paves the way for more transgressive modes of urban walking that I will now discuss.

6.d. Transgressive Walk and Post Criticality

"We did not walk according to a map but towards a map. Yet we never had the illusion that we could control or know the city we had walked around in so long as so relentlessly, or would want to control or know: the walks were never intended as preparations for design or plans."   Wim Cuvers 2010.

Despite their communalities, the Critical Walk and Transgressive Walk can be distinguished in two ways. While Critical Walk invests its critique on the 'methodology' used for understanding the city, Transgressive Walk intervenes in a concrete place and through the reaction to this intervention, we learn about the place. The intervention can vary: it can be in the form of a performance that critiques the boundaries of the space, and it can be a more spontaneous or playful intervention that triggers some reaction or change.

If Critical Walk is associated with the *dérive* and *psychogeography*, Transgressive Walk can be associated with the Détournement and the staging of 'situations'. Détournement is a kind of misappropriation or diversion of pre-existing aesthetic elements: "The integration of present or past artistic production into a superior construction of a milieu. Essentially, détournement is an artistic practice" (Situationist International 1958). At the same time, "clashing head-on with all social and legal conventions, it cannot fail to be a powerful cultural weapon in the service of a real class struggle" (Ibid.). As such it can be used in other mediums – artistic and those that might not be considered as such, and on various scales: "If détournement were extended to urbanistic realisations, not many people would remain

unaffected by an exact reconstruction in one city of an entire neighbourhood of another. Life can never be too disorienting: détournement on this level would really make it beautiful" (Ibid.). The best example for the purposes here is the Détournement in Debord's *Naked City Map* which was a reconstruction of a *dérive*. The Détournement suggested by Debord is not just of artistic objects or representations of reality (texts, maps, films etc.) but also of live situations: "When we have got to the stage of constructing situations, the ultimate goal of all our activity, it will be open to everyone to détourn entire situations by deliberately changing this or that determinant condition of them" (Situationist International 1958). Maybe the best contemporary writer to depict Détournement is Stewart Home. For him Détournement cannot be the replacement of one art form by another maybe more critical one, because it is still a production, and any production, however creative and subversive it may be, in the end is incorporated by the capitalist system.[12] Bearing this in mind it is hard to see what a Détournement could be in and of site-research, what knowledge can be gained by it, and how this knowledge and the walk itself will avoid being incorporated by the hegemony that will use it for its own ends.

Détournement as a live event can be seen as a 'constructed situation' (Situationist International 1958). If Détournement is the "integrated use of artistic means to create an ambiance", 'situation' is "an integrated ensemble of behaviour in time" (Ibid.). From this definition, it is clear that constructed situation surpasses knowledge - it is a creative, generative and even revolutionary act: "We are not going to limit ourselves to merely empirical experimentation with environments. […] The really experimental direction of Situationists activity consists in setting up, on the basis of more or less clearly recognized desires, a temporary field of activity favourable to these desires" (Ibid.). To détourn on site, or to construct a situation, is to challenge the physical and social boundaries of the site and the hegemonic perception and interpretation of it. It is also to expose it, and oneselves, to

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12   See: http://www.stewarthomesociety.org/interviews/nunes.htm.

unauthorised, even unimagined, uses in it. These transgressive actions enable us to check how strong the boundaries that construct this space are, and what the hidden or unimagined potentialities of it are.

Cruising, walking in public spaces in the aim of finding sexual encounters can be seen as a kind of *dérive* and détourn (Binnie 2001). Although it has a purpose, this aimless walk is much more complex than a 'search for sex' as it involves less focused social interactions, not dissimilar to 'window shopping'. Cruising, rather than 'public sex' (Kalifia 2000; Binnie 2001; Turner 2003; Cuyvers et al. 2006), is also almost indistinguishable from a leisurely walk. It is the small movements, eye contact, the turning back to look behind (to see if the one who just passed you is doing the same), it is the repeated walking in a circle, or going back and forth from the centre to the edge that distinguish that walk. Of course, in its purpose the drive is sexual, however cruising engenders knowledge of the space, which cannot be gained through other methods of walking.[13]

In the 'Independence Garden' in Tel Aviv, being part of the community of cruisers, I learned that the place changed its geography night and day, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and in Rome I discovered that ruins were brought back to life, to shelter, to accommodate, to use – away from their historical and symbolic capacities. Another 'gay walk', which is distinguished from cruising, is 'Sissy Walking'. The term was popularised by the renowned drag queen and actor RuPaul, and is essentially an exaggerated 'feminine' walk carried out by a man. I have observed such practice, and how it defies social norms, when I filmed a group of young gays in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, who decided to celebrate Independence Day 2000, by dressing up in their best stilettos, hot pants, tied up shirts, and Sissy Walking through the busy streets and shopping malls of celebrating crowds of families and youngsters. Such a walk, because it was far from a Pride March, was a politicised walk, especially in the context of Malaysia, where homosexuality was at the time illegal. At the

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13   See also: Bell 2001; Turner 2003; Cuyvers et al. 2006.

same time, it was not only political manifesto or a celebration – it had an investigatory dimension – it tested public acceptance, openness or hostility towards a transgressive gender and sexuality performance in a public space.

Every walk has a moment of hiatus. It is in this moment of interruption that the walk establishes a *space* (De Certeau 1984) or a *place (*Lefebvre *1991)*. When this interruption widens, when the flow of people and commerce, of the workings of the city, stop, the street is transformed into a space of protest. I have experienced the violent expressions of such interruptions in the walk and of the city with *Reclaim the Street* demonstrations in London and Los Angeles, and in the tent camps of the 2011 *Movement for Social Justice*, teaching me not only about the extensive force the hegemony uses in public space to keep it in 'order' when we step out of line - but also how streets and squares can be appropriated in significant ways. These, alongside the appropriation of 'dead zones' and public places by 'urban nomads', street art and urban interventions, have inspired my art practice (Doron 2001; Doron-Mualem 2015; 2012) and, in turn, contributed to this research.

Through various urban interventions in 'public spaces' and in 'dead zones', I have met people and communities who have taught me other narratives by and about these spaces. These range from relatively passive and detached observations, through slightly fuller interactions with the space (i.e. the Urban Explorer's corporal engagement with spaces and surfaces of ruins or obscure spaces, cruising – using just very limited and almost indistinguishable body gestures and gazes), to walking and talking, shouting, stopping (i.e. *Reclaim the Street* demonstrations) and making spatial changes in the site (for example, the *Occupy* movement for social justice in 2011 and the Arab Spring and, on a minor scale, my interventionist and participatory art work). The progression of walking as a descriptive, critical and subversive practice can be seen on a scale of transgressiveness from being confined to a prescriptive mode of operation to modes that change the boundaries of both the site and the methodology or research.

Michel de Certeau described any walking as inherently transgressive. Walking does away with the illusion of panoptic knowledge, but not entirely of vision. There is by now, through theory but also because of the influx of air photography, a common understanding between knowledge that is gained through vision-sight and that gained through a corporal method. However, Ingold (2004) argued that visual perception is not contrary to bodily-perambulation, since we see much through movement and in-motion. This undermines the possibility that vision could be 'disinterested', objective or even stable knowledge - the illusion of detached, unbiased knowledge, the illusion that knowledge can be of just one perspective, and even the illusion of the possibility of full and complete knowledge.

Rather than being a mere tool for observation and documentation, walking is a spatialising practice with flux at its heart. And if perception depends upon movement, the way we move determines the knowledge we gain. "Walking is itself a form of circumambulatory knowing. Once this is recognized, a whole new field of inquiry is opened up, concerning the ways in which our knowledge of the environment is altered by techniques of footwork…" (Ibid., p.331). The transgressiveness that is at the heart of walking is reflected also in what walking does. As with transgression, walking marks and actualises the law/map/blueprint that constructs the place (the place of academic research and the researched site) and at the same time opens its boundaries to Other spaces: "The crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform or abandon spatial elements. […] Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc., the trajectories it 'speaks'" (Ibid., p.98-99). Walking, therefore, does away with the idea that the site is a neutral geographical container in which actions take place, and brings the understanding that the site is created discursively with the walker. De Certeau asserts – walking is a spatial practice.

Moreover, as I can maintain from the long walks I have carried out for this research, walking not only makes and shapes the terrain, but it also shapes the walker through the

encounter with that terrain, and the knowledge that it is gained through the walks. The understanding of this symbiotic relation leads to the awareness that site research can never be objective. The researcher is influenced by and influencing the terrain in which she or he walks. This symbiosis is always created through the crossing of the boundaries between the 'I' and the space. Walking is a transgressive practice. By transgressing the 'economy of vision' that create the I and the Other, it transgresses the economy of knowledge production. Hence, I believe that as a site-research methodology, it has the greatest potential for producing new knowledge.

The first clues relating to the discourse's misconception or deception were noted in the study of the space of Ha'yarkon Estuary with its remnants of the Palestinian fisherman's village and of the Orient Fair and Tel Aviv's dilapidated port. That study was carried out almost entirely through everyday practices; my perception of those spaces was formed by my casual meanderings there, through dancing in the clubs that occupied the dilapidating buildings of the Orient Fair, by looking for hidden spots to get intimate with partners, through conversations, some planned, some spontaneous, with other nomads of the zone, with Aaron, with other friends who had an almost inexplicable attraction to this fringe place, through taking a swim at the estuary, through years of photographing the area and the changes that had taken place.

The list of everyday practices I have mentioned, need to be more closely scrutinised. Walking on its own in the zone would have limited my knowledge to the present and to the appearance and physicality of the space, but without the conversations I had with people, I would not have had connected with people and walked from one point in the zone to another and I would not have known about some of the illicit possibilities that its nooks and crannies allowed for. If I had not participated in the illegal raves that took place in the dilapidating buildings of the Orient Fair in the small hours of the morning, I would not have known that any nocturnal activity took place there, and more so, how significant it was for the

communities who are often ignored or marginalised. The kind of engagement realised by means of the study methods I used, suggested that the knowledge of these zones is very subjective and the knowledge gained through this or that means strongly influences the conception of it. But ideas are not formed arbitrarily but through writing and text.

… I am back at Singapore's gay shabby alley. It is around 1am and the place is dimly lit.

Some guys are walking around. A few stand and watch. This walking practice, and its climax of eventual bodily experiences, stands as the symbol of transgressing vision and passing into the corporal. A slim girl is passing by. Maybe she is not? My gaze progresses from scanning mode, to a focused stare, to a passing gaze, I turn my head and then my body, we accidentally touch, we halt. Walking ends and we get lost. And here, this text, initially a short examination of the thesis methodology, goes astray. This place is the common ground of walking and writing: "With writing, as with walking, you often find that you're not heading exactly where you wanted to go. There'll be missteps and stumbles, journeying into dead ends, the reluctant retracing of your steps. And you have to accept that's just fine, a necessary, and not wholly unenjoyable, part of the process. It's an exploration" (Nicholson 2010, p.262).

Both walking and writing cannot be subsumed to the production of knowledge, at least not efficiently because walking always carries you away, sometime even sweeps you off your feet… Therefore to consider walking as a methodology is also to take into account that this journey might entail treading on logic. Walking transgresses methodology (at least as a scientific process). It cannot be fully controlled and for sure, it can never be repeated. Fieldwork goes beyond the abstract realms of 'advancing knowledge'. It considers the internal work on our self, self-actualisation (Hooks 2009), the relations we have in the field

(both the site of research and the field of knowledge from where we come from), the understanding of how these fields have changed us, and what we give back to the field. Walking as a practice of fieldwork goes beyond the narrow understanding of 'work' as a production of objects. Within a service-based discipline I believe this understanding is critical. However, with a long and persistent tradition which equates creativity with withdrawal, introverted, solitary space, and sees service as something that opposes and curtails creativity, transgressive walking can be a place from which to start thinking and doing otherwise. The long walk for an ethical and responsible architecture begins here, in the first steps into the field.

CHAPTER 7:

Writing: Performing Text - from Writing *about* Space to Place-Writing

"The only force opposing this passion to be a sign is the cry, a deviation or an ecstasy, a revolt or flight of that which, within the body, escapes the law of the named."

De Certeau 1984, p.149.

"It is only because the other a text addresses is absent or dead that one writes in the first place. Were the other present, one would not write, but employ spoken language. Writing, then, is always already a gesture of mourning an absence, There is no writing without an absent other..."

Richter, 2004, p. 234.

Writing, as drawing and photography, is a representational apparatus. In *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, Mark Wigley argued that all these apparatuses are based on the logic and practice of architecture. Obeying this logic has dire costs:

> "The discipline of architecture is more than the disciplining of space. Before that, it is the disciplining of a certain thinking 'about' space, or, more precisely, it is a set of institutional practices that maintain the idea that thinking can only ever be 'about' space inasmuch as it is always detached from the spaces it addresses. Separating thinking from architecture in the very moment it appears to direct thinking toward architecture, the discourse suppresses the *anarchitecture* that makes thinking possible and, in so doing, blinds itself to the enigmas of the spaces it addresses." 1995, p.217.

This research starts from the understanding of such a violent separation and from the mourning that followed. This text as a thesis must have quite strict boundaries, certain procedures and a certain form. Through these constraints, I was obliged to separate myself from the places this thesis is based on, and my experiences in them, and re-visit them, mentally, time after time. Hence, the work of mourning haunts this text, and in places, becomes so painful that it materialises in the form of a cry. A cry for action. A cry rather than a plan for action - not only because of the urgency and immediacy of the subject matter, but also because of the action's form. The cry, and its literal forms of expression, bridges the gap between theory and practice and makes evident the bond between the two (Hooks, 2009; 1994). A crying text is no longer just a representation, but it performs, it transgresses, it produces a discursive space (Grillner 2003; 2004). It forms "a theatre of actions" (De Certeau 1984, p.123).

In the seminal book *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Clifford 1986a), James Clifford argued that ethnography, and other social sciences writings, that use description and representations as their main methods are always suspicious - the texts produced by these researchers cannot be separated from the writing subject and their ideology and life experience. Moreover, he argues that literary procedures pervade any work of cultural representation. As I have shown earlier, this is true also in relationship to the texts (which are also from social sciences, urban studies and architecture) that form what I have called the discourse of the 'dead zone'. Most of the texts that I mentioned before do not problematise their implicit or explicit claims to fully and neutrally represent the spaces they are about and they ignore the role their subjective perspective plays in the shaping of these spaces. Often, they limit their interpretation of these spaces to visual analysis or, even more problematically, they use limited visual analysis as a means to justify much broader conclusions, as particularly evident in De Solà-Morales' text or on a larger scale the establishment of Palestine as an empty space. At the same time, they ignore other aspects of

these spaces such as their history, the communities that use them, and the socioeconomic and political frameworks that produced these spaces. In this thesis, as much as I could, within the limitation of time and space, I have tried to address these aspects in my representations of the sites I have discussed.

Moreover, taking Clifford's (1986) views, I have shown that the texts that have been produced about the 'dead zone' aim to serve a very concrete economic or political purpose whilst not acknowledging the effect of this on the production of the text and on the ways these spaces are represented. It is important to understand that the misrepresentation of the 'dead zone' by the discourse is not the heart of the problem, but it is the discourse's attempt to represent these spaces in the first place as a total and autonomous object. In Lefebvre's (1991) terms, the discourse of the 'dead zone' can be described as a representation of space that produces actual places as 'abstract space'. Tyler, in his discussion about ethnographic writing, argues that any text creates "totalistic illusions with which to have power over things or over others as if they were things. The whole ideology of representational signification is an ideology of power. To break its spell we would have to attack writing, totalistic representational signification, and authorial authority…" (Tyler 1986, p.131).

Such an attack, in the context of architectural, planning and academic writing can be formed by what often is excluded from them: sensory and atmospheric descriptions, reading and writing the place through association with stories and myths, interviews with the inhabitants of the space, depictions of the researcher personal experiences in the space. Such research activity, and its textual representation that was put forward in *Urban Literacy*, (Havik 2014) "imply not only the analytical, but also the projective or even speculative" (Ibid., p.227).

I had listed previously, at the start of chapter 1: "[…] badlands, blank space, border vacuums, brown fields, conceptual Nevada, Dead Zones, derelict areas, ellipsis spaces, empty places, free space liminal spaces, nameless spaces, No Man's Lands, polite spaces,

post architectural zones, spaces of indeterminacy, spaces of uncertainty, smooth spaces, Tabula Rasa, Temporary Autonomous Zones, terrain vague, urban deserts, vacant lands, voids, white areas, Wasteland... SLOAPs…" All these are speech acts (de Certeau 1984; 1986). They do not represent places, they appropriate space and transform it into a 'dead zone'. Naming as a death sentence. Naming spaces with these terms is an act which transforms a live space into a non-place, into a 'dead zone'.

After twelve years of various court cases filed against Aaron and his family by the Tel Aviv municipality, the case was settled out of court and Aaron got a small amount in compensation. The rights of Abu George, whose dad founded the village, and whose family was forced to leave the place in 1948, were never acknowledged. Twelve years after the Palestinian fisherman's village was named 'dead zone', the bulldozers came and 'cleaned' the place. The huts were removed and the area was covered with grass. In the middle of where the village was, a path was laid out. A path that makes it impossible to dwell on the crime that was committed here, more than once. However, it is not only the path and the grass that covers the traumatic event. It is the act of naming the place 'dead zone' by the urban planner, and other places as 'empty', 'derelict', 'no-man's land', etcetera, which are the basis of the discourse of the 'void', and it is the representation of the space as *tabula rasa* that marks it as such. The idiom 'Dead Zone', nonchalantly used to describe Ha'Yarkon Estuary by Tel Aviv Municipality's urban planner, was the trigger for this thesis.

As a journalist, I trusted language. This trust has been broken. The language that constructs what I call "the discourse of the dead zone", at best, could not represent the nature of the places that it referred to. At worst, it is a language of deceit, purposely used to obscure the history and the everyday of these places (Ghirardo & Frampton 1991). Even without ill intention, the methods the discourse has used, as I mentioned earlier, and the language in which it represents these spaces, is not sufficient. As I will show, most of the texts that form the "discourse of the void" do not take into account the ways in which knowledge about the

'dead zones' has been produced, nor do they question the modes of writings that are used to represent these spaces and what the effects of these modes of writings are. These texts are governed by various political, social and economic ideologies, which are not stated but which obscure the spaces in question.

Almost all of the texts surveyed in this thesis, from Plato's description of the *chora*, to planning statistics of derelict sites, from the Zionist myth of the wilderness to Rem Koolhaas's *tabula rasa*, conceal the subject who speaks, and eradicate the particularities of place and time. They do not consider their subject's position (corporeal and ideological) when they describe space ("the dead zone"); their description of places is partial and blinded by preconceptions; their written words exclude time: they empty out these places' past, they mute the noise of everyday life's present; their writings are always in the 'future perfect'. The texts that have constituted the 'dead zone' are the building blocks of abstract space created in a void out of historical context, and have constructed the 'dead zone' as a spatial unit of its own, and many mirror the desires or state of mind of their writers and yet they are represented as not personal or political.

They involve a univocal scientific strategy that is created by 'flattening out data', by a classificatory operation and by omissions, erasures and camouflaging gaps; and finally - by naming. Naming that creates a subject, an entity that can be identified and that takes on any phenomena, occurrences and events which beforehand were difficult to sum up or to use. However, naming operates in a completely opposite way as well. Names are open to interpretation. They convey different narratives, and they mark a space, but they always leave a gap that can be occupied. While it is the discourse's pretence of scientific language that creates 'abstract space', names are the basis for the 'figurative' and for narratives. Narratives, therefore, are not a stranger to the discourse of the void. As De Certeau noted: "Political power has known for a long time already how to produce narratives for its own use. The media had done it even better. Urban planners themselves have tried to produced them

artificially. […] the city is the stage for a war of narratives…" (1998, pp.142–3). The discursive texts I mentioned before, and even the terms themselves, produce imagery of death, emptiness and dereliction. Next, I will describe other ways of writing about these spaces.

Recognising that new knowledge about the 'dead zones' might not be sufficient to change attitudes towards them, the modes of writing I have used in this thesis aim to create an experience of them and ourselves in these zones. These other modes of writing, I hope, offer a more complex and critical way of writing about spaces and architecture. But more than writing *about* these spaces, my attempt was to re-create them with words on the page.

7.a.   Place-Writing: a Journey to the Unknown

"You can't talk about the history of contemporary liberation struggles without talking about […] literacy projects."   Haraway 1996, p.8.

"Everyone knows that a place exists which is not economically or politically indebted to all the vileness and compromise. That is not obliged to reproduce the system. That is writing. If there is a somewhere else that can escape the infernal repetition, it lies in the direction, where it writes itself, where it dreams, where it invents new worlds."

Cixous & Clement 1997, p.ix.

Writing here can refer to any creative and emancipatory act. The place from which it can spring must be other to the system which is always rational, homogenised, reductive and unifying. For writing to be creative and emancipatory, it will have to embody the characteristics of such a place (Bowers 1992, p.20). Therefore, if the 'dead zone' is the Other

to the city, the writing about this space should adopt the (real or imagined) characteristics of this place.

This means that writing will become more than a representation of the dead zone. The text will be a mental landscape in which the reader is invited to wander, and even to get lost. I believe that the only way to portray such a landscape is not through false objectivity, but through the recognition that we, who portray such a landscape, already have our footprints in it. I.e., that the landscape of the 'dead zone' is being written through our own subjective eyes, and mental and bodily experiences via our biography, set of beliefs and ideologies. There is a long tradition of writing about places while acknowledging and even deliberately blurring the line between the 'I' and the place through active engagement of the writer with the place. In the differentiation of travel-writing, which also take sites as the subject of writing, Place-Writing is subjective and concentrates on everyday life rather than on the extraordinary attractions of the site. Place-Writing also has also another aspect – these writings take the concrete everyday place or space, and try to learn from it about abstract socio-political and economic matters.

Place-Writing has much in common with what Jean Rendell coined as 'Site-Writing' which draws on spaces as they are remembered, dreamed and imagined, as well as observed, in order to challenge the position of the production of knowledge from a singular and static point of view, located in the here and now (2010, p.18). Rendell, in her book *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*, offers a work that tries to draw on and expand the ways in which art critics write about art. However, some of the observations and suggestions she makes are useful for the discourse and practice of site-research. However, there is a crucial difference between Rendell's 'Site-Writing' and Place-Writing, which I prefer to use. Site is a space of ground occupied or to be occupied by a building. 'Site-Writing' is a practice that tries to build on, and extend the knowledge about an artwork. Place is more than a 'site' – it is a space which has already obtained some characteristics, and is more particular. Place also

means a distinct condition, position, or state of mind. Place-Writing is an attempt to re-create a place in writing. While Place-Writing, as Site-Writing, maintains a critical position, this position is regarding the hegemonic discourse. It leaves to a certain extent the critical position, as its main aim is to immerse the reader in the place itself: the place as a space, the place of the one who writes about it, and a place that the reader is invited to dwell in.

An early example of Place-Writing is De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, in which he described his drug-fuelled rambles through the streets of London (De Quincey 2005). While these journeys were not planned as a methodical study, unlike the *dérive*, they do give a vivid description of the influence of opium on spatial perception. As Place-Writing, the reader is taken on a journey not only to different sites but also in the opiated mind of the writer. Desire that leads to *dérives* in the city are also the framework for Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd', Breton's *Nadja*, Aragon's *Paris Peasant* or the more recent works by J.G. Ballard, for example, *The Concrete Island* (2008). Aragon takes this genre one step further, shading narrative and linearity, to create a kind of impressionistic collage of Paris' marginalised spaces, where the act of wandering itself and the city become the main theme. Although Walter Benjamin tried to distance his writing from Aragon and the Surrealists, Ballantyne (2005) argued that there is no doubt that Aragon's impressions of the Paris's Arcades influenced Benjamin. In his *Arcade Project*, as well as in other urban descriptions, Benjamin took the urban milieu as a starting point, and whilst trying not to lose the vividness of these everyday life spaces, he attempted to read the cityscape's more profound suppositions.

Although Place-Writing at times seems to get lost in the place itself, leaving criticality behind, it is always political. For example, William Blake's *London*, which described a meandering in the streets of the capital, is also a strong social and political critique (Paglia 2007). This mix of critique and social visions are the base for much of the work by the English social explorers who took it upon themselves to investigate the life of

the poor. Writers such as George Sims, William Booth, Mary Higgs, C.F.G. Masterman and Jack London immersed themselves in "a dark continent that is within easy walking distance of the General Post Office" (Sims in: Keating 1976, p.67). Their writing is a mix of colonialist imagery with descriptions of the grim reality of poverty and extreme social and economic gaps and often with a call for change.

Writing about the city, engaging in it through walking, continued in the practice of the *dérive* which I mentioned earlier. However, if the walks that early urban researchers undertook comprised of mainly observations, and at times interviews with the local populace, the Situationists introduced to these walks play and interventions, and they were informed by strong political and social perspectives. The Situationist texts therefore, in contrast with the earlier writings, are not mere descriptions but include fiction, free association, and playfulness as well as strong political proclamations. As such I believe that *dérive* and *pyschogeography* as practices that inform writing about the city still hold out the possibility to "reinstate lived experience as the true map of a city" (Hussey 2002, p.218).

Maybe the most truthful to Situationist practices and political spirit is the writer and artist Stewart Home (1991; 1994). Mixing truth and fiction, sense and nonsense, writing allegories, interviews, informal conversations, fiction, as well as using descriptions and statistics, enables us to reject any hegemonic perspective about the city. Such writing informs the works of other contemporary researchers such as Klaske Havik (2009; 2014), Jane Rendell (2005; 2010), Katja Grillner (2003; 2004), Wim Cuyvers (2006; 2009), as well as fiction writers such as Sebald (2002), Iain Sinclair (2003a; 2003b) and Peter Ackroyd (2000), with their meticulous descriptions of everyday life and/or historical facts mixed with mystical undertones and a political stance (Coverley, 2010). Place-Writing, the literary practice of immersion in a place, whilst carrying on our backs a critical position and a will to make a change, is strongly connected to Michel Foucault's "experience-book" which is radically different from "truth-book" or "demonstration-book" (Foucault & Trombadori 1991, p.37).

Such a book creates "an experience that might permit an alteration, a transformation, of the relationship we have with ourselves and our cultural universe: in a word, with our knowledge savoir" (Ibid., p.42).

In this thesis, I aimed to uncover and securitise the discourse of the 'dead zone', to uncover alternative histories of these zones, to represent the everyday life of these spaces and, as far as I could, take the reader to a journey in them. Therefore, the text had to offer knowledge, critical perspectives and experience. To do so, I had to use very different modes of writings: descriptions, quotations, interviews, narratives, anecdotes and personal accounts. These miscellaneous modes of writings are spread throughout the thesis through the various chapters but at times, when required, they enfold in one chapter and even one paragraph. As far as I could, I pushed the boundaries of the academic text as I prioritised the content of the research and free associations that weave together historical sources, marginalised voices, places and times over the coherent and balanced format of a thesis – to create a thesis in a format of the essay. In *Tracing the Essay*, Atkins (2005) described this form of writing as placed between experience and meaning, literature and philosophy, self and other, process and product, form and formlessness. He argued that this form of writing is a reflection on the process of writing, or writing as a process, or, as he put it, the essay presents "thinking in the process of writing" (Ibid., p.31). Thinking, experiencing, and the process of writing are seldom linear, ordered and well formed. I would argue that the attempts to shackle writing, even academic writing, in a stable and cohesive form, obscures the process of research, of experiences, and of writing itself.

Although it is not explicit in the writing of this thesis, my enchantment with the 'zone' was far removed from a rational urge for knowledge. I became obsessed with Tel Aviv's 'Dead Zone' before I knew its history and way before imagining writing a thesis about it. Still not entirely explained, the emotional draw to this Zone only spurred me on to learn more about it. I spent sleepless nights thinking about that space, and when the longing

was too hard, even in the dead of the night, I went to meander in it, often sitting at its edge where the river meets the sea, sometimes alone, sometimes with a friend or encounter. This enchantment led me to learn more about the place, about its history and unseen present. About how it came about, and about the language that has been used to portray and construct it.

In addition, when it was threatened by a redevelopment plan, it led me, as an environment, planning and architecture journalist, to try to save it. It was a desire that led to knowledge and then to a political action. It would be unethical and deceitful to erase traces of desire and my political stance from the writing of this thesis. Therefore, this thesis is soiled by very personal stories, by an explicit political stance, by more conversations with marginalised people I met than interviews with planners and architects, by critical re-reading of hegemonic texts, by conjuring narratives of different sites from different eras that threaten the cohesion of the linear text and of academic writings, by repetition and revisits to the space from which this research began.

7.b.   Textual (Re)presentation of the 'Dead Zone' – Performative Text

"The tiny details, often reduced and overlooked in analysis, can reveal the depth of the meaning people have for place and spaces with which they identify. Narrative provides a meaning to make sense of and understand social phenomena and individual experience."

Flybbjerg in: Thompson & Tonts 2008, p.56.

As I have argued from the start, the 'dead zone' is produced by the discourse, and this production takes shape through particular methods of researching and representing these spaces. In this lengthy chapter, I will give one example of these methods, discussed in the

previous chapter. Lengthy, because only a close and detailed look can show that these zones are not dead, as might be seen from revenue statistics, land use charts, air photography or a drive though in an air-conditioned car. This chapter is also an example of different methodologies of textual and visual representation of these spaces. This example will substantiate my argument that professional or academic writing alone cannot truly reflect the realities of these zones. Such modes of writing include detailed descriptions, dialogues with the inhabitants/producers of these zones, and testimony of my own actions, thoughts and feelings while being in the zone.

I argue that the methods of writing need to go beyond the impossibility of objectiveness, generalisations and linearity. To understand these zones the writing itself should echo the complexities of these zones and of the research methodologies that enable us to understand these spaces. For example – walking in the zones is never straightforward, you always need to negotiate the difficult grounds, you need to go around some obstacles, you stop to talk with people. Since some of the 'dead zones', such as modern 'buffer zones' between different use zones, or post-modern 'in-between areas' (of enclosed neighbourhoods, the back of shopping malls, etc.), offer little visual stimulation as your mind wanders to other places whilst walking. Yes, I can write this as a statement of factual data, or write a confession about it in a subjective manner, but I believe that to deliver anything of this experience, the text needs to be different, it needs to be more than a representation but an attempt to build that landscape and place the reader in it.

The following text is written in a semi-narrative form. This form enables me to present, simultaneously, the ways in which the knowledge of a specific site was gained, and the knowledge that was gained. It illustrates how walking, talking and interacting rewrite my perception of a site, how the place and its occupants are altered by my interaction with it, and how they changed me as the person who studied them. The narrative form it is written in, brings in the voices of the zones' inhabitants, concentrating on houseless people, in a

unmediated way as possible. By using a very detailed description, that includes not only the external landscape but also my state of mind, I attempt to create a textual landscape that enables the reader to get closer to the experience of walking the zone.

This textual landscape describes the journey through San Francisco's 'dead zones' but the semi-narrative description is not linear. It meanders between personal stories and the site histories, between my description of the sites and references to it by others, between my voice and that of others, between descriptions of concrete sites and other sites that can be geographically far away. The text is excessive in its format, details and tempo, it splinters. It is written to resemble the ways in which the site research was conducted. Sometimes it seems that the writer and the reader can be lost, exactly as in the site research itself. The literary methods used, I believe, perform rather than describe, both the site research methods and the qualities of the 'dead zone's' overlapping spaces I am trying to describe. It offers, I hope, something of the experience of the spaces, rather than the false assumption that it can represent them.

The case study I chose took place in San Francisco in August 2000 and in Rome 2001. These are two places I have done site research out of twenty-one cities in Asia, America and Europe. These places where chosen because they represent two different urban environments, and because the engagement with them, through the people I met, gave me the most significant insight into the everyday life in these spaces. In these short studies, I have concentrated on environment and the everyday life of homeless people. In the next chapter, through shorter observation and the use of photography, I will present other activities and communities that take place in the 'dead zone' and in formal public spaces.

7.c.   San Francisco – Mission Bay: a Brief History of Displacement and Entrenchment

The fields now were lying empty, dotted with some weeds. The only evidence of civilisation were some dilapidated warehouses, the deserted roads, the city that seemed to be far, far away, and a huge billboard at the edge of one field. The size of a large cinema screen, it advertised the latest 'Tarzan' production. However, it is clear that no potential customers would ever pass by. So, rather than advertising the film, it stands as a sign for this place. The image of the 'son of the jungle', in the middle of this wilderness, marks the new "urban frontier" (Smith 1999).

On my second day in San Francisco, I met Susanna Montana, Chief of Special Projects at the San Francisco Planning Department. In answer to my question, "Where is San Fransisco's 'dead zone'?", she suggested Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, which was closed down a few years earlier. The place had been highly contaminated and there were no clear plans for its future. However, since the area was fenced off and guarded, it was, in a way, occupied. The occupation here was by the exchange value, and no room was left for any use value. The day before, Aaron Betsky, then the curator of SFMOMA, whom I asked the same question, directed me to the area of Mission Bay. When I asked Susanna about this place, she agreed that it was a derelict place, but for her it was already a done deal. The place had approved redevelopment plans for an academic institution, light industry and offices. It was no longer a 'dead zone', but a tabula rasa *awaiting its future.*

My hotel was not far from there in what was then a rougher edge of South of Market. The next day at noon, leaving my hostel above a notorious Goth gay punk club that had kept me awake until the early hours, I went down 3rd Street towards Mission Bay. The closer I approached the "Promised Land", the signs of the times became increasingly apparent. The buildings unashamedly demonstrated that by their facades. Suddenly, the row of buildings ended. In front of me was a wide street, situated after the first and last stop of a tram line.

The street I was standing in, Townsend, marked the final frontier, after which time had stopped. Or rather, it collapsed in an undistinguished blend of past, present and future and in a zone that stretched out up to the waterfront. Like ruins in reverse (Smithson & Flam 1996), a few office blocks are being built and, further on, a sports arena. On the horizon, there are some old harbour buildings and warehouses, dusty and grey, and a giant flyover hovering above part of a wide canal. Between all these structures lie vast yellow fields, backed by the August sun, completely silent.

Such silence, probably, has not been heard here since October the 9th 1776, when a ceremonial canon fired to celebrate the completion of the Mission of San Francisco de Assisi colony on the land of the natives Costanoan and Abalone people, who had lived in the area for more than a thousand years. The vast development of the area took place in the second half of the nineteenth century. The marshlands which covered much of the bay have been gradually reclaimed as vegetable gardens in the land between Folsom and Harrison, near Sixth Street. Dry docks were built around 2nd Street and Townsend. Brick manufacturing spread around the bay. Later on, ship building and other harbour related businesses filled up Mission Bay, that was to become the busiest part of San Francisco's waterfront (Olmsted 1986).

Along with the increase in manufacturing and population came the waste. At the end of the nineteenth century, part of the reclaimed land, between Sixth and Seventh Streets, used to be an informal garbage dump. The garbage, coming from the then densely populated South of Market Area, was sorted by scavengers (or as they were known in the same period in French as chiffoniers*) and then dumped into the China Creek. This is how the scavenging operations were reported by the local news: "With a general air of dejected doggedness, many were busily engaged with pitchfork, shovel or stick, sifting each load as it was dumped from the reeking, overflowing the carts. Rags, old bottles, scraps of iron, old sacks, bricks, oyster shells, half-decayed fruit and vegetables – all were prized" (Chronicle, November*

1889:22 in: Olmsted 1986, p.46). The scavengers did not just work in the place but also lived there. The police sporadically raided 'Dumpville', burning the shacks that were put on what became railroad land. The earliest report of a police raid is dated 1889. However, since there were no neighbours, the scavengers returned to the place until the dump was closed in 1895.

Nonetheless, waste areas and nomadic communities have not vanished from Mission Bay. In 1960, the boat and houseboat dweller community was moved from Islas Creek Basin to Channel Street. Ruth Huffaker, who has lived there ever since, describes the area as resembling the country, with fruit trees and vegetables, which survived probably from the food garden created there in the mid-nineteenth century by Chinese immigrants. She also gives a testimony of the homeless people who inhabit the place. Huffaker: "The weeds were so tall that men made little homes in them. You never saw them; they ran if they heard you coming. You'd hear a little rustle and they would be gone [...] You couldn't see anyone walking through. You'd just discover things, like a hole in the ground with rocks around to cook on. One place had two mattresses and a coffee table. It was the country in the middle of the city and the bums made it their own. They drifted off in the 60s because the truckers and wholesalers commercialised the place on either side of the channel. Cut down the weeds" (in: Olmsted 1986, p.63).

Around the same time as Olmsted interviewed Huffaker, homeless people had been moving back to Mission Creek following the decline in industry and shipping in the area, and using the empty lots created by this decline to erect small shanty towns. As before, the authorities were eager to move them out: "In shacks patched together from wood scarps, about two dozen squatters lived in shantytowns in a forgotten corner of San Francisco. [...] City officials declared the little village at Berry and Seventh Street to be a health hazard and gave its residents seven days to clear out" (Ibid.). And again, a few years later down the road, a homeless camp, this time migrants or refugees, or 'aliens' in the colloquial language,

was erected, or rather dug into the ground of an empty field near the drawbridge of Fourth Street. The camp, as Steve, a 'car-dweller' who I met there pointed out, was created amid the weeds and wild anise, and behind a small curvature in the ground.

Apparently, some workers in a nearby new office building alerted the police to the encampment. The last report in the media showed that the police had let the homeless stay in the area and were waiting for the local authorities or a volunteer organisation to try to find accommodation for the lot. They were evicted around July 1999, just a few weeks before my visit.

Illustration 40: Mission Bay, Tarzan, 2000. The unkept lots and the almost bare contaminated grounds created a landscape which is more similar to the savannah rather than a North American city.

Illustration 41: Mission Creek boat dwellers. Again, the dwelling of a marginal group is taken place in a marginal area, the boundary of the dilapidated harbour, a river bank and the edge of a highway.

Illustration 42: Car dweller in Mission Bay area of San Francisco, 2000. While parking a car is always at the edge (of a road and a pavement), here the owner chose/needed to find a place when the edge is obscured to be able to stay there for longer without paying parking fees or fines. In doing so he himself marks/creates a boundary.

Illustration 43: Steve and his home and other home-cars.

7.c.i. The Car Dwellers

Mission Bay area is quite a defined zone. After the railroad that separate it, you enter an area that the city left behind. One main road, Third Street, leads you into it. A few cars, station-wagons and caravans are parked at the edge of it. They seem almost deserted. As I get close, a harsh barking comes from one of the cars. From a neighbouring car, I suddenly notice that a slim, bearded guy, a kind of Robinson Crusoe figure, is pulling some stuff from the front seat of a station wagon, while talking with someone inside. The guy, Steve, as I later found out, says, "Don't worry. They are locked in the car. The guy who owns them is due to come back." I thought of continuing on my trip into the zone, as Steve seemed to be quite busy. But since there was not a living soul as far as the horizon, I decided to ask him if there were any people using the area. "Well," he replied, "I am living in this car." I was quite surprised, because the car was not a caravan, and because I had never encountered or even heard before of car-dwelling homeless people. I would have imagined that if you got into trouble and needed cash you would start by selling your car. Steve said the money from it would barely cover one month's rent in San Francisco.

At the time I met Steve, it was estimated by the police that there were about five hundred homeless people living in their cars in San Francisco. Three years later, in 2003, the *Coalition on Homelessness* in San Francisco estimated that there were something like two to three thousand (Johnston 2003, p.54). The city's official count of homeless of 2007 gave a figure of five hundred. However, the city count report admits that the method of counting vehicle dwellers was faulty and it could be arguably two to three times higher. This problematic counting has been due to the frequent impossibility of determining if a car is used for a dwelling or not, especially when the count is made from a passing car rather than on foot, and because some of the camps of car dwellers are in places which are deemed to be too risky for the surveyors to access. This is a good example of the limits of statistical data and quantitative research.

-232

The uncertainty about the number of vehicle dwellers results from the uncertain legal position of living in one's own car. In theory, it is illegal to sleep in a car between 10PM and 6AM anywhere in San Francisco.[14] In 1997-8, it was reported (Rachel 1997) that the police cracked down on several camps of vehicle dwellers, and the most known one, on Channel Street, was a few streets away from where I met Steve. In one incident, the police claimed that they evicted the camp because local workers, who park their car in the area, complained about filth and drug dealing. Nonetheless, *SF Bay Guardian* stated that, regardless of the homeless activities: "just the sight of a cluster of lived-in automobiles is enough to drive down property values and chase off business clients" (Ibid.).

This cleansing in San Francisco and other American cities is well documented (Smith 1999; Davis 1990; Steiner 2002; Roschelle & Wright 2003). While in the 1980s local authorities "promote[d] the 'containment' (official term) of the homeless" in parts of the downtown (Davis 1992, p.232), more recently the tactic has been replaced by expulsion from the downtown. This, in an opposite way, reflects the movement of middle class families back into the cities, and of globalisation (Sassen 2011; Smith 1999). In these 'reconfigured cities', homeless people "are often seen as dangerous threats that need to be eliminated from the sight of the newly affluent" (Roschelle & Wright 2003, p.154).

The underdeveloped area of Mission Bay in 1999 was still hosting some car dwellers that had been pushed away from other more developed places in the city. Steve said that he moved to the place because the police indicated that they would tolerate car dwelling there. Steve:

> *Some of us stayed around the civic centre but we continually got fines and then were told to move on. We moved to Golden Gate National Park, to be out of sight, but they threw us out from there as well. They said that the only place they wouldn't harass us would be Mission Rock or China Basin.*

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14   San Francisco Police Code, Art. 1.1, Sec. 97.

I asked Steve if he could take me on a tour in the area. He said that he would need to drop his girlfriend off with a friend the next day, so he would have the car, and if I would pay for the gas and for lunch, he would be happy to do so. "Of course I would," I replied, adding that I would include a modest fee.

The next morning, Steve collected me from my hostel. Although I said it would be fine to meet him at Mission Bay where he parked his car, he had said that he might have to move to another location that night, so better to do it that way. I think he also wanted to see what type of hotel I was staying in and when he saw a dormitory hostel in which I shared my room with eight other people, he smiled and asked, "Rough night?" But this, it seemed, facilitated our interaction. I must say, I was a bit anxious myself since as I had never hitchhiked, other than in my own country, and I had no idea where exactly we were going and who we might meet. In answer to my question he replied, "I know a woman who started a colony on the shoulder of a highway, at the edge of Mission, Alex. She is an ex-punk girl, quite something."

Illustration 44: The Art Bus, San Francisco Old Harbour, 2000.

Illustration 45: Tyree Guyton, The Heidelberg Project, Detroit.

Illustration 46: Mission Bay graffiti. Does the text 'SLEAZE' refer to the sexual activities in this abounded rail yard? Or was it the graffiti artist tag which coincidently correlated to such activities in this site?

Before we went to see Alex, Steve took me for a drive through the seemingly empty streets of Mission Buy. He said enigmatically that he could introduce me to the King, who might grant me an interview. Travelling along Fourth Street between fenced empty lots and warehouses, we drove into a narrow dead-end street. At the end of it was a parked yellow school bus. The windows of the bus were covered with abstract painting, mostly in the style of Pollock. Steve knocked on the door of the bus but there was no answer. "I think he is travelling this week." "How come he doesn't go in the bus?" I asked. "It doesn't move. I am not sure if it even has an engine. But he is risking it, he will be lucky if they won't haul it away." The offensiveness to local authorities of standing vehicles, especially when the vehicles are transformed into art works, can be noted elsewhere, as, for example, the Heidelberg Project Art*'s bus in Detroit.*

When I asked if there were other uses for the area, apart from the homeless sanctuary, Steve drove the car into a former rail depot. The area lies beyond two long buildings, former stations or warehouses. The ground was covered with rail tracks, and bushes between which he navigated the car. The walls of the depots were covered with graffiti; the biggest of them all read 'SLEAZE'. As Steve pulled into the secluded area, behind the depot, a couple, a middle-aged man and a half naked woman dashed behind a parked car, got in and drove away. Steve explained that the prostitutes bring their clients here from nearby offices.

We continued. Driving towards the construction site of the Bull Park stadium, he stopped in front of a huge warehouse with a big yard. The place, one of the biggest homeless shelters, was buzzing. The shelter was a massive corrugated iron warehouse with an inner courtyard, all fenced. Standing in this area, away from the city and in the dilapidated harbour, it looked like a secret transport station from which the homeless are sent away, off the land, in medieval ships of fools (Foucault 1973). This imagery might sound preposterous, but Davis (Davis 1990) has mentioned that Los Angeles' politicians have proposed similar

'final solutions' such as deporting homeless people to poor farms on the edge of the desert, confining them in camps in the mountains, or, memorably, interning them on a derelict ferry in the harbour (Ibid., p.232). These ideas sound not much different from General William Booth's proposal, to send England's poor to colonise Africa (Booth 2002).

At the time of my visit, however, this shelter was far enough away from the 'functioning city'. Many of its occupants had been moved from a homeless encampment outside the City Hall that had existed since the 1989 earthquake, and which was dismantled at the beginning of 1999. The shelter, I was told by the municipal planner, was going to be closed down soon due to the new plans for the area for a new university campus and offices. Even postmodern planning apparently has limits on what 'mixed uses' can be, and office workers, students and academic staff, should be protected from such scenes.

Thinking it might be worth interviewing the Head of the Institute about the impending move, I stepped out of the car and approached a person behind the fence who looked as though she worked at the place, surrounded by scruffily dressed people who were involved in some sort of commotion. When I asked for an interview, all she gave me in response was that there might be a bed but I should come back later. This response might have been due to the combination of my shabby clothes, unshaven face and my alien dialect. For a moment, I considered the offer. It could not be noisier than my hostel room, and might give me an opportunity to interview some of the residents. But when Steve warned me of the possibility of my stuff being nicked, of catching fleas, of getting involved in fights with drunk and/or drug fuelled residents, of getting hardly any sleep, not to mention taking the place of someone who needed the place more than I did, I was quickly put off this idea.

We went back to try and meet 'the King of Soma'. Steve could not remember how the nickname King became attached to the guy. It could have been that he was the oldest guy or the one that had stayed in this area the longest without being evicted. But it could be that the royal title was self-attributed.

Steve warned me that the King might not be in the right state of mind for an interview. He had just come back from the hospital having had some operation, but anyhow sometimes he was not very clear. "Don't worry," I said, "He cannot be worse than some of the politicians I interviewed as a journalist." We stopped at 403rd Street. "Here is the bus I told you about. This guy had been here for two years. They tried to scare him off but he won't go. They stole all of his stuff when he went to hospital, pretty well cleaned him up. But he won't leave. He is a bit senile sometimes…"

"How old is he? About 55, 60?"

"Let's see if he is in…"

Outside a small warehouse, there was a hand painted bus, with slogans, a few plants surrounding it, and some chairs. Steve asked me to wait and get inside the bus 'yard' and knock on the door. A suspicious voice answered and the King came out. It took him a few seconds to recognise Steve and then Steve explained to him what it was all about. Hearing about the past eviction attempts my first question was, "Hi, how come they let you stay here?" His answer was, "I am the caretaker." Not completely sure if he was being serious or sarcastic I continued, "Of the building?" And he replied, "Yes… no, the whole property." Steve thankfully stepped into the conversation and calmed the King, who had now become anxious and said, "Hi man, he is cool, it's ok…" Then I asked sympathetically, "Do the city authorities bother you here?" The King, still suspicious, insisted, "No, I am on private property here." I tried to ignore his answer and ask what I already knew from Steve: "So was it the owner [that bothered you]?" His answer took me by surprise: "Your questions are rather infantile and unimportant, there are other questions that I am able to answer and which are more important to more people." Trying to start afresh, I explained what I assumed Steve had already told the King: "My research is about derelict areas which are deemed useless, but are put to informal use by various communities…" This description did intrigue the King and he invited me to sit in the yard.

X: Haaa... Come in

G: I am Gil, by the way.

X: My name is Antura, but you can call me Ginsburg.

G: The bus looks very impressive from outside.

X: Do you have a camera… come… come and take some photos…

While I took some photos, in which Antura, Ginsburg and the King proudly posed I continued to ask:

G: How long did it take you to create this place?

X: What?

G: To put all this...

X: Again… Your questions are unimportant compared to what I will tell you. Wait until I take a couple of joints and lock the door, and we can sit on the other side in comfort… meanwhile you can read this….

I asked Steve if he was ok about the time, and he said he was fine.

When the King came back from the bus I asked him about the slogan on his bus that said, "A cure for the A.I.D.S. virus – recycle your own urine and drink it."

Illustration 47: The King of SOMA in front of his home-bus. The King took the effort to surround the bus, which parks between a pavement-less road and an abandoned building to create a secluded courtyard. He tried to regain the privacy which almost non-existent when one is a homeless.

X: Try to drink your urine, it makes you strong, healthy, horny…

And then he took me to the bus and showed me about five litre plastic containers filled with an unmistakable liquid. At this juncture, he offered me a joint, but I refused politely saying that it would knock me out and I would not be able to continue the conversation. The King gave me a look of disbelief and asked, "Do you smoke tobacco?" "Yes," I said and he walked me back to the yard and said: "Sit and have a smoke then, it is still allowed…" As I sat he said, "So, what are you after?"

G: I want to know how you found this place and why you came here.

This question, and the previous one, were about his personal status in the place and clearly made him upset and he snapped:

X: I don't want to talk to anybody, don't want to waste my time until you … read the fucking letter and you know who you are talking to.

I briefly looked at the letter which did not make much sense and in attempting to continue the interview in a structured way I said, "I will read it, but I want to start at the beginning. How did you end up in this place?" My apparently dismissive attitude made him even angrier. "You didn't read the letter… I would like you to know whom you are talking before I answer these stupid questions. You are talking about claiming this fucking building and I am talking about claiming the whole fucking planet."

I apologised that I did not really understand what this letter was about and to read it carefully it would take me some time: "You see, English is not my first language."

X: "Why didn't you say so in the first place? You remind me of somebody I was living with a long time ago for four years. Every morning we sat eating breakfast together. I read the newspaper and gave him half. He was a construction worker but he was often unemployed so I asked him why he couldn't get a job. He said that he didn't know how to read… he had sat there for four years pretending to read the newspaper and now he was saying that he could not read? It made me feel bad…"

I explained again that I could read, but just that it would take me some time, noticing that Steve has started to show signs of wanting to leave... King, looked at Steve and asked me: "So how are you two are connected..." I answered, "He is my host." And to Steve, "How long do we have?" Steve answered, "Ten minutes."

King is clearly disappointed that the visit is going to be so short and asked again, "So what are you trying to document?"

Me: "I am looking for people who live in areas like this to see how they arrive in these kind of places, how they survive here… is it difficult …"

I didn't end my sentence and the King could not contain himself:

"Yes, it is... it makes you crazy all this waste.... You see there - miles of square meters of abandoned existing factories. They are abandoned and sitting here and getting trashed... and I want to be the caretaker and turn it all into a little town of Bethlehem Waste, where everyone is treated like a King at no cost to the taxpayer. I want to set it up as a showpiece and have food manufacturers donate samples of their food, and clothing manufacturers give away samples of their clothing and pay for it from their income tax which is a perfectly legitimate way to do it. This place could absorb all the homeless people and their vehicles and this could be their place. And people won't be afraid of going to jail because it will be a place free from health and safety code violation so they can also give drugs... and they will also take all the shit that goes into the garbage, bring it here, and it will be accepted, put in the right place and painted and used creatively, see this for example..."

He took my hand, laughing, and we took up a better position from which to view the bus/shelter.

G: "So how long did it take you…?"

King: "About ten years, and I was the caretaker of this place for five years... but it is all written on this paper but it will take you time to read all this shit..."

I took another look at the paper he gave me and asked, "Is this the programme of turning this place to…."

King: 'This is an obituary… you know what an obituary is? The thing people read about you when you die… I am at the point in time that after years of being ignored I am contemplating that come tomorrow I will take a trip to another dimension, maybe overdose or something, and my friends will have a party, a little funeral. They would do it and chill out."

I am trying to ignore what might be a suicide declaration and go back to his idea for the homeless people neighbourhood: "Did you write down your plan for this place?" "I wrote it down and sent it to Clinton but it was no good because I needed a sponsor for it so I sent it also to Bill Gates together with a plan for a solar energy programme for this area asking him to sponsor it. You could cover all this area with solar panels, so that in an emergency, when the rest of the city has no energy, when all the electricity goes out we could sell them energy. It can light the whole area from the solar panels on the roofs… Haa," he sighed, "That's enough… I can see pal…."

I guess he saw that my mind was wandering, thinking how best to navigate the conversation back to his everyday life. Then he asked "Do you know who Swothco is?" "Rothko?" I ask.

King: "No, he is a cop who bothers all the homeless people in vehicles… we brought a case against him in the halls of justice a week or two ago… it appears that he misled the whole police department who misinterpreted 37a in the Police Code that says that you may not leave your vehicle parked or standing in any street for more than 72 hours. But if you come back to the vehicle, even if you do not move it, it means that you didn't leave it parked or standing because you came back to it and they need to count the hours from the start. They are not interpreting it correctly. So, we got an injunction from the Federal Court to stop

misinterpretation of the law resulting in the towing of vehicles away and harassing the homeless….”

Hearing of this daily struggle with the police, I suddenly felt guilty for being a bit impatient when he told me about his dream for the redevelopment of the area, and I was flattered that he was willing to share them with me, somebody he did not know, from far away, dressed in a way that would earn me a place in homeless shelter, and obviously not in a position to help him to realise or even advertise his vision. So I said: “Let’s go back to your idea for this place to create a small living area…it is quite interesting, tell me more…”

King: “It will be a self-sufficient city that will have its own energy, water, food, heat and light free of charge. It will be the place for the homeless to go without the need to pay for anything. You can read it all here.”

He handed me back the long typed letter he wrote to Gates, entitled in thick green marker ‘OBITUARY’. I promised him I would to try and publish his plan, although I admitted I was not sure where and when. And then, as Steve and I were about to leave, the King, standing in front of the bus, said, “There are five billion people on the planet, that’s what’s getting me. They’re not interested in finding solutions to their problems, they’re making too much fucking money, perpetuating the problem. In my attempt to cure all disease and my attempt to communicate with the medical profession, I’ve uncovered a conspiracy to commit genocide to kill us all on purpose to achieve population control. The entire medical profession and all levels of government have been infiltrated by a foreign power, alien to the principles of a free society and they will wipe us off the map very soon. It’s not only the end of the world, they’re bringing about. They don’t want, fuck you, thirty-one years of my life, I’m here to show them the way to immortality from here to the end of humanity.” I could swear that he and the space around him was suddenly illuminated by a strange light, out of nowhere. As I gave him my word to try to publish his plan, I will include it here.
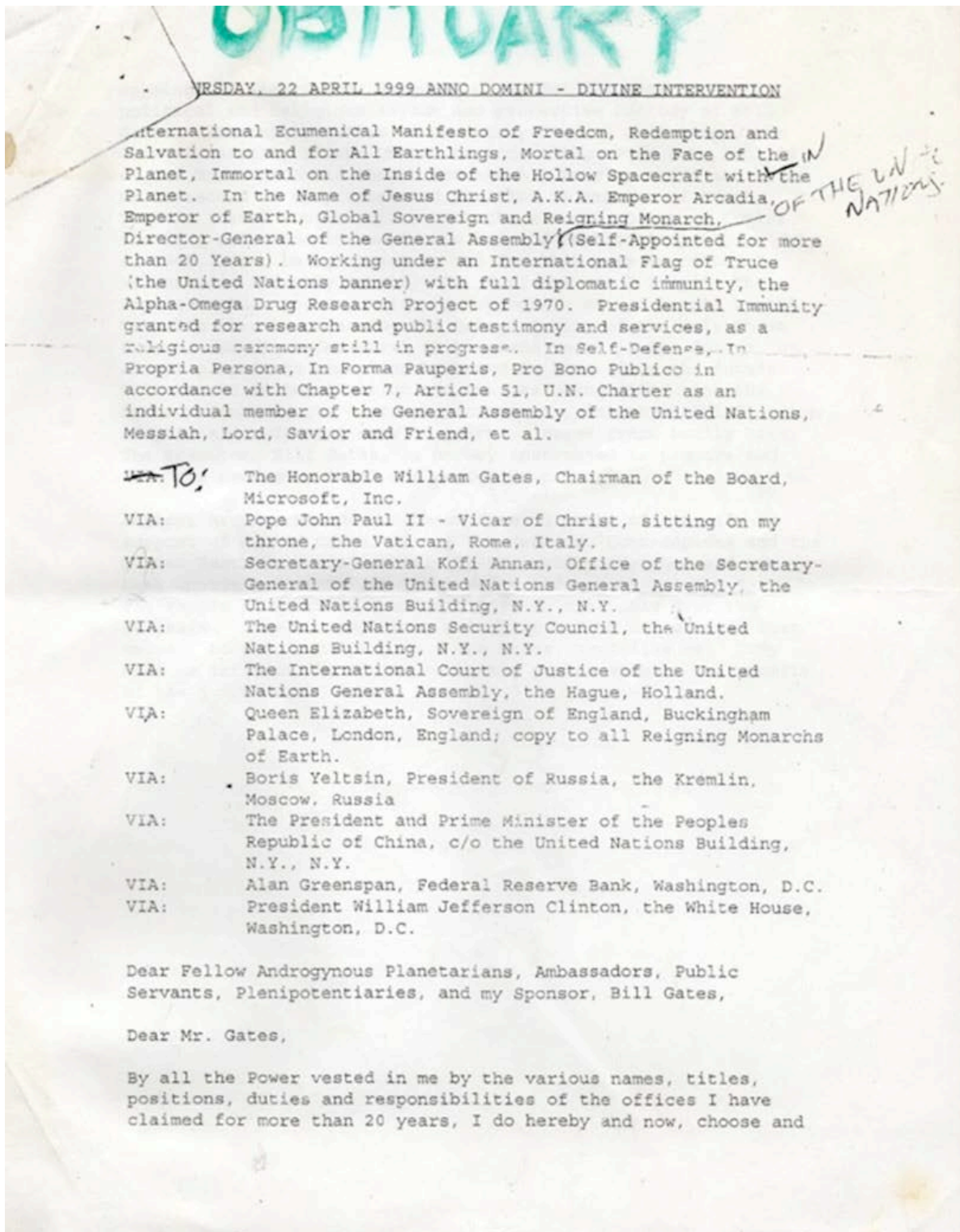
OBITUARY

THURSDAY, 22 APRIL 1999 ANNO DOMINI - DIVINE INTERVENTION

International Ecumenical Manifesto of Freedom, Redemption and Salvation to and for All Earthlings, Mortal on the Face of the Planet, Immortal on the Inside of the Hollow Spacecraft with the Planet. In the Name of Jesus Christ, A.K.A. Emperor Arcadia, Emperor of Earth, Global Sovereign and Reigning Monarch, Director-General of the General Assembly (Self-Appointed for more than 20 Years). Working under an International Flag of Truce (the United Nations banner) with full diplomatic immunity, the Alpha-Omega Drug Research Project of 1970. Presidential Immunity granted for research and public testimony and services, as a religious ceremony still in progress. In Self-Defense. In Propria Persona, In Forma Pauperis, Pro Bono Publico in accordance with Chapter 7, Article 51, U.N. Charter as an individual member of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Messiah, Lord, Savior and Friend, et al.

TO: The Honorable William Gates, Chairman of the Board, Microsoft, Inc.

VIA: Pope John Paul II - Vicar of Christ, sitting on my throne, the Vatican, Rome, Italy.

VIA: Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Building, N.Y., N.Y.

VIA: The United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Building, N.Y., N.Y.

VIA: The International Court of Justice of the United Nations General Assembly, the Hague, Holland.

VIA: Queen Elizabeth, Sovereign of England, Buckingham Palace, London, England; copy to all Reigning Monarchs of Earth.

VIA: Boris Yeltsin, President of Russia, the Kremlin, Moscow, Russia

VIA: The President and Prime Minister of the Peoples Republic of China, c/o the United Nations Building, N.Y., N.Y.

VIA: Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Bank, Washington, D.C.

VIA: President William Jefferson Clinton, the White House, Washington, D.C.

Dear Fellow Androgynous Planetarians, Ambassadors, Public Servants, Plenipotentiaries, and my Sponsor, Bill Gates,

Dear Mr. Gates,

By all the Power vested in me by the various names, titles, positions, duties and responsibilities of the offices I have claimed for more than 20 years, I do hereby and now, choose and

Illustration 48: The King's obituary.

appoint, William Gates, Executor of my Estates, and request
political and religious asylum and Protective Custody of Bill
Gates. Personally. Also of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the
General Assembly of the United Nations. Also Pope John Paul II
of the Roman Catholic Church and ask him to step aside and allow
me to ascend to my predestined position as Emperor of Earth.
This is formal Public Notice that the eternal spirit of Christ
the King has reincarnated in the body of Emperor Arcadia, on July
4, 1968, after being chosen by God for that purpose, after I
volunteered directly to God, "Oh, God, How can I help?" The
Pope's failure to step aside and recognize me, as taught by the
Catholic Church concerning the Second Coming of the Holy Ghost
from a time-dimension about 40 thousand years in the future, by
astral projection traveling backward in time, from the future.
Will result in legal action and charges being filed with the
International Court, of fraud, conspiracy, intentional infliction
of pain and suffering over 30 years to cause great bodily harm.
The Executor, Bill Gates, is hereby instructed to prepare and
file the necessary legal and religious papers.

Emperor Arcadia has devoted more than 30 years of his life in
support of a Good Cause, Saving the Species, Homo-Sapiens and the
planet Earth from extinction. He has avidly searched and has
been unable to locate any intelligent life on the planet Earth.
The People of Earth have made my life so miserable over the last
30 years. I am contemplating giving up a Good Cause, as a lost
cause. No one is helping me. The press, crucified me. They
made me infamous, by trying me in the press, without the benefit
of the judiciary.

Illustration 49: The King's obituary.

MAY DAY ADDRESS - 1 MAY 1999 A.D.

SUBJECT: Divine Intervention by telepathically received
automatic writings, from a superior intelligence _ SPACERAF
located inside the hollow ~~spacious~~ Earth to Emperor
Arcadia, for Executor of his estate, the Honorable
Bill Gates of Microsoft, Spiritual Guidance and
Instructions

Your Excellency,

Henceforth, your aid and assistance is hereby urgently requested and
your undivided attention is ordered to be focused on the following
suggestions to bring about some of the changes needed for the
survival of mankind and this planet.

1.   Diversify your assets and sponsor my efforts or do them
yourself.

2.   I bring you something you cannot buy; I bring you a friend and
an honest man you can trust to help you and all the inhabitants of
Earth.

3.   There is no way for you to spend the 600 billion dollar profit
you made, between now and before the end of next year, when, with
your help, we will both prepare and file necessary bankruptcy
petition for all the nations of Earth, in the International Court of
Justice of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Hague,
Holland, and procure international court order to abolish all money,
worldwide, now and forever; forgive all debts and debtors; and
elevate everything and everyone from present status of being cheap or
expensive, poor and needy, to their upcoming and exalted status of
being priceless and equal. No one will steal anything anymore; there
will be no money, and everyone will own everything on the planet
collectively. We will have streets of gold and walls of diamonds.

4.   Please, establish a savings account in my name, Emperor
Arcadia, to help the 5 billion poor and needy people of earth, and
title the account "The Foundation of the Human Race;" transfer 10% of
your profits into that bank account; set it up so the only person
able to withdraw any of the 60 billion dollars in that savings
account will be Bill Gates. Please accept my I.O.U. in the amount of
180 billion dollars to repay this loan. Due and payable, as soon as
we file bankruptcy for the Planet. Ask either Alan Greenspan, Bill
Clinton, the Secretary of the Treasury, Congress, or the United
Nations to start printing 3 dollar bills as a Savings Bond, that will
be sold in banks worldwide for 1 dollar each, but will have full
redemption value of 3 dollars each, and triple the amount of money
everyone has, and let's make everyone rich before filing bankruptcy,
to allow everyone to pay all their bills. Buy 3 times as much and

Illustration 50: The King's obituary.

take care of 3 times as many people. Place interest earned each day
on that savings account of 60 billion dollars into another account to
replace Social Security. Use that 60 billion dollars as collateral
to borrow as much money as possible from every bank on Earth. All
money placed in that one account will be tripled with either I.O.U.s
for triple value or 3 dollar bills.

5.   Bill Gates is hereby encouraged to discontinue putting all your
eggs in one basket and reinvest only 10% of your profits back into
computers, which hopefully will convince Janet Reno , the Department
of Justice, to drop their anti-trust lawsuit.

6.   Mass Produce and Sell on the Internet -- Solar Energy Panels to
Heat and Light Buildings: Bill Gates is hereby encouraged to procure
the specifications and NASA's permission to manufacture and mass
produce at the lowest price possible and obtain rights to transform
the entire planet via sales on the Internet from supplying
electricity from fossil fuels to "the Sun of God" Solar Energy
Panels. Placing proceeds on these sales into the savings account
aforementioned.

7.   Mass Produce and Sell on the Internet -- Solar Energy Vehicles:
Bill Gates is further encouraged to design motorized vehicles with
Solar Energy Panels on the roof of vehicles, water in the gas tank,
and solar energy produced to separate the hydrogen and oxygen in the
water gas tank, to run vehicles on hydrogen and have oxygen or water
vapor for exhaust, to cease air pollution from using fossil fuels.

8.   Bill Gates is further encouraged to design, mass produce and
market on the Internet Solar Energy Toilets, when after use, push
button and contents of toilet will be disintegrated into electricity
for use as a new energy source. Placing all proceeds and profits
into the savings account.

9.   Bill Gates is hereby encouraged to begin construction of the
Cosmotropolis that can be sealed in the event World atmosphere
becomes contaminated, over Microsoft Headquarters, or other places,
A Colossal, Hollow, Cantelevered Skyscraper Pyramid Terrerian

10.   In the event Bill Gates wishes to establish 2-way radio and
television contact using conventional equipment between the Mortals
on the face of this Planet and the Immortals and Inner Terrestrials,
with whom Emperor Arcadia has been in direct telepathic contact for
more than 30 years, I would humbly and sincerely implore and beseech
I be offered protective custody of Bill Gates, personally and
posthaste, and I will be more than happy to furnish the proper
procedure.

Illustration 51: The King's obituary.

'IF I SHOULD DIE BEFORE YOU WAKE DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

APRIL 20, 1998 ANNO DOMINI

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND DISCOVERIES TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND
CORRECT YOUR MISINTERPRETATIONS, PRESENTED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE

By the Alpha-Omega Drug Research Project of 1970
Presidential, Diplomatic and other Valid Immunities Granted and
Still in Progress As A Religious Ceremony
Emperor Arcadia, Director, Metaphysician, Researcher in Self-
Defense

To cleanse and purify inside the human body, incorporate one or
all of the following into your diet:

    APPLE
  I. Mix 1/5 glass cider vinegar and 4/5 glass distilled water,
and drink.
  II. Mix 1/2 teaspoon baking soda with 8 oz. distilled water,
and drink.
  III. Best of all do yourself a favor. Mix 1/2 glass of your own   *V*
urine with 1/2 glass of soda pop or water, and drink.   *INCREASE*
DO NOT MIX VINEGAR AND BAKING SODA within same 6-8 hour period. *CONSUMPT*
IV DOUBLE YOUR INTAKE OF IODIZED TABLE SALT ON FOOD *OF RAW*
Urine (your in) is an EDIBLE ANTISEPTIC. For 3 days - A *GARLIC,*
SPERMICIDE KILLS FUNGUS-DISSOLVES GREASE - Cauterizes cuts and
burns, sterilizes wounds, relieves topical pain (PISS ON IT),
relieves internal pain (DRINK IT). It is an anesthetic, a shower
of gold, the fountain of youth, your body is the church, or
temple, your urine is the holy water. You will wash your sins
away with water. You shall become as children again.

WE ARE CREATED EQUAL.

In the womb, in the embryonic state each of use, has male female
organs that are developing, a decision is made, one set stops the
other continues. The one tHat stops does not go away. Every
male has undeveloped female organs, every female has undeveloped
male organs. We are all the same sex, androgynous. There is
only one god, Male and Female. Each of us is created in that
mirror image, each human body - male and female together.

ADAM (Atom) and EVE ARE ONE NOT TWO PEOPLE, Adam is misspelled,
it is (Atom) Day. Eve came from the side of Atom. EVE IS NIGHT.
Atom and Eve, Day and Night. The truth is as plain as the nose
on your own face.

Illustration 52: The King's obituary.

The NEXT TIME YOU LOOK INTO A mirror draw an imaginary line down the middle of your face and study it. You will see the RIGHT SIDE your FATHER, the LEFT SIDE, Mother.

The right side of every human body is masculine and positive electrical energy.

The LEFT SIDE of every human body is feminine, and negative electrical energy. That is why PRIESTS OF THE CHURCH AND JUDGES OF THE COURT wear a dress over the pants, we are individual, means one, dual at end, means two. WE ARE ALL TWO IN ONE. LOOK UP THE DEFINITION OF THE SPECIES HOMO SAPIENS - MAN IS DEFINITION <WOMAN IS NOT MENTIONED> MAN WITH A PENIS is man. Man without a penis is without man. WITHOUT IS W.O. in Dictionary. MAN WITHOUT A PENIS IS A WOMAN.

DOMINOS VOBISCUM,

SEND DONATIONS TO: EMPEROR ARCADIA, 199 EDDY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

I NEED A FRIEND WHO IS HONEST, DO YOU? URGENT PLEA: I NEED USE OF A BATHTUB FOR A 3 HOUR SOAK IN HOT MEDICATED WATER. I NEED USE OF A VIDEO CAMERA FOR A 3 HOUR VIDEO TAPE.

CARDINAL MARDI MAHATMA CROWN PRINCE JESUS CHRIST SATAN MESSIAH LORD & SAVIOUR

Emperor Arcadia, et.al.

Illustration 53: The King's obituary.

7.c.ii.   Rough Sleeping: Alex and the Founding of the Village in the Sky

…While the King was dreaming of the eco-social project, Alex, who Steve was about to take me to, was running a homeless colony not far away – on the edge of a cliff between the cosy residential neighbourhood of Potrero Hill and 101 Highway. Although Steve had described the place to me, I was not prepared for such a location. We parked the car in a dead-end street. I was not sure where we went from here since in front of us there was about a hundred metre drop onto the highway, and to our left and right a row of houses. I followed Steve. At the back of one of the houses and the drop was a narrow strip of land that was hardly noticeable because, as far the eye could see, it was covered with thick vegetation. This strip of land was fenced but in the fence, there was a small gate that was unlocked.

We entered the strip. The width of the path beyond the gate was about two to three meters. On one side was the drop onto the highway, and on the other side there were concrete slabs that supported the cliff. The supporting structure formed a semi-enclosed space with a series of shallow alcoves along the cliff each about five metres in length and three metres deep. After we passed a few empty alcoves we came to one that was full of rubbish. The next one had some excrement and used tissues and newspapers. From here onward a rope was stretched to the height of about one hundred and twenty centimetres along the way. A few more metres ahead there were two small tents in one of the alcoves.

I think there were people there but I was not sure. Steve said that Alex must be further down. We passed a few more empty bays and one with a blanket and cardboard sheets. Above them on the concrete wall the name 'Alex' was tagged, but she was not there either. Apparently, I was told a day later, this was the spare/guest room. Next to it, we found Alex and her boyfriend. The alcove was thickly covered with blankets and sheets. Alex was lounging inside, listening to music. Steve tried to tell her about my research but I felt that she was somewhere else. I sat down, half crouching into the 'room', and tried to explain again but she was too jerky, and the hysterical laugh of her boyfriend did not help. Steve said that

maybe we should come some other time and asked if tomorrow morning would be ok. Alex said it would be okay around twelve noon. To confirm, I asked, "Are you sure, because I am leaving San Francisco for Chicago in two days." To reassure me, she wrote a large note: "Gil, Monday noon" and hung it on the wall. I promised to bring coffee and breakfast. On the way, back to the car I asked Steve what they were on, and he said, "Probably crack." "Do you think she will be all right tomorrow?" "I hope so," he replied. I thought maybe we should try to find other residents in this enclave but Steve said that she would be the most knowledgeable and that he was in a rush to meet his girlfriend. He dropped me back at my hotel and we arranged to meet tomorrow.

Next morning, Steve came and drove me in his car straight to Alex. She had just got up but the coffee and doughnuts did the trick. After explaining again the purpose of my research, we started the interview.

Alex: "I became homeless two and a half years ago because I got hepatitis and couldn't afford the rent and was evicted. I squatted for some time in a squat on Mission, corner of 2nd. They came and arrested us and charged us for trespassing. I moved to 7th Street and King for two months but they decided to clean the area there and I continued to move around. Then a friend told me about this spot, it is a secluded area, and people knew about it from word of mouth. He pointed to the gate and I have been here for three months now."

Illustration 54: The different sections in Alex's camp. Some areas are for sleeping, some are used as communal camping site. The concrete slabs that hold the cliff above the highway are used by the homeless people to support the provisory accommodations.

Illustration 55: Alex in her tent on her bed made from found furniture, next to a bedside table that was found nearby.

G: Are the police aware of you and the other people living here?

A: Yes, they were here last week and asked us to move but nobody did. I don't know how long people have been staying here but I guess people have been here for years. I like it here. It is quite noisy but at least the cops don't bother you every day and it is not right on the street where people can take your stuff. The only disadvantage it that it is quite noisy but then, every place has its downsides.

G: Any rules? It looks quite organised. You have separate areas for sleeping, garbage area.

A: Most people have the sense of unspoken rules. Basically, you don't shit in your own backyard, you know… when I see some garbage I try to pick it up… I don't like living trashy – it is the wrong view of homelessness. The fact that you are homeless doesn't mean that you have to live like a pig. Most of the people aren't born homeless you see. I had my place and friends… but it's hard to go back once you are on the streets…the state system and the government, I don't know if they realise it or not, but they keep you here. They do it by ensuring that you are completely preoccupied with survival…you cannot sleep much coz they keep pushing you from place to place, then you need to go half city? [Because you don't have money for transport] to eat in one of the soup kitchens… you need to keep appointments to see the doctor, you need to find a place to take a shower etc. Without a place, a shower, clean clothes and a telephone it is difficult to get a job. It is too difficult to get out of here… but anyhow I am going to get a flat soon. I found out that I am HIV positive so I can get onto one of those programs that will provide me with my own place, TV, some money, and I can designate Michael [her mate] as my husband so he will get all the things that I do.

G: Do you know the other people here?

A: Yes, most of them. The West and Sidney couple downstairs I have known for twelve years and I brought them here. I knew PQ had just got of prison and didn't have a place to go so I invited him here.

G: Do you see a solution for homelessness?

A: We need to reorganise society from the bottom so the wealthy class that have a lot will have a bit less, and the ones who have nothing can survive…

G: And in a more immediate way?

A: They don't have enough shelters and if there is not enough housing so they need to let people stay in empty properties and the huge amount of vacant land… the basic rule should be that the guys that squat should keep it tidy and clean. There is no reason to keep these places empty. But they don't allow it – it is so strange. One policeman once told me that there is no room for us in this city. There is not one square inch of land that does not belong to somebody – there is no place that you can stay… but we are here – you cannot kill us all… we will be moved around and out of sight but this does not solve the problem but only make it worse. They at least should designate an area where you can camp but camping is also illegal here.

G: How do you manage?

A: I don't use transport so I just walk. I pick up stuff from the street or people give you stuff. I don't get any GA - help from the government support. I hate the bureaucracy… and you have to stay in a hostel downtown which is like a jail. I prefer to do it in my own way… There is also lots you can do in the city for free… go to the museums, the library, the park…

G: Is there a freedom in being a homeless?

A: There is something about it… you see I chose to be an outcast. Even when I had my place and a job people looked at me as if I was not a part of their society. There is a freedom in a way as I can sleep wherever I lay my head, I move whenever I feel like it, but at the same time it is very much jail. Once you are here, you are here. And it's very difficult to go back. If I had a choice, I would definitely like to be indoors inside my apartment and have regular food…

G: Have you met homeless people who prefer to be outside?

A: Oh, yes, I have met a few. For them I guess it's like being a hobo… they have the desire to wander to keep moving, they cannot stay in one place and it is fine if that's what your heart tell you to do. I believe that people that want to live like that should be allowed to do so as long it doesn't harm anybody else or the environment. I think people like that cannot help it, it's something within them – even if they wanted to settle down they couldn't.   It was common to have wandering classes in any society throughout history everywhere, all the time.

Her words reminded me of what the celebrated ethnographer, James Spradly (1972; 1999), wrote in his first book *You Owe Yourself a Drunk: Adaptive Strategies of Urban Nomads*: "There are men who, out of desire, habit, or some other reason, will always be tramps. Is American society large enough to tolerate and even welcome such diversity? Can we guarantee citizens the right to be different when this means some men will choose to be tramps?" (1999, p.261).

7.d.   From Surviving in the Zone to the Possibilities of Open Public Space

Donald, a forty-nine year old Scottish guy, who lived for several years on the streets of Naples and as a traveller for nine years in Europe, initiated another kind of self-help 'programme' in Piazza S. Gaetano - an art class for other homeless people and everybody else. I was introduced to him by Adam, the gatekeeper of the DAMM Social Centre. *We got to the Square in the early afternoon, but Donald, Adam's friend, was having a siesta, lying down next to the 'plague column', an obelisk topped by a statue of Saint Dominic, founder of the Dominican Order, erected after the plague of 1656. The Piazza is at the centre of the tourist area and shopping area. Herds of tourists traverse the small square, from the popular Via S. Biagio to the Domenico Maggiore church, following the shouts of their guides who try*

to outdo Naple's everyday commotion in the name of History. But Donald still manages to sleep.

I asked Adam if the police didn't hassle homeless people, especially in such a central and touristy location. He said that the police would intervene only on rare occasions, although they had the authority to do so. He continued, "Even when we have a party they usually will not intervene. Yesterday, two policemen even joined us, they even drank beers with us though I must say it was a bit scary since they carry guns, but they were bored and wanted a bit of a break."

"What about the neighbours around the square? Aren't they bothered about the noise?"

"It is rare that they will say anything. It sometimes happens that a neighbour will come down and ask us apologetically to be quiet because her daughter cannot sleep. In America, it would end with quarrelling and shouting."

"Is it at all probable that they will call the police?" I ask.

"Well, here the police are so corrupt that nobody will bother to get them involved. People manage to do without their intervention. In my neighbourhood, I know most of the people and we protect each other's interests. Here, even if it is the centre of town and more affluent, it's the same."

I am distracted by a muscular guy in an extra tight T-shirt who is walking across the square, and ask Adam if he thinks this guy is gay. "Perhaps," he replies, "Guys here dress in a feminine way," and I try to correct him, "Sexy way, you mean?" and he smiles.

"I think it is the weather and the cocky disposition of people here but it is true that there are a lot of gays living here."

"It doesn't seem so, there are hardly five gay bars here," I say in an obvious disappointment. "It is different here; society is much more tolerant. We don't need

segregated gay bars and clubs like in the States, where if you try to pick up a straight guy by mistake he will beat the shit out of you."

Gays or not, the looks everybody gives each other sometimes is overwhelming. Everybody stares and everybody exhibits and performs. From the street-sellers to the street cruising, from the prostitutes that flaunt their goods in Galleria Umberto to beggars who flaunt their decapitated limbs in the Central Station, from the youngsters puffing marijuana clouds on street corners to children playing football in shopping arcades. This freedom seems to be generated because of the openness which exists, whilst in Britain, it is only by overlooking these activities that they could take place. With all this freedom, I ask Adam what would constitute a transgressive activity in such place.

"Maybe if you start preaching against Jesus in the middle of the square." Seeing that it doesn't seem likely that Donald is going to wake up any time soon, I ask Adam what he is doing tonight.

"I don't know, maybe we can arrange another party here tonight. It will be good for you to experience it."

"Are you going to bring a DJ?"

Adam replies laughing, "You should step-out of your western concepts, you're in Napoli. A party in the square here starts with somebody playing a guitar, drums or whatever. Homeless people gather, students from the neighbourhood bring a crate of beer and join in. This is Napoli, informality is the norm."

Illustration 56: Donald and his art collection done by himself and other people. He usually slept at the edge of the houses in the square, the location of the fountain was considered by him as his living room or studio.
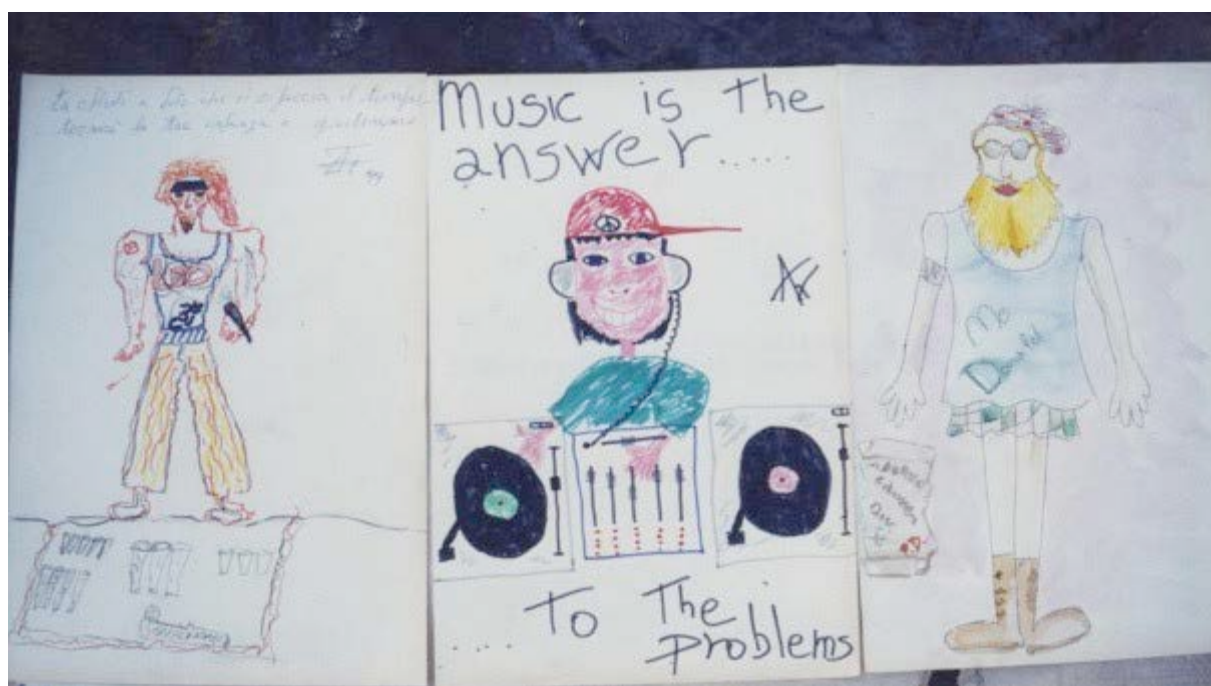
Illustration 57: Drawings by Donald's visitors.

As we speak, a young guy at the edge of the square, leaning on the locked gate of the church, starts playing a guitar. I was not sure that he was homeless but a mother with her daughter and a shopping basket stops and gives the guy some change. He does not have a hat on the floor. A few other teenagers and maybe students are starting to gather to listen to the music that sounds like Italian rap.

The music wakes Donald up. I wish him good morning, although it is late afternoon by now, and asks if he fancies a coffee. "Beer more likely, thanks." When I return with couple of bottles, Adam has already explained to him who I am and what it is all about. Donald seems to be very experienced in explaining what he is doing in the square. Since he is so centrally positioned he gets to speak with many tourists and students. He opens his bag and takes out a red folder in which he keeps drawings and a red box in which there are assorted markers, paints, scissors, glue and brushes. While unpacking his portfolio, labelled with the word 'Eureka', he says that the whole thing started when he came to the square about two years ago and found a piece of cardboard with some drawing on it. With not much else to do in the square, he started drawing and painting scenes from the square. When other homeless people started to show interest, he bought more papers and markers and paints and asked them to join in. "I think this has been a very useful tool to interact with people."

"There is art in everybody. Each person has his own colours and shapes which he likes to put on the paper –although not everybody is a technician – the important thing is to release some energy from inside… to express stuff."

Of the reams of drawings and paintings he has, about third depict Donald and the locals. Others are abstract of landscapes, or street scenes – people smoking pot, playing music or of passers-by. A few drawings have text on them explaining the scenes but more often they contain political or personal messages.

"Not only homeless people drew those," he says. "Some are by kids from the neighbourhood, street youth, and even marines, soldiers and students, until now about a hundred and fifty people have participated in this."

"Why do you keep the drawings? Are the people who drew them not interested in keeping them?"

"Some are, others gave them to me as presents. Some I give away but I never sell them. Often I will hang the drawings around the square and after a day or two they are gone. Somebody likes it and takes it at night. I don't see it as a theft – I see it as a compliment. It is my way of enjoying my work. I don't want to see these works as a commodity but as a tool for liberation and exploration. If I need to define this work I would say that it is a social document of the life in this square, in this city."

As we talk a nun from the nearby church arrives and brings Donald some food - mozzarella cheese, bread and milk. I ask Donald if this is common and he proudly says, "I have been two years in the street and I never went hungry. People are very kind here. I have always got clean clothes and a blanket to sleep under."

"Where do you take shower? Go to the loo?"

"Because I have been here for two years I am well known. The café in the square lets me use the toilet at any time. When they have no customers, they let me shower there. Yesterday after the party here, I was lucky and was invited by some students to take a shower and sleep in a bed, after three constant months of sleeping here; that felt very good. But, other places [where they don't know me] are difficult and I have been refused entrance. So, what you do in such cases is you find an isolated spot somewhere, take a plastic bag, you shit in the plastic bag, tie it up and throw it in the garbage."

"Why do you think the authorities and the local people are ok with you sleeping in the square?"

"Neapolitans are very curious people. They are fascinated in people and they don't mind eccentrics so it is easy."

"What about the police?"

"I have good relations with the police, and they never bother the homeless people here. It is not their job." But he went further.

"There was a cold spell last winter, six people died on the street. As a result, the police invited all the homeless to come and have hot milk biscuits. I missed this invitation somehow, I didn't hear about it. A day later, since they didn't see me they sent a car to check on me and invited me along. The commander at his office asked me if there was anything I need. I asked for a whisky and he sent somebody to the cantina to get one. We talked for 45 minutes about the life in the streets etc. He was impressed by my art project and thought that it might even contribute to a reduction of crime. When I was back in the square, about an hour later an officer arrived and gave me a bottle of twelve-year-old whisky from Aberdeen with a note saying 'Complements of the Commandant'."

"Have you done any other work with homeless people?"

"I built with other people a small cardboard town near the central post office. We built about ten shelters. You can build a reasonable cardboard box shelter for one person or two in two hours. We used cardboard boxes, staples, and stitched with string etc. The idea was good, and the shelters quite comfortable but the 'town' became very filthy after some time. People didn't leave it clean, shat around and some were playing drums at 3am in the morning. The police put a stop to it and cleared the place."

I met Donald a few more times during my stay, but when I returned, three years later, he was gone. He had told me that he dreamt of going to Australia to work on a farm and write up his experiences of his nine years in Italy.

7.e.   Conclusion

The knowledge that was gained through the site-research methods that I have shown in this chapter – using *dérive*, chance, observations, conversations, photography, as well as historical research, could not have been produced by the more common methodologies of urban research which I mentioned before, and which contribute to the imagery of certain urban spaces as 'dead zones'. The methods I have used reveal how these spaces are not a waste but unique grounds for many marginalised activities and communities. They show the survival strategies that homeless people have developed in the face of expulsion both from society and from more visible urban spaces. For example, they show how they find places to live, how they evade the police, how they move in the urban space, how they re-design space to suit their needs: from David who transformed the edge of the road to the basis for his mobile home, the King of SOMA who transformed an empty lot and has written a manifesto for urban agriculture, Alex who created in the slopes of the highway a small homeless people's village, and Donald who created art classes in the heart of a classical public square.

In the next chapter I will present in more detail the ways other communities use urban space, both formal and informal spaces ('dead zones'), for other kind of purposes. While these survival strategies are formed out of necessity, they show how urban space can be used in ways that urban planners have not envisaged or sanctioned. The methods I have used have led me to experience these spaces in much more engaged ways than if I had chosen to use common planning and architectural practices – but it is not just about the methods. Crucial to the experience and knowledge I have gained was the fact that my objectives in approaching these 'zones' were not driven by the will to re-design the space, and/or make it more productive, clean and fitting to hegemonic agendas but by the will to engage with whatever might be found there.

Finally, I believe that the knowledge and experiences gained in such research could not have been presented through dry academic language which excluded experience, which

seeks answers to a pre-defined hypothesis, that conceal the meandering processes, and the writer's position and often suppress the voices of those who become the 'subjects' of the research. It has been argued, for example by Edward Said (1979), Michel de Certeau (1984), and James Clifford (1986), that academic writing is based on vision, which separates the theoretician from the field of study, or more precisely, vision is what creates the 'field', the object of inquiry. In *Writing Culture*, Clifford (1986) states that

> "once cultures are no longer prefigured visually — as objects, theatres, texts —it becomes possible to think of a cultural poetics that is an interplay of voices, of positioned utterances. In a discursive rather than a visual paradigm, the dominant metaphors for ethnography shift away from the observing eye and toward expressive speech (and gesture). The writer's 'voice' pervades and situates the analysis, and objective, distancing rhetoric is renounced." Clifford 1986, p.12.

In the writing of these chapters, as well as in other places throughout the thesis I have attempted to do this – by creating discursive text, contextualising myself in the space of writing, inserting dialogues and lengthy quotations, and by mixing perspectives. Doing this I believe would break open the 'dead zone' as a space that was constituted by distancing vision and rhetoric.

Nonetheless, my argument goes further. Whilst the discourse of architecture and planning is based itself upon the visual, the 'dead zone' is a place where the discourse blinds itself. It chooses not to see what there is in these 'zones' (and by that it sees them as 'dead') and is blind to the fact that what there is in the zone (communities and spatial configurations) also exists elsewhere. This strategy (that as I argued before is created for certain ends such as colonial and capitalist agendas) is also echoed in practice. As I showed in this chapter, much of the effort by hegemonic forces (local authorities are the main agents in this) are directed

against the visibility of homeless people and other excluded communities, rather than tackling the root causes of homelessness.

In the next chapter I will show how through detailed observations, carried out by meandering in the 'dead zones' and in formal public places, and by documentary and engaged photography, these spaces reveal the 'dead zones' as a complex urban space that stretches well beyond the boundaries that the discourse of architecture and planning have imposed on it.

Part C: **Transgressions**

CHAPTER 8:

The 'Dead Zone' as a Nomadic Space

"I think it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand. Each can only be understood through the other."

Michael Foucault, *Space Knowledge Power*

The 'dead zone' is defined by the discourse as delimited space – a zone, in-between space and a space of the edge. It represents the Other of the city – from the ancient Greek city to the postmodern one – an anomaly. It is considered to be the result of the failure of urban planning and the economic system. The zone is a space of excess, of surplus of space and as such it is a waste, a non-productive space. Its imagery of the 'dead zone' is of emptiness and also of dereliction and disorder. Furthermore, as I have already indicated, the imagery of the 'dead zone' is to a large extent loose and even contradictory (empty, yet disordered and dangerous), especially from the colonial perspective. What unites 'dead zones', which is to say what produces the 'dead zone' as an object of discourse and practice, is expulsion – not just of places but even more of certain communities and practices. Communities and practices which are considered transgressive. I will elaborate on this theme in the next chapter.

Taking the loose definitions of what constitutes the 'dead zone', I have mapped such spaces in twenty-one cities in Europe, Asia and America. Disregarding scale, I have looked in these cities for spaces which have the characteristics of zones, in between spaces and edges. While I have relied on these formal/spatial definitions, I aimed to show that they are never empty and are populated by marginal communities. I will show that spaces which have

the spatial definitions of the 'dead zone', as well as the marking of a space which has no coherent or strong usage (from a planning and economic perspective), be it left-over spaces or formal public spaces, are valuable or have been made to be as such. While in the last chapter I focused on homeless people (Steve and the King in the Zone of Mission Bay – Alex in the edge space of the highway – and Donald in the in-between space of the historical city square), in this chapter I will present how other communities and practices use and transform these alleged 'dead zones'.

The possibility of re-thinking the 'dead zone' emerged from the first piece of research (into the Palestinian village in Tel Aviv) and through extensive field journeys, in which I have developed what I call engaged methodologies. This approach has been inspired by the work of Kevin Lynch on the notion of waste. In his book *Wasting Away* (Lynch & Southworth(ed.) 1990),[15] he showed how many derelict sites, assumed to be empty and wasteful, are in use, often by marginalised communities: "Children play in vacant lots, briefly emancipated from adult control. Alleys, which were intended for service access and for waste disposal, were also used by children, rag-pickers, and criminals" (Ibid., p.153). His observations led him to argue that sites empty of human beings, or any possibilities for profitability, cannot be considered as waste as they are heaven for flora and fauna (Ibid., p.143). In the subchapter 'Urban Wilderness' he writes: "Wilderness will develop in almost any untended land. The site of an old railroad station in the heart of West Berlin [...] (is) overgrown by thickets and wildflower meadows, the site, bombed out in World War I, contains examples of one-third of all flora of the region, including rare and endangered species and some indigenous forms, but particularly the exotic urban ornamental run wild" (Ibid., p.112).

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15   The book was edited by Professor Michael Southworth after his death.

Based on Lynch's research, which was a great inspiration for my own research in the 'dead zones', I wanted to see what happens when similar uses of public space take place in normative places. This approach was not part of the original scope of the field research. However, since the field research resembled the Situationist *dérive*, and based on the argument that spaces are marked as 'dead zones' not only, or even particularly, for their spatial attributes but for the communities that inhabit them, or the practices that are performed there, I included other urban spaces in this site research. Yet, through the research I found that there are some spatial characteristics that are more susceptive to marginalised communities and practices. This can be as mundane as the fountain railing in the Naples square which Donald used to sit against and display his artwork, or the empty roadside where Donald parked his car or the more elaborate concrete support structure of the cliff edge of the highway in which Alex established the small homeless village.

In this chapter, I will present a visual survey that tries to map the relations between spaces and the informal uses of them. In this survey, I used the discourse's own portrayal of the 'dead zone' as places which are spatially or geographically external to the city, as well as 'edge spaces'. The last category, 'overlapping spaces', is less defined by the spatial condition but more by the complex activities that occur in them. This analysis was first published in the book *Loose Space*, edited by Karen Franck and Quentin Stevens (2006). At the time, it seemed to be a useful analysis since it was an attempt to find correlations between the spatial condition/architecture of certain sites (mainly the alleged 'dead zones') and the social activities that took place in them. However, in hindsight the attempt to separate spatial analysis from the activities within them was almost impossible. In other words – the spatial analysis was always a combination of the 'planned' and physical space and the activities that transgressed the spatial and social boundaries of these spaces. One of the reasons for repeating this analysis here is to highlight its problematic nature, which is reflected in the quote by Michael Foucault that opened this chapter.

8.a.   The 'Dead Zone' as a Sacred Space

The geographically defined empty space is the most recognised and discussed 'dead zone'. It can be on a scale of a building but it can also be a city devastated by post-industrialisation. What is important for this definition is that they have geographically defined boundaries. Such spaces are ex-industrial or military zones (Lynch & Southworth 1990; De Solà-Morales 1995; Edensor 2005). Industrial ruins include non-functional harbours, dilapidated factories, abandoned train yards, military camps, power stations, heavy machinery disposal sites. They also include abandoned quarries and mines.

Whilst these zones are defined, their spatiality, forms and aesthetics are not. The form and aesthetics of these miscellaneous ruins not only depend on their initial structure (wood, concrete, bricks, glass, corrugate iron, etc.), the construction methods that were employed to build them, the chemicals or other corrosive material that is often stored in them, and their enclosed or open forms but also on the process of decay that they undergo. This process includes climatic conditions, the types of intrusive vegetation that colonise them, the informal use that takes place in them after they have been abandoned by their former inhabitants, and the length of time they have been abandoned. The array of structures and dilapidation processes involved in the shaping of industrial ruins make it impossible to achieve an aesthetic categorisation.

Yet, the process of ruination itself gives them some general characteristic of disorder. As they fall apart, they go through a process which makes their form become more complex to the degree that it is seen as disorder. The frequent uniformity of their surfaces becomes irregular, tented, covered up by vegetation or corrosion. Openings in the structures or spaces close up and new gaps appear where there were none. They acquire new smells and new sounds. While, as I mentioned before, these places vary in their spatiality and looks, they bear the signs of duality of occupation: the place as it was during the planned/formal uses of

it, and the place after it was abandoned and being reoccupied by humans or otherwise.[16] In recent years, there have been a few researchers from urban studies fields, particularly urban and human geography, who have argued that what the discourse identified as 'dead zones', 'wastelands' and derelict areas have desirable qualities that cannot be found elsewhere. These qualities are emanating from the lack of development which leaves these areas to be reclaimed by nature, and from the lack, or what is perceived to be lack, of control that draws marginalised groups to such spaces.

In the important survey of children's game and play, Iona and Peter Opie (1969) observed that the "child's experience are the most vivid when he or she escapes into places that are disused and overgrown and silent" (Ibid., p.15). They provide as an example the bombsites in London after the Blitz as an ideal site for children to play in (Ibid.). Similarly, Day and Midbjer (2007) quoted a German friend who recalled his childhood in a bombed-out city, as a wonderful, exciting and creative-stimulating environment, unlike the bland playgrounds with activity pre-determining equipment where he now teaches. They argue, somewhat cautiously, that while children "need structure in their lives […] they also need un-ordered - places where they're free to make their own construction and hidden places" (Ibid., p.31-32). Williams (1993) argues that sometimes "the most nondescript of objects in the adult world […] [among them] a patch of wasteland - become empowered with a significance as landmarks in the child's environment - a meeting place or even a quite contrary place of solitude - the special place to which the child retreats in order to be alone and which they may recall with fondness throughout their adult life" (Ibid., p.831).

Valentine (2001, p.75), in a discussion on children's informal and formal play areas, noted that children prefer to play in "a diverse and 'flexible' landscape (in terms of surfaces, forms, materials, opportunities for creative and manipulative play etc.)". Abandoned

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16   The most detailed and very illuminating survey of the spatial conditions of industrial ruins can be found in Tim Edensor's (2005) book *Industrial Ruins: Space, Aesthetics and Materiality.*

Illustration 58: Bangkok children playing under of a highway bridge near their neighbourhood.

Illustration 59: Naples, Children playing behind the local museum.

buildings, space left over after planning (SLOAP), industrial ruins, disused land which nature has partially colonised, offer such sites with their complicated spatiality and forms. The use of these sites by children and teenagers has been depicted widely in films such as Pasolini's *Mamma Roma* (1962) and in Shane Meadows' *This is England* (2006). Such waste grounds, argued Valentine, are even more significant for children's play, enjoyment and personal development than the designed playground and other formally designated and provided play sites. Another aspect that such sites offer is a place where children can exercise their creativity and to imagine stories and histories, rather than playgrounds that are either very abstract or contain strong prescribed themes. Children in such sites have much more freedom to shape space (Valentine 2001) both mentally and physically.

A study of such 'other spaces' was conducted by the artist Stephen Willats (2001) in his project *The Lurky Place*. It was a field study and participatory art project that took place in a wasteland site colonised by teenagers in Hayes, outer West London, outside a big housing estate. *The Lurky Place*, so named by one of the teenagers, "was not seen as an extension of personal space, as the immediate environment of the housing block was seen, but as a separate hidden territory; journeying into it, you emphatically left one thing behind and entered another" (Ibid., p.97). Industrial ruins and leftover space are the most typical spaces portrayed as 'dead zones' in the past few decades. Former military camps are another common type that has drawn the attention of planners and architects (Architecture for Humanity competition).

Christiania is an example of a 'zone' which was re-occupied informally and has become since then a contested space. Until a decade ago it was known as the 'Free-Town', an eighty-two-acre site west of downtown Copenhagen which was a military base until it was abandoned in 1969. It straddles the former fortifications of the city and a lake and is enclosed by a five-metre-high wall. In 1970, residents from the surrounding neighbourhoods squatted in the base, seeking in it the green open spaces they lacked. This was followed by the

establishment of a community of about one thousand people who, until the last decade, had their own local government, laws and urban planning and design system. Since its founding, there have been several attempts to evict the squatters. These attempts failed mainly because the site's listed building status prevented any lucrative and concrete development plans. This, the space's unviability in the eyes of the hegemonic capitalist system, is an important component in the creation and maintaining of the 'dead zone'. Since 2000, it has become the most popular tourist attraction in Denmark, with more than half a million visitors a year attracted by the semi-legal soft drug market, cheap restaurants, music venues and the serene atmosphere created by the large green spaces and the banning of cars in the zone.

It can be argued that the 'Free-Town', with its strict environmental and car free policies, was an inspiration for the pedestrianised central zone of Copenhagen. However, it also stands in contrast to Copenhagen's sanitised and over-commercial downtown, celebrated by planners (Rogers and Power 2000). The town was recognised as a social experiment and thus was protected from capitalist and moralistic forces until 2001, when the rise of the centre-right government changed attitudes towards it. Christiania was forced to accept dramatic reforms that in many ways have obliterated the uniqueness of the place.

An example of an 'alternative colony' in a former industrial zone is what is now celebrated as the 'Artist District' in downtown L.A. Born out of economic necessity, it was established during the 1980s, under the noses of the Los Angeles planning authorities. The zone where this artist's colony established itself is located in the former industrial area between the Hollywood and Santa Monica Freeways and between Alameda Street (Little Tokyo) and L.A. River. As with Christiania, the area is a kind of enclave where the former uses have been abandoned and new ones, informal and marginalised, have taken their place.
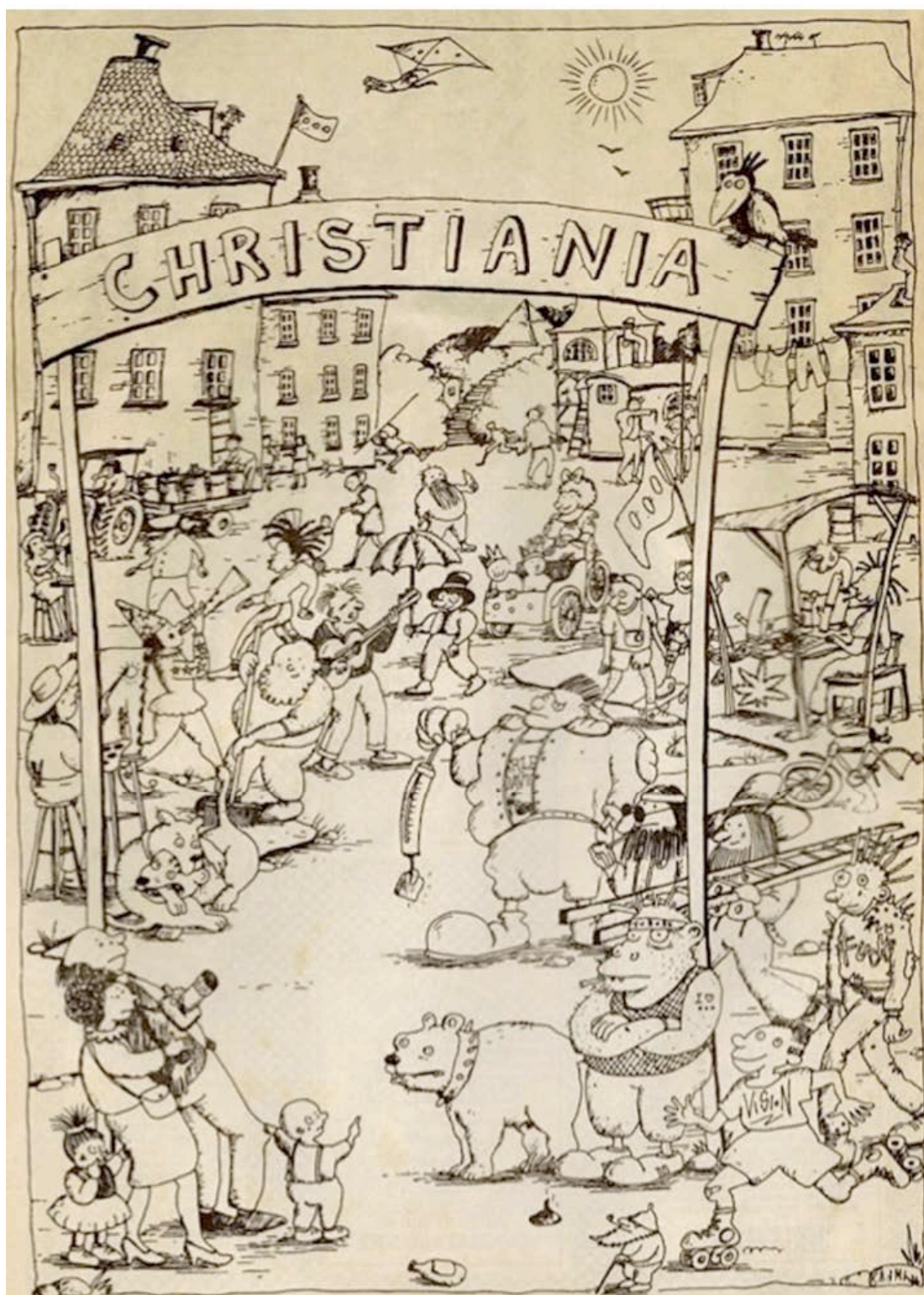
nlustration 60: Christiania guide, back cover, 2000.
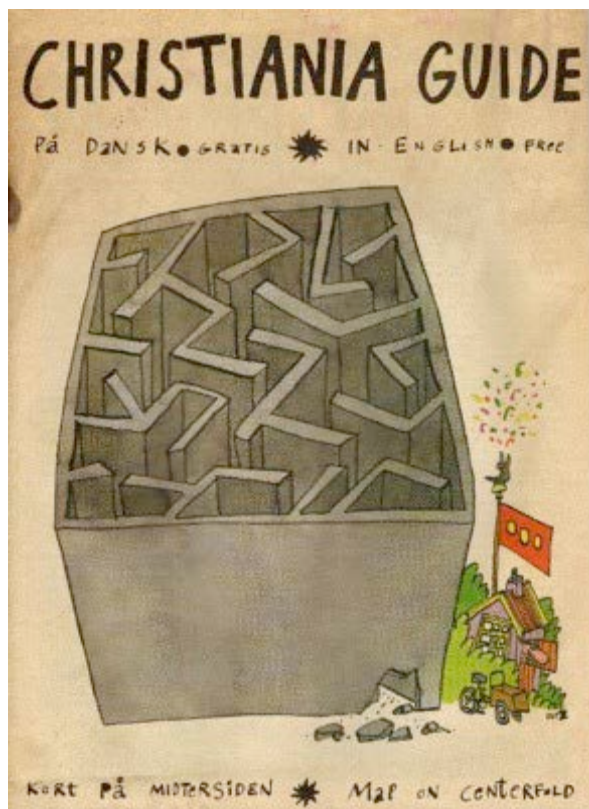
Illustration 61: . Christiania Guide for visitors, 2000. The illustration depicts the town as alternative both for urban planning and the city and for normative society.

Illustration 62: Christiania guide, back cover, 2000.

With the decline of manufacturing in the 1970s, artists started to move into the area, even though until 1998 it was forbidden to live in the industrial buildings. The city's planning authorities were not aware of the dramatic change until a 1990s architect Jim Y. Tokunaga, from the Department of City Planning, admitted in an interview I conducted:

> We were absolutely blind to the transformation of the area from an ex-industrial zone to an artist's neighbourhood. It was without permission, and they did not give it any publicity. Around 1993, we went to the area which we considered as a dead zone, as part of the preparation for a new city plan for central L.A. We walked in the streets and were surprised to see these phenomena. Actually, it struck us.

After the city planners discovered that the area had effectively been transformed into a semi-residential neighbourhood, they passed the Artist in Residence Ordinance (AIR), which allowed artists to live legally in any building. Officially named the 'Arts District' a few months before I visited the place in July 2000, the area included galleries, including the celebrated Action/Space, modest restaurants, grocery stores and about four hundred and fifty live-work lofts. However, the city authorities were in no hurry to change the area's industrial status. Architect Tokunaga admitted that in planning terms the Artist District was a mirage; it did not exist on zoning maps: "Our approach to the Arts District is indifference. The artists can stay there until the demand for industry becomes stronger and industry takes its place back." However, the real danger to this community is unlikely to come from the future return of industry, but rather from plans for more lucrative uses of this downtown area and from the increasing rent – a situation that already started to manifest after the official naming.

However, maintaining the industrial designation of the area with a 'dead use' is very similar to the planning tool of designating Tel Aviv's Ha'Yarkon Estuary as a zone for future planning – a zone that cannot be developed or even maintained sufficiently. In this case, it means that the resident artists have no rights and no say in future planning decisions. About 15 years after my visit in the Artist District, a new urban plan was created for this space, which transformed it into a lucrative residential area, with some commercial uses. The plan included some live/work spaces that were fit for artists' studios and some affordable homes but the opponents of the plan argued that this would not be enough to sustain the artist community.[17] In any case, there is no doubt that the 'Artist District', like most of the other parts of downtown L.A., has become gentrified and incorporated (back) into the city's economy.

The post-industrial 'zones' I mentioned in chapter two and in the discussion of Ruin Porn have been romanticised as 'free places" outside the normative planning system and regulations. Indeed, in these zones, the suspension of lucrative activities has enabled many marginalised communities and activities to thrive in them. However, their suspension is always temporary, and in the case of many, their transformation by the marginalised communities often hasten their gentrification and the end of the communities that started these places' transformation. This was the case with almost all of the places that I studied during 1999-2001. Christiania, Lower East Side Manhattan, the Old Docks in Amsterdam, Tel Aviv Old Harbour area, San Francisco SOMA and the old harbour, and New York Piers had been completely transformed by 2015 and had been cleansed of the communities that resided in them. During some of the presentations of this thesis, people in the audience have remarked that these communities and activities will always find other marginal spaces to occupy. I think this hypothesis needs further research and I believe it will be an important

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17   See: http://www.laweekly.com/news/the-arts-district-is-over-5450620, LA Grow, The Art District Is Over [Accessed 25 March 2015].

one. However, as far as I could tell this was not the case in the cities I studied. The zones I mentioned above had particular qualities (for example concentration of warehouses, a specific geographic location, a particular history and more) that could not be found in other areas. Whether these qualities be 'planned' and 'designed' is another question that will need further research.

Illustration 63: A hotel and restaurant in the Artist District. Notice the yellow, black and red sign which is an artistic take on the signs on most of the buildings in the area that details the industrial uses (fire hazard, chemicals etc.)

Illustration 64: Graffiti on a building in the Art District, 2000. While the official signs of industrial buildings and industry did not depict the current uses of these building as artists studios and residencies it is the graffiti that covered large parts of the building in the neighbourhood that indicated the changing nature of the area and its occupants.

Illustration 65: Signs of gentrification in the Artist District. After finding out about the informal settlement of artists in the area, the city put up sings naming the area the 'Artist District'. However, the city did not change the status of the area and its uses in the urban planning map. And yet, landlords follow the demand form the ground and started advertising spaces for artists.

Illustration 66: Roma gypsy camp in Campo Boario, Rome, 2002.

Illustration 67: Roma gypsy camp in Campo Boario, Rome, 2002.

8.b.   Commons II

The qualities associated with the 'dead zone' can also be found, to some degree, in the commons, which historically originated in wastelands. They are also a defined geographical entity, a site that is located between public and private space; they are not designed as parks are and, at least in the past, many activities that were not allowed anywhere else, including in public spaces, were allowed there (Low et al. 2009). In his writing about Detroit, James Corner (Corner 2001) made a clear connection between the commons and Detroit's wastelands. He noted two similarities between these two spaces: first, that these spaces are never 'designed', they are leftovers or organic transformation of what was in these spaces before, and they do not have a formal usage programme. These spaces, he notes, are "free of excesses of design, composition, or representation, these blank and open space fields invite the participation of all the city's residents. They function as blank slates, level terrains upon which differences may be negotiated in time" (Ibid., p.125). He argues that these qualities of blankness and lack of identity, that are associated with both the wastelands and the commons, enable them to perform "adaptability and inclusivity" (Ibid.). However, neither the Commons nor Detroit's wasteland were ever 'blank and open space'. The inclusivity and adaptability that they do exhibit is a result of the constant fight between hegemonic forces and marginalised communities that found themselves in these zones.

The commons, as the 'dead zone', stand between cultivation and wilderness. They bear the marks of past human activity as well as the return of what is beyond cultivation, which has been variously seen as terrifying, sublime, picturesque or romantic, the subject of legends, literature and art. In an important study of common land, Rogers et al. (2012) argued that the notion of the common's uncultivated state and marginality "might be transferred to the people living among and using the waste: these people might also, therefore, be defined as somehow wild and uncivilised, picturesque or romantic – the 'outside' kinds and peoples being assigned the same characteristics, reinforcing their sense of otherness" (Ibid, p.8).

However, as I will show further on, 'outside' spaces and people are not confined to the commons or the zones, or to any particular geographical site or spatial unit.

Illustration 68: A community garden in a neighbourhood near Downtown, 2000.

8.c.   'Edge Spaces' as the Space of Transgression

While the existence of the 'zone' can be linked to particular spaces, some characteristics of 'dead zones' can be found in much smaller urban sites and in shorter time spans. Essentially, the zones are places of a different order: they have lost their previous definitions and what takes place in them in the present is agonistic to the past order of the place. This duality is at the heart of any 'edge space' – which is always a transitory place between this and that, the one and the other. In fact, edge space is an oxymoron. Edges and boundaries do not have space of their own. Yet, they are the things that define spaces.

The 'dead zones', as zones, or edge places, are boundaries that were transgressed, and that transgression opened in their two-dimensional line – a space. In spatial terms, we can imagine the No Man's Land as such a space, or the *chora*, which I mentioned before. However, while the No Man's Land is by definition empty, and the *chora* is a space which allegedly is void of qualities, I would call 'edge spaces' a boundary that has become inhabited. This habitation is a disturbance of the hegemony. While zones, large and defined areas, are labelled as dead and marked for redevelopment, 'edge spaces', because of their role as something that defines other spaces, can hardly ever be appropriated by the system, which needs them for its definition and often they are often being appropriated by the Other.

The most documented historical case for such 'edge space', as mentioned before, was Paris' *La Zone*. The edge here was the limit of the city, and the takeover was on a large scale and lengthy. In the case of Paris' *La Zone*, the city still has a defined edge - the fortification. In the postmodern city, it is difficult to find such edges but they do exist, for example, the former wagon colonies along the Berlin Wall (Berg, in: Wolff & INURA 1998). On a much smaller scale, we can find criminalised inhabitation of edges of buildings, outside the building walls. Edge places do characterise the postmodern city. Whilst in the pre-modern city, the walled city, the edge was just outside the wall (the *chora*), in the modern city the edge has almost disappeared because free flow and circulation has been one of the major

objectives of such cities. The edges of the roads, the buffers that enable zoning, and the spaces left over after planning are all opportunities for edge space to emerge. But it is the postmodern city of late capitalism that maybe produces the most amount of 'edge spaces'. These spaces are the products of segregation and gated communities, the shopping malls, the highway and any other buffer zones. These edge spaces are often the edges of ways.

In the book *Everyday Urbanism*, Margaret Crawford (1999) wonderfully documented and analysed the edges of streets in downtown Los Angeles that are used for street vendors, and edges of more suburban areas that are used for car boot sales. In my own field study, I documented edges of streets, highways, institutes, parks and entire neighbourhoods, all animated by a myriad of activities. An extreme example for such residential use was a village that was constructed illegally along a live railway line in Bangkok. The village houses were about a meter from the track and many activities were conducted on them such as walking, playing, cleaning carpets, selling goods, and even weight-lifting in a makeshift gym. About every hour these activities disappeared from the tracks to let the train pass.

The banks of waterways are also an edge space. For example, in San Francisco's Mission Creek the boat dwellers settled there in the 1960s after being moved by the state of California from Islais Creek to make way for merchant ship trading. Boat dwellers exist of course in many European countries, but as with in San Francisco, their existence does not always sit well with the gentrification of the waterfront, as can be seen in the case of some boat dweller communities in the old port of Amsterdam, from where some of them were evicted. Where the banks of the river are still less developed, for example the area around the Tiber in ex-industrial areas of Rome, immigrants move in to build makeshift shelters, as I witnessed during my visits there in 2001 and 2003.

Illustration 69:. The pavement's edge- from a boundary to a space for commerce, Naples, 2003.

Illustration 70: Wagon dwellers in the former 'no-mans land' of the former Berlin Wall, 2001.

Illustration 71: Berg and her friends in the wagon colony near the former Berlin Wall, 2001.

Illustration 72: Street vendors on the edge of the Royal Palace's park, Bangkok, 2000. The vendors seats on the two sides of the pavement while leaving a path in the middle for the pedestrians.

Illustration 73: Ellcamprnent on the Tibets banks, Rome 2002.
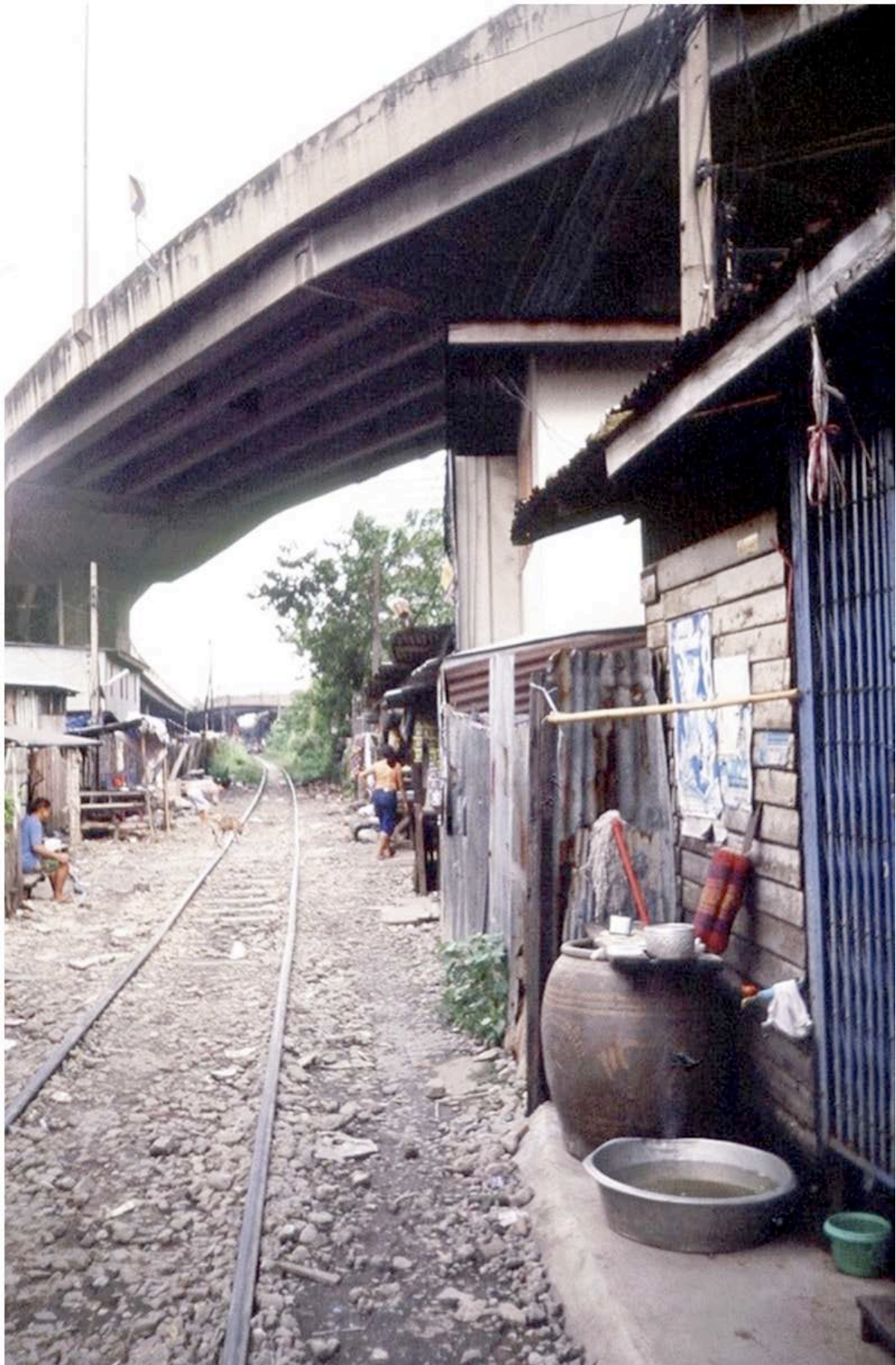
Dlustration 74: Bangkok's Railway Village, houses on both sides of the railways.

While these are particular examples, the edges of public spaces – the park, the square, the pavement – in any city I have visited have been used informally as places for street vending, street games, rough sleeping, sex cruising, pan-handling street performances, and art display. They transform the space of transit from A to B into a place. I will not detail here why and how each of these communities or activities chose or were pushed to these edges but all of them required and sometimes construct the opening in the boundary zone. These excluded communities need the flow of passers-by, and at the same time they need a certain amount of seclusion. For example, the building fronts at the edge of the pavement are used by homeless people to lean on, sit on, or lie beside, especially if they provide cover from the elements. These edges also offer a spot from which to sell for street vendors or for leafleting. The edges of parks, when they have dense vegetation, which is often the case, are used for people to relieve themselves when there are no toilets, for sex cruising activities, and hide and seek play. 'Edge space' is not only accommodated by 'marginalised' activities or communities. As Quentin Stevens notes: "The edge of public space is a popular place for people to situate themselves during their leisure time, because it offers protections, while allowing controlled exposure to outside stimuli" (Franck & Stevens 2006, p.115).

8.d.   'Overlapping Spaces' – between Sacred Space and the Everyday.

If 'dead zones' are spaces where formal/planned uses have been replaced by informal uses, and if 'edge spaces' are spaces in which the 'residual' and the 'excessive' take place, 'overlapping spaces' are the places where the marginalised return and insert themselves back at the heart of the hegemonic space. While the 'dead zones' or edge places have their own boundaries, and are distinctive spatial units, overlapping spaces do not have this. Overlapping spaces are where and when formal and informal, legal and illegal, normative and a-normative activities exist simultaneously with no clear physical or temporal boundaries

-297

between them, and they do not form any (other) space that contains them. If the 'dead zone' is the emblem of "exclusionary space" (Sassen 2014), overlapping space is the place where the excluded return. They return even to the most unlikely places.

Take for example Singapore. Singapore is not a place to go for a *dérive*. It is a city which represents the "ideological production […] in its pure form, uncontaminated by surviving contextual remnants […] and managed by a regime that has excluded accident and randomness" as Rem Koolhaas (1995) argued in his study about the city. Singapore is ostensibly not a place for constructing different situations or for experimental behaviour – methods that I have used in my field studies elsewhere. So, instead of a *dérive*, I go shopping. The shopping mall is five stories of corridors built around a large atrium. While standing on one of the balconies, which offers a panoramic view, I notice that the place is bugged with CCTV cameras, one of which is turning toward me. Some of the shoppers who are strolling along the corridors, I notice, are also turning their back to the shop windows and are leaning on the balconies of the atrium. They gaze, like me, into the void ahead. Standing there, now, for almost an hour, I realise that some of them are not looking for any shops, or the architecture of the mall. They are actually staring, through the void, directly at me and at some other guys who are on the floor below.

I am staring back.

Illustration 75: . Cruising area underneath a highway, Singapore 2000. The graffiti and messages written on the highway bridge support can be seen only when getting underneath the highway. They are meant to visitors that already knows the nature of the site.

To reallY appreciate **architectur ,**
you may even **need** to **commit**
a **murder.**

"" *w*

Architecture is defined by the actions it witnesses
as much as by the enclosure of its wdiiS   Murder
m the Street d1ffers from Murder in the Cathedral
in the same *way* as love in the street differs from
the Street of L<Y--e- Rad1cally-

Dlustration 76: **Benwd Tsclwni,** Advertisemel1lfOrArcltite:tu1e.

The void, between us, has been cut, folded and squeezed under the pressure of our gazes. Our gaze is an architectural tool, constructing within the void of the shopping mall a sexual playground. Somebody needs to update the planning map: the red colour for commercial use is turning pink. The commercial and architectural space is suspended, and transgressed.

Indeed, the architecture of the mall, the void in the heart of it, enables this transgression. Transgressiveness, as Bernard Tschumi (1996) noted in his important book *Architecture and Disjunction*, is intrinsic to any spatial construct. One of the posters from the Advertisements for Architecture series that is documented in the book (Ibid.), gives a concise and clear illustration for his argument. The poster is designed with an image from the film *The High Window* (1947)[18] in which a woman is seen in a window either pushing or trying to catch a falling man. The title of the poster reads: "To really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder" (Ibid, p.100). What this statement implies is that architecture is always open to interpretation and actions. A window may be an innocent opening between the inside and outside of a building, but it can at the same time be a tool for murder. The mall's atrium was built to enhance the shopping experience and enable better circulation (of shoppers and goods) but it can also be a place where free love can take place.

In the lower part of the poster, below the image, a caption says: "Architecture is defined by the actions it witnesses as much as by the enclosure of its walls. Murder in the Street differs from Murder in the Cathedral in the same way as love in the street differs from the Street of Love. Radically" (Ibid.). Tschumi argues here that there are places in which there is a tight correlation between spatial conditions and the programme (the place of ritual is a clear example). There are other places where the connection is looser and they enable

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18   Alternatively titled *The Brasher Doubloon*, the film, directed by John Brahm, is based on the novel *The High Window*, written by Raymond Chandler (1942).

freer play and more open to possibilities. However, in both cases, without the woman who pushed the man through the window, the transgressive act could not take place.

Michel Foucault makes this argument in *Space Knowledge Power* (1982) when he discusses the possibility of liberating architecture. Architecture, as a designed space, he contends, cannot be in itself free, liberatory or transgressive. Freedom, he argues, "can never be inherent in the structure of things. […] If one were to find a place, and perhaps there are some, where liberty is effectively exercised, one would find that this is not owing to the order of objects, but once again, owing to the practice of liberty" (in: Leach 1997, p.372). Therefore, neither the 'dead zone' nor normative public space can be seen as a free space, and similarly the potential of freedom or transgressiveness exists anywhere regardless of the spatial conditions. This is not to say that "the exercise of freedom is completely indifferent to spatial distribution, but it can only function when there is a certain convergence" (Ibid.).[19] This does not make architecture irrelevant but it open it up to possibilities that might not be imagined by architects and planners.

8.f .   The 'Dead Zone' as Nomadic Space

"If you believe you are a citizen of the world, you are a citizen of nowhere."

Theresa May, The Conservatives Party conference Speech, 2017.

"Returning by the Rue Saint-Honoré, we met with an eloquent example of that Parisian street industry which can make use of anything. Men were at work repairing the pavement and laying pipeline, and, as a result, in the middle of the street there was an area which was locked off but which was embanked and covered with stones. On this spot street vendors had

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19   This is not to say that certain spaces might present conditions that are less oppressive and even offer better grounds for liberatory or transgressive practices. But the price for such 'help' ends in even further marginalisation (if we talk about the 'dead zone' spaces), or sometimes in the assimilation and dismemberment of these practices, so they do not pose any threat on the statuesque and hegemonic forces. I will come back to this point in the next chapter.

immediately installed themselves, and five or six were selling writing implements and notebooks, cutlery, lampshades, garters, embroidered collars, and all sort of trinkets. Even a dealer in second-hand goods had opened a branch office here and was displaying on the stones his bric-a-brac of old cups, plates, glasses, and so forth, so that business was profiting, instead of suffering from the brief disturbance. They are simply wizard at making a virtue of necessity."

A. Stahr, *Nach Funf Jahren* (Oldenburg, 1857), vol. 1, p. 29 in: Benjamin 1999, p.421.

This short paragraph describes an example of a 'dead zone' - a segregated area in ruins/under the process of change – and a community of people who, against the official plan, have transformed that space. They create, as Benjamin notes, an "interior" (Ibid.) in what until then was a non-place. Similarly, the array of marginalised communities, groups and activities that I presented in the previous chapters transform urban space.

The communities and activities that defy the assumptions of 'emptiness' and 'wastefulness' of the 'dead zone' and normative spaces (the street, the park, the square), vary. What is common to all of them is that they are in a space in which they are not supposed to be, therefore their presence, their bodies and actions, are deemed transgressive. But their transgressiveness is more fundamental than simply changing space. They enable even those who do not engage with these activities or ways of life to re-think their socio-spatial conditions. Space, as argued by Le Faver, De Certeau, Foucault and others is not an empty container - a container that has boundaries (geographical, cultural, economic, or political), which are presumably set before these communities "invaded that space". These communities, by being in this space, transgress these boundaries. And vice versa, the space that these communities create is excluded from the 'normal' urban space, and is deemed a 'Dead Zone', which is the generic name for many other imageries such as no-man's land, wasteland, wilderness, voids, *terra nullius* and unknowable space. Because of the movement, this passage from normal or hegemonic space to the Other space, which means from the

expulsion from one space and the creation of the Other, I call these communities 'urban nomads'.

The term is also based on previous sources. The first is James Spradley (1972; 1999), who used the term 'urban nomads' for rough sleepers in Los Angeles. He states that the major basis for designating these men as urban nomads was their own definition of their social exclusion, "but also the fact that not having their own place, they have to constantly move from place to place" (1972, p.254). I have shown this in the case of the homeless people I met in San Francisco. This movement takes place mostly in the public space. It is not the movement itself that separates them from the rest of the people who use public space, but it is their attempt to stop in the public space which become merely a 'space for movement', a place which is dedicated to channelling people and commodity, or in other words 'non-place'. Spradley:

> "These men are urban nomads, because they live much of their lives
> in public spaces where our culture demands that people appear to be
> involved in some 'legitimate' activity. Loitering is still a crime in
> many parts of the United States and one of the quickest ways to
> come to attention of the police is to stand, sit, or like in public place
> with no apparent purpose […] when discovered by other citizens or
> the police, they are 'run out' and told to 'keep moving on'." Ibid.,
> p.98.

Movement is therefore not fundamental to nomadism, but the residing in a place of movement, and disturbing the order of the non-place is.

The transgression of the urban nomad is not just geographical or spatial. As I will discuss here, the term 'nomad' was used historically within the urban context by Mayhew (1851/1986) and other Victorian social exploders (P. J. Keating 1976), as well in the popular

media (Hill 1853) to describe London's poor communities that roamed the city in search of income (i.e. prostitutes, beggars, street vendors, street performers etc.). Mayhew's use of the term 'nomadic' was a literal reference to the group's mobile existence within the city as well as a symbolic representation as foreign and/or with an indeterminate identity. This last point, lacking in identity, was also linked to these communities in Marx's (1852) analysis of the *Lumpenproletariat* (ragged proletariat). Not being able to classify them, he argued that they represent the "refuse of all classes", a group that he saw as undefinable, unproductive and un-revolutionarily. Interestingly, in post-modern thought, these same attributes have transgressive qualities which are common also in the view of the 'dead zone'.

Similarly to Spradley's (1977) description of rough sleepers, Deleuze and Guattari described the movement of the nomads as opening a space in a non-place – in the border between two places. Discussing Deleuze and Guattari's 'Nomadology', Braidotti (2011) stated that: "It is the subversion of set conventions that defines the nomadic state, not the literal act of travelling" (Ibid., p.5). Nomadism is not just a movement in space, but it is a way of being. A way of being that is enforced but also a way of being in (non)place that makes a place: "The Nomad is there, on the land, wherever there forms a smooth space that gnaws, and tends to grow in all directions. The nomad inhabits these places, he remains in them, and he himself makes them grow, for it has been established that the nomad makes the desert no less than he is made by it. He is a vector of deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1997, p.367).

While Deleuze and Guattari's text contrasts the nomad with the state, the state can represent here any stable system, plan, or concept, and the planned city is an example of such. Tim Cresswell (1996) stresses the link between the nomads and 'urban nomads' of the city (which represents the State). He argues that the nomad is presented by Deleuze and Guattari "as a figure that resists the rational specialisations of the state" (1997, p.367).

Illustration 77: Homeless makeshift shelter in front of the 'undiscovered America' mural, depicting the history of the Native Americans. The homeless person chose to stay straight under the sign on the wall and at the entrance to the painted temple.

Illustration 78: Rent a Bench. Homeless person sleeping on a bench that is rented for advertisements, 2000. This type of long bench, undivided to sections – a common practice in contemporary bench design aiming to prevent people from sleeping on them, enables a large section of advertisement but also a place to sleep. This is another example of design that was created for 'normative' uses being used for completely other ends.

Illustration 79: A shack in Bat Yam's dunes made of a new development building board. The name of the architect on the board was covered by a black paint. This image is part of a series of informal structures I have been documenting from 1996 and named 'Unknown Architect'.

Illustration 80: Figure 77. Community garden in a housing estate, Brixton, London, 2009. Community gardening have been adopted by local councils and planning authorities, in the past decade, as a tool for community regeneration.

Illustration 81: A squatted house and a community garden, Lower East Side Manhattan, 2000. The graffiti "HOME" negate the first impression that the it is an abandoned building.

Illustration 82: Reclaim the Streets takeover of Parliament Square and the road around it. RST movement opposes the use of private cars in cities and uses various means to block roads and transformed them, temporarily, into a public space for pedestrians.

The nomad, in contrast to the traveller or the immigrant who goes from a place to a place, goes no-where. The nomad "has no place in which meaning and identity can rest" (Ibid., p.362). While Creswell calls the place of the nomad "the place of movement itself" (Ibid.), I would argue, siding with Deleuze and Guattari, and through my observations and conversation with rough sleepers, that the nomad's place is "the intermezzo" (Ibid., p.380) or the hiatus. While the nomad, as a vector of deterritorialisation, or in other words of globalisation and neoliberalism which themselves oppose the state, he is also the by-product of these processes and in turn the producer of deterritorialisation of the smooth running of the global city. I would argue that it is not the constant movement that distinguishes the urban nomad but it is the transgressing of the boundaries of the global city. In doing so, the urban nomad opens a different space and a space of difference.

Sadie Plant, in *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, makes the connection between the Situationist's *dérive*, the urban nomads and Deleuze & Guattari's 'Nomadology': "The nomad bears a disruptive power and raises the spectre of individuals, social groups, and forms of action which derive their strength from their very elusiveness…" (Ibid., p.125). Echoing Marx, Plant argues that the urban nomads "begin to constitute an unidentifiable 'class', threatening not because of the place it assumes within in capitalist society, but by virtue of its refusal of any place…" (Ibid.). It becomes clear, with all the references above, that the nomad (including the figure of the homeless) is at risk of being idealised or romanticised, and that the comparison between the harsh existence of nomadic tribes and of homeless people is overstepped by conceptual considerations (Rosalldo 1987, p.96). However, the spatial and social practices still have much in common as well as their affect on the space they occupies and form.

Finally, although the nomads are, as argued here, and by Rosi Braindotti (2011) "a myth, that is to say a political fiction", the nomadic as existence and practice "allows you to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience: blurring

boundaries without burning bridges. Implicit in [the choice of this figuration] is the belief in the potency and relevance of the imagination, of myth making, as a way to step out of the political and intellectual stasis of these postmodern times. Political fictions may be more effective, here and now, than theoretical systems" (Ibid., p.26). As I showed through my site research, everyday practices do influence spatial, social and economic conditions, even if the changes they trigger are temporary and/or small. In fact, zooming out of particular spaces, or activities, everyday practices, even the most mundane ones that seemingly do not threaten hegemonic space, make a difference.

8.g.   The 'Dead Zone' as a Transgressive Space

"Marginality is today no longer limited to minority groups, but it is rather massive and pervasive; this activity of the non-producers of cultures, an activity that is unsigned, unreadable, and unsymbolised, remains the only one possible for all those who nevertheless buy and pay for the showy products through which a material economy articulates itself. Marginality is becoming universal. A marginal group has become the silent majority."

De Certeau 1984, p.xvii.

"Disorder is due to the mark of something past and passing, to the 'practically nothing' of a passing-by."

De Certeau 1984, p.154.

Like the 'Dead Zone', the city is also a hegemonic construct. If the 'dead zones' are transgressed by urban nomads, the city as a whole is constantly transgressed by its inhabitants. In fact, as Michel de Certeau showed, transgressiveness or liberatory practices produce everyday space or, in other words, everyday space (in contrast to sacred or planned

space) is created by these practices. In the book *The practices of everyday life Part One* (1984) and *Two* (1998), De Certeau depicts the entire city as a series of what I have called here 'overlapping spaces': the planner's concept of city is constantly negotiated, negated and re-written by walkers who create a 'metaphorical' or mobile city. The walker creates this city by subverting the planned one, by walking outside the planned routes, at another pace, by interpreting the places differently, by using the city in informal ways. In De Certeau's concept of space, as well as in Foucault's (Ibid.), space cannot be separated from social practices – the two are always in a state of flux, forming and de-forming. Using the methods I discussed before, both the 'dead zones' and 'normative spaces' reveal their otherness. Walking in these spaces, one sees De Certeau's "mobile city": "a great city built according to all the rules of architecture and then suddenly shaken by a force that defies all calculation" (Kandinsky (1969) in: De Certeau 1984, p.110).

The ruins or debris that result from these forces, by the nomadic transgression of the planned city and the dead zone, contribute to the imagery of various urban spaces as wastelands. The Otherness of spaces, of any Otherness, can be linked to the creation of waste. Either waste that is produced by the hegemony, or the hegemonic imagery of certain spaces, people, activities as waste. I believe that one of the roots of the creation of the imagery of the 'dead zone' is the fear of waste, which is to say the fear of the transgressive. I also believe that transgression is a practice that can overcome exclusionary practices that have sharpened the contemporary city. To get there, I will need to go on a short detour.

Waste, as argued by Mary Douglas (Douglas 1966/2002) in her influential book *Purity & Danger* is just "matter out of place" (Ibid., p.13), and place is always a social construct, constructed usually by hegemonic forces through exclusion of the things which are deemed Other to that place. Waste or dirt is the result of any system of classification, which is also to say that it is classification that produces waste (Douglas 1996; Sibley 1995). The un-classified is excluded but at the same time it always haunts the spaces it is excluded from

as it itself marks the boundaries of those spaces. It is what enables them to be and at the same time, as George Bataille (1985) argued, it has destabilising or transgressive qualities because its in-between location disturbs the boundaries of this or that. The transgressive, or the heterogeneous, Bataille argued "consists of everything rejected by homogeneous society as waste or as superior transcendent value" (1985, p.142). As I showed through the site research and the discourse review, the 'dead zone' and the communities that reside in it share one basic transgressive attribute – they transgress the boundaries of place, the delimited space that was assigned to them by the hegemony. They transgress the 'dead zone' – the dead zone as a blind spot. They transgress their expulsion to obscurity. As such they transform this space into a dissensus place. A space in which what was excluded, which had no presence, is made to be seen again.

However, the transgressive is also the thing that maintains the hegemonic system (Foucault 1997, p.30; Bataille 2001, pp.63-70). Based on theological and anthropological examples, Bataille argued: "[T]ransgression does not deny the taboo but transcends it and completes it. […] Often the transgression is permitted, often it is even prescribed…" (1962, p.63). Following this I would argue that the production of the 'dead zone' as imagery and as a real space is aimed at containing the excluded in a certain place. As testified to by David and Alex in San Francisco, they were tolerated by the police and municipal authorities so long as they restricted their movement to the dilapidated harbour and the edge of the highway. The same is true of the selling of soft drugs in Christiania, the sex-cruising in particular areas rather than others, graffiti, *parkour*, squatting and many other activities documented in this research. They are tolerated in some localised spaces – spaces that the system is currently interested in changing (usually for profit) but than they are marked as 'dead zones' as a pretext to their transformation. Transformation that will demand the expulsion (again) of the ones that were already excluded before.

Bataille's concept of transgression was rooted in religious societies, or sexual activity and might be seem irrelevant today. However, Michel Foucault, in the lecture 'On Other Spaces' (1967), argued that the transgressive still exists since space, or spatial ordering, still contains certain sacredness: "[…] perhaps our life is still ruled by a certain number of oppositions that cannot be touched, that institution and practice have not yet dared to undermine; oppositions that we regard as simple givens: for example, between private space and public space, between family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space, between space of leisure and that of work. All these are still animated by unspoken sacralisation" (2008, p.16). Given that a sacred place exists, so does the possibility of transgression. In his eulogy to Bataille, Foucault (1980) generalised the condition of transgression to any normative system, and, as Bataille, argued that transgression, in fact, has its entire existence in the (non)space of the system's boundary: "Transgression is an action which involves the limit, that narrow zone of a line where it displays the flash of its passage, but perhaps also its entire trajectory, even its origin; it is likely that transgression has its entire space in the line it crosses" (Ibid., p.35). Jacques Derrida's concept of Spacing (in: Wigley 1995), which seems to be derived from Bataille's Transgression, might further explain the socio-spatial qualities of the Transgressive:

> "[Spacing] …is that which opens up a space, both in the sense of fissuring an established structure, dividing it or complicating its limits, but also in the sense of producing space itself as an opening in the tradition. Rather than stepping outside, breaking the law by breaking the line, it is a question of "opening" a space within the old one, where opening is not understood as a new space that can be occupied but as an opening in the very idea of space, a loophole that is precisely not a hole with its own borders, but a kind of a pocket secreted within the old sense of the border."   Ibid., p.59.

While Foucault discussed the transgressive as an action, and Derrida described it in spatial terms, Bataille (1988) describes also the impact of the transgressive on the subject: "There is no longer subject-object, but a 'yawning gap' between the one and the other and, in the gap, the subject, the object are dissolved; there is passage, communication, but not from one to the other; the one and the other have lost their separate existence" (Ibid., p.59). Julia Kristeva (1984) developed the theme of the transgressive subject in her influential book *Power of Horror*, naming it the 'abject'. The abject is the subject that "no longer succeed[s] in differentiating itself as other but threatens one's own and clean self, which is the underpinning of any organisation constituted by exclusions and hierarchies" (Ibid., p.65).

This detour ends back with De Certeau (1988) and his discussion of everyday practices. His concept of tactics (vis à vis strategies) echoes Bataille and Foucault's concept of transgression. Tactic is "a calculus that cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional localisation), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself in the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance" (1988, p.xix). The transgression between the I, the Other and the space was commented on in an appealing text by Wim Cuyvers, where he argues that the 'dead zone' is the space where one transgresses also its one's boundaries:

> "[A]way from the house, away from the space that you must *have* towards the space of *being,* away from the private space towards the public space [...] the space of dissipation […] George Bataille wrote about the critical existential moment: the moment of surrender, the moment when resistance stops, the moment of transgression. And my view is that this moment yearns for its own space: the existential space, the space of surrender and transgression. And in one fell swoop we have arrived at the truly existential space, the space that

people seek in order to realise the ecstatic moment of transgression for themselves." Cuyvers 2006, p.25.

The urban nomads, who are all of us when we step outside our 'own place', and their everyday practices, disturb and complicate planned or hegemonic space, as well as our own boundaries. Such transgression can take place anywhere and, as I showed in many examples before, there are no inherent links between space and transgression. As far as any space is constructed by certain boundaries (spatial, social, political and so on), any space has the potential to be transgressed by a willing subject. However, acts of transgression are, or are made visible in what architecture and planning discourse have designated as 'dead zones'. However, the power of transgressive practices in urban spaces is even greater when they are done outside these 'designated' zones.

While the 'dead zones' might have some spatial qualities that cannot be found elsewhere, and while they might be a sanctuary for certain activities and communities which are deemed 'transgressive', the transgressive potentialities lie somewhere else. Not in the place that they were expelled to already by the hegemony. This was the reason for which my field research, not according to the Ph.D. plan, was extended into other zones, into the heart of the city. The real conflict is there. For example, in UK Law, many activities carried out by the urban nomads such as vending, sleeping, having sex, playing music, planting, painting, inhabiting, crossing the street, and even certain kinds of walking are deemed transgressive if done not "in the right place" and are considered illegal (Cresswell 1996).

With the restructuring of cities to suit global capitalism, the grounding of neo-liberalism in the urban fabric, the attempt to eradicate public spaces as a stage for protest, and with the war on terrorism, the openness and diversity that can be found in 'dead zones' is curtailed, as well as in urban public spaces. The restructuring of cities is done through countless means: increasing urban land value, gentrification and diminishing of social

housing, anti-immigration laws, withdrawal of social and economic help for poor communities, commercialisation of art and culture, privatisation of public spaces, prevention of acts of protest in public spaces, the re-designing of public spaces to prevent any activities which are deemed "deviant" and to increase the profitability of such spaces, and the creation of new laws that are vague enough to enable the removal from public space any "undesirable" elements. Just one example is the UK's Anti Social Behaviour Act[20] that defines anti-social activities as those "that [are] caused or [are] likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons".[21] Such general phrasing can deem many otherwise innocent activities as offensive and numerous acts and behaviours can be included under such a loose definition. And in France, more recently, new laws have deemed certain clothing as offensive: for example, the Burkini and wearing them, again in a certain place, in this case the beach, is illegal and punishable. No wonder that dilapidated industrial sites, abandoned military camp, and even less scenic dumpsites suddenly seem to be desirable spaces. However, concentrating on the future of such spaces is to be blind to the real war that is engulfing the city and beyond.

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20   https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-police-bill
21   http://www.nfh.org.uk/law/crime_and_disorder_act_1998/index.php

Part D: Conclusions

CHAPTER 9

Conclusions

9.a.   The Zone of Expulsion

"[…] at the roots of all social meaning and all order, there is a constitutive exclusion - because by drawing a line, by defining a limit, something always falls outside the system - which afterwards became forgotten and naturalised. But as soon as those naturalised and sedimented social relations are once again reactivated by antagonism, these grounding exclusion - and with it the very contingency at the ground of every system (the fact that things could be otherwise) becomes apparent."

Marchar 2004.

As I have shown through a genealogical survey of this imagery, and through extensive field research, the 'Dead Zone' as an imagery and a place is a site of expulsion. Things, human and non-human, real as well as imagined, have been expelled from it. In antiquity, the *chora* was the place to which femininity, desire and new social practices were expelled. In colonial times, the zone was the empty spaces that were about to be colonised. Colonial imagery depicted space as empty – erasing out of existence the people, communities, and nations that were there, and then through various practices expelled the people out of these places. In post-colonial times and places, the imagery of the 'dark land', abyss and void was used to exclude certain people from the city. Temporarily, the Zone can become a place in which liberatory practices are performed, however, at any given moment, whenever hegemonic forces decide, everything that was banished to this 'dead zone' can be expelled from it. The

imagery of the 'dead zone', of a space which is empty, abandoned, desolate, dirty, as well as more positive attributes conceal the exclusionary realities that engendered these zones as well as their transgressive potential.

The small Palestinian fisherman's village in Tel Aviv's former suburban enclave of Jaffa, that now sits at the heart Tel Aviv, was the trigger for this research and its exemplar. By 2009, the few huts, trees and inhabitants of the village were evicted to create space for a green lawn and a path that connects a park to the city's beach promenade. They created a non-place, a space to go through and not to reside. One building, the lighthouse which was built by the founder of the village and used as his family home, was meticulously conserved. It is empty and kept locked. In 2015, I was standing there peeping from the window with its rightful owner, Abu George, whose family was expelled from there, at gun point, in 1948. This tragic result, as well as the initial depiction of this place as a 'dead zone', was brought about by three main factors: a colonial perspective that aimed to remove the population and erase any trace of its past; a capitalist approach that valued the land more than the people and the environment; and certain aesthetic and spatial preferences of urban planning and design based on certain political views and social assumptions. As I have shown, these factors have contributed to the imagery and production of many other spaces as 'dead zones'.

At the time of writing this chapter, another former fisherman's village, Dharavi in Mumbai, now the third biggest slum in the world, is fighting for its future. As with the fisherman's village, this home for almost one million people has been depicted by the local authorities as a 'void' (Boano et al. 2011, p.300). Not far from there, still functioning as a fisherman's village, Dharavi Beth island is being threatened by a Recreation and Tourism Development Zone (RTDZ) under the aegis of the MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority). This self-sustaining island provides employment to all of its inhabitant but has never received proper governmental services and infrastructure. Now, on the pretext of development under the RTDZ, the locals anticipate no real development for

themselves but instead in the interests of the global tourism industry. The village's fishermen also fear the acquisition of their 'commons' - lands/ponds/spaces - used for drying fish and which is owned by the village as a whole (Coutinho 2016).

At the same time, many of the squats and informal cultural centres I visited in 1999-2002 in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, London, Paris, and Berlin have long gone. Amsterdam's Old Harbour, which had one of the biggest and most developed squatter community centres, has been transformed into a luxury residential area and a generic mix of commerce and culture. The squatter village at Kuala Lumpur was evicted – half of the site was covered with office towers and half still lies derelict and used as an informal car park. The wonderful community and historical area of Maxwell Street Market in Chicago was destroyed by the expansion of University of Illinois at Chicago. There have been many other smaller sites, and more central ones, that were used at the time of my visits by marginalised communities that have been in the past decade cleansed of their populaces.

Before their cleansing, all these spaces were considered 'dead zone' where the marginalised could inhabit and appropriate. With the increasing pressure for space, both on an urban and global scale, former spaces that were created or left for the excluded, are being taken over, cleaned, re-ordered or commodified. A clear and recent example is the illegal but tolerated refugee camp in Calais, set up in 2002, and named by its inhabitants as 'the Jungle' in ironic reference to the squalid conditions (Harker, *The Guardian*, 07/03/2016). The story of the 'Jungle' is not dissimilar to *La Zone* in Paris at the end of the nineteenth century and the East End of London which were inhabited by refugees, or internal refugees who arrived there due to colonialism, restructuring of these cities, or dramatic changes in manufacturing.

However, this time the *zoniers* are from the ex-colonies and the boundary space of the city is France and the European Union borders. And if in the past the boundary was a zone in which the excluded were incorporated or tolerated, like *La Zone*, or other slums, now the boundary becomes a non-place – the sea in which they die. It is not that there is no space for

the marginalised, there is simply no political will to tolerate them even in the 'dead zone'. To the clearing of these 'no-man's lands' both through re-development and gentrification and/or by urban militarisation (Graham 2010), we can add also the social cleansing of public spaces through legal, economic, planning and architectural practices. Public spaces that are traditionally used for protest, identity performance and survival are either being restricted to very limited, or often consumerist, activities or they are privatised altogether (Davis 1990; Smith 1996; Harvey 2012; Sassen 2011).

This shift - from marginalisation (the creation of the 'dead zone') to utter expulsion (the annihilation of these zones) – is portrayed in great detail and theorised by Saskia Sassen in *Expulsion – Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*. In the book, she argues that there has been shift in global capitalism and that today's socioeconomic and environmental dislocations cannot be fully understood in the usual terms of poverty and injustice. These conditions are more accurately understood as a type of expulsion. In a detailed and broad survey, she gives examples and analyses various processes and sites of expulsion, showing that there is a sharp growth in the number of people, enterprises and places that have been expelled from the core social and economic orders of our time. She argues that this process marks the "emergence of new logics of expulsion" (Ibid., p.1).

Sassen, in this book and other writings (2006; 2016), indicates that the scale of the current drive of expulsion can be compared with the imperial epoch of the past. In the article 'Who owns our cities – and why this urban takeover should concern us all', she discusses this paradigm shift in relation to urban restructuring. Here as well, she argues that the imperial epoch of "global geographies of extraction" is moving into the urban land (Sassen 2015). As I showed in the case of London and Paris, this process could already been seen at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century when the imagery of the 'unknown' and 'dark lands' was juxtaposed on parts of western cities before these parts were cleaned and/or gentrified. As Foucault (Foucault et al. 2003) argued: "A whole series of colonial

models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practise something resembling colonisation, or an internal colonialism, on itself" (Graham 2010, p.xvii). However, whilst in past urban restructuring the 'dead zones' were taken by the city or the state or at times by small companies, in the current restructuring these zones are being completely privatised: "One key transformation is a shift from mostly small private to large corporate modes of ownership, and from public to private. This is a process that takes place in bits and pieces, some big and some small, and to some extent these practices have long been part of the urban land market and urban development. But today's scale-up takes it all to a whole new dimension, one that alters the historic meaning of the city" (Sassen 2015).

9.b.   The Zone of Surplus, Excess and Transgression

"Because waste is a cultural construct, changing (deconstructing) our views of it is difficult. We must rethink who we are before we can rethink waste."

<div align="right">Neuman, in: Lynch, Wasting Away 1990, p.162.</div>

Spaces of waste, of excess, of surplus have been in the past decade, alongside or as part of the discourse of the 'dead zone', a focus for not only architects and urban planners. Whilst they are considered the results of extreme capitalism, they are also considered to be possible grounds for resistance and emancipation. This idea has been in the heart of this research project – an attempt to show how even in the 'dead zones', or especially in them, marginalised communities perform acts of survival, resistance and even liberation. I have collected and gone through concrete examples of these from cities from around the globe.

Any act of expulsion creates waste. The 'Dead Zone' is a space of waste, which is different to wasted space. As I showed, the 'Dead Zone' is always in use by someone or

something. Waste, or Wasteland are not nothing or a void. The spaces of excess, surplus and waste created by the hegemonic systems - social, economic, political and aesthetic - have existed, as I have shown, from antiquity to today.

The *chora* was a place to which the Other (the feminine, the poets, new religious practices, the corporeal body) was banished to. The non-European continents, their resources and populace were seen as a surplus to be used as the imperial powers wished; poor urban areas that resulted from excessive and rapid development of the industrial revolution were later seen as wastelands that needed to be redeveloped, and as spaces for capital surplus absorption through the process of 'creative destruction'[22]; the post-industrial landscape as the leftover created by global capitalism; and abandoned military camps as the waste left after there was no need for them. The surplus spaces are also the no-man's lands, the edges of the pavement and highway, the Dutch's *stoep*, the space below bridges, the shopping mall atrium. Public space is also surplus space, or space of excess. For example, the Persian Garden that I discussed at length before, was created through an accumulation of water, flora and fauna from many places into one defined space; the English Garden Squares in London that were built on lands reserved for recreational activities rather than buildings to attract middle class buyers; and the many public or semi-public spaces that were built in the past decades on annexed private land in return for building rights granted to their owners.

And then, even the city has been seen as a product of excess, as David Harvey (Harvey 2008) argues: "From their inception, cities have arisen through geographical and social concentrations of a surplus product. Urbanisation has always been, therefore, a class phenomenon, since surpluses are extracted from somewhere and from somebody, while the control over their disbursement typically lies in a few hands" (Harvey 2008). The surplus, he argued, is not the issue but how it is used, for what purposes and by whom.

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22   The process of disinvestment, devaluation of land, in the aim of making the area easier and cheaper to be cleared for redevelopment (Harvey 2006).

While the devastating effects of global capitalism, neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism are clear, researchers have also been attempting to locate spaces of resistance: "What are the spaces of the expelled? These are invisible to the standard measures of our modern states and economies. But they should be made conceptually visible. When dynamics of expulsion proliferate […] the space of the expelled expands and becomes increasingly differentiated. It is not simply a dark hole. It is present" (Sassen 2014, p.222). In the article 'Making Public Intervention in Today's Massive Cities', Sassen (2006) identified these spaces, especially in Europe with "terrain vague […] a diversity of under-used spaces, often characterised more by memory than current meaning. These spaces are part of the interiority of a city, yet lie outside of its organising utility-driven logics and spatial frames" (Ibid., p.18).

I believe that the most coherent framework within which we can contemplate the space of waste, excess, and non 'utility-driven logic' is the concept of 'General Economy' or the 'economics of excess' by George Bataille (Bataille et al. 1988). General Economy, in contrast to 'restricted' economy, sees loss and waste as a generative force and as inherent to any economic system. He based his theory on examples from the natural world, as well as some indigenous practices.[23] One can easily acknowledge the relevancy of Bataille's ideas in the economic cycles of boom and bust, recessions, and the fluctuations of the real estate market. Bataille named the excess/waste 'The Accursed Share' – that is, the thing that is lost/wasted/sacrificed without capital or utilitarian gain. As examples of the accursed share he uses investment or practices of art/gift giving, non-productive sex and war. I believe that 'creative destruction', that is at the base of large scale urban restructuring (for example of Paris under Haussmann), can be seen as a good example of the 'economy of excess' (Harvey 2008). Going even further back, I would associate the Accursed Share with the biblical law

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23   Based on Marcel Mauss' work *The Gift* (1954) in which he presents the Native American socio-economic practice of the potlatch which is a practice of limitless gift-exchange, at the same time leading to a material loss but through which higher social and political status is gained (Bataille 1985).

of the 'edge of the field' that commands the owner of a field to leave the crops at its edges for the poor.[24]

This biblical command marks part of the harvest as surplus which is not for profit (i.e. a kind of 'waste') and the space of it is allocated to the corner or edge of the field. The excess, loss or waste is what gives the owner his or her sovereignty (Bataille, 1988, p.191) since it is part of them which becomes other/waste that constitutes the boundary of the self. The General Economy requires the Accursed Share (or in other words 'non-productive expenditure') and the Accursed Share, the act of loss, is always transgressive as we break our boundaries and set free, lose, a part of ourselves. Transgression is a key constituent of the General Economy. Can we therefore think about the transgressive as a socio-spatial tool that can be used in the production of liberatory spaces or at least spaces of resistance?

9.c. The Space of Excess as the Essence of Urban Life

Hints about the potential role that transgressive practices can play in reforming urban spaces can be read into Sassen's arguments in the short article 'Who owns our cities – and why this urban takeover should concern us all'. In reference to the street and the city as a site for liberatory practices she writes:

> "In this mix of complexity and incompleteness lies the possibility for those without power to assert 'we are here' and 'this is also our city'. […] It is in cities to a large extent where the powerless have left their imprint – cultural, economic, social: mostly in their own neighbourhoods, but eventually these can spread to a vaster urban zone as 'ethnic' food, music, therapies and more. All of this cannot happen in a business park, regardless of its density – they are

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24   "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleaning of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the stranger" (Leviticus, chapter 19:9-10).

privately controlled spaces where low-wage workers can work, but not 'make'. [...] It is only in cities where that possibility of gaining complexity in one's powerlessness can happen – because nothing can fully control such a diversity of people and engagements."

Sassen 2015.

The three main ingredients which she identifies with the city and its liberatory potential are complexity/diversity/indeterminacy, loosened control, and the power to 'make'. These same ingredients exist both in the 'terrain vague' or 'dead zone' and in the heart of the city.

The 'dead zone' as the 'other' to the city engenders diversity: it is the space that nature is taking back; sites which sustain low land values that sprout or protect uses such as art and craft production, nightclubs, and other small business that cannot afford the soaring land prices of other urban spaces and/or might be in conflict with other uses; also the 'dead zone' that as I showed shelters communities which have been expelled from the city. Yet, the 'dead zone' should not be seen as the ideal solution of these practices, communities and things – but as long as the expelling systems, the least architects and planners can do is to acknowledge these spaces as a default sanctuary.

Acknowledging these spaces and their communities, as they are, and not 'empty' 'dead' spaces, is to give visibility to their conditions as well as to their expulsion by hegemonic systems. In 'Making public intervention in today's massive cities', Sassen (2006) writes: "[t]hose who lack power, those who are disadvantaged, outsiders, discriminated minorities, can gain presence in such cities, presence vis à vis power and presence vis à vis each other." While I recognise the 'dead zones' as a sanctuary, these delimited sites, often hidden from main society which can easily be abolished by new development, are limited in their capacity to generate change. They indeed are part of the hegemonic production of space, and of systems of expulsion from the more visible, lucrative, functioning city. Transgressing

the boundaries of this delineated space, and bringing back the expelled, has more potential for generating change.

Commenting on the liberatory space of the Commons, David Harvey argued that they are different form public space, which the later "have always been a matter of state power and public administration, and such space and goods do not necessarily a commons make" (2012, p.72). Similarly to the relations I have discussed before between architecture and transgression, he argued that "public spaces and public goods contribute mightily to the qualities of the commons, it takes political action on the part of citizens and the people to appropriate them and to make them so" (Ibid., p.73). Echoing the historical roots of this space/concept of the commons, Harvey argues that they should be seen not only as places "but as an unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood" (Ibid., p.72). He calls this interaction between place and people 'Commoning', which he further defines as a "practice that produces or establishes a social relation with a common whose uses are either exclusive to a social group or partially or fully open to all and sundry" (Ibid.).

This practice, he states, must be "collective and non-commodified - off-limits to the logic of market exchange and market valuations." As examples Harvey gives Syntagma Square in Athens, Tahrir Square in Cairo, and the Plaza de Catalunya in Barcelona which were formal public spaces, conceived by the hegemony, and which transformed into commons as people assembled there to express their political views and make demands. Similarly, I can mention the Occupy movement in New York and London, and the Movement for Social Justice in Israel. In all these cases, and especially the latter, squares and parks were transformed into protest camps for weeks and months, creating not only a political protest but forging new ways of doing politics, diverse social practices, and new alliances. The transgressive aspects in these activities were many but I will mention just the

one which is most relevant to this discussion – these movements temporarily changed the use of hegemonic public space, and changed permanently the horizons of the potential of these spaces. As Harvey notes: "One step towards unifying these struggles is to adopt the right to the city as both working slogan and political ideal, precisely because it focuses on the question of who commands the necessary connection between urbanisation and surplus production and use. The democratisation of that right […] is imperative if the dispossessed are to take back the control which they have for so long been denied, and if they are to institute new modes of urbanisation" (2008, p.101).

The 'Dead Zone', as I argued earlier, is a surplus space. It has been such from antiquity to today. Similarly, the origins of 'public space', and the current production of such spaces, are also generated by surplus. Through this research, I have shown that both of these spaces are the grounds for communities, actions, and everyday practices that transgress the foundations of these spaces. In the case of the 'dead zones', they transgress the idea, and at times the realities, of these spaces as waste. In the case of public spaces, they transgress the assumptions that such spaces are for 'leisure'. Of course, the imagery of the 'dead zone' and the 'public space' from antiquity to today as spaces which are outside the economy and politics, spaces which are not profitable, is deceitful. The no-man's land, the wastelands, the abyss - all these colonialised spaces have brought unimaginable wealth to empires.

The post-industrial landscape, abandoned military camps, the devastated working-class neighbourhood, have been kept in their derelict conditions as a way to generate profit through land speculation and as a kind of hostage in discussions on development rights and taxation. Public space is one of the most expensive infrastructures (both to construct and maintain) which multinational company headquarters in cities gain from. The 'Dead Zone' and the 'Public Space' are maybe the two most clear examples of the city's surplus. And yet, from the perspective of the excluded, these zones answer various needs, desires and visions - social, economic, political, psychological, and even aesthetic, that are not met, or denied, in

more regimented, planned, controlled, exclusive spaces. These needs vary between different communities and individuals and these, in many cases as this research shows, are accommodated in spaces which have similar spatial settings: zones, edge spaces, overlapping spaces. See for example the co-habitation of sex-cruisers and homeless people in Russell Square, or co-habitations of political activists and homeless people in squats.

While these zones give a space to fulfil these needs, desires and visions, these spaces are not utopian. They are spaces of conflict or are agonistic spaces. The marginalised communities that occupy them have different needs, compete on the leftover resources, and as in any other community carry the same social ills such as xenophobia, homophobia, racism etc. However, as noted by Cuyvers (2006) and as I can testify from my research, their excluded position often makes it necessary for them to get along, even to cooperate. The destitute, Reclaim the Street protestors, the Occupy movement for social justice, ravers, cruisers, skateboarders, parkourists, prostitutes, street vendors, buskers, artists, LGBTQI communities, squatters, guerrilla gardeners, graffiti artists, refugees, homeless people, all of whom I have gathered under the title of urban nomads, build on these surplus lands and excessive space – the architecture of transgression. The boundaries that these communities and activities transgress are many and diverse. But what these activities and communities have in common is the transgression of the boundary that denotes their space as an ex-territory, as a sacred space that they have no place in.

At the same time the Urban Nomads present practices that resist the regimented and exclusive urban setting as well as the conditions which bar them to the Zones. Some of these practices inspire changes in the ways we think and act in the city, for example the work of graffiti artists who transform blank walls into open air galleries; the practices of urban runners and skateboarders, children playing street games who transform the urban landscape into a playground, and even the survival strategies of the rag pickers which point to the possibility of re-use and recycling. These practices are often, and definitely in the cases

mentioned here, adopted by the hegemony; by urban planners, curators, community organisers, and even the market. At times, they destroy some of the intrinsic qualities of these practices, the political aspects of them.

Hegemonic forces, while 'tolerating' or even appropriating some of what was beforehand considered transgressions, often clear these transgressions from the open public space and coral them into purpose-built spaces where they are confined to specific spaces, classes of people, and uses for capital gain etcetera. Skateboard parks are one example, another is squatting with its socio-political cultural stance as well as its economic necessity – from Christiana the Free Town, to the cultural hubs in Amsterdam, London and New York to the heart of Kuala Lumpur and the outskirts of Bangkok. Some of the cultural production of these spaces has been appropriated while much of their socio-political impact has been eradicated. Another example is the practice of sex cruising which when it took place in 'public spaces' created spaces of enormous diversity and mixing within the gay and bisexual communities which are much divided along lines of class, ethnicity, and age and sexual identification. Directing these desires into the virtual space of the net has ruined much of the diversity, openness and even comradeship that took place in cities.

Moreover, attempting to eradicate, control, cleanse or beautify the spaces in which transgression occurs, without addressing and providing real solutions to the fundamentals that have brought them about is just another attempt at concealment. This action, in which architects and urban designers have much involvement, is maybe the most politically dangerous one. The power of the 'Dead Zones', as well as of public space, is that they engender what Rancière (Rancière 2010) called the 'space of dissensus'. A once buried space which, through various actions, becomes present and alive. The zones of dissensus offer different visions of inclusive, yet agonistic public space. These spaces and the activities that take place in them, or rather, shape them, offer a looking glass into the professions of architecture, urban planning and design. They maintain their critical status by always

marking the hegemonic discourses and practices that produce these zones with various forms of exclusion. Dissensus spaces and practices might hint at transgressive practices that architects, planners and designers might adopt if and when they become interested in subverting the power structures they inhabit and sustain.

9.d.   Engaged Methods: Critical Alternatives for Urban Research

"The everyday artists of ways of speaking, dressing, and living are ghosts in officially recognized contemporary art. It is high time that an urban planning still seeking an aesthetics recognize the same value in them. The city is already their permanent and portable position. A thousand ways of dressing, moving around, decorating, and imagining trace out the invention born of unknown memories. […] As 'idiolects', the practice of inhabitants creates, on the same urban space, a multitude of possible combinations between ancient places […] and new situations. They turn the city into an immense memory where many poetics proliferate."   De Certeau et al. 1998, p.141.

In 'Ghosts in the City', Michael de Certeau and Luce Giard (1998) describe how both everyday practices and narratives insinuate different spaces within the planned city, within architecture: "In two distinct modes, one tactical and the other linguistic, gestures (everyday practices G.D) and narratives manipulate objects, displace them, and modify both their distribution and their uses" (Ibid., p.141). Using extensive field research in which I actively engaged with the communities who occupied them, I was able to negate the hegemonic idea of the 'dead zone' – empty and useless spaces and show how they can be considered alternative public spaces. In other words, the methodologies of engagement enabled me to produce a different narrative for the 'dead zone' and to substantiate the critique on neo-liberal space.

The engaged methodologies gave me a glimpse into what I named the "the architecture of transgression"; imagining what non-normative public space can be, and producing tactics for the (often temporary) production of such space. Indeed, I might have been able to create this narrative by using statistics of homelessness, poverty, housing shortage etcetera. However, such a methodology would be blind to the spatial manifestation of these ills as well as to the role of the discourse and practice of architecture and planning in the production, past and present, of the (imagery) of the 'dead zone'. More importantly, a remote and connotative research will be blind to the ingenious survival strategies, identity performance, and the creative ways in which the excluded do manage to subsist in the places from which they have been excluded. This is true not only in the specific case of the 'Dead Zone' but should inform any investigation of urban space. As Havik argued, if the city as a spatial construct is regarded and actively perceived as a complex identity, the encounter with the complex social and spatial practices that produced the city as as "does not allow for a fixed, predetermined scope, but rather calls for a participatory, site-specific approach to spatial investigations" (Havik 2009, p.165).

To be able to challenge the language that produces the imagery of the 'dead zone', to capture in writing what I learned in my site research through engaged methodologies, to convey experience, and not just knowledge, of these complex zones and their varied inhabitants, I had to use another form of writing: narratives, non-linearity, anecdotes, non-linear (spatial or chronological) structure, fragmentation, dialogues and lengthy quotations, disparate textual sources, a multiplicity of voices including my own as well as extensive visual material. Through this, I could conjure connections between various geographical places and times, from Ancient Greece to nineteenth century London to twenty-first century Los Angeles and trace a story of exclusion. Furthermore, showing these exclusions in celebrated contemporary cities such as London, San Francisco, Singapore, Rome and Shanghai – I have been telling a story that contradicts the celebration of these cities as

'creative hubs', tourist destinations, and economic power houses. At the same time these writing methods have enabled me to tell the story of how non-architects, how marginalised communities and their everyday practices transform those 'dead zones' and/or more generally the spaces of excess.

As Havik (2006) argues: "more descriptive literature provides insight into the way in which space is used and experienced" (Havik 2006, p.43). Compared with the other methods of writing which are more common in the discourse of architecture and planning, especially in regards to the 'zones', I believe that the writing methods I have used, which were greatly influenced by Walter Benjamin writings, Iain Sinclair (1997), Stewart Home (1994), Samuel Delany (1999), W.G. Sebald (2013) and China Miéville, do offer more accurate representations of the zones in particular, and of the city in general. Introducing these methods of research and writing, I believe can also engender new forms of architectural practices that go beyond textual or visual *representation*. A survey of practices that have been informed by such research and writing methodologies is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, and what I would like to introduce in the next subchapter, is one example of how my own architectural / art practice has been influenced by them.

9.e.   From Engaged Methodologies to Transgressive Practices - Opening a Space at the Boundary

"Genuine participation, Rancière argues, is something different: it is the invention of an "unpredictable subject" who momentarily occupies the street, the factory, or the museum - rather than a fixed space of allocated participation whose counter-power is dependent on the dominant order."   Claire Bishop, 2012.

A year into this research, facing social cleansing of public spaces in London, I could not confine myself to the writing of the thesis. Using the knowledge I had already gained, I started to develop artistic practices which offered, I believed, critical tools for urban interventions. They were based on observations made during the field studies of the urban nomads' everyday tactics. Similar to the engaged research methodologies, these tools aimed to expose the constraints of normative/capitalist/neo-liberal public space; to bring into play the excluded communities and histories; and to enable different visions for the 'dead zones' and for the public space. The praxis I developed was unexpected, a by-product, a kind of surplus of this research, and yet, not dissimilar to the 'dead zone', they offer other ways of highlighting and acting on the conditions this thesis exposes.

Neither these practices, nor this thesis set out to provide applicable tools for planning and design in relation to the critique it poses. Aside from the necessary limitation of this research, I believe that even if architects and planners accept the perspective represented by this research, and adopt some of the site research and writing methodologies introduced here, their ability to engage in meaningful action within a capitalist and neo-liberal system in which these professions operate is very limited. Therefore, the praxis presented here is almost a personal response, through the medium spatial interventions, to the conditions of neo-colonialism, to the wrongs of neo-liberalism, the privatisation of particular spaces where I have lived, worked or just passed by and which were affected by these conditions. These responses were developed alongside, and inspired by new developments in architecture and contemporary arts which will be introduced in the following sub chapter and which I hope will frame this work as well as give a glimpse of a possible horizon for other ways of creative engagement with the world we are living in.

9.f.   In-Conclusion

"You are not a profession that has distinguished itself by your social and civic contribution to the cause of civil rights, and I am sure this does not come to you as any shock. You are most distinguished by your thunderous silence and your complete irrelevance… You are employers, you are key people in the planning of our cities today. You share the responsibility for the mess we are in…It didn't just happen. We didn't just suddenly get this situation. It was carefully planned."

Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive director of the Urban League.[25]

"At the point we have arrived there is an urgent need to change intellectual approaches and tools. It would be indispensable to take up ideas and approaches from elsewhere and which are still not very familiar."   Lefebvre 1996, p.151.

Architecture and planning, as I have shown, has a role in systems of expulsion though they are not the main actors in it. These Zones are the results of much bigger social, economic and political powers. Being part of these powers, or subjugated to them, architects and planners have very limited options to change the conditions that bring about these spaces. One of the places they do have some influence on, is in the symbolic realm – the nomenclature that frames these spaces and their imageries. This is seemingly a small step, but as I hope this research has shown, it has great power in the re-conceptualising these spaces. Furthermore, the art/architecture practices I developed and used as a result of this research might hint towards tactics and spaces which other can utilise in opposing some of the unjust, unsustainable, exclusionist, neo-liberal practices and urban spaces they produce.

The practices I have developed were not created in an empty space. I saw these practices as a continuation and at the same time a break from one hundred years of

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25   From the opening notes of the hundredth Convention of the American Institute of Architects, quoted in: Architecture for Humanity (2006, pp.48-49).

Humanitarian Design (Architecture for Humanity (Organisation) 2006). This history starts with the nineteenth century utopian urbanism that attempted to find solutions to the crisis of the industrial city and Modernism that continued to look for such solutions both in urban planning and architectural design. However, as Ghirardo argued: "The high aspirations of the European early modernists were often unrealistic, as were their exaggerated claims for the role of the architect in shaping the new societies they envisioned" (2002, p.113).

I would argue that it was the much less recognised self-built movement, and community design from the late 1960s through to the 1980s, that re-shaped architectural practice and sought community participation in the design process in an effort to make design answerable to communities' needs. In America, this trend took a more political shape beyond design strategies, with its roots in civil rights and social justice movements (Ibid.). In the 1980s and 1990s, the architecture discourse, faced with the failure of modern planning and design to create sustainable cities and housing, underwent a period of critical yet inward looking into relatively narrow issues of form and style, or as Awan, Schneider and Till put it: "Critical architecture and its accompanying theories […] revolved around a retying of architecture's internal knots, in which critical attention is focused solely on architecture's own concern and obsessions. What results in a spiralling effect of critique, which effectively asserts architecture's presumed autonomy" (2001, p.26).

Moreover, discourses about formal architecture or other introspective discussions about it, rather than addressing larger economic, social and political issues which underlie any architectural production, almost always avoid the risk of antagonising moneyed interests (Ghirardo 2002, p.114). In spite of such a critique, which can be traced back to the Modernist movement, it seems that urban planning, design and architecture, because of their servitude to hegemony and to the practical, are rarely able or willing to side with the marginalised, the delinquent or even the fantastical. At the same time, two key elements that also grew out of this critique – engaging with the social and the political, and participation, has formed, in the

last two decades or so, new architectural as well as artistic spatial practices. Whilst they are not recognised as a movement they have gained many names: 'tactical urbanism', 'urban interventions', 'informal architecture', 'guerrilla urbanism' and more. These are associated with the works of thousands of artists, activists, and architects acting outside of their professional practice imagining and trying to create a more humane, just, and creative city (Crawford 2012).

A critical mass of such projects was identified in late 2008 in the exhibition *Actions: What You Can Do With the City* at the Canadian Centre for Architecture. In the press release, the exhibition curators Zardini and Borasi stated that the exhibited project "reveal[s] the existence of a world rich in inventiveness and imagination, alien to our contemporary modes of consumption. These actions propose alternative lifestyles, reinvent our daily lives, and reoccupy urban space with new uses." The book *Spatial Agency – Other Ways of Doing Architecture* by Awan, Schneider and Till (2001) gives an extensive survey of such practices, framing them as practices that: "undress social aspects of space and initiate empowering social relationships alongside formal aspects of architecture; and engender knowledge sharing and respect of the knowledge of others (non-architects) in the construction of space." (Ibid., p.33). This knowledge can be found in stories, activism and everyday practices which embody critical understanding of the formal, political, social and economic space in which they operate. Awan, Schneider and Till demonstrate how this knowledge leads to distinctive and diverse outcomes.

It is impossible to list here all the miscellaneous practices that fall under these terms but many of them intervene in physical space, constructing temporary structures for social use, building new types of housing with and for disadvantaged communities, planting guerrilla gardens in disused spaces, choreographing cultural events in unexpected spaces. They all show a desire to critically interrogate the status quo, and change it for the better. They show architecture's capacity for transformative action and, even more importantly, how

the role of the architect can be extended to take into account the consequences of architecture as much as the objects of architecture (Ibid.).

Designing buildings in this case is just one possible mode of operation that the book introduces alongside other actions that are taken from contemporary art practices. In fact, the objectives and practices mentioned above, have become much more common in the art world since the late 1990s in the form of community art, participatory art, urban interventions, socially engaged art and social practices – just to mention a few terms that attempt to encapsulate these new modes of doing art (Bourriaud 2002; Bishop 2006; Klanten 2010; Thompson 2012). In the book *Living As Form – Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2001*, Nato Thompson defines these modes of art as anti-representational, participatory, socially or political motivated. Rather than objects, they concentrate on actions, performance, developing new educational, economic and political models, and using everyday practices and activists' practices to form social relations, spaces and structures.

Another important aspect is that the frameworks for producing such work, be it architectural or otherwise, have been self-generated and not commissioned, although the recognition of such practices has led to some art and cultural institutes to commission such work. Similar to the work of *Spatial Agency* (Awan et al. 2011.), much of this work is concerned with issues such as global-capitalism, sustainability, the environment, education, housing, labour, gender, race, colonialism, gentrification, migration, war, borders and so on. Like the shift in architectural discourse, there is also here a shift from aesthetic analysis to discussion that includes broader issues that affect both the profession and the production of space. Based on this understanding, it is hard to distinguish between the motivations, practices, sites of action and products of *Socially Engaged Art* and of *Spatial Agency* and indeed many of the works mentioned in *Living As Form* feature also in the book *Spatial Agency – Other Ways of Doing Architecture*.

These practices have gained much recognition in the past decade or so, for example, from the U.S. Pavilion at Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2011, curated by William Mankind, which was entirely devoted to them; Elemental's founder Alejandro Aravena won the Pritzker Prize in 2016; the UK based group Assemble won the Turner Prize in 2015. They have also garnered much criticism for being provisional, unprofessional (since they are by nature inter-disciplinary), and maybe most poignantly not constituting a unified and coherent approach powerful enough to oppose global capitalism or other broad issues that they aim to tackle. However, being very localised, they often address particular issues that arise from these themes and can change perception, bring awareness, introduce new practices and even change on a small scale the conditions that that affect communities, local governments, and the professional discourse and praxis. Maybe more than anything, as argued by Pinder (2008), "Critical urban interventions and spatial practices are based on the refusal to accept current conditions as inevitable and natural" (Ibid., p.734).

These days, when the traditional centres of powers (Parliament, the mass media and even educational institutes) are almost impenetrable to non-hegemonic discourses and praxis, and alternative emerging spaces such as social media have either been put under control or hijacked by hegemonic or populist powers who deliver their old agendas in a hip and seemingly authentic cloak - the space that is still left for critique and action, at least in Western democracies, is the street. Urban interventions, which have been significant forms of, and if not the foundations of, socially engaged art, have an essential role to play, as discussed in the 2006 conference *Generalized Empowerment. Uneven Development and Urban Interventions* by the art and architecture group City Mine(d). In the keynote lecture 'Making Public Interventions in Today's Massive Cities', Saskia Sassen (2006) argued: "The space of the city is a far more concrete space for politics than that of the nation. Street level politics makes possible the formation of new types of political subjects that do not have to go through the formal political system." Through the use of new network technologies, she

added, "local initiatives become part of a global network of activism without losing the focus on specific local struggles. It enables a new type of cross-border political activism, one centred in multiple localities yet intensely connected digitally." The street of course is not an easy place. Ones who are used to more cosy spaces, the media, academia, the studio or the gallery might feel like the homeless there. But just try to remember how the visibility of homelessness is a thorn in the eyes of the powerful (although it is the product of it) and how the destitute, out of want, create ingenious survival strategies.

EPILOGUE

In this epilogue I will present only two urban interventions. I have chosen these two works as they are most closely related to practices borrowed from urban nomads or street communities, and in particular street vendors and direct action style protest. The first deals with the actual issue of the social cleansing of public spaces. The second deals with excavating buried Palestinian history in Jaffa City, which was the Palestinian economic and cultural powerhouse until 1948, and the contemporary gentrification and Judaification of the city. These two works are presented in two manners of writing, the first descriptive and the second as a narrative which, as can be seen, opens up a space where the personal and the public, the factual and the imagined, the past and the present co-exist.

The *Bad Sheets* by Transgressive Architecture (TA, 2001)

On 29 March 2001, the *Evening Standard* carried the following report: "Architect Lord Rogers has said he supports streets and public squares being used by sex-workers, beggars and rough sleepers. Ken Livingston's architectural adviser told a packed lecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects that he defended the rights of buskers, vendors and 'participants in public sex' to use London's public places. […] The Labour peer was responding to a question from the campaign group, Transgressive Architecture, who had organised a protest outside the lecture hall."

The action outside the Royal Institute of British Architects was the first in a series of unauthorised public art installations organised by Transgressive Architecture (TA), which I founded a few weeks before. Entitled *Bad Sheets*, the installations comprised a series of bed sheets printed with images of street communities and folded to a size that resembled a sleeping bag or a tombstone. The installations were carried out between March and July of 2001 in various contested public spaces in central London.

Transgressive Architecture, a group of architects, artists and writers, was formed to critically act through various media against the segregation of public spaces in London, and against the clamping down on street communities such as sex workers, homeless people, beggars, buskers, street vendors and cruisers. TA believes that these groups, who I framed as urban nomads, had the right to public space. Moreover, it argued in support of their contribution to urban life. The *Bad Sheets* installations drew their inspiration from the everyday practices of some of these marginalised communities, questioning the meaning and uses of public space and challenging the social cleansing carried out by London's local authorities.

Illustration 83: The *Bad Sheets* Installation at Trafalgar Sq., London, 2000.

Illustration 84: The *Bad Sheet* Installation at the place where a few months before there was a rough sleeper, Charing Cross underpass, London 2000.

The *Bad Sheets* project, initially installed in front of the RIBA in 2001, focused attention on the role of architects and planners in the social cleansing of the urban nomads. In particular, TA chose the evening of Lord Rogers' lecture to launch the *Bad Sheets* project in order to critique the perception of the public space by the government's Urban Task Force (UTF) that Rogers chaired. TA believed that the UTF's (mis)understanding of the public space, as seen in Towards an Urban Renaissance, has influenced or served conservative local authorities in their drive to socially cleanse public spaces of 'undesirable elements'.

One of the interventions, which took place in Trafalgar Square, contesting the ban on feeding pigeons in the square, as well as the value and boundaries of 'public art', fell victim to the same cleansing drive. A few minutes after laying down the installation, two wardens who had been introduced into the square to ward off and punish any pigeon feeders, demanded the work be removed from the square. Attempts to convince them of the importance of this art work, and its communality with the sanctioned and celebrated other artworks in the square, led to nothing. Refusing to clear our installation, the work was confiscated by the wardens.

Having prepared for such a turn of events, we replaced the bed sheets with ten-metre-tall text reading: VOID, made out of twenty kilograms of pigeon food. As we did it, hundreds of pigeons joined the action, devouring the text and dozens of people asked for the food and started feeding the pigeons all over the square, disturbing the ceremonial unveiling of Rachel Whiteread's Monument - a water-clear resin cast work that was chosen for the Fourth Plinth series of public art installations in the square – replacing one kind of hegemonic figure with another.

***Home Land* (2010)**

"Architecture is the expression of the very being of a society, just as the human face is the expression of an individual's true being. It is, however, mainly to the visages of official persons (prelates, magistrates, admirals) that this comparison pertains. In truth, only the ideal beings of a society, those who have the authority to order and prohibit, can strictly speaking be expressed in architectural form. And so, the great monuments raise themselves before us like levees, countering all troubling elements with the logic of majesty and authority […] it is in the guise of cathedrals and palaces that the Church and State speak to and impose silence upon the masses. It is clear, in fact, that these monuments inspire social compliance and often, real fear. The storming of the Bastille exemplifies this state of affairs: it is difficult to explain the motivation of the crowd other than through the peoples' animosity toward the monuments that are their true masters."   Bataille et al. 1995, p.35.

From the top of his column, at the other edge of Trafalgar Square, the Baron Horatio Nelson is viewing the scene in silence. The silence of others, who are still celebrating the colonial past, is rippling and hitting far away shores. Places who do not remember Nelson, but are living in his legacy.

Spring 2010. Yehuda Ha'Yamit Street in Jaffa is blocked. Barriers have been placed alongside the pavements, cutting off the road. It is now a no-man's land. For a moment, the mythical sand dunes from which Tel Aviv had supposedly arose have been moved and now cover this part of Jaffa. Archaeologists have been called in to dig and document, but they do not let the neighbours know whether they have recovered the broken myths, or found Jonah's sandals. Even if they do, the last cobbler in this street has already closed up his shop, unable to afford the rent increases.

Yehuda Ha'Yamit is not just a street. It is a myth. It was paved during the British Mandate as the main road to Jaffa's old harbour. Until 1948, it was called Faisal, after the King of Iraq. The name of the street was changed after Israeli forces occupied Jaffa. Shame.

Hardly any streets in Israel are named after Iraqi dignitaries, even those who were Iraqi Arab-Jews. My father is of Iraqi origin. He left his homeland, together with almost half of Baghdad's population, who were Jewish, including members of parliament, businessmen, doctors and musicians. After a few years in Israel, which was founded by European Jews, he felt obliged to change his family name from Mualem (in Arabic, 'teacher') to Doron, which means 'present' in Hebrew. The Israeli-sounding name is connected to the Biblical name my father's family had until about 200 years ago. However, the erasure of Mualem, which refers to my great grandfather's profession, hurts me like a phantom pain.

The name Yehuda Ha'Yamit (Judea of the Seafarers) was borrowed from a Roman coin allegedly minted after the victory of the Romans over the Jewish seafarers during the First Jewish-Roman War (66-74 AD). Although this sea battle is described by Josephus, and may have occurred in reality, and although similar coins have been minted to celebrate other Roman victories in this war, this one was declared by experts to be a fake in 1872. Was the month-long excavation of the street designed to conceal this fact? In any case, once the gap between reality and myth was covered up, a dead zone was left between the two sides of the fence. Fed up with this state, the street residents and shop owners decided to take it over. Not in a dissimilar manner, however, to the Parisians of Rue Saint-Honoré, whose actions were depicted by Walter Benjamin (1999). The residents, many of them artists, decided to stage a flash exhibition and community events – with food being cooked in the street, performances taking place on the road, and art works hanging on the fences that were erected for the roadworks.

I go downstairs from my flat and through the staircase window, above the sand dunes, a real estate agency sign declares: 'HOMELAND – Sold'. I look down: the street is full of people, families and children. Neighbours stand on the balconies and gaze down just like me. On the temporary fence alongside the street many artists have hung works. Most of the artists live on this street. Opposite Cafe Dina, the design shops and even the containers have

trespassed beyond their own territory and tables and have been placed along the pavement laden with delicacies made by the street's cooks.

In two spaces, where the street widens, creative workshops for children take place. Some of the children actually prefer to climb and slide and build sand castles in the street which has become one big sandbox. In-between the sand castles, oriental dancers start performing and after them an intimate rock concert takes place. I lift my eyes from the ground and the 'HOMELAND' sign floats above, like a black and yellow radioactive cloud. This estate agent's sign, and many others like it, have sprouted up over the last several months on many of the balconies in the neighbourhood, brooding like raptors awaiting their prey. I return to the flat and remember the rug I found a few days ago in the attic. A carpet is an interesting object. On the one hand it connotes a pleasant meeting over a cup of Turkish coffee and baklava. On the other, it is a precisely demarcated, well-defined domain. A rug is a reproduction of a garden, which in itself is a simulation of Eden. Different from the street, it is a territory that requires invitation. It is a space from which one can be evicted.

The carpet from my attic stopped functioning as a place long ago. Echoing olden times, it looks as if it used to belong to a previous tenant, forced out by the rising rents or even before that, to a family who lived here until May 1948 and who left it behind […] I wash the rug with boiling water and detergent and when it is clean I copy the HOMELAND sign and create a cut-out of the word 'HOME'. I go downstairs and, while greeting my neighbours along the pavement, I enter the no-man's land in between the two fences. The musical performance stops. I climb on top of one of the dunes and unpack hundreds of colourful light sticks, which I plant in the sand hill. The desert, which was constructed by both the archaeological excavation and Western and Zionist imagery, is now blooming with lights. Within seconds a group of children occupy the hill and pick up the glowing plastic flowers, waving them, presaging the storm that is about to come. On a further hill, I place the

HOMELAND carpet. It is still wet from the laundry and reeks of bleach. I immerse the letters 'HOME' in turpentine to get rid of the smell, and set them ablaze.

When the 'HOME' is burned out and only black ashes are left, I shake the carpet and hang it up. A pure museological act. Through the HOME-shaped tears and hollows, the fence can be clearly seen.

[This text was included in the catalogue of the On the Fence art happening which took place between 2010-2013.]

Illustration 85: Image from *Homeland* intervention, Jaffa 2010.

Illustration 86: Image from *Homeland* intervention, Jaffa 2010.
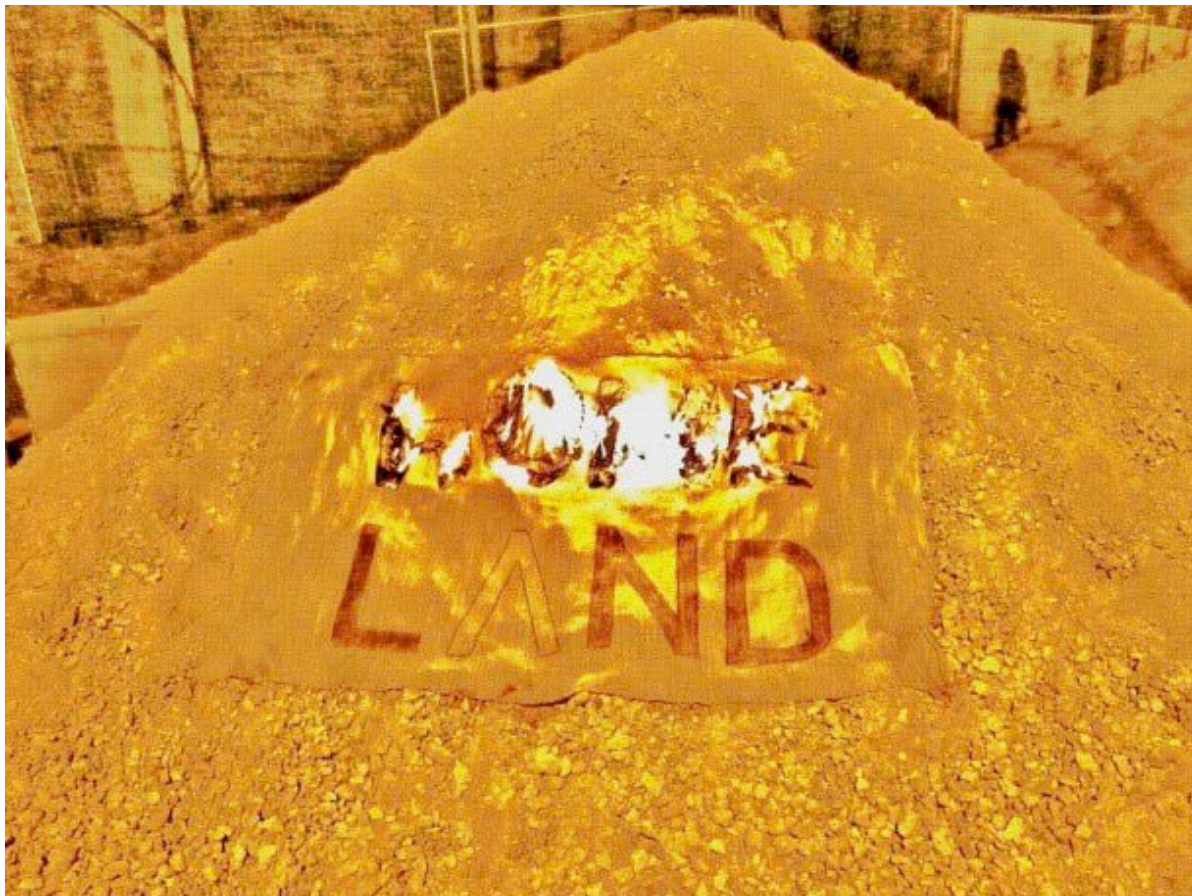
Illustration 87: Image from *Homeland* intervention, Jaffa 2010.

Illustration 88: Images from *Homeland* intervention, Jaffa 2010.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research *The Dead-Zone and the Architecture of Transgression* began in 1996 in a campaign I led in Ha'Ir Weekly of Ha'Aretz Newspaper, to prevent the eradication of the remnants of a Palestinian fisherman's village at the heart of Tel-Aviv. My engagement with the place, its people, and the larger history of Palestine and its colonization could not be contained by my work as a journalist. Professor Architect Zvi Eifrat, who was one of the teachers of a new programme for Critical and Curatorial Studies, headed by the art historian and theoretician Aralia Azuay, suggested that I should consider a Ph.D. research project on the topic. At the time, I had obtained only a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Arts and the leap to a Ph.D. in a foreign country was a big challenge. I will always be grateful to Zvi for opening this path for me.

It took me 20 years to get to this point with several years break in the middle and while establishing a career as an artist. I am not sure that if I had known the hurdles I would have had to surmount, among them discovering that I am dyslexic, financial difficulties, and a deep desire for art and teaching practice rather than academic research, I would have chosen this path. Nonetheless, the long and meandering path I had to follow has led me to many wonderful and unexpected places.

First of all I would like to thank to the countless people I have encountered throughout the site research, among them homeless, squatters, LGBTQ persons, street vendors and activists, who with almost with no expectations have been willing to share with me details of their existence, life stories and tactics of survival in very difficult places. I regret that only few of their stories could be included in this research that had to be constrained, at least to certain extent, by academic conventions.

Special thanks I would like to give to Architect Kyong Park, who, at the time, managed an abandoned house named the International Institute for Urban Ecology, Detroit. Kyong hosted me in an area that was loosely described by local authorities as a no go area or a dead zone. He introduced me to Detroit and some of its communities which embodied in microcosm many of the subjects that this research dwells on. At that early stage of the research this was an eye opening experience.

happened without it. Two of the most notable projects that were directly related to this research were the investigation and proposal for the Campo Boario site in Rome, a typical 'dead zone' that the local municipality after a few years gentrified. This expedition, that enabled the students to go beyond the conventions of urban and architectural practices was facilitated by the remarkable group Stalker and Lorenzo Romito and the results were exhibited at the Italian Consulate in London. This collaboration led to an invitation to give a week long workshop in Naples with Laboratorio Architettura Nomade & New Jersey Institute of Technology, to test some of the practices carried out in University settings in less constrained settings. These produced some interesting results.

The second project was a proposal for temporary interventions in Russell Square London which had been cleansed of its street communities that had been there since the 1950's. The students attempted to recreate the inviting landscape that had been cleansed by micro architectural installations. The attempt to install their work on site in a night time intervention was stopped by the University after an alert from the head of the local council. This censorship left me with scars but the students were given a lesson in the limits of aspirational interventions. Nonetheless the work was published at the university research journal as well exhibited the work at 66EAST - Centre for Urban Culture, Amsterdam, by invitation of Marc Schoonderbeek, for which I was grateful.

In 2009 after several years of research, because of circumstances which interrupted my research, I went back to Israel where I founded the Community Architecture Studio with architect Asaf Asharove and worked with students on social and political projects as well as working as a community artist. Although this work was not easy, to say the least, because of the political climate in Israel, I was captivated by furthering the art and architectural practices whose seeds were in this research. And then came the invitation to complete the Ph.D. as part of Border Conditions & Territories research program at Delft.

I was very honoured and grateful to Marc for facilitating this project, but must admit that I hesitated. I thought this chapter in my life was closed and I had moved on. However, having been invited earlier to give talks in Delft, and having contributed to the *Border Conditions* book and being familiar with the fascinating research of the group, I was enthused by Marc's appreciation of my research and the willingness of Professor Michiel Riedijk to agree to take on a researcher who would spread his work elsewhere. After my presentation at the Border

Conditions & Territories group, and the intriguing discussion with its members, I was convinced that it was the right move.

The conversations with Marc, Klaske Havik, who became my direct supervisor, and Michiel Riedijk were essential in ensuring the thesis met rigorous academic standards and for expanding the chapters about the methodologies and practices I have used in the research. Michiel's very analytical and critical mind helped me immensely to form conclusions and took me beyond my tendency to merely 'describe', assuming that the reader can fathom my underlying critical assessment. Klaske, whose evocative research on literature as a model for architectural research, was immensely helpful in contextualizing the research practices and narrative based methods in which this thesis was written. Moreover, being dyslexic, one of the huge problems I had was to contain the structure of the thesis so it would not sprawl in countless directions and lose its focus. Her suggestions on editing and structuring the text without losing its context and meaning, was literally, an Ariadne's thread to escape the labyrinth the text had grown into during the previous years of writing. Other people to whom I am grateful for reading and proofing large chunks of the text through the years of writing are Sarah Falk, Vivian Bejerano, my dear sister Dr. Ilanit Doron-Mor, and my immensely patient partner Geoff Falk.

This research could have even be imagined without my cherished parents Rachel and Avner Doron, who open for me the door to architecture and arts from my childhood. Although, being very practical, they were perplexed by my decision to leave a successful career as a journalist for doing this research, they supported me emotionally and financially all along these years. Furthermore, while some of the subject and views of this research are totally alien to them and their believes, their acceptances and encouragement are admirable.

Last, but not least, I would like to thanks from all my heart, to my partner Geoff Falk. After almost 20 years together, I am still astonished that although our first meeting in a gay pub resulted in me blubbering about my research for a long five hours and he patiently listening we actually agreed to meet again. Since than he has been closely involved in the research, gave me critical insights, accompanied me to some of the more precarious or at time vary dreary research sites and has been immensely supportive in every possible aspect. Words cannot express my gratitude for him.

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Work Experience

- Arts Awards tutor and SEAS – Socially Engaged Art Salon manager (2014-)
- Artist in the Community (The Ministry of Culture & Sport Scholarship Program) at Hasadna for Art in the Community, Ramat Eliyahu & The Arab-Jewish Community Centre, Jaffa. 2010 -2013
- Lecturer, Beit Berl Academy for Education, School of Art - Hamidrasha, 2011-2013
- Lecturer, Minshar School of Art, Tel Aviv-Jaffa, 2012-2013
- Lecturer and Head of The Community Architecture Studio (CAS) at Avni School of Art and Design, Jafffa 2010-2013
- Artist in the Community – Karev & the Centre for Digital Art, Holon program. Delivery of the program "My Place – Architecture & Urban Culture" at a local school in the disadvantaged neighbourhood of Jessie Cohen, Holon.
- Artist Teacher, (The Ministry of Culture & Sport Scholarship Program) at Jaffa - the Arab Democratic School, Jaffa' 2009-2010
- Art Teacher, Weizman- The Jewish-Arab Primary School, Jaffa, 2009
- Senior Lecturer (0.5FTE), Brighton School of Architecture & Design, (2005 –2006), UK
- Design Atelier tutor and History & Theory tutor in Arts and Architecture, UK, University of Greenwich, School of Architecture & Construction (2002- 2004)
- Freelance writer for Archis – Architecture/City/Visual Culture Magazine. (2000 - 2002)
- P/Time Lecturer in Theory and History in Arts & Architecture, University of North London School of Architecture. Weekly seminar (2000-2001)
- P/Time Lecturer in Theory and History in Urbanism, University of East London School of Architecture. (2000-2001)

Studies
- Ph.D. completion, TU Delft, School of Architecture & the Built Environment, Delft- due 12/2016
- PGC in Art teaching (Primary to High School) Beit Berel Academy for Education,   School of Art – Hamidrasha 2009-2010
- PGCE – Post Graduate Certificate in Learning & Teaching in Higher Education (in Architecture), University of East London. (2002 – 3)
- PGC in Curatorial and Critical Studies from Camera Obscura School of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel (1995-6)
- B.A. (with magna cum laude) in Interdisciplinary Studies in Arts, Tel Aviv University, 1992-1996

Exhibitions
- "Mesubin" (A Room Installation) , ONCA Brighton (due 2017)
- The New Union Flag Project National Tour (Interactive Installations & workshops)- supported by the Art Council England: Tate Modern, Pump House Gallery – London, Tate Modern, Liverpool Museum, Peoples' History Museum – Manchester, Oldham Gallery, Jubilee Library Brighton, Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, Blackpoll Pleasure Beach, Totnes Market Sq ,(07/2017).
- The New Union Flag Project: English Summer – A photography series + A room installation & a anticipatory photo-shoot, Turner Contemporary, Margate (07/2016)
- Displacement – on Refugees, Homelessness & Palestine – group exhibition at SEAS – Socially Engaged Art Salon, Brighton (05/2016)
- Gini in a bottle – Solo exhibition, Studio 73, Brixton, London (01/2015)
- Palestine, Racism and Art – Curator of a group exhibition at Brixton Market House, sponsored by the PSC, London (01/2015)
- Jaffa's Crumbs – Solo exhibition, The Gallery Project, King's Anatomy Museum, London (16.5.2014)
- Secret Service – A performance at Secretes and Confession Live Art event at JW3, London (06.04.2014)
- ب – a solo retrospective exhibition, the Architects House Gallery, Jaffa. Curator, Ami Steinitz (2012)
- Demilitarized Home-Lands: Envisioning Landscape of memory for Palestinians and Israelis – A research project and planning proposal was submitted to the Architecture for Humanity competition "[UN] Restricted Access" (06.2012)
- "A Homeless Family as an art installation", a week long residency performance and cultural events in Beit Ha'am – The People House, The headquarters of the Movement for Social Justice in Israel. 01/2012
- Inscriptions for a Cruising Ground – a room installation at *Research Space* exhibition, The Slade 2006
- Poble Nou's Raw Architecture – a photographic research and room installation at EME3 Architectural Market, Barcelona (10/2005)
- "Dwelling on Process", Stephen Lawrence Gallery, London (07.2003).

Awards, Prizes and Grants
- Grant for the Arts, Art Council England, 2017
- The Peoples' Arts Prize – shortlisted (2015) UK
- The Art Council Award for artist book publication (2013). IL
- Artist in the Community Award, The Cultural Ministry, (2010-2013), IL
- The British Council Grants to Artists scheme (2005), UK
- The British Chavening Scholarship Award - The British Council (1999),UK
- Henry Ford European Conservation Award (1998) IL

Quotes and references to my work in other publications

"Transgression & the City", in *Border Conditions*, Marc Schoonderbeek (ed) Architectura & Natura Publishers, 2010, Netherland

Keith, Michael (2005) After the cosmopolitan?: multicultural cities and the future of racism, Routledge, UK AA files: annals of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, Issues 49-50

Saskia Sassen (2006) "Making public interventions in today's massive cities", in Generalized Empowerment: Uneven Development & Urban Interventions, Brussels: City Min(e)d (Eds.) Brussels

"Spaces of Indeterminacy" in Bridge The Gap? (7.2002) Akiko Miyake and Hans Ulrich Obrist (eds) Kitakushu: Center for Contemporary Art and Koln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther Koning Cupers K. Miessen M. (2002) Spaces of Uncertainty, Wuppertal: Verlag Muller + Busman

Publication (in relation to Art & Architecture education)
- Children Workshop and planning of green / edible playground at Guinness Trust Community Centre, Loughborough Park Estate (06.2008) (a Transgressive Architecture project)
- Studio Culture 3 - The Inclusive Studio Trigger Papers CEBE website http://cebe.cf.ac.uk/news/events/sc3/triggers/Doron.pdf
- P.S. Architecture – as initiative, presentation at Setting a Setting symposium, the lecture was published in Public Works' fanzine 03/07
- "P.S. Architecture" in Setting a Setting, Public Works' Fanzine, 03/2007
- "Danger Zone - Transgression as a teaching methodology" 3rd Annual AHRA Research Student Symposium, University of Edinburgh (04/2006)
- Community Art workshop with housless people in Victoria homeless shalter of the Christian homelessness charity and planning of such with St. Manguse homeless charity (06-08.2005) (a Transgressive Architecture project)
- Workshop at URBANOCEAN(O) - Laboratorio Architettura Nomade & New Jersey Institute of Technology, Naples (07.2005) (a Transgressive Architecture project)
- Transgressive Architecture research & practice, public lecture at IAAC Barcelona, EME3 Architectural Market, (10/2005)
- "The Limits of Inclusiveness", Lecture at TU Delft School of Architecture, Netherlands (04/05)

Chapters in Books
- Beyond The Lines- for the Urban Intervention. An Epilog for the book "Time- City" – the catalogue of the 2010 Biennale of Urban Landscape Architecture – Bat Yam.
- Epilog – urbanaccio`n 07/09, Ana Mendez De Andes (ed) CAJA Madrid 2010
- "Transgression & the City", in Border Conditions, Mark Schoonderbeek (ed) 010 Publishers, 2010, Netherland
- "those marvellous empty zones outside the city limits", Heterotopia and the City, Eds. M. Dehaene &L. De Cauter. –Routledge, 2008. First published in Referred Publication of the conference by the same name.
- "Dead Zones, Outdoor Rooms and the Possibility of Transgressive Urban Space", Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life, Eds.K. Franck and Q. Stevens, New York: Routledge, 2006. (includes discussion on the works of the students at my studio at Uni. Of Brighton)
- "Urban Interventions and the opening of radical democratic space" in Generalized Empowerment:Uneven Development & Urban Interventions, Brussels: City Min(e)d (Eds.) Brussels

Publications about Art, Architecture and more
- "Transgressive Architecture", Loud Paper , Vol. 4, Issue 3, Art & Architecture issue, (06.2004) pp. 38-43.
- "The Void That Does Not Exist" UmBau (Institut fur Architecktureherie TU Wien) Issue 20,(06/2003)pp. 103-113. (Refereed Publication)
- " Untitled – A Reply to Richard Rogers" Archis (02/2002) pp. 41-45
- "The Bad Sheets", CITY, analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action Vol 6, No.1(04/2002)pp.43-59 and front cover. (Referred Publication)
- "A Global Derive", The New Babylonians, special issue of Architectural Design (AD), Vol.71No.3,(07/2001) pp. 53-57
- "Leaps and Boundaries", Building Design , (27/04/2001) p. 12
- "The 4th Dimension – Stalker Profile", Blue Print, (12/2000) pp.56-59
- "Rethinking the Squat", Archis (12/2000) pp. 68-71 and front cover.
- "Ethical Architecture – a competition", Blue Print, (11/2000), p. 3
- "A New Urban Paradigm - Kyong Park in Detroit" Archis, (09/2000), pp. 67-71
- "Guerrilla Gardening: Reclaim the Streets in London" Archis, (07/2000) pp. 48-50
- "The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression" Archis 04/2000) pp. 48-57

Quotes of and references to my work in other publications

- Keith, Michael (2005) After the cosmopolitan?: multicultural cities and the future of racism, Routledge, UK AA files: annals of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, Issues 49-50
- Pierce, J. Reinvigoration the Concept of Land Tenure for American Urban Geography, Geography Compass, Vol. 4 , issue 12, pp.1747-1757
- Lovell, S.T. and Johnston, D.M. Designing Landscapes for Performace Based on Emerging Principles in Landscape Ecology, Ecology and Society 14(1) 44, 2009
- Murray, J. Martin. (2008) Taming the Disorderly City, Cornell University Press
- Lampen, A. (2008) Schrumpfende Städte: ein Phänomen zwischen Antike und Moderne, Bohlau Verlag, Koln
- Jorgensen, Anne and Tylecote, Marian. (2007) Ambivalent Landscapes – Wilderness in the urban interstices, Landscape Research, Vol. 32, No. 4, August 2007,443-462
- Saskia Sassen (2006) "Making public interventions in today's massive cities", in Generalized Empowerment: Uneven Development & Urban *Interventions, Brussels: City Min(e)d (Eds.) Brussels*
- Dr Helen Armstrong, "Time, Dereliction and Beauty: an Argument for 'Landscapes of Contempt"paper at the conference, The Landscape Architect, IFLA Conference Papers (May 2006)
- Tahl Kaminer (2006) "Architectural Autonomy: from Conception to Disillusion", Haecceity Papers,Volume 1 Issue 2: What Now Architecture? Spring 2006
- Mortenbock / Mooshammer (2003) Visuelle Kultur, Berlin: bo`halu Publishers
- , W. (7.2002) "Spaces of Indeterminacy" in Bridge The Gap? Akiko Miyake and Hans Ulrich Obrist (eds) Kitakushu: Center for Contemporary Art and Koln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther Koning Cupers K. Miessen M. (2002) Spaces of Uncertainty, Wuppertal: Verlag Muller + Busmann

Guest Lectures (limited selection)

- Research, Action, Teaching – a lecture at the 2nd degree design studies at HIT, Holon, 12/2011
- The Dead Zone and the Architecture of Transgression, a lecture at the 2nd degree Urban Planning studies at the Technion, Haifa, 05/2011
- Community Architecture – a lecture at the Israeli Centre for Digital Art, Holon 10/2010
- A-Forma, practices of survival in the urban realm. The Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Tel Aviv (09/2010)
- Radical Democratic Public Space, Lecture at Square Politics conference at the National Gallery, London – Organised by the National Gallery and University of "The Boundaries of Public Space", Research News – Uni. Of Brighton Faculty of Arts and Architecture,(2005)
- Transgressive Architecture, talk at the London Urban Social Forum, Bartlett, UCL (10/04)
- Inhabiting Boundaries, Lecture and Tutorials at the TU Delft School of Architecture, Netherlands.(12/03)
- Outdoor Room: The Domestication of Public Space, Opening Lecture of the exhibition "Outdoor Room" at the Warehouse Gallery, UNL School of Architecture (13.02.2001).
- Notes from Somewhere, the National University of Singapore, School of Architecture, Singapore (08/01)
- Rethinking Urban Voids, A lecture at the International Institute for Urban Ecology, Detroit, U.S.A (09/00)
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Lectures in conferences and workshops (a selection)

- " In the beginning was the word or a brief genealogy of the Dead Zone"' in the conference Public Life In the in-between city , Technion, 06/2010
- "Outside Heterotopia: Where Mama Roma and the Kids Play" a paper at Topos - The Moving Image between Art and Architecture Research Spaces III (12/06)
- "Sites of Suspension and my yearning for Bonaventura Hotel" A paper and a roundtable discussion at University of Sheffield, School of Architecture, Architecture and Indeterminacy Theory Forum (11/06)
- Transgressive Spaces, Paper at The Rise of Heterotopia – Public Space and the Architecture of Everyday in a post Civil Society, EAAE Colloquium, Leuven (05.2005)
- "The Limits of Inclusiveness" Poster presented at "Include", RCA, London (04/2005).
- Russell Square project: The boundaries of inclusiveness, Conference: Open Space: People Space ,Edinburgh College of Art(10/04)
- Screening of the film The Bad Sheet at 9th International Bauhaus Colloquium, Medium Architecture Bauhaus UniversityWeimar, and Weimar, Germany. (04/03)
- Lecture & Day Workshop Territory /Tourism /Terrorism - Lecture series Tilburg academy for Architecture & MaastrichtAcademy for Planning, The Netherlands. (12/2002)

- Amsterdam Academy of Architecture – opening lecture of the "Settlements" Lecture Series (04/2002)
- Street Communities and the creation of Transgressive Public Space, The 10th conference of the International Network for Urban Research and Activism (INURA), Brussels, Belgium (10/2000)
- Cities Public Space as a War Zone, Coventry University of Art & Design. "Consuming (in) the War Zone" conference.England (09/00)

וינות, איזכורים והופעת במדיה

- *Architecture for the people by the people,* - Haaretz Daily Newspaper, Esther Zandberg, 17/02//2011 (review of the Studio for Community Architecture's project in Jessie Cohen, Hulon), see: http://www.haaretz.com/culture/arts-leisure/architecture-by-the-people-for-the-people-1.343854

- *Design or revolution* - Haaretz Daily Newspaper, Esther Zandberg, 13.01.2011 [Interview about the conference which I was one of its organizers – Design and Social Responsibility – at the College of Management –Academic Studies, the Interior Design Department) see: http://www.haaretz.com/culture/arts-leisure/design-or-revolution-1.336705

- *Los Limites de la Inclusión, in A4 Investigaciones Uranas mayo 2005*
- *"Limit of Inclusiveness" The Transborderline project, mentioned in Architects Journal (04.03.2005)*
- *How is of public the public space? In Susana Aparicio Urban chronicles http://cronicas-urbanas.blogspot.com/2005/05/cmo-es-de-pblico-el-espacio-pblico.html*
- Transgressive Architektur*, architekten24, http://www.architekten24.de/news/reisen_architektur/3034-transgressive-architecture/index.html*
- Matt Weaver, Regeneration sexy? It is now, The Guardian, (30/03/01)
- "Rogers in 'Social Cleansing' Furor*" ,Architects' Journal,* (01/03/01) p. 4
- "Bed Linen art fights social cleansing*", Time Out,* (27/06/01) p. 15
- " "Dirty Laundry", *Metropolis,* (11/01) p. 46
- "Planners told to leave cities alone – Interview with Gil Doron of Transgressive Architecture", David Cohen, *The Guardian*" Arts section, (8/09/01) p. 32 [http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/news/story/0,9830,533876,00.html]

Publications and Conferences (short selection)
- **"Mind the Gap - Transgressive Art & Social Practices",** a book about my work, sponsored by The Artist Award, The Art Council (IL). A presentation and a talk at my book launch at the Artist's Workshops, Tel Aviv **(14.05.2015)**
- **The Art of Transgression in occupied zones** – A lecture at the conference "Houses beyond the hyphen", Zochrot Organization, Ha'Rabitta, Jaffa (15.05.2015)
- **"Engaged Photography** - ruin porn photography vs. photography as performance",
- Art In Society conference, Rome (06.2014)
- **"The Dead Zone"? is that what you called it?"** at the international conference 'Writingplace – literary methods in architectural research and design', TU Delft, School of Architecture & the Built Environment, 2014
- ***Transgression & the City***, in Border Conditions, M.Schoonderbeek (ed) 010 Publishers,NL (2010)
- ***Epilogue* for the book – Urban Interventions**, Ana Mendez De Andes (ed) CAJA Spain (2010)
- **P.S. Architecture as initiative**, presentation at Setting a Setting symposium, the lecture was published in Public Works' fanzine 03/07
- **"Outside Heterotopia: Where Mama Roma and the Kids Play"** a paper at Topos - The Moving Image between Art and Architecture Research Spaces III, Slade, UCL (12.2006)
- **"Urban Agriculture: Small, Medium, Large",** Architectural Design magazine – spatial issue Food & the City,May,2005.
- "…**badland**, blank space, border vacuums, brown fields, conceptual Nevada, Dead Zones …" in Field –Journal, Sheffield University, Vol. 1 2007, p.10-24 (Referred Publication)
- **"Transgressive Architecture"**, Loud Paper , Vol. 4, Issue 3, Art & Architecture issue, (06.2004) pp. 38-43.

Awards and Prizes
- The Peoples' Arts Prize – shortlisted (2015) UK
- The Art Council Award for artist book publication (2013). IL
- Artist in the Community Award, The Cultural Ministry, (2010-2013), IL
- The British Council Grants to Artists scheme (2005), UK
- A scholarship from the Foundation for Advancing Education for Iraqi Descendents (2002), UK
- The British Chavening Scholarship Award - The British Council (1999),UK
- Henry Ford European Conservation Award (1998),IL

Research Activity in Arts and Architecture

• Ph.D. research "**The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression**" The research deals with the imagery of the "dead zone" within architecture and planning discourse and the overlooked realities and communities in these zones of exclusion. The extensive field research led to re-conceptualization of "site research" and the development of engaged walking, photographing and writing methodologies. These new ways of engaging with the so-called "dead zones" designate these site, in some ways, as radically democratic public spaces.

• 2012   **Demilitarized Home-Lands: Envisioning Landscape of memory for Palestinians and Israelis** - Research project and planning proposal was submitted to the Architecture for Humanity competition "[UN] Restricted   Access".
The interdisciplinary research by design included environmental, cultural and historical issues. The proposal suggested re-use of the abandoned and heavily contaminated military camp that set on the ruins of the Palestinian village of Bayt Dajan, near Tel Aviv. The work was carried out in collaboration with Prof. Amnon Bar-Or, and a team of Zochrot organization.

• 2011   **"Design and Social Responsibility"** at the School of Management – Academic Studies, Interior Design Department. Israel. Research and production of a film in preparation for the conference "Design and Social Responsibility". The conference, key noted by Arch. Anne Lacaton has launched the Design Clinic that aims at working with local authorities and disadvantaged communities. The film I have created for the conference shows the work of the Community Architecture Studio that I founded in 2010.

• 2010-2014 **"Architecture & Urban Cultures"** a study programme
Based on my studies in education in the arts and in architecture I have written a study programme in architecture and the environment for primary school children. The programme was validated by the Ministry of Education and was adopted by the education department of Tel Aviv municipality and has been taught in tens of schools.

• 2006 Generalized   Empowerment,   an   investigation   in   Urban   Interventions
A research group, exhibition and international conference at UCL that looked at art practices for creating inclusive spaces and community empowerment. The research culminated in a conference at UCL, with Prof. Saskia Sassen as the key note speaker.

• 2006 **"The Limits of Inclusiveness: emancipatory spatial practices for the Public(s) Space"**: The Limits of Inclusiveness, was a research by design project based on accommodating conflicting uses in Russell Sq. London, conducted with a senior architect at Will Alsop's office, and students from Brighton University. The project was exhibited at 66EAST – Centre for Urban Culture, Amsterdam

• 2003 **"Dwelling on Process"**, Stephen Lawrence Gallery. The exhibition was part of Architecture Week, and included a catalogue, with articles by Jeremy Till, Richard Rogers, Steve Macadam (Fluid), Paul Monaghan and Simon Allford, Gil Doron and Bruce Stewart. The participants in the exhibition were students from the Bartlett, UCL; University of Greenwich,School of Architecture & Construction; London Metropolitan University School of Architecture.